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Make the friendship bracelets

To celebrate Valentine's Day, Taylor Reed's second grade classroom at Bluffton-Harrison Elementary School made friendship bracelets together. Pictured above, Reed ties MeKnylee DeLaGrange's bracelet.

The students each chose an affirming word from a card written by their peers to spell in beads. Below, Kennedy Russell shows her bracelet's word, "fun." At right, Dary Kaehr laughs with her Valentine's Day card. (Photos by Holly Gaskill)



Murder suspect receives initial hearing date

By SYDNEY KENT

A man accused of murdering his 72-year-old grandmother in her Marle home last year has been extradited from Georgia back to Indiana.

Anthony Castleman, 37, was booked into the Huntington County Jail at 11:20 p.m. on Tuesday.

The charges were filed in November after authorities located the body of Bernice "Dianna" Eubank, with multiple stab wounds and an apparent head injury.

According to court documents, Castleman's cousin told authorities that Castleman alluded to going to prison for an extended period and believed he fled to a neighboring state.

Castleman was ultimately located in Rochelle, Georgia, in late December. He refused to waive extradition, which extended the delay in his return to the state to face the charges alleged against him.

An initial hearing is set for 8:30 a.m. on Monday, Feb. 19 in the Huntington Circuit Court.



Anthony Castleman

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Staff survey reviews Norwell's strengths, threats

By HOLLY GASKILL

A recent survey found staff at Norwell Community Schools believed their increased dual-credit and CTE programs as the district's biggest improvement, while legislative actions present the largest threat.

In a follow-up to January's strategic planning session, Superintendent Mike Springer presented the school board with results from a staff survey of their opinions on the district's growth, successes and threats. According to Springer, 100 staff members responded.

Second to legislation, NWCS staff ranked "negative social media posts" as threatening to the district. It was followed by the influence of illegal drugs, better programming in other districts, and better achievement results at other school districts.

However, "legislative actions changing the goal posts" took first by a high margin — 71% of those surveyed ranked legislative actions as the first or second largest threat.

Board member Chad Kline noted that that number might surprise many people who don't work inside the school. "I'm not sure that the general public understands how much the legislative actions really affect education until you sit in this role, or you're sitting in the education role," he said. Multiple principals and assistant principals nodded in agreement in the audience.

Pertaining to this, Ossian Elementary School Principal Theresa Casto and Lancaster Elementary School Principal Ginger Butcher later advised the schools are reviewing reading curriculum that complies with the state's newest guidelines, centered around what is commonly referred to as the "science of reading."

Casto and Butcher announced plans to have staff review curriculum options and host a more focused group of options with families on March 13. The new curriculum will be implemented in the upcoming school year.

The survey also measured successes in areas previously identified as weaknesses or opportunities in a 2021-22 survey, with increased dual credit and CTE class offerings taking first.

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OES renovation will begin in March

By HOLLY GASKILL

Construction crews plan to begin renovating Ossian Elementary School during the school's upcoming spring break in the last week of March.

During their meeting Tuesday, the board for Norwell Community Schools unanimously approved an agreement with Weigand Construction, the group managing the project, with a guaranteed maximum price of \$1,868,301.

Representing Weigand, Dylan Markley told the board that the renovation should be completed by the end of summer break. Superintendent Mike Springer advised that administrators found it preferable to conclude the year with some work in the building rather than begin a new school year with it.

"A little bit of sacrifice right now ensures that we're hitting the door running in August, and we're not waiting for this project to be done," said Springer.

In June 2023, the board approved pursuing this "interior refresh" as it has been called, as well as new facilities for the baseball and football programs, under a \$6.105 million bond. The OES project will include reconfiguring classrooms for differentiated instruction, as well as new lockers, classroom cabinetry, student furniture, carpeting, and painting.

However, Springer stated that this will not include work on a set of boys' and girls' restrooms.

Springer explained that the bathrooms are not currently compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the renovation design had not originally considered that. Springer said the district is in the design process for the bathrooms and needed more time. He estimated that the bathrooms would be finished in 2025.

Meanwhile, the Norwell Middle

School project is making strides toward completion. Markley stated that crews have begun installing flooring and whiteboards and will switch over electricity on Presidents Day.

Work on the football and baseball buildings has also continued well, Markley said.

Board member Chad Kline noted that the school should consider a temporary restroom during the upcoming track season since the new facility will not be yet available. Springer advised that the school was working on a temporary solution.

The board later unanimously approved holding April 8 as an e-learning day in light of the total solar eclipse. The board has previously decided students would remain in school, but 70% of surveyed parents stated they would prefer an e-learning day or early dis-

(Continued on Page 2)

Property tax bills face resistance from local governments, schools

By LESLIE BONILLA MUÑIZ
Indiana Capital Chronicle

Growing numbers of Indiana communities have sought property tax levies beyond their traditional caps thanks to rising property values. But lawmakers want to make it harder.

