

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

Former deputy arrested for a felony

Bogenschutz is facing a Level 6 charge of identity deception

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review

A former Jay County Sheriff's Office deputy is accused of committing identity deception.

Derek J. Bogenschutz, 36, Peru, was arrested and booked into Miami County Jail on Wednesday for allegedly harassing two people with a fake Facebook account created for state department investigations. He faces a Level 6 felony in Jay Superior Court for identity deception.

In February, officials from the sheriff's office asked the Indiana State Police Fort Wayne Post to investigate the actions of Bogenschutz. (He resigned from Jay County Sheriff's Office on Feb. 29.)

According to the affidavit for probable cause filed in connection with his case, Bogenschutz used a fake Facebook account under the name of Katie Morgan to contact a West Jay Elementary School teacher. Bogenschutz previously worked part-time as a school resource officer and went on a date with the teacher, the affidavit says.

Assuming the identity of the fake Facebook account, Bogenschutz told the teacher that Katie Morgan and the teacher's boyfriend were in a relationship and that the boyfriend had been playing them, documents say. Bogenschutz, addressing the teacher under the fake name, sent screenshots of instant messages between Katie Morgan and the teacher's boyfriend.

The boyfriend called Union City police to report the Facebook account for harassment against himself and the teacher. Union City police brought up the situation to a Jay County Sheriff's Office deputy, who recalled Bogenschutz had a fake Facebook account under the same name that he used for Indiana Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force case work.

See **Arrested** page 2



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Spirited celebrations

Jay County High School held Spirit Night on Wednesday as part of its homecoming week activities. Pictured above, Jay County seniors Gretchen Link (21) and Jaelynn Lykins (42) start celebrating as Brenna Bailey breaks out for a score in a powderpuff game. At right, junior Garrett Bennett celebrates a turnover on downs that the junior class forced against the sophomores.



Israel rejects cease-fire talks

By HENRY MEYER and ETHAN BRONNER
Bloomberg News
Tribune News Service

Israel ordered the military to maintain its bombardment of Hezbollah targets in Lebanon and denied interest in a truce deal, complicating efforts by the U.S. and allies to avoid full-blown war.

"There will be no cease-fire," Foreign Minister Israel Katz said on Thursday. "We will continue to fight the Hezbollah terror group with full force until victory and the return of residents of the north to their homes."

Katz is standing in for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu while the latter travels to the U.S., where he is due to address the

annual United Nations summit on Friday. Netanyahu's office said earlier that the Israel Defense Forces had been told to continue bombing Lebanon.

The proposal for a three-week cease-fire is being led by U.S. President Joe Biden and his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron and came as Israel prepared for a possible ground invasion. Such a

move would risk spiraling into a regional conflict that could drag the U.S. and Iran, which backs Hezbollah, into a direct confrontation.

Lebanon's Economy Minister Amin Salam described the cease-fire proposal as "very serious" and said the next developments would be crucial.

See **Rejects** page 2

Council pulls back funding slated for JCDC

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review

No JCDC; no need for the funds.

Jay County Council agreed on a split 3-2 vote Wednesday to make a \$140,000 appropriation reduction in the economic development income tax (EDIT) fund for the current year. Council members said the dollars had been intended to serve as Jay County Development Corporation's 2024 budget.

Council also approved the county's 2025 budget on first reading Wednesday.

Jay County Commissioners and JCDC have been back and

County's 2025 budget was also approved on first reading

forth amid contract negotiations. Earlier this month, after JCDC representatives responded to "points" commissioners asked them to address before moving forward with a contract, a motion from commissioner Rex Journey to give

JCDC \$140,000 for its budget died for a lack of a second. Commissioners president Chad Aker said he wouldn't move forward with a contract or funding for the organization until its board agrees to a reduction in its membership. Commissioner

Brian McGalliard suggested JCDC wait to approach commissioners in January, when two new members will take McGalliard and Journey's seats.

Council president Matt Minnich explained commissioners originally requested \$140,000 for a contract with JCDC. The money will still be available for officials to use, but commissioners will need to request the \$140,000 from council again before they are able to use it.

"To my knowledge, commissioners decided not to engage in the contract with JCDC," said Minnich. "I would view the goal of county council as over-

sight (of) funds that are spent on behalf of the taxpayer, so to leave the \$140,000 in there simply leaves that money as a blank check to use on whatever."

He pointed to uses of EDIT funding being a part of the county's EDIT plan, being recommended by EDIT advisory committee and being made as an additional appropriation by council.

"So, I think it's just simply to maintain the robustness of that system instead of just leaving money out there to just be used however," Minnich said.

See **Funding** page 2

In review

Jay County Civic Theatre's production of "The Play That Goes Wrong" is this weekend with shows at 7 p.m. tonight and Saturday as well as 2 p.m. Sunday at Arts Place, 131 E. Walnut St., Portland. Tickets are \$12 for students and \$14 for adults and are available at Arts Place, online at bit.ly/JCCTPTGW or by calling (260) 726-4809.

Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 72 degrees Wednesday. The low was 57.

Tonight's forecast calls for a 90% chance of rain with a low in the lower 60s and winds gusting to 35 miles per hour. More rain is possible Saturday with a high in the mid 70s.

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 — Photos from today's JCHS homecoming activities.

Tuesday — Results from Maddy Snow in the girls golf regional tournament

Wednesday — Coverage of next week's Jay School Board meeting.



Funding ...

Continued from page 1
 “You really think that they would just take that money and blow it?” asked council member Jeanne Houchins. “No, they wouldn’t. They’re responsible — they are as responsible for that money as what we are responsible. They have the same level of responsibility to make sure that money gets spent properly.”

She asked county auditor Emily Franks if council is allowed to make the appropriation reduction, with Franks confirming it is.

Council member Cindy Bracy pointed to responsibilities within the branches of local government. She noted council is the fiscal body for Jay County. Commissioners, per Indiana Code, are the county executive.

“To me, it is a way that we are continuing to have checks and balances,” Bracy said, noting commissioners are still able to ask for the \$140,000 as an additional appropriation in the future.

