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BLUFFTON, INDIANA • Wells County's Hometown Connection

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Poneto Town Council candidates discuss community, revitalization

By SYDNEY KENT

Poneto Town Council candidates have a common interest: community.

There are three positions available on the council, with two of the candidates currently serving on the board. Becky Smith (R), the current president, and Linda Ogle (I). Also in the running are Kelly Potter (D), Ashley O'Reilly (D), Isaiah Geels (R), and Paul Miller (R). Election day is Nov. 7.

During the forum Monday evening, candidates were asked four questions regarding their priorities for the town, their outlook on growth, maintaining fiscal responsibility, and the most critical needs. Rick Johnloz and Erin Prible served as moderators for the forum.

All candidates echoed a call for more community events and overall involvement.

Miller said he envisions a more social town where residents bring their needs to the council. Ogle, a current board member of four years, said she wanted to bring back chili suppers, the park board, and an annual garage sale.

O'Reilly expressed a plan for the council to work as a cohesive unit in partnership with other government entities. Potter echoed this desire.

"The three people serving need to come together to see what it is they want to achieve at the end of their four years," Potter, who previously wrote grants for a non-profit, added. "There is grants and funding available."

Isaiah Geels, a four-year Poneto resident, said that while community is important, his priority is helping the community be safer.

"We need to look at how the town spends

money," Geels said. "The roads aren't taken care of and are worse after plow." A chuckle came from the audience of approximately 30 Poneto residents.

Geels also suggested an assessment for the sewer system and investing in the fire department in order to lower homeowner costs and ensure safety.

The majority of the candidates voiced a stance on improving the current state of the town and quality of life for the residents versus population growth.

"I don't see us getting new houses or businesses," Ogle said. "I don't see that happening, but I think we should take the residents into consideration. What can we do with what we have?"

"Growth is important," O'Reilly countered. "I have a seven-year-old and I don't plan on leaving anytime soon. Younger families are coming back. I think it's important to prioritize growth so we have a community for families to come back to."

O'Reilly said she wants to serve on the council to help move the community forward.

Smith said she would like to grow, but there are a limited number of lots for housing. She also noted town involvement as an area of critical need. Geels said safety is his main priority, and the rest can come later. Miller said he would like to see growth in the future after the town cleans up what is needed.

"We need a town clean-up day if we expect people to clean up," Potter said. "Toys in the yard, which has been expressed as a critical issue, is not an issue. The kids

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Pictured at top are the Town Council candidates before the forum. From left to right, Isaiah Geels, Paul Miller, Linda Ogle, Ashley O'Reilly, Kelly Potter, and Becky Smith. Above, LouAnn Reinhard (right) and Brad Schoeff before the forum for Poneto Clerk/Treasurer Monday evening. (Photos provided by Erin Prible)

Commissioners take action on cemetery issues

By HOLLY GASKILL

Perhaps in perfect timing for October, local cemeteries were the prominent topic of conversation for Wells County Commissioners Monday night.

Multiple members of the commissioner-appointed cemetery board brought discussion regarding the Old County Farm Cemetery. The adjacent property, board member Bill Dowdy said, has significantly overstepped the property line into the cemetery.

The board members said the property owner recently purchased and built on the land. Since building, increasing items have crossed over into the cemetery property, board member Jerri Lehman explained. Lehman provided photos of these issues, including large dog houses, two propane tanks, and various junk and furniture on cemetery property.

Commissioner Mike Vanover asked how far these items cross into the county property. Dowdy estimated the kennels were 60-80 ft. into the property. "So it's pretty flagrant," Vanover concluded.

The commissioners instructed County Attorney Ted Storer to draft a letter to the property owner regarding the issue.

Similarly, Thomas Jester told the com-

missioners a farm had planted crops within the easement of a cemetery and its driveway.

County Engineer Nate Rumschlag said the cemetery was documented as the "Old Uniontown Cemetery," and he hasn't been able to determine information on the driveway to the cemetery. However, he stated there is stone underneath the crops.

Rumschlag advised the county needs to determine ownership and whether to maintain the driveway. According to Surveyor Jarrod Hahn, the cemetery was deeded to "the citizens of Uniontown."

Cemetery board member Connie Brubaker advised she had recorded the cemetery in 1999, and there was a road leading to the cemetery at the time. Additionally, she asked the commissioners to take over the abandoned cemetery so it could be maintained.

The commissioners voted 3-0 to re-gravel the road after crops are harvested.

Larry Heckber, Jefferson Township trustee, then addressed the commissioners regarding his concern about the trustee's maintenance of the county cemeteries. Heckber advised he had repaired two cemeteries under his jurisdiction but thinks

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Gaetz files resolution to oust Kevin McCarthy as speaker

By FARNOUSH AMIRI and KEVIN FREKING

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Speaker Kevin McCarthy is facing an extraordinary referendum on his leadership of the House of Representatives after a conservative member of his own conference, a longtime critic, moved to trigger a vote on whether he should remain at the helm.

"I have enough Republicans where at this point next week, one of two things will happen: Kevin McCarthy won't be the speaker of the House or he'll be the speaker of the House working at the pleasure of the Democrats," GOP Rep. Matt Gaetz told reporters after he filed the motion. "I'm at peace with either result because the American people deserve to know who governs them."

McCarthy responded minutes later on social media, "Bring it on."

Gaetz, a far-right Republican from Florida, has for months threatened to use the procedural tool — called a motion to vacate — to try to strip McCarthy of his office. Those threats escalated over the weekend after McCarthy relied on Democrats to provide the necessary votes to fund the government.

That decision has set McCarthy up for what will likely be the ultimate test of his leadership and may force him to look across the aisle to Democrats for support. But how the vote will ultimately unfold remains unclear, as possible parliamentary maneuvering could sway the outcome. And allies of McCarthy have said for weeks they were ready for a motion to come.

The vote could result in humiliation — the first speaker ever ousted from the job through such a motion — or newfound strength as he overcomes yet another obstacle while trying to lead a narrow, unwieldy majority. Conservative critics have been hounding him from the start, denying him votes and thwarting his plans. But

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Pentagon warns it's low on money to replace arms sent to Ukraine

By LOLITA C. BALDOR and TARA COPP

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Pentagon is warning Congress that it is running low on money to replace weapons the U.S. has sent to Ukraine and has already been forced to slow down resupplying some troops, according to a letter sent to congressional leaders.

The letter, obtained by The

Associated Press, urges Congress to replenish funding for Ukraine. Congress averted a government shutdown by passing a short-term funding bill over the weekend, but the measure dropped all assistance for Ukraine in the battle against Russia.

Pentagon Comptroller Michael McCord told House and Senate leaders there is \$1.6 billion left of the \$25.9 billion Congress provid-

ed to replenish U.S. military stocks that have been flowing to Ukraine. The weapons include millions of rounds of artillery, rockets and missiles critical to Ukraine's counteroffensive aimed at taking back territory gained by Russia in the war.

In addition, the U.S. has about \$5.4 billion left to provide weapons and equipment from its stockpiles. The U.S. would have

already run out of that funding if the Pentagon hadn't realized earlier this year that it had overvalued the equipment it had already sent, freeing up about \$6.2 billion. Some of that has been sent in recent months.

McCord said the U.S. has completely run out of long-term funding for Kyiv through the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative, which provides money to contract

for future weapons.

"We have already been forced to slow down the replenishment of our own forces to hedge against an uncertain funding future," McCord said in the letter. "Failure to replenish our military services on a timely basis could harm our military's readiness."

He added that without additional funding now, the U.S. will have

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Sunny and hot today, showers likely tomorrow

| | | |
|---------|---------|----------|
| Today | Wed. | Thursday |
| High 87 | High 85 | High 71 |
| Low 60 | Low 62 | Low 57 |

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A South African hike that literally takes your breath away

We knew it was going to be a great day as soon as we walked out of our cottage and saw the sun shining — a welcome sight after a powerful overnight storm and a few days of overcast skies and rain.

One of the many benefits to traveling to South Africa during our summer in the northern hemisphere is that it is winter there.

Temperatures hover in the mid-60s during the day and not as many tourists are around since it is the off season. The downside, however, is that it rains more frequently and makes it a bit more challenging to plan a day of hiking ahead of time.

We had been in Cape Town, South Africa, for four days after having arrived there following our seven-day sojourn in Kigali, Rwanda. We were staying in a suburb of Cape Town called Constantia, which is near where my wife lived when she was a teacher at the American International School of Cape Town a decade ago.

It was during the year Jen taught and lived in Cape Town that she fell in love with this idyllic city and gorgeous surrounding area that I, too, cannot stop talking about these days.

Cape Town is a port city located on a peninsula and is also surrounded by mountains — two of my absolute favorite features: the ocean and the mountains. And in the winter, it's sweatshirt weather with a pair of shorts. That's my kind of winter.

One of the big items on our bucket list was to spend a few days hiking, but it's hard to plan ahead of time due to the frequent wet weather winter brings in this part of the southern hemisphere.

The sunny day finally came June 18 as we drove from our cottage in Constantia over the mountain on Ou Kaapse Weg, a route that provides stunning views as you traverse the Steenberg Mountains. It took us an hour to reach Cape Point National Park.

There is a hike inside the national park that takes you to the Cape of Good Hope — the point that marks the southwestern most tip of Africa.

