

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

Doubling up

Comedy stretches Jay County High School actors as everyone in 'Woodchuck' plays multiple roles

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review

A lumber executive who is actually an escaped thief and a retired riverboat captain who thinks he's a pirate.

A cabbage farmer's widow and a mysterious out-of-towner.

A confident homeowners association president and a former pageant queen.

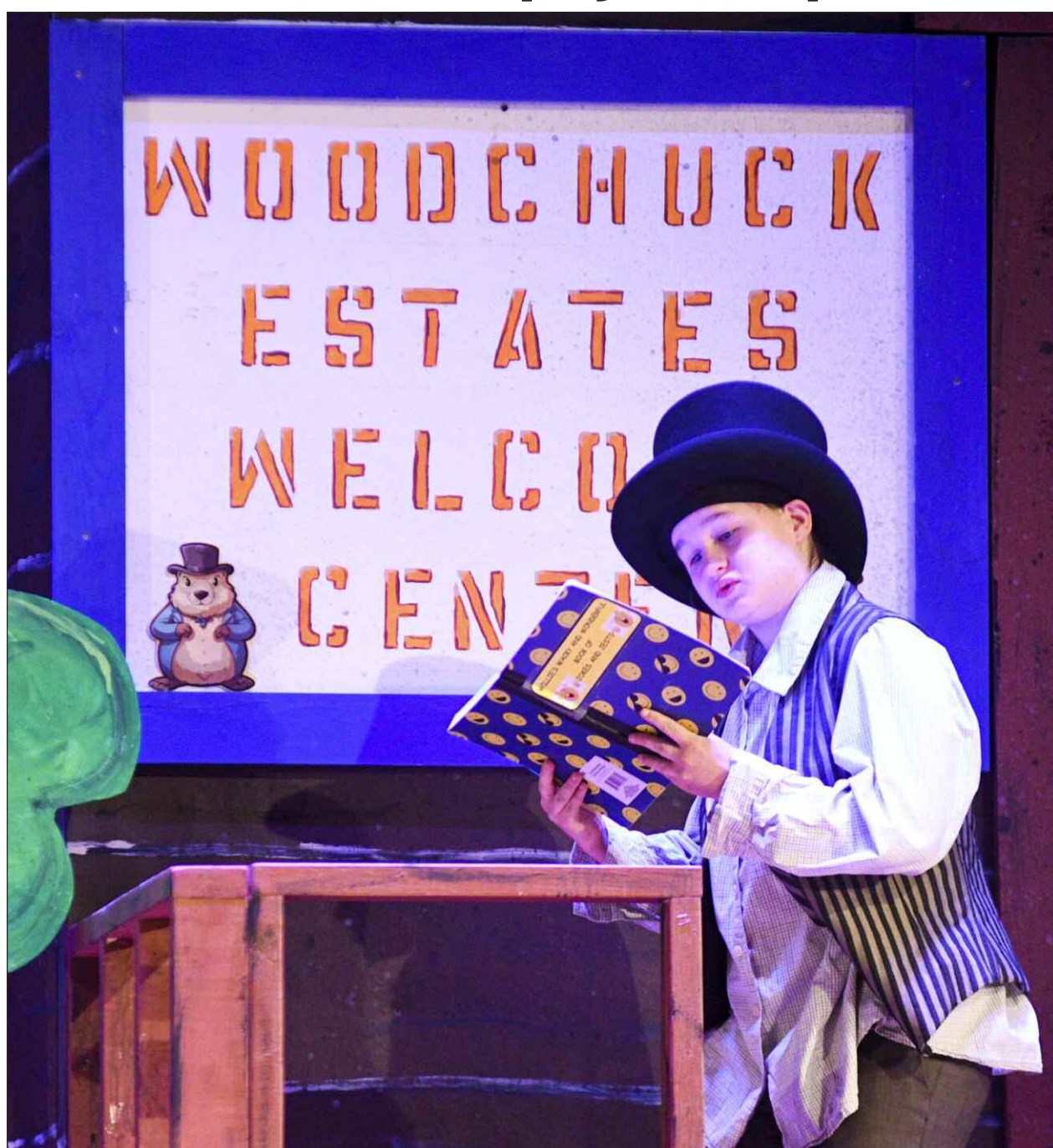
Jay County Junior-Senior High School Drama Club actors will perform in those dual roles and others as they take the stage in their production of "If a Woodchuck Could Chuck Wood."

The comedy by Brian Sylvia is designed for each of the five main performers to play multiple roles, which gives them a chance to stretch their acting chops, said director Cain Billrey.

"There's some fun characters," he added. "Everybody in the show has to play two — there's one who actually technically plays three — but everybody plays two characters. And so it gives the students and opportunity to really sink their teeth into and flip flop and remember who they are when they walk out ... They get to vacillate between two different characters. ...

"Watching them get to grow and play the two different characters and develop two different voices and get two different looks, I think that challenges them."

The show — it opens at 7 p.m. tonight with additional performances at 7 p.m. Friday and 2 p.m. Sunday — features the eccentric residents of the Woodchuck Estates trailer community. A



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Danielle Wright performs as Willie Montgomery during Tuesday's rehearsal for the Jay County Junior-Senior High School production of "If a Woodchuck Could Chuck Wood." Wright also plays "Dr. Justice" Edgar McVee in the show as every cast member plays two characters.

lumber executive who is actually an escaped thief, played by Ethan Spencer, arrives with hopes of buying the facility and its 200-plus

acres of wooded property. "He gets a chance to have ... three different voices, three different distinct characters," said

Billrey. "It's challenging for him. I think he's going to do great with it." The executive/thief seems to fool all of the residents, who instead

have their attention on Lucinda Sharpe, the mysterious out-of-towner played by senior Maley Recker. See **Doubling** page 2

Former deputy pleads guilty

Bogenschutz sentenced to 545 days, all suspended

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review

A former Jay County Sheriff's Office deputy will spend 1.5 years on probation for a crime committed while working for the department.

Derek J. Bogenschutz, 37, Peru, pleaded guilty Wednesday to identity deception, a Level 6 felony. He was sentenced to 545 days in Jay County Jail with all of his sentence suspended.

According to Indiana Code, identity deception is defined as "a person who, with intent to defraud or harm another person, knowingly or intentionally obtains, possesses, transfers, or uses identifying information to profess to be another person."

Bogenschutz pleaded guilty to the crime, which occurred on Jan. 16, 2024. He resigned from the sheriff's office on Feb. 29, 2024.

According to the probable cause affidavit filed in connection with his case, Bogenschutz used a fake Facebook account — it had been created for state department investigations — under the name of Katie Morgan to contact a West Jay Elementary School teacher. He previously worked part-time as a school resource officer and went on a date with the teacher, the affidavit says.

Bogenschutz told the teacher that Katie Morgan and the teacher's boyfriend were in a relationship and that the boyfriend had been "playing them," documents say. See **Pleads** page 2

Redkey needs new firetruck

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review

REDKEY — The fire department needs a new firetruck.

Redkey Volunteer Fire Department firefighter Mark Leavell shared options Tuesday with two Redkey Town Council members.

The board didn't have a quorum for its scheduled meeting and therefore wasn't able to take any action.

Leavell explained the fire department's back-up "pumper" (firetruck) is more than 44 years old. The 1981 truck barely passed the annual state-mandated pump test last year, Leavell said, with black smoke billowing out of the engine.

