

# The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

## Mural underway

*Bliss has started art on side of Dunkirk city building*

By RAY COONEY  
The Commercial Review

DUNKIRK — Another mural is in process in the city.

All those who attended Monday's Dunkirk City Council meeting walked into the city building while artist Pam Bliss painted above their heads.

Dunkirk Mayor Jack Robbins reported that Bliss, who also painted the Glass Capital of Indiana mural in the city in 2020, started work on her newest project last week.

Council member Donna Revolt noted that the mural will feature three school buildings — the original Dunkirk High School that was destroyed by fire, the Dunkirk High School that followed and the Sutton School — that are no longer in operation and the dates they were established. The mural will also feature the Dunkirk Speedcats logo.

The project has been in the works for well over a year, as the city council gave the Dunkirk Beautification Committee permission to commission a mural on the south side of the city building in April 2023. It was contingent on receiving grant funding.

At the time of the approval, there had already been a \$1,500 donation toward the project. The committee was also approved for a \$3,250 grant from The Johnson Fund for the Dunkirk Community via The Dunkirk Foundation for the project.

The mural is expected



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Artist Pam Bliss works on the new mural on the Commerce Street side of the Dunkirk City Building on Monday evening. The public art piece will feature two former Dunkirk high schools, the former Sutton School and the Dunkirk Speedcats logo. It is expected to be complete by the end of the week, weather permitting.

to be completed this week, weather permitting.

The council also heard a request from Stephanie Crouch of Dunkirk Public Library for economic

development income tax (EDIT) funding for new cabinets and countertops for the facility. She said the library has \$3,000 to put toward the project and is seeking assistance

for the remaining funds. Mustard Seed Remodeling of Portland provided a quote of \$8,707 for the project.

Robbins explained that all requests for EDIT

funds go through Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation. He said he will put the topic on the agenda for its next meeting.

See **Dunkirk** page 5

## Prep work should start soon

*Coalition plans to move quickly on recovery facility*

By BAILEY CLINE  
The Commercial Review

Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition hopes to close on the house it plans to develop into a recovery home in Portland and begin prep work as soon as possible.

Commissioners heard updates about the organization's project Monday.

IU Health Jay is donating the property at 422 W. Votaw St. to be converted into a sober living facility, which should serve between 15 and 17 male residents at a time. Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition and IU Health Jay announced the partnership May 15.

Ally Raines, director of Peer Addiction Support Team recovery services at Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition, noted hopes to close on the house today. Once it is owned by the organization, Raines said plans are to begin work outside, such as landscaping and other cleanup.

Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition also plans to have a feasibility study conducted on the structure to determine what renovations are needed. Raines noted that the organization is working with architect Michael Bruns of Fort Recovery — he has offered to do the feasibility study — as well as contractor Muhlenkamp Building Corporation of Coldwater, Ohio.

Once the organization has gained possession of the house and Jay County Opioid Settlement Taskforce has reviewed the study, Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition will return to commissioners to request federal opioid settlement funds for the study.

Raines noted the organization has applied for a Building Communities of Recovery grant through Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to help with the overhead cost. (According to its website, the grant allots up to \$300,000 toward each awardee per year for up to three years.) If received, the new facility could be operational as soon as July 2025.

She also pointed out Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition's naming contest for the facility received nearly 200 submissions. The group has narrowed its selection down to five names and hopes to share those with the community in the next week.

See **Prep** page 2

## Child well-being drops in report

*Math, reading scores push Indiana down in rankings*

By CASEY SMITH  
Indiana Capital Chronicle  
indianacapitalchronicle.com

A new state-by-state report shows Indiana's child well-being ranking has dropped — in part due to Hoosier kids' dismal math and reading scores, as well as increased rates of youth deaths.

Although Indiana continues to rank in the bottom half of states

for its rates of teen births and children living in high-poverty or in single-parent households, those numbers are showing improvement.

The 2024 KIDS COUNT Data Book ranked Indiana 27th among states, three places lower than last year. It's still a slight improvement, however, compared to 2022 and 2021, when the state ranked 28th and 29th, respectively.

In specific categories covered in the latest report, Indiana came in 15th for economic well-being, 17th in education, 31st in family and community, and 32nd in health.

"Indiana has significant opportunities and challenges ahead in supporting the well-being of our children," said Tami Silverman, president and CEO of the Indiana Youth Institute.

See **Drops** page 2



The Commercial Review/Bailey Cline

## Pow wow performer

Brooklyn Cotterman, 13, twirls around Sunday during the Gathering of Great Lakes Nations Pow Wow at the Tri-State Grounds in Portland.

### Deaths

**Pamela McIntire**, 63, rural Bryant  
Details on page 2.

### Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 68 degrees Monday. The low was 55.

