

# The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

## Drones sighted in Jay County

By RAY COONEY  
The Commercial Review

Drone sightings have been reported in Jay County, Mercer County and the surrounding areas.

Local officials are working with federal agencies on how to handle the situation.

Jay County emergency management and law enforcement officials met Wednesday morning with representatives from the FBI, Federal Aviation Administration, Indiana Department of Homeland Security and the military to discuss the drone activity in the area.

Another meeting was planned for Wednesday afternoon. "Are we having drone sightings? Absolutely," said Jay County Sheriff Ray Newton on Wednesday morning. "Are they going around the turkey farms and chicken farms? Yes, they are. "That I am aware of, they are

*Local officials are working with state and federal agencies, warn residents not to attempt to shoot down any aircraft*

doing nothing wrong as of yet. They're not violating airspace. So that's basically where we're at as far as law enforcement."

"At this point, we are not aware of them doing anything in viola-

tion of their rights in the airspace," said Jay County Emergency Management Agency director Samantha Rhodehamel.

Both warned that no attempts should be made to shoot down drones. According to a press release from Jay County EMA, it is a felony punishable by up to 20 years in prison to "damage, destroy, disable, or wreck any aircraft."

Sonrise Aviation, based at Portland Municipal Airport, made a similar request, noting that its aircraft and pilots fly in and out of the facility at all hours.

Reports about drones in the area started in Mercer County, with Sheriff Doug Timmerman

issuing a press release Monday evening. They have since followed in Jay County, as well as Adams, Blackford and Darke counties.

Newton said some of his deputies observed the drones. He added that it is unclear from where they are being operated.

Rhodehamel and some of her staff have observed them as well. "What I have seen is just a dark object, and then it has the red, or some of them have the green, flashing lights on them," she said, adding that sightings have been spread across the county.

She said she is uncomfortable estimating the size of the drones. See **Drones** page 2



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

### Elementary anthem

The Jay County elementary school choir performed The Star-Spangled Banner on Tuesday night before the Jay County High School girls basketball game against Heritage. It was part of a variety of activities for the evening, including free popcorn for fans, honoring the elementary and middle school girls basketball teams and a poster signing with the varsity squad after the game. For more on the JCHS win, see page 8.

## Redkey council OKs Fisher abatement

By BAILEY CLINE  
The Commercial Review

REDKEY — Fisher Packing continues to grow.

Plans are to renovate its Redkey location to add a new freezer, smokehouse, linking line and other equipment.

Redkey Town Council approved new tax abatements Tuesday for the local business.

Fisher Packing plans to renovate approximately 8,000 square feet of its building to increase processing, packaging and dry good storage capacity, as well as add a 2,000 square-foot-freezer onto the existing building.

*Business plans to add freezer and smokehouse*

New equipment would include a smokehouse, linking line, roll-stock packaging machine, link separator, pallet racking, material handling equipment and manufacturing resource planning hardware or software, according to tax abatement forms shared Tuesday. The company is investing approximately \$3.6 million into the project. Michael Fisher of Fisher Packing, with help from Jodi Hayes of Jay County Development Corporation, requested a 10-year abatement and five-year tax abatement in correlation with the project.

With the additional equipment, Fisher is expected to add eight jobs. (Currently, 45 employees work at the facility.)

Fisher Packing started processing meat at its Redkey facility in November 2016 after a July 16 fire that year at its Portland site. The company repurposed the former Bell Aquaculture facility after the fire, which caused more than \$1 million in damage.

In September 2021, Redkey Town Council approved two simi-

lar tax abatements for Fisher Packing for adding a new linking line and smokehouse, a \$3.5 million investment at that time. (The project proposed Tuesday is a new investment for another addition, noted Fisher.) Fisher Packing currently has six tax abatements from Redkey, not including the two approved Tuesday. It also has a tax abatement from Portland.

Council member "Watermelon" Jim Phillips questioned Hayes and Fisher about the Redkey Economic Development Corporation.

See **Redkey** page 2

## Income tax cut bill clears Senate

By NIKI KELLY, LESLIE BONILLA MUÑIZ AND WHITNEY DOWNARD  
Indiana Capital Chronicle  
indianacapitalchronicle.com

While the new governor and budget stewards are tightening state spending due to modest revenue growth, the Indiana Senate on Tuesday passed a bill cutting the state individual income tax rate in the future.

Also in the Senate and House, legislators tackled bare-knuckle fighting, fentanyl strips and physician availability.

Lawmakers are in the middle of a five-year process to reduce the state's income tax rate down to 2.9% by 2027. That would be the third-lowest rate in the country for states with an income tax.

But Senate Bill 451, authored by Sen. Travis Holdman, R-Markle, wants to go further: His legislation would automatically lower the tax

*Holdman authored measure to reduce rate by 0.5% in even years*

rate by 0.05% every even-numbered year, beginning in 2030 — but only if state revenues grow by at least 3% in the previous even-numbered year. Lawmakers could also suspend the law in odd-numbered years.

Holdman said in the decade prior to COVID, state revenues grew 3.24% each year.

WFYI reported that for a household earning \$100,000, that would be a savings of \$50 a year. It would cost the state hundreds of millions of dollars per year in revenue.

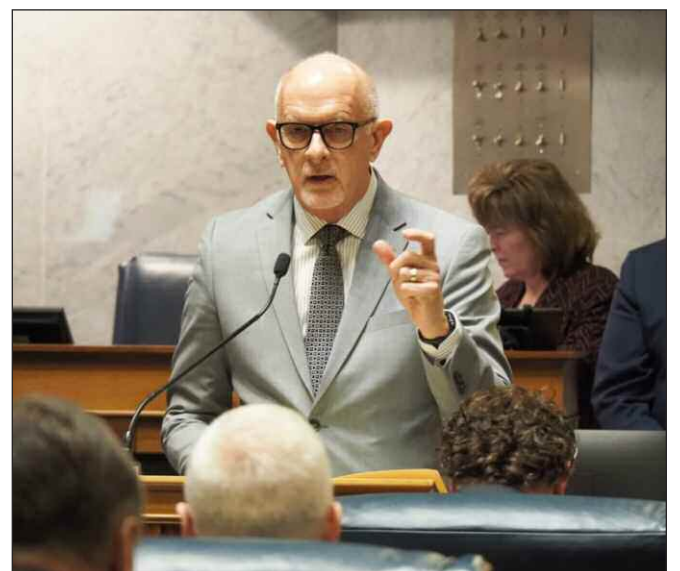
There was no discussion on the bill, which passed 49-0, and now moves to the House.

### Doctor contracts

A bill to ban non-compete agreements for all physicians cleared the Senate on a 47-2 vote, with both 'no' votes coming from Republicans.

Senate Bill 475 would expand the state's current prohibition on non-compete agreements, which only impacts primary care physicians.

See **Senate** page 2



Indiana Capital Chronicle/Whitney Downard

State Sen. Travis Holdman, R-Markle, who represents Jay County as well as Blackford, Adams and Wells counties and part of Allen County, presents his tax bill before the Indiana Senate on Tuesday.

### Deaths

**Cyril Pottkotter**, 66, Fort Recovery  
Details on page 2.

### Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 41 degrees Tuesday. The low was 28.

Rain is expected tonight with the temperature steady around 40 degrees and winds gusting to 25 miles per hour. Expect windy, rainy conditions again Friday.

See page 2 for an extended forecast.

### In review

"Splashin' with a Passion: Peggy's Plunge" is scheduled for noon Saturday, Feb. 8, behind Moser Engineering, 102 E. Performance Drive, Portland. Registration will begin at 11 a.m. The event is a fundraiser for United Way of Jay County. Participants who raise at least \$100 will receive a t-shirt.

### Coming up

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

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

**Monday** — Photo coverage of "Splashin' With a Passion: Peggy's Plunge."





# Drones ...

Continued from page 1  
Officials in Jay and Mercer counties have asked that, for safety reasons, residents not try to chase drones.

Those who see drones are asked to report the information by calling (260) 726-8188 in Jay County and (419) 568-7724 in Mercer County with the time and location of the sightings. Anyone who takes videos or photos should send them to Jay County EMA at [ema@co.jay.in.us](mailto:ema@co.jay.in.us).

Newton said he was hopeful to have more information by Wednesday evening.

"We'll try to figure it out," he said. "We're not trying to ignore it. It's just, we've never had this problem before."

"We are aware here locally, the state and the federal partners are all aware," said Rhodehamel. "We're trying to get a plan of action together. ... That's what we've been working on this morning."

The drone sightings are not limited to east central Indiana and west central Ohio.

During a briefing this morning, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt issued the following statement that she said had just been shared with her by President Donald Trump regarding drones in New Jersey:

"After research and study, the drones that were flying over New Jersey in large numbers were authorized to be flown by the

FAA for research and various other reasons.

"Many of these drones were also hobbyists — recreational and private individuals that enjoy flying drones. In the meantime, it got worse, due to curiosity. This was not the enemy."

NBC News this week reported similar sightings from Connecticut to New Jersey, as well as in Virginia. It said a research lab studying "unidentified phenomena" has counted 650 sightings nationally since November.

The FAA's website says reports of unmanned aircraft are high and that it receives more than 100 such reports near airports each month. It issued a statement last

month about the ongoing drone sightings. It read, in part:

"Having closely examined the technical data and tips from concerned citizens, we assess that the sightings to date include a combination of lawful commercial drones, hobbyist drones, and law enforcement drones, as well as manned fixed-wing aircraft, helicopters, and stars mistakenly reported as drones. We have not identified anything anomalous and do not assess the activity to date to present a national security or public safety risk over the civilian airspace in New Jersey or other states in the northeast."

