

# The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1



Special to The Commercial Review/Dylan Lewis

## Setting over Forge

Shades of red, yellow and orange fill the sky Wednesday evening in this view looking toward Portland Forge. Tonight's forecast calls for partly cloudy skies with a chance of rain.

## County TIF plan is updated

*Funding comes to about \$550,000 annually*

By BAILEY CLINE  
The Commercial Review

The fourth and final step in the process is complete.

Jay County Redevelopment Commission approved a confirmatory resolution Wednesday, formally adopting its updated economic development plan for the county's tax increment financing (TIF) district.

Jay County's TIF district includes about 191 acres southwest of Portland in Greene Township. It has been generating dollars for 15 years and has been used to pay off bonds associated with road work and sewer improvements near the ethanol plant in that area. After Jay County made its final bond payment in 2023 for the project, Jay County Redevelopment Commission began looking into options for how to spend the TIF district funding — about \$550,000 accrued annually for the next 13 years.

The newly updated economic development plan — the original document dates back to 2007 when the TIF district was created — includes a list of potential projects: transportation enhancements, public safety enhancements, utility infrastructure, highway garage improvements, a new building for Jay County Solid Waste Management District, a new public safety building and planning and development of the county's 68 acres on the western edge of Portland.

TIF funding could also be used as a local match for state and federal grants. Jay County Redevelopment Commission is also not tied to using specific amounts of TIF dollars for the aforementioned projects, but the plan is intended to serve as a guide moving forward.

See **Plan** page 2

## Facade funds OK'd for business

By RAY COONEY  
The Commercial Review

A downtown Portland business will get some help with new windows.

During back-to-back meetings Thursday morning, Portland Historic Preservation Commission and Portland Facade Committee approved a certificate of appropriateness for new windows on the north side of Reclaiming Design and agreed to cover half of the cost of cutting the openings.

LeeAnn Miller has been renovating 206 N. Meridian St. as the new home for her interior design business. The north wall was exposed this year when the City of Portland tore down the struc-

### Reclaiming Design will get new second-floor windows

tures at 208 and 210 N. Meridian St. after they had been declared unsafe.

Miller plans to add three second-floor windows in locations similar to where they were located when the building was constructed more than a century ago.

During a brief session, the historic preservation commission

approved the certificate of appropriateness for the windows. It was required because the new windows will include vinyl.

Commission members Emily Goodrich, Rusty Inman and John McFarland approved the certificate, noting that the new windows will match those in the rest of the building.

The facade committee — Joe

Johnston, Mayor Jeff Westlake and Inman — then discussed a request from Miller for funding to help with the installation of the new windows. (A door that had been previously discussed was removed from the request.) Miller provided two quotes for the preparation work — cutting the spaces for the windows into the north wall — but said cost of the windows themselves will depend on the final size of the openings.

The facade committee agreed to cover half the cost of the window preparation work with a maximum total of \$34,199 and asked Miller to return with quotes for the windows when they are available.

## Foundation awards grants

Local organizations will receive more than \$150,000 in support for projects.

The Portland Foundation this week announced its summer 2024 grant recipients, with \$159,553 awarded for 15 projects.

The largest of the grants at nearly one-third of the total funding, was \$50,000 to John Jay Center for Learning. It will be used for the education center's High School Equivalency program.

Jay Community Center and Arts Place each received a pair of grants. The community center was awarded a total of \$17,943 for senior programming, with \$2,943 coming from the Ralph and Bertha Green-Tony and Helen Saffer Fund for the Elderly, the Elizabeth A. Starbuck Fund for the Elderly, the Ralph Denver Stroud and Helen Stroud Endowment Fund, and the Joseph Vormohr Memorial Funds that were

### More than \$150,000 distributed for local causes

established to support senior citizens. It also got \$7,500 for the Boys and Girls Club after-school programs. Grants to Arts Place were \$15,000 for the 2025 Arts in the Parks program and \$7,500 for the Hudson Family Park Amphitheater Concert Series.

The only other grants of more than \$10,000 went to Cincinnati League of Jay County for \$16,570 to purchase a new soft-serve ice cream machine and \$15,424 to Praises and Pathways Daycare for the purchase of furniture.

Receiving \$5,000 apiece were Pennville Pumpkin Festival for its 2024 event and the Town of

Salamonia for upgrading playground equipment.

Other grants were as follows: \$4,000 to Gamma Nu sorority for two ice cream freezers; \$3,616 to Portland Kiwanis Club for a new popcorn machine, snow cone machine and freezer; \$3,500 to West Jay Community Center for new concession stand appliances; \$3,000 to Jay County Robotics from the Virgil and Josephine Thomas Educational Fund for game fields and elements; \$3,000 to New Hope Ministries for a new heating ventilation and cooling system; and \$2,500 to Dunkirk Junior League for an ice maker.

See **Grants** page 2



Tribune News Service/Miami Herald/AI Diaz

## Park protest

As children play in the park Tuesday, Javier Alvarez, 56, joins protesters with Keep Florida State Parks Wild-Defend Oleta State Park against the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's plan to add pickleball courts, cabins and a disc golf course to Oleta River State Park in North Miami Beach, Florida. Gov. Ron DeSantis is withdrawing plans after the proposal faced intense public and political backlash.

### Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 86 degrees Wednesday. The low was 68.

There is a chance of rain tonight, especially after midnight. The low will be in the

upper 60s. Expect mostly cloudy skies Saturday with showers likely and a high in the lower 80s.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

### In review

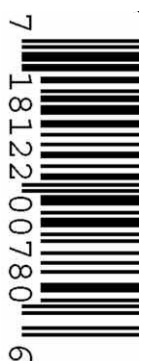
Jay County Solid Waste Management District will have recycling trailers available Saturday. Trailers will be open from 9 a.m. to noon in the shopping center at 220 Lincoln St., Portland, and Dunkirk City Park.

### Coming up

**Saturday** — Results from tonight's JCHS football game against New Castle.

**Wednesday** — A new BBQ restaurant has opened in Dunkirk.

**Thursday** — Coverage of next week's Portland City Council meeting.



# CR almanac

Saturday 8/31	Sunday 9/1	Monday 9/2	Tuesday 9/3	Wednesday 9/4
<b>81/58</b>	<b>84/53</b>	<b>76/49</b>	<b>79/51</b>	<b>82/55</b>
Saturday looks to be stormy with a 60% chance of showers and thunderstorms.	Sunny skies are on the horizon for Sunday, when the high will be around 84.	Labor Day looks to be mostly sunny. Temperatures will be more moderate, around 75.	Mostly sunny skies, when the high will be in the upper 70s.	Sunny skies are on the horizon for Wednesday, when the high will be around 82 degrees.

