

# The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

## Interactive duo



Ehab Tamimi

Ryanhood — Ryan Green (left) and Cameron Hood — Will perform at 7 p.m. tonight at the Jay County Campus of Arts Place in Portland. The folk rock duo has won Best Group/Duo at the International Acoustic Music Awards and has toured with Jason Mraz and Kelly Clarkson, among others. Tickets are \$9 for students and \$15 for adults and are available at [myartsplace.org](http://myartsplace.org), by calling (9260) 726-4809 or at Arts Place, 131 E. Walnut St., Portland.

## One-time friendly rivals, now award-winning pair will take stage tonight at Arts Place in Portland

By RAY COONEY  
The Commercial Review

Ryan Green and Cameron Hood started as friendly rivals. Their musical partnership has long outdistanced those early battles.

Green and Hood perform together as the musical duo Ryanhood, which will perform at 7 p.m. tonight at the Jay County Campus of Arts Place.

The duo's shows typically leads off with some "guitar fireworks" and humor, Green said.

"You get a lot of synergy and tight harmonies," he added. "You get a lot of interaction

with the audience. We began as street performers in Boston, so we've honed that kind of mentality of really being engaging and getting the audience participating and paying attention. There's a lot of humor."

They play guitar, mandolin and ukulele, and storytelling is also integral to their style. Green and Hood seek to take the audience on a journey.

"You'll clap," Green added. "You'll laugh. And you may have some emotional moments as well. ... It's kind of a full range of emotion."

Tickets for tonight's performance are \$9 for students

and \$15 for adults. They are available at [myartsplace.org](http://myartsplace.org), by calling (260) 726-4809 or by visiting Arts Place, 131 E. Walnut St., Portland.

Hood and Green were a year apart at University High School in Tucson, Arizona. During their teenage years, they were in rival rock groups that competed against each other in battle of the bands contests.

It was when Green left to go to Berklee College of Music in Boston while Hood stayed in Arizona to pursue an art degree that they formed a long-distance musical partnership.

After college, Hood moved across the country and the duo began their career as street performers at Boston's Quincy Market.

That led to performing at colleges and eventually to touring nationally. The list of artists they've toured with includes Jay-Z, Lifehouse, Train, Kelly Clarkson and Jason Mraz.

They were also featured performers at the Australia National Folk Festival in 2018.

"That was great to get to have our music bring us to the other side of the world," said Green.

See Duo page 2

## Court: Second doesn't apply to machine guns

By LESLIE BONILLA MUNIZ

Indiana Capital Chronicle  
[indianacapitalchronicle.com](http://indianacapitalchronicle.com)

The Constitution's Second Amendment protections don't include machine guns, the Indiana Court of Appeals ruled last week, citing existing case law. The term includes the fully automatic firearms and conversion devices.

Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department Officers arrested a then-18-year-old Jacob McGee, totting a Glock 22 fitted with a conversion device, in 2023. He was convicted of Level 5 felony machine gun possession in Marion Superior Court and sentenced to four years: two in community corrections and two suspended to probation.

McGee appealed. He argued Indiana's ban on machine guns violates his constitutional right to bear arms, and, alternatively, that there wasn't enough evidence that he knew the "Glock switch" made his firearm into a machine gun.

In a Feb. 19 opinion, a three-judge panel cited a long history of recognition that this constitutional right is "not unlimited." It agreed with "the overwhelming number" of federal district courts and federal appellate courts that "have uniformly concluded" that the Second Amendment's plain text doesn't protect machine guns because they're "dangerous and unusual weapons."

"McGee's Second Amendment challenge thus fails," Judge Nancy Vaidik, the opinion's author, wrote.

The judicial panel also decided there was enough evidence to support McGee's conviction.

It noted that McGee said he bought the Glock 22 in a private sale for \$800 the day before his arrest, and that it came with the switch.

See Apply page 2

## Freeze can stay in place

By GREG STOHR  
Bloomberg News  
Tribune News Service

Chief Justice John Roberts temporarily let President Donald Trump keep freezing foreign-aid payments while the U.S. Supreme Court weighs whether to lift an order that would require disbursement of as much as \$2 billion.

Acting shortly after Trump filed an emergency request, Roberts issued an administrative stay pausing a judge's order that would have required payments to be made by 11:59 p.m. Washington time Wednesday night. Roberts' order asked humanitarian groups challenging the freeze to respond by Friday at noon.

U.S. District Judge Amir Ali said Tuesday the administration had failed to comply with his earlier order to lift a freeze on foreign assistance through U.S. Agency for International Development.

### Temporary halt allowed while court considers case

Humanitarian groups say the freeze is having a devastating effect, upending hundreds of projects, forcing USAID partner groups to lay off or furlough thousands of U.S. workers and putting people who depend on the assistance at risk of disease and death. The groups say the money includes payment for work already completed.

The Trump administration says Ali overstepped his authority and imposed an impossible-to-meet deadline in his latest order.

"This new order requiring payment of enormous sums of foreign-assistance money in less

than 36 hours intrudes on the prerogatives of the executive branch," acting U.S. Solicitor General Sarah Harris said in a Wednesday night filing.

Roberts is the justice assigned to handle emergency matters involving courts in the nation's capital.

The case is the second Trump-related clash to reach the Supreme Court since he took office Jan. 20 and began aggressively trying to remake the federal government. The court so far has held off acting on Trump's bid to immediately fire the head of a federal whistleblower office.



Tribune News Service/AFP via Getty Images/Clarens Siffroy

## Fleeing violence

Men load a couch onto a truck as residents flee their homes Tuesday to escape gang violence in the Delmas neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The United Nations on Feb. 20 launched an appeal for more than \$900 million to help 3.9 million people in 2025 in Haiti, a country ravaged by gang violence where nearly half the population suffers from acute food insecurity.

### Deaths

Mike Abell, 78  
Details on page 2.

### Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 48 degrees Wednesday. The low was 29. Tonight's forecast calls for a low in the upper 20s with winds gusting to 35 mph. Expect windy conditions Saturday with a high in the lower 30s. See page 2 for an extended outlook.

### In review

Jay County Solid Waste Management District will have recycling trailers available from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday in the shopping center at 220 Lincoln St., Portland, the parking lot east of Redkey Post Office and the parking lot south of Salamonina Fire Station.

### Coming up

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

**Tuesday** — Photos from the Fort Recovery choir cabaret concert.

**Wednesday** — Coverage of next week's Jay School Board meeting.



# Obituaries

## Mike Abell

June 1, 1946-Feb. 24, 2025

Mike Abell, age 78, passed away of natural causes on Feb. 24, 2025, at the Atrium Hospital in Middletown, Ohio.



Abell

There will be a celebration of Mike's life sometime in the spring of this year.

Mike was born in Lincoln, Illinois, on June 1, 1946, to Victor and Nell (Robish) Abell. Mike graduated from high school in Lincoln, Illinois. He attended Springfield Junior College and enrolled in the U.S. Navy in 1966. He served as an electronics technician on the USS Franklin D. Roosevelt aircraft carrier during the Vietnam War

until his honorable discharge in 1969.

