

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

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Redkey reacts

Residents oppose sober living facility

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review

REDKEY — Several residents in town don't want a sober living facility in their neighborhood.

Redkey Town Council heard grievances from the public Thursday about plans from Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition to purchase and renovate the building at 319 N. Meridian St. into a recovery residence for those who have struggled with addiction.

Julie Barlow spoke on behalf of the group, pointing to a lack of amenities and resources in the community.

"I just feel like it's not a good fit," she said. "I mean, it's 30 steps outside my back door. Can I let my grandkids outside? No."

She added that Portland has IU Health Jay, as well as more mental health facilities, restaurants, a larger police force and better transportation. Barlow referenced the 68 acres purchased earlier this year by the county and suggested building a new structure on the land.

"Who's going to supervise these people?" Barlow said. "They're going to be able to come and go, so what are they going to do? They can't walk to a job, they can't walk to a restaurant. They can walk down here to the park, but we have kids."

Plans are for a facility to house up to 15 residents as well as a house manager.

Barlow and others also expressed a desire to have been informed about the project's possible location in Redkey sooner in the process, noting it's been discussed for months.

"Well, I for one am dead-set against it," said council member Gary Gardner. "I can tell you that right now. They did not even communicate with us about what their intention (is) to do ..."

Redkey residents attended a Jay County Council meeting Dec. 13 during which Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition requested a portion of opioid settlement dollars for a feasibility study and earnest money for the



The Commercial Review/Bailey Cline

Redkey Town Council discussed potential plans for a sober living facility in the community Thursday. Pictured, a group of residents airing grievances with the project attend the meeting. Council president Erik Hammers shared a petition for citizens to sign in opposition to the project, which would house up to 15 people in recovery.

property. (The request has been granted by Jay County Commissioners, although Jay County Council member Randy May told Redkey citizens at the meeting Thursday that commissioner Brian McGalliard plans to make a motion to rescind that decision at their next meeting Wednesday.)

Although the group recently put in an offer for the building, before moving forward with closing on the property Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition's next steps were to conduct a feasibility study on the house and seek additional grant dollars. If the building were found to be ill-fitted for the facility's needs, it would need to seek another location.

Town council president Erik Hammers read aloud a letter from Kimbra

Reynolds, director of Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition and co-chair on Jay County Opioid Settlement Taskforce. Reynolds explained in her letter that the size of the building and its central location had initially drawn the task force as a potential location for the new facility.

"Our offer on the property at 319 N. Meridian (St.) was contingent upon several key factors: appropriate zoning, feasibility studies, and securing grant funding," said Reynolds in the letter. "This approach was taken with great care to assess the potential for a recovery residence without causing undue hardship or stress for Redkey's residents during the exploration phase."

"Our commitment remains centered on fostering an inclusive envi-

ronment that actively supports recovery and rehabilitation, a vital component of a compassionate and cohesive community," the letter continued. "We aim to create a harmonious living environment that benefits recovery residents and the broader community."

Hammers held up a petition — it decries the act of establishing a sober living facility in Redkey — for those in attendance. He noted plans to be traveling around town and "knocking on peoples' doors" to get more signatures.

Also during a more than hour-and-a-half-long meeting Thursday, Hammers told council it would need to ask for an extension on a deadline imposed by Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM).

The town had been given until the end of the year to create a plan to eliminate its combined sewer overflow (CSO) that originates in a rural part of the county just north of town and lets out into the creek near Main and George streets. (Because the CSO originates outside of town, council members have been discussing the issue with county officials.) Choice One Engineering is currently conducting a master utility study for the town, and it could provide options for how to deal with the CSO. Gardner suggested re-lining sewer pipes, with town employee Randy Young noting it would be costly.

After a discussion about the town's options, Brenda Beaty — she will be joining the board in January — noted a plan needs to be

sent to IDEM. Council member Chance Retter explained that next steps are to send a letter saying the town cannot make the deadline and ask for an extension. (Failure to meet the deadline could result in fines from IDEM.) Plans are to continue with the utility master study, which isn't anticipated to be complete until late spring or early summer, and then tackle the issue.

Also, council promoted Zach Moser to town marshal, effective immediately. Moser has been serving as a Redkey police officer since May and plans to attend Indiana Law Enforcement Academy.

Retter proposed naming Moser to the role, which has been vacant since September.

See Redkey page 2

Bids opened for equalization basin

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review

City officials were scheduled to open bids for two wastewater treatment plant projects.

Bids only came in for one of them.

Portland Board of Works on Thursday opened bids for the construction of an equalization basin at the city's wastewater treatment plant. There were no bids for a tandem project to build a wet weather pump station.

The board also approved the final contract to sell the former Sheller-Globe south building to Chad Fifer.

Jutte Excavating of Fort Recovery was the low bidder for the equalization basin at \$4.57 million. Other bids were \$5.2 million from R.G. Zachrich Construction of Defiance, Ohio, \$5.21 million from Cobalt Civil of Winchester and \$5.73 million from VTF Excavation of Celina, Ohio.

There were no bids for the wet weather pump station.

Jeff Hersha of Fort Wayne's Jones and Henry Engineers, which is handling construction services and providing a resident project representative for the work, explained to bidders in attendance that because there were no bids for the wet weather pump station he will need to consult with Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) and the State Revolving Fund Loan Program on next steps. He said he will also research why none of the firms put in a bid to construct the wet weather pump station.

The work is part of the city's agreed order with IDEM, with the equalization basin and wet weather pump station as a single component.

"It takes both parts ... to meet the statutory requirements of the long-term control plan," explained Hersha after the meeting.

Board of works members Jerry Leonhard and Steve McIntosh, absent Mayor John Boggs, tabled the bids for review.

The bids for the equalization basin came in between 50% and 100% higher than the most recent engineer's estimate of about \$2.9 million in March. (The estimate for the wet weather pump station was about \$9.3 million.)

The city's agreed order with IDEM, signed in 2008, is intended to eliminate combined sewer overflows (CSOs) in the city by increasing the wastewater plant's capacity. (CSOs occur when the amount of water in the system exceeds its capacity, causing untreated stormwater and wastewater to be discharged into waterways.) In addition to the equalization basin and wet weather pump station, it also calls for the construction of an oxidation ditch.

Once completed, the new system will allow excess water to

be pumped into the equalization basin during times when it is overloaded. That water can then be pumped back and treated before being discharged. (IDEM rules require that the equalization basin, which also has mixing and aeration, must be cleared within 72 hours.)

Construction of the equalization basin is expected to take 330 days, with the pump station to take 515 days.

Portland City Council on Monday approved an ordinance for a \$23.8 million bond for wastewater treatment plant improvements, including the equalization basin and wet weather pump station. It will need to be approved on second reading before going into effect.

Leonhard and McIntosh also approved the final purchase agreement with Fifer for the Sheller-Globe south property, 510 S. Bridge St. City attorney Wes Schemenaur said he has

been told Fifer would sign the contract Friday.

The contract spells out that the city will follow through on environmental remediation that is currently underway. Any future remediation would be the responsibility of the landowner. IWM Consulting is currently working for the city to update the Phase I environmental study on the property.

Once that is complete, the sale process can move to the closing process.

The board of works in September 2022 accepted an offer of \$50,000 to sell the property to Fifer. The environmental process and contract negotiations have been ongoing since then.

Fifer plans to install a sawmill on the property and in the future expand to include furniture production. (He has been allowed some access to the property through a limited use agreement.)

Deaths

Gary Street, 71, Portland
Harry Long, 85, Fort Recovery
Helen Williams, 82, Decatur
Carole Arnold, 67, Bradenton, Florida
Barbara Moser, 97, rural Pennville
Jay Rupe, 74, Portland
Details on page 2.

Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 46 degrees Friday. The low was 41.
Rain is expected this morning followed by patchy drizzle in the afternoon. Patchy fog is possible. The high will be around 50. Tonight's low will be in the mid 40s.
See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

The Commercial Review will not publish Tuesday, Dec. 26. We will return to our regular publishing schedule Wednesday.

Coming up

Wednesday — Results from today's JCHS boys basketball game against Wapahani.

Thursday — Coverage of Wednesday's Jay County Commissioners meeting.





Photo provided

Eagle Scout

Ty Paxson became the newest Eagle Scout for Troop 202 of Portland on Dec. 18. A senior at Jay County High School, Paxson's Eagle project was completed at the Jay County Fairgrounds. He added gravel barriers at the base of water faucets located at the camping sites. His project helps with soil management, erosion control and makes mobility for mowing easier.