## Lotteries

<b>Powerball</b> 5-33-47-50-64 Power Ball: 20 Power Play: 2 Estimated jackpot: \$69 million	Daily Four: 3-2-8-6 Quick Draw: 6-7-9-12-28-31-40-41-48-49-51-53-55-58-60-65-70-71-75-78 Cash 5: 3-8-18-23-25 Estimated jackpot: \$222,500
<b>Mega Millions</b> Estimated jackpot: \$627 million	<b>Ohio</b> Wednesday Midday Pick 3: 9-2-7 Pick 4: 2-5-3-9 Pick 5: 9-5-4-5-8 Evening Pick 3: 1-5-6 Pick 4: 3-9-8-6 Pick 5: 1-5-7-8-1 Rolling Cash: 1-15-24-26-32 Estimated jackpot: \$120,000
<b>Hoosier</b> Wednesday Midday Daily Three: 6-0-8 Daily Four: 3-5-9-3 Quick Draw: 2-3-10-13-14-15-31-34-35-38-39-40-47-50-61-62-66-67-75-78 Evening Daily Three: 4-7-5	

## Markets

<b>Cooper Farms Fort Recovery</b> Corn.....3.39 Sept. corn .....3.42 Wheat .....4.18	Sept. beans .....9.46 Wheat ..... 4.93
<b>POET Biorefining Portland</b> Corn.....3.41 Sept. corn .....3.54 Oct. corn .....3.49	<b>ADM Montpelier</b> Corn.....3.41 Sept. corn .....3.41 Beans.....9.55 Sept. beans .....9.55 Wheat .....4.75
<b>The Andersons Richland Township</b> Corn .....3.44 Sept. corn .....3.44 Beans.....9.56	<b>Heartland St. Anthony</b> Corn.....3.34 Sept. corn .....3.40 Beans.....9.36 Sept. beans .....9.36 Wheat .....4.46

## Today in history

In 1862, the Second Battle of Manassas (also known as Bull Run) ended in a decisive Confederate victory in northern Virginia during the Civil War.

In 1905, Ty Cobb made his debut for the Detroit Tigers.

In 1918, Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin survived an assassination attempt during which he was shot twice.

In 1930, businessman and philanthropist Warren Buffett was born in Omaha, Nebraska. Buffett took majority control of textile manufacturer Berkshire Hathaway in 1965. Today the company has a wide range of subsidiaries including GEICO, Duracell, Dairy Queen and Pilot Flying J.

In 1963, a telephone hotline was established between the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States.

In 1967, the U.S. Senate confirmed the appointment of Thurgood Marshall to the Supreme Court, making him the first Black man to serve as a Supreme Court Justice.

In 1976, Tom Brokaw became the news anchor for NBC's "Today Show."

In 1983, Guion S. Bluford Jr. became the first African American to travel into space as a mission specialist on the shuttle orbiter Challenger.

In 1991, Azerbaijan declared its independence from the Soviet Union. It had been under Soviet rule since 1920.

In 1993, "Late Show with David Letterman" debuted on CBS. Letterman had moved from NBC, where he had hosted "Late Night with David Letterman" for 11 years.

In 2007, the Jay County High School boys tennis team defeated Anderson Highland 4-1 to stay in control of the race for the Olympic Athletic Conference championship. Adam Horn and Mark Alberston led the Patriots with a 6-0, 6-0 win at No. 2 doubles.

In 2021, The Portland Foundation announced scholarship awards of \$143,075 for its summer cycle. It included five Dr. Ara C. and Gay B. Badgers Medical Scholarships of \$3,200 each for Kellie Fortkamp, Jared Schlosser, Lizzie Schoenlein, Katy Smeltzer and Abbigayle Smith.

—The CR

## Citizen's calendar

<b>Tuesday</b> 5:30 p.m. — Portland City Council, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Franklin St. 7 p.m. — Salamonina Town Council, Schoolhouse Community Center.	Board of Works, mayor's office, city hall, 321 N. Meridian St., Portland. 5:30 p.m. — Portland Plan Commission, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland.
<b>Wednesday</b> 5:30 p.m. — Jay County Council, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.	<b>Sept. 10</b> 5:30 p.m. — Portland Park Board, city hall, 321 N. Meridian St. 5:30 p.m. — Portland Board of Zoning Appeals, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland.
<b>Thursday</b> 4 p.m. — Portland	

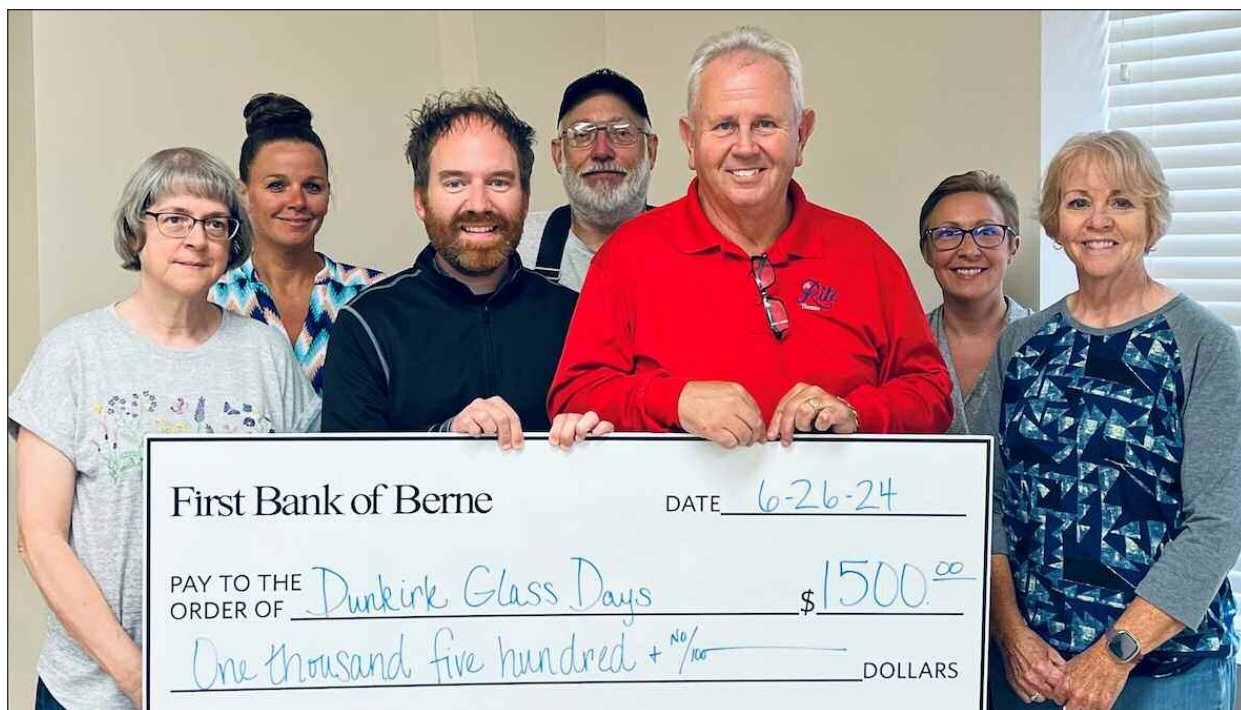


Photo provided

## Bank donates

First Bank of Berne recently donated \$1,500 to Glass Days. Pictured, front row from left, are Glass Days board members Rose Morgan, Kyle Holt, Dru Hall and Pam Robbins. Back Row are Afton Ridgway, Tom Brosher and Jenn Collins.

