

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

Mason sentenced to six years

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review

An Ohio woman will serve six years in prison after crashing her vehicle in Jay County, resulting in the death of a passenger in her car.

Brianna F. Mason, 24, Sidney, was sentenced Wednesday to six years in Indiana Department of Correction for a Level 4 felony for causing death when operating a vehicle while intoxicated. She also received one-year sentences for two Level 6 felonies for criminal recklessness.

She pleaded guilty Jan. 29. Her

Ohio woman pleaded guilty to causing death when operating a vehicle while intoxicated

sentences will be served concurrently.

Mason was also originally charged with reckless homicide, a Level 5 felony, and operating a vehicle without a driver's license,

a Class C misdemeanor. Those charges were dismissed Wednesday.

Mason's charges stem from an incident at 2:20 a.m. Aug. 14, 2023, at the intersection of Indiana 67

and Indiana 26 just west of Portland. Mason's vehicle went off Indiana 26 at a high rate of speed and rolled several times, ejecting four passengers.

Taylor L. LeMaster, 20, Berne,

died from injuries sustained in the crash.

Two other passengers, Mercedes A. Ryan of Anderson and Araia L. Mullins of Chesterfield, had extensive injuries.

Mason displayed "red, watery and bloodshot eyes" and slurred her words when police arrived on scene, according to a Jay County Sheriff's Office report. Her results on a preliminary breath test came in at 0.086%, and her blood alcohol level tested soon after came in at 0.071%. (The legal limit is 0.08%.)

See **Sentenced** page 2

Cases of avian flu ID'd in Jay, Adams

Positive tests include facility with 1.34 million egg pullets

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review

Another location in Jay County has tested positive for bird flu.

On Sunday, Indiana State Board of Animal Health identified the 11th case of highly pathogenic avian flu in the county at a commercial table egg pullet facility.

There was also a new case of avian flu reported in Adams County, marking its third of 2025.

The new case affects the second-largest amount of birds in the county thus far at 1.34 million. (The largest was 1.4 million.) The facility is currently under quarantine and there is a 10-kilometer control area and a 20-kilometer surveillance zone around the property.

More than 5.5 million birds have been affected in Jay County this year, the most of any county in Indiana.

In Adams County, the new case affected 3,400 birds at a commercial breeder duck facility. It is also under quarantine and has a control area and surveillance zone.

No new cases of avian flu have been reported in Ohio since a pair of confirmed positive tests in Mercer County on March 6.

In 2025, Darke County and Mercer County have been the hardest hit by avian flu in Ohio at 8.32 million and 6.11 million birds affected, respectively.

The new cases bring the 2025 totals to 4.24 million birds affected in Jay County, the highest total in Indiana, and 6.11 million in Mercer County. (Darke County is the only county with more cases in Ohio at 8.32 million.)

Jay, Mercer and Darke counties are among the top agriculture producers in their states. Jay County ranks second in Indiana in the market value of poultry and eggs sold annually at \$301.8 million, according to the 2022 Census of Agriculture. Darke and Mercer counties are No. 1 and 2, respectively, out of Ohio's 88 counties at more than \$1.1 billion combined.



Photo provided

Sugar show

Arts Place's Eric R. Rogers Performance Series will continue tonight with Shannon Clark and the Sugar taking the stage at 6:30 p.m. The family band based out of Greenville, Ohio, has been on tour with artists including Tim McGraw. Tickets are available at Arts Place, 131 E. Walnut St., Portland, at myartsplace.org or by calling (260) 726-4809.

Jay Co. rate jumps to 25th-lowest

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review

The local unemployment rate stayed nearly stable in January.

But doing so, the county made a massive jump in the state rankings.

Jay County's rate improved to 25th-lowest among the state's 92 counties according to estimates the Indiana Department of Workforce Development released on Tuesday.

The local unemployment rate jumped 30 spots in the state rankings after coming in tied for the 36th-highest rate in the state in December. Its mark of 4.1% puts it in a tie with Adams, Benton, Knox, Ohio, Rush and Whitley counties.

Jay County's rate was up just 0.1 percentage points from December

while each of the adjacent counties saw increases of at least 0.3 percentage points. It went up 0.4 percentage points from January 2024.

Unemployment increased across the state in January, with the state rate coming in at 4.5%. That's up a half a percentage point from the previous month and 0.4 percentage points from the same month last year.

Howard County again had by far the highest unemployment rate in the state at 7.5%, which was down 0.2 percentage points from the previous month. Starke County was next at 6.9% and Crawford County followed at 6.2%. Each of the state's other 89 counties came in at 5.7% or lower.

Union County took over the lowest rate in the state from Gibson

and Daviess counties, at 3.1%. Daviess, Hamilton and Boone counties were a distant second at 3.5%.

Area unemployment rates are as follows:

Adams County: 4.1%, up 0.6 percentage points, tied for 25th-lowest
Blackford County: 5.6%, up 0.5 percentage points, tied for sixth-highest

Delaware County: 4.9%, up 0.3 percentage points, tied for 24th-highest

Jay County: 4.1%, up 0.1 percentage points, tied for 25th-lowest

Randolph County: 4.9%, up 0.4 percentage points, tied for 24th-highest

Wells County: 3.8%, up 0.4 percentage points, tied for 13th-lowest

Ranking among state counties jumped by 30 positions in January



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Big breakfast

Hungry residents filled Bob Schmit Memorial Exhibition Hall on Tuesday morning for the Jay County Ag Breakfast. Hundreds enjoyed a breakfast of eggs, sausage, bacon, toast and beverages for a free-will donation.

Deaths

Jerry Elzey, 82, rural Portland
Joyce Louck, 87, Redkey
Details on page 2.

Weather

The high temperature reached 71 degrees Tuesday in Jay County. The low was 41.

There is a slight chance of snow tonight with a low in the upper 20s and winds gusting to 30 mph. Expect a high in the lower 50s Friday under mostly sunny skies.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

Jay County Public Library will host a variety of events during Jay School Corporation's spring break, starting with Slime, Squish & Splatter from 1:30 to 3 p.m. Friday. Children will get to use clay, slime, shaving cream and more in a variety of crafts. For details about other offerings, visit jaycpl.lib.in.us.

Coming up

Friday — Coverage of this week's Portland Board of Aviation meeting.

Saturday — Details from Friday's Portland Redevelopment Commission meeting.

Tuesday — Results from the Fort Recovery softball season opener.



Obituaries

Jerry Elzey

Aug. 24, 1942-March 18, 2025
Jerry Norman Elzey, age 82, of rural Portland passed away on Tuesday March 18, 2025, in Lutheran Hospital in Fort Wayne.

He was born in Fort Wayne on Aug. 24, 1942, the son of Arthur James and Ida (Armantrout) Elzey. He was married on Dec. 16, 1966, to Barbara Weaver who survives.

Jerry was retired from Teledyne Portland Forge after 35 years. He served in the U.S. Army and was a member of American Legion Post #211 and Geneva VFW. He was a Bryant High School graduate and enjoyed woodworking and fishing.

Surviving is his wife Barbara; two sons, Rick Elzey (wife: Lisa) of Portland and Jason Elzey (wife: Lori) of Bryant; one



Elzey

daughter, Angela Elzey of Bryant; one brother, Robert Elzey of Geneva; three sisters, Shirley Bollenbacher of Bryant, Patricia Lee of Portland and Donna Wendel of Portland; six grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by a brother, Veryl James Elzey.

Funeral services will be Saturday, March 22, at 10 a.m. in the Baird-Freeman Funeral Home with Pastor Larry Eads presiding. Burial will follow in the Wells Cemetery with military rites by American Legion Post #211. Visitation will be Friday from 3 to 7 p.m.

Memorials can be made to American Legion Post #211 Honor Guard.

Condolences may be expressed at bairdfreeman.com.

Joyce Louck

Aug. 12, 1937-March 17, 2025
Joyce Ann Louck, 87, of Redkey, Indiana, joined her Lord and Savior in Glory peacefully on

Monday, March 17, 2025, surrounded by loved ones at The Woodlands: Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitation Center.

Joyce was born in Muncie, Indiana, on Aug. 12, 1937, a daughter of the late Ferrell R. and Reba Belle (Bewley) Pittenger. She was a 1955 graduate of Desoto High School and the loving wife of the late Carl F. Louck, who she happily married on Dec. 17, 1960, and lost in 2012.

