

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

Roof, HVAC projects move forward

By RAY COONEY

The Commercial Review

An HVAC project and a roof project are moving forward.

Jay School Board on Monday awarded bids for work to replace the heating, ventilation and cooling system for a section of West Jay Elementary School and for the replacement of two sections of roof at Jay County Junior-Senior High School.

The HVAC system that services the northeast wing of West Jay has experienced various maintenance issues during the current school year, which led the board to approve seeking bids last month. The project received bids from Project Design and Piping and Current Mechanical, both of Fort Wayne.

School board members Ron Laux, Donna Geesaman, Phil Ford, Vickie Reitz, Jason Phillips, Marcie Vormohr and Chip Phillips awarded the work to Project Design and Piping, which had the lower overall bid of \$570,300.

They also reviewed two bids for replacing about 37,026 square feet at the east corner of the junior-senior high school over the band and choir rooms, auditorium and adjacent classrooms and 21,879 square feet at the west corner of the building including the vocational and agriculture area. That work also received two bids — from McGuff Roofing of Muncie and Landmark Roofing of Fort Wayne.

The board awarded the project to Landmark at a cost of \$373,986.

The HVAC project will be paid for out of federal coronavirus relief funds from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund, with the roof project to be paid from the corporation's operations fund.

Board members also briefly discussed ongoing efforts to maintain facilities, with superintendent Jeremy Guley noting that architectural and engineering firm Barton Coe Vilamaa is in the process of an overall facilities study to make recommendations for future needs.

See **Projects** page 2

Rehab complete



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Walt Schwieterman of rural Portland works out on the exercise equipment Feb. 7 at the new cardiopulmonary rehabilitation center at IU Health Jay. The new facility, for which plans were first announced in December 2020, opened last month and will celebrate with an open house from 2 to 4 p.m. Thursday.

IU Health Jay's long-awaited new cardiopulmonary rehabilitation center will hold open house Thursday

By RAY COONEY

The Commercial Review

The process took years longer than expected, but now patients who need cardiac or pulmonary outpatient rehabilitation have a new space.

IU Health Jay opened its new cardiopulmonary rehabilitation

center last month and will hold an open house from 2 to 4 p.m. Thursday.

Those attending the open house should use entrance B, take the elevator to the second floor and follow signs to the new facility.

The new facility is part of a

larger renovation project first announced in late 2020. Construction was initially expected to be complete in 2021, but long delays because of the coronavirus pandemic and supply chain issues pushed the timeline back significantly.

"It's very rewarding," said

nurse Tammy Muhlenkamp, manager of the cardiopulmonary rehabilitation center. The new facility opened Jan. 15. "It's been a long time coming, but we're very pleased with the space and the patients seem happy about the way it's laid out."

See **Rehab** page 2

Pennville seeks funds for park

By BAILEY CLINE

The Commercial Review

Pennville is seeking funds to make several improvements to its park.

Tanner McClain of Pennville Park Board request-

ed a \$35,000 match Monday from Jay County Commissioners for the town's park revitalization project.

The park board's plan is separated into three phases, with the first aimed at

removing the park's baseball diamond and converting it into three soccer fields as well as renovating basketball courts on the north side of the park and installing a pump track.

The total cost to complete phase one of the plan comes to \$100,800. Pennville Park Board is looking into an agreement with the Indiana Housing and Community Development

Authority and Patronicity, a crowdfunding business that would match up to \$50,000 toward the project for a \$2,500 administration fee.

See **Funds** page 5

House will come down

By RAY COONEY

The Commercial Review

DUNKIRK — The caretaker's house in Dunkirk City Park will come down.

Dunkirk City Council on Monday approved spending an estimated \$4,500 to help pay to remove the house.

Eva Kreps of Dunkirk Park Board visited council to ask about sharing the cost of the project. She noted the cost to take down the house is \$3,000. An additional \$2,500 is needed for asbestos remediation. The remainder of the estimated \$9,000 total cost will go toward dumpsters to have the debris hauled away.

City council members Jesse Bivens, Christy Curts, Dan Watson and Randy Murphy, absent Donna Revolt, unanimously approved splitting the cost with the park board.

Also Monday, the board OK'd a \$1,000 sponsorship for an event on April 8 for the solar eclipse.

Dru Hall, who is helping to organize the event, said plans call for activities from noon to 5 p.m. at Webster Depot Park, with the band Lost in Reality to play beginning at 1 p.m. Local service clubs have been invited to have booths at the event.

Hall will have commemorative shirts and glasses for sale. He said proceeds from the event will go toward the Glass Days festival.

