

# The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

## Jay is blue again

By RAY COONEY  
The Commercial Review  
Jay County stayed blue. It's case total came down.

So did its positivity rate. Jay County trended in the right direction in Wednesday's update from Indiana State Department of Health, coming in with a "blue" (low risk for the spread of coronavirus) rating for the third week in a row.

After its numbers were up last week — the positivity rate was just 0.13 percentage points below the threshold for pushing the county to "yellow" (moderate risk) — the county saw its rate drop back to 3.36%. That's down 1.51 percentage points from the previous week.

Jay County's cases per 100,000 residents was also down, coming in at 48. It had been 68 a week earlier.

There was some movement in other counties in the area this week, with Blackford County shifting from yellow to blue while Delaware County went in the other direction from blue to yellow. Wells, Adams and Randolph counties were all blue again this week.

The state trend also improved slightly. While seven counties were rated "orange" (high risk) for the second week in a row, 52 were blue. That's up from 46 last week. The remaining 33 counties were yellow.

Jay County currently has vaccination clinics available at Jay County Health Department and IU Health Jay, and vaccinations are open to all Hoosiers ages 16 and older. Appointments can be made online at ourshot.in.gov or by calling the state's 2-1-1 telephone assistance service. The health department has also opened its vaccination clinic to walk-ins from noon to 6 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

As of Wednesday, more than 10,000 doses of coronavirus vaccine had been administered in Jay County. That includes 4,714 individuals who are fully vaccinated.

## Family expanding



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Nurse practitioners Tracy Hamrick (left) and Tracy Laux have both joined the IU Health Jay Family First practice in the last year. They're part of ongoing changes at the practice, which is currently undergoing a renovation and expansion project and will welcome Dr. Colin Good this summer.

## Practice at IU Health Jay has two new healthcare providers in the last year and another on the way

By RAY COONEY  
The Commercial Review  
Family First is getting a new look.

It already has two new providers, with another to come this summer.

IU Health Jay Family First added nurse practitioner Tracy Laux to its staff last summer and in February brought in women's health nurse practitioner Tracy Hamrick.

The addition of the Tracys is part of ongoing changes at the practice at the hospital in Portland. The Family First office, located in the center of the hospital on the south side, is also in the midst of a \$767,500 renovation and expansion project, and Dr. Colin Good is scheduled to join the practice this summer.

Laux has been with IU Health since 2007, first working as a registered nurse at IU Health Ball before getting her master's degree from Ball State University to become a nurse practitioner. She worked at Jay County Hospital and then for about five years at West Jay Clinic in Dunkirk before joining Family First in July.

She said it was good to return to the hospital setting in Portland.

"It was nice to come back because all these front staff, back staff, they're all the people used to work with," said Laux. "It was very comforting."

Hamrick was hired in December and joined Family First a couple of months later after taking advantage of some training opportunities. She's

been a women's health nurse practitioner since 2013 after earning her master's degree at the University of Cincinnati.

She came to IU Health Jay to help facilitate the new Healthy Beginnings program the hospital implemented last year in an effort to focus on prenatal and post-natal health after discontinuing birthing services.

"I believe it's going to be very beneficial, especially for the moms that don't want to make those trips ... to Muncie for their prenatal care," said Hamrick. "Our Healthy Beginnings program here will help incorporate educational opportunities ... We can also see preventative visits for gynecological wellness as well as postpartum care."

Neither Tracy started on the

path of being a nurse practitioner.

Laux, a Coldwater, Ohio, native, first thought about being a radiology technician before shifting to nursing and getting her associate's degree from Rhodes State College. She spent more than five years as a registered nurse before returning to school to become a nurse practitioner.

"I felt like there was maybe something more I could offer," said Laux, noting that she got more and more interested in the profession as she went on rounds with doctors and observed others in the medical field. "That's when I thought I could maybe think about going into being a nurse practitioner."

See **Expanding** page 2



## Prom pump

Nate Chrisman pumps his first in celebration after being announced as Jay County High School's prom king during promenade Saturday evening.

## Biden calls for sweeping action

By CHRIS MEGERIAN and ELI STOKOLS  
Los Angeles Times  
Tribune News Service

WASHINGTON — In a pitch for lifting American workers to prevail in global competition with China, President Joe Biden on Wednesday used his first address to a joint session of Congress to press his case that massive spending on infrastructure, education, technological initiatives and social services will ensure the United States emerges from the coronavirus crisis in a stronger position than before.

The president rooted his proposals in working-class demands for steady paychecks, affordable child care and better schools. But he also framed them as part of a broader struggle between democracies and autocracies, saying the invest-

ments are needed to prevent Beijing from supplanting Washington in a position of international leadership.

"We have to prove them wrong," Biden said. "We have to prove that democracy still works, that our government still works and we can deliver for our people."

The nationally televised, prime-time speech of just over an hour came as Biden approached the end of his first 100 days in office, a period dominated by his efforts to extend economic relief, expand vaccine distribution and bring an end to the pandemic. Although Biden cautioned that the threat isn't over, he described the inoculation campaign as "one of the greatest logistical achievements our country has ever seen."

See **Sweeping** page 2

### Deaths

Angeline Zimmerman, 97, rural Portland  
Juanita Sipe, 83, Celina, Ohio  
Details on page 2.

### Weather

Jay County's high temperature Wednesday was 73 degrees. The low was 64. There was about a tenth of an inch of rain before midnight.

Tonight's low will drop into the mid 40s with winds gusting to 20 miles per hour. Expect mostly sunny skies Friday with a high near 58. See page 2 for an extended outlook.

