

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

Dunkirk planning



Elevate

City seeks building transfer

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review

Development is in the works in Dunkirk.

One step in the process started with Jay County Commissioners on Monday. Commissioners agreed to move forward with a resolution to transfer real estate to a nonprofit organization.

Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation owns the former Stewart Brothers Furniture Store at 304 S. Main St., explained county attorney Wes Schemenaur. He noted there have been several proposals for developing the building over the years.

“One of the issues that’s come up repeatedly is there’s a building directly to the south of there that’s in pretty bad shape, and the idea would be, the DIDC could get the title to that and then be able to do something about it ...” Schemenaur said.

Dunkirk City Council on Monday approved Mayor Jack Robbins moving forward with talks with developers about the possibility of adding 30-plus apartments on a property recently purchased by Dunkirk Industrial Development corporation on the south side of the city. The 9.8 acres is located just east of Indiana 167 near the city’s Family Dollar store.

Mayor OK’d to pursue apartments

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review

DUNKIRK — The city looked to get a jump of several projects Monday.

In its first meeting of 2025, Dunkirk City Council agreed to move forward with plans for a new apartment development and an effort to seek grant funding for a water line project.

It also agreed to advertise a proposed update to the city’s water ordinance for a public hearing at its next meeting.

Dunkirk Mayor Jack Robbins said he has been in contact with two developers regarding almost 10 acres of land now owned by Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation on the south side of

the city. He said the developers estimated 32 to 36 apartments could be constructed on the site, which is east of Family Dollar.

Council members Jesse Bivens, Christy Curts, Dan Watson, Donna Revolt and Randy Murphy voted unanimously to authorize Robbins to continue talking with contractors regarding plans and cost estimates for such a project.

Robbins also asked council for permission to continue gathering information about a potential project to loop water lines. He explained that several dead-end water lines result in rusty water and that a master plan approved in 2019 called for looping lines on Hickory and Elm

streets as well as Blackford Avenue.

He noted that with the city’s grant for its recent water detention project close, it is now eligible to apply for new funding. He told council such a grant would require a 20% match from the city.

Council members voted unanimously for Robbins to move forward with the process of choosing a grant writer and getting estimates for the project.

They also gave city attorney Wes Schemenaur the go-ahead to advertise proposed updates to the water ordinance that include the following:

- Adding a \$20 fee for those who fail to meet for a scheduled

appointment with water department staff

- Instituting a meter antennae replacement of \$8 for those that are lost or damaged.
- Increasing the after-hours service call fee to \$50 from the current \$35
- Creating a \$100 tampering fee in addition to the cost of repairs and any water usage for anyone who accesses water pits without authorization.
- Adding a temporary user fee of \$50 plus the cost of water
- Changing to a \$50 disconnection fee for late payment

Council will hold a public hearing on the changes at its Jan. 27 meeting.

See **Apartments** page 2

That could involve tearing down the building and utilizing the empty lot as additional parking space or for future development.

The building, located at 303 S. Main St., has been in a tax sale twice. Commissioners currently hold a tax sale certificate for the property.

Schemenaur noted that because the county has the tax sale certificate, it is allowed to transfer it to a nonprofit organization such as Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation.

“This is the first step in that process,” said Schemenaur.

In order to move forward, Schemenaur added, the county needed to agree Monday to begin the process of transferring the property to a nonprofit organization or the public.

See **Building** page 5

HVAC update approved

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review

FORT RECOVERY — The elementary and middle school will get some heating and air conditioning upgrades in the next year.

Fort Recovery School Board OK’d entering into an agreement Monday with Garmann Miller of Minster for a heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) project at Fort Recovery Elementary-Middle School.

School board members hired the company in February 2024 to conduct a facilities assessment on the district’s assets. Garmann Miller representatives shared their findings in October with school board, talking about various repairs the district could expect to make in the next 25 years to its buildings.

Superintendent Tony Stahl explained to the school board in December that the elementary/middle school building has

School board hires Garmann Miller for elementary-middle project

variable air volume boxes, which control airflow and are original to the building from when it was first constructed more than two decades ago. Although the school district has been able to replace parts as needed previously, it’s becoming harder to find them in a timely manner.

Garmann Miller will provide architectural and engineering services related to upgrading the school’s HVAC equipment. Hopes are to gather information and bid

the project to contractors early this year, with work to begin in the summer. Stahl explained the plan would be to finish work in student areas such as classrooms by August.

In related business on Monday, school board members OK’d establishing capital project funds for maintaining, improving, renovating or constructing high school facilities and athletic facilities.

See **Approved** page 5



Tribune News Service/dpa/Sebastian Kahnert

Candidate nominated

Tino Chrupalla, Alternative for Germany national chairman and parliamentary group leader, and Alice Weidel, AfD national chairwoman, stand on stage at the AfD’s national party conference following Weidel’s nomination as candidate for chancellor in the upcoming federal elections.

Deaths

Alice Miller, 91, Portland
Larry Nuckols, 53, Portland
Douglas Hammers, 64, Saginaw, Michigan
Details on page 2.

Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 28 degrees early Monday before dipping to a low of 9.

Tonight’s low will be 7 with a slight chance of snow and winds gusting to 25 miles per hour. Expect mostly cloudy skies with a high of 30 Thursday. 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

Thursday — Details from the opening round of the ACAC basketball tournament.

Friday — Coverage of this week’s Portland Board of Aviation meeting.

Saturday — Results from the IHSAA girls wrestling state finals.



Obituaries

Alice Miller

Sept. 23, 1933-Jan. 11, 2025
Alice L. Miller, age 91, of Portland passed away on Saturday, Jan. 11, 2025, in IU Health Jay County Hospital.



Miller

She was born in Muncie on Sept. 23, 1933, the daughter of Earl and Nellie (Austin) Byrd. She married Norman Miller on Aug. 13, 1967, and he passed away on Jan. 12, 2018. Alice had worked for Hardy Chevrolet for 30 years and retired from MainSource Bank.

She was a 1951 Portland High School graduate and a member of Westchester Church where she taught Sunday School.

Surviving are three stepsons, Barry Miller (companion: Valerie Aspy) of Portland, Greg Miller (wife: Shirley) of Portland and Todd Miller (wife: Lori) of Portland; two brothers, Earl Byrd Jr. and John Byrd; 11 grandchildren; and 17 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by a stepson, David Miller; brothers Richard Byrd and William Byrd; a sister, Mildred Northcut; and daughter-in-law Maryanne Miller.

Funeral services will be 11 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 16, in The Church at Westchester with Pastor Darrell Borders presiding. Burial will follow in the Gravel Hill Cemetery. Visitation will be in the church from 9 to 11 a.m.

Baird-Freeman Funeral Home is handling the arrangements. Memorials can be made to Westchester Building Fund.

Condolences may be expressed at bairdfreeman.com.

Larry Nuckols

June 16, 1971-Jan. 10, 2025
Larry Nuckols, age 53, of Portland passed away on Jan. 10, 2025, in the line-of-duty while working as a paramedic at Jay Emergency Medical Service.

He was born in Bluffton, Indiana, on June 16, 1971, the son of Dick and Darlene (Dolly) Nuckols. He served in EMS for over 32 years and was also a U.S. Army

veteran with three combat deployments who served until retirement.

He was a 1990 Blackford High School graduate.

He is survived by his sister Carol Nuckols-Deavers (husband: Eric); brother Richard Nuckols (wife: Jamie); and half-sisters Kimberly Franks and Melissa Creamer. He is also survived by sons Vance Guntle, Joseph Nuckols and Zachary Nuckols; daughters Erika Nuckols (fiancé: Christopher Fitzsimmons), Kylee Kaehr and Elizabeth Nuckols; grandchildren Brooklyn Limbert, Peyton Limbert and Christian Fitzsimmons; many nieces and nephews; and wife Angela Nuckols.