“It’s not going away,” she said of the funding. “We’re not taking it away. We’re just simply putting it in this pot where it’s going to sit, and I’d (say) that’s just part of oversight that is within roles of council.”

Houchins asked if there are other agreements being paid out of the fund. She worried aloud about potential bills coming out of that fund that still need to be paid. Franks said the \$140,000 isn’t currently being used to pay for anything, explaining that dollars for contracts with consultant

Mike Kleinpeter and East Central Indiana Regional Planning District (\$80,000 and \$100,000, respectively) are accounted for.

Council members Harold Towell and Bracy voted in favor of the reduction, with Randy May and Houchins dissenting. Minnich broke the tie in favor of the reduction. (Council members Dave Haines and Faron Parr were absent.)

In other business Wednesday, council approved the 2025 budget on first reading. Next year’s budget comes in at \$24,108,262.14, roughly \$1.6 million more than the current year. (It’s about a 6.6% increase.) It includes nearly \$11.28 million in the general fund, which is up by about \$600,000 from this year.

Other major fund totals are:

just under \$3.5 million for Jay County Commissioners, \$3.16 million for Jay County Highway Department — it also had an additional \$1.9 million from the state in the Local Motor Vehicle Highway restricted fund — \$2 million for Jay Emergency Medical Service, \$1.956 million for Jay County Jail and \$1.356 million for Jay County Sheriff’s Office.

Increases to next year’s budget include at least 3% raises or more for county employees. Other notable changes include adding three correction officer jobs and another nurse position to Jay County Jail and decreasing to four budgeted public defenders. Council also decided on a split vote earlier this month to allocate no specific funding in

the EDIT portion of the county’s 2025 budget. It decided commissioners may approach council in January to request additional appropriations for the money.

The second reading and budget adoption are slated for Oct. 9, with council’s regular monthly meeting to follow.

Also, council agreed (with Towell dissenting) to move forward with amending the salary ordinance to increase Jay County Country Living interim director Melissa Blankley’s pay to the full-time rate at \$26.45 an hour. (Currently, she’s serving in the role on a part-time basis.) Bracy noted Blankley would like to be paid the full-time rate and suggested allowing it until Blankley leaves the department or a new director is hired.

CR almanac

Saturday 9/28	Sunday 9/29	Monday 9/30	Tuesday 10/1	Wednesday 10/2
76/60	74/58	75/58	74/48	69/48
There is a 50% chance of showers. Skies will be partly cloudy with a high of 76 degrees.	Skies will be mostly cloudy with a high of 74. There is a chance of rain, with storms possible.	The high will be 75 under partly sunny skies. There is a 30% chance of showers.	There is a 20% chance of showers. The high will be 74 under mostly sunny skies.	Expect sunny skies with a high of 69.

Lotteries

Powerball 2-26-45-46-52 Power Ball: 21 Power Play: 2 Estimated jackpot: \$243 million	Daily Four: 0-0-8-8 Quick Draw: 1-2-8-10-12-16-20-21-22-31-34-36-55-57-58-61-62-76-77-80 Cash 5: 2-12-22-27-36 Estimated jackpot: \$848,500
Mega Millions Estimated jackpot: \$77 million	Ohio Wednesday Midday Pick 3: 4-2-0 Pick 4: 4-9-9-2 Pick 5: 5-0-3-5-7 Evening Pick 3: 2-8-2 Pick 4: 6-3-1-7 Pick 5: 7-2-9-7-7 Rolling Cash: 11-26-30-32-35 Estimated jackpot: \$120,000
Hoosier Wednesday Midday Daily Three: 6-4-5 Daily Four: 6-7-7-4 Quick Draw: 1-9-10-16-21-23-24-25-27-28-33-44-48-53-56-61-72-74-75-77 Evening Daily Three: 6-9-6	

Markets

Cooper Farms Fort Recovery Corn.....3.63 Oct. corn3.70 Wheat4.67	Oct. beans10.01 Wheat 5.43
POET Biorefining Portland Corn.....3.65 Oct./Nov. corn3.65 Dec. corn3.95	ADM Montpelier Corn.....3.67 Oct. corn3.67 Beans10.04 Oct. beans10.04 Wheat5.22
The Andersons Richland Township Corn3.66 Oct. corn3.66 Beans10.01	Heartland St. Anthony Corn.....3.51 Oct. corn3.61 Beans9.85 Jan. beans10.00 Wheat5.13

Today in history

In 1066, the Norman conquest of England began when William, Duke of Normandy, set sail with his Army for the southeastern coast of England.

In 1590, Pope Urban VII completed the shortest papacy in history, dying 12 days after being elected.

In 1777, the Continental Congress held a session in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, after fleeing Philadelphia.

In 1954, The Tonight Show premiered with host Steve Allen.

In 1964, the Warren Commission released its findings after months of investigating the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

In 1972, Portland Park Board decided to defer plans for major repairs at the Portland youth center until 1973. Contractor Paul Baldauf told the board it would take that time to determine the exact reason cracks had developed in the foundation and south wall of the building.

In 2020, Jay County Commissioners approved a rule to suspend the email accounts of Jay County government employees within a month if they did not complete their required cybersecurity training. —The CR

Citizen’s calendar

Monday 5:30 p.m. — Jay County Country Living Advisory Board executive session, Jay County Community Center senior area, 115 E. Water St., Portland. 6:30 p.m. — Jay County Country Living Advisory Board, Jay County Community Center senior area, 115 E. Water St., Portland.	Tuesday 4 p.m. — Jay County Development Corporation, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland. 5:30 p.m. — Portland Park Board, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Franklin St. 7 p.m. — Salamonia Town Council, School-house Community Center.
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Rejects ...

Continued from page 1
 “We feel there is a lot of flexibility in the past 24 hours from Hezbollah’s side,” he told Bloomberg TV on Thursday. There was no immediate official response from the militant group.

The cease-fire bid comes

as Israeli forces pound targets in Lebanon for a fourth day. More than 600 people, including at least 50 children, have been killed since Monday, with thousands of Lebanese fleeing the country’s south. Hezbollah has fired hundreds of rockets at northern Israel in response

— including its first-ever attempt to target Tel Aviv — in the worst violence between the two sides since a 2006 war.