Dunkirk Mayor Jack Robbins noted that use of the park will need to be approved by the park board.

Council members also approved a payment of \$8,760 to Culy Construction of Winchester for work to fix a water leak on Commerce Street at the for-

mer fire station. Robbins noted that the issue was caused when a fire hydrant was opened and closed too quickly by workers from Miller Pipeline. He said Miller Pipeline will be reimbursing the city for the expense.

Robbins also reported that some of the paving work being paid for via an Indiana Department of Transportation Community Crossings grant will begin soon. That will include adding to the trails in Dunkirk City Park and paving Broad Street between Grand Street and Moore Avenue as well as Washington Street from the railroad tracks west to Indiana Street. (Paving of streets in Quincy Place will wait until after the end of the school year to avoid congestion around nearby West Jay Elementary School.)

See **Dunkirk** page 5



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Scriabin solo

Jay County High School freshman Caleb Garringer performs "Romance" by Alexander Scriabin during Sunday's Winter Pops Concert.

Deaths

Neil Medler, 92, Portland
 Cathleen Plodzien, 75, Portland
 Details on page 2.

Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 43 degrees Monday. The low was 28.
 Tonight's forecast calls for a low in the mid 30s. Rain is expected Thursday morning with breezy conditions. The high will be in the upper 40s.
 See page 2 for an extended outlook.

Correction

A candidate was inadvertently omitted from Saturday's story regarding election filing. James Phillips of Redkey filed to run for the Democrats' nomination for District 33 State Representative. He will face rural Blackford County resident John Bartlett in the primary.

Coming up

Thursday — Preview of the JCHS wrestlers at the IHSAA state finals.

Friday — Coverage of this week's Portland Board of Aviation meeting.



Rehab ...

Continued from page 1
“And we have the opportunity for growth here as well.”
The program through what was then Jay County Hospital started with just cardiac rehab located at the former Vormohr Medical Center on county road 100 South. It had since moved with supervising physician Jerry Whetzel to IU Health Jay Family Medicine on the hospital campus and over the years added pulmonary rehabilitation and supervised exercise for patients with peripheral artery disease. (The program is building toward offering supervised exercise for patients with chronic illnesses.)
The move to IU Health Jay has more than doubled the size of the cardiopulmonary rehabilitation center with addition-

al room for growth if needed. It also allows more flexibility as previously its availability was tied to when IU Health Jay Family Medicine was open.
“Here we’re able to expand our hours a little bit if needed,” said Muhlenkamp. “With having our code team on site, we have emergency personnel on-site. So it does make it more convenient for us and our patients.”
The expanded space — at about 3,500 square feet it is more than double its previous size — is designed specifically for cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation. (The former unit was located in what was previously Dr. Stephen Myron’s office.)
Modeled after the cardiopulmonary unit at IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital in Muncie,

it has more of an open concept. There are bicycles and treadmills — a few more than previously offered — for aerobic exercise as well as a short track for walking and testing. Added to the new facility is equipment for resistance training.
Patient Walt Schwieterman said he finds the new space to be brighter and more inviting.
“I think it’s beautiful, I really do,” he said while riding the bike during a rehabilitation session last week. “When I came in here, it really impressed me.”
Muhlenkamp explained that the goal is to manage chronic diseases for patients through exercise.
For cardiac patients, that means exercising with a heart monitor to improve condition-

ing. Pulmonary patients will be monitored for oxygen saturation and blood pressure.
Patients are also provided with education about managing their risk factors.
“Heart disease is one of the main causes of death in the United States and worldwide,” said Muhlenkamp. “So if we can educate our patients, help rehabilitate ... that’s a big win for everybody.”
“If we can help patients to exercise and build their strength overall, it can improve quality of life.”
IU Health Jay’s cardiopulmonary rehabilitation center is regularly staffed by a nurse and exercise physiologist. They also work with an interdisciplinary team, including a dietician, social worker and respiratory therapist, to provide other services that a patient might need.
Construction of the new facility was paid for with part of the \$5 million IU Health contributed to a capital improvement fund at the time of Jay County Hospital’s integration into the larger healthcare organization. Jay County Hospital Board, which became the IU Health Jay Board for three years before being dissolved, was in charge of allocating those dollars. In addition to the cardiopulmonary rehabilitation center, it selected creating new spaces for outpatient physical therapy and outpatient behavioral health as well as the expansion of the Family First practice. Leftover funds were used to establish the IU Health Jay Hospital Legacy Endowment Fund through The Portland Foundation.

