

A Year in Review: The top local stories of 2023

By HOLLY GASKILL, SYDNEY KENT, DAVE SCHULTZ, and MARK MILLER

This year has been undoubtedly full for Wells County, with events and developments ranging far and wide in their nature. However, few have remained as long standing as the sudden changes occurring within the Wells County Health Department.

The ongoing matter came in No. 1 in the editorial staff's annual review of the year's top stories. Combing through this year's editions, 2023 held numerous stories of controversy and conflict, growing infrastructure and difficult changes, and moments that brought Wells County together.

It was a close vote for multiple stories on this compilation, as well as those that were just barely edged off. As evidence of this, two stories tied for the No. 2 spot.

The following is a recap of this year's top 10 stories, as voted on by the News-Banner staff:

1.) In June, two Wells County Health Department employees left in the same week, effectively leaving the department without half its full-time staff. The resignations followed a series of back-and-forth between elected officials and Health Department employees, specifically disputing a food inspection of Yergy's State Road BBQ.

At a special health board meeting, Marlene Hoag, former deputy administrator, was called out of her retirement from the position to fill the vacancy temporarily. Soon after, Wells County Commissioners threatened to remove a health board member should the board not use their authority to address issues.

The department continued to struggle to fill its vacancies, experiencing further turnover in its part-time staff and facing speculation and criticism. Citing these circumstances, the commissioners turned down funding available through Health First Indiana, becoming just one of six counties in the state to do so.



Firefighters stand in front of the burning 123 S. Marion St. in Bluffton building in July. The blaze was relentless for hours, and firefighters were on scene for over 10 hours. The structure was condemned and torn down in the months following the fire. (News-Banner file photo)

At the end of November, Hoag received the resignation of food environmental specialist Daniel Miller.

cess for the department's health officer, Dr. Kay Johnson. A hearing on the matter has not yet been held. (Continued on Page 10)

On Dec. 6, the health board initiated the removal pro-



2 arrested for battery after reported shooting

By SYDNEY KENT

Two people were arrested in connection to a report of a shooting Friday afternoon at Valley Park Apartments.

Austin Kolkman, 22, and Alex Angus, 19, both of Fort Wayne, were each charged with one count of battery with a deadly weapon, a Level 5 felony. Both subjects were taken to the Wells County Jail.

According to a press release from Bluffton Chief of Police Kyle Randall, units were wounds from the area of the truck. He was treated by Wells County EMS before he was transported to a local hospital.

Multiple police agencies assisted in efforts to locate the vehicle, which was reported as a blue pickup truck with two men. Initial efforts were unsuccessful, however, Randall released an update at approximately 9:30 p.m.

The suspects were apprehended after law enforcement executed a search warrant on the truck in the Mill Road Estates mobile home park in Fort Wayne. Police reportedly recovered evidence related to the altercation such as firearms, drugs, and blood swabs.

Pictured is Indiana Teacher of the Year Tara Cocanower at Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama. (Photo provided)

Lifted up to lift others

Cocanower shares highs, lows of leading as Indiana Teacher of the Year

By HOLLY GASKILL

Bluffton High School teacher Tara Cocanower was named Indiana's Teacher of the Year on Oct. 5, 2022, and hit the ground running with the new role of leadership.

A whirlwind of events and responsibilities have come with the honor, including discussing education needs at the White House and the equally coveted position of grand marshall of Bluffton's Street Fair. She's also ridden in the Indy 500 parade, spoken at Princeton University and visited Google's headquarters in California, amonf numerous other items.

In between once-in-a-lifetime opportunities, Cocanower has traveled across the state to speak with various groups about education and educators. She estimates she's given 26 keynote addresses, but has lost count of the speaking engagements.

Topics vary, but she often uses these speeches to rally and uplift educators.

"(INTOY is) not the perfect teacher award - it's not even the best teacher award," Cocanower said. "It's an award that gave me an opportunity to elevate other educators, and I took it seriously. I gave every-(Continued on Page 2)

dispatched to the 300 block of West Dustman Road at approximately 3:31 p.m. in response to a possible gunshot wound.

Officers learned that the individual had not been shot, however, had suffered wounds from a beating that took place while in a truck on Dustman Road.

The victim reportedly ran to his apartment after the assault and heard gunshot

The Bluffton Police Department, Wells County Sheriff's Office, Indiana State Police, Fort Wayne Police Department, and the Allen County Sheriff's Office participated in the search.

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Economy energizes investors as markets end year up 24%

By DAMIAN J. TROISE AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) - The S&P 500 closed out 2023 with a gain of more than 24 percent and the Dow finished near a record high, as easing inflation, a resilient economy and the prospect of lower interest rates buoyed investors, particularly in the last two months of the year.

Stocks closed Friday with modest losses.

The S&P 500 slipped 13.52 points, or 0.3 percent, to 4,769.83. The benchmark index still posted a rare ninth consecutive week of gains and is just 0.6 percent shy of an alltime high set in January of 2022.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 20.56 points, or 0.1 percent, to 37,689.54 after setting a record Thursday.

The Nasdaq slipped 83.78 points, or 0.6 percent, to 15,011.35, but that was barely a blemish on an annual gain of more than 43 percent, its best performance since 2020.

For most of the year, gains in the broader market were driven largely by seven stocks Apple, Microsoft, Alphabet, Amazon, Nvidia, Meta Platforms and Tesla. Dubbed

the Magnificent 7, they accounted for about two-thirds of the gains in the S&P 500 this year, according to S&P Dow Jones Indices. Nvidia lead the group with a gain of about 239 percent, driven by the mania surrounding artificial intelligence.

A strong rally in November and December marked a big psychological shift for investors, said Quincy Krosby, chief global strategist at LPL Financial, because it went beyond the big technology companies. The Russell 2000 index of smaller companies jumped more than 20 percent over the two months and finished 2023 with a 15.1 percent gain after falling 21.6 percent in 2022.

"It was broad participation in the market that reinforced and confirmed gains for smaller company stocks that were particularly important," Krosby said.

Investors in the U.S. came into this year bearing the bruises of sharp losses for both stocks and bonds in 2022. They expected inflation to ease further as the Federal Reserve pushed interest rates higher. The trade-off would be a weaker economy and (Continued on Page 2)



Lifted up

(Continued from Page 1) thing that I had to it."

This has all come on top of her already rigorous schedule, teaching Advanced Placement history and civics and coaching girls' golf and track and field.

In short, life looks much different than what it once did.

"It's a lot – teaching full-time in and of itself is a lot," Cocanower said. "But I have people that see me, and they get it.'

Cocanower has always been driven to serve and uplift those around her. At times during this year, however, she found herself lost in the mix. It's been hard to juggle all her responsibilities and opportunities, and even harder at times to say no to new ones. She knows the exact days of school she's missed to be the INTOY.

Cocanower found herself in that space again with the opportunity to attend Space Camp, an immersive educational camp hosted by the Alabama Space Science Exhibit Commission. In the unrelenting heat of July in Huntsville, Alabama, Cocanower and other state Teachers of the Year gathered to complete the mock space missions.

The camp became a childhood dream come true but also became a further encouragement in her journey through this year.

As captain of her "mission" team, she was calling out directions, pumping up her team, guiding them through the mission, and following the last of her teammates out the door.

When it came to the water mission, Cocanower felt less confident. The team had to pull themselves from the lake onto a raft, and multiple members weren't sure they could. "I told them, 'I could just tread water here all day. I'm floating, it's fine," Cocanower recalled. "They were like, 'No, we all do this. We all do this

together.""

The crew rallied together, lifting each other on their shoulders and pulling each other up to the platform. Cocanower smiled. "I remember laying on the bottom of that raft, like 'I'm so glad they didn't let me bail out. Because we do this together."

Similarly, the community around Cocanower has pulled her through this year as INTOY.

The year has undeniably come with amazing experiences, honors and opportunities Cocanower never expected to have, but it's also been an incredible commitment. When speaking about the impossible balancing act to The News-Banner in February, Cocanower said she was glad she wasn't on a sabbatical from teaching as some others have been. Now, she laughs - "At times, I wish I had been.'

Cocanower recalls one morning when she had forgotten about a staff meeting and arrived five minutes late. Overwhelmed and overtired, she sat at her desk and cried. "I felt like I had failed, like I let my people down," she said.

Before school started, she sent a message apologizing to Principal Steve Baker and Assistant Principal Stacy Morrison. The two were in her classroom with listening ears and gentle encouragement before the second period of the day had passed. "That's support," Cocanower remembered with tears in her eves.

Administration has also been by her side to help through the practical burdens. Superintendent Brad Yates, whom Cocanower called the "spreadsheet king," helped organize Cocanower's schedules, and Treasurer Anjie Hartman meets monthly to help organize travel expenses.

Cocanower also credits her husband, Geoff, as a major support in all regards, walking through over-

whelming emotions, helping her with speeches and sometimes traveling alongside her.

"I had a panic attack walking into church one Wednesday night," Cocanower added. "(My friends) prayed over me, and they said, 'Go home, rest' ... I think I have loved people and built my tribe, and I tried to show up for people, and I tried to make sure that they know they're important to me. I think I knew I did something right when people showed up for me."

Leading from vulnerability, Cocanower has shared some of her feelings with her students, asking for grace when she's been absent or hasn't graded assignments promptly. In turn, they've reciprocated her openness with compassion and empathy.

"I hope they remember the vulnerability," Cocanower added. "Because I've learned through this whole process that our vulnerabilities are our strengths, and students need to know I'm a real person. And if they don't remember all the historical facts, hopefully, they've seen someone who didn't back down from adversity and did their very best even in the midst of struggles.'

Looking back on that announcement day, Cocanower recalled the advice she had received from the former INTOYs. "There's going to be high highs and low lows," she said. "And it's definitely held that."

In October, Cocanower passed the baton to 2024 INTOY Eric Jenkins, an English teacher at Franklin Community High School in Johnson County. She's given him the same advice she received, with her own specific experiences to add order business cards as soon as you can, create a plan with school administration, and above all, never let

your sentences start with 'I should have.""

"I have no idea why I've been put in the positions and had the experiences that I've had," Cocanower paused. "But I know they were for such a time as this.'

Cocanower's still contracted for events and engagements until summer, but finds her tenure as INTOY is simply entering a new chapter. She hopes to continue speaking, growing, advocating, and teaching, as well as finish her master's degree.

As the year comes to a close, Cocanower referenced a conversation with Sarah Brown Wessling, who works for the National Teacher of the Year program, where Cocanower had said she was glad to soon return to "normal."

Cocanower smiled. "(Brown-Wessling) said, 'You're not going back to anything. You're going forward to your classroom because you are different. You're forever changed. You're going forward to your classroom, and you're going to create new experiences and have different relationships with new students. And you're going to find a new way of doing things while still keeping what you were.' That helped me process. It gave me perspective going forward."

While many things are uncertain, one thing is for sure - for Cocanower, this year has been a testament to community. Not only in representing the community she grew up in but also in the many ways others have rallied around her in those highs and lows.

"There's zero chance that I'm Indiana Teacher of the Year, if, honestly, if I didn't grow up in Bluffton, and I got called to return home ... I've gotten filled up so I can pour out," Cocanower concluded. "It's not about me at all."

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Closures listed for New Year's Day

The offices of the City of Bluffton and Wells County governments plus the Ossian and Bluffton locations of the Wells County Public Library are closed Monday, Jan. 1.

There is no mail delivery and The News-Banner does not publish Monday. The office will not be open. Normal publication and office hours will resume Tuesday.



Saturday, December 30, 2023 (24-hour observations at 7:40 p.m. Friday) High: 38; Low: 34; Precipitation: 0.02 inches of rain Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.29 feet at 9:45 p.m. Friday

Wells County forecast

Today: Mostly cloudy, with a high near 41. Southwest wind around 10 mph.

Tonight: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 31. Southwest wind around 10 mph.

Sunday: Snow showers likely, mainly after 1 p.m. Cloudy, with a high near 37. Southwest wind around 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60 percent. New snow accumulation of less than a half inch possible.



Sunday Night: A 20 percent chance of snow showers before 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 28. West wind around 10 mph.

New Year's Day: Mostly cloudy, with a high near 37. Monday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 24. **Tuesday:** Sunny, with a high near 41.

Tuesday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 27.

Wednesday: Mostly cloudy, with a high near 40.

Wednesday Night: A chance of rain and snow showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 27. Chance of precipitation is 30 percent.

Thursday: Partly sunny, with a high near 37. Thursday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 24. Friday: Partly sunny, with a high near 37.

Building linked to 1978 unsolved slayings in Indiana to be demolished

SPEEDWAY. Ind. (AP) - A former fast-food building linked to one of the most heinous unsolved crimes in Indianapolis-area history will be demolished, officials said.

The building that was Burger Chef in Speedway was the site where four young workers were abducted in 1978 and found slain two days later in a field a county away.

The free-standing building a short distance west of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway will be demolished and replaced by a dental office, town officials told local news

Financial markets

(Continued from Page 1)

possibly a recession. But while inflation has come down to around 3 percent, the economy has chugged along thanks to solid consumer spending and a healthy job market.

The stock market now betting

headed for a third losing year in a row until things turned around starting in late October. Excitement about potential cuts to interest rates sent bond prices soaring and yields dropping. The yield on the 10-year Treasury, which hit 5 percent in October, stood

Seng index in Hong Kong fell nearly 14 percent. Weakness in the property sector and in global demand for China's exports, as well as high debt levels and wavering consumer confidence have weighed on the country's econoand the stock market outlets U.S. and international crude oil prices were relatively stable on Friday. The price of oil tumbled by more than 10 percent this year, defying predic-Indianapolis Star. tions from some experts that it could cross \$100 per barrel. closed in 2016. Despite production cuts from OPEC, a war involving energy exporter Russia and another in the Middle East, U.S. benchmark crude dropped nearly 11 percent in 2023, and a whopping 21 percent in the final three months of the year. Increased production in the U.S., now the top oil producer in the world, as well as Canada, Brazil and Guyana said. offset the reduced output from OPEC. Not all OPEC members participated in the cuts and some countries like Iran and Venezuela are pumping more oil, energy analysts say.



the Fed can achieve a "soft landing," where the economy slows just enough to snuff out high inflation, but not so much that it falls into a recession. As a result, investors now expect the Fed to begin cutting rates as early as March.

The Fed has signaled three quarterpoint cuts to its benchmark interest rate next year. That rate is currently sitting between 5.25 percent and 5.50 percent, its highest level in two decades.

Lower rates could add more fuel to the broader market's momentum in 2024. Wall Street is forecasting stronger earnings growth for companies next year after a largely lackluster 2023, when companies wrestled with higher input and labor costs and a shift in consumer spending.

percent Friday, up from 3.85 percent on Thursday.