To make a maximum levy appeal based on three-year assessed value growth — the most common appeal type — the growth must exceed a statewide

average growth quotient by at least 2%. New legislation would raise that to 4%, drawing opposition from multiple local units of government Tuesday.

House Bill 1120 would further tackle high property taxes by extending a cap on school operating referendum levies, forcing districts with certain debt service rates to put big projects on the ballot and mandating lower values for large homesteads.

"I understand we're trying to balance two important things: taxpayer relief and local control," said Oliver Barie, a lobbyist representing a group of northeast Indiana public schools. But schools, he said, stand to lose millions of dollars they'd otherwise receive.

The Senate Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee heard about 90 minutes of discussion on the bill but didn't vote on it. Rep. Jeff Thompson, R-Lizton, indicated some provisions weren't yet finalized.

Indiana restricts how much money local units of government can collect in property taxes. But they can also appeal their maximum levies for a list of reasons, including unexpected growth in assessed value.

Dozens of local taxing units — from libraries and townships to cities and counties — submitted 95 requests to review their maximum levies last year, according to

Department of Local Government records obtained by the Capital Chronicle. About 80% were based on assessed value growth.

DLGF partially or wholly approved 84 of the requests, allowing those units to collect \$40 million more from their taxpayers.

Thompson, however, said he hoped to cut the number of units eligible for the growth appeals in "half" through his legislation.

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Outside

Love blows out and rain blows in with strong gusts

Today	Friday	Saturday
High 45	High 33	High 28
Low 26	Low 21	Low 23

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OES renovation

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missal. Given further discussion of transportation and safety, the board approved the day as asynchronous e-learning, meaning a teacher will not lead instruction via live video.

Bluffton-Harrison schools and Southern Wells will also have e-learning days in light of the solar eclipse.

However, the NWCS board did not decide if the district will proceed with their latchkey programs, Bobcat Care and Bear Care, during the day. Several leaders expressed hesitation in offering the childcare, not knowing how many families would use the service or for how long.

"We're just not equipped for a 10 to 12-hour daycare program at this point, especially with asynchronous

e-learning," advised Ginger Butcher, principal at Lancaster Elementary School.

Board member Angie Topp suggested the schools survey families about their ability to find childcare and interest in using the latchkey program, as well as possibly entertaining requiring an RSVP or changing service fees. However, OES Principal Theresa Casto said the schools couldn't consider turning away families who needed childcare on the day of.

Ultimately, the group determined more factfinding was necessary before making a decision. The board agreed to revisit the matter at their next meeting, Feb. 27, at Norwell High School.

Also during the meeting, the board:

- Approved the termina-

tion of Demond Kessler, former NMS head track coach and 8th grade boys' basketball coach.

- Accepted resignations from custodian Matthew Musco, OES special education teaching assistant Kelsey (Nicole) Miller, OES teaching assistant Shanna Snyder, NHS teaching assistant Donna Lepper, NMS tennis coach Andrew Rodgers, NMS assistant golf coach Garrett Bucher, and food service employees Melissa Barns and Lisa Miller. Hannah Bastian, NMS math teacher, also resigned effective at the end of the school year.

- Approved the following employment recommendations: Robert Simons as NHS theater director, Cherie Harris as a short-term elementary teaching

assistant, Lillian Lovell for LES latchkey, Barbara Wering and Addison Berich as OES teaching assistants, Sue Elzey as an alternative school instructional assistant, Molly Kurtz as NMS head track coach and Amy Waldman as an assistant coach, Nicholas Ridenour as NMS assistant golf coach, Dennis Fairchild as NMS robotics assistant activity sponsor, and Max Murchland as a bus driver.

- Recognized a \$500 donation from Peyton's Northern Distribution Center in Bluffton to assist students needing lunch money.

- Formally declared a collection of old school instruments as of no value to the district, which was necessary before salvaging the materials.

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Property tax bill

(Continued from Page 1)
"I'm trying to at least push back on some of that," he added.

David Potter, a Republican member of the Danville Town Council, said the proposal would "handicap" the town's ability to "meet a growing demand for services."

He said that just 11% of the town's assessed value pays a "full rate" because some is tax-exempt and the rest hits the constitutional tax caps. The town made an appeal last year to bulk up its public safety services, but he said he's worried about the future.

Accelerate Indiana Municipalities' Jenna Bentley described the current limit as a "high bar for most to meet" and emphasized that qualifying for an appeal doesn't guarantee DLGF will approve one. Local units must back up their requests with extensive evidence of need.

Lawmakers take aim at school operating referendum levies

Assessed value growth also increases the amount of money school corporations collect through their operating referendum levies — and the amount taxpayers cough up. The levies are outside the tax caps.

Thompson hopes to extend a one-year cap on growth in levies approved before 2023. His bill would make the 3% growth cap permanent and add a growth factor.

