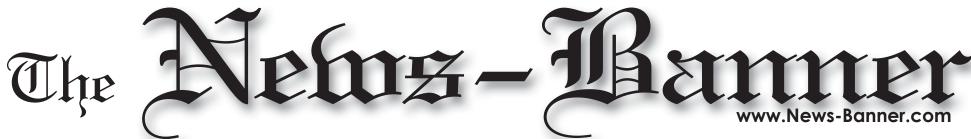
Wolverines win national title

Page 6



Roughly 70 Indiana schools receive bomb threat, Adams schools evacuate

By HOLLY GASKILL Approximately 70 Indiana schools received bomb threats Monday, including neighboring Adams and Allen counties.

This prompted all three Wells districts to issue statements to the public, assuring their schools had not received these threats. Each Wells district also retained its regular sched-

In a Facebook post, Southern Wells Superintendent Trent Lehman wrote: "The police believe it is a SCAM call as 70 schools total received the same threat. SW has not received any threats. SW has taken extra precautions and had security and maintenance check all buses, surroundings outside, doors, etc. and nothing concerning or suspicious has been found thus we have continued with a normal school day.'

According to a statement from Adams Central schools, the threat was sent via email and was "not considered to be customized to Adams Central." The statement reported the specific threat read, "There are explosives inside every school in your dis-

By JONATHAN SNYDER

trict was able to discuss behind the scenes

issues involving a potential new building,

first discussion of their 2024 budget plan.

Treasurer of the Wells County Chamber of

Commerce Trent Bucher stated that there is

about \$13 million worth of equipment cur-

rently in the ground. While there is signifi-

cant debt, a large portion of it will be for-

given, according to Bucher. The final budget

number for the RSD will be given in their

truck and website on Monday.

February meeting.

The Wells County Regional Sewer Dis-

The Regional Sewer District held the

Wells RSD discusses

background issues for 2024

132 in the area.

Adams Central, South Adams and North Adams schools evacuated their buildings and reunited students with their families during the middle of the school day. In a statement Monday afternoon, North Adams said the decision to evacuate was made "out of an abundance of caution.'

Similarly, East Allen County Schools questioned the validity of the threats in a statement: "Despite the widespread nature of these threats, no suspicious or explosive devices have been discovered in any of the schools, and there is no evidence supporting the validity of these threats. Furthermore, law enforcement has informed us that similar threats have been reported in other municipalities across the state and the country in recent weeks, with no established validity in those cases either."

The Indiana State Police also issued a statement regarding their investigation and assistance with evacuation, but no source of the threats has been reported at the time of

There are few updates for the Craigville

project as needed corrections to their punch

list line items will be addressed soon. RSD

Superintendent Lewis Brown is pleased

with VTF Excavation's willingness to get

things right. Project homeowners are still

hooking up to the district's connection sys-

tem, with 76 customers connected out of

gravity sewer is still in flux because of Rail-

Pro's delay with the jack and bore process.

All the force main and service lines are

installed, but the Rail-Pro permit is good

(Continued on Page 2)

The completion date for Kingsland's

holly@news-banner.com



Jim Breckler (right) presents updates on a variety of projects to the Ossian Town Council. (Photo

Ossian council discusses new projects, renovations

By SYDNEY KENT

Jim Breckler with Engineering Resources advised the Ossian Town Council that several new projects that will soon be advertised for bidding after permits are approved at the Monday evening meeting.

According to Breckler, the Indiana Department of Transportation has approved funds for work on Melching Drive and Hillside Court in Ossian. The council also approved pay application number three to the Wastewater plant in the amount of \$272,175. Breckler gave special thanks to Town Manager Crystal Chapman and Clerk-Treasurer Angie Ealing for taking extra time to help customers in need of septic relief before the council meeting.

Josh Barkley was approved to continue as president of the Ossian Town Council, with Dennis Ealing approved to continue as vice president. The board unanimously approved both motions at the Monday evening meeting.

The council also approved a motion for renovations to the Ossian Town Hall, specifically the office area of the building, in the amount of \$54,026.74. A significant portion of the funds are allocated to replace outdated office furniture. The renovations will be paid for with leftover COVID funds.

The council also approved a request to use a portion of the remaining COVID

funds to pay for the contract with the Wells County Sheriff's Department. The department's newest officer, Sam Oliver, began work on Monday, and an additional officer will begin soon. However, neither of the two officers will have the ability to work on their own until they have completed the police academy later this year. Sheriff Scott Holliday, who was present at the meeting, confirmed that the department will continue the

"For the town of Ossian, response times are important," Holliday said. "If we can fill in some gaps for the town, even if we may be in the Southern part of the county and it may take us 20 minutes to get here in the event of an emergency, we have people willing to do it.'

Mike Lautzenheiser, executive director of the Area Plan Commission, requested approval to make adjustments to the Wells County zoning ordinance and subdivision control. Of the many changes, complainants will now be required to write and sign complaints. Requirements for the solar energy system that would eliminate the existing property line setback were also approved. The goal would be to compact the size of the project to take a smaller footprint for the same amount of power generation.

Additional ordinance changes include (Continued on Page 2)

HOOSIER PLAYBOOK "INVESTMENT PARTNERS IN OUR FUTURE"

Gov. Eric Holcomb unveils his governing agenda Monday Jan. 8, 2024. (Casey Smith/Indiana Capital Chronicle)

Holcomb lays out agenda

2024 plans focus on education and workforce

By CASEY SMITH Indiana Capital Chronicle

In his final go, Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb wants to double down on K-12 literacy initiatives and bolster workforce training but won't seek specific policy related to growing concerns around Medicaid spend-

His reading plan could result in holding thousands more third-graders back a year in school.

The Republican governor on Monday unveiled his 2024 agenda, the last in his eight-year term. His policy goals additionally emphasize a need for expanded pre-K and childcare voucher eligibility, as well as increased access to disaster relief at the local

Specifically, Holcomb's agenda targets earlier access to IREAD-3 testing and ensuring Hoosier students are mastering foundational literacy skills. The latest reading scores showed that one in five Hoosier third graders continue to struggle.

Currently, the IREAD-3 exam is only required in third grade. The governor's administration is hoping to require testing in second grade, too. Doing so could help teachers and parents better identify struggling students and implement additional supports — such as through summer school or after-school tutoring — before kids get too far behind.

Students who fail the standardized exam can already be held back, but there are (Continued on Page 2)

Heavy winter storm conditions bear down on central U.S.

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) - A"highly impactful" winter storm delivered a punch to the country's midsection on Monday, with blizzard conditions dumping as much as a foot or more of snow and shutting down schools and highways in several Midwest

Through Tuesday, snow as deep as 8 to 12 inches could blanket a broad area stretching from southeastern Colorado all the way to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, including western Kansas, eastern Nebraska, large parts of Iowa, northern Missouri and northwestern Illinois, said Bob Oravec, a forecaster with the National Weather Service in College Park, Maryland.

'So a very, very highly impactful event coming forward," Oravec There were widespread school

closures across Nebraska and

Kansas on Monday ahead of the storm, where forecasters predicted 5 to 8 inches of snow. The school district that includes Nebraska's capital, Lincoln, told students to stay home. Lines were long Sunday at a Target Store drive-up in Omaha as residents stocked up on milk, bread and booze ahead of the storm.

Whiteout conditions in central Nebraska closed a long stretch of Interstate 80. Kansas closed Inter-

state 70 from the central city of Russell all the way to the Colorado border due to dangerous travel conditions, as well as many secondary roads in northwestern Kansas. Several vehicles slid off I-70 in the northeastern part of the

Federal courts in Omaha and Lincoln closed at noon Monday. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began increasing the flow through a Missouri River dam that

sits on the Nebraska-South Dakota border near Yankton by 2,000 cubic feet per second to reduce the chance of ice jams forming.

The weather service office in Des Moines, Iowa, warned of the potential for "widespread heavy, possibly extreme, snowfall," with up to 9 to 15 inches, and said that commuters on Monday evening and Tuesday morning would face 'significant impacts," with possible (Continued on Page 2)

Local/Area

Obituaries.....3 Police Notebook . . . 3

Opinion Michael Hicks 4

Also... Sports. 6-7 Classifieds 2a Diversions 3a



Rain and snow today with wind gusts, snow tonight

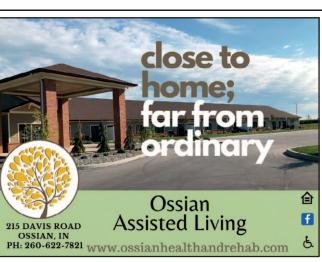
Today	Wed.	Thursday
High 44	High 34	High 36
Low 30	Low 27	Low 27

More Weather on Page 2

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Regional Sewer District

(Continued from Page 1) for Jan. 15. Ryan Lefeld of Choice One Engineering stated that an update should have been given on Monday, but he has not seen one.

Despite the delay, grinder stations for Kingsland are being installed with 40 stations out of 49 installed. While there is no electrical power for the grinder stations yet, Brown is compiling a list of capable electricians to get the system online. Levi Morrison of Wessler Engineering estimates that all the grinder station pits will be installed by

"VTF is making great

strides towards delivering this project on time, if not ahead of schedule," said Morrison in his report.

Apart from the main projects, the RSD discussed purchasing a new building for Brown. The structure will give Brown a new office space, while providing storage rooms for spare grinder units and other materials to support the connection system. The district is still searching for the right building to purchase, as some of their initial findings would not fit their needs. District board member Jon Shady along with his compatriots — Leon Berning, Jon Oman and Bruce Stinson — proposed bringing a realtor in to find what they need.

The RSD also discussed the need for a new truck. They currently have one quote for a 2018 truck with 100,000 miles on it, which should cost about \$17,500. While the district is pursuing other quotes to satisfy the needs of the State Revolving Fund, any new quotes are projected to be higher than the initial number.

Additionally, the district also passed a motion to search for a new vendor for their website. They are paying \$2740.64 to BCS Management for their services. Brown feels that the district has not gotten their money's worth from the current web-

"Anybody who's visited the website says that we should get a different website," said Brown.

The RSD also paid \$11,728.59 for various salaries, electric bills and other expenses. In addition, they heard amounts for pay applications involving Choice One, Wessler and VTF. These applications are expected to be approved in the district's February meet-

jonathan@news-banner.com

Weather

Tuesday, January 9, 2024 (24-hour observations at 9:27 p.m. Monday) High: 36, Low: 30, Precipitation: None

Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.19 feet at 9:45 p.m. Monday

Wells County forecast

Today: Rain, possibly mixed with snow, becoming all rain after 8 a.m. High near 44. East wind 15 to 20 mph becoming south in the afternoon. Winds could gust as high as 30 mph. Chance of precipitation is 100 percent. New snow accumulation of less than a half inch possible.

Tonight: Snow, possibly mixed with rain, becoming all snow after 4 a.m. Low around 30. Breezy, with a southwest wind 15 to 25 mph, with gusts as high as 40 mph. Chance of precipitation is 90 percent. New snow accumulation of less than a half inch possible.

Wednesday: Cloudy, with a high near 34. Breezy, with a west wind 20 to 25 mph, with gusts as high as 40 mph.

Wednesday Night: A 20 percent chance of snow after 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 27. Southwest wind 15 to 20 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

Thursday: Partly sunny, with a high near 36. Breezy.

Thursday Night: A chance of rain and snow after 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 27. Chance of precipitation is 40 percent.

Friday: Rain and snow. High near 40. Breezy. Chance of precipitation is 90 percent. **Friday Night:** Rain and snow. Low around 23. Windy.

Chance of precipitation is 90 percent. Saturday: A 50 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy,

with a high near 29. Windy. Saturday Night: A 20 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 7. Breezy.

Sunday: A 30 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy and cold, with a high near 17. Breezy.

Sunday Night: A chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 5.

M.L.King Day: A chance of snow. Mostly cloudy and cold, with a high near 17.

Holcomb agenda

(Continued from Page 1) exceptions if a child is disabled or an English-language learner.

State officials — including Holcomb - maintain that too many Indiana third graders who can't adequately read are advancing to the fourth grade. His agenda seeks to tighten up the state's retention policy to require third grade students who fail IREAD-3 to be held back for at least one year, starting in 2025.

None of Holcomb's priorities would require lawmakers to reopen the biennial state budget during the short legislative session, however.

"Ultimately, this (agenda) will be very interactive ... looking through a lens of our customers, citizens and local leaders - how they may access all the programs that the legislature, year after year after year, appropriates dollars to. These are programs that really do make a difference," he said during an agenda announcement at the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually impaired in Indianapolis. "Whether it's a local government or philanthropic organizations or local leaders, some don't know about some of the programs. And so, how can we better connect chambers, local leaders, etcetera, in a very easy way?

Indiana's General Assembly reconvened Monday for the start of the 2024

Legislative leaders said previously they're not taking on new and controversial subjects, promising a "quieter" non-budget session.

While Holcomb's agenda is closely aligned with goals expressed last month by Republican legislative leaders, his policy recommendations leave out issues like Medicaid reimbursement rates, gambling, chronic absenteeism and regulation of large water transfers.

Improving literacy

An administrative rule — with the force of law - dictates Indiana's existing third grade retention policy.

According to data from the Indiana Department of Education in 2023 13,840 third-graders did not pass I-READ-3. Of those, 5,503 received an exemption and 8,337 did not. Of those without an exemption, 95 percent moved onto 3rd grade while only 412 were retained.

Indiana Secretary of Education Katie Jenner said Monday that adding a legislative piece will make clear what retention means, and include "the proactive approaches" schools should implement in kindergarten, first and second grades.

"This will just really add clarity for the state and also help us stay laser focused on the fact that we have to have students reading by the end of third grade," Jenner continued, although she said the state board of education could make changes on its own, if it had to. "But I think there is a significant appetite with both the House and the Senate to look at potential legislation options.'

Holcomb's goal is that 95 percent of students in third grade can read proficiently by 2027. State officials said they can still meet that mark — but only if immediate changes and earlywarning systems are put in place.

A pilot program spearheaded by the state education department has already helped hundreds of Indiana schools administer IREAD-3 to second graders as a way to help parents and teachers

determine if reading interventions are needed for younger students before they take the exam.

The 2022-23 school year was the second year schools could opt-in. The test — likely to rebranded as "IREAD" was taken by almost 46,000 second graders. That's up from about 20,000 second graders who tested the year

"It is a very, very popular option for schools because it provides whether the child can read, whether they're on track, or whether they're potentially at risk, and it provides that data at a younger age," Jenner said. "That then can be used by the parent and the teacher to best support that child's learning in the future.

State officials noted that many students are expected to receive additional reading help during the summer.

Funding for summer school equal to about \$18.4 million per year under the current state budget — is mostly going toward students taking physical education and health courses in the summer, Jenner said.

What an opportunity we have to better leverage that funding on the students who are not able to read or may not have numeracy skills," she emphasized, adding that, for now, policymakers want to "focus on the current budget line that we have," rather than appropriating new funds.

