

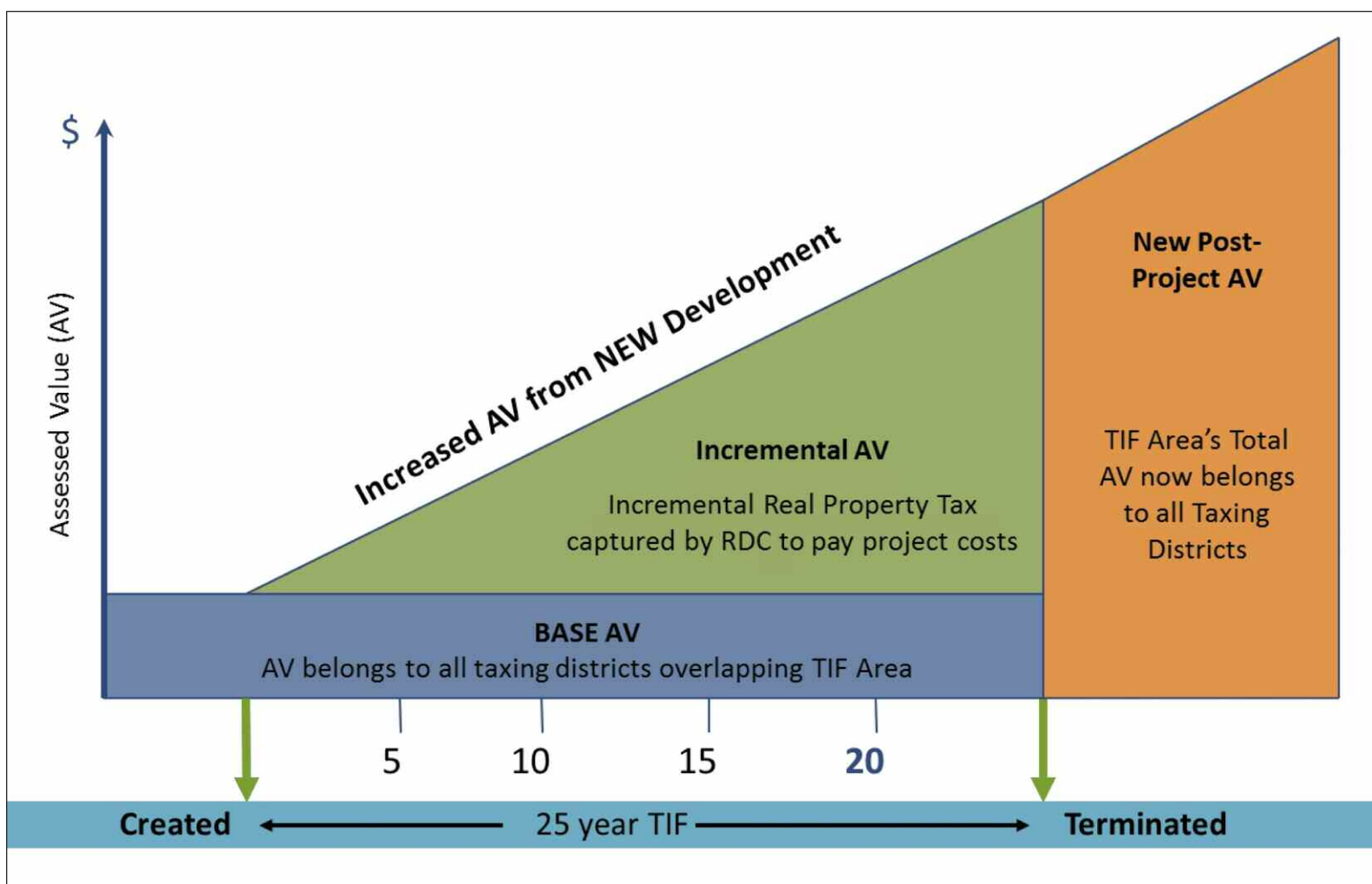
The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

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TIFs on the way



The above graphic from Barnes & Thornburg published last year shows the basics of tax increment financing (TIF) districts. As the value of property within a TIF district increases, the additional tax dollars from the jump in assessed value (represented in green) is captured to be used for economic development projects. The City of Dunkirk is starting the process of creating multiple TIF districts. Portland and Jay County both created their first TIF districts about 20 years ago to capture the additional taxes generated following the construction of Walmart and POET Biorefining, respectively.

With development planned, Dunkirk City Council gives OK for mayor to pursue creation of districts

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review

DUNKIRK — Two tax increment financing (TIF) districts may be coming to the city.

On Monday, Dunkirk City Council gave Mayor Jack Robbins and city attorney Wes Schemenaur the OK to begin the process of creating TIF districts in the area of a planned housing project and the Main Street corridor.

It also heard from the mayor about two downtown buildings being targeted for renovation.

Schemenaur spent a few minutes explaining TIF districts. When a property is in a TIF district, any increase in taxes collected is captured to be used for economic development within the TIF district. (Such increases generally come with new development/construction, which boosts the assessed value of the property.) Those funds are administered by a redevelopment commission, which has members appointed by the mayor and city council. The redevelopment can use

those funds for a variety of purposes as laid out in the city's economic development plan, which is required to be in place before a TIF district can be created.

Schemenaur suggested a standard TIF district for the Main Street corridor — likely extending a block in each direction — and a residential TIF district for the land on the south side of the city that is planned for new apartments. (There are different rules for TIF districts on residential

property.) He noted that there will be some cost involved in creating the TIF districts, mentioning law firm Barnes & Thornburg and CWC Latitudes consultant Ed Curtin.

"There's gonna be some effort and expense to this," he said.

Council members Jesse Bivens, Christy Curts, Dan Watson, Donna Revolt and Randy Murphy gave Robbins and Schemenaur the thumbs up to move forward.

See TIFs page 5

County approves transfer of parcel to DIDC

Non-profit will take control with work planned at adjacent site

By BAILEY CLINE

The Commercial Review

Dunkirk real estate may be changing hands.

Jay County Commissioners approved a resolution Monday to transfer ownership of 303 S. Main St., Dunkirk, to nonprofit Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation.

The nonprofit organization owns the former Stewart Brothers Furniture Store located next door at 304 S. Main St. County attorney Wes Schemenaur explained earlier this month there have been several proposals over the years for developing the building. Dunkirk mayor Jack Robbins noted Monday that Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation began concentrating on efforts to utilize the former furniture store in 2014.

"It was completely stripped, the floors pulled out of there, we're ready to do the heating, cooling, going to get ready to get some business in there," said Robbins.

Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation president Dane Mumbower shared photos with commissioners of the properties and explained how acquiring the building at 303 S. Main St., would help the organization in developing the former furniture store.

"Primarily, my thought is, if nothing else, parking," Mumbower said.

See Transfer page 5

Lawmakers turn to local for funding boost

By LESLIE BONILLA MUNIZ
Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com

Cash-strapped local governments could soon pick from a broader menu of ways to self-fund transportation infrastructure — including through contentious delivery fees or township surplus funds — but wouldn't get any more financial aid directly from the Statehouse.

"We need investment and assistance from the state, but this legislation doesn't include it," said Ryan Hoff, government affairs director and general counsel for the Association of Indiana Counties. He was among nearly two-dozen witnesses who testified before the House's Roads and Transportation Committee on Monday.

The wide-ranging House Bill 1461 also changes allocations and adds requirements for the popular Community Crossings Matching Grant Program; cracks down on economic development incentives; and brushes some dust off long-untouched tolling possibilities.

Author Rep. Jim Pressel, R-Rolling Prairie, called his proposal "37 pages of options."

