

# The Commercial Review

## Dunkirk annexes 9.54 acres

**By RAY COONEY**  
The Commercial Review

DUNKIRK — The city will get a little bigger.

Dunkirk City Council voted Monday to approve the annexation of 9.54 acres of property on the south side of the city.

Monday's vote was the final step in the process to bring the land located east of Dollar General (1001 S. Main St.) and owned by Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation into the city. Officials have been working toward a development project on the property to create 32 apartment units.

### Property is planned for an apartment development

The addition of the new property represents a 1.25% increase in the size of the city to just over 1.2 square miles.

An analysis by financial advisory firm Baker Tilly showed there would be no meaningful additional cost as a result of the annexation because the city already provides police and fire services and sewer and water lines are in place for that area.

The city has not heard any

opposition to the annexation and there was no public comment at the meeting.

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

City attorney Wes Schemenaur explained that there is now a 30-day remonstrance period, during which members of the public can file court action in an attempt to stop the annexation before it becomes official.

"Seeing as there have been no complaints so far, I don't anticipate that," he said.

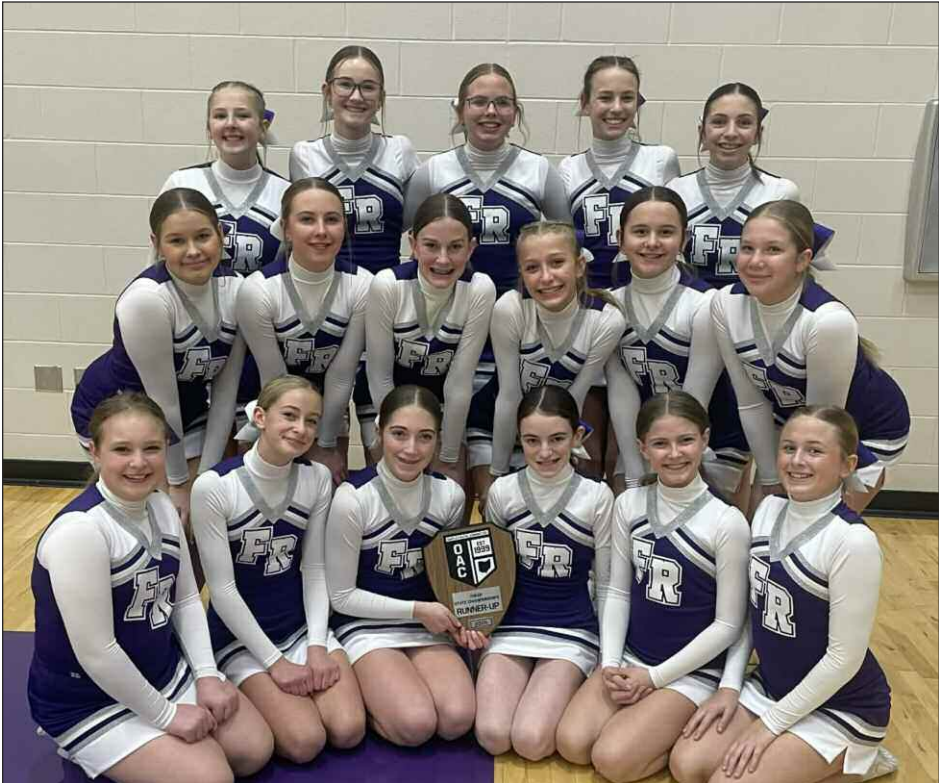
After the 30-day period, the city can take the next steps that include applying zoning rules and working toward the creation of a tax increment financing (TIF) district, which would capture taxes on the increased assessed value after development to be used by the city's redevelopment commission on targeted projects.

Schemenaur previously said that process could be complete by mid-2026.

See **Annexes** page 2



Photos provided



### Triple up

Fort Recovery's high school and middle school cheerleading squads earned three runner-up finishes Sunday in the Ohio Athletic Committee's Cheer State Championships. The high school squad finished second in the Division VI and VII traditional building and gameday competitions. The middle school squad also took second place.

Pictured above, front row from left, are high school cheerleaders Ashlyn Cantu, Madie Schoenlein, Maddie Reinhard, Lydia Will, Alexis Braun, Tenley Albers, Kendall Buckland and Claire Grube. Back row are Ava Fullenkamp, Maddie Weigel, Eliza Smith, Chloe Brockman, Lahna Schlarman, Jesse Springer, River Overman, Lana Wuebker and Aubrey Shuttleworth.

At left, front row from left, are middle school cheerleaders Addison Schoenlein, Whitley Overman, Brooke Dilworth, Adaley Shuttleworth, Finley Thompson and Rachel Boekman. Middle row are Alex Bihn, Skylee Grafmiller, Lauren Hart, Heidi Dues, Lilly Alig and Aubrey Post. Back row are Violet Roessner, Kendall Grube, Molly Boekman, Georgia Wuebker and Ellee Kremer.

## Stahl presents possible summer projects

### Barrenbrugge Athletic Park, website improvements among plans

**By RAY COONEY**  
The Commercial Review

FORT RECOVERY — Fort Recovery School Board got a clearer picture of what capital projects may be in the plans for this summer.

Superintendent Tony Stahl gave the board a primer on potential projects for the coming year after sharing a 10-year capital plan with the board last month.

While not yet asking for project approval, Stahl listed the following Monday as possibilities for this summer:

- Improving facilities at Barrenbrugge Athletic Park — The project, in partnership with Fort Recovery Athletic Boosters, is proposed to start with construction of a new ticket booth and the addition of space for referees and storage. Future phases could involve relocating the visitors' locker room, adding student training and medical space, replacing lights and resurfacing the track. (Stahl noted that school officials will meet with architecture firm Garmann Miller of Minster regarding the project this week.)
- Website upgrades — The current hosting contract expires and school officials are looking at a revamp that could include tying athletics pages more closely with the school site and updating graphics packages.
- Replacing electronic devices for students and teachers
- Installation of a new water heater at the elementary/middle school
- Replacing the sign in front of the high school

Potential future projects laid out in the 10-year plan approved in December include roofing and maintenance for the elementary/middle school and high school buildings.

Also Monday, high school principal Ryan Steinbrunner updated the board on recent changes to the ACT.

See **Projects** page 5

## Death toll rises in Iran protests

**By ARSALAN SHAHLA**  
Bloomberg News  
Tribune News Service

Iran's death toll from ongoing protests may be in the thousands, activist groups said, as U.S. President Donald Trump urged Iranians to continue demonstrations against the regime of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The U.S.-based Human Rights Activists News Agency reported Tuesday that at least 2,000 people have died in just over two weeks of violent upheaval across the country. That figure would make this the deadliest wave of demonstrations in the Islamic Republic in decades.

"KEEP PROTESTING - TAKE OVER YOUR INSTITUTIONS!!!" Trump posted on Truth Social on Tuesday, saying he'd canceled all meetings with Iranian officials until the killing of demonstrators stops.

Of those killed, 1,850 were protesters, 135 were government-affiliated, nine were children, and nine were other civilians not participating in the protests, HRANA said.

### Trump urges demonstrators to keep rallying against ayatollah

The Oslo-based Iran Human Rights group earlier warned the "risk of mass and extrajudicial executions of protesters is extremely serious," including for 26-year-old Erfan Soltani, who it said could be executed on Wednesday, less than a week after his arrest in the city of Fardis, west of Tehran. The IHR said the death toll could be more than 6,000.

Concern about the scale of fatalities is mounting as Trump moved to further isolate Tehran over the violence. His call on protesters to continue their campaign — which began late last year over rising living costs before dramatically escalating — came with a pledge that "HELP IS ON ITS WAY." He didn't specify what that meant.

Trump said Monday he's imposing a 25% tariff on goods from countries "doing business" with Iran. That may impact a range of countries with trading relationships with the Islamic Republic, led by China, the United Arab Emirates and Turkey.

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz predicted that the Islamic Republic is in its "final days" and "effectively finished," according to comments on Tuesday during a visit to India.

