

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1



Swift evening

Elsie Gibbs (left), 10, looks up from cutting moss Tuesday during Jay County Public Library's "A Night for the Swifties." Gibbs and others decorated candles with moss at the station themed after Taylor Swift's eighth album, Folklore. Additional stations themed after Swift and her albums were sprinkled across the library. Nine-year-old Clara Gossage (below) colors a paper guitar at another station.

Farley pleads to a Level 4 felony

Rape and other charges dismissed as part of plea agreement

By BAILEY CLINE

The Commercial Review

A Portland man accused of committing rape has pleaded to a lesser charge.

Life T. Farley, 20, 118 W. 2nd St., pleaded guilty Friday in Jay Circuit Court to criminal confinement with moderate bodily injury, a Level 4 felony. The charge was reduced from a Level 3 felony for criminal confinement resulting in serious bodily injury.

Farley had been facing a Level 1 felony charge for rape when compelled by force or imminent threat of force resulting in serious bodily injury, which in Indiana carries a 20-to 40-year sentence. The charge was dismissed as part of the plea agreement filed Friday.

Other charges — a Level 5 felony for domestic battery resulting in serious bodily injury and a Level 6 felony for domestic battery committed in the presence of a child younger than 16 years old — were also dismissed.

According to information filed in connection with the case, Farley allegedly "did knowingly or intentionally have sexual intercourse or other sexual conduct" with a woman on or around Feb. 9, with court documents also alleging Farley punched, slapped and kicked the woman all over her body.

See Pleads page 2



The Commercial Review/Bailey Cline

Nepal plane crash leaves 18 dead

By ROSHAN SEDHAI

dpa
Tribune News Service

KATHMANDU, Nepal — At least 18 people have been confirmed dead after an airplane crashed in Nepal on Wednesday, police said.

Shortly after take-off,

the plane, belonging to the domestic carrier Saurya Airlines, veered to the right and crashed on the side of the runway at Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA) in Kathmandu, the civil aviation authority said in a statement.

The aircraft with 19 peo-

ple on board was bound for the tourist town of Pokhara, around 200 kilometers north-west of the capital city.

The chief of airport security said the bodies of 18 people have been recovered. "One crew member is seriously injured and is

receiving treatment," he told dpa.

He added that all those aboard were employees of the same airline. "All 19 on board were staff of Saurya Airlines and were going to Pokhara for maintenance work," he said.

Security personnel and

airport firefighters reached the crash site within minutes and worked to extinguish the flames and rescue any survivors.

TIA General Manager Jagannath Niraoula said that it is still unclear how the accident happened.

Reserves projected at post-pandemic low

State closed fiscal 2024 with total of \$2.6 billion

By WHITNEY DOWARD

Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com

Indiana's reserves will hit a post-pandemic low after years of above-average returns due largely to a Medicaid forecast miss of nearly \$1 billion, according to fiscal statements released Tuesday.

Budget writers typically aim for reserves to be between 10% and 12.5% of current year expenditures, and the 2024 fiscal year closed out this month with \$2.6 billion in reserves — or 11.9% of expenditures. That amount will drop even further next year.

Indiana Comptroller Elise Nieshalla credited the reserves to the state's "long-standing conservative stewardship," adding that "a slight increase in income and a solid return on investments fur-

ther support(ed) our strong financial position."

"Indiana's healthy reserves and standing as the 7th lowest debt per capita state showcases our high level of fiscal responsibility, especially during a time when our country is facing a national debt crisis," Nieshalla said in a release. "As a lead financial officer for our state, I see the national debt at nearly \$35 trillion as the greatest looming threat to Indiana's robust economy."

However, the 2025 fiscal year is projected to have reserves that are 10.4% of expenditures, or \$2.3 billion — the second-lowest reserves percentage in the last six years. Indiana's reserves dipped to an unprecedented 8.6% of reserves, or \$1.4 billion, in 2020 when Indiana delayed tax collections during the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 relief from the federal government — both to state coffers and to individual Hoosiers — boosted reserves to a high of \$6.1 billion in the 2022 fiscal year, or \$34.9% of the state's expenditures. High reserves in both 2021 and 2022 triggered automatic taxpayer refunds and lawmakers made large, one-time payments toward pension liabilities and capital projects.

See Reserves page 2

Egg battle

Kelsey Sisco, 10, and Jacob Sisco, 8, of Dunkirk balance eggs on their spoons as part of the Battle of the Barns race at Randolph County Fair on Tuesday. The fair held just south of Winchester will continue through Friday.



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 82 degrees Tuesday. The low was 63.

Tonight's low will be in the upper 50s. Expect sunny skies

Friday with a high around 80. Highs are expected to be in the 80s Saturday and Sunday as well.

For an extended forecast, see page 2.

In review

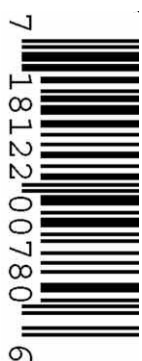
The Swiss Days festival kicked off today in Berne and will run through Sunday. Activities include rides with Vertical Advantage Helicopters Friday and Saturday, the parade at 4:30 p.m. Saturday and performances of The Music Man at 7 p.m. Friday and 2:30 p.m. Sunday at South Adams High School.

Coming up

Friday — Dunkirk Junior League is planning a revival this fall.

Saturday — Photos from the Fort Recovery marching band ice cream social.

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



Reserves ...