For the full statement, go to [bit.ly/FAAdroneDec2024](http://bit.ly/FAAdroneDec2024).

# Obituaries

**Cyril "Cy" G. Pottkotter**, Fort Recovery, April 18, 1958-Jan. 27, 2025. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 1.

.....  
*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

Friday 1/31	Saturday 2/1	Sunday 2/2	Monday 2/3	Tuesday 2/4
<b>52/26</b>	<b>37/31</b>	<b>52/40</b>	<b>51/27</b>	<b>35/29</b>
Rain is likely Friday when there's a 90% chance of showers. Snow possible late.	Saturday looks to be mostly sunny with highs in the mid to upper 30s.	Mostly cloudy on Sunday. The temperature may jump to the 50s.	Monday's forecast shows mostly cloudy skies with a balmy high of 51.	Mostly sunny skies on Tuesday when the high will be in the mid 30s.

# Lotteries

<b>Powerball</b> Estimated jackpot: \$69 million	Evening Daily Three: 9-2-5 Daily Four: 9-4-8-7 Quick Draw: 4-6-7-8-13-16-17-18-22-26-33-39-45-46-59-63-68-69-70-80
<b>Mega Millions</b> 10-19-31-47-56 Mega Ball: 6 Megaplier: 5 Estimated jackpot: \$59 million	<b>Ohio</b> Tuesday Midday Pick 3: 2-9-3 Pick 4: 7-4-9-7 Pick 5: 6-5-9-8-3 Evening Pick 3: 1-1-5 Pick 4: 7-8-0-0 Pick 5: 9-0-0-5-4 Rolling Cash: 24-25-31-36-37 Estimated jackpot: \$140,000
<b>Hoosier</b> Tuesday Midday Daily Three: 8-6-9 Daily Four: 0-1-0-5 Quick Draw: 5-9-10-11-13-17-28-29-31-36-37-48-53-54-55-59-67-68-69-74	

# Markets

<b>Cooper Farms Fort Recovery</b> Corn.....4.96 March corn .....4.93 April corn .....4.97	Feb. beans .....10.57 Wheat ..... 5.09
<b>POET Biorefining Portland</b> Corn.....4.99 Feb. corn .....4.99 March corn .....5.03	<b>ADM Montpelier</b> Corn.....4.89 Feb. corn .....4.89 Beans .....10.51 Feb. beans .....10.54 Wheat .....5.22
<b>The Andersons Richland Township</b> Corn .....4.92 Feb. corn .....4.92 Beans .....10.54	<b>Heartland St. Anthony</b> Corn.....4.87 Feb. corn .....4.87 Beans .....10.33 March beans .....10.38 Wheat .....4.99

# Today in history

In 1933, Adolf Hitler was named chancellor of Germany by then-president Paul Hidenburg. Initially intimidated by Hitler's popularity, Hidenburg originally refused to put him into power. After a round of elections and negotiations, he caved. Hitler's rule led to World War II and the murder of some 6 million Jews and other victims of the Holocaust.

In 1948, Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated in New Delhi, India during a prayer vigil. Shot by Hindu extremist Nathuram Godse, Gandhi was known for his nonviolent protests leading to India's independence from Britain. A year later, approximately 100,000 people prayed at the site in remembrance of Gandhi.

In 2015, Dallas Dudelston and Andy Kohler of Jay County won their first sectional titles, bringing the Jay County wrestling team to a third-place finish at its tournament that weekend. Dudelston had also won the Allen County Athletic Conference about a week prior.

— The CR

# Citizen's calendar

<b>Monday</b> 5:30 p.m. — Portland City Council, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St.	<b>Wednesday</b> 5 p.m. — Jay County Redevelopment Commission, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.
<b>Tuesday</b> 5:30 p.m. — Portland Park Board, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St. 7 p.m. — Pennville Town Council, town hall, 105 N. Washington St. 7 p.m. — Salamonina Town Council, Schoolhouse Community Center.	<b>Thursday</b> 4 p.m. — Portland Board of Works, mayor's office, city hall, 321 N. Meridian St. 4 p.m. — Jay County Development Corporation board, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland.

# Senate ...

Continued from page 1  
Sen. Jean Leising, R-Oldenburg, urged her colleagues to also vote no, citing concerns about attracting physicians to her rural district.

"My rural hospitals have challenges, sometimes, when it comes to acquiring specialists, specifically obstetricians," Leising said. "I'm sure some have signed non-compete agreements ... and I know how hard it would be to replace them."

The bill moves to the House for further consideration.

**Contracting tightened**  
The Senate voted 49-0 to add regulations regarding large state contracts.

Sen. Scott Baldwin, R-Noblesville, said Senate Bill 5 improves efficiency and accountability in state government through stronger rules for contracts exceeding \$500,000 and a no-bid list for poor-performing contractors.

The bill also requires state agencies to submit quarterly progress reports about major state contracts to the state budget committee.

**Fighting fentanyl**

In the House, lawmakers approved proposals dealing with fighting and drug-testing strips.

They engaged in little discussion on House Bill 1073, which requires the Indiana Gaming Commission to regulate boxing,

sparring, professional wrestling, mixed martial arts and martial arts — including bare-knuckle fighting. The measure passed in a vote of 86-5.

His chamber also quickly passed, on an 88-2 vote, a measure clarifying that drug-testing strips don't count as illegal drug paraphernalia.

.....  
*This story was edited for length. For the full version, visit [indianacapitalchronicle.com](http://indianacapitalchronicle.com).*

# Redkey ...

Continued from page 1  
Hayes noted the entity is separate from JCDC.

Council then approved both tax abatements, with Phillips dissenting. (He said he would like to investigate more before approving it.)

Also, council approved, with Phillips dissenting, an ordinance establishing a penalty for unauthorized individuals tampering with water meters.

Redkey's water ordinance establishes unauthorized individuals as any person, firm or corporation not employed by Redkey or given written permission by Redkey to handle water meters in town.

The ordinance approved Tuesday says if a water meter is installed, removed or otherwise tampered without authorization from the town, "there shall be a rebuttable presumption that the resident of the dwelling or business where the water meter is located, is the unauthorized individual who installed, removed or otherwise tampered with the water meter."

If an unauthorized individual tampers with a water meter in town, they are subject to up to \$500 in fines. According to the ordinance, first offenses draw a minimum \$150 fine, second offenses have a minimum \$300 fine and third and subsequent offenses draw a \$400 minimum fine. (Council president Brenda Beaty noted fourth offenses would draw a \$500 fine along with the town filing the issue in court.)

Likewise, any damage resulting from tampering with water meters shall be paid by the person convicted of the offense.

Also Tuesday, council approved, with Floyd Life and Dave Dudelston dissenting, an amendment to Redkey's animal ordinance to allow hens.

Per the ordinance, property owners may have up to six female chickens on a parcel of land. Property owners

may keep chickens for non-commercial, personal use only, and they may not be slaughtered on the property.

Chickens must be kept enclosed and under control of the owner on their property, either in a coop or within a fenced-in area no larger than 100 square feet. They must have an enclosed structure that is at least 8 feet tall and located 20 feet from the property line that provides at least 10 square feet of space per chicken. It must be kept sanitary per town, county and state health regulations.

Chickens and their coops must be confined to the back yard of properties, and waste must be removed in an environmentally responsible manner. Dead chickens must be removed immediately.

Council also decided, with Phillips dissenting, to revisit the town's water adjustment ordinance after discussion about several water bill adjustments, including for one bill totaling more than \$1,700.

Phillips pointed to the town's water ordinance, which allows each resident one water bill adjustment per year. Beaty suggested taking another look at the ordinance — it was last discussed nearly a year ago — and making clarifications. She asked council members to write down their thoughts before the next meeting and share them with town hall.

"Yes, they get an adjustment a year, but on these big, big costs like this, we can't afford to eat it, Jimmy," Beaty said. "We're going to be in trouble when they come do the water audit."

She noted the town had \$85,000 worth of water loss in 2023 per the audit done last year.

Council then agreed to make \$2,361.36 in water bill adjustments.

Utility worker Ted Kolodka talked about the Indiana Department of Environmental Management violation regarding the town's existing combined sewer overflows (CSOs).

He filed an update to Redkey's long-term control plan addressing CSOs on Dec. 31. (The entire 50-page plan will be available online, he added, and includes projects proposed in the master utility study completed by Choice One Engineering last year.)

Kolodka said the town has contacted Indiana Financial Authority to look into grants, forgivable loans and other opportunities to fund the multi-million dollar projects.

Also, council agreed, with Dudelston dissenting, to make officer Jon Cave the temporary town marshal.

Relatedly, council OK'd Cave to hire two reserve officers. Hopes are to transition one of the reserve officers into a full-time deputy role in March or April. Cave noted he will be attending Indiana Law Enforcement Academy beginning May 4.

In other business, council:  
•Hired Seth Fugiett as a utility worker.

•Approved paying \$1,093 to fix a wiring issue with town's Dodge Durango police vehicle and replacing four on the town's Chevy Tahoe police vehicle and two tires on the Durango.

•Decided to discontinue the town's website managed by Emerald Business Solutions. Beaty agreed to look into other options for the town's website.

•Heard Valhalla Axe Hall is starting an axe-throwing league. The business will host a callout meeting starting at 6 p.m. Friday.

•Appointed Beaty as board president and Phillips as board vice president.

•Selected council members to oversee departments as follows: Phillips for wastewater department, Gavin Grady for streets department, Beaty for water and police departments, Life for fire department and Dudelston for parks department.

