

Safe Sanctum



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Stephanie Coons and Zachariah Reese opened Inner Sanctum Piercing and Tattoo in October at 326 S. Main St., Dunkirk. The couple said their experiences in the industry and their personal lives led them to want to open a shop that is clean, safe and kid-friendly. The business is open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

New tattoo shop is focused on family-friendly atmosphere

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review
DUNKIRK — Clean. Safe. Kid-friendly. Those were among the goals for Stephanie Coons and Zachariah Reese when they set out to start their business. Coons and Reese opened Inner Sanctum Piercing and Tattoo in October at 326 S. Main St., Dunkirk, in the former Plymouth church building. “What brought us here is we’ve worked at shops before and there’s a lot of bad in this industry,” said Coons, referencing substance abuse and other concerns. “So once we finished training, we decided to open up a safe, clean place for people to bring their children in to get the piercings they want done.”

“We both fought addiction,” she added, “and we don’t want that around us or any of the people we care about.” Now, Coons handles the piercing side of the business while Reese is the lead tattoo artist. Jayden Weese also works as a tattoo artist, and Inner Sanctum welcomed Misty Bishop to the team this week. Reese, who has lived in Dunkirk since kindergarten, has been interested in art since he was a child, counting Garfield cartoonist Jim Davis and painter Bob Ross among his heroes. “I just like artwork,” said Reese, adding that his babysitter, artist Charles Irvin, sparked his interest when he was 3 years old. “Like, when I was a kid, I’d draw pictures and give them to

the people that were over visiting my parents.” After graduating from Jay County High School in 2003, he was accepted into the Art Institute of Chicago but didn’t have the means to attend. He worked mostly factory jobs until he got an opportunity from Keni Lehman at Fat Cat Tattoo, located in the former Westlawn Elementary School in Dunkirk, and started training. Coons is a North Carolina native who left in search of a new start and ended up in Dunkirk. She met Reese at Fat Cat and was later helping him with a tattoo flash sale when customers kept inquiring about the availability of piercings. “I’ve always had a love for piercings,” said Coons. See **Sanctum** page 2



Photo provided

Zachariah Reese of Inner Sanctum Piercing and Tattoo specializes in cartoon characters like Betty Boop (above) and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

Paving, weather system projects progress

Design work continuing on planned airport improvements

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review
Plans continue to advance on a couple of projects at Portland Municipal Airport. Jason Clearwaters of engineering firm Butler, Fairman & Seufert updated Portland Board of Aviation on Wednesday about work toward runway rehabilitation and the installation of a new automated weather observing system. Clearwaters said his firm has the design of the runway rehabilitation about 60% complete. It will be ready to advertise for bids in May. The project calls for milling and paving the original 4,000 feet of the runway, which is about 25 years old. (In 2022, the runway was extended to 5,500 feet.) Clearwaters previously said he is hopeful that the Federal Aviation Administration will also approve new LED lighting for the entire runway. Bids for the project will be due in mid-June for the board to review at its June 17 meeting. Final grant applications and bids are due to the FAA by June 30. The project is estimated at \$1.52 million. Clearwaters added that the design is about 90% complete on a new weather system for the airport. He said he had a call scheduled for Thursday to learn more about options for communications linking the terminal to the new weather system. He previously told the board two other facilities he works with recently replaced their weather systems, with costs ranging from \$181,000 to \$225,000. The project will be paid for with the airport’s remaining funds from the 2021 federal infrastructure bill. See **Projects** page 2

Online lottery ticket sales won’t advance

By TOM DAVIS
Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com
The plug has been pulled on a bill that would give the Hoosier Lottery permission to sell tickets online and host instant games on its website. The proposal cleared an Indiana House committee on Jan. 8 but had not been called for a vote by the full House. It was scratched from Thursday’s House calendar and won’t advance this legislative session, House Public Policy Committee Chair Ethan Manning said. “It didn’t have enough support, really, from either caucus on the concept,” Manning told

Committee chair says measure did not have enough support

the Indiana Capital Chronicle. “I don’t think I could have changed one word in the bill to gain any more votes. It’s just the idea itself. We’re clearly not ready, as a Legislature, to move any further on any forms of online gambling.” Illinois, Kentucky and Michigan are among 18 states currently with online lottery sales

and Hoosier Lottery officials supported the move as a way to boost revenue. An analysis of House Bill 1078 projected that online sales would increase the lottery’s revenues by between \$314 million and \$629 million in the third year. That would increase the lottery’s annual profits — \$340 million for fiscal year 2025

— by between \$31 million and \$94 million in the third year. The lottery’s sales have been flat at around \$1.7 billion for the past five years. Manning, R-Logansport, called the bill’s failure “a shame, because it’s one way to get additional state revenue without raising taxes, and we have very few ways to do that.” “I was hopeful that that argument would help, but it did not,” he said. A Hoosier Lottery spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Manning’s committee last year endorsed a bill for both online lottery and internet casino games, but it didn’t reach the

full House for a vote amid concerns of drawing business away from physical casinos and greater gambling addiction risks. Manning said this year’s bill faced similar objections despite focusing solely on lottery sales, pointing to worries over online sports betting that was legalized in 2019. “Sports wagering, having gone so early and Indiana being one of the earliest states to do that, I think that’s hurt our argument for further forms of online gaming, because a lot of members don’t like the impacts,” he said. “They don’t like seeing the advertisements and those sorts of things.”

Deaths	Weather	In review	Coming up
Merlie Thinnies , 79, Huntington Details on page 2.	The temperature in Jay County climbed from a low of 21 early Wednesday to a high of 44 late in the day. Tonight’s low will be near zero. There is a chance of light snow Saturday with a high of 11. Snow is expected Saturday evening. See page 2 for an extended outlook.	Jay County Solid Waste Management District will have recycling trailers available from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday in the parking lot at 220 Lincoln St., Portland, and Dunkirk City Park.	Saturday — Details from the JCHS boys basketball game against South Adams. Tuesday — Coverage of Monday’s Jay County Commissioners meeting. Wednesday — Details from next week’s Dunkirk City Council meeting.



Projects ...

Continued from page 1

The current weather system, which provides real-time weather data for pilots, is nearing 25 years old. Airport manager Hal Tavzel has said they are typically expected to last about 15 years.

The board also approved three grant reimbursement requests totaling \$24,347.76 for the airport's apron expansion project, which is complete except for grass seeding that will wait

until the spring. The expansion added 57,700 square feet to the apron — the area where aircraft are parked, unloaded or loaded, refueled, boarded or maintained.

Clearwaters noted that the city will be returning \$39,466 to the FAA and Indiana Department of Transportation because the project came in under budget. He said the federal portion of those funds will be available to the board for other projects.

In other business, the board:

- Learned from Clearwaters that the state is implementing a new software program that will require e-signatures for reimbursement.
- Heard the following from airport manager Hal Tavzel:
 - The airport sold 7,839 gallons of fuel in December for \$34,446.56. That's up from 4,281 gallons in December 2024. He also reported that the total fuel sales came in at 90,037 gal-

lons for 2025, up by more than 7,000 gallons from 2024.

—He is working on hiring a new flight instructor. He explained that the current instructor will be transitioning into more charter flight work.

—A project to add spray foam insulation to a hangar has been completed by Schmidt's Spray Foaming of Willshire, Ohio.

- Approved \$843.71 in claims.






Obituaries

Merlie A. Thinnest, Huntington, a relative of Jay County residents. Sept. 6, 1946-Jan. 20, 2026. Services will be at 2 p.m. Sunday at Walker & Glancy Funeral Home, 109 Windsor St., Montpelier.

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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, birth/death date and services. There is a charge for obituaries, which are accepted only from funeral homes or mortuary services.

CR almanac

Saturday 1/24	Sunday 1/25	Monday 1/26	Tuesday 1/27	Wednesday 1/28
 11/8 A light dusting is expected Saturday when the low may reach single digits.	 16/6 Sunday has a 90% chance of snow with temperatures in single digits.	 9/0 Monday's weather looks like mostly sunny skies with the low hitting zero degrees.	 18/5 Mostly sunny skies on Tuesday when the high may hit the upper teens.	 10/0 Mostly cloudy skies with temperatures again sinking to zero degrees late.

Lotteries

Powerball 11-26-27-53-55 Power Ball: 12 Power Play: 2 Estimated jackpot: \$20 million	Daily Four: 0-2-5-6 Quick Draw: 1-8-11-14-21-23-26-28-30-31-35-37-40-47-48-51-53-60-72-79 Cash 5: 5-10-24-41-42 Estimated jackpot: \$319,500
Mega Millions Estimated jackpot: \$266 million	Ohio Wednesday Midday Pick 3: 6-4-9 Pick 4: 3-4-2-4 Pick 5: 7-1-0-6-3 Evening Pick 3: 7-4-0 Pick 4: 6-4-2-1 Pick 5: 5-0-8-3-0 Rolling Cash: 6-7-13-18-23 Estimated jackpot: \$120,000
Hoosier Wednesday Midday Daily Three: 4-5-8 Daily Four: 2-1-3-0 Quick Draw: 1-7-8-9-20-22-26-30-31-33-35-36-37-42-44-46-52-71-72-78 Evening Daily Three: 6-1-2	

Markets

Cooper Farms Fort Recovery Corn.....4.41 Feb. corn4.43	Wheat 4.74
POET Biorefining Portland Corn.....4.41 Feb. corn4.38 March corn4.35	ADM Montpelier Corn.....4.24 Feb. corn4.26 Beans10.57 Feb. beans10.61 Wheat4.93
The Andersons Richland Township Corn4.33 Feb. corn4.35 Beans10.59 Feb. beans10.63	Heartland St. Anthony Corn.....4.38 Jan. corn4.41 Beans10.32 March beans10.32 Wheat4.64

Today in history

In 1812, the second New Madrid Earthquake struck, with an estimated magnitude of 7.5, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

In 1971, the Bryant High School boys basketball team improved to 11-3 with a 91-75 victory over Redkey. Center Rick Schoenlein led the Owls with 28 points.

In 1962, Jackie Robinson was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility.

In 1973, President Richard Nixon announced an accord had been reached to end the Vietnam War, and would be formally signed four days later in Paris.

In 2009, New York Gov. David Paterson chose Democratic Rep.