Mike worked for RCA Atlantic Fleets Weapons Range in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands from 1969 to 1978. While there he enjoyed diving and spearfishing.

He briefly worked for Purdue in 1979 before joining Nicollet (later acquired by GE) as a field service engineer based from his home in West Lafayette, Indiana.

Mike worked for Applied Materials in San Jose, California, from 1996 to 2001 and Intel Corporation in Colorado Springs, Colorado, from 2000 to 2001.

He was an avid amateur astronomer, actively involved with the Muncie Astronomy Club. His friend "Big" Mike Walker allowed Mike to build a personal observatory on his land near Portland, Indiana. He

enjoyed building this observatory, named "Tall Timbers." Mike imaged deep space objects, especially planetary nebulae. Some of Mike's images are displayed on the Muncie Astronomy Club website. Mike enjoyed viewing the 2024 total solar eclipse, recalling his trip to Mexico with his long-time friend Bill Annis of Haines, Alaska, to view the eclipse in 1991.

Mike was proud to be 27 years sober and was appreciative of the support he received from Alcoholics Anonymous.

Mike was preceded in death by his parents Victor and Nell Abell; his older sister Barbara (Abell) Conley and her spouse Don Conley; niece Mary (Conley) Nivens; and nephews Chuck Conley and Mike Conley.

He is survived by his brothers Vic and Carol (Elson) Abell of

West Lafayette; and Dave and Alicia (Susong) Abell of Arcata, California.

Known by many as "Uncle Mike," he is survived by numerous nieces and nephews including Anne (Abell) Nichols of College Station, Texas, Mark and Tammy (Bixler) Abell of Greenville, Ohio, Tom and Lynne (Reddington) Abell of Eugene, Oregon, Catherine "Cathy" (Conley) Kihara of Havre, Montana, Ruth (Conley) and Rick Lagerquist of Plentywood, Montana, and Carol (Conley) and Grant Sather of Meridian, Idaho.

Mike was survived by numerous grandnieces and grandnephews and was especially close to his grandniece, Sarah Abell, and grandnephew, Andrew Abell. He is also survived by numerous great-grand-

nieces and great-grand-nephews.

His family has requested that any memorial donations be made in Mike's name to the American Heart Association at P.O. Box 840692, Dallas, TX 75284-0692, or online at heart.org

Fond memories and expressions of sympathy may be shared at [zecharbailey.com](http://zecharbailey.com) for the Abell family.

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

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

## CR almanac

Saturday 3/1	Sunday 3/2	Monday 3/3	Tuesday 3/4	Wednesday 3/5
<b>31/16</b>	<b>35/24</b>	<b>46/39</b>	<b>53/50</b>	<b>53/32</b>

## Lotteries

<p><b>Powerball</b> 28-48-55-60-62 Power Ball: 20 Power Play: 2 Estimated jackpot: \$272 million</p>	<p>Daily Four: 9-4-3-5 Quick Draw: 7-13-16-17-20-24-29-41-44-50-59-60-61-62-66-67-71-73-74-75 Cash 5: 1-4-16-33-34 Estimated jackpot: \$105,000</p>
<p><b>Mega Millions</b> Estimated jackpot: \$197 million</p>	<p><b>Ohio</b> Wednesday Midday Pick 3: 9-4-0 Pick 4: 5-4-3-2 Pick 5: 4-1-8-4-8 Evening Pick 3: 6-7-1 Pick 4: 7-0-3-3 Pick 5: 8-0-1-5-8 Rolling Cash: 4-7-19-21-23 Estimated jackpot: \$140,000</p>
<p><b>Hoosier</b> Wednesday Midday Daily Three: 7-5-6 Daily Four: 6-7-8-1 Quick Draw: 6-8-11-13-16-20-24-27-33-34-35-41-45-48-49-52-55-57-65-66 Evening Daily Three: 1-2-7</p>	

## Markets

<p><b>Cooper Farms Fort Recovery</b> Corn.....4.70 April corn.....4.86 May corn.....4.92</p>	<p>March beans .....10.29 Wheat ..... 5.35</p>
<p><b>POET Biorefining Portland</b> Corn.....4.88 March corn .....4.88 April corn .....4.99</p>	<p><b>ADM Montpelier</b> Corn.....4.81 March corn .....4.81 Beans .....10.21 March beans .....10.23 Wheat .....5.34</p>
<p><b>The Andersons Richland Township</b> Corn .....4.87 March corn .....4.87 Beans .....10.29</p>	<p><b>Heartland St. Anthony</b> Corn.....4.66 March corn .....4.66 Beans .....10.00 March beans .....10.05 Wheat .....5.11</p>

## Today in history

In 1827, the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad became the first in the U.S. that was chartered for commercial transportation of freight and passengers. Baltimore was the second-largest city in the country at that time.

In 1922, Egypt was declared an independent country.

In 2018, at midnight Jay County Hospital went live with its integration into Indiana University Health, officially becoming IU Health Jay. The change had been approved by IU Health and various local officials the previous November.

In 2022, Dunkirk City Council approved 2% increases to both its water and sewer rates. The increases were part of the city's five-year utility plan and were set to go into effect June 1.

—The CR

## Citizen's calendar

<p><b>Monday</b> 4 p.m. — Jay School Board executive session, Jay County Junior-Senior High School, 2072 W. Indiana 67, Portland. 5 p.m. — Jay School Board, Jay County Junior-Senior High School, 2072 W. Indiana 67, Portland. 5:30 p.m. — Portland City Council, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St.</p>	<p>Park Board, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St.</p>
<p><b>Tuesday</b> 5:30 p.m. — Portland</p>	<p><b>Wednesday</b> 4 p.m. — Jay County Commissioners executive session, auditorium, Jay County Courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.</p>
<p><b>Thursday</b> 4 p.m. — Portland Board of Works, mayor's office, city hall, 321 N. Meridian St.</p>	

## Duo ...

Continued from page 1  
RyanHood — music and videos are available at [ryanhoo.com](http://ryanhoo.com) — has produced nine albums, including the most recent "Under the Leaves." It was named Best Group/Duo at the 2014 International Acoustic Music Awards.

Green describes their music as folk rock. "We've been called Simon and Garfunkel on

steroids," he added. "You get the harmonies and you get the sweetness of that sound but also some real high energy stuff as well — that's where the steroids part comes in, I guess."

There's something special about being part of a musical duo, Green said, especially coming from the background of being in larger bands. In those situ-

ations, there are a lot of opinions and it can be difficult to make decisions, he said. Solo artistry, meanwhile, can be lonely and lack feedback.

Working together brings a different element to creativity and performance.

"We are among each other's closest friends and also we're always trying to impress one another when we're bringing material to

each other," said Green. "We have to meet that standard ..."

"On stage as a duo, we're very spontaneous with one another and very interactive with one another. And that, to me, starts to create ... a spontaneity and interactivity with the audience as well. I think the audience sees that we're having fun with each other ..."

## Apply ...

Continued from page 1  
He testified the seller told him "what it was." When asked what one does, he responded that it "make(s) your gun shoot fast basically" but said he didn't realize it would enable

the firearm to shoot multiple bullets in a single pull of the trigger."