Tonight's forecast calls for a low in the mid 60s. Expect mostly sunny skies Thursday with the high climbing to 90. There is a chance of rain Thursday night.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

### In review

Jon Eads has filed to run for Jay School Board's District 1 seat, which represents The City of Portland. The seat is currently held by Jason Phillips. Filing, which was moved up on the calendar this year, runs through June 20.

### Coming up

**Thursday** — Results from the Portland Rockets' game against the Muncie Chiefs.

**Friday** — Coverage of this week's Jay County Council meeting.

**Saturday** — Results from the Jay County summer swim meet against South Adams.



# Prep ...

Continued from page 1

Also Monday, commissioners approved a lease agreement with The City of Portland for Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland. (Five tenants utilize the facility, including community coordinator Nate Kimball, Jay County Chamber of Commerce, Jay County Development Corporation, Jay/Portland Building and Planning and Jay County Visitors and Tourism Bureau.)

The one-year agreement stipulates tenants each pay no less than \$350 per month — that cost is determined by splitting the overall rent between tenants — to the city. It requires Portland to cover maintenance for permanent structures, such heating, cooling, plumbing and electrical fixtures. Tenants are responsible for utilities, small repairs and maintenance — they include needs for sinks,

door locks, and the garbage disposal, toilet, thermostat, furnace and air conditioner — toiletries, kitchen supplies, cleaning supplies and other miscellaneous supplies.

Commissioners also heard consulting firm Kleinpeter Consulting has prepared requests for qualifications for an engineering firm and radon tester for the owner-occupied rehabilitation program. Community coordinator Nate Kimball noted he has received 70 applications so far for the program, which is intended to help residents pay for home improvements, such as roof, water heating or heating ventilation and air conditioning unit replacements, electrical work or upgrades to make a home more accessible.

Applications — they are open through June 28 — must be submitted in-person and are available at jaycounty.net, in the Jay

County Auditor's Office at Jay County Courthouse in Portland, Dunkirk City Hall, Redkey Town Hall and Kimball's office at the Community Resource Center in Portland. Projects are limited to \$25,000 per household.

In other business, commissioners Rex Jounay and Chad Aker, absent Brian McGalliard:

- Shared a reminder that economic development income tax (EDIT) funding applications for 2025 are due by Friday.
- Discussed plans to meet with Jay County Council at 9 a.m. Tuesday, June 18, for a presentation on the radio study conducted by Ritter Strategic Services. The company has been looking into options for upgrades to radio equipment for Jay County Sheriff's Office and other emergency responders.
- Approved a contract with Jay School Corporation for the school resource officer. Sheriff

Ray Newton noted a few changes to the language as well adjusting the officer's pay to match the budgeted amount for 2024.

- Tabled a decision on a vehicle recording policy and consent form for employees, noting they would like attorney Wes Schemenaur — he was not present at the meeting — to review the document and share his thoughts. The policy would apply to all county-owned vehicles and county employees who operate or ride in those vehicles.
- OK'd an annual \$25,000 bioterrorism grant application submitted by Jay County Health Department to the state.
- Were reminded that a \$7,500 contract with Mindbase is up for renewal in the fall. Jay County Sheriff's Office assistant 911 director and Indiana Data and Communications Systems coordinator Contessa Stilts

explained the application — employees may download it to their phone — is intended as a sort of preventative resource to help care for first responders' mental health. She noted plans to host a seminar for employees to learn more about the application later this month.

- Heard a request from Dunkirk Public Library for \$5,707.89 for new countertops and cabinets. Commissioners asked the group to check with The City of Dunkirk first to see what it is able to contribute toward the project.
- OK'd Jay County Assessor's Office representatives to stay overnight in Fort Wayne for a conference Aug. 27 through Aug. 30.
- Approved claims, including \$2,500 for fireworks in Dunkirk and \$2,500 for fireworks in Redkey for Independence Day celebrations.

## CR almanac

Thursday 6/13	Friday 6/14	Saturday 6/15	Sunday 6/16	Monday 6/17
<b>90/67</b>	<b>86/60</b>	<b>86/63</b>	<b>93/72</b>	<b>95/73</b>
Thursday's forecast shows sunny skies with wind gusts up to 20 mph.	Friday looks to be sunny with a high near 86 degrees. The low may hit 60 at night.	Sunny skies are expected Saturday with the high in the mid 80s.	More hot temperatures are on the horizon for Sunday, when the high will be 93.	Swellering heat is in the forecast Monday. The high may hit 95 degrees.

