

# The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

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## 2 of the Hundred

**Jay grads have been part of playoff drive as members of Indiana University's marching band**

By RAY COONEY

The Commercial Review

Aaron Funkhouser and Lilly Hedges were on the edge of their seats, along with all of the other band members in their cream and crimson uniforms with the interlocking "IU" stitched across their chests.

Could the Hoosiers actually do it? Would they be able to hold off the perennial powerhouse Ohio State for the Big Ten title?

"I'll never forget when we won that game," said Funkhouser. "Everyone was screaming, crying, hugging each other."

No musician joins the Marching Hundred expecting to witness any level of football success.

At least, that was the case for decades, including when Hedges and Funkhouser signed up after graduating from Jay County High School in 2022.

But all that has changed. Since the short trip north on Interstate 69 to Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis for the Big Ten championship game, they have made much longer jaunts following the Hoosier gridlers to the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California, and the Peach Bowl in Atlanta for the College Football Playoff quarterfinal and semifinal games.

They fly to Miami today, starting a final memorable trip to support IU in the national championship game against the Miami Hurricanes at Hard Rock Stadium.

### Growth of a program

Despite IU's historic lack of football success — just three winning records over a 28-year span — Funkhouser had an impression of what college football games at a Big Ten school would be like.

"I guess I had this vision that like they would be packed to walls with fans," he said. "And they weren't."

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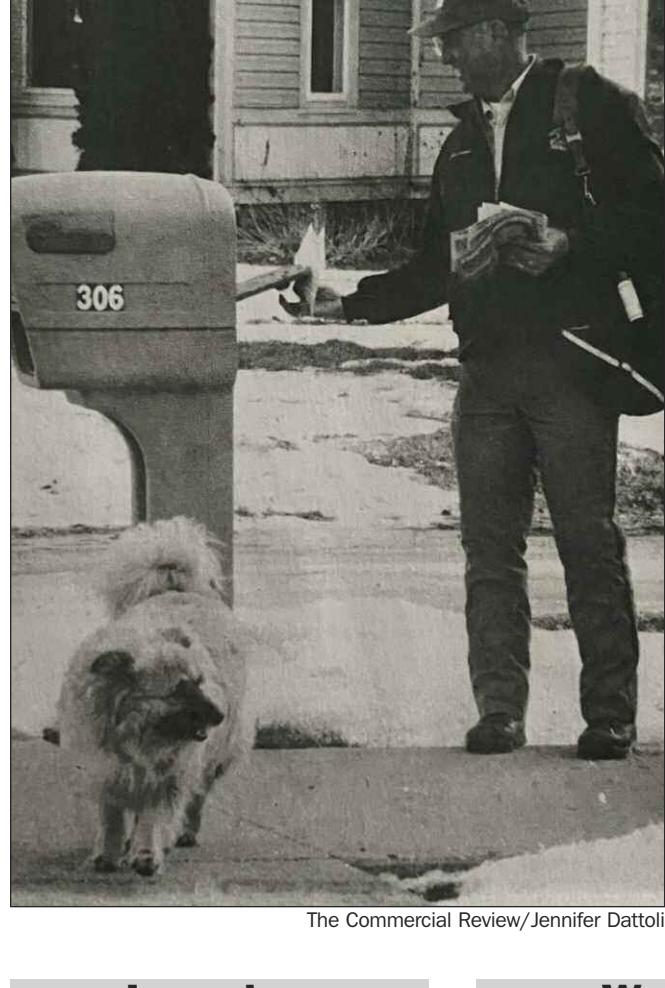


Photo provided

Aaron Funkhouser poses for a photo outside of the Rose Bowl during his recent trip with the band and Hoosier football team to Pasadena, California. Funkhouser and fellow Jay County High School graduate Lilly Hedges march for the Indiana University band and will be on hand again Monday as IU attempts to capture its first football national championship.

## Retrospect

### Carrier had loyal helper on route



The Commercial Review/Jennifer Dattoli

Ridgeville mail carrier John Valentine delivers his route with the assistance of "Baby." The long-haired chow mix, whose actual name was Tigger, had been walking Valentine's 10-mile delivery route with him for about 10 years.

Twenty-five years ago this week, a Ridgeville mail carrier was continuing his long-running tradition of delivering with a partner.

The Jan. 20, 2001, edition of The Commercial Review featured a story about rural Portland resident John Valentine delivering mail in Ridgeville alongside his canine sidekick "Baby."

Valentine recalled the day about a decade earlier when he encountered a frisky puppy while walking his route on Third Street.

"This little dog just came out and started following me," he said. "I reached down to pet her and said, 'How are you Baby?'"

From then on, the long-haired chow mix — her actual name was Tigger — had been joining Valentine on his route. He walked 10 miles a day delivering, and she was with him nearly every step of the way.

"She's a lot of company," Valentine said.

The dynamic delivery duo handled its duties quietly until being featured in Women's World magazine in January 2001. The piece

vaulted them to celebrity status, with passing drivers waving and honking, and some folks along the route leaving treats in their mailbox for "Baby."

"The whole town is kind of attached to her," said Ridgeville deputy clerk Shirley Page. "We think the world of that dog. We just love seeing her."

She was also a valuable defender, having warded off potential bites from not-so-friendly dogs along the route.

"She's protected me quite a few times," Valentine said. "She's saved me from getting bit at least three or four times."

The bond they shared was about more than a uniform. It was a person-to-person connection.

"She won't go with anyone else, even if they bring extra treats for her," Valentine said, referencing substitute mail carriers and residents.

After their route each day, they would part ways, with "Baby" trotting home to rest and wait for her co-worker to return.

## Biochar, feed mill receive approval

Board also OKs exception for building mini barns

By RAY COONEY

The Commercial Review

Three projects, including construction and operation of a biochar facility, received the nod from the county zoning board to move forward.

Jay County Board of Zoning Appeals approved special exceptions Thursday for the biochar facility and a feed mill at Minnich Poultry and a mini barn business for Chris Schwartz.

All three require special exceptions from the board because they do not fall under the guidelines of typical agricultural use.

The only request that received any public comment, either in writing or during Thursday's public hearing, was the biochar facility. It involves a process that Minnich officials say will reduce odor, pests and manure volume by turning manure into biochar, a charcoal-like soil additive.

John Hemmelgarn, Jay/Portland Building and Planning director, explained that his office had received questions about the Minnich facilities after they came up for tax abatements in May 2025.

He noted that there was discussion about a road use agreement, which would identify what roads are being used during the construction of the facilities and requirements for repairing them if there is any damage. Jay County Commissioners, after consulting the county highway department, recently decided a road use agreement is not necessary for the project.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service defines biochar as black carbon produced from biomass sources for the purpose of transforming the biomass carbon into a more stable form. Marge Reier of Minnich Poultry noted that it can be used as a soil amendment product — something added to soil to improve how the soil works, not necessarily to "feed" the plant directly.

Reier explained that manure is one of the substances that can be used to make biochar. She said the process involves first drying manure to a point where it is dry enough to burn. It then goes through a second machine that involves extremely high temperatures, with the manure becoming fuel for the process. Through the process, the manure reduces in volume and becomes biochar, which Reier described as similar to charcoal but in powder form.

Minnich, which has been in operation since 1977 and has nearly 4 million laying hens and produces nearly 3 million eggs per day, is working with AgroNet Zero on the facility.

See Approval page 2

### In review

Incumbent Republican Jennifer Staver filed Thursday afternoon to run for an at-large seat on Redkey Town Council. Two seats, the other is held by Floyd Life, are up for election this year. Filing at Jay County Courthouse will continue through Feb. 6.

### Weather

The high reached 34 degrees Friday in Jay County. The low was 20 early in the day.

Today's forecast calls for mostly cloudy skies with a high in the upper 20s and a 20% chance of snow. Expect a high in the lower 20s Sunday with wind chill values as low as zero.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

### In review

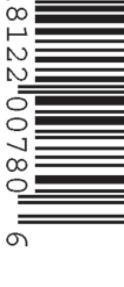
Tuesday is the deadline to register for the 2026 Agriculture Outlook Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, Jan. 27, at Randolph County Fairgrounds. The event will feature speakers sharing information about agriculture, policy and markets. To register, email [aalka@purdue.edu](mailto:aalka@purdue.edu) or call (765) 584-2271.

### Coming up

Tuesday — Coverage of the finals of the ACAC basketball tournaments.

Wednesday — Details from next week's Portland City Council meeting.

Thursday — Results from the Jay County swim meet against Muncie Central.



# Approval ...

Continued from page 1

She said the two main goals of the facility — it would be located on the west side of the Minnich property off of county road 800 South — are to reduce flies and other pests that come with livestock and to reduce the volume of manure for easier transport.

Board member Kaleb Hemmelgarn asked about tax credits for carbon dioxide reduction. Steve Reier, Marge's husband, said Minnich will pursue tax credits, if available, but that they are not the prime driver for the new facility.

Brian Link and Adam Muhlenkamp both had questions, with Muhlenkamp expressing concern about smell.

The Reiers responded that because of the extremely high temperatures there is no smell

from the burning process. Any smell, they said, would come from the drying process. In order to mitigate that, the air is put through a wet scrubber and a biofilter. Marge Reier added that the facility will be monitored for air quality through Indiana Department of Environmental Management.

Muhlenkamp continued to express skepticism that there would not be an odor.

