

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

City OKs plant project

Wastewater facility will get new basin, pump station upgrades

By RILEY EUBANKS
The Commercial Review

More than half a million dollars was appropriated Thursday toward mandated projects at Portland's wastewater treatment plant.

The city's board of works met and approved a new \$526,000 contract for Jones & Henry Engineers to design improvements to the plant's pump station and for the creation of a new 12-million gallon equalizing basin. Both projects are required under the city's long-term control plan with Indiana Department of Environmental Management to improve flood control.

Jeff Hersha of Jones & Henry told the board that the "goal" of amending the long-term control plan last year to prioritize these projects is so the city could potentially bypass the pricy creation of an oxidation ditch.

"In all fairness, it's very likely IDEM will require construction of the oxidation ditch," Hersha admitted, but continued in saying it's not impossible that these two projects could satisfy IDEM's control plan.

Pump station improvements and a new basin were going to be required anyway, so reorganizing the plan could allow the city to get out of paying potentially millions for the oxidation ditch.

Per the plan, the new basin and pump station improvements are projected to cost the city \$5.4 million. Currently, no funding mechanism is in place via state or federal grants to pay for any of it.

See City page 5



The Commercial Review/Bailey Cline

Spreading salt

Michael Sager of Brian and Sons, a mowing and snow removal service, loads the back of his truck with more salt behind the Flower Nook this morning. A mix of rain and snow overnight combined with high winds and temperatures in the teens led to poor travel conditions. Jay and Fort Recovery schools were closed today.

Holdman introduces tax proposal

By RILEY EUBANKS
The Commercial Review

INDIANAPOLIS — Up to \$2 million in new subsidies may be going toward Fort Wayne's arena.

Senate Bill 384, authored and introduced by State Sen. Travis Holdman (R-Markle) in the Senate Appropriations Committee Thursday, would expand how much Allen County can collect from professional sports and convention development area taxes from \$3 million to \$5 million with the majority of that money going toward Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, home of the Fort Wayne

Measure would allow more tax dollars to go to home of Mad Ants, Komets

Mad Ants and Fort Wayne Komets.

The arena will also play host to next week's wrestling semi-state tournament, including competitors who advance from

Saturday's regional at Jay County High School.

"Northeast Indiana supports this ... We have a sense that what's good for Fort Wayne is good for the region," said Hold-

man, who represents parts of northeast Indiana including Jay County.

The bill, which passed unanimously out of committee and will go to the full Indiana Senate for a vote, was amended to establish a professional sports and convention development area tax district in South Bend with money raised going toward Four Winds Field, home of the South Bend Cubs.

"We need that shot in the arm to get to that next step," Allen County Commissioner Nelson Peters said while testifying in support of the bill.

See Coliseum page 5



For The Washington Post/Katrina Benggaard

Alaska leading

An all-female medical crew from Alaska's Maniilaq Health Center took a sled to deliver vaccine to the isolated village of Shungnak in December. Alaska, the state with the largest land mass in the nation, is leading the country in a critical coronavirus measure: per capita vaccinations. About 13% of the people who live in Alaska have already gotten a shot.

Budget bill passes

By JOSH BOAK
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Senate early Friday approved a measure that would let Democrats muscle President Joe Biden's \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief plan through the chamber without Republican support. Vice President Kamala Harris was in the chair to cast the tie-breaking vote, her first.

Democrats in the chamber applauded after Harris announced the 51-50 vote at around 5:30 a.m. The action came after an all-night session, during which senators voted on amendments that could define the contours of the eventual COVID-19 aid bill.

The budget now returns to the House, where it will likely be approved again Friday to

Senate move could impact coronavirus relief package

reflect the changes made by the Senate. Final passage will unlock the next phase in drafting of the virus relief bill, with the work divided among several congressional committees.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer D-New York, called passage of the resolution the "first big step to putting our country back on the road to recovery."

By moving on a fast track, the goal for Democrats is to have COVID

relief approved by March, when extra unemployment assistance and other pandemic aid expires. It's an aggressive timeline that will test the ability of the new administration and Congress to deliver.

The push for stimulus comes amid new signs of a weakening U.S. economy. Employers added just 49,000 jobs in January, after cutting 227,000 jobs in December, the Labor Department said Friday.

See Budget page 5

Deaths

Rita Andrews, 68, rural Dunkirk
Ralph Neargarder, 84, Union City
Emma Bocoock, 84, Port Huron, Michigan
James Stone, 70, Portland
Details on page 2.

Weather

Jay County had a high temperature of 35 degrees Thursday. The low was 18, and there was about a tenth of an inch of precipitation.

Tonight's low will be 10. Expect a high of 22 Saturday with a mix of clouds and sun. Some snow is possible.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

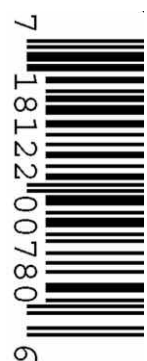
In review

Jay County Solid Waste Management District will have recycling trailers available from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday in the shopping center at 220 Lincoln St., Portland, the parking lot east of Redkey Post Office and the parking lot south of Salamonia Fire Station.

Coming up

Saturday — Results from tonight's JCHS girls basketball sectional semifinal.

Wednesday — Coverage of Monday's Dunkirk City Council meeting.



Capsule Reports

Banks to serve

U.S. Rep. Jim Banks announced Thursday that he will serve as the ranking member of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Military Personnel.

Banks replaces Rep. Trent Kelly as the subcommittee's ranking member. The subcommittee deals with issues including military pay, benefits, allowances and retirements, the military healthcare system, military justice and personnel policy and education and training for U.S. service members.

"I'm incredibly honored to be selected for a position that allows me to work on behalf of our troops and their families," Banks said in a press release. "I pledge to fight to improve their

health care, educational options, financial stability and safety."

Intersection collision

Damage is estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000 after a Portland driver drove into an Albany driver's vehicle at the intersection of Main and Harrison streets in Portland Tuesday.

Cerridwen L. Harris, 19, was driving east on Main Street about 2:47 p.m. when she entered the intersection with Harrison Street. She later told Portland Police she did not see a 2019 Chevy Silverado, driven by Michael D. Hollowell, 64, driving south on Harrison Street, and she struck his vehicle with her 2018 Jeep Cherokee.

