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Annual food bank drive comes at a critical time

Holiday campaign boosted by \$20,000 match

By MARK MILLER

The Wells County Food Bank has had kind of a "double-whammy" this year.

"Between inflation and a mysterious drop in donations so far this year," said Mick Cupp, who has handled the financial end of the food bank since at least 1985, "this year's holiday campaign is more important than it's been for many years."

Meanwhile, the number of families who have come to the agency on South Main Street has seen a significant increase in the past month or so.

"We don't know why," shared Connie Kaehr, who has overseen the troop of volunteers. The food bank had been averaging about 150 families per month until that number ballooned to more than 200 this month.

Thus, the two agreed, the continued matching challenge grant of \$20,000 for donations made between now and Christmas answers another prayer.

"I don't want to be an alarmist, and I don't want to use the word 'critical,'" Cupp continued, "but we're hoping and praying that the community will come through again. They always have."

This will be the 38th consecutive year that an anonymous local donor has come through with a matching grant offer. For years, it had been a \$10,000 challenge and had fluctuated between the two amounts for a few years.

There had been no lack of concern when that donor passed away a few years ago. However, another person has since stepped up to fill that void.

"You know, that has happened several times," Kaehr told a group of Bluffton Rotary Club members who had come to tour the facilities Tuesday.

She shared two instances when a major source of food donations had dried up, only to have another option come along.

"We've been blessed in so many ways," she said. That includes, she quickly added, the host of volunteers who make the food bank possible.

Cupp agreed, noting that the community has met that match every year. "We are blessed," Cupp added. "We have practically zero operating expenses."

With the building and the utilities on South Main Street donated along with all the labor to keep the operation functioning, the only expense besides buying groceries is the liability insurance.

"I think it figures out to about 0.002 percent," Cupp said.

And it's the grocery expenses that have driven up the costs. While many grocery items and clothing items are donated by local individuals, churches and schools, the food bank must purchase the bulk of what they give away.

"We used to spend maybe three or four thousand dollars per month on buying what we need," Kaehr explained. "Now it's not unusual for that monthly bill to top \$6,000."

The purchases are made primarily from Kroger and Troyer's market in Berne, both of which "give us very nice discounts," Cupp said.

"We continue to see some new faces each week," Kaehr noted, "and there are families who stop coming and that's a good thing because we figure they don't need our help any more."

Clients must have a referral from the welfare office in order to receive food and clothing items, Kaehr said.

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A large group of volunteers were busy servicing clients at the Wells County Food Bank Tuesday afternoon. Since the pandemic, a process has been established to protect both clients and volunteers. Above, volunteers Susan Harris, Gale Reinhard and Ann Isch fill an order that a client has completed; at right, volunteers Phil Stoller and Mike Meade place the order in the client's car. (Photos by Mark Miller)

A heart for service

Renkenberger settles into role as director of United Way of Wells County

By JONATHAN SNYDER

As the recently hired director of United Way of Wells County, Ben Renkenberger finds everyday opportunities to connect with and improve the community he has grown to love.

For an organization deeply rooted in Bluffton, it can be intimidating to step into the role, but Renkenberger is no stranger to nonprofits. He's worked at them for many years, serving as an executive youth pastor in Huntington County, working with women in recovery in Alabama and founding a youth mentorship program for developing future leaders, called Collaborative Inc.

His experience across the country gives United Way a different outlook on how they can serve, according to the chair of the board, Jessica Bricker.

"With Ben, we loved his passion for people ... He brings a lot of unique experiences and unique backgrounds with nonprofits to give UW a new perspective," said Bricker.

Renkenberger is diving straight for the heart of the community, attending chamber meetings, ribbon cuttings, and other events to get to know others. He does this in combination with the standard workplace campaigning he does with different corporations.

"What I am ... is an incredibly relational person who wants you to do better, whatever that looks like," Renkenberger said.

Despite Renkenberger living in Huntington, he has quickly grown fond of the community Bluffton provides. He's been amazed at the support and feedback from Bluffton and he desires to do right by them.



Ben Renkenberger joined United Way of Wells County as director in May. (Photo by Sydney Kent)

"I really love Bluffton," added Renkenberger. "For whatever reason, people here are just nicer, they care more, are community-minded, generous, all the things that matter."

Renkenberger's love for others comes from his faith

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Retailers offer bigger Black Friday discounts

By ANNE D'INNOCENZIO and ALEXANDRA OLSON
AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Shoppers venturing out to malls and stores on Black Friday found perks from champagne to virtual reality experiences and old-fashioned doorbusters, as retailers tried to entice customers who are resisting splurges and impulse buying this year.

Consumers are under pressure as their savings dwindle and their credit card debt grows. Inflation has eased but many goods and services like meat and rent are still far higher than they were three years ago.

Yvonne Carey, 72, was among the first shoppers at Macy's Herald Square store in Manhattan where she snapped up discounted Michael Kors slippers and Ugg boots for herself. But Carey said she plans to stick to the same \$1,000 budget as last year as she shops for gifts for her six grandchildren and her husband.

Many retailers ordered fewer goods for this holiday season and pushed holiday sales earlier in October than last year to help shoppers spread out their spending, a trend that accelerated during the pandemic when clogs in the supply network. But this year, retailers said more shoppers were willing to wait until the last minute in hopes of finding better deals.

"In this economy it's really hard. We had to save some

(Continued on Page 2)

Maui residents wonder if their burned town can be made safe

The answer? No one knows

By REBECCA BOONE
Associated Press

When Daniel Skousen scrubs at the ash and soot covering his Maui home, he worries about the smell.

What chemicals created the burning-trash-barrel scent that has lingered since a deadly wildfire tore through Lahaina in August? Should he believe government agencies' assessment of when the

air, land and water will be safe enough for his family to return?

Or will political and economic pressures to rebuild and restore Maui's robust tourism industry — where visitors normally spend \$14 million per day — lead officials to look at any testing results through rose-colored glasses?

"It appears very important to them to get that tourism tax revenue

back," said Skousen. "It makes you wonder if the testing will be biased."

The fire blew out Skousen's windows and filled his home with ash, but the building is still standing, and he hopes someday to move back in. The home next door burned to the ground.

Skousen wants a second opinion on any government environmental assessments, preferably from an expert with a stake in the commu-

nity. But the raw data isn't easy to find, and experts say the long-term health effects from fires like the one that incinerated Lahaina are mostly unknown. There are no national standards that detail how clean is clean enough for a residential home damaged by a nearby fire.

At least 100 people died in the Aug. 8 wildfire, and thousands were displaced. Nearly 7,000 were still in short-term lodging two months later.

The rubble left behind includes electrical cables, plastic pipes and vehicle tires that emit dangerous dioxins when burned; lead from melted vehicles or old house paint; and arsenic-laden ash from termite-resistant building materials.

After a major wildfire burned 1,000 homes in Boulder County, Colorado, in 2021, health officials learned that even professionally remediated homes were often still

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Outside



Partly sunny today,
rain and snow tomorrow

Today	Sunday	Monday
High 40	High 39	High 32
Low 25	Low 24	Low 18

More Weather on Page 2

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Food bank drive

(Continued from Page 1)

While the food bank began more than 40 years ago, first located in a downtown building, Cupp and his wife Connie became involved in 1985 and Kaehr has been involved for more than 20 years, “we don’t recall any year quite like this one,” Cupp said.

In addition to the holiday fund drive, the food bank is dependent on donations that come in throughout the year. It is “about a 50 percent drop” in what they’ve received so far this calendar year that has Cupp

concerned. That does not make either Cupp or Kaehr become discouraged, however.

“We have such a wonderful crew,” Kaehr said, “and this community comes through every year.”

“We are so thankful for what we get,” she continued. “The schools, the churches — it’s pretty amazing.”

Donations can be sent to the Wells County Food Bank, P.O. Box 186, Bluffton IN 46714. The food bank is located at 1254 S. Main St. in Bluffton.

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Wells County Food Bank coordinator Connie Kaehr, left, shares some statistics about the agency’s operations with Jordan Arnold and Lee VonGunten, two members of the Bluffton Rotary Club, which toured the facilities Tuesday. (Photo by Mark Miller)

Heart for service

(Continued from Page 1)

background. He believes that loving others well is not just about being a pastor and preaching to others.

“If you do it right you’re a social worker, or helping a food bank or building a house,” said Renkenberger. “I want to alleviate the suffering of others and treat them better than I’ve been treated by any other neighbor.”

While his love for the community is deep-rooted, the distance has its drawbacks, mainly a lack of opportunity for casual conversation according to Renkenberger.

“Being able to just shut work off and go home is great ... but it doesn’t afford you the casual opportunity to run into someone at a ball game,” said Renkenberger. “How do I continue to be who I am in a community that I know wants to know me, and I want to know them desperately?”

Another challenge for Renkenberger, according to Bricker, is the size of Bluffton’s community. Smaller

communities lead to smaller budgets for United Way, but Bricker remains encouraged with his drive to see the community get the funding and help it needs.

“When he has a seat at the table, he’s fighting for the smaller agencies to have representation across the state,” explained Bricker.

