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MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2024

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Wells to install six new license plate readers

By SYDNEY KENT
Six additional license plate reader cameras will be placed throughout the county in the next year. According to Sheriff Scott Holliday, the software has been purchased for a one-year trial period.

The cameras will be placed on Ind. 1, Ind. 224 and Ind. 124 at the exterior locations of the county. Holliday advised the cameras will only capture photos of license plates of vehicles entering Wells County.

"The camera takes a photo of the rear of a vehicle to get the plate and characteristics of the vehicle, like the make and model and distinguishing marks," Holliday told The News-Banner. "That photo is automatically run through a database that will alert us if the car is stolen or the registered owner has a warrant for their arrest within five to 10 seconds."

Flock Safety, the company that founded the software in 2017, has license plate recognition cameras in over 3,000 cities.

In February of 2022, the Bluffton Police Department received approval from the Board of Works to implement four cameras throughout the city, which



A license plate reader camera by Flock Safety. (Photo provided by Flock Safety Cameras)

cost approximately \$10,000 per year. The contract with Flock is renewed annually according to the company's subscription-based model.

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At left, Chief of Police Kurt Jack stands with new Ossian Police Department officer Sam Oliver. Right, Samantha Oliver was sworn into the Ossian Police Department on Saturday morning from Ossian Clerk-Treasurer Angie Ealing at the Ossian Town Hall. (Photos by Sydney Kent)

Ossian welcomes new officer

By SYDNEY KENT
The Ossian Police Department welcomed a new officer, Sam Oliver, at the Town Hall on Saturday. Oliver is expected to begin work Monday. "I've always wanted to help people," Oliver said among family and friends after she was officially sworn in. "I'm excited to work in a small community and to serve and protect."

"Sam is anxious to get going and eager to learn," Ossian Police Chief Kurt Jack said. "She did very well throughout the application process."

Once she completes training, she will be very effective."

Jack also explained that an additional officer, Josh Ware, will be sworn into the department in the next few weeks. Both Oliver and Ware have one year to complete police academy training.

"We will be doubling our staff," Jack emphasized. "I'm excited they're both coming on board. I believe they will both be highly effective officers."

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The popular Musiclectics were the closing singers for the 11th annual Friends Who Care Gospel Concert. More photos on Page 3. (Photo by Barbara Barbieri)

Friends Who Care hold 11th annual auction, concert

By BARBARA BARBIERI
On Saturday, Jan. 6, the Friends Who Care Cancer Relief Foundation sponsored their 11th annual concert and auction at the 4-H Community Center.

Admission to the event was free and included concessions from Uncle Matt's BBQ for a donation, and silent and live auctions. Isaac Stoller served as the auctioneer for the live auction.

Individuals and groups that offered entertainment included: Arlene Stoller, Faithful Friends, Jeff Adams, Edminston Sisters, Tyler David and Braydan Hathaway, Sarah and Carey

Collins, the Wood Family Singers, Jeff and Mike Shane with Paul Wickey, and the Musiclectics.

Steve Gerber served as the announcer of the entertainers and offered a prayer for those affected by cancer and their families. He also reminded those in attendance that should anyone need assistance they should contact a board member at 260-307-1074.

Board members of the group assisted with the event and included Jeff Adams, Cheryl Buckland, Skip Edwards, Steve Esterhai, Cindy Gordon, Larry Peeper and Bruce Stinson.

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Congressional leaders announce spending level agreement

By KEVIN FREKING
Associated Press
WASHINGTON (AP) — Congressional leaders have reached an agreement on overall spending levels for the current fiscal year that could help avoid a partial government shutdown later this month.

The agreement largely hews to spending caps for defense and domestic programs that Congress set as part of a bill to suspend the debt limit until 2025. But it does provide some concessions to House Republicans who viewed

the spending restrictions in that agreement as insufficient.

In a letter to colleagues, House Speaker Mike Johnson said Sunday the agreement would secure \$16 billion in additional spending cuts from the previous agreement brokered by then-Speaker Kevin McCarthy and President Joe Biden and is about \$30 billion less than what the Senate was considering.

"This represents the most favorable budget agreement Republicans have achieved in over a decade," Johnson writes.

Biden said the agreement

"moves us one step closer to preventing a needless government shutdown and protecting important national priorities."

"It reflects the funding levels that I negotiated with both parties and signed into law last spring," Biden said in a statement. "It rejects deep cuts to programs hard-working families count on, and provides a path to passing full-year funding bills that deliver for the American people and are free of any extreme policies."

The agreement speeds up the roughly \$20 billion in cuts already

agreed to for the Internal Revenue Service and rescinds about \$6 billion in COVID relief money that had been approved but not yet spent, according to Johnson's letter.

"It's a good deal for Democrats and the country," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer told colleagues in a briefing call.

Essentially, Democrats see the trade-offs they made as mild. In a description provided to reporters, they said the COVID savings would have "no significant impact on any current projects or activi-

ties in motion." And they said that moving all of the \$20.2 billion in IRS cuts to this year instead of over two years would still leave the agency able to maintain "critical investments" that Congress provided in 2022. At the time, Congress provided the IRS with an additional \$80 billion that could be spent over 10 years.

Overall, the agreement calls for \$886 billion in defense funding. It would provide \$772 billion in domestic, non-defense spending, when including \$69 billion called

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Cloudy and cold

Today	Tuesday	Wed.
High 38	High 42	High 35
Low 27	Low 33	Low 29

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License plate readers

(Continued from Page 1)

Flock Safety's subscription model starts at \$2,500 per camera per year, with a one-time installation fee of \$150-\$650 per camera. Holliday stated he used commissary funds to purchase the cameras, which will be implemented sometime this month.

"I would like to try these for a year and see how beneficial they are," Holliday said. "I'm not about throwing away money. If I see they are effective in help-

ing solve and reduce crime, I will take them before the (Wells County) Council and request to make them a part of the yearly budget. If not, I won't keep paying them."

According to the company website, Flock requires each search performed to have a case number, meaning officers will not be able to search for license plate photos without probable cause. If a case number is fabricated, it will be caught by an annual audit. The auditing is also transparent

to the council.

Holliday emphasized that the cameras are not traffic cameras, speed monitoring devices or a tool to catch drivers with parking violations or expired tags. They also are not a facial recognition tool or video cameras used to surveil people, and the information collected is automatically deleted after 30 days.

Holliday continued, "As sheriff, public safety is my number one concern. I don't have an officer at the county

line all day, but I could. This automates what we already have access to doing now. I want to know what's coming into our community — whether it is stolen cars, wanted individuals or homicide suspects coming into our community."

"We're not getting special or new information," Det. Chip Swindell added. "This is information that we already have access to. For 99.99 percent of people, this will not affect them."

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Spending level agreement

(Continued from Page 1)

for in a side deal to the debt ceiling bill that McCarthy had reached with the White House, Democrats said.

The most conservative House Republicans opposed the earlier debt ceiling agreement and even brought House proceedings to a halt for a few days to show their displeasure. Many were surely wanting additional concessions, but Democrats have been insistent on abiding by the debt ceiling agreement's spending caps, leaving Johnson in a difficult spot.

"It's even worse than we thought," the House Freedom Caucus said of the agreement in a tweet posted on X. "This is total failure."

Lawmakers needed an agreement on overall spending levels so that appropriators could write the bills that set line-by-line funding for agencies.

Money is set to lapse Jan. 19 for some agencies and Feb. 2 for others.

The agreement is separate from the negotiations that are taking place to secure additional funding for Israel and Ukraine while also curbing restrictions on asylum claims at the U.S. border.

In a joint statement, Schumer and House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries voiced their support for the agreement.

"It will also allow us to keep the investments for hardworking American families secured by the legislative achievements of President Biden and Congressional Democrats," Schumer and Jeffries said.

But they also warned House Republicans about trying to add conservative policy riders to the bills in the coming days, saying Democrats would not sup-

port "poison pill policy changes in any of the twelve appropriations bills put before the Congress."

Rep. Patrick McHenry, who helped lead the debt ceiling negotiations when McCarthy was speaker, noted that two-thirds of both parties in the House supported that agreement.

"This deal, which adheres to that framework, deserves equally as robust support," McHenry said.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., tweeted that he was encouraged that leaders identified a "path toward completing" the spending bills. It was a cautious recognition that some obstacles could lie ahead.

"America faces serious national security challenges, and Congress must act quickly to deliver the full-year resources this moment requires," McConnell said.

Winter storms dump snow on both U.S. coasts as icy roads make for hazardous travel

By STEVE LeBLANC
Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — A major winter storm bringing heavy snow and freezing rain to some communities spread across New England on Sunday, sending residents scurrying for their shovels and snowblowers to clear sidewalks and driveways.

Winter storm warnings and watches were in effect throughout the Northeast, and icy roads made for hazardous travel as far south as North Carolina.

The Northeast snow came as a Sierra Nevada storm packing heavy snow shut down a stretch of interstate Saturday and briefly knocked out power to tens of thousands in Reno, Nevada.

More than 11,000 electric customers in California were without power Sunday afternoon.

Some communities in Massachusetts had recorded more than a foot of snow by Sunday afternoon, according to the National Weather Service. Nearly 13,000 electric customers in the state were without power Sunday afternoon.

Hundreds of flights at Logan International Airport were delayed or canceled Sunday according to tracking website FlightAware.

Snow totals were lower for coastal communities, with Boston reporting just a few inches. Snow was expected to continue throughout the day.

In Cambridge, where snowfall was lighter, residents quickly ventured out.

"I think it's funny because everyone's been freaking out about it," said Alison Conley, 26, a consultant. "We've been betting as to how much snow we're actually going to have and it's looking like not that much is going to stick."

Conley, who was out walking her dog Sunny, said the possibility that climate change is contributing to relatively warmer winter days in the region — the temperature in Boston is expected to be in the 50s on Wednesday, melting much of the snow — is a concern.

"I think it's super alarming," she said. "It is very weird, but, I don't know, from a selfish side it's like kind of nice to not have snow."

The storm reached into Maine with snow totals of up to 12 inches in some places — with locally higher amounts over southern New Hampshire and southwestern Maine. Wind gusts up to 35 mph could add to blowing and drifting snow. Moderate to heavy snow was expected to continue in Vermont, with total snow accumulations of 6 to 12 inches.

Major winter storm conditions were expected into Sunday evening, including snow in parts of New England and rain and freezing rain around the central Appalachian mountains.

New York City mainly saw rain, but counties to the north and west recorded double-digit snow totals by Sunday morning. Millbrook in Dutchess County, about 75 miles north of New York,

recorded a foot of snow. Port Jervis in Orange County reported 13 inches.

New York Gov. Kathy Hochul said Saturday that she expected two-thirds of her state to get 8 inches of snow or more, "fortunately missing some of our more populated areas downstate, the Long Island and New York City."

In the West, a winter storm warning was in effect through Saturday night in the Sierra Nevada from south of Yosemite National Park to north of Reno, where the weather service said as much as 20 inches of snow could fall in the mountains around Lake Tahoe with winds gusting up to 100 mph.

The California Highway Patrol said numerous spinouts and collisions forced an hourslong closure of Interstate 80 from west of Truckee, California to the state line west of Reno.