"There's some really good

Indiana House Bill 1461 offers '37 pages of options'

things in here, there are some things that are maybe not so great, but we need a conversation on: is this good policy?" he told the committee, which he chairs.

Pressel and others spent almost two years studying up on revenue-raising possibilities to head off an anticipated fiscal cliff.

Motor fuel taxation yields eight of every 10 state dollars that fund roads and bridges for both the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and local governments. But as Hoosiers upgrade to more fuel-efficient vehicles — or try electric and hybrid options — there is less money to work with.

And inflation means those dollars aren't stretching as far.

INDOT Legislative Director Aaron Wainscott said his agency has lost out on \$1 billion already

and has had to postpone 300 projects.

Hoosier communities, meanwhile, face an annual funding gap of nearly \$500 million per year in construction costs just to keep road conditions as-is, according to Purdue University's Local Technical Assistance Program — plus more to see improvements and to fund bridges.

Witnesses offered mixed testimony at the hours-long meeting.

"There's a little bit of everything in this bill," said Brian Gould, executive director of the Build Indiana Council. "... I have yet to talk to one stakeholder that's said, 'I love everything in this bill,' but I think everyone I've talked to has also said, 'We can work with this. This is a good place to begin the conversation.'"

The committee didn't vote on the measure. Pressel hopes to



Indiana Capital Chronicle/Leslie Bonilla Muñoz

Rep. Jim Pressel, R-Rolling Prairie, presides over his committee on Monday. The committee discussed his House Bill 1461, which addresses wide-ranging road funding topics.

hear amendments at the body's next meeting.

Local options

Hoosiers could see new fees tacked onto their Amazon, Door-Dash and other delivery orders.

Pressel's legislation would empower counties to impose fees — of between 50 cents and \$1 — per retail delivery. Purchases not subject to sales tax, like groceries, would be exempt.

See Funding page 2

Deaths

Betty Stein, 94, rural Portland
Barbara Garringer, 87, Muncie
Details on page 2.

Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 35 degrees Monday. The low was 16.
Tonight's low will be in the mid 20s. Expect mostly sunny skies Thursday with a high in the mid 40s and rain expected late in the day.
See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

Nominations are open for the Jack Cole Award for Volunteerism. Nominations should be by letter of recommendation and include the nominee's name, address and a brief background describing why the nominee deserves the award. Send nominations to The Portland Foundation, 107 S. Meridian St., Portland.

Coming up

Thursday — Coverage of this week's Redkey Town Council meeting.

Friday — Results from the JCHS girls basketball game at Norwell.

Saturday — Details from the Jay County boys basketball game against Bluffton.



Obituaries

Betty Stein

July 5, 1930-Jan. 27, 2025

Betty Joan Stein, age 94, of rural Portland passed away on Monday, Jan. 27, 2025, at her residence.

She was born in Bryant on July 5, 1930, the daughter of Irvin and Lilly (Heistand) Campbell. She was married on July 30, 1948, to Keith L. Stein, and he passed away on Nov. 1, 1996.

Betty worked at CTS for 18 years, was a farm wife and was owner with her husband of J & K Veal. She was a member of Zion Lutheran Church and a 1948 Bryant High School graduate, and she enjoyed gardening.

Surviving are three daughters, Connie Jarrell (husband: Tom) of Kokomo, Debra Ford (hus-



Stein

band: Dennis) of Portland and Cindy Tedder (husband: Jason) of Camden, South Carolina; eight grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; and three great-great-grandchildren.

She was the last of eleven siblings.

Funeral services will be Monday, Feb. 3, at noon in the Baird-Freeman Funeral Home. Burial will follow in the Gravel Hill Cemetery. Visitation will be Monday from 10 a.m. to noon.

Memorials can be made to Jay County Humane Society or Southern Hospice Care.

Condolences may be expressed at bairdfreeman.com.

Barbara Garringer

Feb. 27, 1937-Jan. 25, 2025

Barbara L. Garringer, age 87, passed away on Saturday, Jan. 25, 2025, in Westminster Village in Muncie.

She was born Feb. 27, 1937, in

Pike Township, Jay County, the daughter of Grover and Mabel (Shaneyfelt) Garringer. She was raised in a home farm environment.

Barbara attended Bluff Point schools and graduated from Jefferson High School in Randolph County in 1955. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from Ball State University and Ball State School of Nursing.

Barbara was a registered nurse at Ball Memorial Hospital, working as a charge nurse and later as head nurse. Thereafter, she was employed with Orthopedics Surgeons in Muncie from 1983 until 2002 as a surgical nurse.

She was a member of Ball State Nurses Alumni, Indiana



Garringer

State Nurses Association, National Association of Orthopedic Nurses and Association of Operating Room Nurses, and obtained national certification for over 40 years. She received a Sagamore of the Wabash award for her skill and dedication to nursing.

She was also a member of Bluff Point Cemetery Association, Minnetrista Cultural Foundation, Sigma Theta Tau, Mississinewa Chapter DAR and Jay County Historical Society.

Barbara loved to travel and did so nationally and internationally with friends and family. She enjoyed reading and bowled in various leagues for several years.

Surviving is a sister, Mary Jane Garringer Stolte of Spencer.

She was preceded in death by a sister, Linda Lee Garringer; a niece, Cathi Stolte Petrie; and a nephew, Larry Stolte.

She will be missed by family, friends and former patients.

Memorials may be made to the Portland Foundation for the Barbara L. Garringer Scholarship Fund.

Visitation will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 1, 2025, at Baird Freeman Funeral Home with a memorial service beginning at 2 p.m. Burial will be in the Bluff Point Cemetery.

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

Thursday 1/30	Friday 1/31	Saturday 2/1	Sunday 2/2	Monday 2/3
47/41	49/28	36/32	51/32	38/24
Thursday's forecast shows mostly sunny skies also with a chance of snow at night.	Rain is likely Friday when there's a 80% chance of showers. Snow possible late.	Saturday looks to be mostly sunny with highs in the mid to upper 30s.	Mostly cloudy on Sunday when highs will be in the upper 40s.	Monday's forecast shows mostly cloudy skies with highs in the upper 30s.

Lotteries

Powerball

Monday
2-40-47-53-55
Power Ball: 20
Power Play: 2
Estimated jackpot: \$69 million

Daily Four: 3-9-8-8
Quick Draw: 1-4-16-17-21-23-28-29-35-37-42-44-46-53-54-60-61-63-66-78
Cash 5: 3-12-18-34-36
Estimated jackpot: \$221,500

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$44 million

Ohio

Monday
Midday
Pick 3: 3-9-5
Pick 4: 7-6-0-2
Pick 5: 2-9-0-4-9
Evening
Pick 3: 2-8-6
Pick 4: 7-6-7-6
Pick 5: 2-3-7-7-3
Rolling Cash: 12-25-30-36-38
Estimated jackpot: \$130,000

Hoosier

Monday
Midday
Daily Three: 7-4-3
Daily Four: 0-1-2-5
Quick Draw: 1-4-16-17-21-23-28-29-35-37-42-44-46-53-54-60-61-63-66-78
Evening
Daily Three: 8-5-7

Markets

Cooper Farms Fort Recovery

Corn.....4.89
Feb. corn4.86
March corn4.90

Feb. beans10.41
Wheat 4.97

POET Biorefining Portland

Corn.....4.92
Feb. corn4.92
March corn4.96

ADM Montpelier

Corn.....4.83
Feb. corn4.83
Beans10.38
Feb. beans10.41
Wheat5.13

The Andersons Richland Township

Corn4.85
Feb. corn4.85
Beans10.38

Heartland St. Anthony

Corn.....4.82
Feb. corn4.82
Beans10.18
March beans10.23
Wheat4.87

Today in history

In 1845, Edgar Allan Poe published his narrative poem, "The Raven," in the New York Evening Mirror.
In 1936, the United States Baseball Hall of Fame selected its first members. They included Ty Cobb, Honus Wagner, Babe Ruth, Christy Matthewson and Walter Johnson.
In 1954, Oprah Winfrey was born in Kosciusko, Mississippi. Winfrey is most well-

known for role as an American talk show host for nearly 25 years.
In 2016, Jay County High School girls basketball team gave up 26 fourth-quarter points to the Class 4A No. 7 Carmel Greyhounds in a 74-46 loss to end the regular season. Senior Abby Wendel was the lone JCHS player to reach double figures, totaling 14 points.
— The CR

Citizen's calendar

Monday
5:30 p.m. — Portland City Council, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St.

hall, 105 N. Washington St.
7 p.m. — Salamonina Town Council, Schoolhouse Community Center.

