

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

Second hopeful files in north district

Leonhard seeking return as county commissioner

By RAY COONEY

The Commercial Review

A former commissioner is hoping to come back to the role again.

Mike Leonhard, who has served three terms in two stints as a Jay County Commissioner, filed Wednesday afternoon to seek the north district seat again.

Leonhard's filing creates the first officially contested race for a county office this year as Doug Horn filed Wednesday morning to run for commissioner in the north district.

Also filing Wednesday afternoon was Rebecca Thornburg for precinct committeeman.

Leonhard, 75, has served three previous terms as county commissioner, from 1997 through 2004 and again from 2017 through 2020. He served on Jay County Council in between his commissioner terms.

"There's just a lot of issues going on in Jay County that I'm not satisfied with," Leonhard said. "And I guess if you're not satisfied, you might as well try to do something about it."

Leonhard was critical of current commissioners for what he said he feels is overuse of consultants and overspending on the purchase of land for possible development on the west side of Portland. He said the county needs to get "back to basics."

Addressing key issues, he put his focus on the ongoing conflict between commissioners and Jay County Development Corporation. He also criticized the commissioners hiring of a community coordinator to replace the former Jay County Community Development role.

See **Files** page 2

'No more stigma'



The Commercial Review/Bailey Cline

Representatives from Jay County Opioid Settlement Taskforce shared an update with plans for a local sober living facility during a Jay County Council meeting Wednesday. Pictured, task force member and Portland fire chief Mike Weitzel and Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition director Kimbra Reynolds speak to council. Others supported them in the crowd while wearing the same t-shirts with the phrase: "No more stigma, no more shame."

Group visits Jay County Council meeting to discuss proposed sober living facility

By BAILEY CLINE

The Commercial Review

"No more stigma, no more shame."

That was the message displayed across the auditorium at Jay County Council's meeting Wednesday.

About 20 people in the crowd wore t-shirts emblazoned with the phrase, a response to recent backlash about placing a recovery residence in Redkey.

Jay County Opioid Settlement Taskforce — it was created to determine how to use dollars from the National Opioid Settlement — has been seeking a location for a sober living facility for several months. In December, Jay County Drug

Prevention Coalition director Kimbra Reynolds announced the group had preliminarily selected a house at 319 N. Meridian St., Redkey. Commissioners approved a \$35,000 request at that time to conduct a feasibility study on the home and put down earnest money.

Two days later, residents from Redkey poured into a Jay County Council meeting to voice their thoughts about the facility, citing a lack of amenities and resources in Redkey as well as safety concerns. Council at that time tabled a decision on the funding request, which was later rescinded by commissioners.

Reynolds explained Wednesday because the funds were

rescinded, the group pulled its offer on the Redkey house.

"Redkey's basically off the table," said Mike Weitzel, who serves as a task force member and is Portland's fire chief.

The task force chose the Redkey location initially because of its price and square footage, explained Weitzel. To be sustainable, he continued, the facility needs to be able to accommodate 15 to 18 residents, which would require roughly 4,000 to 5,000 square feet.

Without a location or feasibility study, the task force can't apply for grant dollars for the project because it won't know how much construction, renovation or property acquisition will cost, explained Reynolds.

Reynolds.

Council vice president Cindy Bracy — she was elected to the role Wednesday — asked what the cost would be to run the facility after opioid settlement funds are depleted.

Based on estimates, said Reynolds, it would likely need a \$300,000 budget each year. Weitzel pointed out the settlement dollars would not be enough for initial startup costs, noting the project will also need grant funding or other dollars. For 18 years, added Reynolds, opioid settlement will sustain the facility, but thereafter it will need to be self-sustainable.

See **Stigma** page 2

Tax testimony

Indiana State and Local Tax Review Task Force heard from national experts about possible changes

By LESLIE BONILLA MUNIZ

Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com

Across nearly three hours of testimony on Wednesday, an array of national experts and Hoosiers asked lawmakers to navigate a narrow tightrope in tweaking the state's tax structure.

The business personal property tax, for example, contributes upwards of 50% of some Hoosier communities' tax collections, said Accelerate Indiana Municipalities' Campbell Ricci.

Patrick Bennett, a lobbyist representing the Indiana Cast Metals Association, told the task force that tax's 30% floor was costing local foundries dearly.

When tax force chair Rep. Travis Holdman, R-Markle,

asked Bennett how to address the financial impact of eliminating the tax, he quipped, "I don't have an answer for that. I'm just here to complain about it."

A group of more than a dozen advocates additionally asked the State and Local Tax Review task force to remove the 7% sales tax from menstrual products.

The two-year tax force is scrutinizing Indiana's tax system in hopes of proposing legislation for 2025's budget session.

And it's putting particular focus on the feasibility of eliminating the individual income tax, which experts have testified could increase reliance on the sales tax and other sources of state income.

Prosperity Indiana Policy Director Andrew Bradley said poorer residents are paying a

greater percentage of their incomes toward taxes.

"Income disparities are wider after we apply state and local taxes," he said. "This is in part because the lowest-income 20% of Hoosier taxpayers face a state and local tax rate 115% higher than the top 1% of Hoosier households."

Indiana is among 44 states whose tax systems worsen economic inequality, according to the latest edition of a report Prosperity Indiana co-released Tuesday.

"(For) our partners in the human services sector — who work everyday with Hoosiers who are living paycheck-to-paycheck — the state and local tax system actually pushes those budgets closer to the breaking point," Bradley said.

See **Tax** page 2



Indiana Capital Chronicle/Leslie Bonilla Muñoz

Prosperity Indiana leader Andrew Bradley says low-income Hoosiers are paying a greater share of income than high-earners at a tax task force meeting Wednesday at the Indiana Statehouse. The two-year tax force is scrutinizing Indiana's tax system in hopes of proposing legislation for 2025's budget session.

Deaths

Nelli Mere, 76, Geneva
Scott Bishop, 43, Dunkirk
Details on page 2.

Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 36 degrees Wednesday. The low was 32.

Tonight's forecast calls for rain early in the evening followed by snow with winds gusting as high as 50 miles per hour. Accumulation of 1 inch or less is expected.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

Correction

A story in Wednesday's edition of The Commercial Review regarding this week's Jay County Commissioners meeting incorrectly identified the firm creating a development plan for the county's 68 acres on the west side of Portland. The company involved is Rundell Ernstberger Associates of Indianapolis.

Coming up

Saturday — Results from the semifinal round of the ACAC basketball tournament.

Tuesday — Photos from Saturday's Jay County Show Choir Spectacular.



Files ...

Continued from page 1
“My biggest concern is JCDC,” said Leonhard, a 1966 graduate of Portland High School and a retired contractor. “It’s been a grand thing for Jay County all these years ...
“They need JCDC.”
Leonhard lost to Rex Journey in the 2020 Republican primary for commissioner in the north district. Journey, who went on to win the seat in the general elec-

tion, has indicated he does not plan to run for a second term.
Filing for this year’s election, which includes races for Jay County Commissioner, three at-large seats on Jay County Council, Jay County Circuit Court Judge, and county clerk of courts, treasurer, coroner and surveyor, is open in the clerk’s office at Jay County Courthouse. The deadline is noon Feb. 9.

Stigma ...

