

# The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

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## Board indicates intent to expand apron

By RAY COONEY

The Commercial Review

Plans are to move forward with expanding the airport apron.

Portland Board of Aviation on Wednesday approved sending a letter of intent to the Federal Aviation Administration to use federal funding for an apron expansion project at Portland Municipal Airport.

The letter of intent informs the FAA of the city's intent to use its federal entitlement funding for the project. Leftover funds from 2023 and the airport's allotment for this year come to about \$262,480.

Katie England of Butler, Fairman & Seufert, the airport's engineering firm, said the project will likely exceed the amount of federal funding available. (It is expected to go out for bid this spring.) She suggested state dollars and federal infrastructure bill funds as possible sources for additional funding.

Also Wednesday, board members Faron Parr, John Ferguson, Clyde Bray and Caleb Lutes approved FAA grant pay requests of \$7,117.56 for the apron expansion design and \$9,050 for the wildlife hazard assessment. England noted that the assessment, which indicates a need for a wildlife fence around the airport, will be submitted to the FAA. (Construction of a fence is set for 2028 in the airport's capital improvement plan.)

In other business, the board:

- Was reminded that the airport is scheduled to host the Aviation Indiana quarterly meeting on Aug. 15. England said Butler, Fairman & Seufert will assist with the planning of the event.

- Heard the airport sold 6,002 gallons of fuel in December for \$27,992.13. That's down slightly from 6,115 gallons in December 2022.

- Re-elected Parr as president and Ferguson as vice president.

## Watson files



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Blake Watson finishes up paperwork Wednesday afternoon to file to run for the south district Jay County Commissioners seat. Watson is the first Democrat to file to run for office in the county.

## Democrat will seek party's nomination for Jay County Commissioner south district seat

By RAY COONEY

The Commercial Review

A fourth candidate has filed to run for commissioner:

Blake Watson turned in paperwork Wednesday afternoon to seek the Democratic nomination for the south district Jay County Commissioner seat.

He joins Duane Monroe, who is running for the GOP nomination for the south district seat, and Mike Leonhard and Doug Horn, who are seeking the Republican nomination for the north district seat. South district incumbent Brian McGalliard said he plans to run for reelection while north district incumbent Rex Journey has

indicated that he will not seek a second term.

Watson, who became the first Democrat to file to run for office in Jay County, is a 2001 Jay County High School graduate. He earned a bachelor's degree in social work from Indiana University - East and a master's degree in gerontology from the University of Indianapolis. He currently works for Retter Farms.

"I believe that we need a choice here in Jay County," said Watson. "We need to have folks that will step forward and create an alternative to where we are, having the Republican majority here. It's nice to have options for the voters to have the opportunity

to have ballot ... to select which candidate they like from different parties."

Discussing what he feels are key issues, Watson said he'd like to see commissioners meetings moved from their current 9 a.m. time to allow for more civic participation and noted a need for alternative viewpoints, improved infrastructure and improving quality of life for residents. In a press release, he criticized current and former commissioners for a lack of accountability.

"Commissioners have now demonstrated that their leadership lacks the ability to break the cycle of dysfunction," he

said in the release. "Mediocrity and virtually no presence of accountability have become the norm shielded by one-party rule."

"Our campaign is not about turning the clock back to a status quo that lacks the will to uplift Jay County, it's about moving forward and advancing the county ..."

Filing for this year's election cycle continues until noon Feb. 9. Positions up for election this year include 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.

## Contract bill advances

By RAY COONEY

The Commercial Review

INDIANAPOLIS — A bill that would clarify the process for county contracts advanced in the Indiana Statehouse.

State Rep. Matt Lehman's House Bill 1158 passed unanimously out of the House Local Government Committee and advanced through second reading in the House chamber.

State Rep. J.D. Prescott (R-Union City) saw his House Concurrent Resolution 3 pass the House on third reading and House Bill 1138 pass on second reading following a couple of amendments. State Sen. Travis Holdman (R-Markle) had three bills clear their committees Tuesday. (Both represent Jay County as part of their districts.)

Lehman's bill lays out procedures for counties to enter into contracts. An amendment to the original bill exempts Marian

County, which has a different form of government than others in the state with the mayor of Indianapolis as its executive.

The measure sets up a procedure that allows the county executive body (county commissioners) to specify language that contracts must include. It lays out a procedure for county elected officials, such as sheriff's, to enter into contracts. It includes submitting them to the county auditor who would then notify the president of the executive

branch. The president would then have 15 days to review the legislation with assistance from the county attorney.

If it was acceptable, the commissioners president could sign the contract or authorize the elected office to sign it. If not, the commissioners president could refuse to approve it but would have to provide a written statement to the officeholder regarding what needs to be changed.

See **Advances** page 2

### Lehman's measure would clarify process for county elected officials



Tribune News Service/AFP via Getty Images/Safin Hamid

## Searching in Iran

A member of a civil defense team carries out search and rescue operations in a damaged building following a missile strike launched Wednesday by Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) on the Kurdistan region's capital of Arbil. The IRGC have launched missile attacks on multiple "terrorist" targets in Syria and in Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan region, Iranian state media reported on Tuesday.

### Deaths

**Randall Wendel**, 59, Fort Recovery  
Details on page 2.

### Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 27 degrees Wednesday. The low was 5.

Tonight's forecast calls for snow with little to no accumulation, a low of 4 and winds gusting to 25 miles per hour. Expect a high of 14 Saturday under partly cloudy skies.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

### In review

Jay County Commissioners and Jay County Council have scheduled a joint session for 6 p.m. Thursday to discuss broadband internet access in the county. The meeting will be held in the auditorium on the first floor of Jay County Courthouse.

### Coming up

**Saturday** — Results from the JCHS boys basketball game against South Adams.

**Tuesday** — Coverage of Monday's Jay County Commissioners meeting.



# Obituaries

## Randall Wendel

Jan. 26, 1964-Jan. 16, 2024  
Randall "Otis" Wendel, 59, of Fort Recovery, Ohio, passed away unexpectedly on Tuesday, Jan. 16, 2024, at Mercer Health in Coldwater, Ohio.  
He was born on Jan. 26, 1964, in Jay County, Indiana, to the late John and Mary Ann (Fiely) Wendel.  
Randy is survived by his partner of 22 years, Leslie Stewart; his daughters, Britany (Cory) Adams of Coldwater and Taylor (Travis) Flaute of St. Henry, Ohio; his grandchildren, Devyn, Dawson, Darcy and

Riley; his siblings, Pam (David) Hicks, Gary (Margie) Wendel and Joyce (Dan) Wilker, all of Fort Recovery; a close cousin, Wanda Fields of St. Henry; his in-law, Court (Sue) Stewart of Steubenville, Ohio; and numerous nieces and nephews.  
In addition to his parents, Randy was preceded in death by Leslie's parents, Harry and Mary Jo Stewart.  
Randy was a 1982 graduate of Fort Recovery High School. He



Wendel

was a devoted businessman, working as a young boy for his father's business, Wendel Poultry Service. Randy served as their vice president for many years.  
He was an avid car enthusiast, which showed through his love of collecting classic cars.  
Recently, Randy developed a passion for animals and had a small piece of land, which he referred to as "Pappy's Ranch." Randy enjoyed history and was a professional "storyteller."  
His biggest passion in life was his four grandchildren. They had his heart, and he will forever be their "Pappy."

Randy's big heart is evident as his legacy will live on through the gracious gift of tissue donation.  
A Mass of Christian Burial will take place at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 22, 2024, at Mary Help of Christians Catholic Church. Burial will follow in St. Mary's Cemetery, Fort Recovery.  
Guests may visit with Randy's family on Sunday, Jan. 21, 2024, from 1 to 6 p.m. and again on Monday from 9 to 10 a.m. at Brockman Boeckman Funeral Home, Fort Recovery.  
Memorial contributions may be given to the Fort Recovery

Community Foundation, in care of the John and Mary Ann Wendel Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 52, Fort Recovery, OH 45846.  
Condolences may be shared with the family by visiting [brockmanboeckmanfh.com](http://brockmanboeckmanfh.com).  
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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 1/20	Sunday 1/21	Monday 1/22	Tuesday 1/23	Wednesday 1/24
<b>29/19</b>	<b>22/4</b>	<b>14/1</b>	<b>19/12</b>	<b>32/29</b>
Wind gusts will get as high as 20 mph on Saturday, when conditions will be mostly cloudy and cold.	Sunday's forecast shows mostly sunny skies with the high around 22 degrees.	There's a slight chance of rain Monday with a higher chance at night, when the low will be 1.	Tuesday has a 70% chance of rain throughout the day.	There's a chance of rain Wednesday under cloudy skies. The low will be around 29.