Schools came out in force on Tuesday, with Barie remarking that growing, stable and shrinking institutions would all "still lose."

A fiscal analysis shows the proposal would affect 52 school corporations operating under pre-2023 levies. They'd collect \$35.2 million less than expected in 2025 and \$54 million less in 2026. The losses would continue until the levies expire.

Barie said the measure would create a "seemingly arbitrary inequity" among school corporations because corporations passing referenda beginning this year wouldn't be subject to the cap.

Brian Tomamichel, assistant operations superintendent at Westfield Washington Schools, said the district lost \$2 million in the cap's first year and expects to lose \$13.9 million over the life of a levy voters renewed two years ago — despite being a "fast-

growing" district.

Those voters, he said, knew what they'd get out of the levy: welding, Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps courses, an orchestra and more.

"Currently, all those programs are placed on hold until we can figure out how we're going to fund them," Tomamichel said. "Through this, we're actually going back to our community and saying 'Hey, we can't meet what we promised you because of the restrictions that have been put on us.'"

Tony Cook, a former lawmaker speaking on behalf of a growing and suburban schools group, criticized state-level digs at locally approved tax measures.

"What are we trying to do? Save the voters from themselves?" he asked.

The Indiana Chamber of Commerce previously testified in support of the provision, arguing lawmakers should get to decide how to handle the revenue "windfall" schools get during major property tax increases. No supporters testified Tuesday, however.

School debt also discussed
The bill would additionally extend a previously temporary provision pushing political subdivisions, like schools, with higher debt service tax rates toward referenda.

If subdivisions have debt service rates greater than 40 cents per \$100 of assessed value, any project that would be financed by bonds or a lease would be considered a "controlled project" — even if the cost doesn't meet traditional thresholds.

The designation comes with additional steps like public hearings. Property owners or registered voters in debt-heavy subdivisions could also request a petition and remonstrance process or referendum.

If the rates exceed 80 cents per \$100, subdivisions would be required to put the project on the ballot as a public question.

Scott Wyndham, the superintendent of the Avon Community School Corporation, said the change would require the district to hold a referendum for every debt issuance moving forward.

The growing district, he said, has issued debt for school construction and maintenance even as it's voluntarily lowered its tax rates.

"To spring this mandate on schools

... would really put in place impossible expectations," he said, given the school's 20-year bonds.

Schools expert Denny Costerison, representing a variety of stakeholder groups, said his main issue with the cap and debt provisions is that last year's legislation would've sunset both.

"As this bill is written, they become permanent tax policy," he said.

He asked the committee to leave the issue to a two-year task force examining the state's tax system and to act instead during a budget year. That prompted Rep. Travis Holdman, R-Markle — who is leading the task force — to confess nervousness at the number of witnesses turning to the body as a "relief valve."

Other provisions

Another stab at lowering property taxes would force county assessors to at least halve the value of homesteads on big lots.

In Indiana, homestead "sites" of up to one acre are taxed at lower rates than additional acres. Those are considered "residential excess" acres.

House Bill 1120 would require assessors to reduce the base value of the land by at least 50%. Witnesses, however, were skeptical of the idea.

"It doesn't really accomplish that that goal of giving relief," Bartholomew County Assessor Ginny Whipple, a Republican, told the committee.

She said that's because the state already requires assessors to value such land close to market value, so lowering the value of one part of the parcel would force an increase in another part.

Otherwise, Whipple said, DLGF won't approve the values. In that scenario, a local unit of government wouldn't be able to set a tax rate and wouldn't be able to collect taxes.

"Don't mess with the value. We assessors do value," Whipple concluded. She suggested that lawmakers — "if they must" make the change — consider a net tax deduction instead.

Thompson's legislation would also let disabled veterans with homes assessed at \$240,000 or less qualify for a property tax deduction, up from the current \$200,000 limits.

Veteran witnesses thanked lawmakers for the boost but cautioned they'd be back within years — like in the past — as property values continue to rise.

Weather

Thursday, February 15, 2024

(24-hour observations at 10:06 p.m. Wednesday)
High: 42; Low: 24; Precipitation: None
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.50 feet at 9:45 p.m. Wednesday

Wells County forecast

Today: Rain, mainly before 11 a.m. High near 45. Breezy, with a south wind 15 to 25 mph becoming northwest in the afternoon. Winds could gust as high as 40 mph. Chance of precipitation is 100%.

Tonight: Partly cloudy, with a low around 26. Northwest wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

Friday: A 50% chance of snow. Cloudy, with a high near 33. Northwest wind 5 to 10 mph.

Friday Night: A 30% chance of snow showers before 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 21. Northwest wind around 10 mph.

Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 28.

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 23.

Sunday: Sunny, with a high near 40. Breezy.

Sunday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 26.

Washington's Birthday: Sunny, with a high near 46.

Monday Night: A 20 percent chance of rain. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 33.

