

County votes to pull ARPA \$ from project

Resolution will also require approval from the redevelopment commission

By RAY COONEY
The county continued the process of stepping away from a proposed housing development project.
Jay County Commissioners approved a resolution Monday to terminate the interlocal agreement with Jay County Development Corporation for using the county's \$1.2 million remaining coronavirus relief funds from the American Rescue Plan Act for the project proposed for 68 acres of county-owned land along Votaw Street on the west side of Portland.

The resolution still needs to be approved by the redevelopment commission.

Monroe explained last month that consulting firm Baker Tilly has indicated the county could reallocate American Rescue Plan Act dollars aimed at the project. (County officials had discussed using the money to help pay for new radios for emergency responders, a project estimated at a total of nearly \$7 million.) Initially, funds had to be allocated by the end of 2024 and spent by the end of 2026.

County officials have withdrawn support for the project over the course of the last month, beginning with Jay County Council voting to "pull the plug" — inform consulting firm Rundell, Ernstberger and Associates to cease work on the project — at its Dec. 10 meeting.

"Yes, do we need housing? Absolutely," said Jay County Council member Cindy Bracy at that meeting. "Is that the right place and the right way to make it happen? No. We need radios."
See Pull page 2



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Second-ranked upset

Jay County High School senior Katie Rowles grins as she runs toward her coaches, including her dad Pat, after upsetting second-ranked Claire May in the semifinal round of the 100-pound bracket during Saturday's regional tournament at Muncie Central. Rowles had already earned a state berth and went on to finish as the regional runner-up. For more on Rowles and the other Patriots competing in the tournament, see page 8.

Group backs bill to reshape suits

By CASEY SMITH
Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com

A newly formed lobbying group backed by Indiana's major business organizations is pressing lawmakers to pass a civil justice bill that would cap non-economic damages, restrict public nuisance lawsuits and shield businesses from certain liability claims.

Democrats have already criticized the bill as solving problems Indiana does not have while limiting the rights of injured Hoosiers.
The Indiana Alliance for Legal

Lehman's legislation would cap damages, shield businesses and restrict nuisance claims

Reform, announced late last month, is endorsing House Bill 1417, filed last week by Rep. Matt Lehman, R-Berne.

Lehman said he authored the bill after identifying what he views as weaknesses in Indiana's

civil justice system that expose businesses and property owners to liability even when they're not negligent.

"It's just trying to find the areas of our judicial system that I think are in some cases being abused,

and trying to put some parameters on," Lehman told the Indiana Capital Chronicle. "We don't want to call into question the courts. At the same time, we've got to restrict some of the people that are getting dragged into the courts that have no negligence."

The bill bundles several proposals aligned with the alliance's goal of curbing what the group describes as frivolous lawsuits and excessive jury awards against Hoosier businesses.

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

'CHICAGO' tour is coming to Emens



Photo provided

Max Cervantes (center) performs as Billy Flynn along with the company of the national tour of "CHICAGO." The tour will visit Ball State University's Emens Auditorium on Thursday, Jan. 22. Tickets are available by calling (765) 285-1539 and the Emens box office, 1800 W. Riverside Ave., Muncie.

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review

For a night, the Emens Auditorium stage will become the Windy City.

The national tour of the Tony Award-winning musical "CHICAGO" will visit the venue at Ball State University at 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 22.

"CHICAGO" tells the tale of nightclub dancer Roxie Hart, played by Ellie Roddy. After murdering her lover, she manipulates everyone, including her rival cellmate Velma Kelly (Claire Marshall), with the help of her lawyer Billy Flynn (Max Cervantes). Kelly is a vaudeville star who is in jail for the murder of her husband and sister.

The original Broadway production of the show ran for 936 performances in the 1970s and the revival that started in 1996 is still running.

Tony-winning musical features orchestra on stage

With Roddy leading the way, the cast has drawn rave reviews, with Leonard Taube of TheatreBloom referring to her as a showstopper, triple threat and femme fatale.

"Roddy has some terrific facial expressions as she grows through the show from unhappy housewife to jilted lover to a prisoner yearning for freedom and fame," wrote Taube.

Roddy, who has also portrayed Rizzo in "Grease," is in her second year with the touring production of "CHICAGO." Marshall

recently toured with "The Cher Show," and Cervantes has been part of national tours of "Pretty Woman" and "On Your Feet!"

Before leading "CHICAGO," director David Hyslop served as the associate director for the U.S. tour of "Priscilla Queen of the Desert."

The set for the show brings the orchestra on stage with the cast.

Tickets range from \$32 to \$80 and are available by calling (765) 285-1539, at ticketmaster.com or at the Emens box office, 1800 W. Riverside Ave., Muncie.

Deaths

Glen Finch, 89, Portland
Donald Stafford, 57, Pennville
Norman Alig, 89, St. Anthony, Ohio
Joan Ruth, 54, Ridgeville
William Decker, 70, Portland
Details on page 2.

Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 32 degrees Sunday. The low was 24.
Tonight's low will be in the mid 30s with a 30% chance of rain. Expect cloudy skies Wednesday with a chance of rain and snow and a high in the upper 30s.
See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

There was one new filing to run for election Monday morning in Jay County. David L. Champion of rural Redkey filed to run for Richland Township Trustee. Offices up for election include sheriff, the middle district Jay County Commissioner seat and four Jay County Council seats. The deadline to file is Feb. 6.

Coming up

Wednesday — Coverage of this week's Dunkirk City Council meeting.
Thursday — Results from the opening round of the ACAC basketball tournaments.
Friday — Details from this week's Jay County Council meeting.





# Pull ...

Continued from page 1

Jay County Redevelopment Commission followed suit on Dec. 18 and also voted to send a letter to Jay County Commissioners and Jay County Council declaring intent to rescind an interlocal agreement allocating American Rescue Plan Act dollars toward the project. Four days later, commissioners Duane Monroe and Doug Horn also voted to notify Rundell Entsberger and Associates to stop development work while commissioner Chad Aker voted against.

Monday’s action, which passed unanimously, formally approved rescinding the interlocal agreement regarding the federal funds.

County attorney Wes Schemenaur said after the meeting that the county council does not need to approve the resolution because it was not a party to the interlocal agreement.

The long-term project called for commercial space along Votaw Street, 210 multi-family housing units, 76 single-family homes and 53 townhomes/duplexes. The first

phase of the project that the American Rescue Plan Act funds would have helped cover involved installing utilities at a cost of \$2.65 million. The county purchased the 68-acre property for \$1.1 million in March 2023. There was no developer tied to the project before the county started the process of pulling back.

Commissioners also signed an agreement to rent the 68-acre property for farming this year to Chris Muhlenkamp at \$420 an acre, a total of \$28,560.

In other business, commissioners:

- Elected Monroe as president of commissioners and Aker as vice president. Aker, who has announced that he will not run for re-election this year, had served as president since 2021. They also elected Horn as president and Monroe as vice president of the county drainage board.
- Approved the following: renewing a contract with Quality Correctional Care for nursing and other medical services at Jay County Jail; spending \$8,000 to take part in an Indiana Sheriff’s Association program that

will write standard operating procedures for jail staff and provide regular training and testing (plans are to utilize the same program for deputies beginning next year); shifting inventory of some equipment from Jay County Country Living to the county highway department; a \$1,750 claim from Jim and Kristen Schoenlein for right-of-way work; all existing department heads and Wes Schemenaur as county attorney to continue serving; a \$5,308 claim for a right-of-way on property owned by Donald and Christine White-nack; a quarterly claim of \$17,078.75 from Jay County Humane Society for animal control services; and \$1,125 for attendance at an Indiana Assessor’s Association conference.

- Learned from highway department superintendent Bob Howell that a culvert is being replaced on county road 300 North this week between county roads 400 East and 450 East. The department is also getting two new plows delivered this week.
- Heard a report from Cambria Sparks of the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs






regarding the county’s veterans services department. She told commissioners that the department meets state and federal standards with the exception of utilizing a Personal Identification Verification card reader. The department is in the process of obtaining that equipment. Aker praised Moser county veterans affairs officer Cliff Moser for his services to local veterans.

- Received a recap from Bill Walters of East Central Indiana Regional Planning District, which assists local governments in Jay, Blackford, Delaware and Grant counties with economic development. The district has applied or is in the process of applying for various grants, including for an INDOT culvert program, Safe Streets for All and Community Crossings. It also received 18 corporate and community grants totaling \$45,200.
- Heard from county surveyor Brad Daniels that his department’s wide-format copier is currently out of service and will need to be replaced. He said he will get quotes. The current

copier cost \$10,000 when it was purchased in 2017.

