

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

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With a purpose



The Commercial Review/Bailey Cline

Eighth grader Cheyenne Ladewig receives an award for being a positive influence from guidance counselor Darian Jones on May 15 during the Teach One to Lead One graduation ceremony at Jay County Junior-Senior High School. Eleven students graduated from the program established in Jay County this year meant to develop students into leaders with help from local mentors.

Teach One to Lead One connects junior high students with mentors in order to develop leaders

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review

It's about empowering the students to live with intention and purpose.

Eleven Jay County Junior High School students graduated last week from Teach One to Lead One, a new community mentoring program at Jay School Corporation.

The program teaches universal principles — respect, integrity, self-control, compassion, courage, teamwork, excellence, humility, enthusi-

asm and honor — and serves to help develop students into leaders for their community.

"We hope that they grow in confidence," said Sara Colter, Teach One to Lead One's Indiana area manager. "Our goal is so they can realize the potential they have that the administration, or their teachers, or their counselors may see in them that they don't quite see in themselves, and help them to realize that they have the potential to do great things, and they have a

purpose in life to do great things."

Teach One to Lead One, which has existed since the 1990s, "offers hope to all students, including those at risk, to live out their purpose and potential," according to its website. It guarantees improved attendance, attitude and academic results.

Teach One to Lead One brings in folks from the community to lead the students as certified mentors. During sixth period each Wednesday,

11 students met with mentors. The Rock Church pastor Matt Ransom, Jay County Chamber of Commerce executive director Tabby Sprunger, real estate agent Jack Houck and former JCHS band director Kelly Smeltzer. Jay County Junior-Senior High School guidance counselor Darian Jones also served as the school's liaison.

Each Wednesday, they tackled a different part of the program's curriculum.

See **Purpose** page 2

Jay's rate falls to 3.2%

Unemployment had climbed above 4% in February

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review

After peaking in February, the local unemployment rate is trending back toward 3%.

Estimates released Monday by Indiana Department of Workforce Development show Jay County with an unemployment rate of 3.2% for April.

The local rate had climbed to 4.1% in February, marking the first time it had reached 4% or higher since September 2020 following the spike related to coronavirus pandemic shutdowns.

Jay County's rate last month was down 0.6 percentage points from March. It was still 0.5 percentage points higher than in April 2023.

Unemployment was down across the region as Jay, Henry and Wayne counties also saw declines of 0.6 percentage points or more. Indiana's rate came in at 3.4%, 0.7 percentage points lower than in March.

"Again this month, the employment data shows the historic opportunity for skilled workers in Indiana," said Indiana Department of Workforce Development commissioner Richard Paulk in a press release. "For the eighth month in a row, the number of private sector jobs reached a new peak. Profession and Business Services, Financial Activities, and Private Education and Health Services added jobs in Indiana over the month."

Gibson County recorded the lowest unemployment rate amongst the state's 92 counties for the third month in a row, this time tying with Dubois and Daviess counties at 2.5%.

See **Rate** page 2

All counties sign on

By WHITNEY DOWNARD
Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com

Every county in Indiana seems to have signed onto a state effort to provide \$150 million in enhanced funding for public health departments in the coming year in exchange for providing "core" public health services.

The Indiana Capital Chronicle called six holdout counties who opted out of the program in 2024, each of which will be participating in the 2025 cohort. Barring any changes to the 86 counties who participated last year, every county will get additional funding from the Indiana Department of Health's Health First Indiana program.

For Theresa Baysinger, a county commissioner from Whitley County, the decision to opt out last year was due to concerns about "regionalizing health departments" and worries about needing to hire new employees to meet grant requirements.

"Obviously what works for one

Handful of '24 holdouts have opted in for funding next year

county doesn't work for another. So we wanted to hold that autonomy for us to make decisions for our county," Baysinger said. "But the more we're learning from surrounding counties, and just seeing how the programs are working and really diving deep into it, we are going to give it a try."

Should lawmakers decide to renew funding for 2026 and beyond, counties like Whitley can revisit their decision and opt back out.

"We just really hope that it works out and that we can provide a better health department for all Whitley County residents," Baysinger concluded.

Funding coincides with the fiscal year, which starts on July 1, rather than the calendar year. The Indiana Department of Health didn't respond to a request for comment.