Although Jenner, Holcomb and Republican state legislative leaders have said that high rates of absenteeism are likely contributing to the state's dismal literacy rates, policy to address student attendance and chronic absenteeism is not included in Holcomb's agenda.

The latest Indiana data shows that about 40 percent of students statewide missed 10 or more school days last year, and nearly one in five were "chronically absent" for at least 18 days.

Other items on Holcomb's agenda

- A statewide review of curricur materials expenses, following the state's 2023 commitment to cover textbook fees in K-12 schools. Jenner suggested Monday that some schools increased their curricular fees this academic year, prompting the state to investigate why reimbursement rates were higher than originally expected.
- The creation of a task force to review bail reform efforts and related impacts on public safety, like violent crime and recidivism rates.
- Tasking Indiana's Family and Social Services Administration to work with various stakeholders to create a "Multisector Plan for Aging" — a 10-year guide to help the state navigate its aging population.
- A call for FSSA and other state agencies to collaborate on a plan to improve support services and treatment options for Hoosier youth struggling with complex mental and behavioral health challenges.

Even so, Holcomb said Monday that he will "participate in the discussion that the legislators might have" about attendance.

"I plead with parents to not underestimate the impact that your child not being in school has on them adversely, long-term. ... We're past COVID now, and so parents need to understand the adverse impact of keeping their child out of school," the governor said. "There just is a correlation. I don't

think it takes a rocket scientist to realize that the less time you're (in school), the less you're going to learn.'

'We want to make sure that in this discussion of chronic absenteeism, that what we're doing is going to make a difference," Holcomb continued. "And I will continue to use my platform to plead with parents, begging them to make sure if their child can be in school, they need to be."

The governor's priorities also call for a mandatory computer science course to be completed by students before graduating high school. He additionally wants to task Indiana's public colleges and universities with offering more three-year bachelor's degrees, and make it easier for students to earn two-year associate degrees at the state's four-year institutions.

Expanding child care

A multi-part plan to expand early childhood education and child care options is also high on Holcomb's

The governor's plan aims to increase the number of child care and early education providers across Indiana by adding credentialing training to state-sponsored grant programs and making more employees of child care entities eligible for On My Way Pre-K and Child Care and Development Fund vouchers.

Holcomb's administration further wants to reduce the minimum age of caregivers; from 21 to 18 for infant and toddler caregivers, and from 18 to 16 for supervised caregivers in schoolaged classrooms.

'We know that to accommodate more kiddos in early learning environments, we need to have more workers there," Holcomb said. "Dropping age limits down — that doesn't mean dropping standards down. We think with the proper training and standards in place and oversight ... you should qualify and be eligible to work there."

Accessing disaster relief

Holcomb said Monday he will also work with legislators to help Hoosiers gain easier access to funds in the wake of both man-made and natural disasters.

Broadly, that means increasing the amount of relief dollars individual counties can receive, in addition to making it easier for individual Hoosiers to access aid.

The governor's plan includes a proposal to allow some dollars from the State Disaster Relief Fund to help local units implement hazard mitigation plans that assist in protecting against future damages. Mitigation could come in the form of newly-built tornado shelters or participation in the National Flood Insurance Program, for example.

Counties with such plans in place could also qualify for increased reimbursement after a disaster.

Holcomb's administration is also seeking to bump the maximum potential award for individual assistance from \$10,000 to \$25,000. Those funds can help Hoosiers with post-disaster damages and debris removal, among other needs.

Holcomb said he's confident the state can afford to increase available aid, noting that Indiana's disaster relief fund is financed by firework sales.

There would still be caps on how much could be dispersed, however, which officials said helps ensure the state fund isn't depleted.

Ossian council

(Continued from Page 1) allowing lines for project sites to be located underground as long as certain requirements are met, allowing "junk" vehicles to not be considered junk, so long as they are covered and maintained, and allowing a building that is partially or completely falling to be considered as junk. Lautzenheiser confirmed that this would be a complaint-driven process.

The council also:

- Approved the purchase of a fax machine for \$591 for the Ossian Police Department.
 - Approved the pur-

chase of ballistic shields for the OPD in the amount of \$5,693.84. Approved an additional

\$920 to the OPD to purchase the correct needed radars Approved payment for

assessment software in the amount of \$14,960 to 120 Water. The assessment is intended to locate where there are lead pipes in the community. Approved a motion to

rezone a business as residential on South Jefferson Street in Ossian. • Approved claims in the

amount of \$228,800.61. sydney@news-banner.com







Winter storm

(Continued from Page 1) whiteout conditions at times. Dubuque, on Iowa's eastern border with Illinois, closed its city offices Tuesday. Schools in Cedar Rapids in eastern Iowa were among those closing Tuesday.

The weather has already affected campaigning for Iowa's Jan. 15 precinct caucuses, where the snow is expected to be followed by frigid temperatures that could drift below zero degrees by caucus day next week. It forced former President Donald Trump's campaign to cancel multiple appearances by Arkansas Gov. Sarah Sanders and her father, former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, who

had been scheduled to court Iowa voters on Trump's behalf Monday.

In South Dakota, Sioux Falls Mayor Paul TenHaken urged residents not to travel Monday if they did not have to, and to give snowplows time and patience so they can clear the roads.

The Illinois Tollway, a state agency that maintains nearly 300 miles of toll roads across 12 northern Illinois counties, urged drives to take a similar "go it slow" attitude. The agency planned to deploy its entire fleet of 196 snowplows to clear snow and ice and help stranded drivers.

Parts of northern Missouri braced for up to a foot of snow. Officials in Kansas City, Missouri, said City Hall would be closed Tuesday and municipal courts would operate remotely. But the Missouri Department of Transportation said it was ready for its first big snowfall of the season, with at least 100 new employees

Silver Bullion

Coin Supplies (Albums & Folders)

after a shortage of snowplow drivers last winter.

Much of western and southern Minnesota as well as west-central Wisconsin were under winter storm warnings or advisories with snow accumulations of up to 10 inches predicted.

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OBITUARIES

Curtis Wade Barner, 48

Curtis Wade "Curt" Barner, 48, of Hamilton, Mich., formerly of Huntington, passed away at 6:10 a.m. Friday, Jan. 5, 2024, at his home in Hamilton. He was born Wednesday, Nov. 12, 1975, to John and Carolyn Barner in Wells

Curt was a 1994 graduate of Southern Wells High School. He attended Indiana State where he studied Electronics Technology. Curt formerly worked at United



Technology in Huntington and at Gentex in Zeeland, Mich. He was an avid bass fisherman, outdoorsman and enjoyed watching the Indianapolis Colts and the Cincinnati Reds.

Curt is survived by his mother, Carolyn J. (Kimmel) Barner, Warren, (Heritage Pointe); brothers, Chris (Erminia) Wamsley, Culver, Ind., Steve Wamsley, Marquette, Mich.; nephew, Ryan C. Wamsley, Fort Wayne; nieces, Lorelei Wamsley, Culver, Ind., and Heather Wamsley, Poestenkill, N.Y.

He was preceded in death by his father, John W.

Barner on August 4, 2004.

Family and friends may gather to share and remember at Walker & Glancy Funeral Home, located at 109 W. Windsor St. Montpelier, IN Friday, Jan. 12, 2024, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

A service to celebrate Curt's life will be held at Walker & Glancy Funeral Home at 11:00 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 13, 2024. Viewing will be held one hour prior to the service, starting at 10:00 a.m. Burial will follow in the Keystone Friends Cemetery in Keystone, IN, Wells County.

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

Jane Ann Hullinger, 94

Jane Ann Hullinger, 94, of Bluffton, passed away early Sunday morning, Jan.7, 2024, at River Terrace Estates in Bluffton.

Jane was born Dec. 11, 1929, in Huntington to Harold and Eva Alberta (Thomson) Jacobs and graduated from Huntington High School in 1947. Jane was dedicated to raising her children and volunteered with the Red Cross and Meals on Wheels. Jane was a member of First United Method-



ist Church in Bluffton. She loved playing piano, knitting, cooking and baking. She was a special caregiver to her

On June 19, 1948, Jane married Robert K. Hullinger, Sr. at First United Brethren Church. They shared 63 years of marriage together before his passing Jan. 4,

Survivors include her children, Robert K. Hullinger, Jr. of Marion, John M. Hullinger of Angola and Rebecca K. (Stan) Worthman of Ossian. Jane was loving known as "Grandma Jane" to 10 grandchildren, Kristina J. (Joel) Roush, Cara L. (David) Teeple, Ryan Hullinger, Elizabeth (Michael) Mendoza, Sierra (Joel) Gibbons and Stone (Shannon) Hullinger, Josie Nicole Tatom, Abby Hullinger, Carli (Brian) Sauer and Shaye (Federico) Worthman; along with 22 great-grandchildren and 2 greatgreat grandchildren.

Jane is preceded in death by her husband; two sons, William J. and Thomas A. Hullinger; a daughter-in-law, Julie Hullinger; and her parents.

Funeral services will take place at 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 11, 2024, at Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home with Barry Crosbie officiating.

Visitation will be held from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday before the service

A private family burial will take place at a later date at Pilgrims Rest Cemetery in Huntington.

Memorials may be made in Jane's memory to Stillwa-

ter Hospice.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Lemler family of Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home. Friends can send online condolences to the family at www.thomarich.com.

Holcomb promotes workforce training resources

By WHITNEY DOWNARD, Indiana Capital Chronicle Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb announced a statewide campaign to promote the state's workforce training resources, all

compiled under the "One Stop to Start" website. "The overall goal of 'One Stop to Start' is to make sure that Hoosiers have awareness of and access to the programs that can get them on that path to realizing a high-wage career," said Holcomb in a release. "Perhaps it's a short-term certificate or a two- or four-year degree. There's a pathway for all Hoosiers, and "One Stop to Start" will help individu-

als discover various options that fit their needs.' Previously, Holcomb said increasing awareness about current government programs would be one of his priorities in his last year as governor. In addition to public health funding and business supports, the state offers tuition-free certifications, connections to apprenticeships and college

financial aid — as detailed at One Stop to Start. The site also offers one-on-one navigator assistance for both Hoosiers and employers during business hours Monday through Friday. And it highlights fast-growing careers and emerging industries, such as microelectronics and semiconductors, electric vehicles, robotics and clean energy pro-

"Indiana's workplace footprint is changing. Our state has long been a leader in industries such as advanced manufacturing, engineering, biopharma and life sciences," Holcomb continued. "As Indiana continues to take workforce development to the next level, we must educate, skill up and train Hoosiers for the economies and industries of the future."

Workforce training and availability are big considerations for potential Hoosier employers seeking partnerships with the Indiana Economic Development Corporation — whether in technical careers or health care, including the state's direct-service workforce for home- and community-based services. Indiana has a low number of Hoosiers with an education beyond high school, hampering efforts to attract certain companies.

Corrections and

clarifications

Saturday's edition misrep-

resented the recent murder

case in Markle. Anthony

Castleman, 37, Markle, has

been charged with the mur-

der of Bernice "Dianna" Eubank, but has not been

convicted nor pled guilty

and is therefore only a sus-

pect of the crime.

An article and headline in

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Check Us Out

Police Notebook

INCIDENTS

City:

Friday, 10:13 p.m., Save On Liquor South. Welfare check requested for subject who appeared to be intoxicated in vehicle.

Friday, 10:44 p.m., 500 block of West Market Street. Report of loud music.

Saturday, 12:12 a.m., Peytons Northern Distribution Center. Report of subject threatening to stab someone while holding knife.

Saturday, 6:48 a.m., 900 block of Eastmoor Drive. Caller reported issues with unwanted party.

Saturday, 8:01 a.m., Kroger. Caller reported man requested ride to Lancaster Senior Villas.

Saturday, 5:15 p.m., Bluffton Police Department. Subject reported a lost license plate for trailer. Officer unsuccessfully explained process of replacement.

Saturday, 7:17 p.m., Save On Liquor North, Caller reported unwanted subject refusing to leave.

Saturday, 7:26 p.m., Americas Best Value Inn. Male warned for trespassing.

Saturday, 8:38 p.m., 300 block of East Wiley Avenue. Caller reported bike on prop-

Saturday, 9:21 p.m., 1200 block of Lancaster Street.

Multiple callers reported to get out. Nottingham Fire Ebony Nowlin advised she woman screaming for help. Found to be a minor altercation, subjects separated.

Sunday, 12:31 p.m., Bluffton Police Department. Report of a wallet found.

Sunday, 4:26 p.m., 1000 block of West South Street. Report of man accessing wife's social media and bank account without permission.

Monday, 1:11 a.m., Indiana Army National Guard. Report of two buses with doors open.

Monday, 10:43 a.m., 300 block of East Central Avenue. Report of stolen medication.

County:

Friday, 1:51 p.m., Wells County Jail. Served three warrants to subject at Wells County Courthouse before transporting them to jail.

Saturday, 7:31 a.m., 5800 East 300 North, Craigville. Report of motion detector alarm. Alarm believed to be activated by mouse.

Saturday, 10:43 a.m., 100 West and West 700 North, Uniondale. Report of stop sign and pole down at inter-

Sunday, 2600 West 1000 North, Markle, Officer reported vehicle unlocked.

Sunday, 5:19 p.m., 6600 East 1100 South, Keystone. Caller reported deer fell into pond through ice, unable

dency at the Medical Col-

lege of Wisconsin, where he

was chief resident in surgery

and completed a fellowship

in cardiothoracic surgery.

During that time, he enlisted

with the United States Navy

Reserve and served for near-

ly a decade before he was

nal bid, Bucshon performed

heart surgeries and was

the president of Ohio Val-

ley HeartCare alongside his

duties as chief of cardiotho-

racic surgery and medical

director of the open heart

recovery intensive care unit

at St. Mary's Hospital — all

called Bucshon a great

friend and mentor in a state-

ment, saying he "fought for

eled to Afghanistan, Nor-

mandy for the 75th Anni-

versary of D-Day and recent

to Africa to visit Indiana

National Guard troops. As

a fellow Navy Reserve Vet-

eran I appreciate what Larry

has done to serve our veter-

ans and support our troops," Banks said. "Those are big shoes to fill for our state!"

Another open seat in 2024

comes roughly a month

before the Congressional fil-

ing deadline. Three districts

so far won't have an incum-

bent, with competitive pri-

mary races in the 3rd Congressional District and 5th

Banks, in the 3rd Con-

gressional District, is seek-

ing the state's open Senate

seat currently held by U.S.

Sen. Mike Braun, who is

Congressional District.

Bucshon's announcement

"Larry and I have trav-

conservative values."

U.S. Rep. Jim Banks,

in Evansville.

Prior to his Congressio-

honorably discharged.

Department rescued the deer.

Monday, 12:45 a.m., Ind. 1 and East 350 North, Bluffton. Driver cited for speeding 71 in a 55 mph zone.

Monday, 1:21 a.m., Ind. 224 and North 300 West, Uniondale. Driver pulled over with odor of marijuana in vehicle. K-9 Leo did not alert, however, some marijuana shake and a used blunt inside of a pop can were found. Warnings issued.