He was preceded in death by mother Darlene (Dolly) Nuckols in 2014; father Dick Nuckols in 2020; and nephew Dustin Franks in 2023.

Funeral services will be Friday, Jan. 17, at 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Baptist Church

with Pastor Galen Fitzsimmons presiding. Burial will follow in the Green Park Cemetery. Visitation will be Thursday from noon to 7 p.m. in the Baird-Freeman Funeral Home.

Memorials can be made to Fallen Heroes or choice of the donor.

Condolences may be expressed at bairdfreeman.com.

Douglas Hammers

July 7, 1960-Jan. 11, 2025
Douglas R. Hammers, age 64, of Saginaw, Michigan, passed away on Saturday, Jan. 11, 2025, at his home.

He was born in Portland on July 7, 1960, the son of Rex and Phyllis (French) Hammers. He was married on Dec. 10, 1983, to Tonya Dunlavy who survives.

Doug retired from Motorola after 35 years. He was a 1978 Jay County High School graduate and enjoyed yard work, camping and spending time with family and friends.

Surviving are his wife Tonya; mother Phyllis Hammers of

Portland; daughter Jennifer Bjurstrom (husband: Robert) of Saginaw, Michigan; in-laws Monte and Marada Dulavy of Portland; and two grandchildren, Alexandra and Taylor.

Funeral services will be Wednesday, Jan. 15, at 2 p.m. in the Baird-Freeman Funeral Home. Burial will follow in the Lawndale Cemetery. Visitation will be from 1 to 2 p.m.

Memorials can be made to the 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.



Hammers

CR almanac

Thursday 1/16	Friday 1/17	Saturday 1/18	Sunday 1/19	Monday 1/20
32/25	40/35	38/17	21/0	6/-3
Thursday's forecast shows mostly cloudy skies with wind gusts reaching up to 25 mph.	There's a 60% chance of rain on Friday when temperatures may hit the mid 30s at night.	Another chance of rain on Saturday under mostly cloudy skies all day. The low may reach 15.	More mostly cloudy skies are in the forecast for Sunday, when the high will be in the 20s.	Martin Luther King Jr. Day may have temperatures get below zero at night.

Lotteries

Powerball Monday 4-6-16-39-66 Power Ball: 9 Power Play: 2 Estimated jackpot: \$303 million	Daily Four: 5-5-5-2 Quick Draw: 3-8-13-16-17-20-21-25-33-34-40-44-51-54-58-60-62-68-71-77 Cash 5: 14-15-19-36-37 Estimated jackpot: \$95,000
Mega Millions Estimated jackpot: \$95 million	Ohio Monday Midday Pick 3: 0-4-8 Pick 4: 9-1-5-8 Pick 5: 1-0-1-3-8 Evening Pick 3: 2-2-6 Pick 4: 5-3-6-8 Pick 5: 9-6-7-0-2 Rolling Cash: 6-21-29-36-37 Estimated jackpot: \$150,000
Hoosier Monday Midday Daily Three: 5-5-4 Daily Four: 5-0-1-8 Quick Draw: 1-3-4-6-11-14-21-23-29-32-34-39-44-53-59-65-67-70-74-79 Evening Daily Three: 4-8-5	

Markets

Cooper Farms Fort Recovery Corn.....4.77 Feb. corn4.78 March corn4.80	Feb. beans10.52 Wheat 4.96
POET Biorefining Portland Corn.....4.77 Feb. corn4.79 March corn4.81	ADM Montpelier Corn.....4.69 Feb. corn4.69 Beans10.47 Feb. beans10.50 Wheat5.05
The Andersons Richland Township Corn4.72 Feb. corn4.72 Beans10.49	Heartland St. Anthony Corn.....4.76 Feb. corn4.76 Beans10.23 March beans10.28 Wheat4.86

Today in history

In 1759, the British Museum opened to the public. Established as an act of Parliament about five years prior, the museum was created to hold world-renowned antiquities and artifacts. Its belongings include the Elgin Marbles and Rosetta Stone.

In 1967, the Green Bay Packers of the National Football League defeated the Kansas City Chiefs of the American Football League in the first Super Bowl game. The Packers took home the trophy for winning the game ending in 35-10.

— The CR

Citizen's calendar

Today 4 p.m. — Portland Board of Aviation, airport, 661 W. 100 North.	Recovery Village Council, village hall, 201 S. Main St. 6:30 p.m. — Fort Recovery Village Council public hearing, village hall, 201 S. Main St.
Thursday 6 p.m. — Jay County Board of Zoning Appeals, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland.	Tuesday 5:30 p.m. — Portland City Council, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St.
Monday 6:00 p.m. — Fort	

Apartments ...

Continued from page 1
Bivens also presented the council with a copy of the fire hydrant use agreement, which includes a \$135 fee plus the current rate for water. It indicates liability for any damage and sets out other requirements for users.

Council also agreed to be the petitioner for vacating an alley that runs between Hoover and Indiana streets north of High Street. The alley was thought to have been vacated decades ago but there are no records indicating such in the county recorder's office.

In other business, the council:
• Re-elected Bivens as council president.
• After a brief discussion, agreed

to pay out 444 hours of unused vacation time form 2024 totaling \$11,147.88. Clerk-treasurer Kara Lowe said the request should have been made before the end of the year to allow 2024 funds to be used and suggested that such a payout should be capped at 80 hours, similar to what other departments receive for holidays. Robbins pushed for paying out the unused days, noting that the police department is not comparable to others because it is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Council unanimously approved paying out the unused overtime hours but agreed that any such future requests should be made before the end of each year.

• Heard from Robbins that equipment to allow for the live-streaming of meetings is ready to be installed. (Live-streaming will be required by state law beginning July 1.)

• Approved the following: payment of \$19,900 for work on two well pumps the city is working to put back into service; a \$200 sponsorship for West Jay Community Center; and payment of \$335,801.56 in claims.

• Heard a question from Revolt regarding contractors that have put in outdoor pickleball courts. Schemenaur pointed her to Portland Park Board president Brian Ison, noting that pickleball courts were installed at Milton Miller Park last year.

Felony arrests

Obstruction
A Portland woman was arrested Sunday for obstruction of justice.

Gloria V. Langston, 49, 1332 N. Ben Hawkins Ave.,

was preliminarily charged with a Level 6 felony. She was released on a \$3,000 bond from Jay County Jail.

Capsule Reports

Left the road
A Portland man lost control of his truck and crashed into a house along U.S. 27 about 5:26 p.m. Sunday.

Alexander J. Mathews, 24, was driving a 2013 Ford F-150 north on the highway near county road 500 North when he left the road for an unknown reason, according to a Jay County Sheriff's Office report. The vehicle he was driving left the road, went down into a ditch and struck the side of a building at 4707 N. U.S. 27, Portland, owned by Brent Cline.

Alexander Mathews complained of head pain, and his passenger, 4-year-old Leon Mathews of Portland, sustained bruising on his face. Alexander Mathews allegedly left the scene of the accident with Leon Mathews.

Mathews was arrested Sunday for leaving the scene of an accident resulting in a serious bodily injury, a Class C misdemeanor, and neglect of a

dependent, a Level 6 felony. He was released from Jay County Jail on an \$11,000 bond. His vehicle was towed. Damage is estimated between \$10,000 and \$25,000.

Arm pain

A Dunkirk man complained of arm pain after he lost control of his vehicle along county road 400 South and hit a pole about 1 p.m. Sunday.