- OK’d the following appointments to local boards: Todd Penrod to the public defender’s board; Jane Ann Runyon to the Jay County Visitors & Tourism Board; Aker to Jay County Plan Commission; Chuck Denney to Portland Plan Commission; Monroe to Jay County Regional Sewer District, Derek Rodgers, Carl Walker and Horn to Jay County Redevelopment Commission; Cindy Shepherd to Jay County Economic Development Income Tax Advisory Committee; Kaleb Hemmelgarn to the Jay County Board of Zoning Appeals; and Terry Hanks to the Alcohol and Beverage Commission.
- Approved claims of \$6,000 for East Central Indiana Regional Planning District’s general services and \$3,000 for work related to Community Crossings grant eligibility for Pennville, Bryant and Salamonia. Monroe expressed concern that he could not find a record of commissioners approving that work. He said he would prefer that such work be handled by Jay County Development Corporation.

# CR almanac

Wednesday 1/14	Thursday 1/15	Friday 1/16	Saturday 1/17	Sunday 1/18
 <b>39/12</b> There is a chance of rain and snow before 4 p.m., with snow to follow. The high will be 39 degrees.	 <b>23/14</b> The forecast calls for a high of 23 under partly sunny skies.	 <b>32/20</b> There is a 40% chance of snow throughout the day. The high will be 32.	 <b>27/9</b> Expect a high in the upper 20s with a 30% chance of snow. The low will reach single digits.	 <b>18/9</b> Skies will be mostly cloudy with a high of 18.

## Lotteries

<b>Powerball</b> Estimated jackpot: \$137 million	23-28-31-44-45-48-55-56-61-64-66-69-70-77-78-80 Cash 5: 12-13-20-34-39 Estimated jackpot: \$166,500
<b>Mega Millions</b> Estimated jackpot: \$215 million	
<b>Hoosier</b> Sunday Midday Daily Three: 4-1-2 Daily Four: 5-8-3-2 Quick Draw: 3-4-7-10-11-15-18-25-26-30-34-40-42-52-54-56-60-65-69-72 Evening Daily Three: 7-5-2 Daily Four: 5-8-8-5 Quick Draw: 4-7-8-12-	<b>Ohio</b> Sunday Midday Pick 3: 2-7-1 Pick 4: 6-8-0-6 Pick 5: 6-1-6-7-4 Evening Pick 3: 2-3-1 Pick 4: 1-2-2-6 Pick 5: 3-1-9-8-4 Rolling Cash 5: 2-7-12-19-33 Estimated jackpot: \$100,000

## Markets

<b>Cooper Farms Fort Recovery</b> Corn.....4.64 Feb. corn .....4.66	Wheat .....4.72
<b>POET Biorefining Portland</b> Corn.....4.64 Feb. corn .....4.58 March corn .....4.58	<b>ADM Montpelier</b> Corn.....4.48 Feb. corn .....4.50 Beans .....10.53 Feb. beans .....10.58 Wheat .....5.00
<b>The Andersons Richland Township</b> Corn .....4.50 Feb. corn .....4.52 Beans .....10.49 Feb. beans .....10.58	<b>Heartland St. Anthony</b> Corn.....4.61 Feb. corn .....4.56 Beans .....10.23 March beans .....10.28 Wheat .....4.72

## Today in history

**In 2016**, Jay County High School boys basketball team opened the Allen County Athletic Conference tournament with a 75-41 victory against South Adams.

**In 2021**, president Donald Trump was impeached for a second time by the U.S. House of Representatives for his involvement in his supporters storming the

Capitol Jan. 6, 2021. He became the first president to be impeached twice.

**In 2025**, Dunkirk City Council gave Mayor Jack Robbins permission to pursue an apartment development for land owned by Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation the south side of the city.

— The CR

## Citizen’s calendar

<b>Tuesday, Jan. 13</b> 5:30 p.m. — Portland Board of Zoning Appeals, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland. 6 p.m. — Ridgeville Town Council, fire department, 302 N. Walnut St.	Board of Works, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St. 6 p.m. — Jay County Council, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.
<b>Wednesday, Jan. 14</b> 5:15 p.m. — Portland	<b>Thursday, Jan. 15</b> 6 p.m. — Jay County Board of Zoning Appeals, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland.

# Obituaries

## Glen Finch

*April 3, 1936-Jan. 9, 2026*

Glen (Bud) L. Finch, age 89, passed away on Friday, Jan. 9, at Persimmon Ridge Healthcare in Portland, Indiana.

He was born April 3, 1936, in Portland, Indiana, the son of the late Glenn and Grace (Whitman) Finch. He married Carolyn Wiley in 1955 and she passed away in 2016.

He was preceded in death by his sisters and brother, Bob (Annie) Finch, Francis (Shorty) Boggs, Annabelle (Ernie) Groves, Betty (Robert) Edsel, Emily (Fred) McFarland, Alice (John) Hare, Bonnie Brown and Dixie Pitman.

Bud graduated in 1954 from Portland High School. He worked at the Portland Water Department, Indiana Michigan Power and American Electric Power, and co-owned Finch Grocery. He was a member of West Walnut Street Church of Christ and attended Portland Friends Church with his special friend Joyce Thomas.

Surviving are his children, Connie (John) McClain of Virginia Beach, Virginia, Teresa McIntire of Monticello, Brenda (Marty) Ryan of Lawrenceburg, Robin Finch and (Barbara Pedone) of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, and Kristy Inman (Jamie Baughman) of Muncie; eight grandchildren, John Michael, Deanna, Ashley, Aaron, Austin, Grace, Alicia and Kaylee; and eight great-grandchildren Autumn, Emma, Daphne, Dane, Darcy, Dominic, Adelina and Caroline.

His dog “Lucky Boy” was very loyal and always checked on him throughout the day to make sure he was OK. His hobbies were watching the San Francisco Giants and the Indianapolis Colts, and he and Joyce would drive the golf cart out to watch the Portland Rockets play. He always had a big smile on his face while watching the Rockets and was known for being one of the greatest power hitters in Rocket history.

Although his passing has left a hole in our hearts, his faith in God and how he lived was a gift to all that knew him. He loved being around people and never knew a stranger. We will remember him not how his life ended, but how he lived his life.

Funeral services will be held on Saturday, Jan. 17, at 11 a.m. in the West Walnut Street Church of Christ with Pastor Gil Alicea presiding. Burial will follow in the Center Cemetery. Visitation will be on Friday from 3 to 7 p.m. in the West Walnut Street Church Fellowship Hall.

Memorials can be made to West Walnut Street Church of Christ or Portland Friends Church.

Baird-Freeman Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Condolences may be expressed at bairdfreeman.com.

Finch

also attended the University of the Cumberlands while working toward his doctorate degree.

Donald proudly served in the United States Army Reserves. He was dedicated to education and taught at Indiana Tech. He was a past member of the Pennville Masonic Lodge and the Pennville Volunteer Fire Department, served his community as a first responder and was on the board for the Museum of the Soldier.

Donald married Beth Lantz on June 6, 1992.

Survivors include:

- His wife — Beth Stafford, Pennville, Indiana
- His children — Brandon Stafford (wife: Jamey), Berne, Indiana, and Cathrine Stafford, Bedford, Indiana
- His mother — Rebecca Ann Stafford, Dunkirk, Indiana
- Two grandchildren — Keyton and Xavier

Visitation will be held on Saturday, Jan. 17, 2026, from 1 to 2 p.m. at Cornerstone Church in Pennville. Services to celebrate Don’s life will follow at 2 p.m. on Saturday at the church.

Arrangements entrusted to Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home in Pennville.

## Norman Alig

*Aug. 10, 1936-Jan. 10, 2026*

Norman W. Alig, age 89, of St. Anthony, Ohio, passed away peacefully on Saturday, Jan. 10, 2026, at the Gardens at St. Henry.

He was born on Aug. 10, 1936, in Jay County, Indiana, to the late Henry and Philomena (Homan) Alig.

In addition to his parents, Norman was preceded in death by his brother and sister-in-law, Alvin and Joyce Alig; one granddaughter; and his in-laws, Sally (Virgil) Stammen, Harold (Eileen) Heuker, Donald “Tiny” Brunswick, John Heuker and Charles, Joseph and Donald Heuker.