Ossian:

Friday, 3:12 p.m., North 100 East and East 900 North, Ossian. Driver cited for speeding.

Friday, 3:12 p.m., North 100 East and East 900 North, Ossian. Driver cited for speeding 70 in a 45 mph zone.

Friday, 5:13 p.m., 5700 East Ind. 224, Ossian. Caller requested information regarding vehicle.

ACCIDENTS

City:

Monday, 7:33 a.m., Stogdill Road and Sherwood Drive. Mackinley Baker advised he was stopped and preparing to turn left when he collided with an oncoming vehicle driven by Griselda Martinez. No injuries were reported. Damage did not exceed \$2,500.

Wednesday, 3:14 p.m., Ind. 1 and Market Street.

went to change lanes and failed to see a Dodge Charger driven by Abby Langholz-Aldara. Nowlin's Kia Sportage collided with the front drivers side of the charger. Damage did not exceed

ARRESTS

Tiahnna Kechaun Leonynette Wilson, 32, Indianapolis; battery, a Class B misdemeanor. No bond set.

Dominique Denzel Kirby, 30, Bluffton; domestic battery, criminal trespassing and invasion of privacy, all Class A misdemeanors, and disorderly conduct, a Class B misdemeanor. Bond set at

Grace M. Sims, 21, Fort Wayne, possession of marijuana, a Class A misdemean-

Troy Kristofer Forrest Jones, 25, Fishers; intimidation with a deadly weapon, a Level 5 felony. Bond set at \$10,000.

Austin Glen Kolkman, 22, Fort Wayne; possession of a controlled Schedule I substance, a Level 6 felony, invasion of privacy and dealing marijuana, both Class A misdemeanors, possession of marijuana, a Class B misdemeanor, and possession of paraphernalia, a Class C misdemeanor. Bond set at

U.S. Rep. Larry Bucshon announces retirement

Leaves open seat in 2024 election

By WHITNEY **DOWNARD**

Indiana Capital Chronicle

U.S. Rep. Larry Bucshon announced Monday he will retire from Congress this year, freeing up another congressional seat for Indiana politicians in the 2024 election cycle.

"Scripture teaches us, 'For everything there is a season, and it became clear to me over the Christmas holiday with much discernment and prayer that the time has come to bring my season in public service to a conclusion. Therefore, I will not seek reelection to an eighth term and conclude my service in the House of Representatives at the end of the 118th Congress," Bucshon said in a statement.

A Republican and cardiothoracic surgeon, Bucshon was elected in 2010 to represent portions of western and southern Indiana. He called it "the privilege of a lifetime," noting his Illinois roots as the son of a coal miner and nurse and thanking his staff.

"However, the biggest thank you must be reserved for my wife, Kathryn, and our children. Without Kathryn's indulgence, support, and willingness to accept drastic changes to our family life over the past 14 years, I would not have been able to serve in Congress. I also want to thank my children Luke, Alec, Blair, and Zoe. When I first ran for Congress, all four children were living at home – with our youngest just 6 years old – and today they are all grown and pursuing their own lives. As young children they all had to accept significant changes to our family life to accommodate my service in Congress," Bucshon concluded.

Much of Bucshon's legislative focus was on health care, including recent efforts to modernize the organ transplant process and lower costs. Other priorities, according to his year-end release from 2023, included energy production, halting undocumented immigration at the southern border and opposing abortion rights.

Bucshon received his medical degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago and completed his resiown competitive primary. Banks' departure has

attracted 14 candidates to the safely Republican race in northeastern Indiana, including 10 Republicans, according to filings with the Federal Election Commission. Republican entrants who

reported fundraising monies to the FEC include: Former U.S. Rep. Marlin Stutzman, former Allen County Circuit Court Judge Wendy Davis, state Sen. Andy Zay, construction project manager Grant Bucher, nonprofit executive Tim Smith, conservative Eric Whalen, Warsaw maintenance technician and military veteran Mike Felker and military veteran and former political staffer Jon Kenworthy.

On the Democrat side, farmer and teacher Phil Goss and global consultant Kiley Adolph have raised funds. In the 5th Congressional

District, incumbent U.S. Rep. Victoria Spartz, a Republican, announced her retirement last year but recently indicated that she might run again. When she initially ran in 2020, her seat was one of the most competitive in the country as both major political parties sought to grow their power. Following redistricting later that year that excluded Marion County while retaining Anderson and Muncie, Spartz's seat became safely Republican.

Eleven other candidates have filed with the FEC, indicating their intention to run though Madison County prosecutor Rodney Cummings withdrew in August. Of the 10 Republican candidates, only three had reported raising any funds.

VISITATION & SERVICES Marcella B. Egly Calling: 10 - 11 a.m. Thursday,

January 11 at Heritage Pointe. **Service:** 11 a.m. Thursday, January 11 at the Applegate Chapel at Heritage Pointe of Warren.

Thoma/Rich, Lemler **Funeral Home** 308 W. Washington St. 824-3850

www.thomarich.com

Personal Invitation to Wells County Residents to a Public Hearing Jan. 10, 2024 at 5 p.m. Wells County Annex 223 W Washington St.

As the acting Wells County Health Department Health Officer, I am extending a personal invitation to our residents to attend this meeting to listen, ask questions and learn more about the state of operational challenges the HD is facing, staffing shortages and especially who and why the decision was made to rob the county residents of \$250,000 in additional funding to expand needed health care services in our community when almost every other county took the money. Please come. Your attendance is very important.

running for governor in his



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Parker

What does new GDP data tell us about us Hoosiers?

The U.S. Department of Commerce is reviewing the National Income Accounts, which measure the size and composition of our economy. This process is undertaken every few years, as better measurement tools are available. Right now, the data only extends back to 2017, but it tells a few interesting stories about the Hoosier economy.

From 2017 through 2022, the Indiana economy grew more slowly than the nation as a whole. In inflation-adjusted terms,

the Hoosier economy expanded by 10.8 percent, while the nation as a whole grew by 11.3 percent. That trend continues our longterm underperformance.



Michael **Hicks**

Hoosier **Opinions**

But, the dismal growth of 2017 through 2020 accounts for all the lagging performance of the Hoosier economy. The expansion from 2009 to 2019 was the worst relative performance of our economy in state history. By 2019, the Indiana economy was slipping into recession due primarily to the tariffs put in place by the Trump admin-

During the post-COVID period, Indiana's economy has grown steadily. No matter which period you examine from 2020 to 2022, we ranked among the top six states for economic growth post-COVID. There are two clear reasons for this.

The first is the American shift of consumption towards manufacturing. From 2017 to 2022, American household consumption of durable goods grew by 316 billion dollars, or 17.7 percent. All of this shift occurred from the start of the pandemic through late 2022. This shift is partially attributable to the low levels of travel and tourism the nation experienced in 2020. But, the vast majority of increased demand for manufactured goods came from federal stimulus payments in the CARES and Pandemic Recovery Act.

A whopping 46.4 percent of Indiana's GDP growth since the pandemic comes from the manufacturing of goods. However, almost all of that growth was due to federal pandemic spending. That spending boom ended in mid-2022, and the Indiana manufacturing sector has actually shrunk over the past six quarters. In fact, most of Indiana's economy shrank over the past 18 months, since the pandemic stimulus spending ran out.

In fact, just four sectors account for 85.8 percent of our state's growth since the end of stimulus. These are retail, transportation, information services and professional and scientific services. Taken together these data tell a pretty clear story. Indiana's slow growth during the last expansion from 2009 to 2019 hit a tariff wall in 2018. That pushed us into an early recession. Then COVID hit, and the U.S. economy slumped to Great Depression levels of joblessness.

The quick rebound was concentrated in the manufacturing sector. Some of that shift was due to consumers substituting RVs, patio furniture and new carpet for the Disney vacation they couldn't safely take. The largest causal factor in Indiana's rapid post-COVID growth was the series of federal government stimulus checks. Those stimulus payments have been spent, and the result was a shrinking manufacturing sector since mid-2022.

The Hoosier economy is now returning to a more pre-COVID trend, with growth that is slower than the nation as a whole. A more interesting story is where that growth is occurring. Before COVID, the geography of economic activity continued to occur overwhelmingly in the Indianapolis metropolitan area. So far in this century, Indianapolis and its suburbs have captured 82 percent of the state's population growth and 105 percent of its jobs. Over the last year for which we have data, that has fallen to 70 percent of population growth and 50 percent of job

The post-COVID world is one in which remote work is now common, and as many as one in three Hoosiers have some remote work options. That allows families far more flexibility in their choice of locations. This has meant departure from the largest city centers, for suburbs and smaller towns.

From 2000 to 2022, Hamilton, Hendricks and Marion County alone accounted for half the state's population growth. However, from 2020 to 2022, Marion County was one of 34 Hoosier counties that lost population. According to the IRS files from 2020-2021, Hamilton County was the number one destination of previous Marion County residents. In fact, the growth in Hamilton and Hendricks counties were so strong, that together they accounted for more than half of all the state's new residents since 2020.

The new GDP data offers some tantalizing evidence that we are seeing an increasing separation between businesses and household location. The Indy metro area is the perfect place to explore this. From 2017 to 2022, the period of revised data, the Indy metro area claimed 38.3 percent of the state's GDP growth. Marion County alone collected a quarter of the state's GDP growth, along with 7.1 percent of the state's population growth. But, since the COVID downturn, Marion County continued to hold 25 percent of the state's total GDP growth while losing more than 7,000 residents.

I apologize for all the data here, but a quick narrative summary might pull it all together. Since the end of the Great Recession, the Hoosier economy has performed poorly, growing slower than the nation. This left us slipping farther and farther behind in terms of income and

prosperity. The one astonishing bright spot has been the performance of the manufacturing sector in the first 18 months after COVID. This burst in manufacturing production was caused primarily by the federal government stimulus, which was exhausted by the middle of 2022. In the six quarters since, Indiana's manufacturing sector shrunk modestly.

At the same time, population growth is happening in a modestly broader set of counties. The shock of the pandemic is too recent to make clear if this is a permanent trend, but it does suggest that as Indiana returns to a pre-COVID economy, more Hoosier counties might expect to pull in a larger share of new residents. This of course means places must becoming more like the successful counties of Hamilton, Hendricks, Allen, Johnson,

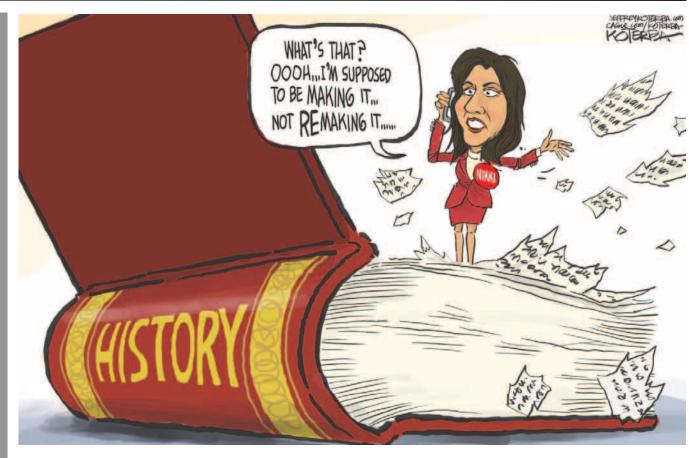
Michael Hicks is the George and Frances Ball Distinguished Professor of Economics and the director of the Center for Business and Economic Research at Ball State University.

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The rational case for **President Nikki Haley**

Though it seems as if campaigning for the 2024 presidential election began right after the last one ended, the voting is only now beginning with Iowa's Republican caucuses on Jan. 15. As usual, we'll learn that the caucuses are strange and chaotic. We'll be reminded that the winner might not become the GOP nominee but one of the losers might. And it's on to New Hampshire on Jan. 23 and South Carolina's first-in-the-South primary on

Most bets are on Donald Trump, despite fierce campaigning by his top challengers, former U.N. ambassador Nikki Haley and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who has visited all 99 Iowa counties and secured the governor's endorsement. DeSantis is seen as needing to score second place in Iowa to continue his bid, as Haley and Trump are polling ahead of him in New Hampshire.

Countless are the reasons that Trump, who has declared himself the "revenge" candidate, should be swept into history's dustbin and left to spend his golden years as a professional defendant. If he continues to insist that the 2020 election was stolen from him, a noxious and provable lie, imagine what he'd do with a 2024

In addition to risking a repeat of Jan. 6, 2021, a Trump loss would leave us with the elderly Joe Biden in the presidency and the painful probability that he won't live to complete his second term. And you know what that means. The single strongest argument against Biden's reelection is Vice President Harris.

I can't stress enough how irresponsible it would be to make a Harris presidency possible. Just listen to her speeches. Her rhetorical flourishes can be dumbfounding, as when she says, "When we talk about the children of the community, they are a children of the community."

Then there's the laugh, maniacal and mystifying. What is she laughing at? Nothing funny, it so often seems. I'm sure the vice president is lovely in other contexts, but as president, she would frighten the world.

Biden has different issues. Never mind the verbal pratfalls for which he has long been infamous; it's his physical ones that are most worrisome. Falling is the No. cause of fatal injuries in older people, and at times, it seems Biden is tilting too far for comfort. No one wants to hear personal criticism of our aged president, so we'll leave it at: Go home, Joe.

Biden was surely the better choice in 2020 — far preferable to a guy accused of paying a porn star for sex and silence while his wife was taking care of an infant, a constitutional heathen who encouraged a siege of the U.S. Capitol by his supporters and believers in the "big

lie." Trump, don't forget, was impeached by the House of Representatives for "inciting violence against the Government of the

This glowering, pouty-frowned schlump belongs nowhere near the White House. Trump is an unfit candidate. Full stop.

Thus, we are left with Haley and

DeSantis. My view is that Haley is far and above the best pick for the job of chief executive and commander in chief. Like DeSantis, she has been a governor (South Carolina), where she was popular enough to be reelected. She left that job to become Trump's ambassador to the United Nations, where she was a natural. Articulate, knowledgeable and a quick

Critics point to Haley's ambition and strategically timed policy positions, such as the decision to remove the Confederate battle flag from the State House grounds following the murders of nine African American parishioners in a historic Charleston church. If it was the right thing to do, why didn't she do it before a racist lunatic mowed down innocent people in prayer? The answer is that politics is about compromises, adjustments and unfolding circumstances. When South Carolina was ready to purge the flag, Haley was ready.

study, she entered and left the position as a polished pro.

DeSantis is plainly smart, too — a graduate of Harvard Law and Yale University. A JAG officer in the Navy, DeSantis was an adviser to a Navy SEAL commander and received both a Bronze Star and the Iraq Campaign Medal.

For all this, however, he seems a man unfamiliar with his own skin. He lacks what Haley has in abundance: charisma. In addition to her proven competence as an executive and her superior performance in debate after debate, she is also warm, approachable and likable. A mother of two, she's the wife of a deployed military officer. Most impressive, she's a dark-skinned, secondgeneration Sikh American who grew up in Bamberg, S.C. (population 3,607), with a father who wore a dastar h turban).

