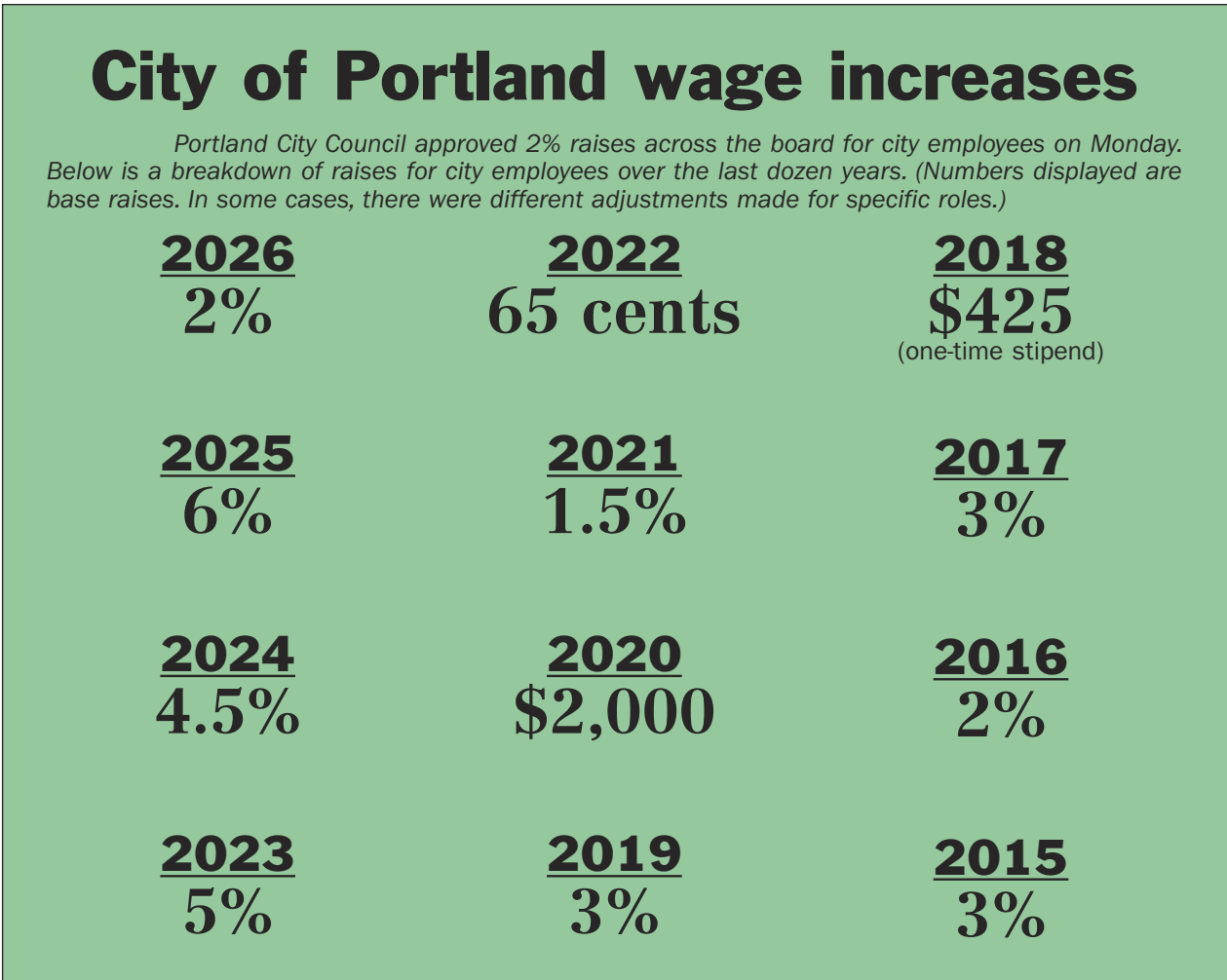


Raises approved

Council approves increases of 2%

By RAY COONEY  
The Commercial Review  
City employees will receive a 2% raise next year. Portland City Council approved the raises as part of the 2026 payroll ordinance during its meeting Monday. The council also heard from Jay County Solid Waste Management director George McGinnis regarding issues at recycling trailers in the city. Clerk-treasurer Lori Phillips presented the payroll ordinance with 2% raises across the board. She had told council members at their previous meeting that she and Mayor Jeff Westlake had discussed the issue and planned to introduce the 2% proposal Monday. The wage increases, as proposed, would represent a total increase of \$95,672. Phillips talked about the uncertainties of the impact of Senate Enrolled Act 1 (SEA 1) and any potential changes the state legislature might make in the next few years. (The measure passed during the 2025 session had estimates that the city would receive a total of \$814,740



The Commercial Review graphic/Ray Cooney

less in tax revenue — that includes \$142,330 less in 2026 — over a three-year period than it would have previously.) Westlake told council members he'd like to see numbers on a 4% raise (it would total \$191,344) and later advocated for a 5% raise (\$239,180), referring at one point to concern over the impact of SEA 1 as "fear-mongering." He also asked for consideration of time and a half pay for holidays. Council member Ashley Hilfiker asked Westlake why he had not

brought up the 4% and 5% raise proposals earlier. Council members Ron May and Dave Golden agreed with Phillips' assessment, with May saying he'd prefer to see what happens with SEA 1. Golden noted that the city has given raises of 6%, 4.5% and 5% over the previous three years and that department heads have been asked to cut their budgets by 10% because of financial uncertainties. The trend with raises seems to be 2%, council member Matt Goldswor-

thy said, adding that some municipalities have settled on a one-time stipend for 2026. "Unfortunately, it's a lot of unknown," said Goldsworthy. "That's the problem with SB 1; none of us really know. And the worst thing I would want any of our department heads to have to do is go and start laying off people." He said the council can always return next year and give a larger raise if the financial outlook turns out better than expected. Hilfiker concurred,

saying she'd "rather be safe than sorry." Council president Kent McClung, who attended the meeting virtually, made a motion to approve the payroll ordinance with 2% raises across the board, as presented. The motion passed 6-1 with Michele Brewster, Mike Aker, Goldsworthy, Golden, Hilfiker and McClung in favor and May dissenting. (May had indicated that he would not vote for a raise for council members.) See Raises page 2

Village income tax levy moves forward

If approved, increase would replace levies on real estate

By BAILEY CLINE  
The Commercial Review  
Fort Recovery residents will have a chance to learn more about the proposed income tax levy next week. Fort Recovery Village Council agreed Monday to host a public forum at 7 p.m. Tuesday to discuss raising the village's income tax from 1% to 1.5%, a decision that would require referendum approval. Council also approved on a second reading declaring intent to proceed with the levy and directed fiscal officer Roberta Staugler to file a certified copy of the intent with the board of elections for placing the income tax levy on the ballot in November. (The decision will be voted into effect on its third reading July 21.) The village's four real estate tax levies, totaling a 9.8 mills — in Ohio, property taxes are charged as millage, with one mill equal to one-tenth of a cent — and generating about \$300,000 annually. By creating an income tax levy, the village would begin collecting a 1.5% income tax, up 0.5 percentage points from the current rate. See Levy page 5

New rates announced

By JOSH WINGROVE and CATHERINE LUCEY  
Bloomberg News  
Tribune News Service

President Donald Trump unveiled the first in a wave of promised letters that threaten to impose higher tariffs rates on key trading partners, including levies of 25% on goods from Japan and South Korea beginning Aug. 1. Trump also announced 25% rates on Malaysia and Kazakhstan, while South Africa would see a 30% tariff and Laos and Myanmar would face a 40% levy. The nations were the first in what the president promised would be a flurry of unilateral warnings and trade deals announced on Monday, two days before agreements are due from trading partners facing his April 2 so-called reciprocal levies. "Our relationship has been, unfortunately, far from Reciprocal," Trump wrote in the letters. Trump's second-term rush to overhaul U.S. trade policies has served as a steady source of uncertainty for markets, central bankers and executives trying to gauge out the effect on production, inventories, hiring, inflation and consumer demand — routine planning that's hard enough without costs like tariffs that are on one day, off the next. The letters issued Monday so far appeared to largely be a novel method of once again punting a looming July 9 deadline for his so-called "reciprocal" tariffs