Continued from page 1
Prior to 2020, the 2019 fiscal year closeout was 13.9%, or \$2.2 billion, and state analysts at the time projected the state would stay near that number for 2020 and 2021.
“Those of you who have been covering this for some time probably find the revenue report and the closeout statement rather boring because we’re sort of landing back into our traditional patterns — unlike what happened during the pandemic,” said Cris John-

ston, the director of the Indiana Office of Management and Budget.
Acting State Budget Director Joseph Habig said that “good fiscal stewardship and prudent budgeting” were “culturally ingrained” in Indiana, with “decades ... of historic results” demonstrating the state’s dedication to spending less than it collected in revenues.
“That common sense discipline ensured that Indiana was able to maintain a \$421.2 million annual

surplus and total combined balances in our general fund reserves at \$2.5 billion,” Habig said. “Our vision is to ensure that Indiana’s priorities are funded not just today, but also tomorrow.”
Indiana’s revenues for the 2024 fiscal year totaled \$21.48 billion, slightly below the forecasted \$21.5 billion. In terms of major revenue sources, Indiana missed the mark on collecting corporate income taxes — which makes up roughly 5% of revenues — by

\$182 million but made up the difference in unexpected interest revenues of \$179 million plus other smaller income streams, such as surplus lottery revenue.
“Corporate income tax is the most difficult tax type to predict,” Johnston said, noting that every company handles its taxes differently. “Also, it can be influenced by very large taxpayers ... but also financial institution taxes. So it is difficult to pinpoint and we’ve seen those variances over the years.”

But future costs remain murky, especially with the ever-increasing Medicaid budget and ongoing tax reform discussions. Legislators are entering the second year of intensive deliberations to determine whether Indiana can afford to further cut — or even eliminate — the state’s income tax, which sits at 3.15%.
.....
This story was edited for length. To read the full version, go to indianacapitalchronicle.com.

CR almanac

| Friday 7/26 | Saturday 7/27 | Sunday 7/28 | Monday 7/29 | Tuesday 7/30 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | | | |
| 80/57 | 84/62 | 86/68 | 87/70 | 87/68 |
| Friday's forecast shows sunny skies with highs in the upper 70s. | Another day of sun is expected Saturday. Temperatures could reach as high as 80. | Mostly cloudy on Sunday. The temperature may hit the low 80s degrees. | Monday's forecast shows a 50% chance of thunderstorms. | Another chance of storms on Tuesday, when the high will be in the 80s. |

Lotteries

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Powerball Estimated jackpot: \$114 million | Evening Daily Three: 7-0-0 Daily Four: 9-3-6-4 Quick Draw: 6-9-19-20-23-24-25-31-40-46-47-49-55-56-60-61-67-69-77-80 |
| Mega Millions 3-9-14-26-51 Mega Ball: 21 Megaplier: 4 Estimated jackpot: \$306 million | Ohio Tuesday Midday Pick 3: 2-5-7 Pick 4: 9-2-8-0 Pick 5: 8-6-8-3-5 Evening Pick 3: 3-9-4 Pick 4: 8-2-4-9 Pick 5: 6-0-4-5-2 Rolling Cash: 17-20-22-23-29 Estimated jackpot: \$100,000 |
| Hoosier Tuesday Midday Daily Three: 4-0-7 Daily Four: 7-3-1-8 Quick Draw: 8-12-19-21-23-27-33-34-39-43-47-48-51-57-65-67-69-70-73-75 | |

Markets

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cooper Farms Fort Recovery Corn.....3.99 Sept. corn3.97 Wheat4.75 | Aug. beans.....11.35 Wheat 4.99 |
| POET Biorefining Portland Corn.....3.96 Aug. corn3.96 Sept. corn3.91 | ADM Montpelier Corn.....3.89 Aug. corn3.86 Beans11.22 Aug. beans.....11.09 Wheat5.04 |
| The Andersons Richland Township Corn3.92 Aug. corn3.92 Beans11.35 | Heartland St. Anthony Corn.....3.91 Aug. corn3.91 Beans11.15 Aug. beans11.10 Wheat4.75 |

Today in history

In 1814, British troops halted a Canada invasion near Niagara Falls led by United States general Jacob Brown in the Battle of Lundy’s Lane amid the War of 1812.
In 1898, United States forces led by general Nelson A. Miles invaded Puerto Rico during the Spanish-American War.
In 1935, Barbara Harris was born in Evanston, Illinois. Harris, an American Tony Award winner and Broadway star, Harris was nominated for multiple Golden Globe awards, as well as an Academy Award for best actress in a supporting role in “Who Is Harry Kellerman and Why is He Saying Those Terrible Things About Me?”
In 1956, Tunisia gained independence from France. Habib Bourguiba led the conflict leading to its independence and became its first president.
In 1978, Louise Brown was born in Oldham, England. She was the first human conceived through in vitro fertilization.
In 1984, Svetlana Savitskaya became the first woman to walk in space as a part of the Soviet Soyuz T-12 mission. She spent 3.5 hours in space testing tools.
In 2007, Pratibha Patil, a lawyer and politician, was sworn in as president of India. She became the first woman to hold the office and served as head of state for five years.
In 2022, Roger L. Boyd of Portland was sentenced to 53 years in prison for the Sept. 5, 2020, murder of James P. Miller of Montpelier. —The CR

Citizen’s calendar

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Today 4 p.m. — Jay County Development Corporation, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland. 5 p.m. — Jay County Redevelopment Commission, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland. | Monday 9 a.m. — Jay County Commissioners, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland. Wednesday 6 p.m. — Jay County Council and Jay County Commissioners, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland. |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Felony court news

Methamphetamine

Several people were sentenced in Jay courts to serve time for possession of methamphetamine.
Jaleesa J. Hampshire, 36, 411 E. Walnut St., Portland, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to possession of methamphetamine, a Level 6 felony. She was sentenced to one year in Jay County Jail with all but 120 days suspended and given four days credit for time served. Hampshire was fined \$25, assessed \$189 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee. She was placed on house arrest for 116 days and on probation for 245 days. As part of her plea agreement, a Level 6 felony for maintaining a common nuisance, a Class B misdemeanor for possession of marijuana and a Class C misdemeanor for possession of paraphernalia were dismissed.
Rebecca L. Keener, 49, 311 E. Henry St., Farmland, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to possession of methamphetamine, a Level 6 felony. She was sentenced to 545 days in Jay County Jail with all but 270 days suspended and given 10 days credit for time served. Keener was assessed \$189 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee. She was ordered to submit to an evaluation within 30 days of her sentencing for substance abuse counseling and placed on probation for 275 days. As part of her plea agreement, a Class C misdemeanor for possession of paraphernalia was dismissed.
Daniel R. Meadows, 52, pleaded guilty in Jay Circuit Court to possession of methamphetamine, a Level 5 felony. He was sentenced to three years in Indiana Department of Corrections and given credit for time served. Meadows was assessed \$189 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee. He was recommended for purposeful

