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Indiana is halfway through Medicaid 'unwinding'

Where does the state stand?

By WHITNEY DOWNARD
Indiana Capital Chronicle

As Indiana hits the halfway point for the Medicaid unwinding process, the rate of Hoosiers losing benefits seems to have slowed as the state reassesses the coverage of millions of beneficiaries following the expiration of pandemic protections.

However, with a total of 231,403 Hoosiers kicked off of the rolls, Indiana could potentially exceed an earlier estimate that predicted only 300,000-400,000 Hoosiers would lose coverage.

During COVID-19, the federal government barred states from purging their Medicaid rolls during the economic tumult and

enhanced their match, paying for nearly three quarters of the cost of coverage rather than the traditional two-thirds.

Indiana's rolls grew from just over 1.5 million enrollees in February of 2020 to over 2.3 million in March of 2023, the last month of protections.

Now halfway through the process of "determining" the eligibility of each enrollee, 231,403

Hoosiers no longer have Medicaid coverage, as reported by the Family and Social Services Administration for the months of April through September, the latest month available.

Cora Steinmetz, the state's Medicaid director, shared her perspective on a panel with the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission on Thursday, a body of experts who report regu-

larly to Congress about the status of government insurance programs.

Steinmetz called the process "extremely challenging" to implement as the expiration of the public health emergency kept getting delayed month after month, impacting how the agency could shore up call centers and ready their staff.

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Champions of the gridiron

The Tigers won their second consecutive championship Friday night. Top left, Bluffton football head coach Brent Kunkel gets a victory shower by members of the team following the team's win. Top right, Bluffton senior Ben Ramseyer (25) hoists the Sectional Championship Trophy while being surrounded by teammates following the Tigers win Friday night. Above, the Tigers celebrate their 41-6 Sectional Championship win over the Eastern Fighting Comets Friday night in Bluffton. **More on Page A1.** (Photos by Chad Kline)

U.S. employers pulled back on hiring in October

Adding 150,000 jobs in face of higher borrowing rates

By PAUL WISEMAN and ANNE D'INNOCENZIO
AP Economics Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — The nation's employers slowed their hiring in October, adding a modest but still decent 150,000 jobs, a sign that the labor market may be cooling but remains resilient despite high interest rates that have made borrowing much costlier for companies and consumers.

Last month's job growth, though down sharply from a robust 297,000 gain in September, was solid enough to suggest that many companies still want to hire and that the economy remains sturdy. And job growth would have been higher in October if not for the now-settled United Auto Workers' strikes. The strikes ended this week with tentative settlements in which against Detroit's automakers granted significantly better pay and benefits to the union's workers.

Friday's jobs report from the government comes as the Federal Reserve is assessing incoming economic data to determine whether to leave its key interest rate unchanged, as it did this week, or to raise it again in its drive to curb inflation. The lower job growth in October, along with a slowdown in pay gains last month, could help convince the Fed that inflation pressures will continue to cool and that further rate hikes may not be needed.

On Wall Street, traders appeared to signal their growing belief in that scenario. Bond yields fell and stock prices rose sharply after the jobs report was released, indicating optimism that the Fed will decide it won't need to impose additional rate hikes.

The unemployment rate rose last month from 3.8 percent to 3.9 percent. And in another sign of a possible softening in the labor market, the Labor Department revised down its

(Continued on Page 2)

Israel resists U.S. pressure to pause war to allow aid to Gaza

By JOSEF FEDERMAN,
BASSEM MROUE
and LEE KEATH
Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Friday pushed back against growing U.S. pressure for a "humanitarian pause" in the nearly month-old war to protect civilians and allow more aid into Gaza, insisting there would be no temporary cease-fire until the roughly 240 hostages held by

Hamas are released.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken made his third trip to Israel since the war began, reiterating American support for Israel's campaign to crush Hamas after its brutal Oct. 7 attack in southern Israel. He also echoed President Joe Biden's calls for a brief halt in the fighting to address a worsening humanitarian crisis.

Alarm has grown over spiraling Palestinian deaths and deepening misery for civilians from weeks of

Israeli bombardment and a widening ground assault that risks even greater casualties. Overwhelmed hospitals say they are nearing collapse, with medicine and fuel running low under the Israeli siege. About 1.5 million people in Gaza, or 70 percent of the population, have fled their homes, the U.N. said Friday.

Palestinians are increasingly desperate for the most basic supplies.