Hollowell told police he had the right of way, according to a police department accident report. A street sign owned by the City of Portland was also damaged.

Slide offs

Three accidents were reported Thursday afternoon in central Jay County as streets were covered with snow and visibility was poor.

Two Portland residents, David E. Heath, 56, and Matthew D. Reidenbach, 50, were involved in single-car accidents because of weather conditions.

Heath was westbound on county road 800 South near U.S. 27 at about 5:37 p.m. when he lost control of his 2013 Honda

CRV, which went off the north side of the road and into a utility pole. Damage was estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

Reidenbach was northbound on county road 250 West at 4:36 p.m. when he lost control of his 2003 Buick Rendezvous, which turned 90 degrees and ended up off the west side of the road. Damage was estimated to cost less than \$1,000.

Another accident involving Jacob M. Waters, 36, Hartford City, as he lost control of his 2006 Lincoln MLT while westbound on Indiana 26 near county road 850 West at 3:14 p.m. His vehicle went off the south side of the highway and rolled three times before coming to a rest. Damage was estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

Crash avoided

A Portland man told the Jay County Sheriff's Office he drove off the side of the road to avoid a collision with another vehicle.

Travis J. Borgerding, 32, was eastbound on county road 400 South near its intersection with county road 800 West when another vehicle came dangerously close to his lane, according to a sheriff's office accident report.

To avoid a collision, Borgerding drove off the north side of the road. He was driving a 2002 Chevy Malibu registered to Jodee L. Borgerding, Portland.

No information was recorded on the other driver. Damage was estimated between \$1,000 and \$2,500.

CR almanac

Table with 5 columns: Saturday 2/6, Sunday 2/7, Monday 2/8, Tuesday 2/9, Wednesday 2/10. Includes weather icons and temperature forecasts (21/7, 15/5, 22/15, 21/5, 15/2).

Table with 2 columns: Lottery name and Estimated jackpot. Includes Powerball (\$30 million), Mega Millions (\$54 million), Hoosier (\$33,388), and Ohio (\$130,000).

Table with 2 columns: Market name and prices. Includes Cooper Farms Fort Recovery, POET Biorefining Portland, The Andersons Richland Township, Central States Montpelier, and Sunrise St. Anthony.

Today in history: On Feb. 5, 2020, the Senate voted to acquit President Donald Trump... In 1918, during World War I, the Cunard liner SS Tuscania... In 1917, Mexico's present constitution was adopted by the Constitu-

Citizen's calendar table listing events for Monday: 8 a.m. - Portland Redevelopment Commission executive session, 9 a.m. - Jay County Commissioners' room, 11 a.m. - Dunkirk Police Pension Board, 3:45 p.m. - Jay County Election Board.

Obituaries

Rita Andrews

April 12, 1952-Feb. 2, 2021. Rita K. Andrews, age 68, a resident of rural Dunkirk passed away Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2021, at IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital in Muncie. She worked at Haynes Milling Company and was a member of the Portland Moose Lodge.



Andrews

Rita Andrews was born April 12, 1952, in Jay County, Indiana, the daughter of Claude and Naomi (Bennett) Taylor. She was married April 22, 1998, to David Andrews. Survivors include: Her beloved husband — David Andrews, Dunkirk, Indiana. Mother — Naomi Taylor, Pennville, Indiana. Son — Chad Tomlinson, Dunkirk, Indiana. Two daughters — Corina Rector, Geneva, Indiana, and Delilah Baily, Albany, Indiana.

She was preceded in death by her father Claude Taylor; brother David Cameron; and a sister, Cindy. Visitation will be held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Monday in the Pennville Chapel of the Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home. Funeral services will follow at 2 p.m. at the Pennville Chapel. Pastor Gil Alicia will officiate the services and burial will follow in the IOOF Twin Hills Cemetery in Pennville.

Condolences may be directed to the family online at williamson-spencer.com.

Ralph Neargarder

May 28, 1936-Feb. 3, 2021. Ralph Steve Neargarder, age 84, a resident of Union City, Indiana, passed away Wednesday, Feb. 3, 2021, at IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital in Muncie. Ralph was born on May 28, 1936, in Union City, Indiana, the son of Clem and Ada (Sargent) Neargarder and was raised by Harry and Viola Rhodes. He worked at Portland Ready Mix, Naas Food in Portland and Cheeseman Trucking for many years, and was owner and operator of M&N lanes in Portland.



Neargarder

Ralph married Marlene Kemp on June 10, 1956. He was a devoted husband, father and grandfather. He was also a hard worker who would help anyone who needed it.

Survivors include: His loving wife — Marlene Neargarder, Union City, Indiana. Two sons — Rick Neargarder (wife: Kathy), Union City, Indiana, and Scott Neargarder (wife: Kelley), Muncie, Indiana. One daughter — Debbie Hosier (husband: Bruce), Jeffersonville, Indiana. One sister — Sally Wilcox, Union City, Indiana. Two brothers — Irvin Neargarder, Union City, Indiana, and Lawrence Neargarder, (wife: Frances), Union City, Indiana.

Nine grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren. Visitation will be held Saturday from 2 to 6 p.m. at Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home in Portland. Private services will be held Sunday at the Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home in Portland. Burial will follow in North Salem Cemetery, south east of Portland. Memorials may be directed toward the Jay County Cancer Society.

Condolences may be sent to williamsonspencer.com.

Emma Bocoock

Oct. 18, 1936-Jan. 30, 2020. Emma Lou (Myers) Bocoock, 84, of Port Huron, Michigan, passed away on Jan. 30, 2021.

Emma was born in Portland, Indiana, on Oct. 18, 1936, to Kathleen (Williamson) and Noel Myers of Portland. She attended school at American University of Beirut in Lebanon, earning her bachelor degree in nursing. Emma nursed in Pennsylvania, Florida, Indiana and Michigan. Additionally, she taught nursing at Ivy Tech Community College in Indiana.



