

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

Contract OK'd, goodbyes shared

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review

The end of the year for county officials comes with end-of-the-year formalities — annual renewals and final claims, among other activities.

With two Jay County Commissioners finishing out their last meeting in office, Monday's meeting also came with a few goodbyes.

Commissioners approved a \$197,000 contract with Quality Correctional Care of Carmel for Jay County Jail inmate medical care Monday. They also shared their farewells for commissioners Brian McGalliard and Rex Journey ending their terms.

Firm hired for medical care at jail, McGalliard, Journey offer thoughts

The contract with Quality Correctional Care increased from the current year's \$120,000 amount, with sheriff Ray Newton noting a second nurse has been brought on for next year. (Jay County Council approved Newton's budget for 2025, which allocated addition-

al funds for a second nurse from Quality Correctional Care on staff.)

Quality Correctional Care provides medical assistance as needed to inmates, a requirement per law.

The medical care provider — it has worked with Jay

County for years — employs a nurse to work at the jail as needed. According to its website, it operates in 70 counties across the state.

Outgoing commissioners also shared their final thoughts Monday. Starting in January, commissioners-elect

Doug Horn and Duane Monroe take the seats currently held by Journey and McGalliard.

Aker asked commissioners before adjourning if they had any comments.

"I'd just like to say I've enjoyed this, it's been very educational for Rex Journey, and I thank you, Chad, for leading us," said Journey.

"It's been a pleasure, gentlemen, I wish the new commissioners nothing but the best of luck," said McGalliard, addressing Horn and Monroe in the crowd. "There's a lot more involved than you probably ever fully realized ..."

See **Commissioners** page 2



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Five inducted

Jay County High School inducted five athletes to its Athletics Wall of Fame during the East Central Indiana Classic wrestling tournament on Monday. Pictured from left are Mollie Hines, Lizzie Dollar, Cameron Clark, Cody Rowles and Tony Wood. Dollar was a four-time state medalist. Wood and Hines each earned two state medals while Clark and Rowles picked up one state medal apiece. For more on the tournament, see page 8.

Ethics report details Gaetz allegations

By DAVE GOLDINER
New York Daily News
Tribune News Service

WASHINGTON — Ex-Rep. Matt Gaetz allegedly paid for sex with a 17-year-old girl and bought and used illegal drugs during more than 20 parties with female escorts, a congressional report said Monday.

A final report from the House Ethics Committee accuses the former Florida lawmaker, who was briefly nominated to be President-elect Trump's attorney general, of illegally paying thousands of dollars for sex with paid escorts, including the underage girl.

He also bought and used illegal drugs including ecstasy and cocaine at parties with the women in Florida and on vacation jaunts, the report said.

"There is substantial evidence that Representative Gaetz violated House Rules and other standards of conduct prohibiting prostitution, statutory rape, illicit drug use, impermissible gifts, special favors or privileges, and obstruction of Congress," the 37-page report said.

The final report, which says Gaetz likely broke numerous state laws, was released after the House Ethics Committee

voted to publicly release it in a reversal of its usual policy.

Gaetz sued the committee in federal court on Monday, in a failed effort to block release of the report.

"There is a reason they did this to me in a Christmas Eve-Eve report and not in a courtroom of any kind where I could present evidence and challenge witnesses," Gaetz tweeted.

Gaetz, 42, an outspoken conservative Republican, has denied breaking any laws and says he is being smeared by political enemies, although he admits partying too hard in his younger years.

Federal prosecutors investigated Gaetz for violating sex trafficking laws in relation to much of the same conduct but declined to charge him.

The report details nearly \$100,000 in payments from Gaetz to a dozen women for either sex or drugs during about 20 encounters, all of which took place after he was elected to represent a deep-red congressional district in the Florida Panhandle in 2016.

"From 2017 to 2020, Representative Gaetz made tens of thousands of dollars in payments to women that the Committee determined were likely in connection with sexual activity and/or drug use," noted the report, which lists

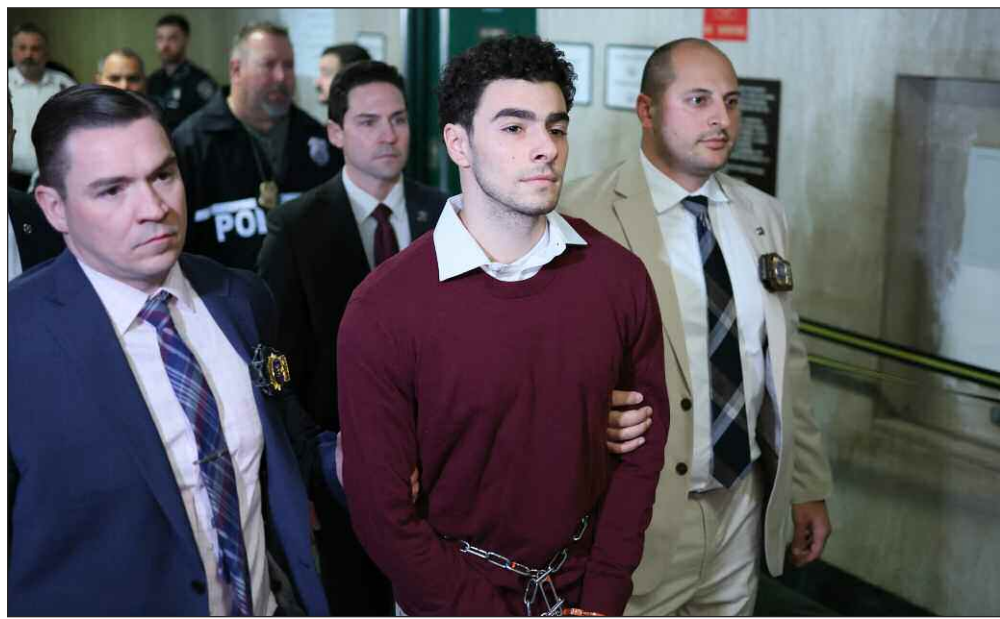
payments totaling more than \$90,000 to 12 different women.

All of the encounters were consensual, although one of the women told the committee the escorts were too impaired to consent to sex at times.

"When I look back on certain moments, I feel violated," one woman told the panel, the report said.

A Florida woman told the committee she was just 17 and had recently finished her junior year in high school when Gaetz had sex with her twice at a 2017 house party. He paid her \$400 cash after the encounters, the report said.

See **Report** page 2



Tribune News Service/Getty Images/AFP/Charly Triballeau

Luigi Nicholas Mangione, center, arrives Monday at Manhattan Criminal Court in New York City. Mangione, 26, is accused of shooting UnitedHealthcare chief executive Brian Thompson on a Manhattan street on Dec. 4.

Suspect pleads not guilty

By MOLLY CRANE-NEWMAN and JOHN ANNESE
New York Daily News
Tribune News Service

NEW YORK — Luigi Mangione pleaded not guilty to first-degree murder and terror offenses in Manhattan Supreme Court Monday stemming from the fatal shooting of UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson.

Wearing a burgundy sweater, white collared shirt, and khaki pants, a handcuffed Mangione, 26, entered his first formal plea to charges linked to the high-profile hit before state Supreme Court Justice Gregory Carro.