Tuesday: Partly sunny, with a high near 49.

Tuesday Night: A slight chance of rain. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 35.

Wednesday: A slight chance of rain. Partly sunny, with a high near 53.

Norwell surveys

(Continued from Page 1)

Staff ranked the increased dual credit and CTE class offerings as the largest improvement, with an average 4.45 rating out of 5. Following were facility improvements (4.29), new branding and marketing assets (3.89), and progress on special education programming (3.83).

Among initiatives to improve the district in the last several years — including other items like increasing pay, pre-K programming, and withdrawal from the Adams Wells Special Services Cooperative — 65% found all endeavors successful.

Two items drew the most responses for unsuccessful initiatives — 16% considered withdrawal from the AWSSC unsuccessful, and 22% considered the branding guide unsuccessful.

Springer expressed positivity in the overall results and how the district has made intentional choices to meet needs. Specifically, he highlighted how dual credit and CTE classes increased from seven to 47, ongoing construction projects and facility improvements, and the implementation of the district's cohesive branding guide.

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House Intelligence Committee chair delivers cryptic warning of serious national security threat

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Republican head of the House Intelligence Committee urged the Biden administration on Wednesday to declassify information about what he called a serious national security threat. A senior congressional aide speaking to The Associated Press pointed to concerns about Russian anti-satellite weapons.

Rep. Mike Turner gave no details about the nature of the threat, and the Biden administration also declined to address it. But several leading lawmakers, including House Speaker Mike Johnson, cautioned against being overly alarmed.

The congressional aide said he understood that the threat relates to a space-deployed Russian anti-satellite weapon. Such a weapon could pose a major danger to U.S. satellites that transmit billions of bytes of data each hour.

The aide, speaking on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter, said it was not yet clear if the Russian weapon has nuclear capability, but said that is the fear.

The threat Turner raised concerns about is not an active capability, according to a U.S. official familiar with the intelligence. The official, who was not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity, added that intelligence officials consider the threat to be significant, but it should not cause panic.

Turner issued a statement urging the administration to declassify the information so the U.S. and its allies can

openly discuss how to respond.

He also sent an email to members of Congress saying his committee had "identified an urgent matter with regard to a destabilizing foreign military capability" that should be known to all congressional policy makers. He encouraged them to come to a SCIF, a secure area, to review the intelligence.

Turner has been a voice for stronger U.S. national security, putting him at odds with some Republican colleagues who favor a more isolationist approach. He has called for the renewal of a key U.S. government surveillance tool while some fellow Republicans and liberal Democrats have raised privacy objections.

And he supports continuing U.S. military aid for Ukraine in its war against Russia at a time that the funding remains uncertain because of opposition in the Republican-led House.

Johnson said he was not at liberty to disclose the classified information. "But we just want to assure everyone steady hands are at the wheel. We're working on it and there's no need for alarm," he told reporters at the Capitol.

Democratic Rep. Jim Himes, the ranking member of the Intelligence Committee, said in a statement that the classified information is "significant" but "not a cause for panic."

The Senate Intelligence Committee said it has been tracking the issue.

"We continue to take this matter seriously and are discussing an appropriate response with the admin-

istration," Sen. Mark Warner, the Democratic committee chairman, and Sen. Marco Rubio, the Republican vice chairman, said in a statement. "In the meantime, we must be cautious about potentially disclosing sources and methods that may be key to preserving a range of options for U.S. action."

The rapidly evolving threat in space was one of the primary reasons that the U.S. Space Force was established in 2019. A lot of that threat has to do with new capabilities that China and Russia have already developed that can interfere with critical satellite-based U.S. communications, such as GPS and the ability to quickly detect missile launches.

In recent years the U.S. has seen both China and Russia pursue new ways to jam satellites, intercept their feeds, blind them, shoot them down and even potentially grab them with a robotic arm to pull them out of their programmed orbits. One of the key missions of the Space Force is to train troops skilled in detecting and defending against those threats.

In its 2020 Defense Space Strategy, the Pentagon said China and Russia presented the greatest strategic threat in space due to their aggressive development of counterspace abilities, and their military doctrine calling for extending conflict to space.

The White House and lawmakers expressed frustration at how Turner raised his concerns. His announcement appeared to catch the Biden administration off-guard.

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OBITUARIES

Kathryn "Kate" I. Walker, 96

Kathryn "Kate" I. Walker, 96, passed away on Sunday, Feb. 11, 2024, at her residence in Spring Hill, Tennessee.

She was born on Aug. 20, 1927, at home in Wells County, to Edward and Gladys (Kershner) White and graduated from Montpelier High School with the class of 1947. Kate retired from working at 3-M Company after 31 years of service.

On June 23, 1947, in Van Buren, Kathryn and Jerome M. Walker were married. He preceded her in death in 1990.

