

The News - Banner

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MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2024

BLUFFTON, INDIANA • Wells County's Hometown Connection

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Chilly Chili Trail Run

Runners set off for two separate races, five miles and three miles, around Ouabache State Park on Saturday. Pictured at right is Tina Grady (left), New Haven, and Roxanne Kingsbury, Fort Wayne. (Photos by Jonathan Snyder)

Judge approves bond reduction for drug charges

By SYDNEY KENT

A motion to reduce bond was approved for a woman who reportedly sold methamphetamine and hydrocodone pills to a confidential informant last December.

Abercrombie told the court she had not held a job since 2021, and had not had a legal ID for over two years.

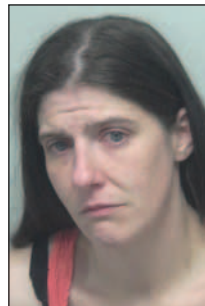
Prosecutor Jeffrey Stineburg argued that the bond was set at the standard amount for a reason.

Stineburg also pointed out that Abercrombie is not originally from Wells County, has not had a job in several years, and has minimal ties to the state of Indiana. He noted that Abercrombie has a prior conviction for neglect of a dependent in South Carolina. A risk assessment also rated her as a high risk to reoffend.

According to a probable cause affidavit, Abercrombie reportedly sold 10 hydrocodone pills, as well as approximately 3.3 grams of methamphetamine to a confidential informant in Wells County on Dec. 1. Abercrombie entered a preliminary plea of not guilty during her initial hearing in December.

Abercrombie is scheduled for a pretrial conference at 1 p.m. on Feb. 21 in the Wells Circuit Court.

sydney@news-banner.com



Cassie Abercrombie

Cassie Abercrombie, 34, Bluffton, appeared in the Wells Circuit Court last Wednesday for a pretrial conference and to address her request to lower her bond. Senior Judge Max C. Ludy, Jr., denied the request to release Abercrombie without bond. However, Ludy lowered the bail amount to \$10,000.

Abercrombie's defense, Patrick Miller, requested she be released on her own recognizance so long as she promised to return for all scheduled hearings. He also said Abercrombie had no criminal history in the state.

Powell: Reserve on track to cut rates this year

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER, AP Economics Writer
WASHINGTON (AP) — Chair Jerome Powell said in an interview broadcast Sunday night that the Federal Reserve remains on track to cut interest rates three times this year, a move that's expected to begin as early as May.

Powell, in an interview recorded Thursday for the CBS news program "60 Minutes," also said the nation's job market and economy are strong, with no sign of a recession on the horizon.

"I do think the economy is in a good place," he said, "and there's every reason to think it can get better."

Powell's comments largely echoed remarks he gave at a news conference Wednesday, after the Fed decided to keep its key interest rate steady at about 5.4 percent, a 22-year high. To fight inflation, the Fed raised its benchmark rate 11 times beginning in March 2022, causing loans for consumers

(Continued on Page 2)

Bill released that pairs border policies with aid for Ukraine, Israel

By STEPHEN GROVES, MARY CLARE JALONICK and LISA MASCARO
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senators on Sunday released a highly anticipated \$118 billion package that pairs border enforcement policy with wartime aid for Ukraine, Israel and other U.S. allies, setting off a long-shot effort to push the bill through heavy skepticism from Republicans, including House Speaker Mike Johnson.

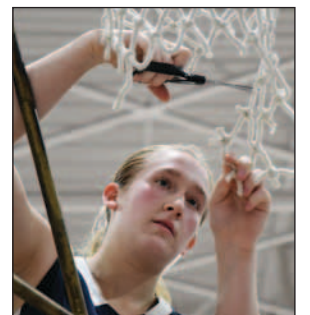
The proposal could be the best chance for President Joe Biden to resupply Ukraine with wartime aid — a major foreign policy goal that is shared with both the Senate's top Democrat, Sen. Chuck Schumer, and top Republican, Sen. Mitch McConnell. The Senate was expected this week to hold a key test vote on the legislation, but it faces a wall of opposition from conservatives.

(Continued on Page 2)



On to Regional

At left, the Norwell girls' basketball team is mobbed on the floor by fans after beating Belmont in the sectional final Saturday at Maconaquah. Below, Makenzie Fues cuts her piece of the net while the team poses at bottom with the trophy and game ball. The Knights face Benton Central in the regional Saturday. Story and photos on Page 6. (Photo by Glen Werling)



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Outside



The fog returns, cloudy and breezy today

Today	Tuesday	Wed.
High 41	High 44	High 50
Low 26	Low 27	Low 37

More Weather on Page 2

Online

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Vol. 95 No. 80

MONDAY
February 5, 2024

Your MONEY
Your TAXES



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Federal Reserve on track

(Continued from Page 1)
and businesses to become much more expensive.
The Fed chair also reiterated that the central bank's next meeting in March was likely too soon for a rate cut. Most economists think the first cut is likely to come in May or June.
With inflation steadily cooling, nearly all the 19 members of the Fed's policy-setting committee have agreed that cuts in the central bank's key rate will be appropriate this year, Powell said in the "60 Minutes" interview. A reduction in that rate would help lower the cost of mortgages, auto loans, credit cards and other consumer and business borrowing.
In December, Fed officials indicated that they envisioned three rate cuts in 2024, reducing their benchmark rate to about 4.6 percent by year's end. Powell told "60 Minutes" that that forecast likely still reflected policymakers' views.
As gauged by the Fed's preferred measure, inflation fell to just 2.6 percent in December compared with 12 months earlier. And in the second half of 2023, inflation was measured at an annual pace of just 2 percent, matching the Fed's target level, down drastically from a peak of 7.1 percent in the sum-

mer of 2022.
Powell attributed the inflation surge of 2021-2022 to the disruptions of the pandemic, including a shift in spending away from services, like restaurant meals, to goods, like home office furniture and exercise bikes. At the same time, COVID closed down or slowed factories across the globe, severely disrupting supply chains and causing widespread shortages of goods and components. Both trends, Powell said, accelerated inflation.
At the same time, Powell acknowledged in the interview, the Fed misjudged the duration of the resulting inflation, which it repeatedly suggested would prove short-lived. As he has before, Powell said the central bank moved too slowly to raise its key rate, which can help slow borrowing and spending. Inflation began spiking in mid-2021 yet the Fed didn't start raising rates until March 2022.
"So in hindsight, it would've been better to have tightened policy earlier," Powell said, referring to rate hikes. "I'm happy to say that. ... We thought that the economy was so dynamic that it would fix itself fairly quickly. And we thought that inflation would go away fairly quickly without an inter-

vention by us."
At his news conference Wednesday, Powell signaled that the Fed was likely to cut rates this year but underscored that central bank officials wanted to see further evidence that inflation is in check.
"It's not that we're looking for better data — it's just that we're looking for a continuation of the good data that we've been getting," he said. "We just need to see more."
Also Wednesday, Powell repeatedly acknowledged the strength of the U.S. economy and noted that inflation had slowed without the sharp rise in unemployment and weak growth that many economists had said would be necessary to cool consumer demand and slow price increases.
"We've got six months of good inflation data and an expectation that there's more to come," Powell said Wednesday. "So this is a good situation. Let's be honest. This is a good economy."
Other Fed officials have expressed caution about the prospect of rate cuts, particularly after a government report Friday showed that job growth soared unexpectedly in December, a sign that businesses remain confident enough in the economy to add many workers.

Aid package released

(Continued from Page 1)
With Congress stalled on approving \$60 billion in Ukraine aid, the U.S. has halted shipments of ammunition and missiles to Kyiv, leaving Ukrainian soldiers outgunned as they try to beat back Russia's invasion.
Senators have been working for months on the carefully negotiated compromise intended to overcome opposition from conservatives who have tired of funding Ukraine's fight. But the coming days will be a crucial test of whether congressional leaders can once again muscle their members to support the package designed to assert American strength — and commitment — around the world. They will also be balancing one of the most fraught issues in American politics — border and immigration legislation.
Biden said in a statement that the Senate proposal "allows the United States to continue our vital work, together with partners all around the world, to stand up for Ukraine's freedom and support its ability to defend itself against Russia's aggression."

McCormack said in a statement that the Senate must be "prepared to act."
"America's sovereignty is being tested here at home, and our credibility is being tested by emboldened adversaries around the world," McCormack said. "The challenges we face will not resolve themselves, nor will our adversaries wait for America to muster the resolve to meet them."
In a bid to overcome opposition from House Republicans, McCormack had insisted last year that border policy changes be included in the national security funding package. However, in an election-year shift on immigration, Biden and many Democrats have embraced the idea of strict border enforcement, while Donald Trump and his allies have criticized the proposed measures as insufficient.
Rep. Elise Stefanik of New York, the third-ranked House Republican and a close ally of Trump, quickly decried the bill as "an absolute non-starter" that would incentivize illegal immigration.
Republicans have also been reluctant to give Biden a political win on an issue they see as one of his biggest vulnerabilities. They have argued that presidents already have enough authority to curb illegal border crossings — a stance that would ensure immigration remains a major issue in the presidential election. But at the same time, House Republicans have also pushed for their own, stricter version of border security legislation.
Johnson, a Republican of Louisiana, told NBC's "Meet the Press" on Sunday morning that he was unaware of the bill's details, but thought the solution to border problems should be a House proposal of hardline immigration measures.
That bill, which passed the House last year without a single Democratic vote, currently has no chance of gaining the Democratic support it would need in the Senate. GOP senators also attempted to add it on to other legislation last year, but that effort only gained 46 votes.
"What we're saying is you have to stem the flow," Johnson said. He also made it clear that he — not Trump — would decide whether to bring the bill to the floor if it passes the Senate.
But in a further sign that Johnson is resistant to the Senate package, he indicated Saturday that the House will vote

on a separate package of \$17.6 billion of military aid for Israel — a move that allows House Republicans to show support for Israel apart from the Senate deal.
It is still unclear if the bill will pass in the Senate. Senate Republicans have been divided on the bill, with several in McCormack's ranks arguing that it isn't strong enough. Some quickly said they would vote against it.
"I will not support this deal," said Sen. Marsha Blackburn, R-Tenn, after the legislation was released.
The proposal is aimed at gaining control of an asylum system that has been overwhelmed by historic numbers of migrants coming to the border.
Migrants who seek asylum, which provides protection for people facing persecution in their home countries, would face a tougher and faster process to having their claim evaluated. The standard in initial interviews would be raised, and many would receive those interviews within days of arriving at the border. Final decisions on their asylum claims would happen within months, rather than the often years-long wait that happens now. They would also be given work permits if they pass the initial screenings.
Sen. Kyrsten Sinema, an Arizona independent who negotiated the border proposal, told CBS' "Face the Nation" that the legislation would be "the strongest solution to our border crisis in my lifetime."
If the number of illegal border crossings reaches above 5,000 daily for a five-day average, an expulsion authority would automatically kick in so that migrants who cross illegally are expelled without an opportunity to make an asylum claim. If the number reaches 4,000, presidential administrations would have the option of using the new authority. Under the proposal, migrants could still apply at ports of entry.
Biden, referencing the authority, has said he would use it to "shut down the border" as soon as the bill is signed into law.
The bill would allot \$20 billion to immigration enforcement, including the hiring of thousands of new officers to evaluate asylum claims and hundreds of Border Patrol agents, as well as funding local governments that have seen influxes of migrants.