The average Gaza resident is

now surviving on two pieces of bread per day, much of it made from stockpiled U.N. flour, said Thomas White, Gaza director for the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees. Demands for drinking water are also growing.

"People are beyond looking for bread," he told U.N. diplomats in a video briefing from Gaza. "It's looking for water."

After talks with Netanyahu, Blinken said a temporary halt was needed to boost aid deliveries and

help win the release of the hostages Hamas took during its brutal incursion nearly a month ago.

But Netanyahu said he told Blinken that Israel was "going with full steam ahead," unless hostages are released.

U.S. officials say they are not seeking a cease-fire but short pauses in specific areas to allow aid deliveries or other humanitarian activity, after which Israeli operations would resume. Netan-

(Continued on Page 2)

Billions roll in to help fight the growing U.S. opioid epidemic

One county shows how recovery can work

By GEOFF MULVIHILL
and CARLA K. JOHNSON
Associated Press

FINDLAY, Ohio (AP) — Communities ravaged by America's opioid epidemic are starting to get their share of a \$50 billion pie from legal settlements.

Most of that money comes with a requirement that it be used to address the overdose crisis and

prevent more deaths.

But how?

It could mean that places look more like the area around Findlay. Here, conservative Hancock County has built a comprehensive system focused on both treatment and recovery by adding housing, a needle exchange, outreach workers and a community center.

"People recover in a communi-

ty," said Precia Stuby, the official who heads the county's addiction and mental health efforts. "We have to build recovery-oriented communities that support individuals."

It was 2007 when Stuby began hearing from officials about prescription opioids being misused. That was about the same time Jesse Johnson, then 14, was prescribed the painkiller Percocet.

The Findlay native was pregnant when she needed stents put into her kidneys as treatment for infections and kidney stones. After seven months on the opioid medication, she gave birth to a healthy daughter. Then she underwent an operation to remove the stents. The prescriptions stopped and she became sick from withdrawal.

"I remember not even being able to hold my daughter," said Johnson, now 31. "It just hurt."

Alcohol, marijuana and, a few years later, cocaine and opioids from the black market helped Johnson ease the pain.

By then, county officials were seeing the area's fatal opioid overdose toll tick up. The recovery system then included only some outpatient services and Alcoholics Anonymous.

"We were grossly underprepared, like I think many places

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Outside

Cloudy today
with a cool breeze

Today Sunday Monday
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Low 37 Low 41 Low 45
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Local Roundup

County Drainage Board will meet Monday afternoon

The Wells County Drainage Board will meet at 4:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 6, 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:
- Consideration of a drainage easement on the A.P. Kelley Prong Tile Drain in Jefferson Township.
 - Consideration of 2024 meeting dates and times.
 - Project updates and miscellaneous drainage matters.

County Commissioners will meet Monday evening

The Wells County Commissioners will meet at 5 p.m. Monday, Nov. 6, in Room 105, the multi-purpose room on the lower level of the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St.

The meeting will begin with a public hearing regarding a request from Mark and Karen Shaffer to vacate an alley in Petroleum.

The commissioners' regular meeting will follow the public hearing. Topics on the agenda include:

- Department updates from Sheriff Scott Holliday, Highway Supervisor Shawn Bonar and Nate Rumschlag.
- A presentation from Ron Turpin regarding the North-east Indiana Strategic Development Commission.
- An appointment with Molly Hoag representing Citizens Against Drug Abuse (CADA).
- Updates from Jessica Bricker and Chad Kline regarding Imagine Early, and Kline regarding Wells County Economic Development.
- A quarterly Wells County Public Library update from Director Sarah MacNeill and board members Matt Yergler and John Stauffer.
- Monthly reports and miscellaneous business.
- 500W Vacate Scheduling
- Right-of-Way or Utility Agreement(s)

Bluffton Board of Works to meet Wednesday afternoon

The Bluffton Board of Public Works and Safety will meet at 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 8, in the Council Chambers on the second floor of City Hall, 128 E. Market St.

- Topics on the agenda include:
- Financial matters.
 - Opening of bids for the Interurban Trail.
 - A request for the Wells County Chamber of Commerce for Parlor City Christmas.
 - A request from Ted Sprunger regarding a water line.
 - Personnel matters.
 - A request from Bluffton NOW!
 - Discussion regarding the utilities schedule of salaries.
 - Announcements

Bluffton Common Council will meet Wednesday

The Bluffton Common Council will meet at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 8, in the Council Chambers on the second

floor of City Hall, 128 E. Market St.

