

# The News - Banner

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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2024 BLUFFTON, INDIANA • Wells County's Hometown Connection \$1.00

## Questions raised with new license plate cams

**By HOLLY GASKILL**

Some Wells County Council members have taken issue with the Sheriff Department's recent purchase of license plate recognition cameras — namely, that the cameras were purchased without their approval through the use of commissary funds.

Council member Brandon Harnish discussed the item to close an otherwise routine first meeting of 2024 by the council. He believed the decision had been an overstep of power by Sheriff Scott Holliday and should have been brought before the council.

According to Holliday, six cameras were bought to read the license plates of cars entering the county via major paths of travel, Ind. 1, Ind. 224 and Ind. 124. These cameras automatically run license plates through a database, alerting law enforcement when a stolen vehicle or a vehicle belonging to someone with a warrant for their arrest enters the county.

The purchase was recorded as \$18,900 in Holliday's report of commissary fund purchases, which he presented to the council at the beginning of their meeting. However, it was not brought up until the end of the meeting and after Holliday had left.

Harnish expressed his belief that a decision of this nature should have been made in public. "With something like this," he said,

referring to pizza bought for inmates. Which was also included in the report. "I get it. But on a major matter of security, liberty, privacy, those kinds of questions ... (to) stick it in the commissary fund, I just have a fundamental disagreement with that process, respectfully."

Council member Seth Whicker agreed, however, he noted that Holliday planned to have the council consider the annual subscription cost in next year's budget should the equipment prove beneficial.

Holliday later told The News-Banner that he has previously purchased law enforcement equipment with the funds, like guns and tasers. He advised that the commissary fund allows the Sheriff's Department to make purchases outside of its budget, and, as an elected official for the department, he retains the executive authority to approve those purchases.

Whicker concluded, "It's nothing against the current sheriff ... to understand more of how it's all gonna operate and work, I think would be vital for us to get that chance a year from now."

During his quarterly report, Holliday gave year-end totals for daily activities, which largely remained consistent with the previous year's totals.

Holliday also provided numbers for the

*(Continued on Page 2)*



## Board of Works discusses mysterious water issue

**By JONATHAN SNYDER**

Water was the main topic of discussion as the Board of Public Works and Safety heard two issues surrounding water bills Tuesday.

The first water discussion involved mysterious spikes in water usage for Jerry Ripple. The Board of Works opened the discussion at their Dec. 5 meeting, and a new test spanning the past month showed that the water meter detecting the jumps was functioning correctly. Since Dec. 5, Utility Director Jon Oman put a new meter onto Ripple's residence, and his rates have returned to normal.

It is a strange case for the board members — Mayor John Whicker, Josh Hunt and the absent Scott Mentzer — who do not have a leak they can identify but recognized the

spikes made no sense. The sudden influx of water is detected in the middle of the night, when Ripple is sleeping and is recording to use significantly more water than a two-person household would need.

"(Ripple) You're not trying to hide anything," said Whicker.

The board will decide whether to take on the water cost in next week's meeting. Since multiple monthly bills are involved, the board must get the documents in order before making an official decision.

The second water discussion was a more straightforward decision for the board. A resident identified a leak outside their residence on West Central Ave, believed to be from an old pipe. A new

*(Continued on Page 2)*

## Norwell is awarded \$32K grant, staff to receive stipends

**By SYDNEY KENT**

The board of Norwell Community Schools approved a motion to pay teachers \$950 stipend and teaching assistants a \$720 stipend on their Jan. 18 paychecks at the meeting on Tuesday evening.

The money for the stipend came from the recently awarded K-3 Early Literacy Achievement Grant in the amount of \$32,850 from the Indiana Department of Education. Superintendent Mike Springer noted that the amount awarded was significantly higher than other grants in the area. The funds are specifically to be used for teachers.

The district was also awarded a Special Education Para-Professional Training grant in the amount of \$11,355. The funds will be used to train up to 12 future assistants in three levels for assistive technology, visual support, medical needs and orthopedic needs, according to Education Services Director Mindy Schumann.

An additional grant in the amount of \$18,211 was awarded to the district to use towards increasing K-12 robotics programming for materials, equipment, stipends for coaches and more.

In other routine beginning of year busi-

ness, the board voted to elect Gene Donaghy as the board president, Chad Kline as the vice president and Deb Adams as the treasurer.

Construction continues with plenty of painting, finishing and flooring installation at Norwell Middle School, according to Dylan Markley with Weigand Construction.

"We just had one of our last walks with the fire marshal," Markley said. "We're also looking at getting furniture over spring break for the administrative offices."

Of the many updates, Markley noted that crews worked longer days during Christmas break and weekend hours in order to successfully switch over switch gear, which replaced a temporary power source.

During an annual board of finance meeting, the board learned that the district ended the year with a bank balance of \$20,573,215, which is a staggering \$7,053,434 higher than the year before. Approximately \$11 million of those funds are allocated for the new middle school. Additional numbers include a total of \$975,017 earned in interest from The First Bank of Berne, though \$200,305 was from outstanding interest owed.

*(Continued on Page 2)*

## Holcomb delivers last, reflective State of the State address

**By WHITNEY DOWNARD**  
**Indiana Capital Chronicle**

Term-limited Gov. Eric Holcomb delivered his eighth and final State of the State to the General Assembly Tuesday, detailing the accomplishments of his administration and previewing milestones yet-to-come.

"A year ago, I promised you that I would work harder than ever, to continue to improve the prospects for every person that calls Indiana home. Today, I renew

to you that same promise until the ultimate conclusion of my assigned duty," he said.

Holcomb had one surprise in the 30-minute speech: a \$250 million grant from the Lilly Endowment to address blight and redevelopment around the state in addition to cultivating arts and cultural initiatives. The funds will be granted to regions through the READI program, which is already distributing to \$500 million in economic development grants in a

second round of funding.

**Holcomb's speech**

He called the state's efforts to create generational change "The Indiana Model," saying it was a team effort to move the state forward on various initiatives.

"The Indiana Model seeks excellence, rejecting any notion that a Midwestern 'vowel state' would be content with mediocrity — and instead takes giant leaps, rather than baby steps" Holcomb said.

Examples included the Governor's Public Health Commission, which proved instrumental in the push to increase the state's share of funding at local public health departments, as well as economic development moves to attract federal partnerships in clean hydrogen, micro-electronics and biotech manufacturing.

Other milestones included the \$28.7 million in committed capital investment the Indiana Economic Development secured in 2023 —

the same amount the state attracted between 2005 and 2016 combined.

"That's called 'Indiana Momentum' and we've got a lot more coming," he said.

Additional highlights touched on salary increases for both teachers and Indiana State Police personnel as well as Indiana's personal income tax cuts, which dropped to 3.05 percent and will continue to fall to 2.9 percent — tied with the lowest personal income tax

*(Continued on Page 2)*

## Sprawling storms hit U.S. with tornado reports and heavy snow

**By SCOTT McFETRIDGE and KATHY McCORMACK**  
**Associated Press**

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — A sprawling storm hit the U.S. South, with tornado warnings and high winds that blew roofs off homes, flipped over campers and tossed about furniture in Florida on Tuesday, while another storm buried cities across the Midwest in more than a half a foot of snow, stranding people on highways as it

headed to the Northeast.

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. 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.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said at Tuesday's briefing that winter storms continue to be a threat across the country.

"We are closely monitoring the weather, and we encourage all Americans to do the same," she said.

**SOUTH IS HIT WITH DEADLY STORMS AND**

**TORNADO WARNINGS**

At least three deaths were attributed to the storm pummeling the South, where 55 mph winds and hail moved through the Florida Panhandle and into parts of Alabama and Georgia by sunrise Tuesday, along with several reports of radar-confirmed tornadoes, the National Weather Service said. A wind gust of 106 mph was recorded before dawn near the coast in Walton County, Florida.

Near Cottonwood, Alabama, a small city near the Georgia and Florida borders, 81-year-old Charlotte Paschal was killed when her mobile home was tossed from its foundation, the Houston County coroner said. A suspected tornado had touched down in the area.

Police in Clayton County, south of Atlanta, say a man died during heavy rain when a tree fell on his car on a state highway in Jones-

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**Outside**

Chance of morning snow, cloudy and windy tonight

Today	Thursday	Friday
High 34	High 36	High 38
Low 29	Low 28	Low 21

More Weather on Page 2

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## Board of Works

(Continued from Page 1)

pipe is in the ground, and the board will adjust the homeowner's sewer rate and take on half of the water cost.

The board also approved the 911 Dispatch Center's request to hire a new dispatcher, Nicholas Fields. Fields worked in private security before his hiring and is originally from Bluffton. The hiring will take the 911 Dispatch Center to 10 employees, with nine fully trained.

Additionally, the board approved raises for four people from two departments. Erin Pezo of the wastewater treatment plant has been reclassified from a plant operator to a lab technician. She is a class II wastewater operator and has passed multiple wastewater license tests from the Indiana Department of Environmental Man-

agement in the past eight months. Pezo will receive a \$1.50 per hour raise for her services.

There were raises aplenty for the Fire Department, as two 10-year veterans received raises for longevity. Paid on-call Lts. Kyle Morphew and Jordan Ehrman celebrated 10 years of service in December and October last year, respectively. They both will receive a \$1.63 per hour raise. Adam Hannie will also receive a \$38.00 raise bi-weekly for his services as an engineer for the fire department as he enters his third year.

A raise for Jonathan Templin has been tabled until further notice. Templin's situation is an odd case for the board, as he entered the role as a part-time firefighter in 2022, already trained. Because Templin now lives

in the area, he is moving to a paid on-call position. The salary ordinance says paid-on-call firefighters are given raises after one year of service. Templin was moved to a paid on-call position in July of 2023, so Templin's total time in the department is over one year, but his status as a paid on-call firefighter is less than one year. While the board is willing to grant the raise, they need time to ensure they progress through legal channels.

"When we start making exceptions to ordinances, we need our ducks in a row," said Whicker.

Furthermore, the board approved payment for two SRF claims, one for the James S. Jackson construction company and one for DLZ. Both these claims total out to \$1,744,974.

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## State address

(Continued from Page 1)

rates in the country.

Infrastructure, which has long been a focus for his administration, will get its own headlines when I-69 finally connects Indianapolis and Evansville and crews finish building double tracks for the South Shore Line in northern Indiana.

But Holcomb's speech

wasn't without its goals, including a list of "musts" for the upcoming year, based largely on his 2024 agenda:

- Improving third grade reading policies.
- Requiring computer science classes for high school graduation.
- Making college more accessible by creating three-year and associate degree

options.

- Growing the state's beleaguered child care workforce.

- Updating the State Disaster Relief Fund to ease community access.

- Building awareness of current government services, such as One Stop to Start.

Holcomb, a U.S. Navy veteran, shared a quote from

Grace Hopper, one of the first female admirals in the Navy, saying "A ship in port is safe, but that is not what ships are built for."

"My administration will not be a ship in port," Holcomb promised the assembled lawmakers. "Instead, we will deploy on multiple fronts until my last day and hour as your governor."

## Sprawling storms

(Continued from Page 1)

boro.

Storm-related injuries were reported in Florida, but no deaths. A section of Panama City Beach, Florida, showed parts of roofs blown away, furniture, fences and debris strewn about and a house that appeared tilted on side, leaning on another home. About 10 miles away in Panama City, police early Tuesday asked residents to stay indoors and off the roads "unless absolutely necessary." Both cities are in Bay County, where multiple tornadoes were reported, Sheriff Tommy Ford said in a brief Facebook Live post.

The Walton County sheriff's department in the Florida Panhandle posted photos of power lines draped across a road, damage to a gas station and large pieces of building materials littering the area. About 70 miles northeast, in Jackson County, Florida, photos showing damage to a campground and RV park in Marianna were posted.

The National Weather Service office in Tallahassee is planning to send out three tornado survey teams on Wednesday — to examine suspected tornado damage in Walton, Bay and Jackson counties in Florida — and two more on Thursday — to look at Houston County, Alabama, and Calhoun County, Georgia.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who gave his State of the State address Tuesday as tornado warnings were active outside the Capitol, issued an executive order to include 49 counties in North Florida under a state of emergency.

"Every government building except this one is closed in Tallahassee because of the weather," DeSantis said at the start of the speech. "We just do what we do in Florida: We respond when these things happen. ... We'll handle whatever fallout is from these

dangerous tornadoes."

Heavy rain across Georgia stopped air traffic at Atlanta's busy airport for a time Tuesday morning and caused flash flooding, blocking some lanes on freeways around Atlanta during the morning commute. More than 80 public school systems across Georgia called off classes entirely while others taught students online or delayed the start of in-person classes.

More than 200,000 customers were without power in Florida, Alabama, and Georgia, while nearly 150,000 people in North Carolina lacked electricity, according to the PowerOutage.us website.

In North Carolina, one person has died and two others were in critical condition after a suspected tornado struck a mobile home park in the town of Claremont, north of Charlotte, said Amy McCauley, a spokesperson for Catawba County. And in Rocky Mount, downed power lines shut down both directions of I-95, one of the nation's busiest highways, the North Carolina's Department of Transportation said in a statement

North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper declared a state of emergency before the storm approached so weight and size restrictions on large and heavy trucks containing emergency supplies or agricultural goods would be waived. Some schools canceled classes or shut down early.

A possible tornado knocked down several old brick storefronts in downtown Bamberg, South Carolina, blocking the main intersection through the city about 60 miles south of Columbia.

Thousands of bricks blocked U.S. 301, the main road through that part of the state; about 40 homes and businesses were damaged or destroyed, said Democratic Rep. Justin Bamberg, who represents the area. No injuries were reported.

UP TO A FOOT OF SNOW

## POSSIBLE FOR LARGE SWATH OF THE MIDWEST

In the Midwest, where a snowstorm started Monday, up to 12 inches of snow could blanket a broad area stretching from southeastern Colorado all the way to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. That includes 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.

In Des Moines, Iowa, Laura Burianov had nearly finished shoveling her driveway Tuesday morning. But with snow still falling, she acknowledged she likely would have to shovel again later in the day.

"It's going to get harder. I shoveled last night and you can't really tell, but I can pretend that three less inches makes a difference," she said.

The storm dumped around 8 to 12 inches of snow across Kansas, eastern Nebraska and South Dakota, western Iowa, and southwestern Minnesota on Monday. In North Sioux City, South Dakota, the National Weather Service reported 15 inches of snow. Lower amounts fell over central Minnesota, Wisconsin and northern Illinois.

Madison, Wisconsin, was under a winter storm warning until early Wednesday, with as much as 9 inches of snow and 40 mph winds on tap.

Poor road conditions contributed to a fatal crash early Tuesday in southeastern Wisconsin, Jefferson County Sheriff Paul Milbrath said in a news release. An SUV driver was killed following a head-on collision with a semitrailer on state Highway 18 around 5:40 a.m. The driver of the semitrailer was not hurt. Sheriff's Capt. Travis Maze said in a telephone interview that layers of slush and snow covered the center and fog lines on the highway.