Survivors include her children, Judy (Bob) Winningham of Highland Village, Texas, Joyce Burke of Spring Hill, and Janet Frauhiger of Sarasota, Florida. She was a loving grandma to nine grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.



Kathryn is preceded in death by two daughters, Jean L. Walker in 2017 and Jill Walker Schmoyer in 2019.

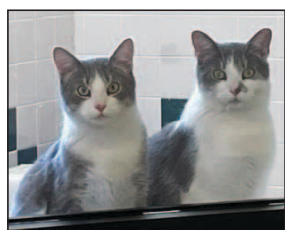
Funeral services will take place at 3 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 24, 2024, at the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton with Life Celebrant Jeff Lemler officiating. Burial will follow at Brookside Memorial Park in Montpelier.

Visitation will take place from 1-3 p.m. on Saturday, prior to the service at the funeral home.

Memorials may be made to Tunnel to Towers Foundation.

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

A Talk with Tego



Loki and Aeros are 1½-year-old, neutered males. They are a bonded pair.



JJ is a two-year-old, domestic short hair, neutered male.



Lane is a two-year-old, domestic short hair, neutered male.



Tego

Tego's Tips: The Wells County Animal Shelter can always use treats, toys, leashes, dog collars, blankets, towels, pet shampoo, pet combs/brushes, scratching posts, grooming clipper blades (sizes 5, 10, 30, 40 for Oster A-5), Advantage flea treatment (large dogs), canned food (kittens/puppies), cat litter (non-clumping), paper towels, Pine-sol, Windex, bleach, laundry soap, dish detergent. The Shelter is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Friday from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., by appointment only.

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

Lawmakers advance bill to speed up replacement of lead water lines

By CASEY SMITH
Indiana Capital Chronicle

A Senate bill that seeks to more quickly replace lead drinking water pipes across Indiana advanced in the opposite chamber on Tuesday with bipartisan support.

Senate Bill 5 — a priority measure for Senate Republicans — would expedite the replacement of thousands of lead service lines, and at a lower cost.

Specifically, the legislation requires landlords to enroll in a program to replace the lead pipes they own through their water utility or be forced to pay for it themselves.

The bill was unanimously approved by the House utilities committee Tuesday and now heads to Ways and Means.

"This is a very large problem in scope," said bill author Sen. Eric Koch, R-Bedford. He noted that the federal government and the Indiana Finance Authority already provide funding to drinking water utilities in the state to help offset the cost of replacing lead pipes to their customers. With regulatory approval, utilities can also pass some costs to ratepayers.

But pipe switchouts have so far been slowed by unresponsive property owners — which in many cases are out-of-state landlords — Koch said.

"What the companies have run into are recalcitrant, or non-responsive, property owners whose non-responsiveness slows the process," he continued. "And when that process is slowed, and they have to remobilize, it slows things down and raises the cost."

An off-the-cuff amendment adopted by the committee ensures a water utility attempts to use all other available remedies before completely disconnecting service, however.

Ditching lead water pipes
Lead pipes were banned by the 1986 Safe Drinking Water Act Lead Ban, but an estimated 265,000 lead pipes are still in use in Indiana, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

In 1991, the EPA established the Lead and Copper Rule to reduce lead and copper in drinking water.

Last November, the EPA proposed a newer rule to

require water systems to replace lead service lines within 10 years. Koch said Tuesday he thinks Indiana "can and should" move faster than the limit imposed by the EPA.

SB 5 creates a program to remove lead service lines at the utility's expense and no direct cost to homeowners.

The bill would allow utility companies, upon notice to schedule the service line replacement, to access the property if the owner does not enroll in the program or replace the service lines at their own expense within 45 days.

Renters are given the right to grant water utilities access to the property, too.

The bill would apply to any utility that has approval from the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission.

Koch's legislation would additionally establish a school lead testing and remediation program to make grants available for lead testing in schools.

Lead service pipes transport water from an underground main to a building's plumbing. Such pipes are more likely to be found in older cities and homes built before 1986.

The most common sources of lead in drinking water are lead pipes and brass or bronze faucets and fixtures, according to the EPA. The highly poisonous metal can enter drinking water when plumbing materials corrode.

Water utilities in Indiana are currently in the process of replacing lead service lines.

Indiana American Water, for example, said in a recent press release that more than half of the lead service lines in its service area have already been replaced.

Children exposed to lead can have trouble learning, behavioral issues, hearing impairment and poor kidney function. It can also cause high blood pressure, kidney failure and anemia in adults and seniors.

"Primary prevention is really the only way to combat lead poisoning, by reducing and eliminating sources of lead in the environment," said Dr. Jeremy Mescher, a pediatrician from Bloomington.

Indra Frank, the Hoosier Environmental Council's director of environmental

health and water policy, further said the bill will help achieve an "ultimate goal" of preventing lead "from getting into our children in the first place." She pointed to the Indiana Department of Health's most recent annual report, which showed that more than 850 Hoosier children had unsafe levels of lead in their blood.

