

# The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

## Grant awarded



The Commercial Review/Bailey Cline

Doug Inman, executive director of The Portland Foundation, speaks during the foundation's annual meeting Wednesday at John Jay Center for Learning. Inman announced the foundation has received a \$1.5 million grant from Indiana United Ways for its Jay County Early Learning Center project, a child care facility.

### The Portland Foundation will receive \$1.5 million for early learning center from Indiana United Ways

By BAILEY CLINE  
The Commercial Review

The Portland Foundation has received another grant to develop an early learning center.

Its total comes to seven figures.

Doug Inman, executive director of The Portland Foundation, announced Wednesday that Indiana United Ways awarded a \$1.5 million capital project grant toward establishing Jay County Early Learning Center.

The foundation also honored a local nonprofit organization

during its annual meeting Wednesday.

The Portland Foundation purchased the former Judge Haynes Elementary School building in Portland for \$35,000 in 2022. Last year, at its annual meeting, the foundation announced it had entered into a five-year agreement with Westminster Preschool of Marion to operate the learning center, which is estimated to serve approximately 150 newborns through 5-year-old children. (Westminster Preschool has hired a director for the Jay

County center, and they are currently undergoing training at the Marion campus.)

Construction has been ongoing at the facility, which is expected to open in August. United Way of Jay County's membership in Indiana United Ways helped facilitate the grant application.

"Connecting every child in Jay County to opportunity is a core part of our mission at United Way of Jay County, and we're delighted to be part of the team that is bringing this 150-seat learning center to life," said

United Way of Jay County executive director Jane Ann Runyon in a press release.

According to Early Learning Indiana's Closing the Gap 2023 Update, only 5.5% of children in Jay County are currently served by a high-quality early education program.

"Closing this gap, especially for the more than 50% of children under age 6 whose parents struggle to meet essential needs, is critical to ensuring that all children can thrive," said Runyon in the press release.

See **Awarded** page 2

## Progress made on rental contracts

City, tenants agree in principle on details

By RAY COONEY

The Commercial Review

There's a path forward for rental agreements at Community Resource Center.

During a Portland Board of Works meeting Wednesday, the city and the tenants of the building at 118 S. Meridian St., Portland, came to an informal agreement on how to move forward with the contract to rent space in the building and a separate agreement for sharing utilities and other costs between the tenants.

The meeting was called specifically to deal with the lease agreements after issues surfaced late last year when they were updated, including the county becoming a new tenant for an office for the community coordinator. The county's lease was different from those of the other tenants (Jay County Chamber of Commerce, Jay County Development Corporation, Jay/Portland Building and Planning and Jay County Visitors and Tourism Bureau), as it did not include utilities. As a result, Jay County Development Corporation, which currently receives and pays the utility bills and then is reimbursed by the other tenants, was not being reimbursed.

Addressing the leases Wednesday, Jay County Development Corporation executive director Travis Richards raised the utility issue, saying his organization is no longer interested in being in control of the utility bills. He suggested that the city take over utilities and charge the tenants via monthly bills or increased rent.

Richards also brought up responsibility for maintenance.

See **Progress** page 2

## Bidding opens next week

By RAY COONEY  
The Commercial Review

Bidding for the latest capital improvement project at the airport is around the corner.

Jason Clearwaters of engineering firm Butler, Fairman & Seufert on Wednesday told Portland Board of Aviation that plans are to advertise for bids next week for the Portland Municipal Airport apron expansion project.

Clearwaters told board members Faron Parr, John Ferguson and Caleb Lutes, absent Clyde Bray, that 90% plans and specifications were sent to Indiana Department of Transportation on Wednesday morning. Plans call for advertising for bids beginning Tuesday, with a pre-bid meeting at 10 a.m. June 10 at the airport.

Bids will be due and opened on June 18, with

### Airport moving toward apron expansion project

Clearwaters to review them and make a recommendation at the board's June 19 regular meeting. The board will be asked to vote on submitting a grant application for the project to the Federal Aviation Administration on the same day.

As part of the process, Clearwaters noted that an independent fee estimate is required for the Butler, Fairman & Seufert professional services agreement related to the project. (Such an estimate is required by the FAA when the agreement exceeds a threshold.) The board subsequently

approved contracting with Foth Infrastructure for the independent evaluation at a cost of \$3,000. (Those funds will be reimbursed to the airport through the FAA grant for the project.)

Clearwaters also informed the board that the FAA has completed its review of the airport's wildlife hazard assessment management plan.

The board also discussed the Aviation Indiana quarterly meeting, which is scheduled for 10 a.m. Aug. 10 at Portland Municipal Airport.

See **Bidding** page 2



Photo provided

### New flags

Members of the Portland Evening Optimist Club and BSA Scouts Troop 202 of Jay County put up new flags Tuesday around Jay County Courthouse. Pictured from left are Bobby Ruiz, Blaine Finch, Linda Aker, Jason Sims and Ferrell Blazer.

#### Deaths

Demarius Ruble, Pennville  
Betty Howell, 86, Markle  
Don Wallace, 73, Keystone  
Details on page 2.

#### Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 70 degrees Wednesday. The low was 55.

Showers are expected tonight with a thunderstorm possible and a low in the lower 60s. Expect partly cloudy skies Saturday with a high in the upper 70s.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

#### In review

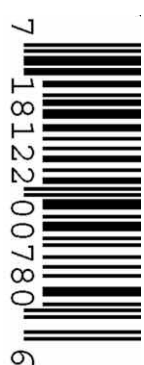
Museum of the Soldier, 510 E. Arch St., will be open from noon to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday in honor of American Forces Day. Light refreshments will be served.

#### Coming up

**Saturday** — Results from the JCHS boys track team at the sectional meet.

**Tuesday** — Photos from Fort Recovery High School's graduation.

**Wednesday** — Coverage of Monday's Jay School Board meeting.



# Progress ...

Continued from page 1  
In practice, the City of Portland, which owns the building, had been paying for major maintenance such as the recent replacement of a water heater but the lease agreement referred to maintenance as a tenant responsibility. (The leases were originally drawn up nearly 20 years ago and had been renewing automatically on an annual basis.)  
Portland clerk-treasurer Lori Phillips said she is not interested in having the city take over utilities. Mary Adair, director of the

visitors and tourism bureau, later said her organization would be willing to take over the billing.  
After some continued discussion about both rent and utilities, Jay/Portland Building and Planning director John Hemmelgarn suggested simplifying the lease terms to split costs among the five tenants.  
Further discussion led to the tenants agreeing in principle to the following:  
•Monthly rent of \$350  
•One-year leases to be reviewed

annually with a target start date of July 1  
•The city covering maintenance for permanent structures such as heating, cooling, plumbing, electrical, the parking lot, etc.  
•The tenants being responsible for utilities and the cost of other shared items such as bathroom and cleaning supplies  
The automatic annual renewal will be eliminated and 90-days notice will be required to terminate a lease.  
City attorney Wes Schemenaur

suggested a separate agreement to handle how the utilities are split between the tenants. It will call for the tenants present in a given month to split the costs equally. (Currently, there are five tenants. If one leaves, the costs would be split evenly between those who remain.)  
Schemenaur said he would work on updating both the lease agreement and the utility agreement between the tenants and send it to the appropriate parties for their review.