Joyce was blessed to be a stay at home mother for all five of her children. Later, she worked as the librarian at the Redkey Elementary School until her retirement.

She was a member of the Friends of the Jay County Library, Susannah Wesley Women's Bible Study, Delta Theta Tau Sorority, Jay County Homemakers and Purdue Extension Chorus. She volun-



Louck

teered at the Ball Hospital Auxiliary, sang in her church choir and was a church member all her life, most recently, New View of the Cross Church in Albany, Indiana.

She was very social and enjoyed playing piano, singing, cooking, walking, eating out with friends, embroidery, animals, spending time with her family and reading, especially the Bible.

Joyce is survived by her children Steve Louck, Julie Grant (Chris), Jim Louck, Kevin Louck (Angie) and Jennifer Jackson (Joe); seven grandchildren, Jordan Grant (fiance: Macy Whitehair), Jacob Grant, Becky Louck, Rachel Lawhead (Dylan) and Julia, Jillian and Josiah Jackson; two great-grandchildren, Kennedy and Parker Lawhead; one sister, Phyllis Fields; and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Reba and Ferrell Pittenger; husband Carl Louck;

and one brother, Richard Pittenger.

Visitation will be held on Saturday, March 22, 2025, at MJS Mortuaries – Redkey Chapel from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Funeral services will follow at 1 p.m. with Pastor Jeorgene Gaddy officiating. Burial will be held in Claycomb Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made in Joyce's honor to New View of the Cross Church or ARF for her love of animals, especially cats.

Arrangements have been entrusted to MJS Mortuaries – Redkey Chapel.

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

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

CR almanac

Friday 3/21	Saturday 3/22	Sunday 3/23	Monday 3/24	Tuesday 3/25
54/41	45/28	46/38	44/30	43/29
Sunny skies are in the forecast for Friday with gusts up to 25 mph.	Saturday's forecast shows a 30% chance of showers with mostly sunny skies expected.	There's a 50% chance of showers Sunday under mostly cloudy skies.	Mostly sunny skies on Monday when there's a 40% chance of snow.	Another day of mostly sunny skies with a slight chance of snow.

Lotteries

Powerball Estimated jackpot: \$416 million	Evening Daily Three: 6-1-7 Daily Four: 1-7-9-7 Quick Draw: 9-14-16-18-19-20-23-28-31-33-38-46-55-57-62-65-66-68-70-77
Mega Millions 27-28-31-32-33 Mega Ball: 24 Megaplier: 3 Estimated jackpot: \$324 million	Ohio Tuesday Midday Pick 3: 9-8-5 Pick 4: 6-7-6-5 Pick 5: 3-3-8-2-0 Evening Pick 3: 4-9-1 Pick 4: 0-3-1-1 Pick 5: 8-9-0-8-6 Rolling Cash: 11-15-16-18-33 Estimated jackpot: \$130,000
Hoosier Tuesday Midday Daily Three: 6-5-0 Daily Four: 5-9-7-6 Quick Draw: 1-2-3-9-11-14-21-24-26-38-40-45-47-51-60-63-69-75-78-79	

Markets

Cooper Farms Fort Recovery Corn.....4.46 April corn4.52 May corn.....4.58	April beans10.17 Wheat 5.15
POET Biorefining Portland Corn.....4.72 April corn4.69 May corn.....4.72	ADM Montpelier Corn.....4.57 April corn4.59 Beans10.11 April beans10.14 Wheat5.19
The Andersons Richland Township Corn4.69 April corn4.69 Beans10.14	Heartland St. Anthony Corn.....4.47 April corn4.52 Beans9.84 April beans9.89 Wheat5.16

Today in history

In 2012, nine Fort Recovery High School athletes were named to the All-Midwest Athletic Conference Academic team. They were girls basketball team members Kylie Kahlig, Ericka Lennartz, Olivia Schwieterman, Kelsey Fiely, Abby May, Chelsea Potkottter and Janelle Schwieterman, and boys basketball team members Jared Kahlig and Elijah Kahlig.

In 2017, Portland City Council approved a \$2,300 request for mayor Randy Geesaman to make a three-day trip to Washington, D.C., and speak with a variety of legislators and federal agencies.

In 2020, Jay School superintendent Jeremy Gully committed to holding prom and graduation ceremonies. At the time, the state was in the midst of COVID-19 shutdowns. Graduation was held in the parking lot between the high school baseball and softball fields.

— The CR

Citizen's calendar

Friday 8 a.m. — Portland Redevelopment Commission, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland.	Wednesday 6 p.m. — Dunkirk Park Board, city building, 131 S. Main St.
Tuesday 6 p.m. — Redkey Town Council, park cabin, 50 Mooney St.	March 31 9 a.m. — Jay County Commissioners, auditorium, Jay County Courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.

Felony arrests

Strangulation

A Portland man was placed on probation for nearly a year for strangulation.

Armando Gallegos-Vargas, 22, 119 East Elder St., pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to the Level 6 felony. He was sentenced to one year in Jay County Jail with 363 days suspended and given two days credit for time served.

He was assessed \$189 in court costs, fined \$25 and ordered to pay a \$50 domestic violence prevention and treatment fee. Gallegos-Vargas was placed on probation for 363 days. As part of his plea agreement, a Class A misdemeanor for domestic battery was dismissed.

Domestic battery

A Portland man was sentenced to serve just under two months in jail for domestic battery.

Joshua A. Bonifas, 38, 1661 W. 650 South, Portland, pleaded guilty in

Jay Circuit Court to the Class A misdemeanor, which was lessened from a Level 5 felony. He was sentenced to one year in Jay County Jail with all but 60 days suspended and given four days credit for time served.

Bonifas was assessed \$189 in court costs and ordered to pay a \$50 domestic violence prevention fee. As part of his plea agreement, a Level 6 felony for domestic battery and a habitual offender enhancement were dismissed.

Intimidation

A Pennville man was placed on probation after pleading guilty to intimidation.

Christopher A. Bessesen, 35, 110 East South St., pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to intimidation, a Class A misdemeanor. (His charge was originally filed as a Level 6 felony.)

Bessesen was sentenced to one year in Jay County Jail with all but

two days suspended and given two days credit for time served. He was placed on probation for 363 days, fined \$1 and assessed \$189 in court costs.

Resisting police

An Albany man was placed on probation after pleading guilty to resisting police.

Ashton E. Branham, 19, 320 North Foster Avenue, pleaded guilty in Jay Superior Court to resisting law enforcement, a Class A misdemeanor. (As part of the plea agreement, the charge was lessened from a Level 6 felony.)

Branham was sentenced to one year in Jay County Jail with all but two days suspended and given two days credit for time served. Branham was assessed \$189.50 in court costs and placed on probation for 12 months. As part of his plea agreement, a Class C misdemeanor for reckless driving was dismissed.

Sentenced ...

Continued from page 1
According to event data recorder information obtained from the vehicle, it was traveling 87 mph about five seconds before the crash. Upon impact, the vehicle was traveling 73 mph. (The speed limit is 55 mph.)

Several of LeMaster's family members and a friend spoke at the hearing Wednesday in favor of a longer sentence for Mason.

"I'll never get to tell him how proud of him I am," said LeMaster's father, Mark Bales. "There's nothing that can bring him back, there's no justice that case ease the pain ..."

"(Brianna) wasn't just a little careless," said Kelley LeMaster, a brother of the deceased. "Drunk driving is not a mistake, it is a choice."

Jay County chief public defender Brandon Murphy asked Donte Alexander, Mason's friend, if Mason's behavior the night of the accident was out of character for her.

Alexander said yes, with a few people in the crowd scoffing out loud at his answer.

Answering questions

from Jay County chief deputy prosecutor Zech Landers, Alexander said he never saw Mason get behind the wheel after drinking or smoking marijuana.

Also speaking in favor of Mason receiving a lesser sentence, Mason's mother, Marry Layton, said she used to interact with her daughter every day.

"Bri's been good, she's never been in trouble in her life," Layton said. "She pays for (this) every day ..."

Breanna Barker, who said she was LeMaster's romantic partner, also talked about LeMaster and Mason's relationship, saying every time she saw LeMaster, she also saw Mason. Answering a question about whether she had forgiven Mason, Barker said she didn't blame her for LeMaster's death.

