

Israel bumps up aid effort

Ceasefire negotiations faltered last week

By DAN WILLIAMS and FARES AKRAM  
Bloomberg News  
Tribune News Service

Israel increased aid distribution to Gaza over the weekend in an effort to defuse a growing international outcry over hunger convulsing the shattered Palestinian enclave.

The relief came after ceasefire talks faltered last week. Israel and the U.S. accused Hamas of stonewalling and hinted that a further escalation in the more than 21-month-old war could follow.

But as warnings around the crisis spiraled, Israel Defense Forces on Sunday suspended some military operations against Hamas to facilitate the movement of U.N. relief convoys, and restored electricity supplies to a desalination plant in Gaza for the first time since March.

The decision was made after Israeli experts monitoring the humanitarian crisis identified “problematic” levels of hunger, a spokesperson for the Israel Defense Forces said in a televised briefing.

As the aid curbs were rolled back, the Israeli government and military said Sunday it had not abandoned its goals of destroying Hamas and releasing the hostages.

See Aid page 2

Alternative option



The Commercial Review/Bailey Cline

Tree of Life Center celebrated its new Portland location with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Friday. Dr. David Rohrer and family nurse practitioner Pauletta Hummel operate the location at 1303 N. Meridian St., Portland. It is open on Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays and among its services offers infusion and injection therapies.

Tree of Life adds a location in Portland

By BAILEY CLINE  
The Commercial Review

Traditional and alternative medicine can go hand-in-hand.

That’s one of the ideologies behind Portland’s new infusion clinic.

Tree of Life IV Center celebrated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house Friday at 1303 N. Meridian St. after opening earlier this year.

The infusion and injection center serves as a second location to Tree of Life Health

Solutions in Greenville, Ohio. The business previously operated a clinic in Fort Recovery that closed its doors in 2022.

Tree of Life focuses on offering integrative medicine, which combines traditional medicine with alternative medicine and other therapies.

“It’s kind of merging traditional medicine with natural-based medicine,” said doctor

and Fort Recovery native David Rohrer. “Not everything can be treated by prescription

medication, sometimes people need certain dietary changes or supplementation to help their condition improve, so it’s kind of looking at it from both sides to optimize peoples’ health.”

Family nurse practitioner Pauletta Hummel explained there are options for those who don’t want to utilize traditional medicine. While she noted benefits to both traditional and alternative medicine, she emphasized the effec-

tiveness of integrative medicine.

“The combination of the two (medicines) is just unbelievable how beneficial it is for the patient,” said Hummel, a Winchester resident who is also co-owner of Hummel Drive-In Theatre.

“That’s my mission and goal, is to get out there and tell people, you don’t need a pill for everything,” she continued.

See Alternative page 2



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Sousaphone line-up

The Jay County High School Marching Patriots performed in the Drums at Winchester contest on Saturday night before it was called off about halfway through because of inclement weather. Pictured, from left, are sousaphone players Chance Sturgill, Adam Williams and Ben Shrack. Because the competition was not completed, no scores or placings were given. Bands that performed received taped commentary on their shows. The band will hold its ice cream social from 6:30 to 8 p.m. tonight at Harold E. Schutz Memorial Stadium, with its state fair preview show at 8:30 p.m.

EU defends trade deal

By RICHARD BRAVO  
Bloomberg News  
Tribune News Service

European capitals defended the trade deal struck with President Donald Trump, which will see the European Union accept a 15% tariff on most of its exports to the U.S. while reducing levies on some American products to zero.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, who met with Trump in his golf club in Turnberry, Scotland, on Sunday, hailed the agreement for the stability and predictability it will offer businesses and consumers. The EU knew that the deal would favor the U.S., but von der Leyen urged reporters to “not forget where we came from,” referencing tariff rates Trump threatened that were as high as 50%.

The lower rate came as a relief to member states that are dependent on exports, especially Germany, which exported \$34.9 billion of new cars and auto parts to the U.S. in 2024.

“The agreement has succeeded in averting a trade conflict that would have hit the export-oriented German economy hard,” German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said in a statement

Pact would put 15% tariff on most European exports to U.S.

late Sunday. “This has enabled us to safeguard our core interests, even if I would have liked to have seen further easing in transatlantic trade.”

Without a deal, Bloomberg Economics estimated that the total U.S. average effective tariff rate would rise to nearly 18% on Aug. 1 from 13.5% under current policies. The new deal brings that number down to 16%.

Prior to Trump’s latest trade fight, the EU estimated the average tariff rate to be about 1% on both sides.

The pact removes a major risk for markets and the global economy, given the transatlantic partners did €1.7 trillion (\$2 trillion) worth of cross-border commerce in 2024. European stocks and U.S. equity futures climbed on Monday with the Stoxx 600 index gaining 0.7%.

Industry officials in Germany, however,

warned that the deal leaves the auto industry exposed and will make companies in Europe less competitive.

“The agreement is an inadequate compromise and sends a disastrous signal to the closely intertwined economies on both sides of the Atlantic,” said Wolfgang Niedermark, a member of the executive board of Germany’s BDI industry federation. “The EU is accepting painful tariffs. Even a 15% tariff will have immense negative consequences for Germany’s export-oriented industry.”

France, which took a more hawkish approach to the negotiations, highlighted the stability the agreement would bring, but also recommended triggering the EU’s anti-coercion instrument, which would initiate a massive retaliation against the U.S.

Deaths

Carol Ashman, 84, Portland  
Reuben Wickey, 70, Monroe  
Details on page 2.

Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 87 degrees Sunday. The low was 72.  
Tonight’s low will be in the lower 70s with a slight chance of showers. Expect partly cloudy skies Wednesday with a high in the mid 80s.  
See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

Jay County Public Library will host its Back-to-School Bash and Pop-Up Food Pantry from 3 to 6 p.m. Thursday, July 31. The bash will include free school supplies and hygiene products for children. There will also be free food, games and other activities. For more information, go online to jaycpl.lib.in.us.

Coming up

Wednesday — Details from next week’s Dunkirk City Council meeting.

Thursday — A story about the Marching Patriots ahead of the Indiana State Fair.

Friday — Preview of the JCHS girls golf team’s season.





# Alternative ...

Continued from page 1

“There’s an etiology behind every symptom, and if you can understand what the etiology is, fill in those deficiencies, your wellness and your quality of life is just, it’s so good.”

The Portland clinic offers IV (intravenous) therapy, which involves injecting different infusions, such as Vitamin C (ascorbic acid), into the bloodstream. The clinic’s IV infusions “menu” includes various combinations created to aid with different

needs. “Energy Surge,” which includes B vitamins, Arginine, Proline, Lysine and Citrulline, is designed to kick-start metabolisms and raise energy levels. “Rapid Recovery,” comprised of Ondansetron, B Vitamins, Magnesium Chloride, Manganese and Copper, is intended to “reboot the body” and replenish vitamins and minerals.

Other therapies are designed to kickstart immune systems or metabolisms, combat fatigue, rejuvenate skin, improve overall

brain functions and memory recall, alleviate premenstrual syndrome symptoms or help with other ailments.

Hummel explained IV therapies can provide the vitamins and minerals in which patients may have deficiencies.

“It’s really all about access of care to the patient, and what they need on an individual basis,” Hummel said.

The Greenville location offers various treatments, including IV therapies as well as integrative

family medicine, chiropractic family care and ozone, hormone replacement and chelation therapies.

When the opportunity arose to open a clinic in Portland, Rohrer added, it seemed like the logical next step.






“Portland’s kind of like my second hometown,” said Rohrer, who previously practiced in Portland and at IU Health Jay for several years. “Portland kind of was a logical choice (for us) to provide some of our resources

down in Greenville up here to allow people to get what they need without having to drive.”