Tuesday
5:30 p.m. — Portland Park Board, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St.
7 p.m. — Pennville Town Council, town

Feb. 5
5 p.m. — Jay County Redevelopment Commission, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.

Funding ...

Continued from page 1

A fiscal analysis by the nonpartisan Legal Services Agency estimated that a fee of 50 cents per delivery could raise \$22 to \$27 per resident, and more if counties choose a higher rate.

A range of business advocates opposed the fee, saying it would hurt family restaurants and other small businesses, and would present a complex administrative burden.

The legislation additionally would let communities tap into surplus money held by townships. These units of local government are county subdivisions.

If, at the end of a calendar year, a township's reserves are more than 15% higher than its estimated budget for the next year, the excess money would go to a township transportation infrastructure fund. Townships would collaborate with cities, towns or counties on bidding out projects improving infrastructure within township boundaries.

Program changes

The legislation would also add a \$150 million cap to Community Crossings, a matching grant program that local governments can use to fund local road and bridge projects. What's left above the cap would get siphoned off for other purposes.

For one year, an estimated surplus of \$207 million would fund fixes for dangerous at-grade railroad crossings, according to the fiscal analysis.

In later years, the excess would go to the Motor Vehicle Highway Account. That's the pot of money behind the state's transportation

infrastructure funding formula; INDOT gets about 62% of it and Hoosier communities split the remaining 38%. On average, between fiscal years 2026 and 2030, the to-be-transferred surplus is estimated at \$62.6 million annually.

County and municipality representatives critiqued the legislation for diverting Community Crossings money — which goes to local governments — into an account that sends large shares of money to INDOT.

House Bill 1461 also tweaks Community Crossings itself.

It adds new application requirements: local governments must adopt ordinances implementing the wheel tax and excise surtax if they can.

All counties are eligible; so are municipalities with more than 5,000 people. There are 37 counties and 107 municipalities that could adopt such taxes but haven't, according to the fiscal analysis and Accelerate Indiana Municipalities. And there are more communities that do levy the taxes but don't max them out. Purdue University's Local Technical Assistance Program has estimated a capacity of \$458 million, but receipts in 2022 only added up to \$123 million — leaving \$335 million untapped.

Pressel's bill also lowers matching requirements for sparsely populated communities, to the delight of advocates. Lawmakers heard, over the interim, that it takes small local governments years to save up for matches.

Economic development

Another provision would bar the controversial Indiana Economic

Development Corp., a quasi-public agency, from offering incentives unless the recipient is on the hook for the transportation infrastructure needed to serve its economic development project.

The IEDC has been under fire for land acquisitions, water supply plans and significant investments in the Limitless Exploration/Advanced Pace manufacturing park. Lawmakers have sought to tighten the reins.

Business groups, including a statewide and local chamber of commerce, opposed the measure.

What's next for tolling?

Indiana lawmakers gave the governor the power to add tolls to more roads and bridges in 2017. Former Gov. Eric Holcomb, who held office from 2017 until early this month, never took them up on the offer.

House Bill 1461 gives that language a refresh. It would let INDOT, with the governor's approval, submit a request for a tolling waiver to the federal government. If the waiver is granted, the Indiana General Assembly wouldn't need to approve authorizing legislation.

Tolling could generate \$4.2 billion in revenue over the first five years of implementation, starting in fiscal year 2029, according to the fiscal analysis. Indiana could receive an estimated \$38.2 billion in revenue over the 22 years between 2029 and 2050.

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This story was edited for length. To read the full version, visit indianacapitalchronicle.com.

Felony courts

Methamphetamine

Multiple Indiana residents were sentenced in Jay courts to serve time for possession of methamphetamine.

Amanda G. Shrout, 46, 410 East Pleasant St., Pennville, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to the Level 6 felony. She was sentenced to one year in Jay County Jail and given 248 days credit for time served. Shrout was fined \$25, assessed \$189 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee. As part of her plea agreement, a Level 6 felony for possession of a narcotic drug and a Class C misdemeanor for possession of paraphernalia were dismissed.

Joshua R. Allen, 38, 1868 S. Indiana 32, Union City, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to the Level 6 felony. He was sentenced to 730 days in Indiana Department of Corrections and given 130 days credit for time served. Allen was fined \$25, assessed \$189 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee. As part of his plea agreement, a Class B misdemeanor for possession of marijuana was dismissed.

Michael R. Paxson, 44, 6870 N. 750 West, Bryant, pleaded guilty in Jay Circuit Court to the Level 5 felony. He was sentenced to three years in Indiana Department of Correction with all but 18 months suspended and placed on probation. Paxson was placed on home detention for 18 months at his home. He was assessed \$189 in

court costs and charged a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee. As part of his plea agreement, a Level 6 felony for unlawful possession of a syringe and a Class C misdemeanor for possession of paraphernalia were dismissed.

Jacob M.J. Schwartz, 50, 10812 W. 800 South, Redkey, pleaded guilty in Jay Circuit Court to the Level 6 felony. He was sentenced to one year in Jay County Jail and given credit for time served. Schwartz was assessed \$189 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee. As part of his plea agreement, a Level 6 felony for maintaining a common nuisance was dismissed.

See page 5

SERVICES

Thursday
Karn, Patricia: 10 a.m., Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, 506 E. Walnut St., Portland.

Saturday
Garringer, Barbara: 2 p.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

Monday
Stein, Betty: noon, Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

Service listings provided by
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120 N. Meridian St.
Portland, Indiana 47371
(260) 726-9201
progressiveofficeproducts.com



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FR High School releases honor roll

Fort Recovery High School recently released the names of its second quarter honor roll recipients.

Making the all A honor roll were seniors Drew Backs, Gavin Evers, Marlee Fiely, Kayla Heitkamp, Joelle Kaup, Bailie Muhlenkamp, Kennedy Muhlenkamp, Karlie Niekamp, Anna Roessner, Ella Schoen and Emma Will.

On the list with all A's and B's were seniors Layla Bihn, Madison Bihn, Samantha Brackman, Nicole Braun, Caleb Coleman, Mason Diller, Brennan Dues, Gavin Dues, Cassidy Dues, Evan Evers, Jacob Foote, Jake

Fortkamp, Sarah Fritz, Darlin Garcia Rivera, Caden Grisez, Brooke Hart, Ethan Hartnagel, Cody Klenke, Gabe Knapke, Lindsey Knapke, Kennedy Kunkler, Emily Lauber, Aleigha Overman, Briggs Overman, Clint Pottkotter, Ben Reinhard, Kruiise Siefing, Reid Timmerman and Gage Zehringer.

