

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371

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\$1

Idol concert



Essential Broadcast Media/Jeff Ray

Scotty McCreery, who won the 10th season of American Idol, will be the headline performer Friday, July 14, during the Jay County Fair. Opening for the North Carolina native will be Gabby Barrett, winner of the Academy of Country Music's award for new female artist of the year in 2021.

McCreery to headline fair lineup

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review

This is it. Scotty McCreery is coming to Jay County. McCreery, the country music artist who got his start on "American Idol," was announced Tuesday as the headliner for this year's Jay County Fair.

He will be the featured performer for a country concert Friday, July 14, at the fair that will also feature Gabby Barrett and Jonny James. Their show is part of eight days of grandstand entertainment that also includes We Are Messengers for a Chris-

tian music concert and bookend demolition derbies.

Tickets for the concerts and all other grandstand events will go on sale at 8 a.m. Monday at jay-countyfair.com. Stockholders can purchase tickets at the fair office from 8 a.m. to noon Saturday.

"We felt Scotty offered the most wide range for people," said fair board president Aaron Loy of McCreery's selection from a list of possible artists. "Being somewhat younger, being on 'American Idol,' he has probably the most name recognition for the area."

McCreery won the 10th season of the talent search TV show "American Idol" and his first studio album, "Clear as Day," debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard charts. His singles released include No. 1 hits "Five More Minutes" and "This is It," and his most recent album, "Same Truck," was released in 2021 featuring the title song and "Damn Strait."

The North Carolina native was the 2012 Academy of Country Music Award winner for best new artist and had the CMT Music Awards break-

through video of the year for "The Trouble with Girls."

The board is hopeful that McCreery will continue an upward trend with the big country show that the event has seen over the last couple of years, Loy said.

"You have to have a big name to draw people," he added. "We figure that's a way to get more people from outside of Jay County coming into to watch a concert."

"We see it working the last couple of years and the board wants to continue doing a big show."

See **Concert** page 2

Board grants variance for new Wendy's

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review

After receiving a variance Tuesday, plans are for Wendy's to begin construction on a Portland restaurant this spring.

Portland Board of Zoning Appeals on 3-1 vote approved a variance to allow Wendy's to have its entrance/exit closer to Meridian Street than required by city ordinance, clearing the way for the fast-food restaurant franchise to move forward.

The variance was required because the Wendy's design presented to Jay/Portland Building and Planning calls for entrances/exits on Race Street and the alley north of the property to be 42 feet from Meridian Street (U.S. 27). Portland's zoning ordinance requires such entrances/exits to be at least 70 feet from Meridian Street. (It was noted during the meeting that many businesses along Meridian Street were grandfathered in when the zoning rules were established in the late 1990s.)

Jae Schilling of Wenzak, the firm looking to build a Wendy's in Portland, and Jay Kammeyer of Perry Building Contractors explained that the size and shape of the lot — the 0.605 acres at 514 N. Meridian St. is angled on the west side where a railroad ran through the city decades ago — created some design challenges.

"It was just barely big enough for us to make it work," said Schilling. "What you have to do in this situation ... is come up with the absolute best scenario you can come up with to move traffic ..."

"For this size lot, in this position, where's it's located on the road, with the side road, there's just not a much better way to get traffic on and off the lot as efficiently as possible and to come up with the minimum amount of parking space that we need to have and to not have confusion and cross traffic on the lot itself."

See **Variance** page 2

Teachers, advocates push back against 'culture war' measures

By CASEY SMITH
Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com

Indiana teachers and education advocates admonished state lawmakers Tuesday for reviving multiple divisive "culture war" bills — including one that seeks to ban "critical race theory" from being taught in classrooms.

Other contentious proposals moving through the GOP-dominated General Assembly would prohibit sexually-explicit content in school library books and force schools to tell parents about students' pronouns and gender identities.

The Indiana Educational Equity Coalition rallied against those measures at the Indiana Statehouse Tuesday. The Indiana State Teachers Association (ISTA), the Indianapolis Urban League and NAACP, the Indiana Latino Institute, the American Civil Liberties

Union (ACLU) of Indiana, and other groups are part of the coalition.

The group specifically took aim at a bill authored by Richmond Republican Sen. Jeff Raatz that would limit classroom discussions about race. The proposal targets teaching about race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation and other factors.

Dr. Russell J. Skiba, a professor emeritus at Indiana University, called Raatz's bill a "racial gag order" that amounts to "censorship" in the classroom.

"This bill will make some children free from hearing uncomfortable truths about our nation's history, but leave students of color wondering why their history and their heritage have been wiped out of their classroom," Skiba said. "That is oppression."

See **Push** page 2



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Movie magic

Lucy Raines plays the saxophone Sunday during the Jay County High School band's winter pops concert. The band closed the show with John Williams compositions from "Star Wars," "Duel of the Fates," "Jurassic Park" and "E.T."

Weather

The temperature in Jay County climbed from a low of 29 early in the day Tuesday to a high of 59.

Tonight's forecast calls for a low of 41. Rain is expected Thursday with thunderstorms

possible after 1 p.m. and winds gusting to 25 miles per hour. The high will be in the upper 50s. There is a chance of snow late Thursday.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

Jay County Civic Theatre's production of "The Laramie Project" opens Friday. Performances are 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday at Arts Place in Portland and 7 p.m. Feb. 25 at Blackford County Arts Center. To purchase tickets, visit Arts Place, call (260) 726-4809 or go to myartsplace.org.

Coming up

Thursday — Coverage of today's Portland Board of Aviation meeting.

Saturday — Results from Friday's JCHS boys basketball game against Norwell.



Variance ...

Continued from page 1
He said moving the eastern Race Street entrance/exit to 70 feet from Meridian Street would put it essentially on top of the western entrance and removing any entrance/exit would cause bottlenecks.

Following a question from board member Kyle Cook, director of Jay/Portland Building and Planning John Hemmelgarn noted that in order for the alley north of the restaurant to handle two-way traffic, it would need to be widened to 24 feet from the current 20 feet. Schilling said his firm would be willing to handle the work to widen the alley.