## Lotteries

<b>Powerball</b> 18-22-43-61-65 Power Ball: 2 Power Play: 4 Estimated jackpot: \$120 million	Daily Four: 6-5-3-9 Quick Draw: 5-6-10-12-15-20-27-28-31-43-45-46-50-54-56-66-69-73-78-80 Cash 5: 5-24-38-40-42 Estimated jackpot: \$115,000
<b>Mega Millions</b> Estimated jackpot: \$236 million	<b>Ohio</b> Wednesday Midday Pick 3: 0-4-5 Pick 4: 0-2-1-1 Pick 5: 7-4-3-0-8 Evening Pick 3: 8-8-4 Pick 4: 7-9-3-6 Pick 5: 7-6-2-9-6 Rolling Cash: 11-16-22-28-33 Estimated jackpot: \$100,000
<b>Hoosier</b> Wednesday Midday Daily Three: 0-5-6 Daily Four: 9-5-8-8 Quick Draw: 5-16-18-19-20-21-22-25-30-34-36-50-57-58-62-64-67-69-72-80 Evening Daily Three: 3-3-3	

## Markets

<b>Cooper Farms Fort Recovery</b> Corn.....4.44 Feb. corn.....4.44 Wheat.....5.05	Feb. beans .....11.94 Wheat ..... 5.44
<b>POET Biorefining Portland</b> Corn.....4.44 Feb. corn.....4.44 March corn.....4.44	<b>ADM Montpelier</b> Corn.....4.22 Feb. corn.....4.26 Beans.....11.84 Feb. beans.....11.86 Wheat.....5.39
<b>The Andersons Richland Township</b> Corn.....4.29 Feb. corn.....4.29 Beans.....11.84	<b>Heartland St. Anthony</b> Corn.....4.34 March corn.....4.34 Beans.....11.67 Feb. beans.....11.69 Wheat.....5.04

## Today in history

In 1809, author Edgar Allan Poe was born in Boston. Poe's parents were actors but he was orphaned at age 2. He became editor of "Graham's Lady's and Gentleman's Magazine," publishing some of his most famous works including "The Pit and the Pendulum," "The Tell-Tale Heart" and "The Fall of the House of Usher."  
In 2004, Portland City Council approved \$284,000 in economic development income tax funds to construct a 9,600-square-foot building on Tyson Road. Gym City

Gymnastics was to lease the building, which is now home to Community Fiber Solutions.  
In 2013, American cyclist Lance Armstrong admitted to doping in all seven of his Tour de France victories.  
In 2019, the Jay County High School girls swim team repeated as the Allen County Athletic Conference champion, scoring 440 points to finish ahead of runner-up Bluffton (380). Eliza Bader, Ashlyn Dow and Erica Hathaway each had a pair of individual wins.  
—The CR

## Citizen's calendar

<b>Today</b> 2 p.m. — Jay County Commissioners executive session, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.	Board, General Shanks, 414 E. Floral Ave., Portland.
<b>Monday</b> 9 a.m. — Jay County Commissioners, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland. 3:30 p.m. — Jay County Solid Waste Management District, 5948 W. Indiana 67, Portland. 5 p.m. — Jay School	6 p.m. — Dunkirk Board of Works, city building, 131 S. Main St. 7 p.m. — Dunkirk City Council, city building, 131 S. Main St.
<b>Tuesday</b> 10 a.m. — Dunkirk Police Pension Board, city building, 131 S. Main St. 5:30 p.m. — Portland Park Board, fire station, 1616 N. Franklin St.	

# Advances ...

Continued from page 1  
The bill cleared the House floor Thursday morning after two amendments, both of which Lehman supported. The amendments specify the timeframe in which the process must be completed and clarify what units of government are exempt.  
Lehman (R-Berne) represents the northern third of Jay County as well as Adams and Wells counties.  
HB 1138 creates a system for local units of government to establish rules for public comment during meetings, including restrictions on time. It includes a "three strike" procedure — two verbal warnings followed by removal — for enforcing those rules and clarifies that law enforcement officers can't be held liable for removing individuals from those meetings.  
It also would clarify what areas of government property are open to the public.  
Prescott supported the two amendments approved Thursday that removed the term "particularly disruptive" from the bill because it is vague and addressed concern about unintended consequences to existing trespass law.

The bill will now move forward for a third reading in the House.  
**Senate Bill 4**  
The bill authored by Holdman along with State Sens. Chris Garten (R-Charlestown) and Ryan Mishler (R-Mishawaka) covers various fiscal issues including a biennial review to identify dedicated funds that have not been used. It also makes various procedural changes and allows the Legislative Service Agency to adopt interim rules for "a reduction, a full or partial waiver, or an elimination of a fee, fine, or civil penalty." It also lays out a procedure for developing new templates for creating funds and drafting appropriations to be considered by the code revision commission and possible new legislation in 2026.  
It passed 13-0 Thursday morning out of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

part of Allen County. It would allow towns to establish riverfront districts. The districts, which are currently limited to cities, allow communities to provide additional liquor licenses at a lower cost in order to help drive economic development. It passed unanimously out of the committee.  
**Senate Bill 61**  
Also heard Tuesday by the Senate Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee, it would allow for petitions to create tourism improvement districts. Such districts would utilize a tax rate to generate funds for marketing and/or development. Holdman noted in advance that the bill was not intended to move forward Tuesday but to begin a discussion. All testimony Tuesday was in favor of the bill, with David Ober of Indiana Chamber of Commerce suggesting a handful of revisions.

pointed out that it's the first alcohol-related bill that he has authored or supported in his dozen years in the Statehouse. He brought the bill at the request of Antonuccio's Italian Market, which is now in his district. The bill was recommended to the Senate Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee.  
**House Concurrent Resolution 3**  
Authored by Prescott, the resolution that urges Indiana Department of Transportation to rename a section of Indiana 1 between Indiana 32 and Randolph County Road 900 West as Kyle Osgood Memorial Mile passed the full House 93-0 Tuesday afternoon. Osgood, a Farmland firefighter, died in May when his firetruck went off the road and flipped while responding to a call regarding a barn fire. He had been with the department for 15 years and was serving as assistant chief at the time of his death. The resolution now moves to the Indiana Senate where it will be carried by State Sens. Scott Alexander (R-Muncie), who represents Randolph County, and Jeff Raatz (R-Indianapolis).

**Senate Bill 20**  
The Senate Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee on Tuesday unanimously passed the bill authored by Holdman, who represents Jay, Adams, Wells and Blackford counties and

**Senate Bill 58**  
On Wednesday, the Senate Public Policy Committee advanced the bill that exempts specialty or gourmet markets with a restaurant permit from income requirements to sell carry-out alcohol. Holdman

# Felony arrests

**Strangulation**  
A Portland man was arrested Wednesday for strangulation.

Ethan N. Bruggeman, 29, 5327 E. 200 North, is charged in Jay Superior Court with a Level 6 felony for stran-

gulation and a Class A misdemeanor for domestic battery. He was released on a \$3,000 bond from Jay County Jail.

# Capsule Reports

**Leaving highway**  
Jay County highway superintendent Eric Butcher is leaving the department.  
Butcher confirmed Thursday evening his last day will be Feb. 22. He noted he has accepted another position but held off sharing the name as details are being finalized.  
"It wasn't an easy decision, but it was one I felt was best for me at this time," noted Butcher, who has headed the highway workers since October 2022.

while passing her on Indiana 67 in Jay County about 6:50 a.m. Tuesday.  
Krystal N. McDowell, 39, Redkey, was driving her 2012 Buick Regal northeast on the highway with her hazard lights activated when John H. Lewis, 65, Bartow, Florida, attempted to pass McDowell in a 2019 Volvo semi truck, according to a Jay County Sheriff's Office report. As he drove into the other lane and passed McDowell, he sideswiped her vehicle, causing between \$25,000 and \$50,000 in estimated damage.  
The truck Lewis was driving is registered to Pik Express of Chandler.

**Sideswiped**  
A semi truck driver hit a Redkey woman's car

Hosted by The Jay County Visitor and Tourism Bureau

## Vendor/Craft Show

February 10  
10AM - 4PM

Free Admission & Parking  
Shop unique handmade treasures  
Support local artisans in our community

**Held at the Holiday Inn Express here in Portland.**

Limited spaces available, can contact Mary Adair at the Jay County Visitor & Tourism 260-726-3366 or email [director@visitjaycounty.com](mailto:director@visitjaycounty.com) for more information.

### SERVICES

Today

**Post.** Charles: 10:30 a.m., Mary Help of Christians Catholic Church, 403 Sharpshurg Road, Fort Recovery.  
**Mere.** Nellie: 11 a.m., First Missionary Church, 950 S. U.S. 27, Berne.  
**Hammond.** Mary: 1 p.m., Garden View Funeral Home, 10501 Indiana 3, Muncie.  
**Hurst.** Louanna: 2 p.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

Monday

**Wendel.** Randall: 10:30 a.m., Mary Help of Christians Catholic Church, 403 Sharpshurg Road, Fort Recovery.

Service listings provided by  
**PROGRESSIVE DEL TORO OFFICE PRODUCTS**  
120 N. Meridian St.  
Portland, Indiana 47371  
(260) 726-9201  
[progressiveofficeproducts.com](http://progressiveofficeproducts.com)

### JOB OPENING

**FULL TIME HEALTH DEPARTMENT SCHOOL HEALTH LIAISON**  
JAY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT SALARY: \$40,003.60 per year

**DUTIES**

- Partners with schools and community partners to promote whole child health, including physical, mental and student health and wellbeing.
- Work closely with schools and other educators to identify, develop and deliver educational programs geared toward student health in Pre-K through Grade 12.
- Collaborating and enhancing of current vaccination efforts to ensure childhood vaccine requirements and seasonal vaccine needs are addressed.
- Coordinate and assist schools with vision, hearing, oral, as well as other health screenings.
- Develops operational plans and policies necessary to achieve objectives and services.
- Represents the Health Department on coalitions, taskforces and committees as assigned.
- Assists with immunization clinic operations as needed.