He pleaded not guilty to all allegations in the 11-count indictment brought last week by Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg's office — first-degree murder in furtherance of terrorism, second-degree murder as a crime of terrorism, an additional count of murder and eight other counts.

If convicted of the top counts, he faces

a potential sentence of life without parole.

Following his extradition last week to New York from Pennsylvania — where he was arrested at a McDonald's on Dec. 9 after a nationwide five-day manhunt — Mangione was taken into federal authorities' custody and charged with murder with the use of a firearm, stalking, and a firearm offense.

The maximum potential sentence in Mangione's federal case is the death penalty, though it's not clear prosecutors would pursue that punishment. State and federal authorities have said the cases will proceed in parallel.

Mangione's attorney Karen Friedman Agnifilo slammed the authorities' handling of his case at Monday's hearing and the dramatic show put on when he was transferred back to New York.

"He's a young man and he is being treated like a human ping pong ball between two warring jurisdictions here," Friedman Agnifilo said.

Deaths

Robert Miller, 44, Portland
Katherine Boice, 36, Salamina
Details on page 2.

Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 41 Monday. The low was 30.
Tonight's low will be in the upper 30s. Expect mostly cloudy skies Friday with rain expected, especially in the afternoon.
See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

Applications are open for grants and scholarships through The Portland Foundation. Organizations and individuals can apply for foundation grants, Pennville Endowment grants, teacher creativity mini grants and scholarships. Applications are available at portlandfoundation.org.

Coming up

Friday — Coverage of this week's Dunkirk City Council meeting.
Saturday — Results from the JCHS wrestling teams at Monroe Central.
Tuesday — A look at the top 10 local news stories of the year.



Commissioners ...

Continued from page 1

Aker handed plaques to Journay and McGalliard and thanked them for their service.

“We’ve had some ups and downs, without a doubt, but I think overall we’ve done what’s best for the county, we’ve tried our best to improve the county,” said Aker.

Also Monday, commissioners decided not to lease the 68-acre property located along Indiana 67 on the west edge of Portland for farming purposes next year. Commissioner president Chad Aker noted the \$1.28 million in American Rescue Plan Act dollars committed toward development of the land in the next two years.

“I think it’s an invaluable commitment to the county’s best interest that we do not farm that next year,” said McGalliard, noting potential liability issues if work installing utilities begins in 2025.

In other business, commissioners:

- Approved the following: purchasing a third 1,000-gallon propane tank for \$3,850 for Jay County Highway Department; combining the Little Salamonina and Eugene Franks watersheds into the Salamonina River watershed, keeping the Little Salamonina watershed rates the same and decreasing the Eugene Franks watershed rates from \$2.19 to \$2 and from \$25 to \$20 a plot; purchasing a \$1,285 front counter for Purdue Extension Office of Jay County; a right-of-way agreement with Comcast for work to be completed along Blaine Pike just south of county road 125 South.

- Appointed Amy Hawbaker to Jay County Library Board.

- Signed a lease with Steve Schoenlein, John Schoenlein and Ken Schoenlein (Schoenlein Brothers) for just under 294 acres of tillable land around Jay County Country Living at \$376 an acre (\$110,468 total) for three years.

- Listened to updates from Jay County Country Living director Stacey Johnson, who shared a year-end financial report. The county budgeted approximately \$451,000, Jay County Country Living spent about \$416,000 and received approximately \$148,000 from Indiana Residential Care Assistance Program among other revenues. According to estimates shared Monday, the facility

resulted in a net expense to the county of roughly \$98,000. Johnson noted she hired a full-time cook and a part-time maintenance worker. She also requested commissioners OK utilize former director Melissa Blankley as an “as needed” employee, noting Blankley’s background as a licensed nurse. Aker suggested discussing the topic at a Jay County Personnel Committee.

- Heard plans to begin bidding out more projects for the owner-occupied rehabilitation program starting in January. Community coordinator Nate Kimball shared feedback he received from contractors, saying they would like more time between the bidding process starting and closing in

order to get the information they need to meet Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs regulations.

- Paid various claims, including a \$366,000 Bank of Oklahoma bond for Jay County Jail, a \$298,733.13 Indiana Treasurer claim — county auditor Emily Franks explained it’s the state’s portion of local excise taxes — a \$22,094.60 Indiana Treasurer claim, a \$15,000 Kleinpeter Consulting claim for the owner-occupied rehabilitation program, a \$13,413.49 Medler’s Furniture of Portland claim for repairs at Jay County Courthouse and \$6,240 Schneider Geospatial claim for geographic information system.

- Heard Jay Emergency Medical Services’ financial breakdown for November from director Gary Barnett. The department had \$131,232.54 in expenses and \$92,242.08 in income.

- Accepted \$250 in donations for Jay County Country Living.

Decision made to not lease land for farming in anticipation of possible start of development

CR almanac

Friday 12/27	Saturday 12/28	Sunday 12/29	Monday 12/30	Tuesday 12/31
51/49	58/52	54/41	50/42	46/31
Friday's forecast shows mostly cloudy skies with a 70% chance of rain.	Saturday looks to be mostly cloudy with another 70% chance of rain.	Mostly cloudy on Sunday, when there's a 50% chance of showers.	Monday's forecast shows more mostly cloudy skies with chance for rain.	Tuesday has a 70% chance of showers with winds of 10 to 20 mph.

Lotteries

Powerball Estimated jackpot: \$117 million	Evening Daily Three: 8-3-1 Daily Four: 6-0-9-0 Quick Draw: 5-6-7-8-10-13-17-33-41-44-45-49-51-52-58-65-67-69-70-75
Mega Millions 2-20-51-56-67 Mega Ball: 19 Megaplier: 2 Estimated jackpot: \$970 million	Ohio Tuesday Midday Pick 3: 2-0-3 Pick 4: 4-2-6-7 Pick 5: 0-7-9-5-4 Evening Pick 3: 1-7-9 Pick 4: 4-8-5-2 Pick 5: 4-0-5-5-4 Rolling Cash: 2-14-27-30-39 Estimated jackpot: \$110,000
Hoosier Tuesday Midday Daily Three: 3-1-8 Daily Four: 0-7-2-6 Quick Draw: 3-8-11-12-20-26-27-33-42-43-56-58-60-61-66-69-70-72-77-80	

Markets

Cooper Farms Fort Recovery Corn.....4.53 Jan. corn.....4.52 Feb. corn.....4.55	Jan. beans9.71 Wheat 4.91
POET Biorefining Portland Corn.....4.53 Jan. corn.....4.55 Feb. corn.....4.57	ADM Montpelier Corn.....4.41 Jan. corn.....4.41 Beans.....9.62 Jan. beans9.62 Wheat4.85
The Andersons Richland Township Corn4.45 Jan. corn.....4.45 Beans9.71	Heartland St. Anthony Corn.....4.52 Jan. corn.....4.52 Beans.....9.40 Jan. beans9.45 Wheat4.81

Today in history

In 1898, Marie and Pierre Curie announced the existence of radium to the French Academy of Sciences. They later won the Nobel Prize in Physics for their discovery.

In 1941, United States president Franklin D. Roosevelt formally established the fourth Thursday of November as Thanksgiving, a federal holiday.

In 1973, “The Exorcist” horror film adapted from William Peter Blatty’s book was released in the United States. It became one of the highest-grossing movies.

