

# The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

## Just a dusting

After initial forecasts had called for as much as 9 inches of snow beginning Sunday, Portland residents woke up Monday to just a dusting this morning as the storm predominantly stayed further south. Pictured, light snow dusts the driveway Monday morning at Jay County Junior-Senior High School. A winter weather advisory was lifted mid-morning Monday and there is no additional snow in the forecast until Friday.



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

## Budget key for session

### Legislators return to statehouse Wednesday

By **WHITNEY DOWNWARD**  
Indiana Capital Chronicle  
indianacapitalchronicle.com

Lawmakers will convene Wednesday to begin drafting the state's next two-year budget, determining how to spend approximately \$44 billion dollars to fund government services such as schools, health insurance programs and infrastructure as well as tackling other fiscal issues.

A December revenue forecast predicted that most of the state's modest growth would be consumed by increased Medicaid expenditures, limiting the number of new programs or expansions lawmakers can adopt in the next budget cycle. High-ranking Republican leaders have urged their colleagues to keep expectations — and budget requests — low, an

adjustment after back-to-back years of unprecedented growth and blockbuster spending.

"Everything the state does right now is more expensive than it was last year. Everything is exorbitantly more expensive," Senate Majority Leader Rodric Bray said last month, pointing to inflation as one driver of costs.

As in years past, roughly half of the state's budget will go to K-12 education. The second-largest budget item will be Medicaid, which Bray, a Republican from Martinsville, said took up roughly 19% of the budget during the 2023 session, or 3% more than the previous cycle.

Outside of those two big expenses, the General Assembly has several looming decisions to make in the coming days that will determine the state's trajectory beyond the two-year budget cycle.

"We're going to have to really tighten up our belts and see where we are," said Rep. Greg Porter, D-Indianapolis. "Because I believe whatever we do in this budget, in the next two years, will really move us in the next 10 to 20 years."

See Session page 2

## Companies file suit against U.S.

### Court asked to set aside review process, Biden's block

By **KIM LYONS**  
States Newsroom  
statesnewsroom.com

U.S. Steel and Nippon Steel on Monday filed a lawsuit against the U.S. government over President Joe Biden's order blocking the sale of the Pittsburgh-based steel company to the Japanese firm.

The lawsuit filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C. asks the court to set aside the review process of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S. (CFIUS) and Biden's order blocking the deal over security concerns.

In a joint statement the

companies accused Biden and the government of violating due process and playing politics, claiming the president "ignored the rule of law to gain favor" with the United Steelworkers union (USW), which had opposed the sale.

"As a result of President Biden's undue influence to advance his political agenda, the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States ("CFIUS" or the "Committee") failed to conduct a good faith, national security-focused regulatory review process, depriving Nippon Steel and U. S. Steel of their rightful opportunity for fair consideration of the Transaction," the statement reads.

Indiana's Gary Works is U.S. Steel's largest manufacturing plant, according to the company's website. It can handle more than 7.5 million net tons of raw steel annually. The site has more than 4,300 employees, per Fox Business.

## Ceremonies define week

By **NIELS LESNIEWSKI**  
CQ-Roll Call  
Tribune News Service

WASHINGTON — Another week of congressional ceremonies gets underway Monday, just as a snowstorm bears down on Washington, though the memories of the rioting four years ago won't be lost on Capitol Hill.

Congress met in joint session at 1 p.m. for the counting of Electoral College ballots, a constitutional function that was disrupted by insurrectionists four years ago. But this year went according to plan, with President-elect Donald Trump returning to the White House in two weeks.

Lawmakers on Capitol

### State funeral for Carter is scheduled for Thursday

Hill will also join the rest of the government and the nation in paying respects to the late President Jimmy Carter this week.

Carter's casket is scheduled to arrive this afternoon at the Capitol Rotunda, where he will lie in state until early Thursday morning.

A state funeral for the former

president is scheduled for Thursday at Washington National Cathedral.

As the ceremonies proceed, the new Republican majorities will use this week to start to set the table for Trump's agenda. It follows Friday's swearing-in of new members and Saturday's House GOP gathering at Fort McNair in Washington.



Tribune News Service/Getty Images/Win McNamee

U.S. Representatives of the 119th Congress are sworn-in during the first day of session in the House Chamber of the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 3, 2025, in Washington, D.C.

### Deaths

**Steven Grile**, 69, Pennville  
**Philip Hartman**, 20, Portland  
Details on page 2.

### Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 27 degrees Sunday. The low was 14. There was less than an inch of snow in Portland.

The forecast calls for a low of 14 tonight. Expect mostly cloudy skies Wednesday with a high in the lower 20s.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

### In review

United Way of Jay County and Second Harvest Food Bank will host a food tailgate from 10 a.m. to noon Wednesday at Jay County Fairgrounds.

Income verification is not required.

### Coming up

**Wednesday** — Coverage of this week's Portland City Council meeting.

**Thursday** — Results from Tuesday's JCHS wrestling match against Coldwater.

**Friday** — Details from this week's Jay County Council meeting.



# Obituaries

## Steven Grile

Feb. 11, 1955-Jan. 4, 2025

Steven D. Grile, age 69, of Pennville passed away on Saturday, Jan. 4, 2025, in IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital in Muncie.



Grile

He was born in Portland on Feb. 11, 1955, the son of Raymond and Nellie (Hodgson) Grile. Steve was retired from Pennville Sand and Gravel St. Henry Tile Com-

pany. He was a 1973 Portland High School graduate and enjoyed photography.

Surviving are a brother, Wayne Grile (wife: Kellie) of Redkey; two sisters, Sharon Link (husband: Ed) of Fort Recovery, Ohio, and Anna Grile of Portland; and nephew and nieces Adam Grile, Mackenzie Conatser, Tami Michael and Brenda Link.

Funeral services are Friday, Jan. 10, at 6 p.m. in the Baird-Freeman Funeral Home. Burial will be in the Gravel Hill Cemetery. Visitation will be Friday from 4 to 6 p.m.

Memorials can be made to the choice of the donor.

Condolences may be expressed at bairdfreeman.com.

## Philip Hartman

May 28, 2004-Jan. 2, 2025

Philip A. Hartman, age 20, of Portland passed away on Thursday, Jan. 2, 2025, at his residence.

He was born in Portland on May 28, 2004, the son of James and Robin (Lake) Hartman.

Philip worked at Crossroads Financial Federal Credit Union. Philip was a 2023 Jay County High School graduate and was

involved in show choir and Jay County Civic Theatre. He enjoyed fishing and target shooting.

Surviving are his parents, Jim and Robin Hartman of Portland; sister Mary Hartman of Bloomington; grandparents Bob and Joyce Lake of Portland; and several aunts and uncles.

Memorial services will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 8, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the Baird-Freeman Funeral Home with Pastor Steve



Hartman

Austin presiding. Family will receive guests from 5 to 7 p.m.

Memorials can be made to choice of the donor.

Condolences may be expressed at bairdfreeman.com.

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

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

# CR almanac

Wednesday 1/8	Thursday 1/9	Friday 1/10	Saturday 1/11	Sunday 1/12
<b>21/8</b> Wednesday's forecast shows mostly cloudy skies with winds between 5 and 10 mph.	<b>19/10</b> Mostly sunny on Thursday, when the low at night may be in the single digits.	<b>24/20</b> There's a slight chance of snow on Friday with a higher chance at night. Cloudy.	<b>26/21</b> Mostly cloudy skies are expected Saturday, when the high may hit the mid 20s.	<b>27/22</b> Another mostly cloudy day is in the forecast for Sunday.