As someone who spent my childhood summers racing up and down the scorching sidewalks of nearby Barnwell, S.C., I can tell you: A person who can make it out of Bamberg to govern and perform on the world stage can do anything, including lead the United States.

Do the right thing for your country, Iowa, and vote

kathleenparker@washpost.com.

Haley fumbled her Civil War answer. Her real error was not immediately owning up to it.

To kick off 2024, I didn't have the origins of the Civil War on my bingo card.

Republican presidential hopeful Nikki Haley has not made many mistakes. Until

I can't decide what is more maddening: Haley's lame answer to a question from a New Hampshire voter about what started the Civil War, or the simplistic attacks on Haley by people in both parties who don't know much about history.

In college, I majored in U.Š. history and took courses on the Civil War. The causes of the conflict are multidimensional.

On the one hand, if that question were on the final exam and I had written exactly what the former governor of South Carolina said, I'd have gotten a D.

Yet, if I had said — as many of Haley's critics suggest – that the sole cause of the Civil War was slavery, I still wouldn't have managed better than a C-minus.

Haley began her answer by saying: "I think the cause of the Civil War was basically how (the) government was going to run, the freedoms and what people could and couldn't do."

After pausing for a few seconds, she completed her thought.

"I think it always comes down to the role of government and what the rights of the people are," she said. "And I will always stand by the fact that I think (the) government was intended to secure the rights and freedoms of the people. It was never meant to be all things to all people.'

Whose rights and freedoms were protected by the government before April 1861, when Confederate troops



Ruben ery. Navarette

attacked Fort Sumter and began the Civil War? Not those of African slaves.

Haley was probably worried about how it would look to voters back home in the Palmetto State if she said to a roomful of Northerners — that the Confederacy went to war to defend slav-

Meanwhile, Haley's critics also erred in suggesting the Civil War was entirely about slavery.

In an op-ed for The Guardian, Democratic operative Sidney Blumenthal said the answer to the question that was posed to Haley was "an easy one for any eighth grader.'

Gov. Ron DeSantis, another contender for the Republican nomination, said Haley "had some problems with some basic American history," and that it's "not that difficult to identify and acknowledge the role slavery played in the Civil War."

But U.S. history is complex. According to History.com, the website of the History Channel, the Civil War began "after decades of simmering tensions between northern and southern states over slavery, states' rights and westward expansion." Other factors cited by historians include the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860; booming economies that gave Southern states the confidence to secede; the invention of the cotton gin, which increased the value of cotton and made the South even more dependent on slaves; and the question of whether Southern states could nullify federal laws.

Of course, much of this is tied to slavery. But saying that slavery was the main cause of the Civil War is not accurate.

People who talk for a living will sometimes be afflicted with "foot-inmouth" disease.

The real problem is how Haley reacted to her gaffe. Instead of owning it and immediately setting the record straight, she suggested the question was planted by Democrats.

Twelve hours later, she said in a radio interview: "Of course the Civil War was about slavery." She declared that "freedom matters" and "individual rights and liberties matter for all people.

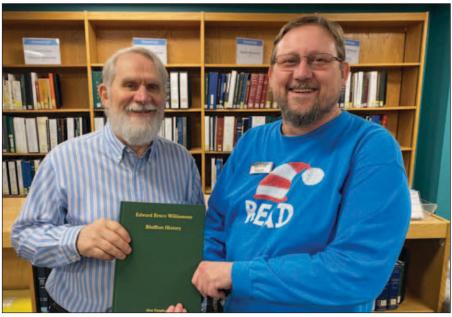
Maybe I'm the wrong person to decide whether gaffes should doom politicians. I voted for Joe Biden in 2020 because the other name on the ballot was Donald Trump. I overlooked Biden's record of making tonedeaf remarks, many of them racially charged.

The former Delaware senator who authored the 1994 crime bill, which led to the mass incarceration of Blacks and Latinos — once joked that the bill did "everything but hang people for jaywalking." Biden — who opposed forced busing in the 1970s and kept company with Southern segregationists in the Senate — also implied that Black women didn't know "how to raise their children" without the help of White social workers who could tell them to "make sure you have the record player on at night.'

I voted for Biden anyway. Why? Because I believe there should be a special dispensation for those who face off against Trump. They should get a free pass when they say the wrong thing — or fail to say the right thing.

Biden got that free pass, and now so should someone else who is squaring off against Trump: Nikki Haley.

crimscribe@icloud.com.



Author Alan Daugherty, at left, is shown presenting two copies of his book about Wells County resident E.B. Williamson to Jason Habegger, adult service manager for the Indiana Room at the library in Bluffton. (Photo provided)

Local author to give city history talk

Local author Alan Daughtery will be at the Wells County Public Library's Bluffton location on Tuesday, Jan. 16, from 6:30-7:30 p.m. to discuss his new book: "Edward Bruce Williamson: Bluffton History."

E.B. Williamson was a renowned naturalist with a particular interest in dragonflies and damselflies, as well as, a botanist and iris breeder. Daugherty's talk will focus mostly on Williamson's life in the early 1900s and his influence on several businesses and organizations in Bluffton and Wells County.

Daughtery recently donated two

copies of the book to the Wells County Public Library. Accepting the book was Adult Service Manager Jason Habegger, who oversees the Indiana Room at the library.

Daugherty will be signing books at the end of the presentation and will have additional copies that can be purchased that evening. Proceeds from the sale of the books will go to Loving Shepherd Ministries.

Pre-registration is appreciated to attend this event. Please register at the library, call (260) 824-1612 or via the Library's Event Calendar at wellscolibrary.org.

"Making a Difference" sponsors



Excel Homes will be one of the sponsors when the Wells Community Boys & Girls Club hosts their annual "Making a Difference" banquet on Jan. 22, at the club. Left to right in the photo are Vicki Bell (club manager), Marlin Schmucher and Bob Grover (both Excel staff), Nick Huffman (club board member) and Gene Bell (resource development officer for the club).



Peyton's also will be one of the sponsors of the Boys & Girls Club fund-raiser. Left to right in the photo are Gene Bell and Vicki Bell (club representatives), Jason Suman (Sr. Operations manager), Theresa Trotter (general manager) and Drew Dunavent (Sr. operations manager).

Activities at Fort Wayne's riverfront areas

A variety of activities are planned at river side areas in downtown Fort Wayne.

The Winter Cozy 80s Apres Ski Party will be held at the Promenade Park Pavilion on Saturday, Jan. 27, from 6 to 10 p.m. Those attending must be 21 or older and admission is \$10 with online credit card only at the door.

On Friday, Jan. 12, 7 to 9 p.m. a Skate Off will be held at the Headwaters Ice Rink.

The January Sunday Heritage Concert will be held on Jan. 14, from 2 to 3 p.m. at the Promenade Park Pavilion featuring acoustic guitar and vocals by Topher Beyer. On Feb. 11 the entertainment will be an Open Jam Session with folks bringing their own instruments.

'A Night at the Ballroom" will be featured on Jan. 18, from 7 to 9:30 p.m. at the

Promenade Park Pavilion. A free "Sunday Sweat on the Riverfront" will take place the 2nd Sundays of the month (Jan. 13 and Feb. 11) with Kickboxing with 9Round from 9 to 10 a.m. and Yoga on the Riverfronts

from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. More info about the events at fortwayneparks.



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How men can live longer

Also: The latest weight loss and diabetes meds

Ouestion: It is scary to hear that men in the U.S. have an increasingly shorter lifespan compared to women. What can I do buck the trend? - Richard F., Seattle

Answer: You're right women in this country now live, on average, almost six years longer than men. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data published in JAMA Internal Medicine shows that in 2021, women's life expectancy was around 79 years, compared to around 73 years for men. Clearly, there is a crisis affecting American men's quality and length of life. Let's look at what's fueling this.

combination increasing rates obesity and associated health problems such as diabetes, differences in men's immune response to COVID-19 and drug abuse are likely contributors.

• In the 2017-2018 Health and National Nutrition Examination Survey, more middle-aged men had obesity than any other group, coming in at 46 percent.

• Worldwide, an estimated 17.7 million more men than women have diabetes. Men develop Type 2 diabetes at a lower weight than women because they store their fat in the belly. And more men than women have undiagnosed (and therefore untreated) Type 2 diabetes. On average, people with diabetes die six years earlier than adults without diabetes.

• More men than women die from COVID-19 perhaps because of inherent immune differences, a reluctance to acknowledge they are ill, and the fact that they have diabetes.

• And men are more than twice as likely as women to die from drug overdoses. Opioids account for almost 70 percent of deaths; cocaine and psychostimulants come in at around 20 percent each, since some deaths are



Mehmet Oz, M.D. and Mike Roizen, M.D.

from multiple drugs. Since 1999, the number of men dying from drug overdoses has risen by 14 percent annually.

These statistics tell you what you need to do to live long and prosper. Avoid illicit drugs, eat a healthy plant-based diet, get lots of physical activity, get regular medical checkups, and if you are ill, see a doctor pronto! Want to know your ActualAge? Go to LongevityPlaybook.com.

Question: There's so much confusing news about the diabetes and weight loss drugs that are being marketed. Can you explain which ones are approved for what uses and what the pros and cons are? — Joyce D., Springfield, Illinois

Answer: The basics are that Ozempic (AKA semaglutide) is injectable diabetes drug that launched the craze of off-label use for weight loss. Then a similar medication called Wegovy was approved for weight loss (the dosing is different than the diabetes version). After that, Mounjaro was OK'd to combat Type 2 diabetes and folks started using it off label for weight loss, too. That led to the most recent version on the market, Zepbound, which has the active ingredient in Mounjaro (tirzepatide), but is approved for weight loss.

The weight loss versions

are for folks who have obesity or are overweight and contend with at least one weight-related condition, such as high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes or high LDL cholesterol.

The diabetes medications, Ozempic and Mounjaro, are GLP-1 and GLP-1 and GIP analogues respectively. They help you produce more insulin and reduce the amount of glucose that your liver produces. In addition, they increase bone mass and decrease cravings for food and alcohol.

There are potential – though rare — risks potential from these meds. If you do not do resistance exercises regularly, you may see a loss of muscle mass. But complications such as pancreatitis, bowel obstruction, and gastroparesis in users of GLP-1, are about 1 percent or less per year of GLP-1 use according to a recent study. However, as the author of an opinion piece in JAMA Network points out, when so many people are using a medication even a small risk of complications can affect a lot of folks. So, if you take these medications, pay attention to how they affect you and alert your doctor to any potential side effects. And make sure to combine consistent resistance exercise and a healthy fish and plant-based diet with your medication routine.

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Michigan routs Washington for National Championship

By RALPH D. RUSSO AP College Football Writer

HOUSTON (AP) — Blake Corum ran for 134 yards and two fourth-quarter touchdowns as Jim Harbaugh and No. 1 Michigan — undeterred by suspensions and a sign-stealing case that shadowed the program — completed a three-year climb to a national championship by beating No. 2 Washington 34-13 Monday night in the College Football Playoff title game.

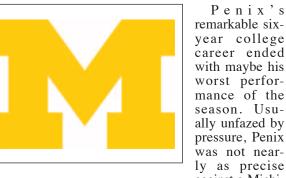
The Wolverines (15-0) sealed their first national title since 1997 when Corum, who scored the winning touchdown in overtime to beat Alabama in the Rose Bowl semifinal, blasted in from the 1-yard line with 3:37 left to put Michigan up by 21 and set off another rousing rendition of "The Victors."

After nine seasons coaching his alma mater and in his third con-

secutive playoff appearance,
H a r b a u g h
delivered the
title so many
expected when
he took over
a struggling
powerhouse
in 2015 —
despite missing six regularseason games

this season while serving separate suspensions.

And he did it with a team his old coach, Bo Schembechler, would have adored. The Wolverines ran for 303 yards against Washington (14-1), and their defense held Michael Penix Jr. and the Huskies' prolific passing game to just one touchdown while intercepting the Heisman Trophy runner-up twice.



against a Michigan defense that took away his signature deep throws.

Penix finished 27 for 51 for 255

yards and a touchdown.

Michigan's J.J. McCarthy had a modest game, throwing for 140 yards and running for 31. But it was enough for him to improve to 27-1 as a starter for the Wolver-

Michigan gave Washington a taste of life in the Big Ten, where

Penix's the Pac-12 champions are heading markable sixear college up for the grind for a while.

Two long touchdown runs by Donovan Edwards and 229 yards rushing in the first quarter put the Wolverines up 17-3 early in the second and conjured up memories of last year's historic Georgia blowout of TCU.

Washington stabilized and didn't allow the Wolverines another point in the first half. After the Huskies stopped Michigan on a fourth-and-2 from the UW 38 with 4:46 left in the second quarter, Penix went to work.

He found Jalen McMillan on a fourth-and-goal with 42 seconds left for a 3-yard touchdown. After being on the verge of getting buried by the Wolverines, the Huskies fans sang along to "Who Let the Dogs Out," happily down 17-10 at half

Will Johnson's interception of Penix on the first play of the second half gave Michigan another opportunity to open up a twotouchdown lead, but the Huskies forced another field goal by James Turner to make it 20-10.

Michigan nursed a touchdown lead until halfway through the fourth quarter, when it put together 71-yard drive, capped by Corum's tackle-breaking 12-yard touchdown that finally gave the Wolverines some room with a 27-13 lead and 7:09 left.

Corum, the engine of groundand-pound offense and heart and soul of team loaded with fourth-, fifth- and even sixth-year players, missed the CFP last year with a knee injury. He was named offensive player of the national title game.

"Michigan, this is for you," Corum told the Wolverines fans.

Houston, the lone unbeaten team in college hoops, jumps Kansas to No. 2 in AP Top 25 behind Purdue

By DAVE SKRETTA AP Basketball Writer

Purdue held its place atop the AP Top 25 on Monday following its win over Illinois in a top-10 showdown, while Houston jumped Kansas into second place as the last unbeaten team in Division I men's college

The Boilermakers, who heat the No. 9

The Boilermakers, who beat the No. 9 Illini 83-78 last week, picked up five more first-place votes and had 54 of the 63 possible to remain at No. 1 for the fourth straight week. The Cougars received seven first-place votes and were second, while the Jayhawks had the other two first-place votes but fell a spot to third after their down-to-the-wire win over TCU.

Houston is 14-0 for the third time in school history after beginning its Big 12 tenure with a romp past West Virginia. Losses by James Madison and Ole Miss left the Cougars with the only unblemished record.

"I think our kids have always had a bit of a chip on their shoulders here," Houston coach Kelvin Sampson said. "We've had to get some of our own fans to understand that we're pretty good. They were so bad for so long. Some of them still have not figured it out. Our kids have, and our coaches have, and we know who we are. And what we're capable of doing."

In truth, the Cougars have been doing it for a while now. They went to the Final Four three years ago, the Elite Eight two years ago and the Sweet 16 last season, when they spent seven week atop the AP poll.