"The gentleman that did the pump test said that he was very hesitant to do the pump test even next year because he was afraid that we would do some major damage to the engine of the truck," explained Leavell.

He noted it's not the pump but the engine that's the problem. The town's next inspection is slated for September or October.

Potential solutions could include purchasing a new truck or replacing the engine. Leavell

explained a used 10- to 15-year-old firetruck ranges between \$175,000 to \$200,000. Used trucks around 20 to 25 years old cost between \$100,000 and \$125,000. Used firetrucks around 30 years old cost between \$50,000 and \$75,000.

Leavell cautioned against a 30-year-old truck, noting the department's other firetruck is a 1996 model. He pointed out both trucks would need to be replaced around the same time in the future.

Another option would be to replace the engine in the 1981 truck, although Leavell cautioned it would cost \$30,000 to \$35,000.

"The problem is, if you put that much money into that old of a truck, there's other things that are going to go wrong with that truck down the road," he said.

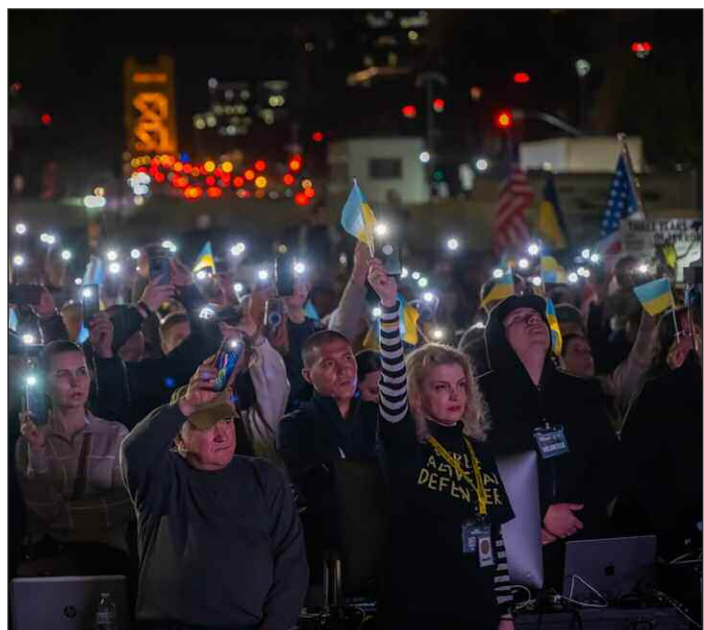
Pumper is almost 45 years old and has had engine problems

Leavell suggested council look into pulling from its cumulative capital improvement fund, which he said has \$141,000 available. He also referenced loan terms for municipalities through Indiana Bond Bank and potential state grants.

Leavell pointed out used firetrucks tend to sell quickly. He asked council to think about its preferred choice. He asked council to authorize the fire department to make a purchase in order to replace the 1981 truck, recommending council allot up to \$125,000.

Relatedly, Leavell noted all of the department's current vehicles are more than 20 years old, with most approaching 30. He suggested creating a plan for how to pay for replacing vehicles in the future.

See **Redkey** page 2



Tribune News Service/The Sacramento Bee/Renee C. Byer

Showing support

Hundreds turned out on Monday for a Stand with Ukraine event at the California State Capitol, marking the third anniversary of Russia's invasion of the country, in Sacramento, California. The event drew a diverse crowd, including Ukrainian Americans, local leaders and a Russian dissident who fled Moscow to avoid fighting in the war.

Deaths

David James, 82, Pennville
Details on page 2.

Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 56 degrees Tuesday. The low was 36.

Tonight's low will be 30 with winds gusting to 25 mph. Expect mostly sunny skies Friday with a high in the lower 50s and continued windy conditions.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

Indiana Broadband Office will host a public listening session from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 4, at Jay County Public Library in Portland. The sessions are an opportunity to hear updates on Indiana's broadband expansion efforts and learn more about state programs and how they will impact communities.

Coming up

Friday — Additional details about the pending sale of WPGW Radio.

Saturday — Results from the JCHS boys basketball game against Belmont.

Tuesday — Photos from the Fort Recovery choir cabaret concert.



Doubling ...

Continued from page 1
Hijinks ensue as the over-the-top characters interact with each other.
Spencer also plays the retired riverboat captain who thinks he's a pirate while Recker doubles as the cabbage farmer's widow.
"She's grown leaps and bounds," said Bilbrey. "She has a strong character. ... She's doing well. I like her accents. I like what she's doing with that role."
The rest of the cast includes Cheyenne Ladewig as the confident HOA president and a former pageant queen, Aerolet Cooke as a teen aspiring journalist and the mayor, and Danielle Wright as an aging hippie activist and a retired Vaudeville writer.
There is also a local radio/TV personality via voice over and a handful of other roles.



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

"It leant itself to a small cast," said Bilbrey. "It's actually written to where it could be a

male or a female in a lot of the roles. ... It's a cute show. It's kinda quirky."

Tickets for each performance are \$5 and will be available at the door.

"I hope we get people to come out and see the show, support the drama club," said Bilbrey.

Aerolet Cooke (left) and Maley Recker perform as Payton Livingston and Brandine Burrows, respectively, during Tuesday's rehearsal. Performances of "If a Woodchuck Could Chuck Wood" are scheduled for 7 p.m. tonight and Friday as well as 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$5 and will be available at the door.

"We just want people to come out and enjoy it and support these kids. They work hard."

CR almanac

Friday 2/28	Saturday 3/1	Sunday 3/2	Monday 3/3	Tuesday 3/4
58/31	33/18	35/22	46/37	55/51
Wind gusts may reach up to 35 mph on Friday under mostly sunny skies.	Saturday looks to be mostly sunny with temperatures around freezing.	Mostly sunny on Sunday with highs again in the mid 30s.	Monday's forecast shows mostly sunny skies with a chance of rain late.	There's a 50% chance of rain Tuesday under mostly cloudy skies.

Lotteries

Powerball Estimated jackpot: \$248 million	Evening Daily Three: 3-3-0 Daily Four: 8-3-7-8 Quick Draw: 2-12-24-30-34-38-39-42-43-46-49-50-51-56-58-59-72-73-74-77
Mega Millions 4-8-11-32-52 Mega Ball: 13 Megaplier: 2 Estimated jackpot: \$197 million	Ohio Tuesday Midday Pick 3: 0-6-0 Pick 4: 2-6-0-6 Pick 5: 4-6-0-9-8 Evening Pick 3: 3-5-5 Pick 4: 1-0-6-6 Pick 5: 8-1-9-3-1 Rolling Cash: 10-15-23-29-34 Estimated jackpot: \$130,000
Hoosier Tuesday Midday Daily Three: 2-4-0 Daily Four: 0-9-4-2 Quick Draw: 1-5-6-9-10-13-19-20-21-24-34-37-41-45-48-63-67-69-78-80	

Markets

Cooper Farms Fort Recovery Corn.....4.72 April corn.....4.86 May corn.....4.92	March beans10.37 Wheat 5.43
POET Biorefining Portland Corn.....4.90 March corn4.90 April corn5.00	ADM Montpelier Corn.....4.82 March corn4.82 Beans10.26 March beans10.30 Wheat5.42
The Andersons Richland Township Corn4.87 March corn4.85 Beans10.37	Heartland St. Anthony Corn.....4.68 March corn4.68 Beans10.06 March beans10.11 Wheat5.18

Today in history

In 1827, New Orleans hosted its first Mardi Gras celebration. Every year, the city in Louisiana hosts a large festival for the holiday.
In 1886, Hugo Black was born in Clay County, Alabama. Black served as a United States senator for 10 years before shifting to an associate justice of the United States Supreme Court for 34 years.
In 1902, John Steinbeck was born in Salinas, California. An American novelist, Steinbeck wrote the classics "The Grapes of Wrath" and "Of Mice and Men."
In 1951, the 22nd amendment was ratified, limiting United States presidents to two terms in office.
In 1963, the Soviet Union announced it would be leaving 10,000 troops in Cuba.
In 1991, president George H.W. Bush ordered a cease-fire in the Persian Gulf War and declared victory. The international conflict sparked after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait less than a year prior.
— The CR

Citizen's calendar

Monday 5:30 p.m. — Portland City Council, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St.	chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St.
Tuesday 5:30 p.m. — Portland Park Board, council	
Wednesday 4 p.m. — Jay County Commissioners executive session, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.	

