

The News - Banner www.News-Banner.com

SATURDAY, JUNE 3, 2023 BLUFFTON, INDIANA • Wells County's Hometown Connection \$1.00

A most grateful graduate

A series of miracles and the power of prayer brought Kaylee Heckber back home - in time for prom and commencement

By HOLLY GASKILL

March 9 was a normal Thursday night. Seventeen-year-old Kaylee Heckber had given a ride to a local family, as she often did, and was driving back to her mom's house.

The couple was just 300 ft. away from the front door. Instead of spending a quiet evening with her boyfriend and family, Heckber wouldn't make it through that front door for two more months.

Sarah Heckber, Kaylee's mother, recalled the phone call she received moments later.

"(Osmun) called me and said, 'Get down here,' and I said, 'That's not something you joke about,'" Sarah remembered. "(Osmun) handed the phone to somebody else, and he said, 'Will you tell her?' Then someone else said, 'Your daughter doesn't have much time to live.'"

As Sarah looked out the front door, she saw the mangled vehicles and silhouettes of those standing by. Without hesitation, she took off toward the site.

Sarah found her daughter lying in the neighboring field, motionless and unresponsive. There was glass in her eyes and blood trailing from her eyes, ears, and nose.

Kaylee's father, Adam, was just moments behind. He had received an emergency alert from Life360, a location-tracking phone application, which had detected the impact.

At the intersection of Adams County Road 700 West and Ind. 124, just outside of Wells County, Kaylee's vehicle was T-boned by an allegedly drunk driver who failed to yield the right of way. Kaylee was ejected from the vehicle. Osmun had also suffered critical cuts and bruises.

Neighbors and pedestrians gathered in the freezing area to help where they could while waiting for emergency response. They brought coats and blankets. And they prayed.

Police found a glimmer of hope in Kaylee's faint pulse. Just moments later, it was gone. Medics began chest compressions and prepared for transport.

Kaylee was moved to Lutheran Hospital in Fort Wayne, where she was immediately brought into surgery. Osmun was medically cleared that night.

With knots in their stomachs and hearts, Kaylee's family and friends waited. And they prayed.

Friday, March 10

They heard nothing for five hours. Five horrible, gut-wrenching hours.

Much of this time Sarah lay on the floor of the hospital chapel calling out to God. Adam's uncle prayed with her. "He said, 'God, I'm asking you to put your hands on this child, your miraculous hands. And I ask

you to show off,'" Sarah recalled.

Finally, at 2:30 a.m., hospital staff emerged from surgery. All eyes turned to the nurses for an update, who were unsure of the patient's name because of the emergency admittance. "Kaylee - she looks like me without a beard," Adam said. Even with all they had both been through in the last five hours, their father-daughter resemblance was uncanny.

Kaylee had survived her initial surgeries, but her situation was critical. It appeared every organ in her body had been affected by the accident.

Her lungs collapsed, her spleen was ruptured and removed, and her left clavicle was broken. There were cuts on her kidneys, liver, colon, and bowel. Her core body temperature was down to only 88 degrees. Her head and arms had significant lacerations, including one that severed her left ear.

Kaylee was moved into the intensive care unit to undergo further tests and treatment. Adam and Sarah were given just five minutes to see their daughter. By all predictions, these were their five minutes to say goodbye.

Their 17-year-old daughter - which they had always described as full of life and sass - was supposed to be eating junk food, shopping for prom dresses or getting ready for graduation. Instead, she lay unre-

(Continued on Page 6)



Discharged one day before prom, Kaylee Heckber was able to attend with her boyfriend, Keaton Osmun. (Prom photos provided by Kristi Quintanilla)



Kaylee Heckber and Keaton Osmun were in a car which was hit by a vehicle driven by an allegedly drunk driver March 9. The other vehicle struck Heckber's Chevrolet Impala on the driver's side, ejecting Heckber from her car. The left photo shows Heckber's vehicle and those who responded to the scene. At right, Heckber is shown at the Shirley Ryan Rehabilitation Center in Chicago. (Photos provided)



Lancaster Park construction opens with ground breaking

By HOLLY GASKILL

In a long-awaited celebration, the city of Bluffton broke ground on Lancaster Park on Friday morning.

"We're ecstatic," Parks Department Superintendent Brandy Fiechter said.

Members from the Parks Department, park board, city government and more were present for the historic moment. The park

will be protected as a community resource in perpetuity, said Nathan Simmons, grants coordinator for the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

Construction is expected to start in the next two weeks and will finish by Dec. 1.

The completed park will include a half-mile walking path, a dual-use football/soccer field, a 9-hole dual-use foot golf/disc golf



Community members broke ground on the construction site for Lancaster Park on Friday morning. (Photos by Holly Gaskill)

course, two sand volleyball courts, a lighted basketball court, a small playground, a Gaga ball court, a giant human foosball court, and two sets of cornhole boards. The

park will also contain a pavilion, solar-powered charging station, bike repair station and a fire pit.

The land for the park, located across from the Lancaster Cen-

tral Elementary School in Bluffton, was donated by Northern Wells Community Schools. The location is a pivotal

(Continued on Page 2)

Inside Local/Area Destination Rec... 3 Police Notebook ... 3

Outside Small chance of showers today, clear tomorrow

Online Follow us on Facebook! Go to www.facebook.com/newsbanner

Opinion Tom Purcell ... 4

Today Sunday Monday High 88 High 84 High 84 Low 58 Low 54 Low 59

Place Your Classified Ads 24/7

Also... Sports ... 1a-2a Classifieds ... 4a Diversions ... 3a

More Weather on Page 2

Vol. 94 No. 181 SATURDAY June 3, 2023

TV & Entertainment weekly in Today's NEWS-BANNER Area things to See & Do PLUS Local TV Listings including Local Cable Systems & Satellite

How to contact us: Call us: 824-0224 or 1-800-579-7476 email@news-banner.com On the Web: www.news-banner.com Follow us at: twitter.com/newsbanner



Lancaster Park

(Continued from Page 1)

turn-around point for both the Poka-bache and Interurban Trails.

This land donation also contributed to the matching funds for the project.

Multiple other major donors were recognized during the groundbreaking ceremony, including Caylor-Nickel Foundation, Chip and Kim Mann, Dave and Kris Troxel, Patti Troxel, Indiana Physical Therapy, National Oil and Gas, Greg and Rachel Roembke and their family, and Roger and Marge Thornton and their family.

With this, Fiechter also announced that a lighted basketball court, which will be full-size and contain six goals, was made possible through the Troxels' donation in memory of Dick Troxel. In their honor, the court will be named, "The Dick and Dave Troxel Court."

The project also received multiple grants, including a \$608,270 grant from the Land Water Conversation Fund.

"This project has been a long journey, and it wouldn't be possible with-

out the support of our community and many generous donors," Fiechter said.

The park was designed in coordination with Engineering Resources. Conor Jackson of James S. Jackson Company is managing the project, and construction and excavation will be completed by Coblentz Construction of Geneva, Frauhiger Excavating of Bluffton and Brooks Construction Fort Wayne. The parks department will also complete a portion of the work.

holly@news-banner.com

Weather

Saturday, June 3, 2023
(24-hour observations at 10:08 p.m. Friday)
High: 90; Low: 60; Precipitation: None
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.46 feet at 8:45 p.m. Friday

Wells County forecast

Today: A 10 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms after 4 p.m. Mostly sunny, with a high near 88. Northeast wind 5 to 10 mph.

Tonight: Partly cloudy, with a low around 58. Northeast wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 84. Northeast wind 10 to 15 mph.

Sunday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 54. Northeast wind around 10 mph.

Monday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 84.

Monday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 59.

Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 77.

Tuesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 50.

Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 74.

Wednesday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 49.

Thursday: Sunny, with a high near 76.

Thursday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 53.

Friday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 82.

Holcombs, Chambers tour Europe

By WHITNEY DOWNARD

Indiana Capital Chronicle
 Gov. Eric Holcomb, First Lady Janet Holcomb and Secretary of Commerce Brad Chambers will travel to Europe next week, highlighting the state's transportation, life sciences, technology and energy sectors – as well as fostering international ties over a mutual love of motorsports.

The international trip to Europe will be Holcomb's 15th and the cost of the trip will be paid by private donations through the private Indiana Economic Development Foundation. Holcomb went to Taiwan and South Korea in August; Germany and Switzerland in October; and Egypt in November.

Those three trips were also covered by the foundation through private donations.

"Indiana's economic momentum continues to

build, and I couldn't be more energized to share that message with our friends, partners and new business prospects in Europe," said Holcomb in a statement. "France and Portugal share similar visions for building global economies of the future, and we see many opportunities for innovation and partnerships across high-tech industries like energy and motorsports that will create new opportunities for Indiana and for Hoosiers."

The trio will arrive in Portugal on Sunday on his first official trip to the country. While serving in the U.S. Navy, Holcomb was once stationed at the NATO base in Oerias, Portugal, which he will revisit during this trip.

Dignitaries include U.S. Ambassador to Portugal Randi Levine and Portuguese Secretary of State for International Trade and Foreign Investment Bernardo

Ivo Cruz, as well as Lisbon-headquartered Energias de Portugal, which aims to generate 100% green energy by 2030 and operates three Indiana facilities.

The delegation will attend an Art in Embassies program hosted by the ambassador and participate in a Business Energy Roundtable with the American Chamber of Commerce in Portugal.

On Wednesday, the group will leave for France – which Holcomb first visited as governor in 2017 – and meet with U.S. and French government officials, including U.S. Ambassador to France Denise Bauer.

The 24 Hours of Le Mans auto race, in the Pays de la Loire region, will be held on over the weekend on the 100th anniversary of the first 24-hour race. Holcomb will participate in the opening ceremony and festivities, highlighting Indiana's

own motorsports industry.

According to the release, Indiana is home to more than 1,000 foreign owned-businesses, including 47 from France and 3 from Portugal. Thirty-two foreign-owned businesses committed to Indiana in 2022, planning to create 6,400 new jobs and invest \$7.25 billion – one-third of that year's total capital investments.

"Indiana has long been a global business destination, with more than 1,075 foreign-owned companies not just enriching Hoosier communities, but contributing to innovations and quality career opportunities," Chambers said in a statement. "The continued growth of our economy and future-focused sectors relies on partners here and around the world, and I look forward to fostering these relationships and building new collaborations in France and Portugal."

Blinken warns against Ukraine cease-fire

A cease-fire now would result in 'Potemkin peace'

By SUSIE BLANN and MATTHEW LEE

Associated Press
 KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Friday that the United States and its allies should not support a cease-fire or peace talks to end the war in Ukraine until Kyiv gains strength and can negotiate on its own terms.

As an anticipated Ukrainian counteroffensive appeared to be taking shape, Blinken said heeding calls from Russia and others, including China, for negotiations now would result in a false "Potemkin peace" that wouldn't secure Ukraine's sovereignty or enhance European security.

"We believe the prerequisite for meaningful diplomacy and real peace is a stronger Ukraine, capable of deterring and defending against any future aggression," Blinken said in a speech in Finland, which recently became NATO's newest member and shares a long border with Russia.

His use of the term "Potemkin" referred to the brightly painted village fronts that 18th century Russian government minister Grigory Potemkin reportedly used to have built to create an illusion of prosperity for Russia's empress.

Blinken repeated the U.S. view that "a cease-fire that simply freezes current lines in place" and allows Russian President Vladimir Putin "to consolidate control over the territory he has seized, and rest, rearm, and re-attack — that is not a just and lasting peace."

Allowing Moscow to keep the one-fifth of Ukrainian territory it's occupied would send the wrong message to Russia and to "other would-be aggressors around the world," according to Blinken, implying that a cease-

fire shouldn't be arranged until either Ukraine pushes Russia back or Russia withdraws its troops.

Blinken's position is similar to that of Ukrainian officials, including his statement that Russia must pay for a share of Ukraine's reconstruction and be held accountable for the full-scale invasion of its neighbor in February 2022.

After months of battlefield stalemate across a 685-mile (1100-km) front line, Ukrainian officials have given confusing signals about whether a counteroffensive, relying heavily on recently deployed advanced Western weapons and training, is coming or already underway.

Some have suggested the campaign will not be a barrage of simultaneous attacks across the entire front but rather a series of more targeted, limited strikes, first to weaken Russia's supply lines and infrastructure, then expanded to broader targets with greater intensity.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy weighed in again on Friday. "This is not a movie," he told reporters in Kyiv. "It is hard to say how you'll see the counteroffensive. The main point here is for Russia to see it. And not just see but feel it. Especially, we speak about the troops that have occupied our territories. De-occupation of our territories – this is the result of our counteroffensive. When you see this, you'll understand that it has started."

Zelenskyy has said his goal is to drive Russian troops out of the four territories it partially occupies and illegally annexed last fall, as well as from the Crimean Peninsula the Kremlin illegally seized in 2014.

Putin has said two of his goals in invading Ukraine were to improve Russia's security and prevent Ukraine from joining NATO but the Kyiv government has applied to join the alli-

ance, and Sweden is hoping to be accepted as a member in July. That would surround Russia with NATO countries in the Baltic Sea.

Blinken described the Russian invasion of Ukraine as a catastrophic strategic failure for Moscow that had strengthened NATO, the European Union and Ukraine. Russia has become more isolated, he said, shackled to China as a junior partner in a relationship that Beijing has increasingly come to resent, and no longer able to use energy as a political tool in countries it once counted as its own or satellites.

For its part, Russia wants any talks to address Ukraine's request to join NATO.

"Naturally, this (issue) will be one of the main irritants and potential problems for many, many years to come," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Friday.

Blinken said Washington was ready to support peace efforts by other countries, including those by China and Brazil but that any peace agreement must uphold the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence.

China, which says it is neutral and wants to serve as a mediator but has supported Moscow politically, on Friday urged countries to stop sending weapons to Ukraine. The United States is a leading Western ally and supplier of arms to Kyiv.

In Kyiv, in the sixth air attack in as many days, Ukrainian air defenses late Thursday and early Friday intercepted all 15 incoming cruise missiles and 21 attack drones, Ukraine's chief of staff, Valerii Zaluzhnyi, said.

The Ukrainian capital was simultaneously attacked from different directions by Iranian-made Shahed drones and cruise missiles from the Caspian Sea region, senior Kyiv official Serhii Popko wrote on Telegram.

Justice Department won't charge Pence over classified documents

By JILL COLVIN and ERIC TUCKER

Associated Press
 WASHINGTON (AP) — The Department of Justice has informed former Vice President Mike Pence's legal team that it will not pursue criminal charges related to the discovery of classified documents at his Indiana home.

The department sent a letter to Pence's attorney Thursday informing his team that, after an investigation into the potential mishandling of classified information, no criminal charges will be sought. A Justice Department official confirmed the authenticity of the letter, which was obtained by The Associated Press.

The news comes days before Pence is set to launch his campaign for the Republican nomination for president

in Iowa Wednesday — a race that will put him in direct competition with former President Donald Trump.

No evidence has ever emerged to suggest that Pence intentionally hid documents from the government or even knew they were in his home, so there was never an expectation that he would face charges. But that decision and timing were nonetheless welcome news for the former vice president and his political team as he prepares to enter the crowded GOP primary field and contrast himself with Trump.

Attorney General Merrick Garland had named a special counsel to oversee the Justice Department's investigation into the discovery of hundreds of documents with classified markings at Trump's Mar-a-Lago home just three days after

the former president formally launched his 2024 campaign — an acknowledgment of the high political stakes. A special counsel was also put in place to investigate classified documents found at President Joe Biden's home in Delaware and at an unsecured office in Washington dating from his time as vice president.