Continued from page 1
One aspect of sustainability will be from the residents, who will be expected to maintain jobs and pay the facility a portion of their wages for living expenses. (Recovery Works will also reimburse the group until residents are able to work. The state program aims to help those seeking recovery.)
Reynolds pointed out the facility would not be open to those actively using drugs or detoxing.
“With a recovery home, the desire is that they are in active recovery, and there is no place for them to go that is safe, and for them to work and maintain in recovery,” said Reynolds.
Another state grant will be available within the next month, added Reynolds. The turnaround time is usually 30 days.
“We have to have something to be able to go forward,” she said, noting the group will at least need to select a location by that point to be eligible.
Weitzel asked council for its blessing to continue looking into options for a recovery residence.
Council members Jeanne Houchins, Matt Minnich and Randy May spoke in favor of the group continuing its search.
“I think last month, it was better to table that just because of the situation, it didn’t mean that I don’t want this to happen somewhere in this county,” said Houchins. “I don’t think anybody around this bench can say they don’t want to see this happen. We all know, or should know, that we need this.”
Council member Faron Parr advocated for educating residents on what the recovery residence will do.
“You’re taking individuals (who are) trapped, bringing them back into the community to be an asset,” said Parr.
Reynolds pointed out Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition will be hosting a community forum regarding recovery housing in Jay County at 6 p.m. Jan. 24 at IU Health Jay.
Council also approved a final 10-year tax abatement with Hodson Energy for its proposed New Jay Solar, a 220-acre renewable energy farm planned just east of Dunkirk’s city limits.
The company will have 100% of property taxes abated over the entirety of the 10-year period. Hodson Energy will save \$4.4 million in property taxes with the abatement. As part of the negotiation, the company agreed to provide \$2.156 million in economic development funds to the county over four years.
Hodson Energy is the fourth renewable energy firm to formally pursue constructing a solar farm in Jay Coun-

ty. Other prospective farms on the horizon include Skycrest Solar from Invenenergy, Rose Gold Solar from Leeward Renewable Energy and Sun Chief Solar from Scout Clean Energy.
In related news, Leeward Renewable Energy representatives reached out to county officials in November to share an update about its progress with Rose Gold Solar, a \$150 million, 150-megawatt project planned on about 1,430 acres just north of Dunkirk.
County attorney Wes Schemenaur said Wednesday he thought the company would be at the meeting to request an amendment to its economic development agreement, specifically to push back the projected construction start date to April 2026 and projection completion date to September 2027. He told council he would follow up with the company.
In other business, council members Harold Towell, Houchins, Minnich, Parr, May and Bracy, absent Dave Haines:
•Tabled updates to the personnel policy, with Towell noting he would like more time to review it. Changes to the policy include adding a workplace relationship disclosure, adjusting Jay County Highway Department’s work hours and compensating all Jay County Sheriff’s Office and Jay County Jail employees for eight hours of holiday pay at their standard hourly rate on holidays. (If sheriff’s office/jail employees are required to work on the designated holiday, they will be compensated at a rate 1.5 times their standard rate for all hours worked.)
•Heard plans are in the works for an ordinance to create a board to oversee Jay County Country Living. Bracy noted she received a draft Wednesday from Schemenaur, who pointed out the document in its current state — he said it isn’t ready for formal action yet — would create an advisory board to “assist the commissioners and the council in the administration and oversight of the county home.”
•Made the following additional appropriations: \$76,400 for Ritter Strategic Services to provide a study looking into radios for emergency responders and \$16,509.05 for Rundell Ernstberger Associates of Indianapolis in its efforts to create a plan for developing the county’s 68 acres along Indiana 67 on the western edge of Portland. (The latter had been proposed at the full cost of \$395,000, but council chose to only pay the first claim Wednesday.)
•Elected Minnich as president. He takes over the position from Houchins, who had previously served as council president for seven years.

Obituaries

Nelli Mere
Nelli Mere, 76, Geneva, died Wednesday at her home.
Arrangements are pending at Downing & Glancy Funeral Home, Geneva.

Scott Bishop
Scott Bishop, 43, Dunkirk, died Tuesday at his home.
Arrangements are pending at Walker & Glancy Funeral Home in Montpelier.

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The Commercial Review publishes death notices for those with a connection to our coverage area free of charge. They include the name, city 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 1/13	Sunday 1/14	Monday 1/15	Tuesday 1/16	Wednesday 1/17
26/6	14/0	10/0	10/3	20/16
There's a 30% chance of snow under cloudy skies. Wind gusts may reach up to 45 mph.	Another slight chance of snow on Sunday, when the low will dip to 0 degrees at night.	Monday's forecast shows more cold temperatures, with the high near 10 degrees.	Another day of potential snow and freezing weather, when the low will be 3 degrees.	Mostly sunny and cold on Wednesday. The high temperature will be about 20 degrees.

Lotteries

Powerball 25-40-43-48-50 Power Ball: 11 Power Play: 2 Estimated jackpot: \$77 million	Daily Four: 1-4-8-8 Quick Draw: 10-23-29-31-33-37-45-46-47-48-51-54-57-64-65-70-73-74-75-78 Cash 5: 1-14-17-26-38 Estimated jackpot: \$80,000
Mega Millions Estimated jackpot: \$187 million	Ohio Wednesday Midday Pick 3: 7-5-6 Pick 4: 7-8-4-6 Pick 5: 5-4-8-7-6 Evening Pick 3: 0-7-6 Pick 4: 1-2-3-2 Pick 5: 6-6-5-0-5 Rolling Cash: 8-10-25-30-34 Estimated jackpot: \$120,000
Hoosier Wednesday Midday Daily Three: 1-9-2 Daily Four: 8-4-7-1 Quick Draw: 3-11-13-14-20-23-26-28-31-53-57-62-63-65-66-73-76-78-80 Evening Daily Three: 7-2-4	

Markets

Cooper Farms Fort Recovery Corn.....4.59 Feb. corn4.59 Wheat5.24	Feb. beans12.26 Wheat 5.64
POET Biorefining Portland Corn.....4.56 Feb. corn4.56 March corn4.58	ADM Montpelier Corn.....4.36 Feb. corn4.40 Beans12.12 Feb. beans12.15 Wheat5.59
The Andersons Richland Township Corn4.44 Feb. corn4.44 Beans12.16	Heartland St. Anthony Corn.....4.44 March corn4.49 Beans11.93 Feb. beans11.96 Wheat5.19

Today in history

In 1777, Mission Santa Clara de Asis, was founded by Padre Thomas Pena. It was the eighth of California’s 21 missions along El Camino Real (The Royal Road), between San Diego and Sonoma.
In 1932, Hattie Ophelia Caraway was the first woman elected to the U.S. Senate. She had been appointed to fill the senate seat following the death of her husband and then won a special election to finish his term. She won her own term in office in November 1932.
In 1964, Jeff Bezos, founder and CEO of Amazon.com, was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He opened a virtual bookstore — Amazon — starting in his garage with a handful of employees.
In 1969, the New York Jets upset the Baltimore Colts 16-7 in Super Bowl III. Jets quarterback Joe Namath had famously guaranteed that his team would win the game.
In 1971, CBS debuted “All in the Family,” the groundbreaking TV sitcom starring Carroll O’Connor as Archie Bunker. The show was based on the British comedy “Till Death Us Do Part.”
In 2022, Jay County Council rescinded its December 2021 decision to contributed \$700,000 in federal coronavirus relief funds from the American Rescue Plan Act toward renovations of the former Judge Haynes Elementary School to become a child care facility.
—The CR

Citizen’s calendar

Monday 7:30 p.m. — Fort Recovery Village Council, village hall, 201 S. Main St.	Wednesday 4 p.m. — Portland Board of Aviation, airport, 661 W. 100 North.
Tuesday 5:30 p.m. — Portland City Council, fire station, 1616 N. Franklin St.	Thursday 6 p.m. — Redkey Town Council, park cabin, 200 S. Mooney St.

Tax ...

Continued from page 1
The report found that poor Hoosiers would pay even greater shares of their income if Indiana were to ditch its individual income tax and replace half the revenue with a sales tax expansion.
Bradley commended the state for excluding groceries from the sales tax and for offering an earned income tax credit, but asked the task force to “do no harm” to poor residents or cash-strapped local governments.
He additionally recommended consideration of a child tax credit, among other changes, and said the task force should consult with organizations who work with impoverished residents.
About six in 10 American adults are “very bothered” by the idea that some corporations and wealthy residents are not paying their “fair share” in taxes, said Erin Macey, director of the Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute. She cited an April survey by the non-partisan Pew Research Center.
National Conference of State Legislatures Senior Policy Specialist Eric Syverson said state sales tax efforts — including Indiana’s — generally “don’t live up to the ideal” of taxing all final consumption.
Syverson said that consumers are increasingly buying services, which aren’t subject to Indiana sales taxes. People are purchasing more digital versions of products that used to be tangible, and

are shopping online more. Governments have struggled to get foreign e-commerce companies to comply with sales tax requirements, he said.
Small businesses spoke out against that prospect.
The National Federation of Independent Businesses regularly surveys members in statewide ballots for their positions on legislative proposal. Indiana State Director Natalie Robinson said 90% of respondents to Indiana’s ballot opposed expanding the sales tax to services.
When survey-takers asked if they’d support that expansion in exchange for the elimination of the individual income tax — most small businesses are pass-through entities that pay this tax — Robinson said her group still got back mixed responses.
“Some owners were conflicted when asked if it would be a fair trade-off,” she said. But, “the consensus from our membership was that state income tax is still the single most burdensome tax for small employers.”
But members strongly supported eliminating the business personal property tax.
Hoosier businesses must pay taxes on property unless their possessions all cost below \$80,000. The property cannot be assessed at less than 30% of its initial cost, which is known as the 30% floor.
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This story has been edited for length. For the full report, visit indianacapitalchronicle.com..