### In review

Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb this week filed a lawsuit seeking to strike down House Enrolled Act 1123 as unconstitutional. What are your thoughts on the issue?

Send letters to the editor to rcooney@thecr.com. There is a 700-word maximum.

### Coming up

Friday — Even single-party states benefit from competition. Guest column.

Tuesday — Coverage of Monday's Portland City Council meeting.



# Obituaries

## Angeline Zimmerman

Dec. 6, 1923-April 28, 2021  
Angeline "Angie" Zimmerman, age 97, passed away at her home in rural Portland on Wednesday, April 28, 2021, surrounded by her family.  
Angie was born on Dec. 6, 1923, in Redkey, Indiana, the daughter of Charles and Iris (Starr) Bird. She graduated from Redkey High School in 1941 and married Max Zimmerman Sr. on Dec. 24, 1943. Max preceded Angie in death on March 3, 2006.  
Angie and her husband were lifelong farmers in Richland and Jefferson townships. She



Zimmerman

loved to garden, cook and make handcrafts, and was an avid reader. One of her favorite things was to have a house full of friends and family to cook for.  
She attended a United Methodist Church most of her life. She looked forward to being in the presence of her Savior Jesus Christ and being reunited with her husband.  
Survivors include:  
Three sons — Max Zimmerman (wife: Linda), Columbia City, Indiana, Jim Zimmerman (wife: Carol), Redkey, Indiana, and Ron Zimmerman (wife: Lou Ann), Redkey, Indiana  
One daughter — Donna Riddle (husband: Erick), Monticello, Indiana  
Six grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren and one great-granddaughter  
Visitation will be held on

Sunday from 4 to 7 p.m. at Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home in Portland.  
Services to celebrate Angie's life will be held on Monday at 11 a.m. at Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home. Angie's son-in-law Erick Riddle and granddaughter Lory Norden will officiate the service. Burial will follow at Hillcrest Cemetery in Redkey.  
Memorials may be directed to Jay County Public Library or EverHeart Hospice.  
Condolences may be expressed at williamson-spencer.com.  
**Juanita Sipe**  
Jan. 28, 1938-April 27, 2021  
Juanita Sipe, age 83, a resident of Celina, Ohio, and a former Madison Township resi-

dent passed away Tuesday, April 27, 2021, at the Gardens of Celina. She graduated from Portland High School in 1955 and was a homemaker.  
Juanita Sipe was born Jan. 28, 1938, in Salamonia, Indiana, the daughter of Forrest and Edith (Hilfiker) Theurer. She was married on Jan. 28, 1956, to Rodney Sipe.  
Survivors include:  
Her beloved husband of 65 years — Rodney Sipe, Celina, Ohio  
Two sons — Clifton Jay Sipe (wife: Becky), Celina, Ohio, and James Robert Sipe (wife: Susan), Fort Worth, Texas  
One daughter — Julia Lance, McMinnville, Tennessee  
Six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren  
Visitation will be held on Friday from 11 a.m. to noon at

Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral home in Portland. Graveside services will immediately follow at Salamonia Cemetery with Pastor Steve Arnold officiating.  
Memorials may be directed to Cancer Association of Mercer County.  
Condolences may be expressed at williamson-spencer.com.  
\*\*\*\*\*  
*The Commercial Review publishes death notices for those with a connection to our coverage area free of charge. They include the name, city of residence, birth/death date and time/date/location of services.*  
*There is a charge for obituaries, which are accepted only from funeral homes or mortuary services.*

## CR almanac

Friday 4/30	Saturday 5/1	Sunday 5/2	Monday 5/3	Tuesday 5/4
<b>58/37</b>	<b>71/55</b>	<b>78/60</b>	<b>74/55</b>	<b>70/49</b>
Mostly sunny all day with winds reaching as high as 25 mph. Otherwise clear at night.	Sunny all day with a few clouds at night, leading to a warm Sunday. Winds may reach as high as 30 mph.	Mostly sunny all day with a 70% chance of rain at night. Other-wise warm temperatures.	90% chance of rain and thunderstorms starting in the afternoon.	Another rainy day with a 50% chance of showers and mostly cloudy skies.

## Lotteries

<b>Powerball</b> 16-18-35-39-53 Power Ball: 21 Power Play: 3 Estimated jackpot: \$129 million	Cash 5: 1-4-9-14-31 Hoosier Lotto: 8-14-20-29-34-46 Estimated jackpot: \$9.8 million
<b>Mega Millions</b> Estimated jackpot: \$319 million	<b>Ohio</b> Midday Pick 3: 5-2-0 Pick 4: 3-2-2-8 Pick 5: 2-4-0-9-5 Evening Pick 3: 7-3-5 Pick 4: 1-8-3-7 Pick 5: 6-1-9-3-9 Rolling Cash: 1-10-22-27-30 Classic Lotto: 10-12-25-36-43-45 Kicker: 7-0-3-5-5-1 Estimated jackpot: \$7.7 million
<b>Hoosier</b> Midday Daily Three: 2-2-5 Daily Four: 3-2-1-0 Evening Daily Three: 5-6-2 Daily Four: 4-9-0-6 Quick Draw: 1-9-11-23-29-38-46-48-50-52-55-57-64-66-67-68-69-72-78-79	