And on the border, Biden said that the immigration system has been broken for too long, and it's time to fix it. "It will make our country safer, make our border more secure, treat people fairly and humanely while preserving legal immigration, consistent with our values as a nation," Biden said.
The proposal would overhaul the asylum system at the border with faster and tougher enforcement, as well as give presidents new powers to immediately expel migrants if authorities become overwhelmed with the number of people applying for asylum. The new bill would also invest in U.S. defense manufacturing, send \$14 billion in military aid to Israel, steer nearly \$5 billion to allies in the Asia-Pacific, and provide humanitarian assistance to civilians caught in conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza.
In a call with reporters after releasing the legislation, Schumer said he has never worked so closely with McCormack. He called the bill a "monumental step" toward strengthening national security at home and abroad.
Without the Ukraine aid, Schumer said, he believes Russian President Vladimir Putin "could be rolling over Ukraine and even into Eastern Europe."

are go for one of the most dramatic weather days in recent memory."
On Sunday, customers called the Santa Barbara Home Improvement Center inquiring about sandbags, flashlights and generators, said assistant manager Lupita Vital. Sandbags sold out on Saturday, so people were buying bags of potting soil and fertilizer instead, she said.
"People are trying to get anything they can get that's heavy to use it as, you know, protection for their doors and everything," Vital said Sunday.
"This storm is predicted to be one of the largest and most significant in our county's history, and our goal is to get through it without any fatalities or any serious injuries," Santa Barbara County Sheriff Bill Brown told reporters Saturday. Classes were canceled

Monday for schools across the county, which was devastated by mudslides caused by powerful storms in 2018.
Strong winds and heavy rain brought treacherous conditions to the coastal city of Ventura, west of Los Angeles, said Alexis Herrera, who was trying to bail out his sedan which was filled with floodwater. "All the freeways are flooded around here," Herrera said in Spanish. "I don't know how I'm going to move my car."
Nearly 846,000 customers were without electricity statewide by Sunday evening, with most of the outages concentrated in coastal regions, according to power-outage.us.
Six San Francisco Bay Area counties were at low risk of waterspouts coming ashore and becoming tornadoes, said the Storm Prediction Center. The last time the center forecasted a tornado

Second atmospheric river in days blows into California, knocking out power, flooding roads

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The second of back-to-back atmospheric rivers battered California on Sunday, flooding roadways and knocking out power to more than 845,000 people and prompting a rare warning for hurricane-force winds as the state braced for what could be days of heavy rains.
The storm inundated streets and brought down trees and electrical lines across the San Francisco Bay Area, where winds topped 60 mph in some areas. Gusts exceeding 80 mph were recorded in the mountains.
Just to the south in San Jose, emergency crews pulled occupants out of the windows of a car stranded by floodwaters and rescued people from a homeless encampment alongside a rising river.
In Southern California, officials warned of potentially devastating flooding and ordered evacuations for canyons that burned in recent wildfires that are at high risk for mud and debris flows. The National Weather Service office for Los Angeles warned that "all systems

risk in the region was in February 2015, according to the San Francisco Chronicle.

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Weather

Monday, February 5, 2024
(24-hour observations at 9:24 p.m. Sunday)
High: 42; **Low:** 28; **Precipitation:** None
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 2.68 feet at 8:45 p.m. Sunday

Wells County forecast

Today: Patchy fog before 11 a.m. Otherwise, partly sunny, with a high near 41. Northeast wind around 10 mph.
Tonight: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 26. Northeast wind 5 to 10 mph.
Tuesday: Partly sunny, with a high near 44. Northeast wind around 5 mph.
Tuesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 27. East wind around 5 mph.
Wednesday: Partly sunny, with a high near 50.
Wednesday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 37.
Thursday: Partly sunny, with a high near 57.
Thursday Night: A 50 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 48. Breezy.
Friday: A 50 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 57. Breezy.
Friday Night: A 40 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 42.
Saturday: A 20 percent chance of showers. Mostly sunny, with a high near 50.
Saturday Night: A slight chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 34.
Sunday: A chance of showers. Partly sunny, with a high near 46.

U.S., Britain strike 36 Houthi sites in new wave

By **LOLITA C. BALDOR** and **TARA COPP**
Associated Press
WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States and Britain struck 36 Houthi targets in Yemen on Saturday in a second wave of assaults meant to further disable Iran-backed groups that have relentlessly attacked American and international interests in the wake of the Israel-Hamas war. But Washington once more did not directly target Iran as it tries to find a balance between a forceful response and intensifying the conflict.
U.S. Central Command said its forces conducted an additional strike on Sunday "in self-defense against a Houthi anti-ship cruise missile prepared to launch against ships in the Red Sea," according to a post on X, formerly Twitter.
"U.S. forces identified the cruise missile in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen and determined it presented an imminent threat to U.S. Navy ships and merchant vessels in the region. This action will protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure for U.S. Navy vessels and merchant vessels," the post added.
The strikes on Saturday against the Houthis were launched by U.S. warships and American and British fighter jets. The strikes followed an air assault in Iraq and Syria on Friday that targeted other Iranian-backed militias and the Iranian Revolutionary Guard in retaliation for the drone strike that killed three U.S. troops in Jordan last weekend.
The Houthi targets on Saturday were in 13 different locations and were struck by U.S. F/A-18 fighter jets from the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower aircraft carrier, by British Typhoon

FGR4 fighter aircraft and by the Navy destroyers USS Gravely and the USS Carney firing Tomahawk missiles from the Red Sea, according to U.S. officials and the U.K. Defense Ministry. The U.S. officials were not authorized to publicly discuss the military operation and spoke on condition of anonymity.
The U.S. warned its response after the soldiers' deaths at the Tower 22 base in Jordan last Sunday would not be limited to one night, one target or one group. While there has been no suggestion the Houthis were directly responsible, they have been one of the prime U.S. adversaries since Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7, killing more than 1,200 people and taking about 250 hostages. The Health Ministry in Hamas-ruled Gaza said that more than 26,000 people have been killed and more than 64,400 wounded in the Israeli military operation since the war began.

Daily Lunch Special

American Legion Post 111

Open to Public

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Tenderloin Basket
Wednesday
Chicken Wings
Thursday
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Friday
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Will publish Feb. 14 News-Banner!

OBITUARIES

Mary Katherine Moss, 99

Mary Katherine Moss, 99 of Warren, passed away Saturday, Feb. 3, 2024, at 12:04 a.m. at Heritage Pointe in Warren.



She was born Feb. 27, 1924, in Jefferson Township, Huntington County, Indiana, to Ora and Olive (Shultz) Mossburg. She graduated from Warren High School, and married Harlan G. Moss on Aug. 29, 1942, in Huntington County.

Mary Katherine worked at Huntington Hospital for 20 years and was a den mother of the Cub Scouts when her boys were young. She enjoyed IU and Pacers Basketball and living her life on the farm. She attended Salomonie Church of the Brethren. She moved to Heritage Pointe five years ago where she enjoyed arts and crafts, ceramics, bingo, and fellowship with other residents.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband; grandchild, Michelle Lynn Moss; one great-grandchild; daughter-in-law Dianne Moss; and brothers, Robert Mossburg, and Paul Shultz.

Loving survivors include her children, David Moss of Bluffton, Steven Moss of Muncie, and Daughter-in-law Cheryl Moss; four grandchildren, Kristine (Bobby) Pierce, Eric (Libby) Moss, Teresa (Shane) Prouty, and Kim Lippe; ten great-grandchildren; and eight great-great-grandchildren.

Friends and family may gather to share and remember Wednesday, Feb. 7, 2024, at Heritage Pointe, Applegate Chapel, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. and again on Thursday, Feb. 8, 2024, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. A funeral service will begin on Thursday at 1 p.m. with Chaplain Gerald Moreland officiating. Burial will follow at Lancaster Cemetery with Pastor Mel Zumbrun officiating.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Glancy-H. Brown & Son Funeral Home in Warren, Indiana.

Wells Court Docket

Wells Superior Court Criminal Cases

Casey Esther Morlan, 28, Bluffton, was sentenced to two days in the Wells County Jail with two days of jail credit. The sentence was issued Tuesday immediately after Morlan pled guilty to one count of possession of marijuana, a Class B misdemeanor. One count for possession of paraphernalia, Class B misdemeanor, was dismissed. Morlan is also required to pay court costs and filing fees in the amount of \$389.

Zachary Lewis Molnar, 31, Yoder, was sentenced to 60 days in the Wells county Jail with all but two days sus-

pending. The sentence was issued Thursday after Molnar pled guilty to one count of operating a vehicle while intoxicated, a Class C misdemeanor. Pursuant to the plea agreement, charges for invasion of privacy — violates an order, a Class A misdemeanor, possession of marijuana, a Class B misdemeanor, operating a vehicle with a false plate and improper display of license plate, both Class C misdemeanors, were all dismissed. Molnar is also ordered to serve 363 days on probation and pay court costs and filing fees in the amount of \$389.50.

Wista Annette Fornwalt, 49, Bluff-

ton, appeared in the Wells Superior Court for a hearing to amend her suspended sentence. Fornwalt was ordered to serve 540 days of her suspended sentence in the Indiana Department of Correction after she admitted to violating the terms of her probation. In January of 2022, Fornwalt was sentenced to 730 days in prison with all but 10 days suspended under one count of residential entry, a Level 6 felony. She was also sentenced to 360 days in the Wells County Jail with all but 10 days suspended for one count of invasion of privacy, a Class A misdemeanor. Fornwalt is also ordered to pay court costs and filing fees in the amount of \$765.



Singing Knights

Norwell's show choirs competed this past weekend at the Edgewood Contest of Champions in Ellettsville. Knight Stars placed 2nd runner up in the single-gender division with Senior V Riley being named the Outstanding Performer as well as earning the Best Crew award. Knight Moves placed 1st in the Small Mixed division while also earning Best Choreography. Senior Emily Edmiston was named Knight Moves' Outstanding Performer as well as best Female Soloist in a Show and Grand Champion of the Solo Competition. Both groups continue their season next week at Carroll High School on Saturday along with the Norwell Middle School group Knight Sounds competing at Carroll on Friday night. (Photo provided)

Holcomb joins other GOP governors in Texas to push for border security

By **LESLIE BONILLA MUÑIZ**
Indiana Capital Chronicle

Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb stood alongside Texas' border with Mexico on Sunday with a dozen other governors as Lone Star State Gov. Greg Abbott promised to expand his border strategy.

"Texas will ... expand the area where we are using that self-defense to make sure we are able to better protect our communities," Abbott said at a news conference at Shelby Park in Eagle Pass.

The park is central to Abbott's clash with U.S. President Joe Biden's administration.

Federal border patrol agents want access to the park — a common crossing point for migrants — but Texas has taken control of the park and denied them entry, according to the Associated Press.

Abbott and a growing number of Republican governors say Biden's administration isn't doing enough to stem the flow of unauthorized migrants. They cite a clause in the U.S. Constitution banning states from keeping troops or waging war unless they're "actually invaded" or in "imminent danger."

"I'm proud to join so many fellow governors in support (of) Governor Abbott and appreciate receiving an up-to-date, real-time ... briefing from those on the front lines who see this humanitarian crisis up close," Holcomb said in a statement Sunday.

"If unregulated immigration continues to transpire, we governors will continue to deal with the after-effects inside our home states," added Holcomb, who didn't speak at the news conference.

He advocated for first stopping the flow of unauthorized migrants and then "passing a legal efficient immigration policy that actually will contribute to a needed and healthy workforce."

Holcomb previously signed on to a 25-governor statement declaring solidarity with Texas' strategies, including the use of razor wire.

Abbott said that national guard troops have erected more than 100 miles of sharp razor wire as a barrier along the border.

That, he said, had cut crossings at the park from thousands of people daily to a three-day average of just three crossers.

Federal officials say the razor wire blocks their patrols and injures migrants. Late last month, the U.S. Supreme Court narrowly voted to allow border patrol agents to cut the wire while a lawsuit over it continues, the Associated Press reported.

Abbott promised to expand the area covered as the governors of Tennessee and Arkansas vowed to send more national guard troops of their own.

Biden, meanwhile, has promised to "shut down the border" when it becomes "overwhelmed" if granted a "new emergency authority" in a bipartisan border security bill. He said he'd use that authority the same day he signs the legislation into law, according to a statement late last month.

BHMS class ranks 2nd in National Young Author's Fair

Sixth-grade students in Clarissia Tijerina's writing class at Bluffton-Harrison Middle School had the unique opportunity earlier this school year to write, create, publish, and sell their own books as part of National Young Author's Fair USA 2023.

Overall, Tijerina's class placed second in the nation earning the Literary Leadership Excellence Award and one student ranked in the top four in sales nationally.

Tijerina says the idea came from an email Superintendent Brad Yates sent to staff about the opportunity. Students had been learning about fractured fairy tales in Tijerina's class, which changed the point of view of classic fairy tales. Some students incorporated that lesson into their books, while others created new projects.

For Tijerina, it's about giving the students the tools and empowering their voices to write. Every year, she tries to find ways to encourage students to take their writing and give it more purpose. When students completed their required in-class work, this was an optional project they could participate in. Most students completed their stories independently at home, but could also work on them in their free time once work was done.

Mrs. Tijerina published her own narrative story on the BriBooks platform to help students navigate the program and explain how to create their books. This helped take the fear out of doing the project.

"Every year I try to

take something out of the classroom that gives more meaningful purpose to their writing, other than a grade. I want them to understand that their voice matters," Mrs. Tijerina says.

Abe Atkins reads an excerpt of his book, "Adventures with Koontz," at the Dec. 18 BHMSD Board of School Trustees meeting.

Student Abe Atkins sold 84 copies of his book, "Adventures with Koontz," a story featuring his grandmother's dog, to earn a fourth-place ranking in sales.

After the top finishers were announced, Atkins was stunned by his award.

"I didn't expect anything out of it and I just rocketed to the top, and I didn't know what to say," he recalled. "It's pretty cool, really."