In 2022, the General Assembly earmarked \$225 million for a two-year program to shore up the state's beleaguered public health program. Prior to the investment, counties spent an average of \$55 per resident for public health — far below the national average of \$91 — though totals ranged from \$83 to \$1.25 per Hoosier, depending on their county of residence.

See **Counties** page 2



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Grad and dad

Joscie LeFevre hugs her dad, school board member Greg LeFevre, after he presented her with her diploma Sunday during Fort Recovery High School's graduation ceremony at Fort Site Fieldhouse.

Weather

Jay County's high temperature climbed to 88 degrees Tuesday. The low was 64.

Expect a low of 60 tonight with a slight chance of showers and storms. Skies will be partly cloudy Friday with a 50% chance

of rain and a high in the lower 80s.

The outlook for the weekend shows highs in the upper 70s with a 50% chance of rain.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

Next week's meeting schedule has been adjusted because of the Memorial Day holiday. Jay County Commissioners will meet at 9 a.m. Tuesday and Jay County Solid Waste Management District will meet at 3:30 p.m. Tuesday.

Also, Redkey Town Council has scheduled a special meeting for 7 p.m. Tuesday.

Coming up

Friday — Coverage of the Jay County Redevelopment Commission meeting.

Saturday — Results from the JCHS baseball team in the sectional semifinal.

Wednesday — Coverage of Tuesday's Jay County Commissioners meeting.





Photo provided

Survival Camp

Members of Scouting America Troop 202 of Portland recently completed the Wilderness Survival Camp. Scouts spent two nights in the woods building shelters, making fire, boiling water, fishing and cooking meals. Pictured, front row, are Hayden Richman, Nathaniel Locke, Kason Sims, Dillon Jellison, Michael Young and Eli Nelson, and in the back row are Hayden Ison, Austin Jellison, Camden Buckland, Joel Wilson, Max Klopfenstein and Traylin Lautzenheiser.

Take steps to improve your mental health

By JENNIFER VANSKYOCK

Mental health is a key component to overall health and wellbeing. It can have an impact on the quality of life and overall functioning.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, one in five U.S. adults and one in six U.S. youth experience a mental illness each year, but only half receive treatment. Long-term and untreated mental health issues can worsen over time and often also negatively impact physical wellbeing.

Why don't individuals with a mental health issue seek treatment?

One key factor that prevents individuals from seeking treatment is the discrimination and stigma that they often face. While mental health issues are common, there has been a lot of misinformation historically and judgment toward those impacted. Unfortunately, that fear of judgment can prevent some from seeking help. Other times, the lack of services in an area or delay in care can also deter individuals from care. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, 122 million people live in mental health professional shortage areas, which can result in a significant barrier to access.

Your Health Matters



important to know you are not alone and there is always someone available for support. Additionally, there are several local options for therapy as well as online options that provide virtual services. These services can be found by calling 211 or making a quick online search.

How can I help if someone I know has a mental health issue?

If you know someone who may be struggling with a mental health issue, it is important to take time to listen, offer support and help them to identify professional resources. Being nonjudgmental is vital in this situation and it is important to ensure others feel safe to share their feelings without shame. Mental illness is common, and we don't want to make those experiencing these issues feel as if they are to blame.

Is there anything I can do to promote good mental health?

Yes. You can practice daily self care that includes eating healthy meals, exercise, developing healthy relationships, finding hobbies, journaling, meditation, getting a good night's sleep and practicing gratitude. Spending time outside with pets or with other people can also help mental health. There may also be times when therapy or medication prescribed by a provider is needed in addition to your self care habits.

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VanSkyock is the program manager for IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health.

Couple fears for friend

DEAR ABBY: My wife's good friend has had a tough time since her divorce. She started dating this guy off and on a few years ago. After the second breakup, we learned the reason. He was verbally abusive (same as her ex-husband).

They eventually resumed living together only to break up again after he threw hot cooking oil on her. This qualifies as physical abuse and, because they lived together, domestic abuse. She moved away and was considering a restraining order.

Several months have gone by, and now we have learned he has moved back in! We are worried for her and her young daughter.