# Obituaries

**Demarius Ruble**  
Demarius Ruble, Pennington, died Thursday.  
Arrangements are pending at Walker & Glancy Funeral Home in Montpelier.  
**Betty Jane Howell**, Markle, the niece of a Portland woman, April 15, 1938-May 14, 2024. Services will be at 3 p.m. Sunday at Walker & Glancy Funeral Home, 109 W. Windsor St., Montpelier.  
**Don Wallace**, Keystone, the stepfather of a Geneva woman, March 25, 1951-May 11, 2024. Services will be at 6 p.m. Tuesday at Walker & Glancy Funeral Home, 109 W. Windsor St., Montpelier.

# CR almanac

Saturday 5/18	Sunday 5/19	Monday 5/20	Tuesday 5/21	Wednesday 5/22
<b>78/60</b>	<b>82/60</b>	<b>84/65</b>	<b>84/65</b>	<b>77/57</b>
Saturday has a 40% chance of rain and thunderstorms, with a high near 78.	Mostly sunny skies are in the forecast for Sunday. The high will be in the low 80s.	A slight chance of rain on Monday under mostly sunny skies.	Tuesday has a 50% chance of storms under mostly cloudy skies.	Another chance of thunderstorms on Wednesday, when the low may hit 57.

# Lotteries

<b>Powerball</b> 19-42-45-55-69 Power Ball: 6 Power Play: 2 Estimated jackpot: \$77 million	Daily Four: 1-1-8-5 Quick Draw: 11-12-13-14-16-21-22-30-31-33-35-39-42-45-47-49-50-62-65-71 Cash 5: 13-21-34-40-43 Estimated jackpot: \$427,500
<b>Mega Millions</b> Estimated jackpot: \$393 million	<b>Ohio</b> Wednesday Midday Pick 3: 3-6-4 Pick 4: 3-1-3-5 Pick 5: 7-8-7-9-6 Evening Pick 3: 8-2-1 Pick 4: 0-0-5-5 Pick 5: 9-1-4-9-4 Rolling Cash: 6-9-17-35-39 Estimated jackpot: \$100,000
<b>Hoosier</b> Wednesday Midday Daily Three: 9-9-0 Daily Four: 3-6-5-2 Quick Draw: 2-7-8-13-14-17-19-33-34-36-51-52-55-58-60-68-69-71-75-76 Evening Daily Three: 5-4-9	

# Markets

<b>Cooper Farms Fort Recovery</b> Corn.....4.45 Late May corn .....4.45 Wheat .....5.49	June beans .....12.11 Wheat ..... 6.20
<b>POET Biorefining Portland</b> Corn.....4.52 June corn .....4.57 July corn.....4.47	<b>ADM Montpelier</b> Corn.....4.36 June corn .....4.38 Beans.....12.05 June beans .....12.08 Wheat .....6.08
<b>The Andersons Richland Township</b> Corn .....4.47 June corn .....4.42 Beans .....12.11	<b>Heartland St. Anthony</b> Corn.....4.40 June corn .....4.43 Beans.....11.78 June beans .....11.88 Wheat .....5.95

# Today in history

In 1814, Norway adopted its constitution.  
In 1973, The Portland Foundation selected 13 students — David Wellman, Rocky Walker, Steve Stockton, Doug McIntire, Michael Boggs, Mary Kay Chiddister, Janet Clark, Donald Donahue, Sheila Eley, Sidney Hall, Karen May, Steve Myron and Sandra Stith — to receive \$700 scholarships.  
In 2013, Jay School Corporation held a retirement reception for departing assistant superintendent Wood Barwick. He had joined the corporation as principal of Jay County High School before moving to the assistant superintendent role.  
In 2018, the Fort Recovery High School baseball team got a squeeze bunt from Reese Rogers in the sixth inning to drive home Riley Post for the only run of the game in a 1-0 victory over Ottawa-Glandorf in the Division III district semifinal at Elida.  
In 2021, Jennifer Young of Portland was sentenced to 20 years in prison after pleading guilty to a Level 1 felony charge of neglect of a dependent resulting in death in connection with the death of her son Hayden Markle.  
In 2022, Jay County High School's Gabi Bilbrey set a new career best as she won the discus championship during the sectional meet at Delta with a toss of 123 feet, 6 inches.  
—The CR

# Citizen's calendar

<b>Monday</b> 5 p.m. — Jay School Board, General Shanks, 414 E. Floral Ave., Portland. 5:30 p.m. — Portland City Council, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Franklin St. 6 p.m. — Fort Recovery School Board, community room, high school, 400 E. Butler St. 7:30 p.m. — Fort	Recovery Village Council, village hall, 201 S. Main St. <b>Wednesday</b> 5 p.m. — Jay County Redevelopment Commission, auditorium, Jay County Courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland. 6 p.m. — Dunkirk Park Board, city building, 131 S. Main St.
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# Awarded ...

Continued from page 1  
Jay County Early Learning Center has already benefited from other grants. Westminster Preschool received \$684,000 from Indiana Family and Social Services Administration for building renovation, playground equipment and supplies. The Portland Foundation received \$500,000 — \$432,500 for renovation, equipment and supplies and \$67,500 for IU Health Jay's Healthy Beginnings program — from Early Learning Indiana, \$291,000 from the first round of the Indiana Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI) and \$50,000 from the Ball Brothers Association of Muncie for the project.

Because of the aforementioned grants and the \$1.5 million from Indiana United Ways, the foundation's financial commitment in the project has been reduced from \$4 million to \$1 million.  
"The \$1 million is still the largest project investment the foundation has ever made," Inman said, noting its financial ability to back such a project is made possible by unrestricted endowment funds.  
"The foundation is committed to serving the children and families of Jay County by investing in the children, and the Jay County Early Learning Center will serve generations of those children," said Inman.  
A generation is defined at about 25 years. Putting it into perspective, Inman said, that would translate to the foundation's commitment of its own funds now breaking down to about \$40,000 annually.  
The Portland Foundation also honored Cassie Alexander and Charlene, Roger and Ben Theurer of Mandy's Blessings with the Jack Cole Award for Volunteerism.