In Arizona transportation officials said several highways in the state's northern reaches — including Interstate 40 near Williams and State Route 64 near Grand Canyon National Park — were closed Sunday afternoon due to weather-related crashes and slide-offs from snowfall.

The National Weather Service said Flagstaff was expected to get 4 to 8 inches of snow by Sunday night with Window Rock was forecast to receive 3 to 5 inches.

In Nevada, the weather service said the wind chill dropped to 32 degrees at Harry Reid International

Airport in Las Vegas around 7:30 a.m. Sunday. Winds were gusting to 37 mph. In northern and western New Mexico, wind chills of 10 to 25 degrees below zero were forecast for early Tuesday.

The East Coast system was expected to track along the Northeast coast throughout the weekend.

A foot of snow was reported in parts of Monroe County, Pennsylvania, and 11 inches in New Jersey's Sussex County.

While warnings were being canceled and highway reduced-speed limits and other restrictions were lifted Sunday, motorists were being cautioned about the hazards of spotty freezing rain and black ice in southeast Pennsylvania and northern New Jersey.

In Massachusetts and portions of Rhode Island, the National Weather Service declared a winter storm warning from 4 p.m. Saturday through 1 a.m. Monday, with snow accumulations of between 6 and 12 inches and winds gusting to 35 mph.

Ice arrived early Saturday in some western North Carolina and southern Virginia areas, ranging from a fine coating to around a quarter-inch.

Forecasters also warned of another Northeast storm Tuesday into Wednesday that is expected to drop heavy rain on already saturated ground. They warned of possible flooding and coastal flooding and a threat of damaging winds that could topple trees and power lines.

Weather

Monday, January 8, 2024

(24-hour observations at 10:34 p.m. Sunday)
High: 33; Low: 31; Precipitation: 1.1 inches of snow
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.19 feet at 10:45 p.m. Sunday

Wells County forecast

Today: Mostly cloudy, with a high near 36. Southeast wind 5 to 10 mph.

Tonight: A chance of snow before 1 a.m., then rain and snow. Low around 32. East wind around 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph. Chance of precipitation is 100 percent. New snow accumulation of around an inch possible.

Tuesday: Rain. High near 43. Breezy, with an east wind 15 to 25 mph becoming south in the afternoon. Winds could gust as high as 35 mph. Chance of precipitation is 100 percent. New precipitation amounts between a half and three quarters of an inch possible.

Tuesday Night: Rain, possibly mixed with snow. Low around 31. Breezy, with a southwest wind 15 to 25 mph, with gusts as high as 35 mph. Chance of precipitation is 80 percent. New snow accumulation of less than a half inch possible.

Wednesday: A 10 percent chance of rain before 7 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 34. Windy.

Wednesday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 26. Breezy.

Thursday: A chance of rain and snow before 1 p.m., then a chance of rain. Partly sunny, with a high near 37. Chance of precipitation is 30 percent.

Thursday Night: A 30 percent chance of rain. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 23.

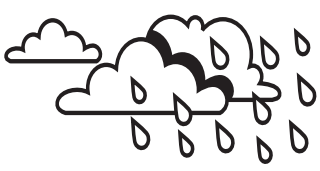
Friday: A chance of rain and snow. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 33. Chance of precipitation is 50 percent.

Friday Night: Rain and snow likely. Cloudy, with a low around 23. Blustery. Chance of precipitation is 70 percent.

Saturday: A 40 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 30. Breezy.

Saturday Night: A slight chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 8. Breezy.

Sunday: A slight chance of snow. Mostly cloudy and cold, with a high near 19. Breezy.



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North Dakota coal miners find mammoth tusk buried for thousands of years

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The first person to spot it was a shovel operator working the overnight shift, eyeing a glint of white as he scooped up a giant mound of dirt and dropped it into a dump truck.

Later, after the truck driver dumped the load, a dozer driver was ready to flatten the dirt but stopped for a closer look when he, too, spotted that bit of white.

Only then did the miners realize they had unearthed something special: a 7-foot-long mammoth tusk that had been buried for thousands of years.

"We were very fortunate, lucky to find what we found," said David Straley, an executive of North American Coal, which owns the mine.

The miners unearthed the tusk from an old streambed, about 40 feet deep, at the Freedom Mine near Beulah, North Dakota. The 45,000-

acre surface mine produces up to 16 million tons of lignite coal per year.

After spotting the tusk, the crews stopped digging in the area and called in experts, who estimated it to be 10,000 to 100,000 years old.

Jeff Person, a paleontologist with the North Dakota Geologic Survey, was among those to respond. He expressed surprise that the mammoth tusk hadn't suffered more damage, consid-

ering the massive equipment used at the site.

A subsequent dig at the discovery site found more bones. Person described it as a "trickle of finds," totaling more than 20 bones, including a shoulder blade, ribs, a tooth and parts of hips, but it's likely to be the most complete mammoth found in North Dakota, where it's much more common to dig up an isolated mammoth bone, tooth or piece of a tusk.

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OBITUARIES

Kathea Holdstock, 30

Kathea Holdstock, 30, of Bluffton, died Saturday evening, Jan. 6, 2024, at Parkview Regional Medical Center in Fort Wayne.

Funeral arrangements are pending with Goodwin – Cale & Harnish Memorial Chapel in Bluffton.

Jane Hullinger, 94

Jane Hullinger, 94, of Bluffton, died early Sunday morning, Jan. 7, 2023, at River Terrace Estates in Bluffton.

Funeral arrangements are pending with the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton.

Court News

Wells Superior Court Criminal Cases

Alma R. Silvers, 27, Bluffton, appeared in the Wells Superior Court for her initial hearing Saturday. On Tuesday, Silvers was charged with residential entry (trespassing), resisting law enforcement using a vehicle and possession of cocaine, operating a vehicle while intoxicated, all Level 6 felonies, and operating while intoxicated — prior conviction, a Class A misdemeanor, and possession of paraphernalia, a Class C misdemeanor. Silvers' bond, initially set at \$20,500, was lowered to \$1,500 during the hearing. Joshua Michael was appointed as public defender for the case. A status hearing is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. Jan. 25 in the Wells Superior Court.

Nathan T. Nusbaumer, 44, Huntington, was sentenced to 730 days in the Indiana Department of Correction with 550 days suspended and 148 days of jail credit towards his sentence. The

sentence was issued after Nusbaumer pled guilty to domestic battery by bodily waste, a Level 6 felony. He was also ordered to spend one year on probation upon release from incarceration and pay court costs and filing fees in the amount of \$239.

Jacob Allen Bowman, 30, Bluffton, was sentenced to 180 days in the Indiana Department of Correction with 164 days suspended and 16 days of jail credit. The sentence was issued immediately after Bowman pled guilty to one count of intimidation: communicated because of the victim's occupation, a Level 6 felony. Charges for resisting law enforcement, public intoxication, and disorderly conduct, all misdemeanors, were dismissed pursuant to the plea agreement. Bowman is also ordered to serve 164 days on home detention as well as probation and pay court costs and filing fees in the amount of \$289.

Rokita files response in disciplinary case

By WHITNEY DOWNARD, Indiana Capital Chronicle
Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita submitted a new and bombastic filing on Wednesday accusing the Indiana Supreme Court Disciplinary Commission of caving to outside pressure in a "political melee," saying it could no longer give him fair treatment.

"The Commission needs to be disentangled from ongoing politics driven by political commentators. If the Commission is not cordoned-off from the political stage, then its meetings need to be made fully public," the filing read.

Many of the filings and decisions of the commission are private, unless the Indiana Supreme Court decides it would be in the public interest to publicize them — which the commission petitioned for in his disciplinary case. Rokita said he doesn't oppose a motion to unseal the conditional agreement, so long as all of the deliberations and meetings related to him fall under the same "extraordinary circumstances."

In his conclusion, Rokita said that his "style and content" were not grounds for the Commission to discipline him as a lawyer.

"Respondent is vocal, aggressive, and successful regarding policies important to Hoosiers. He speaks in a manner that the 'Establishment' abhors. The content of his conservative message offends the Left, if not Liberals," the filing continued. "... His press release (in November) made clear those facts in his combative style, but nothing written rendered his Affidavit false or defied the Supreme Court."

Background

In a November split decision and public reprimand, the Indiana Supreme Court found he had violated two of the Rules of Professional Conduct for lawyers:

They said Rokita's comments constituted an "extrajudicial statement" that he knew — or reasonably should've known — would be publicly disseminated and would prejudice related legal proceedings.

They also said his statements had "no substantial purpose" other than to embarrass or burden Dr. Caitlin Bernard.

The misconduct stems from his televised comments about Bernard, an OB-GYN who performed an abortion on a 10-year-old rape victim from Ohio and was later disciplined before the Medical Licensing Board for discussing the procedure publicly.

In an interview with Fox News commentator Jesse Waters, Rokita called Bernard an "activist acting as a doctor" and said his office would be investigating her conduct.

11th annual Friends Who Care auction and concert



Pies and cakes were offered to the highest bidder at the live auction with Isaac Stoller, standing left, as the auctioneer. Members of the Friends Who Care Board served as assistants. (Photos by Barbara Barbieri)



The Wood Family Singers included Dennis and Susy Wood with their son Aaron Wood (at the keyboard at left) and grandchildren for their stage appearance.



The guitar played by Braydan Hathaway, at right, offered the accompaniment for himself and Tyler David, at left. David also played the keyboard as they offered music during the evening's intermission.



"I Believe" was one of the selections sung by left to right Jeff Shane, Paul Wickey and Mike Shane.



Each entertainment group sang two songs at the concert and pictured here as they sang were Sarah and Carey Collins.

Financial Focus

Consider family meeting to discuss estate plans

At some point, you'll want to share your estate plans with your loved ones — and the first step in this process may be to hold a family meeting.

During this meeting, you may want to cover these three areas:

First, explain your wishes, in a general way, regarding your goals as far as what you want to leave to your loved ones and possibly to charitable groups. And be sure to listen to your family members' questions and concerns.

Next, discuss your estate planning documents, or the ones you plan to create, including a will, living trust and powers of attorney.

Also, talk about the roles you have envisioned for your family members in carrying out your estate plans. For example, you will need an executor for your will and a trustee for a living trust. Plus, you might mention your initial thoughts on who you'd like to serve for health care and financial powers of attorney.

You may need to hold additional family meetings in the future, but by laying the initial groundwork, you will have taken a big first step in establishing the legacy you'd like to leave.

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Lawmakers not seeking re-election is nothing new

As the filing deadline to run for the Indiana House or Senate nears, expect more announcements from lawmakers not seeking re-election.

Over several months, the list of lawmakers leaving the General Assembly has swelled to eight and almost all are Republicans. But while it might seem like an exodus, it's really just a natural evolution of Hoosiers retiring or moving on to new endeavors.

Thanks to the Capitol & Washington blog's casualty list, you can see that the number of lawmakers opting not to run again has averaged 13 in the past 50-plus years.

This covers lawmakers who finish their term and don't seek re-election, but not those who leave early and are replaced.

Indiana's high-water mark was 24 legislators who didn't run for re-election in the 1970-1972 General Assembly. The low was five during the 1978-1980 cycle.