Deadline for higher tariffs set for Aug. 1

until at least the beginning of August. Most of the tariff rates, shared on his Truth Social platform, were largely in line with what Trump had already announced nations were likely to face. White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said there would be around a dozen countries that receive notifications about their tariffs Monday directly from the president. Additional letters will come in the coming days, she said. The episode was the latest turn of the screw for a program that has roiled markets and trade across the globe. One week after announcing the tariffs at a prominent Rose Garden event, Trump offered a 90-day reprieve, lowering duties to 10% to allow time for negotiations. Few nations successfully negotiated deals in the short time given. In the interim, Trump announced framework agreements with the United Kingdom and Vietnam and a trade truce with China. Trump is set to sign an executive order later Monday that will

hold off new rates until August 1 for all nations facing the reciprocal tariffs, Leavitt said. At the same time, Trump warned nations against retaliation over his latest gambit. "If for any reason you decide to raise your Tariffs, then, whatever the number you choose to raise them by will be added" to the threatened levels, Trump wrote. He also said that the rates did not include any sectoral-specific tariffs that the administration had or would separately implement on goods imported in key industries. Both Japan and South Korea are major auto exporters, and are also facing U.S. tariffs on steel. Trump's letters did offer them a way to meet his demands. No tariffs will be imposed if Japan or Korea, "or companies within your Country, decide to build or manufacture product within the United States and, in fact, we will do everything possible to get approvals quickly, professionally, and routinely — In other words, in a matter of weeks," he wrote. See Rates page 5



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Bottoms up

Tony Wood takes a sip of water while trying to keep his food down during the inaugural hot dog eating contest in the Farmer's Building on Saturday. The winner of the contest, Sheldon Upp, got down eight hot dogs in under 10 minutes.

Deaths

Angelina Geesaman, 16, Portland  
Marie Nesbitt, 85, Berne  
Details on page 2.

Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 80 degrees Monday. The low was 71.  
Tonight's low will be in the mid 60s. There is a 60% chance of rain, with thunderstorms possible. Expect a high in the mid 80s Thursday with a slight chance of rain.  
See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

Arts Place's Hudson Family Park Amphitheater Concert Series will continue Thursday with a performance by Fleetwood Mac, a Fleetwood Mac tribute band. The free concert will begin at 8 p.m. Food trucks and children's activities will be available.

Correction

A woman's address was incorrectly published in Thursday's edition. Rachel N. Yates, 36, lives at 281 6th St., Barberton, Ohio, according to mycase.in.gov. The error came from a booking report from Jay County Sheriff's Office.

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Capsule Reports

Cyclist thrown

A Portland man was thrown from his bicycle after crashing into a vehicle at the intersection of Meridian and Race streets about 7:21 p.m. Sunday.

Derlin C. Gomez, 33, Portland, was driving a 2022 Honda CR-V south on Meridian Street. At the same time, Ethan Bumbalough, 23, was riding his bicycle behind Gomez and failed to stop at the intersection, causing him to hit the back of the car Gomez was driving.

Bumbalough was transported to IU Health Jay by Jay Emergency Medical Service for head pain. Damage was estimated at less than \$1,000.

Failed to yield

Damage is estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000 after a Port-

land man crashed into oncoming traffic at Votaw and Williamson streets in Portland about 6 p.m. Saturday.

Martin M. Rodriguez, 32, was driving his 2017 Chevrolet Malibu north and turning from Votaw Street into the Walmart parking lot, 950 W Votaw St. He failed to yield to the stop sign at the intersection, according to a Jay County Sheriff’s Office report. At the same time, Kenny L. Burks, 31, Redkey, was headed east on Votaw Street and turned his 2006 Buick Rendezvous into the parking lot. Their vehicles collided.

Rodriguez was cited for driving without insurance, and his vehicle was towed.

Left the scene

A Dunkirk resident was

arrested Sunday after allegedly sideswiping a Daleville man’s car on Indiana 67 and leaving the scene about 10:26 p.m. Saturday.

Ryan A. Thornburg, 45, Daleville, was driving his 2013 GMC Terrain south on the highway near its intersection with county road 125 South. He told police a northbound vehicle crossed the center line and sideswiped his car. He told police he wasn’t able to get a vehicle description and didn’t see the vehicle’s brake lights come on to stop for the accident, according to a Jay County Sheriff’s Office report.

Police were later called about a hit and run accident involving a 2014 Subaru Forester at Taco Bell, 1501 N. Meridian St., Portland. Police determined driver

Chevy P. Swearingen, 19, was in the same accident as Thornburg.

Swearingen told police Thornburg crossed the center line and caused the accident. He said didn’t stop because he was scared and didn’t see Thornburg’s brake lights come on either.

He was administered a drug blood test with results pending.

Swearingen was preliminarily charged with a Class B misdemeanor for leaving the scene of an accident and two Class C misdemeanors for operating a vehicle while intoxicated and possession of paraphernalia. He was being held in Jay County Jail on a \$1,500 bond.

Both vehicles sustained between \$5,000 and \$10,000 in estimated damage, including broken driver’s side mirrors.

Obituaries

**Angelina Geesaman**, Portland, Nov. 25, 2008-July 5, 2025. Services will be at 11 a.m. Friday, July 11 at Fellowship Baptist Church in Portland.






**Marie (Morrical) Nesbitt**, Berne, a Redkey native and former Portland and Geneva resident, Nov. 12, 1939-July 6, 2025. There will be no services.

\*\*\*\*\*

*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

Thursday 7/10	Friday 7/11	Saturday 7/12	Sunday 7/13	Monday 7/14
 <b>86/66</b> <small>Thursday's forecast shows mostly sunny skies with a slight chance of rain.</small>	 <b>88/71</b> <small>Another day of mostly sunny skies with the possibility of thunderstorms.</small>	 <b>88/69</b> <small>There's a 60% chance of thunderstorms Saturday. The high may be in the upper 80s.</small>	 <b>85/65</b> <small>Sunday's forecast shows a 50% chance of rain with highs in the lower 80s.</small>	 <b>87/68</b> <small>Mostly sunny Monday when the high will reach the mid 80s.</small>

Lotteries

<b>Powerball</b> Monday 33-35-58-61-69 Power Ball: 25 Power Play: 5 Estimated jackpot: \$216 million	Daily Four: 7-1-2-2 Quick Draw: 2-10-16-21-22-30-33-34-44-45-47-52-53-59-66-71-73-76-77-80 Cash 5: 1-4-13-32-34 Estimated jackpot: \$789,000
<b>Mega Millions</b> Estimated jackpot: \$70 million	<b>Ohio</b> Monday Midday Pick 3: 4-3-4 Pick 4: 0-7-7-2 Pick 5: 7-8-7-2-6 Evening Pick 3: 7-3-7 Pick 4: 7-4-2-5 Pick 5: 2-7-8-5-3 Rolling Cash: 3-19-23-31-37 Estimated jackpot: \$140,000
<b>Hoosier</b> Monday Midday Daily Three: 2-3-3 Daily Four: 0-6-4-7 Quick Draw: 5-10-12-13-14-17-19-25-28-30-34-36-44-50-60-66-69-70-74-76 Evening Daily Three: 9-3-8	

Markets

<b>Cooper Farms Fort Recovery</b> Corn.....4.52 Aug. corn .....4.64 Oct. corn .....4.59	Aug. beans.....9.86 Wheat ..... 5.11
<b>POET Biorefining Portland</b> Corn.....4.53 Aug. corn .....4.48 Sept. corn .....4.38	<b>ADM Montpelier</b> Corn.....4.31 Aug. corn .....4.29 Beans .....10.20 Aug. beans.....10.05 Wheat .....5.15
<b>The Andersons Richland Township</b> Corn .....4.39 Aug. corn .....4.86 Beans .....10.28	<b>Heartland St. Anthony</b> Corn.....4.44 Aug. corn .....4.44 Beans .....10.06 Aug. beans.....9.66 Wheat .....4.94

Today in history

In 1972, the Portland High School baseball team defeated Delta 3-0 to clinch at least a share of the Mississinewa Valley Conference championship. The Panthers were undefeated in league play with only a game against Mississinewa remaining.

In 1976, a chemical factory explosion in Seveso — it’s near Milan, Italy — covered the area in toxic dioxin. It’s been ranked by Time magazine as one of the worst environmental disasters.

In 1985, Coca Cola announced plans to resume selling the old formula of Coke after public outcry of the “new Coke.”

In 2001, British TV series “The Office” debuted. The show, written by Ricky Gervais and Stephen Merchant, led to the creation of the American version.

In 2022, Micro Wrestling made its debut at the Jay County Fair.