## U.S. defends veto of call for Gaza ceasefire while Palestinians, others demand halt to fighting

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The United States defended its veto of a call for the immediate suspension of hostilities in Gaza at a U.N. meeting Tuesday and again faced demands by the Palestinians and many other countries for a ceasefire now in the Israel-Hamas war — as well as by a group of rabbis in the gallery.

U.S. deputy ambassador Robert Wood called the Russian-proposed amendment to a Dec. 22 Security Council resolution which it vetoed "disconnected from the situation on the ground." The council then adopted a watered-down resolution, with the U.S. abstaining, calling for urgent steps to immediately allow expanded humanitarian aid into Gaza, "and to create conditions for a sustainable cessation of hostilities."

Wood called it "striking" that those urging an end to the conflict have made very few demands of Hamas, following its surprise Oct. 7 invasion of southern Israel that killed around 1,200 people, "to stop hiding behind civilians, lay down its arms, and surrender." And he reiterated ongoing U.S. efforts to secure a "pause" in the

fighting to get 136 Israeli hostages out of Gaza.

The U.N. General Assembly was meeting because of a resolution it adopted in April 2022 requiring any of the five permanent Security Council members — the U.S., Russia, China, Britain and France — that vetoes a resolution to explain why to the 193-member world body.

The U.S. only got support Tuesday from Israel's U.N. Ambassador Gilad Erdan who said a cease-fire would be "a victory for Hamas ... to continue the reign of terror in Gaza," which it has ruled since 2007.

He said Israel supports every effort to deliver aid and accused Hamas of looting humanitarian assistance before it reaches the people of Gaza. He also accused the United Nations of becoming "an accomplice to terrorists," being "obsessed" with Gazans, ignoring Israeli victims and doing nothing to bring the hostages home, and remaining silent on condemning Hamas.

To illustrate the plight of the hostages, Erdan brought a cake with him for Kfir Bibas who will turn one-year-old in the coming

days while in captivity. He accused the U.N. of all but forgetting the pain of the innocent baby and asked the General Assembly president to leave the cake — with the name Kfir on it — on the speaker's podium "as a painful reminder." But as soon as Erdan finished, a U.N. staff member whisked the cake away.

As a sign of the growing division among Jews over the war, three dozen rabbis from the group Rabbis 4 Ceasefire came to the U.N. as tourists to protest Israel's offensive in Gaza. The majority of them briefly held signs in the empty Security Council chamber saying "Biden Stop Vetoing Peace," and a small group called for a ceasefire from the balcony of the General Assembly chamber before being hustled out by U.N. security officers.

Wood, the U.S. envoy, praised U.N. humanitarian efforts, telling the assembly "the United Nations is playing an irreplaceable role in delivering and distributing lifesaving assistance to people in Gaza."

U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said the U.N. has seen no reports of loot-

ing — just videos of some hungry, desperate people trying to take food from trucks — and reiterated that delivering aid to combat zones is very challenging.

The Health Ministry in Hamas-run Gaza has said Israel's military campaign has killed over 23,000 people, more than two-thirds of them women and children. The count doesn't differentiate between civilians and combatants. Last Friday, U.N. humanitarian chief called Gaza "uninhabitable" and said "People are facing the highest levels of food insecurity ever recorded (and) famine is around the corner."

Riyad Mansour, the U.N. Palestinian ambassador, told the assembly his people are "being slaughtered," and declared "the horrors need to end and the only way to end them is a ceasefire."

"The whole world is calling for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire," he said, pointing to the 153 countries that supported a General Assembly resolution urging an end to the fighting along with U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, humanitarian organizations, and "moral voices."

## Weather

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

(24-hour observations at 9:05 p.m. Tuesday)

High: 45; Low: 32; Precipitation: 1.3 inches of snow, 1.19 inches of rain, melted snow

Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 3.34 feet at 8:45 p.m. Tuesday

## Wells County forecast

**Today:** A 30 percent chance of snow, mainly before 10 a.m. Cloudy, with a high near 34. Breezy, with a west wind 15 to 25 mph, with gusts as high as 40 mph.

**Tonight:** A 30 percent chance of snow after 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 29. South wind 15 to 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.

**Thursday:** A 20 percent chance of snow before 1 p.m. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 36. West wind 15 to 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.

**Thursday Night:** A 40 percent chance of snow after 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 28. Southwest wind 5 to 10 mph becoming east after midnight.

**Friday:** Snow likely before 11 a.m., then rain and snow. High near 38. Breezy. Chance of precipitation is 90 percent. New snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches possible.

**Friday Night:** Rain and snow. Low around 21. Windy. Chance of precipitation is 90 percent.

**Saturday:** Snow likely, mainly before 1 p.m. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 27. Windy. Chance of precipitation is 60 percent.

**Saturday Night:** A 30 percent chance of snow, mainly before 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 3. Windy.

**Sunday:** A 20 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy and cold, with a high near 15. Breezy.

## License plate cams

(Continued from Page 1)

jail's population — as of Tuesday, 71 inmates were in the Wells County Jail, 30 of which were pre-trial holds for the Circuit Court, 16 pre-trial holds for the Superior Court, 18 from the Department of Correction and four Level 6 felons.

Additionally, Holliday stated the jail's final reno-

vation work is still unfinished, which he discussed at several previous County Commissioner meetings. Auditor Lisa McCormick said she has been unable to contact the representative from Ameresco, the group in charge of the project, about attending the commissioners' upcoming meeting.

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## Norwell grant

(Continued from Page 1)

Springer noted that the interest earned was nearly the exact number needed to pay for new furniture at the middle school. Part of the reason for the increase in funds, Springer explained, can be attributed to an increase in state and local funding and the way the district is managing the funds.

Also at the meeting:

- The district received \$1,000 from the Wells County Foundation Grant Distribution from the Northern Wells Community Scholarship Education Fund. The funds will be

equally split for baseball, show choir, softball, and girls basketball.

- The board accepted donations of \$250 to NMS Robotics Club from Saf-T-Lite/General Manufacturing Inc., \$990.63 to 2023 Overdue Lunch Balances from Clean Fuels National, and an anonymous \$1,000 donation to the NHS FFA program. An additional \$625 was accepted from Thrive Mortgage and First Bank of Berne to co-sponsor 25 students participating in a 10-week budget challenge in NHS personal finance.

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OBITUARIES

**Richard C. Fravel, 84**

Richard C. "Dick" Fravel, 84, of rural Geneva, died at 4:16 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 7, 2024 at Lutheran Hospital of Indiana in Fort Wayne. He was born Monday, Oct. 30, 1939, in Adams County. He married Sandra (Hudson) Fravel Sunday, Sept. 14, 1975 in Decatur.

He is survived by his wife, Sandra (Hudson) Fravel, Geneva; sons, Richard (Tracy) Fravel, Monroe, Mark (Joan) Hudson, Sellersburg, Ind., Mitch Hudson, Portland; Daughters Rebecca Fravel, Ossian, Lisa (Mike) Roderick, Rosedale, Ind., Melissa (Doug) Griffis, Avilla, Ind; 17 Grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his father, William Fravel; mother, Ruth (Christman) Fravel; daughter, Annette Fravel; siblings, Agnes Stewart, Dorothy Madden, Charles Fravel, Bob Fravel, Garnet Bulger, and Madeline Henley; and son-in-law, Shawn Yoquelet.

Family and friends may gather to share and remember at Downing & Glancy Funeral Home located at 100 N Washington Street Geneva, Thursday, Jan. 11, 2024 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

A service to celebrate his life will follow at Downing & Glancy Funeral Home at 2:00 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 11, 2024 with Pastor Paul Strouse officiating. Interment will follow in the Riverside Cemetery in Geneva.

Arrangements are being handled by Downing & Glancy Funeral Home in Geneva.

Online condolences may be made at [www.glancyfuneralhomes.com](http://www.glancyfuneralhomes.com)

**Kathea Holdstock, 30**

Kathea T. Holdstock, 30, of Bluffton, passed away on Jan. 6, 2024, at Parkview Regional Medical Center in Fort Wayne.

Kathea was born in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, on June 4, 1993, to Kristie Haley and Kevin (Leanne) Holdstock; both parents survive. Kathea was preceded in death by her stepfather, Eric Haley.

Kathea is also survived by two sisters, Kayla (Brad) Green and Khloe Lawrence; a nephew, Grayson Holdstock; a niece, Noah Holdstock; maternal grandparents, Ken Elliott and Susan (Michael) Butte; and paternal grandparents, Don and Norma Holdstock.

A memorial service will be held at a later date at Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses in Bluffton. Goodwin - Cale & Harnish Memorial Chapel in Bluffton has been entrusted with the arrangements.

**Police Notebook**

INCIDENTS

City:

Monday, 2:13 p.m., Linger Inn. Caller reported fraud via cashed checks.

Monday, 3:09 p.m., Wells County Courthouse. Report of subject causing issues.

Monday, 3:17 p.m., Bluffton Police Fire Department. Caller reported credit card for National Guard was compromised.

Monday, 4:24 p.m., Helping Hands. Report of woman kicked out of home and requesting ride to Fort Wayne.

Monday, 11:16 p.m., Capri Meadows. Caller reported multiple gunshot sounds in the area. Second caller heard the complaint

on a police scanner and called say he had let off fireworks to celebrate the winning of Michigan in the college football championship.

Monday, 11:31 p.m., 80 block of Sunset Drive. Caller reported subject threatening to kill her. Officer advised caller to get restraining order.

Tuesday, 1:56 a.m., Premier Flats Apartments. Caller reported person with bicycle and wearing hood attempted to kick door in.

Tuesday, 6:27 a.m., McDonalds. Semi truck driver reported he would be temporarily parking his semi in the center lane to run in to get food. Dispatch left voice-mail for caller to park somewhere legally.

Tuesday, 11:34 a.m., South Williams and West Cherry streets. Report of power pole down.

Tuesday, 1:29 p.m., Premier Flats Apartments. Caller requested welfare check for student who did not go to school.

County:

Monday, 2:00 p.m., Wells County Jail. Warrant served at the Wells County Jail.

Monday, 2:05 p.m., Wells County Jail. Three warrants served to one subject at the Wells County Jail.

Tuesday, 7:47 a.m., 10000 South 600 West, Montpelier. Caller reported suspicious behavior. Subjects advised parties are trapping muskrats

out of the pond. Tuesday, 9:55 a.m., Wells County Jail. Protection order served to Troy Jones.

ARRESTS

John Alexander Burke, 32, Bluffton, possession of marijuana, a Class B misdemeanor, and possession of paraphernalia, a Class C misdemeanor.

Jason Allen Cook, 47, Bluffton, failure to appear and operating with controlled substance in body, both Level 6 felonies, and leaving the scene of a crash - injury crash, a Class A misdemeanor. No bond set.

Manuel Antonio Alba Jr., 38, Warren, child solicitation, a Level 4 felony. No bond set.



Pictured in the photo from left are Erin Daugherty of State Farm Insurance, Erica Lehman of Coldwell Banker-Holloway, Rachel Reinhard of the Wells County Chamber of Commerce, Emily Arnold and Katie Arnold of Strategence Capital, Kevin Pritchard of Ruoff Mortgage, Selah Arnold of Strategence Capital, Casey Robbins of F&M Bank, Julie Reiff of Strategence Capital, Keith Muhlenkamp of First Merchants Bank, Kevin Sills of Farm Bureau Insurance, Kaden Bussel of Strategence Capital, Kathy Steffen of Stealth Partner Group, Executive Director of Wells County Chamber of Commerce Erin Prible, Scott Steffen of Action Micro Technologies and Graig Stettner of Strategence Capital. (Photo submitted)

**Local Roundup**

**Hearing for health officer's removal will be Wednesday**

The board of the Wells County Health Department will hold a hearing regarding the removal of Health Officer Dr. Kay Johnson at 5 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 10, in Room 105, the multi-purpose room on the lower level of the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St.

**Southern Wells school board will meet Thursday**

The board of the Southern Wells Community Schools will meet at 5 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 11, in the high school media center of the SWCS campus.

Topics on the agenda include:

- Reorganization of the board.
- An annual meeting of the board of finance.
- Recognition of STEM and recent donation.
- A presentation regarding the FFA parliamentary procedure.
- Financial matters, including fundraiser requests and donations.
- Personnel matters.
- Regular review of policies and procedures.
- Consideration of field trip and conference requests.
- Approval of the 2024 commencement program date.
- Superintendent information.

**Bluffton parks board will meet Thursday evening**

The Bluffton parks board will meet at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 12, in the Council Chambers on the second floor of City Hall, 128 E. Market St.

Topics on the agenda include:

- Reorganization of the board.
- Regular reports from the treasurer and superintendent.
- Recognition of donations and grants.
- A donation request.
- Review of the 5-Year Master Plan and annual report.

**U.S. Rep. Greg Pence won't seek reelection**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republican U.S. Rep. Greg Pence of Indiana said Tuesday he will not seek reelection this year to a fourth term, becoming the latest House member to announce that they won't run for reelection.

Pence, the older brother of former Vice President Mike Pence, announced his decision Tuesday morning in a statement on X, formerly known as Twitter, which did not give any indication why he had decided not to run again for Indiana's 6th District seat.

His famous sibling had held the seat for 12 years before later serving as Indiana's governor. Greg Pence was first elected in 2018 to the seat, which spans parts of central, eastern and south-central Indiana.

"In 2017, I ran for Congress because I was Ready to Serve Again. As a former Marine Officer, I approached the job with purpose. After three terms, I've made the decision to not file for reelection," Pence said in his statement.

"For the remainder of my term this year, our team will continue to focus on delivering outstanding constituent services. To the voters in Indiana's 6th District — it is a privilege and honor to represent you in our Nation's capital."

More than two dozen House members are seeking other office or retiring so far heading into the 2024 election.

On Monday, Republican U.S. Rep. Larry Bucshon announced that he would not seek reelection this year to an eighth term to southern and western Indiana's 8th District and will retire from Congress after 14 years.

Bucshon and Pence's announcements mean four of Indiana's nine congressional districts will be open heading into the November general election.

In January 2023, Republican U.S. Rep. Jim Banks announced that he would not seek reelection to northeastern Indiana's 3rd District because he was running for Indiana's U.S. Senate seat being vacated by GOP Sen. Mike Braun, who is running for Indiana governor.

The following month, Republican U.S. Rep. Victoria Spartz announced she would not seek reelection to a third term representing central Indiana's 5th District.

**Wells County Chamber honors Strategence Capital as January Member of the Month**

The Wells County Chamber of Commerce proudly announces Strategence Capital as the January Member of the Month, recognizing the firm for its outstanding community involvement and exceptional customer service. Strategence Capital is located at 1127 North Main Street, Bluffton.