In 2004, thousands of people died from a tsunami triggered from a 9.1 magnitude earthquake off the coast of Sumatra, Indonesia, in the Indian Ocean. The tsunami devastated coastlines in 15 countries.

In 2017, Jay County Commissioners approved a \$43,000 contract with Bill and Kathy Fields for animal control in unincorporated parts of the county. — The CR

Citizen’s calendar

Jan. 2 4 p.m. — Portland Board of Works, mayor’s office, city hall, 321 N. Meridian St.	Recovery Village Council, village hall, 201 S. Main St.
Jan. 6 5:30 p.m. — Portland City Council, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St.	Jan. 7 5:30 p.m. — Portland Park Board, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St. 7 p.m. — Pennville Town Council, town hall, 105 N. Washington St.

Obituaries

Robert Miller

March 7, 1980-Dec. 20, 2024
Robert Paul Miller, age 44, of Portland passed away on Dec. 20, 2024, at his residence.

He was born in Portland on March 7, 1980, the son of Ted Miller and Valerie Pogue.

Paul was a motorcycle technician and also had worked for J&P Custom Plating, Silvertown Mint in Winchester and Poseidon in Berne. He was a graduate of Motorcycle Marine Institute in Orlando, Florida, and was a Freemason of Harriam, Tennessee. He was an avid motorcyclist and outdoorsman, and loved spending time with family. Surviving are his father, Ted

Miller (wife: Cheryl) of Portland; his mother, Valerie Shepherd (husband: Gerald) of Redkey; son Luke Miller of Tennessee; daughters Chloe Miller of Wyoming and Laurel Miller of Tennessee; brother Ryan Miller (wife: Brook) of Carmel, Indiana; sisters Laura Miller of Carmel, Indiana, and Shawn Uhrick (husband: Dustin) of Portland; and several nieces and nephews.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Baird-Freeman Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Miller

Memorials can be made to the Drug and Alcohol Prevention Coalition.

Condolences may be expressed at bairdfreeman.com.

Katherine “Katie” Boice, Salamonina, July 28, 1988-Dec. 20, 2024. Services will be held at a later date.

The Commercial Review publishes death notices for those with a connection to our coverage area free of charge.

They include the name, city of residence, birth/death date and time/date/location of services.

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

Capsule Reports

Lost control

A Hartford City man lost control of the truck he was driving along county road 1150 West, causing it to leave the road and overturn the vehicle about 1:11 p.m. Thursday.

Dillon A. Pontius, 30, was driving a 2019 Volvo truck north on the road near county road 700 South when his right side tires left the road, according to a Jay County Sher-

iff’s Office report. Pontius overcorrected, causing the truck to flip onto its side.

The vehicle — it’s registered to Brian G. Conner of rural Montpelier — was towed, with damage estimated between \$25,000 and \$50,000.

Backing accident

A Geneva woman backed her vehicle into an Adams county police car about 9:45 a.m. Sunday in rural Bryant.

Angelia L. Lopez, 22, was backing up a 2016 Nissan Versa Note at 8784 N. 50 East, Bryant. She told police she wasn’t aware of the parked 2022 Dodge Durango behind her and struck it with her vehicle.

Damage is estimated between \$2,500 and \$5,000.

Turning crash

A Portland man driving on Meridian Street struck another Portland

man’s car about 5:52 p.m. Saturday.

Jimenez Matildo, 28, was driving a 2012 Ford Edge on the street near Snipe alley when he hit the side of a 2013 Chevrolet Silverado driven by 64-year-old James Pickett.

Matildo was cited with an infraction for driving without a license and without insurance.

His vehicle was towed. Damage is estimated between \$2,500 and \$5,000.

Felony arrests

Domestic battery

A Fort Wayne man was arrested Monday for domestic battery.

Drew R. Hire, 32, 175 Country Forest Drive, was preliminarily charged with a Level 6 felony.

He was being held on a \$3,000 bond in Jay County Jail.

Probation violation

A Muncie man was arrested Sunday for violating his probation.

Dillion L. Conwell, 32, 2107 S. Elm St., pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to failure to return to lawful detention, a Level 6 felony. He was sentenced to 545 days in Jay County

Jail with one year suspended and given 80 days credit for time served. Conwell was placed on probation for one year. A petition alleging he violated the conditions of his probation was filed in court Dec. 18.

Conwell was being held on a \$575 bond in Jay County Jail.

Report ...

Continued from page 1
The woman said she didn’t tell Gaetz she was underage and he didn’t ask.

He has emphatically denied ever having sex with any underage girl.

One the report’s most lurid findings surrounded allegations of a drug-fueled 2018 jaunt to the Bahamas, bankrolled by marijuana lobbyists, during which witnesses said Gaetz took ecstasy and had sex with at least

four paid escorts. The trip skirted rules limiting gifts to lawmakers, the report said.

Gaetz won reelection in November to what would have been a fourth term in Congress.

But he resigned on the day Trump nominated him for attorney general in an apparent ploy to prevent release of the damning report.

His bid to become the nation’s top law enforcement officer imploded

within just a matter of days.

Not long after that, Gaetz inked a deal with One America News. He plans to join the right-ring network’s prime-time lineup in January.

The Republican-led panel initially voted against releasing the report because Gaetz was no longer in Congress. But it made a surprising U-turn at a closed-door meeting and voted to release the final version.

Celebrating Small Businesses

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Four 4x4 ads in <i>The Commercial Review</i>	Or run TWO 4x4 ads in the publication(s) of your choice during January for:
Two 4x4 ads in <i>The News-Gazette</i>	The Commercial Review \$160
One 4x4 ad in <i>The News Times</i> for \$230	The News-Gazette \$145
	The News Times \$120

Ads must run in January. Rates do not apply to special sections.

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

GRAPHIC PRINTING
NEWSPAPERS

SERVICES

Saturday

White, Patsy: 1 p.m., Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland.

Service listings provided by

PROGRESSIVE DEL TORO OFFICE PRODUCTS
120 N. Meridian St.
Portland, Indiana 47371
(260) 726-9201
progressiveofficeproducts.com



Photo provided

Representing responsibility

East Elementary recently recognized kindergarteners for displaying responsibility. Pictured above, first row, are Forrest Walters, Simon Chenoweth and Everleigh Jacobs. In the back row are Oliver Yaney, Persephine Hartman, Jozey Gentis and Hensley Saam.

Romance balances on rocky foundation

DEAR ABBY: I think the world of "Celia," my best friend of 25 years. She has been there for me through many major ups and downs in my life. She is beautiful inside and out, well-educated and works hard.

Celia has been in a five-year relationship with an old friend I'll call "Vince." I think he is a nice guy, but not for her. He has no desire to do better in life, doesn't provide for her and lives off her money.

Vince barely works, and his time is spent out and about enjoying himself while Celia works two, sometimes three, jobs.

Now Celia's physical health is suffering, and so is her mental health. Vince has a kid who sometimes stays over, and when they run out of money, Celia asks me to help cover them. She sees nothing wrong in this and wants to have a child of her own with him.

I have had many talks with Celia, but they go nowhere. I've helped with money a few times and she always pays me back. But recently, after she asked me for money for food for the three of them,

I learned they went to the movies instead. Now I feel used. This is just not OK. I no longer want to give her money to cover a grown man's responsibility.

