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BLUFFTON, INDIANA • Wells County's Hometown Connection

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Council agrees to fund upgrades near Parlor Bluff

• **Additional story, Page 3**
By DAVE SCHULTZ

The city of Bluffton has agreed to pay the company developing Parlor Bluff — the subdivision formerly known as the Estates of Parlor City — to do work that will benefit the city as other housing developments are planned and constructed.

Parlor Development Inc. will extend Willowbrook Trail to Parlor Bluff's boundary line, improve drainage in areas bordering its land, extend a sanitary sewer line, increase the size of water mains, install storm drainage improvements, and reconfigure the subdivision's cul-de-sacs — all in accordance with the city's development requirements.

The price tags included so far in the agreement are \$35,420.78 for the oversizing of the water mains, \$58,859.38 for the cul-de-sacs, and another \$6,809.87 for its half of the cost of stone backfill for the stormwater sewers.

The cul-de-sac improvements were necessary because the developers' original request for smaller turnarounds was approved by the city — only to be told by Fire Chief Don Craig that the smaller design violates state fire code. That led the developer to charge the city for the changes.

The remainder of the costs have yet to be figured. When council member Roger Thornton asked for a timeline as to when the total amount would be known, he was told the plans are still being made and costs would be available as the project gets nearer to completion.

The four council members present — Roger Thornton, Rick Elwell, Scott Mentzer, and Janella Stronczek — all approved the agreement. The fifth council member, Josh Hunt, was not present due to illness.

Mayor John Whicker told the council that, according to the agreement, the money would not be due until the costs had been fully documented. He also said the agreement should not be considered a precedent.

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Working a second job

Mayor John Whicker, at left, swears in the four present members of the Bluffton Common Council — from left, Roger Thornton, Rick Elwell, Scott Mentzer, and Janella Stronczek — as members of the Bluffton Redevelopment Commission during Tuesday night's meeting. The city's mayor appoints three members to the commission and the council appoints two others. By tradition, the Common Council members have also served on the Redevelopment Commission. Whicker appointed Elwell, Mentzer, and Stronczek, and the council appointed Thornton and Josh Hunt. Clerk-Treasurer Tami Runyon is seated at center. (Photo by Dave Schultz)

Mayor says he's over public 'city-bashing'

By DAVE SCHULTZ

The city's infrastructure standards came under scrutiny Tuesday afternoon during the meeting of the Bluffton Board of Public Works and Safety.

The questions from Board of Works members Roger Thornton and Scott Mentzer, both of whom are also members of the Bluffton Common Council, stemmed in part from the comments of

a couple of developers during the last council meeting of 2021. At that time, Jeff Thomas — who is working on the Parlor Bluff development on the city's north side — and Jeff Stringer both said that Bluffton's development standards are not what they are elsewhere. Those other city's standards are good enough for them, they said, and Bluffton is taking itself out of the running

for other developments and contractors.

Thornton indicated during the Board of Works meeting Tuesday that he did not want to be seen as critical of what has been done, but he was getting impatient as the standards were tweaked and being put into place.

"I can't think of an area where the

(Continued on Page 2)



This August 2021 photo of K-9 Leo posing with his two latest reader's choice certificates garnered hundreds of interactions on the Wells County Sheriff's Department Facebook page. (Photo provided)

'Very glad to have him'

Sheriff reports on K-9 unit's 2021 activity, gives department's annual report during first county council meeting of the year

By JESSICA BRICKER

Last year, K-9 Leo of the Wells County Sheriff's Department was deployed 15 times to track down fleeing suspects, assisted with four barricaded suspect calls, provided assistance for perimeter security "during high-risk operations" six times and assisted with the arrest of a murder suspect.

K-9 handler Sgt. Andrew Campbell compiles an annual activity report for the K-9 unit, and Sheriff Scott Holliday distributed the 2021 report Tuesday evening to the Wells County Council. Holliday said it's nice to see the investment and what the unit does in the community.

"It takes a lot of work and training for a K-9 officer to be a dog handler, and the investment that the county makes in having one of those dogs," Holliday said. "There is a significant payoff as well. Plus he's pretty famous."

K-9 Leo has won the News-Banner's reader's choice contest two years in a row for best first responder and best police officer in Wells County. He also has a following on the department's social media page. Holliday said Leo is a good public relations tool for the department and chil-

dren love the interaction.

But he is also successful at his job.

"In the end, he does exactly what he's supposed to do and that's to help deter crime and sniff out drugs and apprehend people who don't want to comply," Holliday said. "We're very glad to have him."

Among the items in the report:

- Total deployments: 127
- 306 training hours
- One search for a missing child
- Three times present during a reported burglary in progress
- 13 instances of found drugs, including cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine.
- A "bite apprehension of a suspect refusing to exit (the) vehicle after Blackford County vehicle pursuit ended in Wells County. Suspect attempted to break into Montpelier Historical Society prior to pursuit."
- "K-9 Leo's presence and barking convinced seven suspects who were in a Warren hotel room to surrender without altercation. One subject had an arrest for murder. Two others (were) wanted for their roles in the shooting or supplying the

(Continued on Page 2)

Ossian Police Department sets its goals for the new year

By GLEN WERLING

Sgt. Stephanie Tucker updated members of the Ossian Metropolitan Board of Police Commissioners Tuesday on the goals accomplished by the Ossian Police Department within its budget for 2021 and the goals the department has set for 2022.

In 2021 the department was able to:

- Purchase a new handheld radar
- Replace the 2011 squad car
- Accomplish instructor development training
- Accomplish evidence room

training

In 2022, the goals are to:

- Purchase backup weapons
- Undertake professional development training
- Purchase 3 automatic external defibrillators
- Undergo live fire training
- Upgrade the department's handguns
- Restructure the police pay scale

Regarding the pay scale, Tucker observed that the ball is now in the court of the Ossian Town Council. The council has made some changes to the scale originally proposed

by Tucker and Chief Dave Rigney, but even with the adjustments the proposed pay scale is better than the wage structure that the department currently is operating under, Tucker said.

The Wells County Foundation has provided a grant for the AEDs and a special fund has been set up in which to place the grant money. Now all that needs to be accomplished is the purchase of the AEDs. Once they are purchased, every patrol car will have its own defibrillator, Tucker said.

The live fire training may need to be postponed this year depend-

ing on how the restrictions caused by the fear of the spread of the COVID-19 virus play out, she added.

Tucker also said that the camera system in the interview room is not working with the upgraded department computer server. The problem extended to the department's in-car cameras as well, but that issue is being resolved, she said, adding the interview room cameras will likely need to be replaced.

Tucker also informed board members Caleb Chichester, Bob Miller and Stan Reed that the department spent \$1,068.08 on

fuel for the patrol vehicles between Nov. 16 and Dec. 15. This will be the final fuel statement for 2021 as the department receives its bill on the 15th of every month.

The budget for fuel for 2021 was \$14,000. The department spent \$11,921.69 on fuel in 2021. Rising fuel prices, however, have begun to put the squeeze on the fuel budget. The monthly fuel budget for 2021 was \$1,166.67. The year started with monthly fuel costs in the \$900 range and ended with monthly fuel costs over \$1,000.

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Outside

A wind advisory is in effect today; gusts up to 45 mph

Today	Thursday	Friday
High 32	High 19	High 19
Low 10	Low 7	Low 10

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‘City-bashing’

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elected officials in the city have been more challenged than the (city) standards,” he said. “I think we as a council have waited as long as we have.”

What Thornton wanted to know, responding to the “how it’s done elsewhere” statements they heard at the Dec. 22 council meeting, is what other nearby cities — Decatur, Huntington, and so forth — demand in terms of pipes, casings, street classi-

cations and so forth.

“One developer has said to me, I won’t be developing things (here) under these standards,” Thornton said.

Jon Oman, the city’s operations manager, said the city standards have been a work in progress, saying there were topics that needed to be dug into a little deeper. Mentzer wanted to know what the process was for getting that done.

Doug Sundling replied that the “tweaking” of the

standards has been held up by several things, with one of them being the fact that the company helping with the project, Butler Fairman Seifert, is in one place and Bluffton is in another. Once the company assigned one particular individual to the work last year, things began to move forward.

Sundling said the city staffers’ goal throughout the process has been “what’s best for the city.”

“The department heads’

perspective is, ‘What has worked for us?’” Oman said.

What it boiled down to is that contractors have a profit margin and the city has its standards, “and you guys are stuck in the middle,” Oman said. “I get that.”

Mayor John Whicker said he had another reason for settling the standards ques-

“I’m getting tired of city-bashing in public meetings,” he said.

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‘Very glad’

(Continued from Page 1)

gun. Warrants were in connection with an Ohio shooting. They made comments it was the barking dog that caused them to surrender.”

— — —

Holliday also presented his department’s activity report for 2021.

The number of inmates booked in the Wells County

Jail last year (906) nearly matched the number in 2020 (905). The average daily population dropped slightly in 2021, though, down to 70.37 compared to 73.46 in 2020. The number of meals served dropped from 78,787 to 75,137.

In 2021, there were 286 felony arrests, 387 misde-

meanor arrests, 1,006 traffic stops, 300 traffic tickets, and 313 accidents investigated.

The amount of income generated by the department dropped by less than \$5,800, and Holliday accredited that to the fact that lifetime handgun permits in Indiana became fee-exempt in July 2021. Gun permits gener-

ated \$14,730 in 2020 and \$6,500 through June 2021.

Overall, the income was \$413,626.55 in 2020 and \$407,863.01 in 2021. That includes \$370,375 in Indiana Department of Correction per diem in 2020 and \$380,058 in per diem in 2021.

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Ossian Police sets

(Continued from Page 1)

Tucker noted that was with four vehicles on regular patrol. Now that the department is back to five officers, she questioned what the costs will be like monthly once new hire Evan Holliday is on the road patrolling.

The 2022 fuel budget is also \$14,000.

Tucker also reported that Holliday started his training

at the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy Monday.

New hire part-time officer Nick White has passed his criminal law test and is scheduled to take his traffic law test next Tuesday. He will take a test on firearms Jan. 18. Once he completes his traffic law test, he will begin field training with a full-time Ossian police officer. His field training can

be no more than two days a week because of his part-time status, Tucker said.

The board also reelected the current board officers to the same positions. Chichester will remain the president of the police commissioners, Miller stays as vice president and Stan Reed remains secretary.

The board members did decide to change the time

of the meetings to 6:30 p.m. from the current 6 p.m. start time to better fit Reed’s work schedule. The day of the meetings will remain the second Tuesday of each month.

The board also will continue to meet at Collier’s Comfort at 215 N. Jefferson St.

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Drivers worry while stranded on highway

By SARAH RANKIN and MICHAEL KUNZELMAN
Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — There was no food, water or sleep for Susan Phalen as she spent a frigid night inside her car stopped on Interstate 95 in Virginia. Meera Rao and her husband were only 100 feet past an exit but were unable to move for 16 hours.

Sen. Tim Kaine was on his way to Washington when a seemingly simple commute stretched into a 21-hour ordeal that became “a kind of survival project.”

They were among hundreds of people who got stranded on the East Coast’s main north-south highway in freezing temperatures after a winter storm snarled traffic and left some drivers stuck in place for as much as a full day.

