

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

County adjusts scope of contract

Firm will look at a stand-alone system

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review

Jay County Commissioners decided to take a step back.

Commissioners heard from Integrated Public Safety Commission statewide interoperability coordinator Andrea Baughn and OK'd moving forward with a change in scope in the contract with Ritter Strategic Services during their meeting Monday.

In July, commissioners approved a \$178,500 contract with the company to move forward with planning, procurement, engineering, project management and other work related to switching to the Integrated Public Safety Commission's statewide radio system. Their decision followed a previous Ritter Strategic Services study completed on the county's emergency responder radios, with the company recommending Jay County shift to the statewide system. (Discussion has been ongoing in Jay County for nearly five years regarding a new radio system.)

Per the change approved Monday, the county will pay an additional \$39,000 for Ritter Strategic Services to look into costs and other information regarding the purchase of a stand-alone radio system.

Commissioners president Chad Aker noted he would like to be presented with more than one option for a new system. He reminded commissioners that Jay County Council president Matt Minnich has also expressed a similar desire.

Commissioners met last week with Ritter Strategic Services owner Barry Ritter, who explained his company has received a proposal from Motorola for tower sites as well as proposals from other vendors for pagers and other equipment. (The Integrated Public Safety Commission has a 20-year contract with Motorola to set up equipment for the system.)

See **Contract** page 2



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Cold pizza

Abby Brockman rushes back out of the pond northwest of Moser Engineering during United Way of Jay County's Peggy's Plunge 2025 on Saturday. The polar plunge in honor Peggy Atkinson raised money for Jay County's Special Olympics, cancer society and homeless shelter.

GOP leaders cast doubt on relief

By WHITNEY DOWNARD
and NIKI KELLY

Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com

Despite being a top priority for new Indiana Gov. Mike Braun, Republican leaders in the General Assembly seem to be taking a more cautious approach to new state tax relief in budget discussions.

"I really appreciate the governor kind of leaning in and and, you know, he wants to do more with less. He wants to make sure Hoosiers keep more of their money," said House Speaker Todd Huston.

But he pointed to an existing income tax phase-down already in law as a priority and noted some agencies — such as the

Huston and Bray say they will be cautious with budget

Department of Child Services — that will need additional funding. The state's income tax will continue to fall over the next two years, hitting a low of 2.9% in 2027.

Another bill would extend the gradually falling rate so long as the state's economic conditions hold steady.

"We're going to be cautious. I mean really, really cautious ... there's a lot of

uncertainties right now," said Huston, R-Fishers. "It's challenging and probably a little less frills, more vanilla."

In contrast to the flush budgets during COVID-19, when federal funds and high spending buoyed state revenues, the next two-year cycle will be much leaner — with discussions centered around warring priorities. With less than one month as the state's

top leader, Braun has vowed to usher in a new era of austerity, curbing agency spending while simultaneously granting widespread tax relief.

In addition to a property tax proposal that could save Hoosiers more than \$1 billion collectively, his budget includes several income tax relief proposals:

- Inflation-adjusted income tax deductions
- Eliminating the tax on retirement income
- Stopping the tax on tips
- A farming tax credit
- Instituting sales tax holidays for school supplies and outdoor equipment.

The cuts would reduce state tax revenue by \$696 million over the two years of the budget.

To pay for that, Braun reduced various categories of state agency spending.

Senate President Pro Tem Rodric Rodric Bray called Braun's budget "aspirational," and said he appreciated the leadership.

"There are challenges. DCS continues to be a challenge," said the Martinsville Republican.

Bray said the DCS budget had to be augmented to finish out this fiscal year and that might have to continue in the next two years.

"And so those types of things are going to make it hard to accommodate those tax cuts. We'd love to be able to do it, but there are some challenges with that," he said.



The Commercial Review/Bailey Cline

State Reps. J.D. Prescott (R-Union City) (center) and Matt Lehman (R-Berne) (left), and State Sen. Travis Holdman (R-Markle) visited Jay County for a legislative update Saturday with local residents. Discussion at John Jay Center For Learning mainly focused on bills targeting tax changes.

Tax changes questioned

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review

Jay County residents had concerns to address with local legislators Saturday.

The largest dealt with tax changes currently being discussed at the state level.

State Sen. Travis Holdman (R-Markle) and State Reps. J.D. Prescott (R-Union City) and Matt Lehman (R-Berne) shared legislative session updates Saturday at John Jay Center for Learning.

Regarding Senate Bill 1 — among other items, it addresses deductions and tax credits and requires the Department of Local Government Finance to develop and maintain a property tax transparency portal — Holdman indicated that the bill will be significantly overhauled when brought to the Senate Tax and

Local residents, government officials express concern about plans for tax reform

Fiscal Policy Committee on Tuesday.

"We're working hard to come up with a plan, we're trying to toe the line between being responsible to the taxpayer but at the same time, realizing we have to have local government services, schools, cities, towns, government, and we've got to be

responsible for those folks," he said.

Recommended cuts in Senate Bill 1 total \$1.1 billion dollars. In three years, that amount would increase to \$1.4 billion.

"Some units of government would not even be able to make their debt obligations," he noted.

See **Questioned** page 2

Deaths

Timothy Skiver, 74, Redkey
Dolores Fortman, 87, Fort Recovery
Details on page 2.

Weather

The temperature in Jay County hovered between 27 and 31 degrees Sunday. The low will be in the lower 20s tonight with winds gusting to 20 miles per hour. Snow, rain and freezing rain are expected Wednesday with a high in the lower 30s. See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

Jay County Public Library is hosting "Be My Pal-entine!" from 4 to 5:30 p.m. Thursday. The event in the Community Room at the library, 315 N. Ship St., Portland, will include making friendship bracelets and a bouquet. There will also be chocolate treats. The event is open to children up to sixth grade.

Coming up

Wednesday — Details from Monday's Dunkirk City Council meeting.
Thursday — Results from the diving regional at Hamilton Southeastern.
Friday — Preview of Saturday's wrestling semi-state tournament in Fort Wayne.



Contract ...

Continued from page 1
Ritter Strategic Services plans to negotiate prices with vendors before finalizing costs.
Aker contacted Ritter in December about looking into a radio system that non-emergency responders, such as Jay County Highway Department, could use. He proposed changing the scope in work on the contract with Ritter to include a second option for a stand-alone system.
Previously, non-emergency responders were not allowed on the statewide system. Jay County Emergency Management Agency director Samantha Rhodehamel shared news at the meeting Thursday about the Integrated Public Safety Commission system potentially opening up to county highway departments.
Baughn confirmed Monday her department is looking into adjusting its policy.
“We are revisiting that policy because we realize that expanding into that area is probably important to a lot of counties so you aren’t trying to maintain two systems,” she said.
She shared two features of the Integrated Public Safety Commission system — critical connect and smart connect. The former

allows cellular devices to be integrated into the system. The latter, intended for Motorola devices, allows radios to automatically revert to a wifi signal within range when put into an area with a low radio signal.
Baughn noted Whitley County uses the smart connect feature regularly in dense buildings made of limestone. Answering a question from Aker, she pointed out the county’s school systems developed a hidden wifi network to be used by first responders in school buildings.
Regarding non-emergency responders on the system, she suggested the county use the cellular connect feature.
“There are purposely built devices for utilities, like the highway department,” she said. “They look like radios, they act like radios, but they’re actually using cellular (connections).”
The devices would allow the highway department to switch over to talk to first responders in the event of an emergency. For day-to-day operations, the highway department would essentially have a separate channel.
“They could have many on that cellular side of the network, and then when they would switch

over, they would have one to utilize to be able to talk to dispatch or whoever they need to talk to in a disaster situation,” she said.
Baughn briefly discussed other background with the statewide system, which started operations in 1999. The system shares 192 interconnected sites across the state, with nearly 2,400 state and county agencies currently utilizing it. Baughn noted several counties surrounding Jay County use the system.
She also pointed out that Ohio expects to have its new encrypted system fully implemented by the end of the year. Baughn said she is working with Ohio’s coordinator to figure out radio interoperability between states, specifically for counties that regularly send mutual aid across state lines, such as Jay County and Mercer County, Ohio.
Aker asked commissioners about their thoughts on whether to amend the agreement with Ritter or continue solely looking into the Integrated Public Safety Commission system.
Commissioner Duane Monroe expressed his desire to stick with the original contract.
“I’ve talked to a lot of the people that’s going to be using (the