## Lotteries

<b>Powerball</b> Estimated jackpot: \$220 million	21-23-25-27-40-42-43-53-55-59-63-66-67-70-73-74-80 Cash 5: 1-3-11-21-32 Estimated jackpot: \$262,500
<b>Mega Millions</b> Estimated jackpot: \$62 million	<b>Ohio</b> Sunday Midday Pick 3: 6-0-9 Pick 4: 2-4-6-8 Pick 5: 2-0-7-1-1 Evening Pick 3: 8-1-6 Pick 4: 1-7-5-4 Pick 5: 6-0-2-9-3 Rolling Cash 5: 11-21-23-25-29 Estimated jackpot: \$140,000
<b>Hoosier</b> Sunday Midday Daily Three: 2-3-0 Daily Four: 6-1-9-8 Quick Draw: 1-2-4-8-12-13-15-25-27-28-47-49-51-54-63-67-75-77-78-80 Evening Daily Three: 7-7-9 Daily Four: 6-7-0-7 Quick Draw: 3-12-20-	

## Markets

<b>Cooper Farms Fort Recovery</b> Corn.....4.63 Feb. corn .....4.65 March corn .....4.67	Feb. beans .....10.02 Wheat ..... 4.93
<b>POET Biorefining Portland</b> Corn.....4.61 Feb. corn .....4.64 March corn .....4.66	<b>ADM Montpelier</b> Corn.....4.52 Feb. corn .....4.53 Beans .....9.91 Feb. beans .....9.95 Wheat .....5.02
<b>The Andersons Richland Township</b> Corn .....4.56 Feb. corn .....4.56 Beans.....9.95	<b>Heartland St. Anthony</b> Corn.....4.63 Feb. corn .....4.63 Beans .....9.70 Feb. beans .....9.75 Wheat .....4.83

## Today in history

In 1610, Galileo Galilei, an Italian astronomer, discovered four moons orbiting Jupiter. At that time, they were the first four moons to be located beyond Earth. They are now known as the Galilean satellites — Io, Europa, Ganymede and Callisto.

In 1874, President Millard Fillmore was born in a log cabin in Buffalo, New York. Fillmore was elected vice president in 1848 and ascended to the presidency in 1850.

In 1955, Marian Anderson made her debut at New York City's Metropolitan Opera, becoming the first African American to perform there. The contralto played Ulrica in Verdi's "Un ballo in maschera."

In 2004, the Jay County High School girls basketball team overcame a record-breaking effort from Adams Central senior Natalie Young — with 21 points, she became Adams County's all-time scoring leader — for a 56-48 victory. Felisha Parr had 20 points for the Patriots.

In 2022, Cory M. Jones of Redkey was sentenced to 47.5 years in prison by Jay Circuit Court Judge Brian Hutchison after having pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter in relation to the shooting death of Shanna Jones of rural Dunkirk. —The CR

## Citizen's calendar

**Today**  
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.  
7 p.m. — Salamonina Town Council, Schoolhouse Community Center.

**Wednesday**  
7 a.m. — Jay County Board of Health, Jay

County Health Department, 504 W. Arch St., Portland.  
6 p.m. — Jay County Council, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.

**Monday**  
9 a.m. — Jay County Commissioners, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.  
6 p.m. — Dunkirk Board of Works, city building, 131 S. Main St.

# Felony arrests

### Domestic battery

A Dunkirk man was arrested Sunday for domestic battery.

Caden M. Green, 21, 339 E. North St., was preliminarily charged with a Level 5 felony and Level 6 felony for two counts of domestic battery and a Class B misdemeanor for public intoxication.

He was released on a

\$10,000 bond from Jay County Jail.

### Methamphetamine

A Portland resident was arrested Saturday for possession of methamphetamine.

David E. Franks, 62, 1210 N. Franklin St., was preliminarily charged with a Level 6 felony for possession of methamphetamine

and a Class C misdemeanor for possession of paraphernalia. He was released from Jay County Jail on a \$4,000 bond.

### Probation violation

A Peru man was arrested Friday for violating his probation.

Jimmy R. Sheets, 47, 53 E. Second St., pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to

possession of methamphetamine, a Level 6 felony. He was sentenced to one year in Jay County Jail with 305 days suspended and given 32 days credit for time served. A petition alleging he violated the conditions of his probation was filed in court Oct. 11.

Sheets was released from Jay County Jail on a \$525 bond.

# Capsule Reports

### Building struck

Damage is estimated between \$50,000 and \$100,000 after a man crashed into the side of T.J.'s Bicycle, Moped Sales and Service in Portland about 7:36 p.m. Friday.

Adam J. Hartvig, 40, was driving a 2005 Toyota Tundra north on Meridian Street. He was driving all over the roadway and crossed the median, according to a report from Portland police. Hartvig drove off the road and into the building at 311 N. Meridian St. He was trapped in his vehicle. Hartvig com-

plained of arm pain and was transported to IU Health Jay.

Hartvig was administered a blood alcohol test with results pending. He was preliminarily charged with a Class A misdemeanor for operating a vehicle while intoxicated.

Hartvig was released from Jay County Jail on a \$1,500 bond.

The vehicle Hartvig was driving was towed.

### Lost control

A Bluffton man crashed his car along Indiana 18 near county road 250 West after losing

control of the vehicle about 4:40 a.m. Monday.

Bost L. Hagen, 38, was driving a 2002 Subaru Legacy east on the highway when he lost traction with the road, according to a Jay County Sheriff's Office report. Hagen's vehicle spun 180 degrees and rolled onto its passenger side, resulting in damage to the vehicle's undercarriage, roof, passenger side and front end.

The vehicle was towed, with damage estimated between \$2,500 and \$5,000.

### Backing accident

A Portland man crashed into the back of a

car parked at Jay County Junior-Senior High School about 8:50 p.m. Saturday.

Donald C. Gillespie, 60, was driving his 2012 Infiniti M56 and backing out of a spot in the parking lot at 2072 W. Indiana 67. He backed into a 2012 Nissan Maxima parked in a no parking zone next to a handicapped parking spot with the rear of the vehicle partially in the road, according to a Jay County Sheriff's Office report. Gillespie's car struck the parked vehicle registered to Steven R. Skiles.

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

# Session ...

Continued from page 1  
A key pillar of incoming Gov. Mike Braun's campaign platform and first-year agenda include providing property tax relief to Hoosier homeowners, vowing to limit future growth and reset bills to 2021 levels.

Local units of governments flagged the plan for diverting funds from their coffers without any state assistance and lawmakers have struggled to adopt sweeping reforms, instead targeting small tweaks while property tax bills surged.

Still, lawmakers continue to field calls for reform, which overshadowed a Republican plan to further slash the state's record-low income tax. A two-year task force dedicated to reviewing and reforming the state's tax system ended with only

vague recommendations, as detailed by chair Sen. Travis Holdman.

"To even come up with one bill to address one small issue, it would have taken us months and months to come up with a solution," Holdman said. "I think we will land somewhere in the middle between what (Gov.-elect) Braun wants and what the legislature has in mind and what our constituents are telling us."

The Markle Republican noted that any cuts to property taxes, which take away local funds for public safety and infrastructure, could be backfilled with local income taxes — potentially negating any attempts to lower bills. Additionally, lifting the tax burden on one population, such as homeowners, could shift the burden to others, such as farmers or businesses.

"So we're looking at what we can do

to not make any drastic changes and to ease into that. It's going to take us some time to get there," said Holdman.

Regardless, the upcoming legislative session won't be able to alter any property owner's 2025 tax bill — which has already been calculated by local governments.

Holdman said he intends to still file a bill to lower income taxes if revenues pick up — while another senator will file to eliminate the state's tax floor on business personal property taxes, a long-standing goal of corporate lobbying organizations.

South Bend Democrat Sen. David Niezgodski said he intended to push for legislation expanding the tax credit for disabled veterans and increasing the credit available to renters from \$2,000 to \$3,000.

## SERVICES

### Today

**Barnes, Larry:** 1 p.m., Winchester Presbyterian Church, 201 E. Franklin St., Winchester.

### Wednesday

**Boice, Katherine:** 4:30 p.m., Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland.

**Hartman, Philip:** 7 p.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

### Friday

**Grile, Steven:** 6 p.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

### Sunday

**Hunt, Ruth Ann:** 1:30 p.m., Covenant Presbyterian Church, 415 N. Main St., Springboro, Ohio.

Service listings provided by

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## The Commercial Review

Contact Lindsey at  
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# Daily jump offers consistency, inspiration

By HEIDI STEVENS  
Tribune News Service

In the summer of 2020, when a pandemic gripped the globe and civil unrest filled city streets and dread clouded the air like a low-hanging fog, Dan O'Connor would get up every morning, drive to a parking lot at Montrose Beach and stick a hand-scratched sign inside his windshield: WENT TO JUMP IN THE LAKE.

The sign was to keep his car from getting towed. The lake was to keep his sanity. Both worked.