## SERVICES

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

**Saturday**  
**Pottkotter**, Cyril: 10 a.m., Mary Help of Christians Catholic Church, 403 Sharpshurg Road, Fort Recovery.  
**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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# The Commercial Review





Photo provided

## Optimists donate

Portland Evening Optimist Club recently donated \$200 to Jay County Special Olympics. Pictured above, from left, are Cyndi Denney of Jay County Special Olympics, Portland Evening Optimist Club president Bobby Ruiz and Troy Atkinson of Jay County Special Olympics.

## FRHS releases first semester honor roll

Fort Recovery High School announced its first semester honor roll.

Making the list with all A's were seniors Drew Backs, Mason Diller, Cassidy Dues, Evan Evers, Gavin Evers, Marlee Fiely, Kayla Heitkamp, Joelle Kaup, Gabe Knapke, Bailie Muhlenkamp, Kennedy Muhlenkamp, Karlie Niekamp, Ben Reinhard, Anna Roessner, Ella Schoen and Emma Will.

On the honor roll with all A's and B's were seniors Layla Bihn, Madison Bihn, Samantha Brackman, Nicole Braun, Kaleb Coleman, Brennan Dues, Gavin Dues, Sarah Fritz, Darlin Garcia Rivera, Riley Grieshop, Ava Grisez, Caden Grisez, Ethan Hartnagel, Kyle Huntsman, Eva Kahlig, Cody Klenke, Kennedy Kunkler, Caden Marchal, Norah Meyer, Keegan Muhlenkamp, Aleigha Overman, Briggs Overman, Kruiise Sieftring, Bella Taft, Reid Timmerman, Eowyn Vela and Mara Wenning.

Earning a spot on the list with all A's were juniors Evvie

Briner, Rylee Bulp, Elisa Evers, Carson Fullenkamp, Alivia Grube, Aubrie Heitkamp, Jameson Heitkamp, Madison Heitkamp, Maleiah Kaffenberger, Cayson Kaikala, Brylee Kremer, Cora Kremer, Reece LeFevre, Lily Schwieterman, Reece Wendel, Georgia Wenning and Leah Wuebker.

Making the honor roll with all A's and B's were juniors Gabe Acheson, Ella Bechtol, Douglas Bihn, Alexis Braun, Aiden Brunswick, Parker Brunswick, Ryker Brunswick, Emma Coleman, Kyla Dues, Zoe Dues, Nevaeh Elsass, Mallory Evers, Luke Fortkamp, Alex Gaerke, Brodie Hart, Isabell Hartings, Eli Hawk, Drew Heitkamp, Wes Keller, Dylan Klenke, Olivia Knapke, Autumn Leuthold, Luke Lochtefeld, Matthew Marchal, Colson Post, Troy Post, Anthony Roessner, Dani Schmitt, Hayden Sieftring, Jesse Springer, Megan Weitzel.

Freshmen and sophomores on the list will be published at a later date.

## Old friend continues inviting herself to house

DEAR ABBY: I have an old friend who lives an hour from me. I visit her for the day and come home. I have never invited her to spend the night at my home, nor do I expect her to invite me for a sleepover when I drive down to see her.

The last two times she has visited me, she has arrived at 9 a.m. I assumed she came early because she wanted to spend the whole day. She expected me to sit and talk all day. She refused to do anything except eat and talk. I am not a sitter, and I hated doing it, but she's a good friend, so I put up with it. Both times, around 5 p.m., she went to her car and brought in luggage expecting to spend the night. Then we ended up staying up until midnight so she could talk some more.

### Dear Abby



How can I tell her I'd prefer that she go home at the end of the day? She has been seeing psychiatrists for 50 years. It sounds like she goes just to talk. She's also afraid of everything and has no hobbies or other interests. What can I do to put an end to her uninvited overnight stays without hurting her or risking sending her into meltdown? — TREADING LIGHTLY IN THE WEST

DEAR TREADING: You

are not responsible for this woman's mental health, nor should you be. She appears to have been using you as a supplemental (unpaid) therapist.

The next time she wants to come for another marathon talk session, tell her you'd love to see her around 1 p.m. but will be unable to entertain her past 5. Unless you create boundaries, there won't be any, and the friendship you have with her will implode.

DEAR ABBY: I'm a 43-year-old woman who is unable to have children. As difficult as this is, I have sisters, friends and my own mom who are wonderful mothers, and I look forward to celebrating them on

Mother's Day. However, every year on Mother's Day, I struggle. Strangers assume that I'm a mother, and family overcompensates for the fact I'm not one. I am told "thank you" and have been given trinkets and flowers at restaurants because strangers assume I'm a mom. My family has even given me "awesome aunt" gifts to celebrate the occasion.

I haven't discussed my fertility struggles with anyone because it's too difficult and painful. While I understand and appreciate everyone's kindness, I'm struggling with how to convey that I'm fine with not being recognized. I feel it's cruel to have to disclose my medical diagnosis to others in order to be left alone on a holiday that has nothing

to do with me. How do I kindly tell people to leave me alone? — NEVER MOM IN NEW YORK

DEAR NEVER MOM: You are not the only person who encounters this problem every Mother's Day. You don't have to convey the message verbally, which might be repetitive as well as painful for you. Go online and search for buttons that bear the message "Child-Free." When I looked, I was surprised at the variety that are available.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

## Community Calendar

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

**Today**  
**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 - BRITAIN'S HOPE** — A faith-based recovery group for all kinds of addictions, will meet from 5 to 6:30

p.m. each Sunday at Fellowship Baptist Church, 289 S. 200 West, Portland. Come early for a meal. For more information, call (260) 766-2006.

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

## Sudoku

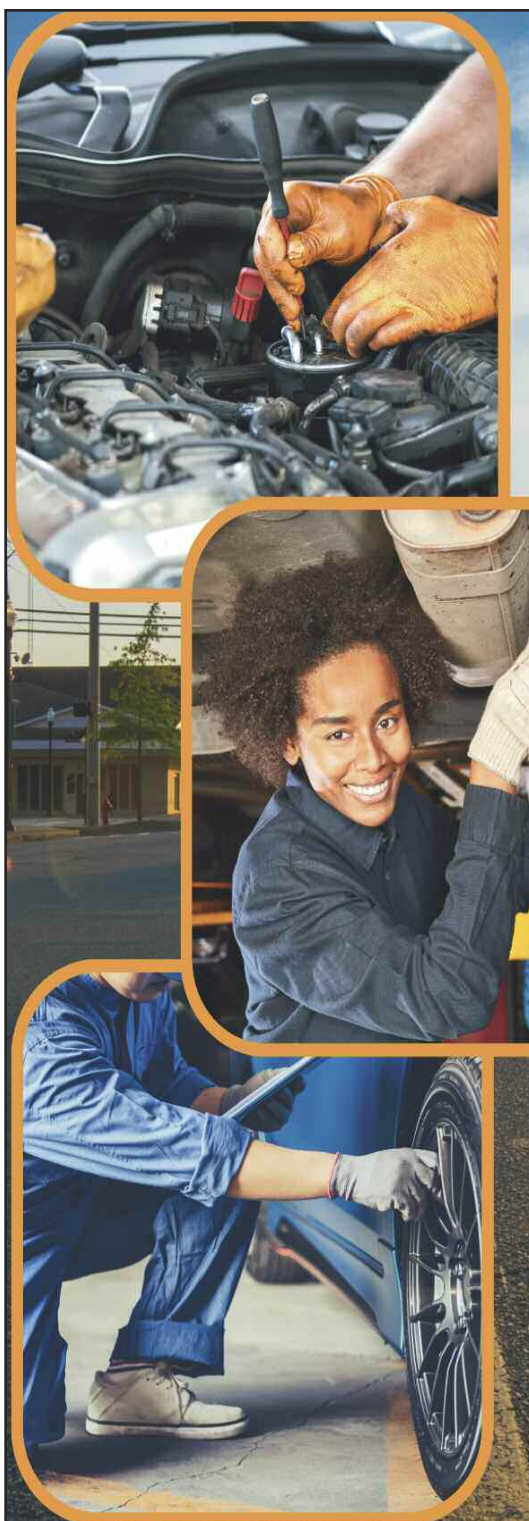
9	4		3					
		6			5			
1			2			6	8	
				4	3		2	
4	3			6				
	1							
	6						1	
2	5			3			9	
	9			1			2	

Level: Intermediate

### Wednesday's Solution

1	4	7	3	2	6	8	5	9
5	9	2	1	7	8	6	3	4
8	6	3	9	4	5	2	1	7
6	7	8	2	5	4	1	9	3
9	1	4	7	8	3	5	2	6
2	3	5	6	1	9	4	7	8
7	5	6	8	9	1	3	4	2
4	8	9	5	3	2	7	6	1
3	2	1	4	6	7	9	8	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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# Disengagement is not the answer

Chicago Tribune  
Tribune News Service

As Donald J. Trump roared out of the gate with a barrage of radical executive orders, blathering rhetorical weaves and handing out ill-considered pardons to boot, many Americans of our acquaintance succumbed Monday to uncharacteristic cynicism. Metaphorically speaking, although in a few hardy cases also literally speaking, they took a walk by the lake.

Or cleared out the basement. Or concentrated on college football. Or just felt glad they did not have to sit watching the inauguration while cameras watched them.

And we hardly are speaking only of Democrats. Plenty of tra-

## Guest Editorial

ditional Republicans and independents did the same thing Monday.

Why suffer the stomach ache, many reasoned. The people had spoken (indeed, they had). They gave Trump a democratically obtained mandate (arguably, they did) for most of the things he had talked about on the campaign trail and now was immediately doing.

Those who disagreed felt

defeated and unheard but also ill-focused as to what they should do, or where they should look, next. Much of the traditional oppositional playbook has, in the dawning Second Age of Trump, come to seem ineffective, pointless, even counterproductive.