## Grants ...

Continued from page 1

Teacher Creativity Mini-Grants — the are intended to help cover the cost (\$300 or less) of learning experiences which teachers feel are important to their students, yet are outside the budget of their school — of \$300 went to Erin Homan (General Shanks Preschool) for classroom events and programs and Erin Ransom (East Elementary School) for classroom dividers and circle carpets. Other teachers receiving grants were Anita Clott (General Shanks) — \$211.66 for items for "Ag in the Classroom"; Jennifer Johnson (West Jay Elementary School) — \$215 for classroom items; and Beth Mathewson (East Jay Elementary School) — \$277.57 for sequencing materials for the classroom.

## Plan ...

Continued from page 1

It's also a document that is needed in order to apply for grants.

Ed Curtin of CWC Latitudes started putting together a draft of the plan in March, with commission members approving it in April. The plan was slightly adjusted in May — the commission removed a section allowing contracts for educational and training programs, which had been added in April, and made a few small changes in the language — before Jay County Plan Commission and Jay County Commissioners approved it the following month.

Redevelopment commission members held a public hearing Wednesday in relation to the plan updates with no comments made.

Curtin noted Wednesday's public hearing and resolution mark the final step in the process for updating and adopting the plan. From here, the county will file the information with Jay County Auditor's Office and Indiana Department of Local Government and Finance.

Also Wednesday, during a less than five-minute meeting, commission members Chuck Huffman, Carl Walker, Brian McGalliard, Faron Parr and Ted Champ approved a \$4,260 claim from consulting firm Baker Tilly for its services.

## Capsule Reports

**Man injured**

A Portland man sustained several injuries after the motorcycle he was driving crashed into a sign along county road 200 South about 11:59 p.m. Wednesday.

Wharris R. Willis Jr., 50, was driving a 2005 Harley-Davidson Sportster 1200 Custom west on the road just east of county road 425 East when he crashed into a road closed sign. Willis was ejected from the motorcycle and landed in a ditch on the north side of the road.

Willis sustained injuries to his left elbow and ankle, along with several cuts and friction wounds to his arms and head. He was transported to IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital in Muncie for his injuries.

Willis was also administered a drug and alcohol blood test with results pending.

The motorcycle was towed, with damage estimated between \$10,000 and \$25,000.

## SERVICES

Saturday  
Garringer, Roberta: 3 p.m.,  
MJS Mortuaries, 109 S. Meridian St., Redkey.

Service listings provided by  
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- Maintains current knowledge of CDC guidelines and immunization/vaccination standards and attends educational training/seminars as necessary.
- Issues certified birth and death certificates to authorized individuals.
- Receives/receipts monies for permits, certificates, and immunizations and files reports as necessary.
- Answers telephones and greets office visitors, responding to inquiries, providing information and assistance.

**REQUIREMENTS**

- High School diploma or equivalent.
- Possession of or ability to obtain TB skin testing certification and CPR/AED certifications.
- Possession of or ability to obtain Notary Public License and National Incident Management (NIMS) Certifications.
- Ability to serve the public with diplomacy and respect, including occasional encounters with difficult persons.
- Ability to problem solve and collaborate as a team player.
- Ability to operate standard office equipment.
- Ability to travel off-site (active Indiana driver's license).

**Hours**

- 35 hours weekly (Monday 8:30 am - 7:00 pm, Tuesday through Thursday 8:30 am - 4:30 pm, Friday 8:30 am - 1:00 pm).
- Occasional evening and weekend hours as needed for department operations and out of town meetings.
- Follows the Jay County government office holiday schedule.

All interested applicants can submit their resume to the Jay County Health Department at:  
504 W. Arch St., Portland, IN 47371  
Ph. 260-726-8080 Fax 260-726-2220 environmentalist@co.iay.in.us  
Applications will be accepted until September 20, 2024



Photo provided

## Optimists donate

Portland Breakfast Optimist Club recently donated funding to various community activities. Pictured above, Jay County Purdue Extension office director Allison Keen accepts a check from president Rodney Miles for the 4-H Exhibit Hall fund. Portland Breakfast Optimist Club also recently made donations to the Jay County Fourth of July committee for its Independence Day festivities, Jay County Fair Board to sponsor Kids' Day during the Jay County Fair in July and Portland Junior League to sponsor two teams.

# Final park concert slated for Sept. 12

Arts Place will close its 2024 Hudson Family Park Amphitheatre Concert Series with a performance by Sounds of Summer: A Beach Boys Tribute at 7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 12.

Sounds of Summer is a southern Indiana band that covers Beach Boys tunes and tells the story of the band. It was featured on AXS TV's "World's Greatest Tribute Bands" in 2016.

In addition to music, Pappie's Smokehouse BBQ, Iceberg Ice Cream and The Greazy Pickle will be in attendance to provide food and refreshments.

Admission to the concert is free. For more information email [jcc@myartsplace.org](mailto:jcc@myartsplace.org) or call (260) 726-4809.

### Statehouse internships

Applications are open for interns with Indiana House Republicans for the 2025 legislative session.

The Indiana House of Representatives offers a spring semester internship at the statehouse in Indianapolis during the session, which starts in January and concludes in April. House interns earn \$900 biweekly and work full-time through the week.

## Taking Note

Internships are open to college students and recent graduates of all majors. Interns get career and professional development assistance, enrollment access to an Indiana government class and opportunities to earn academic credits through their school.

They're also eligible to apply for a \$3,000 scholarship to use toward school expenses.

Applications are available online at [indianahousepublicans.com/internship](http://indianahousepublicans.com/internship) and are due by Oct. 31.

### Party in parking lot

Mt. Tabor Community Church will host its Party in the Parking Lot on Wednesday, Sept. 4.

The event will run from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in the church parking lot, 216 W. Pleasant St., Dunkirk. It will include free food, games, cornhole and other activities.

# Partners view punctuality differently

DEAR ABBY: A friend retired, moved and gave me her well-paying, once-a-week job doing industrial cleaning. It pays a sizable chunk of our bills. My husband, who agreed to work with me doing this, gives me a hard time every week by being late.

We need to be there after business hours at 5:30 p.m. so we don't interrupt anyone while they're working. I have to remind my husband EVERY Wednesday that we need to be AT THE JOB. It causes fights. He makes his own hours at his other job. He can work whenever he wants and leave when it's done. I was raised to believe, "If you're early, you're on time. If you're on time, then you're late." His attitude is, "Why worry about when we show up?"