Here is today's current list:

- Rep. Donna Schaibley, R-Carmel, will complete her current two-year term, but won't seek reelection in 2024. She has served House District 24 — parts of Boone and Hamilton counties — since 2014.
- Rep. Jerry Torr, R-Carmel, also won't seek re-election. He has served House District 39 since 1996, which covers parts of Carmel and Westfield.
- Rep. Bob Cherry, R-Greenfield, will complete his term and retire. He has served Indiana's House of Representatives for 25 years — since 1998. His district, 53, includes parts of Hancock and Madison counties.
- Rep. Randy Lyness, R-West Harrison, will not seek re-election after serving eight years. He represents House District 68, which includes Ohio, Switzerland and Dearborn counties, and a portion of Jefferson County
- Rep. Denny Zent, R-Angola, will finish his term and not return. He has served House District 51, which includes portions of LaGrange and Steuben counties in northeast Indiana, since 2012.
- Rep. Ryan Hatfield, D-Evansville, is the latest to announce he won't run again. Instead, he will run for judge in Vanderburgh County. Hatfield has served House District 77 since 2016.
- Rep. Chuck Goodrich, R-Noblesville, is running for the 5th District Congressional seat. He has served Indiana House District 29 since 2018.
- Sen. John Crane, R-Avon, is not seeking re-election in Senate District 24, which he has served since 2016.

The deadline to file for the 100 House seats and 25 Senate seats up for election this year is Feb. 9. With every departure, there is a loss to the institution. Each member brings expertise, whether it be Torr's experience in the health care and judicial arenas, Cherry's knowledge of agricultural issues, or Zent's awareness of veteran's needs.

Longtime lawmakers have established the key relationships needed to move legislation or help constituents navigate state agencies. As a journalist, I can tell you those with experience understand their bills better, know how the process works and can speak with more authority on a host of items.

But at the same time, having new eyes join the legislature is refreshing. It's sometimes helpful to look beyond how we have always done something and think about how it can be better.

Years ago, far more lawmakers left early, didn't run or were defeated. For instance, in the 1966-1968 cycle, 56 total legislators out of 150 changed for one reason or another. That is 37 percent of the entire General Assembly.

More recently, those numbers have been more in the 20s. In the 2016-2018 cycle, 26 legislators left early, didn't run or lost — about 17 percent.

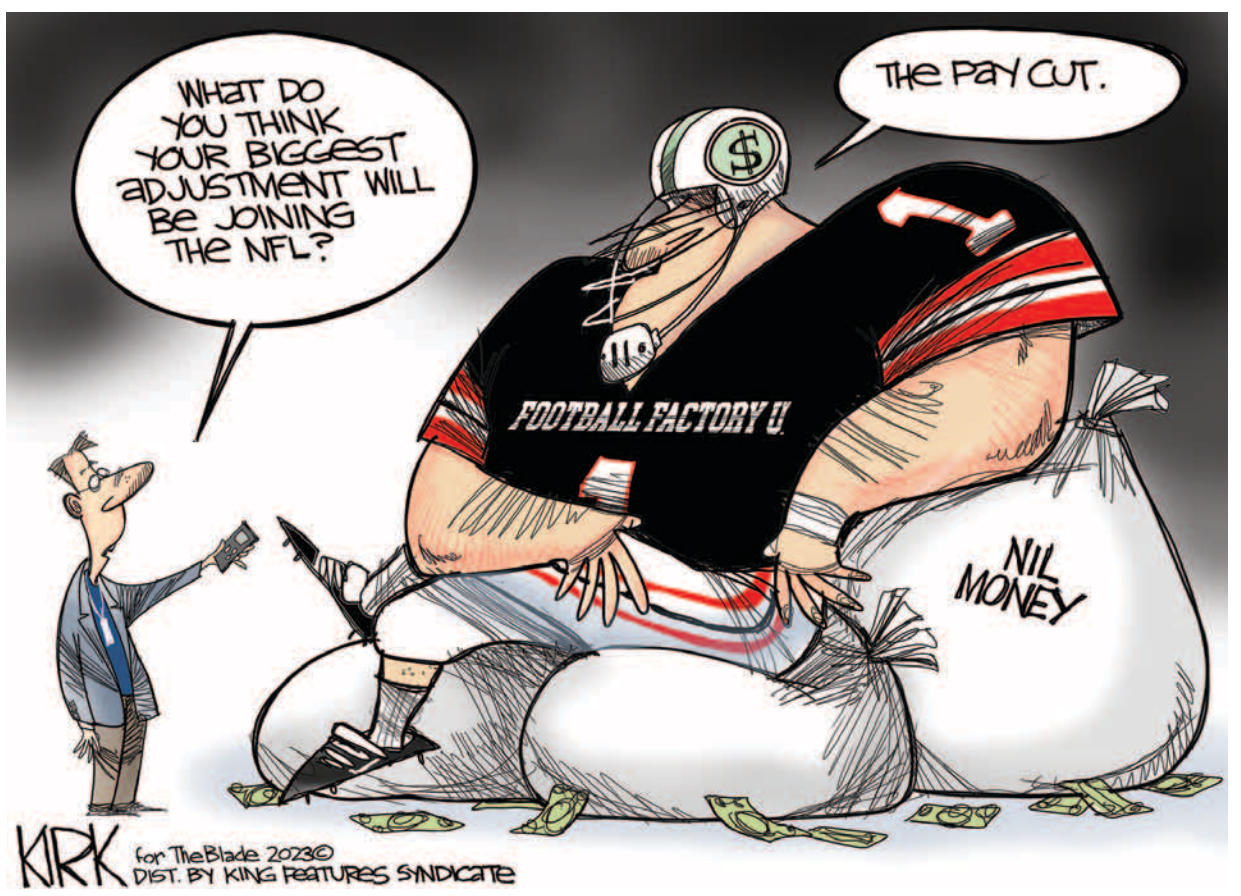
The key is to find a good balance of institutional knowledge and experience versus fresh perspectives and energy.

Niki Kelly is the editor of the Indiana Capital Chronicle, a non-profit newsroom. nkelly@indianacapitalchronicle.com



Niki Kelly

Hoosier Opinions



An NCAA football championship free of all that 'amateurism' nonsense

The football coach was unclear when he said "we're not attempting to circumise the rules," but he might enjoy today's college football industry. Suddenly, its rules are, refreshingly, almost nonexistent regarding the process of recruiting large post-adolescent males.

This is refreshing because the old regime's nonsense — sentimentalism about "amateurism," which is used to facilitate cupidity — has been replaced by rational nonsense: profit-maximizing, employing professional players for the greater glory of higher education. Warm pieties about amateurism have been jettisoned in favor of cold candor about the multibillion-dollar entertainment industry that operates in the shadow of universities.

Perhaps it is the other way around. SMU opened its first stadium 14 years before its first stand-alone library.

As Michigan's and Washington's "student-athletes" (the core locution in the liturgy of the Church of College Football) gird their loins for Monday's national championship game, hear Matt Rhule, coach of Nebraska's Cornhuskers. He says "a good quarterback in the [transfer] portal costs \$1 million to \$1.5 million to \$2 million right now." And: "There are some teams that have \$6-7 million players playing for them."

So, some players might endure pay cuts when they turn (officially) professional. But this anomaly has been erased: Until 2021, a music major could earn money with her clarinet, but a quarterback generating millions for his school could not monetize his talent by selling uses of his name, image and likeness. Now, NIL is an industry.

Schools' athletic officials organize, or exhort boosters to organize, "collectives," a Soviet-sounding name for a capitalist process: Capital is accumulated to meet the prices of a small supply of elite talent. Promises of NIL cash are wielded in the recruitment not just of high school pigskin prodigies but of established college stars who "enter" the transfer "portal." Under new rules, most of them can become free agents without missing a season from competition.

The Post's Candace Buckner notes that the 2022 Heisman Trophy winner (college football's premier award) promptly decamped with his coach from Oklahoma to Southern California. This year's Heisman winner is the fifth of the last seven who played for his second school; two other 2023 Heisman finalists also were transfers. Oregon State's itinerant quarterback, a transfer from Clemson, is now heading for Florida



George Will

State. Utah's quarterback is, Buckner says, "returning for his seventh (!) year": including one redshirt (not competing) year at Texas; another at Utah; the pandemic season did not count against players' eligibility; then a medical noncompeting season at Utah. Two backup Ute quarterbacks, weary of waiting, have entered the portal. Ten days after losing to Michigan, Ohio State's quarterback assuaged his agony by entering the portal.

Multimillion-dollar-a-year coaches move when more lucrative opportunities beckon, so why not players? Besides, some coaches become rich beyond the dreams of avarice

while being booted off the coaching carousel. Sports generate memorable numbers, but this season's most gaudy one came off the gridiron: \$76 million. That is the buyout coming to Texas A&M's fired coach under the 10-year, \$95 million contract extension he signed in September 2021. Since then, he has 19 wins and 15 losses. The wages of mediocrity are not mediocre.

Until recently, the NCAA solemnly said it aimed to "retain a clear line of demarcation between intercollegiate athletes and professional sports." This meant protecting (only) players from the taint of money.

The NCAA was a spectator when conferences rearranged themselves over the past couple of years, unsentimentally sacrificing traditional regional rivalries on the altar of television revenue. Now, dogpaddling in the wake of events, the NCAA proposes a new subdivision (actually, a superdivision) of high-revenue schools. They would be obligated to pay, from a trust fund, at least half their athletes at least \$30,000 a year.

Good luck squaring this with Title IX's fuzzy stipulation of equal treatment of male and female athletes. Dana O'Neil of the Athletic writes: "If the gymnast gets \$30,000, find some more zeros for the quarterback."

The NCAA says it wants to "enhance" athletes' financial opportunities, but what it probably wants is for Congress to write national player-compensation rules. This would squelch the competition that intensifies as different state laws and institutional practices bid up the dollar-value of the choices available to elite athletes.

The NCAA's desire, down the decades, has been to minimize, to the extent possible, the money available to those most responsible for generating the money: players. Many supposedly sacred college football traditions have recently been shredded, but its traditional preoccupation, money, endures.

georgewill@washpost.com

Securing our border at home, defending our values globally

With migrants now flooding our Southwestern border at a reported 10,000 seeking entry daily, it is essential that we take steps to crystalize a national immigration policy.

Republicans insist that \$74 billion in funds that the Biden administration is asking in aid for Ukraine and Israel be part of a larger package that deals with border security and comprehensive immigration policy.

Agreement on such a package will benefit the whole nation.

At first glance, linking U.S. immigration policy and border control to aid to Ukraine and Israel may seem like a politically motivated version of linking apples and oranges. But that's not the case. The issues are related.

We are dealing with the issue of national territorial integrity. The current conflicts in Ukraine and Israel are the results of such violations — in Ukraine, aggression from Russia; in the case of Israel, the crossing of the Gaza border into Israel by Hamas operatives who murdered and committed atrocities against more than 1,200 Israeli citizens in one day.

Nations are physical entities that are based on principles that define what their existence is about. Borders define the area where this unique national reality exists.

Whether borders are violated by an army, by terrorists or by undocumented migrants amounts to the same

thing: a violation of national integrity.

Those who have violated the territorial integrity of Ukraine and Israel — Russia and Hamas, backed by Iran — are also our enemies and look to hurt our country as they have hurt the nations they have violated.

Let's recall that the pilots who flew planes into the World Trade Center and crashed into the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001, resulting in the death of almost 3,000 Americans, trained on American soil.