Kirsten Gillibrand to fill the Senate seat vacated by Hillary Rodham Clinton.

In 2020, Chinese state media said the city of Wuhan would be shutting down outbound flights and trains, trying to halt the spread of a new virus that had sickened hundreds of people and killed at least 17. The World Health Organization said the viral illness in China was not yet a global health emergency, though the head of the U.N. health agency added that “it may yet become one.”

In 2025, Karlise Niekamp scored 22 points to lead the Fort Recovery High School girls basketball team to a victory over the Coldwater Cavaliers.

—The CR

Citizen’s calendar

Today 8 a.m. — Portland Redevelopment Commission, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland. 4 p.m. — Jay County Personnel Committee, commissioners room, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.	Commissioners, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland. 3:45 p.m. — Jay County Solid Waste Management District, 5948 W. Indiana 67, Portland. 6 p.m. — Dunkirk Board of Works, city building, 131 S. Main St. 7 p.m. — Dunkirk City Council, city building, 131 S. Main St.
Monday, Jan. 26 9 a.m. — Jay County St.	

Sanctum ...

Continued from page 1

So, she became an apprentice and learned the craft.

“I like to bedazzle myself, for one,” said Coons, referencing her ear, lip and nose piercings. “But mainly for me, when it comes to doing piercings, I like the look that the client has, the huge smile, the new appreciation for that part of the body that they might not have had. That makes my day.”

She also enjoys interacting with clients and hearing their unique stories.

Reese’s tattoo specialty is cartoon characters ranging from Bettie Boop to Pikachu to pizza-loving reptiles — “I’m a little obsessed with Ninja Turtles,” he said. On a recent afternoon, he was working on a Powerpuff Girls tattoo on Coons’ leg.

He also enjoys black and gray fantasy pieces.

When they were ready to open their own business, Reese saw a Facebook post from building owner Zach Crouch. Both longtime Dunkirk residents, they already knew each other and quickly came to an agreement on rent.

The space needed just a few adjustments — adding a sink and removing carpet in favor of a hard-surface floor — to make it ready for customers.

Piercings range from \$25 to \$200, depending on placement on the body. The base rate for tattoos is \$50, with prices increasing based on size, intricacy and location. The shop also offers occasional flash sales, during which customers can select from a smaller selection of options at a lower cost.

Inner Sanctum is now open five days a week, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Walk-ins are welcome.

“Because Sundays are family day and Garfield hates Mondays,” Reese explained.

With Bishop on board, the busi-



Photo provided

“I’m a little obsessed with Ninja Turtles,” said Inner Sanctum tattoo artist Zachariah Reese. He was working on Powerpuff Girls tattoo on co-owner Stephanie Coons’s leg last week and his other work includes the Sorting Hat from the “Harry Potter” series.

“It’s been good, for a small town,” said Coons. “We get our people. We have some regulars. It’s just up from here.”

“We’re making enough to pay our rent, and a little extra,” added Reese. “And we’re not charging people an arm and a leg.”

SERVICES

Today

Bemis, Chris: 11 a.m., Family Worship Center, 200 E. Elder St., Portland.

Duncan, Shirley: 11 a.m., Downing & Glancy Funeral Home, 100 Washington St., Geneva.

Sunday, Jan. 25

Thinnest, Merlie: 2 p.m., Walker & Glancy Funeral Home, 109 W. Windsor St., Montpelier.

Spohn, Les: 3 p.m., Zechar Bailey Funeral Home, 1499 N. Broadway St., Greenville, Ohio.

Saturday, Feb. 28

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

Service listings provided by

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GRAPHIC PRINTING
NEWSPAPERS

JC grad will be featured in concert

A Jay County High School graduate will be featured in concert next month.

Jordan Wickey, a saxophone player, will perform as part of Ball State Symphony Orchestra's concert at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 26, in Sursa Performance Hall on the campus of Ball State University.

Wickey was one of two winners of a concerto competition at Ball State. He will be performing "Concerto for Alto Saxophone" by Henri Tomasi.

Tickets range from \$5 to \$10.

Taking Note

They are available by calling (765) 285-8749 or at the BSU College of Fine Arts box office in Sursa Hall.

Sorority met
Zeta Alpha chapter of Delta

Theta Tau sorority met Jan. 8. Attending were Sue Ann McLaughlin, Linda Lowe, Kathy Nelson, Lois Nauman, Sharon Hammers, Karen Garringer, Connie Louck, Jana Brighton, Jackie McCollum, Bonnie Seward and Mary Miller. Thank you cards were shared.

We will have fresh strawberry orders available in February. February 7 will be our turn to recycle downtown.

Hostesses Jana Brighton and Lois Nauman served snacks. Our Lucky Lady was Bonnie

Seward and Mary Miller won the Pot of Gold.

Exhibit opening
The exhibit Emmett Till & Mamie Till-Mobley: Let the World See will open Saturday, Jan. 24, at Minnetrista Museum & Gardens in Muncie.

The exhibit examines the life and legacy of Emmett Till, a 14-year-old who was murdered in 1955, and his mother Mamie Till-Mobley. It features images and first-hand narratives about Till-Mobley's effort to tell the

world what happened to her son.

The exhibit will run through April 12.

On the lists
Local students were honored recently by their universities.

Brandyn Towell of Portland was named to the president's list for Southern New Hampshire University.

Megan Knapke of Fort Recovery was named to the president's list for the fall semester at Miami University.

Learning opportunities are the key

By SCOTT ERVIN
Tribune News Service

Dear Kid Whisperer,
I teach in a PK-K Montessori room. What do you do for children who are hitting/hurting others or saying and doing unkind things on a consistent basis? Parents are involved in this, we've had meetings, the student has been assessed, etc... but it just keeps happening to the point that other parents complain about their child, worrying about this student picking on them or hurting them. We go through the steps of helping the student who is hurting to use their words and say, "Don't hit me," or "That makes me feel bad," and then the child who's hitting will have a chance to say something like, "Are you OK?" and "What can I do to help you feel better/fix your heart?" and so on. This child has gotten

Kid Whisperer



really good at these exchanges, but the behavior still gets worse. So now we've started suspending him, which has also made the behavior worse.

Answer: What you are doing as a teacher falls into the "Perfectly Fine, but Woefully Inadequate" category. This has then put your administrator in a position to do something that is pretty destructive (suspension) to the little guy, though it may seem unavoidable if you aren't shown exactly what to do with this kid in the classroom.

You are skillfully

intervening in the use of this kid's negative behavior. That's great, but it is clearly not enough, as he continues to hurt people. You are stuck on interventions when you should be moving on to Learning Opportunities. You need to give this kid the opportunity to learn not to hurt people. He is learning that there are no consequences for hurting people, and that is a dangerous lesson. It is best to teach this kid the lesson that hurting others causes pain for everyone—including the hurter. You can teach him this now or the police, or someone bigger than him, will teach him this lesson later.

Here's how I would teach this lesson to a kindergartner the day after he has physically hurt a kid. I would have a conversation with a par-

ent about keeping him after school for this Learning Opportunity. Otherwise, I would do this at recess.

Kid Whisperer: Hey, buddy. It really made me sad when you hurt Juriah yesterday.

Kid: I did say "I'm sorry." Well, all's well that ends well! That's what I always say. Anywho, I'll be leaving now. I have a 4 o'clock appointment...

Kid Whisperer: Actually, I talked to your mom and she isn't coming to pick you up just yet.

Kid: I sense that something is afoot.

Kid Whisperer: Oh, boy. You are presently struggling with not hurting people. I'm going to ask that you become an expert at not hurting people before you start doing things where you have the chance to hurt people. While I sit here and grade papers, I'm

going to ask that you stay next to me and pretend that I am a student. I'm going to ask that you practice not hurting me.

Kid: I said I was sorry!

Kid Whisperer: I know. Thank you for that. How long do you need to practice being next to me without hurting me: 20 minutes or 25 minutes?

Kid: I don't know!

Kid Whisperer: 25 minutes it is. Would you rather sit, stand or march in place?

Kid: Aaaagggghh! Sit, I guess!

Kid Whisperer: That's fine. You can march in place or stand if you change your mind. Just stay right next to me so you can practice not hurting me. I don't have the energy to talk to students after school since this is my break. I will keep time. Your practice time starts now. Good luck!

Every few minutes the Kid Whisperer will say, "I notice you not hurting anyone!" in order to reinforce this peaceful behavior. Kid Whisperer can read if he wants to. If Kid doesn't stay near you peacefully, you simply don't count that time as successful practice time. He won't be able to participate in high-risk activities such as recess or lunch near other kids until he practices successfully. This kid learning that his world gets worse when he hurts people and better when he doesn't could be the most important lesson of his lifetime!

.....

Ervin is a parent, behavioral consultant and former teacher and principal. He is the author of "The Classroom Behavior Manual: How to Build Relationships, Share Control, and Teach Positive Behaviors."

Husband's social media serves one purpose

DEAR ABBY: I saw my husband's Instagram account, and he's following only women who show their bodies provocatively. Is that emotional cheating, or is it just lust? Also, is that grounds for divorce? His looking at and lusting after women online hurts my feelings. -- IMAGE PROBLEM IN ALABAMA

DEAR IMAGE PROBLEM: What you have described is lust. Emotional cheating involves starting a relationship with someone. While there are many grounds for divorce in the state of Alabama, looking "with lust" at scantily clad women on Instagram is not one of them. Many men do this, and it doesn't present a threat to their marriages. (Consider it

Dear Abby



an updated version of the old Playboy calendars you might have seen hanging in garages.)

Come to think of it, there was once a PlayGIRL magazine containing centerfolds with photos of gorgeous, scantily clad men. (I'm sure a friend told me about them.)

.....

DEAR ABBY: I've been a hairstylist for 37 years. My niece is getting married in two months.

Four months ago, my sister-in-law asked me to do her hair for the wedding, and I agreed. Well, about a month ago, I learned that another niece (who doesn't do hair) has offered to do it because she and her best friend want to start a wedding planning service. This hurts my feelings so bad. Please help me understand why I shouldn't be upset finding out about this. -- READY TO STYLE IN OHIO

DEAR READY: You write that another niece has offered to do the bride's hair. Did the bride accept her offer? If the answer is yes, dry your tears and wait to see the result when an amateur pushes a professional out of the way on the most important day in a young

bride's life. If you have any compassion in your heart, pack your gear in your trunk and have it handy, because the bride may need your help. Desperately.

