

# The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

## Council leaves EDIT \$ out of budget

*Spending out of fund in '25 will require an additional appropriation*

By BAILEY CLINE  
The Commercial Review

Commissioners will need to approach council next year about spending economic development income tax (EDIT) dollars.

Jay County Council agreed on a split 3-2 vote Wednesday to allocate no specific funding in the local income tax economic development portion of the county's 2025 budget. Instead, it decided commissioners can approach the council in January to request additional appropriations.

Jay County Commissioners discussed funding plans July 8, looking at applications. The largest request included \$261,975 for Jay County Development Corporation, but commissioner president Chad Aker said he would like to see a contract between the county and JCDC signed before moving forward with its funding for 2025.

At the meeting, talking about different applicants, commissioners questioned aspects of Jay County Fair Board's operations and finances and heard from Aker about a conversation critical of Jay County Chamber of Commerce's former executive director Tabby Sprunger.

In their budget for 2025, commissioners requested \$323,000 in EDIT dollars for various entities or projects, which includes \$260,000 in a fund labeled as contractual services and \$63,000 split between John Jay Center for Learning (\$25,000), Arts Place's Arts in the Parks program (\$15,000), Jay County Development Corporation services (\$10,000), Jay County 4th of July Committee (\$10,000) and East Central Indiana Small Business Development Center (\$3,000).

Jay County is projected to receive a total of \$741,818 in EDIT dollars by the end of the current year.

See EDIT page 2



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

## Work on Meridian

A crew from Brooks Construction of Fort Wayne works to dig out a portion of the street/sidewalk at the intersection of Meridian and Walnut streets in Portland in front of the Jay County Purdue Extension office. Mayor Jeff Westlake said at Monday's city council meeting that the paving portion of the project is expected to begin Sept. 23.

## Attendance improving, still low

By CASEY SMITH  
Indiana Capital Chronicle  
indianacapitalchronicle.com

New data shows school attendance across Indiana is improving, but thousands of Hoosier students are still missing multiple days — even weeks — of school each year.

The latest attendance numbers released by the Indiana Department of Education last month reported that 17.8% of K-12 students — roughly 219,000 kids — were “chronically absent” during the most recent 2023-24 school year, meaning they missed at least 18 days.

It's the second year in a row that the number of chronically absent students went down, dropping from 19.2% in 2023, and 21.1% in 2022.

The department has not

### Chronic absentee rate dropped to 19.2% in 2023

yet made available other attendance data.

A full attendance report released last year by the state agency, for example, showed that about 40% of students statewide missed 10 or more school days during the 2022-23 term. Those students do not meet the definition of “chronically absent,” however.

Student absences have been on the rise since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in Indiana and across the nation. Chronic

absenteeism surged during the pandemic, nearly doubling to peak at 21.1% in 2022, according to IDOE.

Even so, Indiana's rates were lower than the nationwide average.

The National Center for Education Statistics said that 72% of schools across the country reported an increase in chronic absenteeism in the 2021-22 school year compared to pre-pandemic levels, emphasizing that elevated rates of chronic absenteeism are

“one of the biggest obstacles to the nation's post-COVID academic recovery.” The worst attendance rates in Indiana and in schools across the United States were reported among elementary schoolers, according to state and national data.

Educators around the state say the reasons for absences vary, but family challenges some students face at home, along with hard-to-break tendencies to keep kids home when even mildly unwell — a habit borne out of the pandemic — are key factors. And schools are getting creative to try to combat the growing problem.

IDOE officials are also working on responses to improve school attendance, including development of a new “Attendance

Insights” dashboard that breaks down weekly habitually truant and chronic absenteeism rates at the local and school levels. The state has already made the tool available to Hoosier school officials and plans to launch a public version later this year.

The Indiana Code specifically defines chronic absenteeism as being absent 18 or more days within a school year for any reason — a higher standard than “habitual truancy,” which is ten or more days without an excuse.

Under the “compulsory education” laws in Indiana, children must regularly attend school from the time they're seven years old until they turn 18, with some exceptions.

See Attendance page 2



Tribune News Service/The Atlanta Journal-Constitution/Henri Hollis

## Student charged in shooting

By ALEXIS STEVENS,  
ROSANA HUGHES  
and DAVID AARO  
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution  
Tribune News Service

ATLANTA — Four people were killed and nine others were taken to hospitals after a shooting at Apalachee High School in Barrow County, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation said Wednesday afternoon.

A 14-year-old student at the school was in custody and charged with murder, the state agency confirmed. He was expected to be tried as an adult.

Two teachers and two students were killed in the shooting, according to GBI Director Chris Hoseney. The alleged shooter was identified as Colt Gray, 14,

an Apalachee High School student.

Gray had been previously investigated for threats about a shooting, the FBI Atlanta office said late Wednesday. He was not charged after an investigation last year.

Hoseney said both students killed were 14 years old. They were identified as Mason Schermerhorn and Christian Angulo.

One of the teachers killed was identified as assistant football coach Richard “Ricky” Aspinwall. The other was Christina Irimie, a math teacher, according to the school's website.

Barrow Sheriff Jud Smith called the shooting “pure evil” during a news conference near the school shortly after 1 p.m.

### 14-year-old faces murder counts after four were killed at high school

### Deaths

**Leonard Stevens, 74,**  
Montpelier  
Details on page 2.

### Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 86 degrees Wednesday. The low was 59.

There is a chance of showers tonight with a low in the mid 40s. Expect mostly sunny skies Saturday with the high topping out in the mid 60s and winds gusting to 20 miles per hour.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

### In review

Jay County Solid Waste Management District will have recycling trailers available from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday in the shopping center at 220 Lincoln St., Portland, the parking lot east of Redkey Post Office and the parking lot south of Salamonia Fire Station.

### Coming up

**Saturday** — Results from the JCHS football game against Southern Wells.

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

**Wednesday** — Results from the Jay County girls golf match against Monroe Central.



# Attendance ...

Continued from page 1  
But unless they're excused, students who cut class too often could end up under a juvenile court's supervision. Built-up absences could also prompt prosecutors to file misdemeanor charges against Hoosier parents, given that they are legally responsible for making sure their children go to school.

State lawmakers were adamant to move bills in the 2024 session to help improve student literacy and bolster career readiness. That included the passage of Senate Enrolled Act 1, which will require schools to hold back third graders who do not pass the statewide IREAD test as part of a push to improve reading.

Legislative leaders have repeatedly said, too, that ensuring Hoosier kids actually show up to class continues to be a part of their priority agenda.

Education experts note that being absent as few as three days out of the school year affects test scores and overall academic performance. Getting to school every day also helps kids develop a routine and increases their influential engagement time with adults.

The student demographic groups with the largest gaps in state language arts and math testing since the pandemic are more likely to be chronically absent.

But policymakers have struggled to advance significant solutions for absenteeism.

The final draft of Senate Enrolled Act 282 — approved earlier this year — prompts Indiana school districts to take a tougher stance on student truancy, though it's up to schools to decide how to craft and execute local policies.

The law calls for schools to intervene early when younger students have repeated absences without excuses. Parents of a student in grades K-6 who has missed five days of school within 10 weeks, without being excused, are to be notified by the school and required to create a plan to improve the student's attendance.

The new statute also mandates that school districts create an absenteeism prevention policy, which could include wrap-around

services, referrals to counselors or other social service help.

A violation of the law could result in a class B misdemeanor or punishable up to 180 days in jail and a fine of up to \$1,000. Parents charged with educational neglect could face a level 6 felony, punishable by up to two and half years in prison and a fine of up to \$10,000.

Generally, it's up to local school districts to decide when students' absences are excused, though state law requires schools to excuse absences for certain reasons, including illness, mental or physical incapacity, required court appearances, helping in elections, service as a page for the general assembly and participating in the state fair.

# Obituaries

**Leonard "Don" Stevens**, Montpelier, the father of a Dunkirk man, Dec. 11, 1949-Sept. 2, 2024. Services will be at 10:30 a.m. Saturday at Walker & Glancy Funeral Home, 109 W. Windsor St., Montpelier.

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*The Commercial Review publishes death notices for those with a connection to our coverage area free of charge. They include the name, city of residence, birth/death date and time/date/location of services.*

*There is a charge for obituaries, which are accepted only from funeral homes or mortuary services.*

# CR almanac

Saturday 9/7	Sunday 9/8	Monday 9/9	Tuesday 9/10	Wednesday 9/11
<b>65/41</b>	<b>70/47</b>	<b>79/51</b>	<b>85/55</b>	<b>86/55</b>
Saturday looks to be sunny with highs in the mid 60s. At night, a low of 41 is possible.	Another day of sun is on the horizon for Sunday. The low at night will be in the upper 40s.	Sunny skies are expected Monday, when the low may reach 51.	Tuesday's forecast shows sunny skies with a high in the mid 80s.	Wednesday's outlook seems to be sunny with a high in the mid 80s.