The first European to visit the Cape was a Portuguese navigator in the late 1400s. The area has long been famous for its rough seas and stormy weather, as it is located where the warm current from the Indian Ocean meets the cool current from the Antarctic waters.

It was named Cape of Good Hope for the promise its discovery held for creating a maritime trade route between Europe and the East.

We chose a trail that took us from the parking lot near the visitor's center up and over another mountain to the Cape of Good Hope. It took us about 45 minutes to hike what I would consider an easy trail that was well marked.

The challenge, however, was the frequent strong gusts of wind.

We had to stop several times to wait for the wind speed to decrease as we made our way toward the Cape of Good Hope.

The views along the way, however, took my breath away more so than the occasional 50 mph gusts of wind. Below us we saw tall cliffs that the waves were constantly crashing into — a perfect place for the surfers and boogie boarders we watched hiking down to the beach alcoves to enter the freezing water to practice their sports.

When you reach the Cape of Good Hope, three signs that make for a great picture background let you know you have arrived.

The hike back to the parking lot is equally as impressive. You follow the same trail back as you are treated to more breathtaking views — and occasional strong gusts of what seems like Category 1 hurricane winds.

I was wearing some red 20-year-old gloves during our hike that said The News-Banner on the outside. Jen took a picture of me wearing them that I sent to Mark Miller. Mark knew exactly where we were in the picture since he had been at the same place several years earlier.

Two News-Banner columnists who have visited the southwestern most tip of Africa a couple of decades apart.

It really is a small world.

jdpeeper2@hotmail.com



Justin Peeper



Joe Biden's intentional crisis

The continuing incursion of illegal border crossers into the United States is the most astonishing story in American politics. There have been days recently in which 10,000 people crossed illegally into the country — and remember, in a long-ago era, when Barack Obama was president, a tenth of that was considered a crisis.

The current emergency can be attributed entirely to President Joe Biden. In word and deed, from the 2020 campaign on, Biden sent a message to would-be illegal border crossers around the world: If you come to the United States, you will be allowed to stay. And millions have.

Lately, though, Biden's welcome-to-illegal-crossers policy has become a burden on some important Democrats. New York City Mayor Eric Adams is screaming about the arrival of an estimated 110,000 new asylum seekers in his city. The cost of caring for the new residents will "destroy New York City," Adams said. And even though Adams tried to blame Texas Republican Gov. Greg Abbott for sending illegal border crossers to New York, the fact is that Abbott has sent just 13,000. In any event, the presence of all 110,000 in New York is the result of Biden policies.

Now that some Democrats are complaining, news reports say Biden is beginning to feel some pressure. Can he do something to lower the heat? In response, Biden has come up with a way to address the problem: Rush more inadmissible migrants into the United States.

It seems crazy, and it is. But it is more than that. It is also perhaps the best indicator we have of Biden's intentions in the border crisis. Look at the 10,000-a-day flow of illegal crossers over the border. The president of the United States has the authority and means to protect the U.S. border. The only way a president would allow this to go on for years is if the president wanted this to happen. And it appears that Biden does, in fact, want this to happen.

Early in the border crisis, I wrote, "The president is not trying to stop the flow of illegal crossers. Instead, he is trying to accommodate the flow, scrambling to find housing and living arrangements for those coming in. The message has gotten out to the world, and the world is coming."

And now Biden is going one step further. With the flow at historic levels, he will use U.S. government resources to speed it up, not to slow it down. This is an entirely intentional crisis.

The New York Times reports that nearly half a million migrants from Venezuela will "be allowed to immediately apply for work authorization." The purpose of the move, the Times said, is this: "By allowing them to legally earn income, the change could alleviate the costly burden of housing the refu-

gees in major cities across the country. The migrants also will be protected from deportation for at least the next 18 months."

Maybe that will mollify Mayor Adams for a while. It will certainly increase the incentive for Venezuelans to come to the U.S. as soon as possible. But how, one might ask, did the migrants arrive in the United States from Venezuela in the first place? The answer lies with a Biden administration program known as CBP One. It is what is called a "parole" program, that is, it is designed to release migrants into the United States quickly and without public scrutiny. This is from the Center for Immigration Studies: "A little-known part of the Biden administration's CBP One parole program permits inadmissible aliens to make an appointment to fly directly to airports in the interior of the United States, bypassing the border altogether."

The Biden program "allows migrants to take commercial passenger flights from foreign countries straight to their American cities of choice." The program applies to migrants from Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua and Haiti. The migrants, according to the Center, "request 'advance travel authorizations' through the CBP One mobile app and take commercial flights ('at their own expense') directly into U.S. airports, where U.S. Customs officers parole them into the nation, sight unseen, and in numbers publicly unknown."

The numbers are big. Through the Freedom of Information Act, the Center for Immigration Studies, which supports stricter immigration laws, got information on the flights so far in 2023. The administration has allowed in 221,456 migrants through the program this year. There were 29,120 in May, 29,506 in June, 28,669 in August, and so on. The flow continues.

Where are they going? The administration would not disclose which airports have received the migrants. If any local leaders want to know how thousands of new people are arriving in their towns virtually overnight, courtesy of the U.S. government — well, if they want to know that, they can't find out.

Now the White House is offering immediate work authorization, not just to migrants who crossed the land border illegally but to those who took part in the administration's secretive flight program. That will surely lure more to come, whether by foot over the border or to an undisclosed airport. If you ever hear an administration official say that President Biden is trying to get the border situation under control — don't believe it.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner



Byron York

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Oct. 3, the 276th day of 2023. There are 89 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Oct. 3, 1995, the jury in the O.J. Simpson murder trial in Los Angeles found the former football star not guilty of the 1994 slayings of his former wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and Ronald Goldman.

On this date:

In 1941, Adolf Hitler declared in a speech in Berlin that Russia had been "broken" and would "never rise again."

In 1944, during World War II, U.S. Army troops cracked the Siegfried Line

north of Aachen, Germany.

In 1951, the New York Giants captured the National League pennant by a score of 5-4 as Bobby Thomson hit a three-run homer off Ralph Branca of the Brooklyn Dodgers in the "shot heard 'round the world."

In 1961, "The Dick Van Dyke Show," also starring Mary Tyler Moore, made its debut on CBS.

In 1970, the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) was established under the Department of Commerce.

In 2001, the Senate approved an agreement normalizing trade between the United States and Vietnam.

Honest talk on immigration

The phrase "Climate change denier" has wormed its way into the modern lexicon to shame those who have a different view of the science supporting, or not, the idea that the world is in danger of burning up in weeks, months, or years (they can't seem to decide on the timing).

There is another form of denial that one can clearly see. It is a denial that the southern border is "secure." With pictures showing — and border patrol agents confirming — that tens of thousands of migrants are crossing into the U.S. every day without authorization, it is a lie to say the border is secure.

Sometimes it takes a person from outside the country to wake us up to threats we face. Russian writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn did that in a 1978

Harvard commencement speech, in which he warned that the West suffered from "a decline in courage." The left hated the speech, but he was right in his indictment.

Last week, UK Home Secretary Suella Braverman delivered remarks at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington. She warned of the dangers of uncontrolled immigration without assimilation that now threatens America, Britain and other prosperous nations. She called it "an existential challenge for the political and cultural institutions of the West," adding, "it's a basic rule of history



Cal Thomas

that nations which cannot defend their borders will not long survive."

Ms. Braverman noted the majority of migrants are motivated by economic incentives, not persecution in their home countries. That, she said, does not fit the international definition of "refugee."

"A nation state," she said, "is one of humanity's great civilizing forces. It creates a shared identity and a shared purpose. And that does not need to have a racial component. Typically it binds people of different racial backgrounds together." She also said that a spirit of togetherness and unity produces patriotism, heroism and kindness: "It is the belief that we have specific obligations to others, precisely because they are our fellow countrymen."

Then came a statement that should be obvious to all but the deniers: "Uncontrolled immigration, inadequate integration and a misguided dogma of multiculturalism have proven a toxic combination for Europe over the past few decades." She referenced a 2010 speech by then German Chancellor Angela Merkel in which Merkel admitted German multiculturalism had utterly failed.

Failure is never a reason for some to change their ideologies. Noting she is a child of immi-

grants, Ms. Braverman said: "...there has been more migration to the UK and Europe in the last 25 years than in all the time that went before. It has been too much too quick, with too little thought given to integration and the impact on social cohesion."

The costs are staggering in the UK and U.S. and cannot be sustained as even more come. "Seeking asylum and seeking better economic prospects are not the same thing," Ms. Braverman said. "Seeking refuge in the first country you reach, or shopping around for your preferred destination, are not the same thing. Most are simply economic migrants, gaming the asylum system to their advantage."

As with uncontrolled crime, an uncontrolled border is an invitation for more of the same. The solution is not difficult: finish the border wall and deport all but legitimate asylum seekers who fled their nations under political or religious persecution. The latest stop-gap government funding bill passed late Saturday night contains no money for border security. What does that tell you?

Our constitutional republic is fragile and must be renewed by each generation. We are unlikely to get a second chance.

Those who deny there is a problem and are fine with an open border likely have motives beyond compassion. These might include a visceral hatred of the U.S. and a desire to see our nation, in the words of Presidents Barack Obama and Joe Biden, "fundamentally transformed."

tcaeditors@tribpub.com

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Telling about the lives of some of the folks buried in Oakland Cemetery by Craigville are pictured in front of the Wells County Historical Museum. Left to right are David Reed, Eliza Jane Reed, Connie Brubaker, Dave Schultz and Mike Downey while behind them are Alan Daugherty, Ryan Crismore and Ben Jones. (Photos by Barbara Barbieri)

Craigville and Oakland Cemeteries featured in historical program

By BARBARA BARBIERI

On Sunday afternoon the Wells County Historical Society hosted the annual My Town and Cemetery Walk at the Historical Museum's Annex as Craigville and the Oakland Cemetery were visited.