Cole, the previous director of the foundation, noted this was the first time a group had been nominated for the award. (It has been given to individuals over the years for their volunteering efforts.)  
"Roger, Charlene, Cassie and Ben, have chosen to take what was a tragedy and turn it into something positive to honor their daughter's, their sister's, memory," said Cole.  
In 2015, Jay County native Mandy Theurer died in a car wreck. Her family started Mandy's Blessings and began hosting a variety of fundraising events. Mandy's Blessings has raised more than \$116,000 for organizations over the years, provided 21 scholarships and established an endowment fund with The Portland Foundation.  
"Nine years ago, my mom had a wonderful idea to keep Mandy's memory alive through just loving on our community. This endeavor has been really healing for all of us to just give back and meet so many people who loved her," said

Alexander, holding back tears. "It has and continues to be an honor to be a part of this community and just love on different organizations, and (we're) doing that through her."  
Also Wednesday, Inman shared updates about the foundation's participation in the eighth iteration of the Lilly Endowment Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) initiative.  
In the last year, The Portland Foundation:

- Hired Transform Consulting Group of Wabash to conduct a study gauging the need for an early learning center in southwest Jay County
- Submitted a \$3.9 million concept paper to Lilly Endowment that would involve constructing a learning center in Dunkirk — it would be added onto West Jay Community Center — and to add back the west wing of Jay County Early Learning Center for a Portland Head Start. If approved, the foundation would have the opportunity to submit an in-depth proposal for the project.
- Submitted a \$4.9 million regional proposal in partnership with Blackford and Grant County foundations for Connect East Central Indiana, an initiative aimed at preparing youth for local careers in which they can thrive, said Inman. (Jay County's benefit from the project would involve John Jay Center for Learning.)
- The GIFT initiative is also offering a matching grant opportunity to build unrestricted endowments, noted Inman. The Portland Foundation must receive \$375,000 in unrestricted endowment gifts to receive a \$750,000 match.
- To incentivize donors, the foundation offered a third matching dollar (3:1) for gifts of \$1,250 or more. About \$100,000 of the foundation's funding has been matched for this project, noted Inman, and it resulted in 17 new unrestricted endowment funds.
- The foundation still needs an additional \$177,546 to complete the Lilly Endowment matching opportunity.
- Also, Inman reported the foundation's assets totaled \$47.1 million at the end of 2023, up from the previous year of \$41.5 million and down from 2021's record high of \$50.7 million.
- The Portland Foundation had 21 new endowments last year, bringing its total to 444. It received \$3 million in gifts and granted \$1.6 million in grants and scholarships.
- The foundation has given more than \$13 million in grants and more than \$8 million in scholarships since its founding in 1951.
- Inman also noted The Portland Foundation and The Dunkirk Foundation merged in 2023. The merger added 14 endowments and \$2 million in assets to The Portland Foundation.

# SERVICES

<b>Today</b> <b>McCord</b> , Russell: 11 a.m., Golden Years Homestead Chapel, 3136 Goeglein Road, Fort Wayne. <b>Wolford</b> , Bernadine: 1 p.m., Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland. <b>West</b> , William: 7 p.m., Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland.
<b>Saturday</b> <b>Bedwell</b> , June: 11 a.m., Downing & Glancy Funeral Home, 100 Washington St., Geneva. <b>Sills</b> , Marvin: noon, Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland.
<b>Sunday</b> <b>Howell</b> , Betty: 3 p.m., Walker & Glancy Funeral Home, 109 W. Windsor St., Montpelier. <b>Paxson</b> , Bruce: 7 p.m., Hogenkamp Funeral Home, 715 E. Main St., Coldwater, Ohio.
<b>Monday</b> <b>Prescott</b> , Roger: 7 p.m., Asbury United Methodist Church, 204 E. Arch St., Portland.
<b>Tuesday</b> <b>Wallace</b> , Don: 6 p.m., Walker & Glancy Funeral Home, 109 W. Windsor St., Montpelier.
Service listings provided by <b>PROGRESSIVE DEL TORO OFFICE PRODUCTS</b> 120 N. Meridian St. Portland, Indiana 47371 (260) 726-9201 progressiveofficeproducts.com

# Bidding ...

Continued from page 1  
Clearwaters said the facility should plan for about 50 attendees. He added that the meetings typically open with remarks from the mayor and the airport manager.  
The rest of the agenda is up to the local airport.  
"It's your event," Clearwaters said. "You guys kind of set the agenda."  
He offered suggestions on potential speakers, including local business leaders talking about the impact of the airport and INDOT Aviation doing a presentation on the drone it uses to check for obstructions at airports. He added that he could offer a presentation on the facility's runway extension project that was completed in 2022.

In other business, the board:  
•Heard from Tavzel that in recent bidding for a 10-unit T-hangar at Randolph County Airport, the low bid came in at \$978,000. He provided the number as a reference point for the aviation board, which has been discussing the possibility of adding a T-hangar. He noted that the low bid for a project he was involved in less than two years ago was \$800,000.  
•Learned the city is advertising for bids to lease 26.28 acres of farm ground on the west end of the airport.  
•Heard from Tavzel that the airport sold 5,395.7 gallons of fuel in April for \$26,110.22. That's up from 4,891 gallons in April 2023.

# Capsule Reports

**Recycling trailers**  
Jay County Solid Waste Management District will have recycling trailers available from 8 to 11 a.m. Saturday across from Pennington Fire Station and 9 a.m. to noon in the parking lot at 220 Lincoln St., Portland.  
**Pole hit**  
Damage is estimated between \$10,000 and \$25,000 after a Bryant man swerved to avoid a deer and struck a pole along county road 200 South about 6:45 a.m. Wednesday.  
Conner A. McFarland, 19, was driving his 2005 Chevrolet Silverado east on the road in Jay County when he struck a deer, according to a Jay County Sheriff's Office report. He swerved to avoid the animal, causing his vehicle to go into a ditch off the road and travel 75 yards before hitting a utility pole at 8612 E. 200 South, Portland.

# WHO DO YOU KNOW

That deserves to be recognized for their lifetime of volunteer service in the Jay County Community?

Tell us what their various volunteer service activities are, or have been, including the number of years and mail to:

**Cincinnatus League**  
"Service Before Self"  
P.O. Box 513, Portland, IN 47371  
Questions? Contact Karen Bailey 260-729-1249 or karenannbailey9@yahoo.com  
Deadline to receive nominations is May 27, 2024!!

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# Resources are available

To the editor:  
May 12 through 18 is National Stuttering Awareness Week.

One in every 100 people stutter. That's 80 million people worldwide. Yet stuttering is often misunderstood and even laughed at.

To address the many myths surrounding this complex disorder, the Stuttering Foundation has compiled a list of "75 Must-Use Resources for the Stuttering Community" — available free on our website: StutteringHelp.org.

The foundation's most popular content represents a mix of time-tested favorites and newer innovations:

Drawings and Letters from Kids webpage — featuring submissions from children around the world and published in our magazine.