# Lotteries

<b>Powerball</b> 7-10-21-33-59 Power Ball: 20 Power Play: 3 Estimated jackpot: \$112 million	Daily Four: 9-0-0-7 Quick Draw: 4-5-6-8-15-16-21-26-27-31-32-43-49-53-54-62-65-72-76-77 Cash 5: 8-12-18-32-39 Estimated jackpot: \$333,000
<b>Mega Millions</b> Estimated jackpot: \$740 million	<b>Ohio</b> Wednesday MIDDAY Pick 3: 0-9-6 Pick 4: 2-0-0-4 Pick 5: 3-9-6-2-1 Evening Pick 3: 2-8-1 Pick 4: 1-7-8-5 Pick 5: 7-8-5-5-6 Rolling Cash: 24-29-34-38-39 Estimated jackpot: \$280,000
<b>Hoosier</b> Wednesday MIDDAY Daily Three: 0-6-1 Daily Four: 7-5-1-5 Quick Draw: 8-10-14-15-18-21-23-26-39-40-46-58-60-64-70-72-73-75-76-80 Evening Daily Three: 2-8-7	

# Markets

<b>Cooper Farms Fort Recovery</b> Corn.....3.54 Sept. corn .....3.58 Wheat .....4.46	Sept. beans .....9.75 Wheat ..... 5.21
<b>POET Biorefining Portland</b> Corn.....3.65 Sept. corn .....3.70 Oct. corn .....3.65	<b>ADM Montpelier</b> Corn.....3.55 Sept. corn .....3.61 Beans.....9.79 Sept. beans .....9.77 Wheat .....5.00
<b>The Andersons Richland Township</b> Corn .....3.55 Sept. corn .....3.57 Beans.....9.75	<b>Heartland St. Anthony</b> Corn.....3.44 Oct. corn .....3.49 Beans.....9.65 Oct. beans .....9.50

# Today in history

In 1972, Chester Sloniker, 69, Millgrove, was found dead of two gunshot wounds to the head at a gravel pit southeast of Blackford County roads 600 East and 400 South near Dunkirk. Sloniker reportedly left to go fishing at the gravel pit on the property of Sidney Manor about 8:15 p.m. and was found dead by Manor about 6:50 p.m.

In 1991, the Soviet Union recognized the independence of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Also, the second-largest Soviet city of Leningrad changed its name back to Saint Petersburg, as it had been known prior to 1924.

In 1995, Cal Ripken Jr. of the Baltimore Orioles broke Lou Gehrig's record for consecutive games played as he took the field for the 2,131st consecutive time.

In 1997, a funeral held for Princess Diana of the United Kingdom that included a performance by Elton John was watched by about 2.5 billion on TV. She had died in a car accident about a week earlier.

In 2021, Ball State University's Applied Anthropology Laboratories received a \$200,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to implement a traveling panel exhibit about the Battle of St. Clair's defeat at Fort Recovery. —The CR

# Citizen's calendar

<b>Monday</b> 9 a.m. — Jay County Commissioners, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland. 3:45 p.m. — Jay County Election Board, voting room, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland. 4 p.m. — Jay County Public Library Board of Trustees, community	room, library, 315 N. Ship St., Portland. 5 p.m. — Portland City Council special meeting, Fifer Properties, 510 S. Bridge St., Portland. 6 p.m. — Dunkirk Board of Works, city building, 131 S. Main St. 7 p.m. — Dunkirk City Council, city building, 131 S. Main St.
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# EDIT ...

Continued from page 1  
Jay County Council vice president Cindy Bracy noted Wednesday the county will have two new commissioners next year. (Commissioner Brian McGalliard was defeated in the Republican primary by Duane Monroe, who faces off against Democratic candidate Blake Watson in the November general election. Rex Journey chose not to seek re-election, and Republican candidate Doug Horn is running unopposed for the seat.)

Bracy suggested council grant no EDIT funding — specifically, council not approve the itemized list in the budget presented Wednesday — to commissioners for 2025 until January, when the two new commissioners take their seats.

Per Bracy's suggestion, EDIT funding will still be available to commissioners, but they will need to ask council to make an additional appropriation for each request.

"So what is it in there that you're not in favor of?" asked Aker.

"I'm not in favor of (the local income tax economic development fund) being made by two people and not being made in the way that it was designated and set up to be made, and that we haven't followed the ordinances that we have, and so I think we're just gonna need a hard reset, so let's go to zero," responded Bracy.

She subsequently made a motion to allocate no funding to the local income tax economic development fund until January.

Bracy and council member Harold Towell voted in favor, with council members Jeanne Houchins and Faron Parr dissenting. Council president Matt Minnich broke the tie, vot-

ing in favor of the motion. (Council member Randy May was absent, and council member Dave Haines didn't arrive until after the vote.)

Next year's budget is estimated at more than \$24 million, which is up by nearly \$2 million from the current year. Proposed increases include at least 3% raises or more for county employees, with some getting larger raises to meet the midpoint pay for their position per consulting firm Waggoner, Irwin, Scheele and Associates' statistics. (Larger raises, which were approved by the department's inter-local joint board, are also slated for employees at Jay/Portland Building and Planning.)

Other notable changes to the proposed budget discussed Wednesday include:

- Adding three correction officer jobs and another nurse position to Jay County Jail

- Decreasing to four budgeted public defenders

- An additional \$500,000 in Jay County Highway Department's bridge repair fund to help with matching potential Community Crossings grant funding for repairing bridges

- Two new part-time roles — environmental health specialist and administrative clerk — at Jay County Health Department as well as programs, which are being funded through Health First Indiana's state funding. Jay County Health Department administrator and environmentalist Heath Butz noted through the initiative the county received \$231,167 this year and will receive \$445,396 next year.

Also, Jay County Sheriff Ray New-

ton explained he's looking into options for an outside vendor to prepare meals for inmates at the jail. He noted difficulties keeping employees to manage the kitchen. A new fund, labeled as jail meal contract in the 2025 budget, earmarks \$253,164 for a potential contract, which would first need to be approved by commissioners.

Later in the meeting, Minnich suggested Newton connect with Jay County Country Living board of directors to see if the facility could also utilize the meal contract for its residents.

Also, although not recommended by Jay County Personnel Committee, Jay County Highway Department superintendent Bob Howell and administrative assistant Stephanie Klarer cited a need to hire a third heavy equipment operator in 2025.

Council also approved other budgetary requests Wednesday, including:

- Adjusting the local income tax public safety budget to allocate \$200,000 — it had been marked incorrectly at \$254,000 — for two new vehicles and a transport van for Jay County Sheriff's Office

- Shifting a part-time employee at Jay County Auditor's Office to a four-day work week

County attorney Emily Franks suggested council look at increasing the local income tax public safety tax rate to account for the additional positions at Jay County Jail.

Council meets next for its regular meeting at 6 p.m. Sept. 11. A public hearing and first reading of the 2025 budget is scheduled for 6 p.m. Sept. 25.

## SERVICES

Today

**Schwartz, Mary:** 9 a.m., Schwartz residence, 5711 S. 600 East, Berne.

**Parr, Max:** 3 p.m., Owens Funeral Home, 412 N. Harrison St., Alexandria.

Saturday

**Stevens, Leonard:** 10:30 a.m., Walker & Glancy Funeral Home, 109 W. Windsor St., Montpelier.

**Burgess, Dorothy:** 11 a.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

Service listings provided by

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## Capsule Reports

### Wrong way

A Montana woman driving the wrong direction on Second Street pulled in front of a car on Meridian Street, causing an accident about 10:55 a.m. Wednesday.

Matrece Coblentz, 20, Libby, was driving a 2012 Honda Civic east on Second Street. She told police she was delivering pizza and couldn't find the correct address. As she continued looking for the address, she turned onto Meridian Street and into the path of a southbound 2010 Honda CR-V driven by 42-year-old Mandi Spice of Berne.

Spice complained of lower arm pain.

Coblentz was cited for driving the wrong direction on a one-way street, and Spice was cited for operating a vehicle without insurance.

Both vehicles were towed, with damage estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

# GREAT SELECTION of newspaper roll ends FOR SALE!

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Photo provided

## Historical donation

The Portland Evening Optimist Club recently contributed \$350.00 to the Jay County Historical Society. Pictured, from left, are Jane Spencer of Jay County Historical Society and Linda Aker, president of Portland Evening Optimist Club.

## Tickets now available for 'The Play That Goes Wrong'

Tickets are on sale for Jay County Civic Theatre's upcoming production, "The Play That Goes Wrong."

Shows are scheduled for 7 p.m. Sept. 27 and Sept. 28 and 2 p.m. Sept. 29 at Jay County Campus of Arts Place, 131 E. Walnut St., Portland.

Advance tickets are \$10 for students and children and \$12 for adults. They're available by visiting [bit.ly/JCCTPTGW](http://bit.ly/JCCTPTGW), calling (260) 726-4809 or visiting Arts Place.

### Applications open

Indiana Department of Transportation is accepting applications for its Engineering Scholarship Program.

To be eligible, students must be enrolled in one of the state's accredited civil engineering schools. The INDOT engineering

### Taking Note

scholarship offers \$3,125 per semester for up to five years of post-secondary civic engineering education. Recipients have the opportunity to work at INDOT in full-time, paid positions during summer breaks and upon graduation.

For more information, go to [indotscholarship.in.gov](http://indotscholarship.in.gov). The deadline is Sunday, Dec. 31.

### Internships available

Indiana House Republicans are offering internships for the 2025 legislative session.

The paid, full-time posi-

tions are open to college students and recent graduates. Interns are also eligible to apply for a \$3,000 scholarship.

Applications are available at [indianahousepublicans.com/internships](http://indianahousepublicans.com/internships). The deadline to apply is Thursday, Oct. 31.

### Shows scheduled

Charles W. Brown Planetarium has a variety of shows scheduled for the fall semester.

Shows continue through December.

Upcoming offerings include:

Kitz the Cat's SuperMoon Adventure — Three cats work together to clean up space junk — 3:30 p.m. Sept. 14 and 21

Big Astronomy — A journey to three world-class observatories — 5 p.m. Fridays, Sept. 13 and 20, and Saturdays, Sept. 14 and 21

## Man prefers to rely on ex-wife for surgery

DEAR ABBY: I've been seeing "Pete" for eight months. He has been divorced for the last 15 years. He has two grown children and five grandchildren with his ex-wife, "Linda," who is still a significant person in Pete's life. They text throughout the day and enjoy doing things with Linda's husband.

Pete is having major surgery soon. He has informed me that his daughter and Linda are going to be at the hospital, and there are only two guests per patient allowed. I have tried to explain to him that I'm uncomfortable with Linda being such an important person in his life and hurt that he doesn't include me in their outings. He turns it around and asks me what I want him to do about it. He says it's my problem, not his.