incarceration, meaning upon completing a substance abuse treatment program, the court would consider modifying his sentence. As part of his plea agreement, a Level 6 felony for unlawful possession of a syringe, a Class A misdemeanor for possession of marijuana and a Class A misdemeanor for possession of paraphernalia were dismissed.
Rusty J. Keener, 49, 311 East Henry St., Farmland, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to possession of methamphetamine, a Level 6 felony. He was sentenced to 545 days in Jay County Jail with all but 44 days suspended and given 14 days credit for time served. He was assessed \$189 in court costs, ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee and ordered to submit to an evaluation within 30 days for substance abuse counseling. Keener was placed on probation for 501 days. As part of his plea agreement, a Class C misdemeanor for possession of paraphernalia and a Class A infraction for driving with a suspended license were dismissed.
Billie J. Caylor, 43, 622 W. High St., Portland, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to possession of methamphetamine, a Level 6 felony. She was sentenced to one year in Jay County Jail and given 328 days credit for time served. Caylor was fined \$25, assessed \$189 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee.
John A.E. Fields, 25, 637 North Elm St., Dunkirk, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to possession of methamphetamine, a Level 6 felony. He was sentenced to 545 days in Indiana Department of Correction with 208 days suspended and given 208 days credit for time served. Fields was fined \$25, assessed \$189 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee. He was ordered to submit to an evaluation

within 30 days for substance abuse counseling and placed on probation for 337 days.
Brian P. Jordan, 46, 1016 W Abbott St., Muncie, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to possession of methamphetamine, a Level 6 felony. He was sentenced to 545 days in Indiana Department of Corrections with all but two days suspended and given two days credit for time served. Jordan was assessed \$189 in court costs, fined \$1 and ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee. He was ordered to submit to an evaluation within 30 days for substance abuse counseling and placed on probation for 543 days. As part of his plea agreement, a Class B misdemeanor for possession of marijuana and a Class C misdemeanor for possession of paraphernalia were dismissed.
Jennifer N. Hunt, 38, pleaded guilty in Jay Circuit Court to possession of methamphetamine, a Level 6 felony. She was sentenced to 18 months in Indiana Department of Correction and given credit for time served. Hunt was assessed \$189 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee. As part of her plea agreement, her charge was lessened from a Level 5 felony, and two Level 6 felonies for neglect of a dependent and unlawful possession of a syringe were dismissed.
Matthew A.C. Bishop, 37, 129 W Pleasant St., Dunkirk, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to possession of methamphetamine, a Level 6 felony. He was sentenced to 545 days in Indiana Department of Correction with all but 20 days suspended and given 20 days credit for time served. Bishop was fined \$1, assessed \$189 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee. He was placed on probation for 525 days. As part of his plea agreement, a Class C misdemeanor for possession of paraphernalia was dismissed.

Pleads ...

Continued from page 1
The documents also say he confined her without her consent.
A no-contact order between the woman and

Farley was issued in court Feb. 29.
He was arrested Feb. 16 and preliminarily charged with domestic battery, a Level 6 felony. The additional charges — rape, criminal confinement and a second domestic battery charge — were added to his case when it was filed in court Feb. 26.
Prior to pleading, a jury trial for Farley’s case had been slated for Aug. 12, 13 and 14. His sentencing hearing is now scheduled for 3:30 p.m. Aug. 14.
In Indiana, the sentence for a Level 4 felony ranges between 2 to 12 years, with an advisory sentence of six years.

SERVICES

Thursday
Steed, Wayne: noon, MJS
Mortuaries, 109 S. Meridian St., Redkey.

Service listings provided by
**PROGRESSIVE
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OFFICE PRODUCTS**
120 N. Meridian St.
Portland, Indiana 47371
(260) 726-9201
progressiveofficeproducts.com

EXPLORE

CATHOLIC

“Why Be Catholic?”

An informal discussion on the topics of the widely popular book “Why We’re Catholic” by Trent Horn, who recently joined the Catholic Church.
Hosted by Fr. Peter Logsdon of the Catholic Churches of Jay and Randolph County

- Considering Becoming Catholic?
- Want to Know More about the Catholic faith?
- Just Curious or Interested in this topic?

THURS, July 25TH

BUFFALO WINGS-N-RINGS in Portland @ 7:00 PM

JANITORIAL POSITION

Taking applications for janitorial position for the Redkey Park Cabin.
Application can be picked up at the Redkey Town Hall.

SUUUUPER

ADVERTISING DISCOUNTS

Run a half-page color ad in all four of our newspapers
The Commercial Review (Portland), the News-Gazette (Winchester), The News-Times (Hartford City) and The News and Sun (Dunkirk)

for \$550.

Space for color is limited. Ads will automatically convert to black and white if color space is not available.

Rates do not apply to special sections
Ads must run in April

**Call (260) 726-8141
or email ads@thecr.com**

GRAPHIC PRINTING
NEWSPAPERS

Art camp kicks off next week in Portland

Arts in the Parks is offering an art camp next week.

Art camp, led by Lydia Rowles, will be held at Jay County Campus of Arts Place from Monday through Aug. 2.

Campers will experience a wide variety of art classes with four different classes offered each day.

The camp is open to ages 8 through 15, but it's limited to 20 campers. Lunch and snacks are pro-

Taking Note

vided. Registration is \$20. To sign up, visit bit.ly/ArtCamp2024. For questions, visit Arts Place, call (260) 726-4809 or email visualarts@myartsplace.org.

Coming to Emens

Cirque Musica Holiday Wonderland and The Oak Ridge Boys have been added to the upcoming lineup for Emens Auditorium at Ball State University.

Cirque Musica Holiday Wonderland is scheduled for 6 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 8, with The Oak Ridge Boys' American Made Christmas Farewell Tour set for 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 21.

Tickets are on sale now and are available at ticketmaster.com or by calling (765) 285-1539.

Edwards awarded

The American Public Gardens Association's Executive Garden Leaders Community recently honored Minnetrista Museum & Gardens associate director of horticulture James Edwards with the Gerry Donnelly Future Leader Award.

