

The News - Banner

www.News-Banner.com

THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 2024 BLUFFTON, INDIANA • Wells County's Hometown Connection \$1.00

Hotel Z trash nuisance brought to Markle council

By JONATHAN SNYDER
 A growing garbage dumping zone was the primary topic for the Markle Town Council Wednesday. According to photos and testimony, substantial junk has routinely built up outside of Hotel Z, located at 730 W Logan St. The garbage has reportedly included toilets, mattresses and other furniture. "I wouldn't want to live next to this," said council member Nicolas Lund. That sentiment was shared by the other council members — Council President Mike Doss and Blake Carey. Wendy Smith, who represented the owner Jian Zhen, stated that the trash did not belong to the hotel but acknowledged that it was an eyesore. Smith clarified that the hotel has security cameras, but

they do not stretch far enough to see who is dumping the junk. Considering this, plus a failed inspection from the Fire Department, the council agreed to plan a meeting with Zhen before Feb. 12. Lund stated that while the origin of the trash is unknown, there are still some steps that Hotel Z can take to prevent the issue. Lund mentioned that there is no fence around the dumpster, which would prevent accumulation and allow for additional camera set-up. Smith also said the hotel has had trouble getting the company that provides dumpsters to put lids on them, leading to animals getting into the dumpsters and wind blowing out trash. "There have been a lot of issues (Continued on Page 2)



Workers continue to build the new Fast Pace Health building on Dustman Road. (Photos by Jonathan Snyder)

New health clinic coming to Bluffton

By JONATHAN SNYDER
 A new health clinic is under construction at the corner of Dustman Road, across from Scooter's Coffee on Dustman Road. Fast Pace Health expects to open its doors in late April or early May, depending on the weather. Fast Pace has 29 locations in Indiana, with closest other locations in Marion, Hartford City and Portland. The Marion Clinic has nine exam rooms, a procedure room and an x-ray room available, however specific plans regarding the Bluffton location were not disclosed. According to their Hartford City website, Fast Pace Health offers dermatology, orthopedic, behavioral health, primary care and telehealth services, in addition to urgent care services. Fast Pace also offers physical therapy options for injuries and aftercare. These services are available at all Fast Pace locations. Black Gold Ventures LLC obtained an improvement loca-



tion permit on 1010 North Main St. on Oct. 6 of last year. Afterwards, Hutton Bluffton LLC took ownership of the property and broke ground on the 1.4 acre plot of land. The building will be cover an estimated 3,726 square feet. Berry Hutton General Contractors out of Tennessee are in charge of construction. A sign for Fast Pace Health will be placed on the property sometime next week. Fast Pace Health has not responded to requests for comment at this time. jonathan@news-banner.com

No progress made on Wells County Jail

By HOLLY GASKILL
 Progress on final items of the jail renovation project has remained stagnant for yet another week. During Sheriff Scott Holliday's regular update to the commissioners on Tuesday, he said representatives from Ameresco, the group in charge of the project, now plan to be present at the commissioners' Feb. 6 meeting. The group has reportedly planned to come to several earlier meetings, but has not

attended. "Are they done?" Commissioner Jeff Stringer asked. "Tell them not to come until they're done." Holliday replied, "Well, I think they need to explain to you guys when it's going to be done and (hear) that they're not going to get (the) last payment until they do." Since then, Holliday has discovered a slight leak in one of the cell blocks from the roof, which had been part of the renovation (Continued on Page 2)

Committee considers anti-monopoly bill for health care entities

The committee passed four other bills on Tuesday related to mammograms, dentistry, mental health services and more.

By WHITNEY DOWNARD
 The House Public Health Committee had a busy Tuesday morning, unanimously advancing four bills related to mammograms, dentistry, mental health services and the Indiana Department of Health. But the largest and most wide-ranging bill wasn't called for a vote, with Rep. Brad Barrett, the committee's chair, saying he wanted to hold the bill to allow for committee amendments before their meeting next week. Testimony on the insurance transparency and hospital owner-

ship bill drew mixed reviews, with some concerns about regulations for pharmacy benefit managers. Bill author Rep. Donna Schaibley, R-Carmel, welcomed more ideas as the bill travels through the process. "We're open for discussion and please reach out," she said. **Bill details** The bill borrows much of its contents from ongoing interim task force discussions to reduce the state's health care costs, particularly by addressing the monopolization of health care entities

and allowing employers and other health insurance sponsors to audit health claims data for no fee. As Schaibley detailed, the health department would be tasked with creating a database of ownership information for Indiana's health care entities, which includes hospitals, physician group plans, third party administrators, insurers and pharmacy benefit managers. The bill includes non-compliance penalties. "Consolidation was a major topic of the task force. Hospitals and insurers are buying practices,

which is causing consolidation. There are so many studies that are showing that consolidation increases prices," Schaibley said. "There's also concerns (with) private equity groups..." Private equity groups, for-profit investment organizations that traditionally overtake a business for a short time to restructure it and resell at a profit, have grown in recent years after such entities devastated local media outlets, fisheries and long-term care providers, as detailed by ProPublica. Schaibley shared a study from the Journal of American Medicine that reported a 25 percent increase in adverse events after a private equity acquisition. The influ-

ence of private equity in Indiana's health care landscape is unknown. Elsewhere in the bill, pharmacy benefit managers and third party administrators couldn't bar contract holders — employers who offer insurance plans, health plans, Medicaid or managed care organizations — from requesting audits of health claims once a quarter and couldn't charge for the service. The above portions of the bill were applauded by various employers' groups, including the Indiana Manufacturers Association. "How our members, the employers, interact with the third party administrators, the brokers and the insurance companies is (Continued on Page 2)

INDOT raises cap on Community Crossings infrastructure awards

By LESLIE BONILLA MUÑIZ
Indiana Capital Chronicle
 The Indiana Department of Transportation has raised the cap on its popular Community Crossings Matching Grant program to \$1.5 million from \$1 million. Local government advocates say they're grateful for the award bump and program generally, but want to tweak how it's structured. INDOT Spokeswoman Natalie Garrett said the higher cap is, for now, a pilot for 2024's two calls for projects. The first is due January 31.

"The increase is based on current and projected gas tax and (electric vehicle and) hybrid registration revenue that is earmarked for Community Crossings. INDOT will reassess the pilot program at the end of 2024," she told the Capital Chronicle via email. Garrett said she couldn't provide a specific dollar amount for the Community Crossings funds available in 2024 versus the year prior. She cited fluctuations in gas tax and registration numbers. Advocates favored the boost.

"We certainly don't want to see any of the tax dollars invested into the program go unspent this year when there are always infrastructure needs across all 92 counties," said Ryan Hoff, the Association of Indiana Counties' director of government affairs and its general counsel. "If there is funding available even at the higher cap amount to meet the amounts requested by local governments, then let's get that money invested in infrastructure as was intended," he added, via email.

Jenna Bentley, government affairs director for Accelerate Indiana Municipalities, called the program "transformational for the state" in an interview. But — "Increasing the cap, it'll be interesting to see who's able to take advantage of that," she said. The program, launched in 2016, provides funding to local units of government across Indiana for road and bridge projects. Cities and towns with populations below 10,000 people must put up 25 percent of project costs

and the state will furnish a 75 percent match. If they've got more than 10,000 people, it's a 50-50 deal. Similarly, counties with less than 50,000 people must pay 25 percent and those with above 50,000 must pony up 50 percent. "I think (the higher cap) will help larger communities who have been asking for additional funding... That \$1 million cap is just potentially a drop in the bucket of their overall funding needs," Bentley said. (Continued on Page 2)

Inside
 Local/Area
 Obituaries 3
 Police Notebook . . . 3
 Opinion
 Angelkeep 4
 Also...
 Sports 6-7
 Classifieds 9
 Diversions 8

Outside

 Snow likely today, cloudy and windy

Today	Friday	Saturday
High 26	High 21	High 17
Low 18	Low 5	Low 2

 More Weather on Page 2

Online
 Follow us on Facebook!
 Go to www.facebook.com/newsbanner
 Place Your Classified Ads 24/7
 Vol. 95 No. 65
THURSDAY
 January 18, 2024

THE MATTRESS + FURNITURE STORE

 915 N. Main St., Ste. D, Bluffton, IN 46714
 260.353.1099 • www.themandfstore.com

Adjustable Beds!

Lift Chairs Redliners

Home Stretch catnapper
 & More!!!

How to contact us:
 Call us: **824-0224**
 or **1-800-579-7476**
 email@news-banner.com
 On the Web:
www.news-banner.com
 Follow us at:
twitter.com/newsbanner

Hotel Z trash

(Continued from Page 1)
 in that area, and they have not gotten better," said Operations Manager Mike Grant.
 After the discussion, the council approved an investment of \$25,000 for bidding on a grant from the Indiana Office of Tourism. If awarded, this grant would go to upgrades to the Markle park. The grant will match the amount put in up to \$250,000, and \$135,000 has been donated locally already. Green stressed that if the grant is not awarded, the pledged money will be returned to the proper organizations.
 Green also announced

another \$11,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Huntington. This money will help the town prepare for the upcoming solar eclipse on April 8. Markle is in the path of totality, and officials expect it to become a hotbed of activity on that day. This money should help fund temporary portable toilets and salaries for parking attendants to keep things organized.
 Additionally, the council discussed increasing to five total traffic safety cameras in Markle. Each camera costs about \$3,000 annually, covered through the Redevelopment Commission's

budget. The cameras are expected in approximately six to nine months, but Town Marshal John Markley stressed that they are not speed cameras, nor surveillance cameras.
 The council also paid out 80 total vouchers totaling \$144,413.38 and signed up to be a part of the Indiana tax refund exchange and compliance system program. This allows for any delinquent utility bills or other citizen debts to be collected from their state tax refund.
 The council also announced they are looking for a grant from Community Crossings to help rebuild the

roads and sidewalks damaged in its future water main project. They are asking for the \$2,000,000 maximum from Community Crossings, \$500,000 of which will be matched by the town.
 Furthermore, the council kept their elected officers and appointments the same for 2024, with Eric Hoover on the Wells County Board of Zoning Appeals, and Lund, Stephanie Hensley, Hal Mason, Doug Denney and Mark Hamilton on the Markle Redevelopment Commission. Doss will continue on the Region 3-A Board of Directors.
jonathan@news-banner.com

Wells County Jail

(Continued from Page 1)
 project.
 Separately, Holliday advised he is seeking quotes to solve a sewer issue in the administrative part of the jail building.
 As of Tuesday, Holliday reported 74 inmates were in the jail, 32 of which were pre-trial holds for the Wells County Circuit Court, 18 pre-trial holds for the Superior Court, 17 from the Department of Correction and three Level 6 felons.
 The commissioners also approved a wording change in the jail's sick bank policy to lessen restrictions for contributions. Employees can donate their unused sick days to the 'sick bank,' which can then help others who need

extended time off for illness.
 Stringer and Commissioner Blake Gerber were present Tuesday; Mike Vanover was absent.
 Jennifer Brink of Bluffton again approached the commissioners to discuss Health First Indiana during public comments. According to the Health First Indiana website, the county will receive a minimum of \$549,510 for healthcare opportunities if it joins the program in its second year.
 Brink explored the program as an attraction to business development, citing a conversation she had had with a former senior employee at a major corporation. "I don't know what Economic Development's working on right now. I don't know what the Chamber's

working on right now," she said. "But I know when I talked to (the senior employee), he shopped multiple towns and multiple counties (for his businesses). So what kind of businesses are going to come here when we don't have Health First Indiana?"
 Brink then asked for a meeting between the County Council, commissioners, Health Department and Economic Development to discuss the matter. "I want all the players ... so if you're opting out again (on) June 1, I want everybody to make this decision. I just don't want you guys to make your decisions."
 Both Stringer and Gerber replied, "It is our decision."
holly@news-banner.com

Anti-monopoly bill

(Continued from Page 1)
 a critical part of the whole dynamic," said Andrew Berger, the senior vice president and lobbyist for the organization.
 Certain other fees imposed by those PBMs and TPAs, such as those for waiving bundled services, are also prohibited but attracted more consternation.
 Rep. Martin Carbaugh, R-Fort Wayne, noted that streaming services frequently include similar fees for waiving bundled program offerings.
 "Saying that a PBM can't do that — I don't love that," Carbaugh said. "... even if we went through and did this ... if I'm a PBM, I just raise the price of everything and make it so you don't have a choice. You buy all of the services or you don't have any services."
 Joey Fox, on behalf of the Pharmaceutical Care Management Association, the national trade group for PBMs, also noted worries about the inclusion of ERISA plans, or health plans that fall under the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974. Such plans have been difficult for legislators to regulate in the past, due to federal prohibitions.
 "We believe it's important to ... have clear and uniform health plans (for ERISA) across the country," Fox said.

He noted that roughly 44 of the nation's 66 PBMs operate in Indiana, meaning there is plenty of competition in the space when it came to fees.
Other bills in Public Health
 Barrett, R-Richmond, also heard testimony on his agency bill for the Indiana Department of Health, which addressed several provisions related to home health care, food temperature management and the eviction process for long-term care facilities.
 Rachel Swartwood, the agency's legislative director, explained that current law barred individuals convicted of certain crimes from working in long-term care facilities but not from home health care. The aims to prohibit those convicted from home health as well.
 Additional bill provisions include: uniform temperature control guidelines for food preparation, allowing the Family and Social Services Administration to share mental health records with the health department's child fatality review teams and using administrative law judges for the eviction process.
 "The Department of Health already uses (the administrative law) process. We use it through a memorandum of understanding ... but we want to codify this as we're going through

an administrative change," Swartwood said. "We have about 80 cases a year that go through this process."
 Lawmakers also passed two amended bills, one requiring more health care guidance to people with dense breast tissue, a dental licensing compact and another requiring the state to foot the bill for Hoosiers involuntarily committed to mental health facilities.
 The latter, House Bill 1216, builds on previous work from author Rep. Greg Steuerwald, R-Avon, to reform the state's mental health services. Jails and prisons are some of the state's largest mental health providers and a bill he authored last year to ease payment for such services at the facility level for Hoosiers who aren't incarcerated.
 "The intent here, just like (House Enrolled Act 1006) last year, is to ensure payment for services provided," Steuerwald told the committee.
 Steuerwald said the bill's aim was to continue providing care to people even after their discharge by guaranteeing payment for services.
 "They're either going to be on the streets without mitigation or they're going to be in jail. We're going to pay for this one way or another," Steuerwald said. "... The intent of 1006 was to enhance the facility's

willingness to keep these people under a court order and to treat them."
 Additionally, the bill would allow doctors overseeing intake to consider the testimony of friends and family members before signing off on an involuntary commitment.
 Beth Keeney, the president and CEO of LifeSpring Health Systems, said that expansion of information was crucial for community mental health centers like hers. She shared the story of a parent seeking help for their adult child, who was unaware of the severity of their mental illness.
 She said she had to refer the parent to the police because the person wasn't an established patient or someone the doctors had screened.
 "Law enforcement advised the parent that until they became sicker or caused a problem that required their intervention that they were not able to help either. So unfortunately, my advice to a scared parent of a very sick child was wait until your kid gets sicker," Keeney said. "Now, happily, the situation was resolved and this child was able to get access to care but there have been additional scenarios across the state with much worse outcomes."
 The bill passed the committee unanimously.