### Dear Abby



I care for Pete, but I am getting fed up. Do I throw in the towel or stick it out, hoping he'll see my side of the situation? — INSIGNIFICANT IN THE MIDWEST

**DEAR INSIGNIFICANT: Because Pete thinks accepting his priorities is your problem, not his, it is unlikely he will EVER accept your point of view. The problem appears to be that he doesn't consider you to be a couple, and because he doesn't, his family does-**

**n't. You should have been included in those "outings" with Linda and her husband by now.**

**Nowhere in your letter did you mention any of the sweet, thoughtful, caring things Pete does for you. Because of that, and because (after eight months) he hasn't managed to create a slot on his hospital visitors list, it may, indeed, be time to throw in the towel.**

DEAR ABBY: My adult daughters often ask me to watch the grandchildren. One daughter lives two hours away, the other here in my town. I don't mind weekends and days off, but the local one has now asked me to stay at her house on Sunday nights and help her with the baby in the morning. I work full time in an

extremely demanding job, which she insists is "simple." When I get up in the morning, I have to get ready for work, eat breakfast and start at 8 a.m. Her request that I stay on a Sunday night turned into me feeding the baby in the morning, so I told her it's too much on workdays. Now she's angry with me, and I am very depressed about it.

I am 68. I went back to work at the age of 60 because a change in my husband's industry cut his income severely. She can't seem to understand why this is too much for me. As for me, I can't understand why she would expect this of me on a workday. My job requires me to leave what I'm doing at times and travel immediately to handle an issue. Please advise. — IN DEMAND IN ALABAMA

DEAR IN DEMAND: Taking care of a small child is a favor; it is not mandatory, even if the child is a grandchild. Your only mistake was in agreeing to stay over on a Sunday night rather than get a good rest in your own bed to prepare for the workweek. At your age, you must protect your health. That's why it's so important you stop allowing your daughter to make you feel guilty about putting a stop to the Sunday night sleepovers.

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

Contact Dear Abby at [DearAbby.com](http://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](mailto:news@thecr.com).

### Today

**DUNKIRK HISTORICAL SOCIETY** — Is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the first and third Friday of each month in the former W.E. Gaunt Jewelry building, 113 S. Main St., Dunkirk.

**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.

**SOFT SHOULDERS** — A support group for anyone suffering from memory loss, will meet at 10:30 a.m. the first Friday of each month in the Fireplace Room at Edelweiss Place at Swiss Village in Berne. For more information, call (260) 589-3173.

**CINCINNATUS LEAGUE** — Will hold its next meeting at noon Friday, Sept. 6, at Harmony Café in Portland.

### 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.

**ROAD RIDERS FOR JESUS** — Will meet at 10 a.m. on the first Saturday of each month in the West Walnut Church of Christ fellowship hall, 204 W. Walnut St., Portland. (Please enter from the door facing the alley on the north side of the building.) For more information, call (260) 726-8463.

**DUNKIRK HISTORICAL SOCIETY** — Is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the first and third Saturday of each month in the former W.E. Gaunt Jewelry building, 113 S. Main St., Dunkirk.

**MUSEUM OF THE SOLDIER** — Is open from noon to 5 p.m. the first and third Saturday and Sunday of the month. It is located at 510 E. Arch St., Portland. The website is [museumofthesoldier.com](http://museumofthesoldier.com).

### Sunday

**A BETTER LIFE - BRIANNA'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.

**JAY COUNTY DRUG PREVENTION COALITION** — Will meet at noon the second Monday of each month at Jay County Campus of Arts Place, 131 E. Walnut St., Portland.

## Sudoku

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

Level: Advanced

### Thursday's Solution

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

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

# Fall HOME IMPROVEMENT

Our fall home improvement special section will be distributed in The Commercial Review (Portland), The News-Gazette (Winchester), The News Times (Hartford City) and The News and Sun (Dunkirk)

full-page color	1/2-page B&W
<b>\$500</b>	<b>\$320</b>
full-page B&W	1/4-page color
<b>\$400</b>	<b>\$350</b>
1/2-page color	1/4-page B&W
<b>\$400</b>	<b>\$280</b>

Big business card (3x3.5) - **\$120**  
Business card (2x2) - **\$80**

Contact Lindsey at  
**L.Cochran@thecr.com**  
or **(260) 726-8141**

Space for color ads is limited and will be on a first-come, first-serve basis. Deadline is Sept. 10

# Tax adjusted gross income directly

By MORTON J. MARCUS

Election 2024 is in full-swing. The billboards will appear from those candidates who have loads of money just waiting to be spent. The more billboards and TV advertisements you see, the more alien (non-Hoosier) funding a candidate has.

Not that funding from the domestic nether lands is inappropriate, it's just so one-sided. Unlike the Civil War, which was fought with guns and blood, this contemporary, uncivil war is being fought with guns and money.

Today guns are intended to intimidate a fearful citizenry. The money creates supermajorities in state legislatures and legislative constipation in Congress.

## Eye on the Pie



With full respect for the powers of state officers (governor, attorney general, state senators and state representatives), they have only powers left over from those assumed by the federal government. (See the history of the Tenth Amendment to the United States Constitution.)

In addition, the federal government can require compliance with its wishes by dan-

gling funds before state and local governments. The Feds say, "Want to rebuild that road? Certainly! Here are dollars that will help do the job. All you have to do is follow a few of our rules concerning ..."

Since state and local governments fear asking residents to pay a penny more in taxes for a project that will benefit only the residents of that area, federal funding is gleefully sought.

While some jurisdictions are too poor to pay for their own needs, most are too cheap and too cowardly to pay for what they need after decades of neglect.

Which brings us back to these elections of 2024. Let's elect candidates who will get

higher-income households to pay more into the state general fund to support our ailing localities.

There is an easy way to do that: We already begin Indiana's income tax collection process by using the adjusted gross income (AGI) as reported on the federal form.

Then we have a long, complicated path to the final amount due Indiana's Department of Revenue (DoR). Add this, subtract that and divide by your grandmother's age in 1964 to qualify for a \$45 tax credit.

Make it simple. Tax the AGI directly. Forget all the Indiana credits, deductions and exemptions. We already accept the AGI from the feds. Why fiddle as our communities rot?

Instead of the top 1% of Hoosier taxpayers providing 19.4% of the state's income tax revenue in 2022, they would be responsible for 24.3%.

The bottom half of Hoosier income tax payers provided about 14.5% of our \$10.6 billion income tax collection.

That would drop to 4.8%.

This plan would make Indiana a simpler place to live.

Our income tax would be more in line with the equity we seek.

Plus we'd have a reallocation of seasoned employees from the DoR to other mischief-making state agencies.

Marcus is an economist. Email him at [mortonjmarcus@gmail.com](mailto:mortonjmarcus@gmail.com).

## Low-wage work also hurts customers

By EMILY GUERRA

I've always felt that working in customer-facing jobs is my calling. I'm passionate about making people feel comfortable when they enter a business, be it a retail store or a restaurant.

But it was hard to keep that passion when I worked at Dollar General. Like workers at many other big retailers, we were so short-staffed and poorly trained that it was next to impossible to give good customer service.

My interview and first day on the job went well. Managers, co-workers, and customers all seemed pretty happy. The second day was a complete 180. All of a sudden I was thrown into my duties with zero training. They even scheduled me to close out the store that day without instructions.

Quickly I had shifts where I was the only worker for hours at a time, dealing with long lines of impatient customers, tons of merchandise to stock, and frustrated vendors subject to long wait times.

I frequently had to get overstock items from unstable top shelves and constantly worried I'd fall. The back door also wouldn't close correctly — and even though I brought it up to management several times, it remained an easy way for anyone to sneak in.

I didn't know it then, but Dollar General has repeatedly faced huge penalties for workplace safety violations.

Once I was called out to help with a truck delivery of refrigerated and frozen products. I went to grab a tote bag full and had to do a triple take because it was full of black mold. Another afternoon, I picked up a bag of potting soil to stock and realized it was covered with dead insects, which got all over the floor and other products.

When I had problems like these with merchandise, I was expected to contact the warehouse myself. But that was hard to do, given how understaffed we were.

Dollar General isn't the only tough place for retail employees. At many big stores, workers are short-handed and face difficult working conditions — even when their companies are highly profitable.

## Emily Guerra



Where is all the money going? Well, I can tell you not much went to me.

I made \$14.75 an hour for part-time hours, even though I often wound up working full-time. After the first few weeks, my schedule became so unpredictable that I sometimes worked only a few hours a week. Eventually it just wasn't worth all the hard work and stress, so I quit.

By contrast, Dollar General CEO Todd Vasos made nearly \$10 million last year — 521 times as much as a typical worker at his company, the Institute for Policy Studies reported recently.

Dollar General has also been taking profits that could go towards worker pay or fixing up their stores and spending it instead on stock buybacks. That's when a company repurchases its own shares to inflate the value of its stock and make CEOs even richer. Between 2019 and 2023, the company spent \$9 billion on this financial scam.