Bocoock

Emma was preceded in death by her mother and father; her husband Leo Bocoock; and sisters Judith McFarland and Carla Wilson.

She is survived by her children, Tammy Mignanelli, Thomas Saloom, Timothy Saloom and Teresa Gomez; and her grandchildren. Also surviving are her brothers, David and Ronald.

Burial will follow at a later date in Green Park Cemetery in Portland. Local arrangements by Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home in Portland. Condolences may be sent to williamsonspencer.com.

James Stone, Portland, Nov. 5, 1950-Feb. 4, 2021. Services will be at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday at Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home in Portland.

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.

Felony arrests

Probation violation

A Portland man violated his probation Thursday. Johnathan A. Steed, 29, 1237 N. U.S. 27, was arrested and preliminarily charged with a Level 5 felony for possession of methamphetamine and two Level 6 felonies for unlawful possession or use of a legend drug and maintaining a common nuisance. He was also charged with a Class C misdemeanor for possession of paraphernalia.

He also has previous charges for possession of methamphetamine, maintaining a common nuisance, unlawful possession of a syringe, possession of marijuana and possession of paraphernalia. Steed is being held in Jay County Jail without bond.

Unlawful possession

A Portland man was arrested for alleged unlawful possession charges this morning.

Jeff T. Rivers, 29, 819 E. North St., was preliminarily charged with a Level 6 felony for unlawful possession of a syringe and a Class B misdemeanor for possession of paraphernalia.

He also has previous charges of a Level 6 felony for unlawful possession of a syringe and a Class C misdemeanor for public intoxication.

His bond from Jay County Jail is \$6,000.

Advertisement for GRAPHIC PRINTING. Features: AVAILABLE NOW CUSTOMIZED Round or Square Beverage Coasters. Includes logos for PHS Alumni Celebration, SANDI & WILLIAM June 20, 2020, and FOR ANY Occasion. Price: As Low as 38¢ each. Address: 309 W. Main Street • Portland, IN 47371. Phone: (260) 726-8141 • print@theer.com

Huffman honored by foundation

An outgoing board member was the first to receive an honor as a new member was named to take his place.

The Dunkirk Foundation board of directors recently named outgoing member Chuck Huffman as its first emeritus member while also welcoming Christy Curts to fill the remainder of his term.

Huffman recently resigned from the board after more than 20 years as a member.

"Chuck has spent over two decades in service to The Dunkirk Foundation, and we feel that he is deserving of this honor," said Jesse Bivens, who was re-elected board president. "His dedication has helped to strengthen the foundation and we wanted to retain his wisdom without requiring him to attend regular meetings."

In addition to Bivens, Brenda Brumfield and John Littler were re-elected to their roles as vice president and treasurer, respectively. Wil Masters was elected secretary.

Taking Note

Donors get gifts

In February, donors to the American Red Cross will receive a \$5 Amazon gift card via email.

The effort comes as a measure to thank its donors for helping to ensure a stable blood supply, according to a press release from the organization.

The following are nearby blood drives scheduled in February:

•Bryant: 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. Feb. 22 at Bryant Wesleyan Church, 209 S. Hendricks

•Redkey: 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. Feb. 16 at Redkey Faith Ministries, 9811 Indiana 67

•Berne: Noon to 6 p.m. Feb. 16 at South Adams Senior Center, 825 Hendrick St.

•Bluffton: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Feb. 15 at First Presbyterian Church, 215 East Dunman Road; 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. Feb. 19 at Bluffton Regional Medical Center, 303 South Main St.; 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Feb. 26 Bluffton-Wells County Public Library, 200 W. Washington St.

Beatles art in Blackford

You won't need a "Ticket to Ride" into Blackford County to see some John Lennon art for free.

A new exhibit at the Blackford County Arts Center titled "Only Imagine" will feature art from the famed Beatles guitarist and Hartford City native John Knox daily until Feb. 18.

The original art from Lennon were donated to the center by David Hodges.

The Blackford County Arts center located at 107 W. Washington St., Hartford City, is open from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday except Tuesdays, when it is open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Six books to read in February

By **BETHANNE PATRICK**
Special to The Washington Post

All of these six selections will already be on bookstore shelves by the time you read this, which means you'll be ready to spend the entire month reading. Given the frigid weather recently sweeping the country, that might be a good plan.

"Animal, Vegetable, Junk: A History of Food, from Sustainable to Suicidal," by Mark Bittman

Bittman, acclaimed author and journalist, shows how our food choices affect our global economies, personal health and beleaguered climate. With a strong focus on how 20th century changes led us to early 21st century problems, this book is a manifesto for anyone who eats, which means everyone.

"Land of Big Numbers: Stories," by Te-Ping Chen

As a Wall Street Journal correspondent, Chen lived longer in Beijing than anywhere except her U.S. hometown. Her stories in this collection, following various Chinese characters, consider the very big question of what freedom means. The answers may surprise Chen's fellow Americans.

"The Survivors: A Novel," by Jane Harper

Those who are already fans of this Melbourne-based author will agree: Harper is to Australia what Tana French is to Ireland, a writer whose psychologically rich plots are matched by a deep understanding of place. "The Survivors," set on the coast, centers on a man named Kieran,

his absent brother Finn and, of course, secrets.

"The Removed: A Novel," by Brandon Hobson

Hobson's 2018 novel, "Where the Dead Sit Talking," was nominated for a National Book Award; perhaps his new book will win one. An enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation tribe, Hobson weaves his community's folklore into the story of the Echota family, whose lives have been tragically altered by the death of their son.

"How the One-Armed Sister Sweeps Her House: A Novel," by Cherie Jones

Jones, a lawyer from Barbados, reimagines her home island as Paradise in her debut novel. The irony is that Paradise is anything but, especially for the characters whose hard work and impoverished lives sustain tourists' idylls. An initial murder turns out to be the least mysterious event in a narrative that moves from present to past and back again, showing cycles of abuse and redemption.

"Four Hundred Souls: A Community History of African America, 1619-2019," edited by Ibram X. Kendi and Keisha N. Blain

Kendi ("How to Be an Anti-Racist") and Blain ("Set the World on Fire") present a 400-year history of African Americans. Ninety writers each take on a five-year period, illustrating it through essays, stories and more in a beautiful retrieval of voices once left unheard.