Community Crossings

(Continued from Page 1)
 "But smaller communities, you know, I had a call with some city engineers and I don't think very many will be able to take advantage of that \$1.5 million cap," she added.
 It took one of her organization's member communities — a town of 500 — about seven years to save up for a 25 percent project match. Others with populations slightly above the 10,000-resident divider may struggle to make the higher 50 percent match, as opposed to communities with hundreds of thousands of people.
 And many communities in recent years have used federal pandemic-era dollars to afford their matches. But

that money must be obligated by the end of 2024 and spent by the end of 2026.
 Bentley floated the idea of lowering the match for smaller units of government at a November meeting of a key two-year road funding task force.
 The Association of Indiana Counties has also noted that the program's short timelines complicate bridge projects, which it says take longer to develop.
 Counties are responsible for all bridges over 20 feet in length.
 Hoff wrote that he anticipated the task force would continue analyzing the program's parameters in its future hearings.
 Community Crossings has become a focus for the

task force, which must come up with long-term transportation funding solutions.
 The program's fund could become flush with cash if

electric and hybrid vehicle registrations rise. Since those vehicles use less or no gasoline, the state's main road fund would miss out.

Weather

Thursday, January 18, 2024
(24-hour observations at 10:57 p.m. Wednesday)
High: 23; Low: 2; Precipitation: None
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 2.58 feet at 10:45 p.m. Wednesday

Wells County forecast

Today: Snow likely, mainly before 1 p.m. Cloudy, with a high near 26. Southwest wind 5 to 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60 percent. New snow accumulation of less than a half inch possible.
Thursday Night: Snow, mainly after 10 p.m. Low around 18. Northeast wind 5 to 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 100 percent. New snow accumulation of 1 to 3 inches possible.
Friday: Snow likely, mainly before 1 p.m. Cloudy, with a high near 21. Northwest wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60 percent. New snow accumulation of around an inch possible.
Friday Night: A 20 percent chance of snow showers before 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 5. West wind around 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.
Saturday: Partly sunny and cold, with a high near 17.
Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 2.
Sunday: Sunny and cold, with a high near 20.
Sunday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 12.
Monday: A slight chance of rain or freezing rain after 1 p.m. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 34. Chance of precipitation is 20 percent.
Monday Night: A 50 percent chance of rain. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 29.
Tuesday: Rain likely. Cloudy, with a high near 38. Chance of precipitation is 60 percent.
Tuesday Night: A chance of rain. Cloudy, with a low around 34.
Wednesday: A chance of rain. Cloudy, with a high near 44.



Genealogy and history gathering

At 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 20, the Wells County Public Library will be the site for a joint meeting of the county's Genealogy and History clubs. Speakers at the event will include Beth Steury, at left, and Alan Daugherty, at right. Steury will talk about researching the DNA on the R. B. Williamson family for the book written by Daugherty about E. B. Williamson. The public is invited to attend the event and to learn more about tracing family histories. (Photo by Barbara Barbieri)

STEFFEN GROUP
 REAL ESTATE & AUCTIONS
RESIDENTIAL
COMMERCIAL
AGRICULTURAL
NICK HUFFMAN
 REAL ESTATE BROKER & AUCTIONEER
 260.827.8255

LIVE BEAUTIFULLY

Shades

Blinds

Shutters

Drapery

HunterDouglas

AUDIO
VIDEO
SECURITY
NETWORKING

1421 Manchester St.,
Decatur, IN
½ block west of U.S. 27 North

260-724-2276 • www.icav.us

Arnold Lumber Co.

425 S. Winchester St., Decatur, IN

Hours: Mon-Thurs 7AM-5PM
Fri 7AM-4:30PM • Sat 7AM-11:30AM
260-724-3108 • Fax 260-724-4505

1-800-903-4206 | Check Us Out on Facebook

ONLINE ONLY PERSONAL PROPERTY

AUCTION

ANTIQUES, PRIMITIVES, HIGH END TOOLS, BUCKET TRUCK & MORE!

SUN, JANUARY 14TH - SUN, JANUARY 21ST

PREVIEW LOCATION: 118 EAST CRAIG STREET, OSSIAN, IN 46777

Ford Truck w/ Lift Bucket • Industrial Quality Fans, Exhaust System, and Tools • Fenton & Indiana Glassware • Art Glass • Decanters • Dishes MCM • Furniture • Display Case • Primitives • Antiques • Advertising Kitchen Tools • Toys • Jewelry • Pocket Watches • Exercise Equipment

VIEW COMPLETE CATALOG AT STEFFENGRP.COM

SALE MANAGER: ROD FETTERS (260.557.8451)
SELLER: VARIOUS CONSIGNORS

AUCTION PREVIEW & ONLINE BIDDING ASSISTANCE:

TUESDAY, JAN. 16TH AND THURSDAY, JAN. 18TH (3 PM - 6 PM)

260.426.0633
STEFFENGRP.COM

REAL ESTATE & AUCTIONS AU12000043 - AC3050053

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

www.news-banner.com or www.facebook.com/newsbanner

OBITUARIES

Melissa J. Pax, 43

Melissa J. Pax, 43, of Bluffton, passed away Jan. 16, 2024, at Lutheran Hospital in Fort Wayne.

She was born on Dec. 8, 1980, in Portland, to the late Daniel L. Pax and Norma (Wellman) Mangen.

Melissa is survived by her mother, Norma (David) Mangen of Bluffton; brother, Kevin (Nicole) Pax; step-sisters, Denise Mangen and Lynn (Charles) Gustin of Piqua, Ohio; and six nieces and

nephews. She was preceded in death by a brother, Jerry Pax.

A funeral service will be held at 10 a.m. Jan. 22, 2024, at the Zwick & Jahn Funeral Home, Yager-Kirchhofer Chapel in Berne. Burial will follow at the St. Mary's of the Presentation Catholic Cemetery in Geneva.

The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service at the funeral home on Monday.



Pictured left to right are Kent Ulmer, 4-H Association vice-president, along with grand-children, Kambree and Marshall Stoller; Gretta Nusbaumer, backpack volunteer; Lindsay Johnson and Ashton Prible, Farm Credit staff and Farm Bureau volunteers; Abby Ramseyer, Jr. Leader Club secretary; and Susan Girod backpack volunteer. (Photo provided)

Farm Bureau and Farm Credit donate to backpack program

Wells County Farm Bureau Inc. and the Bluffton office of Farm Credit Mid-America recently partnered to donate \$500 each and held a food drive to benefit the backpack program, "Feeding Tomorrow's Future Today" — weekend food packs for hungry kids in Wells County.

The backpack program distributes approximately 150 bags of food each week

to hungry kids for the weekend and is coordinated by 4-H volunteers with assistance of the Purdue Extension - Wells County Office. All public schools in the county participate in the program and sign-up is coordinated by the school counselors. For more information about the program and how to help, contact Gretta Nusbaumer, 765-499-1412 or Susan Girod 260-827-8393.

Fetal dependent tax exemption garners privacy, implementation concerns

Committee Chair Travis Holdman made clear he'd hear the bill but not bring it to a vote

By **LESLIE BONILLA MUÑIZ**
Indiana Capital Chronicle

A Senate tax committee on Tuesday heard — but didn't vote on — a bill considering fetuses as dependent children for an income tax deduction.

"In full disclosure, we need to let folks know that we do not intend to move this bill this session," Chair Travis Holdman, R-Markle, began.

Holdman, who is leading a two-year task force reviewing the state's tax system, said he wouldn't move "much of any" tax changes through his committee until the task force's work has concluded.

Senate Bill 98 would enable expectant parents to submit — along with their tax returns — a radiologic imaging report confirming the pregnancy. In exchange, they'd claim a personal income tax exemption worth \$1,000 and a dependent child exemption of \$1,500.

The measure would cost the state about \$9 million over fiscal years 2025 and 2026, according to the latest fiscal analysis by the non-partisan Legislative Services Agency.

"How do you create a culture for life?" asked author Sen. Andy Zay,

R-Huntington. "... What I like about this bill is it's a direct benefit to the families, to those expecting mothers. It gives them that credit at the time when they most need it."

He also suggested that, by requiring imaging as proof of pregnancy, the bill could encourage pregnant Hoosiers to access pre-natal care.

Zay, who is running to represent Indiana's Third Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives, announced his plan to file the legislation last month in a campaign news release rather than from his sitting office.

His bill, however, doesn't include guidance on miscarriages — a gap Holdman noted.

"I would like ... that they would still get to claim that deduction," Zay responded. "Having had two of those in our family, with my wife, it's a very traumatic time."

Lacey Davidson, a philosophy professor at the University of Indianapolis, said she feared the bill could put Hoosiers who've had miscarriages at risk of investigation for tax fraud.

"The implementation of this bill requires Hoosiers to submit their personal

medical records with their taxes," Davidson said. "This gross invasion of privacy to access the purported benefits of this bill cannot be written into law."

Witnesses differ on how much measure would help Hoosiers

The bill split witnesses ideologically, with largely conservative groups testifying in support.

American Family Association of Indiana leader Micah Clark said he'd Googled costs associated with childbirth and found that delivery alone could run Hoosiers thousands of dollars.

"Helping parents keep a little bit more of their money to provide for their newborns is, I think, a beneficial thing," Clark said.

Indiana Right to Life lobbyist Jodi Smith said the organization was "excited to see parents be rewarded for having children and to be encouraged to take good care of them."

Smith proposed an amendment requiring the state to validate pregnancy through legal documents like social security numbers or pregnancy loss through fetal death certificates.

Police Notebook

INCIDENTS

County: Wednesday, 12:58 a.m., 5600 North 100 West, Uniondale. Report of homeless man attempting to walk to Berne for warming center. Gave subject ride.

Wednesday, 7:26 a.m., Wells County Jail. Warrant served to Skylark Gearlds.

Wednesday, 8:58 a.m., 700 East and 500 North, Craigville. Driver slid off

road in vehicle, no injuries reported.

Ossian: Tuesday, 5:56 p.m., 800 block of West Lafever Street, Ossian. Report of threats made via messaging.

ARRESTS Bobby Jack Speece, 54, Montpelier, theft of a vehicle and threat from building, both Level 6 felonies, and theft — fraud, a Class A misdemeanor. No bond set.

Skylark Gearlds, 33, Bluffton; sex offender violation, a Level 6 felony, and perjury, a Level 6 felony. No bond set.

Michael Joseph Moore, 37, Fort Wayne; theft - motor vehicle, possession of narcotic drug and possession of methamphetamine, all Level 6 felonies, and possession of paraphernalia, a Class C misdemeanor. No bond set.

Bluffton High School shares 100 percent graduation rate

Bluffton High School has achieved a 100 percent graduation rate and a 100 percent non-waiver rate with the Class of 2023.

BHS Principal Steve Baker made the announcement at the Monday, Jan. 15, meeting of the Bluffton-Harrison Metropolitan School District Board of School Trustees. The graduation rate marks the first 100 percent graduation rate for BHS and is again the best in Wells County. In fact, BHS is only one of 10 traditional high schools in Indiana to achieve the 100 percent rate in 2023.

BHS also achieved a 100 percent non-waiver graduation rate, also the first time BHS has accomplished that rate. The state average is 84.92 percent. There were only six other schools that achieved a 100 percent non-waiver rate. Waivers can be given by building principals on a discretionary basis to

students who don't meet the postsecondary readiness competency requirement.

"The hard work from students, teachers, and parents make this achievement possible," BHS Principal Steve Baker said. "It takes a complete buy-in from everyone to earn this accomplishment. Every percent represents a student who is graduating from one of the best high schools in the state of Indiana prepared for the next phase of his/her life. It takes a K-12 effort so that students are prepared to earn their diploma on time and have the skills necessary for the next phase of their lives."

Also among the data points Mr. Baker presented to the Board of School Trustees:

- There were 106 students in the Class of 2023 cohort.
- 73 percent graduated with college or career

coursework

- No students received a general diploma.
- 45 percent earned a Core 40 diploma.
- 54 percent earned an Academic Honors or Technical Honors diploma. The state average is 31 percent.
- All students graduated on time.

• The 10-year average for BHS is 98.3 percent.

"Our district continues to lead students toward success, and this latest achievement is another prime example of excellence in action," BHMSD Superintendent Dr. Brad Yates said. "From our elementary school to middle school to high school and beyond, our students are prepared for success by great educators."

VISITATION & SERVICES

Ernest "Ernie" J. Barclay

Calling: 3 - 7 p.m.
Friday, January 19 and one hour prior to the service.
Service: 10:30 a.m.
Saturday, January 20 at the funeral home.

Thoma/Rich, Lemler

Funeral Home
308 W. Washington St.
824-3850

www.thomarich.com



100 Years Loved
Please join us for a birthday celebration honoring
Roberta Arnold
Sunday, January 21, 2024
Liberty Center Community Church
2905 West Market Street,
Liberty Center, IN
1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

WE HELP YOU GET SOCIAL SECURITY, MEDICARE AND MEDICAID READY!

Jerry Flack & Associates

WE REPRESENT MANY - MANY - MANY INSURANCE COMPANIES

WE HAVE ALL THE MEDICARE AND MEDICAID OPTIONS AVAILABLE

Preston Kaehr - Julie Myers - Connie Vangelakos

The Price Tag is the Same Everywhere Consider Local for Better Service

WE HAVE THE MARKETPLACE UNDER 65 PRODUCTS.

WHEN YOU HAVE PROBLEMS AND YOU WILL HAVE PROBLEMS YOU WILL HAVE US TO COUNT ON

MEDICARE SUPPLEMENTS - MEDICARE ADVANTAGE PLANS - PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLANS

Life Insurance - Long Term Care Insurance - Investments - Individual and Small Group Health - Dental - Vision - Hearing - Cancer Insurance

Folks on Medicare A and B and Diabetic can get FREE Nice Looking Diabetic Shoes Every Year from Us | We Do FREE Information/ Education Seminars In Your Business (Again Former Teachers)

WE CAN MEET: IN OUR OFFICE - IN YOUR HOME - IN A FAVORED LOCATION

In the 1882 Building at Main & Market with the mural on the outside wall • 260-824-1618

HIGH QUALITY FARMLAND MOSTLY TILLABLE

ONLINE at halderman.com

AUCTION

Tuesday, January 23rd, 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm ET

PROPERTY LOCATION: 3 miles southeast of Markle, IN and Wells Co, Rockcreek Twp

TRACTS 1 & 2: located on both sides of 200 N between 200 W and 300 W.