SERVICES

Today Schwartz , Daniel: 9 a.m., D.L. Schwartz residence, 6836 E. 900 North, Bryant. Daniels , Freda: 2 p.m., Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland. Mann , Dixie: 6 p.m., Downing & Glancy Funeral Home, 100 Washington St., Geneva.
Saturday Imel , Angela: 10:30 a.m., St. Henry Catholic Church, 272 E. Main St., St. Henry, Ohio..
Sunday Williams , Helen: 4 p.m., New Life Ministries, 415 S. Helen St., Portland.
Service listings provided by PROGRESSIVE DEL TORO OFFICE PRODUCTS 120 N. Meridian St. Portland, Indiana 47371 (260) 726-9201 progressiveofficeproducts.com

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Capsule Reports

Recycling available
Jay County Solid Waste Management District will have recycling trailers available Saturday. Trailers will be open from 9 a.m. to noon in the shopping center at 220 Lincoln St., Portland, and Dunkirk City Park.



Photo provided

Volunteer of the Year

Mississinewa Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, recently awarded the Community Volunteer of the Year award. Pictured, chapter regent Kathy Selman (right) presents a certificate to Carol Smith, who started the free Thanksgiving dinners at Asbury United Methodist Church in Portland in 1991. In 2023, the all-volunteer crew prepared over 600 meals.

Time for winter reading

Jay County Public Library is bringing back its winter reading challenge.

Starting Monday, teens or adults may pick up a reading challenge form at the library. Participants may exchange each completed form for prize entry tickets. This year's drawings include a 35-ounce Yeti tumbler, a Vanzon V40 bluetooth speaker, a \$25 Amazon gift card or two tickets to a March 9 Fort Wayne Komets ice hockey game.

Completed forms will be accepted until noon, March 2.

Also happening at the library this month is a lip balm tutorial. Participants at the "Balmy at the Library" Jan. 23 event will create and design their own lip balms in a beach-themed setting.

There will be a session

Taking Note

for third through sixth graders from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and a session for teens and adults from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. Registration is required.

New support

IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health is hosting two new support groups.

Beginning next week, Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT) will be offered for free from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. each Wednesday. The family education and support group is meant for individuals who have a loved

one with substance use disorder, helping folks to develop effective strategies to cope and help their loved one seek treatment.

Smart Recovery, a program aimed at those with substance use disorder, aims to help those living with addiction build and maintain motivation, cope with urges and cravings, manage thoughts, feelings and behavior, and live a balanced life. Free to the public, it meets from 11 a.m. to noon Thursdays.

For more information, call (260) 726-1960.

New member

Morton Pugh of Salamanca recently became a member of the American Angus Association. Headquartered in Missouri, it is the largest beef breed association in the world.

Abused spouse believes it's time to leave

DEAR ABBY: I have been with my abusive husband for almost 30 years. I made several attempts to leave him, which resulted in him stalking me and threatening to seriously harm me and our children. Despite all his threats and abuse, I was forced to allow him to take our children unsupervised. I would end up going back so I could be present when he was around the children.

Our youngest just moved out and, surprisingly, my husband has calmed down. I am going to leave, and I'm looking for places out of state where he won't be able to find me. Honestly, I'm terrified. How do I move somewhere new and start over alone? — ANONY-

Dear Abby



MOUS IN THE U.S.
DEAR ANONYMOUS: Because you feel you may be in danger if you follow through with your plan to leave your abuser and start a new life, contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline. Its toll-free phone number is: 800-799-7233. The people there can help you formulate a safe way to escape. I wish you good luck and a MUCH happier life.

DEAR ABBY: I work nine hours a day in a mental health clinic talking to the clients and doing billing and collections among many other things. I love my job. The problem is that when I step outside to take a break, I want it to be my quiet time.

Most people say a quick "hi," and that's fine, but a man in the business downstairs from me comes out and chats every time. He calls me by the wrong name (which I have not corrected) and talks while I respond with the bare minimum to show I'm not interested.

Is there a nice way to say I am not interested in his company while I am on break? —

DECOMPRESSING IN WISCONSIN

DEAR DECOMPRESSING: Yes, but it will take backbone on your part. The next time you see this person, tell him there are two things about you he needs to know. They are: Your name isn't "Joan," and when you take a break from the pressure of your job, you would like to do it ALONE.

DEAR ABBY: My wife's sister died 14 months ago at the young age of 52. Since then, my brother-in-law has been texting and calling my wife constantly. He is grieving, and his alcohol problem has gotten worse. I have tried to be patient about their communication,

but I'm finding myself getting jealous. What's your advice? — BOTHERED IN ILLINOIS

DEAR BOTHERED: Have a talk with your wife about this. She is grieving the loss of her sister as well as trying to help her widowed brother-in-law. Put your jealousy aside, at least for now, and suggest she join a grief support group.

As to your brother-in-law, understand that his drinking problem won't resolve itself until he admits he has one and decides to join a support group or to dry out in rehab. You would be with your rights to point that out to him, as long as you do it with compassion rather than anger.

Community Calendar

Notices will appear in Community Calendar as space is available. To submit an item, email news@thecr.com.

Today

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

Sunday

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 Sunday at The Rock Church, 1605 N. Meridian St., Portland. Come early for a meal. For more information, call (260) 766-2006.

Monday

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

PING PONG — Will be played from 9 a.m. to noon each Monday at Jay Community Center.

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

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY (TOPS) — Will meet for weigh-in at 4:30 p.m., with the meeting at 5 p.m., at Trinity United Methodist Church, 323 S. Meridian St., Portland.

New members welcome. For more information, call (260) 726-5924.

PREGNANCY CARE CENTER — Free pregnancy testing with ongoing support during and after pregnancy. The center is located at 216 S. Meridian St., Portland. Hours are 1 to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (260) 726-8636. Walk-ins accepted.

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

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

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS — Will meet at 6:30 p.m. each Monday at A Second Chance At Life Ministries, 228 S. Meridian St. in Portland. For more information, call Brenda Eads at (260) 726-9625 or Dave Keen at (260) 251-8792.

Tuesday

BRYANT COMMUNITY CENTER EUCHRE — Will be played at 1 p.m. each Tuesday. The public is welcome.

FRIENDS OF JAY COUNTY LIBRARY — Will meet at 6 p.m. the third Tuesday of each month at the library.

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. 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. Includes activities and devotional time.

Sudoku

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

Level: Advanced

Thursday's Solution

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

Our brides special section will be distributed in The Commercial Review (Portland), The News-Gazette (Winchester), The News Times (Hartford City) and The News and Sun (Dunkirk)

full-page color - \$625

full-page B&W - \$525

1/2-page color - \$425

1/2-page B&W - \$325

1/4-page color - \$275

1/4-page B&W - \$225

Big business card (3x3.5) - \$100

Business card (2x2) - \$52

Contact **Lindsey at L.Cochran@thecr.com or (260) 726-8141**

Deadline for ads is January 17

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

Iran threatens U.S. in addition to Israel

By JAY AMBROSE
Tribune News Service

Iran is an American enemy already, a pal with China and Russia, economically up-and-at-'em, more than a little pleased about its missile and war-head accomplishments, capable of producing nuclear weapons in a hurry and now in a war with Israel making the world less safe every minute. Possible consequences include a second international cold war threatening disastrous American decline or, conceivably, even a third world war.

