

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

www.thecr.com

\$1

Soil removal will cost utility millions

Coal ash waste from power plan caused contamination

TOWN OF PINES, Ind. (AP) — A utility must pay \$12 million under a federal consent decree to remove soil tainted by coal ash from around homes in a small north-west Indiana community where the local aquifer is contaminated by the power plant waste.

Northern Indiana Public Service Co., or NIPSCO, reached an agreement last week with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency detailing how the contamination at Portage County's Town of Pines will be fully cleaned up, The Indianapolis Star reported Thursday.

For many years, NIPSCO dumped coal ash, the byproduct of burning coal to generate electricity, in a landfill that sat on top of the town's aquifer. Coal ash also was used as "fill" during construction at building sites and under the roads of the town of about 600 residents.

Coal ash contains a mix of heavy metals such as arsenic, lead and mercury, which in high levels can damage the nervous system and create an increased risk for certain cancers.

Sampling by state officials shows that heavy metals from coal ash have leached into the Town of Pines' water supply.

Some residents and environmental advocates have expressed frustration that the cleanup process has moved slowly even though the EPA has long known about the pollution in the town, where the contamination led to the creation of a federal Superfund site.

See **Removal** page 2

Plan approved



The Commercial Review/Bailey Cline

Zach Lasek and Mark Wengierski of Scout Clean Energy speak about plans for Sun Chief Solar at a Jay County Plan Commission meeting Thursday. The proposed \$100 million, 100-megawatt solar energy facility will be located on about 1,200 acres northeast of Redkey, near Scout's existing Bitter Ridge Wind Farm. It will have setbacks of about 30 feet from surrounding property lines and about 250 feet from nearby residences.

Sun Chief Solar found to be in compliance, company calls for completion by end of 2025

By BAILEY CLINE

The Commercial Review

A solar farm planned for northeast of Redkey has received the OK to move forward.

Jay County Plan Commission found the proposed Sun Chief Solar with sustainable energy company Scout Clean Energy to be compliant with the current solar ordinance and approved its development plan Thursday.

Scout's Sun Chief Solar project manager Zach Lasek and director of development Mark Wengierski shared a brief overview of the planned facility.

Scout — the same company operating Bitter Ridge Wind Farm in southwest Jay County — will be constructing Sun Chief Solar, a \$100 million, 100-megawatt facility on about 1,200 acres near the existing wind farm northeast of Redkey. (About 70% of the project is in Jefferson township, and 30% of the project is in Richland township.) The facility will be connected to the same transmission line as Bitter Ridge Wind Farm.

"In this case, it will be a true co-location of wind and solar facilities," Lasek said.

Scout's plan is to have its

solar farm completed by the end of 2025.

Sun Chief Solar has a 30-foot setback from surrounding property lines, and it will sit about 250 feet away from nearby residences. (The ordinance calls for 25-foot setbacks from properties and 150-foot setbacks from residences.) The facility will also have a 600-foot setback from nearby wind turbines. The company will have a 25-foot vegetative buffer, in accordance with the ordinance.

Lasek noted the chain link fences surrounding the property will be 7 feet tall.

There will be no permanent impact to wetlands, according to Lasek, as those in the area of the project will be "completely avoided."

Scout will save about \$3.8 million in property taxes with its 10-year tax abatement approved in November. The company will give about \$1.3 million in economic development payments to the county, and its facility will result in additional \$38.9 million in assessed value. It will generate more than \$24 million in property taxes over its 35-year life.

See **Approved** page 2



The Washington Post/Heidi Levine

A woman outside Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, carries a white cloth on a stick Thursday as she and others flee Russian forces. Officials in Ukraine's southern city of Mariupol accused Russian forces of bombarding the besieged seaside hub Thursday, amid international condemnation of a strike a day earlier that tore through a maternity hospital, killing at least three people and injuring 17.

Strikes hit western Ukraine

By YURAS KARMANAU

Associated Press

LVIV, Ukraine — Russia widened its military offensive in Ukraine on Friday, striking airfields in the west and an industrial city in the east for the first time as a huge armored column long stalled outside Kyiv was on the move again, fanning out into nearby forests and towns.

The U.S. and its allies prepared to step up their efforts to isolate and sanction Russia by revoking its most favored trading status. But with the invasion now in its 16th day, Russia appeared to be trying to regroup and regain momentum, with expanded bombardment and tightening on cities already under attack, particularly the key port city of Mariupol, where tens of thousands were struggling to find food under an intense 10-day-old siege.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said there are "certain

positive developments" in Russia-Ukraine talks — but did not offer details.

The Russian leader hosted Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko in Moscow for talks on Friday, telling him negotiations were "being held almost on a daily basis," and that "there are certain positive developments, negotiators on our side reported to me."

For his part, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Ukrainian forces had "reached a strategic turning point,"

speaking in a video outside the presidential administration in Kyiv

"It's impossible to say how many days we will still need to free our land, but it is possible to say that we will do it because ... we have reached a strategic turning point," he said. He didn't elaborate. He said authorities were working on 12 humanitarian corridors and trying to ensure food, medicine and basic goods to people across the country.

See **Strikes** page 5

'It's impossible to say how many days we will still need to free our land ...'

—Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Ukrainian president

Weather

The high temperature Thursday in Jay County was 45 degrees. The low was 28.

There is a chance of snow until about 10 p.m., with less than an inch of accumulation

expected. The low tonight will be 17.

Expect a high of 25 Saturday with a 30% chance of snow.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

Jay County Solid Waste Management District will have recycling trailers available Saturday. Trailers will be open from 9 a.m. to noon in the shopping center at 220 Lincoln St., Portland, and Dunkirk City Park.

Coming up

Saturday — A look at planned INDOT work on Meridian Street in Portland.

Tuesday — Coverage of Monday's Jay School Board meeting.