The price of being lax in a dangerous world is high.

Israelis are paying a dear price for some moments of laxness toward an evil and lethal enemy.

Every day that we allow hordes of migrants into our country without knowing with clarity who these individuals are threatens our national security in two significant ways.

First, the most obvious, is the horrible damage that can be done by one terrorist among the hordes we are letting in.

Second, demonstrating laxness, humanitarian inclinations devoid of the values that define our national integrity, broadcasts to our enemies that we are confused and weak. Perceived confusion and weakness encourage evil forces to act.

For sure the hasty exit of America from Afghanistan broadcast this message to an evil and ambitious Vladimir Putin, who then took aggressive

action in Ukraine he might not otherwise have done.

Iran and their Hamas operatives are for sure very happy to see American leftists celebrating the atrocities that were committed against Israelis.

Last June, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi traveled to Latin America in a visit that included Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua. Iran is doing business with the most corrupt and mismanaged countries in Latin America to solidify its anti-American and anti-Israel base there.

In 1994, the Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina, was blown up and 85 were killed. Investigations in Argentina concluded it was the work of Iran.

Republicans are right to push for raising the bar for defining asylum, setting up a border extradition authority and exercising greater care in allowing anyone into our country without a visa.

Regarding the many already here undocumented and undocumented, I propose reopening some of our closed military bases to house these individuals until their status is clarified. They would have status as refugees but without constitutional rights that would include 14th Amendment coverage granting automatic citizenship to the newly born.

We can't forget that the eternal principles that define freedom in our country are relevant everywhere. We must defend them at home and abroad to the interest of all who want to live in a better world.

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Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, Jan. 8, the eighth day of 2024. There are 358 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Jan. 8, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson, in his State of the Union address, declared an "unconditional war on poverty in America."

On this date: In 1815, the last major engagement of the War of 1812 came to an end as U.S. forces defeated the British in the Battle of New Orleans, not having received word of the signing of a peace treaty.

In 1867, the U.S. House of Representatives joined

the Senate in overriding President Andrew Johnson's veto of the District of Columbia Suffrage Bill, giving Black men in the nation's capital the right to vote.

In 1912, the African National Congress was founded in Bloemfontein, South Africa.

In 1918, President Woodrow Wilson outlined his Fourteen Points for lasting peace after World War I. Mississippi became the first state to ratify the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, which established Prohibition.

In 1935, rock-and-roll legend Elvis Presley was born in Tupelo, Mississippi.

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Holly Gaskill, Editor

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Norwell Internship Spotlight award Bree Ulfig

Senior Bree Ulfig has been selected for the Norwell High School Internship Spotlight award. She has been doing her experience with Norwell High School chemistry instructor and teacher of the year Mr. Mark Weinert. Bree is the daughter of Anthony and Dawn Ulfig of Ossian.

Bree has had the opportunity to observe the teaching styles and classroom management

techniques from Mr. Weinert, one of the best. She has been a great help as she assists with grading, attendance, running errands, and answer the phone. Bree has also learned the procedures for setting up labs for Mr. Weinert's Honors and AP Chemistry labs.

Upon graduation, Bree plans to attend college to study biology. Her ultimate career plan is to become a veterinarian.



Bree Ulfig

Winter events at the Fort Wayne Museum of Art

Two exhibits at the Fort Wayne Museum of Art will be closing on Jan. 28th and include: the Jewish History of the 175 years of the Congregation of Achduth Vesholom and "Portraits from the Permanent Collection."

The International Glass Invitational exhibit will be on view through Feb. 18th and the works by Brooklyn-born artist Robert Kipniss will be through Feb. 25th. The new Glass Wing will continue to showcase the Paul Stankard Paperweights from the Shaffer Collection.

A Curator's Tour will be held on Thursday, Feb. 1, beginning at 12:15 p.m., which is free with museum admission and an RSVP to fwmoa.org/events.

Free admission is offered on Thursday, Jan. 11 for the 2nd Thursday at FWMA gathering and Chief Curator Charles Shepard will present a talk on the museum's special collecting initiative.

The Second Saturday Family Tours will be held on Jan. 13, beginning at 10:30 a.m. and is free with general admission and an RSVP to fwmoa.org/events. These tours are

specifically for PreK-12 students and their adult companions and will be limited to 20 participants and last about an hour.

After Hours: Wine by the Glass get-togethers are planned for the Saturdays of Feb. 10 (American Southwest glass) and March 23 (Australian glass) and are free for museum members and \$20 for non-members. Wine tasting and a tour of the Glass Studio will be led by Jeff Armstrong, FWoMA president and Charles Shepard, CEO from 5 to 6 p.m. RSVP to fwmoa.org/events.

Live music and sweet treats will be offered on Thursday, Feb. 11, from 5 to 7:30 p.m. at the 2nd Thursday's museum event. Admission is free and the Paradigm Gallery will be open for last minute Valentine's gifts.

Regular gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (until 8 p.m. on Thursdays) and Sunday noon to 5 p.m. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 students (PreK-college) and seniors and \$25 for families. General admission is free on Thursdays from 5 to 8 p.m.

Events at the Creative Arts Council of Wells County

428 S. Oak St. in Bluffton
260-824-5222
www.wellscocreativearts.com
creativeartscouncil@gmail.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/wellscocreativearts

Instagram: @creativeartscouncil
Creative Arts office hours — Monday through Thursday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Friday (by appointment only).

Encouraging, presenting and promoting the arts for the benefit of the entire community.

Noir Suspicions

Friday, Feb. 16 at 7 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 17 at 3 p.m.
Attention all mystery enthusiasts! We cordially invite you to join Creative Arts Theater for an evening of intrigue and suspense with Creative Arts Theater's newest production: *Noir Suspicions!* Get ready to put on your detective hats and solve a thrilling crime.

Two ticket options are available:
\$30 for show, charcuterie & dessert from the Charcuterie Shop; \$15 for Show only.

Tickets are available at <https://www.wellscocreativearts.com/other-yearly-productions>

Synopsis: In this hard-boiled comic mystery sequel to the ever-popular *Murder at Cafe Noir*, ex-private eye Rick Archer is now the confused manager of Cafe Noir on the island of Mustique. He is confronted with a corpse on the dock, a mysterious femme fatale, a French blackmailer and a businessman who wants both the cafe and the woman. Rick is arrested after the blackmailer is murdered in his club. It is up to the audience to convince the magistrate that he is innocent. A tribute to Casablanca with many references to the classic movie, *Noir*



Suspicious is guaranteed to delight audiences whether or not they are familiar with *Murder at Cafe Noir*.

Creative Arts Summer Camp
Registration Opens – March 1. Summer Theater Intensive, Summer Dance Intensive, and Summer Art Academy

Ongoing Activities
Creative Crew: Tuesdays from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. All forms of creativity welcome: painting, drawing, needlework and more – spend the morning working on your craft and socialize with other artists. Enter Door 1 or Door 10 at Life Community Church, the creative crew meets in the cafe.

Readers' Brown Bag Luncheon: Meeting the last Tuesday of the month at noon at Life Community Church, enter door 10. All readers are welcome. Call the CAC office for more information.

Creative Arts Council activities are supported by memberships, sponsors and grants from funders including Arts United, a regional agency; the Indiana Arts Commission, a state agency; and the National Endowment for the Arts, a national agency.

Zanesville News by Melba Edwards

Well here it is my first column written in the new year of 2024. We have had a mild winter so far with just a smidgen of snow last week.

As the days dwindled down for 2023 we are happy to be getting out of the COVID times and into healthy families. We still need to keep in mind to be careful about spreading germs and we need to avoid large crowds.

The Zanesville Lions will be meeting tonight, Jan. 8, for their first meeting of the

new year. If you are interested in what we do, come and join us at 6:30 p.m. for a light supper and/or the business meeting at 7 p.m. All our meetings are held at the clubhouse at the ballpark on Van Horn Street.

The Coffee Cafe continues to be open weekdays from 7:30 to 10 a.m. at the Zanesville Community Church of God on Marzane Road. All are welcome to attend.

In all of my life I do not remember anyone being kid-

napped in Zanesville. This happened here over the New Year's weekend. An 11-year-old Zanesville resident was reported as being missing since 3:30 p.m. Saturday and was put on the Silver Alert. The car, reported as being seen in the area, was picked up in traveling south on U.S. 151 near Barneveld, Wisconsin. Three South Dakota residents were taken into custody and thank the Lord that the 11-year-old girl is safely home! Please pray for her and her family.



Sons of the American Legion donate to WCPL Summer Reading Program

Commander Rick Murphy of the Sons of the American Legion stopped by the Wells County Public Library to present a check for the children's Summer Reading Program. Accepting the check on behalf of the library is Cindy Burchell, Children's Services Manager. The Summer Reading Program helps promote the importance of reading for all ages during June and July each year. This year's theme will be "Adventure Begins at Your Library." (Photo submitted)

Area Things to See and Do

ARENA DINNER THEATRE—FW
"LMNOP," Jan. 19-28; "Funny Money," March 1-16; "A Delightful Quarantine," April 19-May 4; "The Drowsy Chaperone," June 14-29. www.arenadinnertheatre.org

CLYDE THEATRE, FORT WAYNE
Tribute to Elton John/Billy Joel; Debutants & Friends; Jan. 20; Foy Vance, Jan. 28. ClydeTheatre.com or at 1-800-514-3849.

EMBASSY THEATER, FORT WAYNE
"Napoleon Dynamite Live!," Jan. 18; Tim Allen; Jan. 26; Joy Koy cinmendy; Feb. 4; <http://fwembassytheatre.org/events>

FIRE AND LIGHT PRODUCTIONS
"The Sound of Music," Jan. 18-20, Arts United Center, 303 E. Main St., Fort Wayne; "Finding Nemo Jr.," April 11-13, Arts United Center, 303 E. Main St., Fort Wayne. Tickets at fireandlightproductions.com.

1ST PRESBYTERIAN THEATRE, FORT WAYNE
Almost Maine; Jan. 26-27; firstpresfortwayne.org/theater/

FORT WAYNE CIVIC THEATER
"The Color Purple," Feb. 9-18, 2024; "Six Degrees of Separation," March 15-24; "Jersey Boys," May 4-19; "Something Rotten," July 21-30. Arts United Center box office 260-424-5220; info at www.fwcivic.org.