I'm not sure how to tell her I can no longer help out with money. — STRAINED FRIENDSHIP

DEAR STRAINED: Celia may be well-educated, but it appears she has serious self-esteem issues, little common sense and a parasite for a boyfriend.

That she would consider having a child with Vince, a man who can't support himself or the child he already has, is coconuts! Tell your beautiful friend that while you care for her, you will no longer subsidize the three

Dear Abby



of them, and using your money to pay for movie tickets was the last straw. Then don't relent.

DEAR ABBY: I taught tennis lessons at a private club for 41 years. Then came the pandemic. I was furloughed and not asked to return to work. I wasn't given the usual parting acknowledgement that previous employees received — no goodbyes, no thank yous.

In the successive years, I have asked for a free membership as a gift for my years of service. So far, the answer is "no." Is my request valid? Should I continue asking? — SERVING FAIRNESS IN ILLINOIS

DEAR SERVING: You didn't mention how many times you have asked for the membership as a gift for your years of service, but if it has been more than once, stop asking because it isn't going to happen. A furlough is defined as a temporary layoff for a specified period of time.

Employees retain their jobs and benefits but do not get paid during that period. If this is what your separation from that private club was called, it may be time to speak to an attorney about how you were treated.

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 Dear-Abby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pay attention to melatonin

By AVERY NEWMARK
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Tribune News Service

Packed holiday schedules, no school, disrupted bedtime routines — a parent's worst nightmare. And if you are one of the many turning to melatonin to help their little ones get to sleep, you may want to think again. New research suggests this increasingly popular solution deserves a closer look.

Nearly 1 in 5 school-age children now regularly use melatonin supplements, according to a study published last year in JAMA Pediatrics. And what's even more concerning, according to researchers, is that about 6% of preschoolers ages 1 to 4 are taking the sleep aid.

While melatonin is a natural-

ly occurring hormone that helps regulate sleep cycles, supplements aren't regulated like prescription medications, and research on long-term use in children is limited.

"It is terrifying to me that this amount of an unregulated product is being utilized," Dr. Cora Collette Breuner, professor of pediatrics at the University of Washington, told NPR.

The surge in usage also coincides with an increase in melatonin poisoning cases. Melatonin ingestion cases reported to poison control centers, largely occurring among children younger than 5, skyrocketed by more than 500% between 2012 and 2021, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Dur-

ing this period, poison control centers documented 260,435 cases of pediatric melatonin ingestion, with the sharpest uptick occurring during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To cut back on melatonin usage, experts recommend these evidence-based sleep strategies:

- Maintain consistent bedtimes, even during holiday festivities
- Turn off screens at least one hour before bed
- Use blackout shades and white noise machines if needed
- Avoid letting children stay up more than one to two hours past normal bedtime on weekends
- Create a calming bedtime routine with activities like reading or quiet music

Community Calendar

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

Today
LAWYERS IN LIBRARIES — Free and confidential consultations with a lawyer are available from 10 a.m. to noon at Jay County Public Library, 315 N. Ship St., Portland. Consulting is available on topics including divorce, custody, guardianship, tenant-landlord issues, bankruptcy, debt collection, estates and immigration. Those interested in participating should sign up in advance at the library, 315 N. Ship St.,

Portland, or by calling (260) 726-7890.

SMART RECOVERY — A group for those struggling with addiction that focuses on motivation, coping with cravings, managing thoughts, feelings and behavior, and living a balanced life meets at 11 a.m. each Thursday in the IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health Center, Entrance C, 510 W. Votaw St., Portland.

CELEBRATE RECOVERY — A 12-step Christian recovery program meets at 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. each Thursday at A Second Chance At Life Ministries, 228 S. Meridian St. in Portland. For more information, call Brenda Eads at (260) 726-9625 or Dave Keen at (260) 251-8792.

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

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

Saturday
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 - BRANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for all kinds of addictions, will meet from 5 to 6:30 p.m. each Sunday at Fellowship Baptist Church, 289 S. 200 West, Portland. Come early for a meal. For more information, call (260) 766-2006.

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

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

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

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY (TOPS) — Will meet for weigh-in at 4:30 p.m., with the meeting at 5 p.m., at Trinity United Methodist Church, 323 S. Meridian St., Portland. New members welcome. For more information, call (260) 726-5924.

Sudoku

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

Level: Intermediate

Tuesday's Solution

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

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

Here Comes the

Bridal Season!

BRIDAL SECTION ADVERTISING SPECIALS

Space for color ads is limited and will be on a first-come, first-serve basis. Deadline for ads is Monday, Jan. 20

Our brides special section will be distributed in
The Commercial Review (Portland),
The News-Gazette (Winchester)
and The News Times (Hartford City)

	full-page color — \$625
	full-page B&W — \$525
	1/2-page color — \$425
	1/2-page B&W — \$325
	1/4-page color — \$275
	1/4-page B&W — \$225
	Big business card (3x3.5) — \$105
	Business card (2x2) — \$52

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

GRAPHIC PRINTING

NEWSPAPERS

Take advantage of Putin's weakness

Bloomberg Opinion
Tribune News Service

Russian President Vladimir Putin has sought to project an image of economic strength while prosecuting the war in Ukraine, as if he could easily outlast the West's efforts to counter his aggression. If President-elect Donald Trump and other Western leaders want to negotiate a prudent peace deal, they shouldn't buy it.

More than most autocrats, Putin understands the importance of economic resilience. Before invading, he built a fiscal fortress to protect his regime. It included a balanced federal budget; minimal foreign borrowing; hundreds of billions of dollars in central bank reserves; and a \$175 billion national wealth fund, designed to smooth the effect of

Guest Editorial

volatile energy prices on the country's fossil-fuel-dependent revenue.

This preparation (alongside continued oil and gas exports) has helped Putin survive Western sanctions and defy predictions of economic collapse. He delivered a vast stimulus by ramping up military spending from less than 4% to (by some estimates) 10% of gross domestic product — providing high-paying jobs in defense production and life-changing payments to the

often-destitute families of soldiers. Together with government-subsidized mortgage loans (now discontinued), the largesse fueled a consumer spending and construction boom.

Now the costs are mounting. Everything is more expensive: By one estimate, a representative basket of consumer goods in Russia costs about 80% more than before the war. Wages have shot up, with much of the labor force killed, wounded or otherwise unavailable. Surging inflation has forced the central bank to raise its key interest rate to an extreme 21%, crushing investment in civilian businesses. The stimulus is petering out: By official measures, growth is expected to slow to 1% next year, from 3.9% this year. Adjusted for independent measures of inflation,