CR almanac

Thursday 2/15	Friday 2/16	Saturday 2/17	Sunday 2/18	Monday 2/19
47/25	36/22	28/19	38/27	45/32
There’s a 70% chance of rain on Thursday morning. The low at night may hit the mid to upper 20s.	There’s a 20% chance of snow on Friday, when the high will be around 36 degrees.	Another low chance of snow on Saturday. Otherwise, mostly sunny, with a high of 28 degrees.	Sunny skies are on the horizon for Sunday, when the low will hit the mid to upper 20s.	Monday looks to be mostly sunny with a high of 45 degrees.

Lotteries

Powerball Monday 17-36-43-54-67 Power Ball: 14 Power Play: 2 Estimated jackpot: \$285 million	Daily Four: 8-4-4-6 Quick Draw: 2-5-9-19-26-31-33-36-38-41-42-47-50-51-52-56-57-58-66-72 Cash 5: 13-22-23-30-36 Estimated jackpot: \$493,500
Mega Millions Estimated jackpot: \$425 million	Ohio Monday Midday Pick 3: 1-6-0 Pick 4: 8-7-8-1 Pick 5: 1-5-9-5-3 Evening Pick 3: 5-3-4 Pick 4: 3-4-9-9 Pick 5: 6-6-8-0-2 Rolling Cash: 4-5-20-30-34 Estimated jackpot: \$333,000
Hoosier Monday Midday Daily Three: 8-5-8 Daily Four: 1-3-4-6 Quick Draw: 10-12-15-19-20-21-22-24-25-32-36-41-43-55-56-59-60-61-64-67 Evening Daily Three: 3-3-7	

Markets

Cooper Farms Fort Recovery Corn.....4.33 March corn.....4.33 Wheat.....4.67	March beans11.69 Wheat 5.57
POET Biorefining Portland Corn.....4.33 March corn.....4.35 April corn.....4.38	ADM Montpelier Corn.....4.16 March corn.....4.18 Beans.....11.71 March beans.....11.74 Wheat.....5.57
The Andersons Richland Township Corn.....4.23 March corn.....4.23 Beans.....11.69	Heartland St. Anthony Corn.....4.31 March corn.....4.39 Beans.....11.50 March beans.....11.03 Wheat.....5.27

Today in history

In 1779, Captain James Cook was killed in a dispute over a theft. Cook was known for his three Pacific voyages that included the first European contact with the eastern coast of Australia and the Hawaiian Islands.
In 1876, Alexander Graham Bell applied for a patent for the telephone.
In 1973, Steve McNair was born in Mount Olive, Mississippi. He rose to fame as the quarterback for Alcorn State University and shared the 2006 NFL MVP Award with Peyton Manning.
In 2004, Sarah Miller of Jay County finished her diving career with a sixth-place finish at the IHSAA Girls Swimming and Diving State Finals at Indiana University Natatorium.
In 2022, Jay County Election Board removed Brenda Beatty from the ballot for Jay County Council District 1, upholding a challenge filed by Jay County Republican chair Jenae Blasdel.
—The CR

Citizen’s calendar

Today 4 p.m. — Portland Board of Aviation, airport, 661 W. 100 North. 6 p.m. — Pennville Town Council executive session, town hall, 105 N. Washington St.	Council, park cabin, 50 S. Mooney St. 6 p.m. — Jay County Board of Zoning Appeals, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland.
Thursday 6 p.m. — Redkey Town	Monday 7:30 p.m. — Fort Recovery Village Council, village hall, 201 S. Main St.

Obituaries

Neil Medler

Oct. 25, 1931-Feb. 11, 2024
Frederic Neil Medler, age 92, of Portland, Indiana, died Feb. 11, 2024. He was born Oct. 25, 1931, in Hartford City, Indiana, to George and Deloris Medler. They moved to Portland in 1934 where his father was the manager of the new Portland Coal and Ice Company. As a very young boy, “Neil” helped deliver ice and coal throughout Portland and Jay County.
In 1944 his father opened a fuel oil, gasoline, coal and appliance store at the site of the “Totten” building, which evolved into Medler’s Furniture. Neil was a 1949 graduate of Portland High School and was a member of the 1946 undefeated, untied and unscored upon football team. He was noted for his football toughness and earned the name “Meatnose” for his hard-nosed play. He was also a member of the 1948 Portland Panther semi-state finalist basketball team.
He married Ann McKinley on Dec. 10, 1950, and she preceded him in death in December 2003. They have three sons, Michael Medler (wife: Sue), Pat Medler (wife: Paula) and Dr. George Medler (wife: Rhonda); eight grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren; as well as several nieces and nephews.
“Neil” was a Portland city councilman for 24 years, and served as both council president and interim mayor. He was involved in the development of Portland Industrial Park to include helping to bring Alphabet, FCC and Tyson Foods to Portland. He was a member of the Portland Park Board for 40 years and was proud of the development of the park system to include North Park and Hudson Family Park. He served as president and treasurer of the