"It was an accident," she said. "I was there when she broke down. She was just as hurt as anybody else."

She added she doesn't believe LeMaster would want Mason to go to jail or prison, but she suggested the court place her on house arrest, saying

LeMaster's family "deserves something."

Mason read aloud a statement to the court, her voice trembling as she spoke.

"I understand my actions have caused irreparable harm," she said. "I am committed to making amends in any way possible ..."

"(That night) turned into a horrible nightmare for us all, but I have to live with it," she added.

She expressed her apologies and asked LeMaster's family to find it in their hearts to forgive her.

Landers asked the court to consider one-year sentences for each of the Level 6 felonies, with a six-year sentence for the Level 4 felony. He asked for the full sentences to be served at Indiana Department of Correction.

"The loss created by Brianna's conduct goes beyond the death of Taylor," he said.

Landers also said a domestic violence case was filed against Mason in Ohio while she was out on bond for this case, suggesting that is an aggravating factor.

Murphy pointed to Mason's age and, prior to

the accident, lack of a criminal history.

"What led to this was a series of mistakes," he said, saying what she did was out of character and that she has expressed remorse for her actions.

Jay Superior Court Judge Gail Dues said she didn't feel the mitigating or aggravating factors outweighed one or the other, and she gave Mason the advisory sentences for each of her charges, with her sentences to be served concurrently.

She also recommended Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles suspend Mason's driver's license for three years.

Following the hearing, Dominique Bales thanked the prosecution for its work in the case but said she felt as though the justice system is broken in cases such as Mason's.

"I don't feel like we got enough justice ... for my son's death," Dominique Bales said. "I don't think we'll ever get it, though."

"A six-year sentence is not justice for taking someone's life," added Mark Bales.

Capsule Reports

New member

Redkey Town Council has a new board member.

Jennifer Staver of Redkey was appointed Monday to fill the position vacated by former council member Gavin Grady. Staver was appointed by Jay County Republican Party chairman Jenae Blasdel.

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SERVICES

Today

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

Saturday

Elzey, Jerry: 10 a.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

Louck, Joyce: 1 p.m., MJS Mortuaries, 109 S. Meridian St., Redkey.

Haynes, Vicki: 3 p.m., W.H. Dick & Sons – Hellwarth Funeral Home, 218 W. Market St., Celina, Ohio.

Service listings provided by

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Photo provided

Cincinnatus donations

Cincinnatus League recently presented checks to several organizations. Pictured are Allison Smiley of Arts Place, Kyle Cook of the Jay Community Center, P.J. Corwin of Youth Service Bureau and Drew Houck of Cincinnatus League.

Spend spring break at library

Jay County Public Library has activities planned for local students on spring break.

“Mission Expl-OREO-ation,” a family night themed after the popular snack cookie, will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. Tuesday. The event, hosted by the library and Jay County Farm Bureau, involves a variety of Oreo-themed activities, games and crafts, as well as an opportunity for attendees to practice milking a cow. Games will include Oreo Nerf blasting, a cookie-stacking challenge, Oreo Battleship and an Oreo speed licking contest.

“Slime, Squish, and Splatter,” a program for children to dive into different sensory crafts using clay, slime, shaving cream and other materials, will be from 1:30 to 3 p.m. Friday in the community room. The event is intended for children of all ages.

Also, “Teen Crafternoon,” a creative activity for teens aged 13 through 17, is slated for 2 to 4 p.m.

Monday. Teens may stop by the library to color socks with fabric markers, turn items into disco balls or decorate cupcakes while watching “Shrek.” Snacks and drinks will be available. Registration is required for the event.

An interactive viewing of the Pixar movie, “Cars,” is slated for 5 to 7 p.m. March 27 in the community room. Participants will be given themed snacks and activities while watching the movie. To register, call or stop by the library’s front desk.

Library visitors may stop by the children’s area from Monday through March 28 to write or draw in a card thanking local farmers for their work, with the cards to be delivered to local farming families.

Agriculture-themed take and make crafts celebrating Ag Week will also be available at the library starting Monday while supplies last. The crafts will be provided by Jay County Farm Bureau.

Partner’s texts with other woman ring alarms

DEAR ABBY: My relationship with my partner hasn’t been the greatest, but we are both working on ourselves to become better partners. Recently, I found out he has been texting another female (flirting). He 100% swore to me nothing more has happened besides the texting. He claims he likes the attention. This other woman knows he’s in a relationship. How can I move forward from this? Before I found out, things were starting to get better. Now I’m not sure how to feel. I want to move past this, but I’m hurting. Help! — TAKEN ABACK IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR TAKEN ABACK: I understand that you are hurt-

Dear Abby



to fill that hole. Second, he may also have an honesty problem. While I don’t usually advise readers to contact the “other woman,” in your case, if you do, you may learn enough to decide whether it would be in your best interest to move on.

.....

ing, and I am sincerely sorry. Your partner has some serious flaws that you shouldn’t take lightly. First, he is so insecure that he needs constant validation that he’s attractive — more validation than one woman can give him. Shovel as fast as you could, and you probably would never be able

DEAR ABBY: Our parents and grandparents have passed. There are five of seven siblings left. When we were living at home, holidays were special and celebrated on the actual day. Once we moved away and started families of our own, it became difficult to get together every year on the exact date of the holiday. Some of

us remained single; others wanted to spend the day with in-laws or at home with spouses and children. We still wanted to get together, so some years we gather on the actual holiday or the day or weekend before or after. This seemed like a great compromise.

Thirty years ago, one of our siblings decided that he wouldn’t join us for any holidays, including birthdays, unless they were celebrated on the exact day. With different work schedules, travel and other family obligations, accommodating the wishes of the one sibling has been impractical. We have missed him greatly over the years as we continue gathering to celebrate as a family. We

are now in our 60s, and grandchildren and their families are added to the mix. How can we convince our missing sibling to join us for holidays whenever we are able to get together as a family versus him staying home alone? — MOURNING IN MINNESOTA

DEAR MOURNING: When the family gathers, call and FaceTime your absent sibling so he can see the merriment he is missing. Tell him you wish he could be there celebrating with you. However, after 30 years of self-imposed exile, do not expect him to change his pattern, because it’s unlikely to happen.

Community Calendar

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

Today

STITCH AND CHATTER QUILT CLUB — Meets from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at Jay Community Center. Show and teal is at 1 p.m. The club is open to all ages and is for anyone who wants to sew. Bring unfinished projects and a sewing machine. For more information, call Nan Weesner (260) 766-9334.

SMART RECOVERY — A group for those struggling with addiction that focuses on motivation,

copied 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.

EN AVANT CLUB — Meets at 1 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR SUICIDE GRIEF —

Meets from 1 to 2:30 p.m. the third Thursday of each month. The support group serves to help individuals who have lost a loved one to suicide. To register, contact Stephanie Patterson at (260) 251-3259.

ORGAN TRANSPLANT SUPPORT GROUP — Will meet at 3 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month in the IU Health Blackford main conference room.

PORTLAND LIONS CLUB — Will meet at 6:30 p.m. the third Thursday of the month at Portland Lions Civic Center, 307 W. 100 North.

FORGET-ME-NOT — A support group for parents, friends and relatives who have lost a baby through miscarriage, birth or illness will meet from 7 to 9 p.m. at St. Vincent Randolph Hospital, Winchester, in community room 1. For more information, call Kimberly Sibery at (765) 964-6075 or Nikki Bosworth at (765) 584-6452.

Friday

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

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

CININNATUS LEAGUE — Will hold its next meeting at noon Friday, March 21, at Harmony Cafe in Portland.

Saturday

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS — Will meet at 10 a.m. at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, 218 E. High St., Portland. For more information, call (260) 251-3336 or (260) 729-7000.

Sudoku

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

Level: Intermediate

Wednesday’s Solution

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

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.

MARCH SPECIALS

Run a mid-sized ad in all of our newspapers,
The Commercial Review (Portland),
The News-Gazette (Winchester),
The News Times (Hartford City) and
The News and Sun (Dunkirk),
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Ads must run in March.

GRAPHIC PRINTING
NEWSPAPERS

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Save Medicare Advantage program

To the editor:

Both in my career as a wealth advisor and my roles in serving on the school board and now county council, I am often asked to help make difficult financial decisions.

How can we invest our money wisely and ensure we receive healthy returns on that investment?