United Way’s local focus is on early childhood education, a legacy that Renkenberger seeks to carry well. The new “Bookends” program, designed to help kindergartners struggling with numeracy and literacy, is a linchpin in United Way’s status that Renkenberger wants to continue in the coming years even though he came in after it started.

“For it to be a brand new program ... and for all four elementary schools to be involved, that’s huge,” Renkenberger said.

This mindset carries over into other programs that Renkenberger oversees. Renkenberger wants to improve the programs that United Way Wells pro-

vides, from the faith fund that serves families struggling with utilities, to the early childhood education needs in the community.

“I want to continue to expand into the things that we are already doing well ... and make a bike path into a two-lane highway,” said Renkenberger.

Renkenberger recognizes the challenges and the goodness of the Bluffton community. Although seeing people suffering is tough, Renkenberger’s desire to help others and love the community pushes him forward.

Renkenberger concluded, “If we go about living this life where it’s just making our cookie cutter white picket fence, where we’re making enough to buy a boat and have a retirement and a legacy of a life insurance policy for our children we are missing it all. Yes, those things are great, and who’s to say I don’t want that, but if that’s all I’m chasing, I’m missing everything.”

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Black Friday deals

(Continued from Page 1)

gift cards. We’ve been saving for like months ahead, to try and make it work, keep it normal,” said Damaris Fay Bayard, shopping with her husband and daughter at a mall in Metairie, Louisiana.

Gone are the Black Fridays of years ago when customers would stand in line for hours in the middle of the night, or brawls would break out over high demand items. But Black Friday shopping remains a favorite tradition for many, and retailers tried to reward devotees with steeper discounts and other surprises.

“Tradition every year, get up at four o’ clock, eat breakfast and come in the mall and shop all day,” said Martha Stewart, singing and giddily looking through her shopping bags at Lakeside Shopping Center in Metarie.

Nearby, Jenell Rayford was delighted when workers at Lakeside popped champagne for shoppers.

“I have champagne and a new pair of shoes in my hand,” Rayford said. “I just wasn’t expecting all of this.”

At Macy’s Herald Square store, the Disney Princess shop had augmented reality allowing delighted youngsters to virtually step into one of the princess dresses. Shoppers who streamed in soon after the doors opened at 6 a.m. were greeted with discounts of between 40 percent and 60 percent on footwear, handbags and diamond jewelry.

“The customer is under pressure. You see it with

what is going on in luxury. That is a recent development,” Macy’s CEO Jeff Genette said in an interview with The Associated Press, adding that shoppers across all income levels are “more discerning about how they are spending their budget.”

About 12,000 customers showed up at Mall of America in Bloomington, Minnesota, in the first hour of its 7 a.m. opening — 20 percent more than last year, said Jill Renslow, executive vice president of business development and marketing for the shopping center. She said she expects sales to be up anywhere from 3 percent to 4 percent at the mall.

Stephen Lebovitz, CEO of mall operator CBL Properties, also said traffic was similar or better on Friday compared with a year ago based on a spot check of 18 of its 54 malls. He said more stores brought back doorbuster discounts, a Black Friday hallmark before the advent of online shopping. Palmetto Moon gave out \$25 gift cards to the first 50 people in line, while JCPenney gave out 200 discount cards every four hours.

Consumers spent \$5.6 billion on Thanksgiving Day, when most of the major stores like Macy’s and Kohl’s closed and shoppers focused on online shopping, according to Adobe Analytics, which tracks online spending. That was up 5.5 percent compared with a year ago. For the first 23 days of November, consumers spent \$76.7 billion

online, up 6.8 percent from the same period a year ago. Online sales on Black Friday are expected to bring in \$9.6 billion, up 5.7 percent compared with the year-ago period, Adobe said.

The National Retail Federation, the nation’s largest retail trade group, expects shoppers will spend more this year than last year, but their pace will slow.

The group has forecast that U.S. holiday sales will rise 3 percent to 4 percent for November through December, compared with 5.4 percent growth a year ago. The forecast is consistent with the average annual holiday increase of 3.6 percent from 2010 to pre-pandemic 2019. Americans ramped up spending during the pandemic, with money in their pockets from federal relief checks and nowhere to go during lockdowns.

Online discounts should be better than a year ago, particularly for toys, electronics and clothing, according to Adobe. It predicts toys will be discounted on average by 35 percent, compared with 22 percent a year ago, while electronics should see 30 percent cuts, compared with last year’s 27 percent. In clothing, shoppers will see an average discount of 25 percent, compared with 19 percent last year.

Analysts consider the five-day Black Friday weekend — which includes the Monday after the holiday known as Cyber Monday — a key barometer of shoppers’ willingness to spend.

This year, “it has been slow,” said Gabriella Santaniello, founder of A Line Partners, an independent retail research firm in Los Angeles, who had a network of associates scouting out malls and stores in Dallas, Philadelphia, Orlando, Florida and other parts of the country on Friday. “They’re getting out to shop. But I don’t think they’re buying as much.”

Worker unrest and protests over the Israel-Gaza war clouded the shopping experience in some parts of the world. Pro-Palestinian activists staged Black Friday protests Los Angeles and Washington. In Europe, the UNI Global Union said it organized “Make Amazon Pay” strikes and protests in 30 countries. Amazon said the strikes would not affect customers.

Black Friday is expected as usual to be the busiest shopping day of the year, according to Sensormatic Solutions, which tracks store traffic.

But some shoppers who returned to stores for Black Friday for the first time in years were unimpressed by the size of the crowds and the quality of the discounts.

Samuel Alvez, 44, and his wife bought two computer monitors and a pressure cooker at a Walmart in Germantown, Maryland, but came away disappointed in the discounts during their first Black Friday outing in years.

“Back in the day, they had these good deals in stores,” Alvez said. “Now, we don’t see that anymore.

Weather

Saturday, November 25, 2023
(24-hour observations at 8:51 p.m. Friday)
High: 36; Low: 25; Precipitation: None
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.28 feet at 8:45 p.m. Friday

Wells County forecast

Today: Partly sunny, with a high near 40. East wind around 5 mph.

Tonight: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 25. East wind around 5 mph becoming south after midnight.

Sunday: Rain, possibly mixed with snow showers, becoming all rain after 4 p.m. High near 39. Southwest wind 5 to 15 mph. Chance of precipitation is 80 percent. Little or no snow accumulation expected.

Sunday Night: A slight chance of rain and snow showers before 10 p.m., then a slight chance of snow showers between 10 p.m. and 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 24. West wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph. Chance of precipitation is 20 percent.

Monday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 32.

Monday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 18.

Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 34.

Tuesday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 20.

Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 40.

Wednesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 23.

Thursday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 44.

Thursday Night: A slight chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 29.

Friday: A chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 47.

Maui residents

(Continued from Page 1)

polluted with ash, char and other toxic substances long after the fire, said Bill Hayes, the county’s air quality program coordinator.

The reason? High winds — like those that plagued Maui during the wildfire this summer — forced fine particulate matter into every crevice, Hayes said. Those particulates would sit inside window panes, behind light switches, between shingles and elsewhere until the winds started up again, re-contaminating the home.

“Char is a carcinogen, so we don’t ever say any level of those particulates are safe,” Hayes said. “That became a challenge in the cleanup — determining the level of when is it clean enough?”

State and federal agencies have released regular updates on Lahaina’s relative safety. The water in much of the town is still unsafe to drink, and visitors have been advised to use protective gear in impacted areas. Officials say pregnant people and kids should stay out of the burn zone, though the Hawaii Department of Education says the schools, which are above the burned part of town, are safe.

Crews have installed air quality monitors throughout town and are spraying a soil sealant to prevent toxic ash from being washed into the ocean or blowing around.

An attorney representing Skousen and about two dozen other Lahaina residents sent a public records request to the Environmental Protection Agency last month asking for all records regarding residential testing of contaminants in Lahaina and their impact to human health.

The EPA’s reply, sent earlier this month, wasn’t reassuring: “No records could be located that are responsive to your request.”

EPA spokesman Kellen Ashford told The Associated Press his agency did some environmental hazard testing in the burn zone, but only to determine the immediate

risk for workers involved in the initial cleanup.

He referred further questions about such testing to the Hawaii Department of Health, which he said was responsible for determining longer-term safety for residents.

The Hawaii Department of Health’s Environmental Health Services Division also told Skousen’s attorney it had no records about residential testing of contaminants to release.

The Health Department declined interview requests. Spokesman Shawn Hamamoto said in an email the department will pursue additional air quality and ash testing when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers begins removing debris from Lahaina.

“I think that they’re playing ‘hide the ball,’” said Skousen’s attorney, Edward Neiger. “The question is, why do they feel the need to hide anything?”

Ashford acknowledged some residents are skeptical of the cleanup efforts. He said the EPA has people stationed at the Lahaina Civic Center and at work sites to talk to community members about their concerns.

Andrew Shoemaker, a fine art photographer who operated a gallery on Lahaina’s famous Front Street, believes it’s an important part of healing to go back to the burned areas to see what is left, but he has recently had a lung infection and doesn’t want to risk his health.

“I don’t even want to take the chance of going over there,” he said.

