

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

County to allow virtual attendance

Commissioners approve resolution that lays out rules

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review

Portland has had an ordinance establishing rules for attending city meetings electronically for almost three years.

The county is now pursuing similar legislation.

Jay County Commissioners approved a resolution Monday laying out stipulations for commissioners to attend meetings virtually. (Jay County Council will likely look into the same resolution for its members during its meeting Wednesday.)

County attorney Wes Schemenaur explained the policy allows commissioners to attend meetings remotely. At least 50% — two commissioners — of

the governing body must be present in person to allow for electronic participation.

“(You) still need to have a quorum physically present, so, but if one of you were going to be gone for vacation or work and still really wanted to be a part of the commissioner meeting, you could, (you) just have to be seen and heard if you want to vote,” said Schemenaur.

The county would need to figure out video chat services compatible with its livestreaming software, he added.

Per the resolution, which lines up with rules set forth in Indiana Code 5-14-1.5-3.5, commissioners may not attend more than 50% of their meetings remotely in a calendar year. Commissioners also may not attend more than two meetings in a row virtually — exceptions to that rule include situations caused by military service, illness or medical conditions, death of a relative or an emergency involving actual or threatened injury to people or property.

See **County** page 2



The Commercial Review/Bailey Cline

Trump: Economy faces a transition

sition, because what we’re doing is very big.”

While declining to address the question, Trump’s response broadly aligns with his speech to Congress last week and a flurry of recent comments from top administration officials, including Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent. At the core of the Trump team’s argument is the prospect of tax cuts and tariff revenue down the road that officials contend will spur the economy.

Trump’s on-again, off-again tariff policies have rattled investors, triggering a selloff in technology shares and levels of volatility not seen in years. Bessent said Friday on CNBC that the U.S. economy needs “detox” to wean it off dependence on public spending and bond traders are signaling an increasing risk that the U.S. economy will stall.

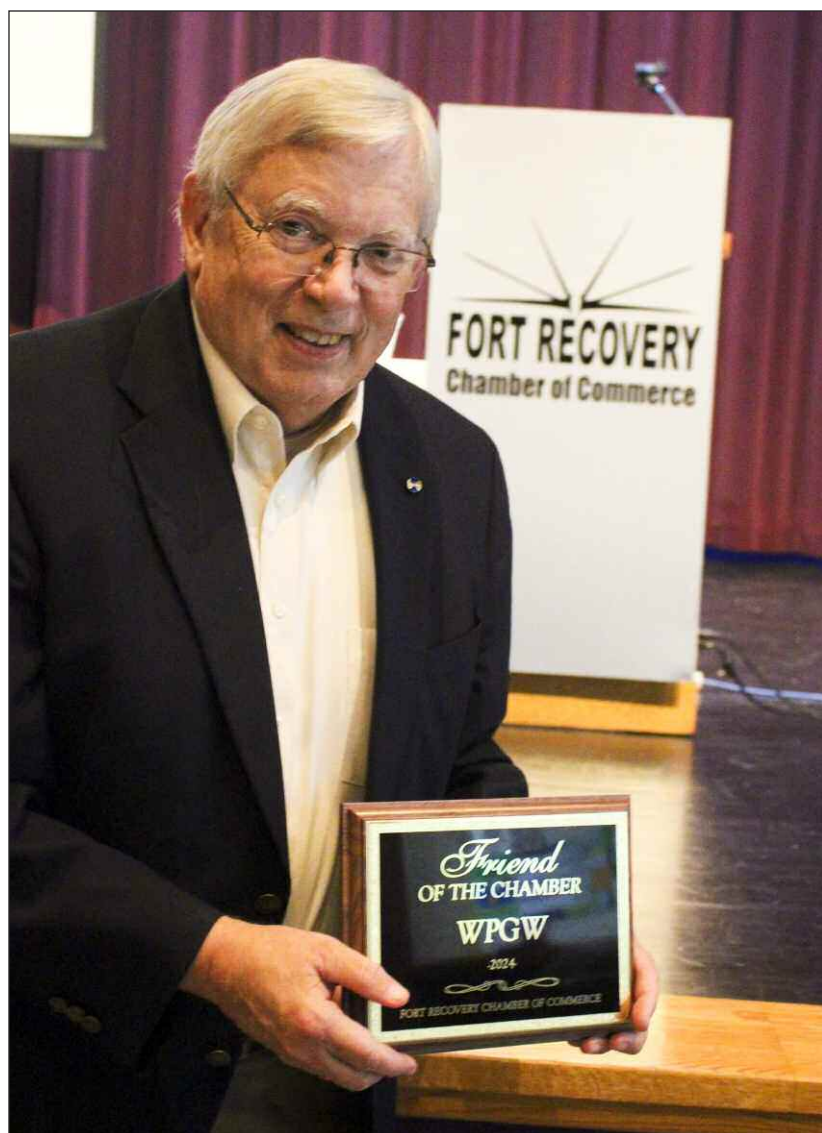
See **Economy** page 2

President avoids calling situation a recession

By MARIA PAULA MIJARES TORRES
Bloomberg News
Tribune News Service

President Donald Trump said the U.S. economy faces “a period of transition,” deflecting concerns about the risks of a U.S. slowdown as his early focus on tariffs and federal job cuts cause market turmoil.

Asked on Fox News’ Sunday Morning Futures whether he’s expecting a recession this year, Trump said, “I hate to predict things like that. There is a period of tran-



FR honors

Fort Recovery Chamber of Commerce recognized several active members of the community Sunday at its annual awards banquet.

Pictured above, 2024 Hall of Fame inductee Helen LeFevre shares information about the village’s history and ongoing projects, such as work at Fort Recovery Morvilius Opera House.

At left, Rob Weaver holds the Friend of the Chamber award, the first award of its kind to be given by the chamber. Weaver’s radio station — he’s in the process of selling WPGW Radio and its sister stations to Portland resident Mark King — has covered the Fort Recovery community for decades.



Tribune News Service/Getty Images/AFP/Amer Hilabi

Flags of Saudi Arabia and Ukraine line the King Abdulaziz Road in the Saudi Red Sea port city of Jeddah ahead of a visit by the Ukrainian President on Monday. Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was due to arrive in Saudi Arabia, a day ahead of crucial talks between Ukrainian and U.S. officials on ending the war with Russia.