Are we sure this is the best use of our funds?

There is one funding question

Letters to the Editor

in Washington, D.C., however, that does not strike me as particularly complex: Whether to support the popular and successful Medicare Advantage program.

And yet, our policymakers keep underfunding Medicare Advantage, year after year.

Medicare Advantage covers 34 million American seniors — 54% of the Medicare-eligible population. Its popularity and high consumer satisfaction make sense; it offers more coverage options at low prices. But it isn't just seniors who are saving money.

The federal government benefits too.

One recent study showed

Medicare Advantage enrollment is linked to lower Medicare spending, saving the federal government \$144 billion over 10 years.

Medicare Advantage delivers for seniors, and it saves money for taxpayers. Were I in the federal government, I would make funding it a top priority. Unfortunately, common sense isn't so common in Washington. Instead of increasing funding for Medicare Advantage, the Presi-

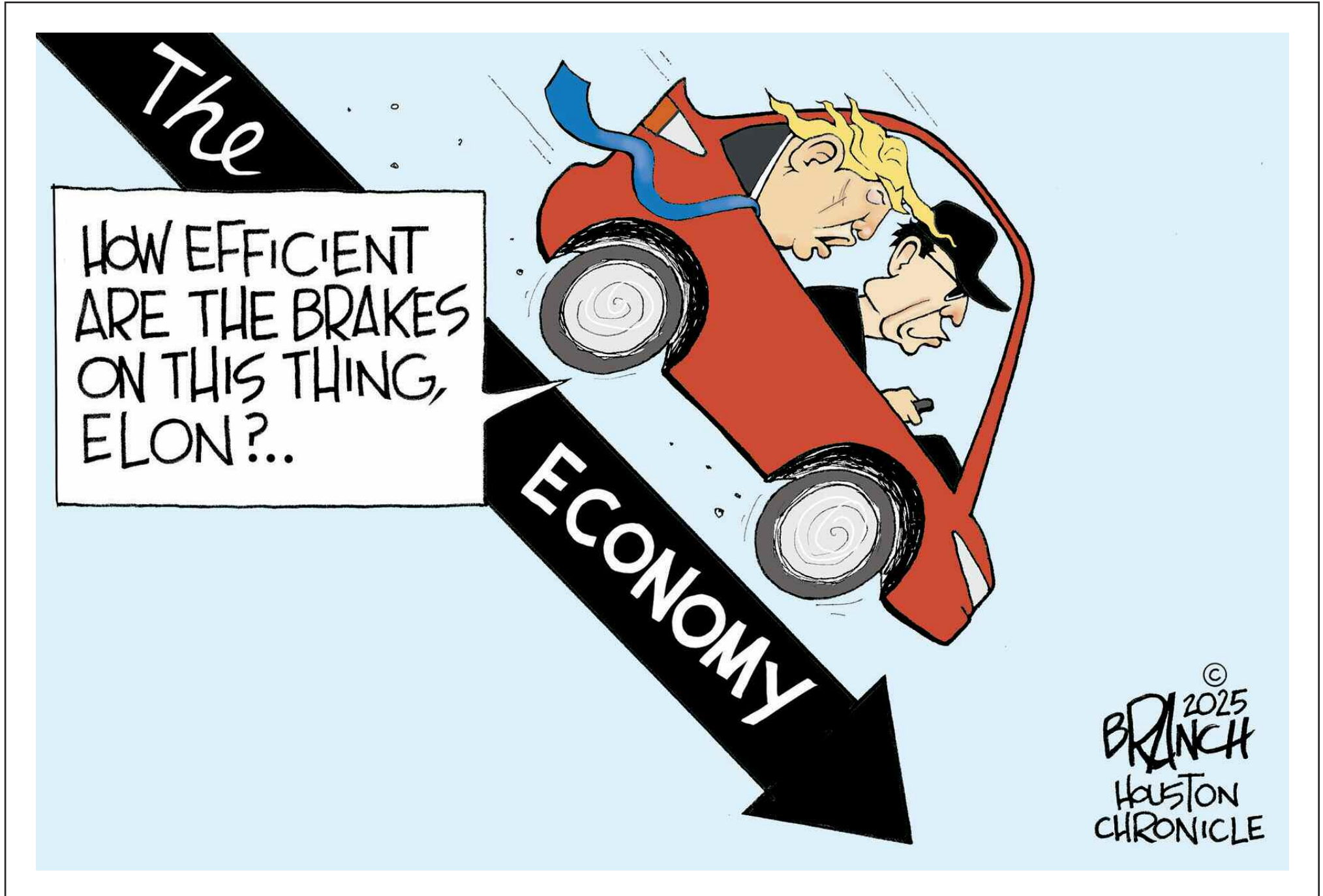
dent Joe Biden administration cut rates in 2024 and 2025.

Now, the scheduled rates for 2026 will also be insufficient.

This will mean higher costs for seniors on Medicare Advantage at a time when life already feels unaffordable.

I'm calling on Sen. Jim Banks (R-Indiana) and all who represent us in D.C. Help us save Medicare Advantage.

Bryan Alexander
Portland



Recession could be extremely painful

By MICHAEL J. HICKS

Recessions are caused by economic shocks that affect either the demand or the supply of goods and services. President Trump's policy choices target both supply and demand.

This helps explain the rapid reversal of economic growth that has descended upon the U.S. Because these effects hit both consumers and producers, changing course will become increasingly difficult.

This risks a very painful type of recession.

Before I explain how this recession might play out, it is useful to address the president's main assertion that he is trading short-term pain for long-term gain. It is bunk.

The range of economic responses, from declining stocks to reduced consumer sentiment and spending, suggests families and businesses understand there is no long-term gain in Trump's plan.

If the White House offered a cogent and thoughtful plan to improve the U.S. economy, then stocks would be rising, business investment accelerating and consumer sentiment rising. That would be true, even if there was economic sacrifice involved.

To illustrate this, imagine if the president offered Congress a realistic plan to balance the budget over five years. It would need to include broad tax increases, targeted spending cuts and a major reworking of our entitlement programs.

Such a plan would cause short-

Michael
J. Hicks



term pain to most American families and businesses. But it would also reduce long-term borrowing costs, ensure the survival of Social Security and Medicaid, and again make us prime location for foreign investors.

That would boost stocks and provide confidence to American investors and consumers.

Nothing remotely like that is under consideration. In fact, the plan passed by the House would be the most inflationary budget in U.S. history. Every business knows this, every member of Congress knows this and even the president's economic advisors know this.

Market participants, from homebuyers in Houston to AI tech investors to mutual fund advisors to people planning new car purchases, are all aware there is no long-run plan for economic gain. Indeed, the long-term risk to the economy is now stagflation—the combination of deep reductions of supply and demand alongside an inflationary budget. This hamstringing policies that might reduce the pain of a recession in two ways.

First, our federal debt has become so large that fiscal policy—like the \$5,000 stimulus float-

ed by Elon Musk—is unlikely to affect demand. Second, any inflationary spending policies will force the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates. This will further reduce spending and new business expansion—cutting both demand and supply.

We are in a cycle that will continue until political pressure ends it. Writing that sentence made me chuckle, because that political pressure would have to come from courageous Republicans.

Ironically, the greatest policy impacts on supply and demand tend to surround the purchase of goods, not services. Tariffs are placed primarily on goods, increasing their price, and the price of substitute goods. So, all automobiles, not just those made in Canada, will see price increases.

The effects will worsen with stagflation, since interest rates will remain high. Cars and homes will cost more and borrowing to buy them will be more expensive. So, we should see households shift their consumption from goods to services. I think this will be big enough to wholly reverse the manufacturing production boom that followed the pandemic.

The really interesting aspect of this is that red states tend to dominate the production of goods, while blue states are far more service-oriented. This is also true at the county and city level.

GOP voters are far more likely to work in the trades, construc-

tion and manufacturing, while Democratic voters toil in service sectors—health care, education and professional services.

As with most downturns, the economic pain will not be uniformly distributed. I make this point only to illustrate that Trump's rapid recession will cause plenty of tears, but they mostly won't be those sweet, sweet liberal tears that appeal to his MAGA followers.

Unlike Trump, I don't revel at the economic pain of people with differing political views. I dislike recessions.