Connie Brubaker gave a brief history of the Oakland Cemetery, which was established on Jan. 17, 1877 and Lynn Elliott introduced the enactors representing folks buried there. David and Eliza Jane Reed were portrayed by Larry and Elaine McAfee; Hiram and Charity Drum by Jim and Jen Sturgeon; Peter Hetrick by Alan Daugherty and Rev. Daniel Abbott by Mike Downey.

Next the program turned attention to the town of Craigville with Brubaker telling of its founding on Aug. 21, 1879, at the time of the completion of the Cloverleaf Railroad. The town was named after William J. Craig, who with his brother Robert were the first white settlers in the township in 1837. Also noted by Brubaker was that Craigville was the first small town in the county to have street lights.

Folks making history in Craigville included William Hartman (Dave Schultz) and Fred Fuhrman (Ben Jones). Craigville Schools were talked about by Amanda Brubaker assisted by "students" Claire Alfred and Josalyn Alford. Ryan Crismore told about the



Other program presenters included left to right in the front row Lynn Elliott, John Gerber, Arvilla Rodenbeck, Josalyn Alford, Amanda Brubaker, Connie Brubaker and Claire Alford while behind them are Christine Hunt and Tammy Schaffer.

importance of the Chicago and Atlantic Railroad.

Next Craigville businesses were featured with the businesses and speakers being: Craigville Post Office (Christine Hunt with a poem), Craigville Garage (Josh Hunt), Farmers & Merchants Bank (John Gerber), Craigville Telephone (Arvilla Rodenbeck and Carla Von Gunten) and Craigville Locker (Tammy Schaffer for the Willis Pritchard family).

Additional speakers adding com-

ments included Tom Moser, Arlene Stoller and Larry Heckber.

Heckber explained that county trustees are in charge of keeping cemeteries in good repair and that the next cemetery to be looked into will be the cemetery beside the former county Poor Farm just south of Bluffton.

Attendees were given a small brochure with photos of some of the Oakland Cemetery's tombstones and the Craigville businesses.

barb@news-banner.com

6th annual downtown Chili Walk Saturday

Bluffton NOW! is hosting the 6th annual 'Bring on the heat' Chili Walk in downtown Bluffton. The event is Saturday, Oct. 7 from 5-7 p.m.

Participating downtown businesses will supply homemade chili to taste and vote on.

Wristbands purchased for \$5 are required to participate. Beverage truck drinks are available to purchase.

For more information, contact Jeremy Penrod at 260-824-2354 or jeremy.penrod@edwardjones.com.

Help to cope with death of a spouse

"Loss of a Spouse" is a free one-night GriefShare video event designed to provide practical coping strategies when you are grieving a spouse's death. It will be offered on Wednesday, Oct. 4 from 6:30-8 p.m. at Pleasant Dale Church located at 4504 W 300 N, Decatur.

The seminar features video interviews with counselors, grief experts, and widowed men and women who offer helpful insights on many issues including

how to deal with loneliness, what to do with your spouse's belongings, what to expect in the days to come, and why it won't always hurt this much.

Everyone who attends will receive a booklet with over 30 short readings on how to live with grief and eventually rebuild your life.

For more information, visit the church's website at www.discoverpd.org/grief-share or contact Pam Schaffer at prschafer@gmail.com.

Car and Craft Fest fundraiser at this weekend at Stauffer Farms

On the weekend of Oct. 6 & 7, Stauffer Farms will host a Car & Craft Fest, as a fundraiser for Forgotten Children Worldwide.

The **Craft Fest** will be open both days from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and vendors will be selling pumpkins and mums, handmade crafts, woodworking, floral decor, honey, baked good and more. In addition there will be hay rides, a bouncy house, face painting and Kettle corn for eating.

The **Car Fest** will be held on Saturday only from 9 a.m. until noon with awards to be presented at 3:30 p.m. Cars will depart at 4 p.m. and there is a \$15 entry fee at the gate. For more information contact Jeff Patterson at 260-266-7590.

Stauffer Farms is located at 3584 NW St. Rd. 116 near Markle.

Auditions told for 'White Christmas'

Creative Arts Theater will hold auditions for its coming production of Irving Berlin's "White Christmas" on Friday, Oct. 6, from 6 to 9 p.m. and Saturday, Oct. 7, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

Auditions are open to everyone ages 12 and up, regardless of experience. Actors should plan to attend on the hour and be prepared to read and sing. Auditions will take place at the Creative Arts Council, 428 South Oak St. in Bluffton. Enter the building through

Door 10. Audition pre-registration is highly recommended with a pre-registration form available on the Creative Arts website of www.wellscocreativearts.com/holiday-production.

Performance dates are Dec. 7, 8 and 9 in the Auditorium at 418 South Oaks St. in Bluffton.

For more information about the auditions and performances, please visit www.wellscocreativearts.com/holiday-production or call the CAC office at (260)824-5222/



Discussing the Craigville Telephone Company were Arvilla Rodenbeck and Carla VonGunten.



Amanda Brubaker with "students" Josalyn Alford and Claire Alford, at left, told stories about the schools in Craigville.



Workday for the homemakers

Several times a year the Wells County Extension Homemakers declare a work day for sewing items that in turn will be donated to other organizations. The project on a recent Thursday morning at the 4-H community building was knotting the edges of small blankets headed to Indianapolis to Riley's Children's Hospital. The work crew included left to right Charolett Gehring, Lois Biberstein, Karen Fear and Mary Ann Ripperger. (Photo by Barbara Barbieri)

Activities and exhibits at the FW Museum of Art

Current exhibits at the Fort Wayne Museum of Art include the following:

Landfall Press: Five Decades of Print making, through Nov. 12, a celebration of 50 years. Curator's Tour on Oct. 5, at 12 noon (free with museum admission).

Indiana Artists Club 2023 Annual Members Exhibition, through Nov. 26. Featuring over 50 diverse works by Indiana artists.

Nick Antonakis was juror for this exhibit. This club was founded in 1917 by 46 artists.

Dia Delos Muertos, through Nov. 6, celebrating the Day of the Dead. Featuring memorial altars and symbolic objects. A Family Celebration on Sunday, Nov. 5, from 2 to 6 p.m., a free event. Mexican food truck on hand.

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CERTIFIED MASTER LOCKSMITH

Tigers push for fifth set, but falls short to Knights in county rival match

By RYAN WALKER

You could throw the records out the window Monday night because Bluffton gave Norwell a run for its money in a five-set thriller.

Despite a losing effort, the Tigers outplayed their 9-18 record coming into The Castle against a tough and growing Knights (16-9) program.

“There was a lot of emotion,” head coach Stacy Morrison said after the game. “We never quit, and we never gave in, so I’m proud of the way we played.”

Bluffton took the first set 25-21 to set the tone for the match. Morrison said that the effort could have been attributed to Saturday’s game against Wabash. The Tigers lost in five sets, but all were within five points in every set.

For the Knights, it was an unexpected blow right off the bat, especially with the emotions of Senior Night for their six seniors.

“I didn’t really know much about (Bluffton) this year,” Norwell head coach Kayla Hunter said. “I knew No. 6 (Marny Schreiber) was really solid in their middle, but other than that, I didn’t know a whole lot. They were a lot scrappier than I kind of anticipated so yeah, I thought their defense was pretty solid, and it was a great match.”

In the next set, Norwell perhaps made the first one look like a fluke with a dominant 25-11 victory, then winning the third 25-21.

But the Tigers wouldn’t go down without a fight.

In the fourth set, Bluffton held a steady lead throughout, ending with a 25-21 win to force a fifth and final set.

A key contributor for Bluffton was Schreiber. The tall middle hitter had 16 kills Monday night, leading her team all over the court with three blocks.

Her 248 kills on the season leads the team by over 100, while also having the most total blocks with 85. The two stats were the most of any player between the

two teams.

On top of Hunter’s compliments for her, Morrison had high praise for her junior and said she’s peaking at the right time.

“She’s actually been playing pretty well for a while now,” Morrison said. “She’s been a dominant player putting the ball down. She never shies away from a block, she just goes after it.”

In the fifth set, Norwell got the crowd rockin’ as they took an early lead and pushed for a 13-8 advantage. A three-point swing was Bluffton’s final effort, but Norwell picked up the victory 15-12.

Norwell got the last laugh, but it took an all-out effort to win an emotional game, and it took everyone to do it.

“So proud of them and I told them just how it was a complete team win,” Hunter said. “We got contributions from every single player which is really important too. To really have to battle back and forth on that, especially on Senior Night, was emotional for them to be able to kind of lock-in and fight at the end is great.”

Stat leaders for Norwell were Vanessa Rosswurm with 17 kills, Jordyn Xayachack with 22 digs, Autumn Lee with four aces, Marlee Wenger with 28 assists, and Mekynzi Beck, Mallory Falls, and Rosswurm with one block each.

Stat leaders for Bluffton were Haley Gibson with 36 assists, Isabella Stout with five aces, Marny Schreiber with 16 kills and three blocks, and Marly Drayer with 26 digs.