I'm angry that he doesn't respect how important this job is to me. I'm his boss when it comes to this jobsite. How can I handle this? I'm so done. I can't lose this job, and I can't do it by myself! It's HIPAA-protected, so not just anyone can do this with me. — TIMED OUT IN THE MIDWEST

DEAR TIMED OUT: How important is it that you start promptly at 5:30? Could all the work get done if you started at 6? I know

Dear Abby



you are a stickler for promptness, but who set the hours? You and your husband might fight less often if you become more flexible.

However, if the problem persists, remind him that the extra income helps to pay important bills. If that doesn't motivate him, stop fighting, contact the friend who gave you the job and ask if she has any suggestions about someone who could do what your husband has been doing. I wish you luck.

DEAR ABBY: We've lived in our working-class urban neighborhood for decades. We have always made friends with our neighbors, including a young couple with a toddler two doors away. We don't socialize with them other than to chat when we see

them on the street, and we gave their daughter a onesie on her birthday last year.

Just before the pandemic, they acquired a rescue dog, which they often leave in their backyard. The animal barks nonstop for hours, which makes it difficult to enjoy being outside in our yard. We're home most of the time, and my partner is a gardener, so he spends long hours out there.

What's the best way to handle this? Friends who know more about dogs than we do tell us it's impossible to break dogs of this habit. Do you think that because we haven't complained they think we're OK with it? We want to be good neighbors. — NOT OK WITH IT IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR NOT OK: Dogs have been known to bark because of separation anxiety. If your neighbors are away when their dog is creating a problem, and you have expressed nothing about it, you or your partner must let them know. The conversation doesn't have to be confrontational, but nothing will change unless YOU step up and bark about it. Do it now, before you lose your minds.

# Community Calendar

Notices will appear in Community Calendar as space is available. To submit an item, email [news@thecr.com](mailto:news@thecr.com).

Drug Prevention Coalition office at 100 N. Meridian St., Portland. For more information, call (260) 251-3259.

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.

GOODYEAR FAMILY REUNION — Begins at 1 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 31, at Greek's Pizzeria in Portland. Please remind other family members.

Sunday  
A BETTER LIFE - BRANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for all kinds of addictions, will meet from 5 to 6:30 p.m. each Sunday at Fellowship Baptist Church,

289 S. 200 West, 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

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

Level: Advanced

### Thursday's Solution

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

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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# Get health care costs under control

To the editor:  
Perhaps you have heard that Indiana's Medicaid system is in deep trouble.

The state agency, the Family and Social Services Administration, which administers Medicaid for the state, under-budgeted Medicaid by \$1 billion.

The main cause is rising costs of nursing home care. It seems that our nursing homes have been taken over by the same health care corporations which are driving costs in our rural areas through the roof. They are demanding profits, which has led to the closure of rural hospital services across the state like the elimination of ER, surgery and inpatient services from IU

## Letters to the Editor

Health Blackford. They are also demanding profits from nursing homes.

The legislature run by the Republican supermajority has pointed their fingers at the FSSA leadership, which of course was appointed by the Republicans in charge of the state government. For the immediate problem, part of the state's budget surplus had to be used to pay for the billion dollar

oopsie. But the long-term solution that has been proposed is very concerning to me and should be to you as well.

Back in March at a legislative update in Portland, State Rep. J.D. Prescott and Sen. Travis Holdman introduced the idea that to pay for the Medicaid error, people shouldn't be able to shelter their estates from nursing homes in a legal protection called the living trust. (I have this discussion on video on my YouTube channel.) They want to make it easier for nursing homes to take estates. Many people have moved their properties to a living trust which, as long as the estate is there for five years, nursing homes can't force

people to sell off their family homes and property.

Prescott and Holdman stated that there is no right for people to hand down their estate to their heirs. They say that it "isn't in our politics or our DNA" to allow people to do with their estate what they want. I wonder if either ever have read John Locke, an English philosopher who Jefferson lifted much of the language in the Declaration of Independence from. The "natural rights" that Locke stated were "Life, Liberty, and Estate." Estate is our political DNA.

And to further talk about the issue of the shortfall, what does this plan really do? It will mean

that family farmers will have to sell their property, often property which has been in the same family hands for over a hundred years, the farm ground that their kids are currently making their living from. How does this help family farmers?

And to the overall problem, it does nothing to curb the growing costs of nursing home care. Once the estates have been taken, what goes to pay that nursing home bill after that?

It seems that we should be much more focused on getting those health care corporations under control to provide needed care without insane profit.

John Bartlett  
Hartford City

## We need a better tax code

By AMY HANAUER  
OtherWords

Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump have starkly different views on taxes and how the tax code can support families.

Harris voices strong support for families through investments in the care economy. She's vowed to advance paid family leave, affordable child care, care for disabled or aging family members, and health care. This could be funded with a better tax code.

These policies would help all of us care for our families and strengthen our communities. Investing public dollars in care could also narrow racial and gender pay gaps by boosting the pay of care workers — who are mostly women, and many of them women of color.

The Trump campaign has been largely silent on care investments. But his campaign has signaled support for more tax cuts at the top. Such cuts would increase inequality and reduce the availability of federal funding to strengthen the care economy.

We saw this in the 2017 tax law that former President Trump signed. It cut taxes for the wealthiest people and corporations, including cutting the effective tax rate for our largest corporations from an average 22.0 percent to an average 12.8 percent. It also preserved loopholes that allow some of the wealthiest corporations to avoid taxes on most — if not all — of their profits.

These tax cuts for the ultra wealthy led to huge losses in federal tax revenue and spiked the national debt, making it harder for the government to fund new investments in priorities that are important to families.

If re-elected, Trump has said he wants to slash corporate taxes further — even though some billionaires pay a lower share of their income in taxes than nurses and teachers do.

By contrast, the Biden-Harris administration created a minimum corporate tax so the wealthiest corporations could no longer pay nothing, added a modest tax on stock buybacks, and funded the IRS to better collect taxes from corporations. These policies raised revenue for care investments and other priorities.

Going forward, Harris

Amy Hanauer



has signaled support for raising corporate tax rates, which are at historic lows, and closing loopholes.

Harris and Trump also have different priorities on taxes for families. As a senator, Harris championed a tax credit of \$6,000 for married couples and \$3,000 for single people in her Lift the Middle Class Act. This would have delivered 88 percent of its benefits to earners under \$119,000.

Harris might not promote this specific plan going forward, but it suggests she'd aim to direct benefits to moderate earners instead of the wealthiest. More recently, she's proposed expanding the Child Tax Credit and adding a \$6,000 credit for families with newborns.

