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THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 2023

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Parks board reviews bids for Lancaster Park

By HOLLY GASKILL

The board of the Bluffton Parks and Recreation Department reviewed recently-opened bids for Lancaster Park in a special meeting last night.

The board endorsed three packages — the pavilion, site development, and site improvement — which will be seen at the next Board of Works meeting.

Two bids were received for every package, and the board recommended acceptance of the apparent low bid for each — Coblents Construction of Geneva for the first package at \$210,600, Frauhiger Excavating of Bluffton for the second package at \$228,000, and Brooks Construction of Fort Wayne for the third package at \$99,983.

Habig Trucking of Bluffton was first thought to have the low bid for site development at \$223,000, but it was later discovered that the package was incomplete and ineligible for consideration.

Conor Jackson, project manager, noted that the bid packages includes all of the project's ideal features from local businesses and are under budget. However, Jackson stated some additional costs may come from unsuitable site soils and paving.

The new park project has been made possible through a more than \$600,000 grant the Parks Department received last year. Plans for the park include a half-mile walking path with benches, a pavilion with restrooms and a drinking fountain, a dual-use football/soccer field, a 9-hole dual-use foot golf/disc golf course, two sand

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Police: Boy shoots 2 administrators at Denver high school

By COLLEEN SLEVIN and JESSE BEDAYN
Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — A 17-year-old student shot and wounded two administrators at his Denver high school Wednesday as they searched him for weapons, a daily requirement because of the boy's behavioral issues, authorities said.

The student fled and his vehicle was later found in a remote mountain area about 50 miles southwest of Denver, but he remained at large. A shelter in place order was issued by authorities around the small town of Bailey, in Park County.

"He obviously is armed and dangerous and willing to use the weapon, as we've learned this morning," Denver Mayor Michael Hancock warned as law enforcement searched for the student, Austin Lyle.

The shooting occurred at a school shaken by frequent lockdowns and vio-

lence, including the killing of a classmate that prompted East High School students to march on the Colorado Capitol earlier this month. Parents who converged on the 2,500-student campus on Wednesday faulted officials for not doing enough to protect their children.

"I am sick of it," said Jesse Haase, who planned to talk with her daughter about taking her out of classes for the rest of the school year.

Amid the flurry of criticism over lax security, Denver school officials said after the shooting that they would once again put armed officers into the city's public high schools.

The shooting happened just before 10 a.m. in an office area as Lyle was undergoing a search as part of a "safety plan" that required him to be patted down daily, officials said.

The gun used in the shooting was not immediately recovered, Denver

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Late evening cravings

The rainy weather Wednesday night didn't stop Bummies from feeding their customers. The local drive-in's opening day was March 15. (Photo by Carrie Penrod)

Board of Works OKs engineering studies

By DAVE SCHULTZ

A pair of engineering studies were approved Tuesday afternoon by the Bluffton Board of Public Works and Safety.

One of the studies will prepare the city for the second round of Community Crossings match grants in 2023, at a cost of between \$79,900 and \$102,900.

The other contract approved Tuesday will provide for a drainage study for the Willowbrook subdivision. The cost for that study will be \$35,000.

Because Bluffton's population is now over 10,000, the city must pay 50 percent of the cost of a project submitted to the state for reimbursement out

of the Community Crossings program. Previously, the city had to pay 25 percent of the total costs.

The money will be paid to USI Consultants of Indianapolis for its work appraising city streets for improvements using Community Crossings. There are five parts to the company's plans — mapping, the CCMG applications, final bid documents, bidding services, and construction services. Each part has an estimated number of hours and a fee range.

City Engineer Kelly White called the cost of the study a "high-level estimate" and added that there was some room for negotiation. She said she had nine miles of city streets and roads on

the list for USI to look at.

The Willowbrook drainage study will take an overall look at the water problem in the subdivision. Mayor John Whicker was in favor of the study. "This issue has gone on since Willowbrook has been in existence," he said.

Both of the studies were approved by the members of the Board of Works — Whicker, Scott Mentzer, and Josh Hunt — on a 3-0 vote.

Also Tuesday, the Board of Works gave Street Commissioner Tim Simpson permission to find a replacement for a 30-year-old plow truck in the city's fleet.

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Fed raises key rate by quarter-point

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Federal Reserve extended its year-long fight against high inflation Wednesday by raising its key interest rate by a quarter-point despite concerns that higher borrowing rates could worsen the turmoil that has gripped the banking system.

At a news conference, Fed Chair Jerome Powell sought to reassure Americans that it is safe to leave money in their banks, two weeks after a rush of depositors pulled funds from Silicon Valley Bank, which collapsed in the second-biggest bank failure in U.S. history. Signature Bank fell soon afterward.

"We have the tools to protect depositors when there's a threat of serious harm to the economy or to the financial system," Powell said. "Depositors should assume that their deposits are

safe."

The Fed chair also underscored that the central bank remains focused on fighting high inflation, which could require additional rate hikes. Yet he also signaled that the Fed might not need to impose many more increases if more banks were to reduce their lending to conserve cash. This could lead to slower growth, hiring and inflation, Powell said.

The Fed "is trying to have its cake and eat it too," said Subadra Rajappa, head of rates strategy at the investment bank Societe Generale. "They wanted to show a bias towards hiking but didn't want to actually commit to more hikes."

In fact, the Fed also signaled that it could be nearing the end of its aggressive streak of rate increases. In its policy statement, it removed language that had previously said it would keep raising rates at future meetings. The

statement now says "some additional policy firming may be appropriate" — a weaker commitment to tightening credit.

And in their latest quarterly economic projections, the policymakers forecast that they expect to raise their key rate just once more — from its new level of about 4.9 percent to 5.1 percent, the same peak they had projected in December.

Still, the Fed's statement included some language that indicated that its inflation fight remains far from complete. It noted that "inflation remains elevated," and it removed a phrase, "inflation has eased somewhat," that was in its February statement.

"The process of getting inflation back down to 2 percent has a long way to go and is likely to be bumpy," Powell said.

Despite the Fed's projection that it

(Continued on Page 2)

Los Angeles strike highlights paltry U.S. school worker pay

By JOCELYN GECKER and COLLIN BINKLEY
AP Education Writers

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Bus drivers shuttle America's children to schools where cafeteria workers feed them and teacher aides assist students who need the most help.

And their pay is notoriously low. School support staffers earn, on average, about \$25,000 a year in Los Angeles, barely enough to get by in one of the most expensive cities in America.

The pay is a driving factor behind a three-day strike that has shut down the entire Los Angeles school system and put a spotlight on the paltry pay of support staff that serves as the backbone of schools nationwide.

Even outside pricey California, the school gigs often don't pay enough to live on.

Arthur Anderson, a school worker in Virginia, says it's a shame it took a walkout to draw attention to the longstanding prob-

lem, but he hopes it helps.

"People are so frustrated. We all are," said Anderson, a teacher's assistant in the Chesapeake Public School System where he has worked for 30 years and makes \$32,000. He works three other part-time jobs to make ends meet. "I struggle to pay my rent. I struggle to pay my bills," he said. "I love what I do. I just don't love what I get paid."

Anderson works 36 hours as a special education aide in his

school's science department. But he is also asked to fill in as a bus driver and a custodian. When a science teacher is absent, he fills in as a substitute, which pays an extra \$10 per class. "I did that today. I got an extra \$20."

The strike against the Los Angeles Unified School District that started Monday has been led by the teachers' assistants, custodians and other support staff who are among the district's lowest-paid workers. They're demanding bet-

ter wages and increased staffing. Teachers joined the picket lines, in a show of solidarity that forced the district to close schools in the nation's second-largest district that serves a half million students.

School support staff around the country tell stories of spending entire careers in public education, filling jobs that keep schools functioning. Yet, many are not making a living wage and like the striking workers in Los Angeles cannot

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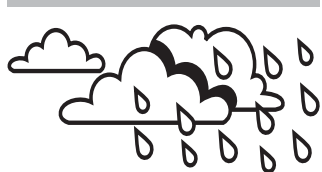
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Outside



Rain all day today, tonight, chance of thunderstorms

Today	Friday	Saturday
High 56	High 44	High 56
Low 38	Low 37	Low 32

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Denver shooting

(Continued from Page 1)
 Police Chief Ron Thomas said. One of the wounded administrators was released from the hospital Wednesday afternoon and the second remained in serious condition, said Heather Burke, a spokesperson for Denver Health hospital. Hundreds of students on March 3 skipped class and marched in support of stricter gun laws following the death of Luis Garcia, 16, who was shot while sitting in a car near East High School. There were no school resource officers on campus at the time of Wednesday's shooting, Thomas said. In June 2020, amid a summer of protests over racial injustice following the murder of George Floyd, Denver Public Schools became one of the districts around the US that decided to phase out its use of police officers in school buildings. That push was fueled by criticism that school resource officers disproportionately arrested Black students, sweeping them into the criminal justice system. After Wednesday's shooting, two armed officers will be posted at East High School through the end of the

school year, and other city high schools also will each get an officer, said Denver Public Schools Superintendent Alex Marrero. In a Wednesday letter to the city's Board of Education, Marrero said his decision violated district's policies but added he "can no longer stand on the sidelines." "I am the leader of this district who is charged with keeping our scholars and staff safe every day," he wrote. The school board said it supported the decision. Gun violence at schools has become increasingly common in the U.S. with more than 1,300 shooting incidents recorded between 2000 and June 2022, according to government researchers. Those shootings killed 377 people and wounded 1,025, according to a database maintained by the researchers. Students from East High School had been scheduled to testify Wednesday afternoon before the Colorado Legislature on gun safety bills. "This is the reality of being young in America: sitting through a shooting and waiting for information just hours before you're scheduled to tes-

tify in support of gun safety bills," said Gracie Taub, a 16-year-old East High School sophomore and volunteer with Students Demand Action in Colorado. Lyle transferred to East High School after being disciplined and removed from a high school in nearby Aurora last school year because of unspecified violations of school policies, said Cherry Creek School District spokesperson Lauren Snell. Marrero said safety plans for students are enacted in response to "past educational and also behavioral experiences," adding that it's a common practice throughout Colorado's public schools. Officials did not give further details on why Lyle was searched daily. In response to the shooting, White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre repeated President Joe Biden's call for stricter gun laws, including bans on assault-style weapons and high-capacity magazines, and for Congress to "do something" on gun control. Wednesday was also the second anniversary of 10 people being shot and killed at a supermarket in Boulder, Colorado.