## Markets

<b>Cooper Farms Fort Recovery</b> Corn.....6.88 Wheat .....7.02	<b>Central States Montpelier</b> Corn.....6.71 May corn.....6.72 Beans .....15.71 Sept. beans .....12.76 July wheat ..... 7.15
<b>POET Biorefining Portland</b> Corn.....6.92 May corn.....6.92	<b>Sunrise St. Anthony</b> Corn.....6.71 May corn.....6.71 Beans .....15.35 May beans .....15.35 Wheat .....6.78 July wheat.....6.81
<b>The Andersons Richland Township</b> Corn.....6.71 May corn.....6.71 Beans .....15.71 May beans .....15.71 Wheat ..... 7.15 May wheat ..... 7.15	

## Today in history

**On April 29, 1992**, a jury in Simi Valley, California, acquitted four Los Angeles police officers of almost all state charges in the videotaped beating of motorist Rodney King; the verdicts were followed by rioting in Los Angeles resulting in 55 deaths.  
**In 1913**, Swedish-born engineer Gideon Sundback of Hobecon, New Jersey, received a U.S. patent for a "separable fastener" — later known as the zipper.  
**In 1945**, during World War II, American soldiers liberated the Dachau concentration camp. Adolf Hitler married Eva Braun inside his "Führerbunker" and designated Adm. Karl Doenitz president.  
**In 1946**, 28 former Japanese officials went on trial in Tokyo as war criminals; seven ended up being sentenced to death.  
**In 1957**, the SM-1, the first military nuclear power plant, was dedicated at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.  
**In 1967**, Aretha Franklin's cover of Otis Redding's "Respect" was released as a single by Atlantic Records.  
**In 1961**, "ABC's Wide World of Sports" premiered, with Jim McKay as host.  
**In 1971**, the Dunkirk High School boys track team cruised to an 87-30 victory over Bryant. Jeff Brown won the 440-yard dash, high hurdles and long jump for the Speedcats.  
**In 1983**, Harold Washington was sworn in as the first Black mayor of Chicago.  
—AP and The CR

## Citizen's calendar

## Pet of the week

Ozzy, a male mixed-breed that is neutered and up to date on vaccinations, can be adopted for \$100 from Jay County Humane Society, 1313 Shadeland Ave., Portland. The shelter can be reached at (260) 726-6339.

Photo provided

## Expanding ...

Continued from page 1  
Hamrick's career started in an optometry office before she decided that job wasn't something she could see herself in for the long-term. She got her associate's degree at Lima Tech (now Rhodes) and her bachelor's degree at Ohio Northern University before continuing her education at the University of Cincinnati.  
"I've always loved the one-on-one patient education, the mom/baby interaction," said Hamrick, who spent eight years as a labor and delivery nurse before deciding she wanted to be involved with patients beyond their short stay in the hospital for delivery. "This way, as a practicing provider, I have a little bit more time where I can establish care with a patient and see them throughout their life stages."  
With the renovated office set to be complete by the end of June and Good to join the practice shortly after, both Hamrick and Laux are looking forward to continuing to see Family First change and grow.  
"I'm very excited," said Hamrick. "I think it's going to be a whole new atmosphere."  
"It's exciting," agreed Laux. "The expansion is going to be really neat. I'm just eager and excited to see what it's going to be."

## Sweeping ...

Continued from page 1  
With nearly one-third of Americans fully vaccinated, Biden has begun to pivot toward an increasingly ambitious agenda that, if successful, would make his presidency among the most transformative in generations.  
"America is on the move again," he said. "Turning peril into possibility, crisis into opportunity, setback into strength."  
Pandemic restrictions left the president speaking to a relatively sparse gathering of fewer than half the 535 members of Congress in the House chamber, rather than to the usual packed audience of lawmakers, Supreme Court justices, Cabinet officials, military leaders, diplomats and other guests.  
Biden began by acknowledging the historic moment represented by the two women behind him on the dais — "Madam Vice President" Kamala Harris and "Madam Speaker" Nancy Pelosi, D-California, of the House. He was the first president, he noted, to be greeting women in both seats reserved for the two people next in the line of succession to the presidency. "And it's about time," he said to applause.  
Lawmakers were spaced three or four seats apart, including in the gallery normally reserved for guests. During most years, a handful of members stake out the seats along the center aisle hours in advance to appear on television shaking the president's hand as he enters. This year, no one was allowed inside until two hours before and each had a seat assigned by the speaker's office. Only a few were in position to exchange fist bumps with Biden as he entered the chamber.  
Metal fencing and National Guard troops ringed the Capitol, a reminder of the enhanced security that remains in place months after the Jan. 6 siege by supporters of then-President Donald Trump. Biden described the riot in his speech as "the worst attack on our democracy since the Civil War."  
"The struggle is far from over," he said. "The question of whether a democracy will long endure is both ancient and urgent."  
Biden used the speech to outline what he calls the "American Families Plan," a just-released \$1.8 trillion, 10-year proposal that would increase taxes on the wealthy to expand educational opportunities, provide paid family leave and offer tax credits to reduce the cost of child care. Low- and middle-income families would be eligible for two years of preschool and two years of community college at no cost.  
To pay for the proposals, Biden wants to end the favorable tax rate on capital gains from stocks and other assets for people earning at least \$1 million per year and to undo Trump's reduction in the top income tax rate for wealthy Americans, restoring it to 39.6% from 37%.

## SERVICES

**Today**  
**Fifer**, Shirley: 1 p.m., Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland.  
**Garringer**, Mary: 2 p.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

**Friday**  
**Sipe**, Juanita: noon, Salamonia Cemetery.  
**Brackman**, Virgil: 2 p.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

**Saturday**  
**Lanning**, Lulu Joyce: 3 p.m., Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland.

**Monday**  
**Zimmerman**, Angeline: 11 a.m., Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland.

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Photo provided

## Optimists sponsoring

Portland Breakfast Optimist Club recently presented a check to Portland Junior League to sponsor two teams. Pictured are Portland Junior League president Brian Ison and Portland Breakfast Optimist Club president Jeff Bowen.