U.S. to press for commitments

By ALBERTO NARDELLIA and NATALIA DROZDIK
Bloomberg News
Tribune News Service

U.S. and Ukrainian officials will meet in Saudi Arabia this week to discuss the timing and scope of an initial ceasefire with Russia, with multiple points of tension still to be ironed out.

The planned talks in Jeddah will follow several days of intense pressure by President Donald Trump’s administration on the Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelenskyy, including the suspension of military aid and intelligence assistance. Those moves were designed to persuade him to agree to a partial truce that would then enable negotiations to halt the three-year Russian invasion.

Talks are planned for meeting in Saudi Arabia

Trump said on Air Force One his administration has largely lifted the freeze on intelligence sharing with Ukraine — a move described by international officials as particularly damaging — as he looks to push both Kyiv and Moscow to the negotiating table. “We want to do anything we can to get Ukraine serious about getting something done,” he told reporters.

An economic agreement between Washington and Kyiv o

n Ukraine’s natural resources has been tied to securing a truce commitment, Bloomberg News has reported. Trump said Sunday he believes Zelenskyy will come back and sign the resources deal, which has been on hold since the acrimonious White House meeting between the two leaders on Feb. 28.

“I think it’ll happen,” the U.S. president told Fox News. See **Press** page 2

Deaths

Ida Wayman, 89, Portland
Bonnie Mills, 87, Portland
Details on page 2.

Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 56 degrees Sunday. The low was 34.

Tonight’s low will be in the mid 30s. Expect partly cloudy skies Wednesday with a high in the mid 60s. His are expected to climb into the 70s on Friday.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

Jay County Public Library will host Seussville in celebration of the birthday of Dr. Seuss from 5 to 7 p.m. Thursday. The event will include crafts, snacks, games and other activities.

The library is located at 315 N. Ship St., Portland. For more information, visit jaycpl.lib.in.us.

Coming up

Wednesday — Photos from Monday’s Jay County High School choir performance.

Thursday — Results from the Jay County junior high swim team.

Friday — Coverage of this week’s Jay County Council meeting.



Obituaries

Ida Wayman

June 9, 1935-March 9, 2025
Ida Berniece Wayman, age 89, a resident of Portland, passed away on Sunday, March 9, 2025, at IU Health Ball Hospital in Muncie. She was a former resident of Pennville.



Wayman

Ida was born June 9, 1935, in Lebanon, Missouri, the daughter of Emmitt and Pearl May (Eilestine) Rippey. She married Hubert Wayman, Jr. on Nov. 25, 1955, and he passed away on July 9, 2023.

Survivors include:

Her children — Rick Wayman (wife: Sheila), Dunkirk, Indiana, Joy Ruble, Pennville, Indiana, and William Wayman, Montpelier, Indiana

One sister — Barbara Cansler, Wabash, Indiana

Ten grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren

Several nieces and nephews

Visitation will be held on Friday from 10 to 11 a.m. at Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home in Portland. Funeral services will follow at 11 a.m. on Friday at the funeral home. Pastor Steve Arnold will officiate and burial will follow at IOOF Twin Hill Cemetery in Pennville.

Memorials may be directed to

the Jay County Cancer Society or the Parkinson's Foundation.

Condolences may be expressed at williamsonspencer.com.

Bonnie Mills

April 23, 1937-March 8, 2025
Bonnie Lou Mills, age 87, of Portland passed away on Saturday, March 8, 2025, at Persimmon Ridge Rehabilitation Centre in Portland.

She was born in Jay County on April 23, 1937, the daughter of Frank E. Layman Sr. and Lulah (Benn) Layman. She was married on Aug. 17, 1952, to Howard Lee Mills, and he passed away on Oct. 8, 2001.

Bonnie drove school bus for Jay School Corporation. She was

an avid bowler, loved to travel and play cards.

Surviving are one son, Daniel Mills (wife: Jane) of Bluffton; two daughters, Betty St. Myers (husband: Terry) of Portland and Wanda Ledbetter (husband: Michael) of Portland; one brother, Frank E. Layman Jr. of Muncie; one sister, Ginger Murrell of Muncie; four grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by a brother, Larry Layman.

There will be no funeral services.



Mills

Burial will be in the Salamina Cemetery.

Memorials can be made to the Portland Foundation or the Jay County Humane Society.

Baird-Freeman Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Condolences can be made at bairdfreeman.com.

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

Wednesday 3/12	Thursday 3/13	Friday 3/14	Saturday 3/15	Sunday 3/16
69/41	67/48	76/59	67/50	52/31
Wednesday's forecast shows mostly sunny skies with highs in the mid to upper 60s.	Thursday looks to be mostly sunny with a slight chance of rain in the afternoon.	Friday's weather calls for mostly sunny skies and warm temperatures in the mid 70s.	There's a 70% chance of rain on Saturday with highs in the upper 60s.	Sunday has a slight chance of rain. Otherwise, temperatures may dip to 31 late.

Lotteries

Powerball Estimated jackpot: \$335 million	19-23-33-40-42-46-51-53-54-56-57-58-63-65-73-76 Cash 5: 5-9-10-26-34 Estimated jackpot: \$90,000
Mega Millions Estimated jackpot: \$256 million	Ohio Sunday Midday Pick 3: 2-0-5 Pick 4: 7-1-1-8 Pick 5: 9-6-0-0-5 Evening Pick 3: 4-7-4 Pick 4: 5-6-2-6 Pick 5: 9-0-4-4-8 Rolling Cash 5: 4-5-11-24-27 Estimated jackpot: \$150,000
Hoosier Sunday Midday Daily Three: 9-3-9 Daily Four: 7-3-6-1 Quick Draw: 2-3-8-17-25-27-34-36-40-50-52-54-56-57-59-65-69-71-78-80 Evening Daily Three: 4-1-7 Daily Four: 7-9-2-9 Quick Draw: 3-9-11-18-	

Markets

Cooper Farms	April beans10.11
Fort Recovery	Wheat 5.17
Corn.....4.53	ADM
April corn4.65	Montpelier
May corn.....4.71	Corn.....4.63
POET Biorefining	April corn4.66
Portland	Beans.....9.97
Corn.....4.81	April beans10.00
April corn4.76	Wheat5.21
May corn4.81	Heartland
The Andersons	St. Anthony
Richland Township	Corn.....4.56
Corn4.76	May corn.....4.61
April corn4.76	Beans.....9.83
Beans10.07	April beans9.88
	Wheat5.16

Today in history

In 1851, "Rigoletto" premiered at the Teatro La Fenice in Venice, Italy. The opera, created by Giuseppe Verdi, serves as one of one of the most popular operas to date.