Link indicated that his questions were addressed during the Reiers' presentation, but said he would have liked to have seen a sample of the end product.

Board members also had questions about noise, the source of the manure and truck traffic. The Reiers said there is not expected to be additional noise, that manure used in the process will

come from on-site at the Minnich facility only and that it should lead to a reduction in traffic.

Board member Marla Lutes also asked about other such facilities in the state. The Reiers said they believe there is only one other in the Seymour area. (They visited that facility and one in Pennsylvania as part of their research process.)

Patti McLaughlin, assistant director of the building and planning department, noted that Minnich Poultry has received the necessary Indiana Department of Environmental Management permits and will have to follow state guidelines.

The board approved the special exception request on a 3-1 vote with Steve Ford, Angela Paxson and Hemmelgarn in favor while Lutes voted against.

Marge Reier noted that the new feed mill, to be located at the intersection of county roads 300 North and 800 East, would replace a current mill that is nearly 50 years old. (Its entrance would be on county road 800 East.) She said the project has been in the works for nearly 10 years. The new facility will grind and mix the same amount as the current mill — it would have a capacity of about 4,000 tons in an eight-hour shift — and will only be used for feeding Minnich Poultry layers and pullets.

The facility would include receiving bays and liquid and corn storage.

Answering questions from board members, the Reiers said truck traffic is not expected to increase. The project is expected

to take 1.5 years to complete, with an estimated start date of this summer.

Schwartz requested an exception to allow him to construct and sell mini barns on his property at 7609 N. 500 West. He explained that he has been in construction for almost a decade and wants to work at home.

Hemmelgarn said Schwartz has enough acreage and a barn for construction. He suggested approval.

Board members clarified that Schwartz meets the required setbacks. They approved his special exception request unanimously.

In other business, the board:

• Re-elected Hilfiker as chair, Paxson as vice chair and Ford as secretary. Also appointed Patricia McLaughlin as recording secretary.

## CR almanac

Sunday 1/18	Monday 1/19	Tuesday 1/20	Wednesday 1/21	Thursday 1/22
<b>21/7</b>	<b>12/2</b>	<b>19/13</b>	<b>35/17</b>	<b>26/14</b>
Skies will be partly sunny with a high in the low 20s and winds gusting to 20 mph.	The high will top out in the low teens under mostly sunny skies. The low will dip to near zero.	Skies will be sunny with the high climbing to near 20.	Temperatures will climb back above freezing with a high of 35 under mostly cloudy skies.	There is a 20% chance of snow. Otherwise, skies will be partly cloudy with a high of 26 degrees.

## Lotteries

<b>Hoosier</b> Midday Daily Three: 9-5-4 Daily Four: 1-4-9-9 Quick Draw: 7-8-9- 13-20-22-24-31-33-46-52- 57-59-61-62-66-72-75-78- 80	Pick 3: 5-8-5 Pick 4: 0-3-1-1 Pick 5: 2-3-9-0-6
<b>Powerball</b> Estimated jackpot: \$179 million	
<b>Mega Millions</b> Estimated jackpot: \$230 million	

## Markets

<b>Cooper Farms</b> <b>Fort Recovery</b> Corn.....4.43 Feb. corn.....4.45	Wheat .....4.83
<b>ADM</b> <b>Montpelier</b> Corn.....4.27 Feb. corn.....4.29	
<b>POET Biorefining</b> <b>Portland</b> Corn.....4.43 Feb. corn.....4.40 March corn.....4.37	Beans .....10.47 Feb. beans .....10.51 Wheat .....5.03
<b>The Andersons</b> <b>Richland Township</b> Corn .....4.34 Feb. corn .....4.36 Beans .....10.49 Feb. beans .....10.53	
<b>Heartland</b> <b>St. Anthony</b> Corn .....4.40 Feb. corn .....4.40 Beans .....10.23 March beans .....10.23 Wheat .....4.78	

## Today in history

**In 1706**, innovator Benjamin Franklin was born in Boston, Massachusetts. Known as one of the founding fathers of the United States, Franklin established Philadelphia's second newspaper, "Pennsylvania Gazette" — it featured what is known as the first political cartoon, "Join, or Die," in 1754 — as well as helped initiate a plethora of other institutions and public entities.

**In 1893**, the Hawaiian Kingdom was overthrown in a coup on Oahu, ending the reign of Queen Lili'uokalani.

**In 1920**, Prohibition began across the United States as enforcement of the Volstead Act took effect.

**In 1922**, actress Betty White was born in Oak Park, Illinois. With a career spanning nearly seven decades, White is best known for her comedic roles on

television, which include "Rose Nylund" on "The Golden Girls" and "Sue Ann Nivens" on "The Mary Tyler Moore Show."

**In 1931**, actor James Earl Jones was born in Arkabutla, Mississippi. The 2017 lifetime achievement Tony Award winner is best known for his deep voice used in stage, film and television roles.

**In 1961**, President Dwight D. Eisenhower delivered his farewell address and issued a warning about the "military-industrial complex."

**In 2014**, Jay County boys basketball team fell 38-37 against host Connersville after Spartans junior Ty Miller hit a 3-pointer with 51.2 seconds left on the clock. JCHS senior Trey Teagle attempted a shot with three seconds left and just missed the mark.

— The CR

## Citizen's calendar

### Monday, Jan. 19

5 p.m. — Jay School Board, General Shanks, 414 E. Floral Ave., Portland.

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

City Council, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St.

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

4 p.m. — Portland Board of Aviation, airport, 661 W. 100 North.

### Tuesday, Jan. 20

5:30 p.m. — Portland



Photo provided

Jay County High School graduate Lilly Hedges shows some enthusiasm while preparing to perform with the Marching Hundred at the Big Ten championship game at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. She and fellow former Marching Patriot Aaron Funkhouser have also made trips to the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California, and the Peach Bowl in Atlanta during the Hoosiers' playoff run.

## Hundred ...

Continued from page 1

"I would see us get beaten by like 30, 40 points. I saw us going to quadruple overtime against Akron."

"And so my first two years in college, we always had this hope that we were gonna get better, but we always knew like it wasn't gonna happen."

Enter Curt Cignetti.

The coach who has done nothing but win everywhere he goes — Google him — made things better. The Hoosiers immediately went 11-2 in his first season, losing only to eventual national champion Ohio State in the regular season and in-state rival Notre Dame in the opening round of the College Football Playoff.

This year, it's been perfection. IU avenged last season's loss to the Buckeyes with a victory in the Big Ten championship game and has since throttled Alabama and Oregon in the College Football Playoff to set up Monday night's clash with the 10th-ranked Hurricanes.

"People show up, which is awesome," said Hedges, who plays alto saxophone. "And it's really cool to see people showing up and believing and rooting and just being diehard fans. It's a huge difference."

"And just going into game day more excited, like really wanting your team to win. I just feel like there's so much more team spirit, more than I ever imagined..."

### Musical commitment

Being a part of the Marching Hundred, which dates back to 1896, goes well beyond the game-day commitment of playing and cheering at football games. It's a semester-long grind.

The season typically starts with a 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. band camp. That's before classes begin.

Then, it's two hours of practice a day, four to five days a week.

The schedule spreads out a bit more late in the fall semester, but band members also had to contend with the Big Ten championship game coinciding with finals week.

"Everyone was stressed out to the max with balancing the Hundred and all of

our other classes," said Funkhouser. "So that was rough."

Though the practice schedule thinned out a bit during the busier end of the fall semester, the Marching Hundred hit it hard after Christmas to prepare for their postseason trips. Those practices sometimes lasted six hours.

### Road to Hard Rock

One of the perks of being a member of the Marching Hundred is getting to travel with the team throughout the postseason. Before 2024, that didn't amount to much. Occasional bowl visits were to games named for restaurants (Outback), meat brands (Foster Farms) and clothing styles (Pinstripe). The Rose Bowl and Peach Bowl, those games are not.

This year's trip to the Rose Bowl was the first for the Hoosiers since 1968 and their first win in "The Granddaddy of Them All."

Simply being there was something special.

"Just the lore of the Rose Bowl is insane," said Hedges. "So being able to actually go and experience that was amazing."

Because of the enormity of the event, Indiana University brought back all of the living former directors of the Marching Hundred. During one of the practices, each of them got in front of the group and directed a song.

"It was so special because you could see it in their eyes how much this really meant to them," said Funkhouser, who plays trombone.

Free time was limited in California, but he and some friends explored Chinatown on the one night they had off.

Both Hedges and Funkhouser mentioned their visit to Georgia Aquarium — it was the largest in the world when it opened in 2005 — as a favorite moment on their Peach Bowl trip. They also spent some time at the World of Coca-Cola.

"There's little snippets of each trip that really stand out to me," said Funkhouser of Redkey.

"I have fun all the time, but that trip was especially fun, getting to go to the aquarium. And always in

this postseason, we get a lot more chance to interact with fans. ... That is another new highlight that I've really enjoyed about all of this."

### Hometown impact

Hedges and Funkhouser were seniors during former Jay County High School band director Kelly Smeltzer's final year before his retirement.

"So happy for both of them," said Smeltzer, who has visited Indiana University Memorial Stadium to watch his former students over the last several years. "Both outstanding students here at Jay County for us. I'm glad they had the opportunity to enjoy a great college experience. ..."

"It's once in a lifetime. I'm so happy for both of them."