Larry D. Richwine, 73, was driving his 2013 Chrysler 200 west on the road near county road 800 West when he lost control of his car on the snow-covered road. Richwine's vehicle slid and went off the south side of the road, striking an American Electric Power utility pole.

Richwine was transported to IU Health Jay for his injury. His vehicle was towed, with damage estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

Backing accident

A Portland man crashed into a Pennville man backing his vehicle out of his driveway along county road 550 West about 10 a.m. Saturday.

See page 5

SERVICES

Wednesday
Hammers, Douglas: 2 p.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

Thursday
Miller, Alice: 11 a.m., The Church at Westchester, 4487 E. 400 North, Portland.

Friday
Nuckols, Larry: 10 a.m., Fellowship Baptist Church, 289 S. 200 West, Portland.

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*Ads must run in January

Illnesses impacted family's first Christmas

By CHRIS SCHANZ

The Commercial Review

It was supposed to be different.

A baby's first anything is a momentous occasion.

Whether it be first steps, first words or first holiday, it is worth celebrating.

Our first Christmas as a family of three, however, was uneventful.

For starters, I was coming down with my semi-annual sore throat. It seems the second iteration of the affliction comes right around when the weather changes from fall to winter. The other is generally in the spring.

At the same time, Baby Schanz had an ear issue we were in the thick of battling. We visited medical

Parental Ponderings



professionals on four occasions, each giving us different advice and separate treatments. To date, we're still fighting the virus, but the latest medication seems to be having the best effect.

Lastly, Chrissy was fighting sinus issues she most likely got from our asymptomatic daughter.

Needless to say, when coworkers asked about the baby's first Christmas, instead of getting to say "It

was magical," I instead replied with: "We were all in varying stages of illnesses."

We still made the best out of the situation. When life gives you lemons, right?

I used vacation days and took the entire week of Christmas off from work. On Monday, Baby Schanz had her 9-month well child appointment — she's in the fourth percentile for height! — and I took her to day care afterward. Despite me not having to work, I sent her to day care for three days so I could get some things done around the house — time to clean! — and also to have some time by myself while Chrissy was at work.

Baby Schanz was home with me on Christmas Eve, and that afternoon once Chrissy got home we did a video call with her side of the family to open gifts we did for Secret Santa.

Later that evening we went to my brother's house for the holiday, and Baby Schanz had a blast. Although we gave her a little assistance, she had a great time ripping open the wrapping paper to see what was inside.

I can't wait until she's a bit older, gets super excited and tears through the paper like the Tasmanian devil. It's going to be adorable.

Christmas Day, as planned, was spent at home

with just the three of us. We didn't want the hassle of packing everything up to leave the house, so we stayed in our pj's and watched holiday movies. It also allowed us some time to recover from our ailments.

We had our gift exchange too, and our daughter opened the few items she got from Santa.

In all, it was a great first Christmas as a family of three. While it certainly could have been better if we weren't fighting off viruses, it was still one we'll be able to look back on and say "Remember when we were all sick on our first Christmas?" and laugh about it.

We surely could have been more sick to make the holiday worse, so we're thankful we weren't completely down for the count with it being our first Christmas.

I just hope we're all healthy and fine for her first big trip, which also coincides with her first birthday, in March.

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Chris Schanz is a former CR Sports Editor who will most likely be sick for the next 10 years because child care facilities are petri dishes for viruses. Send tips for immune system help to christopher.schanz@gmail.com.

Ex-husband may force his way back on the radar

DEAR ABBY: My ex-husband and I share a 3-year-old grandchild through our son. Until now, it hasn't been a big problem because I live in the same city as my son's family, but that's about to change. My grandson is the joy of my life, and I plan to visit wherever they move after my son's job transfer. I had been considering a move back to our hometown. Unbeknownst to me, my son has also been considering a move back there.

The problem for me is that my ex-husband still lives there, and he's inclined to take over and monopolize the child in the same way he did with our son. He remains hostile toward me 20 years after our divorce.

Part of me says I need to be willing to put up with the pain of being in close proximity to my ex to be near my grandson. However, it reminds me strongly of staying married to him

Dear Abby



for the sake of what I perceived to be our children's well-being. In hindsight that was, of course, misguided. Despite my reservations, should I set aside my doubts, move back to my home city and see what happens? — DECISIONS TO MAKE

DEAR DECISIONS: Discuss your reservations with your son and daughter-in-law. If your ex-husband tries to monopolize their child, could they put the brakes on it? On the plus side, you are not the same woman you were 20 years ago. I'd like to think that

you are stronger and smarter now.

If I'm right, while your ex may present a pain in the behind, it would be a tolerable pain, and you would have the access you want to your grandchild.

.....
DEAR ABBY: My mother-in-law has a habit that makes me sick to my stomach. When we are out to dinner with her, she frequently asks, "Can I have a taste of that?" Then, without waiting for a response, she'll stick her fork or spoon into my food and take a piece of it. It nauseates me when I try to eat the rest of the serving. I don't know how to deal with this. She is very sensitive and easily offended, and I have always had the feeling she doesn't like me and doesn't think I'm good enough for her son.

I have asked my husband to nicely ask his mother to stop

doing this, but he refuses because he doesn't want to insult his mother. When I told him it makes me sick to my stomach, he asked if I have ever actually gotten sick from eating food her used utensils have touched, and I had to admit that I have not. So he said, "Then where's the harm?" It still really bothers me. What can I do? — MY FOOD IS MINE

DEAR FOOD IS MINE: Whether your mother-in-law thinks you aren't good enough for her precious son is irrelevant. Because tolerating her rudeness hasn't endeared you to her, you might as well start standing up for yourself. The next time she asks for "a taste of that" smile, grab your plate, cut her off a piece and then hand it to her.

.....
DEAR ABBY: I have been

married to my wife for 10 years. She is the first and only woman I have ever been with. I continue finding myself looking at porn, talking online to other women and asking them for pictures.

I don't know why I do this, and I don't want to continue down this road. What would be a first step to take to show my wife I'm serious about kicking this big problem to the curb? — SEES A PROBLEM IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR 'SEES': A strong step in the right direction would be to tell your wife you recognize your online activities have gotten out of control and start talking about them with a licensed psychotherapist. There are also 12-step groups you can find online to help you kick the habit. I congratulate you for having taken the first step by writing to me.

Community Calendar

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

Today

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.

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.

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 — BRIGANNA'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

STITCH AND CHATTER QUILT CLUB — Meets from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at Jay Community Center. Show and teal is at 1 p.m. The club is open to all ages and is for anyone who wants to sew. Bring unfinished projects and a sewing machine. For more information, call Nan Weesner (260) 766-9334.

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) 251-8792.

EN AVANT CLUB — Meets at 1 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month.

ORGAN TRANSPLANT SUPPORT GROUP — Will

meet at 3 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month in the IU Health Blackford main conference room.

PORTLAND LIONS CLUB — Will meet at 6:30 p.m. the third Thursday of the month at Portland Lions Civic Center, 307 W. 100 North.

FORGET-ME-NOT — A support group for parents, friends and relatives who have lost a baby through miscarriage, birth or illness will meet from 7 to 9 p.m. at St. Vincent Randolph Hospital, Winchester, in community room 1. For more information, call Kimberly Sibery at (765) 964-6075 or Nikki Bosworth at (765) 584-6452.