## Lotteries

<b>Powerball</b> Monday 3-10-33-58-59 Power Ball: 9 Power Play: 2 Estimated jackpot: \$20 million	Daily Four: 3-6-4-7 Quick Draw: 1-3-4-24-27-31-36-43-52-53-55-57-58-61-62-63-72-77-79-80 Cash 5: 1-18-24-36-42 Estimated jackpot: \$105,000
<b>Mega Millions</b> Estimated jackpot: \$30 million	<b>Ohio</b> Monday Midday Pick 3: 7-6-2 Pick 4: 1-9-0-4 Pick 5: 6-5-8-3-4 Evening Pick 3: 8-0-7 Pick 4: 5-8-1-6 Pick 5: 4-4-2-3-4 Rolling Cash: 4-11-16-23-27 Estimated jackpot: \$120,000
<b>Hoosier</b> Monday Midday Daily Three: 7-9-5 Daily Four: 3-8-9-9 Quick Draw: 1-2-7-8-11-16-26-32-33-43-46-49-50-51-52-53-55-60-62-65 Evening Daily Three: 8-5-5	

## Markets

<b>Cooper Farms Fort Recovery</b> Corn.....4.49 July corn.....4.45 Wheat .....5.22	July beans .....11.78 Wheat ..... 5.92
<b>POET Biorefining Portland</b> Corn.....4.50 July corn.....4.45 Oct. corn .....4.44	<b>ADM Montpelier</b> Corn.....4.38 July corn.....4.31 Beans .....11.79 July beans .....11.73 Wheat .....5.91
<b>The Andersons Richland Township</b> Corn .....4.40 July corn .....4.40 Beans .....11.82	<b>Heartland St. Anthony</b> Corn.....4.45 July corn.....4.45 Beans .....11.55 July beans .....11.60 Wheat .....5.71

## Today in history

In 1929, Anne Frank was born in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Frank is known for her diary written during her family's two years in hiding from the Germans in the Netherlands.

In 1964, Nelson Mandela got life in prison for conspiring to overthrow the state and spent 27 years incarcerated. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993 and became President of South Africa.

In 1977, American serial killer David Berkowitz was sentenced to life in prison for murdering six people in New York City. He sent letters to New York newspapers amid the timeline of the murders. He signed the letters as "Son of Sam."

— The CR

## Citizen's calendar

**Wednesday**  
8 a.m. — Upper Wabash River Basin Commission, Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St., Bluffton.  
1 p.m. — Jay County Sheriff's Merit Board, training room, sheriff's office, 224 W. Water St., Portland.  
4 p.m. — Portland Board of Works, mayor's office, city hall, 321 N. Meridian St.

4:15 p.m. — Portland Board of Works executive session, mayor's office, city hall, 321 N. Meridian St.  
6 p.m. — Jay County Council, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.

**Thursday**  
6 p.m. — Jay County Plan Commission, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland.

## Obituaries

**Pamela McIntire**  
Dec. 6, 1960-June 7, 2024

Pamela McIntire, age 63, of rural Bryant passed away on Friday, June 7, 2024, in IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital in Muncie.

She was born in Portland on Dec. 6, 1960, the daughter of Donald and Thelma (Morgan) Binegar. Pam was a nail technician having worked for Heads Up. She attended Jay County High School and enjoyed boating, fishing and spending time with her family.

Surviving are five children, Michael Buckner of Dunkirk, Matthew Buckner (wife: April) of Berne, Terra Ogan of Bryant, Erica

McIntire of Portland and Andrew Loper of Ridgeville; one brother, David Morgan of Roll, Indiana; four sisters, Teresa Stewart (husband: Rick) of Knoxville, Tennessee, Barbara Nuckols of Salamonina and Sue Atkins of Portland; 11 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

She was preceded in death by a son, Shaun Buckner; and a brother, Jerry Binegar.

Funeral services will be Thursday, June 13, at 6 p.m. in the Baird-Freeman Funeral Home with Pastor



McIntire

Tony Mullins presiding. Visitation will be from 4 to 6 p.m. Burial will be in the IOOF Cemetery in Pennville at a later date. Memorials can be made to Baird-Freeman Funeral Home to help with expenses.

Condolences may be expressed at bairdfreeman.com.

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The Commercial Review publishes death notices for those with a connection to our coverage area free of charge. They include the name, city of residence, birth/death date and time/date/location of services. There is a charge for obituaries, which are accepted only from funeral homes or mortuary services.

## Capsule Reports

**Passing accident**  
A Pennville woman was cited for improperly passing another vehicle after she sideswiped a Redkey man's truck along Indiana 1 about 6:29 p.m. Monday.

Michelle L. Bickel, 45, was driving her 2004 Chevrolet Trailblazer south on the highway near 2582 N. Indiana 1, Pennville, when she began to pass

a semi in front of her. In the process, she sideswiped a northbound 2012 Chevrolet Silverado driven by 44-year-old Garry L. Horner. Bickel's vehicle continued into a ditch on the east side of the road.

