

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371 www.thecr.com \$1

Paving 400 South proposed

County will seek bids for project

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review

One of the most well-traveled county roads is being considered for paving.

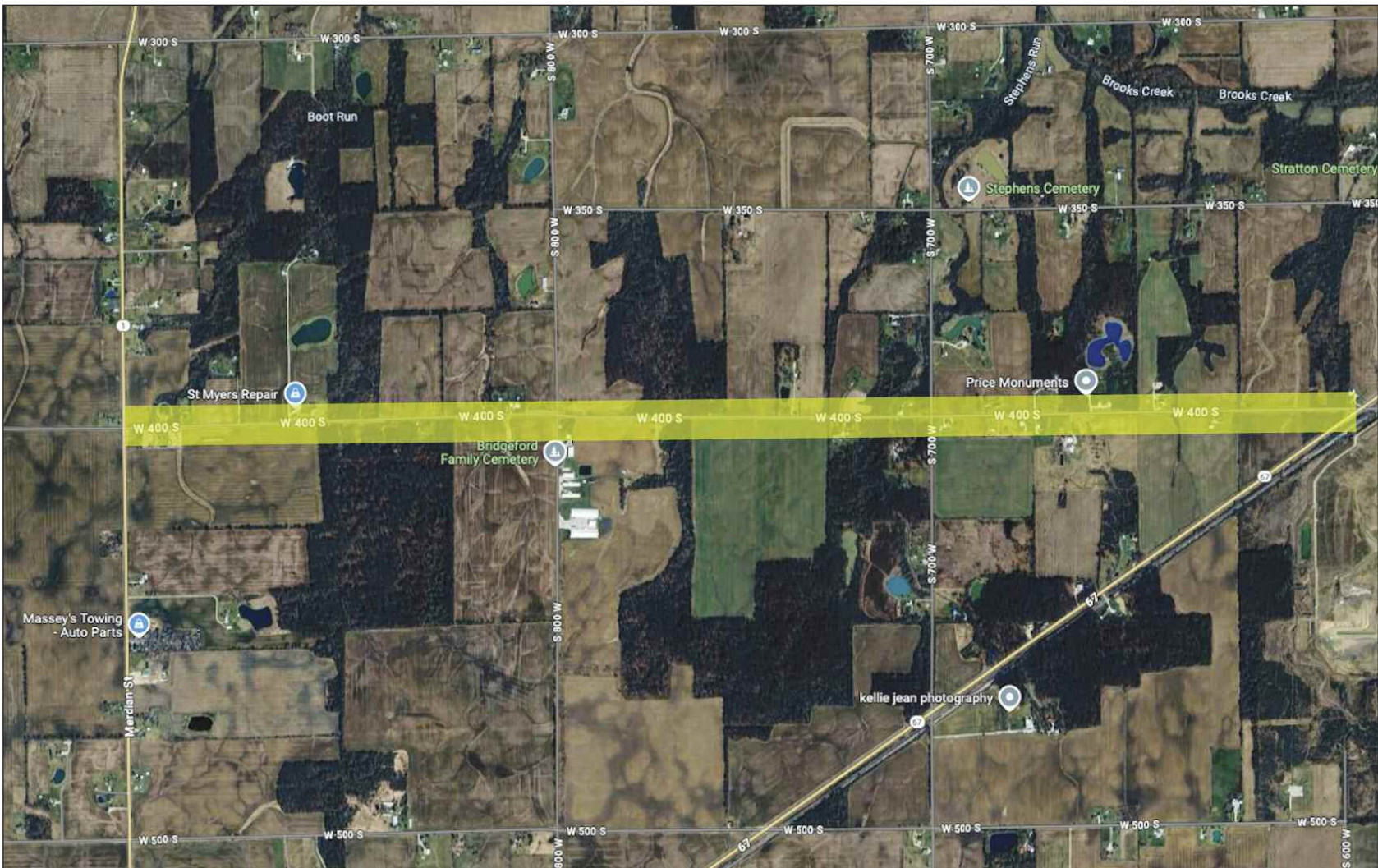
Jay County Commissioners agreed Monday to seek bids for paving county road 400 South from Indiana 67 to Indiana 1.

Jay County Highway Department superintendent Bob Howell proposed paving the section of road that runs from Indiana 67 near Jay County Solid Waste Management District's building to Indiana 1 just north of Redkey, an approximately three-mile span of road.

"This is a heavily traveled road, and it's in need of attention, which chip and seal would not be sufficient enough to repair," explained Howell.

He said the highway department has enough money in its budget to pay for the project, and he asked commissioners for permission to move forward in receiving proposals for the work.

"400 South between (Indiana) 67 and (Indiana) 1 is pretty rough, and I know, a few years back we did 400 South between (Indiana) 1



Google Maps graphic

Jay County Highway Department superintendent Bob Howell proposed paving a section of county road 400 South during Monday's Jay County Commissioners meeting. Commissioners agreed to seek bids to pave the road between Indiana 67 and Indiana 1.

and Dunkirk," said commissioners president Chad Aker. "It's held up really nice. I feel that something probably should be done."

Commissioners agreed the road is heavily traveled. They OK'd seeking bids for the paving project.

Also Monday, commis-

sioners learned about a delay in rehabilitation efforts on the Seventh Street bridge in Portland.

Howell explained that the bridge's caps had more erosion than anticipated. Consulting firm EGIS is working with the contractor to put together a plan, he

added. Options could be to repair the caps at \$33,000, leading to a two-week extension on the project, or to altogether replace the caps, which would take an additional three to five weeks. Howell noted they are still working on an estimate for the latter option.

Commissioners decided to hold off on making a decision on the matter until their next meeting.

Commissioners also OK'd moving forward with drafting a contract with information technology service provider LEAP Managed IT.

Jay County officials formed a cybersecurity task force in the fall to assess cybersecurity risks, plan for incidents and provide recommendations for county cybersecurity and information technology issues.

See **Paving** page 2

Rate increase vote set for August

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review

DUNKIRK — City council plans to take action on water and sewer rate increases and a request to vacate an alley at its first meeting in August.

The sewer and water rate proposed increases were introduced at Monday's meeting, with city attorney Wes Schemenaur formally presenting the language to council members.

Schemenaur explained that the ordinance calls for 3% increases to the city's water and sewer rates, as discussed at the council's June 23 meeting. A public hearing on the increases will be held at the council's Aug. 11 meeting, with plans to vote on it following the hearing.

Council is proposing 3% sewer and water hikes

The increases would push the minimum water rate to 25.54 per month from the current \$24.80 and the minimum sewer rate to \$17.90 per month from the current \$16.87.

The only other change to the ordinance, Schemenaur said, is a proposed increase for the fee for handling waste from septic tanks.

It would be increased to 9

cents per gallon from the current 4 cents.

The septic fee increase would go into effect immediately while the water and sewer rate increases would be effective Feb. 1.

Schemenaur also told council that it will be able to take action Aug. 11 on a request to vacate an L-shaped alley in the area of Franklin and Pearl streets.

Also presented to the council

on Monday was an ordinance change to create a non-reverting fund for the city's fire department. Funds from fire protection contracts — Dunkirk has agreements with Knox, Jackson and Richland townships in Jay County and Niles Township in Delaware County — would go into the new fund. (It currently goes into the general fund.) The city received almost \$14,500 via the most recent contracts.

Schemenaur also encouraged council members to take part in any educational opportunities that may be available regarding Indiana Senate Enrolled Act 1, which addresses various tax issues.

He said he sat through about 90 minutes of a session regard-

ing the legislation passed by the Indiana General Assembly this year.

"My head hurt when it was over with," he said.

Schemenaur said the bill will make significant changes to local government finance. In order to help understand them, he suggested attending seminars led by the Association of Indiana Municipalities and/or consulting firms.

"This is going to be a nightmare, I'm afraid," he said.

Robbins concurred, saying he, treasurer Kara Lowe and council president Jesse Bivens have attended recent seminars as well.

"It's pretty confusing," he said.

See **Rate** page 2



Tribune News Service/AFP via Getty Images/Sam Hariri

Syria's security forces enter the predominantly Druze city of Sweida on Tuesday following clashes between Bedouin tribes and Druze fighters. The fighting has led to almost 100 deaths. Israel's government said it was acting in defense of the Druze community, a minority group the Jewish state has pledged to protect.

Israel carries out air strikes

By SHERIF TAREK and GALIT ALSTEIN
Bloomberg News
Tribune News Service

Israel launched several air attacks in Syria and Lebanon in the past day, increasing tensions with its neighbors.

