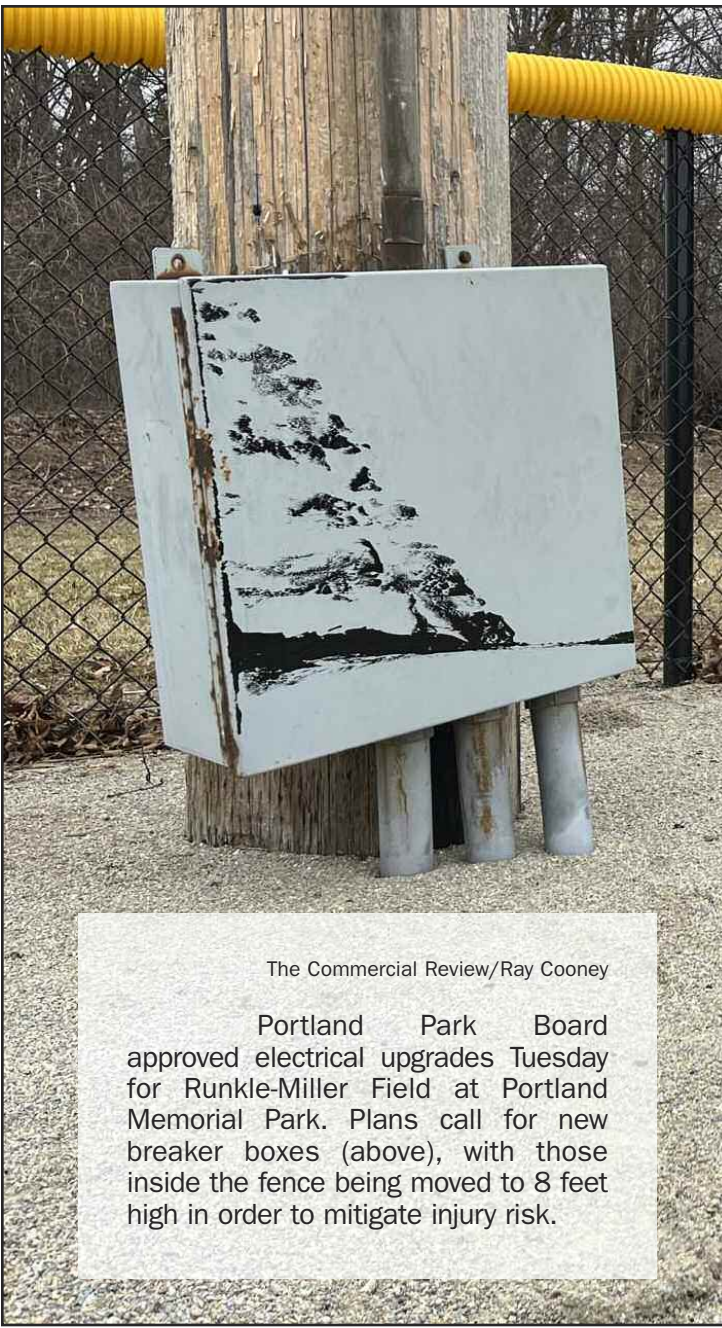


The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1



Electrical upgrades OK'd for Runkle-Miller

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review

A local baseball field will be getting upgrades to its electrical service.

Portland Park Board awarded a \$20,200 contract Tuesday to Coppersmith Electric for upgrades at Portland Memorial Park's Runkle-Miller Field.

The board also discussed details regarding the 2025 Portland Water Park season.

Street and parks department superintendent Matt Shauer referred to the currently electrical service as "dinosaur-like," noting concerns about breaker boxes. Boxes are on various poles around the field and can be easily accessed. (He said all of the boxes at the fields in Portland Memorial Park are similar, saying the Runkle-Miller work is a first step.)

Shauer said plans are to move the boxes on poles inside the field's fence to at least 8 feet high so as to remove an injury hazard. The boxes on the exterior of the field would be moved at least 18 inches off the ground.

The board and parks staff discussed timing and funding for

the project and whether it could be completed this year or wait until 2026.

Park board president Brian Ison and member John McFarland advocated for getting to the work as soon as possible because it is a safety and liability issue.

Board members Michael Brewster, Jennifer Weitzel, Ison and McFarland, absent Shauna Runkle, awarded the job to Coppersmith, which was one of three companies that provided quotes. Shauer will work with the firm to schedule the upgrades around an already-planned roofing project and the Portland Rockets season.

Ison also presented the board

Work will be scheduled around roofing project, and Rockets' season

with proposed prices for tickets, passes and rentals for the 2025 Portland Water Park season. He suggested keeping daily admission at \$5 before 5 p.m. and \$3 after 5 p.m., as well as no changes to the cost of a 10-day pass and annual passes for one, two and three individuals in the same family. He proposed cutting the cost of passes for four and five people by \$25 each to \$200 and \$250, respectively, and reducing the cost of a pass for six or more individuals in the same family by \$50 to \$275.

He suggested increasing pool rental rates to \$150 per hour from the previous \$125, noting that rentals sold out last year.

See **Upgrades** page 2

The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Portland Park Board approved electrical upgrades Tuesday for Runkle-Miller Field at Portland Memorial Park. Plans call for new breaker boxes (above), with those inside the fence being moved to 8 feet high in order to mitigate injury risk.

JCDC approves service agreement

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review

Jay County Development Corporation approved a service agreement Tuesday with the county.

Board president Angela Paxson brought the service agreement to the Jay County Development Corporation board after it was approved along with \$100,000 in funding by Jay County Commissioners last week. It is similar to a contract the county and JCDC agreed to for the second half of 2023. (They did not reach an agreement in

Contract with county runs through June 30

2024 and the county did not contribute any money to the organization.)

Paxson explained that the agreement runs through June 30, with JCDC and the county to look at additional funding

and an agreement through the end of 2025 in the coming months.

It lays out the services JCDC will provide to the county, including:

- Providing resources to the county's grant

writer/community developer for grants and project development

- Assisting businesses in securing tax abatements

- Working with Jay County Redevelopment Commission and other local or regional groups

- Providing services to economic development income tax (EDIT) advisory committee

- Assisting the county with other economic development projects as requested

JCDC board member Doug Loy asked if longer-

term contracts could be considered once a comfort level has been reached between parties. Paxson said she believes that will be the case.

Barb Street, a JCDC board member, thanked commissioners Doug Horn and Duane Monroe, who voted in favor of the funding and the agreement. She said she appreciates the support and indicated that it allows the organization to move forward with seeking to hire a new executive director. (JCDC had drained its reserves in 2024

without funding from the county.)

The Jay County Development Corporation board approved the agreement unanimously.

Street, who is chairing the interview committee for a new executive director, said the group plans to meet again Monday to review resumes and move the process forward. There are about 25 applicants for the position thus far. (Street said applications will remain open until the position is filled.)