Witness Josh Morey of Bluffton — he was driving behind Bickel — told Jay County Sheriff's Office that Bickel had been driving recklessly

in Pennville and that she pulled out in front of a semi. He also alleged she nearly crashed into a northbound motorcycle driver on a first attempt to pass another semi, with the second attempt resulting in her sideswiping Horner's vehicle.

Bickel sustained a minor face wound. Damage is estimated between \$1,000 and \$2,500.

## Drops ...

Continued from page 1

"We should celebrate the progress we've made, especially in economic well-being areas such as parental employment rates and housing affordability; and we must acknowledge the disparities that persist for our kids," Silverman continued. "Every child in Indiana should have access to quality education, regardless of their background or circumstances. By addressing these disparities head-on, we not only invest in the future of our children but also in the economic prosperity of our state."

The report is prepared by the Annie E. Casey Foundation in conjunction with organizations across the county, including the Indiana Youth Institute. It rates states in 16 wide-ranging areas, which are lumped together under the categories of health, edu-

cation, economic well-being, and family and community support.

The education portion of the latest edition — focused on student achievement — reiterates low numbers familiar to Hoosier education officials.

Just 32% of fourth graders nationally were at or above proficiency in reading in 2022, the latest year for which numbers were available. That was down from the 34% who were proficient in 2019, before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Scores were even worse for eighth grade math. Nationwide, only 26% of eighth graders were at or above proficiency in math two years ago, down from 33% in 2019.

In Indiana, one-third of fourth graders performed at or above proficiency in reading — a four percentage-point decrease from

the 2019 rate of 37%, the report showed.

Further, only 30% of Indiana eighth grade students performed at or above proficiency in math, marking an 11% decrease from 2019, ranking the state 11th nationally.

Among Indiana fourth graders in 2022, Black students had an average reading score that was 23 points lower than that of white students. Students eligible for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) had an average reading score 18 points lower than those not eligible for NSLP, according to the KIDS COUNT report.

Meanwhile, eighth grade Black students in Indiana had an average math score that was 31 points lower than white students. Hispanic students in the same grade had an average math score that was 19 points lower than their white peers.

The Casey Foundation report contends that the pandemic is not the sole cause of lower test scores, though.

See Drops page 5

## SERVICES

Thursday  
**McIntire**, Pamela: 6 p.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

Saturday  
**Weaver**, Larry: 10:30 a.m., Akron Community Center, 815 Rural St., Akron, Indiana.

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Photo provided

## New training course

Portland Rotary Club Youth Services teamed up with Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corp at Jay County High School this year to raise funds for constructing a JROTC obstacle training course at the high school. Plans are to practice and host other schools for competitions. The group raised \$11,925 for the project, with Jay School Corporation contributing enough to bump the project to \$20,000.

Pictured above, from left, are youth services chair Drew Houck, Jay School Corporation superintendent Jeremy Gulley, Portland Rotary Club junior board members Desirae Bonefield and Trenton Franks, and JROTC instructor Steven Bishop.

## Students named to FR honor roll

Fort Recovery High School announced its fourth quarter honor roll students.

On the list for receiving all A's were sophomores Evvie Briner, Rylee Bubb, Elisa Evers, Alivia Grube, Brodie Hart, Aubrie Heitkamp, Jameson Heitkamp, Madison Heitkamp, Maleiah Kaffenberger, Cayson Kaikala, Olivia Knapke, Brylee Kremer, Cora Kremer, Lily Schwieterman, Megan Weitzel, Reece Wendel, Georgia Wenning and Leah Wuebker.

Also making the honor roll with all A's were freshmen Kenna Dues, Tyler Dues, Carter Fortkamp, Ava Fullenkamp, Alexis Grisez, Sophia Guggenbiller, Makenna Huelskamp, Meredith Jones, Breaker Jutte and Grace Lochtefeld.

Also Ian McCain, Jake Meyer, Cameron Muhlenkamp, Isaac Roessner, Madelyn Schoenlein, Kiera Stump, Jennifer Wendel, James Westerges, Brynn Willmann and Jase Wuebker.

On the list with A's and B's were sophomores Ella Bechtol, Aiden Brunswick, Ryker Brunswick, Emma Coleman, Garrett Diller, Kyla Dues, Zoe Dues, Nevaeh Elsass, Zackary Ervin, Luke Fortkamp, Carson Fullenkamp, Eli Hawk, Jenna Homan, Reece LeFevre, Autumn Leuthold, Luke Lochtefeld, Anthony Roessner, Dani Schmitt and Jesse Springer.