Such feelings were understandable on a day that saw such drastic changes in the political landscape and so radical a recalibration of institutional norms. In an age where party extremes dominate, such whiplash has become the dominant tenor of our political system. There is one winner and one loser and the first of those two now goes for broke, especially if their name is Trump.

We sympathize with the feelings of defeat but argue nonetheless against cynicism or disengagement.

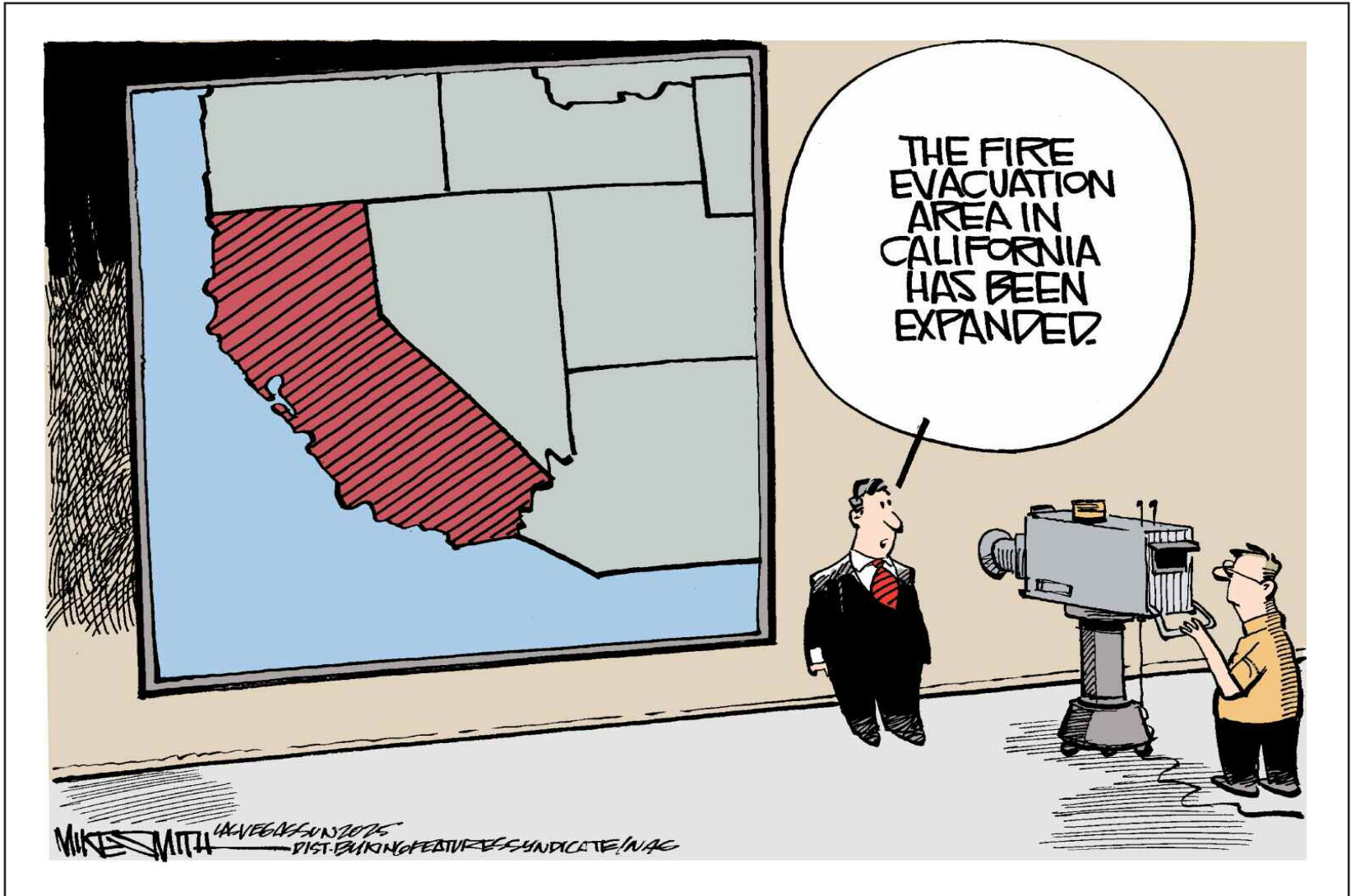
Most Americans situate themselves far from the polarities and are more interested in measured, incremental change than rhetorical revolution. They're not obsessed with political power accruing to a newly ascendant group, billionaires or otherwise, so much as the long-term stability and prosperity of the country. Moreover, all democracies, such as the enduring one that powers this nation, rely for their checks and balances on an engaged opposition.

Sycophants rarely reveal

injustices. Coalitions often make the best decisions.

So, we urge all to get back in the arena, make their voices heard, insist on adherence to the Constitution and work for compromise. We suggest guarding against faux, partisan internet-driven outrages, like Elon Musk's body language or whatever; and focusing instead on organization, persuasion and reasoned, determined argument.

America has always needed moderate, commonsense voices. They tend to be heard more once the initial hoopla is over, but this is no time to check out. The world only spins forward and we find the older you get, the quicker it seems to go.



# Legislative start of '25 has been a whirlwind

By MICHAEL J. HICKS

Before everyone recovered from their inaugural hangovers, Indiana's new administration and legislature got to work with a number of policy items that should be met with bipartisan approval.

That does not mean everyone will embrace every development. But I do think most Hoosiers will either appreciate the changes, or we will learn something about ourselves in the process.

I begin with government reorganization. An observer of Gov. Mike Braun's campaign should have real doubts about his organizational abilities. This was particularly true of the proposed property tax plan, which was clearly not discussed with anyone in possession of a clue about taxation.

In contrast, the Braun administration's proposals after the election should inspire confidence.

The first big step is a proposal to reorganize state government under eight functional cabinet posts. This plan would organize several dozen agencies under a single leader responsible for a broad area, like management and budget or public safety.

No doubt this plan will face some legislative scrutiny. For example, I don't see a clear reason why the Hoosier Lottery reports to the secretary of commerce, but I am certain there are reasons. Moreover, few honest observers would see much to quibble with in this plan.

To be fair, state government has long been loosely organized this way, but this plan formalizes the arrangements. After all, state government employs about

Michael J. Hicks



110,000 people, and clear organizational structure makes sense. No matter how one views their policy positions, the Braun administration is hiring experienced, competent people to fill those cabinet and agency heads.

In his first week in office, Braun signed several executive orders that should be widely appreciated. The first of these created the cabinet positions. He pushed to cut occupational licensing restrictions, eliminate degree requirements for state jobs and institute a broad review of state regulations.

While Indiana is among the least restrictive states on occupational licenses, there remain many that impose restrictions on entrepreneurs and consumers without benefits. This executive order will prompt a review and reduce many of these barriers to workers doing jobs they are able to do. Among the many examples, Indiana is among eight states requiring a septic tank cleaner license. That stinks, and this executive order should help.

Degree requirements for jobs are equally unwise, and several states have already taken the step of outlawing arbitrary credential requirements. In those places — Maryland in particular — the result was no statistically discernable change in the mix of people with degrees working in

state government. So, it is very unlikely to have that effect here, but opening the door to more people is nearly always a constructive move.

Third, Braun's executive order requiring a regulatory review is welcome. This could include new benefit-cost analysis, and comparison with surrounding states. While this imposes short-term costs on state agencies, it is likely to uncover rules that can be eliminated or modified because their benefits are well below their costs.

Braun also eliminated public funding on diversity, equity and inclusion programs funded by the state. Citing the Equal Protection Clause and Students v. Harvard, this executive order should be welcomed by every Hoosier.

This order ends a broad range of activities that were deemed unconstitutional last year and closes the state's DEI office. Now, no agency can maintain an office that grants preferential treatment based upon race, color, ethnicity or national origin. No employee can be required to attend any training that endorses such preferential treatment, nor can an employee be forced to write a DEI statement as part of a job application program.

The executive order also ensures that no one can be mandated to disclose their pronouns. That issue is a clear First Amendment issue, settled in 1943. More likely this was included to appease those Hoosiers who want to read something about pronouns, without bothering to understand it. Though, to be fair, parts of the First Amendment — like the establishment clause —

might pose certain challenges over the coming years.

I am aware that many Hoosiers feel that the promise of equality that animates our Constitution remains unfulfilled. I share that view, and suspect most Americans do as well. I trust we'll continue to work for a more perfect union. But, as Students v. Harvard made abundantly clear, current DEI programs and policies have morphed into a counterproductive set of practices.

They are also unconstitutional. It is past time for them to go.

Taken together, these executive orders streamline government, offer the opportunity to cut waste, allow more worker freedom in Hoosier labor markets and eliminate the contentious, unhelpful and unconstitutional activities within the state government DEI programs. It is a good start to a term that will wrestle with many more difficult challenges.

The legislature has been just as busy as the governor, but their leading legislative proposals are likely to face stiffer backlash than Braun's executive orders.

Among my favorite is House Bill 1004, which would strip nonprofit protections from large multi-location hospital chains that overcharge for services. State Reps. Martin Carbaugh, Julie McGuire and Ben Smaltz authored this bill, which is long overdue. It makes the rather sensible observation that if nonprofit hospitals are going to behave like for-profit firms, then they should be treated as such.

The beauty of this legislation is that it offers hospitals a choice — behave like you are concerned about the health of patients and

your community, or be treated like any other business. Among other things, the removal of nonprofit status would allow them to be taxed on property, sales and profits. Indiana's big five hospital systems are the most profitable industry in the state, and they own an astonishing amount of property. This could be a windfall for Hoosier taxpayers.