Norwell will be at East Noble at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 3.

Bluffton will host North Side at 7 p.m. for its final regular season match of the season on Wednesday, Oct. 4.

Norwell won the junior varsity game (25-7, 25-6). Bluffton’s leaders on the night were Rori Drayer four assists, Aleyda Cruz and Rori Drayer one kill each, Ella Borrer and Isla Gibson with one assist each.

sports@news-banner.com



Norwell’s volleyball team celebrates after getting the final point of the game Monday night in a five-set victory over Bluffton. (Photos by Ryan Walker)



Bluffton middle hitter Marny Schreiber spikes the ball down against Norwell’s Mekynzi Beck (No. 8) and Haley Green (right) during the match. Schreiber had 16 kills for the Tigers.

High School Calendar

TUESDAY, OCT 3

BOYS SOCCER: (sectional at Woodlan) Norwell vs. Heritage, 5 p.m.

GIRLS SOCCER: (sectional) Woodlan at Norwell, 5 p.m.

VOLLEYBALL: Norwell at East Noble, 7:30 p.m.; Southern Wells at Anderson Prep, 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, OCT 4

VOLLEYBALL: North Side at Bluffton, 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, OCT 5

VOLLEYBALL: Norwell at Huntington North, 7:30 p.m.; Adams Central at Southern Wells, 7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCT 6

FOOTBALL: Huntington North at Norwell, 7 p.m.; Adams Central at Bluffton, 7 p.m.; Heritage at Southern Wells, 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, OCT 7

CROSS COUNTRY (CO-ED): Norwell at Delta Eagle Invitational at Taylor University, 8:30 a.m.; Bluffton, Southern Wells at ACAC race at South Adams 11 a.m.

VOLLEYBALL: Norwell at Maconaquah Invite, 9 a.m.

MONDAY, OCT 9

No events scheduled

TUESDAY, OCT 10

No events scheduled

Taylor’s looming return provides plenty for Colts to ponder

By MICHAEL MAROT
AP Sports Writer

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — All-Pro running back Jonathan Taylor is expected to return to the Indianapolis Colts practice field Wednesday.

How soon he’ll start suiting up on Sundays — and how motivated he’ll be — remains unclear.

Less than 24 hours after losing to the Rams in overtime, coach Shane Steichen told reporters the 2021 NFL rushing champ was about to be activated from the physically unable to perform list this week while painting a far different picture about Taylor and his relationship with the Colts than the one that emerged last summer.

“He’ll be out there with us



Jonathan Taylor

Wednesday, had a great conversation with him,” Steichen said. “He’s super excited to be back with his teammates and we look forward to having him.”

Taylor missed all of the Colts offseason workouts, all of training camp and the first four regular-season games following ankle surgery. This week is the earliest he could be activated from the physically unable to perform list.

If he’s healthy, and happy, the Colts offense could look completely different. Zack Moss has played well in his three starts and offers a solid change-up option to the speedy 2021 NFL rushing champ. Indy (2-2) also has dual-threat rookie quarterback Anthony Richardson, who now holds the distinction of being the first Super Bowl

era quarterback with four TD runs in his first three games.

But does Taylor want to play for the Colts?

Throughout his extended absence, the former Wisconsin Badgers star went public about his desire for a contract extension and his disdain for the undervaluing of NFL running backs. There were spats on social media with Colts owner Jim Irsay and the hour-long meeting on Irsay’s bus while a capacity crowd watched a training camp practice. Within hours of Taylor leaving the bus, word leaked about his trade request and in August, the Colts granted Taylor permission to find a trade partner.

When that didn’t work out, Steichen welcomed back the New Jersey prep star with the full knowledge of what Taylor provides — a breakaway threat any time he touches the ball.

It’s still possible the Colts could

deal Taylor before the Oct. 31 trade deadline.

But, at least from Steichen’s perspective, the only real question now is how soon Taylor returns to game day action, possibly even Sunday against division rival Tennessee and two-time league rushing champ Derrick Henry.

“I know it’s been a long time since he’s played football, so we’ll see how practice goes this week, where he’s at physically from putting the pads on,” Steichen said.

“He’s in a good spot. I had a conversation with him the other day, I talked with him today and he’s excited to get back.”

WHAT’S WORKING

Second-half adjustments. Whatever Steichen is doing at halftime seems to be working. The Colts have rallied twice in two weeks to force overtime, winning at Baltimore before losing Sunday. Richardson also has looked more

comfortable in the final two quarters in Weeks 1 and 4.

WHAT NEEDS HELP

Third down defense. Los Angeles was six of 15 on third downs and converted its only fourth down attempt Sunday. But it felt much more lopsided because the Rams didn’t punt until early in the fourth quarter. They also would have scored on seven of their first eight drives if Brett Maher had not missed two field goals. The Colts defense needs to do a better job getting off the field.

NEXT STEPS

Richardson and the Colts seem to be ahead of schedule. But to stay there, they’ll have to figure out how to best use the Taylor-Moss combination coupled with Richardson’s running ability to help open up throws down the field. When that happens, the Colts will be able to take another significant step.

MLB game time drops 24 minutes to 2:40 with pitch clock

By RONALD BLUM
AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The average time of a nine-inning major league game dropped to 2 hours, 40 minutes in the first year of the pitch clock, a 24-minute decrease in a season of change that resulted in a spike in batting average and the most stolen bases in nearly 40 years.

Left-handed hitters benefitted from the new restrictions on defensive shifts, runners took advantage of the slightly decreased distance between bases, and average fastball velocity set another record.

The average game time dropped to its 1985 level after passing 3 hours for the first time in 2016. It reached a record 3:10 in 2021 before the introduction of the PitchCom electronic pitch-calling device helped bring it down to 3:04 last year. Over the objections of the players’ association, MLB instituted a pitch clock set at 15 seconds with bases empty and 20 seconds with runners on base.

“It took some getting used to, but once you got used to it the game’s a lot faster,” Minne-

sota shortstop Carlos Correa said. “There’s not wasted time. The pace was great, so I think it’s here to stay.”

There were nine 3 1/2-hour games, down from a record 390 in 2021.

“I think it’s gone smoothly,” Los Angeles Dodgers catcher Will Smith said. “It’s nice for you to get home a bit earlier. You don’t have the 4-hour games anymore.”

Miami had the fastest average at just under 2:35, while Baltimore and San Diego topped the majors at 2:44.

MLB’s clock will remain the same for the postseason, which averaged 3:23 for nine-inning games last year.

“There are bigger moments, bigger things where we do need to step back and think about something we just did or think about something that we’re going to be doing pitch-wise or swing-wise,” said Zack Wheeler, who starts Philadelphia’s playoffs opener against Miami on Tuesday. “I’m not a big fan of the pitch clock, but it is what it is.”

Phillies catcher J.T. Realmuto

thought about how to cope with the clock in October.

“We are going to have to be a little more cognizant of taking the time and maybe using our extra mound visits or finding ways to slow the game down for our pitchers,” he said.

As part of the clock, MLB instituted penalties for violations that included balls against pitchers and strikes against batters. The New York Mets led with 57 violations, followed by Tampa Bay (52), Pittsburgh (51), San Diego (48) and Miami (47). Seattle had the fewest with 15.

The Pirates topped pitcher violations with 41, followed by the Yankees with 37 and the Mets and Rays with 36 each. The Mariners had the fewest with six. Washington led batter violations with 17, one more than the Mets and Miami. St. Louis had just two, one fewer than Baltimore and the Chicago White Sox.

Philadelphia reliever Craig Kimbrel had the most individual violations with 13, followed by Toronto starter Chris Bassitt with 12 and the Pirates’ Johan Oviedo

with 11.

Washington’s Ildemaro Vargas led batters with five.

There were just four violations of the shift rule requiring two infielders to be on the infield dirt on each side of second base when a pitch is thrown: one each by the Dodgers, Mets, Padres and White Sox.

The major league batting average rose to .248 from .243 last year, which had been its lowest since 1968. The average for left-handed batters, who benefitted most from the shift restrictions, increased 11 percentage points to .247, its highest in four years. The average for right-handed hitters rose by two percentage points to .249.

Runs increased to an average of 9.2 per game from 8.6 and stolen bases to 1.4 from 1.0 following the introduction of 18-inch square bases, up from 15 inches. That reduced the distance between first and second, and second and third, by 4 1/2 inches. The 3,503 steals were up from 2,486 last year and the most since 1987. The 80.2 percent success rate was the highest

in big league history, topping the 75.7% in 2021, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

Home runs increased to 5,868 from 5,215 but remained well below the record 6,776 of 2019.

Batters struck out 41,844 times, up from 40,812, but down from the peak of 42,823 in 2019 when they set a record for the 12th straight season.

Four-seam fastballs averaged 94.2 mph, up from 93.9 mph last year and 93.1 mph in 2015, the first year Statcast started tracking.

There were 3,880 pitches of 100 mph or more, an increase from 3,368 last year and 1,829 in 2021. Pitchers threw four-seam fastballs 32.2% of the time, down from 33.2% in 2022 and a Statcast-era peak of 36% in 2016.

Visiting teams went 105-96 in extra-inning games in the first year the rule starting extra innings with a runner on second was made permanent. Visitors have a 368-358 edge in extra innings since the rule was first adopted as a pandemic alteration in 2020; from 2017-19, home teams had a 312-294 advantage.