Local broadcaster Channel 12 reported senior Israeli officials as saying they have their own conditions for a cease-fire

that Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah is unlikely to agree to. Israel’s Army Radio, meanwhile, reported unidentified security officials saying the military needs more time to achieve its goal of stopping cross-border attacks from Hezbollah.



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Restaurant donates

Arby’s of Portland recently presented a \$3,000 donation check to Kids Purpose Project. Pictured, from left, are Courtnee Taylor, Kortney VanSkyock and Holly Johnson of Kids Purpose Project and Kelly Tuttle and January Easton of Arby’s. Kids Purpose Project used the funds to provide lice kits for school nurses and school supplies for students.

Capsule Reports

Lost control

A Bluffton man’s vehicle rolled several times after it went off the side of county road 50 West about 8 a.m. Monday.

Daniel I. Balderram, 29, was driv-

ing a 2024 Honda Accord south on the road near county road 800 North when he lost control of the vehicle, according to a Jay County Sheriff’s Office report. The vehicle went into a ditch and rolled several times.

Balderram told police he wasn’t injured. The Honda he was driving — it’s registered to Ean Holding of Cincinnati, Ohio — was towed, with damage estimated between \$25,000 and \$50,000.

Arrested ...

Continued from page 1
 The deputy had access to the fake Facebook account and logged in, finding the alleged messages on the account, according to the affidavit. He saved the evidence and reported his findings.

Indiana Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force investigates and prosecutes use of the internet to sexually exploit or entice children, according to its website. Indiana State Police oversees the department.

Bogenschutz previously worked as a member of the task force and gave a public seminar at Jay County Junior-Senior High School on social media safety for children in November. Prior to his time as a sheriff’s office deputy, he worked as a police officer in Redkey.

In March, Jay County Commissioners terminated a contract with Bogenschutz’s software and web design company, Emer-

ald Business Solutions, for the sheriff’s office website.

Plans are for Bogenschutz to be transferred to Jay County Jail in the next few days.

In Indiana, Level 6 felony sentences range from six months to 2.5 years, with an advisory sentence of one year.

Bogenschutz was suspended from Jay County Sheriff’s Office for five days in 2019 for acting improperly during a traffic stop in Clinton County. A concerned driver noted Bogenschutz speeding — at one point he reached 90 miles per hour in a 55 mph zone — and driving erratically without his lights or sirens on and took a video of the incident. Bogenschutz eventually pulled the driver over, berated him and refused to give his name and badge number when asked. (Video of the incident was aired first by Indianapolis TV station RTV6.)

SERVICES

Saturday

Bartlett. Michael: noon, Bartlett Pond, 550 N. 1025 West, Pennville.

Monday

Hudson. David: 2 p.m., Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland.

Service listings provided by

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Local's thanks

Local's Market thanked Jay Community Center and staff for this year's market success with \$250. Pictured are vendors and Bill Cook, market manager, presenting the check to Kyle Cook, Jay Community Center executive director.

Learn about new therapy

Mayo Clinic News Network
Tribune News Service

Melanoma is a dangerous form of skin cancer that has the potential to spread to other parts of the body.

Approximately 100,000 people in the U.S. will be diagnosed with melanoma this year, according to the American Cancer Society. In early 2024, the Food and Drug Administration approved a new treatment for advanced melanoma called tumor-infiltrating lymphocyte therapy (TIL therapy). Dr. James Jakub, a Mayo Clinic surgical oncologist, explains that TIL therapy can be a one-time treatment for some patients diagnosed with advanced melanoma.

TIL therapy uses the body's own immune cells to target cancer — in this case, advanced melanoma. The process, which takes

about three weeks, begins with surgery.

"We remove the cancer; it's sent off to a lab, and those immune cells, those lymphocytes, are isolated, separated out and enriched," says Jakub.

While the cells are prepared, the patient undergoes chemotherapy in preparation for their own immune cells, which recognize the melanoma, to be infused back into their body.

"When we give them back to the patient, they can effectively target the cancer," says Jakub. And now, in numbers, they can overwhelm the cancer and kill it."

Blood tests and scans measure the body's response three months after treatment. For those who have failed multiple lines of treatment, this one-time therapy offers hope.

Daughter's decisions impacted by suicide

DEAR ABBY: My husband's uncle died by suicide in his home six months ago. It was a shock to the entire family. Since the funeral, we have helped to settle his affairs, including cleaning out his home to get it ready for sale.

My husband's cousin (the uncle's daughter) has had an understandably difficult time coming to terms with the loss of her father and has decided to purchase the house and reside there. She hasn't sought grief counseling and uses social media as a therapeutic outlet.

Many in the family believe she's making a mistake spurred by grief. She wants to hold family gatherings and holiday celebrations there. Those of us who helped clean out the house do not want to go back there. The loss is still recent, and the memories of the scene are still fresh.

How can we tell this cousin we are uncomfortable visiting the home without causing her more

Dear Abby



reluctance to visit the house again. Once she knows, she may be less eager to buy her father's home. Yes, she could probably use some grief counseling, and it's available to families who have experienced the kind of trauma she has. A resource that could help is the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988lifeline.org), but that poor, grieving woman has to be willing to ask for it.

DEAR ABBY: When I'm invited to a friend's house for dinner and asked to bring dessert, I always make something fresh and delicious for that evening. Lately, I'm noticing that several friends, when invited to my house or another friend's party, are bringing along half-eaten desserts from the previous evening's family dinner.

I think this is rude. It's like they're saying, "You're not

worth the effort." Is this a new trend, or am I too sensitive? — IRRITATED IN IDAHO

DEAR IRRITATED: You're not too sensitive, and if this is a new trend, I haven't heard of it. Many hosts serve fresh food to their guests and are careful about how it is presented. By that I mean, it is not half-consumed and doesn't look like leftovers. If the "several friends" who do this don't have time to prepare something to bring, they should buy something and bring it whole.