Fed raises key rate

(Continued from Page 1)
 will impose only one more rate hike, Powell also said the central bank could still carry out additional hikes if inflation remained chronically high. Inflation was 6 percent in February compared with a year ago, far above the Fed's 2 percent target. If banks do pull back on lending in the coming months, that could slow the economy and possibly act as the equivalent of an additional quarter-point rate hike, Powell said. In other words, the problems in the banking sector could do some of the Fed's work for it by slowing the economy and cooling inflation. "Events in the banking system over the past two weeks are likely to result in tighter credit conditions for

households and businesses," the Fed chair said. "It is too soon to determine the extent of these effects and therefore too soon" for the Fed to know how or whether its plans for interest rates might be affected. Wednesday's rate hike, the Fed's ninth since last March, suggests that Powell is confident that the Fed can manage a dual challenge: Cool still-high inflation through higher loan rates while defusing turmoil in the banking sector through emergency lending programs and the Biden administration's decision to cover uninsured deposits at the two failed banks. Pressed at his news conference about the Fed's missing what observers say were clear signs that Silicon Valley Bank was at high

risk of collapsing into the second-largest bank failure in U.S. history, Powell acknowledged that "we do need to strengthen supervision and regulation." But he declared the overall banking system secure, saying, "These are not weaknesses that are there at all broadly through the system." Powell promised that he would not involve himself in the Fed's investigation into its supervisory and regulatory failures regarding Silicon Valley, which was announced last week. It will be led by the central bank's vice chair for supervision, Michael Barr. With Wednesday's hike, the Fed's benchmark short-term rate has reached its highest level in 16 years. The new level will likely

lead to higher costs for many loans, from mortgages and auto purchases to credit cards and corporate borrowing. The succession of Fed rate hikes have also heightened the risk of a recession. The Fed's latest policy decision reflects an abrupt shift. Early this month, Powell had told a Senate panel that the Fed was considering raising its rate by a substantial half-point. At the time, hiring and consumer spending had strengthened more than expected. Inflation data had also been revised higher. The troubles that suddenly erupted in the banking sector two weeks ago likely led to the Fed's decision to raise its benchmark rate by a quarter-point rather than a half-point.

Los Angeles strikes

(Continued from Page 1)
 afford to live in the communities where they work. "The issue in Los Angeles is not confined to Los Angeles. It's an issue across the country and it has been decades in the making," said Princess Moss, vice president of the National Education Association, which represents about half a million educational support staff. The NEA, the nation's largest teachers' union, last year released data that showed full-time school support staff earned an average salary of \$32,800. Delaware had the highest salary for full-time K-12 support staff (\$44,738), while Idaho had the lowest (\$25,830), but salaries vary widely by state. They can also vary by metro area and even within school districts, depending on how long a person has been in a job. Amid staff shortages exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, schools have

struggled to hire during a strong labor market, adding to the burden on the staff that remain. A RAND survey of school leaders last year found that around three-fourths of school leaders say they are trying to hire more substitutes, 58 percent are trying to hire more bus drivers and 43 percent are trying to hire more tutors. In recent years, staff also have found themselves on the front lines of enforcing pandemic protocols or helping students struggling with their mental health or behavior. More than half of the nation's public schools started this school year feeling understaffed, with many struggling to fill key support staff jobs, especially in transportation and custodial work, according to an Education Department survey. Asked about the biggest challenges, roughly four in 10 said candidates felt the salary and benefits weren't good enough.

Local 99 of the Service Employees International Union represents about 30,000 LAUSD teachers' aides, special education assistants, bus drivers, custodians, cafeteria workers and other support staff. The union says many live in poverty because of low pay or limited work hours while struggling with inflation and the high cost of housing. Support staff, including many who work part-time, earn about \$25,000 a year, according to the union, which is asking for a 30 percent raise. The school district has offered a cumulative 23 percent raise, starting with 2 percent retroactive as of the 2020-21 school year and ending with 5 percent in 2024-25. The package would also include more full-time positions and an expansion of healthcare benefits. Superintendent Alberto Carvalho has accused the union of refusing to negotiate and said that he was pre-

pared to meet at any time. Leaders of United Teachers of Los Angeles, which represents 35,000 educators, counselors and other staff, have pledged solidarity with the strikers. Experts say it is unusual for different unions in the same school district to band together but the unified labor action in Los Angeles could mark an inflection point.

Weather

Thursday, March 23, 2023
 (24-hour observations at 9:06 p.m. Wednesday)
High: 49; **Low:** 40; **Precipitation:** .50 inches of rain
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.83 feet at 8:45 p.m. Wednesday

Wells County forecast

Today: Showers and possibly a thunderstorm. High near 56. Southwest wind 10 to 15 mph becoming northwest in the afternoon. Winds could gust as high as 25 mph. Chance of precipitation is 90 percent. New rainfall amounts between a quarter and half of an inch possible.
Tonight: Showers likely and possibly a thunderstorm before 8 p.m., then a chance of showers and thunderstorms between 8 p.m. and 11 p.m., then a chance of showers after 11 p.m. Cloudy, with a low around 38. Northeast wind around 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60 percent. New precipitation amounts between a tenth and quarter of an inch, except higher amounts possible in thunderstorms.
Friday: Showers likely. Cloudy, with a high near 44. East wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60 percent. New precipitation amounts between a tenth and quarter of an inch possible.
Friday Night: Showers, with thunderstorms also possible after 5 a.m. Low around 37. East wind 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation is 90 percent. New rainfall amounts between three quarters and one inch possible.
Saturday: Showers likely and possibly a thunderstorm before 11 a.m., then showers likely between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., then a chance of showers and thunderstorms after 2 p.m. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 56. Windy. Chance of precipitation is 70 percent. New rainfall amounts between a tenth and quarter of an inch, except higher amounts possible in thunderstorms.
Saturday Night: A 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms before 8 p.m. Partly cloudy, with a low around 32. Breezy.
Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 54.
Sunday Night: A 30 percent chance of showers, mainly after 2 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 37.
Monday: A 30 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 48.
Monday Night: A 30 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 32.
Tuesday: A 10 percent chance of showers. Mostly sunny, with a high near 48.
Tuesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 29.
Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 50.

Parks board

(Continued from Page 1)
 seating with a fire pit. Department Superintendent Brandy Fiechter said she would anticipate the project being able to start in one to two months after getting through the paperwork and processes.
 holly@news-banner.com

Board of Works

(Continued from Page 1)
 The truck is a 1993 International and Simson said it has "far exceeded its life cycle." Simpson said he wants to find a new or used truck that will be usable for street painting, hauling material, pulling a leaf machine, and serving as a snow plow. The truck will be drivable by both employees who have a commercial driver's license and those who do not. The board approved Simpson's request.
 daves@news-banner.com

A 5,000-mile long seaweed belt is headed toward Florida

By SUMAN NAISHADHAM
 Associated Press
 WASHINGTON (AP) — A 5,000-mile seaweed belt lurking in the Atlantic Ocean is expected in the next few months to wash onto beaches in the Caribbean Sea, South Florida, and the Yucatán Peninsula in Mexico. The Great Atlantic Sargassum Belt — as the biomass stretching from West Africa to the Gulf of Mexico is called — contains scattered patches of seaweed on the open sea, rather than one continuous blob of sargassum. It's not a new occurrence, but satellite images captured in February showed an earlier start than usual for such a large accumulation in the open ocean. Once it washes ashore, sargassum is a nuisance — a thick, brown algae that carpets beaches, releasing a pungent smell as it decays and entangling humans and animals who step into it. For hotels and resorts, clearing the stuff off beaches can

amount to a round-the-clock operation. Sargassum is a leafy brown seaweed festooned with what look like berries. The seaweed floats on the open ocean and — unlike other seaweeds — reproduces on the water's surface, helped by air-filled structures that give it buoyancy. Sargassum piles up on beaches where it quickly decomposes under hot sun, releasing gases that smell like rotten eggs.