The Ambassadors committee carefully selected Strategence Capital for this honor, highlighting the company's commitment to strong values, intellectual integrity, and diligence. The impact of Strategence Capital resonates with its mission to educate, assist, and advise clients on their financial journeys. With four locations in Fort Wayne, Bluffton, Van Wert, Ohio, and Morris, Minnesota, this independent investment firm strives to implement the best financial strategies, alleviating anxieties and simplifying the decision-making process.

Jordan Arnold, financial advisor, Graig Stettner, financial advisor and

partner, Kaden Bussel, trader/paraplanner, and Julie Reiff, client services associate, are all being recognized for their contributions to this prestigious acknowledgment.

Reflecting on the past year, Jordan Arnold remarked, "2023 was a transformative year for our business. We welcomed long-term intern Kaden Bussel as a full-time trader/paraplanner in our office. We also switched Registered Investment Advisers and custodians, which, together enable us to expand our investment offerings and to align with partners that more closely align with our values."

Arnold emphasized the importance of meaningful conversations beyond financial figures, stating, "We want to align our clients' money with their values and ensure it is used for good. Our new app and additional technologies enhance client communication, making the investment experience more transparent and interactive."

Local presence remains a priority

for Strategence Capital, with physical offices in Wells County. Graig Stettner emphasized the commitment to the community, saying, "Having a local office demonstrates our dedication to Wells County. We believe in giving back, supporting the chamber, other nonprofits, banquets, and various community initiatives. Being recognized as Member of the Month emphasizes our active role in the community."

Addressing what sets them apart, Jordan Arnold highlighted, "We make all investment decisions in-house, avoiding outsourcing, which allows us to maintain competitive fees. Education is a core passion, and spending a lot of time educating our clients is a passion of ours."

Strategence Capital's unique approach, local commitment, and emphasis on client connection make them a deserving recipient of the Wells County Chamber of Commerce's Member of the Month accolade.

**New data tool shows where Indiana students are struggling most with literacy**

By CASEY SMITH  
Indiana Capital Chronicle

As debate heats up among Indiana policymakers over how to address Indiana's literacy "crisis," a new statewide dashboard gives a more detailed look at where additional reading supports are needed most.

The Indiana Department of Education on Tuesday released its newly-developed data visualization tool, which allows the public to view IREAD and literacy data at both the state and school levels.

State education officials said the new tool will help teachers, parents and policymakers as they undertake new literacy initiatives.

Earned a "good cause exemption", which allow students to move onto fourth grade in certain circumstances — even though they have not passed the IREAD exam

The new tool also provides a longitudinal heat map of Indiana that shows — by corporation and individual schools — the percentage of students advancing to fourth grade who are unable to read at grade level.

"In the history of our state, we have never had this level of partnership and support for advancing literacy," said Indiana Secretary of Education Katie Jenner in a statement. "This historic collaboration implores us all to seize the moment and determine key solutions in order to urgently move the needle for students."

Although data in the dashboard is not new, the statistics double down on

Indiana's struggling literacy landscape.

Hoosier literacy rates have been declining for a decade, well before the pandemic. Since 2012, the number of students who are not able to read at the end of third grade has more than doubled.

According to data from the Indiana Department of Education, in 2023, one in five Hoosier third graders lacked foundational reading skills. But as reading scores have decreased, retention rates have also decreased,

meaning thousands of students who were unable to read still advanced to fourth grade, according to IDOE officials.

Test data showed 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.

Currently, exemptions are available to students in special education, certain English language learn-

ers and students who have already been retained twice or more.

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## State push for trails is a smart way to boost the economy

An explosion in the development of recreational trails across Indiana through the state's \$150 million Next Level Trails program holds great promise in improving Hoosier health, spurring economic development, boosting property values, and creating the kind of amenities that will attract talented workers.

Just last month, Gov. Eric Holcomb and the Department of Natural Resources announced 14 more recipients as part of the fourth round of Next Level Trails grants, providing a combined \$31.2 million that will support 28 miles of new trails.

Among the biggest recipients are the Fall Creek Greenway in Lawrence and the Marquette Greenway, which will each receive \$5 million. As Inside Indiana Business reported, other projects receiving funding include the Vision Trail Phase 1 in Randolph County and the Poka-Bache Trail in Steuben County.

Local communities also have to have some skin in the game, providing a match of at least 20% that can include monetary contributions, land value or in-kind donations of materials and labor. This helps to guarantee community buy-in and puts the projects on the path to success.

When it comes to state-funded trails, however, the big kahuna is the South Monon Trail Project, which the governor last year announced would receive \$29.5 million in state funds.

Construction began last summer on that trail, which will span more than 62 miles from New Albany to Mitchell and connect Floyd, Clark, Washington, Orange and Lawrence counties. It promises to become a cherished community amenity, offering dramatic views of farmland, forests and nearby state parks and recreational areas, and introducing visitors to the charm of small-town restaurants and shops along the way.

In Indianapolis, we already know the tremendous economic impacts of trails, thanks to public-private partnerships and the philanthropy of the Glick family.

According to a study by the Indiana University Public Policy Institute, neighborhood connections and amenities spurred by the Indianapolis Cultural Trail boosted nearby property values 148 percent from 2008 to 2014, and businesses along the trail reported increased revenue and the creation of more jobs. And now the trail is expanding along South Street and Indiana Avenue.

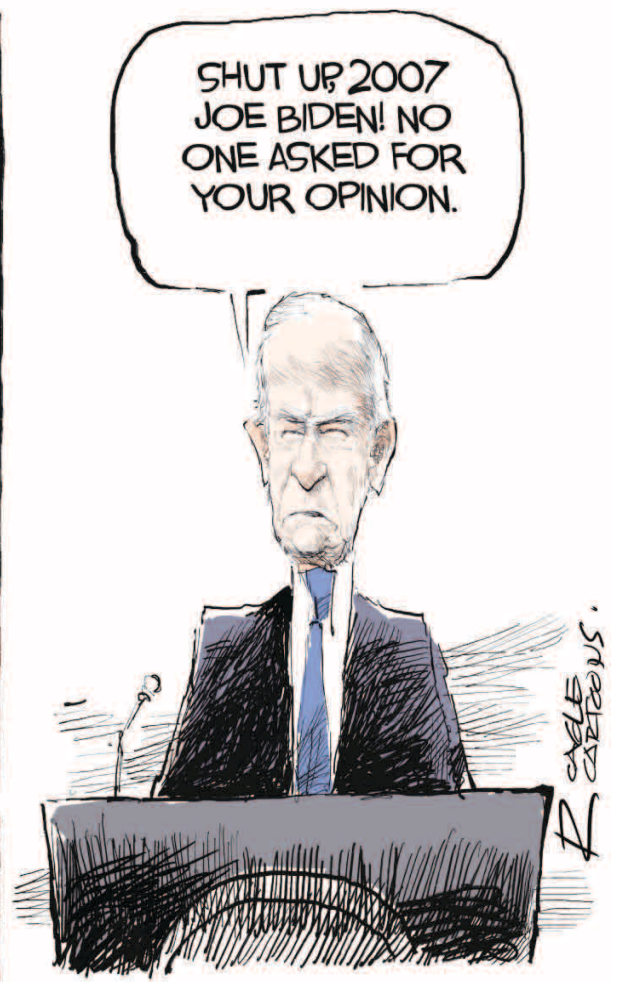
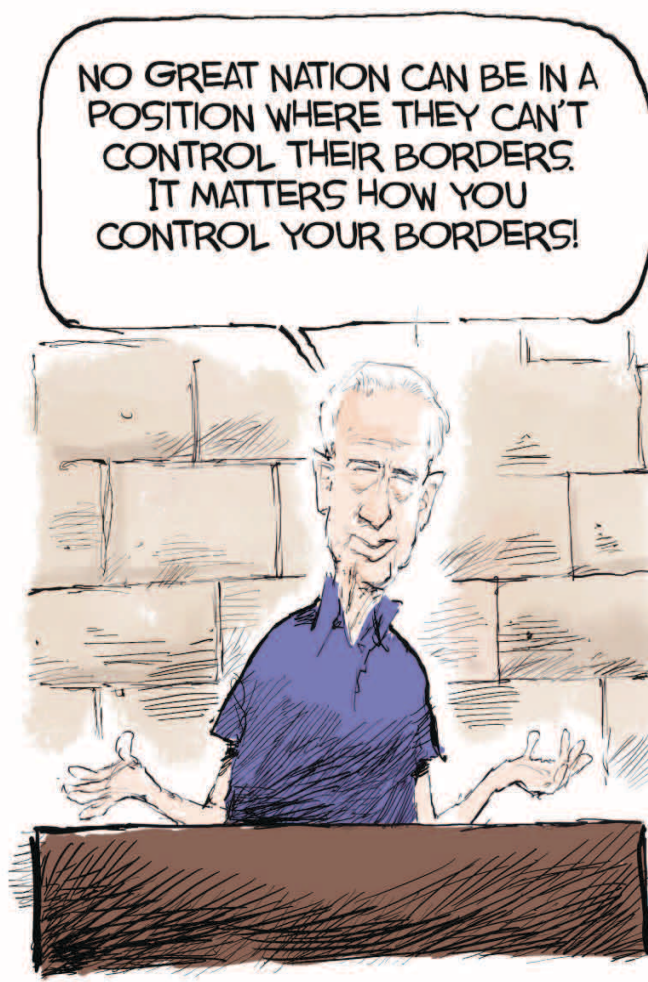
The Monon Trail, which runs from East 10th Street in Indianapolis north to Carmel, Westfield and Sheridan, has had a similar impact on its neighborhoods. Carmel this week announced a \$13 million expansion of a key part of the trail through its Midtown, widening a 0.2-mile stretch from 14 feet to 140 feet. Work also continues on the Nickel Plate Trail and the Penny Trail.

Actually, the list of new trail projects, planned expansions and related amenities seems almost endless. Their positive impacts have been proven repeatedly.

Holcomb, the Legislature and local leaders clearly know a good thing when they see it. And the development of trails plays perfectly into the governor's vision to create appealing communities that will attract talented employees and encourage companies to locate and grow in Indiana.

INDIANAPOLIS BUSINESS JOURNAL.  
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## Hoosier Opinions



## Biden not 'faithfully executing' the law

The oath all presidents take includes a promise to "faithfully execute the office of president of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States." Among other things this means upholding the laws of the United States.

It's worth recalling the definition of an oath: "a solemn appeal to a deity, or to some revered person or thing, to witness one's determination to speak the truth, to keep a promise."

When it comes to the open southern border it could be argued - and should be argued by more members of Congress - that the president has violated his oath, which is reason enough for impeachment.

Immigration laws passed by Republicans and Democrats in Congress and signed by Republican and Democrat presidents are being ignored and thus violated by this president and his Homeland Security secretary, Alejandro Mayorkas. Last week's visit to Mexico by Mayorkas and Secretary of State Antony Blinken was window dressing and will solve nothing.

It's also worth being reminded of what immigration laws say: "Any alien who (1) enters or attempts to enter the United States at any time or place other than as designated by immigration officers, or (2) eludes examination or inspection by immigration officers, or (3) attempts to enter or obtains entry to the United States by a willfully false or misleading representation or the willful concealment of a material fact, shall, for the first commission of any such offense, be fined under title 18 or imprisoned not more than 6 months, or both, and, for a subsequent commission of any such offense, be fined under title 18, or imprisoned not more than 2 years, or both." None of those penalties are being imposed, incentivizing more to come.

Pictures of the flood of migrants making their way to the U.S. on foot and by other means - hundreds of thousands of them - are evidence our immigration

laws are not being faithfully executed by the Biden administration. Some estimates put the number of undocumented migrants currently in the U.S. at 11 million. Cities, including "sanctuary cities" like New York and Chicago, are being overwhelmed. Appeals by their Democrat mayors to the president are ignored.

Some conservative commentators - including me - suspect that the motive of especially Democrats is to "import" future votes for their party. They say that's what "a path to citizenship" is about. A cynic might say that migrants, who are receiving so much free stuff at the expense of U.S. citizens and our tax dollars, will vote for Democrats out of gratitude and to keep the benefits coming. Listening to interviews - mostly on Fox because other media are ignoring or downplaying the crisis - it is clear that many, if not most of the migrants, are coming to America for economic reasons, not because they are being persecuted in their home countries. This cannot continue or the economic strength of America that draws them here will be weakened.

The New York Post recently reported (with pictures) some migrants in New York going door-to-door asking for money, food and clothes. Panhandling has moved from street corners to private homes. How long will that be tolerated?

History proves that when nations fail to control their borders they cease to exist or are greatly diminished in their character and purpose. What about the rights of citizens born in America? Some migrants who obeyed the law and entered the country legally are understandably angry at those who did not.

The United States is unlikely to be an exception to the judgment of history. If the president and Secretary Mayorkas are not impeached, it will be a sign to future migrants that nothing will impede their march to America.



Cal Thomas

## Letters to the Editor

### Bountiful thanks – again

We continue to be amazed and humbled as our loving community, in the midst of a busy Christmas season, gave so generously of their time, money donations, food, toys and clothing. Your donations are so very important to the functioning of our food bank and it is our goal to ensure that you know how much you are appreciated.

Because of each of you, our families are given a chance to have a special holiday season and hopefully change their lives for the better. It is always so touching as they receive their many items, to see their huge smiles, heartfelt thanks and grateful tears.

Our accountant, Trent Bucher, confirmed that we greatly exceeded our 2023 match of our anonymous donor. With your generous donations, we were able to serve 221 families or 502 individuals, including 27 new families, making for a very busy December.

We always knew we lived in a very special community, however with the rising costs of food, etc., this year has been such a blessing for those giving and to those receiving. The love shown from one to another has been so overwhelming.

With love and appreciation, and on behalf of all the Wells County Food Bank volunteers  
AMY MOSER and CONNIE KAEHR

P.S. Any money donations, food, clothing and personal hygiene items would be greatly appreciated throughout the coming year. The food bank is open 1 to 3 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the winter season and closed in January. Starting in April, summer hours are 9 to 11 a.m.

Submit your Letters to the Editor via:

- Our website link (Submit your Letter)
- Fax: (260) 824-0700
- E-Mail: email@news-banner.com
- Mail: PO Box 436, Bluffton IN 46714
- Drop-off: 125 N. Johnson St., Bluffton

All letters must be signed and must include a phone number or address in case verification is desired. Letters are edited for brevity and clarity. **Letters must be no more than 500 words.** Please mark your correspondence as a "Letter to the Editor," or if you wish to express an opinion to us but do not want it published, please mark as "Not for Publication."

## The News-Banner

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## Immigrants aren't poison. They're America's lifeblood.

To understand what is wrong with Donald Trump's repeated claim that migrants who are in the United States illegally are "poisoning the blood of our country," take a moment to watch Bill Murray's 1981 comedy, "Stripes." In the movie, Murray is trying to inspire a ragtag group of losers struggling to pass Army basic training. "We're all very different people," he exhorts them. "We're not Watusi. We're not Spartans. We're Americans, with a capital 'A.' You know what that means? Do ya? That means that our forefathers were kicked out of every decent country in the world. We are the wretched refuse! We're the underdog! We're mutts!"