The process challenged Atkins — finding stories of his grandma's dog, editing the stories, finding pictures to use, and then proofreading them five or six times in an effort to prevent errors, he said. As someone who enjoys reading books a lot, working on this project makes him want to keep writing books now.

"I liked being able to publish a book as a 6th grader," Atkins says. "I took away from this experience that it doesn't matter how old you are, if you work hard you can be successful."

More of Tijerina's sixth grade writing students wrote and published their own books this school year.

"I am very proud of all the hard work my students put into this project, and am

very excited to see how well we represent BHMSD by placing second in the United States for the Literary Leadership Excellence Award," Mrs. Tijerina shared. "It will be wonderful to see the students' books in the Middle School library very soon."

Thirty-two students and Tijerina published a combined total of 44 books. Some students wrote two or three books. Copies will be purchased for the BHMS library under a "Student Published Authors" section.

Tijerina says the BriBooks program is easy to use. Students can type or talk to text straight onto the page, and get feedback in real-time on grammar and spelling. They can also select from a large bank of graphics to illustrate their books. The books feature a biography and photo of the authors on the back cover, just like any other published book.

"It was a pretty easy process," student Naomi Dailley says. "They were very good at helping us fix grammar errors. It was a fun and exciting experience. It is a cool opportunity to publish our book and sell it online."

Tijerina fully vetted each book before signing off on them. After the books were completed, they were listed on Amazon for purchase — and students get royalties for each book sold. The program is free for students to use, and BriBooks also waived the fees associated with obtaining ISBNs for the students' books.

"Seeing the pride on the students' faces, as they bring me their books," Tijerina

Financial Focus

Benefits of fixed-income investments

When many people think about investing, the first thing that comes to mind is the stock market. But if you're going to achieve your goals, you may need to look beyond stocks and add fixed-income investments to your portfolio.

These fixed-income securities, such as corporate and government bonds and CDs, offer three key benefits.

First, when you invest in bonds, you receive a regular source of income in the form of interest payments. And you get these fixed payments until the bonds mature.

Second, bonds and other fixed-income investments can help diversify a portfolio that may be overweighted toward stocks. And while diversification can't always prevent losses, fixed-income investments can help reduce the effects of market volatility.

Finally, because bond prices are typically less volatile than stocks, they can help provide stability to your portfolio.

The amount of your portfolio devoted to bonds will depend on your individual situation. But the combination of income, diversification and stability should be compelling enough for you to find a place for bonds in your mix of investments.

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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

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Ballot initiative amendment defeat expected but still disappointing

I knew the amendment would fail before Rep. Sue Errington, D-Muncie, even began speaking. That's how it works with Democrat amendments in a chamber where Republicans have a supermajority.

But I was interested in the debate on whether Indiana should consider allowing citizens to initiate a statewide ballot question, whether for a law or constitutional change. In Indiana, only legislators can do so.

Sen. Sue Errington, D-Muncie.

(Photo from Indiana House Democrats)

Errington's proposed amendment to a House elections bill would have placed a non-binding public question on the November ballot: "Shall citizens be allowed to initiate a ballot referendum in Indiana?"

The amendment was easily defeated 27-66, with every Republican who voted opposing the measure.

Think about that. It was non-binding. Advisory. Guidance only. And House Republicans don't want to hear what you have to say.

Errington said more and more citizens have asked her why Indiana doesn't have the same rights as citizens in other states like Ohio to initiate change that lawmakers won't do on their own.

It mostly comes up in the context of legalizing marijuana and protecting access to abortion.

Errington quoted public, well-respected polling showing Hoosiers want both by significant margins.

"Is it any wonder that the people in this state are losing confidence in us to make laws that reflect their views?" she asked. "Is it any wonder that they are losing interest in voting when their legislators don't listen to them after they have been elected? And when their legislators actually do the opposite?"

Ohio is one of 19 states that allow direct ballot initiatives, either for laws or constitutional amendments. Voters in Michigan and Illinois also have that option.

GOP disapproval

But Republicans spoke against the amendment.

Rep. Matt Lehman, R-Berne, said Indiana's founders were smart enough to set up a representative government instead of putting every issue on the ballot and getting nothing done.

"(Voters) do weigh in. It's called an election. And that is how we change things in this body, is through elections," he said.

Rep. Tim Wesco, R-Osceola, said the statewide public question would be an unprecedented "waste of Hoosier's time and attention."

He also noted it should be hard to change the state constitution, and I have to agree. But you can create a direct ballot system that gives a path to citizen-led initiatives with a bar high enough to deter constant upheaval.

In Ohio, for instance, petitions for a constitutional change must be gathered from 44 of the state's 88 counties. And the number of petitions is equal to 10% of votes cast for governor in previous election. That meant more than 413,000 signatures for a recent abortion initiative.

That is a ton of work to achieve and means it won't be used on every little issue-of-the-day. For comparison, Indiana is considered to have a strong signature requirement to run for governor or Senate, in which a candidate must collect 500 signatures from all nine congressional districts. That's only a total of 4,500.

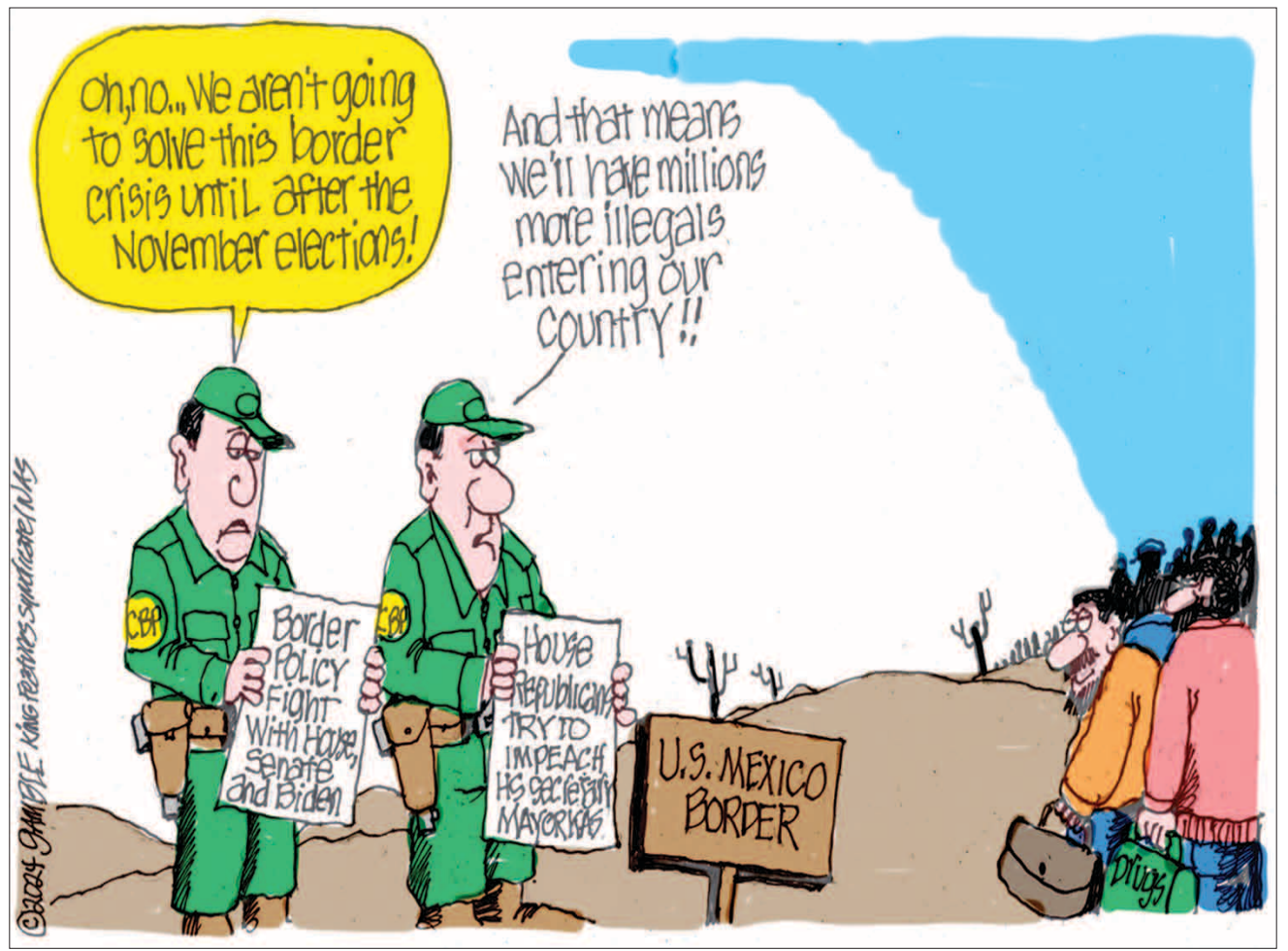
Perhaps House Minority Leader Phil GiaQuinta, D-Fort Wayne, said it best: "I am not scared of what the voters have to say. You shouldn't be either."

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



Niki Kelly

Hoosier Opinions



Wait 'til next year to deal with border catastrophe

After her second trip to the U.S.-Mexican border in a year, U.S. Rep. Erin Houchin called the sieve of humanity trying to secure the American dream the easy and illegal way "catastrophic" and "unsustainable."

The freshman Republican from Salem visited Eagle Pass, Texas, with Speaker Mike Johnson and more than 50 of her colleagues in January, telling Brian Kilmeade of Fox News, "The American people know the border is not secure. I visited the border last March. It wasn't secure then; it's not secure now. The problem is much, much worse, not better."

And Houchin is right. According to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, in 2000 there were more than 1.5 million border apprehensions. They began falling to fewer than 500,000 a year in 2010 under President Obama's administration. They spiked to more than 700,000 in 2019 under President Trump and dipped the next year during the pandemic. Then the flood gates opened. After President Biden took office, there were 1.66 million apprehensions in 2021, 2.21 million in 2022 and 2.05 million in 2023.

Even worse, Houchin added, "People on the terror watchlist are showing up at the processing centers and going through the process. Those people are detained, but we believe they are reporting back what that process is like to gain intelligence. It's really a catastrophic emergency we need to address immediately. We've been calling on the administration to do this for seven months now."

Last August, when I interviewed Houchin at the Hard Truth Distillery in Nashville, I noted that Republicans and Democrats haven't found immigration solutions over the past generation. The last comprehensive immigration reform came in 1986, signed by President Reagan. That was before the internet, before future Vice President Al Gore began warning us about climate change as an "inconvenient truth," before the gang proliferation and political instability in Latin America was exacerbated by rising temperatures and drought. Instead of solutions, both parties use the immigration boogeyman to gin up the partisan divide and raise campaign funds.

"Both parties have gotten into their corners," Houchin said at Hard Truth. "The border — I've been there and seen it firsthand — is absolutely insecure. Border Patrol is begging for assistance. We've seen a flood of migrants come in. That's an issue."

"It creates this logjam," she said.

Kilmeade told Houchin, "My hope is they come up with some type of deal. You guys have the leverage to get something done because they want the war funding. I hope you use it and I hope you get it for the good of the country," he said. "You would actually help Joe Biden's reelection if you did that."

After her visit to Eagle Pass, I wanted to speak with Houchin. Part of the persistent Republican lament was

the mainstream media was ignoring the issue and was giving Biden a pass (I last wrote about the issue in September). I planned to ask her what she believed the strategy should be, what the solutions should be. An interview was scheduled, and then — poof! — no go.

Why?

Last week, Republican presidential frontrunner Donald J. Trump blew up the deal.



Brian Howey

"As the leader of our party, there is zero chance I will support this horrible open-borders betrayal of America," Trump said in Nevada on Jan. 27. "I'll fight it all the way. A lot of

the senators are trying to say, respectfully, they're blaming it on me. I say, that's OK. Please blame it on me. Please."

"That, I think, is going to weigh in heavily," said Sen. Mike Braun, who's running a TV ad for his gubernatorial campaign saying he, too, has been to the border and come up with "solutions."

A recent Economist/YouGov Poll found immigration the second most important issue, with 31% approving of Biden's handling and 62% disapproving.

U.S. Sen. Todd Young called Trump's move "tragic," adding, "I hope no one is trying to take this away for campaign purposes."

Sen. Lankford, the lead negotiator (and an ardent conservative), told CBS's Face the Nation on Jan. 28, "Right now, they're all functioning off of internet rumors of what's in the bill, and many of them are false."

As for Trump, Lankford said, "Even while he was president, he was specifically asking Congress to change the standard on asylum to be able to tighten up, to be able to give them additional funds for deportation. All of those things are in this bill. So if he were to be president, this would be new authorities that he had actually asked for when he was president before."