Four and a half years later, he still jumps. Every morning. He threw a lakefront party on his 365th day of jumping — Jeff Tweedy from Wilco performed; Steve Albini and Jon Langford performed; a band of merry, ragtag Chicagoans jumped in too.

He's coming up on his 1,650th day of jumping.

"It's just something I do," he said. I went to watch him jump on a December morning. We met at Chess Pavilion in Lincoln Park, where North Avenue meets the lakefront and the skyline stands at attention, ready to take whatever you're doing — biking, running, walking your dog — and up the dramatic flair by 1 million. It was 31 degrees.

"During the winter I actually enjoy it more," he said. "I don't know how you'd describe an endorphin rush, but you get this shot through your body like, 'I know this is dangerous and I want to protect you.'"

He brings a shovel to bust up the ice when the lake is frozen. One winter morning one of his sons (he has three) was helping O'Connor when something fell out of his hoodie pocket and sank

through the hole they just cracked open.

"I go, 'Did you just drop a glove?'" O'Connor recalls. "He goes, 'No, that was your phone.'"

A minor setback. This whole thing was originally his wife Margaret's idea. He was hungover and crabby that pandemic summer and she told him to go jump in the lake.

"She's the idea person," he said.

It shook him awake. He kept going.

"I can go down there and I can strip away all the crap and just focus," he said. "I hear about all these health benefits and I'm like, 'I don't know. I still feel fat.' But mentally it's like windshield wipers. Like, 'Alright I got a clear view to start the day.'"

He posts his daily jumps on social media, and he picked up a loyal following pretty quickly. He's been

on TV. He's been in The New York Times.

"I got my 89-year-old uncle in Rhode Island reading about it," he said. "That's pretty wild."

During the pandemic, he used the attention to drive support to the Chicago Independent Venue League, which worked to help struggling music venues survive. Now he dedicates every jump to a different musician, dead or alive.

On holidays, he hosts group jumps. At the end of 2024, folks jumped with him on Thanksgiving and Christmas Day/the first day of Hanukkah.

"There's just a lot of joy in jumping in the water," he said.

If he's out of town, he finds a lakefront substitute.

"I've jumped in Lake Michigan in Illinois, Michigan, Indiana and Wisconsin," he said. "One year we were out in Massachusetts and I did six

New England states in one day — jumped in a pond in Connecticut, a river in Vermont, that kind of thing."

He's jumped in all five Great Lakes, the Potomac River and the Atlantic Ocean. In a pinch one time he settled for a swimming pool in Austin, Texas.

"I don't see myself stopping," he said. "It still feels good, you know?"

I asked if it's changed his sense of self, all this rising before the sun and busting up ice with a shovel and maintaining a daily practice through highs and lows and lost phones. If it makes him feel, I don't know, a little invincible.

"Not really," he shrugged.

He lost his mom in July. He and his family were in Michigan when they got the call, a few days after visiting her at her memory care facility. The December day when I

watched him jump, he'd been to three funerals that week — a friend's mother, his sister-in-law's mother and a cousin.

Jumping offered some consistency. A jolt, maybe. A reminder that pain happens and joy happens and surprise happens. And that's what being alive means.

Those are my thoughts, anyway. That's what I take away from O'Connor's daily jumps, usually into the lake we both live near and love. It's inspiring, whether he means it to be or not.

It's a daily celebration of what we have, born from something that took away so much. I like the tone that sets — at the start of each new day, and at the start of this new year.

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Stevens is a Tribune News Service columnist. Email her at heidikstevens@gmail.com.

# Inappropriate behavior leaves lasting effect

DEAR ABBY: I have a friend, "Doug," I've known for 30 years. I moved away, but we get together once or twice a year. I've known his wife longer than him and watched their son grow up, attending his sports activities when visiting and contributing to school fundraising activities. He's a good kid.

I've recently heard rumors that Doug has made inappropriate advances toward and touched women within our circle of friends. It occurred once when I was there. Sadly, there has been more than one accusation. I do not distrust those rumors. While I didn't witness it, the behavior following the event makes sense to me now. I'm sad, disappointed

and a little angry. I have distanced myself from Doug because one of the victims is also a close friend. I feel guilty for maintaining a relationship with him as if nothing has occurred. I'm continually asked by Doug's wife and son when I am going to visit again. Now that I'm semi-retired, I am out of excuses. I can't just go off the

Dear Abby



grid, and I clearly don't want to be the one to destroy the family. I also don't want to dishonor the victim by behaving as if nothing has happened. Is there a way out of this? — TORN IN WISCONSIN

DEAR TORN: I will assume that the friend Doug touched inappropriately TOLD you what happened, and you didn't hear about it secondhand. If that's the case, the rumors are credible. Did this change in Doug's behavior happen because he was drunk or otherwise impaired? If the answer is no, he may have a medical problem and need to be evaluated by his doctor. If you are really a friend of his

wife's, tell her what you were told, that rumors are being circulated and that you are concerned about him. It may not be news she wants to hear, but it's important she be told.

DEAR ABBY: I am a man who recently found a new job with a group of people I am getting to know and like. One of my siblings died by suicide a little more than 10 years ago. I miss her very much, but I have moved through the phases of grief, accepted it and moved on. We had a party at work recently. People were talking about family and siblings, and it came my turn to speak of my siblings. I said I have two, but one is deceased. I felt like it was

n't the ideal response in this situation, which I have been in several times over the years. What would be the best way to answer a question regarding a deceased sibling? I don't want to forget her and all the great memories I had with her. — AWKWARD IN MASSACHUSETTS

DEAR AWKWARD: You handled the situation appropriately. You are not obligated to discuss the death by suicide of a sibling, or any other relative for that matter, during a party. To do otherwise would certainly have sobered the celebratory atmosphere. This is something that is better discussed privately if you wish to.

# Community Calendar

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

## Today

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.

BRYANT COMMUNITY CENTER EUCHRE — Will be played at 1 p.m. each Tuesday. The public is welcome.

A BETTER LIFE - BRIANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for substance abuse. Meal starts at 6 p.m. and the

meeting is from 6:30 to 8 p.m. every Tuesday at the Nazarene Fellowship Building across from the Nazarene church, 249 E. Center St., Dunkirk. For more information, call Amanda Price at (765) 283-2107.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS — Will meet at 7 p.m. at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, 218 E. High St., Portland. For more information, call (567) 279-8352 or (260) 729-7000.

## Wednesday

WEDNESDAY MORNING BREAKFAST CLUB — Will meet at 8 a.m. in the east room of Richards Restaurant. All women are invited to attend. Includes activities and devotional time.

PING PONG — Will be played from 11 a.m. to noon on Wednesdays at West Jay Community Center.

BRYANT/NEW CORYDON SENIOR CITIZENS — Will meet at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday at the Bryant Community Center for a carry-in dinner. Meat is provided.

PORTLAND ROTARY CLUB — Will meet at noon each Wednesday in the cafe at John Jay Center for Learning, 101 S. Meridian St., Portland.

COMMUNITY REINFORCEMENT AND FAMILY TRAINING — A non-confrontational, evidence-based intervention for helping families affected by addiction meets at 4 p.m. each Wednesday in the IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health Center, Entrance C, 510 W. Votaw St., Portland.

JAY COUNTY CIVIC THEATRE — Holds its regular meeting at 5:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month in the boardroom at Arts Place, 131 E. Walnut St., Portland.

PORTLAND EAGLES — Will meet at 6 p.m., on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month at the Eagles' lodge, 320 N. Meridian St., Portland.

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP — New Beginnings, a support group for friends and families of alcoholics, will meet at 6:30 p.m. each Wednesday

in the Zion Lutheran Church, 218 E. High St., Portland. For more information, call (260) 726-8229.

A BETTER LIFE - BRIANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for all kinds of addictions, will meet from 6:30 to 8 p.m. each Wednesday at Redkey United Methodist Church, 122 W. Main St. Come early for a meal. For more information, call Pastor Randy Davis at (765) 369-2085.

## Thursday

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.