**REQUIREMENTS**

- Associate Degree in Nursing or completion of Nursing Diploma required and current licensing as a Licensed Practical Nurse in the State of Indiana.
- Possession of or ability to obtain certifications in TB skin testing, CPR/AED certifications, Bloodborne Pathogens, First Aid, Stop the Bleed, National Incident Management (NIMS) and/or other areas as required for public health programs/operations.
- Ability to effectively examine individuals, assess needs, and provide information, treatment, assistance, or referrals.

**HOURS**

- 35 hours weekly (Monday through Friday from 8:30 am -4:30 pm).
- Occasional evening and weekend hours as needed for department operations and out of town meetings.
- Follows the Jay County government office holiday schedule.

All interested applicants can submit their resume to the Jay County Health Department at:  
504 W. Arch St., Portland, IN 47371  
Ph. 260-726-8080 Fax 260-726-2220 [Environmental@jaycountyhealthdept.org](mailto:Environmental@jaycountyhealthdept.org)  
Applications will be accepted until January 19, 2024

## MC Special Olympics facing sheriff's office

Mercer County Special Olympics team has a big match coming up.

The group is set to take on Mercer County Sheriff's Office for a basketball game starting at 6 p.m. Monday at Celina Field House. This year's event will open with the Special Olympics Skills Team, The Wildcats, facing sheriff's deputies, with the Special Olympics Cheer Team and Unified Cheer Team performing between games. The evening will conclude with the Bobcats facing the sheriff's deputies at 7 p.m.

"While this game doesn't count toward our official record, its one the players look forward to the most. The comradery that has been built between the Sheriff's department and our athletes because of this event is outstanding," said Mercer County special olympics coordinator Sam Fledderjohann in a press release.

"From a spectator perspective, it's also really fun to watch."

Game admission is free. Donations will be accepted for Mercer County Special Olympics Programming.

## Taking Note

### KidLit in Quilts

Sheila Painter will be sharing her program, KidLit in Quilts, at 6 p.m. Tuesday at Fort Recovery Public Library.

Painter creates quilts that reflect and mimic artwork in children's literature, according to a release from the library. She'll be sharing her pieces and book reviews at the free event sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

### Balmy at library

Jay County Public Library is hosting a beach-themed lip balm tutorial Tuesday. Participants will have the opportunity to create and design their own lip balms. Sessions are from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. for third through sixth graders and from 6 to 7 p.m. for teens and adults. Refreshments will be provided. Registration is required.

# Absent father still wonders

DEAR ABBY: Almost 50 years ago, I got a girl pregnant. She left the state and two years later sent me a letter and a picture of the cutest baby — mine. Her letter ripped me apart.

I admit I was a terrible person and deserved everything she wrote.

Now that I'm up in years, I would like to know about her and the child.

I have thought about the baby often throughout the years. I don't want back into her life, but I would certainly like to see her. I have been thinking about hiring a private investigator to find her whereabouts.

Your thoughts on this? — DEFERRED DAD IN NEW MEXICO

DEAR DAD: After the private investigator lets you know where your old girlfriend is (providing she's still on this side of the sod), refrain from showing up in person. Clearly, the "girl" has gone on with her life, and the "baby" is well into middle age. Write your old flame a letter, or have your lawyer do it, explaining you have thought about her and the child, and ask if either of them is willing to meet with you. Then cross your fingers.

DEAR ABBY: I have been obese most of my life. Recently, I had a health issue that result-

## Dear Abby



ed in my losing a significant amount of weight. Thankfully, I'm doing much better now.

While I'm happy to be enjoying life as a thinner person, how do I handle the well-meaning questions from people who want to know how I did it?

My family and a few close friends know what I went through, but I'm not comfortable sharing the details with co-workers, clients, neighbors, etc., regarding how I got my new figure.

How do I satisfy the curiosity of the questioners without seeming rude or divulging too many details? — KEEPING IT TO MYSELF

DEAR KEEPING: You do not have to answer every question that is asked of you. Bear in mind that these folks are acknowledging your achievement, so try this: "Thank you for the compliment, but I prefer not to discuss it." (Then smile and try not to look like you're gloating.)

DEAR ABBY: I live in a different state than my parents with my husband and two chil-

dren. When we FaceTime with them (mainly my mom) or they come to visit, Mom only talks about my niece and nephew. I love my niece and nephew, but it feels like they are all I hear about.

It makes it seem like Mom doesn't care or pay attention to my children because she and Dad are thinking only about my niece or nephew. They often compare my children to their cousins as well. If I mention something one of my kids did, Mom instantly says my niece or nephew did the same thing.

Other people have commented that they have noticed her doing this, so I know I'm not being overly sensitive. What can I say to her without upsetting the rest of the family? — MY KIDS COUNT, TOO

DEAR MY KIDS: If your mother is oblivious to what she has been doing, make clear to her that her favoritism is blatant. Tell her what she is doing is insensitive, that other people have noticed and pointed it out to you and you want it stopped before your children are old enough to catch on. Period.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

# Community Calendar

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

## Today

**DUNKIRK HISTORICAL SOCIETY** — Is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the first and third Friday of each month in the former W.E. Gaunt Jewelry building, 113 S. Main St., Dunkirk.

**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.

**CINCINNATUS LEAGUE** — Will meet at noon Friday, Jan. 19, at Harmony Cafe in Portland.

## 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.

**DUNKIRK HISTORICAL SOCIETY** — Is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the first and third Saturday of each month in the

former W.E. Gaunt Jewelry building, 113 S. Main St., Dunkirk.

**MUSEUM OF THE SOLDIER** — Is open from noon to 5 p.m. the first and third Saturday and Sunday of the month. It is located at 510 E. Arch St., Portland. The website is museumofthesoldier.com.

## Sunday

**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 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.

**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

**JAY COUNTY PASTORS AND CHAPLAINS** — Meet at 8 a.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month at Richard's Restaurant.

**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.

## Wednesday

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

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

**PORTLAND ROTARY CLUB** — Will meet at noon each Wednesday in the cafe at John Jay Cen-

ter for Learning, 101 S. Meridian St., Portland.

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

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

**A BETTER LIFE - 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

**LAWYERS IN LIBRARIES** — Free and confidential consultations with a lawyer are available from 10 a.m. to noon at Jay County Public Library, 315 N. Ship St., Portland. Consulting is available on topics including divorce, custody, guardianship, tenant-landlord issues, bankruptcy, debt collection, estates and immigration. Those interested in participating should sign up in advance at the library, 315 N. Ship St., Portland, or by calling (260) 726-7890.

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# Sudoku

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

Level: Advanced

## Thursday's Solution

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

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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JAY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT SALARY: \$52,015.60 per year

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- Plans, develops, and implements health education programs and services in accordance with community needs, funding requirements, and department goals and objectives, collecting and analyzing data to identify community needs and administering fiscal resources for health education programs as assigned.
- Insures compliance with Health First Indiana core health services and develops associated key performance indicators as necessary.
- Develops, prepares, and coordinates grant/funding applications and grant/funding-related activities. Ensuring compliance with guidelines and requirements of grant/funding agencies.
- Develops, conducts, or coordinates health needs assessments and other public health surveys.
- Represents the Health Department on coalitions, task forces and committees as assigned.

### REQUIREMENTS

- Baccalaureate Degree in public health, education, or related field.
- Possession of or ability to obtain certifications CPR/AED certifications, Blood borne Pathogens, First Aid, Stop the Bleed, National Incident Management (NIMS) and/or other areas as required for public health programs/operations.
- Ability to travel off-site (active Indiana driver's license).

### HOURS

- 35 hours weekly (Monday through Friday from 8:30 am -4:30 pm).
- Occasional evening and weekend hours as needed for department operations and out of town meetings.
- Follows the Jay County government office holiday schedule.

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Ph. 260-726-8080 Fax 260-726-2220 Environmental@jaycountyhealthdept.org  
Applications will be accepted until January 19, 2024

# Congress set for rare breakthrough

**Bloomberg Opinion**  
Tribune News Service

A deal struck by Republicans and Democrats in Congress has paved the way for students to use federal grants for short training courses. This is a rare example of sensible, bipartisan policy. As a new year begins, leaders of both parties should work to pass the legislation — together with a better plan to pay for it.

The Bipartisan Workforce Pell Act would expand the range of programs eligible for Pell Grants, which are currently used by roughly 6 million undergraduates to help pay for college. The bill allows students, for the first time, to use this aid for programs as short as eight weeks. These are typically courses that train students in specialized skills, in fields ranging from welding to

## Guest Editorial

truck driving to health care. The beneficiaries would be low- and middle-income adults seeking to change careers or gain credentials for higher-paying jobs.