The yield on the two-year Treasury, which more closely tracks expectations for the Fed, fell to 4.25 percent from 4.28 percent from late Thursday. It also surpassed 5 percent in October.

Many global markets also saw solid gains this year. Indexes in France and Germany made double-digit advances, while Britain's has climbed just under 4 percent.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 gained 27 percent in 2023, its best year in a decade as the Japanese central bank inched toward ending its longstanding ultralax monetary policy after inflation finally exceeded its target of about 2 percent.

The Shanghai Composite index lost Bond market investors appeared about 3 percent this year and the Hang

"It's been a couple of shops over the years that never caught on for more than a couple months and we've talked about redeveloping over time but that hasn't happened,' Speedway Town Council President Vince Noblet told The

Most recently, the building housed a pawn shop that

Forty-five years ago, it was where the four young fastfood workers were abducted at closing time on Nov. 17, 1978. Their bodies were discovered still dressed in their brown and orange work uniforms in a Johnson County field.

Jayne Friedt, 20, the assistant manager, was stabbed. Daniel Davis, 16, and Ruth Shelton, 17, were shot in the back of their heads and found lying next to each other. Mark Flemmonds, 16, died choking on his blood, authorities have

"People drive by and see the building and they're always reminded of what happened here," Bill Jones, a former Speedway police officer, told WXIN-TV.

Burger Chef is a now-defunct fast-food chain that once had locations across the U.S.



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OBITUARIES

James L. Klosterman Jr., 71

James L. Klosterman Jr., 71, formally of Warren, passed away Tuesday evening, Dec. 26, 2023, at River Terrace Retirement Community in Bluffton.

James was born Nov. 13, 1952, in Lima, Ohio to James L. and Rose Mary (Roth) Klosterman Sr., both parents preceded him in death.

He worked for Franklin Electric in Bluffton for several years, later retiring from Dana

Corperation in Marion. James enjoyed playing cards, woodworking, camping spending time with his grandchildren and volunteering with the Red Cross, where he was involved with giving aid to the residents of the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana.

Survivors include his children, Amanda (Robert) Rankin of Bluffton and James

Kenneth D. Perry Jr., 57

Kenneth D. Perry Jr., 57, of Montpelier, passed away at 7:26 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 28, 2023 at Bluffton Regional Medical Center in Bluffton. He was born Saturday, Oct. 22, 1966, in Bluffton. He married Lori L. (Lancaster) Perry on Friday, March 13, 1992 in Hartford City.

Kenny was a 1985 graduate of Southern Wells High School. He worked in maintenance for 20 years at UTZ Inc. in Bluff-

ton, and had also worked for Pretzels and at the Bluffton Sewage Dept. Kenny enjoyed bowling, golfing, tinkering in his garage, and spending time with family and friends.

Kenny will be sadly missed by his wife, Lori L. (Lancaster) Perry, Montpelier; son, Chase (Haley) Perry, Montpelier; daughter, Brittany (Wayne) Pontius, Denver, Colo.; father, Kenny Dale Perry, Sr., Keystone; sisters, Patty (William) Biddle, Ossian,



"Jason" (Patricia) Klosterman of Bossier City, La.; four sisters, Kathy Metzger of Wapakoneta, Ohio. Linda Kuhn of Lima. Ohio. Barbara Kwiecinski of Lima, Ohio and Patty Kelley of Wapakoneta, Ohio; and four grandchildren.

Receiving of friends and family will be held Friday, Jan. 5, 2024, from 4:00 until 7:00 p.m. at the Goodwin – Cale & Har-nish Memorial Chapel in Bluff-

ton. Immediately following the visitation, a memorial service will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the funeral home. Pastor Clark Stoller will officiate. A private burial of cremains will take place at the Elm Grove Cemetery in Bluffton.

Memorials can be made in James' memory to the Red Cross.

Online condolences can be made at www.goodwincaleharnish.com.

> Jane (Bob) Henderson, Montpelier; grandchildren, Kennedy Perry, Montpelier, Cooper Perry, Montpelier; and several Nieces & Nephews.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Betty Jean (Bailey) Perry, and daughter, Brandi N. Feathers.

Family and friends may gather to share and remember at Walker & Glancy Funeral Home located at 109 W Windsor St

Montpelier on Tuesday, January 2, 2024 from 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

A service to celebrate Kenny's life will be at Walker & Glancy Funeral Home at 11:00 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 3, 2024, with Pastor Jeremy Cowin officiating.

Arrangements are being handled by Walker & Glancy Funeral Home in Montpelier.

Online condolences may be made at www.glancyfuneralhomes.com

Topics on the agenda include:

• Reorganization of the board

sioner Contract Disclosure Policy

· Department updates from Sheriff Scott

Monthly reports and miscellaneous

• Right-of-ways and utility agreements.

County Chamber of Commerce and Eco-

• Board appointments for the Wells

Annual certification of the Commis-

• Approval of the 2024 Solid Waste Sal-

Appointment of an ADA Coordinator

Bluffton Common Council

will meet Tuesday evening

Holliday and Highway Supervisor Shawn

Local Roundup

Bonar.

business.

ary Contract

nomic Development.

• ARPA Funds

Bluffton Common Council to be sworn in Monday

The Bluffton Common Council will meet at noon Monday, Jan. 1, to be sworn into office. They will meet in the Council Chambers on the second floor of City Hall, 128 E. Market St.

County Drainage Board will meet Tuesday afternoon

The Wells County Drainage Board will meet at 4:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 2, 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:

- Reorganization of the board
- Certification of 2024 drain collections Project updates and miscellaneous

is \$25.00. By registering, you receive access to our Strava group, where you can log your miles and view the leaderboard, a Wells 100 Challenge T-Shirt, a medal if you complete 100 miles by spring, and chances to win additional prizes and discounts by submitting photos and com-ments on Strava or the Wells Winter 100

City Gym Membership Sale – 2024 Gym Key forms are available online at http://tinyurl.com/y53bbf6c.

Please print off the form and bring it to the park office on the 2nd floor of City Hall with your payment (exact change preferred). The price is only \$95.00 per single membership or \$125.00 per family membership, which includes your spouse and dependent children still living in the home. Door locks to the facility will be changed by 10 a.m. on Jan. 2.

Destination Recreation

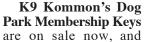
News Notes

Bluffton Parks Rec

Happy New Year! It's crazy how fast time seems to fly by. As we review how this past year has gone, we are delighted with how much was accomplished. Over \$897,251.02 worth of improvements were made in 2023, maintaining the parks and developing Lancaster Park. Large projects require lots of financial resources, and we are thankful to have been blessed with over \$177,000 in local donations and \$25,490 in grants this year. Next year looks to be just as busy by adding pickleball courts, improving parking lots, renovating the pool house, and paving the last mile of the Inter-Urban Trail. We are so grateful for the continued community support; we truly could not do it without all of you.

Kick-off 2024 with the Wells Winter 100 Mile Virtual Challenge. Commit to run or walk 100 miles this winter: Jan. 1-March 19 (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. The price of the challenge

Challenge Facebook Page.



By Brandy **Fiechter**

they will also have locks changed starting Jan. 2. Download the form at http:// tinyurl.com/4h2jnjn8 and bring it to the park office on the 2nd floor of city hall to purchase a new key for 2024. The \$25 fee offers all the dogs in your household an opportunity to run, play, and socialize with other pets. The pouch playground includes a Rover Jump Over, Doggie Teeter Totter, Hoop Jump, King of the Hill, Doggie Crawl Tunnel, and a Fire Hydrant.

Pavilion Rentals — It's time to start thinking about your upcoming parties! We will be accepting rentals throughout all of 2024 starting on Jan. 2. Dates usually fill up quickly at the Washington Park indoor pavilion, so have alternative dates and times in mind when you reach out to us. Stop by our office or call 824-6069 to schedule your next event. Check available dates at https://teamup.com/ ksahp6raijmudh7k7m. Rental forms for 2024 are online at https://tinyurl.com/ mrxd9hnh

The Wells County Trails group is working on a boat launch in Vera Cruz to increase access to the Wabash River for kayakers and they need your help. There are only two weeks left to raise the last \$13,000 and to take advantage of a \$1 for \$1 matching opportunity from the CreatINg Places Campaign, thanks to Indiana Housing and Community Development and AARP. This campaign is brought to you through Patronicity. A donation of any amount helps. Please help improve access to the Wabash River in Wells County. Mail or Drop off a donation to the Wells County Community Foundation at 222 W Washington St., Bluffton, Indiana 46714 (Make Checks Payable to Wells County Trails) by Jan. 12 or make an online contribution at Patronicity.com/VCPaddlesportsLaunch.

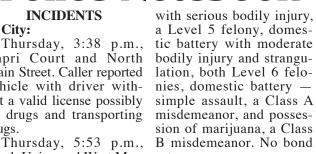
> Have a great week and a Happy New Year!

Police Notebook

INCIDENTS City:

Capri Court and North Main Street. Caller reported vehicle with driver without a valid license possibly on drugs and transporting drugs.

Thursday, 5:53 p.m., North Union and West Market streets. Caller reported



set Michaela Jane Horst-

Calling: 2 - 7 pm, Tuesday, January 2. *Funeral:* 10:30 am Wednesday, January 3 at the funeral home. Goodwin-Cale & Harnish MEMORIAL CHAPEL Locally Owned and Operated Since 1922 St. Rd. 124 East, Bluffton 824-3852

drainage matters

Bluffton Board of Works to meet Tuesday afternoon

The Bluffton Board of Public Works and Safety will meet at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 1, in the Council Chambers on the second floor of City Hall, 128 E. Market St.

Topics on the agenda will include:

• Revisiting the water bill dispute from 427 W. Wabash from the Dec. 5 meeting.

• A handicap request from Jennifer Nelson.

personnel request from Michelle • A Simon

• Approval of 2023 purchase orders.

• Purchase request from Dick Green.

County Commissioners will meet Tuesday evening

The Wells County Commissioners will meet at 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 2, in Room 105, the multi-purpose room on the lower level of the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St.

The Bluffton Common Council will meet at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 2, in the Council Chambers on the second floor of City Hall, 128 E. Market St.

Topics on the agenda will include:

 Approval of Wells County Zoning Ordinance Changes from Mike Lautzenheiser.

• Approval of Resolution 2024-01- Invest Local Fund Deposits.

Wells County Council postpones first meeting

The Wells County Council will not meet 7 p.m. Jan. 2 as previously scheduled. Instead, they will meet at 7 p.m. Jan. 9. An agenda for that meeting will be available at later date.

Area Plan Commission will meet Thursday evening

The Wells County Area Plan Commission will meet at 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 4, in Room 105, the multi-purpose room on the lower level of the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St.

sound of fireworks for about an hour. No fireworks located

Thursday, 8:04 p.m., 500 block of West Ohio Street. Caller reported car possibly signaling SOS with break lights.

County:

Thursday, 2:24 p.m., Clark Avenue and South Ellingham Pike, Bluffton. Officer assisted detectives with traffic stop.

Friday, 1:06 a.m., 5100 East 300 South, Bluffton. Dispatch received a computerized call of a male who gave the name of Ethan Hall. Male stated he killed his family and gave an address. Subjects at address advised everything was fine and they did not know a person by that name.

ARRESTS

Kyle Aaron Davis, 32, Bluffton, domestic battery

meyer, 21, Bluffton, theft, a Level 6 felony, and criminal trespassing, a Class A misdemeanor. Bond set at \$5.000.

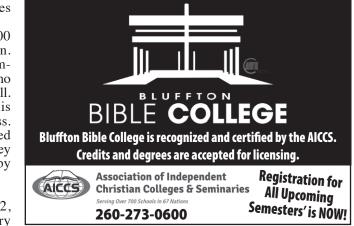
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40th anniversary celebration concert

It will be a 40th anniversary celebration for the Mountain Dewe Boys as they play a concert on New Year's Eve (Dec. 31) at the Hideaway in Bluffton. Music will begin at 8 p.m. Left to right are Jimmy Randolph, Doug Huffman, Mike Huffman and Brian Huffman. (Photo provided)



A win-win New Year's Resolution

Here's a great New Year's resolution: get a pet.

As we wrap up a very inflationary 2023, pet shelters across the country are at maximum capacity and they don't have room to house the pets people are turning in.

ABC News reports that animals entering shelters began to climb in 2021.

During the covid pandemic, you see, many people adopted pets, but as they began to go back to the workplace, some decided they no longer

wanted to care for a pet, so they turned them back in. The past year was significantly worse for pets because adoptions are falling far short of the increase in sheltered pets.

"Shelter Animals Count, a national database of shelter statistics, estimates that the U.S. shelter population grew by nearly a quarter-million animals in 2023," reports ABC News.

Why?

Because the weak economy and high inflation have made it more costly to care for a pet, in particular large dogs and pets who are in need of costly medical care.

If you've not been to a veterinarian recently, you'd be surprised how much many of them charge — which is a good reason to get pet insurance, which I have for my 3-year-old Labrador, Thurber.

My puppy is very healthy and I feed him the best food I can get for him, but when he had a few minor seizures last year, I learned, after taking him to a dog neurologist, that he has epilepsy.

Just the initial examinations cost me about \$800. Had he needed an MRI, that could have been in the \$5,000 range. Thankfully, pet insurance, which only costs \$65 a month, covers about 90% of these costs.

I will pay any amount to get Thurber the care he needs, but fewer people are able to do this now as inflation has done significant damage to their finances and more people are downsizing or losing their homes, reports ABC News.

As a result, dog shelters are forced to house dogs in their offices or with foster volunteers. In some cases, they are being forced to euthanize some of the pets.

There is a win-win solution, however: adopt a pet or more than one.

Adopting a pet will help your local pet shelter get its population down to a manageable number, but you will be the one who benefits the most.

The U.S. Surgeon General reports that Americans are suffering a loneliness epidemic – and one way to ease loneliness is to invite a wonderful ball of fur into your house that will make you laugh out loud, in my case, at least five times a day.

Many Americans are struggling with mental health issues, such as depression - and PsychCentral reports that getting a pet is one of the best ways to relieve depression, as it is hard to not feel joy when your dog snuggles next to you on the couch.

Inviting a pet into your home is a big responsibility and your pet will demand your time and money, but the benefits far outweigh the costs.

Even when the costs include Thurber's favorite treat, a peanut-butter filled bone that costs \$7 and that I give him about 4 or 5 days every week.

Yup, I've spent over \$5,000 on these treats the past three years, but what can I say. I love my dog!



What strange things does 2024 have in store? Take my quiz to find out.