About a dozen documents with classified markings were discovered at Pence's home in January after he asked his lawyers to perform a search of his vice presidential belongings "out of an abundance of caution" after the Biden discovery. The items had been "inadvertently boxed and transported" to Pence's home at the end of the last administration, Pence's lawyer, Greg Jacob, wrote in a letter to the National Archives.

WE HELP YOU GET SOCIAL SECURITY, MEDICARE AND MEDICAID READY!



WE HAVE THE MARKETPLACE UNDER 65 PRODUCTS

The Price Tag is the Same Everywhere Consider Local for Better Service

FREE INFORMATION - FREE EDUCATION ON ALL OUR PRODUCTS WE ARE FORMER TEACHERS

WHEN YOU HAVE PROBLEMS AND YOU WILL HAVE PROBLEMS YOU WILL HAVE US TO COUNT ON MEDICARE SUPPLEMENTS - MEDICARE ADVANTAGE PLANS - PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLANS.

Life Insurance - Long Term Care Insurance - Investments - Individual and Small Group Health - Dental - Vision - Hearing - Cancer Insurance

Folks on Medicare A and B and Diabetic can get FREE Nice Looking Diabetic Shoes Every Year from Us | We Do FREE Information/ Education Seminars In Your Business (Again Former Teachers)

WE CAN MEET: IN OUR OFFICE - IN YOUR HOME - IN A FAVORED LOCATION

In the 1882 Building at Main & Market with the mural on the outside wall • 260-824-1618

Local Roundup

County Drainage Board will meet Monday afternoon

The Wells County Drainage Board will meet at 4:30 p.m. Monday, June 5, in Room 105, the multi-purpose room on the lower level of the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St.

Topics on the agenda include project updates and miscellaneous drainage matters.

County Commissioners will meet Monday afternoon

The Wells County Commissioners will meet at 5 p.m. Monday, June 5, in Room 105, the multi-purpose room on the lower level of the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St.

The first item of business for the meeting will be a public hearing on a request to vacate an alley in the unincorporated community of Banner City.

Items on the agenda for the regular meeting include:

- An appointment with Wells County Sheriff Scott Holliday.
- An appointment with Wells County Highway Superintendent Shawn Bonar.
- A discussion of an unofficial detour for Ind. 218.
- An appointment with Wells County Engineer Nate Rumschlag.
- A request for 2024 support from Bi-County Services, brought to the commissioners by Tim Ramsey.
- A meeting with Wells County fire chiefs.
- Presentation of an ordinance to vacate an alley, brought to the commissioners by Ted Storer.
- Consideration of a resolution for the creation of a committee to investigate the role of a building inspector.
- Consideration of a plaza request for the Bluffton Free Street Fair.
- Discussion of any right of way or utility agreements.

Bluffton Board of Works to meet Tuesday afternoon

The Bluffton Board of Public Works and Safety will meet at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 6, in the meeting room on the first floor of City Hall, 128 E. Market St.

Topics on the agenda include:

- An engineering project update, brought to the board by Kelly White.
- Final approval of an update to city standards, brought to the board by White.
- Consideration of water adjustment requests on Oak Forest Drive and Pine Grove Court.
- The awarding of contracts for wastewater plant upgrades and lining project, brought to the board by Casey Erwin of DLZ.
- A personnel matter, brought to the board by Police Chief Kyle Randall.
- A personnel matter, brought to the board by Brandy Fiechter of the Parks and Recreation Department.
- A request for a fund transfer, brought to the board by Fire Chief Don Craig.
- Discussion of a job description, brought to the board by Craig.
- A quote for the Fire Department, brought to the board by Craig.
- Discussion of American Rescue Plan Act funds.
- Discussion of funding for 200S.

Bluffton Common Council will meet Tuesday evening

The Bluffton Common Council will meet at 6 p.m. Tuesday, June 6, in the Council Chambers on the second floor of City Hall,

128 E. Market St.

The first item of business will be a public hearing on an ordinance to vacate a portion of a public right of way.

Topics on the agenda for the regular meeting include:

- Consideration of an ordinance to vacate particular streets and alleys.
- A request from the Wells County Council on Aging for a funding increase.
- Consideration of tax abatements — Almco Steel, Metaldyne, Midland, AT Ferrell, Alexin, Inventure Foods, Pretzels, the Jackson Studebaker Investment Group, and ADM Alliance — brought to the council by Chad Kline.
- A discussion of wastewater projects, brought to the council by Casey Erwin of DLZ.
- Discussion and approval of 2023 city standards, brought to the council by Kelly White.
- Review of Public Safety Answering Point policy.
- Discussion of a budget work session.
- Discussion of funding for 200S.
- Consideration of an ordinance revision.

Ossian police panel will meet Tuesday evening

The Ossian Board of Metropolitan Police Commissioners will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 6, at Collier's, 215 N. Jefferson St. in Ossian.

Topics on the agenda include:

- Updates and requests from the police chief.
- An update on full-time hiring.
- Equipment update.
- Chief on-boarding activities.
- Social media activities and campaign.
- Pay matrix update.
- Review of department policies.

Wells County Council will meet Tuesday evening

The Wells County Council will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 6, in Room 105, the multi-purpose room on the lower level of the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St.

• A transfer within the County Commissioners' budget in the General Fund.

• An additional appropriation to the Highway Department's maintenance and repair line item.

• A request for 2024 support from Bi-County Services, brought to the commissioners by Tim Ramsey.

• An update on highway garage construction, brought to the council by Conor Jackson.

• Consideration of tax abatement compliance forms for Haven Manufacturing, brought to the council by Chad Kline, and Heartland Broadband, brought to the council by Nick Caley.

• Discussion of a county matrix proposal, brought to the council by Lisa McCormick and Jarrod Hahn.

The meeting will be streamed live on the Wells County Government Facebook page.

Rock Creek Conservancy board will meet Thursday

The quarterly meeting of the board of the Rock Creek Conservancy District will be held at 6 p.m. Thursday, June 8 at 6 p.m. at the Liberty Center Fire Department, 2954 W. Market St. in Liberty Center. Topics on the agenda include budget, maintenance and water monitoring program reports, annual review, treasurer's reports, claim forms, and account reconciliations.

The meeting is open to the public. For additional information call 260/703-0490.

Special education 'choice' program accepting enrollments

By LESLIE BONILLA MUNIZ

Indiana Capital Chronicle
A program funding disabled child access to private schools and other specialized resources is open for enrollment through September 1, State Treasurer Daniel Elliott's office announced Friday.

"As school choice parents, my family knows firsthand the importance of being able [to] choose what's best for your child's educational experience," Elliott said in a news release. "Our Indiana Education Scholarship Account gives parents with children who have their own ways of learning the ability to find the tools to best fit their needs."

Lawmakers created the special education-only ESA program in 2021, but sought to expand it to all Hoosier students this session in a bid to create a universal "school choice" program.

Instead, lawmakers did it by expanding income

eligibility for the state's Choice Scholarships program and eliminating the eight eligibility-determining pathways currently in place. That program allows students to get state-funded vouchers to attend private schools.

To be eligible for an ESA, school-aged Hoosiers must have an active service plan, Individualized Education Program plan or Choice Special Education Plan (CSEP). They must also have an income below 400 percent of the Federal Free or Reduced School Meals limit, according to the Department of Education.

Accounts set up by the state treasurer's office provide each qualifying student with thousands of dollars for private school tuition and various other educational services from providers outside of their school district.

Other expenses can include transportation,

examinations and assessments, occupational therapy, paraprofessional or education aides, training programs and more.

"Ella is complex. Finally, we have a solution ... ESA has opened up doors we never thought possible for her," Elkhart County mother Erica Hunt said in the news release. Elliot's office said the child was one of an estimated 180,000 Hoosier students "affected by special needs."

Education groups have fiercely criticized the initiative as lacking oversight, financial "accountability" and educational standards.

"My team and I believe that the future of education is not forcing a child to fit into the system but giving parents the instruments to build around the individual needs of the child," Elliott said. "Our ESA program is guided by that principle, and we believe in mission."

Bluffton Parks & Rec News & Notes



By Brandy Fiechter

Destination Recreation

Summer seems like it is running at us at 100 miles an hour. We had a very busy opening weekend at the pool, with daily attendance numbers between 350-400 per day. Crowds that size keep our new employees hopping and working frantically to keep up. The good news is that our 15-year-old concession employees can work at the ballpark until 9 p.m. now that summer has arrived. It can be challenging to have staff after 7 p.m. to comply with the state teen labor law, so we appreciated your patience.

Group swim lessons start this Monday for the kids who signed up a while back. If you missed sign-ups, we still have a few openings, and if your child does better in a smaller setting, consider calling the pool at 824-1550 for private swim lessons. There are a variety of days and times available. One-on-one lessons cost \$25 per ½ hour.

Teen/Adult lap swim kicked off this week at noon and is an excellent opportunity to swim laps or water walk during the day. The pool is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 12-12:50 for only \$2. Punch cards are available at the pool and will save you \$5 over ten visits. Starting June 13, we will try out the NEW Aqua Aerobics every Tuesday from 12-12:50 p.m. for a \$5 drop-in fee.

If swimming isn't your thing and you prefer to get your run on, we are about to start the **5 in 5 Series**. Join us for five weeks to run/walk a 5K beginning June 21st at 7:00 pm at the City Gym. The cost for each race is just \$1, due that night.

Now is a great time to get the kids moving during the summer to train for the Iron Kid Triathlon. Children aged 5-12 can compete in a swim, bike, and run at the Wells Community Pool at 8 a.m. on June 24. Sign up online at <https://raceroster.com/events/2023/74283/iron-kids-triathlon>.

The annual Shaving Cream Fight is

coming up quickly. Participants of all ages are invited to get messy with us on June 22 from 2-2:30 p.m. at the Pickett's Run Splash Pad on East Washington Street. Bring your shaving cream, sunglasses or goggles, and a towel. We recommend wearing your swimsuit so that you can rinse off afterward. This is a FREE drop-in event, so you don't need to pre-register.

Seniors, you will want to mark your calendar for the next **Theater Thursday** on June 15. Stop by the Wells County Public Library at 10 a.m. for the movie "Where the Crawdads Sing". Snacks are provided.

Join us for the 1st FREE **Friday night concert** on June 9 at Kehoe Park from 8-10 p.m. for SIMPLY QUEEN. Bring your lawn chair and a few dollars if you want to purchase something delicious from Yergy's or the Sweet Creations dessert truck. 2 Pour Guys will be serving your favorite adult beverages, so remember to bring your ID. This concert is sponsored by the generosity of Patricia Troxel. Special thanks to Title Sponsors Wells County Foundation and ProFed Federal Credit Union.

Then come back on Sunday, June 11 at 7 p.m. for Dan Heath and the Paradise Band. Their group features 7 talented musicians, including piano, trumpet, sax, drums, bass, guitar, and vocals covering the great American songbook, including swing, jazz, pop, and rock. They cover Sinatra, Bobby Darin, Nat King Cole, Elvis, the Beatles, and many other famous artists. Come and enjoy great music for the whole family.

The Grand Sweet Shop will be selling treats during the show. This concert is sponsored by the generosity of National Oil & Gas, Inc. Special thanks to Title Sponsors Wells County Foundation and ProFed Federal Credit Union.

Have a great week!

Representative Jim Lucas jailed on OWI, leaving scene after crash in Jackson County

By LESLIE BONILLA MUNIZ

Indiana Capital Chronicle
Republican state Rep. Jim Lucas was arrested and held in the Jackson County Jail Wednesday morning after police said he drove while intoxicated and left the scene of a crash.

Lucas crashed his vehicle on Interstate 65, just north of Seymour, around midnight, an Indiana State Police spokesperson told the Indiana Capital Chronicle. Police said he left the scene in the crashed vehicle.

Seymour police officers found Lucas' vehicle "a short time later at a different location," according to ISP. Lucas was then located nearby and arrested by a trooper from the state police Versailles Post.

The 58-year-old was booked into the Jackson County Jail at 3:46 a.m. on preliminary charges of operating a vehicle while intoxicated and leaving the scene of a crash with property damage.

According to jail records, Lucas was released at 7:53

a.m. after posting \$705 bond.

State police declined to provide a detailed police report, per ISP policy. Toxicology results were still pending Wednesday morning.

The Chronicle has reached out to Lucas' office for comment. The Seymour representative is known for his Second Amendment and cannabis support, as well as repeated controversial social media posts.

GOP Gov. Eric Holcomb emphasized Wednesday that it's up to the General Assembly to decide whether Lucas should continue to serve as a legislator or face other repercussions, separate from any criminal penalties.

Lucas represents District 69 in Indiana which covers portions of Jackson, Bartholomew, Scott and Washington counties. Jackson County is roughly 70 miles south of downtown Indianapolis.

Lucas was first elected in 2012 and most recently championed House Bill 1177 during the 2023 legislative session. The measure creates a state-funded gun training program for school staff.

Lucas represents District 69 in Indiana which covers portions of Jackson, Bartholomew, Scott and Washington counties. Jackson County is roughly 70 miles south of downtown Indianapolis.

Lucas was first elected in 2012 and most recently championed House Bill 1177 during the 2023 legislative session. The measure creates a state-funded gun training program for school staff.

PANCAKE & SAUSAGE BREAKFAST

June 3rd, 2023

8am- Noon

(Oswalt Family Cooking)

Chester Center Church
9009 S 300 W Poneto
Across from Southern Wells High School

Wells County HazMat Day 2023

SAT., JUNE 10 • 8am – 1pm

Bluffton Middle School Parking Lot • 824-6470

Rid your property of

Household Items: Paints, flammable liquids, old gasoline, kerosene, pesticides, herbicides, motor oil, antifreeze, cleaners, aerosols, corrosive liquids/acids, mercury, fluorescent lamp and PCB ballasts, auto & household batteries.

Pharmaceuticals: Prescription drugs (in original labeled prescription container), sharps/needles (all sharps must be in sealed containers such as a milk jug or original packaging container).

Appliances: Refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners, dehumidifiers, stoves, washers, dryers, water heaters, dishwashers, microwaves.

Electronics: Monitors, CPU, keyboards, printers, fax machines, VCR/DVD, cell phones, cables.

The following charges will apply to these items:

Televisions: Standard \$20⁰⁰ • Large or Console: \$25⁰⁰

Tires: Auto Tires: up to 4 – FREE; \$2⁰⁰ for each additional, limit 12

Truck Tires: up to 4 – FREE; \$5⁰⁰ for each additional, limit 6

Tractor (or tires over 54" tall): \$75⁰⁰ ea. (Tires on rims will be accepted, additional charge \$1⁰⁰)

RESIDENTIAL ONLY – NO BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION DROP OFF

www.wellscounty.org

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

www.news-banner.com or www.facebook.com/news-banner

Americans rediscover the summer picnic

It's a positive trend that I hope continues: the resurgence of summer picnics.

According to Mental Floss, the Covid pandemic caused a picnic boom beginning in 2020 that is showing no signs of letting up.

In 2020, with restaurants shuttered and experts telling us the bug didn't spread so easily in outdoor air, many people, in particular younger people, began picnicking.

I was lucky to grow up only a few miles from a county park that offers 3,000 acres of rolling green hills, walking and biking trails and 63 picnic groves — groves packed with picnickers every summer weekend.

There were lots of reasons to picnic then. Family reunions, church gatherings or neighbors getting together. Schools, companies, unions and other organizations often staged annual picnic events.

The park was so popular that people routinely waited in line for hours one year prior to their event to secure their favorite grove.