In 1990, Lithuania declared its independence from the Soviet Union, becoming the first republic under the country's rule to do so. Its secession served as another step toward the Soviet Union's ultimate dissolution.

In 2011, nuclear meltdowns from Fukushima Daiichi struck Japan following a 9.0 magnitude earthquake and a tsunami.

In 2020, the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak to be a global pandemic. The coronavirus was described at that time as a novel disease, with symptoms presenting similar to that of the common cold.

— The CR

Citizen's calendar

Today 6 p.m. — Ridgeville Town Council, fire department, 302 N. Walnut St.	courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland. 5 p.m. — Jay County Council and Commissioners joint session, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.
Wednesday 1 p.m. — Jay County Sheriff's Office Merit Board, training room, sheriff's office, 224 W. Water St., Portland. 3:45 p.m. — Jay County Election Board, voting room, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland. 4 p.m. — Jay County Commissioners special session, auditorium,	6 p.m. — Jay County Council, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.
Thursday 6 p.m. — Jay County Plan Commission, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland.	

County ...

Continued from page 1
The policy says a commissioner may not participate in a meeting remotely if final action is being taken to adopt a budget, initiate a referendum, establish or increase a fee or penalty, use eminent domain authority, reduce personnel or establish or raise or renew a tax.

Commissioners who want to participate in a meeting electronically must notify the Jay County auditor and commissioners president at least five days in advance of the meeting.

Executive meetings

Council is expected to address issue Wednesday

must remain in-person, according to the policy, and all votes during a meeting with electronic communications must be taken by roll call.

Portland City Council approved an ordinance to the same effect in May 2022, with its rules lining

"In this day and age, it kind of makes sense to be able to have that capability if you want to," Schemenaur said. "It's a useful tool to have, and if you want to do it, like I said, I think the county council's going to consider doing it as well."

Commissioners president Chad Aker added he believes it makes sense to have electronic attendance available as an option for commissioners.

For more commissioners' news, see Wednesday's newspaper.

Economy ...

Continued from page 1
Trump set the tone on March 4 in his address to a joint session of Congress, acknowledging there may be an "adjustment period" as tariffs take effect. "There'll be a little disturbance, but we're okay with that," he said in his speech. "It won't be much."

Last week brought the deepest stock market rout since Trump was reelected four months ago.

Trump dismissed the idea on March 6 that his latest reversal on tariffs against Mexico and Canada had any influence on investors, saying "I'm not even looking at the stock market" and blaming "globalists who see how rich our country is going to be and they don't like it."

The U.S. stock market has fallen more than 6% since peaking on Feb. 19. Investors have faced seven straight days in which the S&P 500

Index swung at least 1% during the trading session and tech shares such as Nvidia Corp. and Tesla Inc., which led the market higher over the past three months, have taken a beating.

In his Sunday Morning Futures interview, recorded late last week, Trump defended his approach.

"We're bringing wealth back to America," he said. "That's a big thing."

Press ...

Continued from page 1
Steve Witkoff, the U.S. president's Middle East envoy, on Monday echoed that optimism, saying he "certainly" hoped the deal would be completed this week.

"We're going over there with an expectation that we're going to make substantial progress," he said on Fox News.

Zelenskyy said last week he was open to a ceasefire if Russia agreed to halt airstrikes and naval operations. A prisoner exchange should follow as a way of establishing trust, the Ukrainian president told European Union leaders in Brussels. A meeting between Zelenskyy and Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman is scheduled for late Monday, with the Ukrainian team set to stay on in the kingdom for U.S. talks.

Russia is willing to discuss a temporary truce in Ukraine provided there is progress toward a final peace settlement, according to people familiar with the matter in Moscow. Yet there's been no public indication that Russian President Vladimir Putin is willing to compromise — or that the U.S. is pushing him to do so.

Trump's advisers are sketching out how they might ease the sanctions imposed on Russia because of the war, including a cap imposed on prices for its oil sales, according to people familiar with the discussions.

The Trump administration's comments on Ukraine have been "encouraging" and are "steps in the right direction," Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said in a magazine interview, according to a transcript published Monday by the Foreign Ministry. Still, it's too early to draw conclusions and "we have not even started the work to overcome the accumulated problems and contradictions in our relations with the Americans," he said.

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Schwartz, Marvin: 11 a.m., Downing & Glancy Funeral Home, 100 Washington St., Geneva.

Friday
Wayman, Ida: 11 a.m., Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland.

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Photo provided

County contest

Optimist Oratorical County Contest for elementary and junior and senior high school students was held March 6 at Jay County Public Library. Students pictured above will advance to Indiana Optimist North District regional contest April 3. From left are Vanessa Vanover of Jay County Christian Academy, Londyn Cavanaugh of East Jay Elementary, Anna Fisher of Bloomfield Elementary, Leah Steed of Jay County Junior-Senior High School, Malak Elshiekh of East Jay Elementary, Sam Gibson of Bloomfield Elementary and Angelina Geesaman of Jay County Christian Academy.

Alcoholic's wife ready to quit on marriage

DEAR ABBY: I have been married for 27 years. Most of them have been miserable. My husband has been a functioning alcoholic for more than 40 years. I consider his behavior emotionally abusive. I hate my home. My kids (22, 19 and 17) don't want me to leave him. I live in my bedroom all day by myself except to go to work. He now says he wants to take a pill to stop drinking. It's just another lie. He will never do it. I am a shell of a woman at 56 and want to end it all. I am so miserable I can't do another year of this. — CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS

DEAR CAN'T: You shouldn't have to "do" another year of this. Consult a lawyer about a legal separation and move out. Tell your well-meaning chil-

Dear Abby



dren that you may return when their father can prove that he has quit drinking. If he takes the meds, once he sobers up, he may be less emotionally abusive. (Don't count on it.) However, if he fails to follow through, file for divorce.

DEAR ABBY: I was invited to my niece's wedding, and we

immediately RSVP'd "yes." I was also invited by her sister to her bridal shower and responded affirmatively. I have a service dog I take with me everywhere. I advised both parties that I was bringing him.