Norman is survived by his wife of 64 years, Hilda (Heuker) Alig, whom he married on Oct. 14, 1961; his children, Donna (Paul) Dahlinghaus of New Bremen, Ohio, Greg (Joanne) Alig of St. Anthony, Dave (Peggy) Alig of Fort Recovery, Kathy (Nate) Carnes of Coldwater, and Rick (Sharon) Alig of St. Anthony; 18 grandchildren; and 30 great-grandchildren with seven on the way; his siblings, Kenneth (Beatrice) Alig of Fort Recovery, Dale (Janet) Alig of New Bremen, and Lucy Ann (Steve) Nieport of St. Henry; Ohio; his in-laws, Marie Brunswick of Fort Recovery, Ed (Sue) Heuker of New Bremen, Susie Heuker of Botkins, Ohio, and Helen (Bob) Smith of Fort Recovery; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Norman was a 1954 graduate of Coldwater High School and proudly served his country after enlisting in the United States Army, where he was honorably discharged. After returning home, he worked for New Idea in Coldwater for several years and devoted his life to farming.

Norman was deeply involved in his community and faith. He was a member of the Fort Recovery American Legion; the Fort Recovery Knights of Columbus, where he served as Past Grand Knight; the Coldwater Eagles; St. Anthony Catholic Church and St. Anthony Men’s Sodality; and the Pioneers.

Above all else, Norman loved his family. Nothing brought him greater happiness than time spent with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, especially taking them on ranger rides around the farm and sharing stories along the way. He found joy and peace outdoors, whether walking in the woods, working the land or simply appreciating

Alig

God’s creations. In quieter moments, Norman enjoyed camping, wood-working, making homemade wine, playing cards and putting puzzles together. His steady presence, kind heart and love for family and community will be deeply missed.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2026, at St. Anthony Catholic Church, with Father Alexander Witt celebrating. Burial, with full military honors, will follow in the church cemetery.

Guests may visit with Norman’s family on Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2026, from 3 to 7 p.m. and again on Wednesday from 9 to 9:45 a.m. at Brockman Boeckman Funeral Home, Fort Recovery. An American Legion prayer service and a Knights of Columbus prayer service will be held Tuesday evening starting at 6:45 p.m.

## Joan Ruth

*May 11, 1971-Jan. 10, 2026*

Joan Raina Ruth, age 54, of Ridgeville passed away on Saturday, Jan. 10, 2026, in St. Vincent Hospital in Winchester.

She was born in Portland on May 11, 1971, the daughter of Clyde “Lew” and Janet (Kelly) Rines.

Joan married the love of her life Norman Ruth on June 25, 1994, and they had four beautiful children. She was a 1989 Winchester High School graduate and in 1995 earned a bachelor’s degree from Ball State University.

She worked at Geneva F&M Bank in Portland for 25 years and previously had worked for LJ Stone. She enjoyed crafting, cooking and baking. She volunteered at the Ridgeville Little League for 15 years. Her favorite thing was spending time with her family and loving her grand babies.

Surviving are her husband of 31 years Norman; one son, Colten Ruth of Ridgeville; three daughters, Bridgett Berry (husband: Desstone) of Montpelier, Caitlyn Clark (husband: Bradley) of Farmland and Jananie Ruth of Ridgeville; her mother Janet Rines of Ridgeville; one brother, Shane Rines of Ridgeville; three grandchildren; and special niece Shaylee Rines.

She was preceded in death by her father Clyde “Lew” Rines; and a daughter, Francine Marie Ruth.

Funeral services will be Thursday, Jan. 15, at 6 p.m. in the Baird-Freeman Funeral Home with Pastor Jonathan Edwards presiding. Visitation will be from 4 to 6 p.m. on Thursday.

Memorials can be made to the American Heart Association.

Condolences may be expressed at bairdfreeman.com.

Ruth

## William Decker

*Nov. 14, 1955-Jan. 7, 2026*

William Dean Decker, age 70, a resident of Portland, passed away on Wednesday, Jan. 7, 2026 at his home.

William was born on Nov. 14, 1955, in Lima, Ohio, the son of Wayne and Kathrine (Reed) Ensley then adopted by Bob and Margie (Reed) Decker.

In his free time William enjoyed riding his tractor and mowing, he loved watching western movies and his favorite actor was Sam Elliott.

Survivors include:

- Companion — Mariam Beaty, Portland, Indiana
- Two sisters — Shirley Lapham, Columbia City, Indiana, and Treva Bowers, North Manchester, Indiana

No services are scheduled at this time.

Arrangements entrusted to Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home in Portland.



# Preserving history is worthy cause

By JAMES FULKES

The Commercial Review

In classic literature, we all know the tale “A Tale of Two Cities.” Today, we explore A Tale of Two Clocks. Both clocks were once iconic landmarks in their respective communities. In Dunkirk, roughly where the asphalt approach for the old bank drive-through now sits, stood the First State Bank of Dunkirk. The original building is

*Fulksey Mayhem*



Historical Society is in the process of a full restoration. Some grant funding has been secured, but additional donations are needed to ensure the old First State Bank building clock is preserved and, hopefully, placed at the restored Webster Depot railroad building in Dunkirk. In Redkey, the historic clock tower has stood for more than a century. In recent years, however, the clock has been out of commission. Currently, the Dunkirk

This clock is an elaborate, old-school, gear-driven, four-faced timepiece that is currently undergoing a full restoration by local volunteers. From 5 to 8 p.m. Jan. 31, a chili supper freewill donation benefit will be held at the Old Redkey Fire Station and city building to restore the clock faces and get the old fire station clock back up and running. Both are very worthy projects. To donate to either,

attend the chili supper in Redkey or make a donation to the Dunkirk Historical Society and designate it for the clock restoration fund. Of course, today we live in a cellphone- and electronic device-driven society, and even classic wristwatches have largely been supplanted as a method of keeping time. Personally, I still love those old classic clocks and their history. They are certainly some-

thing worth restoring to their former glory. Across the pond, a recent restoration of Big Ben in merry old England was completed, and an excellent documentary film was made about its restoration, which ran into the millions of British pounds sterling. Here, we can save two landmark clocks for a much more reasonable price. A tale of two cities, with very different clocks — and both very worthy causes for restoration.

# Grandson has distanced himself from family

DEAR ABBY: My grandson “Ethan” and his fiancée lived with his mother until four years ago. When they moved out, they decided not to give his parents their new address. It has been several years since my daughter has seen her son. Apparently, they occasionally text. Ethan was married seven months ago. He didn’t invite his parents as he felt they would “make it about themselves” and distract from his day. He said I’d be invited to his wedding and would receive a nice picture from the photographer. The wedding date came and went. I saw pictures on social media, so I knew it had transpired. At the time, my gut feeling was that he felt awkward inviting me and his aunt but not his parents. In the past, I have sent Ethan a check on his birthday and at Christmas and helped him financially with vehicle repairs. Although I was not invited, I sent a congratulatory card for the wedding, with a significant check enclosed. He cashed the check but did not acknowledge receipt of the card. Because neither he nor his wife acknowledged my wedding gift, I am debating what to do for his next birthday. Should I ignore the

*Dear Abby*



I’m not sure how to handle a conversation that is sure to come up. I was very close to my classmates until five years ago, when my husband and I faced a series of family tragedies that took all of my time and energy. The worst was losing a daughter who would have been graduating this year. I’m ready to reconnect with my old friends, but how do I deal with casual conversations without making light of the situation or being a wet blanket? If someone asks, “How is your daughter doing?” I need to have a reasonable response that isn’t going to be awful for both of us. The thought of having to talk about it makes me want to stay home. Advice? — UNDECIDED IN LOS ANGELES

DEAR UNDECIDED: Please accept my sympathy for the loss of your daughter. If someone at the reunion hasn’t already heard about her death and asks how she’s doing, respond with the truth, which is that she passed away several years ago. If someone asks for the details, simply say you don’t want to discuss it further and change the subject. ....

DEAR ABBY: I am a 31-year-old woman who is not yet established

in life. I have no husband or boyfriend, no kids and no clear direction for a career. I start new, low-level jobs often. My problem is that I look deceptively young for my age. At most, I look 18 or 19. These employers, co-workers and supervisors treat me differently, and some talk down to me. Some refer to me as a “girl” instead of a “woman.” Some give me incredulous looks if I reminisce about the ‘90s. I have even been accused of lying about my age. Some even had the guts to ask for my driver’s license. Others talk about how “adorable” I am if they think I’m out of earshot. I have tried wearing more mature outfits, but they were uncomfortable, and it felt inauthentic. I tried wearing makeup every day, but I just looked like a teenager who wears makeup. When I tried mentioning it during icebreakers, it elicited giggles of disbelief. I also tried referring to the year I graduated from college. It doesn’t matter that I speak and behave like an adult, because employees have admitted they thought I was just a precocious teen. It doesn’t help that my hobbies include cartoons and anime. Nor

does it help that I can be painfully shy, which, I believe, many people confuse with inexperience. This has been an issue my entire life, but it has grown more pronounced as I age. The most common (and least helpful) advice I get is “You’ll appreciate it when you’re older.” Well, I am concerned with the present. Advice? — BABY FACE IN RHODE ISLAND

DEAR BABY FACE: You look young, act youthful and are following a life path usually associated with someone 10 years younger. This may explain your co-workers’ confusion about your age. Some of them may also be jealous or closed-minded. It may be time to cut down on job-hopping and home in on a career. If you do, your co-workers may have the opportunity to get to know you better. Until then, be cordial, stand up for yourself and stop letting the remarks get to you. You know who you are, and that’s what is most important. ....