The Israel Defense Forces struck several tanks advancing toward Suwayda province in southern Syria on Monday. On Tuesday, strikes on military vehicles intensified.

Israel's government said it was acting in defense of the Druze community, a minority group the Jewish state has pledged to protect.

Deadly sectarian clashes broke out in Suwayda on Sunday and Monday between Druze and Bedouin groups, with the Syrian army moving

Government says it was acting in defense of Druze

forces into the area to try to quell the violence. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he told his military to fire on the tanks because they were "meant to serve the Syrian regime's activities against the Druze."

"Israel is committed to preventing harm to the Druze in Syria due to the deep brotherly alliance with its own Druze citizens," Netanyahu said in a statement with Defense Minister Israel Katz.

The movement of Syrian troops into Suwayda, which runs close to Israel's border, also endangered Israel, they said.

The roughly 700,000-strong Druze community in Syria has forged closer ties with Israel — which has about 150,000 Druze — since the collapse of Bashar Assad's government in December. In Syria, they have feared a sectarian backlash from Islamist militants allied with the new administra-

tion of President Ahmed al-Sharaa.

Syria's been devastated by civil war since 2011 and al-Sharaa is still trying to gain control over large swaths of the country.

Israel positioned some ground forces on Syrian territory soon after Assad, an ally of Iran, fell. It's regularly struck Syria this year and remains wary of al-Sharaa, a former al-Qaeda founder.

Yet in the past month Israel said it was open to a peace deal with Damascus, something that seemed to be given impetus by U.S. President Donald Trump ending sanctions on the Syrian government.

Al-Sharaa's officials haven't commented on the latest Israeli strikes.

See **Strikes** page 5

Deaths	Weather	In review	Coming up
<p>Scott McCaffery, 57, Dunkirk</p> <p>Clara Schwartz, infant, Geneva</p> <p>Details on page 2.</p>	<p>Jay County had a high temperature of 86 degrees Monday. The low was 71.</p> <p>Tonight's low will be in the lower 70s. There is a 50% chance of rain. Rain is expected Thursday with thunderstorms possible and a high in the mid 80s.</p> <p>See page 2 for an extended outlook.</p>	<p>Second Harvest Food Bank will host tailgate food distributions:</p> <p>•Today at Redkey Morgan Park, 102 W. Holmes Ave., Redkey</p> <p>•Thursday, July 17, at Blackford Junior-Senior High School, 2392 Indiana 3, Hartford City</p> <p>Tailgates are set for 10 a.m.</p>	<p>Thursday — Results from the Portland Rockets game against the Muncie Chiefs.</p> <p>Friday — Coverage of this week's Portland Board of Aviation meeting.</p> <p>Saturday — Results from the Jay County Lions Band Contest.</p>



Paving ...

Continued from page 1

Recently, longtime information technology provider Randy Cleaver announced he will retire at the end of the year.

The task force recommended a fully managed service with LEAP Managed IT along with a co-managed option for Jay County Security Center, which will keep working with current information technology provider Cameron Clark.

The company will begin transitioning to become the county's information technology provider role Sept. 1. It's estimated at \$14,391.10 per month.

Also Monday, commissioners heard an update from Jay County Development Corporation executive director Ceann Bales. She pointed to goals to redesign the organization's website and create a new county comprehensive plan. Bales also noted Regional Economic Acceleration and Development

Initiative 2.0 should begin to be dispersed soon, pointing to a steering committee meeting slated for August.

Aker shared hopes for JCDC to take the lead on issuing requests for proposals for the 68-acre infrastructure project on the west side of Portland, with Bales agreeing but saying she'll want to make sure the executive committee is on board.

Commissioners also took bids under advisement involved in constructing a public safety building.

The county accepted proposals through Friday for the project, which would involve building a new facility to be used by Jay County Health Department, Jay Emergency Medical Service and Jay County Coroner's Office.

Seven companies — Peterson Architecture, Elevatus Architecture, RQAW, Martin Riley, American Structurepoint, K2M Design

and MSS Engineering — submitted proposals for the project.

In other business, commissioners Doug Horn, Duane Monroe and Aker:

- Reminded the public about their special meeting July 21, as well as shifting their next regular meeting to July 30.
- Noted a ceremony at Jay County Junior-Senior High School at 10 a.m. July 24 to rename the bridge on Indiana 67 over the Salamonie River to Marine Lance Cpl. Andrew F. Whitacre, who died while serving in Afghanistan
- Approved the following: an annual agreement with the City of Portland for community coordinator Darlesia Lee's office at Community Resource Center; an annual agreement with Jay School Corporation for school resource officer Cody Jesse; and combining Iris Scholar watershed with the Salamonie River watershed.

- Decided to hold off on reviewing economic development income tax (EDIT) requests for 2026. Auditor Emily Franks noted the county won't receive estimates for how much in EDIT dollars it will receive until August, and she predicts the amount will be significantly lower than last year.
- Tabled a decision on renewing a contract with Jay County Humane Society for animal control. Monroe suggested bringing in the organization to share a report on its work at an upcoming meeting.
- Took bids under advisement for a new excavator for Jay County Surveyor's Office. Three companies offered quotes as follows: West Side Tractor Sales, \$150,000; Southeastern Equipment, \$179,000; and MacAllister Machinery, \$231,000.
- Heard there were no bids submitted in the latest round for the owner-occupied rehabilitation program.

Obituaries






Scott S. McCaffery, Dunkirk, July 31, 1967-July 12, 2025. Services will be at 1 p.m. Wednesday at Walker & Glancy Funeral Home, 109 W. Windsor St., Montpelier.

Clara G. Schwartz, rural Geneva, July 12, 2025-July 13, 2025. Services were held Monday at Bunker Hill Amish Cemetery in Geneva.

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 7/17	Friday 7/18	Saturday 7/19	Sunday 7/20	Monday 7/21
 83/63 There's an 80% chance of thunderstorms on Thursday.	 80/68 Mostly cloudy on Friday with a 50% chance of rain and thunderstorms.	 82/70 Saturday's forecast shows a 50% chance of showers throughout the day, with a higher chance late.	 83/67 Mostly sunny skies on Sunday when there's a 60% chance of showers.	 84/68 There's a slight chance of thunderstorms Monday under mostly sunny skies.

Lotteries

Powerball Monday 8-12-45-46-63 Power Ball: 24 Power Play: 2 Estimated jackpot: \$264 million	Daily Four: 8-6-3-6 Quick Draw: 2-10-11-12-15-16-19-22-30-34-35-39-47-48-56-65-70-71-74-79 Cash 5: 2-17-28-30-35 Estimated jackpot: \$100,000
Mega Millions Estimated jackpot: \$90 million	Ohio Monday Midday Pick 3: 6-6-2 Pick 4: 2-7-5-3 Pick 5: 9-4-9-9-1 Evening Pick 3: 7-0-1 Pick 4: 0-2-9-9 Pick 5: 6-1-3-6-9 Rolling Cash: 1-2-12-16-22 Estimated jackpot: \$162,000
Hoosier Monday Midday Daily Three: 1-1-3 Daily Four: 3-6-9-4 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: 0-1-7	

Markets

Cooper Farms Fort Recovery Corn.....4.56 Aug. corn4.63 Sept. corn4.58	Aug. beans.....9.69 Wheat 5.11
POET Biorefining Portland Corn.....4.57 Aug. corn4.52 Sept. corn4.42	ADM Montpelier Corn.....4.32 Aug. corn4.30 Beans10.09 Aug. beans.....9.89 Wheat5.11
The Andersons Richland Township Corn4.45 Aug. corn4.01 Beans10.11	Heartland St. Anthony Corn.....4.47 Aug. corn4.47 Beans9.89 Aug. beans.....9.49 Wheat4.86

Today in history

In 1972, the Dunkirk Watsons knocked off the Portland Rockets 10-5 in the Eastern Indiana Baseball League. Dunkirk scored five times in the fifth inning and two more in the sixth to take the win.

In 2020, the Frye Family Band performed during the slimmed down Jay County Fair. The performance was originally planned to be part of Faith Night at the Fair along with a concert by Jordan Feliz at the grandstand, but most grandstand entertainment for the four-day fair was postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

—The CR

Citizen’s calendar

Today 4 p.m. — Portland Board of Aviation, airport, 661 W. 100 North.	5 p.m. — Jay School Board, General Shanks, 414 E. Floral Ave., Portland.
Friday 5:30 p.m. — Redkey Town Council executive session, park cabin, 50 Mooney St. 6:30 p.m. — Redkey Town Council special session, park cabin, 50 Mooney St.	5:30 p.m. — Portland City Council, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St. 6:15 p.m. — Portland City Council public hearing, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St. 6:30 p.m. — Fort Recovery Local Schools, community room, high school, 400 E. Butler St. 7:30 p.m. — Fort Recovery Village Council, village hall, 201 S. Main St.
Monday 4 p.m. — Jay County Commissioners, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.	