Earning a spot on the honor roll with all A's were juniors Evvie Briner, Aiden Brunswick, Rylee Bubb, Elisa Evers, Carson Fullenkamp, Alivia Grube, Eli Hawk, Aubrie Heitkamp, Jameson Heitkamp, Madison Heitkamp, Maleiah Kaf-fenberger, Cayson

Kaikala, Olivia Knapke, Brylee Kremer, Cora Kremer, Reece LeFevre, Autumn Leuthold, Lily Schwieterman, Megan Weitzel, Reece Wendel, Georgia Wenning and Leah Wuebker.

Making the list with all A's and B's were juniors Ella Bechtol, Doug Bihn, Alexis Braun, Parker Brunswick, Ryker Brunswick, Emma Coleman, Kyla Dues, Zoe Dues, Nevaeh Elsass, Hannah Ervin, Mallory Evers, Luke Fortkamp, Alex Gaerke, Brodie Hart, Isabell Hartings, Drew Heitkamp, Jenna Homan, Wes Keller, Dylan Klenke, Luke Lochtefeld, Matthew Marchal, Colson

Post, Troy Post, Anthony Roessner, Dani Schmitt and Jesse Springer.

On the all A honor roll were sophomores Kendall Buckland, Kenna Dues, Tyler Dues, Cadence Eber, Carter Fortkamp, Alexis Grisez, Russell Hart, Makenna Huel-skamp, Meredith Jones, Breaker Jutte, Grace Lochtefeld, Cameron Muhlenkamp, Isaac Roessner, Emma Schmitz, Madelyn Schoenlein, Amber Timmerman, Ivy Tobe, Jennifer Wendel, Brynn Willmann and Jase Wuebker.

Making the list with all A's and B's were sophomores Brody Barga, Deanna Brown, Alex Car-

reto, Brady Evers, Ava Fullenkamp, Aubree Heitkamp, Maddie Heitkamp, Theresa Hipple, Ian McCain, Jake Meyer, Catarina Moura, Cara Shoemaker, Riley Stammen, Kiera Stump, Kaylor Wendel and James Westgerdes.

Earning a spot on the honor roll with all A's were freshmen Emily Boeckman, Alivia Brunswick, Riley DeRoo, Makenzie Evers, Claire Gaerke, Malia Grisez, Madeline Hardwick, Paisley Hart, Henry Jutte, Cora Pearson, Eliza Smith and Charlie Stammen.

On the honor roll with all A's and B's were fresh-

men Layla Armstrong, Brooke Bihn, Joscie Bihn, Addison Brunswick, Kyra Brunswick, Evan Diller, Jackson Dues, Haley Easton, Will Faller, Pete Guggenbiller and Lizzie Heitkamp.

Also Elizabeth Kahlig, Tyler Kahlig, Courtney Klenke, Liza Knapke, Shelby Knapke, Kinlee Kremer, Mason Laux, Andy Niekamp, Hudson Overman, Charity Pohlman, Kendall Ranly, Madilyn Reinhard, Ally Roessner, Liana Schlarman, Hoyt Schmitz, Ali Siegrist, Lilah Thien, Livy Timmerman, Madelyn Weigel and Jadyn Wyerick.

Truth about visitor leads to friendship crumbling

DEAR ABBY: My friend of eight years has her 55-year-old son living with her. She has been driving a man around who she told me is a friend of her son's and she knows his family. What she never mentioned is that he's a registered violent sex offender who was just released from prison.

She knows how I feel about this issue. Sex offenders are not allowed where we live because there are children here. I am very upset, and I told her to never call me again or come to my home. She brought the man to her home for a cookout. Children live on both sides of her. She has been trying to talk to me, but I have walked away. I feel hurt and lied to. She seems to not care about protecting the children in the neighborhood. What should I do here? — INCENSED IN INDIANA

DEAR INCENSED: Do the responsible thing. For the safety of those children, inform the police that a neighbor has been bringing a registered vio-

lent sex offender to her home in spite of the fact that minor children live on either side of her. The authorities can take it from there.

DEAR ABBY: My niece and I have always had a strong bond. Her son and his wife were expecting a baby. Most of my family knew, but they didn't want to tell anyone until she reached her second trimester.

My niece told me. I was supposed to keep it a secret. I have been depressed because my son is going through a divorce and my psychiatrist put me on a new medication. While I was on the medication, for some reason I for-



Dear Abby

got about keeping it a secret and sent a text to her son congratulating him. My niece is beyond angry at me. I told her I don't know why I did that. Come to find out the medication can cause "confusion." I told my doctor what happened, and she verified it. I explained to my niece about the medication. Although we don't live close, we usually talk a lot. We haven't spoken since this. I have apologized. I would love to have that bond again. Is there anything I can do? — SPILLED THE SECRET

DEAR SPILLED: You have already done what you can. Your niece is now going to have to work through her anger and disappointment. However, if and when that happens, do not expect to be her confidant again. That ship has likely sailed.

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend, "Chad," and I have been together for 10 years. We have no children together, but we have been step-

parents to each other's children since the beginning of our relationship. Since we have been together, we have had to deal with his relentless ex-wife, who's had multiple relationships. We've also dealt with my ex-husband moving out of the state and away from our daughter.

To say the least, we've put ourselves on the back burner dealing with kids and exes. We have also had health problems resulting in surgeries for Chad, my daughter and me. He has asked me to marry him only when he's coming out of surgery — once as he was coming out of anesthesia in the recovery room and another time just after we got home from another surgery. Am I wrong for not taking the "post-surgery proposals" seriously? We have recently become grandparents, and I don't want to hurt him by saying no. I feel like I need a completely lucid proposal. — WANTS IT FOR REAL IN UTAH

DEAR WANTS IT: You and Chad have 10 years invested in

this relationship. If you would like to be married to him, talk with him and ask if he remembers proposing to you, which he has done twice. Tell him you could not in good conscience hold him to a proposal that was made while he was under the influence of anesthesia or pain killers, but you would be open to it if he asked in the sober light of day. Then cross your fingers.

TO MY ASIAN READERS WHO CELEBRATE THE LUNAR NEW YEAR: The Lunar New Year begins today. It's the Year of the Snake. According to Asian culture, individuals born in the year of the snake are goal-oriented. They are excellent mediators — intelligent, refined, clever in business and are good providers because they value material wealth. A healthy, happy and prosperous New Year to you all. (Hiss, hiss, hooray!) — LOVE, ABBY

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 - 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.

Friday

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

Saturday

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS — Will meet at 10 a.m. at Zion Evangelical

Lutheran Church, 218 E. High St., Portland. For more information, call (260) 251-3336 or (260) 729-7000.

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

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

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

Sunday

A BETTER LIFE - BRIANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for all kinds of addictions, will meet from 5 to 6:30 p.m. each Sunday at Fellowship Baptist Church, 289 S. 200 West, Portland. Come early for a meal.

Sudoku

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

Level: Intermediate

Tuesday's Solution

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

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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Great teachers impart life lessons

Editor's note: This column is being reprinted from Jan. 26, 2005. Jack often came into the office with tales of some sort of project he was working on at home. Without his seventh grade shop teacher, who knows if he would have had the confidence to take on such efforts.

By JACK RONALD
The Commercial Review

It's amazing what you can learn about life in seventh grade shop class, particularly if you have a great teacher.

Mine was a guy named Don Oswald.

He had his hands full trying to teach some basics of wood shop to a crew that could never seem to decide whether they were kids or grown-ups or maybe even creatures from another planet. In other words, we were seventh graders, deep in the throes of confusion created by adolescence.

But Don Oswald let us know quickly and firmly that he was the boss. There was a get-down-to-business firmness about him,

Back in the Saddle



though he soon showed he had a sense of humor as well.

Our project that pivotal year was to be a bookcase, though giving it that name implies much more structure than was actually involved.