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at DearAbby.com.

# Capsule Reports

Notices will appear in Community Calendar as space is available. To submit an item, email [news@thecr.com](mailto: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.  
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 infor-

mation, call Pastor Randy Davis at (765) 369-2085.  
**Thursday**  
STITCH AND CHATTER QUILT CLUB — Meets from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at Jay Community Center. Show and tell is at 1 p.m. The club is open to all ages and is for anyone who wants to sew. Bring unfinished projects and a sewing machine. For more information, call Nan Weesner at (260) 766-9334.  
CELEBRATE RECOVERY — A 12-step Christian recovery program meets at 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. each Thursday at A Second Chance At Life Ministries, 228 S. Meridian St. in Portland. For more information, call Brenda Eads at (260) 726-9625 or Dave Keen at (260) 251-8792.  
SMART RECOVERY — A group for those struggling with addiction that focuses on motivation, coping with cravings, managing thoughts, feelings and behavior, and living a balanced life meets at 11 a.m. each Thursday in the IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health Center, Entrance C, 510 W. Votaw St., Portland.  
EN AVANT CLUB — Meets at 1 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month.  
UNDERSTANDING YOUR SUICIDE GRIEF —

Meets from 1 to 2:30 p.m. the third Thursday of each month. The support group serves to help individuals who have lost a loved one to suicide. To register, contact Stephanie Patterson at (260) 251-3259.  
ORGAN TRANSPLANT SUPPORT GROUP — Will meet at 3 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month in the IU Health Blackford main conference room.  
INDIANA UNIVERSITY HEALTH JAY HOSPITAL OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP — Will meet at 6 p.m. the third Thursday of each month in Indiana University Health Jay Hospital Conference Room B. The group is for ostomy and intestinal diversion patients and their friends and family to offer mutual support and learn about the latest products and information.  
PORTLAND LIONS CLUB — Will meet at 6:30 p.m. the third Thursday of the month at Portland Lions Civic Center, 307 W. 100 North.  
FORGET-ME-NOT — A support group for parents, friends and relatives who have lost a baby through miscarriage, birth or illness will meet from 7 to 9 p.m. at St. Vincent Randolph Hospital, Winchester, in community room 1.

# Sudoku

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

Level: Beginner

## Saturday’s Solution

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

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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# Foreign policy is not a board game

By WILLIAM D. HARTUNG

Tribune News Service

Given the administration's actions for the past month, from shooting small boats near the shores of Venezuela, to seizing oil tankers, to acknowledging that there was a U.S. covert action underway there, the military intervention to remove Venezuelan president Nicholas Maduro should come as no surprise.

But while some in Washington are celebrating this as a "victory," in the long-term it could be disastrous for elites in the U.S. and Venezuela, not to mention the people of both nations.

There is no recent evidence that U.S. sponsored regime change can succeed, yet President Donald Trump has said the U.S. will "run" the country until an acceptable transition government can be assembled.

Iraq is the most recent case.

William D. Hartung



Administration officials said deposing Saddam Hussein and winning the war would be a "cake walk," and suggested it would be "cheap" – only \$50 to \$100 billion. In the end it cost at least 20 times that, and it brought to power a sectarian regime that even its own armed forces didn't fully trust, which made it easier for ISIS to sweep in and capture large parts of the country in 2014.

Even more important, Congress and the public should resist efforts by Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Trump to go

further, whether attacking Colombia or using the Venezuelan intervention as a first step towards trying to foster regime change in Cuba.

Foreign policy is not a board game where one victory leads smoothly into the next. Real life is messy and unpredictable, and war even more so, as our experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan amply demonstrate. The "easy" wars there ended up running up \$8 trillion in taxpayer obligations, causing the deaths of hundreds of thousands of refugees for their respective reasons, and inflicting physical and psychological wounds on huge numbers of veterans, including hundreds of thousands suffering from PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injuries. Meanwhile, staff processing veterans' benefits and staffing VA medical clinics are being cut.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who coined the term military-industrial complex at the end of his term, began it with a speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors formally entitled "The Chance for Peace," but later dubbed his "Cross of Iron" speech, in which he said the following:

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children."

The question now is, what do we want to spend our money and labor on that will actually make us safer and more prosperous? War in Latin America is not high

on that list. In fact, it is likely to have the opposite effect, bringing on the consequences Eisenhower warned of over 70 years ago.

Eisenhower also had astute observations about the best way to make America strong. It did not involve piling up more weapons or fighting more wars. It involved cultivating a healthy, well educated, well motivated, and united citizenry as the foundation of our security.

The current policies emanating from Washington are undermining those pillars of security. War in Latin America could leave them in tatters, undermining our safety and security for decades to come. It's time to speak out in favor of a new course before we pay that awful price.

\*\*\*\*\*

Hartung is a senior research fellow at the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft.



# How will lawmakers spend extra cash?

By NIKI KELLY

Indiana Capital Chronicle  
indianacapitalchronicle.com

Indiana lawmakers got an early Christmas surprise back in December — a newly projected tax revenue boost. But that money puts them in a bit of a bind.

Do they let the state surplus rise to \$5 billion by the middle of 2027 while also cutting state agency budgets, laying off workers and slashing social service assistance for poor Hoosiers?

It appears so.

"Though the state's revenue forecast has improved compared to April 2025, it's not responsible to spend money that hasn't yet materialized. Senate Republicans will hold the line on major spending proposals, as budget decisions should be made during budget sessions," the caucus said in a Wednesday news release.

Let's review how we got here.

The two-year budget process began in December 2024 with a forecast that estimated how much tax revenue was expected to come in over the next two fiscal years. Then, state fiscal leaders spent months crafting a budget that would run from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2027.

But just before they finalized the budget in April 2025, an updated forecast showed that much of the new revenue that

had been expected wouldn't materialize.

That forecast process has been used for decades and has generally served the state well. Lawmakers technically always spend money that is expected to come in the future.

It can be confusing, but think of it as if you were told you'd receive a 3% raise next year, so you used that to budget for the year. But, before it took effect, your employer dropped the raise to 1%. You will still receive more pay, though not as much as you had planned for.

So, lawmakers in April 2025 reduced the appropriations in the budget bill by about \$2 billion. The two-year spending plan was signed into law in May. That led to Gov. Mike Braun cutting agency budgets, laying off hundreds of state employees and limiting child care subsidies, among other austerity measures.

Fast forward to December 2025, and the annual forecast comes around again. Except this time, the projections move

in the other direction — a surprise boon! That means the state will now take in far more money than it is scheduled to spend.

This would be your boss unexpectedly going back to the 3% raise. Would you adjust your spending for the year, or save the additional amount?

The state surplus is now expected to rise to nearly \$5 billion by mid-2027 — about double what was anticipated last summer. That's almost 22% of annual state spending, when legislators usually try to keep it between 10-15%.

Democrats are pushing to reverse some key cuts.

House Democratic Leader Phil GiaQuinta, D-Fort Wayne, said the first thing state government should do is eliminate the waitlist for low-income child care vouchers.

"Child care is such a big issue out there, for parents, for employers, something that we could do, we need to really work on that. We could use some of the money for that," he told reporters Thursday. "I've toured a facility in Fort Wayne back in October, and then in December, they put out a notice that it's closing. And it's not the only one closing throughout the state. So the providers need paid; the parents need safe, productive places ... where they can take their children. And that's something

that we really should do, and that's everyone's asking for. It very disappointing that it's not on their priority list."

The waitlist has entered its second year. There were more than 32,000 children in line in November, according to the latest update to a state dashboard. That's constricting enrollment at providers already struck by the state's cuts to voucher reimbursement rates.

Is the state really going to stockpile \$5 billion when day cares are closing? And state employees are not getting a pay raise.

State Budget Director Chad Ranney told the Indiana Capital Chronicle the contingency fund that covers salary adjustments was reduced by 90%. While he hopes to find a way to help employees it might not be possible.

"The revenue has to materialize before we can spend it," he said. "That's a ton of money for the state to sit on but that's 18 months away."

Ranney also mentioned that the budget cut capital repair and rehabilitation funds, which could be adjusted

House Speaker Todd Huston said lawmakers were surprised when the forecast was downgraded last April and were surprised again with the positive news in December.