DEAR ABBY: Our son is engaged to marry a young lady our family can't stand. No matter what we are discussing, she turns the conversation to long, boring stories about her friend, her aunt, her cousin, etc. Nobody cares about these stories, and they are constant. Our two daughters and their husbands

roll their eyes and limit their time with her. My husband leaves the room. Even my 95-year-old mother, who is partially deaf, can't be in her company.

Our daughters think we should tell our son not to marry her, as it is ruining our close family. He doesn't seem to notice it, seems to love her and will be hurt. Have you any suggestions? — STUMPED MOM IN THE EAST

DEAR STUMPED MOM: If you do what your daughters are suggesting, your son is almost guaranteed to be offended and become defensive. It could very likely alienate him and his fiancée. An alternative might be for you to talk privately with your son and point out that his fiancée needs to curtail her speeches because, in case he hasn't noticed, they are so long that she has literally been losing her audience.

Community Calendar

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

Today

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

Saturday

LOCAL'S MARKET — Will be held from 8 a.m. to noon each Saturday in June through October in the parking lot at Jay Commu-

nity Center in Portland. For more information, contact Bill Cook.

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

Sunday

A BETTER LIFE — BRIANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for all kinds of addictions, will meet from 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 BREAK-

FAST 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. For more information, call (260) 726-5924.

PREGNANCY CARE CENTER — Free pregnancy testing with ongoing support during and after pregnancy. The center is located at 216 S. Meridian St., Portland. Hours are 1 to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (260) 726-8636. Walk-ins accepted.

BREAD OF LIFE COMMUNITY FAMILY MEAL — Will be served from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Asbury United Methodist Church, 204 E. Arch St. in Portland. Everyone is welcome.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS — Will meet at 6:30 p.m. each Monday at A Second Chance At Life Ministries, 228 S. Meridian St. in Portland. For more information, call Brenda Eads at (260) 726-9625 or Dave Keen at (260) 251-8792.

Tuesday

COMPASSIONATE CONNECTIONS RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP — A group for anyone with a substance use disorder that helps individuals find connections as they develop long-term recovery meets at noon each Tuesday in the IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health Center, Entrance C, 510 W. Votaw St., Portland.

20th Annual Jay County Heritage Festival

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Saturday, Sept. 28 & Sunday, Sept. 29

11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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FOOD

SATURDAY

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SUNDAY

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BOTH DAYS

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Sudoku

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

Level: Advanced

Thursday's Solution

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

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

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Be confident in our voting process

To the editor:
Are dead people voting? Are illegals voting? Are unregistered people voting? Is there fraud and widespread voting machine issues that affect true results in our elections?

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Why? Today's technological

Letters to the Editor

advances and election boards across the country know what to look for. Voting rolls are purged and updated on a regular basis, including tracking obituaries, who is moving in

and out of voting districts and who is verified as a registered voter.

Safeguards to fair and safe elections include a local election board, trained poll workers from each party, recounts, paper backups and state and federal agencies that monitor elections.

One last important safeguard is the provisional ballot that a voter in question would fill out so that election boards can go back and make sure this

ballot can be included or it is found to be invalid.

Some of the confusion and doubts that spur the claims of fraud and lack of trust in the results can be easily explained. For example, mail in ballots have been in the system for decades. Some states have had 100% mail in since 2000. Some states have different dates for early voting and when vote counts are done.

The 2020 election was a good test to measure how well the

safeguards in place protected everyone's vote. With so many challenges in certain states, so many recounts and court decisions that did verify the results, we can be assured that going to the voting booth this November will provide us the opportunity to cast our vote for whom we want and our vote will be safely included along with any other legally registered voter.

Confidently,
Randy Geesaman
Portland

Child care shouldn't cause financial ruin

By ILETHA JONES
OtherWords

Every mother in America knows this struggle well: how do you afford to raise a child?

My daughter was born almost 14 years ago and my family is still financially recovering from the struggle of supporting a newborn. And we're not alone — American families are spending a greater and greater portion of their income on child care.

According to the non-profit Child Care Aware, the average cost of child care in the U.S. is now more than \$10,000 per year — and even higher for infants and toddlers. And the problem is only getting worse. It's no wonder so many women are choosing not to have children because they say they can't afford them.

Right before I found out I was pregnant, I was let go from my job and lost my benefits and stable income.

Once my daughter was born, instead of enjoying every moment of being new parents, my partner and I were stressed about our financial situation. I didn't have a job to go back to, and even if I did, we wouldn't have been able to afford child care.

I remember tirelessly googling child care providers in the area and becoming exasperated at the costs. There was no way that we could afford to pay \$300-plus a week just for daycare — we wouldn't be able to cover our basic living expenses.

The situation became a Catch 22: If I didn't work, it would be impossible to balance our bills and afford the essentials to raise a child. But if I did, we wouldn't be able to afford those things anyway, because all the money would be going to daycare.

This is why so many mothers like me are driven out of the workforce. As one of the only industrialized countries in the world without national paid leave, the United States forces moms in particular to choose between continuing to work or raising our children.

The fortunate mothers who do have access to a paid leave program are significantly less likely to quit their jobs and more likely to work for the same employer after the birth of their first child. That's not just good for mothers — that's good for employers and our economy as a whole.

As I think back to those days, I remember always feeling sad, not realizing that like 10% to 15% of new mothers I was likely dealing with postpartum depression. That feeling

Kevin Frazier



The situation became a Catch 22: If I didn't work, it would be impossible to balance our bills and afford the essentials to raise a child. But if I did, we wouldn't be able to afford those things anyway, because all the money would be going to daycare.

was only compounded by isolation and the stress of financial insecurity.

Paid leave can help address those mental stressors. According to one study, women who took longer than 12 weeks maternity leave reported fewer depressive symptoms, a reduction in severe depression, and an improvement in their overall mental health. I know I would've benefited greatly from knowing that I could take the time to care for my child without worrying about winding up in dire financial straits.

Having a child should be a joyful event, not a deeply stressful one. I've come to understand my experience as a failure of our elected leaders to provide basic needs like affordable, accessible child care and paid family and medical leave.

I'm glad that unlike elections in the past, this crisis has become a major issue. I hope to see a day when no mother has to go through what I did.