The sister told me I was uninvited or could leave my service dog outside on the porch. Now, a month later, three months after saying yes to the wedding, I am being told I'm uninvited to the wedding because of my service dog. Am I expected to still give a wedding gift? I had planned to give my niece my sterling silver dinner set. What do I do now? — GOING, NOT GOING, IN ILLINOIS

DEAR GOING: Forget about the shower and wedding gift.

If you feel generously inclined, send the happy couple a nice card. If your animal is, indeed, a trained service dog to help you should you need it, it was wrong to rescind your invitation(s). Your dog would have been well behaved and wouldn't have caused a distraction.

DEAR ABBY: My 32-year-old son is not speaking to me, his father and sister because I finally refused to give him more money. I have always helped him with his finances while he spent his money foolishly. It has been nine months since we have spoken or seen each other. He has two children, so we have no contact with them, either.

I want to tell him how foolish he is, but I don't feel I should have to apologize to him. He's jealous of his sister and feels we do everything for her. We have always done exactly the same for both of our children. My daughter rarely borrows money, but if she does, it is returned quickly.

Should I wait until my son misses us enough to contact us on his own or reach out to him? He is very stubborn, and this may go on for years. — SADDENED IN THE SOUTH

DEAR SADDENED: Call your spoiled, entitled son. Tell him you love him, but that you're not changing your stance on the money issue. After that, the ball is in his court.

Community Calendar

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

Today

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

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

A BETTER LIFE - 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.

BRYANT/NEW CORYDON SENIOR CITIZENS —

Will meet at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday at the Bryant Community Center for a carry-in dinner. Meat is provided.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thursday

PORTLAND AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY — Will meet at 6 p.m. Thursday, March 13, at 211 W. Walnut St., Portland. All auxiliary members are welcome.

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.

Sudoku

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

Level: Beginner

Saturday's Solution

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

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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Threats go against our interests

To the editor:

"Let me tell you, Putin went through a hell of a lot with me." President Donald Trump's statement should send a shiver down the spine of anyone who cares about the future of representative democracy in America.

Trump said these chilling words during the disturbing White House meeting with Volodymyr Zelenskyy, president of Ukraine. Earlier, President Trump told the United Kingdom's Prime Minister, Keir Starmer, that Putin would "keep his word" on a peace deal. Starmer was far less confident. That's not surprising. Putin has repeatedly broken his country's commitments to Ukraine.

In 2014, Putin first broke Russia's obligations to Ukraine under the Budapest Memorandum by annexing Crimea. Then, Russia began providing military and economic support to a breakaway effort in Ukraine's Donbas. In February 2022, Putin underlined his duplicity with the invasion of Ukraine. That horrific

Letters to the Editor

war continues today, with at least 100,000 Ukrainians killed, millions of refugees displaced and swaths of the country turned into a desolate landscape.

Putin is not our friend. He is our adversary. Putin rules his country with an iron fist and has repeatedly stated his opposition to representative democracy. That a president of the United States would praise a dictator and mass murderer is a threat to our system of governance.

President Trump accuses Ukraine of starting the war with Russia. Anyone who has paid attention knows this is baseless. Trump adds the ridiculous charge that President Zelenskyy is a dictator. Trump also falsely claims the U.S. has provided

more support to Ukraine than the rest of NATO.

To Trump's claims: Ukraine's governments and presidents have been democratically elected since Ukraine's independence in 1991. When Zelenskyy was elected in 2019 he won 75% of the popular vote in a free and fair election, with a 62% voter turnout. Trump won in 2024 with less than 50% of the popular vote.

Following Russia's invasion in 2022, martial law was proclaimed in Ukraine. The status of martial law is reviewed every 90 days by Ukraine's democratically elected parliament. Elections do not take place in Ukraine under martial law.

An actual dictator is found in Ukraine's neighbor, where Putin has ruled for the last 26 years. Putin murders or imprisons anyone within his grasp who publicly opposes him. The lucky dissenters who flee the country spend the rest of their lives wondering if they can safely drink their tea or sit on a park bench.

As to the claim that Ukraine

started the war, Trump ignores everything that has happened between Russia and Ukraine. Some say Russia felt threatened by Ukraine's desire to become a part of NATO. But there was little Ukrainian public support for joining NATO until Russia seized Crimea. Suddenly, joining NATO became incredibly attractive.

While peace for Ukraine is essential, it can only come with security guarantees from the U.S. and our European allies. Yes, we need Putin to agree to end the war. But the representative democracies of Europe and North America will need to enforce Putin's compliance by assuring a unified response should he renege. When it comes to Ukraine (and most things), Putin's words and signatures are worthless.

Yes, we should consider America first, as we need to protect ourselves if we are to remain a free country. But we should not be, cannot be, America alone. The world's autocrats are our

adversaries, some our avowed enemies. We need to interact with them, as it is too dangerous not to do so. But the United States and our allies must present a united front that recognizes the evil the autocracies represent.

The people of Ukraine are providing the blood, sweat and tears in resistance to Russia's thirst for dominance. The other countries of NATO are doing their part, making a greater contribution of military and humanitarian support than the United States. They have as much to lose as we do — our systems of governance.

Trump's threats to end support for Ukraine, pausing shipments of ammunition and military equipment, as well as ceasing intelligence sharing are huge mistakes. So is praising Putin. These threats are not in the interests of the representative democracies of the world, including the United States.

Eric R. Rogers
Portland

Vaccines are a game changer

By SUSAN KRESSLY
Tribune News Service

Early in my career as a pediatrician, it would not be unusual to get a phone call in the middle of the night from the worried parent of a child with a high fever. I got out of bed, met the family in the emergency room and sat with them while their child was evaluated. It could be a terrifying night, with painful tests to rule out serious illnesses like meningitis.

Vaccines were a game changer. Once my patients could be immunized against the most common causes of meningitis and serious bacterial infections — haemophilus influenzae B (HIB) and pneumococcus and other vaccine preventable diseases like measles — it was easier to rule out these illnesses, offer reassurance and advice over the phone, and schedule an office visit for the next morning.

But we're back in that scary place. Immunization rates have dipped low enough in some communities that measles has taken root. For the first time in a decade, someone in the U.S. has died from measles — an unvaccinated child in Texas caught up in an outbreak that has sickened more than 120 others.

Pediatricians are alarmed, and rightly so.

As president of the American Academy of Pediatrics, I'm getting emails, phone calls and texts from worried colleagues across the country. They have stories to tell of children who were permanently disabled or killed by diseases that we can now prevent with vaccines. They are afraid we will be back in that terrifying place, watching a child suffer and being helpless to offer relief for their pain. While the vast majority of parents vaccinate their children, misinformation has caused more to question the vaccinations that we've come to rely on to keep children healthy.