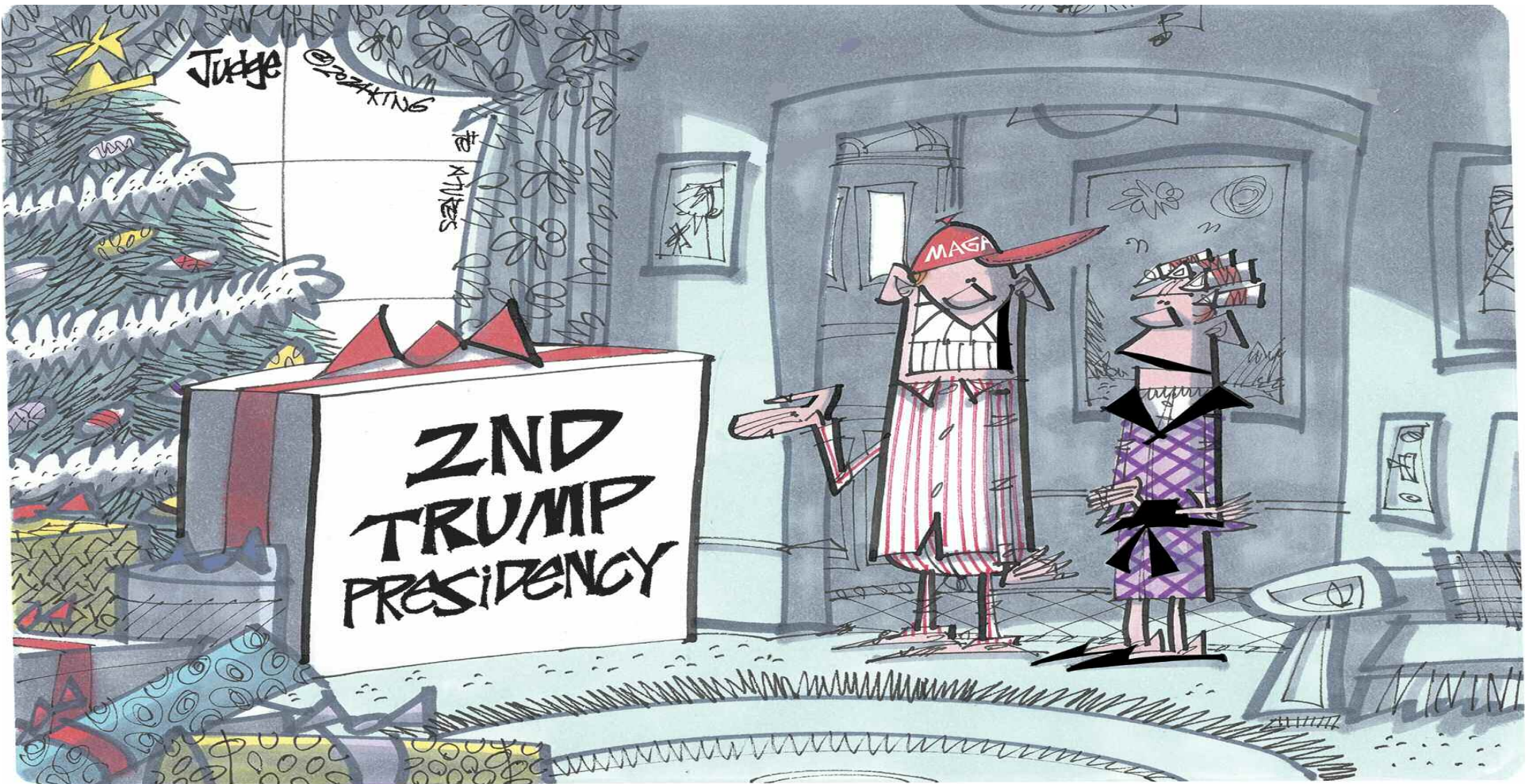
Russia's real output has contracted sharply.

Worse for Putin, his fortress is much diminished. Some \$300 billion in central bank reserves are stuck in the West, perhaps never to return. The wealth fund's liquid cash, denominated in Chinese yuan, has dwindled to the equivalent of about \$31 billion. Profligate lending has weakened banks. This renders Russia much more vulnerable to economic shocks, such as a drop in global oil prices. The longer the war goes on, the greater the damage — and the greater the need to resort to unpopular measures, such as raising taxes or cutting social spending.

Granted, economic constraints alone won't force Putin to end the war anytime soon. They do, however, reflect an advantage that

Western nations should press. The combined economies of the U.S. and Europe are more than 20 times larger than Russia's. Showing continued resolve to outspend Putin would help bring him to the negotiating table and offer crucial leverage. Such a commitment — combined with continued supplies of sophisticated weaponry and toughened sanctions — would maximize the chances of a reasonable deal.

Public patience with extending aid to Ukraine is ebbing, in the U.S. and elsewhere. But slashing support now would not end the war on desirable terms. It would embolden Putin and — in all likelihood — prove far more costly in the long run. Russia's economy is weaker than it looks. The West should seize this opportunity while it can.



"DID YOU KEEP THE RECEIPT?"

School choice comes with significant risk

By **MICHAEL J. HICKS**

I have long supported school choice. There are many good reasons to share my position. At the same time, school choice in Indiana has not delivered the broad success its defenders claim.

School choice in Indiana began in 2000 with the first authorization of charter schools. Then, in 2008, the Mitch Daniels administration pushed for broader school choice, adding a limited voucher program and local school choice.

That local school choice, allowing state tax dollars to follow students to whichever school they attended, ended up being the biggest innovation. Since the Daniels reforms, the state has expanded the voucher program to include all but about 5% of the richest Hoosier families.

Back in 2000, about 12% of Hoosier children attended private schools. Today, it is about half that. The number of kids in charter schools (public schools operating on somewhat different rules than local public schools) has risen, but most students in charters are enrolled in those operated by local public school districts.

Ironically, the big winners of school choice, in terms of enrollment, are local public schools. Of course, that masks the reality that high-performing public schools are doing well with enrollment, while poorly performing public schools are losing enrollment.

That is the point of school choice. School choice imposes compe-

Michael J. Hicks



tion into the marketplace for K-12 educations — and yes, it is a marketplace, but has hitherto been mostly limited to more affluent families. Today, a much higher share of families can access schools they feel better serve their children. In places like Gary, more than 6 in 10 kids take advantage of school choice, and in Muncie it is more than 4 in 10.

Imagine what would have happened to those city populations if families were unable to access better schools.

Still, there are several things we don't know about the effects of school choice in Indiana. We do not have a good estimate of the causal effect of competition on underperforming schools. The preliminary evidence, from one as-yet unpublished study and from NAEP scores statewide, suggest it had a small positive effect. But these results are not yet conclusive.

We also don't have the studies on charter school performance we need to draw big conclusions, and we have almost no longitudinal studies of student outcomes.

The saddest part of our ignorance on these matters is that it seems purposeful. Indiana has

spent tens of millions of dollars on data collection of individuals in school and employment, and almost nothing on causal estimates of the effects of school choice (or almost anything else education or workforce related). Indiana is a full two decades behind West Virginia and Tennessee on education and workforce research. It shows.

Fortunately, we do know a few things. My work finds that simple test scores and proximity of schools are driving most of the transfers between local public schools. So, families are choosing better schools that are nearby — important, but hardly surprising results.

Two studies, by Mark Berends at Notre Dame and Joseph Waddington at Kentucky, shed more detailed light on individual outcomes for transferring students. In one study, they find that low-income children transferring from local public to private schools experience a decline in math test scores, for as long as students were tracked.

A second study focused on a broad set of school choice options in Indianapolis. It reports similar declines in students moving to magnet schools, private schools (including Catholic schools), but no effect for those students transferring to charter schools.

This research team also reports large differences in accountability between charter authorizers, which most likely affects student outcomes. There are numerous studies reporting

poorer learning outcomes from online classes.