radios), and that’s not per say what they want,” he said, regarding a stand-alone system. “I feel like we’re going just to prolong this whole process ... my recommendation is to go what Ritter started with and continue to process with Integrated Public Safety Commission. I think, \$40,000 more to do this amendment, I just think it needs to be moved forward.”
Responding to Monroe’s comment about the cost, Aker said he believes \$40,000 is insignificant compared to the multi-million dollars the county could save. Monroe said he didn’t disagree but pointed out the bids will not be comparable. He again referenced responders who are not in favor of a second option, and he pointed to Ritter’s expertise and recommendation on the matter.
Commissioner Doug Horn said he still has a lot of questions left unanswered, such as the costs associated with using the cellular connect feature with Integrated Public Safety Commission’s system and how complicated it is to integrate.
“I’m kind of like Duane, I’d like to see the thing move forward, but I’d like to know again what we want, and I don’t really

know that yet,” he said. “Every meeting is something new, and when we’re trying to catch up (as new commissioners), I suppose that’s the way it is, but it’s, you know, you come to this meeting, ‘Well, we can do this,’ and you come to this meeting, ‘Well, we can do this,’ and, what can’t we do?”
He asked Aker if Ritter Strategic Services could look into the costs and process for implementing non-emergency personnel into the Integrated Public Safety Commission system, with Aker confirming it would also do that.
Monroe again pointed to Ritter’s recommendation and made a motion for the county to continue with its contract as initially approved. His motion died for lack of a second.
Horn then made a motion to amend the contract, allowing Ritter to look into the stand-alone system and also Integrated Public Safety Commission’s interoperability for non-emergency personnel, with Aker seconding the motion.
Commissioners approved the change 2-1 with Monroe dissenting.

For more commissioners news, see Wednesday’s newspaper.

CR almanac				
Wednesday 2/12	Thursday 2/13	Friday 2/14	Saturday 2/15	Sunday 2/16
33/21 Mostly cloudy skies on Wednesday with a 70% chance of snow.	25/5 Thursday’s forecast shows mostly cloudy skies with temperatures dipping to single digits.	30/26 Friday’s forecast shows mostly cloudy skies with a 50% chance of snow at night.	40/23 There’s an 80% chance of rain and snow throughout the day, with a higher chance of snow late.	27/5 Cloudy on Sunday, when there’s another 50% chance of snow.

Lotteries	
Powerball Estimated jackpot: \$142 million	7-14-15-20-26-27-34-37-41-45-49-50-56-65-75 Cash 5: 7-12-15-18-32 Estimated jackpot: \$446,000
Mega Millions Estimated jackpot: \$110 million	
Hoosier Sunday Midday Daily Three: 4-7-8 Daily Four: 8-5-2-7 Quick Draw: 7-9-13-14-16-18-21-26-27-30-34-38-39-42-43-47-48-62-68-78 Evening Daily Three: 0-3-0 Daily Four: 0-7-4-8 Quick Draw: 2-3-4-5-6	Ohio Sunday Midday Pick 3: 0-9-4 Pick 4: 4-0-7-5 Pick 5: 1-0-7-8-2 Evening Pick 3: 1-7-0 Pick 4: 5-8-7-5 Pick 5: 0-9-5-6-6 Rolling Cash 5: 11-15-22-25-34 Estimated jackpot: \$120,000

Markets	
Cooper Farms Fort Recovery Corn.....4.87 March corn4.93 April corn5.01	March beans10.50 Wheat 5.29
POET Biorefining Portland Corn.....4.95 March corn5.02 April corn5.13	ADM Montpelier Corn.....4.87 March corn4.90 Beans10.42 March beans10.46 Wheat5.49
The Andersons Richland Township Corn4.89 March corn4.89 Beans10.45	Heartland St. Anthony Corn.....4.85 March corn4.85 Beans10.25 March beans10.30 Wheat5.24

Today in history

In 1753, Pennsylvania Hospital became the first operational hospital in the United States. Benjamin Franklin co-founded the practice.
In 1818, Chile declared independence from Spain. Its official independence came in April after the Battle of Mainpu.
In 1847, inventor Thomas Edison was born. Edison helped introduce the modern age of electricity.
— The CR

Citizen’s calendar	
Today 10 a.m. — Dunkirk Police Pension Board, city building, 131 S. Main St. 6 p.m. — Ridgeville Town Council, Ridgeville Fire Department, 302 N. Walnut St.	Court St., Portland. 5 p.m. — Jay School Board, General Shanks, 414 E. Floral Ave., Portland. 6 p.m. — Jay County Council, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.
Wednesday 5 p.m. — Jay County Commissioners and Jay County Council joint session, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N.	Thursday 6 p.m. — Jay County Commission, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland.

Obituaries

Timothy Skiver

Dec. 31, 1950-Jan. 27, 2025
Timothy “Tim” Arthur Skiver 74, of Redkey, Indiana, passed away on Jan. 27, 2025, at D.M.C. Sinai Grace Hospital in Detroit.
Tim was born in Union City, Indiana, on Dec. 31, 1950, to the late Dilman Skiver and Betty June (Ellis) Ruland.
Tim graduated from UCCHS Class of 1969, worked as an artist for Disney World in Orlando, Florida, was apprentice of painter’s union of allied trade in Orlando, Florida, and was a member of the American Legion in Redkey, Indiana.
Tim is survived by a sister Tori (Skiver) Ruiz of Redkey, Indiana;

two brothers, Neil (Karen) Skiver of Greenville, Ohio, and John M. Skiver of Union City; five nieces, Sherry (Craig) Wendell, Daun Ditty, Timara N.L. Ruiz, Keila M. Garcia and Melanie Skiver; two nephews, Shannon Skiver; several great-nieces and great-nephews; close cousin Linda Morgan; two half-sisters, Sabrina Skiver and Tonya Skiver; and three stepsisters, Donna Ortiz, Viva Youngblood and Pam Green.
The family will receive visitors on Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2025, from 4 to 6 p.m. at Reichard Funeral Home, 400 W. Deerfield Road,



Union City, Indiana. A memorial service will follow at 6 p.m. at the Funeral Home.
Condolences may be expressed at reichardfh.com.
Dolores Ann Fortman, Fort Recovery, April 28, 1937-Feb. 4, 2025. Services will be at 10 a.m. Saturday at Mary Help of Christians Catholic Church, Fort Recovery.

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.

Questioned ...

Continued from page 1
“So we’re looking to trim that back significantly from where it is today.”
Prescott talked about House Bill 1229, a measure he proposed that would abolish property tax and establish a sales tax on services. He said the property tax system is overly complicated and pointed to repeated reductions in assessed valuation.
“I think the property tax system itself is flawed, so I came up with a completely new system,” he said.
The bill — it has not cleared committee yet — would repeal property taxes as well as eliminate assessor’s offices, tax increment finance (TIF) districts and referenda. It would then enact a 7% sales tax on services. Prescott said the change would offset revenue from property taxes.
Jay County Council member Bryan Alexander said he believes House Bill 1229 is the least popular policy to date that Prescott has brought to the statehouse.
“Think about this, what we’re doing, think about being fiscally conservative, have local control, and then think about every time a person has a service that gets taxed, every time that small business owner has to fill out the report and submit that back to state,” he said. “That’s a political disaster, in my take.”
Prescott argued the process would be similar to how sales tax is currently figured on goods. He also said it would work as a “fair tax” because it would tax everyone equally.
“It’s regressive,” said Alexander, with Prescott saying he disagrees.
Dunkirk Mayor Jack Robbins questioned whether doing away with property taxes would impact blight programs, wastewater maintenance and other issues.
Prescott said the bill won’t pass this year because it isn’t getting a committee hearing. Regardless, he said it’s important to have a discussion about changing the system.
Holdman noted property values have been increasing at a high rate across the country since the height of