## Farmers market returns

The market is coming back this weekend.

Minnetrasta will host its first Outdoor Farmers Market of the year from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 1.

The market will be in the Orchard Shop parking lot with free parking available in the Center Building lot and the gravel lot at the nature area. For more information about vendors and pre-ordering options, visit [minnetrista.net/farmers-market](http://minnetrista.net/farmers-market)

Masks are recommended for the outdoor market and are required in all Minnetrista buildings.

Outdoor Farmers Market events will continue every Saturday through October.

### Enrollment open

Throughout May, Ivy Tech Community College is offering Virtual Express Enrollment.

Students will be able to sign up virtually for classes that begin June 7. Those interested must

### Taking Note

RSVP and visit [IvyTech.edu/EEDay](http://IvyTech.edu/EEDay) for their campus's event dates and information.

Appointments will include assistance with assessment, a meeting with an advisor and registering for classes.

### Free admission

Indiana Department of Natural Resources is celebrating Visit Indiana Week in conjunction with National Travel and Tourism Week by offering free admission to all state parks, reservoirs and recreation areas from May 2 through 8.

All visitors who check in with their Indiana State Nature Passport to state facilities during Visit Indiana Week will be entered into a drawing for a prize package. The

grand prize is a 2021 State Parks Pass, a \$50 gift card for camping and a subscription to Outdoor Indiana magazine.

Sunday will also be the first of four free fishing days in Indiana this year. Hoosiers can fish in the state's public waters without a fishing license or trout/salmon stamp. (All size and bag limits are still in effect.)

### Registration open

John Jay Center for Learning is now accepting registrations for its VEX Robotics summer camps and clinics.

John Jay will host camps for all levels of robotics participants from June 21 through 25 and June 28 through July 2.

Morning and afternoon sessions will be available.

The registration fee is \$50. Attendance will be limited, so registration in advance is required.

To sign up, stop in at John Jay at 101 S. Meridian St., Portland.

## Doctor, staff are disrespectful to patients

DEAR ABBY: I work as a receptionist in a small medical office. I love my job, but I cannot tolerate when my co-workers make fun of our patients. Sometimes it happens while the patients are still in the exam rooms, maybe within earshot. Even the doctor contributes to this crudeness.

Some examples: "Did you see the size of that guy's nose?" or, "What's with the color of her hair?" or, "He smells like he hasn't had a bath in weeks." This goes on throughout the day every day. Is there anything I can do or say to change this mindset? We have great patients. — AT A LOSS FOR WORDS

DEAR AT A LOSS: The person who's responsible for

Dear Abby



you might be happier working for another doctor.

DEAR ABBY: My daughter "Tiffany" is 12. Her best friend, "Wendy," lives down the block. We are good friends with her parents.

How do I put this: Wendy is a thief. She has no impulse control. When she comes over, she helps herself to whatever is lying around, mostly candy and trinkets. For this reason, we no longer allow friends into our children's rooms.

Recently, another item went missing, and my daughter spotted it at Wendy's house. I told her she should say something and take it back, but she is shy. I want to say something to the parents, but I'm afraid it will ruin our

friendship. I don't think the mother knows her daughter does these things. Any ideas? — STICKY FINGERS

DEAR STICKY FINGERS: If the shoe was on the other foot and your daughter was stealing things from her friends' homes, wouldn't you want to know what was going on so you could deal with it? Talk to Wendy's mother! Tell her you don't want to spoil a friendship you treasure, but Wendy has a problem she needs to know about. If you ignore it, the problem will only escalate.

DEAR ABBY: Would you please settle an argument between my husband and me? One of us thinks it's OK to dry

our everyday dishes with the same dish towel we clean our dog's bowl with. The bowl is first rinsed with soap and water then wiped with the dish towel. One of us thinks it's disgusting. The other disagrees. Would you wash your dishes with said towel? — CURIOUS IN KETTERING, OHIO

DEAR CURIOUS: Although the dish may be perfectly clean after being washed with soap and water, because of the "ick" factor, I sure wouldn't.

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](http://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

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.

A BETTER LIFE - BRANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for all kinds of addictions, will meet from 6:30 to 8 p.m. each Thursday at The Rock Church, 1605 N.

Meridian St., Portland. Come early for a meal. For more information, call (260) 766-2006.

SENIOR CITIZENS CARD CLUB — Will meet at 1 p.m. on the first, second, third and fifth Thursday of each month at Jay Community Center.

### Saturday

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

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

The website is [museumofthesoldier.com](http://museumofthesoldier.com).

### 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.

EUCHRE — For those 55 and older from 12:30 to 3 p.m. at West Jay Community Center in Dunkirk.

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.

## Sudoku

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

Level: Intermediate

### Wednesday's Solution

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

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.

### Calvary U.M.

Church  
Drive In - Drive Thru  
Chicken n' Noodle  
Dinner  
\$8.00

May 1 11am-2pm  
In Back of Church  
301 N. Main Street  
Dunkirk, IN

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# State should simplify tax process

By MORTON J. MARCUS

Gross assessed value may be the best indicator of economic progress for a neighborhood, city, county, or state.