In nearly every state, fewer than 95% of kindergartners are vaccinated against measles. That 95% threshold is important, because at that level, it's unlikely that a single infection will spark an outbreak.

Instead we have communities where fewer than 95% of children are immunized, which explains worrisome increases in vaccine-preventable illnesses like measles and whooping cough. We will have more measles outbreaks this year, and some of those children will likely suffer severe complications or death. This is unacceptable.

Susan Kressly



What we need now is a robust response from partners in the federal government to support communities in improving access to vaccines, equipping doctors to provide life-saving care and making sure parents have accurate information to make decisions for their children's health — including immunizations.

We must resume the work of important federal committees that evaluate the scientific research for vaccine development and dosing, including the committee that was scheduled to meet in March to select the strains for next season's flu vaccine. A separate committee at the CDC was scheduled to meet in February to make important decisions on vaccines for meningococcal, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), human papillomavirus (HPV) and mpox.

I urge health authorities to immediately reschedule these meetings to ensure vaccine decisions are made without delay. We know that vaccination remains our most effective tool to prevent diseases including measles and influenza and their severe consequences. Overwhelmingly, parents agree, and want to vaccinate their children. But we're hearing from many parents now who worry that a vaccine may not be available when their child needs it. When pediatricians are in the exam room with parents, we want to equip them with everything in our power to help their children stay healthy so they can thrive. Immunizations are one of those success stories.

Kressly is president of the American Academy of Pediatrics.



Hail to the simple, positive

By NIKI KELLY
Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com

Sometimes the best bills are straightforward and don't carry divisive baggage. That means they also don't get enough attention. So, I want to highlight some great legislation moving through the General Assembly.

The first would eliminate a backlog of untested rape kits in Indiana by providing additional funding. This one is a no-brainer. The fact that women out there were raped, and the state just lets their case languish is frankly appalling. These women deserve justice and closure.

House Bill 1413 would disperse \$2.5 million to law enforcement agencies to process their backlog of untested rape kits, according to the Indianapolis Star.

The money will pay for equipment that's sorely needed in the state's crime labs. The insufficient amount of equipment has led to the current six- to eight-month delay in testing, according to the bill's author, Rep. Becky Cash, R-Zionsville.

The current proposed state budget includes the money, and my hope is the Senate agrees to keep it in.

Also in the budget is a sales tax exemption for feminine hygiene products and adult diapers. The cost to state coffers is about \$11 million but these are necessary items people need — just like food — and should not be taxed.

And speaking of taxes, a newborn tax credit is a welcome move by lawmakers.

Senate Bill 497, from Sen. Greg Walker, would provide a tax credit of up to \$500 per newborn child. Eligible taxpayers would have an Indiana adjusted gross income at or below 720% of the federal poverty level.

Niki Kelly



That is about \$112,000 for a single person; about \$152,000 for a family of two and about \$231,000 for a family of four.

A fiscal impact statement said each year, approximately 80,000 babies are born in Indiana, and around 3,000 adoptions are finalized.

There are bills moving in both chambers that would exempt testing strips from drug paraphernalia statutes. Senate Bill 312 and House Bill 1167 both would allow Hoosiers to use items marketed to detect the presence of a drug or controlled substance, including field test kits and test strips.

House Bill 1167's author, Rep. Jennifer Meltzer, said the strips can detect dangerous substances like fentanyl and xylazine. She said local health departments, nonprofit groups and others are distributing test strips to Hoosiers in active addiction, helping them avoid potentially lethal overdoses. Meltzer reintroduced the bill after it failed last year.

This bill will save lives. Another bill would provide much-needed oversight on the Indiana Economic Development Corporation.

Senate Bill 516 would require the quasi-public agency to tell local units of government about acquisitions of more than 100 acres — whether it's bought in one or multiple transactions — at least 30 days before those purchases close.

This comes after the IEDC snapped up thousands of acres in Boone County for a massive innovation park before locals knew what was happening.

The bill from Sen. Brian Buchanan also tasks the IEDC and the executives of communities that host innovation development districts — like one within LEAP — with annually compiling reports about the districts' activities over the last calendar year.

The more transparent these projects, the more Hoosiers will be comfortable with them.

And the last bill I will highlight is perhaps not one that is necessary but welcome — easing restrictions on wine delivery.

Senate Bill 107 would allow Indiana's wine dealers to deliver wine directly to customers and would create an opportunity for gourmet wine businesses to deliver wine directly to a consumer's home or office.

"The luxury of convenience that was introduced as a necessity by the COVID-19 pandemic delivery services should be a luxury that is here to stay for customers and businesses alike," said Sen. Ron Alting. "SB 107 paves the way for wine dealers to deliver directly to customers, creating an equal chance for growth alongside liquor and beer vendors."

This list should show Hoosiers that most of the bills passed in the General Assembly are bipartisan in nature and helpful to Hoosiers. And I say cheers to that!

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

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—Thomas Jefferson

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Walgreens to sell to private-equity

By LISA SCHENCKER

Chicago Tribune
Tribune News Service

Walgreens Boots Alliance is being acquired by a private-equity firm for about \$10 billion, the retail pharmacy giant announced Thursday.

An entity affiliated with Sycamore Partners will acquire Deerfield-based Walgreens in a deal that will take the company private. Sycamore is a New York-based private-equity firm specializing in retail, consumer and distribution-related investments.

The company will continue to operate under the names Walgreens and Boots, and its headquarters will remain in the Chicago area, according to a news release. The deal is expected to close in the fourth quarter, pending shareholder and regulatory approval.

"While we are making progress against our ambitious turnaround strategy, meaningful value creation will take time, focus and change that is better managed as a private company," Walgreens CEO Tim Wentworth said in the news release. "Sycamore will provide us with the expertise and experience of a partner with a strong track record of successful retail turnarounds."

The transaction is valued at up to \$23.7 billion when including debt. A Walgreens spokesperson said the company "had no further information to share" when asked Thursday if the deal would lead to further job losses at the company. Sycamore did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the question.

Speculation has swirled for months about the private-equity deal that was announced Thursday.