Jay Ambrose



around with missiles when the United Nations insists you shouldn't, well, go ahead even if we will be surprised when you come up with worrisome capabilities. Put it all together, and the deal should have been a far stricter treaty actually accomplishing something.

Well, a succeeding president, Donald Trump, got rid of the deal and began reinstating sanctions, something he could not have done if it had been a treaty, and himself deserved a Nobel Prize for another achievement. He and his advisers worked out a plan, something called the Abraham Accords, under which Arab countries are encouraged to establish friendly relations with Israel. The march began. Of course, after one term, Trump had a successor, too, namely Joe Biden, who tried one thing and then another that didn't work until here we are with Iran-supported Hamas committing one of the worst horrors of recent decades and Israel fighting back fiercely as a way of not being wiped off the map.

A ruler of some 90 million people, some of whom fiercely resent these super ambitious, cruelty insistent controllers of their lives, Iran has a long view that includes joining with China and Russia to rule the world. The three get together every now and then, and just as Iran receives benefits from the association, its vast reserves of oil help meet China's energy needs and it has sent Russia drones to help kill Ukrainians.

This year's presidential debates must address these issues as well as the outrageous antisemitism afflicting us, not least at elite universities that may someday be known as trash-heap universities. As a nation we have a host of issues, and, if we take it easy, they won't. The point right now is to focus on 2024 as a positive turning point.

Ah, but the United States elected Barack Obama as president and soon enough he was granted a Nobel Peace Prize for nothing much but eloquent utterances about being nice as the best means of achieving peace. Such was the background when the United States and a panel including China and Russia worked out a deal with Iran that let if off the sanctions hook and thereby enriched the country by billions.

Iran has lots of oil and doesn't need nuclear power for domestic energy, but the deal said, hey, keep that nuclear infrastructure that along with other means can allow pretty quick production of nuclear weapons. If you want to keep fooling

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Ambrose is an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service. Readers may email him at speaktotjay@aol.com.



Keep decisions local

By CHRIS LAGONI and TERRY SPRADLIN

Consolidation of Indiana school districts has resurfaced as a topic in policy discussions because of the release of the Indiana Chamber of Commerce's Indiana Prosperity 2035 Plan. Not all agree with this proposal. The Indiana School Boards Association and the Indiana Small and Rural Schools Association believe that local control should prevail. From our perspective, there is nothing wrong with school consolidation or re-organization if it is initiated by the people in the communities affected.

Previous reviews of the topic have failed to consider key aspects of Indiana's school funding and policy landscape. These fallacies continue in the current policy debate. We have been repeatedly told that Indiana is a state that funds students, not schools. Indiana funds students to attend a variety of schools, including small private schools, small charter schools, and small public schools. For certain, Indiana's policy of student-based funding has fueled the creation of more charter schools and private schools, both with student enrollments smaller than even our smallest school corporations. Today, there are approximately 105 charter schools in the state with an average student enrollment of 436 students. Conversely, there are only five school corporations in the state with enrollment below five hundred students. Indiana's approach is to have the state carry more and more varied and individual expenses for education, not to consolidate them.

Indiana's small and rural school corporations currently operate thirty-two early college high schools that enable students to complete the Indiana College Core (30 college credit hours transferable to any Indiana public college or university) or an associate degree while still in high school. Many Indiana small and rural high schools are leaders in Career and Technical Education programming, including online course offerings, even though they do not have access to large vocational high schools. It is not perfect, but Indiana's small and rural schools strive to deliver a robust curriculum with Dual Credit, Advanced Placement, and career education opportunities.

Guest Opinion

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Nearly every year schools in rural areas close because of declining population. But Indiana's school choice policies have allowed many of these schools to immediately re-open as charter schools, negating the savings for taxpayers. Parents wanted the convenience of the school that was closest to their home and did not want their local schools to close. That is clear: Any conversation about school consolidation that does not also attempt to reconcile Indiana's school choice policies only considers half the issue.

If the impetus for change is to create larger high schools with more robust curricular offerings, the proposed solution to consolidate just the district offices misses the mark. Eliminating a superintendent position or a few positions in a central office does not make a bigger high school with more robust course offerings. While central office staff reductions may result in savings, they may very well be offset by the new larger school corporation adding central office positions to help manage more schools and educational programs for more students.

Perhaps the idea of consolidation is simply flawed altogether. Central to any effective economic development initiative is a goal to attract employers and jobs that are high-wage and high demand. Schools are the largest employer in many small towns and rural communities, and the elimination of the good-paying, essential jobs that small schools provide could cripple the local economy. Parents choose small schools for their children because they value safety, smaller class sizes, and low taxes. Or they identify with the

school community as the anchor institution of their community. These are close-knit communities where parents and staff know one another personally. If their school district is eliminated, and school closures ensue, these communities suffer.

Let us offer alternatives the Indiana General Assembly could implement to help communities. First, provide state grants for planning or feasibility studies for school districts and communities wanting to examine consolidation. The last time Indiana provided planning grants from the Indiana Department of Education, there was a consolidation of two school districts (Turkey Run and Rockville into North Parke).

Secondly, one of the significant reasons these discussions have fallen apart in the past has been the effect the consolidation will have on local tax rates. Consolidation of districts may impose a higher tax rate on some residents of the new district. In addition, closing a building, expanding another, adding miles of bus routes, and/or planning for a future building could also impact tax rates. About 10 years ago, the Indiana General Assembly forgave \$92 million dollars in charter school debt for closed schools. A similar approach could be taken to help communities wanting to consolidate. School districts carry debt, and another community may not want to inherit the duty of paying for debt obligations previously incurred. Elimination of debt obligations would help facilitate additional consolidations.

Our belief is that consolidations should remain a local decision. Any state mandate forcing consolidation would be contrary to all other school choice policies because it pushes less school choice for rural communities. This is why any conversation about school consolidation must also be part of the school choice policy conversation if one is needed at all.

Lagoni is executive director of the Indiana Small and Rural Schools Association and Spradlin is executive director of the Indiana School Boards Association.

Border issue must be solved, not politicized

The Free Press (Mankato, Minnesota)

A pack of Republican House members descended on the U.S.-Mexican border Wednesday hoping to draw attention to what they call an "invasion" of immigrants. We wish they would have drawn attention to bipartisan solutions they seem to be ignoring.

Facts are stubborn things. When they are brought to bear on this issue, well-meaning Americans — almost all of whom descended from immigrants — would see the value in solving the decades-old immigration problem.

Cynics argue Republicans don't want to solve the immigration problem because it would take away one of their best campaign issues and overshadow the disastrous political conse-

Guest Editorial

quences of having "solved" the abortion issue. Reasonable people can see the merit in those arguments.

Immigrants or refugees have had a legal right to apply for asylum in the United States since the Senate in 1979 approved unanimously (with 41 Republicans) the U.S. Refugee Act of 1980, signed March 17.

The act describes those who are eligible for asylum as "any person who is outside his or her country of residence or nationality, or without nationality, and is unable or unwilling to return to,

and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of, that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion."

In fact, there was a time when Minnesota's government encouraged immigration.

The state commissioned leaders in the 1800s to recruit Germans and other immigrants out of New York, according to research by the Minnesota Historical Society in a report called "The official encouragement of immigrants to Minnesota during the territorial period."

That recruiting helped develop the German population of Minnesota from 147 circa 1850 to 18,400 in a decade, or from 2.5% of the population to 10%.

The report notes that Minnesota's population grew from 4,500 to 172,000 in 10 years from about 1850 to 1860 and the role of immigration "cannot be disputed."

By 1890, 40% of Minnesota's population was foreign born, according to the Minnesota Historical Society. That compares to 8% today.

So we challenge the House and the Senate to approve a bipartisan compromise that contains the following common sense issues:

—Pathway to citizenship for those already living, working and paying taxes in the U.S.

—Reformed asylum policy, with tighter restrictions if necessary, in a bipartisan plan.

