

# The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

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## Courthouse may get a new system

*Storage of video has become an issue*

By BAILEY CLINE

The Commercial Review

Jay County Courthouse may be getting upgrades to its camera system.

Courthouse security officer Monte Shrack cited memory issues with the current devices during a Jay County Commissioners meeting Monday.

Shrack explained the system installed in 2020 has been having problems storing video footage. Footage currently dates back as far as about two months, although Shrack explained sometimes the cameras override or stop recording footage at random.

County attorney Wes Schemenaur noted footage dating back as far as six months would be ideal in the event of an incident at the courthouse — six

months is the cutoff to file a tort claim against the county — but he said he believed a backlog of 30 or 60 days should generally be enough for most situations. Shrack added that the security officers would likely be aware of such an incident immediately and save the footage.

A few cameras are also recording nearly all the time. The cameras located outside each door are motion-activated, Shrack explained, meaning they're constantly recording because they lock into movement from flags around the courthouse exterior.

He said Digital Video Solutions has suggested the installation of four new hard drives priced at more than \$1,800.

As an alternative, Shrack suggested the county could look into upgrading to a new camera system, pointing out memory wouldn't be an issue with cloud-based storage.

Commissioner Brian McGalliard asked Shrack to check with Digital Video Solutions to see if the new hard drives would allow for up to six months of video storage.

See **System** page 2



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney



## Changing commons

The commons at Jay County Junior-Senior High School is in the process of renovations. Pictured, workers from furniture manufacturing firm Palmer Hamilton install new wall coverings (above) and trim (at right). The upgrades to the commons, which are scheduled to be complete when students return next week, features a new design with a focus on a more collegiate/retail look, including seating with booths and bar-height tables of various shapes and individual seating. A ribbon-cutting ceremony is scheduled for 10 a.m. Wednesday.

## Jay ranks tied for 34th-highest

*County unemployment went up to 3.3%*

By RAY COONEY

The Commercial Review

A slight increase in the local unemployment rate shifted Jay County in the state rankings.

According to estimates Indiana Department of Workforce Development released Wednesday, Jay County had an unemployment rate of 3.3% in November. That tied the county for the 34th-highest rate in the state.

The local unemployment rate went up by 0.2 percentage points from October. It was up 0.6 percentage

points from November 2022.

The slight increase shifted Jay County into a tie for the 34th-highest rate in the state along with Randolph, Allen, Henry, Wabash, Dearborn, Jennings, Marshall, Switzerland and Vanderburgh counties. Jay County was tied for the 42nd-lowest rate among Indiana's 92 counties in October.

Indiana's unemployment rate went up by 0.1 percentage points from October at 3.4%.

"Indiana's employment data for November shows the state remains in a strong position," said Indiana Department of Workforce Development commissioner Richard Paulk in a press release. "Private employment has set state records for two consecutive months which shows employers still have hiring needs and more individuals are landing new jobs."

See **Ranks** page 2

## Biden: Strike meant to deter attacks

By JORDAN FABIAN

Bloomberg News

Tribune News Service

President Joe Biden said the U.S. military struck targets in Iraq in order to prevent further attacks on American personnel in the Middle East, which have fueled concerns about a wider regional conflict.

U.S. forces on Christmas Day struck three installations linked to an Iran-backed insurgent group, their latest retaliation against militias targeting Americans. The strikes are "intended to degrade and disrupt the ongoing series of attacks against the United States and our partners" and to "deter" Tehran's proxy forces "from conducting or sup-

### *American troops were injured by Iran-supported militias*

ported further attacks," Biden wrote Wednesday in a letter to congressional leaders.

The president's comments provided the broadest rationale yet for stepped-up U.S. military action in the Middle East amid the Israel-Hamas war.

American troops have been injured in a series of attacks

carried out by militias supported by Iran, while Yemen-based Houthi rebels have wrought havoc on Red Sea shipping by launching drone strikes on commercial vessels. The militant groups' attacks are meant to be in support of Hamas, the Iran-backed group that rules the Gaza Strip and carried out

the Oct. 7 massacre in Israel that sparked the war.

The U.S. has responded by bolstering its naval presence in the Mediterranean Sea and forming a multinational maritime task force to protect ships in the Red Sea. The White House also declassified intelligence saying that Iran is responsible for the attacks, claims which Tehran has denied. U.S. military forces for weeks have also conducted strikes against militia targets in Iraq and Syria.

The latest strikes were against sites linked to Iraq-based Kataib Hezbollah, an insurgent group behind an attack that injured three U.S.

personnel, leaving one in critical condition.

Tensions remain high, as the U.S. and others have sought to contain the Israel-Hamas conflict from becoming a broader war that destabilizes the Middle East. Biden on Tuesday spoke to Qatari leader Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani about reviving efforts to free hostages held by Hamas and boosting humanitarian aid to Gaza, steps that could lead to a pause in fighting.

Biden's comments were included in a letter that he said was "consistent" with the 1973 War Powers Resolution, which requires presidents to notify Congress within 48 hours of taking military action.

### Deaths

Henry Graber, 38, Bryant Details on page 2.

### Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 48 degrees Wednesday. The low was 32.

Tonight's forecast calls for a low in the lower 30s with a chance of rain and snow showers. Expect mostly cloudy skies Saturday with a high in the lower 40s.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

### Correction

A local resident's address was incorrectly published in Thursday's Jay County Commissioners story. Michael Keller lives in rural Portland.

### Coming up

**Saturday** — Results from the JCHS girls basketball game against Pendleton Heights.

**Wednesday** — Our annual recommendations from The CR's staff.

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# System ...

Continued from page 1  
Commissioners president Chad Aker also requested Shrack look into installing infrared cameras outside to replace the motion-activated devices.  
Also Monday, McGalliard suggested the county discontinue its work with MakeMyMove, a marketing campaign intended to bring 18 workers into Jay County. McGalliard noted the \$50,000 effort — another \$50,000 was also contributed by a local organization, along with a \$100,000 match from Indiana Economic Development Corporation — has yielded one new resident over the course of the

year. He said he would like the remaining funds returned and to review accounting documents associated with the dollars, which were handled through Jay County Development Corporation.  
Commissioner president Chad Aker noted JCDC executive director Travis Richards is on the Jan. 8 meeting's agenda.  
In other business, commissioners Rex Journay, Aker and McGalliard:  
•OK'd a one-year agreement with Chris Muhlenkamp to farm the county's 68 acres located on the western edge of Portland along Indiana 67 for \$400 an acre, or \$27,200. Kenny Hemmel-

garn also submitted a proposal for the land at \$265 an acre.  
•Approved a new one-year contract with Quality Correctional Care, which handles medical needs for Jay County Jail's inmates. The agreement, which starts in January, is priced at \$120,149.88 and split into monthly payments. Sheriff Ray Newton noted the cost increased about 3% this year.  
•Paid more than \$4.7 million in claims, including \$15,015.66 for firearms as budgeted and \$14,049.37 for All Circuit Electric's work installing LED lights at Jay County Jail and Jay County Sheriff's Office.  
•Learned Jay Emergency Med-

ical Service's four new Stryker Power Load systems — they're used to lift patients into the ambulance — will be arriving within the next three weeks. JEMS director Gary Barnett also shared November's financial breakdown, which came to \$131,232.54 in expenses and \$92,242.08 in income.  
•Took bids from Community Auto Group of Bloomington and Thomas Auto Group of Highland under advisement for new vehicles at Jay County Sheriff's Office.  
•Accepted aggregate bids from Jay County Highway Department from US Aggregates, IMI Aggregates and Stoneco.

# Obituaries

**Henry D. Graber**, Bryant, May 23, 1985-Dec. 27, 2023. Services will be at 9 a.m. Sunday at the Daniel Shetler residence, 6336 N. 375 West, Bryant.