Trump begins trial in New York lawsuit accusing him of lying about wealth

By **MICHAEL R. SISAK,**
JAKE OFFENHARTZ
and **JENNIFER PELTZ**

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Aggrieved and defiant, former President Donald Trump spent a day in court Monday for the sometimes testy start of a trial in a fraud lawsuit that could cost him control of Trump Tower and other prized properties.

"Disgraceful trial," he declared during a lunch break, after listening to lawyers for New York Attorney General Letitia James excoriate him as a habitual liar. The state's lawsuit accuses the business mogul-turned-politician and his company of deceiving banks, insurers and others by misstating his wealth for years in financial statements.

"They were lying year after year after year," Kevin Wallace, a lawyer in James' office, said as Trump sat at the defense table. He looked straight ahead, arms crossed, facing away from a screen that showed details of Wallace's presentation.

Trump denies wrongdoing and voluntarily attended a trial that he called a "sham," a "scam," a waste of the state's time and "a continuation of the single greatest witch hunt of all time." Currently the Republican front-runner in the 2024 presidential race, he reiterated claims that James, a Democrat, is trying to thwart his bid to return to the White House.

"What we have here is an attempt to hurt me in an election," he said outside court, adding, "I

don't think the people of this country are going to stand for it."

Trump sneered at James as he passed her on his way out at lunchtime; she left smiling. Meanwhile, his campaign immediately began fundraising off the appearance.

But Trump left for the day claiming he'd scored a victory, pointing to comments that he viewed as Judge Arthur Engoron coming around to the defense view that most of the suit's allegations are too old.

The judge suggested that testimony about Trump's 2011 financial statement was beyond the legal time limit. Wallace promised to link it to a more recent loan agreement, but Trump took the judge's remarks as an "outstanding" development for him.

Engoron ruled last week that Trump committed fraud in his business dealings. If upheld on appeal, the ruling could force Trump to give up New York properties including Trump Tower, a Wall Street office building, golf courses and a suburban estate. Trump has called it a "a corporate death penalty" and insisted the judge, a Democrat, is unfair and out to get him.

The non-jury trial concerns six remaining claims in the lawsuit, including allegations of conspiracy, insurance fraud and falsifying business records. Engoron said that neither side sought a jury and that state law doesn't allow for juries when suits seek not only money but a court order setting out something a defendant must do or not do.

James is seeking \$250 million in penalties and a ban on Trump doing business in New York.

"No matter how powerful you are, and no matter how much money you think you have, no one is above the law," she said on her way into the courthouse.

Trump says that James and the judge are undervaluing such assets as his Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Florida. He and his lawyers also maintain that disclaimers on his financial statements made clear that they were estimates and that banks would have to perform their own analysis.

The former president, his two eldest sons, Trump Organization executives and fixer-turned-foe Michael Cohen are all listed among dozens of potential witnesses.

Trump isn't expected to testify for several weeks. His trip to court Monday marked a remarkable departure from his past practice.

Trump didn't go to court as either a witness or a spectator when his company and one of its top executives was convicted of tax fraud last year. He didn't show, either, for a civil trial earlier this year in which a jury found him liable for sexually assaulting the writer E. Jean Carroll in a department store dressing room.

This time, "I wanted to watch this witch hunt myself," he said outside court.

In a recent court filing, James' office alleged Trump exaggerated his wealth by as much as \$3.6 billion.

He claimed his three-story Trump Tower penthouse, replete

with gold-plated fixtures, was nearly three times its actual size and worth \$327 million, far more than any New York City apartment ever has fetched, James said. He valued Mar-a-Lago as high as \$739 million — more than 10 times a more reasonable estimate of its worth, James maintained.

"Every estimate was determined by Mr. Trump," Wallace said in his opening statement. He pointed to pretrial testimony by Trump Organization figures and ex-insiders including Cohen, who said the company estimated assets to get to a predetermined number "that Mr. Trump wanted."

Wallace said the alleged scheme got the company better loan rates, saving it \$100 million in interest.

"They hid their weaknesses and convinced these banks to take on hundreds of millions of dollars in risk," he said, adding, "While the defendants can exaggerate to Forbes magazine or on television, they cannot do it while conducting business in the state of New York."

Defense lawyers said the financial statements were legitimate representations of prime properties that can command top dollar.

"That is not fraud. That is real estate," attorney Alina Habba said in an opening statement. She accused the attorney general's office of "setting a very dangerous precedent for all business owners in the state of New York."

Defense experts will testify that valuing properties is subjective, Trump attorneys said. He and his lawyers have also argued that no

one was harmed by anything in the financial statements, which were given to banks to secure loans and to financial magazines to justify his place among the world's billionaires.

Banks that made loans to him were fully repaid. Business partners made money. And Trump's own company flourished.

Defense lawyer Christopher Kise blasted last week's fraud ruling, telling the judge he shouldn't have made a decision before hearing expert trial testimony on property valuations. Engoron, tiring of the defense's criticism, shot back: "Respectfully, what's that expression? You're stalking the dead horse here."

Testimony began Monday afternoon with Donald Bender, a longtime partner at accounting firm Mazars LLP, describing how he spent 50 to 60 hours a year preparing Trump's financial statements. Mazars cut ties with Trump last year after James' office raised questions about the documents' reliability.

James' lawsuit is one of several legal headaches for Trump as he campaigns to return to the White House. He has been indicted four times since March, accused of plotting to overturn his 2020 election loss to Democrat Joe Biden, hoarding classified documents and falsifying business records related to hush money paid on his behalf. He has pleaded not guilty to all the allegations.

The New York fraud trial is expected to last into December, Engoron said.

U.S. government sues Union Pacific over using flawed test

They are accused of using the test to disqualify color blind railroad workers

By **JOSH FUNK**
AP Business Writer

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The federal government has joined more than a dozen former workers in suing Union Pacific over the way it used a vision test to disqualify workers the railroad believed were color blind and might have trouble reading signals telling them to stop a train.

The lawsuit announced Monday by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission on behalf of 21 former workers is the first the government filed in what could eventually be hundreds — if not thousands — of lawsuits over the way Union Pacific disqualified people with a variety of health issues.

These cases were once going to be part of a class-action lawsuit that the railroad estimated might include as many as 7,700 people who had to undergo what is called a "fitness-for-duty" review between 2014 and 2018.

Lawyers for the plaintiffs estimate nearly 2,000 of those people faced restrictions that kept them off the job for at least two years if not indefinitely. But the railroad hasn't significantly changed its policies since making that estimate in an earlier legal filing, meaning the number has likely grown in the past five years. More than three dozen lawsuits have been filed so far with many more cases still being reviewed by the EEOC.

Union Pacific has vigorously defended itself in court and refused to enter into settlement talks with the EEOC. The railroad has said it believes it was necessary to disqualify workers to ensure safety because it believed they had trouble seeing colors or developed health conditions such as seizures, heart problems or diabetes that could lead to them becoming incapacitated. They also noted federal rules require color vision testing.

"It is critical for the safety of our employees and communities where we operate that conductors and locomotive engineers correctly see and interpret the various signals that direct train movement," railroad spokeswoman Kristen South said.

Often the railroad made its decisions after reviewing medical records and disqualified many even if their own doctors recommended they be allowed to return to work.

Railroad safety has been a key concern nationwide this year ever since a Norfolk Southern train derailed in eastern Ohio near the Pennsylvania line in February and spilled hazardous chemicals that caught fire, prompting evacuations in East Palestine. That wreck inspired a number of proposed reforms from Congress and regulators that have yet to be approved.

"Everyone wants railroads to be safe," said Gregory Gochanour, regional attorney for the EEOC's Chicago District. "However, firing qualified, experienced employees for failing an invalid test of color vision does nothing to promote safety, and violates the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)."

This lawsuit focuses on a vision test that Union Pacific developed called the "light cannon" test that involves asking workers to identify the color of a light on a device placed a quarter of a mile away from the test taker. The EEOC said in its lawsuit that the test doesn't replicate real world conditions or show whether workers can accurately identify railroad signals.

Some of the workers who sued had failed Union Pacific's "light cannon" test but passed another vision test that has the approval of the Federal Railroad Administration. The other workers who sued had failed both tests but presented medical evidence to the railroad that they didn't have a color vision problem that would keep them from identifying signals.

The workers involved in the lawsuit were doing their jobs successfully for Union Pacific for between two and 30 years without any safety problems. The workers represented in the EEOC lawsuit worked for the company in Minnesota, Illinois, Arizona, Idaho, California, Kansas, Nebraska, Oregon, Washington, and Texas.

Attorney Anthony Petru, who represents a number of the former UP workers, said the "light cannon" test is so unreliable that the railroad's own experts have testified that it would disqualify a quarter of the workers with perfect vision.

"The last thing we would do is take any steps to try to put anybody in charge of a freight train who is unsafe because of their physical characteristics," Petru said.

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Labor leader, Democratic insider chosen to fill Feinstein's Senate seat

By MICHAEL R. BLOOD and ADAM BEAM
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — When California Gov. Gavin Newsom needed to fill the U.S. Senate seat of his late mentor Dianne Feinstein, he could have turned to a big-city mayor, a member of Congress or a powerful legislator.

Instead, he chose Laphonza Butler, a former union leader and Democratic insider who heads a national organization that raises money for women candidates who support abortion rights. She offered a familiar face who shares his vision for a progressive California. In choosing Butler, he also elevated someone who could become an important ally for a potential national campaign that many see in his future.