Making honor roll with A's B's were also freshmen Brody Barga, Ayden Bozarth, Bethany Brackman, Deanna Brown, Carley Buckland, Kendall Buckland, Reese Diller, Cadence Eber, Destiny Ervin, Brady Evers, Grant Fortkamp, Russell Hart, Aubree Heitkamp, Maddie Heitkamp and Lily Hernandez.

Also Addy Homan, Aideen Knostman, Hudson McAbee, Trinity Rammel, Coby Schmitz, Emma Schmitz, Angel Serio, Cara Shoemaker, Amber Timmerman, Ivy Tobe, Kaylor Wendel, Reed Westerges and Will Westerges.

## Wife prepares to run off with husband's best man

DEAR ABBY: I have been married to "George" for 35 years. I was pregnant when I married. We had dated only five months. We came from families that believed you had to "do the right thing" and get married. I love my husband, but never as deeply as I thought I should.

I had feelings for someone else ("Dennis") before I got married, but we were always in different relationships when we'd see each other. He was my husband's best man at our wedding, and they were friends for many years. He moved away and we had not seen each other for 25 years. Dennis and I recently reconnected, and when we first saw each other, it was like I was hit by a truck full of emotions.

Dear Abby



We want to be together. We have never done anything more than hug and share passionate kisses. George will be hurt, but should I keep putting my happiness last just to please someone else? When do I deserve to be happy? — ABOUT TO FLEE

DEAR ABOUT TO FLEE: You have a right to be happy and so does George. Have you and Dennis been discussing marriage during any of those long talks? Does George know you are planning to move out and why? How does Dennis' mother (who is very much in the picture) feel about his romance with you? How do you plan to support yourself if your romance should not work out?

Dennis makes me feel ways I never felt before. We have long talks about how much we missed each other. We can tell each other anything. I'm the happiest I have ever been in my life, but once again, things are complicated. I still live with my husband, although I'm in the process of moving out as soon as I can. Dennis has to take care of his mother and can't just walk off.

Be sure you have answers to these questions before you pack your bags, because if you don't, you may find you slammed the door on a satisfactory marriage to a man whose only flaw was that he wasn't Dennis.

DEAR ABBY: My ex-husband is dying of cancer. I got pregnant shortly before we divorced. I left him because he physically, psychologically and emotionally abused me. I never told him about his son. In fact, I lied and told him the child was someone else's. I did it to protect our child.

Now that my ex is dying, I feel guilty. He never had any other children. Should I tell him he has a son? — FEELING GUILTY IN

THE MIDWEST  
DEAR FEELING GUILTY: That's an interesting question. My first reaction is to let sleeping dogs lie. From your description of your ex-husband, he would have used the child as a pawn to further abuse you. However, you didn't mention whether your son knows who his father is. If he does, he might want to meet him before he expires. This is something only you can decide.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact her 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

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.

BRYANT/NEW CORYDON SENIOR CITIZENS — Will meet at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday at the Bryant Community Center for a carry-in dinner.

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.

JAY COUNTY CIVIC THEATRE — Holds its regular meeting at 5:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month in the boardroom at Arts Place, 131 E. Walnut St., Portland.

PORTLAND EAGLES — Will meet at 6 p.m., on the

second and fourth Wednesday of the month at the Eagles' lodge, 320 N. Meridian 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 - BRIANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for all kinds of addictions, will meet from 6:30 to 8 p.m. each Wednesday at Redkey United Methodist Church, 122 W. Main St. Come early for a meal. For more information, call Pastor Randy Davis at (765) 369-2085.

Thursday  
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.  
SMART RECOVERY — A group for those strugg-

ling with addition 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.

PIKE FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS — Meets at 5 p.m. Thursday, June 13, at Pizza Hut in Portland.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY POST 211 — Will meet at 6 p.m. Thursday, June 13, at 211 W. Walnut St., Portland. All Auxiliary members are welcome.

INDIANA UNIVERSITY HEALTH JAY HOSPITAL OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP — Will meet at 6 p.m. the second Thursday of each month in Indiana University Health Jay Hospital Conference Room B. The group is for ostomy and intestinal diversion patients and their friends and family to offer mutual support and learn about the latest products and information.

## Sudoku

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

Level: Intermediate

### Tuesday's Solution

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

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## Drops ...

Continued from page 2  
Rather, the foundation says educators, researchers, policymakers and employers who track students' academic readiness have been ringing alarm bells "for a long time."

U.S. scores in reading and math have barely budged in decades. In Indiana, state education officials have repeatedly pointed out that Hoosier literacy exam scores have been on the decline since 2015.

During the 2024 legislative session, state lawmakers took decisive action as part of an ongoing push to improve literacy and K-12 student performance.