FORT WAYNE MUSEUM OF ART
Open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (until 8 p.m. on Thursdays, noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. www.fwmoa.org

FURTH CENTER, ANGOLA
Don McLean; May 18; Hotel California; May 31; trine.edu/furth

HONEYWELL CENTER & EAGLES THEATRE, WABASH

Honeywell Center: Thunderstruck; Jan. 20; Dinosaur World Live; Jan. 26; Little River Band; Feb. 2; 360 Allstars; Feb. 3; Princess Bride/Cary Elwes; 1954 The Tribute; March. 2; Tommy Jones/The Shondells; March 30; Etta May & Southern Fried Chicken; April 7; Killer Queen; July 12; **Eagles Theatre:** Nelson, Jan. 18; Little Mer-men; Jan. 19; Sons of Mystro, Feb. 8; Tennessee Whiskey Chicago; Feb. 9; Michael Palascak; Feb. 14; Unspoken; Feb. 15; Step-crew Dance; Feb. 29; <https://www.boxofficeticketsales.com/honeywell-center>

ARTS UNITED CENTER—FW
Fort Wayne Ballet: fortwayneballet.org

SCIENCE CENTRAL, FORT WAYNE
1950 N. Clinton St. in Fort Wayne. Hours 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. Info at 260-424-2400 or at www.sciencecentral.org

BAKER STREET CENTER, FORT WAYNE
Duke Tumatote & Power Trio; Jan. 20; www.bakerstreetcenter.com

LERNER THEATRE, ELKHART
Colin Mochrie; Feb. 10; Rodney Car-rington; Feb. 23; TheLerner.com

WAGON WHEEL, WARSAW
wagonwheelcenter.org

ABCINEMA, DECATUR
130 W. Monroe St., Decatur. Information: www.abcinmaine.com or 260-724-SHOW



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Late Registration Begins: Saturday, February 24th, 2024



Questions? Contact Ashley for more information at (260) 565-9627 or Ashley_VandenBoom@fwymca.org



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Bluffton, Indiana

Knights take down Lions in double overtime

By RICK SPRUNGER
What a difference a week makes for Norwell.

Just seven nights after being, frankly, embarrassed at Adams Central, Norwell outslugged, outmuscled, and outfought a bruising, physical Leo team, 69-63, in double overtime Saturday night at The Castle.

"We came out with a lot more energy and effort tonight, a lot more intensity," Norwell coach Mike McBride said with a smile. "We had a really, really tough week of practice, and the guys responded in practice, and they responded in the game."

They responded by connecting on 21 of 39 field goals for a .538 percentage, committing just 12 turnovers and outrebounding the rugged Lions, 29-23.

Everyone for the Knights contributed.

Ashton Federspiel scored 31 points on 9-for-16 shooting and 11 of 15 free throws, while connecting on back-to-back three-pointers in the first quarter. His efforts got the Knights off and running and collared seven rebounds.

Cohen Bailey added 15 points on 6-for-10 shooting and came up particularly big in the second overtime, when he picked off three rebounds, two of them on the offensive glass, and added a big steal.

Adam McBride and Cade Shelton both just missed double figures with nine

points apiece.

Kaedyon Quintanilla not only snared a pivotal offensive rebound early in the fourth quarter, he also made very possibly the outstanding play of the contest in the third.

He had just picked up his third foul less than 30 seconds into the second half. Just a half-minute later, there he was poking the ball loose out near center court, winning a wild scramble, and then, while on his back, flipping it to a breaking Bailey for a one-on-nothing layup that brought the crowd to its feet.

McBride opened the game with a three-pointer, but then didn't score again until swishing a triple early in the second overtime, a shot that was huge.

"You have to remember that he's only 5'11" and his defender (Nolan Hiteshaw) is 6'4," Mike McBride said. "He was having trouble getting any shots at all."

But, just 16 seconds after a Brock Schott three had given Leo a 56-55 lead, McBride found himself open in the left corner.

He never hesitated, and Norwell, in a game that saw five ties and 10 lead changes, never trailed again.

Then came a pivotal moment.

With Norwell on top, 62-58 and 1:18 remaining, Hiteshaw went to the line after being fouled in the act of shooting a three-pointer from the left corner with a

chance to slice the margin to one point.

Incredibly, he missed all three free throws, and Norwell had the ball and a two-possession lead.

It was then that Bailey stepped up.

He hit the first of two free throws with 1:10 left, then rebounded his own missed second attempt and got the ball to Federspiel, whose two charity tosses nine seconds later made it 65-58.

Bailey then stepped in front of a pass at the other end and fed Shelton, who also hit the first of two free throws.

He missed the second, but once again Bailey was there for yet another offensive rebound and pitched it out to McBride.

"It was good to get Bailey back in the scoring column," praised his coach. "But he gave us more than that. He was all over the floor tonight."

McBride's two free throws at 0:25 finished the Lions off at 68-58.

"We made enough free throws at the end," commented the elder McBride later after watching his team hit 9-13 in the second overtime and 21-32 for the game. "But we missed six in the third quarter. I told our guys that we missed enough in the third quarter that we could have been ahead at the end of the period."

Instead, it was Leo with a 44-40 edge that became



It's Wallis against Wallace as Norwell's Owen Wallis drives past Leo's Colton Wallace in the second quarter Saturday at The Castle. (Photo by Glen Werling)

46-40 twelve seconds into the fourth.

"But we kept fighting," said McBride. Twice, Leo got the ball back with a chance to extend that margin, and twice, the Lions came up

(Continued on Page 7)

Tigers' late run not enough against Warriors in ACAC game

By ANDREW FEEBACK
A poor start proved costly for the Bluffton boys' basketball team as the Tigers fell to the visiting Woodlan Warriors 42-30 Saturday night.

Facing a much taller Woodlan team that also appeared to be quicker, the Tigers (5-5) needed to slow the pace and keep the score down.

Early on, they succeeded in doing that, trailing just 4-2 midway through the first quarter. But offensively, they just couldn't get anything going.

"The Yoder kid did a great job contesting our shots and making it difficult to score," Bluffton coach Craig Teagle said of Woodlan big man Trey Yoder "In the second half, we tried to go away from the guy he was guarding being around the rim and tried to pull him a little higher so we could get some more looks. We didn't shoot it very well, but some of that is because you're playing somebody who's playing pretty good defense."

The 4-2 margin became 15-2 in a hurry. Woodlan (6-5) got consecutive triples from Yoder, Braden Smith and Mason Moore to take control.

Neither team could generate much offensively in the second, with a three-pointer from Axton Beste and a layup from Oliver Adams the only plays to make it into the scoring column.

The Tigers rarely reached the paint early on, having to take more shots from outside. When they did reach the paint, the 6'7"

Yoder was usually in their path. Yoder led all scorers with 14 points. He also grabbed 11 boards and blocked a handful of shots.

Adams, the Warriors' backup center, is 6'8".

"They've got a nice team," Teagle said. "They're strong, they're physical, they're big, they've got weapons and shoot the three. They're built well, and physically, that was tough on us."

Woodlan began the second half with back-to-back treys from Yoder and Moore, and after two more buckets from Adams and Drew Fleek, the Tigers found themselves down 27-7.

Bluffton finally began to see the ball go through the basket a few times after a dreadful first half in which they were 2-18 overall.

The Tigers even made a game of it in the fourth quarter. Five straight points from Tucker Jenkins brought them within 36-28 with 2:46 to play, and they had a chance to draw even closer.

The Warriors scored their last six points from the foul line, with a Kaleb Green put-back finishing the scoring for the Tigers.

Bluffton stayed fairly close on the boards, only being out-rebounded 26-24 in spite of giving up a lot of size.

Teagle was pleased his team still found itself in the game late even scoring so few points early.

(Continued on Page 7)



Eli Garrett (left) knocks away a pass intended for Woodlan's Trey Yoder in the third quarter Saturday at The Tiger Den. (Photo by Glen Werling)

Raiders fall to 0-2 in ACAC play with road loss to Patriots

By RYAN WALKER
MONROEVILLE — Shooting woes, second-chance points and rebounds all played a role in Southern Wells' loss to Heritage Saturday night.

The Raiders (2-8, 0-2 ACAC) were just outmatched by the hosting Patriots (3-6, 2-0 ACAC).

In their last time out on the floor, the Raiders seemingly couldn't miss in a 79-53 win over Randolph Southern in the Union City Holiday Tournament last week. But Saturday night was much different, shooting a 3-18 clip from deep compared to the 15 they hit in the last game.

The Patriots, led by first-year head coach Kyle Sovine, threw out a full-court press that allowed only six shot attempts in the first quarter.

"I thought we were more passive than I wanted us to be offensively, and I thought that passivity led to a lot of the turnovers that you saw," Southern Wells head coach Joel Roush said. "They do a really good job in most presses. They want to take away the middle, and they want to trap you on the sidelines. Once we broke the press and

got the ball halfcourt, all we had to do was throw it ahead up the sidelines (but) they took the press off. We just needed to realize that more quickly."

Southern Wells treaded water as long as it could to size up a gameplan on offense, falling behind by only five points at the end of the first period, but Heritage didn't wait.

The Patriots extended a short run in the first quarter that extended to 14-0 during the second quarter. Evan Pennington's free throws and basket finished the streak but Heritage began a new one at 14-3.


Heritage was up by 21 by that time and kept the pedal to the metal. Sovine, who played at St. Francis University and semi-professionally for a few years in Australia, has a unique style that perhaps kept his team rolling.

His starting five, Kobe Meyer, Landon Lybarger, LanTae Cassel, D'Vontaye Washington and Tauren Brown played just over half of the first quarter. Then, an entirely new five came off the bench all at once, and both units would alternate five at a time into the same rotation. Only once did Sovine tin-

(Continued on Page 7)

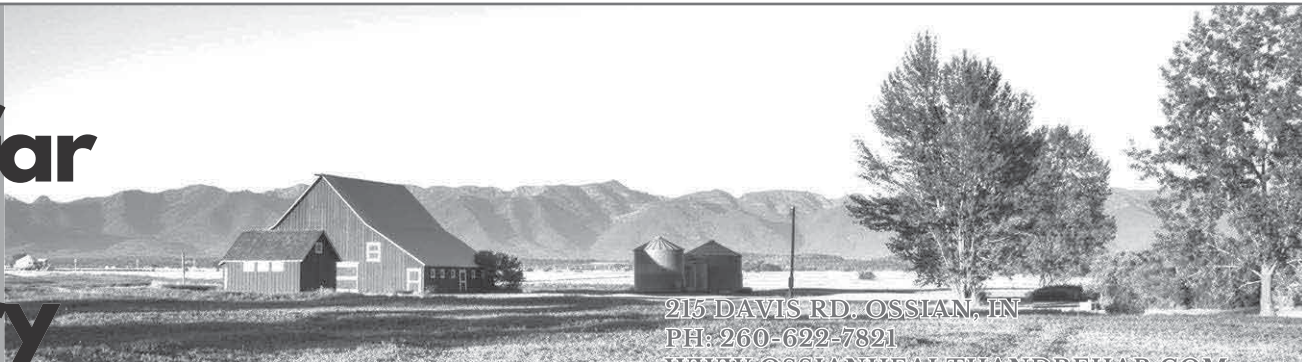


Southern Wells guard Evan Pennington (left) keeps away from Heritage's Tauren Brown Saturday night at Heritage. The Patriots got the 61-40 win to drop the Raiders to 0-2 in the ACAC. (Photo by Ryan Walker)



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Tigersharks take first at Jay County Invitational

Bluffton took home the hardware on Saturday, winning the Jay County Invitational out of the 16-team field. Above, the Tigersharks pose with the trophy. Noah Brooks and Isaac Wheeler both scored 53 points to lead the Tigers. (Photo provided)

Top finishers were:

- Noah Brooks, Elija Robles, Dalton Rodgers and Wheeler second in the medley relay.
- Wheeler first in the 100-yard butterfly and third in the 200-yard IM.
- Brooks first in the 100-yard backstroke and third in the 100-yard freestyle.
- Griffin Linderwell third in the 500-yard freestyle.
- Wes Frettinger, Linderwell, Ashton Arnett and Robles third in the 200-yard freestyle relay.
- Wheeler, Rodgers, Arnett and Brooks second in the 400-yard freestyle relay.