Medler

Portland Lions Club and was a board member of Main Source Bank and the Portland Area Chamber of Commerce. He was volunteer treasurer for Asbury United Methodist Church for 20 years, head usher for 40 years and a member of the church for 75 years. He served as the longtime treasurer of the Portland Alumni Association, as well as a Jay School Corporation trustee. Neil was a nominee for the 2015 Jay County Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement Award and received the Cincinnatus Club Lifetime Achievement Award. He was honored by the Boy Scouts with an appreciation award in October 2023 for his dedication to community service. He worked in the family business at Medler’s Furniture for over 72 years. He was also an avid golfer and sports enthusiast, and loved to play the piano, the harmonica and write poetry.
On June 15, 2005, Neil married Judith-James Toms, who survives, and started another chapter in his life. He became the new stepfather to Amy Henderson (Craig) Angela Kyle (Jay) and Craig Toms (Tamara) and had six step-grandchildren; one step-nephew; a brother-in-law, Ed James; and a sister-in-law Mary Lou James Kravitz. Neil and Judy remained active in Portland and the surrounding area by attending various events.
Private family services will be in the Baird-Freeman Funeral Home with Pastor Joe Boggs presiding. Burial in the Green Park Cemetery in Portland.
Memorials can be made to The Portland Foundation, Asbury United Methodist Church or choice of the donor.
Condolences may be expressed at bairdfreeman.com.

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Cathleen Plodzien

Oct. 26, 1948-Feb. 11, 2024
Cathleen Marie Plodzien, age 75,

of Portland and formerly of Crystal Lake, Illinois, passed away on Sunday, Feb. 11, 2024, at IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital in Muncie.

She was born on Oct. 26, 1948, in Plodzien Green Bay, Wisconsin, the daughter of Fred and Aden (Hart) Kittredge.

Cathleen was retired as a benefits manager for Power Conversion Products and also worked for Nunda Township in Crystal Lake. She was a member of Phi Theta Kappa sorority and enjoyed working with stained glass, antiques, books, animals and nature. She was a selfless person and loved helping others.

Surviving are a son, Michael Plodzien (wife: Monica) of Portland; brother Todd Plodzien (wife: Chris) of McHenry, Illinois; two sisters, Debby Kittridge of Dickenson, Texas, and Cindy Bonaccorsi of San Antonio, Texas; five grandchildren, Noah, Sydney, Christian, Alexa and Liam; and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by a daughter, Kimberly Plodzien.

A celebration of life service will be held at a later date in Crystal Lake, Illinois.

Baird-Freeman Funeral Home of Portland is handling the arrangements.

Condolences may be expressed at bairdfreeman.com.

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.

Projects ...

Continued from page 1
Also approved Monday was the purchase of a new bus from Kerlin Bus sales and leasing for \$163,432 to replace a current bus that was purchased in 2011.
In other business, the board:
•Heard a presentation from director of e-learning Katie Clark regarding the New Teacher Academy at Jay Schools.
See Projects page 5

SERVICES

Wednesday
Gilbert, James: 7 p.m., Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland.

Thursday
Obringer, Carolyn: 10:30 a.m., St. Peter Catholic Church, 1477 Philothea Road, Fort Recovery.

Friday
Link, Mary: 10 a.m., Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, 506 E. Walnut St., Portland.

March 2
Meier, Nancy: 4:30 p.m., Kuhn’s Den, 442 E. Line St., Geneva.

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Holcomb signs 1st bills of 2024

By WHITNEY DOWNARD

Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com

Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb signed the first bill to hit his desk in the 2024 legislative session: one further eroding wetlands protections by redefining certain, protected wetlands to a less regulated class.

The bill, House Enrolled Act 1383, goes into effect July 1.

Indiana's wetlands are grouped into three tiers by the state. Only the highest ranked Class III wetlands receive full protections. Class II wetlands have fewer protections, and Class I has none. That system went into effect in 2022. The 2024 bill would redefine select Class III wetlands as Class II.

Builders and developers roundly applauded the new measure, saying it would reduce costs and prevent permitting delays. Environmental advocates decried the measure for endangering state's wetlands.

The Hoosier Environmental Council contends that — since the 2022 law took effect — 75% of the wetland acres impacted by construction have been lost with no mitigation or replacement of their lost function.