Answers for Employers brochure — answering frequent questions from employers received by the Foundation each year.

Self-Therapy for the Stutterer e-book — written

## Letters to the Editor

by Founder Malcolm Fraser in 1978.

List of Famous People Who Stutter webpage — continuously updated with many celebrities, sports heroes, writers and world leaders.

Podcast webpage — now in its sixth season with more than 100,000 listeners.

Advice to Those Who Stutter audio book — drafted in 1972 and updated by 28 therapists who stutter themselves.

I Stutter ID Card webpage — helping people identify themselves in a nonverbal way.

All resources are available at StutteringHelp.org.

Jane Fraser  
President

The Stuttering Foundation



# What will the legacy be?

By **ANDREW BRADLEY**  
Indiana Capital Chronicle  
indianacapitalchronicle.com

With barely six months left in office and the nominees for his replacement already chosen, some might consider Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb a lame duck. However, housing is one area where he can still choose what his legacy will be.

Holcomb has taken several significant steps on housing during his time in office, including the creation and funding of the Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI), of which roughly one-third of requests have been for affordable and workforce housing. The governor also deserves credit for creating Indiana's first Emergency Rental Assistance program, which kept tens of thousands of Hoosier families housed and their landlords solvent during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Despite these steps, further executive action is needed to fill the gap left by the General Assembly to address Indiana's worsening shortage of safe, healthy, and affordable homes accessible to the most vulnerable Hoosiers. The legislature has failed to act on their own Housing Task Force's recommendation to "support addressing substandard housing" and to increase housing supply that is affordable for the communities seeing the greatest gaps. Holcomb can still take matters into his own hands and not allow deference to the legislature's inaction to define his own housing legacy.

Facts are facts: Indiana's housing outcomes for the most vulnerable Hoosiers have declined in recent years. According to a recent study, with only 34 affordable and available rental units for every 100 of the most vulnerable Hoosier households, Indiana has a lower rate of supply than the national average, and second lowest rate in the Midwest. About 76% of those households spend more than half of their income on housing expenses, the highest rate in the Midwest. Over the past decade, Hoosiers' housing costs have risen, homeownership has decreased, and disparities have

**Andrew Bradley**



*A comprehensive review of Indiana's housing code standards and enforcement is necessary to safeguard the health and safety of Hoosiers ...*

grown, especially for seniors, Black and brown Hoosiers, and low-income working families.

Because of this shortage and rising costs, an increasing proportion of Hoosiers are now housing instable. They make do with inadequate housing that they cannot afford, subjecting themselves and their children to the risk of eviction and homelessness.

Indiana's lack of safe and affordable housing damages the state's public health outcomes and affects the physical and mental well-being of Hoosiers, the education and development of children, the employability of adults, and confounds efforts to build a thriving state economy.

Indiana's patchwork of codes for health and safety standards related to rental housing is one unaddressed problem that contributes to and increases the danger of the state's lack of housing supply. The failure to adequately enforce state and local housing codes jeopardizes the health and the lives of Hoosiers. In January 2024, six children died in a fire in a South Bend rental home that was reported to have failed a safety code inspection due to dangerous wiring but was allowed to be rented again before proper repairs were confirmed to have been made.

A comprehensive review of Indiana's housing code standards and enforcement is necessary to safeguard the health and safety of Hoosiers, improve the quality of available housing, strengthen pathways to homeownership, and allow Hoosiers to age in place. By appointing and convening a Commission on Housing Safety, Stability, and Affordability, Holcomb can address the state's unresolved housing issues and promote solutions in several concrete ways:

- Bring together representatives of state administrative

agencies, courts, local governments, and legislators, along with stakeholders and residents who are tackling the housing health and safety crisis on the ground;

- Align existing housing resources and initiatives at the state and local levels, potentially saving taxpayers millions of dollars;

- Clarify the jurisdiction of code enforcement regarding housing health and safety;

- Coordinate administrative and court-based rules that can protect Hoosiers and expand the housing supply for communities with the greatest need without the need for legislation; and

- Provide a united voice to recommend new legislation where necessary.

Holcomb may not be able to see Hoosiers all the way to housing safety and stability, but he can leave the gift of a commission to guide us on the path forward. Hoosiers can join the hundreds of organizations and individuals who have already signed on to the effort to encourage Holcomb to cement a positive housing legacy.

Bradley is Policy Director for Prosperity Indiana, a statewide membership organization for individuals and organizations strengthening Hoosier communities.

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

# Democrats made a good call on speaker

New York Daily News  
Tribune News Service

As the ax came down on Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson on Wednesday, it was Democrats who were there to block it, with the caucus uniting with the majority of GOP members to defeat Marjorie Taylor Greene's effort to remove the speaker. It wasn't just an act of goodwill — this was in exchange for Johnson's successful efforts to help pass an international military aid bill last month, which is itself what drew Greene's ire. This was a smart move.

It would have been very easy here, and perhaps electorally helpful, for Democrats to simply have stood back and let the Republicans continue to devour each other, throwing the House into further chaos and tanking any possibility for the now-dominant MAGA wing to push through its dangerous and unpopular agenda items. But doing so would also tank any possibility of other legislation making it through — not just funding for Ukraine but things as basic as keeping the government open.

The objective was not to save Johnson, but to block Greene. We understand the urge to qualify this as a stalemate or even a loss for Democrats, who still don't control the chamber and have saved a very right-wing speaker, but he is now perhaps the weakest and most malleable speaker in congressional history.

His already slim partisan advantage keeps dropping as GOP legislators leave, and as the smoke settles on this ouster effort, it's clear who's left holding the cards: Hakeem Jeffries and his unified Democratic caucus. Without them, Johnson is on the chopping block, and he knows it, which is why he's defending Jack Smith and saying Democrats aren't enemies. That might be bare minimum stuff, but for a contemporary GOP speaker, that's plenty.

Had Greene been successful in her efforts, who knows where things would

## Guest Editorial

be right now. Perhaps a beleaguered GOP moderate wing, sick of the dysfunction, would have caved and helped install an extremist like Jim Jordan, who absolutely would not shepherd through votes on foreign aid or probably anything beyond bad-faith investigations of political opponents. This is not an ideal situation, but it's certainly a far better one than having Greene as king-maker.

Contrary to what some GOP congressmembers seem to believe, the purpose of the legislative body is not burnishing personal brands or grandstanding, but to write, debate and approve meaningful legislation that can improve people's lives. The never-ending circus of leadership musical chairs and unreasonable MAGA demands puts that function on ice.

Not to say we should get ahead of ourselves and praise Johnson as some sort of smooth dealmaker or bipartisan operator. Just after being saved by his Democratic colleagues, the speaker announced legislation to prohibit the already-illegal practice of federal noncitizen voting, admitting even during that same press conference that this is not a real issue. This is all in service to Donald Trump and his obsession with claiming election fraud where there is none, along with a side serving of xenophobia. Johnson knows this is a dangerous game, given Trump's contempt for fair elections.