"Every team is different," said Cougars guard Jamal Shead. "I think with this team, just like all the other teams, we're bonded off the court. I think that plays a big part in being able to get onto each other in game and be able to say anything to each other. We know we aren't going to take it the wrong way, so we're able to get on each other and keep pushing."

Defending national champion UConn remained at No. 4, Tennessee was fifth and Kentucky sixth. North Carolina moved up one spot to seventh, Arizona and Oklahoma each bumped up two, and Illinois fell one spot to round out the top 10.



Marquette dropped four spots into a tie at No. 11 with Duke following its loss to Seton Hall, which made quite a statement last week and nearly entered the poll after a pair of wins over ranked teams; the Pirates

also defeated Providence.

The Golden Eagles and Blue Devils were followed by Memphis, Baylor and Wisconsin, which jumped six spots after wins over Iowa and Nebraska. Auburn made the biggest move after beating Pennsylvania and blowing out Arkansas, climbing nine spots to No. 16, and was followed by Colorado State and BYU, which lost to Cincinnati in the Big 12 debut for those two schools.

San Diego State returned to the poll at No. 19 and Utah State entered at No. 20, the first time the Aggies have been ranked since the first five weeks of the 2019-20 season. Clemson, Creighton, Gonzaga, FAU and Texas rounded out the Top 25.

RISING AND FALLING

Auburn is up to No. 16 on the strength of seven consecutive wins, the second-longest streak in the SEC behind Georgia's nine-game run. The Tigers are just behind the Badgers, whose only loss since mid-November came at No. 8 Arizona.

No. 24 FAU's fall continued with a loss to Charlotte. The Owls were seventh two weeks ago before losing to Florida Gulf Coast.

IN AND OUT

San Diego State and Creighton are ranked again, while Utah State's debut at No. 20 comes amid a 13-game winning streak that is tied with Samford for the second-longest nationally behind unbeaten Houston.

Those three replaced Ole Miss and James Madison, who each lost for the first time, and Providence, which lost twice last week.

CONFERENCE WATCH

The Big 12 had two of the top three teams and six in the Top 25, double the total of any other conference. The Mountain West added San Diego State and Utah State to Colorado State and is tied with the Big Ten, Big East, ACC and SEC with three apiece.

High School Calendar

Tiger Woods

TUESDAY, JAN 9

BOYS BASKETBALL: Norwell at Wayne, 7:30 p.m.; (ACAC Tournament Round 1) Bluffton at Southern Wells, 7:30 p.m.

GIRLS BASKETBALL: (ACAC Tournament Round 1) Bluffton at Southern Wells, 6 p.m.

SWIMMING & DIVING (CO-ED): DeKalb at Norwell, 5:30 p.m.; Marion at Bluffton, 5:30 p.m. WRESTLING: Oak Hill at Norwell, 6:30 p.m. WEDNESDAY, JAN 10

GIRLS BASKÉTBALL: Bishop Dwenger at Norwell, 7:45 p.m.

WRESTLING: Bluffton at Manchester, 6 p.m.

THURSDAY, JAN 11 SWIMMING & DIVING (CO-ED): Bluffton at Manchester, 5:30 p.m. FRIDAY, JAN 12
BOYS BASKETBALL: Norwell at Bellmont,

SATURDAY, JAN 13 GIRLS BASKETBALL: Bellmont at Norwell

7:45 p.m. SWIMMING & DIVING (CO-ED): NE8 Meet at Norwell, 10 a.m.

WRESTLING: Norwell, Southern Wells at Garrett Invitational, 9 a.m.

MONDAY, JAN 15 No events scheduled TUESDAY, JAN 16

BOYS BASKETBALL: Southern Wells at Adams Central, 7:30 p.m. SWIMMING & DIVING (CO-ED): Hunting-

ton North at Norwell, 5:30 p.m.

Tiger Woods, Nike end its partnership



By DOUG FERGUSON AP Golf Writer

Tiger Woods has gone from "Hello, world," to saying goodbye to Nike.

Woods ended months of speculation by making it official Monday that the partnership between golf's biggest star and the powerful Swoosh brand is ending after 27 years, a move that raises questions about the future of both in the sport.

Woods in a social media post thanked Nike co-founder Phil Knight for his "passion and vision" that brought them together when he turned pro.

"Over 27 years ago, I was fortunate to start a partnership with one of the most iconic brands in the world," Woods wrote. "The days since have been filled with so many amazing moments and memories, if I started naming them, I could go on forever."

Mark Steinberg, his agent at Excel Sports, confirmed the end of the deal that began in 1996 when Woods turned pro after winning his third straight U.S. Amateur.

"I guess, hello world, huh?" a 20-yearold Woods said at the Greater Milwaukee Open.

Nike launched a "Hello, World" campaign two days later, and Woods lived up to the hype. Within eight months, he already had four wins, including the watershed Masters victory that made him the first golfer of Black heritage to win a major.

"It was time for the next chapter," Steinberg told The Associated Press. "Amazing run. Great partnership."

Nike also posted to social media, saying in a photo, "It was a hell of a round, Tiger."

"Tiger, you challenged your competition, stereotypes, conventions, the old school way of thinking," the Nike post was captioned. "You challenged the entire institution of golf. You challenged us. And most of all, yourself. And for that challenge we're grateful."

Woods signed a five-year deal worth \$40 million when he turned pro. It was shocking money at the time to most in the industry except Nike, and his father.

"Chump change," the late Earl Woods once said, and he was proven correct. Woods renewed the deal believed to be worth over \$100 million in 2001. His eight-year deal in 2006 was reported to be \$160 million, and his latest deal was signed in 2013 for a reported \$200 million.

As recognizable as any athlete in the world, Woods became the face of Nike Golf and had his own "TW" brand.

On the golf course, Woods set records as the youngest to win the Grand Slam at age 24, the only player to hold all four major titles at the same time and his 15-shot win at the U.S. Open, the largest margin for a major in golf history.

But there were signs in recent years of a

But there were signs in recent years of a fractured relationship. Woods returned from his February 2021 car crash that shattered bones in his right leg by wearing FootJoy shoes, saying it was a better feel considering his injuries.

Woods remained in them — Nike has a long history making shoes — even until the PNC Championship last month that he played with his son.

When asked about his deal with Nike,

Woods replied, "I'm still wearing their product," and sternly repeated the phrase when asked if this was the end of his deal. More than just a face, Woods

unwittingly delivered big moments for Nike, none greater than his 2005 Masters victory when he hit a pitch from below the 16th green that went up the slope and then rolled back toward the hole. The ball hung on the edge for a full secthe swoosh in full view — before

it dropped. It remains one of the most famous moments in golf's most-watched tournament.

He also was filming a commercial one

year when between takes, Woods began bouncing the golf ball off his club. That led to a spot where he bounced the ball off the club, between his legs, behind his back, before hitting the ball in mid-air.

"Throughout the course of our partnership, we have witnessed along with the rest of the world, how Tiger not only redefined the sport of golf, but broke barriers for all of sport," Nike said in a statement. "We watched him set records, challenge conventional thinking and inspire generations of people around the globe. We are grateful to have been a part of it. We wish him the best in the future."

Woods has won 15 majors, second only to Jack Nicklaus (18), and his 82 career PGA Tour victories are tied with Sam Snead. But he has been slowed in recent years by five back surgeries, shattered ligaments in his rebuilt left knee, the 2021 car crash and age. He turned 48 at the end of last year.

Nike stood by him when his personal life imploded in 2009 over extramarital affairs, and when his schedule was reduced greatly because of leg and back injuries. Woods remarkably returned from fusion surgery to win the Masters in 2019, his fifth green jacket.

Nike also has shown signs of slowing its golf business. It decided to get out of the hard goods business in 2016, sending Woods to play different clubs and a different golf ball.

Nike, meanwhile, said in a recent earnings call it planed to cut \$2 billion over the next three years, raising questions about how much it would remain invested in golf.

The company still has a stable of golfers wearing its apparel — including Scottie Scheffler, the world's No. 1 player who wears a "TW" brand shoe — and Rory McIlroy and Nelly Korda. Jason Day, a former No. 1 player, did not renew his deal this year and switched to a different apparel company.

Woods has been optimistic that he can play once a month in 2024, which likely is to start at the Genesis Invitational in Los Angeles next month.

Steinberg said he was working on a new deal and that "I anticipate there could be an exciting announcement" at the Genesis Invitational.

Woods indicated the same. "People will ask if there is another chap-

ter," Woods wrote in his post. "Yes, there will certainly be another chapter. See you in LA!"

Randy Moss, Larry Fitzgerald are among 19 players and 3 coaches voted into College Football HOF

By ERIC OLSON AP College Football Writer

Randy Moss and Larry Fitzgerald were among 19 players and three coaches in the College Football Hall of Fame class announced Monday.

Warrick Dunn of Florida

State, Toby Gerhart of Stanford, Julius Peppers of North Carolina and Danny Woodhead of Chadron State also were elected to the Atlantabased hall by the National Football Foundation.

Coaches elected were

Frank Solich of Nebraska and Ohio, Mark Dantonio of Cincinnati and Michigan State and Danny Hale of Division II West Chester and Bloomsburg. Moss, inducted into the

Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2018, was one of college football's most electric performers in his two seasons at Marshall. He was an All-American as both a receiver and return man. He caught 174 passes for 3,529 yards and 54 touchdowns in his career and was the 1997 Biletnikoff Award winner. His 26 touchdown receptions that season were a Bowl Subdivision record. He played for five teams

over 14 NFL seasons and was the league's leading receiver five times.

Fitzgerald was the 2003 Heisman Trophy runner-up and Biletnikoff Award winner while playing for Pittsburgh, where he totaled 161 catches for 2,677 yards and a school-record 34 touchdowns over his two seasons. He caught a touchdown in 18 consecutive games to set an NCAA record. He was the third overall pick in the 2004 NFL draft and 11-time Pro Bowl selection in 17 years with the Arizona Cardinals.

Dunn, who led Florida State to the 1993 national title, became the first Seminoles player to rush for 1,000 yards in three straight seasons. He finished his career in 1995 as the school's all-time leader in career touchdowns, all-purpose yards and rushing yards.

The hard-running Gerhart won the 2009 Doak Walker Award at Stanford and was the Heisman Trophy runner-up. Gerhart ran for 1,871 yards and 28 touchdowns to lead the nation in his senior year.

Peppers, who played at UNC, won the 2001 Bednarik and Lombardi awards.

In 2000, he led the nation with 15 sacks and a school-record 24 tackles for loss. He was the second overall pick in the 2002 NFL draft and was a first-team All-Pro and nine-time Pro Bowl pick over 17 seasons with three teams.

Woodhead played at Division II Chadron State in Nebraska from 2004-07 and finished his career as college football's all-time rushing leader for all divisions with 7,962 yards. He twice won the Harlon Hill Trophy as the top DII player. Woodhead signed with the New York Jets as an undrafted free agent in 2008 and spent 10 years in the NFL with four teams.

The rest of the 2024 class includes Justin Blackmon of Oklahoma State, Paul Cameron of UCLA, Tim Couch of Kentucky, Armanti Edwards of Appalachian State, Deon Figures of Colorado, Dan Hampton of Arkansas, Steve Hutchinson of Michigan, Antonio Langham of Alabama, Paul Posluszny of Penn State, Dewey Selmon of Oklahoma, Alex Smith of Utah, Kevin Smith of Texas A&M and Chris Ward of Ohio State.

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News-Banner Scoreboard

BASKETBALL High School

1. Lawrence North 10-0 2. Fishers 12-0 3. Westfield 9-0 4. Indianapolis Cathedral 10-0 5. Noblesville 10-1 6. Indianapolis Attucks 10-3 7. Ben Davis 8-2 8. Greenfield-Central 11-0
9. Lake Central 11-0

10. Kokomo 11-3 11. Richmond 14-0 12. Brownstown Central 10-4 13. Penn 7-2

T14. South Bend Riley 12-3 T14. Wapahani 11-0 16. Anderson 8-2 T17. Brebeuf Jesuit 7-3 T17. Topton 12-0 19. Guerin Catholic 10-4 20. Franklin 10-1

Receiving votes (alphabetically):
Avon 10-3, Bedford North Lawrence
7-2, Brownsburg 7-6, Center Grove
7-4, Danville 11-1, Delta 10-2, Evansville Harrison 9-2, Evansville Memorial 6-4, Fort Wayne Bishop Luers 9-1, Fort Wayne North Side 9-4, Fort

Wayne Wayne 8-3, Heritage Hills 12-1, Indian Creek 11-1, Jeffersonville 7-6, Lafayette Jefferson 10-2, New Pales-Latayette Jelierson 10-2, New Pales-tine 8-2, North Central (Indianapolis) 6-3, North Posey 8-2, Northridge 10-2, Providence 10-2, Southridge 10-1, Valparaiso 11-3, Warren Central 6-5, Evansville Christian School 10-1.

1. Hamilton Southeastern 16-1 2. Columbia City 15-23. Center Grove 17-14. Lawrence Central 19-1 5. Fort Wayne Snider 15-26. Homestead 15-2 Jennings County 15-3 Lawrence North 14-3

9 Franklin 15-2 10. Northridge 18-2 11. South Bend Washington 13-4 12. Zionsville 15-3 13. Lake Central 16-3

14. Norwell 14-415. Fishers 12-5
16. Hamilton Heights 16-2 17. Bedford North Lawrence 14-4
18. Rensselaer Central 17-0

19. Noblesville 10-7 20. Indian Creek 14-4 Receiving votes (alphabetically): Benton Central, Caston 17-0, East-ern Hancock 16-1, Evansville Memo-

rial 12-3, Franklin Central 8-7, Gibson Southern 14-4, Greensburg 13-3, Lanesville 17-1, North Knox 17-1, Plainfield 14-4, Silver Creek 11-4, South Knox 15-1, Warsaw 9-7.