The end of nonprofit status would also end their noncompete clauses, which they currently wield skillfully to prevent competition from other hospitals. It would also expedite antitrust enforcement by the Federal Trade Commission and Department of Justice.

This law would be a huge victory for Hoosier businesses, Hoosier consumers, and state and local governments.

House Speaker Todd Huston has also created the Indiana-Illinois Boundary Adjustment Commission, which would be tasked with exploring ways to entice several Illinois counties that have voted to secede from the state to join Indiana. This is first-rate trolling, and I look forward to reading the commission minutes.

I also look forward to writing more about the legislature's valiant efforts to return sanity to the state's health care markets, and what the benefits — and costs — of absorbing disaffected Illinois counties might be.

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

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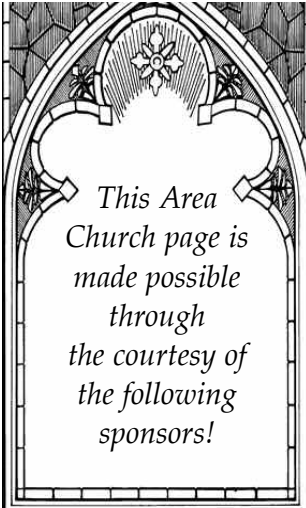
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**Asbury United Methodist**  
204 E. Arch St., Portland  
Joe Boggs  
(260) 726-8464  
Services: 9:30 a.m., 11 a.m.  
asburyministries.org

**Bellefountain United Methodist**  
440 S. 600 East  
Pamela Freeman  
Services: 9 a.m.

**Bluff Point Friends**  
80 E. 650 South  
Services: 10 a.m.  
Sunday school: 9:30 a.m.

**Boundary St. Paul**  
Corner of Treaty Line  
Road and county road 300 East  
Ava Gannon  
(260) 726-2373  
Services: 9:30 a.m.

**Bryant Wesleyan**  
209 S. Hendricks St.  
Paul VanCise  
(260) 997-6231  
Services: 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.  
bryantwesleyanchurch.com

**Calvary United Methodist**  
301 N. Main St., Dunkirk  
Susan Durovey-Antrim  
(765) 499-0368  
Services: 10:30 a.m.  
susan.duroveyantrim@inumc.org

**Christ Chapel**  
2535 Wabash Road, Fort Recovery  
(419) 733-1469  
christchapel.fr.com

**Church of the Living God (Miracle Missions)**  
8472 S. 800 East, Union City  
Services: 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday school: 9:30 a.m.

**Church of God of Prophecy**  
797 N. Creagor Ave., Portland  
Nanette Weesner  
(260) 766-9334  
Services: 10 a.m., 6 p.m.  
nanybell@yahoo.com

**Church of the Brethren**  
Floral and Chicago avenues, Portland  
Kevin McClung  
(260) 729-7295  
Services: 10 a.m.

**Church of the Living God**  
South Broad Street, Dunkirk  
Services: 7 p.m., 7 p.m. Friday

**Collett Nazarene**  
450 South, 1 mile west of U.S. 27  
Billy Stanton  
(260) 251-2403  
Services: 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.

**Cornerstone Baptist**  
211 E. Main St., Portland  
Wayne Ward  
(260) 726-7714  
Services: 10 a.m.

**Cornerstone Church of Pennville**  
190 W. Main St., Pennville  
David Davidson  
(260) 202-9718  
Services: 10:30 a.m.

**Dunkirk Nazarene**  
226 E. Center St., Dunkirk  
Tom Fett  
(765) 768-6199  
Services: 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.

**Evangelical Methodist**  
930 W. Main St., Portland  
Steve Arnold  
(260) 251-0970  
Services: 10:20 a.m., 6 p.m.

**Fairview United Methodist/Jay County**  
2875 E. 200 South  
Pamela Freeman  
Lay leader: Beth Stephen  
(260) 726-9184  
Services: 10:15 a.m.

**Faith Community**  
9560 W. 200 South, Dunkirk  
Joe Schmit  
(260) 251-5254  
Services: 10 a.m.

**Family Worship Center**  
200 E. Elder St., Portland  
Ronald Willis  
(260) 726-4844  
Services: 11 a.m., 6:30 p.m. Wednesday  
thefamilyworshipcenter.org

**Fellowship Baptist**  
289 S. 200 West  
Hugh Kelly  
(260) 726-8873  
Services: 9 a.m., 11 a.m.  
Sunday school: 10 a.m.  
pastorkelly@fbc-portland.com

**First Church of Christ**  
1049 Union City Road, Fort Recovery  
David J. Nicholson  
(419) 375-2860  
Services: 10:30 a.m.  
fcfcfortrecovery.org

**First Community Baptist**  
341 S. Meridian St., Redkey  
Everett Bilbrey Jr.  
Sunday school: 9:30 a.m.  
Services: 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; 7 p.m. Wednesday

**First Free Will Baptist**  
12369 W. 600 South, Dunkirk  
Sunday school: 10 a.m.  
Services: 10:50 a.m., 6 p.m., 6 p.m. Wednesday

**First Presbyterian**  
402 N. Ship St., Portland  
Rev. M. Rex Espiritu  
(260) 726-8462  
Services: 9:30 a.m.  
Sunday school: 10:15 a.m.  
firstpcportland.org

**Fort Recovery Church of the Nazarene**  
401 E. Boundary St., Fort Recovery  
(419) 375-4680  
Services: 10:30 a.m.  
Kids vision and teen ministries: 6 p.m. Wednesday  
frnaz@frontier.com

**Fort Recovery United Methodist**  
309 E. Boundary St., Fort Recovery  
Rev. Carol McKay  
(304) 617-0101  
Services: 9 a.m.

**Full Gospel Lighthouse Tabernacle**  
468 E. Washington St., Dunkirk  
Robert Thomas  
(765) 348-4620  
Services: 6:30 p.m., 6:30 p.m. Thursday

**Geneva First United Methodist**  
100 W. Line St., Geneva  
Barry McCune  
(260) 368-7655  
Services: 9:30 a.m.

**Geneva Nazarene**  
225 Decatur St., Geneva  
(260) 525-8609  
Services: 10 a.m., 6 p.m.  
Sunday school: 9 a.m.  
Prayer meeting: 6 p.m. Wednesday

**Gilead Church**  
County road 650 North, one-quarter mile east of Balbec  
Services: 10:30 a.m.

**Hickory Grove Church of the Brethren**  
Indiana 1 and Indiana 26  
Earl Doll  
(260) 731-4477  
Services: 10:30 a.m.

**High Street United Methodist**  
435 High St., Geneva  
Rev. Joseph Hampton  
(260) 368-7233  
Services: 9 a.m.

**Holy Trinity Catholic**  
7321 E. Indiana 67, Bryant  
Fr. Peter Logsdon  
Fr. Martin Sandhage  
Services: 8 a.m., 4:30 p.m. Saturday

**Hopewell of Life Ministries**  
County road 200 South, 2 miles east of Indiana 1  
Rev. Ruth Funk  
(260) 251-8581  
Services: 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.

**Immaculate Conception Catholic**  
506 E. Walnut St., Portland  
Fr. Peter Logsdon  
Fr. Martin Sandhage  
(260) 726-7055  
Services: 5:30 p.m. Saturday, 10:30 a.m. Sunday

**Kingsley Full Gospel**  
4030 S. 700 East, Dunkirk  
Stuart Phillips  
Services: 9:30 a.m. and 6 p.m., 7 p.m. Wednesday

**Mary Help of Christians**  
403 Sharpsburg Road, Fort Recovery  
Rev. Alexander Witt  
(419) 375-4153  
Services: 4:30 p.m. Saturday, 9 a.m.

**Mount Tabor Community Church**  
216 W. Pleasant St., Dunkirk  
Scott McClain  
(765) 768-7273  
Services: 9:30 a.m.

**Mount Zion United Methodist**  
County roads 600 East and 200 North  
Rev. Darrell Borders  
(260) 726-4786  
Services: 9 a.m.

**New Beginnings Holiness Church of Blaine**  
4017 W. 200 South  
Randy Smith  
(260) 251-2406  
Services: 10 a.m., 6 p.m.  
nbholiness.com

**New Covenant Fellowship**  
1238 W. 450 South  
Chuck Myers  
(260) 251-0063  
Services: 10:30 a.m.

**New Life Ministries**  
415 S. Helen St., Portland  
Dr. Kay Fairchild  
(260) 223-2961  
Services: 4 p.m.  
drkayfairchild.com

**New Mt. Pleasant United Methodist**  
5905 S. Como Road  
Neil Butcher  
(765) 499-7838  
Services: 9 a.m.

**Noble Congregational Christian**  
1964 N. 800 East  
Aaron Huey  
Services: 10:30 a.m.

**Oak Grove United Methodist**  
829 S. Indiana 1  
Neil Butcher  
(765) 760-9085  
Services: 10:45 a.m.

**Pleasant Hill**  
9945 N. 800 East, Union City  
Bruce Bryan  
(765) 964-3664  
Services: 9 a.m., 6 p.m.  
mypleasanthillchurch.org

**Portland Church of Christ**  
1217 W. Votaw St., Portland  
Bob Graham  
(260) 726-7777  
Bible class: 9:15 a.m.  
Services: 10:20 a.m.  
Bible School: 6 p.m. Wednesday  
portlandcoc.com

**Portland First Church of Nazarene**  
920 S. Shank St., Portland  
Steve Cecil  
(260) 726-8040  
Services: 10:45 a.m.

**Portland Friends**  
226 E. Main St., Portland  
Herb Hummel  
(260) 202-9732  
Services: 10 a.m.  
Sunday school: 9 a.m.