*The Commercial Review publishes death notices for those with a connection to our coverage area free of charge. They include the name, city of residence, birth/death date and time/date/location of services.*

*There is a charge for obituaries, which are accepted only from funeral homes or mortuary services.*

## CR almanac

Saturday 12/30	Sunday 12/31	Monday 1/1	Tuesday 1/2	Wednesday 1/3
<b>42/30</b>	<b>39/27</b>	<b>36/23</b>	<b>39/26</b>	<b>39/28</b>
Mostly cloudy skies on Saturday with a high of 42 degrees.	Another day of mostly cloudy skies on Sunday, when the low will reach the mid 20s.	New Year's Day looks to be mostly cloudy as well, with a low around 23 degrees.	Mostly sunny on Tuesday. The high will be in the upper 30s.	Mostly cloudy skies on Wednesday, when the high will be around 39 degrees.

## Lotteries

<b>Powerball</b> 4-11-38-51-68 Power Ball: 5 Power Play: 3 Estimated jackpot: \$760 million	Daily Four: 9-5-8-8 Quick Draw: 1-6-11-12-17-20-26-27-30-31-33-39-48-50-51-52-58-61-63-69 Cash 5: 2-7-12-19-32 Estimated jackpot: \$361,000
<b>Mega Millions</b> Estimated jackpot: \$92 million	<b>Ohio</b> Wednesday Midday Pick 3: 9-7-4 Pick 4: 8-0-9-4 Pick 5: 3-7-4-5-4 Evening Pick 3: 6-7-3 Pick 4: 0-0-5-0 Pick 5: 0-5-8-4-9 Rolling Cash: 1-8-9-19-26 Estimated jackpot: \$130,000
<b>Hoosier</b> Wednesday Midday Daily Three: 7-4-5 Daily Four: 3-5-1-1 Quick Draw: 1-6-15-19-21-22-34-36-37-45-47-50-52-55-61-70-76-78-79-80 Evening Daily Three: 0-9-6	

## Markets

<b>Cooper Farms Fort Recovery</b> Corn.....4.59 Jan. corn.....4.62 Wheat.....5.52	Jan. beans.....12.84 Wheat.....5.92
<b>POET Biorefining Portland</b> Corn.....4.60 Jan. corn.....4.60 Feb. corn.....4.63	<b>ADM Montpelier</b> Corn.....4.29 Jan. corn.....4.46 Beans.....12.80 Jan. beans.....12.84 Wheat.....5.81
<b>The Andersons Richland Township</b> Corn.....4.50 Jan. corn.....4.60 Beans.....12.84	<b>Heartland St. Anthony</b> Corn.....4.50 March corn.....4.57 Beans.....12.67 Feb. beans.....12.70 Wheat.....5.47

## Today in history

In 1170, Thomas Becket, the archbishop of Canterbury, was killed in the cathedral by knights of King Henry II of England.  
In 1808, President Andrew Johnson was born in Raleigh, North Carolina. Johnson never attended school but taught himself to read and write, becoming a U.S. Congressman, U.S. Senator, governor of Tennessee and vice president before ascending to the presidency following the assassination of Abraham Lincoln.  
In 1845, the U.S. Congress approved the annexation of the Republic of Texas. The decision sparked the Mexican War.  
In 1972, the Fort Recovery High School boys basketball team improved to 9-0 with a 91-65 victory over Tri-Village to win the Franklin-Monroe holiday basketball tournament. —The CR

In 1998, leaders of the Khmer Rouge issued a public apology for the estimated 1.5 million who were killed during their rule from 1975 through 1979.  
In 2015, the World Health Organization declared Guinea ebola free two years after the disease was first reported in the country. It had sparked an outbreak in western Africa.  
In 2021, the Fort Recovery High School boys basketball team watched its early 11-point lead slip to three but was able to stay calm and pushed back for a 58-43 victory over the Lincolnview Lancers.  
In 2022, senior Gabi Bilbrey scored a dozen of her career-high 30 points to lead the Class 3A No. 5 Jay County High School girls basketball team to a 63-50 victory over Pendleton Heights.

## Citizen's calendar

**Tuesday**  
4 p.m. — Jay County Development Corporation, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland.  
5:30 p.m. — Portland City Council, fire station, 1616 N. Franklin St.  
7 p.m. — Pennville Town Council, town hall, 105 N. Washington St.

# Jobless claims higher than expected

By **AUGUSTA SARAIVA**  
Bloomberg News  
Tribune News Service

Initial applications for U.S. unemployment benefits increased in the week leading up to Christmas, while remaining at a level that is consistent with a resilient labor market.  
First-time claims rose by 12,000 to 218,000 in the week ended Dec. 23. The figures tend to be volatile around the holidays. The four-week moving average, which offers a clearer picture of the trend, was little changed at

212,000 last week, the lowest since late October.  
Continuing applications, a proxy for the number of people collecting unemployment benefits, rose to 1.88 million the week prior.  
Despite last week's increase, first-time applications for unemployment benefits remain near historical lows, adding to evidence that companies are reluctant to pare headcounts against a backdrop of steady demand.

Thursday's claims data precede the government's monthly jobs report at the end of next week. Economists forecast a still-healthy 170,000 increase in December payrolls, consistent with resilient labor demand that has been key in powering the economy.  
Such job growth reinforces some forecasts that Federal Reserve officials, after almost two years of aggressive interest-rate hikes, will be successful achieving a soft landing

for the economy — where they manage to tame inflation while avoiding a surge in unemployment.  
So far, the job market has proved durable while inflation is slowly getting closer to the central bank's 2% target.  
On an unadjusted basis, initial claims increased by 31,570 to 272,610. California, Missouri and New Jersey led the advance, while claims fell the most in Texas. The figures for California and Texas were estimated.

# Ranks ...

Continued from page 1  
"Whether it's job creation, talent acquisition or upskilling the labor force, Indiana is home to unprecedented opportunity for workers and employers."  
Gibson and Daviess counties were tied for the lowest rate in the state at 2.5%. Dubois County was next at 2.6%.  
Howard County had by far the

highest unemployment rate in Indiana at 6.6%. It took over that spot from Lake County, which was second at 5%.  
Eighty-seven of the state's counties had unemployment rates of 4% or lower.  
Area rates are as follows:  
Adams County: 2.9%, up 0.1 percentage points, tied for 15th-lowest  
Blackford County: 4%, down 0.3

percentage points, tied for sixth-highest  
Delaware County: 4%, up 0.3 percentage points, tied for sixth-highest  
Jay County: 3.3%, up 0.2 percentage points, tied for 34th-highest  
Randolph County: 3.3%, down 0.3 percentage points, tied for 34th-highest  
Wells County: 2.8%, no change, tied for ninth-lowest

# Congress passed 31 laws in 2023

By **DANIELLE BATTAGLIA**  
McClatchy Washington Bureau  
Tribune News Service

WASHINGTON — Members of Congress spent the past 12 months ensuring that this session would be one for the history books.  
It was punctuated with the first removal of a House speaker, the first interim speaker and the first member to be expelled in more than 20 years.  
There was Republican infighting; and almost physical fighting in a hallway, a committee meeting and even on the House floor. But what people won't remember about 2023 is the long list of legislation passed through the hallowed halls of Congress.  
That's because it doesn't exist.  
In fact, only 31 pieces of legislation became

law since Jan. 1, making this year one of the most ineffective in congressional history. And President Joe Biden signed eight of those bills into law just this month.  
One bill that passed came from Sen. Mike Braun, a Republican from Indiana, to strengthen benefits for Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange who then had children born with spina bifida. Under this new law, Veteran Affairs must provide lifetime health care, job training and monetary benefits to the children who have spina bifida whose parents were exposed to Agent Orange during the war.  
The two chambers also tackled issues in health care. One of the first pieces of legislation to pass through Congress ordered the Office of the Director of National Intelligence to declassify information about potential links between the Wuhan Institute of Virology in China and the origin of COVID-19. Sen. Josh Hawley, a Republican from Missouri, sponsored the bill and it passed both chambers unanimously.  
Less universally accepted was Arizona Republican Rep. Paul Gosar's bill to end the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

**JANUARY 1, 2024**  
**NEW YEAR'S DAY DINNER**  
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MAC & CHEESE  
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All you can eat buffet  
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**SERVICES**

**Today**  
**Arnold**, Carole: 8 a.m., Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland.  
**Schwartz**, Rosann: 9 a.m., Enos E.J. Schwartz home, 4362 E. 900 South, Geneva.  
**Bubp**, Capitola: 2 p.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

**Saturday**  
**Moses**, Barbara: 2 p.m., Williamson, Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 190 S. Union St., Pennville.