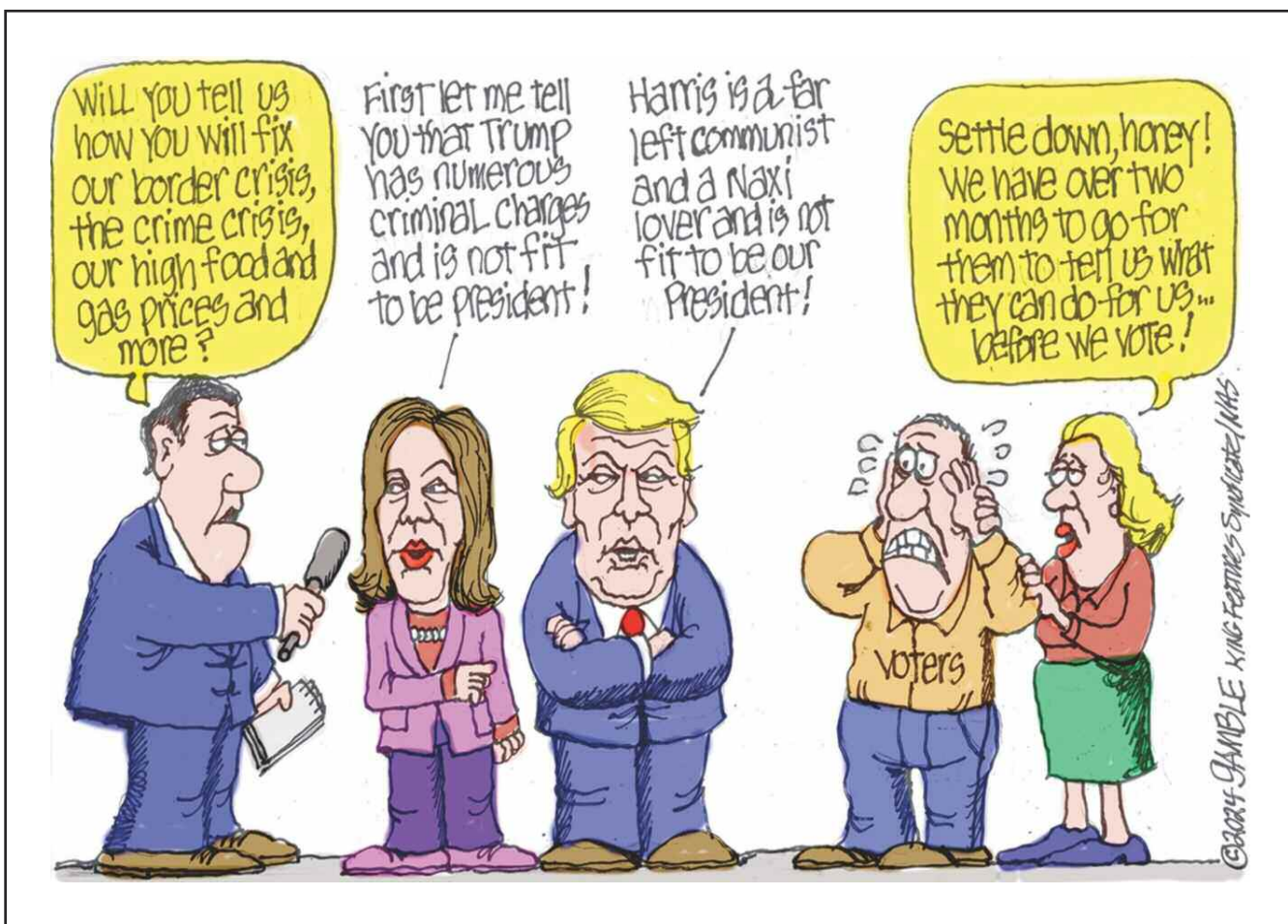
By contrast, the tax bill that Trump signed delivered more than half its benefits to the top 5 percent of households — those with incomes over \$263,000. (Like Harris, Trump's vice presidential nominee, J.D. Vance, has suggested a bigger Child Tax Credit. But Vance has also floated making people without children pay more taxes.)

Taxing the wealthiest and big corporations would support care investments and make our tax code more fair. Strengthening care infrastructure would help us all thrive and make the economy stronger. But we need to collect sufficient revenue to support those transformational policies.

There is strong public support for better care and for fairer taxes. Tax justice advocates should call on both the Harris and Trump campaigns to commit to a fairer tax system — and to use the money it would raise to invest in the child care, elder care, and health care our families need.

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*Hanauer is Executive Director of Citizens for Tax Justice. This op-ed was distributed by OtherWords.org.*

*OtherWords is a free editorial service published by the Institute for Policy Studies.*



## States should get off autopilot

By PATRICK A. MCLAUGHLIN  
Tribune News Service

One reason America's economy contains less opportunity than many people expect is because over time, modern democracies, for all their merit, create and keep too many rules. Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch's new book, "Over Ruled," emphatically makes a similar case, citing my estimate that it would take over three years just to read our federal regulations.

Navigating so much red tape means businesses spend less money expanding, hiring, or giving raises. It deters and derails entrepreneurship. Statutes created by Congress play their part. So do rules continually made by hundreds of regulatory agencies spread throughout the country. Last but not least are state and local regulations. While ignorance of the law may not be a valid defense in court, for the average person or small business owner, this layer cake of regulations makes ignorance inevitable.

Letting regulations build up over time is the default setting. Lawmakers like to create new agencies, give them vague missions, and move on. When you're campaigning for your job every few years, "set-it-and-forget-it" solutions are awfully appealing. Good governance, though, requires active management. It means hard work to slow or even reverse the accretive nature of modern rulemaking.

The Mercatus Center's ongoing State RegData project shows which states stockpile the most rules. More importantly, we know which pay more than lip service to the problem, bucking the trend and eliminating red tape that's no longer necessary or desirable. Our new index measures the regulation on the books for 48 states (we couldn't incorporate digitized regulatory codes from Arkansas and West Virginia).

The most regulated state is California, followed by New York, New Jersey, Illinois, and a surprise: Texas.

Mary McNamara



Indeed, without a proactive stance to prevent it, regulations pile up in both red and blue states.

The least regulated state is Idaho, followed by South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, and Alaska.

Idaho wasn't always that way. Six years ago, it had more than 72,000 regulatory restrictions. Today, it has just 31,497. Gov. Brad Little's administration did this deliberately and proactively, combining elements of the two most effective ways to curb the natural tendency toward regulatory accumulation: regulatory budgeting and regulatory sunsets.

Several others, including Iowa, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Virginia, have reformed their regulatory process over the past few years. The movement was inspired by British Columbia. The Canadian province strove to find and reduce regulatory red tape back in 2001. Its groundbreaking initiative cut about 40% of restrictions within three years, causing its economic growth rate to increase by over one percentage point.

A "regulatory budget" is like a household budget, boiled down to two essential elements: quantifying how much you spend and then setting goals to control that spending. In Idaho, "spending" was tracked by simply counting regulatory restrictions within regulatory code text. Missouri, Ohio, and Virginia have used similar strategies. Other budgets attempt to monetize the cost of regulations and add that up.

With that starting point, the next step is setting a goal. Virginia and Ohio used a 25% reduction. Others use a "pay-as-you-go" approach

where new regulations are offset by eliminating or reducing the cost of old regulations (which are probably outdated anyway). Idaho used a one-in, two-out approach. For every new regulatory restriction, two or more had to go.