the coronavirus pandemic. While tax caps are in place, he added, debt is added on top of those caps.
He warned residents, noting property tax bills they will be receiving in a few weeks will be on average 7% higher than bills in 2024. Those figures were determined before the current legislative session.
“We are working to control growth and/or slow spending down (for) local units of government,” he said.
Holdman referenced his Senate Bill 451, which calls for decreasing the state income tax rate by 0.05% in even-numbered years beginning in 2030 as long as certain fiscal conditions are met. (The bill was approved in the Senate last month and was referred to the House.)
“For the 10 years prior to COVID, revenue’s increased year over year 3.24%,” he said. “And so, my philosophy is, if we don’t need it ... don’t spend it on something frivolous, give it back to the taxpayer to support state government.”
Questions also surfaced Saturday about House Bill 1231 proposed by Prescott, which would require the Ten Commandments to be displayed in all school libraries and classrooms.
Portland City Council

member Kent McClung noted the United States Supreme Court’s ruling on Stone v. Graham in 1980, which found a Kentucky law requiring Ten Commandments to be posted in classrooms to be a violation of the First Amendment.
“Are you spoiling for another fight to take to the Supreme Court?” he asked.
Prescott noted justices and decisions made by the Supreme Court have changed in recent times, indicating there may be a path forward for the case now.
During their update, which lasted nearly two hours Saturday, legislators also shared information about other bills they are working on amid the 2025 session.
Lehman summarized a few of his bills, including:
•House Bill 1003, which would improve transparency in health care pricing and billing and increase access for patients to their health care information and grant more control over their treatment options
•House Bill 1004, which tightens regulations on nonprofit hospitals to ensure they are acting as nonprofit entities delivering health care
Prescott also highlighted

a few of his bills in the works, including:
•House Bill 1012, which calls for police to inform property owners when there is damage to the owner’s property crops or a structure and it’s reported to a law enforcement officer or agency, and when debris from a vehicle accident is identified by police is left on the property that could damage farm equipment or other vehicles or property
•House Bill 1399, which among other items makes “unlawful presence in Indiana by an alien,” referring to those who have entered the country illegally, a Class A misdemeanor
Holdman highlighted a need for residents to keep themselves informed about legislative changes and later encouraged folks to visit Indiana General Assembly’s website, iga.in.gov. He pointed out bills are available there to view and watch as they make their way through the chamber.
“You can track any bill,” he said. “As Matt (Lehman) said, if a bill does not have a hearing this week, this coming next week, the bill for all intents and purposes is probably going to die.”

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SERVICES

Today
Hayden, Earl: 11 a.m., Bryant Wesleyan Church, 209 S. Hendricks St., Bryant.
Fidler, Bruce: 4 p.m., Downing & Glancy Funeral Home, 100 Washington St., Geneva.

Wednesday
Skiver, Timothy: 6 p.m., Reichard Funeral Home, 400 W. Deerfield Road, Union City.

Saturday
Fortman, Dolores: 10 a.m., Mary Help of Christians Catholic Church, 403 Sharpsburg Road, Fort Recovery.

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Make Valentine's Day special to all

By OLIVIA SMITH
The Commercial Review

Valentine's Day is coming up. Being in a Christian college means that the couples are extra coupley this week. It is very easy to feel lonely, like you will never find someone, no matter where you are.

We get so caught up wanting romantic love that we forget there is love all around us. I know I do. It's hard not to when everywhere you look there are couples.

Having a boyfriend or a girlfriend sounds like the best thing in the world and we get so caught up in wanting a romantic relationship that we forget to enjoy the season of life we are in right now. There is so much happening around us, so many friends wanting to talk and so many new people to meet yet we get so in our head we forget to appreciate it.

Pause.
Before I go on: There is nothing wrong with wanting a romantic relationship; it is natural. I strongly dislike it when someone says, "it'll come when you least expect it," because while that may be true, it's annoying.

You're On Your Own, Kid



Don't get so caught up in getting a romantic relationship that you ignore all the other relationships in your life.

Spending Valentine's Day alone is discouraging but my challenge is to make someone else's day better. It'll make yours better too.

Bring flowers to your mom. Treat your sister to a dinner out. Hang out with your brother. Call your grandparents.

These people are in your life and have been in your life for some time now. Showing your family you appreciate them can mean way more to them than you think.

Or you could make an adventure out of it.

Take yourself on a date. Get flowers for a random person.

Hang out with your friends. And let yourself be a little disappointed because it is OK, and natural.

Call someone you haven't in a while. Start a conversation with someone random.

I feel like we have this preconceived idea of what this day is supposed to be like but it doesn't have to be that. Whatever idea you have in your head it doesn't have to happen.

Valentine's Day is about love so let's make it about love. Show your love to those in your life you overlook, show your love to the people around you. Show your love to the retail workers and restaurant workers that are making this day special for you.

Seriously, that last one is important. Remember that they are people too and they make this day possible for anyone single or taken.

So, whether you are in college or another stage in your life, you can be a little disappointed if you are spending this Valentine's Day alone. But don't get so disappointed that you forget to show love to those in your life that love you no matter what.

Parent keeps diagnosis quiet

DEAR ABBY: I am 66 years old and have been diagnosed with moderately aggressive prostate cancer. I will start radiation therapy soon. My wife knows about it and has been very supportive, but we have not shared it with my children, siblings, relatives or friends.

One of the reasons for keeping quiet was that my daughter-in-law was expecting their first child, and I didn't want to ruin their joy. Now the baby is here, and I'm still not comfortable informing them. What is your opinion? Should I tell them, keep it a secret or let my wife tell them afterward, should I not survive the treatment? — SECRETIVE IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR SECRETIVE: To tell or not to tell is a very personal decision. It might depend upon your reason for not wanting anyone to know about your diagnosis. Consider tabling the announcement until you have

Dear Abby



started treatment and see how challenging it may (or may not) be.

If you need emotional support, you may want to tell those close to you what's going on or join a cancer support group. It would be unfair to your wife to make her delay informing your children, siblings, relatives, etc. until after you are gone because she would be blamed for keeping your condition from them.

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 Dear-Abby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Sorority news

Eta Chi Chapter of Sigma Phi Gamma International Sorority met at Mt Tabor Hall Feb. 4 for a business meeting. Marcia Eglan gave a report from province and international officers. The treasurers report was given by Shari Van Nuland, and the minutes from the previous meeting were read by Julie Terrell. Terrell also read the correspondence.

The main discussion was about plans for the alpha province meeting to be held in Portland March 14-

16. We have decided to have Pete's Catering serve the evening meal March 15 at the Moose Lodge.

We are still looking for entertainment for March 15. Decorations and programs were discussed. The meal to be served at Mt. Tabor Hall in Dunkirk on March 14 was discussed. Eta Chi will serve baked spaghetti, gaelic bread, salad and sugar cream pie. Plans for March 16 lunch are still under discussion.

Eta Chi Chapter delegates for the Alpha Province will be Renee Blu-

menhorst and Rose Morgan, with Kathleen Inman as alternate delegate.

The international convention will be held in St. Louis this year. Registrations must be turned in by May 1.

The next meeting will be Feb. 11.

Those attending were: Stephanie Faulkner, Shari Van Nuland, Rose Morgan, Marsha Eglan, Julie Terrell, Kris Cook, Connie Retter, Renee Bumenorst, Marlene Cle-venger, and Kathleen Inman.

Community Calendar

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

Today

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

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

A BETTER LIFE - BRIANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for substance abuse. Meal starts at 6 p.m. and the meeting is from 6:30 to 8 p.m. every Tuesday at the Nazarene Fellowship

Building across from the Nazarene church, 249 E. Center St., Dunkirk. For more information, call Amanda Price at (765) 283-2107.

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

Wednesday

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

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

BRYANT/NEW CORYDON SENIOR CITIZENS — Will meet at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday at the Bryant Community Center for a

carry-in dinner. Meat is provided.

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

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

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

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

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP — New Beginnings, a support group for friends and families of alcoholics, will meet at 6:30 p.m. each Wednesday in the Zion Lutheran Church, 218 E. High St., Portland. For more information, call (260) 726-8229.