The problems began Monday morning when a truck jackknifed on I-95, triggering a chain reaction as other vehicles lost control, state police said. Eventually lanes in both directions became blocked across a 40-mile stretch of the highway between Richmond and the nation’s capital at a time when snow was falling around 2 inches an hour.

Hundreds of motorists spent the night in their vehicles, worrying about a lack of food, fuel and water as temperatures fell into the teens. One family reported that they went more than 18 hours without eating.

There were no reports of serious injuries or deaths, but there was plenty of anger among drivers.

“No one came. It was just shocking,” said Rao,

who was traveling home to Burtonsville, Maryland, after visiting her daughter in North Carolina when she got stuck Monday evening. “Being in the most advanced country in the world, no one knew how to even clear one lane for all of us to get out of that mess?”

It took until Tuesday evening around 8:30 p.m. for the Virginia Department of Transportation to reopen the interstate. Authorities had announced earlier in the evening that all stranded motorists had made it off the highway. Transportation officials then oversaw the removal of remaining abandoned vehicles and making sure the entire stretch was plowed.

As stranded motorists waited in their cars, many posted desperate messages on social media. Between midnight and 3 a.m. Tuesday, traffic came to a complete standstill, state officials said.

Gov. Ralph Northam said his team responded through the night by sending emergency messages to connect drivers with help and working with local officials to set up warming shelters as needed. Officials told reporters crews were helping distribute food, water and fuel.

Rao said they stopped their car engine at least 30 times to conserve gas and ran the heat just enough to get warm. They had some potato chips, nuts and apples to eat, but Rao did not want to drink any bottled water because she had a sprained ankle and did not think she could reach a makeshift restroom.

Finally, around mid-morning Tuesday, a tow

truck driver appeared and cleared away snow, allowing the Raos and other cars back up and take the exit.

“He was a messenger from God,” Rao said. “I literally was in tears.”

People who were stranded and their families lashed out at Northam on Twitter, asking why the Virginia National Guard was not deployed.

Northam said in an interview that he opted not to request National Guard help because the issue facing state crews was not a lack of manpower but the difficulty of getting workers and equipment through the snow and ice to where they needed to be. He said that effort was complicated by the disabled vehicles, freezing temperatures and ice.

The affected section of the interstate was not pre-treated because heavy rain preceded the snow, which fell at times as fast as 2 inches an hour, said Marcie Parker, a state Department of Transportation engineer.

“That was entirely too much for us to keep up with,” she said.

The storm also left passengers on an Amtrak train stranded in Virginia. Amtrak’s Crescent left New Orleans on Sunday on its way to New York and got stuck near Lynchburg on Monday morning, when downed trees blocked the tracks.

Passenger Sean Thornton told AP that Amtrak provided food, but toilets were overflowing and passengers were furious. Amtrak planned for the train to complete its trip once the tracks are clear.

Up to 11 inches of snow

fell in the area during Monday’s blizzard, according to the National Weather Service, and state police had warned people to avoid driving unless absolutely necessary, especially as colder nighttime temperatures set in.

Compounding the challenges, traffic cameras went offline as much of central Virginia lost power in the storm, the transportation department said.

Kaine left his home in Richmond for his usual two-hour commute to the U.S. Capitol after Monday’s snowstorm, expecting to preside over the Senate on Tuesday morning. Instead, he spent the night alone in his car on I-95.

The Democrat told Washington radio station WTOP that he worried about all the families with children or elderly passengers who were running out of fuel and food. But Kaine also described a camaraderie as strangers connected along the highway, including a Connecticut family who walked up and down lines of stopped cars, sharing a bag of oranges they had planned to bring home from a Florida vacation.

“I’ve never seen anything like it,” Kaine said. “I will never forget this.”

Phelan’s planned one-hour drive from her parents’ house turned into a 16-hour nightmare. She said at some point during the gridlock, she thought she might have to start knocking on windows asking other drivers for water. But she, too, witnessed acts of kindness among the stranded drivers, saying “everybody was helping everybody.”

Weather

Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2021
(24-hour observations at 8:48 p.m. Tuesday)
High: 37; **Low:** 22; **Precipitation:** None
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 6.42 feet at 10:45 p.m. Tuesday.

Wells County forecast

Wednesday: A chance of flurries before 10 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a temperature falling to around 20 by 5 p.m. Breezy, with a west wind around 25 mph, with gusts as high as 45 mph.

Wednesday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 10. West wind 15 to 20 mph, with gusts as high as 35 mph.

Thursday: A 30 percent chance of snow showers after 1 p.m. Mostly cloudy and cold, with a high near 19. West wind around 10 mph.

Thursday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 7. West wind 10 to 15 mph.

Friday: Mostly sunny and cold, with a high near 19.

Friday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 10.

Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 37.

Saturday Night: Rain and snow showers likely, becoming all rain after 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 32. Chance of precipitation is 70 percent.

Sunday: A chance of rain showers before 3 p.m., then a slight chance of rain and snow showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 41. Chance of precipitation is 40 percent.

Sunday Night: A 10 percent chance of snow showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 14.

Monday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 22.

Monday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 11.

Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 27.

State limits rapid COVID tests due to supply shortage

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — The Indiana Department of Health announced Tuesday it has limited who is eligible for rapid COVID-19 tests at state-run sites due to high demand and a surge of cases amid the spread of the omicron variant.

Under new state guidance, rapid antigen tests at state and local health department testing sites will only be available to those 18 or younger, regardless of symptoms, or those who are 50 and older, but symptomatic.

The department said the change is necessary “due to the national shortage of rapid antigen tests.” Health officials said the new protocols will ensure students can stay in school and so residents who are most likely to need a monoclonal antibody can get it within the prescribed window.

The state uses about 50,000 rapid tests a week but is only guaranteed to receive 11,000 a week right now, according to the state health department.

Rapid test appointments previously scheduled for Tuesday were to be honored while supplies last. No appointments for rapid tests can be honored at state or local health department sites after that, except for those still eligible for tests under the new guidance. PCR tests will continue to be offered at all testing sites, with results expected in two to three days.

In addition to the guidance changes, the state plans to increase hours at several testing sites.

The community testing and vaccination clinic outside the Indianapolis Motor Speedway will open from noon to 8 p.m. Tuesday-Friday and from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays through Jan. 22.

The clinic, which is being held in the INDYCAR parking lot, will accept walk-ins only from noon to 4 p.m.

Here in Wells ...

- Wells County Health Department Deputy Administrator Marlene Hoag told the county council that enforcing the new rules Tuesday did not go well for her staff as those wishing to be tested learned of the new requirements.

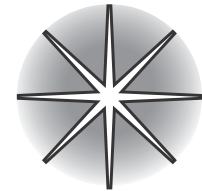


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Police Notebook

INCIDENTS

City:
Monday, 4:01 p.m., First Bank of Berne, 404 N. Main St. Report of a suspicious man pacing back and forth in front of the entrance to the bank. Officer responded and located the man who apparently was frightened by the spread of COVID-19 to the point that he was unwilling to enter the bank until more people had left.
Monday, 8:51 p.m., Wabash Village apartments, 401 E. State St. Caller reported seeing a suspicious flashing red light on the building across the street. Officer responded and located the source of the light as a reflection off a metal box. The flashing lights from an ambulance at the nearby Lilac Lane apartment complex was reflecting off the box.
Tuesday, 2:52 a.m., PNC Bank, 304 W. Market St. Caller reported seeing people inside the bank and thought it was suspicious. Officer checked. It was a cleaning crew.
Tuesday, 4:12 a.m., Main Street at Water Street. Officer pulled over a vehicle containing four juveniles, none

of whom had a license to drive and all of whom were out after curfew. The four were detained at the police department until parents could arrive to pick them up.
Tuesday, 7:10 a.m., Fresenius Medical, 1100 S. Main St. Man walked into Fresenius, which is inside the former Wells Community Hospital. The man then walked into the part of the building that is not occupied and promptly started to trash the interior of the building. Officers and sheriff's deputies dispatched. The man was located. Derek Todd Liebo, 21, Bluffton, reportedly was not very cooperative but did not resist arrest. He was charged with arson, a Level 4 felony, and criminal mischief, a Class B misdemeanor. Reportedly the man spoke about seeing only the color red and that "the shadows were attacking him."
He had reportedly thrown an electric drill through a window pane, had broken other glass and wood inside the building, had attempted to set fire to two separate areas of the building. In a medical supplies storage area, he had reportedly piled up papers and

attempted to set them on fire.
Tuesday, 11:32 a.m., residence in the 200 block of West Cherry Street. Woman reported finding a knife discarded in her yard.
Tuesday, 11:56 a.m., Main Street bridge over the Wabash River. Someone dumped a bicycle under the bridge.
County:
Monday, 12:40 p.m., residence on Ind. 116 northwest of 300W. Sheriff's deputies responded to a report of a verbal altercation between three adult siblings at the residence. Situation calmed. Parties separated.
Tuesday, 9:05 a.m., 1100N at the Norfolk Southern Railway crossing. Report of two females in hooded sweatshirts walking on the tracks carrying a blanket between them. State excise officer was close by and checked the tracks but the females were gone.
ARRESTS
Shawnta Marie Turner, 29, Ossian; three counts of theft, all Class A misdemeanors, and revocation of bail from a previous case. Bond set at \$4,500 on the theft charges.

City council elects president, but vote is not unanimous

By DAVE SCHULTZ
Scott Mentzer will once again serve as the president of the Bluffton Common Council.
Mentzer was re-elected to the position by a 3-1 vote, with Roger Thornton casting the lone "no" vote.
Thornton nominated Josh Hunt to be the council president. Hunt was not present for the meeting.
Thornton said he thought Mentzer had done a good job as the council's president, "but I would like to see (the position) passed

around a bit." Thornton's nomination of Hunt died for a lack of a second.
After Mayor John Whicker declared Thornton's motion dead, Rick Elwell nominated Mentzer for the position. "I appreciate the work that Scott has done," Elwell said. "The status quo is not a bad way to go either."
After a second by Janella Stronczek, Mentzer was elected on a 3-1 vote with Elwell, Stronczek, and Mentzer voting in favor.
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Notre Dame restarts mask mandate

SOUTH BEND, Ind. (AP) — The University of Notre Dame has reinstated a mask requirement for all students, staff and campus visitors as the omicron variant fuels a surge in COVID-19 cases across the country.
As of Jan. 1, masks were required indoors for all students, staff and visitors to the South Bend campus. That requirement will continue until 90% of the campus community has been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and also received a booster shot, school officials said.
During the fall semester, Notre Dame only required masks to be worn in certain locations and among visitors before booster vaccine shots became widely available.
Health officials have repeatedly said full vaccination and booster shots are the best defense against the new omicron variant.
The university is also requiring its students and employees to receive and verify the status of a booster vaccination by Jan. 21, the South Bend Tribune reported.
Notre Dame's spring semester classes begin Jan. 10. The university will have multiple vaccine clinics for students and employees looking to meet the Jan. 21 booster deadline.
"Our goal is to keep everyone in the campus and local communities as safe as possible, especially in the early weeks of the semester when cases of omicron are expected to peak," school officials wrote in a Dec. 31 letter.
Notre Dame officials expect to lift the university's masking requirement on Feb. 4. At that point, school officials said at least 90% of the campus community should be considered "fully protected."