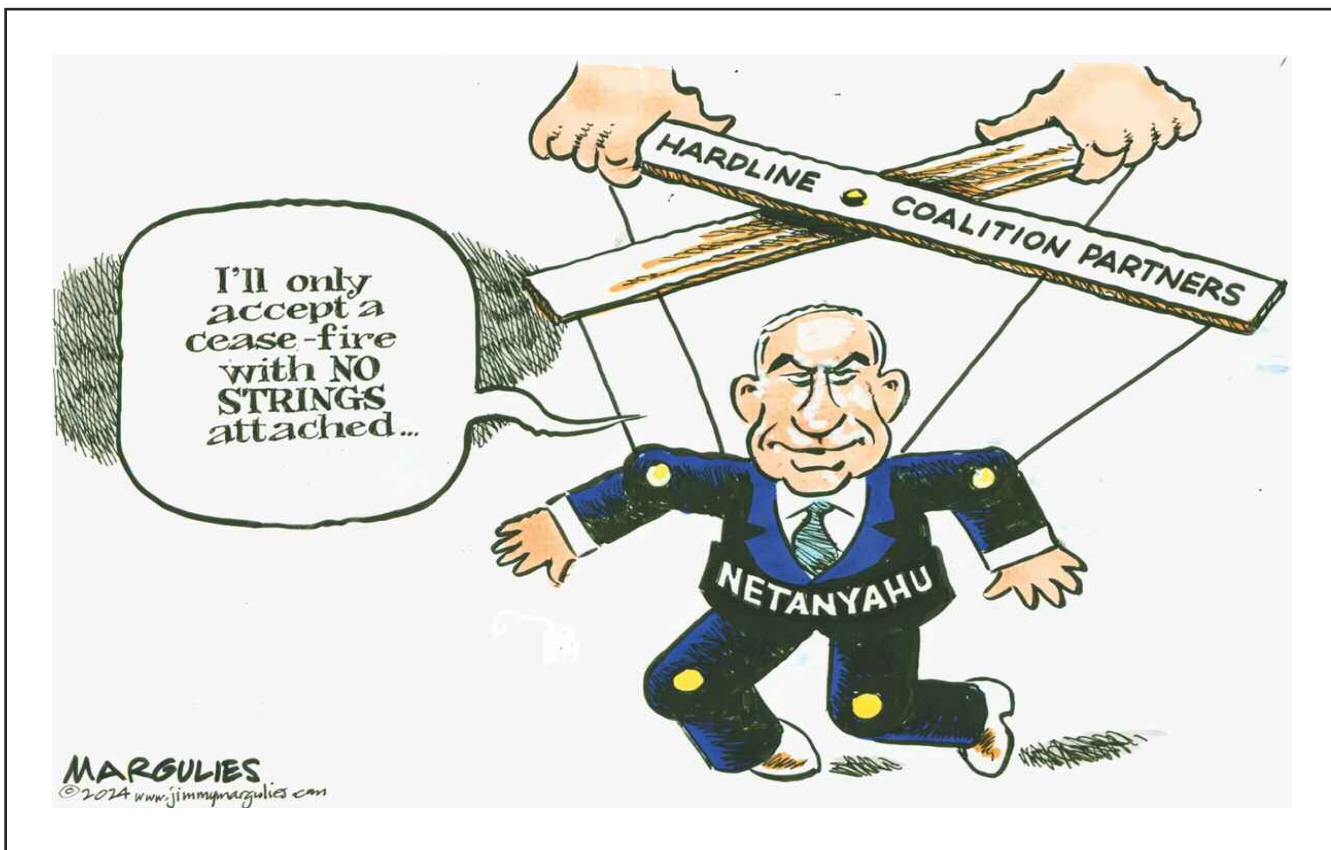
I also learned from the Institute's report that 88 percent of Dollar General workers who are eligible to participate in the company 401(k) plan don't have one dime in their accounts. Low-wage workers like me just don't earn enough to be able to save for our retirement.

I saw up close how a business that's focused on exploiting employees to make those at the top even richer isn't just bad for workers like me, but for customers as well. And anyone who's worked for one of these low-wage companies can tell you Dollar General is hardly unique.

If we want a strong economy, we need to do more to make sure all workers can make a decent living and feel safe and respected in their workplace.

Guerra is a former Dollar General employee from Canton, Oklahoma.

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



## Illinois ban is long overdue

Chicago Tribune

Tribune News Service

For Chicagoans of a certain vintage who attended Catholic schools in the distant past, this new law might sound like heresy: Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker earlier this month signed a ban on corporal punishment in private schools. At the same time, the state reiterated a 30-year ban on the practice in public schools.

Anyone who grew up getting their knuckles rapped for school infractions can't be blamed for thinking the nanny-state Democrats have done it again. Classrooms will turn into unruly free-for-alls, the thinking goes, and virtues like respect and discipline will go out the window.

Well, it might surprise those same old-fashioned disciplinarians to learn that Illinois' private schools were on board with the law. Schools in the Catholic Conference of Illinois no longer use corporal punishment, Executive Director Bob Gilligan said, telling The Associated Press, "It's an anachronistic practice."

Ralph Rivera, who represents the Illinois Coalition of Nonpublic Schools, said he's similarly unaware of any member school that hits its students. While his group usually opposes state meddling in its classrooms, Rivera told the AP, its schools made no objection to the law. "Even if they don't do it, they told us to stay out of it, because it doesn't look good when you say, 'No, we want to be able to spank children.'"

Across the U.S., at least 96% of public schools report not using corporal punishment. The World Health Organization has decreed the practice a violation of children's rights, and the United Nations prohibited it more than three decades ago.

So, whatever happened to that stereotypical nun who ran her classroom with an iron ruler? In

## Guest Editorial

short, educators wised up. The evidence shows that hitting kids in school doesn't work. In the long run, it leads to worse behavior, and can leave children traumatized. It's also unfairly administered, with Black males and students with disabilities disproportionately targeted.

There really is no excuse for it, and plenty of reasons why teachers — and parents — have no business paddling, spanking or hitting the children in their care. You don't have to take our word for it: The American Academy of Pediatrics in suburban Itasca has been crying out to end corporal punishment of children for years now.

In research published last year, the physicians' group renewed its call. The group cited a series of studies that indicate spanking by parents or primary caregivers does not achieve better behavior. A 2017 study among parents from different countries and cultures confirms that hitting kids can bring on multiple problems.

"In the short-term, corporal punishment may cause a child or adolescent to be fearful and immediately obedient," the research report said. Over the long term, however, hitting kids not only fails to improve behavior, but can lead to mental-health problems, impaired cognitive development, poor educational outcomes and increased aggression. Further, being spanked as a child can contribute to antisocial behavior and other problems in adulthood as well.

While the evidence is strong, not everyone wants to believe it. After

all, most people who were mildly spanked as children, either by teachers or parents, didn't grow up with terrible problems as a result.

In parts of the Southern U.S., being paddled at school remains a rite of passage. Even though a dwindling number of public schools still use corporal punishment, almost 70,000 students are being struck at least once by school personnel during an academic year, according to research cited by the pediatrician group.

State Rep. Margaret Croke, a Chicago Democrat whose school-age child attends Catholic school, championed the Illinois law. Her intent was not to open the door to state regulation of private education, she told the AP, but to "keep kids out of harm's way."

Croke said she was disturbed by a Missouri school district that dropped corporal punishment in 2001, then reinstated it two years ago as an opt-in for parents. Croke wanted to send a message that "it never was going to be OK to inflict harm or pain on a child."

When the ban takes effect in January, Illinois will become just the fifth state in the nation to prohibit corporal punishment in all schools, along with New Jersey, Iowa, Maryland and New York. Today, 17 states technically allow corporal punishment in all schools, although four prohibit its use on students with disabilities. North Carolina state law doesn't preclude it but every school district in the state blocked its use in 2018.

Federal efforts to ban the practice have gone nowhere so far, including a 2023 measure co-sponsored by Illinois Democratic Sen. Dick Durbin. Given that thousands of children are still getting beaten at school every year, with negative results, it's time to get this legislation out of committee and into practice. Let's put the paddles away for good.

# The Commercial Review



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—Thomas Jefferson

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# No more competition

*Some solar developers, farmers want to work side-by-side*

By **KARINA ATKINS**

Chicago Tribune  
Tribune News Service

Matt Riggs' family has been farming in Urbana since 1874. But, his parents had to work second jobs to cushion themselves from the volatile corn and soybean markets that dominate Illinois' agricultural sector.

It quickly became clear that Riggs would also need to find another income stream if he wanted to keep the farm. He expects to lose \$200 to \$300 on each acre of corn this year, but a craft brewery he and his brother started is keeping the family farm afloat.

In the past few years, Riggs has realized the land his family has worked for 150 years is also ideal for solar panels. It's flat, well-drained and gets lots of sunlight.

As Illinois strives to convert 40% of its energy consumption to renewables by 2030 and 100% by 2050, solar installations are expected to increase by 1,700% over the next five years, according to the Solar Energy Industries Association.

Across the country, approximately 83% of new solar projects developed by 2040 will be installed on farm and ranch land, according to a 2022 American Farmland Trust analysis.

But, broad, low-lying solar arrays are not inherently compatible with farming. They typically take land out of agricultural production. This doesn't have to be the case, however. An emerging field called agrivoltaics suggests shorter, shade-tolerant crops may grow well in the small spaces between panels.

After installing solar panels at his brewery and seeing how reliable they were, Riggs wondered if he could use them to hedge his farm's balance sheet.

"The sun is going to come up on average a certain amount of time so you can build a really stable, predictable financial model, which I looked at having grown up on a farm and was like 'Wow, that's awesome,'" said Riggs.

Some Google searches led him to agrivoltaics.

While there are very few agrivoltaic projects in Illinois, early research and small projects show synergies between solar energy and agriculture. The co-location of solar panels and agriculture could keep farmers in business, improve ecosystem health, feed the country and provide clean energy.

## Learning to speak the same language

Agri-voltaics is a meeting of the minds between two groups that don't always look at the land the same way. This was on display at a recent farmer forum.

"He became bilingual and now speaks nature as well as technology," said Will Harris, a cattleman from southwest Georgia, of a developer he partnered with to graze sheep beneath solar panels.

Riggs also received a roar of laughter and scoffs during the forum when he said a developer he had considered partnering with last year wouldn't give him first right of refusal on vegetation mowing and trimming plans.

Riggs said he immediately stopped talking to the company, in disbelief that anyone would suggest they knew what was best for his family's land.

"You could offer me a trillion dollars an acre per year. There's no scenario where me or my family would feel comfortable signing the contract," he said.

One of the few Illinois farmers who still owns his farmland, he's passionate about maintaining control and is holding out for the right developer. But, many farmers don't have this luxury.

Approximately 70% of farmland in Illinois is rented from landowners who often live in cities or out of state. When solar developers approach with decades-long contracts that pay double or triple the going rate per acre, it's hard for landowners to turn down the offers. A farmer whose yearly income is subject to fluctuating market demand can't compete.

