

The News - Banner

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2023 BLUFFTON, INDIANA • Wells County's Hometown Connection \$1.00

Bluffton's very own Santa marks 40th year

By SYDNEY KENT

The year was 1984, and the merchants group in downtown Bluffton was in need of a Santa for the Christmas season.

Lauren "Bud" Elzroth, an employee with Franklin Electric, was the first choice for the position; he had served as the designated Santa for the annual company Christmas party for years prior. Unfortunately, he wasn't available.

His son, however, was up for the challenge — and the extra cash. Jeff Elzroth borrowed a Santa suit and agreed to the task. He didn't know that "yes" would continue for the next 40 years and counting.

"I took it over that year so I had money to buy my kids presents for Christmas," Elzroth explained. "I just loved it so much and I loved kids. So when they asked me to come back, I was like, 'Sure thing.'"

With that, the money that Elzroth earned for Christmas was ultimately redirected to purchase a suit that would bring joy to the community. The community returned the favor. Over the past four decades, Elzroth has been an integral piece of countless Christmas memories.

"Years ago at Sonlight Church, I was in a play," Elzroth recounted. "In the past, we would always go to the hospital on Christmas Eve to see if there were any kids to visit. If there were, we would find something to take up to them with permission. We've even had brand new deliveries — I've held a baby that was two hours old."

Elzroth has donated time throughout his tenure as jolly Saint Nick at local day cares and the head start program. He has also delivered a wide variety of gifts.

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Jeff and Amy Elzroth as Santa and Mrs. Claus at the annual Winter Wonderland event on Thursday. (Photo by Sydney Kent)

Homeless population is up 12 percent

By KEVIN FREKING

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States experienced a dramatic 12 percent increase in homelessness to its highest reported level as soaring rents and a decline in coronavirus pandemic assistance combined to put housing out of reach for more Americans, federal officials said Friday.

About 653,000 people were homeless, the most since the country began using the yearly point-in-time survey in 2007. The total in the January count represents an increase of about 70,650 from a year earlier.

The latest estimate indicates that people becoming homeless for the first time were behind much of the increase.

A rise in family homelessness (Continued on Page 2)



Ossian Elementary's historians

Fourth grade students at Ossian Elementary School hosted a "Learning Museum" on Friday, where they dressed up as people, places and events from the "Who was...?" nonfiction book series. Judd Bauermeister (above) dressed as Albert Einstein and Cayla Wolford (right, top) dressed for the Amazon Rainforest are pictured sharing their research projects with fellow students. At right bottom, Charlotte Scott, Holley Cole and Ellie Sands dress as British royalty, Queen Elizabeth I, Queen Victoria, and Princess Diana. Scott said she chose to study Queen Elizabeth I because she liked learning about sightings of Elizabeth's ghost. Walking through the special museum, a visiting student exclaimed, "This is so cool — this used to be a gym." (Photos by Holly Gaskill)



Israeli military says it mistakenly killed 3 Israeli hostages

By NAJIB JOBAIN, JACK JEFFERY and JULIA FRANKEL

Associated Press

RAFAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israeli troops mistakenly shot three hostages to death Friday in a battle-torn neighborhood of Gaza City, and an Israeli strike killed a Palestinian journalist in the south of the besieged territory, underscoring the ferocity of Israel's ongoing onslaught.

The deaths were announced as a U.S. envoy tried to persuade the Israelis to scale back their campaign sooner rather than later.

The hostages were killed in the Gaza City area of Shijaiyah, where troops have been engaged in fierce fighting with Hamas militants in recent days. The soldiers mistakenly identified the three Israelis as a threat and opened fire on them, said the army's chief spokesman, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari.

He said it was believed that the three had either fled their captors or been abandoned.

"Perhaps in the last few days, or over the past day, we still don't know all the details, they reached this area," Hagari said. He said the army expressed "deep sorrow" and was investigating.

Hamas and other militants abducted more than 240 people (Continued on Page 2)



'Christmas Around the World'

Lancaster Elementary School students hosted friends, family and peers for showings of their special Christmas concert on Thursday. Music teacher Hannah Hobson directed students through songs of "Christmas Around the World," featuring songs from different traditions. Pictured, the choir sings "African Noel" from West Africa with teachers Allyson Schwartz and Zach Teeple assisting on percussion. (Photo by Holly Gaskill)

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Outside

Rain and a chance of snow move in this weekend

Today	Sunday	Monday
High 51	High 48	High 36
Low 41	Low 32	Low 20

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Vol. 95 No. 39

SATURDAY
December 16, 2023

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in Today's **NEWS-BANNER**

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Santa and Mrs. Claus

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"I have delivered a horse, guinea pig, cat, dog, a little bit of everything over the years," Elzroth laughed. "And you know, we get your typical request for a million dollars. One request almost made me cry one year. There was a little girl, and her parents were fighting and getting divorced. She asked me if her parents could get back together. I told her there was probably nothing I could do, but I would say a prayer with her. And I did. Four years ago, we even did a marriage proposal."

"This year, they will have three kids," Amy Elzroth, the beloved Mrs. Claus for 12 years, added.

"When Amy and I met," Elzroth said. "She agreed to do this with me, though she was very shy. We would go out to the middle school and Southern Wells in front of a couple hundred people."

"I would hide behind him a little bit," Amy smiled.

"She was a huge help," Elzroth continued. "I told her she could do the pictures, and she said she wanted a suit. The kids would often come up and start screaming as soon as they

saw me, and so they sat with her."

The couple have five children and 19 grandchildren together. When the children were younger, Elzroth said he kept Santa a secret from them, just as his parents had done with him. As they aged, they became his helpers.

"All of my kids helped me uptown, they were my little elves," Elzroth laughed. "They took pictures, collected money for me. (My daughter) Kira (Lee) was the best. A couple of my kids would come around for home visits with me and dress up like elves."

"It's been very fun having him be Santa my whole life," Lee said. "I looked forward to helping with Santa's workshop every year and riding downtown on the fire truck. I love seeing the repeat people every year and the new ones. He's always been great with remembering names, which is always surprising for the kids. The best part is having him be Santa for my daughter now too."

"Our grandkids don't really know," Elzroth added. "Our newest one doesn't, but they've seen us, they

always make a point to take a picture with us. That's really special and that will be something they get to look at."

From advances in photography to the fluctuating economy, Elzroth explained that the Santa experience has changed over the past four decades.

"People don't hire Santa anymore," Elzroth said. "COVID is when it seemed like everything changed, we didn't do any bookings at all. I was afraid we would have spread it. It was the only time we ever missed Christmas. Up until then, I came to town on the fire-truck and we had the lighting ceremony. Bluffton did away with the lighting ceremony after COVID. It's really sad."

Elzroth recalled an impactful donation he received the year he was forced to miss Christmas due to the virus.

"I cried when I saw the money," Elzroth said. "It was from one of the families we have been going to for over 30 years. The year before, we had just bought new suits and everything and thought we would lose a lot of money."

The Claus suits are made of velour, and cost approximately \$1,200 each. Elzroth also has to replace the beard for the costume every few years. In between new beards, a local stylist at Hair By Design styles the beard.

"Easily thousands of dollars in investment in the suits alone, but do you know what people notice?" Elzroth quipped. "My wife's nails."

The Elzroth's said that they plan to continue to fill the beloved roles for as long as they can.

"I will be 65 in a few months," Elzroth said. "We've already slowed down. The regulars keep us coming back, families that we have done for decades. It's kind of like our family too. We see who has arrived, who has passed away. One family gives us envelopes for the adults every year. They get their envelope, but they still have to sit on my lap and take a picture."

Though Santa and Mrs. Claus are fully booked on Christmas Eve this year, they will be available from 1-3 p.m. today at the Family Farm and Home store.

sydney@news-banner.com

Deadline for Christmas Eve, Day events

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day church and community events should be sent to The News-Banner by 5 p.m. Monday, Dec. 18. A list of events will appear in the Thursday, Dec. 21 edition of the The News-Banner.

Both religious and non-religious events can be included. Please also send church service information if there is a change in regular worship schedules due to the holiday.

Information should include:
 • The name and address of the church.
 • Times and dates for all events.
 • Any specific details about the event planned.
 • A contact phone number (N-B use only)
 Information can be submitted by email at email@news-banner.com, or brought into the N-B's office at 125 N. Johnson St. in Bluffton. Information may be edited for length or grammar.

Weather

Saturday, December 16, 2023
(24-hour observations at 9:07 p.m. Friday)
High: 56; Low: 31; Precipitation: None
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.24 feet at 9:45 p.m. Friday

Wells County forecast

Today: A 10 percent chance of showers after 5 p.m. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 51. Southeast wind 5 to 10 mph.

Tonight: Showers, mainly after 7 p.m. Low around 41. South wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph. Chance of precipitation is 90 percent. New precipitation amounts between a quarter and half of an inch possible.

Sunday: A 50 percent chance of showers, mainly before 1 p.m. Cloudy, with a high near 48. South wind around 10 mph becoming west in the afternoon.

Sunday Night: A 20 percent chance of showers. Cloudy, with a low around 32. West wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

Monday: Snow showers likely, possibly mixed with rain, becoming all snow after 1 p.m. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 36. Breezy. Chance of precipitation is 60 percent. New snow accumulation of less than one inch possible.