See **Agreement** page 2

Locals, lawmakers struggle to compromise

By CASEY SMITH and LESLIE BONILLA MUNIZ
Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com

Frustrations escalated Tuesday over Indiana's impending property tax relief plan that local Hoosier officials fear could bring deep cuts to municipal revenues.

Lawmakers, meanwhile, were hard-pressed to find alternative ideas that appease local budgets and still deliver on promises to lower taxes.

A first draft of Gov. Mike Braun's property tax plan, outlined in Senate Bill 1, was a key point of discussion in the Senate tax committee, where public testimony was heard Tuesday. Chairman Sen. Travis Holdman, R-Markle, said "more work" and amendments are expected next week. It's not clear what changes could be made or when a committee vote might come.

Currently, the Republican governor's proposal would cap annual increases on property taxes for all property types at 3%.

Homeowners aged 65 and older, who have minor children or who are low-income would see increases capped at 2%. The legislation would also raise the homestead deduction for houses worth less than \$125,000 and require a property tax transparency portal to go live by 2026.

Braun has repeatedly emphasized that in order to help "struggling" taxpayers, relief will



Indiana Capital Chronicle/Leslie Bonilla Muñoz

Franklin homeowner Mark Gross, Indiana Gov. Mike Braun and Indianapolis homeowner Jennie Reith talk property taxes in the governor's office on Tuesday. Senate Bill 1 has caused tension between state lawmakers and local officials, who have expressed concern about losing tax revenue.

"have an impact on local governments."

Jason Johnson, the governor's deputy chief of staff, maintained before the Senate committee that Braun's administration wants to protect "vital" police and fire services, as well as schools. But just as "state government is having to tighten its belt," Johnson said the governor's team is asking local units "to follow lead" and keep taxpayers "front of mind."

County, city and town officials appeared less willing, however.

"We want to make sure all the tools we have for economic development and public safety in our local units still actually function after we do some property tax reforms," said Campbell Ricci, policy director for Accelerate Indiana Municipalities (AIM).

The proposed tax cuts could cause local governments across the state to lose \$1.2 billion in property revenue in 2026, accord-

ing to a legislative fiscal analysis.

Carmel Mayor Sue Finkam said her city has added \$4 billion in net assessed value while increasing property tax bills by just 7% since 2020, but estimates show Senate Bill 1 "will eliminate \$2.7 billion in assessed value, erase \$26.1 million from our general fund, and revert our property tax revenue back to 2019 levels."

Brandon Sakbun, mayor of

Terre Haute, said property tax cuts are likely to impact police and fire salaries, which account for 82% of the city's general fund.

When asked by Sen. Chris Garten, R-Charlestown, what they consider to be "acceptable property tax reform," the mayors did not provide specific answers, but said they hear more from constituents about public safety and other local services than they do about property tax concerns.

Downstairs in his office, Braun held court on his tax proposal, flanked by two Hoosiers in puffy white armchairs and before a wall of cameras and reporters.

Indianapolis homeowner Jennie Reith said her property tax bill had jumped \$1,200 in the last three to four years.

Franklin homeowner Mark Gross told of a \$1,000 increase.

Braun blamed federal policies for inflation but turned scrutiny on local units of government, saying they've been "a little disingenuous about the process."

"If you want above and beyond that (tax cap), do it through a referendum process that is very transparent," he added. "... Don't hide behind an opaque system."

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

Deaths

Betty Midlam, 96, Albany
Details on page 2.

Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 41 degrees Tuesday. The low was 29.

The forecast calls for a low in the mid 20s tonight with winds gusting to 25 miles per hour. Expect partly cloudy skies Friday with a high in the mid 30s.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

A legislative update with State Reps. J.D. Prescott (R-Union City) and Matt Lehman (R-Berne) and State Sen. Travis Holdman (R-Markle), all of whom represent Jay County, is scheduled for 11 a.m. to noon Saturday at John Jay Center for Learning, 101 S. Meridian St., Portland.

Coming up

Friday — A preview of the brackets for the wrestling regional at JCHS.

Saturday — Results from the JCHS girls basketball sectional semifinal versus Delta.

Tuesday — Coverage of Saturday's Third House Session.



Obituaries

Betty Midlam

Oct. 12, 1928-Feb. 4, 2025
Betty Lou Midlam, 96, of Albany, Indiana, formerly of Redkey, Indiana, joined her Lord and Savior in Glory peacefully on Tuesday, Feb. 4, 2025, at Parker Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center.

Betty was born in Redkey, Indiana, on Oct. 12, 1928, a daughter of the late Greta Lucille (Wise) and Denzel E. Shrack.

She was a 1946 graduate of Redkey High School, former Redkey Wolves cheerleader and drum corps member, the loving wife of the late Richard D. Midlam and a devoted homemaker for her family.

She was formerly employed by the Pennville Feed Mill, First State Bank of Dunkirk and Dr. Fiederlein in Muncie, Indiana.

Betty was a faithful woman of God, member of the Redkey United Methodist Church and Delta Theta Tau Sorority, and enjoyed singing in the church choir and with her sister for local events and gatherings, and helping at the church whenever possible. She loved reading, working with her flowers, feeding the birds, watching "Perry Mason" and "Gunsmoke" and dogs playing, riding in the con-



Midlam

vertible or on the Gator and watching her family swimming and playing at the lake. Her family will always treasure the laughter shared every Christmas morning at 6 a.m. sharp, with every detail perfectly done, by their elegant, yet funny mother, with a heart of gold.

She is survived by her daughters, Karen L. Case (Steve) and Kathy L. Fuqua (Rock); son Richard Midlam (Sherry); brother Henry M. Shrack (Amy); six grandchildren, Todd (Cathy), Andy (special friend: Raeanne), Joshua (Cara), Melissa (Chad), Stormy and Jeff (Christina); 17 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

Betty was preceded in death

by her parents; husband Richard; lifelong friend and father of her daughters Ed Clark; two sons, Jeff and Ray Midlam; two brothers, Charles E. Shrack and William L. Shrack; sister B. Jean Rahe; and five grandchildren, Chris, Ryan, Tammy, Christian and Jason.

Visitation will be held on Thursday, Feb. 6, 2025, from 4 to 8 p.m. and Friday, Feb. 7, 2025, from 10 to 11 a.m. at MJS Mortuaries - Redkey Chapel. Funeral services will be held on Friday, Feb. 7, 2025, at 11 a.m. with Pastor Randy Davis officiating. Burial will be held privately in Gardens of Memory Cemetery in Muncie, Indiana.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Redkey Unit-

ed Methodist Church, 122 W. Main St., Redkey, IN 47373.

A special thank you to the nurses and staff at Parker Health Care for the comfort and compassion shown to Betty and her family.

Arrangements have been entrusted to MJS Mortuaries - Redkey Chapel.

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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

Friday 2/7	Saturday 2/8	Sunday 2/9	Monday 2/10	Tuesday 2/11
32/26	39/27	34/23	36/25	33/19
Mostly sunny skies on Friday when the high will be in the mid 30s.	Saturday's forecast shows an 80% chance of snow under mostly cloudy skies.	Mostly cloudy on Sunday, when there's a slight chance of rain.	Monday's forecast shows mostly sunny skies with highs in the lower 30s.	Tuesday's forecast shows a 40% chance of snow under mostly cloudy skies.