Iran's government hasn't given any figures for civilian deaths and the state broadcaster, which has an effective monopoly on domestic news services, has repeated official claims that "terrorists and rioters" killed scores of security

forces amid a continued internet blackout.

In one video that's been verified by the BBC as coming from a mortuary on the outskirts of Tehran, at least 180 bodies can be seen. HRANA reported that almost 17,000 people had been detained in connection with protests.

A video purportedly from downtown Tehran, near the city's Enghelab Square, which has hosted pro-government rallies, appeared to show hundreds of protesters chanting against Khamenei overnight. Another video showed protesters gathering in Tehran's main cemetery on Monday, chanting slogans.

Unrest across Iran intensified sharply from Thursday through the weekend, drawing hundreds of thousands to the streets, calling for the downfall of Khamenei. Despite a sweeping crackdown and state-organized rallies challenging the unrest, it remains unclear how long the calm claimed by authorities will hold, while the underlying drivers of the protests remain unresolved.

See **Protests** page 5

Deaths	Weather	In review	Coming up
<p><b>Robert Vance</b>, 85, Portland</p> <p><b>Richard Shirk</b>, 67, Charlotte, Michigan</p> <p><b>Rick Arnold</b>, 73, Geneva</p> <p>Details on page 2.</p>	<p>The high temperature was 42 degrees Monday. The low was 26.</p> <p>There is a 50% chance of snow tonight with windy conditions and a low of 16. Thursday's high will be in the mid 20s with snow possible. Little accumulation is expected.</p> <p>See page 2 for an extended outlook.</p>	<p>Faron Parr of Bryant will seek re-election to the Jay County Council District 2 seat. Parr, a Republican who is also a former county commissioner, filed to run again Monday.</p> <p>Also filing Tuesday was James E. Brewster, a Republican, for Wayne Township Trustee.</p>	<p><b>Thursday</b> — Results from the opening round of the ACAC basketball tournaments.</p> <p><b>Friday</b> — Details from this week's Jay County Council meeting.</p> <p><b>Saturday</b> — Coverage of the semifinal round of the ACAC basketball tournaments.</p>



Obituaries

Robert Vance

Oct. 30, 1940-Jan. 11, 2026

Robert E. “Bob” Vance age 85, of Portland passed away on Sunday January 11, 2026. He was born in rural Portland on October 30, 1940 the son of Merritt and Faye (Edwards) Vance. He was married on November 24, 1962 to Karen Woodruff and she passed away on January 4, 2019. He graduated from Portland High School in 1958 and Tri State University in 1964 with a degree in mechanical engineering. Bob worked at Sheller-Globe and Jay Complete Electric. He also owned Vance Heating and Cooling and Indoor Comfort by Vance. He holds a patent for a paper punch system for computers that he designed



Vance

while working for National Cash Register.

Bob served on both city and county councils. Bob belonged to many service organizations over the years. He was a former president of Rotary Club. Bob served as treasurer for the Jay County Historical Society. Bob was a member of Asbury United Methodist Church where he served for many years as the Chairman for the Board of Trustees and on the finance committee.

Bob is survived by his children Lori (Steve) McIntosh of Portland, Lisa (Matt) Rudy of Babcock Ranch, Florida, Robert (Jinnie) Vance of Yorktown and Lana (Melvin) Hilty of Portland, a brother Larry Vance of Kennasaw, Georgia, and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his wife, his parents, and his sisters

Alice Leonhard Horn and Florence Reitenour.

Services for Bob will be on Saturday Jan. 17 at 3 p.m. in the Asbury United Methodist Church with Pastor Josh Arthur presiding. Burial will follow in the Green Park Cemetery. Visitation will be Saturday from noon to 3 p.m. at the church. Memorials can be made to the Jay County Historical Society.

Condolences may be expressed at bairdfreeman.com.

Richard Shirk

Dec. 17, 1958-Jan. 9, 2026

Richard “Rick” Shirk, age 67, a former resident of Portland, passed away on Friday, Jan. 9, 2026, in Charlotte, Michigan.

Rick was born Dec. 17, 1958, in Portland, Indiana, the son of Jerry and Sue (Denney) Shirk. He graduated from Jay County High School in 1977 and worked for All American Homes in

Decatur and retired from Pennville Sand and Gravel. He was currently working at a greenhouse in Charlotte, Michigan.

Rick had a generous heart, always willing to help others, and loved the freedom of riding his motorcycle.

Survivors include:

His wife — Jane Love, Charlotte, Michigan

His children — Coty Shirk, Fishers, Indiana, Hilary Shirk, Portland, Indiana

His mother — Sue Shirk, Portland, Indiana

His sister — Jari Counterman (husband: Bruce), Portland, Indiana

Four grandchildren

He was preceded in death by his father, Jerry Shirk.



Shirk

Visitation will be held on Friday from 4 to 7 p.m. at Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home in Portland. Funeral services will follow at 7 p.m. on Friday at the funeral home.

Condolences may be expressed at williamsonspencer.com.

**Rick Arnold**, Geneva, April 5, 1952-Jan. 11, 2026. Services will be at 2 p.m. Monday, Jan. 19, at Baird-Freeman Funeral Home in Portland.

.....

*The Commercial Review publishes death notices for those with a connection to our coverage area free of charge. They include the name, city of residence, birth/death date and time/date/location of services. There is a charge for obituaries, which are accepted only from funeral homes or mortuary services.*

CR almanac

Thursday 1/15	Friday 1/16	Saturday 1/17	Sunday 1/18	Monday 1/19
<b>25/17</b> Skies will be mostly cloudy with a high in the mid 20s.	<b>34/18</b> Snow is expected, mainly before 1 p.m. Skies will be mostly cloudy with a high of 22 degrees.	<b>22/8</b> Expect mostly cloudy skies with a high of 22. There is a 20% chance of snow showers.	<b>19/7</b> The high will top out in the high teens under mostly cloudy skies.	<b>21/7</b> Expect mostly cloudy skies with a high of 21.

Lotteries

<b>Powerball</b> Monday 5-27-45-56-59 Power Ball: 4 Power Play: 2 Estimated jackpot: \$105 million	Daily Four: 2-6-3-9 Quick Draw: 1-3-5-11-18-23-25-31-34-35-40-42-43-49-57-61-67-68-69-71 Cash 5: 19-26-33-40-45 Estimated jackpot: \$181,000
<b>Mega Millions</b> Estimated jackpot: \$215 million	<b>Ohio</b> Monday Midday Pick 3: 4-1-5 Pick 4: 13-5-7-0 Pick 5: 1-6-6-1-6 Evening Pick 3: 6-1-1 Pick 4: 8-5-5-5 Pick 5: 8-7-3-6-9 Rolling Cash: 13-17-25-33-36 Estimated jackpot: \$110,000
<b>Hoosier</b> Monday Midday Daily Three: 5-2-2 Daily Four: 1-0-2-1 Quick Draw: 8-13-15-19-24-26-28-29-30-36-39-41-45-49-51-53-55-60-62-70 Evening Daily Three: 7-8-2	

Markets

<b>Cooper Farms Fort Recovery</b> Corn.....4.39 Feb. corn .....4.41 March corn .....4.41	Feb. beans .....10.41 Wheat ..... 4.66
<b>POET Biorefining Portland</b> Corn.....4.39 Feb. corn .....4.33 March corn .....4.33	<b>ADM Montpelier</b> Corn.....4.21 Feb. corn .....4.23 Beans .....10.30 Feb. beans .....10.35 Wheat .....4.93
<b>The Andersons Richland Township</b> Corn .....4.26 Feb. corn .....4.28 Beans .....10.32	<b>Heartland St. Anthony</b> Corn.....4.37 Feb. corn .....4.32 Beans .....10.06 Feb. beans .....10.11 Wheat .....4.89

Today in history

In 1526, the Treaty of Madrid was signed by Charles V and Francis I, forcing Francis to give up Burgundy, Italy and Flanders.

In 1559, Elizabeth I takes over as Queen of England. Known as “the Virgin Queen,” her parents were Anne Boleyn and King Henry VIII.