Those connected with surrounding properties — Mike

Medler of Medler's Furniture to the north, represented by attorney Jim Forcum; Laci Smitley, whose mother owns property to the west; and Roy Adams of Adams Physical Therapy to the northwest — spoke against the variance request, specifically as related to the alley.

Forcum argued the variance should not be granted because eliminating the alley entrance/exit would not create a hardship for Wendy's. Medler expressed concern about semi trucks, which use the alley for deliveries to his business. Smitley had similar comments about the impact on her mother's property and its tenants — Aker Plumbing — and Adams

offered his concerns about traffic and parking.

Medler also questioned the validity of environmental testing that was done at the site, which was once the home of Abramson's Junk and Salvage.

City attorney Wes Schemenaur responded that environmental testing was not in the city's purview because the property is not city owned. Schilling added that Wendy's corporate and lenders for the approximately \$2 million project are satisfied with the testing results.

During a lengthy discussion in the hour-long meeting, board member Aaron Loy said his main concern is the creation of a possibly dangerous traffic situation with drivers turning off of

Meridian Street onto Race Street and interacting with Wendy's traffic. Cook suggested that Wendy's make the north side of its property an exit only in addition to widening the alley to 24 feet. (Wendy's cannot dictate the flow of traffic on the alley itself because the alley is public property.)

The board eventually voted 3-1 — Lee Newman, Larry Petro and Cook were in favor — to grant the variance with the stipulations that the north side be exit only and the alley be widened. Loy voted against. Connie Roberts was absent from the meeting.

Following the vote, Forcum asked for the "findings of fact" that led to the board's decision,

indicating an intent to appeal. (Schemenaur said after the meeting that an appeal would go to Jay Circuit Court.) Under state law, a variance can be approved only if the board finds that it will "not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community," the use and value of the adjacent property will not be effected in a "substantially adverse manner" and strict application of the ordinance would result in "practical difficulties" in use of the property.

Schilling and Kammeyer indicated a goal of beginning construction in March. The project is estimated at 120 days to complete, putting the completion date in mid-summer.

CR almanac

Thursday 2/16	Friday 2/17	Saturday 2/18	Sunday 2/19	Monday 2/20
57/24	32/20	45/32	50/36	50/31
Rain is expected Thursday with 90% chance of showers and afternoon thunderstorms.	Partly sunny skies are in the forecast for Friday with a high of 32 degrees.	Saturday's weather looks to be sunny with a low around 32 degrees.	Sunday's forecast shows mostly sunny skies with a high of 50 degrees.	There's a 40% chance of showers Monday under mostly cloudy skies.

Lotteries

Powerball Estimated jackpot: \$57 million	Quick Draw: 2-3-11-13-16-17-21-23-37-41-52-57-58-59-61-64-67-77-78-80 Cash 5: 22-30-32-42-44 Estimated jackpot: \$85,000
Mega Millions 23-24-35-40-43 Mega Ball: 1 Megaplier: 3 Estimated jackpot: \$84 million	Ohio Midday Pick 3: 2-8-4 Pick 4: 8-1-8-0 Pick 5: 3-8-1-0-7 Evening Pick 3: 1-7-6 Pick 4: 0-8-4-2 Pick 5: 0-1-4-5-3 Rolling Cash: 1-12-14-19-26 Estimated jackpot: \$130,000
Hoosier Midday Daily Three: 9-0-3 Daily Four: 3-1-2-2 Quick Draw: 7-8-9-42-43-47-48-49-50-55-61-62-63-65-68-73-74-77-78-80 Evening Daily Three: 5-6-5 Daily Four: 6-3-0-0	

Markets

Cooper Farms Fort Recovery Corn.....6.79 March corn.....6.79 Wheat.....7.56	Wheat.....7.08 July wheat.....7.59
POET Biorefining Portland Corn.....6.89 March corn.....6.92 April corn.....6.96	Central States Montpelier Corn.....6.74 March corn.....6.74 Beans.....15.05 March beans.....15.07 Wheat.....7.59
The Andersons Richland Township Corn.....6.81 March corn.....6.81 Beans.....15.02 March beans.....15.12	Heartland St. Anthony Corn.....6.47 March corn.....6.49 Beans.....14.82 March beans.....14.87 Wheat.....7.22

Today in history

In 399 B.C., Socrates was sentenced to death in Athens, Greece, for impiety and corrupting youth. A philosopher, he became one of the first to debate moral and ethical thought.

In 1898, the U.S.S. Maine battleship sank in the harbor of Havana, Cuba. More than half of its crew members died, inciting violence against Spain and leading to the Spanish-American War, which lasted for eight months.

In 1933, Chicago mayor Anton J. Cermak was shot by a bullet intended to kill then United States president-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt. Cermak died three weeks later.

In 1954, animator Matt Groening was born in Portland, Oregon. The cartoonist is known for his comic strip, "Life in Hell," and TV series "The Simpsons" and "Futurama."

In 1965, Canada adopted its present national flag, which depicts a maple leaf and colors across the region.

In 1979, Leon Spinks became heavyweight boxing champion of the world after he defeated Muhammad Ali.

In 1989, Soviet Union president Mikhail Gorbachev pulled troops from Afghanistan. The country had occupied Afghanistan since 1979.

In 2005, Youtube launched in the United States. The website created to share and view videos now is the second-most visited online address.

— The CR

Citizen's calendar

Today
4 p.m. — Portland Board of Aviation, airport, 661 W. 100 North.

Thursday
6 p.m. — Redkey Town Council, park cabin, 200 S. Mooney St.

6 p.m. — Jay County Board of Zoning Appeals, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland.



Photo provided

Gabby Barrett is part of the lineup for the country music concert July 14 during the Jay County Fair. The grandstand lineup also includes a Christian music concert headlined by "We Are Messengers," two demolition derbies, auto cross, a rodeo, a monster truck show and a professional wrestling event. Tickets for grandstand events will go on sale Monday at jaycountyfair.com.

Concert ...