At the end of 2023, who wouldn't want to press the "reset" button — or maybe "fast forward," so we can just skip 2024? But take heart. "Never assume that the obvious is true," to quote New York Times columnist William Safire. So, in the spirit of Safire's annual year-end "Office Pool" quiz, place your bets for the year ahead. And remember, as Safire said, "Nobody stands taller than those willing to stand corrected.'

As any crystal-ball gazer knows, there aren't "right" or "wrong" answers here. Your guesses about the "known unknowns" ahead might be better than mine. And beware, for some questions, I chose more than one answer or none at all. Ukraine

On Dec. 31, 2024, the status of the war in Ukraine will be:

1. Russian defeat, after the United States and Europe increase military assistance.

2. Ukrainian defeat, after House Republicans refuse to approve more U.S. military assistance.

3. A continued military stalemate, with Ukrainian partisans fighting a guerrilla war behind Russian lines.

4. A cease-fire, with a post-Zelensky Ukrainian government negotiating a new border that would divide Russiancontrolled territory and Ukrainian-controlled territory.

5. A wider war that spreads to NATO territory after escalation by both Ukraine and Russia.

6. None of the above.

Russia Russian President Vladimir Putin will close 2024 as:

1. A reelected president of Russia.

2. A former president of Russia who has retired to pursue his passions for judo and bare-chested horseback riding.

3. A war criminal who has been convicted by the Interational Criminal Court.



Ignatius

1. Providing 155mm ammunition to Ukraine, beating out a rival offer by South Korea.

2. Launching a flotilla of balloons toward the United States, each carrying giant loudspeakers repeating the national slogan: "Let us build a fairyland for the people by dint of science!'

3. Naming his fourth child "Mar-a-Lago."

4. Testing a hypersonic cruise missile that could attack the United States, using technology obtained from Russia.

5. Announcing that he would be ready to negotiate a peace treaty with the United States if Donald Trump is reelected president.

6. None of the above.

Technology

The most significant technology development of 2024 will be:

1. An AI-driven influence campaign to sway the 2024 presidential election, whose impact cannot be measured, leaving the outcome of the election permanently in question.

2. A quantum computer so powerful that it can use Shor's algorithm to break any encryption scheme and decode all secret intelligence cables and bank transactions.

3. A large-language model far more powerful than ChatGPT-4 that can communicate with other LLMs and create what scientists describe as "super-intelligence," whose powers aren't fully understood.

4. The United States and China conduct governmentto-government dialogue about how to address security threats from powerful AIs.

5. None of the above.

Economy

The biggest economic story of 2024 will be:

1. Huge federal deficits finally spook the bond market and make borrowing costs jump. 2. Inflation reaccelerates, the Fed raises interest rates

(instead of cutting them), the stock market declines and the U.S. economy veers toward recession.



You will, too.

Contact your nearest animal shelter and bring a bundle of furry joy home in the New Year!

Purcell, creator of the infotainment site ThurbersTail.com, which features pet advice he's learning from his beloved Labrador, Thurber, is a Pittsburgh Tribune-Review humor columnist. Email him at Tom@TomPurcell.com.

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Saturday, Dec. 30, the 364th day of 2023. There is one day left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Dec. 30, 1922, Vladimir Lenin proclaimed the establishment of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which lasted nearly seven decades before dissolving in December 1991.

On this date:

In 1813, British troops burned Buffalo, New York, during the War of 1812.

In 1853, the United States and Mexico signed a treaty under which the U.S. agreed to buy some 45,000 square miles of land from Mexico for \$10 million in a deal known as the Gadsden Purchase.

In 1860, 10 days after South Carolina seceded from the Union, the state militia seized the United States Arsenal in Charleston.

In 1903, about 600 people died when fire broke out

at the recently opened Iroquois Theater in Chicago.

In 1954, Olympic gold medal runner Malvin G. Whitfield became the first Black recipient of the James E. Sullivan Award for amateur athletes.

In 1972, the United States halted its heavy bombing of North Vietnam.

In 1994, a gunman walked into a pair of suburban Boston abortion clinics and opened fire, killing two employees. (John C. Salvi III was later convicted of murder; he died in prison, an apparent suicide.)

In 2004, a fire broke out during a rock concert at a nightclub in Buenos Aires, Argentina, killing 194 people.

In 2006, a state funeral service was held in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda for former President Gerald R. Ford.

In 2009, seven CIA employees and a Jordanian intelligence officer were killed by a suicide bomber at a U.S. base in Khost, Afghanistan.

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> Holly Gaskill, Editor Mark Miller, Opinion Page Editor

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4. An embattled leader struggling to suppress secession movements in Chechnya, Dagestan and Siberia.

5. Deceased, following an unexplained air crash.

6. None of the above.

Saudi Arabia

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's biggest surprise in 2024 will be:

1. Nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize after his decision to normalize relations with Israel and champion a Palestinian state.

2. A massive cyberattack on Saudi Aramco that cripples the kingdom's oil industry for several weeks.

3. Growing internal dissent over normalization of relations with Israel that forces him to appoint a deputy crown prince and pardon political prisoners and exiles.

4. A Biden administration defense pact with Oatar to prevent MBS from seizing its vast gas reserves.

5. Jared Kushner and Greg Norman accept honorary Saudi citizenship.

6. The NFL decides to host the next Super Bowl in Riyadh.

7. None of the above. Gaza

The Gaza War will end with:

1. Benjamin Netanyahu's replacement as prime minister.

2. Civil unrest in the West Bank between the Israel Defense Forces and Israeli settlers.

3. Continuing violence in Gaza that can't be fully suppressed by Israel, the Palestinian Authority or the international peacekeeping force assigned to maintain order.

4. Wider conflicts in Lebanon and Iran as Israel seeks to preempt any future threat of ballistic missile or nuclear attack.

5. Reduced American military support for Israel. 6. None of the above.

CIA

The CIA's biggest surprise in 2024 will be:

1. Recruiting another agent inside Chinese President Xi Jinping's inner circle.

2. Canada is caught interfering in the 2024 U.S. presidential election.

3. The director of national intelligence announces a reduction in ODNI staff to avoid overlap with the 18 intelligence agencies it oversees.

4. A string of truck bomb explosions in Latin America, Asia and Europe, with a previously unknown group called "Martyrs of Gaza" claiming responsibility.

5. Development of artificial intelligence "virtual case officers" to spot, develop and recruit spies overseas.

6. None of the above.

North Korea

North Korea's Kim Jong Un will stun the world in 2024 by:

3. After China's Xi Jinping renews his focus on a market economy, the country's depressed stock market soars and investors rush back in.

4. Nobel Prize winning economist Paul Krugman launches a new CNN feature called "Paul's Charts" to compete with Steve Rattner on MSNBC's "Morning Joe."

5. Sabotage disrupts chip production in Taiwan, causing a sudden shortage of high-performance computer chips and a crash in tech stocks.

6. Oil demand reaccelerates as the global economy rebounds and prices soar above \$100 a barrel.

7. None of the above.

Military

The most destabilizing and potentially dangerous military trend of 2024 will be:

1. Attacks by armed drones, whose origin is unknown, on civilian areas outside combat zones.

2. The development of small, high-powered microwaves to inject malware from a distance, using satellites, drones and other autonomous systems. 3. U.S. intelligence concerns

sion.

that a future Chinese research

station on the moon will serve

bombardment weapons, pio-

neered by China, that can sud-

denly descend from space and

destroy cities by sheer kinetic

force, without a nuclear explo-

powers to "prepare the battle-

field" for future conflict by

inserting malware that, when

activated, could cripple trans-

portation, energy and commu-

nications systems around the

5. A rush by all major cyber

4. The proliferation of orbital

as a military base.

JUST WAIT. DUDE YOUAREOLD ARE YOU RUNNING FOR PRESIDENT?

> 6. None of the above. Journalism

> > The news-business shocker of the year will be:

1. Substack launches a creator-driven television news site that quickly overtakes CNN.

world.

2. Jeff Bezos, owner of The Washington Post, buys TikTok and creates an iconoclastic 21st-century news product to attract a younger audience.

3. The International Herald Tribune, bought in 2002 by the New York Times and rebranded as its International Edition, makes a comeback as an independent online newspaper publishing simultaneously in 10 languages.

4. Elon Musk sells X for \$1 to his biographer Walter Isaacson, who reinvents it as a global news site "X-tra."

5. Local news stages a comeback as communities across the United States support high-quality online local news sites.

6. None of the above.

My predictions: Ukraine: 3; Russia: 1, 3; Saudi Arabia: 7; Gaza: 1, 2, 3, 4; CIA: 5; North Korea: 5; Technology: 3, 4; Economy: 2, 3, 6; Military: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; Journalism: 5.

Follow David Ignatius @IgnatiusPost on X (formerly Twitter).



CHURCH PAGE



A CITY ON A HILL CHURCH 705 W.-900 N., Uniondale 10 a.m. - Worship.

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

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

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

BETHEL

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

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN **CHURCH LCMS**

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

BLUFFTON CHURCH OF GOD

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

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



NATIONAL OIL Delivery to Home

FARM • BUSINESS

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

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



limbo"

Whether waiting in hope-

ful anticipation of a prom-

ised raise, waiting in dread

for test results, waiting in

eagerness for a long-planned

vacation, everyone experi-

ences times of "living in

WAIT.

- seasons when

all we can do is

is that, when we

invite Him to do

so, Jesus enters

those periods of

waiting and offers

purpose and mean-

ing to our expect-

ance. Rather than

passing the time

in fear, worry, or

frustration, a rela-

tionship with Him

provides guidance and ener-

The waiting provides

gy for each day.

The good news

This page is dedicated to the building of a more spiritual and greater church-going people and is made possible

BETWEEN TWO SEASONS December 26th through

by the Advertisers on this page who want as their return to see more people go to church.

January 1st is a strange time of year. The frenzy of Christmas

preparations, travel, and celebrations has climaxed and most of us are ready to get

back to our typical schedules. But the glimmer of approaching New Year festivities and another 3-day weekend ensures that normalcy will very likely not return until the final notes of Auld Lang Syne fade into the midnight

Children are

air.

not quite half way through a 2-week winter break, store exchange or return lines have dwindled, most of us have settled down to watch sappy movies and contentedly nibble on leftover culinary treats, while the weather lulls us into believing that 50 degrees is normal!

It's easy to succumb to the stupor of between-holiday emotions. Much like the groggy feeling after indulging in too many servings of decadent holiday foods, we allow ourselves to imagine that nothing between Christmas and New Years Eve impacts us. After all, isn't January 1 the official start of all our new changes?

Life will always be filled



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN 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.

NEW HOPE LUTHERAN

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

NOTTINGHAM

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

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.

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.

ST. MARK'S

LUTHERAN (NALC) 5912 N. Sugar St., Uniondale 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.

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.





time to consider the previous AND coming year. What lessons did I learn? How did God provide specific answers to prayers? What part have I played in

by Martha

Paxson

advancing His Kingdom? What am I eager to learn in the next 366 days offered to me? How can I grow and share my faith in 2024?

in-between", reflect on your hopes, fears, dreams, and needs. Invite God to work IN and THROUGH your life to bring about His honor, glory, and purpose, then prepare for the best year ever. mpaxson99@yahoo.com

During this "season of

824-2220



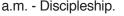




LORIST 126 W. Townley Bluffton • 824-3330







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

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. firstpcbluffton.org 9:30 a.m. - Children/ youth & Adult Sunday School. 10:30 - 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.



824-0900 General Motors 824-1931 Chrysler

vvorsnip

FIRST REFORMED **CHURCH OF** BLUFFTON

(EVANGELICAL)

123 S. Jefferson St.,

Ossian

www.OssianChurch.com

8:45 a.m. - Adult Sun-

day school. 10 a.m. -

301 W. Cherry St. 9:15 a.m. - Sunday School. 10:30 - Worship.

GRACE BAPTIST

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

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

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

TO REPORT CHURCH NEWS:

- · E-mail to churchnews@news-banner.com
- Drop information at 125 N. Johnson St. in Bluffton

LIVING FAITH MISSIONARY

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

LIVING WATER UNITED CHURCH

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

MARKLE CHAPEL HILL SEVENTH DAY **ADVENTIST**

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

MARKLE CHURCH **OF CHRIST**

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

> MARKLE **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 BEGINNING 2187 W. SR 218 10 a.m. - Sunday School. 10:30 - Worship.

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

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

ship.

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC 1300 N. Main St. Saturday: 7:45 a.m. -

Prayer. 8 a.m. - Mass. 8:30 - Rosary. 4 p.m. or by appointment - Confessions. 5 p.m. - Mass. Sunday: 7:30 & 10 a.m. - Mass.

ST. LUKE CHURCH

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

ST. MARK EV. **LUTHERAN**

16933 Thiele Rd. stmarkfw.org 8:45 a.m. - Sunday School. 10 a.m. - 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.

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Raiders, Oswalt catch fire to stomp Rebels in tournament

By RYAN WALKER

UNION ČITY – To say Southern Wells got red hot in the second half is an understatement.

The Raiders (2-7) picked up their lone win of the Union City Holiday Tournament in the fifth-place game by simply thrashing Randolph Southern (1-8) in the second half to win 79-53.

Belive it or not, Southern Wells needed a Chandler Oswalt three with 50 seconds to go to regain the lead before halftime at 26-25.

But what happened after halftime was unthinkable - nine made threes and 62 percent from the floor converted into a $5\overline{3}$ -28 second half for the Raiders.

"I think it's just a matter of seeing the ball go through the basket," Southern Wells head coach Joel Roush said after the game.



Chandler Oswalt (right) dishes out a pass to teammate Andrew Aker (bottom left). The two combined for 13 three-pointers in the game.

"Confidence builds confidence and it just continued to build on itself. Things just really, really kind of snowballed.'

Oswalt's three to lead his team into the half was just one of many. The senior guard splashed three of them in the first half, then caught fire and nailed five more in the second.

His eight was hit for the third time in a row, all within the first four minutes of the fourth quarter. He was met at halfcourt by teammate Evan Pennington with a grin on his face and an emphatic highfive.

Oswalt finished with a game-high 29 points and went 8-14 from beyond the arc. He hit from deep territory and contested looks, drawing some attention toward him. That allowed Andrew Aker to find space in the corner and knock down five of his own

"It's not like (Oswalt's) forcing bad shots. These are rhythm shots that his teammates got," Roush said. "My favorite part is that he was able to return the favor and get Andrew a couple of wide-open threes too when he would shot fake (then) they would fly at him and he pitched it to Andrew. And Andrew was able to knock down some threes too."

On the defensive side, it wasn't the team's best effort, but enough to hold its streak. Roush shared that it was apart of the halftime speech to clean some things up on that end fo the floor.