Dioxins, toxic compounds that can be released when plastic pipes, tires and other household materials are burned, are a particular concern for Shoemaker. Dioxins can last for decades inside the human body, and can cause reproductive and developmental problems, damage the immune system, interfere with hormones and cause cancer, according to the World Health Organization.

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Indiana abortions drop steeply after ban goes into effect – but don't hit zero

By **LESLIE BONILLA MUÑIZ**
Indiana Capital Chronicle

Indiana abortions plummeted to low double-digits after a near-total ban went into effect over the summer, according to data from the state's health department.

Abortion clinics stopped providing the procedures August 1, although the ban officially took hold on August 21. The law, which strips clinics of their licenses, includes several narrow exceptions: for the mother's life or physical health, fatal fetal anomalies, and victims of rape or incest.

Only hospitals or hospital-owned surgical centers can perform abortions. Many hospitals are religiously affiliated and don't offer abortions at all.

IDOH received 355 terminated pregnancy reports in August. That's a 66 percent decrease from the 1,046 filings in August 2022, according to an IDOH annual report.

Under state law, a Hoosier health care provider must file a terminated pregnancy report within 30 days of performing abortion, or within three days if the patient is under 16 years old. That means many of the August reports were for abortions that occurred in July.

The number of filings dropped further after providers filed their last pre-ban terminated pregnancy reports.

IDOH received just 13 filings in September and 12 in October — 98 percent and 97 percent decreases from the 737 and 447 reports filed during those months last year.

But abortions didn't hit zero, in contrast to a widely cited study this month by the Guttmacher Institute, an organization that supports access to the procedures.

The institute estimated a 100 percent drop in abortions to zero in Indiana, but at a 50 percent uncertainty interval. To generate the estimates, the institute uses a statistical model that combines information from samples of providers with historical data.

"While Terminated Pregnancy reports are not medically necessary, they do reveal what we know to be true: exemptions are a

right in name only," said Rebecca Gibron, CEO of Planned Parenthood of Indiana.

"This threat to our access to health care underscores the importance of Planned Parenthood and Women's Med currently blocked from providing — safe spaces where patients can get accurate information to make informed choices, unbiased by ideology or fear of political consequences," Gibron continued. "It's imperative that patients have options when they are turned away in their most vulnerable moments of need."

Anti-abortion group Indiana Right to Life didn't immediately return a request for comment.

When a full quarterly report is issued in late December, Hoosiers will be able to see what exceptions providers cite to perform the procedures, where they're occurring and more.

Two lawsuits against the ban are ongoing.

One relies on Indiana's Religious Freedom Restoration Act and several plaintiffs who argue their religions allow or even require abortions in some cases. A federal judge last month dismissed a separate attempt to use that law against the ban.

The other — an amended complaint — draws on the state's constitution to argue the law's wording is impermissibly strict and the ban on clinics is unnecessary. A hearing has been set for May.

"The current hospital requirement makes abortion even more inaccessible because only a few hospitals currently provide abortion care, they are concentrated in the Indianapolis region, and they typically do so at much higher costs than abortion clinics, where nearly all abortions occurred before the ban," said Gibron, whose organization is a plaintiff in the case.

"This can mean patients have increased travel times, harmful delays, even more expensive care, and in dire cases, even death. We also know that patients who meet exemptions allowed under the ban are being turned away from hospitals," she added. "This is barbaric."

Statehouse dome closed to tours

By **WHITNEY DOWNARD**
Indiana Capital Chronicle

A structural engineering study completed in January 2023 quietly closed the iconic dome of the Indiana Statehouse to tours last year due to safety concerns, according to the Indiana Department of Administration.

The dome, which has its own lapel pin, is one of the most celebrated parts of the Statehouse and includes 256 panels of colored glass, as detailed by the agency online. But the agency didn't indicate any plans to reopen the 19th-century structure in the coming years.

The emblematic feature atop the Statehouse includes several architectural elements, including a cupola, which is the smaller structure on top of the dome. The visually striking stained glass dome sits under this outer feature and a skylight, and is just above the central rotunda.

"In 2022, IDOA conducted a structural engineering study to review the steel infrastructure of the State House dome to include all steel staircases, supports, brackets and other supports," said governor's office spokeswoman Erin Murphy on behalf of IDOA. "As a result of the study, IDOA determined there needed to be limited access to the dome for safety concerns and therefore ended group tours."

Access to the dome

Prior to the study — the first structural assessment of the dome that the agency is aware of — IDOA gave small, scheduled tours to Statehouse staff, legislators, interns and more.

Dome visitors spell out their names in the dust on the stained glass of the Indiana Statehouse dome. (2014 photo from Niki Kelly/Indiana Capital Chronicle)

"We do not foresee the dome being reopened for tours in the near future. The structure was not designed for multiple people accessing the space at one time," Murphy continued. "The intent was for maintenance access only. Also, building codes today were not in place when the State House was constructed so there are several code issues related to safety that are a concern."

IDOA said its facilities management

staff, HVAC contractors and fire alarm contractors have access to the dome, which is barred by card readers to limit individual access.

Inside the dome, visitors would use markers to sign their names on the outer walls and, on the other side of the beautiful stained glass, some would spell their names out in dust with their fingers.

Not just a dome

The Statehouse on Capitol Street in Indianapolis is actually the state's third, following the first Statehouse in Corydon and an earlier building at its current location — the latter of which was demolished to make way for the current edifice that opened in 1888. It cost \$2 million to construct at the time.

The Statehouse count doesn't include Indiana's territorial seat of government in Vincennes, where the original capitol building still stands. After Indiana became a state in 1816, Corydon became the state seat of government. The first 40-square-foot Statehouse, built from Indiana limestone, also still stands.

The state capital moved to Indianapolis in 1821.

The four-story structure in the Renaissance Revival style uses Indiana limestone along with marble for the flooring and granite for the columns.

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources nominated the building to the National Register of Historic Places in 1975 and three years later the dome was reclad in copper, as it had been originally — according to an archived page from IDOA.

A massive interior renovation in the 1980s under Gov. Robert Orr honored the building's centennial anniversary. It cost \$11 million. As part of that effort, broken panes of glass in the dome were replaced, fixing an ongoing leak.

"To ensure that light filtered evenly through the dome to the floor of the rotunda more than 100 feet below, workers painted the interior surface of the outer dome with highly reflective white epoxy paint and added artificial light behind the glass," another archived IDOA page read. "As a result, the colors of the interior dome glow richly even on cloudy days."

Bodies of 2 men found after small plane crashes near central Indiana airport

FAIRLAND, Ind. (AP) — Two men have died after a small plane crashed in central Indiana.

First responders were called to a field around 5 p.m. Wednesday in Fairland near the Shelbyville Municipal Airport, about 25 miles southeast of Indianapolis, state police said.

They saw heavy smoke coming from the plane. The body of one man was found after the fire was extinguished. The body of a second man later was located in the wreckage.

The plane's origination and destination were not immediately known.

The Federal Aviation

Administration and the Safety Board are investigating the crash.

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Bluffton Parks & Rec News & Notes



By **Brandy Fiechter**

Destination Recreation

I hope by now that we have all come out of our Thanksgiving dinner food comas and are ready to start thinking about the upcoming Christmas season. We have many opportunities to spend time with the family, creating lasting holiday memories.

Parents of little ones, mark your calendars for **Toddler Story Time with Mrs. Claus** on Dec. 14 at 11 a.m. Toddlers are invited to listen to stories told by Mrs. Claus, take part in some fun winter craft activities, and enjoy burning off some energy in a bounce house!

Santa has scheduled his annual trip to the Bluffton City Gym Thursday, Dec. 14, from 5:30-7 p.m. Bring the kids to **Winter Wonderland** to play games, jump in a bounce house, and tell Santa what they would like for Christmas. Enter the glass door on the west side of City Hall (128 E Market) for this free event.

Happy Pawldays! The Bluffton Parks Department invites you and your pet to the annual **Paws and Claus** Wednesday, Dec. 13, from 5:30-7 p.m. in the Bluffton City Gym. Bring your camera to snap a photo of your pet with Santa. Pets will receive free treats and must be clean and leashed. If your pet-friendly business or organization would like to participate as a vendor at Paws and Claus, please email events@blufftonindiana.gov for free table space. Questions call 824-6069.

