

# The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

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## Lifetime LeMasters

### Couple honored for decades of service

By BAILEY CLINE  
The Commercial Review

Those who prefer to stay out of the spotlight can be the ones most deserving of praise.

Leland and Judy LeMaster were honored Saturday with The Spirit of Vicki Lifetime Achievement Award during the Jay County Community Awards at Spoke & Wheel Event Center.

Portland Fire Chief Mike Weitzel won Citizen of the Year, marking his second time to earn the achievement after his first award in the category for 2020. Dunkirk Mayor Jack Robbins also nabbed a second Dunkirk Community Commitment award, having previously won the accolade for 2019.

Wheel & Spoke Antique Mall won the Business of the Year Award. (Under previous ownership, the antique mall won the Innovator of the Year Award in 2017.) Joyce/Dayton Corporation was honored as the industry of the year.

Jay County Development Corporation was among the new winners this year, taking home the Not-for-profit of the Year Award and drawing a standing ovation from the crowd.

Other new faces that also received recognition Saturday at the awards sponsored by Jay County Chamber of Commerce were:

- Small Community Commitment - Pennville Community Park Board
  - Innovator of the Year - Toddertown Early Learning Center
  - Young Professional of the Year - LeeAnn Miller
  - Community Group of the Year - 2 Guys Pies
- The LeMasters earned



The Commercial Review/Bailey Cline

Leland and Judy LeMaster thank the community after receiving The Spirit of Vicki Lifetime Achievement award Saturday at the Jay County Community Awards at Spoke & Wheel Event Center in Portland. The LeMasters were honored for their years of volunteering, helping with Optimist clubs as well as launching the Mighty Marvel Optimist Club for residents with mental disabilities.

the lifetime achievement award for their time as volunteers with the Morning and Evening Optimist clubs. They also spearheaded Mighty Marvel Optimist Club, a group for local residents with mental disabilities.

"Leland and Judy have made tremendous impact in our community through their countless hours of volunteering," said chamber board president Josh Stewart while introducing them as finalists. "They tirelessly remain dedicated to the youth of Jay County. The countless hours they

have contributed to our community is priceless."

Stewart noted the LeMasters prefer to stay "behind the scenes," but he encouraged their recognition Saturday.

"Their efforts do not go unnoticed, which is why they are nominated. Your community loves you," he added.

Leland LeMaster shared his gratitude for Jay County Chamber of Commerce and the community around him. Judy LeMaster expressed thanks for receiving the award named after the late Vicki Tague,

the former Jay County Chamber of Commerce executive director who won the honor herself in 2016.

"It's truly an honor to receive this in Vicki's honor," said Judy LeMaster. "She was a great person, and Jay County is truly a place to raise your kids, and that's what we've taught ours — to give back to the community that you live in."

Weitzel, who has served as Portland's fire chief since the beginning of 2016, was voted Citizen of the Year for his volunteer efforts and leadership in

various roles. His community involvement includes work with Portland Main Street Connect and United Way of Jay County.

"Mike is an all-in, give-it-all-you-got person," said Ja-Mar TV, Appliances and Bedding owner Shauna Runkle. "He is stepping up and doing what he can in many areas of the community. He does all this because he wholeheartedly and truly cares about the people of Jay County."

Wheel & Spoke Antique Mall of Portland earned Business of the Year, having given a facelift to the

space. The business' efforts have attracted new shoppers and visitors to Portland, noted chamber board member Mark Valentine.

Joyce/Dayton took home the Industry of the Year Award. The company broke ground in April on a nearly \$9 million project, marking the 11th expansion of its manufacturing facility in Portland. Joyce/Dayton was also named to Indiana Chamber of Commerce's Best Places to Work in Manufacturing for 2023.

See **Honored** page 2

## Commissioners stand by their actions

By BAILEY CLINE  
The Commercial Review

Jay County Commissioners stand by their actions.

Their legal representative says they have followed Indiana law and intend to defend a dispute of those actions if necessary.

Commissioners heard a prepared response Monday from county attorney Wes Schemenaur to the letter The Commercial Review submitted to them May 10.

They also agreed, per Schemenaur's request, to submit the response as a letter to the editor of the newspaper. (It will run in Thursday's print edition online and has already been posted online at thecr.com.)

The Commercial Review questioned the legality of discussing the county's proposed contract with Jay County Development Corporation during an "administrative" meeting May 2. President, editor and publisher of The Commercial Review Ray Cooney sent a letter to commissioners urging them to "publicly acknowledge that discussion of the proposed contract with Jay County Development Corporation at the administrative meeting was inappropriate and constituted a violation of Indiana's

### Attorney says contract discussion was 'well within their executive and administrative function'

Open Door Law." It also urged that commissioners keep any future administrative meetings to "routine activities that are reasonably related to the everyday internal management of the county" as required by Indiana Code 5-15-1.5.5(f).

If commissioners did not do so, The Commercial Review said it would file a formal complaint against Jay County Commissioners to the Office of the Public Access Counselor. The newspaper also printed an editorial Saturday relaying that information to the public.