Continued from page 1
Barrett, another "American Idol" alum, was named the Academy of Country Music Awards New Female Artist of the Year in 2021. Her songs "I Hope" and "The Good Ones" topped the U.S. country charts.

"She's an up and comer," said Loy. "She's doing a lot of really good things. According to our agents, they think this could be one of the best lineups they see all year."

James is an Indiana native who debuted with the single "Smoke" in 2021.

We Are Messengers is a Christian

band originally from Ireland. Its top songs include "Come What May," "Maybe It's OK," "Saviour," and "Wholehearted."

Gill has been in the music industry for more than 20 years and is a worship leader and songwriter.

"We started this a couple years ago and each year it keeps growing and growing," said Loy of the Christian music night. "So we're feeling really good about it."

Much of the rest of the grandstand schedule will be familiar to regular fairgoers, with demolition derbies on Saturdays July 8 and July 15, autocross and straw races

Sunday, July 9, 3 Bar J Rodeo returning after a year off Tuesday, July 11, and Full Throttle Monster Trucks on July 12. The new addition to the lineup is Delaware County Championship Wrestling on Monday, July 10, alongside a classic car cruise in.

One key change is that Saturday and Sunday grandstand events will begin at 3 p.m. instead of the traditional 7 p.m. The goal is to complete events at a more reasonable hour, as the popular demolition derbies have run well past midnight. In connection, free admission will end at noon on the weekends.

Push ...

Continued from page 1
Teachers could not "compel, promote or indoctrinate" the belief that one race is superior or inferior to another, according to the proposal.

Similar legislation was filed last year but failed after drawing protests and heated debate at the Statehouse, however.

"Unfortunately, instead of focusing efforts and time on meaningful and positive solutions for Hoosier students related to learning or policies that would fix the teacher shortage, some legislators have made it a priority to spend their time promoting discriminatory legislation that would harm kids," said Keith Gambill,

president of ISTA, the state's largest teachers union.

Mounting opposition against Raatz's latest bill also centers around a proposed amendment that would only prohibit teaching of concepts that are related to "race or color."

"This amendment now definitely clarifies chairman Raatz's true concerns," said Mark Russell, director of advocacy for the Indianapolis Urban League.

See Push page 5



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SERVICES

Today
Kelsey, Jamie: 3 p.m., Wilson-Shook Funeral Home, Dunkirk Memorial Chapel, 317 N. Main St., Dunkirk.

Thursday
Adair, Cindy: 10 a.m., Baird-Freeman Funeral Home, 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

May 13
Warrick, Clarice: 11 a.m., West Richmond Friends Meeting, 609 W. Main St., Richmond.

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Optimists read

Portland Evening Optimist charter members Leland and Judy LeMaster read "The Little Engine that Could" to Jay County preschoolers to celebrate Optimist Day Feb. 2. Books were donated to the children.

Arts center offers classes

Blackford County Arts Center is offering three art classes this month.

Beginning Oil Painting starts at 5 p.m. Thursday. The class offers guidance for those new to painting on canvas or picking up an old skill.

Beginning Creating Writing starts at 10 a.m. Saturday, and it offers students prompts to write poems, creative nonfiction or start a novel.

Phone-Friendly Photography, a class for beginner photographers, begins at 2 p.m. Feb. 28. It demonstrates how to take quali-

Taking Note

ty pictures with phones and digital cameras.

To register, visit myartsplace.org or call arts center director Lylanne Musselman (765) 348-4154.

Email bcac@myartsplace.org to answer questions.

Top 50

Ball State University recently announced recipients of its awards for the top ranking students.

Making the top 50 was senior Katelyn Harris, a pre-medical preparation major from Portland.

The award recognizes 100 outstanding junior and senior undergraduates nominated for representing the spirit of beneficence. Recipients are invited to an awards ceremony March 25 at Ball State Alumni Center and at 3 p.m. April 5 in Emens Auditorium.

Friend's spouse shares desires

DEAR ABBY: My married friend is a swinger. She says her husband's sex drive has declined lately, but it hasn't. He keeps trying to get me to talk "naughty" with him, but I always refuse. To me, that would be betraying my friend. He has encouraged her to get a live-in girlfriend for herself. I asked her what she thinks would happen if she did and he decided to do the same. She doesn't believe he would, but I do.

Abby, I value our friendship. If I tell her about his late-night habits, it would hurt her. If I don't and she finds out, it will also hurt her. He always apologizes after each attempt. Apologies mean nothing if he continues to repeat his actions. Lately, I have avoided spending time with her because of his late-night requests. What should I do? — TURNED OFF IN THE SOUTH

DEAR TURNED OFF: Tell him his advances are not welcome and to stop calling you, and that if he doesn't, you will tell your friend. If he persists, inform your friend how long this has been going on and that you have been reluctant to tell her, but it has reached the point that it is making you not want to be around her either. After that, the ball will be in her court.

DEAR ABBY: My adult son is married with a newborn son. I recently learned that he is the victim of spousal abuse. He was keeping it a secret from us, but we found out when authorities became involved. My son loves his wife and wants to make it work. I have no idea how to nav-

Dear Abby



igate holidays and special occasions when we will see them. Knowing your adult son is being harmed by his wife, how would you interact with this woman? — UNEASY IN ARIZONA

DEAR UNEASY: Be glad that the fact your daughter-in-law is a spousal abuser is now on record. Before the next holidays, you and your husband should have a talk with your son about why he has tolerated the abuse and WHAT HIS OPTIONS ARE. Is she so out of control that she could hurt the baby in a fit of rage? Are they receiving counseling? Has he spoken to an attorney about this?

A support group your son would find helpful is Stop Abuse for Everyone (stopabuseforeveryone.org). Once he gets in touch, he will realize that he's far from the only husband who has been battered. He also needs to know you are there for him regardless, so when the holidays roll around, be "cordial" — and keep your eyes open.

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

Community Calendar

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

Today

PORTLAND ROTARY CLUB — Will meet at noon each Wednesday at Harmony Cafe, 121 N. Meridian St.