They helped the Marching Patriots to third-place finishes at the Indiana State Fair during their freshman and sophomore seasons and then fourth place in 2021 following a year off because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Both former Patriots credited their time with bands in Jay County for laying the groundwork that allowed them to become part of the Marching Hundred.

"I do want to say a special thank you to Mrs. (Jennifer) Crum, who was my sixth grade band teacher, and Mr. Smeltzer ... for getting me here. ... All that time, it led to this. I couldn't have done it without them."

"I would not be here if Kelly Smeltzer and the Jay County Marching Patriots hadn't set such a solid foundation and my love for band, especially marching band," said Hedges.

### IU and after

Hedges and Funkhouser are members of Kappa Kappa Psi, an honorary fraternity. It promotes college bands, honors band members, stimulates campus leadership, seeks to foster relationships between college bands and works to provide a positive college experience for band members.

Both have had opportunities to travel during their college experiences.

For Hedges, a Portland resident it was by being

part of Remote Area Medical, an organization that offers dental, vision and medical care for underserved communities. She traveled with a group to serve a community in Kentucky, volunteering at a free healthcare clinic.

Funkhouser spent time studying abroad in Europe. His trip overseas included a six-week stint as an intern for Two Chics Media to gain experience as he is a double major in interactive digital media and mathematics.

Hedges already has one foot out of college while the other continues to march with the Hundred, having graduated in December. She studied psychology pre-med but has decided not to attend medical school. Instead, she is taking a gap/growth year to save money and plans to pursue a doctor of psychology degree. She'd like to become a clinical neuropsychologist.

Funkhouser will graduate from IU in the spring. His current plans are to become



Tribune News Service/Linda Gassenheimer

It only takes this Italian bean soup about 15 minutes to come together. Flavored with garlic and onion, it also requires just a single saucepan.

## Soup only needs on pot

By LINDA GASSENHEIMER

Tribune News Service

Enjoy a little taste of Italy to warm up a chilly January evening. This hearty soup comes together in just 15 minutes in a single saucepan. I added orecchiette. These are small, concave, disk-shaped pasta that beautifully capture the rich flavors of the broth.

The result is a comforting, satisfying vegetarian dinner.

### Helpful hints

For quick preparation, buy diced fresh onion, carrot and celery in the produce section of the market.

Any type of short cut pasta such as penne can be used instead of orecchiette.

Northern white beans can be used instead of cannellini beans.

### Countdown

Assemble ingredients.

Start soup.

While soup simmers, boil pasta in a separate pot.

### Shopping list

To buy: one bunch celery, 1 container peeled carrots, 1 container reduced sodium vegetable broth,

### Quick Fix



1 can reduced sodium cannellini beans, 1 can reduced sodium plum tomatoes, 1 container orecchiette pasta and 1 small piece Parmesan cheese.

Staples: olive oil, onion, garlic, salt and black peppercorns.

#### Italian Bean Soup

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 cup diced onion

1/2 cup diced carrots

1/2 cup diced celery

2 large crushed garlic cloves

1 1/2 cups reduced sodium vegetable broth

2 cups rinsed and drained cannellini beans

1 cup canned reduced sodium plum tomatoes

Salt and pepper

3/4 cup orecchiette pasta

2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

Heat olive oil in a large

saucepan over medium high heat. Add the onion, carrots, celery and garlic. Sauté until vegetables are soft, about 5 minutes, stirring often. Add broth, beans and tomatoes. Break up tomatoes with the edge of a spoon. Bring to a simmer, lower heat to medium and cover pan with a lid. Simmer 5 minutes. While soup cooks, bring a large pot 3/4 full of water to a boil and add the pasta. Boil 8 minutes or according to package instructions. Drain. When soup is ready, add the pasta and simmer 3 minutes. Ladle warm soup into two soup bowls. Add salt and pepper to taste. Stir to combine ingredients in bowl. Sprinkle Parmesan cheese on top.

Yield 2 servings.

Per serving: 574 calories (16 percent from fat), 10.1 g fat (2.2 g saturated, 3.8 g monounsaturated), 4 mg cholesterol, 28.4 g protein, 97.4 g carbohydrates, 18.6 g fiber, 243 mg sodium.

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Gassenheimer is the author of over 30 cookbooks, including her newest, "The 12-Week Diabetes Cookbook." Listen to Linda on WDNA.org and all major podcast sites. Email her at Linda@DinnerInMinutes.com.

## Playground presence raises some questions

DEAR ABBY: To help out his parents, I pick up my grandson from day care two days a week. I recently started taking him to a local park for about 45 minutes before I take him home. I'm physically active and climb the slides, chase him around and play with him. He loves our time together.

Over the last two weeks, there has been a little 6-year-old girl at the park who seems to be on her own. Her parents, I assume, are in the parking lot. They are not in the park play area.

The time we are there is the same time school gets out, so I'm sure she goes there every day after school. She has attached herself to us and wants me to go down the slide with her, push her on the swings and chase her constantly, and she asks me to watch her do this or that. Whatever we are doing, she is right there.

She is cute and sweet, but she is taking my time away from my grandson. Also, my grandson is annoyed at someone else demanding my time which also distracts me from keeping a close eye on him. There isn't another park we can go to that is nearby, and he loves this particular one. The girl is always there when we go. At first, I tried to include her in our play but that made it worse because she wanted more attention.

I am a retired teacher, so I understand she is craving attention from an adult, but she's really impeding on our play time together. How do I politely ask her to leave us alone? — DISTRACTED GRANDMA IN FLORIDA

DEAR GRANDMA: You are assuming that the little girl HAS a parent in the parking lot. The next time you see her, ask her who is there with her — mom, dad, aunt, caregiver? If you do, you can either meet the person and explain the problem or realize that no responsi-

ble adult is looking after her. If this is the case, for heaven's sake, report it to the school or CPS because leaving her all alone is child endangerment.

### Dear Abby



DEAR ABBY: I am a 66-year-old woman who has worked full time for 47 years, in addition to raising two children and maintaining a home. I will be retiring in three months because, honestly, I'm tired of the rat race.

I'm single and don't have a boyfriend. I have plenty of friends and family, but I'm increasingly nervous about what I'll do with my spare time. I know I should feel happy and grateful that I'm able to retire, but at the same time, I'm having anxiety over this freedom. Have you any suggestions to offer? — STOPPING SOON IN TEXAS

DEAR STOPPING: Start making a list of what your interests are. Your retirement years could offer you the chance to travel and see the wonders this country has to offer. You could take adult education classes at a nearby college or university. You might like to volunteer some time on projects or charities in your community. Or you could just hang out with friends. How you choose to spend your free time is entirely up to you and limited only by your imagination.

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.

### Today

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

DUNKIRK HISTORICAL MUSEUM — Is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the third Friday and Saturday of each month at Webster Depot, 132 W. Railroad St.

MUSEUM OF THE SOLDIER — Is open from noon to 5 p.m. the first and third Saturday and Sunday of

the month. It is located at 510 E. Arch St., Portland. The website is museumofthesoldier.com.

each Monday at Jay Community Center.

EUCHRE — Will be played starting at 1 p.m. each Monday at West Jay Community Center, 125 Hoover St., Dunkirk.

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY (TOPS) — Will meet for weigh-in at 4:30 p.m., with the meeting at 5 p.m., at Trinity United Methodist Church, 323 S. Meridian St., Portland. New members welcome. For more information, call (260) 726-5924.

THE LIFE CENTER — Free pregnancy testing with ongoing support during and after pregnancy, as well as help with the needs of the family. The center is located at 1209 S. Shank St., Portland. Hours are 1 to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (260) 726-8636. Walk-ins accepted.

BREAD OF LIFE COMMUNITY FAMILY MEAL — Will be served from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Asbury United Methodist Church, 204 E. Arch St. in Portland. Everyone is welcome.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS — Will meet at 6:30 p.m. each Monday at A

Second Chance At Life Ministries, 228 S. Meridian St. in Portland. For more information, call Brenda Eads at (260) 726-9625 or Dave Keen at (260) 251-8792.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR SUICIDE GRIEF — Meets from 7 to 8:30 p.m. the third Monday 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.

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JAY COUNTY PASTORS AND CHAPLAINS — Meet at 11:30 a.m. on the third Tuesday of each month in the chapel at Indiana University Health Jay Hospital.

COMPASSIONATE CONNECTIONS RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP — A group for anyone with a substance use disorder that helps individuals find connections as they develop long-term recovery.

meets at noon each Tuesday in the IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health Center, Entrance C, 510 W. Votaw St., Portland.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS — Will meet at 7 p.m. at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, 218 E. High St., Portland. For more information, call (567) 279-8352 or (260) 729-7000.

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WEDNESDAY

WEDNESDAY MORNING BREAKFAST CLUB — Will meet at 8 a.m. in the east room of Richards Restaurant. All women are invited to attend. Includes activities and devotional time.

PING PONG — Will be played from 11 a.m. to noon on Wednesdays at West Jay Community Center.

PORTLAND ROTARY CLUB — Will meet at noon each Wednesday in the cafe at John Jay Center for Learning, 101 S. Meridian St., Portland.

COMMUNITY REINFORCEMENT AND FAMILY TRAINING — A non-confrontational, evidence-based intervention for helping families affected by addiction meets at 4 p.m. each Wednesday in the IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health Center, Entrance C, 510 W. Votaw St., Portland.