"That probably suggests to

me that we probably should wait and see how this all shakes out. We know going into 2027 there are all sorts of changes taking place economically at the federal level and those types of things, and we really should probably wait to see how all that turns out," he said Thursday. He hoped that would lead to a strong budget session in 2027.

There is a mechanism in state law to return surplus money to state taxpayers. The automatic taxpayer refund splits excess revenues between pension relief and income tax relief for Hoosiers. But it only kicks in during odd-numbered years unless lawmakers choose to change the schedule.

It doesn't seem very conservative to take more taxpayer money than necessary, so Republicans have a choice: return it now or invest it in key areas that were previously slashed. Either can happen and still maintain an appropriate surplus to protect Indiana's vaunted AAA credit rating and mantle of fiscal discipline.

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Kelly, editor-in-chief of Indiana Capital Chronicle, has covered the Indiana Statehouse since 1999.

Indiana Capital Chronicle is an independent, nonprofit news organization. Its website is indianacapitalchronicle.com.

# The Commercial Review



US PS 125820

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Production manager

VOLUME 151–NUMBER 178  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2026

www.thecr.com

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

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—Thomas Jefferson

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# VP of Mercer Health retires

Dr. Thangaraj Amaran, vice president of medical affairs for Mercer Health, has retired.

Amaran started at Mercer Health in 1981 as a urologist and spent more than 35 years in patient care. He became vice president of medical affairs in 2018, serving as a liaison between administration and medical staff.

“Dr. Amaran’s legacy is one of compassion, innovation, and unwavering dedication,” said Robert Rose, president of the Mercer Health Board of Governors. “We are deeply grateful for his contributions and proud to honor his remarkable career.”

During his career, Amaran also served as chief of staff three times, vice chief of staff and past chief of staff.

He led initiatives including the Medical Staff Education Series, which encouraged peer-to-peer learning and awareness of specialized services, and Community Health 101, an educational program addressing public health risks.

Amaran has been nominated for the 2026 Ohio Hospital Association’s Albert E. Dyckes Health Care Worker of the Year Award.

### Liechty named

Kent A. Liechty of First Bank of Berne will serve as a constituent director for the Indiana Bankers Association this year.

The association announced its leadership last week, with David M.

## Business roundup

Findlay of Lake City Bank in Warsaw as chairman of the board of directors. Lisa Arnold of Home Bank in Martinsville will serve as vice chair.

Liechty is one of four constituent directors in a group that also includes Garry D. Kleer of First Bank Richmond.

J. Daniel Maddox of Citizens State Bank of New Castle was named as a director representing the north region.

### Ribbon cuttings

Jay County Chamber of Commerce has several ribbon-cutting ceremonies scheduled:

- 4 p.m. Friday, Jan. 16 — The Brass Bell, 135 S. Union St., Pennville
- 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 24 — Two Mama’s on Tap, 2 W. High St., Redkey

For more information about the chamber, visit [jaycountychamber.com](http://jaycountychamber.com).

### Expanding plant

POET Biorefining has announced plans to expand its Shelbyville location.

The biofuels firm based in South Dakota plans to nearly double the Shelbyville facility’s bioethanol production. The upgrade will also double its dried distillers grains and corn oil output

and add 20 new full-time employees.

“This expansion reflects POET’s confidence in the future of biofuels and our commitment to American agriculture and domestic energy production,” said Jeff Lautt, POET president and chief operating officer. “By growing this facility, we’re strengthening markets for local farmers, creating good-paying rural jobs, and ensuring we can meet the growing global demand for our suite of bioproducts.”

Construction is planned to begin in March, with completion by the end of 2027.

The company also owns and operates POET Bio-processing in Portland.

### Grants available

Main Street America is offering a \$20,000 Small Business Grant.

The grant is targeted for businesses that support the community and are interested in expanding those efforts alongside business growth. Examples include businesses that host community events, meetings, fundraising or art exhibits, provide pro bono services, make public art or gathering spaces more accessible or lead collaborative efforts with other organizations.

For more information, visit [mainstreet.org](http://mainstreet.org). The deadline to apply is Jan. 16.

The East Central Indiana Small Business Development Center is offering assistance with the application process. Reach the

center by emailing [ZiBar-tle@isbdc.org](mailto:ZiBar-tle@isbdc.org).

While there is an emphasis on “Main Street” or downtown-style businesses, being part of Main Street America or OCRA Main Street is not a requirement for applying.

### Hosting drive

Menards stores are holding a pet supplies drive through the end of March.

Supplies needed include food, treats, feeders, collars and beds. Items collected will be donated to local humane associations.

Donation boxes will be near the doors at Menards locations, including in Muncie, Richmond and Celina, Ohio.

### Priorities set

Indiana Manufacturers Association announced its priorities for the 2026 legislative session last week.

The organization that represents Hoosier manufacturers is focusing on conforming state tax law with recent federal changes, tort reform and modernizing Indiana’s environmental statutes.

“The IMA’s priorities this year reflect the feedback we have heard from our members across the state,” said Andrew Berger, IMA president, in a news release. “We are committed to working with lawmakers to pass legislation that cuts costs and streamlines government.”

### State sues Lilly

Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita has added Eli Lilly to the state’s ongo-

ing lawsuit that alleges insulin manufacturers and pharmacy benefit managers manipulated the price of diabetes medication.

Rokita said he added Indianapolis-based Lilly to the suit after the state was unable to resolve claims from an original suit in 2024.

“Pharmaceutical companies should not take advantage of Hoosiers or any other American — this includes Lilly, regardless of its Indiana roots,” Rokita said. “For two years, I attempted to resolve this matter with them amicably and without litigation — an effort not required by the state and one not afforded to Lilly’s out-of-state competitors. Lilly, which maintains by far the largest market share for insulin, rejected this outreach and consumed two years of time.”

The lawsuit claims Lilly, Sanofi-Aventis and Novo Nordisk separately conspired with pharmacy benefit managers CVS Caremark, Express Scripts and OptumRx to artificially inflate insulin prices in exchange for payments.

### Now trading

Versant Media Group, a spinoff of Comcast properties, began publicly trading last week.

The new company includes MS Now (formerly MSNBC), CNBC, Golf Channel and USA. Comcast had announced its plans for the spinoff in November 2024.

“As part of Comcast and

NBCU we had other priorities as a company,” Versant CEO Mark Lazarus said on “Squawk Box.” “We made different decisions, because we had a different company and a different strategy. Now we’re bringing these [assets] into their own company, we’re going to be able to invest into them. We’ll invest organically ... and hopefully the market is listening to what we’re saying.”

### New brand launched

Advance Auto Parts announced the formation of new brand ARGOS last week.

The brand will feature oil and fluid auto care products. The company said the launch came as a result of feedback from customers.

“Affordability, reliability and strength are the three clear priorities we hear from our customers when it comes to quality automotive products,” said Bruce Starnes, executive vice president, chief merchant at Advance Auto Parts. “ARGOS delivers on those qualities. It’s a product line built for today’s drivers, DIYers, and professional technicians. We’re excited to help our customers’ cars last longer, for an affordable price.”

The ARGOS brand will be available at all Advance and Carquest locations in the U.S. beginning in mid-February.

.....  
*Does your business have news to share? Email us at [news@thecr.com](mailto:news@thecr.com) to be included in our weekly business roundup.*

# Roundup ...

Continued from page 8

Fort Recovery (8-1, 4-0 MAC) has had to share the MAC title with the Tigers (6-3, 4-1 MAC) the past two seasons. The win keeps FRHS undefeated in conference play with the biggest remaining match against undefeated Coldwater.

Lilah Thien led all bowlers with a 390 series. She rolled the best game of the match at 207 pins to open the day.

Liliana Williams stepped up for the Tribe, setting a new career best series at 356 pins. She had games of 176 and 180.

Jadyn Wyerick and Deanna Brown rolled two games apiece as well. Wyerick finished with a 332 series, while Brown had a 326.

Malia Grisez also rolled a 155. Alayna Bartram led Versailles with 347 pins. No one else had more than 315.

Fort Recovery just edged the Tigers in the Baker games 774-768.

### Pats get 11th

BROWNSBURG — The Jay County boys wrestling team finished 11th at the Class 2A IHSW-CA Team State Duals hosted by Brownsburg on Saturday.

The Patriots (12-6) fell to No. 6 Owen Valley 45-27 to start the day. In its second match, Jay County fell to Gibson Southern, which finished one spot lower in the Class 2A dual rankings at 12th, 45-29.

JCHS then had to face the Indianapolis Bishop Chatard Trojans in the placement round, which it wallopped 71-9.

Jason Landers and Caleb Sibray had the strongest days for the Patriots, both finishing 3-0 in the 138- and 165-pound weight classes, respectively.