On Monday, Schemenaur cited Indiana Code which allows county executives to meet without a 24-hour notice if the meeting is intended for "administrative functions," which are defined in the statute as "only routine

activities that are reasonably related to the everyday internal management of the county or town, including conferring with, receiving information from, and making recommendations to staff members and other county or town officials or employees."

(The section also states "administrative functions" do not include "taking final action on public business," "the exercise of legislative powers" or "awarding of or entering into contracts, or any other action creating an obligation or otherwise binding the county or town.")

Schemenaur referred to Indiana Code 36-2-3.5-4(a), which states "all powers and duties of the county that are executive or administrative in nature shall be exercised or performed by its

executive, except to the extent that these powers and duties are expressly assigned to other elected officers." The subsection of that text, he added, includes the ability to "negotiate contracts for the county."

"This statute expressly makes the negotiation of contracts on behalf of the county an executive, or administrative, function," he said.

Schemenaur said municipal executives regularly negotiate and talk about the terms of contracts before they are brought to a public vote. He noted proposals are often amended and re-written multiple times before being brought to a public vote.

"The Open Door Law only expresses and prohibits the awarding or entering into contracts creating a binding obligation on the county in an administrative meeting," he said. "By expressly prohibiting the awarding of a contract in such a session, the legislature clearly contemplated the contracts with the county would necessarily be discussed, otherwise there would be no need to include the express prohibition on voting in the statute. Likewise, if the legislature intended to prohibit discussion of contracts in the

statute, it could have clearly done so."

Despite commissioner Rex Journay's email to Jay County Development Corporation representatives that used the word "decision," said Schemenaur, there was no vote taken on May 2 to award or deny a contract. He said discussion regarding a counterproposal to the contract with JCDC was "well within their executive and administrative function."

He compared county commissioners' roles to those of a mayor, noting they routinely negotiate contracts prior to bringing them to a vote before the appropriate body. Those preliminary discussions are not always occurring while the public is present.

"The county commissioners are no different just because there are three executives instead of one," he added.

Schemenaur also said he took issue with The Commercial Review's demands, specifically addressing Cooney. He asserted The Commercial Review should have filed a complaint with the Indiana Public Access Counselor's Office immediately instead of waiting for a response from commissioners.

See **Commissioners** page 2

#### Deaths

**Marvin Sills, 92**, Portland  
**Jeanette Grieshop, 90**, Fort Recovery  
**Bruce Paxson, 62**, Coldwater, Ohio  
Details on page 2.

#### Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 75 degrees Sunday. The low was 45.  
Rain is expected tonight with a low in the mid 50s. Wednesday's forecast calls for mostly cloudy skies with a chance of showers and a high in the lower 70s.  
See page 2 for an extended outlook.

#### In review

The Portland Foundation will hold its annual meeting at 4:30 p.m. Wednesday at John Jay Center for Learning.  
Portland Board of Works has also scheduled a meeting for 4 p.m. Wednesday in council chambers at Portland Fire Station for discussion of lease agreements for Community Resource Center.

#### Coming up

**Wednesday** — Coverage of the Jay County baseball game against Delta.  
**Thursday** — Results from the JCHS girls in the sectional track meet.  
**Friday** — Coverage of The Portland Foundation's annual meeting.





# Cherish the time spent with old friends

By JAMES FULKES

God, karma, fate, whatever.

It's a devilishly nasty business for whomever is responsible.

On Tuesday, April 30, the blessing of a social media link provided me with some rather shocking yet urgent news.

An old U.S. Navy radar air traffic controller colleague, ironically one I had just recently found and reconnected with, was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

We hadn't physically seen each other since the day we parted ways in

## Fulksy Mayhem



Philadelphia in July 1987.

Thankfully, I was able to track him down around Christmas time last year and send him a small token of my appreciation of our friendship that began 40 years ago.

The sad news came with one bright revelation. Two more of our former crew

members were going to be visiting him May 1 and 2.

Getting more than two of us to be in the same place at the same time is akin to herding cats, so I decided to drop everything and dash off in a hurry on the morning of May 1 to make the three-and-a-half-hour drive to see all three, including Dave.

I arrived a bit after 9 a.m., and for about three hours that day all of us were young again.

We all shared memories and recalled our years at sea on a massive U.S. Navy aircraft carrier together.

Dave was in good spirits, but having had friends in the past with the same diagnosis, I could sense that he was fading away.

A bit after noon, the other two who met us there all had their lives to return to, one to Atlanta via Cleveland and one to the northwestern suburbs of the greater Chicagoland metro area.

We said our goodbyes, exchanged contact information and took a few photos before I pointed the hood of the car back southward to Indiana.

I knew it would be the

last time I would ever see Dave.

I honestly thought he had a few weeks.

A mere two days passed, and as I arose on a Sunday, the message came.

Dave was gone, peacefully, surrounded by his family at home — the home I had just visited him in three days earlier.

I certainly had a few items planned for that Thursday, but now using that oh-so-clear 20/20 hindsight, I am so glad I chose the drive to Michigan that day.

Thursday through Sunday is the twinkle of an

eye, time-wise, but those three hours in Dave's living room are a treasure that is priceless beyond any amount of compensation.

Deposits into our memory bank are far exceeding in value than any deposit we will ever make in a financial institution. I found that point to be crystal clear on a beautiful sunny Michigan day in May.