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP — New Beginnings, a support group for friends and families of alcoholics, will meet at 6:30 p.m. each Wednesday in the Zion Lutheran Church, 218 E. High St., Portland. For more information, call (260) 726-8229.

A BETTER LIFE — BRIANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for substance abuse. Meal

starts at 6 p.m. and the meeting is from 6:30 to 8 p.m. every Tuesday at the Nazarene Fellowship Building across from the Nazarene church, 249 E. Center St., Dunkirk. For more information, call Amanda Price at (765) 283-2107.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS — Will meet at 7 p.m. at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, 218 E. High St., Portland. For more information, call (567) 279-8352 or (260) 729-7000.

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## Sudoku

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

Level: Advanced

### Friday's Solution

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

The objective is to fill a nine-by-nine grid so that each column, each row, and each of the nine three-by-three boxes (also called blocks or regions) contains the digits from 1 to 9 only one time each.

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IC: H

# Project seeks to light up river path

To the editor:

The Jay County Trails Club is excited to share some wonderful news with our community.

Recently, the Portland City Council unanimously approved Jay County Trails to move forward with a lighting enhancement project along the RiverPath Trail.

Dedicated by the City of Portland in 2009, the RiverPath Trail is a paved, tree-lined pathway that follows the Salamonie River, connecting Meridian Street to Wayne Street, linking Hudson Family Park to Freedom Park and providing pedestrian access to downtown. For those unfamiliar with the area, the trail runs along the south side of the East Jay Elementary School parking lot and is used daily by students and residents alike.

Even so, the trail often goes unnoticed. It offers peaceful river

## Letters to the Editor

views and glimpses of wildlife, yet its subtle presence has kept it from becoming the inviting space it could be. With simple, thoughtful string lighting, we believe this overlooked stretch can become something truly special — a place that feels safer, warmer and more inviting for everyone who uses it. As people enter Portland near the Arch Bridge, this new lighting will create a beautiful first impression. The soft glow along the river will warmly welcome residents and visitors alike, beautifully highlighting our RiverPath Trail.

Our vision includes the installation of black posts with overhead string lighting to gently illuminate the trail, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere that encourages people to walk and gather. Beyond improving safety, this lighting opens the pathway to new opportunities to enjoy and experience the trail in meaningful ways.

String lighting over the pathway creates space for evening walks, community events, and moments that bring people together. Many of us caught a glimpse of that magic last fall during Michelle Goldman's Bridge Dinner, when the lighting of the green bridge reminded us how powerful a thoughtfully designed space can be.

We are delighted to share that the Jay County Trails Club will cover the cost of materials for the lighting project, with funds

already secured through The Portland Foundation. We are also looking forward to working collaboratively with the city street department to help with the installation to bring this vision to life.

As the project moves forward, we invite community members, schools and local businesses to join us in making this space beautiful. Opportunities will be available to contribute through donations, volunteer time, materials, services or helping with future enhancements like landscaping, benches and other beautification efforts. We hope that this becomes a project our entire community can take pride in.

If you would like to contribute now, please make donations to The Portland Foundation, with "Trails Club Riverwalk Project" listed in the memo line.

This initiative builds upon the

city's investment in our trail system and reflects a shared desire to create spaces that strengthen connection, safety, and quality of life in Portland. We are grateful for the mayor and city council's support and excited to work alongside our community as we move ahead. This lighting project will bring more visibility, safety and beauty to one of our community's outdoor spaces. Evening strolls will feel warmer and more welcoming, and the trail will better connect our parks, neighborhoods and downtown.

This is the first chapter of a much bigger vision — and we're just getting started.

Stay tuned. We'll be sharing how you can be part of bringing this project to life.

Sincerely,  
Jenny Bricker  
On behalf of the Jay County  
Trails Club

## Stories are both inspiring, chilling

By TANIA NAVARRO

The San Diego Union-Tribune

Tribune News Service

It's not easy to talk about what is happening in Venezuela, especially when you are not Venezuelan and have neither lived nor worked in the country.

But as a journalist, I have spent years listening to Venezuelans tell their stories. While living in Utah, I even shared a house with someone from Barquisimeto, Venezuela's musical capital.

From friends, sources and neighbors, I learned about a country rich in culture and warmth — a place that once was a paradise, but whose complicated and painful history has led to the crisis we see today.

During my first year as a journalist in San Diego, in 2008, I learned a phrase that Venezuelans say with a smile: "Where there are Venezuelans, there will be bulla." Bulla means noise — laughter, music, life. Two years later, at the Salt Lake City farmers market, I tried *tequeños* for the first time and fell in love with the crunchy cheese-filled snack that has since become a symbol of home for many in the diaspora.

Those moments may seem small, even joyful. But they contrast sharply with the stories I have heard in recent years.

In 2023, while reporting outside a migrant shelter in Tijuana, I met Robert Connell. He was one of many Venezuelans on the move — first displaced to Peru, then Ecuador, and eventually forced to walk north with a migrant caravan to reach the Mexico-U.S. border. He arrived just in time to request an interview through the now-defunct CBP One app.

As a journalist, I wasn't allowed inside the shelter, so I spoke with migrants outside. Connell's story stopped me. He was a little older than me and had worked as an emergency medical technician and first responder for a local government in Venezuela.

Ironically, this proximity to power was his only way out: While the regime typically uses document retention to control its employees, his specific status allowed him to bypass the very repression that keeps others trapped. One night, with passports in hand, he escaped with his wife and two kids, including a newborn baby.

What he told me still gives me chills.

Tania  
Navarro



He spoke of hunger so widespread it reshaped daily life. Of the impossibility of finding food, medicine or basic supplies. Of why Venezuela was no place to raise a child. He described toddlers climbing trees to pick mangoes because there was nothing else to eat. Children digging through trash. Teenagers willing to trade their bodies for a piece of chicken.

Connell was prepared. He had skills, experience and determination. Even so, his journey was brutal and uncertain. The last time we spoke, he was in Chicago, having successfully entered the United States after his interview at the San Ysidro Port of Entry. I haven't heard from him since.

But I thought of him — and of the many Venezuelans I've met over the years — when news broke that dictator Nicolás Maduro had been apprehended on Jan. 3. I also thought of those who never made it out, those who died as a result of a brutal and inhumane regime.

What worries me now is what comes next.

Instead of extending a meaningful lifeline to people who are still resisting inside Venezuela — or those who were forced to flee — we are once again hearing rhetoric about mass deportations. A Trump administration eager to remove Venezuelan migrants ignores the reality that many of them are not economic opportunists but survivors.

Venezuelans did not leave their country lightly. They left because staying meant hunger, violence and hopelessness. If there is anything I have learned from years of listening, it is this: Where there are Venezuelans, there is bulla — but also resilience. The question is whether we are willing to listen to their stories, or whether we will choose to silence them by sending them back.

.....

Navarro is community opinion editor at The San Diego Union-Tribune. She is a transfronteriza who lives on both sides of the border.



## Braun had a lonely night

By JOHN KRULL

TheStatehouseFile.com

Normally, after a Hoosier governor finishes a State of the State Address, the hallway outside the chamber of the Indiana House of Representatives is clogged with people.

Supporters linger to share the good feeling of a big event for their team and to try to reinforce the speech's message. Opponents dawdle because they're seeking chances to reshape the narrative or offer a critique.

And some loiter just because they want attention and surfing the wave generated by the biggest speech a governor gives all year can make that happen.

This year, though, minutes after Indiana Gov. Mike Braun finished his second State of the State, the hall outside the House chamber was almost empty.

A few protesters holding handmade signs and shouting incomprehensible chants clustered outside the doors, but few others remained.

It was as if someone pulled a fire alarm and the building vacated.

The why of this is easy to determine.

The best thing that can be said about Braun's speech is that it was short — a listless 22-minute address that was short on substance and long on self-congratulatory gestures, many of them either selective or spurious.

Effective State of the State speeches summon citizens to do great things. They are calls to action, the blare of a bugle designed to fire the spirits of lawmakers and the people they represent to meet looming challenges.

Braun's address, though, had all the lift of a week-old grocery list.

It was a tired and tiresome offering, one that lacked a coherent theme, message or agenda for the state. About the only interest it generated came from watching to see if Braun

John  
Krull



would dislocate a shoulder patting himself on the back.

He made it sound as if Indiana were an economic paradise, rather than a state where per capita household income has lagged for decades. He said that Indiana was doing great and that Hoosiers were doing great.

It was a curious approach for a governor with public approval ratings rivaled only by nasty communicable diseases.

Reputable sources within the GOP have told me that their polls have found that Braun, a Republican serving in one of the reddest states in the country, recorded only a 24% approval rating. Worse, a recent poll commissioned in Braun's home county, Dubois County, found that he had only 16% support.

The return of the bubonic plague would poll better than that.

Given this evidence of a lack of confidence in the governor's leadership, it might have made sense for Braun to make use of the moment and confront the problem. He could have said that he had heard the voters and would rededicate himself and his administration to addressing their concerns.

Instead, the governor said, in effect, that those concerns were all in the heads of the citizenry, delusions that they should ignore.

To bolster this thesis, he offered arguments about wage growth contradicted by data reported by reputable sources and supported only by isolated outliers. He applauded the

work of the Indiana State Police and the Indiana National Guard and all but demanded that his listeners leave their seats to offer perfunctory and tepid standing ovations.

He roamed the countryside looking for good things that had happened on his watch to tout. He stopped just short of taking credit for the sun's rise every morning and the glistening beauty of the season's first snowfall.