Employment shocks, like the one that is just starting, fall most heavily on the least educated workers, such as those who have not been to college or finished high school. Lost jobs mean that hardworking people lose careers, homes and oftentimes must move from the places they love.

Economic shocks to agriculture and manufacturing are more geographically concentrated, so some cities or towns will be heavily affected, while others escape the deepest job losses.

Workers in manufacturing, construction, logistics and agriculture face far greater challenges finding similar employment anywhere. These workers endure much more painful transitions to new occupations. A large share never again finds meaningful work, and their children have poorer economic prospects than those who do not lose jobs.

Over the past few years, economists were widely criticized for

insisting that the economy was strong, even with high single-digit inflation. The coming downturn is going to make it starkly clear why economists are far more worried about the long-term economic effects of, say, an 8 percent unemployment rate than an 8 percent inflation rate.

We really dislike both coming at the same time—which is where Trump's policies are pushing us. By Christmas, many Americans are going to be nostalgic for former President Joe Biden's economy.

Of course, there is some opportunity to prevent much of this. If the president admitted his tariffs were a mistake, stopped threatening existing federal spending like the CHIPs Act and made amends with our allies, he could corral a bipartisan Congress to pass meaningful spending cuts and tax increases to balance the budget, we would surely experience an improved economic outlook.

I chuckled writing that paragraph, too. He'd much rather taunt a Canadian leader than save your job. The president inherited a solid economy poised for a soft landing. He chose a recession.

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

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—Thomas Jefferson

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

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

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

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

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

Calvary United Methodist
301 N. Main St., Dunkirk
Susan Durovey-Antrim
(765) 499-0368
Services: 10:30 a.m.
susan.duroveyantrim@in.umc.org

Christ Chapel
2535 Wabash Road, Fort Recovery
(419) 733-1469
christchapelfr.com

Church of the Living God (Miracle Missions)
8472 S. 800 East, Union City
Services: 10:30 a.m.
Sunday school: 9:30 a.m.

Church of God of Prophecy
797 N. Creagor Ave., Portland
Nanette Weesner
(260) 766-9334
Services: 10 a.m., 6 p.m.
nanybell@yahoo.com

Church of the Brethren
Floral and Chicago avenues, Portland
Kevin McClung
(260) 729-7295
Services: 10 a.m.

Church of the Living God
South Broad Street, Dunkirk
Services: 7 p.m., 7 p.m. Friday

Collett Nazarene
450 South, 1 mile west of U.S. 27
Billy Stanton
(260) 251-2403
Services: 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.

Cornerstone Baptist
211 E. Main St., Portland
Wayne Ward
(260) 726-7714
Services: 10 a.m.

Cornerstone Church of Pennville
190 W. Main St., Pennville
David Davidson
(260) 202-9718
Services: 10:30 a.m.

Dunkirk Nazarene
226 E. Center St., Dunkirk
Tom Felt
(765) 768-6199
Services: 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.

Evangelical Methodist
930 W. Main St., Portland
Steve Arnold
(260) 251-0970
Services: 10:20 a.m., 6 p.m.

Fairview United Methodist/Jay County
2875 E. 200 South
Pamela Freeman
Lay leader: Beth Stephen
(260) 726-9184
Services: 10:15 a.m.

Faith Community
9560 W. 200 South, Dunkirk
Joe Schmit
(260) 251-5254
Services: 10 a.m.

Family Worship Center
200 E. Elder St., Portland
Ronald Willis
(260) 726-4844
Services: 11 a.m., 6:30 p.m. Wednesday
thefamilyworshipcenter.org

Fellowship Baptist
289 S. 200 West
Hugh Kelly
(260) 726-8873
Services: 9 a.m., 11 a.m.
Sunday school: 10 a.m.
pastorkelly@fbc-portland.com

First Church of Christ
1049 Union City Road, Fort Recovery
David J. Nicholson
(419) 375-2860
Services: 10:30 a.m.
fccftrecovery.org

First Community Baptist
341 S. Meridian St., Redkey
Everett Bilibrey Jr.
Sunday school: 9:30 a.m.
Services: 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; 7 p.m. Wednesday

First Free Will Baptist
12369 W. 600 South, Dunkirk
Sunday school: 10 a.m.
Services: 10:50 a.m., 6 p.m., 6 p.m. Wednesday

First Presbyterian
402 N. Ship St., Portland
Rev. M. Rex Espiritu
(260) 726-8462
Services: 9:30 a.m.
Sunday school: 10:15 a.m.
firstpccportland.org

Fort Recovery Church of the Nazarene
401 E. Boundary St., Fort Recovery
(419) 375-4680
Services: 10:30 a.m.
Kids vision and teen ministries: 6 p.m. Wednesday
frnaz@frontier.com

Fort Recovery United Methodist
309 E. Boundary St., Fort Recovery
Rev. Carol McKay
(304) 617-0101
Services: 9 a.m.

Full Gospel Lighthouse Tabernacle
468 E. Washington St., Dunkirk
Robert Thomas
(765) 348-4620
Services: 6:30 p.m., 6:30 p.m. Thursday

Geneva First United Methodist
100 W. Line St., Geneva
Barry McCune
(260) 368-7655
Services: 9:30 a.m.

Geneva Nazarene
225 Decatur St., Geneva
(260) 525-8609
Services: 10 a.m., 6 p.m.
Sunday school: 9 a.m.
Prayer meeting: 6 p.m. Wednesday

Gilead Church
County road 650 North, one-quarter mile east of Balbec
Services: 10:30 a.m.

Hickory Grove Church of the Brethren
Indiana 1 and Indiana 26
Earl Doll
(260) 731-4477
Services: 10:30 a.m.

High Street United Methodist
435 High St., Geneva
Rev. Joseph Hampton
(260) 368-7233
Services: 9 a.m.

Holy Trinity Catholic
7321 E. Indiana 67, Bryant
Fr. Peter Logsdon
Fr. Martin Sandhage
Services: 8 a.m., 4:30 p.m. Saturday

Hopewell of Life Ministries
County road 200 South, 2 miles east of Indiana 1
Rev. Ruth Funk
(260) 251-8581
Services: 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.

Immaculate Conception Catholic
506 E. Walnut St., Portland
Fr. Peter Logsdon
Fr. Martin Sandhage
(260) 726-7055
Services: 5:30 p.m. Saturday, 10:30 a.m. Sunday

Kingsley Full Gospel
4030 S. 700 East, Dunkirk
Stuart Phillips
Services: 9:30 a.m. and 6 p.m., 7 p.m. Wednesday

Mary Help of Christians
403 Sharpsburg Road, Fort Recovery
Rev. Alexander Witt
(419) 375-4153
Services: 4:30 p.m. Saturday, 9 a.m.

Mount Tabor Community Church
216 W. Pleasant St., Dunkirk
Scott McClain
(765) 768-7273
Services: 9:30 a.m.

Mount Zion United Methodist
County roads 600 East and 200 North
Rev. Darrell Borders
(260) 726-4786
Services: 9 a.m.

New Beginnings Holiness Church of Blaine
4017 W. 200 South
Randy Smith
(260) 251-2406
Services: 10 a.m., 6 p.m.
nbholiness.com

New Covenant Fellowship
1238 W. 450 South
Chuck Myers
(260) 251-0063
Services: 10:30 a.m.

New Life Ministries
415 S. Helen St., Portland
Dr. Kay Fairchild
(260) 223-2961
Services: 4 p.m.
drkayfairchild.com

New Mt. Pleasant United Methodist
5905 S. Como Road
Neil Butcher
(765) 499-7838
Services: 9 a.m.

Noble Congregational Christian
1964 N. 800 East
Aaron Huey
Services: 10:30 a.m.

Oak Grove United Methodist
829 S. Indiana 1
Neil Butcher
(765) 760-9085
Services: 10:45 a.m.

Pleasant Hill
9945 N. 800 East, Union City
Bruce Bryan
(765) 964-3664
Services: 9 a.m., 6 p.m.
mypleasanthillchurch.org

Portland Church of Christ
1217 W. Votaw St., Portland
Bob Graham
(260) 726-7777
Bible class: 9:15 a.m.
Services: 10:20 a.m.
Bible School: 6 p.m. Wednesday
portlandcoc.com

Portland First Church of Nazarene
920 S. Shank St., Portland
Steve Cecil
(260) 726-8040
Services: 10:45 a.m.