Photo provided

Five generations

Pictured are five generations of the Blowers, Mong, Ronald and Schricker families. In the front row are great great-grandmother Martha Ronald holding Emberlyn Kay Schricker and great-grandmother Evelyn Mong. In the back row are grandmother Elizabeth Blowers and father Jordan Schricker.

Man focuses only on himself

DEAR ABBY: I refer to my husband as "the most single married man" I know. He turns off the lights, turns off the heat and turns off the TV while I'm still watching or still plan on being home.

His latest "single" thing is that he planned a birthday dinner out with our son and other family members.

Guess what? I found out about it from the birthday boy.

We have been married almost 50 years. All our children are in their 40s.

I have spoken to him numerous times about his forgetting my presence in a room, but I have never been excluded from a family birthday until now. I am thinking of writing a book titled, "The Most Single Married Man I Know." What should I be doing differently? — FORGOTTEN WOMAN IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

DEAR FORGOTTEN: If this has been going on since you and your husband were married, accept that he is someone who is unusually centered on himself. If this is something relatively recent, he may need to be physically and neurologically evaluated by his physician.

If there is nothing "wrong" with him, recognize it's time to fend for yourself. Remember to monitor the thermostat, keep a flashlight handy and be prepared to explore activities you enjoy in case your husband "forgets" to

Dear Abby



include you in the future.

DEAR ABBY: My best friend's father recently passed away. A memorial has been planned on the day of a wedding I had agreed to attend with my girlfriend. In this situation involving two significant one-time life events, is it more courteous to defer to the living or the dead? — UNSURE IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

DEAR UNSURE: Much depends upon your relationship with both of these people. Because your best friend may need emotional support during this sad time, I am inclined to suggest that you go to the memorial — and have your girlfriend attend the wedding so you will be represented. If you explain the circumstances to the person who sent the wedding invitation, there should be no hurt feelings.

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

Community Calendar

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

Saturday

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

Monday

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

BRYANT AREA COMMUNITY CENTER — Walking from 9:30 to 10:30 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 — Will be played starting at 1 p.m. each Monday at West Jay Community Center, 125 Hoover St., 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.

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

JAY COUNTY DRUG PREVENTION COALITION — Will meet at 3:30 p.m. the second Monday of each month at Portland Fire Department, 1616 N. Franklin St. For more information, call (260) 251-3259.

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.

REDISCOVERING JOY — A support group for widows and widowers meets from 6:30 to 8 p.m. the second Monday of each month at R&R Fabrications, 601 E. Washington St., St. Henry, Ohio. Ohio State University Extension agent Danny Rethman will be speaking about gardening. For more information, call or text Judy at (419) 733-5629 or Mary at (419) 678-8830, or email rediscoveringjoy@yahoo.com. New members are welcome.

Tuesday

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

ALZHEIMER'S CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP — Will meet at 5:30 p.m. the third Tuesday of each month at Jay County Public Library community room. For more information, call Deb Tipton at (260) 729-2806 or Elasha Lennartz at (765) 729-4567.

THE LANDING — A 12-step program for those in sixth through 12th grade will meet at 5:55 p.m. each Tuesday at 2nd Chance at Life Ministries, 228 S. Meridian St., Portland. For more information, call (260) 703-0777 or (260) 726-5273.

Sudoku

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

Level: Advanced

Thursday's Solution

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

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

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Mourning father offers his thanks

To the editor:
In late February, I got a call that no one wants to get. My daughter had passed away and my world was completely changed forever.