The Rebels still only went 9-30 in the first half, but the Raiders gave them 20 chances at points from the charity stripe with 16 fouls.

In Southern Wells' first game, the team fell by five in overtime to Elwood. Roush felt like there was an opportunity missed with that game to play in the 3rd place contest, which would have set up another shot at Bluffton before their other game in the ACAC Tournament.

Even though Southern Wells went 1-2 in the tournament, it had reaped some benefits and hit on a goal Roush was looking for.

Last season, Roush's squad was playing their best basketball around the same time, winning three out of four before Christmas.



Southern Wells guard Evan Pennington (left) tries to blow past Randolph Southern's Noah Allen during the 5th place game in the Union City Holiday Tournament Friday night. The Raiders' big second half propelled them to a 79-53 win. (Photos by Ryan Walker)

season and took an 18-day break in between which perhaps ended up costing them. The Raiders lost six in a row after that.

But the win over Randolph Southern at least sets them up for success in the new year instead of an almost three-week absence.

"I think we developed some confidence," Roush said.

'We felt like we maybe should have beat Elwood. We missed a lot of shots around the basket missing a bunch of free throws. I think what we learned too, is that if we continue to plug away, good things will happen for us and we'll continue to improve and I think you saw that tonight."

Southern Wells will wait eight days for its next game at Heritage in ACAC play

The team didn't play in a tournament that starting at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 6. sports@news-banner.com

SPORTS

SOUTHERN WELLS 79, RANDOLPH SOUTHERN 53 At Union City High School SOUTHERN WELLS (2-7): Chandler Oswalt 9-16 3-4 29, Andrew Aker 6-10 0-0 17, Perrin Gates 4-5 2-2 10, Evan Pennington 3-5 2-2 8, CJ Reber 2-5 2-2 6, Caleb Johnson 2-2 1-2 5, Landon Johnson 1-3 0-0 3, Trey Slusher 0-1 0-0 0, Joshua Aulbach 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS: 27-47 10-14 79.

RANDOLPH SOUTHERN (1-8): Noah Allen 5-12 8-11 20, Ronnie Dotson 3-13 1-2 9, Brody Mills 3-9 0-0 8, Taysen

20, Ronnie Dotson 3-13 1-2 9, Brody Mills 3-9 0-0 8, Taysen Stewart 2-3 2-3 6, Brody Sullival 2-5 1-2 5, Ian Vance 1-3 0-0 2, Bryson Grimes 0-3 0-2 0, Beau Atkins 0-1 0-0 0. TOTALS: 16-51 12-20 53. So. Wells 15 11 29 24 - 79 Randolph 13 12 11 17 - 53 Three-point FG: Southern Wells: 15-29 (Oswalt 8-14, Aker 5-9, L. Johnson 1-2, Reber 0-2), Randolph Southern: 8-25 (Allen 4-6, Dotson 2-10, Mills 2-5, Jefferies 0-1, Vance 0-1). Rebounds: Southern Wells: 24 (Pennington 5, Gates 5 Reber 4 Aker 4 Oswalt 3. C. Johnson 1. 5, Reber 4, Aker 4, Oswalt 3, C. Johnson 1, L. Johnson 1, Aulbach 1), Randolph Southern: 18 (Mills 8, Allen 7, Stew art 6, Dotson 1, Jefferies 1, Sullivan 11, Grimes 1, Vance 1, Atkins 1). Turnovers: Southern Wells: 7, Randolph South-ern: 10. Fouls: Southern Wells: 16, Randolph Southern: 12. Fouled Out: None.Technicals: None

Tiger defense shuts down Panthers to earn third at **Union City Tournament**

By RYAN WALKER

UNION CITY – Kaleb Green got the game's first basket and take a 2-0 lead for Bluffton at the 7:39 mark. The Tigers never trailed or tied beyond that point.

The Tigers (5-4) finished the Union City Holiday Tournament with a 2-1 record with a 49-19 rout over Elwood (4-7) in the 3rd

four made triples, two from Declan Grieser and one each by Cameron Williams and Axton Beste.

Elwood made just two shots by the break, and Bluffton made five threes.

As the season rolls along, Tiger head coach Craig Teagle is seeing improvements in a once quiet-in-nature team into one that's talking all over the floor.

third quarters. He finished with a game-high 11 points and Green with 10.

Bluffton also dominated the boards with a 24-10 clip.

In holiday tournaments, teams get to play multiple games in a day or two without worrying about school activities. That gave Bluffton an opportunity to try some new rotations and test the toughness of the group.



place contest.

Bluffton suffocated the Panthers' offense in under 20 points, no more than seven points per quarter, and only eight made baskets.

Elwood's first points didn't come until the 1:02 mark when Jayden Mullins hit a free throw, and its first bucket was with under three minutes to go in the half. Three minutes later, and the Panthers got its second and only made shot of the half.

Meanwhile, Bluffton's Green made the teaam's first eight shots in the paint. Axton Beste hit a baseline jumper as the horn sounded to make it 10-1 at the end of the first quarter

The Tigers stretched into a 27-5 advantage at the break with the help of

"I thought instead of just knowing what the other

team was doing, we did a better job of taking away what they were trying to do," Teagle said after the game. "Our guys communicated well, and they're getting better every day. I feel like we get some improvements defensively. We're not where we need to be, but we're getting better all the time."

On offense, Teagle's bunch did what it needed to, and did even more so from downtown. Their 8-15 shooting mark was the same number as Elwood made shots in total, including 2-pointers.

Grieser had three of them, including buzzerbeaters in the second and

For example Andrew Hunt started in place of Eli Garrett. Hunt nailed a pair of threes in the games and finished with eight points overall, all while Garrett still played in his three-and-D role with a made shot from deep in the game.

Teagle said it was productive to see the result and liked what he saw from his group.

"I think it helps out depth a little bit we got to play some kids that weren't really in the seven or eightman rotation," Teagle said. "I think that gives you some depth people you know you can rely on bringing in certain spots. I think it says a little bit about your toughness having three games in a 24-hour period with inten-

Bluffton's Kaleb Green (right) swats at Elwood's Jackson Blackford in the third-place game of the Union City Holiday Tournament Friday night. The Tigers defeated the Panthers 49-19 to finish in third place with a 2-1 record. (Photo by Ryan Walker)

sity level stuff and then just going on the road."

Bluffton's next game will be in conference play as it hosts Woodlan at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan 6.

sports@news-banner.com

BLUFFTON 49. ELWOOD 19 At Union City High School BLUFFTON (0-0): Declan Grieser 4-6 0-0 11, Kaleb Green 5-5 0-0 10, Andrew Hunt 3-6 0-2 8, Tucker Jen-

kins 2-5 1-2 5, Axton Beste 2-5 0-0 5,Eli Garrett 1-3 0-0 3, Ben Maggard 1-1 0-0 3. Cameron Williams 1-1 0-0 3, Hunter Wenger 0-1 1-2 1, Nolan Lambert 0-1 0-0 0, Jude Baumgartner 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS: 19-34 2-5 49. ELWOOD (0-0): Beau Brandon

2-4 0-0 5, Caam Gallegos 1-3 1-1 3, James Ward 1-6 0-0 2, Xavier Dav-enport 1-3 0-0 2, Braden Etchison 1-4 0-0 2, Kaden Sullivan 0-1 2-2 2 Jackson Blackford 1-7 0-0 2, Jayden Mullins 0-1 1-2 1,Brice Shuler 0-2 0-0 0, Isaac Casas 0-0 0-0 0, TEAM 0-1 0-0 0.TOTALS: 8-32 4-5 19. Bluffton 10 17 8 14 --- 49

No. 9 Missouri shuts down No.

7 Ohio State in Cotton Bowl

Elwood 1 4 7 7 — 19 Three-point FG: Bluffton: 8-15 (Griser 3-4, Hunt 2-3, Williams 1-1 Beste 1-2, Garrett 1-3, Maggard 1-1 Williams 1-1), Elwood: 1-10 (Brandon 1-2, Davenport 0-2, Blackford 0-2, Ward 0-1 Shuler 0-1 Etchison 0-1 TEAM 0-1). Rebounds: Bluffton: 24 (Jenkins 7, Williams 4, Green 3, Hunt 3, Beste 2, Grieser 2, Wenger 2, Gar-rett 1), Elwood: 10 (Ward 3, Mullins 2, Gallegos 2, Etchison 1, Davenport 1, Blackford 1). Turnovers: Bluffton: 8, Elwood: 9. Fouls: Bluffton: 11, Elwood: 4. Fouled Out: None. Technicals:

High School Calendar

SATURDAY, DEC 30

BOYS BASKETBALL: Norwell at Adams Central, 7:45 p.m. GIRLS BASKETBALL: Bellmont at Bluffton,

7:30 p.m. **MONDAY, JAN 1**

No events scheduled

TUESDAY, JAN 2

GIRLS BASKETBALL: Norwell at Carroll, 7:30 p.m.; Southern Wells at Daleville, 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JAN 3

GIRLS BASKETBALL: Bluffton at North Miami, 7:30 p.m.

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

THURSDAY, JAN 4 SWIMMING & DIVING (CO-ED): Norwell at East Noble, 6 p.m.; Bluffton at South Adams,

5:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, JAN 5

GIRLS BASKETBALL: Bluffton at Jay County, 7:30 p.m.; South Adams at Southern Wells, 7:30 p.m.

SWIMMING & DIVING (CO-ED): Norwell, Bluffton at Jay County Dive Invite, 6 p.m. SATURDÁY, JAN 6

BOYS BASKETBALL: Woodlan at Bluffton, 7:30 p.m.; Southern Wells at Heritage, 7:30 p.m.

GIRLS BASKETBALL: Norwell at Leo, 7:30 p.m.

WRESTLING: Norwell at Bill Kerbel Invitational (New Haven High School), 9 a.m.; Bluffton at IHSWCA Team State (Manchester High School), 6 p.m.

SWIMMING & DIVING (CO-ED): Norwell, Bluffton at Jay County Invte, 9 a.m.

WRESTLING: Southern Wells at Huntington North Invite, 9 a.m.

Raiders place 24/30 in Spartan Classic wrestling tournament

Southern Wells placed 24th in the Spartan Classic down in Connersville Friday night.

Peyton Long was the top man for the Raiders, finishing second in the 285-pound weight class. He fell to Levi DeGroat of Connersville by decision 5-0 in the title match.

Jarin Frauhiger finished in seventh place, defeating Cayden Ramos of Jasper by fall.

Greenfield Central was took home first place, followed by New Palestine and East Noble.

Southern Wells will be at the Huntington North Invitational at 9 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 6.

By STEPHEN HAWKINS AP Sports Writer

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) - All-America running back Cody Schrader rushed for 128 yards and bulled into the end zone for a 7-yard touchdown to open the fourth quarter with Missouri's first score, and the ninthranked Tigers capped an 11-win season with a 14-3 win over No. 7 Ohio State in the Cotton Bowl on Friday night.

In a game with almost as many total punts (16) as points, the Tigers (11-2) suddenly scored touchdowns on consecutive drives after punting eight times before that. Brady Cook threw a 7-yard TD to Luther Burden III with 5:12 left in the game.

Ohio State (11-2), which was undefeated before losing its regular-season finale to Michigan, played without two-time All-America receiver Marvin Harrison Jr. The standout junior was on the sideline, but opted out of playing. He hasn't announced yet if he will enter the NFL draft.

The Buckeyes were already without starting quarterback Kyle McCord, who left the program earlier this month to transfer to Syracuse. Devin Brown, who took over as the starter, left the game in the middle of the second quarter with an apparent left ankle injury. They finished with only 203 total yards

After finishing 6-7 with bowl losses each of the past two years, Missouri wrapped up coach Eliah Drinkwitz's fourth season by winning 11 games for the first time since 2014.

Missouri had only 120 total yards before the eight-play, 95-yard drive that ended with Schrader, the former NCAA Division II standout and walk-on, running through two defenders for his 14th TD – and 10th consecutive game with a score. Cook had a 15-yard run before a 50-yard pass to a wideopen Marquis Johnson.

The Tigers then went 91 yards in 13 plays, including Cook converting fourthand-1 with a 2-yard plunge, for Burden's score.

Brown appeared to get hurt when he was sacked on a third-down play late in the first quarter. He returned when the Buckeyes got the ball back, but true freshman Lincoln Kienholz took over midway through the second quarter and finished the game.

With McCord gone, Brown took over as the starter after not playing since Oct. 21, and was 4-of-6 passing for 20 yards while getting sacked three times. Kienholz was finished 6 of 17 for 86 yards and lost a fumble while being sacked with 3:13 left.