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Joynes is the co-coordinator of the media and communications team with United Workers.

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



Lawmakers have difficult task

By NIKI KELLY
Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com

It's clear that state lawmakers will address exploding Medicaid costs in the upcoming legislative session. It could mean making it harder for elderly Hoosiers to protect their assets, reexamining expansion coverage for working adults or cutting benefits.

But I wanted to make sure we remember there are human beings behind those numbers.

Some have a misperception that those on Medicaid — a state-federal health insurance program for low-income people — are fleeing the state for benefits they don't deserve.

The fact is many are just people who have medical needs beyond their means. That's certainly the case for Jim Densmore. He was a hard-working, full-time data policy analyst in his early 60s when he suffered a catastrophic stroke.

Several years later he is still partially paralyzed, learning to walk again and struggling to cover his medical needs with social security. He is on a waitlist for Medicaid help.

Many Hoosiers like Densmore need help. But I also acknowledge that fiscal concerns about Medicaid are legitimate and can't be ignored.

The numbers

As of last month, 1.96 million Hoosiers are on Medicaid, which has dropped since the pandemic.

The total tab for the 2024-2025 fiscal year is about \$26 billion, including both federal and state dollars. The state portion alone is \$8.2 billion.

Elderly and disabled Medicaid beneficiaries make up roughly 33% of the overall population but account for 94% of expenditures — making their health care more expensive than the average user.

K-12 spending in Indiana for years has been 50% of the state

Niki Kelly



budget. But in the current biennial spending plan, that dropped to 47% as the Medicaid portion grew.

Growth has led the Family and Social Services to make changes to coverage and move to a managed care system for long-term care that state officials hope will save money.

So, how do lawmakers curb the growth trend? Some of it relates to national health care policy and growth in costs overall. And a recent lawsuit suggests fraud is also a problem.

House Ways and Means Chairman Jeff Thompson said everything is on the table. When crafting the budget in 2023, he told people behind the scenes that, by 2030, Medicaid would eat up all the state's new revenue.

"And I was wrong ... because it's going to be sooner than that," Thompson said this week at a budget panel.

Sen. Ryan Mishler, who heads the Senate Appropriations Committee, has been beating the drum about Medicaid growth for several years. He said that, in the last budget, the program grew by \$2.3 billion. A mistaken forecast meant another \$900 million.

But he said legislative action doesn't necessarily mean cutting benefits.

Sheltering assets

"I think we have to look at eligibility for nursing homes. I mean, I know it sounds bizarre, but there's millionaires going on Medicaid into nursing homes, and that's got to stop," Mishler said.

He noted the look-back period was extended from three to five

years to try to ease that issue but said lawmakers might have to go further.

"I think there's a lot of things we have to look at, and some changes have already been made, but I think we'll have to do some changes legislatively as well. The last thing we really want to do is cut benefits."

Sen. Travis Holdman, R-Berne, also has concerns about older citizens sheltering their assets in trusts and using other legal maneuvers.

He spoke to a small group of Hoosiers in a video posted to YouTube, in which he said "Medicaid is going to eat us alive, folks, if we're not careful."

Holdman said the biggest piece is long-term care for the aged. He noted if you put everything in a trust and get past five years before needing long-term care, then you don't have to use those assets to pay for your own care. Instead, Medicaid steps in to pay for at-home and nursing home care.

He acknowledged it might not be popular to address the loophole but that it might be addressed next session.

"There's nothing political, nothing in our DNA, nothing that says when you die you get to leave everything to your children. I think the bootstrap way of good Hoosier government, good Hoosier standards are: you pay your own way," he said.

This is just one part of what promises to be a complex, even painful discussion as lawmakers try to balance state fiscal concerns with providing health care to poor Hoosiers who have no other choices.

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Kelly, editor-in-chief of Indiana Capital Chronicle, has coverage the Indiana Statehouse since 1999.

Indiana Capital Chronicle is an independent, nonprofit news organization. Its website is indianacapitalchronicle.com.

The Commercial Review



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VOLUME 151—NUMBER 116
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2024

www.thecr.com

The Commercial Review is published daily except Sundays, Mondays and four holidays (New Year's Day, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving and Christmas — holidays are observed on Tuesday when they fall on a Monday) by The Graphic Printing Co. Inc., 309 W. Main St., Portland, Indiana 47371. Periodical postage paid (USPS 125820) at Portland, Indiana. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Commercial Review, 309 W. Main St., P.O. Box 1049, Portland, Indiana 47371 or call (260) 726-8141.

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—Thomas Jefferson

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Nitrogen benefits are limited

Study says anecdotal claims aren't backed up by research

By MEGAN ALLEN
University of Illinois

In a recent study from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, researchers tested whether modern high-yielding soybeans benefit from nitrogen fertilizer, with results suggesting additions are largely unnecessary.

Soybeans form a natural partnership with bacteria that colonize the plant's roots. In exchange for sugars, the bacteria convert atmospheric nitrogen into a form the plant can use, supplying much of the nitrogen needed for growth and grain development. It has historically been accepted that this supply, along with nitrogen from the soil, meets the plant's nitrogen needs, but ever-increasing yield potential raises the question about whether this is still the case, say researchers in the Department of Crop Sciences and Illinois Extension; both units are part of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES) at Illinois.

Questions raised

Soybean is a high-protein crop, and protein does not come cheap. Nitrogen is a key component of amino acids, which are the building blocks of proteins. As soybean yields increase, the plant needs to produce more protein, which in turn requires more nitrogen. Therefore, some researchers and farmers believe adding nitrogen fertilizer helps the plant meet this increased demand.

"Ongoing genetic



University of Illinois/Joshua Vonk

Pictured is a soybean field in Chillicothe, Illinois. Results of research in a recent University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign study raise questions about the benefits from nitrogen fertilizer.

improvement steadily raised soybean yield potential and the need for nitrogen, raising questions about supplementing the supply with fertilizer," said Emerson Nafziger, professor emeritus in crop sciences and Extension specialist. "People wondered whether soybeans wouldn't be able to supply all of the energy for high yields as well as the energy needed to fix such a large amount of nitrogen."