On weekends the park was jammed and jumping: Kids running around, footballs, Frisbees and water balloons flying through the air. While the kids played, the adults talked and laughed and sipped ice-cold beer.

We ate hot dogs and juicy hamburgers and my mom's sweet potato salad — I can still taste these incredible picnic delicacies and crave them still.

The picnics were tremendous social events that connected people to each other in a million different ways. We laughed and talked all day long and when dusk arrived, nobody was ready to go home.

In a modern world that has separated and isolated us, we need to experience picnic connectedness now more than ever before.

Robert Putnam, author of the acclaimed 1995 book "Bowling Alone," identified several trends that have been causing a breakdown in social-connectedness over many years.

The rise of the dual-income family, for example, resulted in both parents being exhausted after long days of work, making them less prone to join and support civic groups.

Television and the Internet are also breaking down our connectedness. Putnam said that "time-budget studies in the 1960s showed that the growth in time spent watching television dwarfed all other changes in the way Americans passed their days and nights."

Social media has made this challenge considerably worse with many people, in particular younger people, spending hours online or chatting with their "friends" while in a room in their home alone.

Before there were 300 TV channels — before smartphones turned us into zombies and air conditioning caused us to shut our windows and doors — people sat out on their porches at night, sipping lemonade and talking with each other.

I enjoyed countless summer nights enjoying the company of my neighborhood friends that way.

Now we spend far too many hours sitting in our cooled homes isolated from our fellow human beings — which is why we are in desperate need of more summer picnics.

But there is hope for us.

Smithsonian reports that interest in picnics has exploded on social media. On Pinterest alone, searches for picnic date ideas have grown by 385 percent since last year.

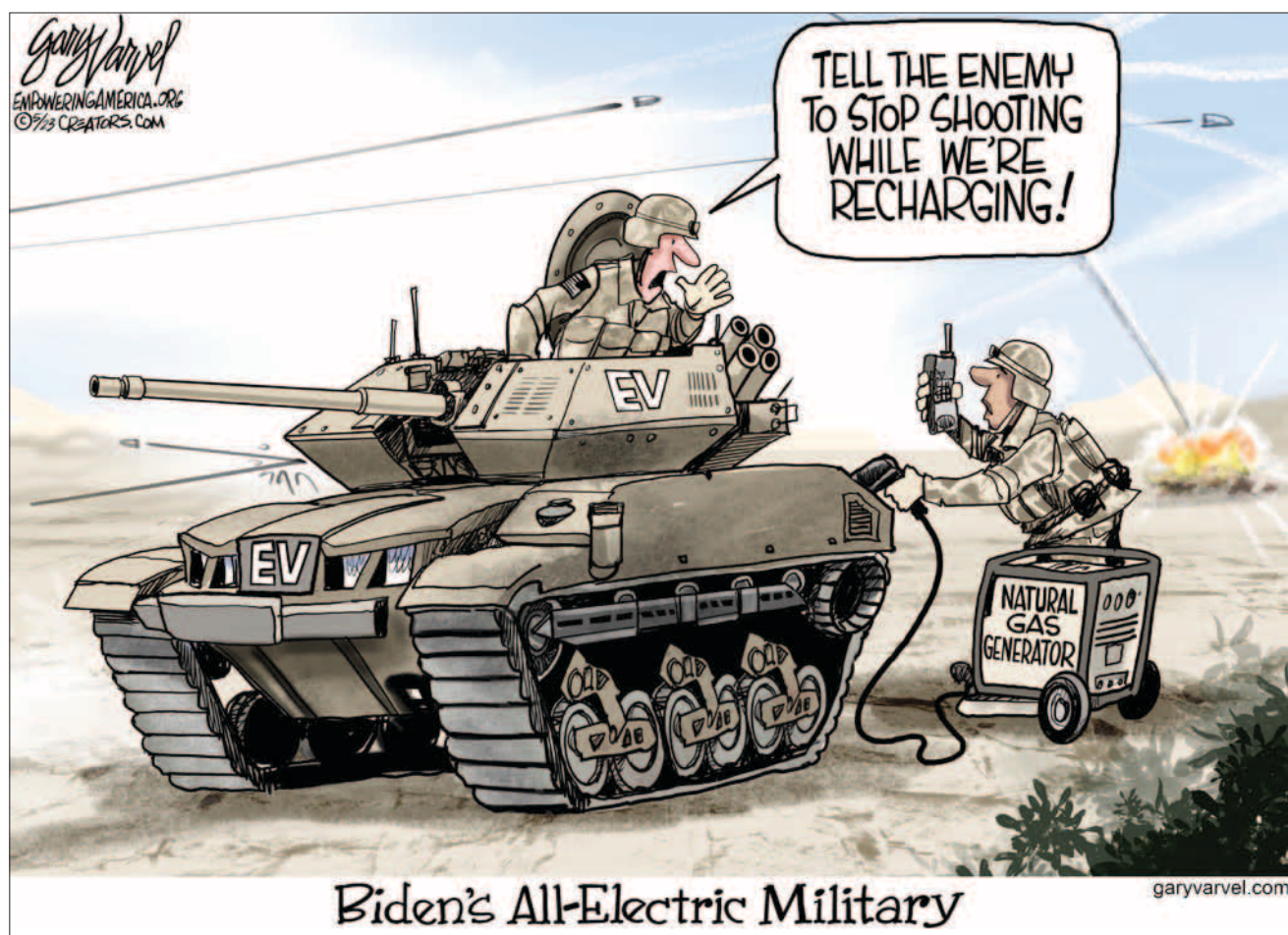
I just Googled "summer picnic" and was delighted to see picnic activities taking place all over the nation — and lots of ideas to make your picnic fun and your picnic food delicious.

Hey, Covid, you caused us a lot of grief, but I thank you for the summer picnic resurgence. It couldn't have come at a better time!

Tom Purcell is a Pittsburgh Tribune-Review humor columnist. tom@TomPurcell.com.



Tom Purcell



Biden's All-Electric Military

garyvarvel.com

Two-thirds of new cars will be EVs in nine years? That will not happen.

Because multiple subsidies seem insufficient to lure multitudes into buying electric vehicles, President Biden is resorting to a labyrinthine industrial policy to supply what people are not demanding. A purchaser of an EV is eligible for tax credits of up to \$7,500, if:

If final assembly of the vehicle occurred in North America. And if a minimum of 40 percent (80 percent by 2027) of the minerals in the battery, and 50 percent (100 percent by 2029) of the vehicle's components come from the United States or a country with which it has a "free trade agreement."

There are no such agreements with some nations that are important sources of EV materials, so the Biden administration has issued a semantic fiat: In the context of the pertinent legislation, the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), the phrase "free trade agreement" shall mean any deal that encourages environmentally and labor-friendly trade — *and such agreements do not need congressional approval*. The Constitution says: "Congress shall have power . . . to regulate commerce with foreign nations." But desperate times require desperate measures, and nowadays times are always too desperate to treat the Constitution as other than a tissue of suggestions.

Goldman Sachs says the IRA's subsidies of green investments will cost \$1.2 trillion over a decade. They are luring firms from European nations, which retaliate by relaxing their rules that restrict permissible government enticements to keep firms at home. So goes the dialectic by which statism in one nation breeds reciprocal statism in others.

Biden wants EVs, which were only 5.8 percent of U.S. new car sales in 2022, to be 67 percent by 2032. (His initial target had been 50 percent by 2030.) So, consumer sovereignty must be extinguished. Congress would not risk the aggressive paternalism of mandating that Americans buy EVs. For progressives, however, Congress is to the body politic as the appendix is to the human body: unnecessary and troublesome.

Congress has inadvertently empowered the Environmental Protection Agency to accomplish indirectly what Congress never intended. Biden's EPA has issued such stringent limits (beginning with the 2027 model year) on the pollution generated by each manufacturer's total fleet, the limits will make internal combustion vehicles scarce. Generally under industrial policy, supply precedes demand, and demand lags until government circumscribes our choices for our own good. Why else have government plan things? There is a history of what has been called "policy

beyond capability" — splashy goals proclaimed with fanfare, then quietly unenforced, or amended. In 1994, President Bill Clinton proclaimed "Goals 2000," which included a high school graduation rate of at least 90 percent, and U.S. students "first in the world in math and science." Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan correctly said of each goal: "That will not happen."

The Cato Institute's Peter Van Doren notes that to implement the 1970 Clean Air Act, the EPA proposed parking surcharges and parking space reductions. Congress, horrified, forbade this. And: "By 2005, of the 338 deadlines set by the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 only 37 had been met by the deadline specified in the statute."

Two-thirds of new cars sold nine years from now will be EVs? That will not happen, but much money will be spent not getting there.

What is delicately called consumer hesitancy regarding EVs includes worries about charging time. When U.S. automobile ownership surged from 8 million in 1920 to 20 million in 1929, drivers found gasoline because the private sector nimbly supplied service stations to meet demand. A century later, because industrial policy expects supply to precede demand, the Biden administration plans to spend \$7.5 billion providing 500,000 charging stations for subsidized EV purchasers.

The Manhattan Institute's Mark P. Mills calls attention to "the gargantuan, energy-hungry processes needed to make" batteries for "zero emissions" EVs. There will be substantial "upstream" emissions from the mining required to unearth the lithium, graphite, nickel, zinc, aluminum, etc., which means that "the rush to EVs could even increase global vehicle-related emissions."

Still, the history of science is a story of pleasant and unanticipated surprises. Theodore Roosevelt, who like most progressives was cocksure about everything, foresaw a "timber famine" partly because railroads were ravenous for wood crossties, which rotted and had to be replaced. Roosevelt did not foresee creosote, which prevents rotting.

EV batteries will become lighter and better; substitution might reduce EVs' reliance on certain minerals. It is, however, usually safe to say of a goal proclaimed by overconfident progressives administering an industrial policy: That will not happen.

georgewill@washpost.com.



George Will

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Saturday, June 3, the 154th day of 2023. There are 211 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On June 3, 1989, Chinese army troops began their sweep of Beijing to crush student-led pro-democracy demonstrations.

On this date:

In 1621, the Dutch West India Co. received its charter for a trade monopoly in parts of the Americas and Africa.

In 1888, the poem "Casey at the Bat" by Ernest Lawrence Thayer was first published in the San Francisco Daily Examiner.

In 1935, the French liner Normandie set a record on its maiden voyage, arriving in New York after crossing the Atlantic in just four days.

In 1937, Edward, The

Duke of Windsor, who had abdicated the British throne, married Wallis Simpson in a private ceremony in Monts, France.

In 1962, Air France Flight 007, a U.S.-bound Boeing 707, crashed while attempting to take off from Orly Airport near Paris; all but two of the 132 people aboard were killed.

In 1965, astronaut Edward H. White became the first American to "walk" in space during the flight of Gemini 4.

In 1989, Iran's spiritual leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, died.

In 2008, Barack Obama claimed the Democratic presidential nomination, speaking in the same St. Paul, Minnesota, arena where Republicans would be holding their national convention in September 2008.

We should all be grateful to Anheuser-Busch.

Some corporation had to show how "woke" marketing could cost an iconic American brand dearly in terms of its image, its sales and its market capitalization.

Through its special beer can produced for transgender influencer Dylan Mulvaney, Anheuser-Busch, in effect, volunteered for duty.

The CEO of General Motors didn't really say in the 1950s that what's good for GM is good for the country.

Still, to paraphrase the famous misquote of auto executive Charles Wilson, what's terrible for Bud Light sales is now good for America. With every viral anti-Bud Light video and 12-pack moldering on a store shelf or in a warehouse, the message is being sent to other corporations that they may come to regret their gratuitous forays into the culture war.

Now, Target has directly learned the same lesson with its Pride apparel, and has removed some clothes and made associated displays less prominent. Coupled with the ongoing contention over Disney, whose image has taken a big hit among Republicans, the flare-ups raise the prospect that we've entered a new era of conservative consumer power.

There's no doubt that the rise of social media has made it possible to spread the word quickly about controversies, and conservatives are newly attuned to how corporations can trespass against their values and interests. That said, the recent boycott suc-



Rich Lowry

cesses are not necessarily replicable.

Bud Light proved uniquely vulnerable. Its image was of an all-American product, the go-to beer for barbecues, hunting trips and ballgames — as easily enjoyed and uncontroversial as a flyover on the Fourth of July.

The Dylan Mulvaney promotion was hilariously off-brand. Why should a beer company, especially an unpretentious, mass-market beer company, be associating itself with a gay man who decided he's a woman and prances around like a teenager? What is it about Dylan Mulvaney that says "beer" or "Middle America"? Mulvaney made it worse by creat-



ing indelible, cringe-inducing imagery, dressing like Holly Golightly from "Breakfast at Tiffany's" with a bunch of Bud Light in one video and relaxing in a bathtub in another.

What's transpired is more than a boycott; Bud Light has become a national joke. It's signature blue-and-white cans and bottles now stand for ineptitude and out-of-touch marketing. Picking up a six-pack shows that you aren't in on the joke.

The advantage of Bud Light was that it was widely known and readily available; the problem is that its competitors are just as readily available, and once someone stops to think about it, it's just as easy to pick up the Coors Light or something else right next to the Bud Light on the shelf or in the freezer. Sure enough, as of April 15, Bud Light's U.S. retail-store sales dropped 17 percent from the year prior and sales of Coors Light and Miller Lite each grew 17 percent, according to The Wall Street Journal.

As for Target, even if it doesn't get hit as hard as Anheuser-Busch, it is a low-margin business that can't afford unnecessary consumer turbulence.

On the other end of the spectrum are difficult-to-boycott entities like the Los Angeles Dodgers, who embraced an anti-Catholic gay activist group. The offended Dodgers fan may strenuously object but can't just up and start rooting for the Los Angeles Angels.

The best outcome of all this would be if corporations realize the potential hazards of going along with the woke cultural tide, and resolve to stick to the 50-yard line of American national life. No one is going to care if a boutique brand based somewhere in blue America associates itself with every new progressive fad. It's the companies that are firmly in the mainstream that shouldn't needlessly alienate people or takes sides in battles that have nothing to do with their core business.

Bud Light is an ongoing warning of the perils. Surely, it's not the future old Adolphus Busch imagined for his company, but it's useful all the same.

Rich Lowry is on Twitter @RichLowry

The News-Banner

(USPS 059-200)

Evening News est. 1892 • Evening Banner est. 1899 • Consolidated 1929

News-Banner Publications, Inc.

George B. Witwer, Chairman of the Board
Doug Brown, President, Publisher
Dianne Witwer, Secretary/Treasurer

Periodicals Postage Paid at Bluffton, IN 46714. Published every day except Sundays and principal holidays at 125 N. Johnson St., Bluffton IN 46714, Post Office Box 436

David Schultz, Editor
Mark Miller, Opinion Page Editor



Call to Worship

This page is dedicated to the building of a more spiritual and greater church-going people and is made possible by the Advertisers on this page who want as their return to see more people go to church.



APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHURCH - COUNTRY
1970 S.-800E., Bluffton
9:45 & 11:45 a.m. - Worship.

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHURCH - NORTH
630 E. Dustman Rd.
9:45 & 11:45 a.m. - Worship.

ASBURY CHAPEL UNITED METHODIST
8013 W.-1100S.-90,
Montpelier
9:30 a.m. - Sunday
School. 10:30 - Worship.

BETHEL
(Independent Bible)
4500E-300S, Bluffton
9 a.m. - Sunday School.
10 a.m. - Worship.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH LCMS
6114E-750N, Ossian
bethlehemossian.org
9 a.m. - Divine Service.
10:15 - Adult Bible Class,
Youth Bible Class & Sun-
day School. 11:30 - Voice
of Bethlehem on 92.7
FM.