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

Thursday

SMART RECOVERY — A group for those struggling with addiction that focuses on motivation, coping with cravings, managing thoughts, feelings and behavior, and living a balanced life meets at 11 a.m. each Thursday in the IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health Center, Entrance C, 510 W. Votaw St., Portland.

CELEBRATE RECOVERY — A 12-step Christian recovery program meets at 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. each Thursday at A Second Chance At Life Ministries, 228 S. Meridian St. in Portland. For more informa-

tion, call Brenda Eads at (260) 726-9625 or Dave Keen at (260) 251-8792.

INDIANA UNIVERSITY HEALTH JAY HOSPITAL OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP — Will meet at 6 p.m. the second Thursday of each month in Indiana University Health Jay Hospital Conference Room B. The group is for ostomy and intestinal diversion patients and their friends and family to offer mutual support and learn about the latest products and information.

JAY COUNTY TRAILS CLUB — Will meet at 7 p.m. the second Thursday of each month at Jay Community Center.

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.

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Sudoku

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

Level: Beginner

Saturday's Solution

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

The objective is to fill a nine-by-nine grid so that each column, each row, and each of the nine three-by-three boxes (also called blocks or regions) contains the digits from 1 to 9 only one time each.

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GRAPHIC PRINTING NEWSPAPERS

Braun backs up his talk with cuts

By NIKI KELLY

Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com

Gov. Mike Braun has no patience for local governments upset by possible property tax cuts. He has told them directly they have grown too fast and it's time to get back to reality. And, to his credit, he is doing the same thing with state government in the budget he proposed to lawmakers.

I recently drilled down into Braun's budget proposal to see how he is handling state finances. Starting with a wide-angle lens, he is growing general fund state expenditures only 2% the first year of the biennium and 1.7% in the second year. In comparison, expenses grew 4% this year under the budget passed by lawmakers and signed by Gov. Eric Holcomb in 2023.

At the same time, Braun's budget proposes almost \$700 mil-

Niki Kelly



lion in tax relief for Hoosiers: from eliminating taxes on retirement income and tips to a new tax credit for farmers and a sales tax holiday for school supplies.

So, how is he dealing with modest revenue growth and giving tax cuts at the same time? The answer: he isn't giving agencies and officeholders what they want.

Braun flatlines the operational budget of the Secretary of State's Office, Office of the Attorney General and Office of the State Comptroller. Also in the secretary of state's budget, he reduces

election security and voter education outreach funding.

The Lieutenant Governor's operational budget was also slightly reduced. And several programs that the office oversees will take hits. For instance, the Office of Community and Rural Affairs line item drops 28%; rural economic development was zeroed out and the Indiana Destination Development Corporation would see funding drop from \$20 million a year in the last budget to \$5.5 million a year.

Under the Indiana Economic Development Corporation, the 21st Century Research and Technology Fund drops from \$32 million to \$20 million a year; the Manufacturing Readiness Grant is halved to \$10 million a year; Braun wipes out programs for direct flights as well as business promotion and innovation.

Large pots of money for site

acquisition and deal-closing that used one-time excess dollars are not renewed.

There are currently no capital projects in Braun's budget — either for state facilities or higher education.

As for agencies, he flatlined the Indiana Department of Health operational budget while also cutting a major public health initiative. He dropped slightly the base budget for the Bureau of Motor Vehicles and Indiana Department of Environmental Management.

Some agencies will still see significant growth, such as the Indiana Department of Correction and Indiana State Police.

Most of the agency numbers I compared are operational base budgets from the general fund and don't include separate line items that might be covered by other direct appropriations or revenue streams.

But it's clear Braun is following his own guidance to local governments and tightening the state's belt. There is an important caveat about these cuts, though.

Right now, they are just numbers on a page — how those savings are achieved is key. Will Hoosiers see diminished service? Or, what opportunities will be lost by cutting taxes instead of investing strategically in education, health or other vital needs?

The Indiana House will now have its say, releasing its own version of the budget next week. We are far from the end, but Braun started the process with a bang.

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

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

Trade blackmail sure to backfire

Bloomberg Opinion
Tribune News Service

About the best that can be said of the new trade policy emanating from the White House is that it's all a bluff. After several days of panic, the U.S. agreed to delay enormous new tariffs on Canada and Mexico in exchange for some token border-security measures.

Yet serious damage has already been done. And these costs will be nothing compared to the harm that the new administration might yet inflict by starting a full-scale global trade war. If that happens, everybody loses — Americans not least. This new economic strategy, if one can dignify it with that term, ranks among the worst White House initiatives ever undertaken.

The logic behind the administration's trade agenda directly contradicts itself. Start with the executive order threatening to impose tariffs of 25% on Canada and Mexico — in patent violation, by the way, of the free-trade agreement the U.S. championed in 2020. Supposedly, the idea is to force America's immediate neighbors to stanch the flow of migrants and illegal drugs across their borders.

If the two countries comply (whatever that may mean) and the tariffs remain suspended, they won't raise any revenue and won't erect a wall behind which the U.S. manufacturing sector will be revived, defeating the administration's stated rationale for tariffs in general.

If the real concern is border security, closer cooperation with neighbors is required. Forcing compliance by humiliating countries that wish to be partners is extraordinarily foolish and short-sighted. Which is the better basis for promoting U.S.-led cooperation on this or any other matter — friendship or seething resentment?

If, on the other hand, the goal is to pay for government spending and protect U.S. producers by walling off goods from China, Europe and whomever the administration chooses to bully, the tariff strategy is doomed to fail. The more effective the barriers are

Guest Editorial

in reducing imports, the less revenue they'll raise (because they'll shrink the base to which tariffs are applied). The more effective they are in raising revenue, the less domestic producers will benefit (because the flow of imports won't be much reduced).

Suppose, optimistically, that policy struck a compromise, aiming for a mix of somewhat more tariff revenue combined with a measure of trade protection for U.S. producers. Even then, the idea makes no sense. First, retaliation is certain. Other governments won't let the White House reduce them to feckless subordinates. The result will be fewer U.S. exports, hence little or no trade-balance benefit.

Second, tariffs will raise prices and cut real incomes. And sheltering U.S. producers from competition will make them less efficient, diminishing growth and living standards while adding to the need for continuing subsidies.

As the familiar cycle of rising protectionism and falling competitiveness escalates, a trade war will yield what it always does: mutually assured stagnation.

It's possible the threatened tariffs will, in the end, come to nothing. Sooner or later, maybe, deals will be done and any new measures will be rolled back. (The U.S. might help its own cause by doing more to cut off the flow of high-powered guns across the border, as Mexico has requested.)

Would that make everything all right? Absolutely not. The administration has already caused real and lasting damage to the U.S.'s economy and to its relations with other countries. How are producers supposed to make plans and invest amid this needless confusion? And what are U.S. allies to make of an administration that views them with such naked contempt? It remains to be seen only whether the harm is manageable and reversible.



Rebels created country with a heart

By FREDERIC J. FRANSEN
Tribune News Service

Two hundred fifty years ago this month, on Feb. 9, 1775, the British Parliament declared the Massachusetts Bay Colony to be in "rebellion." This allowed British soldiers to shoot suspected rebels on sight, which encouraged further rebellion and the growing independence movement. The shooting war began two months later when fighting broke out at Concord and Lexington.

Seventy years ago, in 1955, Warner Brothers released the film "Rebel Without a Cause," starring James Dean, Natalie Wood and Sal Mineo. The film — set in the world of teenage gangs, stolen cars and knife fights — revolves around Dean, playing a troubled 17-year-old "struggling to live with integrity" in a world of moral chaos, in the words of the late film critic Jay Carr.

The film was a huge success in the United States but censored in Great Britain and banned in New Zealand and Spain, where authorities worried that it would destroy the morals and habits of young people, alienating them from society.

The notion of the "alienated teenager," causing trouble for trouble's sake was somewhat novel when Dean and Wood appeared on the screen.

Until the 1940s, there was no special focus on young people between the ages of 13 and 19 because most teenagers would either leave school (with or without a diploma) and start working or engage in rigorous preparation for college. No one had the time or energy to rebel, and the word "teenager" had only recently become a marketing category.