—Avoid false narratives about which president will crack down on illegal immigration. The administration of President Barack Obama denied

entry at the Mexican border to more immigrants than the administration of ex-President Donald Trump.

—Give business the tools to accurately track immigration status.

—Do not separate children from parents. This creates lifelong trauma.

—Do not use immigration as bargaining chip to approving aid to Ukraine, the first country under unlawful attack on a scale not seen since World War II.

—Heed the call of business groups who favor immigration to bolster and increasingly serious shortage in the work force.

Let's embrace the role of immigration in our society that history shows. Building of human capital and diversity in our workplace should take precedence over petty and hateful politics.

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—Thomas Jefferson

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Seaweed considered as plant food

By ASHLEY MIZNAZI

Miami Herald
Tribune News Service

MIAMI — Seaweed poses all sorts of problems when it piles up on South Florida beaches. It stinks, spoils the view and makes swimming icky. It's also pricey to haul off to the landfill, which currently is the only viable disposal option.

Someday maybe a ton of sargassum might be worth its weight in, if not gold, maybe fertilizer.

Turning seaweed into plant food is one of six proposals that Miami-Dade is considering as part of a county effort to find new ways to deal with a seaweed surge that scientists expect climate change will only make worse. Other potential pilot projects could explore converting sargassum into building material, types of "green" fuel and even an additive that could help reduce erosion of the beaches where the sargassum winds up.

These ideas spring from an invitation for fresh approaches offered last year by the Miami-Dade Innovation Authority, a nonprofit that connects local government to private technology companies. The agency has now selected six finalists to come up with environmentally friendly ways to get rid of all the seaweed that annually piles up on South Florida's shores. At least three winners, expected to be selected later this month, will each get \$100,000 to take on a challenge complicated by the fact that sargassum often contains unhealthy levels of heavy metals and arsenic.

"The [project's] primary purpose is ecological," Mayor Daniella Levine Cava told the Miami Herald when the project launched in July. "Not filling up the landfills with a product that ideally doesn't need to go in the landfill. It's not garbage. It's not waste. It's organic, and we hope there will be other uses for it."

Here's a look at the proposals:
Creating 'green hydrogen'

Chemergy was incorporated in Miami in 2011 by a family with a dream of producing low-cost renewable "green hydrogen" fuel from organic and plastic waste. Maybe sargassum could be part of that waste stream, too.

"We thought the seaweed would be a logical thing to throw into our system," said Melahn Parker, the president of Chemergy, which he co-founded with his father, Robin. "Our facility is near the source of the seaweed and it's a way to completely eliminate it."

The system uses a chemical process that takes organic material and burns and separates it into hydrogen, carbon dioxide and ash.

The hope is that when putting sargassum through the system, all the "bad stuff" like the sili-



Tribune News Service/Miami Herald/Pedro Portal

Heavy equipment start cleaning the seashore from seaweed after a 2019 press conference by Miami Dade County and City of Miami Beach elected officials announcing the Miami-Dade County's removal operation for sargassum/seaweed on Miami Beach in Miami. Turning seaweed into plant food is one of six proposals that Miami-Dade is considering as part of a county effort to find new ways to deal with a seaweed surge that scientists expect climate change will only make worse.

cone, lead, sand and magnesium mixed within the sargassum should turn to ash, Robin Parker said.

Beyond that, The CO2 is sequestered and the hydrogen can be stored to one day be put into the grid or be used for transportation. It's a greener fuel option too: if you can run a car on hydrogen, water would come out of the exhaust pipe.

In the past, the company has worked with the Department of Energy.

"I think this can be the cheapest solution," Melahn Parker said. "It's just burdened by high equipment costs now."

Helping plants grow

EcoChar, a company based in The Netherlands, applied to burn the sargassum into an agricultural product called biochar. Biochar contains mineral ash, phosphorus, potassium, magnesium and fixed carbon that can be used as a soil additive that increases water retention.

Seaweed would be a new material for the company to work with. Usually, they deal with animal manure. They have projects in Georgia and Pennsylvania and are processing turkey manure at a farm in Saudi Arabia too.

Shane McGolden, the U.S. based EcoChar spokesperson, said when organic material is burned into char, the heavy metals are locked and stored.

The equipment, however, is not portable and goes for millions. McGolden wasn't able to identify who at the company applied or how the company would be able

to help the county with the \$100,000 grant budget.

Protecting the coast

ShoreLock, located in downtown Miami, makes a product designed to reduce coastal erosion by strengthening the chemical bond between water and sand. According to the company, adding this product to sand should slow down how much the tide pulls the sand back into the ocean and mitigate erosion.

Blayne Ross, the CEO of ShoreLock, said the current mixture starts with breaking down plant-based material and that sargassum could be potentially be added. He believes the company's process would strip out heavy metals or toxins.

"What was really cool about the challenge for us was being able to take the sargassum to protect the coastline," Ross said.

If they receive the money, their next step is to partner with universities to see how Shorelock would perform in a wave tank.

Fertilizer for farmers

Algas Organics is a startup that turns the island of St. Lucia's sargassum into fertilizer that U.S. farmers buy. The founder, Johanan Dujon, noticed the sargassum pileups at his home on St. Lucia beaches and the eastern Caribbean in 2014 hurting the tourism economy. He now wants to explore collecting sargassum off of Miami's beaches, where he spends part of his time.

Algas Organic's patented hybrid fermentation process

removes heavy metals and processes over 1,000,000 pounds of seaweed per year, the Algas Organics website said.

Building material

Adar Technologies thinks that it can dry and sanitize seaweed with a machine that breaks down material at the speed of sound. The end product is a fine, dry and odorless powder with 90% of its original moisture content removed.

The team is based in Wyoming and Arizona, but their equipment is all housed in a shipping container that can be transported. The machine is relatively simple, 13 feet long and 9 feet tall, with material going in one side and coming out the other. So far, they've tested it on 70 different materials and are eager to try the sargassum.

The powder could be used in building materials, or potentially a feed stock or fertilizer product. Right now, those options are off the table because of heavy metals and arsenic levels in seaweed. One part of their proposal to the county was to test whether building material with sargassum might leach out any dangerous compounds.

"Some people have some great technology to treat the heavy metal already, and some are in the competition with us, so we'll see where they end up but we do not," said Doug Farrington, the chief operating officer at Adar Technologies.

Biogas

YA Maof Holdings and Man-

agement has projects around the world with a focus on waste and water treatment. Some of their past projects include an organic waste to energy facility in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic and a recycling site in Israel.

Sargassum isn't a new endeavor for the company. In 2018 they worked with the government in the Mexican state of Quintana Roo, which reported that in 2018, 522,226 tons of sargassum were collected from the coasts. By using algae waste, YA Maof Holdings and Management said they could create a biogas.

What's next

Once the finalists are chosen, The Nature Conservancy, a global conservation organization, will advise and evaluate the candidates while they test their products during the Spring 2024 sargassum season alongside Miami-Dade County and its partnering organizations.

Though summer 2023 turned out to be far less than the massive sargassum explosion some scientists had expected, the threat of more waves of seaweed in the future remains. Scientists believe warming ocean waters are giving the sargassum a hospitable place to prosper.

"Increasing sargassum blooms are attributable to many factors, including changes in ocean currents, extreme weather, and warming waters associated with climate change," said Morgan Higman, the Florida climate strategy director at The Nature Conservancy.

Farm conference set

Purdue Ag News

Registration is open for the 2024 Indiana Small Farm Conference.

The 12th annual conference and trade show will be held Feb. 29 and March 1 at the Hendricks County Fairgrounds in Danville.

Michael Kilpatrick, founder of Growing Farmers and host of "Thriving Farmer Podcast" will be the keynote speaker.

This year's conference

will offer eight tracks from which attendees can choose sessions that interest them:

- Urban agriculture
- Vegetable production
- Business
- Livestock
- Resilient agriculture
- Niche opportunities
- Equity and food security
- Flowers

"A new and exciting session called Fiber Farming will include a presentation about sheep, alpaca and

rabbit farming for fiber," said Amy Thompson, Purdue Extension's beginning farmers coordinator and a conference organizer. "There will also be a fruit grafting demonstration during the social hour on Thursday evening and several farmer panels and opportunities for networking."