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OBITUARIES

Jerry W. King, 94

Jerry W. King, 94, passed away Tuesday afternoon, March 21, 2023, in Bluffton, following a short illness.



Jerry was born in Bluffton on Nov. 20, 1928, to Hugh R. and Mary G. (Hedges) King, both parents preceded him in death. He married Darlene D. (Lancaster) in Wells County, on Nov. 26, 1949, she survives in Bluffton. Jerry was a 1946 graduate of Bluffton High School and retired from Bowmar LLC in Ft. Wayne after 32 years of service.

Survivors include his wife; Darlene D. King of Bluffton; two daughters, Anita (John) Davis of Greenfield, Ind., and Lisa (Wayne) Kipfer of Bluffton; five grandchildren, Natasha (Brandon) Mechling, Sahara (Daniel) Lautzenheiser, Amy (Adam) Carmichael, Kara Denton, and Ryan Shei; eight great-grandchildren, Collin and Ashlyn Mechling, Landen Lautzenheiser, Jami (Cole) Allen, Kaydence and Jadyne Pope, Mason Miller and Nevaeh Carmichael; and one great-great-grandchild, Wesley Allen. Jerry was preceded in death by his parents; daughter, Judy Diane King; one grandson, Paul Michael Shei; and two siblings, Edna Stinson and Fred King.

As Jerry requested, private family services will be held with Tony Garton officiating. Private family burial will take place at the Six Mile Cemetery.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to Goodwin - Cale & Harnish Memorial Chapel 3220 East SR 124 Bluffton.

Online condolences can be made at www.goodwincaleharnish.com.

Betty I. Zook, 90

Betty I. Zook, 90 of Bluffton, passed away early Wednesday morning, March 22, 2023, at her residence, surrounded by her family.

Funeral arrangements are currently pending with the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton.

Study says Indiana housing cost burden is severe and statewide

By XAIN BALLENGER
The Statehouse File

A report released recently by the statewide membership organization Prosperity Indiana and the National Low Income Housing Coalition says the state's affordable housing shortage and "severe" housing cost burden is statewide.

A report released recently by the statewide membership organization Prosperity Indiana and the National Low Income Housing Coalition says the state's affordable housing shortage and "severe" housing cost burden is statewide.

The shortage is worst for Hoosier renters with extremely low incomes across all 92 counties, and Indiana's supply and cost burden remain behind the Midwest average.

The report found a statewide shortage of 120,796 affordable and available rental homes for extremely low-income renter households, defined as those with incomes at or below the poverty level or 30 percent of their area median income, whichever is greater.

This means there are 39 affordable and available rental homes for every 100 extremely low-income Hoosier renter households.

According to the report, because of the statewide shortage, 70 percent of the renter households spend more than half of their incomes on housing, which leaves little left over for basic necessities.

The report also found that Black and Brown Hoosier households are twice as likely or more to be extremely-low-income renters than white households and bear a "disproportionate burden" of Indiana's affordable housing shortage.

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

EPA "Good Neighbor Rule" to limit state's contribution to air pollution

By Enrique Saenz
Indiana Environmental Reporter

Indiana is one of nearly two dozen states affected by a new U.S. Environmental Protection Agency rule limiting the air pollution that travels from those states and degrades the air quality in states downwind.

Under the Clean Air Act, the EPA must establish emission standards, known as National Ambient Air Quality Standards, for several harmful air pollutants, known as "criteria pollutants."

The CAA contains a "good neighbor" provision that requires the EPA to prohibit states from emitting pollution in amounts that could affect air quality in other states and prevent them from attaining and maintaining pollutant standards.

The Biden administration's updated "good neighbor" rule will further limit nitrogen oxide pollution from power plants and factories that produce cement, steel, iron, glass, petroleum and coal products in 23 states, including Indiana, in order to reduce their impact on the ozone levels in downwind states.

According to the EPA, emissions from these 23 states have worsened the air quality of multiple other states, causing them to violate the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Ground level ozone is created by chemical reactions that happen when nitrogen oxides mix with volatile organic compounds in heat and sunlight.

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

Corrections and clarifications

In Wednesday's edition of the News-Banner, the subhead for the article on wastewater plant upgrades referred to the Chamber of Commerce. This should have been the Common Council.

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Police Notebook

INCIDENTS

City:
Tuesday, 4:42 p.m., Auto Doctor. Stolen catalytic converter.
Tuesday, 4:58 p.m., Grace and Mercy Transitional Housing. Chickens in the roadway.
Tuesday, 8:08 p.m., South Main Street and East Spring Street. Citation issued for 49 in a 30 mph zone.
Tuesday, 11:40 p.m., residence on Cedar Road. Verbal dispute between a man and a woman.
Wednesday, 7:04 a.m., Walmart. Parking problem.
Wednesday, 7:37 a.m., Hampshire Court Apartments. Stolen moped.

County:
Tuesday, 12:47 p.m., Wells County Jail. A man was arrested on warrant out of Johnson County and advised deputies he had recently taken prescription medication. The man was transported to Bluffton Regional Medical Center to be medically cleared.
Tuesday, 7:35 p.m., North Ind. 1 and East 1050N. Citation issued for passing in a no passing zone.
Tuesday, 11:50 p.m., Assisted fire department with a car fire.
Ossian:
Tuesday, 11:47 p.m., South Jefferson Street and East Lafever Street. Citation issued for driving with expired plates.
Wednesday, 6:23 a.m., Smith Transmission. Back door appeared to be kicked in.

ACCIDENTS
City:
Tuesday, 8:39 a.m., 300N. Tanner L. Butler, 26, Monroe, was driving 2013 Ford Fusion eastbound on 300N when a deer entered the roadway and he was unable to avoid collision. The car received damage to the front end of the vehicle but could be driven from the scene.
FIRES
Tuesday, 7:32 p.m., Pizza King, Bluffton. Report of a gas smell near oven. Building evacuated. Incident terminated at 7:48 p.m.
Tuesday, 11:46 p.m., Clark Avenue and West Silver Street. Car fire. Bluffton Fire Department Responded. Fire under control at midnight. Freeman's towed the vehicle.
ARRESTS
Tristen Thomas Root, 38, Fort Wayne; domestic battery, a Level 5 felony, strangulation, a Level 6 felony, confinement, a Level 3 felony. Bond set at \$21,500. Bonded.

Absentee voter bill hears discussion in Indiana Senate

After passing Senate committee it now moves to the Senate Chamber

By ASHLYN MYERS
The Statehouse File

INDIANAPOLIS - Absentee voters would need to send in additional means of identification to be verified under the controversial amended House Bill 1334, which was passed by a Senate committee Monday and now goes to the Senate Chamber.

This bill would require that absentee voters submit the last four digits of their Social Security number, driver's license number, non-driver ID or voter ID number. Alternatively, the applicant could instead send a photocopy of any identification covered under Indiana law, like a passport or a driver's license.

The Senate Elections Committee met Monday to discuss the bill, which received hours of testimony and discussion as it made its way through the House, and it will now face the full Senate.

According to the bill's author, Rep. Timothy Wesco, R-Osceola, his amendments aim to alleviate the concerns presented to him during the bill's last hearing, where organizations such as Common Cause Indiana and the Indiana Elections Division testified in opposition.

The amendment brought on Monday would require the Indiana Department of Motor Vehicles to share driver's license numbers with county clerks to match identification numbers on absentee voter applications.

The bill also makes it so that if political candidates or parties send out absentee voter applications, they must include a disclaimer somewhere on the application that explains who funded it and sent it.

"The bill does not preclude a candidate or a political party from mailing absentee ballot applications. That is widespread common practice here in Indiana for political parties to mail absentee ballot applications," Wesco said.

"The only thing that state law requires is that they put a disclaimer on that third-party absentee

ballot application of who paid for the application and that it was not requested by the clerk's office because it has led to a lot of confusion," he continued.

Sen. Andrea Hunley, D-Indianapolis, was concerned that the bill's language on checking voter identification could be confusing for counties where the county clerk and the voter registration official are not the same individuals. This is the case with Hunley's home county, Marion County.

Wesco, however, dismissed it, saying that identification would be handled by whoever is in charge of registration. He said he hasn't had anyone in any of the counties bring that concern to him.

"Well, I'm Marion County, and so I'm coming with the concern," Hunley said.

Sen. J.D. Ford, D-Indianapolis, authored two amendments for the bill, with both failing nearly along party lines.

His second and more notable amendment tackled the "excuses" portion of the absentee voter application. Currently on the application, the voter has to put down their reason for voting by mail. Ford's amendment aimed to eliminate this section.

"Essentially, I'm just asking why the government needs to know and who is following up, who is investigating to make sure that people are checking this," Ford said. "It's my understanding that that's not happening."

Sen. Greg Walker, R-Columbus, was the only Republican to vote in support of Ford's second amendment, with only Democrats voting for the first.

Wesco's amended bill passed with a vote of 6-2.

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

A Talk with Tego



Biscuit is a one-year-old, domestic short hair, spayed female.



Mittens is an orange DSH Neutered male 9mo old



Sisco is an orange/white DSH Neutered male 7mo old



Tego

Tego's Tips: Frequently brush a dog's fur to make it look nice.