Tree of Life IV Center accepts walk-in appointments, with clients having the option to pay with Health Savings Accounts or Flexible Spending Accounts. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays and Fridays, and 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesdays.

For more information, call (260) 703-5122 or visit tree-of-life-health-solutionsportland-indiana.square.site.

CR almanac

Wednesday 7/30	Thursday 7/31	Friday 8/1	Saturday 8/2	Sunday 8/3
 <b>90/72</b> Wednesday's forecast shows a 50% chance of thunderstorms.	 <b>92/74</b> Thursday also looks like a 50% chance of rain and thunderstorms.	 <b>86/71</b> Sunny skies on Friday when the high will be in the upper 80s.	 <b>85/71</b> Saturday's forecast shows mostly sunny skies with a high around 85.	 <b>88/71</b> Mostly sunny on Sunday when the low will reach around 71.

Lotteries

<b>Powerball</b> Estimated jackpot: \$364 million	34-36-37-42-44-46-47-48-52-58-59-60-66-69-74-80 Cash 5: 21-30-36-37-43 Estimated jackpot: \$105,000
<b>Mega Millions</b> Estimated jackpot: \$130 million	
<b>Hoosier</b> Sunday Midday Daily Three: 0-3-7 Daily Four: 4-6-1-3 Quick Draw: 7-9-10-13-17-18-26-30-32-33-40-42-45-51-54-55-56-58-63-71 Evening Daily Three: 1-0-4 Daily Four: 4-7-7-9 Quick Draw: 1-8-14-19-	<b>Ohio</b> Sunday Midday Pick 3: 5-9-6 Pick 4: 8-2-5-8 Pick 5: 5-3-4-5-5 Evening Pick 3: 5-2-2 Pick 4: 2-2-6-7 Pick 5: 3-9-4-5-4 Rolling Cash 5: 1-10-12-20-38 Estimated jackpot: \$130,000

Markets

<b>Cooper Farms Fort Recovery</b> Corn.....4.46 Aug. corn .....4.51 Sept. corn .....4.49	Aug. beans.....9.78 Wheat .....5.09
<b>POET Biorefining Portland</b> Corn.....4.45 Aug. corn .....4.43 Sept. corn .....4.33	<b>ADM Montpelier</b> Corn.....4.20 Aug. corn .....4.20 Beans .....10.20 Aug. beans.....10.05 Wheat .....5.13
<b>The Andersons Richland Township</b> Corn .....4.29 Aug. corn .....4.29 Beans .....10.08	<b>Heartland St. Anthony</b> Corn.....4.44 Aug. corn .....4.44 Beans .....9.98 Nov. beans .....9.58 Wheat .....4.84

Today in history

In 1954, the first part of J.R.R. Tolkien’s “The Lord of The Rings” was published.

In 1858, Japan and the United States signed the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, also known as the Harris Treaty, which opened new ports to U.S. trade and granted U.S. citizens extraterritorial rights.

In 2008, Redkey Town Council formally approved a contract with E&B Paving of Anderson for \$3.2 million in work on Meridian and Boyce streets and Wayne Avenue. The project included raising the height of the street in some places and the creation of storm sewers, drains,

curbs, gutters and sidewalks.

In 2021, Peyton Smith pitched the Portland Rockets to a 3-2 victory over the South Bend Royals in the National Amateur Baseball Federation regional tournament at Fort Wayne’s Carrington Field. Smith went the distance and recorded back-to-back strikeouts to end the game for the Rockets, who halted a seven-game losing streak.

In 2022, Eric Rogers retired as executive director of Arts Place. He had worked for the organization since 1976 when he was hired by Jay County Arts Council.

—The CR

Citizen’s calendar

<b>Today</b> 9 a.m. — Redkey Town Council executive session, park cabin, Morgan park, 50 Mooney St. 10 a.m. — Redkey Town Council special session, park cabin, Morgan park, 50 Mooney St.	Solid Waste Management District board, 5948 W. Indiana 67, Portland.
<b>Monday</b> 5 p.m. — Jay School Board, General Shanks, 414 E. Floral Ave., Portland. 5:30 p.m. — Portland City Council, council chambers, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St. 7:30 p.m. — Fort Recovery Village Council, village hall, 201 S. Main St.	
<b>Wednesday</b> 9 a.m. — Jay County Commissioners, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland. 3:45 p.m. — Jay County	

## Obituaries

**Carol Ashman**  
*Jan. 10, 1941-July 25, 2025*

Carol L. Ashman, age 84, of Portland passed away peacefully at her residence on Friday, July 25, 2025. She was born in Portland on Jan. 10, 1941, the daughter of Walter Ray and Letha Mae (Wells) Heiby. She was married on July 1, 1961, to Wilbur “Dale” Ashman, and he passed away on April 9, 2004.

Carol was a Fort Recovery High School graduate and worked for Marsh Supermarkets in the deli and bakery. She enjoyed spending time with her family.

Surviving are one son, Rod Ashman (wife: Julia) of Celina, Ohio; two daughters, Rhonda Grayson

(husband: Kevin) of Geneva and Renee Schlechty (husband: Randy) of Portland; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by a grandson, Brandon Grayson.

Funeral services will be held on Wednesday, July 30, at 2 p.m. in the Baird-Freeman Funeral Home with Pastor Darrell Borders presiding. Burial will follow in the Green Park Cemetery. Visitation will be Wednesday from noon to 2 p.m.

Memorials can be made to the



Jay County Humane Society or Jay County Cancer Society. Condolences may be expressed at bairdfreeman.com.

**Reuben L. Wickey**, Monroe, a relative of Bryant and Geneva residents, Dec. 22, 1954-July 25, 2025. Services will be at 9 a.m. Tuesday at the Wickey residence, 3177 W. 200 South, Monroe.

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*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.*



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Swiss toss

Members of the Swiss Days court toss beaded necklaces to the crowd during Saturday’s parade. Storms delayed the start of the parade by a half hour.

## Aid ...

Continued from page 1

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel would enable the passage of “minimal humanitarian supplies” into the territory, according to a statement, even as the military continues fighting and negotiators pursue a truce.

Mahmoud Mardawi, a senior Hamas official, described the about-face on Telegram as “not a solution, but rather, a belated and twisted confession of a crime having been committed.” Hamas official Bassem Naim said in a statement the new aid “will not create an environment suitable for negotiations.”

U.S. President Donald Trump told reporters Sunday that “Israel is going to have to make a decision” about its next steps in Gaza now that talks appeared at a stalemate. “I know what I’d do, but I don’t think it’s appropriate that I’d say,” he said.

He also noted the U.S. had sent \$60 mil-

lion in food aid in the last two weeks and “nobody said, ‘Gee, thank you very much, and it would be nice to have at least a thank you.’”

The U.N. World Food Program has warned for weeks that the entire population of 2.1 million people in the Gaza Strip faces crisis levels of food insecurity. Scores of aid groups say starvation is fast spreading.

That’s seen world anger toward Israel’s government on the rise amid increasing reports and images of emaciated babies, children crammed into soup queues, and men tussling over bags of flour.

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz spoke by phone on Sunday with Netanyahu, expressing “deep concern about the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza,” and urging “further substantial steps,” according to a readout from his office.

SERVICES

Today

**Wickey**, Reuben: 9 a.m., Wickey residence, 3177 W. 200 South, Monroe.

Wednesday

**Ashman**, Carol: 2 p.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

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# Brother Believe Me to perform Aug. 14

You better believe it. Brother Believe Me will perform Aug. 14 at Hudson Family Park.