Compounding that loss of wetland protections, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 2023 that federal protections for wetlands under the Clean Water Act only apply to those with a continuous surface connection to federally protected waterways that make them "indistinguishable" from those waters.

Environmental groups and experts note that wetlands are vital for soaking up excess nutrients in soil — especially elements like nitrogen and phosphorus, which are common ingredients in fertilizer that can leach from farmland — and preventing them from creating problems elsewhere.

Wetlands also catch and hold excess stormwater, reducing flooding on that landscape. Additionally, they help cleanse underground aquifers. That's important, given that about 70% of Indiana residents rely on groundwater for at least part of their drinking water supply, according to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management.

Funds ...

Continued from page 1

(The partnership is a part of the CreatINg Places program available through the state for various projects, such as those related to playgrounds, public plaza development, park creation or improvements, bike and pedestrian pathways and public space enhancements.) Plans are also to apply for a \$10,000 grant through Church of Brethren, which McClain noted hosts a church in the park program throughout the summer.

So far, the park board has raised \$35,530.43 in less than a year. Approximately \$5,000 of that amount has been spent on architectural fees.

Phase two of the project would include making renovations to the community pavilion, establishing pedestrian walks, building picnic shelters, renovating concessions and restrooms, developing play areas for children and plaza spaces, connecting Broadway Street to the park on the eastern edge of town and adding street parking. The park board's hopes for phase three would involve developing a splash pad or other water-related amenity, such as installing bubblers and jets or a rock water wall and pool.

Commissioners all spoke in support of the project.

"I think this is ideally the projects we like to see," said commissioners president Chad Aker. "You guys are making the effort, you guys have put in countless hours doing this, you're getting community buy-in in this, you guys are raising these funds ... you guys are doing everything that we want to see."

He suggested Pennville Park Board approach Jay County Council — it meets next at 6 p.m. Feb. 21 — to request release of the funds.

Also Monday, commissioners gave Sheriff Ray Newton permission to purchase a \$1,795 shock band and \$1,695 sound shield from APB Consulting Solutions of Nicholasville, Kentucky.

Newton explained Jay County Jail has been utilizing shock gloves from the same company as an alternative to using tasers on violent inmates. He noted \$2,500 in damages in the last year sustained on a county van by inmates, as well as another \$1,000 in damages in one of the jail cells. The ankle band is remote-controlled and is



intended to keep officers safe in altercations, he explained.

"It's happening a lot where these inmates are getting combative, and correction officers need more tools instead of using a taser," said Newton.

Commissioners approved the purchase with Brian McGalliard abstaining, saying he would like to do more research on the equipment.

Also, commissioners allotted \$1,500 to mail information about broadband speed tests to all county residents.

Jay County Purdue Extension Office director Allison Keen explained the county has one month left to gather data and update the Federal Communications Commission's broadband availability map. Aker noted the county's \$3.9 million commitment toward a project to bring nearly 400 miles of fiberoptic broadband to Jay County. The project will target households or businesses designated as unserved or underserved per the FCC's speed standards.

Residents may visit broadbandmap.fcc.gov to ensure the information about broadband availability — location and speed — is correct for their address. The website also includes links to challenge that information. (Speed tests may be conducted at connectingindiana.com.)

Commissioners also OK'd, with McGalliard dissenting, Jay County Development Corporation to renew a one-year agreement with the Yodel calendar website for \$4,800. Per commissioner Rex Journey's motion, the decision is subject to creating a marketing plan for the website moving forward.

In other business, commissioners:

- OK'd treasurer Paula Miller to enter into a nearly \$6,000 agreement with L and D Mail Masters for tax bill mailings. Miller noted 63 counties in Indiana utilize the out-of-house service, and commissioners approved the agreement subject to county attorney Wes Schemenaur's review of the contract.

- Approved a decision to increase Loblolly watershed fees by 25%, or from \$2 to \$2.50 an acre and from \$20 to \$25 a plot. It will be effective in May.

- Granted right-of-way access for electricity work along portions of county roads 500 North, 550 East, 650 East, 700 East and 300 North.

- Heard a request from adjoining property owners Randy Fisher and Greg Bailey to vacate the portion of Second Street between county road 200 South and Ruth Street in rural Portland.

- OK'd LifeStream Services' purchase of four new buses for

\$473,780. (The program is mainly funded by dollars from the state.)

- OK'd assessor Robin Albersson to switch a 2015 Ford Explorer used by Jay County Sheriff's Office over to her department. The vehicle has just over \$149,000 miles on it. Newton originally planned to trade in the vehicle.

- Approved claims, including \$111,582.80 for the new Stryker Power Cot at Jay Emergency Medical Service.