Idaho's second approach was a flavor of regulatory sunset that Gov. Little called "zero-based regulation." Regulatory sunset means the automatic expiration of regulations unless deliberately renewed. The idea is common for legislation, but most regulations lack built-in expiration dates. Idaho now places the burden of proof on its agencies, requiring all regulations to expire after five years unless the agency can justify keeping them in place.

Idaho shares a border with six states, including Oregon and Washington, America's seventh- and eighth-most regulated states. What are Idaho's neighbors getting in return for more than six times as much regulation? A heavily regulated economy certainly has consequences: slower economic growth, fewer jobs, and higher prices, to name a few. Are Oregonians and Washingtonians six times safer? Is their environment six times as pristine?

Maybe policymakers are aware of the hidden consequences of regulatory accumulation and believe it's worth it. If so, what's the return on investment, so to speak? Without some process requiring agencies to look back and examine whether old rules are delivering, all they can do is speculate.

Most states have their regulatory process on autopilot, mindlessly letting the penalties of overregulation accrue without knowing whether the benefits are worth the cost.

.....  
*McLaughlin is the Mercatus Center at George Mason University's Director of Policy Analytics, where he leads the RegData and QuantGov projects, which deploy data science tools to quantify federal and state regulations.*

# The Commercial Review



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# Farmers: Chemicals are killing livestock

By ELIZABETH CAMPBELL  
Fort Worth Star-Telegram  
Tribune News Service

Families who built their small farms around riding their horses, raising cattle and holding family fish fries in rural Johnson County face an uncertain future because of what they're finding in the pasture or stock tank: dead or deformed cattle, horses and fish.

The past two years have been a "nightmare" for the family farmers, and they point to "forever chemicals" found in fertilizer made from sewage as the reason.

The five farmers who live outside of Grandview — James Farmer, Robin Alessi, Patsy Schultz and Karen and Tony Coleman — have been embroiled in a complex legal battle with the EPA and fertilizer manufacturer Synagro Technologies Inc. and its Texas subsidiary since February, when they filed a lawsuit against Synagro in Circuit Court of Baltimore County and one against the EPA in Washington.

Synagro contracts with Fort Worth to manage the city's biosolids program, which involves separating solids in the sewage treatment process and recycling the waste into granulate fertilizer. After the sludge is treated in Fort Worth, it is sent to farms in Johnson, Hill and Wise counties, including one that neighbors the farmers' properties.

Synagro contracts with more than 1,000 municipal waste treatment facilities and uses the biosolids to manufacture Synagro Granulate Fertilizer, according to court documents.

Biosolids are used instead of commercial fertilizer across the world, but Maine and Connecticut have banned them over concerns about the forever chemicals, and Michigan has placed limits on them.

Forever chemicals, also known as PFAS, are man-made synthetic chemicals used in a range of products, including carpet, clothing and nonstick cookware. They don't break down, and they accumulate in the human body and in the environment.

They're in the blood of people and animals across the world, as well as the air, water and soil, according to the EPA. They are also known to cause health problems such as cancer.

The families seek more than \$75,000 in damages from Synagro because they cannot sell their cattle and their land is "almost worthless" as a result of the contamination.

The farmers said they never know if they will have to drop everything to take their animals to Texas A&M for necropsies.

James Farmer recorded videos on July 29 to show what the families often find when checking on their livestock. In this case, a previously healthy cow is lying in the pasture unable to stand up and was euthanized.

"This is what we deal with daily, weekly, monthly," Farmer



Tribune News Service/Fort Worth Star Telegram/Amanda McCoy

Tony Coleman gives a tour of the family's land in Johnson County on Aug. 5. Livestock and fish have been dying since 2022. He blames forever chemicals from the biosolids found in Synagro fertilizer.

says in the video he shared with the Star-Telegram.

As the cow mooed softly, Karen Coleman tearfully asked a veterinarian, "How long is this going to take?"

"Pretty quick," the doctor replies.

"We're having to euthanize this cow because she can't get up," Farmer says, adding: "She's asleep now. She's gone."

## Legal fight

The lawsuit against the EPA states that the federal agency violated the Clean Water Act and the Administrative Procedures Act for failing to identify certain PFAS as "toxic pollutants" in sewage sludge and failing to regulate them where information exists to show that the chemicals must be regulated.

Johnson County joined the farmers' lawsuit against the EPA in July.

The EPA has requested an extension to respond to the lawsuit in September, said Laura Dumais, an attorney with Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, the nonprofit organization that is representing the farmers and Johnson County in their lawsuit against the EPA.

EPA Administrator Michael Regan established the EPA Council on PFAS in 2021 with the goal to develop a plan of action to "further the science and research to restrict these dangerous chemicals from getting into the environment and to immediately remediate the problem."

According to the EPA's "Strategic Roadmap," a risk assessment for the forever chemicals in biosolids should be finished by this winter.

"The risk assessment will serve as the basis for determining whether regulation of PFOA and PFOS in biosolids is appropriate. If EPA determines that regulation is appropriate, biosolids standards would improve the protection of public health and wildlife health from health effects resulting from exposure to biosolids containing PFOA and PFOS," the EPA document reads.

Fort Worth was not named in the lawsuit against Synagro.

In its response to the allegations, Synagro argued that the case should be dismissed because it was filed in Baltimore, the home of the company's headquarters. It argues the proper venue is Texas, because the events in question happened there.

Synagro said in court documents: "This is a straightforward Texas tort case, with Texas Plaintiffs, witnesses, facts, property and damages, all governed by Texas law. There is no relevant connection whatsoever to Baltimore County, over 1,400 miles from the alleged events at issue."

The company also said in an emailed statement to the Star-Telegram that the farmers' allegations were "novel" and "unproven."

The farmers didn't use Synagro products, and the biosolids applied by a neighboring farmer met the requirements from the EPA and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Synagro argued.

The statement from Synagro also said that the EPA supports applying biosolids as a "valuable practice" that recycles nutrients to farmland.

Before the company responded to the allegations, the farmers' lawsuit was amended with "drastically" reduced concentrations of the forever chemicals, Synagro said.

Mary Whittle, an attorney representing the farmers, wrote in an email to the Star-Telegram, "The changes in pollution values were due to decimal place errors during conversions from the lab results to parts per trillion, but the pollution values are still extremely high."

Whittle added that the results were from surface and well water tests.

The EPA set a limit for PFAS to less than 4 parts per trillion in drinking water.

"We want to bring the fight to the company that is out there convincing cities and farmers to use their products," Whittle said.

## Following their dreams

Robin Alessi grew up an "Air Force brat," but she experienced the ranching way of life while in Montana and Alaska, and she wanted to buy land where she could have her horses and be a "western cowgirl."

Alessi, who worked in the restaurant industry, moved to Texas and found the perfect piece of land near Grandview for her horses and other animals.