But, if farmers and solar companies can find a way to understand each other, a growing number of farmers like Riggs see solar energy as a potential safety net. They could make a passive income from the solar company leases while still raising products for the market.

**Opportunities and challenges**  
The logo for the Solar Farm Summit hosted in Chicago — a sheep overlaid on solar panels — is emblematic of the work that must still be done for agrivoltaics to take off in Illinois.



Tribune News Service/Chicago Tribune/Stacey Wescott

Alson Time, a postdoctoral research associate, checks soil moisture and a temperature sensor in a soybean plot on July 23 between solar panels in the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's agrivoltaics farm where researchers are exploring how crops can coexist with solar panels.

Sheep and solar panels pair well together. The sheep appreciate the shade from the panels and do a good job keeping the grasses low. But, there aren't many sheep farmers in Illinois, and there isn't a large appetite for lamb products in the United States.

Still, registration more than doubled at this July's summit compared with the inaugural one last year, organizers said.

On a 54-acre property called Solar Farm 2.0 in Champaign, University of Illinois researchers are exploring how row crops, which monopolize Illinois' agricultural output, can coexist alongside solar panels.

Their preliminary research suggests corn, which needs lots of sun and grows high, won't do well among solar arrays. But, shorter, more shade-tolerant crops such as soybeans, wheat, barley and hay may grow well in the small spaces between panels. In other parts of the country such as Arizona and Massachusetts, agrivoltaic farms are seeing promising yields of specialty groups such as tomatoes, basil and berries.

In Saline County, 165 miles south of Solar Farm 2.0, the American Farmland Trust has partnered with solar developer Sol Systems to see if kernza, a hybrid wheat that improves soil health, might also grow well alongside solar panels in Illinois. However, as with sheep, there isn't a large demand for kernza among American consumers.

Environmentalists have long questioned whether Illinois should be growing so much corn and soybeans in the first place. They're water-intensive, primarily used for biofuels and livestock feed rather than human consumption, and monocropping has degraded soil health, according to a study published by the National Academy of Sciences.

"You have food deserts all over the Midwest where farmers markets are about the only thing going in terms of getting produce there. Is there a way for us to rebuild some specialty crop supply at scale?" posed Ethan Winter, director of the American Farmland Trust's Smart Solar division. The 12-person team only came about three years ago to explore the intersection of solar and agriculture. This is new territory. The passive income stream from solar arrays could give Illinois farmers the cushioning they need to diversify their harvests.

"For us to nurture this thing and grow it, it won't deliver massive profit year one. We may fall on our faces as we're establishing these crops that are foreign to central Illinois," said Riggs, who is interested in experimenting with more direct-to-consumer products such as berries and flowers. "The cool thing is agrivoltaics can mitigate that risk until we're good at it."

Agri-voltaics is also being pitched as a way to make farming more resilient to climate change. The solar panels could shield crops from the sun and storms as weather becomes more severe.

"As the climate changes, where we may have extreme heat and extreme precipitation, it may actually benefit plants to have some shade. So, it's also very forward-looking research," said Madhu Khanna, director of the University of Illinois research project.

## Slowly warming up to solar

Many Illinois farmers are on the defensive as they watch utility-scale, non-agri-voltaic solar projects pop up next to their fields.

Last year, Illinois passed a zoning law that made any land approved for agricultural or industrial use also eligible for solar installations.

Farmers have already had to adapt to an influx of windmills and raised concerns about carbon sequestration in recent years.

"It just seems like people are wanting to start a war right here in central Illinois over all of this green energy stuff," said Shane Gray, a first-generation farmer in Waverly, Illinois, whose farm is next to Double Black Diamond. At 4,100 acres, it's the largest solar project east of the Mississippi and is expected to offset 70% of the electricity from the city of Chicago's municipal operations.

The land was chosen because it's near a transmission line, said Matt Birchby, president and co-founder of the project developer, Swift Current Energy. While he said the company is open to incorporating agrivoltaics into future plans, nothing will be farmed on this site, which is about the size of 11 family farms.

"If you're a landowner within a certain radius of a transmission line, you're either getting a letter in the mail or a knock on the door," said Alan Bailey, the Midwest solar specialist at American Farmland Trust.

The Illinois Farm Bureau, which represents 3 of every 4 farmers in the state, is against putting solar projects on productive farmland. It advocates for placing them on abandoned brownfield sites, vacant lots and rooftops instead.

But, projects on brownfields and former landfills tend to be smaller and more expensive because of land remediation costs, according to Anna Toenjes, associate vice president of impact at Sol Systems, a solar company experimenting with agrivoltaics in Illinois.

"Having the flexibility to develop projects on different types of land is really critical to achieving the scale needed to achieve the goals set on the federal and state levels," Toenjes said.

Although solar panels are only projected to cover 1% of total farmland in the United States, the most productive farmland is most likely to be affected, according to the American Farmland Trust analysis. Historically, towns and cities were built next to the richest farmland. Transmission lines, which solar arrays must connect to, were subsequently built next to these highly populated areas, said the organization's President and CEO John Piotti.

However, agrivoltaics is slowly catching on in rural Illinois. Earlier this month, Riggs' county Farm Bureau sent his proposal to modify the organization's hard-line stance against solar development to the state-level resolution committee. If approved, the Illinois Farm Bureau would support public funding for agrivoltaic projects.

Ultimately, state and federal policy will set the pace of progress for agrivoltaics.

Lightstar Renewables, a Boston-based solar developer, applied last month to construct Illinois' largest commercial agrivoltaic project in Kane County.

The fate of the 4.95 megawatt, 36-acre project, which is anticipated to provide enough energy to power 1,100 homes annually and grow hay and soybeans, is in the hands of the state government.

The company found an interested landowner near a transmission line, worked with a local farmer to design an array he can grow beneath and between and successfully pushed the project through the county permitting process.

Now, Lightstar is waiting to be accepted into Illinois Shines, a state-run solar incentive program that can cover up to 40% of the cost of a solar system.

The program receives more applications than grid capacity, even after being allocated more megawatts under the Pritzker administration's 2021 Climate and Equitable Jobs Act.

"We anticipate it will be slow to actually get built and put into operation because of the timeline and capacity limits with Illinois Shines," said Cecelia Stephens, a development manager at Lightstar.

While hopeful the Kane County project will be approved this year, the company plans to apply again in 2025 if it isn't. Illinois Shines is generally regarded as a national model of how states can support solar development, but Stephens said there is an opportunity for more weight to be given to agrivoltaic projects.

Applications are evaluated with a points-based system. Currently, agrivoltaics only receives one point. For comparison, projects built on rooftops receive three points and projects built on brownfields receive two.

"If the Illinois Shines program

could further incentivize or prioritize agrivoltaic projects, I think that would really be something that would help push us forward more quickly," said Stephens.

She pointed to New York as an example of a state that has really invested in the new field. It just announced a grant program that will award up to \$750,000 to agrivoltaic projects.

Riggs would like to see Illinois Shines' points-based system broken down even further to prioritize projects that will produce the highest agricultural output and create the most farming jobs.

Given that solar farm leases typically last two to four decades, he feels an urgency to get agrivoltaic projects underway.

"Every day we don't have a tiered incentive structure to incentivize real, robust dual-use, there's another project going in that's going to be there for 25 years, and it's a missed opportunity," he said.

The U.S. Department of Energy and Department of Agriculture have put tens of millions of dollars into agrivoltaic research. Solar Farm 2.0 is funded under a \$10 million USDA grant.

There is also bipartisan support in Congress for further research into agrivoltaics. The Farm Bill introduced by House Republicans this May directs the agriculture department to study the impacts of and best practices for "shared solar energy and agricultural production." Additionally, it tells the agriculture department not to fund any solar projects on prime farmland unless they incorporate agrivoltaics or have local government approval.

"The rise of agrivoltaics is a great reason why we need a new Farm Bill every five years," said Samantha Levy, conservation and climate policy manager at American Farmland Trust.

Agri-voltaics was only beginning to be discussed in 2018, so it was not included in the last Farm Bill, which reached its five-year expiration date last year. After failing to come to a consensus, a divided Congress opted to extend the 2018 Farm Bill until this September.

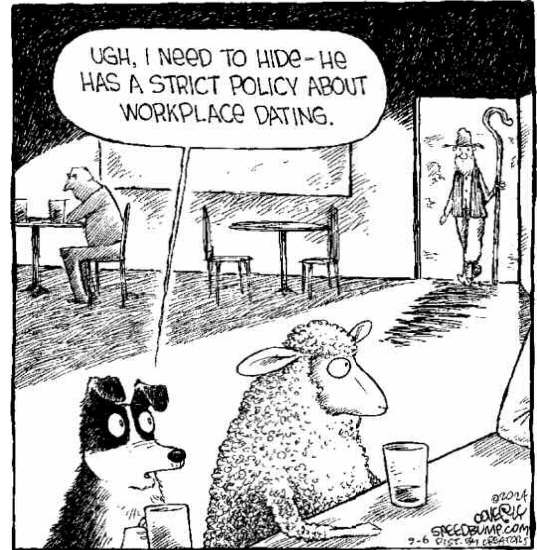
History suggests Congress will likely be in gridlock until after the presidential election in November and consequently extend the 2018 bill another year.

With these federal delays and the backlogs at the state level, Riggs worries that family farmers will lose out on an opportunity to be a part of the clean energy transition and maintain their cherished livelihoods.

"If a project has real agricultural dual-use and was partnered with a small family farm, it's the golden ticket for that family," said Riggs. "Every one of these little community solar projects could literally sustain a family farm for the next generation."