Results for both Norwell teams and Bluffton girls were not sent at the time of print. Bluffton will be back in action at home starting at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 9.

Knights take down Lions

(Continued from Page 6)

empty after hurried flings from the arc.

With Norwell teetering on the edge, Quintanilla got his huge offensive rebound off a McBride miss and dished to Bailey for a three-pointer that got the Knights back into the game.

Federspiel followed with a three-point play underneath to tie the score, and Bailey drove the left baseline for a pretty dish to Shelton for an easy bunny that put Norwell back in the lead. “We gave ourselves a chance to win,” said McBride, who made a crucial defensive change at a timeout with 3:13 left.

With the score tied at 51-51, Norwell came out of the timeout in a box-and-one, a gimmicky defense designed to stop Leo’s Jackson McGee, who finished with 24 points.

Leo couldn’t believe its eyes.

McGee actually ran one or two patterns on the baseline to see if that was what Norwell was up to.

Sure enough, Bailey was sticking to him like white on rice while the other four Norwell defenders never moved a muscle.

Even McGee offered a little chuckle as he retreated back into a corner.

And a seemingly baffled Leo team, who had been pounding the inside all night, responded by putting the ball on Hiteshaw’s hip out at the timeline while all ten players on the floor stood there and looked at each other for three minutes. “He’s a great player,” said McBride of his decision to shadow Leo’s go-to guy. “He had 16 of their 28 in the first half, and he had hit some tough shots.”

Hiteshaw came out of the stall at 0:05 and missed a three-pointer, and the game went into overtime.

It was more of the same during the first extra session. Norwell stayed with the box-and-one, Federspiel tied the game at 53-53 on a shot from underneath with 1:41 left, and Leo put the ball back in the freezer.

Trey Hiteshaw missed from the lane, and the second overtime was needed. Leo lost despite shooting a fairly solid .472 from the field on 25-for-53 firing, but it may have been shot selection that was at the core of its demise.

The Lions only com-

mitted seven turnovers and were a white-hot 20-31 (.645) from two-point range. But they were a woeful 5-for-22 (.227) from three-point range and a mere 8-for-15 (.533) from one-point range.

Norwell won the junior varsity game, 42-33.

Nick McBride scored 10 points, Caiden Petrie eight, Brady Smith and Will Case six apiece, Drew Jolly and Ryne Thornton four each, and Garry Riley and Aedyn Quintanilla two a piece.

sports@news-banner.com

NORWELL 69, LEO 63 (2OT) at Norwell

LEO (6-4, 1-1 NE8): Brock Schott 2-5 2-4 7, Trey Hiteshaw 5-11 1-1 11, Jackson McGee 11-20 0-0 24, Nolan Hiteshaw 4-12 0-3 9, Landon Ruff 2-3 3-5 7, Colton Wallace 1-2 2-2 5. TOTAL: 25-53 8-15 63.

NORWELL (7-4, 2-0 NE8): Cade Shelton 2-3 5-9 9, Kaedyn Quintanilla 2-3 0-0 4, Adam McBride 2-7 3-4 9, Cohen Bailey 6-10 1-2 15, Ashton Federspiel 9-16 11-15 31, Owen Wallis 0-0 1-2 1, Garry Riley 0-0 0-0 0, Brady Smith 0-0 0-0 0. TOTAL: 21-39 21-32 69.

Leo 14 14 16 7 2 10 — 63
Norwell 19 8 13 11 2 16 — 69

Three-point shooting: Leo 5-22 (Schott 1-1, T. Hiteshaw 0-3, McGee 2-10, N. Hiteshaw 1-5, Ruff 0-1, Wallace 1-2), Norwell 6-9 (Quintanilla 0-1, McBride 2-2, Bailey 2-4, Federspiel 2-2). Rebounds: Leo 23 (Schott 8, McGee 5), Norwell 29 (Federspiel 7, Bailey 6, Shelton 5). Turnovers: Leo 7, Norwell 12. Personal fouls: Leo 20, Norwell 11. Fouled out: T. Hiteshaw. Technical fouls: None. Junior Varsity: Norwell 42, Leo 33.

Tigers run not enough

(Continued from Page 6)

“That’s why you play two halves,” he said. “You get a chance to erase what happened in the first half, and come back and play a great second half. We didn’t play great early; they hit a couple of threes to get us down even further, but then we started battling one possession at a time. When we did that, I thought we gave ourselves a chance.”

“We took some bad shots, so we’ve got to do a better job of getting good shots,” he continued. “Even when you’re behind, you’ve got to take great shots. I thought we forced a few, but at least we were battling and fighting.”

Jenkins led the Tigers

with 12 points while Beste had nine.

Bluffton will head to Southern Wells on Tuesday evening for the start of the ACAC tournament. The boys will play after the girls’ game that tips off at 6 p.m.

The junior varsity game went to Woodlan 42-38. Nolan Lambert scored 12 points, Marshal Gerber had seven and Jude Baumgartner added five.

Bluffton won the freshman game 38-23, led by Max White’s 19 points. Abram Gehrett had seven points and Jonah Geisel scored five.

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WOODLAN 42, BLUFFTON 30 At Bluffton
WOODLAN (6-5): Lincoln Sparks

Raiders fall to 0-2 ACAC

(Continued from Page 6)

ker with one of the two groups with Davian Bates, but it lasted for about one minute.

The starting group struggled in the first quarter, scoring zero points in their first shift, but the second group outperformed them by a wide margin and got Heritage going in the second quarter. Both of them after that started to find a rhythm. The style of play gave fits for Southern Wells.

“I’m not sure anything changed — that’s the good part for (Heritage),” Roush said. “That one is just about as good as the other. When you can sub 10, and you don’t lose much, that’s quite a weapon to have.”

Roush’s Raiders gained some momentum by the second half with their offense. CJ Reber hit the first triple of the game and Perrin Gates went 3-3 in the post in the

half. Both added nine points in the contest. Pennington scored five of his game-high 12 in the third as well.

Southern Wells will host Bluffton in the ACAC Tournament next 20 minutes after the girls’ game at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 9.

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HERITAGE 61, SOUTHERN WELLS 40 At Heritage

SOUTHERN WELLS (2-8, 0-2 ACAC): Evan Pennington 3-8 6-9 12, Perrin Gates 4-4 1-4 9, CJ Reber 4-9 0-0 9, Chandler Oswalt 2-10 2-7, Trey Slusher 1-1 0-0 3, Andrew Aker 0-4 0-0 0, Caleb Johnson 0-1 0-0 0, Joshua Aulbach 0-0 0-0 0, Landon Johnson 0-0 0-0 0. 14-37 9-15 40.

HERITAGE (3-6, 2-0 ACAC): Kobe Meyer 6-8 2-2 14, Noah Redmon 5-6 2-2 12, D’Vontaye Washington 4-5 2-2 10, Braden Walter 3-5 2-2 9, Caleb Abbott 2-3 2-2 7, Landon Lybarger 1-6 0-0 3, Tauren Brown 1-1 0-0 2, Cam Rauner 1-2 0-0 2, Eii Tigulis 1-3 0-2 2, Davian Bates 0-0 0-0 0, Lucas Taylor 0-0 0-0 0, Landri Linder 0-1 0-0 0, 24-44 10-12 61. So. Wells 5 9 14 12
Heritage 10 25 20 6
Three-Point FG: Southern Wells: 3-18 (Reber 1-3, Slusher 1-1, Oswalt 1-7, Aker 0-4, Pennington 0-2, C. Johnson 0-1), Heritage: 3-8 (Walter

1-2, Abbott 1-1, Lybarger 1-2, Meyer 0-1, Rauner 0-1). Rebounds: Southern Wells: 11 (Oswalt 3, Gates 3, Pennington 2, Reber 1, L. Johnson 1), Heritage: 31 (Washington 8, Lybarger 4, Cassel 4, Redmon 3, Walter 3, Abbott 3, Meyer 2, Tigulis 2, Rauner 1, Brown 1). Turnovers: Southern Wells: 14, Heritage: 17. Fouls: Southern Wells: 12, Heritage: 13. Fouled Out: None. Technicals: None. JV: 62-28 Heritage.

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Tigers finish 0-3 in Team State wrestling tournament

The Bluffton Wrestling team fell in all three matches at the 1A Team State tournament at Rochester High School on Saturday.

Three Tigers went unbeaten on the day, Levi Johns (113), Christian Castanada (175) Johnny Cruz (285).

Below are the scores and individual results of the three matches:

Cowan 47, Bluffton 30

- Daigan Barbosa (C) won over Will Frettinger by fall at 106.
- Levi Johns (B) won by fall Emma Jones at 113.
- Bowen Keith (C) won over Jed Logan by fall at 120.
- Raef Keith (C) won over Grant Nunley by fall at 126.
- Jackson Bradley (C) won by fall over Parker Nash at 132.
- Jaden Unger (C) won over Kaden Simpson by fall at 138.
- Jacob Unger (C) won over Bryce Patrick by all at 144.
- Jayden Jett (C) won over Pierceton Morgan by technical fall 15-0 at 150.
- Brody Lewis (B) won by fall over Xander Sparks at 157.
- Levi Abbott (C) won over Chris Kramer by fall at 165.
- Christian Castanada (B) won over Noah Modglin by decision 9-3 at 175.
- Taven Frees (B) won over Peyton Kepler by decision 10-9 at 190.
- Lukas Gehrett (B) won over Levi Watson by fall at 215.
- Johnny Cruz (B) won over Carson Van Cleave by fall at 285.

Southmont 42, Bluffton 29

- Cooper Scott (S) won over Will Frettinger by fall at 106.
- Double forfeit.
- Levi Johns (B) won over Briar Riggle by fall at 120.
- Camden Laney (S) won over Jed Logan by fall at 126.
- Jeffery Pine (S) won over Parker Nash by fall at 132.
- Maddox Cade (S) won over Kaden

Simpson by fall at 138.

- Marlon Williams (S) won over Bryce Patrick by fall at 144.
- Hunter Alesi (S) won over Pierceton Morgan by fall at 150.
- Brody Lewis (B) won by technical fall 16-0 over Paxton Gentry at 157.
- Chris Kramer (B) won over Gavin Hayes by decision 8-2 at 165.
- Christian Castanada (B) won by forfeit at 175.
- Taven Frees (B) won over Tyler Davis by decision 6-4 at 190.
- Wyatt Woodall (S) won over Lukas Gehrett by fall at 215.
- Johnny Cruz (B) won over Ayden Dickerson by fall at 285.

Faith Christian 43, Bluffton 36

- Will Frettinger (B) won over Cameron Stilings by fall at 106.
- Levi Johns (B) won over Josh Barton by fall at 113.
- Jed Logan. (B) won over Luke Satchell by fall at 120.
- Will Roberts (FC) won over Grant Nunley by fall at 126.
- Tavien Smith (FC) won over Parker Nash by major decision 11-2 at 132.
- Ethan Seubring (FC) won over Kaden Simpson by fall at 138.
- Ethan Blosson (FC) won over Bryce Patrick by decision 16-14 at 144.
- Eli Blosson (FC) won over Pierceton Morgan by fall at 150.
- Zach White (FC) won over Brody Lewis by fall at 157.
- Cameron Brown (FC) won over Chris Kramer by fall at 165.
- Christian Castanada (B) won over Brighton Herron by fall at 175.
- Taven Frees (B) won over Caleb Parlow by fall at 190.
- Noah Hill (FC) won over Lukas Gehrett by fall at 215.
- Johnny Cruz (B) won over Josue Pozos by fall at 285.