This notion is spurred on by highly publicized "record" yields that are often attributed to intensive practices including nitrogen fertilizer, Nafziger says. These anecdotal claims are not backed up by available research and are partly what prompted Nafziger and his

colleagues Giovanni Preza Fontes and Joshua Vonk to tackle the issue.

Yields improved?

To test whether soybeans respond to extra nitrogen, the U. of I. team ran nine field trials across four locations in Illinois between 2014 and 2017. They looked at soybean yield when nitrogen fertilizer was applied at each of four growth stages: planting, flowering, pod setting, seed filling, and at all four of these stages.

The researchers found that applying nitrogen to the crop at all four stages increased yield in most cases, but not enough to cover the cost of the fertilizer. Nafziger stresses that the yield improvements they saw from repeated

applications are not a recommendation for farmers to follow suit.

"While this increase from repeated applications was interesting, any treatment that costs two to three times the value of the extra production is a sure way to lose money," he said. "People who are trying to set yield records might do it anyway, but it should never be done in normal production fields."

In all years and locations, soybean yields were good to outstanding, regardless of nitrogen application. There was no consistent yield benefit from single nitrogen applications during flowering, pod setting, or seed filling.

"We found little response to applying nitrogen at individual reproductive

stages ranging from flowering to seed filling, despite the fact that these cover the period when crop demand is high as pods are formed and seed filling begins. This indicated that nitrogen availability during critical stages of yield formation was not a significant limitation to yield," said Preza Fontes, assistant professor in crop sciences.

Exception found

There was, however, one exception. A single nitrogen application at planting significantly increased soybean yield in two out of three years in a loam soil in a farmer's field near Chillicothe, Illinois. This was unexpected as other studies have found that when nitrogen is applied during

planting, the plant invests less in its symbiotic relationship with nitrogen-fixing bacteria, sometimes leading to deficiencies later in the season.

Nafziger partly attributes this yield increase to the site's lighter soil texture and lower organic matter, which may have been less favorable for early growth compared to the other sites. In one of the two years, the single nitrogen treatment also seemed to lessen the symptoms of sudden death syndrome, a soil-borne fungal disease.

"We can't count on this for disease control, but in this case, it seemed to be part of the reason it increased yield," Nafziger said. "A little boost early in the season might have been enough to get plant and root growth ahead and keep them ahead the rest of the season."

A single application at planting could help soils with limited early-season nutrient availability, but in most cases, farmers can trust nitrogen-fixing bacteria to do their job. Free-living soil bacteria can also contribute to early growth by releasing nitrogen from soil organic matter, which may explain why early-applied nitrogen had little effect in soils with more organic matter.

"Nitrogen fertilizer should only be considered in areas where the crop often gets off to a slow start due to soil factors. It's a practice that we don't think people should rush into," Nafziger said. "In fact, those with lighter soils might hand-apply nitrogen fertilizer to a small plot and watch to see if the crop grows better there. If it doesn't, then the fertilizer did no good."

"We need nitrogen for high corn yields, but one of the things that makes soybean such a great part of the crop rotation on most Illinois farms is that it produces high yields without the expense and environmental consequence of applying nitrogen fertilizer."

L.A. settles with Monsanto for \$35 million

By ANDREW J. CAMP
Los Angeles Times
Tribune News Service

Contamination of key Los Angeles waterways such as the Santa Monica Bay, Los Angeles Harbor and Echo Park Lake due to the spread of toxic chemicals is at the heart of a \$35-million settlement between the L.A. City Council and agriculture giant Monsanto and two smaller companies.

The City Council on Tuesday announced the payout by the companies to settle a lawsuit filed in 2022 over damage from long-banned chemicals called PCBs, which have been linked to health problems including cancer.

The City Council approved the settlement at Tuesday afternoon's meeting, voting 13 to 0 after a closed session. Councilmembers Imelda Padilla and Nithya Raman were absent.

A call to the office of City

Deal reached over contamination in waterways including Santa Monica Bay

Atty. Hydee Feldstein Soto was not immediately answered, nor was a call to Monsanto's representation.

In March 2022, then-City Attorney Mike Feuer sued Monsanto, which was swallowed by the German corporation Bayer in 2018, and smaller chemical companies Solutia Inc. and Pharmacia.

The complaint sought compensation for the cost of past cleanups — and for future abatement of — polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs. The chemicals tainted and continue to pollute many Los Angeles water-

ways, including the Dominguez Channel, Ballona Creek, Marina del Rey and Machado Lake.

"The city has expended millions and millions of dollars so far and is going to continue to expend millions and millions of dollars to remediate this issue," Feuer said at the time.

PCBs are human-made organic chemicals that have no known taste or smell and range in consistency from oils to waxes, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

They had several commercial uses, including in transformers and capacitors, oil used in

motors and hydraulic systems, cable insulation, oil-based paint, caulking and plastics.

PCBs were produced and used domestically from roughly 1929 until they were banned in 1979, according to the EPA.

From the 1930s through 1977, Monsanto was the sole producer of PCBs in the United States, according to the National Library of Medicine.

Exposure to PCBs increases the chances of a person developing cancer while diminishing the effectiveness of the immune system and damaging reproductive organs and the nervous system, according to the EPA.

The lawsuit alleged that Monsanto knew that "its commercial PCB formulations were highly toxic and would inevitably produce precisely the contamination and human health risks that have occurred." Instead of informing public officials, the company "misled the public,

regulators, and its own customers about these key facts."

The lawsuit alleged that, as early as 1937, Monsanto acknowledged internally that PCBs produced "systemic toxic effects upon prolonged exposure."

Many of Los Angeles' waterways had been impaired by PCB contamination, according to the lawsuit.

The city has said that it continues to shoulder the cost and responsibility of cleaning these locales along with monitoring and analyzing samples.

People face PCB exposure, according to the lawsuit, by eating contaminated food, breathing contaminated air, or drinking or swimming in contaminated water. Fish captured in contaminated waters and eaten also provide an avenue for PCB exposure.

The settlement avoids a court trial, which presented some risk to the city.

