

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

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.

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 Schemenauer 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.

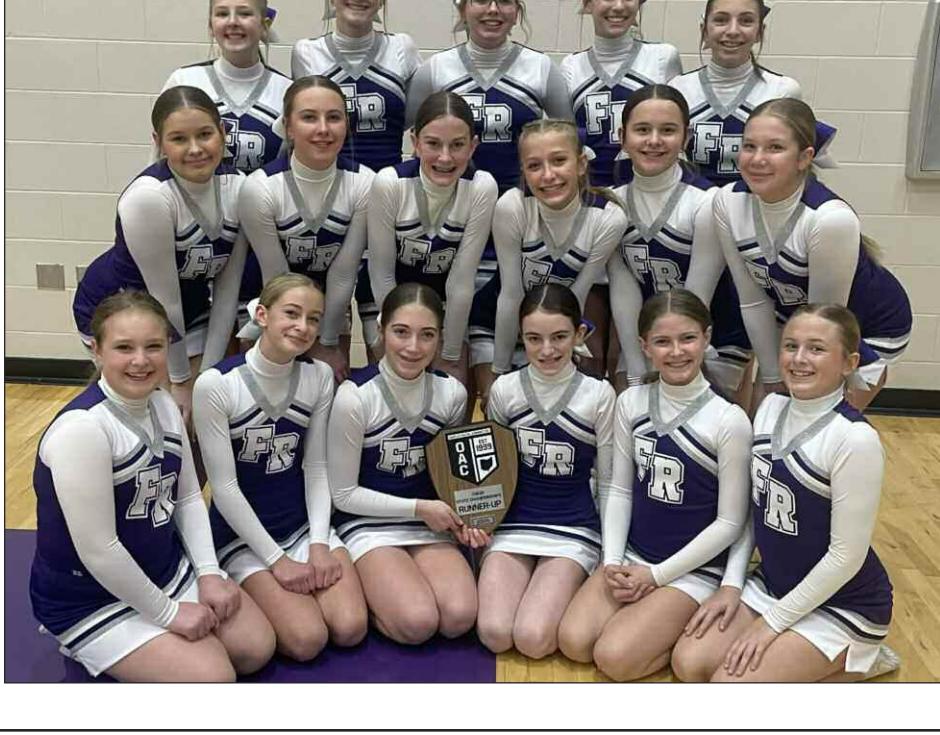
After the 30-day period, the city can take the next steps that include applying zoning rules and working toward the creation of a tax increment financing (TIF) district, which would capture taxes on the increased assessed value after development to be used by the city's redevelopment commission on targeted projects. Schemenauer previously said that process could be complete by mid-2026.

See Annexes page 2

Property is planned for an apartment development



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, Adalee Shuttleworth, Finley Thompson and Rachel Boekman. Middle row are Alex Bihl, 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.

Death toll rises in Iran protests

By ARSALAN SHAHNA

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 morgue 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

Robert Vance, 85, Portland
Richard Shirk, 67, Charlotte, Michigan
Rick Arnold, 73, Geneva
Details on page 2.

Weather

The high temperature was 42 degrees Monday. The low was 26.

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.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

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.

Also filing Tuesday was James E. Brewster, a Republican, for Wayne Township Trustee.

Coming up

Thursday — Results from the opening round of the ACAC basketball tournaments.

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

Saturday — Coverage of the semifinal round of the ACAC basketball tournaments.



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. Vance



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

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) Hiltz of Portland, a brother Larry Vance of Kennesaw, 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.

Decatur retired from Pennington 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.



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.

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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
25/17	34/18	22/8	19/7	21/7

Skies will be mostly cloudy with a high in the mid 20s. Snow is expected, mainly before 1 p.m. Skies will be mostly cloudy with a high of 22. There is a 20% chance of snow showers.

The high will top out in the high teens under mostly cloudy skies.

Expect mostly cloudy skies with a high of 21.

Lotteries

Powerball Monday 5-27-45-56-59 Power Ball: 4 Power Play: 2 Estimated jackpot: \$105 million	Daily Four: 2-6-3-9 Quick Draw: 1-3-5-11-18-23-25-31-34-35-40-42-48-49-57-61-67-68-69-71 Cash 5: 19-26-33-40-45 Estimated jackpot: \$181,000
Mega Millions Estimated jackpot: \$215 million	
Hoosier 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	Ohio 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

Markets

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

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.

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

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

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-

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

city's plan commission and Kaelyn Weaver to the park board to replace Deb Storie and Larry Spade, respectively, both of whom stepped down from their roles.

• Heard Bivens request that the council review the city's ordinance regarding water leaks and water bill adjustments at its next few meetings.

• Approved the following: sponsorship of a banner at West Jay Community Center; an adjustment to the salary ordinance to pay the IRS rate for mileage (previously, the city's handbook and ordinance were not aligned);

and payment of claims totaling \$394,403.97.

• Heard from Murphy that bids for 2026 street improvement projects through Indiana Department of Transportation's Community Crossings grant program will be opened Tuesday. Streets set for paving this year are all of Rick Drive, Second Street, Walnut Street and Harold Avenue, Blackford Avenue between Meridian and Main streets, Commerce Street between Main and Broad streets, and Meridian Street from the railroad tracks to Blackford Avenue.

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

Allig., 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, Alyssah: noon, 205 E. 1st St., Bath, Illinois.

Service listings provided by

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'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.

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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

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 be 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 Ultra-violet. 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.

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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 — BRITANNA'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 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.

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.

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.

EN AVANT CLUB — Meets at 1 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month.