Toddler strapped in car seat of disabled car killed in crash

FRANKLIN, Ind. (AP) — A toddler strapped inside a car seat died Tuesday when the disabled car the child was in was struck by a pickup truck, Indiana State Police said.
The child and car seat were in the rear seat of a car partially in the left lane of Interstate 65 northbound near Franklin, police said.
The child was trans-

ported to a hospital and pronounced dead, police said.
The car had pulled to the left side of the roadway and stopped for unknown reasons while partially in the left lane, police said.
A northbound pickup then struck the rear end of the stationary car. The driver of the car and the driver of the pickup truck both suffered non-life-threatening injuries.

Wells Court Docket

Wells Superior Court Criminal Cases

Preliminary plea of not guilty entered for Eric Smith Jr., 26, Bluffton, charged with domestic battery committed in the presence of a child less than 16 years old, a Level 6 felony. Bond continued at \$25,000. Law office of Sprunger and Sprunger appointed as public defender.
At 12:37 a.m. Nov. 26, Smith reportedly went to a relative's house and told that relative he was going to stay with him because he had no other place to stay. The relative told Smith that he was not going to stay and asked him to leave. Smith allegedly walked into the residence anyway and his relative tried to stop him. Smith then allegedly punched his relative in the head in the presence of his relative's juvenile son. When the relative said that he was going to call police, Smith reportedly fled.
— — —
Preliminary plea of not guilty entered for Keaton Dale Detrow, 21, Ossian,

charged with possession of a Schedule I, II, III, or IV controlled substance, a Class A misdemeanor.
On Oct. 9, 2021, sheriff's deputies were assisting the Wells County Probation Department with the searches of the dwellings of probationers.
While performing the search of a room where one of the probationers stayed, deputies allegedly located two vape pens, one of which had a cartridge for Muha Meds that reportedly contained THC. There were also reportedly empty boxes in the room labeled for Muha Meds. Ryan Loy Fisel, 44, Fort Wayne, pleaded guilty to operating a motor vehicle after having been found to be an habitual traffic violator, a Level 6 felony.
Sentencing set for 3 p.m. March 16.
— — —
Mendy T. Rothgeb, 36, Fort Wayne, violated probation by failing to report to her probation officer Feb. 3, Feb. 9, and Feb. 17 of last year, using alcohol and fail-

ing to report her contacts with law enforcement on Jan. 7 and Jan. 19 of last year.
Ordered to serve 30 days in the Wells County Jail and pay \$100 fees. She was credited for 10 days spent in confinement awaiting disposition of her case.
Upon the completion of her term of incarceration, her probation will terminate.
Rothgeb was originally sentenced Oct. 1, 2020, on one count of disorderly conduct, a Class B misdemeanor.
Infractions
Hayden A. Brown, 19, Bluffton; driving while suspended and operating a motor vehicle without operable taillights and/or a license plate light, Main Street at Arrowhead Trail.
Dylan D. Eppard, 22, Bluffton; operating a motor vehicle without insurance and learner's permit violation, 600 block of North Main Street.
Civil Cases
Complaints for possession and for non-payment of rent filed by BCG Capi-

tal LLC, Bluffton, against: Heather Ross, Bluffton, \$695; Briah Burnsworth, Bluffton, \$510.
Complaints for payment filed by Indiana Physical Therapy, Fort Wayne, against: Casey Boone, rural Bryant, \$759.90; Teresa A. Hathaway, Bluffton, \$775.08; Dacia R. Irelan, rural Liberty Center, \$278.22; Nikki Phillipe, rural Bluffton, \$449.83; and Kristina Sprunger, Fort Wayne, \$1,365.07.
Donni Gray reappointed court administrator. Catherine LaVine reappointed as court reporter.
Wells Circuit Court Criminal Cases
Alexis Wirt, 21, Markle, pleaded guilty to battery resulting in bodily injury to a person less than 14 years of age, a Level 5 felony. Sentencing set for 1 p.m. Feb. 9.
Civil Cases
Verified petition to modify custody without an agreement filed by Rebecca S. Bates, Markle, on behalf of minor child Raelynn E. Ogle.

COVID-19 surge not deterring push to end Indiana emergency

By TOM DAVIES
Associated Press
INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Indiana's ongoing spike in COVID-19 illnesses isn't deterring state leaders, who remain determined to bring an end to the official statewide public health emergency.
The Republican-dominated state Legislature started its 2022 session Tuesday and planned to quickly take up actions that GOP Gov. Eric Holcomb says will allow him to drop the emergency declaration that he first issued in March 2020. Those steps come as health officials are concerned about the fast-spreading omicron variant further stressing Indiana's hospitals that have been facing their highest-ever overall patient loads.
A House committee is set to vote Thursday on a bill that includes administrative actions sought by Holcomb, along with provisions that would force businesses to grant broad exemptions to any workplace COVID-19 vaccination requirements. The state's major medical and business groups oppose the employer limitations, as do Holcomb and Senate Republican leaders.
Republican House Speaker Todd Huston said the ongoing COVID-19 spread wasn't giving him second thoughts about proceeding.

"COVID is something that we're going to have to live with and people are going to have to take the precautions that they feel are best," Huston said. "I'm so grateful and thankful for our healthcare and medical providers who are doing everything they can, but no one thinks or believes this is going away. We had to live through it and around it."
Indiana hospitals were treating nearly 3,200 COVID-19 patients as of Sunday, according to tracking by the state health department. That is up about 160% since early November and the most such patients since mid-December 2020 before the vaccines were widely available.
About a quarter of those patients are in hospital intensive care units as Indiana averaged more than 40 COVID-19 deaths a day through nearly all of December. Those COVID-19 cases and other severe illnesses pushed the state's total hospitalizations for any reason to highest-ever mark of nearly 12,000 patients in mid-December and remained at nearly 11,500 this week after a holiday period when fewer scheduled surgeries are typically performed, according to the Indiana Hospital Association.
That high patient level is forcing many hospitals to keep patients in emergency

departments for several hours awaiting open rooms and leaving them with little ICU space for new critically ill patients, said Brian Tabor, the hospital association's president.
"The strain right now is coming from the fact that the system is essentially like an engine that's been running at full tilt for an extended period of time without any downtime for maintenance," Tabor said. "We're going to continue to be in an emergency situation for some time within the four walls of the hospital."
The ongoing statewide health emergency has become a persistent target of conservative criticism, and Senate Republicans are backing a bill that focuses solely on three law changes sought by Holcomb. The governor said those steps would allow the state to keep receiving enhanced federal funding for Medicaid expenses and those eligible for food assistance programs, along with letting the state health commissioner continue issuing a standing doctor's order for the administration of COVID-19 vaccinations to children ages 5 to 11.
"Ending the public health emergency doesn't mean

that COVID is gone," Holcomb said Monday. "We'll continue on a day, in day out basis, on a weekly basis, to deal with COVID as long as it is with us."
Legislative leaders, meanwhile, have dropped the COVID-19 precautions adopted for last year's session, when the House moved from its Statehouse chamber to a large conference room inside a state office building for allow greater distancing between its 100 members. The 50-member Senate closed off its balcony to the public and placed 20 senators there in order to space out more.
The plexiglass surrounding the podiums from which legislators speak is gone and all committee meetings rooms are being opened again to the public. Nearly all Democratic House members were wearing face masks during Tuesday's opening session, while it appeared fewer than five Republicans wore masks.
Huston told House members it was their personal responsibility to protect themselves and others.
"We're back here and we're back here to stay," Huston said. "So, to do that, I'm just saying we all must stay healthy and take care of ourselves."

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A little spray paint brings life into an old filing cabinet

I push and pull the block of sandpaper back and forth across the surface of the old filing cabinet, excited about its future.

I pay special attention to the bottom edges where it had chipped over time and to the top where it's rusted a bit.

A once-over, a small amount of painters' tape on the front and then the real fun begins. I open and shake the paint primer and start spraying, taking care that errant paint doesn't end up on tomorrow's newsprint.

With more than two sides done, I run out of primer and have to make a run to the store. I'm new to this whole process and I'm certain I used too much. Oh well. On the trip to the store and then back to the News-Banner, I am able to visualize a plan for what comes after the spray paint.

That vision, I hope, is what the community will see when I'm done with the Little Free Library I've been working on for the News-Banner foyer. I first wrote about the project in September on this page. After that column, I received many generous donations to stock the drawers of the cabinet, which I hope to organize by genres.

I am most thrilled by all the children's book donations I received from a couple of particular supporters (you know who you are and thank you again). I am pretty sure I have enough children's books to fill at least two drawers of the cabinet, and I'll put them on the bottom so they are easy to reach by little hands.

I like tackling crafty projects like this but it becomes a challenge to make the time for them. Last year I stained a small wooden step stool gray (again, I'm certain I used too much stain — I sense a theme forming). In the fall of 2020, I took a "coffee and calligraphy" class at Crimson House to learn fancy handwriting. I bought extra supplies and how-to books but haven't touched them in months. I hope that changes soon.

I plan to get into needlepoint soon, and I'm excited to see what I can do with that skill. I just remember making countless friendship bracelets with all the thread I found around the house as a child. If you have any needlepoint tips, send them my way.

Calligraphy and needlepoint have to be less messy than spray painting and staining — although I'm proud to report that both of the latter projects could have gone a lot worse.

Soon, you'll be able to see my best attempt at painting and decorating the filing cabinet. Just don't judge the lack of artistic skills. It's all a work in progress.

jessica@news-banner.com

Hoosier Opinions

Make a difference in the new year

With each new year come new resolutions. While many of us often resolve - and often fail - to eat better, get more sleep and exercise, how about making a resolution we can actually stick with?

With each new year come new resolutions. While many of us often resolve - and often fail - to eat better, get more sleep and exercise, how about making a resolution we can actually stick with?

Becoming an organ donor is one of the most selfless and important decisions humans can make. And in 2021, Americans did not disappoint.

On Dec. 17, the United States set a new record when it surpassed 40,000 transplants in one year, according to the United Network for Organ Sharing. 2020 was the 10th consecutive year for record-breaking organ donations from deceased donors and the eighth in a row for deceased donor transplants. Dr. Matthew Cooper, UNOS president, said the record number of transplants was a testament to the lifesaving work being done each day for others.

"It is … a testament to the generosity of so many inspiring donors and their courageous families who gave the gift of life," Cooper said. "This news serves as a reminder that no matter what challenges we face as a nation, our community of doctors, patients, donor families, hospitals, organ procurement professionals and advocates are dedicated to building on past successes to save even more lives. But there is always more work to do."

And while the milestone is something to celebrate, there are nearly 107,000 patients still on the waiting list for a transplant, while 20 people die each day waiting for an organ. Signing up to become a donor is a commitment we all can make. According to the Indiana Donor Network, anyone can sign up as an organ and tissue donor, no matter their age or medical condition. Organs that can be donated include kidneys, heart, lungs, liver, pancreases and small intestines. Tissues that can be donated include corneas, skin, heart valves, bones, veins and tendons.