SPEED BUMP

Dave Coverly

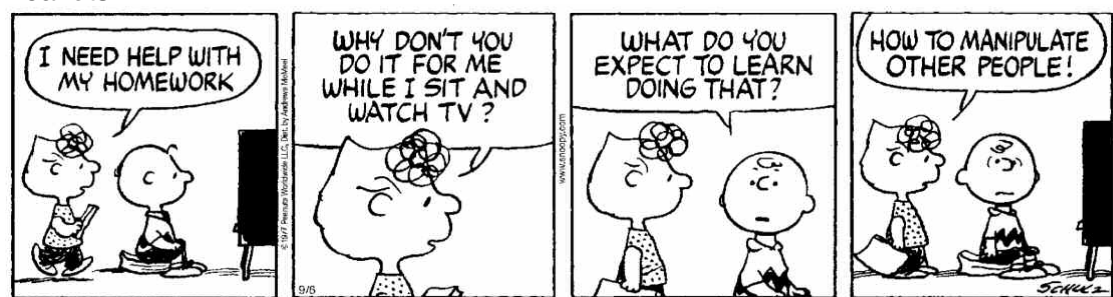


THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane



Peanuts



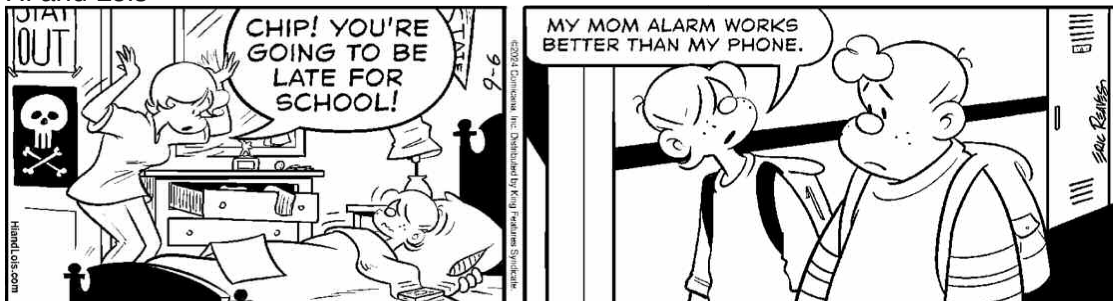
Rose is Rose



Agnes



Hi and Lois



Between Friends



Blondie



Snuffy Smith



Beetle Bailey



Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Bidding quiz

You are South, both sides vulnerable. The bidding has been: North 1♦ Pass, East 1♥ Pass, South 2♦ Pass, West 3♥\* Pass, 3NT Pass. What would you bid now with each of the following four hands? 1. ♠J7♥AKQJ952♦63♣J8 2. ♠4♥KQ9872♦K974♣KJ 3. ♠72♥KQJ9764♦A5♣J6 4. ♠AJ8♥KJ8743♦A75♣K

1. Pass. There is no good reason to think that four hearts is safer than three notrump. On the contrary, partner will almost certainly be able to take nine quick tricks in notrump, as your hearts are solid and partner should have a stopper in any suit that is led. At four hearts, you could conceivably lose four tricks, particularly with partner having twice shown minimum values after opening the bidding. The hand can stand four losers in notrump, but not in hearts. 2. Four diamonds. This hand does not figure to lend itself well to notrump and is obviously better designed for suit play. Four diamonds (forcing) permits partner to go on to five diamonds, or possibly show belated support for hearts. Minor-suit games are relatively

rare, since most hands with a potential for 11 tricks usually produce at least nine in notrump, but here the likelihood of making nine tricks in notrump is too remote. If partner should make a move toward slam, say by cuebidding five clubs, you will show no interest by retreating to five diamonds. 3. Four hearts. The chance of making four hearts is excellent, while three notrump might prove very precarious. The danger in notrump is that the opponents, having the advantage of the opening lead, might establish their long suit before dummy's hearts can be established. 4. Four diamonds. It's almost a sure thing that partner can make three notrump, but passing is not right because there is still too good a chance for a slam. For example, six diamonds would be a strong favorite if partner held: ♠K92♥5♦KQ9863♣AJ4. Investigating a slam by bidding four diamonds does not really jeopardize game possibilities. It keeps the avenue open to both game and slam, and what you do next depends largely on how partner reacts. Thus, if he now cuebids five clubs, indicating the club ace and interest in slam, you should carry on to six diamonds.

Tomorrow: Safeguarding a slam. ©2024 King Features Syndicate Inc.

9-6

CRYPTOQUIP

XEV'QJ NJSSHBP IJ XEV ZEB'N GEIDSJNJSX SEKJ NRJ EDJQM "ENJSSE" EQ "QHPESJNNE"?

NRJ KJQZH HZJM!

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: NO ACTORS COULD BE BRIGHTLY ILLUMINATED DURING THE STAGE PLAY. SOMEBODY STOLE THE SPOTLIGHT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: E equals O

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across, Down, and Solution time: 25 mins. Includes a solution grid and yesterday's answer.

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The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

## Finding space

An attack from Fort Recovery High School's Brynn Willmann splits Maria Hemmelgarn (12) and Mya Kunkler (11) of Jay County during Tuesday's match. Willmann had six kills and three blocks in the three-set sweep.

## Sports on tap

### Local schedule

**Today**  
Jay County — Football vs. Southern Wells — 7 p.m.  
Fort Recovery — Football vs. Coldwater — 7 p.m.

**Saturday**  
Jay County — Junior high tennis vs. Bluffton/Randolph Southern — 10 a.m.  
Fort Recovery — Cross country at Brookville Invite — 9 a.m.; Volleyball at Tri-Village — 9 a.m.; Middle school cross country at Brookville — 9 a.m.; Middle school volleyball vs. Botkins — 9 a.m.

### TV sports

**Today**  
10 a.m. — Paralympic wheelchair basketball (USA)  
12 p.m. — Grand Slam tennis: U.S. Open (ESPN2)  
3 p.m. — Grand Slam tennis: U.S. Open (ESPN)  
7 p.m. — College football: BYU at SMU

(ESPN2); Western Illinois at Indiana (BTN) 7:10 p.m. — MLB: Cincinnati Reds at New York Mets (Bally Indiana)  
9 p.m. — College football: Duke at Northwestern (FS1)

**Saturday**  
1:20 a.m. — AFL: Greater Western Sydney Giants at Sydney Swans (FS1)  
9 a.m. — UEFA Nations League soccer: North Macedonia at Faroe Islands (FS1)  
11 a.m. — NASCAR Xfinity Series: Focused Health 250 (USA)  
12 p.m. — College football: Arkansas at Oklahoma State (ABC); Texas at Michigan (FOX); Pitt at Cincinnati (ESPN2); Kansas State at Tulane (ESPN); Bowling Green at Penn State (BTN)  
12 p.m. — UEFA Nations League soccer: England at Republic of Ireland (FS1)  
12:30 p.m. — NASCAR Cup Series: Quaker State 400 (USA)  
12:30 p.m. — NWSL soccer: Portland Thorns Washington Spirit (CBS)  
1 p.m. — Paralympic track and field (NBC)  
3 p.m. — NASCAR Xfinity Series: Focused Health 250 (USA)  
3:30 p.m. — College football: Cal at Auburn

(ESPN2); South Carolina at Kentucky (ABC); Baylor at Utah (FOX); Tennessee State at North Dakota State (ABC); South Dakota at Wisconsin (FS1); Michigan State at Maryland (BTN); Northern Illinois at Notre Dame (NBC)  
4 p.m. — Grand Slam tennis: U.S. Open (ESPN)  
4 p.m. — Pro Motocross Championship: Charlotte (NBC)  
4 p.m. — International friendly soccer: Canada at United States (TBS)  
4:10 p.m. — MLB: Cincinnati Reds at New York Mets (Bally Indiana)  
7 p.m. — College football: South Florida at Alabama (ESPN); Virginia at Wake Forest (ESPN2); Kansas at Illinois (FS1)  
7:15 p.m. — MLB: Chicago White Sox at Boston Red Sox (FOX)  
7:30 p.m. — College football: Tennessee at N.C. State (ABC); Colorado at Nebraska (NBC); Western Michigan at Ohio State (BTN)  
10 p.m. — College football: Texas Tech at Washington State (FOX)  
10:15 p.m. — College football: Liberty at New Mexico State (ESPN2)  
10:30 p.m. — College football: Mississippi State at Arizona State (ESPN)

11 p.m. — College football: Utah State at USC (BTN)

### Local notes

**Final races**  
The first of the final three races of the Adams County 5K Challenge is the Catch Your Breath While You Dash for Diabetes on Sept. 14.  
The race will start at Adams Memorial Hospital at 1100 Mercer Avenue, Decatur. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. and will cost \$25, with the race starting at 9 a.m.  
The Callithumpian Canter will follow on Sunday, Oct. 4. Preregistration is \$20 and can be done at adamscounty5kchallenge.com.  
The race will begin with a \$10 fun run at 1:30 p.m. before the 5K at 2 p.m.

**Turkey Trot sign-up open**  
Cooper Farms will be hosting its 17th annual Turkey Trot Saturday, Nov. 2 at the Cooper Farms Turkey Harvesting Plant in St. Henry, Ohio.  
Participation costs \$15. All proceeds benefit EverHeart Hospice.

The race will begin at 10 a.m. There will be splits at each mile of the 3.1-mile course. There will also be chip timing for participants operated by Speedy Feet.

Water will be provided throughout the race, as well as a to-go turkey meal at the end.  
You can register by visiting [bit.ly/cooperfarmsturkeytrot](http://bit.ly/cooperfarmsturkeytrot), or search for "Cooper Farms Turkey Trot 5k" on [speedyfeet.com](http://speedyfeet.com).

**Classic set**  
The 11th Annual Adams Health Foundation Golf Classic is set to be held on Sept. 13 at Wabash Valley Golf Club.

Teams of four can participate for \$400, with tee times at either 7:30 a.m. or 1 p.m.  
Included are an 18-hole round of golf, a best, non-alcoholic beverages, a cooler bag and lunch.  
All proceeds go to school healthcare scholarships and community health. For more information, contact Kim Trombley by emailing [kim.trombley@adamshelthnetwork.org](mailto:kim.trombley@adamshelthnetwork.org) or by calling (260) 724-2145 ext. 13062.