Democrats should make clear that their shielding comes with heavy strings attached, and work to defeat Johnson in this year's general election, just as they should endeavor to defeat every other MAGA Republican.

# The Commercial Review



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

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# Organization will assess soil health

## Indiana Organic Network will be part of statewide initiative

By STEVE KOPPE  
Purdue Ag News

A Purdue University interdisciplinary team is establishing a network of organic farmers to improve soil health.

The effort will formalize the Indiana Organic Network (ION) as part of a statewide initiative to assess soil health at regional and farm scales. The project is supported by a grant of nearly \$1 million from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

"This project is about empowering Indiana organic farmers," said Yichao Rui, an assistant professor in the Department of Agronomy who heads the Purdue Agroecology Lab. Rui leads the ION effort with Ashley Adair, Extension organic agriculture specialist in the Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture.

Project partners include the Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative and the Indiana Natural Resources Conservation Service.

"The formation of the Indiana Organic Network is something Indiana has needed," Adair said. "We would like to see farmers — whether they're grain farmers, specialty crop farmers or livestock farmers — take the reins and lead this network forward so that it can be for the farmer, by the farmer."

Indiana ranks fifth in U.S. agriculture production, Rui noted. "Historically, we've been known for large-scale, conventional corn and soybean farming. That's a proud history. However, recent challenges such as climate change, environmental degradation, human health issues and long-term food safety concerns



Purdue Agricultural Communications/Tim Thompson

Purdue's Ashley Adair, Extension organic agriculture specialist, demonstrates a roller crimper attachment for BCS and other walk-behind tractors at the 2022 Small Farm Education Field Day. Adair co-leads Purdue's launch of the Indiana Organic Network.

require us to explore other farming approaches," he said.

Organic farmers are sometimes able to reduce environmental issues by avoiding synthetic fertilizers, pesticides and herbicide and relying instead on crop diversity, organic fertilizers and extended crop rotations.

Indiana currently has 937 certified organic crop and livestock farms, Adair said. These range from a few acres or less for diversified vegetable farms on the small end, up to thousands of acres planted in row crops. ION is intended to assist certified organic farms and farms that are going through the USDA-mandated transition process.

"If somebody wants to become a certified organic farmer, they have to follow specific guidelines over the course of a 36-month transition peri-

od to meet those directives, which is federal law," Adair said.

The project will include conducting the first statewide soil health census on organic farms in Indiana. The results will offer insights into soil health status of organic farming systems and the impact of various organic practices.

"Such information is essential for farmers to identify areas for improvement in their practices, such as reducing tillage, to further enhance soil health," Rui said.

"Soil health is a foundation of long-term successful farming. Organic farming holds a lot of potential, but it presents significant challenges. It's difficult because synthetic fertilizers are not an option. You need to build fertility and maintain soil health. How do you accomplish that? There

are lots of questions and challenges," he said.

Healthy soil is rich in organic matter, which encompasses a variety of components such as decomposing plant material, living plant roots and a diverse population of soil microbes. These elements are crucial as they contribute to the structure, fertility and overall biological health of the soil, supporting sustainable agricultural practices and robust plant growth.

Most organic farmers, along with some conventional farmers, practice cover cropping during the winter. Cover crops usually have deep roots and can add biomass underground. Carbon transfer to deeper layers is crucial for soil carbon sequestration and the function of organic systems. And yet there is still much to learn. "A detailed understanding of

what's happening below the 15-centimeter depth, 6-inch layer, and the benefits of organic farming in that deeper soil is largely unknown. That's a big knowledge gap," Rui said. The Purdue team will work with organic farmers across the state to bridge this gap.

The Purdue team also plans to develop field-based microbial activity testing kits that would provide organic farmers with more immediate and better insight into nutrient cycling at a given location.

Organic farmers often fill knowledge gaps by doing their own trials, Adair noted. "If there's a way that we at the university can help add to that story, then that's what we need to do," she said. "This project is one good step in the right direction to help build concrete data to help growers in Indiana."

## Maine farmers to sue over chemicals

### Group will join action against the EPA

By PENELOPE OVERTON  
Portland Press Herald (Maine)  
Tribune News Service

A Maine-based organic farming group announced Monday that it plans to join a lawsuit contending that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has failed to regulate harmful forever chemicals found in the sludge that Maine farmers used as an agricultural fertilizer for years.

The Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, or MOFGA, claims that federal law requires the EPA to regulate toxic pollutants in sludge and take steps to prevent them from harming humans and the environment. Its failure to do so has put us all at risk, said MOFGA Director Sarah Alexander.

"If the EPA had been regulating appropriately, many of our farmers wouldn't be facing the harm they are today," Alexander said. "We demand that the EPA do the work required under the Clean Water Act and stop allowing these toxic chemicals to contaminate the U.S. food and water supply."

Farmers across the U.S., including Maine, have been impacted by the spreading of sludge contaminated by at least 18 different types of forever chemicals, MOFGA

claims. There is sufficient scientific evidence that at least a dozen of these chemicals require EPA regulation to protect the public.

Under a 1987 amendment to the Clean Water Act, the EPA must identify emerging risks from sewage sludge and adopt rules to prevent it from harming people or the environment. The agency has identified more than 250 pollutants, yet only adopted nine sewage sludge rules for land application.

In 2021, the Biden administration said it would consider whether to regulate forever chemicals in sludge after it completed a human health and environmental risk assessment in the winter of 2024 on two of the oldest forever chemicals commonly found in sludge, PFOA and PFOS.

The agency recently announced new national drinking water standards for forever chemicals, including both PFOA and PFOS, that are lower than Maine's interim drinking water standard, but it has remained mum on the status of its risk assessment and has yet to start the lengthy rulemaking process.

The EPA's reluctance to regulate sludge has left Maine farmers to shoulder the burden, Alexander said.

"This lawsuit isn't about money," Alexander said. "We aren't seeking damages for the Maine farmers who have lost livestock or crops because of this, some who have even lost their farms. That's for another day. This is about forcing the government to set a national standard so it won't happen to anybody else."

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**THE FAMILY CIRCUS** By Bil Keane

5-17  
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“... and we thank you for this food. A-mmmmmMMMMM-men.”

**Contract Bridge** By Steve Becker

**Bidding quiz**

You are South, neither side vulnerable. The bidding has been:  
West North East South  
1 ♦ Dble Redble ?