Capsule Reports

Intersection collision

Two Winchester residents were transported to the hospital after a vehicle collision at the intersection of Bryant Pike and U.S. 27 about noon Sunday.

Leland B. Turpin, 50, Portland, was driving his 2009 Dodge Ram north on the highway when he looked away from the road to check his phone for directions to turn off onto Bryant Pike. At the same time, Mendy R. Beam, 48, was driving a 2018 Chevrolet Impala south on the highway. When Turpin looked back at the road, he realized his vehicle was in the opposite lane of traffic in Beam's path. Beam wasn't able to avoid crashing into Turpin's vehicle.

Beam complained of chest pain. Her passenger, 51-year-old Kristina Dixon, also complained of chest pain.

Both vehicles were towed, with damage estimated between \$25,000 and \$50,000.

Failed to yield

A Selma teen failed to yield to oncoming traffic at the intersection of Indiana 67 and Indiana 1 in Redkey, causing an accident about 8:22 p.m. Friday.

Derick L. Myers, 17, was driving a 1987 Chevrolet Blazer south on Indiana 1. He stopped at its intersection of Indiana 67, and he told

police he didn't see traffic coming from either direction and pulled into the intersection. (He also told police he thought the intersection was a four-way stop.) Myers continued into the path of an eastbound 2020 Nissan Frontier driven by 69-year-old David M. Stoner of Portland. Stoner wasn't able to avoid hitting the car Myers was driving, striking the passenger side fender.

Both vehicles were towed, with damage estimated between \$10,000 and \$25,000.

Fell asleep

A Union City man fell asleep at the wheel while driving along Meridian Street in Portland, causing him to go off the road and hit a mailbox and fire hydrant about 3:23 a.m. Monday.

Andrew E. Orsonio-Machuca, 19, was driving his 2015 Chrysler 200 north on Meridian Street when he fell asleep. His car went off the road at 703 S. Meridian St., hitting a mailbox at the address and a fire hydrant.

Damage is estimated between \$2,500 and \$5,000. His vehicle was towed.

Turning accident

A Montpelier woman turned her car into oncoming traffic, leading to a crash at the intersection of

Indiana 67 and Indiana 26 about 8:28 a.m. Monday.

Kimberly A. Yencer, 46, was driving her 2010 Ford Fusion south on Indiana 26 and stopped at its intersection with Indiana 67. She continued into the intersection to turn east onto Indiana 67. At the same time, Kevin D. Huffman, 63, Geneva, was driving his 2025 Land Rover Defender south on the highway. Yencer turned into the path of Huffman's vehicle, and Huffman's car struck Yencer's vehicle.

Both vehicles were towed, with damage estimated between \$25,000 and \$50,000.

Bucket tangled

Damage is estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000 after the bucket on an Ohio worker's truck got caught in phone lines along U.S. 27 in Portland about 7:45 a.m. Friday.

Durbin Yoel Sean Matos, 34, Middletown, was driving a 2021 Ford F-750 and leaving the parking lot at 1411 N. U.S. 27. He told police he forgot to lower the bucket on the truck, and as he was leaving, the top of the truck caught in the overhead phone lines above the driveway. He began turning south onto the highway, and the lines pulled the truck over onto its driver's side.

The truck is registered to Asplundh Tree Expert of Fort Wayne.

Rate ...

Continued from page 1

In other business, council:

- Approved the following: the payment of \$19,488 to Peerless Midwest to replace a well pump at the water treatment plant (Bivens noted that another pump will need to be replaced, but suggested handling one now and putting the other on hold until 2026); purchasing \$7,390 in gear for volunteer firefighters from Donley Safety; payment of a claim of \$5,531.40 to Safety Systems

for emergency lighting for the new 2025 Dodge Durango police vehicle; a \$200 sponsorship for Dunkirk Junior League; a \$400 sponsorship for the upcoming 3-on-3 basketball tournament at Dunkirk City Park; payment of claims totaling \$368,887.49;

- Received a reminder from Robbins that there will be a meeting regarding Head Start at 4 p.m. tonight. The meeting will include a representative from Save the Children

Head Start of Northeast Indiana. The Head Start program that was previously housed at West Jay Community Center was shut down in the spring.

- Heard it received thank you cards for its sponsorships of the West Jay Optimist Club Jerry Nelson Memorial Fishing Derby and Jay County 4-H.
- Learned from Revolt that the installation of new playground equipment and related work at Dunkirk City Park is complete.

- Heard from community coordinator Darlesia Lee about the Indiana Energy Saver Program, which will assist Hoosiers in reducing energy costs through energy efficiency upgrades. The program is supported by \$182 million in federal funding and will offer rebates for projects such as heating and cooling systems, water heaters, insulation, appliances and lighting. For more information, visit indianaaenergysaver.com.

Felony court news

Strangulation

A rural Portland man was sentenced to one year in jail after pleading guilty to strangulation and criminal confinement.

Brandon L. Fisher, 42, 2387 E. 400 South, pleaded guilty in Jay Circuit

Court to both Level 6 felonies. He was sentenced to one year in Jay County Jail for each crime, with his sentences to be served concurrently. Fisher was given credit for time served and assessed \$189 in court costs. He was assessed a \$50 domestic violence prevention and treatment fee.

As part of his plea agreement, a Level 6 felony for domestic battery committed in the presence of a child younger than 16 years old was dismissed.

SERVICES

Today

McCaffery, Scott: 1:30 p.m.,
Walker & Glancy Funeral Home,
109 W.Windsor St., Montpelier.

Thursday

Ritter-Butz, Sandra: 7 p.m.,
Downing & Glancy Funeral
Home, 100 Washington St.,
Geneva.

Service listings provided by

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Wife questions man’s honesty

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been married for three years. Most of that time, it has been perfect. Six months ago, we received some amazing news: We are expecting a child! This was a miracle. We had been struggling to conceive, and I had almost given up hope that it would ever happen.

My problem is, when my husband and I started dating, my husband and my brother became fast friends. At first, I was thrilled that the man I loved got along so great with my family. But ever since the news of our pregnancy, they have become almost inseparable. They text constantly, and it seems almost every weekend they are taking a hunting trip or going to the casinos.

My husband says he’s just trying to have some fun before the baby comes along. Am I wrong to feel he should be spending more time with me, the pregnant mother of his future child? He’s a great provider and a loving husband when he is present, but

Dear Abby



I can’t help but feel neglected.

One evening, we were sitting on the couch watching TV and I happened to get a glimpse of his phone. I noticed he was texting my brother (as usual), but then I saw the text from my brother: “Goodnight babe,” with a HEART EMOJI! I didn’t mean to snoop, but I was shocked and couldn’t unsee this. I immediately asked what was going on, and he very defensively told me it was an inside joke and that I shouldn’t be reading his texts over his shoulder.

I feel crazy for even thinking what I’m thinking, but could something be going on between my brother and my husband? I don’t even know

how to begin to confront this issue, and I’m afraid if I ask my husband point-blank, he will lie to my face. I feel lost and betrayed. Please help. — CRESTFALLEN IN COLORADO

DEAR CRESTFALLEN: As thrilled as you are about this pregnancy, your husband may be less so. In fact, he may regard the approaching arrival of his child as a door closing on having a life. There are straight men (“men’s men”) who prefer the company of men over that of women. Because you are afraid to confront your husband about what you saw, have an in-person talk with your brother and ask him why he sent a heart emoji to your husband.

.....
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Civic theatre elects officers

Jay County Civic Theatre elected officers for 2025-26 during its regular meeting Wednesday evening. Re-elected were Ray Cooney as president, Lee Osteen as vice president and Reid Knuth as secretary. Katie Loy was newly elected as treasurer.

Loy takes over from Greg Rittenhouse. He has served as treasurer since February 2017. Rittenhouse will serve as assistant treasurer to help Loy with the transition.

Also serving on the JCCT board of directors are Casi Denney, Sarah Lingo and Rachel Tebbe.

The board voted to change its regular meetings to be held at 6:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month in the board room at Arts Place. (JCCT meetings are open to the public.)

Upcoming Jay County Civic Theatre activities include:

- Pre-audition night for “Annie” at 6 p.m. Wednesday, July 23, at Arts Place
- Auditions for “Annie” on Aug. 4 and 5 at Arts Place

The next Jay County Civic Theatre regular board meeting will

Taking Note

be at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 9, in the board room at Arts Place.