Monday Night: A 20 percent chance of snow showers before 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 20. Blustery.

Tuesday: Sunny, with a high near 33.

Tuesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 24.

Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 41.

Wednesday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 31.

Thursday: Mostly cloudy, with a high near 44.

Thursday Night: A slight chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 35.

Friday: A chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 45.



Homeless population

(Continued from Page 1)

ended a downward trend that began in 2012.

"For those on the frontlines of this crisis, it's not surprising," said Ann Oliva, chief executive officer at the National Alliance to End Homelessness, an advocacy group.

Housing and Urban Development Secretary Marcia Fudge said the data underscored an "urgent need" to support proven solutions that help people quickly exit homelessness and that prevent homelessness in the first place.

Going back to the first 2007 survey, the U.S. then made steady progress for about a decade in reducing the homeless population as the government focused particularly on increasing investments to get veterans into housing. The number of homeless people dropped from about 637,000 in 2010 to about 554,000 in 2017.

The numbers ticked up to about 580,000 in the 2020 count and held relatively steady over the next two years as Congress responded to the COVID-19 pandemic with emergency rental assistance, stimulus payments, aid to states and local governments and a temporary eviction moratorium.

Jeff Olivet, executive director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, a federal agency, said the extra assistance "held off the rise in homelessness that we are now seeing." He said numerous factors are behind the problem.

"The most significant causes are the shortage of affordable homes and the high cost of housing that have left many Americans living paycheck to paycheck and one crisis away from homelessness," Olivet said.

Within the overall rise, homelessness among individuals rose by nearly 11 percent, among veterans by 7.4 percent and among families with children by 15.5 percent.

People who identify as Black make up about 13 percent of the U.S. population but comprised 37 percent of all people experiencing homelessness. People who identify as Hispanic or Latino make up about 19 percent of the

population but comprised about 33 percent of those experiencing homelessness. Also, more than a quarter of the adults experiencing homelessness were over age 54.

HUD said that rental housing conditions were "extraordinarily challenging" in 2022, with rents increasing at more than twice the rate of recent years. It noted that trend has subsided since the January count. Such relief could show benefits when volunteers and housing officials around the country begin the next homeless count in just a few weeks.

Officials also noted that President Joe Biden's budget for this fiscal year has recommended guaranteed vouchers for low-income veterans and youths aging out of foster care, among other investments designed to reduce homelessness.

More than half the people experiencing homelessness in the country were in four states: California, New York, Florida and Washington. While about 28 percent of the nation's homeless are estimated to be in California, its increase was only about half the national rate. New York's homelessness went up more than three times the national rate, according to HUD's report.

New Hampshire, New Mexico and Colorado along with New York saw the largest percentage increases in homelessness. In all, the number of people experiencing homelessness increased in 41 states and the District of Columbia, and decreased in just nine states.

Dave Giffen, executive director of The Coalition for the Homeless in New York City, said the cost of rental housing soared after the pandemic.

"So when we saw the pandemic-era protections go away, we did start to see homelessness starting to increase again. We saw more people being evicted, housing instability," Giffen said. "But then all of that got kind of masked by the sudden, very rapid influx of new asylum seekers, and that is a crisis for which the city and state were more unprepared to deal with."

Starting in the summer of 2022,

New York City's homeless shelter system has been overwhelmed by waves of international migrants who are being bused into the city from southern U.S. border states. More than 150,000 migrants have been in the city's shelters for some period of time.

Mayor Eric Adams has pleaded with the federal government for aid to help defray the cost of housing migrants, which he says will run into the billions of dollars over the next few years. He has chastised the governor of Texas, for arranging to bus migrants out of that state to New York. Adams, a Democrat, has also asked for legal and bureaucratic changes that would allow migrants to get work permits more easily.

HUD did not get data that enabled it to separate out the specific impact of migrants and asylum seekers on homelessness, but some communities indicated it did affect their increase. The Biden administration has provided more than \$1 billion in grant funding to cities and states to fund critical needs for migrants. It's also identifying potential federal land and buildings that can be made available for shelter and other services for migrants, said a senior HUD official not authorized to publicly discuss the report.

HUD also sought to highlight improvements and noted that some communities bucked the national trend. Chattanooga, Tennessee, and the surrounding region, for example, saw a 49 percent drop from the 2022 count to this year's. Chattanooga increased efforts to more rapidly connect people to permanent housing and boosted efforts to prevent people from becoming homeless.

Other communities highlighted for a drop were Dallas, which experienced a 3.8 percent decrease, and Newark and Essex County, New Jersey, which saw a 16.7 percent drop. Houston has closed numerous homeless encampments across the city and saw a 17 percent reduction in unsheltered homelessness. San Jose, California, and Tucson, Arizona, were also cited for improvements.

Israeli military

(Continued from Page 1)

ple in the Oct. 7 attack that triggered the war, and the hostages' plight has dominated public discourse in Israel ever since. Their families have led a powerful public campaign calling on the government to do more to bring them home.

Demonstrations in solidarity with the hostages and their families take place nearly every day. Late Friday, hundreds of protesters blocked Tel Aviv's main highway in a spontaneous demonstration calling for the the hostages' return.

Israeli political and military leaders often say freeing all the hostages is their top aim in the war alongside destroying Hamas.

Still, in seven weeks since ground troops pushed into northern Gaza, they have not rescued any hostages, though they freed one early in the conflict and have found the bodies of several others. Hamas released over 100 in swaps for Palestinian prisoners last month, and more than 130 are believed to still be in captivity.

The three hostages were

identified as young men who had been abducted from Israeli communities near the Gaza border — Yotam Haim, 28, Samer Al-Talalka 25, and Alon Shamriz, 26.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called their deaths an "unbearable tragedy" and vowed to continue "with a supreme effort to return all the hostages home safely."

In southern Gaza, the Al Jazeera television network said an Israeli strike Friday in the city of Khan Younis killed cameraman Samer Abu Daqqa and wounded its chief correspondent in Gaza, Wael Dahdouh. The two were reporting at a school that had been hit by an earlier airstrike when a drone launched a second strike, the network said.

Khan Younis has been the main target of Israel's ground offensive in the south.

Speaking from a hospital bed, Dahdouh told the network that he managed to walk to an ambulance. But Abu Daqqa lay bleeding in the school and died hours later. An ambulance tried to reach the school to evacu-

ate him but had to turn back because roads were blocked by the rubble of destroyed houses, it said.

Dahdouh, a veteran of covering Israel-Gaza wars whose wife and children were killed by an Israeli strike earlier in the war, was wounded by shrapnel in his right arm.

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, Abu Daqqa is the 64th journalist to be killed since the conflict erupted: 57 Palestinians, four Israelis and three Lebanese journalists.

Palestinian U.N. Ambassador Riyad Mansour told a General Assembly meeting on the war that Israel "targets those who could document (their) crimes and inform the world, the journalists."

"We mourn one of those journalists, Samer Abu Daqqa, wounded in an Israeli drone strike and left to bleed to death for six hours while ambulances were prevented from reaching him," Mansour said.

The Israeli army did not immediately respond to an Associated Press request for comment about Abu

Daqqa's death.

Israel's offensive has flattened much of northern Gaza and driven 80 percent of Gaza's population of 2.3 million from their homes. Displaced people have squeezed into shelters mainly in the south in a spiraling humanitarian crisis.

The offensive has killed more than 18,700 Palestinians, according to the Health Ministry in Gaza. Thousands more are missing and feared dead beneath the rubble. The ministry does not differentiate between civilian and combatant deaths. Its latest count did not specify how many were women and minors, but they have consistently made up around two-thirds of the dead in previous tallies.

While battered by the Israeli onslaught, Hamas has continued its attacks. On Friday it fired rockets from Gaza toward central Israel, setting off sirens in Jerusalem for the first time in weeks but causing no injuries. The group's resilience called into question whether Israel can defeat it without wiping out the entire territory.

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BHMS students become authors through self-publishing opportunity

Sixth-grade students in Clarissa Tijerina's writing class at Bluffton-Harrison Middle School had the unique opportunity this fall to write, create, publish, and sell their own books as part of National Young Author's Fair USA 2023.

Tijerina says the idea came from an email Superintendent Brad Yates sent to staff about the opportunity. Students had been learning in Tijerina's class about fractured fairy tales, which changed the point of view of classic fairy tales. Some students incorporated that lesson into their books, while others created new projects.

For Tijerina, it's about giving the students the tools and empowering their voices to write. Every year, she tries to find ways to encourage students to take their writing and give it more purpose. When students completed their required in-class work, this was an optional project they could participate in. Most students completed their stories independently at home, but could also work on them in their free time once work was done.

"Every year I try to take something out of the classroom that gives more meaningful purpose to their writing, other than a grade. I want them to understand that their voice matters," Tijerina says.

Twenty-seven students and Tijerina have published their books with a combined total of 44 books. Some students wrote two or three books. Copies will be purchased for the BHMS library under a "Student Published Authors" section.

"I enjoy writing books for others to read. It was fun to use my imagination and to share that with others," Renley Hurst explained.