**Sunday**  
**Graber**, Henry: 9 a.m., Daniel Shetler residence, 6336 N. 375 West, Bryant.

**Wednesday**  
**Young**, Clara: 1 p.m., Brown-Butz-Diedring Funeral Service & Crematory, 515 E. 53rd St., Anderson.

**Jan. 14**  
**Williams**, Helen: 4 p.m., New Life Ministries, 415 S. Helen St., Portland.

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# How to navigate holiday parties with ex

By JANN BLACKSTONE  
Tribune News Service

Q. I just broke up with my husband of four years. Christmas was rough, but most of my friends stood by me and made it bearable. New Year's Eve is around the corner and I have been invited to a party given by a friend who was my friend first. Her husband has become my ex's best friend and I know my ex will be there. I don't want to see him. Should I call him and tell him not to go? What's good ex-etiquette?

**Ex-Etiquette**



describe is the most common question I am asked when it comes to attending parties. Someone has known someone for years, introduces their new partner, and that partner strikes up a friendship with the friend's partner. The couple breaks up and

now the friend couple has to pick how they will navigate both sides. What adds a little more drama to your situation is that it is around the holidays, which are already riddled with emotion and tradition. Breaking up is miserable. Breaking up around the holidays is miserable times 100.

When friends giving a party don't want to take sides, according to good ex-etiquette, I suggest they invite both people. Then as a courtesy, the host informs them both that

the other has been invited, with the addition that if they both do attend, they not disrupt the party. If they don't think they can act in a civil manner, they should not attend. You aren't in charge of the guest list. Calling someone and telling them not to attend is not your job.

I understand you probably feel a little betrayed by your friend inviting your ex, but her allegiance is not only to you, but to her husband, as well. He probably wants to invite your ex because they are now

friends. Everyone is between a rock and a hard place here. (Good Ex-etiquette rule No. 7, "Use empathy in problem solving.") So, as bad as you probably feel, I'd find something else to do this year for New Year's Eve—unless you have a guarantee your ex will not attend. However, we all know there's never a guarantee. I can think of about five movies off the top of my head where exes attend the same party.

So, if you really don't want the drama—or don't

want to subject your friends to drama—don't go this year. Next year, hopefully, your life will be on a more positive trajectory. Maybe you'll even throw your own party. That's your good ex-etiquette.

Jann Blackstone is the author of "Ex-etiquette for Parents: Good Behavior After Divorce or Separation," and the founder of Bonus Families, bonusfamilies.com. Email her at the Ex-Etiquette website [exetiquette.com](http://exetiquette.com) at [drjann@exetiquette.com](mailto:drjann@exetiquette.com).

# Unhappy wife ponders life with another man

DEAR ABBY: I have been married to my husband for 12 years. We have had our ups and downs. I was unfaithful at one point, and he left for eight months, but we worked through it all.

We are now coming out of another really rough patch involving a lot of arguing and talk of divorce. I'm having a hard time because around the time he left, I started falling out of love with him. I tried my best to be a good wife and do what I am supposed to, but this last bout of unpleasantness has left me feeling empty and no longer in love.

There is now someone in my life I have developed strong feelings for. I imagine a life with him and the thought of being with him excites me. My husband is a good person, but he's an alcohol and drug addict. He has done EVERYTHING he can and is willing to do things he can't to ensure I love him as much as he loves me, and that our marriage doesn't end. He has been sober

**Dear Abby**



now for seven years, but habits and tendencies still remain.

The problems in our marriage are not all his fault. I have some things I also need to work on, and yet, I still imagine a life with another man. What should I do? — CONFLICTED IN TEXAS

**DEAR CONFLICTED:** Please discuss the state of your marriage (and your feelings) with a licensed marriage and family therapist. It might make sense for you and your husband to have a trial separation, because changing partners might not be what you hope it will be. It would give you the chance to find out whether the "excitement" you feel for this other man

is real or the illusion of a woman who is unhappy. You have already been through so much, so please do nothing on impulse now.

DEAR ABBY: I am a retired widow. A new neighbor moved in next door. I have always been pleasant to her while she complains about everyone and everything, but it's getting old. She watches for me to walk my dog, then runs outside to tell me her latest woe or complain about something. She has now begun ringing my doorbell and inviting herself inside for the same reasons.

Abby, I live in a small community. We are all close neighbors. I don't know what to do about this woman. Can you suggest anything? I'm thinking about moving. — PRIVATE IN NORTH CAROLINA

**DEAR PRIVATE:** It appears your new neighbor is friendless, and for good reason. As I see it, there are a couple of things you can do to discourage her. The

first would be, when you are trapped and she is complaining, to stop her and tell her you prefer to talk only about PLEASANT things. The second would be, when she rings your bell, to tell her you are busy and when you want company you will invite her over. Do NOT let her in.

DEAR ABBY: My dear friend "Lana" and her husband both passed away a while back. Recently, my son confided that he and Lana's daughter had an affair years ago that resulted in a child. We all grew up close and regarded ourselves as related even though we were not. Lana's daughter married someone and passed the child off as her husband's. I never noticed how much that young man resembles my son before. I always called him one of my grandsons in an unofficial capacity. He is grown and married now.

Since I learned that he is my biological grandson, I have

ached to acknowledge our relationship. But I don't want to rock the boat and disrupt the family dynamic, let alone break my son's trust. Should I take this secret to my grave? After all, he already calls me "Nana." — REAL TRUTH IN THE SOUTHWEST

**DEAR REAL TRUTH:** Do NOTHING without first talking about this with your son. Because of the popularity of DNA testing in recent years, your grandson may find out on his own that the man he was raised to believe is his father is not. This kind of revelation can be devastating to some individuals. The news would be better coming from your son than from you.

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](http://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](mailto: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. For more information, 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.

**Tuesday**

**BRYANT COMMUNITY CENTER EUCHRE** — Will

be played at 1 p.m. each Tuesday. The public is welcome.

**A BETTER LIFE - BRIANNA'S HOPE** — A faith-based recovery group for substance abuse. Meal starts at 6 p.m. and the meeting is from 6:30 to 8 p.m. every Tuesday at the Nazarene Fellowship Building across from the Nazarene church, 249 E. Center St., Dunkirk. For more information, call Amanda Price at (765) 283-2107.

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

**NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS** — Will meet at 7 p.m. each Tuesday at Church of God of Prophecy, 797 N. Creagor Ave. in Portland. For more information, call (260) 766-9334

**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.

**SINGLES AND SEPARATES SUPPORT GROUP** — For anyone who's lost a loved one or has a spouse living in long-term care or suffering from an illness, the group will meet at 2 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month in the Arthur & Gloria Muselman Wellness Pavilion in Berne. For more information, call Sarah Conrad at (260) 589-4496.

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

**A BETTER LIFE - BRIANNA'S HOPE** — A faith-based recovery group for

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

**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.

**GRIEF SHARE** — Meets from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Thursdays from Jan. 4 to March 28 at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, 218 E. High St., Portland. Grief Share is a weekly grief support group for those needing to find hope and healing after the death of a loved one. To register, call (260) 726-8832 or email [zion-lutheranportland@gmail.com](mailto:zion-lutheranportland@gmail.com).

**PORTLAND LIONS CLUB** — Will meet the first Thursday of the month at Portland Lions Civic Center, 307 W. 100 North. The meal will be served at 6:30 p.m. and the meeting will begin at 7 p.m.

## Sudoku

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

Level: Advanced

**Thursday's Solution**

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

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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Deadline for ads is January 17

Space for color ads is limited and will be on a first-come, first-serve basis.



# Public invited to review finances

To the editor:  
There has been extensive discussion over the last few years amongst the Jay County Commissioners, Jay County Council and Jay County Development Corporation (JCDC) about JCDC's funding, our mission and goals, representation on our board of directors and the contractual obligations for all sides.

If you are a regular consumer of local news, you likely have heard, read about or watched some of these conversations. If not, we encourage you to review previous news articles, watch some of the

## Letters to the Editor

livestreamed meetings on the county's website or stop by the office to have a conversation with our executive director.