How to deal with holidays

By JANN BLACKSTONE

Tribune News Service

Q: My co-parent and I are having trouble deciding how to celebrate the Christmas holidays with the children.

I would like to exchange the kids on Christmas Day at noon so they can be with us both. She would like to spend the holidays with her parents about 3 hours away, which would require that she take the kids a day before Christmas and return the day after.

I know the kids love their grandparents, but I don't think it's fair. I asked the kids what they wanted to do, and they said stay with me. She said she also asked the kids, and they said stay with her. What's good ex-etiquette?

A: Even though court ordered parenting plans are supposedly written "in the best interest of the children," the truth is, parenting plans are written for the parents. It's difficult for children to do things like get up in the middle of Thanksgiving dinner because they are scheduled to be at the other parent's home at a specific time.

And when parents tell me, "It's not me! That's what it said in the court order!" that just shows who was really taken into consideration when the order was written — the parents, not the children.

Next, you and mom both committed the No. 1 co-parenting blunder out there: You both asked the children to pick between the two of you—and they picked you both.

Why? Because that's the truth. They probably want to be with both of you. Kids don't care about all the drama behind the decision. They just want a decision. If you and mom put your heads together and make a plan, then communicate to the children that you have both agreed to the

Ex-Etiquette



plan, the kids will line up. Teens may balk, but teens balk about most things. The key here is to present the decision as a united front.

With that in mind, it is my experience that when parents can't decide on their own and require the court to get involved, the court will alternate the holiday, odd years to one parent, even years to the other. If you want to do something different, you better come up with an agreement of your own. And that means you are going to have to compromise, Ex-etiquette for Parents Rule No. 10.

Where the compromise lies in this debate is up to you and mom. I can offer an idea. Many co-parents no longer alternate Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, but alternate both days—Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. So, in even years the kids would be with you for two or three days and odd years with mom. Does that mean you will see the kids for Christmas Day each year? No. But this way, mom and the kids can visit with her parents every other year and you have a few days alone with them every other year as well.

There is no perfect science to a breakup, but being open to compromise and being flexible as the kids get older is the best ex-etiquette possible. Do your best. Happy holidays.

Wife pressured to forgive mother-in-law

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been married for 25 years. Right now, our marriage is in trouble because I have been ordered to rekindle a relationship with his mother, whom I haven't spoken to in six years.

In my opinion, the woman is toxic. For 17 years, she has essentially stabbed me in the back. At my husband's request, I forgave her each time. I love him, but I have come to realize he always takes her side. In his eyes, she can do no wrong.

Six years ago, we had an issue regarding her spanking my children. I asked to meet in a neutral location to discuss it, but she and my husband's stepfather refused. To resolve the situation, I agreed to meet at their home under one condition: If an argument began, my husband and I would leave. We even drove there separately.

Upon our arrival, my father-in-law began screaming at me, so I left, and I've had no contact with my in-laws since. My husband says if his mother goes to her grave without this issue being resolved, he'll never forgive me. I told him I did nothing wrong and

Dear Abby



I have no intention of rekindling a relationship with his mother.

To top it off, my husband and his mother have been putting ideas into one of our children's heads, and now he is telling me I make everything awkward and I should fix the problem. Help! — GANGED UP ON

DEAR GANGED UP ON: In California, it is against the law to hit a child. If Granny's old-fashioned method of discipline is ongoing, you cannot reconcile with her, and the children should be kept away from her.

If this was a one-time incident, tell your husband you will forgive his backstabbing witch of a mother one last time. However, if she raises a hand to one of the children again, you will call child protective services and a lawyer because she's a menace.

DEAR ABBY: I need help deciding whether I should attend a wedding. I avoid crowds for health reasons. My son's girlfriend's older sister is getting married. Although my son has been seeing his girlfriend for more than seven years, I have never met any of her family, nor have I been invited to any events. I suspect it may be career-related, although I'm now retired. The bridal couple is requiring all guests, male and female, to wear black. I don't own a black suit. My guess is this invitation is a cash call. Your thoughts? — UNDECIDED IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR UNDECIDED: Because you do not know your son's girlfriend's family and don't want to buy a black suit, in addition to the fact that you avoid crowds for health reasons, you are off the hook. If you do receive a formal invitation, send your regrets and a nice card wishing the joyful couple a lifetime of happiness together.

DEAR ABBY: When I met my boyfriend, it felt perfect. I thought I had found my soul mate. When I met his family, we got along well and spent more and more time together. I was 28; he was 31. We lived an hour away from his parents, and even though we were there every weekend and sometimes twice a week, his mom began complaining that she didn't get to see him enough.

His sister, who is my age, grew increasingly jealous. I had just lost my younger brother and was grieving when she began lashing out at me regularly. She's extremely controlling of my boyfriend and me, demanding we do whatever she says and go wherever she wants us to go, including when we are allowed to leave.

She has no respect for any polite or firm boundaries we set, swearing and becoming hysterical and hostile almost every time we interact. She has "kicked me out" of the family gathering, which led to my being completely unwelcome. She tries to gaslight everyone

and uses a lot of manipulation tactics to convince others I'm the problem, not her.

Now her husband and her parents lash out at me even at my boyfriend's expense. What is most depressing is that he sides with them because they're "family," and it's his role or he's the problem. This wore my boyfriend and me out, so I removed myself from the situation and moved to another state with my sister. Is there any chance we can have a peaceful future? — 'IN-LAW' DRAMA IN TEXAS

DEAR DRAMA: No, there is not. Unless you enjoy being abused, the family dynamic you described was extremely unhealthy. You did the right thing to extricate yourself. If a peaceful future is what you're looking for, keep looking.

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.

Tuesday

JAY COUNTY PASTORS AND CHAPLAINS — Meet at 8 a.m. on the fourth Tues-

day of each month at Richard's Restaurant.

BRYANT COMMUNITY CENTER EUCHRE — Will be played at 1 p.m. each Tuesday.

JAY COUNTY CANCER SUPPORT GROUP — Will meet from 5 to 6:30 p.m. in conference room C at Indi-

ana University Health Jay Hospital. Open discussion for cancer patients, survivors, family members or anyone interested in helping with the group. For more information, contact Linda Metzger at (260) 726-1844.

A BETTER LIFE - BRANNA'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.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS — Will meet at 7 p.m. each Tuesday at Church of God of Prophecy, 797 N. Creagor Ave. in Portland.

Wednesday

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

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.

EUCHRE CLUB — Will meet at 2 p.m. the fourth Wednesday of each month at Chalet Village Health and Rehabilitation in the North Lounge.

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 - BRANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for all kinds of addictions, will meet from 6:30 to 8 p.m. each Wednesday at Redkey United Methodist Church, 122 W. Main St. Come early for a meal. For more information, call Pastor Randy Davis at (765) 369-2085.

Thursday

CELEBRATE RECOVERY — A 12-step Christian recovery program meets at 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. each Thursday at A Second Chance At Life Ministries, 228 S. Meridian St. in Portland. For more information, call Brenda Eads at (260) 726-9625 or Dave Keen at (260) 251-8792.

LAWYERS IN LIBRARIES — Free and confidential consultations with a lawyer are available from 10 a.m. to noon at Jay County Public Library, 315 N. Ship St., Portland. Consulting is available on topics including divorce, custody, guardianship, tenant-landlord issues, bankruptcy, debt collection, estates and immigration.



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Sudoku

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

Level: Advanced

Friday's Solution

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

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

Proposal promotes false narrative

St. Louis Post-Dispatch
Tribune News Service

To those who grumble that Jan. 6, 2021, is ancient history and everyone should just move on already, we offer rebuttal in the person of Missouri state Sen. Denny Hoskins. The Warrensburg Republican, who is in the running next year to become the state's top election official, has filed legislation to require hand-counting of the state's roughly 3 million ballots.

His backward rationale is that it would make voting more secure and accurate. In fact, all serious data indicates the opposite is true — unless, of course, you're fully vested in the MAGA-manufactured myth that ballot-counting machines are being hacked by foreign governments and other dark forces.

Guest Editorial

It's anyone's guess whether Hoskins is truly this delusional, or is merely playing to the persecution fantasies of the fringe right. But it's one of the two.