Obituaries

David James

June 14, 1942-Feb. 24, 2025
David R. James, age 82, of Pennville passed away on Monday, Feb. 24, 2025, in IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital in Muncie.
He was born in Pennville on June 14, 1942, the son of Russell and Frances (Morrical) James. He was married on Aug. 26, 1961, to Patricia DeHoff who survives.
David was a lifelong farmer and 1960 Pennville High School graduate. He enjoyed doing carpentry work.
Surviving are his wife Patricia; one son, Daren James (wife: Amy) of

Fishers; two daughters, Dana James of Pennville and Kimbra Blankenbaker of Pennville; two sisters, Barbara Funk (husband: Everett) of New Haven and Susie Baumgartner of Ohio; seven grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.
He was preceded in death by a brother, Robert James.
A celebration of life service will be held at 5 p.m. on Saturday, March 1,



James

at 5 p.m. in the Baird-Freeman Funeral Home. Family will receive guests from 3 to 5 p.m.

Memorials can be made to the Parkinson's Foundation. Condolences may be expressed at bairdfreeman.com.

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The Commercial Review publishes death notices for those with a connection to our coverage area free of charge. They include the name, city of residence, birth/death date and time/date/location of services.

There is a charge for obituaries, which are accepted only from funeral homes or mortuary services.

Pleads ...

Continued from page 1
Addressing the teacher under the fake name, Bogenschutz sent screenshots of messages between Katie Morgan and the teacher's boyfriend.
The boyfriend called Union City police to report the Facebook account for harassment.

Union City police brought up the situation to a Jay County Sheriff's Office deputy, who recalled Bogenschutz had a fake Facebook account under the same name that he used for Indiana Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force case work.
The deputy had access

to the fake Facebook account and logged in, finding the messages on the account, according to the affidavit. He saved the evidence and reported his findings.
Jay County Commissioners terminated a contract with Bogenschutz's software and web design company, Emerald Busi-

ness Solutions, for the sheriff's office website in March 2024. Redkey Town Council followed suit in January.

Bogenschutz was suspended from Jay County Sheriff's Office for five days in 2019 for acting improperly during a traffic stop in Clinton County.

Redkey ...

Continued from page 1
Also, council member Gavin Grady has resigned. He submitted a formal to Jay County Clerk's Office Feb. 14, effective immediately. Grady didn't respond to The Commercial Review for comment before press time. Jay County Republican Party chairman Jenae Blasdel will need to find a replacement for the open seat, which was originally occupied by former council member Chance Retter before he resigned last year.
Town marshal Jon Cave is also no longer working for Redkey. Cave recently started as an officer for Portland Police Department.
In other business, council members "Watermelon" Jim Phillips and Brenda Beaty, absent Floyd Life and Dave Dudelston:
•Discussed graffiti issues. Beaty noted recent vandalism at the park and the water tower, despite the lat-

ter having fencing around it. Beaty pointed out it would cost \$150,000 to repaint the tower. She also suggested looking into how to make the tower less open to vandals, noting the liabilities involved in an accident.
•Heard plans from utility worker Ted Kolodka to update the town's snow plowing policy, which allows the town to plow roads after a certain amount of snow. Kolodka would like to adjust the threshold, which currently requires 4 inches or more of snow, down to 3 inches or more of snow. He said other surrounding communities usually plow after 3 inches or more.
•Learned Second Harvest Food Bank will be hosting monthly tailgates in Redkey on the third Wednesday of each month from 10 a.m. to noon at the park. (It previously hosted tailgates quarterly in town.) Plans are to host the next

tailgate from 10 a.m. to noon March 19 at the park. Leavell noted portions of Mooney Street and Central Avenue may be congested with traffic during that time. He also pointed to the need for volunteers, saying he would like to put together a list of organizations to be involved.
•Met the county's new community coordinator, Darlesia Lee.
•Heard a request from Leavell to wrap red LED lights around the light poles in downtown Redkey for decoration.
•Learned one of the doors — the door Redkey firefighters have a key for — at the former fire station has been barricaded after a suspected break-in. Board members shared plans to keep keys to town buildings at the clerk-treasurer's office.
•Heard the clerk-treasurer's office is looking to hire more part-time help.

Budget could put building in jeopardy

Indiana Capital Chronicle
Provisions in the state's draft budget could leave the Indiana Historical Society in a bind, possibly without a building.
In Gov. Mike Braun's proposed spending plan — and the House version approved last week — Republican budget writers

moved to terminate the state's contract with the nonprofit institution.
The historical society owns the downtown Indianapolis building where its headquarters, museum and archives are housed. It does not, however, own the land on which the building sits.

Capsule Reports

Struck tree
Damage is estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000 after a Union City woman hit a deer and tree along county road 600 South about 9 p.m. Tuesday.
Melissa A. Blankley, 60, was driving her 2013 Buick Encore east on the road near county road 850 East when she hit a deer.
She told police she veered across the road as a result of the impact and drove into a tree on the north side of the road.
Her vehicle was towed.

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SERVICES

Today
Fuller, Jereldene: 2 p.m., Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland.

Friday
Keller, Charles: 10:30 a.m., Mary Help of Christians Catholic Church, 403 Sharpshurg Road, Fort Recovery.
Heston, Herbert: 11 a.m., MJS Mortuaries, 109 S. Meridian St., Redkey.
Wilhelm, Debbie: 2 p.m., Goodway Baptist church, 14065 W. 400 North, Medaryville.

Saturday
Evans, Robley: 10:30 a.m., First Presbyterian Church, 215 E. Dustman Road, Bluffton.
James, David: 5 p.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

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

Rustic furniture on display

Willow furniture and other home decor made by an Indiana artisan is on display for the next month in Jay County.

A Half Century of Rustic Furniture by Greg Adams is available to view for free in the Hugh N. Ronald Gallery at Arts Place now through March 28 during regular business hours. Adams will also be available for a meet and greet starting at 6 p.m. Friday.

Also Friday, Ryanhood will perform at 7 p.m. at Arts Place. The show is a part of the Eric R. Rogers Performing Arts Series. Tickets are \$9 for students and \$15 for adults.

For questions or more information on how to be involved, please call (260) 726-4809 or email visualarts@myartsplace.org.

Volunteerism award

The Portland Foundation is accepting nominations for the 28th annual Jack Cole Award for Volunteerism.