The JCDC board of directors, including one county commissioner and three county council members, get monthly financial reports. These reports contain our monthly and year-to-date income/expenses, special

projects balances, certificate of deposit balance and annual budget information. JCDC also reported our checking account, certificate of deposit and special project account balances on our 2024 application for county funds. It is also important to note that our annual budget has been unanimously approved by the board of directors, including the county representatives, for the last several years.

For 2024, Jay County Council has allocated \$140,000 for JCDC's operational budget. The Jay County Commissioners are unsure how much of that fund-

ing they will release to us. As of Dec. 6, they are asking for detailed financial information from JCDC, including: "bank statements, CD balances, monthly claims and balances of all checking and savings accounts to show full transparency and to make an educated decision on funding".

While we believe we have answered every question and provided adequate information, JCDC wants to continue being a good partner. To fully satisfy this request, ensure that there are no lingering questions and continue demonstrating true transparency, JCDC

invites the entire community to attend our upcoming board meeting where we will be reviewing detailed financial information from the last 10 years. We will look at budgets, income, expenses, account balances and annual independent audit reports.

If you have an interest in JCDC's finances, please join us at 4 p.m. Jan. 2 at the Community Resource Center (118 S. Meridian St., Portland.).

Respectfully submitted on behalf of Jay County Development Corporation,  
Travis Richards  
Executive director

## We need the Workplace Psychological Safety Act

By **RANDY JURADO ERTL**  
Progressive Perspectives  
Tribune News Service

In October, the Massachusetts state legislature heard testimony from hundreds of activists in support of the Workplace Psychological Safety Act (WPSA), an anti-bullying bill that could set a new national precedent.

The measure — which was first put forward in Rhode Island earlier in 2023 — would hold employers accountable for psychological abuse committed on the job. Advocates for the bill define psychological abuse as "bullying and mobbing that violate an employee's basic human right to dignity."

With bullying affecting nearly 80 million U.S. workers (roughly one in two overall), according to a 2021 survey by the Workplace Bullying Institute, there is an urgent need to counteract such abuse being tolerated or committed by employers, many of whom rely on loopholes in current laws to avoid facing penalties. The WPSA lays out a more stringent system for workers to seek recourse from, among other things, "common behaviors that a reasonable person would deem to be toxic."

While there are plenty of laws designed to protect employees from racism and discrimination in the workplace, these laws are far from perfect — and many do not account for abuses that are less blatant. As a professional credentialed teacher, I've seen colleagues being yelled at, intimidated and talked to condescendingly, none of which would, at present, be legally considered workplace abuse.

Teachers are among the workers who need this act's safeguards the most. There is no cookie-cutter approach to teaching. Every day is unique, challenging and exhausting. And expectations — especially for new teachers — are extremely high. Some students have different learning ability levels, language barriers, social-emotional and various other challenges. On top of these pressures, teachers face the threat of displacement.

Put simply, displacement is a bureaucratic method to get rid of teachers. A school can justify displacement for reasons such as low enrollment or favoring teachers in certain subjects over others. But sometimes, administrators simply displace teachers because they don't get along with them personally or professionally. One could say that displacement is a form of bureau-

**Randy Jurado Ertll**



*Students will only benefit from having an effective, long-term teacher who is not being micromanaged or harassed.*

cratic psychological abuse.

Conditions that displaced teachers face can cause psychological issues like anxiety, depression, hypervigilance and post-traumatic stress. Newer teachers are often the ones displaced, and they are mainly placed in schools that they have not selected.

It is time for unions and civil rights organizations to stand up and declare displacements unacceptable. Regardless of years of experience, all teachers must be treated with dignity and respect. Students will only benefit from having an effective, long-term teacher who is not being micromanaged or harassed.

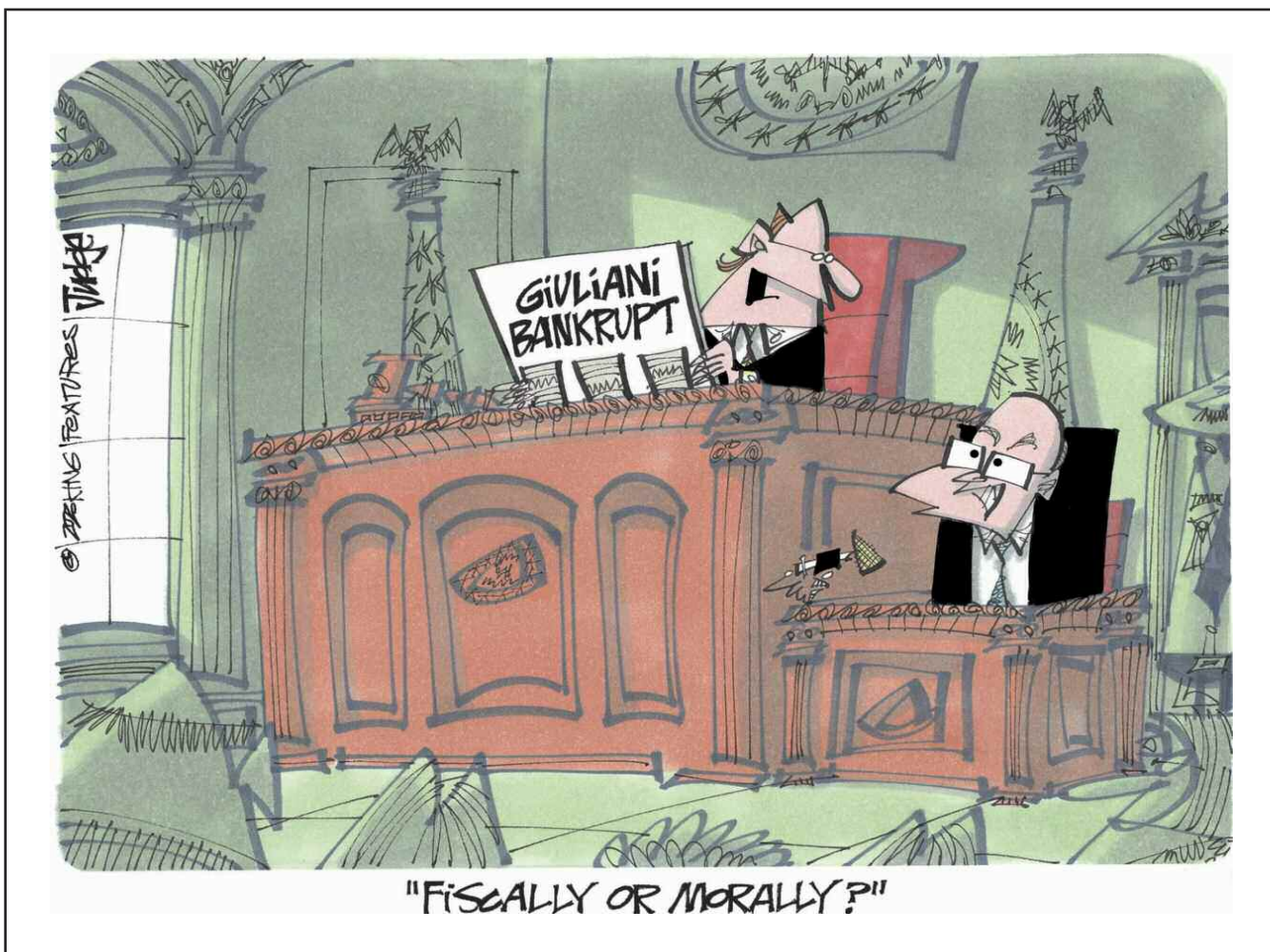
We must get the WPSA signed into law in all 50 states. We must stand up for the rights of all workers to be treated fairly and with respect.

The WPSA can serve as a legal protection for new teachers who, at times, may feel that their labor union may not advocate or represent them in relation to the issue of displacement.

Teachers throughout the United States have an opportunity to organize, advocate for and demand that their school board members support and adopt the Workplace Psychological Safety Act.

By implementing the principles of the Workplace Psychological Safety Act, school board members can set the example that bullying and psychological harassment of teachers is unacceptable and no longer tolerated.