The worst domestic assault against American democracy since the Civil War culminated on Jan. 6, but it began earlier. In the weeks before the mob of then-President Donald Trump's supporters attacked the Capitol, Trump and his surrogates laid the groundwork by spreading outrageous, easily disproved lies about supposed

election fraud. Among the loopiest was that tabulating machines used to count paper ballots had been compromised to flip votes to challenger Joe Biden.

For an indication of just how far down the rabbit hole this conspiracy-mongering went, consider that a voting-machine company called Dominion Voting Systems this year landed a landmark libel settlement from Fox News for almost \$800 million. Among the deranged, entirely fictional allegations the network allowed Trump surrogates to spin on its shows was that Dominion was formed to fix elections by associates of the late Venezuelan dictator Hugo Chávez.

You can't make this stuff up — except, Trump and his lawyers did, again and again. No significant instances of

election fraud were ever uncovered, despite the most vigorous post-election reviews in U.S. history. Dozens of courts threw out Trump's claims as utterly baseless. Even now, some of Trump's former lawyers are facing lawsuits and disbarment for peddling his lies.

Still, Trump continues peddling those lies even today, attempting to make next year's election a referendum on the validity of the last one. It's a cynical and dangerous crusade to erode Americans' confidence in their elections.

Hoskins, running for Missouri secretary of state next year, is effectively endorsing that crusade with his legislation to hand-count all Missouri ballots. He says it's based on "concerns" from "a lot of people" about "the accuracy of tabulating machines." Yet he can't

cite a single shred of evidence that there's been any actual security problem with the machines.

Even most of Hoskins' fellow Republicans understand that hand-counting ballots is unfeasible because it would require immense staffing and would delay election results for weeks or months — and then would yield numbers more likely to be corrupted by human error or mischief.

But unfeasibility isn't the most offensive aspect of it. To the extent that the public has "concerns" about election validity, they have been planted by Trump's big lie and by legislation like this, which lends that lie undeserved credibility. Peddling this kind of corrosive conspiracy hokum should be disqualifying for statewide office.

Kick billionaires off of the nice list

By BELLA DEVAAN
OtherWords

It's high giving season in America. From Angel Trees and red buckets to year-end appeals, nonprofits and charities receive more donations during the five-week holiday stretch than any other on the calendar.

Millions of people whose incomes are too low to take advantage of charitable tax deductions are still moved by the holiday spirit to give generously.

For Americans with enough income to itemize — less than 10% of the country's population — the tax benefits of giving to charity can encourage generosity. For over a century, our country has used tax deductions to publicly subsidize charitable donations because of the promise that they can help fund a better world.

Yet there's a pernicious trend in year-end giving: It's more and more dominated by the extremely wealthy.

The share of regular people giving to charity has decreased, slipping below 50 percent of households for the first time in 2018. The share of how much regular people give to charity consistently hovers around 2 percent of annual disposable income.

Meanwhile, mega-philanthropy has been increasing — even as these mega-philanthropists keep getting richer. This gargantuan giving might sound like good news. But the rise of "top-heavy philanthropy" correlates with a decline in household buying power and a staggering increase in inequality.

The extremely wealthy don't give the way regular people do. You might donate directly to a local food bank, the Red Cross, or another charity that directly serves people in need. But the very richest are more likely to give first to intermediaries whose charitable impact is a lot murkier.

At this point, 41 cents of every dollar donated to charity — over \$130 billion in 2022 — flows into private foundations and donor-advised funds, known as charitable intermediaries. The donors can take a big tax break immediately, while those intermediaries promise to distribute the donations to working charities in the future.

Private foundations are required to disburse just 5 percent of their assets each

Bella Devaan



year — and donor-advised funds face no payout or transparency requirements. This creates a massive lag in money reaching organizations with urgent needs.

That means we're losing out on tax dollars that might support schools, jobs, public programs, or the environment for "charitable" contributions that could sit warehoused in private foundations or donor advised funds for years. My colleagues and I at the Institute for Policy Studies estimate that the costs in tax revenue likely add up to several hundreds of billions of dollars each year.

In other words: The average taxpayer's holiday generosity extends, unwittingly, to subsidizing the ultra-wealthy.

Many American workers — including firefighters, teachers, and nurses — already pay a higher tax rate than American billionaires. They take home less income in a year, too, than average CEOs of large companies make in a few hours. The idea of these workers subsidizing billionaire philanthropy — which may or not support real charities, and certainly not at an acceptable pace — feels wrong.

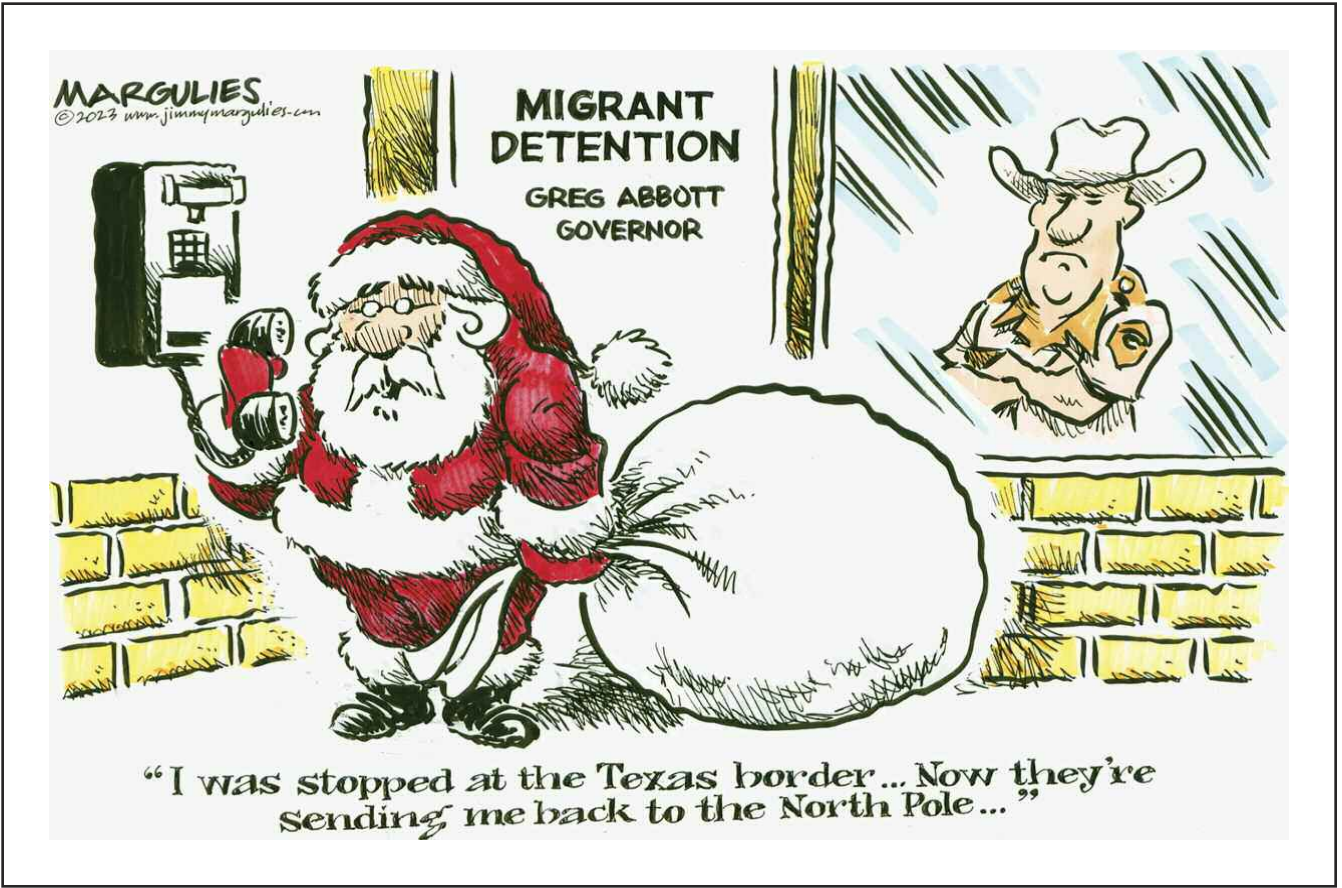
This holiday season, we should demand a world in which we all get to define our common good — where the wealthiest cede power to the charities, causes, and people who they claim to support and who enabled their success in the first place.

That means restructuring philanthropy so those foundations and DAFs have to quickly distribute funds to urgent causes. It also means making our tax code fairer and funding public investments so fewer Americans need to rely on charity in the first place.