Lotteries

Powerball Estimated jackpot: \$113 million	Evening Daily Three: 9-2-5 Daily Four: 6-9-6-8 Quick Draw: 4-8-12-24-26-27-37-40-43-44-49-52-53-54-57-62-69-70-73-80
Mega Millions 14-24-31-53-54 Mega Ball: 1 Megaplier: 3 Estimated jackpot: \$94 million	Ohio Tuesday Midday Pick 3: 2-4-8 Pick 4: 7-8-9-3 Pick 5: 4-0-6-0-7 Evening Pick 3: 4-0-3 Pick 4: 3-2-6-7 Pick 5: 0-4-3-7-3 Rolling Cash: 3-13-20-23-35 Estimated jackpot: \$130,000
Hoosier Tuesday Midday Daily Three: 6-8-6 Daily Four: 0-5-3 Quick Draw: 4-8-11-12-13-14-17-20-24-28-29-30-38-40-41-44-50-62-70-80	

Markets

Cooper Farms Fort Recovery Corn.....4.88 March corn.....4.93 April corn.....5.00	March beans10.57 Wheat 5.22
POET Biorefining Portland Corn.....4.95 March corn.....4.99 April corn.....5.11	ADM Montpelier Corn.....4.87 March corn.....4.90 Beans10.49 March beans10.53 Wheat5.41
The Andersons Richland Township Corn4.88 March corn4.88 Beans10.52	Heartland St. Anthony Corn.....4.83 March corn4.83 Beans10.33 March beans10.38 Wheat5.17

Today in history

In 1895, George Herman Ruth Jr., also known as Babe Ruth, was born in Baltimore, Maryland. Ruth played for the Boston Red Sox, New York Yankees and Boston Braves over his 21-year career in baseball. He set several records during his time, including most home runs (60) in a season in 1927, and the record for career home runs (714). He also took the Red Sox to three World Series championships and won four World Series titles with the Yankees.

In 1911, Ronald Reagan was born in Tampico, Illinois. Reagan, an actor and Republican politician, served as the 40th president of the United States from 1981 to '89.

In 1952, Elizabeth II became the queen of the United Kingdom after her father, George VI, died. Elizabeth II held the throne for more than 70 years.

— The CR

Citizen's calendar

Thursday 4 p.m. — Jay County Commissioners special session, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland. 4 p.m. — Portland Board of Works, mayor's office, city hall, 321 N. Meridian St.	120 N. Court St., Portland. 4 p.m. — Jay County Public Library Board, community room, library, 315 N. Ship St., Portland. 6 p.m. — Jay County Country Living Advisory Board, living facility, 1194 E. 200 North, Portland.
Monday 9 a.m. — Jay County Commissioners, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland. 3:45 p.m. — Jay County Election Board, voting room, courthouse, St.	6 p.m. — Dunkirk Board of Works, city building, 131 S. Main St. 7 p.m. — Dunkirk City Council, city building, 131 S. Main St.

Upgrades ...

Continued from page 1
Other admission fees, a discount for swim club members and pay for life-guards and other workers would remain the same.

Board members had a brief discussion about prices, with Brewster saying he would like to consider a \$1 increase to daily admission.

He said that rate has not gone up since the facility opened almost a decade ago.

McFarland said he'd like to review admission

numbers and other data before making a decision about the coming year.

Ison asked Shauver to provide historical daily admission and pool pass numbers and advised park board members to request any other information they would like to review.

Ison also said he has reached out to several candidates for pool manager and assistant manager and plans on setting up interviews soon.

In other business:

Agreement ...

Continued from page 1
The committee is made up of Barb Street, Rusty Inman, Bryan Alexander, Chad Aker, Jack Robbins, Doug Loy, Dave Golden and Paxson.

In other business:
•Alexander urged attendance at a Third House Session with local legislators scheduled for 11 a.m. Saturday at John Jay Center for Learning. He said he is "disturbed" by some of the bills being considered in the Indiana Statehouse this year, specifically mentioning Senate Bill 1 and its impact on tax revenue for local government units.

•Paxson reported that the 25-member JCDC board had 24 members at the end of 2024, with four members — Alicia Corwin, Mike Fisher, Ryan Johnson and Matt Minnich — not planning to return for 2025. She said the nominating

committee is working on finding individuals to fill the open roles and asked board members to make suggestions.

•The board received its 2025 meeting schedule. It meets regularly at 4 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each even-numbered month in the board room at Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland. It also asks members to have the same time on the second Tuesday of odd-numbered months for informational meetings or if a special meeting is needed.

•JCDC administrative assistant Jodi Hayes provided a report about ongoing activities, including recent tax abatements for Fisher Packing in Redkey and Joyce/Dayton in Portland, assistance with loan information for businesses, helping the City of Dunkirk work on plans for a grant application through the Indiana Office of Com-

munity and Rural Affairs and completing documentation for the Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI 2.0).

•Portland Mayor Jeff Westlake thanked all of the JCDC members for their efforts to work together for the betterment of the community.

•Mary Adair of Jay County Visitors and Tourism Bureau provided reminders that a Jay County Fair Collectibles Show will run from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday in the Bubp Building at Jay County Fairgrounds; a Vendor and Craft Show is set for 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday at the Lions Club Civic Center, 307 E. 100 North, Portland; and "Splashin' with a Passion: Peggy's Plunge" is scheduled for noon Saturday behind Moser Engineering, 102 E. Performance Drive, Portland.

Capsule Reports

Pole hit
A Bryant man lost control of his vehicle and crashed into a pole along county road 700 East about 6 a.m. Friday.

Eric L. Chrisman, 27, was driving a 2007 Lexus GX east on the road near county road 300 North when he drove off the north side of the road. Chrisman told police a vehicle pulled in front of him and he attempted to stop, but the icy road surface caused him to lose control. The car went into a ditch and struck a pole, damaging the driver's side of the vehicle.

Damage is estimated between \$10,000 and \$25,000.

Lost control
A Fort Recovery man lost control of his car on Indiana 67, causing an accident about 8 p.m. Jan. 30.

Andrew T. Wood, 31, was driving his 2008 Lexus west on the highway near county road 350 East when his car began hydroplaning across the road surface. His vehicle began spinning and hit a guard rail along the side of the road, according to a Jay County Sheriff's Office report.

Wood's vehicle was towed, with damage estimate between \$10,000 and \$25,000.

Intersection crash
A Muncie teen crashed the car she was driving into a Bluffton man's vehicle at the intersection of Indiana 1 and county road 400 South about 7:48 p.m. Tuesday.

400 South when she stopped at its intersection with Indiana 1. She didn't see the northbound 2018 Chevrolet Cruze driven by 35-year-old Brandon S. Evans on the highway and continued east through the intersection. Bramlett crashed into Evans' vehicle. Bramlett's car went off the road and into a field on the northeast side of the road, and Evans' car went off the road and into a ditch, according to a Jay County Sheriff's Office report.