It is worth noting that, to really measure school performance, you must control of all the non-school effects on learning for individual students. That is devilishly hard to do well.

The best studies are performed by tracking students as they move between schools, as in these studies by Berends and Waddington. Their results, based on different times using individual student scores before and after changing schools, offers very robust conclusions.

Of course, school choice may have many other benefits for families and students. But when it comes to improving Indiana's educational outcomes, the period of school choice has been a clear failure.

In 2008, when the Daniels administration expanded school choice, Indiana's economy was already suffering from poor educational outcomes. The bellwether measure — adult educational attainment — was then a whopping 6.5 percentage points below the nation as a whole. By 2019, it had collapsed to 9.1 percentage points below. That loss stabilized after COVID-19 but is poised to worsen.

Unsurprisingly, this decline affected employment and wages across the state. One example is the quality of jobs. From 2000 to 2023, the average Hoosier worker saw their wages decline from 5.8% below the national average to 16.2% below. Indiana is a magnet for low-wage jobs.

With almost a quarter-century of school choice, Indiana's economy is in a relatively worse place today, with a less-educated workforce and declining relative wages. The prognosis is for more of the same.

Poor educational outcomes are the fundamental cause of our economic woes. Recent cuts to education spending have magnified the problem.

Indiana now spends less money per student on K-12 and higher education than we did when the big changes to school choice came about (2008 to 2010). In fact, this year is probably the lowest per student spending by state and local governments in the past several decades. And yes, those data are adjusted for inflation, a quick and honest calculation that the governor and several lawmakers seem to struggle with.

Some of the blame must attend to those of us who supported school choice. We overestimated the benefits, so it is time to set the record straight. I still believe school choice is good for Indiana families. But insofar as it has been used to justify cuts in per student educational spending, it risks being Indiana's single most damaging economic policy of the 21st century.

Hicks is the director of the Center for Business and Economic Research and the George and Frances Ball distinguished professor of economics in the Miller College of Business at Ball State University. Email him at mhicks@bsu.edu.

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"Were it left for me to decide whether we should have government without newspapers or newspapers without government I should not hesitate to prefer the latter."
—Thomas Jefferson

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SPEED BUMP Dave Coverly

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane

Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

A delicate operation

South dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ 7 4
 ♥ A K 10 7 5 3
 ♦ A 5
 ♣ 8 6 4

WEST
 ♠ J 9 5 3 2
 ♥ 9 4
 ♦ 7
 ♣ J 10 9 7 2

EAST
 ♠ Q 10 8
 ♥ J 8 6 2
 ♦ J 10 9 3
 ♣ Q 5

SOUTH
 ♠ A K 6
 ♥ Q
 ♦ K Q 8 6 4 2
 ♣ A K 3

won the club lead with the king, cashed the queen of hearts, led a diamond to the ace and cashed the A-K of hearts, hoping the jack would fall.

When it didn't, he led a diamond to the king, hoping for a 3-2 division of the missing diamonds, in which case he would have scored the rest of the tricks. But West showed out and South went down one after continuing with the queen and another diamond, losing a diamond and a heart.

It might seem declarer did nothing wrong and was very unlucky to lose the slam. However, the fact remains that he did not adopt the best line of play, and it cost him dearly.

After cashing the queen of hearts at trick two, South should have led a low diamond from his hand and played low from dummy! This would have protected against a 4-1 diamond division before he cashed the A-K of hearts, and he would have finished with 12 tricks consisting of two spades, three hearts, five diamonds and two clubs.

All South needed to make the slam was the willingness to sacrifice a diamond trick before finding out how the red suits were actually divided.

Tomorrow: Test your play.
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12-26

CRYPTOQUIP

Z N J M V W V O V R H C K R M
 W M J K X E J X J K I J L R W B B O
 X N R H K X O, Z N W X C P J K X N J R H

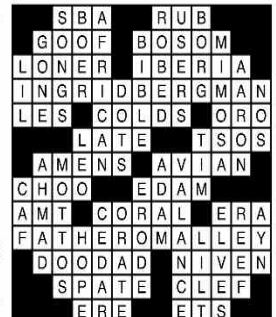
SPXNJH VHRME XNJS? IJJIKR.
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: STICKER MESSAGE ON SANTA CLAUS' VEHICLE AS HE MAKES HIS ANNUAL VISITS: "HERE TO SLEIGH."
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: V equals B

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
 1 Pack cargo
 5 Aleppo's land (Abbr.)
 8 Winter Palace denizen
 12 Sister of Rachel
 13 Runner Sebastian
 14 Film lioness
 15 — Romeo
 16 Scepter
 17 Tide type
 18 Mortar partner
 20 Language of Pakistan
 22 TV anchor, for one
 26 Columbus' birthplace
 29 Rent out
 30 Haw preceder
 31 Oodles
 32 "Way cool!"
 33 Honey-comb unit
 34 LBJ's successor
 35 AAA job

DOWN
 1 Duel prompter
 2 Far (Pref.)
 3 Klutzes
 4 Un-specified things
 5 Threaded hardware
 6 "— hoo!"
 7 Lowered after
 8 Looks after
 9 Emulated Sherlock
 10 Solid-rock insert
 11 LL Cool J's music
 19 Tony-winner Salonga
 21 Dumpster critter
 23 Cabbage salads
 24 "Electric" creatures
 25 Depend (on)
 26 John Irving protagonist
 27 Sailor's saint
 28 Like easy-to-clean pans
 32 Honored at the Friars Club
 33 Museum VIP
 35 Texter's "Enough!"
 36 "Get it?"
 38 After-noon hour
 39 Actress Cicely
 42 The Eternal City
 43 Singer Simone
 44 Slender
 45 Flight stat
 46 Goat's cry
 48 Perfect serve

Solution time: 24 mins.



Yesterday's answer 12-26

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12					13				14		
15					16				17		
18				19		20	21				
			22		23				24	25	
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31				32					33		
34				35					36		
37			38				39				
			40				41		42	43	44
45	46				47	48			49		
50					51				52		
53					54				55		

Peanuts

Rose is Rose

Agnes

Hi and Lois

Between Friends

Blondie

Snuffy Smith

Beetle Bailey

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ECIC ...

Continued from page 8
Frettinger made a move for a pin in the third period only to have Lothridge roll through to gain control. He pinned Frettinger about 25 seconds later to improve to 13-5 and secure the ECIC title in his first opportunity. "It felt really good," said Lothridge. "Being a freshman and winning ECIC, it felt really good."

"(I was) being aggressive ... and having confidence."

The ninth-ranked Ortiz took some time to feel out Central Noble's Parker Boots in the final championship match of the day as they wrestled to a scoreless first period. He took the down position to start the second and scored a quick escape for the only point he would need. He went on to get a takedown midway through the period and added a reversal in the third for a 6-0 win to earn the 285-pound championship.

"I was a little nervous in the beginning," said Ortiz. "I knew he was going to be fast. ... But I ended up figuring out that he wasn't going to take the shot."

Heskett (16-2) gave up the first points of his championship match at 132 pounds against Centerville's Conner Frazier but a late takedown in the second period turned the tide of the match. Heskett took a 5-3 lead into the third period, got a quick escape and then put an exclamation point in his win with a takedown at the buzzer for a 9-3 win.