TRACT 3: located at the intersection of 300 N and 500 W.

207.3+/- total acres

Tract 1: 19.83+/- Acres
Tract 2: 110+/- Acres
Tract 3: 77.47+/- Acres

HALDERMAN
REAL ESTATE & FARM MANAGEMENT
800.424.2324 | halderman.com

Rick Johnloz: 260.827.8181

Auctioneer: Russell D. Harmeyer IN Act. Lic. #AU1000277, HRES IN Act. Lic. #AC69200019.
HLS# RAJ-12975, Farm: Susan Dunn Estate

Congress returns to a full plate... and huge uncertainty

I learned long ago that it's a fool's game to make predictions about an upcoming session of Congress. That's because, even during the decades when it functioned according to rules and tradition, the best-laid plans could be knocked askew by world or national events, shifting politics, the whims of an individual senator, or the demands of a powerful House committee chair. These days, all those things are still true—only rules and tradition have generally gone out the window, so there's even less predictability than there used to be.



Lee Hamilton

Hoosier Opinions

Over the next few weeks, we'll see our first example of this. You probably remember that back in November, Congress avoided shutting down the government by kicking the decision down the road—but only by a little bit. Continued funding for government departments and agencies faces deadlines on January 19 and February 2. The idea in November was to give Congress some breathing room to set priorities for government spending for the coming year—only now, there's very little time in which to act. With pressure in both chambers to avoid yet another continuing resolution that puts off hard decision-making and leaves government employees uncertain about the future of their programs, it's possible Congress could get its act together in time—but if it does, it'll be a nail-biter.

That's in part because, to make matters even more uncertain, House Republicans have moved forward with an impeachment inquiry focused on President Biden. Their reasoning is ambiguous and the move is likely to put moderate Republicans facing re-election in swing districts in an uncomfortable position. Meanwhile, the House GOP caucus has resolved none of the internal divisions that bedeviled it last year—only this time around, it has an even narrower majority, after members expelled New York Republican George Santos, and former Speaker Kevin McCarthy relinquished his seat at the end of the year. With another Republican due to depart Jan. 21 (Ohio Rep. Bill Johnson will become president of Youngstown State University), just six seats will separate the Republican and Democratic caucuses in the House until special elections can take place.

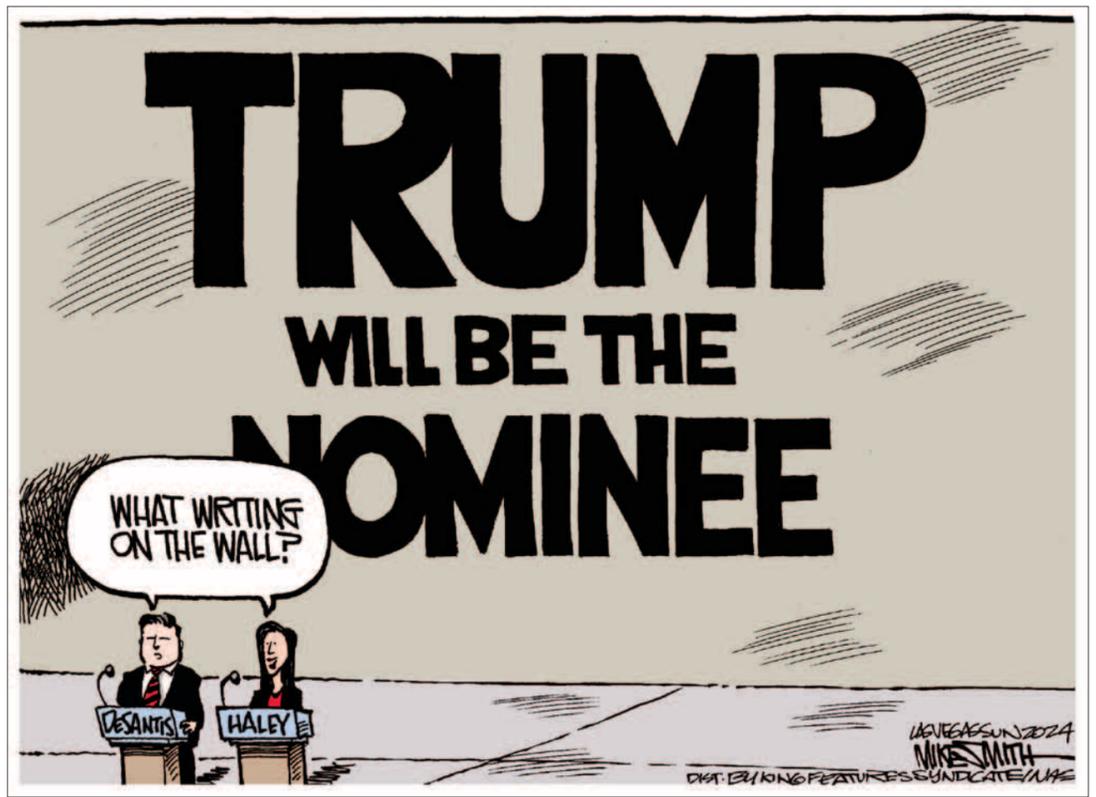
All of this comes against a backdrop of an election year with majorities in both the House and the Senate in play, as well as a high-consequence presidential election. The conventional wisdom holds that very little can get done on Capitol Hill during election years like this one, as legislators stake out positions aimed at garnering votes, rather than racking up legislative accomplishments.

But it's conceivable that this year could be different. Though President Biden has a number of accomplishments to point to as he runs for re-election, including an overall healthy economy and a variety of bills that passed in the early years of his time in office, he will likely be eager to point to recent legislation, as well. Similarly, members of both the House and the Senate will be anxious to spend as much time as possible at home campaigning, which could put them in a mood to cut substantive deals quickly so that they can focus on re-election in the latter half of the year.

All those calculations will come into play not just on government funding and House Republicans' impeachment inquiry, but on several burning issues facing Congress. For one thing, among legislators' must-pass agenda items is a new farm bill, which they didn't manage to renew last fall, and instead extended until September in hopes—this may sound familiar—of buying more time to come to an agreement. And of even more immediate import, Republicans have tied the Biden administration's request for aid to both Ukraine and Israel to their demands on stricter immigration laws and border policy; both sides have shown willingness to work toward an agreement, but the issues are knotty and a deal is far from a sure thing.

All of these issues face Congress in the next few months. And all of them are up in the air. Will House and Senate members manage to set aside their differences and be productive? Will they tie themselves up in knots? It will all be worth watching.

Lee Hamilton is a distinguished scholar with the IU School of Global and International Studies. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.



Iowa nudged the nation closer to a revolting rematch next fall

A small minority of Iowa's tiny minority (0.96 percent) of the U.S. population has spoken. Next week, a portion of New Hampshire's 0.42 percent will speak. By Feb. 24, when South Carolina (1.63 percent) will be heard from, these three states might have consigned the other 97 percent of Americans to a November choice that disgusts a whopping majority.

Writing in National Affairs, Wheaton College political scientists Bryan T. McGraw and Timothy W. Taylor say that in 2016, Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump "had the lowest favorability of any candidates in presidential polling history." Eight years later, a Biden-Trump rematch probably would establish a new low.

Iowa gave Trump the outcome he probably wanted. The icing on his Iowa cake - he won 97 of 99 counties by at least 10 points - was Nikki Haley's failure to finish off Ron DeSantis's campaign. The former South Carolina governor might have done this if 2,500 more voters had propelled her past him into second place, which would have bolstered her claim that it is now a two-person race.

It actually is. Her chance of stopping Trump is substantially better than that of DeSantis, whose mistaken assumption has been that the Republican nominating electorate wants a less feral, more pastel version of Trump. This electorate wants a brawler, which DeSantis is, but it will not embrace a less entertaining incarnation of today's political tribalism.

Thirty-five states, with 63 percent of the nation's population, have voted for the same party in this century's six elections. Political competition is so suspended, like a fly in amber, that ticket-splitting is rare: Only 3 percent of 2020 voters supported a presidential candidate from one party and a House or Senate candidate from the other. In 2016 and 2020, 66 of 67 Senate elections were won by the candidate of the party whose presidential candidate carried the state.

More than half of the 1,215 convention delegates needed to secure the GOP nomination will be allocated on March 5, 10 days after South Carolina's primary. By limping on for six more weeks, DeSantis complicates Haley's task of deflating Trump by defeating him in her home state.

Trump's cascading legal distractions, driven by progressive prosecutors, have strengthened his grip on his party. If, however, Trump is inaugurated 371 days after Monday's Iowa caucuses, progressives will have accomplished perhaps the largest self-inflicted wound in U.S. political history.

The second-worst news drenching President Biden's campaign is: Although no Republican presidential candidate has won among voters under 30 since 1988, the New York Times-Siena College poll last month showed Trump leading Biden with that cohort 49 percent to 43 percent, a 10-point swing since July. Even worse news for Biden is this:

A USA Today-Suffolk University poll finds his support among Black voters at 63 percent, a 24-point collapse since 2020. In 1964, four months after achieving enactment of the Civil Rights Act, Lyndon B. Johnson won 94 percent of the Black vote, 26 points better than John F. Kennedy's 1960 percentage. In the subsequent 14 elections, no Democratic nominee has received less than Jimmy Carter's 83 percent in 1976, and Democratic candidates have averaged 85 percent.

Writing in National Affairs, Boston College political scientists Dennis Hale and Marc Landy say: "Polarization is largely a response by part of the electorate to the reality that the mass media and the nation's major cultural and educational institutions are largely controlled by, or operate for the benefit of, a very different part of the electorate." This perception is reinforced by ham-handed progressive tactics that impart momentum to Trump's grievance tour.

Before the Supreme Court ends this mischief, let's end applause for grandstanding officials in blue states who ban Trump from ballots on the ground that the 14th Amendment makes him ineligible because on Jan. 6, 2021, he participated in an "insurrection." Stretching that concept enough to disqualify the man currently leading him in polls, Biden, in a statement remarkably silly even considering the source, said that on Jan. 6 "we nearly lost America - lost it all." Oh? A rabble's four-hour tantrum, which briefly delayed the certification of the 2020 election, nearly did what four years of Confederate military campaigning could not do?

The Congress that, a year after Appomattox, selected the word "insurrection" surely was thinking of such concerted attempts to smash the national regime. Until there is something comparable, let's agree that the last person disqualified by Section 3 died at 104 in 1951. His name was - really - Pleasant Crump, the last known surviving Confederate soldier.

georgewill@washpost.com



George Will

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Jan. 18, the 18th day of 2024. There are 348 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Jan. 18, 1778, English navigator Captain James Cook reached the present-day Hawaiian Islands, which he named the "Sandwich Islands."

On this date: In 1911, the first landing of an aircraft on a ship took place as pilot Eugene B. Ely brought his Curtiss biplane in for a safe landing on the deck of the armored cruiser USS Pennsylvania in San Francisco Harbor.

In 1913, entertainer Danny Kaye was born David Daniel Kaminsky in New York City.

In 1943, during World War II, Jewish insurgents in the Warsaw Ghetto launched their initial armed resistance

against Nazi troops, who eventually succeeded in crushing the rebellion.

In 1975, the situation comedy "The Jeffersons," a spin-off from "All in the Family," premiered on CBS-TV.

In 1990, a jury in Los Angeles acquitted former preschool operators Raymond Buckley and his mother, Peggy McMartin Buckley, of 52 child molestation charges.

In 1991, financially strapped Eastern Airlines shut down after more than six decades in business.

In 1993, the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday was observed in all 50 states for the first time.

In 2005, the world's largest commercial jet, the Airbus A380 "superjumbo" capable of flying up to 800 passengers, was unveiled in Toulouse, France.

Last week's Angelkeep Journals column highlighted ash trees that had suffered now for years and lost or were losing the battle against Emerald Ash Borer. This brought to mind a new Angelkeep discovery from last year that failed to get any recognition in this column simply because other events and nature personalities took precedence.

It happened every year. Summer and fall, though loaded with new discoveries and unique events, could not be contained within the number of days this column appeared during those seasons.

When winter hit, a large population of plants went dormant or died. A significant amount of critters died, burrowed, hibernated, flew south (or north depending on their preference,) or were locked in a stage as yet unavailable to show themselves for a nature-lover's story. Winter allowed some of the previously forgotten to appear on The News-Banner opinion page.

So it went for Locust Borer. Some might have found locust borer a bug they were happy to be around. Others might have associated it with destruction of something more valuable.

Angelkeep remained on the fence. Good or bad, locust borer needed a chance to become a focus of attention. So with an open mind, meet Locust Borer, then make your decision.

Yay or nay, your opinion made no hay, that was to say, locust borer remained here to stay.

Angelkeep initially took a dim view of this insect. Its early sighting caused alarm. At a quick glance it

Angelkeep Journals

appeared to be a yellow jacket (a wasp.) Angelkeep loathed them. They attacked. They stung. Repeatedly. They hid inside an open soda can. They could sting inside the mouth. That happened to a family member. It was bad. Stung in the wrong spot inside the mouth could kill you.

Even entomologists agreed. Adult locust borer resembled a wasp or hornet. Its bright yellow marks on a black background were enough to give any wasp hater instant hatred. If

an observer took a good look, before zipping off in another direction in speedy flight, the reddish legs could be seen.

The most interesting, and tell-tale descriptive identifying characteristic of locust borer, was the stripe of yellow forming a "W." That appeared across the wing covers, the outer shell-like parts scientifically called elytra. Adults grew to be approximately an inch in length, again very similar to the yellow jacket.

To toss in a Mark Miller-style digression, which Angelkeep fondly appreciates, the former Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp 1592, that built the park later called Ouabache, had sports teams using the mascot of yellow jackets. It didn't last for some unknown reason. Maybe a team of tree workers stumbled on a yellow jacket ground nest and learned to hate them as much as Angelkeep. Regardless of the reason, the CCC



Alan Daugherty



Boys changed their mascot to Cardinals.

Angelkeep never heard of any professional or college team using locust borer as a mascot. Seems like a state like Wyoming, Washington, Wisconsin, West Virginia, etc. could utilize the wing back yellow "W" an incentive to have it serve as mascot. Reverse the "W" by observing locust borer from the head end and you have an "M." Michigan? Massachusetts? Maryland?