Let's kick billionaires off the nice list.

DeVaun is a researcher at the Institute for Policy Studies and co-author of the IPS report The True Cost of Billionaire Philanthropy.

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



There's still good news

By MICHAEL LEPPERT
Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com

It's hard to even recognize good news anymore. No matter what the good news might be, it won't be long before someone from 'the other side' energetically claims it's cherry picked, not completely accurate, or my favorite, that the news is actually bad.

Good news of the week: the U.S. economy is outperforming almost every country on Earth.

I should pause there, so those on 'the other side' of that accurate, documentable, statement of fact can get its alternative description of the situation together. OK, now that the crowd who wants us to believe everything is actually terrible is ready, we can proceed.

On January 19, 2021, the day before Joe Biden was inaugurated, the Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA) closed at \$30,930.52. On Friday, the Dow closed at an all-time high of \$37,305.16. Now, the market doing well, and the economy doing well is not the exact same thing. But I remember a president who pounded that erroneous equivalency into our heads. It was the last president. While it might be cute to agree with him this one time just because it's convenient for my side, I won't.

The Dow is just one measure of how the economy is working. There's more to it than that, of course.

Steve Rattner, an investment banker and financial journalist, discussed the impact of the Federal Reserve Board's quarterly meeting on MSNBC last Wednesday. He said this holiday season, "Inflation on goods, from used cars to computers and televisions is actually turned into deflation. Prices on those goods are actually lower than they were a year ago."

Again, it is not the rate of increase that has shrunk. It is that prices themselves are lower. For consumers,

Michael Leppert



during their spendiest time of the year, that seems like good news. But again, not if your side wants consumers to be mad, and stay mad, until further notice.

NPR's Domenico Montanaro published a detailed report on December 9th on who sees good economic news and who doesn't, primarily based on who is in the White House and who isn't. I always find it fascinating how politics has the ability to change opinionless things like math and science so fluidly.

My personal experience with this can be summarized by a strategic error I made on Sunday night. My wife and I didn't know what we were having for dinner, so I wanted to go to the grocery store to keep my place on our kitchen's Dinner Planning Committee. The problem arose when I discovered we needed to make "a quick stop at Ulta on the way." For those unfamiliar, Ulta is a "beauty" store where shoppers buy cosmetics, fragrances, bath, body and haircare products.

I'm glad I didn't wait in the car. Walking into that store was like walking into a casino on the Las Vegas strip. The smells that hit me in the face just inside the door, and the elaborate floor to ceiling displays of no-miss therapies and products to make one their absolutely most beautiful, were mind-boggling. We were in there for 15 minutes, and in that amount of time, I was convinced it could become the prettiest woman in town.

It wouldn't be inexpensive mind you, but only in a strong economy

can a store full of dreams, like Ulta, even exist. And business was booming in there on Sunday night. Whether your demographic wants to emulate Jennifer Aniston, or Ariana Grandé, Ulta has what you need to get the job done. And Americans are buying it.

My beauty supply market experience aside, what other traditional metrics matter?

Unemployment? It's at 3.7% today. The lowest pre-pandemic number was 3.5%. In January of this year, it had bested that when it hit 3.4%. Americans who want a job, either have one or can get one.

Back to Rattner for a moment, who I often disagree with. During his Wednesday report, he said, "I've never seen quite this much disconnection between the state of an economy and the state of how people feel about the economy." I will go a step further. Not only are people mad when they shouldn't be, they are assigning blame for what should be celebrated.

The good economic news is undeniable: America is winning. It hasn't become utopia, but even if it had, I'm not sure it would matter.

The aftermath of a global pandemic caused historic inflation. By the way, it may have been the most predictable economic phenomenon in history too. But in the face of this unique global challenge, we have quickly reestablished ourselves as the winners again.

When we get around to having the victory party, it's gonna be sick. I'm inviting both Jennifer and Ariana. They'll love my new look.

Leppert is an author, educator and a communication consultant in Indianapolis.

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

The Commercial Review



US PS 125820

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

"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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12-23 CRYPTOQUIP

JQCCQC EMUK DEMFMQVDIQR'
EDOQCMAP THUPAMIP AHVP:
“JDOP TQHCRPUE D RFDCT
UMAAUP FJCMRAKDR.”
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN DO YOU THINK IS THE OPTIMAL TIME TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH YOUR DENTIST? TOOTH-HURTY.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals L

Trivial Review

(Answers are printed below, upside down.)

Classic Christmas

- Gene Autry, known as the Singing Cowboy, recorded what classic Christmas song?
- The poem “A Visit from St. Nicholas” is now better known by what name?

(1) Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer
(2) 'Twas the Night Before Christmas

12-25 CRYPTOQUIP
UBHC TEQQCWYT LWTBC IBQQK
ZUQOOWYT WY IKHWY TWGQ
QHJB MCBQE PME JBEWICLHI?
“POQQJQ YHGWZHZ!”
Saturday's Cryptoquip: HORROR FILM AFICIONADOS' FAVORITE YULETIDE TUNE: “HAVE YOURSELF A SCARY LITTLE CHRISTMAS.”
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals G

CRYPTO FUN

百 (C) Ω * ρ ≡ ~ * +
Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to winter. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 13 = I)

A. 7 12 13 22 22 11 5 9
Clue: Big snow storm

B. 21 16 13 12 12 18
Clue: A bit cold

C. 9 5 13 24 6
Clue: Pile of snow

D. 25 3 10 14
Clue: Frozen precipitation

Answers: A. Blizzard B. chilly C. drift D. snow

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to winter.

ACTSO

Answers: Coats

Guess Who?

I am a musician born in Denmark on December 26, 1963. I played tennis as a young man, but gained an interest in music after receiving a ticket to see Deep Purple, which inspired me to become a drummer. I've been part of a metal rock band for many years.

Answer: Lars Ulrich

kids' corner

PEOPLE FACT!

STEVE NELSON AND JACK ROLLINS WROTE THIS SONG ABOUT A CHILLY DUDE WITH "TWO EYES MADE OUT OF COAL."

ANSWER: FRODO THE SNOWMAN

How they SAY that in...

ENGLISH: Family
SPANISH: Familia
ITALIAN: Famiglia
FRENCH: Famille
GERMAN: Familie

What's the Difference?

There are four differences between Picture A and Picture B. Can you find them all?

A

B

Answers: 1. Front glass has juice 2. Cherry in pie on candle 3. Extra olives in dish at right 4. Missing flame

THIS DAY IN... HISTORY

DEC 24

- 1871: THE OPERA, 'AIDA' PREMIERES IN CAIRO, EGYPT.
- 1929: A FOUR-ALARM FIRE BREAKS OUT IN THE WEST WING OF THE WHITE HOUSE IN WASHINGTON, D.C.
- 1951: LIBYA BECOMES AN INDEPENDENT NATION AND IDRIS I IS PROCLAIMED KING.

New Word

FESTIVE
cheerful and jovially celebratory

WINTER WONDERS WORD SEARCH

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

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

WORDS

BLANKET
BLIZZARD
BRISK
BUNDLE
DOWNHILL
FROZEN
HAZARD
HEAVY
ICECAP
ICE SKATING
LAKE
MITTENS
MOUNTAIN
NOR'EASTER
PARKA
SCARF
SKIING
SLED
SLIPPERY
SNOWMAN
TEMPERATURE
WINTRY
WOODBURNING
WOOLEN

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

- 1 "Same Old Love" singer Selena
- 6 Slaps sharply
- 12 "My friend," in Paris
- 13 Redeem
- 14 Pay
- 15 Melodious
- 16 Elitist
- 17 Partner of Wagnalls
- 19 Compass pt.
- 20 Work on proofs
- 22 "Cheers" bartender
- 24 Biol. or chem.
- 27 North Carolina university
- 29 Reporter's quest
- 32 Holiday workplace fetes
- 35 Place for a wreath
- 36 Beget
- 37 Bug barrier
- 38 PC port

DOWN

- 40 Barks
- 42 Many millennia
- 44 Sultry
- 46 Buckle
- 50 Guest at an inn
- 52 Chinese martial art
- 54 "This Is — Tap"
- 55 Holiday quaff
- 56 Shrewd
- 57 Rx amounts
- 1 Perhaps
- 4 Ostrich's kin
- 5 Holders of compressed data
- 6 Read quickly
- 7 Report card
- 8 "— was saying ..."
- 9 Chinese noodle dish
- 10 Smooch
- 11 Winter blanket
- 12 U.S. Army enforcers
- 18 Perfect
- 21 Xmas time
- 23 Crumb mover
- 24 Lay down the lawn
- 25 Corp. money manager
- 26 "Eureka!"
- 28 Told a story
- 30 Teeny
- 31 Retired jet
- 33 Apr. addressee
- 34 Game caller
- 39 Sheep's cry
- 41 Big gulps
- 42 "Born Free" lioness
- 43 "I dropped the fruitcake!"
- 45 Perry's creator
- 47 Skin breakout
- 48 Frat letters
- 49 Pen pal?
- 51 Bearded antelope
- 53 Previously

Solution time: 26 mins.