Damage is estimated between \$10,000 and \$25,000. Both vehicles were towed.

SERVICES

Today

Chittum, Madonna: 7 p.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

Friday

Midlam, Betty: 11 a.m., MJS Mortuaries, 109 S. Meridian St., Redkey.

Saturday

Walker, Connie: 11 a.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

Wright, Jacquelyn: 11 a.m., Trinity Lutheran Church, 301 Wayne St., Fort Recovery.

Tuesday

Fidler, Bruce: 4 p.m., Downing & Glancy Funeral Home, 100 Washington St., Geneva.

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



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FR Middle school releases honor roll

Fort Recovery Middle School recently released its second nine weeks honor roll.

Making the list with straight A's were sixth graders Easton Diller, Rozlyn Diller, Tyce Dilworth, Heidi Dues, Kayla Dues, Addison Fortkamp, Calan Fortkamp and Rachel Fortkamp.

Also Conner Homan, Anna Niekamp, Violet Roessner, Addison Schoenlein, Kaitlyn Stammen, Peyton Weitzel, Zoey Wendel, Hailey Wenning, Natalie Wenning and Georgia Wuebker.

Also on the honor roll with straight A's were seventh graders Kyle Andrews, John Bihn, Logan Gaerke, Skylee Grafmiller, Miley Hardwick, Alex Heitkamp, Mason Jutte, Owen Lamm, Camden LeFevre and Eloise Niekamp.

Also Aubrey Post, Katelyn Siefing, Aubrey Stammen, Makayla Wehrkamp, Aubrey Wendel, Kenzie Wendel, Julia Westgerdes, Mya Will and Gavin Willmann.

Earning a place on the list with straight A's were eighth graders Chloe

Brockman, Brinley Fortkamp, Addyson Heitkamp, Addison Jutte, Kayden Ranly, Alexander Roessner, Lydia Will and Lana Wuebker.

On the list with all A's and B's were sixth graders Rhett Albers, Lillian Alig, Rachel Boeckman, Ziva Brown, Aaron Brunswick, Leonard Faller, Gavin Gaerke, Wade Gaerke, Mitchell Geier, Hailey Grisez, Josh Grube, Riley Guggenbiller and LaMicheal Heitkamp.

Also Wesley Heitkamp, Blake Homan, Lane Homan, Jordan Honey-

cutt, Maverick Huelkamp, Ellee Kremer, Hannah Link, Walker Link, and Brandon Martinez.

Also Whitley Overman, Emma Pearson, Charles Roessner, Theodore Schmitz, Adaley Shuttleworth, Garrett Siefing, Tyler Steinbrunner, Kolten Timmerman, Xavier Tobin, Marcus Wenning, Riley White, Evan Willmann and Rihanna Wuebker.

Also making the list with all A's and B's were seventh graders Mason Alig, Kolson Bechtol, Alexandra Bihn, Molly

Boeckman, Lukas Brackman, Brooke Dilworth, Carly Fortkamp, Macy Fullenkamp, Brayden Grisez, Mason Grisez, Lauren Hart, Jesse Homan, Jayce Honeycutt, Ryan Jutte and Isla Kaiser.

Also Eli Kremer, Quinn McCain, Tori Noggler, Branson Pohlman, Benson Rammel, Jordy Ranly, Addalyn Roessner, Rayla Staugler, Koby Timmerman and Rielle Wendel.

On the honor roll with all A's and B's were eighth graders Kaiser Albers, Tenley Albers, Jenna

Bertke, Kali Brunswick, Kale Diller, Emmitt Dues, Jordan Dues, Anthony Evers, Hope Evers, Stetson Fullenkamp, Kayla Gaerke, Claire Grube, Gavin Heitkamp, Brynn Huntsman, and Yoselin Juarez-Gomez.

Also Carter Kaiser, Briar Leuthold, Isaac Niekamp, Courtney Overman, River Overman, Andrew Rehmert, Ethan Schmitz, James Shuttleworth, Bryce Siefing, Jett Tobe, Mara Wendel, Claire Wenning, Vincent Wenning, Reid Willmann and Lane Zehringer.

Coworker friendship fades as time goes on

DEAR ABBY: I had a close friendship with a co-worker. We used to have lunch together and shared many personal and intimate stories. We were the two work newbies, even though I started six months before he did.

He has adapted well in the work environment, but I'm still struggling with different personalities and communication styles. Because he's better established at work than I am, he has become part of close circles within management. I think he eventually wants to advance his career as far as he can.

I feel like I got left behind because his priorities changed, and our friendship was left by the wayside. I'm now realizing

Dear Abby



course it is hurtful. You looked to your co-worker for emotional support and now it is gone. You wouldn't be human if you didn't mourn the loss.

On the plus side, you have learned from this experience. Work relationships are just that, and it is unwise to expect more from them. You had a preconception about how your relationship with this person was going to be; he had other ambitions, and he is acting upon them. Such is life.

DEAR ABBY: My husband's parents divorced when he was young, and he acquired a beauti-

ful, solitaire diamond from his mother's engagement ring. The diamond was made into an engagement ring for his first marriage (which, obviously, also ended in divorce.)

As a couple, we are trying to decide what to do with the stone. His mom doesn't want it back. We could sell it (it has been appraised/certified by the gemological institute), or he has suggested I keep it and have it made into a necklace.

I am unsure about the proper action to take in this situation. Although it is not a pressing matter, we have discussed it for a few years now. Your input would be appreciated. — BEJEWELED IN THE WEST

DEAR BEJEWELED: It appears the diamond has brought only bad luck to the two women who have worn it. You know its monetary value, so consider taking it to a jeweler and discussing a trade-in for something you would enjoy wearing, such as earrings or a bracelet. (Where I live, multiple gold chain bracelets and necklaces are popular.)

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.

PORTLAND LIONS CLUB — Will meet the first Thursday of the month at Portland Lions Civic Center, 307 W. 100 North. The meal will be served at 6:30 p.m. and the meeting will begin at 7 p.m.

FORGET-ME-NOT — A support group for parents,

friends and relatives who have lost a baby through miscarriage, birth or illness will meet from 7 to 9 p.m. at St. Vincent Randolph Hospital, Winchester, in community room 1. For more information, call Kimberly Sibery at (765) 964-6075 or Nikki Bosworth at (765) 584-6452.

Friday

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

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

SOFT SHOULDERS — A support group for anyone suffering from memory loss, will meet at 10:30 a.m. the first Friday of each month in the Fireplace Room at Edelweiss Place at Swiss Village in Berne. For more information, call (260) 589-3173.

CINCINNATUS

LEAGUE — Will hold its next meeting at noon Friday, Feb. 7, at Harmony Cafe in Portland.

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.

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.

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.

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. For more information, call (260) 766-2006.

Monday

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

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

JAY COUNTY DRUG PREVENTION COALITION — Will meet at noon the second Monday of each month at Jay County Campus of Arts Place, 131 E. Walnut St, Portland. For more information, call (260) 251-3259.