Friday

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

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

Sudoku

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

Level: Intermediate

Tuesday's Solution

5	8	2	1	4	9	7	3	6
7	6	9	3	2	8	5	1	4
3	1	4	5	6	7	9	8	2
1	3	7	6	9	4	2	5	8
2	4	5	8	7	1	6	9	3
6	9	8	2	5	3	4	7	1
8	7	6	4	1	5	3	2	9
4	5	1	9	3	2	8	6	7
9	2	3	7	8	6	1	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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Staff found way to get the job done

Editor's note: This column is being reprinted from Jan. 14, 2005. Oddly enough, the situation Jack shares came up in conversation last week when I was chatting with former reporter Jen Tarter about the minuscule amount of snow that fell Jan. 5 and 6. These are the kind of moments, forged in fire — or in this case, ice — that are remembered forever. It's special when a team comes together and is able to succeed under difficult circumstances. A commitment to doing so is a quality Jack instilled in all who worked for him.

By JACK RONALD
The Commercial Review

What does the boss do when his employees look at him as if he has lost his mind?

That's the question I was faced with Thursday morning, standing in the dark and chilling offices of the newspaper in Portland. At that early hour, only a handful of employees had made it in.

But it was a pretty remarkable handful. Pressman Brian Dodd had driven all the way from Daleville because we had been

Back in the Saddle



scheduled to unload a truck of newsprint that morning. He didn't see a single electric light burning during the whole drive to work. Classified advertising representative Helen Rouch was there, even though there was no way to take a classified ad; instead, she showed up with a pot of coffee, thanks to a generator at home.

Huddled together in the dark, they looked more than skeptical when I started talking about getting the paper out.

No power. No hope for power soon. Their look told me they thought I needed to get a better grip on reality.

But then a few pieces of the puzzle fell into place.

First, I used my wife's cell

phone to try to find an operating printing press. Our usual backup is Winchester; we printed their paper a few months back when they had press problems. But they had no power either.

The next call was to my old friend Frank Snyder in Celina. His father, Parker, and my dad had been cronies; and Frank and I have known each other since childhood.

The huddled group was only slightly less dubious when I returned to say I'd found a press.

Earlier, I'd gone looking for a generator. But Mayor Bruce Hosier told me he thought that Community Home Improvement had sold its last one Wednesday afternoon and was awaiting a new shipment.

I decided to take a leap. Nothing ventured. Nothing gained.

Walking into Mayor Hosier's morning meeting with his department heads, I asked if there was some space in one of the city's generator-powered buildings where we could set up an emergency newsroom on a temporary basis. The hands of

more than one department head shot up, ready to help.

At the urging of Police Chief Bob Sours, we soon took over a conference room on the second floor of city hall.

With local electricity and a place to print, the employee skepticism evaporated. Suddenly, it was all systems go, although everyone had to discover new roles and new ways of getting the job done.

People whose regular jobs had been upended and interrupted by the power outage grabbed new chores and offered to help.

Commercial printing manager Carl Ronald soon found that his new job was as technical support for the temporary newsroom. Sports editor Ray Cooney, with no sports to report on, was suddenly a photographer and photo editor.

It was a clumsy process. With just two computers in place that first day, people stood in line to write, then stood in line to edit, then stood in line to work with photographs and build pages.

But we got out an abbreviated

four-page edition and soon were flying to Celina.

There, Frank's staff greeted us like family, doing everything possible to get the paper printed and in the van headed back to Portland.

It was only slightly easier Friday, when three more laptops eased the computer crunch but the generator at city hall began to overheat. During one two-hour period, the news staff was only able to work about 20 minutes, and that came in chunks of three or four minutes at a time.

Managing editor Barbara Wilkinson, news editor Mike Snyder, sports editor Ray Cooney and reporters Jennifer Tarter and Rachele Haughn did a whale of a job.

Was it perfect? Of course not. And there were still enormous hurdles involved in getting the papers delivered. Some folks didn't see the Thursday edition until days later because of downed trees and blocked roads.

But the important thing, it seems to me, is that the job got done.

Put the focus where it belongs

Chicago Tribune
Tribune News Service

The United States faces a nationwide crisis in which our young people are reading at alarmingly low rates, with just 1 in 3 fourth graders meeting proficiency standards. So why are some on the right focused on standardized testing, not for students but for teachers?

Make no mistake, literacy is the big problem in public education. But it's the kids we care about — we're not so worried about college-educated adults. So it's disappointing to see some choosing instead to focus on a decision by New Jersey to eliminate the requirement that all teachers pass a perfunctory standardized test before they're able to get a teaching job.

It's fair to point out that addressing a national early childhood literacy crisis requires ensuring that our teachers are properly equipped to do their jobs. We have to make sure our schools are staffed with effective, competent teachers, and we've got to make sure we don't let standards slip. But get serious: A one-off standardized test isn't the answer. Does anyone think teachers who graduate with a four-year bachelor's degree won't be able to read or do very basic math?

Fees to take the Praxis Core Skills test cost as much as \$150, which isn't an insignificant amount of money for a recent college graduate, or someone who's trying to break into a new field or someone who finds himself in-between jobs. Here in Illinois, Gov. JB Pritzker in 2022 wisely signed legislation aimed at reducing fees for teachers, including reducing the fee for a lapsed license to \$50 from \$500 and making it easier to obtain a substitute teacher requirement. The state has also waived a standardized testing requirement through August 2025. Good. Many would-be educators think twice, or not at all, about pursuing the profession because of the daunting amount of obstacles in their way: The prospect of acquiring another degree, plus navigating the licen-

Guest Editorial

sure process, is a lot to tackle on top of other obligations such as family and putting food on the table.

Eliminating barriers to employment is a philosophy that people who identify as free-market, small-government thinkers should support. Especially when there are still meaningful safeguards in place to ensure only qualified people are teaching our kids.

There's a lot to tackle when it comes to fixing America's education system, but the debate over standardized testing for teachers is a distraction from the bigger problem: Our kids can't read. And make no mistake, if children can't read by third grade, it makes things far worse for them each year moving forward, as classroom instruction shifts away from simply learning to read, instead focusing on the need for kids to be able to read in order to learn ... math, science, history and more. When they can't read and they can't learn, they're more likely to drop out of school, which means lower lifetime earnings and opportunities.

To their credit, state leaders here acknowledged this crisis when they developed a "Comprehensive Literacy Plan," which serves as a strategic framework to enhance literacy instruction across Illinois. While the plan emphasizes a focus on important things such as phonics, fluency and comprehension, and state policy continues rightly to allow local districts to control curriculum, it lacks teeth to motivate — or mandate — districts to advance the important work of ensuring students are receiving proper reading instruction.

To reiterate: It's students we can't allow to fall behind. The conversation on literacy must remain focused on the people who really need our attention.



Red flags can prevent shootings

By ALEXIS CORDONE
Progressive Perspectives
Tribune News Service

On Dec. 16, in Madison, Wisconsin, 15-year-old Natalie Rupnow shot and killed two other people before taking her own life. Authorities quickly discovered that she had allegedly plotted the attack with Alexander Paffendorf, a 20-year-old California man who admitted to having his own plan to arm himself with a gun and explosives and target a government building.

What happened next illustrates how state laws can help — or hinder — efforts to prevent mass shootings.

Police, invoking California's red-flag law, were able to immediately issue an emergency protective order requiring Paffendorf to surrender any firearms in his possession, potentially avoiding additional tragedy.

Red-flag laws are civil, not criminal, processes that authorize emergency orders to temporarily restrict a person's access to firearms if there is significant concern that the person is a danger to themselves or others. While these laws vary, 21 states have some version in effect. Wisconsin, where the shooting took place, does not.