Once she is sworn in, Butler will be the only Black woman in the Senate and the first openly LGBTQ+ California senator. That, alongside her background in the labor and women's rights movements, helps harden Newsom's ties to important national Democratic constituencies.

Speaking to reporters Monday in San Francisco, Newsom praised Butler's "deep knowledge" of the legislative process and said she was the kind of candi-

date he would build "if I had to literally design from my imagination."

"She's the only choice," he added.

Few voters outside workaday Democratic politics would recognize her name, but Butler is well known inside the party apparatus. Her credentials include working for nearly two years with a consulting firm tied closely to the governor and founded by his top political lieutenants. She also served as a senior adviser to Kamala Harris's 2020 presidential campaign and headed Emily's List, the abortion rights group.

While Newsom could have sought a marquee name to fill the seat, "a comfort level is important. Any governor might be a little hesitant about somebody with too many degrees of separation," said Claremont McKenna College political scientist Jack Pitney.

But Newsom's choice will not be universally welcome. A competitive race for Feinstein's seat is already underway among three prominent House Democrats, Reps. Katie Porter, Adam Schiff and Barbara Lee, who is Black. The governor has said he didn't want to tip the scales in the 2024 race by choosing among those candidates. Butler has not said if she

intends to run for a full term, a decision she must make by Dec. 8.

Newsom said he told Butler to "do what you think is best for you and the state of California, and you make that judgment completely independent of any expectations from me."

Her selection drew swift criticism from Republicans, who have long struggled in a liberal-leaning state where Democrats haven't lost a statewide election since 2006.

"The last thing we need are more union activists in government," tweeted GOP Assemblyman Bill Essayli.

Butler has yet to appear in public since the appointment was announced by Newsom's office Sunday. She is expected to be sworn in Tuesday in Washington by Harris, the last Black woman to serve in the Senate.

"For women and girls, for workers and unions, for struggling parents waiting for our leaders to bring opportunity back to their homes, for all of California, I'm ready to serve," she said in a statement.

Newsom faced intense pressure from Black political leaders and advocacy groups to appoint Lee to the seat after he pledged to name a Black woman should Feinstein be unable to finish her term. Though

most of those groups praised Butler, their displeasure at Newsom for snubbing Lee is likely to simmer.

State Sen. Steven Bradford, vice chair of the California Legislative Black Caucus, said he was disappointed Newsom bypassed Lee, "who is simply unmatched in her values, vision and lived experiences."

Aimee Allison, who founded She the People, a political advocacy network for women of color that also supported Lee, said in a statement she would be "delighted by the prospect of multiple talented Black women running for the Senate" in California and elsewhere.

Ballots for the March 5 primary will be mailed to voters in early February, leaving just a narrow window for Butler to raise money in a state where a statewide campaign can easily cost \$20 million or more.

Butler, 44, comes from a working-class family. Her father, a small-business owner, died from a terminal illness when she was 16. Her mother worked as a classroom aide, a home care provider, a security guard and a bookkeeper while caring for Butler and her two siblings, the governor's office said.

She has never held public office.

Butler was elected president of the state's largest labor union in the early 2010s, back when the nation was reeling from the Great Recession.

"Laphonza had this ability to get to what was in people's hearts," said Arnulfo De La Cruz, the union's current president who at the time was elected with Butler as the union's executive vice president. "She could connect with members from completely different backgrounds in all places across the state."

That work culminated in 2016 when former Gov. Jerry Brown signed a law to raise the statewide minimum wage to \$15 per hour. De La Cruz said Butler was the union's chief negotiator.

"The ability to be effective in politics is maybe a little bit about perception but certainly a lot about strength and your ability to elect people or unseat them," De La Cruz said.

Democratic state Sen. Maria Elena Durazo, a former officer in the Los Angeles Federation of Labor, said Butler was committed to lifting women out of poverty.

"She was very forceful

in a way that was strategic. She didn't waste a lot of words just talking when she spoke," Durazo said. "She was considered very powerful. She didn't abuse that power."

Butler left the labor movement for campaign consulting, joining a firm alongside top advisers to Newsom and Harris. She was a senior adviser on Harris's campaign for president, which started to much fanfare but fizzled as she struggled to raise money and hone her message.

Butler has also worked for corporate clients, including Airbnb and Uber.

Newsom, who was elected governor in 2018, has now chosen both of the state's U.S. senators. The selection of Butler bears resemblance to the last time, when he tapped his close friend and confidant for the job, now-Sen. Alex Padilla.

At the time, Newsom was under pressure to select a Black woman to fill the seat of Harris, who is Black. His choice of Padilla, the state's first Latino senator, ranked Black leadership in the state who saw the seat as their own.

Fed's Powell gets an earful about inflation and interest rates from small businesses

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
AP Economics Writer

YORK, Pa. (AP) — Federal Reserve officials typically gather many of their insights and observations about the economy from some of the top Ph.D. economists in Washington.

On a visit Monday to York, Pennsylvania, Chair Jerome Powell got an earful from a group with a decidedly different perspective: Small-business people who are grappling personally with inflation, high interest rates, labor shortages and other challenges of the post-pandemic economy.

Powell, along with Patrick Harker, head of the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, traveled to York to learn about the efforts of the long-time manufacturing hub, where York Peppermint Patties were once made, to diversify its economy.

The businesspeople they spoke with were generally optimistic but expressed a range of concerns: They are still having trouble finding all the workers they need. Higher interest rates have discouraged some of them from expanding. And higher costs and a chronic difficulty in acquiring enough supplies have persisted.

"We were a little blindsided by inflation," said Julie Flinchbaugh Keene, co-owner of Flinchbaugh's Orchard & Farm Market, who spoke to Powell and Harker at the Gather 256 coffee shop while the two Fed officials conducted

a walking tour. Since the pandemic struck more than three years ago, she said, "predictability is just gone. It's very hard to operate a business without predictability."

Keene noted that her parents had experienced high inflation when they ran the business back in the 1980s. But the company was much smaller then and had no employees. As a result, her father said, "I don't have any wisdom to give you."

"We'll get inflation down," Powell said after listening to her concerns.

During his tour of downtown York, Powell also met Jennifer Heasley, owner of Sweet Mama's Mambo Sauce, who makes a barbecue-style sauce and owns a food stall in the York Central Market.

When asked before his visit what she would most want to tell Powell, Heasley said, "Lower interest rates."

Heasley said she is paying a much higher rate now on her credit cards, which she sometimes uses to fund her business.

Powell's visit occurred as the Fed is monitoring the economy for signs that its streak of rate increases are having their desired effect and that inflation is continuing to cool. At their most recent meeting two weeks ago, Fed officials signaled confidence about a so-called "soft landing," in which inflation would fall back to their 2 percent target without a deep recession. The policymakers predicted that

inflation would fall to about 2.6 percent by the end of 2024, with only a small rise in the unemployment rate.

But given its confidence in the economy's resilience, the Fed also signaled that it expects to keep its benchmark rate higher for longer, potentially raising it once more this year and keeping it above 5 percent well into 2024.

Inflation has dwindled from a four-decade high of 9.1 percent in June 2022 to 3.7 percent in August. In the meantime, the unemployment rate has defied predictions by remaining low while the economy has continued to expand.

Before the walking tour, Powell and Harker conducted a roundtable discussion with several business owners and executives, nonprofit leaders and educators.

Kevin Schreiber, CEO of the York County Economic Alliance, a business development group, told reporters that the local economy is growing at a healthy pace. At the same time, Schreiber said, many business people are worried about the next 12 to 18 months and the prospect that interest rates will stay high and inflation won't be fully conquered.

A lack of child care is another top problem for many businesses in the area, Schreiber said, because it keeps many parents out of the workforce.

Schreiber said there were 219 child care centers in the area before the pandemic. Now, there are only

170. Many of the remaining centers are operating at less than full capacity because of staffing shortages.

Tom Palisin, executive director of The Manufacturer's Association, who took part in the roundtable, said later that higher interest rates have led many local companies to pull back on acquisitions and investments in new technology.

"Companies want to invest," he said, "but they've hit the pause button."

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North Dakota state senator, his wife and 2 kids killed in Utah plane crash

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — A state senator from North Dakota, his wife and their two young children died when the small plane they were traveling in crashed soon after a refueling stop in Utah, a Senate leader said Monday.

Doug Larsen's death was confirmed Monday in an email that Republican Senate Majority Leader David Hogue sent to his fellow senators and was obtained by The Associated Press.

The plane crashed Sunday evening shortly after taking off from Canyonlands Airfield about 15 miles (24 kilometers) north of the desert recreation town of Moab, according to a Grand County Sheriff's Department statement posted on Facebook. The sheriff's office said the senator was the pilot and all four people on board the plane were killed.

"Senator Doug Larsen, his wife Amy, and their two young children died in a plane crash last evening in Utah," Hogue wrote in his email. "They were visiting family in Scottsdale and returning home. They stopped to refuel in Utah."

"I'm not sure where the bereavement starts with such a tragedy, but I think it starts with prayers for the grandparents, surviving stepchild of Senator Larsen, and extended family of Doug and Amy," Hogue wrote. "Hold your family close today."

A bouquet of roses was draped over Larsen's desk in the Senate chamber, just above the nameplate that reads: "D. Larsen - District 34."

The crash of the single-engine Piper plane was being investigated, the National Transportation Safety Board said in a post

on X, the social media website formerly called Twitter.