These are just a few pets available for adoption at the Wells County Animal Shelter, 1613 W. Cherry St., Bluffton. For more information call 824-6063.

Woman charged with neglect in daughter's shooting death

PORTAGE, Ind. (AP) — The mother of a 2-year-old northwestern Indiana girl who died after accidentally shooting herself with a gun she found in her home has been charged with neglect of a dependent.

The charge has been filed against Abigail Rodriguez, 28, of Portage, online court records showed Wednesday.

Hours after shooting herself on Feb. 7, Grace Rodriguez died at Comer Children's Hospital in Chicago, the Cook County medical examiner's office said at the time.

Abigail Rodriguez told police she and her daughter were in the girl's bedroom when Grace wandered into her mother's room and shot herself with a 9 mm handgun, a Portage police officer wrote in an affidavit, The (Northwest Indiana) Times reported.

The woman said she thought her daughter was walking toward the living room until she heard a gunshot, the affidavit said, and she rushed into her bedroom and saw Grace on the floor, wounded.

She said she keeps the weapon in the kitchen during the day and on a nightstand next to her bed at night, the affidavit said. But on the day in question, she said she forgot to bring the gun into the kitchen.

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A prize for the 'thieves' at the BMV

It is time to announce the winner of the prestigious and soon-to-be coveted Reno Prize, which, starting this year, will be awarded to honor the most creative theft from citizens by their government.

It should have been an easy choice, since the Indiana General Assembly is in full swing. As the saying goes, "No man's life, liberty or property are safe while the legislature is in session."

But lawmakers have let us down, conducting a humdrum session filled mostly with business as usual.

A budget that will spend much more than the last one, with the usual padding for fraud, abuse and incompetence built in. Billions held in reserve instead of being returned to the taxpayers it was taken from. Backroom deals with well-heeled lobbyists that will benefit small groups of Hoosiers at the expense of the overall citizenry.

Theft, certainly, legal if sometimes sneaky and often audacious, but nothing truly unusual. Nothing creative enough to merit the Reno Prize.

So we must turn to the executive branch, in whose many divisions faceless and nameless bureaucrats work tirelessly without the harsh glare of scrutiny to demonstrate that "public service" means showing the pesky public just who's boss. They know what they can get away with, and they can cite chapter and verse of the state laws allowing them to do it.

And so we have a winner.

The first annual Reno Prize goes to . . . imagine drumroll here . . . The Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

According to an investigation by WRTV of Indianapolis, the BMV makes millions by selling Hoosiers' personal information, and it is not required by law to tell us they are doing it. In a practice that's been going on for years, the bureau offers up information to the highest bidders for our birth dates, addresses and past addresses, odometer readings, what kinds of cars we drive and even our license plate numbers.

In the last 10 years, the bureau has realized nearly \$240 million from the sales, and in 2022 alone it made \$25 million.

People who can buy the information include lawyers, bail bondsmen, private investigators, insurance agents and debt collection agencies. There are supposed to be restrictions on how the information is used — third-party marketers aren't supposed to use it to directly solicit us, for example. But we all know that once our information is out there, it is out there forever.

So the BMV is exploiting the state's citizens by joining in the theft of their precious privacy, so fragile in the digital age. And it is profiting from giving out those citizens' information, which can then be used against them in myriad ways.

Truly breathtaking, eminently worthy of recognition.

If you are thinking about Googling more information about the Reno Prize, by the way, don't bother. I made it up.

It pays tribute to the Reno brothers, a hardy band of innovators from Rockford, in southern Indiana's Jackson County, whose band of robbers terrorized the Midwest shortly after the Civil War by perfecting the concept of train robbery.

There were train robberies before the Renos, of course, but the crooks were stupid about it. Not as stupid as what you might have seen in old Westerns in which the scoundrels chased down the train on horseback, but thoughtless nonetheless.

Before the Renos, robbers did their deeds while the trains were idling at their stations. This soon became problematic, what with all the people, including law enforcement representatives, milling about.

The Reno brothers' brilliant twist was to buy tickets and ride on the trains until they got to the middle of nowhere, which trains tend to do, then go quickly about their nefarious business with no pushy interventions by the law. The simple elegance of their plan quickly caught on and was emulated by train robbers across the country.

What an inspired modification it was. Riding the train as ordinary passengers, looking just like all the other ordinary passengers until it was time to strike. Not unlike today's government workers, who look just like the rest of us until — well, you get the idea.

Alas, criminals who repeat the same patterns often get caught. Aided by Pinkerton agents hired by the railroads, authorities kept arresting members of the Reno brothers' gang. But outraged mobs kept taking them away from authorities and hanging them from the nearest tree, 10 of them in three separate incidents, all in 1868. True genius is seldom appreciated in its own time.

A sad fact that it is hoped the Reno Prize will help us avoid in this time.

Leo Morris is a Fort Wayne-based columnist for *The Indiana Policy Review*. Contact him at leoedits@yahoo.com.

Submit your Letters to the Editor via: • Our website link (Submit your Letter) • E-Mail: email@news-banner.com • Fax: (260) 824-0700 • Mail: PO Box 436, Bluffton IN 46714 • Drop-off: 125 N. Johnson St., Bluffton. All letters must be signed and must include a phone number or address in case verification is desired. Letters are edited for brevity and clarity. **Letters must be no more than 500 words.**

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Leo Morris

Hoosier Opinions



Xi's visit should worry the West

Pentagon strategists have always divided the world into East and West, with U.S. regional forces under European Command or Indo-Pacific Command. But looking at the embrace of Presidents Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin this week, you wonder whether we may need a single "Eurasian Command" to handle an integrated threat.

A strong China is bolstering a weak Russia. That's the real headline that describes the showy meetings in Moscow this week between the two countries' leaders. The Chinese aren't providing weapons (yet), but Xi certainly offered moral and psychological support in what might be described as a get-well visit to an ailing relative. White House spokesman John Kirby on Tuesday rightly called Putin a "junior partner."

The paradox of the Ukraine war is that Putin's bid for greater power in Europe has made him weaker. This diminished Russia will fall increasingly under China's sway — unless there's an unlikely turn post-Ukraine and a Western-leaning leader replaces Putin. Maybe that's the biggest reason for Xi's fraternal visit: He is bolstering a flank against America and the West.

China's dominance over a weaker Russia will take many forms in the coming years. Russia has lost its energy markets in Europe because of its reckless invasion, so it will depend ever more on demand from China and other Asian customers. China's economic sway grows every year in central Asia and in Russia's own far east. Its hard power in space, cyber, robotics and artificial intelligence will increasingly dwarf Russia's.

Xi's rescue strategy for Russia seems to center on a peace plan that would stanch the bleeding in Ukraine. From what we know, Xi proposes a cease-fire agreement that would freeze Russia's gains from last year's illegal invasion. That version won't fly with Ukraine or the United States. We won't know for a few days whether Xi will talk with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in a way that opens a real process of negotiation. That seems unlikely. But so did the Iran-Saudi deal that Xi brokered this month.

By playing the peacemaker, Xi can position himself better to take other, harsher rescue measures if Ukraine rejects a cease-fire. He could offer ammunition for Russia, arguing he's only leveling the playing field. He could try to mobilize nations of the Global South, such as India, South Africa and Brazil, to pressure Ukraine to end the fighting. Xi wants to keep



David Ignatius

the high ground, invoking the sanctity of the United Nations charter even as he affirms his support for the Russian leader who shattered that charter's norms. It's a shameless approach, but smart diplomacy.

Xi's emerging role as the leader of a Eurasian bloc presents dilemmas for U.S. strategists. For a generation, separating China from Russia was a central goal of U.S. foreign policy. Driving that wedge was a major reason for the historic visit to China in 1972 by President Richard M. Nixon and national security adviser Henry Kissinger. The Biden administration initially hoped it could try that strategy in reverse — warming relations with Moscow

in the June 2021 summit in Geneva in part to concentrate on the Chinese challenge. That didn't work out as the White House hoped, to put it mildly.

Now it's Xi who is the triangulator. He is playing off the bitter split between the United States and Russia, helping Putin, but also keeping a bit of distance, too. Xi similarly used China's close relations with Iran to make the diplomatic breakthrough between Riyadh and Tehran that the United States could never achieve.

Though Putin was beaming in Xi's reflected glow this week, the visit was a reminder of just how isolated the Russian leader is. President Biden hosts a prominent foreign leader at the White House every other week. When was the last time you saw a major foreign leader visit the Kremlin? (The president of Belarus doesn't count.) Xi's get-well visit will give his "dear friend" Putin a psychological boost and help his domestic popularity. But other than China and a few outliers, Russian stands alone.

If you were looking for another reason why it's important that Ukraine succeeds against Russia, consider the photos from Moscow. "The President of Eurasia" — I fear that's the invisible caption of the pictures of Xi that we're seeing amid the Kremlin's golden doors and red carpets. The idea that a vast swath of the world is dominated by a China that stands so resolutely against freedom and democracy is chilling. If this alliance succeeds, we will live in a darker world.

The bottom line: The International Criminal Court indicted Putin last week for war crimes. Xi is his only powerful friend. Dealing with them separately is bad enough. If they truly become partners in Eurasia, sharing dominion under a Chinese banner, that would be worse.