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP — New Beginnings, a support group for friends and families of alcoholics, will meet at 6:30 p.m. each Wednesday in the Zion Lutheran Church, 218 E. High St., Portland. For more information, call (260) 726-8229.

A BETTER LIFE - BRANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for all kinds of addictions, will meet from 6:30 to 8 p.m. each Wednesday at Redkey United Methodist Church, 122 W. Main St. Come early for a meal. For more information, call Pastor Randy Davis at (765) 369-2085.

Thursday CELEBRATE RECOV-

ERY — 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.

EN AVANT CLUB — Meets at 1 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month.

ORGAN TRANSPLANT SUPPORT GROUP — Will meet at 3 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month in the IU Health Blackford main conference room.

JAY COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY — Will meet at 5:30 p.m. the third Thursday of each month at Jay County Public Library. The public is welcome.

PORTLAND LIONS CLUB — Will meet at 6:30 p.m. the third Thursday of the month at Portland Lions Civic Center, 307 W. 100 North.

FORGET-ME-NOT — A support group for parents, friends and relatives who have lost a baby through

miscarriage, birth or illness will meet from 7 to 9 p.m. at St. Vincent Randolph Hospital, Winchester, in community room 1. For more information, call Kimberly Sibery at (765) 964-6075 or Nikki Bosworth at (765) 584-6452.

Friday

DUNKIRK HISTORICAL SOCIETY — Is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the first

and third Friday of each month in the former WE. Gaunt Jewelry building, 113 S. Main St., Dunkirk.

Saturday

ALCOHOLICS ANONY-

MOUS — 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.

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

Level: Intermediate

Tuesday's Solution

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

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

Small towns are something special

Editor's note: This column is being reprinted from Feb. 16, 2005. Jack loved telling stories about his exploits at Hoosier State Press Association events over the years. But far more than that, as you'll read here, he loved his hometown.

By JACK RONALD
The Commercial Review

I was lost. Coming home from a state press association conference in Indianapolis, I'd avoided the tried-and-true route home. And I'd gotten lost. Part of that was intentional, I guess. It's always fun to take a more leisurely approach to what can become a routine trip. Over the years, I've often found myself going to Indy via interstates and coming home via county roads. But this time I was lost.

Back in the Saddle



My first mistake was to wonder how much Carmel had been transformed since the last time I passed through. The answer was that it had changed enough I didn't recognize the place. Moving north from the I-465 loop, I found myself in unfamiliar territory and figured I'd have to rely upon the old go-north-a-bit then go-east-a-bit method of working my way back to Jay County.

I guess I expected the clutter and sprawl of the greater metropolitan Indianapolis area. What I hadn't counted on was the sameness of it all. Beige subdivision after beige subdivision filled the landscape. Every retail outlet was a national chain. I could have been in the middle of Indiana or the middle of Iowa or the middle of a dozen other states for that matter. Character, that overlooked something which gives the best small towns a unique feel all their own, was nowhere to be found. Instead, there were overpriced cookie-cutter houses and bloated McMansions. All of them carried pricetags that would choke any Jay County homebuyer; we're all accus-

tomed to getting plenty of house for the money. But folks were paying for location, location, location; Carmel and Fishers are apparently where they want to be. Heading east, feeling my way through a part of Hamilton County that I used to know well 35 years ago, I found myself muttering under my breath, "You couldn't pay me enough to live here." Too much traffic. Too much sprawl. Too much ugliness. Too much sameness. And too darned many people. I looked down the street of yet another beige subdivision as I drove past. In every driveway sat either a mini-van or an SUV. I wondered if people occasionally found themselves walking up to

the wrong front door; they all looked so much alike. Years ago, back in college, I remember talking with friends who had grown up in the suburbs. They loved it. It never occurred to them that they were missing something. And when I told them about growing up in a small town, where every house on the block looked different, where bankers and truck drivers lived across the street from one another, where I knew kids from virtually every social and economic background, they looked at me as if I had lost my mind. That's OK. They saw it their way. I saw it mine. Guess I'm still crazy after all these years.

Elections should stay non-partisan

Tribune-Star (Terre Haute)
Hoosiers are not clamoring to let political parties control their local school board elections.

Instead, the effort to fully politicize oversight of Indiana's community schools is being pushed by a faction in the national Republican Party. It is meant to spread the GOP's reach into local classrooms.

House Bill 1428 puts the national Republican Party a step closer toward its bosses dictating support of certain school board candidates and the decisions made once they get elected. Indiana's history of nonpartisan school board elections would end and be replaced by a patchwork system. Each of Indiana's 300 school districts would have to decide whether to do what the GOP wants — require school board candidates to wear a political party label — or to keep the non-partisan format. Districts would make that decision through a voter referendum or through the school board.

The Indiana House's elections committee voted 6-4 along party lines Wednesday to endorse and advance the bill.

The element of allowing local districts to decide whether to politicize school board elections is slightly more palatable than similar bills that would force every Hoosier school board candidate to pick a party or take on the uphill task of running as an independent. Neither version is necessary, though.

"This bill is a solution looking for a problem," said Terry Spradlin, executive director of the Indiana School Boards Association, in testimony before the committee Wednesday, as reported by the Indiana Capital Chronicle.

Indiana's existing system of nonpartisan school board elections allows people who are not overtly political to serve in that job. Voters base their decisions on candidates' comments and stances on issues, shared in public forums, candidate interviews and neighborhood interactions. The claim that attaching a party label to these folks will increase "transparency" is a ruse. Party affiliations would box candidates into a set of stances dictated by party bosses.

It also is quite likely that many partisan school board candidates would skip popular candidate

Guest Editorial

Voters base their decisions on candidates' comments and stances on issues, shared in public forums, candidate interviews and neighborhood interactions.

forums, just as many Republicans in partisan races do now. Voters' knowledge of such candidates would then be limited to an "R" or "D" — essentially a stereotype.

Partisan school boards also could base hiring decisions on the suspected party affiliations of teachers, principals, counselors and other staff.