The next Jay County Civic Theatre show will be “Legally Blonde” on Sept. 25, 26, 27 and 28.

Series continues

The Muncie Three Trails Music Series is in full swing.

Its next concert, a performance by Blue Moon Marquee, opens at 7 p.m. Aug. 16 at Canan Commons. Other shows include:

- Saturday, Aug. 23 — Vanessa Collier at Brown Family Amphitheater at Ball State University
- Saturday, Aug. 30 — Jennie Devoe at Canan Commons
- Saturday, Sept. 6 — Colby T. Helms & the Virginia Creepers at Brown Family Amphitheater
- Saturday, Sept. 20 — The Afro Peruvian Jazz Orchestra at Brown Family Amphitheater

Community Calendar

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

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

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

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

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 tell 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.

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) 251-8792.

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.

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.

Friday

DUNKIRK HISTORICAL MUSEUM — Is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the third Friday and Saturday of each month at Webster Depot, 132 W. Railroad St.

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 information, please call (260) 251-3259.

CINCINNATUS LEAGUE — Will hold its next meeting at noon Friday, July 18, 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.

DUNKIRK HISTORICAL MUSEUM — Is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the third Friday and Saturday of each month at Webster Depot, 132 W. Railroad St.

MUSEUM OF THE SOLDIER — Is open from noon to 5 p.m. the first and third Saturday and Sunday of the month. It is located at 510 E. Arch St., Portland. The website is museumofthesoldier.com.

Sunday

A BETTER LIFE – BRIANNA’S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for all kinds of addictions, will meet from 5 to 6:30 p.m. each Sunday at Fellowship Baptist Church, 289 S. 200 West, Portland. Come early for a meal. For more information, call (260) 766-2006.

Monday

PORTLAND BREAKFAST OPTIMISTS — Will meet at 7 a.m. for breakfast at Richards Restaurant.

PING PONG — Will be played from 9 a.m. to noon each Monday at Jay Community Center.

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

Level: Intermediate

Tuesday's Solution

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

The objective is to fill a nine-by nine grid so that each column, each row, and each of the nine three-by-three boxes (also called blocks or regions) contains the digits from 1 to 9 only one time each.

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Everyone needs a friend like Andy

Editor's note: This column is being reprinted from July 14, 2010. Everyone needs that friend who can turn their day around no matter the struggles and challenges endured. For Jack, that friend was Andy.

By JACK RONALD

The Commercial Review

These days, when a storm front is approaching, I can feel it in my knuckles.

The combination of age and a lifetime of work at typewriters and computers has given me some variation of carpal tunnel or arthritis.

Most of the time, it's just a nuisance. But the knuckles really start buzzing when a low pressure system is on the way.

That's when I need a call from Andy.

Andy's an old friend who lives

Back in the Saddle



in Pasadena. He calls about every six weeks or so, and the staff has learned that when the call comes in I am useless for the better part of half an hour.

Inevitably, Andy will have me laughing within seconds after I've picked up the phone. His laugh — the laugh of a little Jewish guy six months older than me — is enough to get me laughing all by itself. It's that infectious.

We've been friends for some-

thing approaching 30 years now, and he still tells stories about a visit to Portland with his dog not long after we first met. The twins ran the dog ragged, playing with it so enthusiastically it slept for nearly a day when Andy took it home. But a call from Andy isn't just about old times and laughter.

It's about perspective.

You see, Andy's been unable to work for some time. While I'm dealing with an occasional buzz in the knuckles, he's fighting the most pernicious and painful type of arthritis, the kind that has resisted treatment, the kind that delivers pain so intense it sometimes knocks Andy unconscious. He lives in a world where any change in the weather can be devastating physically.

At a time when he should be at his prime professionally — he's a former bureau chief for The Associated Press in Los Angeles — he's involuntarily retired thanks to his illness.

And yet, even when he's recounting various treatments and medications, I have never, ever heard him feel sorry for himself. It's not in his DNA.

Instead, this guy — who has trouble with little things like standing and sitting and walking — is teaching a citizenship class to a group of Hispanics who are in this country legally and want to build a future in America. When he's not doing that, he helps teach a class in English as a foreign language.

Most recently, he's been working with an international rescue organization, helping a group of

Iranians who fled their country's repressive regime as they try to acclimate to life in the United States.

If he's feeling up to it, he may also do a stint as a docent at an art museum.

And when school's back in session, there will be writing and journalism after-school programs for middle school kids to conduct.

I don't know about you, but I find that a pretty humbling laundry list of activities.

And sometimes, when I hear someone complaining about their aches and pains or difficulties that have come their way, it occurs to me that everybody needs an Andy, someone to give them a call, provoke a belly laugh, and help them get things back into focus.

Congress keeps digging deeper

Bloomberg Opinion

Tribune News Service

In a remarkable achievement, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act got worse with each iteration before finally being enacted last week. On plausible assumptions, the final version will add more than \$5 trillion to deficits over the next 10 years, moving the track of public debt from unsustainable to all but unhinged. As Congress turns to its budget for next year, it must grapple realistically with this looming crisis.

As written, the measure will add about \$3 trillion to the expected 10-year deficit. Include interest payments, and the cost rises to nearly \$4 trillion. Assume that assorted "temporary" measures are made permanent — which seems reasonable, given that most of the bill's cost comes from extending supposedly temporary tax cuts passed in 2017 — and the total could be as much as \$6 trillion. Federal debt held by the public would climb from 100% of gross domestic product today to 130% by 2034. (After that, it just keeps going up.)

Remember when fiscal conservatives wanted to balance the budget? This plan means annual deficits of more than 7% of GDP even if the economy remains at full employment. Add a recession during the next decade, and the numbers soar off the charts. As the debt rises, the steps needed to rein it in become ever more challenging.

Complicating the task going forward, many of the bill's provisions were designed to obfuscate its true costs. Temporary tax and spending changes were timed so that the biggest deficit increases were piled into the early part of the decade. (First, the pleasure of lower taxes and higher spending; later, in theory, the pain of higher taxes and lower spending.) For accounting purposes, the bill's supporters went as far as to claim that it actually reduces projected deficits — relative to a new "current policy" baseline. In effect, this declared the bill's centerpiece, extending the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act at a cost of more than \$3 trillion, to be a fiscal non-event.

The magnitude of the

Guest Editorial

Temporary tax and spending changes were timed so that the biggest deficit increases were piled into the early part of the decade.

challenge means that tweaks alone — such as the \$9.4 billion "rescissions" package the president has requested, which the Senate may vote on next week — won't cut it. Nor will some combination of tariffs, faster growth and cracking down on "waste, fraud and abuse." What's required is a comprehensive review of taxes and entitlements.

As a start, Congress should create a bipartisan fiscal commission, on the model of the 2010 Bowles-Simpson panel, to offer an honest assessment of the budget trajectory and propose reforms. The key is to put everything on the table, including Medicare and Social Security. Modest but broad-based tax increases — admittedly, not likely anytime soon — should also be under consideration. Likewise small budget cuts across an array of federal programs. Such changes will of course be unpopular, but the quicker they get underway, the less painful they'll need to be.

Lawmakers will turn this week to negotiating next year's budget, very much in a spirit of business as usual. That's precisely the wrong approach. The Big Beautiful Bill has made the country's fiscal picture much uglier, and reforms much more urgent. The sooner Washington understands that reality, the better.



We fall short of our ideals

By DAVID PLAZAS

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Tribune News Service

The first "Superman" movie I ever watched starred Christopher Reeve as the iconic hero who, despite literally being an alien who entered Earth without an invitation, took on the mission of protecting people who would not always accept him for who he was but for what he could do for them.

Frankly, I wish Superman was real today. I wish he was real to save the 100-plus people who perished in flooding in central Texas.

I wish he were real to help the dozen or so people who suffered injuries from two boat explosions on Lake Lanier over Fourth of July weekend.

Perhaps Superman would have stopped innocent people, including American citizens, from being detained by federal officials just for their legal status or for their disagreements with the federal government.

That 1978 movie seems so innocent, but the film set the stage for the politics of today in one scene:

"Why are you here?" asks Daily Planet newspaper reporter and future love interest Lois Lane (played by Margot Kidder).

"I'm here to fight for truth and justice and the American way," answers Superman (played by Reeve).

"You're going to end up fighting every elected official in this country," Lane retorts.

That movie felt like pure escapism, but the latest movie version of "Superman," out Thursday and starring David Corenswet as the hero, embraces its politics head-on.

In an interview for The Times of London, 2025 "Superman" director James Gunn holds nothing back about the moral of the story, according to TNS/Variety Entertainment News Service.