BLUFFTON CHURCH OF GOD
327 W. Cherry St.
10 a.m. - Sunday
School. 11 a.m. - Wor-
ship. 6 p.m. - Service.

BOEHRER UNITED METHODIST
3467 S 600 W,
Liberty Center
boehrerumc.org
9:30 a.m. - Worship.
10:45 - Sunday School.

CALVARY LUTHERAN, ELCA
1532 N. Main St.
9 a.m. - Worship.

**HIDAY
AUTOMOTIVE GROUP**
824-0900 General Motors
824-1931 Chrysler

NATIONAL OIL
Delivery to Home
FARM • BUSINESS
824-2220

**Thoma/Rich,
Lemler
Funeral Home**
WELLS COUNTY'S
OLDEST CONTINUING BUSINESS
308 West Washington St., Bluffton, IN
260-824-3850
www.thomarich.com

**NAPA WELLS CO.
AUTOMOTIVE SUPPLY,
INC.**
643 N. Main St.
Bluffton
260-824-4460

**MIKE
ANDERSON
CHEVROLET**
FIND NEW ROADS
604 S. JEFFERSON, OSSIANS • 622-4115

**POSY POT
FLOWERS**
126 W. Townley
Bluffton • 824-3330

Warren Pharmacy
(260)375-2135
1-800-895-7035
222 N. Wayne Street - Warren, IN
Your Pharmacist, Terry Daniels P.D.
Has Over 30 Years of "Pharmaceutical" Experience
Mon.-Fri 9-5:30; Sat. 9-12 noon

**Cupp
Real Estate**
127 Oak Forest Dr., Bluffton, IN
824-1588

BLUFFTON WESLEYAN CHAPEL
(Independent Holiness
Church)
1309 W. Washington St.
blufftonwesleyan.net
9:30 a.m. - Sunday
School. 10:30 & 6:30
p.m. - Worship.

CHESTER CENTER
900S-300W, Poneto
9:30 a.m. - Sunday
School. 10:30 - Worship.

**CHRISTIAN
NEW LIGHT**
1011 W. Washington St.
9:45 a.m. - Sunday
School. 10:30 - Worship.
6 p.m. - Praise & wor-
ship.

CHURCH OF CHRIST
735 S. Marion St.
10 a.m. - Bible Study.
10:45 - Worship.

COVENANT CHAPEL
3550 S. SR 1
mycovenantchapel.org
9:15 a.m. - Sunday
School. 10:15 - Worship.
(Children's Church for
ages 6-12).

DILLMAN UNITED BRETHREN
8888S-1100W-90,
Warren
9 a.m. - Worship. 10
a.m. - Sunday School.

DOMESTIC CHURCH OF CHRIST
9 a.m. - Sunday school.
10 a.m. - Church service.

EPWORTH UNITED METHODIST
1204 W. Cherry St.
9:30 a.m. - Worship.
10:40 a.m. - Sunday
School.

FAIRVIEW CHURCH OF GOD
5511 W. Yoder Rd., Yoder
fairviewlife.com
9 a.m. - Sunday School.
10 a.m. - Worship.

FELLOWSHIP BAPTIST
210 W. Townley
fbc-bluffton.com
10 a.m. - Worship. 11
a.m. - Discipleship.

FIRST BAPTIST
202 W. Cherry St.
fbcbluffton.com
10:15 - Worship.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF OSSIANS
1001 Dehner Dr.
9:30 a.m. - Sunday
School. 10:30 a.m. - Wor-
ship. 6:30 - Service.

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST
909 W. Spring St.
FCCfamily.com
9:30 & 11 a.m. - Wor-
ship.

FIRST CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE
1515 Clark Ave.
blufftonnazarene.org
9 a.m. - Sunday School.
9-10 a.m. - Free ESL
classes. 10:15 - Worship.
6 p.m. - Service.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
215 E. Dustman Rd.
firstpcbuffton.org
9:30 a.m. - Children/
youth & Adult Sunday
School. 10:30 - Worship.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN (EVANGELICAL)
123 S. Jefferson St.,
Ossian
www.OssianChurch.com
10 a.m. - Worship.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST
325 W. Washington St.
9:30 a.m. - Worship.
10:45 - Sunday School.

FORGIVEN CHURCH
1409 S. Main St.
forgivenonline.org
9 a.m. - Worship.

Time to Take a Devotional Break



HE STILL HAS PLANS

Another graduation season has arrived, and older graduates look back and smile nostalgically, remembering their childish certainty of becoming a firefighter, ballerina, or nurse. Life has brought new dreams and goals, and oftentimes childhood memories disappear, whether through choice or unavoidable circumstances.

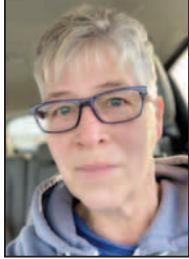
In Jeremiah 29, the prophet penned a letter to exiles facing life in a foreign land, captives who lived in hope that God would rescue them from the enslavement of a godless ruler. Their faith was challenged by unbelieving prophets and fortune-tellers who made wild promises that God's people would soon be rescued from the clutches of their captors. Jeremiah warned that the prophecies being made were not from God, instead telling the exiles to plan on remaining in their current situation for seventy years.

Jeremiah 29:4-7 encouraged the children of Israel to build homes, families, and communities of faith in the midst of captivity, knowing that God would come to their rescue in His appointed time. Jeremiah 29:11, often quoted without regard for

its background, brings attention to the fact that in spite of the difficulties faced in their current situation, God had a plan and would carry it to completion. Despite the trauma of bondage and displacement following the war, God had not forgotten the ones He loved.

Today's world often brings anxiety and uncertainty for those who seek to live according to the Word of God. Society refuses to recognize, let alone bow to, God's ultimate authority and rule, choosing instead to center cultural norms around their own version of truth. With no eternal standard of morality or veracity, "my truth" is as valid as "your truth", and chaos soon reigns.

Jeremiah's God is the same God of Daniel, Esther, Mary, Paul, and YOU. He continues to watch over His people, revealing Himself to those who earnestly seek Him. Your life's agenda may appear to be well thought out, seemingly written in stone, but God knows the end from the beginning. He knows you best because He created you and loves you dearly. Allow Him to bring you the brightest future possible as you seek His will.



by Martha Paxson

mpaxson99@yahoo.com



FIRST REFORMED CHURCH OF BLUFFTON
301 W. Cherry St.
9:15 a.m. - Sunday
School. 10:30 - Worship.

GRACE BAPTIST
1621 S. 350 E.
Stogdill Rd. Ext.
gbcbluffton.com
9 a.m. - Sunday School.
10 a.m. & 6 p.m. - Wor-
ship.

HARVEST TIME BIBLE
11015S-600E, Keystone
9:10 a.m. - Prayer. 10
a.m. - Worship.

HOPE MISSIONARY
429 E. Dustman Rd.
hope4thefamily.com
8 a.m., 9:30 & 11 a.m. -
Service at Main Campus.
9:30 & 11 a.m. - Service,
north campus, Ossian.

LANCASTER CHAPEL UNITED METHODIST
4510 E 400N, Craigville
9 a.m. - Sunday School.
9:40 - Fellowship. 10
a.m. - Worship.

LIBERTY CENTER BAPTIST
3071 W. Cherry St.
8:30 a.m. - Pastor/Dea-
con's Prayer. 9 - Sunday
School. 9:55 - Fellow-
ship. 10:15 - Worship.

LIBERTY CENTER COMMUNITY CHURCH
8:45 a.m. - Choir prac-
tice. 9 a.m. - Coffee,
donuts, conversation.
9:30 - Worship w/infant
nursery & children's
church. 10:45 - Sunday
School.

LIFE COMMUNITY
428 S. Oak St.
lifecommunity.net
10:30 a.m. - Service
(Children's programs
available).

KEYSTONE CHURCH
10556S-200W
9:30 a.m. - Worship.
10:30 - Sunday School.

LIVING FAITH MISSIONARY
17718 Bluffton Rd., Yoder
10 a.m. - Worship. 11:30
- Sunday School.

LIVING WATER UNITED CHURCH
6486 S 700E, Bluffton
8:45-9 a.m. - Prayer. 9
a.m. - Sunday School. 10
a.m. - Worship.

MARKLE CHAPEL HILL SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST
470 E. Morse St.
Saturday: 9:30 a.m. -
Worship. 10:45 - Sabbath
School (Bible study).

MARKLE CHURCH OF CHRIST
455 E. Morse St.
marklechurch.org
9 a.m. - Adult Bible
study groups. 10:30 -
Worship. Children's &
student programming
both hours.

MARKLE UNITED METHODIST
145 W. Morse St.
9 a.m. - Sunday Ser-
vice. 10 a.m. - Worship.

MCNATT UNITED METHODIST
9221 W 800S-90,
Montpelier
8:30 a.m. - Coffee fel-
lowship. 9:15 - Worship.

MURRAY MISSIONARY
1117 N. Washington St.,
Murray
murraymc.org
9:30 a.m. - Worship. 11
a.m. - Sunday School.

RIVER OF LIFE
927 N. Main St.
10:30 a.m. - Worship.

NEW BEGINNING
2187 W. SR 218
10 a.m. - Sunday
School. 10:30 - Worship.

NEW HOPE LUTHERAN
(Missouri Synod)
8824 N. SR 1, Ossian
newhopelutheran-ossian.
webs.com
9 a.m. - Sunday School
& Adult Bible study. 10
a.m. - Worship.

NOTTINGHAM
1100 S. SR 1
9:30 - Sunday School.
10:30 & 6 p.m. - Worship.

OSSIANS CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE
302 N. Metts St.
ossiannaz.org
9:15 a.m. - Bible study.
10:30 - Service.

OSSIANS UNITED METHODIST
201 W. Mill St.
ossiannumc.org
9 a.m. - Worship, Wor-
ship child care nurse. 10
a.m. - Fellowship. 10:15 -
Adult Sunday School.

PARK COMMUNITY
617 S. Bennett St.
blog.parkub.org
10 a.m. - Connection. 11
a.m. - Worship.

PETROLEUM COMMUNITY CHURCH
3625 E. 2nd St.
9 a.m. - Worship. 10:30
- Sunday School.

PONETO BAPTIST
Grape Street
8:30 a.m. - Sunday
School. 9 a.m. - Worship.

PONETO UNITED METHODIST
36 E. Walnut St.
9 a.m. - Worship. 10
a.m. - Fellowship. 10:15 -
Sunday School.

RIVER OF HOPE
1224 W. Central
11 a.m. - Worship & the
Word.

SIX MILE
4790 SE SR 116
9 a.m. - Sunday School.
10 a.m. - Worship.

SONLIGHT WESLEYAN
2350 S. SR 1
sonlightwesleyan.org
9:30 a.m. - Sunday
School. 10:30 - Worship.
Nursery & Children's
classes available during
Sunday School & Wor-
ship.

SOUTHERN WELLS COMMUNITY CHURCH
9450 S 300 W, Poneto
9 & 10:45 a.m. - Wor-
ship.

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC
1300 N. Main St.
Saturday: 7:45 a.m. -
Prayer. 8 a.m. - Mass.
8:30 - Rosary. 4 p.m. or
by appointment - Confes-
sions. 5 p.m. - Mass.
Sunday: 7:30 & 10 a.m.
- Mass.

ST. LUKE CHURCH
4960W-100N, Decatur
stlukechurch.in
9 a.m. - Worship. 10:15
- Sunday School.

ST. MARK EV. LUTHERAN
16933 Thiele Rd.
stmarkfw.org
8:45 a.m. - Sunday
School. 10 a.m. - Wor-
ship.

THE MEETING PLACE
115 E. Market St.
6:30 p.m. - Bible study.

TOWER LIFE CENTER
11811 N. Wayne St.,
Zanesville
towerlifecenter.com
9:30 a.m. - TLC Groups.
10:30 - Worship.

ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN (NALC)
5912 N. Sugar St.,
Uniondale
10 a.m. - Worship.
10:15 - Children's Sun-
day School.

TURNPOINTE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
500 W. Logan, Markle
turnpointechurch.com
9:30 a.m. - Fellowship.
10 a.m. - Adult & Chil-
dren's Worship.

UNIONDALE UNITED METHODIST
5867 N. Main St.
www.uniondaleumc.com
9 a.m. - Worship.

UNIONTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST
11419 N-200W, Ossian
9 a.m. - Sunday School.
10 a.m. - Worship.

VERA CRUZ FAMILY WORSHIP CENTER CCCU
2771 SE Mulberry St.,
Vera Cruz
9-10 a.m. - Sunday
School. 10-10:30 - Fel-
lowship. 10:30 - Worship.

WESTSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH
205 S. Adams St.,
Monroe
9 a.m. - Worship. 10:15
- Discipleship for adults &
children.

ZANESVILLE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF GOD
11984 N. Marzane Rd.
9 a.m. - Bible Class. 10
a.m. - Worship.

ZANESVILLE UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST
3092 W. Broadway
9 a.m. - Sunday School.
10 a.m. - Worship.

Bi-County Services
of Adams & Wells County
Supported Living • Waiver Services • Workshop
(260)824-1253

Goodwin-Cale & Harmish MEMORIAL CHAPEL
A Tradition of Caring
Locally Owned and Operated Since 1922
Douglas L. Cale & Mitchel P. Harmish
Owners
3220 St. Rd. 124 East, Bluffton • 824-3852

Les Gerber Insurance
AUTO • HOME • LIFE • BUSINESS
Perry Gerber
1120 N. Main St., Bluffton
260-824-1237

PIZZA KING
114 W. Water
824-4956
Dine In, Carry Out or We Will Deliver
"For The Times You Don't
Want to Leave Home."

Ford Family Ford of Bluffton
More Than
A Customer...
You're Family

Bluffton Dental Clinic
1417 Baker Place, Bluffton, IN
(260) 824-5940
Dr. Pamela J. Johnson
decaturdentalin.com

JOHN DEERE
TTG EQUIPMENT
5088 E. - 100 N. BLUFFTON (260)965-3659
4777 W. 500 N. HUNTINGTON (260)584-7958
983 N. St. Rd. 13 WABASH (260)585-1149
www.ttgequipment.com

AdamsWells
INTERNET TELECOM TV
260-565-3131
A Division of Craigville Telephone Company, Inc.

Les Gerber Insurance
AUTO • HOME • LIFE • BUSINESS
Perry Gerber
1120 N. Main St., Bluffton
260-824-1237

TO REPORT CHURCH NEWS:
• E-mail to churchnews@news-banner.com
• Drop information at 125 N. Johnson St. in Bluffton

PIZZA KING
of Bluffton, Indiana
114 W. Water
824-4956
Dine In, Carry Out or We Will Deliver
"For The Times You Don't
Want to Leave Home."

A most grateful graduate

(Continued from Page 1)

sponsive in an ICU bed, connected to two IVs and a ventilator, her skin pale from the blood loss and covered in cuts and bruises.

The scene was overwhelming. “I knew there was nothing I was going to be able to do, there was really nothing any doctor was going to be able to do, but if she was going to make it, it was going to be Him,” Sarah said. “God was going to save her.”

Saturday, March 11

In the ICU, doctors determined Kaylee had experienced several small strokes and a brain bleed. Kaylee’s carotid arteries, which provide blood flow to the brain, were also damaged.

Kaylee’s parents were invited into the hospital room after her condition stabilized, but they were again asked to leave when her blood pressure dropped dangerously low. While they were able to rejoin her later, it was incredibly apparent how touch-and-go her status was.