We don't have good numbers on the market value of real estate. Sales disclosure forms may not do the trick, if they are not audited. The Gross valuations of county assessors can be challenged by property owners. No one challenges when the assessments are too low. So these Gross assessments are a minimal statement of value.

The GAV of the property we own is listed with our property tax bills. It changes as the market value of homes in our neighborhoods change, if there are a minimal number of home

## Eye on the Pie



sales in the neighborhood. Assessors follow a manual from the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF), so there should be statewide uniformity.

DLGF's data base provides the Net assessed value of property, but those figures are the result of political fiddling with presumably objective values to lower the taxes of selected groups of property owners.

Homeowners and farmers are the primary beneficiaries of our property tax practices. In a state that pretends to treat all persons the same, persons with a mortgage on their primary residence get a \$3,000 deduction in their assessed value. Plus, every such homeowner gets a standard \$45,000 deduction.

Then there's the granddaddy of deductions. An assessment under \$600,000 drops by 35 percent (25 percent over \$600,000). That's a whopping \$35,000 on a \$100,000 home.

Thus, a home with a GAV of \$100,000 has \$83,000 in deductions, leaving a Net taxable value of just \$17,000.

We're not done yet. The legislature has designated part of

the flat-rate local income taxes to reduce local property taxes. They also bamboozled Indiana voters into putting a constitutional cap on property taxes.

For homeowners' primary residences, that cap is one percent of the GAV or \$1,000 on that \$100,000 home. Indiana's median property tax rate in 2020 was \$2.04 per \$100 of assessed value, or \$347 in property tax on that home with the \$17,000 taxable value. Since the tax (\$347) is less than the \$1,000 cap, the homeowner gets no value from the constitutional amendment and pays \$347.

With homeowners getting lower assessments, the costs of local functions do not decline. Hence, lower assessments require higher tax rates to

come up with the funds supporting public services.

However, legislators have instituted controls on property tax rates and made local governments dependent on state funding or special tax referendums. Thus did our state legislators get their desired control over the local governments they consider inferior, if necessary, creatures.

Confused? Thank a legislator. If GAV approximates market value, why not just use GAV times a lower tax rate to raise the necessary funds for localities? Want smaller government, then simplify government practices.

.....  
Marcus is an economist. Email him at [mortonjmarcus@yahoo.com](mailto:mortonjmarcus@yahoo.com).

## Lockdowns come at significant cost

The Detroit News  
Tribune News Service

We are pleased that Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer is not choosing to close down the state in response to the latest wave of the coronavirus — a response she's opted for during past surges. Shutting large swaths of the economy is costly on many fronts, and has long-lasting impacts.

A new report released by the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, authored by University of Michigan-Flint economist Chris Douglas, estimates that Michigan lost more than 64,000 jobs during the state's second lockdown, starting last November. During the so-called "pause to save lives," indoor dining was banned through Feb. 1. Other businesses, such as theaters and bowling alleys, as well as high schools and colleges were also closed for weeks.

Since this lockdown hit the hospitality industry especially hard, Douglas focused on the effects on restaurants and bars. In Michigan, an estimated 3,000 restaurants have closed since the beginning of the pandemic, taking with them thousands of jobs. Women and minorities are disproportionately impacted.

The study found Michigan's job losses were much steeper than neighboring states, thanks in large part to its tight restrictions. Jobs at eateries and bars fell 23% from October 2020 to January 2021, according to the report — a direct result of the shutdown order.

These findings mirror an earlier report from the Anderson Economic Group, which examined the economic hit following the second lockdown. That report found the leisure and hospitality industries lost nearly 60,000 jobs between November and December, yet the retail industry, which was allowed to remain open, saw an increase of jobs during that time frame.

Other Midwest states, including Ohio, Wisconsin and Indiana, that avoided bans on indoor dining experienced much smaller industry employment losses of 5% or less.

"We can clearly see that the costs of the shutdowns have been devastating," said Douglas in a statement. "Unfortunately, the shutdown did not appear to provide any noticeable benefits that could justify

## Guest Editorial

**Other Midwest states, including Ohio, Wisconsin and Indiana, that avoided bans on indoor dining experienced much smaller industry employment losses of 5% or less.**

the massive costs to the jobs and livelihoods of Michigan's citizens."

Douglas also took a look at the data surrounding the effectiveness of the lockdowns on preventing deaths from the virus. He found "little statistical relationship between lockdown severity and declining COVID-19 deaths." Other neighboring states fared about the same as Michigan in terms of virus cases, even though they had much looser mandates in place.

This meshes with a recent Associated Press report that found similar COVID outcomes in Florida and California, despite disparate strategies for responding to the virus.

Yet Douglas identified a strong statistical link between shutdowns and unemployment.

In his conclusion, Douglas writes: "Economic shutdowns provide massive, concentrated costs on those businesses and individuals impacted by these restrictions. Many businesses who were mandated to close will never reopen. Many individuals who worked in the affected industries consequently will have a difficult time finding a new job."

Governors like Whitmer want to appear they are being proactive in fighting COVID, but they must take the evidence into account to ensure they aren't doing more harm than good.

SHENEMAN THE STAR-LEDGER



AND NOW, TO EXIT GRACEFULLY...

## Negotiations will go nowhere

By ELI LAKE

Bloomberg Opinion  
Tribune News Service

Senator Marsha Blackburn has not devoted much of her time in office to Iran policy. But last week the Tennessee Republican offered some clarity on the issue when she introduced a bill aimed at preventing President Joe Biden from returning the U.S. to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

"It's time for Biden to wake up and realize that the U.S. cannot negotiate an honest agreement with Iran because they are a fanatical, anti-American regime," her statement reads. "No amount of negotiating or 'indirect discussions' can change that."