She met Farmer, who owns a fence company, and the two built their lives around raising their animals and having family fish fries.

Patsy Schultz and her late husband Jim bought around 300 acres in 2002. The property is Schultz's main asset after her husband's death in 2018.

Her daughter and son-in-law, Karen and Tony Coleman, lease land from her for cattle grazing.

The Colemans live in Burleson. Karen is a senior executive assistant at the University of North Texas Health Science Center and her husband is a diesel mechanic, but they are also dedicated to their land and animals.

## Odors causing concerns

In 2018, the families noticed a noxious odor after fertilizer made from sludge was spread on a neighbor's land.

They contacted Larry Woolley, the Precinct 4 county commissioner, and Dana Ames, the county's environmental investigator.

In an interview, Ames described an odor worse than a decomposing body, but said there was nothing she could do at the time because the odors weren't causing harm or damage.

In late 2022, Ames was again called by the farmers because they saw piles of the fertilizer on the ground literally smoking, and shortly thereafter, Farmer described a major "fish kill" in his pond after a heavy rain.

"Because of the conditions I observed, I said, 'This cannot be OK,'" Ames said.

Ames launched a year-long investigation that involved the

testing of water, soil and animals from the farmers' land.

What she found was startling. Johnson County tested soil, ground and surface water as well as tissue and organs from dead animals.

Results from a calf's liver showed 610,000 parts per trillion of forever chemicals, which is "off the charts," Ames said.

"The most disturbing thing to me is that people have known about this for a long time, and they've failed to act," Ames said.

"My victims are organic farmers. They were breeding their own cattle, growing their own vegetables. They were self-sustaining on their property."

Ames said she is worried about the future of mankind if the forever chemicals aren't regulated.

Woolley, the county commissioner, is also sounding the alarm bells.

A former ag teacher, Woolley said he still is involved with farming and ranching, but he worries about the farmers who lost their livelihoods because of the forever chemicals.

"These ranchers are victims with 150 head of beef cattle that they don't know what to do with. It's clear that they don't want to sell them or put them in the food chain," Woolley said.

Woolley said he has been meeting with state and national legislators to make them aware of the need for regulations of biosolids.

"I'm not an environment freak," Woolley said. "I grew up on a farm and continue to farm and ranch. We're pretty much ag folks. We're pretty much interested in protecting our kids, grandkids and protecting our water."

## What's next

James Farmer said one of his biggest disappointments is that when his nephew catches a catfish, he has to throw it back into the pond.

As he looked at a photo of his nephew holding the fish, Farmer said, "He pulled the fish right out of the water and said 'Uncle James, Can we keep this and eat it?'"

"No, baby, we can't," Farmer recalled.

The farmers continue to raise their livestock, knowing they can't sell the animals or eat the vegetables grown in their gardens.

They still pay bills for feed and equipment.

They used to enjoy coming home from work to fish or watch calves being born, but now they worry about what they'll find when they check on their livestock.

Tony Coleman asked why the federal and state governmental agencies allow people to use the fertilizer knowing that it contains the forever chemicals.

"That just makes us extremely angry because we didn't ask for none of this," Coleman said. "We just wanted to come farm our land, raise our cattle and just be out of sight, out of mind."

# Toney was top showman

Alivia Toney took her turn in the spotlight this year.

Toney earned the titles of senior and master class showman during the Jay County 4-H Cat Show on July 8. She competed in the 4-H small animal supreme showmanship competition on July 9.

Piper Wagner was named beginner showman, and Keisha Adair was named intermediate and junior showman.

Makinsey Murphy also swept the kitten category, earning grand champion and reserve grand champion awards for her long-hair male, Mocha, and short-hair male, Chimney, respectively.

Other results are as follows:

**Short-hair**  
Female  
Champion: Audrey Hambrock  
Reserve champion: Sophia Calvary

Male  
Champion: Dominic Steveson  
Reserve champion: Elizabeth Calvary  
Grand champion: Dominic Steveson  
Reserve grand champion: Audrey Hambrock

**Long-hair**  
Male  
Champion: Jayme Harker



The Commercial Review/Bailey Cline

Alivia Toney, 15, holds her cat, Pandora, after earning the titles of senior and master class showman at the Jay County 4-H Cat Show on July 8.

Female  
Champion: Piper Wagner  
Reserve champion: Audrey Hambrock  
Grand champion: Piper Wagner  
Reserve grand champion: Jayme Harker

**Cage decorating**  
Champion: Piper Wagner  
Reserve champion: Audrey Hambrock

**Costume**  
Champion: Audrey Hambrock  
Reserve champion: Dominic Steveson

**Cat ambassador test**  
Level 2  
Champion: Audrey Hambrock

Level 3  
Champion: Makinsey Murphy

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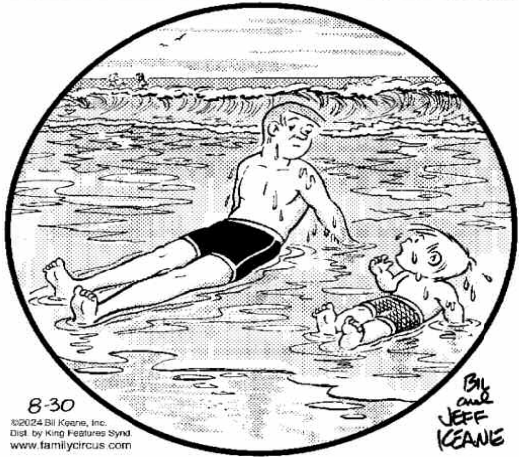
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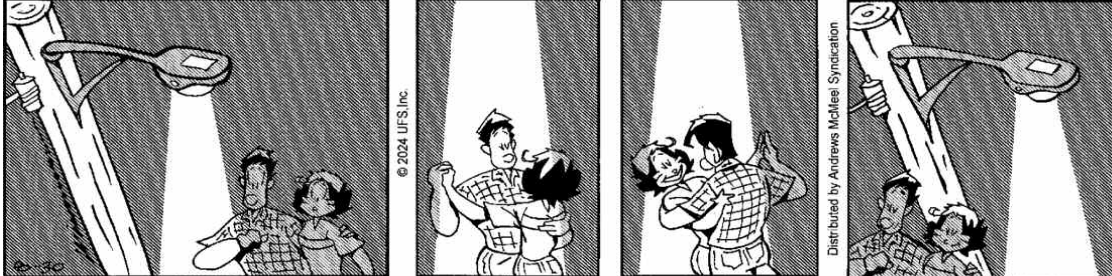
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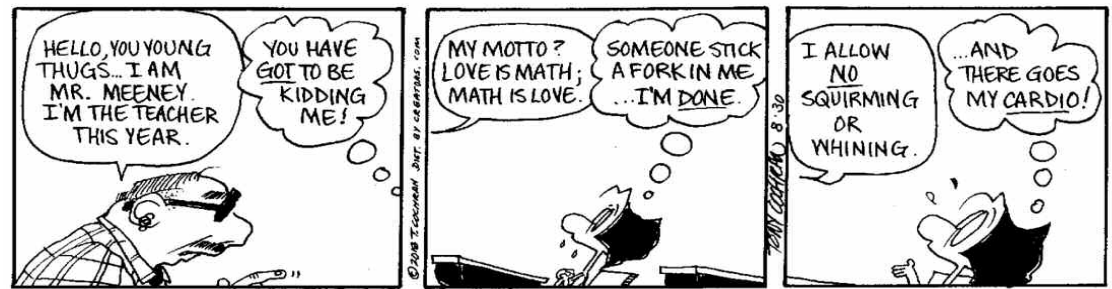
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Agnes