Without a red-flag law, in many jurisdictions, police generally can't separate someone from their guns until after a crime has been committed. While Paffendorf would have been arrested in any state once it was discovered that he was plotting an attack, if he lived in Wisconsin rather than California, the authorities would have had to build a criminal case against him before initially restricting his access to firearms. This could have taken more time, perhaps a few days, and

Alexis Cordone



there's no telling how he might have used it.

In my work as an emergency department doctor, I care for teenagers and adults who are referred for psychiatric evaluations when they threaten to harm others or manifest other expressions of homicidal ideation. But they are not charged with a crime unless they took concrete steps to plan or implement an attack.

Red-flag laws allow law enforcement — and in some jurisdictions, clinicians, family members and other professionals — to petition for a protective civil action when we become aware of threats or concerning patterns of behavior that could pose a danger to others. Without laws like these, there is little we can do to prevent violence from occurring even when we know a person's mental health is unstable or they have made a credible threat, unless their threat or actions already amount to a crime.

It's not a crime to have a mental health crisis — nor should it be. But refusing to separate someone from their firearms until they spiral to the point of committing a crime is clearly poor planning. Unfortunately, red-flag laws have been the target of considerable political misinformation and alarmism.

To be clear: Under most red-flag laws, separation of a person at risk

from their firearms is typically temporary; it requires due process of law and a hearing, and the restriction can be lifted once it becomes clear that a risk is no longer present or was not present in the first place. In most states, the gun owner retains control of the disposition of their firearms; guns typically can be stored with a licensed firearms dealer or the local police. In some states, they can even be sold for the gunowner's profit or stored with a friend.

Due to the federal Dickey Amendment, which blocked most research about gun violence, data on red-flag laws are limited. Still, they do show significant promise in reducing firearm-related suicides. The recent launch of the National Extreme Risk Protection Order Resource Center by the Department of Justice, which will highlight emerging practices to prevent risk, should help us better understand the impact of red-flag laws and develop best practices around them to ensure they precisely target people at high risk of violence while remaining equitable and just.

As Madison, Wisconsin, processes yet another needless shooting, we should take stock of lessons learned. Red-flag laws are an emerging component of our response to gun violence and can help prevent a personal crisis from devolving into a public tragedy. They deserve the attention and support of anyone who cares about public safety and responsible gun ownership.

Cordone is a board-certified emergency physician pursuing further training in pediatric emergency medicine at Yale-New Haven Health. She is also a Public Voices Fellow of The OpEd Project.

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We welcome letters to the editor, which are accepted by email only to letters@thecr.com. They should be 700 words or fewer; signed, with city/town of residence and include a phone number for verification purposes. We reserve the right to edit for content and clarity.

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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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Approved ...

Continued from page 1
Also Monday, school board members Don Wendel, Sean Kahlig, Mitch Fullenkamp, Greg LeFevre and Nick Wehrkamp:
•Heard Ohio State University offensive lineman Carson Hinzman will be speaking to Fort Recovery students Jan. 31.
•Approved the following: eighth graders' trip to Washington, D.C., from Oct. 27 to Oct. 31;

changing Kristy Keller's work assignment from elementary intervention specialist to second grade teacher effective Aug. 1; spring sport passes for the 2025-26 school year, with Kahlig dissenting.
•Were reminded student appreciation night is slated for Friday during the Fort Recovery boys basketball game.
•OK'd contracts with the following: Valerie Stammen as

girls high school reserve softball coach, Charlie Vasey as a high school weight room supervisor and Hannah Siegel as junior high track assistant coach.
•Appointed Wendel as board president and Kahlig as vice president.
•Authorized the superintendent and treasurer to enter into an agreement with Mercer Health for drug testing services and Medical Review Office

services as needed for testing employees and K&K Tours for eighth graders' Washington D.C. trip in October.
•Appointed Wehrkamp as the 2025 Ohio School Board Association legislative liaison and Fullenkamp as an alternate and LeFevre as the 2025 student achievement liaison.
•Approved various other annual legal requirements, including annual authoriza-

tions for Stahl and treasurer Deanna Knapke.
•Accepted several donations, including \$3,600 from Tom and Mary Pat Zitter split between the elementary, middle school and high school activities accounts as well as \$600 from the Zitters for Scholastic Bowl and \$500 for choir and \$2,000 from Fort Recovery Insurance Agency for the high school driving simulator.

Felony court news

Drunk driving

A Portland man was sentenced to jail for drunk driving.

Elvis E. Franks, 50, 210 West Lafayette St., pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to operating a vehicle while intoxicated, a Level 6 felony. He was sentenced to one year in Jay County Jail with all but 60 days suspended and given two days credit for time served. Franks was placed on probation for 305 days, fined \$25, assessed \$189.50 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$200 drug and alcohol countermeasures fee.

He was ordered to submit to an evaluation within 30 days of his sentencing for substance abuse counseling. The court recommended Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles suspend his license for one year retroactive to April 15, 2024. As part of his plea

agreement, a Level 6 felony for operating a vehicle with a blood alcohol level of 0.15% or more was dismissed.

Resisting law

Two Jay County residents were sentenced to jail for resisting law enforcement.

Cristopher M. Lessing, 33, Portland, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to the Level 6 felony. He was sentenced to 180 days in Jay County Jail and given 180 days credit for time served. Lessing was fined \$25 and assessed \$189 in court costs.

Samantha R. Lanum, 27, 213 N. Meridian St., Dunkirk, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to resisting law enforcement, a Level 6 felony, and possession of paraphernalia, a Class C misdemeanor. She was sentenced to 545 days in Jay County Jail with all but

188 days suspended and given 188 days credit for time served. Lanum was placed on probation for 357 days, fined \$25 and assessed \$189.50 in court costs. As part of her plea agreement, a Level 6 felony charge for possession of methamphetamine was dismissed.

Common nuisance

A Redkey woman was sentenced to jail for maintaining a common nuisance.

Megan D. Young, 43, 307 E. High St., pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to the Level 6 felony. She was sentenced to 545 days in Jay County Jail with all but 90 days suspended and given 36 days credit for time served. Young was fined \$25, assessed \$189 in court costs placed on home detention for 54 days and placed on probation for 15 months. As part of her plea agree-

ment, three Level 6 felonies for possession of methamphetamine, possession of a narcotic drug and unlawful possession of a syringe were dismissed. A habitual offender enhancement was also dismissed.

Cases dismissed

Indiana v. John F. Besson, Level 6 felony
Indiana v. Coby L. Green, Level 5 and Level 6 felonies

Found guilty

A man was sentenced to prison after he was found guilty of unlawful possession of a syringe.

Shane L. Williams, 48, was found guilty by a Jay Superior Court jury of the Level 6 felony. He was sentenced to 730 days in Indiana Department of Corrections and given 46 days credit for time served. Williams was assessed \$189 in court costs.

Building ...

Continued from page 1

Next, the county will accept applications from nonprofit organizations for the building, with applications to be reviewed at a public hearing. From there, the property could be transferred to a nonprofit organization.

Plans are to hold a public hearing regarding the matter at commissioners' next meeting Jan. 27.

Schemenaur said Dunkirk Mayor Jack Robbins and Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation president Dane Mumbower plan to come to the Jan. 27 meeting to share information about their hopes for the property and the former furniture store.

Also Monday, commissioners heard an update from community coordinator Nate Kimball regarding the county's owner-occupied rehabilitation program, an effort to repair homes with new roofs, heaters or other necessities.

Kimball shared plans for the county to begin accepting bids this month for the next round of projects in the \$1 million program mainly funded by an Office of Community and Rural Affairs grant. A few previous requirements for bidders have been changed, he noted, in an effort to streamline the process. The county will hold a pre-bid meeting with contractors at 10 a.m. Thursday. Commissioners will open bids at their next meeting Jan. 27.