In a sense, Blackburn blundered. Democrats have long criticized former President Donald Trump's policy of sanctioning Iran. Trump said the sanctions were meant to put pressure on Iran to agree to a better deal, but Democrats said they were a thinly disguised way to force regime change.

Now Blackburn has let the mask slip: The problem with Iran, she says, is the regime itself. It will never agree to stronger conditions for a nuclear agreement — such as a ban on missile development, the abolition of sunsets on uranium enrichment levels or an end to Iran's support for regional aggression.

At the same time, Blackburn is on to something. If the Biden administration succeeds in the ongoing nuclear negotiations in Vienna, one unavoidable consequence will be a windfall for Iran's war machine. Tens of billions of dollars owed to Iran (mainly from the sale of oil and gas) remain locked in overseas bank accounts because of U.S. sanctions. Iran will receive that money when the sanctions are lifted.

So a deal that seeks to prevent the world's leading sponsor of ter-

rorism from obtaining a nuclear weapon will provide Iran with money to sponsor more terrorism. This is not a flaw with the deal so much as a flaw with the regime.

Unfortunately, Blackburn's actual legislation does little to address the problem she has identified. Her bill would prevent federal funds from being spent on rejoining the 2015 Iran deal and require Biden and any future president to submit any deal to the Senate as a treaty, requiring two-thirds approval. Those are laudable goals. But while they make it harder to lift sanctions on Iran, they don't increase the chances of success for Iran's democratic opposition.

To do that, Blackburn (and for that matter the Biden administration) should consider a new approach. One idea would be not to release the billions now frozen in overseas accounts until Iran agreed to hold a referendum — monitored by the U.N. — to change its constitution and eliminate the unaccountable position of supreme leader. That constitutional change has circulated among Iranian reformers for nearly two decades, and in recent years has been endorsed by a slew of dissidents and human rights activists, including Nobel Laureate Shirin Ebadi.

Another idea would be to work directly with humanitarian organizations in Iran to reduce the harm caused by sanctions to supplies of food and medicine. Give those goods directly to Iranian organiza-

tions that are independent from the regime. Biden could also lift some banking restrictions to make it easier for Iranian diaspora groups to send money to labor unions and dissidents still in Iran.

These proposals would signal that the U.S. does not intend to punish the Iranian people for the proliferation and terrorism of the regime that oppresses them. It would also provide a path to the full economic normalization that Iranians themselves so desperately want.

America's current approach offers only false hope in this regard. Even if all the sanctions are lifted, Saudi Arabia, Israel and the United Arab Emirates will pressure banks and oil companies to stay away from Iran's economy as a condition for doing business in their countries. Meanwhile, companies that choose to invest in Iran will still have to weigh the risks that any Iranian dual nationals that work for them are at risk of arbitrary arrest, as has happened time and again in Iran since the 2015 nuclear deal. Biden's policy also offers false hope on nuclear security, as the best he can get will be an Iranian return to enrichment limits that expire by the end of the decade.

Six years ago, there was a credible argument that the alternative to former President Barack Obama's flawed nuclear deal was a regional war. But Israel has shown that sabotage can set back Iran's nuclear program without the region spiraling into open warfare. That sabotage has purchased precious time for Biden to focus U.S. policy on the problem at the center of the Iranian nuclear crisis: the Iranian regime.

.....  
Lake is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering national security and foreign policy.

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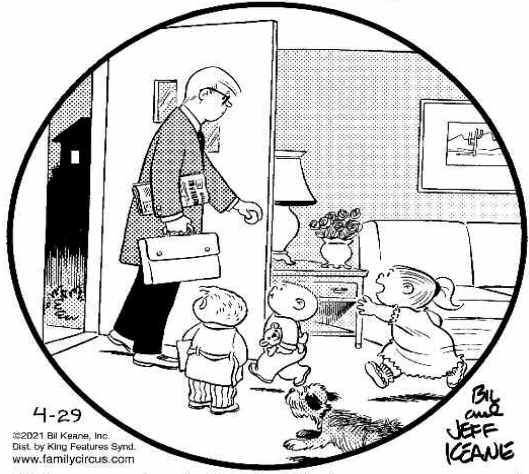
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Dave Coverly