An NTSB spokesman said a board investigator was expected to arrive at the scene Monday "to begin to document the scene, examine the aircraft, request any air traffic communications, radar data, weather reports and try to contact any witnesses. Also, the investigator will request maintenance records of the aircraft, and medical records and flight history of the pilot."

Officials didn't release the plane's origin or final destination. After landing at the airport, the travelers took a car into Moab before taking off in the refueled plane, NTSB spokesman Fabian Salazar said at a news conference at the airport.

The agency will have a preliminary report on the crash within a couple weeks, followed by a final report in a year to year and a half, Salazar said.

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Spartz defends anti-checkoff amendment before it fails in the House

By SABRINA HALVORSON

Hoosier Ag Today

Representative Victoria Spartz's (R-IN-5th) controversial anti-checkoff amendment to the Ag Appropriations Bill failed before the full House late Wednesday. Before the vote, she defended her amendment proposal on the House Floor late Tuesday night.

"So, if you want to force farmers to pay some money, I think part of what farmers need to know where the money goes. You know? Do they promote commodities or promote very wealthy jobs for ... people in fancy suits? Farmers work hard for this money," she said. "So, my amendment has two parts. To have more transparency with trying to do the Farm Bill, but also, you know, no taxpayer's money should be used unless we know what's happening with this checkoff dollars."

The amendment would have prevented taxpayer money from being used for checkoff programs. However, opponents point out that checkoffs are paid for by producer dues and no taxpayer money is going to the programs, therefore the amendment was unnecessary.

Rep. Glenn G.T. Thompson (R-PA-15th), who also serves as House Agriculture Committee Chairman, gave a voice to the opposition on the House Floor. "Research and Promotion programs, commonly referred to as checkoffs are time-tested programs that expand markets, increase consumer demand, develop new uses for those covered commodities, and quite frankly ... helps to fund the resources needed to be able to deal with issues related to those crops or those commodities. These programs are voluntarily created by producers for producers, and they receive no taxpayer dollars for any other activities or for USDA oversight of their activities," he said.

Thompson said the debate about checkoffs should be considered during Farm Bill deliberations not the current ag appropriations bill because no funds from the ag appropriations bill goes to the programs. After a voice vote late Tuesday on the sparsely populated House Floor was deemed in favor, Thompson requested a recorded vote, which was held the next day.

The final tally Wednesday evening was 49 in favor, 377 against. Among the 377 who voted down Spartz's amendment, 190 were Democrats, while 187 were Republicans—among her own party. Following the defeat of her amendment, Spartz made the following statement on her Twitter, or "X" social media account: "That's how we measure the depth of the swamp—almost 400 people deep. Thank you to the 49 of my colleagues who are willing to stand with Main Street—not K Street or Wall Street!" said Spartz.

Among Spartz's colleagues in the House who voted with her in favor of her amendment were Republican Representatives Matt Gaetz (R-FL-1st), Lauren Boebert (R-CO-3rd), and Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-GA-14th)—while House Democrats who voted for the Spartz amendment included Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY-14th), Ilhan Omar (D-MN-5th), and Rashida Tlaib (D-MI-12th).

McDonald's says 'thank you' to Indiana farmers

By CJ MILLER

Hoosier Ag Today

The next time you and your family walk into a McDonald's or go through their drive thru, it's likely that the pork in your Sausage Egg McMuffin® and the milk in your milkshake came from Indiana's farms. That's because the McDonald's system buys a lot of these products from farms and suppliers across the state.

"We absolutely love the agriculture industry in Indiana. It's a neat partnership that we get to have with them," says Paul Jedele, who owns nine McDonald's franchise restaurants around Greencastle, Crawfordsville, and west-central Indiana with his brother Tim.

He is taking the time during National 4-H Week to thank Indiana's farmers.

"We spend about \$30 million a year in the McDonald's supply system purchasing from Indiana farmers," according to Jedele. "That yields 44 million pounds of product that are coming from our fields and our communities. It's just a pretty staggering number when you think about it—and it's a great story to tell."

The McDonald's system also buys 13 million pounds of pork, 12.5 million pounds of sugar, and millions of gallons of milk—all from Indiana farmers. In addition, the McDonald's system also buys millions of eggs, as well as millions of pounds of flour from Indiana suppliers.

Jedele says the support that McDonald's gives to Indiana farmers goes beyond National 4-H Week. "We find ways to get involved with 4-H," says Jedele. "I do local presentations at some schools in my counties that are celebrating 4-H. My brother and I sponsor 4-H activities as well."

He also thanks Indiana farmers for their hard work and dedication to providing quality products to the McDonald's system.

"Great food starts with great farmers and suppliers. That's a tough job," says Jedele. "I watch the farmers, especially at harvest time. They're out late at night. I'll be leaving a restaurant at 9:00 or 10:00 at night and I still see the farmers out harvesting in the middle of night with their lights. It just shows the dedication to keeping food on the shelves for all of us to survive. We greatly appreciate the effort of the farmers and the legacy they're creating for future generations as well."

They're next-generation owner-operators, so we purchased our restaurants off of our father. We realize that supporting the youth helps us for our future and the agriculture needs of Indiana, so I think it's so critical to be able to focus on the youth."

They're next-generation owner-operators, so we purchased our restaurants off of our father. We realize that supporting the youth helps us for our future and the agriculture needs of Indiana, so I think it's so critical to be able to focus on the youth."

USDA will issue \$1.75B of emergency relief to farmers

By AGDAILY

The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that they will begin issuing more than \$1.75 billion in emergency relief payments to eligible farmers and livestock producers. These much-needed payments are helping farming and ranching operations recover following natural disasters in 2020, 2021, and 2022.

"USDA provides substantial economic support for America's farmers and ranchers through its critical farm program payments. These payments are reflective of the incredible and cumulative financial hits brought on by devastating natural disasters that agricultural producers nationwide have endured while fulfilling their commitment to produce our food, fiber and fuel," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "This additional assistance helps offset the tremendous losses that these producers faced and is a valuable investment, not only for farmers and ranchers but in the economic successes of our communities — rural and urban — and in our nation's food security for generations to come."

Emergency Livestock Relief Program

This week, FSA will issue more than \$581 million in 2021 and 2022 drought and wildfire emergency relief to eligible ranchers.

FSA is closing out the Emergency Livestock Relief Program for losses suffered in 2021. ELRP Phase Two payments are estimated at \$115.7 million. Ranchers who lost grazing acres due to drought and wildfire and received assistance through ELRP Phase One will soon receive an additional payment through ELRP Phase Two. This second payment will be equal to 20 percent of the 2021 gross ELRP Phase One payment. ELRP Phase Two payments to producers will be automatic with no application required. In April 2022, FSA staff processed more than 100,000 payments through ELRP Phase One and paid eligible ranchers more than \$600 million for 2021 grazing losses.

In 2022, ranchers continued to experience significant loss of grazing acres due to drought and wildfire. To help mitigate these losses, eligible ranchers will receive ELRP disaster assistance payments for increases in supplemental feed costs. To expedite payments, determine producer eligibility and calculate the ELRP 2022 payment, FSA is using livestock inventories and drought-affected forage acreage or restricted animal units and grazing days due to wildfire already reported to FSA by ranchers when they submitted their Livestock Forage Disaster Program applications. ELRP payments for 2022 losses are estimated at \$465.4 million and will be automatic with no application required.

Emergency Relief Program Phase Two FSA is closing out Phase Two of the Emergency Relief Program this week through the delivery of more than \$1.17 billion in crop disaster assistance payments to producers of eligible crops who suffered losses, measured through decreases in revenue, due to qualifying natural disaster events that occurred in calendar years 2020 and 2021. ERP Phase Two was intended primarily for producers of crops that were not covered by federal crop insurance or FSA's Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). Previously, through ERP Phase one, FSA staff processed more than 300,000 applications and paid an estimated 217,000 eligible producers more than \$7.4 billion.

More information

These programs represent a few of FSA's extensive commodity, conservation, credit, disaster recovery and safety-net programs. By the close of the fiscal year on Sept. 30, for all farm and farm loan programs — including vital access to capital for distressed borrowers — USDA, through the delivery of FSA programs, will have invested more than \$19 billion in America's agricultural producers with more economic support on the way in fiscal year 2024.

For more information on available FSA programs, contact your local USDA Service Center.

For more information on available FSA programs, contact your local USDA Service Center.

WFBF: What an expiring Farm Bill means for farmers

By AGDAILY

The farm bill is an all-encompassing, multiyear law that governs an array of agricultural and food programs. Expiring every five years, it provides an opportunity for policymakers to address a broad range of agricultural and food programs.

In the past, farm bills have primarily focused on commodity programs that support a handful of staple commodities — corn, soybeans, wheat, cotton, rice, dairy and sugar. This year's farm bill will address similar commodities, and the process won't be all that different from years past.

Each farm bill is different, but recent farm bills have faced legislative hurdles for enactment, from insufficient passage votes to presidential vetoes. Extensions are sometimes needed to make it to the finish line. The 2002 farm bill was the last farm bill to be enacted before its fiscal year expiration. The 2008 and 2014 farm bills were each enacted during extensions of the previous farm bill.

The last farm bill to expire was in 2012 and had some unique circumstances. The 2008 farm bill was authorized until the end of 2012 but was extended for a short period under appropriations acts. The 112th Congress was about to end legislatively, so a one-year extension of all provisions was enacted to cover fiscal year 2013 and the 2013 crop year. Programs that required mandatory funding did not continue in fiscal year 2013 because no additional mandatory funding was provided during the extension.