In fact, attending high school in the

Frederic J. Fransen



first part of the 20th century was unusual; most young people finished eighth grade and then went to work. However, after World War II, with the widespread adoption of mandatory high school, Dean's and Wood's generation was forced to sit in classrooms, wishing they were elsewhere. Many responded to boredom with rebellion. Students without a purpose became rebels without a cause.

Contrast this with the American Founders. In 1775, many of America's future Founding Fathers were hardly more than teenagers. John Marshall, who would later become Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, was 20; Alexander Hamilton, the first U.S. Treasury secretary, 21; and James Madison, the "Father of the Constitution," was a mere 25. In their teenage years, they learned how to defy an empire. They were leaders in a rebellion grounded not in ennui but in principles.

Eighteen months after being called out as rebels, American colonists declared their independence, claiming that the purpose of government was to protect the rights, that the government derived its "just powers" from the consent of the governed, and when that consent was withdrawn, the people could form a new government. The rights they were fighting over began with "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." The

American rebels clearly had a cause.

The right to pursue happiness is a core American principle. It informs our special kind of individualism and our big heart and explains why we generously give people second chances, have among the world's most lenient bankruptcy laws, and are far more tolerant in many ways than most other countries. We want people to live free and fruitful lives despite their past mistakes. We encourage people to dust themselves off and try again.

Americans also understand and even tolerate when a few rules are broken in the pursuit of their happiness. In many countries, speeding is monitored by remote cameras. In the United States, only a few states allow them, and they are often controversial.

If the juvenile delinquents in "Rebel Without a Cause" had rebelled in the name of some principle, they probably would have been understood (and the film much less successful). The problem is the senselessness of their rebellion, which, if anything, was contributing to their unhappiness.

By contrast, the American rebels of 1775-1776 aimed to restore essential liberties that they believed were a God-given birthright. They were rebelling against the authority of Parliament to govern them without representation, demanding instead the right to self-government. They sought to be treated as adults and the United States to be treated as a grown-up nation.

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Fransen is president of Huntington Junior College in West Virginia and CEO of Certell Inc. He wrote this for InsideSources.com.

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— Thomas Jefferson

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CrossRoads receives 5 Star rating

BauerFinancial awarded Crossroads Financial Federal Credit Union a 5 Star Superior Rating.

The rating is the highest available from BauerFinancial, an independent firm, and is judged based on financial strength, stability and performance in areas including capital adequacy, profitability, loan quality and liquidity. Those achieving a 5 Star rating are considered "superior" and are recommended by Bauer.

CrossRoads is based in Portland and also has offices in Dunkirk and Winchester.

New VPs named

Farm Progress recently named Matt Coniglio as its vice president of sales and Beth Wagner as its vice president of business development.

Coniglio previously served as senior director of strategic accounts for Farm Progress. He has served as president of the National Agri-Marketing Association.

Wagner most recently was vice president of digital business development for Informa Markets, parent company of Farm Progress. She is active in American Agri-Women

Business roundup

and the National Agri-Marketing Association.

Farm Progress is an agriculture information business offering live events, digital products and other services.

Shakes return

Shamrock Shakes returned to McDonald's menus across Indiana on Monday.

The shakes will be available for about six weeks, with 25 cents from each sale to be donated to Ronald McDonald House Charities. Last year, customers in Indiana helped raise more than \$126,000 for the organization.

Partnership extended

Comcast has extended its partnership with NASCAR as the title sponsor of the Xfinity Series.

The entities have collaborated on the series since 2014. The partnership will add the "Xfinity Fastest Lap" for 2025 in which the driver and owner with the

fastest lap in each race will be awarded one point.

"We're not just entering year 11 of our partnership. We're embarking on year one of a renewed relationship with NASCAR filled with fresh energy and exciting opportunities to enhance the competition on the track in a way that has never been done before, and continue to connect with fans in new and engaging ways," said Comcast vice president of brand partnership and engagement Matt Lederer in a press release.

Program announced

CVS Pharmacy is partnering with Duquesne University to encourage individuals to pursue pharmacy degrees.

The Tuition Advantage program will offer CVS Pharmacy employees the opportunity to pursue a doctor of pharmacy degree through the Pittsburgh university online at a reduced cost. Those who go through the program and start their careers with CVS can receive a scholarship to cover 50% of their tuition.

"To continue to meet patients' needs in the communities we serve, it's cru-

cial that we support students who are interested in community pharmacy as a career," said Len Shankman, CVS executive vice president, in a press release. "We believe that innovative tuition-support programs, such as the Tuition Advantage Program we've created with Duquesne University, will support students on their path to pharmacy and help ensure patients continue to have convenient and local access to pharmacy care."

Drop off food

Menards stores are serving as drop-off sites for food banks from now until the end of March.

Participating stores include those in Muncie, Anderson and Richmond in Indiana as well as Celina, Ohio.

New VP named

Dollar General last week announced that Steve Deckard will be its new executive vice president of strategy and development. Tracey Herrmann has been promoted to executive vice president of store operations.

Deckard most recently oversaw Dollar General's operations team. He has

been with the company since 2006.

Herrmann previously served as senior vice president of store operations for Dollar General. She has also had leadership roles in merchandising, pricing and operations.

Offering exams

Meridian Health Services will offer free dental exams for children ages 1 through 14 at its Meridian Dental sites on Monday, Feb. 17.

The free exams will be offered from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. for the American Dental Association's national "Give Kids a Smile" event. Participating locations include Portland, Muncie, Richmond and Marion.

Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments are encouraged to avoid wait times. To make an appointment, call (866) 306-2647.

Courses offered

Indiana Chamber of Commerce is offering various safety training courses throughout the year.

The chamber is offering 10-hour and 30-hour Occupational Safety and Health Administration courses next week at the Indiana

Chamber Conference Center in Indianapolis.

Forklift safety trainer training will be offered Feb. 4, with the 2025 Indiana Safety and Health Conference Expo to follow from Feb. 24 through 27 at Indiana Convention Center.

For more information about the training courses and details about other offerings, visit indianachamber.com.

Training offered

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

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

Additional sessions are scheduled for March 25 and April 29.

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

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

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Does your business have news to share? Email us at news@thecr.com to be included in our weekly business roundup.

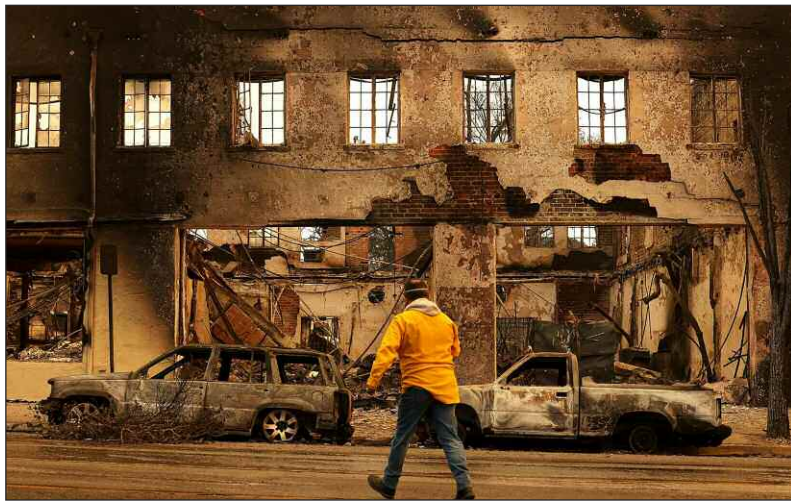
Allstate expects \$1.1 billion in fire losses

By LAURENCE DARMIENTO
Los Angeles Times
Tribune News Service

Allstate said this week that it expects to lose \$1.1 billion due to the Los Angeles fires, making it the second major insurer to announce the financial impact of the country's single most costly blaze.

The Northbrook, Illinois, company said the figure represents its losses on a pre-tax basis and after deducting payments it received from reinsurance. Despite the size of the hit, the company's fourth quarter net income grew 30% to \$1.9 billion.

Allstate said the minimal impact on its financial performance reflected its "comprehensive reinsurance program" and its decision starting in 2007 to reduce its market share. Allstate had a 5.8% share of the state's homeowners market in 2023, making it the sixth largest carrier. Insurers acquire reinsurance typically from other larger insurers in order to limit their payouts during huge wildfires and other catastrophic events.