In 1784, the Treaty of Paris was ratified by the Continental Congress, establishing the United States as its own nation.

In 2001, Wikipedia

debuted on the internet. The online encyclopedia was founded by Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger. It's an open-source material, meaning it can be edited by anyone.

In 2025, Jay County High School boys basketball coach Jerry Bomholt recorded his 600th career victory as the Patriots defeated South Adams 61-14 in the opening round of the Allen County Athletic Conference tournament.

—The CR

Citizen’s calendar

**Today**  
5:15 p.m. — Portland Board of Works, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St.  
6 p.m. — Jay County Council, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.

**Thursday, Jan. 15**  
6 p.m. — Jay County Board of Zoning Appeals, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland.

Annexation ...

Continued from page 1

Work toward the development is still in its early stages, with no developer tied to the work at this time.

Referencing the apartment development effort and various other projects that are in the works, Mayor Jack Robbins expressed optimism about the year to come.

“2025 was pretty good to Dunkirk,” he said. “2026 is gonna be better.”

In other business, council:

- Re-elected Bivens as president.
- Robbins announced that all department super-

*Mayor optimistic about the new year*

intendents would stay in place for 2026.

- Heard from Revolt that construction of pickleball courts at Dunkirk City Park is expected to begin in March, weather permitting.
- Appointed Curts to the

Capsule Reports

**Rear-end collision**

A car driven by a rural Portland man struck the rear of a trash truck while driving on Indiana 26 on Tuesday morning.

Hayden N. Richman, 18, told police he was driving west on Indiana 26 between county roads 200 East and 300 East, according to a Jay County

Sheriff’s Office report. He looked away from the highway and when he looked back he realized a 2018 Mack LR Waste Management truck was slowing in front of him.

Richman said he did not have time to attempt to avoid the collision and the 2015 Ford Fusion he was driving struck the rear of the truck.

Richman had minor bleeding on his elbow and lower arm as a result of the collision.

Damage was estimated between \$10,000 and \$25,000.

The Fusion is registered to Marvin D. Reed of rural Portland. The trash truck is registered to WM Transport of Indiana, Morristown.

SERVICES

Today

Alig, Norman: 10:30 a.m., 471 St. Anthony Road, Fort Recovery, Ohio.

Friday, Jan. 16

Rockwell, Wendell: 6 p.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

Shirk, Richard: 7 p.m., Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland.

Saturday, Jan. 17

Finch, Glen: 11 a.m., West Walnut Street Church of Christ, 204 W. Walnut St., Portland.

Stafford, Donald: 2 p.m., Cornerstone Church, 190 W. Main St., Pennville.

Vance, Robert: 3 p.m., Asbury United Methodist Church, 204 E. Arch St., Portland.

Monday, Jan. 19

Arnold, Rick: 2 p.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

Saturday, Feb. 28

Hughes, Allyssah: noon, 205 E. 1st St., Bath, Illinois.

Service listings provided by

PROGRESSIVE

DEL TORO

OFFICE PRODUCTS

120 N. Meridian St.

Portland, Indiana 47371

(260) 726-9201

progressiveofficeproducts.com

‘Let-kids-be-kids’ advances in House

By CASEY SMITH

Indiana Capital Chronicle indianacapitalchronicle.com

A bill to shield Hoosier parents from child welfare investigations solely for allowing their children age-appropriate independence cleared the House Judiciary Committee on Monday with bipartisan support.

House Bill 1035 advanced to the full House on a 12-1 vote after more than an hour of testimony and discussion.

Only Rep. Ryan Dvorak, D-South Bend, voted against the bill, citing concerns that its new “recklessness” standard could raise the threshold too high for state intervention in child welfare cases.

Another Democrat on the committee, Rep. Victoria Garcia Wilburn of Fishers, is a co-author and voted in favor.

The bill follows other proposals in recent years to broaden parents’ rights and prevent “unjust” Department of Child Services inquiries and investigations. Senate Enrolled Act 143, for example, was passed during the 2025 session and requires courts to give deference to parental rights in disputes with government regulators.

GREAT SELECTION

of newspaper roll ends

FOR SALE!

Stop by our office or call TODAY!

GRAPHIC PRINTING

NEWSPAPERS

Publishers of

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana

The News-Gazette

Winchester, Indiana

The News Times

Hartford City, Indiana

309 West Main Street

Portland, IN 47371

260-726-8141

Office Hours: Tuesday - Friday 10 am - 4 pm

226 1/4-Page COLOR Ad

176 1/4-Page Black & White Ad

\*Rare does not apply to special sections. \*Ads must run in January

The Commercial Review

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

# Limelight Prime is proven winner

**By NORMAN WINTER**  
Tribune News Service

Once New Year's Day has passed, gardeners start to get excited about new plants and ideas for the landscape and garden.

One plant that The Garden Guy wants to put in your mind is Proven Winners' "Landscape Shrub of the Year": Limelight Prime hydrangea paniculata. This year's Pantone "Color of the Year" is Cloud Dancer and as the name suggests, it's a cumulus cloud white, which Limelight Prime may fit perfectly for the garden.

Limelight Prime is considered a new generation of the much loved and award-winning Limelight. The difference is that it blooms earlier, which is important for colder areas. Its branches are sturdier, and flowers are brighter. It is also a perfect size for the landscape reaching 4 to 6

## On Gardening

feet in height and 4 to 5 feet wide.

In my area it seems most of the Hydrangea paniculata plants are grown as a hedge, maybe a cluster of 3 to 5 where they can be seen by all who pass by. But they are largely "panicles without partners." While The Garden Guy is largely joking, I want everyone to think about planting "panicle pals" or combinations for your Limelight Prime hydrangeas.

It seems to me that no matter what type of planting you are going to do, Limelight Prime simply makes every style of garden better. In the South we have a lot of gardeners who

like to plant a cutting garden. Let me remind you that 19 years ago, Limelight (the granddaddy) was selected as the Cut Flower of the Year for 2007. This award was courtesy of the American Specialty Cut Flower Association. It stands to reason that if Limelight won the award then, then Limelight Prime would be its equal and deserve a prominent place in the garden.

Light Prime is recommended over a huge area geographically, zones 3-9. Despite this I could not wait to try it with tropicals when I got mine in 2021. I planted it with a Red Abyssinian banana and Portora elephant ears. You would have trouble convincing neighbors the Limelight Prime was not an exotic tropical.

Every year since then I have changed the bed just to see how the looks perform. Sunstar Red pentas is



Tribune News Service/Norman Winter

Limelight Prime with its white panicles is the perfect match for the Pantone 'Color of the Year' called Cloud Dancer. Here it is partnered with Truffula Pink gomphrena.

another flirt with tropical and of course the red star-shaped flowers were a perfect match for the large white panicles.

I crave pollinators, particularly butterflies and hummingbirds, so some of

terfly bush on each end of the bed and more perennials like Augusta Lavender heliotrope, Serendipity ornamental allium and Luminary phlox varieties Prismatic Pink and Ultraviolet. I've squeezed in a blue ceramic glazed bird bath and usually work in some chartreuse colored ColorBlaze coleus like Lime Time or Mini Me Chartreuse.

Limelight Prime performs best in soils with good drainage. In other words, a bog is NOT your friend. The soil pH is not such a large factor unless you are on the extremes, extremely acidic or extremely alkaline. I've pruned hard and I've pruned tall, but generally like pruning by 30% to 50% and trying hard to not overthink it. Just remember that whatever type of bed you have, the Limelight Prime will make it more beautiful.

# Relatives take sides as accusations pile up

DEAR ABBY: I'm a 51-year-old mother and grandmother whose kids don't talk to me. The reason: My son, "Aaron," was sexually assaulted by his friend, "Eli," and I told him his friend was no longer allowed to come over. I spoke to Eli's mother. She told me she'd take care of it and agreed the two shouldn't hang out. They were both underage at the time. (Aaron was 10, and Eli was 13.)

A few months later, Aaron told me that it wasn't Eli but his own uncle "Joe" who sexually assaulted him. I knew better. I talked to Joe and, of course, he knew nothing. I told Aaron to stop lying about his uncle and that Eli still couldn't come over.