The award was established by the foundation's board of trustees to honor Cole's work as its first executive director.

Nominations should be by letter of recommendation and include the nominee's name, address and a brief background describing why the nominee deserves the award.

The winner will receive a commemorative plaque and a nominal cash award to be presented to the volunteer's

Taking Note

charity of choice. The award will be presented at the Foundation's annual meeting on May 28.

Deadline for nominations is March 14. They should be sent to the foundation office at 107 S. Meridian St., Portland. For more information, contact the foundation office at (260) 726-4260.

WOW scholarships

Win on the Wabash Super Raffle will be awarding 20 seniors this year from the local area with \$1,000 scholarships.

Seniors who have demonstrated a dedication to volunteerism and community service throughout high school will be awarded.

Requirements are students must be a United States citizen, must have logged community service hours throughout their high school career and must be a senior enrolled in school in Jay County, Mercer County, Ohio, Darke County, Ohio, Auglaize County, Ohio, or Shelby County, Ohio. Applicants are asked to fill out a 400-word maximum essay reflecting on their experiences with community service throughout high school.

Applications must also include a letter of recom-

mendation. The deadline to apply is March 31.

Pioneer Camps

Indiana State Police has announced its dates and locations for its summer camps, including several in Anderson.

Pioneer Camps, which are by recommendation only, will be held for 11 through 14 year olds in June, with one set for June 16 through 19 at Mounds State Park in Anderson.

Other camps in Anderson include a Law Camp for sixth, seventh and eighth graders will be held June 29 through July 2 and a Career Camp for high school students from June 22 through 28. A Career Camp will also be held from July 6 through 11 at Trine University in Angola.

Shield Project is scheduled for June 4 through 8 at Anderson University.

For more information, or to register, visit trooper.org.

Taking applications

Indiana Donor Network Foundation is accepting applications for educational scholarships.

The scholarships are open to immediate family members of Indiana residents who were organ, tissue or cornea donors, living donors, transplant recipients and Hoosiers waiting for transplants.

Applications are available online at indianadonornetwork.org/scholarships. The deadline is March 17.

Wife leaves marriage to seek love, affection

DEAR ABBY: I have been married to my husband for more than 20 years. He's mostly very nice, although he has generalized anxiety disorder. In the past, he threatened to kill someone (not me!) as well as himself and had to be hospitalized.

Ninety-nine percent of the time he's friendly and thoughtful, except for one thing: He isn't capable of giving affection, and we haven't had sex in more than a decade. We have seen multiple counselors over the years to no avail. We have tried doctors and meds. I have begged, cried, talked with him and remained celibate always.

I met a younger man online who lives overseas, and it was platonic for two years. Suddenly, I realized I had more than platonic feelings for him. We started talking about love to each other. No sex was involved, nor have we exchanged revealing photos. (We are both religious.) I told my husband I want a divorce because I don't believe in cheating and I am totally over him ignoring my needs for so long. My question is, was I wrong? — MAKING CHANGES IN GEORGIA

DEAR MAKING CHANGES: Because your marriage was not fixable, you did the right thing by telling your husband you wanted out. However, as well as you think you know this younger, foreign man whom you have never met, it is extremely important to move SLOWLY from here on.

There are so many catfish and romance scams online that, frankly, it's scary. Before making any commitments, romantic or financial, you two need to meet, get to know each other, see how each other lives and what his

Dear Abby



friends and family are like (and vice versa). I wish you luck, but keep your eyes open.

DEAR ABBY: I am a divorced single mom who just purchased a new home. My 23-year-old daughter came home from college a few years ago and is refusing to move out. I understand that rental prices are high and she's saving money, but I can't live with her anymore.

Abby, we have very dissimilar lifestyles. My daughter is a slob and refuses to respect my pleas to keep her room and her bathroom (which is also our guest bathroom) clean and tidy. Her room stinks! She spends her days off sitting around on her phone all day. (She does have a job, and she's also active in church.)

How can I get her to move instead of me flying off the handle every time she disrespects me? I just want to live in peace in a neat and tidy house. — FRUSTRATED IN FLORIDA

DEAR FRUSTRATED: You have my sympathy. Have a calm talk with your daughter. Point out that she is an adult now, and because her living habits are so different from yours, you are no longer willing to have her stay with you. Offer to help her find another place to live and set a date for her to be out. If she still refuses, you may have to start a formal eviction.

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.

LAWYERS IN LIBRARIES — Free and confidential consultations with a lawyer are available from 10 a.m. to noon

at Jay County Public Library, 315 N. Ship St., Portland. Consulting is available on topics including divorce, custody, guardianship, tenant-landlord issues, bankruptcy, debt collection, estates and immigration. Those interested in participating should sign up in advance at the library, 315 N. Ship St., Portland, or by calling (260) 726-7890.

DEMENTIA SUPPORT GROUP — Meets at 5:30 p.m. at Persimmon Ridge Rehabilitation Centre, 200 N. Park St., Portland.

Friday

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

Saturday

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

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

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.

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP — Will meet at 1 p.m. the first Monday of each month at Portland Place, 430 W. Lafayette St. For more information, call (800) 589-1121.

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

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.

Sudoku

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

Level: Intermediate

Wednesday's Solution

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

Not-for-profit Specials




Ads must run in March.
Rates do not apply to special sections.

Advertise your not-for-profit organization in all of our publications with:

Four 4x4 ads in The Commercial Review
Two 4x4 ads in The News-Gazette
One 4x4 ad in The News Times

for **\$330**

OR

Run two 4x4 ads for your not-for-profit organization in the publication(s) of your choice during March for:

The Commercial Review - \$156
The News-Gazette - \$145
The News Times - \$120

Call (260) 726-8141 or email ads@thecr.com

Take steps toward a healthier life

Albert Lea Tribune (Minnesota)
Tribune News Service
Every February since 1964, the president of the United States has declared the month to be American Heart Month, an opportunity to focus on heart health and remember loved ones lost to heart disease.

According to the American Heart Association, at the time of that initial declaration by President Lyndon B. Johnson, more than half the deaths in the U.S. were caused by cardiovascular disease.

According to the Heart Association, heart disease remains the

Guest Editorial

leading cause of death for Americans and claims more lives in the country than all other forms of cancer and accidental deaths combined.

It is fueled by ongoing increases in high blood pressure, obesity and other risk factors.

The Heart Association states

nearly 47% of U.S. adults have high blood pressure and more than 72% of U.S. adults have an unhealthy weight. On top of those statistics, more than half of U.S. adults have type 2 diabetes or prediabetes.

What can be done to change those numbers?

The Heart Association says people can reduce some risk factors for heart disease by not smoking, exercising, eating healthy, getting enough sleep and being at a healthy weight.

It is also important to keep cholesterol, blood pressure and blood sugar at healthy levels.

People must take steps to stay physically active and maintain a healthy body weight by eating a well-balanced diet and abstaining from tobacco products, the declaration adds.