Sunday, March 12

Three days after the accident, there was a break in the clouds. Kaylee was being cared for by eight specialized doctors, and two signed off on her care. She was able to respond physically but was restrained to prevent her from interfering with her wounds or IVs.

The next 48 hours were critical, however. Doctors were unsure if Kaylee could recover from her brain’s swelling, which had not gone down.

Standing at this crossroads, Adam considered how to process these never-ending updates among overflowing support. At any given time, 10-30 people stood by in the waiting room with food, a change of clothes, or an ear to listen.

Sarah passed off her phone to a family member after being inundated with messages. It became apparent it wasn’t just the people in the waiting room who were praying for Kaylee, but a whole community.

In the late hours of the night, Adam posted the first of many updates about Kaylee’s journey on Caring Bridge.

“We have heard countless stories of unbelievable people coming together to pray for our daughter,” he wrote. “We can’t stop praying for this beautiful, young child.”

Monday, March 13 –

Friday, March 17

Kaylee continued to improve physically through the following days, but it was tenuous.

Although she opened her eyes on different occasions, she wasn’t awake. She couldn’t respond to directions, like squeezing Adam’s hand. Her physical responses were limited to pain, and the swelling in her brain remained. Kaylee was just an echo of who she had been.

Even so, Adam found glimmers of hope. After days of looking at his daughter with blood dried in mats of her hair, nurses bathed her and brushed her hair. “She has it braided now, which probably makes Kaylee very happy her hair is not a mess,” he wrote on March 13.

Another glimmer of hope followed when, on Wednesday, Kaylee wiggled her toes, lifted two fingers and opened her eyes — all at the instruction of her doctor. This small act showed her brain was recovering its motor functions.

One week was much longer than many of Kaylee’s doctors ever expected her to make it. Multiple nurses said they didn’t expect doctors to have to be there over the first weekend, let alone that Kaylee would pass through these milestones with flying colors.

“If you didn’t believe in miracles after yesterday, today, March 17, should be that day,” Adam wrote.

That morning, Kaylee breathed on her own and tried to talk. That night, she was sitting in bed, eating a cheeseburger, pizza, french fries, and crackers — all while looking through her phone.

Tuesday, March 21

Finally, Kaylee was cleared to move out of the ICU and into a regular hospital room. The same day, she stood up during physical therapy. In the following days, Kaylee was walking up and down the hallways of the hospital.

One of Kaylee’s primary doctors advocated for her transfer to the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab in Chicago, which the doctor believed was Kaylee’s best chance for recovery.

For the first time, the Heckbers began to consider Kaylee’s full recovery as a legitimate possibility, not just a hope.

Friday, March 24

Just as they began to envision a new future, there was a new devastating blow —

Kaylee’s health insurance did not approve the transfer. The insurance company told Adam that Kaylee would be better off going to a nursing home.

“At that point,” Adam paused. “No, we were not going to give up. We couldn’t accept that.”

They had planned to transport Kaylee on Friday. Instead, they waited in the hospital.

Kaylee then began throwing up without a clear cause. Doctors later discovered several abscesses on her small intestine. For Adam, it felt like being dragged backward as Kaylee received more medications, and a tube was stuck down her throat.

In a sudden and unexplainable change of heart, the ruling was reversed for Kaylee’s transfer to Shirley Ryan. Kaylee was going to receive the care she needed to be well again.

The same day, the Adams County Sheriff’s Office charged the driver, Christen Gerber, 41, of Bluffton, with two counts of causing serious bodily injury while driving intoxicated.

Until these breakthroughs, Sarah felt frozen in time as she processed everything happening to her baby and best friend. Heartbreak seemed to follow every hope.

Sarah didn’t understand how Adam could write updates online for everyone to read. She didn’t understand why strangers would care. She didn’t understand why God would allow something like this to happen.

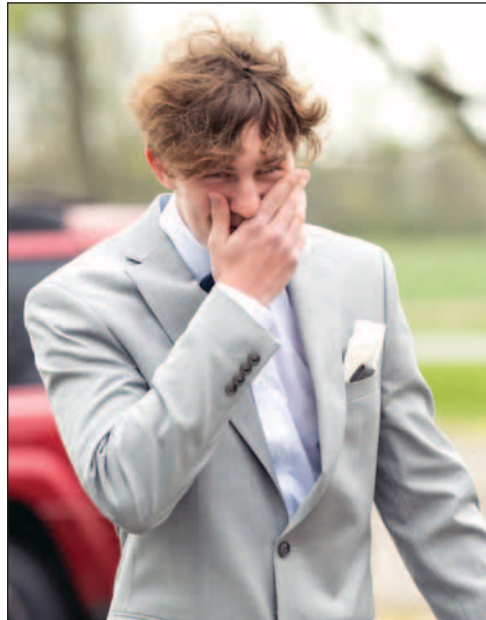
She was only confident in one thing — God is good.

“There is no doubt in my mind that this is a testimony of faith,” Sarah said.

In every step, they continuously prayed Isaiah 41:10 over Kaylee, which reads, “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

The community also continued to rally behind Kaylee. Adam and Sarah were both given the flexibility to be with Kaylee from their workplaces. Community members brought food, gave money to help with travel and health costs, and continually sent messages and prayers.

“(Hospital staff) said she ran the floor because she got a stack of mail every single day,” Sarah laughed. “And she loved it.”



Keaton Osmun reacts to seeing Kaylee Heckber dressed up for prom after eight weeks in the hospital.

Mail time became the best time.”

Later, Georgie Corle of Parlor City Trophy offered to print “Kaylee Strong” shirts at cost as a fundraiser. And, although there were mounting costs with Kaylee’s medical care, Sarah and Adam decided the shirts would be sold at cost. They wanted everyone to be able to show their support and participate in a physical reminder of the prayer still needed.

Tuesday, March 28

On the way to Shirley Ryan, Adam received another answer to prayer — a room had opened at the Ronald McDonald House, a charity that houses families of children receiving medical care. They were able to stay just down the road from Kaylee’s treatment.

Once there, Kaylee began more occupational therapy to restore both her body and brain. She was working on her speech, memory, coordination and more — all things that had been severely affected by the accident.

Kaylee was first challenged to walk for six minutes with pauses as needed. A few days later, she was working on hitting 25 minutes. Her obstacles were many and the work was hard, but Kaylee’s desire to return home to friends and family propelled her.



Above, Kaylee Heckber celebrates prom with photos with her parents, Sarah Heckber (left) and Adam Heckber (right), and the rest of their family (below). (Prom photos provided by Kristi Quintanilla)



Sunday visits from Osmun were often a great encouragement in this journey. Although her memory wasn’t its sharpest, she never forgot he was coming to visit her every week.

“Some days, we would have really somber days where she wouldn’t smile all day — especially back when she wasn’t speaking — but the entire time Keaton was there, she was smiling ear to ear,” Sarah said.

By April 3, the hospital set a target discharge date of April 25. And once again, her grit and motivation blew expectations out of the water.

Monday, April 17

“Not only is our baby recovering — He is still showing off!” Sarah wrote on Caring Bridge, referring to God’s providential care.

With Kaylee’s progress, doctors moved up her discharge to Friday, April 21. While it was an incredible encouragement, it was also brought about another sort of miracle.

“I turned to her and asked, ‘Do you know what this means?’” Sarah said. “You’re going to prom.”

Kaylee sat in shock for a moment before an even bigger smile spread on her face. “I’m going to prom.”

Norwell High School’s prom was scheduled for April 22 at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum in Fort Wayne. Kaylee would have just over 24 hours after returning home to make her debut to her peers.

The endeavor felt nearly impossible — prom would be physically and mentally exhausting, especially considering the crowd that would be present. On top of it all, Kaylee didn’t have a dress.

But in light of all the obstacles Kaylee had already overcome, that hardly seemed relevant. Kaylee was going to prom.

Kaylee embarked on the Magnificent Mile with her mom and her grandparents in tow. They combed through racks of dresses hoping to find the best dress within their budget, returning to Shirley Ryan every few hours for a new outside pass from the hospital. The frenzied shopping even brought a glance from a sales representative who asked Sarah, “Do you know these dresses are designer?”

“We knew after all we’d been through, we didn’t look like we should be shopping for dresses on the Magnificent Mile,” Sarah laughed.

Then, a glimmering navy dress caught their eyes. It was full-length with long sleeves and covered in dazzling sequins. It was everything Kaylee had wanted — and it was 70 percent off.

Friday, April 21

When the day came, they drove home in a daze. It seemed strange that their lives had changed so much in a flash. They had spent the last eight weeks driving between home and hospital, and they were finally bringing

Kaylee with them.

“I just couldn’t wait to sleep in my own bed,” Kaylee said with a grin.

Saturday, April 22

A flurry of excitement followed Kaylee’s arrival home.

Hearing Kaylee was going to prom, Amanda Ford of Bella Vita offered to do her hair, and Kristi Quintanilla offered to take photos. Another had given a gift card for dinner at Baker Street in Fort Wayne. Kaylee’s family even got dressed up to send her off.

“To see where she was at six weeks ago, then walking in was pretty amazing,” Adam said. “Definitely worth getting dressed up for.”

Now it was just time for the perfect date.

Osmun had stood by Kaylee’s side through the accident and her recovery in the hospital. He had doted on her and joked with her. And now, he could finally take her to prom.

Realistically, the two only stayed at prom for a short while. It had already been a long day, and it was odd to have been back among their classmates with so many eyes on them. Before Sarah could get back to the car, Kaylee texted her mom to come to pick the two of them up.

They ordered chicken nuggets and milkshakes at McDonald’s on the way home, and Sarah made up a bed on the floor for Keaton.

“Next thing you know they were both dead asleep — 9:45 p.m. on prom night,” Sarah said.

It was the perfect prom.

Today, June 3

The journey isn’t over for Kaylee. While she’s now home, there’s a long road ahead to rebuilding her strength, coordination and memory. There’s no guarantee she’ll bounce back perfectly, but every day, every step, and every memory is a triumph no one expected her to have when this all began.

“Doctors have told me there’s no medical explanation Kaylee’s alive,” Adam said.

The details of each moment came in a blur, but in hindsight, there seem to be a million miracles along the way.

The cold weather of that fated evening dangerously lowered Kaylee’s body temperature, but doctors later said it was the only thing that kept her brain from swelling further. While insurance delayed the transfer to Shirley Ryan, it also allowed doctors the time to identify life-threatening abscesses on her intestines. One of Kaylee’s doctors was supposed to transfer to another hospital but remained just long enough to ensure she was transferred for occupational therapy.

These moments and more brought Kaylee back home, to prom, to turning 18 years old, and to today.

“Not only did (God) put his hand on her, he showed off for her to heal,” Sarah said. “Not just to save her, but restore her.”

The next step on her journey, however, is much simpler. Just like any other NHS senior, Kaylee will be graduating high school.

The school froze Kaylee’s grades at the time she left, allowing her to graduate with her classmates. On Sunday, June 4, she’ll walk across the stage, closing this chapter and entering a new one.

And while she’s not physically and mentally ready to consider her post-graduate plans, Kaylee is seriously considering nursing school after getting to know the many kind, hardworking nurses who cared for her.

The gravity of Kaylee’s situation doesn’t always register with her, but the kindness that medical staff, family, friends, community members and strangers have shown her weighs heavy. Although the attention is somewhat uncomfortable — as any normal teenager would feel — she also recognizes it comes with compassion, love and answered prayers.

After all, Kaylee didn’t fight alone in the hospital, and she isn’t celebrating her victories alone either.

holly@news-banner.com



At right, Kaylee Heckber poses in downtown Chicago during one of her outside visits allowed by the Shirley Ryan Rehabilitation.

Keaton Osmun visited Kaylee Heckber every Sunday while she was at Shirley Ryan Rehabilitation in Chicago. Above, they’re picture with a blanket printed with “Kaylee Strong” and Joshua 1:9.



Rescuers at site of Iowa building collapse move on to recovery

By **SCOTT McFETRIDGE** and **HANNAH FINGERHUT**

Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — An Iowa task force has completed its search for survivors at the site of a partially collapsed Davenport apartment building without finding three missing people who are feared dead, authorities said Friday. The focus has shifted to shoring up the structure so recovery efforts can begin.

The remains of the six-story apartment building were constantly in motion in the first 24 to 36 hours after it collapsed on Sunday, which officials said posed a risk to rescuers who were trying to search for survivors.

“We do what the building tells us to do,” Rick Halleran, the task force’s Cedar Rapids division chief, said of the delay in searching the building.

City officials earlier this week said that Branden Colvin, 42; Ryan Hitchcock, 51; and Daniel Prien, 60, were unaccounted for and had “high probability of being home at the time of the collapse.” All three have since been listed in the National Database of Missing Persons.

The state task force was mobilized and on site to first search for survivors and then secure the structure, Halleran said. He said the search for survivors was completed Thursday evening after electrical equipment connected to the building was controlled. The state’s search and rescue

team, search dogs and cameras were used in the search Thursday.

Officials fear the unstable building will eventually collapse on its own. Adding to the challenge is a giant pile of brick and steel at the base of the building that is helping to hold up the structure but also may contain the remains of people killed in the collapse.

“We are doing the best we can to balance the building conditions and the safety of our responders,” Fire Chief Mike Carlsten said. Conditions have forced a response that may take “days and weeks” instead of what ideally would have been minutes or hours after the collapse, he said.

Mayor Mike Matson said the debris pile “could be a place of rest for some of the unaccounted” and stressed the city would be sensitive about those remains, comparing work at the site to an archeological dig.

Work to bring down the building comes amid questions about why neither the owner nor city officials warned residents about potential danger even after a structural engineer’s report issued last week indicated a wall of the century-old building was at imminent risk of crumbling.

Documents released Wednesday night show city officials and the building’s owner were warned for months that parts of the building were unstable.

Current and former residents speaking with The Associated Press described concerns about interior

cracks on the wall that ultimately collapsed that were reported to building management.

The day before the collapse, the operations director of Downtown Davenport Partnership, an organization affiliated with the city’s chamber of commerce, called 911 to report concerns that a local contractor had relayed, the Quad City Times reported. The newspaper reported that fire officials who responded to the emergency call spent less than five minutes at the scene.

Scott County prosecutor Kelly Cunningham cautioned Friday against assuming a criminal prosecution is appropriate, saying an independent investigation needs to be conducted into the cause of the building’s structural failure, and right now it’s in the city’s jurisdiction.

The building collapsed shortly before 5 p.m. Sunday. Rescue crews pulled seven people from the building in their initial response and escorted out 12 others who could walk on their own. Later, two more people were rescued, including a woman who was removed from the fourth floor hours after authorities said they were going to begin setting up for demolition.

Davenport Police Chief Jeff Bladel said transient people also often entered the building but there was no indication anyone else was inside and missing. Asked at a news conference Friday if any human remains have been found in the building, Matson said, “We can’t disclose that yet.”

Davenport mayor says he has ‘regrets’ after partial collapse of Iowa building

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — A structural engineer’s report issued last week indicated a wall of a century-old apartment building in Iowa was at imminent risk of crumbling, yet neither the owner nor city officials warned residents of the danger days before the building partially collapsed, leaving three people missing and feared dead.

The revelation is the latest flashpoint after Sunday’s partial collapse of the building in Davenport, where residents have lashed out at city leaders over what they see as an inept response.

“Do I have regrets about this tragedy and about people potentially losing their lives? Hell yeah. Do I think about this every moment? Hell yeah.” Mayor Mike Matson said Thursday. “I have regrets about a lot of things. Believe me, we’re going to look at that.”