While New Year's resolutions typically focus on the betterment of ourselves, becoming an organ donor helps more than just one person - as many as 74 more, in fact, according to the Mayo Clinic.

The Indiana Donor Network reported that another person is added to the national transplant waiting list every 10 minutes. Consider making a decision to help others and start the new year off right.

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The 10 worst things Biden did in 2021

In my last column, I listed the 10 best things President Joe Biden did in his first year in office. Here are the 10 worst (winnowing this list down to just 10 entries was extremely difficult):

10. He canceled Operation Legend amid a record crime wave in U.S. cities. At least 12 major cities broke annual homicide records in 2021. Yet Biden ended the Trump Justice Department's Operation Legend, which deployed federal officers to aid local law enforcement and helped arrest more than 6,000 criminals. Now, after suffering the most violent year in a quarter century, the mayor of Chicago is requesting federal help to fight violent crime — help that Biden withdrew when he took office.

9. He weaponized the FBI to intimidate parents who show up at school board meetings. Parents are furious about pandemic closures and schools indoctrinating their kids with extremist ideologies. Biden treated them like domestic terrorists.

8. In the midst of a historic labor shortage, he pushed vaccine mandates. Forcing employers with more than 100 employees to fire unvaccinated workers — even if they have natural immunity from previous infection — or impose onerous weekly testing requirements would drive more Americans out of the labor force, at a time when businesses can't find workers and there are more than 11 million unfilled jobs.

7. His war on fossil fuels drove domestic production down and gasoline prices through the roof. Then he begged the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) — a foreign oil cartel — to produce more oil, which will result in the same emissions as domestically produced oil. It's like the 1970s all over again.

6. He greenlighted Russia's Nord Stream 2 pipeline to Germany. Then Biden inappropriately pressured Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to accept Russian energy dominance over his country. Democrats impeached President Donald Trump for far less.

5. He showed weakness in the face of Russian aggression against Ukraine. It's no coincidence that Russian President Vladimir Putin is threatening Ukraine just months after Biden's disastrous retreat from Afghanistan and his capitulation on Nord Stream 2. Then, channeling his inner Neville Chamberlain, Biden offered to hold talks to discuss Russia's concerns on NATO and the possibility of "accommodations." Pushing Ukraine to "accommodate" Moscow under threat of invasion would reward Putin's aggression — and invite more of it.

4. He unleashed the worst border crisis in U.S. history. U.S. Customs and Border Protection reported more than 1.7 million encounters with illegal migrants at the southern border, nearly four times the number the year before, the highest annual total on record — including 378,000 who were not from Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador or Guatemala. Seizures of deadly fentanyl more than doubled in 2021, and is closely connected to a surge in overdose deaths, which

reached a historic high.

3. His \$1.9 trillion in social spending disguised as "COVID-19 relief" helped unleash inflation and extreme labor shortages. This was the worst fiscal policy mistake in decades, passed with Democratic votes alone. And despite all that "COVID" spending, shortages of test kits and treatments persisted as the omicron variant arrived.

2. He failed to deliver on his promise to put his "whole soul" into unifying the country. Biden threatened to veto his own bipartisan infrastructure bill, then went to Capitol Hill and urged members of his own party to take it hostage as leverage to pass Build Back Better. He failed to pass any other major pieces of bipartisan legislation, allowing himself to be captured by his party's radical left wing.

1. His withdrawal from Afghanistan was the most shameful foreign policy calamity in my lifetime. Biden left hundreds of U.S. citizens and as many as 62,000 of our Afghan allies behind enemy lines, and forced NATO allies to abandon their citizens and allies as well. He put the safety of U.S. service members at the Kabul airport in the hands of the Taliban and Haqqani network, a decision that led to the deaths of 13 Americans in a suicide attack. His "over the horizon" drone strike killed no terrorists but took the lives of 10 innocent people. And he repeatedly lied about the unfolding disaster — declaring that al-Qaida was "gone" from Afghanistan; that no Americans were having trouble getting to the airport; that no allies were questioning the United States' credibility; that none of his military advisers had recommended leaving a residual force; and that his Afghan debacle was an "extraordinary success."

That's a shameful list, but it only scratches the surface. Among the (dis)honorable mentions: Biden proposed what the New York Times reports were the "highest sustained levels of federal spending since World War II"; he increased vaccine hesitancy by insulting the unvaccinated; at a time when the threat from China is rising, he sent Congress a budget that actually cut defense spending after inflation; and he told Putin that 16 areas of the United States' critical infrastructure were off-limits to Russian cyberattacks — which effectively told the Russian leader that the rest were not.

Little wonder that Biden suffered the fastest collapse in public approval of any president in modern history. When he took office, he had almost 56% approval and was 20 points above water. Today, he's more than 10 points underwater. That's a 30-point swing in less than a year. No recent president has fallen from grace so far, so fast, so early in his presidency.

This was the worst first year of any president in my lifetime.

Marc A. Thiessen is on Twitter, @marcthiessen.

Chuck Schumer's Jan. 6 cynicism

On Jan. 6, 2021, rioters seeking to disrupt the counting of electoral votes breached the U.S. Capitol and rampaged for hours before order was restored.

This was a disgraceful spectacle that shouldn't be repeated, and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer knows just what is needed to respond to the moment — passing every progressive voting-related priority that can possibly be jammed through the Senate on an extremely narrow, partisan vote.

The defense of our democracy, Schumer maintains, demands nothing less.

The latest pitch for the Democratic voting agenda is more cynical and detached from reality than ever. We are to believe that the only way to counteract the furies unleashed on Jan. 6 is by imposing same-day voter registration and no-excuse mail voting on the states, ending partisan gerrymandering, and requiring the counting of ballots that arrive up to seven days after Election Day, among other provisions completely irrelevant to events that day or afterward.

If you're thinking that Democrats supported all of this on Jan. 5 of last year and still supported it on Jan. 7, you're correct.

Their agenda has as much to do with Jan. 6 as an annual appropriations bill or the naming of a post office.

The Democratic drive to nation-



Rich Lowry

Now, the justification is the Capitol riot and subsequent GOP state-level voting changes that have been portrayed, falsely, as the return of Jim Crow.

In reality, voting has never been easier and voters have never had so many options for how to participate in elections, whether early in-person voting, traditional same-day voting, or mail-in voting. There are partisan disputes about how to strike a balance between convenience and security, but there is no reason that these differences can't be debated at the state level, with the balance struck differently depending on the policy preferences of elected officials in each state.

Limits on drop boxes or measures to tighten up the identification requirements around mail-in ballots aren't suppressing the vote.

The true weakness of the system that was highlighted last year on Jan. 6 is the poorly drafted Electoral Count Act. It should be

alized our elections has always been a sweepingly radical step in search of an alleged crisis to address. When a version was first introduced a few years ago, it was sold as addressing "the vile voter suppression practices" of the GOP, in the words of The New York Times. The big lie of the time was that the Georgia gubernatorial campaign of Stacey Abrams in 2018 was undone by such practices.

revised to make it explicit that the vice president can't decide which electoral votes to count and that states can't discard the popular vote if the outcome isn't to their liking. Even though changes along these lines might get bi-partisan support, Schumer is pushing to eliminate the filibuster to pass the progressive wish list of electoral non-sequiturs (although a few provisions, like prohibiting the intimidation of election officials, have been added to the Democratic package to address the 2020 post-election fight).

To wrap this push in the bloody shirt of Jan. 6 is opportunistic and irresponsible and can only serve to convince even more Republicans that the outrage over that day is in the service of a nakedly partisan agenda.

Schumer has an uphill climb to convince relatively moderate Democrats Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema to go along with kneecapping the filibuster. If the New York senator were to succeed, he would have blown a hole in the traditional practices of the Senate and set the precedent for Republicans — should they achieve unified control of Washington in 2024 — to impose all their own favored electoral policies on the states.

This yin and yang wouldn't do anything to restore faith in democracy, rather the opposite. But Chuck Schumer is on a mission to achieve, and to use, the power to rewrite the country's electoral rules — justifications and consequences be damned.

Rich Lowry is on Twitter @RichLowry

As 2022 begins, here’s some resolutions to keep

It has become a kind of tired truism that just about no one keeps their resolutions going past, say, Jan. 15. Gym memberships lapse. That fancy exercise bike becomes the cliché of a clothes rack. The new kitchen appliance mocks you and takes up way more counter-space than it should.

Still, hope springs eternal, ruffling its feathers. “Come on,” it says, “this is the year. You can do it!”

Maybe so. 2021 was quite a train wreck of a year no matter your particular political persuasion, capped off with the death of the beloved Betty White. Why can’t, oh please, why can’t 2022 be better? And if a small set of personal, idiosyncratic, meaningful-only-to-you resolutions can help, why not?

Herewith, these are my own very personal, local, just-for-me resolutions:

1. Write one line of poetry a day about the weather. This is inspired by the gorgeous poem “Love” by Alex Dimitrov, written one line a day. The author said this of his motivation: “There seemed

to be so much negativity everywhere — in the country, online, and even in art — that I wanted to remember what I loved about life. I wanted to give people hope.” I like that sentiment quite a bit. My own motivation comes from my dad’s practice of writing down the bare facts of the weather every day on a large grid calendar my family kept hung in the kitchen. Temperature, precipitation, visibility, storms, and more. Day by day, year after year, for decades, Dad kept track. His daily practice meant he paid attention to the world outside himself. I think this matters quite a bit.

2. Bake one fresh loaf of bread a week. I received a surprise bread maker for Christmas, and so, to justify the sasquatch-like footprint of this thing in our farmhouse-small kitchen, weekly bread it will be. Besides, and because, why not? Fresh bread is a humble and welcome staple, real food to celebrate and be grateful for.

3. Read more poetry. As the poet William Carlos Williams wrote, “It is difficult to get the news from poems, but men die miserably every day for lack of what is found there.” What can

Abby) repeatedly told me, and I paraphrase: If you don’t move it, strengthen it, stretch it, you lose it. She is right. I’d like to keep what I have, thank you very much, so even though doing the repetitive exercises I was taught bores me to actual self-pitying tears, do them I will.

4. Do the boring physical therapy exercises. A very wise physical therapist (hi,

5. Ride the fancy exercise bike. Also boring, but at least I can read poetry (see #3) while pedaling.

6. Aim to participate in a century club dressage competition. This is when the combined age of you and your horse equals 100. Admittedly, this resolution is cheating a bit. My horse and I currently have a combined age of about, say, 75. We have some time to prepare. As in, well, a decade. But this year, we’ll start.

7. Volunteer. I used to volunteer on a regular basis when I lived and worked in the same town. Now, living here and working 75 miles away, I have fallen

out of that habit. Using the distance is both a valid reason, and a lazy excuse. Enough of all that. Volunteering is one of the few things most of us can do that makes a huge difference to the world at large. I once was a mentor in the schools and stayed with the same girl from middle school through high school into college and beyond. We’re still in touch some 30 years later, and her sweet daughter bears my name as her middle name. Can you ask for more than that? All you have to give is yourself, your time. The rewards are enormous for everyone.