.....  
*Ertll is a teacher, newspaper columnist, and an award winning published author.*



## Safeguard democracy from AI

By **STEVEN KULL and JP THOMAS**  
The Baltimore Sun  
Tribune News Service

The Founding Fathers asserted that elected officials should listen to and be influenced by the views of the electorate. As James Madison said, "it is the reason, alone, of the public, that ought to control and regulate the government."

However, the means for government officials to hear from the people are limited. Elected officials receive emails, letters, phone calls and input at town halls, and some agencies occasionally ask for public comments on complex regulations. Americans express very low levels of confidence that they influence the policymaking process and that elected officials understand the views of the people, undermining trust in the democratic process.

With developments in AI, this situation is growing worse. AI can generate vast numbers of communications to policymakers masquerading as citizen input.

When the Federal Communications Commission in 2016 took public comments on whether to retain net neutrality, the New York Attorney General later found nearly 18 of the 22 million comments were fabricated, using generated fake names, or real names without consent. A large portion was generated by the broadband industry, which wanted fewer regulations. Among the genuine inputs, 98.5% favored retaining net neutrality.

Researchers conducting a recent study for Brookings sent 32,398 emails to legislative offices, some written by citizens, others generated by AI, which can deliver thousands of letters that sound genuine seconds. The study found legislative offices could not discern which were fake.

We are just seeing the beginning of what will become a flood of false inputs drowning genuine input and further undermining public confidence.

So what can be done? It may be that the collapse of a flawed system

## Guest Opinion

requires not a superficial repair, but a major upgrade.

In this country — and other democracies — universities, non-profit organizations and governments have been using methods for consulting citizens on important policy issues. These public consultation efforts recruit representative samples that mirror the public as a whole, making it possible to discern consensus. And they verify that those who engage are, in fact, real citizens using modern technologies.

Further, they go beyond polls, which are limited to a narrow range of topics on which the public already has enough information to give meaningful input.

For example, in "public consultation surveys" developed by the Program for Public Consultation at the University of Maryland, up to several thousand verified citizens go through a transparent online process in which they get a briefing on a policy proposal the government is debating and evaluate arguments for and against. All content is reviewed by policy experts on different sides of the debate. So when citizens make their policy recommendations, it is an accurate expression of their values and priorities. Voice of the People also conducts these online surveys in congressional districts and then brings together constituents who took the survey and representatives to have informed discussions on the issues.

Other programs take smaller groups of citizens through more in-depth processes — called "citizen assemblies," "citizen juries" or "deliberative polls" — that can last

several days. In addition to getting briefed, these "mini-publics," which can range from several dozen to several hundred, meet and discuss issues with experts and each other before coming to conclusions.

Asked how they feel about using public consultation, a very large majority of voters approve and say it would improve their confidence in government. They also say they are more likely to vote for candidates who commit to engaging their constituents in this way, with more than four in 10 saying they would even be ready to cross party lines.

What is striking is that when citizens engage in these public consultation processes, they are far more likely to find bipartisan common ground than Congress. From public consultations with nearly 100,000 Americans, Voice of the People has identified over 200 points of bipartisan agreement, in a wide range of policy areas, on which Congress has been gridlocked.

While privately funded efforts are making a meaningful contribution, if policymakers truly want to listen, they should create a government-funded institute to consistently consult the people.

We stand at a crossroads. AI has opened up new possibilities for distorting the democratic process by generating fake voices in the service of special interests. At the same time, democratic, technological innovations have opened up the possibility of not only verifying the voices of representative samples of citizens but also giving them tools to deliver meaningful input to their elected representatives. Which use becomes the norm will set the future of democracy itself.

.....  
*Kull serves as director of the Program for Public Consultation at the University of Maryland. He is the founder and president of Voice of the People. JP Thomas is vice president of Voice of the People and director of Voice of the People Action.*

# The Commercial Review



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

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# Dairy sector is contracting

By **CHRISTOPHER VONDRACEK**  
Star Tribune  
Tribune News Service

Minnesota lost 58 dairy farm permits in November, a devastating blow to a farm sector already drained by contraction.

"We have some seasonality to this. In October, November and December, you'll always see some herds go," Lucas Sjostrom, executive director of the Minnesota Milk Producers Association, said. "But I have not seen [a monthly declines in permits] over 50 for a long time."

The end of the year is typically a time to see more farmers opt out of milking cows, either permanently or temporarily, as producers put up silage or feed for the coming year.

But Sjostrom says this last month's numbers underscore the razor-thin financial margins for dairy farmers under a crush of economic pressures, such as high input costs and low commodity values, just a year after dairy enjoyed higher prices for milk, cheese and butter in the aftermath of the pandemic.

Sjostrom said at least farmers aren't going bankrupt. He credited safety-net programs such as Minnesota's Dairy Assistance, Investment and Relief Initiative for aiding producers during crashes in milk prices.

"I would guess Minnesota



Tribune News Service/Minneapolis Star Tribune/David Joles

Louriston Dairy, built and operated by Riverview LLP in Murdock, Minnesota. Minnesota has 146 fewer dairy farmer permits this Christmas than at the beginning of the year, according to the state Department of Agriculture.

has, due to that program, the least amount of unplanned exits," Sjostrom said.

In sum, Minnesota has 146 fewer dairy farmer permits this Christmas than the state did at the beginning of the year, according to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

Overall, the state had a total of 1,825 permits as of Dec. 1, according to MDA. A decade ago, the state counted over 4,000 dairy farms.

The largest losses this year were in central Minnesota's dairy heartland. Stearns and Morrison counties saw 27 and

21 fewer permits in December than in January, respectively.

Counties in southeastern Minnesota's dairy belt — Fillmore (9), Goodhue (6) and Houston (5) — also saw significant losses. A few counties in Minnesota saw small increases in the number of dairy permits, including Becker

(2) and Aitkin, Winona and Swift (1).

The bitter news follows a year of bottoming-out commodity prices on milk and cheese. The U.S. also lost, on appeal, a challenge to Canada's dairy program before an international arbitration board that would've opened up a new market for Minnesota dairy manufacturers and farmers.

Last month, a dispute settlement panel under the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, the replacement to NAFTA, ruled 2-1 in favor of Canada's milk program, which curtails imports through a tariff quota system and is largely viewed as protectionist.

"It's a market that should be there, but it isn't," said Alan Bjerga a spokesman for the National Milk Producers Federation, which represents many of the nation's dairy cooperatives. "It's safe to say U.S. dairy producers did not get the quota that they thought they were promised under USMCA."

The news wasn't all dour for dairy. The downward trend in fluid milk consumption over the last year was outpaced by faster declines in dairy alternatives such as oat milk. Meanwhile, before leaving for the holidays, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill to return whole milk to American schools.

## Mexican producers hope for a new label

By **ALFREDO CORCHADO**  
The Dallas Morning News  
Tribune News Service

SANTA TERESA, N.M. — Chihuahua cattle producers plan to promote their signature steaks by adding the label "Made in Chihuahua," a move inspired by other successful Mexican brands and an effort to capitalize on a booming Hispanic market in the U.S.

The plan depends on a proposed federal rule change that would tighten requirements for packers to label their meat and poultry "Product of USA." Current government rules allow packers to voluntarily use the "Product of USA" label as long as the product was packaged within the U.S., even if the meat or poultry was imported from another country.

The Department of Agriculture said the move is aimed at providing more transparency for consumers. The current policy allows imported meat to have a "Product of USA" label, even if it comes from a multinational corporation, as long as it passes through a USDA-inspected plant. The federal rule change is pending USDA approval.

Once that happens, Alvaro Bustillos, president of the Unión Ganadera Regional de Chihuahua, or Chihuahua Cattlemen's Association, says he sees a "tremendous opportunity to tap into the Hispanic nostalgia market and add value to a product we're proud of and, in this case, one that defines our state."

In Chihuahua, Bustillos oversees the biggest cattle crossing along the U.S.-Mexico border. Chihuahua cattle are born in Mexico, but raised, fed, slaughtered and packaged in the U.S. Bustillos said he welcomes transparency and wants to add the "Made in Chihuahua" label.