Tribune News Service/Los Angeles Times/Christina House

Businesses and cars were burned by the Eaton Fire in Altadena, California. Insurance firm Allstate expects to lose \$1.1 billion from the fires in California.

The company also received approval last year for an average 34% rate increase starting in November.

Last week, another larger insurer, Chubb Ltd., estimated its

losses from the fire will total about \$1.5 billion, with the financial impact expected to be limited to the fourth quarter.

The American-Swiss insurer had only a 2.27% share of the Cal-

ifornia homeowners market in 2023, putting it outside the state's top 10 largest home insurers. However, it focuses on providing coverage for more expensive homes such as those predominant in Pacific Palisades, which was devastated by the fires and has a median home value of \$3.5 million, according to Zillow.

State Farm General, California's largest home insurer, has not released its losses but asked state officials on Monday for an emergency rate hike averaging 22% Monday, saying the fires have put the company in dire financial straits.

The insurer, a subsidiary of State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Co. of Bloomington, Illinois, said the company has already received at least 8,700 claims and paid more than \$1 billion to customers. It also expects to pay out "significantly more" to satisfy claims.

The insurer said the rate hike is necessary to rebuild the company's capital base so it will not have to "further constrain" its

ability to provide home insurance in the state. Industry ratings agencies have said they expect such insurance premium increases because of the fires.

All told, risk modelers have estimated it will cost the insurance industry \$20 billion to \$45 billion to pay for property damage, temporary housing costs and other claims stemming from the fires. That would make the blazes one of the country's worst natural disasters but likely not as costly as Hurricane Katrina.

The Los Angeles-area disaster is only the latest in a series of mega fires that have hit the state since the latter half of the last decade. In 2018, the Camp fire destroyed the town of Paradise in the Sierra Nevada foothills, causing \$12.5 billion in insured losses, making it at the time the most costly fire in U.S. history.

The fires have prompted insurers in fire-prone neighborhoods to drop policy holders and stop writing new insurance, forcing many into the state's FAIR Plan, an insurer of last resort that

Vance tapped to find TikTok buyer

By DAVE GOLDINER
New York Daily News
Tribune News Service

Vice President JD Vance was reportedly tapped Friday to forge a deal to save TikTok.

President Trump has assigned Vance to find a buyer for the popular Chinese-owned social media app ahead of an April 5 deadline for it to be sold or shut down.

Vance, who ran a hedge fund before running for office, will be looking to find a deep-pocketed tech titan to snap up the American operations of the app.

National security adviser Mike Waltz, a longtime harsh critic of China, will also be part of the effort led by Vance, Punchbowl News first reported.

Congressional hawks from both parties have long warned about the national security threat posed by TikTok because it can access the data of its 170 million American users.

Republicans and Democrats united to overwhelmingly pass a bill ordering TikTok's China-based parent company, ByteDance, to sell the app's U.S. operations by January 19, the day before Trump's inauguration, or be shut down.

Trump, who once harshly criticized TikTok, flip-flopped to sign an executive order on his first day in office delaying for 75 days the enforcement of the law.

Company faces ban as members of Congress have warned about the national security threat

Now the White House is under pressure to forge a deal that can appease conservative China hawks while keeping happy the legions of Americans who use the app for everything from e-commerce to funny cat videos and political takes across the political spectrum.

Many potential buyers have been put forward including Microsoft, Trump ally Elon Musk or a group fronted by billionaire Frank McCourt and "Shark Tank" star Kevin O'Leary.

Trump has floated the idea of the federal government taking a stake in TikTok through the new sovereign wealth fund he launched.

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The Commercial Review

SPEED BUMP Dave Coverly



THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

Assumptions are essential

North dealer. Both sides vulnerable. NORTH: ♠ Q J 7 3, ♥ A J 2, ♦ K Q, ♣ A Q 10 9. WEST: ♠ K 9 4, ♥ K 8 6 5, ♦ J 9 5 2, ♣ 8 4. EAST: ♠ 6, ♥ Q 10 4, ♦ A 10 7 6 3, ♣ 7 6 5 2. SOUTH: ♠ A 10 8 5 2, ♥ 9 7 3, ♦ 8 4, ♣ K J 3.

leads a diamond against four spades. East takes the ace and must decide what to return. The correct return is a low heart, but before discussing the rationale behind this play, let's first examine the effect of the heart shift. After South follows low, West puts up the king, and dummy wins with the ace.

The bidding: North 1♣, East Pass, South 1♠, West Pass. Opening lead — two of diamonds. A shrewd defender makes all kinds of assumptions about the location of the unscen cards. In doing so, he does not credit declarer with cards that would render the contract impregnable; rather, he assumes that his partner has the necessary honor-card holding and/or distribution needed to bring about declarer's defeat.

Peanuts



Rose is Rose



Agnes



Hi and Lois



Between Friends



Blondie



Snuffy Smith



Beetle Bailey



2-11 CRYPTOQUIP

PRHOHSWL, LWSWOTHDWL ZVGONKW NDL KOHS LHPRJNQL EQ YVJXP YOVT LGEJHD: SUW

RJGZX VY SUW HOHPU. Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF EMPLOYEES FROM A HUGE INDIAN CITY CALL FOLKS TO PITCH PRODUCTS, IS THAT DELHI-MARKETING? Today's Cryptoquip Clue: L equals D

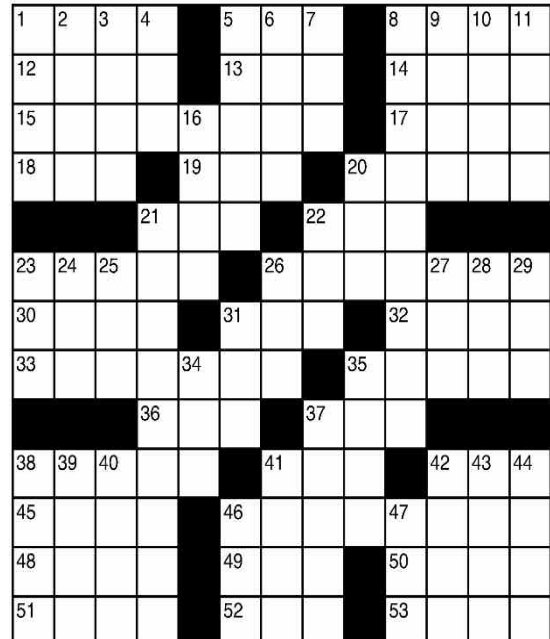
CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS 33 Pond floater, 1 Use a squeegee, 5 ACLU concerns, 8 Oodles, 12 Valhalla VIP, 13 — Jima, 14 Slightly, 15 Reveals by accident, 17 California valley, 18 LAX and JFK overseer, 19 Bad spell, 20 Playful sea critter, 21 Young bloke, 22 Used to be, 23 Skewered Thai recipe, 26 Beach robes, 30 Four Corners, 31 Gear-wheel tooth, 32 Barrett or Jaffe. DOWN 21 Revolving tray, 22 Witty one, 23 Bando of baseball, 24 "Exodus" hero, 25 Up to, 26 Massachusetts cape, 27 Fine, to NASA, 28 Compass dir., 29 Blue, 31 Taxi, 34 Impose, 35 Eggy drinks, 37 Demolishes, 38 Daytime drama, 39 Rid of rind, 40 Sweet sandwich, 41 Rock's Hendrix, 42 Donate, 43 Bickering, 44 Profs' degrees, 46 Trail the pack, 47 "Sheesh!"

Solution time: 22 mins.



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Snow moves on to regional diving meet

Maddy Snow has competed at the diving regional the past three years.

The senior didn't have her best day at the sectional, but did just enough to make it four straight seasons of advancing.

Snow claimed the fourth and final advancing spot at the IHSAA Sectional 7 tournament that the Jay County High School swim team hosted on Saturday.

(Only the diving portion of the sectional was held, as the swimming got postponed to Monday.)

To advance to the regional, which will be held today at Hamilton Southeastern, divers had to finish in the top four at their respective sectionals. Snow's 308 points claimed that spot. The top two places went to Delta as Grier Backus rallied for 373.65 points and Ava West followed her with 335.15. Norwell's Emerson Meredith claimed the other regional berth with a score of 319.35. Savanna Condie of Delta finished fifth with 281.80.