To have an event listed in "Sports on tap," email details to [sports@thecr.com](mailto:sports@thecr.com).

### 90 SALE CALENDAR

**PUBLIC AUCTION**  
Located: 3652 N 600 E  
Montpelier, IN  
Saturday Morning  
September 14th, 2024  
9:30 A.M.

**OLD & COLLECTORS ITEMS - HOUSEHOLD GOODS**

Whirlpool washer & dryer, Whirlpool side by side refrigerator, Lighted china cabinet, boar head and fish mounts, 1910 Bluffton Street fair medallion, card tables, pressure cookers, and other items not listed.  
2016 JEEP-4 WHEELER-MOWERS-TOOLS  
2016 Jeep Compass 4x4 with 73,000 miles, log splitter, Simplicity 3110 mower (non running), John Deere 56 mower (non running), trolling motors, fishing poles, tackle boxes, and many other items not listed.

**LYLE TOWNS**  
Loy Auction  
AC#31600027  
Auctioneers  
Gary Loy AU01031608  
Travis Theurer AU11200131  
Aaron Loy AU11200112

**PUBLIC AUCTION**  
Saturday September 7th, 2024  
TIME 10:00 A.M.  
LOCATED: 912 S VINE ST

PORTLAND, IN.  
OPEN HOUSE Sunday Aug. 25th 1-3p.m. or for private showing phone auctioneers.

**REAL ESTATE**  
Sells at 10 a.m.  
3 bedroom, 1 bath ranch style house containing 1,048 sq. ft. finished living area. Central air . 24'x25' detached garage. Good starter home.

**ANTIQUES-HOUSE-HOLD-GARAGE ITEMS**  
Aladdin oil lamp, cast iron dutch oven, skillets, and pans. Vintage NASCAR collectibles, NAPA toys, semi & trailer. GE upright freezer, Schumacker 200 amp battery charger, Grinder on pedestal, Electric power washer, Tools & utility cabinets. Several items not mentioned.  
OWNERS; ESTATE OF GARY W KELLY  
Note: Check Auctionsoft and AuctionZip for more photos.

**SHAWVER AUCTIONEERING AND REAL ESTATE**  
AC31800004

### 90 SALE CALENDAR

**AUCTIONEERS**  
Zane Shawver  
Lic. #AU10500168  
260-729-2229  
Pete D. Shawver  
Lic. #AU19700040  
260-726-5587

**PUBLIC AUCTION**  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14TH, 2024  
TIME 10:00 A. M.  
LOCATED: 3646 N 200 E

DECATUR, IN  
VEHICLES-TRAILER-GENERATOR-TOOLS  
2008 Ford Explorer XLT, 2007 Chevy Impala LT, 2005 Continental Cargo 20ft. enclosed trailer with ramp door, Agri-Fab- 38 inch law sweeper, Delta 10 inch table saw, Homecraft planer, portable scaffolding, and garden planter.

**COMMERCIAL APPLIANCES-ANTIQUES-MISCELLANEOUS**  
Garland gas stove, Hobart dish washer, Cadco steam table, Bunn coffee maker, Chefmate meat slicer, Commercial washer & dryer, barber chairs and dryers, grinding wheel, 3 cushion sofa and loveseat, telescope, Brinks combination safe, & karaoke system.

**OWNER: ADAMS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
NOTE: Check Auctionsoft and AuctionZip for more photos.

**SHAWVER AUCTIONEERING AND REAL ESTATE**  
AC31800004  
**AUCTIONEERS**  
Zane Shawver  
Lic. #AU10500168  
260-729-2229  
Pete D. Shawver  
Lic. #AU19700040  
260-726-5587  
[www.auctionzip.com](http://www.auctionzip.com)

**PUBLIC AUCTION**  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21TH, 2024  
TIME 10:00 A. M.  
LOCATED: 1136 N 550 W PORTLAND, IN  
**VEHICLES-GUNS**  
1967 Chevrolet Camero (non running), 2018 Chevy Colorado quad cab 4x4 with 32,000 miles, 1987 Chevrolet S10, 1992 Jeep Wrangler, Case NF tractor, Smith & Wesson model 22A Cal. camo with peep sight, Ruger 57 5.78x28 cal. w/clip, Baylor 12 guage side by side, Large lot of ammo, Reloading equipment,

### 90 SALE CALENDAR

Compound bows and arrows.

**ANTIQUES-HOUSE-HOLD-GARAGE ITEMS**  
Drink Royal Crown Cola Thermometer, Crank telephone, Handmade quilts, Pie Safe, Vintage tricycle, Violin, Banjo, Crocks, 5 gallon milk cans, pull type combine, steel wheel spreader, Wood stoves, Rally rear tine tiller, Go cart frames, Yard roller, Large lot of hardwood lumber-oak and walnut, Collectible coins.

**OWNER: Darry Rowles Estate-Lydia Rowles Executor**  
NOTE: Check Auctionsoft and AuctionZip for more photos.  
**SHAWVER AUCTIONEERING AND REAL ESTATE**  
AC31800004  
**AUCTIONEERS**  
Zane Shawver  
Lic. #AU10500168  
260-729-2229  
Pete D. Shawver  
Lic. #AU19700040  
260-726-5587  
[www.auctionzip.com](http://www.auctionzip.com)

**PUBLIC AUCTION**  
Located: Woman's Building Jay County Fairgrounds, 806 E. Votaw St. Portland, IN  
Thursday Afternoon  
September 19th, 2024  
5:00 P.M.

**HOUSEHOLD GOODS - OLD & COLLECTORS ITEMS**  
Lazy Boy electric lift chair, 3 cushion sofa, vanity dresser, king size bed, Lazy Boy leather recliner, Webscor stereo/record cabinet, 5 gallon crock, old eyeglasses, Toys: Tonka car hauler, Tonka dump truck, Ford Bronco, Tonka bulldozer, Lincoln Logs, Walt Disney School Bus lunch pail, McCoy vase, Fire King, old ball gloves, and other items not listed.

**MOWER-TOOLS**  
Craftsman LT2000 riding mower, Husky 1650 psi power washer, Craftsman 12 amp edger, tree saw, furniture clamps, cement urns, and other items not listed.  
Auctioneers Note: Please note we will be running 2 rings. Doors will be open day of auction at 4:00 p.m.

**CHARLES SANDERS, Deceased**  
**SHIRLEY SANDERS, MARGARET PATTENSON, Deceased**  
SON, Deceased  
Loy Auction  
AC#31600027  
Auctioneers  
Gary Loy AU01031608  
Travis Theurer AU11200131  
Aaron Loy AU11200112

### 90 SALE CALENDAR

**REAL ESTATE AUCTION**  
Saturday, SEPTEMBER 14, 2024  
9:00AM

Location 891 W 650 N, Bryant, IN 47326  
Real Estate:  
\*3 +/- acres \*2305 sq. ft. building  
\*1125 sq. ft. basement  
\*24'x48' pavilion. Personal property to follow;  
\*Cub Cadet mower\*snow blower\* picnic table.

Community Christian Ministries, Owners  
Sale conducted by Green Auction - 260-589-8474.  
See SoldonGreen.com for details and flyers.  
Rob Green AU19500011  
Bill Liechty AU01048441

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### 110 HELP WANTED

**HIRING PART-TIME INSERTER** Hours vary each week. Apply at The Graphic Printing Company • The Commercial Review 309 West Main Street • Portland, IN 47371 Office Hours: 10 am - 4 pm, Tuesday - Friday NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE. Equal opportunity employer.

**HELP WANTED: TOWN OF REDKEY** is looking for a full time Utility worker. Hours are 7-3:30p.m. Duties will be to assist with water/sewer department. Pick up applications at cit building in Redkey.

### 130 MISC. FOR SALE

**PAPER END ROLLS FOR SALE** Various sizes and prices. Call The Commercial Review at 260-726-8141 for more information.

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### 130 MISC. FOR SALE

The Commercial Review, 309 W Main, Portland 260-726-8141.

### 190 FARMERS COLUMN

**AG RENTAL Spreaders:** BBI, Artsway Vertical. New Holland 228 skid loaders w/full cab, heat/ac. Fort Recovery 419-852-0309

### 200 FOR RENT

**LEASE SPACE** available, Coldwater, OH. Manufacturing, warehousing, assembly, distribution, offices, inside and outdoor storage. Easy access to major highways and railroad access with loading docks and overhead cranes available. Contact Sycamore Group, 419-678-5318, [www.sycamoreospace.com](http://www.sycamoreospace.com)

### 230 AUTOS, TRUCKS

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### 250 PUBLIC NOTICE

### 260 PUBLIC AUCTION

### Public Notice

STATE OF INDIANA  
COUNTY OF JAY  
IN THE JAY COUNTY  
CIRCUIT COURT  
CASE NUMBER  
38C01-2407-MI-31  
IN RE THE MATTER OF:  
NICOLE DELANEY  
Notice of Petition  
for Name Change  
Nicole Delaney, whose mailing address is Dunkirk, IN 47336, in the Jay County, Indiana, hereby gives notice that Nicole Delaney has filed a petition in the Jay County Court requesting that her name be changed to Nicole Dheel. Notice is further given that the hearing will be held on said petition on September 24, 2024 at 11:30am  
Nicole Delaney, Petitioner  
7/30/2024  
JON EADS  
CR 8-23,30,9-6-2024-HSPAXLP

✓ **Out The CR**  
Classifieds  
[www.thecr.com](http://www.thecr.com)

### 250 PUBLIC NOTICE

## Public Notice

### NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

By virtue of a certified copy of a decree to me directed from the Clerk of the Superior Court of Jay County, Indiana, in Cause No. 38D01-2405-MF-000007, wherein Rocket Mortgage, LLC *Pl/a* Quicken Loans, LLC was Plaintiff, and James Bercau, was a Defendant, requiring me to make the sum as provided for in said Decree with interest and costs, I will expose at public sale to the highest bidder, on the 10th day of October, 2024 at 10:00 AM of said day, at 120 N. Court Street, Ste.305, Portland, IN 47371, the fee simple of the whole body of Real Estate in Jay County, Indiana:  
PART AND PARCEL OF OUT LOT FIVE (5) IN BLOCK TWO (2) IN THE WEST ADDITION TO PORTLAND, INDIANA, DESCRIBED AS: COMMENCING AT A POINT IN THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID OUT LOT SIXTY SIX (66) FEET WEST OF THE SOUTHEAST CORNER THEREOF, AND RUNNING THENCE NORTH ABOUT TEN (10) RODS TO A POINT IN THE SOUTH LINE OF CRANE ALLEY IN SAID ADDITION, THENCE WEST ON THE SOUTH LINE OF CRANE ALLEY, SIXTY-SIX (66) FEET TO THE TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND HERETOFORE DEEDED BY ONE CHRISTOPHER S. ARTHUR AND WIFE TO ONE OTIS H. AND JENNIE S. WALTERS (SEE DEED RECORD 47 PAGE 473, JAY COUNTY RECORDS); THENCE SOUTH ABOUT TEN (10) RODS TO A POINT IN THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID OUT LOT, THENCE EAST ON SAID SOUTH LINE, SIXTY-SIX (66) FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING.  
38-07-20-103-110.000-034  
and commonly known as: 710 W Main St, Portland, IN 47371.