To be fair, Braun came to the moment facing huge political challenges.

Thanks to the semi-special session the governor called in December to try to ram through President Donald Trump's ill-advised gerrymandering scheme, Braun faces an Indiana General Assembly that is at best indifferent and at worst hostile to his leadership. It cannot be fun to work in a building in which everyone is angry.

But other governors — Mitch Daniels comes to mind — have seen such moments as an opportunity to lead, not a reason to tread water.

Effective governors have two or three big goals they want to achieve, grand policy objectives they tout whenever and wherever anyone will listen.

As Mike Braun enters the second year of his governorship, reasonable people still wonder why he wanted to occupy the state's most prominent office — what he wants to accomplish with the power the state's people have granted him.

The reason the Statehouse was empty after Braun's State of the State is that this governor gave people no reason to stick around.

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

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— Thomas Jefferson

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1-17

## CRYPTOQUIP

DKFAU K N V I J G W V B K Y K U  
 B K Y W V I D F K R W Z T F K Z E  
 N J A K X A X W Z S K S A J K Z U  
 N P I V B A X: B A Z J E G J W Z R P A J.  
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I HEARD THAT ACTRESS RIVERA ONCE DECEIVED A FAST AFRICAN CAT. SO, DID CHITA CHEAT A CHEETAH?  
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: S equals P

**CRYPTO FUN**

Solve the code to discover words related to skiing. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 5 = I)

**A.** 7 23 15 19 24 20 5 19  
 Clue: Tall land mass  
 Answers: A. mountain B. lift C. powder D. hill

**B.** 4 5 8 24  
 Clue: Conveyance

**C.** 9 23 6 13 22 25  
 Clue: Soft snow

**D.** 10 5 4 4  
 Clue: Raised area of land

**SKI SLOPES WORD SEARCH**

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

T	D	R	T	C	T	P	P	M	T	W	V	O	J	P	K	T	N	C	X
L	F	A	C	A	L	E	H	X	I	E	L	T	J	R	G	L	A	D	E
S	S	U	V	S	L	A	K	U	V	C	H	A	I	R	I	L	K	P	N
C	L	O	N	A	B	U	C	C	P	G	N	I	V	R	A	C	N	A	
L	O	O	I	T	L	D	Y	I	A	O	A	H	E	R	W	P	W	P	L
M	P	B	G	R	R	A	D	I	T	J	L	D	I	F	T	R	L	O	
G	E	T	M	0	J	N	N	Y	C	R	G	E	Y	B	E	E	V	R	D
N	D	S	P	W	S	X	G	C	D	E	E	N	S	J	S	J	E	F	N
I	W	G	T	W	B	B	I	G	H	O	S	V	U	S	E	M	W	Y	O
R	A	M	N	T	K	L	P	X	E	H	X	K	X	O	O	C	C	E	N
S	S	I	D	A	G	L	J	A	H	C	G	I	G	O	L	W	E	C	N
P	H	D	F	R	T	N	T	R	C	K	L	B	R	P	W	C	B	O	D
F	E	N	J	K	I	T	I	E	I	K	R	G	W	Y	W	C	A	S	Y
K	L	I	O	Y	E	A	C	Y	W	D	O	X	N	E	S	T	L	H	
P	M	B	V	R	S	E	K	A	P	X	N	I	O	C	Y	I	R	S	F
F	E	J	R	F	E	P	E	L	W	S	M	A	A	X	N	E	R	L	G
A	T	A	N	G	U	D	T	E	N	A	B	P	G	M	D	J	U	U	O
T	I	X	U	V	C	L	S	F	V	X	L	R	W	O	Y	K	G	T	
N	T	K	E	L	S	D	V	A	S	X	I	T	O	A	W	N	R	O	N
R	E	N	C	H	T	V	K	B	J	S	A	P	A	X	O	Y	D	M	G

APRES-SKI  
AVALANCHE  
BASE LAYER  
BINDINGS  
BLACK DIAMOND  
CARVING  
CHAIR  
DROP  
EDGE  
GLADE  
GONDOLA  
GROOMER  
HELMET  
JACKET  
LIFT  
MOGULS  
POLES  
POWDER  
SLOPE  
SNOWPLOW  
TERRAIN  
TICKET  
VERTICAL  
WAX

**Trivial Review**  
 (Answers are printed below, upside down.)

**Location, location, location**

1) What city hosted the first College Football Playoff championship game in 2014?  
 2) Where was the Rose Bowl game moved to during World War II?

2) Duke University  
 1) Arlington, Texas

**CRYPTOQUIP**

R E B Y M R B I Q M W B K K T J C G Y Y X  
 I D T I M H E O B C D Y C C H M M B U B Y O I  
 Y O Y E F J M Q E W T S B O F C W T G G

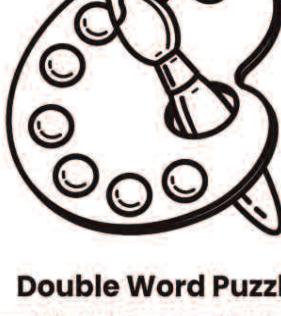
I T G S: T U D T I - O T X.

Saturday's Cryptoquip: FAMED ACTOR WITH A BAD HABIT OF MAKING MANY CREASES IN PAPER AND CLOTHES: HENRY WRINKLER.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: F equals G

**Creative Coloring**

Color in this picture to create your own masterpiece.



**THIS DAY IN HISTORY**



1909: Ernest Shackleton and his expedition find the magnetic South Pole.

1920: The League of Nations holds its first council meeting in Paris, France.

1969: Soviet spacecraft Soyuz 4 and Soyuz 5 perform the first-ever docking of crewed spacecraft in orbit.

**NEW WORD**

**NICHE**

a specialized segment of the market

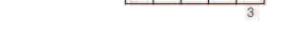
**ART & CRAFTS**

Answer: Arts and crafts



**TIGTINK**

Answer: TIGTINK



Answer: TIGTINK



Answer: TIGTINK



Answer: TIGTINK



Answer: TIGTINK



Answer: TIGTINK



Answer: TIGTINK



Answer: TIGTINK



Answer: TIGTINK



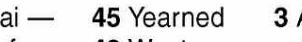
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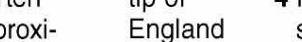
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Answer: TIGTINK



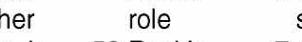
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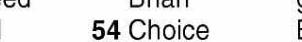
Answer: TIGTINK



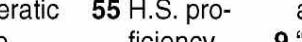
Answer: TIGTINK



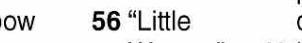
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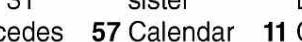
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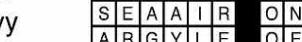
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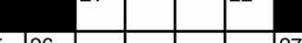
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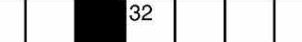
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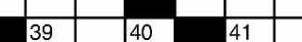
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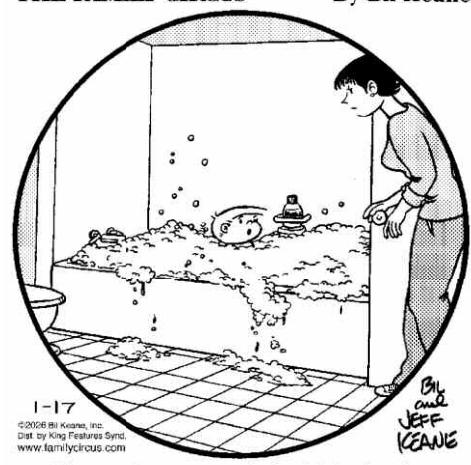
## SPEED BUMP

Dave Coverly



## THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane



## SPEED BUMP

Dave Coverly

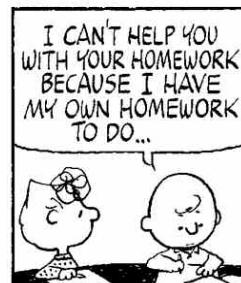


## THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane



## Peanuts



## Rose is Rose



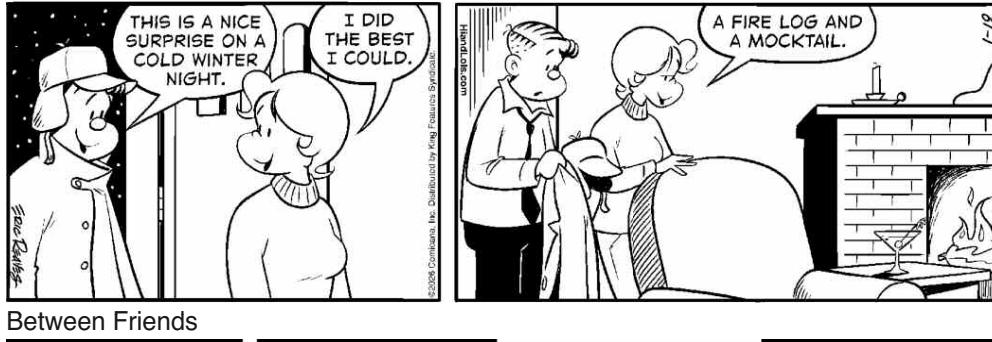
## Rose is Rose



## Agnes



## Hi and Lois



## Between Friends



## Blondie



## Snuffy Smith



## Beetle Bailey



Maybe it's a chuckle from reading a vintage Peanuts cartoon. Maybe it's a column by a member of The CR staff. But we try to keep our sense of humor.