The trial court opined that McGee still understood the switch would amplify the gun's ability to fire beyond semi-automatic functions.

Vaidik wrote that he'd asked her court to "reweigh the evidence, which we don't do."

"The evidence is sufficient to prove McGee knew the switch made his gun a machine gun," Vaidik concluded.

## Felony court news

### Nonsupport

A Huntington woman was sentenced to jail for nonsupport of a dependent.

Jessica Butcher, 33, 1718 Park St., Huntington, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to the Level 6 felony. She was sentenced to 910 days in Jay County Jail with all but 180 days suspended and given 142 days credit for time served.

Butcher was assessed \$189 in court costs and placed on probation for 730 days. She was ordered to pay \$5,115.82 in restitution to Elizabeth A. Brotherton for the benefit of her child.

### Intimidation

A Pennville man was sentenced to jail for intimidation.

Steven E. Geesaman, 47, 6327 W. Walnut Corner Road, Pennville, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to the Level 6 felony. He was sentenced to 910 days in Jay County Jail with all but 428 days suspended and given 428 days credit for time served.

Geesaman was fined \$25, assessed \$189 in court costs and placed on probation for 482 days. As part of his plea agreement, a Class A misdemeanor for criminal trespassing was dismissed.

### Justice obstruction

A Muncie man was sentenced to prison for obstruction of justice and other charges.

Bobby J. Nealy, 43, 1200 East 18th St., Muncie, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to possession of methamphetamine and obstruction of justice, both Level 6 felonies. He was sentenced to 540 days in Indiana Department of Correction and given 32 days credit for time served.

He was assessed \$189.50 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee. As part of his plea agreement, a habitual offender enhancement was dismissed.

### Resisting law

An Indianapolis man was sentenced to jail for resisting law enforcement. Jeantinel Zephirin, 39, 3930 Breen Drive, Indianapolis, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to a Class A misdemeanor, a lesser charge. (It was origi-

nally filed as a Level 6 felony.) He was sentenced to one year in Jay County Jail with all but eight days suspended and given eight days credit for time served.

Zephirin was fined \$500, assessed \$189 in court costs and placed on probation for 357 days. As part of his plea agreement, a Class C misdemeanor for driving without a license was dismissed.

### Drug possession

Four Indiana residents were sentenced to serve time for drug possession.

Cheyenne P. Petro, 30, 519 South Spencer St., Redkey, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to possession of methamphetamine, a Level 6 felony. She was sentenced to one year in Jay County Jail with all of her sentence suspended. Petro was fined \$25, assessed \$189 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee. She was placed on probation for one year. As part of her plea agreement, a Class B misdemeanor for possession of marijuana was dismissed.

In a separate Jay Superior Court case, Petro pleaded guilty to another county of possession of methamphetamine, a Level 6 felony. She was sentenced to one year in Jay County Jail with all but 60 days of her sentence suspended and given four days credit for time served. (Petro's sentence will be served consecutively to the

first sentence.) She was placed on probation for 305 days, fined \$25, assessed \$189 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee.

Curtis W. Mock, 42, 8179 E. 550 North, Pennville, pleaded guilty in Jay Circuit Court to possession of methamphetamine, a Level 4 felony. He was sentenced to 10 years in Indiana Department of Correction with four years suspended and given credit for time served. Mock was placed on probation, assessed \$189 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee.

Jacob J. Westlake, 34, 3012 East Royerton Road, Muncie, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to possession of a narcotic drug, a Level 6 felony. He was sentenced to one year in Jay County Jail and given 316 days credit for time served. Westlake was fined \$25, assessed \$189 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$200 drug abuse, prosecution, interdiction and correction fee.

Robert J. Balle, 52, 623 ½ E. Votaw St., Portland, pleaded guilty in Jay Circuit Court to possession of methamphetamine, a Level 5 felony. His charge was lessened from a Level 4 felony. He was sentenced to three years in Indiana Department of Correction and given credit for time served. Balle was assessed

**PART-TIME**

# JOB OPPORTUNITY

## Inserters

Hours vary each week

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### SERVICES

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.

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# Ex's partner caught red-handed

By JANN BLACKSTONE  
Tribune News Service

Q. My wife and I have been doing our best to get along with her ex and his partner. We all have kids and have decided we will all be the first to call each other if there is an emergency for the kids. Because of this, we all exchanged keys to our homes in case of emergency. The kids go back and forth on a weekly basis. Yesterday I came home to find my wife's ex's partner in my garage raiding my floor freezer for lobster tails. I was so shocked I just stood there as she put the tails back in the freezer and said

## Ex-Etiquette



nothing as she walked out the side door. I have no idea how to handle this. Should I press charges? What's good ex-etiquette? A. I'm having trouble keeping a straight face right now, but I must tell you, this is not the first time I have heard a story like this. (It is the first lobster tail story; most of the time, the culprit is

stealing meat of some sort, and it has been everyone from a mother-in-law to exes, sometimes even the kids.) My first question would be do you think your wife's ex knew about this little excursion? If he didn't know about it before she did it, it might make a difference in working through it. I have dealt with a similar situation when the spouse swore he had no idea what his partner was up to, which let him off the hook, but also complicated the issue at their house. That's another column. So, what do you do? There's not much more

you can do other than call a meeting between the adults and hash it out. I suspect the ex's wife is embarrassed and doesn't really know what to say at this point. She was wrong. She broke into your home, even if she had a key, and was stealing your personal property. I would ask them how they plan to make amends and then ask for your key back. Let them know that you were doing your best to work with them, but this is a huge setback. Before the meeting I would suggest you and your wife get clear about future boundaries and make sure they are

understood in no uncertain terms. Personally, I would not be rude, but I would keep my distance in the future. Should you press charges? That's a tough one. With the kids in mind, I would weigh how pressing charges for this particular offense will affect your future interaction with the father of your wife's children. If it was me, I would make it clear that if anything close to this happened again, I will be going straight to the police. And then at that point I would be waiting for a list of things they planned on doing to make things

right. I want to make it clear I am not telling you not to press charges. If you think making an example would be more appropriate than a conversation, that is your right as a parent. But good ex-etiquette always starts with a conversation with the kids' best interest at the forefront. Jann Blackstone is a child custody mediator and the author of "The Bonus Family Handbook: The Definitive Guide to Co-parenting and Creating Stronger Families. She can be reached at bonusfamilies.com or jann@bonusfamilies.com.

# Sisters' decisions exacerbate loss of mother

DEAR ABBY: I have two sisters. Our mother passed away last year after a bad fall. I was her primary caretaker and was with her every day. The other two sisters were not speaking to her at all, which hurt her deeply. She had dementia but still missed them and would talk about them often. It was all very sad. When Mom died, my older sister wouldn't tell her goodbye. She didn't attend the

## Dear Abby



funeral and said to everyone who would listen that she wasn't sad. My younger sister arrived — late — for the funeral. Afterward, they attacked

me — screaming, cursing, etc. They were angry over small things, like the fact that I used my older sister's maiden name in a DRAFT of Mom's obituary. I cut them off and have stopped speaking to them and to the rest of the family. I want no details about my life getting back to them, giving them reason to attack me again. The problem is that my entire family is now gone. I am so sad. Not only did I lose my

mother, but everyone else as well. Should I approach them? — WORSE THAN GRIEF IN GEORGIA DEAR WORSE: I would advise against approaching your sisters again, for the reasons you stated. If you wish to contact extended family, reach out with the understanding that anything you tell them will likely drift back to your sisters. Because your siblings are so

unpleasant, it may make more sense for you to concentrate your energies on deepening the friendships you have with others. 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.