"I mean, 'Superman' is the story of America," Gunn said. "An immi-

David Plazas



grant that came from other places and populated the country, but for me it is mostly a story that says basic human kindness is a value and is something we have lost."

Even Superman of the comic books of the 1930s or the movies of the 1970s and 1980s acknowledged that America needed a hero like him precisely because something was missing in society.

Superman was the anti-bully, the anti-villain and the ultimate anti-racist.

As a shy, sensitive son of immigrants who enjoyed buying and reading comic books, fictional heroes — whether they were Superman, Wonder Woman or the X-Men (sorry to DC and Marvel purists) — inspired me and taught me three core lessons:

1. You could be different and still be valued.
2. You might not be accepted for your differences, but you could overcome that hurdle.
3. You had talents you could offer others with the hopes of bettering the world.

Comic books might offer escapism and the occasional dark story line, but they could also offer hope, especially in trying times.

Then, there are the real heroes.

In 2016, when I saw the late Atlanta District 5 U.S. Rep. John Lewis speak in Nashville — where he was educated at Fisk University and American Baptist College — I bought his graphic novel "March: Book One."

It was truly a superhero narrative about a humble man from Troy, Alabama who began his ministry preaching to chickens and eventual-

ly changed the world through his nonviolent advocacy and his example that someone like him — a descendant of enslaved Black people — could represent diverse Americans in Congress.

Lewis did not wear a cape, but he stood up for the least of these — in other words, for truth, justice and the American way.

Who gets to 'own' the American ideal?

"The" American way seems to be lost in the polarization of the United States today.

Who represents it best? The blue states? The red states? Georgia?

Superman wears red and blue, which is purely coincidental, but his sartorial choices speak to a need for all Americans to rise above their self-interest and seek a broader community with a unified purpose.

The American ideal embraces equality, fairness and integrity — even if history has shown that Americans do not always practice what we preach.

The American ideal welcomes the immigrant and the refugee even when our policies seek to round up and deport them.

The American ideal is about soaring above adversity even when our own tribal instincts lock us into toxic squabbles.

Americans, in order to build and restore community, should embrace their own inner Superman — or Superwoman — even though it sometimes means confronting mockery and loathing.

We ordinary humans may not be men or women of steel, but we can be people of steely resolve who seek to emulate a powerful hero who is loyal to an ideal that transcends politics.

Plazas is the opinion editor of The Atlanta Journal-Constitution and serves on the editorial board. Email him at david.plazas@ajc.com.

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—Thomas Jefferson

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Cancer institute faces cuts

Employees
express
concern over
reductions

By RACHANA PRADHAN
and ARTHUR ALLEN
KFF Health News
Tribune News Service

The Trump administration's broadsides against scientific research have caused unprecedented upheaval at the National Cancer Institute, the storied federal government research hub that has spearheaded advances against the disease for decades.

NCI, which has long benefited from enthusiastic bipartisan support, now faces an exodus of clinicians, scientists, and other staffers — some fired, others leaving in exasperation.

After years of accelerating progress that has reduced cancer deaths by a third since the 1990s, the institute has terminated funds nationwide for research to fight the disease, expand care, and train new oncologists.

"We use the word 'drone attack' now regularly," one worker said of grant terminations. "It just happens from above."

The assault could well result in a perceptible slowing of progress in the fight against cancer.

Nearly 2 million Americans are diagnosed with malignancies every year. In 2023, cancer killed more than 613,000 people, making it the second-leading cause of death after heart disease. But the cancer fight has also made enormous progress. Cancer mortality in the U.S. has fallen by 34% since 1991, according to the American Cancer Society. There are roughly 18 million cancer survivors in the country.

That trend "we can very, very closely tie to the enhanced investment in cancer science by the U.S. government," said Karen Knudsen, CEO of the Parker Institute for Cancer Immunotherapy and a globally recognized expert on prostate cancer.

"We're winning," Knudsen said. "Why we would let up, I really don't understand."

This article is based on interviews with nearly two dozen current and former NCI employees, academic researchers, scientists, and patients. KFF Health News agreed not to name some government workers because they are not authorized to speak to the news media and fear retaliation.

"It's horrible. It's a crap show. It really, really is," said an NCI laboratory chief who has worked at the institute for three decades. He's lost six of the 30 people in his lab this year: four scientists, a secretary, and an administrator.

"If we survive I will be somewhat surprised," he said.

After a mandate by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Government Efficiency to slash contract spending by more than a third, the cancer institute is cutting contracts to maintain precious biological specimens used in its research, according to



Tribune News Service/KFF Health News/Mike Etchamendy

Mike Etchamendy of Big Bear Lake, California, with his dog, Bear. Etchamendy says he owes 10 years of his life to treatment by National Cancer Institute doctors and opposes cuts to the institute's budget.

three scientists. "The required contract cuts are going to be devastating," a senior scientist said.

On the NCI campus in Bethesda, Maryland, scientists describe delays in getting essential supplies — "literally anything that goes into a test tube or a petri dish," a recently departed clinician said — because of staffing cuts and constant changes in policies about what they can order.

Even the websites that publish new evidence on cancer treatment and diagnosis aren't being updated, because HHS fired workers who managed them. And when NCI scientists do communicate with outsiders, what they say has been severely restricted, according to documents viewed by KFF Health News. Forbidden topics include mass firings, President Donald Trump's executive orders, and "DEIA" — diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

The turmoil at the National Institutes of Health's largest arm could haunt the country and the world for years to come.

"I really, really don't understand what they're trying to achieve," said Sarah Kobrin, chief of NCI's health systems and interventions research branch. "It just doesn't make sense."

"Efforts that are lifesaving now are being curtailed," one scientist said. "People will die."

Years of support

Initially, some workers said, they thought the cancer institute might be spared. HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has called chronic disease — cancer is one — "an existential threat" to the country. Cancer research, with multiple NCI-funded breakthroughs in genetics and immunotherapy, has sidestepped the political minefields around other public health issues, like vaccination.

"People who care about cancer might be the biggest lobby in the country," said Paul Goldberg, editor and publisher of The Cancer Letter, which has monitored oncology science and policy since 1973.

Count Mike Etchamendy, 69, of Big Bear Lake, California, as part of that lobby. Since 2013 he's flown to the East Coast scores of times to participate in five clinical trials at the cancer wing of NIH's Clinical Center.

"They call it the House of Hope," Etchamendy said. Between drugs, therapeutic

vaccines, and expert treatment for his rare bone cancer, called chordoma, he said, he believes he's gained at least 10 years of life. He's proud to have served as a "lab rat for science" and worries about NCI's future.

"People come from all over the world to learn there," Etchamendy said. "You cut funding there, you're going to cut major research on cancer."

In response to a list of detailed questions from KFF Health News about the cuts and chaos at NCI, HHS spokesperson Andrew Nixon said the reporting amounted to a "biased narrative" that "misrepresents a necessary transformation at the National Cancer Institute." Nixon declined to elaborate but said research into cancer and other health conditions continues to be a high priority "for both NIH and HHS."

"We are refocusing resources on high-impact, evidence-based research — free from ideological bias or institutional complacency. While change can be uncomfortable for those invested in the status quo, it is essential to ensure that NCI delivers on its core mission," he said.

Much of NCI's work is authorized by the National Cancer Act of 1971, which expanded its mandate as part of President Richard Nixon's "War on Cancer." Three of four of the cancer institute's research dollars go to outside scientists, with most of the remainder funding more than 300 scientists on campus.

And Congress was generous. Harold Varmus, one of more than 40 Nobel laureates whose work was funded by NCI, said budgets were usually handsome when he was NIH director from 1993 through 1999. President Bill Clinton "would say to me, 'I'd like to give you a bigger increase, Harold, but your friends in Congress will bring it up.' He'd offer me a 5% increase," Varmus recalled, but "I'd end up getting more like 10%" from Congress.

Congress appropriated \$2 billion to NCI in fiscal 1993. By 2025, funding had risen to \$7.22 billion.

Rat on colleagues

During a May 19 town hall meeting with NIH staff members, Jay Bhattacharya, the institute's new director, equivocated when asked about funding cuts for research into improving the health of racial and ethnic minori-

ties — cuts made under the guise of purging DEI from the government.

According to a recording of the meeting obtained by KFF Health News, Bhattacharya said the agency remained "absolutely committed to advancing the health and well-being of every population, including minority populations, LGBTQ populations, and every population."

Research addressing the health needs of women and minorities is "an absolute priority of mine," he said. "We're going to keep funding that." But a study considering whether "structural racism causes poor health in minority populations" is "not a scientific hypothesis."