The Commercial Review We Deliver

We Deliver  
Laughter

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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/  
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  
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Advertising Deadline is  
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**PLEASE NOTE:** Be sure  
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and we may not  
know unless you call to  
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Saturday Morning  
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**ANTIQUES - OLD &  
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ends; Bakelite handled  
cutlery; Roseville 946  
6" doubled handled  
vase; Longaberger; Carni-  
val Glass; Cranberry  
candy dish; Amberina  
fluted vase and tall red  
vase; ; several pieces of  
Pyrex; Germany plates;  
Pink Depression; 1 gal-  
lon wood barrel; 2 gal-  
lon wood barrel; light-  
ning rods with balls; St  
Marys OH oil can;  
Wapak #2, #8 and #9  
irons; 9 pt. brass light-  
ning rod top; US Army  
compass; skeleton keys;  
Bedrock PLANES:  
Stanley #605 and #606,  
Bailey #5, Stanley  
#113, Stanley #68, Stan-  
ley #80, Stanley #5,  
Stanley #71, Stanley  
Bailey #5, Millers Falls  
#68, #603 and Stanley  
#68 to name a few;  
American Electric wall  
telephone; Wilhelm Tele-  
phone Co. wall phone;  
advertising oil cans;  
soda and medicine bot-  
tles; 100# brass front  
scale; manuals; brass  
school bell; pipe  
wrenches; files; chisels;  
wedges; screw jack; stir-  
rups; feed sacks; car  
books; tractor books;  
and other items not list-  
ed.

Auctioneers Note: Auction  
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tos.

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**PUBLIC AUCTION**  
SATURDAY  
JANUARY 31ST, 2026  
TIME 10:00 A.M.

LOCATED: 6278 W.  
300 N. PENNVILLE, IN  
BACKHOE TRACTOR-  
CAMPER-TRAILER

Allis Chalmers I-400  
Loader Backhoe. Allis  
Chalmers WD45 Tractor.

1997 Prowler Fifth  
Wheel Camper. 2010

Single Axel Utility Trailer  
w/ Ramp. 2001 Dodge

Dakota 4x4 (rough).

Small Portable Chicken

House. Charcoal Hog

Roaster on Transport.

Troybilt Pony Rototiller.

Cushman Scooter. Mini

Bikes. Bicycles. Gas

Powered Wood Chipper.

Push Mowers. 1 1/2

Pacer Trash Pump.

Apartment Sized Chest

Freezer. 5 Drawer

Dresser. Portable Dish

Washer. Other Items Not

Mentioned.

OWNERS: Randy Morgan

and Patricia Morgan

Note: Check Auctionsoft

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## 110 HELP WANTED

## HIRING A DIRECTOR

Life Center of Jay County is Hiring for a

Part time position in Portland.

High school diploma or equivalent.

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with all socio-economic populations.

Administrative experience with excellent computer

skills, ability to manage strategic growth and

operational excellence and the desire to represent

the center throughout the community including

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required. Previous experience in the non-profit

sector is a plus.

Send resume to jaypccboard@gmail.com

READ THE CR  
THEN RECYCLE

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**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**

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**TRACT 1: Buildings-  
Pond- Approx. 5 Acres**

**TRACT 2: Approx. 30**

**Acres**

**TRACT 3: Tract 1 & 2**

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BAUMER, AU19600119**

**AARON SCHAEFER,**

**AU1160015**

**KENT ARNOLD,**

**AU19600255**

**Members serve for one year and**

**until a successor is appointed and qualified.**

**Board member one is appointed by the county commissioners.**

**Board member two is appointed by the largest city or town's executive.**

**To watch the hearing, visit**

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**Appointed Board Members:**

**3 Terry Hanks 08/15/2016**

**1 Jim Zimmerman 03/29/2018**

**2 Willard R Micheau 03/23/2021**

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**https://www.in.gov/ate/public-m**

**eetings/local-board-hearings**

## Box score

Southern Wells Raiders at Jay County Patriots			
Girls varsity summary			
Southern Wells (11-6)			
FG-FGA	FT-FTA	PTS	
Davis 5-12	2-2	15	
Coffel 2-4	0-0	4	
Meyer 2-2	0-0	4	
Reeves 1-6	0-0	3	
Watkins 1-4	0-0	2	
Carpenter 0-1	0-0	0	
Thomas 0-1	0-0	0	
Deweese 0-0	0-0	0	
Parks 0-0	0-0	0	
Chase 0-0	0-0	0	
Holmes 0-0	0-0	0	
Paxson 0-0	0-0	0	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>11-30</b>	<b>4-19</b>	<b>28</b>
			.367 .211
Def. Rebound percentage: .375			

Home (12-5)			
FG-FGA	FT-FTA	PTS	
KSchwtrmn 10-15	3-7	24	
HSchwtrmn 9-13	2-2	22	
Brunswick 5-8	0-2	10	
Newton 2-3	0-0	6	
Peters 2-5	0-0	4	
May 1-3	0-0	3	
Lekue 1-3	0-0	3	
Dirksen 1-2	0-0	3	
ASchwtrmn 1-2	0-0	2	
Schemenaur 0-1	0-2	0	
Kaigler 0-0	0-0	0	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>32-55</b>	<b>5-13</b>	<b>77</b>
			.582 .385
Def. Rebound percentage: .583			

Score by quarters:			
So. Wells	8	12	3
So. Wells	8	12	3
Jay Co.	27	22	10
	5	—	28
	27	22	10
	18	—	77

**3-point shooting:** Southern Wells 4-19 (Davis 3-9, Reeves 1-6, Coffel 0-2, Watkins 0-1, Thomas 0-1). Jay County 8-13 (HSchwierman 2-4, Newton 2-2, KSchwierman 1-2, Dirksen 1-1, Lekue Magro 1-1, May 1-1, Brunswick 0-1, ASchwierman 0-1).

**Rebounds:** Southern Wells 14 (Watkins 7, Davis 3, Coffel 1, Reeves 1, Carpenter 1, Holmes 1). Jay County 22 (Peters 6, KSchwierman 4, HSchwierman 3, Dirksen 3, Newton 2, Brunswick 2, May 2).

**Assists:** Southern Wells 6 (Davis 3, Coffel 2, Carpenter 1). Jay County 14 (KSchwierman 5, Brunswick 5, HSchwierman 3, Peters 1).

**Blocks:** Southern Wells 1 (Meyer 1). Jay County 2 (Brunswick 1, Peters 1).

**Personal fouls:** Southern Wells 10 (Coffel 2, Holmes 2, Watkins 2, Chase 1, Davis 1, Reeves 1, Carpenter 1). Jay County 7 (KSchwierman 2, HSchwierman 2, Lekue Magro 1, May 1, Kaigler 1).

**Turnovers:** Southern Wells 35. Jay County 15.

## Rout ...

Continued from page 10  
Offensively, Hallie Schwierman set the tone for Jay County. The junior provided 20 first-half points while orchestrating the Patriots' scorching start.

"She's talking to the girls and encouraging them and trying to get them in the right places, and just being a good floor leader like you want your point guard to be," McIntire said. "And she's doing a really nice job with that."

With the Patriots up by 29 points at the half, Hallie Schwierman played sparingly after the intermission, finishing with 22 points. She passed the torch to her sister Karsyn Schwierman, who continued to bolster Jay County's advantage with 15 of her game-high 24 points coming in the second half.

"I definitely didn't start off great, but as we went through the game, my teammates just were picking me up and helping me gain my confidence back," Karsyn Schwierman said.

Karsyn Schwierman wasn't the only Patriot to step up in Hallie Schwierman's absence. A total of nine different Jay County players entered the scoring column, including all five starters and four bench players.

"I'm so proud of them to be able to step on the court and do a good job, and keep that lead and handle the ball well," Hallie Schwierman said. "And I'm just happy that we get the opportunity that I can go sit down on the bench the second half and not have

"We're ready to go to the championship," Hallie Schwierman said. "I mean, especially with losing last year, I think people got the idea that maybe we weren't as good as we have been in the past, but I think we're as good, if not better; and I think that this year's gonna be a great year for us, and we're all out for blood. We lost our streak last year, and this year we're just going to start right back up again."



The Commercial Review/Ethan Oskroba

Kendall Schemenaur of the Jay County High School girls basketball team attempts a layup during the Patriots' 77-28 victory over the Southern Wells Raiders in the semifinals of the Allen County Athletic Conference tournament on Friday. Schemenaur was part of a bench unit that chipped in 12 points as the Patriots advanced to face Bluffton in the ACAC tournament championship game on Saturday.

## Flourish ...

Continued from page 10

"(She) won the first one in the morning, won the last one in the evening, and in between, it's going to be a blur for her and for us, but we're happy that she goes home 2-2. That's super awesome."

Rowles' final placing came down to another battle against No. 6 Delgado (21-9), who she lost to in overtime in last season's regional semifinal. She didn't allow it to last long.

When Delgado took a shot, Rowles sprawled. She avoided the takedown attempt and instead slapped a headlock on her rival. She worked it to a pinning position, finishing the match in just 40 seconds.

"When the shot came, I got my feet back," said Rowles, who plans to wrestle in college at Indiana Tech. "And I love to rip 'em from there, nice little headlocks. That's what I did."