For more information or to sign up, visit purdue.ag/sfc.

Agriculture residues may be used for fuel, chemicals

By EMILY C. DOOLEY

University of California, Davis

Research led by University of California, Davis, sheds new light on how to access the sugars locked up in plant materials to convert byproducts into new feedstocks to produce fuels, materials and chemicals.

Converting grasses, weeds, wood and other plant residues into sustainable products normally produced using petroleum products will be key to achieving carbon neutrality.

"We want to utilize plant residues and there is a lot of plant waste out there," said Tina Jeoh, a professor of biological and agricultural engineering at UC Davis.

The research, published in the journal Green Chemistry, will help lower the technological barrier and make it easier for the sustainable conversion of plant material, including agricultural byproducts, Jeoh said.

Jeoh used a spectromicroscopy tool at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory to measure enzyme reactions in real time to changes in the environment. The technology allows for simultaneous imaging and chemical analysis.

Biocatalysts, which accelerate chemical reactions, need sugars for certain conver-

sions, such as fermentation. Cheap, renewable and sustainable sugars that don't compete with food demands are key to that transformation.

"These sugars are key to establishing a bioeconomy built on cycling renewable carbon for biofuel, biochemical and biomaterial alternatives to fossil fuel sourced versions," Jeoh said.

Finding a better way to unlock sugars could advance the technology used in sustainable production operations.

"The emerging biomanufacturing industry is developing new catalysts to make compounds that will replace fossil fuels," Jeoh said. "Most of these are based in fermentation technology and there's still this question of 'Where does the sugar come from?' How are enzymes interacting at the surface of the plant residues to efficiently break bonds to release sugars?"

The technology at the Berkeley Lab, which was funded through a U.S. Department of Energy program, allows researchers to analyze infrared wavelengths and characterize biochemical processes in both place and time.

"It actually really confirmed a lot of what we thought we were seeing, which is very exciting," Jeoh said.

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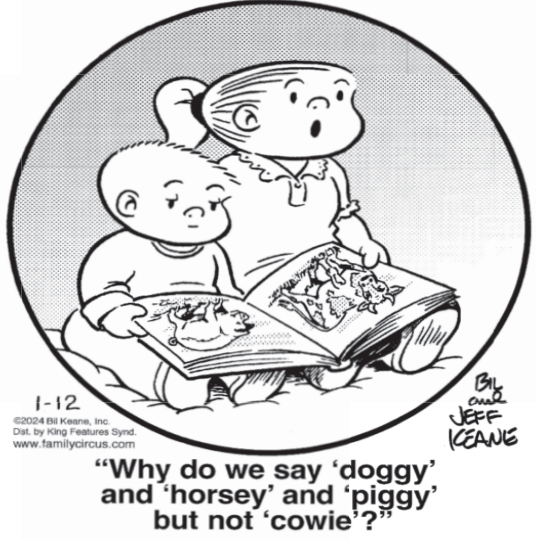
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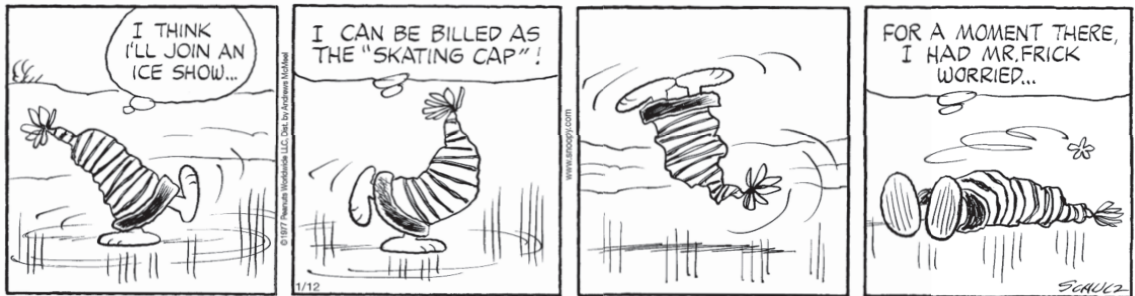
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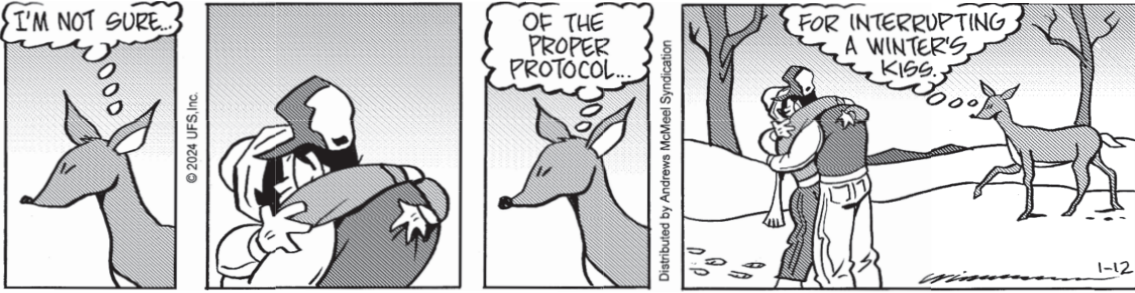
THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



Peanuts



Rose is Rose



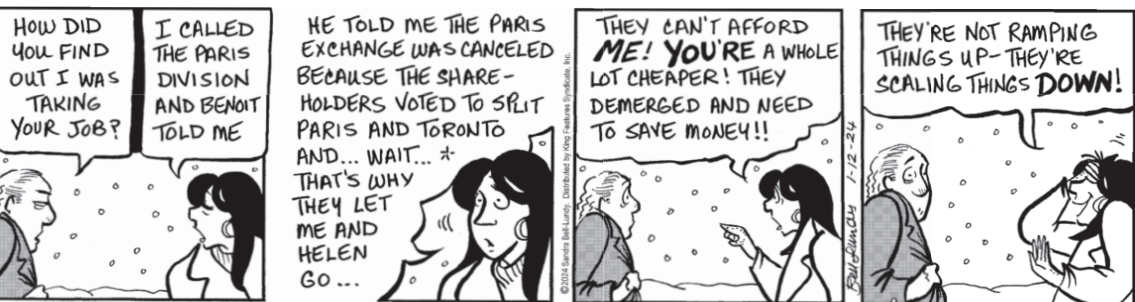
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Hi and Lois



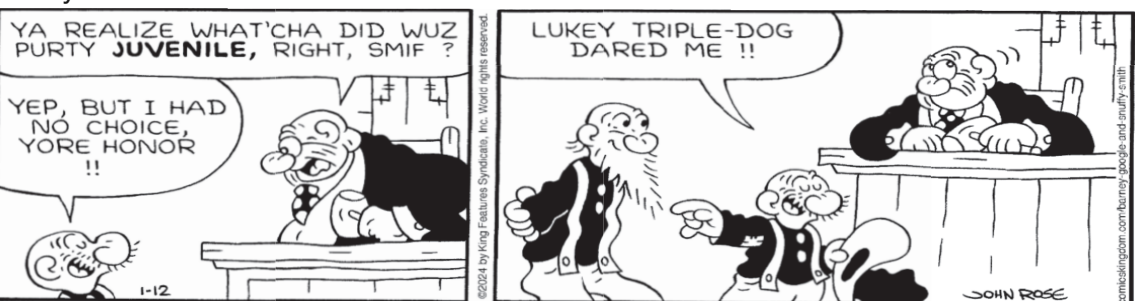
Between Friends



Blondie



Snuffy Smith



Beetle Bailey



Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

Bidding quiz

You are South, both sides vulnerable. The bidding has gone:
South West North East
1♠ Pass 2♥ Pass
2♣ Pass 3♣ Pass

What would you bid now with each of the following four hands?
1. ♠KJ8742♥643♦KQ♣A7
2. ♠KQ9542♥A♦A83♣KQ74
3. ♠KQJ1093♥J6♦5♣AJ62
4. ♠AJ7652♥J98♦10♣AQ9

1. **Three hearts.** Partner obviously has a good hand, since he has made two forcing bids, but caution is needed to reach the best contract. Only two bids can be considered — namely, three hearts and three notrump.