It is fascinating, too, that the Republicans are offering to allow a decision on adopting partisan school board elections to be made on a local level. That same party, which holds supermajority dominance in the Indiana General Assembly, has for years rejected attempts by cities and counties to adopt their own ordinances on plastic bags, gun violence, the minimum wage, housing and other local real issues because a "patchwork" of local rules would "confuse" people.

But in this case, a patchwork is apparently OK.

Lawmakers are pushing this idea forward to follow a national party plan to further social wars meant to inflame voters. Average Hoosiers are not asking for this. People in several states — Florida, Arkansas, Montana, Kentucky and others — are getting drawn into the scheme, too.

Currently, 41 states maintain nonpartisan school board elections. There is no good reason for Indiana to drop off that list.



Workers' voices just got stronger

By MICHAEL FELSEN
Progressive Perspectives
Tribune News Service

Workers across this country just got a big boost, and from an unlikely source: the Department of Homeland Security. How's that?

There are about 11 million unauthorized immigrants in the United States. They're not recent arrivals in this country. A majority of them have been here for a decade or more. Many have families. And they're workers, around 8 million of them, who pick and process the food we eat, cook in our restaurants, care for our elderly and infirm, and build our homes. They help keep our economy running, and they pay billions in taxes. They're integral members of our communities.

And yet, far too many of these workers have been consigned to live in fear. They often find jobs with unscrupulous employers, eager to exploit their undocumented status. They're paid subminimum wages, with no overtime pay; sometimes they don't get paid at all. They're subjected to unsafe conditions, and if they get injured on the job and go to the hospital, they're told to report that they got hurt at home.

All these employer practices are illegal. Workers, whether documented or not, are entitled to the protections that many federal and state laws provide. This keeps the standards uniform for all workers, so employers don't have a special incentive to hire those who are undocumented. But immigrant workers without work authorization stay quiet and endure illegality and abuse, fearing the dreaded "call to ICE" that bad employers threaten to make.

And while undocumented workers suffer, their fellow "legal" workers do, too. They see that asserting rights is perilous. Wages are depressed, safety hazards go unaddressed, organizing

for better conditions is stifled. This is bad news for all workers.

Hence, whether workers actually receive the protections the laws promise depends significantly on how the DHS — specifically, Immigration and Customs Enforcement — treats undocumented workers. It's not hard to fathom that when ICE's enforcement policy prioritizes workplace raids aimed at detaining and deporting unauthorized immigrants, as it did under George W. Bush and Donald Trump, worker vulnerability and worker mistreatment are magnified. The culture of fear engendered by such policies is hard to break.

The Obama administration recognized this and ended workplace raids, focusing instead on border apprehensions, removal of immigrants with criminal records and "paper raids" that investigated employers. It also implemented an agreement between its Department of Labor and ICE. Under the agreement, ICE agreed to stay out of DOL's way when it was doing worker protection enforcement and would assess whether tips from employers were intended to retaliate against workers or "otherwise frustrate the enforcement of labor laws."

Obama's efforts to provide some protections for undocumented workers came to a screeching halt when his successor, Trump, effectively declared war on undocumented immigrants. Workplace terror, dampened at least a bit under Obama, returned.

Michael Felsen



Under Biden, the pendulum has swung again, decisively, in workers' favor. Since day two of his administration, DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorka has made clear that undocumented workers aren't in his agency's crosshairs. He's repeated that message multiple times, recognizing the contributions of the millions of undocumented workers "who work on the frontlines in the battle against COVID...teach our children, do back-breaking farm work to help deliver food to our table...." Hence, he pledged to adopt immigration enforcement policies that would support "the important work of the Department of Labor and other government agencies to enforce wage protections, workplace safety, labor rights, and other laws and standards."

True to that commitment, and beginning on Jan. 13, DHS offered a clear means by which undocumented workers who assist a labor investigation could request temporary immigration relief and work authorization. Broad reform of our immigration laws, and a path to citizenship for our millions of unauthorized immigrants, remains a critical need. Nevertheless, with the path that DHS has now provided, undocumented workers and their advocates have notched a huge victory.

As we await further progress toward reform, let's hope we've seen the last swing of this pendulum. For the benefit of all workers — documented or not.

Felsen concluded a 39-year career as an attorney with the U.S. Department of Labor by serving as New England Regional Solicitor from 2010-2018. He is currently senior advisor with Justice at Work and Strategic Enforcement Advisor with the Workplace Justice Lab at Rutgers University.

The Commercial Review



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—Thomas Jefferson

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Haley launches presidential bid

By MARK NIQUETTE

Bloomberg News
Tribune News Service

Nikki Haley, a former South Carolina governor and Donald Trump's ambassador to the United Nations, announced she was challenging the former president for the Republican Party's presidential nomination, claiming the mantle of younger leadership.

"It's time for a new generation of leadership — to rediscover fiscal responsibility, secure our border, and strengthen our country, our pride and our purpose," Haley said in a video Tuesday announcing her run.

Haley, 51, is the first after Trump to jump into the race, hoping to carve out a lane as a fresh face in a party that has suffered losses in recent elections.

But that lane is likely to be crowded.

Several Republicans are expected to challenge Trump, including Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, 44, and South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott, 57.

Haley is highlighting the contrast with President Joe Biden, 80, who is expected to seek a second term, and Trump, 76, who is trying to return to the White House after losing a reelection bid in 2020 that was capped by his supporters waging a deadly riot on the U.S. Capitol to overturn his defeat.

But she faces an uphill battle to dethrone Trump without a large national profile and a history of waffling on her former boss. A Jan. 24 Emerson College poll showed Trump with 55% of the

vote in a potentially crowded primary field, with DeSantis at 29%, former Vice President Mike Pence at 6% and Haley at just 3%.

A Monmouth University Poll released last week showed Trump and DeSantis as the clear preferences among GOP voters right now, with Haley and other potential candidates mentioned by only a handful of survey participants.

Haley has flip-flopped on the former president, who, though weakened, maintains a significant grip on the GOP. She opposed him in 2016 before joining his administration, and she criticized Trump for his role in the Jan. 6 insurrection before saying in 2021 that she wouldn't run in 2024 if Trump did. But she laid the groundwork for a presidential run last year, including actively

campaigning for GOP candidates across the U.S., and said the disappointing Republican midterm performance altered the landscape.