The "bookcase" was three pieces of wood. One was about six inches by fourteen inches. One was about six by six, and the third was six by two inches.

Our task, he explained that first week, was to construct a bookcase of basic design, cutting the wood ourselves, joining it, and sanding it to a finish that would pass his inspection.

Fortunately, no power tools

were involved or some of us would have left seventh grade with fewer digits than we'd had as sixth graders.

The tools were rudimentary, and they were kept locked in a screened cage at the back corner of the shop. At the start of each class, we'd have to sign tools out. At the end of the class, we'd have to return them in good condition. Class members took turns with the record-keeping in the tool cage.

For most of us, it was our first time ever trying to build something.

For all of us, it was a chance to see the world in a different way.

It quickly turned out that some of us weren't very good at this, while others took to it naturally. And there was absolutely no correlation between how well a student performed in shop and how well he did in any other class.

None of the good grades from English or history transferred over to the skills necessary to

think three-dimensionally and to work with our hands.

Probably nobody learned that faster than I did. When it came to shop, I was the equivalent of an illiterate. And it took some real patience on Don Oswald's part to get me "reading" by the end of the year.

The bookcase came together with dado joints, one on the top of the largest piece of wood and one on the bottom. The dado slots were cut with a miter saw, then chiseled out by hand. The shortest piece of wood would then be glued into the dado on the bottom of the largest piece, acting as a sort of foot. The third piece would fit into the top dado and act as a bookend. The finished piece would sit at a slight angle.

It would make a perfect gift for your father, Don assured us.

Sure, if it ever got finished.

Few projects ever seemed as daunting as that first one.

We all fought with the chisel. Some of us mis-measured and

had to buy more wood. And our finishes — no matter how hard we sanded or how much we steel-wooled — always seemed to need more work.

In the end, we all got them done, even those who were worse with wood than I was.

What did we learn?

We learned respect for wood. We learned respect for tools. We learned respect for those whose set of skills was different from our own.

And we learned to respect ourselves for seeing the project through to the end.

Don was right, by the way. It made a great gift to my father. To my great pride and seventh grade satisfaction, he kept it in his office the rest of his life. Today, it sits on the computer desk at home, holding software CDs.

Great life lessons from an outstanding teacher. You never know what you're going to learn in seventh grade.

Trump should reverse decision

By VINCENT TROMETTER
Chicago Tribune
Tribune News Service

Consent of the governed is one of the founding principles of our country.

Embedded in the Declaration of Independence, it harks to the frustrations of American colonists over unjust laws and levies placed upon them by the mad king, King George III. Simply put, it is a reaction against the tyranny of centralized government and the ignorance of local popular appeal.

There have been few moments in recent memory when this principle was violated more than Joe Biden, as president, halting the sale of U.S. Steel to Nippon Steel.

On Dec. 23, mayors and municipal leaders of Gary, Indiana, and the Mon Valley in Pennsylvania, whose blast furnaces would have been saved by Nippon, sent a letter to the modern-day mad king, Biden, imploring him not to block the deal, lest their economies crumble.

The folks on the ground told Biden that David McCall, head of the powerful United Steelworkers, was not negotiating in good faith and was pushing misinformation that eventually compelled Biden to block the deal this month.

So, is this truly the end?

If you are President Donald Trump, you surely do not want this to be so.

The Mon Valley and Gary Works plants produce, respectfully, 2.9 million and 7.5 million net tons of steel annually. The American Iron and Steel Institute shows 2023's total steel output for the country at 89.7 million net tons. Thus, if the Mon Valley and Gary plants were to close, this would reduce America's annual steel output by almost 12%.

Increases in the price of steel caused by this shrinking in supply will be made worse if Trump implements his tariffs. In 2023, the U.S. imported around 28.2 million net tons of steel. Canada and Mexico exported the

Vincent Trometter



most to us at a combined 11.1 million net tons.

Without increasing domestic steel production, levying 25% tariffs on Mexico and Canada, as well as 10% to 20% unilateral tariffs on all other countries, any business that depends on steel inputs in the U.S. will be handicapped.

If I am Trump, how am I going to rebuild the military if I have 12% less steel and steeper costs for steel imports than my predecessor? How am I going to super-drive the American economy when these factors are in place?

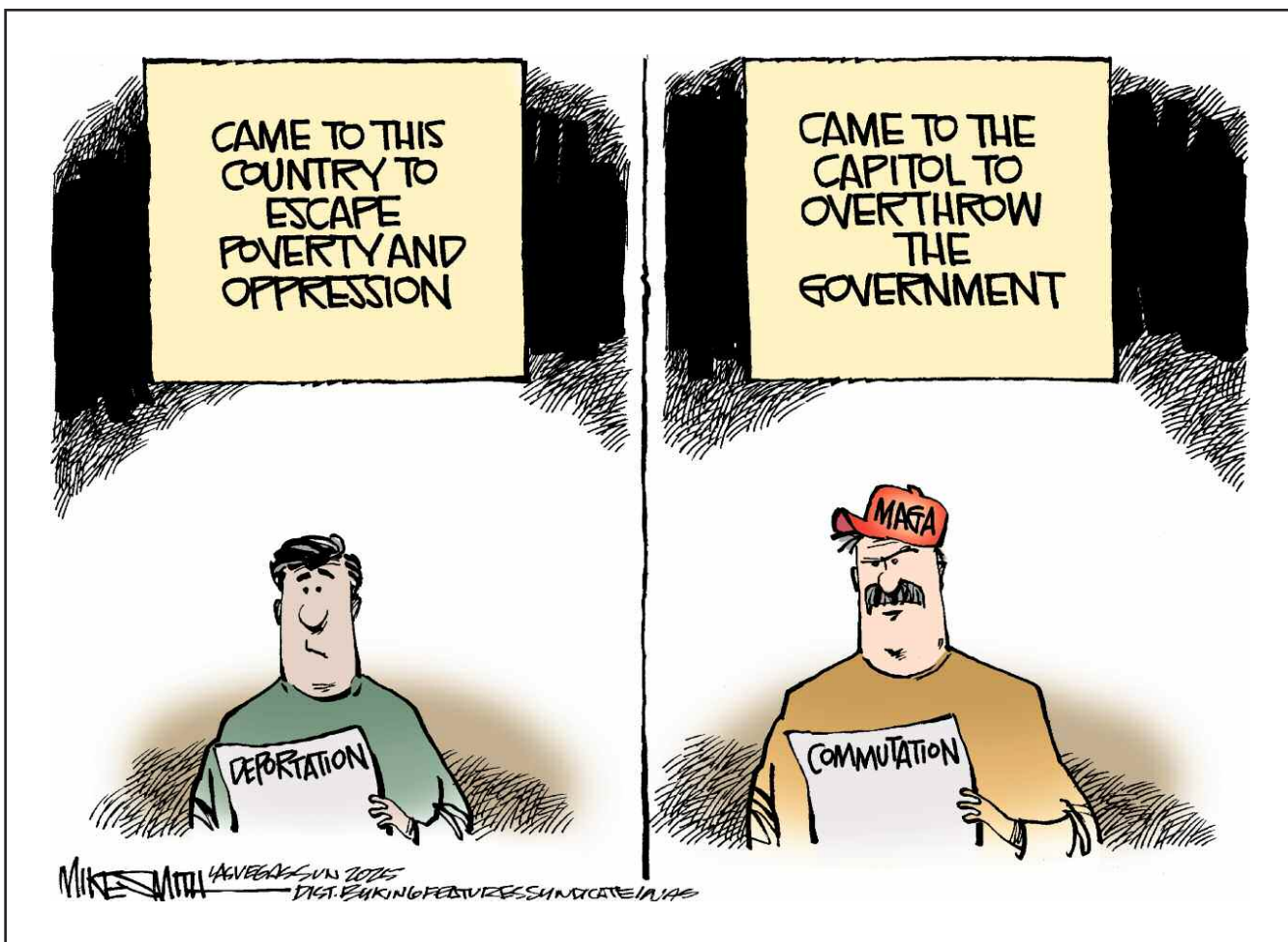
Trump appeals to working-class voters who feel like they have been left behind. In a sense, he speaks to those who feel Washington has lost its consent to govern. By reversing Biden's decision, he would speak to the communities that Biden truly turned his back on. Through this sale, he also would have more steel to fulfill his agenda since Nippon's pledged investments would increase production and keep the Mon Valley and Gary plants operational for decades to come.