Aaron is an adult now, and he's got his siblings believing him about his uncle, and he's still

## Dear Abby



friends with Eli. My husband and I moved next door to Joe, and now all the kids have blocked me from their and their kids' lives. When I tried to talk to Aaron about the situation, he blocked me completely. Joe knows nothing about what's going on. How do I get back into my children's and grandkids' lives? — TURNED UPSIDE DOWN

**DEAR TURNED:** Could the boys have been experimenting

with getting familiar with their bodies when all this occurred? Did you see something and confront your son and he admitted it? Aaron may have blamed Uncle Joe because he wanted to continue seeing Eli. Or ... was his accusation TRUE? You will not be able to heal the schism in your family until everyone is in agreement about what really happened when Aaron was 10.

\*\*\*\*\*

DEAR ABBY: My older brother, age 70, is making his estate plans with his partner. We have no other siblings or children. I told him I'm financially secure and don't need him to leave me anything, but he insisted on having my Social Security number, saying it's needed for beneficiary

bequests. I called him back before disclosing the information, because I wanted to make sure it was really him.

He later called me and asked for my passport number because his partner has assets in China, and the paperwork required more information. That was too much information for me, and I asked him to take me out of his bequests entirely. He fussed about having to contact the lawyer and change the trust information but said he would take care of it. Now, he's no longer speaking to me.

Abby, my brother never disclosed that he would need anything beyond a Social Security number. Should I feel guilty about the added expense of editing his trust? — TROUBLEMAKER SIS IN TEXAS

DEAR SIS: You should absolutely NOT feel guilty for refusing to reveal the information your brother was requesting! Are you SURE it was your brother calling and asking for this highly personal information and not a scammer? I ask because a beneficiary's Social Security number and/or passport number is NOT REQUIRED when someone is being mentioned in a will, and I think you may have dodged a bullet.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.*

# Community Calendar

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

**Wednesday**

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 information, call Pastor Randy Davis at (765) 369-2085.

JAY COUNTY CIVIC THEATRE — Holds its regular meeting at 6:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday

of each month in the boardroom at Arts Place, 131 E. Walnut St., Portland.

**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 (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.

Be prepared before the next power outage.

It's not just a generator.  
It's a power move.™

Receive a free 5-year warranty with qualifying purchase\* - valued at \$535.

Call 866-953-2203 to schedule your free quote!

\*Terms and Conditions apply.

GENERAC

Sudoku

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

Level: Intermediate

Tuesday's Solution

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

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.

Protection your loved ones deserve ...

GUARANTEED  
Life Insurance  
up to \$30,000.00

Modified Whole Life Insurance from Physicians Life Insurance Company

Imagine what \$30,000.00 could mean to your family after you're gone – cash to help pay your funeral, medical bills or other final expenses.

- Guaranteed acceptance for ages 45 to 85\*
- No medical exam, no health questions
- Lock in your rate for life

Find out how affordable this coverage can be – Call for your FREE Information Kit

1-833-467-0943

Life55plus.info/Hoosier

► Plus – you'll also get a FREE Final Wishes Planner just for calling!

\*Ages may vary by state. Guaranteed for one of these life insurance policies. Benefits reduced first two years. Insurance Policy L770 (ID: L770ID; OK: L770OK; TN: L770TN). 6236-0625

Ad Specials

NOT FOR PROFIT

Advertise your not-for-profit organization in all of our publications in January with

FOUR 3x5 ads in The Commercial Review

TWO 3x5 ads in The News-Gazette

ONE 3x5 ad in The News Times

ONE 3x5 ad in The News and Sun

for \$190

Or run TWO 3x5 ads in the publication(s) of your choice during January for:

The Commercial Review – \$90

The News-Gazette – \$75

The News Times – \$60

The News and Sun – \$60

Ads must run in January. Rates do not apply to special sections.

Call (260) 726-8141 or email ads@thecr.com

# Christmas gift flew into backyard

*Editor's note: This column is being reprinted from Jan. 11, 2006. Jack loved birds. It was a regular occurrence that my weekend email from him would include a photo of a bird. I was one of many who received these pictures. It's appropriate that nature offered him a winged gift one Christmas morning.*

By JACK RONALD

The Commercial Review

It was Christmas morning, and things were off to a leisurely start.

Not everyone was awake, but there was no rush. We'd had an early Christmas celebration the week before, and we'd have a belated one a week later with other family members.

For now, it was just a matter of

## Back in the Saddle



enjoying the warm sleepiness of the holiday, having a second cup of coffee and gazing out the kitchen window.

"What's that?"

"Where?" I said.

My wife directed my attention to one of the five bird feeders in the backyard. Two have a mix of seed, one hanging on the side of the garage has black sunflower seeds, another hanging from an ash tree by the back fence has

thistle seed, while still another has suet for woodpeckers.

"Back there," she said, "at the base of the feeder by the Jonases' garage."

I stared at a mulchy-looking area covered with leaves and plants that were dormant for the winter. "I see two cardinals," I said. "No, three."

"Four," my wife corrected me. "But that's not what I'm talking about. Keep looking."

She disappeared from the kitchen, leaving me there to squint at the brown, leafy area, seeing nothing.

"There it is again," she said as she came back in bearing two sets of field glasses. Where she found them, I'm not sure. "Let me get a bird book."

She grabbed the Sibley guide that I'd given her for Christmas a few years ago and started flipping through its pages.

Meanwhile, I wiped some of the sleep from my eyes, readjusted my bifocals, and raised field glasses to my face.

It took a minute to get them adjusted and to find that spot at the base of the feeder. But when I did, I saw it.

"Wow!" I said.

Connie started running through the possibilities.

"It's too big for a kinglet," she said.

"Much too big," I agreed, staring at the bird which was ground-feeding near the cardinals. "It's almost robin-sized, but not really that big."

"At first, I thought it was a rose-breasted grosbeak," she said, referring to perhaps the most spectacularly-colored bird we'd ever hosted in our backyard.

"I don't think so, but maybe it could be winter coloring of some sort," I offered.

Page after page was flipped, coffee was sipped, and the Christmas morning clock ticked along effortlessly.

"Got it," she said.

And she was right.

Our visitor was an Eastern towhee, a lovely, distinctively marked bird of rust and gray and black and white.

"Wow," I said again. "What an amazing gift for Christmas morning."

# Stop war and help Americans

By LINDSAY KOSHGARIAN

Otherwords

At a time when nearly half of Americans say they're struggling to afford basic necessities, President Trump has turned his attention to invading and ruling Venezuela.

One in two Americans are having trouble affording groceries, utilities, health care, housing, and transportation, according to a recent poll. Health care costs are rising — and in many cases doubling — for millions of Americans because Republicans in Congress refuse to help. And while grocery prices remain high, those same GOP lawmakers chose to cut food stamps for millions of struggling people.

Our government should be helping working people and families. Instead, the president chose to use our tax dollars to invade a foreign country. And while Trump said plenty about how the U.S. will now rule over the people of Venezuela, he hasn't explained why the same tax dollars that paid for this invasion can't be used to make health care, food, or housing more affordable for people here.

The president added he's "not afraid of boots on the ground" in Venezuela. But the last times the U.S. attempted to take over other countries — in Iraq and Afghanistan — it cost trillions of dollars, thousands of American lives, and potentially millions of lives in the Middle East. It's way too soon to make this mistake again — and Trump had previously promised he wouldn't, calling those wars "foolish" and "stupid."

To be sure, someone will benefit from this invasion — just not ordinary Americans. The president has offered oil companies taxpayer dollars to take Venezuela's oil. They hardly need the help, though they did contribute handsomely to his campaign.

Despite previous claims by the administration, this move is far more about oil than drugs, since Venezuela isn't a supplier of the fentanyl that still causes so many deaths — and even the cocaine trafficked through Venezuela tends to head to Europe, not the United States. Either way, the U.S. shouldn't be in the business of deposing every questionable leader in the world by military force.