Our country does not have a singular bloodline to be poisoned. Americans can trace their roots to every corner of the planet. Even if your ancestors came here on the Mayflower, you're descended from boat people, the riffraff of 17th-century Europe. They came here for the same reasons most immigrants come today: seeking a better life than what they faced in the place of their birth.

The reason we can make the audacious claim that we are an "exceptional" nation is because we are the first in human history not built on blood and soil, but on an idea: the idea of human freedom. Anyone (including Spartans) can become an American. Our mixed-breed heritage distinguishes us. "You can go to live in France, but you cannot become a Frenchman," President Ronald Reagan once said, "You can go to live in Germany or Turkey or Japan, but you cannot become a German, a Turk or Japanese. But anyone, from any corner of the Earth, can come to live in America and become an American."

This is precisely why we need not fear the rise of nationalism in America. In most countries, nationalism is based on ethnicity. But ours is



Marc Thiessen

a creedal nationalism — a commitment to the supremacy of the American *idea*. European nationalism is inherently exclusive; American nationalism is inherently inclusive, open to those who come here legally and accept our creed, our Constitution and our founding principles.

Today, our creedal nationalism is under assault from both the left and right. On the left, some are trying to convince us that America

is a systemically racist country that isn't really all that great. On the right, some self-styled "national conservatives" are seeking to foist European-style blood-and-soil nationalism onto the American body politic. This is inimical to our founding principles. The Declaration of Independence says that "all men" — not all "Americans" or "U.S. citizens" — are created equal. Although we have sometimes failed to live up to those principles, when immigrants come here and jump into what we used to call the "great American melting pot," they can become as American as any of us.

Fortunately, most Americans still believe this. According to a Gallup poll from July, a 68 percent supermajority says immigration is a good thing for the country (up from 52 percent in 2002). Just 27 percent of Americans consider it a bad thing.

The problem at our southern border is not that so many people want to come here. It's that many are coming *illegally*. It's that our government lets millions of people enter without screening out criminals and those who wish our country harm. It's that transnational drug cartels take advantage of the porous border to flood our country with deadly fentanyl. It's that economic migrants abuse the asylum system and crowd out actual refugees. It's that the border chaos makes it impossible to reach bipartisan consensus to fix our immigration system.

But the fact is, we need legal immigrants. There are 8.7 million unfilled jobs in the United States, and there are not enough native-born workers to fill them. According to Census Bureau data, the U.S. population is now growing at less than replacement levels. The only thing stopping us from overall population decline is immigrants, who are projected to account for 88 percent of U.S. population growth through 2065.

Far from poison, immigrants are a lifesaving transfusion into the American bloodstream. That includes the Trump family. The former president is descended from a mix of German and Scottish immigrants. (His grandfather came here in 1885 as a 16-year-old German barber, while his mother was a domestic worker who grew up in hardscrabble circumstances in Scotland.) His children by Ivana Trump and Melania Trump are German-Scottish-Czech or German-Scottish-Slovenian mix. His grandchildren on the Kushner side have a Polish-Jewish background. And his grandchildren by Eric and Lara Trump have Slovak, English, German, Swiss-German and Dutch heritage.

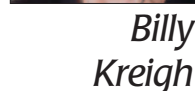
Like most of us, the Trumps are mutts. And this is the real source of American greatness. "We lead the world," Reagan told us, "because, unique among nations, we draw our people — our strength — from every country and every corner of the world. ... Thanks to each wave of new arrivals to this land of opportunity, we're a nation forever young, forever bursting with energy and new ideas, and always on the cutting edge, always leading the world to the next frontier."

Yes, we urgently need to secure our border. But the moment we start worrying about the purity of our blood, we will abandon what makes us exceptional — and become just another country. And that is no way to make America great again.

Follow Marc A. Thiessen @marcthiessen on X

# Clearing up “stuff” engenders whole bunches of other “stuff”

The middle of the second week of January 2024 and already it seems like this year is in overdrive. Took the Christmas tree down over the weekend; it is always a bit melancholic for me. When the tree goes up, the day after Thanksgiving, I enjoy the entire process with the help of my grandson.



**Billy Kreigh**

When I take it down, I do that alone. I wonder if disassembling the tree is a cause for introspection for others also. Tucking those ornaments away and stripping the lights, carefully wrapping each strand so that next year no one has to spend hours trying to untangle them (a pesky gnome must get into them when I am unaware because come December 2024, they will be a twisted mound of confusion).

Well, the second week of January and it is probably safe to say that any, if not all, New Years resolutions so deliberately made just 10 days ago have likely been abandoned, annihilated, or abolished. I do not do resolutions. In previous times, when I was much younger, more frivolous, and a believer in my power to stick with something for more than fourteen minutes, I did attempt the resolution thing. I vowed to “exercise more, lose

weight, and give up Pepsi.” Oh well.

As I aged and became so very much wiser, instead of setting myself up for guaranteed failure with resolutions, I determined that I would just continue to exercise when required, give the bathroom scale to Bargain Hut, and drink my Pepsi whenever I dang well wanted to. Yes, life became decidedly less complicated thereafter.

As previously stated, clearing up holiday “stuff” alone provides the opportunity for me to think about “stuff” with wild abandon. For those who may not know me well, that means that my mind frantically ricochets around my brain, willy-nilly with no regard to or for absolutely anything. Ok, so not that different from the usual state of my mind, granted, but on steroids.

Assuming that any readers of this digressive account might be remotely interested, I gladly share some of my more riveting thoughts. You are welcome.

1. What constitutes a good apology? As one who is regularly faced with the need to apologize, I guess relevant, sincere, sans excuses would be a good place to begin. Pretty sure that I might need to deliberate this one some more.

2. Where does happiness origi-



**Here's the Thing**

“to” to “from” makes all the difference. I make the choice; I am going to be more conscious of that choice, and no, that is not a resolution as much as it is a realization with intent. Is that merely semantics? I do not think so.

3. Sometimes the answer lies in the question. Sounds very similar to one of those inane statements an old English teacher might say, doesn't it? Here's where my mind went with this one: if I can understand the essence of the root of the question, I will be more likely to come to an answer. This is not “circular thinking” but rather linear thinking because it requires a methodical and analytical approach to the question. Rarely are questions comprised of only one objective or one level of inquiry.

4. What do we do with questions that seem to have no answer? Not rhetorical necessarily, but questions where the answer is nebulous at best, impossible at worst. Examples of this are: how far east can one travel until he is traveling west? When I forget a thought, where does it go? If I enjoy wast-

ing time, is it really a waste? If I expect the unexpected, is the unexpected now expected? How would anyone ever know if something were infinite? Ok, you get the idea; I am getting a few extra strength Tylenol and a Pepsi.

5. Is there life on other planets? I think about this rather often. Here's where I “land” on this one. We have no information as to just how vast “space” really is. Heck, I cannot even understand what a “light year” really is. Ok, I can read the definition of one: the distance light travels in one Earth year – about 6 trillion miles. But when The Milky Way is described as being 100,000 light years across, well, gotta say, nope, I do not get it. Six trillion times 100,000 is entirely too many zeroes for me. And would it not seem incredible for us to think that in all of space, we are the only life there is? If there indeed is life elsewhere, could we then be the aliens?

6. How do I discern when I need to hold on and when I need to let go? This one plagues me regularly. I will get back to you.

7. Is there such a thing as “silence”? Even if submersed in a sensory deprivation chamber, wouldn't I still hear my own breathing?

8. Shadow and light hold much meaning for me, metaphorically and symbolically, heck I could talk for days about that with you, if you might be so inclined. It is comforting to me to know that no

matter how dark the shadow, it could not even exist if there were no light. It is the light that provides the shadow. Yep, that is definitely a good thing for me to remember.

**Here's the thing:** The tree is dismantled and stored away. A new year has begun and much about the world's situations remain troubling and even disheartening. There is a great deal for us to ponder and consider. I know how I see things, usually, and I try to stay in some form balance between thinking about everything and driving myself even more crazy. It is fine line. Perhaps the bottom line is that questioning, debating, considering – all are involved in the process of critical thinking where being aware of our own biases and assumptions is, well, critical. Sometimes these do not lead to a definitive answer or understanding as much as they serve to stimulate the thinking process.

Maybe next year when I am putting the decorations away by myself, I should just write a dang resolution, probably would be much quicker and easier, don't ya know.

bkreigh@adamswells.com

*Editor's Note: This is one of a series of articles written by a group of retired and current teachers — LaNae Abnet, Ken Ballinger, Billy Kreigh, Kathy Schwartz, Anna Spalding. Their intent is to spur discussions at the dinner table and elsewhere. You may also voice your thoughts and reactions via The News-Banner's letters to editor.*

## Overspent in December? Here's how to battle the January blues

By **KIMBERLY PALMER** of NerdWallet

January often means facing down any overspending from the previous month, which can be a downer. But financial experts say it's possible to neutralize some of that strain and battle the blues by focusing on steps such as creating or updating a budget and prioritizing paying off high-interest debt. Tracking your bills carefully to avoid late payments and rebuilding savings when possible also helps. Finally, knowing your rights when it comes to refunds, and seeking support from professionals and friends can also help make it easier to handle January's tasks.

The first workday in January after the holidays hits a little bit differently: The parties are over, debt payments are soon due and it can feel like there's nothing to look forward to.

You may be able to minimize the doldrums with some planning and other steps to turn things around, financial experts say.

“Financial stress can be temporary,” says Tonya Rapley, financial educator and founder of the millennial money and lifestyle blog My Fab Finance. She suggests focusing on small steps such as paying this month's bills, then reminding yourself that you can recover from December's overspending.

Here are a few more ways to fight this month's financial downers:

### MAKE OR UPDATE A BUDGET

The new year is a great time to create or update a budget, which can give you back a sense of control, says Mike Croxson, CEO of the National Foundation for Credit Counseling, a nonprofit financial coaching organization.

The popular 50/30/20 budget, for example, suggests putting 50% of your take-home income toward needs, 30% toward wants and 20% toward savings and any debt payments. You can adjust those percentages as needed, especially if you live in an urban area with high housing costs.

“The best way to get control back is to make a plan,” Croxson says. “You can get back on top of this and back to where you feel good about your finances.”

### PAY OFF DEBT

With interest rates higher than they were a couple of years ago, credit card debt is also more expensive, which makes paying it off a financial priority. How exactly you do that is up to you, Croxson says.

“Paying off the highest interest rate balance first makes the most common sense, but for some people, paying off the smallest dollar amount first is most important because they feel like they accomplished something,” Croxson says. Small wins can give you momentum to continue.

Online calculators for those two methods, known as the avalanche and the snowball, respectively, can help you stay

on track.

### TRACK YOUR PAYMENTS CAREFULLY

If you purchased holiday gifts using “buy now, pay later,” which allows shoppers to split payments into multiple installments, then it's important to note when those bills are due, says Christine Alemany, chief marketing officer for i2c, a global banking and payments platform.

Alemany suggests tracking your buy now, pay later due dates with a financial management tool or spreadsheet to avoid late fees or interest charges. “The variety of payment methods that consumers now have gives them the option to choose what's best for them,” she says, but “that convenience needs to be balanced by discipline.”

### BUILD UP SAVINGS

Amid all of that repayment, it's also important to find a way to save money, Croxson says. “Having a savings line item in your budget is a critical step for virtually every consumer, even if it's \$20 or \$25 a month,” he says. “There will be an emergency, and you will need it.” Being able to turn to savings in the future also helps you avoid building up debt again, he adds.

The good news for Americans is that positive signs in the economy, such as a slower rate of inflation and lower gas prices, means it's a little easier to find room for savings, according to Alan Gin, associate professor of economics at the University of San Diego's Knauss School of Business.

With gas prices coming down, Gin says, “not only will consumers be more confident, but they will have more money.”

### KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

If an expensive item you bought or received as a gift in December breaks in January, that's another potential downer, which is why knowing your refund rights is critical, says Wayne Hassay, partner attorney for LegalShield, a legal services provider. He suggests keeping track of all paperwork related to the item and any warranty attached whenever you make a big-ticket purchase.

In some cases, paying with a credit card can give you additional protections, he adds. And if your pricey new electronics break, don't hesitate to follow up with the retailer or brand until you get a satisfactory response, which could be a refund or a new product.

### GET HELP IF YOU NEED IT

Working to pay off debt and get back on budget in January can feel lonely because it's such a solo activity, which is why it's helpful to reach out for additional support, whether that's from financial professionals or friends and family.

“Be honest with people,” Rapley says. She suggests sharing in a friend group chat if you are looking to scale back and spend less, because you'll likely find encouragement that can help you stay on track. “That communication is definitely important,” she says, and can help you feel less alone — and with more good things to anticipate in the year ahead.

## ‘Making a Difference’ sponsors



**Habegger's Ace Lumber of Bluffton**, represented by Jesse Frauhiger and Jeremy Frauhiger, center, will be among the sponsors of the Wells Community Boys & Girls Club “Making a Difference” banquet to be held on Jan. 22 at the club. With them are club representatives Vicki Bell, at left, and Gene Bell, at right. (Photos provided)



Dr. Laura Kukulhan, DDS, center, will be another sponsor of the Boys & Girls Club annual fund-raiser. Accepting the sponsorship wre club representatives Vicki Bell, at left, and Gene Bell, at right. This year the featured speaker will be Wayne Barker, former Superintendent of the Bluffton-Harrison M.S.D.



Steve Feasel of **Velocity Motors**, at right will also be a sponsor for the “Making a Difference” event to be held at the Wells Community Boys & Girls Club on Jan. 22. Club representative Gene Bell is at left.

### Shrine Circus at Allen County War Memorial Coliseum

The Mizpah Shrine Circus will be coming to the Fort Wayne Coliseum Jan. 26-28.

Shows will be held on Friday, Jan. 26, 7 p.m.; Saturday, Jan. 27 at 10 a.m., 2:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. and Sunday, Jan. 28 at 2 p.m.

Ticket prices begin at \$16 per person. Information at allaccess@memorialcoliseum.com

### Marriage Tune-Up Weekend at Hope Missionary Church

“Who says working on your marriage has to feel like work?”

Marriage speakers Jeff & Debbie McElroy of Forever Families have a heart for ministering to couples and will be leading the 2024 Marriage Tune-Up Weekend at Hope Missionary Church in Bluffton on January 26-27. The cost for the

event is \$79 per couple. For more information and to register, go to [www.hope4thefamily.com/events](http://www.hope4thefamily.com/events).