- Agreed to move the April 22, Oct. 14 and Oct 28 meetings to 5 p.m. in Jay County Courthouse auditorium instead of the usual 9 a.m. time. The decision was made to avoid scheduling conflicts with early voting, which will be available in the auditorium beginning April 9.

- OK'd paying a \$958.21 garnishment order. First deputy clerk Missy Elliott explained the wrong case number had been issued on the order and the refund had been issued to the wrong individual. Elliott noted after several attempts to contact the man, he spoke with the clerk's office and agreed to pay back the money in \$100 increments. Commissioners will be reimbursed for the funds as they are paid back.

- Gave permission to Newton and new highway superintendent Bob Howell to apply for new county credit cards.

Dunkirk ...

Continued from page 1

In other business, council:

- Agreed to advertise an additional appropriation of \$14,000 for equipment to fill new self-contained breathing apparatus. The new air tanks that were purchased are in use and were paid for via an Assistance to Firefighters Grant through the Federal Emergency Management Agency which was a partnership of all of the county's fire departments.

- Heard from Robbins that he has a contract from engineering firm Jones & Henry of Fort Wayne for a process to fix a phosphorus issue at the city's wastewater plant. He said he will have city attorney Wes Schemenaur review the contract before bringing it back to council for approval.

- Rescinded approval of \$8,536 to purchase chlorine monitors from BL Ander-

son and approved purchasing the equipment from USABlueBook for \$2,728.82.

- Heard from Murphy that new street signs have been ordered for the library/glass museum.

- Tabled an ordinance on policies for making cuts in streets and the subsequent repairs for further review.

- Heard a plug from a representative of Arts Place's performance committee regarding Friday's Gabriel Royal concert. The cellist and vocalist will perform at 7 p.m. Friday at Arts Place in Portland.

- Approved paying claims totaling \$340,886.99 and spending \$60 per month for new email accounts for council members.

- Heard they received thank you notes from Youth Service Bureau and Secret Families Christmas Charity of Jay County for their sponsorships.

Projects ...

Continued from page 5

The program is designed to help teachers who are new to the corporation — there are 16 this year — and involves assigning them a mentor who they meet with regularly. Funded through a Digital Learning Grant, the academy also provides information on various topics. So far this year those have included orientation, Skyward, Google Tools, generative artificial intelligence, e-learning, classroom management strategies, blended and online learning, Indiana Learning Lab (professional development) and professional growth/

- Approved the following: leaves of absence for art teacher Heather Keller, special education teacher Lauren Hemmelgarn, fifth grade teacher Taylor Schwarck and second grade teacher Kim Hyatt; extracurricular assignments include Carissa Allred as high school girls golf coach; two bus use requests from Fellowship Baptist Church Youth Group; various policy updates including mandatory curriculum, adjunct teachers and fee; an exclusive sports medicine sponsorship agreement with Indiana University Health for \$15,000 annually; the assessment of the corporation's wellness

plan, which shows goals to be met with the exception of the areas of nutrition education and physical activity, both of which are being "partially met"; and canceled four checks that were outstanding for more than two years at a total of \$6,658.13.

- Accepted the resignations of Redkey Elementary School special education resource teacher Mallory Bost, Redkey/West Jay elementary physical education/technology instructor Maggie Pryor and preschool nurse Amanda May.

- Heard from Jay County Council member Cindy Bracy about the county's recent commitment of matching funds for a grant application to extend nearly 400 miles of fiberoptic internet lines in the county. She asked that the board think about the possibility of contributing toward the needed \$3.9 million in local match dollars, noting that the expanded internet connectivity will be a benefit to the school corporation and its students.

- Accepted a federal Title II, Part A grant of \$148,015.59, a federal Title IV, Part A grant of \$84,217.35 and a donation of \$500 from Kroger through Peyton's Northern Distribution Center of Bluffton.

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THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane
"Another thing we have in common, Daddy - we both have the same Valentine - Mommy!"

Peanuts
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT WHY YOU DIDN'T GET ANY VALENTINES, BIG BROTHER. I THINK I'VE FIGURED IT OUT... YOU DIDN'T GET ANY VALENTINES BECAUSE NO ONE SENT YOU ANY! MAY YOUR CHOCOLATE CREAMS ALL MELT IN THE BOX!

Rose is Rose
YOU KNOW HOW THIS IS GOING TO END, ABBY. YES, ONE OF THEM WILL LOSE A GLOVE... AND THE OTHER ONE WILL GET SNOW IN HIS BOOT.