Tijerina says the BriBooks program is easy to use. Students can type or talk to text straight onto the page, and get feedback in real-time on grammar and spelling. They can also select from a large bank of graphics to illustrate their books. The books feature a biography and photo of the authors on the back cover, just like any other published book.

"It was a pretty easy process," student Naomi Dailey says. "They were very good at helping us fix grammar errors. It was a fun and exciting experience. It is a cool opportunity to publish our book and sell it online."

Tijerina fully vetted each book before signing off on them. After the books were completed, they were listed on Amazon for purchase — and students get royalties for each book sold. The program is free for students to use, and BriBooks also waived the fees associated with obtaining ISBNs for the students' books.

"Seeing the pride on the students' faces, as they bring me their books," Tijerina says, "makes this teacher very proud. They have done an amazing job!"

Students are currently in the promotion portion of the project. Book promotion is until Dec. 17. Currently, nearly 100 student books have already been sold. A few students will present excerpts of their books to the BHMSD school board on Monday, Dec. 18.

Search for books by author's name or book title, and check for sale updates at: <https://www.yaf.bribooks.com/us/dash-board> Awards are available to the top 10 "Best Seller" winners.

Bluffton Parks & Rec News & Notes



By Brandy Fiechter

Destination Recreation

If becoming fitter is part of your New Year's resolution, we have an excellent goal for you to reach. Around 220 people commit to doing the **Wells Winter 100 Mile Virtual Challenge** each year. The idea is to run or walk 100 miles between Jan. 1 – March 21 (the first day of spring).

Whatever your fitness goals are for 2024, this challenge will help you build and maintain a solid base, while reinforcing good habits and consistency through group accountability and motivation. All you need is an average of just under 10 miles a week – simple as that. The price of the challenge is only \$25.00.

By registering, you receive access to our Strava group, where you can log your miles and view the leaderboard (Note: You can also submit your miles via email), a Wells 100 Challenge T-Shirt, and a finishing medal if you complete 100 miles by March 22. There will also be chances to win additional prizes and discounts by submitting photos and comments on Strava or the Wells Winter 100 Challenge Facebook Page.

If you want a warm place to walk, stop by the **FREE Weekday Walkers** in the City Gym from 8:30-10:30 a.m. Enter the glass door on the west side of City Hall and sign in on the wooden door before you enter. Twenty laps equal one mile. If running on a treadmill is more your pace, consider signing up for a year-long city gym membership for only \$95. Stop by the park office on the 2nd floor of City Hall to sign up.

Don't forget to check the Bluffton Parks Facebook page to see where **Pep-permint the Elf** is hiding next! Children 12 and under are encouraged to look for a clue to the elf's whereabouts, then go to that park and take a selfie when they find a photo of him. Post those photos on our Facebook page, and we will draw winners to pick up a prize at City Hall. Hurry before time runs out. The Search

for Santa's Helper game will end on Dec. 20.

It's voting time for the annual **Gingerbread Contest**. While you are checking out the events on our Facebook page, be sure to "like" your favorite gingerbread creation in each age category. Voting ends Monday, Dec. 18, and the winners will be announced the next day.

Many people have been asking about taking crochet lessons, so we have scheduled additional classes after the first of the year. **Hooked on Crochet** classes will be taught by Kathy Gehrett at the Washington Park pavilion from 5:30-6:30 p.m. on Thursdays, Jan. 11, 18 and 25. Learning to crochet will give you a lifetime of pleasure and relaxation. You can learn to create handmade items for yourself and those you love.

Three one-hour group lessons cost \$20 (exact change preferred) due the first day. Yarn and instructions will be provided, and you will need to bring a size H hook. Call the park office to pre-register at 824-6069 or email events@blufftonindiana.gov. Class size is limited and open to beginners and advanced students.

Join us on Christmas Eve at 9 a.m. for a **FREE Santa Run/Walk**. We will provide Santa and elf hats and jingle bells to the first 75 to check in. Donuts will be served after the run/walk until 10 a.m. in the city gym. Check-in opens on Dec. 24 at 8:15 a.m. at the City Gym.

The final **Theater Thursday** for the year is this Thursday, Dec. 21, at the Wells County Public Library. We look forward to seeing you by 10 a.m. to enjoy the film *Last Christmas*, rated PG-13.

Please note that Community Harvest closes to give employees time off during the holidays to be with their families. The Farm Wagon at Life Community Church will only take Tuesday, Dec. 26 off and will return to the regular schedule starting on Jan. 2 at 9 a.m.

Have a great week!

Police Notebook

INCIDENTS

City:

Thursday, 3:31 p.m., 1200 block of Lancaster Street. Caller reported subject violated protection order by appearing at property and "putting hands" on her. One subject arrested for domestic battery and invasion of privacy.

Thursday, 4:09 p.m., 1000 block of West Cherry Street. Caller reported a young toddler reported someone inappropriately touched her.

Thursday, 9:58 p.m., Peyton's Northern Distribution Center. Caller reported damage to mirror from unknown vehicle.

Thursday, 11:38 p.m., 200 block of East Market Street. Caller requested to turn ammunition over to officer.

Friday, 1:05 p.m., 400 block of West Miller Street. Caller requested welfare check for mother who allowed subject in residence after they offered to pave her driveway. Subject then ques-

tioned mother's medication.

Friday, 1:25 p.m., 300 block of Autumn Court. Welfare check requested for elderly subject, contact made.

County:

Thursday, 12:54 p.m., Wells County Jail. Warrant served at the jail.

Thursday, 11:33 p.m., Ind. 1 and East 400 North, Bluffton. Subject arrested for driving while suspended with a prior suspension.

Friday, 7:45 a.m., South Meridian Road and East 250 South, Bluffton. Car versus deer.

Friday, 8:16 a.m., Wells County Jail. Warrant served at the jail.

Friday, 9:14 a.m., 5900 North Miller Street, Uniondale. Dispatch received a call and hang up with no more information. When officers arrived, they found multiple subjects outside.

One man advised he had just had an affair with his wife's sister and his wife would

not leave. The man's wife advised she had suspicions he had been unfaithful when he was not in bed at 4 a.m. She reportedly went to her sister's house after his work reported he was not there and found the two together.

Ossian:

Friday, 7:29 a.m., Ind. 1 and Ind. 224, Ossian. Report of a car accident with three to four vehicles involved and injuries.

ARRESTS

Lee Mack Breedlove, 33, Bluffton, domestic battery, a Level 6 felony, and invasion of privacy, a Class A misdemeanor. Bond set at \$50,000.

Mikala Paige Bailey, 23, Bluffton, two counts of domestic battery with serious bodily injury, both Level 5 felonies. Bond set at \$20,000.

Satar Satar, 43, Fort Wayne, driving while suspended — prior conviction, a Class A misdemeanor.

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.



Little Angels

Cleo Graham, Zoe Osborne and Fiona Striker sing along to "10 Little Angels" during the preschool recital at Bluffton-Harrison Elementary School on Friday. The students also sang "Sugar Plum Fairy," "Must be Santa," "I'm the Happiest Christmas Tree" and "Feliz Navidad." (Photo by Holly Gaskill)

First Presbyterian Church Special Christmas Concert and Worship Service

Featuring the A440 Strings from Fort Wayne Philharmonic
Sunday, December 17 • Concert at 10 AM • Worship Service at 10:30 AM



The A440 Strings, all members of the Fort Wayne Philharmonic, will perform Traditional Christmas music and other seasonal music.

Violinist Pablo Vasquez • Violinist Alexandre Tsilibes
Violist Kristin Westover • Cellist Brian Klickman

First Presbyterian Church in Bluffton is located at 215 E. Dustman Road. Everyone is invited to this special Worship Service!

Sunday, December 17
Concert at 10 AM
Worship Service at 10:30 AM

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The hick has returned to Hoosierland

Saturday's Sub



Mark Miller

Have you ever felt like Mark Twain's character in "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court"? Out of place, even out of your epoch?

A Hoosier Hick in the Big Apple. Same thing.

Many of you have likely experienced this, but this was the first adventure into the heart of the city for the Millers — a "Christmas in NYC" bus trip. So glad I wasn't driving, more so in the city than to and from, but that wouldn't have been any fun either.

We stayed just across the Hudson River in Secaucus, New Jersey, which looks an awful lot like Weehawken and East Rutherford and North Bergen. We drove by the Meadowlands Sports Complex several times coming and going, home of the Jets and the Giants. Also the scene of a lousy performance by my Packers Monday evening. But I digress.

It was just five miles from our hotel to Midtown Manhattan, which at about 8 a.m. on a weekday means one hour and 15 minutes. Except for Friday, which took us less than 20. Even our local New York guide could not pinpoint a reason for that.

Day One: Strawberry Fields Memorial and the building where John and Oko lived .. and the front entrance where he was gunned down. Central Park. Grant's Tomb. Harold Square and Macy's where the Thanksgiving Day Parade begins.

You have to have reservations to see Santa at Macy's. There is still a long line. Long. But a friendly elf guides people in and answers Hoosier questions. He wishes us a Merry Christmas and when we return the greeting he reaches into his apron and gives us a "Macy's Santaland, 2023" button. Best souvenir I brought home. Actually, the only one beside a couple ticket stubs. And it was free.