Monday Boys' Scores Hammond Science and Tech 85, Portage Christian 36 Horizon Christian 59, Mooresville Indiana Deaf 76, MTI 41

Monday Girls' Scores Homestead 69, Ft. Wayne Concor-

Lake Station 74, Gary West 31 N. Posey 60, Evansville Christian 41 S. Putnam 60, Riverton Parke 31 Salem 59, S. Central (Elizabeth) 44 Indianapolis City Tournament= First Round= Covenant Christian 63, Indpls

Washington 24 Indpls Scecina 58, Indpls Attucks 34 Purdue Polytechnic 57, Christel House Manual 24

College

Women's Basketball Scores

NBA

FASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division 8 12 .778 .657 41/2 Philadelphia 15 21 .583 .432 .417 Toronto 15 21 41 Southeast Division 13 **L** 15 15 Pct .583 .583 GB Miami Orlando 21 26 .400 Washington 6 30 .1 Central Division .167

L 11 GB W Milwaukee .583 Indiana 15 Cleveland .583 15 Chicago Detroit 33 083 WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division W L Pct 22 15 .595 Pct .595 Dallas New Orleans 15 17 Houston Memphis San Antonio 23 .361 .143 **Northwest Division W** 25 **L** Minnesota 1 ½ 9 15 11 12 .686 .684 Oklahoma City24 Denver 17 10 20 25 Portland

L.A. Clippers 22 Sacramento 21 .629 .600 Phoenix .528 L.A. Lakers 18 Golden State 17 19 .486 19 .472 Sunday's Games
Cleveland 117, San Antonio 115
Portland 134, Brooklyn 127, OT
New Orleans 133, Sacramento 100
Orlando 117, Atlanta 110, OT Dallas 115, Minnesota 108
Dellas 115, Minnesota 108
Denver 131, Detroit 114
Memphis 121, Phoenix 115
Toronto 133, Golden State 118
L.A. Lakers 106, L.A. Clippers 103
Monday's Games

Monday's Games
Oklahoma City 136, Washington 128 Chicago 119, Charlotte 112, OT Indiana 133, Boston 131 Miami 120, Houston 113

Milami 120, Houston 113
Utah at Milwaukee, 8 p.m.
Phoenix at L.A. Clippers, 10:30 p.m.
Tuesday's Games
Minnesota at Orlando, 7 p.m.
Sacramento at Detroit, 7 p.m.
Portland at New York, 7:30 p.m.
Memphis at Dallas, 8:30 p.m. Toronto at L.A. Lakers, 10:30 p.m. Wednesday's Games

Minnesota at Boston, 7 p.m. Sacramento at Charlotte, 7 p.m San Antonio at Detroit, 7 p.m.
Washington at Indiana, 7 p.m.
Washington at Indiana, 7 p.m.
Oklahoma City at Miami, 7:30 p.m.
Philadelphia at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.
Houston at Chicago, 8 p.m.
New Orleans at Golden State, 8:30

.m.
Denver at Utah, 10 p.m.
Toronto at L.A. Clippers, 10:30 p.m.
Thursday's Games
Brooklyn at Cleveland, 2 p.m.
Boston at Milwaukee, 7:30 p.m.
Portland at Oklahoma City, 8 p.m. New York at Dallas, 8:30 p.m. Phoenix at L.A. Lakers, 10 p.m.

FOOTBALL

Final NFL Standings AMERICAN CONFERENCE East W L T 11 6 0 11 6 0 s 710 0 .647 451 311 .647 496 391 .412 268 355 v-Buffalo x-Miami e-N.Y. Jets e-New Engl 4 13 0 235 236 366 Pct PF PA

South
W L T
y-Houston 10 7 0
e-Indianap 9 8 0 .588 377 353 .529 396 415 e-Jacksonv 9 8 e-Tennessee6 11 .353 305 367 North W L T Pct PF PA *-Baltimore 13 4 0 x-Cleveland11 6 0 x-Pittsburgh10 7 0 e-Cincinnati 9 8 0 West .765 483 280 .647 396 362 .588 304 324 .529 366 384 Pct PF PA .647 371 294

West
W L T Pct PF
y-Kansas City116 0 .647 371
e-Denver 8 9 0 .471 357
e-Las Vegas8 9 0 .471 332
e-L.A. Charg 5 12 0 .294 346
NATIONAL CONFERENCE
Fast .471 357 413 .471 332 331 .294 346 398 East y-Dallas 12 5 0 x-Philadelphia116 0 e-N.Y. Giants 112 0 Pct PF PA .706 509 315 .647 433 428 .353 266 407

e-Washington413 0 .235 329 518 South W L T Pct PF PA e-New Or. 9 8 y-Tampa Bay9 8 e-Atlanta 7 10 e-Carolina 2 15 .529 402 327 .529 348 325 .412 321 373 .118 236 416 North

W L T Pct PF PA .706 461 395 v-Detroit x-Green Bay9 8 e-Chicago 7 10 .529 383 350 .412 360 379 e-Minnesota 7 10 .412 344 362 West

e-Eliminated from playoffs x-clinched playoff spot y-clinched division
*-clinched home-field advantage Saturday's Games Pittsburgh 17, Baltimore 10 Houston 23, Indianapolis 19

Sunday's Games
Cincinnati 31, Cleveland 14
Detroit 30, Minnesota 20
N.Y. Jets 17, New England 3 New Orleans 48, Atlanta 17 Tampa Bay 9, Carolina 0 Tennessee 28, Jacksonville 20 lennessee 28, Jacksonville 20
Dallas 38, Washington 10
Green Bay 17, Chicago 9
Kansas City 13, L.A. Chargers 12
L.A. Rams 21, San Francisco 20
Las Vegas 27, Denver 14
N.Y. Giants 27, Philadelphia 10
Seattle 21, Arizana 20 Seattle 21. Arizona 20 Buffalo 21, Miami 14

NFL Playoff Glance Wild-card Playoffs Saturday, Jan. 13 Cleveland at Houston, 4:30 p.m. (NBC/Peacock) Miami at Kansas City, 8 p.m.

(Peacock)
Sunday, Jan. 14
Pittsburgh at Buffalo, 1 p.m. (CBS)
Green Bay at Dallas, 4:30 p.m.

..A. Rams at Detroit, 8 p.m.

Monday, Jan. 15
Philadelphia at Tampa Bay, 8:15
p.m. (ESPN/ABC)

College 2023-24 Bowl Glance Monday, Jan. 8 CFP National Championship Michigan 34, Washington 13

HOCKEY

NHL EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

GP W L OTPts GF GA

38 24 8 6 54130 101

39 25 12 2 52123 99 **Boston** 37 20 10 4 44144 136 5 43134 143 40 20 16 Tampa Bay41 19 17 5 43134 143 Montreal 39 17 17 5 39 111 137 Buffalo 40 17 19 4 38120 134 35 14 21 0 28116 125

Carolina 40 22 13 5 49137 122
N.Y. Islanders391811 10 46121 130
Philadelphia4020 14 6 46117 113
New Jersey3821 15 2 44135 136
Washington3819 13 6 44 94 117
Pittsburgh 39 20 15 4 44121 106
Columbus 41 13 19 9 35126 150
WESTERN CONFERENCE

Central Division
GP W L OTPts GF GA
eg 39 26 9 4 56132 94
do 40 25 12 3 53148 127 39 23 11 5 51142 120 40 22 17 1 45126 125 Dallas Nashville St. Louis 38 20 17 Arizona 38 19 17 Minnesota 39 17 18 2 40114 114 4 38116 127 2 26 94 151

Chicago 40 12 20 _ Pacific Division GP W L OTPts GF GA Vancouver 40 26 11 3 55155 105 Vegas 40 23 12 5 51133 112 Vegas 40 23 12 5 51133 Los Angeles3620 10 6 46122 Edmonton 36 20 15 1 41131 113 Seattle 39 16 14 9 41106 115
Calgary 40 17 18 5 39121 131
Anaheim 39 13 25 1 27 97 130
San Jose 40 9 28 3 21 80 164 NOTE: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild

cards per conference advance to playoffs. Sunday's Games
Washington 4, Los Angeles 3
Chicago 4, Calgary 3
Winnipe 6, Arizona 2 Detroit 3, Anaheim 2

Monday's Games
Vancouver 6, N.Y. Rangers 3 Pittsburgh 4, Philadelphia 1 Dallas 4, Minnesota 0 Boston at Colorado, 9 p.m. Tuesday's Games

Los Angeles at Tampa Bay, 7 p.m. San Jose at Toronto, 7 p.m. Seattle at Buffalo, 7 p.m. Vancouver at N.Y. Islanders, 7:30 Anaheim at Nashville, 8 p.m

Anaheim at Nasnville, 8 p.m. Columbus at Winnipeg, 8 p.m. Florida at St. Louis, 8 p.m. Edmonton at Chicago, 8:30 p.m. Boston at Arizona, 9 p.m. Ottawa at Calgary, 9 p.m.

Wednesday's Games

Montreal at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.

Minnesota at Dallas, 7:30 p.m.

Vegas at Colorado, 10 p.m.

Thursday's Games

Anaheim at Carolina, 7 p.m.

Edmonton at Detroit, 7 p.m.

Los Angeles at Florida, 7 p.m. New Jersey at Tampa Bay, 7 p.m. Ottawa at Buffalo, 7 p.m.

San Jose at Montreal, 7 p.m. Seattle at Washington, 7 p.m. Toronto at N.Y. Islanders, 7 p.m. Vancouver at Pittsburgh, 7 p.m. Chicago at Winnipeg, 8 p.m. N.Y. Rangers at St. Louis, 8 p.m. Calgary at Arizona, 9 p.m.

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Anthony Richardson, Jonathan Taylor give Colts a view into a promising future

By MICHAEL MAROT

AP Sports Writer INDIANAPOLIS (AP) Indianapolis Colts got a glimpse of

Richardson in 2023. Now, they can start dreaming about all the new possibilities.

their future with quarterback Anthony

Two days after falling a win short of the playoffs, Indy's players cleaned out their lockers and reflected on their accomplishments during coach Shane Steichen's first season — and what next season might look like.

"That's going to be a really awesome sight to see," running back Jonathan Taylor said when asked about playing with Richardson. "What I saw from watching the tape and what I saw in person, he's very, very talented. But he's also eager to learn. Any time you've got someone talented like that, with that hunger to learn, you'd better watch out because those are the ones who are going to be special."

The Colts (9-8) were eager to see that backfield pairing during the 2023

But Taylor's lingering ankle injury forced him to miss Indy's offseason workouts, training camp, the entire preseason and the first four weeks of the regular season. By the time the 2021 NFL rushing champ returned in Week 5, Richardson was making his fourth career start.

Then, after the pair took exactly one snap together, Richardson suffered a

season-ending shoulder injury. Still, the Colts saw enough from Richardson to believe they made the right choice with the No. 4 overall draft pick last spring and enough of a healthy Taylor to start envisioning the stress the duo can put on defenses next season.

"Anthony got a chance to sit back and watch and learn, really just seeing the NFL season as a whole," Steichen said. "Obviously, we would have

loved to have had him out there for he asked for more targets during a — The What happened to him was unfortu- general manager Chris Ballard — and nate, but I think it's going to make us stronger."

While this season was supposed to be measured by Richardson's progression, Indy got strong enough play from backup quarterback Gardner Minshew and backup running back Zack Moss that it came within 15 yards, 66 seconds and perhaps one dropped pass from winning its first AFC South crown since 2014.

How did the Colts do it?

Indy's offensive line rebounded from a dismal 2022 to establish itself as one of the league's premier units, and Steichen's offense produced about eight more points per game than the Colts did in 2022 under coach Frank Reich and his interim replacement, Jeff

Defensively, the Colts recorded a franchise-record 51 sacks. Indy's young secondary endured some midseason growing pains but showed steady improvement as the season wore on. Linebacker Zaire Franklin recorded a franchise-record 179 tackles despite missing one game.

Those promising developments along with Taylor's re-emergence and Richardson's strong start — provide hope for the future.

"The natural reflection is you look back at where we were a year ago to where we are now, I mean, guys' lives have changed. Guys are in different places," Pro Bowl center Ryan Kelly said. "But we're certainly much better, much closer than we were a year ago.'

PITTMAN'S NEXT STEP

Taylor signed a three-year contract extension in October and now the Colts must decide how they can best keep Taylor's draft classmate, leading receiver Michael Pittman Jr.

He caught a career-best 109 passes with his production increasing after

the season to have him learn that way. midseason meeting with Steichen and produced his second 1,000-yard season. And Pittman doesn't view the possibility of receiving the franchise tag as all bad, either.

"I don't think anyone would be displeased with \$23 million," he said. "The franchise is almost like a tag of respect. Obviously, you get paid in the top five at your position. Do I necessarily want to play on one? No, but you can use that to work toward a long-term deal as well."

MORE ON FREE AGENCY

Pittman is one of 14 Colts players set to become unrestricted free agents and the list includes some familiar names.

While Minshew, who won a careerhigh seven games, and Moss, Indy's leader in yards rushing (794 yards) and total yards (955), are expected to look for starting jobs elsewhere, the tougher decisions may be what to do with three key starters - defensive tackle Grover Stewart, Pro Bowl cornerback Kenny Moore II and safety Julian Blackmon.

NEXT STEPS

The Colts will be monitoring Richardson's recovery from shoulder surgery. The hope is that he runs with more discretion so he can stay healthy - and take the Colts back to the play-

Then come the decisions. Defensive coordinator Gus Bradley has been under fire since the Colts gave up 114 points during October's threegame losing streak. On Monday, Steichen wouldn't hint if there would be staff changes, saying he valued con-

Indy's deep passing game also struggled this season, and while Richardson's strong arm would provide a boost, another potential solution would be to draft a receiver with the No. 15 overall pick.



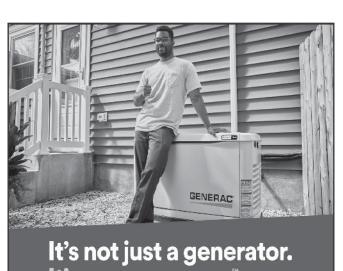
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Pope Francis calls for a universal ban on surrogacy

ROME (AP) — Pope Francis called Monday for a universal ban on what he called the "despicable' practice of surrogate motherhood, as he included the "commercialization" of pregnancy in an annual speech listing threats to global peace and human dignity.

In a foreign policy address to ambassadors accredited to the Holy See, Francis lamented that 2024 had dawned at a time in which peace is "increasingly threatened, weakened and in some part lost."

Citing Russia's war in Ukraine, the Israel-Hamas war, the issue of migration, climate crises and the "immoral" production of nuclear and conventional weapons, Fran-

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cis delivered a list of the ills afflict-ing humanity and the increasing violation of international humanitarian law that allows them.

But Francis also listed smaller-scale issues that he said were threats to peace and human dignity, including surrogacy. He said the life of the unborn child must be protected and not "suppressed or turned into an object of traffick-

"I consider despicable the practice of so-called surrogate motherhood, which represents a grave violation of the dignity of the woman and the child, based on the exploitation of situations of the mother's material needs," he said.

Saying a child is a gift and

contract," he called for a global ban on surrogacy "to prohibit this practice universally.

Vatican teaching opposes in vitro fertilization, and Francis has previously voiced the Roman Catholic Church's opposition to surrogacy, or what he has called "uterus for rent." At the same time, however, the Vatican's doctrine office has made clear that samesex parents who resort to surrogacy can have their children bap-

While commercial surrogacy contracts are common in the United States, including protections for the mothers, guarantees of independent legal representation and medical coverage, they are banned in parts of Europe, including Spain and Italy.

Russia's war in Ukraine, and the threat to babies born to surrogate Ukrainian mothers, exposed the country's thriving industry. Ukraine is one of the few countries that allow surrogacy for foreigners.

Critics say commercial surrogacy targets women who are poor and from vulnerable communities. Supporters say surrogacy gives women a chance to provide children to childless couples, and that commercial contracts protect both the surrogates and the intended

On Monday, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops quoted

Francis' words in explaining why the Catholic Church teaches that surrogacy "is not morally permis-

"Instead, we should pray for, and work towards, a world that upholds the profound dignity of every person, at every stage and in every circumstance of life," spokesperson Chieko Noguchi said.