# Sudoku

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

Level: Beginner

## Saturday's Solution

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

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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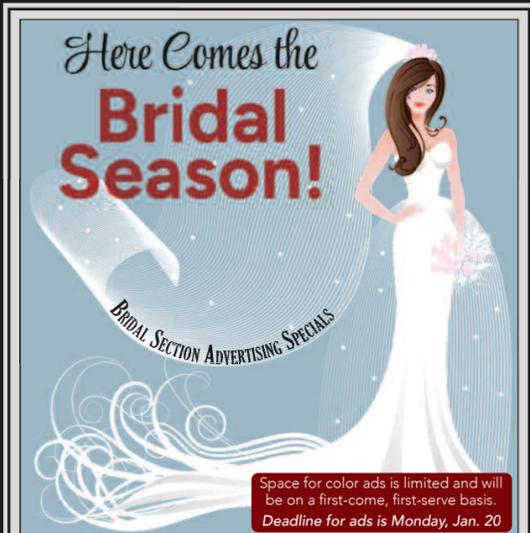
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## GRAPHIC PRINTING NEWSPAPERS

# Don't get distracted by vouchers

By NIKI KELLY

Indiana Capital Chronicle  
indianacapitalchronicle.com

You will likely hear a lot about universal vouchers when legislators return next week. Republicans who support school choice are all lining up to support it.

But I caution you to not be distracted by this effort. Indiana essentially already has universal vouchers, and this final step is actually very small. There are other education policies that do deserve your attention, though.

Lawmakers in 2023 expanded Indiana's voucher program, which provides thousands of dollars to pay private school tuition, by raising the income ceiling to 400% of the amount required for a student to qualify for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program, equal to about \$220,000. At the time, we quoted Betsy

**Niki Kelly**



Wiley, president and CEO of the Institute for Quality Education, as saying early number-crunching showed that only 3.5% of Hoosier families with school-aged kids would not qualify for vouchers under the new income limits.

"We would say it's universal," Wiley told the Indiana Capital Chronicle.

Lawmakers use the 400% of reduced lunch threshold, while other entitlement programs in the state use federal poverty

level to determine eligibility. The current eligibility guidelines equate to about 740% of the federal poverty level.

So, when you hear universal vouchers, they mean they will remove all income eligibility. The richest of the rich will now get state dollars to send their children to a private school. It will cost the state more. Though, given the behemoth price tag of the program already — about \$600 million in fiscal year 2025 — it's not much.

I believe there are more important debates to focus on for education stakeholders, starting with how much money is put toward tuition support for traditional public schools.

Every budget in recent years has spent more on education, and Republicans often ask Democrats what amount will be

enough. In fiscal year 2025, the estimate for tuition support is \$9 billion.

I don't know what that amount is, but I do know that schools face rising costs every year so there isn't likely a magic number. And teachers expect a raise each year to care for their own families.

A good beginning would be to give schools funding increases that exceed inflation. That hasn't been the case in some recent years. And it will be very hard to do this year as Indiana's tax revenues are expected to grow in the first year but remain flat in the second year.

Another key focus should be properly funding Indiana's pre-K program. Lawmakers expanded it statewide but didn't add funding to the pot. That has contributed to a waitlist for the program — though officials said last

month a waitlist would have occurred even without expanded eligibility.

And did I mention that the eligibility for that program is limited to 150% of the federal poverty level? That's about \$46,800 for a family of four. If that's not an inequity compared to vouchers, I don't know what is.

Private school vouchers are a way of life in Indiana and aren't going anywhere. It's time for opponents to focus on other policy decisions that will help children in public schools. I gave you a few to begin with.

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

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

## Tether and Trump could be dangerous

Bloomberg Opinion  
Tribune News Service

Perhaps nothing encapsulates the perils of crypto better than Tether Holdings Ltd.

Tether is a so-called stablecoin. It addresses one of cryptocurrencies' greatest drawbacks — extreme volatility — by mimicking the government-issued currencies crypto was supposed to replace. In return for actual dollars, it provides dollar-denominated digital tokens that can be sent across various platforms to anyone, anywhere without touching the regulated financial system.

Miraculously, Tether has survived various cataclysms to become the crypto world's stablecoin of choice. It has done so despite practices that would trigger a run on a traditional bank — such as effectively lending holders' dollars to an affiliated, insolvent crypto exchange. Controlled by a company registered in the British Virgin Islands, Tether still keeps a significant portion of its "reserves" in Bitcoin and unspecified loans and investments, and it has been looking to expand into commodity finance. It has about \$120 billion in tokens outstanding, roughly equivalent to a midsized US bank.

What could go wrong? Much already has. An almost comical cast of villains — including Russian arms dealers, Irish gangsters, North Korean hackers and Hamas — have used the stablecoin to move billions of dollars. Although Tether at times cooperates with authorities to freeze tokens, its persistent association with criminal activity suggests these efforts aren't entirely adequate. According to news reports, federal prosecutors have been investigating Tether, and the Treasury Department has considered imposing sanctions on the company, effectively prohibiting Americans from doing business with it. (Tether has denied wrongdoing.)

Now, though, President-elect Donald Trump's victory has radically changed Tether's outlook. Trump and his associates have embraced crypto enthusiastically. His nominee for commerce secretary, Howard Lutnick,

### Guest Editorial

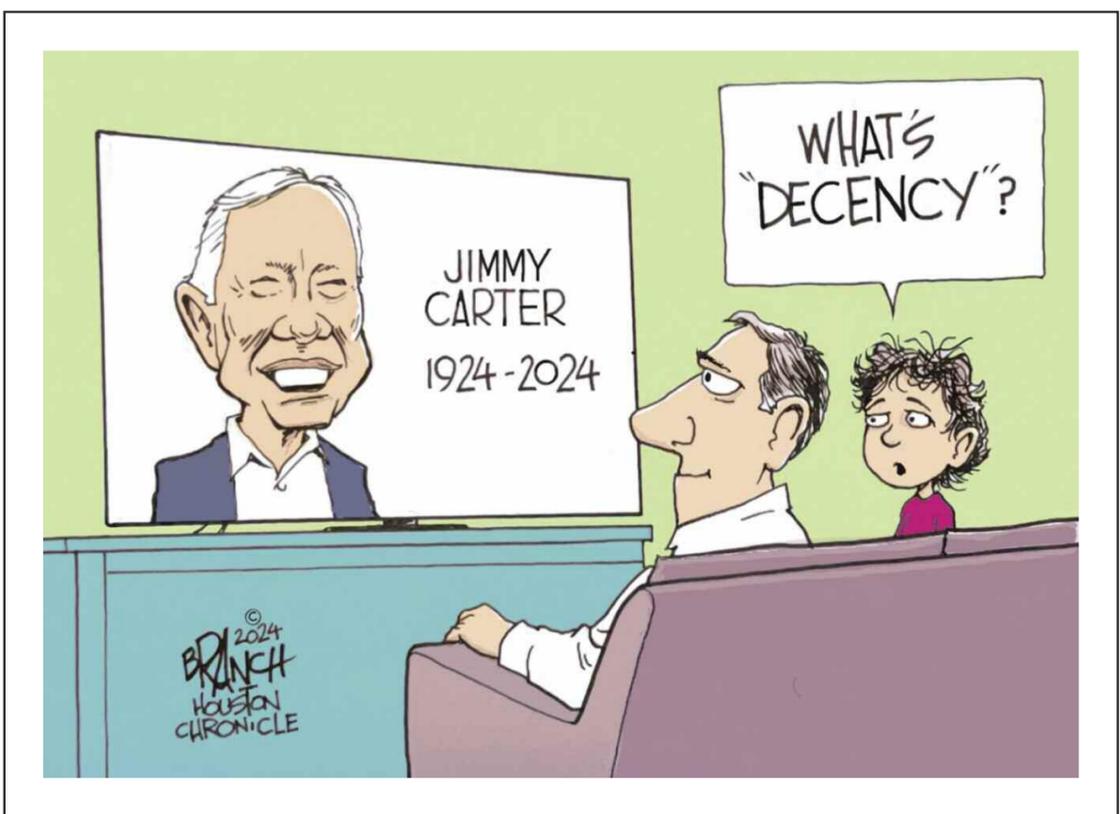
controls a firm — Cantor Fitzgerald LP — that recently struck a deal to take a 5% stake in Tether, makes tens of millions of dollars a year keeping custody of its assets, and has solicited its participation in a plan to lend billions of dollars against Bitcoin. Although Lutnick says he'll distance himself from his businesses if confirmed, he has remained a vocal supporter of Tether.