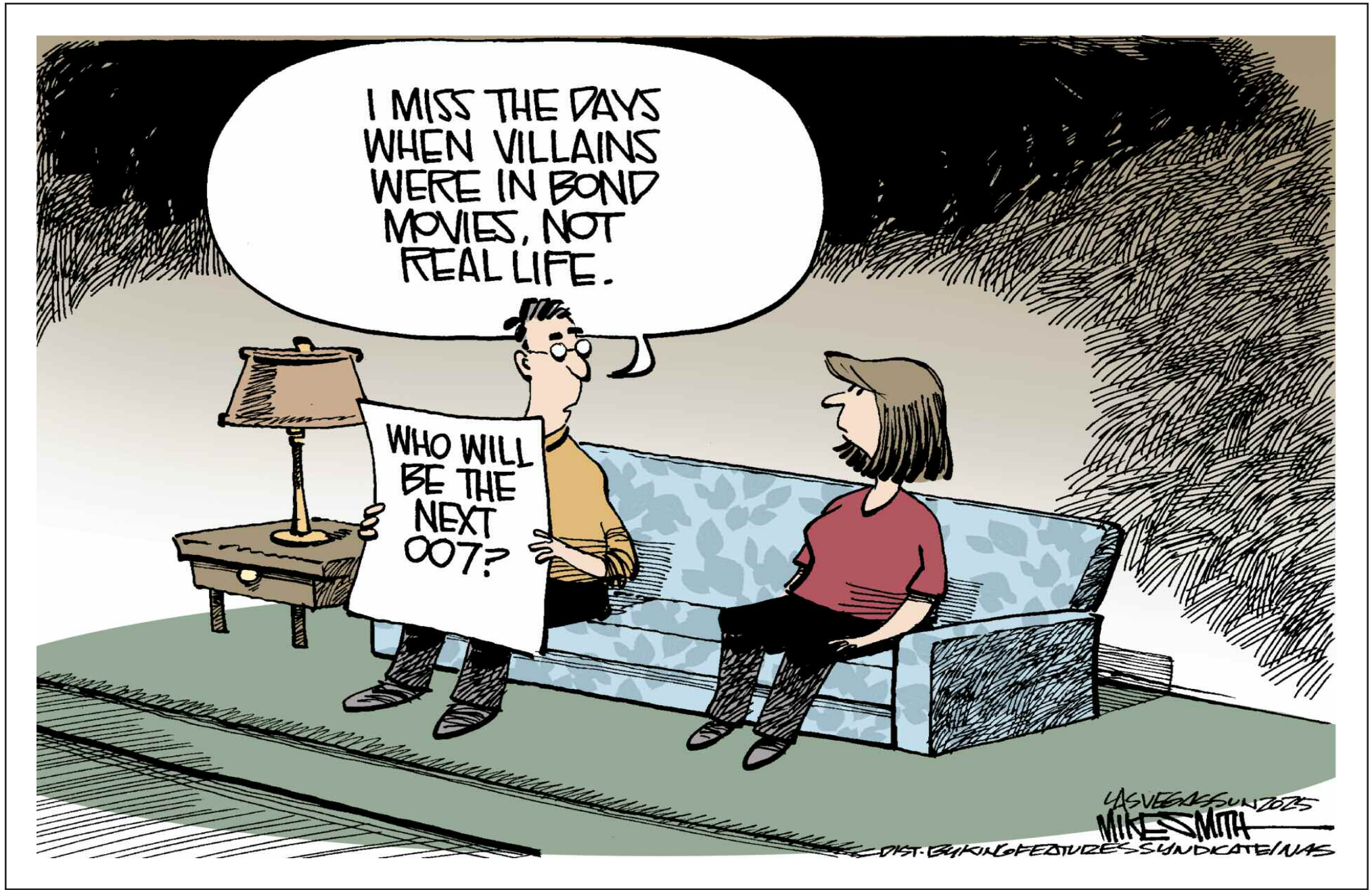
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services advises even little changes such as using spices to season foods instead of salt or motivating teachers and administrators to make physical activity a key part of the school day as a few examples of things you can do.

The Department of Health and Human Services outlines

the importance of physical exercise and gives information on how much activity adults and children should be getting.

The guidelines recommend adults get at least 2 1/2 hours of moderate aerobic physical activity and muscle-strengthening activity per week, while children ages 6 to 17 should get at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day.

We encourage you to take little steps each day and recommit to a healthier lifestyle — not only for you but for your loved ones, as well.



Tax reform proposals are confusing

By **MICHAEL J. HICKS**

I confess to often being confused by tax proposals, which might seem unusual given that I've authored dozens of tax studies. So, instead of trying to help readers understand an economic issue in this column, I'm going to explain to you why I'm a bewildered by some of the proposals that are before the Indiana legislature this year. First, the basics.

Indiana, like almost every other government in the world, taxes three things: wealth, consumption and income. There are lots of names for these taxes, but this is the universe of taxes.

Wealth taxes are the oldest form, appearing in the archeological record between 4000 and 6000 B.C., in ancient Mesopotamia. Consumption taxes and income taxes are first recorded in Rome, from Julius and Augustus Caesar, in the first century B.C. So, there's nothing new here.

Modern taxes on wealth are primarily property taxes. Consumption taxes are sales and use taxes. Taxes on income are, well, income and payroll taxes. Every state (yes, every state) collects some version of all these, even if they have different names. There's a great deal of variability in who pays each of these taxes, how they are administered and what types of businesses or people are taxed.

Economic research provides almost no evidence that the mix of taxes plays an important role in household or business location, or economic growth. Here in

Michael J. Hicks



Indiana, our wealth taxes (property taxes) are the seventh-lowest in the nation on a per capita basis. Our taxes on consumption (sales taxes) are 26th-lowest and our taxes on income (income taxes) are 34th-lowest on a per-person basis.

I am confused why there's such strong push to reduce or eliminate the one really low tax in Indiana. I'm especially confused since the property tax was required in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which proscribed rules for establishing our state.

The most likely explanation for this is that some Hoosier elected leaders are listening to a relatively small number of wealthy folks who would prefer someone else pay the taxes that fund their local schools, police, fire and other services. I suppose that is a pathway to electoral success. It is dubious public policy.

Still, economists are suspicious of asking people what they want. Instead, we prefer to observe what people do. Though almost everyone says they want lower taxes, folks are actually moving to places with higher taxes. Since 2010, all the population growth in Indiana has come in just a few

high tax counties. The best way to see this is simply to inspect the effective overall tax rate (taxes as a share of household income) and the median property tax payment.

Growing counties have a total state and local tax rate that is 34 percent higher than the counties that have lost population. In those growing counties, the median property tax payment per resident is \$456 higher — a whopping 54 percent higher — than in counties that have lost population. The 10 fastest-growing counties have an effective state and local tax rate that is 238 percent higher than the 10 fastest-shrinking counties, and pay an enormous 131 percent higher property taxes per resident (\$937 more per year).

So, listening to people who are complaining about taxes gives you a very different answer than asking "what are the taxes like in the places that are growing versus places that are in decline?"

Now, people aren't moving to those places because of high taxes. Rather, they are moving there to access the public services those taxes provide.

Again, you can learn this not only by watching where they move, but also by the value that people place on property in these high-tax locations. There is a large body of research on this question. This work offers clear estimates of how much households are willing to pay to live in different locations.

For example, if you take two identical homes and put one in

the best school corporation in the state (as measured by test scores) and the other in an average school corporation, the difference in home prices is about 30 percent. Likewise, if you put one in a quiet residential area and the other near an airport runway, you'd find the value of the home drops by about half a percent for each additional decibel of aircraft noise.