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**Mean Girls**  
Thursday, January 11th 6pm  
Friday, January 12th 6:20pm & 9pm  
Saturday, January 13th 3:30pm, 6pm, & 8:30pm  
Sunday, January 14th 2:20pm & 5pm

**Migration**  
Thursday, January 11th 6:20pm

**Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom**  
Friday, January 12th 6pm & 8:45pm  
Saturday, January 13th 3pm, 5:45pm, & 8:30pm  
Sunday, January 14th 2pm & 4:45pm

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# Tiger boys rout Raiders in the ACAC Tournament

By RICK SPRUNGER

A strong defense and an offensive surge starting the second half carried Bluffton to a 47-20 win over Southern Wells in first-round action of the boys' Allen County Athletic Conference basketball tournament Tuesday night.

The Tigers, now 6-5 on the season, advanced to the semi-final round on Friday at Heritage, a 56-52 upset winner over Woodlan.

Southern Wells dropped to 2-9 on the season.

Bluffton came out of the locker room at halftime on fire.

The Tigers scored 12 unanswered points to start the third quarter and extended a 14-7 lead at the break to 26-7 with 5:33 left in the period.



Bluffton's Kaleb Green takes the ball to the rim, helping the Tigers with a game-high 17 points.

"I thought we came out for the second half with a much higher intensity level, a much higher effort level," said first-year Bluffton coach Craig Teagle. "Kaleb Green was a big spark for us in the second half."

Green scored 13 of his game-high 17 points in the third and fourth periods, including a three-point play in the first 15 seconds that got the Tigers off and running.

The Tigers hit six of their first eight shots of the third quarter.

During that same third quarter stretch, Southern Wells turned the ball over four times in five possessions and missed the only shot it took.

"First of all, Bluffton played very solid defense," acknowledged Raider coach Joel Roush. "They're very physical, and they get outstanding help."

Teagle was pleased with his team's defensive play.

"We tried to switch onto (Chandler Oswalt) because he can hit from just about anywhere on the floor," he continued about his defensive gameplan "We lost him a couple of times, but we got lucky when he didn't hit his shots. We also wanted to keep (Evan Pennington) in front of us and (Perrin Gates) off the offensive boards."

Whatever Teagle drew up must have worked like gold because Southern Wells struggled all night to put the ball in the basket.

"If it was a lack of effort, if we were taking bad shots or being selfish, I'd be a lot more upset than I am," said Roush of his team's inability to find the basket.

Southern Wells hit on just one of 15 shots from the field during the entire first half and six of 32 for the game for a .188 shooting percentage.

After missing its first seven shots of the game, Southern Wells got a three-pointer from Caleb Johnson to earn the Raiders a 6-6 tie with 1:28 left in the first quarter.

From then until the 5:01 mark in the third quarter, the Raiders only managed to score one point.

Yet, despite managing just that one point in the second quarter and seven in the first half, the Raiders were still very much in the game, trailing just 14-7.

"I thought in the first half we were solid defensively," Roush continued after watching his team limit Bluffton to 5-for-21 shooting (.238) in the first two periods "We did a good job of hanging in there. But it's tough to keep guarding when your shots aren't dropping, and their physicality can



Southern Wells guard Evan Pennington (center) is swarmed by Bluffton defenders Kaleb Green (left) and Hunter Wenger going to the basket Tuesday night at The Raider Dome. The Tigers defense only allowed 20 points in the 47-20 win in Round 1 of the ACAC Tournament over the Raiders. (Photos by Ryan Walker)

just wear you down."

Bluffton got over its first half shooting woes by canning 12 of 19 second half shots (.632), an almost startling improvement over its first half numbers.

"We shot a little better in the second half," Teagle said with a smile.

Green started the second half with that three-point play, and Tucker Jenkins rebounded an Axton Beste miss for two more.

Green then stole the ball and got the ball to Beste for another bucket underneath, Jenkins ripped a three-pointer from the corner, and Green scored for that 26-7 spread.

At that point, C.J. Reber finally pried the lid off the Southern Wells basket with a 10-footer in the lane.

Beste answered that with a three-pointer and a bucket underneath for a 31-9 margin with 3:20 left in the third quarter that pretty much ended any remaining doubt.

Jenkins joined Green in double figures

with 13 points for Bluffton.

The Tigers outrebounded Southern Wells by a 31-21 margin and committed just 10 turnovers, a mere five after the first quarter.

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## BLUFFTON 47, SOUTHERN WELLS 20

**at Southern Wells**  
**BLUFFTON (6-5):** Andrew Hunt 1-4 0-1 2, Cameron Williams 0-2 2-2 2, Tucker Jenkins 5-7 2-5 13, Axton Beste 3-9 0-0 7, Kaleb Green 6-8 5-6 17, Declan Griener 1-3 0-0 2, Elijah Garrett 0-3 0-0 0, Hunter Wenger 1-3 2-2 4, Benjamin Maggard 0-1 0-0 0, Nolan Lambert 0-0 0-0 0, Jude Baumgartner 0-0 0-0 0. TOTAL: 17-40 11-16 47.  
**SOUTHERN WELLS (2-9):** Andrew Aker 0-6 0-0 0, C.J. Reber 1-2 0-0 2, Evan Pennington 1-4 0-0 2, Chandler Oswalt 0-8 1-2 1, Perrin Gates 2-7 3-4 7, Caleb Johnson 1-2 2-3 5, Landon Johnson 1-3 0-0 3, Joshua Aulbach 0-0 0-0 0, Trey Slusher 0-0 0-0 0. TOTAL: 6-32 6-9 20.  
**Bluffton** 8 6 22 11 — 47  
**So. Wells** 6 1 8 5 — 20  
**Three-point shooting:** Bluffton 2-13 (Hunt 0-2, Williams 0-2, Jenkins 1-1, Beste 1-4, Green 0-1, Garrett 0-2, Maggard 0-1); Southern Wells 2-18 (Aker 0-5, Reber 0-1, Oswalt 0-7, C. Johnson 1-2, L. Johnson 1-3). Rebounds: Bluffton 31 (Jenkins 8, Green 5); Southern Wells 21 (Gates 6). Turnovers: Bluffton 10, Southern Wells 14. Personal fouls: Bluffton 11, Southern Wells 17. Fouled out: Oswalt. Technical fouls: None.

# Offense leads Tiger girls to win vs. Raiders in ACAC Tourney

## Konley Ault scores 15 points in her return

By RYAN WALKER

PONETO — The first quarter was all Bluffton needed in a 70-27 victory over Southern Wells during Round 1 of the ACAC Tournament.

It was a night-and-day difference on offense for Bluffton (14-4), who shot a measly 6-37 with 24 points last Friday against Jay County. Haley Gibson led the charge with four three-pointers to open the floodgates to a 29-point first quarter. Isabella Stout added four buckets as Southern Wells had 18 total turnovers in the first half.

The offensive spark might of had something to do with Konley Ault, who returned for the first time since a wrist injury sidelined her over the past 10 games. Ault, before the injury, was the No. 1 player on her team in field-goal percentage, assists and steals and top-three in every just about other category.

She tallied 15 points in the contest with seven made shots and seven rebounds, even hitting a free throw with her left hand, the one she didn't hurt.

"Obviously very happy that she's able to get cleared to play today," Bluffton head coach Doug Curtis said. "We've had that tough stretch without her. We were hoping she'd get cleared and have a chance to play today and then get a win."

Curtis made note that

before Ault even went in off the bench, Gibson and Stout were tearing it up on the scoreboard. Gibson finished with a game-high 20 points and Stout was second at 16.

Once Ault did check-in, the team was able to spread the floor better and he said "That's when we're smoother all the way around, and it looked like that tonight."

With Stout, Gibson and Ault all on the floor, Bluffton was hard to stop on both ends of the floor.

"It's super difficult," Southern Wells head coach Jessica Killingbeck said. "We started out in our zone, then they were hitting shots so we had to adjust to a man-to-man. We were allowing middle drives, so we made an adjustment at halftime talking about adjusting and forcing them baseline."

The Tigers finished the first quarter at 12-14 from the floor, and picking up 15 more points in the second. The Raiders (4-13) had five made shots by the break.

Killingbeck and the coaching staff were looking for an answer, breaking out of their defensive game plan at halftime.

For most of the third quarter, it worked, allowing its lowest total at 10 points.

Ashlie Needler limited forward Maryn Schreiber to just two points on the night and also had a team-high 11 points. Killingbeck's biggest

shoutout however went to a pair of freshman.

Aubrey Meyer and Kaylea Coffel have inched their way to more playing time down the stretch, and both cracked the starting lineup in recent weeks.

Killingbeck said that the two provide energy and toughness, working hard in every practice. She decided to give them a go in the lineup on this night.

"Gibson and Stout killed us in that first half, and then I thought Meyer and Coffel did a really nice job slowing them down a little bit, giving us the opportunity to get support offensively," Killingbeck said. But by that time, it was too late for the Raiders with a running clock in the second half but that was when they turned it up a notch.

"I think it was a good adjustment by our coaching staff, and they made good adjustments at halftime," Killingbeck said. "We just can't wait until halftime to do those things."

Bluffton's semifinal matchup with Woodlan will be at Heritage High School at 6 p.m. The first meeting between the two went by way of the Tigers in a close 47-44 final score. This time, they'll have Ault though, who missed that game.

"We've had that tough stretch without her. We were hoping she'd get cleared Monday and get a chance to play today and get a win, get



Southern Wells' Ashlie Needler (left) drives on Bluffton defender Konley Ault during Round 1 of the ACAC Tournament Tuesday night at The Raider Dome. Ault returned to the court for the first time in 10 games with a wrist injury and led the Tigers in a win over the Raiders 70-27. (Photo by Ryan Walker)

through a couple of practices and be ready to go against Woodlan," Curtis said.

sports@news-banner.com

## BLUFFTON 70, SOUTHERN WELLS 27

**at Southern Wells**  
**BLUFFTON (14-4):** Haley Gibson 8-14 0-0 20, Isabella Stout 8-17 0-0 16, Konley Ault 7-11 1-2 15, Madysen Ssonnigsen 4-5 0-0 9, Tressa Renner 1-2 0-0 3, Marly Drayer 1-6 1-2 3,

Maryn Schreiber 1-5 0-0 2, Sophie Eisenhut 1-1 0-0 2, Cayah King 0-2 0-2 0, Madelyn Funk 0-2 0-0 0, Isla Gibson 0-0 0-0 0, Addison Yates 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS: 31-65 2-6 70.

**SOUTHERN WELLS (4-13):** Ashlie Needler 4-15 3-4 11, Kaylea Coffel 2-4 0-0 5, Gracie Reeves 1-6 0-0 3, Kyah Thomas 1-2 0-0 3, Erika Beavans 1-4 0-0 2, Aubrey Meyer 0-1 0-0 0, Col-lena Reeves 0-1 0-0 0, Karlee Warner 0-3 0-0 0, Kenzie Paxson 0-1 0-0 0. TOTALS: 10-42 3-6 27.

**Bluffton** 29 15 10 16 — 70  
**So. Wells** 9 5 5 8 — 27

Three-point FG: Bluffton: 6-15 (Gibson 4-5, Ssonnigsen 1-1, Renner 1-1, Stout 0-3, Ault 0-1, Drayer 0-2, Funk 0-1), Southern Wells 4-11 (Thomas 1-1, Coffel 1-3, G. Reeves 1-4, Meyer 0-1, C. Reeves 0-1). Rebounds: Bluffton: 38 (Ault 7, H. Gibson 6, Drayer 5, Schreiber 5, Stout 4, Ssonnigsen 4, King 3, I. Gibson 1, Eisenhut 1), Southern Wells 22 (Paxson 7, Needler 5, Coffel 3, G. Reeves 2, Warner 1, C. Reeves 1). Turnovers: Bluffton: 15, Southern Wells 30. Fouls: Bluffton: 5, Southern Wells 7. Fouled Out: None. Technicals: None.

# Generals' long-range attack overwhelms the Knights

By ANDREW FEEBACK

FORT WAYNE — It's hard to beat a team that never seems to miss.

The Norwell boys' basketball team was on the receiving end of a phenomenal shooting performance from the Fort Wayne Wayne Generals Tuesday night, and the Knights took an 80-55 loss on the road.

Wayne (9-3) made a staggering 16 of 28 from beyond the arc, with all of those shots spread out among just four players.

Jevon Lewis did most of the damage, knocking down 9 of 16

and finishing with 31 points. Preston Comer threw in four more as the Generals finished 32 of 48 from the field overall.

Norwell (7-5) had some hot shooting of its own early on, trading triples with the Generals for the first few minutes. The teams combined to make eight three-point shots before either team scored from inside the arc.

The Knights trailed by just a point when the first quarter ended and were only down 26-24 midway through the second.

"I thought offensively, in the first half, we played really well,"

Norwell coach Mike McBride said. "We took good shots, we were patient (and) we moved the basketball. I thought that was really good. We did what we had to do to have a chance to be in the game. The hard part was, we just couldn't stop them."

Chase Barnes scored five quick points, drawing a Norwell timeout.

Four free throws from Ashton Federspiel sandwiched around a three-pointer from Qalon Miles had the Knights within eight at the break.

But the Knights were down 12 quickly to begin the second half

after two quick baskets from HJ Dillard.

"We needed a stop and then a score, and then a stop and a score," McBride said. "I thought that was really important that we get that. We had the missed shot, we just didn't get the rebound. Then they scored on it, then we had a turnover and they scored, and right away I'm calling timeout."

Lewis took over in the third quarter, hitting three more deep ones as Wayne pushed its lead to 15.

Two more long ones from Miles and Comer had the Generals up 57-38 after three.

Norwell had a bit of a burst early in the fourth quarter to pull within 62-47, but Wayne scored the next six points, and the Knights emptied the bench with four minutes to play.

"We tried to chip away, but they were just too good offensively tonight," McBride said. "That was really what it came down to."

A statistical oddity that rarely happens in a basketball game, but wasn't entirely surprising given how many outside shots the Generals took, was that Wayne did not shoot a free throw the entire game.

(Continued on Page 7)

# Generals overwhelm Knights

(Continued from Page 6)

But free throws are hardly necessary for a team whose top scorer is practically hitting shots from the parking lot at times, and even while being contested. There really wasn't much else the Knights could have done.

Norwell will head to Bellmont Friday night for a conference clash with the Braves, who are having their best season in quite some time.

The junior varsity Knights defeated the Generals in

double overtime, 49-46. Nick McBride scored 16 points and Brady Smith had 14, while Garry Riley and Drew Jolley both added five.