- Topics on the agenda include:
- The presentation of a possible welcome sign from Chandler Gerber.
 - Discussion regarding holidays and Christmas lights.
 - Consideration of an amended interlocal agreement for the Emergency Communications Department.
 - Consideration of Ordinance 1604 permitting advance payments.

Zanesville Town Council will hold executive session

The Zanesville Town Council will meet at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 7, at the Zanesville Town Hall, 17736 Wayne St., to conduct a maintenance interview, and finalize the use of COVID-19 funds and the handbook.

Visitors Commission will meet Wednesday morning

The Wells County Convention and Visitors Commission will meet at 8 a.m. Wednesday, Nov. 8, in the conference room of the Wells County Chamber of Commerce, 211 Water St. in Bluffton.

- Topics on the agenda will include:
- Financial updates
 - Strategic planning metrics
 - Marketing grant applicants
 - Monthly report
 - Discussion regarding the commission's December meeting and the Visitors Guide.

Wells County Council will meet Wednesday evening

The Wells County Council will meet at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 8, 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:
- Department requests for fund transfers and additional appropriations.
 - Appointments with Wells County Recorder Carolyn Bertsch regarding an ordinance for the recorder's perpetuation fund and Molly Hoag for Citizens Against Drug Abuse (CADA).
 - An update regarding the Wells County Health Department with Marlene Hoag, interim administrator.
 - Consideration of an amended interlocal agreement for the Emergency Communications Department.

- Miscellaneous business.
- Consideration of the 2024 salary ordinance, 2024 surveyor salary ordinance, and 2024 sheriff salary ordinance.

Bluffton parks board will meet Thursday evening

The Bluffton parks board will meet at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 9, in the Council Chambers on the second floor of City Hall, 128 E. Market St.

- Topics on the agenda include:
- Reports from the treasurer and superintendent.
 - Acceptance of donations.
 - Consideration of bids for the pickleball court and parking lot at Lancaster Park.
 - Consideration of bids for the Interurban Trail.
 - Request to purchase pool chemicals for the upcoming season.
 - Discussion regarding 2024 meeting dates.



BIDDING CLOSING NOVEMBER 5 STARTING AT 4 PM EST - Randy Rossman, owner and multiple consignors. Online only consignment auction. 1,000+ lots! Featuring furniture, household items, collectibles, antiques, tools, guns, & much more! Pick up times: Nov. 6, 1-6 p.m. & Nov. 7, 9 a.m.-noon, 3 pick up locations in Decatur. *Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC*, Kjauction.com, 260-724-7402.

NOVEMBER 5-NOVEMBER 12 - (Online Only) - Kipfer Family, seller. New Holland TL90 diesel tractor, International 706 gas tractor, 1984 Case Model 444 garden tractor, 2008 Miller 250 Bobcat welder generator, Pilot 24-volt fork lift charger, Marathon, Shell, other gasoline plastic signs, Fenton, Lladro, Carnival, Vaseline, Royal Dalton, RS Prussia glassware, antique & modern furniture. Preview: Nov. 9 from 3 p.m.-6 p.m., 6345 W 200 S-1, Bluffton. Sale manager, Patrick Carter, *The Steffen Group Inc.*, 260-824-3006, www.steffengrp.com.

NOVEMBER 17-NOVEMBER 24 - (Online Only Auction) - Fiechter, seller. 2357 N. Main St., Bluffton. Glock, Smith & Wesson, Sig Sauer, Ruger, Beretta, Remington, Century Arms, Kel-Tec, Kahr, Savage Arms, Winchester, Bushmaster, Saltwater Arms, handguns, pistols, rifles, shotguns. Preview: Nov. 21 from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and Nov. 22 from 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Bluffton Gun & Pawn. Sale manager, Isaac Stoller, *The Steffen Group Inc.*, 260-824-3006, www.steffengrp.com.

NOVEMBER 27 - 6 p.m. - Pamela & Rick Myers, owners. Auction conducted at Wells County 4-H Community Center, 1240 4-H Park Road, Bluffton, IN. Land located at County Rd. 100 N & State Rd. 116, NW corner of Bluffton. 118.91 acres, Sec. 28 & 33, Lancaster Twp., Wells County. These farms will be offered in the following tracts, and/or combined. Tract 1: 26.18 acres. Tract 2: 92.73 acres. Auctioneer: Jody Holloway, 260-273-0999, *Holloway Auction Company, Inc.*, 260-824-5060, www.HollowayAuction.com.