8. “Eat food, mostly plants, not too much.” This is food writer and researcher Michael Pollan’s mantra for healthy eating. It’s easy: Eat food that you can recognize as real food. For example, Spam, Twinkies, and Doritos are delicious things, but weird and processed and just not real food. Rely on plants — fruits and vegetables — as the core of your diet (meat is fine, just forego the 16-ounce steaks. I mean, really). And, “not too much” is just plain good advice.

9. Read Moby Dick. I’ve read enough of this book to be able to talk about it somewhat intelligently, but never read it cover to cover. This is the year. As incentive, I’ll watch at least part of the

annual marathon-reading of the book at the New Bedford Whaling museum. It lasts about 36 hours, and all kinds of readers participate, from ordinary citizens to celebrities of all kinds. We’re all in luck: it begins this Saturday, January 8, and is fully online at <https://www.whalingmuseum.org/program/moby-dick-marathon-2022/>

Here’s the thing: All of the above resolutions are good, but this one is probably the most important of all.

10. Be more like Betty. In an interview with Katie Couric in 2012, as Betty White was turning 90, Couric asked for her secret to a long and rich life. Betty White responded, “When I pontificate, it sounds so, you know, ‘Oh, well, she’s preaching.’ I’m not preaching, but I think maybe I learned it from my animal friends. Kindness and consideration of somebody besides yourself, I think that keeps you feeling young. I really do.”

I think the lady was absolutely right.

Editor’s Note: This is one of a series of articles written by a group of retired and current teachers — Ken Ballinger, Jean Harper, Billy Kreigh, Marianne Darr-Norman, and Anna Spalding. Their intent is to spur discussions at the dinner table and elsewhere. You may also voice your thoughts and reactions via The News-Banner’s letters to editor.



Jean Harper



Bank donates to downtown pathways project

First Bank of Berne is an alley art sponsor for the downtown pathways project, committing to a multi-year donation of \$10,000 to Bluffton NOW! Last year, \$4,000 was donated with \$3,000 to follow this year and \$3,000 in 2023. Pictured are, from left, Jeremy Penrod, Cory Mann, Michael Lautzenheiser and Brandy Fiechter of Bluffton NOW and Kent Liechty and Erica Bennett of First Bank of Berne. (Photo submitted)

Nau to speak to local HR group

Jamie Nau of Grow Nau Consulting will be the featured speaker for the AdamsWells HR Group luncheon Thursday, Jan. 20. Nau will speak on “Managing Their Whole Self,” addressing how simple changes can improve the work experience and help attract — and keep — top performers.

“In today’s excessively connected environment, it is nearly impossible to expect our team members to ‘leave it all at home’ in order to perform well at work,” said an announcement about the program. “As employers and managers, it is essential that we adapt to the current environment and labor market shifts. Great benefits are no longer sufficient to bring great talent in the door. We must create an environment where our top performers can thrive and



Jamie Nau

others want in.” At the luncheon, Nau will discuss changes that can be made to the work environment and “manage your employees as whole humans, as they have come to expect.” The luncheon is from noon to 1:30 p.m. and will be held at the Arts, Commerce, and Visitors Centre, 211 Water St. in Bluffton. The cost will be \$10, which will include the cost of lunch. Those interested in attending must RSVP no later than Tuesday, Jan. 18. Reservations may be made by following this link, <https://conta.cc/3zpg0Ay>; by calling 260-824-0510; or by emailing either eprible@wellscc.com or hwondercheck@wellscc.com Nau’s presentation is being made possible by support from Trine University.

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Norwell’s comeback falls short at Carroll

By JOSH BURRIS
HUNTERTOWN – The Norwell Lady Knights nearly pulled off the improbable Tuesday night at Carroll.

Trailing to the Chargers by 18 points with 6:30 left in the game, the Knights went on a 20-1 run to take a 1-point lead with 1:48 remaining.

While they made the comeback, it did not result in a win as Carroll managed to escape with a 64-60 victory.

“On one hand, you are just super proud of your kids, excited for the fight. I love to see us rise to that level as a team. We’ve been waiting on it for a little while here,” Norwell coach Eric Thornton said after the game. “On the other hand, you are looking back and going ‘we can’t let it get to that point.’ So it’s something where you are always looking at how can we improve? But I want our kids to dwell more on how we fought and how we battled.”

Thornton called a timeout before the run began, and the message he delivered seemed to light a fire in his team.

Kennedy Fuelling kicked off the run with a 3-pointer. Mackenzie Toliver knocked down two

free throws, Skyla Tomasek made a layup, Fuelling hit another three, and Tomasek hit another layup to make 12 straight Norwell points.

Carroll’s Taylor Fordyce, who scored a game-high 30 points, broke the run by hitting the first of two free-throw attempts.

Norwell stayed hot, getting a three from Toliver, a layup from Mackenzie Fuess, and a three by Emily Todd to put the Knights in front 56-55 with 1:48 to play.

The Chargers took the lead back with two free throws each from Alexis Castator and Fordyce. Then Fuelling made a layup with 50 seconds left to bring the Knights within 59-58.

The Knights then fouled Castator, sending her to the free-throw line for a 1-and-1. She missed the first shot, and the Knights rebounded. But Fordyce stole a Norwell pass and took it down to the other end for a layup and an and-1 opportunity. Fordyce made the free throw, and the Chargers led 62-58 with 16.6 seconds left.

Castator made two more free throws on a double bonus opportunity to make it 64-58, and Tomasek made two shots with 1.8 seconds left to make the final score.

Thornton said his players were

getting off great shots all night. They just simply were not falling. He encouraged them in that timeout to continue to take shots like they had been all game.

“We had a lot of good shots that had not fallen until that point,” Thornton said. “We encouraged our kids in that timeout to keep getting the shots they were getting, that they were doing the right thing. On the other end, our help side was not where it needed to be. We were too far away from the ball, and then we can’t get to where the ball gets to. They were getting too many easy baskets. A combination of us not making shots and us not being in very good defensive position led to that.”

Carroll took advantage of those miscues by Norwell in the second and third quarters especially.

Norwell ended the first quarter with a 14-12 lead. Then Carroll outscored Norwell 38-19 in the middle two.

The Knights hung with the Chargers for a majority of that second quarter, trailing just 25-22 after a reverse layup by Tomasek with 3:15 left. The Chargers ended the quarter on a small 8-4 run though to lead 33-26 at the half.

And after Fuelling made a layup at the start of the third quarter that brought the Knights within 5 points, the Chargers went on a 13-5 run to lead 46-31.

Annabelle Johnson hit a jumper for Norwell with 1:45 left in the third, but Fordyce ended it with back-to-back layups to put her team up 50-33.

A layup by Emily Todd and free throw by Johnson were each answered by layups from Fordyce that made it a 54-36 game.

Tomasek and Todd each scored 14 to lead Norwell. Fuelling and Fuess each added 12. Johnson also had a team-high 10 rebounds followed by eight from Tomasek.

The Knights ended the game shooting 39.7 percent from the field (23-of-58), while the Chargers shot 43.4 percent (23-of-53).

The Chargers also were a blazing 47 percent from three (8-of-17) while the Knights made just 29.2 percent of their shots from deep (7-of-24).

Overall, Thornton said he thought his team grew in this game and hopes they can carry the momentum from the fourth quarter into Friday’s NE8 Conference game at Leo.

“Our team got better by playing

this game tonight. I love the way we responded. Now we’ve got to go get Leo – that’s a big game for us on the road,” Thornton said. “We’ve got to go on the road on Friday and have the right mindset and use this game as fuel and try to go get a conference win.”

Norwell defeated Carroll in the JV game 42-24.

Ryland Graft led Norwell with 15 points, and Ali Riley joined her in double figures with 10.

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CARROLL 64, NORWELL 60 At Carroll High School									
NORWELL (12-4): Kennedy Fuelling 5-13 0-0 12, Mackenzie Toliver 1-9 2-3 5, Emily Todd 6-10 0-0 14, Lillian Norris 0-0 0-0 0, Haley Green 0-0 0-0 0, Annabelle Johnson 1-5 1-2 3, Mackenzie Fuess 5-12 0-1 12, Skyla Tomasek 5-9 4-4 14. TOTALS: 23-58 7-10 60.									
CARROLL (9-7): Jersey Paul 1-7 0-0 3, Brooke Pocock 2-7 0-0 6, Taylor Fordyce 11-17 4-5 30, Kayla Gibbs 4-8 1-1 10, Alexis Castator 2-6 4-5 8, Gabriela Beeman 0-0 0-0 0, Natalie Linnemeier 1-2 0-0 2, Victoria Straley 0-1 0-0 0, Jasmine Anderson 2-5 1-2 5. TOTALS: 23-53 10-13 64.									
Norwell 14 12 7 27 — 60 Carroll 12 21 17 14 — 64									
Three-point Goals: 7-24 (Fuelling 2-5, Todd 2-5, Fuess 2-7, Toliver 1-7), Carroll 8-17 (Fordyce 4-4, Pocock 2-7, Paul 1-1, Gibbs 1-2, Castator 0-3). Rebounds: Norwell 32 (Johnson 10, Tomasek 8, Fuess 3, Todd 3, Fuelling 1, Toliver 1), Carroll 37 (Anderson 9, Gibbs 6, Fordyce 5, Paul 4, Linnemeier 3, Castator 3, Pocock 2). Turnovers: Norwell 16, Carroll 17. Fouls: Norwell 13, Carroll 16. Fouled Out: None. Technicals: None.									
JV: Norwell 42, Carroll 24									

Lady Tigers go cold late, fall to Norse

By RICK SPRUNGER
WABASH – Bluffton’s Lady Tigers made a really nice fourth-quarter run at Northfield Tuesday night, rallying from a 33-22 deficit to take a 34-33 lead.

Unfortunately for Bluffton, however, the Tigers couldn’t hang on and dropped a 47-39 non-conference decision to a tall and talented Northfield bunch.

“We gassed out,” said Bluffton coach Eric Mounsey of his team’s falter at the finish line. “We went scoreless for several minutes (after taking the lead).

“We’re still working on learning how to compete for a full 32 minutes.”

Bluffton’s big rally started after it had scored just 2 points in the first six minutes of the second half and had fallen behind, 33-22.

Marly Drayer scored from the lane, and Ryleigh Johnson added a layup to trim the margin to 33-26 at the third-quarter break.

Monroe Heller then took over.

She hit the first of two free throws seven seconds into the final stanza, then rebounded the miss of her second free toss, stepped behind the arc, and drilled a three to cut the gap to 33-30.

Heller, who led Bluffton (6-9) with 14 points, then stole the ball on the other end and fed Haley Gibson for a layup and a 1-point game.

Moments later, Gibson connected from the right corner with her foot on

the line and a 34-33 lead with 6:49 left.

But Bluffton didn’t score again for another nearly three minutes.

And Northfield (8-7) ran off 9 unanswered points before a Tressa Renner 3-pointer stemmed the bleeding.

But the Norse immediately scored another 5 straight points afterwards to render Heller’s layup with 12 seconds remaining meaningless.

“Little things mattered,” said Mounsey of his team’s struggles down the stretch. “We would get a big stop, but we would then miss some easy bunnies or would take shots too early in the possession and end up not getting a score.