# Community Calendar

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

**Today**  
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 — BRANNA'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.

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

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS — Will meet at 6:30 p.m. each Monday at A Second Chance At Life Ministries, 228 S. Meridian St. in Portland. For more information, call Brenda Eads at (260) 726-9625 or Dave Keen at (260) 251-8792.

**Tuesday**  
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 — BRANNA'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.

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

SINGLES AND SEPARATES SUPPORT GROUP — For anyone who's lost a loved one or has a spouse living in long-term care or suffering from an illness, the group will meet at 2 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month in the Arthur & Gloria Muselman Wellness Pavilion in Berne. For more information, call Sarah Conrad at (260) 589-4496.

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

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

# Sudoku

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

Level: Advanced

## Thursday's Solution

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

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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# Time with our pets is never enough

By BAILEY CLINE  
The Commercial Review

Your pets may only be there for part of your life, but you are their whole life.

That phrase, more or less, has circulated the internet in years past, reminding pet owners to cherish their animals.

I found myself trying to make the most of those words recently.

As I started writing a draft for this column, I looked over at my senior border collie, Beauty, while she scratched that itch on her ear in just the right place. I've been blessed to share 13 years with her.

Thirteen years. She's been around for nearly half my life.

My parents lost our other family pet, 12-year-old Minnie the cat, late last year. At that time, I told Beauty she wasn't allowed to leave us any time soon.

After finding a lump on her back recently, I was worried I may have jinxed myself.

Any time you find a lump in a place there shouldn't be a lump, on a human or pet, concern is valid. Senior pets, too, are a whole different breed of worry.

## On the Line



Any out-of-place growth or mole could spell that six-letter diagnosis no one wants to hear. Nearly everyone I talked to after scheduling a veterinarian appointment said the same thing: let's hope it isn't cancer.

We've had a few health scares in recent years with Beauty after doing routine senior dog blood work, but additional testing abated our worries quickly. She's a healthy looking dog for her age.

A lump wasn't something I wanted to think about just yet.

Plus, it wasn't easy to find. A soft lump that moved around under her skin, it was hard to pinpoint. My fiancé, Justin, couldn't feel the lump when I tried to show him, but he still encouraged me to look into it.

I waited longer than I should

have to schedule the appointment. I kept thinking I was worrying over nothing like always.

Google told me it could be cancer. Then again, Google says just about any medical concern could be cancer.

I called Saturday, and the veterinary clinic fit me in for a visit Feb. 17. I spent the rest of the weekend worrying.

With her mortality in mind, I took a longer walk than usual with her the day before her appointment despite the freezing temperatures. Strolling around together in the snow felt liberating somehow. Beauty excitedly rushed ahead to sniff every mailbox, hydrant and tree she could find on our path.

By the time we returned home, she waited patiently at the door as I unlocked it. The cold had finally sunken into her thick coat.

You'd think she was freezing, too, when we made our way into the Hartford Animal Clinic's lobby that next morning. Surrounded on either side by yellow labradors, Beauty couldn't stop shaking.

She's never been a fan of other dogs. She planted herself firmly against the side of my leg farthest away from the others.

The vet tech weighed her — just under 30 pounds, a normal weight for my little lady.

We were then ushered into an exam room, where veterinarian Dustin Decker quickly appeared to check her lump.

I offered none of my internet search knowledge. Let the professional handle it, I thought.

Within a few seconds, he shared his assumption: lipoma. A quick fine needle aspiration — a cell sample extraction from the growth — indicated the same diagnosis.

Not to be confused with the lymph system cancer lymphoma, lipomas are benign skin tumors made up of fat cells. They show up as soft, moveable lumps under the skin and are typically painless for animals. They don't require treatment unless they become large or uncomfortable or interfere with movement.

I'm writing this as if I absorbed every word the vet

told me in the moment and didn't research lipomas after the fact. Truthfully, all I heard was "not cancer," "not fatal" and "no treatment needed."

I hugged Beauty as I strapped her harness into the car after leaving the clinic. She wagged her tail, licked my cheek and jumped excitedly in her seat.

My thoughts were correct — I was worrying over nothing. Then again, I'd rather pay for a quick check-up and find nothing substantial than discover a few months down the road my dog has a terminal affliction.

With a senior dog, every year that goes by together feels that much more precious. Every unremarkable test result and vet appointment help me breathe a little easier.

I don't know how much longer I have with Beauty, but I know it'll never feel like enough time. I was reminded of that the other night as she snuggled into the covers next to me before falling asleep.

However much life she has left, we'll make the most of it.

# Cast offs aren't worth the trouble

By MORTON J. MARCUS

Ah, there was good news recently.

I say recently because it may no longer be the case given the rapidity with which ideas of all sorts, creative and idiotic, float in and out of the Indiana General Assembly.

A bill (House Bill 1008, as amended) imagines Indiana counties joining together, by a vote of the people, to consider "the possibility of a county: 1. separating from the State of Indiana to form a new state; [or] 2. separating from the State of Indiana to join another state."

And you thought only President Donald Trump was capable of disruptive initiatives. Here we have three disruptive thoughts borne out of the original HB 1008, which itself was a near-revolutionary act. That bill would have established the Indiana-Illinois boundary adjustment commission "to discuss and recommend whether it is advisable to adjust the boundaries between the two states."

Adjust boundaries? Don't the existing state boundaries predate the villainy of Eve and the Snake? The unamended bill has no public participation in the process. It is pure Hoosier.

Recommendations are made to the governor by the commission members who are appointed by the self-same governor. Even if accepted by that potentate, nothing will be done prior to approval by the Indiana and Illinois legislatures and the U.S. Congress.

But let's not get hung up in the process and instead consider the larger question: Which of Illinois' 102 counties do we desire to add to our land area? My guess would be Cook and Will Counties, but I'm a dreamer not a legislator.

Let's pretend that we were interested in having control of the Wabash River which separates Indiana from Illinois from south of Terre Haute (Vigo County) down to the Ohio River.

Five Illinois counties (Clark, Crawford, Lawrence, Wabash and White) would become part of Indiana. There's the

## Eye on the Pie



**Each of these five Illinois counties has lost population in the past 10 years.**

first problem. All those names are currently used by Indiana counties. Which will give up their current names, the rebellious of Illinois or the acquisitive of Indiana?