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**FORT WAYNE WAYNE 80, NORWELL 55**  
**At Fort Wayne Wayne**  
**NORWELL (7-5):** Cade Shelton 1-3 0-1 2, Caiden Petre 1-1 0-0 3, Garry Riley 0-0 0-0 0, Brady Smith 0-0 1-2 1, Kaedyn Quintanilla 1-5 2-2 5, Adam McBride 4-8 2-2 12, Trace Moser 0-0 0-0 0, Owen Wallis 0-1 0-0 0, Cohen Bailey 0-5 0-0 0, Nick McBride 1-2 0-0 2, Ashton Federspiel 9-12 8-8 28, Ryne Thornton 0-1 0-0 0, TOTALS: 17-38 13-15 55.  
**FORT WAYNE WAYNE (9-3):** Ki'Shawn Toles 0-0 0-0 0, Jevon Lewis 11-19 0-0 31, Kharrington Terry 1-1 0-0 2, Qualon Miles 3-3 0-0 8,

Chase Barnes 2-7 0-0 5, Preston Comer 8-10 0-0 20, HJ Dillard 6-6 0-0 12, Khayn Williams-Thomas 0-0 0-0 0, Lashawn Green 0-0 0-0 0, Tyree Eldridge 1-1 0-0 2, Tre'Von Zeigler 0-1 0-0 0, London Miles 0-0 0-0 0, Ziare Sullivan 0-0 0-0 0, Orayne Bragg 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS: 32-48 0-0 80.

**Norwell 18 10 10 17 — 55**  
**Wayne 19 17 21 23 — 80**  
**Three-point Field Goals:** Norwell 6-19 (Adam McBride 2-6, Federspiel 2-3, Petrie 1-1, Quintanilla 1-4, Wallis 0-1, Nick McBride 0-1, Bailey 0-3), Fort Wayne Wayne 16-28 (Lewis 9-16, Comer 4-5, Miles 2-2, Barnes 1-5). Rebounds: Norwell 16 (Federspiel 4, Shelton 4, Adam McBride 3, Smith 2, Bailey 2, Riley 1), Fort Wayne Wayne 17 (Comer 5, Dillard 4, Lewis 3, Miles 2, Sullivan 2, Terry 1). Turnovers: Norwell 9, Fort Wayne Wayne 3. Fouls: Norwell 5, Fort Wayne Wayne 10. Fouled out: None. Technicals: None.  
**JV:** Norwell 49, Wayne Wayne 46, 2OT.

## News-Banner Scoreboard

### BASKETBALL

#### High School

**Tuesday Boys' Scores**  
 Argos 60, N. Miami 44  
 Barr-Reeve 79, Washington Catholic  
 24  
 Bloomington Lighthouse 63, Eminence  
 49  
 Blue River Valley 64, Union (Modoc) 25  
 Bowman 61, S. Bend Adams 54  
 Carroll (Ft. Wayne) 61, DeKalb 41  
 Castle 91, Evansville Central 70  
 Christian Academy 59, Silver Creek  
 56  
 OT  
 Clay City 62, Union (Dugger) 32  
 Cloverport, Ky. 60, Cannelton 36  
 Crosspointe Christian Academy 65,  
 Mooresville Christian 63  
 Culver 78, Community Baptist 56  
 Elkhart Christian 64, LaPorte LaLumi-  
 ere 58  
 Evansville Reitz 56, Boonville 36  
 Ft. Wayne Blackhawk 57, Horstead  
 52  
 Ft. Wayne Concordia 51, Leo 50  
 Ft. Wayne Dweneger 57, New Haven 53  
 Ft. Wayne North 58, Ft. Wayne Can-  
 terbury 50  
 Ft. Wayne Wayne 80, Norwell 55  
 Glenn 45, Triton 44, OT  
 Griffith 56, Hanover Central 35  
 Lake Central 55, Highland 35  
 Oak Hill 67, Southwood 50  
 Portage 68, Hammond Central 47  
 Purdue Poly North 43, GEO 35  
 Purdue Polytechnic 77, Indpls Wash-  
 ington 67  
 Rock Creek Academy 55, Lou. Col-  
 legiate, Ky. 37  
 S. Bend Clay 72, Oregon-Davis 40  
 S. Bend Riley 66, Michigan City 64  
 Seymour 58, Salem 32  
 Shelbyville 59, Columbus East 53  
 Tippecanoe Valley 56, LaVale 45  
 Tipton 82, Wabash 50  
 Warsaw 56, Penn 53, OT  
 Winamac 45, Northfield 33  
 Allen County Conference Tournament  
 First Round  
 Adams Central 62, S. Adams 35  
 Bluffton 47, Southern Wells 20  
 Heritage 56, Woodlan 52  
 Johnson County Tournament  
 First Round  
 Greenwood 81, Edinburgh 49  
 Greenwood Christian 63, Indian Creek  
 57  
 Whiteland 67, Franklin 64  
 Marion County Tournament  
 First Round  
 Franklin Central 54, Southport 50  
 Indpls Ben Davis 71, Indy Brebeuf 65  
 Indpls N. Central 78, Indpls Lutheran 64  
 Indpls Park Tudor 68, Beech Grove 40  
 Indpls Pike 70, Indpls Perry Meridian 42  
 Indpls Roncalli 63, Speedway 51  
 Lawrence North 67, Lawrence Central  
 59  
 Warren Central 61, Decatur Central 44  
 Northeast Corner Conference Tourna-  
 ment  
 First Round  
 Central Noble 41, W. Noble 33  
 Eastside 61, Hamilton 55  
 Fairfield 54, Churubusco 34  
 Fremont 72, Prairie Heights 38

#### Tuesday Girls' Scores

Austin 58, Henryville 24  
 Barr-Reeve 68, Washington Catho-  
 lic 11  
 Bedford N. Lawrence 71, Columbus  
 East 35  
 Benton Central 61, Lafayette Jeff 33  
 Bethany Christian 70, South Bend  
 Career Academy 19  
 Bethesda Christian 44, Indpls Park  
 Tudor 34  
 Bloomington North 55, Mitchell 24  
 Blue River Valley 60, Union (Modoc)  
 47  
 Boone Grove 55, Calumet 31  
 Cannelton 24, Cloverport, Ky. 18  
 Carmel 57, Columbus North 43  
 Charlestown 58, Eastern (Pekin) 29  
 Chesterton 74, Hobart 50  
 Christian Academy 44, Clarksville  
 28  
 Clinton Prairie 48, N. White 28  
 Columbia City 71, Wawasee 31  
 Concord 36, Jimtown 17  
 Corydon 46, Forest Park 27  
 Crawford Co. 48, Springs Valley 36  
 Culver Academy 38, Twin Lakes 33  
 Delphi 46, Faith Christian 39  
 Dixie Heights, Ky. 45, E. Central 30  
 Eastern (Greentown) 57, Tipton 22  
 Eastern Hancock 66, New Castle 36  
 Eminence 61, Bloomington Light-  
 house 29  
 Evansville Memorial 67, Evansville  
 Mater Dei 44  
 Fountain Central 45, Covington 27  
 Frontier 33, N. Newton 29  
 Ft. Wayne Luhrs 68, New Haven 32  
 Ft. Wayne Northrop 56, Bellmont 50  
 Goshen 63, S. Bend St. Joseph's 31  
 Greenscastle 42, N. Montgomery 26  
 Greensburg 70, Brown Co. 43  
 Hamilton Hts. 65, Western 35  
 Hammond Central 75, Whiting 29  
 Heritage Hills 66, N. Posey 65, 2OT  
 Indpls N. Central 58, Zionsville 55  
 Indpls Riverside 27, Indpls Irving-  
 ton 14  
 Indpls Roncalli 62, Guerin Catholic  
 36  
 Indy Brebeuf 50, Tri-West 46  
 Jennings Co. 67, Floyd Central 44  
 Lafayette Catholic 64, W. Lafayette  
 56  
 Lafayette Harrison 41, Kokomo 34  
 Lakewood Park 62, Clinton Chris-  
 tian 2  
 Lanesville 73, Trinity Lutheran 39  
 Lapel 35, Blackford 33  
 Loogootee 37, Pike Central 33  
 Maonaquah 58, Pioneer 36  
 Madison-Grant 64, Taylor 49  
 Manchester 52, Peru 27  
 Martinsville 41, Terre Haute South  
 17  
 McCutcheon 56, Carroll (Flora) 49  
 Michigan City Marquette 55,  
 DeMotte Christian 18  
 Mississinewa 62, Marion 29  
 Morgan Twp. 48, Washington Twp.  
 40  
 Munster 51, Crown Point 41  
 N. Decatur 60, Morrirstown 31  
 N. Judson 42, LaVale 39  
 N. Vermillion 33, Attica 21  
 New Palestine 43, Triton Central 37  
 New Paris National Trail, Ohio 39,  
 Cambridge City Lincoln 10  
 Noblesville 58, Mt. Vernon (Fort-  
 ville) 34  
 Northview 50, Cascade 47  
 Oldenburg 66, Hauser 20  
 Orleans 50, White River Valley 36  
 Plymouth 61, LaPorte 35  
 Portage 43, East Chicago Central  
 39  
 Providence 47, New Washington 44  
 Richmond 60, Connorsville 44  
 Rising Sun 45, Milan 41  
 Rossville 48, Frankfort 38  
 S. Bend Clay 40, Elkhart Christian  
 34  
 Denver at Utah, 10 p.m.

S. Decatur 70, Crothersville 28  
 S. Spencer 62, Boonville 43  
 Scottsburg 82, Paoli 32  
 Shakamak 50, N. Daviess 37  
 Shelbyville 43, Rushville 33  
 Silver Creek 58, Madison 31  
 South Knox 77, Wood Memorial 47  
 Southridge 41, Dubois 27  
 Southwood 51, Lakeland Christian  
 36  
 Southwood 55, Madison-Grant 40  
 Sullivan 48, N. Central (Farmers-  
 burg) 46  
 Terre Haute North 39, Marshall,  
 Ill. 36  
 Tri 52, Northeastern 47  
 Tri-County 62, Seeger 3  
 Tri-Township 51, Kouts 39  
 Triton 35, Winamac 25  
 W. Vigo 42, Cloverdale 38  
 Western Boone 61, Crawfordsville  
 38  
 Allen County Conference Tourna-  
 ment  
 First Round  
 Adams Central 52, S. Adams 46  
 Bluffton 70, Southern Wells 27  
 Woodlan 49, Heritage 21  
 Delaware County Tournament  
 First Round  
 Wapahani 47, Daleville 30  
 Yorktown 45, Cowan 19  
 Indianapolis City Tournament  
 Quarterfinal  
 Covenant Christian 38, Purdue  
 Polytechnic 34  
 Heritage Christian 83, Indpls Tind-  
 ley 36  
 Indpls Cathedral 61, Indpls Her-  
 ron 19  
 Indpls Chatard 68, Indpls Scecina  
 18  
 Northeast Corner Tournament  
 First Round  
 Central Noble 61, W. Noble 32  
 Eastside 52, Hamilton 12  
 Fairfield 38, Churubusco 20  
 Fremont 49, Prairie Heights 45

### College

**Men's Basketball Scores**  
**Tuesday, Jan. 9**  
**EAST**  
 Cornell 91, Columbia 79  
 Duke 75, Pittsburgh 53  
 Kansas St. 81, West Virginia 67  
 Miami (Ohio) 86, Buffalo 65  
 Rutgers 69, Indiana 57  
 Seton Hall 74, Georgetown 70  
 Yale 80, Brown 70  
**SOUTH**  
 Alabama 74, South Carolina 47  
 Auburn 66, Texas A&M 55  
 Florida St. 87, Wake Forest 82  
 Kentucky 90, Missouri 77  
 LSU 77, Vanderbilt 69  
 Nicholls 66, SE Louisiana 61  
 Rhode Island 79, Davidson 74  
 VCU 54, George Mason 50  
**MIDWEST**  
 Akron 80, Ball St. 76  
 Bowling Green 83, Ohio 78  
 Cent. Michigan 80, E. Michigan 64  
 Creighton 84, DePaul 58  
 Iowa St. 57, Houston 53  
 Nebraska 88, Purdue 72  
 Richmond 58, Loyola Chicago 56  
 Texas 74, Cincinnati 73  
 Toledo 89, Kent St. 75  
 W. Michigan 95, N. Illinois 90, OT

**SOUTHWEST**  
 Baylor 81, BYU 72  
 Texas Tech 90, Oklahoma St. 73  
**FAR WEST**  
 Boise St. 65, Colorado St. 58  
 Utah St. 83, Wyoming 59

**Women's Basketball Scores**  
**Tuesday, Jan. 9**  
**EAST**  
 Marquette 75, Seton Hall 54  
**MIDWEST**  
 Michigan St. 74, Maryland 69  
 Minnesota 82, Michigan 66  
 Saint Joseph's 69, Saint Louis 57  
 St. John's 60, Xavier 42  
 Temple 72, Wichita St. 49

### NBA

**EASTERN CONFERENCE**  
**Atlantic Division**  
 Boston 28 8 .778 —  
 Philadelphia 23 12 .657 4½  
 New York 22 15 .595 6½  
 Brooklyn 16 21 .432 12½  
 Toronto 15 21 .417 13  
**Southeast Division**  
 Miami 21 15 .583 —  
 Orlando 21 16 .568 ½  
 Atlanta 14 21 .400 6½  
 Charlotte 8 26 .235 12  
 Washington 6 30 .167 15  
**Central Division**  
 Milwaukee 25 12 .676 —  
 Indiana 21 15 .583 3½  
 Cleveland 21 15 .583 3½  
 Chicago 17 21 .447 8½  
 Detroit 3 34 .081 22  
**WESTERN CONFERENCE**  
**Southwest Division**  
 New Orleans 22 15 .595 —  
 Dallas 22 16 .579 ½  
 Houston 18 17 .514 3  
 Memphis 14 23 .378 8  
 San Antonio 5 30 .143 16  
**Northwest Division**  
 Minnesota 26 10 .722 —  
 Oklahoma City 24 11 .684 1½  
 Denver 26 12 .684 4  
 Utah 18 20 .474 9  
 Portland 10 26 .278 16  
**Pacific Division**  
 L.A. Clippers 23 13 .639 —  
 Sacramento 22 14 .611 1  
 Phoenix 19 18 .514 4½  
 L.A. Lakers 18 19 .486 5½  
 Golden State 17 19 .472 6

**Monday's Games**  
 Oklahoma City 136, Washington  
 128  
 Chicago 119, Charlotte 112, OT  
 Indiana 133, Boston 131  
 Miami 120, Houston 113  
 Utah 132, Milwaukee 116  
 L.A. Clippers 138, Phoenix 111  
**Tuesday's Games**  
 Minnesota 113, Orlando 92  
 Sacramento 131, Detroit 110  
 New York 112, Portland 84  
 Memphis 120, Dallas 103  
 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.  
 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 p.m.  
 Denver at Utah, 10 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.

**Friday's Games**  
 Houston at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.  
 Indiana at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.  
 Sacramento at Philadelphia, 7:30 p.m.  
 Charlotte at San Antonio, 8 p.m.  
 Golden State at Chicago, 8 p.m.  
 L.A. Clippers at Memphis, 8 p.m.  
 Orlando at Miami, 8 p.m.  
 Portland at Minnesota, 8 p.m.  
 Toronto at Utah, 9:30 p.m.  
 New Orleans at Denver, 10 p.m.