— The CR

Citizen’s calendar

<b>Today</b> 6 p.m. — Jay County Council, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.	room, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.
<b>Monday</b> 9 a.m. — Jay County Commissioners, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland. 3:45 p.m. — Jay County Election Board, voting	4 p.m. — Jay County Public Library, community room, library, 315 N. Ship St., Portland. 6 p.m. — Jay County Country Living Advisory Board, living facility, 1194 E. 200 North, Portland. 7 p.m. — Dunkirk City Council, city building, 131 S. Main St.

Raises ...

Continued from page 1

McGinnis asked the city for help in addressing a problem involving residents leaving non-recyclable items in and around recycling trailers stationed at Jay County Sheriff’s Office and the parking lot at 220 Lincoln St. (He raised similar concerns in August 2023.) He expressed frustration that a county ordinance regarding illegal dumping — it is prohibited to place non-recyclables in recycling trailers provided by Jay County Solid Waste Management District and it is forbidden to leave recyclable and non-recyclable items (specifically trash) outside the trailers — that was passed in 2022 is not being enforced.

The county’s ordinance lists newspapers, newsprint, magazines, books, office paper, cardboard, paper packaging, aluminum and glass beverage and food containers, number 1 and number 2 plastic containers and tin and steel food containers as recyclable materials.

McGinnis noted that all county residents can take items to the landfill twice at year at no charge.

The city’s ordinance allows residents to purchase a permit to have large items such as couches, chairs and mattresses to be picked up on regular trash collection routes.

Council members expressed a

willingness to help but took no specific action.

In other business:

- Council approved a moratorium on data centers on second reading.
- A public hearing on a moratorium on carbon sequestration facilities has been set for 6:15 p.m. Monday, July 21, in council chambers.
- No action was taken on a proposed ordinance regarding outside employment. Several council members indicated they were not clear as to why the ordinance was being proposed. It died on the table after a brief discussion.
- Phillips issued a reminder that the city’s public hearing on its 2026 budget is planned for Sept. 15 with adoption to follow on Oct. 6.
- Golden and Hilfiker complimented the Jay County Fair Board on this year’s Jay County Fair, which concluded Saturday. Westlake noted that the Vintage Motor Bike Show is at the fairgrounds today through Saturday.
- Council sent a tax abatement request from Pioneer Equipment Leasing to the city’s tax abatement advisory committee. The company is requesting a three-year abatement on \$3.5 million in new equipment. The abatement would save the company \$91,087 while the new equipment would generate \$91,087 in taxes over a 10-year period.
- Goldsworthy touted the disc golf course at Hudson Family Park,

encouraging residents to try it out. He also passed on thanks from a resident to police officer Mitch Rigby for his handling of a recent traffic accident.

- May requested that council conduct an executive session to discuss personnel issues.
- Council approved closing Ship Street between Arch and High streets from 3 to 8 p.m. Thursday, July 10, and noon to 7 p.m. Thursday, July 31, for events at Jay County Public Library.
- Jay County Development Corporation executive director Ceann Bales provided an update on her first three months on the job. She said she has been meeting with local business and industry leaders regarding what they want from JCDC and mentioned various other initiatives she has been working on. She mentioned updating the organization’s website and marketing properties as priorities.
- Aker noted that a problem area on Western Avenue between High and Arch streets has been paved.
- May asked about street lights on Blaine Pike, indicating he feels there are not enough along the multi-purpose trail.
- Westlake noted that work is continuing on the Seventh Street bridge over the Salamonie River.
- May shared condolences for the death of Westlake’s mother on June 16.

Felony arrests

**Methamphetamine**

A Portland man was arrested Thursday for possession of methamphetamine.

Colbi T. Byrd, 30, 102 S. Park St., was preliminarily charged with three Level 6 felonies for possession of methamphetamine, possession of a narcotic drug and unlawful possession of a syringe, as well as a Class A misdemeanor for possession of paraphernalia. He was released on a \$4,500 bond in Jay County Jail.

**Unlawful possession**

A Portland man was arrested Thursday for unlawful possession of a firearm.

Quentin L. Guntle, 30, 2697 E. Treaty Line Road, was preliminarily charged with a Level 4 felony for unlawful possession of a firearm by a violent felon, a Level 4 felony.

He was being held in Jay County Jail on a \$35,000 bond.

**SERVICES**

Today

**Haffner**, David: 1 p.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

Friday

**Geesaman**, Angelina: 11 a.m., Fellowship Baptist Church, 289 S. 200 West, Portland.

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Photo provided

## Stout shows award-winner

HAG Georgina 1936 won reserve grand champion cow-calf pair at the 2025 Indiana Angus Junior Preview Show on June 15 in Lebanon. Kadilynn Stout of Portland owns the March 2019 daughter of SAC Conversation. A May 2025 heifer calf sired by Patton Sundance completed the winning duo.

## More arts workshops added to lineup

Several pop-up Arts in the Parks classes are coming up. Redkey blacksmith and martial artist Leroy Brown will host classes for making a leaf-shaped metal keychain from 9 to 10:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Thursday at 2629 S. Indiana 1, Dunkirk. He'll also offer a "beat the bully" karate course from 2 to 4 p.m. Thursday in Dunkirk as well as the same course from 10 a.m. to noon Tues-

day at Jay County Campus of Arts Place in Portland. Mini art camp — it costs \$5 per day — is slated for 2 to 6 p.m. Monday and Tuesday and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. July 16 and 17 at Lehman Park Pavilion, 212 Park Ave., Berne. Students will be offered new projects and experiences each day. There's an animal tracks workshop — students will find footprints left by animals and learn

how to preserve them and turn them into art — slated for 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. Monday and Tuesday. Also, "Watercolor My World," a watercoloring class utilizing various tricks to create surprising results, is scheduled for 10 to 11:30 a.m. July 16 and 17. Classes cost \$5. To register, visit myartsplace.org, call (260) 726-4809 or email visualarts@myart-

## Community Calendar

Notices will appear in Community Calendar as space is available. To submit an item, email [news@thecr.com](mailto:news@thecr.com).

**Today**  
**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 REIN-**

**FORCEMENT AND FAMILY TRAINING** — A non-confrontational, evidence-based intervention for helping families affected by addiction meets at 4 p.m. each Wednesday in the IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health Center, Entrance C, 510 W. Votaw St., Portland.  
**JAY COUNTY CIVIC THEATRE** — Holds its regular meeting at 5:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month in the boardroom at Arts Place, 131 E. Walnut St., Portland.  
**PORTLAND EAGLES** — Will meet at 6 p.m., on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month at the Eagles' lodge, 320 N. Meridian St., Portland.  
**AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP** — New Beginnings, a support group for friends and families of alcoholics, will meet at 6:30 p.m. each Wednesday in the Zion Lutheran

Church, 218 E. High St., Portland. For more information, call (260) 726-8229.  
**A BETTER LIFE - BRIANNA'S HOPE** — A faith-based recovery group for all kinds of addictions, will meet from 6:30 to 8 p.m. each Wednesday at Redkey United Methodist Church, 122 W. Main St. Come early for a meal. For more information, call Pastor Randy Davis at (765) 369-2085.

**Thursday**  
**SMART RECOVERY** — A group for those struggling with addiction that focuses on motivation, coping with cravings, managing thoughts, feelings and behavior, and living a balanced life meets at 11 a.m. each Thursday in the IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health Center, Entrance C, 510 W. Votaw St., Portland.  
**CELEBRATE RECOVERY** — A 12-step Christian recovery program meets at 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. each Thursday at A Second Chance At Life Ministries, 228 S. Meridian St. in Portland. For more information, call Brenda Eads at (260) 726-9625 or Dave Keen at (260) 251-8792.  
**INDIANA UNIVERSITY HEALTH JAY HOSPITAL OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP** — Will meet at 6 p.m. the second Thursday of each month in Indiana University Health Jay Hospital Conference Room B. The group is for ostomy and intestinal diversion patients and their friends and family to offer mutual support and learn about the latest products and information.  
**JAY COUNTY TRAILS CLUB** — Will meet at 7 p.m. the second Thursday of each month at Jay Community Center.

**Friday**  
**PAST RECOVERY SERVICES** — Peer Addiction Support Team recovery support group meets at 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. each Friday at the Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition office at 100 N. Meridian St., Portland. To learn more informa-

tion, please call (260) 251-3259.

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

**Sunday**  
**A BETTER LIFE - BRIANNA'S HOPE** — A faith-based recovery group for all kinds of addictions, will meet from 5 to 6:30 p.m. each Sunday at Fellowship Baptist Church, 289 S. 200 West, Portland. Come early for a meal.

## New friendship hurts marriage

DEAR ABBY: I am 57 and have been married for 32 years to my husband, who retired from his full-time job last year. I still work full time. Since his retirement, he has been going to a bar once a week or so, spending a few hours visiting with the customers and staff.