Also finishing with strong days at 2-1 were Corbin Lothridge, Alex Rivers, Cooper Glassford, Jacob Robinson, Bryan Fields and Spencer Smitley.

### Roessner leads

VERSAILLES, Ohio — The

Fort Recovery boys bowling team beat Versailles 2,597-2,482 at McBo’s Lanes on Saturday.

Anthony Roessner shot the best game of the match, knocking over 234 pins en route to a 402 series.

Gabe Acheson, A.J. Siefring and Garrett Diller all had strong days as well with series over 350 pins. Acheson broke the 200-pin mark at 205, while a 177 made for a 382 total pins. Siefring beat him out by three pins with a 385, while Diller ended with 355.

Reece LeFevre rolled a 147 in his individual game for the Indians (9-1, 4-1 MAC).

The best day for the Tigers (7-2, 4-1 MAC) came from Caiden Green with a 362. Sam Albers wasn’t far behind with a 362 series.

Outside of a rough first game, the Tribe held strong in the Baker series for a to top Versailles 308-780.

### Just missed

PENDLETON — Jay Coun-

ty’s girls basketball team fell to the Pendleton Heights Arabians, 10th-ranked team in Class 4A, 53-45 on Saturday afternoon.

The Patriots (10-5) lost all four quarters, but the biggest difference came in the third as Pendleton Heights (14-3) outscored them 15-11. The other three quarters only had differences of one or two points.

Karsyn Schwieterman led JCHS with 13 points, while Halie Schwieterman had 10.

Elizabeth Brunswick came up one point short of double figures at nine. Raylah Newton hit a pair of threes in the second and fourth quarters, Claudia Dirksen had a triple in the first and Charlee Peters added buckets in the second and third.

Adah Hupfer led the Arabians with 21 points on 9-of-17 shooting. Olivia Jones, Sami Brunk and Mamie Trout played support roles with 10, nine and eight points, respectively.

### Too late

FORT RECOVERY — The Fort Recovery High School girls basketball team turned on the offense in the fourth quarter, but couldn’t overcome the Arcanum Trojans on Saturday, taking a 47-41 loss.

The Indians (2-11) trailed Arcanum (6-6) by eight points heading into the final period. The Tribe outscored its first half total with 18 points, but a 15 spot by the Trojans prevented a full comeback.

Bridget Homan led the way for Fort Recovery with 15 points. Makenna Huelskamp hit her only field goal in the fourth quarter and she scored six of her 10 points in the period.

Cameron Muhlenkamp followed with eight points, while Maddie Schoenlein had five. The only other Indians to score were Emma Schmitz with two points and Kayla Gaerke with one.

The Trojans had a one-two punch in Caroline Long and Matty Noe as the duo combined for 33 points.

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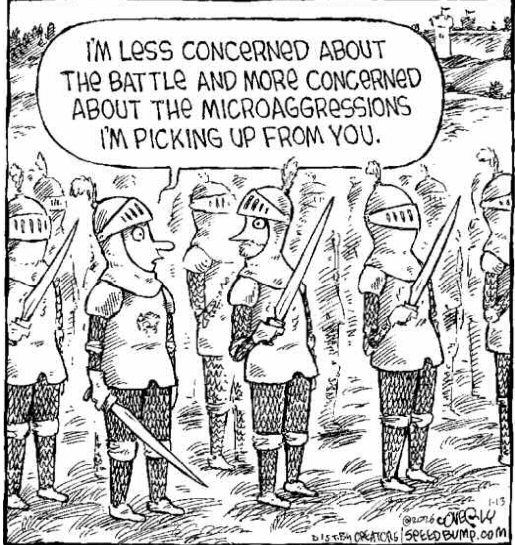
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Super psychology

South dealer.  
North-South vulnerable.

**NORTH**  
♠ 9 6 3  
♥ A 5  
♦ A Q 8 7 4  
♣ K 7 3

**EAST**  
♠ 5 2  
♥ 1 8 7 6 2  
♦ K 5  
♣ 9 8 5 4

**SOUTH**  
♠ A J 4  
♥ 9 3  
♦ 1 10 9 2  
♣ A Q J 10

The bidding:  
South West North East  
1 ♠ 1 ♣ 2 ♠ Pass  
3 ♦ Pass 3 ♥ Pass  
3 NT

Opening lead — king of spades.

To succeed, a good bridge player must also be a good psychologist. There are times when an opponent's thought processes can be turned against him, and one must always be on the lookout for such opportunities.

South was a fine psychologist on this deal. West led the king of spades, and declarer saw immediately that if West had the king of diamonds, the contract was ice-cold, since he would score 11 tricks with the aid of diamond finesse.

But South was concerned about what might happen if East had the king of diamonds. In that case, the contract was in serious danger.

The immediate question was whether or not to win the first trick. Declarer knew that if he took the ace and tried a diamond finesse, he would go down if the finesse lost and East had a spade to return.

South also knew that if he played low on the spade lead, West would almost surely shift to a heart, and the contract again would collapse if East had the king of diamonds.

Faced with these threatening possibilities, South came up with the brilliant idea of playing the jack of spades on West's king! West naturally thought declarer had the A-J alone — which was exactly what South hoped he would think — and continued with the queen of spades, expecting his partner to have a third spade to return later if he gained the lead.

Declarer took the queen of spades with the ace and tried the diamond finesse. The finesse lost, all right, but East had no spade to return, and South finished with 10 tricks as well as high marks for his superb application of practical psychology.

Tomorrow: The rationale of good defense.  
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1-13

CRYPTOQUIP

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WE VE WNAGTA ALVA ZVYYXT  
WII CVATY, ZWNGM ALVA

ZYT VAT V MYVXESWC?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: HIGH-CARB PASTA MEAL THAT MOST INSECT-EATING BIRDS ARE PARTIAL TO: MACARONI AND BEES.  
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals S

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Freeway exit
  - 5 Under the weather
  - 8 Confront
  - 12 Bone-dry
  - 13 Large snake
  - 14 "Your time —!"
  - 15 Ultimate authority
  - 17 Richard of "Chicago"
  - 18 Bit of ink
  - 19 British ref. work
  - 20 Tint
  - 21 Summer cooler
  - 22 Cambridge sch.
  - 23 Stable worker
  - 26 Locked horns (with)
  - 30 Lima's land
  - 31 Watch chain
  - 32 Chaplin of "Game of Thrones"
  - 33 Sign after Libra
  - 35 Hairnet
  - 36 Kinsey study
- DOWN**
- 1 Finn's vessel
  - 2 Met solo
  - 3 Gum flavor, often
  - 4 Handheld organizer
  - 5 "Peer Gynt" playwright
  - 6 Washing machine unit
  - 7 Non-clerical
  - 8 Bowl game
  - 9 Cruising anthem
  - 10 It gets in the whey
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  - 26 Bill's partner
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Solution time: 22 mins.

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# State ...

“I got that escape and I was like, ‘Oh, this is mine,’” Rowles said to her coaches as they walked off the mat.

“I don’t get up from the bottom very often. And I got that,” she elaborated later. “I just decided I was getting up. I had the opportunity. I took it.

“And when I got that escape, especially that quickly, I just knew this match, this is mine.”

The finals did not go so well, as Brown used two takedowns, a four-point near fall and an escape to build an 11-0 lead through two periods. She extended that advantage in the third period before pinning Rowles in 5:42.

“Just made a couple mistakes and it added up,” she said. “Nothing I can’t fix.”

While Rowles will be back on the mat Friday hoping for another chance at Brown and a state title in the process, the season came to an end for the rest of the Patriot wrestlers.

After needing just 42 seconds for a pin in the opening round, 12th-ranked 135-pounder Maleah Parsons seemed primed to join Rowles with a state berth. She scored the first seven points of her ticket-round match against No. 6 Dayonna Dyson of Franklin Central.

Parsons (28-8) pushed the advantage to 11-2 in the second period, but Dyson never showed signs of being flustered. Instead, she bided her time and waited for an opening. When it came, Dyson got a reversal and pin in 2:54.

“Maleah took her down right away, put

her on her back right away, put her on her back again right away,” said Jacks, referring to the loss as “heart-breaking.” “But when she ran that one arm bar and put Dyson on her back — she got three near fall — Dyson came back on top and really had Maleah just pancaked out and flat. ... And then Dyson was able to just reach up and put that half (nelson) in and put it down.”

No. 7 Amara Crawford (25-5) of Jay County scored a pin in the opening round at 190 to set up a match against No. 11 Aneesa Thompson of Perry Meridian with a state berth on the line. They wrestled a scoreless first period, but Crawford was called for stalling when she was 19 seconds away from riding out Thompson in the second. An escape midway through the third gave Thompson a 2-0 lead and she held on as Crawford attacked her head while trying to find a throw.