Contact David Ignatius on Twitter @IgnatiusPost

'Tis the season to be jolly

Angelkeep Journals

Happy went the gardener when the earthworm arose in the soil to croon its unheard carol. 'Tis the golden finches, brightening daily yellow-er as the eye beheld, that offered the musical accompaniment. A gardener kicked off his shoes to curl his toes in the loam, a bright new beginning, a season long awaited, with praise upward bestowed.

So the picture unfolded at Angelkeep, perhaps not the official first day, but the first day when the habitat erupted with the full spectacle of rejuvenation.

With apologies regarding interruptions and selective phrases, but with gratitude and appreciation of poet Henry Beer, "I have a little riddle, I'll try to make it plain; I'm sure that you can guess it, And call it by its name."

The March Full Moon also picked up the name of Worm Moon for a very good reason. That was two weeks and two days ago, and a New Moon appeared two days prior to this column.

"We see and hear with wonder, The songs of feathered friends, E'en early in the morning, Their praise to heaven ascends."

Was Henry Beer talking about the golden finches singing, or was he referring to the American robins giving thanks for all the abundance once again spread before their hungry bellies like manna spread all over the Biblical ground to be picked up only as needed. Each day new manna arose from the ground for sustenance. For the robin, the Bible story never ended.

Worm Moon had to have been

initiated by southern native tribal members. Northern Native Americans could not have known about earthworms until much later, about the period of colonialization. Early ships used soil for ballast, and colonists may have transported some with plants, laden with earthworms.

Angelkeep's ground, like all other lands forever changed by the ice age glacial spread, resulted with all earthworms obliterated. So the North American Shawnee tribe, and others, referred to our Worm Moon as Sap Moon. It became a time of tapping maple trees for syrup, which can also begin in February.

If the day of Sap or Worm Moon came in with violent storms, the moon's name changed to Storm Moon, meaning little hope was felt by Anglo-Saxons for their eventual crops. On a dry Worm Moon, the same group rejoiced and called it Rugged Moon, indicating a generous harvest period.

The Pueblo tribe had their own great name, "Moon When the Leaves Break Forth." Of course this was long before white men forced their tribe to congregate in the southwest desert. Warming Moon used by Shoshones seemed logical, as did Crow Moon, referring to areas when birds returned from migration, but not necessarily



Alan Daugherty

the Crow Native American tribe. Henry Beer certainly referred to the bird migration joy.

"We glance out in the lilacs
And there with craft and toil
We see a nest of robins
All made of straw and soil.
The lambs on sunny hillsides
Do frolic with delight;
The meadows all are glowing
With dandelions so bright."

Angelkeep kept a steady vigil of daily treks to daffodil beds, plus daily counting of crocus popping their heads gaping at the sunshine. Did you know that the first blooming crocus was a natural sign that conditions were prime for planting early garden such as radishes, parsnips, and spinach? Angelkeep tried eating a parsnip once. Only once. Had a tasty recipe ever been devised for parsnips? Perhaps a bacon-wrapped parsnip would do well dipped in spicy salsa.

Henry Beer said, "The plows are making furrows; The farmers o'er the land, Prepare the ground for seeding, With earnest, watchful hand."

While Angelkeep writes about busting myths, 1945 *Life* magazine invented standing an egg on end for Equinox, and Equinox stands literally a myth, as no days of the year have equal night and day times, but the Equinox is the closest day to it.

"Now can you name this season, When birds and nature sing?"

I believe that you have guess it, I believe you'll say it's "Spring."

Mr. Daugherty is a Wells County resident who, along with his wife Gwen, enjoy their backyard and have named it "Angelkeep."

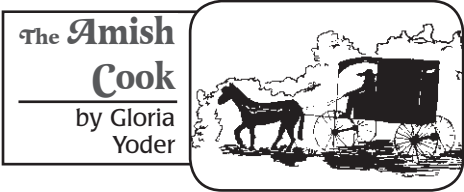
Wearing a special dress, commemorating a special day

The morning dawned as all other mornings. It was cool, in fact it was downright chilly. My mind endlessly traveled to 13 years ago. It had been sunny, with temps in the mid-70s. We could not possibly have had a day more perfect for our wedding.

Our hearts flooded with awe as we watched the shop fill with 400 guests who had come to share in our joy as the long-awaited moment was coming; we were to be joined as husband and wife. It was too good to be true, or so it felt.

Daniel had arrived early that morning. I was comforted through and through, knowing that I will not again have to part from him, our long-distance dating was behind us, and there was not even another day to wait. The time had come. Daniel was dressed in his new white shirt, black pants, and matching vest and mutza (suit). My light blue dress, which I had carefully made months before, was finally being worn.

I distinctly remember the two of us stepping in the walk-in cooler to



The Amish Cook
by Gloria Yoder

get the red roses and placing them on our bridal table.

Life was complete beyond measure and much more than I deserved.

Now when I relive the memories they hurt, they sting, they comfort me, they give me a sense of knowing God knows. It was a Sunday morning, I headed for the closet. Should I or shouldn't I? I hadn't worn it for years. Why not? Wouldn't it be a token of the love still in my heart for the man of my dreams? With a lump in my heart, and more love than it could hold I reached to the back of my closet. Yes, I would do it.

As I got ready for Sunday school, more memories flooded back of how carefully I got ready that morning 13 years before.

Stepping out in the hallway I

explained to the children how I wore this dress when I married Daddy.

"Mom, can you still wear it?" they asked in disbelief. Smiling I responded, "Yes, I'm 33 so I'm not growing anymore!"

In a sense I felt like I was drifting back in another world as I got everyone ready to go ... has life changed so much? Do we really have six children for me to love and care for? As I walked out the door I felt like I was kind of like jumping off a mountain. I did not know what the day would hold or how God would care for us, but one thing I did know is that God would absolutely completely provide for us.

At Sunday school we sang several songs that were especially meaningful to us, including the German version of "How Beautiful Heaven Must Be." We were deeply blessed by the love and support on all sides as kind words were spoken and encouragement was offered.

Daniel's parents had invited us

to their house for pancakes and homemade kielbasa after our services. As we finished up our meal, we hashed memories and digested the reality of today. When it was time to do the dishes, my mother-in-law sweetly said, "You did not help with the dishes 13 years ago and you don't need to help today!" It was a little token that meant a lot.

The afternoon passed swiftly, thanks to Julia for playing with the children while I took a refreshing nap.

In the evening we had some drop-in guests including a couple from our church who a year ago married in our shop where we had gotten married 12 years before. Our hearts were warmed as they brought a scrap-sheet of pictures of us as a family someone had taken on the day of their wedding. Perhaps the picture that melted my heart the most was Daniel sitting in church with a little boy sitting on either side of him. Hmm. Things change; love does not. And, God knows and sees exactly how much it hurts, and much more still, he has ways of healing and restoring in

ways we could never tell or imagine.

Daniel's Sunday noon specialty was pancakes and waffles. He would make them while I changed the little boys' white shirts. This recipe can be used for either pancakes or waffles.

DANIEL'S HOMEMADE WAFFLES

- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1½ cups milk
- ½ cup butter, melted
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 cups flour

Instructions
Whisk wet ingredients together, then mix in dry and stir until combined.

Don't over-combine after adding dry ingredients

Also, Daniel discovered that it works best to brown the waffles for one minute and 30 seconds, with an additional one minute and 45 seconds on medium heat on the second side.

It toasts them to a nice, golden brown.

Should you rent in retirement?

There are some circumstances when renting could be beneficial

By LIZ WESTON of NerdWallet

The homes that helped many people build wealth can become a burden in retirement. It's not just the big maintenance and repair bills. Few homes are set up to support aging in place, and remodeling them to be safer can be expensive. Selling the house could help you tap equity to supplement your retirement income, and renting — at least for a while — could give you the flexibility to find a more engaging, supportive and affordable community. Here's what to consider before you sell your home and make the switch to renting.

Some people rent in retirement because they don't have much choice; they can't afford to own homes. But financial planners say renting can make more sense than owning in some circumstances, even for retirees who can afford the costs of homeownership.

Renting offers flexibility as well as freedom from all the chores and expenses of maintaining a home. Renting also may provide built-in communities for socializing, as well as accessible housing features such as one-floor living, which can help people age in place.

"While retirees often don't want to rent, it can be a smarter decision for a number of reasons," says certified financial planner Lisa A.K. Kirchenbauer of Arlington, Virginia.

CONSIDER RENTING IF YOU'RE IN TRANSITION

If you're moving to a new area, financial planners often recommend renting first to get a better feel for the advantages and disadvantages of various neighborhoods. You'll need time to find new doctors, check out entertainment venues, locate favorite restaurants and otherwise set up your support services, says Delia Fernandez, a certified financial planner in Los Alamitos, Calif.

"It makes sense to rent for maybe even a year so you can really dig into the community and figure out what's going to be the right fit for you," she says.

Renting is often smart if you expect to move again within a few years. Buying and selling homes is expensive, and your home may not rise in value fast enough to offset those costs. Selling a home also may take longer than you expect.