Bluffton will be at Manchester for a regular season match at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 10.

Bluffton-Harrison sweeps AC tournament title in 8th, 7th grade

Bluffton-Harrison’s eighth and seventh grade squads took home first place at the Adams Central Holiday Tournament over the weekend.

The eighth grade team defeated South Adams 45-15. Khloe Dick led the Tigers with 12 points, while Bridget Steffen had 10.

In the championship game, the Tigers beat Adams Central 25-24. Kamryn Ault led

the Tigers with nine points and Khloe Dick added 6 points.

The seventh grade team won Round 1 40-6 over South Adams. Gracie Jellison led the way with 10 points and Josie Nash had eight points.

In the championship game, the Tigers won 27-17 over Woodlan. Leading scorers were Josie Nash with seven and Anna Hartman with six points.

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Dinner guest with no conscience

Dear Annie: My wife and I have a close friend whom, in non-pandemic times, we invited over for dinner or cocktails at least once or twice a week. We've spent many holidays together over the last 10 or so years. We love her like a sister.

What causes someone to talk nonstop? Don't they realize that it's annoying? — Carrying Ear-plugs From Now On

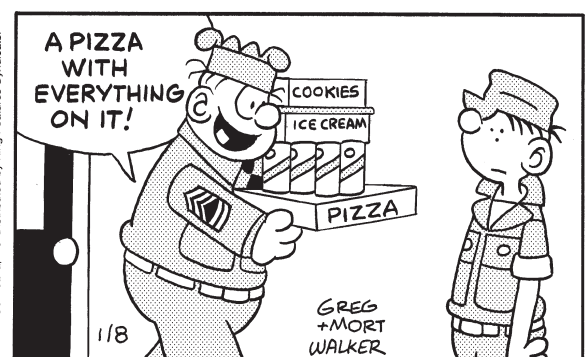
Dear Annie by Annie Lane



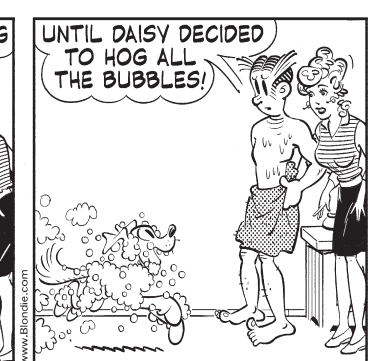
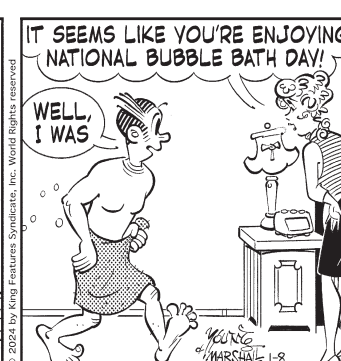
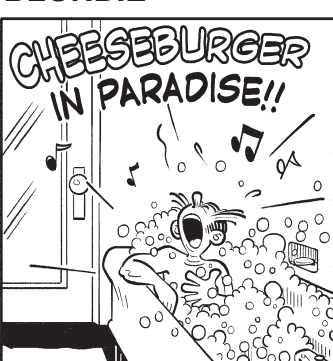
Dear Ear-plugs: There are many possible causes for excessive, nonstop talking, including mental illnesses, brain injury, hearing loss, fear of silence and just plain old self-absorption.

Dear Susan: You get points for creativity. Thanks for the laugh. "How Can I Forgive My Cheating Partner?" is out now!

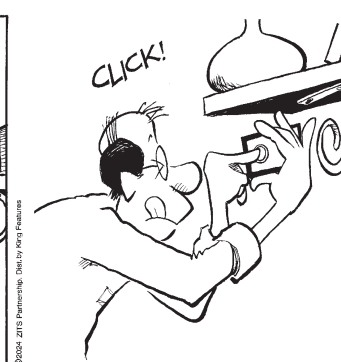
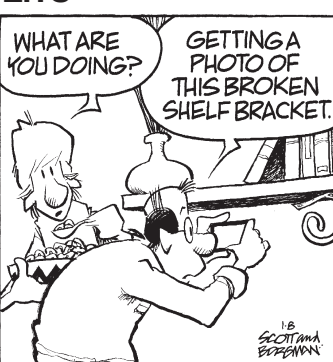
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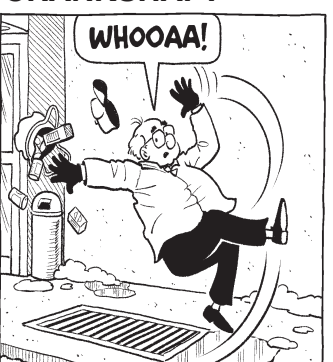
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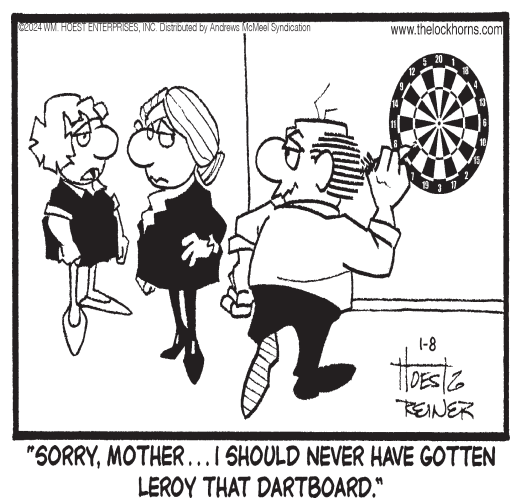


THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane



The LOCKHORNS



My Answer

By Dr. Billy Graham



Repentance means more than just being sorry

Q: I've been told that I've committed a horrible sin — being immoral with a married man. I thought adultery happened with married people. Will I end up in Hell because of this, even though I'm single? — C.A.

A: The definition of adultery is when one person commits immorality with a person who is not his or her spouse. The reason that adultery is such a serious sin is that marriage is a picture of the relationship between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

ture in a human relationship which God ordained is sin and causes severe damage to many other people.

Adultery leaves many scars that remain for a lifetime, but like all sin, adultery is forgivable if a person repents before Jesus Christ. As serious as sin is, God forgives repentant hearts (see John 8:3-11).

Repentance means more than just being sorry for a sinful act. It means that with God's help we renounce sin once and

for all. The Bible says, "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to [all], teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live [righteously] and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people" (Titus 2:11-14, NKJV).

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

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Table with 12 columns: Time Slot, Channel, Program Name, Description. Rows include various news, entertainment, and sports programs.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes solution time and Saturday's answer.

Crossword puzzle solution grid with numbers corresponding to clues.

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	8	3					4	6
	1	7	6	2	4		8	5
6				7		1		
	3	1	2				6	
	2			3		8		1
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Lottery Numbers

Saturday's Drawings HOOSIER LOTTERY
Cash 5 — 16-24-25-32-37
Cash4Life — 05-07-26-28-42, Cash Ball: 01
Lotto Plus — 04-08-12-20-30-46
Quick Draw Midday — 05-06-12-14-25-27-28-31-35-39-40-44-45-48-56-57-59-65-66-70, BE: 70
Daily Three-Midday — 01-00-04, SB: 01
Daily Three-Evening — 04-07-04, SB: 08
Daily Four-Midday — 09-02-05-00, SB: 01
Daily Four-Evening — 03-01-04-08, SB: 05
Quick Draw Evening — 01-02-12-17-18-20-21-24-29-31-44-45-49-57-60-65-72-76-77-78, BE: 21
Hoosier Lotto — 02-19-20-24-43-44
POWERBALL
04-31-34-38-61; Powerball: 13; Power Play: 2X

Sunday's Drawings

HOOSIER LOTTERY
Cash 5 — 05-16-34-36-45
Cash4Life — 11-12-23-34-39, Cash Ball: 04
Quick Draw Midday — 03-10-11-15-24-27-29-34-36-46-48-50-51-55-59-60-62-68-72-74, BE: 50
Daily Three-Midday — 09-01-09, SB: 04
Daily Three-Evening — 06-06-03, SB: 05
Daily Four-Midday — 06-09-09-08, SB: 04
Daily Four-Evening — 06-06-03-02, SB: 08
Quick Draw Evening — 02-07-11-23-24-28-30-31-37-38-44-47-55-56-61-63-72-73-77-79, BE: 77
Hoosier Lotto — Estimated jackpot (for Wednesday): \$2.6 million
MEGA MILLIONS
Estimated jackpot (for Tuesday): \$165 million
POWERBALL
Estimated jackpot (for Wednesday): \$46 million

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Public Sale Calendar

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. 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, sleepers, 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 consignments! *Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC*, 260-724-7402, Kjauction.com.

BIDDING NOW OPEN AND STARTS CLOSING JANUARY 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 JANUARY 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.

JANUARY 30 - 10 a.m. EDT - Stetzel Farm LLC. Farm machinery retirement auction. Tractors, planters, harvest equipment, tillage, miscellaneous and farm related, trucks and trailers. Timed online. No reserve. Inspection Jan. 20 and Jan. 29 from noon to 4 p.m., 7204 S 200 E, Warren. Contact Mike Stetzel, 260-450-2370, with equipment questions or to set up an inspection appointment. *Merit Auctions*, www.meritauctions.com, 833-273-9300, auction manager: Zach Hiner, 260-437-2771.

JANUARY 30 - 2 p.m.-6 p.m. ET - Online - Farm: Mann Farm. Property Location: Three miles northwest of Craigville, IN; 1/4 mile south of US 224 along 500 E in Lancaster Township, Wells County. 36.75+/- total acres, 34.5+/- tillable, 2.25+/- non-tillable, high quality farmland, Wells Co. Soil Types: Pewamo silty clay loam, Bount Del-Rey silt loam; WAPI: 140.6 bu. corn, 43.8 bu. soybeans. Additional information, drone flight, photos available at halderman.com. *Halderman Real Estate & Farm Management*, 800-424-2324, Rick Johnloz: 260-827-8181, Neal Wolhuter: 260-336-2219.

FEBRUARY 12 - 6 p.m. - Daniel E. Schloss, Elizabeth L. Burchfield (f/k/a Elizabeth L. Schloss), Estate of Meshell L. Schloss. Wells County 4-H Community Center, Bluffton. Online bidding available. 164+/-A offered in 8 Tracts or combination. Productive tillable land, professionally designed and stocked pond, recreational woods, newer tree plantings w/conservation grasses, potential country building sites, Huntington County, Salamonie Township. Inspections Jan. 13, 10a.m.-1p.m., Feb. 5, 3-5p.m., call for private showing. Auction managers: Jerry Ehle, 260-410-1996, Steven C. Coil, 260-446-2037, *Schrader Real Estate and Auction Company, Inc.*, schraderauction.com, 800-451-2709.