Under the terms of the deal, shareholders are to receive \$11.45 per share when the acquisition closes, with another one-time right to receive up to \$3 per share based on proceeds of divesting certain health care assets. The \$11.45 represents a premium of 29% to Walgreens' closing share price of \$8.85 on Dec. 9, the day before media started reporting news of a potential deal.

The deal follows years of struggles for Walgreens, which



Tribune News Service/Chicago Tribune/Armando L. Sanchez

People and vehicles pass outside a Walgreens near the intersection of W. Division Street and N. Dearborn Street in Chicago. Walgreens Boots Alliance is being acquired by a private-equity firm for about \$10 billion.

has been grappling with industry-wide challenges including issues related to medication reimbursements as well as changing consumer habits. Walgreens has also been dealing with the fallout from a previous attempt to become more of a health care destination by investing billions of dollars into primary care provider VillageMD, with plans to put Village Medical clinics in 1,000 of its stores by 2027. Walgreens later reversed course on that plan.

In response to those challenges and others, Walgreens announced plans in October to shutter 1,200 stores over the next three years, including in Chicago. Walgreens has also been slashing costs for years, including through layoffs in Illinois and other locations. Wal-

greens also recently suspended its practice of paying cash dividends to stockholders for the first time in 92 years.

Wentworth had previously unveiled a plan to turn the company around, partly by refocusing on its historic work as a retail pharmacy operation.

The move to take Walgreens private could help the business in the long run, said Howard Gutman, private equity strategy and coverage lead at management consulting firm Morgan-Franklin Consulting.

Walgreens is likely, under Sycamore, to be separated into smaller parts, with some of those parts potentially sold off, Gutman said.

"It's no different than a lot of other companies that have multiple divisions and have to separate or divide in some fashion to

do their best by their workers and shareholders," Gutman said.

Some, however, worry about yet another health care-related company being controlled by private equity.

"We've seen with private equity-owned health care companies — hospitals, clinics, other service companies — we see in order to get the profits the private-equity firm has a goal of, they usually embark on heavy cost cutting," said Matthew Parr, a spokesperson for the Private Equity Stakeholder Project, based in Chicago. "Sometimes that means cutting services."

That could be a concern for patients who rely on Walgreens to get their medications, he said. "It might be the only pharmacy in their community," he said.

Under the deal, Walgreens Executive Chairman Stefano Pessina, who owns 17% of Walgreens' shares, will vote all his shares in favor of the transaction and then reinvest in the company acquiring Walgreens. The Walgreens board of directors unanimously approved the deal, with Pessina recused from the deliberations and approval.

"This transaction reflects our confidence in (Walgreens') pharmacy-led model and essential role in driving better outcomes for patients, customers and communities," Stefan Kaluzny, managing director of Sycamore Partners, said in the release.

Walgreens has about 12,500 locations across the U.S., Europe and Latin America, and Walgreens Boots Alliance employs about 311,000 people.

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THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane

3-11
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"This box that they were in was too heavy to carry down!"
Bill and Jeff Keane

Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

A highly unusual discard

East dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 10 9 5
♥ K 8 2
♦ 8 7 4
♣ A J 10 3

WEST
♠ J 7 4
♥ A J 6 5 3
♦ 9 2
♣ 9 6 5

EAST
♠ 8
♥ Q 10 9 7 4
♦ A K Q J
♣ 8 7 2

SOUTH
♠ A K Q 6 3 2
♥ —
♦ 10 6 5 3
♣ K Q 4

The bidding:
East South West North
1♥ 1♠ 2♥ 2♠
3♥ 4♠

Opening lead — nine of diamonds. When is a signal not a signal? Answer: When it obviously does not mean what it says. For example, take this case where South gets to four spades on the bidding shown. It is not clear whether West should lead the ace of hearts, the suit his partner bid, or make the more aggressive lead of a diamond, hoping to get a diamond ruff.

Be that as it may, West fortunately elected to lead a diamond. Had he led the ace of hearts instead, declarer would have finished with an overtrick. East won the diamond lead with the jack and continued with the ace and king. It was on the third round of diamonds that West made a most unusual play — he discarded the ace of hearts!

Under the circumstances, there was no way East could construe this play as a signal for him to lead a heart next. Rather, East reasoned that his partner was trying to stop him from shifting to a heart. So East continued with a fourth round of diamonds, and West's jack of trump became the setting trick.

Observe that if East had shifted to a heart instead of leading another diamond, which he very well might have done without West's extraordinary discard, declarer would have had no problem scoring the rest of the tricks. But West had recognized that a heart shift by East could easily prove fatal, and he headed off a potential disaster by making the most dramatic discard he could find.

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Agnes

Hi and Lois

Between Friends

Blondie

Snuffy Smith

Beetle Bailey

3-11 **CRYPTOQUIP**

TS NLF ZIQI SLQRIK PL HYN
PL JI LV Y HLHFDYQ ULRTYD
VIZU ZIJUTPI, ZLFDK NLF

FUI Y QIKKTP RYQK?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: ACTIVITY FOR FOLKS WHO REALLY LIKE VIEWING ALL EVENTS INVOLVING THE PONTIFF: PAPAL-WATCHING.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals P

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Own (up)
5 Tree
8 Comic
12 Golden Rule
13 Tax pro
14 Track
15 "Fargo" director
17 Informal greeting
18 Belief
19 Light (Lat.)
20 Cove
21 Honey holder
22 Lob's path
23 Egypt's neighbor
26 Adjusted a bit
30 Baby carriage
31 Diner dessert
32 Egyptian river
33 Not too soft, as pasta
35 Second U.S. President

DOWN

1 Japanese volcano
2 Eve's grandson
3 Flower part
4 Spain's Costa del —
5 Use elbow grease on
6 Pinnacle
7 Zero-star review
8 "Home Alone" actor
9 Satan's forte
10 "Network" star
11 Level
16 Family
20 Hot temper
21 "Misery" actor
22 Shock partner

Solution time: 22 mins.

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

Yesterday's answer 3-11

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12					13				14	
15				16					17	
18				19			20			
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48					49			50		
51					52			53		

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Title ...

Continued from page 8
And it works, just like so many other years. Who'd have seen this coming, back in October?
"It's hard man, like battling everybody else in competition, but also battling your own people," Purdue coach Matt Painter said Feb. 18, comparing Izzo's longevity to Joe DiMaggio's famed 56-game hit streak. "I think people don't understand that the people that support you, you battle also, because when you raise your expectations and you go to eight Final Fours and 10 Big Ten championships, people expect that."
"As a coach, what people expect from you is your best year. So if he doesn't win the national championship, win the Big Ten, he's s—, right? And we all know he's really good."