Fair winds and following seas, Dave.

It was an honor to know you, serve our country together and call you friend.

# Son is a doormat to cheating, abusive wife

DEAR ABBY: Our daughter-in-law is morally corrupt, egotistical and narcissistic. For almost a year she has been blatant about having an affair and has abused and disrespected our son and two of her three daughters. She has taken innumerable vacations over the years without our son. When they are together at home, she constantly puts him down and psychologically abuses him, usually in front of his younger daughters.

She tries to meet her boyfriend whenever possible. Usually, she sends him a text and then goes "shopping." If my son is around to watch the kids, she'll just leave. If she's home, she has long phone conversations with the boyfriend, even though the children are present. The oldest daughter knows

## Dear Abby



what's happening, as she has told her dad as much. The funny thing is, his wife thinks no one knows what's going on when we all know what's going on. All we can do is encourage our son to get a lawyer. That's probably just what she wants, so she can make him the bad guy. Thanks for any suggestion you might have. — MYSTIFIED IN MINNESOTA

DEAR MYSTIFIED: I understand why, as a caring

parent, you are upset about the treatment your son has been receiving. But until he is willing to admit to himself that his marriage is irretrievably damaged, nothing will change.

Support him emotionally and tell him to talk to an attorney about what his options and responsibilities would be if he chose to divorce his wife. What's happening now is not good for his children, which is why he might want to ask for custody. He doesn't have to file papers, but it may educate him about what to do (and expect) next. The rest is up to him.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have traveled many times

with two other couples who are dear friends. My husband recently passed away, but I plan to continue traveling with them. We've traditionally split expenses such as condo and car rentals equally, with each couple paying one third.

We now have our first trip planned since my husband's passing. We're planning to rent a three-bedroom condo and a vehicle large enough to accommodate all of us and our luggage. They assumed I would pay one-third of the condo expense, since I'll have my own bedroom. I'm fine with that.

My question is regarding the rental car. We haven't discussed how we'll split the cost, but I think it would be fair to split the car five ways, since there are only five of us now. I don't want

to cause friction between us, and I'd appreciate your thoughts on how the car rental cost should be split and how I should approach discussing this. — UNCERTAIN TRAVELER

DEAR UNCERTAIN: Because your situation has changed, I don't think it would be inappropriate to raise the subject of splitting the cost of the car rental five ways. These are longtime friends, and your point is valid. Mention it the next time the trip is discussed.

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

COMPASSIONATE CONNECTIONS RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP — A group for anyone with a substance use disorder that helps individuals find connections as they develop long-term recovery meets at noon each Tuesday in the IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health Center, Entrance C, 510 W. Votaw St., Portland.

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

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

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

## 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 Center for Learning, 101 S. Meridian St., Portland.

COMMUNITY REINFORCEMENT AND FAMILY TRAINING — A non-confrontational, evidence-based intervention for helping families affected by addiction meets at 4 p.m. each Wednesday in the IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health Center, Entrance C, 510 W. Votaw St., Portland.

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

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

## Thursday

STITCH AND CHATTER QUILT CLUB — Meets from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at Jay Community Center. Show and teal is at 1 p.m. The club is open to all ages and is for anyone who wants to sew. Bring unfinished projects and a sewing machine. For more information, call Nan Weesner (260) 766-9334.

SMART RECOVERY — A group for those struggling with addiction that focuses on motivation, coping with cravings, managing thoughts, feelings and behavior, and living a balanced life meets at 11 a.m. each Thursday in the IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health Center, Entrance C, 510 W. Votaw St., Portland.

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

EN AVANT CLUB — Meets at 1 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month.

ORGAN TRANSPLANT SUPPORT GROUP — Will meet at 3 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month in the IU Health Blackford main conference room.

PORTLAND LIONS CLUB — Will meet at 6:30 p.m. the third Thursday of the month at Portland Lions Civic Center, 307 W. 100 North.

FORGET-ME-NOT — A support group for parents, friends and relatives who

have lost a baby through miscarriage, birth or illness will meet from 7 to 9 p.m. at St. Vincent Ranolph Hospital, Winchester, in community room 1.

## Friday

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.

Advertise your business or activities in our **Summer Festival Special Section** with distribution in 4 newspapers!

The Commercial Review (Portland)  
The News-Gazette (Winchester)  
The News Times (Hartford City)  
The News and Sun (Dunkirk)

1/2-page color – \$450 (limited availability)

1/2-page B&W – \$375

1/4-page color – \$350 (limited availability)

1/4-page B&W – \$250

Big business card (3x3.5) – \$100

Business card (2x2) – \$60

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

Deadline for Ads is May 15, 2024

**(260) 726-8141**

Contact Lindsey at [L.Cochran@thecr.com](mailto:L.Cochran@thecr.com)

## Sudoku

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

Level: Beginner

### Saturday's Solution

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

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

# Judan Judo thankful for support

To the editor:  
We at Judan Judo would like to thank all the sponsors who helped make the 2024 Indiana State Judo Championships a success.