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		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.

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Ads must run in January.

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

Others

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.

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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



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"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

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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.

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.

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• 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.

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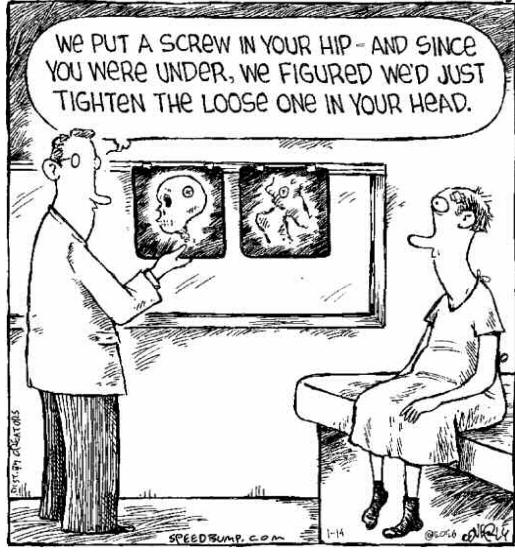
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In other business

SPEED BUMP



Dave Coverly

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



By Bil Keane

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

The rationale of good defense

South dealer. North-South vulnerable.

NORTH

♦ A 18 3
♦ 8 6 4
♦ K 9 4
♦ 8 5 3

WEST

♦ A 10 2
♦ A Q 9 5
♦ 10 2
♦ A K 10 9 4

EAST

♦ J 7 3 2
♦ 7 6 3
♦ Q J 7

SOUTH

♦ A K 10 2
♦ K 10
♦ A Q 1 8 5
♦ 6 2

The bidding:

South West North East

1 ♠ 2 ♠ Pass Pass

2 ♠ Pass 3 ♠ Pass

4 ♠

Opening lead — king of clubs.

many clues to guide him to the proper return. Most of these clues come from the bidding.

East knows that West has five clubs for his overcall, which means that South has no more clubs. He likewise knows that South bid diamonds before he bid spades, giving South a 4-2-5-2 or 4-3-4-2 distribution. (If South had only one heart, West would have five hearts and almost surely would have overcalled with one heart rather than two clubs.)

So, by putting all of these inferences together, East concludes that a club continuation would be futile and that a heart shift might be critical. He therefore returns the deuce of hearts at trick three.

The shift strikes pay dirt when West scores the A-Q of hearts to put the contract down one. Note that, after taking the king of hearts with the ace, West might have a problem deciding whether to try to cash the queen of hearts or the ace of clubs, but this too is an easy problem to solve.

It is widely accepted that the play of the queen under partner's king at trick one signifies a singleton or possession of the jack. So West leads a low club at trick two, confident that East will ruff or play the queen to set the contract.

After East wins the trick, he is faced with the crucial problem of what to play next. But there are

Tomorrow: It happened in Dead Man's Gulch.

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1-14

CRYPTOQUIP

Y T P J Y P Q Y R O C L L J R H P Q E Y Q E

O S L R Y Z L B T S Y R S L P Z B Q

O S L C L K R , S L ' R J I B H P H V K

J V P K Y Q E H K L P I .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN SOME SUNBEAMS SHINE ON AN OUTLET THAT CARRIES OFF WATER, COULD THAT CREATE A DRAINBOW?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: S equals H

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 38 Greek

1 Possessive vowel

40 Get older

2 "Zounds!" page

41 Stitches 23 Ruckus

I.M. — 43 Over- dept.

24 Tear stamp

4 Maestro Ozara 25 Lover of

43 Over- dept. Troilus

27 " —haw!"

44 Arcade game (oater cry)

45 Take offense at

46 Con- clude

47 Made level

48 Pester

49 Storm center

50 Pester

51 Kimono

52 Mexican

53 Sticky pine product

54 "There!"

55 Rocker

56 Slightly

57 Small

58 Fib

59 Hefty

60 Singer

61 Con- spacy

62 Rob

63 French

64 Legisla- ture

65 Breaks down

66 Abba of Israel

67 Post- WWII alliance

68 Dutch export

69 Florida county

70 1011, to Caesar

Solution time: 23 mins.

R	A	M	P	I	L	L	F	A	C	E
A	R	I	D	B	O	A	I	S	U	P
I	N	F	A	L	S	Y	G	E	R	E
F	N	A	L	S	T	A	D	S	H	A
N	A	L	S	T	O	E	D	S	H	A
A	L	S	T	O	E	D	S	H	A	
L	S	T	O	E	S	H	A			
S	H	A								
H	A									
A										

Yesterday's answer 1-14

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12					13			14			
15					16				17		
18								19	20		
21								22			
23	24	25		26		27	28		29	30	
31			32		33		34		35		
36			37		38		39		40		
41			42		43		44				
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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 Kaitlyn Fouty (23-0) of White-land Community or No. 2 Claire May (29-1) of Roncalli, 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 Jimtown.

"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 preparing her this week for that. So we'll put her in the best possible situation for her 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 tournament. While Rowles won't have her team surrounding her, it's nothing that she isn't used to as she's competed for Team Indiana during the past two offseas 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 bummer 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 opportunity 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

Local Roundup

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

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 basketball 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

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 Sabres (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: Saska Baskonia at Anadolu Efes (FDSN 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 (ESPNU)
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 (ESPNU); 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)

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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 Cortevea 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 Cortevea 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

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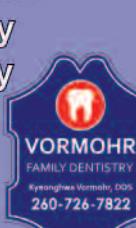
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