This combination — Trump and Tether — presents quite a few potential problems. Two in particular stand out.

First, the more Tether grows, takes on risks and becomes interconnected with Wall Street firms like Cantor, the greater the chance that crises in crypto will infect the broader financial system. Second, a resurgent Tether could vastly expand opportunities for illicit activity, undermining governments' ability to fight crime, counter terrorism and enforce sanctions. Trading volume more than doubled after the election, totaling about \$4.6 trillion in November.

No doubt, Scott Bessent and Jay Clayton, Trump's picks to head the Treasury Department and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, recognize the dangers. So might some legislators. Ideally, Congress would impose order, requiring stablecoin issuers to hold only safe and liquid assets and take much greater responsibility for monitoring trading and reporting suspicious activity. Barring that, Bessent and Clayton should use their ample powers — including the prospect of sanctions and prosecution — to achieve the same.

Ultimately, stablecoins — or at least the technology behind them — may have significant benefits, including making money transfers faster, cheaper and more transparent. It's in nobody's interest that they instead become a conduit for crime and a threat to financial stability.



## Congress has an old problem

By RICK SILVA

Red Bluff Daily News (California)  
Tribune News Service

Brandon Granger, the son of Texas Republican Rep. Kay Granger, informed the Dallas Express his mother has been battling "some dementia issues late in the year" and had been residing in an assisted-care facility for the last half year. The most recent vote she casted on the House floor was in July, and she has been absent for more than 300 votes since that time.

While this is certainly alarming news to hear, Granger is hardly an anomaly.

The median age of senators in the incoming 119th Congress will be 64 years old. In the House, the average age is 59. A majority of our current Supreme Court is past or approaching retirement age. Do senior officials possess the mental capacity or innovation crucial to lead the country?

Soon to be former president Joe Biden was just one example of the frailty of officials who demonstrated a decline in motor skills. The late Sen. Dianne Feinstein was a prime and depressing example of someone who should have stepped down before she was visibly impaired. Mitch McConnell, who was the victim of a few sporadic frozen public episodes, stepped down from Senate leadership but will remain in office until his term expires in 2026.

The senility situations of a sizable segment of numerous powerful and influential leaders in Washington is a quiet but growing scandal. Increasing public concern about leaders who are defiant and resist any suggestion to exit while their mental faculties are intact is amplified by a Congress that appears to be psychologically indif-

**Rick Silva**



ferent and confined to the days of yesteryear bereft of the political acumen crucial to effectively combat modern problems. Many are devoid of the ever-increasing social media platforms that are essential in effectively connecting with a younger as well as middle aged voting blocks. Connecting a number of polls earlier this year showed public unease about the ages of Biden and 78-year-old Donald Trump. Polls show upwards of 70% of Americans support the idea of implementing an age limit on candidates for president and for Congress, and a mandatory retirement age for Supreme Court justices, potential legal challenges notwithstanding.

In the early 1990s, certain activists employed such an initiative process to ratify passage of term limits on Congress in more than 20 states, without a single loss. Back in 1995, the Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that states cannot arbitrarily impose such term limits. Almost three decades later, the idea remains overwhelmingly popular as ever. If you have to be a certain age to run for certain offices, which makes sense, then shouldn't there be an age limit to prohibit persons from inhabiting certain positions?

Many high-ranking members of Congress have amassed colossal donor networks that provide them unchallengeable job protection, so they routinely recite the same fatigued filled arguments against

establishing term limits. Many of them claim it would result in staff and underlings running government affairs, only that's largely happening now! Most senators born before 1950 (and there are a disproportionate number of them) struggle with acute memory loss, cognitive decline and other health issues that often accompany most people as they get older.

It is highly obscene for our nation to let a potentially vibrant and well-received reform such as term limits for Congress be stifled by members' refusal to relinquish power. No one is saying that "no one over 60 need apply" to run for Congress. In fact, some elderly members would be very effective in serving in advisory capacities. Nonetheless, the nuts and bolts coupled with the daily demands of an increasingly complex nation and larger world require men and women who possess the energy, vision, technological skills and physical stamina pertinent to effectively deliver such demands.

Some critics of younger members, such as Alexandria Ocasio Cortez and Maxwell Frost, argue that they are "too aggressive" or should "wait for their turn" to pursue certain positions. The fact is they are members of the Millennial and Gen Z generations who are being directly affected by the current state of affairs. They are well aware of the fact that the nation is heading in a downward slope, they cannot afford to "wait" and that the "turn" that is needed is a sharp, decibel screeching U-Turn.

Watson is a professor of history, Black studies, and gender and sexuality studies at East Tennessee State University. He is also an author and public speaker.

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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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# AgBest honors Dunkirk station

A local convenience store and gas station was honored by its company. AgBest Express of Dunkirk was named the CountryMark Retail Station of the Year for 2024.

The award from the company recognizes a station that “consistently goes above and beyond to meet the needs of its customers.” CountryMark opened a new AgBest Express store in Dunkirk in July.

Stephanie Hicks manages Dunkirk’s AgBest Express location.

AgBest is a farmer-owned cooperative based in Muncie.

## Pepcon purchased

Poepelman Materials & Pepcon of Darke County announced its acquisition of Coate Concrete Products on New Year’s Day.

Based in Bradford, Ohio, Pepcon has been in the aggregates and ready-mixed concrete industry for decades. Coate is based in West Milton, Ohio.

“Family is at the heart of everything we do at Pepcon,” said Ben Poepelman, president of Pepcon. “Welcoming Coate Concrete Products into the Pepcon family allows us to honor and build upon the legacy that

## Business roundup

Craig Coate and his team have established. We look forward to combining our shared passion for quality, on-time delivery, and customer service to create something even stronger for the future.”

## Elevance acquires

Elevance Health last week completed its acquisition of Indiana University Health Plans.

The insurance plans through IU Health include coverage for about 19,000 via Medicare Advantage plans. Nearly 10,000 are also insured through employer plans.

With the purchase by Elevance, the plans will now operate as part of Anthem in Indiana.

“The acquisition of IU Health Plans supports Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield parent company’s whole-health strategy and will continue to support members, families, and communities across the entire care journey — connecting them to the care, support, and resources they need to lead healthier lives,”



Photo provided

AgBest Express of Dunkirk was named the CountryMark Retail Station of the Year for 2024. The honor goes to a station that “consistently goes above and beyond to meet the needs of its customers.”

Elevance said in the press release.

## Tips provided

With severe winter weather in full swing, CenterPoint Energy has launched its Winter Energy Guide.

The guide at centerpointenergy.com/readyforwinter provides resources including safety tips and ways to save energy.

Tips include:

- Having a supply of water and non-perishable food ready in case of an emergency situation. (Make sure to include pet food.)
- Maintaining a first-aid kit that includes bandages, antiseptics, gloves and medications.

- Keeping a supply of blankets, hand warmers, coats, scarves and gloves.
- Making sure to have emergency supplies such as flashlights and a portable

radio, with batteries charged.

## Training offered

ServSafe training will be available at John Jay Center for Learning in Portland.

The next session is scheduled from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 25.

Additional sessions are scheduled for March 25 and April 29.

The certification course

is open to all food service employees and emphasizes safe food- and beverage-handling practices to minimize the risk of food-borne illnesses.

For more information, or to register, call (260) 729-5525.

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Does your business have news to share? Email us at [news@thecr.com](mailto:news@thecr.com) to be included in our weekly business roundup.

# Court strikes down net neutrality rules

By MEG JAMES  
Los Angeles Times  
Tribune News Service

A federal appeals court on Thursday dealt a blow to President Biden’s Federal Communications Commission, striking down the agency’s hard-fought and long-debated open internet rules.

The FCC had sought to reinstate a sweeping policy established under President Obama that was designed to treat internet service as an essential public service, similar to a water or power utility.

Under the so-called net neutrality rules, internet service providers would have been subjected to greater regulation. A Republican-led commission repealed the rules in 2017 during President-elect Donald Trump’s first term.

Early last year, the FCC — then back under Democratic control — voted to formalize a national standard for internet service to prevent the blocking or slowing of information delivered over broadband internet lines. The core principle of open internet meant that internet service providers couldn’t discriminate among content suppliers.