Man obsessed with ex-boyfriend

DEAR ABBY: My sister "Darby" and I are in our 20s and confused about the relationship she is in. She's 23 and has been dating a 22-year-old man. They fight a lot because he can't stop talking about her ex-boyfriend. He says he visualizes her having sex with him, and is frustrated with himself for not being able to get the images out of his head. Is there a name for this particular problem, and how can Darby work with it? — SUPPORTIVE SIS IN THE WEST

DEAR SIS: Yes, actually, there are two names for this "condition." They are obsession and jealousy, and both are signs of potential control issues. Stay close to your sister and be there for her, because this young man's behavior is a red flag.

Darby and her boyfriend are both adults. I assume neither came to the relationship wrapped in cellophane. His fixation should not be hers (or yours) to fix. Because he can't get the images out of his head, he should schedule a few sessions

Dear Abby



with a licensed psychotherapist, since his problem will continue the longer he is in the dating world.

DEAR ABBY: I moved in with my boyfriend six years ago. A year ago, his adult daughter decided she would have all her internet purchases sent to his home. Abby, these packages arrive every day, all week long. I'm tired of it. I think she's a spend-aholic.

I told him at the beginning of our relationship that I would never come between him and his daughter. But it has become a bit much. She calls him for every little thing. Now she has started asking him to help with his granddaughter's homework. I have two adult children of

my own and grandchildren. Am I overreacting? I'm ready to move out and on. —OVER IT AND OUT

DEAR OVER IT: Before moving out and on, discuss this with your boyfriend of six years. His daughter seems to be unusually dependent for an adult. Is there a reason why she's doing these things? Could she be fearful that the packages she's ordering could be stolen from her porch? Does her daughter need more help academically than she is able to provide? The answers to those questions could be enlightening. After you get those answers, there will be time to make a rational (rather than emotional) decision about the status of the relationship you have with her father.

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 www.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.

Saturday

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS — Will meet at 10 a.m. upstairs at True Value Hardware, Meridian Street, Portland. For more information, call (260) 729-2532.

Monday

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

BRYANT AREA COMMUNITY CENTER — Walking from 9 to 10 a.m. every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

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

WEST JAY COMMUNITY CENTER GROUP — Doors open at 10:30 a.m. Bingo will begin at 11 a.m. Euchre begins at 1 p.m. There is a \$1 donation for center's expenses. For more information, call (765) 768-1544.

PREGNANCY CARE CENTER — Free pregnancy testing with ongoing

support during and after pregnancy. The center is located at 216 S. Meridian St., Portland. Hours are 1 to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (260) 726-8636. Walk-ins accepted.

BREAD OF LIFE COMMUNITY FAMILY MEAL — Will be served from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Asbury United Methodist Church, 204 E. Arch St. in Portland. Everyone is welcome.

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY (TOPS) — Will meet for weigh-in at 5:30 p.m., with the meeting at 6 p.m., in the fellowship hall at Evangelical Methodist Church, 930 W. Main St., Portland. New members welcome. For more information, call (260) 726-5312.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS — Will meet at 6 p.m. each Monday 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.

PORTLAND CITIZENS' POLICE ACADEMY ALUMNI — Will meet at 11 a.m. the second Monday of each month at the Portland Fire Department. For more information, call Nick Miller at (937) 239-0022.

DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP — Meets at 3 p.m. on the second Monday of each month at Mercer Health in Coldwater, Ohio.

REDISCOVERING JOY — The support group of widows and widowers meets at 6:30 p.m. on the second Monday of each month at Preferred Insurance Center, 809 W. Main St., Coldwater, Ohio. For more information, email rediscoveringjoy@yahoo.com.

Sudoku

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

Level: Advanced

Thursday's Solution

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

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



We have a busy schedule of special sections and pages coming up.

Mark your calendar so you don't miss them.

Cars

Friday, February 19 (ad deadline Feb. 12)

Spring Home Improvement

Friday, March 19 (ad deadline Mar. 12)

Spring Sports

Wednesday, April 7 (ad deadline Mar. 31)

Ag Outlook

Friday, April 23 (ad deadline Apr. 16)

The Commercial Review
260-726-8141 • ads@thecr.com

Community to address addiction

To the editor:
You are invited to our community conversation.
If you think that addiction is affecting our community, you need to be part of this conversation. Many of our efforts to prevent drug use have been through school assemblies and drug-free messaging. As the Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition (JCDPC), we wanted to take a more hands-on approach to tackle the tempta-

Letters to the Editor

tions that our youth face daily, through manipulation that we have even experienced ourselves in our community.
The Jay County Tobacco Pre-

vention Coalition, part of JCDPC, will be hosting its first annual TPC Community Conversation Friday, Feb. 12, from noon to 1 p.m. This will be a virtual presentation about the marketing tactics of Big Tobacco to convince our youth to start using tobacco products and to encourage continued use. It is honestly incredibly frustrating to learn about how the placement of ads can affect how likely members of our

community is to start using addictive products.
With that being said, even though we cannot meet in person, I want to have a virtual group discussion about how to address these issues as a community, for our community. I want to do that by sharing Jay County statistics. We will be showing real-life examples through pictures taken in convenience stores and gas stations in Jay County.

By discussing the impact that tobacco has on the health and wellness of o
will be able to not only create awareness of this prominent issue but also take action towards an addiction free future.
If you would like more information about this free virtual event, email sydney@jcdpc.org.
Sydney Haines
Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition

The distinction is an important one

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review

People often confuse the definitions of misinformation and disinformation.

The former is defined as an intent to inform but with incorrect facts; the latter is defined as knowingly spreading false information.

Let's talk about why the difference is important.

Pretend a Miss Cindy Lou sees an article pop up on her Facebook feed about goldfish developing cravings for human flesh. (Let's say it's a convincing read.) Pretend, against her better judgment, she believes it and shares the post. Let's assume others believe it and start spreading the story, too.

Those people are misinformed. Hence, they are spreading misinformation.