For having the audacity to lead the negotiations with Senate Democrats, Lankford was censured by the Oklahoma Republican Party on Jan. 27, according to Axios.

Houchin told me last August, "I cannot overstate the crisis level at the border," Houchin said. "If the president and vice president had seen and talked to people like I did, they would declare it a national emergency."

The United States is facing a "catastrophic" and "unsustainable crisis" at the border. Terrorists and fentanyl are said to be flooding in. In the face of that predicament, our politics of the day is adopting an old Brooklyn Dodger lament: "Wait 'til next year."

Do you suppose terrorists will adapt to our political schedule?

Brian Howey is senior writer and columnist for Howey Politics Indiana/State Affairs. Find Howey on Facebook and X @hwypol.

Politicking

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, Feb. 5, the 36th day of 2024. There are 330 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Feb. 5, 2020, the Senate voted to acquit President Donald Trump, bringing to a close the third presidential trial in American history, though a majority of senators expressed unease with Trump's pressure campaign on Ukraine that resulted in the two articles of impeachment. Just one Republican, Mitt Romney of Utah, broke with the GOP and voted to convict.

On this date: In 1811, George, the Prince of Wales, was named Prince Regent due to the mental illness of his father, Britain's King George III.

In 1917, the U.S. Congress passed, over President Woodrow Wilson's veto, an act severely curtailing Asian immigration.

In 1918, during World War I, the Cunard liner SS Tuscania, which was transporting about 2,000 American troops to Europe, was torpedoed by a German U-boat in the Irish Sea with the loss of more than 200 people.

In 1922, the first edition of Reader's Digest was published.

In 1937, President Franklin D. Roosevelt proposed increasing the number of U.S. Supreme Court justices; the proposal, which failed in Congress, drew accusations that Roosevelt was attempting to "pack" the nation's highest court.

In 1971, Apollo 14 astronauts Alan Shepard and Edgar Mitchell stepped onto the surface of the moon in the first of two lunar excursions.

In 1973, services were held at Arlington National Cemetery for U.S. Army Col. William B. Nolde, the last official American combat casualty before the Vietnam cease-fire took effect.

In 1983, former Nazi Gestapo official Klaus Barbie, expelled from Bolivia, was brought to Lyon (see OHN), France, to stand trial. (He was convicted and sentenced to life in prison -- he died in 1991.)

In 1993, President Bill Clinton signed the Family and Medical Leave Act, granting workers up to 12 weeks unpaid leave for family emergencies.

"Masters of the Air" does a public service

Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks have once again done a public service.

Like "Band of Brothers" and "The Pacific" before it, the new series "Masters of the Air" is a profound act of devotion to the memory of the men who won World War II, this time focused on the air war in Europe.

Telling the story of a nation's history will always depend on popularizers more than academic historians (especially when the latter don't like their country's history very much), and Spielberg and Hanks are better popularizers than anyone has cause to expect. "Masters" tells the story of the 100th Bomber Group of the 8th Air Force, known as the "Bloody 100th," not for the destruction it wrought, but the punishment it took in some of the most hazardous duty of the war.

No one has ever reproduced the story, the machines, the conditions and the missions of this aspect of the war as accurately and carefully before, and we can assume, no one ever will again.

Ten years in the making with a \$250 million budget, this is a production at the very highest level of technical proficiency. The B-17s -- the long-range bombers known as Flying Fortresses, or "Forts" for short -- steal the show. They are lovingly reproduced and often look like something out of a painting.

Which doesn't obscure their deadly purpose, or the deadly business



Rich Lowry

of flying one over hostile territory.

If nothing else, "Masters" brings home the experience of flying in a tin can breathing through primitive air masks in below-zero temperatures, while getting shot at by German anti-aircraft guns and trying to fend off ferocious assaults from much faster German fighters.

It is as terrifying as it sounds.

Relying on Air Force records, the show's makers have obsessively reproduced the exact position of each plane and its precise fate during missions. As the screenwriter John Orloff has explained, they felt a factual rendering was mandatory; this wasn't "Star Wars" -- a made-up conflict involving fictional people -- but real battles in which Americans gave their last full measure of devotion.

Orloff notes that about three months after its arrival in England, 34 of the 100th's 36 crews had been shot down. The tour of duty was 25 missions, but the aviators made it through just 11 on average.

In contrast to the British who bombed at night, the U.S. engaged in daylight bombing that was supposed to be precision in nature. Without protection from fighter planes, which wasn't available at the beginning, this made the B-17s sitting ducks. Sometimes the missions involved hitting industrial sites, sometimes they targeted cities themselves and Ger-

man morale, sometimes they were designed to bait the Luftwaffe into combat so it could be degraded.

With the introduction of the long-range P-51 fighters that could properly defend the B-17s, the balance of the air war shifted decisively in 1944.

There's been a long-running debate about the morality and efficacy of the allied bombing campaign. There's no doubt that was a real moral cost to the campaign and its wanton destruction. Unfortunately, though, there was no easy way to take down a totalitarian power that had come to dominate the European continent, and for a long time, strategic bombing was our only serious means to attack the Nazis directly.

As for the efficacy, if nothing else, the campaign diverted massive Nazi resources to air defense. But it achieved more than that.

"By 1945," military historian Cathal Nolan writes, "the bombers would destroy Germany's transportation systems and demolish most vital war industries, especially oil supply and refining, and effectively end fighter production."

He continues, "Neither Germany nor Japan could by the end of their respective wars move military supplies, complete production or deploy weapons and divisions as they wanted, even inside their homelands."

Young American men gave their all in harrowing conditions to make this contribution to victory. "Masters" is their story as it deserves to be told.

Rich Lowry is on Twitter @RichLowry

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Norwell Internship Spotlight award Bella Winget

Senior Bella Winget has been selected to receive the Norwell High School Internship Spotlight award. She has been doing her experience with Norwell Middle School 8th Grade English teacher Mrs. Erin Hitzfield. Bella is the daughter of Kylie and Adam McCartney of Ossian and Chad Winget of Fort Wayne.

of time working with the students one on one. She also observes Mrs. Hitzfield's teaching techniques, along with her classroom and behavioral management styles. Bella has also been a huge help with grading, making copies, and running errands.

After graduation, Bella plans to attend Purdue Fort Wayne to study education and/or psychology.



Bella Winget

Zanesville News

by Melba Edwards

I am just reminding you men and boys as your ladies, young and old, expect a valentine! Make sure you pick just the right valentine as my husband Kenny was in real trouble one Valentine's Day when he was working at Yeomen Engineering in Huntington. He forgot to get my valentine and he didn't have time to pick one up so he sent his secretary to get one. That was a mistake as all you women know that you don't let another woman pick out your wife's special card.

When he gave it to me I asked him a few questions like, "This doesn't look like the cards you give me!" If you knew Kenny you would see that he couldn't hold a straight face. He had been caught so he admitted and apologized. He never left anyone buy his cards for him after that.

He also used to buy me a red rose for very child but when the twins were born he bought me two dozen and then he, we, decided that seven roses were a

little expensive. Sometimes though he would give me fakes after that as they were cheaper! Guys, get your cards and order your candy and flowers as the time is short!

Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, is a special day in our family as 81 years ago my brother David McBride was born. Maurice was 10, I was 7, Mary Lou was 4 and we had no idea we were getting a baby brother but there he was a little red head laying in a blue basket on the couch in the living room at the farm.

In 1997 on Valentine's Day our mother Mary McBride passed away. She had lived with us for one year.

This year our red-headed grandson Abram Edwards will be one-year-old on Valentine's Day! He is one of Jeremiah and Brandy's clan.

By my typewriter I have a Zanesville History Book that I, Rosemary Smuts Kumber and typist Velma Harden compiled in 1976. If you would like to buy one I have a few available

for the price of copying of \$20 each. You can also read one at your local library and then decide if you want one for home.

I made it to our great-grandson's Crete and Nico Edwards's Upward Basketball games at the Tower Life Center Gym on Wayne Street. Upward basketball and Cheerleading is held every Saturday most of the day and they also serve sandwiches and other food. You are all welcome to come and enjoy watching the kids play. Thanks to all of you who keep this great community activity going.

The Zanesville Church of God's Coffee Cafe is open every weekday mornings from 7:30 to 10 a.m. All are welcome to attend.

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

Events at the Creative Arts Council of Wells County

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

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

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

Two ticket options are available:
\$30 for Show, Charcuterie & Dessert from The Charcuterie Shop (Bluffton)
\$15 for Show only
Tickets are now available at <https://www.wellscocreativearts.com/other-yearly-productions>

Synopsis: In this hard-boiled comic mystery sequel to the ever-popular **Murder at Cafe Noir**, ex-private eye Rick Archer is now the confused manager of Cafe Noir on the island of Mustique. He is confronted with a corpse on the dock, a mysterious femme fatale, a French blackmailer and a businessman who wants both the cafe and the woman. Rick is arrested after the blackmailer is murdered in his club. It is up to the audience to convince the magistrate that he is innocent. A tribute to Casablanca with many references to the classic movie, **Noir Suspicions** is guaranteed to delight audiences whether or not they are familiar with **Murder at Cafe Noir**.

Creative Arts Summer Camps
Summer Theater Intensive June 2024; **Shrek the Musical JR** (Ages 12-18); Auditions: Saturday, May 4th, 2024 (must be age 12 by March 1st); Rehearsals: June 3 - 14; Monday - Friday from 9 AM to 4 PM; Performances: June 14 at 7 PM and June 15th at 3 PM and 7 PM; (Attendance is required at all 10 days of camp plus all 3 performances); Tuition: \$100

Disney The Jungle Book Kids (Ages 8-11); Auditions: Saturday, May 11, 2024 (must be age 8 by March 1st); Rehearsals: June 17-18; Monday - Friday from 9 AM to Noon; Performances: June 28 at 7 PM and



June 29 at 3 PM; (Attendance is required at all 10 days of camp plus both performances); Tuition: \$100

Summer Dance Intensive - Registration Opens - March 1, 2024; Dates: June 3-21, 2024; Creative Movement (Ages 3-5); For 3-5 year old students, the 45 minute Creative Movement class meets twice a week for three weeks.; Choose 1 session; Tuesday and Thursday; Session A: 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM; Session B: 10:45 AM - 11:30 AM; Tuition: \$50

Pre-Dance (Ages 6-8); The Pre-Dance class is geared toward 6-8 year old students. Students will take two 45 minute classes (one in ballet and one dance elective) twice a week for three weeks.; Tuesday and Thursday / 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM; Tuition: \$90

Continuing Dance (Ages 9-12); For 9-12 year old students, Continuing Dance occurs twice a week for 3 weeks. Students will take two, one hour classes (one in ballet and one dance elective). Tuesday and Thursday / 4:45 PM - 6:45 PM; Tuition: \$120

Intermediate/Advanced Class; For students that have reached an intermediate to advanced level of classical ballet. Students will take 1.5 to 2.5 hours of class three times a week for three weeks. Classes offered will include ballet, pointe, and contemporary dance styles.; Monday / 3:00 PM to 5:30 PM; Wednesday / 3:00 PM to 5:30 PM; Friday / 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM; Tuition: \$190

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

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

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Special Feature

Your MONEY \$ Your TAXES

3 tips to catch up on retirement savings

One need not look long or far to be reminded of the importance of saving for retirement. Indeed, it's hard to go a single day without encountering roadside billboards, television and streaming service advertisements, and/or promotional emails touting the retirement planning services offered by an assortment of investment firms. If those adds seem ubiquitous, it's for good reason, as saving for retirement is among the most important steps individuals can take as they look to ensure their long-term financial security.

Despite the widely accepted significance of retirement planning, studies indicate that many people are behind on saving and aware that they're behind. According to a recent survey from the online financial resource Bankrate, 55 percent of respondents indicated they are behind on their retirement saving. In addition, a Gallup poll released in May 2023 indicated that just 43 percent of non-retirees think they will have enough money to live comfortably in retirement. The good news for individuals who are

behind or concerned about their financial wellness in retirement is that three strategies can help them catch up on their savings.

1. Take advantage of catch-up rules if you qualify. Laws governing retirement accounts in the United States allow individuals 50 and older to contribute more to their retirement accounts than they're eligible to contribute prior to turning 50. Bankrate notes that current laws allow individuals over 50 to contribute an extra \$1,000 per year to a traditional or Roth IRA and an extra \$7,500 annually to a 401(k), 403(b) or 457(b) account. In Canada, individuals can contribute the maximum to a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP). According to the National Bank of Canada, individuals can contribute up to 18 percent of their annual income to an RRSP, and those contributions are deducted from taxable income. That means individuals are potentially saving more for down the road and paying less in taxes today.