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

DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP — Meets at 3 p.m. on the second Monday of each month at Mercer Health in Coldwater, Ohio.

TAKE OFF POUNDS

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

PREGNANCY CARE CENTER — Free pregnancy testing with ongoing support during and after pregnancy. The center is located at 216 S. Meridian St., Portland. Hours are 1 to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (260) 726-8636. Walk-ins accepted.

BREAD OF LIFE COMMUNITY FAMILY MEAL — Will be served from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Asbury United Methodist Church, 204 E. Arch St. in Portland. Everyone is welcome.

PORTLAND EVENING OPTIMIST CLUB — Will meet at 6 p.m. the second and fourth Monday of each month at Richards Restaurant.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS — Will meet at 6:30 p.m. each Monday 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.

REDISCOVERING JOY — The support group of widows and widowers meets at 6:30 p.m. on the second Monday of each month at R & R Fabrications, 601 E. Washington St., St. Henry, Ohio. For more information, email rediscoveringjoy@yahoo.com.

Tuesday

COMPASSIONATE CON-

NECTIONS RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP — A group for anyone with a substance use disorder that helps individuals find connections as they develop long-term recovery meets at noon each Tuesday in the IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health Center, Entrance C, 510 W. Votaw St., Portland.

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

A BETTER LIFE - BRIANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for substance abuse. Meal starts at 6 p.m. and the meeting is from 6:30 to 8 p.m. every Tuesday at the Nazarene Fellowship Building across from the Nazarene church, 249 E. Center St., Dunkirk. For more information, call Amanda Price at (765) 283-2107.

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

Wednesday

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

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

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

Sudoku

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

Level: Intermediate

Wednesday's Solution

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


Jay County Conservation Club

80TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER & DANCE

Join us for the kick off event of our 80th anniversary celebrations!

FEBRUARY 8TH
5-10 PM

Dinner begins at 5:00 PM with ham, cheesy potatoes, applesauce, roll, and dessert. Dancing begins at 7:00 PM with music from the 40s through now provided by Premier Entertainment.

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Despite campaign, work isn't easy

Chicago Tribune
Tribune News Service

The state of Illinois is seeking employees who don't want a 40-hour workweek.

A cringey commercial you may have seen recently boasts that working for the state can mean five weeks off in your first year on the job, with flexible hours, a hybrid setup and good work-life balance, all while enjoying a 37.5-hour workweek.

This sounds like a sweet deal. Also one unavailable in most other full-time careers.

We know of course that some state workers toil long and hard at their jobs. Still, the state's clueless ad leans into the worst critiques and caricatures of

Guest Editorial

government work, maybe in an effort to appeal to a post-COVID-19 workforce that resents being called back to the office.

"What do you want from your career?" asks a voice at the start of the commercial. The faux potential recruits don't then talk about their ambition or their desire to serve or to make Illinois better.

They talk about how much

time off they want. Seriously? That's the message?

We don't take issue with people earning fair wages, getting breaks and having good benefits, but the commercial is tone-deaf. And it's hard not to be miffed when you consider how state worker benefits compare with those the people paying taxes are getting.

An open administrative role for the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity pays up to \$126,000 per year, and an open nurse position posted online in Elgin pays up to \$102,000. State workers also retire with better benefits than the average Illinoisan.

The maximum annual Social

Security benefit for those in the private sector retiring at 62 for 2023 was just \$30,864, while the average starting pension for career workers participating in the State Employees' Retirement System is \$52,920 (many state workers also get Social Security for private work, and some have retired as early as 55).

Sure, it's just a commercial. But as the state looks to lure more employees, it's worth noting that the Illinois government added 15,600 jobs, among the highest gains of any industry statewide, from December 2023 to December 2024, according to an Illinois Policy Institute analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics data. Only the private education and health

services sector (26,600-plus jobs) and local government (16,000-plus jobs) outpaced state government hiring.

Really great careers and really great benefits sound fantastic, but remember that unemployment in Illinois is 5.2%, the third-highest in the U.S. Without robust private-sector growth, it's incredibly hard to justify a growing, highly compensated public sector. The rest of us pay for those great benefits, and most of us full-timers are clocking more than 37.5 hours a week.

Branding state work as an easy, cushy gig strikes a bitter chord with taxpayers, and it won't do Springfield any favors with the people who foot the bill.



Residents want strong local public services

By MICHAEL J. HICKS

It is hard to resist trolling Illinois, especially Chicago.

I've done so myself on occasion. After all, Chicago is a city with too many governance flaws to list in a single column. But they also enjoy a few strengths. The Chicago Metro area is bigger, richer, better educated and its workers substantially more productive than Indiana as a whole.

Still, it's fun to troll a place like Chicago, and Todd Huston, who must be ranked as among the most serious and effective legislative leaders in the country, did so earlier this month. The story is worth telling.

Many downstate Illinois residents dislike Chicago's strong influence in the state. Last year, a total of 33 counties voted to secede from Illinois and form their own state. Mr. Huston invited those counties to join Indiana. He even created a Commission to study the possibility.

That's first-rate trolling. I thought it'd be fun to think through the prospect of Indiana picking up these 33 counties. Would it be good for Indiana? Would it be good for those counties? Would it be good for the remaining 69 Illinois counties?

The 'secessionist' counties in Illinois are in the southern part of the state, with many bordering Indiana. This one-third of counties comprise only 6.6 percent of the Illinois population, and only 4.0 percent of the state's economy.

Per capita income in the secessionist counties is \$54,381.

Michael J. Hicks



If it were a separate state, it would be the second poorest state in the union, sliding right in between Mississippi and West Virginia. The remaining counties in Illinois enjoy per capita income of \$73,228.

Adding the secessionist counties to Indiana would cut our per capita income enough for us to slide from 14th to 11th place from the bottom. Only 18.6 percent of adults in these counties have completed college, while the Illinois total is 36.7 percent. This new 'secessionist' state would instantly be the least well-educated state, and would be right about where the USA as a whole was in the late 1980s.

Economic growth in the secessionist counties has been at about half the rate of the rest of Illinois so far this century. And, while the rest of Illinois has experienced very modest population growth of about 1.4 percent, these secessionist counties have lost a whopping 5.2 percent of their population.

If the secessionist parts of Illinois were their own state, they'd have the worst 25 years of population loss of any state in U.S. history. So, it's pretty easy to see why these counties might be unhappy about their

economic conditions. They are truly dismal.

But how much of this is plausibly the fault of Illinois state government? After all, the other Illinois counties are doing much better. That includes Chicago, where the economy continues to be robust, even as population growth has stalled. Is it possible that these counties are somehow being robbed of economic opportunity by Illinois?

Nope. As it turns out, these counties are essentially welfare queens of the state of Illinois.