In Cindy Lou's defense, she wasn't trying to spread a lie. She legitimately thought her pet fish, Goldie, had the potential to spontaneously morph into a piranha.

It sounds far-fetched. But in a nutshell, this is how it starts.

In an age when an infinite amount of knowledge is available at our fingertips, it can be near impossible to sift through so much data to find the truth — even if the truth may appear blatantly obvious to others. Toss in factors like confirmation bias and echo chambers, and it's no wonder like-minded individuals believe those contradicting them are uneducated.

Cindy Lou wasn't out to convince the world of something she knew to be a lie. She informed others with false facts. Now, that's not to excuse her ignorance. It does, however, show how easy it is to click "share" on an article of which someone may have only read the first few lines. (Or, even worse, just the headline, as is often the case.)

The term "fake news" once applied to fabricated stories not unlike the man-eating goldfish tale. Although we now have the internet to spread false information faster, fake news has been around for centuries.

Recall that rumors spread like wildfire. Besides, it's much more interesting to talk about something like an otherwise passive fish harboring a carnivorous appetite than it is to talk about the weather.

"Fake news" has since morphed into the definition of disinformation, which has also been around for hundreds of years. It dates back to war times and is better known under the guise of "propaganda." It's described as

On the Line



It's described as deliberately misleading, manipulated or biased information, and it's often spread for a purpose. Sometimes it's for brainwashing, other times it's for espionage.

deliberately misleading, manipulated or biased information, and it's often spread for a purpose. Sometimes it's for brainwashing, other times it's for espionage. Take Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany, for example. Or the Cold War.

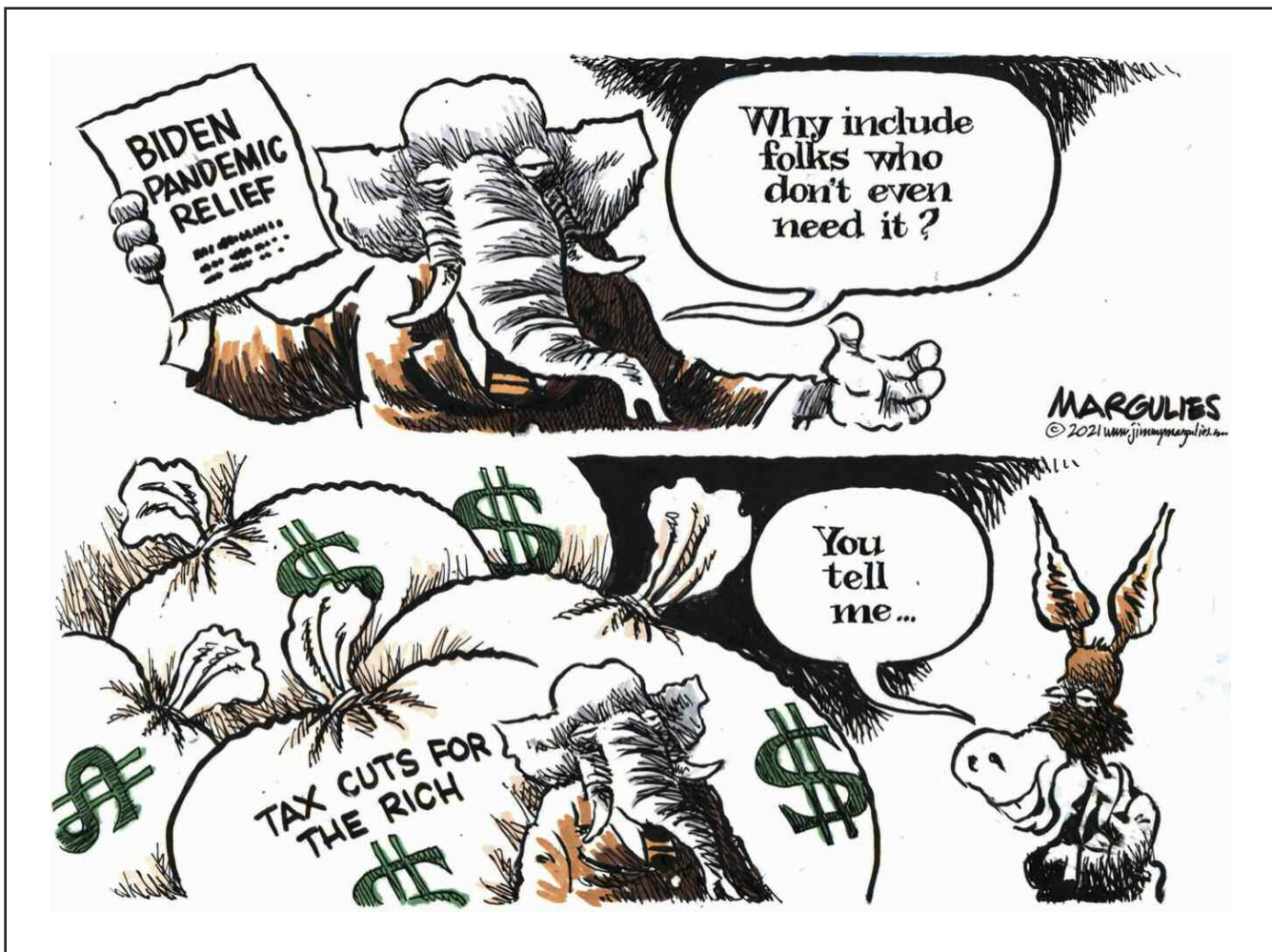
Imagine growing up in North Korea, a country with a strict dictatorship and, consequently, major censorship. Propagandistic disinformation praises the government and vilifies other countries daily. You've been surrounded by bias, distorted content all your life, so why would you think otherwise? One word: brainwash.

Interestingly, when I searched online to fact-check myself on North Korea, the first few suggestions on Google were questions like: "Is North Korea dangerous to visit?" and "Can you leave North Korea?" Also, "Is the internet banned in North Korea?" All valid questions.

Disinformation, mixed in with a "Big Brother" government, looks something like that.

When former president Donald Trump uses the words "fake news" in regular context, he's accusing the media as providers of disinformation: biased, purposely misleading news. He's not just claiming news outlets are publishing incorrect stories; he's claiming the media — which includes thousands of journalists nationwide — is attempting to sway the public in one direction.