One of the staff has taken an interest in being his "buddy." My husband is outgoing and somewhat flirtatious. The staff member is a younger, female bartender who he invites to our home bar for drinks. They have also established a social media relationship and send text messages.

When I had an out-of-town trip planned, they concocted a plan for her to come over for cocktails with another of our friends. They planned to keep it a secret because "I might become upset." I found out and DID become upset. I have discovered other messages, and I no longer trust my husband. I don't think they are in a physical relationship, but despite his reassurances, I can't let go of what might have been shared about me and feel a deep sense of betrayal. How can I move forward? — SUSPICIOUS IN WASHINGTON

**DEAR SUSPICIOUS:** What the bartender and your husband are doing is inappropriate. It might be worthwhile to ask her employer whether there are any rules about their staff socializing with patrons outside the establishment. As to your lack of trust in your "flirta-

*Dear Abby*



tious" husband, under these circumstances it is understandable. Marriage counseling may help to repair your relationship. Offer him the option of joining, and if he refuses, go alone.

DEAR ABBY: I have a male friend (attorney) who is married to a dermatologist. Nearly every time this friend interacts with a medical provider, he is dissatisfied and feels he is being ripped off. He attests that doctors order unnecessary tests and deliberately overcharge. He does this vociferously and repeatedly.

I'm a retired medical professional and consumer of health services myself, so I am certainly aware that many parts of our health care system are a mess. I do not know how to stop his rants. I try to change the subject, but nearly every conversation is the same. — TIRED OF LISTENING

**DEAR TIRED:** You are not a hostage. The next time this friend raises the subject, tell him you have heard his complaints, there is nothing you can do about them, you would prefer to discuss something positive when you're together and CHANGE THE SUBJECT.

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## Sudoku

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

Level: Intermediate

### Tuesday's Solution

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

# July SALE

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# Freedoms don’t extend everywhere

*Editor’s note: This column is being reprinted from July 6, 2005. Jack saw most of the world than most of us. Starting with his time in Moldova more than a quarter century ago, he made multiple trips to train journalists in former Soviet republics and elsewhere. After celebrating Independence Day last week, it’s important for us to remember that the freedoms we enjoy are not experienced everywhere. We must protect them lest we lose them.*

By JACK RONALD  
The Commercial Review

Anna shook her head in disbelief. “That sounds like kindergarten journalism,” said the voice in my headset, translating her words. Others around the table in the conference room at the European Center for Communication and Culture nodded in agreement. You Americans, they seemed to be saying in unison, have it so easy. I wasn’t going to argue. I know that the rules we play by in this

## Back in the Saddle



country are so different — so much more tilted toward transparency of government, access to information, and freedom of speech — that when compared to the realities of Belarus it is indeed “kindergarten journalism.” Take the basics of gathering information. American journalists are used to most public records being open for inspection. They’re used to being able to attend most meetings of public agencies and most court proceedings. And they take for granted the fact that there’s no legal penalty for reporting that information accurately. Sure, we gripe now and then.

And we’re always jockeying for greater public access rather than less; but when we do so, our opinions are heard and given consideration. Not so in Belarus. There, in an often-forgotten country sandwiched between Poland and Russia which has been routinely devastated by European power struggles for centuries, different rules apply. Records aren’t public. Meetings aren’t always public; neither are court proceedings. When they are public, even a reporter who provides an accurate account of events isn’t safe from legal harassment or prosecution. Report too aggressively — or too accurately — and a journalist may find herself ordered to leave official press conferences. The police may be called to eject those whose mere presence offends the people in power. American journalists are used to the protection of opinion provided by the First Amendment. We’ve become accustomed to the

body of legal judgments which have limited exposure to libel suits in favor of having free and vigorous debate in a democracy. Not so in Belarus. There, all too often, libel suits are a full-scale frontal assault on the press by government and those in power. Opinion is not protected. Truth is not a defense. And we’re not talking about civil libel; we’re talking about criminal libel, the kind which can put a reporter in prison. A column suggesting that you’d like a president who didn’t make his political opponents disappear could send its writer to hard labor for several months for “insulting the honor and dignity of the president.” (No word about the “honor and dignity” of the president’s opponents who have disappeared whenever they gained a footing.) Americans used to economic freedom as well as political freedom assume that they can always start their own newspaper.

Not so in Belarus. Anyone interested in starting a newspaper there must first get approval from the local government, which — surprise, surprise — is already publishing a newspaper of its own so that the official version dominates. Approval may take months and may never happen at all. Even if a newspaper does succeed in becoming registered, the rules and regulations are so arbitrary and arcane that they seem to exist solely for the purpose of providing a pretext for shutting a newspaper down. And if your newspaper loses its registration and is suspended, what can you do? Not much. One publisher whose paper was suspended for a month last year responded by going on a hunger strike. It didn’t work. At the end of the month, the suspension was lifted. And the publisher was fined for conducting an unlicensed demonstration by refusing to eat. As for me, I prefer the rules here in “kindergarten.”

# Fight to revive is just beginning

Bloomberg Opinion  
Tribune News Service

The pledge by NATO members to spend 3.5% of gross domestic product on military capabilities and 1.5% on defense infrastructure is the alliance’s boldest commitment in decades. It concedes a basic truth: Russia’s war in Ukraine has exposed critical shortfalls in Europe’s defenses at a time when U.S. support has become less certain. The challenge now is to translate that ambitious target into deployable firepower fast enough to meet the threat.

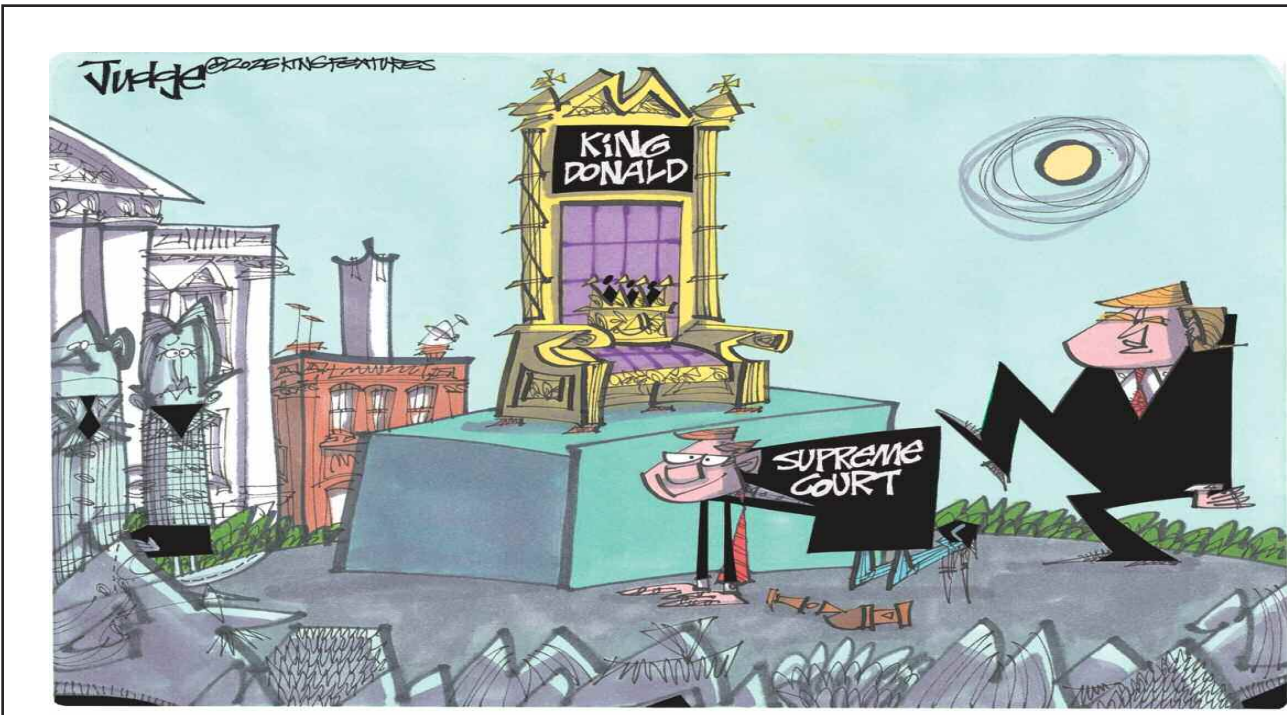
The starting point is finding the money to meet the new commitments. France, Italy and the UK already run heavy budget deficits. Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez is claiming his country has eked out a concession to spend just 2.1% of GDP. Over time, Germany’s weak growth and fractious politics could undermine its resolve, despite the loosening of its debt brake. Discipline, and likely continued pressure from the U.S., will be required to ensure members don’t renege on their spending promises.