Depending on the program, the timing and consequences of farm bill expiration vary. There are two principal expiration dates for the farm bill: the end of the fiscal year (Sep. 30) and the end of the crop year (Dec. 31). For programs with mandatory spending — nutrition and conservation — the fiscal deadline has far more consequences. Farm commodity support programs, on the other hand, are authorized on the basis of crop years. For those programs, December 31 is far more important.

The first commodity harvested in the 2024 crop year (and thus not covered by the 2018 farm bill) is dairy on January 1, 2024, since cows are milked every day of the year. Without reauthorization of commodity support programs, like the Dairy Margin Coverage program, dairy is the first commodity to face the realities of a farm bill expiration. New plantings of other commodities harvested in 2024 — such as wheat, corn, or soybeans — would not be affected until harvest in the summer or fall of 2024, when their respective marketing years would begin.

The type of funding the program receives also affects the consequences of the expiration and extension. Programs that rely on mandatory funding are the most at risk of interruption if a farm bill expires. Without reauthorization or an extension, these programs generally cease to operate following a farm bill expiration.

Federal crop insurance programs are permanently authorized and funded by the Federal Crop Insurance Act. The program does not expire with the 2018 farm bill. In addition, there are several agricultural disaster programs for livestock that were previously authorized by farm bills and are not subject to the farm bill expiration. Those programs include Livestock Indemnity Program, Livestock Forage Disaster Program, Emergency Assistance for Livestock, honey bees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program.

If Congress fails to pass a new bill by January 1, 2024, some programs would revert back to the 1940s-era policy that would see the U.S. Department of Agriculture buying dairy products off the market, driving up consumer prices. This is something no one in the dairy or agriculture industry wants to occur, further adding to the importance of an extension.

Department of Agriculture buying dairy products off the market, driving up consumer prices. This is something no one in the dairy or agriculture industry wants to occur, further adding to the importance of an extension.

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Is it too late for an honest marriage?

Dear Annie: I'm not sure if you print household tips, but the following was really helpful to us this summer. After reading my small air conditioner unit's owner's manual, I always thought that I just needed to clean the filter monthly with a vacuum. After removing the front panel, however, I realized that more extensive cleaning needed to be done. There was quite a bit of dust and grime in there. A six-minute YouTube video helped me to give it a safe, deeper cleaning using household materials.

By unplugging the unit, cleaning the filter with dishwashing liquid in the sink, cleaning the fins gently with a toothbrush and compressed air, and spritzing the outer panel with hydrogen peroxide, the unit was as good as new. After allowing everything to dry and replacing the parts, I then plugged it in. I'm not sure if it's a coincidence, but colds and upper respiratory issues, which my husband and I had been plagued with over the summer, cleared up within a few days! — Helpful Household Tips

Dear Household Tips: Thank you for these tips on keeping your air quality clean. I don't think it's a coincidence that you are having fewer cold and flu issues. Clean air equals clean lungs and body.

Dear Annie: I've been married for 47 years and realized early on that my husband was an in-the-closet gay man. He admits he used me to keep people and family from knowing. I've tried to leave him, but I always go back because he promises to not cheat anymore with other men. But it stays the same. Now our children are grown, and it's just the two of us. He has a lot of health issues and claims he needs me to be there for him.

Also, we don't have marital relations anymore. Actually, it has been over 20 years. I'm so lonely and long

to be touched and romanced, but I'm 74 now, and I don't think I will ever find that in my life. I care about him so much, but I feel used, and I am very resentful toward him. I'm so depressed. I just don't know what to do. I can't leave now due to finances. — I Think I'm Stuck

Dear Stuck: It sounds like he thought the two of you had an arrangement in your marriage but that arrangement is simply not working for you. What your husband did was selfish and cruel. And it is no wonder you are depressed. You deserve to be romanced and told the truth from the beginning. The good news is that it is not too late. It is time to leave your husband with the understanding that the two of you can still be friends. You are just leaving him as a wife.

Once you get away from the toxic situation you are in, then you should seek the help of a professional therapist who can help you sort out the understandable anger you have toward him and the grief you will feel mourning all the years spent in a relationship that was built on false pretenses.

"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. Visit http://www.creatorspublishing.com for more information. Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

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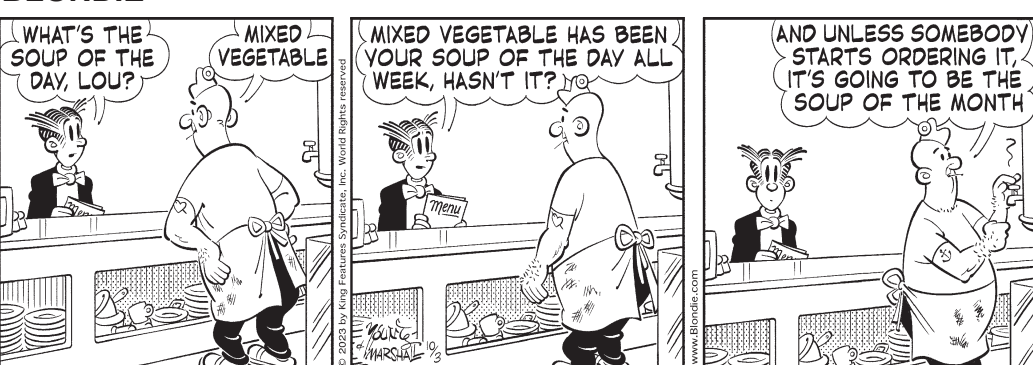
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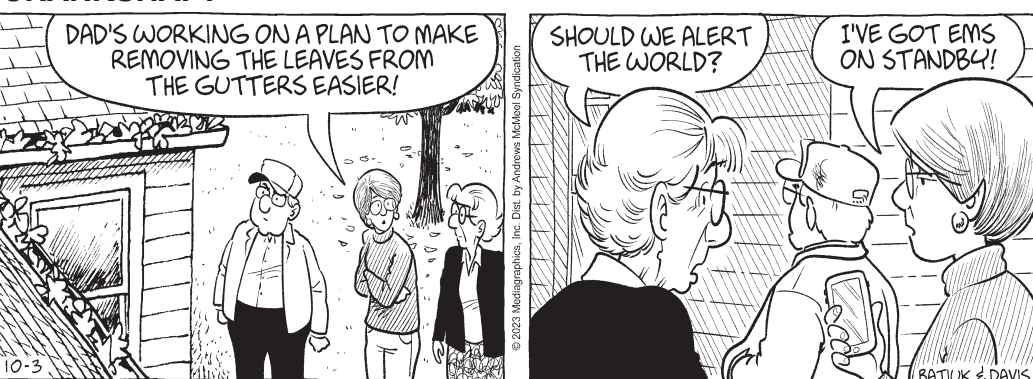
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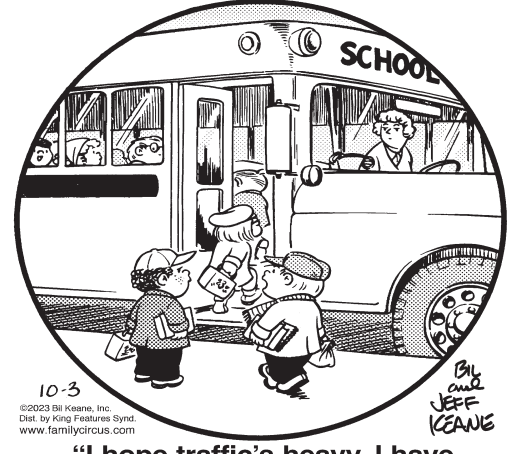
CRANKSHAFT



THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane

The LOCKHORNS



My Answer

By Dr. Billy Graham



Those who keep Heaven in view remain serene in the darkest of days

Q: Often people speak of having a worldview. What does it mean to have a worldview and what determines a right worldview — religion, political agendas, personal perspective? — W.V.

A: There are certain special privileges that only the true Christian can enjoy. There is, for example, the privilege of having divine wisdom and guidance continually. The Bible says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him" (James 1:5).

The Christian also has a worldview. This worldview sets forth God's purpose and the end toward

which all are proceeding. It assures us that in spite of men's war upon each other and in spite of the destructive forces of nature that seem to hold us in their grip, God is still on the throne and in command of everything. Satan himself is held back by God's power and given an opportunity to exercise his evil influence only as God sees fit and only as long as God has a definite plan for each period of history, for every nation, and for every individual. The Scripture discloses God's plan for the return of Christ when His kingdom shall be established. So you see, for the Christian, life has a plan and an assurance that God will ultimately triumph over all unrighteousness.

All false religions cut away parts of God's revelation, add ideas of their own, and come out with various viewpoints that differ from God's revelation in the Bible.

To sum up the superiority of the Christian life over all other ways of living, we cannot overlook the advantage that the Christian will have for all eternity. Those who keep Heaven in view remain serene in the darkest of days, knowing that Christ will someday rule.

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

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Table with columns for time slots (10:03, 11:00, etc.) and rows for various TV channels (WINM, CBS, etc.) listing programs and their descriptions.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words. Includes 'Yesterday's answer 10-3' and 'Solution time: 22 mins.'

Table with columns 1-11 and rows 1-53, representing the crossword puzzle grid.