Dear Abby



My experience as a former law enforcement officer is why I'm convinced she is trapped in a spiral of domestic abuse. I'm afraid each event will become more violent. How can friends help in these cases? It's easy to spot these cycles when you are not in them. — STANDING BY IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR STANDING BY: The most helpful thing you and your wife can do is continue to stand by this friend. Do not allow her abuser to isolate her. Explain your concerns about the man's hair-trigger temper and your worry that her child could be caught in the middle of his violent episodes — or injured or killed if his fury is aimed directly at the child.

You or your wife should talk privately with her. Make sure she has the National Domestic Violence Hotline, (800) 799-7233. And reinforce that if she senses she might be in danger, she can call not only the police but also you.

Community Calendar

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

Today

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.

LAWYERS IN LIBRARIES — Free and confidential consultations with a lawyer are available from 10 a.m. to noon at Jay

County Public Library, 315 N. Ship St., Portland. Consulting is available on topics including divorce, custody, guardianship, tenant-landlord issues, bankruptcy, debt collection, estates and immigration. Those interested in participating should sign up in advance at the library, 315 N. Ship St., Portland, or by calling (260) 726-7890.

MISSISSINEWA CHAPTER OF NATIONAL SOCIETY DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION — Will meet at 4:30 p.m. Thursday, May 23, at Jay County Historical Society. Paula Book, Indiana DAR committee chair, will be the guest speaker. For more information, call Kathy Selman at (260) 251-

1694 or Sue Sommers at (260) 726-2678.

DEMENTIA SUPPORT GROUP — Meets at 5:30 p.m. at Persimmon Ridge Rehabilitation Centre, 200 N. Park 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.

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.

Saturday

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS — Will meet at 10 a.m. at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, 218 E. High St., Portland. For more information, call (260) 251-3336 or (260) 729-7000.

Sunday

A BETTER LIFE - BRIANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for all kinds of addictions, will meet from 6:30 to 8 p.m. each Sunday at The Rock Church, 1605 N. Meridian St., Portland.

Tuesday

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

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.

Sudoku

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

Level: Intermediate

Wednesday's Solution

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

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

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Wednesday, July 3 - CR/NS*

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Wednesday, July 10 - CR/NS*

Blackford band

Wednesday, July 10 - NT*

Blackford County Fair preview

Wednesday, July 10 - NT*

*UNIV = appears in all Graphic Printing Newspapers, CR = The Commercial Review, NG = The News-Gazette, NT = The News Times, NS = The News and Sun

Sliding in safely

Champ steals home to mercy rule Delta in Jay's first playoff win in nine years

By ANDREW BALKO

The Commercial Review

MUNCIE — Riah Champ has had no shortage of walk offs throughout her high school career.

She can now say she's walked a team off with a steal of home plate.

The Jay County High School softball team won its first playoff game since 2015 as Champ's steal of home plate ended the IHSAA Class 3A Sectional 24 opener against host Delta Eagles after just five innings with a final of 13-3.

The win earns JCHS a date with the Mississinewa Indians today at 7 p.m. in the sectional semifinal.

"I think they were really prepared and ready to go today," JCHS head coach Doug Arbuckle said. "All the way through the lineup, when we get that production, we're a hard team to beat."

The Patriots entered the bot-

tom of the fifth inning with an 11-3 lead over Delta. Morgan Misciano started off with a short pop up to second base for the first out.