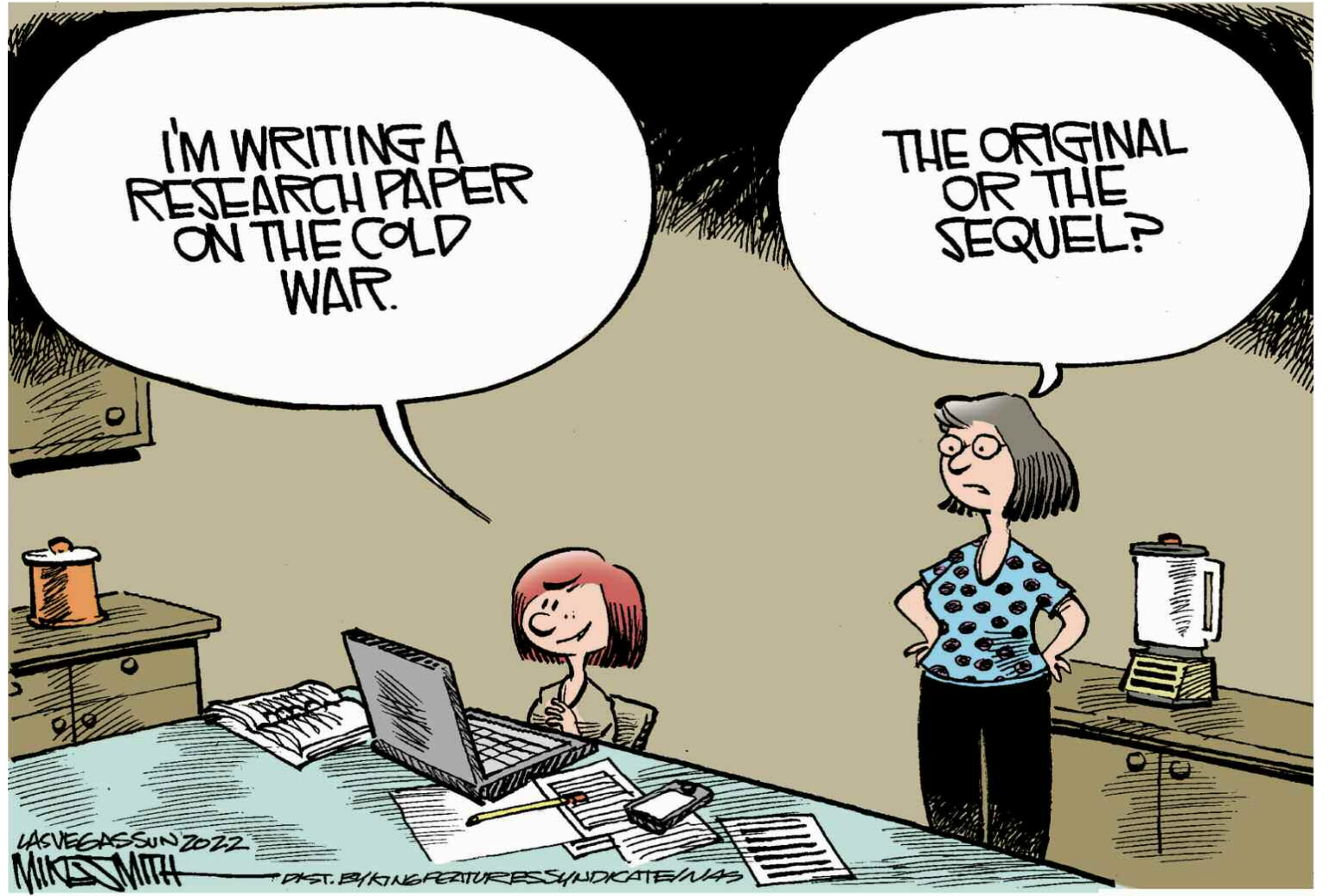
Letters to the Editor

The person on the other end of that call was Jay County coroner Mike Brewster.

I would like to express my most sincere appreciation for the way that Mike displayed professionalism that is simply put, beyond reproach. He made every effort to ensure that all of my family's questions were answered, and that all of our needs were met. It is something that we will forever be grateful for.

I also would like to thank Rob Penrod and his team at Williamson-Spencer & Penrod for helping provide a beautiful service for my daughter.

You are both truly class acts.
Eric Smith
Honolulu, Hawaii



Conflict is difficult, costly

By MICHAEL J. HICKS

Authoritarian governments are frequently thought to be more decisive than democracies. They can appear stronger and more likely to win the future than do liberal democracies, where debate is marked by public disagreement. Democracies are slow, with actions guided by compromise and the consent of the governed. Working toward compromise and consensus takes deep strength and conviction that too few people possess. This is one reason why admiration for authoritarian leaders is largely confined to the most insecure of us. This truth is exploited by authoritarian leaders who offer their followers the pretense of physical bravado and toughness, accompanied by flashy uniforms, caps and slogans.

If the past couple weeks have demonstrated anything, it is the folly of this belief. The future belongs to liberal democracies, where respect for individual rights, political freedom and the rule of law are nurtured and grow. A second lesson of the past two weeks is that this future demands a fight. We are again engaged in this fight, and it is wise to consider the cost.

In the coming weeks, the Russian armed forces will demonstrate their solitary battlefield talent. They will shell Ukrainian civilians, and execute prisoners and civic leaders as they advance into Ukraine. Russian officers will be shot for failing to achieve their tactical objectives. This offers obvious short-term encouragement to the others, but their situation is precarious. Roughly 70 percent of their ground combat power is now losing a tactical fight in Ukraine.

The battlefield pictures are haunting. They so remind me of my war, that I can again smell the cordite and burning flesh outside of Basra. If you think that description is difficult, I assure you the pictures are certain to get far worse. They may become unthinkable worse in ways that will test the world.

Putin's Russia is in deadly trouble. Their currency is now less valuable than cheap toilet paper of the same weight, and the nation is almost entirely cut off from foreign trade and investment. Part of this is due to sanctions by Western democracies, but the biggest blow has been from the private sector. Russians are unlikely to be able to import or export commodities or products. They cannot even refuel

Michael J. Hicks



their merchant ships at sea or repair their commercial air fleet.

They are an economy of roughly \$1.7 trillion, with a \$0.6 trillion foreign currency reserve that they now cannot spend. They have had a run on the banks, and face the collapse of every market and network system in the nation. They can no longer import food, medicine, telecommunications equipment and transportation parts. By mid spring, Russia will be a barter economy.

Russia has already suffered a stunning strategic loss. Nothing they can now achieve on the battlefield will change that. They entered Ukraine hoping to add to their arsenal, but this campaign might easily result in the erosion of one-third of their military power. Summer will be tough, but the coming winter will see a humanitarian crisis in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, a loose puppet state of Putin's. There will be millions of refugees walking across Europe, and political unrest not seen since 1917 will cover Russia.

We Americans are unworthy fortunate. This economic shock will affect us, but only minimally. Oil price spikes typically precede a recession. War affects oil prices, as anyone now headed to the pump can see. Still, after adjusting for inflation, gas prices are below the level we saw for a full 85 months in the 21st century, and lower than they were for the entire period from 2010 to 2014.

Trade with Russia is roughly 0.2 percent of the world economy. So, even huge shocks to Russia are a rounding error in the global economy. It is unwelcome to be sure, but our economy is our strength and Putin's weakness. It isn't now clear he has any strengths.

Happy circumstances are possible. Putin could die like other authoritarians before him, or retire to Pyongyang. If he stays, European and NATO nations will move to a warlike level of preparation. That is where the real discomfort will be felt. Germany has already doubled her defense spending, as will other NATO countries. Our spending will not

have to increase as heavily, but I suspect we will have to move an army corps back to Europe. By 2023, we will likely be back to Cold War levels of force structure in Europe. This will be costly in both money and youth.

We have forgotten too quickly some of the consequences of a Cold War. From 1945 to 1991, the U.S. lost a service member every 8 hours or so to training and operational accidents. It is an expensive, difficult and dangerous work we embark upon. It is also necessary. A major part of the success of democracies in the Cold War was an understanding of the costs of failure. It was a maturity of spirit born in the trenches of WWI and the battlefields of WWII. We again need that courage and resolve.