Times Square, an early dinner, time for a stop at Smith's Bar. The Smith in our group insisted on buying. He was a popular guy. Pictures were in order. Then on to a performance of "Hamilton." We've watched the video on Disney+ but in-person is a bit different. Just a bit.

Day Two. A morning behind-the-scenes tour of Radio City Music Hall where we got to meet a real Rockette. We learned there are actually two "teams" or "casts" of Rockettes, since they do four shows a day. But it's not a year-round job. Hundreds audition for just a few openings each year. The Rockette we met has a degree from Boston College in four kinds of dancing. Pretty impressive.

Then time enough for several members of our group to ice skate at Rockefeller Center. We checked out NBC Studios just across the street and saw Al Roker taping something; then a tour of the Intrepid Museum which houses the Enterprise space shuttle before another early dinner so we could head back to Radio City Music Hall for the evening performance of the Rockettes Christmas Spectacular. Whew. Usually, when something is billed as "spectacular" it is not. If you've seen it, you know it is. Truly amazing. I honestly think I was smiling during the full 90 minutes or so.

Day Three: Lower Manhattan. A view of a very distant Statue of Liberty. Thought we'd get closer. The FiDi — Financial District — and the 9/11 Memorial and Museum. It is not possible to characterize this as a "fun day." We've been to the USS Arizona Memorial at Pearl Harbor. A very similar experience.

Our Last Supper in New York was at a classic Italian eatery — Carmine's — that fed us family style. Huge plates of Italian salad and appetizers. Huge plates of sausage-and-pasta and shrimp-and-pasta. We thought we were ready for dessert until they brought out huge plates of chicken-and-pasta and salmon-and-pasta. They offered to box up the leftovers but what would we have done with it? As we were leaving the restaurant, waiting outside was one of the relatively few homeless people we came across on the trip. There was a universal lament: What we'd just thrown away would have fed this poor guy for two months.

Every trip to New York City, I understand, is required by law to include the Empire State Building. Judging by how things are laid out, nighttime is the best time to avoid the crowds. We got to the top and enjoyed the spectacular views — again, living up to its billing — in pretty good time.

But we didn't see Cary Grant or Deborah Kerr or Tom Hanks or Meg Ryan. There was a cardboard cut-out of the Elf (Will Ferrell) but we passed on a pose with that.

New York is supposed to be crowded. What's a word that triples that? Quadruples? Is it possible to have gridlock on a sidewalk? Yes.

New York is expected to be expensive. It's not if you don't spend money.

New Yorkers are supposed to be rude. There was one fellow, an usher at the Empire State Building, who we think was just trying to fill that stereotype. Otherwise, you'd have thought they are all Hoosiers. Enough to make us feel at home? They tried, but I am happy as a Hoosier Hick.

miller@news-banner.com



A compromise on the border would be good for Biden (and for Ukraine)

To pass a compromise on funding for border security and Ukraine, Senate Democrats are going to have to learn some new math — because the old Democratic math won't cut it.

Here is the old math: You need 60 votes to pass a bill in the Senate, and Democrats have 51 votes, so all they need to do is win over nine Republicans and — voilà! — bipartisan compromise.

No longer. The 51+9 model might have worked during the first two years of Joe Biden's presidency, when Democrats controlled the House (which would pass whatever compromise Senate Democrats came up with). But the House is in Republican hands now, and the GOP majority knows that any border security measure which passes the Senate without losing at least some Democratic support will be — practically by definition — nothing more than window dressing. That means it is dead on arrival in the lower chamber.

Despite his public demands that the Senate approve H.R.2, the House GOP's excellent border security bill, Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) understands that Senate Democrats won't do that. But to pass the House, a compromise bill must make changes to our border laws robust enough that it will inevitably lose some Democratic support in the Senate.

Senate Republicans agree. "This is going to end up being 30 and 30," Sen. James Lankford (R-Okla.), who is leading negotiations for a compromise, recently told Politico. "We're going to have folks on my side that are going to say, not enough, no way, there [are] still loopholes" on the border. And "we're going to have folks on the other side that are going to say [it is too] draconian, non-compassionate" and refuse to vote for it. Only after making changes that cause some senate Democrats to balk will the Biden administration have a bill that can become law.

In other words, the key to passing a Ukraine-border compromise will not be addition but subtraction. Senate Republican leaders are ready to move forward knowing they will lose about 10 GOP senators who are dead-set against any additional aid to Ukraine. They also know they will have to make border policy compromises that will cost additional GOP votes. The question is: What fundamental changes to our border-security laws are Biden and Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.) willing to make that will cost some Democratic votes in the Senate — yet make the bill palatable enough to pass the GOP-controlled House?

Democrats tried to avoid making real concessions and shaming the GOP for delaying aid to Ukraine and Israel. "Republicans — and only Republicans — are holding everything up because of unrealistic, maximalist demands on the border," Schumer thundered on the Senate floor on Monday. Those pressure tactics



Marc Thiessen

were never going to work. Even the most pro-Ukraine Republicans will vote against a bill that includes funding to more efficiently process illegal migrants entering the country but does not do more to stop them from entering in the first place.

So now, some on the left are panicking that Biden is going to make real, substantive changes to border policy that Republicans are demanding. Sen. Bob Menendez (D-N.J.) implored Biden: "Please don't go down this road, don't cave to the extreme Republican immigration proposals ... because if you do so, you cement your legacy as the asylum denier in chief. That's not something we want to see." If he loses Menendez's vote on a final package, that would be a sign real progress is being made.

Getting tough on the border is in Biden's political interest, as well. A recent Wall Street Journal poll shows that immigration is the second-most important issue to voters, and 64 percent disapprove of his border policies, while just 27 percent approve. That's because he has presided over the worst border crisis in U.S. history. In fiscal 2023, the record for the most encounters at the southern border was again broken — for the third year in a row. Last week, migrant encounters hit more 12,000 in a single day — the highest total ever recorded. To put that in perspective, in 2019, the Obama administration's homeland security secretary, Jeh Johnson, said that 1,000 border encounters a day "overwhelms the system." Wouldn't it be better for Biden's reelection prospects if border encounters drop down from current record levels to the averages under the past three (Republican and Democratic) presidents?

Even some Democrats see that the status quo at the border is unsustainable. "Honestly, it's astonishing," Sen. John Fetterman (D-Pa.) said last week, "you essentially have Pittsburgh showing up there at the border." There is a compromise to be had that can win 60 to 70 votes in the Senate and pass the House. But it depends on whether Schumer and Biden are willing to move forward with a bill that loses some votes in their conference, just like Republicans are.

Doing so would be good for Biden and good for the American people — and it would be good for Ukraine. The most devastating argument employed by the anti-Ukraine right is that Biden cares more about securing Ukraine's border than our own. Well, Biden could prove critics right by refusing to secure the U.S. border. Or he can prove them wrong by reaching an agreement with Republicans that would stop the flood of illegal migrants into this country and disarm the GOP isolationists of their most potent argument against aid to Ukraine.

The American people — and the Ukrainian people — are waiting to see what he decides.

Follow Marc A. Thiessen @marcthiessen on X

Root causes of lower learning

We are constantly told how necessary it is to find the "root causes" of everything, from crime, to illegal immigration, to the wave of antisemitism spreading across many college campuses and in our streets.

Often, this call to examine root causes is simply a distraction that avoids coming up with solutions.

Let's not kid ourselves that the resignation of the president of the University of Pennsylvania for her refusal to unequivocally denounce genocide against Jews (though Liz Magill will stay on as interim president until a replacement is found and will also remain a tenured professor) is going to solve anything so long as this attitude prevails among many faculty members and the boards that hire university presidents. The latest involves a medical school panel at George Washington University which has defended Hamas' "right of resistance." It will likely not be the last as other universities confront the issue and their conduct codes.

We are paying a price for the jettisoning of standards by which right and wrong, good and evil can be defined and judged. If everybody is right; if truth is subjective, then nothing can be said to be wrong which



Cal Thomas

has brought us to the current moral chaos and intellectual flabbiness.

C.S. Lewis knew right and wrong and how the wrong dominates when standards disappear. In his classic book "The Abolition of Man," Lewis wrote: "In a sort of ghastly simplicity we remove the organ and demand the function. We make men without chests and expect of them virtue and enterprise. We laugh at honour and are shocked to find traitors in our midst. We castrate and bid the geldings be fruitful."

It's difficult to improve on that critique, but Lewis does in this quote that also has modern applications: "For every one pupil who needs to be guarded against a weak excess of sensibility there are three who need to be awakened from the slumber of cold vulgarity. The task of the modern educator is not to cut down jungles but to irrigate deserts. The right defence against false sentiments is to inculcate just sentiments. By starving the sensibility of our pupils we only make them easier prey to the propagandist when he comes. For famished nature will be avenged and a hard heart is no infallible protection against a soft head."

The propagandists are in place throughout America's education sys-

tem, especially at the college level. The rotting intellectual fruit of their excesses can now be seen on campuses and in the streets as students and others who know little other than what they've been taught call for the elimination of the Jewish democratic state and the murder of Jews. Heil Hitler 2023!