A group of experienced musicians, Brother Believe Me reproduces a wide range of musical genres with compelling accuracy and energy, according to a press release from Arts Place. Their set list, which includes a mix of songs from the 1970s, '80s and today, appeals to all ages and musical preferences. Brother Believe Me's performance marks the final free show of the year in the Hudson Family Park Amphitheatre concert series. Kids activities and food trucks will also be available.

**Dean's list**

A Portland resident was recently named to the dean's list at a Crawfordsville university. Blake Caldwell made the list for the spring semester at Wabash College.

**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.

Dates for other shows are as follows:

- 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

All shows begin at 7 p.m.

For more information, visit [munciethreetrails.com](http://munciethreetrails.com).

**Senior learning**

It's time to learn more about mental health as a senior.

Kathy Lawrence of Encompass will share a presentation on seniors and their mental health during the senior lunch and learn series Aug. 7. Lunch begins at 11:30 a.m. with the presentation to follow.

Reservations are \$5. The event is intended for seniors 55 years old and older.

# Wife wants birthday party to be drama-free

DEAR ABBY: My husband has four grown children — one from his first marriage; three with his late wife. Talk about drama! Who talks to whom? Who can't stand whom? Who gets annoyed when one of them comes to visit us? They could be BFFs today and tomorrow stab each other in the back.

Recently, my husband has been saying he'd like to see his four children and all his grandchildren together. Actually, his exact words were, "I guess the only time I'll see all my kids together in one room is when they come to my funeral."

My husband has a milestone birthday approaching. I've been thinking about having a surprise birthday party for him at a restaurant and inviting all the



Dear Abby

dinner? — STEPMOM WHO WANTS PEACE

**DEAR STEPMOM:** I think the idea of your husband's family gathering to celebrate his milestone birthday is wonderful. Please don't scrap the idea because his grown children don't always act like adults. Invite everyone, remind them that this happy occasion should not be considered an opportunity to air any grievances, and then cross your fingers that they will rise to the occasion.

.....

DEAR ABBY: I have been in a relationship with my now-fiance for eight years. I'm five years older than he is. I know he loves me, but I'm not sure if he's still IN love with me. Of course he

says he is, but sometimes I think he's just comfortable with me. He doesn't show the love he used to.

I have often said I feel like I'm just here to accommodate him with cooking, cleaning and outside chores. We don't even have good conversations anymore. They're always all about HIM. When I tell him how I feel, things change for only a short time, and then they go right back. There are good times, but they are few and far between. I need your advice. — DOUBTING IN MICHIGAN

**DEAR DOUBTING:** After eight years together, the flames of passion have been known to die down and routine takes over. What you two may need is time apart — so you can miss each other a little and appreciate each other

more. That little bit of separation may also give you something new to talk about.

Consider doing some activities you can do together, such as going on a day trip or taking up a new sport. Also, you might feel less taken for granted if those chores you described, such as cooking, cleaning and yard work, were divided or shared. From what you have written, you have been doing all the heavy lifting.

.....

*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.*

# 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**

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

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

**JAY COUNTY CANCER SUPPORT GROUP** — Will meet from 5 to 6:30 p.m. in conference room C at Indiana University Health Jay Hospital. Open discussion for cancer patients, survivors, family members or anyone interested in helping with the group. For more information, contact Linda Metzger at (260) 726-1844.

**A BETTER LIFE - BRIANNA'S HOPE** — A faith-based recovery group for substance abuse. Meal starts at 6 p.m. and the meeting is from 6:30 to 8 p.m. every Tuesday at the Nazarene Fellowship Build-

ing across from the Nazarene church, 249 E. Center St., Dunkirk. For more information, call Amanda Price at (765) 283-2107.

**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS** — Will meet at 7 p.m. at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, 218 E. High St., Portland. For more information, call (567) 279-8352 or (260) 729-7000.

**Wednesday**

**WEDNESDAY MORNING BREAKFAST CLUB** — Will meet at 8 a.m. in the east room of Richards Restaurant. All women are invited to attend. Includes activities and devotional time.

**PING PONG** — Will be played from 11 a.m. to noon on Wednesdays at West Jay Community Center.

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

**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**

**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.

**SOFT SHOULDERS** — A support group for anyone suffering from memory loss, will meet at 10:30 a.m. the first Friday of each month in the Fireplace Room at Edelweiss Place at Swiss Village in Berne. For more information, call (260) 589-3173.

**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.

**ROAD RIDERS FOR JESUS** — Will meet at 10 a.m. on the first Saturday of each month in the West Walnut Church of Christ fellowship hall, 204 W. Walnut St., Portland. (Please enter from the door facing the alley on the north side of the building.) For more information, call (260) 726-8463.

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

**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.

**CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP** — Will meet at 1 p.m. the first Monday of each month at Portland Place, 430 W. Lafayette St. For more information, call (800) 589-1121.

**EUCHRE** — Will be played starting at 1 p.m. each Monday at West Jay

Community Center, 125 Hoover St., Dunkirk.

**TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY (TOPS)** — Will meet for weigh-in at 4:30 p.m., with the meeting at 5 p.m., at Trinity United Methodist Church, 323 S. Meridian St., Portland. New members welcome.

Get to Know:

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# AUGUST SPECIALS



**1/2 PAGE B&W AD:**

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## The Commercial Review

# Sudoku

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

Level: Beginner

## Saturday's Solution

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

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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# Misdirection might not work now

New York Daily News

Tribune News Service

Dead six years, child sex criminal Jeffrey Epstein is causing a problem for President Donald Trump and the Republican Party and has now caught House Speaker Mike Johnson, who is backflipping wildly.

Last week, the Trump toady lived up to that description by sending the House out of town early on its month-long summer recess right as bipartisan members were scheduled to force a vote on release of Epstein files, this after Johnson himself said last week “we should put everything out there.”

That’s just fine by Trump, who in complete about-face had his administration claim there was no Epstein client list and has insisted that his own supporters are rubes for wanting to see the documents he’d promised he’d show them. If he’s frustrated that

## Guest Editorial

so many people are fixated on this particular question, he can find that culprit in the mirror.

Part of Trump’s electoral successes have been cemented on his ability to deliver very simple political promises. He was going to deport all the “bad hombres” illegally in the country; he was going to bring prices down and revitalize American manufacturing; he was going to end the war in Ukraine and keep the U.S. out of foreign military entanglements; and he was going to finally bring clarity to whole sordid Epstein debacle, which tied together a number of his MAGA

supporters’ paranoias and fascinations with elite cabals and pedophiles lurking in every corner.

In the end, he’s been unable to deliver these simple promises because, as it turns out, the world is complicated. There’s no way to have massive arrest numbers of hardened criminals while preserving everyone’s civil and due process rights. There was obviously no path towards a quick and easy resolution of Putin’s invasion of Ukraine, nor the decades-in-the-making collapse of American industrial capacity.

Yet, the Epstein case was one area where he essentially could pretty easily carry out his promises. The files, he assured everyone, did exist and would be expeditiously released by his Justice Department and his FBI so that the public would finally have full insight into these crimes and

coverups. He can’t credibly say here that he has been foiled by an intransigent Congress or liberal judges or foreign leaders. His transparent and indisputable attempt to get out of his own commitment raises some pretty obvious questions for even ardent supporters around who exactly he’s trying to protect and what information he’s trying to keep obscure.

As much as Trump has mastered misdirection and red herrings throughout his time in politics, we doubt this will be easy to squirrel out of with as blunt a tool as U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi’s request for release of grand jury transcripts from a Manhattan federal judge, which will likely produce next to nothing.

The real meat of things are the files that federal agents hold on the totality of the Epstein investi-

gation and the rumored client list, as well as what Ghislaine Maxwell (now serving 20 years in federal prison and appealing her conviction, and probably hoping for a presidential pardon) has to say about her insight as Epstein’s longtime right hand.