We inhabit a 246 year-old democracy with strength enough to handle a global crisis of this sort while still filling potholes. Unlike the Russian government, we can walk and chew gum at the same time. But, these times demand more of us all. If you find it necessary to complain about high gas prices, at least be honest about the cause. High gas prices are caused by Vladimir Putin and those who emboldened him to conduct this murderous invasion.

Better yet, when you fill up at the pump, quietly remember how many citizens of democratic Ukraine would trade anything to have our problems. And instead of complaining, give thanks for the heroic sacrifice that weakens the Russian army, while giving pause to a generation of tyrants across the world.

Every American should be thankful of how trivial is our sacrifice in this conflict. We should also be proud of how well our government and her allies have handled this crisis. The world's resolve was not organic. Our intelligence agencies and diplomats have performed brilliantly. Do not let partisanship blind you to this truth. The free world's thoughtful and informed resolve is the best defense against a broader conflict, and our ultimate weapon against the expansion of an authoritarian tyranny that is now attacking Ukraine.

Hicks is the director of the Center for Business and Economic Research and the George and Frances Ball Distinguished Professor of Economics in the Miller College of Business at Ball State University. Email him at mhicks@bsu.edu.

Landmark verdict can spark change

The Washington Post

Why is it that police officers, who have sworn an oath to uphold the law, just stand by and do nothing when a fellow officer engages in illegal conduct — such as making discriminatory arrests or using excessive force? That question has long been the elephant in the room in any discussion of police reform. That is why the conviction of three former Minneapolis police officers on federal charges that they violated the constitutional rights of George Floyd is significant. Officers are now on notice that their inaction in the face of wrongdoing puts them at risk not only of losing their jobs but also of being criminally charged. That has the potential to bring about needed change to hide-bound police cultures.

A federal jury last month found three former Minneapolis police officers — Tou Thao, 36; J. Alexander Kueng, 28; and Thomas Lane, 38 — guilty of depriving Floyd of his civil rights by failing to provide medical care as Derek Chauvin knelt on Floyd for more than nine minutes on May 25, 2020. Thao and Kueng were convicted on an additional charge for not intervening to stop Chauvin. All three face state charges of aiding and abetting murder and manslaughter; they have pleaded not guilty.

The case against Chauvin, who was convicted of murdering Floyd and is serving a 22-year state prison sentence while awaiting sentencing for his guilty plea to federal civil rights charges, was straightforward. Prosecutors showed how his actions — pressing his knee against Floyd's neck and ignoring his repeated pleas for help — resulted in the death of the 46-year-old Black man. Prosecutors in the federal case, which was believed to be the first in which officers were tried for federal charges of failing to intervene, faced a stiffer challenge: proving the inaction of the three officers was willful and deliberate. Defense attor-

Guest Editorial

neys had argued the officers, two of whom were rookies new to the job, were just following the orders of Chauvin, the senior, veteran officer in charge whose judgment they thought could be trusted.

Prosecutors hammered home that the law requires police officers to intervene when they see a fellow officer using excessive force. They detailed the training the officers received. But, as federal prosecutor Samantha Trepel said in her opening statement, "They watched as Floyd suffered a slow and agonizing death." When he said 25 times he could not breathe, they "didn't lift a finger" — and that, she said, is a crime. Just as in Chauvin's trial, perhaps the most powerful evidence was the video that captured the agonizing minutes of Floyd's death and ignited protests around the nation over police brutality.

The verdicts are an affirmation of the decision by the Justice Department under the Biden administration to aggressively pursue civil rights violations. Just days before the Minneapolis jury delivered its verdict, federal prosecutors secured hate-crimes convictions against three white men in Georgia in the killing of a Black man who was chased down while jogging. The verdicts against the three former Minneapolis officers may cause some police to think about quitting and give pause to those considering entering the profession. Yet the verdicts underscore the constitutional obligations of police to intervene when they see fellow officers breaking the law. They should spur police departments to make sure their officers are properly trained to uphold the law — even when the transgressor is a colleague.

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HUGH N. RONALD (1911-1983), Publisher Emeritus



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Strikes ...

Continued from page 1
Western and Ukrainian officials have said Russian forces have struggled in the face of heavier-than-expected resistance and supply and morale problems. So far, they have made the most advances on cities in the south and east while stalling in the north and around Kyiv.

Friday's strikes targeted the west, away from the main battle-zones, where the Ukrainian air force has used bases to operate. Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said Russia used high-precision long-range weapons Friday to put military airfields in Lutsk and Ivano-Frankivsk "out of action." He did not provide details.

The Lutsk strikes killed four

Ukrainian servicemen and wounded six, Lutsk Mayor Ihor Polishchuk said. In Ivano-Frankivsk, residents were ordered to shelters after an air raid alert, Mayor Ruslan Martsinkiv said.

In another potentially ominous movement, new satellite photos appeared to show the massive Russian convoy outside the Ukrainian capital had fanned out into nearby towns and forests.

Howitzers were towed into positions to open fire, and armored units were seen in towns near the Antonov Airport north of the city, according to Maxar Technologies, the company that produced the images.

The 40-mile line of vehicles, tanks and artillery had massed

outside Kyiv early last week. But its advance had appeared to stall amid reports of food and fuel shortages while Ukrainian troops also targeted it with anti-tank missiles.

The purpose of the new moves was unclear. Russia likely intends to eventually encircle the capital. But Nick Reynolds, a land warfare analyst at British defense think-tank Royal United Services Institute, said the move "looks like a defensive measure to allow the convoy to both better protect itself" and may indicate it can't surround the city quickly.

"Therefore, by dispersing, they can better protect themselves in the areas where they do hold ground," Reynolds said. The Russians seemed to be

stalled near Kyiv and Kharkiv but making progress in other areas, and the Ukrainian military has "taken a battering" while Russia is increasing bombardments and regrouping its forces on the ground.