Angelkeep discovered this bug on a tall stalk of goldenrod bloom. It became a frequently visited wildflower utilized by locust borer even though at the adult stage the insect had no need for feeding itself. By observation, goldenrod became a mating heaven. Adults were very active flyers emerging in September when goldenrod takes an active role in making many allergy sufferers angry. Goldenrod got a bad rap for that from allergic people. Goldenrod did not irritate and worsen allergies, ragweed was the culprit.

Adult locust borers laid eggs in the fall which overwintered under shallow bark. Spring's emerging larvae, all white and legless, began boring into heart wood or down the branches. They often preferred locust trees. They weaken branches until limbs fell off or their boring cut off water and nutrient supplies needed for tree growth.

Angelkeep had no locust tree to harm, so "live and let live" regarding the locust borer.

Perhaps Iowa should have change their mascot. Locust borer had lines making the "I," "W," and almost an "A." It might be better than some Iowa hawk's eye.

Now you can vote. Live or swat. Mr. Daugherty is a Wells County resident who, along with his wife Gwen, enjoy their backyard and have named it "Angelkeep."

The News-Banner

(USPS 059-200)

Evening News est. 1892 • Evening Banner est. 1899 • Consolidated 1929

News-Banner Publications, Inc.

George B. Witwer, Chairman of the Board
Doug Brown, President, Publisher
Dianne Witwer, Secretary/Treasurer

Periodicals Postage Paid at Bluffton, IN 46714. Published every day except Sundays and principal holidays at 125 N. Johnson St., Bluffton IN 46714, Post Office Box 436

Holly Gaskill, Editor

Mark Miller, Opinion Page Editor

Opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily represent the views of this newspaper.

Gloria conquers the chaos of a kitchen remodel

My kitchen is torn to pieces; everything is a huge mess.

Before you get worried, though, I'm having an amazing day! Thanks to the kindness and generosity of those who had never met us, I am getting brand-new kitchen cabinets. Yes, it's true, and it's today.

When I was a little girl, my maternal grandpa made and installed cupboards for the house my dad built for us.

Twenty-four years later the children helped me empty them and used the empty spots for hiding places. When my cousin Josh and his family came one evening, our children were nowhere to be seen. When I wouldn't tell them where they were, they started looking for them. Soon three-year-old Joshua's muffled voice could be heard, "Josh, up here!" Door after door was opened, as pleased faces peered out at their guests.

As of last night, those cupboards were all removed, floors have been scrubbed where the cupboards had been, and today, a new leaf has been turned.

Last fall, when I received a phone call from a cabinet shop in Indiana about them doing cabinets for us, they asked whether I could come the following day to pick out what I wanted. What? Could this be real? I called a driver and planned to take the

The Amish Cook

by Gloria Yoder



three little boys with me.

It was a day to remember, thinking, talking, and debating, but today is even better. Early this morning, little ones in pajamas peered out the windows and watched in wonder as two boys carried piece after piece from the trailer to the house. The children's hand prints and my note to Daniel on the wall would be covered by the cabinets, but that's okay; we know it's there. I told the children that perhaps one day they can show their children the hand prints should they ever need to replace the cupboards.

I am down to counting the hours until I can fill the cupboards with kitchen supplies. There should be ample space since I hadn't had an island before. I constantly try to cut back on the number of dishes stored in my cabinets. There are some specific dishes that I like, but then if I hardly use them, what value do they have? Collecting dust is only natural and will occur to anything stored. Who likes cleaning extra stuff?

A few years ago, Daniel and I had chosen a rustic gray flooring that looked like slabs of wood pieced together. Now I had debat-

ed on the color of cabinets to go with it. I enjoy dark, woody shades, but I didn't want anything that showed too many fingerprints and water stains; after all, our kitchen gets used heavily daily. I finally settled with a medium gray/ brown in knotty hickory wood.

This morning as those first pieces were toed to the house I was amazed how well the color and style blended well with the flooring and pink-rose walls (somehow, I never outgrew my liking for pink, so Daniel had cheered me on to color the kitchen in the color I liked). Today, I smiled; I knew Daniel would be pleased with his wife enjoying a new kitchen. Isn't that something? On our way to heaven, there are many things along the way, some brutal, many complicated, and yes, also joys to thank God for.

When the Lehmans and both set parents came to help remove the old cabinets, Mom had prepared a soothing stew for all of us. Here's a recipe for you to try tonight!



CHEESY CHICKEN STEW

- 3 cups chicken broth
- ½ pound diced chicken
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 ½ cups potatoes diced
- 16 oz mixed vegetables
- 2 cans cream of chicken soup
- 1 pound melting cheese such as Velveeta
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon garlic salt
- 1 teaspoon seasoning salt

1 teas salt, or to taste
In a 4 quart kettle cook together broth, onion, and celery, for ten minutes. In a separate saucepan cook potatoes until soft. Add to broth mixture, stir in meat, chicken soup, and cheese. Heat and serve.

Liquid amount may be adjusted according to your preference to make it more soupy.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION



Leona Mahnensmith's 100th birthday

Leona Mahnensmith will turn 100 years old on Jan. 29. She was a beautician for over 40 years in Ossian. Her family requests taking a moment to send a birthday card or personal note to help her celebrate this milestone.

Leona's address is:
Ossian Health & Rehab
c/o Leona Mahnensmith
215 Davis Rd
Ossian, IN 46777

Thank you from the Mahnensmith family.

A Talk with Tego



Pebbles is a seven-month-old, tortoiseshell female.



Polly is a seven-month-old, domestic short hair, mitten pawed female.



Baby is a seven-month-old, domestic short hair female.



Tego

Tego's Tips: Keep pets away from burning candles.

These are just a few pets available for adoption at the Wells County Animal Shelter, 1613 W. Cherry St., Bluffton. For more information call 824-6063.

Students named to Trine University President's List

Trine University students were named to the President's List for the Fall 2023 semester. To earn President's List honors, students must complete a minimum of 12 hours and have a grade point average of 3.750-4.000.

The following area students were named to the President's List:

Janelle Brown of Decatur, majoring in RN to BSN
Jacob Creager of Fort

Wayne, majoring in Exercise Science.

Kade Fuelling of Decatur, majoring in Exercise Science.

Connor Miller of Warren, majoring in Design Engineering Technology.

Lydia Roop of Decatur, majoring in English.

Lucas Rosbrugh of Fort Wayne, majoring in Design Engineering Technology.

Ethan Sommerfeld of

Bluffton, majoring in BS in Information Systems.

Johnathan Wilder of Decatur, majoring in Mechanical Engineering

Max Worth of Bluffton, majoring in Civil Engineering.

Carter Zezula of Markle, majoring in Dual Enrollment.

Landon Zezula of Markle, majoring in Dual Enrollment.



Supporting the Boys & Girls Club

Sons Of the American Legion, represented by Rick Murphy, at right, are among the groups supporting the Wells Community Boys & Girls Club with a donation to the "Making a Difference" Banquet and Auction to be held at the club on Jan. 22. Accepting the check was the club's Director Vicki Bell, at left. (Photo provided)

Activities at Fort Wayne's riverfront areas

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

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

On Feb. 11 the entertainment will be an Open Jam Session with folks bringing their own instruments.

"A Night at the Ballroom" will be featured tonight from 7 to 9:30 p.m. at the Promenade Park Pavilion.

A free "Sunday Sweat on the Riverfront" will take place on Sunday, Feb. 11 with Kickboxing with 9Round from 9 to 10 a.m. and Yoga on the Riverfronts from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

More info about the events at fortwayneparks.org.

FORT WAYNE Box Drop

Mattress & Furniture
260-227-2145

Factory Direct Showroom

Delivery Available

Amy & Tracy Houtz
260-227-2145

7824 Bluffton Rd.
Fort Wayne, IN

By Appointment:
Tues - Wed - Thurs

Showroom Open:
Fri & Sat 11am - 4pm

Attention Advertisers!

COMING IN FEBRUARY ... OUR 26th ANNUAL

Wells County

Fact Book

2024

Wells County Fact Book

One of our most popular annual projects, it is sure to be a "keeper!"

Jampacked with information we use everyday but take for granted, updated with newly elected officials and more!

Useful information for new residents and visitors as well as natives! From who to call at city hall, county offices, schools and utilities ... how to get a building permit, listings of regional zip codes, important phone numbers...

There are statistics, information on health care, recreation, churches, state government, maps and so much more!

You'll want your business to be a part of this year-round handy reference guide to Wells County!



The News-Banner

AD DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24

Contact Your Ad Rep Today or

Call 824-0224

or 800-579-7476 and ask for Display Advertising

Raiders outmatched by Schultz, ACAC leader Jets

By RYAN WALKER

MONROE — Southern Wells was just simply outplayed by a really good Adams Central team Wednesday night.

The Jets, now 10-1 and a perfect 4-0 in the ACAC, jolted to a lead in the first quarter and used it to top the Raiders (2-10, 0-4 ACAC) 72-38.

Led by 6'7" senior and Olivet Nazarene commit Isaac Schultz, Adams Central just finished back-to-back conference tournament titles and is seeking to do the same in the regular season.

They began the game by winning the tip and quickly lobbing an alley-oop dunk to Schultz to set the tone.

Southern Wells responded as well as it could. Andrew Aker scored the first on a putback, Perrin Gates with a bunny underneath and a CJ Reber triple, but the Jets' scoring attack soared to a 24-11 at the end of the first quarter. Schultz produced 10 of the points on 4-4 shooting, helping his game-high 24 and eight rebounds.

"They are a tough matchup at every position," Southern Wells head coach Joel Roush said after the game about Adams Central. "They're quick, they're strong. They have length, size and skill. All of that conglomerates into something that is very difficult to deal with. I was worried about us offensively, and their offense really gave us trouble."

Even with a solid effort of 5-9 from the floor for the Raiders, it just wasn't enough and did not carry into the second quarter.

Outside of Reber's second three, the Raiders didn't get much going until late in the period. Evan Pennington got one of his two buckets with under two minutes before the break, and Reber picked off an inbounds pass and scored right as the final buzzer sounded. By then, it was 44-18 in favor of the Jets.

Reber, who scored 12 points for the Raiders, perhaps had his best night of the season.

Roush explained that they've asked him to shoot the ball more, and he has this season. Wednesday night, he hit three mid-range or beyond jumpers and helped on defense once he tweaked a few things.

"CJ's a good shooter," Roush said. "The short corner area is a place where he was open and we encourage him when he's open and he had a pretty good game. I would like for him to be a little more aware of his man when he's off the ball defensively. But, once we got that corrected, I think he played one of his better games."

Perrin Gates also had a nice night despite his matchup against Schultz, scoring a team-high 14 with five rebounds. Reber tallied six rebounds along with teammate Aker to lead the team.

Southern Wells will host Muncie Burris at 7:30 p.m. next Tuesday, Jan. 23.

sports@news-banner.com

ADAMS CENTRAL 72, SOUTHERN WELLS 38
At Adams Central
SOUTHERN WELLS (2-10, 0-4 ACAC): Perrin Gates 6-10 2-3 14, CJ Reber 5-12 0-0 12, Evan Pennington 2-7 0-0 4, Landon Johnson 1-1 0-0 3, Chandler Oswalt 1-9 0-0 3, Andrew Aker 1-9 0-0 2, Caleb Johnson 0-1 0-0 0, Trey Slusher 0-0 0-0 0, Joshua Aulbach 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS: 16-51 2-3 38.
ADAMS CENTRAL (10-1, 4-0 ACAC): Isaac Schultz 11-15 2-2 24, Trace Maller 8-14 0-0 16, Micah McClure 4-6 2-4 10, Braylend Reber 4-6 0-2 8, Max Hamilton 1-3 4-4 6, Ryan Tester 2-6 0-0 4, Kolton Littler 1-3 0-0 2, Cade Van De Weg 0-3 0-0 0, Marcus Bollenbacher 0-0 0-0 0, Drew Johnson 0-0 0-0 0, Lawson Deathe 0-0 0-0 0. TEAM 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS: 30-58 8-12 72.
Southern Wells 11 7 8 12 — 38
Adams Central 24 20 14 15 — 72
 Three-point FG: Southern Wells 4-21 (Reber 2-6, Oswalt 1-6, L. Johnson 1-1, Aker 0-4, Pennington 0-1, Gates 0-2), Adams Central 0-6 (Tester 0-2, Maller 0-2, Schultz 0-1, Littler 0-1). Rebounds: Southern Wells 21 (Reber 6, Aker 6, Gates 5, Oswalt 2, Aulbach 1, C. Johnson 1), Adams Central 36 (Schultz 8, Steele 6, Littler 6, Reber 6, Tester 3, Hamilton 2, Maller 2, Van De Weg 1, Bollenbacher 1, TEAM 1). Turnovers: Southern Wells 12, Adams Central 4. Fouls: Southern Wells 8, Adams Central 8. Fouled Out: None. Technicals: None. JV: No game.



Adam Central's Isaac Schultz (middle) towers over Southern Wells' defenders Perrin Gates (right) and CJ Reber (left) Wednesday night at The Hangar. Schultz, an Olivet Nazarene commit, scored 24 to lead the Jets to a 72-38 victory over the Raiders. (Photos by Ryan Walker)



Schultz (blocking) stuffs Raiders' Oswalt attempting a jumper.

Josh Van Meter inks minor league deal with the Yankees

Norwell graduate Josh Van Meter has found a new home for the 2024 baseball season, singing with the New York Yankees to a minor league deal reported by Ken Rosenthal of The Athletic Wednesday afternoon.

As reported, it appears that he will receive an invitation to Spring Training down in Tampa Bay and provide the Yankees depth in the utility spot in the



Josh Van Meter

farm system.

Van Meter spent all of last season in the Milwaukee Brewers Triple-A Affiliate for the Nashville Sounds where he hit .209 with six home runs and played only 51 games due to an injury.

His last stint in the major leagues was with Pittsburgh and appeared in 67 games with the Pirates and nine in the minors.

High School Calendar

THURSDAY, JAN 18
GIRLS BASKETBALL: Eastbrook at Bluffton, 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.
SATURDAY, JAN 20
BOYS BASKETBALL: New Haven at Norwell, 7:45 p.m.
GIRLS BASKETBALL: Bluffton at Heritage, 7:30 p.m.; Southern Wells at Jay County, 7:30 p.m.
SWIMMING & DIVING (CO-ED): NE8 Meet at Norwell, 10 a.m.
WRESTLING: Norwell at NE8 Meet at Huntington North, 9 a.m.
MONDAY, JAN 22
 No events scheduled.
TUESDAY, JAN 23
BOYS BASKETBALL: Bishop Luers at Norwell, 7:45 p.m.; Muncie Burris at Southern Wells, 7:30 p.m.
GIRLS BASKETBALL: Southern Wells at Southwood, 7:30 p.m.
SWIMMING & DIVING (CO-ED): Norwell at Delta, 6 p.m.
WEDNESDAY, JAN 24
GIRLS BASKETBALL: Cowan at Southern Wells, 7:30 p.m.