What would you bid with each of the following five hands?  
1. ♠6 ♥J963 ♦J754 ♣8732  
2. ♠K1053 ♥Q1053 ♦10 ♣J984  
3. ♠KJ87642 ♥8 ♦73 ♣542  
4. ♠Q53 ♥10962 ♦72 ♣Q763  
5. ♠Q62 ♥J107642 ♦A43 ♣8

1. **One heart.** In standard bidding, your right-hand opponent's redouble indicates 10 or more high-card points, so your side could be in serious trouble. Whether or not to bid over the redouble is more a matter of common sense than convention. A pass indicates that there is nothing to be gained by bidding, while a bid indicates that it is unwise to pass.

Here the aim of the one-heart bid is to avoid the awkward situation that could arise if you were to pass and your partner bid one spade, your worst suit. The heart bid does not promise any values; it can be based merely on heart length and/or the obligation to keep partner out of trouble.

2. **Pass.** This is a fairly good hand opposite a takeout double, but there is no need to respond at this point since partner has a bid coming, and you have support for any suit he names.

3. **Three spades.** This is not a strong bid, but instead indicates extra spade length and very limited high-card strength. Partner is expected to pass unless he has values in excess of a minimum double. While the chief purpose of the three-spade bid is to interfere with the opponents, it also implies substantial offensive strength if spades are trump.

4. **Pass.** Here it is better to let partner seek his own salvation. You can't be sure which suit should be trump, so you let him make the choice. You're at least moderately prepared for any suit he chooses.

Note the difference between this hand and the first one. There you bid one heart because of the danger that partner, left to his own devices, might bid spades. Here there is no good reason to fear that action.

5. **Two hearts.** The jump to two hearts informs partner that your side may have a game in hearts. The bid is not forcing and shows a stronger hand than a jump to three hearts, which would be preemptive, as in No. 3 above. If partner does not accept your invitation, game is unlikely.

Tomorrow: Stop, look and listen.  
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5-17

**CRYPTOQUIP**

VEQ KEUL QLHKER X HU NGL  
NTIL EV ILQKER FGE LRAETK  
NLQQXMZL IPRK. NGHN 'K

APKN GEF LTL QEZZ.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHAT WOULD YOU CALL LETTERS OF ADMIRATION SENT TO "THE NANNY" ACTRESS DRESCHER? FRAN MAIL.  
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Q equals R

**CROSSWORD** By Eugene Sheffer

<b>ACROSS</b>	<b>35 Bar</b>	<b>DOWN</b>	<b>20 Kid</b>
1 Tummy muscles	mitzvah, e.g.	1 "Feels so good!"	around
4 Like dried mud	36 Taj —	2 Bikini half	21 — Minor (bear constellation)
8 Streetcar	37 Coffee enhancer	3 More intense	22 Trumpet noise
12 Louvre collection	40 Chantilly, e.g.	4 "It's a Wonderful Life" director	23 Part of NYC
13 Balm ingredient	41 Petty of "Tank Girl"	5 Regrettably	25 Italy's silhouette
14 Spanish greeting	42 Solid, as abs	6 Decks in the ring	26 Fools
15 Unequivocal "no"	46 Spelling-out phrase	7 "Indeed!"	27 "Arrivederci —"
17 Cavort	47 Shoppe descriptor	8 Songbird	28 Two-way
18 Partially mine	48 Conk out	9 Leeway	30 Do laps
19 Cougars	49 PC alternatives	11 Atlas pages	33 Ex-hausts
20 Coup group	50 First lady Truman	16 Obligation	34 Apiece
22 Tournament passes	51 Sean, to Yoko	19 Church seating	36 "This — no sense!"
24 Wild revelry			37 Chowder morsel
25 Windbag			38 Historic Parks
29 Away from NNNW			39 Idle or Bana
30 Sky-rockets			40 Some TV screens
31 Debtor's letters			42 Filch
32 Strenuous labor			43 Yucatan "Bravo!"
34 Singer Franklin			44 Brazilian city
			45 Lair

**Solution time: 25 mins.**

A	L	E	C	B	A	T	R	B	I	S		
H	U	L	U	A	M	O	A	U	D	I		
A	G	A	R	S	A	O	N	T	S	B		
B	E	L	A	S	T	L	S	A	T			
			C	H	E	C	K	I	T	O	U	T
T	O	D	A	Y	O	I	L	D	N	E		
O	R	E	O	O	A	T	D	U	N	S		
I	S	T	H	P	S	D	E	P	O	T		
L	O	O	K	A	T	H	A	T				
X	I	T	I	I	I	S	R	A	E	L		
A	B	I	T	M	E	L	O	R	C	A		
P	U	N	T	U	R	L	I	O	R	I		
E	G	G	Y	M	A	Y	T	O	N	E		

Yesterday's answer 5-17

**Peanuts**

YOU KNOW WHERE CHAMPIONS ARE MADE?  
WELL, THEY'RE NOT MADE AT WIMBLEDON OR FOREST HILLS, I'LL TELL YOU THAT!  
THEY'RE MADE RIGHT HERE ON THESE DIRTY BUMPY, MISERABLE COURTS WHERE YOU CALL YOUR OWN LINES AND KEEP YOUR OWN SCORE!  
YOU GET WHAT YOU GO FOR, KID!  
I'D LIKE TO GO HOME, BUT I THINK SHE'D KILL ME!

**Rose is Rose**

BREATHE. STRETCH. FOCUS. I DON'T NEED COACHING FROM A COUPLE OF HAND PUPPETS. WE THINK YOU DO. KEEP GOING.

**Agnes**

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOUR GRANDMA TOOK YOUR WELDER.  
I KNOW... REMIND ME TO NEVER ASK ABOUT PUTTING A 220-VOLT OUTLET IN MY ROOM AGAIN.  
KIND OF RAISED A RED FLAG.  
YEAH.  
NEXT TIME, TELL HER IT'S FOR A DRYER SO YOU CAN HELP WITH THE LAUNDRY.  
YOU ARE BRILLIANT BUT ONE DAY TOO LATE.

**Hi and Lois**

I ASKED YOU TO BE NICER TO YOUR BROTHER.  
I TRIED.  
BUT AN "OPEN-DOOR POLICY" IS TOO MUCH TO ASK.  
KEEP OUT OR ELSE!

**Between Friends**

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF MY NEW PAJAMAS, HARV?  
NICE.  
YOU DIDN'T EVEN LOOK AT THEM!  
NICE.  
AND YET, IN THE LINGERIE SHOP, I WAS CONVINCED THEY WOULD CHANGE MY LIFE.

**Blondie**

SEE YOU GUYS LATER... WE'RE GOING FOR PIZZA.  
I CAN'T BELIEVE ALL THOSE KIDS WERE IN ALEX'S ROOM.  
ME NEITHER.  
HEY, WAIT FOR US.

**Snuffy Smith**

WHY CAN'T I BE HOME-SCHOOLED, AUNT LOWEZY?  
YA ARE BEIN' HOME-SCHOOLED, JUGHAID !!  
HOOTIN' HOLLER'S YORE AN' THAT THAR'S YORE SCHOOL !!