"Republicans have lost the popular vote in seven out of the last eight presidential elections. That has to change," Haley said in the video.

The daughter of Indian immigrants, Haley was the youngest and first minority female governor in the country when she was elected in South Carolina in 2010. She regularly touts the state's unemployment rate reaching a 15-year low during her tenure with aggressive economic development.

Republican pollster Whit Ayres notes Haley does have some advantages. She was a popular

and successful governor from an early primary state who's one of the few to leave the Trump administration with their reputations enhanced, he said. But a lot of her success as a presidential candidate will depend on how much money she can raise and what kind of reception she gets on the campaign trail, he said.

Her leadership PAC, Stand for America, raised \$17.5 million over the last two years. That total was more than she raised in her two gubernatorial campaigns, when she took in \$8.4 million in 2014 and \$3.8 million in 2010, state records show. Stand for America ended 2022 with \$2 million in the bank after spending \$15.5 million, including donations to federal and state campaigns of almost \$617,000.

Capsule Reports

First in three

Jay County High School's academic team took first place in three disciplines Tuesday as it competed in its first in-person Eastern Indiana Academic League meet of the season at Randolph Southern. (Its previous two meets were held virtually.)

The team's wins came in English, science and social studies.

Alex Ardizzone was in two of the three first-place groups, joining Duston Muhlenkamp and Khutso Mutheketel in science and Barbare Aliashvili and Brooke Stauffer in social studies. The English team is made up of Lina Boynova, Raine Keen, Emma LeMaster and Ella Stockton.

Stacy Fomina, Puhiza Shemsedini, Ardizzone,

Boynova, Keen and Stockton were second in interdisciplinary.

The team will host the Eastern Indiana Academic League conference meet at 5:30 p.m. Feb. 27 in the JCHS auxiliary gym.

Rear collision

Damage is estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000 after a Redkey

woman crashed into the back of a semi truck on Indiana 67 about 12:20 p.m. Tuesday.

Mary J. Eley, 50, was driving her 2007 Pontiac Torrent northeast on the highway near Tyson Road when she hit the back of a semi driving in front of her. The semi didn't stop. Eley told police the driver likely didn't know he had been hit.

Push ...

Continued from page 2

"This legislation is a solution in search of a problem."

The bill was scheduled to be heard in the Senate Education Committee Wednesday but was pulled from the agenda late Tuesday night.

Raatz, who chairs the committee, said in a written statement to the Indiana Capital Chronicle earlier Tuesday that his priority "is to ensure our students are receiving the best possible education."

"I want our classrooms to be a place where all children can learn and thrive, and we will continue having conversations about the best way to achieve that," Raatz said.

Last year's unsuccessful anti-"critical race theory" (CRT) legislation stalled and died in what appeared to be an ideological split in the Republican supermajority.

Provisions in that bill would have prohibited classroom instruction about "divisive topics" that might cause "discomfort" in some students. It also included a ban on the teaching of racist concepts or ideas that some people may find "unwelcome, disagreeable, or offensive."

Such language is not included in the latest proposal, however.

Gambill maintained that parents, students, educators and community

allies will return to the Statehouse again this year to unite against Raatz's bill — and others — that promote "dangerous ideas in classrooms."

"We can, again, successfully stop these attacks if we all do our part in pushing back on these discriminatory ideologies," he said.

Gambill said lawmakers should instead focus their efforts around proposals like House Bill 1637, which would increase certain scholarship amounts in an effort to attract more students into teaching — particularly black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC).

"Across our races, backgrounds and genders, we all want the same thing — great public schools for every student. We want students to have the freedom to be themselves and pursue their dreams," he said.

"But today, some politicians are pushing laws that restrict our freedoms. They fuel division among parents by pushing laws that erase our history — from Selma to Stonewall — and target and punish educators for doing their job."

Ivan Douglas Hicks, senior minister at First Baptist Church North Indianapolis, said Raatz's bill is "ignorant" and emphasized the need for Hoosier students to be edu-

cated about all aspects of history — not just some.

"It is ignorant to think that a society is going to be better when you whitewash history and teach children that nothing ever happened that has led them to be in the circumstance they are in today," Hicks said. "We will not stand for it."

Numerous bills filed this session additionally target transgender students and attempt to legislate around gender identity issues.

Buried in a separate school accreditation bill authored by Raatz is a provision that mandates teachers and school employees to report to the school if a student indicates that they want to change their "name, attire, pronoun, title, or word to identify the student in a manner that is inconsistent with the student's biological sex at birth."

School employees would also have to report if a student expresses having "conflicted feelings about ... or difficulty handling or coping with" their gender identity or gender expression.

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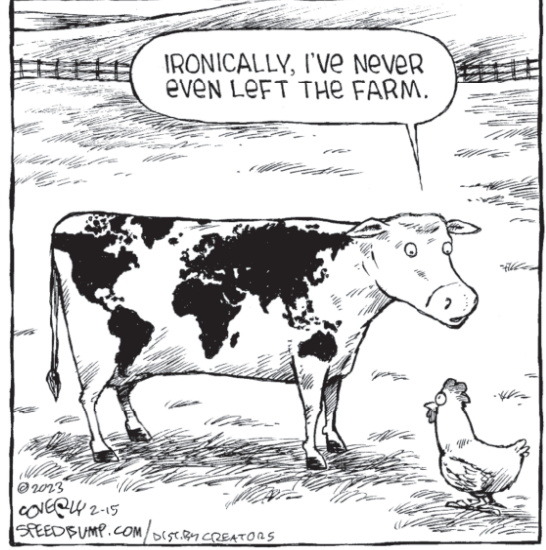
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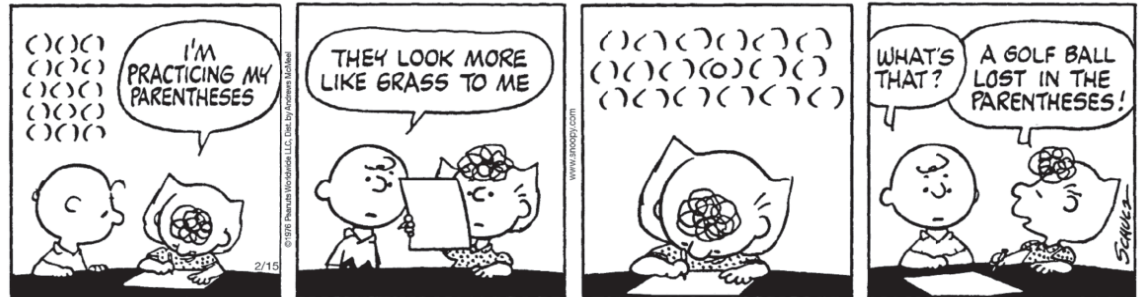
Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