## Order would’ve increased FCC oversight for internet providers

The order also would have given the FCC increased oversight to demand that internet providers respond to service outages or security breaches involving consumers’ data. The FCC cited national security, saying increased oversight was necessary for the commission to effectively crack down on foreign-owned companies that were deemed to be security threats.

But on Thursday, the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, based in Cincinnati, ruled that the five-member commission lacked the authority to reclassify broadband internet as a telecommunications service. The decision dismantles one of Biden’s major technology initiatives.

In its ruling, the 6th Circuit referred to the FCC’s net neutrality order as a “heavy-handed regulatory regime.”

The court said a recent U.S.

Supreme Court ruling had removed a judicial framework that allowed courts to interpret rules with deference to the federal agency that created them. The 6th Circuit said the FCC did not have the statutory authority to change the classification of broadband internet to a telecommunications service. That role rests with Congress.

The case was brought by the Ohio Telecom Association, a trade organization representing internet service providers.

FCC Chair Jessica Rosenworcel, who has long championed the net neutrality rules, called on lawmakers to take up the mantle in the wake of the court decision. She had shepherded the move to reinstate them during her tenure leading the agency and led the 3-2 party-line vote last year to restore the net

neutrality rules.

“Consumers across the country have told us again and again that they want an internet that is fast, open, and fair,” Rosenworcel said in a statement. “With this decision it is clear that Congress now needs to heed their call, take up the charge for net neutrality, and put open internet principles in federal law.”

The regulatory climate has changed dramatically in recent years and is expected to shift again after Trump moves back into the White House. Trump’s pick for FCC chairman, Brendan Carr, wrote a chapter on the FCC in the conservative policy blueprint Project 2025. Companies expect the commission under Carr to be more business-friendly.

“President Biden’s entire plan rested on the Chicken Little tactic of persuading Americans that the Internet would break in the absence of these so-called ‘net neutrality’ regulations,” Carr said in a statement. “The American people have now seen through that ruse.”

The net neutrality dispute hinged on the degree to which the FCC could regulate broadband internet service providers under the authority the commis-

sion received from Congress in the landmark Communications Act of 1934 and the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

“We hold that Broadband Internet Service Providers offer only an ‘information service’ ... and therefore, the FCC lacks the statutory authority to impose its desired net-neutrality policies through the ‘telecommunications service’ provision of the Communications Act.” 6th Circuit Judge Richard Allan Griffin wrote in the 26-page ruling.

Consumer groups, which lobbied for more than a decade for net neutrality regulations, lamented the decision.

“Today’s decision represents a major setback for consumers, competition, and the Open Internet,” John Bergmayer, legal director at Public Knowledge, said in a statement.

“In rejecting the FCC’s authority to classify broadband as a telecommunications service, the court has ignored decades of precedent and fundamentally misunderstood both the technical realities of how broadband works and Congress’ clear intent in the Communications Act.”

Net neutrality has been a seesaw battle for more than 15 years.

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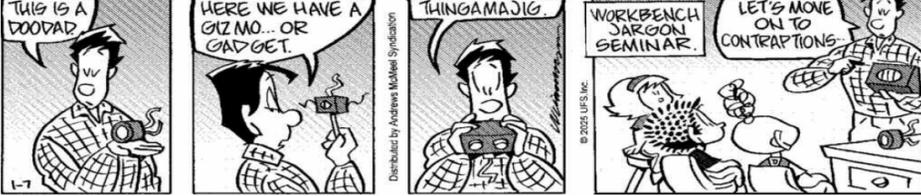
**THE FAMILY CIRCUS** By Bil Keane



**Peanuts**



**Rose is Rose**



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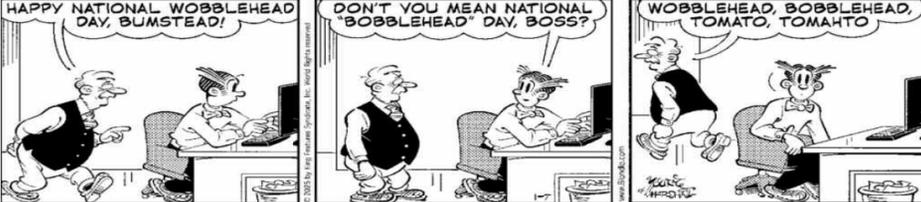
**Hi and Lois**



**Between Friends**



**Blondie**



**Snuffy Smith**



**Beetle Bailey**



**Contract Bridge** By Steve Becker

**Famous Hand — Part two**

East dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

**NORTH**  
♠ A  
♥ A 8 6 5 4  
♦ 9 3 2  
♣ 10 6 5 3

**WEST**  
♠ J 10 9 8 7 6 2  
♥ 10 7 3  
♦ 10  
♣ K J

**EAST**  
♠ 5 4 3  
♥ Q J 2  
♦ A K Q 7 6  
♣ 8 7

**SOUTH**  
♠ K Q  
♥ K 9  
♦ J 8 5 4  
♣ A Q 9 4 2

The bidding:  
East 1♠ South 1NT West 3♠ North 3NT  
Opening lead — jack of spades.

Yesterday we featured this deal from the 1974 match between Italy and North America where an Italian pair, holding the North-South cards at the first table, got to five clubs doubled and went down 800.

The bidding went very differently at the second table, where a North American pair reached three notrump with the North-South cards.

West led a spade to dummy's ace and declarer had to decide how to play the clubs. He needed five club tricks to make the contract and so was forced to assume that East had the king.

But when he led the ten of clubs from dummy and East followed low, South had to further decide whether East had the K-x of clubs or the K-J-x. After great thought, he played low from his hand.

West won with the jack and returned the ten of spades to declarer's king. South then led a heart to dummy's ace and — consistent with his original plan — took a second club finesse.

Disaster! West won with the king and cashed the 9-8-7-6 of spades, producing this position:

Tomorrow: It takes two to tango.  
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**1-7**

**CRYPTOQUIP**

ZIPX GPUPYDF YPGDYBI FDQG  
DYP BSFOKUDOKXL GKEKFDY

QDBOPYKD, OIPYP EKLIO QP D  
BSFOSYP ZDY.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: POPULAR MOVIE ABOUT A TROUPE OF BAD, OVERDRAMATIC PANTOMIME ACTORS: "THE SILENCE OF THE HAMS."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: L equals G

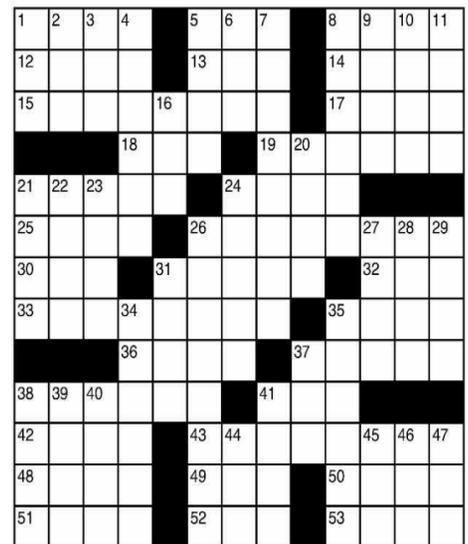
**CROSSWORD** By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Makes a choice
  - 5 Pear-shaped fruit
  - 8 "The Black Prince" author
  - 12 High point
  - 13 Hostel
  - 14 Central point
  - 15 "Citadel" actress
  - 17 Only
  - 18 Brooch
  - 19 Rappers' improvisations
  - 21 Signaled "Hi!"
  - 24 —
  - 25 Battery fluid
  - 26 Female royal
  - 30 Roulette bet
  - 31 Carried on, as war
  - 32 Pickles on "Rugrats"
  - 33 Inmate
- DOWN**
- 1 Antonym (Abbr.)
  - 2 Capita lead-in
  - 3 — chi
  - 4 Used a Zoom alter-native
  - 5 Twain hero
  - 6 Squid squirt
  - 7 More knotted, as a tree
  - 8 Har-monious
  - 9 Leeway
  - 10 Between jobs
  - 11 Beholds
  - 16 Help flush, e.g.
  - 21 Get bent out of shape
  - 22 Computer brand
  - 23 Caesar's "I saw"
  - 24 Implores
  - 26 Primitive flutes
  - 27 Wax-coated cheese
  - 28 Ledge
  - 29 Do in
  - 31 Courts
  - 34 Mollify
  - 35 Lengthy list
  - 37 —
  - 38 Leaf
  - 39 Flight-less birds
  - 40 Endure
  - 41 Easter bloom
  - 44 Classic car
  - 45 Dead heat
  - 46 Sinusitis doc
  - 47 Six, in Sicily

Solution time: 22 mins.