**Beetle Bailey**

WOW! LOOK AT ALL THE MAIL ZERO GETS!  
HE LIKES TO DONATE TO LOTS OF CHARITIES.  
HE DOESN'T HAVE MUCH MONEY, SO HE SENDS THEM ALL QUARTERS.

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Photo provided

## The next step

Alex Dues signed to play baseball at Marietta College on Monday afternoon. Pictured from left to right in the front row are mother Jenny Dues, Alex and father Nick Dues. Back row are coach Kevin Eyink, sisters Maleia and Kyla, brothers Brennan and Jordan and assistant coach Ben Homan.

## Tribe ...

Continued from page 8  
Aubrey Young of Allen East sits as the first seed out of the 100 dash with a time of 12.93, white she edges Pearson out of the final spot in the 200 dash by 0.004 seconds. Another preliminary first-place finish came from the girls 4x100 relay team. Roessner, Paige Guggenbiller, Kiana Matsuda and Pearson combined for a 50.19 time. The other favorable seed belongs to the 4x400 relay team. Matsuda, Will, Guggenbiller and Roessner ran a 4:17.68 race to claim the fourth seed. New Knoxville's team sits just below Fort Recovery with a time of 4:23.2. Like Pearson in the 200 dash, Matsuda sits just outside of the favorites to make the regional in the 300 hurdles. Her time of 47.8 seconds earned fifth place, while Karlee Buschur of St. Henry beat her out by 0.39 seconds. The boys 4x400 relay team also earned a finals berth after Breaker Jutte, Isaac Roessner, Ben Ingold and Trevor Heitkamp claimed the sixth-best time of 3:46.99. New Bremen holds the No. 4 seed at 3:36.92. The boys team has already earned points from the 4x800 relay team and Carson Fullenkamp. Heitkamp, Reese Diller, Russell Hart and Parker Bruswick combined for the relay and took sixth place in 9:03.86. They would have needed to be 22.59 faster to beat Marion Local for the final regional spot. Fullenkamp's throw of 45 feet, 0.5 inches, captured sixth place in the shot put. Allen East's Landen Poling earned the final regional berth with a throw of 49 feet, 9 inches.

## Compliance ...

Continued from page 8  
Beiswanger and Henneaux couldn't seal the deal as Joselyn Smith gave them trouble with a barrage of volleys. The tiebreaker went back and forth between the teams. Ultimately, Jay County's duo found a way to outlast the Rebels with the final two points coming on a long hit by Baker and a forehand by Beiswanger that Joselyn Smith attempted to volley but hit into the net. "We never really gave up or got mad at each other," said Henneaux, an exchange student from Belgium that recently got moved to the No. 2 doubles team to replace the injured Chloe Ruiz. "I'm just really happy, really proud of us and I'm excited for tomorrow." The final of the No. 2 doubles match ended up being 6-0, 7-6 (8-6) in favor of JCHS. All three Jay County singles players breezed through their opponents. Brenna Bailey secured the first victory of the day for the Patriots with a 6-1, 6-0 beating of Jordan Black in the No. 2 singles contest. Bailey mentioned that she may have been too aggressive in the fifth game of the first set (her only loss) as a few too many shots sailed long. Beyond the hiccup, Bailey found success by working with short placements and forcing Black into long rallies that eventually ended with a mistake. "One of my best qualities in tennis is just covering the court," Bailey said. "So every shot I can

at least get a touch on it. It might not be a good shot, but usually I get a touch on it because I can get so much court coverage." Dillon dominated the No. 3 singles match in a similar fashion, defeating Pelico 6-1, 6-1. Garringer pointed out that Dillon's serves have improved over the past two weeks, and that played a role in the dominant performance. Brenna Haines gave up a few extra games to Alexis Stump in the No. 1 singles contest, but still managed a 6-2, 6-3 victory. No. 1 doubles duo Dirksen and Sprunger dropped the only match of the day for JCHS to Sophi Chenoweth and Brianna Smith (Joselyn's older sister). The Patriots got down early in the first set and never recovered, while letting a late lead slip away in the second set. The final ended up 6-4, 6-4 in favor of the senior Rebels. The win also advances them to the individual sectional at Noblesville. "I'm excited for them and they've earned that," RSHS coach Kyle Good said. "I told them, 'Just enjoy the ride.'" "We don't get kids advancing individually every year so it's a big deal." Jay County previously played against Union City on April 23, which resulted in a 4-1 win for the Patriots. The only loss came from Beiswanger and Ruiz to Shelby Arnold and Addison Thornburg. (The pair got promoted to No. 1 doubles in the match against Winchester in the sectional opener.)



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Jay County No. 2 singles player Brenna Bailey hits a backhand during Wednesday's sectional opener against Randolph Southern. Bailey beat Jordan Black 6-1, 6-0 to secure the first win of the match.

## Sports on tap

### Local schedule

**Today**  
Jay County — Softball vs. Richmond — 5:30 p.m.; JV baseball at Blackford — 5 p.m.  
Fort Recovery — Track district finals at Spencerville — 4

**Saturday**  
Jay County — Boys golf ACAC tournament at Celina — 8 a.m.; JV baseball Patriot Invitational — 10 p.m.  
Portland Rockets vs. South Bend Royals — 7 p.m.

### TV sports

**Today**  
11 a.m. — PGA Championship: Valhalla Golf Club (ESPN2)  
12 p.m. — PGA Championship: Valhalla Golf Club (ESPN)  
1 p.m. — PGA Championship: Valhalla Golf Club (ESPN2)  
3 p.m. — NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series: Wright Band 250 (FS1)  
5:40 p.m. — NASCAR Cup Series: NASCAR All-Star Open (FS1)  
8:30 p.m. — NBA playoffs: Boston Celtics at Cleveland Cavaliers (ESPN)  
10:10 p.m. — MLB: Cincinnati Reds

at Los Angeles Dodgers (Bally Indiana)

**Saturday**  
6:30 a.m. — Formula 1: Emilia Romagna Grand Prix (ESPN2)  
10 a.m. — Formula 1: Emilia Romagna Grand Prix (ESPN2)  
10 a.m. — PGA Championship: Valhalla Golf Club (ESPN)  
10:30 a.m. — NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series: Wright Band 250 (FS1)  
1 p.m. — PGA Championship: Valhalla Golf Club (CBS)  
1 p.m. — WNBA: Indiana Fever at New York Liberty (ABC)  
1:30 p.m. — NASCAR Craftsman