Also, commissioners approved claims totaling \$50,376.52 for services from construction engineer Egis in relation to work completed for the owner-occupied rehabilitation program.

In other business, commissioners Chad Aker, Duane Monroe and Doug Horn:

•Recognized Larry Nuckols, a Jay Emergency Medical Service

employee who died Friday evening after suffering a heart attack while on duty. Nuckols served 32 years as a paramedic for Jay County, as well as 24 years in the U.S. Army. "He went doing what he loved to do, but I just wanted to recognize Larry for (his service)," said Aker.

•Agreed to pay \$720 for programming from Matrix Integration in order to set up 10 new email licenses for commissioners and Jay County Council members. Aker explained plans to create generic email addresses so that they may be easily transferred as candidates take and leave office. Information technology worker Randy Cleaver will assist in creating the addresses for county officials.

•Approved the following: an agreement with Forte for credit card services at Jay County Treasurer's Office; an annual report from Jay County Board of Finance; Jay County Highway superintendent Bob Howell bidding up to \$17,000 for a forklift for his department; purchasing paper for Jay County Courthouse from Four-U Office Supplies of Celina, Ohio, for \$2,590.60; and several claims, including \$16,581.25 for animal control services from Jay County Humane Society and \$100 for creating an additional cash drawer at Jay County Clerk's Office.

•Appointed Aker as commissioners' president, Horn as drainage board president and Monroe as drainage board vice president.

•Made various board appointments, including Ted Champ, Carl Walker and Horn to Jay County Redevelopment Commission, and assigned commissioners to oversee different county departments.

•Reappointed Patricia Moore to Dunkirk Public Library Board.

Capsule Reports

Continued from page 2
Arthur T. Buschur, 61, was backing a 1993 Ford F-150 out of his driveway near county road 650 North when he noticed an oncoming 2012 Ford F-250. He attempted to pull back into his driveway, according to a Jay County Sheriff's Office report, but wasn't able to reenter it. Adam R. Brenneman, 22, was driving the Ford F-250 north on the road when he noticed Buschur backing out of his driveway. He wasn't able to stop because of slick road conditions, causing him to crash into the back of Buschur's car. The back of Brenneman's car struck a utility pole owned by Jay County REMC. Damage is estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

Tree hit

A Geneva woman lost control of the van she was driving and hit a tree along Indiana 67 about 2:30 p.m. Friday.

Garcia Rolando, 44, was driving a 2004 Honda Odyssey east on the highway near county road 650 East when she lost control on the snow-covered road, according to a Jay

County Sheriff's Office report. She drove off the road into a yard at 6665 E. Indiana 67, hitting a tree on the front passenger side of the van.

Rolando was cited with an infraction for driving with expired plates, and the van she was driving was towed.

The tree and yard are owned by Mike Kimmel. Damage is estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

Teen flipped

A Fort Recovery teen lost control of the car he was driving and flipped it along county road 300 South about 6:14 p.m. Friday.

Ethan J. Wenning, 16, was driving a 2011 Ford F-150 east on county road 300 South when he lost control because of snow and slick road conditions, according to a Jay County Sheriff's Office report. His car left the road and rolled over onto its top.

The vehicle was towed, with damage estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

Hit pole

A Portland woman lost control

on Hayes Street and crashed into a pole about 5 p.m. Friday.

Misty A. Coleman, 35, was driving on Arch Street in Portland when she turned north onto Hayes Street. Her vehicle started sliding because of snow on the road, according to a Portland police report, causing it to strike a pole.

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

Mailboxes hit

A Portland man lost control of the truck he was driving and crashed into mailboxes, a boulder and two signs on county road 400 North about 3:10 p.m. Sunday.

Tyler H. Weesner, 21, was driving a 2004 Chevrolet Silverado west on the road near its intersection with U.S. 27 when he lost control of the truck. The vehicle slammed into two mailboxes, a landscaping boulder and drove over two signs, according to a Jay County Sheriff's Office report.

The vehicle Weesner was driving was towed. The damaged property is owned by Kandy Strausburg. Damage is estimated between \$2,500 and \$5,000.

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South dealer. North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 6 4 2
♥ 7 6 3
♦ A Q 10 3
♣ Q J 9

WEST
♠ 19 8
♥ Q J 9 5 4
♦ 7
♣ A 10 8 5

EAST
♠ Q 10 7 5 3
♥ K 10 8
♦ 8 5 4 2
♣ 7

SOUTH
♠ A K
♥ A 2
♦ K J 9 6
♣ K 6 4 3 2

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♠ 1♥ 2♣ 2♥
3♥ Pass 4♣ Pass

Opening lead — seven of diamonds.

Occasionally, an expert declarer will make a play that seems foolish at the time and yet proves amazingly successful. When the play is later analyzed, though, it usually turns out that the declarer knew exactly what he was doing, and that what appeared to be a remarkable play was actually based on simple logic.

Consider this deal where South reached five clubs as shown and West led a diamond. Declarer took the diamond with the jack and played a low trump to dummy's queen.

South then returned to his hand with a spade and led another low trump. When West again followed low, declarer played dummy's nine! After the nine held, South continued with the jack and wound up losing only a club and a heart to make the contract.

How did South know to finesse the nine of trump? No, it was not because he caught a glimpse of West's hand; on the contrary, it was because he deduced that West's plays indicated he had started with the A-10-8-5 of trump.

From declarer's viewpoint, there could be no good reason for West to lead a diamond rather than a heart unless the diamond was a singleton. This inference was reinforced at trick four when South led the second trump toward dummy's Q-9 and West followed with the eight.

It was now extremely unlikely that West had only the A-8-5 of trump, because if he did, he would surely have gone up with the ace and tried to put his partner on lead with a heart in order to get a diamond ruff. It followed that West's original trump holding was the A-10-8-5 and that he was expecting to score a second trump trick with the ten after declarer played dummy's jack. Finessing dummy's nine was therefore the only sensible thing for South to do.

Tomorrow: No way out.
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1-15 CRYPTOQUIP

G U W X C F V N K Z L X M M X B D Q H A
K U R X C F N D H V N D C L V , H G Z
V X Q W Z T A M X V G L Z B X L Z L H N
H U R Z U G Z T T X C F H Z V H .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: COOKBOOK HAVING A NUMBER OF RECIPES FOR DIVERSE TYPES OF MEAT SAUCES: "FIFTY SHADES OF GRAVY."
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: F equals G

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Lopsided win
5 Have bills
8 Wan
12 Golden Fleece ship
13 Fix illegally
14 Final Four gp.
15 Speed
17 Teri of "Tootsie"
18 Actor Estevez
19 Looked closely (at)
21 Pitcher Maglie
22 Bath powder
23 Speed (up)
26 Poetic contraction
28 Period of rule
31 El-Masry of "Star Wars"
33 Bro, maybe
35 Stair part
36 Deeply touched

DOWN

1 Gushing review
2 Utah city
3 Wrinkled fruit
4 Workshop array
5 Baltimore base-batters
6 Humorist
7 Pharaoh's land
8 The "A" of UCLA
9 Shortage
10 Fast runner
11 Lawn party site
16 Pisa
19 Shortage
20 Jug handle
23 Zodiac animal
24 Comic Philips
25 Live-liness
27 Tease
29 "My word!"
30 "Science Friday" network
32 Second-hand deals
34 "Cheer up!"
37 Carried out
39 Tibetan monk
42 Con-fronts
44 "— di Lammer-moor"
45 Driver with a handle
46 Tiny bit
48 Walk unevenly
49 LAX guesses
50 Broadway actress
53 Docs' org.