Snow's best dives came back-to-back as she earned 33s on a forward double somersault tuck and an inward 1 1/2 somersault tuck.

Snow never earned less than a 22.4, which she got on her first dive of the day, a reverse dive tuck.

Miller leads

FORT WAYNE — The JC Flipsters gymnastics team competed at the Walk of Fame Classic over the weekend.

Emalee Miller and Emma Robinson put together the best performances, each earning a top-five finish all around.

Miller placed fourth all-around in the Xcel Bronze category with a score of 36.0. Her best finish came on the vault, as 8.85 points netted her third in the event. She also had sixth-place finishes on the beam (9.1) and the floor (9.15).

Robinson competed in the Xcel Silver

Local roundup

division, claiming fifth all around with 36.825 points. The vault also treated Robinson well, netting her 9.15 points for third. She came fifth on both the bars (9.3) and the floor (9.35) as well.

Aubree Shannon had the top finish of the Xcel Gold division with an all-around score of 35.875. She was the runner-up on the bar with 9.325 points.

Girls dominate

The Jay County Winter Swim team held their home meet on Sunday with the girls dominating the field and the boys coming in fourth despite only having three tankers.

The Jay County girls finished with 614 points, demolishing the field as the runner-up finished with only 295. The three Jay County boys put together 83 points to claim fourth place out of six teams.

They had four tankers finish as high point winners.

Hayden Guggenbiller led the 8-and-younger girls by winning all five of her events.

Carsyn Guggenbiller and Elly Byrum ran the 9-10-year-old and 13-14-year-old divisions with four victories and two runner-up finishes each.

Grant Glentzer was the only boy to be a high point winner. He claimed the top spot in the 13-14-year-old boys division with three first-place finishes and was runner-up twice.



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Maddy Snow of Jay County High School twists during the semifinals of the sectional diving competition Saturday morning. Snow finished in fourth place to earn the last regional berth from the sectional at Jay County and will compete at Hamilton Southeastern at 6 p.m. tonight. The swimming portion of the sectional was postponed to Monday night. Pick up Wednesday's paper for full coverage.

Advance ...

Continued from page 8

"He had a little bit of nerves going into that first one and was able to push through that," said Eric Myers. "And then he pinned a pretty solid Cowan kid in the semifinals; just ran in to a tough Yorktown kid in the semifinals."

The 12th-ranked Byrum (35-4) finished as the regional runner-up for

the second consecutive year, earning his spot in the 113-pound championship match by catching a quick cradle for a pin of Brayden Williams (15-9) of Yorktown in 22 seconds and then blanking Zac Reno (20-5) of Wes-Del 6-0 in the semifinal. He fell behind No. 12 Kaid Jackson (30-6) of Delta by six points in the championship match, picked up a

third-period takedown and ultimately fell by a 15-6 major decision.

"It's not what I wanted," said Byrum. "I wanted to win. I wrestled hard to win. It's just not my day."

"I knew it was going to be a hard match. I just didn't keep my intensity up and let myself fall behind."

Landers (27-13) and

Lothridge (28-11) locked in their semi-state berths with pins in the quarterfinal round at 132 and 106, respectively. The former beat Cowan's Tyler Coffey (21-8) in 1:30 while the latter topped Shepherd Zick (22-17) of Muncie Central in 1:14.

After a loss to Delta's 10th-ranked Sam Mosier (30-4) in the semifinal, Landers bounced back to

beat Yorktown's Jayden Cline (23-12) by a 16-4 major decision in the third-place match.

Lothridge dropped his final two matches of the day to No. 10 Reed Wicker (29-4) of Delta by a pin and Jacob Binegar (24-14) of Bellmont by a 12-0 major decision.

Patriots whose seasons ended with quarterfinal losses Saturday were:

•No. 8 Alan Ortiz (32-4), a semi-state qualifier in each of his first two seasons, at 285 by a 4-1 sudden victory to Cortez White (32-11) of Muncie Central

•Sylas Wenk (27-13) at 120 by a 9-8 decision to Ben Bush (26-8) of Yorktown

•Brice Coy (23-12) at 215 by a pin against Yorktown's Wyatt Roach (13-5)

Roundup ...

Continued from page 8

Kaup qualifies

TROTWOOD, Ohio — Caleb Smith and Carson Fullenkamp swam good enough times on Friday to punch their tickets to the district finals.

One day later, four girls earned spots alongside them.

Joelle Kaup and the 200-yard medley relay team of the Fort Recovery girls swim team will have a date with the district final on Feb. 14 after competing at the

OHSAA Division II sectional swim meet at Trotwood on Saturday.

The top first-place finisher in each event and the next 25-best times advance to the district meet at Miami University (OH) to fill out a 32-athlete field. (Only the next 17 best times advanced for relays to fill out the 24-team field.)

Kaup made it in a pair of individual events. The senior swam times of 25.84 seconds in the 50 freestyle and 1 minute, 4.36 sec-

onds in the 100 backstroke to claim third in both events at sectional.

Kaup is listed as the ninth seed in the 50 freestyle and 15th in the backstroke.

She also joins Livy Timmerman, Liza Knapke and Aubrey Shuttleworth on the 200 medley relay team that advanced. Despite only finishing sixth at sectional, their time of 2:10.78 was good enough for the final spot in the district.

Sports on tap

Local schedule

Today
Jay County — Freshman boys basketball vs. Eastbrook — 6 p.m.; Junior High wrestling vs. Driver — 6 p.m.
Fort Recovery — Girls bowling sectional at Dayton — 9 a.m.

TV sports

Today
7 p.m. — College basketball: Tennessee at Kentucky (ESPN); Florida at Mississippi State (ESPN2)
8 p.m. — College basketball: George Mason at Saint Louis (FDSN Indiana)
9 p.m. — College basketball: Penn

State at USC (BTN)
10 p.m. — NBA: Memphis Grizzlies at Phoenix Suns (TNT)
11 p.m. — College basketball: Northwestern at Oregon (BTN); Colorado State at Utah State (FS1); Santa Clara at St. Mary's (ESPN2)

Wednesday
10 a.m. — NASCAR Cup Series: Daytona 500 (FS1)
2:30 p.m. — Premier League soccer: Everton at Liverpool (USA)
6 p.m. — College basketball: St. John's at Villanova (FS1)
6:30 p.m. — College basketball: Iowa

at Rutgers (BTN)
7 p.m. — NBA: San Antonio Spurs at Boston Celtics (ESPN); Indiana Pacers at Washington Wizards (FDSN Indiana)
7 p.m. — College basketball: Louisville at N.C. State (ESPN2)
8 p.m. — NASCAR Cup Series: Daytona 500 (FS1)

8:30 p.m. — College basketball: Washington at Ohio State (BTN)
9 p.m. — College basketball: LSU at Arkansas (ESPN2)
9:30 p.m. — NBA: Golden State Warriors at Dallas Mavericks (ESPN)
10 p.m. — College basketball: Wyoming at New Mexico (FS1)

90 SALE CALENDAR

PUBLIC AUCTION
Located: Bubp Exhibition Hall at the Jay County Fairgrounds, 806 W Votaw St., Portland, IN February 15th, 2025 9:30 A. M.
ANTIQUE-OLD & COLLECTORS ITEM
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250 PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice

PUBLIC NOTICE
Jack W. Racer, 5900 S County Rd 575 E, Selma, IN 47383 has submitted to the Division of Oil and Gas a request to convert an existing well to a Class II Saltwater Disposal well to be used for the injection of produced brine. The permit was originally issued on Jan 23, 2024 and this submission is a renewal. This well is located in Section 18, Twp. 22N, Rng. 13E in Jay County, Indiana. The subject well - Fugiett 2-18, permit #56187 - will be injecting fluid into the St. Peter Sandstone within the depth interval of 1326 feet to 1330 feet at a maximum injection pressure not to exceed zero pounds per square inch. The maximum injection rate for this well will not exceed 1000 barrels per day. Written comments and objections, a request for a copy of this application or a request for an informal hearing concerning this application must be submitted to the Division of Oil and Gas within 15 days from the publication date of this notice and should be mailed to:
Department of Natural Resources
Division of Oil & Gas
Attn: Technical Section
402 W Washington St
Rm 293
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2748
CR 2-11-2024-HSPAXLP