.....

DEAR ABBY: Every time I tell my wife something, she questions it, doubts it or disagrees. I could walk inside soaking wet and say, "It's raining," and she'd still check her phone's weather app. We went to counseling years ago, but the counselor focused mainly on my communication problems, not so much on hers, which made her behavior worse.

I have reached my breaking point. I no longer want to talk to my wife because I know she'll question whatever I say. Each time it happens, I feel myself

getting angrier. One day, I may snap and tell her exactly how I feel about her behavior. -- KEEP IT TO MYSELF

DEAR KEEP: "One day" you will tell her? How about getting it off your chest right now? Swallowing your anger has only allowed this problem to fester. Tell your wife you have reached your breaking point, that you both need more counseling from a different therapist. If she refuses, consult one for yourself, starting now.

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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 available. To submit an item, email news@thecr.com.

Today PAST RECOVERY

SERVICES — Peer Addiction Support Team recovery support group meets at 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. each Friday at the Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition office at 100 N. Meridian St., Portland. To learn

more information, please call (260) 251-3259.

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

Sunday
A BETTER LIFE - BRIANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for all kinds of addictions, will meet from 5 to 6:30 p.m. each Sunday at Fellowship Baptist Church, 289 S. 200 West, Portland.

Come early for a meal. For more information, call (260) 766-2006.

Monday
PORTLAND BREAKFAST OPTIMISTS — Will meet at 7 a.m. for breakfast at Richards Restaurant.

PING PONG — Will be played from 9 a.m. to noon 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 COM-

MUNITY 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.

PORTLAND EVENING OPTIMIST CLUB — Will meet at 6 p.m. the second and fourth Monday of each month at Richards Restaurant.

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.

Sudoku

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

Level: Advanced

Thursday's Solution

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

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

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We need to define ‘rural health’

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

I do love AI.
If it gives me a clear answer, it's probably wrong. However, one of AI's comprehensive, in-depth, multi-referenced, nuanced discussions will derail my train of thought.
Congress and the administration have been working on a 10-year, \$3 billion aid package for rural hospitals.
No.
They claim to be working on improving rural health. But they cannot define health, nor can they be sure what is "rural."
Seems simple to me. Health is what I have until I feel sick. Urban is where I live, if I can see more than one house when I look outside.
For years, Hoosiers have suffered from the urban-rural

Morton J. Marcus



divide. Urban is where your children want to live until they want less of that and more of this. To make that adjustment, they choose suburban, something close to, but below urban. Suburban is purgatory in the celestial classification system.
Urban used to be cities and towns, but as those entities spread out like aging relatives, population density became more fashionable as a measure. Except many people who lived in

rural areas tended to work, shop and use services in urban places. Were they Rubans?
Psychologically, Hoosiers are rural folk. According to faculty I know at Purdue, if you eat, you are part of farming and farming is a rural activity. I tend to believe, if you eat, you are part of plumbing and associated waste treatment, but I don't have a strong lobbying group on my side.
These days, and subject to change, the Census Bureau defines an urban area as having at least 2,000 housing units or 5,000 persons.
The Office of Management and Budget classifies counties as part of metropolitan areas based on commuting flows. The Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service is

more lyrical and uses a four-tone scale for its FAR (Frontier and Remote) system. This is based on the time distance from the ZIP code of residency to various service availabilities.
If the government seeks to improve rural health care, then the FAR classification system seems most compelling. The issue should be the time distance not to a hospital, but to specific services within hospitals.
This means outstanding triage everywhere, with increasing levels of service within matrices of frequency of demand and required resources given time constraints. That's probably too complicated for the top level of the Department of Health and Human Services, but practitioners probably work it out daily.

Under the FAR coding system, a ZIP code is level 1 if it is 60 minutes or more from a high level of medical services. For purposes of use in Indiana, this is useless.
According to the latest data I found from Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service (dated April 15, 2015), only 65 of our 36,184 square miles of land area (a robust 0.6%) and just 2,197 people among our 6.6 million people (0.034%) are in level 1 of FAR.
I'll bet we'll still get multi-millions of the \$3 billion. As will Rhode Island. That's why we have U.S. senators.
.....
Marcus is an economist formerly at the IU Kelley School of Business. Contact him via email at mortonjmarcus@gmail.com.

King would stand for our democracy

By **MITCHELL ZIMMERMAN**
OtherWords

In the mid-1960s, I joined the freedom movement in the South as a member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in Georgia, Mississippi, and Arkansas. Those were heady years, and I am proud of my small role in the great achievements of that time.
Our movement breathed new life into American democracy, inspiring and teaching people who led many of the other liberation movements of the 1960s and '70s. It opened up schools, education, jobs, public accommodations, voting power, electoral office, and judgeships to people of color in the South and throughout the country.
But there is also a fight for history. Those who rule our society have a miserly notion of democracy, and they have re-told the story of our movement, to try to make it fit into the way they want most people to act — as passive observers of government and society, who do nothing other than vote every few years.

The distorted history they tell of the civil rights movement fits into that stingy vision. Their version of our history says that the movement was about a handful of great leaders, like Dr. Martin Luther King, and their followers.

Dr. King was an extraordinary leader — a moral giant, a radical thinker, a gifted tactician, a great teacher of the power of nonviolence, and one of the most eloquent and inspiring speakers in American history. His memory and his teachings remain a threat to those who seek to empower white supremacy and debase our democracy, which is why MAGA denigrates Dr. King and tries to obscure his teachings.

But a giant part of King's leadership was inspiring others to be leaders. The freedom movement was about thousands upon thousands of leaders, all across America, sometimes acting in planned ways, sometimes acting spontaneously.

The movement was about millions of people who took to the streets, courthouses, and schools, who were jailed and beaten, fired, and abused for standing up for themselves. People who nonetheless protested, organized, went to meetings, voted, and demanded justice — demanded freedom.

Mitchell Zimmerman



Each of them was a leader, too, leading other Americans to understand the flaws of our nation — and the urgency of curing them.
One other important lesson to understand about the movement was that, with hindsight, its victories appeared inevitable. But they did not seem inevitable at the time. People had to persist in struggle over years and decades, understanding that to grow discouraged would be a kind of surrender — that defeats might not be permanent, nor would victories, and that it might take a long time to finally smash the Jim Crow system.

Those lessons apply to today's struggle against fascist authoritarianism in the United States. I keep hearing people ask, "What can we do?" and "Can anything we do make any difference?"

Persisting — not surrendering to despair — is part of the struggle. Victory over fascism may not be inevitable, but neither is defeat. We must keep demonstrating on the streets — peacefully, no matter what violence ICE wreaks — monitoring ICE activities, recording their abuses and exposing them, disrupting when we can at acceptable risk, writing to our representatives and to newspapers, voting, canvassing, contributing money and time, joining with others, and above all reaching out.

We must all become leaders in small or large ways, attempting to persuade and remind others of the dangers and of the injustices that we are fighting against, and urging them to act.

Dr. King would have recognized the urgency of this moment, as the Trump regime seeks to reverse the gains of the past and to eviscerate American constitutional democracy. And he would have been proud of those who stand up — peacefully, insistently, loudly — and say No, we're not going to go backward.

.....
*Zimmerman is an attorney, longtime social activist and author.
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Parties need some soul searching

Chicago Tribune
Tribune News Service

A record 45% of American adults now identify as political independents, according to new Gallup polling — up from 33% in 1990. That's a big change.
As the ranks of the politically homeless grow, the share of Americans who call themselves Democrat or Republican continues to shrink. That's hardly surprising. Both parties increasingly reward the loudest, angriest voices within their coalitions, leaving many voters unwilling to claim a label that no longer reflects how they see themselves. Gallup found that many independents still lean toward one party; nonetheless, their reluctance to wear a partisan badge is telling.

It points to a broader problem: Our political leaders are mistaking a small but furious online minority for the country itself.

There's a name for the system that thrives on that confusion: the rage economy.

It's a concept increasingly used by voices such as TV journalist Chris Cuomo and state legislators such as Texas state Rep. James Talarico who discussed the term in a Jan. 13 conversation with Ezra Klein of The New York Times. Talarico, a Texas Democrat, is in a high-stakes U.S. Senate primary against U.S. Rep. Jasmine Crockett. In his conversation with Klein, Talarico rails against billionaires who he describes as profiting off of news networks, social media platforms and algorithms that divide us instead of bringing us together.

"Because anger sells. Hate sells. Fear sells," he said. "These billionaires and their platforms are engi-

Frederic J. Fransen



neering our emotions so they can profit off our pain. They are selling us conflict, and they're calling it connection. It's almost like feeding someone empty calories, and I think it has left people starving for actual community, for real relationships."

Sounds about right, and we expect that such a raw expression of frustration and, yes, outrage, over a media universe hellbent on making us hate each other resonates with most people, especially that growing percentage of Americans identifying as independent.

The online outrage cycle has intensified a kind of pendulum politics, swinging sharply from one administration to the next — two nonconsecutive Trump presidencies sandwiching a Biden era shaped by COVID and cultural battles that often felt overamplified and out of touch with how regular, reasonable people feel.

As we approach the 2026 midterm elections, the signals should be clear: More voters appear to be searching for a return to moderation and common sense. Will politicians take heed? We're hopeful, but skeptical at the same time.

Both parties are unpopular at the moment. Recent RealClear-Polling averages say 52.5% of Americans regard the Republican Party unfavorably. That's slightly better than the Democ-

Both parties increasingly reward the loudest, angriest voices within their coalitions, leaving many voters unwilling to claim a label that no longer reflects how they see themselves.

rats who stand at 56.2% when it comes to those unimpressed.

Perhaps what we should learn about partisanship during the second Trump era is that while Democrats and Republicans are engaged in mudslinging, a growing number of Americans — especially younger Americans — want no part in it. Most Gen Z voters — and roughly half of millennials — identified as independents in 2025, according to Gallup. We suspect they realize that attack ads and one-upmanship does nothing to benefit the American people.

As both parties worry about how to come out ahead in 2026, we'd encourage less power-grabbing and more soul searching. Winning at the ballot box is step one, and step two is delivering a country — or a state or a city — that works for the people who live there.