Edwards started his career as a gardener at Minnetrista. He has placed a focus on creating access to horticulture and engaging the community through innovative and sustainable practices.

"James has consistently demonstrated his commitment through his diligent work and innovative approaches not only on our campus, but throughout Community," said Minnetrista president

and CEO Brian Statz in a press release. "His passion for creative problem-solving and steadfast commitment to personal and professional growth distinguish him as a leader here at Minnetrista," he said. "By empowering our staff to attend workshops, conferences, and educational programs, we ensure that our team stays at the forefront of industry trends and best practices."

Longtime partner doesn't feel like they're being heard

DEAR ABBY: I have been in a relationship with "Ben" for 13 years, but I have been to his parents' home only twice. I really love him. We never go anywhere or do anything together. He has never given me a gift for any occasion or "just because." Material things don't matter to me, but if he thought to get me something, it would make me feel he cares.

Ben is always gone, and I'm always alone. He is very selfish. How can I help him understand that I have feelings and I matter as much as he does? — MISSING SOMETHING IN MISSISSIPPI

DEAR MISSING: People demonstrate their feelings for each other in different ways. From what you have written, it appears the man you have been with for 13 years spends the exact amount of time with you that he wishes, with little to no regard for your needs.

You could talk to Ben until the cows come home, but he won't get the message. For your sake, invest no more time in this man. Concentrate on finding a partner who is willing to give you what you need. If you do, you'll have a happier life than the one you are living now.

DEAR ABBY: A friend's daughter moved in with me to attend college so she would not

Dear Abby



have to commute. At the time, I was out of state with an ill family member. While I was away, my bathroom was repainted without my permission. Had I been asked, I would have said NO.

I, and many others, think this was totally inappropriate. It's still unsettling to me, even though it happened a couple of years ago. How do I put this behind me? — COLOR-CORRECTED IN TENNESSEE

DEAR COLOR-CORRECTED: I understand why you are still seeing red. You were generous, and your hospitality was violated. What the girl did was nasty. (I hope you made her restore it to the way it was, but I suspect you didn't do that.)

A way to put this behind you would be to consider it a LESSON and, in the future, before allowing anyone to stay in your home, establish a set of ground rules that includes "no altering the premises in your absence."

DEAR ABBY: I have an unusual situation and don't

know what to do. I've been married for 28 years. My husband likes to urinate outside. We have a patio just outside our kitchen window, and I can't stand the smell anymore.

Our neighbors have complained to him and have asked me to make him stop. I have asked him nicely, I have begged, I have gotten angry and I have cried. Nothing makes him stop.

Last year, he was arrested for urinating in a public park. Please help me figure this out. — AT THE END OF MY ROPE IN WISCONSIN

DEAR 'END': For some men, their home is their castle, and their yard is their kingdom. Your husband seems to like marking his turf — literally. (Dogs do this as well.) Because you can't make him see reason, it may be time for your neighbors to report him to the authorities for exposing himself in public.

And, between you and me, that he would urinate in a public park may indicate that he's slipping mentally, which should be mentioned to his doctor.

DEAR ABBY: I am a 47-year-old woman. I have been with my partner for 10 years. He was the most amazing person in years past, but lately he has been dismissive, avoids all emotional topics and is absent

for days off and on. If I bring it up, he borders on abusive. Suddenly, he's belittling me and making me feel like I'm not the beautiful person he's always proclaimed I was. For my own sanity, I left him. Now he's promising he will have counseling (together and separately) so that he can get better and help me understand why he did a complete 180. Should I believe him? Should I take another chance on us? I love him, but it took so long to heal that I'm stuck in self-preservation mode. What should I do — walk or talk? — FRACTURED IN ARIZONA

DEAR FRACTURED: You say you left him — that was healthy. Some women stay and tolerate abuse until their self-esteem is completely eroded. Because you still care for him, I vote for giving him the second chance he is asking for, BUT ONLY AFTER THE COUNSELING HE HAS PROMISED IS WELL UNDERWAY. You deserve not only an apology but answers for the treatment you received from him. Do not reconcile until you have them.

DEAR ABBY: My daughter is 16. She has been with her boyfriend, who is 18, for a year. She says she loves him, but she doesn't want to go on dates. She also doesn't like to give him hugs (the only type of

affection that is shown). I have told her it's OK if she doesn't like him like that, and it's OK to not have a boyfriend at all. She says she doesn't want to talk about it.

I am concerned because this isn't normal. He gets to see her only when she allows him to come to our house. She could go weeks without seeing him and be OK. He is so in love with my daughter that I don't think he will ever end their relationship. I just want her to be happy, and she doesn't seem to be. I try to let her figure things out herself, but her dad and I are at a loss. How can we help her? — SOMETHING'S OFF IN OHIO

DEAR OFF: You and your husband should stay out of this. This is your daughter's problem (if there IS a problem) to resolve. She may like this young man only as a friend, or she may be taking her time figuring out where her true feelings lie. Once she does, SHE will end it. If her boyfriend (I use this term advisedly) wants more than he's receiving, he will eventually draw the line himself.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Community Calendar

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

Today

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.

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.

DEMENTIA SUPPORT

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

Friday

PAST RECOVERY SERVICES — Peer Addiction Support Team recovery support group meets at 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. each Friday at the Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition office at 100 N. Meridian St., Portland. For more information, call (260) 251-3259.

Saturday

LOCAL'S MARKET — Will be held from 8 a.m. to noon each Saturday in June through October in the parking lot at Jay Community Center in Portland. For more information, contact Bill Cook.

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. Come early for a meal. For more information, call (260) 766-2006.

Monday

PORTLAND BREAKFAST OPTIMISTS — Will meet at 7 a.m. for breakfast at Richards Restaurant.

PING PONG — Will be played from 9 a.m. to noon each Monday at Jay Community Center.

EUCHRE — Will be played starting at 1 p.m. each Monday at West Jay Community Center, 125 Hoover St., Dunkirk.

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY (TOPS) — Will meet for weigh-in at 4:30 p.m., with the meeting at 5 p.m., at Trinity United Methodist Church, 323 S. Meridian St., Portland. New members welcome.