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By Bil Keane



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**Contract Bridge**

By Steve Becker

**Never say die**

North dealer.  
Both sides vulnerable.  
**NORTH**  
♠ Q 4 3  
♥ A K 1 6 3  
♦ Q 8 5 2  
♣ Q  
**WEST**  
♠ J  
♥ 8 7 5 4  
♦ 10 9 7  
♣ 10 8 5 4 2  
**EAST**  
♠ K 9 2  
♥ 10 2  
♦ A 6 4 3  
♣ 9 7 6 3  
**SOUTH**  
♠ A 10 8 7 6 5  
♥ Q 9  
♦ K J  
♣ A K J  
The bidding:  
North East South West  
1♥ Pass 2♠ Pass  
2♦ Pass 4NT Pass  
Opening lead — ten of diamonds.  
Declarer occasionally finds him-  
self in a contract that he has almost  
no chance of making. Regardless of  
who is to blame — and in many cases  
no one is really at fault — it is still  
his responsibility to try to bring about  
a successful resolution.  
Take this case where an overly  
optimistic South found himself in a  
virtually hopeless six-spade contract.  
After learning via Blackwood that an  
ace was missing, South should have  
taken the safer course and signed off  
at five spades rather than assume his  
partner had the K-Q-x or K-x-x-x of  
spades, which would have made the  
slam a strong favorite.  
West led a diamond to East's ace,  
and declarer won the diamond con-  
tinuation with the king. South then  
paused to consider the possible divi-  
sions of the missing trumps.  
If the spades were divided 2-2, a  
trump trick had to be lost, so he next  
considered potential 3-1 splits. If  
either defender had the K-J-x of  
spades, there was also no hope. Nor  
would it help if the spade king fell  
singleton under the ace, since the  
other defender's J-9-2 could not be  
overcome regardless of how South  
continued.  
Only one possibility remained —  
a singleton jack. If the lone jack was  
in the East hand, it would do South  
no good, but if West had it, declarer  
was in business.  
So South crossed to the queen of  
clubs at trick three and led the queen  
of spades. It didn't matter what East  
did. If he refused to cover, the queen  
would win and a repeat finesse would  
pick up the king. If he did cover,  
South would win, re-enter dummy  
and finesse against East's nine to  
bring in the slam.  
Desperate situations require des-  
perate measures.  
Tomorrow: Bidding quiz.  
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4-29

**CRYPTOQUIP**

AYXN SE DQCCBC IQOI

EWOIICXCN IZSHYDOW EYBQ

LYPQI CBHCDYOWWM CXGSM

COIYXP: LOXIO-ZOM GODA.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I'D BE ABLE TO  
STRAIN A BIT OF FLOUR LIGHTLY, BUT I'LL  
LEAVE YOU TO DO THE HEAVY SIFTING.  
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: A equals K

**CROSSWORD** By Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS**  
1 Sashimi fish  
4 First bed  
8 Gush  
12 — de mer  
13 Sleek, in car lingo  
14 Others (Lat.)  
15 Prairie State  
17 Dweeb  
18 E.T.'s craft  
19 Ice cream parlor orders  
21 Pester  
24 PBS funder  
25 Equi-  
26 Branch  
28 "Enigma Variations" composer  
32 School session  
34 Stephen of "Still Crazy"  
36 Japanese noodles  
37 Doctor's order  
39 Workout venue  
41 Not 'neath  
42 "Way cool!"  
44 Haystack find  
46 West Indies island  
50 Up-to-date  
51 Read quickly  
52 Modern wet blanket  
56 Funny Fey  
57 Medicinal plant  
58 Director Spike  
59 Requests  
60 Token of immunity  
61 Bagel topper  
**DOWN**  
1 —  
2 Actor Linden sister  
3 Imagined oil  
5 Old Olds-mobile  
6 Showy flower  
7 Boat-swain, casually  
8 Summer footwear  
9 Entreaty  
10 Green land  
11 Bankrolls  
16 Condi-tions  
20 Formerly known as  
21 Chart toppers  
22 Cruising  
23 Goof up  
27 Eldest March sister  
29 Benevo-lence  
30 Cain's brother  
31 Excep-tional  
33 Spots for yachts  
35 Objectivist Rand  
38 Harpy  
40 Tony-winning actress/singer  
43 Persian Gulf emirate  
45 "A mouse!"  
46 "The Thin Man" dog  
47 Mark Harmon TV series  
48 Gas container  
49 "— Lang Syne"  
53 Menag-erie  
54 Author Tolstoy  
55 Superman foe Luthor  
**Solution time: 24 mins.**  
H A T E K E D C A F E  
O X O L O V E A L U M  
L E O P I A N O B A R S  
A L L A H T R A  
M A L T B L A S E  
D I V E B A R S S N O W  
U N I A L I T O N A E  
E T T U O P E N B A R S  
L O O P S S W A B  
S R A S Q U A D  
S U S H I B A R S M G R  
A S T O L I I I P E A  
C H E T E M T S S E T  
Yesterday's answer 4-29

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12			13					14		
15		16					17			
		18			19		20			
21	22		23		24					
25			26		27		28	29	30	31
32		33		34		35		36		
37			38		39		40		41	
		42		43		44		45		
46	47	48		49		50				
51				52		53			54	55
56				57					58	
59				60					61	

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## Cox to the Cougars

Bailey Cox, a Jay County High School senior, signed his national letter of intent on Wednesday to play football for the University of Saint Francis Cougars. Pictured from left are former JCHS football coach Tim Millspaugh, mother Jennifer Cox, Bailey Cox, father Craig Cox, teammate Sheldon Eley and assistant coach Michael Karn.

## Men take third in competition

HUBER HEIGHTS, Ohio — A half dozen members of the Jay County Barbell Club competed in the nationwide Festivus Games Team CrossFit competition at AKP CrossFit.

Teams were ranked among how they finished at their specific location and then amongst all teams competing at multiple locations throughout the United States.

The men's team, comprised of Kurt Hess, Aaron Hoevel and first-time competitor Andrew Warren, finished third out of 12 teams at their location, and were 453rd out of 2,030 teams nationwide.

Bre McIntire, first-time competitor Sierra Pugh and Shawnda Roussey placed sixth out of 19 women's teams at AKP CrossFit, and ranked 670th out of 3,039 teams nationwide.

### Local roundup

#### Golfers win opener

WINCHESTER — The Jay County Junior High golf team opened its season Tuesday with a victory against Driver at Winchester Golf Club.

Jay County scored 157 in the six-hole match, with Winchester ending with a score of 186.

Cody DeHoff, Luke Fugitt and Isaac Homan all matched one another with their score of 37 to lead the Patriots. Maddy Snow completed the team score with her round of 46.