Amazon will invest in Diamond Sports as part of a bankruptcy restructuring agreement

By JOE REEDY
 AP Sports Writer

Amazon will partner with Diamond Sports as part of a restructuring agreement as the largest owner of regional sports networks looks to emerge from bankruptcy.

Diamond owns 18 networks under the Bally Sports banner. Those networks have the rights to 37 professional teams — 11 baseball, 15 NBA and 11 NHL.

Diamond Sports has been in Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings in the Southern District of Texas since it filed for protection last March. The company said in a late 2021 financial filing that it had debt of \$8.67 billion.

The terms of the agreement were announced by Diamond Sports on Wednesday morning and then presented before Judge Christopher Lopez at an afternoon hearing in Houston.

"There's lots to digest, especially when you consider where things were the fourth quarter of last year," Lopez said at the end of the hearing. "It is certainly a very interesting development to say the least. The thought the company is moving in this direction is a positive development."

Diamond Sports had been negotiating deals with all of the leagues, which would have been completed by the end of the com-

ing baseball season.

The NBA and NHL both said they have received the documents and were reviewing them before discussing next steps with Diamond. Major League Baseball was more pointed in its evaluation.

"There is a lot to digest. It is unable to be digested because it hasn't been purchased, cooked or served. When we get to that point, we will look at it and figure out whether it is able to be digested," MLB lawyer James Bromley said during the hearing. "We will refrain from adding congratulations until such time that something is actually delivered."

Amazon had no immediate comment. The agreement remains subject to approval by the bankruptcy court.

The agreement with Diamond Sports' largest creditors allows it to emerge from bankruptcy and continue operations and prevents a total collapse of the regional sports network system where the NBA, NHL and MLB would have to step in to take over production and distribution of most of their teams.

Last season, MLB had to take over production and distribution of the San Diego Padres and Arizona Diamondbacks games after Diamond let rights payments to the

(Continued on Page 7)

Pascal Siakam traded to Pacers, while Raptors get 3 1st-rounders

By TIM REYNOLDS
 AP Basketball Writer

Pascal Siakam was traded to the Indiana Pacers on Wednesday night, ending a run of nearly eight years with the Toronto Raptors

during which he was a two-time All-NBA selection, two-time All-Star and part of the team that won the 2019 NBA title.

His next chapter: teaming up with All-Star guard

Tyrese Haliburton on a Pacers team that started the day as the highest-scoring club in the NBA and now has even more offensive firepower for the second half of

(Continued on Page 7)



Perfect!

Miken Habegger recently accomplished two feats in the bowling alley. The sophomore at Bluffton High School bowled his first 800 series, bowling an 815 in three games on Dec. 23. On Jan. 13, he completed a perfect 300 game. (Photo provided)

Colts owner Jim Irsay was found unresponsive, struggling to breathe during December emergency call

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — First responders found Indianapolis Colts owner Jim Irsay unresponsive and struggling to breathe in early December when they responded to an emergency call from inside the home, TMZ.com reported Wednesday.

The online outlet cited police records from Carmel, Indiana, a northern suburb of Indianapolis, that detailed the Dec. 8 incident. TMZ.com said the police report revealed Irsay had a "blue skin tone" when they arrived and he was treated with Narcan, a medicine that can reverse an opioid overdose. Eventually, he was transported to

a hospital. Irsay has a history of addiction to pain killers and has publicly addressed the problems he has faced, most recently in November when he told HBO Sports he had sought treatment at least 15 times.

Earlier this month, Irsay cancelled a performance in Los Angeles with the Jim Irsay Band because of what team officials described as a severe respiratory illness. When asked for an update on Irsay's condition last week, general manager Chris Ballard said he was stable and he was getting

(Continued on Page 7)

News-Banner Scoreboard

FOOTBALL

NFL

Wild-card Playoffs
Monday, Jan. 15
 Buffalo 31, Pittsburgh 17
 Tampa Bay 32, Philadelphia 9

Divisional Playoffs
Saturday, Jan. 20
 Houston at Baltimore, 4:30 p.m. (ESPN/ABC)
 Green Bay at San Francisco, 8 p.m. (FOX)

Sunday, Jan. 21
 Tampa Bay at Detroit, 3 p.m. (NBC/Peacock)
 Kansas City at Buffalo, 6:30 p.m. (CBS/Paramount)

BASKETBALL

High School

Wednesday Boys' Scores
 Evansville Christian 78, Valparaiso 75
 Ft. Wayne Snider 54, Heritage 43
 Ft. Wayne Wayne 66, Ft. Wayne Dwenger 64, OT
 Hammond Noll 66, Illiana Christian 52
 Indpls Roncalli 51, Triton Central 33
 Penn 57, Northridge 49, OT
 W. Vigo 68, S. Vermillion 61
 Westfield 58, Noblesville 54
 Bi-County Tournament=

First Round=
 Bremen 43, New Prairie 38
 Glenn 72, Argos 52
 LaVille 85, Culver 57
 Triton 56, Oregon-Davis 25
 Porter County Conference Tourna-

ment=
 First Round=
 Boone Grove 71, Tri-Township 37
 Hebron 58, Kouts 40

Wednesday Girls' Scores
 Alexandria 63, Mississinewa 27
 Carroll (Flora) 72, Eastern (Greentown) 32
 Cass 44, Wabash 29
 Charlestown 66, North Oldham, Ky. 29
 Columbia City 66, Huntington North 48

DeKalb 43, E. Noble 30
 Edgewood 44, Eastern (Greene) 36
 Elkhart 49, Penn 44
 Fairfield 38, Central Noble 36, OT
 Ft. Wayne Dwenger 59, Ft. Wayne Wayne 46
 Indiana Deaf 66, Indpls Irvington 18
 Indpls Attucks 47, Indpls Secoina 41
 Indpls Cathedral 49, Avon 43
 Indpls Shortridge 56, Indpls Ritter 40
 Kokomo 65, Taylor 34
 Merrillville 62, Hobart 34
 Mishawaka Marian 37, S. Bend
 Clay 33
 Morristown 71, Greenwood Christian 39
 N. Knox 68, Sullivan 34
 N. Vermillion 47, S. Vermillion 10
 Northeastern 61, Anderson 31
 Oldenburg 59, Purdue Polytechnic 45
 Providence 62, Rock Creek Academy 51
 S. Bend Washington 76, Ft. Wayne Northrop 51
 S. Putnam 58, Monrovia 35
 Shelbyville 60, Whiteland 51
 Silver Creek 50, Columbus North 36

Wapahani 37, Monroe Central 35
 Western 73, Northwestern 28
 Woodlan 59, Fremont 38
 Bi-County Tournament=

First Round=
 Glenn 40, Argos 37
 LaVille 41, Culver 26
 New Prairie 66, Bremen 61
 Triton 70, Oregon-Davis 32

College

Men's Basketball Scores

Wednesday, Jan. 17
EAST
 Navy 71, Lehigh 69
 Robert Morris 102, Detroit 99, 2OT
 Rutgers 87, Nebraska 82, OT
 UConn 62, Creighton 48

SOUTH
 Auburn 80, Vanderbilt 65
 Florida St. 84, Miami 75
 Kentucky 90, Mississippi St. 77
 LSU 89, Mississippi 80
 N. Iowa 83, Belmont 72
 North Carolina 86, Louisville 70
 Virginia 65, Virginia Tech 57

MIDWEST
 Bradley 70, S. Illinois 69
 Drake 77, Illinois St. 56
 Evansville 78, Valparaiso 75
 IUPUI 85, Fort Wayne 79
 Loyola Chicago 79, UMass 78
 Murray St. 73, Ill.-Chicago 58
 Northwestern 72, Maryland 69
 Oakland 70, Youngstown St. 67
 Providence 100, DePaul 62

SOUTHWEST
 Houston 77, Texas Tech 54
 Oklahoma 77, West Virginia 63
 UCF 77, Texas 71

FAR WEST

UCLA 68, Arizona St. 66

Women's Basketball Scores

Wednesday, Jan. 17
EAST
 Georgetown 73, Providence 71
 Ohio St. 84, Maryland 76
 St. John's 60, Butler 42
 UConn 83, Seton Hall 59
 Villanova 66, Marquette 63
 West Virginia 80, Houston 39

SOUTH
 Arkansas St. 78, South Alabama 69

MIDWEST
 Ball St. 79, Cent. Michigan 47
 Bowling Green 70, Akron 59
 Buffalo 65, N. Illinois 58

Cleveland St. 72, Wright St. 61
 Dayton 71, George Washington 53
 E. Michigan 53, Miami (Ohio) 48
 Illinois 96, Rutgers 68
 Indiana 85, Minnesota 62
 Michigan St. 91, Northwestern 72
 Nebraska 62, Michigan 43
 Toledo 87, Kent St. 76
 W. Michigan 73, Ohio 55
 Wichita St. 71, Memphis 66

SOUTHWEST

Kansas St. 2, TCU 0
 Oklahoma St. 82, BYU 50
 Texas Tech 71, Iowa St. 63

FAR WEST

Boise St. 68, San Jose St. 64
 Colorado St. 81, Air Force 67

Nevada 89, Utah St. 44
 UNLV 67, San Diego St. 60

NBA

Wednesday's Games
 Minnesota 124, Detroit 117
 Boston 117, San Antonio 98
 Cleveland 135, Milwaukee 95

HOCKEY

NHL

Wednesday's Games
 Detroit 3, Florida 2, OT

Browns coach Kevin Stefanski shakes coordinator Alex Van Pelt, 2 other assistants gone

By TOM WITHERS

AP Sports Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — For the second straight year, Browns coach Kevin Stefanski has made a major offseason change to his staff.

Offensive coordinator Alex Van Pelt has parted ways with the team, leaving just days after Cleveland was blown out in the wild-card round by Houston and following a season in which the Browns were ravaged by injuries.

A team spokesman confirmed Wednesday that Van Pelt is no longer with the Browns. Also, Stefanski fired running backs coach Stump Mitchell and tight ends coach T.C. McCartney was not retained after his contract expired.

The shakeup might not be over as the Browns continue to hold staff evaluations.

They've quickly moved on from Mitchell and are interviewing Duce Staley to be his replacement. The 48-year-old Staley was most recently an assistant head coach and running backs coach with Carolina before being fired.

Following a 7-10 season in 2022, Stefanski fired defensive coordinator Joe Woods and special teams coordinator Mike Priefer. Those moves led to the hiring of Jim Schwartz, who turned Cleveland's defense into one of the NFL's best this season, and Bubba Ventrone, who dramatically improved special teams.

Van Pelt's departure is a surprise. It was immediately known if he was fired or resigned.

He and Stefanski appeared to have a strong relationship, and just last week Van Pelt praised his boss for the job he did during a challenging season.

"He's awesome," Van Pelt said of Stefanski, who has led the Browns to the playoffs twice in four seasons. "I've enjoyed every second with him. He's coached a lot of football, different schemes. His ability to change on a dime based on who this player, his starter is at quarterback I thought has been

really remarkable.

"But the message, the culture he's built here over the last four years, I'm really proud to be on his staff."

However, while Van Pelt helped in putting game plans together, Stefanski handled all play-calling duties on game day. Van Pelt may have wanted an increased role and wasn't going to get it with the Browns.

It's also possible Stefanski is looking for someone to help him better suit Cleveland's offense to quarterback Deshaun Watson, who made just six starts before suffering a season-ending shoulder injury and undergoing surgery.

All three assistants had been with Stefanski since he was hired in 2020.

The Browns went 11-6 and made the playoffs this season despite a wave of injuries and having to start five quarterbacks. However, they were abruptly bounced from the playoffs on Saturday, losing 45-14 to the Houston Texans.

Stefanski said Sunday that some of his assistants would be leaving for other opportunities in the coming weeks.

Mitchell, a former NFL running back, just completed his fourth season with the Browns. He spent much of the season trying to help the team cope with the loss of star Nick Chubb, who suffered a season-ending knee injury in Week 2.

Mitchell has coached in the league for more than two decades.

McCartney helped develop David Njoku into one of the league's best tight ends. Njoku finished with career highs in catches (81), yards (882) and touchdowns (6) this season.

Cleveland's offense was in constant flux from the opener.

The Browns lost Watson to a shoulder injury in November, and the team signed free agent Joe Flacco, who went 4-1 as a starter and surpassed expectations before he threw two pick-6s against the Texans. Cleveland also played much of the season with backups at both starting tackle spots.

Amazon invests in Diamond

(Continued from Page 6)

Padres lapse and was unable to agree to an amended deal with the Diamondbacks.

Under the terms of the restructuring agreement, Amazon will make a minority investment in Diamond — expected to be initially \$115 million — and enter into a commercial arrangement to provide access to Diamond's content via Prime Video.

Customers will be able to access their local team's content on Prime Video channels where Diamond has rights. Pricing and availability will be announced at a later date, but it is unlikely that this content would be available as benefit included for current Prime subscribers. Regional sports content will also remain available on cable and satellite providers.

Amazon Prime already carries some New York Yankees and Brooklyn Nets games produced by the YES Network.

Due to the complexity of this bankruptcy case, though, it could take a while before games become available on Prime Video.

Diamond also has an agreement in principle with Sinclair Broadcast Group to settle pending litigation between the companies.

Sinclair bought the regional sports networks from The Walt Disney Co. for nearly \$10 billion in 2019. Disney was required by the Department of Justice to sell the networks for its acquisition of 21st Century Fox's film and television assets to be approved.

Even before Sinclair bought the regional networks, the business was in a downturn due to cord-cutting and declines in advertising revenue after entering into exorbitant long-term deals with some teams.

Under an agreement with creditors last year, Diamond Sports Group became a separate company from Sinclair.

As part of the settlement, Sinclair will pay Diamond \$495 million and provide ongoing services to support Diamond's reorganization. The proceeds from the settlement also will pay off some creditors.

"We are thrilled to have reached a comprehensive restructuring agreement that provides a detailed framework for a reorganization plan and substantial new financing that will enable Diamond to operate and thrive beyond 2024," Diamond Sports CEO David Preschlack said in a statement. "We are grateful for the support from Amazon and a group of our largest creditors who clearly believe in the value-creating potential of this business. Diamond's near-term focus will be on implementing the RSA and emerging from bankruptcy as a going concern for the benefit of our investors, our employees, our team, league and distribution partners, and the millions of fans who will continue to enjoy our broadcasts."

Diamond recently reached agreements with the NHL and NBA to keep local rights through the end of this season.

It remains in discussions with MLB on reworked agreements. Diamond has not reached amended terms with the defending World Series champion Texas Rangers and Cleveland Guardians, while its contract with the Minnesota Twins expired at the end of last season.