Even more important will be spending the money wisely. The first task must be to address Europe’s fragmented defense industrial base and the duplication of weapons systems. The region produces more than a dozen main battle tank variants and is pursuing two rival sixth-generation fighter programs — the Future Combat Air System (France, Germany, Spain) and the Global Combat Air Program (Britain, Italy, Japan).

Some progress is being made, such as the pooling of ammunition orders by Nordic states through Norway’s Nammo AS. And 19 EU countries are funding joint drone and electronic warfare projects through the European Defense Agency, an EU body. Yet these efforts are small-scale; fewer than 1 in 5 equipment purchases by European Union members (23 of 27 EU members are in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) are made jointly. NATO members will tend to launch more joint tenders, cap the number of platforms per class and insist that new gear be interoperable.

## Guest Editorial

European members should also acknowledge where domestic production makes sense and where it doesn’t, rather than insisting on broad “buy European” provisions. Europe still relies on the U.S. for a range of critical needs from air and missile defenses to cyber and electronic warfare, as well as intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. Countries should continue buying critical capabilities from the U.S. and license production locally where possible. A new venture between Rheinmetall AG and Anduril Industries Inc., for European production of U.S. drone designs, shows how pragmatic technology sharing can bridge gaps while local industry scales. Progress will need to be carefully monitored, not just in spending levels but also in weapons delivered. NATO’s classified capability reviews should be distilled into an annual public scorecard for taxpayers to review. Governments should also be forced to show that the funds designated for infrastructure are actually going to reinforce rail beds, widen tunnels and build logistics hubs — all essential to address shortcomings in military mobility — rather than politically driven projects rebadged as defense. Finally, European leaders must be honest with themselves and, most important, with voters. While defense R&D can spin off useful breakthroughs that benefit the broader economy, military outlays rarely deliver the jobs boost that investments in health care or green energy can. Massive defense spending is and should be defended as insurance against Russian aggression, not as a quick fix for stagnant growth. NATO leaders deserve credit for overcoming parochial concerns and political resistance to agree on the new spending targets. They should recognize, however, that their fight has only just started.



# People will feel effects of bill

By MICHAEL LEPPERT  
IndianaCitizen.org

Every semester, the students in my business writing class are divided up into teams and are assigned a real-life challenge from a company looking to elevate its performance in any number of ways. It’s an opportunity to research the complexities of a market, to create an entrepreneurial solution and to effectively communicate all of it to the company looking to grow. And it’s an opportunity for me. I get to teach them the value of feedback. The worst ideas I’ve seen in my career come from organizations that spend too much time only talking to each other. The habit skews logic and rationality and creates blind spots allowing for fantastical outcomes that ultimately prevent actual success. So, let’s talk about this lesson plan in the context of “The One Big Beautiful Bill Act,” or “OBBBA.” First, the name itself. What likely started as a spasm straight from the mouth of President Donald Trump has become the dumbest title of landmark legislation in history. It communicates nothing of what the legislation actually does, good or bad, and sounds unserious, sarcastic and irritating in its vagueness. On Tuesday while researching the latest in the U.S. Senate, I spotted the first commercials for Trump’s new men’s cologne and women’s perfume on social media. I, of course, thought it was a hoax at first, but confirmed it’s reality. The scents, called “Fight, Fight, Fight” and “Victory 45-47” must feature a refreshing aroma; sweet, soothing and subtle with a sort of locker room-esque approachability. After that brief rancid distraction, I went back to looking for the talking points from those who support Trump’s legislation. I came across the promotion of “OBBBA,” on the White House webpage. This docu-

## Michael Leppert



ment is truly stunning in its silliness. Please look at it. It honestly looks like an ad for the smelly cologne, or possibly an ad for a pride-swallowing memoir about the smelly cologne. But I’m a professional, so I scrolled past that embarrassing half page to get to the words part of this debate. There are endorsements rolling by on a ticker under an oversized header, “Backed by American Industry.” This list is actually pretty short: Verizon, Comcast, Dell, 3M, Delta and Uber. Hmm. Uber? The company that finally turned its first annual profit in 2023 is supporting OBBBA because of the bill’s elimination of taxes on tips. But that elimination doesn’t appear to apply to Uber drivers in its current form. This endeavor is so gimmicky, even those who support the idea in theory often overlook its limited impact. The Economic Policy Institute’s February piece is a valuable source on the issue. Second, almost every Republican is ignoring something they really shouldn’t. The polling shows this legislation is historically unpopular. The vast majority of Americans can see harm coming from this bill. Whether it’s healthcare cuts or deficit growth, both of which are unquestionably coming from OBBBA, all polls are showing similar results. On Monday, Harry Enten, CNN’s Chief Data Analyst, detailed five – that right, five – different polls that showed the legislation’s net favorability ranging from minus 19 to minus 29. Enten tried to find a bill that has ever been this unpopular and couldn’t.

Third, and likely lost in the noise of the big, beautiful bust, is this story from the New York Times: “The Dollar Has Its Worst Start to a Year Since 1973.” Some of my younger readers might wonder what happened 52 years ago. Well, this: “The last time the dollar began a year with such a steep decline was in 1973 when foreign currencies stopped being linked to the dollar. That move came two years after President Nixon made a decision to no longer link gold to the dollar.” Yea, that was a biggie too. Again, what is important with regard to the value of the U.S. Dollar’s decline is the feedback it provides. Steve Englander, global head of G10 foreign exchange research at Standard Chartered says, “The issue is: What is it telling you about how the world sees your policies?” For those who don’t trust polling, trust the valuation of our currency. This steep decline is screaming at us that our policies are anything but beautiful. As I have gotten older, I have become both more patient and a better listener. This entire political and cultural experience of MAGA has tested my patience, but I am convinced that eventually those trapped in that deafening echo chamber will one day escape. A friend told me last year that the escape will begin in earnest when supporters truly feel the consequences of the movement’s failures. I try to teach my students to thoughtfully listen to the feedback they get and to use it wisely. If only our leaders could do the same. \*\*\*\*\* Leppert is an author, educator and a communication consultant in Indianapolis. He writes about government, politics and culture at MichaelLeppert.com.

# The Commercial Review



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“Were it left for me to decide whether we should have government without newspapers or newspapers without government I should not hesitate to prefer the latter.”  
—Thomas Jefferson

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# Indiana AVs grow by 12%

By **LESLIE BONILLA MUNIZ**  
Indiana Capital Chronicle  
indianacapitalchronicle.com

Gross assessed values for commercial, industrial and residential properties throughout Indiana collectively rose 12% from 2024 to 2025, according to a statewide comparison chart assembled by the Department of Local Government Finance for property taxes due and payable in 2026.



Photo provided

The data is sourced from ratio studies performed annually by the state's 92 county assessors. "It is essentially a test of each assessor: how well are you doing? Are you doing this right?" said Larry DeBoer, a retired Purdue University agricultural economics professor and tax expert.

"Not very many ... elected officials actually face a test like that. They're being held accountable."

Agricultural land, meanwhile, will be assessed at a lower base rate than the previous year, thanks to a provision in the behemoth tax plan Indiana lawmakers approved in April.

That'll likely shift property tax burden toward other property types, DeBoer noted. That's not the only shift, however.

The legislation also saves homeowners a collective \$1.2 billion in property taxes over three calendar

Values for Hoosier houses collectively rose by less than commercial and industrial properties, according to an annual ratio study. Commercial assessed value grew 16.07% in total, according to the study, ahead of industrial assessed value, which increased 15.59%.

years, from 2026 through 2028, according to a fiscal analysis. It does so largely by creating a credit for 10% off every homestead's bill, up to \$300 each.

Commercial assessed value grew 16.07% in total, according to the study, ahead of industrial assessed value, which increased 15.59%.

Values for Hoosier houses collectively rose by less: 10.42%.

Lawmakers have, for years, promised cash-strapped homeowners that high assessed values and resulting skyrocketing property tax bills would naturally come down.

"I think we're seeing some evidence" that values are growing more slowly, DeBoer said.

Relief could be on the horizon at last.

Gross assessed values don't translate perfectly to

property tax bills, however. County auditors will apply all deductions and credits to certify net assessed values, according to DLGF spokeswoman Jenny Banks.

DeBoer also observed a bigger variety in residential value growth than in recent years.