2. Itemize your tax deductions. The online financial resource Investopedia notes that taking the

standard deduction is not for everyone. Individuals with significant amounts of mortgage interest, business-related expenses that are not reimbursed by an employer, and/or charitable donations may lower their tax obligation by itemizing their deductions. That reduction in tax obligation allows individuals to redirect those funds to their retirement accounts.

3. Cut back on discretionary spending. Perhaps the simplest, though not necessarily the easiest, way to catch up on retirement savings is to redirect funds typically spent on discretionary expenses



like dining out or travel into retirement accounts. One way to feel better about this approach is to remind yourself that the

less money spent on dining out and travel now means more money will be available to spend on such luxuries in retire-

ment. Three simple strategies make it easier to catch up on retirement savings.

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Knights capture sectional title over Braves

By RICK SPRUNGER

BUNKER HILL — An overwhelming start and a solid finish were the ingredients in Norwell's 57-40 win over Belmont in the championship game of the Class 3A sectional at Maconaquah Saturday night.

The second-ranked Knights, now 20-4 on the season, advanced to Saturday's regional at Caston against No. 7 Benton Central (25-3) at 4 p.m. Belmont finished its season with a 17-8 mark.

Norwell raced out to a 28-11 lead in the game's first 10 minutes, then regained control of the game in the fourth quarter after Belmont had trimmed the margin all the way down to seven.

In between, it was an adventure as Belmont fought its way back into the game after seemingly having been dead and buried.

Makenzie Fuess was the big gun for Norwell, rifling 25 points on 9-for-18 shooting to lead both teams in scoring. She hit three consecutive three-pointers in the first quarter during Norwell's jackrabbit start, then scored seven more points in the fourth period as the Knights blunted the Belmont charge.

"That great start we had was so important when you look back at the end of the game," said Norwell coach Eric Thornton while watching his team cut down the sectional nets for the fourth time in five years. "I was so proud of our kids how they played when it got down to single digits."

Those were the two big stories of the game: Norwell's hot start, and Belmont's long, slow climb back.

Norwell came out with guns blazing.

The Knights ripped six of seven three-pointers in the first quarter from four different players in seizing command at 25-11 after one period. It started with a steal and layup by Dekota Hubble for her only two points of the game. Hubble then caused a Belmont pass to sail out of bounds, and Annabelle Johnson followed with a three-pointer on her only shot of the game.

That quick it was 5-0, and Belmont hadn't even advanced the ball past the midcourt stripe yet. The turnovers continued to come for Belmont, and the three-pointers continued to fall for Norwell.

The Braves, caught back on its heels by the inten-

sity of Norwell's 1-3-1 trap, turned the ball over on four of their first six possessions and eight times in the quarter while hitting on just four of 12 shots from the field.

Meanwhile, Johnson, Vanessa Rosswurm and Kennedy Fuelling all had threes, and Fuess got her third with 0:03 left in the period.

"They were on fire," conceded Belmont coach Andy Heim after the game. "They had open looks; they had covered looks. They were hitting everything, and that 1-3-1 is really hard to simulate in practice. We don't have the great athletes, plus that's not the defense we ordinarily run."

After Fuelling knocked down her second and Norwell's seventh three of the game to start the second quarter and run the score to 28-11, something happened to the Norwell offense. It made 9-13 in the first eight minutes (.692), and the Knights hit on just six of 23 (.261) in the middle two quarters. After scoring 25 points in the first period, they managed just 14 in the next two quarters combined, and Belmont began the long climb back.

The Braves outscored the Knights 9-2 over the

next six minutes on a sort of low-speed chase while weaving points in and out of five more turnovers. That's because Norwell was missing eight of nine shots itself.

Only a Fuess steal and five-footer in the lane with 2:45 left broke the string for the Knights.

It was still 32-20 at half-time, however, after a lob play from Fuelling to Fuess with 0:03.5 remaining. That left Belmont only two points closer than it was at the quarter-break.

Rather than spark a Norwell surge to start the second half, it was Belmont continuing to creep up on the Knights.

A 7-0 run got the Braves to within 37-29, and a three-pointer by Lanie French narrowed it even further to 39-32.

Most of Norwell's misses from the field were one-and-done flings from behind the arc.

"We had some silly turnovers (four in the quarter), and we were taking quick shots," said Thornton. "We started settling for three-pointers. We weren't penetrating, we weren't trying to pass the ball inside, and we weren't going to the baseline."

(Continued on Page 7)



Annabelle Johnson launches a three-point shot over Belmont's Kamryn Jarvis in the second quarter Saturday at Maconaquah. (Photo by Glen Werling)

Norseman top Raiders in girls' hoops sectional final

By ANDREW FEEBACK

SPEICHERVILLE — The season came to an end for the Southern Wells Raider basketball team Saturday night as they fell to the host Northfield Norsemen in the sectional championship game, 41-22.

The rims were unkind to the Raiders throughout the night as they finished 7-30 from the floor and were just 6-15 from the foul line.

"Shots just weren't falling; lid on the basket for us tonight," Southern Wells head coach Jessica Killingbeck said. "We were getting the shots that we wanted, and I thought we took good shots. It just unfortunately didn't go our way tonight."

The Raiders finished with a record of 7-16, while Northfield improved to 12-12.

In spite of its offensive struggles, Southern Wells found itself trailing just 6-5 early in the second quarter.

Then, they were dealt a huge blow when Ashlie Needler picked up her third foul with more than six minutes remaining in the half on a basket from Eden Hoover.

The Raiders failed to score again before halftime and were behind 14-5 at the break.

Still, they managed to claw back and keep it interesting for awhile. By drawing six fouls on the Norsemen before com-

mitting one themselves, they got to the free throw line and made four out of six attempts, which got them within 16-11 at the 3:04 mark.

The Raiders had a chance to pull even closer, but a turnover led to a three-pointer from Northfield's Elliott Baker.

"I think that probably was the turning point," Killingbeck said. "Then we had to go man-to-man, and I thought our 1-2-2 looked a little bit better than our man. But they pulled us out of it with that shot, and that was kind of the change of the pace right there."

That was Northfield's only triple of the game, and it started a 10-1 run for the hosts that increased their lead to 26-12 by the end of the third.

Southern Wells finally got its first shot to drop from beyond the arc when Erika Beavans connected early in the fourth quarter, then got another one from Kyah Thomas to cut the lead to 10.

Beavans stepped inside the line and hit again to bring the Raiders within 29-20 with 4:29 still to play, and suddenly, the Raiders had momentum.

That disappeared quickly with a rash of turnovers over the last four minutes, several

(Continued on Page 7)

Tigers earn third straight victory, outlast Patriots in ACAC rematch

By ANDREW FEEBACK

Some timely baskets and key late defensive stops helped the Bluffton boys' basketball team win its third straight game 37-31 over the visiting Heritage Patriots Saturday afternoon.

Much like their first encounter three weeks ago, which went to the Patriots 37-35 in the ACAC Tournament, this one was destined to be low-scoring from the start. Bluffton led 10-7 after the first quarter, and both teams managed only two points in the second frame.

This time around, the Tigers (9-8) did a better job on the boards and took better care of the basketball.

"We did a better job overall," Bluffton head coach Craig Teagle said. "We had 20 turnovers the first game, we had 12 tonight, nine in the first half. Huge getting opportunities to shoot the basketball, and much like the third quarter last time, Tucker (Jenkins) kind of took over. I felt like he did at the end tonight, we were going to him and he was going to make a play."

It's not unusual for teams to be a bit slow out of the gate in the more mundane atmosphere of matinee matchups, but both teams struggled mightily to get anything going offensively in the first half.

The Tigers got their only two points of the second quarter on a pair of free throws from Cameron Williams at the 1:25 mark, and the Patriots (6-11) got their two points on a layup from Noah Redmon on the ensuing possession.

"I thought we were playing faster than we needed to be," Teagle said. "We tried to force a couple passes, and their strength and quickness bothers you because they get into you so hard. We just needed to settle down. Having a lead at half-time and knowing we hadn't played very well helped us. It allowed us to say, we surely will play better in the second half, and here's what we have to do to play that way, and I thought we did."

In the third quarter, both teams seemed to get their feet underneath them. By getting to the free throw line, the Tigers stretched their lead to 22-17 on a pair at the stripe from Kaleb Green.

The Patriots got a big shot of momentum when Kobe Meyer made a free throw, missed the second, got his own rebound and passed it to Redmon for a three-point play that brought Heritage within one.

Williams knocked down a much-needed three-pointer from the wing, then Eli Garrett came off the bench and drilled one from the corner on his only shot attempt of the game to put Bluffton up 28-21.

The Tigers had another lull on the offensive end in the fourth, but still maintained a 33-30 lead thanks to the Patriots' struggles at the foul line.

A big bucket in the paint from Jenkins with 1:18 to play pushed the lead to five.

Meyer missed a three, which the Tigers rebounded. With the clock running, the Patriots had to foul, and Redmon was the one who

had to do it with 46 seconds left, fouling out of the game as the visitors' top scorer with 11 points.

Andrew Hunt made one of two. The Patriots' Braden Walter split a pair as well, and Williams made one more with 18 seconds left to end it. Jenkins led the way with 11 points while Williams added nine.

The Tigers are back above the .500 mark as the calendar has flipped to February, which is not insignificant for a team that went 2-20 a year ago.

They will also finish no worse than fourth in the conference standings, which was a bit better than most prognosticators predicted at the start of the season, including one from Fort Wayne who picked them to come in last place.

Teagle said that while he hoped for things to go this well, realistically he didn't expect it.

"We talked with the seniors about this early in the year," he said. "I want them to be part of something they can come back and say, 'We helped build this.' But they want to be part of it right now, so I'm proud of them because maybe we can find a couple more wins down the road. When they leave, their legacy's not only the fact that they were the building blocks, but they turned it around in their year. It's a good effort, they're learning every day, they're good kids, and we'll keep building on this, but we've got a tough one on Tuesday."

(Continued on Page 7)



Heading to state

Bluffton freshman Ellie Coyne defied the odds at Saturday's sectional swim meet. The Tigershark took home the 100-yard breaststroke event, punching her ticket to the state finals next Friday. Coyne was the only event-winner not from Delta. At left top, Coyne holds her first-place ribbon after the race. At left bottom, Coyne ascends from the water for a breath during the breaststroke race. (Photos by Ryan Walker) **Story on page 7**

Bluffton's Cruz, Norwell's Douglas take home regional championships

JAY COUNTY — Eight Wells County wrestlers that will be heading to the semi-state next week at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum.

The list included two regional champions: Norwell's Hunter Douglas at 120 and Bluffton's Johnny Cruz at 285. Results for the rest of the placers are below.

Individual Placers:

Norwell: Hunter Douglas first at 120 (won over Faurote of Belmont by decision 7-0), Jason Prough fourth at 126, Cody Cox fourth at 165, Chance Behning second at 175 (lost to Russell of Delta by fall), Ethan Michael fourth at 215.

Bluffton: Levi Johns second at 113 (lost to Bollinger of Delta by decision 14-3), Johnny Cruz first at 285 (won over Adam Central's Wurm by fall).

Southern Wells: Jarin Frauhiger third at 138.

Team Scores:

1. Delta 143.5, 2. Belmont 122, 3. Jay County 107, 4. Adams Central 105, 5. Cowan 60.5, 6. Norwell 57, 7. South Adams 43, 8. Bluffton 42, 9. Yorktown 41.5, 10. Union City 17, 11. Wes-Del 14, 12. Dal-ville 13, 13. Monroe Central 11, 14. Southern Wells 8, 15. Winchester 6, 16. Muncie Central 0.



Bluffton's Johnny Cruz (top) takes down Adams Central's Zac Wurm during the regional final matchup Saturday afternoon at Jay County High School. Cruz won by fall and will represent the Tigers at the semi-state next week. (Photo by Ryan Walker)

Knights capture sectional

(Continued from Page 6)

He continued, "All we were doing was passing the ball around the perimeter. We lost our confidence as Bellmont got closer and closer. We started playing not to lose because you don't want to make a mistake."

It didn't help that Johnson, Fuelling, and Rosswurm were each playing with three fouls.

"We were in foul trouble," acknowledged Thornton. "We tried to get our kids to be patient. We wanted to shorten the game."

Bellmont actually had two chances to get the Norwell lead down to five, once at the end of the third quarter and once at the start of the fourth. But Fuess wrapped a three and a drive through the lane around a steal and layup by Fuelling, while Bellmont was turning the ball over on four of its first five possessions of the fourth quarter.

That ran the score to 46-32 and put the Knights out of danger.