Partnership cooperation
East dealer. East-West vulnerable. NORTH: 10 9 8, 10, A Q 10 7 3 2, K 10 6. WEST: Q 4, K Q J 8 7 5, A, Q 9 8 7 4. EAST: K J 2, A 9 4 3, 9 8 6 5, 5 2. SOUTH: A 7 6 5 3, 6 2, K J 4, A J 3. The bidding: East 1, South 2, West 4, North Pass. Opening lead — jack of hearts.

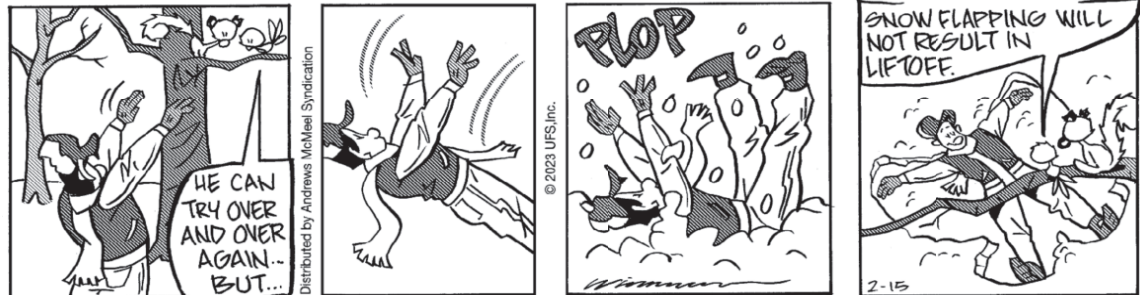
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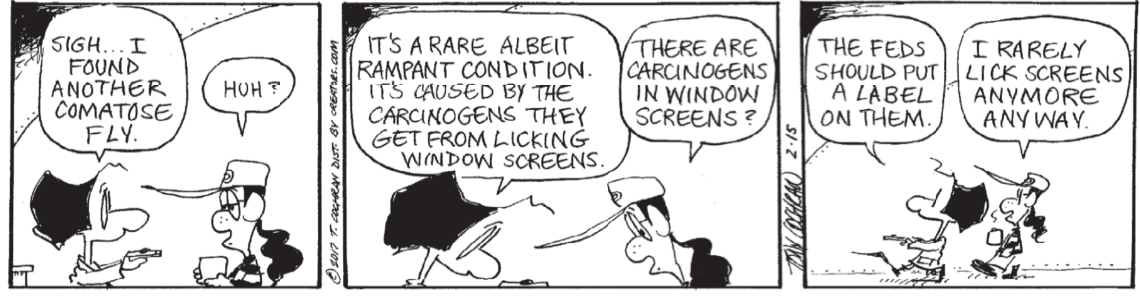
Peanuts



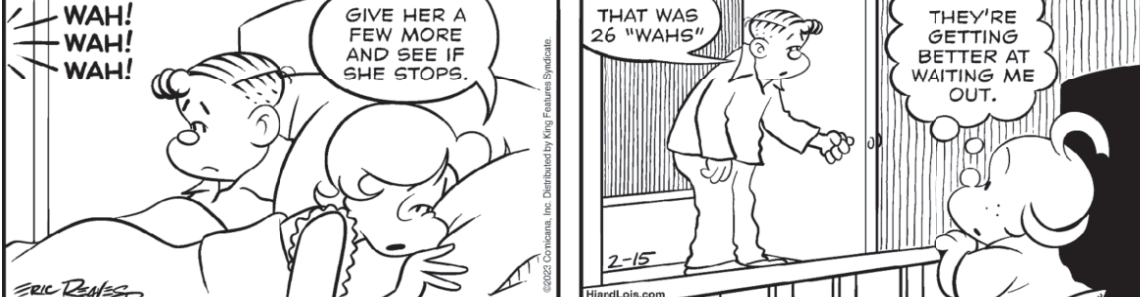
Rose is Rose



Agnes



Hi and Lois



Between Friends



Blondie



Snuffy Smith



Beetle Bailey



Tomorrow: The pessimistic approach. ©2023 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

CRYPTOQUIP

W YKQDYOC XZKO CZP Y APHGF
ZR XWSDT LFX W LWKK
GZZU RZQ OWHHDQ XZSZQQZL.
TFDDTF! UDAYAT!
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN THEY HEARD I WAS PICKED FOR THE BASKETBALL TEAM, MY FRIENDS CHEERED "HOOP HOOP HOORAY!"
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: L equals W

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS: 1 "Young Frankenstein" role, 5 Crater edge, 8 Writer Kingsley, 12 Only, 13 Yale grad, 14 React in horror, 15 Facial treatments, 17 Sofa brand, 18 TV detective Remington, 19 Lustrous fabric, 21 Young bloke, 22 Pro votes, 23 — Kippur, 26 PBS supporter, 28 March honoree, for short, 31 Art colony in New Mexico, 33 24 horas, 35 Jug handles. 36 Celtic priest, 38 AOL rival, 40 Shred, 41 Belgrade resident, 43 Short trip, 45 Black Sea port, 47 Ruling periods, 51 Sobbed, 52 Making lunches for the week, say, 54 Final Four org., 55 Vagrant, 56 Bosc, for one, 57 Freshens the lawn, say, 58 Apr. check, 59 Wrong opponent, 16 Arkin or Alda, 20 DDE's, 23 Since Jan. 1, 24 Rowing need, 25 Computer accessory, 27 Goal, 29 MSNBC's Melber, 30 Recipe abbr., 32 Naps, 34 Hindu retreats, 8 Stir up, 9 Does well, workers, 10 "Understood", 11 Bridge, 44 Kate Middleton's sister, 45 Has, 46 1920s art style, 48 Mushroomed room, 49 Close, 50 Agile, 53 Continent north of Afr.