Hi and Lois



Between Friends



Blondie



Snuffy Smith



Beetle Bailey



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By Steve Becker

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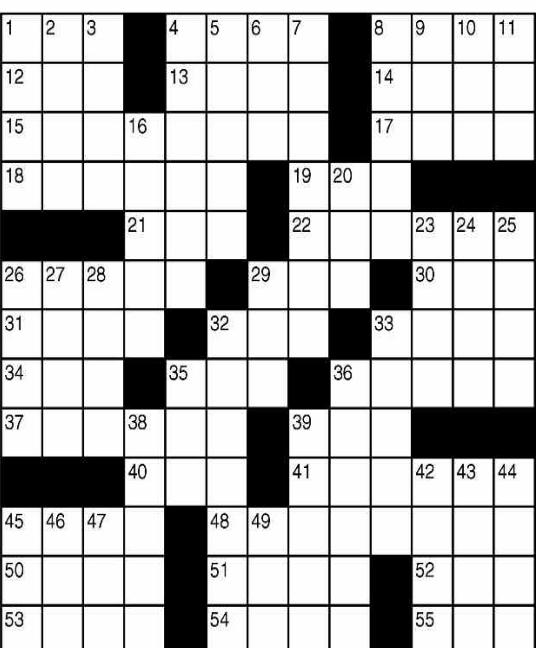
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# Sports

## Chris Ballard believes in young Colts roster

By **GEORGE BREMER**  
The Herald Bulletin (Anderson)  
Tribune News Service

INDIANAPOLIS — Chris Ballard was asked directly Wednesday whether he views himself as being on the hot seat heading into his eighth season as the Indianapolis Colts general manager.

"I think every year you do," he said. "I mean, that's kind of how I'm wired. But no, (it's) no different than any other year."

As the Colts prepare for the Sept. 8 opener against the Houston Texans, there's a relative sense of confidence around the Indiana Farm Bureau Football Center.

Indianapolis was 15 yards shy of an AFC South title and a playoff home game last season. But an incomplete pass on fourth-and-1 sealed a 23-19 loss against the Texans and left the franchise sitting out for the third straight postseason.

Ballard chose to largely bring back the same roster for 2024.

The only major additions came through the draft, with defensive end Laiatu Latu and wide receiver Adonai Mitchell arriving in the first two rounds. Both are expected to play significant roles in Year 1.

The only other notable newcomers to the roster are defensive tackle Raekwon Davis and quarterback Joe Flacco, who were signed in free agency this spring and are slated as backups, and defensive back Samuel Womack III — who was claimed off waivers from the San Francisco 49ers on Wednesday and has spent the bulk of his career playing on special teams.

It's a run-it-back philosophy from a general manager whose system has always been predicated on drafting well and developing talent from within.

This season might test that philosophy like no other.

The difference in the Colts making the playoffs for the first time since 2020 — and perhaps winning the division for the first time since 2014 — very well could come down to the performance of a handful of young home-grown players in key positions.

It all starts, of course, with 22-year-old quarterback Anthony Richardson — who will make just his fifth career start in the season opener against the Texans.

Ballard reiterated his confidence in the signal caller and his belief experience is the biggest obstacle remaining to be cleared.

"The more he plays, the more he sees, the better it's going to get," Ballard said. "... But (he's grown with) just his understanding of the offense and what he likes. That's a big point of this now. You want the quarterback to have some belief in what he's running and be a little more opinionated about, 'Hey, I like — (head coach) Shane (Steichen), I like this. (Offensive coordinator) Jim Bob (Cooter), this is something I feel comfortable with.' And I think the more he plays, the more he'll become vocal about that."

The other area where young players must mature quickly is in the defensive backfield.

Safety Julian Blackmon and cornerback Kenny Moore II are proven veterans who enjoyed strong training camps. But the rest of the starting lineup will be youngsters.

See Roster page 7



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

## Surprise celebration

Jay County High School's Lani Muhlenkamp (8) gets swarmed by teammates Brenna Bailey (libero), Paisley Fugiett (7) and Kayla Jetmore (6) after her pass over the net during a scramble resulted in the final kill of the third set for a 25-17 win over Winchester. The Patriots walked away with the 25-17, 20-25, 25-17, 25-10 victory Tuesday over the Golden Falcons.

## Baseball, softball sectional assignments released

The Patriots can see a pair of new opponents in the spring sports sectionals.

The IHSA released the new baseball and softball sectional alignments for the 2025 and 2026 seasons on Tuesday.

The Jay County High School baseball and softball teams will both remain in Class 3A Sectional 24. Staying with them are Delta, New Castle and Yorktown.

Both sectionals now mirror each other with the same six teams after

some shake up in the final two spots.

After two years in Sectional 24, Centerville got swapped out of both sports and replaced by Connorsville. The Bulldogs never made it out of the opening round for baseball over the past two seasons, while they fell in the semifinal (both times to Yorktown) in softball.

After an announcement earlier this year that saw the Hamilton Heights Huskies removed from the basketball sectional, they will join

in both baseball and softball. For the baseball sectional, they just fill in an open spot on the bracket and replace Mississinewa for softball.

The Indians made the sectional championship game in 2023 before falling to Yorktown and got taken down by Jay County in 2024's semifinal game.

Hamilton Heights competed in Sectional 24 as recently as 2022. It claimed a sectional championship in baseball in 2021 and softball in 2016.

## Big Ten shows off new replay center

By **PHIL THOMPSON**

Chicago Tribune  
Tribune News Service

ROSEMONT, Ill. — When you look around at the banks of video monitors and hear officials talk of "CROs" using a "Hawk-Eye" system, you might think you had stepped into a military mission control room.

But the only long bombs being watched are of the football variety.

CRO is the Big Ten's shorthand for "collaborative replay official," and Hawk-Eye is the software they'll be using to review plays on the football field this season — all part

of high-tech upgrades conference officials showed off Tuesday at the Big Ten's new state-of-the-art replay center at its Rosemont headquarters.

"This is really the marriage of great people and great technology," Commissioner Tony Petitti said. "This still comes down to people having to make decisions, sometimes very difficult, very close decisions. And our job in this replay center is to provide the technology, the speed, the looks, the ability to make great decisions as quickly as possible."

See Replay page 7

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