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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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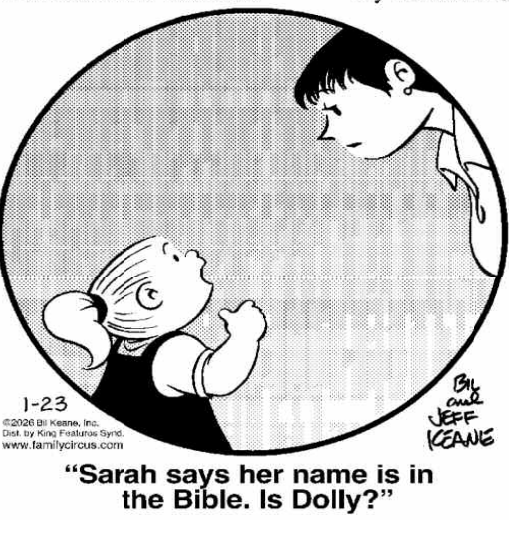
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THE FAMILY CIRCUS

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Peanuts



Rose is Rose



Agnes



Hi and Lois



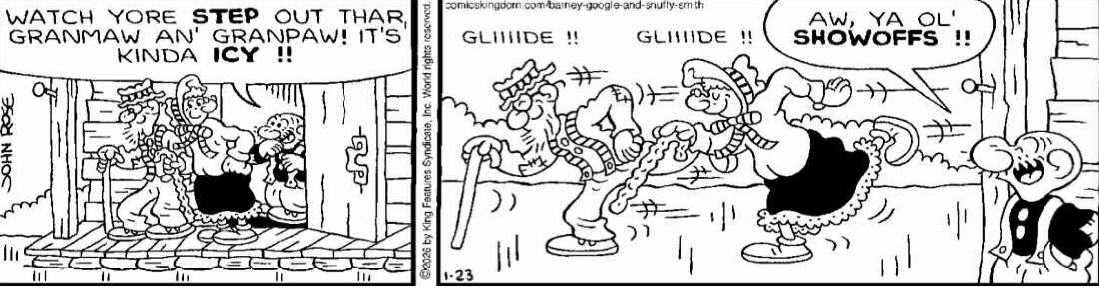
Between Friends



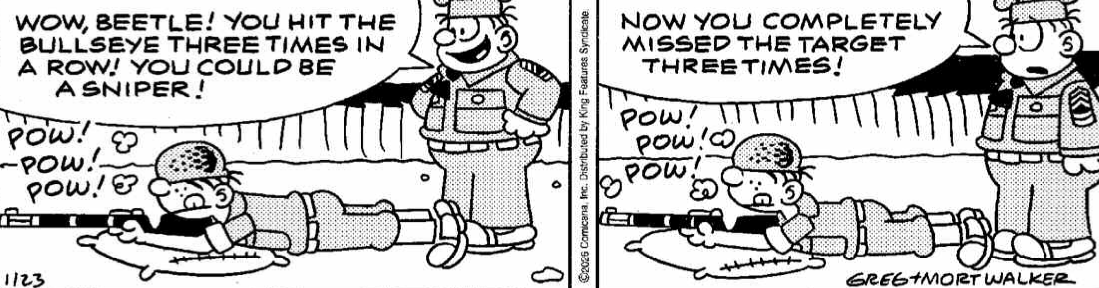
Blondie



Snuffy Smith



Beetle Bailey



Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Bidding quiz

You are South in each of the following four hands. What would you bid where the question mark appears?

1. ♠ K95 ♥ 9872 ♦ AQ4 ♣ AJ7
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♣ Pass ?

2. ♠ 62 ♥ AQJ93 ♦ Q874 ♣ KJ
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♥ ?

3. ♠ 8 ♥ AQ96 ♦ KJ7 ♣ AKQ92
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♦ Pass ?

4. ♠ AKJ5 ♥ 10 ♦ AQJ973 ♣ Q4
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♥ Pass 2 ♣ Pass ?

minus score.

2. Three diamonds. You can't be certain whether the best game contract is in hearts, diamonds or notrump, so you jump to three diamonds (forcing) to compel partner to help make the choice. You plan to bid four hearts over three hearts, five diamonds over four diamonds, and to pass if partner bids three notrump.

3. Two hearts. The jump-shift tells partner there is a game in the combined hands and forces partner to bid again, which you can well afford to do even though partner might have only six points. Game, and possibly a slam, is very likely, but you have no idea whether it is in clubs, diamonds, hearts or notrump. If you were to bid only one heart (not forcing) and partner passed, you'd almost surely have missed a game in hearts or some other denomination.

4. Three diamonds. You have values well above a minimum opening bid, and it is now time to let partner know. Although you have the high-card values for a jump to three notrump, you don't have the balanced distribution that this would indicate.

Three diamonds strongly suggests a 6-4-2-1 pattern and might pave the way to a good slam. You might still wind up in three notrump, if that is what partner bids next, but at least he will know the type of dummy to expect when it appears.

1. Pass. Hands containing 14 high card points are mandatory opening bids, even though they might contain no attractive suit to name. Here, you had no choice but to start by bidding a three-card club suit.

When partner raises to two clubs, indicating six to 10 points, it is obvious that there is no game in the offing. Since partner has guaranteed at least four clubs for his raise and at the same time denied possession of a four-card major, you have no better alternative than to settle for a partscore with clubs as trump. To bid again at this point would indicate game-going aspirations and would probably result in a

Tomorrow: Planning the play.
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1-23

CRYPTOQUIP

XQZXKG ND CEWHE YGKZNQ
JN EWKG JN YBWQJ EWZ CBT
BKJ, JEG ABQ CBZ DBHGP

CWJE B AXKBT PWTGAAB.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN YOU'RE PLANNING TO GO OUT IN A NOISY RAINSTORM, YOU SHOULD PUT ON SOME THUNDERWEAR.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: C equals W

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Part of MPH

4 Pronto

8 Gymnast Korbust

12 Past

13 Mother of Zeus

14 PlaySta-tion alter-native

15 Messen-gers

17 Kid's plea

18 Feeder filler

19 Expos

20 Reacts in horror

22 Flag feature

24 Applica-tions

25 Kind of call

29 — standstill

30 Bread and pasta, slangily

31 — Diamond Phillips

32 Lively Baroque dance with a running step

DOWN

1 Lobbying org.

2 Freud's "The — and the Id"

3 "Emile" author

4 The Ram

5 Molt

6 — Lingus

7 Mas' mates

8 Farm wagon

9 Letter-shaped brace

10 Depleted

11 Pivot line

16 Agents, for short

19 Taverns

20 Avocado dip, for short

21 Re-garding

22 Varieties

23 Tooth-paste holder

25 Walking stick

26 Periodic table listings

27 Only

28 Year-end celebra-tion

30 "Growing Pains" singer Alessia

33 High-tech workers?

34 Clue

36 Major artery

37 Ice cream variety

38 La Scala solo

39 Intend

40 Chaste

42 Tax prep pro

43 Poetic contrac-tion

44 Before

45 Ever-green tree

Solution time: 25 mins.