Yesterdays answer 12-23

Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

Slow and steady wins the race

South dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ J 9 6
♥ 10 5 4 3
♦ J 7 3
♣ A Q J

WEST
♠ Q 7 3
♥ Q 6 2
♦ 10 9 8
♣ 10 7 6 4

EAST
♠ 8 5 4 2
♥ —
♦ 6 5 4 2
♣ K 9 5 3 2

SOUTH
♠ A K 10
♥ A K J 9 8 7
♦ A K Q
♣ 8

The bidding:
South West North East
2 ♠* Pass 2 NT Pass
3 ♥ Pass 4 ♥ Pass
4 NT Pass 5 ♦ Pass
5 NT Pass 6 ♣ Pass

*Strong and artificial
Opening lead — ten of diamonds.
You run into bad breaks now and then, but that's not a good reason for losing your cool and possibly blowing a contract that might still be made. On the contrary, the worse your luck, the harder you should try to overcome it.
Consider this deal where you're in six hearts and West leads a diamond. Certainly, making the slam looks easy enough — indeed, with any luck at all you might make seven.
But when you win the diamond with the queen and play the ace of hearts, East shows out, and suddenly even the small slam no longer seems certain. Since you have to lose a trump trick, the question now is how to give yourself the best chance to avoid a spade loser.
There are three obvious ways to proceed. One is to try a straightforward spade finesse. Another is to lead a club and finesse the jack. A third possibility is to lead a club to the ace and continue with the queen, planning to discard a spade if East follows low.
Any of these three approaches might, of course, go wrong. But a fourth approach — one that is not so obvious — offers by far the best chance of success. So, rather than risk the possibility of losing a finesse, you continue with the king of trump at trick three, cash the ace of clubs and then play the A-K of diamonds.
If West ruffs either diamond, he is endplayed, and if he doesn't, you next put him on lead with a trump. This forces him to return a spade, a club or a diamond (if he has one), and in all three cases you get home safe and sound.

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Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

Famous Hand

East dealer. North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 10 2
♥ K J 9 8 7 3
♦ A Q 10
♣ 7 5

WEST
♠ A K
♥ A 6 4
♦ J 9 3
♣ J 10 6 4 3

EAST
♠ 6 5 4
♥ Q 10 5 2
♦ K 5 2
♣ Q 8 2

SOUTH
♠ Q J 9 8 7 3
♥ —
♦ 8 7 6 4
♣ A K 9

The bidding:
East South West North
Pass 2 ♣ Pass 2 ♦ Pass 2 ♠

Opening lead — jack of clubs.
It would not be an exaggeration to say that at the world-championship level, no two pairs use exactly the same bidding system. Indeed, it would probably take a 1,000-page volume just to describe briefly the assorted systems in use at a typical world event.
Such differences in systems can have a great effect on the outcome of many deals. Consider this dramatic example from the 1990 world team championship.
The deal was the last of the 56-board semifinal match between Canada and Germany. Though the players didn't know it, the Canadians led by four IMPs at this point.
The bidding shown took place at the table where Bernhard Ludewig and Jochen Bitschene were North-South for Germany. Bitschene's two-club opening indicated 10 to 12 points and either a six-card major or 5-5 distribution in the minors. Two diamonds asked for clarification, and two spades showed a six-card spade suit with 10 to 12 points.
Declarer won the opening club lead, ruffed his third club in dummy and led a trump. He wound up losing only two spades and a diamond for a score of +170.
When Canada's Eric Kokish and George Mittelman held the North-South cards, their bidding went:
East South West North
Pass 1 ♣ Pass 1 NT Pass 2 ♦ Pass 3 ♥

After Mittelman opened one spade, Kokish responded one notrump, forcing. Mittelman bid his second suit, and Kokish jumped to three hearts, invitational. Mittelman decided he had heard enough and passed.
Kokish lost six tricks for down two, -200. This gave the Germans a net pickup of 370 points (8 IMPs) on the deal and a 4-IMP victory in the match. They then went on to defeat the United States in the final to capture the world title.

Tomorrow: A precautionary measure.
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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

- 1 Hendrix hairdo
- 5 Cat's cry
- 8 "Brave New World" drug
- 12 Faux pas
- 13 Tours pal
- 14 Streetcar
- 15 German car name
- 16 Winter quaff
- 18 Kid's sandwich, for short
- 20 Low cards
- 21 Cupid's alias
- 23 "— the fields we go ..."
- 24 Santa's bagful
- 28 Taxpayer IDs
- 31 New England cape
- 32 "— Kick Out of You"
- 34 Suffix with cash
- 35 Answer an invite
- 37 Floral wreaths
- 39 TV Tarzan
- 41 Style Ron
- 42 Respectful bow
- 45 Neighbor of Sweden
- 49 Christmas mantel decor
- 51 Shakespearian villain
- 52 Carton sealer
- 53 Behold (out)
- 54 Scratched (out)
- 55 Canonized Fr. women
- 56 Sailor
- 57 Anti-toxins
- 11 Adams and Irving
- 17 Nevertheless, briefly
- 19 Zwei
- 22 Fulton's power
- 24 Standard
- 25 ICU pros
- 26 Letter holder
- 27 More intense
- 29 Actor Beatty
- 30 Fourth-yr. students
- 33 Designer Gucci
- 36 Locales'
- 38 Eagles' homes
- 40 Tibetan bovine
- 42 Bygone fliers
- 43 Rat —
- 44 Fine spray
- 46 Aftermath
- 47 Antiquing aid
- 48 Luke's teacher
- 50 PBS funder

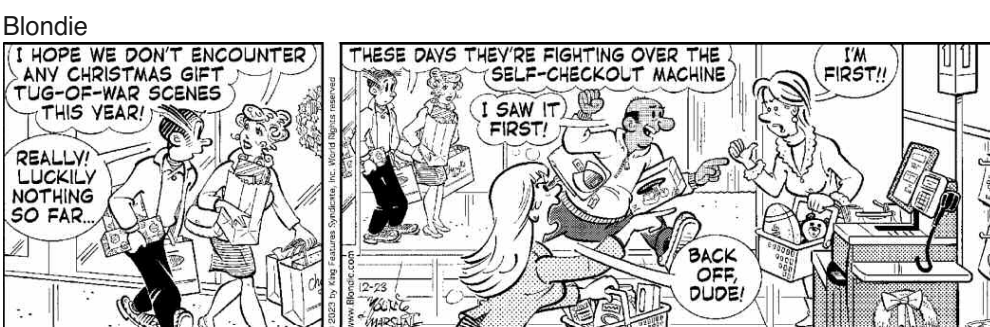
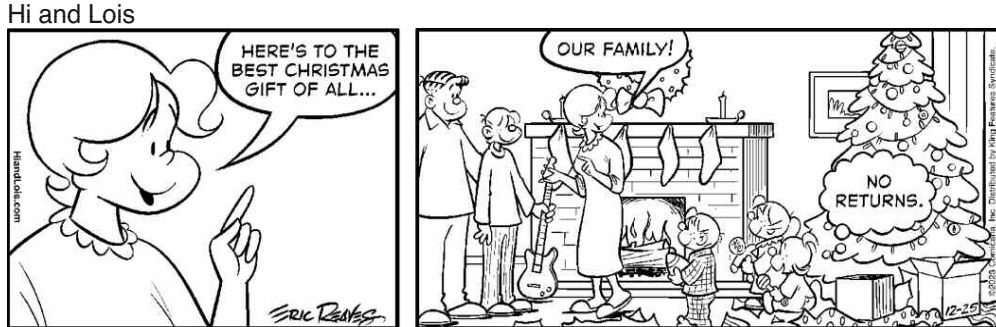
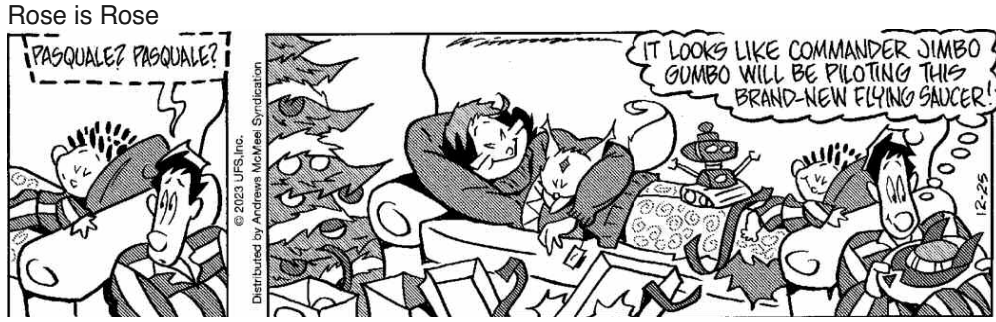
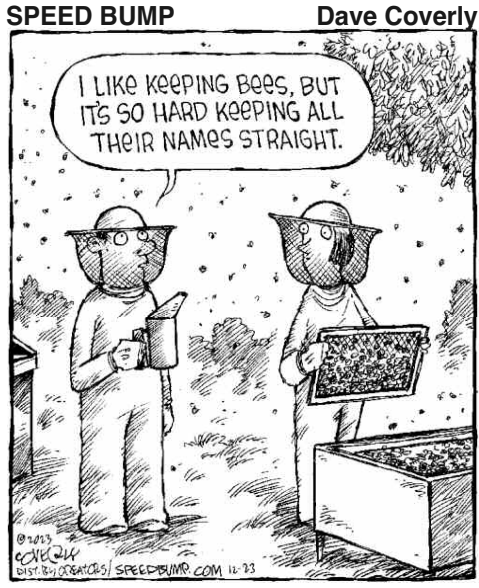
DOWN