"We need scientific ideas that are actionable, that improve the health and well-being of people, not ideological ideas that don't have any chance of improving the health and well-being of people," he said. That comment angered many staffers, several said in interviews. Many got up and walked out during the speech, while others, watching remotely, scoffed or jeered.

Several current and former NCI scientists questioned Bhattacharya's commitment to young scientists and minorities. Staffing cuts early in the year eliminated many recently hired NCI scientists. At least 172 National Cancer Institute grants, including for research aimed at minimizing health disparities among racial minorities or LGBTQ+ people, were terminated and hadn't been reinstated as of June 16, according to a KFF Health News analysis of HHS documents and a list of grant terminations by outside researchers.

Those populations have higher rates of certain cancer diagnoses and are more likely to receive diagnoses later than white or heterosexual people. Black people are also more likely to die of many cancer types than all other racial and ethnic groups.

Jennifer Guida, a researcher who focuses on accelerated aging in cancer survivors, said she recently left NCI after a decade in part because of the administration's DEI orders. According to several workers and internal emails viewed by KFF Health News, those included an HHS edict in January to report their colleagues who worked on such issues, and flagging grants that included DEI-related terms

because they didn't align with Trump's priorities.

"I'm not going to put my name attached to that. I don't stand for that. It's not OK," said Guida, who added that it amounted to a "scrubbing of science."

Racial discrimination is one factor that contributes to accelerated aging. "There are a growing number of cancer survivors in the U.S.," Guida said, and "a significant number of those people who will become cancer survivors are racial and ethnic minorities."

"Those people deserve to be studied," she said. "How can you help those people if you're not even studying them?"

In May, NCI informed leaders of the Comprehensive Partnerships to Advance Cancer Health Equity, a program that links 14 large U.S. cancer centers with minority-serving colleges and universities, that their funding would be cut. The project's Notice of Funding Opportunity — the mechanism the government uses to award grants — had been suddenly taken offline, meaning NCI staffers couldn't award future funding, according to three sources and internal communications viewed by KFF Health News. These "unpublishings" have often occurred without warning, explanation, or even notification of the grantee that no more money would be coming.

The cancer partnerships have trained more than 8,500 scientists. They're designed to address widely documented disparities in cancer care by having top medical schools place students from rural, poor, and minority-serving schools and community clinics in research, training, and outreach.

Research shows that patients from racial and ethnic minorities receive better medical care and have improved outcomes when their clinicians share their background.

"I'm from an immigrant family, the first to graduate in my family," said Elena Martinez, a professor of family medicine and public health at the University of California-San Diego, who leads one of the partnerships with colleagues at largely Hispanic Cal State-San Diego. "I wouldn't be here without this kind of program, and there won't be people like me here in the future if we cut these programs."

Silencing the science

In early April, when the dust settled after mass firings across HHS, workers in NCI's communications office were relieved they still had their jobs.

It didn't last. A month later, HHS fired nearly all of them, three former workers said. Combined with retirements and other departures, a skeleton crew of six or seven remain of about 75 people. "We were all completely blindsided," a fired worker said. NCI leadership "had no idea that this was happening."

As a result, websites, newsletters, and other resources for patients and doctors about the latest evidence in cancer treatment aren't being updated. They include Cancer.gov and NCI's widely used Physician Data Query, which compile research findings that doctors turn to when caring for cancer patients.

Gary Kreps, founding director of the Center for Health and Risk Communi-

cation at George Mason University, said he relied on Physician Data Query when his father was diagnosed with advanced stomach cancer, taking PDQ printouts when he met with his dad's doctors. "It made a huge difference," Kreps said. "He ended up living, like, another three years" — longer than expected — "and enjoyed the rest of his life."

As of May 30, banners at the top of the Cancer.gov and PDQ websites said, "Due to HHS restructuring and reduction in workforce efforts, the information on this website may not be up to date and pages will indicate as such." The banners are gone, but neither website was being updated, according to a fired worker with knowledge of the situation.

Outdated PDQ information is "really very dangerous," Kreps said.

Wiping out NCI's communications staff makes it harder to share complex and ever-changing information that doctors and patients need, said Peter Garrett, who headed NCI's communications before retiring in May. Garrett said he left because of concerns about political interference.

"The science isn't finished until it's communicated," he said. "Without the government playing that role, who's going to step in?"

Budget to destroy

Following court decisions that blocked some NIH grant cancellations or rendered them "void" and "illegal," NIH official Michelle Bulls in late June told staffers to stop terminating grants. However, NCI workers told KFF Health News they continue to review grants flagged by NIH to assess whether they align with Trump administration priorities. Courts have ordered NIH to reinstate some terminated grants, but not all of them.

At NCI and across NIH, staffers remain anxious.

The White House wants Congress to slash the cancer institute's budget by nearly 40%, to \$4.53 billion, as part of a larger proposal to sharply reduce NIH's fiscal 2026 coffers.

Bhattacharya has said he wants NIH to fund more big, breakthrough research. Major cuts could have the opposite effect, Knudsen said. When NCI funding shrinks, "it's the safe science that tends to get funded, not the science that is game changing and has the potential to be transformative for cures."

Usually the president's budget is dead on arrival in Congress, and members of both parties have expressed doubt about Trump's 2026 proposal. But agency workers, outside scientists, and patients fear this one may stick, with devastating impact.

It would force NCI to suspend all new grants or cut existing grants so severely that the gaps will close many labs, said Varmus, who ran NCI from 2010 to 2015. Add that to the impact on NCI's contracts, clinical trials, internal research, and salaries, he said, and "you can reliably say that NCI will be unable to keep up in any way with the promise of science that's currently underway."

The NCI laboratory chief, who has worked at the institute for decades, put it this way: "If the 40% budget cut passes in Congress, it will destroy clinical research at NCI."

Strikes ...

Continued from page 1

It is unclear if they will scupper the chances of the two countries forging diplomatic relations for the first time.

In Lebanon, the IDF carried out "numerous strikes" against Hezbollah in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley on Tuesday morning, saying it targeted training compounds used by the Iran-backed militant group's elite Radwan Force for operations against Israel. The IDF said the Radwan was trying to rebuild its capabilities after being severely weak-

ened in a war with Israel between September and November last year.

Israel has regularly struck southern Lebanon and even the eastern Bekaa Valley since a ceasefire in November. Still, these latest attacks appeared bigger than normal.

Since Hamas invaded Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, the Jewish state has fought wars against other Iran-backed militias and Iran itself. It's changed its military doctrine to prevent another Oct. 7-style attack, including

building troop positions beyond its borders and acting more quickly when it perceives threats.

The violence in Suwayda, where the Druze are concentrated, killed about 100 people in the past few days, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. It said Druze battled with tribal fighters as well as state military and police forces.

A spokesman for Syria's defense ministry said 18 soldiers were killed.

In May, Israel struck a target

near the presidential palace in Damascus after the Druze community called for international help following a series of clashes with Syrian forces.

After that strike, Netanyahu said he would not allow any threat to the Druze, an ethnically Arab group whose faith is an offshoot of Islam.

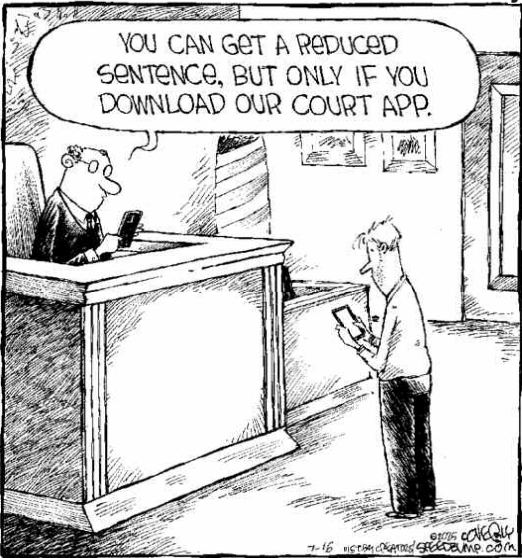
Sharaa, whose Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham group led an Islamist uprising against Assad, has been trying to prevent violence that flared up in Syria a few months after the downfall of

his predecessor. He has been seeking to disarm the country's myriad militias or get them to join the national army.

In March, armed men the government said were affiliated with the ousted regime attacked security sites near Syria's Mediterranean coast. That stirred up violence against the Muslim Alawite minority, to which Assad belongs. Three months later, a suicide bomber blew himself up inside a church in eastern Damascus, killing 22.