Yesterday's answer 1-23

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

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word
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word
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words.... \$13.00
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250 PUBLIC NOTICE				
Public Notice				
Jay County, Indiana Total Compensation 2025				
Name	Job Title	Department	Amount	
Affolder, Judith E	PTABOA Board Member	0066 Ptaboa	\$170.00	
Aker, Chad A	County Commissioner	0068 Commissioners	\$24,013.21	
Alberson, Robin L	County Assessor	0008 Assessor	\$57,027.14	
Alexander, Bryan K	County Council Member	0068 Commissioners	\$5,933.00	
Alexander, Jarrod R	PT Deputy	0005 Sheriff	\$1,593.27	
Alicea, Trevor D	PT Basic EMT	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$208.90	
Alig, Michael R	Truck Driver	1176 Highway	\$51,723.20	
Allen, Shelby L	Victim Advocate	0009 Prosecutor	\$43,505.28	
Armstrong, Nancy	Food Inspector	1159 Health	\$21,315.44	
Ayres, Braydon A	Basic EMT	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$2,773.15	
Bailey, Christina M	Secretary Public Defender	0271 Public Defender	\$38,617.12	
Bailey, Jennifer L	Sheriff Secretary	0005 Sheriff	\$38,732.56	
Baldwin, Kolby J	Jailer	1170 Jay Co LOIT	\$31,025.23	
Baldwin, William E	Head Communication Office	0380 Jail	\$61,463.68	
Barnett, Gary J	Shift Supervisor	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$89,974.10	
Beatty, Angela C	PT Cook / Housekeeper	0622 Retirement Center	\$254.05	
Bemis, Preston L	PT Basic EMT	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$9,390.19	
Bentz, Marilyn K	Cook/ Housekeeper	0622 Retirement Center	\$2,344.29	
Bickel, Sherri L	Title IV-D Administrator	0009 Prosecutor	\$47,791.68	
Blakely, Amy C	PT Deputy	0361 Emergency Management	\$2,073.24	
Blowers, Elizabeth C	Dispatcher	0380 Jail	\$7,071.26	
Boice, Warren A	Advanced EMT	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$63,701.40	
Bonifield, Desirae M	Jailer	1170 Jay Co LOIT	\$39,819.41	
Bowdell, Matthew	Paramedic	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$96,113.66	
Bracy, Cindy A	County Council Member	0068 Commissioners	\$6,163.41	
Brewster, Michael E	County Council Member	0068 Commissioners	\$8,660.84	
Bricker, Chad E	PT Truck Driver	1176 Highway	\$3,172.91	
Brown, Desiree	Advanced EMT	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$62,391.81	
Brown, Joshua A	Asst Public Defender	0271 Public Defender	\$69,138.74	
Brown, Kevin M	PT Deputy	0005 Sheriff	\$4,676.79	
Brown, Mackenzie R	PT Basic EMT	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$18,905.47	
Brumfield, Ray C	Asst. Pros. Attorney	0009 Prosecutor	\$1,384.56	
Bruner, James R	Merit Board	0005 Sheriff	\$125.00	
Bullock, Cameron L	Jailer	1170 Jay Co LOIT	\$29,382.23	
Burkey, Courtney L	Health Educator	1161 Health Maintenance	\$54,049.06	
Burkey, Virginia L	Health Board	1159 Health	\$931.37	
Butz, Heath D	Administrator	1159 Health	\$65,423.75	
Byrum, Angela M	1st Deputy	0004 Recorder	\$41,258.60	
Cadwallader, Sandra K	PT Clerical	0003 Treasurer	\$7,314.54	
Caldwell, Eric L	Jailer	0380 Jail	\$42,476.40	
Caldwell, Mia M	Jailer	1170 Jay Co LOIT	\$4,888.36	
Campbell, Brodie C	PT Paramedic	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$44,003.91	
Campbell, Christopher L	PT Jailer	0380 Jail	\$386.47	
Carpenter, Stephanie	Senior Court Reporter	0201 Superior Court	\$44,642.72	
Cassity, Danielle R	Paramedic	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$76,291.56	
Champ, Ted R	Merit Board	0005 Sheriff	\$100.00	
Clamme, Robert A	Deputy Prosecutor	0009 Prosecutor	\$29,473.84	
Clark, Cameron D	Surveyor Laborer	0006 Surveyor	\$7,449.27	
Clay, Glenda L	PT Registrar	1159 Health	\$20,883.10	
Clay, Glenda L	PT Registrar	1161 Health Maintenance	\$925.68	
Clemons, Tammy L	PT Dispatcher	1222 Statewide 911	\$4,680.55	
Clevenger, Seth B	PT Basic EMT	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$1,049.72	
Coleman, Laura L	Registered Nurse	1159 Health	\$55,323.12	
Compton, Curtis D	Investigator	0009 Prosecutor	\$67,304.16	
Conatser, Michael O	Dispatcher	0380 Jail	\$52,596.76	
Conley, Ciara E	Bailiff	0201 Superior Court	\$37,917.12	
Coons, Gregory S	PT Custodian	0161 Courthouse	\$4,998.95	
Cooper, Keithan D	Jailer	0380 Jail	\$1,545.38	
Craig, Carmen J	Admin. Asst.	0005 Sheriff	\$48,947.23	
Crosbie, Kyndal R	Health Liasion	1161 Health Maintenance	\$4,106.55	
Culy, Denise C	1st Deputy	0001 Clerk	\$45,752.80	
Culy, Monica D	1st Deputy	0006 Surveyor	\$42,915.04	
Culy, Nancy J	1st Deputy	0002 Auditor	\$48,774.64	
Curless, Jessica D	Dispatcher	0380 Jail	\$16,564.02	
Curtis, Christopher R	Paramedic	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$89,974.28	
Curtis, Jessica J	Sup./Training Coord.	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$106,266.91	
Dailey, Shawndra D	P/T Dispatcher	1222 Statewide 911	\$9,011.72	
Dalton, Jordan L	Jailer	0380 Jail	\$5,175.30	
Daniels, Bradley A	County Surveyor	0006 Surveyor	\$55,997.23	
Davis, Amy M	1st Deputy	0003 Treasurer	\$42,481.54	
Decker, Travis W	PT Paramedic	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$4,725.89	
Defibaugh, Rufus H	PT Jailer	0380 Jail	\$4,668.90	
Denney, Charles E	PT Truck Driver	1176 Highway	\$2,394.92	
Dennis, Shealyn W	PT Basic EMT	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$6,898.93	
Dollar, Randall P	Truck Driver	1176 Highway	\$50,288.85	
Dow, Ashlyn K	PT Clerical	0009 Prosecutor	\$4,120.38	
Dowlen, Joshua C	PT Basic EMT	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$15,410.89	
Dunnuck, Jacob P	Asst Public Defender	0271 Public Defender	\$85,000.23	
Eads, Jon A	County Clerk	0001 Clerk	\$2,591.84	
Eason, Nathanael D	Heavy Equip Operator / Labor	0006 Sur-		
veyor				
Edwards, Dawn A	Jail Sergeant	0380 Jail	\$49,356.99	
Eley, Wanda D	Jailer	1170 Jay Co LOIT	\$41,649.68	
Elliott, Melissa A	Clerk	0001 Clerk	\$63,558.06	
Fennig, Trevor L	Dispatcher	0380 Jail	\$19,605.28	
Ferguson, Laura K	PT Clerical	0004 Recorder	\$17,424.94	
Fields, Brayden L	County Coroner	0007 Coroner	\$18,616.50	
Filomeno, Jonathan R	Jailer	1170 Jay Co LOIT	\$37,577.00	
Fisher, Kristyn A	Cook/ Housekeeper	0622 Retirement Center	\$46,834.67	
Font, Amy Jo	PT Paramedic	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$5,974.21	
Ford, Jeanna M	PT Clerical	0003 Treasurer	\$4,376.32	
Foreman, Jonelle N	County Treasurer	0003 Treasurer	\$55,139.14	
Fourman, Jessie R	Dispatcher	0380 Jail	\$52,711.79	
Fourman, Ryan J	Jailer	1170 Jay Co LOIT	\$48,001.38	
Fox, Brice L	Mechanic	1176 Highway	\$1,508.60	
Fox, Michael W	PT Cook / Housekeeper	0622 Retirement Center	\$25,334.46	
Franklin, William L	PT Paramedic	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$26,099.31	
Franks, Alice R	Custodian	0161 Courthouse	\$12,181.72	
Franks, Emily J	County Auditor	0002 Auditor	\$63,852.64	
Franks, Trenton K	Jailer	1170 Jay Co LOIT	\$43,117.23	
Frantz, Alexandria L	PT Advanced EMT	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$28,837.13	
Freyburgher, David E	Jailer	1170 Jay Co LOIT	\$11,656.71	
Furtah, Karissa K	P/T Dispatcher	1222 Statewide 911	\$9,463.96	
Gabbard, Terry M	Dispatcher	0380 Jail	\$14,920.76	
Garringer, Kylee R	2nd Deputy	0001 Clerk	\$36,734.61	
Geesaman, Cherrie J	Reassessment Deputy	0008 Assessor	\$49,557.19	
Geesaman, Earl L	Truck Driver	1176 Highway	\$11,882.41	
Geesaman, Harley W	CDL Truck Driver	1176 Highway	\$52,035.00	
Geesaman, Randy D	PTABOA Board Member	0066 Ptaboa	\$170.00	
Gerlach, Kyle S	Shift Supervisor	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$102,698.98	
Gibson, Cody L	Jailer	1170 Jay Co LOIT	\$26,196.30	
Gibson, Joshua D	Health Board	1159 Health	\$931.37	
Gilbert, Trenda K	Bailiff	0232 Circuit Court	\$32,752.88	
Grabber, Elizabeth G	Communications Officer	0380 Jail	\$52,962.60	
Gray, Gary L	PT Paramedic	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$640.80	
Grayson, Erica M	Jail Sergeant	0380 Jail	\$35,160.54	
Green, Kevin A	Basic EMT	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$59,726.40	
Habib, Selah D	Jailer	1170 Jay Co LOIT	\$12,931.00	
Haines, David D	County Council Member	0068 Commissioners	\$230.41	
Hankins, John B	PT Merit Deputy	0005 Sheriff	\$1,277.36	
Harding, Samuel T	Jailer	1170 Jay Co LOIT	\$37,854.14	
Harris, Jordan E	Jailer	1170 Jay Co LOIT	\$33,319.86	
Harley, Jaylen E	PT Cook / Housekeeper	0622 Retirement Center	\$28,780.64	
Hartzell, Kaleb M	PT Cook	0622 Retirement Center	\$1,416.58	
Hartzell, Keegan J	Laborer	0006 Surveyor	\$50,380.96	
Heath, Alexander M	Jailer	0380 Jail	\$18,975.29	
Hemmelgarn, John J	Administrator	0101 Planning & Zoning	\$73,088.16	
Hendershot, Gary L	Deputy Director	9116 Comm Corr 09-10	\$57,124.71	
Henkle, Kerioka R	1st Deputy	0008 Assessor	\$42,993.94	
Herman, Kelly J	PTABOA Board Member	0066 Ptaboa	\$170.00	
Hess, Brady L	PT Basic EMT	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$9,938.42	
Hess, Kurtis R	Heavy Equip Operator / Labor	0006 Sur-		
veyor				
Hirschy, Chad E	Heavy Equip Operator / Labor	0006 Sur-		
veyor				
Hodge, Deborah S	Cook	0622 Retirement Center	\$15,161.39	
Holmes, Lindsey K	Senior Court Reporter	0232 Circuit Court	\$52,653.56	
Honeycutt, Aaron J	Deputy	1170 Jay Co LOIT	\$63,491.54	
Horn, Douglas S	County Commissioner	0068 Commissioners	\$23,196.39	
Horn, Tammy K	2nd Deputy	0003 Treasurer	\$38,417.12	
Houchins, Jeanne D	County Council Member	0068 Commissioners	\$230.41	
Howard, Bethany J	PT Cook / Housekeeper	0622 Retirement Center	\$26,058.98	
Howard, Raven N	PT Cook / Housekeeper	0622 Retirement Center	\$2,142.99	
Howell, Robert A	Supervisor	1176 Highway	\$73,015.00	
Hummer, Todd L	Truck Driver	1176 Highway	\$52,563.20	
Hutzler, Paul A	PT Custodian	0161 Courthouse	\$1,425.93	
Ingram, Angela	Head Cook	0622 Retirement Center	\$40,156.92	
Ireland, Katie J	PT Basic EMT	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$4,768.15	
Jellison, Travis M	Truck Driver	1176 Highway	\$52,717.74	
Jessee, Cody D	Deputy Sheriff/ Sro	0005 Sheriff	\$63,759.19	
Johnson, Joe E	Heavy Equip Operator / Labor	0006 Sur-		
veyor				
Johnson, Mason E	Mechanic	1176 Highway	\$2,164.80	
Johnson, Stacey L	Director	0622 Retirement Center	\$70,437.42	
Jones, Selina E	Basic EMT	1151 Jay Co EMS	\$69,405.92	
Journay, Rex L	County Commissioner	0068 Commissioners	\$816.82	
Keen, Alexandria D	Housekeeper	0622 Retirement Center	\$28,242.29	
Kerrigan, Jessica L	1st Secretary	0011 Extension Office	\$37,917.12	
Kiess, Jeffrey L				
Kimmel, Joshua M				
Klarer, Stephanie E				
Knisely, Paige S				
Kunkle, Sean A				
Lance, Kearsten L				
Layman, Tracy J				
Leavell, Riley R				
Lehman, Kenisha L				
Lemaster, Codi M				
LeMaster, Ronald C				
Lennartz, Elasha R				
Lennartz, Tony E				
Locke, Cory M				
Loper, Donald M				
Lopez, Valerie N				
Lothridge, Steven E				
Macy, James R				
Maitlen, Jordan L				
Marley, Brayden C				
Mathews, Shelbi L				
May, Ashlynn R				
May, Clifford L				
May, John W				
May, Randy J				
McClain, Vicki K				
McDavid, Kimberly N				
McFarland, John R				
McGalliard, Brian R				
McLaughlin, Kendra J				
McLaughlin, Patricia J				
Miller, Gregory L				
Miller, Jamie D				
Miller, Kristen N				
Miller, Nicholas R				
Miller, Paula R				
Minch, Sheldon N				
Minnich, Ana I				
Minnich, Matthew J				
Moeller, Angela R				
Money, Bradley K				
Monroe, Duane P				
Moser, Clifford A				
Mosser, Mackenzie I				
Mumbower, Dane A				
Mumbower, Kodi A				
Murphy, Brandon E				
Myers, Beverly D				
Nelson, Jocelyn B				
Newton, Cindy E				
Newton, Larry R				
Nibarger, Jennifer D				
Nixon, Christina M				
Nuckols, Jade R				
Nuckols, Larry M				
Nusbaumer, Tre A				
Odell, Ronnie L				
Ostrowski, Joni L				
Parr, Faron D				
Patterson, Spencer J				
Paxson, Trent A				
Pearce, Dustin R				
Pearson, Hope E				
Penrod, Todd A				
Perez, LaToi E				
Pinkerton, Rex				
Price, Megan K				
Ralph, Ryan P				
Ray, Jeffrey S				
Redford, Crystal A				
Reidt, Tyler D				
Reinhard, Joseph S				
veyor				
Reitenour, Adam W				
Retter, Chance C				
Reynolds, Ashley E				
Reynolds, Ronnie L				
Rhodeamel, Samantha J				
Rigby, Heath A				
Rines, Shane L				
Robinette, James B				
Rockwell, Della				
Rockwell, Jennifer L				
Rowles, Kayla R				
Ruiz, Alejandro				
Runyon, Nadlie				
Schemenaur, Christina M				
Schlechtly, Angela J				
Schlechtly, Steven W				
Schlosser, Shannon R				
Schwartz, Benjamin M				
Scott, Jack S				
Scott, Jack S				
Scott, Kenneth L				
Scott, Kimberly D				
Setser-Walker, Jonathan D				
Shaneyfelt, Carrie A				
Shannon, Leah J				
Sheffer, Kristi L				
Shepherd, Cory A				
Shirk, Hilary M				
Shrack, Monte E				
Sieffring-Runyon, Daila J				
Smart, Jonathon B				
Smith, Diana L				
Smith, Jennifer L				
Smith, Marisa M				
Smitley, Eric D				
Stewart, Jacob M				
Stilts, Contessa A				
Stinson, Jeffery R				
Stults, Diana G				
Sutter, Whitney A				
Sutton, Amy L				
Sutton, Bruce E				
Swhier, Larry L				
Theurer, Gary W				
Thomas, Penny R				
Towell, Brandyn E				
Towell, Harold A				
Twigg, Molly J				
Upp, Melanie J				
Vazquez, Antonio L				
Vela, Ruben				
Voreis, Zachary A				
Vormohr, Joseph F				
Walker, Rachel N				
Wasson, Brinnin K				
Wasson, James				
Wasson, Ransom W				
Weaver, Heather D				
Weekley, Andrea M				
Weiland, Yvette A				
Wells, Patrick D				
Wendel, Bradley D				
Wendel, Joseph E				
Whetzel, Jerry W				
White, Jason A				
White, Matthew L				
Whited, Cheyenne S				
Whited, Cheyenne S				