- 1 Pronto
- 2 Err
- 3 Flo — ("Low" rapper)
- 4 Speaks one's mind
- 5 Game played with tiles
- 6 Punk-rock subgenre
- 7 Skater Katarina
- 8 Boutiques
- 9 Calls for room service
- 10 Created

Solution time: 21 mins.

Saturday's answer 12-25

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
12 13 14
15 16 17
18 19 20
21 22 23
24 25 26 27 28 29 30
31 32 33 34
35 36 37 38
39 40 41
42 43 44 45 46 47 48
49 50 51
52 53 54
55 56 57



We Deliver

Laughter

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

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250 PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice

STATE OF INDIANA
COUNTY OF JAY, SS:
IN THE JAY COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT
CAUSE NO: 38-C01-2309-MI-19
IN RE THE NAME CHANGE OF:
OCEANASEA BUCKLAND,
Petitioner
NOTICE OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME
Oceanasea Tru Buckland, whose mailing list is Portland, Indiana, in the Jay County, Indiana, hereby gives notice that Oceanasea Tru Buckland has filed a petition in the Jay County Court requesting that her name be changed to Oceanasea Tru McKibben. Notice is further given that the hearing will be held on said Petition on Feb. 1st, 2024 at 7:30 am.
Oceanasea Tru Buckland,
Petitioner
12-6-2023
CR 12-16,23,30-2023-HSPAXLP

Public Notice

STATE OF INDIANA
JAY COUNTY, SS:
IN THE JAY CIRCUIT COURT IN THE MATTER OF THE UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION OF THE ESTATE OF DEBRA L. WHITESSELL,
Deceased
CAUSE NO. 38C01-2312-EU-000029
NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF JAY COUNTY, INDIANA
In the Matter of the Estate of Debra L. Whitesell, deceased. Notice is hereby given that Nicole Christine Knoth and Lauren Elizabeth Whitesell were, on the 19 day of December, 2023 appointed co-personal representatives of the Estate of Debra L. Whitesell, deceased, who died on the 16th day of November, 2021. All persons who have claims against this estate, whether or not now due, must file the claim in the office of the Clerk of this Court within thl'ee (3) months from the date of the first publication of this notice, or within nine (9) months after the decedent's death, whichever is earlier, or the claims will be forever barred.
Dated at Portland, Indiana, this 19 day of December, 2023.
Jon Eads
Clerk of the Jay Circuit Court
James S. Forcum (6917-05)
ATTORNEY AT LAW
300 South Jefferson Street Post Office Box 430 Hartford City, Indiana 47348 765-348-1858
CR 12-23,30-2023 HSPAXLP

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STATE OF INDIANA
COUNTY OF JAY, SS:
IN THE JAY SUPERIOR COURT
2023 TERM
CAUSE NO: 38D01-2312-MI-000035
THREE BOYS INVESTMENT PROPERTIES, LLC
Plaintiff
And
AMY SUTTON, LISA A. SMITH, THE HIGHEST RANKING OFFICER OF CITIFINANCIAL SERVICES, INC.
NICCI JO LITTLER, NICCI JO LITTLER
THE HIGHEST RANKING OFFICER OF CITIFINANCIAL SERVICES, INC., AND THE UNKNOWN HUSBAND, WIFE, WIDOW, WIDOWER, CHILD, CHILDREN, DESCENDANTS, HEIRS, SURVIVING SPOUSES, CREDITORS AND ADMINISTRATORS OF THE ESTATE, DEWISEES, LEGATEES, TRUSTEES, EXECUTORS OF THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENTS; SUCCESSORS IN INTEREST AND ASSIGNS, RESPECTFULLY, OF EACH OF THE FORGOING PERSONS, ALL OF WHOM ARE UNKNOWN TO PLAINTIFF;
ALL OF THE WOMEN ONCE KNOWN BY ANY OF THE NAMES AND DESIGNATIONS ABOVE STATED WHOSE NAMES MAY HAVE BEEN CHANGED AND WHO ARE NOW KNOWN BY OTHER NAMES; THE NAMES OF ALL WHOM ARE UNKNOWN TO THE PLAINTIFF, AS THE SPOUSES OF EACH OF THE PERSONS NAMED ABOVE, OR DESCRIBED AND DESIGNATED AS DEFENDANTS IN THIS ACTION WHO ARE MARRIED; THE NAMES OF ALL OF WHOM ARE UNKNOWN TO PLAINTIFF; ALL PERSONS AND CORPORATIONS WHO ASSERT OR MIGHT ASSERT ANY TITLE, CLAIM OR INTEREST IN OR LIEN UPON THE REAL ESTATE AND INTEREST THEREIN DESCRIBED IN THE COMPLAINT IN THIS ACTION BY, UNDER OR THROUGH ANY OF THE DEFENDANTS IN THIS ACTION NAMED, DESCRIBED OR DESIGNATED IN THIS COMPLAINT AND ABOVE NAMED; ALL OF WHOM ARE UNKNOWN TO THIS PLAINTIFF.
Defendant(s)
SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION
Notice is hereby given to the following named persons who may claim some interest in the following described real estate and whose whereabouts are unknown or some or all of whom are unknown to the Plaintiff, to wit:
"SEE DEFENDANTS LISTED ABOVE"
You have been sued in the above entitled action to Quiet Title to the following described real estate located in Jay County, Indiana, to wit:
A.
Parcel No: 38-09-08-104-160.000-014
Legal: Commencing at a point on the south side of Washington Street in the town, now city of Dunkirk, Indiana, 325 feet Eastward from the northeast corner of Lot One (1) in Block Nine (9) in said city and running Southward at right angles to said Washington Street a distance of 130 feet; thence Westward at right angles to last described line and parallel with Washington Street 65 feet; thence Northward at right angles to last described line 130 feet to the south line of Washington Street; thence Eastward on and along the south line of Washington Street 65 feet to the place of beginning and being a part of Out Lot Four (4) in the town, now city of Dunkirk, Indiana.
Commonly known as: 225 E. Washington St., Dunkirk IN 47336
That unless you appear in person or by counsel and respond to the allegations of said complaint within thirty (30) days after the last publication of this notice a judgment by default may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.
Jon Eads
Clerk of Jay County, Indiana
JON D. MADISON (26466-33)
DeFur Voran LLP
400 S. Walnut Street, Ste. 200
Muncie IN 47305
765-288-3651
765-288-7068 (fax)
CR 12-23,30-2023,1-6-2024-HSPAXLP

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The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Juaquin Flores of host Jay County High School puts the pressure on Parker Boots of Central Noble on Friday during the East Central Indiana Classic. Flores was one of six Patriots to earn championships with pins in the final round — he beat New Castle's Nathan Shafer in 2 minutes, 39 seconds, for his title — as Class 2A No. 4 JCHS earned the ECIC team title for the third consecutive year.