That seems to be why former Trump personal criminal defense attorney Todd Blanche, now the DOJ No. 2, is seeking to speak with her ahead of her chance to potentially testify publicly. Trump might claim that he didn’t know about this effort, but he is quite simply not a credible source on pretty much anything and especially not here given the real possibility that he could be personally mentioned in the documents.

The president is banking on the media and his supporters to just move on. This time, he might be wrong.

# Keep politics out of church

By MARY ANNA MANCUSO

Miami Herald

Tribune News Service

As a Catholic and someone who used to work in politics, I have often appreciated that when I step into Mass on Sunday mornings, I can focus on my faith and not the latest polling or candidate endorsements.

I support religious liberty and being able to worship without government interference. But that freedom shouldn’t allow our sacred places to become overly political. Partisan politics should be kept out of our religious institutions.

But a new ruling will allow religious leaders to endorse political candidates in churches and other religious houses without the risk of losing their tax-exempt status. I hope that doesn’t mean I’ll be hearing about candidate X from the pulpit.

The ruling comes after the evangelical group, National Religious Broadcasters and two Texas churches, filed suit against the Internal Revenue Service last August. They were challenging, on First Amendment grounds, a tax code that defines the tax-exempt status for churches and other nonprofit organizations and prohibits their participation in “any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.”

As a result, the IRS has reversed its previous policy and will now allow religious leaders to endorse political candidates.

I’m not alone in my dismay over the thought of hearing about politics during the time I set aside for worship. Faith leaders in Miami told the Herald that they’re concerned this ruling could create rifts in religious communities. Houses of worship shouldn’t become cogs in political machines.

There are those who see this as a victory for religious freedom. Dr. Robert Jeffress, senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Dallas, praised the filing and tweeted, “Government has NO BUSINESS regulating what is said in pulpits!”

President Donald Trump also applauded the development. During the first White House Faith Office summit on July 14, he said “God is once again welcomed back into our public square.”

I see it differently. God has never been absent from

Mary Anna Mancuso



the public square — as a Catholic, I bring my values into my civic life every day. The real issue here is whether houses of worship will become extensions of political campaigns.

I recognize the frustration some conservative Christians and others feel. In the past, many evangelicals embraced political engagement with enthusiasm, speaking at campaign rallies for Trump and mobilizing voters through explicit endorsements. This change in the law means they will no longer have to risk their tax-exempt status if they want to engage in partisan endorsements.

The “Souls to the Polls” movement, which focuses on Black churches, is one way that that faith communities already have influenced voter turnout.

But the Catholic Church is drawing a line when it comes to this latest ruling. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a statement saying that the “Church maintains its stance of not endorsing or opposing political candidates.”

I’ve spent enough time in pews and on the campaign trail to know the difference between a sermon and a stump speech. And those lines shouldn’t be blurred.

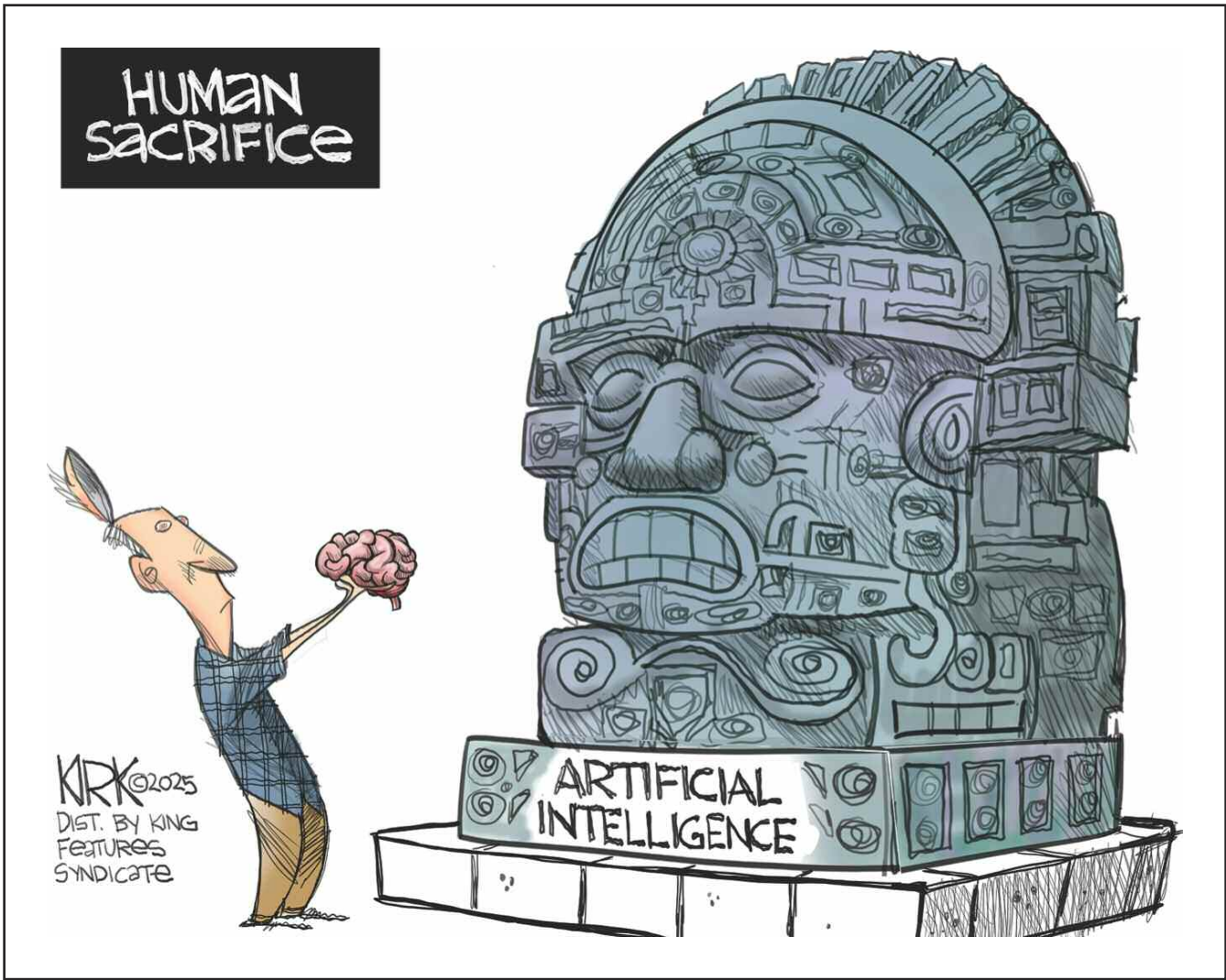
When politics enters the pew, division follows. Houses of worship should be places of refuge, reflection and reconciliation. I may differ politically with my fellow congregants, but on Sundays during Mass, we are united in worship under one God. The last thing I want to know is who my priest is voting for or their political affiliation.

As a conservative, I believe we should value institutions that transcend politics, not surrender them at the altar of partisanship.

Religious leaders have many responsibilities — to guide us on issues of morality and faith, for example. But let’s keep politics out of it.

.....

Mancuso is a member of the Miami Herald Editorial Board.



# Early starts take away from kids

By NIKI KELLY

Indiana Capital Chronicle  
indianacapitalchronicle.com

Hoosier kids shouldn’t be in orientation and buying school clothes in late July. Alas, children will soon be back in the classrooms instead of finishing out a nice summer.

Fair warning: I am entering grumpy, boomer territory. But it’s not just my age. Even the younger members of the Indiana Capital Chronicle believe this has gotten out of control.