NOTICE
The City of Bluffton is accepting sealed bids for the demolition of an unsafe building at 418 Hale Street and 228 E Market Street. Bidding instructions and specifications may be obtained from the Clerk Treasurer's Office, 128 East Market Street, Bluffton, IN, during the hours of Mon-Fri, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Bids must be returned to the Clerk Treasurer's Office by 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, January 23, 2024, to be opened and read aloud at the public meeting of the Board of Public Works and Safety on January 23, 2024 at 4:30 p.m.
nb 1/8, 1/15
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8	1	2	8	1	6	7	9	5
1	9	8	9	8	7	6	9	2
6	9	7	1	9	2	1	8	8
2	6	1	8	1	8	9	7	9
9	8	8	7	2	9	1	1	6
9	7	1	9	6	1	8	8	2
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8	2	9	6	7	8	9	1	1
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Israel: Hezbollah struck sensitive air traffic base in the north

JERUSALEM (AP) — Hezbollah has struck an air traffic control base in northern Israel, the Israeli military said Sunday, and warned of “another war” with the Iran-backed militant group.

The increase in fighting across the border with Lebanon as Israel battles Hamas militants in Gaza gave new urgency to U.S. diplomatic efforts as Secretary of State Antony Blinken prepared to visit Israel on his latest Mideast tour.

“This is a conflict that could easily metastasize, causing even more insecurity and even more suffering,” Blinken told reporters after talks in Qatar, a key mediator. The escalation of cross-border fighting between Israel and Hezbollah has complicated a U.S. push to prevent a regional conflict.

The Israeli military said Hezbollah fire hit the sensitive air traffic control base on Mount Meron on Saturday but air defenses were not affected because backup systems were in place. It said that no soldiers were hurt and all damage will be repaired.

Nonetheless, it was one of the most serious attacks by Hezbollah in the months of fighting that has accompanied Israel’s war in Gaza and forced tens of thousands of Israelis to evacuate communities near the Lebanese border.

Hezbollah described its rocket barrage as an “initial response” to the targeted killing of a top Hamas leader in a Hezbollah stronghold in

Beirut last week, which is presumed to have been carried out by Israel.

The Israeli military chief of staff, Lt. Col. Herzi Halevi, said military pressure on Hezbollah, a Hamas ally, was rising and it would either be effective “or we will get to another war.” Military spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari asserted that Israel’s focus on Hezbollah’s elite Radwan force was pushing it away from the border.

Israel has mostly sought to limit the fighting in its north. Hezbollah’s military capabilities are far superior to those of Hamas. But Israeli leaders have said their patience is wearing thin, and that if the tensions cannot be resolved through diplomacy, they are prepared to use force.

“I suggest that Hezbollah learn what Hamas has already learned in recent months: No terrorist is immune,” Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told his Cabinet. We are determined to defend our citizens and to return the residents of the north safely to their homes.”

Lower-intensity fighting along Israel’s northern border broke out when Hezbollah began firing rockets shortly after the Oct. 7 Hamas attack on southern Israel triggered the war in Gaza, killing about 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and taking some 250 people hostage. Hezbollah has said its attacks aim to ease pressure on Gaza.

In a joint news briefing with Blinken, Qatar’s government

acknowledged that the killing of the senior Hamas leader in Lebanon can affect the complicated negotiations for the potential release of more hostages held by Hamas in Gaza but “we are continuing our discussions with the parties and trying to achieve as soon as possible an agreement.”

The Israeli military has signaled that it has wrapped up major combat in northern Gaza, saying it has completed dismantling Hamas’ military infrastructure there. Now it presses its offensive in the south, where most of Gaza’s 2.3 million Palestinians are squeezed into smaller areas in a humanitarian disaster while being pounded by Israeli airstrikes.

Netanyahu insists the war will not end until the objectives of eliminating Hamas, getting Israel’s hostages returned and ensuring that Gaza won’t host a threat to Israel are met.

Biden administration officials have urged Israel to wind down its blistering air and ground offensive and shift to more targeted attacks against Hamas leaders.

More than 22,800 Palestinians have been killed and more than 58,000 wounded since the war began, according to the Health Ministry in Hamas-run Gaza. The death toll does not distinguish between combatants and civilians. Health officials say about two-thirds of those killed have been women and minors.

Palestinian girl killed when Israeli police fire at suspected attackers in West Bank unrest

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli police on Sunday opened fire at a pair of suspected attackers who rammed their car into a West Bank checkpoint, fatally shooting a young Palestinian girl in an adjacent vehicle, according to police and medical officials.

The two suspects were also shot, while a young police officer was lightly hurt. The Sunday evening incident came hours after nine people were killed in other unrest in the occupied territory, which has experienced a surge of violence since Israel’s war against Hamas erupted on Oct. 7.

Israeli police said the ramming took place at a checkpoint near the Palestinian village of Biddu, just northwest of Jerusalem.

Security camera footage showed a white car plowing into a pair of Israeli police at the checkpoint. Police then chase after the vehicle, opening fire.

Police said a man and woman inside the car were shot, but a girl in a van in front of them was shot as well. The girl, who was reported to be 3 or 4 years old, was pronounced dead by Israel’s Magen David Adom rescue service.

Police said a preliminary investigation found that “during the rapid response of the officers toward the terrorists’ vehicle, the vehicle with the child may have been affected.” They promised a “thorough investigation.”

The conditions of the suspected attackers was not immediately known, but the rescue service said a female officer in the paramilitary border police was lightly wounded.

Earlier on Sunday, a man driving a car with Israeli license plates was fatally shot at a busy intersection in the West Bank, hours after a violent confrontation elsewhere left seven Palestinians and a border policewoman dead.

The victim in the drive-by shooting was later identified as a Palestinian resident of Jerusalem.

Golden Globes open with rocky Jo Koy monologue, win for Downey Jr.

By JAKE COYLE
AP Film Writer

A revamped Golden Globes kicked off with Taylor Swift in the house, wins for Robert Downey Jr. and Da’Vine Joy Randolph and a rocky monologue from comedian Jo Koy.

Koy took the stage at the Beverly Hilton International Ballroom in Beverly Hills, California, to open the 81st Golden Globes. The Filipino American stand-up hit on some expected topics: Ozempic, Meryl Streep’s knack for winning awards and the long-running “Oppenheimer.” (“I needed another hour.”)

After one joke flubbed, Koy, who was named host after some bigger names reportedly passed,

also noted how fast he was thrust into the job.

“Yo, I got the gig 10 days ago. You want a perfect monologue?” said Koy. “I wrote some of these and they’re the ones you’re laughing at.”

The night’s first award went to Da’Vine Joy Randolph for best supporting actress in Alexander Payne’s “The Holdovers.” Randolph has emerged as the favorite in the category for her performance as a grieving woman in the 1970s-set boarding school drama.

“Oh, Mary you have changed my life,” Randolph said of her character. “You have made me feel seen in so many ways that I have never imagined.”

That was quickly followed by a win for Robert Downey Jr., who won his third Globe for his supporting performance in “Oppenheimer.” It was the first head-to-head contest between Christopher Nolan’s epic and Greta Gerwig’s “Barbie.” Downey’s closest competition was considered the Kenery of Ryan Gosling.

“Golden Globes journalists, thank you for changing your game, therefore changing your name,” said Downey.

In the TV categories, Ali Wong and Steven Yeun both won for their performances in “Beef.” “Succession,” the lead television nominee, started off with a win for Matthew MacFadyen, who said

he adored “every second playing the weird, the wonderful human grease stain that is Tom Wambsgans.”

A NEW-LOOK GLOBES

The carpet was red, but the color of the night might be pink. “Barbie,” the year’s biggest hit, came in the lead nominee with nine nominations, including best comedy or musical. Margot Robbie, star and producer of the film, arrived dressed for the part, sporting a pink Armani dress modeled after Superstar Barbie from 1977.

But in any color, it was a new-look Golden Globes. The awards returned sans the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, which was disbanded after years of diversity

and ethical scandals. The Globes also lost its longtime network home. This year’s show is being broadcast on CBS in a one-year deal. Even the menu was flipped, with Nobu catering.

The revamped Globes had the challenge of moving past a tumultuous few years while recapturing the bubbly, irreverent spirit of all those shows hosted by Ricky Gervais or Tina Fey and Amy Poehler. Those broadcasts helped turn the Globes into the third biggest award show of the year, after the Oscars and the Grammys. The Globes’ glitzy good time enabled many to overlook the improprieties of an award show that often doubled as a punchline.

Special Feature

Your MONEY \$ Your TAXES

Financial mistakes anyone can avoid

Earnings go a long way toward determining an individual’s financial security. However, high wages do not guarantee long-term financial security any more than lower wages ensure a future marked by a lack of financial flexibility. Individuals are a unique variable in any financial equation, and those who can exercise and maintain some fiscal discipline are more likely to secure long-term security than those who cannot.

One way anyone can improve their chances at a secure and flexible financial future is to identify and avoid some common mistakes. Avoiding the following mistakes can increase the chances individuals at various income levels enjoy a secure financial future.

- Delay saving for retirement: Conventional wisdom says it’s never too early to begin saving for retirement. Despite that, surveys indicate many adults are behind on saving. A 2022 survey from Bankrate found that 55 percent of respondents indicated they were

behind on their retirement savings, while 35 percent reported being “significantly behind.” Though laws governing retirement contributions have made it easier for people to catch up, it’s still better to begin saving once you enter the professional arena, which for most people is some time in their early to mid-twenties. The longer you delay saving for retirement, the more precarious your financial future becomes.

- Spending beyond your means: The post-pandemic increase in cost-of-living has garnered considerable attention in recent years, when inflation has driven up the cost of just about everything. There’s little consumers can do about the rising cost of living, but making a concerted effort to curtail spending is one way to combat the spike. However, surveys indicate many people earning significant salaries are living paycheck-to-paycheck. For example, a 2021 report from LendingClub Corporation found that nearly 40 percent of individuals with annual incomes

greater than \$100,000 live paycheck to paycheck, with 12 percent reporting they are struggling to pay their bills. An assortment of variables undoubtedly contribute to that stark reality, and one might be a tendency for consumers to spend beyond their means. Individuals who are struggling to curtail their spending are urged to seek the help of a certified financial planner who can help them devise a budget and alleviate some of the stress and pressure associated with overspending or living paycheck to paycheck.

- Poor use of credit:

Credit cards can be a financial safety blanket, but that blanket can soon smother consumers who don’t know how and when to utilize credit. Reserve credit cards for emergency situations and resist the temptation to use them for daily expenses, such as groceries and gas. Credit card interest rates tend to be in the double digits, so unless card holders can pay their balances in full each month, they’re only exacerbating the already high cost of living by using credit for daily expenses.

- Buying too much house: Overspending on

housing is another financial mistake, and arguably the one that’s the most difficult to avoid. It can be hard to walk away from a dream home, but such a decision could secure your financial future. Unfortunately, data indicates far too many individuals are spending more on housing than conventional financial wisdom recommends. The most recent Consumer Expenditure Survey from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics found that spending on housing accounted for 33 percent of the average household’s monthly expenses and that the average house-

hold spent 88 percent of its after-tax income each month. That latter figure is especially troubling, as conventional financial wisdom recommends a saving rate of 20 percent. Overspending on housing greatly affects a person’s ability to save and invest, so resisting the temptation to buy that expensive dream home could be the difference between a secure or scary financial future.

Avoiding some common mistakes can help individuals be more financially flexible and secure over the long haul.

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