Falls in the finals

JC's six championship wins came by pin

By RAY COONEY

The Commercial Review

The Patriots were already in command.

Up by more than 20 and with a half dozen wrestlers slated to take the mat in the finals, the championship was all but secured.

They took nothing for granted.

The Class 2A No. 4 Jay County High School wrestling team pinned its way through the finals Friday, racking up six individual titles and pulling away for a dominant 51-point victory in the East Central Indiana Classic.

"We challenge our guys to make sure they wrestle hard," said JCHS coach Eric Myers, whose team won the ECIC for the third consecutive year. "Sometimes there's a let up in that final round. ... I felt like we went out and wrestled pretty hard. We were even down in a couple of

situations and we came back and found a way to win. I was real proud of the way our guys wrestled there."

The Patriots' 224.5 points left them as the dominant team while the next four battled for second place. Columbus North (173.5) was the runner-up, followed by Class 1A No. 4 South Adams (169.5), Bluffton (167.5) and New Castle (164.5) in the field of 15 teams.

Jay County's pins in the championship round were as follows:

106 — Griffin Byrum (21-3) over Charlie Fleshman of Central Noble in 2 minutes, 47 seconds

126 — Cody Rowles (18-6) over Jason Shuey of Central Noble in 3:08

138 — No. 3 Tony Wood (25-0) over Joseph Cloud of Central Noble in 40 seconds

150 — Jacob Robinson (20-4)

over Zack Martin of Monroe Central in 5:19

190 — Juaquin Flores (20-5) over Nathan Shafer of New Castle in 2:39

215 — Bryce Wenk (24-0) over Luke Powers of Wes-Del in 1:37

Wood, who placed seventh in the state at 132 last year, was the king of the pin for Jay County as he kept his perfect record intact. He won all four of his matches with pins in the first period, needing a total of just 2:33 on the mat. In the finals, he got an early takedown and then used a cradle to finish off Cloud.

Wenk notched an early takedown while falling out of bounds before finishing off Powers in the first period to stay perfect on the season. Like Wood, he pinned all four of his opponents on the way to his ECIC championship.

The two closest calls in the finals came from Rowles and

Robinson. The former, a two-time state qualifier, trailed 4-0 early in the second period before converting a reversal into a headlock to flip the script of Shuey. The latter, a full-time varsity wrestler for the first time this year, saw a 6-2 lead slip away before catching Martin with a throw into a pin with 42 seconds remaining.

"A lot of good wrestlers today," said Robinson. "The last match was definitely tough. But I just put in the work — staying in it and not giving up. ...

"It's just me wrestling me," he added. "The majority of the time I'm making my own moves and just grabbing stuff and rolling."

Flores built a 4-0 lead in the second period over Shafer and then used a cradle for his pin. Byrum, wrestling for the first time at 106 this season, was scoreless in the first period before starting the second on top, catch-

ing Fleshman in a cradle and recording the first of the finals pins.

"It feels pretty good," said Byrum, who recorded three pins after getting a first-round forfeit. "I expected it. ... I just find a pin ... and make it work. ...

"I just got more confident. As the match went on ... I found my rhythm, got my pin."

Other individual ECIC champions included five state-ranked wrestlers — No. 10 Levi Johns of Bluffton at 113, No. 2 Tylin Thrine of New Castle at 132, No. 8 Gavin Whitehead of New Castle at 144, No. 12 Asher Ratliff of Columbus North at 157 and No. 2 Juan Cruz of Bluffton at 285.

In addition to the six championships, the Patriots also got third place finishes from 132-pounder A.J. Heskett (17-9), 144-pounder Tave Curtis (9-3) and heavyweight Alan Ortiz (11-4).

It's Over-man

Fort Recovery junior hits game winner against Starfires

By ANDREW BALKO

The Commercial Review

BERNE — After a tough start from 3-point range for Owen Wanner, he stepped up with a big shot for the Starfires to tie the game.

Too bad for him, Briggs Overman called game.

Dribbling to his left, Overman hit a game-winning buzzer-beater to lift the Fort Recovery boys basketball team to a 39-37 victory over the South Adams Starfires on Friday night.

Sitting on the floor after hitting the shot, Overman let out a scream as his team rushed to him in excitement.

"It was a little bit scary but it felt good," Overman said.

The play wasn't initially designed for the junior. After a timeout with 10.3 seconds left and a foul that brought time down to less than nine seconds, the Indians (4-2) drew up a play designed for Gavin Faller. However, when forward Rex Leverette caught the ball on the post, the Starfires (1-7) triple teamed him, forcing him to focus on just keeping the ball safe.

He secured the ball and passed toward the right corner to Overman, who took two dribbles toward half court and one inside the free throw line. He elevated over Wanner and sank the



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Briggs Overman, a Fort Recovery High School junior, reacts after hitting the game-winning buzzer-beater Friday night as the Indians fought off the host South Adams Starfires 39-37.

shot as the buzzer sounded to win the game.

"I was going to come around and get a screen for our big guy, Gavin," Overman said. "But I popped out, Rex was lucky and I just went and created to hit the shot."

During a two-minute stretch of the second quarter, Leverette had committed three turnovers in a row while trying to force high-low action from the elbow. As the game went on, he cleaned that up, and even picked up four assists in the game.

None was bigger than the last.

"I just had to not force the ball, make pass fakes, find the open guy and not force it in," Rex Leverette said. "I knew first of all, I had to keep control. As soon as Briggs was open, I knew he could hit a shot, so I gave him the ball."

The flood gates opened late in the game as five players scored baskets for Fort Recovery in the fourth quarter while Wanner and Tytus Lehman combined for 18 points in the period.

Wanner struggled from distance early in the game,

coming into the fourth quarter 0-for-4 from 3-point range and only 2-for-10 on the evening.

He finally hit one with 2 minutes, 14 seconds, to go off an assist from Lehman to cut the Indians' lead to two.

A basket from Eli Lennartz extended the lead back to four game before Wanner nailed another, assisted by Derek McKean to cut the deficit to one with 49.4 seconds to go.

A timeout and a scripted play led to Faller getting a wide-open bucket. Wanner wasn't to be denied, as a jab

step gave him just enough space to tie the game with less than 14 seconds left before Overman's game winner.

"We need some other kids (than Lehman) to step up," said SAHS coach Garrett Krieg, a 2011 Jay County High School graduate. "Owen Wanner did a great job hitting some shots for us. He struggled to shoot the ball the last few games. It was great to see him hit three threes there."

Wanner finished with 13 points while Lehman led all scorers with 17.

The first half was a rock fight, with only 28 total points scored. South Adams couldn't find the basket at all until the 1:14 mark of the first quarter when McKean converted a drive.

Fort Recovery hit four shots in the opening period, all from different players, and three more in the second. The Starfires netted 11 points in the second quarter to trail the Indians 15-13 at the break.

"That 1-2-2 is a tough defense to play against and if you're not going to hit shots, it's going to be a grinder," FRHS coach Bob Leverette said. "We didn't hit shots. ...

"Teams can hang around with that defense. That's part of the reason why we play our 3-2. It's the same

principles to get teams standing around."

The Indians had a balanced scoring effort with Overman tallying a team-high eight points. After him, Reece Guggenbiller, Rex Leverette, Faller and Lennartz all had six points, while Alex Dues added five.

"We'll take the win," Bob Leverette said. "We told the guys early in the season, 'Any type of win is a win.' We'll take it and go."

Junior varsity

The Indians rolled out to a large first-half lead as they beat the Starfires 47-27 on Friday.

Fort Recovery scored 15 in the first and then 17 in the second quarter while it held South Adams to only 13 first half points.

Tyler Wendel led the way with 12 points, 10 of which he scored in the first half.

Breaker Jutte and Brody Barga followed up with nine points each. Jutte did all of his scoring in the first period, netting four baskets and 1-of-2 free throws. Barga's scoring was spread between the second and third with three in the former and six in the latter.

Henry Craig led South Adams with 12 points, of which came from 3-pointers. He hit two early and another in the second and third before running dry.