Given Trump's plan of autarky, not reversing Biden's decision would be a bigger betrayal to the working class than Biden blocking the deal in the first place. Without Nippon acquiring U.S. Steel, workers who thought Trump would lead them into a new golden era will surely be bypassed when they find out they don't even have enough material to do the things that they are doing now.

When they voted for Trump, do you think they consented to this?

.....

Trometter is vice president of Competitive Markets Action Inc. in Washington, D.C., and a native of Williamsport, Pennsylvania.



Restoring control can't wait

Bloomberg Opinion
Tribune News Service

Since the start of the new year, the bond market has been urging Congress to come to terms with America's spiraling budget problems. Soon it might be demanding immediate action.

Long-term yields have hovered around 5%. If they stay there, the government's inflation-adjusted cost of borrowing will likely exceed the economy's rate of growth — meaning the debt ratio will rise even faster than currently projected and that bigger spending cuts or tax increases will be needed to rein it in. This is what "unsustainable" fiscal policy looks like.

Lawmakers haven't even started talking about this problem, much less grappling with it realistically. The Congressional Budget Office has just updated its periodic assessment of "Options for Reducing the Deficit." Studied alongside the latest estimates of required fiscal tightening, it suggests just how dire the country's outlook is.

On current policies — optimistically assuming no extra spending, no new tax reductions, moderate bond yields and no economic setbacks — the debt will rise to nearly 120% of gross domestic product by 2035 and keep on rising thereafter. Stabilizing the debt ratio at its current level of roughly 100% of GDP would demand spending cuts and tax increases amounting to some \$9 trillion over the next 10 years. Measured against that prospect, the CBO's list of deficit-reduction choices offers no easy answers.

To illustrate, the government's single biggest spending program, at about \$1.5 trillion a year, is Social

Guest Editorial

Security. Gradually raising the normal retirement age to 70 from 67 — a controversial reform, too much for many politicians — would reduce the program's 10-year outlays by roughly \$100 billion. Setting all Social Security payments from next year at \$2,000 a month inflation-adjusted (equivalent to 150% of the federal poverty level) would be even more radical and is scarcely imaginable: Even this would save only about \$300 billion between now and 2034.

What about taxes? The CBO estimates that a surtax of 2 percentage points on incomes above \$100,000 (\$200,000 for joint filers) would raise about \$1 trillion over 10 years. Limiting itemized personal-tax deductions could plausibly raise some \$2 trillion; eliminating them altogether would raise about \$3.5 trillion. Yet these dramatic tax increases, combined with those improbable changes to Social Security, would get you only a little more than halfway to stabilizing the debt over the decade. Add a politically suicidal European-style value-added tax of 5%, raising another \$2 trillion to \$3 trillion (depending on the base), and you're closer.

The point is straightforward: To get on top of the country's daunting fiscal problem, everything must be on the table. To keep spending cuts feasibly modest, program by pro-

gram, savings must be found in many different areas: Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, defense and other discretionary categories.

Revenue must likewise be examined from every angle: Limit personal-tax deductions, reform the corporate tax (preferably by raising the rate while shielding new investment), gradually trim tax subsidies for borrowing and for employment-based health insurance, raise the earnings ceiling for the payroll tax, start taxing carbon emissions, eliminate stepped-up basis at death for capital gains tax, and more.

The wider the net, the less disruptive each of these changes will need to be. Indeed — and here is the good news — many of these reforms would be valuable in their own right: If well designed, they could spur efficiency and support faster growth even as they help get public borrowing under control.

Bear in mind, Washington's next big initiative seems likely to be in the opposite direction: Extending the expiring provisions of the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act could add another \$5 trillion to cumulative deficits by 2034.

Scott Bessent, President Donald Trump's choice for Treasury secretary, said recently that extending the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was a top priority. He needs to think again.

At a minimum, lawmakers should ensure that any such extensions are paid for, so that the plan is revenue-neutral. Then, as a matter of urgency, they must turn their attention to stabilizing the debt. The longer the task is delayed, the harder it will get — and the bigger the risk that a financial-market panic will demand a far costlier reckoning.

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— Thomas Jefferson

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Transfer ...

Continued from page 1
"That building is in dire need of repair ... engineering-wise, I can't answer those questions, it's been years and years since I've been inside of it, but something needs to be done with that building."

The building transferred Monday has been through a county tax sale twice. Commissioners currently hold a tax sale certificate for the property. Because the county has the certificate, commissioners may transfer the property to a nonprofit organization. (The roughly \$1,800 in taxes owed on the building will be erased with the transfer.)

"If you do transfer it, it does wipe out the \$1,800 that the county is owed, but it would hopefully eventually end up back on the tax rolls if you could encourage some development there," noted Schemenaur.

He added the transfer is not final — Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation will need to go through a redemption process for the building, which takes approximately 120 days. (If the owner redeems the property by paying their back taxes, the property would remain under their ownership.)

The transfer is also subject to reverting back to the county if Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation doesn't make changes to the building within the next five years.

Following a public hearing,

commissioners agreed to move forward with the transfer.

Also Monday, during a nearly three-hour meeting, commissioners opened bids for the next round of projects in Jay County's owner-occupied rehabilitation program.

The county received offers for various home projects from Mustard Seed Remodeling of Portland (total \$353,288), Dave's Heating and Cooling of Portland (total \$146,782) and Fortitude Design and Consulting of Evansville (total \$124,100). It also received a total of \$62,077 in bids for radon mediation work from Air Xray of New Haven. (Testing for radon is required by Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs before construction projects take place.)

Commissioners took the bids under advisement.

Also Monday, commissioners discussed potentially changing the scope of work in an ongoing study with Barry Ritter of Ritter Strategic Services to include looking into costs for a second stand-alone radio system.

The company is looking into upgrading radio equipment for Jay County emergency responders. Currently, it's focusing on shifting the county to the Integrated Public Safety Commission's statewide system. Commissioners president Chad Aker suggested looking into the stand-alone system for non-public entities. After discussion, commis-

sioners agreed to invite Ritter to a meeting to talk about the project.

Aker also shared plans to hold a work session and discuss economic development income tax (EDIT) funds with groups that applied for EDIT dollars.

Commissioner Duane Monroe suggested re-opening applications for EDIT funding, noting one applicant now needs less money than initially requested.

Schemenaur suggested inviting applicants to the work session in 10- to 15-minute intervals to talk about funding requests. Aker said he will connect with commissioners about potential dates coming up for the meeting.

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

- Approved ordinances amending purchasing procedures, allowing elected officials and department heads to make purchases up to \$5,000 without prior approval from commissioners and allowing county officials to enter into contracts less than \$5,000 without prior approval, effective Feb. 1.

- Shifted a few regular meetings because of conflicting schedules, with commissioners deciding to hold their second meeting in March on March 31 and their second meeting in June to June 30.