Those turnovers were the result of a hard-nosed Norwell defense that never let up, even when the shots weren't falling on offense.

"You hope that happens," said Thornton of his

team's defensive intensity that forced Bellmont into a whopping 24 turnovers for the game. "And we got our confidence back when we saw the ball start to go through again."

The Knights hit five of six shots in the fourth quarter as they started attacking the basket again and regained their mojo.

Heim credited Norwell's hot start as the key to the outcome.

"We had to battle back from that deficit, and that's hard to do against a team like Norwell," said the Bellmont mentor. "We had to stay focused. But you spend so much energy, and after a while your legs start to get tired."

Rosswurm scored 14 points on 5-of-8 shooting and Fuelling 11 to join Fuess in double figures for Norwell.

"Vanessa's rebounding and scoring were so important," praised Thornton of his 5-10 sophomore, who scored eight points in Norwell's first-quarter breakout. "She provided an awful lot for us."

Fuelling's 11 points gave her 1,578 for her career and moved her to within 13 points of the Norwell career record of 1,591 held by 2012 Miss

Basketball Jessica Rupright.

The Knights finished 20-for-43 for .465 from the field with nine three-pointers.

Bellmont shot the ball reasonably well, hitting on 14 of 33 fielders for a .424 percentage but took 10 fewer shots than Norwell, largely because of all those turnovers.

Hailey Cole led the Braves with 17 points, but no other Brave reached double figures. French connected on three of Bellmont's four three-pointers to finish with nine points.

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NORWELL 57, BELLMONT 40
At Maconaquah
NORWELL (20-4): Kennedy Fuelling 4-14 1-2 11, Annabelle Johnson 1-1 2-4 5, Makenzie Fuess 9-18 2-4 25, Vanessa Rosswurm 5-8 3-6 14, Dekota Hubble 1-2 0-0 2, Lilly Norris 0-0 0-0 0, Haley Green 0-0 0-0 0, Addie Norris 0-0 0-0 0. TOTAL: 20-43 8-16 57.
BELLMONT (17-8): Kate Kitson 0-0 0-0 0, Emily Bleke 3-11 1-2 7, Belle Laurent 0-2 0-0 0, Kamryn Jarvis 2-4 0-0 5, Hailey Cole 5-10 7-11 17, Lanie French 3-5 0-0 9, Gwen Laurent 1-1 0-1 2. TOTAL: 14-33 8-14 40.
Norwell 25 7 7 18 — 57
Bellmont 11 9 12 8 — 40
Three-point shooting: Norwell 9-23 (Fuelling 2-9, Johnson 1-1, Fuess 5-12, Rosswurm 1-1), Bellmont 4-10 (Bleke 0-2, B. Laurent 0-1, Jarvis 1-1, Cole 0-3, French 3-4). Rebounds: Norwell 22, Bellmont 25 (Cole 8). Turnovers: Norwell 14, Bellmont 24. Personal fouls: Norwell 14, Bellmont 14. Fouled Out: None. Technical fouls: None.

Norseman top Raiders

(Continued from Page 6)

eral of which resulted in fast-break buckets for the Norsemen. Collena Reeves netted the Raiders' only bucket the rest of the way, and Northfield scored the final seven points.

Beavans and Needler topped the Raiders with seven points, while Reeves had five and Thomas added three.

Northfield placed three players in double figures: Hoover with 14, Baker with 12 and Hannah Holmes with 11.

The Raiders will graduate Karlee Warner from a young team that Killingbeck is pleased with.

"We have great kids," she said. "They're great basketball players, but even better people. We were young this season, and I think the community sees how much these kids have grown and what they've tried to do. I'm excited to see what that looks like next season, because we return a lot. I'm proud of the people they are. They're like my daughters, and I love them with all my heart."

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NORTHFIELD 41, SOUTHERN WELLS 22
At Northfield
SOUTHERN WELLS (7-16): Erika Beavans 3-9 0-4 7, Kaylea Coffel 0-0 0-0 0, Aubree Meyer 0-2 0-0 0, Collena Reeves 1-3 3-4 5, Gracie

Reeves 0-1 0-0 0, Kenzie Paxson 0-3 0-0 0, Breanna Leidig 0-0 0-0 0, Kyah Thomas 1-1 0-0 3, Karlee Warner 0-1 0-0 0, Ashlie Needler 2-10 3-7 7. TOTALS: 7-30 6-15 22.

NORTHFIELD (12-12): Elliott Baker 5-12 1-1 12, Camryn Kuhn 0-6 2-2 2, Callie Hoffman 0-4 1-4 1, Laney Haupt 0-0 0-0 0, Eden Hoover 6-12 2-4 14, Samantha Powell 0-0 0-0 0, Vivian Haupt 0-0 1-2 1, Hannah Holmes 4-7 3-4 11, Jaycie Krom 0-0 0-0 0, Ayla Dale 0-0 0-0 0, Faith Krom 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS: 15-41 10-17 41.
Southern Wells 2 3 7 10 — 22
Northfield 6 8 12 15 — 41

Three-point Field Goals: Southern Wells 2-8 (Beavans 1-2, Thomas 1-1, Needler 0-2, Collena Reeves 0-2, Gracie Reeves 0-1), Northfield 1-9 (Baker 1-4, Kuhn 0-4, Hoover 0-1). Rebounds: Southern Wells 24 (Collena Reeves 8, Needler 6, Paxson 5, Meyer 3, Gracie Reeves 2), Northfield 27 (Holmes 8, Baker 6, Hoover 4, Jaycie Krom 3, Kuhn 3, Hoffman 2, Vivian Haupt 1). Turnovers: Southern Wells 18, Northfield 11. Fouls: Southern Wells 14, Northfield 11. Fouled out: Needler. Technicals: None.

Knights finish runners-up, Tigers' Coyne wins 100 breaststroke

By RYAN WALKER

JAY COUNTY — Saturday's swim and dive sectional meet came as a little bit of a surprise, including a local state qualifier.

Delta, who came in as the favorite, swept all but one event that afternoon, winning as a team by 70 points over Norwell.

The Knights lost to the same Eagles team last year by 15 points, but returned all but one on the roster in hopes to win it this season. But the dominance of the Eagles proved they were the true champions.

Norwell faced them in a one-on-one meet on Jan. 23, and that's when they realized it would be a tougher mountain to climb than expected.

"We swam them last week, so we knew that they had some really good incoming freshmen this year, and it was going to be a battle," Norwell head coach Stephanie Scott said after the meet.

Norwell still clearly was the second-best in the 11-team field. The Knights scored 398 total team points — 133 ahead of third place Jay County — and placed third in 10 individual and relay events.

Unlike last season, this year's team will be hit hard with graduation. The senior list features Jillian Melcher, Haleigh Reinhard, Ella Krug, Addyson Heyerly and Renee Frazee, who all had big roles at the sectional. They also helped back-to-back Northeast 8 Conference titles return to Ossian.

An emotional Scott after the meet didn't focus on their athletic careers after the meet nearly as much as the type of people they are and remembering the fun times.

"Their personalities. They're goofy, funny and keep everybody lighthearted and light-hearted," Scott said of her senior's final go around. "They keep practices interesting, but have big hearts for the team."

For Bluffton, it was a group that was small and struggled on the team score because of it, but one that competed as hard as anyone else.

Because of their small roster, spots in the pool would be plugged up by opposing team members. That took points away due to having more athletes. So, the problem wasn't the effort for Bluffton. In fact, they let the results do the talking.

Out of all 10 teams, only one was able to knock Delta out of first place in any event. That team was Bluffton, and it was its freshmen breaststroker.

Ellie Coyne blew away the competition in Thursday's preliminaries, boasting a 1:12.47 time and seeded her first in the finals.

For a freshman, it's immense pressure to live up to a one-seeded standard and take home the first-place ribbon, especially with a trip to the state finals on the line. But Coyne was more than up for the task, clocking in at 1:10.90, two seconds faster than Thursday.

"We were very nervous going into it," Bluffton head coach Hunter Cunningham said. "(Coyne) was seeded first, which was exciting, but as you can see Delta came out of nowhere and swept sectionals today. It's super exciting as Bluffton that we were the one team that was able to break that up. She went out there and did her race and wasn't worried about the people behind her. As a freshmen doing that, I'm excited to see where she goes the next three years."

Her first-place finish will leave her as the only non-Delta participant from the Jay County sectional to bus down to the state finals next weekend. The finals will be at the Indiana University Natatorium on Friday for the preliminary rounds.

As a team, the Tigers placed ninth with a team score of 108.

Cunningham was proud of her group this year for battling the circumstances and understanding it wasn't their fault for the scores. She mentioned that her team and freshman swimmers blew expectations away at the sectional.

Next season, they'll lose

Zoey Schmidt and Lucia Corkwell by graduation, but will restock with freshmen and build from this year.

"This group of girls is good under pressure," Cunningham said. "When it comes down to competition, they know how to compete, which is exciting to see. We're small — we had seven girls competing and all seven swam today. That's a huge accomplishment knowing that all seven were here."

Top event finishers: Norwell

- Jillian Melcher, Ella Krug, Marlee Meredith and Emerson Meredith third in the 200-yard medley relay.
- Olivia Daniel third in the 200-yard freestyle.
- Krug second, Haleigh Reinhard fourth in the 200-yard IM.
- Melcher second in the 50-yard freestyle.
- Emerson Meredith fourth in the diving events.
- Krug second in the 100-yard butterfly.
- Emerson Meredith third in the 100-yard freestyle.
- Cassie Coyne second, Daniel fourth in the 500-yard freestyle.
- Renee Frazee, Emerson Meredith, Marlee Meredith and Melcher second in the 200-yard freestyle relay.
- Melcher third, Rilynn Ervin fourth in the 100-yard backstroke.
- Reinhard second in the 100-yard breaststroke.
- Addyson Heyerly, Daniel, Frazee and Krug second in the 400-yard freestyle relay.

- Bluffton**
- Zoey Schmidt, Lucia Corkwell, Ellie Coyne and Kierstynn Reed seventh in the 200-yard medley relay.
- Ellie Coyne sixth in the 100-yard freestyle.
- Schmidt 10th in the 500-yard freestyle.
- Coyne, Corkwell, Anna Zurcher and Kierstynn Reed eighth in the 200-yard freestyle relay.
- Coyne first in the 100-yard breaststroke.
- Emily Hansen, Schmidt, Emma Fink and Surcher ninth in the 400-yard freestyle relay.

High School Calendar

MONDAY, FEB. 5
SWIMMING & DIVING: (Boys only): Norwell at Adams Central, 6 p.m.
TUESDAY, FEB. 6
BOYS BASKETBALL: Heritage at Norwell, 7:45 p.m.; Bluffton at Manchester, 7:30 p.m.; Elwood at Southern Wells, 6:45 p.m.
SWIMMING & DIVING: (Boys only): Bluffton at Huntington North, 5:30 p.m.
WEDNESDAY, FEB. 7
No events scheduled.
THURSDAY, FEB. 8
No events scheduled.
FRIDAY, FEB. 9
BOYS BASKETBALL: Norwell at Huntington North, 7:45 p.m.; Northfield at Bluffton, 7:30 p.m.; Woodlan at Southern Wells, 6:45 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEB. 10
GIRLS BASKETBALL: (Regional final) Norwell vs. Benton Central at Caston High School, 4 p.m.
WRESTLING: (Semi-State): Norwell, Bluffton, Southern Wells at War Memorial Coliseum (Fort Wayne), 8:30 a.m.
MONDAY, FEB. 12
No events scheduled.
TUESDAY, FEB. 13
BOYS BASKETBALL: Southern Wells at North Miami, 7:30 p.m.
WEDNESDAY, FEB. 14
No events scheduled.
THURSDAY, FEB. 15
SWIMMING & DIVING: (Sectional, boys only) preliminary rounds, Norwell and Bluffton at Jay County, 5:30 p.m.

Tigers outlast Patriots

(Continued from Page 6)

Bluffton will travel to Manchester Tuesday night.

The Tigers made it a clean sweep on the day winning the junior varsity and freshman games.

The junior varsity team won 38-30, with Griffin Morgan scoring 12 points, Ben Maggard adding eight and Nolan Lambert chipping in six.

The freshman team won 36-30. Max White scored 14 points while Jonah Geisel

added nine.