"Our whole herd is based on U.S. genetics, but we also have one of the most advanced, sophisticated traceability programs," he said. "We use it for sanitary purposes and now we want to use it for marketing purposes by leveraging this asset. We can prove the herd originated in Mexico. We're not trying to hide that."

Over the years, a growing number of U.S. brands have been imported from Mexico, including medical devices, toothpaste, printers, airplanes and car parts.

A rising number of Mexican-owned brands — Topo Chico mineral water, Avocados From Mexico, tequila and beer — have exploded across the U.S., moving

far beyond nostalgic markets and into the U.S. mainstream, said marketing expert David Benitez, who sees a similar trend for Mexican meat.

"There is a huge, and I literally mean huge, market for steaks from Mexico," said Benitez, president of Dallas-based Intelligent Mexican Marketing, which specializes in imported Mexican and Latin American brands. "Products like Topo Chico, for example, have gone from these little things from Mexico to forming part of mainstream America."

These niche products can yield a "premium price," Benitez said. "From a branding perspective, you're talking about the Holy Grail, because people automatically know when you say the word Chihuahua or Sonora, [they] relate those states to cattle and steaks."

The U.S. Latino economy reached \$3.2 trillion in 2021, up from \$2.8 trillion in 2020, according to a new report by the Latino Donor Collaborative in partnership with Wells Fargo.

Chef Pati Jinich agrees about the potential. Jinich has become an icon on food and culture, thanks to her books; her cooking show, Pati's Mexican Table; and La Frontera with Pati Jinich, a PBS series about culinary dishes along the border.

She said the timing is right for Mexican brands, including steaks, to enter the U.S. market, given the size of the Hispanic market and appreciation of Mexican culture in mainstream America.

"The idea is brilliant because every region is a micro-region in Mexico that specializes in something and there is so much pride for products not only made in Mexico, but a particular part of Mexico," Jinich said.

"It's like champagne from France, or tequila from Jalisco, or mezcal from Oaxaca," she said. "The United States, of course, loves Mexican food and culture. We are just scratching the surface. There is so much to learn and enjoy from the neighbor to the south."

Among the most successful brands, especially during holidays, is Avocados From Mexico, the biggest maker of guacamole. In the past 10 years, the company's brand recognition took off thanks to a series of witty commercials airing during the Super Bowl.

The key has been to "build a brand for Mexican avocados and drive demand through food service and retail," said Ana Ambrosi, director of corporate communications at Avocados From Mexico.

# HEALTHCARE

## How to get kids more engaged in their dental health

Dental health should be a priority at any age, and is especially important for children. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says more than half of children between the ages of six and eight have had a cavity in at least one of their primary teeth. Also, more than half of adolescents aged 12 to 19 have had a cavity in at least one permanent tooth. Cavities and other oral health conditions, such as periodontal diseases, are largely preventable with proper oral hygiene.

Parents know that getting children — especially young ones — to care for their teeth in the correct manner may require some help and then reinforcement throughout the developmental years. However, there are ways to make dental care a more engaging activity for youngsters.

### Use plaque-disclosing tablets

Show children just where they may need to direct more brushing effort with plaque-disclosing tablets. These tablets use food-grade coloring in them, which sticks to areas with plaque accumulation. After chewing the tablets and the child smiles,



he or she will see the spots where efforts need to be ramped up. This can be a fun lesson as children will likely enjoy seeing their teeth covered in the tablet color.

### Flavored toothpastes and mouthwashes

Mint reigns supreme in oral health products as the dominant flavor, but not all children are enamored with that flavor. Most oral care products geared toward the younger set come in different flavors like bubble gum and berry. Kids can take active roles in their oral health by choosing the flavored

products they prefer to use.

### Electronic toothbrushes

Children may enjoy using electronic toothbrushes because they are easy to maneuver and can even seem like a toy. According to the Cleveland Clinic, electric toothbrushes generally are considered more effective at removing plaque and keeping teeth clean. That benefits kids and adults because it potentially means fewer painful visits with the dentist.

### Make it a competition

Children love games and healthy competition between

peers and siblings. Offer a prize (non-sugary, of course) to children who brush and floss daily for the required times. Extra points can be awarded for every dental wellness check that comes back with a glowing report.

### Make smart food choices

Engage children in lessons and choices about which foods are good for oral health and which may be poor. Sticky foods or those with a lot of sugary content should only be occasional treats. The entire family can work together to plan meals around foods that are good for the teeth and gums, such as crunchy veggies, leafy greens, high-calcium dairy products, and fatty fish.

### Practice on pets

Pets need clean teeth, too. Children may enjoy not only brushing their own teeth, but learning how to keep their companion animals' mouths healthy with brushing and care.

Various strategies can increase the chances that kids engage with oral hygiene practices early on. TF242712

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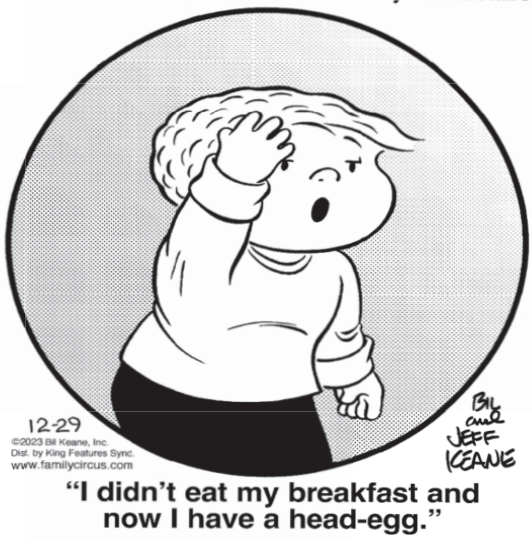
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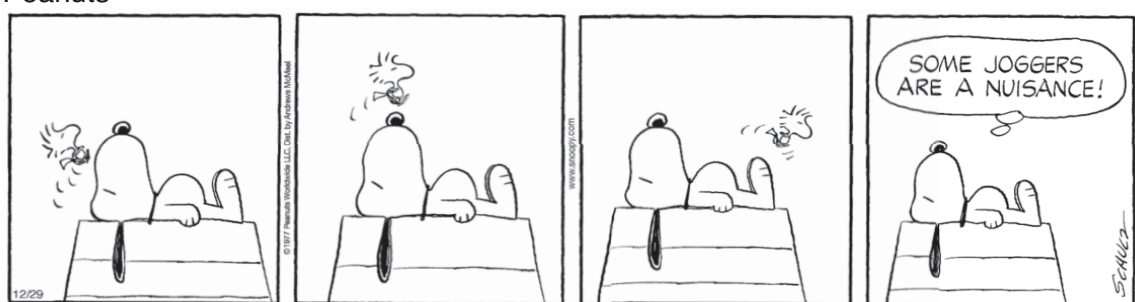
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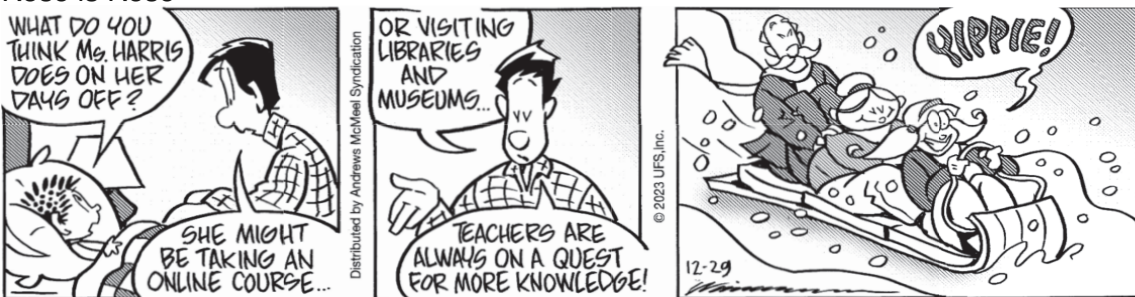
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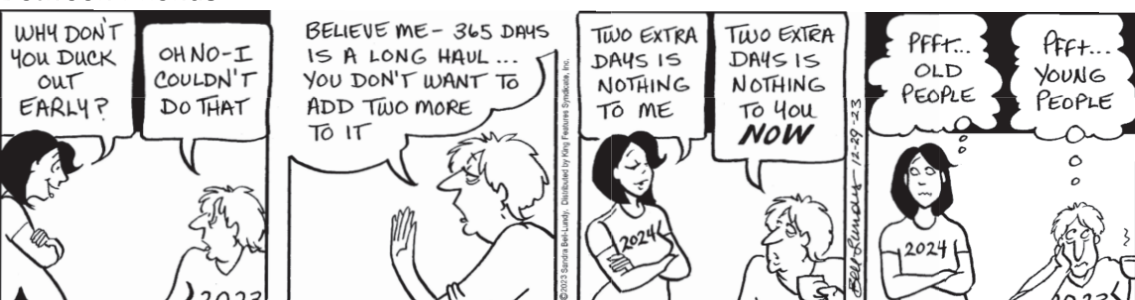
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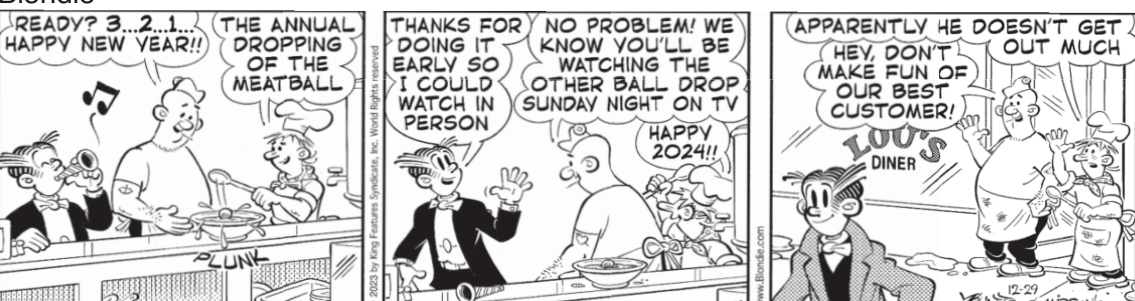
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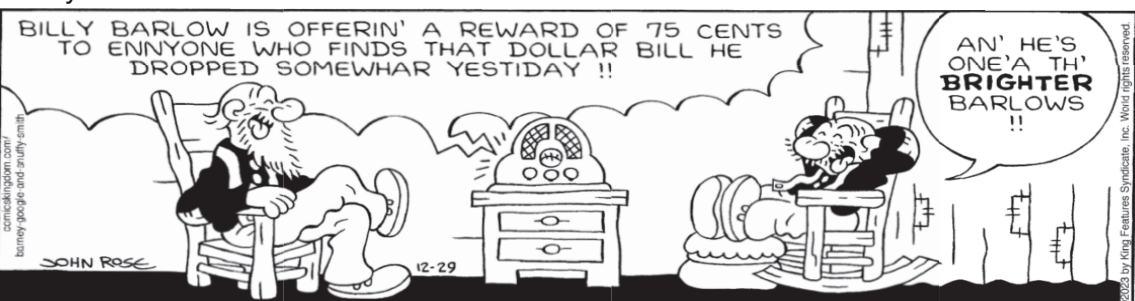
Between Friends