The tournament was held at Jay County Junior-Senior High School. The support of our local businesses and individuals allowed us to use a pooling and scoring system that is being used by USA Judo. It also gave us the ability to be a National Referee evaluation site. With your support we continue to be one of the premiere tournaments in the Midwest.

## Letters to the Editor

Platinum sponsors: Buffalo Wings and Rings, Boundary Bash, Clear Choice Chiropractic, George Family Dentistry, Jay County Visitor and Tourism Bureau, Masters Insurance, Michael Vanover Wells County Commissioner, Schmit Chiropractic Offices, The Fort Nutri-

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Bronze sponsors: AMX Sports, Farmers State Bank, Jay County Beverage, Jay County REMC, MJS Mortuaries, Pennington Custom Cabinetry and True Value Hardware

Additionally, we would like to

acknowledge the Jay School Corporation, The Commercial Review, Jay County Wrestling Club, Dr. Taylor Brackman and lastly all our Judo families and friends that came together and gave of their time, sponsorships and donations.

We truly appreciate all that you do for Judan Judo. Without the support of these individuals and businesses, we would be unable to continue to serve and encourage the youth of Jay County.

Vickie Daniels  
Brad Daniels  
Judan Judo

## Applying shouldn't be so complicated

Bloomberg Opinion

Tribune News Service

Although college isn't for everyone, earning a degree still offers a pathway to success for many Americans. Yet each year, hundreds of thousands of low-income, college-ready students never actually enroll, partly because the application process prioritizes administrative busywork over academics. Policymakers should work to make it simpler.

Applying to college typically involves selecting from among hundreds of schools, verifying course requirements, submitting standardized test scores, requesting letters of recommendation and providing household financial data. Most students start the process months, even years, before the deadline for submission. More than 1,000 colleges use the Common App — a template for basic information — but applicants often must submit additional material, such as personal essays, tailored to each school.

According to a 2023 poll, 62% of students describe the experience as "very or somewhat challenging." More than 60% of Black, Latino and Asian students say it's more stressful than any other academic activity, 20 points higher than for White students; among would-be first-generation college students, only half say they managed to gather all the material necessary to apply, compared to 74% of those with college-educated parents.

Partly due to these challenges, large numbers of those qualified for college never end up applying. A study of 1.2 million students with Common App accounts found that about 25% of them started but didn't complete any of their applications. Students from poor and less educated families were more likely to be "non-submitters" than their wealthier peers, despite having comparable academic credentials. Overall, as many as 1 million students who begin the application process never finish it.

Should this be of concern? Some students surely neglect to submit their applications due to laziness or procrastination. Others change their minds. Highly selective colleges also have an interest in making the process as demanding as possible to screen unserious candidates.

Yet 56% of the country's 15 million undergraduates attend four-year institutions that admit at least 75% of applicants, effectively meaning that anyone who meets minimal academic standards gets in. Some of these schools still

## Letters to the Editor

ask students to itemize their extracurricular activities, list years of work experiences, and submit essays and personal statements, even though the vast majority are admitted on their transcripts alone.

It's reasonable to expect students to put effort into their applications. But for less selective schools, requiring all this added material serves little academic purpose; in fact, it's counterproductive. It diminishes the importance of objective criteria like test scores in favor of "holistic" measures that overwhelmingly benefit wealthier candidates. It also wastes taxpayer money because public colleges end up employing vast numbers of administrators to review applications, resources that would be better spent on actual instruction. Worse, superfluous requirements can deter otherwise qualified candidates from applying.

Streamlining the process would help. Over the past decade, 10 states have started guaranteeing admission to qualified students to certain schools before they apply, based on their test scores and grade-point averages. Idaho's program has increased enrollment by 7%. A similar effort by Common App has expanded to 28 states; it proactively notifies students of admission and requires a simplified application to confirm their acceptance. One study found that low-income students who received such offers were more likely to submit at least one application than those who didn't.

Policymakers should encourage more colleges to participate in these programs and to track how many of those admitted ultimately enroll and earn degrees. Participation from flagship public universities should be prioritized, which would ensure that more low-income high achievers can get financial and academic support. The federal government can help by notifying households of their eligibility for financial aid when they file tax returns and requiring greater transparency from colleges on the true costs of attendance.

A college education doesn't guarantee success, but students deserve a fair chance to obtain one. Removing needless application obstacles would be a big step forward.



## Primary had too much, too many

By NIKI KELLY

Indiana Capital Chronicle  
indianacapitalchronicle.com

Election night might have been more of a whimper than a blowout, but digging into Tuesday's results reveals some key takeaways for both voters and politicians.

After hundreds of candidates, thousands of votes and millions in spending, here are my three lessons:

### The Benjamins

Money has corrupted the system, and we might never be able to go back. Sorry to start on a depressing note, but every conversation I had about races in the past month always ended up at money. And speaking with voters on Tuesday, Hoosiers hate that it has taken over elections.

The Citizens United ruling in 2010 changed the dynamics forever, allowing unlimited "independent" election spending by corporations and labor unions. A few months later, a lower court used that case to strike down limits on the size of contributions to groups that support candidates without donating to them directly.