250 PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice

NOTICE TO BIDDERS FOR THE JAY SCHOOL CORPORATION JAY COUNTY, INDIANA
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the Board of School Trustees of The Jay School Corporation (the "Owner") will receive sealed bids for the Jay County Jr./Sr. High School Tornado Damage Renovation. Bids will be accepted at The Jay County School Corporation Administration Office, 414 East Floral Avenue, Portland, Indiana, until 2:00 p.m. (local time), on March 6, 2025. Bids will be opened and tabulated at that time in the Board Room. A Pre-Bid Meeting is scheduled for February 20, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. at Jay County Jr./Sr. High School, 2072 West SR 67, Portland, Indiana. All bidding and construction shall be in accordance with construction documents prepared by Barton-Coe-Vilamaa, Architect and Engineers, Inc., which can be obtained from the office of Barton-Coe-Vilamaa. Call 260/489-9079 (office of Barton-Coe-Vilamaa) to request an invitation to receive digital access to the bidding documents. Bidders will be required to file, with their bids, a certified check made payable to The Jay School Corporation or a Bid Bond for an amount not less than five percent (5%) of their maximum bid or bids. Should a successful bidder withdraw its bid, or fail to execute a satisfactory Contract, The Jay School Corporation may then declare the bid deposit or bid bond to be forfeited as liquidated damages. Each successful bidder shall be required to furnish an approved Performance Bond and a Labor and Materials Payment Bond which cover faithful performance of the contract and the payment of all obligations arising thereunder. A Maintenance Bond shall also be required. Said bonds shall remain in full force and effect for twelve months from the substantial completion of the Work. The contract will be awarded to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder complying with the conditions for bidding, provided the bid is reasonable and it is to the best interest of the Owner to accept it. The Owner reserves the right to reject the bid of any or all bidder in accordance with Indiana Code 36-1-12. Bids not reaching said office by 2:00 p.m., on March 6, 2025 will not be opened and will be returned unopened to the original bidder.
Dated this 8th day of January 2025.
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
THE JAY SCHOOL CORPORATION
CR 2-11,18-2025-HSPAXLP

Maddy Snow placed fourth in diving at sectional, see story page 7

FRHS girls bowling competes in sectional today, see Sports on tap

Sports

Emotional advance

Oft-injured Myers joins fellow seniors in finishing as regional runner-up

By **RAY COONEY**

The Commercial Review

A.J. Myers has been through a lot.

He tore his medial collateral ligament.

He tore his anterior cruciate ligament.

He tore his meniscus — twice.

He considered giving up wrestling (and football) to focus on baseball during his senior season.

Instead, he stuck with it.

Now he's headed to semi-state with a chance to earn a berth to the state finals.

Myers joined classmates Griffin Byrum and A.J. Heskett as regional runners-up Saturday as a group of five Jay County High School wrestlers earned semi-state berths.

"I wanted to do this for my dad," said Myers, trying to fight off tears. His father, James, is a former JCHS head coach and a current assistant coach, and was a state medalist during his time as a Patriot. "I tried to quit a long time ago, but he's always told me to keep going." He paused, again emotional. "He's the only reason I'm here today."

The host Patriots scored 70 points to finish fifth out of 13 scoring teams, 5.5 ahead of sixth-place South Adams and 3.5 behind fourth-place Yorktown. Belmont (129.5) claimed the regional title by eight points over runner-up No. 17 Delta with Adams Central (97.5) in third.

Only three of the seven Jay County athletes who made it to semi-state last season were in the lineup Saturday — three graduated and Jacob Robinson



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Jay County High School senior A.J. Myers fights off Yorktown's Tom Dygard during their first-round match Saturday in the regional tournament. The oft-injured Myers pinned Dygard to earn his first semi-state berth and went on to finish as the regional runner-up.

is out with an injury — but the team still continued its run of sending groups of wrestlers to the penultimate level of the state tournament series. (The top four wrestlers in each weight class — those who win in the opening round at the regional — advance to the semi-state.)

"I'm proud of our guys and

the amount of work that they put in," said Patriot coach Eric Myers. "A lot of that is still attributed to the guys who moved on because they set the tone and the work ethic in the room. But then you also have to give credit to our upperclassmen for buying into that and leading our team ... I'm proud of what the individuals

in our program ... the precedent that they've set."

"We had a few 50/50s in the first round, a couple that went our way, a couple that didn't," he added. "I'm happy with the way our guys competed. Always bummed to lose the guys that we do, but I felt like our guys wrestled pretty well." A.J. Myers (19-6) made the

most of his final regional opportunity, needing just 15 seconds to take down Tom Dygard (16-19) of Yorktown in the opening round at 190. He finished him off less than a minute later, recording his pin in 1 minute, 6 seconds.

He went on to hold off Dallas Godby (21-6) of Wes-Del 8-5 in the semifinal before falling by pin to No. 8 Xavior Palacios of Belmont for the second consecutive week by pin in 2:32 in the championship match.

That opening pin, though, earned A.J. Myers an opportunity to compete at the coliseum for the first time in his high school career and put him two victories away from a state berth.

"I just kept my head in it," he said. "That semifinal match was tough. I was gassed at the very end. I just had to keep my head in it, keep telling myself I could do it."

It was just the second regional appearance for Myers, who fell short while trying to battle through one of his knee injuries in 2023 and then was unable to wrestle because of another injury last season.

Heskett (35-5) also earned his first semi-state berth when he handled Monroe Central's Cory Brown Jr. (33-5) in the opening round at 144. He built a 6-1 lead in the first period and then caught Brown in a headlock that he converted to a pin in 3:42.

He went on to pin Cowan's Jacob Unger (14-6) in the semifinal before giving up a 17-1 technical fall to Yorktown's Wyatt Hoppes (32-1) in the championship match.

See **Advance** page 7

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Tribe boys to face Houston

FRHS roundup

The Indians received a sixth seed. But they'll only need to battle a pair of teams that currently have less than 10 wins to put themselves in the district championship.

The OHSAA Division VI Southwest 1 District bracket came out on Sunday and the Fort Recovery High School boys basketball team will open against seventh-seeded Houston in the sectional finals.

The No. 6 seed Indians (6-14) will open their tournament experience at 6 p.m. at Troy on Feb. 20 in the sectional championship against the seventh-seeded Houston (5-14).

The winner will earn a matchup in the district semifinal on Feb. 26. FRHS would

face either No. 4 seed Northeastern (9-12) or fifth-seeded Riverside (7-14).

The district championship on March 1 would likely come against No. 2 seed Anna (11-10).

Potential matchups for the regional semifinal come include No. 1 Tri-Village (18-2), No. 2 Country Day (12-8) and No. 3 Felicity-Franklin (11-9) out of the Southwest 2 district. No. 1 Miami Valley Christian Academy (15-4) is likely to be the regional championship opponent.

See **Roundup** page 7

Davis will miss one month

By BRODERICK TURNER
Los Angeles Times
Tribune News Service

LOS ANGELES — Former Laker Anthony Davis will be sidelined at least a month because of a strained left abductor, several people with knowledge of the situation not authorized to speak publicly on the matter told The Los Angeles Times on Sunday night.

Davis will be examined Monday to determine what the next step will be for his recovery, according to multiple people.

Davis was traded by the Lakers in a blockbuster deal for Luka Doncic last week that upset Dallas fans.

The 11-time All-Star had 26 points, 16 rebounds, seven assists and three blocked shots in less than three quarters in his Dallas debut in a 116-105 win for the Mavericks.

Davis made 10 of 18 shots, including both of his 3-pointers, in 31 minutes against the Houston Rockets.

The Lakers sent Davis, young guard Max Christie and their 2029 first-round draft pick to Dallas for Doncic and forwards Maxi Kleber and Markieff Morris. The Lakers also sent second-year guard Jalen Hood-Schifino to the Utah Jazz, who got second-round picks from the Lakers (their 2025 pick from the Clippers) and Mavericks to facilitate the trade.

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