The difference in these definitions is important.



Newspapers are fighting back

By MARGARET SULLIVAN
The Washington Post

Lurking behind a groundbreaking lawsuit recently filed in federal court in West Virginia is a haunting question: What if?

What if local newspapers had been able to compete successfully for digital advertising revenue as their readers moved online? What if the powerful "duopoly" of Google and Facebook hadn't sucked up all the oxygen in this new digital economy, essentially asphyxiating traditional media by depriving it of the ad dollars needed to survive?

Would the newspaper industry be healthier — and therefore would our democracy be healthier? Is there still time for an industry to get up off its death bed?

The people behind this antitrust lawsuit hope to find out. Although there is no dollar figure identified in the complaint, West Virginia attorney Paul Farrell, who filed it, thinks the numbers could be astronomical: The two behemoth companies have pocketed billions of dollars in ad revenue — more than half of all the digital advertising dollars in 2019, for example — while newspapers have been struggling to replace the print ad dollars that once sustained them.

"There is no financial stake large enough," to make up for what's happened to the newspaper industry in the past two decades, said Farrell, the lead lawyer in HD Media's suit against the tech giants. Nationwide, more than 2,000 local newspapers have shuttered since 2004; half of all newsroom jobs have been eliminated. That tragic trend has only accelerated during the coronavirus pandemic, just when the information they provide is most needed.

Certainly, the West Virginia papers have felt the pain. And just as certainly, local journalism is hugely important in the state.

In 2017, the Charleston Gazette-Mail won a Pulitzer Prize in investigative reporting for revealing how the pharmaceutical industry was, in essence, poisoning West Virginia communities by shipping them an astonishing overload of opioid pills.

"Follow the pills and you'll find the overdose deaths," Eric Eyre's two-part investigation begins. Set in Ker-

Margaret Sullivan



mit, West Virginia, where the population is only 392, it describes a horror: "There, out-of-state drug companies shipped nearly 9 million highly addictive — and potentially lethal — hydrocodone pills over two years to a single pharmacy in the Mingo County town." Rural and poor, Mingo County had the fourth-highest prescription opioid death rate of any county in the United States.

For a newsroom of fewer than 50 employees, winning a Pulitzer was a triumphant moment, a demonstration that the paper could still live up to its proud, long-held mission of "sustained outrage" against wrongdoing. "I didn't know a darn thing about this subject a few years ago," Eyre told me in 2017, "but over time you can specialize and become an expert."

The glory was short-lived. The very next year, the paper declared bankruptcy. HD Media became its owner with the leading bid at auction.

By 2020, the paper's prize-winning investigative reporter and some of its top editors had decamped to a new, nonprofit newsroom, the Mountain State Spotlight. They are doing vital work. But with only three full-time reporters, they can't cover the area the way two robust newspapers once did. And for residents without internet access or tech savvy, their journalism may go unseen, though they offer it free to newspapers across the state.

Even with their efforts — and those of the Gazette-Mail, which still has plenty of talent and ambition — "there is a dearth of local reporting that goes beyond the news conferences and really digs deep," said Greg Moore, executive editor of the nonprofit and a former top editor at the Gazette-Mail.

The lawsuit focuses on what it portrays as illegal monopolistic prac-

tices by the tech companies, and on a secret agreement — code-named Jedi Blue — between Google and Facebook, which is also at the heart of a separate, price-fixing lawsuit brought by several state attorneys general.

HD Media, which owns not only the Gazette-Mail but the Herald-Dispatch in Huntington and several weekly papers, is urging "every other newspaper in America" to join their suit.

"We are fighting not only for the future of the press but also the preservation of our democracy," said Doug Reynolds, the company's managing partner, in a statement last week.

Google and Facebook have said little publicly in response to the new suit, and have maintained that Jedi Blue agreement was legal and above board.

For many years, both companies have contributed to journalistic causes — helping newsrooms with their digital strategies, sponsoring industry events, sharing revenue and directing readership through various initiatives.

But investigative reporter Eric Eyre, for one, is unimpressed.

"They try to make up for what they've done by donating huge sums of money to support local journalism while they're killing local journalism," he told me.

Can these small newspapers really go up against the tech giants? And even if successful, would it even matter at this late date?

"I'm just a hillbilly lawyer in West Virginia," Farrell said, who has also sued some of the nation's largest drug companies on behalf of communities affected by the opioid crisis.

But, in representing the papers, he finds himself inspired by the famous "Braveheart" scene where Mel Gibson's character leads an against-the-odds charge with an exultant cry of "Freedom!"

Well, maybe. Those who care about local newspapers may not love the little guys' chances in this David versus Goliath situation.

But, given the importance of their quest, we can wish them godspeed.

Sullivan is The Washington Post's media columnist.

The Commercial Review

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

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Coliseum ...

Continued from page 1
C.J. Steigmeyer, chief operating officer of the coliseum, estimated the venue is worth \$110 million in economic development for the northeast Indiana region. Possible improvements Steigmeyer is planning for the coliseum involve it hosting additional events and laying a new ice floor, which he said would cost \$5 million.
The Allen County War Memorial Coliseum has a capacity of around 10,000 for most events and is the home of the Mad Ants, the G League affiliate of the Indiana Pacers, the Komets, a minor-league hockey affiliate of the Las Vegas Golden Knights, and the Fort Wayne Derby Girls of the

Women's Flat Track Derby Association.
In the past, the coliseum has hosted the NBA Finals, many NCAA tournaments and two rallies by former president Donald Trump — one during the 2016 Republican primary and another during his presidency.
During the same committee session, Holdman also voted in favor of Senate Bill 356, which could lead to a new gaming license for the Four Winds South Bend casino. That bill passed out of the committee 12-1.
Sen. Ryan Mishler (R-Bremen) was listed as an author for both Senate Bills 356 and 384.
To the Senate
A bill authored by State Rep.