And that brought us super PACs, a beefed-up version of political action committees. Unlike their brethren, super PACs are prohibited from donating directly to political candidates and cannot coordinate with a campaign but both can raise and spend unlimited sums, as detailed by the nonprofit OpenSecrets, which tracks election spending.

These groups poured millions into Indiana races this year and often are behind the most misleading or downright false election ads. And yet the candidates who benefit from the attacks turn a blind eye. The PACs are supposed to be run independently. But I suspect their behavior would change if the candidates they're helping denounced their actions more often.

And self-funding of campaigns is also becoming much more common. Candidate after candidate this primary dipped into their own pockets to fund their campaigns. And their pockets are much deeper than mine.

Brad Chambers loaned his campaign \$10 million in the GOP gubernatorial race. That's a staggering amount of money.

Or consider Jefferson Shreve in Indiana's 6th Congressional District. He loaned his campaign \$4.5 million and it appeared to seal his win. Just months before that he bankrolled 93% of his unsuccessful mayoral campaign with \$13.5 million in con-

tributions to himself, according to the Indianapolis Star.

So much for a candidate building a wide swath of support from citizens. But I do want to credit Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch for doing just that. She isn't a wealthy businesswoman. Instead, she has spent her life serving in public office and her campaign was funded by supporters who believed in her vision.

### Haley effect

Indiana — and national news outlets — are buzzing with the fact that Nikki Haley managed to snag one in five GOP presidential votes here. And that's even though she dropped out two months ago.

It's hard to tell without serious data crunching, but one of two things may have happened.

Occam's razor tells you the simplest explanation is probably the right one. Some Republicans just don't like Donald Trump. I know a few who voted exactly that way.

The other option is that Democrats and independents took Republican ballots to vote in the governor's race for a more moderate candidate. There was even an advertising campaign pushing it. I also know a few people who did this.

Nick Roberts, a Democrat Indianapolis City-County Councilor, did some initial analysis that seems to back up the latter.

He used precinct-level data that was available on the Indiana Secretary of State's site to do some math. While counties are still reporting, he looked at 2,527 precincts to create a correlation graph.

Overall, he found that Haley's support was extremely predictive (a 67% correlation) to Chambers' support. In fact, there are about 75 precincts around the state that they both won. For both candidates, heavily-Democrat Marion County was their best county in the state, with Chambers winning it outright as his only county win.

Again, more analysis is needed. But that theory seems to have some preliminary support.



Niki Kelly

### Too many candidates

I freely acknowledge that this take will seem antithetical to encouraging civic involvement in the state. But there were a number of key races that just had too many candidates.

The governor's race is a perfect example, with six Republicans lining up. There is a fine line between having no options and too many. By having six, debates were less helpful and the campaigns themselves were less substantive.

At the Indiana Capital Chronicle, a simple four-part questionnaire on a specific topic (with responses limited to 150 words) ballooned to thousands of words when each candidate weighed in. An hour-long forum meant each candidate had only a few minutes to appeal to voters — often creating more questions than answers.

At least three of those candidates probably should have taken themselves out of the equation.

I will forever wonder if Crouch or Chambers or Eric Doden, for instance, could have tightened that race against U.S. Sen. Mike Braun if other candidates had dropped out. If the polling wasn't so clearly in his favor, he might have been forced to be more specific on issues and even make significant policy proposals.

And if it'd been a one-on-one or a three-person race? Who knows how much more competitive and less fractured the vote might have been.

The crowded primaries weren't limited to the governor's race. On the U.S. House side, there were 63 candidates running across nine House seats. That's an average of seven per race — but some actually had 10 candidates. How is a voter supposed to educate themselves adequately on that many candidates to make an informed choice?

Regardless, a nominee who came through with 30% of a vote isn't particularly inspiring, especially when you remember that less than one-third of registered voters even bothered to cast a ballot. When you consider the above, it's no wonder that most of Indiana stayed home on Tuesday.

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*Kelly is editor-in-chief of Indiana Capital Chronicle and has covered the Indiana Statehouse since 1999.*

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

# The Commercial Review



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

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

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The Commercial Review/Bailey Cline

## Sixty years

Jay County Humane Society treasurer Mindy Weaver and Jay County Chamber of Commerce executive director Tabby Sprunger stand together while chamber board member Nick Lyons takes their photo Saturday. The nonprofit organization, which now serves as the county's contracted animal control service, celebrated its 60th business anniversary.

# Commission approves I&M increase

The Indiana Regulatory Commission recently approved a rate settlement agreement with Indiana Michigan Power, which subsequently released details of its Powering Our Future Plan.

The settlement calls for a two-phase increase — \$4.20 this month and an additional \$4.27 in January — for the average residential customer. Bills will go up to \$174.83 on average from the current \$166.36.

I&M was approved for a total increase of \$61.8 million, a little more than half of the \$116.4 million the company originally requested.

“With the recent decision from the IURC, Indiana Michigan Power will continue its current work to provide safe, reliable power to our customers while increasing the resiliency of the grid for the future,” I&M president and chief operating officer Steve Baker said in a press release. “Through continuous collaboration with a number of stakeholders, we collectively reached a settlement we feel serves the best interests of our customers.”

I&M said it will use the increase for \$550 million in grid resiliency improvements including upgrading 15 substations, replacing 24 miles of power lines and more than 2,800 poles, and installing technology upgrades.