The quality-of-life differences between the low-tax and high-tax counties are substantial. By my calculations, Hoosiers are willing to pay about twice the price for an identical house in Hamilton County than the same one in Martin County. That difference is almost exclusively due to the quality of locally provided services — good schools, safe neighborhoods, and the availability of private amenities like grocery stores.

It is easy to see how a place that attracts more residents experiences rising property values, and thus its property taxes grow. If cities and counties spend those tax dollars wisely, then they attract more residents. And, yes, this could get out of hand. If taxes rise more than the value of the local amenities they are paying for, then people leave. Americans vote with their feet.

This is a critical point. So, when there's population decline in a city or county, it isn't just because taxes are too high or amenities are too low. It is primarily because residents (or potential residents) don't think the

county is providing value for the tax dollars they are spending.

However, it is necessary to stipulate that there are precisely zero communities in Indiana that are stagnating because the schools are too good, the streets too safe and well maintained, or that lure too many good grocery stores for residents. Neither is there a single municipality or county that is losing residents because taxes are too high.

I'm heartened that the legislature seems to understand these issues and has rejected the more than \$1 billion in local property tax cuts proposed by the Braun administration. It's wise to think about taxes in a budget session. But it is courageous, as well as wise, to think deliberately and rigorously about the potential effect of cuts or increases.

Our legislature seems to have done just that.

In the end, it is important to consider not only the people complaining about high taxes, but also those who want to live in a place that provides high-quality local public services, which they are willing to pay for.

Those are the people Indiana desperately wants, but is now struggling to attract and retain.

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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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—Thomas Jefferson

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

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

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

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

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

Calvary United Methodist
301 N. Main St., Dunkirk
Susan Durovey-Antrim
(765) 499-0368
Services: 10:30 a.m.
susan.duroveyantrim@in.umc.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.
firstpccportland.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@therockkjc.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
Randy Smith (260) 703-0733
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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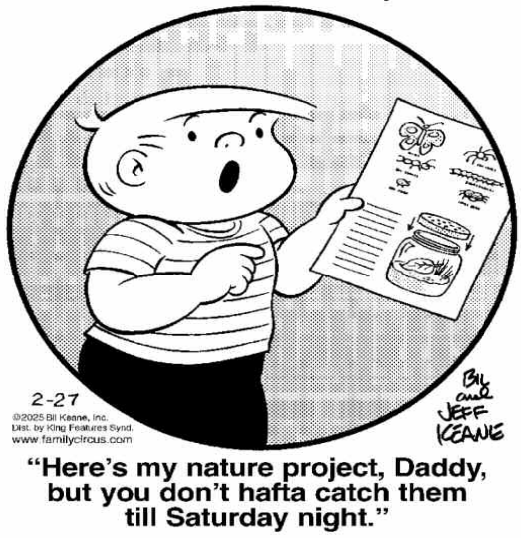
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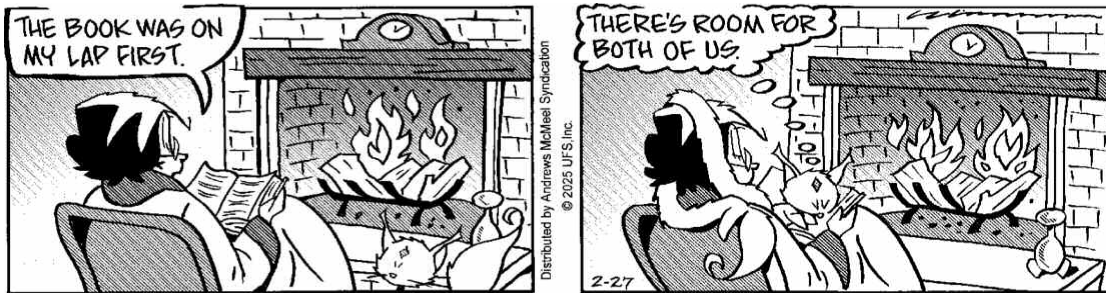
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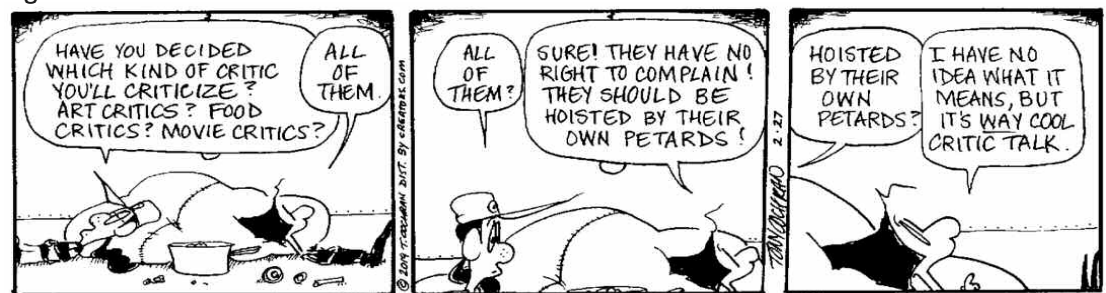
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Hi and Lois



Between Friends



Blondie



Snuffy Smith



Beetle Bailey



Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

A guide to good bidding

North dealer. North-South vulnerable. NORTH: 108, AK53, KQ4, QJ93. WEST: 76, 6, J87532, 10842. EAST: 542, J1094, A1096, 75. SOUTH: AKQJ93, Q872, A K 6.

Official bid asking North to bid a four- or five-card major if he had one, and North showed his hearts. From South's point of view, the two-heart response was ideal, as there was a bid available that would allow him to find out about the quality of his partner's hearts. Accordingly, South leaped to five notrump!

The bidding: North 1NT, East Pass, South 5NT, West Pass. Opening lead - seven of spades. Players who deride artificial conventions must occasionally bite the bullet and acknowledge that there are times when artificial bidding methods are more effective than hit-or-miss methods.

This was also an artificial bid, the so-called grand slam force, implying that he accepted hearts as trump and directing North to bid seven hearts if he held two of the top three trump honors. North obediently leaped to seven hearts, which South then converted to seven spades in the interests of greater safety.

Tomorrow: Test your play. ©2025 King Features Syndicate Inc.

2-27

CRYPTOQUIP

SAMJ UGQEK LGQ U MEE PGNIGTI SAG FP PAMHFTX M PQXMHL KIPPIHJ SFJA LGQ?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN A HIGH-STRUNG WEE CHILD WANTED TO SCHOOL HIS SISTER, WHAT HAPPENED? THE TAUT TOT TAUGHT. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals C

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS: 1 One of the five W's, 4 Surround, 8 Sent a dupe to, 12 Thither, 13 March Madness gp., 14 Tardy, 15 Candy box weight, 17 Flair, 18 Highland hat, 19 At best, 21 Sound system, 24 Hanking-ing, 25 Long time, 26 South of France?, 28 - Lumpur, 32 Initial chip, 34 Sandy shade, 36 Conspiracy, 37 India's first prime minister, 39 Paper Mate rival, 41 Felon's flight. DOWN: 2 Sweetie, 3 Tithing fraction, 4 Garden figurines, 5 Hosp. section, 6 Hindu royal, 7 Papa, 8 Earn big bucks, 9 Use a phone, 10 And others (Lat.), 11 Say it isn't so, 16 Standard, 20 Comics cry, 21 Writer O'Casey, 22 Vocal quality, 23 Ump's yell, 27 Wee dollop, 29 Multifunctional, as a printer, 30 Cash advance, 31 \$ dispensers, 33 Pencil tips, 35 Pen tip, 38 Aircraft carrier letters, 40 Spot with slots, 43 Yuja Wang's instrument, 45 Lush, 46 Baby carriage, 47 Frost, 48 Japanese noodle, 49 Big fusses, 53 Actress Gretchen, 54 Fish-fowl insert, 55 Omelet need.