"Covid was a nationwide trend that affected every place — so maybe we're not seeing a big nationwide or

even statewide trend affecting home values now," he posited.

"We're back to: assessed value is a local issue," DeBoer added. "And a local economy, and the local assessing practice, is what seems to be influencing the changes."

Indiana's farmland is assessed differently.

DLGF calculates a rolling average using six years of capitalized net

operating income and net cash rent. The highest value of the six is dropped from the formula, and the remaining five years are averaged to determine a base rate.

Another increase was in the cards for the base rate, to \$2,390 per acre.

That would've come after several straight years of big jumps: from \$1,500 in assessment year 2022 to \$1,900 in 2023 and \$2,280 in 2024.

Lawmakers intervened via Senate Enrolled Act 1, increasing the capitalization rate in the formula's denominator to lower the base rate. Now, it'll be \$2,120 per acre, according to a DLGF memo.

"Yep, that was a victory for the (Indiana) Farm Bureau," DeBoer quipped.

The formula averages six years to "iron out the blips," he said, but it also can create a delay where assessed values may keep rising even as farm incomes and commodity prices are falling. The last high pandemic-era value, for example, won't drop out of the formula until the end of the decade.

The average price of top-quality farmland was \$14,392 per acre in 2024, according to a Purdue University Farmland Values survey. Average- and poor-quality farmland prices averaged \$11,630 and \$9,071, respectively.

## Levy ...

Continued from page 1

Diller has said that alone would generate between \$200,000 and \$400,000 more than the real estate tax levies.

If the income tax levy is approved, the village would decide not to collect on its real estate tax levies in the coming years. A Fort Recovery property owner would save an average of 14% each year on their total real estate tax bill without the levies, according to Diller.

On Monday, Diller talked about various projects the village will need to pay for in the future, including replacing a pump station on Wayne Street as well as water and wastewater facility upgrades, converting street lights, replacing outdated fire hydrants and various street projects. He proposed utilizing the additional funding for such projects or seeking input to see where community members would like to see tax dollars spent.

Mayor Dave Kaup noted a recent conversation with local

residents questioning why the village doesn't bump the income tax rate to 2%, with Kaup pointing out it would be a "pretty big jump" to double the rate.

Diller said most of the communities Fort Recovery residents work in collect a 1.5% income tax.

"So if we go above that, they're going to pay that 1.5% to there, and they've got to pay some back to us, whatever we go above it," he said. "It's a little more complicated."

He asked council members if they've had discussions with residents about the levy. They responded that they haven't heard much of a negative response from their constituents. Council member Luke Knapke noted one constituent pointed to the savings folks would make on their property tax bills.

Council then set the date for its public forum and approved legislation on a second reading.

Also Monday, village council approved its budget for 2026.

Next year's budget shows plans for \$2.8 million in expenditures and \$1.43 million in revenue for the general fund. Fiscal officer Roberta Staugler pointed to 3% raises across the board, a new fiscal position and her and Diller's retirement planned into the budget.

Diller highlighted a few permanent improvements to be made next year, the largest of which include the village's match of \$182,000 for the multi-use trail project to be constructed in summer 2026. The project, which is 90% funded through Ohio Department of Transportation's Systemic Safety Funding grant, involves constructing a trail for pedestrians and biking traffic along Ohio 49, Sharpsburg Road and Flaler Road.

Diller noted the budget doesn't factor in multi-million dollar estimates for improvements to water and wastewater treatment facilities or replacing the pump station on Wayne Street.

In other business, village

council members Al Post, Luke Knapke, Scott Pearson and Greg Schmitz, absent Cliff Wendel and Erik Fiely:

- Learned Fort Recovery's National Night Out is slated for 5 to 8 p.m. July 20 at Ambassador Pool.
- Heard about plans to replace the speaker system downtown along the brick portion of Wayne Street. Diller noted Fort Recovery Community Foundation granted dollars to Fort Recovery Merchants Association for the project.
- Were informed village representatives will attend Fort Recovery School Board's meeting July 21 to discuss establishing a Community Reinvestment Area across the entire village.
- Learned Diller would like to hire local resident Kelly Jutte as a consultant for the village, with Jutte to be paid on an hourly basis via contract. He pointed to Jutte's expertise in the water and wastewater treatment fields and shared hopes

for her help amid planning efforts with the town's utilities moving forward.

- Approved a \$153,497.28 bill from Caldwell Tanks for work completed on the second water tower in the village and a \$47,795.16 pay request from Tom's Construction for work completed along Butler Street.
- Heard the new water tower failed its second bacteria test, requiring the village to drain and disinfect the tank again. Once the tower passes retesting, it will be ready to be put into service, with Diller estimating it should be complete by the end of the month.
- Learned about plans to convert one tennis court into two permanent pickleball courts at Community Park.
- Were reminded Schmitz, Fiely, Wendel and Knapke's terms end in December. Diller noted council members hoping to be re-elected need to file petitions with the county prior to Aug. 6.

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Ads must run in July.

A collage of three food items: a pizza with various toppings, a plate of fried chicken strips, and a burger with cheese and sauce.

## Rates ...

Continued from page 1

Asked why Trump had chosen to hit Japan and South Korea first, Leavitt said it was "the president's prerogative."

"Those are the countries he chose," she added.

Leavitt said the administration is "close" to securing agreements with some other trading partners, adding that Trump "wants to ensure these are the best deals possible."

Following a rally to all-time highs last week, the S&P 500 was down about 1.1% as of 2:39 p.m. New York time, while the Nasdaq 100 Index fell 1.1%. The Cboe VIX Index edged about 18, while a gauge of expected volatility in technology stocks traded at the highest level in two weeks.

The dollar extended gains after Trump's announcement, hitting the highest level in more than a week against a basket of peers. The currencies of South Korea, South Africa and Japan all fell more than 1% against the greenback.

Japanese automakers' American depository receipts fell to session lows after Trump's announcement. Toyota ADRs fell 4.3% to session lows, while Honda's fell 3.9% to session lows. The South African rand fell 1.5% to a session low.

For many of the nations, engaging Trump in trade negotiations on his accelerated timeline has proven difficult.

Even though Japan and Korea are two of the U.S.'s closest allies in Asia, they're both dealing with domestic situations where cutting trade deals might be risky politically. South Korea President Lee Jae-myung only took office on June 4, and elections in Japan's upper house later this month made the government of Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba reluctant to offer too much in concessions.

The European Union is not expecting to receive a letter setting tariff rates today, according to a person familiar with those discussions, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Trump has also threatened to slap an additional 10% levy on "any country aligning themselves with the Anti-American policies of BRICS," targeting the bloc of developing nations led by Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa as they gathered for a meeting in Rio de Janeiro.

Leavitt on Monday said Trump would "take any action necessary to prevent countries from taking advantage of the United States and our people."

Trump's levies will help fill the Treasury's coffers at a time when investors are worried about the nation's mounting debt, particularly after Congress passed much of the president's economic agenda in a \$3.4 trillion tax cut and spending package last week. The dollar has slumped and longer-term borrowing costs remain elevated.



SPEED BUMP Dave Coverly



THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



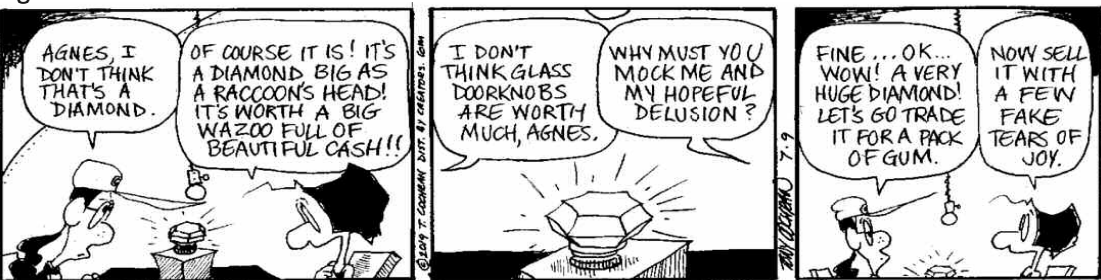
Peanuts



Rose is Rose



Agnes



Hi and Lois



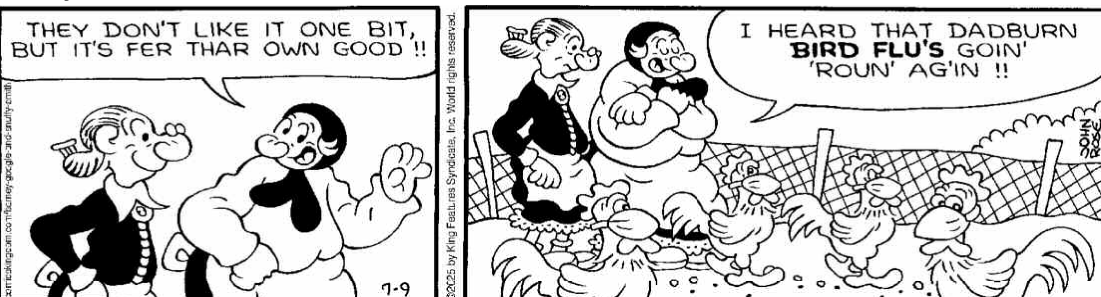
Between Friends



Blondie



Snuffy Smith



Beetle Bailey



Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

More than just a guess

West dealer.  
Neither side vulnerable.  
**NORTH**  
♠ K  
♥ 8 5 4 3  
♦ Q 8 7 4  
♣ A J 10 9