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SPEED BUMP Dave Coverly



THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

Bidding quiz

Your right-hand opponent deals and bids Three Clubs, both sides vulnerable. What action (if any) would you take with each of the following five hands?

1. ♠ KQ93 ♥ AJ84 ♦ AJ62 ♣ 7
2. ♠ Q94 ♥ AJ ♦ AKQ973 ♣ K8
3. ♠ KQJ9652 ♥ 8 ♦ AKQJ4 ♣ 3
4. ♠ KJ85 ♥ A72 ♦ A98 ♣ Q92
5. ♠ AK72 ♥ AQJ92 ♣ KQJ3 ♣ —

1. **Double.** The double of a pre-emptive bid is intended as takeout. Partner may pass only if he thinks it is best to play for penalties, but usually he responds in his longest suit. It is true that you have only 15 points in high cards and are forcing partner to respond at the three-level, but it is not overly optimistic to assume partner has some values and support for one of your three suits, which increases the value of your hand. Of course, there is some element of danger in bidding over three clubs, but it would be more dangerous to pass.

2. **Three notrump.** To merely overcall with three diamonds would be a distinct underbid, and to double for takeout would also be unsound because of your lack of support for the major suits. With eight probable tricks in your hand, the best shot is three notrump.

There is an element of risk here also, but since the chief purpose of a pre-emptive bid is to make life difficult for the opponents when they have the better hands, it is not surprising that any bid you make carries some degree of risk.

3. **Four spades.** Partner needs very little for this contract to come home, and it would be unduly pessimistic on your part to assume that partner can't supply what you need. An overall of three spades would show a lesser hand — for example, the same hand with one less spade and one more heart or club. Three spades would merely invite partner to bid, and you should not risk a pass with a hand as promising as this one.

4. **Pass.** This may seem conservative, since you have the values for an opening bid, but here the level is simply too high to justify any action other than a pass. To double for takeout is very dangerous, since you lack the distribution to justify a forced response from partner. You might easily incur a disastrous penalty if you caught partner with a poor hand.

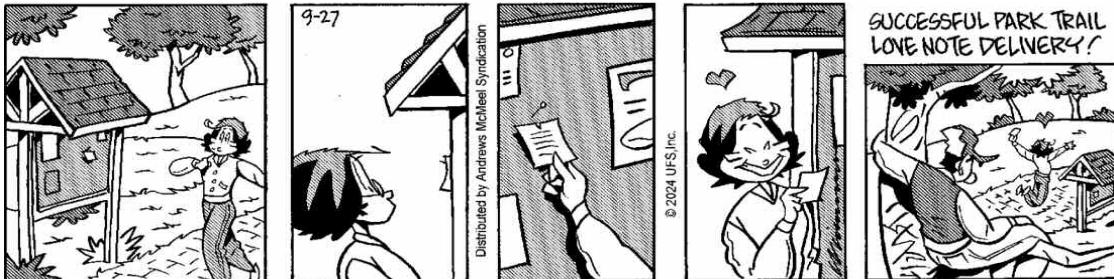
5. **Four clubs.** You can't play this hand in less than game, and the best way of letting partner know this is by cuebidding the opponent's suit, asking partner to choose a suit. The cuebid is preferable to a double because you don't want to run the risk of partner's placing three clubs doubled, which is one of his options.

Tomorrow: Death of a monarch.
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Peanuts



Rose is Rose



Agnes



Hi and Lois



Between Friends



Blondie



Snuffy Smith



Beetle Bailey



CRYPTOQUIP

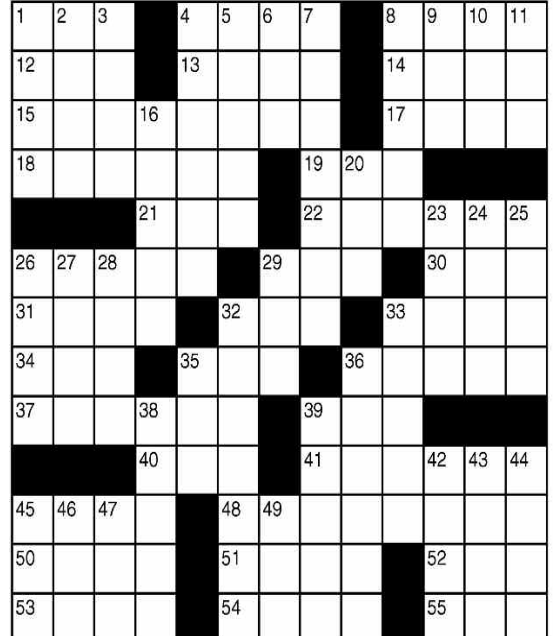
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Yesterday's Cryptoquip: YES, THAT GUY DOES INDEED HAIL FROM A LARGE CITY SOUTH OF MILAN. HE'S THE GENOAN ARTICLE.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Z equals S

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	36 Curses	DOWN	23 Arm-
1 Dugout item	37 "Amen to that!"	1 "Troy" actor	strong's destination
4 "Toodle-oo!"	39 Zing	Eric	24 Poker pot money
8 "Today" co-host	40 Rowing need	2 Help a hood	25 Legend-ary loch
12 Lawyers' org.	41 Van Gogh painting	3 Mexican snack	26 Book-keepers (Abbr.)
13 Apple on a desk	45 Crummy joint	4 Cultivated the soil	27 Fallon predecessor
14 Spoken	48 Cycling contest	5 Gather	28 Brewer's kiln
15 Choker, e.g.	50 Malaria symptom	6 Tic—-toe	29 Pampering, for short
17 Wrinkled fruit	51 "Cold As Ever" rapper	7 Paint solvent	32 Biting like mammal
18 Coral structures	52 School book fair org.	8 Keep after	35 "Houdini" singer
19 Sun-bather's goal	53 Prof's degrees	9 Assoc. dish	Lipa
21 DDE's opponent	54 Swear	10 Lentil	33 Piglike
22 "JFK" actor Gary	55 Cain, to Adam	11 Actress MacGraw	36 French caps
26 Sun block?		16 Actor Kinski	38 Boxing ring border
29 Blaster's need		20 Flight stat	39 — Peak targets
30 Undivided			42 Easy
31 Carrots' mates			43 Outside (Pref.)
32 Pub pint			44 Penn or Astin
33 Youngsters			45 Fist bump
34 Reply (Abbr.)			46 "Yecch!"
35 Roman 700			47 Wet dirt
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Sluggish sectional

Strong season comes to an end for Indians in the sectional

By **ANDREW BALKO**

The Commercial Review

BRADFORD, Ohio — The Indians finished off the regular season on a high note.