Up to now, the idea of expanding Pell Grants to shorter courses has failed over concerns about sending taxpayer dollars to low-quality providers. The framework negotiated by the House Committee on Education and the Workforce's Republican chair, Virginia Foxx, and ranking Democrat Bobby Scott addresses

this by requiring that all programs demonstrate a completion and job placement rate of at least 70%, with graduates earning a median income of at least \$21,870 plus the cost of tuition within one year. Eligibility would be limited only to training courses offered by accredited higher-education institutions, a priority for Democrats, but those institutions could include for-profit and online providers, as Republicans have advocated.

Committee members backed the compromise last month by 37-8 — greatly boosting its chances of attracting broad support in both houses of Congress. Considering the legislative impotence of the current Congress, that's one reason for lawmakers to make it a top priority as they return to Washington. Beyond

demonstrating that bipartisanship isn't dead, it would also help more low-income Americans obtain practical, career-advancing credentials at a time when employers face shortages of qualified workers and confidence in traditional higher education has plummeted.

In one respect, though, the plan can and should be improved. The measure is projected to cost a modest \$160 million over five years. The committee wants to offset this by banning institutions with endowments larger than \$500,000 per student from receiving federal student-loan money — a policy that would affect roughly 50 to 60 of the country's wealthiest schools. This would harm students by preventing them from using aid they're eligible for at the school of their

choice — and might actually cost money rather than save it, because undergraduates who enroll in selective institutions are also the most likely to finish their degrees and pay back their loans in full.

Lawmakers are right to seek cuts in the bloated student-loan system to fund short-term training, but there are better ways to go about it. Capping the size of graduate-school and parent PLUS loans and streamlining the government's public-service loan forgiveness program would be fairer, simpler and far more economical.

The bipartisan push to help lower-income Americans gain skills and get ahead was a bright spot in an otherwise dismal legislative session. In 2024, Congress should use that momentum and deliver.

# We must find a common cause

By CHARLES SAVENOR  
The Fulcrum  
Tribune News Service

In an age of intense political divisions and polarization, it can be easy to yearn for simpler times and even the "good old days." In actuality, our ancestors faced their own challenges and wrestled with differences that may have felt like obstacles to the future.

One such example unfolded on the very first day of the Continental Congress in September 1774. When one of the delegates suggested that the session begin with a prayer, there was a great deal of pushback, for the delegates represented a variety of religious beliefs ranging from Anabaptists to Quakers. Seeking to bridge the divide, Samuel Adams of Boston convinced his peers to move forward by asserting "that he was no bigot, and could hear a Prayer from any gentleman of Piety and virtue who was at the same time a friend to his Country."

The assembly opened the Sept. 7 session with the Rev. Jacob Duche offering several prayers. Remembered most vividly was the Philadelphia clergyman's reading of the first three verses Psalm 35, which states: "Of David. O Lord, strive with my adversaries, give battle to my foes. Take up shield and armor, and come to my defense. Ready the spear and javelin against my pursuers; say to my spirit, 'I am your deliverance.'"

John Adams described the response to this prayer in a letter to his wife, Abigail: "I must confess I never heard a better prayer ... with such fervor, such ardor, such earnestness and pathos, and in language so elegant and sublime for American [and] for the Congress. ... It has had an excellent effect upon everybody here." While the words of this man who would become our second president convey the spirit of this moment, generations later we wonder what was behind the impact.

Several theories attempt to explain why Psalm 35 resonated so deeply with the members of the Continental Congress that day. One view suggests that the founders were inspired by the identification of America with the biblical David fighting

Charles Savenor



victoriously against England, representing the giant Goliath. Philosopher and theologian Michael Novak believes, "It was the providential and covenantal mission that has enabled Americans, past and present, to overcome their differences and to unite their individual agendas into a common destiny."

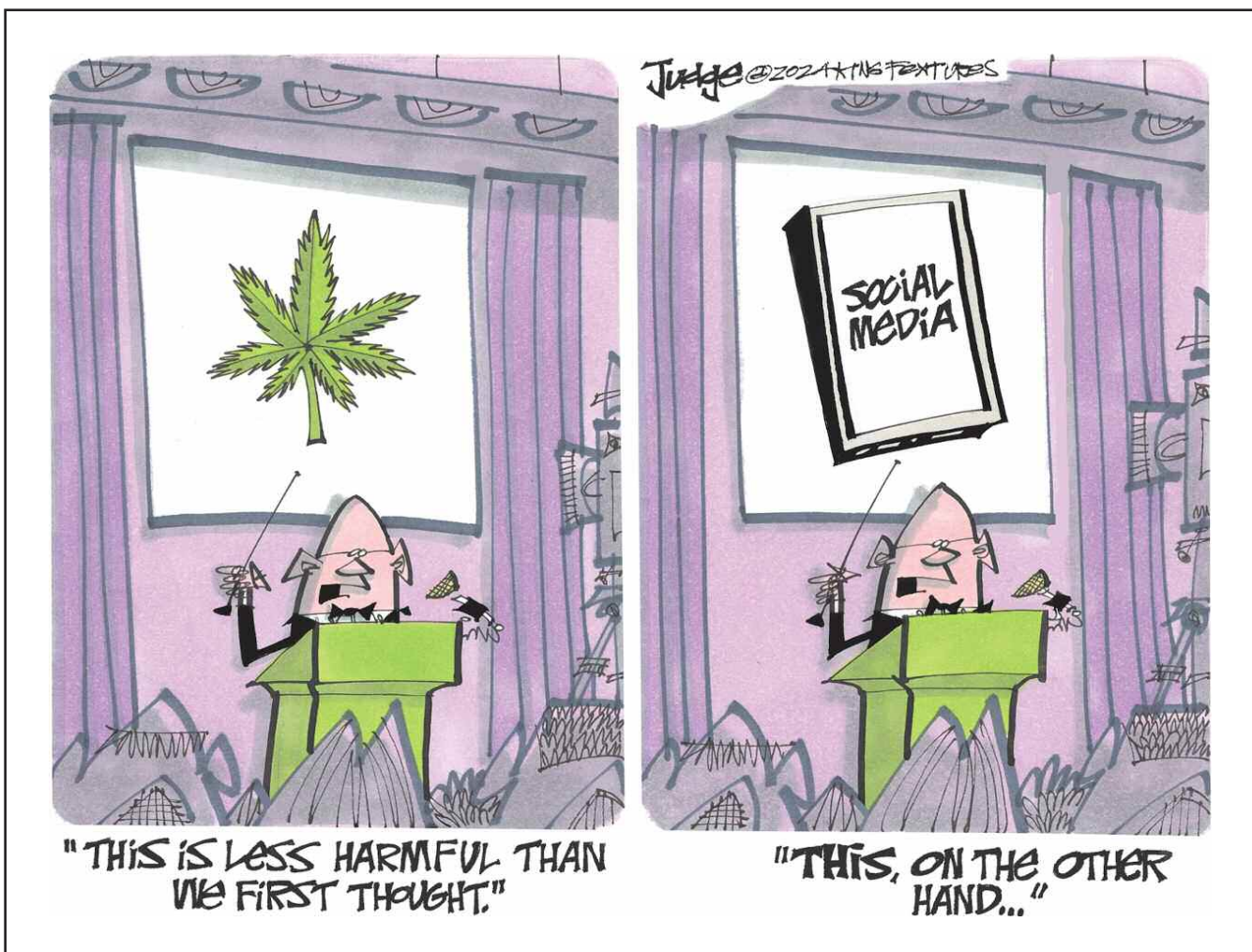
I suggest that inspiration emanated from finding a way forward. What began as a cacophonous debate transformed into a harmonious moment generating civic spirit to embrace common purpose.

Two and a half centuries later, that moment of American history inspires the work of democratic and civic education organizations, including Civic Spirit, with which I am affiliated. Our mission is to educate, inspire and empower schools across faith traditions to enhance civic belonging, knowledge, and responsibility in their student and faculty communities. We believe this investment of hope, love and energy will yield the next generation of engaged citizens and civic leaders who will overcome their differences and chart a course for our country with common cause.

At the conclusion of John Adams' letter to his beloved wife, he beseeched Abigail to read Psalm 35 and share it with her friends. In the same vein, I encourage all of us to share the story of the Continental Congress and the courageous evolution of American democracy to show what is possible when we find common cause.

American society needs this sentiment in 2024 more than ever. With a commitment to education, conversation and collaboration a brighter future is within our reach.

.....  
*Savenor is the executive director of Civic Spirit, a nonpartisan organization that provides training and resources to faith-based schools across the United States.*



# Some bills are meant to hurt

By MICHAEL LEPPERT  
Indiana Capital Chronicle  
indianacapitalchronicle.com

For nearly half my life, I have had my eye on the Indiana General Assembly. Looking back on all the things I could have watched during the bulk of the last three decades, I'm deeply saddened by the choice I made. I could have chosen sunsets, priceless art, or what social media now knows is a favorite in my house, Golden Retriever and Dachshund videos.

But not Hound Dogs. Nope. The best thing about a hound dog is the song. And that one isn't flattering either. Even when The King himself sang it.

Rep. Bruce Borders, R-Jasonville, is famously known in Indiana politics as an Elvis impersonator, a tragically embarrassing vocation. Now, I love Presley as much as anyone, but imitating him should be limited to the privacy of one's shower. Those doing it in public are likely to do other dumb things. Like file House Bill 1334.