Lewis isn't finished in his critique of academia: "A great many of those who 'debunk' traditional or (as they would say) 'sentimental' values have in the background values of their own which they believe to be immune from the debunking process."

This book was written in 1943 in the middle of World War II, a war that united Americans and Britons. When pictures of German death camps were published, the country was shocked and revolted. The Nazi hatred of Jews 80 years ago has been resurrected in our day. This, too, is revolting, especially as it comes from what are supposed to be institutions of "higher learning." More like lower learning.

If these excerpts leave you unpersuaded, try this one: "An open mind, in questions that are not ultimate, is useful. But an open mind about the ultimate foundations either of Theoretical or of Practical Reason is idiocy. If a man's mind is open on these things, let his mouth at least be shut..."

Yes, a mind is a terrible thing to waste. It is also a terrible thing to lose.

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1970 S.-800E., Bluffton
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APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHURCH - NORTH
630 E. Dustman Rd.
9:45 & 11:45 a.m. - Worship.

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

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

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6114E-750N, Ossian
bethehemossian.org
9 a.m. - Divine Service. 10:15 - Adult Bible Class, Youth Bible Class & Sunday School. 11:30 - Voice of Bethlehem on 92.7 FM.

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327 W. Cherry St.
10 a.m. - Sunday School. 11 a.m. - Worship. 6 p.m. - Service.

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blufftonwesleyan.net
9:30 a.m. - Sunday School. 10:30 & 6:30 p.m. - Worship.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF OSSIAN
1001 Dehner Dr.
9:30 a.m. - Sunday School. 10:30 a.m. - Worship. 6:30 - Service.

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

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

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

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN (EVANGELICAL)
123 S. Jefferson St., Ossian
www.OssianChurch.com
8:45 a.m. - Adult Sunday school. 10 a.m. - Worship. 11 a.m. - Carry-in lunch.

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

Time to Take a Devotional Break

REBELS & RULE FOLLOWERS

I'm a rule follower. I may talk big and occasionally do some crazy, spontaneous things, but at heart - I follow the rules. Wait in line over here? Okay.

Avoid that parking area? No problem. Leave the mattress tag alone? You betcha.

Whether due to a strict upbringing or years spent following rules in a small missionary boarding school or a simple dislike of chaos, I have discovered that in most instances, behaving in an orderly fashion is the best practice. Leave it at that - I generally follow the rules.

Rule-followers typically disdain rebels. We pity them for their choices but inwardly smile as we watch them receive consequences from their actions.

While Christians are not expected to abide by the laws and restrictions of the ancient Jewish faith, God HAS provided guidelines for each of us to follow. In reading His Word and imitating the life of Christ, we become more like our Savior, more pleasing to God.

God's Word also clarifies some of the consequences facing those who choose NOT to obey these

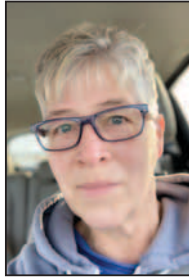
principles of holy living. The psalmist spoke of such rebels when he wrote of kings and rulers choosing to break the shackles and chains placed around them by their Creator (Psalm 2: 1-3). Rather than viewing God's laws of Truth as loving protections, their sinful, alienated hearts chose to imagine that God was cruelly stopping them from enjoying life. In throwing off God's guidelines, they reaped tragic consequences.

Throwing off hindrances is not always wrong. We CAN be "good

rebels." Romans 12:1-3 encourages believers to remember that, watched by a heavenly audience, we should "throw off everything that hinders us" as we run with endurance a race of obedience to God's Word. This type of "rebellion" is the good kind, in which we dispense restraints placed on us by sin.

God delights in this type of rebel! He wants us to see that the ramifications of our disobedience far outweigh any temporary pleasure we may derive from that rebellion.

Decide today to be both a spiritual rule follower as well as an obedient rebel.



by Martha Paxson



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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470 E. Morse St.
Saturday: 9:30 a.m. - Worship. 10:45 - Sabbath School (Bible study).

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

MARKLE RIVERSIDE 316
145 W. Morse St.
10 a.m. - Worship.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PONETO FAITH COMMUNITY CHURCH
36 E. Walnut St.
9 a.m. - Worship. 10 a.m. - Fellowship. 10:15 - Sunday School.

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

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

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

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

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

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

ST. LUKE CHURCH
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stlukechurch.in
9 a.m. - Worship. 10:15 - Sunday School.

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

ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN (NALC)
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10 a.m. - Worship. 10:15 - Children's Sunday School.

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

THE CHURCH AT MCNATT
9221 W 800 S-90, Montpelier
8:30 a.m. - Coffee fellowship. 9:15 - Worship.

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

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

UNIONDALE COMMUNITY CHURCH
5867 N. Main St.
9 a.m. - Worship.

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

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

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

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

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

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Local Roundup

Solid Waste District board will meet Monday

The board of the Wells County Solid Waste District will meet at 4 p.m. Monday, Dec. 18, 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 will include:
- Financial updates
 - 2024 Solid Waste District contract
 - Supervisor report

County Drainage Board will meet Monday afternoon

The Wells County Drainage Board will meet at 4:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 18, 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 will include:
- Consideration of a utility drain easement on the H. Bunn Tile Drain in Jefferson Township.
 - Project updates and miscellaneous drainage matters.

County Commissioners to meet Monday evening

The Wells County Commissioners will meet at 5 p.m. Monday, Dec. 18, 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 will include:
- A hearing regarding Jefferson Township's appeal for benefits.
 - Review of bid packages for the Wells County Highway Department.
 - Discussion of Wells County TRAX FRA grant assistance agreement with Jodi Coblenz and Ben Beer. Also with Beer, the board will discuss a possible supplemental agreement for Bridge 54.
 - Consideration of an extension of the Joray Hillis sewer with Eric Gerber.
 - Approval of right-of-way and utility agreements.
 - 2024 board appointments
 - Review of ARPA funds and open ADA coordinator designation.
 - Monthly reports and miscellaneous business.

County Commissioners will hold executive session

The Wells County Commissioners will meet directly following their regular meeting Monday, Dec. 18, in Room 105, the multi-purpose room on the lower level of

the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St.

The executive session was cited as a discussion of "initiation of litigation or litigation that is either pending or has been threatened specifically in writing."

Bluffton-Harrison school board will meet Monday

The board of the Bluffton-Harrison Metropolitan School District will meet at 6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 18, in the school district's administration building at 803 E. Harrison St. in Bluffton.

- Topics on the agenda will include:
- Financial matters.
 - Reports and announcements, specifically discussion of sixth grade author project and the 2024 Lilly scholarship. Communications Specialist Jessica Bricker, Assistant Superintendent Julie Meitzler, and Superintendent Brad Yates will also give updates.
 - Continued discussion regarding the high school building project envelope and athletic facility needs.
 - Personnel matters.
 - Recognition of donations.
 - Routine policy review.
 - Consideration to adopt resolutions for the Wells County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan and year-end transfers.
 - Discussion of the healthy operations plan.
 - Board reorganization.

A board of finance meeting will follow the regular agenda.

County Election Board will meet Tuesday afternoon

The Wells County Election Board will meet at 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 19, in the clerk's office in the Wells County Courthouse, 102 W. Market St.

- Topics on the agenda will include:
- Discussion of disposal of decommissioned voting machines.
 - Any other election business.

Bluffton Board of Works to meet Tuesday afternoon

The Bluffton Board of Public Works and Safety will meet at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 19, in the Council Chambers on the second floor of City Hall, 128 E. Market St.

- Topics on the agenda will include:
- Financial matters
 - Consideration of a water bill adjustment for Marletta McConnehey at 128 W. Silver St.
 - Review of a personnel matter brought to the board by Fire Chief Don Craig.

Southern Wells school board to hold executive session

The board of the Southern Wells Community Schools will meet at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 19, to evaluate job performance. The board's regular monthly meeting will follow.

Southern Wells school board will meet Tuesday

The board of the Southern Wells Community Schools will meet at 5 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 19, in the high school media center of the SWCS campus.

- Topics on the agenda will include:
- Financial matters
 - Recognition of recent Raider success.
 - Approval of fundraiser requests and donations.
 - Personnel matters
 - Approval of the separation agreement from the special education co-op.
 - Consideration of facility use requests.
 - Approval of conference requests and field trip requests.
 - Discussion regarding the 2024-25 school calendar.
 - A tax abatement presentation with the Wells County Council.
 - Superintendent information.
- A work session will immediately follow in the board room to discuss potential building projects.

Bluffton Common Council will meet Tuesday evening

The Bluffton Common Council will meet at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 19, in the Council Chambers on the second floor of City Hall, 128 E. Market St.

- Topics on the agenda will include:
- Revisiting the potential opportunity to use opiate settlement funds to purchase a vehicle for Hannah's House/Community Care.
 - Council appointments.
 - Discussion regarding a possible partnership with Ferguson Marketing, brought to the council by Council member Chandler Gerber.
 - Consideration of an amendment to the salary ordinance.

Wells County BZA will meet Tuesday evening

The Wells County Board of Zoning Appeals will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 19, in Room 214 on the ground floor of the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St. in Bluffton.

Topics on the agenda include:

- A request from ANS Enterprises to allow reduced property road frontage of 12.5 ft. from 25 ft. for a new parcel to be created at 1780 S Main St. in Bluffton.