Robinson (15-2) and Coldwater's Tanner Stammen went back-and-forth for the 150-pound title, with the former scoring the first takedown 30 seconds into the match before falling behind 4-3 at the close of the first period. A double-



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Freddie Lingo of Jay County works for a pin against Muncie Central's Braxton Johnson during the opening round of Monday's East Central Indiana Classic at JCHS. Lingo pinned Johnson in the second period before dropping his next match to move to the consolation bracket. He went 3-2 on the day to finish in seventh place at 215 pounds.

leg takedown that he converted to a cradle and three-point near fall pushed Robinson ahead 9-4. Stammen rallied back, getting to within 9-7 before Robinson scored an escape as he held on for a 10-7 win to repeat as ECIC champ.

Cooper Glassford (13-5) also wrestled in a championship

match, finishing in second place at 126 pounds as Dakota Sprunger of South Adams pinned him in 3 minutes, 41 seconds. Glassford advanced to the finals with two technical falls and a pin.

Jason Landers took third place at 138 pounds, winning his first

two matches by pin before taking a technical fall loss to undefeated and third-ranked Tylin Thrine of New Castle in the semifinals. He bounced back to rack up a 15-2 major decision over Eli Loshe of South Adams in the third-place match.

Others placing in the top eight

for the Patriots were A.J. Myers (fifth - 190), Syllas Wenk (sixth - 120) and Freddie Lingo (seventh - 215).

"We wrestled really well," said Myers. "I felt like there were some spots that were a little dicey, but I felt like we ended the day really well."

Red Sox sign Walker Buehler

By MAC CERULLO

Boston Herald Tribune News Service

BOSTON — The Red Sox aren't done adding to their starting rotation.

According to multiple reports, the Red Sox are signing former Los Angeles Dodgers right-hander Walker Buehler. The deal is reportedly for one year, \$21.05 million and will allow the two-time World Series champion an opportunity to rebuild his market value in his first full season recovering from his second Tommy John surgery.

Buehler represents a fascinating buy low option for the Red Sox, who have already fortified their rotation by acquiring left-handers Garrett Crochet and Patrick Sandoval this winter.

The 30-year-old was for a stretch one of the most dominant pitchers in baseball, earning two All-Star nods

while posting a 3.03 ERA with 408 strikeouts over 356 1/3 innings in four seasons between 2018-21. He underwent season-ending Tommy John surgery in August of 2022, cutting that season short after only 12 starts, and he went on to miss all of 2023 as well.

Upon his return in 2024, Buehler was not the same guy. In 16 starts for the eventual World Series champions he posted a 5.38 ERA over 75 1/3 innings, but with the Dodgers rotation decimated by injury he wound up making four appearances in the playoffs.

His first playoff start did not go well, as he allowed six runs in five innings in Game 3 of the NLDS against San Diego, but he came through with two of his best outings of the season afterwards, throwing four scoreless innings to start Game 3 of the NLCS against the Mets and

five scoreless in Game 3 of the World Series against the Yankees.

Buehler wound up closing out the decisive Game 5 of the World Series too, earning the save with a scoreless ninth to lock down Los Angeles' second World Series title in five years.

By signing a one-year deal, the Red Sox are betting that those last outings are a better reflection of who Buehler will be going forward another year removed from elbow surgery. The deal also likely closes off any more additions to the starting rotation, which now features Crochet, Buehler, Tanner Houck, Brayan Bello, Lucas Giolito and Kutter Crawford plus depth options like Cooper Criswell, Richard Fitts, Quinn Priester, Hunter Dobbins and eventually Sandoval, who is also recovering from Tommy John surgery and isn't expected to be available until at least the second half.

Sweep ...

Continued from page 8

Other top finishes for the girls came from Maddy Snow in the 1-meter diving (190.35), Avery Wentz in the 100 backstroke (1:13.80) and Lauren Fisher in the 100 breaststroke (1:21.23).

Carson Westgerdes was the only tanker with multiple victories for the Patriot boys (2-4, 2-1 ACAC). He first claimed the 100 butterfly uncontested in 1:04.18 before beating out two teammates in the 100 breaststroke. Westgre-

des finished first with a time of 1:13.30, beating runner-up Lincoln Clamme (1:19.11) and third-place Cooper Glentzer (1:22.00).

Glentzer, a fellow freshman, also found some individual success in the 200 IM (2:18.46).

The other three first-place finishes for the boys came from Peyton Yowell in the 100 freestyle (56.44), Matthew Fisher in the 100 backstroke (1:07.94) and the 400 freestyle relay (3:56.74).

Sports on tap

Local schedule

Friday
Jay County — Swim home tri-meet — 8 a.m.; Boys wrestling at Monroe Central — 8:30 a.m.; Girls wrestling at Monroe Central — 8:30 a.m.; Fort Recovery — Swim at Lima YMCA — 10 a.m.; Boys basketball vs. South Adams — 6 p.m.

Saturday
Jay County — Boys basketball at Wapahani — 6 p.m.; Fort Recovery — Boys bowling vs. St. Henry at

Minster — 9:15 a.m.; Girls basketball at Marion Local — 6 p.m.; Boys basketball at Marion Local — 7:30 p.m.; Middle school boys basketball at Marion Local — 9 a.m.; Middle school girls basketball at Marion Local — 9 a.m.

TV sports

Today
7:30 a.m. — Premier League soccer: Everton at Manchester City (USA)
10 a.m. — Premier League soccer: Aston Villa at Newcastle United (USA)

12:30 p.m. — Premier League soccer: Manchester United at Wolverhampton Wanderers (USA)

2 p.m. — College football Gameabove Sports Bowl: Pitt vs. Toledo (ESPN)
3 p.m. — Premier League soccer: Leicester City at Liverpool (USA)
5:30 p.m. — College football Rate Bowl: Rutgers vs. Kansas State (ESPN)
7 p.m. — NBA: Oklahoma City Thunder at Indiana Pacers (FDSN Indiana)
9 p.m. — College football 68 Ventures Bowl:

Arkansas State vs. Bowling Green (ESPN)

Friday
12 p.m. — College football Armed Forces Bowl: Oklahoma vs. Navy (ESPN)
3:15 p.m. — Premier League soccer: Ipswich Town at Arsenal (USA)
3:30 p.m. — College football Birmingham Bowl: Georgia Tech vs. Vanderbilt (ESPN)
7 p.m. — College football Liberty Bowl: Texas Tech vs. Arkansas (ESPN)
7 p.m. — NHL: Chicago Blackhawks at Buffa-

lo Sabers (ESPN2)
7:30 p.m. — NBA: Indiana Pacers at Boston Celtics (FDSN Indiana)
8 p.m. — College football Holiday Bowl: Syracuse vs. Washington State (FOX)
9:30 p.m. — NHL: Colorado Avalanche at Utah Hockey Club (ESPN2)
10:30 p.m. — College football Las Vegas Bowl: USC vs. Texas A&M (ESPN)
.....
To have an event listed in "Sports on tap," email details to sports@thecr.com.