Solution time: 23 mins.

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Yesterday's answer 1-15

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Gold ...

Continued from page 8
“That’s what I’ve been telling myself ever since I was a freshman that I want to be the best and I’m gonna do what it takes.”

Winner also mentioned she wants to see Jay County finish top four at the state tournament. With five Patriots wrestlers competing, the main threats to Jay County are No. 4 Columbus East (8), Franklin Central (7), No. 1 Merryville (6), No. 10 Mooresville (6), No. 2 Whiteland (6) and No. 3 Franklin Community (5). Winner will be helped by a pair of returners in No. 5 Katie Rowles (31-5) and No. 6 Lina Lingo (30-8).

Rowles was thrilled with her draw as she opens the 100 bracket with No. 10 Mariah Pope (15-5) of Bloomington South, someone she beat multiple times in the offseason. A victory would set her up against either No. 15 Jacqueline Mallory (9-3) of Lowell or Riverton Parke’s Shelby Leitgabel (17-4).

The highest-ranked wrestler Rowles could see in the semifinal is No. 3 Madisyn Mikels (7-0) of Portage, as No. 1 Ella Neibert (29-1) and No. 2 Claire May (27-1) are on a collision course in the bottom half of the bracket. With her draw, Rowles will have her eyes set on a run to the title match.

“I think I got the best draw I could have,” Rowles said. “I just need to stay focused, stay technique driven and not just try to be



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

No. 11 Tatianna Willis of Jay County High School wraps up Alexa Moore of Bishop Chatard in the ticket round of the regional meet on Jan. 10 at Alexandria-Monroe. Willis will have to take on No. 4 Brooke Fuller in the 110-pound opener at the state finals on Friday.

faster but sloppier. ... I know I can definitely be top four and I think it would be really awesome to be in the finals.”

Lingo is favored to win her 135-pound opener against No. 13 Abigail Goodwin (27-6) of Bloomington South as well. Lingo has a tough draw, pitting her against the top-ranked wrestler out of Northwood, Naima Ghaffar (42-1) in the quarterfinal. For her to match last year’s top-four finish, she’ll need to find a way to upset Ghaffar to

earn a match against No. 3 Katy Vardaman (33-2) of Homestead.

“It’s my last time there, so I want to place obviously and get that medal for my senior year,” Lingo said. “But I really just want to take it all in and enjoy it because it’s the last time I’ll ever get to experience it. ... I just need confidence in myself and knowing that I belong here and this is what I was made for.”

While Winner, Rowles and Lingo aren’t new to competing at state, this

year will be a new experience for the group. With the IHSAA officially sanctioning girls wrestling for the first time this season, the state finals were moved from a high school gym — last year Kokomo hosted the tournament — to Corteva Coliseum. Myers — who also coaches the boys team, which wrestles at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum and Gainbridge Fieldhouse in the state series — knows it can be a struggle to block out the bright lights and is coach-

ing the returners and two new state competitors to take it in while drowning it out.

“I always tell kids when they get to the state finals, ‘Whenever you walk out on that mat, you need to focus and isolate everything else outside of that circle,’” Myers said. “So these girls wrestle at Corteva Coliseum, that’s going to be a big step, especially if they haven’t wrestled anything like that. ...

“That’s hard for kids. Whenever you get into that arena and do the parade of champions, you kind of want to take that in. That’s an experience that you’ve worked for, but once the matches start and that whistle blows, you’ve got to get focused.”

The other two Patriots, No. 11 Tatianna Willis (28-7) and Brenna Ruble (33-7) come in as underdogs in their opening match.

Willis will open the 110-pound bracket against Whiteland’s No. 4 Brooke Fuller (28-4). Willis and Fuller have squared off three times throughout their careers, with Fuller leading the series 2-1.

While Willis has fallen to the fourth-ranked wrestler, the win gives her some insight on how she can pull off the upset and move on in the tournament.

“The first one is going to be a tough one, but I’m ready to work this week,” Willis said. “I beat her last year when we were going back-and-forth and I got on

top and got her in a backside half that she couldn’t get out of. ... She’s gotten me in a couple of bars, so I’ve been working with Brenna and Pat (Rowles) on defending bars.”

A win would give Willis a quarterfinal matchup she’d be favored in against the victor of No. 15 Britain Whitmer (20-7) of Glenn and No. 16 Kadie Fearnow (25-6) of Clinton Prairie.

Ruble faces No. 9 Vika Konovalenko (27-7) out of Columbus North. While Konovalenko comes in as the favorite, Ruble is happy with the draw, noting how both wrestlers are freshman and will be on an equal playing field.

“I’ve looked at the girl and she seems very beatable if I wrestle to the best of my ability,” Ruble said. “We’re both freshmen so it goes hand-in-hand. ... She’s very top heavy and likes to overpower you. So, I have to be more technical with her and setting up shots can really catch her off balance.”

A win over the freshman Bulldog would set Ruble up for a match with No. 2 Angel Smith (26-0) of Plymouth.

Both Willis and Ruble mentioned that their primary goals are to medal, even if it is just in eighth place. This will be the former’s last chance at placing at state, while the latter hopes to grow from the experience the next four years.

Sports on tap

Local schedule

Thursday
Jay County — Boys wrestling vs. Homestead — 6:30 p.m.
Fort Recovery — Girls basketball at Minster — 6 p.m.; Middle school girls basketball vs. South Adams — 5 p.m.

Friday
Jay County — Girls wrestling state finals at Corteva Fieldhouse — 10 a.m.
Fort Recovery — Boys bowling vs. Ansonia — 4:30 p.m.; Girls bowling vs. Ansonia — 4:30 p.m.;

Boys basketball vs. Minster — 6 p.m.

TV sports

Today
3 a.m. — Grand Slam tennis: Australian Open (ESPN2)
2:30 p.m. — Premier League soccer: Aston Villa at Everton (USA)
6 p.m. — NHL: Carolina Panthers at Buffalo Sabers (TNT)
7 p.m. — College basketball: Kansas at Iowa State (ESPN2); Seton Hall at Butler (FS1)
7:30 p.m. — NBA: New York Knicks at

Philadelphia 76ers (ESPN)
7:30 p.m. — College basketball: Penn State at Michigan State (BTN)
8:30 p.m. — NHL: Edmonton Oilers at Minnesota Wild (TNT)
9 p.m. — Women’s college basketball: Seton Hall at Marquette (FS1)
10 p.m. — NBA: Miami Heat at Los Angeles Lakers (ESPN)

Thursday
3 a.m. — Grand Slam tennis: Australian Open (ESPN2)

1 p.m. — USGA golf: Latin America Amateur Championship (ESPN2)
3 p.m. — Premier League soccer: Southampton at Manchester United (USA)
7 p.m. — NBA: Indiana Pacers at Detroit Pistons (FSDN Indiana)
7 p.m. — College basketball: Memphis at Temple (ESPN2); Michigan at Minnesota (FS1); Northeastern at UNC Wilmington (FOX)
7 p.m. — Women’s college basketball: Nebraska at Iowa (BTN)
7 p.m. — NHL: Detroit Red Wings at Florida Panthers (ESPN)

7:30 p.m. — NBA: Cleveland Cavaliers at Oklahoma City Thunder (TNT)
9 p.m. — College basketball: Maryland at Northwestern (BTN); Rutgers at Nebraska (FS1)
9 p.m. — Grand Slam tennis: Australian Open (ESPN2)
9:30 p.m. — NHL: Edmonton Oilers at Colorado Avalanche (ESPN)
10 p.m. — NBA: Houston Rockets at Sacramento Kings (TNT)