County health board to hold hearing Wednesday

The board of the Wells County Health Department will hold a hearing regarding the potential removal of Health Officer Dr. Kay Johnson at 8 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 20, in Room 105, the multi-purpose room on the lower level of the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St.

Markle Town Council will meet Wednesday evening

The Markle Town Council will meet at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 20, at 154 E. Morse St. in Markle.

- Review of an agreement with Huntington County United Economic Development, brought by Marker Wickersham.
- Bid opening for 197 E. Morse St. Lease
- Adoption of Resolution 2023-7, the Wells County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Consideration of Ordinance 2023-11, establishing a capital asset policy
- Town correspondence with the Huntington County Chamber of Commerce, Youth Services Bureau and Indiana Department of Environmental Management
- Reports from the town marshal, superintendent, assistant superintendent and clerk-treasurer.
- HCUED and Region 3-A reports

County health board will meet Thursday morning

The board of the Wells County Health Department will meet at 6:30 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 21, 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 will include:
- Bi-monthly reports.
 - Updates from the nursing and regarding Health Department staffing.
 - Request to approve a full-time employee.

County Council will meet Thursday afternoon

The Wells County Council will meet at 1:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 21, in Room 105, the multi-purpose room on the lower level of the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St.

Jury awards \$148M in damages to Georgia election workers

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST
and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A jury awarded \$148 million in damages on Friday to two former Georgia election workers who sued Rudy Giuliani for defamation over lies he spread about them in 2020 that upended their lives with racist threats and harassment.

The damages verdict follows emotional testimony from Wandrea "Shaye" Moss and her mother, Ruby Freeman, who tearfully described becoming the target of a false conspiracy theory pushed by Giuliani and other Republicans as they tried to keep then-President Donald Trump in power after he lost the 2020 election.

There was an audible gasp in the courtroom when the jury foreperson read aloud the \$75 million award in punitive damages for the women. Moss and Freeman were each awarded another roughly \$36 million in other damages.

"Money will never solve all my problems," Freeman told reporters outside Washington's federal courthouse after the verdict. "I can never move back into the house that I call home. I will always have to be careful about where I go and who I choose to share my name with. I miss my home. I miss my neighbors and I miss my name."

Giuliani didn't appear to show any emotion as the verdict was read after about 10 hours of deliberations. Moss and Freeman hugged their attorneys after the jury left the courtroom and didn't look at Giuliani as he left with his lawyer.

The former New York City mayor vowed to appeal, telling reporters that the "absurdity of the number merely underscores the absurdity of the entire proceeding."

"It will be reversed so quickly it will make your head spin, and the absurd number that just came in will help that actually," he said.

It's not clear whether Giuliani will ever be able to pay the staggering amount. He had already been showing signs of financial strain as he defends himself against costly lawsuits and investigations stemming from his representation of Trump. In September, his former lawyer sued him, alleging Giuliani had paid only a fraction of nearly \$1.6 million in legal fees he racked up.

His attorney in the defamation case told jurors that the damages the women were seeking "would be the end of Mr. Giuliani."

Giuliani had already been found liable in the case and previously conceded in court documents that he falsely accused the women of ballot fraud. Even so, the former mayor continued to repeat his baseless allegations about the women in comments to reporters outside the Washington, D.C., courthouse this week.

Giuliani's lawyer acknowledged that his client was wrong but insisted that Giuliani was not fully responsible for the vitriol the women faced. The defense sought to largely pin the blame on a right-wing website that published the surveillance video of the two women counting ballots.

Giuliani's defense rested Thursday morning without calling a single witness after the former mayor reversed course and decided not to take the stand. Giuliani's lawyer had told jurors in his opening statement that they would hear from his client. But after Giuliani's comments outside court, the judge barred him from claiming in testimony that his conspiracy theories were right.



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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2023 • The News-Banner • Page 1a

Jenkins' 18 points leads Tigers in county clash win over the Raiders

By RYAN WALKER

PONETO — Bluffton got its revenge against Southern Wells in a Friday night boys' basketball clash between the two Wells County rivals.

The Tigers got a 43-22 win in a defensive battle just one day shy of when the Raiders earned a 5-point win at the Tiger Den last season.

Bluffton (3-1, 2-0 ACAC) executed its offensive gameplan by feeding big man Tucker Jenkins in the post. The 6'3" forward had a game-high 18 points on 9-12 from the field and tallied 12 rebounds.

The senior is two inches taller than anyone listed on the Raiders' roster and dominated near the glass all night.

"(Jenkins) is a bad combination for his opponents," Southern Wells head coach Joel Roush admitted after the game. "He's physical, he's athletic and he's skilled. That's a bad combination for us, and he is really hard for us to deal with."

Jenkins made three shots in each of the first three quarters and always hit his first one within the first minute or so. His presence on the block was much needed — outside of him, the Tigers shot 34 percent and turned the ball over 12 times.

The score was only 11-5 by the end of the first quarter, as the Raiders were desperately hanging on to Andrew Akers' three-pointer to hold them within a manageable distance. But what gave Bluffton its spark wasn't exactly expected.

Just 26 seconds into the second quarter, Hunter Wenger checked in the game. However, the official scorekeeper called over a Bluffton assistant coach and a referee to ask about Wenger's uniform number, which was No. 12.

The scorebook appeared to have him as No. 10. The No. 2 did not have its tail drawn all the way and therefore looked like a 0.

The result was a technical foul issued to Bluffton for the error and gave Chandler Oswald two free throws and he made them both.

Bluffton head coach Craig Teagle said that the scorebook keeper read it wrong.

"But it was 12 in my book," Teagle said. "She read it wrong. So, we somehow got punished because the home book wrote it in there different."

The intensity of the game on both sides turned up a notch. A few more fouls were called and a handful of turnovers ensued, but the Tigers got the best of the call in the end with back-to-back runs after the technical was issued, the first at 6-0 and the second 7-0. They outscored Southern Wells 13-1 in that timespan.

"The kids got fired up about that," Teagle said. "They got upset when that happened. It shouldn't have to, you should be ready to go. When we talked to them as (the free throw) was being shot, then you could see it in their eyes that they were pretty fired up about it."

In the full 32 minutes, Bluffton was the top dog on defense.

Teagle's squad suffocated Southern Wells to an ice-cold 6-36 on the night for 16 percent. That total is 22 percentage points lower than the Raiders' average.

In last year's game, Chandler Oswald dropped 19 points in the Raiders' victory, and this season leads the team with 14.3 points per contest. Friday night, he went 1-12 and with six points.

"(Our) game plan was trying to take (Oswalt) out of it and not let him get a lot of shots," Teagle said. "He had 19 points against us last year. He'd been their leading scorer and I thought for the most part we did a good job. We lost him two or three times. We were fortunate that he didn't hit a couple of those threes when he was open."

Roush agreed with Teagle's assessment, but wasn't happy with his own team for missing some easy looks.

"Bluffton, first of all, is always in the right position," Roush said. "They're physical. They're active. They're good defensively. I thought that we handled them pretty well, we just couldn't get the ball in the basket. We were 7-40. We're taking shots that we generally make. Maybe other than a couple, I thought we took good shots, and you just have to live with that. If you take good shots, and they don't go in ... I think we missed five, six or seven what we call 100 percenters that just got to go into the basket."

Teagle wasn't entirely pleased with his defense, though.

As much as his team stopped their leading scorer and stuffed them for 22 points, Perrin Gates had himself a night on the glass, too.

The senior forward, two inches shorter than Jenkins and four shorter than forward Kaleb Green, led the Raiders with a team- and season-high 10 points and 12 rebounds. Gates had only averaged three points and six rebounds per night.

"We didn't do a good job on (Gates) at all," Teagle said. "He had eight (offensive rebounds) and scored 10 points. We've got to do a much better job than that. But again, in saying that to his credit, he was crashing the boards and doing the things he needed to do."

"He is my most conscientious player," Roush said. "He's always in the right position. He's undersized but he fights like crazy down there, and you can't ask more of a kid than all he can give, and he gives it to us. He really does a great job."

Bluffton's Axton Beste finished the game with nine points on 3-6 shooting and a free throw to go with four rebounds.

Bluffton won the junior varsity game 27-12 in two quarters. Bluffton's top scorer was Ben Maggard with eight points and Colsen Teuple had six. Southern Wells was led by Landon Johnson with eight and Trey Slusher had four.

The Tigers have a quick turnaround at Garrett starting at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 16.

Southern Wells will be at Smith Academy at 2 p.m. the same day.

sports@news-banner.com

BLUFFTON 43, SOUTHERN WELLS 22

At Southern Wells

BLUFFTON (3-1, 2-0 ACAC): Tucker Jenkins 9-12 0-1 18, Axton Beste 3-6 1-2 9, Kaleb Green 1-5 2-4 4, Eli Garrett 1-3 0-0 3, Cameron Williams 1-3 0-0 3, Declan Grieser 1-3 1-2 3, Nolan Lambert 1-1 0-0 3, Andrew Hunt 0-1 0-0 0, Hunter Wenger 0-1 0-0 0, Ben Maggard 0-1 0-0 0, Jude Baumgartner 0-0 0-0 0. **TOTALS:** 17-35 4-9 43.