City officials said Thursday that they did not order an evacuation because they relied on the engineer’s assurances that the building remained safe.

The state’s search and rescue team, search dogs and cameras were used Thursday to continue combing the building for missing people. Matson said crews were also consulting with experts about how to safely bring down the structure, which remains extremely unstable, while being respectful of bodies that could be buried in the debris.

The six-story building collapsed shortly before 5 p.m. Sunday. Rescue crews pulled seven people from the building in their initial response and escorted out 12 others who could walk on their own. Later, two more people were rescued, including a woman who was removed from the fourth floor hours after authorities said they were going to begin setting up for demolition.

Earlier this week, authorities said five people were missing, but Davenport Police Chief Jeff Bladel said during a media briefing Thursday that two of them have since been accounted for and are safe.

City officials named those unaccounted for as Branden Colvin, Ryan Hitchcock and Daniel Prien. The city said all three “have high probability of being home at the time of the collapse and their apartments were located in the collapse zone.”

Bladel said transient people also often enter the building but there is no indication anyone else was inside and missing.

People living in the building will be eligible for \$6,000 payments from the city and those meeting certain income requirements could get state payments of \$5,000. Businesses near the collapsed building will also be eligible to receive payments.

The Red Cross is hosting an event Saturday for displaced residents to get assistance. Each household will be eligible for a \$6,000 grant from the city, and those meeting certain income requirements could get state payments of \$5,000. Businesses that were in the building, as well as residents and businesses in nearby buildings that are at risk, will also be eligible for grants.

Trump’s lawyers ask judge to exit criminal case, cite political bias

By **MICHAEL R. SISAK**

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Within hours of his historic arraignment this spring, Donald Trump fixed his ire on the judge, complaining that he’s “a Trump-hating judge” with a family full of “Trump haters.”

On Friday, the former president’s lawyers doubled down on that criticism, demanding Judge Juan Manuel Merchan step aside from his New York City criminal case because of what they say is anti-Trump bias and a conflict of interest arising from his daughter’s work for some of Trump’s Democratic rivals.

Trump’s lawyers allege that Merchan, a respected jurist in Manhattan’s criminal court, tipped the scales in two other Trump-related cases by involving himself in plea negotiations for Trump’s longtime finance chief and requiring him to testify against Trump’s company in exchange for a five-month jail sentence.

Trump’s lawyers, Susan Necheles and Todd Blanche, also asked Merchan to explain three political donations totaling \$35 that were

made to Democratic causes in his name during the 2020 election cycle.

In the New York case, Trump pleaded not guilty to 34 felony counts of falsifying business records. The charges relate to hush-money payments made during the 2016 campaign to bury allegations that Trump had extramarital sexual encounters. He has denied wrongdoing.

Merchan did not respond to inquiries from The Associated Press asking him to confirm or deny if he’s the person who made the donations, which include \$15 for President Joe Biden’s campaign against Trump, according to federal campaign finance records. Such contributions are typically prohibited under court rules.

The former president’s criminal case is “historic and it is important that the People of the State of New York and this nation have confidence that the jurist who presides over it is impartial,” Trump’s lawyers wrote in what’s known as a motion for recusal.

The decision on recusal is up to Merchan himself, who previously rejected such a request when

Trump’s company was on trial. Trump’s lawyers could be also making a play to raise the issue on appeal if he’s convicted. Along with their motion, Trump’s lawyers submitted 42 pages of what that say is evidence of Merchan’s political bias.

The hush-money case is continuing in state court while Trump’s lawyers seek to transfer it to federal court, which would also remove Merchan from the judicial equation. A federal judge has scheduled a June 27 hearing on that request.

A message seeking comment was left with Merchan. A spokesperson for New York’s state court system, Lucian Chalfen, said that since the case is pending in front of the judge, “it would be inappropriate for any further comment.”

Merchan has appeared respectful and exceedingly accommodating in his limited interactions with Trump and has refused to issue a gag order, even as the ex-president continued to pillory him, District Attorney Alvin Bragg and others involved the case. At a recent hearing, Merchan said he was “bending over backwards” to make sure

he wasn’t limiting Trump from having “every opportunity possible to advance his candidacy.”

Trump’s recusal motion expands on the criticism he’s lobbed at Merchan and his family in statements and on his Truth Social platform.

Merchan’s daughter, Loren, is a political consultant whose firm has worked on campaigns for prominent Democrats including Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris, House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries and California Gov. Gavin Newsom.

Trump, the leading contender for the Republican nomination in 2024, could face Biden again as he seeks a return to the White House. He and his allies have seized on Merchan’s political ties in portraying his prosecution as part of a Democrat-led “witch hunt.”

“I have a Trump-hating judge with a Trump-hating wife and family whose daughter worked for Kamala Harris,” Trump said in a speech at his Mar-a-Lago estate, hours after his April 4 arraignment.

Among Trump’s other criticisms, he’s claimed Merchan “railroaded” ex-Trump Organiza-

tion CFO Allen Weisselberg into a guilty plea last summer and acted “viciously” in presiding over the company’s trial, which ended in a tax fraud conviction last December.

Merchan was heavily involved in negotiations that led to Weisselberg’s plea to charges he skirted taxes on perks including a Manhattan apartment and luxury cars. Merchan said he wished he could impose a tougher penalty after hearing Weisselberg testify, particularly when he spoke about his wife getting \$6,000 for a no-show job to qualify for Social Security benefits while her husband raked in big money.

Those cases were preludes to Trump’s historic indictment.

Trump’s case ended up in Merchan’s courtroom because of a rotation in which judges assigned to oversee grand juries handle any cases that arise from them, according to the court system. Merchan also often handles financial cases and runs Manhattan’s mental health court, where some defendants get a chance to resolve their cases with treatment and supervision.

Utah district bans Bible in elementary and middle schools

By **SAM METZ**

Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — The Good Book is being treated like a bad book in Utah after a parent frustrated by efforts to ban materials from schools convinced a suburban district that some Bible verses were too vulgar or violent for younger children.

And the Book of Mormon could be next.

The 72,000-student Davis School District north of Salt Lake City removed the Bible from its elementary and middle schools while keeping it in high schools after a committee reviewed the scripture in response to a parental complaint. The district has removed other titles, including Sherman Alexie’s “The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian” and John Green’s “Looking for Alaska,” following a 2022 state law requiring districts to include parents in decisions over what constitutes “sensitive material.”

On Friday, a complaint was submitted about the signature scripture of the predominant faith in Utah, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, widely known as the Mormon church. District spokes-

person Chris Williams confirmed that someone filed a review request for the Book of Mormon but would not say what reasons were listed. Citing a school board privacy policy, he also would not say whether it was from the same person who complained about the Bible.

Representatives for the church declined to comment on the challenge. Members of the faith also read the Bible.

Williams said the district doesn’t differentiate between requests to review books and doesn’t consider whether complaints may be submitted as satire. The reviews are handled by a committee made up of teachers, parents and administrators in the largely conservative community.

The committee published its decision about the Bible in an online database of review requests and did not elaborate on its reasoning or which passages it found overly violent or vulgar.

The decision comes as conservative parent activists, including state-based chapters of the group Parents United, descend on school boards and statehouses throughout the United States, sowing alarm

about how sex and violence are talked about in schools.

Because of the district’s privacy policy, it’s unknown who made the request for the Bible to be banned from Davis schools or if they are affiliated with any larger group.

A copy of the complaint obtained by The Salt Lake Tribune through a public records request shows that the parent noted the Bible contains instances of incest, prostitution and rape. The complaint derided a “bad faith process” and said the district was “ceding our children’s education, First Amendment Rights, and library access” to Parents United.

“Utah Parents United left off one of the most sex-ridden books around: The Bible,” the parent’s complaint, dated Dec. 11, said. It later went on to add, “You’ll no doubt find that the Bible (under state law) has ‘no serious values for minors’ because it’s pornographic by our new definition.”

The review committee determined the Bible didn’t qualify under Utah’s definition of what’s pornographic or indecent, which is why it remains in high schools, Williams said. The committee can make its own deci-

sions under the new 2022 state law and has applied different standards based on students’ ages in response to multiple challenges, he said.

An unnamed party filed an appeal on Wednesday.

The Bible has long found itself on the American Library Association’s list of most challenged books and was temporarily pulled off shelves last year in school districts in Texas and Missouri.

Concerns about new policies potentially ensnaring the Bible have routinely arisen in statehouses during debates over efforts to expand book banning procedures. That includes Arkansas — one of the states that enacted a law this year that would subject librarians to criminal penalties for providing “harmful” materials to minors, and creates a new process for the public to request materials be relocated in libraries.

“I don’t want people to be able to say, ‘I don’t want the Bible in the library,’” Arkansas Democratic state Sen. Linda Chesterfield said during a hearing.

Parents who have pushed for more say in their children’s education and the curriculum and materials available in schools have

argued that they should control how their children are taught about matters like gender, sexuality and race.

EveryLibrary, a national political action committee, told The Associated Press last month it was tracking at least 121 different proposals introduced in legislatures this year targeting libraries, librarians, educators and access to materials. The number of attempts to ban or restrict books

across the U.S. in 2022 was the highest in the 20 years, according to the American Library Association.

“If folks are outraged about the Bible being banned, they should be outraged about all the books that are being censored in our public schools,” said Kasey Meehan, who directs the Freedom to Read program at the writers’ organization PEN America.



Your property taxes.
The roads you travel.
Our local water supply.
School finance.

No one covers the news that affects your life like your community newspaper.

your community. your newspaper.

News-Banner

We're *your* newspaper.

U.S. Defense Secretary Austin: Washington won't stand for 'coercion, bullying' from China

By DAVID RISING
Associated Press

SINGAPORE (AP) — American Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin vowed Saturday that Washington would not stand for any "coercion and bullying" of its allies and partners by China, while assuring Beijing that the United States remains committed to maintaining the status quo on Taiwan and would prefer dialogue over conflict.

Speaking at the so-called Shangri-La Dialogue, an annual forum bringing together top defense officials, diplomats and leaders, Austin lobbied for support for Washington's vision of a "free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific within a world of rules and rights" as the best course to counter increasing Chinese assertiveness in the region.

The U.S. has been expanding its own activities around the Indo-Pacific to counter sweeping territorial claims from China, including regularly sailing through and flying over the Taiwan Strait and in the South China Sea.

"We are committed to ensuring that every country can fly, sail and operate wherever international law allows," he said. "And every country, large or small, must remain free to conduct lawful maritime activities."

Austin noted that the U.S. had provided millions of doses of the COVID-19 vaccine during the height of the pandemic and is regularly involved in disaster relief and humanitarian assistance efforts in the region. He said

it is working to combat climate change, illegal fishing and ensure that supply chains do not suffer disruptions — ticking off many issues of importance to Asian-Pacific nations.

"We're doubling down on our alliances and partnerships," he said.

He said the U.S. is also committed to deterring North Korea's missile threat and China's claims on Taiwan, a self-governing island democracy that Beijing says is its territory, and said Washington has been stepping up defense planning, coordination and training with partner nations in the region.

"To be clear, we do not seek conflict or confrontation," he said. "But we will not flinch in the face of bullying or coercion."

Austin assured that the U.S. remained "deeply committed" to the longstanding one-China policy, which recognizes Beijing as the government of China but allows informal relations with Taiwan, and continues to "categorically oppose unilateral changes to the status quo from either side."

He added that Russia's invasion of Ukraine had served to underline how dangerous the world would be if big countries were able to "just invade their peaceful neighbors with impunity."

"Conflict is neither imminent nor inevitable," Austin said. "Deterrence is strong today — and it's our job to keep it that way. The whole world has a stake in maintaining peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait."

China's new defense minister, Gen. Li Shangfu, declined Austin's invitation to talk on the sidelines of the conference, though the two did shake hands before sitting down at opposite sides of the same table together as the forum opened Friday.

Austin said this was not enough.

"A cordial handshake over dinner is no substitute for a substantive engagement," he said.

Li, who was named defense minister in March, is under American sanctions that are part of a broad package of measures against Russia — but predate its invasion of Ukraine — that were imposed in 2018 over Li's involvement in China's purchase of combat aircraft and anti-aircraft missiles from Moscow.

The sanctions, which broadly prevent Li from doing business in the United States, do not prevent him from holding official talks, American defense officials have said.

It was not clear whether Li, who is to address the forum Sunday morning, was in the room while Austin talked.

Austin reiterated calls that Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese made in his opening address at the forum for China to engage in regular, direct communications to help prevent any possible conflict.

"For responsible defense leaders, the right time to talk is anytime," Austin said. "The right time to talk is every time. And the right time to talk is now."

Restoration lags for Syria's Roman ruins at Palmyra, and other war-battered historic sites

By ABBY SEWELL
and ALBERT AJI
Associated Press

PALMYRA, Syria (AP) — At the height of the Islamic State group's rampage across Syria, the world watched in horror as the militants blew up an iconic arch and temple in the country's famed Roman ruins in Palmyra.

Eight years later, IS has lost its hold but restoration work on the site has been held up by security issues, leftover IS land mines and lack of funding.

Other archaeological sites throughout Syria face similar problems, both in areas held by the government and by the opposition. They were damaged by the war or, more recently, by the deadly 7.8-magnitude earthquake that struck a wide area of neighboring Turkey and also Syria in February.

Youssef Kanjou, a former director of Syria's Aleppo National Museum, said the situation of heritage sites in his country is a "disaster."

Without a coordinated preservation and restoration effort, said Kanjou, now a researcher at Tübingen University in Germany, "We will lose what was not destroyed by the war or the earthquake."

Before the war, Palmyra — one of Syria's six UNESCO world heritage sites — was the country's archaeological crown jewel, a tourist attraction that drew tens of thousands of visitors each year. The ancient city was the capital of an Arab client state of the Roman Empire that briefly rebelled and carved out its own kingdom in the third century, led by Queen Zenobia.

In more recent times, the area had darker associations. It was home to the Tadmur prison, where thousands of opponents of the Assad family's rule in Syria were reportedly tortured. IS demolished the prison after capturing the town.

The militants later destroyed Palmyra's historic temples of Bel and Baalshamin and the Arch of

Triumph, viewing them as monuments to idolatry, and beheaded an elderly antiquities scholar who had dedicated his life to overseeing the ruins.

Today, the road through the desert from Homs to Palmyra is dotted with Syrian army checkpoints. In the town adjacent to the ancient site, some shops have reopened, but signs of war remain in the form of charred vehicles and burned-out or boarded-up stores and houses.

The Palmyra Museum is closed, and the much-loved lion statue that used to stand in front of it has been moved to Damascus for restoration and safekeeping.

Nevertheless, Syrian and foreign tourists have begun to trickle back.

"We thought it was impossible that foreigners would return to Palmyra," said Qais Fathallah, who used to run a hotel there but fled to Homs when IS took over. Now he is back in Palmyra, operating a restaurant, where he said he serves tourists regularly.

On a recent day, a group of tourists from countries including the United Kingdom, Canada and China, and another, with Syrian university students, were wandering through the ruins.

Some of the Syrian tourists had visited in better days. For communication engineering student Fares Mardini, it was the first time.

"Now I've finally come, and I see so much destruction. It's something really upsetting," he said. "I hope it can be restored and return to what it was."

In 2019, international experts convened by UNESCO, the United Nations' cultural agency, said detailed studies would need to be done before starting major restorations.

Younna Tabet, program specialist at the Arab states unit of UNESCO's World Heritage Center, said restoration work often involves difficult choices, particularly if there isn't enough origi-

nal material for rebuilding.