Amazon, though, has acquired direct-to-consumer rights for the Detroit Tigers, Kansas City Royals, Miami Marlins, Milwaukee Brewers and Tampa Bay Rays.

Siakam traded to Pacers

(Continued from Page 6)

the season.

It took Indiana a sizable amount of draft capital — three first-round picks — to get the deal done, but the Pacers also managed to hang on to their four leading scorers this season and add another star to the mix.

"We're incredibly excited to welcome Pascal to Indiana," Pacers President Kevin Pritchard said. "As a two-time All-NBA selection and two-time NBA All Star, Pascal is a player that our organization has long admired and respected. We feel that his unique offensive skillset will complement our style of play, while his defensive versatility will be a valuable asset to our team."

Siakam leaves Toronto fifth on the team's career list in games and points, plus third in rebounds and 10th in steals.

"Pascal is a champion, an integral part of winning teams and an example of what can be achieved with dedication, perseverance, hard work and tenacity," Raptors President Masai Ujiri said. "We're lucky to have seen Pascal develop into the man and player that he is today -- and we are grateful for everything he has done for our city and for our franchise."

Indiana sent a pair of players with NBA championship rings, guard Bruce Brown and forward Jordan Nwora, to Toronto. Guard Kira Lewis, who was acquired earlier Wednesday by Indiana from New Orleans in a deal that helped make the Siakam trade possible, also went to the Raptors.

"Pascal is just a pure basketball junkie," Toronto coach Darko Rajakovic said Wednesday night before his team topped the Miami Heat. "He is the first one to show up in the gym, the last one to leave. He was always coachable, always professional since Day 1. ... I can only be thankful and grateful for all of his contributions to our team this season."

New Orleans also gave up a second-round pick and got a sizable prize back for its involvement: The Pelicans are now below the luxury tax threshold.

"We wish him the best," Pelicans coach Willie Green said about Lewis. "Unfortu-

nately, it didn't work out the way we wanted it to here."

The deal is a huge move for Indiana, the NBA's highest-scoring team this season. The Pacers entered Wednesday at No. 6 in the Eastern Conference and soon will get to pair Siakam alongside Haliburton, who has been out with a hamstring issue but could return as early as Thursday. He's listed as questionable for Indiana's game at Sacramento.

Siakam, 29, is in the final year of his contract, which pays him nearly \$38 million this season, and becomes eligible this summer to sign a five-year deal that could be worth as much as \$247 million. The Pacers are expected to at least consider giving Siakam such a deal.

Siakam was averaging 22.2 points this season, and he has averaged 17.4 points and 6.5 rebounds in his career. He was an All-Star in 2020 and 2023 and was the last starter from Toronto's title team still with the franchise.

It is the second significant trade made by the Raptors in less than three weeks, after moving OG Anunoby, Precious Achiuwa and Malachi Flynn to New York for RJ Barrett and Immanuel Quickley in late December.

Brown will be joining his fifth different team once he arrives in Toronto, after stints with Detroit, Brooklyn, Denver and the Pacers. He was averaging a career-best 12.1 points this season, his sixth in the NBA.

Nwora averaged 5.2 points with the Pacers this season. Lewis appeared in 118 games — all in a reserve role — over parts of four seasons with the Pelicans and was averaging 2.9 points this season.

To facilitate it all and clear the spot needed to bring in Lewis in the first trade, the Pacers waived veteran forward James Johnson in what was solely a procedural move. He had appeared in five games with Indiana since getting signed in mid-December and is expected to re-join the Pacers once he clears waivers because a roster spot would then be open.

The Raptors also cleared a spot by waiving center Christian Koloko.

Irsay found unresponsive

(Continued from Page 6)

through it.

On Wednesday, the Colts issued another statement.

"Mr. Irsay continues to recover from his respiratory illness," it read. "We will have no further comment on his personal health and we continue to ask that Jim and his family's privacy be respected."

The 64-year-old Irsay received a six-game suspension and was fined \$500,000 by the NFL after pleading guilty to a misdemeanor count of operating a vehicle while intoxicated in September 2014. He was arrested six months earlier when Carmel officers spotted him driving unusually near his home. During a search of the car, police found a variety of prescription drugs and \$29,000 in cash.



Haas to field a female teenager racer from Indiana in F1 Series

By JENNA FRYER

AP Auto Racing Writer

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Haas F1 will field an American racer for the first time in team history — a woman in Formula One's Academy Series.

The Kannapolis-based team said Wednesday that 19-year-old Chloe Chambers will represent Haas while competing with Campos Racing. The native of Fort Wayne, Indiana, will be supported by Haas, the only American-owned F1 team, as the academy series format changes so that it races in companion with select F1 races this coming season.

Chambers will have a Haas-designed car and firesuit and be fully integrated with the F1 team.

"Having the backing of Haas is going to open many doors for new experiences and it's going to be a place where I can learn," Chambers said. "It's my first season in F1 Academy, so I'm looking forward to getting good results and developing as a driver. I did some testing over the winter with Campos Racing, and the team and I work very well together."

Chambers began her career in karting and won multiple regional and national championships. She competed in her first single-seater series in 2021 in the F4 United States Championship and scored her first point at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course.

Chambers competed in the 2022 W Series and the 2023 Porsche Sprint Challenge North America last season. She also participated in the 2023 Castrol Toyota Formula Regional Oceania Championship in New Zealand, where she was the first woman to win a pole and a race and was named "Most Improved Driver" by the series.

Chambers also holds the Guinness World Record for fastest vehicle slalom, set in 2020 when she was 16 and drove a Porsche 718 Spyder in 47.45 seconds.

Haas has not fielded an American driver since its 2016 debut and will field F1 cars for a second consecutive season for Kevin Magnussen, who is Danish, and Nico Hulkenberg, who is German. Her hiring was applauded by Ayao Komatsu, who last week replaced Guenther Steiner as team principal at Haas.

HIDAY AUTOMOTIVE GROUP

Let Us Help You Find Your Next Vehicle!

- Extensive Inventory
- Competitive Lease Specials
- Outstanding Finance Options
- Exceptional Customer Service

Our Next Satisfied Customer Well Be You!

HOURS: Service: Mon-Fri 7:30am - 5pm — Sales: Mon-Fri 8am - 6pm • Sat 8am - 1pm

CHEVROLET RAM CRYSLER DODGE Jeep

CHRYSLER GENERAL MOTORS
260-824-1931 260-824-0900

www.HidayMotors.com

Service with a Smile!

Barry Scott Service Manager Mark Foreman Service Consultant Marion Wells Service Consultant

Hiday Motors

1743 N. Main St., Bluffton • 824-0900

INNOVATIVE CONCEPTS

AUDIO VIDEO SECURITY NETWORKING

Be Summer Ready

The Best On The Water. Loud & Clear!

• Sound Systems for boats

Powerful Sound For OFF-Road Adventure

• RV's • Golf Carts • ATV's

(260) 724-2276

1421 Manchester St., Decatur
1/2 block west of U.S. 27 North

www.icav.us

PRECISION SERVICE

Family, Farm and Fleet Vehicle Repair
FLEET ACCOUNTS AVAILABLE
0520 S. Decker Dr.
Bluffton

"The Quality Service You Deserve!"
260-824-9149

Bluffton Tire Inc.

1308 S. Main St.
Bluffton

10% OFF

Discontinued Closeout Tires

1-260-824-0418

The Classifieds

Place Your Ad 24/7: GO TO www.news-banner.com AND CLICK ON "Classifieds"

OR CALL 824-0224 MON-FRI 8-5 • TOLLFREE 800-579-7476 • FAX 824-0700

WE ACCEPT



SEE your ad published every day in Wells County homes ...

All ads are searchable at classifieds.news-banner.com...

SUDOKU

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

King Classic Sudoku

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

Difficulty: ★★★

1/18

©2024 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

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/ 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.

Help Wanted



JOURNAL GAZETTE NEWSPAPER CARRIER Deliver newspapers Mon-Sat in Bluffton city limits. Delivery hours approx. 2-6 am Mon-Fri and 2-7 am Sat. Independent contractor - Estimated monthly pay \$1,400. Call 260-750-0524 today!

HELOISE HINT: One way to get ahead in the office is to be a good listener. Pay attention in meetings with your co-workers. Always be alert to what your supervisor is saying! Email HELOISE@Heloise.com.

FOR SALE

Miscellaneous

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

Lottery Numbers

Wednesday's Drawings HOOSIER LOTTERY
Cash 5 — 05-24-38-40-42
Lotto Plus — 04-11-27-33-37-46
Cash4Life — 28-41-49-55-57, Cash Ball: 04
Quick Draw Midday — 05-16-18-19-20-21-22-25-30-34-36-50-57-58-62-64-67-69-72-80, BE: 30
Daily Three-Midday — 00-05-06, SB: 06
Daily Three-Evening — 03-03-03, SB: 03
Daily Four-Midday — 09-05-08-08, SB: 06
Daily Four-Evening — 06-05-03-09, SB: 03
Quick Draw Evening — 05-06-10-12-15-20-27-28-31-43-45-46-50-54-56-66-69-73-78-80, BE: 28
Hoosier Lotto — 03-20-26-29-37-42
MEGA MILLIONS
Estimated jackpot (for Friday): \$236 million
POWERBALL
18-22-43-61-65 Powerball: 02; Power Play: 4X

SERVICES

Services

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

FREE HIGH SPEED internet for those that qualify. Government program for recipients of select programs incl. Medicaid, SNAP, Housing Assistance, WIC, Veterans Pension, Survivor Benefits, Lifeline, Tribal. 15 GB internet service. Bonus offer: Android tablet FREE with one-time \$20 copay. Free shipping & handling. Call Maxship Telecom today! 1-866-981-3302 (I)

LICENSED & INSURED

ANNOUNCE YOUR SERVICES in the Bluffton News-Banner. A 20-word, line classified for two months is \$97. Contact the office at (260) 824-0224, 125 N. Johnson St., or www.news-banner.com and click on classifieds.

EMPLOYMENT

Help Wanted

WELLS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE is currently seeking applicants for the position of Maintenance/Custodian. Applicants must have general knowledge of heating/cooling, plumbing, electrical with the ability to make minor repairs and/or adjustments. Additional responsibilities include building maintenance and ground keeping. 20-year matrix salary range for the position is \$43,682 - \$52,774. Years of service and experience will be honored for a starting salary up to five years in the pay matrix. Apply at www.wellscountysheriff.com under "Job Opportunities". Deadline for Pre-application submission is no later than February 5, 2024. A full job description is also listed on the website for review.



LEGAL ASSISTANT FOR ADVANCED ELDER LAW MEDICAID PLANNING

Sprunger Elder Law is growing and is seeking a Legal Assistant. Responsibilities include documentation gathering, scheduling, prep for e-signing, lead tracking, communicating with clients, and handling logistics. Experience is preferred, but not required. The ideal candidate is someone who is dedicated and driven person who excels in a team environment. They will be a focused and organized professional with strong attention to detail and a desire to deliver impeccable service for clients. sprungerandsprunger.com

January

GOODS & SERVICES DIRECTORY

YOUR LOCAL AGENTS, HERE FOR YOU.



BLUFFTON OFFICE: (260) 824-2234
1307 Baker Place • Bluffton, IN
Mike Lampton | Michael Towne | Jacob Duncan

Sure-Flo Seamless Gutters
5" & 6" Continuous Gutters
Leaf Protection Systems
Large Color Selection - FREE Estimates
260-888-5062
www.seamlessgutter.net

Public Sale Calendar

BIDDING ENDS JANUARY 21 - (Online only auction) - Various consignors, sellers. 1999 Ford F350 truck with lift bucket, antiques, display cases, advertising memorabilia, jewelry and pocket watches, Fenton and Indiana glass, mid-century modern, industrial quality fans and tools. Preview: Jan. 18 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 118 East Craig Street, Ossian, IN. **The Steffen Group Inc.**, www.steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006.

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

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

JANUARY 30 - 2 p.m.-6 p.m. ET - Online - Farm: Mann Farm. Property Location: Three miles northwest of Craigville, IN; 1/4 mile south of US 224 along 500 E in Lancaster Township, Wells County. 36.75+/- total acres, 34.5+/- tillable, 2.25+/- non-tillable, high quality farmland, Wells Co. Soil Types: Pewamo silty clay loam, Bount Del-Rey silt loam; WAP1: 140.6 bu. corn, 43.8 bu. soybeans. Additional information, drone flight, photos available at halderman.com. **Halderman Real Estate & Farm Management**, 800-424-2324, Rick Johnloz: 260-827-8181, Neal Wolhuter: 260-336-2219.

FEBRUARY 2 - 10 a.m. - Secured creditors & various consignors, owners. 815 Adams St., Decatur. Online only truck & equipment auc-

tion. 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 & much more! Accepting consignments! **Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC**, 260-724-7402, Kjauction.com.

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 Feb. 5, 3-5p.m., call for private showing. Auction managers: Jerry Ehle, 260-410-1996, Steven C. Coil, 260-446-2037. **Schrader Real Estate and Auction Company, Inc.**, schraderauction.com, 800-451-2709.

FEBRUARY 13 - 6 p.m. - Keith L. Gilbert estate. Markle Volunteer Fire Department, 150 W. Sparks St., Markle. Property: From Town of Markle, travel northeast on Marzane Road 4 miles. 67.5+/-A offered in 4 tracts or any combination, Wells County, Union Township. Tract 1: 18+/-A w/16.44+/-A tillable. Tract 2: 9.5+/-A w/7.26+/-A tillable. Tract 3: 20+/-A, mostly tillable. Tract 4: 20+/-A, mostly tillable. All tracts have road access! Online bidding available. Inspection: Feb. 3, 10 a.m.-noon. Auction manager Al Pfister, 260-760-8922. **Schrader Real Estate and Auction Company, Inc.**, 800-451-2709, schraderauction.com.

SUDOKU ANSWER

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

Public Notice

TO THE OWNERS OF THE WITHIN DESCRIBED REAL ESTATE AND ALL INTERESTED PARTIES NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

By virtue of a certified copy of a decree to me directed from the Clerk of Superior Court of Wells County, Indiana, in Cause No. 90D01-2308-MF-000017 wherein Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. was Plaintiff, and Linda S. Parker, State of Indiana were Defendants, requiring me to make the sum as provided for in said Decree with interest and cost, I will expose at public sale to the highest bidder, on the 14th day of February, 2024, at the hour of 1:00 pm or as soon thereafter as is possible, at Courthouse

102 W. Market St., 1st Fl. Bluffton, IN 46714, the fee simple of the whole body of Real Estate in Wells County, Indiana.

A part of Out Lot Number 5 in the Original Plat of the town of Ossian, Wells County, Indiana, bounded as follows: Commencing at the northeast corner of said Lot Number 5; thence west 50 feet; thence south 150 feet; thence east 50 feet; thence north 150 feet to the place of beginning. Also described as follows: Part of Out Lot Number 5 in the Original Plat of the town of Ossian, Wells County, Indiana, bounded and described as follows: Commencing at the northeast corner of said Lot Number 5; thence west 78 feet Recorded 50 feet; thence south 150 feet; thence east 78 feet Recorded 50 feet; thence north 150 feet to the place of beginning.