The Parks Department was happy to be on the **Parlor City Christmas** Planning Committee again this year. Join us for a fun, family-friendly festival throughout downtown Bluffton Saturday, Dec. 9.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 8-10 a.m. — Breakfast—cost \$11 (American Legion)
- 8-11 a.m. — Breakfast with Santa—donation (Masonic Lodge)
- 9:30-1:45 p.m. — Cookie Walk Benefiting Grace & Mercy (The Lounge)
- 9:30 a.m.-1:45 p.m. — Musical Entertainment featuring Studio 88, Jeannette S. Lundeen Music Studio, Creative Arts School of Music, Tammy Ray Piano Studio, and Gretchen Steffen's piano students
- 10 a.m.-2 p.m. — Wood Carvings by Ryan Frauhiger of Forrest Carvings; warm up by the outdoor fire on the patio and enjoy a Pinewood Derby track (Wells County Commerce & Visitors Centre — 211 W. Water St.)
- 10 a.m.-3 p.m. — Parlor City Shop-

ping Fair—shop local with 35+ artisans and vendors (Wells County Commerce & Visitors Centre)

- 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. — Trolley Rides (stops at the library, Historical Museum, Wells County Commerce & Visitors Centre, and Market St.)
- 10 a.m.-5 p.m. — Christmas at the Mansion (Wells County Historical Museum)
- 11 a.m.-12 p.m. — Owl and Raptor Demonstration (100 block of W. Market St.)
- Live Reindeer (100 block of W. Market St.)
- 11 a.m.-2 p.m. — Sentimental Journeys horse-drawn wagon rides (Start from the Wells County Public Library)
- Goodie Walk—free food & treats by local businesses throughout Downtown Bluffton
- Connect 4 Basketball (100 block of W. Market St.)
- Santa photos — free pictures by Burman Photography (Hosted at Parlor Studios — 224 W. Market St.)
- NeuEnchanted Expressions Face Painting by Carissa free face-painting (Wells County Commerce & Visitors Centre)
- A Balloon Above — free balloon animals (209 W Market)
- Jessica Shoemaker Events — free photo booth (209 W Market)
- Traveling carolers, a snowman character, and photo cutouts throughout downtown
- Princess Meet and Greet
- Busted Haft Ax throwing
- Crafts, goodies, and mini organ concerts at 11:15 a.m., 12:15 p.m., and 1:15 p.m.
- 11 a.m.-evening — Live Nativity (Dutch Mill Plaza)
- 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. — White Christmas by the Creative Arts Performance Company — admission adults \$15; \$10 children under 12 (Life Community Church Auditorium — 428 S. Oak St.)
- 6-9 p.m. — Wonderland of Lights—entry donation (Ouabache State Park) Throughout the Day
- Vote on your favorite in the Window Decorating Contest
- Read a winter story at the Story-Walk® at Pickett's Run Park

For more information, contact the Parlor City Christmas committee at parlorcitychristmas@gmail.com.

Have a great week!

Obituary Policy

The News-Banner and Ossian Journal publishes "basic" obituaries free of charge for "local" deaths. "Basic" obituaries will include the deceased's name, age, community of record, date and place of death, basic genealogical information, the date, time and location of calling hours and services and the name of the funeral home handling arrangements.

If additional information and/or a photo is desired to be included, or if the deceased does not meet the definitions of a "local" person, there is a charge.

Area funeral homes will provide details on the policy and will coordinate obituary publication.

Public Notice

NOTICE

Uniontown Cemetery Association will be meeting at Uniontown Church of Christ, 11419 N. 200 W., Ossian, IN for its annual meeting at 10 a.m. Dec. 2, 2023.

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The delicious history of pumpkin pie

I love pumpkin pie. It reminds me of so many happy family gatherings when, after clearing the Thanksgiving table, we'd enjoy pumpkin pie, coffee and deeply satisfying conversation well into the evening.

My mother's pumpkin pie has a thick, fluffy crust. She bakes her pies "well done" with a slight char on the top, giving them a unique and delicious oaky flavor.

Lucky for me, I've enjoyed her unique pumpkin pie experience for many years and will do so again this Thursday.

But after recently learning about the remarkable history of pumpkin pie, I love it more than ever.

According to History.com, pumpkin is a fruit that dates back 10,000 years ago to Central America, where indigenous people boiled and baked it in many forms.

After the "New World" was discovered, European explorers brought pumpkin seeds back home and cultivated them.

Pumpkin soon became part of "England's highly developed pie-making culture, which had for centuries been producing complex stuffed pastries in sweet and savory varieties," says History.com.

When the Pilgrims arrived in America in 1620, they brought their familiarity with pumpkins with them.

In fact, says History.com, "A year later, when the 50 surviving colonists were joined by a group of 90 Wampanoag for a three-day harvest celebration, it's likely that pumpkin was on the table in some form."

Without ovens, though, the Pilgrims initially had no way to make pumpkin pie.

As the Pilgrims flourished in New England, they preferred "apples, pears, and quince tarts instead of their former Pumpkin Pies," wrote Massachusetts ship captain Edward Johnson in 1654.

This was probably because the process of turning pumpkin into a pie filling was time-consuming and laborious. It was much easier and faster to make a fruit pie.

Perhaps that's the chief reason pumpkin pie didn't catch on in America until 1796 with the publication of America's very first cookbook, "American Cookery," written by New England writer Amelia Simmons.

Simmons' pumpkin pie recipe was unlike any that came before it. She used eggs, sugar and cream to create a filling more like custard or pudding — the delicious filling we enjoy now.

However, it would be years before Simmons' version of pumpkin pie gained popularity beyond the New England region.

That changed in the 1800s as the pumpkin became a symbol of the anti-slavery movement in New England.

"Because pumpkins were a crop that grew easily and required very little labor for cultivation and harvest, pumpkin farming operated as the antithesis of the plantation economies of the South where cash crops like cotton, sugar, and tobacco were being mass-produced through exploitative slave labor," reports YahooNews.

After President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed Thanksgiving a national holiday in 1863, writers, such as Sarah Josepha Hale, published numerous recipes for turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie, which soon became the staples of our iconic Thanksgiving feast.

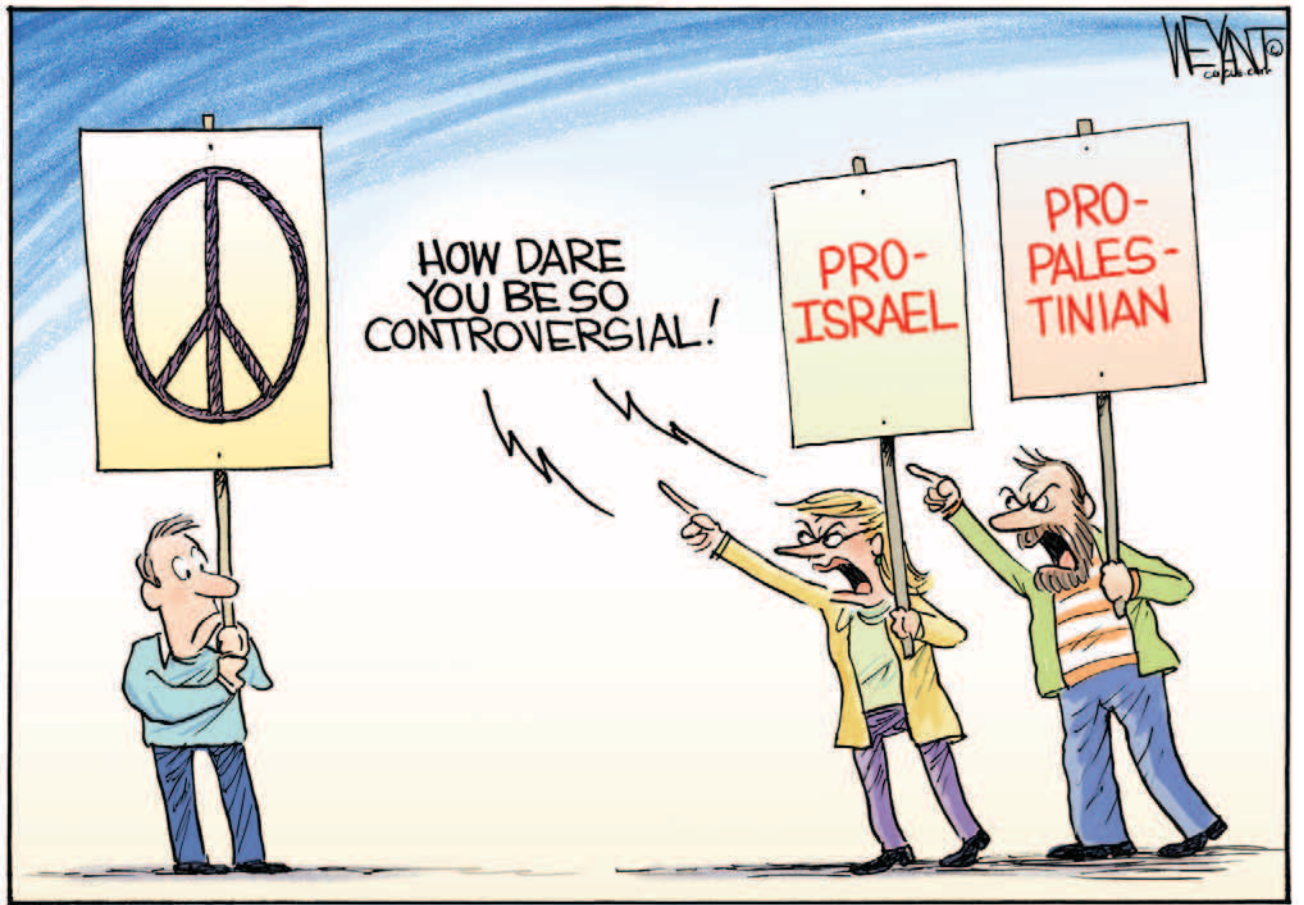
In 1929 Libby's introduced canned pumpkin pie filling, which eliminated the labor-intensive process of turning pumpkin into custard — making it easy for everyone to enjoy pumpkin pie every Thanksgiving.