News-Banner Scoreboard

BASKETBALL High School

Friday Boys' Scores Adams Central 59, Eastbrook 41 Avon 63, Floyd Central, Ky. 49 Cass 42, New Prairie 39 Celina, Ohio 53, Heritage 27 Evansville Central 70, Jacper 60 Evansville Central 70 Jasper 60 Floyd Central 55, Eastern (Pekin) 47 Gibson Southern 53, Forest Park 47 Hillcrest, III. 61, Hammond Noll 46 Indy Brebeuf 70, Evansville Memorial 58 Lawrence North 98, Marion 72 Liberty Christian 58, Shenandoah 47 Loogootee 48, Washington 45 Mayfield, Ky. 59, Mt. Vernon (Posey) 50 Rock Creek Academy 39, Hancock Co., Ky. 28 J., NJ. 20 Taylor 71, Indpls Riverside 48 W. Lafayette 63, Seeger 48 Wapahani 66, Blue River Valley 41 Wood Memorial 54, Union (Dugger) 43 Clau Cit / Turgarometh Clay City Tournament Championship Tri-West 47, Clay City 44 Fifth Place Owen Valley 58, Riverton Parke 35 Third Place N. Vermillion 61, N. Central (Farmersbura) 60 Clinton Central Tournament Championship Tipton 74, Noblesville HomeSchool 45 Semifinal Noblesville HomeSchool 57, N. Putnam 56 Tipton 69, Western 57 Seventh Place Fountain Central 58, Clinton Central 48 Third Place Western 67, N. Putnam 53 Clinton Christian Tournament Pool A Illiana Christian 66, Lakeland Christian 16 Illiana Christian 77, Clinton Christian 24 Lakeland Christian 55, Clinton Christian 50 Pool B Bethany Christian 50, DeMotte Christian 25 Bethany Christian 70, Westville 51 DeMotte Christian 56, Westville 35

- Fishers Tournament Fifth Place Bloomington North 63, Lawrence Central 55 Semifinal Chesterton 66, S. Bend Riley 57 Fishers 62, Portage 45 Seventh Place Jeffersonville 70, Evansville Bosse 56
- Third Place S. Bend Riley 54, Portage 47 Huntington North Tournament Championship East Chicago Central 67, Indpls Tech
- 65 Fifth Place Merrillville 65, S. Bend Adams 52 Third Place
- Huntington North 68, Ft. Wayne Snider 59 I aPorte Tournament
- Championship Northridge 66, LaPorte 60 Fifth Place Ft. Wayne Luers 83, Lowell 38
- Seventh Place Hammond Morton 65, Michigan City
- Marguette 56 Third Place Logansport 62. Hanover Central 59. OT
- Lawrenceburg Tournament Pool A
- Bethesda Christian 47, Lawrenceburg 39
- Guerin Catholic 53, Lawrenceburg 33 Guerin Catholic 70, Bethesda Christian 58
- West Morgan, Ala. 72, Connersville 65 Whiteland 72, Connersville 43 Pool B New Palestine 83, Jennings Co. 59
- Newport, Ky. 64, Jennings Co. 46 Newport, Ky. 72, New Palestine 66 Pool C
- Whiteland 95, West Morgan, Ala. 52 Pool D
- Ft. Wayne Blackhawk 69, Beech Grove 56

(Hanover) 36

Third Place

Springs Valley 60, Brownstown 54 Tecumseh 60, Owen Valley 17

Trinity Lutheran 63, Bloomfield 39

Brownstown 61, Southwestern (Hanover) 60

- Ft. Wayne Blackhawk 74, Pike Central 67 Pike Central 60, Beech Grove 46
- Lebanon Tournament Championship
- Gary 21st Century 61, Evansville North 55 Consolation
- Indpls Metro 57, University 49
- Third Place Charlestown 49, Clarksville 40 Southridge Tournament Championship Orleans 40, Southridge 32 First Round Orleans 67, S. Central (Elizabeth) 45 Southridge 45, S. Ripley 41 Third Place S. Central (Elizabeth) 72, S. Ripley 64 Switzerland County Tournament Consolation Hamilton Hts. 79, Trinity Lutheran 58 Rising Sun 58, Tri-Township 43 First Round Christel House Manual 64, Hamilton Hts. 55 Hopkins Co. Central, Ky. 72, Tri-Township 52 Indian Creek 47, Rising Sun 38 Switzerland Co. 55, Trinity Lutheran 54 Semifinal Christel House Manual 64, Switzerland Co. 59, OT Indian Creek 87, Hopkins Co. Central, Ky. 49 Tabernacle Christian Tournament Crothersville 48, Martinsville Tabernacle 30 Union City Tournament Championship Eastern (Greentown) 63, Union City 43 Fifth Place Southern Wells 79, Randolph Southern 53 Third Place Bluffton 49, Elwood 19 Wabash County Tournament First Round Manchester 82, Southwood 31 Wabash 46, Northfield 34 Wabash Valley Tournament Championship Terre Haute North 49, Terre Haute South 35 Consolation Bloomfield 66, Greencastle 45 Fifth Place Sullivan 70, Marshall, III. 29 Wawasee Tournament Championship Ft. Wayne Wayne 62, Wawasee 60 First Round Ft. Wayne Wayne 68, Ft. Wayne Dwenger 56 Wawasee 62, Rochester 40 Third Place Ft. Wayne Dwenger 68, Rochester 55 Friday Girls' Scores Attica 41, BHRA, III. 35 Bremen 45, Mishawaka 34 Calumet Christian 51, Christian Liberty Academy, III. 14 Central Noble 72, S. Adams 44 Evansville Christian 52, White River Vallev 37 Indpls Pike 84, Anderson 61 New Albany 45, Evansville Harrison 25 Oswego, III. 64, Terre Haute South 44 Sullivan 49, N. Central (Farmersburg) 44 Switzerland Co. 62, Harrison Co., Ky. 40 Union City 47, Southwestern (Hanover) 37 Bowman Academy Tournament Pool A River Forest 44, Bowman 41, OT River Forest 56, Gary 21st Century 41 Pool B East Chicago Central 34, S. Bend Riley 30 Gary West 65, Lighthouse 14 Center Grove Tournament Championship Center Grove 62, Brownsburg 45 First Round Brownsburg 61, Warsaw 59 Center Grove 72, Jeffersonville 24 Third Place Jeffersonville 61, Warsaw 49 Eastern Greene Tournament Championship N. Knox 48, Springs Valley 36 Ninth Place Eastern (Greene) 50, Trinity Lutheran 45 Semifinal Jasper 45, Martinsville 26 N. Knox 67, Southwestern
- S. Bend Adams 49, Morgan Twp. 46 Fifth Place S. Bend Adams 64, Hobart 45 Semifinal Kankakee Valley 65, Washington Twp. 33 Munster 46, Portage 43 Seventh Place Morgan Twp. 65, Mishawaka Marian 28 Third Place Portage 58, Washington Twp. 57 Union City Tournament First Round Blackford 65, Blue River Valley 35 Clinton Central 58, Adams Central 39 Ft. Wayne Blackhawk 53, Union Co. 44 Union City 47, Southwestern (Shelby) 37 Vincennes Rivet Tournament Pool A Corydon 38, Lafayette Catholic 37 Evansville Memorial 56, Lanesville 43 South Knox 52, Lafayette Catholic 31 Pool B Evansville Memorial 64, Purdue Polytechnic 19 Lanesville 48, Vincennes Rivet 27 Vincennes Rivet 55, Purdue Polytechnic 21 Wabash County Tournament First Round Manchester 57, Northfield 44 Wabash 48, Southwood 26 College Men's Basketball Scores Friday, Dec. 29 ÉAST Niagara 69, Buffalo 63 Penn St. 90, Rider 63 SOUTH Clemson 93, Radford 58

Elon 82, Valparaiso 78 Kentucky 96, Illinois St. 70 LSU 96, Northwestern St. 55 Miami 95, North Florida 55 Nath 65, Portice 405 North Carolina 105, Charleston Southern 60 UCF 98, Bethune-Cookman 54 Winthrop 113, Toccoa Falls 62 MIDWEST Cincinnati 76, Evansville 58 Denver 95, Omaha 80 Fort Wayne 73, N. Kentucky 60 Green Bay 88, Wright St. 77 IUPUI 67, Detroit 55 Indiana 100, Kennesaw St. 87 Iowa 103, N. Illinois 74 McNeese St. 87, Michigan 76 Miami (Ohio) 119, Wilberforce 69 Minnesota 80, Maine 62 Nebraska 91, SC State 62 Northwestern 74, Jackson St. 63 Purdue 80, E. Kentucky 53 W. Michigan 127, Aquinas College 71

SOUTHWEST Texas 72, UNC-Greensboro 37 FAR WEST Saint Mary's (Cal.) 66, Kent St. 46

Women's Basketball Scores

Fiday, Dec. 29 SOUTH Florida St. 95, Georgia Tech 80 Mississippi St. 99, MVSU 35 Vanderbilt 73, Fairleigh Dickinson

W. Kentucky 97, W. Virginia St. 39 MIDWEST E. Illinois 80, SIU-Edwardsville 74 E. Michigan 69, Saginaw Valley

St. 44 Oakland 89, N. Kentucky 79 S. Indiana 75, SE Missouri 37 FAR WEST Saint Mary's (Cal) 70, San Jose St. 52

Stanford 78, California 51

NBA

Thursday's Games Boston 128, Detroit 122, OT New Orleans 112, Utah 105 Indiana 120, Chicago 104 Minnesota 118, Dallas 110 Denver 142, Memphis 105 San Antonio 118, Portland 105 Miami 114, Golden State 102 L.A. Lakers 133, Charlotte 112 Friday's Games Washington 110, Brooklyn 104 Orlando 117, New York 108 Sacramento 117, Atlanta 110 Boston 120, Toronto 118 Milwaukee 119, Cleveland 111 adelphia 131, Houston 12 Charlotte at Phoenix, 9 p.m. () Oklahoma City at Denver, 9 p.m. San Antonio at Portland 10 p m Memphis at L.A. Clippers, 10:30 p.m. Saturday's Games Miami at Utah, 5 p.m. Toronto at Detroit, 6 p.m. New York at Indiana, 7 p.m. L.A. Lakers at Minnesota. 8 p.m. Philadelphia at Chicago, 8 p.m. Dallas at Golden State, 8:30 p.m. Sunday's Games Atlanta at Washington, 3 p.m. Boston at San Antonio, 7 p.m. Brooklyn at Oklahoma City, 7 p.m. L.A. Lakers at New Orleans, 7 p.m. Orlando at Phoenix, 8 p.m. Sacramento at Memphis, 8 p.m. Monday's Games Minnesota at New York, 3 p.m. Cleveland at Toronto, 7:30 p.m. Detroit at Houston, 8 p.m. Indiana at Milwaukee, 8 p.m Charlotte at Denver, 9 p.m. Dallas at Utah. 9 p.m. Portland at Phoenix, 9 p.m Miami at L.A. Clippers, 10:30 p.m.

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| e-Carolina | 2 | 13 | 0 | .133 | 236 | 381 |
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| | W | L | Т | Pct | PF | PA |
| y-Detroit | 11 | 4 | 0 | .733 | 412 | 355 |
| Green Bay | 7 | 8 | 0 | .467 | 333 | 331 |
| Minnesota | 7 | 8 | 0 | .467 | 314 | 299 |
| Chicago | | 9 | | .400 | 314 | 345 |
| 0 | | We | st | | | |
| | W | L | Т | Pct | PF | PA |
| y-San Fran | 11 | 4 | 0 | .733 | 444 | 267 |
| L.A. Rams | 8 | 7 | 0 | .533 | 357 | 332 |
| Seattle | 8 | 7 | 0 | .533 | 320 | 352 |
| e-Arizona | 3 | 12 | 0 | .200 | 275 | 403 |
| e-Eliminate | d fr | om | pla | yoffs | | |
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Atlanta at Chicago, 1 p.m. Carolina at Jacksonville, 1 p.m. L.A. Rams at N.Y. Giants, 1 p.m. Las Vegas at Indianapolis, 1 p.m. Miami at Baltimore, 1 p.m. New England at Buffalo, 1 p.m. New Orleans at Tampa Bay, 1 p.m. San Francisco at Washington, 1 p.m.

Tennessee at Houston, 1 p.m. Pittsburgh at Seattle, 4:05 p.m. Cincinnati at Kansas City, 4:25 p.m. L.A. Chargers at Denver, 4:25 p.m.

L.A. Chargers at Denver, 4:25 p.m. Green Bay at Minnesota, 8:20 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 7 Atlanta at New Orleans, 1 p.m. Buffalo at Miami, 1 p.m. Chicago at Green Bay, 1 p.m. Cleveland at Cincinnati, 1 p.m. Dallas at Washington, 1 p.m. Denver at Las Vegas, 1 p.m. Houston at Indianapolis, 1 p.m. Jacksonville at Tennessee 1 p.m. Jacksonville at Tennessee, 1 p.m. Kansas City at L.A. Chargers, 1

p.m. .A. Rams at San Francisco, 1 p.m. Minnesota at Detroit, 1 p.m. N.Y. Jets at New England, 1 p.m. Philadelphia at N.Y. Giants, 1 p.m. Pittsburgh at Baltimore, 1 p.m. Seattle at Arizona, 1 p.m. Tampa Bay at Carolina, 1 p.m.

College

2023-24 Bowl Glance Tuesday, Dec 19 Frisco Bowl Frisco, Texas UTSA 35, Marshall 17 Thursday, Dec. 21 Boca Raton Bowl Boca Raton, Fla. USF 45, Syracuse 0 Friday, Dec. 22 Gasparilla Bowl Tampa, Fla. Georgia Tech 30, UCF 17 Saturday, Dec. 23 Camellia Bowl Montgomery, Ala. N. Illinois 21, Arkansas St. 19 **Birmingham Bowl** Birmingham, Ala. Duke 17, Troy 10 Duke 17, 109 10 Armed Forces Bowl Fort Worth, Texas Air Force 31, No. 24 James Madison 21 Famous Idaho Potato Bowl Boise, Idaho Georgia St. 45, Utah St. 22 68 Ventures Bowl Mobile, Ala. South Alabama 59, Eastern Michigan 10 Las Vegas Bowl Las Vegas Northwestern 14, Utah 7 Hawaii Bowl Honolulu, Hawaii Coastal Carolina 24, San Jose St. 14 Tuesday, Dec. 26 Quick Lane Bowl Detroit Minnesota 30, Bowling Green 24 First Responder Bowl Dallas Texas St. 45. Rice 21 Guaranteed Rate Bowl Phoenix Kansas vs. UNLV, 9:00 p.m. Military Bowl Presented Annapolis, Md. No. 23 Tulane vs. Virginia Tech, 2:00 p.m. Duke's Mayo Bowl Charlotte, N.C.

North Carolina vs. West Virginia, 5:30 p.m.