“Those are just huge momentum stoppers.”

Bluffton’s biggest problem all night, however, was on the boards, where it was soundly beaten by a 36-22 margin.

“Northfield rebounded really, really well,” said Mounsey. “They are big, and they’ve got a lot of length.

“We needed to box out, and we didn’t do that.

“And that just really hurt us on the glass.”

Things started getting away from the Tigers in the second quarter.

Bluffton had taken a 17-14 lead after one quarter on Heller’s 3-pointer with 36 seconds left but then went ice-cold.

The Tigers missed 14 of their last 15 shots in the first half and managed only an Isabella Stout layup in the first

five and a half minutes of the third quarter to fall into that 33-22 hole.

It was then that they came alive before faltering down the stretch.

Heller was the only player to reach double figures for Bluffton, which finished 15-for-52 from the field for a 28.9 shooting percentage.

Northfield was led by Emily Pennington’s 17 points and 10 rebounds and Hannah Holmes’ 10 points and 12 rebounds.

The Norse were 19-for-49 from the field for a 38.8 percentage.

Northfield also won a 25-9 decision in the junior varsity contest, which was shortened to two quarters.

Kennedy Nash scored 3 points and Cayah King, Ayla Nern, and Madi Fenstermaker 2 apiece for Bluffton.

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NORTHFIELD 47, BLUFFTON 39 At Northfield High School									
BLUFFTON (6-9): Isabella Stout 2-3 0-0 5, Ryleigh Johnson 3-6 2-2 8, Monroe Heller 5-18 1-2 14, Marlyn Schreiber 0-5 0-0 0, Haley Gibson 3-7 0-2 6, Tressa Renner 1-5 0-0 3, Marly Drayer 1-4 1-2 3, Lily King 0-4 0-0 0. TOTAL: 15-52 4-8 39.									
NORTHFIELD (8-7): Addy Rosen 2-3 0-0 5, Ainsley Dale 1-5 0-1 2, Eden Hoover 2-9 3-3 8, Emily Pennington 8-12 1-2 17, Hannah Holmes 4-12 2-2 10, 2-9 0-0 6, Elli Baker 2-6 0-0 5, Camryn Kuhn 0-2 0-0 0. TOTAL: 19-49 6-8 47.									
Bluffton 17 3 6 13 — 39 Northfield 14 12 7 14 — 47									
Three-point Goals: Bluffton 5-20 (Stout 1-1, Heller 3-11, Gibson 0-2, Renner 1-2, Drayer 0-2, King 0-2), Northfield 3-12 (Rosen 1-1, Dale 0-3, Hoover 1-4, Pennington 0-1, Baker 1-2, Kuhn 0-1). Rebounds: Bluffton 22 (Johnson 6), Northfield 36 (Holmes 12, Pennington 10, Baker 6). Turnovers: Bluffton 11, Northfield 14. Fouls: Bluffton 11, Northfield 13. Fouled Out: None. Technicals: None.									
JV: Northfield 25, Bluffton 9.									

Barrett, Randle lead Knicks over Pacers

DENIS P. GORMAN
Associated Press
NEW YORK (AP) — RJ Barrett scored 24 of his 32 points in the first half, Julius Randle had 30 points and 16 rebounds in his first game after coming off the COVID-19 health and safety protocols list, and the New York Knicks beat the Indiana Pacers 104-94 on Tuesday night.

Alec Burks added 14 points for New York (18-20), which snapped a two-game losing streak. Immanuel Quickley chipped in with 11.

“With both guys the most important thing is them attacking the rim,” New York coach Tom Thibodeau said about Barrett and Randle. “The aggressiveness of RJ attacking the rim, and for Julius to do what he did today is just remarkable.

“We had no idea what he was going to be like. So, unbelievable effort. Unbelievable game. Sixteen rebounds. Just all the things that he did.”

Kiefer Skyes scored 22 points in the Pacers’ fifth straight loss. Duane Washington Jr. added 17. Domantas Sabonis and Torrey Craig each contributed 15.

“I’m not just here to survive,” said Sykes, who signed with the Pacers as a free agent on Dec. 27. “I’m here to



thrive. I want to be in the NBA for a long time. So I’m going to continue to work and have that mindset and out-work everybody.”

The New York-Indiana rivalry in the mid-to-late 1990s was among the NBA’s must-see matchups. This game was far from it, with a decimated Pacers squad taking on a Knicks team nearly back at full strength.

Malcolm Brogdon, Chris Duarte, Isaiah Jackson, Jeremy Lamb, Caris LeVert, Goga Bitadze, Kelan Martin and T.J. Warren all missed the game for Indiana as they were in health and safety protocols. T.J. McConnell did not play as he is recovering from right wrist ligament surgery. By comparison, New York was aided by the returns of Randle, Mitchell Robinson and Jericho Sims from protocols.

It was tied at 55 at halftime, even with Barrett’s huge first half. The Pacers, who trailed by 12 early in the second quarter, finished the final seven minutes of the period with an 18-8 run.

“Just trying to be aggressive,” Barrett said of his approach early in the game. “That’s really it. When you get into the paint, you make reads: You (have) to finish or kick out. It puts pressure on the defense.”

Randle took over in the third, scoring 14 points on 5-for-7 shooting, including 2 for 2 from 3. New York led 84-77 after three and Barrett, Randle and Burks took turns knocking down big shots in the fourth.

“He makes us different. That’s his gift. He can play with speed. He can play with power. He can make decisions,” Thibodeau said of Randle. “It does make us different, yeah.”

TIP-INS

Pacers: Rick Carlisle will be coaching Indiana at home on Wednesday while his one-time team, the Dallas Mavericks, will retire Dirk Nowitzki’s number before their nationally televised game against the Golden State Warriors. “I’m really disappointed that I’m unable to attend that (ceremony),” Carlisle said. Carlisle coached the Mavericks from 2009-21. “It’s (going) to be so special. ... Dirk just means so much to so many of us and he proved to be a great champion as well. It’ll be very emotional.”

Knicks: Thibodeau disagreed that an upcoming stretch of eight games out of 10 at Madison Square Garden could benefit his squad. “We can’t look ahead,” Thibodeau said before the game. “We’re not going to win just because we’re home. That’s not how you win. We’ve got to come in and put the work into it.”

UPNEXT:

Pacers: Host Brooklyn on Wednesday night.

Knicks: Begin a home-and-home series against Boston on Thursday night at Madison Square Garden.

BHMSD 7th- and 8th-grade boys get wins

Bluffton-Harrison Middle School’s seventh-grade boys’ basketball team defeated Bellmont 47-7.

Bluffton held a 29-7 lead at halftime and did not allow a single point in the second half.

Nine different Tigers scored points in a balanced offensive attack.

Parker Nash led the way with 8 points. Cooper Craig followed with 7, and Max White, Axton Beste, and Jonah Geisel each added 6.

The eighth-grade Tigers also were victorious over Bellmont by a 38-18 score.

Things were tied up 6-6 after one

quarter, and Bellmont took a slim 13-11 lead into halftime.

Then the Tigers left their opponent in the dust in the second half, outscoring Bellmont 25-7.

Kaden Grau was Bluffton’s top scorer with 19 points, and AJ Streveler joined him in double figures with 11.

High School Calendar

WEDNESDAY, Jan. 5
WRESTLING: Bluffton at Norwell, 6:30 p.m.
BOYS BASKETBALL: Central Noble at Bluffton, 7:30 p.m. (JV 6 p.m., Freshman 5 p.m.)

THURSDAY, Jan. 6
SWIMMING: Bluffton at South Adams, 5:30 p.m.; Norwell at East Noble, 6 p.m.

FRIDAY, Jan. 7
GIRLS BASKETBALL: Bluffton at Jay County, 7:30 p.m. (JV 6 p.m.); South Adams at Southern Wells, 7:30 p.m. (JV 6 p.m.); Norwell at Leo, 7:30 p.m. (JV 6 p.m.)

SWIMMING: Bluffton at Jay County Invite, 6 p.m.

Lady Raiders fight back to top Daleville

The Southern Wells Lady Raiders held on to win 49-47 at Daleville on Tuesday.

The Raiders trailed 10-6 after one quarter and still trailed at halftime 17-16.

Daleville really pushed its lead in the third quarter, ending that one with a 35-22 lead.

Southern Wells managed to fight its way back into the game though, outscoring the hosts 27-12 in the fourth to complete the comeback and win the game.

With the win, Southern Wells improved to 4-10 on the season, while Daleville dropped to 4-10.

The Raiders will play again on Friday at home against South Adams.

NHS boys’ swim team tops Angola, girls lose

Norwell’s boys’ swim team won 102-66 in a meet at Angola on Tuesday.

The Knights were able to take first place in seven of 11 events.

Brody Page won the 100 freestyle with a time of 50.91 and the 100 backstroke with a time of 58.6.

Landon Anderson won the 50 freestyle with a time of 25.05. Reece Lobsiger won the 100 butterfly with a time of 1:03.59. Carson Hiester won the 500 freestyle with a time of 5:50.45.

Jakob Peterson, Kale Meredith, Page, and Marin Melcher won the 200 medley relay with a time of 1:49.87.

Emerson Graft, Peterson, Meredith, and Page won the 400 freestyle relay with a time of 3:46.48.

The Lady Knights suffered an 87-83 loss to the hosts and took first place in just one of 11 events.

Aubreyan Heyerly, Riley Meredith, Emma Page, and Ella Krug won the 200 freestyle relay with a time of 1:55.43.

Norwell had 10 second-place finishes though.

Page finished second in the 200 freestyle with a time of 2:13.12 and second in the 500 freestyle with a time of 6:08.2.

Emerson Meredith finished second in the 50 freestyle with a time of 26.96 and second in the 100 freestyle with a time of 59.71.

Krug finished second in the 100 butterfly with a time of 1:08.19. Jillian Melcher finished second in the 100 backstroke with a time of 1:08.07. Haleigh Reinhard finished second in the 100 breaststroke with a time of 1:21.51.

Melcher, Riley Meredith, Emerson Meredith, and Heyerly finished second in the 200 medley relay with a time of 2:02.99.

Ava Johnson, Haleigh Reinhard, Maddy Reinhard, and Addyson Heyerly finished second in the 200 freestyle relay with a time of 2:01.45.

Emerson Meredith, Cassie Coyne, Page, and Melcher finished second in the 400 freestyle relay with a time of 4:03.65.

Norwell will return to action on Thursday at East Noble for an NE8 Conference meet.

Bluffton wrestling team defeated by Bellmont

The Bluffton Tigers lost 44-21 in a home wrestling match to the Bellmont Braves on Tuesday.

Bluffton won five of the 14 weight matchups.

Levi Johns (113 pounds) and Elliott Apps (160 pounds) won their matches by fall.

Landon Bertsch (132 pounds), Levi Kahn (170 pounds), and Johnny Cruz (285 pounds) won their matches by decision.

The Tigers will compete again on Wednesday in a dual match at Norwell.