Rowles had a strong start to her day, scoring eight points before unranked Annalise Sanchez of New Haven got on the board with an escape 30 seconds into the second period. Sanchez (20-7) closed the gap to 8-4 before Rowles ran off the next 13 in a row, including two near falls, for a 21-4 technical fall victory.

The dream of a state championship came to an end in the quarterfinal round, as Rowles was unable to find any traction against Hobart's fourth-ranked Joanna Cantu (36-5). Rowles first chased a single-leg takedown at



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Katie Rowles of Jay County gets a hand to the face while trying to hold down Aniah Delgado of Perry Meridian for a pin in their seventh-place match at 100 pounds during Friday's state finals. Rowles scored the pin in 40 seconds to finish her career with a victory.

the 1:30 mark of the first period but was unable to finish it, with Cantu eventually slipping behind her for a takedown.

The same pattern happened in the second and third periods as Cantu defeated Rowles 9-2.

"She hit angles to get the initial set up to finish the takedown, go behind, and the length of the Cantu girl from Hobart just was able to get her to square up on

Katie," said Jacks. "The length, I think, was our downfall there."

"And Katie kept going back to the drawing board ... She had three different types of shots, and they all ended in Cantu getting a takedown. But I wouldn't ask her to do anything different. She's aggressive."

Rowles rematched with Roncalli's Claire May (32-2) in the consolation semifinals after

upsetting the second-ranked wrestler in the state with a pin a week earlier in the regional semifinal. A repeat performance was not to be.

Though Rowles got on the board first with a headlock for a takedown midway through the second period, May responded with a reversal 17 seconds later. May chose the bottom position to start the third period. While

Rowles attempted to work a half nelson for near-fall points or a pin, May slipped out again for a second reversal and a 4-3 lead.

Rowles fought for an escape in the closing seconds of the match and made it to her feet, but did not get the call to even the score as time expired.

"Just a hard, tough fight between two really good wrestlers," said Jacks. "Last week, that was Claire's first loss and Katie was one that gave it to her. We knew it was going to be close."

Undefeated and top-ranked Kaitlynn Fouty (27-0) of Whitehall won the 100-pound state title.

The seventh-place finish with the win over Delgado completed a career in which Rowles was a three-time state qualifier and two-time state medalist. She placed fourth at 100 pounds in 2025 and helped the Patriots win the inaugural IHSAA sectional title at Muncie Central as well.

"I wish we could have everybody work as hard as Katie does," said Jacks. "She started freshman year, no shoes, no time on the mat. She had gone to watch her brother Cody wrestle, but she didn't really experience any wrestling. And went to state that year ...

"She just inspires the girls. ... She's always trying to build our program. ... So I'm going to miss her. For as small as she is, she casts a big shadow for us."

## Tribe picks up second MAC win over Minster

MINSTER, Ohio — With a one-point deficit at half, the Indians' fourth conference game could have gone either way, but a strong second half helped them prevail.

The Fort Recovery High School boys basketball team pulled out a 63-51 victory over the Division VII No. 7 Minster Wildcats on Friday.

Minster got off to a 15-10 lead by the first quarter break, but the Tribe fought back to go into halftime trailing 25-24.

They took advantage of a strong third quarter, in

which Hudson Overman

scored six points while Breaker Jutte, Brody Barga and Grant Fortkamp each had four, to take a 5-point lead. Jutte and Overman went to work in the fourth period to secure the victory for Fort Recovery (8-4, 2-2 Midwest Athletic Conference).

Jutte finished with a game-high 20 points, while

Overman had 19. Barga

also reached double fig-

ures with 12.

Cole McClurg was the

leading scorer for the

Wildcats (7-6, 0-4 MAC)

with 17 points. Beck Stephney had 12 as well.

Overman had 19. Barga

also reached double fig-

ures with 12.

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ures with 12.

Cole McClurg was the

## Ripped ...

Continued from page 10  
The Patriots' defense continued to bother Southern Wells as the Raiders went 0-3 from the field in the second quarter while turning the ball over 10 times.

While Jay County turned the Raiders over 16 times in the first half (22 in the entire game), it took care of the rock on the other end of the floor. The Patriots didn't cough the ball up at all in the first quarter. They slipped up some in the second period, but came back out at halftime and only gave the ball away three more times for eight total turnovers.

"We were able to just calm down," said junior guard Brock Wasson. "Coming into halftime we had (five) turnovers and coach told us not to get to 10. We ended with (eight) so we were able to focus in and do it."

With a strong lead at the end of the first quarter, Rigby was able to extend his bench. Nick Snow, Samuel Wiggins, Jacob Monroe and Alex Miller got to play throughout the second, third and fourth quarters. They ended with a combined four points, 11 rebounds and one assist.

"Those are big minutes for those guys," said Rigby. "Not just for them, but for us to see what kind of situations they're comfortable in. It's one thing to see it in practice everyday, but it's another to actually get them out here with the fans and bigger moments and see how they respond. I thought they all did a really good job."

Jayden Comer led the Patriots in scoring as he dropped 18 points for the second consecutive game. He finished 8-of-13 from the field, while vacuuming in six rebounds and dishing out two assists.



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

JCHS also got a nice lift from Wasson off the bench. He ended with 11 points, which finished as the second most in the game and tied Jaxcon Casterline of Southern Wells.

Wasson found particular success from beyond

the arc, hitting 3-of-4 triples.

"It definitely builds confidence," Wasson said. "Shooting from the 3-point line was rough last game, so it was nice to come out and knock them down. ... I was just going off my teammates screens

and using their bodies to get me open."

Rigby's emphasis throughout practice this week has been to focus on what the Patriots do well. While there is still some work to do, he likes the direction his team is heading and will look to claim

Brock Wasson of the Jay County High School boys basketball team goes up for a reverse layup to avoid the block attempt of Southern Wells' Joshua Aulbach during Friday night's Allen County Athletic Conference tournament semifinal. Wasson scored 11 points and dished out two assists to help power the Patriots to a 60-19 victory. JCHS will take on Heritage tonight in the ACAC championship game at South Adams.

## Box score

Southern Wells Raiders at Jay County Patriots

Boys varsity summary

Southern Wells (1-8)

	FG-FGA	FT-FTA	PTS
Frauhiger	0-2	2-2	2
Durham	0-7	0-0	0
AAulbach	1-4	0-0	2
Schneider	0-0	0-0	0
Williams	0-0	0-0	0
Pfister	0-0	0-0	0
Kirkwood	0-1	0-0	0
Casterline	4-8	3-4	11
Slusher	0-0	1-2	1
JAulbach	0-3	3-4	2
Gates	0-0	0-0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5-25</b>	<b>9-12</b>	<b>19</b>
	.200	.750	

Def. Rebound percentage: .484

Jay County (9-2)

	FG-FGA	FT-FTA	PTS
Overton	2-4	1-2	6
Comer	8-13	0-0	18
Monroe	0-4	2-2	2
Barnett	0-0	0-0	0
Wasson	4-9	0-2	11
Miller	0-1	0-0	0
Wiggins	1-3	0-0	2
Forthofer	3-5	0-2	6
Phillips	0-1	0-0	0
Snow	0-1	0-0	0
Swoland	4-9	1-2	9
Sommers	3-3	0-0	6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>25-53</b>	<b>4-10</b>	<b>60</b>
	.472	.400	

Def. Rebound percentage: .857

Score by quarters:  
So. Wells 2 4 9 4 — 19  
Jay Co. 22 17 12 9 — 60

3-point shooting: Southern Wells 0-4 (AAulbach 0-2, Frauhiger 1-4, Casterline 0-1). Jay County 6-20 (Wasson 3-4, Comer 2-6, Overton 1-2, Phillips 0-1, Swoland 0-1, Wiggins 0-2, Monroe 0-4).

Rebounds: Southern Wells 18 (Slusher 4, JAulbach 3, Frauhiger 2, Durham 2, Casterline 2, Team 2, Pfister). Jay County 34 (Forthofer 7, Comer 6, Monroe 3, Wiggins 3, Phillips 3, Snow 3, Barnett 2, Miller 2, Sommers 2, Overton, Swoland, Team).

Assists: Southern Wells 1 (AAulbach). Jay County 12 (Overton 3, Comer 2, Wasson 2, Barnett, Forthofer, Phillips, Snow, Swoland).

Blocks: Southern Wells 0. Jay County 1 (Swoland).

Personal fouls: Southern Wells 8 (Durham 4, AAulbach 2, Casterline 2). Jay County 7 (Wasson 3, Overton, Comer, Miller, Snow).

Turnovers: Southern Wells 22. Jay County 8.

I've been apart of are the ones that make the least amount of mistakes and execute what they're doing the best."

## Sports on tap

## Local schedule

Today

Jay County — Boys wrestling at Concordia Lutheran — 9 a.m.; Girls basketball in Allen County Athletic Conference tournament vs. Bluffton at South Adams — 6 p.m.; Boys basketball in Allen County Athletic Conference tournament vs. Heritage at South Adams — 8 p.m.; JV boys wrestling in State tournament at Ball State University — 10 a.m.; Junior high wrestling at Bellmont — 8:30 a.m.

Fort Recovery — Girls bowling vs. New Bremen at PIAA Lanes — 9 a.m.; Boys bowling vs. New Bremen at PIAA Lanes — 1 p.m.; Swimmers at MAC meet at Jay County — 1 p.m.; Boys basketball at Crestview — 5 p.m.