**Saturday's Games**  
 Cleveland at Boston, 7 p.m.  
 Detroit at New York, 7 p.m.  
 Philadelphia at Philadelphia, 7:30 p.m.  
 Phoenix at Phoenix, 8 p.m.  
 Washington at Washington, 8 p.m.  
 Memphis at Memphis, 8 p.m.  
 New York at New York, 8 p.m.  
 Dallas at Dallas, 8 p.m.  
 Chicago at Chicago, 8 p.m.  
 Milwaukee at Milwaukee, 8 p.m.  
 Orlando at Orlando, 8 p.m.  
 Boston at Boston, 8 p.m.  
 Toronto at Toronto, 8 p.m.

**Sunday's Games**  
 Atlanta at Atlanta, 12 p.m.  
 Dallas at Dallas, 12 p.m.  
 Detroit at Detroit, 12 p.m.  
 Houston at Houston, 12 p.m.  
 Indiana at Indiana, 12 p.m.  
 Los Angeles at Los Angeles, 12 p.m.  
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 Phoenix at Phoenix, 12 p.m.  
 Portland at Portland, 12 p.m.  
 Sacramento at Sacramento, 12 p.m.  
 San Antonio at San Antonio, 12 p.m.  
 Toronto at Toronto, 12 p.m.  
 Utah at Utah, 12 p.m.

**Monday's Games**  
 Los Angeles at Los Angeles, 8 p.m.  
 Philadelphia at Philadelphia, 8 p.m.  
 Chicago at Chicago, 8 p.m.  
 Golden State at Golden State, 8 p.m.  
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 Memphis at Memphis, 8 p.m.  
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 Portland at Portland, 8 p.m.  
 Sacramento at Sacramento, 8 p.m.  
 San Antonio at San Antonio, 8 p.m.  
 Toronto at Toronto, 8 p.m.  
 Utah at Utah, 8 p.m.

# Sports Roundup

## Federspiel wins player of the week honors

Norwell forward Ashton Federspiel recently won honors for players of the week from the Indiana Basketball Coaches Association by Franciscan Health.

The senior led the Knights with 31 points in the 69-63 double-overtime win over Leo on Saturday night. He went 9-17 from the field and had five rebounds.

## Knights top Barons in NE8 swim match

Norwell defeated DeKalb in both swimming matchups Tuesday night at home. The boys won by a final score of 108-52, while the girls won 139-40.

**Individual winners were:**

**Boys**  
 • Ethan Williamson, Colten Strunk, Parker McCartney and Kale Meredith in the 200-yard medley relay.  
 • Rylan Heyerly in the 200-yard freestyle and in the 100-yard freestyle.  
 • Kale Meredith in the 200-yard IM and in the 100-yard breaststroke.  
 • Gage Reinhard in the 50-yard freestyle.  
 • Strunk in the 100-yard butterfly.  
 • Williamson in the 500-yard freestyle.  
 • Meredith, Reinhard, Strunk and Heyerly in the 200-yard freestyle relay.  
 • Williamson, Reinhard, Strunk and Heyerly in the 400-yard freestyle relay.

**Girls**

• Emerson Meredith in the diving events and in the 500-yard freestyle.  
 • Jillian Melcher, Addyson Heyerly, Emerson Meredith and Sawyer Peterson in the 200-yard medley relay.  
 • Haleigh Reinhard in the 200-yard freestyle.  
 • Olivia Daniel in the 200-yard IM.  
 • Cassie Coyne in the 50-yard freestyle and in the 100-yard breaststroke.  
 • Marlee Meredith in the 100-yard butterfly.  
 • Ella Krug in the 100-yard freestyle.  
 • Addison Page, Daniel, Astrid Claussen and Jillian Melcher in the 200-yard freestyle relay.

• Ryleigh Huffman in the 100-yard backstroke.

• Molly Threewits, Karrigan Melcher, Huffman and Meredith in the 400-yard freestyle relay.

Norwell will host the NE8 swim meet starting at 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 13.

## Tigersharks sweep Giants in swimming

Bluffton swept Marion in swimming Tuesday night at home in both boys and girls.

The boys won by a score of 144-36, while the girls won 84-68.

**Individual winners were:**

**Boys**  
 • Elija Robles in the diving events.  
 • Noah Brooks, Ashton Arnett, Anthony Hartman and Wes Frettinger in the 200-yard medley relay.  
 • Girffin Linderwell in the 200-meter freestyle.  
 • Dalton Rodgers in the 200-meter IM and in the 100-meter butterfly.  
 • Isaac Wheeler in the 50-meter freestyle and in th 100-meter breaststroke.  
 • Arnett in the 400-meter freestyle.  
 • Brooks, Evan Klopfenstein, Graham Linderwell and Rodgers in the 200-meter freestyle relay.  
 • Rhett Gerber in the 100-meter backstroke.  
 • Griffin Linderwell, Clayton Brubaker, Wheeler and Brooks in the 30-meter free-style relay.

**Girls**

• Anna Zurcher, Lucia Corkwell, Ellie Coyne and Kierstynn Reed in the 200-meter medley relay.  
 • Zoey Schmidt in the 200-meter free-style and in the 400-meter freestyle.  
 • Corkwell in the 200-meter IM and in the 100-meter butterfly.  
 • Coyne in the 50-meter freestyle and in the 100-meter breaststroke.  
 • Reed in the 100-meter freestyle.  
 • Zurcher, Emily Hansen, Schmidt and Reed in the 200-meter freestyle relay.  
 • Zurcher in the 100-meter backstroke.  
 • Bluffton will be at Manchester at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 11.

## High School Calendar

**WEDNESDAY, JAN 10**  
**GIRLS BASKETBALL:** 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, 7:30 p.m.; Bluffton at Heritage, 7:30 p.m. (approx)

**GIRLS BASKETBALL:** Bluffton vs. Woodlan (at Heritage), 6 p.m.

**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.

**WEDNESDAY, JAN 17**  
**WRESTLING:** Norwell at South Adams, 6:30 p.m.

**THURSDAY, JAN 18**  
**GIRLS BASKETBALL:** Eastbrook at Bluff-ton, 7:30 p.m.

**SWIMMING & DIVING (CO-ED):** Oak Hill at Norwell, 5:30 p.m.; Wayne at Bluffton, 5:30 p.m.

**FRIDAY, JAN 19**  
**BOYS BASKETBALL:** Bluffton at Adams Central, 7:30 p.m.

**GIRLS BASKETBALL:** Norwell at New Haven, 6 p.m. (no JV)

**SWIMMING & DIVING (CO-ED):** ACAC Swim/Dive Invitational, 5:30 p.m.

**WRESTLING:** Bluffton, Southern Wells at ACAC Tournament (at Bluffton), 6 p.m.





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

### King Classic Sudoku

2	7	6	8			5		
		5						
8	4		1					7
6	1	3	5	4				
		8	1	2				4
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		9	6	8		7		
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4		9	7	5	1	3		

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Difficulty: ★★★

1/10

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### EMPLOYMENT

### Help Wanted

**THE WELLS COUNTY** Prosecutor's Office is looking to hire a person for an Investigator position. The position is a part-time county-paid position making \$21/hour. The investigator would be responsible for conducting criminal investigations and assisting the Prosecutor in preparing cases for trial. The investigator must be an effective communicator, be proficient with a computer, be able to work independently, and have the ability to be on 24-hour call for assistance at crime scenes. Interested persons should go to [wellscounty.org/prosecutor/](http://wellscounty.org/prosecutor/) for a more detailed description of this position. Send any resumes to the Wells County Prosecutor's Office, 102 West Market Street, Suite 405, Bluffton, IN 46714 or submit them by email to [prosecutor@wellscounty.org](mailto:prosecutor@wellscounty.org).

### FOR SALE

### Pets

**HELOISE HINT:** If you notice that the fish in your aquarium are suddenly inactive or sluggish. Check that the chemical balance and water temperature are correct in your fish tank. Email [HELOISE@Heloise.com](mailto:HELOISE@Heloise.com).

### Miscellaneous

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

## Lottery Numbers

### Tuesday's Drawings HOOSIER LOTTERY

**Cash 5** — 10-27-30-35-44  
**Cash4Life** — 02-09-13-25-47, Cash Ball: 01  
**Quick Draw Midday** — 06-15-22-28-34-35-40-42-43-46-47-54-57-58-60-63-66-70-76-77, BE: 47  
**Daily Three-Midday** — 08-06-05, SB: 06  
**Daily Three-Evening** — 00-02-04, SB: 08  
**Daily Four-Midday** — 08-08-05-02, SB: 06  
**Daily Four-Evening** — 03-05-00-00, SB: 08  
**Quick Draw Evening** — 08-12-19-22-23-27-31-34-35-36-40-41-45-46-54-64-65-71-72-80, BE: 27  
**Hoosier Lotto** — Estimated jackpot (for Wednesday): \$2.6 million

### MEGA MILLIONS

12-15-32-33-53; Mega Ball: 24; Megaplier: 3X.

### POWERBALL

Estimated jackpot (for Wednesday): \$60 million

Thank you for reading

The News-Banner

## January

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#### Services

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## Public Sale Calendar

**JANUARY 11 - 6 p.m.** - Estate of Mary Lynn Lautzenheiser, seller. 4917 E. 100 N., Bluffton, IN. One-of-a-kind property w/quick access to Bluffton, Decatur, Fort Wayne. Main home was once township school building, and has covered porch walk through to previous dance studio that has potential to be fourth living unit. Property also offers detached two car garage and two-unit apartment building. Isaac Stoller, sale manager, *The Steffen Group Inc.*, <http://www.steffengrp.com>, 260-824-3006.  
**JANUARY 12 - 10 a.m.** - Secured creditors & various consignors, owners. 815 Adams St., Decatur. Online only truck and equipment auction. Online bidding only. Offering 500+ lots! 2012-2014 Freightliner M2106 box trucks, dump trucks, day cabs, sleepers, utility trucks, bucket trucks, utility & semi trailers, SUV's, pickup trucks, 250+ various skid steer attachments, various truck parts, fencing, work benches, tool boxes and much more! Accepting consignments! *Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC*, 260-724-7402, [Kjauction.com](http://Kjauction.com).

**BIDDING NOW OPEN AND STARTS CLOSING JANUARY 17 - 6 p.m. EST.** - Gary Meyer, owner. Online only commercial real estate auction! 1,376 sq. feet building, 2 bay service area, 15'x16' office space, paved parking lot, .46 acre triangle lot located on N. Main Street, (Hwy. 27)! Zoned: Commercial. Year built: 1950. Wabash Township, Section 29, Adams County, Indiana, South Adams School Corp. Auction preview by appointment, 617 N. Main St., Geneva. *Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC*, 260-724-7402, [Kjauction.com](http://Kjauction.com).  
**JANUARY 23 - 2-6 p.m. ET - Online - Farm: Susan Dunn Estate.** Property Location: Three miles southeast of Markle, IN and Wells Co., Rockcreek Twp. 207.3+/- total acres, high quality farmland, mostly tillable. Tracts 1 & 2: Located on both sides of 200 N between 200 W and 300 W. Tract 3: Located at intersection of 300 N and 500 W. Tract 1: 19.83+/- acres. Tract 2: 110+/- acres. Tract 3: 77.47+/- acres. *Halderman Real Estate & Farm Management*, 800-424-2324, [halderman.com](http://halderman.com), Rick Johnloz, 260-827-8181.

drone flight, photos available at [halderman.com](http://halderman.com). *Halderman Real Estate & Farm Management*, 800-424-2324, Rick Johnloz: 260-827-8181, Neal Wolhuter: 260-336-2219.  
**FEBRUARY 12 - 6 p.m.** - Daniel E. Schloss, Elizabeth L. Burchfield (f/k/a Elizabeth L. Schloss), Estate of Meshell L. Schloss. Wells County 4-H Community Center, Bluffton. Online bidding available. 164+/-A offered in 8 Tracts or combination. Productive tillable land, professionally designed and stocked pond, recreational woods, newer tree plantings w/conservation grasses, potential country building sites, Huntington County, Salamonie Township. Inspection Jan. 13, 10a.m.-1p.m., Feb. 5, 3-5p.m., call for private showing. Auction managers: Jerry Ehle, 260-410-1996, Steven C. Coil, 260-446-2037, *Schrader Real Estate and Auction Company, Inc.*, [schraderauction.com](http://schraderauction.com), 800-451-2709.

### Public Notice

**Public Notice**  
 The Harrison Township Trustees Office will be holding a Harrison Township Advisory Board meeting on Monday, January 22, at 6:30 pm in the Harrison Township Trustees Office in the Annex Building located at 223 West Washington Street. The agenda includes Organization, Fire Prot. report, Presentation from Bluffton Parks Dept., Twp. Assistance report, Financial Report.  
 Kyle Hunt, Harrison Twp. Trustee  
 nb 1/10  
 hspaxlp

### SUDOKU ANSWER

9	8	1	5	7	6	2	8	4
8	9	6	1	7	4	9	6	5
2	7	8	5	9	6	1	9	3
5	1	7	9	8	2	5	7	6
7	9	5	2	6	1	8	9	4
6	8	4	7	9	5	1	2	9
2	7	9	6	1	9	7	5	8
5	7	8	4	9	2	5	6	1
1	6	9	5	7	8	9	2	7

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# Bluffton High School announces honor roll students

Bluffton High School has released the names of its students on the high honor roll and honor roll for the second term of the 2023-24 school year.

## SENIORS

**High Honor Roll** — Ashton Paul Arnett, Mackinley Baker, Katelynn Bedwell, Alydia Bertsch, Harley Ann Bolinger, Keturah Bradford, Lillian Claire Broderick, Rehryn Brooks, Savannah Lynne Browning, Jonah Cole, Connor Collins, Lucia Corkwell, Kristopher Michael Cortez, Claire Denise Craighead, Hutchinson Craighead, Landon Crist, Zara Eisenhut, Leighton Elkins, Kylie Frauhiger, Caleb Gerber, Takaylah Grace Gerber, Rhett Gilbert, Peyton Logan Hall, Lauren Elaine Mann, Gissel Martinez, Chris McClain, Lawrence Thomas McClelland, Kadyne Alexander Nusbaumer, Lily Genevieve Pulfer, Hattie Jean Reinhard, Kiara Sammons, Isaiah Salazar San Juan, Elsie Schaden, Zoey Schmidt, Olivia Schreiber, Madison Lee Smith, Elijah Spencer, Cameron William Straub, Clayton Aaron Straub, Ayden Teeple, Hudson Maxwell Werich, Elizabeth Pearl Wheeler, Katelin Alizabeth Wilson, Katelyn Woosley and Noah Scott Zoll.