“September is how the Lord (and the harvest) intended,” a reporter quipped during a Slack conversation this week.

Indeed, all of us remembered starting the academic year around Labor Day, and we grew up across at least six different states.

In 2009, parents pushed the Indiana General Assembly to require a uniform start date, or at least one that was after Labor Day. There were hearings, but ultimately, local control was retained.

The decision is left to individual districts. The Metropolitan School District of Warren Township in Indianapolis started Thursday, for instance. Many others are set to return July 30, July 31 or Aug. 1.

An IndyStar listing covering more than 30 central Indiana districts or schools had Aug. 14 as the latest start date — but that was just one Catholic high school.

The creep toward earlier starts began when educators saw learning loss from the long summer. And thus began the balanced calendar.

Niki Kelly



But as far as I can tell from recent scores, students aren’t doing any better in recent decades than they were before.

Schools also say it’s necessary to meet the state’s 180-day instructional requirement.

One parent at a 2009 legislative hearing counted the weekdays between the fourth Monday in August and the end of May, showing plenty of days available to meet the requirement without infringing on summer.

“Summertime is a magical time in a child’s life,” he testified. “Three months of fun. No responsibility.”

Instead, schools have largely redistributed time out of the classroom, adding weeklong fall breaks, additional days in December and other small breaks.

Others have argued that utility costs are higher in August, and that kids going back early impacts tourism activities that rely on youth workers.

It’s not just Indiana, though. Pew Research Center found in a 2023 analysis that some students start in late July, with many back by mid-August.

There are differences across geographic regions. Schools tends to

start earlier in southern regions than farther north, broadly speaking.

Here is what Pew found:

•More than two-thirds of students in the U.S. Census Bureau’s East South Central division (Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi and Tennessee) went back to school the week of Aug. 7. They joined another 19% of students who had started classes earlier.

•In the West South Central division (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas), 94% of students returned to school between Aug. 7 and Aug. 18.

•But in the six New England states, almost no one goes back to school before the week of Aug. 28.

•And students in the Middle Atlantic states (New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania) go back even later. About three-quarters won’t hit the books until after Labor Day, which falls on Sept. 4 this year.

Indiana falls into the East North Central region, with the majority starting in mid-August.

I think it’s time to re-evaluate the school calendars with an eye toward starting later.

Some of my concern is absolutely nostalgia. But I also don’t think the shift has netted students and parents anything of value.

.....

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

Indiana Capital Chronicle is an independent, nonprofit news organization. Its website is indianacapitalchronicle.com.

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Photo provided

Ribbon cutting

Jay County Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting ceremony recently for Chicago’s Pizza in Portland. The new Chicago’s location — it has 24 restaurants, including in Winchester and Cambridge City — is located at 1511 N. Meridian St.

Hardwick keeps spot on 250 list

A Jay County High School graduate is still considered one of the most influential individuals in the state.

Mark Hardwick was selected again as part of IBJ Media’s Indiana 250.

The fourth annual version of the list, released last week, recognizes the state’s “most influential and impactful business and community leaders, representing public and private companies, law firms, universities, not-for-profits, government and community organizations.”

“Every year, we see fresh faces stepping up and driving meaningful change across Indiana,” said IBJ Media CEO Nate Feltman in a letter introducing this year’s list. “The Indiana 250 is a snapshot of those bold thinkers and doers who are shaping the future of our state — from innovative entrepreneurs to dedicated community advocates. It’s truly inspiring to witness the depth of talent and passion making Indiana a great place to live and work.”

A Dunkirk native, Hardwick graduated from JCHS in 1989.

He is CEO of First Merchants Corporation, which operates in Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and Illinois. He also serves on the Ball State University Board of Trustees.

He has been with First Merchants since 1997 and was promoted to CEO in 2021. He was honored as IBJ’s Chief Financial Officer of the Year in 2012.

IBJ Media publishes the Indianapolis Business Journal, Inside Indiana Business and Indiana Lawyer.

App launched

CenterPoint Energy has

Business roundup

launched a new mobile app for its Indiana customers.

The app includes account management, energy usage data and bill reminders. It replaces the previous Vectren app that was retired in July 2024.

“At CenterPoint, we continue to explore various ways to connect with our customers and provide updated mobile-friendly tools to enhance their user experience. Through the new CenterPoint Energy app, customers can conveniently manage their accounts and receive important alerts directly to their smart devices,” said Tony Gardner, CenterPoint’s Senior Vice President and Chief Customer Officer. “We look forward to continuing to provide tools that help us better serve our customers in managing their bills and energy use.”

For more information about the app, visit [CenterPointEnergy.com/App](http://CenterPointEnergy.com/App).

Firm acquired

Eli Lilly announced its purchase of Verve Therapeutics.

The Boston-based firm develops genetic medicines for cardiovascular disease. Lilly is a pharmaceuticals firm based in Indianapolis.

“This acquisition unlocks the opportunity to potentially transform the treatment paradigm for millions of patients world-

wide by delivering lifelong cardiovascular risk reduction with a one-and-done treatment,” said Ruth Gimeno, Lilly group vice president of diabetes and metabolic research and development, in a press release. “We are excited to welcome Verve colleagues to Lilly and work together to develop innovative genetic medicines for cardiometabolic disease.”

Facility opens

CVS Health has opened its new Workforce Innovation and Talent Center in Columbus, Ohio.

The facility will offer free workforce training and health services in collaboration with various local workforce organizations. It will be focused on those seeking employment as pharmacy technicians, customer service associates, call center associates and retail associates.

“At our new WITC, we’re dedicated to helping individuals build skills for in-demand jobs, like Pharmacy Technicians,” said CVS Health senior vice president of corporate social responsibility and chief sustainability officer Sheryl Burke in a press release. “Working alongside the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority and various local workforce organizations, we aim to make it easier for community members to access and find meaningful employment.”

Training offered

ServSafe training will be available at John Jay Center for Learning in Portland.

The next session is sched-

uled from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Aug. 19.

The certification course is open to all food service employees and emphasizes safe food- and beverage-handling practices to minimize the risk of food-borne illnesses.

Additional sessions will be held on Tuesdays, Sept. 23, Oct. 28 and Nov. 25.

For more information, or to register, call (260) 729-5525.

Hosting drive

Menards is hosting a food drive through the end of July.

The company will accept donations of non-perishable food items through July 31. They can be placed in collection boxes near the exit doors to its locations.

Participating locations include stores in Anderson, Fort Wayne, Kokomo, Muncie, Richmond and Celina, Ohio.

Expo scheduled

Registration is open for the Indiana Chapter of the National Tooling and Machining Association and the Precision Machining Association Indiana District’s Indiana Manufacturing Suppliers Expo.

The event will run from 1 to 6 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 21, at Embassy Suites in Plainfield. It will include educational tracks including AI in manufacturing.

“Indiana’s small manufacturers and suppliers are the heart of our economy — bringing cutting-edge tech, consistent quality, and real innovation,” said Dan Kendall, Precision Machining Association chair, in a press release. “This

Expo unites that community, building meaningful partnerships and fueling growth. And with AI reshaping how we make things, this year’s expanded education sessions are essential — packed into one power-packed afternoon, they give manufacturing leaders the tools to not just keep pace, but lead.”

To register, or for more information, visit [intma.org](http://intma.org).

Nominate manufacturers

Nominations are open for the Indiana Manufacturers Association 2025 Manufacturing Excellence Awards.

The awards honor Indiana companies and individuals for their contributions to the manufacturing industry. They are open to all manufacturers in Indiana.

Anyone can make a nomination by going online to [indianamfg.com/2025-manufacturing-excellence-awards](http://indianamfg.com/2025-manufacturing-excellence-awards). The deadline is Sunday, Aug. 31.