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Rick Uhlenhake 419-852-0800
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January 18th, 2025
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Notice is hereby given that Jay County, Indiana, is creating a bidder’s list for its Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Program. Homes within Jay County will be rehabilitated through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Each home may receive up to \$25,000 for improvements. Each home will be bid individually. The work will include roof repair or replacement, ADA accessibility, heating and cooling replacement, water heater replacement, and lighting and electrical upgrades. Persons interested in placement on the bidder’s list must submit their name, company name, phone number, address, email, and Federal ID number or Social Security number to Chris Nevels at Chris.NEVELS@egis-group.com. Contractors must meet all county and state licensing requirements. Proof of adequate liability insurance and workmen’s compensation coverage must be provided. Contractors are required to maintain liability coverage for work done throughout the construction period. The policy must name the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) as additionally insured. The Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) has adopted a state goal of 10% participation for minority and female-owned businesses. These businesses are encouraged to participate. The work to be performed under this contract is subject to the requirements of section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, as amended, 12 U.S.C. 1701u (section 3). The purpose of section 3 is to ensure that employment and other economic opportunities generated by HUD assistance or HUD-assisted projects covered by section 3 shall, to the greatest extent feasible, be directed to low- and very low-income persons, particularly persons who are recipients of HUD assistance for housing. Bidders on this work shall be required to comply with the provisions of the President’s Executive Order No. 11246, as amended. A meeting will be held on January 16, 2025, at 10:00 am at the auditorium in the courthouse located at 120 N. Court Street, Portland, Indiana 47371. Any contractor interested in bidding on this program is encouraged to attend. The first set of homes is available for bid. Bid specifications can be obtained from Chris Nevels at Chris.NEVELS@egis-group.com. Only bids received by Auditor’s Office at 120 N. Court Street Suite 202, before 8:45 am (Eastern Time) on January 27, 2025, will be considered. The envelope must be marked “Jay County OOR Group 1.” Bids may be mailed or hand-delivered to the Auditor’s Office at 120 N. Court Street Suite 202. No electronic bids will be accepted. Jay County Commissioners will open bids on January 27, 2025, at 9:15 am in the auditorium. If there are any questions regarding the program or improvements to the houses, please contact Chris Nevels at 317-558-7540. CR 1-8.15-2025-HSPAXLP

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Sports

Going for gold

Winner goes for fourth state title as Patriots aim for five medalists

By **ANDREW BALKO**
The Commercial Review

The Patriots are looking to take home some hardware.

Some are aiming for gold. Others would be happy just to be on the podium in the eighth spot.

But all five girls are looking to medal.

The five girls from the No. 5 Jay County High School girls wrestling team that will compete at the inaugural IHSAA State Finals at Corteva Coliseum at

Indiana State Fairgrounds on Friday are looking to make it past the first round and earn medals.

At the state tournament, wrestlers only need to win their opening match to guarantee a spot on the podium. Each following match either moves them towards the championship of their respective weight class or into the consolation bracket.

"You want to get as many placers as possible," said JCHS coach Eric Myers. "If you go in there, focus on one match at a time, then

you're able to go wrestle that first round, secure your medal and then everything there on is just taking one step up that podium every time. You can't overlook anyone at that level."

While she isn't overlooking anyone in her bracket, three-time-state-champion No. 1 Malloory Winner (32-0) has the highest goal on the team — win her fourth state title.

Winner's path to a title won't be a cake walk. She opens with Providence Cristo Ray's Jessica Mar-

tinez (21-6), which would be Winner's 100th career victory. Should the higher seeds win, Winner's 170-pound quarterfinal would be against No. 3 Laine Peppler (26-4) out of Rochester before a semifinal with No. 2 Grace McMahon (24-1) of Columbus East. Should the JCHS senior state off the next two ranked wrestlers, potential title-match opponents include No. 4 Heaven Gardner of New Haven (23-5) and No. 11 Lydia Kwaleh (17-4) of Perry Meridian — both of whom Winner beat 1-0 at some

point this season — as well as the fifth, seventh, ninth and 10th ranked wrestlers.

The stiff competition does not seem to have phased Winner as she aims for the gold.

"I've always been told, ever since I was itty bitty that wrestling is 90% mindset and 10% skill," Winner said. "I just know that it's all in your head. If you believe you're the best, you'll go out there and be the best."

See **Gold** page 7



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Tribe stays undefeated in MAC play

CELINA, Ohio — The Tigers weren't able to pick off the Indians.

The Tribe kept the Cardinals from making a move to the top of the standings as well.

The Fort Recovery High School girls bowling team held off the New Bremen Cardinals 2,400-2,210 on Saturday at Plaza Lanes to keep the top spot in the Midwest Athletic Conference standings.

Emily Lauber shot the match-high game of 195 pins for Fort Recovery (5-1, 4-0 MAC). She opened the match with a 146 for an average pinfall of 170.5.

Five other Indians averaged 145 pins or higher to give the Indians a 1,535-1,482 advantage on New Bremen (4-4, 3-2 MAC). Kayla Heitkamp (155), Lilah Thien (152) and Jady Wierick (151) all averaged above 150 pins, while Ella Schoen and Deanna Brown finished with 149 and 145, respectively.

The Tribe put the match away in the baker games, outrolling the Cardinals 865-728, with a 202 high in the second game.

Aliyah Parlett led the way for New Bremen with games of 185 and 160.

Local roundup

Three top

CONNERSVILLE — The JC Flipsters had athletes finish place all-around to lead the bronze and silver Xcel teams to victory at Celebrate the New Year with gymnasts.

Jordyn Champ, Emma Robinson and Paxton Hirschy all placed first all-around in the gold, silver and bronze Xcel divisions, respectively.

Champ racked up 36.9 points thanks to first-place finishes on the bars (9.35) and the beam (9.275).

Taking top spots on the vault (9.0), bars (9.35) and the floor (9.4) pushed Robinson to the top of the silver division with 37.025 points. Aubrey Forman followed Robinson as the second-place finisher all-around.

Hirschy took first in the vault (8.9), bars (9.275) and floor (9.35) to claim the all-around. Aria Shannon got third in the bronze all-around as well.

Man arrested for stalking WNBA star Caitlin Clark

By **JOSEPH WILKINSON**
New York Daily News
Tribune News Service

A Texas man who sent violent, explicit messages to WNBA star Caitlin Clark and stalked her has been arrested in Indianapolis, authorities announced Monday.

Cops said Michael Lewis, 55, traveled from his hometown of Denton, Texas, to the city where Clark plays for the Indiana Fever in the WNBA, the Indianapolis Star reported. He was arrested Sunday at a hotel in the city, the Marion County prosecutor's office announced.

Investigators said Lewis sent a series of threatening messages to Clark between Dec. 16 and Jan. 2, according to ESPN. One message read: "Been driving around your house 3x a day. But don't call the law just yet."

Police officers confronted Lewis about his behavior on Jan. 8 in the hotel

room, but he downplayed his actions and didn't stop, local Fox affiliate WXIN reported. Authorities arrested him four days later.

Clark, the 22-year-old superstar who rewrote the NCAA record books at Iowa and won Rookie of the Year in the WNBA, told authorities she was shaken by the messages and changed her appearance and routine, the Star reported.

"No matter how prominent a figure you are, this case shows that online harassment can quickly escalate to actual threats of physical violence," Marion County Prosecutor Ryan Mears said in a statement.

Lewis was charged with one count of stalking threatening sexual battery or death, according to WXIN. He faces a maximum of six years in prison and a \$10,000 fine and is scheduled to appear in court Tuesday.

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