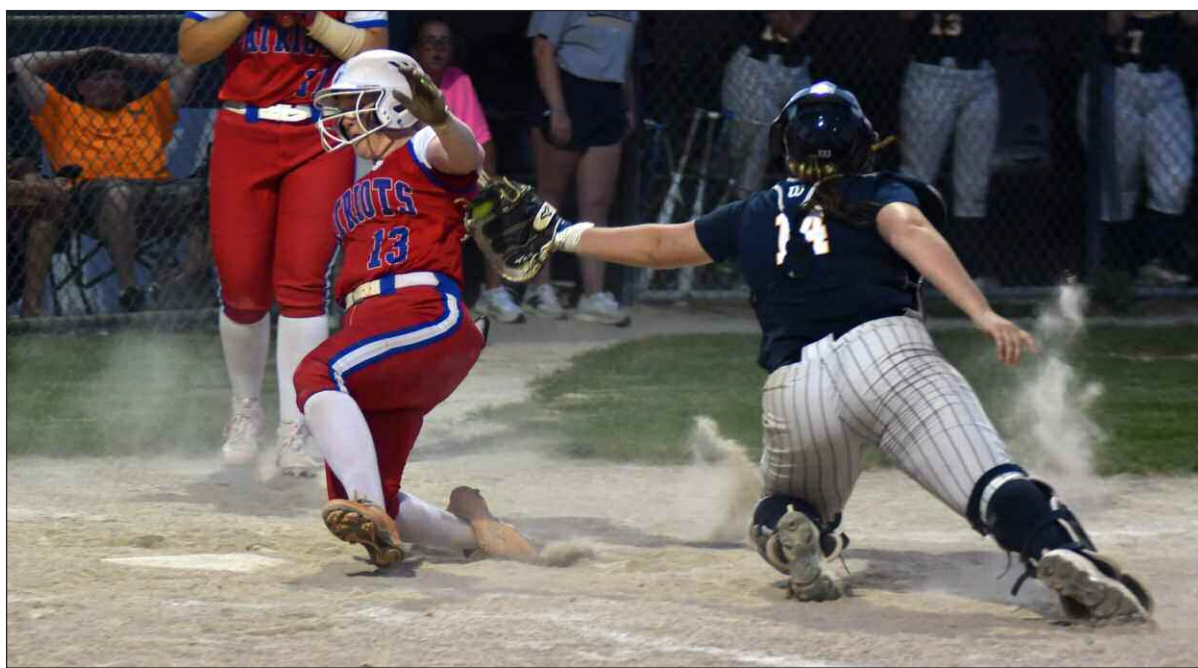
Mallory Winner got all the way to second on an error by Fancy Robbins at shortstop to put a runner on. (Brooklyn Bright pinch ran for Winner.)

Champ followed Winner's lead with a swinging bunt that she beat out for a single. She took second with no contest to put the game-ending run on second base.

Jaelynn Lykins got Bright across the plate and Champ to third with a groundout to Hailee Hamilton at second base.

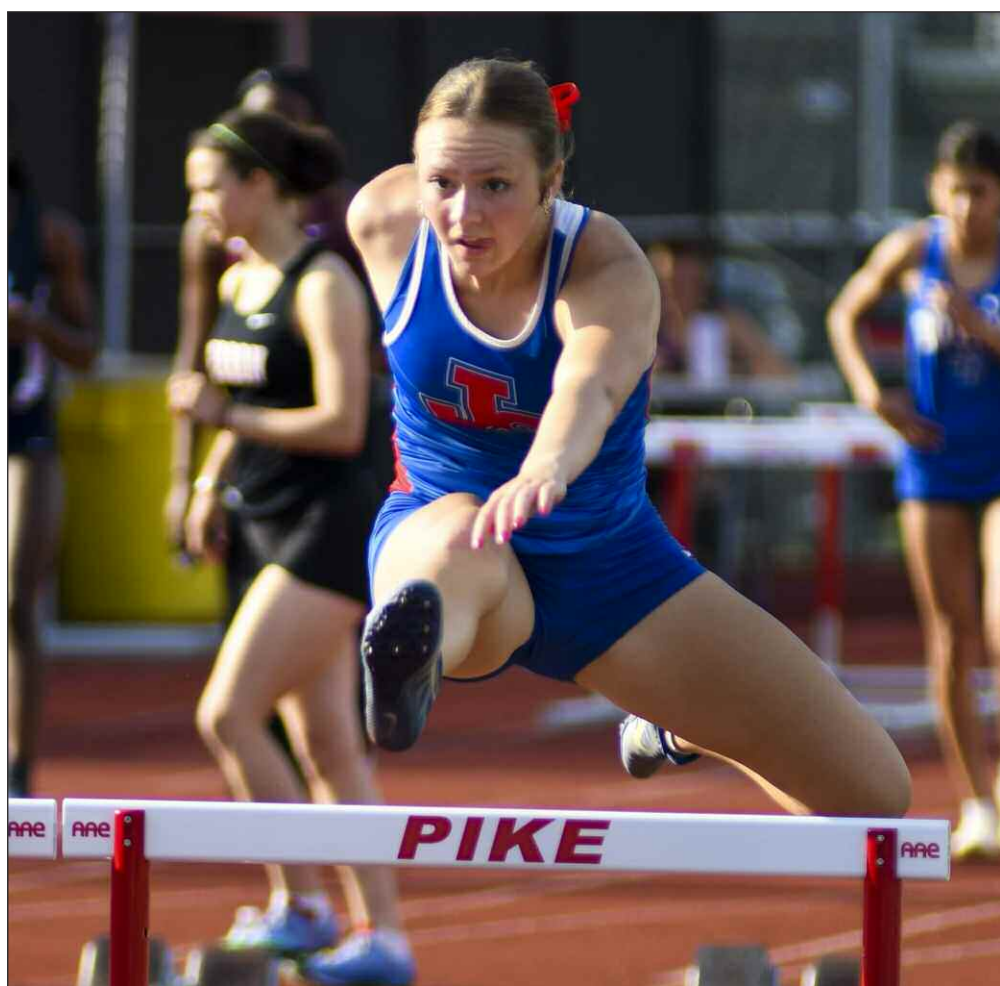
Haley Loser started Jozey Shimp with a strike in the following at bat, before spiking the second pitch in the dirt. Ava Montero's block kept the ball in front of the plate, but Champ crashed home plate hard after getting a big lead off.