More commonly known as: 301 West Lavefer Street, Ossian, IN 46777

State Parcel No.: 90-02-16-519-049.000-009

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

Plaintiff Attorney
ATTORNEY NO. 15-23-01022
Codilis Law, LLC
8050 Cleveland Place
Merrillville, IN 46410
(219) 736-5579
15-23-01022

Sheriff of Wells County
JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP
301 West Lavefer Street,
Ossian, IN 46777
Street Address

SHERIFF FILE NO:
The Sheriff's Department does not warrant the accuracy of the street address published herein.

SERVICE DIRECTED TO:
Linda S. Parker
301 West Lavefer Street
Ossian, IN 46777

Type of Service
Sheriff

NOTICE

NOTE: This law firm is a debt collector.

nb 1/4, 1/11, 1/18
hspaxlp

Jerry Flack & Associates
Jerry Flack & Julie Myers
Retirement Advisors
A Senior Citizen Answers Our Phone!
OFFICE 260-824-1618 • Corner of Main & Market • Bluffton, IN

AMISH CREW
will do roofing, siding, remodeling, pole barns. Specializing in redoing old barns. Free estimates.
Call 260-438-2508

A-1 U-Stor
Safe & Secure Self Storage
824-1846
• Safety Lighting • Clean Units
• 24 Hr. Access
• Video Cameras
www.a1-ustor.com
After hours & Saturdays
Call 273-9678 or 824-4782
In Monroe at corner of U.S. 27 and S.R. 124
Office at 1180 N. Main, Bluffton

COUNTRY PLACE Apartments
408 Countryside Drive, Ossian
• 1 & 2 Bedrooms
• Laundry Facilities On-Site
• All Ground-level
• Private Entrances
• Equipped Kitchen
260 622-6429
Virtual Tours Offered
TDD: 7-1-1
OssianApartments.com

Home Remodel and Repair
Locally Owned
Repair Bowed Basement Walls
Foundations repaired
Floor joist repair or replaced
Concrete • Doors
Windows • Painting
Tile • Small Jobs Welcome
Text me at 260-301-1269
Jim Baker

We Carry Prevagen and CBD Oil!
R Warren Pharmacy
(260)375-2135
Nature's Sunshine Distributor
222 N. Wayne St., Warren • 1-800-895-7035
Terry Daniels, Pharmacist • Melinda Daniels, RN

Primary Contracting, LLC
Specializing in Building & Remodeling
OWNER: Edwin Wickey
Call for Spring Scheduling Today!
Free Estimates - 260-233-4276

- Pole Barns
- Garages
- Vinly Siding
- Metal Roofing
- Poly Decks
- Storm Damage

JC'S GARAGE DOOR SALES & SERVICE
All makes & models • broken springs & cables
Owner: James Fisher • Sales: Carl Fisher
"50 Years of Combined Experience"
Call us at 824-3262

As a resident of the Wells County community for decades, Attorney, Gerret J. Swearingen, has devoted his legal practice to assisting clients in preserving the family assets from the high cost of Nursing Home and In-Home Healthcare.

As your guide through the "Medicaid Planning" process, Swearingen Elder Law will provide the right path to both protect your life savings and receive the quality of care we all deserve.

1645 Hillcrest Dr., Suite 2A
Ossian, IN 46777

SWEARINGEN ELDER LAW

- Medicaid Planning
- Durable Power of Attorney
- Estate Planning & Deeds
- Special Needs Trusts
- Long Term Care Planning
- In-Home Healthcare Planning
- Wills, Living Wills, & Advance Healthcare Directives

(260) 888-9256
FREE INITIAL CONSULTATION!

Zap Electric, Inc.
260-824-2927
Commercial-Industrial-Residential
24 Hr. Emergency Service
Charles Miller-Electrician
1233 W. Cherry St., Bluffton FREE Estimates

STOR-N-GO STORAGE UNITS
2740 E. 200 N. • Bluffton, IN • 260.273.8345
with Security Cameras

Camelot Auto LLC
Get Cash NOW
260-307-1302
We Buy Junk Cars

For as little as ... **\$187** PER ISSUE
YOUR BUSINESS IN THE NEWS-BANNER Every Day!
Call 824-0224 or 622-4108
Feb. deadline is Tues., Jan. 23!

Norwell MS releases honor roll for second semester

Norwell Middle School has announced its honor roll and distinction for the first semester of the 2023-24 school year.

8th Grade Distinction

Kenan Abdulrahim, Ellie Bales, Tiffany Bays, Jillian Bischoff, Brooke Bowling, Fielder Brege, Emma Burnau, Edward Bushee, Robert Cahoon, Greyson Chavis, Dylan Chism, Kaitlyn Collins, Stellan Davis, Addison Dohrman, Kamdyn Ealing, Adalynn Fausz, Cash Fegley, Lillie Felton, Layla Frisch, Amore Gilbert, Kinley Heindel, Ethan Hill, Ivy Hill, Abigail Hippensteele, Lillian Holmes, Carson Jolloff, Marvin Keller, Carter Kelley, Mia Kurtz, Jacob Macy, Joshua McBride, Ada McLaughlin, Lance Meriwether, Layken Mialkowski, Evie Miser, Eric Morgan, Khloe Morgan, Macy Oatess, Mya Oatess, Addison Parsons, Hudson Petrie, Vivian Reidenbach, Kahra Rupp, Abigail Schlemmer, Gabrielle Schlemmer, Jillian Smith, Daisy Swineford, Channing Thompson, Ashley Tucker, KayLee Tucker, Adrienne Wagner, Phoenix Whitsitt, Reagan Wilson, Mallory Young and Anthony Zavacki.

Honor

Laurny Baird, Beau Bates, Corbin Behning, Kennady Bixler-Scheumann, Taven Brock, Cooper Bunn, Connor Careins, Reid Cavanaugh, Aidan Chandler, Madelyn Clark, Trinity Cole, Chloe Comer, Carter Costello, Emma Crippen, Erika Crosswhite, Gracie David, Carter DeWeese, Savannah Duff, Avery Elmore, Elias Fagin, Zeke Ford, Dessie Fritts, Brennen Fryback, Isaiah Goeglein, Wyatt Goulet, Faith Grant, Eva Grisafo, Kahlan Hollenbach, Payton Hupfer, Carly Jacobs, Abigail Johnson, Baylee Johnston, Koda Keller, Miles Kelly, Lorelei Kinsey, Emma Lenwell, Owen Lichtsinn, Brock Martin, Ava Mason, Ethan Mast, Rebecca McConn, Royce Merrill, Westin Miller, Caden Mitchell, Tripp

Mitchell, Carly Mittlestedt, Cooper Nagel, Magnolia Neuschwander, Carmen Ortiz, Amelia Penrod, Benjamin Peterson, Khaymen Peterson, MacKenzie Price, Addison Privett, Connor Rose, Illiyana Sailors, Greyson Shoemaker, Kaulen Sinclair, Hailey Singleton, Khloe Stockman, Evan Swallow, Ty Tofflemoyer, Julian Torres, Evan Uptgraft, Grady Vachon, Reese Wathen, Brady Watkins, Travis Watson, Coral Weiss, Rachel Werling, Karter West, Levi White, Amelia Zavacki and Tyler Zent.

7th Grade Distinction

Isabel Affolder, Emma Bailey, Stella Ballard, Kynnlei Beste, Jordyn Brickley, Joao Caldoro, Dalton Crow, Lily Dillion, Crete Edwards, Rylan Falk, Kendall Fegley, Kenley Fisher, Baylee Ford, Kayla Freed, Vincent Fuhrmann, Kyndal-Lynn Fuller, Camdyn Gerber, Chase Gerber, Krista Gerber, Parker Gerber, Ally Graft, Owen Grover, Jordyn Grzych, Hadie Isch, Carter Jackemeyer, Titus Jacob, Kayla Jeffrey, Cohen Karns, Claire Kelley, Wyatt Knell, Elijah Landis, Derek Lenwell, Haley

Lewis, Addison Long, Benjamin Lukins, Novalynn Malone, Brenna Meyer, Roman Meyer, Quinn Oakleaf, Clayton Parsons, Leah Randol, Easton Reinhard, Madeline Ringger, Joshua Roby, Elaina Scott, Charles Simerman, Bristol Smith, Adalyn Stine-McCave, Abigail Swineford, Avery Thornton, Maddux Thornton, Katelyn Troutt, Stella Tumbleston and Case Wireman.

Honor

Izabela Aldave, Josephina Alig, Joshua Antrim, Reid Bolyn, Morgan Boomershine, Henry Brinson, Kaylyn Buck, Maddox Bunn, Callie Burton, Benjamin Captain, Kach Cauble, Landon Clark, Caedon Confer, Miles Daugherty, Nyla Davis, Jillien Dawalt, Kora DeLaGarza, Mason Diver, Leah Ewing, Myah Frauhiger, Jayce Hollenbach, Rilynn Hoopingartner, Gracie Hulvey, Preslie Jones, Hunter Kurtz, Jason Lenwell, Madelynn Lewis, Elizabeth Mann, Angela

Public Notices

Town of Ossian, Indiana Notice of Receipt of Bids

Project: Collection System Improvements & Septic Relief ("Project").

Summary: The Town of Ossian intends to construct sanitary collection system improvements for septic relief at the northern limits of its collection system and to relocate the Mill St lift station at the eastern limits of its collection system. Along Dyar Drive, McNeal Circle, SR 1 from 250 ft south of Dyar Drive to 350 ft north of Dyar Drive, and the northern and western limits of Homestead Place subdivision, the Project shall construct 2,800 LF of 8-inch gravity sewers via open cut. Along SR 1 from 300 ft south of the Allen Mollot drain to 350 ft north of CR 1050N and along CR 1050N from 950 ft west of SR 1 to 400 ft east of SR 1, the Project shall construct 1,300 LF of 2-inch and 1,400 LF of 3-inch low pressure sewers via trenchless directional drilling. Along Mill St from Maxine Dr to 150 ft east of Lynfield Ct the project shall construct 1,000 LF of 10-inch gravity sewers via open cut, 1,000 LF of 6-inch force main, and a new lift station. The project shall include sanitary gravity and pressure laterals, grinder stations, pavement removal and replacement, erosion control, and surface restoration.

General Plans and Specifications: Complete digital project bidding documents are available at www.questcdn.com. Quest CDN will serve as the Issuing Office and maintain the plan holder list. Digital Bidding Documents may be downloaded for a non-refundable fee of \$22 by inputting Quest project number QuestCDN eBidDoc #8913311 on the website's projects search page. Please contact QuestCDN Customer Support at 952.233.1632 or info@questcdn.com for assistance in membership registration, downloading, and working with digital project information. No paper copies will be provided by the Owner.

Pre-Bid Meeting: Beginning at 10:00 a.m., on Tuesday, January 30, 2024, a pre-bid meeting will be held at the Ossian Town Hall, 507 N. Jefferson Street, Ossian, Indiana 46777. All prospective bidders are encouraged to attend.

Federal Funding: Any contracts awarded under this Notice of Receipt of Bids are expected to be funded in part by loan funds from the Indiana State Revolving Loan Fund program. Neither the United States nor any of its departments or agencies will be a party to this Notice of Receipt of Bids or any resulting contract. All Contractors shall be aware of the requirement for the American Iron and Steel provision of this Contract. Bidders on this project shall be responsible for complying with the Federal Contract Provisions contained in these specifications. The prevailing wage rates of the Department of Labor apply to this project. The Labor Standards Provisions found at 29 CFR 5.5(a) apply to this project if the prevailing wage rates of the Department of Labor apply. The Contractor (and Sub-Contractors) must comply with the minimum rates for wages for laborers and mechanics as determined by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts.

Bids: All bids must be submitted to the Town of Ossian by 12:00 noon, Thursday, February 8, 2024, to be considered for the work. Bids submitted prior to 11:45 a.m. on February 8, 2024, shall be submitted at the Ossian Town Hall, 507 N. Jefferson Street, Ossian, IN 46777. Bids submitted after 11:45 a.m. on February 8, 2024, must be delivered to the Ossian Town Council meeting location at Collier's Comfort, 215 N. Jefferson St., Ossian, IN, between 11:45 a.m. and 12:00 noon. Bidders are responsible for the timely delivery of their bids. All bids shall be in sealed envelopes bearing the Project title, "Town of Ossian Collection System Improvements & Septic Relief", and include the name and address of the bidder. All bids shall include fully completed and executed Contractor's Bid for Public Work — Form 96 and E-Verify and Iran Investment Certification. Bids shall be accompanied by a bidder's bond or certified check equal to 5% of the bid amount. Bids arriving after the time set will be returned unopened and only complete bids with all required materials will be considered.

Review and Consideration: All bids timely received shall be publicly opened and read aloud at Collier's Comfort, 215 N. Jefferson St., Ossian, IN at 12:00 noon, February 8, 2024. The Town of Ossian, Indiana, reserves the right to reject all bids, waive defects and amend the Project's scope. It is anticipated that the Ossian Town Council will take bids received under advisement and that a determination may be made by April 8, 2024.

By: Town Manager, Crystal Chapman
Town of Ossian, Indiana
nb 1/11, 1/18 hspaxlp

Mayer, Anna McBride, Hadley Meyer, Ian Mitchell, Noah Nash, Easton Pine, Kenley Reed, Jaydin Rhoads, Connley Rupp, Isaiah Thompson, Cody Waldman, Allyson Wheeler and Mason Zent.

6th Grade Distinction

Canyon Aschlman, Oakley Bryant, Mackenzie Bunn, Violet Butcher, Julia Collins, Wesley Dafforn, Herbert Davis, Kaydence Denton, Jack Dunwiddie, Lydia Felton, Cooper Figert, Paxton Frisch, Camrynn Fulton, Gabriel Gerber, Annabelle Gill, Veronica Haiflich, Austin Harnish, Weston Harris, Allison Hart, Laken Heaston, Nolan Hitzfield, Cole Jackemeyer, Annabelle Johnson, Alexis Keller, Grant Keller, Kennedy King, Harrison Koop, Kody Krinn, Piper Krum-

ma, Camryn McCartney, Aiden McInerney, Macy McNabb, Hudson Meriwether, Mercy Meyer, Ellie Miller, Paxton Miller, Grayson Miser, Emma Moon, Mason Morales, Layla Moyer, Brielle Noe, Madison Nordman, Elias Nussbaum, Brynleigh Ormsby, Paizley Price, Jace Reinhard, Hazel Richhart, Claire Ringger, Aubree Roberts, Meghan Roberts, Alec Smith-Fisher, Tyson Taylor, Graciela Torres, George Tucker, Mason Turnbough, Rylie Van't Hof, Rylan Watson, Shannon Weimer and Samuel Worthman.