SOUTHERN WELLS (0-4, 0-1 ACAC): Perrin Gates 3-7 4-7 10, Chandler Oswald 1-12 2-2 6, Andrew Aker 1-7 0-0 3, CJ Reber 0-4 1-2 1, Evan Pennington 0-4 1-2 1, Caleb Johnson 0-1 1-2 1, Landon Johnson 0-1 0-0 0, Trey Slusher 0-0 0-0 0. **TOTALS:** 6-36 9-15 22.

Bluffton 11 13 11 8 — 43
So. Wells 5 3 6 8 — 22

Three-point FG: Bluffton: 5-14 (Beste 2-4, Lambert 1-1, Garrett 1-3, Williams 1-3, Grieser 0-1, Hunt 0-1 Jenkins 0-1), Southern Wells: 1-15 (Aker 1-6, Oswald 0-7, Reber 0-2). Rebounds: Bluffton: 29 (Jenkins 12, Williams 4, Beste 4, Hunt 3, Wenger 2, Grieser 2, Garrett 1, Green 1), Southern Wells: 17 (Gates 12, Aker 1, Reber 1, Pennington 1, Oswald, C. Johnson 1). Turnovers: Bluffton: 12, Southern Wells: 12. Fouls: Bluffton: 14, Southern Wells: 10. Fouled Out: None. Technicals: Bluffton 1 (team).
JV: 27-12 Bluffton (two quarters).



Bluffton's Tucker Jenkins (middle) goes up for a layup over Southern Wells' CJ Reber (left) during the county/ACAC battle. Jenkins led the Tigers with 18 points in their 43-22 win over the Raiders. (Photos by Ryan Walker)



Raiders' Chandler Oswald (middle) goes up for a jump shot over Bluffton's Declan Grieser (left) and Andrew Hunt (right).

Knights' Heyerly signs with Trine Thunder to continue tennis career

By RYAN WALKER

Norwell's Addyson Heyerly inked with Trine University Friday morning at the high school to continue her tennis career.

The senior, and Knights' No. 1 singles player, got together with family, friends and coaches for signing day.

"I'm really excited to move on to the next level and do something I love," Heyerly said after she finalized the pen to paper on her letter of intent.

The Thunder will be getting a first-team all-conference singles player in Heyerly. She helped the Knights win Northeast 8 and sectional championships last season.

Heyerly shared that she loved the campus and it was the perfect size and community. She plans on studying elementary and special education.

Another reason for her commitment to

the Thunder was the coaching staff. Head coach Erin Kolar and assistants made it clear they wanted her to be a part of the roster.

"They were really nice and they made me feel welcome, like I was valuable," She said.

She is still not sure if she will stick to singles or doubles at the college level, but what's for certain is that she will be joining a winning program. Trine has finished its last two seasons at 11-7 to complete five straight seasons of winning records except for the COVID-19 season that lasted only nine games.

Heyerly will finish up her final season with Norwell's tennis team in the spring and is currently wrapping up her swimming season as well.

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Norwell's No. 1 singles tennis player Addyson Heyerly (middle) moments before signing her national letter of intent with Trine University Friday morning in the high school breezeway. (Photo by Ryan Walker)

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Honesty needed in a healthy marriage

Dear Annie: My husband doesn't spend time with me anymore. We have been together for eight years and married for three. We were inseparable most of that time, but, all of a sudden, he doesn't want me around. He says most married people hardly ever hang out. He tells me the honeymoon is over.

I have tried everything. At marriage counseling, he puts on a show and tries to make me look bad. He mostly ignores my calls and texts when he leaves, and when he does respond, it's very nasty.

I'm not sure if he is cheating or not. I don't think I want to be married to him anymore. How do I handle this? Is asking for a divorce reasonable? How do you do that? — Still Unsure

Dear Unsure: Are you telling the marriage counselor that you feel he puts on a show and tries to make you look bad? It is important to be completely honest during your counseling sessions or else they won't work. Once you have said all of that during your therapy sessions, and you still want a divorce, then you can most certainly ask for one. Honesty, love and communication are all pillars for a healthy marriage, and you deserve a man who understands that.

Dear Annie: My husband and I have been married for 24 years, and we have two adult kids who no longer live in our household.

My husband has always treated me as if I were his maid. I am told to do all the housework. I don't mind, but sometimes a little help is nice. When he's not upset, he's the sweetest man.

About three years ago, he made me quit my job because I cheated on him. He made me delete all social media, and I was unable to take individual pictures of myself.

We have been having lots of disagreements, and one day in our home, he hit me. That left me with bruises and a bad headache because he hit me on the head. I told him I didn't love

him and wanted to divorce him. As soon as I said that, he promised he would never hit me again and that he would be a better person in the future.

He always does this. He slaps me and then promises he will never do it again. And then he does it again, and I fall into his little game — again. After the most recent incident, he bought me a belt and clothing that I have been wanting so that I would forgive him.

What do I do to get away from him? I have no money or job. How do I leave this man? — Trapped by a Monster

Dear Trapped: It might feel like you are trapped because 24 years of living with a man who is abusive is a long time. But you are not trapped. There is help available. There are many local and national hotlines available to help women in your exact situation. I encourage you to contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 or chat with someone via their website (https://www.thehotline.org). The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence is another great resource at https://ncadv.org/get-help. If you feel like you are in immediate danger, call 911. Just remember that you have the power to leave the cage that you feel trapped in. There are groups and people out there.

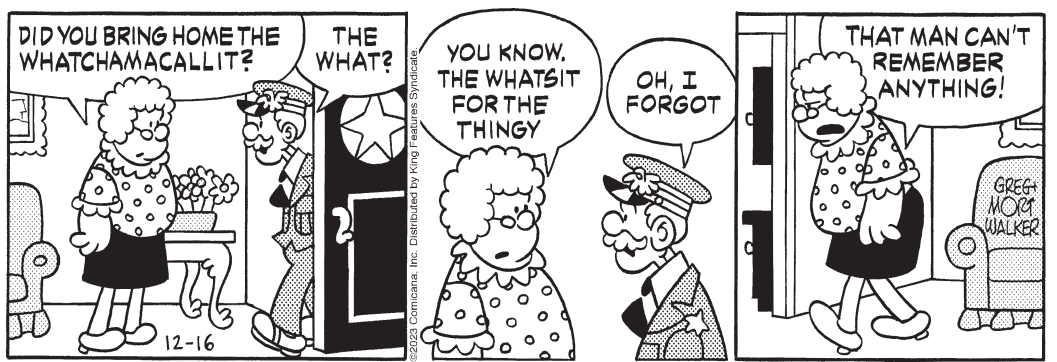
"How Can I Forgive My Cheating Partner?" is out now! Annie Lane's second anthology — featuring favorite columns on marriage, infidelity, communication and reconciliation — is available as a paperback and e-book. Visit http://www.creatorspublishing.com for more information. Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

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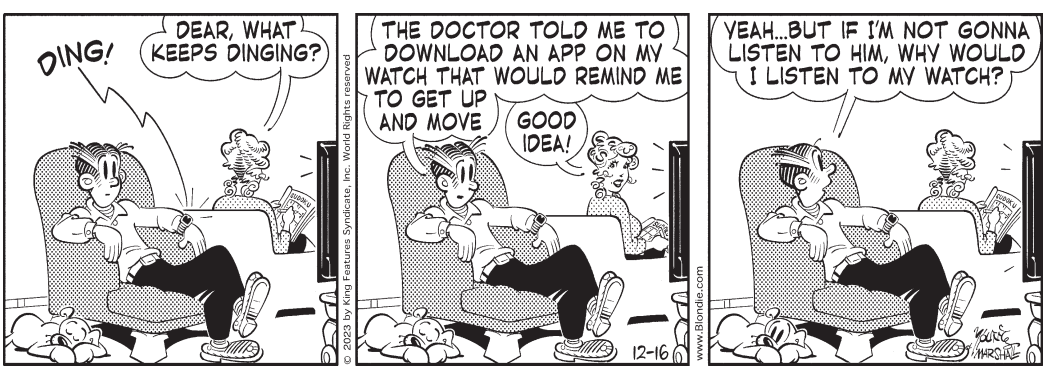
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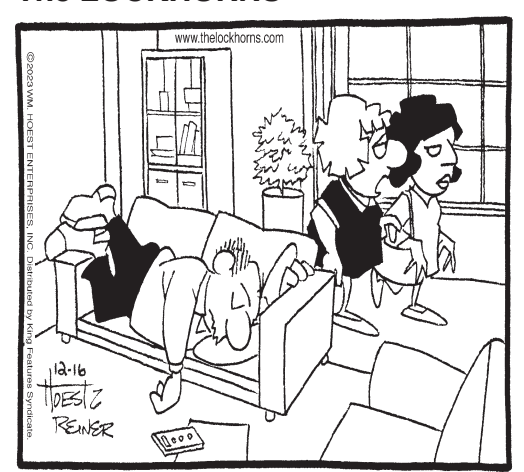
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THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane

The LOCKHORNS



My Answer

By Dr. Billy Graham



He lives!

the dust of his tomb. Powerless! The Taj Mahal holds the remains of a Mughal emperor and his favorite wife. The building itself is glorious, but as for the occupants? No more glory! Greek philosophers chased after immortality with an intellectual fervor. No unbeliever yearned more fervently for a pleasant eternity than Plato, who constantly felt the "longing after immortality."