BitBroLtd BrMySq

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Canaan

Canoo Inc

Caterpillar

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McDnlds

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NL Inds

Nikola

Nucor

Palantii

PepsiCo

PrUltPQ

Pfizer

NorflkSo

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

WEEKLY DOW JONES AND S&P 500





| | STOCK MARKET INDEXES | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------|---------|-------|--------|--------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| - | Week | | | Wk | Wk | YTD | 12-mo | | | | | | |
| High | Low | Name | Last | Chg | %Chg | %Chg | %Chg | | | | | | |
| 37,778.85 | 31,429.82 | Dow Jones Industrials | 37,689.54 | +303.57 | +.81 | +13.70 | +13.70 | | | | | | |
| 16,717.04 | 13,249.10 | Dow Jones Transportation | 15,898.85 | -165.05 | -1.03 | +18.72 | +18.72 | | | | | | |
| 1,003.67 | 765.47 | Dow Jones Utilities | 881.67 | +8.52 | +.98 | -8.86 | -8.86 | | | | | | |
| 16,933.62 | 14,471.08 | NYSE Composite | 16,852.89 | +82.44 | +.49 | +10.99 | +10.99 | | | | | | |
| 15,150.07 | 10,207.47 | Nasdaq Composite | 15,011.35 | +18.38 | +.12 | +43.42 | +43.42 | | | | | | |
| 4,793.30 | 3,780.78 | S&P 500 | 4,769.83 | +15.20 | +.32 | +24.23 | +24.23 | | | | | | |
| 2,817.96 | 2,322.38 | S&P MidCap | 2,781.54 | -5.99 | 21 | +14.45 | +14.45 | | | | | | |
| 48,598.18 | 37,443.64 | Wilshire 5000 | 48,295.38 | +123.62 | +.26 | +26.85 | +26.85 | | | | | | |
| 2,071.78 | 1,633.67 | Russell 2000 | 2,027.07 | -6.89 | 34 | +15.09 | +15.09 | | | | | | |
| 16,317.50 | 11,731.63 | Lipper Growth Index | 16,217.65 | +70.12 | +.43 | +35.18 | +35.28 | | | | | | |
| | | STOOK EVOLUNI | - 11- | | | | | | | | | | |

STOCK EXCHANGE HIGHLIGHTS

| Name | Last | Chg | %Chg | Name | Last | Chg | %Chg | Name | Vol (00) | Last | Cho |
|-----------------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------|------|
| Regis rs | 9.45 | +3.53 | +59.6 | System1 | 2.22 | 264 | -22.4 | Palantir | 1419859 | | _ |
| ChinGrn | 3.03 | +1.00 | | Copel | 8.48 | | -17.1 | Pfizer | 1373956 | | |
| BrghtHI rs | 7.63 | +2.37 | +45.1 | ZIM Intg | 9.87 | -1.71 | -14.8 | FordM | 1373570 |) 12.19 | 1 |
| AmpriusTc | 5.29 | +1.51 | +39.9 | CazooĞ | rs 9.50 | -1.46 | -13.3 | AT&T Inc | 1180755 | 5 16.78 | +.2 |
| SunITch | 10.17 | +2.38 | +30.6 | SOS Ltd | 4.60 | 69 | -13.0 | BkofAm | 1036704 | 33.67 | +.2 |
| Bakkt HI | 2.23 | +.38 | | BP Pru | 2.47 | | -12.4 | Carnival | 963207 | | |
| Altice | 3.25 | +.54 | | StarGas | 11.53 | | -11.9 | Uber Tch | 722635 | | |
| Navios pfG | | +1.71 | +14.3 | Gannett | 2.30 | | -11.2 | ExxonMbl | 684253 | | |
| BigLots | 7.79 | +.91 | +13.2 | akaBrnd | | | -9.3 | ChrgePt | 663256 | | |
| Huya | 3.66 | +.42 | +13.0 | GpSuprv | ri 4.06 | 40 | -9.0 | Alibaba | 657775 | 5 77.51 | +2.2 |
| NASDAQ G | AINERS | s (\$2 or | R MORE) | NASDAG | LOSER | IS (\$2 OR | MORE) | NASDAQ | ACTIVES | (\$1 OR | MORE |
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for the Busy Family!

Weekday, Late Evening, and

Goshen Classic JeKalb 48 New Prairie 28 Goshen 50, E. Noble 45 Hall of Fame Tournament Championship Columbia City 56, Jennings Co. 47 First Round Columbia City 75, Indian Creek 69 Jennings Co. 60, Lake Central 22 Third Place Lake Central 51, Indian Creek 45 Lake Station Tournament Championship Michigan City Marquette 63, New Haven 39 First Round Michigan City Marquette 68, Whiting 32 New Haven 48, Lake Station 42 Lakeland Christian Tournament Pool B Bethany Christian 51, Hamilton 27 Bethany Christian 52, Granger Christian 26 Granger Christian 41, Hamilton 38 North Central Classic Decatur Central 64, Carroll (Ft. Wayne) 50 Hamilton Southeastern 69, Indpls N. Central 61 North Decatur Tournament Championship Shelbyville 54, Edgewood 41 First Round Edgewood 49, N. Decatur 43 Shelbyville 54, Madison 41 Third Place N. Decatur 52, Madison 33 North White Tournament Championship Rochester 29, N. White 18 First Round N. Newton 47, Clinton Prairie 39 N. White 47, Clinton Prairie 39 Rochester 42, Kouts 35 Third Place Kouts 57, Clinton Prairie 44 Northridge Tournament Pool A Ft. Wayne Dwenger 43, Andrean 24 Knox 49, Andrean 48 Northridge 55, Knox 22 Northridge 68, Ft. Wayne Dwenger Pool B Merrillville 54, NorthWood 44 Merrillville 73, S. Bend St. Joseph's NorthWood 45, Rushville 33 S. Bend St. Joseph's 56, Rushville 48 **Plainfield Classic** First Round Plainfield 59, Indpls Roncalli 45 Zionsville 59, Greensburg 49 Third Round Greensburg 60, Indpls Roncalli 55 Portage Tournament Championship Munster 44, Kankakee Valley 21 Consolation Hobart 45, Mishawaka Marian 22

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FOOTBALL

NFL AMERICAN CONFERENCE East **W L T** 11 4 0 Pct PF PA x-Miami .733 463 314 Buffalo 9 6 0 e-N.Y. Jets 6 10 0 .600 403 276 .375 251 352 e-New England 411 0 .267 212 322 South W L 8 7 Pct PF PA .533 328 331 **T** 0 Houston Indianapolis 8 7 Jacksonville 8 7 .533 354 372 .533 331 343 0 Õ e-Tennessee510 0 .333 274 321 Vorth W L T x-Baltimore12 3 0 x-Cleveland11 5 0 Cincinnati 8 7 0 Pittsburgh 8 7 0 Pct PF PA .800 417 244 .688 382 331 533 318 345 .533 257 291 West West Pct PF PA Kansas City 9 6 0 .600 333 265 Denver 7 8 0 .467 327 377 Las Vegas 7 8 0 .467 225 294 e-L.A. Chargers510 0 .333 325 369 NATIONAL CONFERENCE East East East East East W L T Pct PF PA x-Philadelphia 114 0 .733 392 366 x-Dallas 10 5 0 e-N.Y. Giants510 0 .667 451 286 .333 214 371 e-Washington411 0 .267 309 453 South **WLT** 870 Pct PF PA .533 326 302 Tampa Bay 8 Atlanta 7 8 New Orleans7 8 0 0 467 287 288 .467 331 297

San Diego, Cali No. 16 Louisville 8:00 p.m. Texas Bowl Houston No. 22 Oklahom A&M, 9:00 p.m. Thursda Fenway Bowl Boston Boston College Pinstripe Bowl New York Rutgers 31, Mia Pop-Tarts Bowl Orlando, Fla. Kansas St. 28. I Alamo Bowl San Antonio, Te No. 14 Arizona 3 homa 24Friday, De Friday, Gator Bowl Jacksonville, Fla Clemson 38, Ke Sun Bowl El Paso, Texas No. 15 Notre Da Oregon St. 8 Liberty Bowl Memphis, Tenn Memphis 36, lo Saturda Peach Bowl Atlanta No. 10 Penn St. sippi, noon Music City Bowl Nashville, Tenn Maryland vs. Au Orange Bowl Miami No. 4 Florida St 4:00 p.m. Arizona Bowl Tucson, Ariz. Toledo vs. Wyo Monda ReliaQuest Bow Tampa, Fla. No. 13 LSU vs. Citrus Bowl Orlando, Fla No. 20 Iowa vs. 1:00 p.m Fiesta Bowl Glendale, Ariz. No. 8 Oregon vs 1:00 p.m. Rose Bowl College Footbal Pasadena, Calif No. 1 Michigan 5:00 p.m Allstate Sugar E College Football New Orleans No. 2 Washingt 8:45 p.m.

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| . Wisconsin, noon | Fidelity Advisor Growth | | | | 128.32 | +4.0 | +45.1/A | +19.5/A | 5.75 |
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| | Putnam SustLeadersA | m | LG | | 108.28 | +5.0 | +25.7/E | +16.2/C | 5.75 |
| vs. No. 18 Liberty, | Putnam TEIncA m | | ML | 535 | | +3.4 | +7.5/B | +2.1/C | 4.00 |
| S. NO. TO LIDEITY, | Schwab SP500ldx | | LB | 76,905 | | +5.2 | +28.5 | +15.9 | NL |
| | Thornburg IntermMnA | m | MI | 266 | | +2.0 | +5.4/D | +1.8/C | 2.00 |
| all Playoff Semifinal | Thornburg LtdTrmUSG | | GS | 42 | | +2.2 | +3.6/D | +0.2/E | 2.25 |
| if. | Vanguard 500ldxAdmrl | | LB | 437,896 | 439.99 | +5.0 | +25.9/B | +15.8/A | NL |
| vs. No. 5 Alabama, | Vanguard GrldxAdmrl | | LG | 64,730 | | +4.2 | +46.4/A | +19.4/A | NL |
| | Vanguard InTrTEAdmrl | | MI | 67,500 | 13.75 | +2.4 | +5.9/C | +2.3/A | NL |
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| all Playoff Semifinal | Vanguard TrgtRtr2025 | -d | ΤG | 73,950 | 18.41 | +4.7 | +15.5 | +7.7 | NL |
| ton vs. No. 3 Texas, | Vanguard TrgtRtr2030F | =d | TH | 84,828 | 35.54 | +5.1 | +17.1 | +8.5 | NL |
| 1011 VS. INU. 3 10XdS, | Vanguard TrgtRtr2035F | | ΤI | 86,328 | | +5.2 | +18.3 | +9.3 | NL |
| | Vanguard TrgtRtr2040 | | ТJ | 75,757 | | +5.3 | +19.7 | +10.2 | NL |
| | Vanguard TrgtRtr2045 | -d | ΤK | 72,507 | 26.71 | +5.5 | +21.0 | +10.9 | NL |
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Vanguard TtBMIdxAdmrl FB 69,669 Vanguard TtInSIdxAdmrl 31.08 +7.4 NL +5.1 +16.0 +7.3 NL Vanguard TtInSIdxInv FB 176,880 18.58 +5.0 +16.0 Vanguard TtlSMIdxAdmrI LB 323.910 115.97 +6.3+28.6+15.4NL MA 91,911 +14.1/B +9.8/A NL Vanguard WingtnAdmri 71.40 +4.0CA -Conservative Allocation, CI -Intermediate-Term Bond, FB -Foreign Large Blend, GS -Short Government, IB -World Bond, IH -World Allocation, LB -Large Blend, LG -Large Growth, LV -Large Value, MA -Moderate Allocation, MI -Muni National Intermediate, ML -Muni National Long, NT -Nontraditional Bond, WS -World Stock, Total Return: Chng in NAV with dividends reinvested. Rank: How fund performed vs. others with same objective: A is in top 20%, E in bottom 20%. **Source:** Morningstar.

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CL 95.981

Stock Footnotes: g = Dividends and earnings in Canadian dollars. h = Does not meet continuedlisting standards. If = Late filling with SEC. n = New in past 52 weeks. pf = Preferred. rs = Stock has undergone a reverse stock split of at least 50 percent within the past year. rt = Right to buy security at a specified price. s = Stock has split by at least 20 percent within the last year. un = Units. $v_{ij}^{t} = \ln$ bankruptcy or receivership. wd = When distributed. wi = When issued. wt = Warrants. Mutual Fund Footnotes: b = Fee covering market costs is paid from fund assets. d = Deferred sales charge, or redemption fee. f = front load (sales charges). m = Multiple fees are charged. NA = not available. p = previous day's net asset value. s = fund split shares during the week. x = fund paid a distribution during the week. Source: The Associated Press. Sales figures are unofficial.

BEETLE BAILEY

DIVERSIONS

I DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD TAKE

THAT MANY

NAMES IN VAIN

Sprained hand, hurt heart

Dear Annie: A few weeks ago, a do that, we don't friend and I had a trip to Costco planned. have a snow-The night before, I fell in my house and wasn't sure if I sprained or broke my hand in the wee hours. I couldn't Her house is five make up my mind whether I should go to urgent care in the morning or the ER that night. I was in pain, but it wasn't killing me, so I decided to reevaluate it stay with me. She in the morning. I was hurting enough in the morning to decide to go.

Unbeknownst to me, my friend was irritated with me for that choice. She is a caregiver by trade, and taking me to the urgent care was like working for her without getting paid. I didn't find out she was irritated with me until the next week. I apologized genuinely and told her how I would do it differently the next time, now knowing how she felt.

I don't drive due to a visual-spatial disability. When my friend expressed that she had plans for later that afternoon, I offered to take an Uber home from the urgent care. She dropped me off anyway. We still went to Costco. I didn't know she was irritated with me until I got a curt text the next week.

I tried to explain how I felt. The people who would have taken me to urgent care instead of her both died unexpectedly in a single 24-hour period last October. If she gets hurt, she has a husband who can take her or at least meet her wherever. I don't have anyone, and it's a lonely place to be. Her response was to tell me not to compare my suffering to hers. I wasn't. She said she was past the whole thing and that she was more time and space from each other just setting a healthy boundary with me.

I feel like she thinks I am selfish for not waiting until after our planned excursion to find out if my hand was broken or not (based on what she has said). I really like her, but the whole Partner?" features favorite columns on thing is making me see her in a less positive way than before. Thankfully, my hand has a bad sprain, not a break, and it's still in a brace two and a half weeks later.

Am I wrong for feeling like I am owed an apology? I feel like if she can't

ball's chance of moving forward. minutes from the urgent care, and I didn't ask her to went home and waited until I was done. At any rate, when she said she was past it, I tried



Dear

Annie

by Annie Lane

to resume our relationship. I texted last week to see how her day was going, and she couldn't find the time to respond. Apparently, that was wrong of me, too.

I am really bothered by the whole situation. I am socially isolated by not having much money and not driving. I don't want to lose her as a friend, but at the same time, I am done apologizing. I don't think I did anything wrong. Perhaps I miscalculated how much she cares about me to expect me to delay medical treatment to better fit her schedule? - Sprained and Strained

Dear Sprained: It's extremely odd how little concern this woman showed for your well-being after your at-home accident. A true friend would never treat this sort of situation as "working without getting paid," but instead would be ready and willing to help however you needed.

Perhaps you both could use some to cool off. If she continues to behave in this way in the future, she may not be someone you can consider a friend after all.

"How Can I Forgive My Cheating marriage, infidelity, communication and reconciliation. It 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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I'M SORRY YOU

THAT, CHAPLAIN

HAD TO HEAR









CRANKSHAFT ONE OF OUR CHILDREN RUNS A VINTAGE MOVIE THEATER

ZITS

IT'S FREEZING

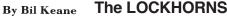
OUT THERE!

AND THE OTHER A PIZZERIA! WE'RE BLESSED!



"I CAN'T go to bed. Mr. Yost is

sleeping in it.'



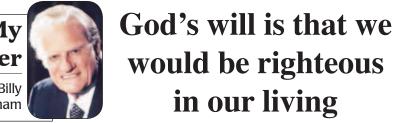


"NICE TRY, LEROY."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer ACRO 1 Hia

My Answer By Dr. Billy Graham

Q: I think I'm doing all the right things to be happy. So why do I fall deeper into the mindset of depression and am not happy about anything? I do attend church and believe in Jesus, but I've failed miserably to attain true happiness — and I'm not alone. I'm tired of listening to talking heads who say that we can be our own source of power and



have the power to change our lives for the better but they cannot live up to their claim because they have no power to change the human heart. At worst, they end up enslaving their adherents. The kind of religious experience that does not produce righteousness is hardly worth seeking.