Partner's bidding guarantees that he has five or six hearts, so although your heart holding is not particularly robust, it is time to let him know you have some support for that suit. Three hearts is far superior to bidding three notrump with your single diamond stopper.

2. **Five clubs.** Hands rise and fall in value, depending on partner's (and sometimes the opponents') bids. Thus, the initial two-heart bid took a lot of wind out of your sails, but the three-club bid has now added significantly to your hand's original value.

To raise to four clubs at this point would be inadequate. This could all too easily be read merely as a forced response to partner's forcing bid of three clubs. Now that the club fit has been discovered, you have much more than a minimum opening bid, and the best way to indicate this sudden improvement is to jump to five clubs.

3. **Four spades.** Game in spades is practically certain, as it is difficult to imagine losing four tricks opposite whatever partner has to contribute. Your spades are playable as trump even if partner is void, so showing your club support is unnecessary.

4. **Four hearts.** This hand, with its 12 high-card points, is far more promising for game purposes than Hand No. 1, with its 13 points. The difference is one of fit.

In the first hand, you started with a minimum opening bid, and it pretty much stayed that way throughout. You therefore did nothing more than show a preference for hearts. But here, with better heart and club support, and especially because of your singleton diamond, your hand is no longer in the minimum class. The jump-preference is used to express these additional values in case partner is interested in slam.

Tomorrow: Cards always tell a story.
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1-12 CRYPTOQUIP

O MIWAHQ JRRX EUHE
XIEIWEACIO WRFOGLI ER
UIQM EUIL ORQCI XAJJAWGQE

WDALI WHOIO: LVOEIDV LIHE.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE MALE DEER FOUND NO DATE WITH WHOM TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL FOREST GATHERING, SO HE WENT STAG.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: J equals F

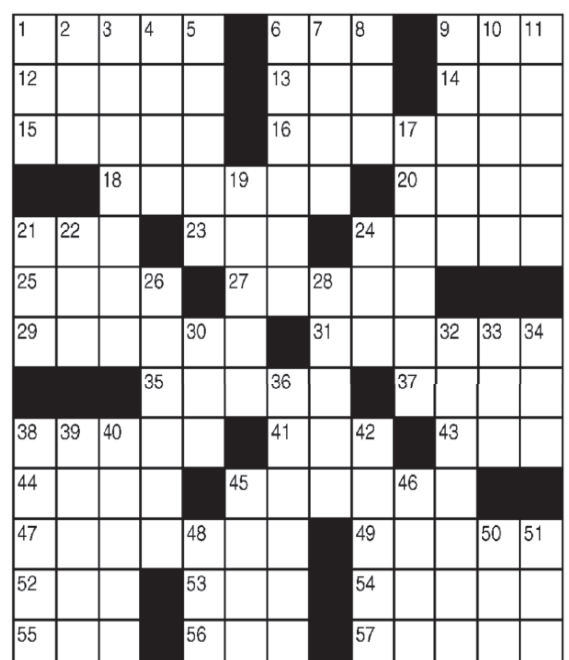
CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Platters | 1 Weir |
| 6 Aries | 2 Glass of |
| 9 — | public |
| Zedong | radio |
| 12 Popular | 3 "My Way" |
| typeface | singer |
| 13 Mayo | 4 Tranquil |
| ingredient | 5 More |
| 14 Corn | 6 Pine |
| serving | opera |
| 15 Virile | 49 Boxer's |
| 16 Java | dream |
| neighbor | 52 Moment |
| 18 2009 | 53 Insult |
| Hilary | 54 Bankrupt |
| Swank | energy |
| biopic | company |
| 20 Lake bird | 55 Super- |
| 21 Dugout | relative |
| item | suffix |
| 23 Director | 56 CIA |
| Howard | operative |
| 24 Together | 17 Claim |
| (with) | 19 Avoids |
| 25 Like | cards |
| lemons | |
| 27 "All kid- | |
| ding—" | |
| 29 "Doctor | |
| Zhivago" | |
| star | |
| 31 Acting | |
| ruler | |
| 35 Commer- | |
| cial cow | |
| 37 North | |
| Sea | |
| feeder | |

Solution time: 25 mins.



Yesterday's answer 1-12



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Porzingis ...

Continued from page 8

After the game, Brown was heated that the foul was overturned and called for the league to investigate the matter.

"I think he obviously hit me in the head," Brown told reporters. "I think we definitely need to do some investigation, that's all I'm going to say. I think that was an obvious one. Like I've never heard of (the) head (is) part of the ball. It doesn't make any sense to me. And I asked him. I went up and asked ... like did I get hit in the head? He looks me straight in the face, (official) James (Williams), and he says, 'No, you didn't get hit in the head.' And I'm like, 'OK.' ...

"Like that cost our team the game, and you expect us not to be frustrated, you know what I mean? We're trying to build great habits. We're trying to win as many games as possible, and we just dropped one because of that. So, I feel like we got the right to be upset and the league should understand. Of course we're going to say something about it after the game, so I don't think there should be any fines. But I definitely think that one should be investigated."

Brown claimed that Williams wasn't telling

the truth when asking him if he got hit in the head.

"I asked him, did I get hit in the head?" Brown said. "Because that was the one question I wanted to make sure that we both... and he said, no. And I asked him again, are you sure? And he said yes. That's what pissed me off. Because I know I got hit in the head. And then you see the replay, it's pretty obvious that I got hit in the head, and then you look me in my eye and tell me that I didn't?"

On the ensuing possession, Porzingis was ruled to make contact with Mathurin on his shot attempt, but similar to the Brown play, the league said the contact was marginal.

"Porzingis (BOS) is above the ball and legally contests Mathurin's (IND) shot attempt, with some incidental arm contact occurring concurrent with the block," the Last 2-Minute Report said. "Referees conducted a replay review to determine if the foul was called with no time remaining on the clock, and determined it was called before the expiration of time. The clock was reset with 0.6 remaining on the clock. The foul itself was not a review-

able matter under this replay trigger."

The Last 2-Minute Report also said that the officials missed a call before the Porzingis foul. As the Pacers were inbound with two seconds left, Myles Turner should have been called for an illegal moving screen on Derrick White, the league said.

"Turner (IND) turns his lower body into White (BOS) and delivers contact during the screen," the report said.

While the final calls were unfortunate, Mazzulla did recognize that the game was not decided on them. The Celtics gave up 44 points in the third quarter in an atrocious defensive second half against a Pacers team that lost All-Star guard Tyrese Haliburton to injury in the first half.

"Close games, like we always talk about, they aren't necessarily won in the last few minutes," Mazzulla said. "We took the lead, up two, battled back. But that third quarter, they just played with a little bit of inspiration, almost. ...

"We all have to be better on defense. No 25-point quarters and a 44-point quarter isn't good enough for us to win, so we all have to be better in that."



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

To the rim

Fort Recovery's Cameron Muhlenkamp powers up for a layup in the Indians' 51-36 blowout of Ansonia on Tuesday.

Swinney ...

Continued from page 8

Dabo contract Alabama clause

Swinney made news in 2019 when it was revealed his contract extension at that time included an "Alabama clause" that made his buyout higher if he left to coach that school as opposed to any other program.

That clause was maintained in his 2022 contract extension and outlines how

Swinney's annual employee buyout if he leaves to coach Alabama is 1.5 times higher annually than it is for any other college job. According to his contract, "Should Employee terminate early for the purpose of accepting employment in another position with duties of or substantially similar to a collegiate head coach," Swinney would owe Clemson:

— 2024: \$7.5 million

(Alabama); \$5 million (other)
— 2025: \$6 million (Alabama); \$4 million (other)
— 2026: \$4.5 million (Alabama); \$3 million (other)
— 2027: \$4.5 million (Alabama); \$3 million (other)
— 2028: \$3 million (Alabama); \$2 million (other)
— 2029: \$3 million

(Alabama); \$2 million (other)
— 2030: \$1.5 million (Alabama); \$1 million (other)
— 2031: N/A (Alabama); N/A (other)
The contract also states that there's "no amount owed" if Swinney accepts an NFL head coach position and that "Employee shall notify Director of Athletics prior to discussions by Employee or his

agents for other employment."