RENTING COULD HELP YOU AGE MORE SAFELY AND SERENELY

Few homes are truly accessible to people who have mobility problems or other age-related disabilities, and adapting your current house could be prohibitively expensive. Newer apartment buildings could offer ramps, elevators, one-floor living and other amenities to keep you safe as you age.

Social isolation and loneliness are other risks to consider, since these can have a huge negative impact on older people's health, according to the Centers for Disease



Control and Prevention. Apartments can provide a community of people who can socialize and watch out for each other.

Another option, for those who can afford

it, is a continuing care retirement community, or CCRC, that allows you to stay in one place even if you later need higher levels of care. People typically move into one of these facilities when they're healthy and can live independently, with the promise that they can access assisted living, skilled nursing and sometimes memory care services as they age. CCRCs typically charge a hefty one-time entrance fee — the average was \$379,606 in the fourth quarter of 2022, according to the National Investment Center for Seniors Housing & Care, a research group. Residents also pay monthly fees that typically increase with the level of care. The average monthly rent was \$4,364, NIC found.

RENTING COULD HELP YOU TAP MORE EQUITY

Many people hit retirement age without enough savings and need to use their home equity to supplement their income, says certified financial planner Nicholas Bunio of Berwyn, Penn. Two common ways of tapping equity — selling a home and buying a less expensive one, or using a reverse mortgage — may not free up enough cash to substantially improve their situations, Bunio notes.

COPING WITH RENT INCREASES AND OTHER UNCERTAINTIES

Many retirees understandably fear the possibility of big rent increases when they're on a fixed income. But retirees should keep in mind that rents aren't the only housing costs that are subject to inflation. Even when you have a fixed-rate mortgage, chances are good that your property taxes, homeowners insurance and costs to maintain and repair your property increase every year as well, says Crystal Cox, a certified financial planner in Madison, Wis.

Renters can ameliorate the risk of rent increases somewhat by opting for longer leases, Bunio says. So-called "mom and pop" landlords may be more amenable to negotiating rent than large corporations, and being a star tenant also can help, Fernandez notes.

"Landlords like people who keep up their property, and they like people who make any maintenance easy," Fernandez says.

Another potential worry is the possibility of eviction. Even if you can keep up with the rent, a landlord could end your tenancy by selling the building, for example.

But homeowners aren't immune to potential dislocations, DeSantis notes. Many older people must move into assisted living facilities because they're no longer safe in their homes. She recommends people consider moving to more supportive housing while they still have the health and energy to manage the transition.

1,000 BOOKS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN



Several children recently completed the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten Program at the Wells County Public Library by reading and listening to 1,000 books with the help of family members.

At left, both Beau and Tess Kumle completed the program and are pictured with their mother Rachelle. Beau chose "Rappy the Raptor" as his prize book, while Tess selected "The Big Bug Search."



At right, Emric Smith is pictured with his dad and mom, Ryan and Elizabeth, and little brother Gideon.



At left, Gwyneth Steffen (in middle) is pictured with her parents Aaron and Gretchen.

The 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program is sponsored by the United Way of Wells County, the Wells County Foundation, and the Friends of the Library. The program not only helps prepare children for school, but instills the value of reading and life-long learning. For more information visit the Wells County Public Library's website at www.wellscolibrary.org and click on the "Children" section.

Legion will host March breakfast on Saturday

American Legion Post 111 will host its monthly breakfast Saturday, March 25, starting at 8 a.m.

The cost is \$11 for adults and \$5 for children ages 5 to 12. Children under five years of age eat for free.

The post home is at 111 W. Washington St. in Bluffton.

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Luke McBride became Norwell's all-time leading basketball scorer on Feb. 24 on senior night beating the previous record of 1,811 points set by Darin Archbold in 1988. Above, McBride is shown with his father and coach, Mike McBride, holding a commemorative ball. (News-Banner file photo)

IBCA names Norwell's McBride as All-State Large School selection

The Indiana Basketball Coaches Association named its selection for the Supreme 15 team, along with 15 additional players on both its All-State teams for Large Schools and Small Schools.

Norwell senior Luke McBride earned his way on the Large School All-State list this season, leading the Knights to a third Northeast 8 Conference title in four seasons and a 22-4 record.

The Bethel University signee averaged 21.5 points for the Knights while adding over seven rebounds and a steal and a half per game. On the final regular season game, McBride broke the school's record for career

points held by Darin Archbold at 1,813.

The IBCA's 20-member head coaching group votes on the lists and nominates players and meets with the committee chairman to review and vote on the final results. Franciscan Health Sports Medicine presents the announcement, and they help fund the resources to create plaques and certificates for the award-winners.

The Supreme 15 group is the best 15 players in the state, regardless of class. The Large School selections are those in Class 4A and 3A, while Small School picks are from 2A and 1A. Supreme 15 honorees are not included in these two lists.

High School Calendar

THURSDAY, MARCH 23

No events scheduled.

FRIDAY, MARCH 24

No events scheduled.

SATURDAY, MARCH 25

No events scheduled.

MONDAY, MARCH 27

No events scheduled.

TUESDAY, MARCH 28

No events scheduled.

TUESDAY, MARCH 28

No events scheduled.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29

No events scheduled.

THURSDAY, MARCH 30

No events scheduled.

FRIDAY, MARCH 31

No events scheduled.

SATURDAY, April 1

BASEBALL: Norwell at Jennings County, 11 a.m.; Norwell vs. Seeger Memorial at Jennings County, 2 p.m.

SOFTBALL: Southern Wells at Wes-Del, 10 a.m.

Report: Notre Dame closing deal with PSU's Shrewsberry

By RALPH D. RUSSO
AP College Sports Writer

Notre Dame is finalizing a deal to make Penn State's Micah Shrewsberry its new men's basketball coach, two people with direct knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

The people spoke on condition of anonymity because contract details were still being completed and needed school approval.

Shrewsberry, in his second season at Penn State (23-14), led the Nittany Lions to the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 2011 and a tournament victory for the first

time since 2001.

The Nittany Lions beat Texas A&M and were eliminated by Texas in the second round.

Notre Dame has been searching for a replacement for Mike Brey, who spent the last 23 seasons as coach of the Fighting Irish. He announced in January that this would be his last season with Notre Dame.

The Irish finished 11-21.

Shrewsberry grew up in Indianapolis and went to school at Division III Hanover College in Indiana.

He was the head coach at Indiana University South Bend, an NAIA school located in the same city as Notre Dame, from 2005-07.

He later worked as an assistant coach at Butler and Purdue, with a stint as an assistant with the Boston Celtics in between.

ESPN first reported Notre Dame was close to a deal with Shrewsberry.

Tyrese Maxey keys fast start in 76ers victory over the Bulls

By JAY COHEN
AP Sports Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — Tyrese Maxey scored 16 of his 21 points during Philadelphia's dominant first half, and the 76ers beat the Chicago Bulls 116-91 on Wednesday night.

De'Anthony Melton had 25 points and Tobias Harris finished with 20 as Philadelphia earned a split of its four-game season series against Chicago. Joel Embiid added 12 points, seven rebounds and seven assists in just over 16 minutes of playing time.

Philadelphia had won eight in a row before Monday night's double-overtime loss to Chicago. But the 76ers jumped all over the Bulls in the rematch, opening a four-game road trip with an efficient offensive

performance.

Playing without James Harden and Jalen McDaniels because of injuries, the Sixers started the game with a 23-1 run. They shot 48% from the field on the night and had five players score in double figures.

Coby White scored 19 points for Chicago, and Zach LaVine had 16.

The Bulls (34-38) had won five of six in one of their best stretches in a largely disappointing season. They remain in 10th in the East, holding onto the last spot for the conference's play-in tournament.

After the shaky start, Chicago closed to 36-26 on White's 3-pointer early in the second quarter. But Philadelphia pulled away again before halftime.

UP NEXT

Bulls: At Portland on Friday night.

Browns land WR Moore from Jets, swap draft picks

By TOM WITHERS
AP Sports Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — Elijah Moore wanted out of New York. The Browns wanted speed. Both got their wish.

Cleveland added another offensive playmaker and target for quarterback Deshaun Watson on Wednesday, acquiring Moore in a trade with the Jets, who have overhauled their receiving group this offseason — perhaps in advance of quarterback Aaron Rodgers' arrival.

The Browns have agreed to send the No. 42 pick in this year's draft to the Jets for Moore and the No. 74 selection. The deal's completion is pending a physical.

The Jets are parting ways with Moore, a second-round pick in 2021, shortly after agreeing to terms with former Kansas City wide receiver Mecole Hardman on a one-year deal, according to a person with knowledge of the contract.

New York will have picks No. 42 and 43 — as well as No. 13 overall. Earlier in free agency, the Jets signed former Packers wide receiver Allen Lazard and have been working toward a possible deal for Rodgers.

Cleveland made its major quarterback move last year, sending three first-round picks to Houston for Watson in a controversial trade. Now they're adding a downfield threat for Watson in Moore, who can play in the slot, backfield or line up outside. He'll complement receivers Amari Cooper and Donovan Peoples-Jones.

The Browns lacked a player capable of stretching defenses after Anthony Schwartz, a third-round pick in 2021, struggled with drops and his confidence.