“She was really going for that take-down at the end,” said Jacks. “It was a little too little, too late.”

Each of the other Patriots lost in the opening round:

•Alexis Tipton (12-13) by pin in 1:06 to sixth-ranked Olivia Lemus of Roncalli at 115

•Gracie Rowles (8-7) by a 19-8 major decision to North Central’s No. 8 Monica Alvarado at 125

•Madison Gage (23-10) by a 10-1 major decision to Elizabeth Fish of Eastern Hancock at 155

•Kenady Lyons (7-12) by pin in 1:12 to Frank-ton’s Hailey Salisbury at 235

# Size ...

Rigby pointed to a lack of energy early that led to the Patriots (7-2, 2-0 Allen County Athletic Conference) trailing Adams Central (2-7, 2-1 ACAC) by five twice early in the second quarter. Three-pointers erased the deficit.

Jay County closed the half on an 18-4 run that included triples from Benson Barnett, Jayden Comer, Brock Wasson and Gabe Overton at the buzzer following an airball 3-point try by the Jets on the opposite end of the floor.

Overton opened the second half with another 3-pointer for an 18-point lead, pushing the Patriots shooting percentage from long distance to 57.1%.

“I thought we took some really good ones,” said Rigby. “If you shoot that well, then good things are going to happen.”

The Jets were able to close to within seven points by the end of the third quarter, but their offense went flat while Jay County ran away with the game. The decisive 11-point run started with a second-chance hoop from Cole Forthofer followed by the junior converting a traditional three-point play.

Aiden Phillips, Gradin Swoveland and Overton got into the scoring as the lead ballooned to 23 points. “Just going to the rim. I think getting to the rack tonight was a big deal,” said Comer, who led the effort with four triples en route to a 21-point effort. “And I think that’s what got us going, and then I think it ended pretty well.

“When you get it in there and they all trap it, especially how big we are ... they kick it out and we’re a pretty good shooting team.” Forthofer followed Comer with a dozen points, nine of which came in the fourth quarter. Swoveland added 10.

Overton and Wasson each drained a pair of 3-pointers as they finished with 10 and eight points, respectively. Barnett had the other long-distance shot



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Jay County’s Brock Wasson flies in for a layup on Saturday at Adams Central. Wasson scored a season-high eight points in the 74-53 win.

and hit all of his four free-throw attempts for seven points.

The depth of scoring helped the Patriots overcome 18 points on 7-of-10 shooting from Braylend Reber, 15 from Lawson Deathe and 12 from Kolten Combs.

The Patriots have strung together wins over New Castle, Delta, Wapahani, Muncie Central and Adams Central since falling on the road to Fort Recovery on Dec. 6.

“We’re playing great, and I love it,” said Comer. “We’re gonna do big things this year. I know. I see it right now. We’re gonna be a really good team ...

“Offensively, I think we’ve got it going. We know what we’re doing offensively.”

## Box score

Jay County Patriots  
at Adams Central Jets

Boys varsity summary

Jay County (7-2, 2-0 ACAC)			
	FG-FGA	FT-FTA	PTS
Overton	4-9	0-0	10
Comer	8-14	1-2	21
Barnett	1-4	4-4	7
Wasson	2-5	0-0	8
Wiggins	0-0	0-0	0
Miller	0-0	0-0	0
Forthofer	5-6	2-3	12
Phillips	1-2	0-1	2
Swoveland	4-8	2-2	10
Sommers	2-8	0-0	4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>28-56</b>	<b>9-12</b>	<b>74</b>
	<b>.500</b>	<b>.750</b>	
Def. Rebound percentage: .727			

Adams Central (2-7, 2-1 ACAC)			
	FG-FGA	FT-FTA	PTS
Deathe	7-13	0-0	15
Becher	1-4	0-0	2
Combs	0-1	0-0	0
Johnson	4-8	2-2	12
Rathbun	0-0	0-0	0
Alana	0-2	1-2	1
Geels	2-3	0-0	5
Maller	0-0	0-0	0
Manley	0-1	0-0	0
Reber	8-11	1-3	18
<b>Totals</b>	<b>22-43</b>	<b>4-7</b>	<b>53</b>
	<b>.512</b>	<b>.571</b>	
Def. Rebound percentage: .536			

Score by quarters:  
Jay Co. 11 21 16 26 — 74  
Adams C. 11 12 18 12 — 53

**3-point shooting:** Jay County 9-18 (Comer 4-8, Overton 2-3, Wasson 2-4, Barnett 1-2, Swoveland 0-1). Adams Central 5-15 (Johnson 2-4, Geels 1-1, Reber 1-2, Deathe 1-4, Becher 0-3, Combs 0-1).

**Rebounds:** Jay County 29 (Forthofer 7, Phillips 6, Swoveland 4, Comer 3, Barnett 3, Sommers 3, team 2, Overton, Wasson). Adams Central 21 (Reber 11, Becher 3, Johnson 3, Deathe 2, Alana, Geels).

**Assists:** Jay County 9 (Overton 5, Swoveland 2, Wasson, Phillips). Adams Central 3 (Reber 2, Johnson).

**Blocks:** Jay County 2 (Forthofer, Sommers). Adams Central 2 (Geels, Reber).

**Personal fouls:** Jay County 12 (Comer 3, Forthofer 3, Overton 2, Swoveland 2). Adams Central 14 (Johnson 5, Rathbun 3, Deathe 2, Becher, Alana, Geels, Reber).

**Turnovers:** Jay County 8. Adams Central 14.

Alex Miller’s 12 points led a deep scoring effort for the Patriots. Nick Snow followed with 10.

Brady Collins added five points and Brayden Barlow and Brady Millsbaugh each had five as nine players hit at least one field goal.

# Sports on tap

## Local schedule

**Today**  
Jay County — Swim at Yorktown – 6 p.m.; Girls basketball in Allen County Athletic Conference tournament vs. Woodlan – 6 p.m.; Boys basketball in Allen County Athletic Conference tournament vs. Woodlan – 7:30 p.m.; Junior high boys basketball at Northside – 6 p.m.  
Fort Recovery — JV boys bowling vs. Coldwater at Community Lanes – 5 p.m.; Middle school girls basketball at Minster – 5 p.m.

## TV schedule

**Today**  
6:30 p.m. — College basketball: Villanova at Providence (FS1)  
7 p.m. — College basketball: Virginia at Louisville (ESPN2); Wisconsin at Minnesota (BTN)  
8 p.m. — NBA: San Antonio Spurs at Oklahoma City Thunder (NBC)  
8:30 p.m. — College basketball: West Virginia at Houston (FS1)

9 p.m. — College basketball: Florida at Oklahoma (ESPN2); Iowa State at Kansas (ESPN); Oregon at Nebraska (BTN)  
10 p.m. — NHL: Dallas Stars at Anaheim Ducks (TNT)  
10:30 p.m. — College basketball: Maryland at USC (FS1)  
11 p.m. — NBA: Portland Trail Blazers at Golden State Warriors (NBC)  
11 p.m. — College basketball: St. Mary’s at San Francisco (ESPN2)

**Wednesday**  
6:30 p.m. — College basketball: Iowa at Purdue (BTN); Butler at Xavier (FS1)  
7 p.m. — NBA: Cleveland Cavaliers at Philadelphia 76ers (ESPN)  
7 p.m. — College basketball: Auburn at Mississippi (ESPN2)  
7:30 p.m. — NHL: Philadelphia Flyers at Buffalo Sabers (TNT)  
8:30 p.m. — College basketball: Illinois at Northwestern (BTN); UCLA at Penn State (FS1)

9 p.m. — College basketball: Vanderbilt at Texas (ESPN2)  
9:30 p.m. — NBA: Denver Nuggets at Dallas Mavericks (ESPN)  
10 p.m. — NHL: Vegas Golden Knights at Los Angeles Kings (TNT)  
10:30 p.m. — College basketball: Arizona State at Arizona (FS1); Michigan at Washington (BTN)  
11 p.m. — College basketball: TCU at BYU (ESPN2)

## 60 SERVICES

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## 90 SALE CALENDAR

**49TH ANNUAL COLDWATER YOUNG FARMERS CONSIGNMENT AUCTION**  
Saturday February 14, 2026

The Coldwater Young Farmer Association will be conducting their annual farm machinery consignment auction at the Coldwater football stadium parking lot in Coldwater, Ohio.