God's will is that we would be righteous in our living; this starts by giv-

Our longing for God must supersede all other desires, perhaps including our own happiness, because we really don't know what it means to be truly happy until we know and live for Christ. Our desire for Him must be like a gnawing hunger and

a burning thirst. The Bible tells us, "The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith" (Romans 1:17). We must first be "in" Christ, and we must have Christ in us

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

spirituality. I've proven it's a lie! – U.H.

A: Unhappiness is an effect, and sin is the cause. Sin and unhappiness go together. All was blissful in the garden of Eden until sin crept in. Then happiness crept out. The two just cannot exist together.

There all kinds of philosophies which claim to their own personal lives.

ing our life to the Lord in repentance. Then, because God is holy, His whole plan of redemption has holiness as its goal. Neither is righteousness an abstract, speculative morality prevalent in the world. Many people condemn sin in high places but fail to recognize it in

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

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| WIPB 49 | | | Man Band | Paid | Gundry, ME Big Bang | | Baskethall | Ohio State vs. | West Virgini | ia From | Kellyann TMZ's Meri | rv Flfin' | FOX 55 Nev | vs First at | Beat Shazar | m "Let's Get | Dinosaurs" Two and a | Two and a | | drinks | |
| WFFT 55 | | 6 55 | 55 Program | Program | Dig Dulig | big builg | | gage FieldHo | | | Christmas | y 2 | 10 (N) | | Busy!" | in Let's Get | | Half Men | | Seus | S |
| CABLE C | | | (4:00) 🛠 Twi | isted Sister | ₩ Look Wh | o's Stalking (| (2023 Thrille | r) Iuliana | ♥ Secret L | ove Triangle | (2023 Thrille | r) Ionathan | (:05) 🛠 Silen | Night Fata | Night ('23) | Matthew | 🌣 Secret Lo | ve Triangle | - | itle | |
| LIFE | | 113 10 | (23) Mena 1 | Suvari. | DeStefano, H | Harley Jay, Alis | ssa Filoramo. | | Stoddard, H | larley Bronwyn | n, Brianna Col | hen. (P) | Pohlkamp, H | ailey Rutledg | e, Alex Cama | cho. (P) | ('23) Brianna | a Cohen. | | chara | |
| FX | | | 5 148 (4:30) ♥★★ Mike & | Pirates of th Mike & | | | | nny Depp. Mike & | | tes of the Car Everybody | | | | | What We The King | What We The King | What We The King | What We The King | | Maxir _esli∈ | |
| TVLAND | 25 | 100 | ³⁰⁴ Molly | Molly | Molly Las Vegas | Molly | Molly Las Vegas " | Molly | Raymond | | Raymond | | Raymond | Raymond | | of Queens | of Queens Las Vegas " | of Queens | | -esile 'Gigi" | |
| E! | 26 | 142 114 | | | | | Cast" | | Time" | | What I See? | | Love" | | and Serve M | anicotti " | Under Survei | illance" | 34 (| Crear | m |
| PARMT | 30 | 24 | 241 Yellowston Than Evil" | ne "Meaner | Yellowston World Is Pur | | Yellowston Money" | e "Half the | Yellowston Pain" | ne "Phantom | Yellowston Is You" | e "All I See | Yellowston | e "Winning o | r Learning" | Yellowston Blanket of R | | ¥★★★ The Help | | oie fla | |
| ESPN | 31 | 50 14 | 206 (4:00) Orang | ge Bowl The A e No. 6 Bulldo | ACC champion | and No. 5 Se | minoles (13- | Countd- own (L) (N) | NFL Footba Arlington | all Detroit Lior | ns at Dallas C | owboys From | AT&T Stadiur | | (:15) Postgame | SportsCent Scott Van P | | SportsCe- nter (L) (N) | | 'Hard | |
| ESPN2 | 32 | 54 143 | 8 209 (4:00) Baske | | SportsCent | er (L) (N) | | Countdown | Kickoff (N) | /(:15) NFL Foo | | | |) (N) | Postgame | | MMA Awar | ds (N) | | nails, | |
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| USA | 34 | 133 10 | | hn Wick: Chaj | | abellum (2019 | | ¥★★ Ramp | age ('18) Na | aomie Harris, | | ampage (201 | | | (:15) Law & C | | (:05) Law & O "Poisoned N | Örder: SVU | | Con- ducte | |
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| DISC | 35 | | ²⁷⁸ "No Safety i 280 1000-Lb. Si | in Numbers" | "Baked Alas 1000-Lb. Si | | "Haunted ar 1000-Lb. Si | | "Frozen and sMothered | | "Frozen in F sMothered | | "Stone Cold sMothered | | "Snow Daze 90 Day Fian | | "Frozen and sMothered | Afraid" | | <u> </u> | Т |
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| A&E | | | Power of Go 265 Neighbor. | | Neighbor | Neighbor. | Places" Neighbor | Neighbor | | y Departed" Neighbor. | "Uncanny C Neighbor | | "UFO Hotspo Buddy Vala | | "Strange Teo Neighbor. | | of the Dearly Neighbor. | | 12 | + | † |
| HALL | | 117 18 | (4:00) 🛠 Chr | ristmas Town | n 🏽 Time for | Him to Come | e Home for | Christmas | 🛠 Time for | Her to Come | e Home for (| Christmas | 🛠 Christma | s Made to O | r der ('18, Roi | m) Jonathan | 🛠 Noel Nex | | | | |
| | | | Twilight | meron Bure. | | yler Hynes, Ste Twilight | eve Bacic, Ho Twi. Zone | | | Carmack, Shen | | ech. Twilight | Bennett, Jo M | /larie Payton- | Noble, Alexa | | Natalie Hall. | | 15 | | Ι |
| SYFY | | | | | IWIIIant | | | IWIIIant | Twilight | Twiliaht | Twilight | | lwilight | Twilight | | Twilight | Twilight | Twilight | | | 4 |
| | | 135 122 | 2 ²⁴⁴ Zone | Zone | Zone | Zone | "Mr. Bevis" | Zone | Twilight Zone | Zone | Zone | Zone | Zone | Zone | Twilight Zone | Twilight Zone | Zone | Twilight Zone | 10 | — | - 1 |
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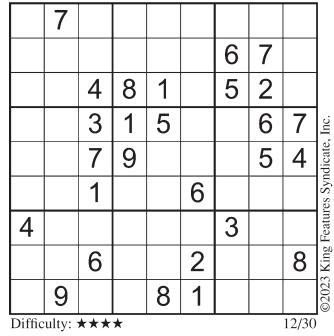
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SUDOKU

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively

King Classic Sudoku

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FOR SALE

Miscellaneous

EVEREST VX3 ICE & WATER VENDING MACHINE This Everest VX3 water/ice vending machine is the perfect addition to any business looking to boost their profits. With the ability to dispense both water and ice, this unit is sure to be a hit with customers. The machine is in great working condition and has been slightly used, making it a cost-effective option for those looking to invest in a vending machine. This unit is made in the United States and comes with a unit quantity of 1. Included is an all season insulation package, ice shield ozone disinfection, and cold fusion energy recovery. It is perfect for placement in other beverage and snack vending locations, as well as in restaurant and food service settings. Don't miss out on the opportunity to make extra money with this Everest VX3 vending machine. \$45,000.00 260-273-7020 glacierpure@outlook.com

Garage Sales

HELOISE HINT: When creating an ad for your garage sale. Do not exaggerate what you are offering. Be honest and highlight your better items. Write to HELOISE@Heloise.com.

Home Furnishings



ESTATE WASHER AND Roper dryer, excellent condition, \$75 each, 260-224-2685.

Pets

HELOISE HINT: If you are tak-ing your dog out for a snowy and cold winter walk, be careful not to slip. When you get home, wipe off your pet's paws thoroughly to remove any potential deicing products, sand or ice that might be stuck on your dog's paws. Fax Heloise @ 210-HELOISE (435-6473).

SERVICES

Services CONNECT TO THE best wireless home internet with Earth-Link. Enjoy speeds from 5G and 4G LTE networks, no contracts, easy installation, and data plans up to 300 GB. Call 855-430-1496 (I)

Services

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

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SWITCH AND SAVE up to \$250/year on your talk, text and data. No contract and no hidden fees. Unlimited talk and text with flexible data plans. Premium nationwide coverage. 100% U.S. based customer service. For more information, call 1-855-572-5165 (I)

DIAGNOSED WITH LUNG CANCER? You may qualify for a substantial cash award even with smoking history. NO obligation! We've recovered millions. Let us help!! Call 24/7, 844-229-7933 (I)

Lottery Numbers

Friday's Drawings

HOOSIĚR LOTTĔRY Cash 5 — 10-18-23-40-44

Cash4Life — 06-13-26-39-41, Cash Ball: 04

Ouick Draw Midday — 06-09-10-19-23-25-30-31-47-49-58-61-63-70-72-73-75-76-78-79, BE: 75

Daily Three-Midday -00-00-05, SB: 09

Daily Three-Evening — 08-03-03, SB: 08

Daily Four-Midday — 07-07-05-08, SB: 09

Daily Four-Evening — 08-05-01-05, SB: 08

Quick Draw Evening 02-05-09-15-16-20-29-32-37-45-48-50-51-54-60-68-72-77-78-80, BE: 54

Hoosier Lotto — Estimated jackpot (for Saturday): \$2 million

MEGA MILLIONS 11-27-30-62-70, Mega Ball: 10, Megaplier: 3X POWERBALL Estimated jackpot (for

Saturday): \$760 million

Public Notice

STATE OF INDIANA

Services

LIVE PAIN FREE with CBD products from AceWellness. We guarantee highest quality, most competitive pricing on CBD products. Softgels, Oils, Skincare, Vape & more. Coupon Code: PRINT20 Call Now 833-226-3105 (I)

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WE ACCEPT

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CNC MACHINIST Hi, tired of working in a dead end job? Running the same machine, making the same part? Feel like you're not getting any better? Not learning any new ma-chining skills? Take this chining Take this opportunity to become a master machinist. Learn to operate multiple machines, make precision component parts, in our AS100 Certified Job Shop. Perhaps you retired too early and are looking for a part time position we are offering this too.

Email: jturnbull@dedricktool.com 260 824-3334

HELOISE HINT: If you are looking for work. Double-check your online profile and be certain that it's updated, refreshed and professional. It will help you attract and impress potential employers.Send your jobsuccess story to HELOISE@ Heloise.com.

VEHICLES

VISA

Auto/Trucks 2010 CHEVROLET MALIBU White 4 door 4 cyl black interi-\$2,500.00 OBO 260-273-3393 rmoon1423@gmail.com

INDIANA AUTO AUCTION, INC. Huge Repo Sale January 2024. Over 100 repossessed units for sale. Money order or cashier's check only \$500 cashier's check or money order deposit per person re-quired. 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: Does your car's upholstery look dirty? Take action. First, vacuum all surfaces to remove dirt and debris. Then spray cloth seats and carpets with foam cleaner. Also clean the windows and then lower them to air out the car. Email HELOISE@ Heloise. 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

BIDDING ENDS 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, vin-tage primitives, artifacts, trains, Fenton, Haviland & Franciscan china, antique furniture, military items, salesman samples and miniatures, coins & currency. Sale manager, Rod Fetters. *The Steffen Group Inc.*, 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

JANUARY 12 - 10 a.m. -Secured creditors & various consignors, owners. 815 Adams St., Decatur. Online only truck and equipment auction. Online bidding only. Offering 500+ lots! 2012-2014 Freightliner M2106 box trucks dump trucks, day cabs, sleep-ers, utility trucks, bucket trucks, utility & semi trailers, SUV's, pickup trucks, 250+ various skid steer attachments, various truck parts, fencing, work benches, tool boxes and much more! Accepting consign-ments! *Krueckeberg Auction* & *Realty LLC*, 260-724-7402, Kjauction.com.

BIDDING NOW OPEN AND

STARTS CLOSING JANU-ARY 16 - 10 a.m. EST - Carmel Wellness and secured creditors, owner. Liquidation of Carmel Wellness featuring decompression table w/tension machine, body and therapy tables, hydraulic tables, washer and dryer, folding tables, chairs, desks, office supplies, and much more! Auction pick up Jan. 17, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. *Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC*, 260-724-7402, Kjauction.

com BIDDING NOW OPEN AND STARTS CLOSING JANU-ARY 17 - 6 p.m. EST. - Gary Meyer, owner. Online only commercial real estate auction! 1,376 sq. feet building, 2 bay service area, 15'x16' office space, paved parking lot, .46 acre triangle lot located on N. Main Street, (Hwy. 27)! Zoned: Commercial. Year built: 1950. Wabash Township, Section 29, Adams County, Indiana, South Adams School Corp. Auction preview Jan. 8, 4-5 p.m. or by appointment, 617 N. Main St., Geneva. Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC, 260-724-7402, Kjauction.com

JANUARY 23_- 2-6 p.m. ET - Online - Farm: Susan Dunn Estate. Property Location: Three miles southeast of Markle, IN and Wells Co., Rockcreek Twp. 207.3+/- total acres, high quality farmland, mostly tillable. Tracts 1 & 2: Located on both sides of 200 N between 200 W and 300 W. Tract 3: Located at intersection of 300 N and 500 W. Tract 1: 19.83+/- acres. Tract 2: 110+/acres. Tract 3: 77.47+/- acres. Halderman Real Estate & Farm Management, 800-424-2324, halderman.com, Rick Johnloz, 260-827-8181.

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SS COUNTY OF WELLS IN THE WELLS CIRCUIT COURT CAUSE NUMBER 90C01-2310-JC-000044 IN THE MATTER OF: KS - DOB 6/21/2013 A CHILD ALLEGED TO BE A CHILD IN NEED OF SERVICES SUMMONS FOR SERVICE **BY PUBLICATION & NOTICE** OF CHILD IN NEED OF SERVICES HEARING AND

ALLEGED FATHER) NATASHA STANTON (BIOLOGI-CAL MOTHER) AND ANY UNKNOWN ALLEGED FATHERS

TO: Any Unknown Alleged Father

Whereabouts unknown NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to Any Unknown Alleged Fathers, whose whereabouts are unknown, that the Indiana Department of Child Services has filed its Verified Petition Alleging the child to be in Need of Services, in accor-dance with I.C. 31-34-9-3, and that an adjudication hearing has been scheduled with the Court.

YOU ARE HEREBY COM-MANDED to appear before the Judge of the Wells Circuit Court, 102 Market Street, Bluffton, IN 46714 - 260-824-6485 for a(n) Initial/Fact Finding Hearing on 3/11/2024 at 10:30 AM.