Agnes
WE HAVE TO GET THE LOVE POTION BACK FROM BOB! HE WILL TRY TO PLY ME WITH IT! HE'LL SOMEHOW SNEAK LOVE BOLOGNA INTO MY SYSTEM AND MAKE ME HIS FOREVER!! I'M TOO YOUNG FOR COMMITMENT!! I NEED MY SPACE! I CAN COMMIT UNTIL FRIDAY. TELL HIM TO GIVE IT TO ME.

Hi and Lois
WHAT DO YOU GIVE TO THE WOMAN WHO HAS IT ALL? A VALENTINE'S DAY HUG. THAT'S ALL I NEED.

Between Friends
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH ME TAKING STEVE TO DINNER TO THANK HIM FOR HELPING ME. SO OUR RELATIONSHIP DIDN'T WORK OUT... WE DON'T HATE EACH OTHER OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT. WHY CAN'T WE MAINTAIN A CORDIAL, RESPECTFUL, PLATONIC FRIENDSHIP? WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THIS DRESS FOR DINNER?

Blondie
I DAGWOOD, COME SEE YOUR BIG VALENTINE'S DAY SURPRISE!! IT'S YOUR FAVORITE SANDWICH, (AND I WROTE 'I O U I N' STEAK SAUCE! DID I JUST SEE DADDY CRYING? HE SAID HIS ALLERGIES WERE ACTING UP AGAIN. HEV, COOL SANDWICH!

Snuffy Smith
WHATTA YOU AN' FER VALENTINE'S DAY, SNUFFY? OH, JUST TH' USUAL !! TRYIN' T' PICK TH' BEST CHOCKLITS OUTTA TH' BOX 'FORE TH' OTHER ONE GIT'S 'EM !!

Beetle Bailey
NO MAN IS PERFECT BUT YOU CAN ALWAYS TRY TO FIX THEIR FLAWS. SOME GUYS NEED A MAJOR OVERHAUL.

Contract Bridge By Steve Becker
A built-in booby trap
South dealer. Both sides vulnerable. NORTH: 8 6 2, Q 9 8, K 8, A J 7 5 2. WEST: K 7 4 3, 5, 10 7 6 5 2, 8 4 3. EAST: J 10 9, 6 4, A Q 9 4, K Q 10 6. SOUTH: A Q 5, A K J 10 7 3 2, J 3, 9.

2-14 CRYPTOQUIP
EQFE ZLUIH-ZWFHE JDY HINDEIY
EQI RQGOI VHIIJ FOUQFXIE
DA WIHI ZINGAYZ RDEQGLE
WDZZDAV F XIEF.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: ASPIRING DOCTOR IN SCHOOL WHO WAS GIVEN A LONG-LASTING WAVY HAIRSTYLE: A PERMED PREMED. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Z equals S

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer
ACROSS: 1 Slugger Aaron, 5 LAPD alert, 8 "Hey!", 12 Downwind, 13 Born abroad?, 14 Highly rated, 15 Mathematician and computer pioneer, 17 Iranian money, 18 Oolong brewer, 19 Kind of benefit, 21 - Paulo, 22 Navy commando, 23 Crunchy sandwich, 26 2500, in Roman numerals, 28 Snapshot, 31 Actress Hatcher, 33 "Outta here!", 35 "Frozen" reindeer.
DOWN: 36 Place for sweat-ers?, 38 "What-ever", 40 Rock's Brian, 41 Salingier, 43 Young lion, 45 Boston athlete, 47 Nebraska tribe members, 51 Slender woodwind, 52 Old "romance at sea", 54 Volcanic flow, 55 Broad st., 56 To be, in Toulon, 57 Kept tabs on, 58 Sailor, 59 Leak out slowly, 7 Song from "Kiss Me Kate", 10 Hose woe, 11 Far (Pref.), 16 Rich soil, 20 Workout unit, 23 "Dynamite" band, 24 Meadow to Juliet, 27 Rep.'s rival, 29 Hamilton bill, 30 Yoko of music, 32 Rather, 34 Salvage, 37 Paris pal, 39 Actor Cronyn, 42 Brilliance, 44 Innocents or Nat, 46 Online auction site, 48 Table d', 49 Bern's river, 50 Dance move, 53 Eggs.

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Sports



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Power lift

Jay County High School sophomore Alan Ortiz lifts Caleb Evans of Homestead off the mat during the opening-round match Saturday in the 215-pound bracket in the semi-state tournament at Allen County War Memorial Coliseum in Fort Wayne. Ortiz edged Evans 5-3 before falling by pin to eventual champion No. 18 Travis Henke of Northridge by a last-second pin in the ticket round to finish his season with a 24-9 record.