It took 10,000 years for the pumpkin fruit of Central America to make it to England, travel back to America and become a Thanksgiving staple, but if you ever had a bite of my mother's incredible pumpkin pie, you'd know the wait was worth it.

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



Tom Purcell



Attitudes of gratitude and ingratitude

We again, earlier this month, entered the season of gratitude. You remember gratitude, don't you? It was what we expressed before we became entitled.

It began with the observance of Veterans Day, during which many thanked those who served in the military and have protected our freedoms. Next was Thanksgiving, when some people have paused to thank God for the many blessings He has bestowed on America, despite our rebellion against His commands. Even given the culture rot and political turmoil we are experiencing, there is still much for which to be thankful. Then comes Christmas when gratitude to God for His ultimate Gift seems to be increasingly diminished by the secular.

The height (or depth) of ingratitude is being exposed in large demonstrations across the world. As the anti-Israel and anti-Jewish protesters say vulgar things about the Jewish people and call for the elimination of the democratic Jewish state, they might benefit from having the contributions of Jews explained to them. Those contributions have contributed to a better society and world.

It was the Jews who gave us the Talmud, or Old Testament, which is full of information about God and wisdom for how we can live successful lives. A Jew — Jesus of Nazareth — is introduced in what Christians call the New Testament and lays out His plan for the salvation of all who believe in Him.

Given their small percentage of the population, Jews have excelled in many fields for which everyone should be grateful. A short list can't cover them all.

There was physicist Albert Einstein, Jonas Salk (creator of the first polio vaccine), Albert Sabin (oral polio vaccine), Galileo (discovered the speed of light, among other things), Selman Waksman (Streptomycin and coined the word antibiotic), Gabriel Lipmann (discovered color photography), Baruch Blumberg (discovered the origin and spread of infectious diseases), G. Edelman (discovered chemical structure of antibodies), Briton Epstein (identified the first cancer virus), Maria Meyer (structure of atomic nuclei), Julius Mayer (discovered law of thermodynamics), Sigmund Freud

(father of psychotherapy), Benjamin Disraeli (British prime minister), Isaac Singer (inventor of the sewing machine), Levi Strauss (largest maker of denim jeans), Joseph Pulitzer (established the famous prize that honors journalists, literature, music and art), Ben Hecht (journalist, playwright, novelist).

Broadway would be dark and musical theater dead without the contributions of Jews. These included George and Ira Gershwin, Oscar Hammerstein, Richard Rodgers, Lorenz Hart, Kurt Weill, Irving Berlin, Leonard Bernstein, Betty Comden and Adolph Green, Jule Styne, Neil Simon, Stephen Sondheim, Marvin Hamlisch, Cy Coleman, John Kander and Fred Ebb (Cabaret, Chicago), and perhaps some lesser known talents like Charles Strouse (Bye Bye Birdie, Annie) and Stephen Schwartz (Godspell, Wicked) and the prolific Cole Porter.

Jewish artists created beauty, sometimes out of tragedy. These include Marc Chagall, whose work hangs in the Israeli Knesset. There are many other Jewish painters and sculptors.

If you enjoy weekends, credit the Jews (see Exodus 20:8). Other contributions made by Jews to society and culture include the census, animal rights, asylum, equality under the law, our courts, crop rotation, monetary damages, and public schools, though they might not take credit for them today given their declining quality and growing antisemitism.

A few demonstrators calling for "free Palestine" and "from the river to the sea," have been interviewed and have demonstrated little to no knowledge about the history of Judaism or the establishment of the Jewish state. Ignorance allows dictators and terrorists to pursue their objectives, while a properly informed public preserves and protects what is important to a free and civilized society.

If you believe such things are important, offer some gratitude, not hostility, to the Jews.

tcaditors@tribpub.com



Cal Thomas

Will stars align for Nikki Haley?

The political world spends a lot of time discussing former President Donald Trump's lead over the Republican field in national polls — currently at 45.4%, according to the RealClearPolitics average of polls. But, of course, the race will unfold as a series of state contests, beginning in Iowa on Jan. 15, New Hampshire on Jan. 23, Nevada on Feb. 8 and South Carolina on Feb. 24. By then, Republicans should have a pretty good idea who their 2024 presidential nominee will be.

Of course, Trump is leading in the early-voting state polls, too — a 29.7-point lead in Iowa, a 27-point lead in New Hampshire and a 30.5-point lead in South Carolina. Something big will have to happen for Trump's huge leads to disappear. But there is a secondary race, too — the race to be the backup nominee should Trump somehow fail. Right now, the secondary race appears to be coming down to Ron DeSantis vs. Nikki Haley, and Haley is emerging with a strong hand, at least for the moment.

As is always the case, there's been a huge amount of campaigning in Iowa. It's important to all the candidates, but even more important to candidates who are slipping in the polls and see a good finish in the first-voting state as a way to revive their fortunes. Currently, DeSantis is going "all in" campaigning in Iowa in a move widely seen as an indicator that he believes a poor showing there would not be survivable.

But here's the problem with Iowa, even for candidates who manage to do well there. It's been 23 years since a Republican hopeful won the Iowa caucuses and then went on to win the Republican nomination. You have to go back to 2000, when George W. Bush won both the caucuses and the nomination, to find an Iowa winner who became the GOP's standard-bearer.

New Hampshire has been a different story. In 2016, Trump won the primary and then the nomination. Mitt Romney did it in 2012, and John McCain did it in 2008. The last GOP candidate to lose the New Hampshire primary but still win the nomination was Bush in 2000.

Which brings the story back to DeSantis. Say his efforts pay off and he does well in Iowa. (As for all the other



Byron York

candidates, "does well" means "finishes second to Trump.") He will then have eight days to do well in New Hampshire, where of course Trump is also leading. That's where Haley's strength could kick in and do some serious damage to DeSantis.

A recent University of New Hampshire poll found Trump leading Haley by a 42% to 20% margin, with Chris Christie in third place at 14% and DeSantis in fourth with 9%. News coverage of the poll focused on Haley's rise from 12% in the last UNH poll in September to 20% today.

New Hampshire voters can register as Republican, Democrat or "undeclared," and undeclared voters are allowed to vote in the Republican primary. The UNH poll showed Haley doing very well with undeclared voters. Among registered Republicans, Trump led Haley by a margin of 55% to 17%



— a 38-point lead. Among undeclared voters, Haley led Trump by a slim margin of 25% to 24%. In the new poll, undeclared voters made up 43% of the group of likely GOP primary voters surveyed.

Of course, even with the undeclared support, Haley is still 22 points behind Trump. But the survey does point to the importance of undeclared voters in New Hampshire, and it raises the subject of mischief voting. In the past, some Democrats have urged fellow Democrats to re-register to undeclared temporarily in order to vote in the Republican primary.

On the other side, in 2008, the late Rush Limbaugh famously created "Operation Chaos" in which he urged Republicans to vote in the Democratic primary race between Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton.

Now, there are special concerns about possible mischief voting in the 2024 New Hampshire primary because President Joe Biden has offended many in New Hampshire by throwing the state out of the first group of Democratic primaries, choosing instead to start with South Carolina, where Biden won in 2020. So what will New Hampshire Democrats, facing a new situation in January, do? Would the Republican primary be a perfect place for a Democrat to cast a protest vote against Trump — and for Haley — in the Republican primary?

Andrew Smith, director of the University of New Hampshire poll, downplays the possibility, saying mischief voting has never been a serious factor in a New Hampshire primary. "Regarding independents, very few, about 3% of voters, move from one party to another over primary cycles," Smith said in an email exchange. "Most independents who are really Democrats will vote in the Democratic primary or stay at home. It's hard enough to get people to vote in their own party's primary, let alone the other party."

If the New Hampshire Republican primary were held today, it seems clear that Haley would beat DeSantis. And then the campaign would move on to South Carolina, where Haley happens to be the former governor and where she leads DeSantis 18.8% to 10.5%, according to the RealClearPolitics average of polls. If a candidate wins New Hampshire and South Carolina, no matter what happened in Iowa, that candidate is probably on the way to the nomination.

Of course, right now, that candidate looks to be Trump. But the secondary race is important, too, given Trump's legal situation and the always-there possibility that something weird could happen in a very unusual Republican campaign. In that event, the winner of the secondary race could become the Republican nominee. And at the moment, Haley is coming on strong.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Saturday, Nov. 25, the 329th day of 2023. There are 36 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Nov. 25, 2016, Fidel Castro, who led his rebels to victorious revolution in 1959, embraced Soviet-style communism and defied the power of 10 U.S. presidents during his half-century of rule in Cuba, died at age 90.

On this date: In 1783, the British evacuated New York during the Revolutionary War.

In 1914, baseball Hall of Famer Joe DiMaggio was born in Martinez, California.

In 1947, movie studio executives meeting in New York agreed to blacklist the writers, producers and directors known as the "Hollywood Ten," who had been cited for contempt of Congress the day before.