90 SALE CALENDAR

PUBLIC AUCTION

Located: Bearcreek Farms, 8341 N 400 E, Bryant, IN
January 6th, 2025 6:00 P.M.
75 Acres-Bearcreek Township Jay County, IN
Parcel 1-55 acres with 53 acres of tillable ground. Soil types include Blount-Glywood, Pewamo and Glywood clay.
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90 SALE CALENDAR

REAL ESTATE AUCTION

Saturday, January 11, 2025
10:00 AM
Location of Sale: Bearcreek Farms 8341 N 400 E, Bryant, IN
Real Estate: 56.54 acres-Sec. 4 Bearcreek Twp. Property located East of 27 on Jay & Adams Co. Line. Selling 2 parcels & combinations.
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Fort Recovery girls basketball gets first MAC win, see story below

JCHS wrestling will travel to Monroe Central Friday, see Sports on tap

Sports

First in ECIC

Patriots claim five weight classes to run away with victory in 17-team field

By RAY COONEY

The Commercial Review

Before the finals, Jay County High School inducted five graduates to its Wall of Fame.

The group included three boys who were state medalists in their careers. Even with that trio gone, no one came close to the Patriots on Monday.

After honoring three of the top wrestlers in the history of the program, the current Jay County crew hit the mat and won five championships to cap off a fourth straight East Central Indiana Classic title.

The Class 2A No. 10 host Patriots got championships from Corbin Lothridge, Griffin Byrum, A.J. Heskett, Jacob Robinson and Alan Ortiz as they cruised to the ECIC championship, scoring 226 points to outdistance runner-up Central Noble (182.5) and third-place Alexandria (175) in a field of 17 scoring teams.

"We've had some really good teams the last few years," said JCHS coach Eric Myers, acknowledging the Wall of Fame inductions of Tony Wood, Cameron Clark and Cody Rowles. "But these guys have stepped up and worked really hard and they deserve the recognition that they get for winning this tournament. I'm proud of them for stepping up today and wrestling hard and getting this win. It's a lot of fun. They definitely deserve it."

Lothridge at 106 pounds and Byrum at 113 were wrestling simultaneously in the finals. Both faced some early adversity, giving up takedowns to fall behind 3-0.

Byrum (17-1), ranked 13th in the state and looking for a repeat championship, reclaimed



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Jay County High School freshman Corbin Lothridge looks toward his coaches for guidance while trying to force Will Frettinger of Bluffton to the mat in the 106-pound championship match during Monday's East Central Indiana Classic. Lothridge pinned Frettinger in the third period to earn one of the host Patriots' five championships as they won the team title.

control with a takedown of Central Noble's 16th-ranked Charlie Fleshman 22 seconds into the second period and then added two near-fall points in the closing seconds for a 6-3 advantage. He left no doubt in the third period, locking Fleshman in a

cradle for a pin with 1:26 left on the clock.

"I knew that was my match to win," said Byrum, who pinned Fleshman to win the 106-pound ECIC championship last season. (Fleshman was a 2024 state qualifier.) "It's always better to beat

a guy a second time because it's always harder ...

"I didn't start out well, but I just kept with the grit and kept being stingy, found my points and found a way to win."

Lothridge got an escape and takedown to lead Bluffton's Will

Frettinger 4-3 after the first period, but fell behind again 6-5 on a takedown midway through the second. It took him just 16 seconds to score a reversal that he converted into a four-point near fall for control of the match.

See ECIC page 7

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Tribe stumps St. John's in second quarter for win

FORT RECOVERY — The Indians struggled to stop the Bluejays in the first quarter.

In the second, the visitors couldn't buy a bucket against the Indians, leading to a Tribe victory.

Despite giving up 14 3-point baskets, the Fort Recovery High School girls basketball team pulled out a 61-46 victory over the St. John's Bluejays for its first Midwest Athletic Conference win of the season Monday.

The Indians (4-6, 1-3 MAC) gave up six threes to St. John's (0-10, 0-4 MAC) in the first period, while totalling only nine points themselves off a trio of Karlie Niekamp baskets and a Makenna Huelskamp triple.

FRHS came back in the second period, not allowing a single Bluejay point while amassing 18 on six made field goals to take a 27-18 lead into the intermission.

Niekamp led the way for Fort Recovery with a season-high 21 points on 10 made shots. Huelskamp followed with 16 points and Kennedy Muhlenkamp added 11. Rounding out the score was Bridget Homan with nine and Cameron Muhlenkamp and Madie Schoenlein with two points each.

SJHS hit 14 threes, while

FRHS roundup

only making one shot inside the arc. Aubrey Fairchild led the way with 21 points to match Niekamp, while Megan Kerner followed with 14.

Grieshop leads

NEW BREMEN, Ohio — The Fort Recovery boys bowling team cruised to a 2,879-2,095 win over the Parkway Panthers at Speedway Lanes on Saturday.

Riley Grieshop put up the high score for the Indians (3-4, 2-0 MAC), rolling a 245 in the second individual game. He threw a 179 in the first to finish with a 212 pin average.

A.J. Siefiring and Anthony Roessner also had games that eclipsed 200. Siefiring opened with a 187 before bouncing back with a 227, while Roessner was inserted into the lineup for the second game in which he knocked down 220 pins.

Other individual bowlers included Eli Lennartz with 371 pins, Gabe Acheson with 341 and Garrett Diller

who had 142 in the first game.

Parkway's best game of 186 pins came from Joshua Hague.

Fort Recovery also dominated the Panthers (2-8, 0-2 MAC) 967-630 in baker. FRHS rolled a 205 and 218 in the first two games.

Tribe wins

NEW BREMEN, Ohio — A collective effort from the Fort Recovery girls bowling team led the Tribe to a 2,522-1,932 victory over the Parkway Panthers at Speedway Lanes on Saturday.

Jadyn Wyerick rolled the best game of the Indians (3-1, 2-0 MAC) at 195 after being inserted for the second game.

Deanna Brown finished with the best average pinfall at 186.5 pins after putting up scores of 181 and 192.

Other bowlers who contributed include Kayla Heitkamp (316 pins), Lilah Thien (311), Emily Lauber (153) and Ella Schoen (139).

Parkway's high game came from Ashtlynn Muhlenkamp with just 147 pins.

The Tribe also handled the Panthers (1-5, 0-1 MAC) in the baker matches 906-667 thanks to a 211-pin second game and a 247 in the fifth.

Patriots sweep Jets

The Patriot boys picked up their first win of the season against an Adams County school last week, while the girls fell in a close race.

One week later, when the Patriots faced off with the other Adams County team in the Allen County Athletic Conference, both the boys and girls walked away with victories.

The Jay County High School swim teams took care of business against the Adams Central Jets on Monday with the girls rolling to 170-70 win and the boys coming out on top 136-112.

Sophia Hoewel had her strongest meet of the season, picking up a pair of indi-

vidual victories for the Patriots (3-3, 2-1 ACAC), while contributing to both relays that came out on top. Hoewel started her day as the anchor to the 200-yard medley relay that won with a time of 2 minutes, 8.87 seconds. The junior then pulled out a pair of first-place finishes in the 200 freestyle and the 100 freestyle with times of 2:20.82 and 1:02.74. Hoewel also led off the 400 freestyle relay that took first with a time of 4:29.57.

Brooklynn Byrum also won two events for the Jay County girls. Her victories came in the 200 individual medley (2:35.03) and the 100 butterfly (1:08.84).

See Sweep page 7