**Honor Roll** — James Dalton Beer, Dejuan Kenneth Bradley, Devynn Thomas Brown, Alycha Brubaker, Dawson Leroy Carr, Christian Carmona Castaneda,

Jacob Chenard, Gretchen Crist, Kyle Michael Crosbie, Nolan Crump, Juan Cruz, Caleb Dailley, Elijah Garrett, Haley Gibson, Alexis Grover, Alyssia Elizabeth Heffern, Joshua Hon, Andrew Wayne Hunt, Sareyna Lche Jackson, Abigail Delaney Kelly, Kayla Kiefer, Cayah Lynlee King, Christopher Douglas Kramer, Maksym Artemovich Laishevkin, Brody Lewis, Mayson McCormick, Wyatt Meadows, Madison Murray, Nicholas Pastore, Jaelynn Pemberton, Corina Gale Rader, Benjamin Neal Ramseyer, Isabella Rhoderick, Anthony Ripple, Eliza Robles, Dalton James Rodgers, Sophia Rebecca Schwartz, CyLee Lohra LuAnn Sills, Kaden Simpson, Allison Danielle Tungate, Fletcher Wenger, Hunter Wenger and Alex Robert West.

## JUNIORS

**High Honor Roll** — Jackson Lee Affolder, Zainab Ameen, Charos Anorboeva, Jude Thomas Baumgartner, Dihan Benade, Noah Bluhm, Hailey Erma Bozarth, Chloe Renee Bredemeyer, Isabela Curless, David Walter DeFrain, Marly Drayer, Chloe Engle, Karlee Ewart, Tavin Frees, Lexi Grady, Kaleb Green, Anthony Hartman, Samuel Holloway, Adriana Huffman, Olga Jordan, Levi Johns, Connor Klopfenstein, Griffin Linderwell, Benjamin Maggard, Ali Mygrant, Mohammed Nashwan, Taylor Nusbaumer, Grant Reifsteck, Tressa Renner,

Amarah Robles, Maryn Schreiber, Madyson Marie Sonnigsen, Isabella Stout, Bailey Lyn Yates and Lukas Charles Yates.

**Honor Roll** — Kade Abbett, Brady Andrew Baldauf, Macy Ann Bywater, Phoenix Graham Cook, Austin Coons, Mason Ellis, David Wesley Frettinger, Austin Geimer, Addison Goodwin, Sierra Graham, Elycia Rian Herrada, Carissa Lynn Hughett, Jaden Daniel Hummer, Dakotah Jennings, Brett Kuhlbeck, Mykhailo Artemovich Laishevkin, Nolan Lambert, Tanner McClure, Averianna Petty, Sacra Nicolas Powell, Noemi Real, Artyom Reimberdyev, Laney Sawyer, Dane Schlagenhaut, Brianna Elaine Snyder, Cameron Williams, Ethan Michael Wilson and Logan Zoll.

## SOPHOMORES

**High Honor Roll** — Hayden Alfeld, Libby Arnett, Konley Jo Ault, Sierra Nicole Baughman, Elijah Yosef Bertsch, Vanessa Bird, Eve Corkwell, Hannah Davis, Olivia Cristina Donascimento, Anakin Eguia, Emmitt Fiechter, Mason Warren Fox, Emma Kay Frauhiger, Steven William Frettinger, Marshall James Gerber, Baylee Green, Miken William Habegger, Alyssa Lynn Hartman, Kameron Holloway, Thesaly Sarelle Huy, Aaron Jessup, Lilly King, Braden James Lemler, Owen Dwight Lesh, Kylee Masterson, Alexander John Mechling, Kayla Ray Morgan, Layna Mur-

ray, Natalia Polanco, Keiner Rinehart, Lily Nicole Rupel, Sebastian Schoeff, Josephina Sessions, Brody Shutt, Kaitlyn Victoria Rose Stafford and Aaron Streveler.

**Honor Roll** — Colton Arnold, Piper Baker, Emma Bredemeyer, Xzavier Charles Driscoll, Kinzie Jae Fiechter, Aidan Gavilanez, Sierra Holmes, Savannah Rose Hughett, Carmen Hurry, Izabelle Scarlet Irelan, Dakota Marie Lee, Elijah Scott McCollum, Griffin Morgan, Brockton Steven Zane Osborne, Marko Pazushko, Rylenn Marie Penick, Jackson Rockwell, Saij Rodriguez, Cohen Elijah Rogness, Jasmine Marie Rupel, Riley James Schlotter, Emma Schwartz, Coleson Matthew Teeple, Ava Troxel, Gabrielle Nicole VanCamp and Hannah Claire Ching-Ling Withers.

## FRESHMEN

**High Honor Roll** — Nadege Sharin Arleth Abrego, Tristan Ault, William Ault, Axton Beste, Elliott Brown, Mateo Castro, Sierra Clark, Samuel Cortez, Lydia Grace Dailey, Rori Drayer, Madison Duncan, Anasia Eguia, Sophie Eisenhut, Madelyn Funk, Addison Gehring, Audrey Gerber, Isla Gibson, Emily Hansen, Reagan Harris, Jordan Jellison, Luke Jennings, Heath Johnson, Addison Nicole Kauffman, Evan Robert Klopfenstein, Alexandria Koby, Conner Landis, Alexander Maggard,

Aidan Michael McClure, Jackson Clay Meyer, Eliana Mygrant, Jacob Ribich, Riley Roby, Grady Rockwell, Lincoln Rodgers, Chanley Shaw, Gabriel Spencer, Colt Ternet, Myles Kelson Velasquez, Makaila Watson, Aiden Wilfong, Addison Yates and Anna Zurcher.

**Honor Roll** — Juan Alvarez, Savannah Baumgartner, Zane Betz, Easton William Blair, Ella Borrer, Dominic Bowlin, Lillie Brown, Clayton Brubaker, Cooper Craig, Kinley Falk, Isaac Flood, Abram Gehrett, Adriana Gehring, Jonah Geisel, Rhett Gerber, Aleah Mae Grover, Koby Hartman, Cierah Rae Hicks, Kylie Hiser, Chase Houser, Parker Hummer, Paige Hutchison, Levi Jennings, Logan Johnson, Parker Johnson, Rozlynn Marie Johnson, Jacob Kephart, Elijah Samuel Kerner, Izabell King, Nicole Marie King, Samuel King, Kameron Klinski, Coy Lantz, Travis Leitner, Khira Lewis, Graham Linderwell, Jorge Lopez Velazquez, Riley Ann Lucas, Sophia Ethel Mayne, Piper Rynn Morgan, Ashley Cheree' Morpheu, Jared Moser, Lance Moser, Brian Nusbaumer, Jessica Nusbaumer, Kierstynn Reed, Blake Reinhard, Maya Saige, Ryan Schlagenhaut, Alayna Sheets, Silas Troyer, Reese Turnbull, Maxwell Kenneth White and Gia Youngren.

# Judges express skepticism of claims Trump's immune from prosecution

WASHINGTON (AP) — With Donald Trump listening intently in the courtroom, federal appeals court judges in Washington expressed deep skepticism Tuesday that the former president was immune from prosecution on charges that he plotted to overturn the results of the 2020 election.

The panel of three judges, two of whom were appointed by President Joe Biden, also questioned whether they had jurisdiction to consider the appeal at this point in the case, raising the prospect that Trump's appeal could be dispensed with on more procedural grounds.

During lengthy arguments, the judges repeatedly pressed Trump's lawyer to defend claims that Trump was shielded from criminal charges for acts that he says fell within his official duties as president. That argument was rejected last month by the lower-court judge overseeing the case against Trump, and the appeals judges suggested through their questions that they, too, were dubious that the Founding Fathers envisioned absolute immunity for presidents after they leave office.

"I think it's paradoxical to say that his constitutional duty to take care that the laws be faithfully executed allows him to violate criminal law," said Judge Karen LeCraft Henderson, an appointee of former President George H.W. Bush.

The outcome could carry enormous ramifications both for the landmark criminal case against Trump and for the broader, and legally untested, question of whether an ex-president can be

prosecuted for actions taken in the White House. It will also likely set the stage for further appeals before the U.S. Supreme Court, which last month declined a request to weigh in but could still get involved later.

A swift decision is crucial for special counsel Jack Smith and his team, who are eager to get the case — now paused pending the appeal — to trial before the November election. But Trump's lawyers, in addition to seeking to get the case dismissed, are hoping to benefit from a protracted appeals process that could delay the trial well past its scheduled March 4 start date, including until potentially after the election.

Underscoring the importance to both sides, Trump, the 2024 Republican presidential primary front-runner, attended Tuesday's arguments even though the Iowa caucuses are just one week away and despite the fact that there's no requirement that defendants appear in person for such proceedings. Making his first court appearance in Washington since his arraignment in August, Trump sat at the defense table, watching closely and occasionally taking notes and speaking with his lawyers.

His appearance and his comments afterward underscored his broader effort to portray himself as the victim of a justice system he claims is politicized. Though there's no evidence Biden has had any influence on the case, Trump's argument could resonate with Republican voters in Iowa as they prepare to launch the presidential

nomination process.

After the hearing, Trump spoke to reporters at The Waldorf-Astoria hotel, which used to be the Trump International Hotel, calling Tuesday "a very momentous day." He insisted he did nothing wrong and claimed he was being prosecuted for political reasons.

"A president has to have immunity," he said.

Former presidents enjoy broad immunity from lawsuits for actions taken as part of their official White House duties. But because no former president before Trump has ever been indicted, courts have never before addressed whether that protection extends to criminal prosecution.

Trump's lawyers insist that it does, arguing that courts have no authority to scrutinize a president's official acts and that the prosecution of their client represents a dramatic departure from more than two centuries of American history that would open the door to future politically motivated cases.

"To authorize the prosecution of a president for official acts would open a Pandora's box from which this nation may never recover," said D. John Sauer, a lawyer for Trump, asserting that, under the government's theory, presidents could be prosecuted for giving Congress "false information" to enter war or for authorizing drone strikes targeting U.S. citizens abroad.

He later added, "If a president has to look over his shoulder or her shoulder every time he or she has to make a controversial deci-

sion and wonder if 'after I leave office, am I going to jail for this when my political opponents take power?' that inevitably dampens the ability of the president."

But the judges were skeptical about those arguments. Judges Henderson and Florence Pan noted the lawyer who represented Trump during his 2021 impeachment trial suggested that he could later face criminal prosecution, telling senators at the time: "We have a judicial process in this country. We have an investigative process in this country to which no former office holder is immune."

"It seems that many senators relied on that in voting to acquit" Trump, Pan told Sauer.

Judge J. Michelle Childs also questioned why former President Richard Nixon would need to be granted a pardon in 1974 after the Watergate scandal if former presidents enjoy immunity from prosecution. Sauer replied that in Nixon's case, the conduct did not involve the same kind of "official acts" Trump's lawyers argue form the basis of his indictment.

Aside from the merits of the immunity claim, the judges jumped right into questioning Trump's lawyer over whether the court has jurisdiction to hear the appeal at this time. Sauer said presidential immunity is clearly a claim that is meant to be reviewed before trial. Smith's team also said that it wants the court to decide the appeal now.

Smith's team maintains that presidents are not entitled to absolute immunity and that, in any

event, the acts Trump is alleged in the indictment to have taken — including scheming to enlist fake electors in battleground states won by Biden and pressing his vice president, Mike Pence, to reject the counting of electoral votes on Jan. 6, 2021 — fall outside a president's official job duties.

"The president has a unique constitutional role but he is not above the law. Separation of powers principles, constitutional text, history, precedent and immunity doctrines all point to the conclusion that a former president enjoys no immunity from prosecution," prosecutor James Pearce said, adding that a case in which a former president is alleged to have sought to overturn an election "is not the place to recognize some novel form of immunity."

When Judge Henderson asked how the court could write its opinion in a way that wouldn't open the "floodgates" of investigations against ex-presidents, Pearce said he did not anticipate "a sea change of vindictive tit-for-tat prosecutions in the future." He called the allegations against Trump fundamentally unprecedented.

"Never before has there been allegations that a sitting president has, with private individuals and using the levers of power, sought to fundamentally subvert the democratic republic and the electoral system," he said. "And frankly, if that kind of fact pattern arises again, I think it would be awfully scary if there weren't some sort of mechanism by which to reach that criminally."

# Austin kept cancer, surgery complications secret

WASHINGTON (AP) — Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin has prostate cancer, and his recent hospitalization was for surgery and later to treat a urinary tract infection related to that operation, his doctors said Tuesday.

The cancer revelation answers the main question about Austin's hospitalization, which has now lasted eight days. But it may only add to questions of accountability, since President Joe Biden only learned about the cancer diagnosis on Tuesday, even though it was made about a month ago.

"Nobody at the White House knew that Secretary Austin had prostate cancer until this morning," said John Kirby, the National Security Council spokesman.

The 70-year-old Austin was admitted to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center on Dec. 22 and underwent surgery to treat the cancer. He developed the infection a week later. Biden and other senior administration officials were not told for days about his hospitalization or his cancer.

According to the doctors, the cancer was detected when Austin had a regular screening in early December. They said he "underwent a minimally invasive surgical procedure" and went home the next day. But on Jan. 1 he reported nausea and severe

abdominal, hip and leg pain due to the infection.

They said his prostate cancer was detected early, and his prognosis is excellent.

The cancer revelation comes after days of persistent questions about Austin's hospitalization and the delays in notifying key leaders. And it raises more questions about the transparency and truthfulness of the Defense Department, which for the past four days said he was initially at Walter Reed for an "elective medical procedure," and not prostate surgery.

Asked about that choice of wording, Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder, Pentagon press secretary, said in a briefing on Tuesday that it was developed in consultation with Austin's doctors.

When pressed on the delays in public notification, Ryder said, "Despite the frequency of prostate cancer, discussions about screening, treatment and support are often deeply personal and private ones." It was still not clear Tuesday how this will affect Austin's job, travel or other public engagements going forward. Deputy Defense Secretary Kathleen Hicks is expected to take on some of his day-to-day duties as he recovers.

The lack of transparency about Austin's hospitalization — including the failure to tell Biden and other top

officials about it or the reason for it for days — has triggered sharp criticism.

Austin spoke with Biden on Saturday, the same day he issued a public statement saying he recognized he could have done a better job insuring the public was informed about his hospitalization, and said "I commit to doing better." He did not, however, tell the president in that phone call that he had cancer.

Several Republican lawmakers even said Austin should be ousted. Rep. Mike Rogers, R-Ala., the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, launched a formal inquiry into the situation. And, earlier Tuesday, the White House chief of staff ordered Cabinet members to notify his office if they ever can't perform their duties.

Dr. John Maddox, trauma

medical director, and Dr. Gregory Chesnut, director of the Center for Prostate Disease at Walter Reed, provided the first details of Austin's prognosis in a statement put out by the Pentagon. They said he was under anesthesia during the initial surgery, and when he went to intensive care on Jan. 2 the infection had triggered an intestinal backup and his stomach had to be drained with a tube in his nose.

Medical experts said it's likely Austin had urine leak into his abdomen, a rare complication of prostate surgery, and that led to a bowel problem.

"All of this is temporary and reverses relatively quickly," said Dr. Benjamin Davies, a professor of urology at University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

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