Crossword grid with solution time: 24 mins. and yesterday's answer 2-27.

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90 SALE CALENDAR

PUBLIC AUCTION Saturday March 15th, 2025 TIME 10:00 A.M. LOCATED: 783 S 600E Portland, IN.

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Public Notice

Redkey Civil Town, Jay County, Indiana Cash & Investments Combined Statement - 2024

Table with 6 columns: Local Fund Number, Local Fund Name, Beg. Cash and Inv. Bal. Jan. 1, 2024, Receipts, Disbursements, End Cash and Inv. Bal. Dec. 31, 2024. Lists various fund categories like Governmental Activities, Rainy Day, etc.

250 PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice

Portland Civil City, Jay County, Indiana Cash & Investments Combined Statement - 2024

Table with 6 columns: Local Fund Number, Local Fund Name, Beg. Cash and Inv. Bal. Jan 1, 2024, Receipts, Disbursements, End Cash and Inv. Bal. Dec 31, 2024. Lists various fund categories like Governmental Activities, Police Pension Fund, etc.

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Sports

Patriots hold their lead

Jay County stopped Winchester's comeback attempt just in time

By ANDREW BALKO

The Commercial Review
WINCHESTER — The Patriots could not miss from deep.

While a barrage of 3-pointers developed a 20-point advantage midway through the second half, Gabe Overton wasn't going to let the Golden Falcons go down without a fight.

While the sophomore dropped 15 points on the Patriots in the final period, the visitors did just enough to hold on to their lead and the win.

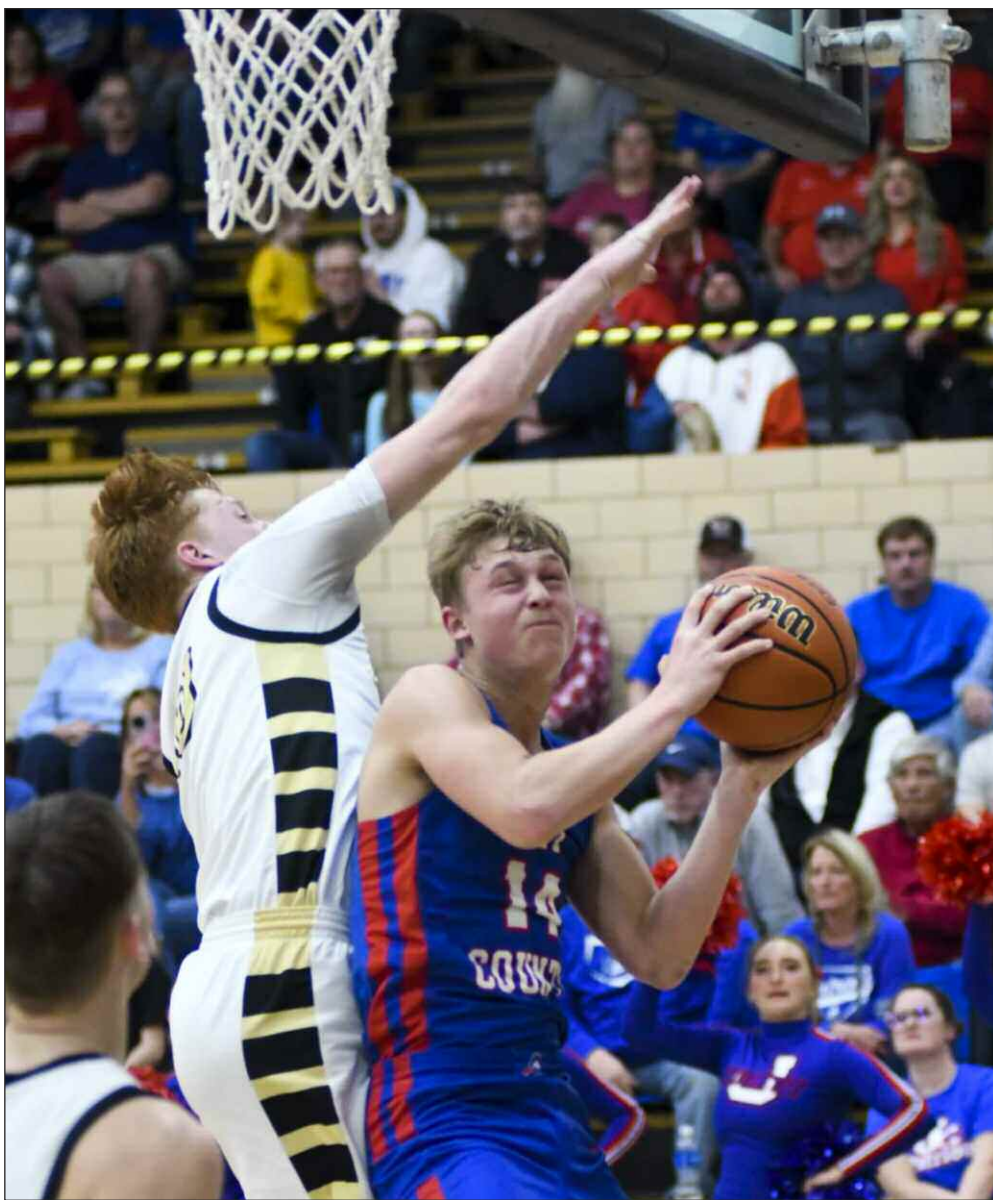
Jay County High School's boys basketball team survived the Winchester Community Golden Falcons' comeback attempt for a 68-57 victory on Tuesday night.

"Very proud of them," said JCHS interim coach Brogan Gary. "We had a good start. Shot the ball well and shot it with confidence. Very proud of how those guys handled that (adversity). Obviously this is a learning experience to finish out games and do the small things even though we're up 19, we've got to learn how to dig deep and be disciplined."

Jay County (12-9) entered the final period with a 19-point lead at 56-37. But after the Patriots had controlled the game through the first three quarters — Winchester (11-12) only led 1-0 after Overton got to the free throw line on an open-side drive — the Golden Falcons employed a full-court press designed to trap ball handlers near the timeline and sidelines.

The zone press resulted in five JCHS turnovers and led to 13 Overton points — he also dished out an assist during the stretch — to cut Winchester's deficit to 59-53. (Overton finished as the Golden Falcon's leading scorer with 20 points, all but one of which were scored in the second half, and passed on four assists.)

"He knows one speed and that's 110%," said WCHS coach Jake Turner. "His energy is good for the rest



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Jay County High School sophomore Benson Barnett draws a foul on Caleb Hummel of Winchester at the tail end of a press break. The Patriots hung on to win the game 68-57 after Winchester shaved a 19-point deficit to only six midway through the fourth quarter.

of our guys ... He loves playing that frenetic style, I'm sure he'd love for us to press a little bit more. So I was really happy for him to have that success."

After Gary called a timeout with 3 minutes, 58 seconds remaining, the Patriots got things under control to be able to finish off Winchester.