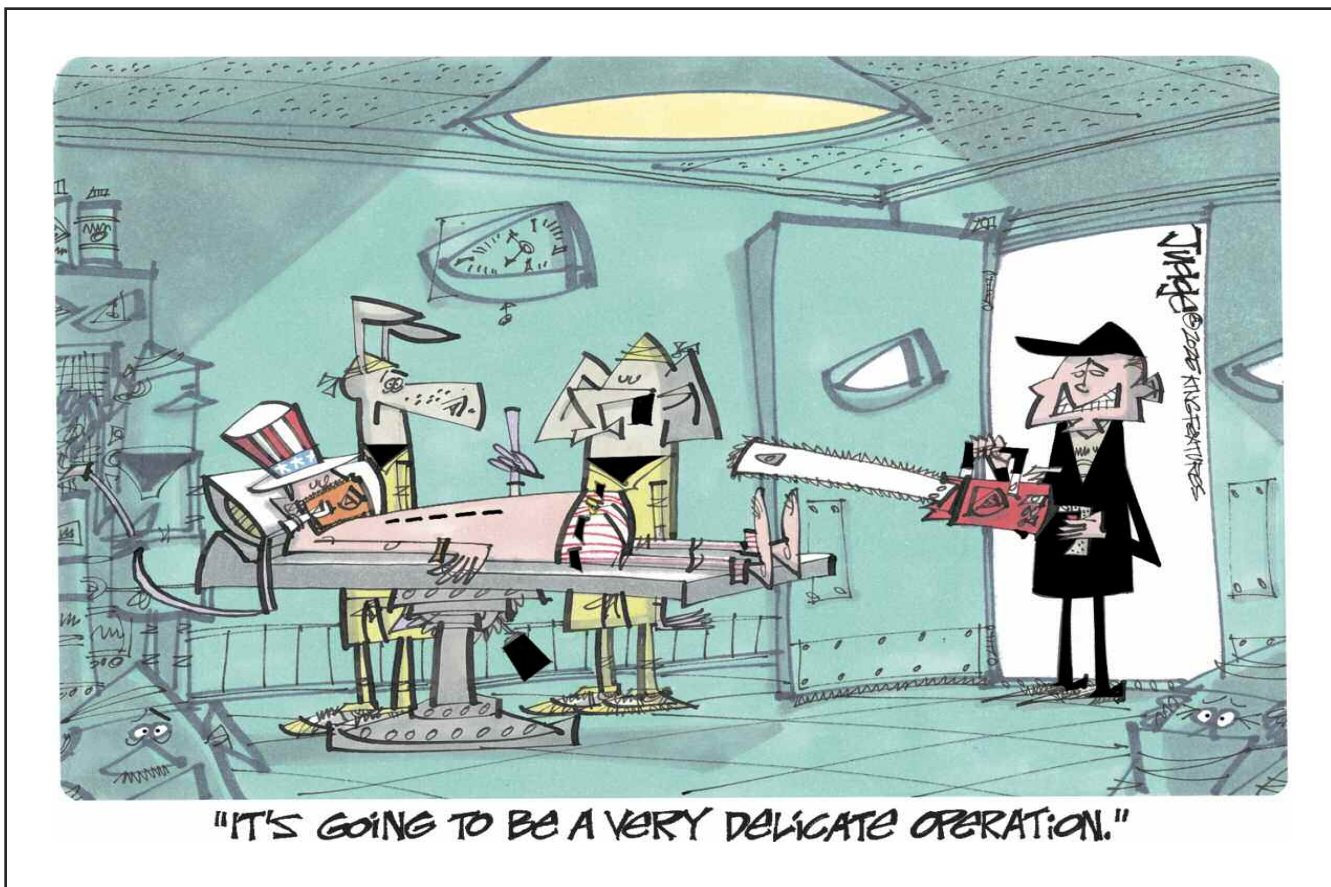
What would we gain? Five counties with 72,500 persons. Each of these five Illinois counties has lost population in the past 10 years. Together their populations have declined by 7.7%.

In this respect they match up well with our five counties that border Illinois across the Wabash River. These are Vigo, Sullivan, Knox, Gibson and Posey, each of which have also lost population in the past 10 years. As a group, the five Indiana counties lost 2.3% of their populations.

In terms of total personal income, the Illinois-5 saw a growth of 30% over 10 years, while Indiana's counties had a 42% increase. The resultant growth in per capita personal income for the Indiana-5 was 45% compared to 41% in the five counties to the west.

In sum, the Illinois-5 are neither numerous nor wealthy enough for us to get excited about adding them to our illustrious 92 counties. We would have to grab off a richer, more populous set of counties before accepting our neighbors' poor cast-offs.

Marcus is an economist. Email him at [mortonjmarcus@gmail.com](mailto:mortonjmarcus@gmail.com).



# Some critical thinking is required

Chicago Tribune  
Tribune News Service

On "CBS Mornings" Wednesday, Gayle King asked Ed Bastian, CEO of Delta Airlines, if he was concerned by what she referred to as the Trump administration's firing of "many employees of the FAA."

She went on to imply, without evidence, that the recent plane crashes might have had something to do with those actions. "After looking at all these mishaps," King said, wearing a concerned expression, "A lot of people are very nervous."

Bastian was having none of that. He said there had been less than 400 support-staff job cuts in an agency that employs some 50,000 and that he was satisfied they had no impact on safety and that hirings were soon to follow.

"The Trump administration has committed to investing deeply in terms of improving the overall technologies that are used in the air traffic control systems and modernizing the skies," he said. "They've committed to hiring additional controllers and investigators, and safety and investigators. So no, I'm not concerned with that at all."

For those on the right who look for evidence of media bias, the exchange was red meat, especially since King looked shocked, even disappointed, by Bastian's unequivocal answer, countering a dominant narrative that the new administration was destroying any and all responsibilities of the federal government.

Worse for King, this was not some administration operative, or even a political appointee such as the new secretary of transportation, Sean Duffy. This was the CEO of one of America's largest airlines and some-

## Guest Editorial

one who surely would be sounding an alarm if there was new reason to worry about the safety of the nation's skies.

In fact, he was doing the opposite, stating the opinion that the FAA has long been limited by outdated technological equipment and that the new administration had committed to rectifying that situation.

At the same time, though, he was also making the point that there has been no evidence yet presented by the National Transportation Safety Board or any other such body that problems at the FAA had contributed to the recent incidents either at Washington Reagan Airport or this week in Toronto, which is, of course, under Canadian jurisdiction. Both of those incidents are under investigation and, even allowing for them, Bastian was of course right to point out that air travel remains far and away the safest mode of mechanized transportation in the United States.

We say King was doing her job and asking a question on everyone's mind, whatever the look on her face. But we're also glad Bastian batted it down. After former Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, who should know better; tried to score some political points with his base by making a similar vague implication, Duffy said on X Thursday that the Trump administration plans to invest major new resources and immediately over-

haul "our outdated, World War II-era air traffic control system."

If we were in less polarized times, we'd all be cheering that initiative and, more importantly, holding this administration to that promise. Especially since we all know they don't always keep their promises. It would also not be controversial to assert that talking to some of Elon Musk's SpaceX technical team, and letting them look at the FAA's wheezing technology, is not an inherently bad idea. There are some smart people there. They may have some good ideas for improvement.