Congress is to blame here, too. It's their job to declare war, not the president's — and they didn't do

Lindsay Koshgarian



*It's way too soon to make this mistake again — and Trump had previously promised he wouldn't, calling those wars "foolish" and "stupid."*

their job to stop this. The president sent plenty of signs that this invasion might be coming. But in recent weeks, despite bipartisan efforts in both the House and Senate, narrow majorities in Congress refused to pass measures that would have halted it. Both measures failed by just a handful of votes.

And in December, members of both parties passed a \$1 trillion war budget with zero safeguards to stop something like the Venezuela invasion — which, again, was easy to see coming. Members of Congress passed the \$1 trillion war budget at the same time that Congressional Republicans voted to refuse help for millions of Americans struggling to afford health insurance. So the invasion went forward even while millions of Americans did the math on just surviving until the next paycheck.

But it's not too late to improve this situation. Members of Congress can stop another unjustifiable war — and help Americans pay their bills instead. Congress can refuse to allow the president to send troops back into Venezuela with a simple vote. And while they're at it, Congress should extend some real help to Americans struggling to get by.

.....

*Koshgarian directs the National Priorities Project at the Institute for Policy Studies.*

*OtherWords is a free editorial service published by the Institute for Policy Studies.*



# Many failed school in Uvalde

Houston Chronicle

Tribune News Service

The first officers who arrived at Robb Elementary on May 24, 2022, could have stopped the shooter before he ever entered the building.

Former school police officer Adrian Gonzales could have been the one to prevent the murders of 19 children and two teachers. There is no question of that. Gonzales acknowledged as much to investigators after the shooting. What prosecutors must prove in a trial that began Tuesday in Corpus Christi is that his actions — or lack of action — rise to the level of criminality.

It will be up to the jury to hear the evidence, consider the law and decide whether Gonzales should face up to two years in prison. What we already know, however, is that Gonzales wasn't the only one who could have prevented the killing of nine and ten year olds.

Look away. Move on. Don't think about how the slaughter never had to happen. That's been the story from the beginning.

In the aftermath of the shooting, Gov. Greg Abbott quickly declared the responding officers — nearly 400 from various agencies — heroes. Interviews, videos and testimony revealed the opposite. Despite clear training to go after active shooters, crowds of law enforcement — with vests and guns and helmets — lingered in the school hallways, even as shots cracked through the air in nearby classrooms and students whispered into cell phones begging 911 for help.

The trial is focused on a single officer who failed Uvalde's children but we must remind ourselves of the scores of people who failed them. And it should also serve as a reminder of all the failures before and since. This was not the first school shooting in this country. Far from it. It wasn't even the first school shooting in Texas. And yet the gunman legally

## Guest Opinion

purchased the weapon he would use to kill children and educators.

Family members of the victims filled the halls of the state Legislature demanding change, their shouts and pleas falling on deaf ears. A bill that would have raised the legal age to purchase assault-style rifles from 18 (the age of the gunman) to 21 never even made it to a full House vote one year after the massacre. And though the state poured money into mental health resources and increased some training requirements, far too little was done to protect our children from future gun violence as too many of our state lawmakers sat content to watch an aggrieved father dragged out of the House chamber for shouting.

Turns out state troopers can act efficiently when they want to.

In opening statements in Corpus Christi — hundreds of miles removed from the scene of the crime at the request of the defense — Gonzales's lawyer argued that the only person responsible for the deaths that day in May was the shooter himself. He cautioned the jury not to be overwhelmed with emotion and to cast blame on Gonzales simply because it felt good to have someone to blame.

"What the prosecution wants you to do is see those horrible things, get so mad at Adrian that you say, 'convict him' because of this horrible thing that's happened," his lawyer argued.

But we urge Texans to stay mad. To let your outrage shake the halls of power. To demand some accountability. We must, not just from a single offi-

cer but from a society that condemned children to be slaughtered inside their own classrooms.

We must remember the anger that bubbled up across the country as videos were shared of parents pleading to be let into the building as children were murdered inside, of scenes of law enforcement "loitering" while gun shots ring out, of the celebrations that had taken place just that morning as students marked their achievements and looked forward to a summer that would never come for 21 innocent souls.

We must remember 10-year old Khloie Torres whose desperate calls to 911 should haunt every Texan.

"Can you tell the police to come to my room," she whispers to the dispatcher at 12:36 p.m. Torres had already called 911. So had classmates and teachers. Several times. Still no one came.

"I've already told them to go to the room," the woman responds. "We're trying to get someone to you."

We know that at least some of the victims died on the way to the hospital. How many might have lived if someone had acted sooner?

And so we must get mad.

As the trial continues, we must ask ourselves not just how many more could have been saved that day, but since then, too. How many more young people have we failed since? How many more people have died at the hands of Washington gridlock and a partisan refusal to consider even the most basic gun safety laws — a political movement moved far beyond the days when the National Rifle Association focused on marksmanship and safety?

Too many people are responsible for the lives lost in Uvalde. Too few have faced any kind of consequence. Justice should not only be served in the court room but in ballot boxes, too. It's every Texan's responsibility to make sure it is.

# The Commercial Review



US PS 125820

HUGH N. RONALD (1911-1983), Publisher Emeritus  
JOHN C. "JACK" RONALD (1948-2022), Publisher Emeritus

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.

We welcome letters to the editor, which are accepted by email only to [letters@thecr.com](mailto:letters@thecr.com). They should be 700 words or fewer, signed, with city/town of residence and include a phone number for verification purposes. We reserve the right to edit for content and clarity.

**RAY COONEY**  
President, editor and publisher

**TONIA HARDY**  
Business manager

**LOUISE RONALD**  
Board chair

**BRIAN DODD**  
Production manager

VOLUME 151–NUMBER 179  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2026

[www.thecr.com](http://www.thecr.com)

*"Were it left for me to decide whether we should have government without newspapers or newspapers without government I should not hesitate to prefer the latter."*

—Thomas Jefferson

**Subscription rates**  
**Internet-only:** Three days – \$3; Monthly auto-pay – \$10; 13 weeks – \$32; six months – \$60; one year – \$108.  
**City (walking – where available):** Monthly auto-pay – \$12; 13 weeks – \$38; six months – \$72; one year – \$129.  
**Motor route (where available):** Monthly auto-pay – \$13; 13 weeks – \$46; six months – \$78; one year – \$148.  
**Mail:** Monthly auto-pay – \$15; 13 weeks – \$53; six months – \$86; one year – \$161.  
**Home delivery problems:** Call (260) 251-9588

The HDMS Niels Juel warship, an Iver Huitfeldt-class frigate of the Royal Danish Navy, is moored in Nuuk, Greenland, in 2025. In response to President Donald Trump’s threats about taking over the territory, Greenland’s government said it will intensify efforts to ensure the island’s defenses are managed within the NATO military alliance.



# NATO called on for defense

By SARA SJOLIN  
Bloomberg News  
Tribune News Service

Greenland’s government said it will intensify efforts to ensure the island’s defenses are managed within the NATO military alliance, pushing back on renewed threats from the U.S. about taking over the territory. “All NATO member states, including the United States, share a common interest in the defense of Greenland,” the prime minister’s office said in a statement issued late Monday. “The Government coalition in Greenland will therefore, in cooperation with Denmark, work to ensure that dialogue and further development of Greenland’s defense take place within the NATO framework.” The message comes ahead of a high-stakes meeting of Danish and Greenland foreign ministers with U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio in Washington on

## Greenland seeks assurances after threats from Trump

Wednesday, according to media reports. U.S. Vice President JD Vance will participate in Wednesday’s meeting, Denmark’s Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen said, according to Danish news agency Ritzau. The stated aim for the talks is to help defuse President Donald Trump’s renewed threats toward Greenland and begin repairing strained ties with Washington over the strategically important island. “The United States has once again reiterated its desire to take

over Greenland,” officials in Nuuk said in the statement. “This is something the government coalition in Greenland cannot accept under any circumstances.” Teresa Ribera, executive vice-president of the European Commission, also condemned the U.S. approach, calling the threats unacceptable and highlighting that Greenland is not for sale. “It’s quite obvious that the European project has been targeted as something to destroy both externally and internally,” she said at the doorstep. “Europe grows up in

difficult times. These are really difficult times.” After a meeting with Rubio Monday night, German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul said he is optimistic that Europe can reach a “compromise” with the U.S. over Greenland. Rubio didn’t make any official comments after the meeting. The dispute has also prompted Trump to renew criticism of other members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, after Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen warned that any attempt to take over Greenland would undermine the alliance. Danish Defense Minister Troels Lund Poulsen said on Tuesday he will meet with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte on Monday next week in Brussels. Greenland’s minister for foreign affairs, Vivian Motzfeldt, will also participate in that meeting, he said, according to local media.