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BLUFFTON 37, HERITAGE 31
At Bluffton
HERITAGE (6-11): Eli Tigulis 0-0 0-0 0, Kobe Meyer 1-5 1-4 4, Cam Rauner 0-1 0-2 0, Landon Lybarger 0-2 0-0 0, Braden Walter 1-7 2-4 4, Lan'Tae Cassel 0-1 0-0 0, D'Vontaye Washington 2-2 3-4 7, Noah Redmon 4-6 1-3 11, Taurean Brown 2-8 0-0 5, Caleb Abbott 0-0 0-0 0, Landri Linder 0-0 0-0 0, Davian Bates 0-0 0-0 0, Lucas Taylor 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS: 10-32 7-17 31.
BLUFFTON (9-8): Nolan Lambert 0-0 0-0 0, Andrew Hunt 0-3 1-2 1, Elijah Garrett 1-1 0-0 3, Hunter Wenger 0-0 0-0 0, Cameron Williams 2-6 3-4 9, Tucker Jenkins 5-8 1-4 11, Jude

Baumgartner 0-0 0-0 0, Axton Beste 2-4 0-0 6, Declan Grieser 0-1 0-0 0, Jared Moser 0-0 0-0 0, Kaleb Green 0-3 7-8 7, Benjamin Maggard 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS: 10-26 12-18 37.
Heritage 7 2 15 7 — 31
Bluffton 10 2 19 6 — 37
Three-point Field Goals: Heritage 4-16 (Redmon 2-3, Meyer 1-4, Brown 1-2, Walter 0-4, Rauner 0-1, Cassel 0-1, Lybarger 0-1), Bluffton 5-11 (Beste 2-2, Williams 2-4, Garrett 1-1, Hunt 0-3, Jenkins 0-1). Rebounds: Heritage 17 (Washington 4, Cassel 3, Lybarger 3, Redmon 2, Meyer 2, Walter 1, Rauner 1, Brown 1), Bluffton 22 (Jenkins 8, Green 4, Beste 3, Grieser 3, Williams 3, Hunt 1). Turnovers: Heritage 10, Bluffton 12. Fouls: Heritage 18, Bluffton 15. Fouled out: Redmon. Technicals: None.
JV: Bluffton 38, Heritage 30.
Freshman: Bluffton 36, Heritage 30.



Southern Wells' Erika Beavans (right) drives to the hoop as Northfield's Eden Hoover reaches in an attempt to block the route to the hoop in the second half of Saturday night's sectional final at Northfield. The Raiders season ended with a 41-22 loss. (Photo by Chad Kline)

Eagles outshoot Knights, inches closer to share of boys' NE8 crown

By RICK SPRUNGER

At the end of the day, the name of the game is still putting the ball in the basket.

Columbia City did that on Saturday afternoon at The Castle, Norwell didn't, and so the Eagles and not the Knights will play for a share of the Northeast 8 Conference championship Friday night.

Columbia City topped Norwell 66-50 behind a dazzling offensive performance. The Eagles hit on 22 of 36 shots from the field for a .610 shooting percentage while turning the ball over six times the entire game.

Included in that mark was an 8-13 performance from three-point range. By contrast, Norwell hit on just 19 of 52 shots for a .365 percentage and was just 4-for-21 from the arc.

"We just had a bad shooting night against a good team," said a matter-of-fact Norwell coach Mike McBride after the game. "We didn't take a lot of bad shots, and we didn't commit a lot of turnovers (six). We had a lot of good looks in the first quarter, and we didn't make them, and then that carried over into the second quarter."

That second quarter was a miserable eight minutes for Norwell.

The Knights hit on just two of eight shots in the period and scored just six points.

By contrast, Columbia City hit on eight of 11 shots in the quarter, didn't commit a single turnover in the entire first half and stretched a 14-11 lead after one period to a 35-17 spread at halftime.

It actually started with Columbia City's last two possessions of the first stanza, when Owen Marshall and Brady Hartman zipped consecutive three-pointers to start what amounted to a 27-6 run.

A rebound basket by Kaedyn Quintanilla with 2:52 left in the first half narrowed Columbia City's margin to 25-17.

But Norwell missed its last four shots of the half while the Eagles were running off 10 unanswered points, starting with a three and a drive to the basket, both by Matthew Mulligan.

Aiden Denning tacked on a three-point play in the lane with 0:35 remaining to make it 33-17.

Norwell played for one shot, which Federspiel missed. Brady Hartman grabbed the rebound and flung an outlet pass to a cherry-picking Mulligan for a one-on-nobody layup that just beat the buzzer for that 18-point lead.

Norwell made a run at the Eagles in the second half, but the deficit was just too great to overcome.

The Knights hit Columbia City with a

10-2 flurry to start the third quarter and reduced the deficit to 37-27.

A back-breaking three-point play by Mulligan stopped the Knights in their tracks, and the visitors continued to maintain a 46-32 lead at the third stop.

Twice in the fourth period Norwell was able to sneak the gap down to nine points, first at 48-39 on a three-pointer by Quintanilla, then at 50-41 on a bucket by Cohen Bailey on Norwell's fourth shot of the possession.

Another three by Mulligan got Columbia City back out to safety, and Norwell never got that close again.

Norwell actually got the early jump in the contest, taking leads of 5-0 and 7-3.

The Knights moved ahead, 11-8, on a layup by Cade Shelton off a pretty no-look pass from Bailey.

But that's when the wheels came off for Norwell, which hit on just two of its remaining 13 shots in the first half.

Mulligan paced Columbia City with 22 points on 8-10 shooting from the field, including a 4-for-5 effort from the arc.

Hartman added 17 points and Denning 14 for the Eagles.

Federspiel paced Norwell with 16 points while Quintanilla added 13 and Bailey 10.

Norwell, now 9-8 on the season and 4-2 in the Northeast 8, still has a mathematical shot at a share of the conference crown. But that would require Columbia City and Bellmont both to lose their remaining conference games, neither of which is likely to happen.

Columbia City also won the junior varsity contest, 52-41.

Nick McBride paced Norwell with 21 points.

Drew Jolley added eight, Caiden Petrie five, Ryne Thornton four, and Will Case three for the Knights.

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COLUMBIA CITY 66, NORWELL 50
At Norwell
COLUMBIA CITY (13-6, 5-1 NE8): Stratton Fuller 2-4 1-2 6, Cayden Kauffman 0-0 0-0 0, Aiden Denning 4-8 5-6 14, Matthew Mulligan 8-10 2-4 22, Brady Hartman 5-10 6-8 17, Owen Marshall 3-3 0-0 7, Landon Richmond 0-1 0-0 0, Eli Krider 0-0 0-0 0. TOTAL: 22-36 14-20 66.
NORWELL (9-8 4-2 NE8): Cade Shelton 2-6 1-5 5, Kaedyn Quintanilla 5-6 0-0 13, Adam Marshall 2-12 1-2 6, Cohen Bailey 4-11 2-2 10, Ashton Federspiel 6-14 4-4 16, Owen Wallis 0-2 0-0 0, Nick McBride 0-1 0-0 0, Garry Riley 0-0 0-0 0. TOTAL: 19-52 8-13 50.
Columbia City 14 21 11 20 — 66
Norwell 11 6 15 18 — 50
Three-point Field Goals: Columbia City 8-13 (Fuller 1-2, Denning 1-4, Mulligan 4-5, Hartman 1-1, Marshall 1-1), Norwell 4-21 (Quintanilla 3-4, A. McBride 1-10, Bailey 0-3, Federspiel 0-2, Wallis 0-2). Rebounds: Columbia City 23 (Mulligan 6), Norwell 27 (Bailey 6). Turnovers: Columbia City 6, Norwell 6. Personal fouls: Columbia City 12, Norwell 17. Fouled out: None. Technical fouls: None.
Junior Varsity: Columbia City 52, Norwell 41.

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

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Lottery Numbers

Saturday's Drawings
HOOSIER LOTTERY
Cash 5 - 23-34-35-43-44
Cash4Life - 10-19-39-41-58, Cash Ball: 02
Lotto Plus - 12-15-16-28-32-38
Quick Draw Midday - 04-08-14-16-31-37-38-40-41-42-45-48-57-60-62-68-70-73-76-80, BE: 37
Daily Three-Midday - 00-02-08, SB: 09
Daily Three-Evening - 08-05-03, SB: 02
Daily Four-Midday - 01-07-09-05, SB: 09
Daily Four-Evening - 07-03-08-02, SB: 02
Quick Draw Evening - 03-08-14-22-24-31-34-37-38-43-52-54-56-58-59-65-67-73-74-78, BE: 34
Hoosier Lotto - 08-10-22-31-34-38
POWERBALL
09-11-27-59-66; Powerball: 19; Power Play: 3X

Sunday's Drawings
HOOSIER LOTTERY
Cash 5 - 01-09-17-34-42
Cash4Life - 30-32-37-47-59, Cash Ball: 04
Quick Draw Midday - 01-02-03-14-17-19-27-28-31-32-43-44-49-50-52-67-70-73-78-79, BE: 44
Daily Three-Midday - 02-05-00, SB: 01
Daily Three-Evening - 07-09-03, SB: 09
Daily Four-Midday - 09-06-07-00, SB: 01
Daily Four-Evening - 06-06-06-08, SB: 09
Quick Draw Evening - 01-12-15-21-28-29-33-35-43-45-50-52-54-56-59-60-61-69-72-75, BE: 43
Hoosier Lotto - Estimated jackpot (for Wednesday): \$4.2 million
MEGA MILLIONS
Estimated jackpot (for Tuesday): \$358 million
POWERBALL
Estimated jackpot (for Wednesday): \$214 million

SUDOKU ANSWER

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

Public Sale Calendar

BIDDING STARTS CLOSING FEBRUARY 6 - 10 a.m. EST - Mac Sheet Metal LLC, Mark McClanahan, owner. Offering over 300+ lots! Caterpillar V40C 4,000 lb. forklift, Clark C301 5,500 lb. forklift, 2013 Chevrolet Silverado 3500 stake bed, 6.0L V8, automatic, 104, 072 miles, 12' stake bed, sheet metal equipment, tools, more. Preview Feb. 5, 10 a.m.-noon EST, 295 Industrial Blvd., Franklin, IN. Pick up Feb. 8, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Feb. 9, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. *Krueckeburg Auction & Realty LLC, Kjauction.com, 260-724-7402.*

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.*

BIDDING NOW OPEN AND STARTS CLOSING FEBRUARY 13 - 10 a.m. EST - Creative Industries, Inc., Mark Clark, president. Toyota 424FGC25 forklift, band, chop & table saws, SSC sheet board saw, multiple Delta drill press, 4 Delta dust collectors, hand & power tools, work benches & shop carts, large amount of aluminum channeling & much more! Preview Feb. 5, 1:30-3 p.m. EST, 1024 Western Dr., Indianapolis, IN. Pick up Feb. 15, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. EST. *Krueckeburg Auction & Realty LLC, 260-724-7402, Kjauction.com.*

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. Auction manager Al Pfister, 260-760-8922, *Schrader Real Estate and Auction Company, Inc., 800-451-2709, schraderauction.com.*

FEBRUARY 18 - 2 p.m. - Multiple consignors, owners. Online only consignment auction. Furniture, freezers, Pokemon items, sports cards, G.I. Joe figurines, china, 4 wheeler, riding mower, fishing lures, upholstery fabric, household items, vintage toys, light fixtures, etc. Preview Feb. 15, 3-5 p.m., 812 Elm Street, Decatur. *Krueckeburg Auction & Realty LLC, 260-724-7402, Kjauction.com.*

FEBRUARY 18-FEBRUARY 25 - (Online Only Auction) - Thomas and Mary Woodward and others, sellers. Outstanding collection of antique pickle casters and brides baskets, Victorian condiment sets, large glassware collection including Carnival, Fenton, cut and pressed glass, Indiana glass, sterling silver, antique and modern furniture, primitives, vintage toys, outstanding line of shop tools, much more. Open house: Feb. 15 and 22 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 102 S. Jefferson St., Ossian, IN. *The Steffen Group Inc., www.steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006.*

FEBRUARY 20 - 9 a.m. EST - Online Only - JW Jones, Co, owner. Quarry equipment, rock crushers, stackers, heavy trucks, trailers, light duty trucks, forklifts, excavators, wheel loaders, dozers, haul trucks, shop equipment, power units, & much, much more! Preview Feb. 16, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Pick up Feb. 22-23, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. EST, Feb. 27, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Feb. 28, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Items located mostly in Parago, IN, and Gosport, IN, with some in Martinsville, IN. *Krueckeburg Auction & Realty LLC, 260-724-7402, Kjauction.com.*

BIDDING NOW OPEN AND STARTS CLOSING FEBRUARY 21 - 6 p.m. EST - Dean Stoppenhagen, owner. 3877 E. 900 N, Ossian, IN (located just east of Aviation Dr. on 900 N, north side of road). Online only land auction! 69.588 tillable acres! Zoned: agricultural, residential development potential! Jefferson Township, Northern Wells School Corporation. *Krueckeburg Auction & Realty LLC, 260-724-7402, Kjauction.com.*

FEBRUARY 25-MARCH 3 - (Online Only Auction) - The Estate of Alan Johnson. 2021 Jeep Grand Cherokee with 3,600 miles, 2 completely restored 1967 and 1969 Vintage Triumph motorcycles, 2017 Grasshopper zero turn mower, 2018 Sur-Trac enclosed trailer, tools, modern furniture, household. Open house: Feb. 25 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and Feb. 29 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., 3651 E. 1000 N., Ossian, IN. *The Steffen Group Inc., 260-824-3006, www.steffengrp.com.*

FEBRUARY 27-MARCH 5 - (Online Only Auction) - The Estate of Alan Johnson. Three bedroom ranch home on full finished basement located in prime Northern Wells location. This home sits on a half acre lot with mature trees and an asphalt driveway. Open houses: Feb. 25 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and Feb. 29 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., 3651 E. 1000 N., Ossian, IN. *The Steffen Group Inc., www.steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006.*

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Gruesome footage from stolen memory card is key to Alaska murder trial

By MARK THIESSEN
Associated Press
ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — A woman with a lengthy criminal history including theft, assault and prostitution got into a truck with a man who had picked her up for a “date” near downtown Anchorage. When he left her alone in the vehicle, she stole a digital memory card from the center console.