'I don't have that many years left, so I'm going to just kind of say the Big Ten still matters to me, and it's going to matter to me until I walk out the door.'

—Tom Izzo, Michigan State men's basketball coach

It's a refrain the coaching fraternity has stuck on all season when reflecting on Izzo's career — many among the old guard of Big Ten bosses — especially as he logs his name atop various record books that come with coaching for three decades. Not only can he still coach players tactically (hiccups against the zone notwithstanding), but his style of coaching — the tough-to-please but caring leader — is a big

reason why this year's Spartans are surging.
Look at Jaden Akins, the senior captain who has weathered a poor shooting season while being one of the conference's best defensive players in marquee matchups. How about Jeremy Fears Jr., who Izzo has stuck by since a shooting last Christmas threatened both his life and his basketball career. Whether it's Xavier Booker's slow

growth or Frankie Fidler's transfer acclimation, go down the roster and there's a fingerprint of Izzo's coaching on nearly every player.
Even in the highs, Izzo's tough love gets the best from his team. Like when Jase Richardson got a little selfish in the second half of Thursday's win, opting to stretch around a defender instead of passing the ball. You didn't have to hear exact words to get the

gist of what Izzo told Richardson on the sideline, and Michigan State's offense was better for it. Even with the glow of a championship around his team, Izzo still spent more time calling out the struggles of an ugly win instead of gloating in the spotlight.
"Tom and I come from a generation where that's why we got into this business — it wasn't always about winning," Illinois coach Brad Underwood said Feb. 15, when Izzo broke Knight's record for Big Ten wins. "Yes, we're competitive, but it was about seeing young people grow. ... I have so much respect for the longevity of that and the fact that he's (70 years old), and still wanting to do that speaks volumes."
It was never a question

that Izzo would be around for Michigan State — they're inseparable. What Thursday's championship-clinching win proved is that he can still coach the Spartans to the top. That the coach who said, "I'm getting back to a deeper run in this tournament, or I'm going to die trying" at the end of last season has still got it. And as March unfolds in front of him, he'll have a chance to prove how far he can take this team. For now, the Big Ten title is a reminder.
"I don't have that many years left," Izzo said, "so I'm going to just kind of say the Big Ten still matters to me, and it's going to matter to me until I walk out the door."
Having proven himself all season, don't expect that any time soon.

Sports on tap

Local schedule

Today
Jay County — Junior high swim vs. South Adams — 6 p.m.
Fort Recovery — Softball scrimmage at Houston — 5 p.m.
Thursday
Jay County — Junior high wrestling in ACAC tournament at Adams Central — 5:30 p.m.

TV sports

Today
12 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Conference Tournament (ESPN2)
4 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Conference Tournament (ESPN2)
5 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Conference Tournament (ESPN2)
6:30 p.m. — NBA: Milwaukee Bucks at Indiana Pacers (TNT)
7 p.m. — College basketball: Maine vs. Ver-

mont (ESPN2);
7:30 p.m. — CONCACAF Champions Cup soccer: Columbus Crew at Los Angeles FC (FS1)
9 p.m. — College basketball: Albany vs. Bryant (ESPN2); FIU vs. Western Kentucky (ESPN)
9:30 p.m. — CONCACAF Champions Cup soccer: Tigres UANL at FC Cincinnati (FS1)
11:30 p.m. — College basketball: Big Sky Conference Tournament (ESPN2)
Wednesday
11:30 a.m. — College basketball: Richmond

vs. Davidson (USA)
2 p.m. — College basketball: Fordham at Rhode Island (USA)
4:30 p.m. — College basketball: La Salle at UMass Amherst (USA)
5 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Conference Tournament (ESPN2)
7:30 p.m. — NBA: Oklahoma City Thunder at Boston Celtics (ESPN)
7:30 p.m. — NHL: Buffalo Sabers at Detroit Red Wings (TNT)
8:30 p.m. — CONCACAF Champions Cup soc-

cer: Monterrey at Vancouver Whitecaps (FS1)
10 p.m. — NBA: Minnesota Timberwolves at Denver Nuggets (ESPN)
10 p.m. — NHL: Anaheim Ducks at Utah Hockey Club (TNT)
10:30 p.m. — CONCACAF Champions Cup soccer: Los Angeles Galaxy at Herediano (FS1)
11:30 p.m. — College basketball: Cal Poly vs. UC Davis (ESPN2)
.....
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90 SALE CALENDAR

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Saturday March 15th, 2025
TIME 10:00 A.M.
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90 SALE CALENDAR

PUBLIC AUCTION
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9:00 A.M.
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CITY OF PORTLAND is currently taking applications for Pool Manager and Assistant Manager. This individual will be responsible for supervising the day-to-day activities at the Portland Water Park as well as maintaining the cleanliness of the facility. A complete job description is available at City Hall and on the City of Portland website. Applications will be available at City Hall, 321 North Meridian Street, Portland, Indiana 47371, Monday, March 10th 2025 thru Friday, March 14th 2025. Applications need to be submitted to City Hall by Friday, March 14th 2025 at 4p.m.

130 MISC. FOR SALE

SCRATCH PADS ARE BACK various bundles sizes and XL pads. \$1.25 plus tax. Pick up at The Commercial Review Tuesday thru Friday 10am to 4pm.

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WE PAY CASH for junk autos. We pick up at your location. 1-765-546-2642 or 1-765-857-1071. Slocumis Salvage

250 PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice

Penn Township Public Library, Jay County, Indiana
Cash & Investments Combined Statement-2024

Local Fund	Local Fund	Beg. Cash and Inv. Bal.	Receipts	Disbursements	End Cash and Inv. Bal.
Number	Name	Jan. 1, 2024			Dec. 31, 2024
Governmental Activities					
0	General	\$51,449.61	\$32,915.27	\$24,739.21	\$59,625.67
0	Rainy Day	\$6,270.44	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,270.44
3	Gifts	\$5,418.38	\$13,889.50	\$14,389.50	\$4,918.38
Total All Funds		\$63,138.43	\$46,804.77	\$39,128.71	\$70,814.49

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2	Park And Recreation	\$50,950.93	\$8,632.86	\$5,190.07	\$54,393.72
3	Rainy Day	\$7,451.22	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$7,451.22
4	Township	\$113,971.35	\$53,614.69	\$31,689.59	\$135,896.45
5	Township Assistance	\$65,975.15	\$8,632.87	\$6,228.52	\$68,379.50
Total All Funds		\$316,732.84	\$83,123.97	\$59,900.58	\$339,956.23

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250 PUBLIC NOTICE

Junior high swim split with Bluffton on Thursday, see story below

FRHS softball has first scrimmage set for today, see Sports on tap

Sports



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Smooth Swoveland

Gradin Swoveland of the Jay County High School boys basketball team glides in for a layup while a Yorktown player fouls him during the Patriots' loss in the sectional opener at New Castle on March 4.