Top 10 finishes



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Fort Recovery High School's Teigen Fortkamp swims the 50-yard butterfly at the Celina Sprints at Jay County High School on Thursday. Fortkamp finished in the top 5 for all four events, including first-place finishes in the freestyle and backstroke.

Fortkamp and Wendel lead Indians in Celina Sprints

By **ANDREW BALKO**

The Commercial Review

Typically, there is only one 50-yard event at swim meets. It's a rare day to have a butterfly, breaststroke or backstroke race at that length.

It didn't matter for the Indians' top swimmers, who both had strong days.

Teigen Fortkamp won two events and Sage Wendel finished in the top 10 in four to lead the way for the Fort Recovery High School swim team in the Celina Sprints held at Jay County High School on Thursday.

"They both had a lot of good swims today and had some good place finishes," said assistant coach Ava Bubb, who was filling in for coach Mindy Bubb who missed the meet because of an illness. "A lot of the swimmers had some good races and shaved some time off their 50 times, which they don't get to do very often. It's a neat meet to come to and we got to see some fast swimming."

The Fort Recovery girls team tallied 110 points to secure third place while the boys had 55 to capture fourth.

The Jay County boys finished eighth with eight points while the girls gathered six points

to tie Celina for ninth place.

St. Marys Memorial won both the boys and girls with 257.5 points and 149 points, respectively.

Fortkamp had the best day of the lot. She came in as the top seed in two out of the four events and didn't disappoint.

Her time of 25.27 seconds in the 50-yard freestyle was enough to dominate the field. Elise Oldiges of Minster claimed the second-best time of 26.08 seconds.

Fortkamp also took the top spot in the 50 backstroke with a time of 28.46 seconds. Finishing second was Ava Shardo of Versailles with a 29.08 time.

"We had the (Bowling Green) meet this past Saturday and I didn't perform the way I wanted to," Fortkamp said. "This meet really brought my spirits back up, especially with how the rest of the season will go."

"I'm a very competitive person. I don't like finishing second. I want to be first."

Fortkamp came up short of the top spot in the 50 backstroke. Her time of 33.93 seconds just wasn't enough to beat Oldiges, who swam a 33.10.

The FRHS senior also had a third-place finish in the 50 butterfly with a career-best 28.48 seconds (which shaved off 1.73 seconds).

Following up Fortkamp in three of the four events was Joelle Kaup.

The FRHS junior was the second best finisher in the freestyle, butterfly and backstroke finishing in the top-10 twice. Times of 26.99 seconds and 29.51 seconds led Kaup to eighth-place finishes in the freestyle and butterfly, while her time of 32.04 was 0.3 seconds short of 10th in the backstroke.

Paige Guggenbiller had the next-best placement in the breaststroke, earning 10th in 35.63 seconds.

Just as Fortkamp had the best finish for the Indians in all four events, Wendel had the top time for the boys in all four. The senior made a statement early right away, as he exceeded his seed time. Wendel came in as the 10th seed for the 50 freestyle, but dropped 0.71 seconds to swim a 23.98 and capture a tie for third place with St. Marys Memorial's Marcus McClain.

Wendel had another top-five finish in the 50 butterfly, grabbing fourth place with a 26.01.



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

JCHS sophomore Matthew Fisher swims the butterfly during the Celina Sprints at Jay County on Monday. Fisher claimed the best placements in the backstroke and butterfly, earning 13th and 20th, respectively.

He recorded career bests in all four events, placing seventh in the backstroke (28.75) and ninth in the breaststroke (32.67).

"I just go into every meet and say, 'As long as I can PR, I did everything I can,'" Wendel said. "So, I can't really complain anytime I PR."

"I did well with my pullouts of the blocks where I am able to kick and not start my swim yet. That usually helps in the long run."

Jay County's top swimmer from the girls side was Lauren Fisher. Her highest finish came in the 50 butterfly in which she placed 11th with a

career-best time of 30.17 seconds.

"Butterfly has always been my stroke," Fisher said. "We were all neck-and-neck and we all finished with a (30-second time), so it's just working at that."

Fisher also earned the top spots for the Patriots in the 50 freestyle and 50 breaststroke. Her 36.95-second finish took 17th in the breaststroke while she placed 21st in the freestyle with a time of 28.44 seconds.

Avery Wentz had the best finish for the Patriot girls in the 50 backstroke, earning 23rd.

Matthew Fisher earned the best finish in two of

the four events for the Patriot boys. Fisher placed 13th in the 50 backstroke (30.6 seconds) and 20th in the 50 butterfly (29.41 seconds).

The Patriots had another 13th-place finish from Lincoln Clamme in the 50 breaststroke, clocking in at 38.39 seconds. Joseph Dow had the best finish in the 50 freestyle, taking 20th place in 26.42 seconds.

"As far as placement, I'm happy with where they're at," JCHS coach Matt Slavik said. "Some of those events have over 80 kids and putting a majority of our kids in the top half is nice, refreshing and a good mental boost."

Sports on tap

Local schedule

Today
Jay County — Boys basketball vs. Wapahani — 6 p.m.
Fort Recovery — Girls bowling vs. Versailles at Community Lanes — 9:15 a.m.; Boys bowling vs. Versailles at Minster — 1 p.m.

Tuesday
Jay County — Girls basketball vs. Yorktown — 6 p.m.

TV sports

Today
7:30 a.m. — Premier League: Manchester United at West Ham United (USA)
10 a.m. — Premier League: Newcastle United at Luton Town (USA)

12 p.m. — College football bowl games: Troy vs. Duke (ABC); Arkansas State vs. Northern Illinois (ESPN)
12 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Butler at Providence (FS1); Mississippi State at Rutgers (BTN)

12:30 p.m. — Premier League: Arsenal at Liverpool (NBC)
2 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Seton Hall at Xavier (FS1)
3 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Arizona at Florida Atlantic (FOX)

3:30 p.m. — College football bowl games: James Madison vs. Air Force (ABC); Georgia State vs. Utah State (ESPN)
4 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Villanova at DePaul (FS1); Vanderbilt at Memphis (CBS)
4:30 p.m. — NFL: Cincinnati Bengals at Pittsburgh Steelers (NBC)

7 p.m. — College football bowl games: South Alabama vs. Eastern Michigan (ESPN)
7 p.m. — NBA: Orlando Magic at Indiana Pacers (Bally Indiana)

7:30 p.m. — College football bowl games: Utah vs. Northwestern (ABC)
8 p.m. — Men's college basketball: St. John's at UConn (FOX)
10 p.m. — College football bowl games: Coastal Carolina vs. San Jose State (ESPN)

Sunday
1 p.m. — NFL: Cleveland Browns at Houston Texans (CBS); Indianapolis Colts at Atlanta Falcons (FOX)
4 p.m. — NFL: Jacksonville Jaguars at Tampa Bay Buccaneers (CBS)
4:25 p.m. — NFL: Arizona Cardinals at Chicago Bears (FOX)

8:15 p.m. — NFL: New England Patriots at Denver Broncos (ABC)

Monday
12 p.m. — NBA: Milwaukee Bucks at New York Knicks (ESPN)
1 p.m. — NFL: Las Vegas Raiders at Kansas City Chiefs (CBS)
2:30 p.m. — NBA: Golden State Warriors at Denver Nuggets (ABC)
4:30 p.m. — NFL: New York Giants at Philadelphia Eagles (FOX)
5 p.m. — NBA: Boston Celtics at Los Angeles Lakers (ABC)
8 p.m. — NBA: Philadelphia 76ers at Miami Heat (ESPN)
8:15 p.m. — NFL: Baltimore Ravens at San Francisco 49ers (ABC)
10:30 p.m. — NBA: Dallas Mavericks at

Phoenix Suns (ESPN)

Tuesday
7:30 a.m. — Premier League: Nottingham Forest at Newcastle United (USA)
10 a.m. — Premier League: Fulham at AFC Bournemouth (USA)
12:30 p.m. — Premier League: Liverpool at Burnley (USA)
2 p.m. — College football Quick Lane Bowl: Bowling Green vs. Minnesota (ESPN)
3 p.m. — Premier League: Aston Villa at Manchester United (USA)
5:30 p.m. — College football Servpro First Responder Bowl: Texas State vs. Rice (ESPN)
8 p.m. — NBA: Indiana Pacers at Houston Rockets (Bally Indiana)
9 p.m. — College football Guaranteed Rate Bowl: Kansas vs. UNLV (ESPN)



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From our family to yours, best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a healthy, prosperous new year!

The Commercial Review

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