To quote this masterpiece, HB 1334 actually says: "An employer may require an immunization only if the employer respects the employee's right to refuse an immunization." No, that's not edited. No, I took no dramatic or creative freedoms with the actual words on the paper.

In case any employer or contractor out there is curious whether this innovative policy idea applies to them, the answer is yes. Unless, drum roll, you are the federal government. It turns out the Indiana legislature is not the boss of them.

Something that could make this mess of a bill seem sane would be comparing it to Senate Bill 187, filed by Senator Gary Byrne, R-Byrneville. That is also not a typo.

This is the entire bill: "A public transportation agency shall not

Michael Leppert



implement free or reduced fares on a general, primary, or municipal election day." This one surprised me a little, because I thought the bill would prevent people from getting a free ride specifically to vote. What the bill says is that on days legally defined as Election Day, public transportation agencies can't provide free rides or reduced fares to anyone, in route to anywhere.

Since studying this one sentence bill long enough to understand it only took a few seconds, I was immediately distracted by how it would enhance people's lives in Byrneville, from where Senator Byrne hails. The "town" is actually an unincorporated area in Harrison County, and likely doesn't have a "public transportation agency." It once had a post office from 1851 to 1906, but I don't know if there once was free horse and buggy service to it.

Arika Herron of Axios Indianapolis wrote about SB 187 last week, when Sen. Byrne said the bill is about fairness for Hoosiers. Specifically, he said, "The rural parts of those counties can't get a free ride." What he left off of that sentence was the word, "ever." There is no public transportation in deep, rural Indiana on Election Day, or any other day. That's part of the charm of rural living: no traffic.

But the worst bills of this legislative session aren't humorous, or merely humorless. They are hateful.

House Bill 1291, filed by Rep. Chris Judy, R-Fort Wayne, attempts to

erase the word "gender" from the Indiana Code and replace it with "biological sex." He wants to legally cancel all transgender people in Indiana. If his bill were to pass, as filed, transgender people would no longer exist in the state. The bill creates definitions for other things too. Words like "woman," "man," "girl," and "boy," would now all mean what the legislature says they mean.

Maybe if transgender Hoosiers have no legal standing for who they are, they won't want to live here anymore. Is that the goal? Statistically speaking, how many people will we begin pretending no longer exist? According to data gathered by IUPUI from Gallup and the Williams Institute, about 27,600 people. An enormous number of people who aren't being protected enough already.

Even when this bunch seemingly attempts to provide assistance to people in need, they can't help but throw in a little harm to go with it. A prime example, House leadership wants to protect the 18,000 members of Indiana's Jewish community by specifically defining "antisemitism" as religious discrimination, while overtly ignoring the 40,000 Muslims in the state who are suffering every bit as much. This incongruence is insulting to Hoosiers — as if they think we are all as ignorant as they are.

Luckily, legislators will have time to learn up before enacting any of these awful ideas.

All of these bills are all designed to hurt people. And if I could give this legislature one assignment for positive change, The King himself might instruct the same thing: "Don't Be Cruel."

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

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—Thomas Jefferson

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# Industry benefits from high prices

By JUDITH KOHLER

The Denver Post  
Tribune News Service

The cattle producers tending to their animals in the yards at the National Western Stock Show in Denver on Wednesday were fighting the cutting, cold winds. But when it comes to the industry itself, ranchers for now are riding tailwinds of strong customer demand and high cattle prices.

"It's a great time to be in the beef industry," said Amanda Hilbrands of the Hilbrands Cattle Co. in Clara City, Minnesota.

Although high cattle prices mean higher prices at the grocery store, consumer demand remains robust, agricultural economists say.

Jane Evans Cornelius, who owns the family-run business Coyote Ridge Ranch in LaSalle, said the impacts of the high prices ripple throughout the industry. Coyote Ridge doesn't raise cattle that wind up in grocery stores. Their Herefords provide breeding stock.

"We're benefitting (from the high prices), but the net income is not as dramatic as you would like," Cornelius said. "It's being eaten up by inflation."

The beef industry weathered the disruptions of the coronavirus pandemic, but faces headwinds of high feed and fuel costs even as ranchers' animals are fetching top dollar. High interest rates for equipment are another bite out of profits.

And state policies and laws on water conservation, overtime pay and wildlife, including the restoration of wolves to Colorado, are creating angst among ranchers, said Erin Karney, executive vice president of the Colorado Cattlemen's Association. She said some in the industry see the strong market as an opportune time to sell out.

Ongoing drought across some of the country's major rangelands has helped drive up feed prices and led ranchers to reduce their cattle numbers. The U.S. cattle herd inventory of 29.4 million as of July 1, 2023, is the lowest in decades, driving up cattle prices due to tight supplies.

The inventory is based on the number of cows and their calves and doesn't include dairy cows and other kinds of cattle. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is expected to release the full-year inventory for 2023 soon.

The Colorado herd size was 642,000 as of July 1, 2023, compared to 792,000 in 2019, before the coronavirus pandemic closed beef processing plants when thousands of employees across the country got sick. Hundreds of the workers died. Feedlots filled up when the animals couldn't be slaughtered and sale prices slid for ranchers.

It's a different market now. The USDA reported that the average



Tribune News Service/The Denver Post/Helen H. Richardson

Charlie Spindle, in back, keeps her Hereford and Charolais cattle moving to try to exercise them in an outdoor exercise pen near their paddocks at the National Western Stock Show in Denver on Jan. 8, 2024. She is from the Bill King Ranch in Moriarty, New Mexico.

calf price in November 2023 was \$290 per hundred pounds, double the average price of \$149 per hundred pounds in July 2020.

The increases are the result of the low herd size, which is part of a natural cycle that occurs when ranchers respond to low prices and high supplies by decreasing their cattle numbers.

"As prices go up, they keep more of their calves and raise them to maturity to become a cow and produce more calves," said Daniel Mooney, assistant professor of agricultural and resource economics at Colorado State University.

But it takes three years to raise a mature cow, so there's a lag in rebuilding herds, Mooney added.

"We're at a natural low point, but then shocks to the economy and to the production system are also really important," Mooney said. "Drought, inflation and COVID are all shocks that have recently occurred that are also impacting the size of the beef herd."

At the start of 2023, more than 90% of beef cows were in states where most of the pasture and rangeland conditions were poor to fair, Mooney said. "As pasture and rangeland conditions worsened, there was an increase in beef-cow slaughter. People were culling more animals."

Ranchers are seeing higher prices. So are customers.

"Prices are up about 10% from a year ago. If you go back to 2019 levels, you're talking about closer to a 30% increase," said Brian Earnest, lead economist for ani-

mal protein for CoBank, which provides financial services to agricultural businesses.

Besides the small herd size, general inflation and higher production costs — fuel, transportation, feed, interest rates — are keeping the cost of beef elevated, Earnest said. He believes consumers should be prepared for beef prices to remain high in 2024.

Dawn Thilmany also expects that people will have to keep paying more because the cattle supply will remain tight for a while and, despite beef's sticker price, consumer demand is strong.

Thilmany, a professor of agricultural economics at CSU director of the Northwest and Rocky Mountain Regional Food Business Center, said economists looked at people's food-buying habits during the pandemic and since then. People are back to spending about what they did pre-COVID on eating out.

"But people are still spending more at home than they were spending for food before COVID, even when we adjust for inflation," Thilmany said.

Annual U.S. beef consumption averaged 57 pounds per capita 2013-2022, according to the USDA. Despite the recent disruptions, beef consumption has trended higher, Agricultural Economic Insights reported. The rate was 59.1 pounds per capita in 2022, the highest level since 2010.

Thilmany said economists believe cooking at home became a kind of recreational activity during the pandemic, one that has

continued. "Steak demand has been very high, so we kind of start getting a sense that maybe this is a treat people will give each other once a week at home."

A good rib-eye steak is going for more than \$20 a pound, or at least 10% above a year ago and at least 30% above pre-pandemic prices, Thilmany said.

Some of the costs and constrained supplies might be offset by beef imports. The U.S. normally imports different types of beef than it exports, such as leaner meat, but 2023 could set a record. With one more month of data to go, the Livestock Marketing Information Center said the imports totaled 3.421 billion pounds. The record is 3.679 billion pounds in 2004.

As of November, U.S. beef exports totaled 2.785 billion pounds in 2023, a 15% drop from 2022, Katelyn McCulloch, the center director said in an email.

While economists marvel at customers continuing to purchase pricey cuts of meat, several Denver-area shoppers responding to questions about their buying habits said they've cut back on beef because of budgets or concerns about their health and the environment.

"This past year is probably the least meat I've eaten in a year," Robert Adams of Denver said in an email.

Adams said he and his wife probably have steak once a month and typically buy the meat at Costco.

A number of people replied online that eating beef is bad for

their health and for the environment because of the methane produced by cattle. One person said cows "farting is destroying the Earth."

Actually, cattle belches rather than farts are a bigger source of methane, a potent greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change. The USDA said beef production and consumption in the U.S. accounts for 3.7% of the nation's greenhouse gas emissions.