Paramount among the new laws passed was one to require reading-deficient third graders to be held back a year in school.

Health-focused portions of the report show that — after peaking in 2021 — the national child and teen death rate stabilized at 30 deaths per 100,000 children and youth ages 1 to 19.

But in Indiana, the death rate has continued to rise. While 29 deaths per 100,000 Hoosier children and youth were recorded in 2019, the rate increased to 36 deaths in 2022, per the report.

The Indiana Youth Institute (IYI) has already drawn attention, for example, to higher rates of mental health crises such as depression and suicidal ideation among the state's youth. According to IYI data, one out of every three students from 7th to 12th grade reported experiencing persistent sadness and hopelessness. One out of seven students made a plan to commit suicide.

The most recent data available additionally show that nationwide and in Indiana, the child poverty rate improved and economic security of parents increased back to pre-pandemic levels.

Between 2018 and 2022, roughly 113,000 — or 7% — of Hoosier children were reportedly living in high-poverty areas. That's a drop from 10% between 2013 and 2017, according to the report.

From 2019 to 2022, teen births per 1,000 declined from 21 to 17, and the percentage of children in single-parent families also dropped from 35% to 32%.

Advocates pointed to "some bright spots" for Hoosier kids and their families in this year's national report, as well:

- Between 2019 and 2022, more parents (75%) had full-time secure employment in Indiana — which surpassed both the national average and that of the four neighboring states: Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan and Ohio.

- In 2022, fewer children (22%) lived in households that faced a high housing cost burden, spending 30% of their income solely on housing expenses, in comparison to the national average (30%).

- In 2022, more Hoosier teens (95%) between the ages 16 and 19 were either enrolled in school or employed, an improvement from 93% in 2019.

- Far fewer children under 19 (5%) were also uninsured. Indiana saw the fifth-highest decrease nationally in uninsured children between 2019 and 2022 — a 29% improvement.

The report offers several recommendations for policymakers, school leaders and educators that include chronicling absenteeism data by grade, establishing a culture to pursue evidence-based solutions and incorporating intensive, in-person tutoring to align with the school curriculum.

"Kids of all ages and grades must have what they need to learn each day, such as enough food and sleep and a safe way to get to school, as well as the additional resources they might need to perform at their highest potential and thrive, like tutoring and mental health services," said Lisa Hamilton, president and CEO of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Efforts are being made to rehabilitate the Dunkirk Junior League baseball and softball fields on the south side of Dunkirk City Park. Mayor Jack Robbins said during Monday's city council meeting that those involved are hoping to host a league in the fall. The facility has not been regularly used in about five years.

## Dunkirk ...

Continued from page 1

The mayor also reported that a group has been working to rehabilitate the Dunkirk Junior League baseball/softball diamonds on the south side of Dunkirk City Park. The facility has not been regularly used for about five years.

"It's taken its toll," said Robbins. "They've got it cleaned up and we sure appreciate it. ..."

"We're glad to see it starting back up and hope the residents and parents jump in and help. I think it's going to be a good thing for the City of Dunkirk."

Robbins said the goal is to have a fall league at the facility this year.

Council also learned that the walking trail at the park has been completed with a final inspection to come next week.

In other business, council:

- Heard a reminder from community coordinator Nate Kimball that applications are open for the county's owner-occupied rehab program through the end of the month. (He said about 70 applications have been turned in so far.) The program offers funding for home improvements including roof, water heating or heating ventilation and air conditioning unit replacements, electrical work or upgrades to make a home more accessible and applications are available at Jay County Auditor's Office at Jay County Courthouse in Portland, Dunkirk City Hall, Redkey Town Hall and Kimball's office at Community Resource Center in Portland.

- Received a thank you letter from Kathy Nelson for its recent

- \$250 sponsorship of the West Jay Optimist Club fishing derby.

- Approved the following: a \$450 sponsorship for a free swim night at Dunkirk City Pool in conjunction with its Independence Day celebration on June 29; increasing fire protection contract rates by 3% for Knox, Richland, Jackson and Niles townships; making Melissa Mumbower an authorized purchasing agent for Dunkirk City Pool; removal of a leaking fire hydrant near Dunkirk Volunteer Fire Department; transfers totaling \$198,622.91; payment of \$340,866.99 in claims.

- Tabled the following: discussion of quotes for livestreaming equipment and new doors for the city building; a request to close an alley adjacent to High Street

- surrounded by four properties owned by Jonathon and Natalie Cassel; transfers totaling \$198,622.91.

- Heard from Revolt that all Main Street flower pots have been adopted with various organizations committing to plant flowers and tend to them through the year.