**Praise Chapel Church of God**  
4527 E. 1000 North (Jay-Randolph county line)  
Rev. Josh Canfield  
(765) 584-7045  
Services: 10:30 a.m.

**Redeemer Lutheran**  
Malin and Elm streets, Bryant  
Father Dan Layden  
(260) 997-6787  
Services: 9:30 a.m.

**Redkey Faith Ministries**  
9811 W. Indiana 67, southwest of Redkey  
Rev. Craig and Robin Cotherman  
(765) 369-2920  
Services: 10 a.m.  
RedkeyFaith.org

**Redkey First Christian**  
Union and Malin streets  
Jeff Hammers  
(765) 468-6172  
Services: 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday school: 9:30 a.m.

**Redkey United Methodist**  
122 W. Main St.  
Lori McIntosh  
(765) 369-2085  
Services: 10:30 a.m.

**Redkey Church of the Nazarene**  
801 W. High St.  
Fred Stevens  
(765) 369-2676  
redkeynaz.org  
Services: 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., 6:30 p.m. Wednesday

**River of Life**  
722 W. Main St., Portland  
Susan Hathaway  
(260) 729-1095  
Services: 10:30 a.m.

**The ROCK**  
1605 N. Meridian St., Portland  
Matt Ransom  
(260) 726-7474  
Services: 10 a.m.  
matt@therockjc.org

**Salamonia Church of Christ**  
3900 S. 600 East  
Bruce Phillips  
(260) 335-2017  
Services: 9 a.m.

**Second Chance at Life Ministries**  
228 S. Meridian St., Portland  
Dave Keen (260) 251-8792  
Mike Eads (260) 703-0733  
Services: 10:30 a.m.

**St. Joseph Catholic**  
1689 St. Joe Road, Fort Recovery  
Rev. Alexander Witt  
Services: 7:30 a.m. Sunday

**St. Mary's Catholic**  
346 S. Broad St., Dunkirk  
Rev. Kevin Hurley  
Services: 5 p.m. Saturday, 5:30 p.m. Thursday

**St. Paul Catholic**  
517 Meiring Road, Fort Recovery  
Rev. Alexander Witt  
Services: 11 a.m. Sunday

**St. Peter Catholic**  
1477 Philothea Road, Fort Recovery  
Rev. Alexander Witt  
Services: 9 a.m. Sunday

**Sugar Grove Nazarene**  
3984 N. 550 West, Portland  
Pastor Mike Heckman  
(615) 517-1017  
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.  
Services: 10:30 a.m.  
Bible study: 6 p.m. Wednesday

**Sugar Grove Church**  
County roads 600 South and 1150 West, Dunkirk  
Scott McClain  
Services: 9 a.m.

**Temple Baptist**  
17920 Indiana 167, Dunkirk  
John Elam  
(765) 768-7708  
Sunday school: 10 a.m.  
Services: 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., 7 p.m. Wednesday  
7pillarsdirector@gmail.com  
templebaptistin.com

**The Church at Westchester**  
4487 E. 400 North  
(260) 726-6311  
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.  
Services: 10:35 a.m.  
churchatwestchester.org

**Trinity Lutheran**  
301 N. Wayne St., Fort Recovery  
Robin Owen  
(419) 375-4498  
Services: 9 a.m. (contemporary service, fourth Sunday)  
pastorrobino@gmail.com

**Trinity ArchBridge Church**  
323 S. Meridian St., Portland  
Dan Vore  
(260) 726-8391  
Sunday school: 9 a.m.  
Services: 10:15 a.m.  
portlandtrinity.com

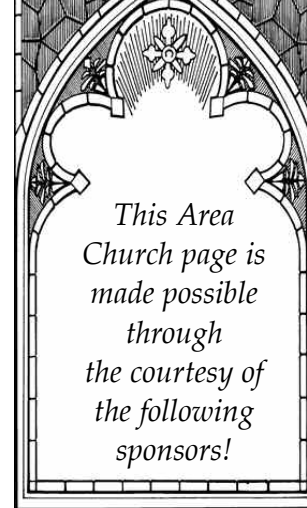
**Union Chapel**  
6200 N. 375 West, Bryant  
Interim Pastor Chris Kruchkow  
(260) 849-0687  
Services: 10:20 a.m., 6 p.m.

**Union Chapel Church of the Nazarene**  
County road 900 North (Jay-Wells county line)  
Fred Stevens  
Services: 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.

**Walnut Corner**  
County roads 200 North and 500 West  
Steve Rogers  
(260) 251-1113  
Services: 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday school: 9:30 a.m.

**West Walnut Church of Christ**  
204 W. Walnut St., Portland  
Gil Alicea  
(260) 726-4691  
Services: 10 a.m.  
westwalnutchurchofchrist.org

**Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
Robin Owen  
218 E. High St., Portland  
(260) 726-8832  
zionlutheranportland@gmail.com  
Services: 10:30 a.m.



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**SPEED BUMP** Dave Coverly

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**THE FAMILY CIRCUS** By Bil Keane

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**Contract Bridge** By Steve Becker

**The handwriting on the wall**

North dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

**NORTH**  
 ♠ K J 8 5  
 ♥ A 7 2  
 ♦ 9 4  
 ♣ A Q 6 3

**EAST**  
 ♠ 7 6 2  
 ♥ J 6  
 ♦ A K J 7 5 2  
 ♣ K 7

**SOUTH**  
 ♠ A Q  
 ♥ K 9 5 4  
 ♦ Q 10 3  
 ♣ J 10 8 2

play the jack of diamonds at trick one in order to maintain communication with his partner should West happen to gain the lead. Declarer took the jack with the queen, cashed the A-Q of spades, crossed to the ace of hearts and cashed two more spades.

On the fourth spade, East discarded the jack of hearts, but when South next led a heart to the king, East was hard-pressed for a discard. Unwilling to blank his king of clubs, he parted with a diamond, but this merely simplified declarer's task. South was now able to exit with a diamond, allowing East to score four diamond tricks, but East then had to return a club into dummy's A-Q at the end to hand declarer the contract.

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

Opening lead — eight of diamonds. Part of the makeup of the expert defender is the ability to visualize, early in the play, what the layout of the cards is likely to be later in the play. This often proves to be very useful in planning the defense.

Consider this deal from a national team event. At both tables, South became declarer at three notrump after East had overcalled in diamonds, and both Wests led the diamond first.

At the first table, East elected to

Tomorrow: Bidding quiz.  
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1-30

**CRYPTOQUIP**

WSM'HY QSN NS JYY NTY  
 IZIFXKQ KYE NSPNSXJY JTYANYP  
 NTYW TIHY IN NTY FSS. XN'J

NMPNAW IEYJSZY!

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN ALBERT EINSTEIN PASSED AWAY, I WONDER IF PEOPLE EVERYWHERE OBSERVED A MOMENT OF SCIENCE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: F equals Z

**Peanuts**

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**Rose is Rose**

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**Agnes**

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**Beetle Bailey**

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**CROSSWORD** By Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS**

1 Photo, for short  
 4 Senate staffer  
 8 Scoff  
 12 Rx overseer  
 13 Classic theaters  
 14 Bohemian  
 15 Tunes from Trinidad  
 17 Pinta's companion  
 18 MSN rival  
 19 Acapulco native  
 21 NAACP co-founder W.E.B.  
 24 Collection  
 25 — Cruz Kayne of "Barbie"  
 26 D.C. baseballer  
 28 Serious  
 32 Overlook  
 34 Inherited  
 36 "Little Caesar" role  
 37 Group spirit

**DOWN**

1 Cpl.'s subordinate  
 2 Wyo. neighbor  
 3 Utensil made from a gourd shell  
 4 Sturdy fabric  
 5 Billboards  
 6 Euclidean subj.  
 7 Relaxes  
 8 Custodian  
 9 Rocker Clapton  
 10 Sicilian volcano  
 11 Vanna's "Wheel of Fortune" colleague  
 16 "— hoo!"

**20 Crosses (out)**  
 21 Title for Judi Dench  
 22 One  
 23 Droop  
 27 "Mazel —!"  
 29 Scripture-based  
 30 Beige  
 31 Castle  
 33 Singer Knowles  
 35 Highland hat  
 38 Pouch  
 40 Actress Jamie Lee  
 43 PC shortcut  
 45 Japanese pond carp  
 46 Mama — Elliot  
 47 Golden Rule word  
 48 Den noise  
 49 Black-and-white cookie  
 53 Little rascal  
 54 Hollywood's Gardner  
 55 Sass

**Solution time: 24 mins.**

Z	A	C	W	H	O	M	H	A	N	A
E	N	O	E	U	R	O	A	G	A	R
E	K	E	S	N	O	W	G	L	O	B
S	A	D	A	T	N	I	T			
			B	E	L	A	N	E	W	S
S	H	E	S	G	O	N	E	R	A	R
O	A	R	G	O	T	T	A	S	O	W
B	L	I	P	S	E	A	G	L	A	S
S	E	E	Y	A	S	L	A	M		
			T	U	B		I	N	A	N
S	E	T	H	G	R	E	E	N	J	A
A	E	R	O	I	R	A	S	A	V	E
W	R	E	N	T	A	U	T			

Yesterday's answer 1-30

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# MSU ...

Continued from page 8  
A fast-paced attack powered Michigan State to a 36-16 first-half lead, but it came with costs. Some of its 31 shots came at break-neck speed, challenging the Spartans' focus on the finish. Some usually-made shots missed the mark and meant that the pace of scoring didn't reflect the pace of play.

Such pace flustered Minnesota (11-9, 3-6 Big Ten) even more. It struggled to keep pace with Michigan State, often sprinting back to defend almost as soon as it released a shot. Eleven turnovers in the first half didn't make things any easier. And three of those came on shot clock violations as a rowdy Breslin Center roared. As the Spartans took a 16-6 halfway through the first half, the guards kept pushing the pace as Minnesota looked more and more tired.