We share much of the alarm at the activities, and the modus operandi, of the Department of Government Efficiency, commonly known as DOGE. And we abhor Trump's appalling implication that "DEI" was likely responsible for the crashes. No evidence has been presented of that, either. He should have remained silent.

But the situation with the FAA is a reminder that critical thinkers know that more than one thing can be true at once.

The Trump administration can be setting about trying to destroy some of the crucial functions of the federal government even as they also try to improve at least one of them, the agency that keeps us safe in the skies. Smart Democrats will oppose policies that harm Americans and weaken the nation while supporting initiatives that enhance safety and strengthen the country.

Otherwise, it will be a very long four years that could leave the country in rubble.

Clearly, Delta's Bastian understands that all too well and had the courage to say so. Good for him.

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—Thomas Jefferson

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# Is there a better way?

## Killing 166 million birds has not stopped H5N1

By **SUSANNE RUST**  
and **KAREN KAPLAN**  
Los Angeles Times  
Tribune News Service

When the deadly H5N1 bird flu virus made its first appearance at a U.S. poultry farm in February 2022, roughly 29,000 turkeys at an Indiana facility were sacrificed in an attempt to avert a larger outbreak.

It didn't work. Three years later, highly pathogenic avian influenza has spread to all 50 states. The number of commercial birds that have died or been killed exceeds 166 million and the price of eggs is at an all-time high.

Poultry producers, infectious disease experts and government officials now concede that H5N1 is likely here to stay. That recognition is prompting some of them to question whether the long-standing practice of culling every single bird on an infected farm is sustainable over the long-term.

Instead, they are discussing such strategies as targeted depopulation, vaccinations, and even the relocation of wetlands and bodies of water to lure virus-carrying wild birds away from poultry farms.

But each of these alternatives entails a variety of logistical, economic and environmental costs that may eclipse the intended savings.

"People talk about common-sense solutions to bird flu," said Dr. Maurice Pitesky, a veterinarian and commercial poultry expert at UC Davis. "But that's what mass culling is. There's a reason we've been doing it: It's common sense."

The current version of the bird flu — known as H5N1 2.3.4.4b — is both highly contagious and highly lethal. It has plowed through the nation's commercial chickens, turkeys and ducks with a mortality rate of nearly 100%.

"There's a reason why they call it 'highly pathogenic avian influenza,'" said Angela Rasmussen, a virologist at the University of Saskatchewan's Vaccine and Infectious Disease Research Organization. "It just goes straight through a flock like a hot knife through butter."

And it's why most researchers and veterinarians promote mass culling, describing it as humane and cost-effective.

A natural death from H5N1 is not pleasant for a chicken, said Rasmussen. The virus produces a gastrointestinal infection, so the birds wind up dying of diarrhea along with respiratory distress.

"It's like Ebola without the hemorrhage," she said.

Sparing birds that don't look sick is a gamble. They may be infected and able to spread the virus through their poop before they have any outward signs of illness. The only way to know for sure is to test each bird individually — an expensive and time-consuming prospect. And if even a



Tribune News Service/Getty Images/AFP/Moises Avilla

Hens for sale roam in their cage at Wabash Feed & Garden store in Houston, Texas, on Feb. 10. A resurgence of avian flu, which first struck the United States in 2022, is hitting chicken farms hard, sending egg prices soaring and rattling consumers accustomed to buying this dietary staple for only a few dollars.

single infected bird is missed, it can spread the virus to an entire flock of replacements, Rasmussen said.

Besides, she said, all of the extra work that would go into making sure some chickens can stay alive would only drive up labor costs and ultimately make eggs more expensive.

It also has the potential to increase the total amount of virus on farms, which is dangerous for human poultry workers, said Dr. Ashish Jha, dean of the Brown University School of Public Health.

"One of the reasons to cull early is that you don't want a lot of bird-human exposures," he said. "The more infections we introduce to humans, the more mutations we're going to see that increase the risk for a broader epidemic or pandemic."

For all of these reasons, international trade agreements require mass culling — also known as "stamping out" — so that importers don't get a side of H5N1 with their poultry, said Dr. Carol Cardona, a veterinarian and avian influenza researcher at the University of Minnesota.

That's not the only financial incentive for mass culling. The USDA reimburses farmers for eggs and birds that have to be killed to contain an outbreak, but not for birds that die of the flu.

Yet at times, this has meant killing more than 4.2 million birds, most of which may have been healthy.

Bill Mattos, president of the California Poultry Federation, said a more targeted

approach could be feasible when all birds are not living under the same roof. In California, for instance, farms that raise broiler chickens typically operate multiple stand-alone buildings with separate ventilation systems, entryways and exits.

Biosecurity measures like these can keep pathogens from spreading between barns, Cardona said. Risks could be reduced further by requiring workers to change their clothes and boots when moving from barn to barn, or by assigning workers to a single barn, she said.

But others, including Dr. John Korslund, a veterinarian and former USDA researcher, are skeptical that such a practice could work, considering the virulence of H5N1.

"Chickens are infected and shedding virus very early, often before visible evidence of clinical illness," Korslund said. "Odds are that 'healthy' buildings on infected premises may be in reality in the early stages of incubating infections," he said.

While it was possible some buildings might remain virus free, and some birds could be salvaged, the downsides of this approach are huge, Korslund said. "A lot of additional virus will be put into the environment," he said.

Indeed, flu particles from one facility can escape exhaust fans and travel great distances, said Michael Osterholm, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota. Studies have shown that "the movement

of virus from farm to farm was associated with wind direction and speed," he said.

Bird flu vaccines may offer some protection. Both China and France use them, and the USDA granted a conditional license this month for an H5N2 vaccine designed for chickens, according to Zoetis, the company that developed it.

While some are heralding vaccines as a potential tool to inoculate the nation's poultry farms, others say the costs could be too much.

Most U.S. trade partners are not keen to import poultry products from countries that vaccinate their birds due to concerns that the shots can mask the presence of the virus. And most will blackball a nation's entire poultry portfolio, even if just one region or type of poultry is infected.

The U.S. exports more than 6.7 billion pounds of chicken meat each year, second only to Brazil, according to the National Chicken Council. So as long as foreign buyers are resistant to vaccination, the shots probably won't be deployed even if egg-laying hens are getting wiped out by the virus.

As members of the U.S. Congressional and Senate Chicken Caucuses wrote in a letter this month to the USDA, "if an egg-laying hen in Michigan is vaccinated for HPAI, the U.S. right now would likely be unable to export an unvaccinated broiler chicken from Mississippi."

The new H5N2 vaccine might allay such concerns. While it

would offer protection against H5N1, it would elicit antibodies that look distinct from the ones that arise from an actual infection, Cardona said.

Pitesky said that none of these measures will work if we don't do a better job with flu surveillance and farm placement.

Wildlife and agriculture officials should ramp up their testing of wild birds to determine where the virus is moving and how it is evolving, he said. That will require global coordination because infected birds can travel back and forth between the U.S., Canada, Russia, East Asia and Europe.