NEWS-BANNER SCOREBOARD

BASKETBALL

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Brooklyn	23	12	.657	—
Philadelphia	20	16	.556	3 1/2
Toronto	17	17	.500	5 1/2
Boston	18	19	.486	6
New York	18	20	.474	6 1/2
Southeast Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	23	15	.605	—
Washington	19	18	.514	3 1/2
Charlotte	19	19	.500	4
Atlanta	16	20	.444	6
Orlando	7	31	.184	16
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	25	10	.714	—
Milwaukee	25	14	.641	2
Cleveland	21	17	.553	5 1/2
Indiana	14	24	.368	12 1/2
Detroit	7	28	.200	18
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Southwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Memphis	25	14	.641	—
Dallas	19	18	.514	5
San Antonio	14	22	.389	9 1/2
New Orleans	13	25	.342	11 1/2
Houston	10	28	.263	14 1/2
Northwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Utah	27	10	.730	—
Denver	18	17	.514	8
Minnesota	17	19	.469	10
Portland	14	22	.389	12 1/2
Oklahoma City	13	23	.361	13 1/2
Pacific Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Golden State	29	7	.806	—
Phoenix	29	8	.784	1/2
L.A. Clippers	19	19	.500	11
L.A. Lakers	19	19	.500	11
Sacramento	16	22	.421	14

Monday's Games				
Philadelphia	133,	Houston	113	
Washington	124,	Charlotte	121	
Memphis	118,	Brooklyn	104	
Detroit	115,	Milwaukee	106	
Chicago	102,	Orlando	98	
Utah	115,	New Orleans	104	
Dallas	103,	Denver	89	
Golden State	115,	Miami	108	
Portland	136,	Atlanta	131	
Minnesota	122,	L.A. Clippers	104	
Tuesday's Games				
Toronto	129,	San Antonio	104	
Memphis	110,	Cleveland	106	
New York	104,	Indiana	94	
Phoenix	123,	New Orleans	110	
Sacramento	at L.A. Lakers,	late		
Wednesday's Games				
Detroit	at Charlotte,	7 p.m.		
Houston	at Washington,	7 p.m.		
Philadelphia	at Orlando,	7 p.m.		
Brooklyn	at Indiana,	7:30 p.m.		
Golden State	at Dallas,	7:30 p.m.		
San Antonio	at Boston,	7:30 p.m.		
Oklahoma City	at Minnesota,	8 p.m.		
Toronto	at Milwaukee,	8 p.m.		
Atlanta	at Sacramento,	10 p.m.		
Miami	at Portland,	10 p.m.		
Utah	at Denver,	10 p.m.		
Thursday's Games				
Boston	at New York,	7:30 p.m.		
Detroit	at Memphis,	8 p.m.		
Golden State	at New Orleans,	8 p.m.		
L.A. Clippers	at Phoenix,	10 p.m.		
Friday's Games				
San Antonio	at Philadelphia,	7 p.m.		
Milwaukee	at Brooklyn,	7:30 p.m.		
Utah	at Toronto,	7:30 p.m.		
Dallas	at Houston,	8 p.m.		
Minnesota	at Oklahoma City,	8 p.m.		
Washington	at Chicago,	8 p.m.		
Sacramento	at Denver,	9 p.m.		
Atlanta	at L.A. Lakers,	10 p.m.		
Cleveland	at Portland,	10 p.m.		

NCAA

All Times EST				
AP Top 25				
	Record	Pts	Pvs	
1. Baylor (61)	13-0	1,525	1	
2. Duke	11-1	1,447	2	
3. Purdue	12-1	1,376	3	
4. Gonzaga	11-2	1,314	4	
5. UCLA	8-1	1,287	5	
6. Kansas	11-1	1,237	6	
7. Southern Cal	12-0	1,015	7	
8. Arizona	11-1	1,013	9	
9. Auburn	12-1	976	11	
10. Michigan St.	12-2	934	10	
11. Iowa St.	12-1	896	8	
12. Houston	12-2	849	12	
13. Ohio St.	9-2	819	13	
14. Texas	11-2	640	17	
15. Alabama	10-3	589	19	
16. Kentucky	11-2	560	18	
17. Providence	13-1	560	21	
18. Tennessee	9-3	519	14	
19. Villanova	9-4	437	22	
20. Colorado St.	10-0	386	20	
21. LSU	12-1	371	16	

22. Xavier	11-2	270	23
23. Wisconsin	10-2	221	24
24. Seton Hall	9-3	174	15
25. Texas Tech	10-2	142	25
Top 25 Schedule			
Monday			
No. 23 Wisconsin 74, No. 3 Purdue 69			
No. 8 Arizona 95, Washington 79			
Tuesday			
No. 1 Baylor 84, Oklahoma 74			
No. 2 Duke 69, Georgia Tech 57			
No. 6 Kansas 74, Oklahoma State 63			
No. 9 Auburn 81, South Carolina 66			
No. 14 Texas 70, Kansas St. 57			
No. 21 LSU 65, No. 16 Kentucky 60			
Marquette 88, No. 16 Providence 56			
No. 20 Colorado St. 67, Air Force 31			
No. 24 Seton Hall 71, Butler 56			
Wednesday			
No. 5 UCLA vs. Arizona St., 10:30 p.m.			
No. 10 Michigan St. vs. Nebraska, 7 p.m.			
No. 11 Iowa St. vs. No. 25 Texas Tech, 9 p.m.			
No. 12 Houston at South Florida, 7 p.m.			
No. 15 Alabama at Florida, 7 p.m.			
No. 18 Tennessee vs. Mississippi, 7 p.m.			
No. 19 Villanova vs. Creighton, 8:30 p.m.			
Thursday			
No. 7 Southern Cal at California, 11 p.m.			
No. 13 Ohio St. at Indiana, 7 p.m.			
No. 23 Wisconsin vs. Iowa, 9 p.m.			

NCAA

Tuesday's Scores				
BOYS PREP BASKETBALL				
Adams Central	52,	Rockford Park-way,	Ohio	30
Argos	34,	S. Bend Trinity	22	
Beecher, Ill.	47,	S. Newton	33	
Bellmont	52,	S. Adams	29	
Borden	58,	Madison Shawe	26	
Castle	61,	Boonville	43	
Chesterton	77,	Hammond Noll	48	
Christian Academy	63,	New Wash- ington	47	
Columbus Christian	53,	Medora	37	
Concord	57,	New Prairie	33	
Corydon	68,	Rock Creek Academy	46	
E. Noble	68,	Westview	55	
Elkhart Christian	61,	Churubusco	39	
Ev. Central	59,	Princeton	53	
Ev. Day	90,	Carmi White County,	Ill.	54
Fishers	58,	Lafayette Jeff	47	
Franklin Central	71,	Whiteland	64,	20T
Fremont	73,	Ft. Wayne Wayne	65	
Ft. Wayne Blackhawk	79,	S. Bend St. Joseph's	66	
Ft. Wayne Snider	90,	New Haven	75	
Garrett	62,	Hamilton	34	
Gibson Southern	58,	Ev. Mater Dei	56	
Goshen	41,	Michigan City Mar- quette	38	
Highland	67,	Wheeler	35	
Indpls Cathedral	85,	Mishawaka Marian	61	
Indpls Chatared	61,	Beech Grove	51	
Indpls Pike	71,	Noblesville	68	
Indpls Riverside	76,	Victory College Prep	70	
Indpls Roncalli	43,	Indpls Perry Meridian	35	
Indpls Shortridge	73,	Providence Cristo Rey	57	
Indpls Tindley	70,	Heritage Chris- tian	48	
Indpls Washington	69,	Traders Point Christian	49	
Jasper	48,	Ev. Reitz	37	
LaPorte	62,	Lowell	29	
Lakeland	69,	Lakewood Park	55	
Lawrence North	60,	Indpls Attucks	39	
Leo	75,	Ft. Wayne Canterbury	44	
Maconaquah	84,	Eastern (Green- town)	59	
Marion	73,	Ft. Wayne Luers	71	
Martinsville	59,	Columbus East	51	
Merrillville	78,	Griffith	37	
Mishawaka	67,	Elkhart	46	
Morgan Twp.	55,	Covenant Chris- tian	39	
N. Montgomery	47,	Sheridan	31	
New Buffalo,	Mich.	83,	S. Bend Career Academy	73
Noble-Whitley Home School	64,	Ft. Wayne Smith Academy	14	
NorthWood	47,	Columbia City	41	
Peru	69,	N. Miami	39	
Plymouth	53,	Michigan City	45	
Prairie Hts.	60,	Bronson, Mich.	38	
Providence	49,	Southwestern (Hanover)	48	
Terre Haute North	50,	S. Vermil- lion	25	
Triton	42,	Logansport	31	
W. Vigo	56,	Riverton Parke	45	

Western 52, Lafayette Catholic 46	Westfield 87, Mt. Vernon (Fortville) 78
Greene County Tournament	
First Round	
Linton 75, Owen Valley 48	Pike Central 51, Shoals 42
Hendricks County Tournament	
First Round	
Avon 78, Cascade 47	Brownsburg 47, Tri-West 34
GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL	
Andean 60, Hammond Noll 34	Bethany Christian 51, Lakewood Park 46
Blackford 67, Delta 44	Bloomington South 55, Brown Co. 31
Blue River 62, Eastern Hancock 55	Bremen 50, Central Noble 46
Carroll (Flora) 61, N. White 54	Carroll (Ft. Wayne) 64, Norwell 60
Columbia City 62, Churubusco 24	Crawford Co. 74, Austin 73, OT
DeKalb 35, Eastside 31	Eastbrook 34, Huntington North 26
Eastern (Greene) 53, Bloomington North 52, OT	Eastern (Pekin) 62, New Albany 54
Elkhart 63, Mishawaka 44	Forest Park 47, Dubois 37
Ft. Wayne Northrop 69, Heritage 44	Garrett 51, Fairfield 46
Glenn 48, NorthWood 47	Greencastle 46, Clay City 39
Hauser 60, Monrovia 55	Henryville 49, Crothersville 16
Highland 52, Lowell 39	Homestead 68, Indpls N. Central 58
Indiana Creek 48, Southport 42	Indiana Deaf 42, Indpls Herron 33
Indianapolis Homeschool 64, Heritage Christian 51	Indpls Cathedral 53, Mooresville 46
Indpls Perry Meridian 54, Greenfield 48	Indpls Ritter 38, Beech Grove 32
Jay Co. 57, Ft. Wayne Concordia 19	LaCrosse 60, River Forest 41
LaVilla 61, S. Bend Career Academy 8	Lake Central 58, Kankakee Valley 25
Lanesville 82, S. Central (Elizabeth) 5	Leo 43, Prairie Hts. 35
Madison 44, Brownstown 41	Merrillville 74, Knox 60
Mishawaka Marian 68, Goshen 36	Mt. Notre Dame, Ohio 45, E. Central 31
Muncie Central 47, Yorktown 45	N. Central (Farmersburg) 32, Cloverdale 25
N. Montgomery 59, N. Putnam 43	Northfield 47, Bluffton 39
Oakbrook Prep, S.C. 39, Martinsville Tabernacle 22	Paoli 57, Perry Central 23
Parke Heritage 53, W. Vigo 49	Penn 68, New Prairie 27
Rushville 48, Franklin Co. 31	S. Central (Union Mills) 65, Lake Station 46
S. Spencer 60, Evansville Christian 16	Scottsburg 46, Seymour 43
Sheridan 54, Crawfordsville 34	Southern Wells 49, Daleville 47
Southmont 52, Riverton Parke 40	Tecumseh 54, Boonville 35
Tipton 75, Mississinewa 65, OT	Tri-County 63, Attica 12
Trinity Lutheran 67, Greenwood Christian 50	Twin Lakes 71, Frontier 25
Vincennes Rivet 46, Salem 41	W. Lafayette 67, Frankfort 27
Washington 49, Southridge 20	Washington Twp. 65, Whiting 16
Western 64, Rossville 18	Western Boone 42, Fountain Central 28
Wood Memorial 52, Mt. Carmel, Ill. 46, 20T	Woodlan 40, Antwerp, Ohio 38
Ripley County Tournament	
First Round	
Jac-Cen-Dei 66, Milan 11	S. Ripley 34, Batesville 27