"Is it worth it to rebuild it with very little authenticity or should we rather focus on having 3D documentation of how it was?" she said.

Missions to the site were held up at first by security issues, including land mines that had to be cleared. IS cells still occasionally carry out attacks in the area.

Money is also a problem.

"There is a big lack of funding so far, for all the sites in Syria," Tabet said, noting that international donors have been wary of breaching sanctions on Syria, which have been imposed by the United States, the European Union and others.

U.S. sanctions exempt activities related to preservation and protection of cultural heritage sites, but sanctions-related obstacles remain, such as a ban on exporting U.S.-made items to Syria.

Russia, an ally of Syrian President Bashar Assad's government, has begun restoring Palmyra's triumphal arch, the largest-scale project underway to date at the site.

"We have some funding from some friends in some places, but it is not sufficient in relation to the disaster that occurred," said Mohammad Nazir Awad, director general of Syria's department of Antiquities and Museums.

It doesn't have to be this way, said Maamoun Abdulkarim, who headed the antiquities department at the time of the IS incursion. Abdulkarim pointed to the international push to recover damaged heritage sites in the city of Mosul in neighboring Iraq, also controlled by the militants for some time, as an example of a successful restoration.

"We need to make some separation between political affairs and cultural heritage affairs," said Abdulkarim, now a professor at the University of Sharjah. He warned that damaged structures are in danger of deteriorating further or collapsing as the rehabilitation work is delayed.

Helping you
GROW YOUR SAVINGS



4.50%
APY

11-MONTH
Certificate of
Deposit (CD)

1st Source Bank

1stsource.com/cd
Member FDIC

Limited time only, rates subject to change. The APY is effective as of 5/3/2023. A \$500 minimum deposit is required. The maximum deposit is \$5 million. Offer good for consumer deposits only. Annual Percentage Yield (APY) assumes that funds remain on deposit and the interest is compounded at maturity. Substantial penalty for early withdrawal. Upon renewal, then-current rates apply. Offer cannot be combined with any other promotion, bonus rate, or coupon.



Bluffton's Keegan Schwartz takes a swing during the sectional at Timber Ridge Golf Course. The Tigers' No. 1 golfer shot a 70, punching his ticket to the regional meet next Thursday at The Players Club hosted by Muncie Central. The match will begin at 8 a.m. (Photos by Ryan Walker)



Norwell's Derek Smith makes a putt during the sectional, scoring an 83 for the day and helping the Knights place third to qualify for the regional meet next Thursday.



Southern Wells Chandler Oswald drove on the final hole of the day with his team-best score of 89. The team finished with a total of 381.

Norwell team, BHS individual earn regional berth

By RYAN WALKER

The Norwell boys' golf team narrowly edged out Bluffton at the sectional meet, taking third place and the final spot in the regional next week.

The Knights shot a 335, enough to beat out the Tigers by three strokes. Bluffton ended with a 338.

Perhaps nobody was happier after a hot and sunny 18 holes than Norwell's first-year head coach Daniel Schmidt.

"I am immensely proud of our team for accomplishing a goal that we have been striving towards all season," he said after the meet. "We're all very excited to play another week and to get the chance to continue representing Norwell."

Norwell and Bluffton have

been neck and neck this season. At the Bi-County meet at the beginning of May, the Knights outduelled the Tigers. But in the most recent outing, May 25 at Timber Ridge, the Tigers won the match by nine strokes in nine holes.

Considering that match wasn't too long ago, and the Tigers just missed the cut, there was some disappointment.

"There is definitely a little disappointment not making it out of sectionals," Bluffton head coach Steve Abbett said. "We knew we had a chance, but we obviously fell short. However, I'm extremely proud of our boys and the season that we had."

Bluffton didn't leave the season without some accomplishments of

its own.

Keegan Schwartz shot a 70 at the sectional, good for second-best out of all golfers, qualifying for the regional meet as an individual.

"I'm very proud of Keegan and his career here at Bluffton," Abbett said. "This is his third year in a row getting out of sectionals — his freshman year was COVID. His 70 at sectionals this year was a great way to end his run at this tournament. I'm excited to see what he can do at regionals. He has been right there each year, so I'm hoping this is the year he breaks through."

The Tigers also won the ACAC meet this season.

Southern Wells finished eighth at the meet with a score of 381.

Head coach Ross Palmer was hoping his team would dip right below the 400 final team score line, and the team eclipsed that and much better.

Part of that reason was the trio of Chandler Oswald, Quinton Mullins, and Gabe McElhaney shooting under 100 for the Raiders.

Oswald and Mullins notably were newcomers to the team this season.

Norwell and Schwartz will start their quest at regionals at The Players Club at Woodland Trails in Muncie starting at 8 a.m. Thursday, June 8.

Final team results

First Eastbrook (315), second Belmont (326), third Norwell (335), fourth Bluffton (338), fifth South Adams (342), sixth Oak

Hill (349), seventh Adams Central (370), eighth Southern Wells (381), ninth Mississinewa (404), Blackford 10th (405), Madison-Grant 11th (421).

Individual results:

Norwell

Derek Smith (82), Ashton Feder-spiel (83), Chase Hulvey (85), Ethan Ottinger (85), Cooper Sloan (89).

Bluffton

Keegan Schwartz (70), Kade Abbett (87), Connor Klopfenstein (90), Ephraim Frauhiger (91), Declan Grieser (93).

Southern Wells

Chandler Oswald (89), Quinton Mullins (92), Gabe McElhaney (98), Tristen Worster (102), Bailey Couch (116).

sports@news-banner.com

Clevinger, 4 relievers combine for shutout as White Sox beat Tigers

By ANDREW SELIGMAN
AP Sports Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — Mike Clevinger and four relievers combined on Chicago's fourth shutout, Tim Anderson scored a run and drove in one, and the Chicago White Sox beat the Detroit Tigers 3-0 on Friday.

Clevinger pitched three-hit ball over five innings in first start since May 17. He struck out six and walked one after being sidelined because of inflammation in his right wrist.

Keynan Middleton (1-0), Reynaldo López and Joe Kelly each gave up a hit while working a scoreless inning. Kendall Graveman retired all three batters in the ninth for his fifth save and the White Sox came away with the win after losing four of five.

Detroit, which won three of four at home against Chicago last weekend, went 0 for 9 with runners in scor-

ing position and stranded nine while spoiling a solid start by Reese Olson (0-1) in his major league debut. The 23-year-old right-hander didn't allow a hit until the sixth inning, when he gave up two runs. He struck out six and walked one.

The White Sox's first hits came when Romy Gonzalez and Anderson chased Olson with back-to-back singles to start a two-run sixth. Andrew Benintendi drove in the first run when he greeted Will Vest with a single, and Eloy Jiménez added an RBI single, extending his hitting streak to 13 games.

The White Sox got another run in the seventh, when Anderson drove in Jake Burger with a double to left against Mason Englert.

The Tigers had runners on first and second with none out in the eighth after Joe Kelly walked Akil Baddoo

and Javier Báez singled, only to come away empty-handed when Eric Haase grounded to the pitcher.

TRAINER'S ROOM

Tigers: RHP Alex Faedo (right middle fingernail soreness) had his scheduled start pushed back to Tuesday. LHP Matthew Boyd will start Sunday in his place, manager A.J. Hinch said. ... The Tigers now list OF Riley Greene's injury as a stress reaction in his left fibula after previously describing it as a stress fracture.

White Sox: Besides getting Clevinger back from the 15-day injured list, the White Sox reinstated INF Elvis Andrus from the 10-day IL.

UP NEXT

The weekend series continues with RHP Michael Lorenzen (2-2, 3.50 ERA) starting for Detroit and RHP Dylan Cease (3-3, 4.88) getting the ball for Chicago.

Detroit Pistons agree to deal with Suns former head coach Monty Williams

By LARRY LAGE
AP Sports Writer

DETROIT (AP) — Monty Williams is taking over the Detroit Pistons.

The team said Friday it reached an agreement with Williams to fill its coaching vacancy. Terms of the deal were not announced, but a person familiar with the situation told the AP on Wednesday night it was a six-year contract.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the move had not been announced at the time.

"After spending some time with Monty, it's clear that he's found a unique balance between achieving victory at the highest level while at the same time nurturing a culture of growth, development and inspiration," Pistons owner Tom Gores said. "I'm beyond excited. This is a huge win for us."

The 51-year-old Williams was fired by Phoenix on May 13, two years after

reaching the NBA Finals and a year after he won the league's coach of the year honors.

Williams won 63% of his games over four regular seasons with the Suns, but they were eliminated in the Western Conference semifinals two years in a row after losing to Milwaukee in the 2021 NBA Finals.

Williams will be formally introduced at a news conference in Detroit next week. He said he made the decision to sign on with the Pistons after a series of conversations with Gores, general manager Troy Weaver and other Pistons executives.

"A week ago, I was not sure what the future would hold," Williams said in the team's release. "But, after talking with Tom and Troy, I was excited hearing their vision for the Pistons going forward. They had a thoughtful plan and I am so appreciative of the emphasis they placed on the personal side of this business. They

showed tremendous consideration for me and my family throughout this process."

Detroit won an NBA-low 17 games last season, and Dwane Casey stepped down as coach with one year left on his contract to take a role in the front office.

The Pistons did not have good fortune in the draft lottery, landing the No. 5 pick overall for the second straight year and missing out on an opportunity to draft 7-foot-3 French pro Victor Wembanyama, 19, who is expected to be the first overall pick of the San Antonio Spurs.

Detroit, a three-time NBA champion, has earned a spot in the playoffs just twice in 14 years. The Pistons have not won a post-season game since 2008, when they advanced to the Eastern Conference finals for the sixth straight time during a remarkable run that included winning the 2004 NBA title and falling a game short of repeating as

champions.

Jaden Ivey and Jalen Duren, the No. 5 and No. 13 pick overall last summer, did provide hope for the future with their play last season. Cade Cunningham, the No. 1 pick overall in 2021, had his second season cut short by shin surgery.

Williams is 367-336 in nine seasons as an NBA head coach with a 29-27 postseason record. He had a five-year stint with the New Orleans Pelicans, who fired him in 2015 with a 173-221 record and two playoff appearances.

"Monty represented the ideal prototype for our young team, but we didn't expect him to be available," Weaver said in the release. "When he suddenly became available, we jumped at the opportunity to speak with him. That doesn't mean the others in our process were not strong candidates. They were. But Monty is the prototype."

ACAC releases its honors for softball

The Allen County Athletic Conference released its all-conference awards for the softball season.

Bluffton and Southern Wells each had one player represented on the second team.

Lily King for the Tigers made it as an infielder, hitting for a .447 batting average, hit her first career home run and hit two more after, drove in 17 runs, hit for a 1.236 on-base plus slugging percentage, and only tallied four errors as a pitcher and infielder.

Jadyn Yencer for the Raiders was honored as an at-large selection. The senior played in the outfield and was a speeder, stealing a team-high 22 bases and was second in the conference. She hit .371, scored a team-best 22 runs, and drove in 10 runs, along with a perfect fielding percentage.

The conference champion, Woodlan (5-1 ACAC), had the most selections with five players.

3 athletes compete at track state meet

Wells County was represented by three local athletes at Friday's boys' track and field state meet Friday night at Indiana University, Bloomington.

Norwell's Trevon Stoppenhagen, Winston Frauhiger, and Jake Parker competed in four separate events.

Below are the results.

• Frauhiger finished 21st in the high jump with a height of 6-2.

• Stoppenhagen finished 28th in the 100m dash trials with a time of 11.17 and 28th in the 200m dash trials with a time of 22.87. The junior did not make it to the finals in either event.

• Jake Parker was disqualified in the 110m hurdles due to hitting the hurdle with his hand, according to the alphasite website.

Bluffton's Lauren Reiff will compete in the girls' discus starting at 3 p.m. Saturday, June 3.

High School Calendar

SATURDAY, JUNE 3

BASEBALL: (regional championship) Norwell vs. New Castle at Oak Hill High School, 1 p.m.

TRACK & FIELD (girls): (state meet): Bluffton at Indiana University, 3 p.m.

MONDAY, JUNE 4

No events scheduled.

TUESDAY, JUNE 5

No events scheduled.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6

No events scheduled.

THURSDAY, JUNE 7

No events scheduled.

FRIDAY, JUNE 8

No events scheduled.

Tackling my catfish trauma

Dear Annie: When I was 12 or 13 years old, I had a pen pal in a different state. I'll call him "Casey."

a scenario where you express to "Casey" the trauma and pain her deception caused, and you get some answers and a heartfelt, long overdue apology in return.

I knew all about Casey's parents and siblings, as he did mine. The correspondence went on for about four years. For me, it was a strong case of puppy love.

But I want you to be prepared for the other potential outcomes. It's possible that she'll deflect her wrongdoing, dig her heels in and you walk away more frustrated and upset as a result — or with nothing at all.

Several years went by, and I happened to travel to Casey's state. I thought I'd give his brother a phone call that wouldn't incur long-distance charges.

Ultimately, the only person who knows what's the right choice is you. It may be your chance to finally release the hold this event has had over you and fully heal, but do proceed with caution.

I am now 70 years old, been happily married for 48 years, and learned that "Casey" lives within an hour's drive of my home.

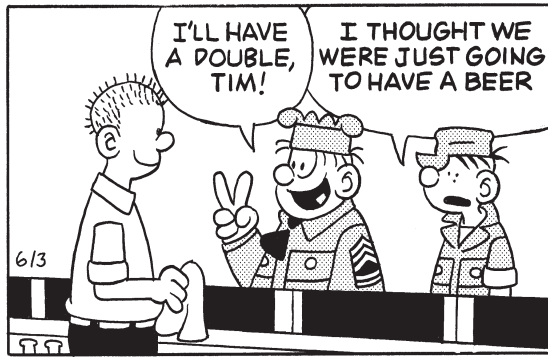
"How Can I Forgive My Cheating Partner?" is out now! Annie Lane's second anthology — featuring favorite columns on marriage, infidelity, communication and reconciliation — is available as a paperback and e-book.