It has also been observed that Aristotle reflected that "species of mankind possesses immortality." Shakespeare wrote, "I have immortal longings in me." They died and were buried. No more wisdom! Ancient Egyptians built pyramids for their dead and filled them with provisions for

life beyond the grave. An African chief was buried with his wife to give him companionship in the future life. The Norsemen buried horses and armor with their warriors so that they might fight in the afterlife.

Christian missionaries have been heckled because there is no tomb with the bones of its leader. Christ followers speak of the empty tomb, for the eternal, immortal One who possesses all power, all glory, and all wisdom is not dead — He lives! What a glorious truth!

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

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Q: Time magazine once featured an article about the great thinkers of history, even before the time of Jesus, and that most came to believe in life after death, in some fashion. It claims that Socrates and many Greek thinkers had subscribed to the idea of the immortality of the soul. It claimed that Jesus stood in a very long line of serious thinkers. I've never heard this before. — T.H.

A: The belief in the immortality of the soul is intuitive and instinctive. When Charlemagne's tomb was opened, all that was left was a jumble of moldy bones; his crown and scepter lay buried in

Table with columns for time slots (12:16, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12) and rows for various TV channels (WINM, CBS, Antenna, ABC, NBC, MNT, WPTA-2, WPTA-3, FOX, WFTF, etc.) listing programs and their descriptions.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes 'Solution time: 26 mins.' and 'Yesterday's answer 12-16'.

Table with columns 1-10 and rows 11-53, representing the crossword puzzle grid.

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3	2							5

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12/16

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REAL ESTATE

Real Estate

HELOISE HINT: Wooden drawers sticking? To get them moving again, rub gliders or contact surfaces with a bar of soap. Email HELOISE@Heloise.com.

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-OSSIAN-
1645 Hillcrest Dr., Suite 2A
Ossian, IN 46777
Attorney
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VEHICLES

Auto/Trucks

INDIANA AUTO AUCTION, INC. Huge Repo Sale December 21, 2023. Over 100 repossessed units for sale. Money order or cashier's check only. \$500 cashier's check or money order deposit per person required. Register 8 am-9:30 am. No public entry after 9:30 am. All vehicles sold AS IS! 4425 W. Washington Center Road, Fort Wayne. (A)

HELOISE HINT: During the winter months, pay close attention to your car's tires. Make sure that they are properly inflated so they are effective on the road. It's especially important when highways are icy or snowy. Email HELOISE@Heloise.com.

EMPLOYMENT

Help Wanted

THE TOWN OF Warren is now accepting applications for Operations Manager to oversee all departments of the Town - Water, Sewer, Electric, Street, Park as well as any other duties which could/would be assigned through the Town Council related to Public Works operations. Prior Municipal Work Experience, Managerial Experience, and at least one License preferred but all three not required. Wage based on experience level. Applications can be found online at warrenindiana.us or picked up at Town Hall, 132 N. Wayne Street. Applications and resumes will be accepted until January 15, 2024. Call 260-375-2656 for further information. Town of Warren, Indiana, is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Lottery Numbers

Friday's Drawings HOOSIER LOTTERY
Cash 5 — 12-15-21-26-32
Cash4Life — 07-19-34-51-55, Cash Ball: 04
Quick Draw Midday — 01-07-11-14-21-31-33-35-37-39-45-51-53-55-57-62-65-67-69-79, BE: 45
Daily Three-Midday — 03-08-08, SB: 00
Daily Three-Evening — 09-09-05, SB: 08
Daily Four-Midday — 08-09-09-02, SB: 00
Daily Four-Evening — 07-03-03-00, SB: 08
Quick Draw Evening — 12-17-21-26-27-30-36-40-42-46-47-61-62-63-65-69-76-77-79-80, BE: 80
Hoosier Lotto — Estimated jackpot (for Saturday): \$1.2 million
MEGA MILLIONS
10-20-28-40-54, Mega Ball: 12, Megaplier: X2
POWERBALL
Estimated jackpot (for Saturday): \$535 million

Help Wanted

EXPERIENCED WORSHIP/YOUTH LEADER, Faith Community Church (Huntington In.), myfaithcommunity.org, FT/PT Flexible - Competitive Salary, Email: jason@myfaithcommunity.org

THE TOWN OF Warren is now accepting applications for a general labor position serving all departments of the Town - Water, Electric, Sewer, Street, and Park as well as any other duties which could/would be assigned under Town operations. Prior Municipal work experience, background in electric work, and/or licensing preferred but not necessary to be considered. Applications can be found online at warrenindiana.us or picked up at Town Hall, 132 N. Wayne Street and will be accepted until January 15, 2024. Call 260-375-2656 for further information. Town of Warren, Indiana, is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Public Sale Calendar

BIDDING STARTS ENDING DECEMBER 17 - 6 p.m. EST - Ronald H. Jackson estate, owner. Online only personal property auction! 300 lots featuring: household, antiques, furniture, glassware, collectible Bossom chalkware, tools, long & hand guns & much more! Auction pick up: Dec. 18, 2-6 p.m., 3934 Summersworth Run, Fort Wayne, IN. **Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC**, 260-724-7402, Kjauction.com.

DECEMBER 23-JANUARY 1 - Online only auction - Various consignors, seller. Modeline MCM floor & table lamps and Art Nuevo, Presidential collection, advertising, toys, early Moxie thermometer, 25+ Nativity scenes, antiques, vintage primitives, artifacts, trains, Fenton, Haviland & Franciscan china, antique furniture, military items, salesman samples and miniatures, coins & currency. Preview: Dec. 26 from 3 p.m.-6 p.m. and Dec. 28 from 3 p.m.-6 p.m., 102 South Jefferson, Ossian. Sale manager, Rod Fetter. **The Steffen Group Inc.**, 260-824-3006, www.steffengrp.com.

BIDDING NOW OPEN AND STARTS CLOSING DECEMBER 27 - 10 a.m. EST - Whites Meat Market, owner. Complete liquidation. Meat saws, scales, display coolers, retail shelving, stainless sinks and tables, Herring Hall Marvin safe and much more! Auction pick up Dec. 29, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. EST, 46 W 400 S #1, Kokomo, IN. **Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC**, 260-724-7402, Kjauction.com.

DECEMBER 31-JANUARY 7 - Estate of Mary Lynn Lautzenheiser, seller. Personal property online only auction. John Deere mower, lawn & garden, furniture, Christmas, books, household. Open houses: Jan.

4 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. and Jan. 6 from 10 a.m. to noon, 4917 E 100 N., Bluffton, IN. Isaac Stoller, sale manager, **The Steffen Group Inc.**, <http://www.steffengrp.com>, 260-824-3006.

JANUARY 11 - 6 p.m. - Estate of Mary Lynn Lautzenheiser, seller. 4917 E. 100 N., Bluffton, IN. One-of-a-kind property w/quick access to Bluffton, Decatur, Fort Wayne. Main home was once township school building, and has covered porch walk through to previous dance studio that has potential to be fourth living unit. Property also offers detached two car garage and two-unit apartment building. Open houses: Jan. 4 from 4-6 p.m., Jan. 6 from 10 a.m.-noon. Isaac Stoller, sale manager, **The Steffen Group Inc.**, <http://www.steffengrp.com>, 260-824-3006.

Public Notice

STATE OF INDIANA)
) SS
COUNTY OF WELLS)
) IN THE WELLS
) CIRCUIT COURT
) PROBATE DIVISION
) CAUSE NO.
) 99C01-2312-EU-000055
IN THE MATTER OF)
THE ESTATE OF)
TIMOTHY L. TOPP,)
) DECEASED.)
NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION
For Publication in Newspaper
Notice is hereby given that James R. Topp was on the 7th day of December, 2023, appointed Personal Representative of the estate of Timothy L. Topp, deceased, who died on the 20th day of April, 2023.
All persons who have claims against this estate, whether or not now due, must file the claim in the office of the Clerk of this Court within three (3) months from the date of the first publication of this notice, or within nine (9) months after the decedent's death, whichever is earlier, or the claims will be forever barred.
Dated at Bluffton, Indiana, this 7th day of December, 2023.
Beth Davis
Clerk, Wells Circuit Court
BURT, BLEE, DIXON, SUTTON & BLOOM, LLP
Attorneys for Petitioner
Michael C. Moellering
Law Office No. 16813-64
W. Michael Horton
Attorney No. 7787-02
200 East Main Street, Suite 1000
Fort Wayne IN 46802
(260) 426-1300

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91/71	****	3099412						
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6	5	4	9	8	5	1	2	7
8	5	9	7	2	1	9	6	4
5	6	9	8	1	9	7	4	2
9	8	2	4	9	7	6	5	1
4	1	7	5	6	2	9	5	8

Need more employees!
A 20 word, line classified in the Bluffton News-Banner for a month is \$52. Contact the office at 125 N. Johnson St., 824-0224, or submit on-line at classifieds.news-banner.com.