J.D. Prescott (R-Union City) has passed through the Indiana House of Representatives and will now be sent to the Senate for consideration.
House Bill 1150, which among other changes would limit the fine issue period related to oversized loads, passed on third reading out of the House in a 91-2 vote and is sponsored by Sens. Chris Garten (R-Charlestown) and Jeff Raatz (R-Richmond).
The bill had one amendment, introduced by Prescott during the bill's second reading, that would increase the maximum fine for storing and towing an abandoned 30-foot or longer vehicle from \$2,000 to \$2,500.
That fine was previously written to be increased to \$5,000

in an amendment to the bill made when it was being debated in the House Roads and Transportation Committee last week.
Prescott represents all of Jay and Randolph counties and part of Delaware County.
No new taxes
Holdman announced in a press release Wednesday that the Senate Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee will not hear any bills that would raise the local food and beverage taxes during this legislative session.
"According to an industry survey, about one in five Indiana restaurants has permanently closed since the start of the pandemic, making it more

critical now than ever to support Indiana's restaurants," said Holdman, chair of the committee, in the press release. "I know that there are some localities that may not like this decision, but we firmly believe that a tax increase on our restaurants is simply not appropriate at this time."
The announcement was preceded by a joint resolution from Fort Wayne City and Allen County councils lobbying against any increase to the tax.
New bills
Holdman was added as a sponsor to House Bills 1230 and 1238, both of which are available to view along with every other bill at iga.in.gov.



Bloomberg/Anindito Mukherjee

Barricades erected by the police block a highway Wednesday in Ghazipur on the outskirts of New Delhi, India. Thousands of Indian farmers called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government to lift its blackout on phone and internet services ahead of a push to block roads across the country on Saturday.

Crackdown sparks anger

By ARCHANA CHAUDHARY
Bloomberg

Thousands of Indian farmers called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government to lift its blackout on phone and internet services ahead of a push to block roads across the country on Saturday to escalate protests now in their fourth month.

The farmers, backed by a growing international campaign of celebrities and activists such as Rihanna and Greta Thunberg, issued a statement Friday calling for an "immediate reinstatement" of telecommunications services that were disrupted at protest sites outside of the capital, New Delhi border. "The government's efforts to suppress the voice of disagreement continue," the farmer unions said in a statement.

India restricted internet use more than any nation in 2020 and suffered the highest economic cost as a result, according to a report by Top10VPN.com, a company that reviews virtual private networks. Authorities have resorted to internet shutdowns to stem protests in recent years, including nationwide demonstrations over a discriminatory citizenship law and after it revoked the special autonomous status of Kashmir,

Farmers call for lifting blackout ahead of protests on Saturday

the country's only Muslim majority region.
"Time and again government authorities use times of political unrest to monopolize their control over information," said Allie Funk, New York-based senior research analyst at Freedom House. "That the world's largest democracy can carry out such sweeping abrogations with little or no push back from other countries has just allowed the curbs to be normalized."
India's government has toughened its stance against the protesters after violent clashes broke out last month: Authorities fortified Delhi's borders with concrete barricades, concertina wire and long metal spikes at key protest sites in addition to cutting water, phone and internet. On Wednesday, the government issued a legal notice to Twitter over its decision

to restore the handles of users who tweeted the hashtag #ModiPlanningFarmerGenocide on Jan. 26, saying those tweets were "designed to inflame passions, hatred and factually incorrect."
The farmers camped outside the capital are demanding a repeal of laws passed last year that they claim favor big companies over small landholders. They have rejected an offer by Modi's government to suspend the reforms for 18 months, as well as a mediation process established by the Supreme Court.
Modi's administration has defended the laws, saying they eliminated cartels that exploited farmers and would ultimately boost incomes by making the agricultural sector more competitive. The legislation passed easily in a parliament dominated by Modi's

allies, which won a landslide in a national election in 2019.
The increased global attention on the farmer protests threatens to damage India's reputation as it looks to attract more investment from companies looking to diversify supply chains away from China in the wake of the pandemic and burgeoning geopolitical tensions. The country is among the world's worst hit by COVID-19 and faces an unprecedented economic recession.
The Biden administration also weighed in on the protests, backing the farmers in their call for access to the internet. "We recognize that unhindered access to information, including the internet, is fundamental to the freedom of expression and a hallmark of a thriving democracy," it said in a statement on Thursday.

India's crackdown on the internet could hurt the country's relations with democratic partners such as the U.S., U.K. and Japan, according to Raman Cheema, Asia policy director and senior international counsel at Access Now, an internet freedom advocacy group.
"It doesn't help combat violence," he said. "It only makes things worse."

Clayton presented two similar quotes from Hawkins Inc. and another from Brenntag that will annually cost the city anywhere between \$90,000 and \$120,000 depending how many gallons of treatment is needed to maintain state-required water quality. That price is contingent on rain, and the cost could go down during a drought, Clayton said.
In other business, board members Jerry Leonhard, Steve McIntosh and Portland Mayor John Boggs:
•Signed off on two promotions within the Portland Police Department. Trevor Fennig was elevated to a full-time dispatcher and Clint Gaston will become the department's part-time code enforcement officer after previously serving as a reserve officer.
•Approved a repayment program totaling \$7,984 for officer Jagg Nuñez, who is required to repay the cost to send him to the police academy because he resigned before his contract expired. The board also approved a \$11,977.59 contract with officer Brandon McDavid to send him to the police academy beginning March 15.
•Agreed to a 50/50 split with Portland Redevelopment Commission to pay for new LED lights and cosmetic improvements for light poles along Meridian Street (U.S. 27) expected to total \$17,226. Any rebate from Indiana Michigan Power for the LED lights would go toward the city, per the agreement.
•Tabled a vote on paying \$97,800 to VS Engineering for the design of a new trail.
•Paid \$6,000 to Choice One Engineering to update the city's prioritizing list for streets to be paved from future Community Crossings grants.
•Wrote off \$1,544.50 in debt, which is allowed every two years, and terminated \$256.16 worth of outstanding checks, which is allowed after a check from the city hasn't been cashed after two years.

Budget ...