# Iran ...

Continued from page 1 State-run IRIB News reported on Tuesday that authorities had seized “a large consignment of electronic equipment used for espionage and sabotage,” including what appeared in footage to be Starlink kits. On Tuesday, foreign exchange tracking websites showed the rial trading at around 1.45 million to the U.S. dollar, roughly the same level that initially sparked protests among traders in Tehran on Dec. 28. Soaring inflation has made it increasingly difficult for millions of Iranians to afford basic food items, and a \$7 handout to households is unlikely to ease living costs. The NetBlocks group, which monitors global internet connectivity, said Tuesday that a nationwide internet shutdown in Iran had entered its fifth day, cutting off millions from global online services. Reports said some citizens were able to make international calls as of Tuesday morning. Trump has called on Starlink — which some Iranians already use, despite it being banned in the country — to help restore communication. Connecting Iran to the internet via Elon Musk’s service won’t be easy. Owning a Starlink terminal is illegal, so equipment would have to be smuggled in. The military is also working to jam Starlink and is hunting down any users, according to Amir Rashidi, director of digital rights and security at Internet human rights group Miaan Group. An unspecified number of protesters have been taken to court and charged with “moharabeh,” which carries the death penalty.

# Projects ...

Continued from page 1 The test that is used by some colleges for admission will now have fewer questions, fewer answer options for math and less time for some sections. Also, the science portion of the test will be optional and will not be part of a student’s composite score. Steinbrunner said Fort Recovery students will continue to take the science portion of the test. They will not be required to take the science portion if they retake the test multiple times. He also told the board about a recent Business Advisory Council event during which students on a panel pushed for more technology education, specifically related to using laptops and Microsoft Office. In other business, the board: •Re-elected Wendel as president with Kahlig as vice president. Also, treasurer Deanna Knapke was approved as public records officer for board members. Sean Kahlig and Nick Wehrkamp were sworn in for another term as board members.

Wehrkamp was appointed as student achievement liaison. •Learned from middle school principal Holly Wermert that Kayla Dues won the school’s spelling bee with Zoey Wendel second and LaMichael Heitkamp third. All three are seventh graders. All three will compete in the Mercer County Spelling Bee in March. Dues will also compete in the regional bee. She also noted that student appreciation nights will be held at girls and boys basketball games on Jan. 20 and 29, respectively. The middle school will also host a quiz bowl on Jan. 31. •Heard from elementary school principal Laura Brandt that information is being gathered for the 2026-27 kindergarten class. She said 54 students have already signed up. She also noted that the eligibility rules for kindergarten have changed, with children now required to be 5 before the first day of school. (Previously they had to be 5 by Aug. 1.) •Learned from Steinbrunner

that scheduling for the 2026-27 school year is underway at the high school and that eighth graders will be making a visit during which they will learn about elective class options. He also noted that 27 out of 61 sophomores have applied to the Tri-Star Career Compact for career and technical education for next year. •Appointed Knapke as the authorized financial agent for the district and Ennis Britton as legal counsel. •Accepted the resignation of Bonnie Fortkamp as a full-time custodian retroactive to Dec. 31 and granted severance and unused personal pay. •Approved the following: A request for an advance draw on 2026 tax collections for the general fund and bond retirement from Mercer and Darke counties; a resolution that the district is in compliance with its Nutritional Standards Policy; establishing a board service fund not to exceed \$5,000 to pay expenses incurred in the per-

formance of board duties; and accepting amended amounts and rates as determined by the budget commission and authorizing the necessary tax levies and certifying them to the county auditor. •Authorized Wendel, Stahl and Knapke to attend local, district, state and national meetings. •Authorized Knapke to pay all invoices within the limits of appropriations as they are received; secure bonds of \$50,000 for the board president and superintendent and a \$100,000 bond for the treasurer. •Authorized Stahl and Knapke to: accept donations on behalf of the board; continue an agreement with Mercer Health for drug testing services; enter into federal, state and local grants and for the treasurer to appropriate those funds, and to enter into an internet service provider agreement. •Authorized Stahl to: make offers of employment when the board is not in session; accept

resignations from employees when the board is not in session; approve staff member attendance at conferences and meetings; enter into agreements with institutes of higher education for College Credit Plus services; enter into agreements with other schools for special services; make technical corrections to policies; employ substitutes on an as-needed basis; be purchasing agent for the school district; employ temporary personnel and casual labor as needed. •Accepted donations totaling \$7,307, including \$1,500 each from Tom and Mary Pat Zitter for the elementary, middle and high school activity funds. •Set its regular meetings for 6:30 p.m. on the third Monday of each month. The board will hold a work session at 6 p.m. Monday, Feb. 23, with a regular meeting to follow at 6:30 p.m. •Heard thanks from Stahl to the board members for their continued service. January is School Board Appreciation Month.

## Our Wedding special section will be distributed in:

The Commercial Review (Portland) • The News-Gazette (Winchester) • The News Times (Hartford City)

Full-Page Color

\$625

Full-Page B&W

\$525

Half-Page Color

\$425

Half-Page B&W

\$325

Fourth-Page Color

\$275

Fourth-Page B&W

\$225

Big Business Card (3 x 3.5)

\$110

Business Card (2 x 2)

\$52

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



Contact Lindsey by emailing L.Cochran@thecr.com

Or call us at (260) 726-8141



**THE  
CLASSIFIEDS**  
Find it - Buy It  
Sell It!  
(260) 726-8141

# Focused ...

Continued from page 8

There's probably going to be a strength difference there with her being bigger, but there's also a bigger weight cut which takes a toll on a wrestler. So I'm not really worried about anything there. I'm just going to wrestle, be me and then there isn't anybody I can't beat."

The rest of the tournament won't be a cake walk either as all four of the potential semifinal opponents are ranked wrestlers.

The most likely matchups would be against either No. 1 Kaitlynn Fouty (23-0) of White-land Community or No. 2 Claire May (29-1) of Roncali, whose sole loss came to Rowles in the regional semifinal. (Fouty finished third at state in the 105 weight class last year, while May beat Rowles in the third-place match.) Rowles could also potentially face Twin Lakes' Kerris Funkhouser (28-3), who is ranked 14th, or No. 16 Khloie Smith (21-8) of Jintown.

"Anybody can beat anybody at that level on any given day," Jacks said. "I know that she's going to podium and be a multiple-time medalist and she knows that as well. It's just a matter of what our game plan is for this week, identifying the potential wrestlers we'll face along the way. Each has a differ-

ent style and we're prepar- ing her this week for that. So we'll put her in the best possible situation for her- self to go out and deliver."

Seven of the eight potential championship foes for Rowles are ranked as well. The favorites to come out of the bottom half of the bracket are No. 3 Aaliyah Brown (12-9) of Center Grove, – she beat Rowles in the regional title match – No. 5 Jalia Powers (28-2) of Crown Point or No. 6 Aniah Delgado (20-6) out of Perry Meridian.

This will be the first time since 2018 that Jay County has only sent one wrestler to the state tour- nament. While Rowles won't have her team sur- rounding her, it's nothing that she isn't used to as she's competed for Team Indiana during the past two offseasons in national tournaments.

Despite any adversity Rowles may face, she's looking to end her time as a Patriot strong.