Once Michigan State settled into a rhythm offensively, it rattled off a 13-0 run that included three straight makes from Holloman. As the Minneapolis-born guard made the shots in succession, the crowd got louder and louder until it exploded at its loudest for his steal that sprung Richardson in transition. Richardson's free throws bookended the run, which keyed a game-high 22-point lead.

Michigan State came out of halftime up big, and it played like it. Sloppy defense and poor passing helped Minnesota to trim the lead down to 15. Holloman made that ill-advised pass that so frustrated Izzo. It didn't take long before the Spartans were back up 22 points.

Izzo expects more from his group, and some of those areas shined in Tuesday's win. The transition game put up 17 points. The Spartans hauled in 13 offensive rebounds, including five from Cooper. And those Holloman threes? They showed rhythm to one of Michigan State's few true weaknesses this season.

But the sloppy details are just as pressing, especially to Izzo. Michigan State made mistakes that drive him crazy, like when Frankie Fidler cost a score due to basket interference halfway through the second half. Point guard Jeremy Fears Jr. missed free throws. The Spartans fell a step behind defensively on some possessions.

Those mistakes didn't sink Michigan State by any stretch of the imagination, but they did whittle the lead to 13 points off a Garcia three with 7:27 left. But the fact that the game didn't come any closer down the stretch was a privilege borne from that dominant close to the first half. By 5:17, that lead ballooned right back to 20 points as Coen Carr dunked over top of forward Parker Fox.

At 18-2 and 9-0 in conference play, MSU matches its best start since 2018-19.



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Alice Ometti of Jay County puts up a shot during the fourth quarter of a 57-29 victory Tuesday over visiting Heritage. Ometti, an exchange student from Italy, grabbed two rebounds in her varsity debut.

# Beautiful ...

Continued from page 8  
Fuller led an inspired effort for Heritage, which got its only win of the season 56-40 over Canterbury on Nov. 14. She hit consecutive 3-pointers to open the game and totaled 10 points, five rebounds and two assists.

The 29 points scored were 4.1 more than Heritage's season average while the 57 points allowed were 4.6 less.

"There's no doubt we play hard," said HHS

coach Nicole Sisson. "We don't make excuses. We know the expectation is always to ... give our best ..."

"And Danica, our point guard, is a great example of that as our only senior. She kind of has a ripple effect on our whole team."

Jay County was set to close its regular season Wednesday with a trip to Norwell before heading to the sectional tournament at Connersville next week.

## Box score

Jay County Patriots vs. Heritage Patriots				Score by quarters:					
				Heritage	10	4	8	5	— 29
				Jay Co.	13	10	16	19	— 57
<b>Girls varsity summary</b>									
<b>Heritage (1-18, 0-6 ACAC)</b>									
	FG-FGA	FT-FTA	PTS						
Spieth	0-3	0-0	0						
Lybarger	0-4	0-2	0						
Fuller	4-8	0-0	10						
Bickel	2-4	0-0	4						
AdMeyer	2-5	1-2	5						
Krey	0-3	0-0	0						
Roy	3-4	0-0	6						
AuMeyer	2-7	0-0	4						
<b>Totals</b>	<b>13-38</b>	<b>1-4</b>	<b>29</b>						
	<b>.342</b>	<b>.250</b>							
<b>Def. rebound percentage:</b>	<b>.500</b>								
<b>Jay County (10-11, 4-2 ACAC)</b>									
	FG-FGA	FT-FTA	PTS						
Bickel	2-6	1-2	5						
Schwietrmn	6-19	5-7	17						
Carreno	1-8	4-6	6						
Brunswick	5-10	2-4	12						
May	2-4	1-6	6						
Pivoriunaite	0-0	0-0	0						
McAbee	0-1	0-0	0						
Ometti	0-1	0-0	0						
Heath	5-13	1-2	11						
<b>Totals</b>	<b>21-62</b>	<b>14-27</b>	<b>57</b>						
	<b>.339</b>	<b>.511</b>							
<b>Def. rebound percentage:</b>	<b>.750</b>								
<b>3-point shooting:</b> Heritage 2-15 (Fuller 2-4, AuMeyer 0-4, Lybarger 0-3, Spieth 0-2, AdMeyer, Krey). Jay County 1-11 (May 1-3, Newton 0-4, Schwieterman 0-4).									
<b>Rebounds:</b> Heritage 30 (Bickel 6, Roy 6, AuMeyer 6, Fuller 5, Lybarger 2, AdMeyer 2, team 2, Krey). Jay County 44 (Brunswick 10, Heath 8, May 7, Schwieterman 6, Carreno 6, team 3, Newton 2, Ometti 2).									
<b>Assists:</b> Heritage 7 (Spieth 2, Fuller 2, Lybarger, AdMeyer, Roy). Jay County 8 (Brunswick 3, Newton 2, Carreno 2, Heath).									
<b>Blocks:</b> Heritage 3 (AdMeyer 2, Krey). Jay County 2 (Newton, May).									
<b>Personal fouls:</b> Heritage 15 (AuMeyer 4, AdMeyer 3, Roy 3, Lybarger 2, Spieth, Fuller, Bickel). Jay County 8 (Schwieterman 2, Brunswick 2, May 2, Newton, Heath).									
<b>Turnovers:</b> Heritage 26. Jay County 12.									

# Australian Open champ reflects on early days

By MICHELLE KAUFMAN  
Miami Herald  
Tribune News Service

MIAMI — All over South Florida this week, surely there are tennis fans who recall seeing Madison Keys' power, promise, and smile long before she won the Australian Open at age 29 on Saturday, becoming the oldest American in the Open era to win her first Grand Slam title.

Maybe they saw her as an 8-year-old camper at the Evert Tennis Academy in Boca Raton, Fla., on summer break from Rock Island, Ill., with her family.

Or maybe they encountered her a few years later as a full-time student at the academy, getting tips from legend Chris Evert and her brother, John, who was so impressed with Keys as a camper that he encouraged Keys' parents, both attorneys, to relocate from Illinois to fully immerse Madison in the sport.

Perhaps they remember her from Junior Orange Bowl tournaments at Salvadore Park and Biltmore Tennis Center in Coral Gables, or from the Crandon Park Tennis Center in Key Biscayne, where 5-foot-10 Keys dazzled spectators with her 114 mph serve as a 14-year-old in the Orange Bowl Under-18s division.

In an interview with the Miami Herald on Tuesday, Keys reflected on the early stages of her career in South Florida and how they shaped her into the Australian Open champion and No. 7 ranked player in the world.

"I have very fond memories of coming down for one-month

vacations in Boca when I was 8, 9 and 10, and two of the four weeks I would do the camp at Evert Academy," Keys said. "When I was 10, John [Evert] pulled my parents aside and said, 'Hey, if you guys want to really go for this, then I think she should come as a full-timer.'"

Keys' parents, Rick, a former college basketball player, and Christine, asked their eldest daughter what she wanted, and she told them she wanted to move to Boca Raton and one day be a professional tennis player. They obliged.

Keys' mother took a leave from their family law firm the following year and moved to Boca with Madison and her younger sisters Montana and Hunter.

"I always laugh thinking back, the fact that my parents just kind of let me dictate my life at 10 years old," Keys said. "They fully supported me. So, we packed up and moved to Florida."

She stayed at the Evert Academy until age 16 and said her coaches there taught her foundational skills she applied the rest of her career.

"They were amazing," Keys said. "They helped me incredibly much. They changed a bunch of my techniques. They changed my grip. I learned how to hit a kick serve from one of the coaches there. And, I had such a great time because I wasn't going to regular school, I was being home-schooled, so it was great being able to be around

those kids and have as normal a life as you can while you're living at a tennis academy."

She remains close with some of her friends from those days.

Keys also has vivid memories of competing in the Jr. Orange Bowl and Orange Bowl tournaments. She remembers losing as an 11-year-old on a corner court and then winning the 12-under title the next year. She recalls making it to the Under-16s final at age 13 and then numerous big matches in the 18s at Crandon Park.

"I always really loved playing in Key Biscayne and then it was really fun for me to be able to go from Orange Bowl to playing in the Miami Open on the same courts," she said.

Keys made steady progress over the next few years and reached the Australian Open semifinals in 2015, a month shy of her 20th birthday. Chris Evert was not surprised.

"I think everybody that saw her at that point [as a younger teenager] and thought, 'Oh, my gosh, there's so much raw power that if she could just control it and harness it, she's going to be a great player,'" Evert said.

At the time, ESPN commentator Patrick McEnroe said of Keys: "I certainly think within the next 24 months, two and a half to three years, absolutely, Madison can win a major."

It wound up taking 10 years, and she did it by dominating the entire tournament.

Keys, who entered the tournament ranked No. 19, knocked off four top-10 seeds, including No.

2 seed Iga Swiatek and top seed and two-time defending champion Aryna Sabalenka. Keys was the first woman since Serena Williams in 2005 to beat No. 1 and No. 2 at the Australian Open and the first to do it at any major tournament since Svetlana Kuznetsova at the 2009 French Open.

Her only previous final in a Slam was a forgettable one. She lost 6-3, 6-0 to fellow American Sloane Stephens at the 2017 U.S. Open.

The biggest reason for her improbable Australian Open run last week, she said, was a new mental approach.

"I finally unburdened myself from the pressure of wanting to win a Slam, finally got to the point where I could actually be a lot more present on the court, playing freely, problem solve and work through nerves," said Keys, who now lives in the Orlando area with husband/coach Bjorn Fratangelo, whom she married in November.