Jay likely to stay in 3A

Enrollment puts Patriots at 128th in Indiana

INDIANAPOLIS — Updated enrollment numbers were released Monday.

They project the Patriots will stay where they have been.

Indiana High School Athletic Association on Monday released enrollment totals that will be used for reclassification and realignment for the next two years. Based on those figures, it looks as if Jay County High School's athletic teams will remain in their current classes.

Enrollment numbers are used to determine classes for baseball, boys basketball, girls basketball, football, boys soccer, girls soccer, softball and volleyball. They will be in effect for the 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years.

The Patriots are expected to remain in Class 3A for all four-class sports. They would be among the top 40 in enrollment in that class out of about 100.

They look as if they will remain in Class 4A for football and continue to be one of the larger schools in Class 2A for boys soccer and girls soccer.

JCHS ranks 128th with an enrollment of 800. That's down from 118th two years ago when its enrollment was 879. (Its enrollment could stabilize as its largest classes are the freshman and sophomores with 203 and 208 while the juniors and seniors are both in the 190s.)

The IHSAA has changed its formula for the four-class sports (volleyball, boys basketball, girls basketball, softball and baseball) this year, with the top 20% in Class 4A, the next 25% in class 3A, the next 25% in Class 2A and the smallest 30% in Class 1A. Football (six classes) and soccer (three classes) are not affected and will continue as they have in previous years.

Official classifications will be announced in the spring, with tournament sectional assignments to follow in late April.

On tap

Local schedule

Thursday
Jay County — Boys swimming sectional at Jay County — 5:30 p.m.; Junior high wrestling vs. Muncie Southside — 6 p.m.
Fort Recovery — Girls basketball at New Knoxville — 6 p.m.

TV sports

Today
3 p.m. — UEFA Champions League: Real Sociedad at PSG (CBS)
6:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Michigan State at Penn State (BTN)
7 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Miami at Clemson (ESPN2)
7:30 p.m. — NBA: Chicago Bulls at Cleveland Cavaliers (ESPN); Indiana Pacers at Toronto Raptors (Bally Indiana)
7:30 p.m. — NHL: Florida Panthers at Pittsburgh Penguins (TNT)
8:15 p.m. — NASCAR Cup Series: Daytona 500 (FS1)
8:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Iowa at Maryland (BTN)
9 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Tennessee at Arkansas (ESPN2)
10 p.m. — NBA: Los Angeles Clippers at Golden State Warriors (ESPN)
10 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Utah State at Wyoming (FS1)

Thursday
5 p.m. — NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series: Fresh from Florida 250 (FS1)
6:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Northwestern at Rutgers (BTN)
7 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Temple at Florida Atlantic (ESPN2)
8:15 p.m. — NASCAR Cup Series: Bluegreen Vacations Duel at Daytona (FS1)
8 p.m. — NHL: Edmonton Oilers at St. Louis Blues (Bally Indiana)
8:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Iowa at Maryland (BTN)
8:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Minnesota at Purdue (BTN)
9 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Stanford at Washington (ESPN2); Colorado at UCLA (ESPN)
11 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Utah at USC (FS1)

Jay County slams short-handed Jets

MONROE — The Patriot girls spent most of the evening competing against each other.

The boys were also uncontested in five events.

Jay County Junior High School's swim teams obliterated the short-handed host Adams Central Jets on Monday, with the girls winning 140-5 while the boys posted a 106-35 victory.

Grady Warvel and Cooper

Glentzer each won two events to lead the Patriot boys. Warvel was first in the 50-yard freestyle with a time of 28.32 and the 100 freestyle in 1 minute, 1.85 seconds. Both of Glentzer's wins were uncontested by the Jets as he posted times of 2:09.28 in the 200 freestyle and 4:39.54 in the 400 freestyle.

Adding individual victories for the JCHS boys were Rockland Beiswanger (100 breaststroke),

Grant Glentzer (100 backstroke), Tony Beiswanger (diving), Carson Westgerdes (50 butterfly) and Raif Beiswanger (100 individual medley).

The Patriot girls had just one Adams Central opponent — Elaina Cowan — leading to mostly intrasquad competition. Maria Laux and Brooklynn Byrum led the way with two wins apiece, the former finishing the 100 IM in 1:15.22 and

the 100 freestyle in 1:02.55 while the latter posted times of 30.22 in the 50 butterfly and 1:27.26 in the 100 breaststroke.

Also picking up wins were Gabby Gibson (200 freestyle), Lila Wendel (100 backstroke), Elly Byrum (50 freestyle), Kali Wendel (400 freestyle) and Jordyn Champ (diving).

Both Patriot teams swept the relays.

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