SPEED BUMP

Dave Coverly

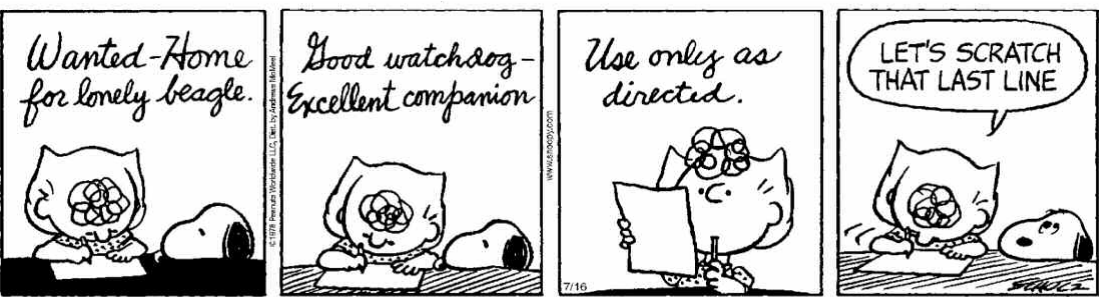


THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane



Peanuts



Rose is Rose



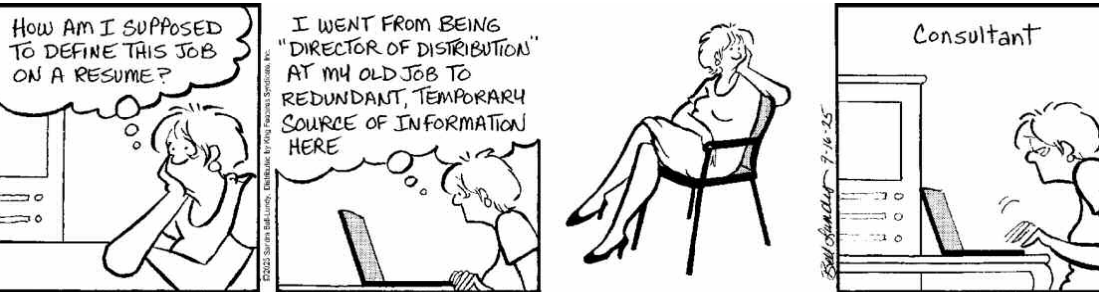
Agnes



Hi and Lois



Between Friends



Blondie



Snuffy Smith



Beetle Bailey



Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

The bidding points the way

South dealer.
Neither side vulnerable.

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

WEST
♠ K Q 10 9 2
♥ A K 10 6 4
♦ —
♣ 8 3 2

EAST
♠ 7 5 4
♥ Q 8 2
♦ J 9 7 6
♣ 10 6 5

SOUTH
♠ 6
♥ J 9 3
♦ A K 8 4 3
♣ A K J 7

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♦ 1 ♠ 1 NT Pass
2 ♠ 2 ♥ 3 ♦ Pass
4 ♦ Pass 5 ♦

Opening lead — king of hearts.
Assume you get to five diamonds on the bidding shown and West, after cashing the K-A of hearts, shifts to the king of spades, which you win with the ace. How would you continue?

There seems to be nothing to the play, but, like any tried-and-true veteran, you say to yourself before proceeding: "Is there anything that can defeat me?" The lone answer that emerges is "yes" — if one of the opponents has all the missing

trumps."

There are two ways of handling this possibility. One is to lead a low diamond to the ace at trick four, which would enable you to overcome the J-9-7-6 in the West hand. The other is to play the queen of diamonds at trick four and trap the J-9-7-6 in the East hand.

Judging from West's bidding, the odds are astronomical that if either opponent holds all four trumps, it is East. You therefore cash the queen of diamonds at trick four and, when West shows out, you continue with the ten.

After East covers with the jack, taken by your king, you ruff the jack of hearts in dummy, return a trump and make the appropriate play with your holding of A-8-4 poised over East's 9-7.

The catch in this setup, and what makes it so easy to go wrong, is that usually your holding facing the Q-10-5-2 would be something like A-K-9-4-3, or A-K-7-4-3 — and in both of these cases, cashing the ace first is the only correct play.

But here, where you have A-K-8-4-3, the four missing trumps — wherever they are — can be easily overcome if you guess which opponent is more likely to have them. Considering the bidding, the "guess" is not really a guess at all.

Tomorrow: The rationale of good defense.
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7-16

CRYPTOQUIP

ZJCV OQW'UC IHDGCM ZSIJ
FWDI HD EWKJ ZQUG HD
EWDSKSHV FWDISV, S'M DHO
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Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF SAILORS ON SHIPS
ACCIDENTALLY HIT THEIR HEADS FAIRLY
HARD, DO YOU SUPPOSE THEY SEE SPARS?
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: F equals J

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 "So frustrating!"
4 Small fruit pie
8 Mast
12 Flamenco cheer
13 Body lotion ingredient
14 Cathedral area
15 Poetic contraction
16 Sleeveless smocks
18 Physicist Enrico
20 — Paulo, Brazil
21 Stood up
24 Shopping binge
28 Doberman —
32 Holler
33 Odometer start
34 Buenos —
36 Cagers' gp.
37 Smack a baseball
39 Wind-driven toy
41 Western resort lake

DOWN
2 Downwind
3 German mister
4 Pudding variety
5 Actress
6 Harry Potter pal
7 Brewed drinks
8 "Peanuts" pooch
9 Standard
10 "Hail, Caesar!"
11 In medias —
17 Scale notes
19 Dalloway or
22 Harbor arrival
23 Haunting

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HOMEFRIES TAR
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Yesterday's answer 7-16

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Photo provided

High point winners

The Jay County Summer Swim team honored its high point winners on Sunday. Pictured from left in the front row are Brooklynn Byrum, Graham Peterson, Jaleyn Knapschafer, Maddie Theurer and Sam Benirschke. Back row are Elly Byrum, Cooper Glentzer and Grant Glentzer. Not pictured is Addisyn Champ.

Dates ...

Continued from page 8

The opening ceremony, now officially scheduled for 5 p.m. PDT on July 14, 2028, will be shared between the Coliseum and SoFi Stadium. Swimming will deliver the final competition of the 2028 Olympics as the last medal events are set to begin at 3 p.m. on July 30, 2028. Three hours later, the Olympic Games will conclude with the closing ceremony at 6 p.m. at the Coliseum.

Several sports will begin qualifying competitions before the opening ceremony, including cricket. The sport, which is returning to the Games for the first time since 1900, will be played at the Fairgrounds in Pomona and begin competition on July 12, along with soccer, handball, water polo, basketball, rugby and field hockey.

Making its Olympic debut, flag football will take place during the first week of competition from July 15 to 22 at BMO Stadium. The early competition could help reduce potential overlap with NFL

training camps. Active NFL players are allowed to try out for Olympic national teams, but training camps typically begin in late July.

The sport will get a premier showcase opportunity in its Olympic debut as all flag football competitions are scheduled for afternoon and evening time slots. The men's medal games are from 6-8:30 p.m. on July 21, 2028 with the women's finals beginning at 1 p.m. on July 22.

Marquee events swimming, track and field, and artistic gymnastics (July 15-20, July 22-25) will dominate the prime-time windows in the United States as the Summer Games return to American soil for the first time since 1996.

U.S. viewership of the Olympics waned from 2018 to 2022 as three consecutive Games in Asian countries made for complicated time zone changes. Viewers in the Pacific Time Zone were 16 hours behind live coverage from Tokyo in 2021, when the pandemic-delayed Games averaged

a record-low Olympic viewership for NBC. But numbers skyrocketed at the Paris Games, where evening sessions in Europe made for lunchtime viewing state-side, building interest just in time for L.A. to take the torch.

"We are energized by today's milestones," LA28 CEO Reynold Hoover said in a statement Monday that also celebrated 1 million enrollments with the youth sports program PlayLA, "and remain focused on the work ahead as the Road to 2028 continues."

A full list of times for specific events are expected to be released later this year.

LA28 announced its eighth sponsorship deal of the year last week, inking Uber and Uber Eats as the official rideshare and on-demand delivery partners, respectively. The private organizing group plans to release information for volunteer opportunities this year, and registration for the ticket lottery should follow in early 2026.



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Big block

Andrew Martinez blocks a pad during the Fort Recovery High School football team's camp on Monday. The Indians will travel to Fort Loramie on Friday for a seven-on-seven scrimmage.

Sports on tap

Local schedule

Thursday
Portland Rockets at Fort Wayne Jackers – 7:15 p.m.