"It's ugly already but it's going to get worse," he said.

The British Ministry of Defense said that after making "limited progress," Russian forces were trying to "re-set and re-posture" their troops, gearing up for operations against Kyiv.

Moscow also indicated it plans to bring fighters from Syria into the conflict.

Russian President Vladimir Putin approved bringing in "volunteer" fighters and told his defense minister to help them "move to the combat zone."

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov confirmed the "volunteers" include fighters from Syria.

Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said Russia knew of "more than 16,000 applications" from Middle East countries, many of them from people he said had helped Russia against the Islamic State group, according to a Kremlin transcript.

Since 2015, Russian forces have backed Syrian President Bashar Assad against various groups opposed to his rule, including Islamic State. Opposition activists in Syria have also reported Russian recruitment efforts for the Ukraine war. But they estimate the number of volunteers so far is in the hundreds or a few thousand.

Senate OKs aid for Ukraine

By ALAN FRAM
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A \$13.6 billion emergency package of military and humanitarian aid for besieged Ukraine and its European allies easily won final congressional approval, hitching a ride on a government-wide spending bill that's five months late but loaded with political prizes for both parties.

With Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion killing thousands and forcing over 2 million others to flee, the Senate approved the \$1.5 trillion overall legislation by a 68-31 bipartisan margin late Thursday. Democrats and Republicans have battled this election year over rising inflation, energy policy and lingering pandemic restrictions, but they've rallied behind sending aid to Ukraine, whose stubborn resilience against brutal force has been inspirational for many voters.

"We promised the Ukrainian people they would not go at it alone in their fight against Putin," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said just before the vote. "And once we pass this funding in a short while, we will keep that promise."

The House passed the compromise bill easily Wednesday. President Joe Biden's signature was certain.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said approval "proves once more that members of both parties can come together to deliver results for the American people" — a phenomenon in short supply in recent years.

She also prodded lawmakers to revive money "urgently needed to prevent severe disruptions to our COVID response." In an embarrassment to Biden and Democratic leaders who'd made it a top priority, the House on Wednesday dropped the measure's \$15.6 billion for continuing efforts to battle the pandemic after rank-and-file lawmakers balked at cuts in aid states had been promised.

Around half the \$13.6 billion measure for the war was for arming and equipping Ukraine and the Pentagon's costs for sending U.S. troops to other Eastern European nations skittish about the warfare next door. Much of the rest included humanitarian and economic assistance, strengthening regional allies' defenses and protecting their energy supplies and cybersecurity needs.

Republicans strongly backed that spending. But they criticized Biden for moving too timidly, such as in the unresolved dispute with Poland over how that nation could give MiG fighter jets to Ukraine that its pilots know how to fly.

"This administration's first instinct is to flinch, wait for international and public pressure to overwhelm them, and then take action only after the most opportune moment has passed us by," said Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky.



Mt. Cuba Center

Admiring blooms

Visitors admire the blooms along a trail at Mt. Cuba Center in Hockessin, Delaware. Just off Interstate 95 near the Pennsylvania-Delaware border, Mt. Cuba Center manages more than 1,000 acres sustainably, supporting scientific research and educating the public about native plants.

China locks down city of 9 million

BEIJING (AP) — China on Friday ordered a lockdown of the 9 million residents of the northeastern city of Changchun amid a new spike in COVID-19 cases in the area attributed to the highly contagious omicron variant.

Residents are required to remain at home, with one family member permitted to venture out to buy food and other necessities every two days. All residents must undergo three rounds of mass testing, while non-essential businesses have been closed and transport links suspended.

The latest lockdowns, which also include

Yucheng with 500,000 people in the eastern province of Shandong, show China is sticking to the draconian approach to the pandemic it has enforced for most of the past two years, despite some earlier indications that authorities would be implementing more targeted measures.

China reported another 397 cases of local transmission nationwide on Friday, 98 of them in Jilin province that surrounds Changchun, a center of the country's auto industry. In the entire province, cases have exceeded 1,100 since the latest outbreak first struck late last week.