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	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Tennessee	11	5	0	.688	391	329
Indianapolis	9	7	0	.563	440	339
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Jacksonville	2	14	0	.125	227	446

FOOTBALL

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All Times EDT				
AMERICAN CONFERENCE				
East				
	W	L	T	Pct PF PA
x-Buffalo	10	6	0	.625 456 279
x-New England	10	6	0	.625 438 270
e-Miami	8	8	0	.500 308 349
e-N.Y. Jets	4	12	0	.250 300 477
South				
	W	L	T	Pct PF PA
y-Tennessee	11	5	0	.688 391 329
Anaheim	9	7	0	.563 440 339
e-Houston	4	12	0	.250 255 424
e-Jacksonville	2	14	0	.125 227 446

North				
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Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★

1/05

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Cash4Life — 05-13-19-20-29, Cash Ball: 2

Quick Draw Midday — 02-08-10-12-14-15-16-21-22-24-28-37-41-54-55-61-64-68-69-80, BE: 41

Daily Three-Midday — 5-4-5, SB: 1

Daily Three-Evening — 8-8-3, SB: 0

Daily Four-Midday — 9-8-4-8, SB: 1

Daily Four-Evening — 1-7-5-2, SB: 0

Quick Draw Evening — 01-07-09-15-21-26-27-31-34-36-37-40-42-44-46-49-53-74-78-80, BE: 37

Hoosier Lotto — Estimated jackpot (for Wednesday): \$4.4 million
MEGA MILLIONS 04-06-16-21-22, Mega Ball: 1, Megaplier: 3.
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Public Notice

NOTICE

Wells County Community Corrections will hold the next Advisory Board Meeting on January 11, 2022 at 11:45 am in the Wells County Community Corrections Training Room: 102 W Market Street, Suite 107, Bluffton, IN 46714

nb 1/5
hspaxlp

SUDOKU ANSWER

8	9	6	7	8	4	1	9	2
1	9	2	9	8	6	8	4	7
7	8	7	9	1	9	6	8	8
8	1	7	8	2	9	6	7	9
2	8	1	6	1	9	7	9	8
9	6	9	8	7	2	8	1	7
7	2	9	1	8	9	8	6	7
9	8	8	7	6	2	1	9	7
6	1	9	9	8	8	2	7	7

Hancock ends '21 with plans for almost 1K new homes

By MITCHELL KIRK
(Greenfield) Daily Reporter
HANCOCK COUNTY — Another year is in the books, as are plans for over 1,000 new homes in Hancock County.

Local government departments overseeing building permits are reporting totals for 2021 in the triple digits throughout their respective jurisdictions, with several seeing significant spikes from last year. Officials expect much of the same, if not more, as they look toward 2022.

Through Dec. 27, McCordsville logged 432 building permits for single-family homes for the year, blasting past 2020's 241.

Ryan Crum, McCordsville's assistant town manager of planning and building, thinks the increase is part of what's happening to the national housing market.

"We're seeing just a surge in demand right now, and the builders are doing their best to keep up with it," Crum said. "I think the

other thing is simply McCordsville's location and great schools — those things are making us very, very attractive. That certainly does not hurt and it's going to continue to keep those numbers up."

He doesn't see the trend dipping in 2022.

"Likely it will be even a little bit more probably next year just based upon the fact that demand seems to continue, and we're going to have really pretty healthy lot inventory next year," he said.

New Palestine had 213 single-family residential building permits for the year as of Dec. 28. Town manager Jim Robinson noted that's an exponential rise from the 35 to 40 the town typically has in a year.

"This year was just unreal for us," he said.

Robinson attributes the surge to the work of D.R. Horton and Lennar Homes in the community.

"They're very productive builders," he said. "They've definitely been the bulk of it. We expected that,

but not to this capacity. It's amazing the permits that they bring in."

He wouldn't be surprised if the trajectory continues next year.

"I can't look in a crystal ball, but I do know we are working with two other developers in the area as well as Lennar and D.R. Horton expanding," Robinson said. "It's very possible next year we could possibly be looking at the same or more homes."

Robinson expects all of the residential building to spur other kinds of development too.

"We definitely have a lot of rooftops here in New Palestine," he said. "I think a lot of people over the last few years have had a little bit of urgency for restaurants and other things to follow. Now that the rooftops are here, we'll see what happens."

For 2021 in Greenfield, single-family permits came in at 209 as of Dec. 27, down from last year's total of 278. City planning technician Brandon Badger noted that

while the total will likely be lower year over year, this month drew 55 permits, much higher than the monthly average of 14. He added that's due to new sections in subdivisions recently opening up.

"It can come in waves at times," Badger said.

Greenfield also had two multi-family building permits this year totaling more than 400 units.

Like his contemporaries throughout Hancock County, Badger expects more of same in the new year.

"Even though the numbers are kind of up and down a little bit, I don't see anything really major changing, at least in the residential," he said. "There seems to be quite a bit of interest in home building in Greenfield, and it doesn't look like it's changing anytime soon."

Unincorporated Hancock County had 197 single-family permits so far this year as of Dec. 27, more than doubling last year's total of

98. It also had 74 non-residential permits, nearly tripling the 25 in 2020.

Fortville had 113 single-family permits year to date through Dec. 28, up from a total of 99 last year.

"We're definitely seeing a manageable uptick in permits," said Adam Zaklikowski, the town's planning and building director.

He added such permits have been rising incrementally in Fortville since 2016, when the town had 30, followed by 58 in 2017, 69 in 2018 and 72 in 2019.

"I would say at this point, barring any unforeseen larger national economic issues, I would expect those trends to continue," Zaklikowski said. "We'll see what happens with interest rates in 2022, and if they go up if that has an impact at all on the pace."

This story was provided to the News-Banner by the Hoosier State Press Association's Information Network.

CDC posts rationale for shorter isolation and quarantine time

By MIKE STOBBE
AP Medical Writer
NEW YORK (AP) — The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Tuesday explained the scientific rationale for shortening its COVID-19 isolation and quarantine recommendations, and clarified that the guidance applies to kids as well as adults.

The CDC also maintained that, for people who catch COVID-19, testing is not required to emerge from five days of isolation — despite hints from other federal officials that the agency was reconsidering that.

The agency announced the changes last week, halving the isolation time for Americans who catch the coronavirus and have no symptoms or only brief illnesses. Isolation should only end if a person has been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and if other symptoms are resolving, the CDC added.

It similarly shortened the time that close contacts need to quarantine, from 10 days to five.

CDC officials previously said the changes were in keeping with evidence that people with the coronavirus are most infectious in the two days before and three days after symptoms develop.

Some experts have questioned how the new recommendations were crafted and why they were changed amid a spike in cases driven largely by the highly contagious omicron variant. Some also expressed dismay that the guidelines allowed people to leave isolation without getting tested to see if they were still infectious.

On Tuesday, the CDC posted documents designed to address those — and other — questions about the latest recommendations. The new guidance applies to school children as well as adults, the CDC said, responding to questions

raised by school leaders around the country.

In laying out the scientific basis for the revisions, the agency said more than 100 studies from 17 countries indicate that most transmission happens early in an infection. The CDC acknowledged the data come from research done when delta and other pre-omicron variants were causing the most infections. But the agency also pointed to limited, early data from the U.S. and South Korea that suggests the time between exposure and the appearance of symptoms may be shorter for omicron than for earlier variants.

The CDC also took up the question of why it didn't call for a negative test before people emerge from isolation.

On Sunday, Dr. Anthony Fauci — the White House's top medical adviser — said the CDC was considering including the negative test as part of its guidance.

The agency said lab tests can show positive results long after someone stops being contagious, and that a negative at-home test may not necessarily indicate there is no threat. That's why, the agency said, it was recommending that people wears masks everywhere for the five days after isolation

ends.

It did offer tips for those who have access to the tests and want to check themselves before leaving isolation.

Dr. Eric Topol, the head of the Scripps Research Translational Institute, accused the agency of furthering confusion. He

agreed that it is appropriate to shorten isolation time, but only with testing.

"We do need to come up with a strategy that limits isolation time, but we don't want it to be one that's adding to the spread of the virus and unwittingly leading to the virus circulating," he said.

Judge tosses lawsuit of man who was nude baby on 'Nevermind'

By ANDREW DALTON
AP Entertainment Writer
LOS ANGELES (AP) — A federal judge has dismissed the lawsuit of a 30-year-old man who alleged that the image of him nude as a 4-month-old on the 1991 cover of Nirvana's "Nevermind" album is child pornography.

Judge Fernando M. Olguin on Monday granted a motion to dismiss the suit from the defendants, who include surviving Nirvana members Dave Grohl and Krist Novoselic and the estate of Kurt Cobain, but left the door open for plaintiff Spencer Elden to refile an amended version.

The dismissal came after Elden's attorneys did not file an opposition to the defendants' motion to dismiss by a Dec. 30 deadline. The attorneys declined comment Tuesday.

The lawsuit, filed in August in federal court in California, said that Elden had suffered "lifelong damages" as the band and others profited from the ubiquitous image of him naked underwater appearing to swim after a dollar bill on a fish hook.

has autographed copies of the album cover for sale on eBay; and he has used the connection to try to pick up women."

The judge gave Elden's attorneys until Jan. 27 to file an amended complaint that addresses the issues raised in the defendants' motion, or the suit will be more definitively dismissed.

One of Elden's attorney's, Maggie Mabie, told The Associated Press in August that he filed the lawsuit when he did because he "finally has the courage to hold these actors accountable."

Mabie said despite the photo being 30 years old, the lawsuit was within the statute of limitations of federal child pornography law for several reasons, including the fact that the image is still in circulation and earning money.

The suit sought at least \$150,000 from each of more

than a dozen defendants, including the record labels involved in the release and re-release of "Nevermind," and cover photographer Kirk Weddle.

Elden's father was a friend of Weddle, who took pictures of several swimming babies in several scenarios at the Rose Bowl Aquatic Center in Pasadena, California.

When the photo was shot, Nirvana was a little-known band with no sense they were making a generation-defining album in "Nevermind," their first major label release, whose songs included "Smells Like Teen Spirit," "Come as You Are" and "Lithium." Cobain died in 1994.

The Associated Press does not typically name people who say they have been victims of sexual abuse, but may when they have repeatedly come forward publicly, as Elden has.

January

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