On the offensive end, the Patriots found a way to break the press with Jayden Comer receiving a pass between the opposing vol-

leyball line and midcourt, beating one defender and making a decision to attack or pull it out and run clock. That strategy led to Comer dishing assists to Eli Petro and Aiden Phillips, as well as giving a pass ahead to Benson Barnett, who hit a pair of free throws.

"Once they all collapsed, just dish that thing," Comer said. "That's all it is."

Down on the other end of the floor, Eli Dirksen got subbed in and took on the

responsibility of guarding Overton. The WCHS sophomore guard only managed two more points on a drive to the rim with 31 seconds remaining.

"(Dirksen) took a lot of pride and a lot of leadership to take that upon himself," said Gary. "He's a great kid, so I knew he was going to give his best effort. He was determined to slow him down, which was huge for us."

Jay County jumped on top of the Golden Falcons

Box score					
Winchester Golden Falcons vs. Jay County Patriots					
Boys varsity summary					
Jay County (12-9)					
	FG-FGA	FT-FTA	PTS		
Comer	8-8	0-0	23		
Barnett	1-1	3-4	5		
Wasson	2-3	0-0	5		
Petro	1-3	0-0	2		
Dirksen	3-4	4-8	10		
Phillips	1-1	1-2	3		
Griffin	4-10	3-4	15		
Swoveland	2-8	0-0	5		
Totals	22-38	11-18	68		
	.579	.611			
Def. rebound percentage: .852					
Winchester (11-12)					
	FG-FGA	FT-FTA	PTS		
Campbell	2-3	1-2	5		
Overton	7-10	2-4	20		
McFarland	0-0	0-0	0		
Hummel	4-14	1-2	11		
Fraze	3-7	6-6	12		
Price	0-0	0-0	0		
Baldwin	2-6	0-0	6		
Tarter	0-2	3-4	3		
Moore	0-1	0-0	0		
Totals	18-43	13-18	57		
	.419	.722			
Def. rebound percentage: .810					
Score by quarters:					
Jay Co.	18	18	20	12	68
Wnchstr	8	12	17	20	57
3-point shooting: Jay County 13-20 (Comer 7-7, Griffin 4-9, Wasson 1-1, Swoveland 1-3). Winchester 8-24 (Overton 4-5, Baldwin 2-6, Hummel 2-10, Fraze 0-3).					
Rebounds: Jay County 27 (Phillips 7, Swoveland 5, Dirksen 4, Griffin 4, Team 3, Comer 2, Barnett, Petro). Winchester 21 (Campbell 6, Fraze 4, Overton 3, Tarter 3, Hummel 2, Team 2, Bladwin).					
Assists: Jay County 18 (Swoveland 7, Comer 4, Griffin 3, Dirksen 2, Barnett, Petro). Winchester 12 (Overton 4, Baldwin 3, Hummel 2, Campbell, Fraze, Tarter).					
Blocks: Jay County 1 (Swoveland). Winchester 3 (Hummel 2, Overton).					
Personal fouls: Jay County 14 (Comer 3, Griffin 3, Swoveland 3, Barnett, Wasson, Petro, Dirksen, Phillips). Winchester 21 (Overton 5, Campbell 4, Hummel 4, Baldwin 3, Fraze 2, Price, Tarter, Moore).					
Turnovers: Jay County 12. Winchester 7.					

early as Tucker Griffin followed his 27-point performance against Heritage with four first-quarter 3-pointers.

After Griffin went to the bench early in the second quarter with a second foul, Comer banged home four triples of his own, supplemented by one more from Brock Wasson.

JCHS found the bottom of the net four more times from deep, with Comer hitting another three triples and Gradin Swoveland adding one of his own. Swoveland's three early in the third period as the Patriots led by 21 points 41-20. They hit a 20-point cushion after a pair of bonus free throws by Benson Barnett before Overton split his own bonus foul shots.

In all, the Patriots shot 13-of-20 (65%) from deep, without even attempting a three in the final period. Comer shot a perfect 7-of-7 from deep — he was 8-for-8 from the field for a game-high 23 points — to lead the way for JCHS. Both Comer and Gary attributed the

lights-out shooting to good ball movement, as 12 of the 13 triples came off assists.

"Our ball movement is getting better," Comer said. "We've been working really hard on it and ball movement in practice because we hadn't been doing that much. Now we are starting to play as a team and it really showed tonight."

The Patriots are set to close out the regular season Friday against Bellmont before facing Yorktown in the sectional opener at New Castle on March 4.

Junior varsity

A hot start lifted the Patriots to a 63-51 victory over Winchester on Tuesday.

Jay County scored 20 points to the Golden Falcons' five in the opening period on four triples and four more shots near the rim.

Nick Snow led JCHS with 16 points, while Brock Wasson and Drew Schemenaur followed with 15 and 10, respectively. Jacoby Addington was the high scorer for WCHS with 13.

Sports on tap

Local schedule

Today
Jay County — Junior high wrestling at Southern Wells — 5:30 p.m.

Friday
Jay County — Boys basketball (including freshmen) vs. Belmont — 6 p.m.
Fort Recovery — Girls bowling State at H.P. Lanes in Columbus — 10:45 a.m.

Saturday
Jay County — Junior high wrestling at Jay County Invite — 9 a.m.

Fort Recovery — Boys bowling State at Columbus — 10:45 a.m.

TV sports

Today
3 p.m. — Premier League soccer: West Ham United at Leicester City (USA)
6 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Purdue at Penn State (BTN)
7 p.m. — College basketball: North Texas at Florida Atlantic (ESPN2)
7 p.m. — Women's college basketball: North Carolina at Duke (ESPN)
7 p.m. — NHL: Columbus Blue Jackets at Mon-

treal Canadiens (FOX); St. Louis Blues at Washington Capitals (FDSN Indiana)

8 p.m. — NBA: Denver Nuggets at Milwaukee Bucks (TNT)
8 p.m. — PVF volleyball: Vegas Thrill at Indy Ignite (FS1)
8 p.m. — College hockey: Michigan at Ohio State (BTN)
8:30 p.m. — NBA: Charlotte Hornets at Dallas Mavericks (ABC)
9 p.m. — College basketball: Cleveland State at Wright State (ESPN2)
9 p.m. — Women's college basketball: South Carolina at Ole Miss (ESPN)
10 p.m. — CONCACAF Champions Cup soccer:

Vancouver Whitecaps at Deportivo Saprissa (FS1)

Friday
2:30 p.m. — Bundesliga soccer: VfB Stuttgart at Bayern Munich (ESPN2)
3 p.m. — IndyCar: Grand Prix of St. Petersburg (FS1)
6 p.m. — College hockey: Michigan at Ohio State (BTN)
7 p.m. — College basketball: Davidson at VCU (ESPN2)
7 p.m. — Unrivaled basketball: Vinyl BC at Laces BC (TNT)
7:30 p.m. — NBA: Cleveland Cavaliers at Boston Celtics (ESPN)

8 p.m. — College basketball: UCLA at Purdue (FOX)

8:15 p.m. — Unrivaled basketball: Mist BC at Phantom BC (TNT)
8 p.m. — NBA: Indiana Pacers at Miami Heat (FDSN Indiana)
9 p.m. — College basketball: Iowa at Northwestern (FS1); Kent State at Akron (ESPN2)
10 p.m. — NBA: Los Angeles Clippers at Los Angeles Lakers (ESPN)
11 p.m. — College basketball: Nevada at UNLV (FS1)

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