Honor

Sephora Alfreus, Braydon Arnold, Melody Bailey, Tanna Bauman, Maleah Baumgartner, Madalyn Bookmiller, Alyssa Borkholder, Gage Braden, Vivian Branham, Kayah Bry-

Wells County, Indiana Total Compensation 2023

Aglar, James A, Sheriff Deputy Day, Sheriff, 102 W. Market Street, Bluffton, IN 46714, N, \$62,970.80; Ailor, Scott N, Probation Officer, Probation, \$7,470.92; Ainslie, Russell T, Ema Clerical, Emergency Management, \$17,854.76; Alford, Russell J, Highway Mechanic, HWY Maint, \$40,460.38; Andrews, Colin Z, Deputy Prosecutor, Pros Attorney, \$23,762.00; Andrews, Colin Z, Deputy Prosecutor, Pros Attorney, \$5,000.00; Andrews, Colin Z, Temp Job Desc, Pros Attorney, \$634.15; Andrews, Colin Z, Drainage Board, Pros Attorney, \$138.67; Andrews, Vicki S, County Council, Commissioners, \$7,238.00; Andrews, Vicki S, Solid Waste Board, Recycle, \$585.00; Anstett, Glen A, Highway Maintenance, HWY Maint, \$54,673.76; Arnold, Jared T, Jailer 3rd, Jail, \$6,112.39; Bailey, Grace D, Pros Legal Secretary, Pros Attorney, \$20,161.15; Bailey, Grace D, Pros Legal Secretary, Pros Attorney, \$20,166.79; Bailey, Norman L, Courthouse Security, Sheriff, \$17,978.75; Bailey, Norman L, Parttime Staff, Sheriff, \$1,505.75; Bantz, Bryce G, Jailer 3rd, Jail, \$811.60; Bates, Cindra S, Circuit Court Reporter, Circuit Court, \$49,108.80; Baughman, Nancy L, Treasurer Parttime, Treasurer, \$1,800.00; Baughman, Nancy L, Highway Part-time, Treasurer, \$1,200.00; Baughman, Nancy L, Clerical Parttime, Treasurer, \$4,128.00; Baumgartner, Victoria A, Probation Secretary, Probation, \$39,467.07; Beck, Ronald A, Highway Maintenance, HWY Maint, \$54,723.43; Bennett, Kim E, Road Foreman, HWY Maint, \$60,354.19; Bennett, Ryan R, Environmental Sanitarian, Health, \$23,024.04; Bennett, Seth M, Jailer 1st, Jail, \$11,362.61; Benson, Michael R, Courthouse Security, Sheriff, \$3,230.00; Bertsch, Carolyn C, Recorder, Recorder, \$47,493.00; Black, Riley E, Coroner Deputy, Coroner, \$5,597.50; Blevins, James L, Public Health Nurse, Health, \$53,736.23; Bonar, Shawn A, Highway Supervisor, HWY Maint, \$68,497.58; Boxell, Nathan L, Highway Mechanic, HWY Maint, \$51,708.53; Brackin, Kirsten L, Dispatcher 2nd, Jail, \$45,686.84; Bradley, Charles T, Sheriff Deputy Day, Sheriff, \$65,219.04; Brookshier, Kurtis L, Sheriff Deputy Day, Sheriff, \$73,663.12; Burnau, Lindsay J, Clerk-Bookkeeper, HWY Maint, \$37,474.58; Bushee, Linda F, Extension Secretary, County CoOp Ext Service, \$7,366.00; Cale, Vicki L, Probation Officer, Probation, \$74,146.00; Campbell, Andrew J, Sheriff Deputy 3rd, Sheriff, \$69,579.92; Campbell, Ronald W, Courthouse Security, Sheriff, \$2,826.25; Carter, Desmond P, Sheriff Deputy 2nd, Sheriff, \$63,066.73; Childers, Nicholas G, Comm Corr Tech, CC Grant, \$20,020.44; Childers, Nicholas G, Comm Corr Tech, CC Grant, \$20,895.53; Clark, Sonja R, Election Parttime, Temp Pay Location, \$480.00; Clark, Yvonne R, Clerical Parttime, Veterans Serv Officer, \$12,822.60; Collins, Diana L, Surveyor Deputy, Surveyor, \$40,942.46; Conrad, Nicholas E, Sheriff Deputy 2nd, Sheriff, \$53,257.28; Craig, Carl L, Highway Maintenance, HWY Maint, \$52,896.42; Creager, Dallas J, Jailer 2nd, Jail, \$14,605.71; Croll, David G, Deputy Prosecutor, Pros Attorney, \$115,686.06; Crickard, Marsha J, Election Parttime, Clerk, \$790.00; Cummins, Zachery L, Recycle Center Worker, Recycle, \$17,926.24; Daggert, Jarius A, Jailer 1st, Jail, \$46,988.49; Dalrymple, Laura A, Victim Assistant Coordinator, Pros Attorney, \$40,583.86; Davis, Beth J, Clerk, Clerk, \$53,779.00; Day, Laura J, Circuit Court Bailiff, Circuit Court, \$40,135.94; Del Cic, Alea N, Clerk Parttime, Clerk, \$45.00; Dockett, Andrew L, Jailer 1st, Jail, \$44,494.64; Double, Janet S, Clerk Deputy, Clerk, \$42,759.31; Double, Mark A, Custodian, Court House, \$34,832.44; Duncan, Christopher M, Highway Maintenance, HWY Maint, \$55,784.89; Duncan, Rachel L, Clerical Parttime, Recorder, \$4,522.57; Duncan, Shari A, Deputy Assessor, Assessor, \$38,024.51; Eddy, Stephanie L, Probation Officer, Probation, \$74,146.00; Eichler, Lisa M, Auditor Deputy, Auditor, \$41,665.89; Elliott, Lynn, Election Parttime, Treasurer, \$550.00; Elzey, Kimi S, Deputy Assessor, Assessor, \$39,440.91; Elzey, Richard S, County Council, Commissioners, \$7,238.00; Estrada, Morgan A, Extension Secretary, County CoOp Ext Service, \$27,757.71; Evans, Ronald E, Recycle Center Worker, Recycle, \$9,501.26; Feher, Kathy L, Clerical Parttime, Health, \$17,766.24; Fischer, Jackie L, Highway Maintenance, HWY Maint, \$51,913.95; Fishbaugh, Autumn A, Jailer 3rd, Jail, \$913.05; Fisher, Bonnie L, Election Parttime, Clerk, \$1,165.00; Fisher, Monte L, Courthouse Security, Sheriff, \$17,461.00; Fisher, Monte L, Parttime Staff, Sheriff, \$171.00; Ford, Travis G, Courthouse Security, Sheriff, \$7,210.50; Foreman, Eric T, Highway Maintenance, HWY Maint, \$53,360.70; Frank, Ann N, Recorder Deputy, Recorder, \$37,611.91; Fravel, Colton M, Jailer 1st, Jail, \$6,330.57; Garrett, Deborah L, Dispatcher 3rd, Jail, \$49,432.40; Gaskill, Hilarie N, Coroner, Coroner, \$16,456.00; Gentis, Rhonda K, Clerk Deputy, Clerk, \$42,767.74;

ant, Joshua Buirley, Ada Campbell, Madelyn Chubb, Keegan Corey, Carter Culbreath, Addison Dalrymple, Jackson Decker, Cayden Doak, Adeigh Ervin, Clark Evans, Kountry Ferguson, Leila Fitzmaurice, Blake Fuess, Aria Geng, Reece Goeglein, Bailee Grogg, Jaydon Heindel, Della Hensley, Emma Holte, Rylan Ingram, Lyric Johnston, Anistyn Jolloff, Braylon Leeth, Brody Lengerich, Travis Lenwell, Ames Michael, Sydney Nordman, Taylor Nunn, Brooklyn Quintanilla, Garrett Reed, Marin Reinhard, Desiraee Ruch, David Runkel, Landen Sallee, Claire Sands, Brynlee Sliger, Landon Sonnigsen, Wesley Springer, Rio Stahl, Keigan Thompson, Mason Vandal, Chloe Whitaker, Blake Whitmer, Easton Wilson and Jaxon Yager.

\$31,200.00; Petro, Robert J, Coroner Deputy, Coroner, \$525.00; Pettibone, Joe B, Community Correction Officer, CC Grant, \$15,676.83; Pettibone, Joe B, Community Correction Officer, CC Grant, \$33,628.26; Plummer, Jennifer J, Election Parttime, Clerk, \$945.00; Poeppel, Justin A, Jailer 1st, Jail, \$2,272.51; Poindexter, Blake T, Community Correction Director, CC Grant, \$42,122.17; Poling, Kevin L, Recycle Center Supervisor, Recycle, \$37,203.45; Poppewell, Rodger, Courthouse Security, Sheriff, \$11,822.00; Price, Deana S, Clerk Deputy, Clerk, \$42,221.27; Pugh, Caleb C, Jailer 2nd, Jail, \$45,137.32; Randall, Dewey D, Veterans Officer, Veterans Serv Officer, \$22,176.28; Reimschisel, Todd R, Sheriff Merit Board, Sheriff, \$650.00; Richards, Timothy A, Jailer 3rd, Jail, \$8,440.76; Richardson, Roger D, IT Supervisor, IT, \$59,218.89; Rigney, David L, Courthouse Security, Sheriff, \$2,717.00; Roberts, Laura L, Assessor, Assessor, \$49,606.00; Rolston, Kylie L, Clerical Parttime, Health, \$4,705.25; Ross, Tricia A, Health Officer, Health, \$22,347.04; Rumschlag, Nathaniel S, Highway Engineer, HWY Maint, \$105,787.98; Runyon, Valerie N, Probation Officer, Probation, \$54,588.00; Saucedo, Keaton T, Jailer 3rd, Jail, \$36,464.45; Sell, Larry J, Election Parttime, Clerk, \$1,500.00; Shaffer, Benjamin J, Highway Maintenance, HWY Maint, \$48,063.70; Shaw, Sarah C, Chief Staff Asst, Pros Attorney, \$41,544.83; Simpson, Sandra J, Superior Court Bailiff, Superior Court, \$40,993.48; Sipe, Timothy R, Deputy Prosecutor, Pros Attorney, \$90,397.74; Smith, Joshua L, Courthouse Security, Sheriff, \$688.75; Smith, Karissa J, Jailer 2nd, Jail, \$43,667.99; Smith, Melissa A, Staff Assistant lvd, Pros Attorney, \$20,894.08; Smith, Melissa A, Staff Assistant lvd, Pros Attorney, \$20,894.64; Smith, Samuel W, Jailer 1st, Jail, \$43,447.98; Snider, Debra S, Community Correction Secretary, CC Grant, \$10,868.00; Snider, Debra S, Community Correction Secretary, CC Grant, \$27,077.93; Spear, David L, Sheriff Merit Board, Sheriff, \$650.00; Springer, Austin L, Sheriff Deputy 2nd, Sheriff, \$60,342.66; Steele, James G, Probation PT Field Officer, Probation, \$1,763.21; Steele, James G, Parttime Staff, CC Grant, \$8,725.30; Steele, Randy D, Sheriff Chief Deputy, Sheriff, \$76,551.00; Stineburg, Jeffrey A, Parttime Legal, Pros Attorney, \$5,000.00; Stout, Kati J, Pros Legal Secretary, Pros Attorney, \$38,848.19; Stringer, Jeffery D, Commissioner, Commissioners, \$25,082.00; Stringer, Jeffery D, Drainage Board, Commissioners, \$1,365.00; Stronczek, Jan M, Probation Secretary, Probation, \$41,104.33; Studebaker, Bobbette K, Head Custodian, Court House, \$42,096.54; Studebaker, Bobbette K, Election Parttime, Clerk, \$170.00; Sutton, Mikel L, Highway Maintenance, HWY Maint, \$50,578.23; Swindell, Farrell D, Sheriff Deputy Day, Sheriff, \$61,877.00; Teeple, David P, IT Assistant, IT, \$55,341.55; Terrell, Michael D, Jail Parttime, Jail, \$8,492.16; Thacker, Randall L, Recycle Center Worker, Recycle, \$13,133.40; Thomas, Clifford, Coroner Deputy, Coroner, \$750.00; Thompson, Karen L, Jail Commander, Jail, \$68,200.00; Toland, Alyssa K, Extension Parttime, County CoOp Ext Service, \$4,606.25; Tucker, Stephanie A, Courthouse Security, Sheriff, \$3,315.50; Tucker, Stephanie A, Solid Waste Board, Recycle, \$520.00; Turmal, Scott A, Community Correction Officer, CC Grant, \$15,375.00; Turmal, Scott A, Community Correction Officer, CC Grant, \$43,081.04; Ulmer, Tracey M, Area Plan Secretary, Plan Commission, \$15,615.00; Vanover, Michael K, Commissioner, Commissioners, \$24,822.00; Vanover, Michael K, Drainage Board, Commissioners, \$1,235.00; Velasquez, Richard A, Ema Director, Emergency Management, \$39,896.18; Viber, Ceonda S, Jailer 1st, Jail, \$12,985.84; Wall, Sahara L, Parttime Staff, Health, \$5,137.50; Werich, Gregory E, Chief Probation Officer, Probation, \$86,890.00; Whicker, Robert S, County Council, Commissioners, \$7,238.00; Williams, Christina J, GED Educator, CC Grant, \$19,277.95; Wix, Stephanie L, Jailer 3rd, Jail, \$8,724.82; Yake, Nan E, Election Parttime, Clerk, \$295.00; Zaklikiewicz, Maciej B, Sheriff Deputy 3rd, Sheriff, \$59,598.46; Zent, William D, Custodian Parttime, Court House, \$13,008.20; Zimmer, Evan J, Jailer 3rd, Jail, \$42,865.58; Zirkle, Melissa R, Jail Parttime, Jail, \$21,386.69; Zoda, Dane T, Coroner Deputy, Coroner, \$675.00; Zuercher, Charlotte R, Pros Legal Secretary, Pros Attorney, \$40,799.64; Zuercher, Isabelle K, Deputy Assessor, Assessor, \$37,551.72.

I, Lisa McCormick, hereby certify that the names, addresses, duties and compensation of employees as listed herein are correct and complete and that it includes all employees of the aforesaid office, department, board, bureau, commission or institution, who were employees during the year 2023.

oj, nb 1/18 hspaxlp