- Approved the following: paying an additional \$14,300.35 to Hays and Sons Complete

Restoration of Muncie for restoration services at Jay County Courthouse following a water leak; paying \$26,870.12 to Mustard Seed Remodeling of Portland for remodeling one of the men's restrooms at Jay County Country Living, with the approval contingent on an additional appropriation from Jay County Council; a \$23,297.08 contract with All Circuit Electrical of Bryant for replacing lights at Jay County Jail; a \$13,900 agreement with property owners at 402 W. Seventh St., Portland, in order to grant an easement related to replacing the bridge on Seventh Street, with an additional \$7,500 factored in to pay for trees removed in the process; a two-year, \$3,405 contract with J.J. Keller and Associates for School of Chemical Sciences data management software at Jay County Highway Department to stay compliant with safety guidelines; a \$10,566.62 contract with Matrix Integration of Jasper for upgrading internet equipment and speeds at Jay County Courthouse; paying \$7,800 to Four-U Office Supplies of Celina, Ohio, for a new copier in auditor Emily Frank's office; moving forward with vacating two alleys in New Corydon; allowing highway superintendent Bob Howell to go over the county's \$1,500 credit card spending limit to pay for employees to attend a three-day conference outside of Jay Coun-

ty; a pass-through grant for transportation agency LifeStream Services to purchase four new buses; right-of-way contracts for upcoming construction work on two bridges, one on county road 350 West between 50 North and 200 North and the other on county road 1100 West between Division Road and county road 100 North; and spending an additional \$2,350 on a van Jay County Sheriff's Office is purchasing in order to add three more seats.

- Agreed to pay for three Jay County Prosecutor's Office employees to attend a three-day child support conference in June in Fort Wayne.

- OK'd closing volunteer emergency service Rescue 19's bank account intended for donations and moving dollars into a donation account for Jay Emergency Management.

- Appointed Judith Affolder, Diana Stults and Jeff Kiess to the Property Tax Assessment Board of Appeals.

- Heard Jay Emergency Medical Services' financial breakdown for December from director Gary Barnett. The department had \$124,304.70 in expenses and \$88,881.21 in income. Barnett also compared annual financial breakdowns between 2023 and 2024, pointing out the county brought in an additional \$69,082.35 and spent \$44,431.82 less in 2024.

- Paid \$1.85 million in claims.

TIFs ...

Continued from page 1
Both Robbins and Bivens noted that creating TIF districts has been discussed several times in the past decade-plus.

Robbins also told the council that Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation is partnering with private investors — Rock Fuqua, Jesse Walter and Dr. Oakland Gaerke — on a project in the Stewart Brothers building at 304 S. Main St. in downtown Dunkirk. He said the first plans are to replace 17 windows on the second floor and remove a balcony. The goal is to create apartments upstairs with retail space on the first floor, with Fuqua, Walter and Gaerke eventually taking ownership of the building.

He noted that the city also got approval from Jay County Commissioners on Monday to take control of an adjacent property at 303 S. Main St. that could be converted into a parking lot. (See related story.)

Robbins said the same investors purchased the former Gaunt's Jewelry building at 213 S. Main St. with plans of an upstairs apartment and downstairs retail space.

"This is a good thing for Dunkirk," the mayor said. "I think that's really going to help the downtown."

"We might be short of buildings here in Dunkirk here before long," he added. "It's growing. ..."

"Things are happening in Dunkirk."

He added that he's also heard some interest about the Todd Building, though no viable plans have been presented to him as of yet. The building is the subject of ongoing litigation with Todd Building Group, which had plans of putting

a restaurant in the building that never came to fruition. (The city has been trying to recoup funds that were loaned for the building's renovation.)

Robbins said after the meeting that he feels if the right opportunity comes up a deal can be worked out to allow the sale of the building.

In other business, council:

- Approved an update to the city's water ordinance that includes adding or increasing various fees. It increases the fee for an after-hours service call to \$50 from the current \$35 and creates a \$100 tampering fee.

- Heard from Robbins that an application has been turned in for an Indiana Department of Transportation Community Crossings grant for paving Pleasant Street on the west side of the city, Fourth Street, D Street and Lincoln Avenue between Main and Angle streets.

- Approved the following: vacating an east-west alley between Hoover and Indiana streets; payment of claims totaling \$272,366.33; payment of a \$9,066.98 claim from Culy Contraction for work to repair a water line on Blackford Avenue; and payment of a \$990 claim from McCammon Brothers for utility work in Dunkirk City Park.

- Heard from Revolt about plans to apply for a grant from The Portland Foundation for installing pickleball courts in the park.

- Was reminded by clerk-treasurer Kara Lowe that she is advertising for an open clerical position and has received several applications.

Felony courts

Continued from page 2
William A. Ogan, 59, 6931 N. 750 East, Bryant, pleaded guilty in Jay Circuit Court to the Level 6 felony. He was sentenced to one year and four days in Jay County Jail with one year suspended and given credit for time served. Ogan was placed on proba-

tion, assessed \$189 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee. As part of his plea agreement, his charge was lessened from a Level 5 felony, and a Class A misdemeanor for driving with a suspended license was dismissed.

Felony arrests

Nonsupport

A Missouri man was arrested Saturday for nonsupport of a dependent.

Daniel E. Novak Jr., 43, 5717 Gannings Station Road, Louis, was preliminarily charged with three Level 6 felonies for the alleged crime.

He was being held without bond in Jay County Jail.

Unlawful possession

A Dunkirk woman was arrested Saturday for unlawful possession of a syringe.

Jennifer L. Jones, 38, 5337 S. 1150 West, was preliminarily charged with a Level 6 felony for the alleged crime.

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

HEALTHCARE

3 short-term fitness goals that can lead to long-term success



- 1. Aspire for incremental weight loss.** Weight loss goals were the fourth most popular New Year's resolution for 2024 among participants in the Forbes Health/One Poll survey. Though that survey separated fitness goals from weight loss goals, the two are certainly linked. Individuals who aspire to lose 10 pounds undoubtedly recognize that such a goal cannot be achieved overnight, so why not aspire to lose small amounts of weight at predetermined intervals? For example, if the end goal is losing 10 lbs., aim to lose two pounds by the end of January. Incremental progress can motivate individuals to stay the course and ultimately propel them toward achieving a more substantial, long-term goal.
- 2. Exercise for a predetermined number of days each week.** Another way to gradually build toward achieving long-term fitness goals is to establish monthly minimum exercise sessions. Individuals accustomed to a sedentary lifestyle can resolve to exercise three days per week in the first month of their resolution, and then increase that by a day in the second month. A consistent schedule when designing this goal is imperative, which is why it can make more sense to plan for three days per week as opposed to 12 days per month.
- 3. Resolve to walk a mile per day.** Walking is an accessible cardiovascular activity that can have a profound effect on overall health. Walking also can help condition sedentary individuals' bodies for more strenuous activity, which is a transition many people aspire to make when setting long-term fitness goals. A daily one-mile walk won't require a significant commitment of time, but it can help acclimate the body to routine exercise. As the effects of a daily walk begin to take hold, individuals may find it easier to engage in more strenuous physical activities, making this an ideal stepping stone on the way to achieving long-term fitness goals.

Short-term goals can help people remain motivated as they pursue more substantial goals that take longer to achieve. Such an approach can be especially useful for individuals resolving to improve their physical fitness at the start of a new year.

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THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane

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Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

The sure way

South dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ A K 2
 ♥ K Q 8 4
 ♦ A 10 9 8
 ♣ A J

EAST
 ♠ Q 6 5 3
 ♥ 6 3
 ♦ K J 7
 ♣ 9 5 4 2

SOUTH
 ♠ J 7
 ♥ A J 10 9 2
 ♦ Q 6 3
 ♣ K Q 8

The bidding:
 South West North East
 1♥ Pass 4 NT Pass
 5♦ Pass 5 NT Pass
 6♦ Pass 6♥

Opening lead — ten of spades.