Now, more than four years later, what she found on that card is key to a double murder trial set to begin this week: gruesome photos and videos of a woman being beaten and strangled at a Marriott hotel, her attacker speaking in a strong accent as he urged her to die, her blanket-covered body being snuck outside on a luggage cart.

“In my movies, everybody always dies,” the voice says on one video. “What are my followers going to think of me? People need to know when they are being serial-killed.”

About a week after she took the SD card, the woman turned it over to police, who said they recognized the voice as that of Brian Steven Smith, now 52, a South Africa native they knew from a prior

investigation, court documents say.

Smith has pleaded not guilty to 14 charges, including first- and second-degree murder, sexual assault and tampering with evidence, in the deaths of Kathleen Henry, 30, and Veronica Abouchuk, who was 52 when her family reported her missing in February 2019, seven months after they last saw her.

Henry and Abouchuk were both Alaska Native women who had experienced homelessness. They were from small villages in western Alaska, Henry from Eek and Abouchuk from Stebbins.

Authorities say Henry was the victim whose death was recorded at the Towne-Place Suites by Marriott, a hotel in midtown Anchorage. Smith was registered to stay there from Sept. 2 to Sept. 4, 2019; the first images showing her body were time-stamped at about 1 a.m. on Sept. 4, police said.

The last images on the card were taken early on Sept. 6 and showed Henry’s body in the back of a black pickup, according to charging documents. Location data showed that at the time the photo was taken, Smith’s phone was in the area of

Rainbow Valley Road, along the Seward Highway south of Anchorage, the same area where Henry’s body was found several weeks later, police said.

As detectives interrogated Smith about the Marriott case, authorities said, he offered up more information to police who escorted him to a bathroom: He had killed another woman, and he went on to identify her — Abouchuk — from a photo and to provide the location of her remains, along the Old Glenn Highway north of Anchorage.

“With no prompting, he tells the troopers in the bathroom, ‘I’m going to make you famous,’” District Attorney Brittany Dunlop said during a court hearing last week. “He comes back in and says ... ‘You guys got some more time? You want to keep talking?’ And then discloses this other murder.”

Alaska State Troopers in 2018 incorrectly identified another body as that of Abouchuk, because Abouchuk’s ID had been discovered with it, for reasons that remain unclear. But with the information Smith provided, investigators re-examined the case and used dental records to confirm a skull with a bullet wound found

in the area Smith identified was Abouchuk’s, authorities have said.

Smith’s attorney, Timothy Ayer, unsuccessfully sought to have the digital memory card’s evidence — or even mention of it — excluded at trial. The woman who turned in the card initially claimed she had simply found it on the street, and it wasn’t until a second interview that she confessed she had stolen the card from Smith’s truck while he tried to get money from an ATM and she had it for a week before giving it to police, he said.

For that reason, he argued, prosecutors would not be able to demonstrate the provenance of the 39 photos and 12 videos, establishing whether they were originals or duplicates, or say for sure whether they had been tampered with.

“The state cannot produce a witness to testify that the video fairly and accurately depicts any act that actually happened,” Ayer wrote.

However, Third Judicial District Judge Kevin Saxby ruled late Friday that the woman can testify about her possession of the card until she handed it over to police and that the recordings can

be properly authenticated.

Henry’s family has not spoken publicly about her death and efforts to reach relatives have not been successful. Abouchuk’s family has not returned messages from The Associated Press.

“These were two Alaska Native women,” Dunlop, then the assistant district attorney, said in 2019 after Smith was charged. “And I know that hits home here in Alaska, and we’re cognizant of that. We treat them with dignity and respect.”

Authorities said Smith, who is in custody at the Anchorage Correctional Facility, came to Alaska in 2014 and became a naturalized U.S. citizen the same month Henry was killed.

In a 2019 letter to the AP, he declined to discuss the case. He added that he was doing well: “I have lost weight, I have much less stress and I am sober.”

His wife, Stephanie Bissland of Anchorage, and a sister acting as a family spokesperson in South Africa, both declined to comment until after the trial.

The trial, expected to last three to four weeks, was scheduled to begin Monday with jury selection.

Prosecutors had suggested the possibility of closing

the courtroom to prevent the gruesome videos from being seen by the public. The Associated Press, the Anchorage Daily News, Alaska’s News Source and Alaska Public Media objected to any such move in a letter to the court’s presiding judge.

Afterward, Saxby said he has no intention of keeping the public from the courtroom, but safeguards will be in place to prevent those in the gallery or watching the trial’s livestream from seeing them.



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Grammys open with high-octane Dua Lipa performance

By MARIA SHERMAN
AP Music Writer
LOS ANGELES (AP) — Karol G made Grammy history by becoming the first female performer to win best música urbana album. She took home the honor for her blockbuster “Mañana Será Bonito” record, which was presented to her by Christina Aguilera and Maluma.

“This is my first time at the Grammys,” she told the audience in English. “And this is my first time holding my own Grammy.”

Then SZA took the stage — performing a medley of her larger-than-life hits “Snooze” and “Kill Bill,” joined by dancers wielding katanas.

Mariah Carey presented the night’s first award, for best pop solo performance, to Miley Cyrus for “Flowers.” It was also the singer’s first ever Grammy.

Cyrus said she almost missed the start of the show because of driving rain that is pounding Los Angeles and said she was glad she didn’t miss her chance to be onstage with Carey. Cyrus has been nominated eight times previously.

Afterward Cyrus, Luke Combs performed “Fast Car” with Tracy Chapman — his cover of the Chapman classic has dominated country radio and won him song of the year at the 2023 CMAs. In 1989, Chapman won best pop vocal performance, female for the song.

Dua Lipa opened the show with a high-octane medley: first, a tease of her forthcoming single, “Training Season,” then, her most recent single, “Houdini,” and finally, her disco-pop “Barbie” hit “Dance the Night.”

From the stage at the Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles, four-time Grammy host — and two-time nominee — Trevor Noah greeted an excited crowd, starting things off with a kiss on the cheek from Meryl Streep.

“The Grammys are gonna win as Oscar,” he joked about the moment.

Women outpace men in the major categories, so viewers can expect to see a spotlight on its female nominees as the night continues.

Other performers include Billy Joel, Eilish, Rodrigo, Burna Boy, Travis Scott, and a first-ever Grammys performance from Joni Mitchell.

Bridgers took an early lead at the Grammys, quickly winning four trophies ahead of the main telecast, with her and her boygenius bandmates bringing an infectious energy to the Premiere Ceremony.

Songwriter Justin Trantner gave her the first award Sunday, best pop duo/group performance, which went to SZA and Bridgers for “Ghost in the Machine.”

She wasn’t on stage for that but skipped her way up with her band boygenius — made up of her, Lucy Dacus and Julian Baker — clad in matching white suits, when they won their first Grammy as a group for best rock performance for “Not Strong Enough.”

“Oh my God I want to throw up,” said Dacus in their acceptance speech. “This isn’t real. Thank you.” “Music saved my life,” Baker jumped in. “Anyone can be in a band.” Minutes later, they walked back out on stage for best rock song and best alternative music album.

Newcomer Coco Jones won best R&B performance for “ICU” in a stacked competition where she was up against SZA’s “Kill Bill” and Victoria Monét’s “How Does It Make You Feel.” SZA’s second win of the night came in the form of the best progressive R&B album for “S.O.S.”

Jack Antonoff took home producer of the year, non-classical for a third year in a row, tying Babyface as the only other producer to do so

consecutively. “You need the door kicked open for you,” he said in his acceptance speech. “Taylor Swift kicked that (expletive) door open for me,” referencing their work together.

The first of three new categories in 2024, best pop dance recording, was given out shortly afterward and went to Kylie Minogue for “Padam Padam” — her first win in 18 years.

About 80 Grammys were handed out pre-broadcast. Regional Mexican star Peso Pluma won his first Grammy for his first and only nomination, for best música Mexicana album for his “Genesis.”

Early on in the afternoon, “Barbie” took home two Grammys in quick succession: for compilation soundtrack for visual media and best song written for visual media.

Billie Eilish and Finneas arrived early in the afternoon to collect song written for visual media trophy for their “Barbie” ballad “What Was I Made For.”

“This is shocking to me,” Eilish said. “I was expecting to turn right back around and leave.”

“I want to thank our parents, our dad, who worked as a construction worker at Mattel Corporation for much of our childhood to keep food the table,” said Finneas.

Dozens of stars began arriving early, with Lipa and Monét among the stunning looks on the arrivals carpet.

Best African music performance, a new category which aims to highlight regional musical traditions and recognizing “recordings that utilize unique local expressions from across the African continent,” went to South African singer Tyla for her ubiquitous hit, “Water.” It marks her first Grammy nomination and win. “I never thought I’d

say I won a Grammy at 21 years old,” she said in her acceptance speech. “Last year God decided to change my whole life.”

Jimmy Jam presented the bulk of the R&B and rap categories, which included best traditional R&B performance. That one went to PJ Morton and Susan Carol for “Good Morning,” — a sweet moment, but it meant Hazel Monét, Victoria Monét’s 2-year-old daughter, lost her opportunity to become the youngest Grammy award

winner of all time.

Killer Mike won three awards in quick succession Sunday night, but somehow ended up in police custody before the main Grammys ceremony began. There was no immediate word why he was detained.

Brandy Clark, who has been nominated for 17 Grammy awards in her career — including six this year — took home her first Grammy for best americana performance for her track “Dear Insecurity.”

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Public Notices

**Jackson Township, Wells County, Indiana
Cash & Investments Combined Statement - 2023**

Local Fund Number	Local Fund Name	Beg Cash & Inv Bal Jan. 1, 2023	Receipts	Disbursements	End Cash & Inv Bal Dec. 31, 2023
Governmental Activities					
1	Fire Fighting	\$95,111.20	\$8,915.98	\$8,000.00	\$96,027.18
3	Rainy Day	\$10,510.32	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,510.32
4	Township	\$70,791.62	\$10,340.19	\$6,635.53	\$74,496.28
5	Township Assistance	\$55,404.41	\$275.68	\$498.03	\$55,182.06
Total All Funds		\$231,817.55	\$19,531.85	\$15,133.56	\$236,215.84

CERTIFICATION
State of Indiana
SS:
Wells County
I, Bruce Herr, Trustee of JACKSON TOWNSHIP, Wells County, Indiana, do solemnly affirm under the penalty of perjury that the preceding report contains the information required by Indiana code 36-6-4-13, and is, true and correct; that the amounts with which I am charged in this report are all of the amounts received by me; and that the various items of expenditures credited have been fully paid in the amounts stated; that such payments were made without express or implied agreement that any portion thereof shall be retained by or repaid to me or to any other person. A complete abstract that contains the statements required under Indiana code 36-6-4-13(a)(5) and (a)(6) is available for inspection in the county auditor’s office.

I further affirm that a complete and detailed annual report, together with all accompanying vouchers showing the names of persons having been paid money by the township, have been filed as required by law in the office of the County Auditor, and that copies of such annual report are in custody of the Township Board and the State Board of Accounts. Said report is subject to inspection by any taxpayer of the township.

Bruce A. Herr
JACKSON TOWNSHIP Trustee
Telephone: 765-348-9160
This report was received, accepted, and approved by the Township Board at its annual meeting, this 31 day of Jan., 2023.
Jackson Township Board
Benjamin M. Morton
Bruce Leas
Greggory Vanover

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