Solution time: 23 mins.
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Yesterday's answer 2-15

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The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Tony Wood, a Jay County High School senior, tries to pin Hayden Williams of Garrett during their 138-pound semi-state semifinal match Saturday at Allen County War Memorial Coliseum. Wood leads a group of four Patriots who will compete in the state finals.

Four to state

By RAY COONEY

The Commercial Review

For about two decades, state berths were hit or miss for the Patriots.

Beginning in 2011, they have had at least one wrestler make it to Indianapolis every year.

Since 2017, they've advanced two or more.

On Friday night, the largest contingent in school history will make its way to the state capital.

Four Jay County High School athletes — Tony Wood, Cameron Clark, Cody Rowles and Christian Wittkamp — will compete Friday in the IHSAA Wrestling State Finals at Gainbridge Fieldhouse in Indianapolis.

"It's just really cool," said Jay County coach Eric Myers, whose current group matched the 1984 and 1985 squads that each had four state qualifiers.

See State page 7

Integrity, smarts were key factors

By GEORGE BREMER
The Herald Bulletin (Anderson)
Tribune News Service

INDIANAPOLIS — One of the most comprehensive head coaching searches in NFL history officially ended Tuesday with the introduction of Shane Steichen at the Indiana Farm Bureau Football Center.

Indianapolis Colts general manager Chris Ballard said high character, a beautiful football mind and a shared vision for the future of the franchise allowed Steichen to stand out among 13 candidates to become the team's new sideline leader.

"We went into this, we wanted to get the best fit for us and for the Colts organization, and Shane fit that," Ballard said. "We interviewed (candidates with backgrounds) from defense to offense to special teams. We had a run from young to older, and we had a very diverse group here."

"And Shane kind of checked all the boxes. A few of them checked most of them, but Shane checked all of them of what we were looking for."

Dressed in a navy blue suit with a Colts' horseshoe logo pin, Steichen entered Gridiron Hall with his wife Nina, son Hudson and daughter Stella. A video presentation preceded Steichen's arrival filled with highlights from media coverage announcing the pending hire over the weekend and even a brief viral clip of the former Philadelphia Eagles offensive coordinator during a meeting with his former team.

Just two days after the Eagles' 38-35 loss against the Kansas City Chiefs in Super Bowl LVII, Steichen's voice cracked with emotion as he thanked all the people who helped him get to this point from his former players with the Eagles and Chargers all the way back to his high school football coach.

Philadelphia head coach Nick Sirianni served as the offensive coordinator in Indianapolis for three seasons (2018-20), and several other coaches on the Eagles' staff spent time with the Colts. Steichen also has a close relationship with former Indianapolis quarterback Philip Rivers from their days together in San Diego and Los Angeles.

So he had ample opportunity to research his new employer.

"Just like they did research on me, I did research on this place, and not one (bad) thing came out of this place," Steichen said. "Unbelievable respect for this organization, the people in this building, Mr. (Jim) Irsay, Chris, the operations part of it, the whole thing."

"I've heard nothing but great things. So very fortunate to be in the position I'm in and looking forward to getting to work."

Steichen played quarterback at UNLV and actually got his start in the NFL as a defensive assistant with the San Diego Chargers in 2011. That experience gave him a different perspective on offensive football, and he rejoined that side of the coin in 2013 with the Cleve-

land Browns under head coach Rob Chudzinski — a former Indianapolis offensive coordinator.

Steichen returned to the Chargers in 2014 and was promoted to quarterbacks coach in 2016. He took over as interim offensive coordinator in 2019 and served in the position full time in 2020, helping quarterback Justin Herbert earn The Associated Press Offensive Rookie of the Year award.

For the last two years, Steichen has tutored quarterback Jalen Hurts in Philadelphia.

That background of quarterback development played a role in landing the job with the Colts. A strong recommendation from Rivers also didn't hurt.

"Shane was just tremendous in the interview," Irsay said. "He showed incredible leadership, toughness, (a) very fast mind, able to process information and disseminate information very quickly. I know Philip said at one point (Steichen) threw away the play card and was calling plays from your head, which is savant-like according to Philip."

"He was so impressive that I talked to Chris (on) Friday night (the week before the Super Bowl) — and they're meeting with him all day Saturday — I said, 'I don't want to tip the deck or anything, but I'm not going to tell you anything you're not going to see.' But, boy, Shane just knocked it out of the park and really showed qualities that put him above during the whole process as our man."

The 37-year-old takes over a team that finished 4-12-1 a season ago and will be looking for vast improvement on offense.

The next step will be hiring assistant coaches. Defensive coordinator Gus Bradley and special teams coordinator Bubba Ventrone were among those in attendance Tuesday, but Steichen said no final decision has been made on whether to retain their services.

Selecting a new quarterback also will be high on the agenda, with Steichen and his staff soon to begin digging into draft prospects alongside Ballard.

Steichen has a clear vision for where he hopes the Colts are going. His introduction came less than 48 hours after Philadelphia's Super Bowl loss, and returning to that game remains the ultimate goal.

"It was an unbelievable experience to be a part of that football game," Steichen said. "The guys that have been in this room — coaches or players that have been a part of it — it was a tremendous honor to get to that point. It took a lot of hard work to get there. Being in that game — I'm not gonna lie — I turned it on about an hour ago and watched the first quarter, just to look at it, just to be in that moment and know how hard it is to get there."

"It's going to take a lot of hard work, obviously, as the Colts organization, players. We want to get there as soon as we can."



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