DECEMBER 1 - 8 a.m. - Secured creditors & various consignors, owners. 815 Adams St., Decatur. Truck & equipment auction. Live and online bidding. Offering 700+ lots! 2012-2014 Freightliner M2106 box trucks, dump trucks, day cabs, sleepers, utility trucks, bucket, trucks, utility & semi trailers, SUV's, pickup trucks, 100+ various skid steer attachments & much more! Cars, SUV, 1/2 ton & 3/4 ton pickup trucks, cargo & passenger vans! Accepting consignments! *Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC*, Kjauction.com, 260-724-7402.

DECEMBER 5 - 2 p.m.-6 p.m. ET. (Online) - Farm: Goodwin Trust. Property location: 2 miles north of Markle, IN at the intersection of N Marzane Road and W 800 N. 157.3+/- total acres, 136.9+/- tillable, 12.2+/- CRP, 8.2+/- non-tillable. Prime farmland, tillable, CRP, Wells County, Union Township. Soil types: Pewamo silty clay loam, Glynwood clay & silt loam, Del Rey-Blount silt loams, Glynwood-Mississinewa clay loam. WAPI: 133.5 corn bu, 40.2 soybeans bu. *Halderman Real Estate & Farm Management*, 800-424-2324, halderman.com, Rick Johnloz, 260-827-8181.

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Feeling down over dishonest boyfriend

Dear Annie by Annie Lane



Dear Annie: About eight months ago, I met "Len" through a dating app. I'm 71, and he's 81. We clicked right away and started a beautiful relationship. He calls me twice a day and comes to visit me once a week. We go out for dinner and take some road trips once in a while. He never invites me to the house where he lives; he told me that it belongs to his brother and he only occupies a room in the back, which was added to the house.

ering their age gap is more than 50 years.

Up to now, he's never told me the truth and keeps on insisting their relationship is like father and daughter and they've been together since 1818. I've been helping him to clean the yard at his rental house since the renter left because he wants to put the property on the market. While I'm working there 12 hours a day, three days a week, this live-in woman (he calls her "daughter") enrolled in a law school in San Diego. He bought her a condominium and told me that it would be cheaper for his daughter to own a condo than rent an apartment, and he can save some money in the long run.

He was divorced three times and has only one daughter from his first marriage. He said that his daughter never liked or loved him, although he supported her until she finished college. Len is a very generous and kindhearted person. He has helped me in so many ways, too.

One day, we were at a gas station and his cellphone, which was plugged in inside the car, rang. He was pumping gas while I was in the car. He asked me to answer it. The lady at the other end was furious right away after hearing my voice and asked me who I was. I told her I was Len's girlfriend. She asked to talk to Len, so I handed the phone to him outside the car window. I overheard Len tell her that I'm nobody.

Since then, I became suspicious of Len. I found out that he has a live-in 26-year-old woman he's been supporting and sending to college. I always noticed him calling and answering someone on his cellphone, but each time it would happen, he'd walk away so I couldn't hear the conversation. Recently, after I told him that I want to break up with him because I feel he's being dishonest and lying to me, he told me that the woman was his adopted daughter. He's keeping so many secrets from me about their relationship. He wouldn't tell me the truth until one day, I found out from their cleaning lady when I called their landline that they were living together as husband and wife. I felt sick to my stomach after hearing that, consid-

I'm fed up with his lies and deception. He wants to keep me as his girlfriend but stay with this young woman, too. I suspect that she's only using him and now continuing her studies to become a lawyer. She'll leave him after she graduates from law school and marry a younger man, and Len will end up brokenhearted. Please give me advice on what to do. Do I walk away from him now, even if I love and pity him? — Confused Monogamous Woman

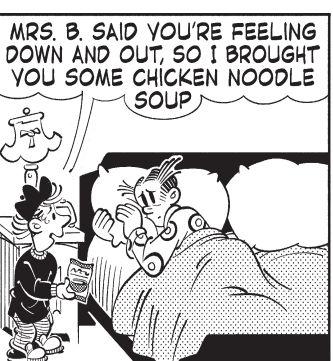
Dear Monogamous Woman: The relationship "Len" has with this younger woman is extremely odd, to say the least, and poses serious problems considering he hasn't been forthcoming about it whatsoever. Beyond that, even if he weren't lying to you or deceiving you, fundamentally, you both want different things out of a relationship. I advise you to run, not walk, away from this situation and seek companionship with someone who is honest and serious about a monogamous partnership.

Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com. © 2023 CREATORS.COM

BEETLE BAILEY



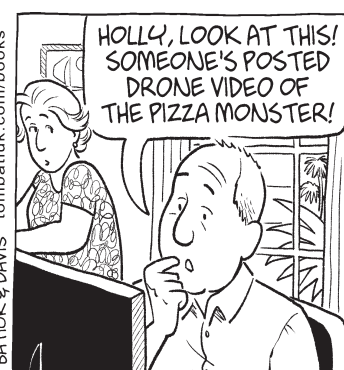
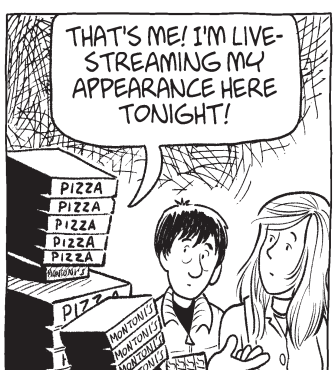
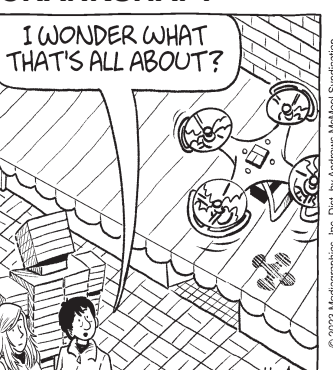
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My Answer

By Dr. Billy Graham



God will give us faith to believe

Q: Why do so many intellectuals have a hard time trusting the Bible? It seems all they can do is tear it down and suggest that anyone who believes its truth is anti-intellectual. —K.I.

A: The Gospel is not anti-intellectual. It demands the use of the mind, but the mind is affected by sin, whether that mind is of superior intelligence or average. A person may be intellectually brilliant, but spiritually ignorant. "A natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; ... and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14, NASB).

be turned into a first-class mind when Christ penetrates the heart.

Some years ago, one of the most brilliant men in the world was reported to have an IQ of 208 with over 140 patents with a world-leading company. He even attempted theoretically to reconstruct the human brain. He became completely bewildered and shaken, however, when confronted with the complexity and utter impossibility of such a reconstruction. He didn't know what to do or where to run. His choice was twofold: either the human brain came about by a fantastic chance or by intelligent planning. When faced with the alternative he knew he had only one choice, and he became a believer in God as it was revealed to him through Jesus Christ, whose

intellect he could not surpass.

Many people of great intelligence will not accept Christ as their Savior because they cannot prove His existence, yet the plain truth is that God cannot be proved by intellectual arguments alone. If the human mind could fully prove God, He would be no greater than the mind who proves Him!

We may not understand everything in the Bible, but God will give us faith to believe. We must allow faith to go beyond our intellect, receiving His words as the inspired Word of God.

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

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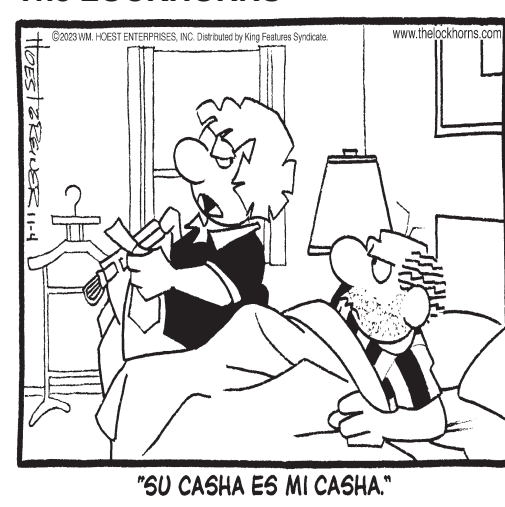
THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane



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The LOCKHORNS



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer. ACROSS 1 Tubular pasta 5 Roof edge 9 "Shark Tank" network 12 Big fusses 13 gin fizz 14 Status follower 15 Bell tower sound 16 Cash drawer 17 Web address 18 "Maureen" singer 19 Off-roader (abbr.) 20 Swiss river 21 Feedbag bit 23 Japanese sash 25 Arm's-length pic 28 English county 32 Spectrum creator 33 French ice cream 34 Tugged

Table with columns for date, time slot, and program titles like WINM, CBS WANE, etc.

Table with crossword puzzle grid and solutions for ACROSS, DOWN, and other puzzle elements.