Consider the North-South diamond holding in today's deal where, as declarer, your aim is to avoid losing more than one trick in the suit.

One method of play is to lead low to the ace and return the ten. If East follows low, you can let the ten ride or go up with the queen. If East has the jack, playing low on the ten wins, but if he has the king, the queen is the winning play. Whether you are successful depends on how good a guesser you are.

Another approach is to lead a low diamond from the closed hand and finesse dummy's eight. If the eight loses to the jack, you later try another finesse against West, hoping your right-hand opponent wasn't dealt the king and jack.

The second method of play is better than the first because when the play begins, there is about a 75% chance that East does not hold both honors, while if you play the ace followed by the ten, your chances are not nearly as good as that.

However, you shouldn't blindly choose the second line of play, for there might be yet another approach that is even better. In the present case, for instance, you can improve your prospects further by adopting a third line of play.

Accordingly, you win the spade lead with the ace, draw trump, cash the king of spades and ruff a spade. Next you cash the A-K-Q of clubs and lead a low diamond to the eight.

East takes the jack, but even if he has the king, the slam is home. Because you have taken the precaution of eliminating the side suits before tackling diamonds, there is nothing he can do to stop you from scoring the rest of the tricks.

Tomorrow: The handwriting on the wall.
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CRYPTOQUIP

TSMP WNOMCZ MYPYZMVP GWYYMR
 WTWF, V TAPRMC VB GMAGNM
 MUMCFTSMCM AOYMCUMR W
 JAJMPZ AB YLVMPLM.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF I SPOKE TO A BELUGA OR HUMPBACK FACE TO FACE, I MIGHT START WITH "WHALE, HELLO THERE!"
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: G equals P

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Efron of "Parkland"
 4 "For — the Bell Tolls"
 8 Maui's — Highway
 12 Rock's Brian
 13 Continental coin
 14 Petri dish gel
 15 Scrape (out)
 16 Shakable paper-weight
 18 Egypt's Anwar
 20 Quibble
 21 Composer Bartok
 24 Informative
 28 Hall & Oates ballad of 1976
 32 Scarce
 33 Galley item
 34 Must, casually
 36 Plant seeds
 37 Radar dot
 39 "Gems" found on a beach

DOWN

1 "Bye!"
 43 Poetry contest
 44 Vat
 46 Foolish
 50 Scott Evil
 55 Blue
 56 Saab model
 57 Nest egg choices
 58 Broad st.
 59 Weed songbird
 60 Lacking slack
 61 Wine choice

2 "Diana" singer
3 Not single-sex
4 Locale in "The Great Gatsby"
5 Atila, e.g.
6 Acapulco gold
7 Cut, as a lawn
8 Summer top
9 Previously
10 Collar
11 Common verb
17 Tonic's mixer
19 Six-pack muscles
22 Novelist Anita
23 Poker pot starters

25 "That — close one!"
26 "No seats" signs
27 Evergreens
28 Weeps
29 Robust gold
30 Buffalo's lake
31 List- ending abbr.
35 Not for
38 Large constrictor
40 Run after K
42 Summer mo.
45 Telly watcher
47 Slightly open
48 Cathedral area
49 Kept tabs on
50 Cutting tool
51 Chariot trailer
52 Three, in Rome
53 Notable time
54 Vichy water

Solution time: 23 mins.

DALE MOBS GPA
 APEX APOP LAB
 STICKWITH URI
 EIRE EBERT
 ENDED EROS
 LORD PARENTED
 LIU OASIS TTA
 ARMENIAN SCAN
 SPAR ANKLE
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Yesterday's answer 1-29

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Sports

Career highs and firsts

Niekamp sets scoring mark at 28, Ranly, Hiser put in first hoops on varsity

By **ANDREW BALKO**
The Commercial Review

FORT RECOVERY — Karlie Niekamp gave the Tribe and its fans plenty to be excited about.

But the senior got the loudest when a freshman got her moment and made the most of it.

Niekamp scored a career-high 28 points on Monday, but found another level of excitement when Scarlet Hiser scored her first varsity basket in the closing minute of the Fort Recovery High School girls basketball team's 64-17 whooping of the South Adams Starfires.

The game against the Starfires (3-17) was originally scheduled for Jan. 21, but was rescheduled due to inclement weather.

The Indians (10-9) wasted no time getting ahead of South Adams, allowing coach Tyler Deitsch to extend his bench and get everyone in by the end of the game. As a result, freshmen Kendall Ranly and Scarlet Hiser scored their first career buckets, the former on a 3-pointer with 2 minutes, 30 seconds left and the latter on a wide open layup off of a press break with less than a minute to go.

"I'm happy with the way we came out and played and proud of our girls for executing what we talked about," Deitsch said. "It's good for everybody to get a chance to get in and try to contribute.

... Being able to get out there and build confidence is big for those girls. And being able to get everybody in is



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Fort Recovery High School's Cameron Muhlenkamp dives on the floor to swipe the ball away from Ana Lehman of South Adams during Monday's 64-17 victory. The Indians' defense forced South Adams to commit 28 turnovers, leading to transition opportunities.

always a good sign for your team.

"It just helps with team morale. I think everybody was more excited for

Scarlett to score than she was herself, which just kind of shows how our girls relate and feel about each other."

To get there, Fort Recovery got a career-kind performance out of its senior forward. Niekamp hit a new scoring high by

putting up 28 points on 12-of-16 (75%) from the field to outpace the Starfires herself. South Adams couldn't find a

way to slow down the 5-foot, 11-inch Indian, as she found ways to score with her back to the basket, off of 10-foot pull ups, drives to the rim, two free throws and a pair of triples.

Niekamp also pulled down a game-high 15 rebounds and led all players with five assists. All five of those assists came in transition opportunities, in which Niekamp stole the ball before passing it ahead or sucked in a rebound and pushed the pace before finding a teammate.

"I was just playing my game and being opportunistic," Niekamp said. "I was just able to get those rebounds and then my teammates were turning up the sidelines, so I could pass up to them. We work on that in practice and that was like our picture-perfect transition, so it just worked out well tonight."

Along with the Indians manufacturing transition opportunities with Niekamp ripping down rebounds and running, they turned SAHS over to create offense.

Fort Recovery ran a 1-2-2 full-court press that featured Kennedy Muhlenkamp at the top, Cameron Muhlenkamp and Niekamp as the next in line and Makenna Huelskamp and Emma Schmitz — starter Bridget Homan missed the game with an illness — protecting the back line. As a result, the Indians forced 28 turnovers, including 15 in the first quarter alone.

See **Career** page 7

Fort Recovery girls finish 6-0 in the conference

COLDWATER, Ohio — The Tribe isn't any stranger to success so far this season.

They have now completed the perfect Midwest Athletic Conference regular season.

The Fort Recovery High School girls bowling team took down the Minster Wildcats 2,588-1,996 on Saturday at Pla-Mor Lanes to finish a perfect 6-0 in the regular season against MAC teams.

Ella Schoen led the way for the Indians (8-1, 6-0

Bowling roundup

MAC), putting out the only games above 200 in the match as she rolled a 201 and a 214. Lilah Thein was pushing the two-century mark in both games, finishing with a 190 and 194.

See **Roundup** page 7



Beautiful butterfly

Fort Recovery High School's Carson Fullenkamp swims the 100-yard butterfly at the 2025 Cav Invite on Saturday at Jay County. He finished third in the event with a time of 1 minute, 1.44 seconds.

The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney



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