Concerns around water shutoffs

But Rep. Matt Pierce, D-Bloomington, repeatedly expressed concerns about tenants in small rental units who "could bear the brunt" of a water shutoff if their landlord isn't responsive or cooperative when utilities seek to replace lead piping.

"If you have a recalcitrant owner, you can just go into the property, replace, and get the job done — or you've got this other option of disconnecting," Pierce said. "My concern is that might end up punishing the tenants who don't have any real control over the owner of the property."

Bridget O'Connor, representing Citizens Energy Group, maintained that "our first priority is replacing lines — we do not want to have to disconnect service."

Even so, the committee approved a change to the bill to make clear that disconnecting water service is a last resort and should only be an option when a utility has tried and failed to enter a property.

Maurice L. Moser

Calling: 12 - 3 p.m.
Friday, February 16.
Funeral: 3 p.m. Friday,
February 16 at the funeral home.



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Police Notebook

INCIDENTS

City:

Monday, 4:29 p.m., 1300 block of West Scott Street. Caller reported black dog barking at her on her property. Dog went home.

Monday, 4:31 p.m., Save On Liquor South. Officer assisted woman with tire change.

Monday, 9:53 p.m., Dollar Tree. Report of stolen wallet.

Monday, 10:12 p.m., Walmart. Caller reported subject following her around store.

Tuesday, 12:35 p.m., Pine Grove Apartments. Report of harassment.

Tuesday, 8:23 p.m., South Marion and West South streets. Caller reported they were bitten by neighbor's dog while walking outside.

Tuesday, 9:23 p.m., North Main and West Water streets. Driver cited for expired license and no proof of insurance. Officer removed

false sticker from license plate and noted he would contact Outdoor Solutions regarding a stolen sticker off of their work truck.

County:
Tuesday, 12:35 p.m., Wells County Jail. Warrant served to Ali Ram Zar.

Tuesday, 2:57 p.m., Wells County Courthouse. Officer transported subject to the Adams County Jail.

Tuesday, 3:36 p.m., Wells County Jail. Warrant served to Bradley Cottier.

Tuesday, 3:37 p.m., Wells County Jail. Warrant served to Joshua Aber.

Tuesday, 5:59 p.m., 4600 East 400 North, Craigville. Report of a goat in the roadway, baaaad for traffic.

Wednesday, 12:46 a.m., Taco Bell. Officer conducted traffic stop, driver blew .148 PBT. Jacob Aaron Stout arrested for operating while intoxicated.

Ossian:
Tuesday, 5:30 p.m.,

700 block of Leatherwood Lane, Ossian. Officer observed child walking alone when a vehicle pulled up and the child got in the vehicle. Officer spoke to everyone in the vehicle and at the home to confirm child was safe.

Tuesday, 6:54 p.m., North 100 East and East 900 North, Ossian. Driver cited for speeding.

ARRESTS

Andrew Michael Castaneda, 24, Bluffton; burglary, a Level 6 felony. Bond set at \$5,000.

Brittany Ann Meyers, 34, Marion; driving while suspended — prior, a Class A misdemeanor. Bond set at \$189.48 cash.

Ali Rammer, 34, Fort Wayne; false informing, a Class B misdemeanor. No bond set.

Bradley M. Cotter, 38, Lewisburg, Ohio; nonsupport of a dependent, a Level 6 felony. Bond set at \$5,000.



Ready to entertain you

The Creative Arts Theater cast of "Noir Suspicions" will be ready to entertain you on either Friday, Feb. 16 at 7 p.m. or on Saturday, Feb. 17 at 3 p.m. at the New Life Church auditorium in Bluffton. Left to right are Ralph Tuttle, Johanne Lichtsinn, Kinlee Taylor, Amanda Baldauf, Jon Webber, Tim Bryan, Matt Elwell, Dave Shepherd and Heather Barkley. Show tickets, available at the door, are \$15 for adults and \$10 for those 12 and younger. (Photo provided)

House child care bill moves forward

By WHITNEY
DOWNARD

Indiana Capital Chronicle
A bill that would increase the number of children allowed to be supervised by unlicensed home providers advanced with full-throated Republican support over the concerns of Democrats on Wednesday.

House Bill 1102 would allow such home-based providers to supervise up to seven children before licensing, an increase from the current maximum of five. Additionally, programs operating out of schools will be exempt from licensing requirements, so long as they meet health and safety standards.

But Sens. Shelli Yoder and J.D. Ford, both Democrats, worried about increasing the number of children supervised by home providers because children related to the provider don't count toward the state maximum.

Testimony from the Family and Social Services Administration shared minimum staffing ratios for center-based providers, which are: one adult for four

infants and one adult for five two-year-old children. By age three, one teacher can supervise up to ten children.