Jacob Monroe also competed for Jay County, but his score of 47 did not factor into the team total.

## Haines places ninth for Titan golfers

Collin Haines finished in the top 10 as an individual in leading the Indiana University-South Bend men's golf team during the Chicagoland Collegiate Athletics Conference championships on Monday and Tuesday at TPC at Deer Run in Silvis, Illinois.

The 2018 Jay County High School graduate shot 77 on the first day, which put him in a four-way tie for seventh overall. On day two, Haines bested his round from the previous day by one stroke, but he slipped two spots.

His tournament total of 153 was ninth overall, tying him with three other golfers.

Nick Hayden, a 2017 JCHS graduate, shot 169 (81-88) to place 28th out of 54 competitors.

### Collegiate Check-up

Roosevelt University won the conference championship with a two-day total of 609. Holy Cross (South Bend) shot 622 for second, while Olivet Nazarene was third with 326.

IU-South Bend placed eighth out of 10 teams with a score of 670.

#### Max Moser Jay County - 2018

Doubled and scored twice for

the Huntington University baseball team on Tuesday in a 21-9 victory against Lourdes.

Moser was 1-for-4 with a double and a walk. He also struck out twice.

The Foresters (28-13) scored two or more runs in all eight offensive innings, racking up 20 hits.

Moser is batting .207 in 29 at-bats. He's got six hits, including two home runs and two doubles. He's driven in six RBIs and drawn two walks.

#### Robby LeFevre Fort Recovery - 2019

Competed for the Fordham University men's track and field team in the Wolfie

Invitational on Friday at Stony Brook University.

He was sixth overall in the 100-meter dash with his time of 11.37 seconds. Anthony Urbanick of Stony Brook won the race in 10.88 seconds.

In the 200 dash, LeFevre had a time of 24.14 seconds, which was eighth. Yourry Tapandengombe of Fairleigh Dickinson ended in 22.15 for the victory.

#### Noah Arbuckle Jay County - 2020

Also played for the Huntington University baseball team in its 21-9 thrashing of Lourdes on Tuesday.

He tossed 1 2/3 innings of relief, allowing two runs — one

earned — on two hits. He also walked one.

Arbuckle has appeared in five games, allowed five runs — four earned — on five hits in 5 2/3 innings of work. He's struck out a pair and walked two.

#### Cade Wendel Fort Recovery - 2019

Pitched for the Lake Erie baseball team on Friday in an 11-5 loss to Trevecca Nazarene.

Wendel got the start and lasted five innings. He surrendered seven runs — five earned — on eight hits. He struck out two, walked three and allowed two home runs in shouldering the loss.

## Reds hope to build off series win Sports on tap

By DAVID JABLONSKI

Journal-News (Hamilton, Ohio)

LOS ANGELES — The Cincinnati Reds will not have a winning record when the first month of the season ends for the eighth straight season.

Despite a 6-1 start and then nine victories in their first 14 games, the Reds will either be 12-13 or 11-14 at the end of April. On the bright side, they just took two out of three games from the Los Angeles Dodgers, the team considered to be the best in baseball, ending a seven-game losing streak and salvaging

what could have been a disastrous road trip that started with a three-game sweep by the St. Louis Cardinals.

"I'm just really, really proud of our team, happy with our team," said manager David Bell after an 8-0 loss in the series finale Wednesday. "You have to learn yourself over and over, and I think if anything comes out of this, it's just remembering the importance of continuing to believe in yourself, continuing to have confidence no matter what's going on. I thought this Dodger series was a good example of that. Even though

we didn't win today, I do think a lot of positives came out of (the series) so we can continue to get better."

With an off day Thursday, the Reds (11-13) enter a three-game series at home against the Chicago Cubs facing a three-game deficit in the National League Central division. Through Wednesday, the Cubs (10-14) were the only team behind the Reds in the division.

The 7:10 p.m. game Friday is the first of five straight home games against Chicago teams. The Reds play the Chicago White Sox on Tuesday and Wednesday.

### Local schedule

Today

Jay County — Boys golf vs. Blackford — 4:30 p.m.; Softball vs. Adams Central — 5 p.m.; Baseball vs. Adams Central — 5 p.m.; JV baseball at Adams Central — 5 p.m.; JV softball at Adams Central — 5 p.m.; Junior high golf vs. Centerville — 5 p.m.

Fort Recovery — Track vs. South Adams — 4:30 p.m.; Baseball vs. Minster — 5 p.m.; Softball at Minster — 5 p.m.; JV baseball at Minster — 5 p.m.

Friday

Jay County — Girls tennis at Richmond — 5 p.m.; Boys track at New Castle — 5:30 p.m.; Baseball at Woodlan — 6 p.m.; Softball at Woodlan — 6 p.m.; JV baseball vs. Southern Wells — 5 p.m. Fort Recovery — Softball at Arcanum —

5 p.m.; JV baseball vs. Ansonia — 5 p.m.; Junior high track at Coldwater Invitational — 4:30 p.m.

### TV schedule

Today

7 p.m. — NBA Basketball: Indiana Pacers vs. Brooklyn Nets (FSN) 8 p.m. — NFL Draft: Round 1 (ESPN)

Friday

7 p.m. — NFL Draft: Rounds 2-3 (ESPN)

Saturday

Noon — NFL Draft: Rounds 4-7 (ESPN) 4:05 p.m. — Major League Baseball: Cleveland Indians at Chicago White Sox (FS1) 7:30 p.m. — NBA Basketball: Golden State Warriors at Houston Rockets (ESPN)

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