Truck Series: Wright Band 250 (FS1)  
1:45 p.m. — MLS: Atlanta United at Nashville SC (FOX)  
3 p.m. — WNBA: Los Angeles Sparks at Las Vegas Aces (ABC)  
3 p.m. — Track & Field: LA Grand Prix (NBC)  
4 p.m. — MLB: Seattle Mariners at Baltimore Orioles (FS1)  
4 p.m. — UFL: Michigan Panthers at Memphis Showboats (FOX)  
8 p.m. — NBA playoffs: Oklahoma City Thunder at Dallas Mavericks (ESPN)  
8 p.m. — UFL: Birmingham Stallions at Houston Roughnecks (ESPN2)  
9:10 p.m. — MLB: Cincinnati Reds at

Los Angeles Dodgers (Bally Indiana)  
11 p.m. — Boxing: Denys Berinchyk vs. Emanuel Navarrete (ESPN)

**Local notes**  
**Outing scheduled**  
The annual City of Portland Mayor's Golf Outing has been scheduled for Friday, June 14, at Portland Golf Club. Registration for the event will be held from 11 a.m. until 11:45 a.m. on the day of the outing. A meal will also be provided for the four-person teams at this time. Registration is limited to

the first 20 teams and must be completed by June 10 and submitted to 321 N. Meridian St., emailing mayoroffice@thecityofportland.net or calling (260) 726-9395. Golfing will begin with a shotgun start at noon. Those interested can also sponsor the event. It cost \$150 to sponsor a hole, \$200 to sponsor a team and a meal or \$300 for to sponsor a team, a meal and hole sponsorship. . . . . To have an event listed in "Sports on tap," email details to sports@thecr.com.

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**90 SALE CALENDAR**

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# Sports

## Patriots force compliance

*Jay County beats Rebels 4-1 to make sectional title match*

By **ANDREW BALKO**  
The Commercial Review

In the sectional opener of the 2023 season, the Patriots were in a 2-2 deadlock before a court freed up for No. 3 singles player Maggie Dillon.

With her contest acting as the rubber match, Dillon needed to win for the Patriots to advance.

In 2024, she didn't have that pressure, as the Patriots secured three wins before she ever got fully going.

The Jay County High School girls tennis team took down the Randolph Southern Rebels 4-1 in the IHSAA Sectional 53 opener on Wednesday.

The victory sets up a date with Union City — it beat Winchester 3-2 in the other sectional semifinal — on Thursday for a chance at a fourth straight sectional title.

"I'm very excited," said first-year JCHS coach Andrea Garlinger. "I thought they played amazingly. I was very shocked that Sophia (Sprunger) and Meredith (Dirksen) didn't pull that out, but it happens."

With Winchester and Union City facing off on the north courts, only the No. 1 and 2 singles and No. 1 and 2 doubles matches could be held between Jay County (8-6) and Randolph Southern (7-7), forcing Dillon and Noemi Pelico to wait to start the No. 3 singles contest.

Last year, Dillon's match ended up being the deciding factor on which team made it to the sectional championship. In 2024, she didn't have that pressure as the Patriots secured three quick wins, capped off by Zion Beiswanger and Lucie Henneaux's victory in the No. 2 doubles match.



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Lucie Henneaux, an exchange student from Belgium at Jay County High School, grimaces as she hits a backhand on Wednesday's 4-1 victory in the sectional opener against Randolph Southern. Henneaux and Zion Beiswanger teamed up to win the No. 2 doubles match 6-0, 7-6 (8-6) to set up a date with the Union City Indians on Thursday.

"I'm glad we were the deciding factor," Beiswanger said. "That's a good thing so that the pressure's not all on Maggie, but she would have pulled through anyway."

Beiswanger and Henneaux cruised through the first set against freshmen Kehlan Baker and Joselyn Smith 6-0. Beiswanger mentioned that their focus, concentration and

stamina played a major role in the early success.

The second set wasn't as smooth. They built a 3-1 lead, but as they tired out, it started to slip. Fortunately for the Patriot net-

ters, a 5-3 deficit was the worst that the match set ever got. They even worked their way back into a 6-5 lead with a chance to end the match.

See **Compliance** page 7

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## Tribe punches two tickets to regional

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio — The Indians have punched regional tickets in two events.

They earned seeds that indicate they can follow suit in four more events.

They made their way to the finals to give them a chance in another two events.

Two more performances failed to reach the regional level, but scored some points for the Tribe.

The Fort Recovery High School track team's Karlie Neikamp and the girls 4x800-meter relay both earned a berth for the regional competition after placing in the top four at the Division III district tournament preliminary hosted by Spencerville on Wednesday.

After the first day of competition, the girls team sits in fifth place out of 11 teams with 13 points. The boys team secured six points, which is good for eighth place out of 12 teams after the

*Indians move on in eight events from Wednesday's prelims*

prelims. Minster leads both sides with 34 points for the boys and 25.66 earned by the girls.

Neikamp earned her first regional berth as a junior in the discus with a mark of 112 feet, 6 inches to take second place. New Knoxville's Avery Albers took the district crown with a throw that beat Neikamp by 6 feet, 4 inches.

The girls 4x800 relay team secured the other regional berth on Wednesday. In the district race, Ellie Will, Kennedy Muhlenkamp, Joelle Kaup and Natalie Brunswick paced fourth with a time of 10 min-

utes, 13.02 seconds to edge out New Bremen for the last spot by 6.04 seconds.

The Indians secured eight qualifications for the finals which will take place later today. Five of those eight seeds are in the top four and favored to make it through to the regional.

Anna Roesner took the top spot in both the 100 dash and 200 dash with times of 12.14 seconds and 24.83 seconds. Mara Pearson qualified in both events as well, finishing third in the 100 dash (12.73) and fifth in the 200 dash (27.11).

See **Tribe** page 7

## Jay softball can't find runs in loss

FRANKTON — The Patriots have averaged over 14 hits per game over the month of May.

The Eagles finally quieted the Patriots to the point of keeping them scoreless.

The Jay County High School softball team got shut out by the Frankton Eagles on Wednesday in a 2-0 loss that snapped an eight-game winning streak over the month of May.

The game was originally scheduled for Tuesday, but got delayed due to rain.

Paige Parker and Grace Kessinger put together a strong day in the circle for Frankton (15-5), only surrendering four hits to Jay County (13-5). Parker earned the win after tossing four innings, in which she struck out four batters.

Two of the Patriots' singles came in the third inning when Hallie Schwieterman and Carley Trinidad delivered back-

to-back singles. A pair of strikeouts and a groundout eliminated the threat.

Jay County put pressure on Frankton in the fifth inning as Schwieterman, Morgan Missicano and Mallory Winner drew walks to load the bases, but Riah Champ struck out to end the inning before any of the runners could make their way home.

The Eagles scored in the first and third innings.

The first run scored on a double steal, in which Jersey Marsh swiped second base and Claire Duncan made her way to the plate on an error by Schwieterman.

Duncan led off the third inning with a double and later scored on a single by Aly Smith.

Trinidad suffered the loss in six innings as she gave up seven hits and one earned run.