"I'm very thankful for this opportunity that God has given me," Rowles said. "It's a bit of a bum- mer that I'm not going to have my team there with me, but it's gonna be fun, I'll have my coaches and it will be a good time. ...

"I plan on making the most of it, taking it all in. This is an amazing oppor- tunity at an awesome venue."



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

## Wiggins works

Samuel Wiggins of the Jay County High School boys basketball team handles the ball during the Patriots' 74-53 road win over the Adams Central Flying Jets on Saturday. The result continued streaks for both teams, as the Patriots have now won five straight games while Adams Central has dropped five in a row.

# Lee's 29 powers eighth grade Patriots

This season, there's simply been no stopping the Patriots. On Monday, there was no stopping Abram Lee, either.

Lee scored 29 points to propel the Jay County Junior High eighth-grade boys basketball team to a 54-38 victory over the Hagerstown Tigers.

The triumph improved the Patriots to a perfect 13-0 on the season.

Seven other Patriots

## Local Roundup

found their way onto the score sheet to supplement Lee's opus. Finn Hemmelgarn contributed eight points and four assists. Job Dirksen (five points),

Eli Homan (four), Jaylen Brown (four), Jenson Edwards (two) and Bentley Comer (two) also scored for Jay County.

**Seventh survives**

The seventh-grade edition of the Patriot boys basket- ball team wasn't as dominant as its older iteration, but still pulled out a thrilling 28-27 victory over the Tigers.

Sawyer Smitley led the

way for Jay County with 12 points. He was the only Patriot in double figures.

Cruz Darby (six points), Carson Pfeifer (five), Henry Teeter (three) and Ryker Price (two) also scored for the Patriots.

**Flipsters start**

CONNORSVILLE — The Jay County Flipsters tumbling and gymnastics team competed in its first event of 2026 at Con-

norsville High School on Sunday.

Allie Evans excelled in the platinum division, finishing first in all four events and the all-around. Haley Fisher and Emma Fisher were the Flipsters' top finishers in the gold division, tying for the vault crown with identical 9.0 scores.

At the silver level, Emma Robinson placed first in the vault, bars and floor while

finishing second on beam to earn the all-around title.

In the bronze division, Aria Shannon took first place in the all-around. Shannon was fueled by a floor-routine first place and top-three finishes in each of the other three events. Lettie Vanskyock notched wins on vault and bars en route to second place in the all-around while Sydney Muhlenkamp was first on the beam.

# Sports on tap

## Local schedule

**Thursday**

Jay County — Boys wrestling at Homestead – 6:30 p.m.; Junior high boys basketball vs. Heritage – 6 p.m.; Junior high girls basketball at Heritage – 6 p.m.

Fort Recovery — Boys bowling vs. Newton at McBo's Lanes – 4 p.m.; Girls bowling vs. Newton at McBo's Lanes – 4 p.m.; Girls basketball vs. Minster – 6 p.m.; Middle school girls basketball at South Adams – 5 p.m.

## TV schedule

**Today**

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 Missouri (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)

**Thursday**

12:30 p.m. — Euroleague basketball: Saski Baskonia at Anadolu Efes (FSDN Indiana)

2 p.m. — USGA Golf: Latin America Amateur Championship (ESPN2)

7 p.m. — NHL: Philadelphia Flyers at Pittsburgh Penguins (TNT)

7 p.m. — College basketball: Oakland at Milwaukee (ESPN)

7 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Villanova at UConn (FS1); Texas at South Carolina (ESPN2); Nebraska at Michigan State (BTN)

8 p.m. — NHL: Seattle Kraken at Boston Bruins (ABC)

9 p.m. — College basketball: Lindenwood at Southeast Missouri State (ESPN); Wichita State at Florida Atlantic (ESPN2)

9 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Oregon at Iowa (FS1)

7 p.m. — College hockey: Michigan State at Wisconsin (BTN)

9:30 p.m. — NHL: Toronto Maple Leafs at Vegas Golden Knights (ESPN)

## STATEWIDE CLASSIFIEDS

**PREPARE FOR** power outages with Briggs & Stratton PowerProtect(TM) standby generators - the most powerful home standby generators available. Industry-leading comprehensive warranty - 7 years (\$849 value.) Proudly made in the U.S.A. Call Briggs & Stratton 1-877-798-0270.

**REPLACE YOUR** roof with the best looking and longest lasting material steel from Erie Metal Roofs! Three styles and multiple colors available. Guaranteed to last a lifetime! Limited Time Offer up to 50% off installation + Additional 10% off install (for military, health workers & 1st responders.) Call Erie Metal Roofs: 1-866-781-6023

**SAFE STEP.** North America's #1 Walk-In Tub. Comprehensive life-time warranty. Top-of-the-line installation and service. Now featuring our FREE shower package and \$1600 Off for a limited time! Call today! Financing available. Call Safe Step 1-855-743-1911

**SUNSETTER. AMERICA'S** Number One Awning! Instant shade at the touch of a button. Transform your deck or patio into an outdoor oasis. Up to 10-year limited warranty. Call now and SAVE \$350 today! 1-855-801-2797

## STATEWIDE CLASSIFIEDS

**UP TO \$15,000.00** of GUARANTEED Life Insurance! No medical exam or health questions. Cash to help pay funeral and other final expenses.Call Physicians Life Insurance Company-833-467-0943 or visit [www.Life55plus.info/hoo sier](http://www.Life55plus.info/hoo sier)

**WE BUY** Houses for Cash AS IS! No repairs. No fuss. Any condition. Easy three step process: Call, get cash offer and get paid. Get your fair cash offer today by calling Liz Buys Houses: 1-855-655-7718

**WHEN YOU** want the best, you want Omaha Steaks! 100% guaranteed and delivered to your door! Our Butcher's Deluxe Package comes with 8 FREE Omaha Steaks Smash Burgers ONLY \$89.99. Call 1-866-488-3469 and mention code 79797ZEH or visit [www.oma-hasteaks.com/Deluxe27 98](http://www.oma-hasteaks.com/Deluxe27 98)

**00 CLASSIFIEDS**

**CLASSIFIED ADS** 260-726-8141

**ADVERTISING RATES** 20 Word Minimum Effective 07/01/2018: Minimum charge.... \$12.40

1 insertion.....62¢/ word

2 insertions.....81¢/ word

3 insertions.....96¢/ word

6 insertions.... \$1.14/ word

12 insertions. \$1.52/

## 00 CLASSIFIEDS

word

26 insertions. \$1.77/ word

Includes Online.....FREE

Classified Display \$6.95/ per column inch

No borders or logos allowed on Classified Page

Card of Thanks Up to 100 words.... \$13.00

In Memory Up to 100 words.... \$13.00

Advertising Deadline is 12:00 p.m. the day prior to publication.

Pre-Payment required for: Rummage sales, business opportunities, jobs wanted, boats and sporting equipment, wanted to rent, motorized vehicles, real estate and mobile homes.

**40 NOTICES**

**PLEASE NOTE:** Be sure to check your ad the first day it appears. We cannot be responsible for more than one days incorrect copy. We try hard not to make mistakes, but they do happen, and we may not know unless you call to tell us. Call before 12:00 pm for corrections. The Commercial Review, 309 W Main, Portland, Indiana 260-726-8141.

**FREE TO PLAY POKER PERIL**

Tournament. Saturday, January 24, 2026 7:00 PM. Located: Vineyard at Evergreen Farm, 4949 Siegrist Jutte Rd, Coldwater, OH

## 60 SERVICES

**J. L. CONSTRUCTION & ROOFING LLC.** Amish crew. Custom built homes, new garages, pole barns, interior/ exterior remodeling, drywall, windows, doors, siding, roofing, foundations. 260-726-5062, leave message.