In his geopolitical roundup, Francis singled out Russia by name in noting the "large-scale war waged by the Russian Federation against Ukraine." It marked an unusual break with Francis' usual tendency to spare Moscow direct and public blame for the invasion when expressing solidarity with the Ukrainian people.



The Allen County War Memorial Coliseum

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Fort Wayne Farm Show

Tuesday, January 16 **Appleseed Room A** 10:00 a.m.

Midwest Ag Market Outlook Jon Cavanaugh WOWO Market **Analyst**

David Kohli WOWO Market Analyst **Ryan Martin** *Farm Origination*

Specialist, Louis Dreyfus Co. **Rob Winters** Farm Director, News/ Talk 1190, WOWO

11:30 a.m. **How Farmers Can Take Advantage of Global Climate**

Carrie Vollmer-Sanders

Action

Sustainability Director, U.S. Farmers & Ranchers in Action

2:00 p.m.

Pesticide Applicator Program PARP, CCH Credits Available

James Wolff Ag & Natural Resources Educator, County Extension Director, Purdue Extension, Allen County **Christian Krupke,** Professor of

Entomology, Purdue University **Ann Klein** Extension Educator, Purdue Extension, Noble County

Wednesday, January 17 **Appleseed Room A** 9:00 a.m.

Coffee and... The Demand for Regenerative Ag (Breakfast Served)

Noah Radde *Grain Origination* Specialist, ADM

11:30 a.m. (Luncheon) **Hot Topics in Land Use Appleseed Room B**

Brianna Schroeder Partner, Janzen Schroeder Ag Law

2:00 p.m. **New Technology in Conservation**

Rhiannon Lake Conservation Program Specialist, Allen County **SWCD**

Adam Shanks Extension Educator - ANR, Purdue Extension, Clinton County

5:30 p.m. **Back By Popular Demand: Five Ways to Lose the Family Farm**

Dan Gordon Owner, Attorney, Gordon Legal

Thursday, January 18 **Appleseed Room A** 10:00 a.m.

Cultivating Resiliency: Financial Incentives for Environmental Stewardship with the Soil and **Water Outcomes Fund®**

(Breakfast Served) Indiana Soybean Alliance, Indiana Corn Marketing Council, Soil and

11:00 a.m. **Insurance & Agritourism** Mike Lampton Agent,

Water Outcomes Fund

Indiana Farm Bureau 12:30 p.m. **Office Hours: Meet Your Agency Staff**

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Growers on edge about 2024's commodity prices, input costs

By BRIAN BOYCE **AGDAILY**

It may have felt something like a "Hard Candy Christmas," as Dolly Parton might sing, for U.S. farmers this year, especially as they await more information about commodity prices and input costs for 2024. Meanwhile, the word has been out for quite a while that market prices for major crops like corn and soybeans are expected to fall this year from historic highs. Even so, many input costs are on the rise, and interest rates remain high, particularly for new equipment.

Earlier in November, President Joe Biden signed a funding extension of the 2018 Farm Bill for yet another year, with lawmakers looking to craft new and updated legislation that reflects present numbers. With the existing legislation based on pre-COVID pricing and inputs, farmers across the country have entered 2024 with a lot of questions.

dent and commercial loan officer at Terre Haute Savings Bank, which serves the greater Wabash Valley in west-central Indiana, said the present reminds him of

"We saw this back in 2008, as well as back in 2012 after the drought," the ag lender of 20-plus years said. "I think it's pretty

With market disruptions as seismic as COVID-19, the war in Ukraine, and relatively stark changes in the prime interest rate at play, it's no wonder that what goes up must come down.

Coming up soon

Late this past year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture released the U.S.focused portion of its Agricultural Projections to 2033 report, with a complete report due out in February. Some of the numbers projected are reminiscent of a hayride through a bumpy

corn long-term projections, total planted acres for that crop in the U.S. will jump from 88.6 million acres in the 2022/2023 season to 94.9 million acres in 2023/2024. Bushels harvested per acre are expected to stay the same, but what's noticeable is the projected farm price dropping from \$6.54 per bushel to \$4.95, with \$4.50 projected for 2024, and \$4.30 the year afterward. The U.S. report estimates that net returns could fall from \$617 per acre to \$386, \$372, and \$350 in coming years.

Meanwhile, the net return for oats per acre is expected to drop from \$100 to \$50 in the same period, but sorghum could spike from \$34 to \$91.

Input costs and yet more whackery within the global supply chain are all at play, as the U.S. Macroeconomic Assumptions through 2033 point out the difference in interest rates on all things financing. Whereas in 2022, According to the U.S. the U.S. Federal Reserve percent, in 2023 it jumped to 8.19 percent and is expected to fall only to 7.70 percent in 2024. Crude oil prices per barrel averaged \$92.80 in 2022 versus \$76.30 in 2023 and are expected to go back to \$80.50 in 2024 and then perhaps up to \$101 by 2029.

Fertilizer and other direct input costs are expected to fall slightly from their spike in 2022, but as Purdue University agriculture economist Michael Langemeier wrote in October, those prices won't fall below the historical averages. So breakeven costs per acre for some crops may fall this year, but farmers could still wind up netting less due to falling prices and an increased cost of financing.

What's in store down the road?

With the potential of declining commodity prices and increased financing and equipment costs potentially overtaking the drop in fertilizer, smaller ag producers are more likely to be

impacted than larger groups, meaning farm management is more important than ever.

Litz from Terre Haute Savings Bank said the good news is that as a whole, producers have had two really good, record-setting years in terms of profitability, and that should help. The real squeeze will, as usual, be

felt by smaller producers - those with less than 400 acres. The cost of new, and even used equipment, is getting to the point that smaller producers just can't justify

With new equipment financing at the bank running between 7.5 percent and 8 percent, the cost of even a used combine may be out of reach, as those are running between \$150,000 and \$200,000. To that extent, the impact of inflation isn't just being felt at the seed dealership, but with all things tool and vehicle related. Back in 2019, the prime lending rate was about 4 percent, he said, noting how big a differ-

ence that makes to producers with smaller numbers of acres and thus lower gross

This is leading more and more landowners to shift from full-time production and into cash-renting positions, with some even accepting contract pay from the larger farm corporations to help farm their own ground, he said. For many farmers in this category, off-farm employment is already a given, and it just makes more sense to lease out their land for cash and accept the part-time pay from the tenant company to help do what they've always done.

In the big picture though, Litz said this is the fourth time he's seen this type of phenomenon in the last 20 years, and the good news is, people are still farming onward. If producers are looking for any indication of what's yet to come, they would do well to remember the lessons learned the past in terms of cycles.

TRACT 2

USDA finds tolpyralate herbicide has surprising effect on some corn varieties

A team of Agricultural Research Service, university, and industry scientists has spotted a new genetic vulnerability to tolpyralate herbicide in 49 varieties of corn, marking the first report of weed control posing a danger to the staple crop.

The finding, reported in the journal Pest Management Science, will enable farmers to avoid crop losses, such as by choosing a tolpyralate-tolerant variety or by using a different herbicide product.

According to Marty Williams, an ecologist with the ARS Global Change and Photosynthesis Research Unit in Urbana, Illinois, tolpyralate was registered in 2017 and labeled for use in fallow fields and on all types of field-, pop- and- sweet corn. It belongs to a class of herbicides known as HPPD (4-Hydroxyphenylpyruvate dioxygenase) inhibitors.

When applied as a post-emergent herbicide, tolpyralate triggers a biochemical chain of events in targeted weeds that initially causes bleached-appearing leaves and then ultimately plant death.

Normally, corn plants can quickly metabolize HPPD inhibitor herbicides before they inflict the same kind of harm. The process depends on the presence or absence of certain types of alleles (alternate gene copies) in a region of their genome known as NSF1.

One way that corn breeders check for the alleles during evaluations of new candidate varieties is to spray them with nicosulfuron. It is an acetolactate synthase enzymeinhibiting herbicide that can also serve as a reliable indicator of a variety's sensitivity to several types of post-emergence herbicides, including most ALS and HPPD inhibitors. As it turns out, however, spraying nicosulfuron isn't a reliable indicator of corn tolerance to tolpyralate.

That's what Williams and his collaborators from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Illinois Foundation Seed Inc. learned after conducting a series of greenhouse, field, and laboratory tests using genetic mapping techniques. They began their investigation in late summer 2021 after a corn breeder's report that spraying tolpyralate onto a sweet corn inbred line called XSEN187 had severely damaged all plants.

But instead of the alleles they expected to see, the team traced the sweet corn inbred line's tolpyralate sensitivity to a cluster of genes residing on a unique region of chromosome 5. This was confirmed by the alleles' association with visible tolpyralate damage in two populations of offspring plants that were derived from crosses between the sweet corn inbred and two tol-

The researchers expanded the scope of their investigation, ultimately identifying tolpyralate sensitivity in a total of six types of field corn and 43 types of sweet corn. Additional screening is likely to detect the trait in other varieties as well. Consider the case of the inbred line IL677a, which was used to introduce the widely popular sugary enhancer gene to sweet corn. In tests, the line proved severely sensitive to tolpyralate, raising the possibility that this sensitivity was also widely introduced into sweet corn along with the sugar enhancer trait.

Importantly, the researchers also showed that tolpyralate sensitivity in the corn lines they evaluated is contingent upon exposure to oil-based adjuvants, additives that are mixed into herbicide tanks before application. However, removing them isn't an option, Williams noted. The adjuvants are key to ensuring the herbicide is absorbed into the leaves of targeted weeds, killing them more effectively.

How exactly the newly identified gene or genes on chromosome 5 make these varieties vulnerable to harm from tolpyralate hasn't been figured out yet. "We need a greater understanding of the physiological mechanism so that the manufacturer and seed companies can reduce the risk of crop injury, such as by improving crop tolerance to the herbicide," Williams said. "Moreover, the research may have application beyond tolpyralate, because several new HPPDinhibiting herbicides are being developed from the same pyrazole ring scaffold as tolpyralate."

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Hoosier Ag Today

2024 is shaping up to be a very big year for one Indiana farm family as they plan to greatly expand their dairy operation.

"Dairy farming has been our blood forever and we've always had this goal and passion to be able to process our own milk onfarm and make products here," says Andrew Kuehnert, one of the co-owners of Kuehnert Dairy in Fort Wayne.

The sixth-generation dairy farm is expanding and opening a brand-new Milk

House and retail shop in Allen County. "We've been working on this so over a year now, so we are getting very close," according to Kuehnert. "We are hopefully going to be up and operational towards the end of January or early February. We plan on having a full line of milk products coming out, including glass-bottle milk, cheese curds, butter, and ice cream. Hopefully the cheese curds are up and ready to go. If you come up to our retail store right on the farm, you can look through a big picture window see where our cheese curds are being

Their new cheese curd manufacturing facility is being made possible through a \$100,000 grant that Kuehnert Dairy has received from the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance.

'With that grant, it's going to allow us to purchase the equipment that we need to make farm fresh cheese curds right in our milk plant," says Kuehnert. "It's also going to help with packaging. Our cheese curds able, so I am very confident that our flavor and our quality of product can be second to

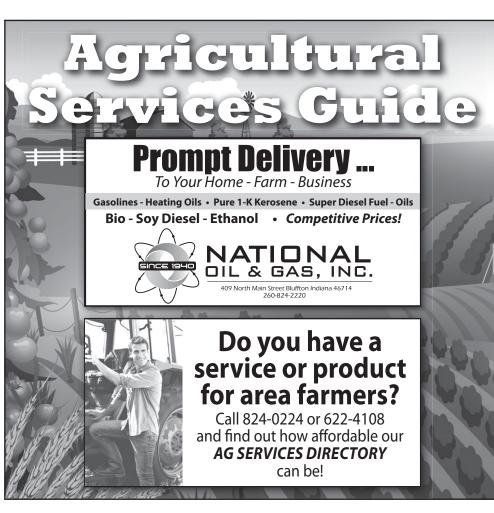
The new Kuehnert Milk House is also part of the plan to continue growing the farm's agritourism business.

'For the past 11 years, we've opened our farm in the fall for seven weekends during our Kuehnert Dairy Fall Festival and invited the public to come out see what we do on a daily basis," he says. "It's always been very important for everybody in our family to tell our side of the story and show people what dairy farmers do each and every day for 365 days a year. That's been a great opportunity for agritourism to show people what we do. We feel like we have built respect and trust with our local community by just being honest and showing what we do each and every day.'

Even though Andrew's father, Al Kuehnert, passed away in 2021, he says his dad's memory will continue to live on through as the family farm continues to

"With losing my dad unexpectedly, it was challenging. We had to figure out a new norm for our dairy farm and what we were doing. After losing my dad, that kind of put us on a delay with this Milk House. I think it'll make him very proud that we get it up and running. We know he's always up watching over us and taking care of us, so we know we're trying to live on his legacy."

For more information, visit kuehnert-



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glacierpure@outlook.com

Lottery Numbers

Monday's Drawings HOOSIËR LOTTERY

Cash 5 — 05-19-26-33-39

Cash4Life — 35-38-50-52-56, Cash Ball: 04 **Quick Draw Midday** — 02-09-14-18-20-25-31-35-44-

47-48-51-52-54-60-61-63-68-76-77, BE: 63

WE ACCEPT

Daily Three-Midday — 07-07-03, SB: 07 **Daily Three-Evening** — 00-04-04, SB: 09 **Daily Four-Midday** — 08-03-04-08, SB: 07

Daily Four-Evening — 00-04-06-05, SB: 09 **Quick Draw Evening** — 08-10-14-17-25-28-30-32-35-38-44-48-51-56-58-59-60-63-71-76, BE: 48

Hoosier Lotto — Estimated jackpot (for Wednesday): \$2.6 million

MEGA MILLIONS

Estimated jackpot (for Tuesday): \$165 million **POWERBALL**

07-17-28-40-45 Powerball: 02; Power Play: 3X

Thank you for reading

The News-Banner

January

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Feb. deadline is Tues., Jan. 23!



Stetzel Farm LLC. Farm Public Notice machinery retirement auction. Tractors, planters, harvest

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE By virtue of a certified copy of a decree to me, directed from the Clerk of Wells Superior Court of Wells County, Indiana, in Cause No. 90D01-2308-MF-000019, wherein PennyMac Loan Services, LLC was Plaintiff, and Jessie C. Click, Ashton Click and Profed Federal Credit Union were Defendants, required me to make the sum as provided for in said Decree, with interest and cost, I will expose at public sale to the highest bidder on the 14th day of February, 2024, t the hour of 1:00 PM, or as soon thereafter as is possible, at 102 W Market St, Bluffton, IN 46714, the fee simple of the whole body of Real Estate in Wells Coun-

Lots Numbered One Hundred Eleven (111) and One Hundred Twelve (112) as known and designated on the recorded Plat of Oak Park Addition to the City of Bluff-

More commonly known as 926 S Morgan St, Bluffton, IN 46714-3504 Parcel No. 90-08-04-503-061.000-004

Together with rents, issues, income and profits thereof, said sale will be made without relief from valuation or appraisement

/s/ BARRY T BARNES BARRY T. BARNES, Plaintiff Attorney # 19657-49 FEIWELL & HANNOY, P.C.