Blondie



Snuffy Smith



Beetle Bailey



Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

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90 SALE CALENDAR

47TH ANNUAL COLDWATER YOUNG FARMERS CONSIGNMENT AUCTION Saturday February 10, 2024

The Coldwater Young Farmer Association will be conducting their annual farm machinery consignment auction at the Coldwater football stadium parking lot in Coldwater, Ohio.



## Tops ...

Continued from page 8

### 3. Upgrading outdoors

In late 2022, Jay County High School athletics director Steve Boozier presented Jay School Board with a list of "do now, do next, do in the future" priorities. The board took action in late January, approving a \$6.1 million capital improvement project that includes the construction of a new \$3.15 million locker room, restroom and concession building at the northeast corner of the football field and the installation of synthetic turf at a cost of about \$1.25 million.

That project is underway with a target of being in use for the 2024 fall sports season.

### 4. Second in state

Mara Pearson set three goals for the OHSAA state track meet: to medal, jump in the mid-high 18s and be more consistent. Four jumps of 18 feet and better secured all three goals and the runner-up spot.

The Fort Recovery High School junior's fifth jump went 18 feet, 5 inches, and left her three quarters of an inch short of Lucas' Shelby Grove, who took home the state title. They were trading first throughout the meet before Grove's fourth attempt put her on top for good.

Pearson was also on the school-record-breaking 4x100-meter relay team.

### 5. Coach steps away

About three months after his team's season came to an end, Jay County High School girls basketball coach Kirk Comer announced his retirement.

At the time he stepped away, his 408 career wins were ninth-most among active Indiana high school girls basketball coaches and ranked 24th on the all-time list. More than half of those victories came in his two stints with the Patriots — 2005 through 2010 and 2016 through 2023 — including a sectional championship in 2006.

He also coached at Daleville, Union, Union City, Winchester and Monroe Central during his three-decade career.

### 6. Best in FR history

All seven runners played an important role for the Fort Recovery High School girls cross country team that earned 306 points to finish 10th at the state meet in the highest finish in school history.



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Natalie Brunswick set the pace with a 43rd-place finish (19:41.65), followed by Makenna Huelskamp (90th), Ellie Will (105th) and Joelle Kaup (124th). After a slow start, Jenna Hart passed an opponent at the finish line to place 160th.

While Maddie Heitkamp (165th) and Anna Roessner (167th) didn't score, they took away points from Fairbanks and Sand Valley, which tied for 11th with 307.

### 7. New clubhouse

Jay County Baseball Club closed on a building in early September that it plans to turn into an outdoor sports complex in the near future.

The purchase of the building cost \$575,000 with the price of technology, equipment and labor to outfit the building coming out to about \$320,000.

It received a one-time match of \$175,000 in wind farm economic development fund dollars from the county.

The building will have batting cages, turf, a golf simulator, office space and a classroom, and will be available to members of the community via membership.

### 8. Medal, championships

A banner year for the Jay County High School wrestling team closed with Tony Wood earning book-end victories at Gainbridge Fieldhouse to finish seventh in the state at 138 pounds.

Wood pinned Cathedral's Max McGinley in his opening state match before dropping his next two. He then beat Warren Central's Christian Arberly in the seventh-place match.

The junior's effort capped a season that saw the Patriots repeat as sectional champions and win their first regional title since 1988. They had eight wrestlers qualify for the semi-state and four compete at the state finals.

### 9. Regional, record

Jay County High School's Gabi Bilbrey scratched her first throw of the regional meet.

After an adjustment from throwing coach Brian Miles, Bilbrey came back to secure a spot in the finals.

Bilbrey's throw of 128 feet, 1 inch, was enough for the championship and a trip to state. The victory was the second time Jay County had a regional champion in the past three years, after Elisa Parazzi took the high jump in 2021.

Fort Recovery High School freshman Makenna Huelskamp (3049) and senior Ellie Will (3055) run at the OHSAA Division III state cross country meet earlier this year. With her third-place finish on the team, Will scored all four years of high school as the team made its fourth appearance in as many years. Jenna Hart also accomplished the same feat. The trip was Huelskamp's first visit to a state competition.

A week earlier, Bibrey broke her own school record twice in the discus. Her toss of 140 feet, 6 inches, also set a sectional record.

### 10. Field debuted

The LeFevre Family Baseball and Softball Complex made its debut for the 2023 season Fort Recovery High School baseball and softball seasons.

The project to construct a new baseball field, with a press box, restrooms and concession building, adjacent to the existing softball field had been in the works since 2017. Construction was delayed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The new baseball field features stadium-style seating, an observation mound behind the center field fence and wood fencing in right field designed to resemble the wall of a fort.

## Sports on tap

### Local schedule

**Today**  
Fort Recovery — Girls basketball at St. Henry — 6 p.m.; Boys basketball at St. Henry — 7:30 p.m.; JV boys basketball at St. Henry — 2:15 p.m.; JV girls basketball at St. Henry — 3:30 p.m.; Freshman boys basketball at St. Henry — 1 p.m.; Middle school boys basketball at St. Henry — 9:30 a.m.; Middle school girls basketball at St. Henry — 9:30 a.m.