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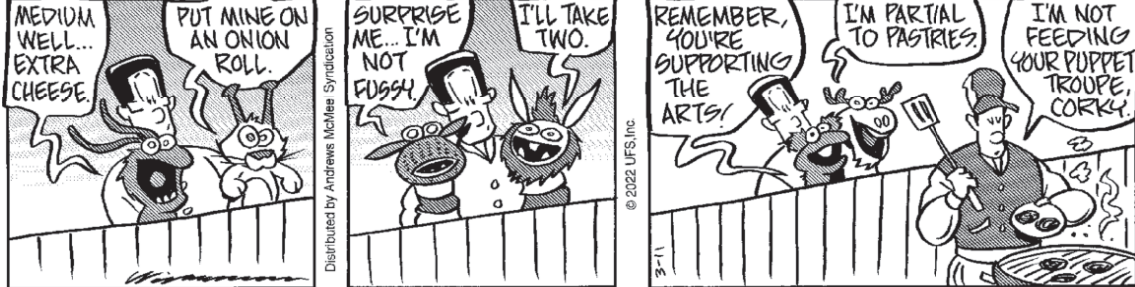
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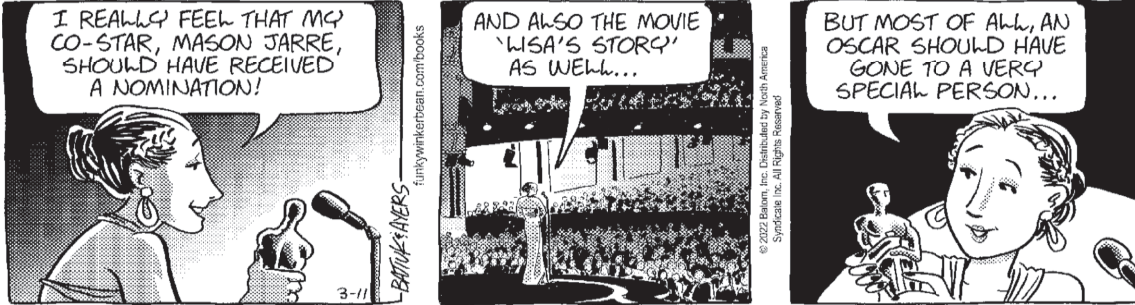
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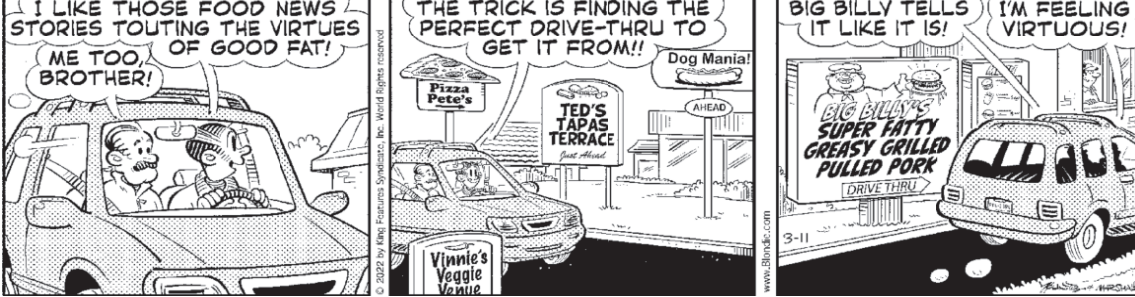
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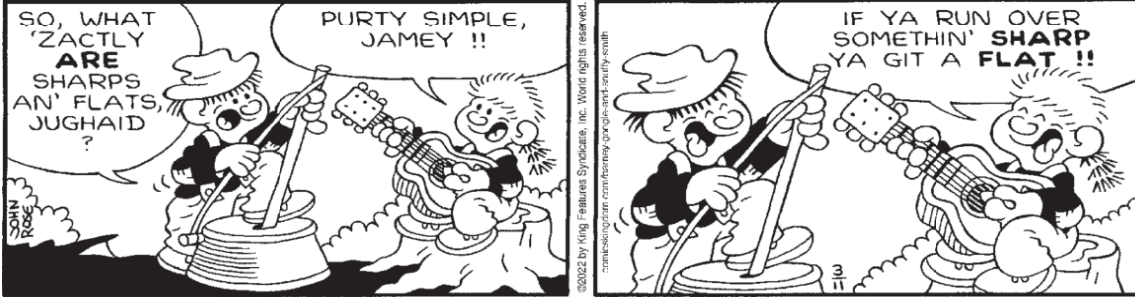
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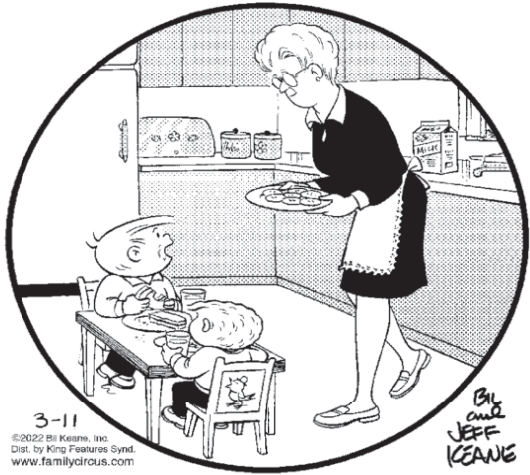


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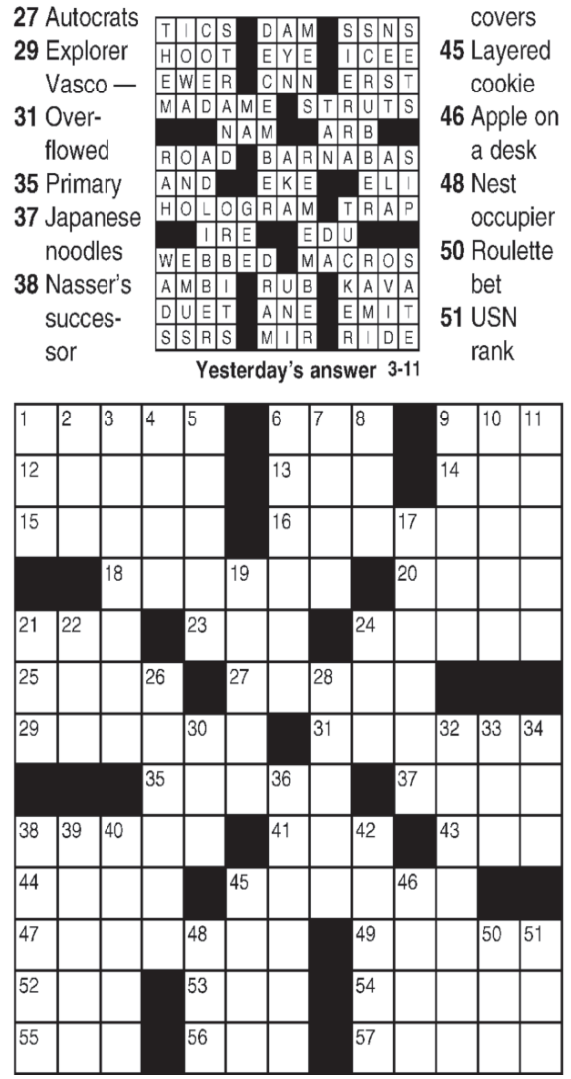
1. You are the dealer with the West hand at Six Diamonds, and North leads the queen of hearts followed by the jack. You play low twice from dummy as South contributes the six and four. How would you play the hand?
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7 VK852
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Dble Pass Pass Pass
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3-11 CRYPTOQUIP

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14 - Lingus 49 Love, to Luigi Brynner 9 Mighty sharks 33 Recede
15 Diacritical mark 52 Bikini half 9 Mighty sharks 33 Recede
16 Hawaiian island 53 "Gosh!" 10 Monster 34 "Kapital"
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Nine in a row power Jay to victory

The Patriots trailed by 12 after the first seven weight classes.