From champion to market

For young exhibitors, honor comes with a hard goodbye

By MIGUEL OTAROLA
The Denver Post
Tribune News Service

The market animals Madilyn Norvell has trained and shown at the National Western Stock Show's junior livestock auction, including last year's Grand Champion Steer, have always felt like best friends to her.

The love the 15-year-old Oklahoman develops for her animals as she prepares them for the pageantry of the auction floor makes saying goodbye at the end of the stock show that much harder, she says. Because, like other market animals, even the plush, adorable bovine winners end up butchered and sent to supermarkets.

"It's always been very difficult for me, and almost every other exhibitor in this industry, to part from their animals," Norvell, joined by her father, said in a phone interview with The Denver Post. "It is ultimately one of the best and worst parts of showing livestock."

The industry, at the end of the day, is about selling meat meant to feed the masses, she said. It's a lesson she learned at a young age from her parents, Beth and Tyler Norvell, who themselves trained and groomed market animals for stock shows when they were kids.

As a celebration of that industry, the Stock Show's junior livestock auction showcases fine market and breeding animals and the children and teens who care for them. Year after year, it's the steers that draw the most attention from the public for their pint-sized figures and manicured coats of hair. The ones named Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion by the judges make a ceremonious visit at the end of the



Tribune News Service/The Denver Post/Andy Cross

Madilyn Norvell, 14, from Tuttle, Oklahoma, leads the National Western Stock Show Grand Champion Steer, Thunder, down the red carpet for the 79th annual Steer at the Brown Palace Hotel and Spa in Denver on Jan. 24, 2025. Both the NWSS Grand Champion and Reserve Champion are brought into the atrium lobby for guests to take photos with the winners and to enjoy afternoon lunch and tea.

day to the Brown Palace Hotel and Spa in downtown Denver.

Last year, it was Madilyn's steer, Thunder, who took top honors at the junior show — followed by a record-breaking bid of \$210,000 at auction.

Steers are young, neutered males raised specifically for beef. The ones that participate in the stock show were usually purchased a year in advance, said Dr. Jennifer Martin, an associate professor at Colorado State University and stock show superintendent.

The Norvells' purchase of Thunder, who they named after Oklahoma City's basketball team, went differently. Weeks before nominations were due, the family bought the steer from Madilyn's

friend, Sadie Winne, who they said had trained him for months but was unable to show him.

"He was always super friendly. He was incredible around kids. He kind of became like a best friend to me," Madilyn said. "Not only did I have a bond with him, but my whole family had a bond with him. My best friend had a bond with him."

Madilyn's first experience at the National Western Stock Show was in 2020, when she was 9 years old and showing market pigs.

She took Thunder's halter rope from Winne and spent days, from morning to sunset, training and pampering him for competition. A significant portion of that training involves "working" their hair, which grows long and receives

attention from the judges. Washing it every day, blowing it out and adding product to make it shine helps the coat grow and adds volume, Madilyn said.

A typical training routine consists of walking the animal and guiding it with a halter over the muzzle. It eats commercial steer feed that is high on carbs, proteins and fat, maybe with some molasses mixed in for sweetness, Martin said.

Come show time, the steer is fluffy as a cotton ball and ready for a(uction).

The steers are entered into a weight class and ranked by a panel of three judges. Those judges inspect each animal's build and bone structure. They dig their fingers deep into the animal's hair.

"When we think about a market animal that is going

to be slaughtered and go into the meat supply chain, they're looking for muscle, they're looking for appropriate amounts of fat," said Martin. "Do they balance that well? Are they attractive-looking?"

The steers named Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion are then auctioned. The money goes to the winning family, with a portion going to a trust that provides college scholarships for agricultural and rural studies.

The record-breaking bid for Thunder was placed by an agricultural manufacturing company founded by Buck Hutchison, a founder of the junior livestock auction who died in 2024.

Given their pedigree and the stage on which they're judged, the steers represent

the best beef the cattle industry has to offer. The stock show sells them to feed lots, which take them to meat-packing plants, Martin said. Eventually, their beef goes on sale in the meat aisles of the nation's grocery stores for a profit.

It's a bittersweet departure that resembles a coming-of-age ritual. The National Western Stock Show does its part to make it an event, honoring the Grand Champion and Reserve Champion steers in the posh surroundings of the Brown Palace the day of the auction.

They are taken to feed lots the next day. Madilyn and Winne, who had accompanied her to the stock show, watched Thunder disappear and go off to an unknown destination.

Madilyn's father, a cattle industry lobbyist in his home state, has attended farewells where grown men in cowboy hats break down in tears, he said. Her daughter is a sophomore and hopes to keep showing animals for as long as she can, including alongside her younger sister at this year's junior livestock auction.

"The whole entire reason why we're involved in this industry is ultimately to feed people," Madilyn said. "I know that because of my contribution to this industry and to our community, I am able to help feed as many people as possible."

For the event's organizers, the auction is less about the money and more about the educational experience for the young exhibitor, Martin said.

"More importantly, that prize is respect from your fellow producers who are also trying to raise really high-quality animals," she said.

For the carnivore consumer, the best part could potentially be found in the meat aisle of their local grocery store.