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Day one of Gaza cease-fire sees first swap of hostages, prisoners

RAFAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Hamas on Friday released 24 hostages it held captive in Gaza for weeks, and Israel freed 39 Palestinians from prison in the first stage of a swap under a four-day cease-fire that offered a small glimmer of relief to both sides.

Israel — wrenched by the abduction of nearly 240 people in Hamas' Oct. 7 attack that triggered the war — cheered as 13 Israeli women and children emerged free from Gaza. Most were in their 70s or 80s, and the youngest was a 2-year-old. Also released were 10 people from Thailand and one from the Philippines.

In Gaza, the truce's start Friday morning brought the first quiet for 2.3 million Palestinians reeling and desperate from relentless Israeli bombardment that has killed thousands, driven three-quarters of the population from their homes and leveled residential areas. Rocket fire from Gaza militants into Israel went silent as well.

Increased supplies of food, water, medicine and fuel promised under the deal began to roll into Gaza, where U.N. officials had warned that Israel's seal on the territory threatened to push it to starvation.

But relief has been tempered — among Israelis by the fact that not all hostages will be freed and among Palestinians by the brevity of the pause. The short truce leaves Gaza mired in humanitarian crisis and under the threat that fighting could soon resume.

Israel says the cease-fire could be extended if more hostages are released, and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said it had received a new list of hostages to be released by Hamas on Saturday.

But Israel has vowed to resume its massive offensive once the truce ends. That has clouded hopes that the deal could eventually help wind down the conflict, which has fueled a surge of violence in the occupied West Bank and stirred fears of a wider conflagration across the Middle East.

FIRST HOSTAGES FREED

Under the deal, Hamas is to release at least 50 hostages, and Israel 150 Palestinian prisoners over the four days. Both sides were starting with women and children. Israel said the four-day truce can be extended an extra day for every additional 10 hostages freed.

After nightfall Friday, a line of ambulances emerged from Gaza through the Rafah Crossing into Egypt carrying the freed hostages, as seen live on Egypt's state-run Al-Qahera TV. The freed Israelis included nine women and four children 9 and under.

The released hostages were taken to three Israeli hospitals for observation. The Schneider Children's Medical Center said it was treating eight Israelis — four children and four women — and that all appeared to be in good physical condition. The center said they were also receiving psychological treatment, adding that "these are sensitive moments" for the families.

At a plaza dubbed "Hostages Square" in Tel Aviv, a crowd of Israelis celebrated at the news.

Yael Adar spotted her mother, 85-year-old Yaffa Adar, in a TV newscast of the release and was cheered to see her walking. "That was a huge concern, what would happen to her health during these almost two months," she told Israel's Channel 12.

But Yael's 38-year-old son,

Tamir Adar, remained in captivity. Both were kidnapped on Oct. 7 from Kibbutz Nir Oz. "Everyone needs to come back. It's happiness locked up in grief."

The hostages included multiple generations. Nine-year-old Ohad Munder-Zichri was freed along with his mother, Keren Munder, and grandmother Ruti Munder. The fourth-grader was abducted during a holiday visit to his grandparents at the kibbutz where about 80 people — nearly a quarter of all residents of the small community — are believed to have been taken hostage.

The plight of the hostages has raised anger among some families that the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was not doing enough to bring them home.

Hours later, 24 Palestinian women and 15 teenagers held in Israeli prisons in the occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem were freed. In the West Bank town of Beituna, hundreds of Palestinians poured out of their homes to celebrate, honking horns and setting off fireworks that light up the nights sky.

The teenagers had been jailed for minor offenses like throwing stones. The women included several convicted of trying to stab Israeli soldiers, and others who had been arrested at checkpoints in the West Bank.

Iyas had been taken last year into "administrative detention," without charges or trial and based on secret evidence. Israel often holds detainees for months without charges. Most of those who are tried are put before military courts that almost never acquit defendants and often don't follow due process, human rights groups say.

According to the Palestinian

Prisoners' Club, an advocacy group, Israel is currently holding 7,200 Palestinians, including about 2,000 arrested since the start of the war.

CEASE-FIRE TAKES HOLD

Friday's halt in fighting brought Gaza's uprooted population a moment to catch their breath after weeks of fleeing for shelter, searching for food and fearing for family.

After the truce began Friday morning, four trucks of fuel and four trucks of cooking gas entered from Egypt, as well as 200 trucks of relief supplies, Israel said.

Israel has barred all imports into Gaza throughout the war, except for a trickle of supplies from Egypt.

Its ban on fuel, which it said could be diverted to Hamas, caused a territory-wide blackout. Hospitals, water systems, bakeries and shelters have struggled to keep generators running.

During the truce, Israel agreed to allow the delivery of 34,340 gallons of fuel per day — still only a small portion of Gaza's estimated daily needs of more than 1 million liters.

Most of Gaza's 2.3 million people are crowded into the southern portion of the territory, with more than 1 million living in U.N. schools-turned-shelters. The calm brought a chance for displaced residents of the south to visit homes and retrieve some belongings.

But the hundreds of thousands who evacuated from northern Gaza to the south were warned not to return in leaflets dropped by Israel. Israeli troops hold much of the north, including Gaza City.

Still, hundreds of Palestinians tried walking north Friday. Two were shot and killed by Israeli troops and another 11 were

wounded.

Israel's northern border with Lebanon was also quiet on Friday, a day after the militant Hezbollah group, an ally of Hamas, carried out the highest number of attacks in one day since fighting there began Oct. 8.

Hezbollah is not a party to the cease-fire agreement but was widely expected to halt its attacks.

A LONGER PEACE?

The war erupted when several thousand Hamas militants stormed into southern Israel, killing at least 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and taking scores of hostages, including babies, women and older adults, as well as soldiers.

The hope is that "momentum" from the deal will lead to an "end to this violence," said Majed al-Ansari, a spokesman for the Foreign Ministry of Qatar, which served as a mediator along with the United States and Egypt.

But hours before it came into effect, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant told troops that their respite would be short and that the war would resume with intensity for at least two more months.

Netanyahu has also vowed to continue the war to destroy Hamas' military capabilities, end its 16-year rule in Gaza and return all the hostages.

The Israeli offensive has killed more than 13,300 Palestinians, according to the Health Ministry in the Hamas-run Gaza government. Women and minors have consistently made up around two-thirds of the dead, though the latest number was not broken down. The figure does not include updated numbers from hospitals in the north, where communications have broken down.

Sea turtle nests break records, but global warming threatens survival

INDIAN ROCKS BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Just as they have for millions of years, sea turtles by the thousands made their labored crawl from the ocean to U.S. beaches to lay their eggs over the past several months. This year, record nesting was found in Florida and elsewhere despite growing concern about threats from climate change.

In Florida, preliminary state statistics show more than 133,840 loggerhead turtle nests, breaking a record set in 2016. Same for green turtles, where the estimate of at least 76,500 nests is well above the previous mark set in 2017.

High sea turtle nest numbers also have been reported in South Carolina, Alabama, North Carolina and Georgia, although not all set records like Florida, where Justin Perrault, vice president of research at Loggerhead Marinelife Center in Juno Beach, said the number of nests is remarkable this year.

"We had more nests than we had ever seen before on our local beaches," said Perrault, whose organization monitors Palm Beach County and broke a local record by 4,000 nests. "That's quite a bit of nesting."

There are seven species of sea turtles: loggerhead, green, leatherback, hawksbill, Kemp's ridley, olive ridley and flatback. All are considered either endangered or threatened. They come ashore on summer nights, digging pits in the sand and depositing dozens of eggs before covering them up and returning to the sea. Florida beaches are one of the most important hatcheries for loggerheads in the world.

Only about one in 1,000

sea turtle hatchlings live to adulthood. They face myriad natural threats, including predators on land and in the ocean, disruptions to nests and failure to make it to the water after hatching. This year along one stretch of Florida's Gulf Coast where 75 nests had been counted, most were wiped out by the surge from Hurricane Idalia in August.

"Unfortunately, the nests pre-Idalia were almost all lost due to the high tides and flooding on our barrier islands," said Carly Oakley, senior turtle conservation biologist at Clearwater Marine Aquarium.

Female turtles generally lay eggs in a three-year cycle, leading to up-and-down years of nests, she said. "The nesting process is very exhausting and, in this break, females regain the energy to do the process again," Oakley said.

Climate change has added to those challenges, reducing beaches as sea levels rise and causing more powerful tropical storms. Hotter air, water and sand and changes in the ocean currents turtles use to migrate also lower the odds of surviving, according to Oceana, an international conservation group.

Sand temperatures play a major role in determining sea turtle sex. In general, warmer temperatures produce more female turtles, and sand temperatures are projected to increase dramatically around the world by 2100, according to researchers at Florida State University.

"So the warmer the nest is, the more likely that nest is to produce females," Perrault said. "Additionally, hatchlings that come out of warmer nests are much

smaller and often slower."

A study led by FSU professor Mariana Fuentes that was published recently in the *Global Change Biology* journal found sea turtles will have to nest much later or much earlier than they currently do to cope with changing environmental conditions.