At said hearing, the Court will consider the Petition and evidence thereon and will render its decision as to whether the above named minor child is child in need of ser-vices and shall enter adjudication accordingly. Your failure to appear after lawful notice will be deemed as your default and waiver to be

present at said hearing. UPON ENTRY OF SAID ADJUDICATION, A DISPOSI-TIONAL HEARING will be held in which the Country will be held in which the Court will consider (1) Alternatives for the care, treatment, or rehabilitation for the child; (2) The necessity, nature, and extent of your participation in the program of care, treatment, or rehabilitation for the child; and (3) Your finan-cial responsibility for any services provided for the parent, guardian or custodian of the child including child support. YOU MUST RESPOND by

appearing in person or by an attorney within thirty (30) days after the last publication of this notice, and in the event you fail to do so, an adjudication on said petition, judgment by default may be entered against you, or the court may proceed in your absence, without further notice.

Beth Davis Clerk Holly N Smith, 31840-49 Attorney, Indiana Department of Child Services c/o Wells Co DCS 221 W Market St Bluffton, IN 46714 Office: 260-824-3530 nb 12/23, 12/30, 1/6 hspaxlp

Year in Review

(Continued from Page 1)

Most recently, Sahara Wall has been brought on full-time as deputy administrator. The Wells County Council has also approved funding for an increased salary for one environmental specialist, intending to bring back Ryan Bennett, who left the position in June. Wall confirmed Bennett's transition has not yet occurred but is still the department's intention.

2.) In responding to what appeared to be a normal house fire in downtown Bluffton on July 6, the Bluffton Fire Department sent out a distress signal as flames quickly turned into an overwhelming inferno.

The fire at 123 S. Marion St. in Bluffton was reported in the morning and continued to rage uncontrollably for multiple hours. The incident wasn't terminated until 8 p.m. that night and required assistance from several fire departments from Wells, Adams and Allen counties.

The source of the fire was later determined to be an electrical issue stemming from equipment in the basement.

James Thompson, the property owner, his wife, and their four young children were all asleep in the building when neighbors knocked on the door and alerted them of the smoke. Thompson had purchased the building, built in the 1880s, at the beginning of the year and planned to renovate part of the building for office use and part as a mental health facility.

The building was ultimately condemned and demolished. Barkley Properties LLC has since purchased the property.

2.) On several occasions this year, the Wells County Public Library became subject to controversy regarding LGBTQ matters. The first of these conversations began with the library's display policy, specifically regarding their annual Pride Month display.

The item had been brought to attention by library board member Matt Yergler, and, pending discussion, the library forewent a display in June. However, a summer reading program prize sparked criticism that the library was still participating in Pride Month. Each child who signed up for the reading program was offered a rainbow-colored bracelet that read, "Working as One."

People on either side of the issue then showed up to voice their concerns at a Wells County Commissioner meeting, where Children Services Director Cynthia Burchell expressed it had not been her intention to signal Pride. She had purchased the bracelets through a library vendor six months before the issues were discussed and had liked the bracelet's statement of community. As for the color, Burchell said she preferred a multi-colored option because it appealed to more color preferences.

The following month, the library's board approved a policy outlining expectations that book displays include multiple viewpoints on controversial issues.

LGBTQ issues again became a center of discussion as the library came to review its

annual membership in the American Library Association in September. Library Director Sarah MacNeill explained that the ALA, a nonprofit that lobbies for library funding, had increasingly favored one political ideology. While these political matters included more than LGBTQ issues, they again became the forefront of the conversation.

The board ultimately agreed to look at the practical benefits of the membership. Finding few, the board voted not to renew the library's membership.

4.) On the cusp of the New Year, it was discovered a Fort Wayne woman — Celeste Cuthbert, 48 — had walked away from Praxis by Landmark Recovery in Bluffton and was missing. A month later, her body was found at a vacant property around 150 ft. east of the facility.

The property's neighbors approached the city with their concerns, claiming Praxis frequently let individuals walk off without their belongings or coats.

CEO Matt Boyle promised to implement changes with new leadership cited as one of the modifications. Praxis also hosted a community event at Roush Park to rebuild trust. A new team was hired, and the facility was operational.

By May, however, the licenses for the Bluffton facility, along with two other Indiana locations, were suddenly revoked due to misconduct that led to drug-related deaths at other facilities. The Wells County location officially closed its doors on Aug. 3.

5.) A Markle man wanted for the murder of his grandmother was apprehended in Georgia on Christmas Day. He had been on the lam for over one month.

Markle resident Bernice "Dianna' Eubank, 72, was found dead at her home on Nov. 12 in an apparent gruesome homicide. Law enforcement issued a warrant for her grandson, Anthony Castleman, 37, who had been living with her at the time. Castleman carries an extensive history of violent crime in multiple counties, including Wells. Family members reported he had allegedly fled the area.

After a week, a \$1,000 reward for his arrest was offered by the Huntington County Sheriff's Office. Castleman was apprehended this week by U.S. Marshals in Georgia. This is an ongoing story.

6.) Local property tax issues have been on the News-Banner's front pages for the past couple of years as homeowners' property taxes have seen significant increases.

When the 2023 tax billings were posted on the county's GIS website in early February, a News-Banner survey of about 150 residential properties in the county showed that many homeowners experienced a double-digit percentage increase.

Meanwhile, data revealed the continued trend of single-family residential properties picking up a larger share of the total property tax bill: In 2018, single-family properties accounted for 18.78 percent of the total tax levy; by 2023 that percentage has grown to 31.06 percent.

When the 2023 assessments for 2024 property taxes were mailed out mid-year, another round of protests arose. The result was a more than doubling of formal appeals of those assessments filed in the County Assessor's office.

Those appeals were heard by the Property Tax Assessment Board of Appeals, a group that had been in the news during 2023, dealing with criticisms and a shake-up in its members in 2022.

In the first of two hearings held Oct. 16, the PTABOA board utilized the services of Andrew Smethers, a regional vice-president of the Nexus Group, a company that works with a majority of Indiana's counties in property tax issues. He performed an independent review of each appealed property and gave the board his opinion after the appealing homeowner had made their case.

Of the 13 decisions made by the board, six were essentially "won" by the homeowners, as Smethers either agreed with their position or told the board he would not object if they ruled in the taxpayer's favor. Three other appeals resulted in a partial adjustment to their assessment.

Meanwhile, the state legislature enacted a number of property tax relief measures that will take effect for the 2023-pay 2024 cycle.

Local State Senator Travis Holdman chaired an interim study committee - the State and Local Tax Review task force which will look further into possible changes in the state's property tax system.

The Wells County Council also voted in September to reduce the local property tax credits beginning next year, although that will not impact assessments.

County Assessor Laura Roberts is unsure about how all that will impact assessments and tax rates in the coming years.

Thus, it is likely to see property taxes in the news throughout 2024 as well.

7.) Efforts to increase access to quality childcare access came into focus this year, including the creation of Imagine Early, a nonprofit that aims to address childcare needs in Adams and Wells counties. The organization was formed out of the Adams-Wells Early Learning Coalition.

With the boots on the ground, Southern Wells Community Schools opened its preschool in the fall, now serving 22 students. The preschool is housed within the Junior-Senior High School building and partners with a class, hoping to encourage the next generation of educators.

Additionally, Norwell Community Schools doubled their preschool offerings in the new school year. Bluffton-Harrison Elementary School also opened its first "experiential learning" classroom, which includes farming decor and interactive elements to promote learning through play. The school hopes to renovate a second classroom focused on construction.

8.) The city of Bluffton is getting a significant — and needed — upgrade on its

wastewater treatment plant.

Huge mounds of dirt have been the order of the day at the plant on North Main Street. The \$31.9 million project, formally approved by the city's Board of Works and Public Safety and the members of the Bluffton Common Council on June 7, was made possible by a combination of grants and loans from the Indiana Finance Authority's Revolving Loan Fund.

The project includes revamping the oldest section of the plant and the sewer main lining and manholes to prevent groundwater from entering the sanitary sewer system. The cost of the required improvements has brought the average sewer rates for the city's residential customers from \$37 to \$62 a month.

Mayor John Whicker said the work is ahead of schedule. "We've been blessed to have a great local contractor on the project, and they've had great subs (subcontractors) on it, too.'

Completion of the upgrade is slated for 2025.

9.) A myriad of men and two women were arrested under sting operations facilitated by the nonprofit predator catcher group, Predator Catchers Indianapolis.

Three of these cases have reached conviction thus far, with at least one case currently set for trial. Of the arrests, five suspects met the decoy at Walmart. Two of the individuals were Wells County residents, and three traveled from neighboring states to meet who they believed to be a 13-year-old child.

The organization has not responded to multiple requests for comment, however, it is suspected that Wells County is the chosen location for suspects to meet the group due to the county's willingness to file charges.

10.) Northern Wells Community Schools embarked on a marketing mission this year and, in doing so, took on a new name -Norwell Community Schools.

Not only did the district take the middle and high school's name, but the schools' colors were also adopted by Ossian and Lancaster elementary schools. Either elementary school retained its mascot but received a 'refreshed" logo version.

However, the district received a vocal pushback in consideration of these changes, particularly in communication about the matter. The changes were passed in a split vote 3-2 by the school board, with members Angie Topp, Chad Kline and Corey Krug in favor and Gene Donaghy and Traci Neuenschwander opposed.

Doug Stitt of Sensible Solutions presented new marketing assets for the district as part of its "Norwell Next" vision. Superintendent Mike Springer considered it an appropriate time to do so with middle school construction, which presented a blank slate. New signs, marketing materials and school merchandise have continued to roll out throughout the district.

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'Swatting' calls targeting officials may prompt heavier penalties

By JEFF AMY Associated Press

Swatting is the act of making a to prompt a response at a particular address. The goal is to get authorities, particularly a SWAT team, to show up.

prank call to emergency services and my wife was upstairs pack- The call was then determined surprised to open the door and see ing for a trip, and all of a sudden, I heard her, you know, start yelling, 'There's police running at the door.' She saw on our Ring doorbell," he told WABE

"I was watching a little football and that there was no emergency. Democratic mayor said she was to be a swatting attempt so the response was canceled while police were on the way. Greene has been the subject of multiple swatting attempts.

masning lights, but said her nome has been targeted by multiple swatting calls since she took office in 2021.

ATLANTA (AP) - A spate of false reports of shootings at the homes of public officials in recent days could be setting the stage for stricter penalties against so-called swatting in more states.

U.S. Sen. Rick Scott of Florida, Boston Mayor Michelle Wu, Georgia U.S. Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene and Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost have been among the victims.

Several Georgia lawmakers targeted say they want increased penalties for swatting, like laws enacted this year in Ohio and Virginia. Similar bills are pending in other states and Congress.

Here's a look at the issue and what could be done about it:

WHAT IS 'SWATTING'?

Calls in multiple states in recent days featured the voice of a man calling himself "Jamal," claiming he had shot his wife because she was sleeping with another man and saying he was holding the boyfriend hostage, demanding \$10,000.

Two Ohio lawmakers said they thought they were targeted recently for helping pass a law making swatting a felony in the state.

Georgia state Sen. Clint Dixon said the incident at his house in Buford on Christmas evening was "quite startling" for himself, his wife and three children.

WHO'S BEEN **TARGETED RECENTLY?**

A man in New York called the Georgia suicide hotline just before 11 a.m. Monday, claiming that he had shot his girlfriend at Greene's home in Rome, Georgia, and was going to kill himself next, said Kelly Madden, the Rome police spokesperson. The call was quickly transferred to police when suicide hotline responders recognized the congresswoman's address.

The department said it contacted Greene's private security detail to confirm she was safe

Scott wrote on X that police were sent to his home in Naples, Florida, while he and his wife were out at dinner on Wednesday night. Police said they met Scott's private security service at the home, but didn't find anything out of place.

These criminals wasted the time & resources of our law enforcement in a sick attempt to terrorize my family," Scott wrote.

In Boston, a male caller claimed on Monday that he had shot his wife and had tied her and another man up at Wu's home. The

'For better or worse, my family are a bit used to it by now, and we have a good system with the department," Wu told WBUR.

Also targeted have been a Republican congressman from New York, Georgia Lt. Gov. Burt Jones and a former state senator in Nebraska. Dixon was among four Georgia state senators who were recently swatted. In Ohio, a total of three current or former state lawmakers were affected.

Jones said his home in a small town south of Atlanta was swatted on Wednesday, only to have a bomb threat called in on Thursday.

The Air Force said nuclear missile capsules were safe, but toxic dangers lurked

By TARA COPP Associated Press WASHINGTON (AP) -A large pool of dark liquid festering on the floor. No

fresh air. Computer displays that would overheat and ooze out a fishy-smelling gel that nauseated the crew. Asbestos readings 50 times higher than the Environmental Protection Agency's safety standards.

These are just some of the past toxic risks that were in the underground capsules and silos where Air Force nuclear missile crews have worked since the 1960s. Now many of those service members have cancer.

The toxic dangers were recorded in hundreds of pages of documents dating back to the 1980s that were obtained by The Associated Press through Freedom of Information Act requests. They tell a far different story from what Air Force leadership told the nuclear missile community decades ago, when the first reports of cancer among service members began to surface:

'The workplace is free of health hazards," a Dec. 30,

2001, Air Force investigation found.

"Sometimes, illnesses tend to occur by chance alone," a follow-up 2005 Air Force review found.

The capsules are again under scrutiny.

The AP reported in January that at least nine current or former nuclear missile officers, or missileers, had been diagnosed with the blood cancer non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Then hundreds more came forward selfreporting cancer diagnoses. In response the Air Force launched its most sweeping review to date and tested thousands of air, water, soil and surface samples in all of the facilities where the service members worked. Four current samples have come back with unsafe levels of polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs, a known carcinogen used in electrical wiring.

In early 2024, more data is expected, and the Air Force is working on an official count of how many current or former missile community service members have cancer.

Some current missileers

told the AP they were concerned by the new reports but believe the Air Force is being transparent in its current search for toxic dangers. Many of them take some of the same precautions missileers have for generations, such as having "capsule clothes," the civilian attire they change into once inside the capsule to work the 24-hour shift. The clothes go straight into the laundry after a shift because they end up smelling metallic.

"Whenever you hear 'cancer' it's a little concerning," said Lt. Joy Hawkins,

23, a missileer at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana. To Hawkins and fellow missileer Lt. Samantha McGlinchey, who spoke to a visiting AP reporter as they completed an underground shift at launch control capsule Charlie, the news meant they would

need to be diligent about medical checkups. "There's more testing, things to come, cleanup efforts," McGlinchey, 28, said. "For us early in our careers, it's better to be caught so early.'

Others worry the dangers will again be played down.





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