Theoretically, she said, a home provider could have four young children at home on top of the seven allowed under the bill.

"This just makes me uncomfortable ... expanding in this way without addressing the number of children that might be present in the home already from the parent," said Yoder, of Bloomington.

Indianapolis' Ford additionally wondered about background checks for visitors at home-based centers, which prompted Sen. Liz Brown to fire back about

government overreach in private homes and she implored the committee to "put our reasonable hats on."

"For some people having 11 to 12 children in a home might be too much, for others that might be just their family," said Brown, R-Fort Wayne.

Requiring something like background checks for every visitor would be an astronomical cost, she said, and "the very families who need help, who need more opportunities and choices, we would be undercutting them" if implemented.

The bill moved on a 8-2 vote with support from Republicans and moves to the Senate.

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Bill eliminating Gary lawsuit sets dangerous precedent

When I was in the active practice of law, I was used to winning some cases and losing others. When my client lost at the trial level, I would sometimes appeal to a higher court if I felt the legal rules had not been applied correctly at the trial court level. Regardless of the result, I respected the judicial process and the role our courts played in resolving disputes.



Paul Helmke

A bill now moving through the General Assembly threatens to upend Indiana's judicial system.

House Bill 1235, introduced by Rep. Chris Jeter, R-Fishers, and already passed by the Indiana House, is intended to end an almost 25-year-old case brought by the City of Gary by changing the legal rules on who can bring a case to court retroactively. The details of the case should not be the main concern here; rather, we should look more closely at and fully understand the dangerous precedent this bill will set.

Hoosier Opinions

When two parties are engaged in litigation both sides are entitled to a judicial process where there is a judge who acts as an umpire of sorts as the case proceeds toward an eventual trial. There is an appeals process to resolve significant legal issues that may arise during any lawsuit. Sometimes you win, and sometimes you lose, but the legal process is one that all parties follow out of respect for our system of law.

In the City of Gary's case, they have gone through the appellate process three separate times and significant legal issues about the lawsuit have been heard by the Indiana Court of Appeals as well as the Indiana Supreme Court. These appellate courts in Indiana have determined — not once, not twice, but three times — that Gary's case has merit and should proceed to a jury trial. Yet, the defendants in this lawsuit will not accept these rulings.

HB 1235 is unprecedented in its reach and brazenness. Unlike previous versions of legislation where gun manufacturers are shielded from lawful activity, HB 1235 could shield an entire industry from unlawful activity — even when it is knowingly unlawful. This legislation prohibits all cities and towns in Indiana from seeking judicial recourse for any harm caused by a "firearm or ammunition manufacturer, trade association, seller or dealer."

In other words, the General Assembly would be placing an entire industry above the law. In addition, it would retroactively take the option of bringing a lawsuit like this away from local elected officials and transfer it to the Indiana Attorney General.

HB 1235 would strip power from the judicial branch and transfer it to the legislative branch. Checks and balances are the lifeblood of our democracy. The U.S. and Indiana Constitutions provide for the separation of powers to prevent one branch from usurping the powers of other branches. Taking one branch's power from another puts a thumb on the scale and tips it in one direction.

Five of the defendants in Gary's lawsuit sit on the board of the trade organization that has endorsed and promoted this bill, which would conveniently get rid of the lawsuit they're facing. It is clear why this bill has been introduced and why it is empowering one branch at the expense of another — and, ultimately, who benefits.

There's more at stake here for all of Indiana than one lawsuit. This bill is an attack on the separation of powers, Indiana's judicial system, and the rule of law. If this can happen in this case, why not in others? Lose in the courts? Don't worry, if you have the clout, ask your legislators to change the rules, retroactively, to save you.

Legislators must consider the consequences of undermining Indiana's Constitution and setting such a dangerous and unwarranted precedent. They should reject HB 1235 and let the facts and evidence — and the courts — decide this case.

Paul Helmke is Professor of Practice at the O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs, Indiana University in Bloomington. He previously served as mayor of Fort Wayne from 1988-2000.

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Feb. 15, the 46th day of 2024. There are 320 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Feb. 15, 1965, singer Nat King Cole, who despite facing extreme racism throughout his short career sold more than 50 million records that included massive hits such as "Mona Lisa" and "Route 66," died in Santa Monica, California. He was 45.

On this date: In 1764, the site of present-day St. Louis was established by Pierre Laclède and Auguste Chouteau.