A pair of researchers at Southern Illinois University's Paul Simon Public Policy Institute publish reports every couple years on the flow of public budgets across Illinois. This very detailed work by John Jackson and John Foster makes it possible to see where the tax dollars are flowing across the State of Illinois. And, for what it is worth, that is very much like a study I did for Indiana more than a decade ago with colleagues Dagny Faulk and John Ketzenberger.

As it turns out, residents in these secessionist counties pay about \$2,986 per person each year in state taxes. That would make them the fourth lowest-taxed residents in the nation. But, here's the rub, they receive \$5,430 per person each year in support from residents of the other 69 Illinois counties.

In contrast, the rest of the state collects \$4,485 in state taxes each year, and gets back \$4,217 per person each year in state spending. So, each resident of

the secessionist counties gets \$2,444 more state dollars spent in their county each year than they pay in taxes. On top of that, they pay only 66.6 cents for every dollar of taxes residents in the other 69 Illinois counties pay.

Federal taxes and spending tell a similar story. A recent study of mine calculated the share of taxes and transfer payments made at the county level to the federal government. You guessed it, the secessionist counties pay a lower federal tax rate, but receive more in Social Security payments and in other types of transfers (TANF, SNAP, etc.) than the counties that did not vote to secede from Illinois.

There are some useful lessons here.

First, the secessionist counties of Illinois pay low state taxes but are beneficiaries of enormous transfers from the rest of Illinois. It is hard to pinpoint just what these Illinois secessionist counties are angry about. Most likely it is bad vibes borne of ignorance. There's compelling evidence of that.

If they do come to Indiana, Hoosier taxpayers will need to pony up almost \$2 billion more per year to match the fiscal largesse those secessionist counties receive from the rest of Illinois. It is worth noting that those taxes are going to come primarily from urban areas, like Fishers, Carmel and Indianapolis.

So no, we don't really want them — though it is easy to see why Illinois might not want them either.

Second, neither the Red State and Blue State models of rural development have worked. The secessionist counties of Illinois look just like 40 or 50 declining rural counties in Indiana. Both Illinois and Indiana policymakers are failing their rural counties, though most of the blame for economic decline belongs squarely with the voters of those rural counties.

Finally, the real political divisions in America are geographic. So far this century, a whopping half of all the population growth this century has occurred in just 75 out of 3,143 U.S. counties or 2.3 percent. Fully 45 percent of U.S. counties have lost population this century.

This deep economic divergence has gripped the United States for four decades. It is not between Red or Blue states, or places with high taxes or woke policies. It is primarily between urban and non-urban counties, and reflects the desire of most Americans to live in places with strong local public services — great schools, low crime, and businesses that offer a mix of goods and services. Places that offer these do well, those that do not will look more and more like rural Illinois.

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

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

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

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Area churches are listed with location, pastor and phone number, services and website or email address. All services are Sunday, unless otherwise indicated.

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

Bellefontain 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
christchapelfr.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.
fccftrecovery.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.
firstpceportland.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 Kruckow
(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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Continued from page 8
The Indians (9-2, 6-0 MAC) went undefeated in conference matches during the regular season, while Versailles (11-4, 5-1 MAC) only lost to FRHS to finish one point behind in the standings. The loss in the tournament championship gave Fort Recovery five MAC points, while the Tigers got six, so both teams tied at 11 on the year.

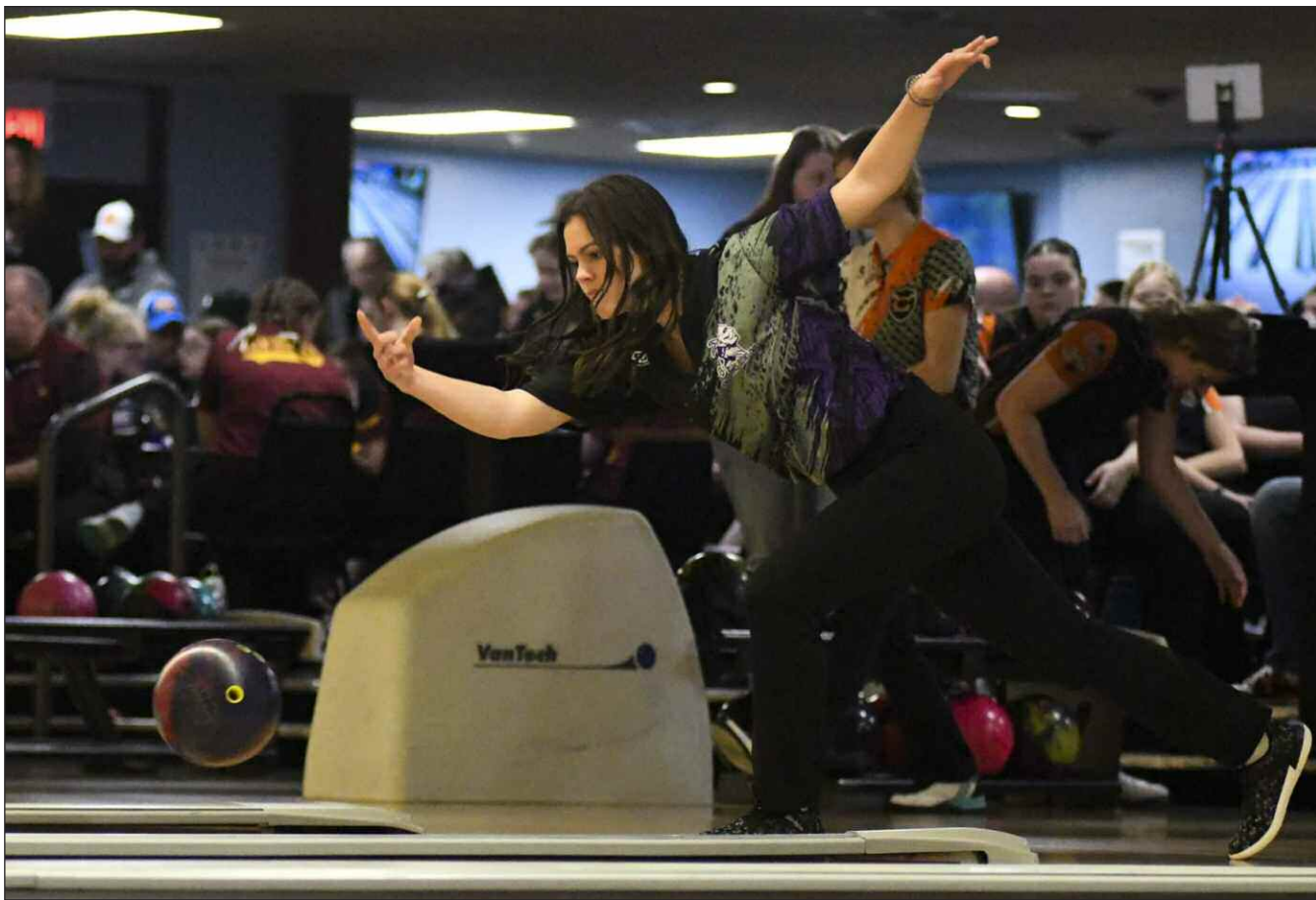
“Definitely frustrating to split it with Versailles again, but I’m proud of how the girls bowled,” said FRHS coach Alison Rosegrant. “We looked great in all the bakers leading up to Versailles. It was a close match, everything within a few pins. One ball could have made a difference.