They didn't lose another match the rest of the night.

Jay County Junior High School's wrestling team closed with nine consecutive victories as it dominated the visiting Bluffton Tigers 70-30 Thursday.

Julian Hudson (125) started a run of six consecutive pins for the Patriots, who improved to 14-2. Continuing the streak were Jacob Robinson (132), Cole Carpenter (140), Leighton Brown (150), Garrett Bennett (160) and Malachi Hernandez (175).

Rhysin Blowers (196)

won by a 10-2 major decision before Joaquin Johnson (220) and Alan Ortiz (275) finished off the sweep of the final nine matches of the evening.

Other wins for Jay County on Thursday came from Maddax Byrum (75), Grant Linville (85) and Hayden Ison (110).

Scoring exhibition victories for the Patriots were Byrum (75), Gabe Ardizzone (125), Ava Raines (160), Maleah Parson (160), Haley Ridenour (160) and Hayden Richman (102).

Jay County will compete in the Allen County Athletic Conference Tournament at 9 a.m. Saturday at South Adams.



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Julian Hudson of Jay County Junior High School controls Bluffton's Gavin Grieser during their 125-pound match Thursday night. Hudson went on to win by pin, starting a run of nine consecutive Patriot victories.

Deal ...

Continued from page 8

Training camps in Florida and Arizona will open Friday, with players mandated to report by Sunday. Opening day was pushed back just over a week from its March 31 date, but all that might be forgotten when the Yankees' Aaron Judge digs in against the rival Red Sox, or Shohei Ohtani eschews the new universal designated hitter and plays both ways for the Angels.

"I do want to start by apologizing to our fans," Commissioner Rob Manfred said, his voice quavering at times, later adding: "I hope that the players will see the effort we made to address their concerns in this agreement as an olive branch in terms of building a better relationship."

A frenzy of free-agency action was expected. A freeze on roster transactions was dissolved Thursday night, spurring a wave of speculation about new homes for Carlos Correa, Freddie Freeman and more than 100 other free agents who had been kept in lock-out limbo.

The deal brings major changes that include expansion of the DH to the National League, increasing the postseason from 10 teams

to 12, advertisements on uniforms, a balanced schedule that reduces intradivision play starting in 2023 and measures aimed to incentivize competition and decrease rebuilding, such as an amateur draft lottery. Most of the labor fight, of course, centered on the game's core economics.

The players' executive board approved the five-year contract at about 3 p.m. in a 26-12 vote. Owners ratified the deal 30-0 just three hours later, and just like that, baseball's ninth work stoppage ended.

Not that all is resolved. Union head Tony Clark did not appear alongside Manfred and scheduled a separate news conference for Friday, a visible sign of the sport's factions.

"Our union endured the second-longest work stoppage in its history to achieve significant progress in key areas that will improve not just current players' rights and benefits, but those of generations to come," Clark said in a statement.

Manfred pledged "maybe to more regularly get to the bottom of player concerns so that they don't build up."

"I spoke to Tony after their ratification vote. I told him that I thought we had a great opportunity for the game in front of us," Manfred said. "One of the things that I'm supposed to do is promote a good relationship with our players. I've tried to do that. I think that I have not been successful in that. I think that it begins with small steps."

Players' pictures that had been scrubbed from the league's website were restored. Teams tweeted videos and statements celebrating the lockout's end and sharing info about tickets for the new opening day.

The 184 games canceled by Manfred were instead postponed, and the regular season was extended by three days to Oct. 5. Approximately three games per team will be made up as part of doubleheaders.

With pitchers Max Scherzer and Andrew Miller taking prominent roles as union spokesmen, players let three management deadlines pass — Manfred called them "the art of collective bargaining" — before accepting an agreement before the fourth.

While the union's executive subcommittee voted 8-0 against

the deal — all earned \$3.5 million or more last year — player representatives were in favor by 26-4.

"Time and economic leverage. No agreement comes together before those two things play out," Manfred said. "I think we made an agreement when it was possible to make an agreement."

After narrowing the economic gap this week, MLB made another offer Thursday afternoon, saying this was the absolute, final, last moment to preserve full salary and service time.

"The deal pushes the game forward," Yankees pitcher Gerrit Cole, a member of the union's executive subcommittee, said in a telephone interview with the AP. "It addresses a lot of the things that the players in the game should be focused on: the competitive integrity aspect of it."

The union especially wanted to boost pay of young players and encourage teams not to delay their debuts in order to push back free agency.

Under the new postseason format, two division winners from each league receive first-round byes and the remaining four

teams play in a best-of-three wild card round.

The deal allows teams to have advertising on uniforms and helmets for the first time and established a fast-track MLB-dominated rules committee that could recommend a pitch clock and limits on defensive shifts starting in 2023. Tiebreaker games for playoff berths have been eliminated, replaced by mathematical formulas.

The luxury tax threshold rises from \$210 million last year to \$230 million this season, the largest yearly increase since that restraint began in 2003. The threshold rises to \$244 million by 2026, a loosening for the biggest spenders such as the Yankees, Mets, Dodgers and Red Sox. The 3% annual growth is well over the 2.1% during the expired contract and the 1.2% in the 2011 deal.

Tax rates remain unchanged at the initial threshold, second and third thresholds. A new fourth threshold, aimed at billionaire New York Mets owner Steve Cohen, starts \$80 million above the first and has rates of 80% for the first offender, 90%, for the second and 110% for the third.

Sports on tap

Local schedule

Today
Jay County — Junior high swimming hosts Allen County Athletic Conference Championships — 5 p.m.