Awards set

Indiana Chamber of Commerce will host its annual awards dinner at 5 p.m. Nov. 5 at the JW Marriott Indianapolis.

Daymond John, founder of FUBU and a longtime star of “Shark Tank,” will be the featured speaker.

Individual tickets are \$195. For more information, visit [indianachamber.com](http://indianachamber.com).

\*\*\*\*\*

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THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane

“This is our cabana.”

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Thoughtful defense

North dealer.  
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH

♠ K 6

♥ A K

♦ A K 10 9 6 2

♣ Q 7 3

WEST

♠ J 8 7 4 3 2

♥ Q 8 4

♦ 5 4

♣ J 6

EAST

♠ A Q

♥ K 9 5 2

♦ Q 7 3

♣ 10 9 5 2

SOUTH

♠ 10 9 5

♥ J 7 6 3

♦ J 8

♣ A K 8 4

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

Opening lead — four of spades.

In the ordinary course of events, you seldom get a chance to anything brilliant during the play. But every once in a while, you must do something extraordinary to accomplish your goal. Unfortunately, there's no guardian angel to tell you when that time has arrived; you just have to discover the killing play all by yourself.

Take this case where East had to make a spectacular move to defeat three notrump. West led a spade, and East won the A-Q, after which he had to decide what to do next.

After considering the matter carefully, East returned the only card in his hand that could defeat the contract — the king of hearts! Whether declarer took the king with dummy's ace or ducked, West, who signified possession of the queen by signaling with the eight, could not be stopped from eventually gaining the lead with the queen to run his spades, and declarer finished down four after attempting a diamond finesse.

From East's viewpoint, the king of hearts was clearly the right play. He had to credit West with either the queen of hearts or ace of clubs, since if declarer had both of those cards, there was virtually no chance of stopping the contract.

Very little harm could come from leading the king of hearts even if it turned out that South had the queen. In that case, East would still have time to try to find his partner with the ace of clubs when he got on lead with the queen of diamonds.

A low heart return at trick three, depriving West of the lone entry to his spades, would have given declarer all the time he needed to establish dummy's diamonds and make the contract. But the highly unusual king-of-hearts return, creating an entry to West's hand, left South with no recourse.

Tomorrow: A little worry never hurts.  
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Peanuts

KIDS AND PARENTS ARE ALWAYS ARGUING ABOUT SOMETHING

BUT KIDS HAVE THE ADVANTAGE

THEY CAN WEAR THE PARENTS DOWN

KIDS HAVE BETTER BENCH STRENGTH!

Rose is Rose

... AND THEN I HEARD A LOW GROWL COMING FROM THE FOREST... I FUMBLER TO FIND A FLASHLIGHT.

OF COURSE... I FORGOT TO PACK BATTERIES...

ZIP WHOO!

FINISH YOUR STORY QUICKLY... WE'RE CLOSING SOON.

Agnes

YEP! WHEN WE GET TO THE POOL, I'M GOING TO MARCH RIGHT TO THE TOP OF THE HIGH DIVE WITH ABSOLUTELY NO FEAR.

THEN, WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE, I WILL SWAGGER TO THE END OF THE BOARD AND LEAP WITH PERFECT RECKLESSNESS INTO THE GAPING MAW OF THE NETHERWORLDS ABEYSS!

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SURE... INTO THE MAW IS INTO THE MAW.

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I HAVEN'T HAD A JOB INTERVIEW SINCE I WAS IN MY TWENTIES

I WONDER IF ANYTHING'S CHANGED

... ASIDE FROM ME BEING IN MY FIFTIES

Blondie

BOY, THIS NEW EXTRA-STRENGTH TOOTHPASTE BLONDIE GOT ME REALLY WORKS!

AND SHE'S RIGHT, IT REALLY KNOCKS OUT GARLIC BREATH!

MAYBE SHE'S TRYING TO TELL ME SOMETHING

Snuffy Smith

HORACE THINKS HE'S FUNNY, BUT HE AIN'T !!

HEY, FELLERS, WANNA HEAR A GOOD JOKE ?

YEAH !! GO GIT CYRUS--HE'S ALWAYS GOT SOME GOOD'UNS !!

Beetle Bailey

DID YOU MOW THE PARADE GROUNDS LIKE I TOLD YOU?

MOW OR LESS

SARGE DOESN'T APPRECIATE HUMOR

CRYPTOQUIP

BM MHIUG YPV BWCVPGHKYFBKX

EPHHKV P GBKYPY PBXLF HK

FLV WHKVR, YPV FLVR CVPMEFIR

MPYKU?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: ODD INSECT VARIETY THAT REALLY LOVES PARTICIPATING IN GAMES AND SPORTS: THE PLAYING MANTIS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals F

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 — bean

5 Lawyers' gp.

8 Bell tower sound

12 Mideast gulf

13 Mafia boss

14 Penne — vodka

15 Minimize

17 Slope transport

18 Congeal

19 Internet address

20 Rise

21 Calligrapher's instrument

22 Method

23 Maui dances

26 Workshop cutter

30 Un-repaired

31 Physics particle

32 Desire

33 Pianist, in "Rhapsody in Blue"

35 Enjoyed

36 Weir

37 "Evita" narrator

38 "Chapter Two"

41 Scot's denial

42 Comic Gasteyer

45 United — Emirates

46 Taylor Swift and Katy Perry, for two

48 2150, to Brutus

49 — Magnon

50 Gov. division

51 Lighten

52 Bro's sib

53 Twistable treat

20 — Salvador

21 Latin ballroom dance

22 Pallid

23 Owns

24 GI entertainers

25 Rapper — Kim

26 Droid

27 — Lanka

28 Bio stat

29 Marry Keller

31 Belief

34 Actor McKellen

35 Molt

37 Mob bosses

38 "Ditto"

39 "— la Douce"

40 Apple computers

41 Sushi wrapper

42 Say it's so

43 Scruff

44 Regarding

46 Dell products

47 Altar promise

DOWN

1 Indy circuits

2 Not busy

3 Dell array

4 Whatever

5 Pettify

6 Soup serving

7 New England cape

8 Helen

9 Exile isle

10 Astronaut Shepard

11 Cooking fat

16 Union payment

Yesterdays answer 7-29

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12					13			14			
15				16				17			
18				19			20				
		21				22					
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45						46			47		
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51						52			53		

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# Kurt Kitayama wins 3M Open

**By JERRY ZGODA**  
The Minnesota Star Tribune  
Tribune News Service

BLAINE, Minn. — Ten-year pro Kurt Kitayama needed all 65 shots Sunday to win the 3M Open in Blaine by a single shot, but it might have been one over all the others that won him his second PGA Tour title and enabled his mother to watch the TV again.

He chipped in from the thick greenside rough on the third hole to give his day a birdie-birdie-birdie start. He got up and down from 75 feet for a birdie at the par-5 12th. He hit a wedge from under a tree to save par at the 15th and saved par again at the closing 18th hole with an awkwardly angled, downhill bunker shot above the green that was good enough to set up a two-putt to win.

But none of those shots for Kitayama was bigger and more dramatic than his 191-yard fairway bunker shot at No. 14, struck — and stuck at a back flagstick — with a 7-iron.

Kitayama's 3-foot birdie putt re-established a three-shot lead and kept the field from seriously challenging the 32-year-old the rest of the way.

"To hit it that like I did was unbelievable," said Kitayama, whose four-round total of 23-under-par 261 was a stroke off the tournament record set two years ago by Lee Hodges. "That was a very big shot."