Steelers trade 2nd round pick for DK Metcalf

By **JOE RUTTER**
The Tribune-Review, Greensburg
Tribune News Service

Adding the big-play veteran receiver they lacked last season, the Pittsburgh Steelers are acquiring DK Metcalf from the Seattle Seahawks, a league source confirmed to TribLive on Sunday.

ESPN initially reported the trade, adding that the Steelers will be giving Metcalf a five-year, \$150 million contract. Metcalf is scheduled to make \$18 million this season in the final year of his current contract.

The Steelers are sending a second-round draft pick to Seattle, and they are swapping sixth-round and seventh-round picks with the Seahawks to land Metcalf, a two-time Pro Bowl receiver who recently requested a trade.

The move is a splashy one for the Steelers with the start of the legal tampering period for free agency beginning at noon Monday.

Metcalf, 27, has surpassed 1,000 yards receiving in three of his six NFL seasons. In 2024, he caught 66 passes for 992 yards and five touchdowns. He missed two games with a knee injury.

Before acquiring Metcalf, the Steelers were about \$64 million under the salary cap. It remains undetermined who will be throwing passes to Metcalf this season. He could be reunited with former Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson. He is viewed as the

backup plan if the Steelers don't re-sign Justin Fields. Wilson and Fields are set to become free agents Monday.

After trading top receiver Diontae Johnson last March, the Steelers didn't adequately replace him in the lineup, and a lack of a dependable option to pair with George Pickens was a shortcoming the entire season. The Steelers traded for Mike Williams in October, but aside from a touchdown catch in his first game he wasn't a focal point of the offense.

Pickens led Steelers wide receivers with 59 catches for 900 yards and three touchdowns. Calvin Austin III was second with 36 catches for 548 yards and four touchdowns. Van Jefferson, who is a free agent, caught 24 passes for 276 yards and two scores.

The Steelers still are expected to select a wide receiver in the NFL Draft but can make other positions such as defensive line a priority.

Metcalf reportedly wanted to play in a warm-weather city, but the lure of a mega-contract extension by the Steelers — the richest in franchise history — apparently was enough to change that school of thought.

Per salary-tracking site Spotrac, Metcalf is getting a four-year, \$132 million extension on top of his salary for 2025.

With his new contract, Metcalf becomes the NFL's fourth highest-paid wide receiver.

Jay swim splits with the Tigers

BLUFFTON — The Jay County Junior High School swim team split with Bluffton on Thursday as the girls won 120-66 but the boys fell to the Tigers 112-63.

Ely Byrum and Maria Laux led the way for the girls, both locking up the top spots in a pair of events. Byrum's first-place finishes came in the 50-yard freestyle and the 100 backstroke, while Laux claimed the 200 freestyle and 50 butterfly.

The Patriot girls picked up another four individual wins, along with sweeping the relay events. Individual winners were Jordyn Champ in the 1-meter div-

ing, Gabby Gibson in the 100 individual medley, Kali Wendel in the 100 freestyle and Eloise Teeter in the 400 freestyle.

Grady Warvel — who broke Kyle Weaver's school record in the 50 butterfly that lasted over two decades last week with a time of 27.17 seconds — led the boys with a pair of victories. He finished first in the 100 individual medley and the 100 breaststroke.

The only other wins for the boys came from Ben Fisher in the 100 freestyle and the 200 medley relay team.

The Patriots' next home meet is tonight against South Adams.

Tom Izzo, Michigan State claims the Big Ten title

By **CONNOR EAREGOOD**
The Detroit News
Tribune News Service

IOWA CITY, Iowa — Tom Izzo slouched back in his chair in the Carver-Hawkeye Arena media room. His Michigan State team had just claimed the Big Ten title outright with a 91-84 win over Iowa. Someone had asked him about Fran McCaffery, the 15-year and 500-game Iowa coach whose future has been called into question amid a losing season for the Hawkeyes.

Izzo tilted his head back and looked at the ceiling, trying to find the right words. The Spartans' coach of the last 30 years heartily endorsed a peer he believes coaches the right way. It hit close to home for a coach who's been in those shoes, even just six short months ago.

"I look at some of the players he's had and what they've done. You know, you get lucky and unlucky," Izzo said. "I mean, I just went through a three-year period where everybody wants to ship me out. I mean, it's just the way it is."

Because of this year's miracle Spartans, most will forget the three down years when some called an aging Izzo into question. Izzo has coached Michigan State to its first Big Ten championship in five years and first outright title in seven, all without the star power he's had on any of his 11 title teams. He's managed a roster that sees 10 players with regular minutes in the lineup, one whose top scorer (Jaden Akins) ranks 34th in the conference. By committee, by luck and by a whole lot of brute force, Michigan State sits atop a conference in which it was predicted to finish fifth at the start of the year.

It's a remarkable turnaround.

This 11th title adds to a laundry list of records for the Hall of Fame coach. He's tied with Indiana's Bob Knight and Purdue's Ward "Piggy" Lambert for the most titles in Big Ten history, and he leads the conference with 359 wins and counting. For a coach nicknamed Mr. March, and for a team

that has proven time and time again it can rise from the mat just like it did Thursday, there's a chance these Spartans keep on winning.

"Our consistency has been unbelievable, if you ask me," Izzo said. "I mean, that's a great credit to my staff."

There's space to say Izzo grew, adjusted, listened to all the critiques heading into this season — and he did, to some extent, dropping from NCAA committees and focusing his efforts on this team. Izzo listened when former players told him he coached differently than he used to. And yet this team is, in Izzo stubbornness, one big throwback. The mantra to defend, rebound and run has Michigan State tied for its most conference wins in school history, with a chance to break the record on Sunday against Michigan. This team dunks as much as it makes threes. And with dogged determination and physicality, it defends.

See Title page 7

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