Sudoku

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

Level: Intermediate

Wednesday's Solution

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

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.

NEVER MISS

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We have a busy schedule of special sections and pages coming up.

Mark your calendar NOW.

Engine show

Tuesday, Aug. 20 - UNIV*
FRHS fall sports

Tuesday, Aug. 20 - CR*
JCHS fall sports

Wednesday, Aug. 21 - CR/NS*
Blackford fall sports

Wednesday, Aug. 21 - NT*
Randolph County football

Thursday, Aug. 22 - N-G*

DEADLINES ARE ONE WEEK PRIOR



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

Progress always brings pushback

By MORTON J. MARCUS

Back in April, the Indianapolis Business Journal asked the then five Republican candidates for governor, "What would you do to boost the economy of rural Indiana?"

They gave us all the answers: education, business investment, health care, child care, Main Streets, agricultural research, unleash entrepreneurship and, my favorite, "maximize the expertise at Purdue."

What do we see when we believe a place needs a "boost?" Is it a loss of population or just a slower rate of growth than other places? Is population the only factor? And given the answers above from the candidates, should our actions be dif-

Eye on the Pie



ferent for urban versus rural areas?

Where is the need? Population offers an easy answer.

In 2020, at the time of the last census, 44 Hoosier counties had fewer people than their peak populations. Peaks were determined from a table of seven census years (1900, 1920, 1940 on to 2020).

Lake County was the biggest numeric loser, down by 24,300 from its 1980 level of 523,000. But

that was less than a 5% decline in 40 years, an average annual loss of 607 residents (0.12%). Is that a crisis?

Compare that to the biggest percent decline of 44% (12,200 persons) in Vermillion County. Here the population was 27,600 in 1920, over a hundred years ago. The annual loss was 122 persons. Is Vermillion in crisis or has it adjusted to its reality?

To answer that question, dig down to the township level.

In Lake County, only three of 11 townships lost population. Calumet Township dropped 118,900 (56%) of its residents, North Township lost 47,400 residents (23%) and Hobart Township was down 1,900 (4%). The other eight townships gained 209,400.

In Vermillion County, each of the five townships lost population from their respective peaks. Clinton and Vermillion townships each lost more than half of their peak populations.

Lake County is an example of population shifts resulting from household income growth combined with racial/ethnic bias. Vermillion County is likely the poster child for the loss of an industrial base.

What should we do about the 642 Indiana townships (64% of our 1,008 townships) that together were 791,400 below their previous population peaks? Let it be and just recite the mantra of remedies offered by the GOP hopefuls?

What does each county or township have or lack to sup-

port economic advances for its citizens? Possibly improved transit and/or roads to jobs elsewhere might be the best route at this time. But any road improvement will be fought by property owners as a danger to children waiting for school buses and old folks picking up the mail.

In fact, anything that facilitates change will bring immediate opposition by those who decry decay yet oppose necessary progressive steps. Rural or urban restoration is an admirable goal, but will be a political nightmare when actually attempted.

Marcus is an economist. Email him at mortonjmarcus@gmail.com.

Vance signals a new conservatism

Bloomberg Opinion
Tribune News Service

Americans had reason to fear for the future even before the attempted assassination of Donald Trump.

One hopes this enormity, together with respect for its innocent victims, will urge elected leaders to keep the risk of instability and political violence front of mind. In particular, campaigns need to talk less about the evil of their opponents and think harder about policy.

Policy did indeed come up at the Republican Party's national convention this week, but not in a good way. Energized by the weekend's outrage, Republicans celebrated both a new policy platform and the choice of Senator JD Vance as the former president's running mate.

The choices go together all too well. Republicans are shifting toward a new kind of inward-looking big-government conservatism — "national conservatism," as its advocates prefer. Unless something changes, this benighted program's electoral prospects look good.

Ronald Reagan's Republican Party stood for market liberalism and strong national defense. The Trump administration lacked such guiding principles, and relied instead on the president's certainty that he knew best. He settled on protectionism, unfunded tax cuts with enormous deficits, chauvinistic strutting and a carelessly transactional approach to U.S. alliances. To its shame, the old Republican Party looked on impotently, hoping this would pass.

It didn't, and the emerging new party has no reservations. The choice of Vance for vice president underlines the point. Some plausible deputies might've tried to restrain Trump's illiberal and narrowly nationalist instincts. Vance, henceforth Trump's presumed successor, seems more likely to fuel them.

He agrees with Trump that U.S. aid to Ukraine should be scaled down and NATO has been allowed to lean too heavily on U.S. support: "No, I don't think that we should pull out of NATO, and no, I don't think that we should abandon Europe," he has said. "But yes, I think that we should pivot." This undermines the alliance that the old Republican Party rec-

Guest Editorial

ognized as vital for national security.