### Reception set

Jay County's Purdue Extension office will hold a retirement open house for Deborah Coleman.

The event is scheduled for 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 21, at El

## Business roundup

Camino Real, 220 W. Lincoln Ave., Portland. Coleman has worked for the extension office for 44 years.

### Fairs scheduled

The United States Postal Service will host a series of job fairs across the state later this month.

In-person job fairs will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursday, May 30, at various locations, including post offices at 215 W. Main St., Berne, and 116 S. Main St., Lynn.

Applications will also be available online at [usps.com/careers](https://usps.com/careers).

### Book drive set

A bank with local branches will hold a drive in an effort to help improve financial literacy.

First Financial Bank's book drive is scheduled for May 6 through 24 at various area locations.

The bank will accept donations of books at its locations at:

- 112 N. Meridian St., Portland
- 211 W. Pearl St., Union City
- 101 W. Washington St., Hartford City

Following the drive, books will be delivered to area schools, libraries and non-profit organizations in the community.

“This will be a fun drive for everyone involved, and we're looking forward to filling every

one of these book bins,” said First Financial chief corporate responsibility officer Roddell McCullough in a press release. “Reading and financial literacy often go hand in hand, so this is an opportunity to team up with the community to help our neighbors improve their financial well-being.”

A list of recommended books on finance will be available in each financial center. First Financial also offers tools and resources at [bankatfirst.com](https://bankatfirst.com).

### Training scheduled

ServSafe training will be held monthly at John Jay Center for Learning in Portland through June.

Training sessions are scheduled from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays May 21 and June 18. The certification course is open to all food service employees and emphasizes safe food- and beverage-handling practices to minimize the risk of food-borne illnesses.

For more information, or to register, call (260) 729-5525.

### Reorganizing leadership

NextEra Energy last week announced that Kirk Crews will become its new executive vice president and chief risk officer.

Crews has served as NextEra's executive vice president of finance and chief financial officer in March 2022. He has been with the company since 2016.

Brian Bolser, who spent nearly 25 years at Goldman Sachs, has been named to succeed Crews.

“Having successfully served in a number of critical roles across

our business, Kirk is uniquely qualified to take on his new position,” said NextEra chairman and CEO John Ketchum in a press release. “His deep financial acumen and leadership skills will enable Kirk to provide significant leverage to our business as we pursue our strategic objectives.”

“I'm also very pleased to welcome Brian to NextEra Energy. He is a strong leader ...”

### Agreement reached

Ardagh Glass Packaging-Europe last week announced that it has entered into an electricity power purchase agreement with Sunnic Lighthouse GmbH.

Sunnich Lighthouse will provide solar energy for Ardagh's NextGen Furnace in Obernkirchen, Germany. The facility is switching from 90% gas and 10% electricity for its energy to 80% renewable and 20% gas.

“Securing long-term renewable electricity for our NextGen Furnace is key to decarbonising glass production,” said Ardagh Europe CEO Martin Peterson in the press release. “This PPA will also take AGP-Europe another step closer to meeting our goal of transitioning to 100% renewable electricity by 2030.”

Ardagh operates glass packaging facilities in Dunkirk and Winchester.

### Paxton purchases

Paxton Media Group, which owns several Indiana newspapers, recently purchased the Kernersville News of North Car-

olina from Meredith Owensby Harrell.

Paxton owns 13 Indiana newspapers, including The Courier-Times (New Castle), Huntington Herald-Press and Connersville News-Examiner. The Carter/Owensby-Harrell families had owned the publication since its founding in 1938.

### Meetings scheduled

The Indiana Office of Energy Development will host a series of meetings as part of the process of planning, designing and implementing a federally funded home energy rebate program.

The office will be seeking public input on the rebate, for which implementation is planned for the fall.

In-person meetings will be held at four locations around the state in May and June. Meetings include 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 11, in Indianapolis, and 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 25, in Fort Wayne. (Specific locations have not yet been announced.)

“We are seeking engagement with Hoosiers across the state so that we can reach as many qualified applicants as possible when these programs are made available,” said Ryan Hadley, executive director of the Indiana Office of Energy Development. “Input is a critical element to ensure we develop a robust and well-run program.”

A virtual closing session will be held at 6:30 p.m. June 27.

.....  
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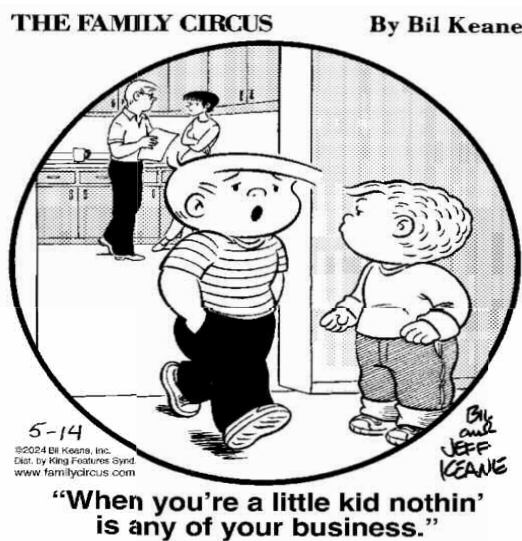
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**Contract Bridge** By Steve Becker

**The Texas transfer**

South dealer.  
Both sides vulnerable.