Even that may not be enough for every species, said Fuentes, who works in FSU's Department of Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Science. Turtles have adapted to altered climates

over millions of years, but today's rapid changes could happen too quickly for them to evolve, she said.

"We have found that even if they do change the timing of their nesting, that's not going to be sufficient to maintain the temperatures of current nesting grounds," Fuentes said.

Sea turtle mothers already have to lumber out of the water to find a good spot to nest, which can be difficult in areas where humans have built seawalls. Some female turtles make

several attempts, known as false crawls, before finding a suitable location.

Raccoons, coyotes and other predators raid the nests and hatchlings, once they dig their way out, have to crawl to the sea before being snatched up by birds and other animals. Electric lights can disorient them, causing turtles to head the wrong way on the beach instead of following light from the moon and stars. And when the lucky ones finally start swimming, hungry fish await.

Michelle Pate, biologist at the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, said tens of thousands of hatchlings don't make it to the water, even as nest numbers trend higher across much of the Southeast.

"If we can't get hatchlings to emerge and make it to the ocean, then an increase in nest numbers doesn't help," she said.

The increase in turtle nests this year conceals an ominous future for the animals, Perrault said.



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Tigers earn win over rival Starfires as ACAC conference play begins

By RYAN WALKER

More shooting woes continued for Bluffton, but everything else was more than enough to win its conference opener 60-39 over South Adams Friday night at The Tiger Den.

The win gave Bluffton head coach Doug Curtis his first in the ACAC as the Tigers' skipper, who was previously at Adams Central, and helped the group improve to a perfect 6-0 record.

The Starfires (2-5) lost several key players last season in a 13-11 showing and only seven were available in Friday night's matchup due to low numbers and injuries.

One of the key losses was Peyton Pries, by far South Adams' leading scorer, but her sister, Macy, returned for her senior year as the main piece. On Friday night, Bluffton keyed in on her and kept her quiet for most of the night. For Curtis, that was crucial for conference win No. 1.

"I thought going in, as long as we do what we're supposed to do, and we do a good job on Pries, we'll be fine," he said.

Pries, who netted her 1,000th career point in her last game, finished with just two made shots and a couple of free throws for eight points. She went 2-10 from the floor and had to get other teammates Addie Baker and Laney Trausch involved.

Curtis still thought there could be more room for improvement from his game plan, as she had success finding Baker with 13 points and Trausch 10.

"Every time (Pries) gave the ball up, we were trying to deny her from getting the ball back," Curtis said. "I didn't think we did a great job of that, but we did enough of a job to bother her when she did drive, we had two people on her the whole time. So that was pretty good."

Despite the 21-point victory, the Tigers were 21-55 (39 percent) from the floor, with most of the baskets from close range and in transition.

The team made 30 shots at a 44 percent clip in its previous win over New Haven on Wednesday, but even then, Curtis has been emphasizing offense from mid-range and beyond.

"When you're talking to kids about shooting, then they're feeling more pressure," Curtis said. "So, they need to try to not to talk (about it). There's all kinds of things going on there. But they know that they're not shooting the ball as well as they want to shoot it, so we tried to shut up and work on it in practice. But you know, it's a pressure thing."

Like the New Haven game two days before, the Tigers were cold at the beginning. They didn't make their first bucket until a layup by Isabella Stout at the 3:31 mark.

Haley Gibson added a pair of makes to respond to the Starfires' spurt of makes. To end the quarter, Madyson Sonnigsen nailed a three to take a 12-10 lead.

At the 3:38 point, South Adams used a timeout, but Bluffton was 1-7 in the quarter by that point. But that was when the Tigers pounced on three straight turnovers and cashed in to aid a 10-0 run.

That burst of offense made it a 10-point game, and Bluffton outscored South Adams the rest of the way 36-25.

One thing is for certain about this Tigers' team led by Curtis — he will lead the charge on the defensive end.

The Tigers allowed under 40 points for the third time this season, and have averaged 40 points given up per contest.

In the third quarter, the Starfires didn't make a single shot and finished with five points via the free throw line. The 19 turnovers helped the team get easier looks for points on the other end.

Perhaps a new face provided a spark, as freshman Sophie Eisenhut was given her most minutes on varsity this season. She has soaked up junior varsity minutes during the first five games of the season, therefore, leaving her without a chance following those games. South Adams does not have a junior varsity team, and Eisenhut got her audition, and Curtis was impressed with her four rebounds, a couple of blocks, and hitting the free throw line a few times.

"Well, that's what was going to happen eventually — the question was when," Curtis said of Eisenhut's more prominent role on Friday night. "I think that'll continue to happen in the future. We want to be bigger, and that's the way to get bigger."

Stout was the leading scorer with 13 points. Gibson tallied 12, while Konley Ault added 10.

Bluffton's next game will be at Blackford at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 30.

sports@news-banner.com

BLUFFTON 60, SOUTH ADAMS 39

At Bluffton

SOUTH ADAMS (2-5, 0-1 ACAC): Addie Baker 4-10 5-9 13, Laney Trausch 4-10 2-2 10, Macy Pries 2-10 3-8 8, Liz Gerber 1-8 2-3 5, Emmerson Smith 0-6 2-4 2, Bekah Patterson 0-3 0-0 0. TOTALS: 11-47 14-26 39.

BLUFFTON (6-0, 1-0 ACAC): Isabella Stout 5-11 3-4 13, Haley Gibson 5-15 0-0 12, Konley Ault 5-9 1-3 12, Maryn Schreiber 2-5 2-4 6, Madyson Sonnigsen 2-5 0-0 6, Sophie Eisenhut 1-3 2-4 4, Tressa Renner 1-2 0-0 3, Marty Drayer 1-4 0-0 2, Cayah King 0-1 0-0 0, Madelyn Funk 0-1 0-0 0, Addison Yates 0-0 0-0 0, Isla Gibson 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS: 21-55 7-14 60.

South Adams 10 7 5 17 — 39

Bluffton 12 18 14 17 — 60

Three-point FG: South Adams: 2-8 (Pries 1-2, Gerber 1-4, Smith 0-2); Bluffton: 6-16 (Sonnigsen 2-4, H. Gibson 2-8, Ault 1-1, Renner 1-1) Rebounds: South Adams: 23 (Gerber 8, Patterson 6, Trausch 4, Pries 3, Baker 2); Bluffton: 38 (Stout 6, H. Gibson 6, Drayer 5, Sonnigsen 5, Renner 5, Eisenhut 4, Schreiber 4, King 2, Ault 2). Turnovers: South Adams 19, Bluffton 9. Fouls: South Adams 10, Bluffton 18. Fouled Out: None. Technicals: None. JV: No JV Game.



Haley Gibson (middle) draws a crowd of Macy Pries (left) and Emmerson Smith (right) as she drives into the lane in the second quarter Friday night at the Tiger Den. (Photos by Glen Wering)



Bluffton freshman Sophie Eisenhut is the center of attention as she powers up a shot in the lane Friday night at The Tiger Den.

High School Calendar

SATURDAY, NOV 25

GIRLS BASKETBALL: Angola at Norwell, 12:30 p.m.; Adams Central at Southern Wells, 7:30 p.m.

WRESTLING: Southern Wells at Homestead Super Duals, 9 a.m.

MONDAY, NOV 27

No events scheduled

TUESDAY, NOV 28

BOYS BASKETBALL: Norwell at Mississinewa, 7:30 p.m.

SWIMMING & DIVING (CO-ED): Concordia at Norwell, 5:30 p.m.; Bluffton at Jay County, 6 p.m.

WRESTLING: Eastside at Bluffton, 6:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, NOV 29

BOYS BASKETBALL: Bluffton at Blackford, 7:30 p.m.

GIRLS BASKETBALL: Southern Wells at Muncie Burris, 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, NOV 30

GIRLS BASKETBALL: Bluffton at Blackford, 7:30 p.m.

SWIMMING & DIVING (CO-ED): Bishop Luers, Blackhawk at Bluffton 5:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, DEC 1

BOYS BASKETBALL: South Adams at Bluffton, 7:30 p.m.; Southern Wells at Adams Central, 7:30 p.m.

GIRLS BASKETBALL: Huntington North at Norwell, 7:45 p.m.

Alex DeBrincat, Red Wings knock off NHL-best Bruins for 2nd time

By MIKE CRANSTON
Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Alex DeBrincat and J.T. Compher each had a goal and an assist, and the

Detroit Red Wings beat Boston 5-2 on Friday for their second victory over the NHL-leading Bruins this season.



Robby Fabbri, Dylan Larkin and David Perron also scored for the Red Wings, who are the only team to beat Boston (14-2-3) in regulation. Shayne Gostisbehere had two assists and Ville Husso stopped 25 shots.

"A big win for us," Husso said.

In their third meeting in a month — the Bruins won the first game on Oct. 28 — Detroit took advantage of six Boston penalties to improve to 10-0-2 when scoring four or more goals.

"A really good start. I feel like our guys were focused and locked in," coach Derek Lalonde said. "A pretty complete road game against a very good team."

Jake DeBrusk and Danton Heinen scored for the Bruins, who had been 5-0-2 since losing at Detroit on Nov. 4. Jeremy Swayman made 24 saves on his 25th birthday.