- Heard from Bivens that water tower work is underway in the city and that residents may experience low water pressure or discolored water. The work is expected to be completed on June 18. He noted that a fence was damaged during the work and is being replaced at no cost to the city. At his request, the council also approved the purchase of 10 pump-off valves, which help to sustain water pressure, for \$4,180.

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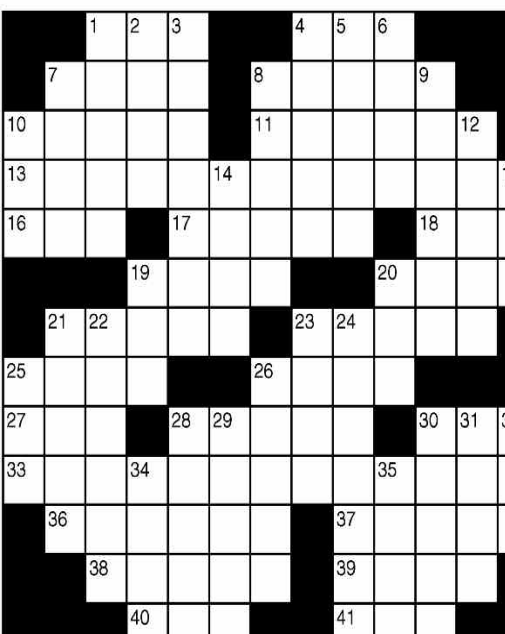
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6-12 CRYPTOQUIP

QE C VQEEUS DN RBQR ZBQOPCLW BMAEU XCRB LM WOQEN NQOS, C VOMZKQCPUS 'RBUOU MAWBRC DU Q KQXL!' Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF TWO JELLYFISH LOOKED JUST THE SAME, I THINK YOU COULD REFER TO THEM AS I-TENTACLE TWINS.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 28 Stab 2 Rowboat 14 Mattress 1 Large snake 30 'Dyna-mite' 3 Claims 15 Mauna - 4 Cutting band 4 Weary 19 Auction tool 33 Squanders an opportunity 5 -ski 20 Almond, e.g. 8 Water conduits 36 Former Disney head 8 'Cry, the Beloved Country' 24 Weapons store 13 Blames someone else 39 Border on 9 Painter 26 Paris subway 28 Trait carriers 29 Software of a custom-ers 30 Pay-check extra 31 Diplomacy 32 Messy room 34 Tax-payer IDs 35 Rum cake DOWN 1 Ecstasy scene Solution time: 23 mins.



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# Indians open with loss to Flyers

MARIA STEIN, Ohio — The Indians just got back from the state tournament in the early hours of Monday morning. On their run to the state championship game, they had to take down the Flyers in the district final.

Coming back for the summer season, the Flyers got their revenge.

Less than 24 hours after competing in the state tournament, the Fort Recovery ACME baseball team dropped its season opener via walk off to the Marion Local Flyers 6-5 on Monday.

The Indians (0-1) jumped out with two runs in the first inning on a double by Mason Diller before eventually trailing 5-3 in the seventh. With two outs, third

## Local roundup

baseman Caden Grisez singled to left field to score Dylan Klenke and Austin Siegrist, tying the game up and forcing extra innings.

After throwing two strong innings in the sixth and seventh, Klenke started to unravel on the mound in the eighth. He gave up a leadoff triple before an infield single and a walk loaded the bases with no outs in the tie game. Damon Cramer followed with a sin-

gle up the middle to walk off the game against Fort Recovery.

## White leads

Crossroads defeated FCC 10-9 on Monday in Portland Junior League Minor softball.

Kierstyn White put together a strong day for Crossroads with a home run and three RBIs. Paisley Day also hit a homer for Crossroads.

Aubrie Overla and Kendall Snow both hit a double and a single, while the former also added an RBI.

Kynlee Homan collected a pair of base hits, while Lilah Hudson, Scarlett Rodgers and Brinley Steed each hit one single.

# Hurley picks UConn over Lakers

By DAN WOIKE

Los Angeles Times  
Tribune News Service

LOS ANGELES — UConn coach Dan Hurley, who darted to the front of the Lakers' coaching search in a surprise turn last week, has turned down a six-year, \$70 million offer to leave the defending NCAA champions, according to people with knowledge of the decision not authorized to speak publicly.

The failed pursuit, which comes 20 years after the Lakers tried — and failed — to hire then Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski, leaves the Lakers in a peculiar position of being without a head coach more than a week into June.

The Lakers' interest in Hurley was kept incredibly secretive until ESPN's Adrian Wojnarowski broke the news early Thursday, triggering a wild four-plus days of speculation set against the opening two games of the NBA Finals.