Yesterday's answer 1-7



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**90 SALE CALENDAR**

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The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Cole Forthofer attempts a layup while Muncie Central's Shemar Taylor (2) and Terry Miles (behind) contest the shot. Forthofer scored the go-ahead bucket in the fourth quarter and played a key role in Jay County's 1-3-1 zone defense that shut down the Bearcats.

## Wonder ...

Continued from page 8  
Forthofer was fouled by Terry Miles on the play but didn't convert the free throw. The Patriots did however cash in their next six free throws to ice the game away, as MCHS needed to commit fouls to extend the contest.

Jay County dominated the style of play, slowing down the Bearcats, who averaged 41.3 points per game prior to Saturday. MCHS often spent upward of 30 seconds on the offensive end of the floor trying to find a way to penetrate the zone.

"We were not trying to play slow on the offensive end, they force you to," said MCHS coach Justin Ullom. "We were trying to speed things up with the 1-3-1 and trapping all game. For the most part, we didn't make shots. ... Those last seven or eight possessions, they showed their maturity and how to win and we didn't."

Shemar Taylor and Landen Wells played key

Jay County Patriots vs. Muncie Central Bearcats		Score by quarters:	
		Mun. Cen.	8 10 5 5 — 28
		Jay Co.	6 7 9 14 — 36
Boys varsity summary			
Muncie Central (3-7)			
	FG-FGA	FT-FTA	PTS
Hiatt	2-5	0-1	4
Echols Jr.	1-4	0-0	2
Taylor	3-8	0-0	9
Wells	2-5	0-0	4
Johnson	3-9	0-1	7
Miles	0-3	0-0	0
Higgs	1-1	0-0	2
Burkhart	0-0	0-0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>12-35</b>	<b>0-4</b>	<b>28</b>
	<b>.343</b>	<b>0.000</b>	
Def. rebound percentage: .667			
Jay County (4-4)			
	FG-FGA	FT-FTA	PTS
Comer	2-6	2-2	8
Fuglett	0-0	0-0	0
Petro	2-2	0-1	4
Dirksen	0-1	0-0	0
Forthofer	2-6	0-1	4
Phillips	1-2	0-0	2
Griffin	1-5	0-0	2
Swoveland	5-10	5-6	16
Sommers	0-0	0-0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>13-32</b>	<b>7-10</b>	<b>36</b>
	<b>.406</b>	<b>.700</b>	
Def. rebound percentage: .807			
3-point shooting:			
Fort Recovery 4-16 (Taylor 3-8, Johnson 1-3, Hiatt 0-1, Echols Jr. 0-2, Wells 0-2). Jay County 3-10 (Comer 2-6, Swoveland 1-3, Griffin 0-1).			
Rebounds:			
Muncie Central 19 (Miles 5, Hiatt 3, Echols Jr. 3, Johnson 3, Wells 2, Team 2, Burkhart). Jay County 28 (Forthofer 8, Team 6, Griffin 4, Comer 3, Phillips 3, Petro 2, Swoveland 2).			
Assists:			
Muncie Central 8 (Wells 4, Hiatt 2, Echols Jr., Johnson). Jay County 6 (Griffin 4, Fuglett, Swoveland).			
Blocks:			
Muncie Central 2 (Wells, Miles). Jay County 3 (Forthofer, Griffin, Swoveland).			
Personal fouls:			
Muncie Central 16 (Wells 5, Echols Jr. 3, Taylor 3, Miles 2, Hiatt, Johnson, Higgs). Jay County 15 (Petro 3, Forthofer 3, Griffin 3, Swoveland 3, Phillips 2, Comer).			
Turnovers:			
Muncie Central 13. Jay County 14.			

roles for the Bearcats on offense as the former hit three triples for a team-high nine points, while the latter finished with four points and four assists.

Bomholt said he was overall impressed with the effort from his team, going down the line and

listing one or two things that each player did to help the Patriots come out with their fourth win of the season.

"I mean just everybody," Bomholt said. "Everybody that played did something really, really positive for us."

## Fires ...

Continued from page 8  
Fans turned apathetic to close out the season with Gillette Stadium half-empty for games against the Los Angeles Chargers and Bills. "Fire Mayo" chants were heard in the stands at both games. Fans were pictured at Sunday's game with bags on their heads and signs asking for Mayo's job.

The Patriots must now open their first head-coaching search in 25 years. Former Tennessee Titans head coach and ex-Patriots player Mike Vrabel is expected to be a strong candidate for the job.

Patriots executive vice president of player personnel Eliot Wolf is currently expected to remain in his current role as de-facto general manager.

Kraft released the following statement on his decision to fire Mayo:

"Unfortunately, the trajectory of our team's performances throughout the season did not ascend as I had hoped."

Mayo spent five years as a Patriots linebackers coach before being promoted to head coach. There was a succession

plan written into Mayo's contract that he would become the Patriots' next head coach after the team parted ways with Belichick. The team fired Belichick last January, so the Patriots were able to name Mayo as their next head coach without going through an interview process.

The Patriots now must con-

duct a full search for their next head coach. Vrabel, Lions offensive coordinator Ben Johnson and Vikings defensive coordinator Brian Flores are among this year's top candidates. Flores was a Patriots linebackers coach before being named Dolphins head coach in 2019. He was fired from the position after the 2021 season.

## Sports on tap

### Local schedule

**Today**  
Jay County — Swim vs. Belmont — 6 p.m.; Girls basketball (varsity only) at Concordia Lutheran — 6 p.m.; Boys wrestling vs. Coldwater — 6:30 p.m.; Junior high wrestling vs. Coldwater — 6:30 p.m.  
Fort Recovery — Swim tri-meet at South Adams — 5:30 p.m.; Girls basketball at Ansonia — 6 p.m.; Middle school girls basketball at New Bremen — 5 p.m.

**Thursday**  
Jay County — Swim tri meet — 6 p.m.; Freshman boys basketball vs. Anderson — 6 p.m.; Junior high boys basketball at Selma — 5:30 p.m.; Junior high girls basketball vs. Fort Recovery — 6 p.m.  
Fort Recovery — Girls basketball vs. New Bremen — 6 p.m.; Middle school boys basketball vs. Celina — 5:30 p.m.; Middle school girls basketball at Jay County — 6 p.m.

### TV sports

**Today**  
6:30 p.m. — College basketball: St. John's at Xavier (FS1)  
7 p.m. — College basketball: Pitt at Duke (ESPN); Tennessee at Florida (ESPN2)  
7 p.m. — Women's college basketball: UCLA at Purdue (BTN)  
7:30 p.m. — NBA: Los Angeles Lakers at Dallas Mavericks (TNT)  
8 p.m. — NHL: St. Louis Blues at

Minnesota Wild (FDSN Indiana)  
8:30 p.m. — Women's college basketball: DePaul at St. John's (FS1)  
9 p.m. — College basketball: Auburn at Texas (ESPN2)  
9 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Wisconsin at Washington (BTN)  
10 p.m. — NBA: Boston Celtics at Denver Nuggets (TNT)  
10:30 p.m. — College basketball: UNLV at Boise State (FS1)  
11 p.m. — College basketball: Loyola Marymount at St. Mary's (ESPN2)

**Wednesday**  
6:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Connecticut at Villanova (FS1)  
7 p.m. — Men's college basketball: USC at Indiana (BTN); Mississippi at Arkansas (ESPN2)  
7 p.m. — NBA basketball: Oklahoma City Thunder at Cleveland Cavaliers (ESPN); Chicago Bulls at Indiana Pacers (FDSN Indiana)  
7:30 p.m. — NHL hockey: Colorado Avalanche at Chicago Blackhawks (TNT)