"It's one thing if you play well and things happen and you don't get the result," Bruins center Charlie Coyle said. "But that wasn't the case I don't think."

Despite a 16-save shutout Wednesday against New Jersey, Alex Lyon was the Red Wings' backup. Husso had allowed at least four goals in his past three starts, but had been on paternity leave and hadn't played since Nov. 11.

"He should have a kid every six weeks," Lalonde said, smiling. "The Bruins finally solved Husso when DeBrusk knocked home his own rebound on the power play to get Boston within 2-1 early in the second period."

It was DeBrusk's second goal in as many games after managing one in his first 16 games.

But Husso kept the surging Bruins at bay until Fabbri scored on a wrist shot from the faceoff circle at 13:24 of the second.

Heinen's wrist shot 4:12 into the third got the Bruins within a goal. But Brandon Carlo was

called for hooking less than a minute later and Larkin scored five seconds into the power play to give Detroit another two-goal cushion.

Perron added an empty-netter with 1:45 left.

"Once we did start chipping away, it seemed like we had a penalty and they would capitalize," DeBrusk said. "They controlled our momentum swings and that's why they got the win."

Boston coach Jim Montgomery gave veteran James van Riemsdyk the day off in the team's traditional Black Friday home matinee, with Morgan Geekie returning to the lineup.

An early Geekie miscue and an odd bounce put the Bruins in a hole. With Geekie serving a holding penalty, Compher redirected Gostisbehere's shot at 5:13. The puck bounced off Swayman's chest and trickled between his legs.

The Red Wings made it 2-0 late in the first period when DeBrincat pickpocketed rookie Matt Poitras

in the neutral zone, skated in alone and wristed a shot past Swayman for his team-high 12th goal.

Boston couldn't overcome the sleepy start and lost in regulation at home for just the fifth time in 50 regular-season home games over the past two seasons.

After using 11 forwards and seven defensemen for several games this season, including their first victory over Boston, the Red Wings had a traditional 12-6 lineup with Jake Walman (illness) scratched.

It worked as Detroit won its second straight after returning from a 0-1-1 trip to Sweden.

"We know we're a good team," Husso said. "If we can bring it every night, every day, our best game, we can beat any team in this league."

UP NEXT

Red Wings: Host Minnesota on Sunday.

Bruins: At the New York Rangers on Saturday, with Matt Grzelcyk (upper-body injury) expected to return.

Surprised by neighbor's come-on

Dear Annie: I was at home making a sandwich recently when my close friend's wife from next door came through the back door. She called out and said she just wanted to see how I was doing. I said I was great and asked if she wanted a sandwich and a beer. She said no to the sandwich but yes to the beer, so I got her one and then sat down to enjoy my lunch.

She continued standing by the counter while we talked, and then out of the blue she said she wanted to tell me something: that she had been really interested in me for years but never said anything. She then tried to kiss me, and I backed away immediately.

I was shocked, surprised and dumbfounded all at once. I didn't know what to say. But I did turn her down. I couldn't do that, especially in my home, a home I share with the woman I married when she was 16 because I absolutely loved her and still do. I couldn't believe what happened, and I sure can't share it with my wife or her husband. They both would blow a gasket. I've gotten to the point where I don't care to be around my friend and certainly not his wife. This is driving me nuts, and any suggestions would be appreciated.

Dear At Wits' End: It sounds like you handled the situation as well as you could have. It's a shame your friend's wife had to pull a move like that, because now the dynamic between the four of you will inevitably suffer. You did nothing wrong, though, and you should not let this woman's misdeed drive a wedge between you and your wife.

At this point, honesty is the best policy. If you refuse to see the neighbors and start acting strangely around your friend's wife, your wife will know something is up and wonder what you are hiding from her. The truth is, you have nothing to hide, because you are innocent. Tell her what happened — you can spare her the details — and then you and your wife can decide together how to proceed.

Dear Annie: My friend was VERY upset, and rightfully so, because her

best friend committed suicide. But my friend was very angry with me and accused me of being a bad friend when I asked her not to call me every day and expect me to drop everything I was doing to listen. I did listen the first week after it happened and every night when she called me. Anything I suggested to help her with the grieving process was judged as "I didn't care" and therefore, I was not a good friend.

She also did this to her other friend. She would talk about death and suicide every day to us, and her other friend has terminal cancer. I told her to seek some counseling, that I'm not a psychiatrist and am dealing with some health issues myself and can't deal with more stress. — Struggling to Shoulder the Load

Dear Struggling: While your delivery could have been gentler, you did the right thing setting a boundary for yourself and your personal peace. If anything, your friend's behavior shows just how much she's hurting.

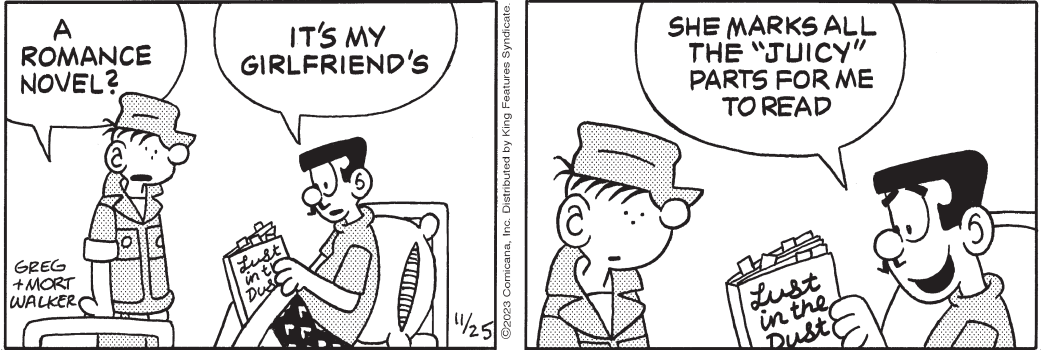
Being there for her doesn't mean having to bear the brunt of her pain. Continue to support her in whatever way is possible for you and keep encouraging her to seek professional help. Once the initial shock of what happened subsides, I hope she will heed your advice, taking steps to properly grieve her late friend's death and heal from this tragedy.

"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. © 2023 CREATORS.COM

Dear Annie by Annie Lane



BEETLE BAILEY



BLONDIE



ZITS



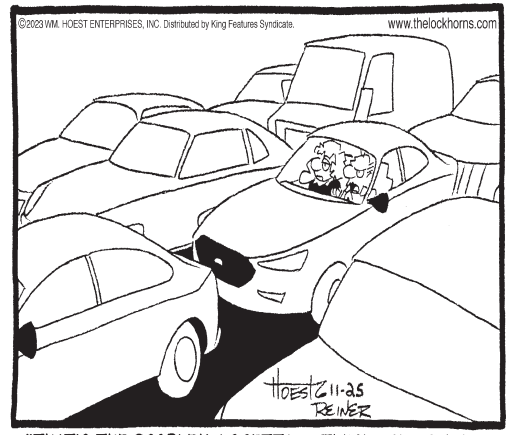
CRANKSHAFT



THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane

The LOCKHORNS



My Answer

By Dr. Billy Graham



God will never let us down

Q: I was brought up to believe that the story of Noah's Ark was a fairy-tale and the great flood a myth. Visiting "The Ark" taught me so much about the Bible, and archaeology verifies this historical account. What astounded me most, though, was to hear why the flood came about — because of the sin in people's hearts. People's hearts today seem as corrupted. Where will this all end? — H.M.

A: "Archaeology Substantiates Noah's Flood," said the London Times in 1929. The article that followed gave an archaeologist's view of the civilization that existed prior to the

flood. The Bible also gives a vivid account of the corruption and the sin of that day.

At least 2,000 years of human history had intervened since the spotless purity of Eden. During that same period there had been a vast increase in population with woeful deterioration resulting in appalling moral corruption. Sin, crime, immorality, the breaking of home life, unnatural affection, murders, demon possession — these were common characteristics of the civilization immediately preceding the deluge. The great civilization that had taken years to build was destroyed in the space of 40 days.

The flood didn't destroy the people of that day; sin had already done its deadly work of eating out

the heart and core of the ancient civilization before the flood came. There is a fundamental law of God, a law apparent from Genesis to Revelation, which says, "The wages of sin is death." The wages of a nation's sin, the wages of individual sin, is death.

This is the reason God sent His Son to provide a way of escape, and all who hope for a better life should put their trust in Christ and His Gospel. "Trust in Him at all times" (Psalm 62:8, NKJV). God will never let us down.

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

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TV schedule table with columns for time slots (11:25, M, A, D1, D2, 5 PM, 5:30, 6 PM, 6:30, 7 PM, 7:30, 8 PM, 8:30, 9 PM, 9:30, 10 PM, 10:30, 11 PM, 11:30, 12 AM, 12:30) and rows for various channels (WIMM, CBS, ANTA, ABC, NBC, MNT, WPTA-2, FOX, WISE, PBS, WFWA, FOX, WFTF, etc.)

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across (1-36) and Down (1-18) and a solution time of 26 mins.

Table for yesterday's crossword answer (11-25) with a grid and corresponding numbers 1-31.