90 SALE CALENDAR	90 SALE CALENDAR	90 SALE CALENDAR	100 JOBS WANTED	190 FARMERS COLUMN	200 FOR RENT	230 AUTOS, TRUCKS
PUBLIC AUCTION Located: Bubp Exhibition Hall at the Jay County Fairgrounds, 806 W Votaw St., Portland, IN Saturday Morning JANUARY 24, 2026 9:30 A.M. ANTIQUES - OLD & COLLECTORS ITEMS Jewelry; brass bookends; Bakelite handled cutlery; Roseville 946 6i doubled handled vase; Longaberger; Carnival Glass; Cranberry candy dish; Amberina fluted vase and tall red vase; ; several pieces of Pyrex; Germany plates; Pink Depression; 1 gallon wood barrel; 9 gallon wood barrel; lighting rods with balls; St Marys OH oil can; Wapak #2, #8 and #9 irons; 9 pt. brass lighting rod top; US Army compass; skeleton keys; Bedrock PLANES: Stanley #605 and #606, Bailey #5 2, Stanley #113, Stanley #68, Stanley #80, Stanley #5, Stanley #71, Stanley Bailey #5, Millers Falls #68, #603 and Stanley #68 to name a few; American Electric wall telephone; Wilhelm Telephone Co. wall phone; advertising oil cans; soda and medicine bottles; 100# brass front scale; manuals; brass school bell; pipe wrenches; files; chisels; wedges; screw jack; stirrups; feed sacks; car books; tractor books; and other items not listed. Auctioneers Note: Auction Preview will be held starting at 8:00 a.m. day of auction. Please visit Auction Zip for photos. RICHARD STACHLER Loy Auction AC#31600027 Auctioneers Gary Loy AU01031608 Travis Theurer AU11200131 Aaron Loy AU12001112 Kaden Khayyata AU12400069	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 1/2i 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 and AuctionZip for more photos. Online bidding available. SHAWVER AUCTIONEERING AND REAL ESTATE AC31800004 AUCTIONEERS Zane Shawver Lic. #AU10500168 260-729-2229 Pete D. Shawver Lic. #AU19700040 260-726-5587 PUBLIC AUCTION Saturday, February 14th, 2026 10:00am OPEN HOUSE February 2nd, 4-6 PM BLACKFORD COUNTY HOUSE- BUILDINGS-POND APPROX 5 ACRES BLACKFORD SCHOOLS 3 BEDROOM - 2 BATH 1576 SQUARE FEET-2 CAR GARAGE TRACT 1: Buildings-Pond- Approx. 5 Acres TRACT 2: Approx. 30 Acres TRACT 3: Tract 1 & 2 Combined Seller: JUDY KAY	WASHBURN ESTATE IAA Auctioneer HEARTLAND Auction & Realty, INC. 445 E 100 N, Decatur, IN 260-724-3499 ELLENBERGER Auctions, Inc. AUCTION COMPANY NUMBER, AC30200063 PRINCIPAL AUCTIONEER, RON KING, AU19500129 JESSTON NUSBAUMER, AU19600119 AARON SCHAEFER, AU11600015 KENT ARNOLD, AU19600255 Public Auction Located: Women's Building at the Jay County Fairgrounds, 806 E Votaw St., Portland, IN Thursday Afternoon JANUARY 29, 2026 4:30 P.M. HOUSEHOLD GOOD-OLD & COLLECTORS ITEMS-MISC 9 drawer dresser with mirror; glass door display china cabinet; 3 cushion sofa; glider rocker with stool; end tables; coffee table; Kenmore dehumidifier, NIB; Fire Sentry safe; corner shelf; #5 crock; Christmas figurines and Village accessories; Fire King; Royal Crown wood case; Pink Depression; ; Victrola; toys; Lefton; child's tea sets; milk bottles; Cabbage Patch; set of Pfaltzgraff dishes; circular saw; square; saws; wire; fuse box; nails; screws; and other items not listed. MADGE SERGENT ESTATE Loy Auction AC#31600027 Auctioneers Gary Loy AU01031608 Travis Theurer AU11200131 Aaron Loy AU 11200112 Kaden Khayyata AU 12400069	AMISH CREW LOOKING FOR any work. No job is too big or small. Pole barns, roofing, remodeling. 260-849-2489. 110 HELP WANTED TOWN OF REDKEY ACCEPTING applications for Deputy Marshall. Experience preferred but not mandatory. Apply at the Redkey Town Hall. Applications accepted from January 12-23. 130 MISC. FOR SALE SCRATCH PADS ARE BACK various bundles sizes and XL pads. \$1.25 plus tax. Pick up at The Commercial Review Tuesday thru Friday 10am to 4pm. PAPER END ROLLS FOR SALE Various sizes and prices. Call The Commercial Review at 260-726-8141 for more information. 190 FARMERS COLUMN AG RENTAL Spreaders: BBI, Artsway Vertical. New Holland 228 skid loaders w/full cab, heat/ac. Fort Recovery 419-852-0309 ARE YOU INTERESTED IN USING soil and water conservation practices such as cover crops or grassed waterways on the ground you farm? Let us help you! Your land and the way you manage it can make a positive difference. The Upper Mississinewa River Watershed Cost-Share Program is now accepting applications, available at the following county Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) offices: Blackford, Delaware, Grant, Jay, Randolph, and Darke. Selected applicants will be reimbursed up to 75% of the cost of their chosen practice(s). This program supports newly imple-	mented practices; pre-existing structures and practices do not qualify, outside of cover crops. The maximum amount paid out for vegetative practices is \$5,000, and for structural practices is \$15,000. There are approximately 40 eligible practices, from livestock fences to pollinator habitat and much more. Priority will be given to those within subwatersheds at Deer Creek, Upper Big Lick Creek, Halfway Creek, Bush Creek, and Gray Branch. Others may be prioritized depending on the number of applications received. If you have questions about the program, please call Clair Burt at the Delaware County SWCD at 765-747-5531 ext. 3. The application deadline is January 31, 2026. 200 FOR RENT LEASE SPACE available, Coldwater, OH. Manufacturing, warehousing, assembly, distribution, offices, inside and outdoor storage. Easy access to major highways and railroad access with loading docks and overhead cranes available. Contact Sycamore Group, 419-678-5318, www.sycamorespace.com 250 PUBLIC NOTICE Public Notice Notice is hereby given that the Town Board of the Town of Redkey will meet in an Executive Session on. Tuesday January 27, 2026 at 5:15 pm. Before the regular meeting at 6:00 pm. At the Redkey Park Cabin 50 Morgan Drive, Redkey, Indiana 47373 The Executive Session is being conducted for the purpose of receiving information about and interviewing prospective employees pursuant to Ind. Code 5-14-1.56.1(b)(5). CR 1-23-2026-HSPANXLP	STORAGE UNITS FOR RENT Starting at \$45.00 a month. 260-251-2563 2 BEDROOM, 2 BATH Newly remodel. \$800.00 Month plus gas & electric. Prefer older couple. 1 small pet allowed. 260-251-2563 250 PUBLIC NOTICE Public Notice ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS: NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, the bid acceptance deadline has been extended for Jay County Solid Waste Management District of Portland, Indiana, by and through its Citizens Advisory Committee, hereinafter referred to as the Owner, and will receive sealed proposals for: JAY COUNTY RECYCLING FACILITY. Bids may be forwarded by registered mail addressed to George McGinnis, Coordinator/Director, Jay County Solid Waste Management District, 5948 W State Road 67, Portland, IN 47371 and will be considered by the Owner at a public meeting called to receive such proposals, provided the same shall have been received not later than 3:45 P.M. local prevailing time, on March 30, 2026 at Jay County Solid Waste Management District, 5948 W State Road 67, Portland, IN 47371, ATTN: George McGinnis. Proposals received after the bid opening process has begun will be returned unopened. Bids will be evaluated, and is the intent that an award of contract will be made on April 27, 2026. The Owner reserves the right to hold the bids for up to a thirty (30) day holding period. Bids shall be submitted in an enclosed opaque sealed envelope, marked "JAY COUNTY RECYCLING FACILITY". The work to be performed and the proposals submitted, including any and all separate and combination proposals, shall include sufficient and proper sums for all General, Construction, Mechanical, Electrical, Installation, Labor, Materials, Tools, Equipment, Taxes (both Federal and State), Permits, Licenses, Insurance, Service Costs, and so forth, incident to and required for the construction of the facility. In general, the project includes the installation of a New Recycling Facility at the south side of West Tyson Road, Parcel#: 38-07-19-300-024.002-034. The project also includes clearing, site drainage, utilities, pavement, sidewalks and grading improvements, and site restoration. All materials furnished and labor performed incident to and required for the proper and satisfactory execution of the contracts shall be furnished and performed in accordance with the requirements of the contract documents as defined in the General Conditions of the Construction Contract, and any addenda thereto, prepared by the Engineer, MSS Engineering, LLC. Said drawings are on file in the office of the following: the Engineer, 414 W 5th St.; Auburn, Indiana 46706; the Owner, Jay County Solid Waste Management District, 5948 W State Road 67, Portland, IN 47371. Approved Performance and Payment Bonds guaranteeing faithful and proper performance of the work and materials, to be executed by an acceptable surety company, will be required of each Contractor at the time of contract execution. The bond will be in the amount of one hundred percent (100%) of the contract price and must be in full force and effect for a period of twelve (12) months from the date of written acceptance of and final payment of the work. Bids shall be properly and completely executed on bid forms provided by the Engineer which shall include the Non-Collusion Affidavit. Each bid shall also include the Indiana State Board of Accounts Form No. 96, all as required by Statute. No bids shall be withdrawn after the opening of bids without the consent of the Owner for a period of thirty (30) days after the scheduled time of receiving same. The Owner reserves the right to reject any bid, or all bids, or to accept any bid or bids, or to make combination of bids as may seem desirable, and to waive any and all informalities in the bidding. The Project Manual, Technical Specifications, Addendums and all bid documents will be made available at www.mssengineer.com/jcswmbid. Plans also on file at MSS Engineering, LLC, 414 W 5th St., Auburn, IN 46706. CR 1-23, 2-28-2025-HSPANXLP	WE PAY CASH for junk autos. We pick up at your location. 1-765-546-2642 or 1-765-857-1071. Slocum's Salvage READ THE CR THEN RECYCLE

2025-26 Girls wrestling All-GPC team



Graphic Printing Company Wrestler of the Year Katie Rowles

Jay County High School senior

Katie Rowles was selected as the 2025-26 Graphic Printing Company Wrestler of the Year for girls wrestling, following teammate Mallory Winner. "I don't know how to say it without sounding kind of cocky, but I definitely work hard," Rowles said. "State was last week and I just got done with a private practice in Fort Wayne. This is kind of my life year-round. So that's a pretty cool accomplishment, but I think I've definitely worked for it." The Patriot senior has had plenty of success throughout her career. While the sport was run under Indiana High School Girls Wrestling Coaches Association, she made one state appearance and won a regional title. Rowles has won both of the 100-pound IHSAA sectional titles and finished second and third in the regional. Last season, Rowles placed fourth in the state tournament. She made it back to state and placed seventh to close out the year with a 30-6 record. "It felt different to wrestle on the team this year because we didn't have Mallory (Winner), Lina (Lingo), Emily (Manor) or Tatianna (Willis)," said Rowles, who took on a leadership role for the season. "I didn't have my usual squad with me, but we made a new one and that was really special to me too." Rowles will continue to wrestle next season at Indiana Tech. "Katie coming in as one of our few seniors and one of two seniors that actually had experience, she came in as a natural leader," said JCHS coach Troy Jacks. "She came in to take that leadership role right away. Kind of like passing the hat from Mallory to Katie and she took it in stride. "Katie always, from day one until last Friday and beyond, is just trying to be the best version of Katie that she can be. She trains, she works out, has a great diet, mental preparation, journals to focus not only on wrestling, but is also ranked No. 1 in the class. She takes a really good approach to everything that she does. That's what Katie is, in a nutshell is a perfect student-athlete."