TV schedule

Today
3 p.m. — UEFA Women's Euro soccer: Norway at Italy (FOX)
3:30 p.m. — NBA 2K26 summer league: Sacramento Kings at Cleveland Cavaliers (ESPN2)
5 p.m. — Copa America Femenina soccer: Bolivia at Brazil (FS1)
7:30 p.m. — WNBA: Indiana Fever at New York Liberty (FOX)
8 p.m. — NBA 2K26 summer league: Dallas Mavericks at Philadelphia 76ers (ESPN)
8 p.m. — Athletes Unlimited Softball: Blaze at Talons (ESPN2)

8 p.m. — Copa America Femenina soccer: Venezuela at Colombia (FS1)
10 p.m. — NBA 2K26 summer league: Washington Wizards at Utah Jazz (ESPN)
10 p.m. — MLS: Seattle Sounders at Colorado Rapids (FS1)

Thursday
6 a.m. — The Open golf: The Open Championship (USA)
3 p.m. — UEFA Women's Euro soccer: Sweden at England (FOX)
4:30 p.m. — NBA 2K26 summer league: Indiana Pacers at New York Knicks (FDSN Indiana)
7 p.m. — NBA 2K26 summer league: San Antonio Spurs at Charlotte Hornets (ESPN)
7 p.m. — Joker's Jackpot at Eldora Speedway (FS1)
7 p.m. — Athletes Unlimited Softball: Bandits at Volts (ESPN2)
9 p.m. — NBA 2K26 summer league: Boston

Celtics at Los Angeles Lakers (ESPN)
9 p.m. — World Long Drive golf (ESPN2)
11 p.m. — NBA 2K26 summer league: Denver Nuggets at Los Angeles Clippers (ESPN2)

Local notes

Partnership announced
Ball State University will be partnering with Indy Eleven to provide free training for youth coaches in Indiana on August 2.

The in-person training session will be at Michael A. Carroll Stadium in Indianapolis. It will be a one-hour workshop focused on building positive, youth development-focused coaching practices.

Those who attend will receive a ticket to the Indy Eleven soccer match and Professional Growth Points for those going for a teaching license.

Tickets available
Jay County Junior-Senior High School will begin selling its super and season tickets on Monday, July

21 from 8 a.m. until noon and from 1 p.m. until 7 p.m.

After July 21, tickets will be available during the high school's office hours which are between 7:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

Regular season tickets for individual varsity events will cost \$7, while admission to JV, freshman or junior high events will be \$6 for adults.

The Patriot Pass, which gets you into all high school and junior high events costs \$115. The Senior Patriot Pass for those 65 and older will be \$70.

Other deals are as follows:

- High School Adult Super tickets - \$90
- Senior Super Tickets - \$55
- Pre-Paid Sports Pass - \$60
- Basketball season pass - \$60
- Football season pass - \$25

Outing scheduled
United Way will be hosting a golf outing at Portland Golf Club on August 2.

Registration will begin at 11:30 a.m. with the teams teeing off at 12:30 p.m. Teams can register for \$250 each, with lunch included, at unitedwayjay-county.org or by going to Portland Golf Club.

Prior to the golf outing, there will be a freewill pancake and sausage breakfast from 7:30-10:30 a.m.

After golf there will be a family fun night. It will cost \$40 for two adults and two kids to play nine holes and eat. There will be live music by Ken Bantz, a bounce house and fireworks.

Next race set
The next race in the Adams County Challenge series is the Swiss Days Race in Berne on Saturday, July 26 at 8:15 a.m.

There will be a 1-mile kids run and a 5K race. To register, visit adamscounty5kchallenge.com.

To have an event listed in "Sports on tap", email details to sports@theocr.com

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Organizers set dates for several Olympic events

By THUC NHI NGUYEN
Los Angeles Times
Tribune News Service

LOS ANGELES — LA28 released the first look at the 2028 Olympic competition schedule on Monday, exactly three years before the Games open on July 14, 2028. The slate is highlighted by a break in tradition to accommodate the organizing committee's unique, dual-venue opening ceremony plan.

Instead of beginning the schedule with swimming, as has been customary in recent Games, track and field will instead take place during the first week of competition from July 15 to 24 at the Coliseum. Swimming will follow from July 22 to 30 at SoFi Stadium, where an indoor pool will be built after the opening ceremony.

See Dates page 7



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Wendel works

Fort Recovery High School running back Reece Wendel receives a short pass during the football team's camp on Monday. The Tribe has six more weeks to prepare under first-year coach Wes Wenning before opening the season against Ponitz.

Cal Raleigh wins Home Run Derby

By SCOTT HANSON
The Seattle Times
Tribune News Service

ATLANTA — Mariners catcher Cal Raleigh, whose home run total has been the talk of Major League Baseball, had a power surge when it mattered most in the opening round of the Home Run Derby, propelling him to the championship Monday night.

After surviving a real chance of getting knocked out in the opening round, Raleigh cruised through the semifinals and defeated Tampa Bay's Junior Caminero in the final, 18 home runs to 15, earning the championship belt and \$1 million.

Raleigh joined Ken Griffey Jr. (1994, 1998, 1999) as the only Mariners player to win the Home Run Derby. He's also the only catcher and switch-hitter to win the Derby.

This is just surreal," said Raleigh, who was pitched to by his father Todd, the former baseball coach at the University of Tennessee and Western Carolina University, with his 15-year-old brother, Todd Jr., doing the catching. "You don't think you're going to win it. You don't think you'll ever get invited. And then you get invited, and the fact that you win it with your family, it's super special."

The title would not have been possible had it not been for Raleigh's late heroics in the opening round.

Facing elimination with one out left in the bonus round, he hit two straight homers to tie Brent Rooker of the Athletics for fourth place with 17. Raleigh advanced to the semifinals by about an inch in a tiebreaker, which was determined by the farthest homer hit.

Raleigh's farthest was 470.6 feet. Rooker's farthest was 470.5.

"Point one ... my goodness gracious, that's close," Raleigh said. "I mean it's just crazy. An inch off, and I'm not even in the final four, which is amazing. So I guess I got lucky there. It was one extra biscuit."

Raleigh faced Pittsburgh's Oneil Cruz, the top seed of the opening round, in the semifinals and he put on a show. Hitting left-handed, Raleigh had 16 home runs in two minutes, then added three more in the bonus round.

Cruz put up a good fight, hitting 13, but it wasn't nearly enough.

In the first semifinal, Minnesota's Byron Buxton hit seven homers, and Caminero stopped when he reached eight, good enough to advance to the finals.

Raleigh has an American League record 38 home runs at the All-Star break and is on pace to hit 64 this season. This was another special night for him, and his family.

"It's a dream come true," Todd Raleigh said. "Anybody that's ever played

baseball as a kid dreams of stuff like this. I dreamed of it. I dreamed of it. And when you're a parent, you look at things a little differently, right? Because you want your kids to be happy."

Cal credited Todd Jr. for encouraging him from behind home plate.

"Honestly, he was hyping me up. He was firing me up the whole time," Raleigh said of his brother on the broadcast. "I'd hit one good, and he'd be like 'Let's go,' and, I don't know, it just got me going. ... That's why I got good spurts through the Derby."

Raleigh, the seventh hitter of the night, hit eight home runs left-handed before calling a timeout with 1:22 left in the three-minute opening round. He then switched to right-handed and hit seven more.

Needing at least two in the bonus round to have a chance to advance, he went back to left-handed and made two straight outs before crushing two balls that moved him on in the competition.

Raleigh then stuck with the left-hand side in the semifinals and finals.

"I was lucky enough to make it the next round and was grooving a little bit more lefty," Raleigh said. "So we're like, since we have a chance to win, we might as well stick to the side that's working a little better."

James Wood of the Washington Nationals opened the competition, hitting 16 home runs.

It got better from there. Rooker followed with 17, and Caminero then topped that with 21.

Cruz then equaled Caminero with 21, with five of his homers going at least 483 feet, with a top one of 513, the farthest of the night.

Buxton, hitting fifth in the first round, had 20 homers, eliminating Wood. The Yankees' Jazz Chisholm Jr. followed Buxton, and struggled mightily, hitting three.

Atlanta's Matt Olson, hitting last in the opening round, had a chance to eliminate Raleigh and Rooker, but finished with 15.

About an hour later, the title was Raleigh's.

"Hopefully I can inspire some future catchers, future switch-hitters out there. I've got to give credit to this guy here," Raleigh said, referring to his dad. "He's the one who made me both of them."

Notes:

•There was a late change in the lineup of participants as Atlanta's Ronald Acuña Jr. dropped out and was replaced by Olson.

•Raleigh became the eighth Mariner to participate in the Home Run Derby.

•Raleigh said Griffey Jr., who is a photographer, took pictures at the event and gave him some advice.

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