**GOODHEW'S ALL SEASON** Construction- Specializing in standing seam metal roofs. When Quality Counts, Count On US. A company you can trust. Member of the BBB. New Installation and repairs. Call Rodney Thornbury, owner 765-509-0191

**SEAMSTRESS NAN HOMEMADE** Sewing and Alterations, Quilts, Baby Blankets, Applique, Zippers, Hemming, Memory T-Shirt, Special Orders, Wedding & Prom Gowns. 260.766.9334

## 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

## 90 SALE CALENDAR

Machinery consigned by January 17, 2026 can be advertised

**PUBLIC AUCTION**

Saturday, February 14th, 2026

10:00am

OPEN HOUSE February 2nd, 4-6 PM

BLACKFORD COUNTY HOUSE- BUILDINGS- POND

APPROX 5 ACRES

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

Seller: JUDY KAY WASHBURN ESTATE

IAA Auctioneer

HEARTLAND Auction & Realty, INC.

445 E 100 N, Decatur, IN

260-724-3499

ELLENBERGER Auctions, Inc.

AUCTION COMPANY NUMBER, AC30200063

PRINCIPAL AUCTIONEER,

RON KING, AU19500129

JESSTON NUSBAUMER, AU19600119

AARON SCHAEFER, AU1160015

KENT ARNOLD, AU19600255

**100 JOBS WANTED**

**AMISH CREW LOOKING FOR** any work. No job is too big or small. Pole barns, roofing, remodeling. 260-849-2489.

## 130 MISC. FOR SALE

**SCRATCH PADS ARE BACK** various bundles sizes and XL pads. \$1.25 plus tax. Pick up at The Commercial Review Tuesday thru Friday 10am to 4pm.

**PAPER END ROLLS FOR SALE** Various sizes and prices. Call The Commercial Review at 260-726-8141 for more information.

**190 FARMERS COLUMN**

**AG RENTAL** Spreaders: BBI, Artsway Vertical. New Holland 228 skid loaders w/full cab, heat/ac. Fort Recovery 419-852-0309

**ARE YOU INTERESTED IN USING** soil and water conservation practices such as cover crops or grassed waterways on the ground you farm? Let us help you! Your land and the way you manage it can make a positive difference. The Upper Mississinewa River Watershed Cost-Share Program is now accepting applications, available at the following county Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) 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

**READ THE CR THEN RECYCLE**

## 190 FARMERS COLUMN

not qualify, outside of cover crops. The maximum amount paid out for vegetative practices is \$5,000, and for structural practices is \$15,000.&#8239;There are approximately 40 eligible practices, from live-stock fences to pollinator habitat and much more. Priority will be given to those within subwatersheds at Deer Creek, Upper Big Lick Creek, 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.

**200 FOR RENT**

**LEASE SPACE** available, Coldwater, OH. Manufacturing, warehousing, assembly, distribution, offices, inside and outdoor storage. Easy access to major highways and railroad access with loading docks and overhead cranes available. Contact Sycamore Group, 419-678-5318, [www.sycamorespace.com](http://www.sycamorespace.com)

**230 AUTOS, TRUCKS**

**WE PAY CASH** for junk autos. We pick up at your location. 1-765-546-2642 or 1-765-857-1071. Slocum's Salvage

# Focused on finals

## Rowles aims to give JCHS another champ

**By ANDREW BALKO**  
The Commercial Review

Katie Rowles has been to state twice before, but she's never made the trip alone.

Despite being alone, the senior has her sights set high. The Patriots have had a state champion for four straight years and she intends to make it five.

No. 7 Rowles will make the trip to Indianapolis to represent the Jay County High School girls wrestling team at the IHSAA State Tournament at Corteva Coliseum on the Indiana State Fairgrounds on Friday.

Rowles (28-4) previously made it to the state tournament as a freshman, back when she competed in the 98-pound weight class, but didn't make the podium. She made it back last season, finishing fourth in the 100-pound bracket.

In her third trip to state, she will aim high to try and bring a state championship back home to Portland for a fifth consecutive year after Mallory Winner claimed a title the past four seasons.

"I'm not planning on changing anything this week," Rowles said. "I've been working hard all season and I'm just going to keep that going. And the game plan is to take it all."

"I want to make it to the finals and I want to win."

While claiming a state title is no small task, Rowles has some of the major keys necessary to bring home the gold, primarily, the proper mindset.

"Katie puts a lot of time into her craft and she's never satisfied with not being the champion," said JCHS coach Troy Jacks. "She constantly watches film. She's constantly practicing, she journals, she does a lot of mind training along with her physical



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Katie Rowles of Jay County High School twists Eastern (Greentown) senior Nichole Smith in her regional quarterfinal match Saturday at Muncie Central. Her quick pin of Smith secured her a state berth in the 100-pound weight class. Rowles is the only Patriot headed to state this year and will compete at 10 a.m. Friday at Corteva Coliseum in Indianapolis.

training and does a lot of things in the offseason like national events.

"That's just where she's at and where her space is. She's trying to be the champion and on a mission to do that."

To secure a spot on the podium, Rowles needs to beat Annalise Sanchez (20-6) of New Haven.

Rowles has already beat the NHHS junior this year via pin in 1 minute, 9 seconds to claim the title at the East Noble Invite.

"You can't overlook anybody, but it definitely does help give a little bit of peace of mind," Rowles said of having already beat her first-round matchup. "It's a wrestler I'm familiar with

and I know I can get the job done."

The quarterfinal will be tougher for the Patriot.

She will either face No. 4 Joanna Cantu (33-4) of Hobart or No. 15 Ella Keller (26-11) out of Franklin Community. Cantu can pose a unique challenge as a wrestler with more strength as

she finished seventh at the state tournament in 2025 in the next weight class up at 105 pounds.

"I don't know a ton about Cantu because she's never been at 100 before," Rowles said. "She's always been heavier, so she's going to be a bigger girl cutting down."

See Focused page 7

### Here's My Card

#### MECHANIC

##### STU'S GARAGE L.L.C.

Specializing in diesel engines, medium and heavy duty truck, and agricultural equipment  
Air conditioning equipped & certified

Stuart Terrell  
11490 W. SR. 28  
Redkey, IN 47373  
(765) 789-4899  
Cell: (765) 729-8301

#### WATER SYSTEMS

##### ECOWATER SYSTEMS®

OF HARTFORD CITY, LLC  
(765) 348-2587

413 W. Water St. • Hartford City, IN 47348

Jacob H. Holsten  
Owner

Your Water Perfected.™

#### VETERINARIAN

BE A RESPONSIBLE PET OWNER

- Vaccinate
- Spay/Neuter
- Microchip
- Protect against fleas & worms

Teeth Cleaning too!

Call Portland Veterinary Clinic  
Christian Bader, DVM 260-726-7370

#### DENTIST

- We are accepting new patients
- We offer all general dentistry
- Complete cosmetic dentistry
- Root Canals
- Anxiety-Free oral sedation
- Payment plans

Vormohr Family Dentistry

#### REAL ESTATE

##### JACKHOUCK REAL ESTATE

260-729-2164

1415 W. Votaw St.  
PORTLAND, IN 47371  
jackhouck2012@gmail.com

#### WELDING

PORTABLE & SHOP  
SPECIAL ATTENTION  
TO BREAKDOWNS!

PRESIDENT  
STEVE VORE

**VORE'S WELDING & STEEL INC.**

- COMMERCIAL WELDING & FABRICATION •
- SPECIALIZED WELDING & BRAZING •
- (ALUMINUM & STAINLESS STEEL)

PHONE (419) 375-4087  
FAX (419) 375-2466  
3234 ST. RT. 49N, BOX 37  
FORT RECOVERY, OH 45846  
vores@bright.net

#### DENTISTRY

##### george family DENTISTRY

Malcolm C. George • (260) 726-4710 • Portland, IN

#### MONUMENTS

Jay County Monuments

Located in the  
Baird-Freeman Funeral Home.

Providing FREE quotes  
and answers to your questions.

We are a proud distributor of Edwin F. Nikol, Inc.  
Monuments

260-726-7171

It's not a day in a life, but a life in a day.

#### AUTO PARTS

##### Williams Auto Parts

Used Auto & Truck Parts

1127 S. Detroit Avenue • Portland, IN 47371  
(260) 726-8001 • (800) 669-5762  
www.williamsautopartsinc.com

ADVERTISERS, call 260-726-8141 or email ads@thecr.com.