**NORTH**  
♠ Q 6  
♥ K Q 10 9 8 3  
♦ K 7  
♣ A J 3

**WEST**  
♠ K 7 5 2  
♥ 7 6 5  
♦ 10 4  
♣ 9 8 7 2

**EAST**  
♠ 10 9 8 3  
♥ A 2  
♦ 8 6 5 3  
♣ Q 10 4

**SOUTH**  
♠ A J 4  
♥ J 4  
♦ A Q J 9 2  
♣ K 6 5

The bidding:  
South West North East  
1 NT Pass 4♦ Pass  
4♥ Pass 4 NT Pass  
5♥ Lead 6♥ Pass

Opening lead — nine of clubs.

Generally speaking, the majority of players are opposed to most artificial bidding conventions. They prefer to use more natural methods wherein if their partner bids spades he has spades, if he bids hearts he has hearts, and so on.

But as a player becomes more experienced, he may be tempted to add new conventions to his arsenal. And if he is by nature gadget-minded, he might soon find himself weighed down by a host of conven-

tions that prevent him from employing natural bids. When this point threatens to be reached, a player is best advised to choose his conventions carefully.

One of the artificial bids that has become popular in recent years is the Texas Transfer, which is used in response to a one- or two-notrump opening bid. If responder jumps directly to four diamonds, he is asking opener to bid four hearts, while if responder jumps to four hearts, he is asking opener to bid four spades. (In the latter case especially, there is a real danger that one player or the other may forget he is playing Texas, with disastrous consequences.)

Today's deal from a national team-of-four event demonstrates the advantage of Texas, which is to have the opening lead come into the stronger hand rather than through it. At the first table, the bidding followed traditional lines: 1NT-3♥-3NT-6♥, and East led the ten of spades. After this lead, there was no way for declarer to make the slam, and he went down one.

At the second table, the North-South pair was playing Texas and so reached six hearts with South as declarer. With West on lead against the slam, it was impossible to defeat the contract, and South chalked up an easy 1,430 points.

**Tomorrow:** The one and only chance.



**5-14 CRYPTOQUIP**

ZW ZKNELDC'Y ENLCNKY ARPNC  
PA NDELKFN PTN VLRZPLE  
VZPH PQAWAEC, PTNH QAGEC  
JN CAGJEZDF CGJEZD.

**Yesterday's Cryptoquip:** NOTEWORTHY AMERICAN WRITER WHO WAS VERY FOND OF FRUIT PRESERVED IN SYRUP: TRUMAN COMPOTE.

**Today's Cryptoquip Clue:** F equals G

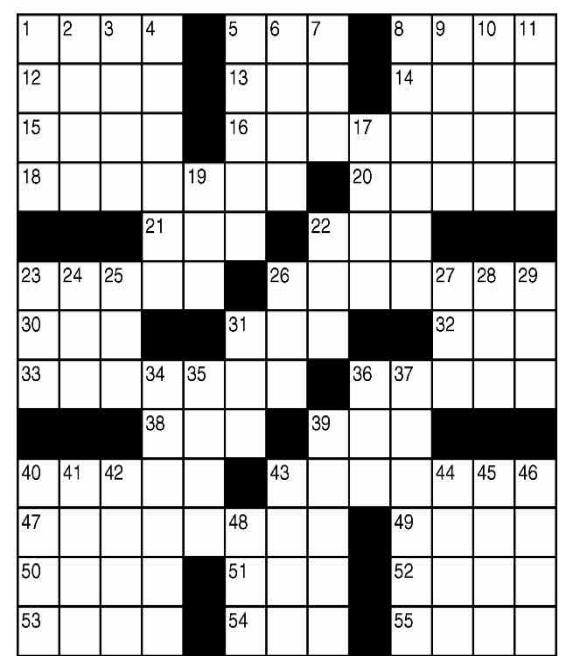
**CROSSWORD** By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Openings
  - 5 Co. with a peacock logo
  - 8 Junk email
  - 12 Wrinkly fruit
  - 13 Tic-tac-toe win
  - 14 LBJ biographer Robert F. Kennedy
  - 15 Dorm alternative
  - 16 Spanish dance
  - 18 Likes
  - 20 Incendiary crime
  - 21 Praise in verse
  - 22 La-la lead-in
  - 23 Frost works
  - 26 Loyal following
  - 30 TiVo, for example
  - 31 Numbered rd.
  - 32 Petty pvee
  - 33 Enthusiast
  - 36 Casual wear
  - 38 Sorority letter
- DOWN**
- 39 Sheep's cry
  - 40 Set — (schedule)
  - 43 Pigeon variety
  - 47 Showy displays
  - 49 Thus
  - 50 Words to a backstabber
  - 51 Online chats, briefly
  - 52 Fixes illegally
  - 53 Ban-shee's cry
  - 54 — Zedong
  - 55 Approving cheers
  - 1 Taj Mahal site
  - 3 Scheme
  - 4 "Cheers," for one
  - 5 Type of checking
  - 6 Fluffy scarves
  - 7 Bam-boozle
  - 8 Ornamental beetle
  - 9 Frying needs
  - 10 Jason's ship
  - 11 Apollo 11 destination
  - 17 Mend socks
  - 19 Luggage tags, e.g.
  - 22 — kwon do
  - 23 Adobe file format
  - 24 Eggs
  - 25 East ender?
  - 26 Consumer protection agcy.
  - 27 Comedian
  - 28 Go astray
  - 29 UFO
  - 31 Brazilian city
  - 34 Clever
  - 35 Ellington's "Take — Train"
  - 36 Painter Vermeer
  - 37 Bistro, for one
  - 39 Low-voiced singer
  - 40 Not many figures
  - 42 Against disaster aid org.
  - 44 Opera house solo
  - 45 Rocker — Pop
  - 46 Privation
  - 48 Edge