For more information on consigning your farm machinery please call: Dusty Uhlenhake 419-733-3096  
Rick Uhlenhake 419-852-0800

Machinery consigned by January 17, 2026 can be advertised

**PUBLIC AUCTION**  
Saturday, February 14th, 2026  
10:00am

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## 250 PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF INDIANA  
COUNTY OF JAY, SS:  
IN THE JAY CIRCUIT COURT  
2026 TERM

38CO1-2601-EU-000001  
In the Matter of the Unsupervised Administration of the Estate of:  
Patsy Hodge, Deceased No.

## NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION

Notice is hereby given that Michael Hodge and Barbara Vanhorn was, on the 8th day of January, 2026, appointed Co-Personal Representative of the estate of Patsy Hodge deceased, who died on November 17, 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 8th day of January, 2026.

HINKLE, RACSTER, SCHEMENAUR & LANDERS  
Melissa Elliott  
121 W. High Street Clerk of the Circuit Court,  
Portland, IN 47371 For Jay County, Indiana  
Attorney  
CR 1-13,20,2026-HSPAXLP

## 190 FARMERS COLUMN

offices:&#8239; Blackford, Delaware, Grant, Jay, Randolph, and Darke. Selected applicants will be reimbursed up to 75% of the cost of their chosen practice(s). This program supports newly implemented practices; pre-existing structures and practices do not qualify, outside of cover crops. The maxi-

## 250 PUBLIC NOTICE

## Public Notice

NOTICE TO BIDDERS FOR JAY SCHOOL CORPORATION  
JAY COUNTY, INDIANA

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the Board of School Trustees of the Jay School Corporation (the "Owner") will receive sealed bids for the Jay County Jr/Sr High School Renovations. Bids will be accepted at Jay County School Corporation Administration Office, 414 East Floral Avenue, Portland, Indiana, until 10:00 a.m. (local time), on February 9, 2026. Bids will be opened and tabulated at that time in the Board Room.

A Pre-Bid Meeting is scheduled for January 22, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. at Jay County Jr./Sr. High School, 2072 West SR 67, Portland, Indiana.

All bidding and construction shall be in accordance with construction documents prepared by Barton-Coe-Vilamaa, Architect and Engineers, Inc., which can be obtained from the office of Barton-Coe-Vilamaa. Call 260/489-9079 (office of Barton-Coe-Vilamaa) to request an invitation to receive digital access to the bidding documents.

Bidders will be required to file, with their bids, a certified check made payable to Jay School Corporation or a Bid Bond for an amount not less than five percent (5%) of their maximum bid or bids. Should a successful bidder withdraw its bid, or fail to execute a satisfactory Contract, Jay School Corporation may then declare the bid deposit or bid bond to be forfeited as liquidated damages.

Each successful bidder shall be required to furnish an approved Performance Bond and a Labor and Materials Payment Bond which cover faithful performance of the contract and the payment of all obligations arising thereunder. A Maintenance Bond shall also be required. Said bonds shall remain in full force and effect for twelve months from the substantial completion of the Work.

The contract will be awarded to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder complying with the conditions for bidding, provided the bid is reasonable and it is to the best interest of the Owner to accept it. The Owner reserves the right to reject the bid of any or all bidder in accordance with Indiana Code 36-1-12.

Bids not reaching said office by 10:00 a.m. on February 9, 2026 will not be opened and will be returned unopened to the original bidder.

Dated this 13th day of January 2026.  
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES  
JAY SCHOOL CORPORATION  
CR 1-13,20,2026-HSPAXLP

## 190 FARMERS COLUMN

mum amount paid out for vegetative practices is \$5,000, and for structural practices is \$15,000.&#8239;There are approximately 40 eligible practices, from livestock fences to pollinator habitat and much more. Priority will be given to those within subwatersheds at Deer Creek, Upper Big Lick Creek,

## 190 FARMERS COLUMN

Halfway Creek, Bush Creek, and Gray Branch. Others may be prioritized depending on the number of applications received. If you have questions about the program, please call Clair Burt at the Delaware County SWCD at 765-747-5531 ext. 3. The application deadline is January 31, 2026.

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Located: Coldwater football stadium parking lot in Coldwater, Ohio

Saturday February 14, 2026

The Coldwater Young Farmer Association will be conducting their annual farm machinery consignment auction at the Coldwater football stadium parking lot in Coldwater, Ohio.

For more information on consigning your farm machinery please call:

Dusty Uhlenhake 419-733-3096  
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Machinery consigned by January 17, 2026 can be advertised

CR 1-2,13-2026



Strong second, fourth quarters put Jay boys over Jets, see story below

JCHS basketball hosts Woodlan for ACAC tourney, see Sports on tap

Sports

Katie to state

Rowles knocks off No. 2 May in semifinal, finishes as runner-up

By RAY COONEY  
The Commercial Review  
MUNCIE — Katie Rowles squared off against Claire May for the first time since they met at the state finals last season. She thought back to that match, which she led before getting caught by May for a third-period pin. Donning the Wonder Woman-themed singlet she designed, Rowles fell behind her second-ranked rival from Roncalli. But she bounced back, built a lead and after scoring a quick escape in the third period looked every bit like the superhero. Rowles, a Jay County High School senior who is ranked seventh in the state at 100 pounds, bowled May over and pinned her in the semifinal round of Saturday's IHSAA regional tournament at Muncie Central. "That felt great," said Rowles. "She stuck me for the third-fourth place match last season, and I got that right back this year. I'm pretty darn happy about it." Though she dropped the title match to third-ranked Aaliyah Brown of Center Grove, the victory over May was key to positioning herself for Friday's state finals. Rowles was the only JCHS wrestler to advance to state — it takes two regional wins to earn a berth — as a couple of her fellow Patriots took tough losses in the quarterfinal round. "Our record of having people at the state finals goes way back to when we first started the girls program," said Patriot coach Troy Jacks. "And we're looking for hardware."



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Jay County High School senior Katie Rowles forces a grimace on the face of Josenit Vasquez Ochoa of Franklin Central during their first-round match Saturday in the 100-pound bracket of the regional tournament at Muncie Central. Rowles scored two pins to earn her state berth and then knock off second-ranked Claire May with a period pin in the semifinal round. She finished as the regional runner-up.

Rowles (28-4) breezed her way to a state berth, building an 11-0 lead on Josenit Vasquez Ochoa of Franklin Central before pinning her in the third period and then blitzing Eastern (Greentown) senior Nichole Smile in just 33 seconds in the quarterfinal. Aggressiveness was the story of the rematch with May, even when Rowles gave up points. She made a single-leg attack early but couldn't finish it, resulting in a takedown for May. But Rowles got an escape and was up 8-3 by the end of the first period. Her advantage was six heading into the third period when May chose to start on top. It took Rowles just six seconds to escape — not typically her strong suit — and the quick turn proved to be a spark as she drove through May, powered her to the mat and scored the pin 37 seconds into the final period. See State page 7

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The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Gabe Overton of the Jay County High School basketball team rises up for a jump shot during Saturday's 74-53 victory at south Adams. Overton was one of four Patriots in double figures with 10 points and had five assists.

Size, shooting, speed

By RAY COONEY  
The Commercial Review  
MONROE — The Patriots walked into the gym with a considerable size advantage. Then they hit seven first-half 3-pointers. When they started adding transition offense, it was too much for their hosts to overcome. Jay County High School's boys basketball team shot better than 50% from 3-point range, opened a nine-point lead at halftime and used an 11-0 fourth-quarter run to put the game well out of reach Saturday in a 74-53 victory over the Adams Central Jets. "I didn't think it was my best coached game, which kind of trickled down, but I give a lot of credit to the guys. They responded in the second half," said JCHS

*Jay takes advantage of strengths in win over AC*

coach Tyler Rigby, whose team won its fifth in a row. "We used our defense to create some offense, which that's probably what we do best when we really lock down defensively and we're engaged. We can get a lot of easy buckets on the other end, and that fueled that run that we had to break it open a little bit." See Size page 7

Tribe gets 1,000th win

FORT RECOVERY — The Indians not only tore up the Railroaders, but they also snapped a three game skid and hit a program milestone. The Fort Recovery High School boys basketball team notched its 1,000th program victory over the Bradford Railroaders 74-40 on Saturday. Hudson Overman led the way for the Tribe (7-4) with a game-high 20 points, with at least four points in each quarter.

Local Roundup

Colson Post and Brody Baraga also secured double-digit scoring with 13 and 12 points respectively. Nearly all the Indians got in on the action, as 10 players scored. Rallie Wirrig led Brad-

ford (4-7) with 18 points. No other Railroaders had more than eight. **Sill undefeated** VERSAILLES, Ohio — Fort Recovery's girls bowling team took a major step forward in its hopes to repeat as the Midwest Athletic Conference champions for a third straight season with a 2,416-2,253 victory over the Versailles Tigers at McBo's Lanes on Saturday. See Roundup page 5