“So, I’m super proud of the season we’ve had, I’m proud of how we performed tonight and I’m excited for the postseason.”

The Indians are now tied with Coldwater with two MAC girls bowling titles, while VHS leads all schools with four. (New Bremen, Minster, Parkway and Marion Local have not claimed a title in five seasons.)

The Indians opened the best-of-five Baker set with Versailles with their weakest game of the day, as five open frames kept them under 150 pins. Freshman Lilah Thien and sophomore Deanna Brown closed all four of their frames. Both put up a pair of strikes, while Brown — who was the anchor — had her first extra ball of the 10th frame bounce off the pocket to leave the No. 5 pin. The Tigers overcame a slow start with two opens in the first three frames for the 161-142 win.

FRHS bounced back



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Kayla Heitkamp releases her Storm Phaze II during the first round of Tuesday’s Midwest Athletic Conference girls bowling tournament at Community Lanes in Minster. Heitkamp finished with the Indians’ fifth-best fill (58.3%) and strike (29.7%) percentages, as the Tribe clinched its second straight MAC title. After a first round bye, Fort Recovery swept Minster 175-119, 170-136, 167-114 before falling to Versailles in the championship 161-142, 148-183, 169-166, 190-180 to allow the Tigers to claim the title of co-champions.

with its best game of the day thanks to six strikes.

Ella Schoen started with a Brooklyn strike (when the ball crosses to the non-dominant hand side) before Thien followed it up with a flush shot. After a pair of opens, Brown, Schoen, Thien and Kayla Heitkamp strung together strikes for a hambone (four straight strikes). While the Indians finished the game with two more opens, the run was good enough for a 35-pin victory that tied the match up.

The Tribe marked all but two frames, but a late

turkey put the Tigers ahead in the third game. But Versailles left the 10th frame open to give FRHS a chance.

A strike from Schoen in the ninth set up Brown, but the lefty needed at least two strikes of her own to give her team a 2-1 lead. Her first shot came up just light, leaving the 10 pin. (She closed the frame and left the No. 4 pin on the extra ball for a 169-166 loss.)

The Indians again only had two opens in the fourth game, but couldn’t pull even.

After nine frames, Fort Recovery led 171-160.

Schoen’s first shot in the 10th frame hit the pocket flush, but left a ringing 10 after hitting the pocket too hard. Her attempt at converting the spare ended with her ball falling into the right gutter for the final of 180.

On the other lane, Versailles’ Danielle Francis punched out the 10th for the victory.

Brown had the strongest day for the Indians, closing 24 of 28 potential frames (85.7%) and rolling strikes on 43.2% (16-of-37) of the full racks she shot at. While she felt good about her team’s performance, she

was left wondering about what could have been if they caught a few more breaks.

“It feels good to be striking and be one of those people helping the team,” Brown said. “All we were away was three pins in one game and then we could have won that last one by just a spare and a strike.”

The Tribe also got a strong performance from its freshman in the final match. Thien closed seven of her eight frames against the Tigers while throwing six strikes. She also finished with the team’s second-best fill

and strike percentages at 78.8% (26-of-33) and 39.4% (13-of-33). Jayden Wyerick got entered into the lineup for the third and fourth Baker games filling all four of her frames.

“They actually came and followed us in the postseason last year,” Rosegrant said while also noting that experience with the youth league prepared the freshmen for postseason play. “So they’ve got this experience from the audience and now they’re ready to bowl on the big stage.”

To get to the championship match, Fort Recovery had to go through the Minster Wildcats in the semifinal. It was never at risk of dropping a game, cruising to a 175-119, 170-136, 167-114 victory.

Emily Lauber finished as the top performer from the round, filling all six of her frames, while striking three times.

The top-seeded Indians got a bye in the first round. (The first round consisted of two individual games and two Baker games and the team with the most total pins moved on to the semifinal round. FRHS finished with 1,889 in the opening round.)

The Indians will now turn their sights to the sectional meet 9 a.m. Tuesday at Rollhouse Dayton. To capture a sectional championship, they will need to go through Versailles again.

“We’re definitely going to use this as our driving force,” Rosegrant said. “We’re going to come back with a vengeance. We want to take sectional and be first, we want to take district and be first. We’re going to take this opportunity to learn where we had a few open frames, we just can’t have those next time.”

Retiring ...

Continued from page 8
Brogan Gary, previously the junior varsity coach, will step in as the interim coach to finish the season. In turn, Ar buckle will fill in as the JV coach.

Basketball runs deep in Gary’s family full of high-level basketball players, including his father who was an Indiana All-Star at Anderson Highland and played for UNC-Wilmington, an uncle who played for Vanderbilt and an uncle who played for Tulane and coached at Purdue.

Gary began high school at Anderson Highland in the final year before it closed its doors.

Then transferring to Pendleton Heights, he was a part of an Arabians squad that made three consecutive regional appearances and finished as the No. 1 team in Class 4A in 2011-12.

The role as the JV coach was his first experience on the sidelines. As he takes over the Patriots, he will look to keep the same goal of making a run for the sectional title.

“My focus here is to be here for these young men,” Gary said. “I want to be a role model and bring in a mentality that doesn’t fold in times of adversity. ... We’re going to work our butts off. Our goal right now is

to prepare for the sectional and win the sectional. The things they’ve been through this year, the ups and downs, is only going to make us stronger. ...

“I know this is tearing a lot of people up. I know we didn’t want him to go out this way and he didn’t want to go out this way. It’s a tough time with his health and he’s in our thoughts and prayers. ... This season as we go forward, we’re going to be doing this for him because he’s our leader and he’ll continue to be our leader. There’s no forgetting about him.”

Gary will make his debut Thursday at Southern Wells.

Bomholt finished his career with a 602-393, which sits 19th all time in Indiana, record over 44 seasons. He had two stints at JCHS, spanning a total of nine years. He went 112-86 (56.6%) while guiding the Patriots. He has led teams to 13 sectional titles — including two at Jay County — and a state finals run while at Southwestern in 1998.

Bomholt landed his first non-interim head coaching position with Jay County in 1980. After leaving in 1984, he had considered coming back to Portland to retire as a Patriot and got the opportunity in the 2020-21 season.

“Coming here to Jay County for, not really my first job, but it was the first actual thing I got to put together,” Bomholt said. “And the people here have been fantastic. If you could just use easy words to describe it, they’re our family.”

“They’ve been our family. And even though we went away for a few years, my wife and I said if we ever have a chance to come back, we’ll come back. We’d like to finish where we’ve started. The hard part is I really wanted to finish this year. But because of other circumstances, it didn’t allow us to finish that way and that just made it awful hard.”