Saturday
Jay County — Track in Golden Eagle Relays at Anderson University — 3 p.m.; Junior high wrestling in Allen County Athletic Conference Tournament at South Adams — 9 a.m.

TV schedule

Today
11:30 a.m. — Men's college basketball: Big Ten Tournament — Indiana vs. Illinois (BTN)

Noon — Men's college basketball: SEC Tournament — Texas A&M vs. Auburn (ESPN); Atlantic 10 Tournament — Fordham vs. Davidson (USA)

1 p.m. — Men's college basketball: American Athletic Conference Tournament — Cincinnati vs. Houston (ESPN2)
2 p.m. — Men's college basketball: SEC Tournament — LSU vs. Arkansas (ESPN); Big Ten Tournament — Iowa vs. Rutgers (BTN)

3 p.m. — Men's college basketball: American Athletic Conference Tournament — Semifinal (ESPN2)

6 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Atlantic 10 Tournament — Massachusetts vs. Dayton (USA)

6:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Big East Tournament — Semifinal (FS1); Big Ten Tournament — Michigan State vs. Wisconsin (BTN)

7 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Big 12 Tournament — Semifinal (ESPN2); ACC Tournament — Semifinal (ESPN)

8:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Atlantic 10 Tournament (USA)

9 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Big East Tournament — Semifinal (FS1); Big Ten Tournament — Penn State vs. Purdue (BTN)

9:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: ACC Tournament — Semifinal (ESPN)

11:30 p.m. — Pac-12 Tournament — Semifinal (FS1)

Saturday
8:30 p.m. — NBA basketball: Milwaukee Bucks vs. Golden State Warriors (ABC)

11 a.m. — Men's college basketball: America East Tournament — Championship (ESPN2)

11:30 a.m. — NASCAR Xfinity Series: United Rentals 200 qualifying (FS1)

1 p.m. — Men's college basketball: SEC Tournament — Semifinal (ESPN);

Big Ten Tournament — Semifinal (CBS); MEAC Tournament — Championship (ESPN2)

1:30 p.m. — NASCAR Cup Series: Ruoff Mortgage 500 qualifying (FS1)

2 p.m. — NHRA: Camping World Series — All-Star Callout (FOX)

3 p.m. — Men's college basketball: The American Tournament — Semifinal (ESPN2)

3:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Big Ten Tournament — Semifinal (CBS); SEC Tournament — Semifinal (ESPN)

3:30 p.m. — Major League Soccer: Los Angeles Galaxy at Seattle Sounders (FOX)

4:30 p.m. — NASCAR Xfinity Series: United Rentals 200 (FS1)

5:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: The American Tournament — Semifinal (ESPN2)

6 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Big 12 Tournament — Championship (ESPN); Mountain West Conference — Championship (CBS)

6:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Big East Tournament — Championship (FOX)

6:30 p.m. — Men's college hockey: Notre Dame at Michigan (BTN)

7:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Mid-American Conference — Championship (ESPN2)

8:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: ACC Tournament — Championship (ESPN)

9 p.m. — Men's college basketball: Pac-12 Tournament — Championship (FOX)

9:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: SLC Tournament — Championship (ESPN2)

10 p.m. — Men's college hockey: Penn State vs. Minnesota (BTN)

11:30 p.m. — Men's college basketball: BWC Tournament — Championship (ESPN2)

Local notes

Registration dates upcoming
Portland Junior League will have a registration session Saturday for its 2022 season.

The session will be from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday at Jay Community Center.

Forms can be picked up at JCC, or online registration is available at the Portland Junior League's Facebook page.

PJL is open to boys and girls ages 5 through 15.

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

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Sports



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Ruble wrestles

Brenna Ruble of the Jay County Junior High School wrestling team tries to work for a pin Thursday evening during the Patriots' match against the visiting Bluffton Tigers. For details about the match, see page 7.

Owners, players reach a deal

By RONALD BLUM
AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK — Major League Baseball's players and owners ended their most bitter money fight in a quarter-century Thursday when the players' association accepted management's offer to salvage a 162-game season that is now scheduled to start April 7.

The work stoppage ended at 7 p.m., closing an acrimonious 99-day lockout that delayed spring training and threatened to cancel regular-season games for the first time since 1995.
See Deal page 7

IU rallies past Wolverines

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Trayce Jackson-Davis scored 19 of his 24 points in the second half, Xavier Johnson had 17 points, eight rebounds and seven assists and No. 9 seed Indiana closed on a 31-9 run to rally past eighth-seeded Michigan 74-69 on Thursday in the second round of the Big Ten Conference tournament.

Michigan led by 17 points on an Eli Brooks basket with 12:52 remaining but the Wolverines would not make another field goal until the 1:42 mark. Jackson-Davis made two free throws with 5:39 remaining in the second half to give Indiana its first lead, 63-62, since it was 7-6 with 15:50 remaining before halftime. The free throws capped a 20-2 run that saw Jackson-Davis throw down two momentum-changing dunks on back-to-back possessions, off nice assists from Trey Galloway and Johnson.

Hoosiers close on 31-9 run in second round of tournament

After Michigan missed its 13th straight shot, Jackson-Davis scored in traffic in the lane for a 71-64 lead with 1:53 left. DeVante' Jones ended Michigan's slide with a runner in the lane and Brooks added a 3-pointer in transition two possessions later to pull within 71-69.

Michigan forced Indiana into a tough contested shot and got the defensive rebound but threw it out of bounds with 10.9 seconds left. It was Michigan's 10th turnover of the

second half. Johnson was fouled and made two free throws for a 73-69 lead.

Indiana (19-12) advances to play top-seeded Illinois in the quarterfinals on Friday.

Jones scored 18 points for Michigan (17-14), which had its 14-game winning streak in the opening game of the Big Ten tournament snapped. Brooks added 17 points and Hunter Dickinson scored 13 of his 15 in the first half.

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