9 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Penn State at Illinois (BTN)  
8:30 p.m. — Women's college basketball: USC at Maryland (FS1)  
9:30 p.m. — NBA basketball: San Antonio Spurs at Milwaukee Bucks (ESPN)  
10 p.m. — NHL hockey: Florida Panthers at Utah Hockey Club (TNT)  
10:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Air Force at San Diego State (FS1)

### 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.  
Parcel 2-20 acres of woods.  
Parcel 3-Combination of Parcels 1 and 2. Acreages are subject to pending survey. Farm has access off Highway 27.  
For more information contact Gary Loy, Auctioneer (260) 726-5160 or Kim Loy, Real Estate Broker at (260) 726-2700  
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Kaden Khayyata AU12400069

### 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.  
Marilyn Hough, Owner  
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### Public Notice

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To all occupiers of lands lying within the boundaries of the Jay County Soil and Water Conservation District, notice is hereby given that on the 26th day of February 2025, beginning at 6:00 P.M., an annual meeting will be held for the purpose of making a full and due report of their activities and financial affairs since the last annual meeting and to select a supervisor for the Jay County Soil and Water Conservation District of the State of Indiana. All land occupiers and other interested parties are entitled to attend. The meeting will be held at the Bob Schmit Memorial Building, Jay County Fairgrounds, Portland, Indiana.  
Dated this 2nd day of January, 2025  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**  
Kurt Theurer - Chairman  
Barry Miller - Vice Chairman  
Carl Walker - Secretary  
Rick Inlet - Treasurer  
Betty Drinkut - Supervisor  
Steve Rines - Associate Supervisor  
Dated this 2nd day of January, 2025  
CR 1-7-20254 HSPAXLP

### 260 PUBLIC AUCTION

**PUBLIC AUCTION**  
Saturday, January 11, 2025  
10 AM  
56.54 Acres- Sec. 4 Bearcreek Twp. Farm is located ¼ mile East of US 27 on the Jay & Adams County Line.  
Tract 1 – 38.72 acres Tract 2 – 17.82 acres and combined  
Sale Location: Bearcreek Farms 8341 N 400 E, Bryant, IN 47326  
**Marilyn Hough, Owner**  
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Terms of Sale: 10% nonrefundable deposit day of auction with balance due at closing. Closing to be within 45 days of auction. Possession at closing. Sellers to provide Owners Title Insurance and Warranty Deed. Buyer to assume taxes due and payable in May 2025 and thereafter. Any inspections need to be made prior to auction date and will be at the buyer's expense. Any statements made day of auction will take precedence over previously printed or oral matter. For more information or private showing contact GARY LOY, Auctioneer at (260) 726-5160, KIM LOY, Real Estate Broker at (260) 726-2700 or MISSY PUTERBAUGH at (260) -224-4200.  
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# Sports

## 1-3-1 wonder

### Jay suffocates Bearcats with zone switch

By ANDREW BALKO  
The Commercial Review

The Bearcats and Patriots were already playing at the pace of molasses.

The Patriots needed to find something to slow the Bearcats down just a little bit more so they could take their first lead since the start of the second quarter.

When Jerry Bomholt moved his team into a 1-3-1 zone, it not only slowed the Bearcats down, but brought them to complete halt.

After switching from their normal 3-2 zone to a 1-3-1, the Jay County High School boys basketball team shut off the water over the final six minutes to beat the Muncie Central Bearcats 36-28 on Saturday.

The Patriots (4-4) were down 23-22 entering the third quarter and gave up the first five points of the period to Muncie Central (3-7) on a Kanon Higgs post up and a Jaxson Johnson triple.

Gradin Swoveland — he led all scorers with 16 points — broke the ice for Jay County with a pull-up jump shot at the 6 minute, 13 second mark, prompting a timeout.

Following the timeout, the Patriots were in a 1-3-1 zone with 6-foot, 9-inch Cole Forthofer near the half-court line, Aiden Phillips at the free throw line, Tucker Griffin and Swoveland extended out to either side and Jayden Comer running the baseline.

“Sometimes it’s extremely difficult to play against a really quick team,” said

JCHS coach Jerry Bomholt. “What we were able to do tonight is we were smart enough to get a different defender. So we got it in possessions where we could use the backline, the 10-second line and the sideline.

“We tried to funnel the ball and not let it stay in the middle. ... We’ve got Cole and with his size, as long as we could stop the dribble, his size caused trouble. Then we got a couple of really, really good steals from behind them, we got four great rebounds where we didn’t give them a second shot.”

The new alignment gave the Bearcats fits, shutting them out for the final six minutes of the game. On the other end of the floor, Jay County scored 12 straight points after implementing the zone for 14-0 run with Swoveland’s basket just before the change.

Swoveland scored the next two baskets to pull within one possession of the Bearcats. Griffin tied the game with 2:32 left by nailing a jumper from the right elbow.

One minute later, JCHS took the lead on a baseline-out-of-bounds play designed for Forthofer.

“Jayden threw the ball up to me up high, I just jumped up and caught it and got lucky it went in,” Forthofer said. “This year we haven’t been a great first-half team but we came back in the second half, played tough and got a win.”

See Wonder page 7



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Gradin Swoveland, a junior at Jay County High School, glides in for a layup during the Patriots’ 36-28 victory over Muncie Central on Saturday. Swoveland led JCHS with 16 points in the game, including eight in the fourth quarter.

## Jay falls at Yorktown

YORKTOWN — Opening the 2025 portion of their schedule against consecutive Hoosier Heritage Conference opponents proved difficult for the Patriots.

Jay County High School’s girls basketball team dropped its second consecutive game following a four-game winning streak Saturday as it fell 54-41 to the Yorktown Tigers.

Saturday’s loss followed a 77-29 defeat Thursday to HHC squad Pendleton Heights. The Patriots had closed the 2024 portion of their schedule with wins over Adams Central (overtime), Blackford, New Castle (overtime) and South Adams.

### Patriots drop second in a row to HHC rivals

Jay County (7-7) had a tough time against the Tigers from the start, falling behind 12-2 in the opening period. It was down by 20 at halftime before closing the gap thanks to a 20-8 advantage in the fourth quarter.

Hallie Schwieterman and Elizabeth Brunswick each scored in double figures for the Patriots, totaling 16 and 10 points, respectively. Raylah Newton added eight points.

Gabi Petro finished with team highs of six rebounds and three assists.

The game at Yorktown started a long road stretch for the Patriots, who will travel to Concordia tonight and Bluffton on Friday before the Allen County Athletic Conference Tournament next week and then a visit to Norwell on Jan. 21. Their next home game is Jan. 23 against Delta.

## Indians’ skid hits four

the Botkins Trojans for their fourth straight loss.

The game got away from the Indians (3-7) in the third quarter when they got doubled up 18-9. The result was a 42-25 deficit after they had trailed by eight at halftime.

Grant Fortkamp was the only FRHS player to reach double figures as he scored 19 points. A dozen of those points came in the fourth quarter while the other seven were in the first.

Breaker Jutte followed Fortkamp for the Indians, scoring all of his even points in the second half. Briggs Overman and Brody Barga had six points apiece.

Fort Recovery will be on the road again Friday at New Bremen before playing its first home game of 2025 on Jan. 14 against St. Henry.

### Fort Recovery boys season has been a roller coaster

BOTKINS — The Indians opened with three straight losses.

Then they won three in a row. They’re back in the midst of the wrong kind of streak.

Fort Recovery High School’s boys basketball team fell 62-49 Saturday to

## New England fires coach

By ANDREW CALLAHAN and DOUG KYED  
Boston Herald  
Tribune News Service

BOSTON — The New England Patriots have fired Jerod Mayo after his first season as head coach, team owner Robert Kraft announced Sunday.

Mayo’s firing comes at the end of a 4-13 campaign, one of the worst in franchise history. Mayo,

38, was hired less than a year ago and named Bill Belichick’s successor after the 2023 season.

The Patriots won Mayo’s final game as head coach 23-16 over a 13-4 Buffalo Bills team that rested its starters.

Patriots players publicly stated their support for Mayo, but team sources have described a poor culture with a lack of leadership that can

make demanding and decisive decisions.

After a season-opening upset at Cincinnati, the Patriots endured two six-game losing streaks and regressed over the second half of the year. Mayo also committed several missteps with his messaging, while his locker room frequently pointed fingers after hard losses.

See Fires page 7

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