They went undefeated in the Midwest Athletic Conference, won the last 12 dual matches of the season and earned the conference tournament title for the first time in program history.

Despite the accomplished regular season, the Indians had a poor outing at the wrong time, ending their season in the sectional.

The Fort Recovery High School girls golf team struggled through the OHSAA Division II Southwest Sectional that lasted over six hours from the Indians' first tee time at Stillwater Valley Golf Club on Tuesday.

The Indians ended in ninth place with 445 strokes, the worst of their three 18-hole matches by 22.

"It was disappointing," said FRHS coach Jeff Vaughn. "I thought we had a good chance. I thought we'd play better today, since we were here on Saturday (for the MAC tournament), but that's the game of golf."

When FRHS played at Stillwater Valley Golf Club in the MAC tournament on Saturday, it shot a 418. That score would have earned the Indians a regional berth. (The top four teams advance to the regional.)

Instead, the four teams to move on were sectional champion Graham Local (398), Fort Loramie (418), who Fort Recovery beat in a nine-hole match on Sept. 19, Russia (422) and Versailles (437), who the Indians topped by 24 in the MAC tournament.

Olivia Knapke came the closest to moving on as an individual — the top four individuals not on qualifying teams move on to play



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Fort Recovery High School senior Emma Will tees off on the first hole at Stillwater Valley Golf Club during the sectional meet on Wednesday. Will provided the second score for the Indians as they fell to ninth, ending their season.

in the regional — with the team-low score of 102. She fell short by seven strokes, as Indian Lake's Alex Kinney claimed the final berth in a shoot off. Others to

make it through were sectional champion Reagan McDaniel (78) of Riverside, Reagan Brewer (82) of Tri-Village and Isabel Flores (91) of Lehman Catholic.

Knapke ended up tied for 12th in the tournament with Graham Local's Riley Donnelly. She shot four of the Indians' six pars on the day, including on the 152-

yard, par-3 17th hole. The junior's drive went well, bouncing onto the green and rolling to within five feet of the hole. On her first putt attempt, she correctly played a line that went from right to left, but didn't put enough on her shot to be short by 6 inches. A tap in secured the even score.

Her other pars came on the first, ninth and 13th holes. She also had three bogeys and was the only Indian to never shoot double-par or worse.

"She had a rocky start," Vaughn said. "She triple-bogeyed the first two holes and that kind of sets the tone right from the get go. She just never really got it back."

The only other pars came from Emma Will on the 10th hole and Georgia Wenning on the seventh.

Will provided the second-best score of 110 for the Indians, while Evvie Briner and Mallory Evers rounded things out with a 116 and 117, respectively. Wenning's 122 didn't play into the final.

Briner had a particularly strong finish with four bogeys over the last six holes, including the seventh and eighth. Strong play on No. 7 earned her the bogey, while an iron shot got saved by some tall grass before it could go into the rocks on No. 8.

While Fort Recovery couldn't continue its hot season, it returns four of the six staples to its lineup next year and four of the five sectional competitors.

"I don't think we need to dwell on this," Vaughn said. "Obviously it was a bad day and those things happen. Hopefully they work in the offseason and see the potential that we have. ... I feel bad for Emma with it being her last year playing as a senior, but all good things come to an end."



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Jay County Patriots

Portland, 2-3 (1-2 ACAC)

Coach: Grant Zgunda, fourth year (27th overall)

Conference: Allen County

Last week at Bluffton: The Patriots traded punches with Bluffton and put together a strong late-game drive to pull within two points but ultimately fell 34-25 to the Class 2A No. 9 Tigers. Sean Bailey powered the offense with 134 passing yards and two TDs, while rushing for 64 yards and one TD.

Season leaders: Passing — Sean Bailey — 36-of-70 for 530 yards and seven TDs. Rushing — A. J. Myers — 42 carries for 201 yards and five TDs. Receiving — Benson Ward — six receptions for 160 yards and two TDs. Defense — Lucas Strait — 37 tackles, two blocked punts and one sack.

at

Woodlan Warriors

Woodburn, 2-3 (1-2 ACAC)

Coach: Brock Rohrbacher, first year (12th overall)

Conference: Allen County

Last week vs. Southern Wells: Drew Fleek led the Warriors to a 50-12 win over the Raiders with 71 yards and three touchdowns on seven rushing attempts. Woodlan only needed 32 plays to put up half a hundred points.

Season leaders: Passing — Ty Loudon — 10-of-22 for 254 yards and four TDs. Rushing — Shaiden Snyder — 19 carries for 267 yards and three TDs; Drew Fleek — 52 carries for 245 yards and four TDs. Receiving — Carter Fleek — seven receptions for 172 yards and two TDs. Defense — Drew Fleek — 31 tackles and three sacks.

Last season: After giving up a game-winning touchdown in the final minute in 2022, the Patriots flipped the script as an interception by Grant Wendel set up A.J. Myers for a TD that gave them a 34-29 lead with 1:08 left. Myers finished the game with five TDs and 237 yards on 39 carries.

Game notes: Jay County and Woodlan have met on the gridiron 10 times, with Jay County finally breaking through for its first victory in 2023 ... Since falling 15-14 to Southridge in the 2017 Class 2A state championship game, Woodlan has had six straight losing seasons ... Jay County has a 46.4 Sagarin rating, which is 190th overall and 42nd in Class 3A. Woodlan's 34.12 rating is 234th overall and 50th in Class 3A ... John Harrell predicts Jay County to win 31-21, while Calpreps.com has the Patriots as 15-point favorites.