Clemson athletic director Graham Neff said in September 2022 he saw that heightened buyout specific to Alabama, and Swinney's high buyout in general, as a sign of his "commitment to Clemson."

"If you were to look at the market for the buyouts, Coach's buyout to Clemson even before any of the additive for Alabama specific-

ly is the highest (number) of his market, the top 10 markets." Neff said. "That commitment that he has to Clemson sets the market ... that's how I see those buyout dollars, because there's a lot of (buyouts) around the country and the market that aren't a whole lot, if anything."

"So even those dollars there from Coach are emblematic of his commitment to Clemson."

Sports on tap

Local schedule

Today
Jay County — Girls wrestling state at Kokomo — 11 a.m.; Girls basketball ACAC tournament vs. Adams Central — 6 p.m.; Boys basketball ACAC tournament vs. Adams Central — 7:30 p.m.
Fort Recovery — Boys basketball at Delphos St. John's — 6 p.m.

Saturday
Jay County — JV boys wrestling regional at Tri-9 a.m.
Fort Recovery — Girls bowling vs. Minster at McBo's Lanes — 9:15 a.m.; Boys bowling vs. Minster at Versailles — 1 p.m.

TV sports

Today
2 p.m. — Bundesliga soccer: TSG 1899 Hoffenheim at Bayern Munchen (ESPN2)
6:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Minnesota at Indiana (FS1)

7 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Dayton at Duquesne (ESPN2)
7:30 p.m. — NBA: Sacramento Kings at Philadelphia 76ers (ESPN); Indiana Pacers at Atlanta Hawks (Bally Indiana)
8:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: DePaul at Villanova (FS1)
9 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Wright State at Youngstown State (ESPN2)
9:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Nebraska at Iowa (BTN)
10 p.m. — NBA: New Orleans Pelicans at Denver Nuggets (ESPN)
10:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Boise State at Nevada (ESPN2)

(BTN); Seton Hall at Butler (FS1)
12:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: VCU at La Salle (USA)
12:30 a.m. — Premier League: Manchester City at Newcastle United (USA)
1 p.m. — Men's college basketball: St. John's at Creighton (FOX)
1 p.m. — NHL: New York Rangers at Washington Capitals (ABC)
2 p.m. — Men's college basketball: San Diego State at New Mexico (CBS); Kentucky at Texas A&M (ESPN); Xavier at Providence (FS1); Virginia at Wake Forest (ESPN2); Bradley at UIC (Bally Indiana)
2:15 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Penn State at Purdue (BTN)
4 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Kansas State at Texas Tech (ESPN2); Arkansas at Florida (ESPN)
4 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Seton Hall at Xavier (FS1)
4:30 p.m. — NFL: Cleveland Browns at Houston Texans (NBC)

4:30 p.m. — Men's college hockey: Michigan State at Penn State (BTN)
6 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Houston at TCU (ESPN); Oklahoma State at Iowa State (ESPN2)
7 p.m. — Men's college hockey: Notre Dame at Ohio State (BTN)
8 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Drake at Southern Illinois (ESPN2); Cincinnati at Baylor (ESPN)
8 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Indiana at Iowa (FOX)
8 p.m. — NHL: Boston Bruins at St. Louis Blues (Bally Indiana)
10 p.m. — Men's college basketball: USC at Cal (ESPN2)
10 p.m. — Boxing: Artur Beterbiev vs. Callum Smith (ESPN)

ment will have tickets for the boys and girls Allen County Athletic Conference basketball tournament for sale through today at 12 p.m.
Tickets for all three sessions will cost \$10. Tickets for a single session will only be sold at the door for \$6.

Tryouts scheduled
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.aloo247.com, call (205) 264-1468 or email 411@aloo247.com.

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

Local notes

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Sports

Swinney's name floated to replace Nick Saban

By CHAPEL FOWLER
The State
Tribune News Service

For years, rumors have swirled that Clemson football coach Dabo Swinney would be a top target for the Alabama job when Nick Saban decided to move on.

As of Wednesday afternoon, that's being put to the test.

Following an ESPN report that Saban, 72, was retiring after winning six national championships at Alabama, a handful of national reporters informally connected Swinney to the Crimson Tide, with dozens of other social media users chiming in on the potential fit.

Alabama coaching search list

ESPN's Pete Thamel said in a post on X (formerly Twitter) that Swinney was part of his "quick projected target list" of candidates for the Crimson Tide, while The Action Network's Brett McMurphy reported Oregon coach Dan Lanning is

expected to be Alabama's top target.

Thamel also included Washington coach Kalen DeBoer, Penn State coach James Franklin, Florida State coach Mike Norvell and Notre Dame coach Marcus Freeman on his short list. As one of the top programs in the sport, Alabama can naturally cast a wide net and target high-profile sitting coaches.

Swinney, who just completed his 15th season as Clemson's full-time coach, has deep ties to the state and the program. He's a Pelham, Alabama, native, and lettered three years at Alabama as a wide receiver (1990-92) for legendary coach Gene Stallings.

He also coached there as a graduate assistant, wide receivers coach and tight ends coach from 1993-2000 before arriving at Clemson in 2003 as receivers coach. He's been with the Tigers ever since, winning national championships in 2016 and 2018 and becoming the winningest coach in program history.

Swinney is in the second season of a 10-year, \$115 million contract he signed in September 2022 that keeps him under contract through 2031. His total salary for 2023 was \$10.75 million, the second highest in the country behind Saban, according to a USA TODAY Sports database.

Swinney, 54, had a few viral clashes with fans during Clemson's 2023 season, at one point insinuating the Tigers losing a few games might help "lighten the bandwagon." He also had a viral rant on his radio show in response to a fan, identified as Tyler from Spartanburg, questioning his credentials and high salary.

"I work for the board of trustees, the president and the AD," Swinney said Oct 30 as part of a rant that made national waves. "And if they're tired of me leading this program, all they gotta do is let me know. I'll go somewhere else where there is an appreciation."

See Swinney page 7

NBA report admits Porzingis foul was wrong

By STEVE HEWITT
Boston Herald
Tribune News Service

Celtics coach Joe Mazzulla said he couldn't wait until 4 p.m. on Tuesday when the NBA would release its Last 2-Minute Report from their controversial loss to the Pacers. He probably wasn't thrilled with what he read.

In the final seconds of their 133-131 loss to the Pacers, two calls went against the Celtics that led to the defeat. With three seconds left, Jaylen Brown was fouled by Buddy Hield on a go-ahead shot attempt before the call was reversed following a Pacers challenge. Moments later, Kristaps Porzingis was whistled for fouling Benedict Mathurin on a 3-point attempt with 0.6 seconds left, leading to Indiana's game-winning free throws.

In its Last 2-Minute Report on Tuesday, the NBA ruled that the overturn call on Hield's foul of Brown - when he made contact with Brown's head - was the correct decision, saying that Hield made inciden-

tal contact of Brown's head. But the league said that Porzingis should not have been called for the foul on Mathurin.

On the Hield foul of Brown that was overturned, the league said: "On replay review, the coach's challenge of the shooting foul on Hield (IND) was deemed successful. The video clearly shows that Hield reaches forward and makes contact with the ball from behind Brown (BOS). While in contact with the ball, Hield also makes minimal contact with Brown's head, and on review that contact was correctly deemed incidental. As the rulebook makes clear, the mere fact that contact occurs does not necessarily constitute a foul; contact which is incidental to an effort by a player to defend an opponent, reach a loose ball, or perform normal defensive or offensive movements is not considered illegal. Play resumed with IND possession, since Nesmith (IND) had imminent possession at the point of interruption."

See Porzingis page 7



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Lethal Leuthold

Saige Leuthold of Fort Recovery High School puts up a mid-range jumper during a 51-32 win over Ansonia on Tuesday. Leuthold had 10 points, including shooting 4-for-4 from the free throw line.



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