Several Denver-area residents replied they're cutting out meat entirely or eating more poultry or plant-based proteins. However, one person said she'll always eat beef because of the high amount of protein. "I hope we can finally just let farmers make money, let truckers do their job and support our local grocery stores," she said.

Tim Ritschard's great-grandfather used to say that a semi-load of calves would buy a pickup truck.

"Anymore, with all your costs and stuff, that's not the case," said Ritschard, whose family has ranches in the Kremmling area since 1891.

Cattle prices are up, but so is the cost of diesel fuel. "Prices went from \$1.80 or \$2 (a gallon) to \$3 or \$4. When you're running eight pieces of equipment every day, that adds up pretty quickly," Ritschard said.

Last winter's big snows in northwest Colorado provided plenty of moisture for the rangeland and allowed the Ritschards to put up a lot of hay for the cattle. "That's money in the bank," Ritschard said.

So far this winter, though, the weather has been drier. Ritschard said by this time, snow in some spots should be over his knees. "It's not even covering my boots."

Despite the challenges, Todd Inglee, executive director of the Colorado Beef Council, said ranchers are "eternal optimists."

"They're always saying next year it's going to be better," Inglee said.

He pointed to the beef industry's focus on sustainability. Industry groups are helping finance research into beef production's impacts on greenhouse gas emissions. The industry hopes to show that ranching can be part of the solution to climate change by keeping range land intact to help store carbon dioxide.

Janie VanWinkle ranches with her husband, her son and his family outside of Grand Junction. They have updated their irrigation systems to use water more efficiently and manage cattle grazing to keep the land in good condition.

"The grass is good. The market is good. Life is good," VanWinkle said.

# Study finds depletion of aquifers threatens crop yields

By SCOTT SCHRAGE

University of Nebraska

Three decades of data have informed a new university of Nebraska-led study that shows how the depletion of groundwater — the same that many farmers rely on for irrigation — can threaten food production amid drought and drier climates.

The study found that, due in part to the challenges of extracting groundwater, an aquifer's depletion can curb crop yields even when it appears saturated enough to continue meeting the demands of irrigation. Those agricultural losses escalate as an aquifer dwindles, the researchers reported.

That reality should encourage policymakers, resource managers and growers to reconsider the volume of crop-quenching groundwater they have at their disposal, the team said, especially in the face of fiercer, more frequent drought.

"As you draw down an aquifer to the point that it's quite thin, very small changes in the aquifer thickness will then have progressively larger and larger impacts on your crop production and resilience," said Nick Brozović, director of policy at the Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute. "And that's a thing that we don't predict well, because we tend to predict based on the past. So if we base what's going to happen on our past experience, we're always going

to underpredict. We're always going to be surprised by how bad things get."

The team came to its conclusions after analyzing yields, weather and groundwater data from the High Plains Aquifer, which underlies portions of eight states — including nearly all of Nebraska. Some areas of the aquifer, especially those beneath Texas and Kansas but also the Cornhusker State, have diminished considerably over the past several decades, pumped for the sake of irrigating land that would otherwise stand little chance of sustaining crops.

"In terms of things that let you address food security under extreme conditions — in particular, drought and climate change — we really can't do without irrigation," said Brozović, professor of agricultural economics at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. "If we want to feed the world with high-quality, nutritious food and a stable food supply, we need to irrigate."

Brozović and Husker colleague Taro Mieno had already constructed plenty of models, and run plenty of simulations, on how the High Plains Aquifer responds to drought and dry conditions. But talking with farmers revealed that the models were not addressing their primary concern: well yield, or the amount of groundwater

that growers can expect to continuously draw when trying to buffer their crops against drought.

"Everybody's interested in how aquifer depletion affects the resiliency of irrigated agriculture in the region," said Mieno, an associate professor of agricultural economics and lead author of the study, which was published in the journal *Nature Water*.

So the researchers consulted annual estimates of the High Plains Aquifer's thickness, which date back to 1935, along with county-level yields of corn and soybean from 1985 through 2016. Meteorological data, meanwhile, allowed the team to calculate seasonal water deficits, or the difference between the water gained from precipitation and the amount that crops lost via evaporation and transpiration.

Farmers fortunate enough to be growing corn and soybean above the most saturated swaths of the High Plains Aquifer — roughly 220 to 700 feet thick — continued to enjoy high irrigated yields even in times of extreme water deficits, the team found. By contrast, those depending on the least saturated areas — between 30 and 100 feet — saw their irrigated yields begin trending downward when water deficits reached just 400 millimeters, a common occurrence in Nebraska and other Midwestern states.

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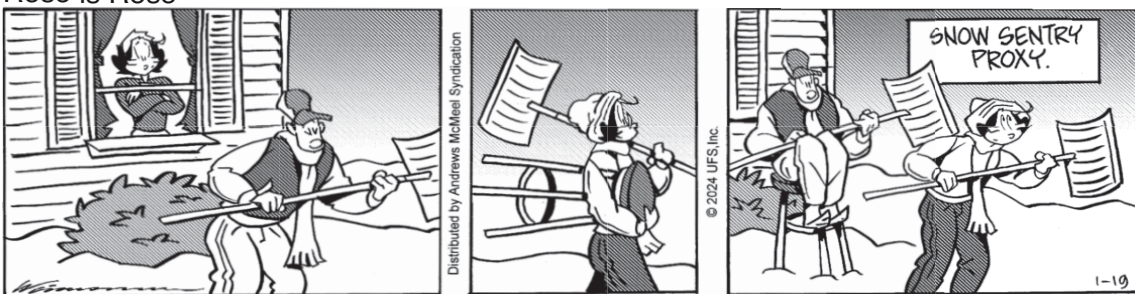
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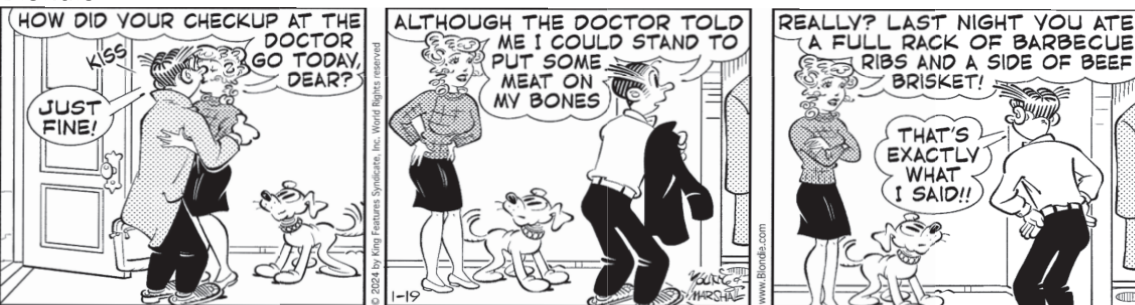
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Between Friends



Blondie



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Beetle Bailey



Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

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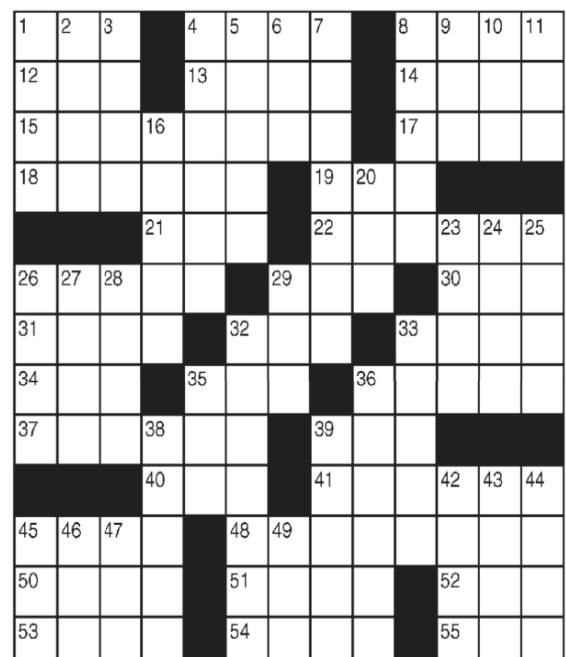
CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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Solution time: 25 mins.



Yesterday's answer 1-19



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# Pacers acquire Pascal Siakam in 3-team deal

By **TIM BIELIK**  
cleveland.com

CLEVELAND, Ohio — Pascal Siakam is on the move to one of the Cavaliers' division rivals.

ESPN's Adrian Wojnarowski reported on Wednesday that the Indiana Pacers are acquiring the two-time All-Star and former NBA champion from the Toronto Raptors in a three-team deal that is also including the New Orleans Pelicans. In exchange for Siakam, the Raptors are receiving Bruce Brown Jr., Jordan Nwora and three first-round picks, two of

which will be in the 2024 NBA Draft from Indiana.

The Pelicans are also sending guard Kira Lewis Jr. to the Raptors and a second-round pick to the Pacers per Wojnarowski.

Siakam is averaging 22.2 points, 6.3 rebounds and 4.9 assists in 39 games for the Raptors this season, shooting 52.2% from the floor in 34.7 minutes per game. He is slated to be a free agent after this season.