Subject to all liens, encumbrances, rights of redemption, easements and restrictions of record not otherwise foreclosed and extinguished in the proceedings known as Cause # 38D01-2405-MF-000007 in the Superior Court of the County of Jay Indiana, and subject to all real estate taxes, and assessments currently due, delinquent or which are to become a lien.  
Said sale will be made without relief from valuation or appraisal laws. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagee, the Mortgagee's Attorney,  
Larry R. Newton, Jr.  
Jay County Sheriff  
Doyle & Foutty, PC  
41 E Washington St, STE 400  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

DOYLE & FOUTTY, PC. IS A DEBT COLLECTOR  
CR 9-6,13,20-2024-HSPAXLP

### 260 PUBLIC AUCTION

## PUBLIC AUCTION

LOCATION: 891 W 650 N, Bryant, IN 47326  
**Saturday, September 14, 2024**  
9:00 a.m.

OPEN HOUSE: AUGUST 10th, 10:00-1:00pm  
SEPTEMBER 10th 4:00-6:00pm  
REAL ESTATE has been well maintained and could have multiple uses. 3.4 ACRES with a 2,305 sq. ft. finished 1st floor & 1,125 sq.ft. finished basement with full kitchen. 24' X 48' Pavilion. 3 Restrooms. Well and Septic System. Bloomfield School District. Seller will provide staked survey.  
Buyer assumes taxes in Spring 2025. \$7,500 Down Payment Due day of Auction. Closing in 30 days.  
PERSONAL PROPERTY to sell after real estate. Lawn Mower, Snow Blower, Chairs, Tables, Picnic Tables.

Community Christian Ministries, Owner  
Green Auction  
Rob Green AU1 9500011  
Bill Liechty AU01048441  
656 West Main Street, Berne. IN 46711  
260-589-8474  
SoldonGreen.com  
CR 8-7,9-6-2024

## Fortkamps lead the Cougars

Tiegen Fortkamp made the decision to stick with volleyball and join her sister, Paige, by joining the Cougars.

So far, it's worked out for the sisters.

The pair of Fort Recovery High School graduates have led the Saint Francis University volleyball team to a 7-6 record through the non-conference portion of the season.

Paige Fortkamp once again leads the team with 186 kills, while Teigen Fortkamp comes in third at 79. Paige Fortkamp also owns the best qualifying hitting percentage at 0.247, the most aces at 29, while adding 92 digs and 19 blocks.

Teigen Fortkamp leads the team with 21 blocks, and her 177 assists is good for second among the Cougars.

They had a particularly strong day in the 21-25, 25-19, 26-28, 25-18, 15-9 win over Defiance on Aug. 24. Teigen Fortkamp set a career-high 13 kills in the match, while her 22 assists, six digs, three blocks and one ace all trailed her season high by a count of two in each statistic.

### Collegiate Check-up

Paige Fortkamp had a season-high 26 kills while adding nine digs and one block.

#### Jalyn Bruns Fort Recovery — 2022

Shot rounds of 83 and 162 strokes to open the 2024 season for the IU-East women's golf team, as the Red Wolves took the top spot and second place in a pair of invitationals.

On Aug. 27's season opener in the Trine University Tournament at Zollner Golf Course (Angola, IN), Bruns had 83 strokes to tie Natalie Kulka (Trine), Bailey Bravata (Trine) and Skylar Whitman (Siena Heights) for the seventh best score. It was the third-best round for IU-East, which finished as the runner-up with 329 strokes.

In the IU-East Fall Invitational on Aug. 30 at Highland Lake Golf Course, Bruns shot a 162, which didn't contribute to the team's first-place finish. The Red Wolves took the top spot in their own invitational with 621 strokes, while Trine trailed behind with 627.

#### Whitney Rammel Fort Recovery — 2022

Totaled 11 kills for the East Tennessee State University volleyball team, as the Buccaneers opened the season with a loss and two victories in the Wildcat Classic hosted by Davidson.

The junior had five kills in each of ETSU's victories on Saturday against Elon (25-15, 25-18, 25-21) and Davidson (25-18, 22-25, 25-19, 25-15). Rammel supplemented her offense with a strong defensive effort against the Wildcats, as she blocked six attacks and added a dig. Her only other stat against Elon was one dig.

Rammel only managed one kill in the season opener for the Buccaneers (2-1). She also recorded one assisted block as

Marshall beat ETSU 18-25, 20-25, 22-25.

#### Cali Wendel Fort Recovery — 2024

Has found herself a regular spot in the Edison State Community College volleyball team's rotation through the first nine games of her freshman campaign.

The FRHS graduate has played 29 out of 32 sets and made appearances in every single match.

Wendel has given a strong defensive effort for the Chargers (3-6), leading the team with 145 digs, and sits second statistically with 10 aces and 145 serve receives. She also only has 15 service errors for a 90.6% success rate at returning the serve.

Offensively, Wendel has notched two kills on 23 attempts and added 16 assists.

#### Allysen Fullenkamp Fort Recovery — 2023

Made the floor in two of the Indiana Wesleyan University

volleyball team's first 10 games of the season.

She saw the most action for the Wildcats (8-2) in their 25-7, 25-10, 25-7 sweep of the Wilberforce Bulldogs. Fullenkamp played in all three sets, swinging for six kills, third in the match behind teammates Alex Lloyd (12) and Marin Sanchez (nine). She also had three blocks, three digs and an ace in the victory.

In Aug. 31's sweep of Trinity Christian, Fullenkamp played one set, only recording one assist and one zero attack.

#### Lindy Wood Jay County — 2022

Finished 28th at the Bluffton University Beaver Dam Invite on Aug. 30 for the University of Saint Francis women's cross country team.

The former Jay County Patriot crossed the finish line in 22 minutes, 1.6 seconds. Seven other Cougars finished above Wood, meaning her time did not impact the second-place finish.

Saint Francis totaled 43 points, beating Heidelberg (85) and falling to Ohio Northern (20).



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

### Soft touch

Fort Recovery High School's Karlie Niekamp attacks the ball during the Indians' 25-14, 28-26, 25-20 win over Jay County on Tuesday. Niekamp's six kills was the fourth-most in the match.

## Which football national champ had the longest odds?

By TODD DEWEY

Las Vegas Review-Journal  
Tribune News Service

**LAS VEGAS** — The first season of the College Football Playoff produced the biggest long-shot winner.

Ohio State was 40-1 to win the national championship entering the 2014 season, according to sportsoddshistory.com.

The Buckeyes, coached by Urban Meyer and led on defense by Joey Bosa, lost starting quarterback Braxton Miller to a season-ending injury before the season started. He was replaced by redshirt freshman J.T. Barrett, who suffered a season-ending injury during Ohio State's win over Michigan in the regular-season finale.

Redshirt sophomore Cardale Jones stepped in and led the Buckeyes to a 59-0 win over Wisconsin in the Big Ten title game, a 42-35 victory over Alabama in the CFP semifinals and a 42-20 triumph over Oregon in the national championship in his first three career starts.

Here are the other biggest preseason long shots to win the national championship since 2001, when sportsoddshistory.com started tracking the odds.

#### 2002 Ohio State, 19-1

The Buckeyes were the first team in the Football Bowl Subdivision to finish 14-0 in the 2002 season. Led by first-year coach Jim Tressell and freshman running back Maurice Clarett, Ohio State beat Michigan in Ann Arbor before upsetting top-ranked Miami as an 11 1/2-point underdog in the Fiesta Bowl for the school's first Bowl Championship Series national title. Clarett's 5-yard touchdown run was the difference in the Buckeyes' 31-24 double-overtime win over the Hurricanes for the school's first national championship since 1970.

#### 2019 Louisiana State, 25-1

Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback Joe Burrow threw 60 touch-

down passes while directing a record-setting offense that featured future NFL stars Ja'Marr Chase and Justin Jefferson. The Tigers went 15-0 after beating top-10 teams Texas, Florida, Auburn and Alabama in the regular season and defeating Georgia in the Southeastern Conference championship game. LSU whipped Oklahoma 63-28 in the CFP semifinals, then defeated defending national champion Clemson 42-25 in the CFP championship. The Tigers outscored their opponents 726-328, or an average of 48.4-21.9.

#### 2003 Louisiana State, 40-1

Coached by Nick Saban, the Tigers beat Georgia in the SEC title game before defeating Oklahoma 21-14 in the Sugar Bowl for the BCS national championship, the school's first national title since 1958. Southern California finished No. 1 in the final Associated Press poll. It was the last time there was not a consensus national champion.

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