Sports on tap

Local schedule

Today
Jay County — Girls swim sectional preliminaries at Jay County — 5:30 p.m.; Boys basketball at Southern Wells — 6 p.m.; Junior high wrestling vs. South Adams — 6 p.m.
Fort Recovery — Girls basketball vs. Versailles — 6 p.m.; Middle school girls basketball MAC tournament at St.

Henry — 5 p.m.; Middle school boys basketball MAC tournament at St. John’s — 5 p.m.

Friday
Jay County — Girls basketball sectional semifinal vs. Delta/Hamilton Heights at Connersville — 7:30 p.m.
Fort Recovery — Swim sectional at Trotwood — 6:30; Boys basketball at Versailles — 6 p.m.

TV sports

Today
6 p.m. — Women’s college basketball: Rutgers at Indiana (BTN)
6:30 p.m. — Women’s college basketball: UConn at Tennessee (ESPN)
7 p.m. — College basketball: Temple at South Florida (ESPN2); Maryland at Ohio State (FS1)
7:30 p.m. — NBA: Dallas Mavericks at Boston Celtics (TNT)

8 p.m. — Women’s college basketball: Iowa at Minnesota (BTN)
9 p.m. — College basketball: St. Mary’s at San Francisco (ESPN2)
9 p.m. — Women’s college basketball: Maryland at Oregon (FS1)
10 p.m. — NBA: Golden State Warriors at Los Angeles Lakers (TNT)
10:30 p.m. — NBA: Indiana Pacers at Los Angeles Clippers (FDSN Indiana)
11 p.m. — College basketball: Washington State at Oregon State (ESPN2)

Friday
6 p.m. — College wrestling: Penn State at Michigan (BTN)
7 p.m. — College basketball: USC at Purdue (FS1); VCU at Dayton (ESPN2)
7 p.m. — Unrivaled basketball: Lunar Owls BC at Phantom BC (TNT)
7:30 p.m. — NBA: Philadelphia 76ers at Detroit Pistons (ESPN)
8 p.m. — College basketball: St. John’s at UConn (FOX)

8 p.m. — College wrestling: Iowa at Nebraska (BTN)
8:15 p.m. — Unrivaled basketball: Rose BC at Mist BC (TNT)
9 p.m. — College basketball: San Jose State at Boise State (FS1)
9 p.m. — College gymnastics: LSU at Alabama (ESPN2)
10 p.m. — NBA: Utah Jazz at Phoenix Suns (ESPN)
10 p.m. — College wrestling: Wisconsin at Purdue (BTN)

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Jefferson Township, Jay County, Indiana
Cash & Investments Combined Statement - 2024

Local Fund Number	Local Fund Name	Beg. Cash and Inv. Bal. Jan. 1, 2024	Receipts	Disbursements	End Cash and Inv. Bal. Dec. 31, 2024
Governmental Activities					
0061	RAINY DAY FUND	\$255.91	\$2,135.00	\$390.91	\$2,000.00
0101	TOWNSHIP FUND	\$2,298.60	\$23,647.95	\$15,090.34	\$10,856.21
0105	EXCESS LEVY	\$87.13	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$87.13
0840	TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE	\$7,037.69	\$0.00	\$274.50	\$6,763.19
1111	FIRE FIGHTING FUND	\$87,560.72	\$23,553.45	\$8,590.59	\$102,523.58
9999	PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS	\$0.00	\$692.40	\$0.00	\$692.40
Total All Funds		\$97,240.05	\$50,023.80	\$24,346.34	\$122,922.51
Certification: State of Indiana SS: Jay County I, Angela Moeller, Trustee of Jefferson Township, Jay County, Indiana, do solemnly affirm under the penalty of perjury that the preceding report is complete, true and correct; that the sum with which I am charged in this report are all of the sums received by me; and that the various items of expenditures credited have been fully paid in the sums stated; that such payments were made without express or implied agreement that any portion thereof shall be retained by or paid to me or to any other person. I further affirm that a complete and detailed annual report, together with all accompanying vouchers showing the names of persons having been paid money by the township, have been filed as required by law in the office of the County Auditor, and that copies of such annual report are in custody of the Township Board and the State Board of Accounts. Said report is subject to inspection by any taxpayer of the township. Angela Moeller Jefferson Township Trustee 260-251-9850 Date this report was to be published: February 6, 2025 Subscribed and sworn (or affirmed) to before me, the Chairman of the Township Board of Jefferson Township at its annual meeting, this 29th day of January, 2025 Janet Confer, Jefferson Township Board Chairman Township Board: Joshua Monroe, Richard Nixon CR 2-6-2025 -HSPAXLP					

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Retiring a Patriot

JCHS boys basketball coach Jerry Bomholt retires effective immediately to focus on health

By ANDREW BALKO
The Commercial Review

Jerry Bomholt knew he wanted to finish his career with Jay County.

While his time as a coach didn't end the exact way he had imagined it, he's decided it's time to move on and focus on his health.

After suffering his second health scare in 21 days, Bomholt announced his retirement effective immediately from his role as the Jay County High School boys basketball coach on Tuesday afternoon.

Bomholt most recently collapsed prior to Saturday's matchup at Blackford, holding him out of his second game this season. He previously had to sit out of the game against Adams Central on Jan. 11 after dealing with low blood pressure. Assistant coach Doug Arbuckle filled in for him in both cases.

Since being released from the hospital early Sunday morning, Bomholt has seen medical personnel to try and determine the cause of the second health scare.

He has since reflected and during a meeting with his wife and Jay County athletics director Alex Griffin, Bomholt decided it was best to retire from coaching bas-



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Jay County High School boys basketball coach Jerry Bomholt receives a commemorative basketball from athletics director Alex Griffin on Friday during a celebration of his 600th career win prior to the Patriots' game against Bluffton. After collapsing before the JCHS game Saturday at Blackford, Bomholt announced Tuesday that he is retiring from coaching to focus on his health. He finished his career with 602 victories — 19th all-time in Indiana boys basketball — and 13 sectional titles.

ketball to focus on his health.

"It was extremely difficult," Bomholt said. "This was probably the hardest decision I've ever had to

make, because it had to do with what most people would have looked at as a hobby, but this was never a hobby. I took it as a job. ...

"But it was tough telling those kids what was going to happen and the coaching staff. But they'll survive. They're tough kids. God has a dif-

ferent way He wants this to end for us. We're going to try to follow His will and not ours and go from there."

See **Retiring** page 7

Tribe forced to share with Tigers

FRHS girls bowling ties with Versailles for second consecutive MAC title

By ANDREW BALKO
The Commercial Review

MINSTER, Ohio — The Indians found themselves in the same spot for the second year in a row.

They won all six Midwest Athletic Conference matches during the regular season.

After a bye and cruising through the host Wildcats, all that stood between the Tribe and an outright title was the Tigers.

And for a second straight year, the Indians came up just short and will share the conference title.

The Fort Recovery High School girls bowling team finished second at the MAC tournament falling to the Versailles Tigers 161-142, 148-183, 169-166, 190-180 at Community Lanes on Tuesday.

See **Share** page 7



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