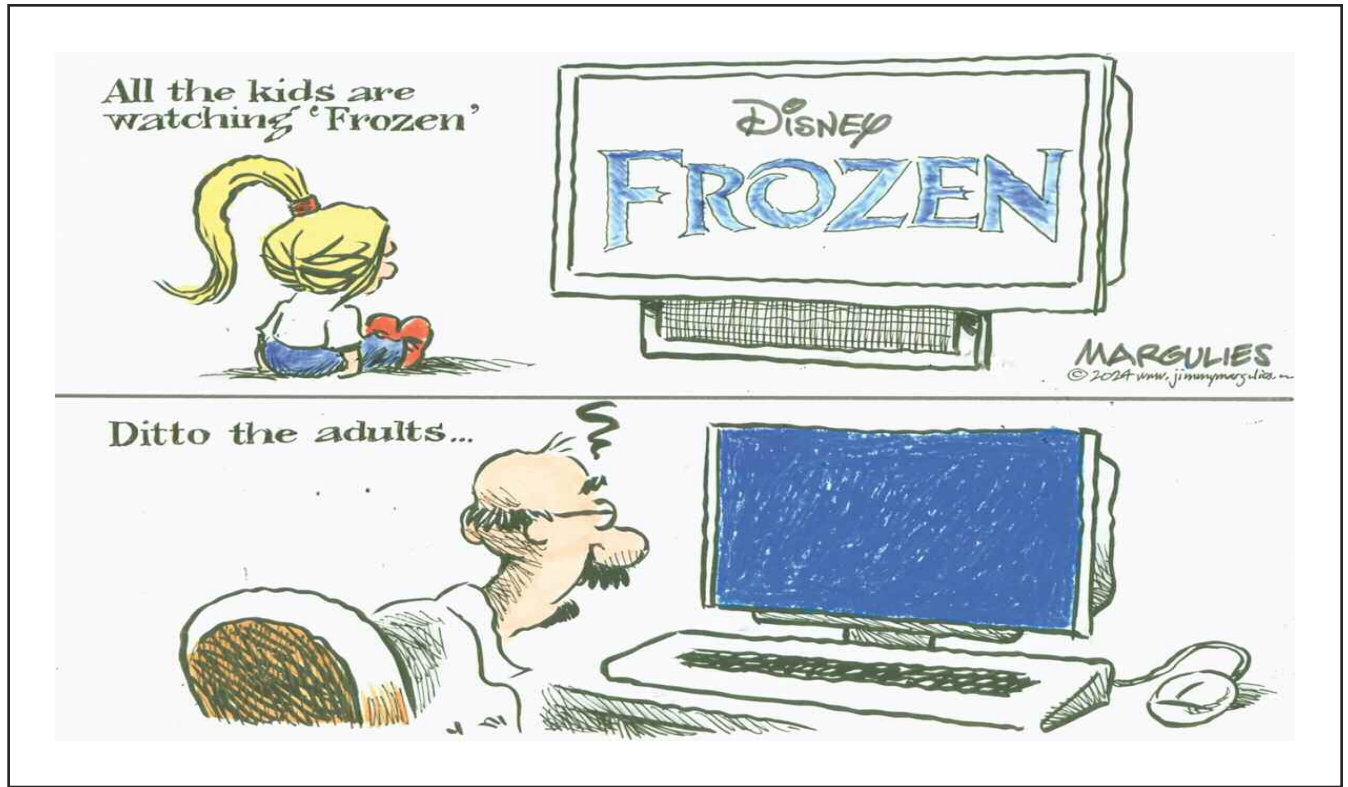
Trump, Vance and the new platform are also aligned on domestic policy: Seal the border and undertake the largest deportation program in American history. Stop outsourcing and make the U.S. a manufacturing superpower. Build infrastructure. Rebuild U.S. cities ("making them safe, clean and beautiful again"). Rule out entitlement reform and cut workers' taxes. Whether Trump sees the contradictions is debatable. Vance does, and he embraces them nonetheless.

A former Never Trumper, Vance has moved to and fro on policy as electoral math has dictated, but he seems genuinely suspicious of commerce and private enterprise. He has blamed worsening fiscal shortfalls on trade ("we shipped millions of good jobs to China and other countries") and favors higher taxes on the companies responsible. He says immigration suppresses wages. (It doesn't.)

No fan of big tech, he commends the Federal Trade Commission's aggressive new approach to antitrust enforcement. Sean O'Brien, head of the Teamsters union, was granted a prime-time speaking slot at the convention; he praised Vance and a "growing group" of GOP officials for "listening to unions and standing up to corporations."

When it comes to market forces versus government intervention, of course, the populist right often agrees with the populist left. Thanks to the Republican realignment, voters lose twice over. The absence of small-government conservatives shifts economic policy unopposed toward ill-conceived interventions, and cultural friction between social liberals and social conservatives, which is hard to assuage, comes to dominate the country's politics.

America's political system requires a willingness to tolerate disagreement. Its prosperity requires close attention to the defects of populist economics. The new Republicans have other priorities.



Soaring prices are not acts of God

By STEVEN HILL
The Fulcrum
Tribune News Service

Since the pandemic, going to the grocery store has become a jarring experience. On a recent visit, I packed my purchased items into my tote bag and then gawked at the receipt in disbelief.

I'm not alone. Gripping about the high cost of groceries has become a national pastime. It's not just a figment of our imaginations: Grocery prices have soared nearly 27% since 2020, higher than overall inflation.

Some consumers have gone into debt to afford groceries. According to an Urban Institute analysis, many families have had to tap credit cards, savings and payday loans to afford the essentials.

The standard explanation for these grocery price increases has been supply chain disruptions caused by pandemic-related labor shortages, rising fuel costs and droughts.

Certainly those factors have all played a significant role. But is that all that's going on here? Let's probe a little deeper.

Concurrent with the alarming rise in grocery prices has been a record increase in grocery industry profits. The major grocery chains have been operating at the highest profit margins in two decades. A recent Federal Trade Commission study on grocery supply chains found that major retailers have leveraged their size and influence to dictate what they pay to their suppliers.

So during a time when everyone else's costs have escalated, grocery chains have been able to control costs even as their prices soared.

For example, Pepsi and Coca-Cola dominate the beverage industry. In 2021, during the middle of the pandemic, Pepsi raised its prices, blaming it on alleged higher costs. Yet somehow it still raked in \$11 billion in profits. Then in 2023, even though the pandemic was over and inflation was dropping, Pepsi still hiked its prices by double digits for the seventh consecutive quarter: Its profits soared another 14%.

Pepsi's only major competitor, Coca-Cola, announced the same

Steven Hill



price hikes around the same time. If Pepsi and Coke had other large competitors, consumers would have more choices. But Pepsi and Coke own most of the substitute beverage products!

That's what's called a market monopoly, and soft drinks are not the only food products dominated by a handful of businesses. Only four companies control the processing of 80% of beef, nearly 70% of pork and almost 60% of poultry. With so few businesses competing, it is pretty easy for them to coordinate price increases. Consequently, at the end of 2023, Americans were paying at least 30% more for beef, poultry and pork products than they were before the pandemic.

The number of grocery stores itself has fallen 30% in the past 25 years, resulting in more than a third of grocery sales coming from only four retailers. Walmart alone has nearly a quarter of the grocery market. Low competition gives these retailers more market power to raise prices.