**Solution time: 22 mins.**



**Yesterday's answer 5-14**



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# Sports



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Drea Perez of Barnett's swings for a hit during his team's Portland Junior League game Saturday against Cook's Nursery. Portland Junior League celebrated its opening day of the season Saturday.

## POET opens PJJL with a pair of wins

Portland Junior League is officially underway, and POET Bioprocessing is starting off on the right foot.

POET Bioprocessing started the 2024 season with a pair of wins in Portland Junior League Rookie baseball on Saturday over Pioneer Packaging (20-7) and Williams Auto Parts (9-6).

Seven players notched three hits in the 20-7 clobbering of Pioneer Packaging, while three players added two. Corbin Hutzler stood out with two triples and a single.

Nolan Homan led POET's offense in the second game. He smashed four hits, including two doubles and a triple. Four more players had multi-hit games, including Hutzler (two doubles and a single) and Harvey Hemelgarn (a double and two singles).

Brett Huntsman led Williams Auto Parts with a triple, a double and two singles. He also received support from Thobe Keller with three base hits. Wyatt Fennig and Carson Dailey both collected two hits as well.

### Hirschy leads

Trey Hirschy powered the offense for Cooks Nursery in its 16-2 win over Barnett's on Saturday's Portland Junior League Rookie baseball.

### Youth roundup

Hirschy was one of five players with three hits for Cooks Nursery. He had home runs in the first and second innings, while doubling in the third.

Kayden Alberson, Kolby Armstrong, Steven Robbins and Duke Steed collected three hits apiece as well. Alberson smashed two triples and a double, while Armstrong had one of each.

Barnett's got a bulk of its offense from Micah Davis, who had two hits and scored both runs. Aiden May also had two hits.

### FCC wins

FCC won its first game of the season on Saturday 12-3 in Portland Junior League Minor softball.

Gabbi Miller provided the offensive highlight, with an inside-the-park home run down the foul line.

Audrey Miller controlled the game for FCC from the circle, striking out multiple batters in the nine-run victory.

## Jaylin Simpson eager for NFL

Colts rookie wants to play 'the best of the best'

By MARK INABINETT  
al.com  
Tribune News Service

Former Auburn defensive back Jaylin Simpson should be happy with the Indianapolis Colts' 2024 schedule. Although the Colts' NFL slate for his rookie season has not been announced, UMass and Samford won't be on it.

"I just like playing against the best of the best," Simpson said. "In college, especially like SEC teams, you kind of play against smaller-league teams before you get to SEC play. I personally didn't like that. I wanted the big games — the Georgias, the LSUs, the Alabamas. That's when the stars come out, the big plays, the big moments, and you really get to see who rises to the light. And I feel like I always did that."

"That's every team in the NFL. Every team got guys. I'm just all about competing, having fun and putting on a show. That's what the SEC is about, that's what I'm about, and that's what I'm going to continue to be."

Simpson joined the Colts in the fifth round of the NFL Draft on April 25. After five seasons at Auburn, Simpson said he felt prepared to make the transition to the NFL.

See Simpson page 7

## Jay softball sweeps Woodlan

They weren't blowouts, but the Patriots continue to win.

The Jay County High School softball team picked up a pair of victories over the Woodlan Warriors on Saturday to remain undefeated in May and extend its winning streak to seven games.

The 7-3 defeat of the Warriors acted as a makeup game from April 27 that got canceled for field conditions. The Patriots' 7-5 victory in the second game was just an added game.

The Patriots (12-4, 3-2 Allen County Athletic Conference) got started on the right foot as Jaelynn Lykins blasted a two-run home run as part of a three-run first inning.

A bulk of the first game's offense came from the top four in the JCHS order as Morgan Missicano collected three runs and three

### Jay County roundup

hits, while Mallory Winner, Riah Champ and Lykins had two RBIs each.

Winner manned the circle in game one, only allowing one earned run over seven innings.

Jay County needed three runs in the sixth inning to take down the Warriors (12-6, 3-1 ACAC) in the second game.

Back-to-back doubles by Champ and Jozey Shimp gave the Patriots runners with no outs. A Mady Fraley single plated Champ to tie the game at 5-5. Two pitches later, Charlie Trinidad delivered a double to center field to take a two-run lead.

See Roundup page 7

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