The Pacers are sixth in the Eastern Conference with a record of 23-17, two games behind the fourth-place Cavaliers, head-

ing into Wednesday's games, and Siakam now joins a team that includes Tyrese Haliburton and Myles Turner.

He was the Raptors' last remaining piece of the 2018-19 championship team that included O.G. Anunoby, Marc Gasol, Kawhi Leonard, Kyle Lowry and Fred Van Vleet. The Raptors traded Anunoby to the Knicks earlier this season, and Van Vleet signed with the Rockets in the offseason.

The Raptors are 12th in the East with a record of 15-25 and have lost their last four games.

# Goodell defends officiating

By **NOLAN BIANCHI**  
The Detroit News

DETROIT — Although NFL commissioner Roger Goodell didn't directly address a controversial penalty on Taylor Decker in the Detroit Lions' Week 17 loss to the Dallas Cowboys, he did address officiating, in general, while speaking Wednesday at Ford Field to promote the NFL draft and said the league's officials are doing "an extraordinary job."

Goodell engaged in a "fireside chat" emceed by NBC play-by-play broadcaster and Michigan resident Mike Tirico at the home of the Lions.

Tirico addressed the subject by noting two specific mistakes he made on this weekend's playoff broadcasts and saying that nobody within the game is perfect.

"Analysts (aren't) perfect, coaches aren't perfect, our quarterbacks aren't perfect — they throw incomple-

tions — running backs miss the hole, but we ask the officials to be perfect," Tirico said before offering Goodell a chance to speak on the league's efforts to improve that part of the game.

"I'm proud of our officials. They do an extraordinary job, but they aren't perfect. They're making decisions out there in a matter of seconds," Goodell said.

Lions fans are particularly sensitive to the topic, given the team's long and complicated history with officiating, and the fact one of the season's biggest refereeing controversies worked against Detroit in the loss to Dallas. The Lions thought they had taken a 21-20 lead against the Cowboys with 23 seconds remaining after a two-point conversion, which was then reversed after Decker, an offensive lineman, was penalized for not reporting as eligible before catching a pass to convert the try.

Decker was once again at the center of an officiating controversy in Sunday's 24-23 playoff win over the Los Angeles Rams. On Detroit's final drive before halftime, he was called for a false start that appeared to actually be a neutral-zone infraction committed by Rams linebacker Ernest Jones.

Following the Dallas game, Detroit maintained its process was correct and that referee Brad Allen made a mistake. To the chagrin of Lions fans everywhere, feedback from the league office in the days that followed seemed to indicate that the NFL sided with its officials in the ordeal.

Goodell said there are some times when officials get a call right and are still criticized.

"What we've seen in a variety of situations this year — without getting into any specifics — is they get it right and they're still criticized," Goodell said.

# Line drives ...

Continued from page 8

We keep coming back for more, believing again: "This is our year!"

"SOL," or "Same Old Lions," is something often thrown around up here in Michigan. Some way, or some how, the Lions will find a way to lose rather than find ways to win. It's inevitable.

Enter MCDC in 2021. "Motor City" Dan Campbell made headlines by saying the Lions were going to "bite kneecaps." Ten days after his hiring, Detroit traded away Matthew Stafford, the franchise leader in every passing category imaginable. In return, we got some draft picks and Jared Goff, a QB who was supposed to

bridge the gap between Stafford and whatever stud the Lions were going to draft with a top-five pick in the future.

Dark days were ahead, we thought.

The 2021 Lions were 0-10-1 before they got their first win, a 29-27 triumph over the Minnesota Vikings. They won only two more games the rest of the season and ended with a 3-13-1 record.

The following year, with HBO's Hard Knocks taking an in-depth look, MCDC, Aaron Glenn (defensive coordinator) and Ben Johnson (offensive coordinator) had the upward trajectory going in full force. Detroit finished 9-8, barely missed the playoffs and

ended Aaron Rodgers' legacy in Green Bay with a win at Lambeau Field in the final game of the season.

Enter the start of this year.

Not only did us Lions fans, once again, believe "This is our year!" but many across the country did too. They were favorites to win the NFC North, a goal they accomplished for the first time in franchise history and their first division title since 1993 (NFC Central).

They were even getting picked to reach the NFC Championship game for the first time since '91, previously the only time they won a playoff game.

It was hard to not get caught up

in the hype, because we've been there before; get our hopes up to have them dashed early on in the season or earn a Wild Card berth and be one-and-done in the post-season.

Sunday night at Ford Field — the stadium's first playoff game and Detroit's first home postseason game in 32 years — was a culmination of MCDC instilling belief in his players (and fans), Goff being THE quarterback instead of A quarterback and a team putting three decades of futility to rest.

I stood alone in the middle of my living room, the TV as the only trace of light as my wife lay in bed when Detroit held on to

beat Stafford and the Los Angeles Rams 24-23.

I raised my arms in celebration, careful not to make too much noise and wake my bride.

My eyes watered. I sat back down on the couch and put my head in my hands, taking the time to myself to reflect on what just happened.

I didn't know how to act. I've never had my football team win a playoff game and be old enough to know what's going on.

"Act like you've been there before."

Us millennial Lions fans have never been there before.

Now, we have. And we're not done yet.

# Sports on tap

## Local schedule

**Today**  
Jay County — Swimming ACAC Invite at Jay County — 5:30 p.m.; Boys basketball (including freshman) vs. South Adams — 5 p.m.; Boys wrestling ACAC tournament at Bluffton — 6 p.m.  
Fort Recovery — Boys basketball vs. Coldwater — 6 p.m.

**Saturday**  
Jay County — Boys basketball vs. Hagerstown — 12 p.m.; Girls basketball vs. Southern Wells — 6 p.m.; JV boys wrestling state at Noblesville West — 9 a.m.; Junior high boys basketball at Adams Central — 9 a.m.; Junior high wrestling at Noblesville West — 9 a.m.  
Fort Recovery — Girls bowling vs.

Marion Local at Pla-Mor Lanes — 9:15 a.m.; Swimming Cav Invite "MAC" at Jay County — 12 p.m.; Boys bowling vs. Marion Local at Pla-Mor Lanes — 1 p.m.

## TV sports

**Today**  
3 a.m. — Australian Open tennis (ESPN2)  
2 p.m. — USGA: Latin America Amateur Championship (ESPN2)  
6:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Georgetown at Xavier (FS1)  
7 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Saint Louis at VCU (ESPN2)  
7 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Belmont at Drake (Bally Indiana)  
7:30 p.m. — NBA: Denver Nuggets at Boston Celtics (ESPN)

8:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Indiana at Wisconsin (FS1)  
9 p.m. — Australian Open tennis (ESPN2)  
10 p.m. — NBA: Dallas Mavericks at Golden State Warriors (ESPN); Indiana Pacers at Portland Trail Blazers (Bally Indiana)  
10:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: UNLV at Colorado State (FS1)

**Saturday**  
3 a.m. — Australian Open tennis (ESPN2)  
7:30 a.m. — Premier League: Crystal Palace at Arsenal (USA)  
12 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Baylor at Texas (ESPN); Marquette at St. John's (FOX); Penn State at Ohio State

(BTN); Creighton at Seton Hall (FS1)  
12:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Rhode Island at Dayton (USA)  
12:30 p.m. — Premier League: Nottingham Forest at Brentford (NBC)  
1 p.m. — Men's college basketball: San Diego State at Boise State (CBS)  
2 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Purdue at Iowa (FS1); USC at Arizona State (FOX); Belmont at Bradley (Bally Indiana)  
2 p.m. — LPGA Tour: Hilton GV Tournament of Champions (NBC)  
2:15 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Northwestern at Nebraska (BTN)  
2:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Duquesne at Saint Joseph's (USA)  
3 p.m. — International friendly soccer: Slovenia at United States (TNT)

4 p.m. — Men's college basketball: DePaul at Butler (FS1)  
4:30 p.m. — NFL playoffs: Houston Texans at Baltimore Ravens (ABC)  
6 p.m. — Men's college basketball: BYU at Texas Tech (ESPN2)  
6 p.m. — Women's college basketball: San Jose State at San Diego State (FS1)  
8 p.m. — Men's college basketball: UConn at Villanova (FS1)  
8 p.m. — NHL: Washington Capitals at St. Louis Blues (Bally Indiana)  
8 p.m. — Men's college hockey: Ohio State at Minnesota (BTN)  
8 p.m. — Australian Open tennis (ESPN2)  
8:15 p.m. — NFL playoffs: Green Bay Packers at San Francisco 49ers (FOX)

## Local notes

**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.aloo0247.com, call (205) 264-1468 or email 411@aloo0247.com.  
.....  
To have an event listed in "Sports on tap," email details to sports@theocr.com.

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**JAY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY** - Applications now being accepted for the full-time position of Library Assistant. Job requires working with teen and adult programming, marketing, and strong customer service and technology skills. Job description available at the library and on the library's website at www.jaycpl.lib.in.us. Applications accepted until the position is filled.