Monday

Jay County — Freshman boys basketball at Hamilton Heights — 6 p.m.; Junior high boys basketball vs. Elwood — 5 p.m.; Junior high girls basketball vs. St. Henry — 5 p.m.

Fort Recovery — Boys bowling in tournament at T-P Lanes — 8:30 a.m.; Girls bowling in tournament at T-P Lanes — 8:30 a.m.; Freshman boys basketball vs. Coldwater — 6 p.m.; Middle school boys basketball at Coldwater — 5 p.m.; Middle school girls basketball vs. Celina — 5 p.m.

Tuesday

Jay County — Swim vs. Muncie Central — 6 p.m.; Girls basketball vs. Norwell — 6 p.m.; Freshman boys basketball at Wapanaan — 6 p.m.

Fort Recovery — Swim in tri-meet at Delta — 5:30 p.m.; Girls basketball (varsity only) at South Adams — 7 p.m.; Middle school girls basketball vs. Coldwater — 5 p.m.

TV schedule

Today

12 a.m. — College basketball: Michigan State at Washington (BTN)

7:30 a.m. — Premier League soccer: Manchester United at Manchester City (USA)

10 a.m. — Premier League soccer: Liverpool FC at Burnley (USA)

12 p.m. — College basketball: UConn at Georgetown (FOX); Minnesota at Illinois (BTN); Kentucky at Tennessee (ESPN); Butler at Seton Hall (TNT); Virginia at SMU (ESPN2)

12:30 p.m. — College basketball: Duquesne at Fordham (USA)

12:30 p.m. — Premier League soccer:

5 p.m. — College basketball: North Texas at Tulane (ESPN2)

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

6:30 p.m. — NFL Playoffs Divisional Round: Los Angeles Rams at Chicago Bears (NBC)

6:30 p.m. — College basketball: St. Bonaventure at La Salle (USA); Utah State at Grand Canyon (FS1)

4 p.m. — College basketball: Arkansas at Georgia (ESPN2); Arizona at UCF (ESPN); Michigan at Oregon (NBC); Nebraska at Northwestern (BTN)

4:30 p.m. — NFL Playoffs Divisional Round: Buffalo Bills at Denver Broncos (CBS)

4:30 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Grand Canyon at New Mexico (FS1)

6 p.m. — College basketball: Texas A&M at Texas (ESPN2); Wake Forest at Florida State (ESPN2)

6 p.m. — College hockey: Minnesota State at Michigan Tech (FOX)

8 p.m. — NFL Playoffs Divisional Round: San Francisco 49ers at Seattle Seahawks (FOX)

8 p.m. — College basketball: Louisville at Pitt (ESPN2); BYU at Texas Tech (ESPN)

10 p.m. — Australian Open tennis (ESPN2)

Monday

3 a.m. — Australian Open tennis (ESPN2)

12 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Ohio State at TCU (FOX)

1:30 p.m. — NHL: Buffalo Sabres at Carolina Hurricanes (NTN)

2:30 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Michigan at Vanderbilt (FOX)

3 p.m. — Premier League soccer: Brighton & Hove Albion (USA)

4 p.m. — NHL: Washington Capitals at Colorado Avalanche (TNT)

5 p.m. — NBA: Dallas Mavericks at New York Knicks (NBC)

5 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Notre Dame at UConn (FOX)

6 p.m. — College basketball: Providence at Marquette (FS1)

7 p.m. — NBA: Indiana Pacers at Philadelphia 76ers (FDSN Indiana)

7:30 p.m. — College football National Championship: Miami vs. Indiana (ESPN)

8 p.m. — NBA: Boston Celtics at Detroit Pistons (NBC)

8 p.m. — Unrivaled basketball: Mist BC at Breeze BC (TNT)

9:15 p.m. — Unrivaled basketball: Lunar Owls BC at Vinyl BC (TNT)

Tuesday

3 a.m. — Australian Open tennis (ESPN2)

6:30 p.m. — College basketball: Minnesota at Ohio State (BTN)

7 p.m. — College basketball: LSU at Florida (ESPN2); Seton Hall at St. John's (FS1)

8 p.m. — NBA: San Antonio Spurs at Houston Rockets (NBC)

9 p.m. — Australian Open tennis (ESPN2)

10 p.m. — NBA: Los Angeles Lakers at Denver Nuggets (NBC)

10 p.m. — NHL: New Jersey Devils at Edmonton Oilers (TNT)

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## Jay boys ripped Raiders in ACAC semifinal

By ANDREW BALKO

The Commercial Review

The Patriots walloped the Warriors in the opening round of the Allen County Athletic Conference tournament.

Their semifinal opponent didn't post much of a threat either as the Patriots ripped the Raiders apart to clinch a spot in the final.

Jay County High School's boys basketball team ran away with a 60-19 victory over the Southern Wells Raiders in the ACAC tournament semifinal on Friday night.

The victory earned the Patriots (9-2) a trip to South Adams today to face the Heritage Patriots, who beat Bluffton 63-50 in the other semifinal, following the conclusion of the girls championship game.

The 41-point victory over Southern Wells (1-9) came three days after the Patriots beat Woodlan by 36. With the championship game looming on Saturday, Jay County could have overlooked the Raiders, but came out prepared to put the game away.

"I'm glad that one's over, that's the feeling I've got," said JCHS coach Tyler Rigby. "Honestly, that's a hard game to play in. I thought we responded really well early and started off where we left with Woodlan. We were mentally locked in and got off to the start that we really wanted."

"Sometimes, if you're not mentally locked into a game like that, it can go bad pretty quickly."

Jay County started the game on an 11-0 run that got broken up by Adam Aulbach on an off-balance runner with 3 minutes, 51 seconds remaining in the quarter.

SWHS didn't score again in the period as the Patriots put up 11 more points to lead 22-2 at the quarter break with five players contributing offensively.

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## Introducing the 2026 Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship Recipient

### For Jay County



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## Patriots roll to title game

**Jay County  
turned in  
dominant  
effort vs.  
the Raiders**

By ETHAN OSKROBA

The Commercial Review

The Patriots haven't lost back-to-back Allen County Athletic Conference tournaments since 2013 and 2014.

If Friday's performance is any indication, they're intent on keeping it that way.

The Jay County High School girls basketball team dismantled the visiting Southern Wells Raiders 77-28 in the ACAC tournament semifinal.

The Patriots will face Bluffton in the championship game on Saturday at 6 p.m. at South Adams High School.

"Glad to see that we're moving on, getting an opportunity to play in the

The Commercial Review

## Final flourish Rowles closes with victory for 7th

By RAY COONEY

The Commercial Review

INDIANAPOLIS — There were smiles after the opening round, sadness after the second and frustration following the third.

Ultimately, Katie Rowles felt the satisfaction of the referee's hand slapping the mat in her final match.

Rowles, a Jay County High School senior, became a two-time state medalist with her opening win Friday at the IHSAA Girls Wrestling State Finals and closed her career with another victory to finish in seventh place in the 100-pound weight class at Corteve Coliseum on the Indiana State Fairgrounds.

"I don't really think it's sunk in yet," said Rowles, who entered the postseason ranked seventh in the state. "It's just crazy to think that, for one, high school wrestling is over; and two, I finally got another win today."

"Today was a little rough. It's hard to come into the state tournament, especially your last go at the state tournament with big goals, and not let the pressure get to your head. And I don't really feel like I did. I think I wrestled my best ... It's nice to finally end it with a win."

Rowles (30-6) closed her career with a victory by pin over Aniah Delgado of Perry Meridian in the seventh-place match. She won her opening match of the day to secure a top-eight finish and a state medal before dropping her quarterfinal and consolation semifinal bouts.

Her effort earned 7.5 points for Jay County, placing it in 64th out of 121 teams represented in the state tournament.

Whiteland scored 99.9 points to win the team title ahead of runner-up Crown Point (78.5), with undefeated and top-ranked Kaitlynn Fouty (27-0) of taking the 100-pound state title to lead the way.

"Ups and downs like crazy, because ... she wrestled hard every match and a couple of times we didn't get her hand raised," said JCHS coach Troy Jacks. "But on any other given day, she did enough, had enough effort and enough skill to win those matches."

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The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Jay County High School senior Katie Rowles gets a hug from coach Troy Jacks after pinning Aniah Delgado of Perry Meridian to win her seventh-place match in the 100-pound bracket Friday during the IHSAA Girls Wrestling State Finals at Corteve Coliseum on the Indiana State Fairgrounds in Indianapolis. Rowles finished her career as a two-time state medalist after placing fourth at 100 pounds last season.

The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

championship game of the ACAC," said Jay County coach Sherri McIntire. "I thought we probably came and went a little bit in that game. I thought we coasted a little bit ... But at the end of the day, we're moving on, getting to play in a championship, so very pleased."

Jay County (12-5) didn't take long to assert its will on Friday night, blasting the Raiders (11-6) with a 13-0 opening run in the first two and a half minutes of play. The Patriot advantage ballooned to 27-8 at the end of the opening quarter as the team romped to a 49-point first half.

Turning defense into offense was a central theme for the Patriots, who generated a plethora of transition baskets by causing 21 first-half turnovers.

"Our defenses are key," McIntire said. "If we can get out and get some turnovers and get the ball out in transition and get some of those transition baskets, I feel like that just gets us going, gets our energy where it needs to be and that's where we're best."

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