Indianapolis, IN 46250 (317) 237-2727 Scott Holliday. Sheriff

not warrant the accuracy of the street address published herein. FEIWELL & HANNOY, P.C. IS A DEBT COLLECTOR. nb 1/9, 1/16, 1/23

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PER ISSUE

Attorney SUDOKU ANSWER 8415 Allison Pointe Blvd., Suite 400

caster 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 Wolheter: 260-336-2219. FEBRUARY 12 - 6 p.m. - Dan-

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Couple is worlds apart before tying the knot

Dear Annie: My fiancee and I have before you tie the been together for six years, and I am knot. Best of luck having a hard time understanding where I fit in her life. She claims to love me, but lately, her actions just don't say that. She puts everyone ahead of me. Last Christmas, we went to her mom's on the other side of the country and her mom told her she had to introduce me as her friend.

She still has contact with her ex-husband, who, after we got together, asked her to send him inappropriate pictures of herself. She contacts him when she gets drunk, about every six months. Then she lies about it, even when I catch her talking to him.

Her daughter who is 30 just had her fourth child, and my fiancee devotes time and money to her. Her daughter makes more money than both of us. We spent over \$250 on a baby shower for her daughter and only about \$50 on my son and his wife when they were expecting their first child.

I just feel like I am being used and taken advantage of. We bought a car together last summer, and she put it solely in her name. Every time I ask if we can get my name on the title, she says, "Sure, you pay for it." I think we should go halves like we did paying for the car. — Scared and Confused

Dear Scared and Confused: Actions speak louder than words, and it sounds like she is being selfish and entitled. But it is up to you to stick up for yourself and say that you are not going to give half the money if she doesn't put the car in your name. As far as how much money was spent on her daughter versus your son, try not to count pennies. It's about the celebration of the baby and the love that is present, not the amount of money spent on the celebra-

I suggest you both go to counseling

Dear Annie: The information you gave regarding the National Domestic Abuse Hotline is wonderful. In addition, I'd like

to you.



Dear

Annie

by Annie Lane

to encourage Trapped, or any other woman (or man or child!), to reach out to their primary care provider. We are usually aware of our local women's shelters and can move women and children immediately — often from our office and out a back door if needed — to a safe place. Trapped can make an appointment with her provider for an annual checkup. If he insists on going into the exam room, after the nurse does blood pressure, etc., she can ask to use the bathroom and slip a prewritten note to the nurse or leave the note in the bathroom. That should prompt the provider to make her husband leave the exam room. Unfortunately, I've had to do this too often in my practice. — Nurse Practitioner Who's Been There

Dear Nurse Practitioner: Thank you for your letter. Reaching out to your primary care provider is a wonderful suggestion for those suffering domestic

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

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43 More

My Answer

By Dr. Billy Graham

Q: I've exhausted every way to entertain my family. We've seen every movie, explored every amusement park, toured the great parks and cities of the world and cruised the oceans. I thought I was doing the right things by broadening their minds and experiences, but my teenagers tell me they're bored. What does this signify? - B.T.

A: America is said to have the highest per capita boredom of any spot on Earth! We have the greatest variety of artificial amusements. People have become so empty that we can't even entertain ourselves.

Boredom is not a minor matter. While everyone may experience boredom

Boredom is not a minor matter

ous apathy creeps over the land and into minds and hearts. Man is the only one of God's creatures who is capable of being bored. No other living thing except man can ever be bored with itself or its surroundings. This is very significant, for the Creator never does anything without a purpose, and if He gave man the capacity for boredom, He did it for a purpose. Boredom is one of the sure ways to measure inner emptiness! It's as accurate as a thermometer for telling just how hollow the inner spirit really is; the inner self is a vacuum. It is one of the unfailing rules of this universe that all vacuums must be filled, and filled immediately. We've tried to fill

at times, this danger-

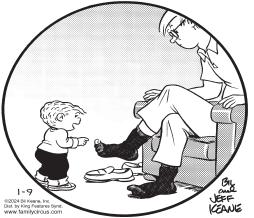
education, and pleasure, but the world is filled with nations of empty people.

Why are we so empty? Because God, the Creator of life, made mankind for Himself, and we will never find completeness and fullness apart from fellowship with Almighty God. Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone" (Luke 4:4, NKJV). And our youth especially are desperately searching for purpose and fulfillment. The Bible says, "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things" (Jeremiah 33:3, NKJV).

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

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THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"I think this little pig is tryin" to go to market.'

The LOCKHORNS



"MY WIFE IS ON THE PHONE? I THOUGHT YOU WERE SCREENING MY CALLS."

IN THE CLASSIFIEDS!

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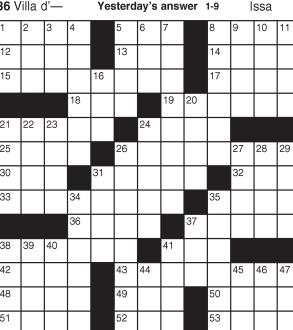
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Moon landing attempt by U.S. company appears doomed after fuel leak

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — The first U.S. moon landing attempt in more than 50 years appeared to be doomed after a private company's spacecraft developed a "critical" fuel leak just hours after Monday's launch.

Pittsburgh-based Astrobotic Technology managed to orient its lander toward the sun so the solar panel could collect sunlight and charge its battery, as a special team assessed the status of what was termed "a failure in the propulsion system."

It soon became apparent, however, that there was "a critical loss of fuel," further dimming hope for what had been a planned moon landing on Feb. 23.

'We are currently assessing what alternative mission profiles may be feasible at this time," the company said in a statement.

The problem was reported about seven hours after Monday's predawn liftoff from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station. United Launch Alliance's Vulcan rocket provided the lift for Astrobotic's lander, named Peregrine, putting it on a long, roundabout path to the moon.

A propulsion system problem "threatens the ability of the spacecraft to soft land on the moon," the company said. The lander is equipped with engines and thrusters for maneuvering, not only during the cruise to the moon but for lunar descent.

Late Monday, Astrobotic released a photo taken from a lander-mounted camera. The company said it showed a "disturbance" in a section of thermal insulation, and that aligns with what is known so far of the problem.

Astrobotic was aiming to be the first private business to successfully land on the moon, something only four countries have accomplished. A second lander from a Houston company is due to launch next month. NASA gave the two companies millions to build and fly their own lunar landers.

The space agency wants the privately owned landers to scope out the place before astronauts arrive while delivering tech and science experiments for the space agency, other countries and universities as well as odds and ends for other customers. Astrobotic's contract with NASA for the Peregrine lander was \$108 million and it has more in the pipeline.

Before the flight, NASA's Joel Kearns, deputy associate administrator for exploration, noted that while using private companies to make deliveries to the moon will be cheaper and quicker than going the usual government route, there will be added risk. He stressed that the space agency was willing to accept that risk, noting Monday: "Each success and setback are opportunities to learn and grow.

The last time the U.S. launched a moon-landing mission was in December 1972. Apollo 17's Gene Cernan and Harrison Schmitt became the 11th and 12th men to walk on the moon, closing out an era that has remained NASA's pinnacle.

The space agency's new Artemis program — named after the twin sister of Apollo in Greek mythology looks to return astronauts to the moon's surface within the next few years. First will be a lunar fly-around with four astronauts, possibly before the end of the year.

Highlighting Monday's moonshot was the longdelayed initial test flight of the Vulcan rocket from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station. The 202foot rocket is essentially an upgraded version of ULA's hugely successful workhorse Atlas V, which is being phased out along with the company's Delta IV. Jeff Bezos' rocket company, Blue Origin, provided the Vulcan's two main engines.

ULA declared success once the lander was free of the rocket's upper stage, nearly an hour into the flight and before the spacecraft's propulsion system malfunctioned and prevented the solar panel from properly pointing toward the sun.

Landing on the moon has long been a series of hits and misses. The Soviet Union and the U.S. racked up a string of successful moon landings in the 1960s and 70s, before putting touchdowns on pause. China joined the elite club in 2013 and India in 2023. But last year also saw landers from Russia and a private Japanese company slam into the moon. An Israeli nonprofit crashed in 2019.

Next month, SpaceX will provide the lift for a lander from Intuitive Machines. The Nova-C lander's more direct one-week route could see both spacecraft attempting to land within days or even hours of one another.

Besides flying experiments for NASA, Astrobotic drummed up its own freight business, packing the 6-foot-tall Peregrine lander with everything from a chip of rock from Mount Everest and toy-size cars from Mexico that will catapult to the lunar surface and cruise around, to the ashes and DNA of deceased space enthusiasts, including "Star Trek" creator Gene Roddenberry and science fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke.

The Navajo Nation recently sought to have the launch delayed because of the human remains, saying it would be a "profound desecration" of a celestial body revered by Native Americans. Astrobotic chief executive John Thornton said the December objections came too late but promised to try to find "a good path forward" with the Navajo for future missions.

One of the spaceflight memorial companies that bought room on the lander, Celestis, said in a statement that no single culture or religion owns the moon and should not be able to veto a mission. More remains are on the rocket's upper stage, which was boosted into a perpetual orbit around the sun reaching as far out as



White House, Pentagon to review Defense Secretary's lack of disclosure on hospital stay

WASHINGTON (AP) — Both the White House and Pentagon said Monday they would look into why President Joe Biden and other top officials weren't informed for days that Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin had been hospitalized. A Pentagon spokesman pointed to one reason: A key staffer was out sick with the flu.

Even as the Biden administration pledged to look into what rules or procedures weren't followed, it maintained its silence about why Austin has been hospitalized for a week. Late Monday, the Pentagon issued an update saying Austin "is recovering well."

Some Republicans have demanded Austin's resignation, but the Pentagon said he has no plans to step down.

Austin, 70, went to the hospital on Dec. 22 for what the Pentagon press secretary called an "elective procedure" but one serious enough that Austin temporarily transferred some of his authorities to his deputy, without telling her or other U.S. leaders why. He went home the following day.

He also transferred some

of his authorities after experiencing severe pain and being taken back to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center by ambulance and put into intensive care on Jan. 1. The White House was not informed until Jan. 4.

Austin, who resumed his duties on Jan. 5, is no longer in intensive care. Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder, the Pentagon press secretary, said his prognosis is "good" but it is not known when he will be released from the hospital.

The Pentagon said Austin has continued to receive briefings and make calls to senior leaders. On Monday, he spoke to national security adviser Jake Sullivan and got briefings from Gen. Erik Kurilla, his top general in the Middle East; his deputy, Kathleen Hicks;nd the Joint Chiefs chairman, Gen. CQ Brown Jr.

The failure to properly inform government and defense leaders will be the subject of what John Kirby, the National Security Council spokesman, called a "hotwash" to see if procedures need to be changed.

Kirby, speaking to reporters on Air Force One as Biden traveled to South Carolina, said there is an "expectation" among members of Biden's Cabinet that if one of them is hospitalized, "that will be notified up the chain of command."

Ryder acknowledged that he and other public affairs and defense aides were told Jan. 2 that Austin had been hospitalized but did not make it public and did not tell the military service leaders or the National Security Council until Jan. 4.

"I want to offer my apologies and my pledge to learn from this experience, and I will do everything I can to meet the standard that you expect from us," he said.

Ryder said staff in Austin's front office will review notification procedures, including whether regulations, rules or laws were broken, and will take steps to cess. Those staff members, however, are among those who did not disclose the secretary's hospitalization.

In a statement issued Saturday evening, Austin took responsibility for the delays in notification.

"I recognize I could have

done a better job ensuring the public was appropriately informed. I commit to doing better," he said, acknowledging the concerns about transparency. "But this is important to say: this was my medical procedure, and I take full responsibility for my decisions about disclosure."

Ryder provided some more detail on who knew about the hospitalization and when they were told.

He said when Austin was taken back to the hospital on Jan. 1 he "was conscious but in quite a bit of pain." He spent that evening undergoing tests and evaluation. The next day, "due to the secretary's condition and on the basis of medical advice." some authorities were transferred to Hicks through a standard email notification that often does not provide the reason for transfer,



Explosion at historic Texas hotel injures 21, scatters debris in Fort Worth

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) - An explosion at a historic Texas hotel in Fort Worth on Monday blew out windows, littered downtown streets with large sections of debris from the building and injured 21 people, including one who was in critical condition, authorities said.

The blast flung doors and entire sections of wall onto the road in front of the 20-story hotel, where rescue crews found several people trapped in the basement, said Craig Trojacek, a spokesman for the Fort Worth Fire Department.

More than two dozen rooms were occupied at the Sandman Signature Hotel when the blast took place, Trojacek said. Authorities said they believe a gas leak caused the explosion and said the hotel had been undergoing construction.

Rebecca Martinez was among those in nearby buildings who recalled hearing a loud crack that sounded like thunder Monday afternoon, and then seeing a wall of dust and debris sweep through the city streets. Stepping outside to see what happened, she came upon a man and a woman leaned up against a fire hydrant.

"The man was all bloody, his face was all bloody," Martinez said. "Then I started smelling natural gas, real intense and I thought, 'I might need to get away from

Moments later, she said, authorities evacuated her building and some of the surrounding neighborhood.

The blast left four people with serious injuries and the others taken to hospitals had minor wounds, officials said at a news conference.

The Sandman Signature Hotel is in a busy area of downtown about one block from the Fort Worth Convention Center. Footage from news helicopters showed firefighters picking their way through the piles of drywall, shattered glass and mangled metal that coated the street outside the hotel. Authorities urged people to avoid the area.

Trojacek said a restaurant in the building had been under construction but said it was not definitive that is where the blast

Video posted to social media showed a man sitting on a street corner across from the explosion site and holding a woman at his chest. The man appeared to have blood on his forehead, and a medical technician knelt in front of him to tend to his wounds.

A grey haze covered normally busy streets of downtown Fort Worth as firefighters walked through layers of debris. Remnants of the building lay scattered across the street and over parked vehicles, and gaping holes could be seen on the ground.

"There was debris. There was insulation. There was office furniture," Charlie Collier, 31, told The Associated Press. "Everything that was in the first couple floors of the building was blown out all over the street."

Trojacek said investigators were working with federal investigators to determine the cause of the blast. The scene had left rescue teams unable to immediately reach some parts of the building.

'We had reports of people trapped down in the basement, and because of the explosion that took place, some of those access areas were either covered up or it didn't feel safe at that point to get people down into," Trojacek said.

Technicians from Atmos Energy, a Dallas-based natural gas distributor, were examining the blast site Monday. A spokesperson for the Railroad Commission of Texas, the state's oil and gas regulator, said an agency inspector was also on the scene and working with local authorities.

According to the hotel website, the Sandman Signature Fort Worth Downtown Hotel has 245 rooms and was built in 1920 as the "Waggoner Building," named after cattle rancher and oilman William Thomas Waggoner. The building has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since





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