Challengers Jake Knapp and Sam Stevens came up



Tribune News Service/Getty Images/Andrew Weavers

Kurt Kitayama of the United States lines up a putt on the 18th hole during the final round of the 3M Open 2025 at TPC Twin Cities on Sunday in Blaine, Minnesota.

short. Knapp trailed by three shots on the par-5 finishing hole, but his second shot at 18 came up just short into the lake, even with the wind. Stevens hit into a bad lie on the same hole that kept him from trying to go for an eagle that he needed to apply pressure.

"I'm not too disappointed," said Stevens, who shot 66 to finish alone in second at 22 under and now has three top-10 finishes this year.

With his older brother, Daniel, carrying his bag and his parents watching at home in California, Kitayama still needed to save par on 18 — "That bunker shot on 18, making sure I got it on the green, that was big," he said — and earned a second career victory to go with his Arnold Palmer Invitational from March 2023 at Bay Hill.

A year after he finished tied for sixth at the 3M

Open, Kitayama just made the cut at this year's event, but then shot a tournament-record-tying 60 on Saturday to enter Sunday trailing co-leaders Akshay Bhatia and Thorbjørn Olesen by a stroke. Once he made it to the weekend, Kitayama shot 17 under par in two days on a course designed by Palmer himself.

Just coincidence?  
"I'm not too sure," Kitayama said. "Some

courses you're just comfortable with. Having that result last year definitely helps coming into this week, knowing that I can play well here."

He credited his brother — who is his sometime caddie — with keeping him centered and called his parents, Clifford and Rumiko, by video not long after he won the trophy and \$1.5 million first-place prize.

"My mom didn't answer,

so I called my dad," Kitayama said. "I assumed they would be together. My dad tells me my mom couldn't watch. I think she was out somewhere so she couldn't be too nervous. Then I called my girlfriend and she was ecstatic. Really cool to see them."

By winning, Kitayama earned 500 FedEx Cup points to move from 110th to 53rd with one regular-season PGA Tour event to come before the playoffs begin. He is the third consecutive 3M Open winner to begin the week outside the top-70 playoff cutoff: Jhonattan Vegas was 147th going into last year and Hodges was 74th in 2023.

Kitayama also is projected to move from No. 97 to No. 39 in the Official World Golf Ranking.

Kitayama's 20 birdies in the final two rounds are the most made on the weekend by a PGA Tour winner since 2003. His 32 total birdies tie for the third-most in a 72-hole event on the tour since 1983.

Knapp made bogey after finding the water on 18, and his round of 68 left him in a four-way tie for third with Pierceson Coody (67), David Lipsky (64) and Matt Wallace (64) at 20 under. Finishing in a tie for 10th was Chris Gotterup, coming right after his victory at the Scottish Open and third-place finish at the British Open.

The two third round co-leaders shot two of the worst final rounds. Bhatia was 4 over and Olesen 2 over.



Photos provided

## Most improved

Portland Junior League handed out awards for the most improved athletes following the conclusion of the season. Pictured from left to right in the left photo are Brantley Robinson, Klay Farmer and Parker Huntsman of the Willie Mays baseball division. (Not pictured are Gabe Lutes and Jaxon Allred.) Pictured at right are Kali Newell, Kayah Kaigler and Madysen Taylor of the Major softball division.

# Sports on tap

### Local schedule

**Thursday**  
Fort Recovery — Volleyball scrimmage vs. South Adams — 9 a.m.  
Portland Rockets in NABF World Series vs. Hackensack Troasts at Lee Pfund Stadium and North Central Field — 11 a.m.  
Portland Rockets in NABF World Series vs. Berea Blue Sox at Lee Pfund Stadium and North Central Field — 4 p.m.

### TV schedule

**Tuesday**  
7 p.m. — USL Championship soccer: Pittsburgh Riverhounds at Miami FC (ESPN2)  
7:05 p.m. — MLB: Tampa Bay Rays at New York Yankees (TBS)  
7:10 p.m. — MLB: Los Angeles Dodgers at Cincinnati Reds (FDSN Indiana)  
11 p.m. — Leagues Cup soccer: Pachuca at San Diego (FS1)

**Wednesday**  
7 p.m. — WNBA: Phoenix Mercury at Indiana Fever (FDSN Indiana)  
8 p.m. — WNBA: New York Liberty at Minnesota Lynx (ESPN)  
8 p.m. — Leagues Cup soccer: Pumas UNAM at Orlando City (FS1)  
8:30 p.m. — Club Friendlies soccer: St. Louis City at Aston Villa (FOX)  
10 p.m. — USL Championship soccer: Orange County SC at Phoenix Rising (ESPN2)  
10 p.m. — Leagues Cup soccer: Portland Timbers at Atletico San Luis (FS1)

### Local notes

**Chamber to host**  
Jay County Chamber of Commerce will host its golf outing on Sept. 19 at 9 a.m. Participation costs \$250 per team with lunch included. A \$20 team mulligan golf ball can be purchased as well.

Sponsorships can be purchased as well. A lunch sponsorship will cost \$500, while a gold sponsorship will go for \$450. Hole sponsorships cost \$100 for members and \$150 for non-members.

The deadline to register is Sept. 12. For more info, call (260) 726-4481 or email amanda@jaycountychamber.com.

### Partnership announced

Ball State University will be partnering with Indy Eleven to provide free training for youth coaches in Indiana on Aug. 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 is selling super and season tickets.

To purchase tickets, visit 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 Aug. 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 unitedwayjaycounty.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 Adams Memorial/Kekionga Greenway Gallup at 4:30 p.m. Aug. 13.

The race begins at the Riverside Center in Decatur. Registration forms can be found at adamscounty5kchallenge.com.

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

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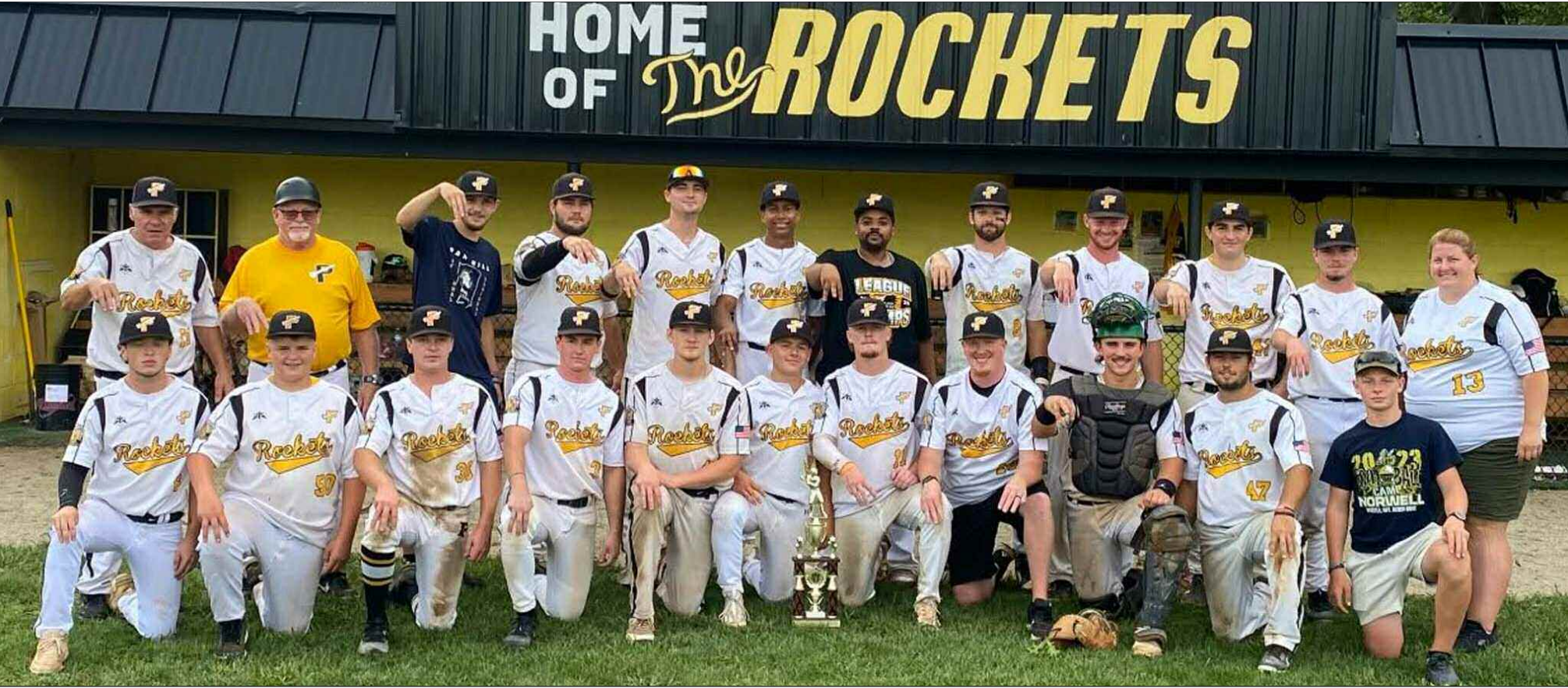