Portland Friends
226 E. Main St., Portland
Herb Hummel
(260) 202-9732
Services: 10 a.m.
Sunday school: 9 a.m.

Praise Chapel Church of God
4527 E. 1000 North (Jay-Randolph county line)
Rev. Josh Canfield
(765) 584-7045
Services: 10:30 a.m.

Redeemer Lutheran
Malin and Elm streets, Bryant
Father Dan Layden
(260) 997-6787
Services: 9:30 a.m.

Redkey Faith Ministries
9811 W. Indiana 67, southwest of Redkey
Rev. Craig and Robin Cotherman
(765) 369-2920
Services: 10 a.m.
RedkeyFaith.org

Redkey First Christian
Union and Malin streets
Jeff Hammers
(765) 468-6172
Services: 10:30 a.m.
Sunday school: 9:30 a.m.

Redkey United Methodist
122 W. Main St.
Lori McIntosh
(765) 369-2085
Services: 10:30 a.m.

River of Life
722 W. Main St., Portland
Susan Hathaway
(260) 729-1095
Services: 10:30 a.m.

The ROCK
1605 N. Meridian St., Portland
Matt Ransom
(260) 726-7474
Services: 10 a.m.
matt@therockkjc.org

Salamonia Church of Christ
3900 S. 600 East
Bruce Phillips
(260) 335-2017
Services: 9 a.m.

Second Chance at Life Ministries
228 S. Meridian St., Portland
Dave Keen (260) 251-8792
Randy Smith (260) 703-0733
Mike Eads (260) 703-0733
Services: 10:30 a.m.

St. Joseph Catholic
1689 St. Joe Road, Fort Recovery
Rev. Alexander Witt
Services: 7:30 a.m. Sunday

St. Mary's Catholic
346 S. Broad St., Dunkirk
Rev. Kevin Hurley
Services: 5 p.m. Saturday, 5:30 p.m. Thursday

St. Paul Catholic
517 Meiring Road, Fort Recovery
Rev. Alexander Witt
Services: 11 a.m. Sunday

St. Peter Catholic
1477 Philothea Road, Fort Recovery
Rev. Alexander Witt
Services: 9 a.m. Sunday

Sugar Grove Nazarene
3984 N. 550 West, Portland
Pastor Mike Heckman
(615) 517-1017
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Services: 10:30 a.m.
Bible study: 6 p.m. Wednesday

Sugar Grove Church
County roads 600 South and 1150 West, Dunkirk
Scott McClain
Services: 9 a.m.

Temple Baptist
17920 Indiana 167, Dunkirk
John Elam
(765) 768-7708
Sunday school: 10 a.m.
Services: 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., 7 p.m. Wednesday
7pillarsdirector@gmail.com
templebaptistin.com

The Church at Westchester
4487 E. 400 North
(260) 726-6311
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Services: 10:35 a.m.
churchatwestchester.org

Trinity Lutheran
301 N. Wayne St., Fort Recovery
Robin Owen
(419) 375-4498
Services: 9 a.m. (contemporary service, fourth Sunday)
pastorrobino@gmail.com

Trinity ArchBridge Church
323 S. Meridian St., Portland
Dan Vore
(260) 726-8391
Sunday school: 9 a.m.
Services: 10:15 a.m.
portlandtrinity.com

Union Chapel
6200 N. 375 West, Bryant
Interim Pastor Chris Kruckow
(260) 849-0687
Services: 10:20 a.m., 6 p.m.

Union Chapel Church of the Nazarene
County road 900 North (Jay-Wells county line)
Fred Stevens
Services: 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.

Walnut Corner
County roads 200 North and 500 West
Steve Rogers
(260) 251-1113
Services: 10:30 a.m.
Sunday school: 9:30 a.m.

West Walnut Church of Christ
204 W. Walnut St., Portland
Gil Alicea
(260) 726-4691
Services: 10 a.m.
westwalnutchurchofchrist.org

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Robin Owen
218 E. High St., Portland
(260) 726-8832
zionlutheranportland@gmail.com
Services: 10:30 a.m.

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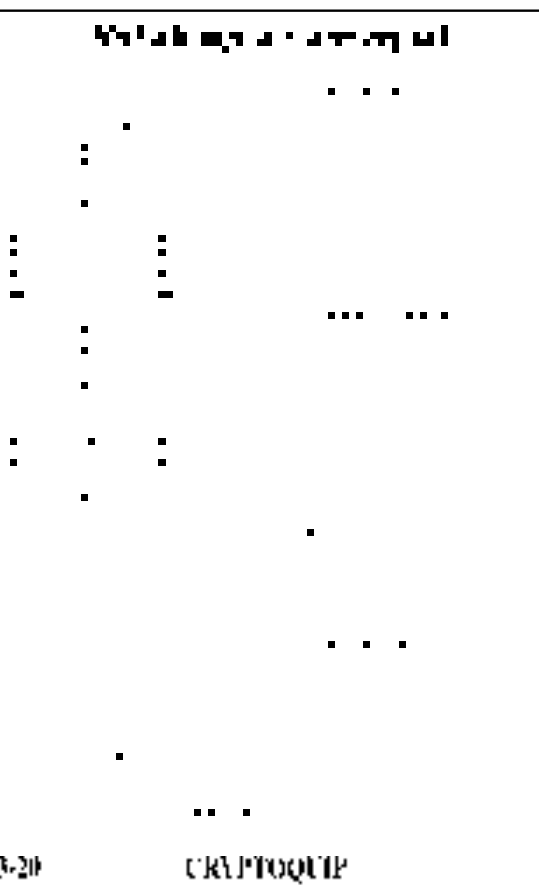
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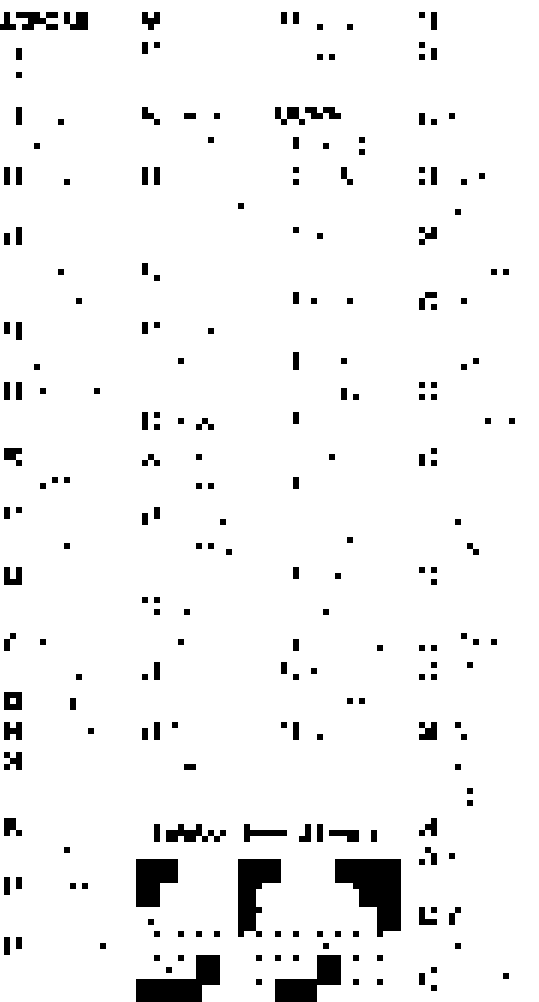
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The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Ball ...

Continued from page 8
Ball became a well-known figure in the sports world while his sons were basketball stars at Chino Hills High School. Now he says he intends to use his platform to encourage others to look after their own well-being better than he did.

"From my experience the last couple months, I want to get in people's heads the importance of taking care of your health — especially Black people, because sometimes we're not trying to go to the hospital, we will try to sleep it off or say, 'Yeah, we'll get to it later,'" Ball wrote. "And sometimes it's a little more serious than what you think."

"I look at my situation like this: I've talked to some of my people that's my age that's been calling me that have cancer. And they say, 'We thought we got it all, but we didn't,' and so the organs are getting tore up in the inside. Now these folks are dying. And these are my friends that are around my age, in the 50s and dying of cancer."

"Just for me to have my foot cut off, I got another one. I'm good to have my foot cut off as opposed to being dead. But if I don't go at the end of last year during Christmas to get that infection looked at, [an infection] that's been around for maybe a month or two on the bottom of my foot, this would be a different type of story."