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## 130 MISC. FOR SALE

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## 250 PUBLIC NOTICE

### Public Notice

STATE OF INDIANA  
COUNTY OF JAY, SS:  
IN THE JAY SUPERIOR COURT 2023 TERM  
Cause No. 38D01-2310-MF-000024  
Jay County Christian Home Builders, Inc.  
Plaintiff

vs  
Eric R. Marshall, Sidney Marshall  
Eric R. Marshall as natural guardian of Breanna Marshall  
Mariner Finance, LLC, Heights Finance Corporation  
Defendants  
SHERIFF'S SALE

By virtue of a copy a default judgment directed to me from the Judge of the Jay Superior Court in this cause wherein Jay County Christian Home Builders, Inc. is Plaintiff and Eric R. Marshall, Sidney Marshall, Eric R. Marshall as natural guardian of Breanna Marshall, Mariner Finance, LLC and Heights Finance Corporation are the Defendants requiring me to make the total sum of \$49,766.64 with interest thereon from the date of the judgment at the legal rate and any costs of this sale, I will sell at public auction to the highest bidder on the 14th day of March, 2024 at 10:00 am on the 3rd floor of the Courthouse in Portland, Indiana the following described real estate:

Lot numbered Twenty-three (23) in Block Numbered Thirty-four (34) in William G. Sutton's Addition to the Town, now City of Dunkirk.

For informational purposes only the above-described real estate is located at 243 E. Commerce St. in Dunkirk, Indiana 47336. This sale shall be made without relief from valuation or appraisal laws and subject to all liens, encumbrances and easements of record. Immediately after the sale I will execute and deliver a deed of conveyance for the real estate and the Purchaser shall be placed in absolute possession of the real estate.

Dated this 16th day of January, 2024

Larry R. Newton, Jr.,  
Jay County Sheriff  
HINKLE, RACSTER & SCHEMENAUR Attorneys for Plaintiff  
121 W. High Street  
Portland, IN 47371  
260-726-8104

CR 1-19,26,2-2-2024 - HSPAXLP

## 250 PUBLIC NOTICE

### Public Notice

STATE OF INDIANA  
COUNTY OF JAY, SS:  
In the Matter of the  
Unsupervised  
Administration  
of the Estate of:  
IN THE JAY CIRCUIT COURT  
2024 TERM  
Joan R. Bowen, Deceased  
No. 38C01-2401-EU-000003  
NOTICE OF  
ADMINISTRATION

Notice is hereby given that Fred Mann and Shirley Mann were, on the 12th day of January, 2024, appointed Personal Representatives of the estate of Joan R. Bowen deceased, who died on December 22, 2023.

All persons who have claims against this estate, whether or not now due, must file the claim in the office of the Clerk of this Court within three (3) months from the date of the first publication of this notice, or within nine (9) months after the decedent's death, whichever is earlier, or the claims will be forever barred.

Dated at Portland, Indiana, this 15th day of January, 2024.

HINKLE, RACSTER &  
SCHEMENAUR  
121 W. High Street  
Portland, IN 47371  
Attorney  
Jon Eads

Clerk of the Circuit Court,  
For Jay County, Indiana  
CR 1-19,26-2024 - HSPAXLP

## 250 PUBLIC NOTICE

### Public Notice

STATE OF INDIANA  
COUNTY OF JAY, SS:  
AMANDA BARGER  
VS.  
HAROLD PAYNE  
IN THE JAY SUPERIOR  
COURT  
CAUSE NO.  
38D01-2303-CT-000005  
SUMMONS - SERVICE BY  
PUBLICATION  
NOTICE OF SUIT

The State of Indiana to the Defendant(s) above named, and any other person who may be concerned:

You are hereby notified that Harold Payne is being sued by Amanda Barger, in Jay Superior Court, State of Indiana. The title of the case as shown by the complaint is Amanda Barger vs. Harold Payne, Cause No. 38D01-2303-CT-000005.

The nature of the suit is a civil action wherein Plaintiff has filed a Complaint for Damages demanding judgment for personal injuries and damages as a result of an incident which occurred on September 29, 2021. This summons by publication and notice is specifically directed to the defendant, Harold Payne, whose whereabouts are unknown.

You must answer or otherwise respond to the complaint in writing, by you or your attorney, on or before the 8th day of February, 2024 (the same being within thirty (30) days after the publication of the third Notice of Suit, the last such notice of this action), and in case you fail to do so, judgment by default may be entered against you for the relief demanded by the Plaintiffs in the complaint. If you have a claim for relief against the Plaintiff arising out of this occurrence that is the subject matter of the Plaintiff's claims, you must assert it in your written answer. The name and address of the attorneys representing Plaintiff: Ken Nunn Law Office, 104 Franklin Road, Bloomington, Indiana 47404.

Ryan D. Etter, #27832-49  
KEN NUNN LAW OFFICE  
104 South Franklin Road  
Bloomington, IN 47404  
Phone: (812) 332-9451  
Fax: (812) 331-5321  
E-mail: ryane@kennunn.com  
ATTEST: Jon Eads  
Clerk of the Jay Superior Court  
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# Sports

## Line Drives



## Lions fans finally taste success

By CHRIS SCHANZ  
Special to The Commercial Review

“Act like you’ve been there before.”

It’s often the rebuttal to when a player over-celebrates a play, an overall performance or a victory.

Batter hits a home run and shows up the pitcher? Act like you’ve been there before.

Shooter makes a game-winning 3-pointer as time expires and frantically jumps around in excitement? Act like you’ve been there before.

But what if you’ve never actually been there before?

As a Detroit sports fan, I’ve had the pleasure of celebrating league championships five times. The Red Wings won the Stanley Cup in 1997, ‘98, 2002 and ‘08. The Pistons — let’s not talk about this year’s team, please — beat Kobe, Shaq and the Lakers in 2004.

The Tigers, though not my favorite baseball team, won the World Series in 1984, the year before I was born. I’ve celebrated two World Series wins when the Atlanta Braves, my actual team, won in 1995 and 2021.

The Lions, on the other hand, are one of four teams — the Browns, Jaguars and Texans being the others — to never make the Super Bowl.

(Worth noting, the Lions won four NFL championships before the AFL-NFL merger in 1935, ‘52, ‘53 and ‘57.)

Year in and year out, the mantra every September has been “This is our year!” This is the year the Lions won’t stink. Every season we’re drinking the Kool-Aid, hopeful to dig ourselves out of the bottom of the division and conference.

But by Thanksgiving, reality has all but set in and Detroit is generally without much reason to play; no division title, no playoffs and, obviously, no Super Bowl.

See Line Drives page 7



Photos provided

## Senior signings

Two Fort Recovery High School seniors signed their national letters of intent to further their volleyball careers on Jan. 12. Teigen Fortkamp will be joining the St. Francis Cougars to play with her older sister Paige, while Cali Wendel signed to play for the Edison State Chargers. Pictured at top in the front row from left are father Brian Fortkamp, Teigen and mother Susie Fortkamp. Back row is brother Crew Fortkamp, FRHS coach Travis Guggenbiller and sister Paige Fortkamp. Pictured on bottom in the front are mother Jodi Wendel, Cali and father Jeff Wendel with coach Guggenbiller behind.



## Jim Irsay suffered OD last month

By JAMI GANZ

New York Daily News  
Tribune News Service

Indianapolis Colts owner Jim Irsay is believed to have suffered an overdose early last month when local authorities found him unresponsive.

The 64-year-old businessman, who spoke candidly the month prior about battling addictions to alcohol and pain pills, was struggling to breathe and had a weak pulse when Carmel (Ind.) Police found him in his bed at around 4:30 a.m. local time on Dec. 8, according to documents obtained by TMZ Sports.

Authorities responded to the residence after they were called about an unconscious Irsay being found on the bathroom floor, at which time, his skin was said to be blue, the outlet reports.

“He responded slightly” after he was given a dosage of Narcan, which “rapidly reverses an opioid overdose,” per the

### Colts owner found unresponsive in early December

National Institute on Drug Abuse. The drug was administered after authorities tried other methods to rouse Irsay, including an unsuccessful sternum rub.

Paramedics then “took over lifesaving efforts,” before an ambulance transported Irsay to the hospital, per TMZ.

“At this time, it is unknown what Mr. Irsay had ingested prior to our arrival,” officers reportedly wrote in the documents, after a caretaker detailed Irsay’s medications. Authorities classified the incident as an

“overdose” as well as “overdose/poisoning,” according to TMZ.

In a November episode of HBO’s “Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel,” the self-described “rich, white billionaire” opened up about struggling with substance abuse, which landed him in rehab no less than 15 times. He also spoke about a previous overdose.

“I was trying to detox myself and I mixed multiple drugs that I didn’t know anything about and so all of a sudden I started slurring my words and then

code blue, I stopped breathing,” recalled Irsay. “And they revived me, and the doctor goes, ‘Jim, you’re one lucky man because I had signed, virtually, the death certificate.’”

News of Irsay’s suspected overdose comes after the Colts announced in a statement last week that he was “being treated for a severe respiratory illness” and, as a result, would have to forego a previously scheduled appearance, TMZ Sports reported at the time.

“While this unfortunately means he won’t be able to perform with his band this week in Los Angeles, he is receiving excellent care and looks forward to returning to the stage as soon as possible,” said the team, referencing the Jim Irsay Band, for which he is the frontman. “We’ll have no additional information at this time and we ask that you respect the privacy of Jim and his family as he recovers.”

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