**WEST**  
♠ 10 9 8 6  
♥ Q 9 7 2  
♦ K  
♣ 6 4 3 2

**EAST**  
♠ J 7 5 3 2  
♥ J 10 6  
♦ 10 9  
♣ K 8 5

**SOUTH**  
♠ A Q 4  
♥ A K  
♦ A J 6 5 3 2  
♣ Q 7

The bidding:  
West North East South  
Pass Pass Pass 1 ♦  
Pass 3 ♦ Pass 6 ♦

Opening lead — ten of spades.  
The expert declarer often "guesses" right in what most players would deem a 50-50 situation, and you might wonder how he does it. However, the truth is that many so-called successful guesses are based on careful reasoning.  
Take this case where South is in six diamonds and West leads a spade. Declarer wins with dummy's king and plays the queen of trump, East following with the nine. South must now "guess" whether to finesse or play his ace in the hope

that West has the singleton king. In the actual case, the contract stands or falls on this decision, since a subsequent club finesse will lose to East.

The ace is the right play, but the fact that it catches West's king is more than just a lucky guess. Declarer starts by assuming that East cannot have the K-10-9 of trump, since with that holding East would cover the queen with the king to guarantee himself a trump trick.

It follows that West must have either the singleton king, singleton ten or doubleton K-10. Declarer can cover all three possibilities by playing the ace.

If West has the K-10, South cannot control the outcome whether he plays the ace or the deuce, so this case can be dismissed. If West has the singleton king, the ace is obviously the winning play.

But what if West holds the singleton ten? In that event, South still makes the contract by playing the ace. After West produces the ten, South cashes the A-Q of spades, discarding two hearts from dummy, and then the A-K of hearts. A trump lead then forces East to win with the king and return a club or yield a ruff-and-discard, either of which hands South the slam.

Tomorrow: Structural visualization.  
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7-9

CRYPTOQUIP

TC Q URNIYK TI VMR UNRITETKP  
YCCTXRN YC QK YNTPQLT  
XYLLTVVRR, T'E XQJJ VMRL  
VMR CYJETKP XMQTN.  
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHAT WOULD YOU PRESUME IS SOMETHING THAT CENSORS CERTAINLY ENJOY DOING? BLEEPING ON THE JOB.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals G

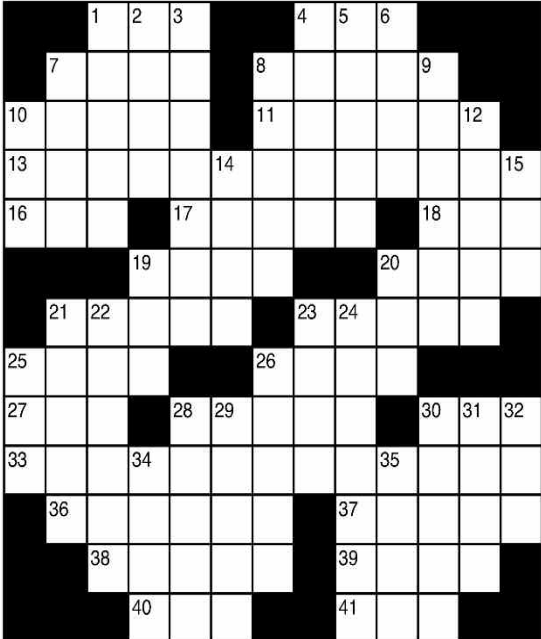
CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- |                            |                        |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>ACROSS</b>              | <b>DOWN</b>            |
| 1 Hardly any               | 1 Con- alter-          |
| 4 "— goes there?"          | 2 List- ending         |
| 7 Post-WWII alliance       | 3 President Wilson     |
| 8 Yorkshire city           | 4 George of "Cheers"   |
| 10 Chocolate source        | 5 Ford or Hudson       |
| 11 Baseball division       | 6 "Garfield" dog       |
| 13 1989 Kevin Costner film | 7 Hammer target        |
| 16 Vintage                 | 8 Elevates             |
| 17 Tattered                | 9 Awake suddenly       |
| 18 Kung — chicken          | 10 Corp. money manager |
| 19 Barracks beds           | 23 Monu- mental        |
| 20 Elevator name           | 24 Backslide           |
| 21 Garbage barges          | 25 Deli creation       |
| 23 Flynn of film           | 26 Golfer Palmer,      |
| 25 Desist                  | to fans                |
| 26 Tarzan's clique         | 28 Bit of flora        |
|                            | 29 Chair designer      |
|                            | 30 Cram                |
|                            | 31 Hide                |
|                            | 32 MGM motto           |
|                            | start                  |
|                            | 34 Corvette roof       |
|                            | option                 |
|                            | 35 Go yachting         |

Solution time: 23 mins.

ASKS NIT TABU  
SUIT OOO RBIS  
OLLA FUNGIBLE  
FUNNIES OPELS  
ZOE BOO  
DIVAN FUNDING  
ECO ATM ROI  
FUNRUNS EBERT  
END ORB  
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Yesterday's answer 7-9



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Photo provided

## Rookie winner

Pictured, players from Wings and Rings of Portland Junior League Rookie softball display their rings after winning both the regular season and tournament titles.

## Lohner ...

Continued from page 8  
Utah's long been a breeding ground for NFL tight ends. In the past four years, four Utes TEs (Cole Fotheringham, Thomas Yassmin, Dalton Kincaid, and now Lohner) have cracked pro rosters. Lohner put himself on a path to becoming the fourth when he decided to jump to Salt Lake, arriving at Utah at the end of summer workouts in 2024.

He missed spring ball. He hadn't played organized football since eighth grade. Staffers had to literally teach Lohner how to put his pads on, at first, as Utes head coach Kyle Whittingham recalled.

He wound up barely seeing the field. Behind the

scenes, though, a grizzled Utah staff saw a gem.

"I really believe that they've got themselves something with Caleb," Whittingham said. "And not to take anything away from all our other guys, because really, we like all those guys as well.

"But Caleb's kind of an anomaly."

In one practice in BYU's 2020-21 season, Burgess was coaching on the baseline in a team period when Lohner barreled over big man Kolby Lee to crash the glass.

Lee, a 6-foot-9 mountain, didn't take too kindly to Lohner's aggression. Peeved, he came roaring in after an offensive rebound to try to knock him on his

behind. Bruise for bruise.

Except Lohner didn't even budge, Burgess recalled. Didn't even recognize it was a cheap shot.

"He just like, stands there," Burgess recalled, "and kinda looks at him like a bug hit him."

The BYU assistant still marvels over Lohner years later, telling the tale of another time he tried swiping down to dislodge the ball from Lohner and wound up with a fractured finger.

"I know these sound like Bo Jackson-type stories," Burgess said. "But he has this athletic ability and this strength that's really, really powerful."

Lohner's game was fit for football. None of it was

finesse. He high-pointed rebounds, smacked guys around and dunked. It translated, in his short stint at Utah, to four touch-down grabs in red-zone packages.

Still, Lohner entered the draft process this offseason as a near-complete unknown. Utah's collective ended up giving him an NIL package to play basketball in 2024-25. Lohner used it to pay for predraft training. Uncle Mike, a longtime entrepreneur who'd built the Cowboys Golf Club in Dallas, consulted longtime Cowboys executive Stephen Jones for advice.

Eventually, Mike wound up pleading his nephew's case to a couple of agents.

## Lowry will spend 20th season with Philadelphia 76ers

By GINA MIZELL

The Philadelphia Inquirer  
Tribune News Service

PHILADELPHIA — Kyle Lowry has agreed to return to the 76ers on a one-year contract, a source confirmed to The Philadelphia Inquirer on Monday evening.