Around the corner

Fort Recovery High School second baseman Layla Armstrong tosses the ball over to first during the Tribe's scrimmage against Sidney Lehman on Monday. With the season set to kick off March 22, Armstrong is one of a handful of freshmen fighting to earn the starting spot at second base for the season. For a full preview, check out Friday's edition of The Commercial Review.

Sports on tap

Local schedule

Saturday
Jay County — Track at Midwest High Performance HSR Qualifier — 12 p.m.
Fort Recovery — Softball doubleheader at Franklin Monroe — 9 a.m.; Baseball scrimmage at Indian Lake — 12 p.m.

TV sports

Today
12:15 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Louisville vs. Creighton (CBS)
12:40 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Purdue vs. High Point (TRUTV)
1:30 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Wisconsin vs. Montana (TNT)
2 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Houston vs. SIU Edwardsville (TBS)
2:50 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Auburn vs. Alabama State (CBS)
3:15 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Clemson vs. McNeese State (TRUTV)
3:45 p.m. — UEFA Nations League soccer: Netherlands at Spain (FS1)
4:05 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: BYU vs. VCU (TNT)
4:35 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basket-

ball: Gonzaga vs. Georgia (TBS)
5 p.m. — College softball: Wisconsin at Purdue (BTN)
6:50 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Tennessee vs. Wofford (TNT)
7 p.m. — NBA: Brooklyn Nets at Indiana Pacers (FDSN Indiana)
7 p.m. — College wrestling: NCAA Championships (ESPN)
7 p.m. — Women's college basketball First Round: Columbia vs. Washington (ESPN2)
7:10 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Kansas vs. Arkansas (CBS)
7:25 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Texas A&M vs. Yale (TBS)
7:35 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Missouri vs. Drake (TRUTV)
7:30 p.m. — College softball: Maryland at Michigan (BTN)
9 p.m. — Women's college basketball First Round: High Point vs. William & Mary (ESPN2)
9:25 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: UCLA vs. Utah State (TNT)
9:45 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: St. John's vs. Omaha (CBS)
10 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Michigan vs. UC San Diego (TBS)
10:10 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's bas-

ketball: Texas Tech vs. UNC Wilmington (CBS)
11:30 p.m. — Formula 1: Chinese Grand Prix (ESPN2)
Friday
3:30 a.m. — Formula 1: Chinese Grand Prix (ESPN2)
11:30 p.m. — Women's college basketball First Round: Michigan vs. TBD (ESPN2)
12 p.m. — Women's college basketball First Round: Kentucky vs. Liberty (ESPN)
12:15 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Mississippi State vs. Baylor (CBS)
12:40 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Alabama vs. High Point (TRUTV)
1:30 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Iowa State vs. Lipscomb (TNT)
2 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Memphis vs. Colorado State (TBS)
2 p.m. — Women's college basketball First Round: Notre Dame vs. Stephen F. Austin (ESPN)
2:50 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Duke vs. TBD (CBS)
3:15 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Saint Mary's vs. Vanderbilt (TRUTV)
3:30 p.m. — Women's college basketball First Round: TCU at Fairleigh Dickinson (ESPN2)
4 p.m. — Women's college basketball First

Round: South Carolina vs. Tennessee Tech (ESPN)
4:05 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: North Carolina vs. Ole Miss (TNT)
4:35 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Maryland vs. Grand Canyon (TBS)
5:30 p.m. — Women's college basketball First Round: Ohio State vs. Montana State (ESPN2)
6 p.m. — Women's college basketball First Round: Louisville at Nebraska (ESPN)
6 p.m. — College gymnastics: Big Ten Championships (BTN)
6:30 p.m. — IndyCar: The Thermal Club INDY-CAR Grand Prix (FS1)
6:50 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Florida vs. Norfolk State (TNT)
7:10 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Kentucky vs. Troy (CBS)
7:25 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Marquette vs. New Mexico (TBS)
7:35 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Arizona vs. Akron (TRUTV)
8 p.m. — Women's college basketball First Round: Tennessee vs. South Florida (ESPN)
8 p.m. — College wrestling: NCAA Championship (ESPN)
8:30 p.m. — NBA: Detroit Pistons at Dallas Mavericks (ABC)

9 p.m. — NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series: Baptist Health 200 (FOX)
9:25 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: UConn vs. Oklahoma (TNT)
9:45 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Illinois vs. TBD (CBS)
10 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Michigan State vs. Bryant (TBS)
10 p.m. — Women's college basketball First Round: UCLA vs. TBD (ESPN)
10:10 p.m. — NCAA Tournament men's basketball: Oregon vs. Liberty (TRUTV)

Local notes

Registration open
Registration for the 35th annual Flat 50 Plus bicycle ride in Adams County is now open. To register, visit RunSignUp.com.
There are rides ranging from 20 to 100 miles long.
The event will be held at 7 a.m. Saturday, June 21. It will start at Bellmont high school and will have stops in Willshire, Geneva and Monroe with refreshments.
.....
To have an event listed in "Sports on tap," email details to sports@thecr.com.

90 SALE CALENDAR

PUBLIC AUCTION
Saturday April 5th, 2025
TIME 10:00 A.M.
LOCATED: 9514 N 100W,
Ridgeville, IN
SUV-GOLF CART-TRACTOR-TOOLS
2011 Ford Escape XLT w/ 80,000 miles. Club Car Gas Golf Cart w/ Carryall. Ford Golden Jubilee Tractor. Bush Hog 5i 3pt Mower. Craftsman Table Saw, Planer, and Radial Arm Saw. 200 gallon Overhead Fuel Tank. Hog Panels.
ANTIQUES-FURNITURE-MISC.
(2) Street Lights. Cast RR-W Sign. Chambers Gas Cooking Stove. Steamer Trunks. Forge Horse tie-down. Large lot of Deer Antlers and Mounts. Four Compartment Chicken Nester. Dress-making Mannequin. Tigerwood 2 door Chest. Oak Ice Chest. Handmade Doll Collection. Portland Forge and Ridgeville Silver Coins. Hotpoint Refrigerator. Large Cedar Chest. Sofa. (3) Recliners.
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90 SALE CALENDAR

PUBLIC AUCTION
SATURDAY, MARCH 29TH, 2025
9:00 A.M.
LOCATED: 3430 W State Road 67, Portland, IN or 3 Q miles west of Portland at the corner of Hwy 67 and County Road 200 South.
NOW ACCEPTING CONSIGNMENTS UNTIL
NOON. THURSDAY, MARCH 27TH, 2025.
HEAVY EQUIPMENT-FARM TRACTORS-FARM EQUIPMENT
Case SR 210B Skid-loader w/ CHA high flow, 765 hours. International 354 Tractor w/ Bush Hog, International 15i Disc., Kil Brothers 24i Rolling Basket, (2) J&M 250 bu. hopper wagons.
TRUCKS-TRAILERS-AUTOS
2021 Dodge 3500 Single Axel Dump w/ 6.7L Cummins, 2005 Ford Single Axel Dump Truck 56,000 miles, 6.0 Diesel, 2000 Freightliner Semi FL112 w/ C13 CAT Engine, 2013 Chevy Traverse LT 4x4, 18i Car Hauler Trailer, 16i Enclosed Trailer.
MOWERS-RTVS-SUPPORT EQUIPMENT-MISC.
Kubota 2G 327 Zero turn Mower, Snapper Pro ST50 w/ Bagger, Ryan 24i Sod Cutter., Club Car 48 Volt Electric Golf Cart, Pallet Forks, Cement Mixer, (2) Western 2&3 Ton Salt Spreaders, Large Lot of Landscaping Pavers, Blocks, and Bricks. Approximately 150 Trees including Oak, Maple, Elm, and Pine. Rose Bushes. Shrubs. Misc Plants.