The general belief outside of the Lakers' organization before the report was that former player and current broadcaster JJ Redick had been the longtime

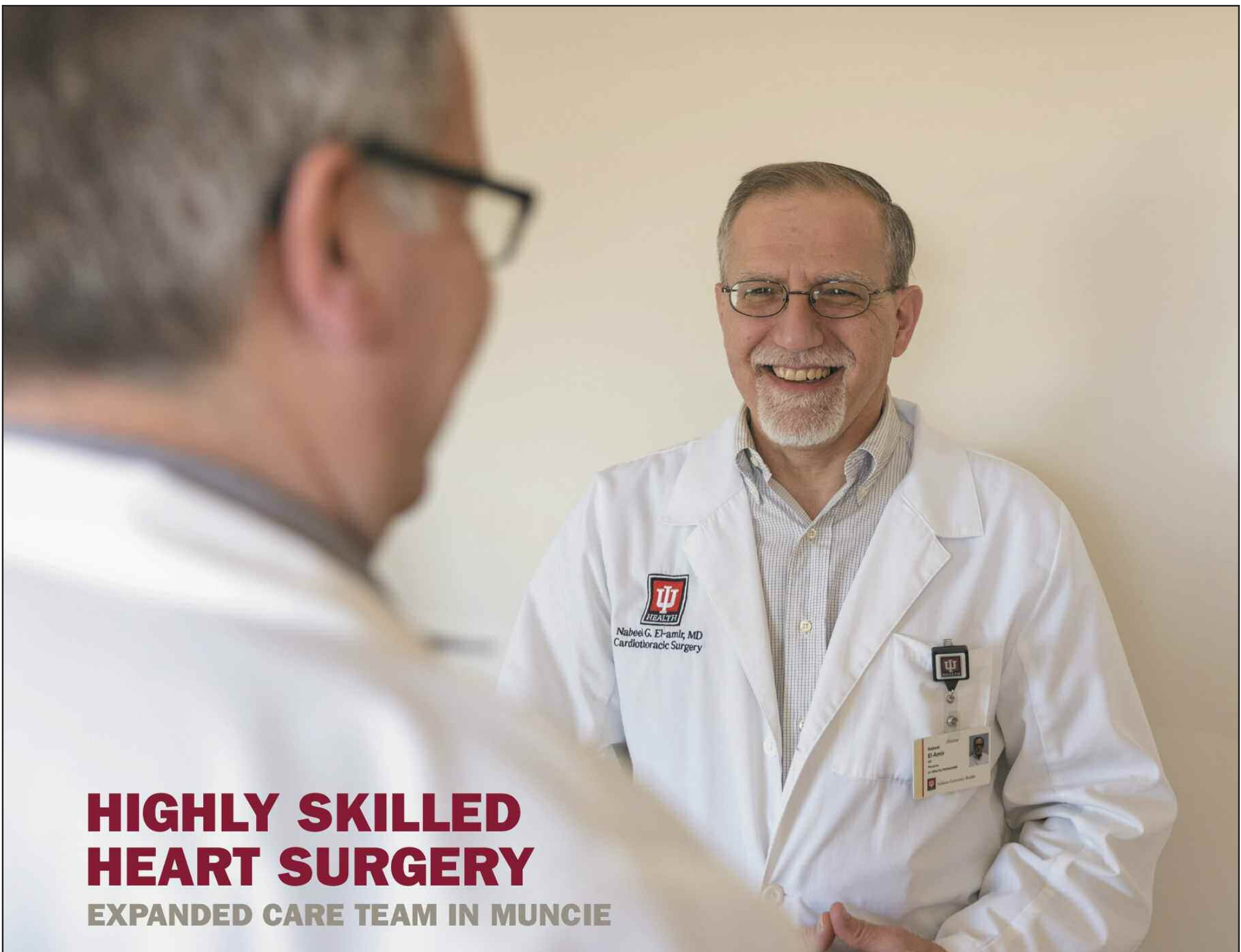
favorite for the job. Still, only New Orleans assistant James Borrego, who previously coached in Charlotte, had been in Los Angeles for interviews with Lakers executives. Redick, according to people with knowledge of the situation, has not undergone similar interviews, though he's spoken with executive vice president and general manager Rob Pelinka.

It's expected the Lakers will refocus there, though it's not immediately clear what the next steps are. Redick is still calling the NBA Finals for ESPN, and Borrego is considered a top candidate for the Cleveland Cavaliers opening.

Both faded to the background as the Lakers took a big swing at Hurley.

Hurley met with Pelinka and controlling owner Jeanie Buss on Friday in Los Angeles before returning to the East Coast. He was at a Billy Joel concert Saturday night at Madison Square Garden in New York before returning to campus Monday, when his team had a scheduled practice.

See Hurley page 7



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