Poultry farms near ponds, lagoons or wetlands that attract wild birds should be on high alert during migration season, Pitesky said. Farmers should use apps such as eBird, Bird-Cast or the Waterfowl Alert Network to keep tabs on when the birds are nearby so they can step up their biosecurity measures as needed, he said.

It may be possible to lure wild birds away from agricultural facilities by bolstering wetlands in more remote areas, he said.

"I keep pushing the idea of starting to reflood some of those wetlands, but we haven't done it in any kind of strategic fashion," Pitesky said.

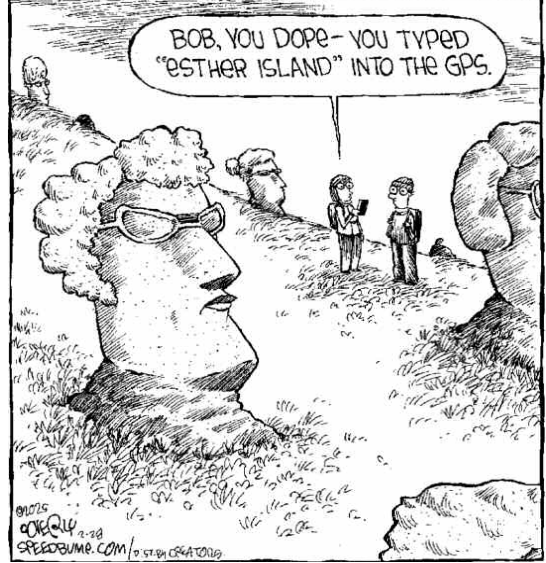
The idea makes sense, but has been brushed off as "pie in the sky, which I push back on," he said. "I'm like, what we're doing right now is obviously not working."

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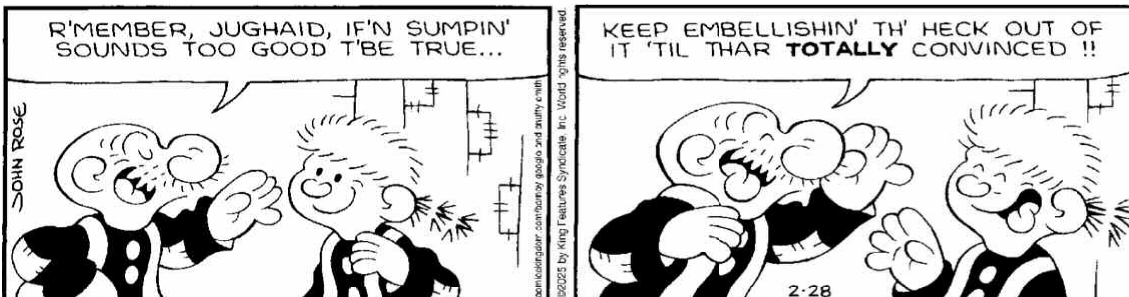
Between Friends



Blondie



Snuffy Smith



Beetle Bailey



Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

Test your play

1. You are declarer with the West hand at Four Hearts, and North leads the three of diamonds. South wins with the ace and returns the deuce of diamonds to your king. Assuming that trumps are divided 2-2, how would you play the hand?

WEST EAST  
♠ 9 5 4 ♠ K 3  
♥ A Q 10 7 ♥ K J 9 5 2  
♦ K Q ♦ 9 6 4  
♣ A 6 5 3 ♣ K J 8

2. You are declarer with the West hand at Three Notrump. North leads the six of spades, and you win South's jack with the queen. How would you play the hand?

WEST EAST  
♠ A Q 10 ♠ 8 4 2  
♥ A 10 3 ♥ K J 6  
♦ A 10 5 ♦ Q J 8  
♣ Q 9 8 2 ♣ K J 10 5

1. To assure 10 tricks, draw two rounds of trump, ruff dummy's nine of diamonds and lead a low club. If North follows low, finesse the eight! Even if South wins the eight with the nine or ten, he must hand you the contract, whatever he returns.

Thus, a club return into dummy's K-J would allow you to eventually discard a spade from dummy on

your ace of clubs; a spade return would establish dummy's king; and a diamond return would allow you to ruff in your hand and discard a spade from dummy.

If North happens to produce the nine or ten when you lead a low club toward the K-J-8, you simply cover with the jack to create the same impregnable position.

2. The contract is certain if you play correctly. All you have to do to ensure a favorable outcome is to cross to the king of hearts, lead the queen of diamonds and finesse. If the queen loses to the king, North cannot return a spade or a heart without handing you a trick, after which you can guarantee 10 tricks by driving out the ace of clubs. If he returns a diamond or club instead, you simply establish clubs to assure nine tricks.

If the diamond finesse wins at trick at three, you abandon the suit and shift your attention to clubs, forcing out the ace. Again, you are sure of at least nine tricks.

If you were to lead a club at trick two, which is tempting, you could wind up with your arm in a sling. South might win with the ace and return a spade, and the contract would then be up for grabs.

Tomorrow: A matter of logic.  
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2-28

CRYPTOQUIP

IBV'FG XROLCD ZG EB PBCRVZG  
EULR PVFTI PXSSXDG QXFLGEI  
GQGGFI AXI XE ALCCGFELZG?

BU, OXTG CB!

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHAT COULD YOU CALL SOMEONE WHO IS SHARING A SUGARY DESSERT WITH YOU? YOUR SWEET-MATE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: F equals R

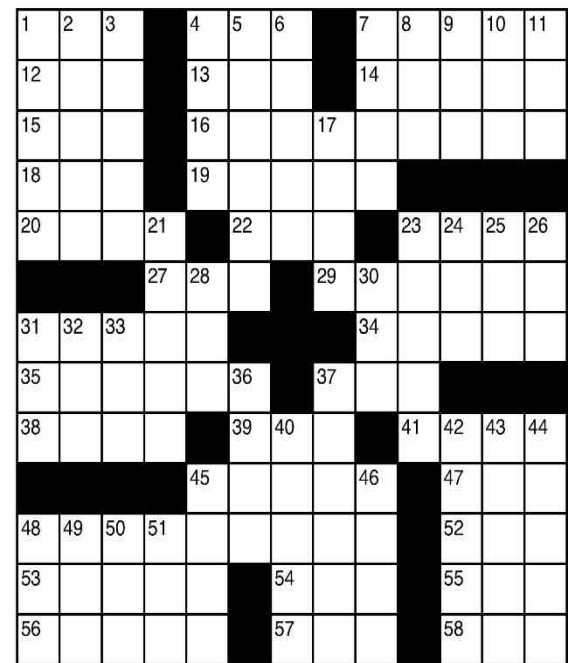
CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 41 "Lotus position" 2 White on "Wheel of Fortune" 23 Wander off  
1 Den sets discipline 24 Mimic  
4 Ecol. watchdog 45 Prepared to pray 3 Packs away Vardalos  
7 Object (to) 47 Chum for short 4 Big fair, for short 26 Jewel  
12 Stetson, e.g. 48 Slow-cooked entrees 5 Eye slyly Diner  
13 Ballot marks 52 911 responder 6 Jellied entree order-taker  
14 Resident of Tabriz 53 Iroquoian language 7 "Carpe —!" 30 Peculiar  
15 Artist Yoko 54 Bubble — 9 Atlas page long time 31 Saigon soup  
16 West Indian stew 55 Old Oldsmobile 10 Popular card game 32 Very long time  
18 SSE's opposite 56 Goddess with a bow 11 Slowing, in music (Abb.) 33 Noshed  
19 Poppy drug 57 Bobby of hockey 58 Billboards 17 " —" 34 Albacore, e.g.  
20 Deep cut 22 Oft-torn knee part, for short 23 Crooned 27 Astern 29 Comfort food with a crust  
31 Oyster's prize 34 Ambition 35 Chinese stew 37 Rx overseer 38 Till bills 39 — tree

Solution time: 25 mins.