Cleveland explored the free agent market and other trades, including one for Denver wide receiver Jerry Jeudy before striking the deal with the Jets.

While Moore, who will turn 23 next week, hasn't put up big numbers, he's

quick and versatile and gives Cleveland's offense another wrinkle to support Watson and its strong running game.

The 5-foot-10, 180-pound Moore had 37 catches for 446 yards and one touchdown last season, but was unhappy with his role and asked for a trade. He became disgruntled due to a lack of pass-catching opportunities and asked to be dealt in October.

After the Jets' 27-10 victory at Green Bay

in Week 6, Moore quote-tweeted a reporter's Twitter post that pointed out he had no official receiving targets. In a series of since-deleted tweets, Moore posted if he said what he really wanted to, he'd be viewed as selfish, but added: "Just know I don't understand either."

Things took a turn when he reportedly had a disagreement with then-offensive coordinator Mike LaFleur the following week and was held out from practice for two days to clear his head — but then requested to be dealt by the Jets.

Moore didn't travel with the team to Denver for its victory in Week 7. He returned to practice the following week, but had no catches the next two games and was targeted just once.

Coach Robert Saleh insisted Moore wouldn't be traded and was a big part of what the Jets wanted to do on offense last season and in the future. But Moore's production the rest of the season was minimal, catching more than two passes just twice in the next eight games.

Five months after asking to be dealt, Moore gets a fresh start in Cleveland.

Moore played college ball at Mississippi. He had 43 catches for 538 yards and five TDs as a rookie, but his production dipped in 2022 in part because the Jets didn't have good quarterback play along with the arrival of wide receiver Garrett Wilson, the AP Offensive Rookie of the Year.

AP source: Browns bringing back LB Walker on 1-year deal

By TOM WITHERS
AP Sports Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — Free agent linebacker Anthony Walker Jr. is returning to the Browns after missing most of last season with an injury that rocked Cleveland's defense, a person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

Walker has agreed to a one-year contract with the Browns, said the person who spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal hasn't been signed.

The 27-year-old Walker tore a quadriceps tendon in Week 3 against the Pittsburgh Steelers and missed the rest of 2022. Without him, Cleveland's defense not only lost an experienced player but one of its top communicators and leaders.

ESPN first reported Walker's return. Walker posted a photo on Twitter of himself on the field with the Browns with the caption: Nobody cares; WORK Harder!!"

The Browns sustained a rash of injuries at linebacker last season with Walker, Jeremiah Owusu-Koramoah and Jacob Phillips all suffering season-ending injuries. Those losses along with some other problems led to Cleveland's 7-10 record and led to the firing of coordinator Joe Woods, who has been replaced by former Lions coach Jim Schwartz.

Walker signed with the Browns in 2021 as a free agent and started 12 games after spending four seasons with the Indianapolis Colts. After getting hurt, Walker stayed around the Browns while undergoing therapy to support his younger teammates.

Cleveland has focused primarily on fixing its defense during free agency with several prominent signings, including tackle Dalvin Tomlinson, end Ogbornia Okoronkwo and safety Juan Thornhill.

The Browns also re-signed linebacker Sione Takitaki, who stepped in and played well following the other injuries.

After player input, MLB allows for some delays on pitch clock

By RONALD BLUM
AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Major League Baseball has clarified its new rules to allow umpires to delay the start of the pitch clock after big swings in which a hitter loses footing or when a pitcher covers first base, third or home, in addition to other clarifications announced Wednesday.

The commissioner's office said in its memo that if a catcher ends an inning on base, at bat or on deck, an umpire may determine the catcher needs additional time and allow the pitcher another warmup throw and the catcher to throw to second base.

The MLB also said whether a defensive team violated the new shift restrictions will be subject to a video review only involving the first player to touch a ball after a pitch.

The league also said that after a batter uses his one allowed timeout during a

plate appearance, the clock shall start when the hitter indicates he is ready in addition to the previous specification when he returned to the batter's box.

The clarifications ahead of March 30 openers were contained in a four-page memo sent by MLB senior vice president Michael Hill to managers, general managers and assistant general managers, a copy of which was obtained by The Associated Press.

"They're important in my mind because they're responsive to things players said to us," Commissioner Rob Manfred said Tuesday night before Japan beat the United States 3-2 in the World Baseball Classic championship game.

Baseball's 11-man competition committee, established in the labor agreement last March, adopted the pitch clock and shift limits last September over the opposition of the four players on the panel. MLB

set the pitch clock at 15 seconds with no runners and 20 seconds with runners.

The average time of spring training games through Monday was down 25 minutes to 2 hours, 36 minutes. Violations per game were 1.03 during the past week, down from 2.03 during spring training's first week, according to the memo.

Teams were told bat boys and girls in the visiting dugout will meet with the visiting club before each series to discuss the player preferences. MLB said it will monitor the bat boys and girls to determine whether they contribute to non-compliance with the pace of game procedures.

MLB said it will issue guidance to teams Friday on use of PitchCom by pitchers. Catchers were allowed to use the device to call pitches last season, and pitchers were allowed to experiment with it during spring training.

The Classifieds

SUDOKU

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

King Classic Sudoku

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

Difficulty: ★★★

3-23

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Public Notices

Alcohol & Tobacco Commission
LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Alcohol Beverage Board of Wells County, Indiana will hold a public hearing at 9:00 am on April 04, 2023 at the Wells Carnegie Govt Annex Multi Purpose Room 105, 223 W Washington St in the city of Bluffton in said county, to investigate the propriety of holding an alcoholic beverage permit by the applicants listed herein to wit:

RR9030513 Beer Wine & Liquor - Restaurant (210) RENEW-AL

JERRY REINHARD/ LISA OWENS 121 NORTH MAIN Bluffton IN D/B/A B-4

nb 3/23 hspaxlp

Public Notice

The City of Bluffton (128 E. Market St., Bluffton, IN 46714) intends to continue to discharge stormwater into the following watersheds:

Watershed Name
12-Digit Hydrologic Unit Code
Johns Creek-Wabash River
051201010801
Dowty Ditch-Wabash River
051201010802

and is submitting a Notice of Intent to notify the Indiana Department of Environmental Management of the MS4 entity's intent to comply with the requirement of the MS4 General Permit to discharge stormwater run-off.

Please address MS4 Program Questions to:

Kelly White, City Engineer
Address: 128 E. Market St, Bluffton, IN 46714
Email: kelly.white@blufftonindiana.gov
Phone: 260-824-0071

nb 3/23 hspaxlp

STATE OF INDIANA COUNTY OF WELLS SS:

IN THE WELLS CIRCUIT COURT
CAUSE NO.
90C01-2303-EU-000013

IN THE MATTER OF THE UNSUPERVISED ESTATE OF JACK E. KOBER, DECEASED.

NOTICE OF UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION

Notice is hereby given that Jack E. Kober was on the 16th day of March, 2023 appointed Personal Representative of the Estate of Jack E. Kober, deceased, who died on February 19, 2023, and was authorized to administer said estate without court supervision.

All persons who have claims against this estate, whether or not now due, must file the claim in the office of the Clerk of this Court within three (3) months from the date of the first publication of this notice, or within nine (9) months after the decedent's death, whichever is earlier, or the claims will be forever barred.

Dated at Bluffton, Indiana, this 16th day of March, 2023.

Beth Davis
Clerk, Wells Circuit Court

Attorney for the Estate:
Timothy K. Babcock
Attorney No. 21526-90

DALE, HUFFMAN & BABCOCK
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Attorney for Estate

nb 3/23, 3/30 hspaxlp

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Miscellaneous

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Lottery Numbers

Wednesday's Drawings
HOOSIER LOTTERY

Cash 5 — 03-10-15-16-30

Lotto Plus — 03-04-13-16-17-37

Cash4Life — 01-10-22-30-36, Cash Ball: 01

Quick Draw MIDDAY — 01-16-20-22-24-27-28-31-32-38-39-49-51-52-53-54-64-65-79, BE: 57

Daily Three-MIDDAY — 09-02-01, SB: 08

Daily Three-EVENING — 01-01-06, SB: 05

Daily Four-MIDDAY — 04-03-01-09, SB: 08

Daily Four-EVENING — 03-09-07-01, SB: 05

Quick Draw EVENING — 05-09-16-18-21-24-25-30-33-34-46-48-55-61-62-63-73-76-77-79, BE: 16

Hoosier Lotto — 04-06-12-14-37-40

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POWERBALL

27-28-37-50-57 Powerball: 05; Power Play: 2X

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Public Sale Calendar

MARCH 26-APRIL 2 - (Online Only Auction) - Leffers Family Partnership, seller. Huge online auction. Outstanding modern and antique furniture including Ridgeway grandfather clock, Amish made oak bedroom suite and dining room suite, wonderful curved front secretary, antique pump organ, feather weight sewing machines, glassware, primitives, tools, wicker patio furniture, rare Victor III talking machine, designer home decor, household. Preview: March 28 and 30 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., 12910 Tonkel Rd., Fort Wayne, IN. *The Steffen Group Inc.*, [steffengrp.com](http://www.steffengrp.com), 260-824-3006.