Photo provided

Pictured above, the Portland Rockets pose with the 2025 NABF Regional trophy on Saturday after defeating the Livonia Firebirds 4-3. The win clinched the Rockets their third trip to NABF World Series, which will take place in Naperville, Illinois, this season.

Rockets sweep Firebirds over weekend to claim Regional title

The Rockets are going back to the World Series. The Portland Rockets beat the Livonia Firebirds on Friday 12-3 and 4-3 on Saturday to clinch the NABF Regional title and earn a spot in the World Series for the first time in eight years. In Friday's victory, the Rockets scored a pair of runs in the second inning on a double by Noah McElDowney, but Dylan Brammer gave up three runs in the third frame. Portland trailed 3-2 heading into the top of the seventh

inning, but got a pair of runners on base on a dropped third strike and a single. Joel Kennedy played the hero by blasting a home run to deep left field to put the Rockets up 5-3. Seven more runs came in on a single by Cameron Pratt, a Quinn Faulkner groundout, Evan Pearce's single, a passed ball and a second Kennedy homer. In total, Kennedy had five RBIs on four hits. Brammer earned the win with a complete game. He allowed seven hits but didn't give up a

walk while striking out eight batters. Portland again got on the board early in Saturday's championship game as Joel Kennedy smashed a double to right-center field that scored Corban White in the bottom of the first. Kenney Bailey hit a sacrifice fly in the bottom of the second inning to go up 2-0. Garrison Brege surrendered three runs in the fourth inning, but a McElDowney double reclaimed the lead for the Rockets.

Brege earned the win after giving up three runs on seven hits and five walks over five innings. Jayden Simpson picked up the save after tossing the final two innings with no runs scored. This will be the Rockets' third appearance in the NABF World Series. Previously, they went to Buffalo, New York in 2012, and again in Battle Creek, Michigan in 2017. The Rockets will play in two round robin games on Thursday and one on Friday to determine

if they move on to elimination play over the weekend. On Thursday, they will face the Hackensack Troasts at 11 a.m. before taking on the Berea Blue Sox at 4 p.m., both at Zimmerman Field. Portland finishes on Friday with a game against the Lombard Orioles at 6:30 p.m. at Lee Pfund Stadium. Only the top two teams from pool play will advance. Fans that can't make the trip to Naperville can follow the Rockets on the GameChanger app.

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Rays swept by Reds

By **MARC TOPKIN**  
Tampa Bay Times  
Tribune News Service  
CINCINNATI — The Tampa Bay Rays continued their majors'-worst skid with a 2-1 loss to the Cincinnati Reds on Sunday. The defeat was the 18th in their last 25 games, coming after a 25-9 run during which they had the best record in the league. In being swept for the fifth time this season, the Rays dropped to 53-53, the first time they haven't been over .500 in two months. On June 28, they were 11 games over at .47-36. While the bullpen has been a problem, the offense also has been quiet. The Rays were held to two or fewer runs in all three losses to the Reds. Cincinnati got two first-

inning runs off Rays starter Shane Baz, and that was enough. The Rays were shut out and held to two hits into the eighth inning by Reds starter Brady Singer — the former University of Florida star — until Taylor Walls homered. Tony Santillan took over and struck out Matt Thaiss and got Chandler Simpson to fly out to end the inning. Ex-Ray Emilio Pagan closed it out for the Reds, striking out Yandy Diaz, while getting Jonathan Aranda and Junior Caminero to fly out. The Rays finished with just three hits on the day. The Reds grabbed a 2-0 lead in the first inning off Baz. TJ Friedl and Matt McLain started the rally

with back-to-back singles, though Baz then struck out the dangerous Elly De La Cruz. Austin Hays bounced a ball up the middle that Rays shortstop Taylor Walls charged for, but couldn't pick up with his glove, allowing Friedl to score from second. McLain, who moved up to second on Hays' single, then stole third and scored when Gavin Lux grounded out to first. Walls, considered one of the game's most sure-handed infielders, also had a misplay in Saturday's loss that he attributed to an unexpected and especially bad hop. The Rays left after the game for New York, where on Monday they open a four-game series against the Yankees.

Nick Kurtz makes history

By **CHRIS BIDERMAN**  
The Sacramento Bee  
Tribune News Service  
Nick Kurtz had a night for the record books Friday night in Houston. The all-time, Major League Baseball history record books. The Athletics' 22-year-old first baseman became the first MLB rookie to hit four home runs in a game and just the 20th player overall to ever do it. He went 6 for 6 at the plate, adding a double off high off the left-field wall and a single. He drove in eight runs and scored six more in the A's 15-3 victory over the Astros. His 19 total bases across those six hits also ties for the most in MLB history, as did his five extra-base hits. Only former Los Angeles Dodgers outfielder Shawn Green, who did so in 2002, had ever tallied 19 bases in a game. That means Kurtz's performance has a legitimate argument for the greatest single-game batting performance in MLB history. Kurtz hit home runs in the second, sixth, eighth and ninth innings Friday. He went deep on each of Houston's four pitchers used in the game, including outfielder Cooper Hummel, who threw the ninth inning of the blowout. The homers traveled 384 feet, 368 feet, 414 feet and 383 feet.

Kurtz extended his hitting streak to 12 games and in July leads all American League hitters in batting average (.425), on-base (.494), slugging (1.082), OPS (1.576), runs (22), doubles (13), home runs (11), RBIs (27) and extra-base hits (25). This week he became the odds-on betting favorite to win AL Rookie of the Year, overtaking his teammate shortstop Jacob Wilson, who has spent the majority of the season chasing Yankees slugger Aaron Judge for the batting title. Kurtz is just over a year removed from getting drafted. The A's selected the slugger fourth overall out of Wake Forest. He debuted in the majors April 23 after appearing in just 33 minor league games. The left-handed hitter through 66 games is batting .305/.374/.686. According to the Associated Press, Kurtz' 43 extra-base hits through his first 66 games trail only Joe DiMaggio's 48 and his 23 home runs through 66 games is the second most all time behind Cody Bellinger (24). Four home runs in a game had been accomplished 19 times in history prior to Friday night, most recently by Eugenio Suarez of the Arizona Diamondbacks earlier this season, on April 26. Six players who've done it went on to make the Hall of Fame, including Willie Mays, Mike Schmidt and Lou Gehrig.