Continued from page 1
Restaurants, retailers, manufacturers and even the health care sector shed workers last month, with state and local governments also letting go of non-school employees.
The unemployment rate fell to 6.3% from 6.7%, but U.S. economy is 9.9 million jobs shy of its pre-pandemic level.
Biden, who has been meeting with lawmakers in recent days to discuss the package, will talk Friday at the White House with the House committee chairs who will be assembling the bill under the budget process known as "reconciliation."
Biden also plans to make

remarks today on the economy as he keeps up the pressure on Congress to "act big" on his relief package.
The Senate passed an amendment 99-1 that would prevent the \$1,400 in direct checks in Biden's proposal from going to "upper-income taxpayers."
The marathon Senate session brought test votes on several Democratic priorities, including a \$15 minimum wage. The Senate by voice vote adopted an amendment from Sen. Joni Ernst, R-Iowa, opposed to raising the wage during the pandemic. Ernst said a wage hike at this time would be "devastating" for small businesses.

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Auctioneers Note: This auction offers a nice selection of antiques and collectibles. Auction preview will be held on Friday February 12th from 4:00pm to 6:00pm. It is recommended you follow COVID-19 guidelines by wearing a facial mask and social distancing
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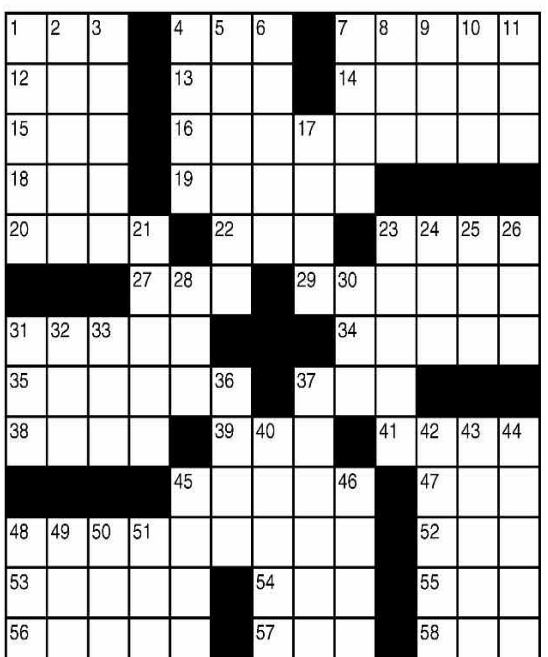
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Sports

A balanced effort

Three reach double figures in Patriot's 48-41 win

By CHRIS SCHANZ

The Commercial Review

The Patriots had been looking for a more balanced attack. They got it Thursday.

Three players scored in double figures, helping the Jay County High School boys basketball team to a 48-41 victory against the Oak Hill Golden Eagles.

"I thought once again we had a good team win," said JCHS coach Jerry Bomholt, whose team is now 5-4 on the year and has won four of its last five games.

After Ethan Dirksen ended the first quarter by banking in a 3-pointer at the buzzer to give Jay County a 15-13 lead, Oak Hill (9-8) fired right back on back-to-back buckets by its own No. 15, Landon Biegel.

Biegel's baskets put the Golden Eagles on top, but Josh Dowlen responded with his only 3-pointer on a Dusty Pearson assist to put the Patriots back on top, 18-17.

They never trailed again. Jay County opened a 12-point lead, 40-28, after the third quarter before appearing to do everything it could to give the game away. It missed its first two shots of the period before four consecutive turnovers, including a charge, against Oak Hill's press.

See **Balanced** page 7



48



41



The Commercial Review/Chris Schanz

Jay County High School junior Ethan Dirksen shoots between Oak Hill defenders Kian Hite (23) and Blake Fox during the first quarter Thursday at JCHS. Dirksen had 18 points and 10 rebounds for his second double-double of the season, leading a JCHS charge of three players scoring in double figures for a 48-41 victory against the Golden Eagles.

Tribe falls to 'Cats

No. 4 Minster races past Fort Recovery

MINSTER, Ohio — The Midwest Athletic Conference's two highest-scoring teams met on the court Thursday night.

The top team did its thing. The other, well, didn't.

Fort Recovery High School's girls basketball team struggled to score and wasn't able to keep the Minster Wildcats at bay in a 58-27 loss.

The Indians dipped to 13-5 (6-3 MAC) and had their hopes of back-to-back conference championships come to an end. Minster, which won state titles in both 2018 and 2019 and is currently ranked fourth in Division IV, moved to 18-1 (8-0 MAC).

The Wildcats, who were averaging just north of 57 points per game, jumped out to a 24-4 lead at the end of the first quarter thanks to a 10-point effort by future Miami (Ohio) RedHawk Ivy Wolf.

See **Falls** page 7

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The Commercial Review/Chris Schanz

Ashlyn Dow, a Jay County High School senior, swims the breaststroke leg of the 200-yard medley relay during the preliminaries of the IHSAA swim sectional meet Thursday at JCHS. The Patriots earned six top seeds, most of any other team.

Jay earns six top seeds

By CHRIS SCHANZ

The Commercial Review

The Patriots are in position to reach state in six events.

A team sectional crown is very much up in the air. Jay County High School's girls swim team earned six top seeds during the IHSAA swimming sectional prelims it hosted Thursday.

Delta and Norwell trail Jay County with two No. 1 seeds apiece. Winchester's lone swimmer Ella Baldwin, who trains with Jay County, is the top seed in the 100 backstroke (1:04.11).

The three-day meet is scheduled to resume at 6 p.m. today with diving, and 4 p.m. Saturday with the swimming championship and consolation heats.

The top eight qualify for the championship finals, while places nine through 16 will swim in the consolation finals.

Patriots are vying for their fourth straight team title

the 200-yard medley relay on the efforts of Eliza Bader, Ashlyn Dow, Rieley Brewster and Mara Bader. They had a time of 1 minute, 55.38 seconds, which is more than five seconds ahead of No. 2 seed Norwell.

Seniors Eliza Bader and Dow both had a pair of top seeds in individual events.

Bader posted the fastest time in both the 50 freestyle (25.21 seconds) and 100 butterfly (59.85) and will be the swimmer to beat Saturday. Dow led the field in both the 100 freestyle (54.95 seconds) and 100 breaststroke (1:09.06) to earn her top seeds.

See **Earn** page 7

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