**Saturday**  
Jay County — Girls wrestling IHSWCA regional at Jay County — 9 a.m.; Boys basketball at Muncie Central — 6 p.m.  
Fort Recovery — Girls bowling vs. New Bremen at Plaza Lanes — 9:15 a.m.;

Boys bowling vs. New Bremen at Celina — 1 p.m.; Boys basketball vs. Lincolnview — 6 p.m.; Freshman boys basketball at Coldwater — 10 a.m.

### TV sports

**Today**  
12 p.m. — College football Taxslayer Gator Bowl: Clemson vs. Kentucky (ESPN)  
2 p.m. — College football Tony the Tiger Sun Bowl: Oregon State vs. Notre Dame (CBS)  
3:30 p.m. — College football Autozone Liberty Bowl: Memphis vs. Iowa State (ESPN)  
7 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Easter Kentucky at Purdue (BTN)

8 p.m. — College football Goodyear Cotton Bowl: Missouri vs. Ohio State (ESPN)  
9 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Fairleigh Dickinson at Illinois (BTN)  
9 p.m. — Men's college basketball: San Diego State at Gonzaga (ESPN2)  
11 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Arizona State at Stanford (ESPN2)

**Saturday**  
7:30 a.m. — Premier League: Chelsea at Luton Town (USA)  
10 a.m. — Premier League: Burnley at Aston Villa (USA)  
12 p.m. — College football Chick-Fil-A Peach Bowl: Ole Miss vs. Penn State (ESPN)  
12 p.m. — Men's college basketball:

Stonehill at Rutgers (BTN); Hofstra at St. John's (FS1)  
12 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Ohio State at Michigan (FOX)  
12:30 p.m. — Premier League: Manchester United at Nottingham Forest (USA)  
2 p.m. — College football Transperfect Music City Bowl: Auburn vs. Maryland (ABC)  
2 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Creighton at Marquette (CBS); Virginia Tech at Wake Forest (ESPN2); Indiana State at Michigan State (FS1)  
2 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Minnesota at Iowa (BTN); Baylor at Texas (FOX)  
4 p.m. — College football Capital One Orange Bowl: Georgia vs. Florida State

(ESPN)  
4 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Wichita State at Kansas (ESPN2); UCLA at Oregon (CBS); Chicago State at DePaul (FS1)  
4 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Michigan State at Penn State (BTN)  
6 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Wisconsin at Purdue (BTN)  
7 p.m. — NBA: New York Knicks at Indiana Pacers (Bally Indiana)  
7 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Ohio State at West Virginia (FOX)  
8:15 p.m. — NFL: Detroit Lions at Dallas Cowboys (ABC)

Tryouts for A League of Our Own Independent Baseball League is hosting a tryout at the Mojo-Up Sports indoor Complex in Noblesville on Jan. 30.

Anyone 19-years-old or older that is looking for the opportunity to continue playing baseball can try out.

The league begins play on Aug. 31 and runs through Oct. 19, playing 50 games in 50 days.

To sign up or for more information on the league, visit [www.alooo247.com](http://www.alooo247.com), call (205) 264-1468 or email 411@alooo247.com.

To have an event listed in "Sports on tap," email details to [sports@thecr.com](mailto:sports@thecr.com).

### Local notes

Tryouts scheduled

### 90 SALE CALENDAR

#### LIVE/SIMULCAST AUCTION

New Year's Day Extravaganza  
Monday, January 1st, 10:00am

Located: Bricker Auction Gallery  
414 N Meridian St., Portland, IN  
2 RINGS RING 1

Antiques, Primitives, Silver Certificates, Vintage Toys, Cast Iron, Furniture, Appliances, Coca-Cola items, costume jewelry, musical instruments.

RING 2  
2023 Bad Boy Tractors w/loaders, 2018 Polaris side by side, 2019 Triumph Several firearms, new Home Depot items, pedal tractors, vintage games, and more!

Properties will sell at 12 pm  
1st property 1664 w 900 S Ridgeville, IN 1280 sqft home.  
2nd property 616 W Race St. 1830 sqft home.

### 90 SALE CALENDAR

Call for preview of homes.

Auction preview December 29th from 3 to 5pm  
Go to [bidbricker.com](http://bidbricker.com) to bid

Bricker Auction Company  
Cell: 260-703-0839  
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Chad Bricker-Auctioneer  
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### 190 FARMERS COLUMN

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### 260 PUBLIC AUCTION

## New Year's Day Extravaganza

Bricker Auction House  
414 N Meridian St. Portland, IN

January 1, 2024

@ 10:00 am Live & Simulcast!

Ring 1 - Antiques, Primitives, Silver Certificates, Vintage Toys, Cast Iron, Furniture, Appliances, Coca-Cola items, pocket knives, costume jewelry, musical instruments.

Ring 2 - 2023 Bad Boy Tractors w/ loaders, 2018 Polaris side by side, 2012 Honda motorcycle, 2016 Kawasaki, 2019 Triumph, oLder International tractor, several firearms, ammo, new Home Depot items, pedal tractors, vintage games, fishing and more!

Properties will sell starting at 12:00. 1st property is located at 1664 W 900 S Ridgeville, IN. This is 1280 sq ft home on 5 acres.

2nd property is located at 616 W. Race St. 3 bedroom, single bathroom, 2 living rooms, attached garage. 1,830 sq ft.

Call Chad to preview the homes. Preview will be Friday, December 29 from 3 to 5.

Go to [bidbricker.com](http://bidbricker.com) to start bidding!  
Chad Bricker, Auctioneer - 260-703-0839 - AU11600027

CR 12-29-2023



# Sports

## Schwieterman tops list again

### Jay grad is top story of 2023 for second year in a row

By RAY COONEY and ANDREW BALKO

The Commercial Review

A sophomore repeated as the state champion.

One of the winningest coaches in Indiana history retired.

A multi-million project was approved and began.

All are rare occurrences. But when an athlete becomes not only the leading scorer in program history or school history but across all basketball ever played in the county, that accomplishment stands alone.

Renna Schwieterman claimed the top spot on The Commercial Review's list of the biggest sports stories for the second year in a row for becoming the all-time leading scorer across boys and girls basketball in Jay County history.

The rest of the top 10 is as follows:

2. Mallory Winner repeats as girls wrestling state champion

3. Multi-million dollar outdoor athletics project is approved and gets underway

4. Mara Pearson finishes as state long jump runner-up

5. Kirk Comer retires as JCHS girls basketball coach

6. FR girls cross country records best state finish in school history

7. Jay County Baseball Club pursues indoor training facility

8. Tony Wood places seventh in state; Patriots win sectional, regional titles

9. Gabi Bilbrey wins regional discus crown, breaks school record

10. Fort Recovery opens new baseball facility

#### 1. Bales bested

Schwieterman had already surpassed all-time Jay County High School girls basketball leading scorer Shannon Freeman in late 2022. When she did, just three players in county his-



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Renna Schwieterman and Greg Bales shake hands at the Jay County High School girls basketball game against Heritage after overtaking Bales' record for the all-time leading scorer in county history.

tory remained ahead of her — 1971 Bryant graduate Tom Weigel (1,529 points), 1959 Bryant graduate Richard Masters (1,574) and 1972 Redkey graduate Greg Bales (1,723). Schwieterman quickly surpassed Weigel and Masters, and then, with 4.2 seconds left in the

third quarter of the final game of the regular season, she hit a pair of free throws to move past Bales. She finished her career with 1,754.

#### 2. Repeat champion

Mallory Winner was an unde-

feated state champion as a freshman. After breaking her leg in the offseason, she had a couple of hiccups as a sophomore. But trailing by one with two minutes to go in her season, she came back strong.

Trailing top-ranked Grace Hiroms of Rochester 1-0 heading

into the final period of the 160-pound state title match, Winner showed the bottom position. With just 37 seconds remaining, she scored a reversal and then held on for a 2-1 victory and her second consecutive state championship.

See **Tops** page 7

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