So yes, inflation is down, but many people don't notice because food prices are still high, partly due to several years of price gouging by monopolies. And this dynamic goes well beyond the grocery store. In 75% of U.S. industries, whether pharmaceuticals, airlines, health care, utilities, energy or others, fewer companies now control more of their markets than 20 years ago.

What role do presidents or politics play in all of this? During the recent debate, Donald Trump attacked President Joe Biden over high grocery prices, saying, "He caused the inflation ... it's killing people. They can't buy groceries anymore."

Certainly it's true that prices have greatly increased during the Biden presidency. But much of that initial-

ly was a result of the pandemic — which began during Trump's presidency. It's unlikely that either president could have controlled those pandemic-unleashed economic forces.

To Biden's credit, his administration has been pressing grocery retailers to lower prices, and actually has done more than any president since Teddy Roosevelt to crack down on monopolies. His FTC has taken action against price-fixing in the meat industry and filed a lawsuit to block the merger of supermarket giants Kroger and Albertsons that would eliminate even more competition and lead to higher prices.

Trump, in his strategy to protect American businesses, has called for a 10% tariff on all imported goods. That makes a great campaign slogan, but given that the United States imports 15% of its food supply — including 60% of fresh fruit and nearly 40% of fresh vegetables — that would likely further increase food costs.

Just recently, there's evidence that some of the anti-monopoly saber rattling might be working. Grocery chains have finally begun lowering prices. Target announced it would lower prices on roughly 5,000 items, including staples such as milk, produce, bread, coffee, diapers and pet food. Aldi, the fastest-growing grocery chain in the country, announced price cuts on hundreds of items. Walmart and Safeway have followed suit.

But this is not some newfound corporate generosity. With prices so high, U.S. consumers had reduced their grocery spending to the point that it actually began to threaten Big Grocery's sales and profits. Greedy grocery chains have quite literally bitten the hand that feeds them.

Going forward, as America races toward a presidential election, voters will be eyeing their grocery bills and comparing the candidates' statements over who will provide the most relief.

Hill was policy director for the Center for Humane Technology, co-founder of FairVote and political reform director at New America.

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—Thomas Jefferson

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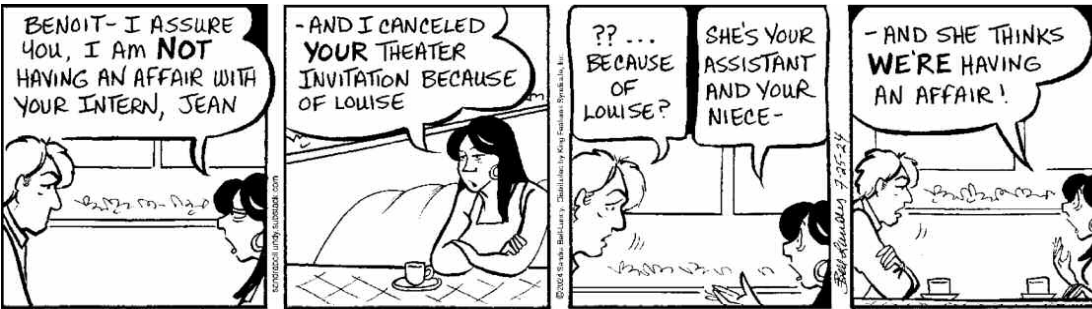
Agnes



Hi and Lois



Between Friends



Blondie



Snuffy Smith



Beetle Bailey



Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

What can defeat me?

North dealer. Neither side vulnerable. NORTH: J, AKQ2, A653, AK74. WEST: 52, 3, J74, Q1098653. EAST: A3, J9864, Q1098, J2. SOUTH: KQ1098764, 1075, K2.

The bidding: North 1, East 2, South 3, West 3NT. Opening lead — three of hearts. This deal occurred in a national pair championship. As usual, with several hundred pairs playing the same hand, there were many different results.

The most popular contract by far was six spades. However, some pairs climbed all the way to seven spades — a tad ambitious lacking the ace of trump — while still others got no higher than four spades.

The hand is somewhat difficult to bid, especially from South's viewpoint. Thus, if South uses Black-

wood, he learns that his partner has three aces. This alone should persuade him to stop in six spades, but it might leave him with a gnawing doubt about whether North could have the right three aces, in which case there might be a grand slam.

Surely the most disappointed players were those who got to six spades and went down one. This occurred at more than a few tables where declarer played the hand too quickly and lost the slam as a result.

At all of these tables, West's opening lead was a heart, South won in dummy and led the jack of trump. East went up with the ace and returned a heart, and that was the end of that. Down one.

The declarers who went down in the slam were certainly unlucky to run into a heart ruff, but, even so, they had only themselves to blame. The possibility of a heart ruff should have been apparent to these declarers, and they could have taken a simple step to prevent it.

All they had to do was to cash dummy's A-K of clubs and discard two hearts before leading a trump. Clearly, those declarers who went down in six spades had neglected to ask themselves "What can defeat me?" Had they done that, the answer would not have been long in forthcoming.

Tomorrow: Bidding quiz. ©2024 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

7-25 CRYPTOQUIP

PX FDPID EMZQ CA QDH FHLL JDCTGV ACGLJ QBEPIMGGB AHHG KCZH KHGMXIDCGB QDMX

TJTMG? JMVVHZ-VMB.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN ACTRESS BARRYMORE IS REMARKABLY THOROUGH ABOUT SOME TASK, SHE DOES HER DREW DILIGENCE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals U