See **Sliding** page 7



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Riah Champ, a senior at JCHS, avoids Ava Montero's tag by inches in a steal of home plate to beat Delta by a 13-3 mercy rule in the IHSAA Class 3A Sectional 24 opener.



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Jay County High School's Morgan DeHoff leaps over a hurdle during the regional meet at Pike on Tuesday. DeHoff climbed to 14th place in the 100-meter hurdles with a time of 18.55 seconds.

Patriots' season ends at regional

By RAY COONEY

The Commercial Review

INDIANAPOLIS

— With their highest seed at No. 12, the Patriots knew their season was most likely coming to a close Tuesday.

The meet was more about celebrating the season.

Jay County High School's girls track team closed its 2024 campaign Tuesday in the regional meet at Pike, with its 4x100-meter relay team posting the top finish of 11th.

"I'm proud of all the girls who made it," said JCHS coach Joe Imel. "We emphasized, we're here because you deserved it, you earned it. We're here to have fun, make memories."

Without a top-eight finish, the Patriots did not score in the meet.

North Central won the regional title with 74 points ahead of fellow Indianapolis schools Bishop Chartard (59) and Lawrence North (57).

The 4x100 relay team of Morgan DeHoff, Ariel Beiswanger, Matilda Mende and Jenna Dues was able to improve on its seed and its sectional time. DeHoff ran the final leg and crossed the finish line in 51.45 seconds — 0.06 seconds faster than when the team won the sectional championship in the event a week earlier at Delta.

Jay County's quartet was 0.17 seconds ahead of 12th-place Herron and 0.15 seconds behind 10th-place Muncie Central. Bishop Chatard earned the final state-qualifying berth in 48.34. (The top three finishers in each

event automatically advance to the state finals, which will be contested May 31 at Indiana University.)

"You can't be unhappy with a 4x1 that sets your school record," said Imel of the group that broke the 24-year-old mark as it ran a 50.87 seconds to win the Allen County Athletic Conference title in early May. "They ran another really respectable time today. I'm just really proud of the girls."

DeHoff, a junior, was also able to improve on her seed individually. Projected to finish last amongst the 16 runners in the 100 hurdles, she climbed to 14th place in 18.55 seconds.

Jay County placed 16th in each of its other events:

See **Ends** page 7

Jay swept in regional opener

NOBLESVILLE — The Patriots made it to the regional tournament for the fourth year in a row.

After switching to a different regional, they were hoping for some different luck, but still couldn't make it out of the opener.

Jay County High School's girls tennis team got swept 5-0 on Tuesday by the No. 21 Delta Eagles in the opening round of the IHSAA regional tournament hosted by Noblesville.

Along with the team getting swept, the Patriots (9-7) got swept at two positions.

Local roundup

In singles play, Maggie Dillon fell to Elizabeth Bamidele 6-0, 6-0, in the No. 3 singles match.

No. 1 doubles duo Meredith Dirksen and Sophia Sprunger also failed to claim a game. Kaite Manor and Kelsey Vest claimed the match 6-0, 6-0 for the Eagles.

See **Roundup** page 7

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