She explained that she had a tendency to get nervous at critical moments during matches but learned to relax.

"A lot of times in the past, nerves were bad, and there was a panic moment like 'Oh, God, I'm nervous; this is going to be bad,'" Keys said. "But I'm in a good place now. Winning or not winning a Slam doesn't define me anymore. It's amazing to be in a position where it's just one another accomplishment instead of defining who I am as a person."

# Sports on tap

## Local schedule

**Today**  
Jay County — Swim at Marion — 6 p.m.  
Fort Recovery — Swim tri-meet at South Adams — 6 p.m.; Girls basketball at New Knoxville — 6 p.m.; Middle school boys basketball at Ansonia — 5:30 p.m.

**Friday**  
Jay County — Boys basketball vs. Bluffton — 6 p.m.  
Fort Recovery — Boys basketball vs. New Knoxville — 6 p.m.

**Saturday**  
Jay County — Boys wrestling sectional at Jay

County — 8:30 a.m.; Boys basketball at Blackford — 6 p.m.  
Fort Recovery — Girls bowling tournament at Columbus — 11 a.m.; Boys basketball at Arcanum — 6 p.m.

## TV sports

**Today**  
1 p.m. — College football: Reese's Senior Bowl practice (ESPN2)  
6 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Oregon at Michigan State (BTN)  
6:30 p.m. — College basketball: Ohio State at Penn State (FS1)  
7 p.m. — NFL: Pro Bowl Skills Competition (ESPN)

7 p.m. — NBA: Atlanta Hawks at Cleveland Cavaliers (TNT)  
7 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Oklahoma at LSU (ESPN2)  
8 p.m. — College hockey: Michigan State at Ohio State (BTN)

8:30 p.m. — College basketball: Illinois at Nebraska (FS1)  
8:30 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Iowa State at Kansas State (ESPN)  
9 p.m. — College basketball: Memphis at Tulane (ESPN2)  
9:30 p.m. — NBA: Houston Rockets at Memphis Grizzlies (TNT)  
10:30 p.m. — College basketball: Oregon at

UCLA (FS1)  
10:30 p.m. — NHL: San Jose Sharks at Seattle Kraken (ESPN)

**Friday**  
5 p.m. — College basketball: Yale at Princeton (ESPN2)  
6:30 p.m. — College basketball: Butler at Georgetown (FS1)  
7 p.m. — NBA: Dallas Mavericks at Detroit Pistons (CBS)  
7 p.m. — College basketball: Dayton at Saint Louis (ESPN2)  
7 p.m. — Unrivaled basketball: Rose BC at Phantom BC (TNT)

7:30 p.m. — NBA: Denver Nuggets at Philadelphia 76ers (ESPN)  
8 p.m. — College basketball: Indiana at Purdue (FOX)

8:15 p.m. — Unrivaled basketball: Lunar Owls BC at Laces BC (TNT)  
8:30 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Arizona at Utah (FS1)  
9 p.m. — College Gymnastics: Arkansas at Oklahoma (ESPN2)  
10 p.m. — NBA: Phoenix Suns at Golden State Warriors (ESPN)

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# Sports

## 'Beautiful experience'

Exchange students see first varsity action in win over Heritage

By RAY COONEY

The Commercial Review

With the game well in hand, Sherri McIntire took a timeout to make substitutions.

For the first time during their year in the United States, Elze Pivoriunaite and Alice Ometti checked into a game.

Almost immediately, they put notches on the stat sheet.

The special moments for the exchange students capped off a 57-29 victory for the Jay County High School girls basketball team, which struggled to assert itself in the first half before eventually pulling away.

"That was fun," said McIntire, whose team secured third place in the Allen County Athletic Conference behind Class 2A No. 6 Bluffton and Woodlan. "They're just great kids. They come to practice every day and just bring a positive attitude, just fit right in. We're just so thankful that they decided to play basketball."

Jay County was up by 30 when Pivoriunaite and Ometti entered the game, with the latter grabbing a rebound on her first defensive possession. She snagged a second board on the next Heritage trip down the floor, and then Pivoriunaite came up with a steal in the waning moments.

"I didn't realize, actually," said Ometti. "I was just going and just doing what I could, but then when I realized, I was like, 'Oh my gosh, wow. I did something good.'"

Both players had their doubts when McIntire called them to head to the scorer's table, but were happy to have the chance to write themselves into JCHS history.

"It was amazing," Ometti said.

"It has been a beautiful experience and I'll never forget about it. I'm so glad I got this opportunity."

"I was so nervous. I was really, really nervous, but as soon as I got on the court I had so much fun..."

"It was amazing, super stressful; I was super nervous," added Pivoriunaite. "It was so worth it. All of the girls were so supportive."

Much of the first half was a struggle for the home team as it fell behind 6-3 and struggled to shake its visitors, who entered the game on a 15-game losing streak. Heritage (1-18, 0-6 ACAC) stayed within single digits throughout the first half and was down 23-16 after Danica Fuller scored the first points of the second.

JCHS (10-11, 4-2 ACAC) — it was without junior Alexis Sibray and freshman Gabi Petro because of illness — finally put the game away as it held Heritage to three points over an eight-minute span bridging the third and fourth quarters. The home team scored 26 points during the same stretch, including the final seven in a row from Elizabeth Brunswick.

Hallie Schwieterman's 17 points led the winning effort.

Brunswick added a dozen points on 5-of-10 (50%) shooting from the field while adding team highs of 10 rebounds and three assists.

"I thought Liz Brunswick had a solid game tonight," said McIntire, who also got 11 points and eight rebounds from Amelia Heath. "I thought she did a good job when I took Hallie out for a little bit. She had to guard (Fuller); Liz did a really good job on her."

See Beautiful page 7



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Elze Pivoriunaite of Jay County High School dribbles against Heritage's Audrey Meyer during the fourth quarter Tuesday. The exchange student from Lithuania came up with a steal in her first game action of the season.



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## Girls sweep, boys split in final home dual meet

The boys beat the Bruins, but couldn't take Burris.

The girls bested both teams.

Jay County High School's girls swim team swept the Blackford Bruins and the Burris Owls, while the boys team split the double dual in the final week of the regular season Tuesday.

The Patriot boys (5-8) dominated Blackford 102-38, while falling just short in a 85-74 defeat to Burris. The girls (9-4) eclipsed 100 points in both matchups, winning 123-65 over Blackford and taking down Burris 109-69.

Sophia Hoevel had the strongest day for the girls, bringing home wins in the 200-yard individual medley (2 minutes, 40.21 seconds) and the 500 freestyle (6:21.64). The junior was also on the 200 freestyle and 400 freestyle relay teams that took first place. (The girls' 200 medley relay team also finished first.)

Other individual wins came from Maddy Snow in the 1-meter diving (179.85 points) and Avery Wentz in the 100 backstroke (1:12.88).

The freshman secured the only victories for the boys. Cooper Glentzer swam times of 1:04.32 and

### Local roundup

2:18.37 to win the 200 individual medley and the 100 backstroke, respectively. Carson Westgerdes claimed the 50 freestyle in 25.92 seconds.

The Patriots will travel to Marion tonight before preparing for their respective sectional meets.

### Indians lose

MARIA STEIN, Ohio — The Fort Recovery High School boys basketball team fell to the Marion Local Flyers 46-38 on Tuesday.

The Tribe (4-12, 1-5 MAC) played its best basketball in the third quarter, as it outscored Marion Local 16-11. Briggs Overman and Grant Fortkamp were the only two Indians to score in the period, putting up eight points apiece. Overman finished with 14 on the night, while Fortkamp had 10.

Breaker Jutte and Brody Barga both scored six points, while Gavin Evers made one shot in the fourth quarter.

Grant Kremer led the Flyers (15-1, 5-1 MAC) with 20 points. The junior poured in six triples, while hitting two free throws. Seven more players scored for MLHS, including Austin Niekamp, who had 13.

### Moving on

The Jay County Junior High School girls basketball teams both advanced past South Adams in the Allen County Athletic Conference tournament on Monday with the eighth graders winning 44-6 and seventh grade claiming a 29-6 victory.

With the win, both teams advanced to the second round of the ACAC tournament against Bluffton on Wednesday.

Karsyn Schwieterman and Charlee Peters both reached double figures, scoring 13 and 10 points, respectively. Claudia Dirksen followed with nine points, while Avery Snow, Alyvia Muhlenkamp and Kendall Schemenaur all had four.

Boo Towell powered the seventh graders' victory with 15 points. Brenna Weitzel scored six points, Bella Barnett had four and Arabella Link and Leah Steed each made one bucket.

## MSU wins 13th straight

By CONNOR EAREGOOD

The Detroit News Tribune News Service

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Tom Izzo slammed his fists on the scorer's table.

Why? Even though his Michigan State men's basketball team was up double-digits on Minnesota — even though 18-2 overall and 9-0 in the Big Ten were all but expected after taking a 20-point lead to halftime, Izzo's team came out sloppy to start the second half. A Tre Holloman turnover came off an ill-advised pass. And Izzo was frustrated. That's how good things are at Breslin Center these days, where Izzo can nitpick fine details in a burgeoning blowout. Michigan State won big against Min-

nesota on Tuesday, 73-51, in a game that saw its transition game execute to a sloppy but lethal effect. The Spartans extended their win streak to 13 in their second win over the Gophers this season.

Twelve points from Holloman led Michigan State in the win, while nine players scored at least five points. Ten rebounds from center Carston Cooper aided a 40-22 team advantage on the glass. Jase Richardson led the game with eight assists, part of 20 helpers on 25 Michigan State makes. Minnesota star Dawson Garcia scored a game-high 21 points on 16 shots.

See MSU page 7