Dear Catfished: Before you decide, think long, hard and honestly about the expectations you have for a confrontation. What are you hoping to get out of it? There's

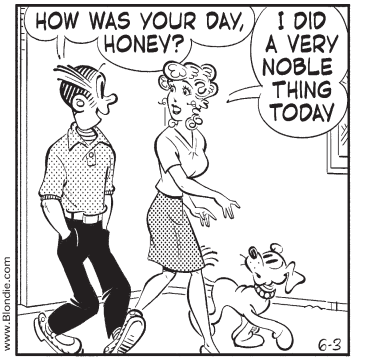
Dear Annie



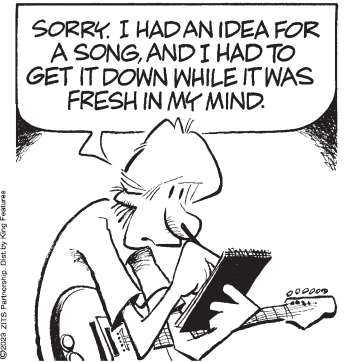
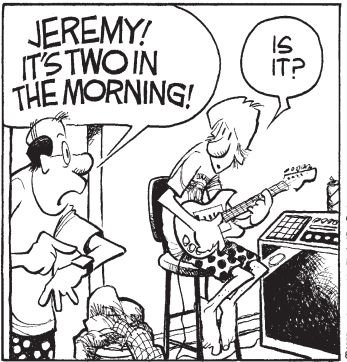
BEETLE BAILEY



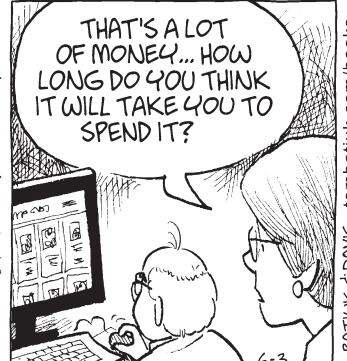
BLONDIE



ZITS



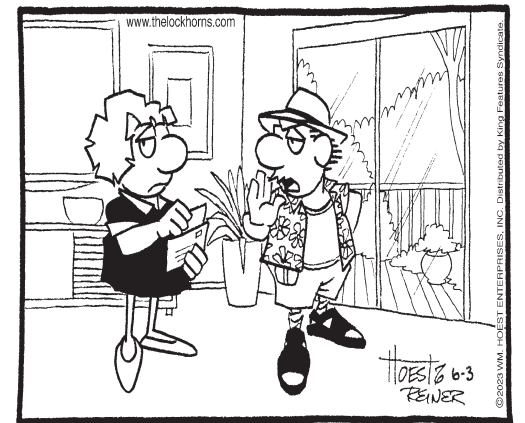
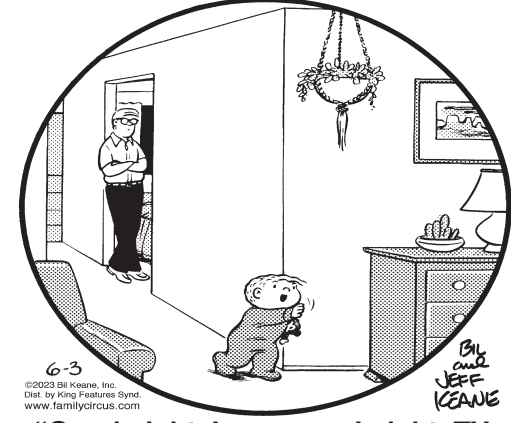
CRANKSHAFT



THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane

The LOCKHORNS



"Good night, lamp; good night, TV; good night, plants; good night, chair; good night, other chair ..."

"FORGET IT, LORETTA... I'M NOT GOING TO SOME SILLY COSTUME PARTY AND LOOKING FOOLISH."

My Answer



By Dr. Billy Graham

What people think about money reveals what they think about God

center; and the second has God at the heart. The first has an eye for this world; the second has an eye for eternity.

the man in the parable who buried his talent [large sum of money], it brings upon us the severest judgment of God.

Q: Doesn't it seem the spirit of greed has overtaken the spirit of giving? - G.G.

A: There are clearly two attitudes about money: One is Satan's. He says to every man as he said to Christ, "All these things I will give you if you will fall down and worship me"

What people think about money reveals what they think about God. A man's heart is closer to his wallet than almost anything else.

(This column is based on the words and writings of the late Rev. Billy Graham.)

The first is motivated by selfishness; the second, by unselfishness. The first has greed at

Scripture teaches that we are stewards of a little while of all we earn. If we misuse it, as did

©2023 Billy Graham Literary Trust. Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

BUY IT SELL IT RENT IT FIND IT FILL IT GET IT DO IT IN THE CLASSIFIEDS! Place Your Ad 24/7/365! www.news-banner.com

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words. Includes a solution time of 26 mins and a grid for yesterday's answer.

Table with columns for time slots (6:00, 6:30, 7:00, etc.) and rows for various TV channels (WINN, CBS, WANE, etc.) listing program titles and times.

Table with columns for time slots (6:00, 6:30, 7:00, etc.) and rows for various TV channels (WINN, CBS, WANE, etc.) listing program titles and times.

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

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

©2023 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Difficulty: ★★ ★★

6/3

Help Wanted

AMERICA'S BEST VALUE Inn & Suites, 100 Charles Deam Court, Bluffton, has immediate openings for front desk & housekeeping, full & part-time positions available, hourly rate of \$10+. Apply in person.

NEED MORE EMPLOYEES? Place a 20 word, six day line classified ad for \$24.50. Add a graphic or photo for an additional \$5. Contact the Bluffton News-Banner, 260-824-0224, 125 N. Johnson St., submit online at www.news-banner.com and click on classifieds.

VEHICLES

Auto/Trucks

1994 CHEVROLET SUBURBAN, 2500, 184,000 miles, white/blue, 4x2, 6.5 turbo diesel, new paint, loaded, Reese hitch, trailer brakes, original. 260-450-2432.

INDIANA AUTO AUCTION, INC. Huge Repo Sale June 8, 2023. Over 100 repossessed units for sale. Cash only. \$500 deposit per person required. Register 8 am-9:30 am. No public entry after 9:30 am. All vehicles sold AS IS! 4425 W. Washington Center Road, Fort Wayne. (A)

RENTALS

House Rentals

ONE BEDROOM, BLUFFTON house, appliances included, service animals only, \$625 a month, 260-437-7591.

Wanted to Rent

NEED TO RENT or buy on contract, 3 bedroom house, apartment, or trailer in Bluffton. Call 260-228-1014.

REAL ESTATE

Home For Sale

5 BEDROOM, 2 bath, Poneto home, 2+ acres, several out-buildings, many updates, Southern Wells School District, \$325,000, 260-273-1607.

FOR SALE

Pets



FRENCH BULLDOG PUPPIES 14 weeks- full AKC, all shots etc
Facebook- Perfect French bulldogs
260-307-3490
angela46992@yahoo.com
https://m.facebook.com/groups/281436650673060/?ref=share&mibextid=566gvf

Pets

MINI DACHSHUND PUPPIES 2 chocolate and tan males and 2 chocolate tan females will be ready on 1st week june 1st shots worming vet checked due claws removed playful \$450 mom and dad on site 260-701-0666 andyryan121@hotmail.com

Lawn & Garden

300 FEET, DRIP irrigation tubing with spaghetti tubing and drippers, \$25, 824-4563.

SERVICES

Services

MARV'S CONSTRUCTION Room additions, fix old saggy floors, all types remodeling. Redo bathrooms, old foundation repairs. Marv Schwartz: 260-525-8877.

LONE VIKING LAWN CARE Veteran run lawn care service. Affordable. Will negotiate and beat competitors prices. Call or txt 260-273-7645 for a free quote or set up an appointment. 260-273-7645 Lonevikingllc@gmail.com

CHRISTIAN WOMAN WILL run errands, fix lunch, or serve as companionship a few hours a day, part-time, contact 765-210-0997.

Lottery Numbers

Friday's Drawings
HOOSIER LOTTERY
Cash 5 — 14-18-23-29-35
Cash4Life — 13-28-40-55-57, Cash Ball: 01
Quick Draw Midday — 05-07-08-10-22-24-26-37-48-54-58-60-62-63-66-67-71-73-78-79, BE: 10
Daily Three-Midday — 07-02-01, SB: 00
Daily Three-Evening — 03-06-04, SB: 02
Daily Four-Midday — 06-09-03-04, SB: 00
Daily Four-Evening — 05-09-02-09, SB: 02
Quick Draw Evening — 04-09-11-1-27-30-32-37-39-43-48-53-54-57-58-61-70-74-75-76, BE: 74
Hoosier Lotto — Estimated jackpot (for Saturday): \$19.4 million
MEGA MILLIONS
03-16-19-36-60, Mega Ball: 25, Megaplier: X2
POWERBALL
Estimated jackpot (for Saturday): \$262 million

Place a three day garage sale line classified ad and receive a free garage sale kit!

EMPLOYMENT

Help Wanted

ALH Building Systems

WE ARE HIRING
1ST SHIFT
COMPETITIVE WAGES
FULL TIME EMPLOYMENT

APPLY ONLINE AT
[HTTPS://ALH-BUILDING.COM](https://alhbldg.com)

MUST PASS
DRUG SCREEN

MARKLE, IN

Lengerich MEATS

LENGERICH MEATS IS looking for a motivated and reliable individual with great attention to detail to join our team. The position is for general labor starting at \$15.00/hr. Send your resume to Lengerich@frontier.com or stop in and fill out an application.

Help Wanted

JACKSON GENERAL CONTRACTOR

CONSTRUCTION CAREERS- ALL SKILL LEVELS AT JACKSON CONSTRUCTION With our continued growth, we're seeking to hire hard-working local team members for several commercial & industrial construction-related roles. These include skilled carpenters and laborers in masonry, carpentry and steel erection. All skill and experience levels will be considered with a good work ethic and an interest to work in the field at our various construction sites around the region. These are full time positions with paid benefits, competitive wages, tool allowance and matching 401k. All with a company where we recently celebrated our 75th anniversary. Come join our team! Please send resume to hireme@jjacksonco.com, or call our office in town at (260) 824-0918 to get a job application. www.jjacksonco.com

Read & recycle

Public Sale Calendar

This Week's Garage Sales

FRIDAY 6/2 AND Sat 6/3 from 9am-5pm at the Wells County 4-H grounds. Women's clothing size large-3x. Juniors size Lg-XL. Mens XL- 3XL. Mowers, edger, weed eaters, Scott's spreader, power tools, rototiller, cat/dog carriers, rabbit cage and supplies, coolers, toaster oven, breadmaker, VCR, scrapbook supplies, Mikasa crystal clock, antique vanity with mirror, projector screen, car radio, new size 10 tennis shoes, truck side mirrors, Step One toolbox, children's books, home decor, households and much more.

consignors, seller. Outstanding line of machinist tooling, lathes, 1st Edition Machinery's Hand Book, 5-ton presses, metal cutting saw, vintage and handmade fishing lures, collection of vintage rod & reels, vintage toys, wooden boat, canoe, 1950's Massey Harris 44 gas tractor, lawn roller, heavy duty engine hoist, antiques, collectibles, glassware, modern furniture. Preview: June 15 and June 22 from 3-6 p.m. 102 S. Jefferson St. Ossian, IN. Sale manager, Patrick Carter, *The Steffen Group Inc.*, 260-824-3006.

JUNE 19-JUNE 23 - (Online Only Auction) - Golfo Di Napoli Realty, LLC, seller's. 7916 South Warren Road, Warren, IN. "State of the Art Organic Cheese Processing Facility." Tract 1: Modern 31,000 SF manufacturing building with retail area on 40+/- acres. Tract 2: Complete line of Italian cheese processing equipment. Tract 3: Combination of Tract 1 and 2. Brandon Steffen, sale manager, *The Steffen Group Inc.*, (260) 824-3006.

BIDDING NOW OPEN SOON STARTS CLOSING JUNE 25 STARTING AT 4 PM EST - Multiple Consigners, owner. Online only consignment auction! 1,000+ lots! Featuring furniture, household items, glassware, collectibles, antiques, TV's, silver coins, tools, guns, Amazon return items, (18) 20.00 gold pieces, & much more! Auction Preview: June 22, 3-5 p.m., 815 Adams Street, Decatur, IN. Pick Up times: June 26, 1-6 p.m. & June 27, 9 a.m.-noon. *Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC*, 260-724-7402, Kjauction.com.

SUDOKU ANSWER

8	8	7	6	9	7	9	1	
1	7	6	9	7	8	8	9	8
9	9	7	8	8	1	6	7	7
8	1	7	8	9	7	9	7	6
9	6	9	7	1	8	7	8	7
7	7	8	7	6	9	1	8	9
6	8	9	7	9	1	1	7	7
7	9	1	7	8	6	9	7	8
7	7	9	1	7	8	8	6	9

June GOODS & SERVICES DIRECTORY

Jerry Flack & Associates Retirement Advisors
Jerry Flack & Julie Myers
A Senior Citizen Answers Our Phone!
OFFICE 260-824-1618 • Corner of Main & Market • Bluffton, IN

ASSISTING IN:
• FREE Medicare Supplement Comparison
• Life Planning
• Safe Money Ideas
• Dental - Vision - Hearing

YOUR LOCAL AGENTS, HERE FOR YOU.

INDIANA FARM BUREAU INSURANCE
BLUFFTON OFFICE: (260) 824-2234
1307 Baker Place • Bluffton, IN
Mike Lampton | Michael Towne | Jacob Duncan

AMISH CREW
will do roofing, siding, remodeling, pole barns. Specializing in redoing old barns. Free estimates. Call 260-438-2508

Come See Us for Your CBD Oil Needs

R Warren Pharmacy
(260)375-2135

Nature's Sunshine Distributor
222 N. Wayne St., Warren • 1-800-895-7035
Terry Daniels, Pharmacist • Melinda Daniels, RN

As a resident of the Wells County community for decades, Attorney, Gerret J. Swearingen, has devoted his legal practice to assisting clients in preserving the family assets from the high cost of Nursing Home and In-Home Healthcare.

As your guide through the "Medicaid Planning" process, Swearingen Elder Law will provide the right path to both protect your life savings and receive the quality of care we all deserve.

SWEARINGEN ELDER LAW

1645 Hillcrest Dr., Suite 2A Ossian, IN 46777

Attorney Gerret J. Swearingen

STOR-N-GO STORAGE UNITS
2740 E. 200 N. • Bluffton, IN • 260.273.8345
with Security Cameras

Primary Contracting, LLC 260-223-4276 Free Estimates

Decks • Garages • Pole Barns • Siding • Remodeling
Metal and Shingle Roofing • Storm Damage • Trim Wood Working and more!

Owner - Edwin Wickey COMPETITIVE RATES!

A-1 U-Stor Safe & Secure Self Storage
824-1846

•Safety Lighting •Clean Units
•24 Hr. Access
•Video Cameras

www.a1-ustor.com
After hours & Saturdays Call 273-9678 or 824-4782
In Monroe at corner of U.S. 27 and S.R. 124
Office at 1180 N. Main, Bluffton

The Golden Dog training & boarding
"MAKING DOGS GOLDEN SINCE 2019"
260-273-9973
Pupslovethedogendog.com

Wickey Construction

Free Estimate on Metal Roofing & More

260-273-9776

Home Remodel and Repair

Locally Owned

Repair Bowled Basement Walls
Foundations repaired
Floor joist repair or replaced
Concrete • Doors
Windows • Painting
Tile • Small Jobs Welcome

Text me at 260-301-1269
Jim Baker

Zap Electric, Inc.
260-824-2927
Commercial-Industrial-Residential
24 Hr. Emergency Service
Charles Miller-Electrian FREE Estimates

COUNTRY PLACE Apartments
408 Countryside Drive, Ossian

• 1 & 2 Bedrooms
• Laundry Facilities On-Site
• All Ground-level
• Private Entrances
• Equipped Kitchen

260 622-6429
Virtual Tours Offered
TDD: 7-1-1
OssianApartments.com

The HIDEAWAY BEER & BOURBON

THURSDAY - Dollar Off Drinks (Excludes Pop)
WEDNESDAY - KARAOKE
FRI. & SAT. - Live Music

Follow us on FB for our Events.
123 S JOHNSON ST. • 824-0455

JC'S GARAGE DOOR SALES & SERVICE
All makes & models • broken springs & cables
Owner: James Fisher • Sales: Carl Fisher
"50 Years of Combined Experience"
Call us at 824-3262

Sure-Flo Seamless Gutters
5" & 6" Continuous Gutters
Leaf Protection Systems
Large Color Selection - FREE Estimates
260-888-5062
www.seamlessgutter.net

YOUR BUSINESS IN THE NEWS-BANNER Every Day!
For as little as ...
\$123 PER ISSUE
... you can keep your name in the public eye!
Increase your business with regular advertising!

Plus The Ossian Journal Every Week!

Call 824-0224 or 622-4108
July deadline is Tues., June 27!