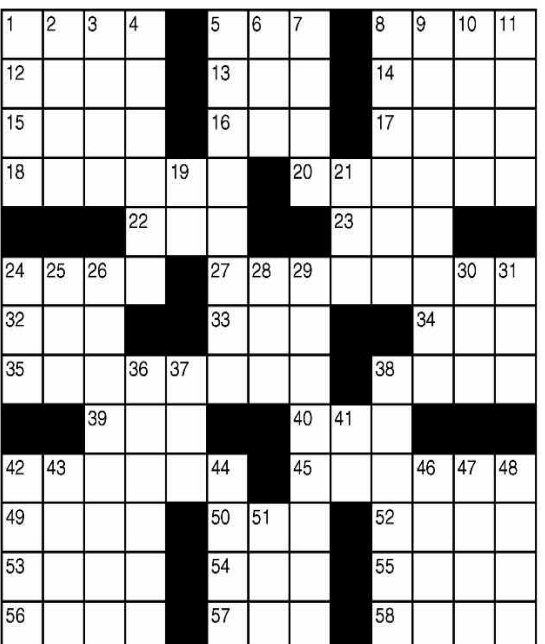
CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS: 1 Expansive, 5 Taxi, 8 Play parts, 12 Regretably, 13 "Yoo- —!", 14 The Mets' old home, 15 Zilch, 16 "Evil Woman" gp., 17 Steerer's place, 18 Do a slow burn, 20 Gourmet mushrooms, 22 Navy address, 23 Waincot wood, 24 "Of — and Men", 27 Arriving, 32 "Kinda" suffix, 33 Reaction to an air show, 34 Sass, 35 Deep fissure, 38 Mimicking bird, 39 Aachen article, 40 Id counterpart, 42 Square one, 45 Sky-rocketed, 49 "Phooey!", 50 U.K. recording label, 52 "Un-unh", 53 Fed. workplace monitor, 54 Sturgeon product, 55 Idyllic place, 56 Church service, 57 Ruin the veneer, 58 Ruby and Sandra, 1 Moving fleet, 2 African lily, 3 Logical, 4 Dangerous fly, 5 Popular cereal, 6 ISP giant, 7 Prosperous time, 8 Hindu retreat, 9 In a sassy manner, 10 Relate, 11 — Club, 19 "Greetings!", 21 Odometer start, 24 Karaoke prop, for short, 25 Leb. neighbor, 26 Fast felines, 28 Refusals, 29 More rinky-dink, 30 Diarist Anais, 31 Dean's list stat, 36 Panoramas suffix, 37 Chemical foundations, 38 Complained, 41 "Leave now!", 42 Actor Leslie — Jr., 43 Celestial bear, 44 School session, 46 Took the bus, 47 Slender weapon, 48 Cozy rooms, 51 Extinct bird.

Solution time: 24 mins.



Yesterday's answer 7-25



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Tony Petitti welcomes new schools

By ANDY YAMASHITA

The Seattle Times

Tribune News Service

INDIANAPOLIS — Under the lights in the cavernous interior of Lucas Oil Stadium, Tony Petitti takes the stage.

It's the start of a new era for Washington and the Big Ten. The differences between the Huskies' previous home in the Pac-12 and its new one were apparent before Petitti, the commissioner, uttered a single word.

Take the setting, for example. Lucas Oil Stadium, the home of the Indianapolis Colts, looms large on the city's skyline and is arguably its most recognizable building. In less than five months, two teams will meet on this field with a chance to win the Big Ten championship.

This event is about football. This conference is about football. Zouk Nightclub in Las Vegas, where the Pac-12's last media day was held, feels a universe away. Welcome to Big Ten country.

"College football has never been stronger," Petitti said, "especially in the Big Ten Conference."

Big Ten media days, now a three-day event to accommodate the entire 18-team conference, began at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis on Tuesday. Washington coach Jedd Fisch and UW's player representatives won't speak until Thursday, but Petitti, along with players and coaches from Illinois, Northwestern, Rutgers, Wisconsin, Purdue and Ohio State, met the media Tuesday.

Washington, USC, UCLA and Oregon officially join the Big Ten on Aug. 2. Petitti described the process of identifying the four new members as a "holistic approach." He added academic standing and competitiveness in multiple sports helped the former Pac-12 schools'

Oregon, USC, UCLA and Washington officially join the Big Ten on Aug. 2

case, and praised the four schools for their fit across multiple categories. However, Petitti acknowledged one factor had a particularly important emphasis.

"Are you bringing additional value to the conference in football?" Petitti said. "It's no secret that football is a large, large part of the revenue that's driven to support the whole ecosystem. We understand that. So when you're evaluating potential members, football sort of moves to the front of the line in terms of the athletic piece."

Petitti said the conference is working with all four of the new arrivals to help them integrate into the Big Ten, including having discussions about scheduling, championship formats, marketing, brand alignment and incorporation into the Big Ten Academic Alliance. He said feedback from student-athletes will be considered and adjustments will be made as necessary going forward.

Washington, in particular, has found itself in a difficult position because of the move. The athletic department is saddled with around \$240 million in stadium renovation debt which it owes to the university's internal lending program.

See Welcomes page 7



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

On the attack

Cameron Muhlenkamp, a sophomore at Fort Recovery High School, attacks a ball in a practice Tuesday afternoon. Muhlenkamp joins the varsity squad as an outside hitter after being on junior varsity in 2023. The Indians will open their season on Aug. 17 at Russia.



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Will U.S. men's soccer embarrass or surprise in Paris?

By KEVIN BAXTER

Los Angeles Times

Tribune News Service

MARSEILLE, France — The U.S. was two minutes away from an early exit in the men's soccer tournament at the Beijing Olympics when Sacha Kljestan scored on a penalty kick. That did little to change the results and even less to save the Americans, who left China after that final group-stage game.

But it did make Kljestan the answer to an unwelcome trivia question: Who

was the last American male soccer player to score a goal in the Olympic Games?

Kljestan was 22 then and midway through his third season in MLS. He would go on to play more than 470 games for four teams on two continents, winning eight trophies in Belgium and a Supporters' Shield in the U.S. before retiring two years ago.

Chivas USA, the first pro team he played for, was disbanded a decade ago.

See Soccer page 7

Ernie Johnson taking leave

By RODNEY HO

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Tribune News Service

ATLANTA — Ernie Johnson, the well-respected longtime TNT Sports broadcaster, is taking a leave of absence from hosting duties for TBS' national MLB games.

In a news release, he said, "I'd like to thank the leadership at TNT Sports for allowing me the time away to take care of a family matter during the baseball season. I look forward to returning to the studio for the start of the NBA season."

TBS is replacing Johnson with MLB Network's Greg Amsinger as the studio host, starting Tuesday night with national coverage of the Mets-Yankees Subway Series game.

The other members of the analyst crew remain: Pedro Martinez, Jimmy Rollins and Curtis Granderson.

See Leave page 7

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