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Located: 722 E Main St, Portland, IN
Friday Afternoon
April 11th, 2025
5:00 P. M.
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For more information or private showing contact
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NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

By virtue of a certified copy of a decree to me directed from the Clerk of the Superior Court of Jay County, Indiana, in Cause No. 38D01-2410-MF-000021 wherein PennyMac Loan Services, LLC was Plaintiff, and Shaun Hines was the Defendant, requiring me to make the sum as provided for in said Decree with interest and costs, I will expose at public sale to the highest bidder, on the 17th day of April; at the hour of 10:00 AM, or as soon thereafter as is possible at the Jay County Sheriff's Department 120 North Court Street; 3rd floor Courthouse; Portland, IN 47371 in Jay County, Indiana, the fee simple of the whole body of Real Estate in Jay County, Indiana. A part of the northwest quarter of Section 35, Township 23 North, Range 13 East, Jay County, Indiana, as shown on a survey completed by Farber Surveying, Inc., File #0123-06, dated January 24, 2023, being more particularly described as follows:

Commencing at the Northwest corner of the Northwest Quarter of Section 35, Township 23 North, Range 13 East, Jay County, Indiana; thence N 87 degrees 35 minutes 11 seconds E (assumed bearing), along the North line of said Northwest Quarter, a distance of 353.16 feet for the point of beginning of the tract herein described; thence S 02 degrees 19 minutes 50 seconds E, a distance of 134.99 feet; thence S. 87 degrees 35 minutes 11 seconds W, a distance of 176.56 feet; thence S 00 degrees 53 minutes 16 seconds E, a distance of 140.96 feet; thence S 88 degrees 58 minutes 09 seconds E, a distance of 398.78 feet; thence N 01 degrees 35 minutes 37 seconds W, a distance of 299.89 feet to the North line of said Northwest Quarter; thence S 87 degrees 35 minutes 11 seconds W, a distance of 221.84 feet to the point of beginning, Containing 2.08 acres, more or less.
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The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Golden hour Grant

Grant Wendel of the Jay County High School baseball team starts to turn a double play during the red-blue scrimmage Tuesday evening. JCHS installed new lights at the diamond, allowing the Patriots to scrimmage later in the day, as well as host games with later start times in the season.

Boozier's back in east Indiana

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review

HARTFORD CITY — A former Patriot coach and athletics director will be walking the sidelines in Blackford County next season.

Blackford School Board hired Steve Boozier as the next Bruins football coach Tuesday, bringing him back to the job he held for eight seasons.

He will also have a teaching position leading the school's weightlifting program.

"I'm extremely excited," said Boozier, who led the Bruins from 2000 through 2007. "Blackford's always a place I wanted them to do well except for weeks that they were playing Jay County. And now, it just flip flops. Now I want Jay County to do well except for the week they play Blackford."

A committee worked through the interview process, talking with about 10 candidates, said BHS athletics director Garry May. He said it was Boozier's commitment to growing the program and investing in students that stood out.

"He's a community guy," May added. "He still lives in the community. ... It was just really, really exciting to see him come through that process."

"What really stands out is his commitment to the development and the growth of our student athletes. ...

"Part two is, he's had proven success here. He's the last winning coach. He's the last coach to win a sectional championship."

Boozier's first stint with the Bruins included their last sectional championship in 2003 when they went 9-4 and scored tournament wins over Mississinewa, New Palestine and Yorktown. He was 5-5 in his final season and 45-39 overall at BHS before leaving in 2008 to become the athletics director at Wes-Del.

He later returned to coaching at Jay County, his alma mater, for three seasons before becoming the Patriots' athletics director. He was in that

role through the 2023-24 school year before retiring and then moving on to teach and coach football at Tri-County North in Ohio. (His team went 3-7.)

Before his first stint at Blackford, he coached at Northfield and Tri-County North.

"We had a great eight years there from 2000 to 2008," said Boozier, who will trade his current 160-mile round-trip commute for 3.1 miles to BHS. (He has lived in Hartford City for 27 years.) "I'm very familiar with the area and a lot of the guys that I coached, their kids are filtering up through the system now. I'm looking forward to meeting those kids and all the others and see what we can get going."

Blackford is coming off of a difficult stretch, having posted a 4-36 record over the last four seasons. It was 2-8 last year under Randy Sehy after going winless in 2023.

The team's last winning season came at 8-4 under Sehy — he coached the team for eight years and has also served as the track coach — as it advanced to the sectional championship game in 2018.

Boozier said he feels bringing more athletes into the program will be key to the rebuild, adding that the junior-senior high format expands those possibilities. Rather than having four-year relationships with students, they are expanded to six years.

He is hopeful to have a coaching staff in place by early April.

"We've got to make connections with kids and recruit the hallways and the lunch room and everything else," he said, adding that he planned to start doing so the day after he was hired. "I want to go out there and start meeting kids, and then throughout the spring and the course of the summer just make connections. ... We'll just start building that process slowly but surely the way we did in the past when we were there last time."

Lavar Ball had leg amputated

By CHUCK SCHILKEN

Los Angeles Times

Tribune News Service

LOS ANGELES — When LaVar Ball first addressed having his right foot amputated, he seemed to be taking the matter in stride.

"Did y'all forget I'm LaVar?" the father of NBA players Lonzo and LaMelo Ball and rising rap star/former professional basketball player LiAngelo Ball said last month on TikTok. "If I wanted to, I'd grow it back!"

In a first-person article published Tuesday by Slam magazine, however, the famously vociferous Papa Ball revealed that he wasn't

always so upbeat about his medical situation — and that he ended up losing more than just his foot over the course of three operations since December.

"I had an infection on my foot that started spreading through my blood due to not paying attention to my diabetes," Ball wrote. "I ended up having to get my leg amputated. First, they cut off a couple of toes. Then they cut off my foot. Then they said, 'We gotta go almost knee high for another surgery.' Three surgeries. And then there were also the blood transfusions. Not one, not two, not three, four different times.

"All those surgeries and blood transfusions, it made me question whether it was worth going through it sometimes. It made me think, 'Man, just kill me and let me go about my business.' It made me think that maybe it's time for me to shut it down.

"But then seeing what my boys are doing out there, they're like, 'Dad you're the toughest dude I know.' That made me keep going. ... It was good to have that backing from my boys. One of the things that makes me go is when they are all together. When they are all together, I feel strong."

See Ball page 7

Tar Heels earn statement win

By TOM FOREMAN JR.

News & Record, Greensboro, N.C.

Tribune News Service

The conspiracy theorists likely are having to refine their arguments about whether North Carolina should be in the NCAA Tournament. The Tar Heels are still in it, and they made an emphatic opening-game statement.

Going back to work after losing to Duke in the semifinals of last week's ACC Tournament, the 11th-seeded Tar Heels used a tough defense and a sharp shooting eye to run up a big first-half lead and take a 95-68 victory over San Diego State on Tuesday in the First Four in Dayton, Ohio.

North Carolina (23-13) advances to the first round of the South Regional in Milwaukee to play sixth-seeded Ole Miss at 4:05 p.m., EDT. The game will be broadcast on TNT.

The No. 11 seed is the lowest ever for North Carolina, which is in its 54th NCAA Tournament appearance, second to Kentucky's 62.

Critics pointed to North Carolina's lack of Quad 1 wins. They didn't mention that the Tar Heels played the nation's fifth-toughest nonconference schedule, a list that included games against No. 1 NCAA Tournament seeds Auburn and Florida, No. 2 seeds Alabama and Michigan State, and a trip to Kansas, which earned a No. 7 seed.

And the Tar Heels had

higher rankings in the NET (36th), KenPom (33rd) and BPI (25th) than West Virginia, Indiana, Ohio State and Boise State. Those teams were the first four to be left out of the field.

And while North Carolina wasn't left out, the Tar Heels took out the Aztecs within the first 10 minutes. Jae'Lyn Withers hit a 3 with 9:49 left in the first half, pushing the Tar Heels to a 25-13 lead. It was part of an 11-0 run that stretched the edge to 33-13 at 6:20.

Much of the Tar Heels attack took the ball to the basket with their guards speeding by the Aztecs (21-10) either to score or draw fouls that led to foul shots. It didn't hurt that North Carolina was 7-for-9 from 3-point range in the first 20 minutes as part of a 14-for-23 performance from the field.

The runaway continued in the second half as North Carolina ran the lead out to as much as 40. At the seven-minute mark, UNC Head Coach Hubert Davis began taking his starters out of the game.

RJ Davis hit all six 3-pointers he tried and finished with 26 points for the Tar Heels. Seth Trimble scored 16, Van-Allen Lubin added 12 and Withers got 10 and also grabbed 10 rebounds. North Carolina shot 52.6% from the floor.

Nick Boyd and Wayne McKinney had 12 apiece for the Aztecs, who shot 39% from the field.

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