WHO GIRD CCED  
YON NCAAL LATE  
ONEPOUND ELAN  
TAM IDEALLY  
STEREO YEN  
EON SUD KUALA  
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# First in seven years

*Tribe beat Riverside 45-37 to earn first trip to district finals since 2017*

By **ANDREW BALKO**  
The Commercial Review

TROY, Ohio — Jaxon Woods posed a significant threat to the Tribe's odds at a postseason run.

A key offensive foul forced the Pirate forward to take a back-seat in the third quarter.

With Woods not posing a threat, the Indians were able to utilize a 1-3-1 zone to force turnovers, get out in transition and build enough of a lead to carry them the distance.

The sixth-seeded Fort Recovery High School basketball team punched its ticket to the district finals for the first time since 2017 by beating the No. 5 seed Riverside Pirates 45-37 in the OHSAA Division VI Southwest 1 District opener on Wednesday at Troy.

The win snaps a seven-year drought of failing to reach the district finals. The Tribe (8-16) last reached the district final in 2017, when it fell to the top-seeded Perry 54-45. Fort Recovery is now slated to face the second-seeded Anna Rockets (14-10) at Troy on Saturday at 11 a.m.

"It's been a long time coming but it feels great," said FRHS coach Bob Leverette. "This was one of our goals to start the season and now we get to play for it. Those kids could have quit, 6-16 season. They believed in what we were selling them. Ended the season pretty tough against a couple good teams. They didn't take too much away from that, stayed focused and now they get to play for a district title."

Through the first half, Woods scored 10 points on 4-of-6 from the field. He had two of the five first-quarter points before picking up a second foul on a charge. He sat the final two minutes of the first before coming back in the second to score seven more points, giving RHS a 19-16 advantage at the half.

The Indians (8-16) scored the first bucket of the second half as Briggs Overman took the ball coast-to-coast for a three-point play that tied the game. On the following play, Woods picked up his third foul as he tried to set a screen on Grant Fortkamp near

the volleyball line. Saddled with his third foul, Woods — who finished as the game's leading scorer with 21 points — was forced to be less aggressive on offense.

"It was just huge for momentum," Leverette said. "You could feel it out of our bench and the players on the floor. It was very big and probably the deciding factor in the game."

The Indians then flipped from their man-to-man defense to guard the Pirates (8-16) in a 1-3-1 zone. Without having to worry about Woods attacking the rim as relentlessly, the zone was able to cause chaos by either forcing a turnover or eliciting a quick contested shot inside the arc.

"That (1-3-1) we run really locks them down," said Fortkamp, who plays the top position of the zone. "When we can get Breaker (Jutte) and Brody (Barga) on the wings with their long arms, getting them in the corner, most teams freak out. We were able to freak them out a little bit and slow them down."

The stops led to FRHS getting out in transition, where it scored nine unanswered for an 11-0 run. Gavin Evers scored two points off of free throws and Overman split a pair of free throws as well. The other six points came from Fortkamp on a backcourt bucket when Jutte stole an inbound pass and shuffled it off to the guard, a triple on an Evers assist and split a pair of free throws after Post dove on a defensive rebound near midcourt and flipped the ball over his head to Fortkamp.

After the Indians built a nine-point lead, Riverside ended the period on a 5-2 run, but the damage was done. Fort Recovery extended its lead to 14 after scoring the first three baskets of the final period on a Barga post move and back-to-back three-point plays by Overman and Fortkamp.

Evers finished as Fort Recovery's offensive leader with 12 points. He shot a perfect 4-of-4 from the free-throw line and the field.

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The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Brody Barga of the Fort Recovery boys basketball team puts up a bunny during the OHSAA Division VI Southwest 1 district opener victory over Riverside at Troy on Wednesday. Barga led the Indians with 14 rebounds and three assists, while putting up eight points in the 54-37 win.

## Tribe takes on state



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Fort Recovery High School's Anthony Roessner follows through after rolling his ball at Monday's practice at Miracle Lanes. Roessner and the other Indians will travel to H.P. Lanes in Columbus for their first trip to the state tournament in program history.

*Tribe boys bowling look to enjoy first state experience, sitting ninth heading into tournament*

By **ANDREW BALKO**  
The Commercial Review

The Indians fell 65 pins short of a state berth in 2024.

Having graduated five of the top seven bowlers, including the Midwest Athletic Conference Bowler of the Year, it didn't appear as though the Tribe was set up to make another serious push at its first state berth.

Not only did the Indians smash those expectations, their district scores imply they may also have a chance to push into the top eight and advance once they get there. Either way, the Tribe plans on enjoying its first experience in Columbus.

The Fort Recovery High School boys bowling team will travel to Columbus on Saturday to compete in the OHSAA Division II State Finals at H.P. Lanes for the first time in program history.

Bowling will start with the qualifying round at 10:45 a.m. with three individual games and three Baker games. The top eight teams then advance to bracket play, in which teams will bowl a best-of-

five series of Baker

games. Despite losing five seniors from the MAC runner-up team that fell two spots short of a trip to state in 2024, Fort Recovery managed to find a groove late in the season, culminating in a fourth-place finish at the district tournament to clinch the final state berth.

"At the beginning of the year we had our struggles and it was a big step off," said assistant and acting head coach Lucas Acheson. (The reigning MAC Bowler of the Year and 2024 FRHS graduate has led the Indians throughout the post-season as coach Corey Gerlach was tied up with work responsibilities.) "Right away we knew that roles needed to be filled. ... All five seniors left last year and this year we've had a lot of people come and build off each other. No one has been the key player. We've all been playing together and there hasn't been one stand out. They've all been doing good this year."

While Fort Recovery

had relatively even performances throughout the season, senior Riley Grieshop — one of the two returning bowlers alongside Gabe Acheson — delivered a career-high series of 702 (223, 226, 253), which clocked in as the ninth best performance from the various districts. At state, the top five bowlers make the all-state first time, while bowlers No. 6 through 10 are on the second team and five more get named as honorable mention.

While Grieshop could be in the running for some all-state recognition by putting up a similar performance, he plans on trying to stay loose heading into the tournament.

"Honestly, I'm just bowling and not thinking about anything else," Grieshop said. "I really just think about nothing, throw the ball and let the ball do the work."

Joining Grieshop and Gabe Acheson are senior Eli Lennartz, juniors Garrett Diller, Reece LeFevre and Anthony Roessner, and freshman Leland Wilson.

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