Lowry, the North Philly native and former Villanova star, will play his 20th NBA season and continue with his hometown team after joining the Sixers off the buyout market in February 2024. This deal fulfills a wish that Lowry vocalized during his news conference following the Sixers' regular-season finale in April, saying, "I still want to play one more year, and hopefully it's here."

"The pride of being a Philadelphian and playing for Philadelphia, you want to figure out how to be a part of something different and special," Lowry added then. " ... This organization deserves to be at the top of the top, and this city

deserves it. I want to be a part of that. Hopefully I can."

Lowry was hampered by a hip injury for much of the 2024-25 season, limiting him to 35 games. The 39-year-old point guard averaged 3.9 points and 2.7 assists in 18.8 minutes per game. He connected on only 35% of his field-goal attempts.

Yet Lowry's leadership in the locker room and on the bench during games remains valuable.

He has a long-standing relationship with Sixers coach Nick Nurse, including winning the 2019 NBA championship together with the Toronto Raptors.

Star point guard Tyrese Maxey has credited Lowry with helping him handle the mental challenges of countering a variety of defenses Jared McCain and VJ Edgecombe — along with, potentially, restricted free agent Quentin Grimes — are other young guards who could benefit from Lowry's tutelage.

## Sports on tap

Local schedule	TV schedule		
<b>Saturday</b> Jay County Summer swim hosts conference championships – 7:30 p.m. Portland Rockets doubleheader vs. Fort Wayne Blues – 1 p.m.	<b>Today</b> 8 a.m. — Tennis: Wimbledon (ESPN) 12 p.m. — UEFA Women's Euro soccer: England at Netherlands (FS1) 3 p.m. — UEFA Women's Euro soccer: France at Wales (FOX)	7:05 p.m. — MLB: New York Mets at Baltimore Orioles (ESPN) 7:10 p.m. — MLB: Miami Marlins at Cincinnati Reds (FDSN Indiana)	3 p.m. — UEFA Women's Euro soccer: Finland at Switzerland (FOX); Norway at Iceland (FS1) 3:30 p.m. — NBA 2K26 summer league: New Orleans Pelicans vs. Minnesota Timberwolves (ESPN2) 5:10 p.m. — MLB: Miami Marlins at Cincinnati Reds (FDSN Indiana)
	<b>Thursday</b> 8 a.m. — Tennis: Wimbledon (ESPN)		5:30 p.m. — NBA 2K26 summer league: Oklahoma City Thunder vs. Brooklyn Nets (ESPN2) 8 p.m. — NBA 2K26 summer league: Los Angeles Lakers vs. Dallas Mavericks (ESPN) 10 p.m. — NBA 2K26 summer league: San Antonio Spurs at Philadelphia 76ers (ESPN)

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Tucker Loucks swims the freestyle leg of the 8-and-younger 100-meter medley relay for the Jay County Summer Swim team on Monday. Jay County beat up on Yorktown 724-216 to finish the regular season 7-0.

Jay summer swim finishes 7-0 in dual meets

Not many teams have been able to push Jay County, and Yorktown was no exception. As a result, Jay County completed a perfect regular season. The Jay County Summer Swim team beat Yorktown 724-216 on Monday to finish the regular season 7-0 in dual meets. Jay County captured 15 of the 18 relays and claimed 43 of the 59 individual events. Ten tankers picked up three individual victories, contributing to sweeps in the 8-and-younger girls and the 15-and-older boys. Hayden Guggenbiller and Maddie Theurer worked to handle the former age group, while Cooper Glentzer and Carson Westgerdes took care of the latter. Other triple-even winners were Graham Peterson (8-and-younger), Emme Theurer (9-10-year-old girls), Addisyn Champ (11-12-year-old girls), Elly Byrum (13-14-year-old girls), Brooklynn Byrum (open 200-meter freestyle and 15-and-older girls) and Aubrey Millspaugh (15-and-older girls). Backing the strong efforts at the top were Laynie Mann, Isabelle Byrum, Maria Laux and Ben Fisher, who all claimed two first-place finishes. Also supporting the effort with one victory each were Carsyn Guggenbiller, Gabby Gibson, Grant Glentzer, Lila Wendel and Max Klopfenstein. Jay County will close out the summer season on Saturday at 9:15 a.m. as it hosts the Wabash Valley Conference Championships.

Broncos looking to make Lohner ‘the next Jimmy Graham’

By LUCA EVANS

The Denver Post

Tribune News Service

DENVER — To this day, Mike Lohner doesn’t quite know where his nephew found the money. Or the parts. Or why, really, he decided to rebuild a 1960s-era van from scratch, in the summer of 2021. The why has always seemed less important than the how, with Caleb Lohner. “There are those people that plan out their life,” Mike said. “And there are people that sort of go where life leads them.” Life led a younger Caleb Lohner, before his sophomore year of hoops at BYU, to getting his hands on a vintage camper. He fixed up the engine. He redesigned the interior. The hours faded, and Lohner once rushed to a summer workout at BYU with oil grease smeared across his cheeks. “Caleb, what?” BYU assistant coach Chris Burgess recalled asking him then. “Go wash your face off.” “I tried,” Lohner replied. “It’s all over the place.” This is how the now-Broncos rookie has always

been. A “beautiful kid,” Burgess called him. Lohner plays guitar and surfs. He preferred hopping in Utah’s Provo River to hopping in ice baths in the training room at BYU. He would plop himself down in Burgess’s office, in his couple of years there, and chatter on about topics much broader than sports. They would eventually talk about sports, because the 6-foot-7 Lohner could barrel through a brick wall and jump higher than 40 inches. For his entire life, Lohner believed he had a future in basketball. But Burgess, who spent a decade playing basketball overseas and another decade coaching, often told Lohner he’d make a good tight end in football. Everyone told him that, really. Forever. On a recruiting visit for Utah basketball, Utes TE coach Freddie Whittingham — a longtime family friend — half-joked to Lohner he should come out for football. He shrugged it off. But as a college hoops career wound down at Baylor, Lohner paused. He told his uncle that he had a deep belief he was meant to make a difference in



Tribune News Service/Getty Images/Chris Gardner

Caleb Lohner (84) of the Utah Utes catches a touchdown pass over JD Drew (3) of the Utah State Aggies during the first half of their game at Maverik Stadium on Sept. 14, 2024, in Logan, Utah. sports. And so, in May 2024, Lohner transferred to Utah to play football. One year later, a kid who had four catches — whose family had no idea how to go about any kind of draft process — signed an NFL contract. The pivot from college basketball to pro football was exceedingly complicated. The reality was simple. Lohner wanted to do it. And so he did. “It’s like, ‘Of course I’m playing football — this is what I do, and this is what I’m working on,’” Burgess said. “He’s not a worrier.

He’s not an overthinker. He just gets things done.” On April 26, before the 241st pick in the seventh round, Sean Payton called Lohner to tell him the Broncos were taking him. He added a sales pitch, too, based on one of his all-time success stories with the New Orleans Saints. “Hey, you ever heard of Jimmy Graham?” Payton asked Lohner, as his Uncle Mike recalled. “We’re going to make you the next Jimmy Graham.” Lohner just nodded along for the ride, like he’s always done. “Caleb, of course, said, ‘Yeah,’” Mike Lohner recalled. “Let’s do it.” The Graham comparison wasn’t a shock. Or new. Far from it. That comparison has followed Lohner ever since he arrived in Denver — ever since the night he was drafted, when Payton brought up the former Saints stud unprompted when asked about Lohner. Lohner, for his part, has mostly shrugged it off. “I try personally not to hear it,” Lohner told The Denver Post in May. “Just because I’m on my own journey, how I’m learning.”

That journey, though, started with a look at Graham. Whittingham, Utah’s tight ends coach for a decade, grew up with Lohner’s father in the same neighborhood in Provo and was sold for years on the kid as a future NFL pro. After a disappointing two years at Baylor that saw him receive limited minutes despite team success, Lohner finally called Whittingham and told him he was considering the transition. So Whittingham, eventually, sat Lohner and Uncle Mike down for a PowerPoint presentation. On one slide, Whittingham put a picture of former All-Pro Graham with a side-by-side physical comparison to Lohner. Graham came into the NFL at 6-foot-6 and played four years of college basketball before switching to football. He recorded just 17 catches his senior year. Lohner stood at 6-foot-7, Whittingham pointed out, and played four years of college basketball. “I just was saying, ‘They’re looking for guys with traits like you,’” Whittingham said. See Lohner page 7

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