APRIL 9-APRIL 16 - (Online Only Auction) - Various consignors, seller. Large collection of antique console and table top radios, railroad items including early 1900's map cabinet, antique and primitive furniture, coins, vintage jewelry, Fenton, Lesney Matchbox cars. Preview: March 30 and April 6 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 102 South Jefferson St., Ossian, IN, (*Steffen Group Auction Gallery*). *The Steffen Group Inc.*, [steffengrp.com](http://www.steffengrp.com), 260-824-3006.

APRIL 13 - 6 p.m. - Adams County Commissioners, owner. Adams County 4H Park dining hall, 160 W. Washington St., Monroe. Land located on N 200E between US Hwy. 33 & 300N (both sides of road). 132+/- acres offered in multiple tracts, Washington Township, Section 13, Adams County, Decatur. Tract 1: 9.96+/- tillable. Tract 2: 29.96+/- tillable. Tract 3: 29.94+/- tillable. Tract 4: 61.42+/- tillable. Land sold as individual tracts or any combination! Possession to be taken immediately! *Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC*, kjauction.com, 260-724-7402.

APRIL 14-APRIL 21 - (Online Only Auction) - Harkelroad Buildings, LLC, seller. 8,142 SF multi tenant office building that has been well maintained. This building perfect for an owner occupant or as a multi tenant investment property. Zoned R-3 with variance, paved parking, prime NE Allen County location. Open house: April 11 and 18 from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m., 3705 Rupp Dr., Fort Wayne, IN. *The Steffen Group Inc.*, [steffengrp.com](http://www.steffengrp.com), 260-426-0633.

SUDOKU ANSWER

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

Pioneer of gospel music rediscovered in Pittsburgh archives

By JESSIE WARDARSKI

Associated Press
PITTSBURGH (AP) — Scattered in crates, dirty and difficult to read, the gospel music of composer Charles Henry Pace sat packed away, unorganized — and unrealized — for more than 20 years.

Frances Pace Barnes, the pioneering music publisher's daughter who remembers how he could turn a hum into a song, knew the crates held pieces of her family's past. But she was not expecting those decaying printing plates and papers to reveal an important part of gospel music history.

"I didn't know it was going to be a legacy," said Pace Barnes.

As it turns out, her father was one of the first African American gospel music composers in the United States, and the owner of one of the country's first independent, Black gospel music publishing companies.

Today, the University of Pittsburgh is restoring his

work from the 1920s to the 1950s and cementing his place in the genre's history. It was the curiosity of music historian Christopher Lynch that set the Charles Henry Pace preservation project into motion.

Long after Pace died in 1963, his music store, which was first known as the Old Ship of Zion and later changed to the Charles H. Pace Music Publishers located in Pittsburgh's Hill District, was sold and his archives went with it. Eventually, the materials made their way to auction, and the university's library system bought them in 1999.

The 14 crates sat for more than two decades before Lynch, who also is the project's coordinator with the university's Center for American Music, uncovered the significance of what they held.

Lynch, who moved to Pittsburgh in 2017, was inspired to go through them after taking a tour of the Hill District — the city's first hub

of Black culture and art — and learning that a park in the area would be dedicated to Pace's wife and community activist, Frankie Pace.

But his task was large. And in 2021 he began organizing, cleaning and deciphering the 250 printing plates and about 600 photographs that detailed Pace's legacy.

Although the genre's roots reach as far back as 19th century spiritual songs, the lineage of modern gospel music heard in Black churches today includes the work of musicians and composers who emerged in the 1920s.

Those pioneers include Thomas Dorsey, who is often called the father of gospel music, "giving the impression that he pretty much singlehandedly invented this style," said Lynch.

But after digging into Pace's early work, he says it was around the same time, or even a few years before Dorsey. This has helped the historians piece together the

community of musicians who pushed gospel music forward as it began entering popular culture.

During this period, African American gospel music composers didn't have access to large publishing companies so Pace learned to do it all himself. Lynch says an important part of the archival work is restoring the true history and giving credit where credit is due since many of Pace's most recorded songs, including, "If I Be Lifted Up," are rarely credited to him, listed instead as "traditional songs."

Pace got his start in Chicago, creating his first publishing company where he worked on the early music of Dorsey. He also formed the Pace Jubilee Singers, which was one of the first Black groups to record gospel music and perform on the radio. Soon after meeting his wife, the couple relocated on Pittsburgh's North Side where Pace introduced gospel music in 1936 to

Tabernacle Baptist Church as the music director and later opened their store in the Hill District.

The couple formed the Pace Choral Union, a gospel choir of 75 singers at its inception and 200 at its peak. They helped establish gospel music across the city, performing at churches and events throughout Pittsburgh and western Pennsylvania as well as weekly on the radio.

"I really didn't realize until I was much older how talented my father was," said Pace Barnes, who grew up working in his store. The storefront, which doubled as an office, sold gospel music and church literature. Artists, unable to write their own music, could come to Pace with an idea. He would arrange it, and then, print and publish the songs.

The storefront became a hub for some big name, traveling musicians like Louis Armstrong and W. C. Handy.

Pace was one of few people who knew how to

fully print sheet music using photo negatives and metal plates mounted onto scrap wood. This was crucial to the expansion of gospel music in the U.S.

Frankie and Charles were also able to build a wide-ranging geographical distribution network of 301 stores across 29 different states. They also had a consistent list of more than 2510 mail subscribers who ordered from him directly.

In addition to co-owning the music store and singing in the Pace Gospel Choral Union, Frankie Pace earned a reputation as a strong community activist. She worked with various groups to improve education and housing conditions, and co-founded a committee that advocated for mandatory community input on any future development in the Hill District.

"This is history, and we are part of making history again," said director and founder of The Heritage Gospel Chorale of Pittsburgh, Herbert V.R.P. Jones.

Ukraine: Russia hits apartments and dorm, killing civilians

By HANNA ARHIROVA

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russia stepped up its missile and drone attacks against Ukraine on Wednesday, killing students and other civilians, in a violent follow-up to dueling high-level diplomatic missions aimed at bringing peace after 13 months of war.

"Russia is shelling the city with bestial savagery," President Volodymyr Zelenskyy wrote in a Telegram post accompanying video showing what he said was a Russian missile striking a nine-story apartment building on a busy road in the southeastern city of Zaporizhzhia. "Residential areas where ordinary people and children live are being fired at."

At least one person was killed in the attack shown in the Zaporizhzhia video,

apparently recorded by closed circuit TV cameras. Elsewhere, Moscow's forces launched exploding drones before dawn, killing at least eight people in or near a student dormitory near Kyiv.

Ukrainian media showed several angles of the missile raining down on an apartment building across the street from a shopping mall in Zaporizhzhia, producing a huge plume of gray and black smoke, with bits of concrete flying into the air as cars whizzed by. Videos showed the violent outcome of the attack: charred apartments, flames and smoke billowing out of several floors of the buildings, and piles of broken concrete and shards of glass on the ground. Two children were among the wounded, said Zaporizhzhia City Council

Secretary Anatolii Kurtiev, adding that 25 people needed hospital treatment, with three in critical condition.

Zaporizhzhia city is about 60 miles from the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, Europe's largest which has come under threat during the war and has been shut down for months. The U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency reported the plant had suffered another loss of a backup external power source. Its six reactors still need power to cool nuclear fuel, and were relying on only a primary source Wednesday, the IAEA said.

Russia has denied targeting residential areas even though artillery and rocket strikes hit apartment buildings and civilian infrastructure daily. Russian officials have blamed Ukrainian air

defenses for some of the deadliest strikes on apartments, saying the deployment of air defense systems in residential areas puts civilians at risk. Russia sometimes also claims Ukraine is hiding military equipment and personnel in civilian buildings.

The war, which Russia started Feb. 24, 2022, has evolved in two main directions: a front line mainly in eastern Ukraine, centered around the city of Bakhmut, and periodic Russian missile and drone strikes nationwide. In addition, periodic — although unconfirmed — Ukrainian sabotage attacks have been launched across the border into Russia. The front-line fighting largely stalemated over the winter, with expectations of major offensives by both sides expected in more favorable

spring weather.

Earlier Wednesday, a drone attack damaged a high school and two dormitories in the city of Rzhyschiv, south of the Ukrainian capital, officials said. It wasn't clear how many people were in the dormitories at the time. The body of a 40-year-old man was among those pulled from the rubble on one floor, according to regional police chief Andrii Nebytov, adding that more than 20 people were hospitalized. Video showed what appeared to be a bloodied sneaker and a green ball on the ground near a damaged building, whose top floor was ripped off at a corner.

The attacks occurred as dueling diplomatic missions were winding down. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida left Kyiv after meeting Zelenskyy to sup-

port Ukraine. Chinese leader Xi Jinping left Moscow after meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin about Beijing's peace proposal, which the West has rejected as a non-starter. No progress toward peace was reported.

U.S. National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson noted the violent turn of events.

"Just one day after Russia called for peace, Russia is attacking Ukrainian homes as part of its brutal war," she said in Washington. "What Russia is doing is horrific — and we are committed to continuing to help Ukraine defend itself against this Russian aggression."

The drone barrage and other Russian attacks on civilian infrastructure also drew a scathing response from Zelenskyy.

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