All-Graphic Printing Company first team

- Aleaha Ackman**
Winchester freshman

Ackman had the strongest season of the Golden Falcons in their first year. She put together a 17-7 record and clinched a regional berth, but an injury cut her season short.
- Amara Crawford**
Jay County sophomore

Crawford wrestled at 170 pounds before moving to 190 for the tournament. The seventh-ranked wrestler got upset in the ticket round of the regional to finish 25-5.
- Hannah Jernigan**
Blackford sophomore

As a first-year wrestler, Jernigan continued to get better and better before clinching a state berth in the 105-pound weight class. She finished her season at 21-18.

- Addison Flores**
Blackford senior

The Bruin senior made it back to the state tournament after missing it in 2024-25. She also posted a record of 22-15 in the 145-pound weight class to close out her career.
- Raegan Quattlebaum**
Monroe Central junior

Quattlebaum had the best record for the Golden Bears at 28-12 and made her second regional appearance before getting ousted in the 130-pound opener.

Editor's note: Due to the small amount of participation in girls wrestling among Graphic Printing Company schools, the first team has been limited to six athletes to keep the recognition competitive.

Peralta sent to Mets

By ABBEY MASTRACCO and GARY PHILLIPS
New York Daily News
Tribune News Service
NEW YORK — Hours after saying he wanted to add another frontline starter, David Stearns managed to acquire the best one available on the trade market. A source confirmed to the New York Daily News on Wednesday night that Stearns is reuniting with Milwaukee Brewers ace Freddy Peralta, with the Mets sending top prospects Brandon Sproat and Jett Williams back in return. According to ESPN's Jeff Passan, Milwaukee will also send another major league pitcher to the Mets. The addition of Peralta instantly boosts the Mets' rotation. Losing Sproat stings as a player the Mets drafted twice and developed into a big league starter, but the right-hander out of the University of Florida is still unproven. Peralta is an upgrade. A two-time All-Star, the right-hander has been an ace and a workhorse for the Brewers, recording a 3.40 ERA over the last three years while totaling at least 30 starts in each campaign. While Peralta is also coming off a career-high workload with 176 2/3 innings pitched in 2025, the 29-year-old's 2.70 ERA, 33 starts, 17 wins and 204 strikeouts were personal bests as well.

Peralta's 3.64 FIP and 3.47 expected ERA weren't as strong as his ERA, but both numbers still made him a top-15 starter. Meanwhile, his .206 expected batting average against, 88-mph average exit velocity, 30.1 whiff percentage, 28.2 K% and 34.5 hard-hit percentage all ranked in the 80th percentile or better. The performance earned Peralta a fifth-place finish in National League Cy Young voting. Armed with a mid-90s four-seam fastball, change-up, curveball and slider, Peralta had a whiff rate over 34% on everything but the fastball last year. His heater has been his most used pitch, but don't be surprised if the Mets cut back on that in an effort to create even more swing and miss for a hurler who had the ninth-highest strikeout rate among all starters last season. A flyball pitcher, Peralta will have to keep limiting hard contact in Queens, where he will try to replicate his 2025 season before potentially hitting the open market. Set to make \$8 million this year, Peralta is scheduled for free agency next winter. However, his agency, ACES, has been open to extensions in the past, and the Mets now have a season to sell the Dominican native on a long-term future in Flushing.

Sports on tap

Local schedule

- Today**
Jay County — Boys wrestling in Allen County Athletic Conference tournament at Bluffton — 6 p.m.; Boys basketball vs. South Adams — 6 p.m.
Fort Recovery — Boys bowling vs. Mississinawa Valley — 4:30 p.m.; Girls bowling vs. Mississinawa Valley — 4:30 p.m.; Boys basketball vs. Coldwater — 6 p.m.
Saturday
Jay County — Swim hosts Allen County Athletic Conference Championships — 9 a.m.; Girls basketball vs. Southern Wells — 6 p.m.; Junior high boys basketball at Adams Central — 9 a.m.; Junior high wrestling at Noblesville — 9 a.m.
Fort Recovery — Girls bowling vs. Coldwater at Community Lanes — 9 a.m.; Girls basketball (varsity first) vs. Franklin Monroe — 10 a.m.; Boys bowling vs. Coldwater at Community Lanes — 1 p.m.; Boys basketball at Mississinawa Valley — 4:30 p.m.

TV schedule

- Today**
3 a.m. — Australian Open tennis (ESPN2)
6 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Michigan at Rutgers (BTN); Iowa at Maryland (NBC)
7 p.m. — College basketball: South Florida at UAB (ESPN2); Wisconsin at Penn State (FS1)
7:30 p.m. — Women's college basketball: South Carolina at Oklahoma (ESPN); UConn at Georgetown (TNT)
8 p.m. — Women's college basketball: USC at Michigan State (BTN)

- 9:30 p.m. — NHL: Detroit Red Wings at Minnesota Wild (ESPN)
Friday
3 a.m. — Australian Open tennis (ESPN2)
5 p.m. — College wrestling: Purdue at Michigan State (BTN)
5:30 p.m. — College basketball: St. Louis at St. Bonaventure (ESPN2)
6 p.m. — College basketball: Indiana at Rutgers (FS1)
7 p.m. — NHL: Tampa Bay Lightning at Chicago Blackhawks (ESPN)
7 p.m. — College wrestling: Minnesota at Ohio State (BTN)
8 p.m. — NBA: Indiana Pacers at Oklahoma City Thunder (FDSN Indiana)
8 p.m. — College basketball: Ohio State at Michigan (FOX); Marquette at Butler (FS1); Akron at Ohio (ESPN)
9 p.m. — Australian Open tennis (ESPN2)
10 p.m. — College basketball: Utah State at Colorado State (FS1)
Saturday
3 a.m. — Australian Open tennis (ESPN2)
12 p.m. — College basketball: Maryland at Michigan State (CBS); Mississippi at Kentucky (ESPN); NC State at Pittsburgh (ESPN2); Nebraska at Minnesota (FS1)
12:30 p.m. — College basketball: Villanova at UConn (FOX)
1:30 p.m. — IMSA Auto Racing: Rolex 24 at Daytona (NBC)
2 p.m. — College basketball: North Carolina at Virginia (ESPN); Oklahoma at Missouri (ESPN2); West Virginia at Arizona (CBS); Yale at Penn (ESPN)
2 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Villanova at St. John's (FS1); Illinois at Nebraska (BTN)
2:30 p.m. — College basketball: St. John's at Xavier (TNT)
3 p.m. — NBA: New York Knicks at Philadelphia 76ers (ABC); Illinois at Purdue (FOX); Richmond at George Washington (USA)
4 p.m. — College basketball: Auburn at Florida (ESPN); Memphis at Wichita State (ESPN2); San Diego State at UNLV (CBS); Jackson State at Bethune-Cookman (ESPNU); Arizona at Iowa State (FS1)
5 p.m. — College basketball: VCU at Davidson (USA)
5:30 p.m. — NBA: Golden State Warriors at Minnesota Timberwolves (ABC)
5:30 p.m. — College basketball: Utah at BYU (FOX)
6 p.m. — College basketball: Northwestern at UCLA (FS1); Morgan State at Howard (ESPNU); TCU at Baylor (ESPN2)
6 p.m. — College hockey: Minnesota at Michigan State (BTN)
6:30 p.m. — College basketball: Houston at Texas Tech (ESPN)
7 p.m. — Australian Open tennis (ESPN2)
8 p.m. — College basketball: Nevada at New Mexico (FS1); Kansas at Kansas State (FOX); Chattanooga at Samford (ESPN)
8:30 p.m. — NBA: Los Angeles Lakers at Dallas Mavericks (ABC)
8:30 p.m. — College basketball: Tennessee at Alabama (ESPN)
8:30 p.m. — College hockey: Penn State at Wisconsin (BTN)

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

IT'S ALL UP TO YOU ...

PEOPLE'S CHOICE

The Graphic Printing Company is bringing back its People's Choice special section. This special section gives you, our readers, the opportunity to recognize your favorites.

Here's the concept:
For the next few weeks you vote for your favorites in a variety of categories: We tally the votes.

The winners in each category will be listed in a special section to run next month, along with other top vote-getters. The winners of the "Best Overall" category will be featured in the special section. Eligibility is limited to those in The Graphic Printing Company's coverage area, which includes all of Jay, Randolph and Blackford counties, as well as portions of the adjacent counties including Fort Recovery and Geneva.

The Categories

Best Overall

Antique shop
Appliance sales
Auto parts store
Auto service and repair
Bank/credit union
Boutique/clothing
Car dealership
Chiropractor
Coffee spot
Community Event
Construction
Convenience store
Daycare facilities
Dentists
Doctor
Entertainment option
Farm implement sales
Financial advisor
Florist
Funeral home
Furniture
Gas station

Greenhouse
Gym
Hair salon/barber
Hardware store
Home improvement
Industry
Insurance
Landscaping
Law office
Nail salon
New business
Non-profit organization
Park
Photographer
Pizza
Real estate and auction
Restaurant (non-pizza)
Veterinarian and pet services
Other
(is there something that doesn't quite fit the above)

To vote, visit thecr.com, winchesternewsgazette.com or hartfordcitynewstimes.com and click on the "People's choice" link. (Rather than making this multiple choice, we are leaving each category open-ended. That leaves the voting up to you, the readers, and avoids the possibility that we might leave off an option that would be worthy of the winning vote.)

Winners will be acknowledged in a special section to run in late February.
Did we miss a category?
Let us know and we'll consider adding it to the list next year.

To advertise in People's Choice ...
Contact Lindsey at L.Cochran@thecr.com or (260) 726-8141

Advertising options:
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Three columns by 10.5 inches black and white: \$200
3 columns by 5 inches black and white: \$125
3 columns by 3 inches black and white: \$75