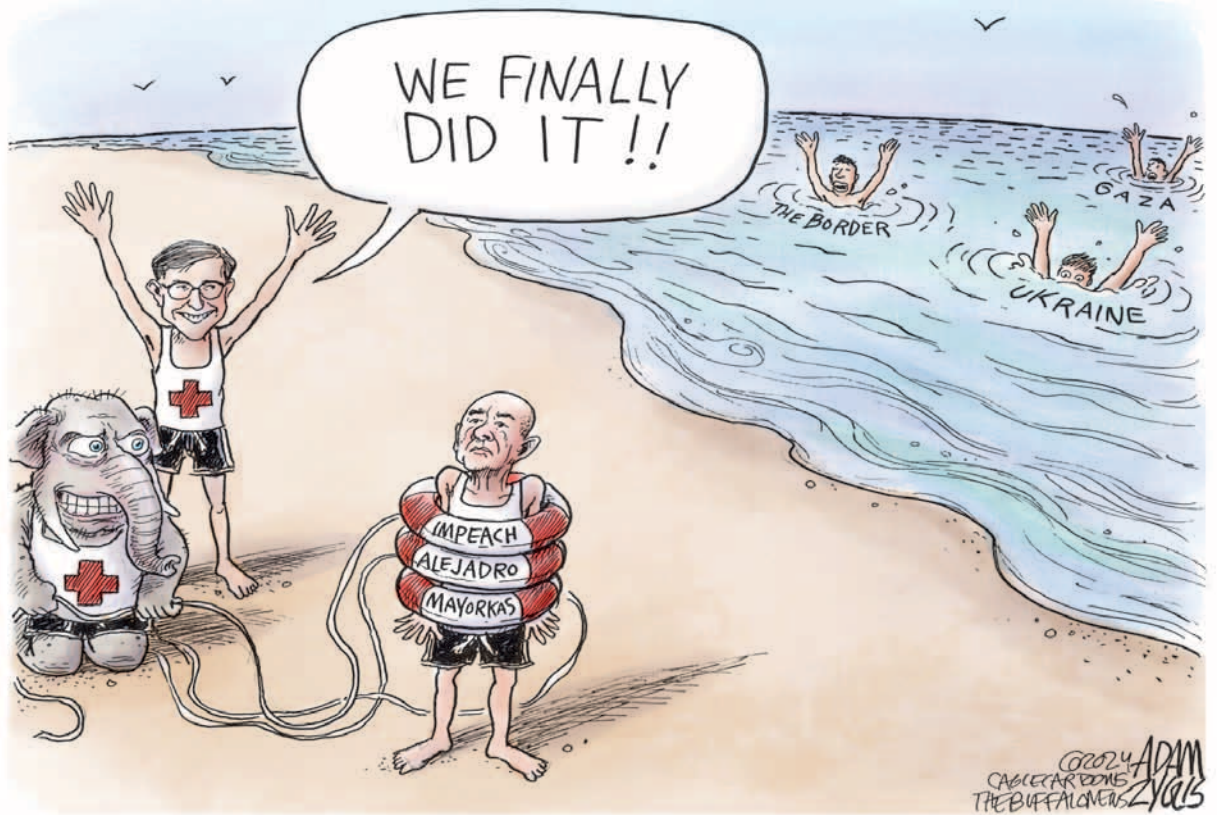
In 1879, President Rutherford B. Hayes signed a bill allowing female attorneys to argue cases before

the Supreme Court.

In 1898, the U.S. battleship Maine mysteriously blew up in Havana Harbor, killing more than 260 crew members and bringing the United States closer to war with Spain.

In 1933, President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt escaped an assassination attempt in Miami that mortally wounded Chicago Mayor Anton J. Cermak; gunman Giuseppe Zangara was executed more than four weeks later.

In 1961, 73 people, including an 18-member U.S. figure skating team en route to the World Championships in Czechoslovakia, were killed in the crash of a Sabena Airlines Boeing 707 in Belgium.



Republicans, once a noble party, fall to ignoble acts on Ukraine aid

In its 170 years, the Republican Party has had occasions of nobility. In its infancy, it redefined the Union while preserving it. Ten decades later, larger percentages of House and Senate Republicans than of House and Senate Democrats voted for the nation-transforming 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

Today, however, substantial numbers of insubstantial congressional Republicans are contemplating an ignoble act whose imprudence exceeds even its pettiness. These Republicans could, by denying Ukraine the material means of resistance, hand Russian President Vladimir Putin a victory that might be just the beginning of Putin's war for the restoration of "Greater Russia."

Putin, who has made two wagers, quickly lost the first when he failed to quickly overrun Ukraine. He might, however, win his second wager: that the United States will live down to his disdain for what he considers its decadence. Surely his contempt is partly a response to former president Donald Trump's political durability, which Putin understands is evidence of America's retreat from seriousness.

Just 22 Republican senators — 45 percent of their party's caucus — helped pass the bill that would provide, inter alia, aid to Ukraine. In the House, however, Speaker Mike Johnson's opaque thinking and uncertain skill might leave the bill at the mercy of the isolationist faction within Johnson's caucus.

It is actually charitable to ascribe to cynical opportunism these legislators' pandering to their most Trumpian constituents. The alternative is to convict the legislators of believing two preposterous things: that our nation cannot afford to aid Ukraine and cannot manage to address the southern border crisis while aiding Ukraine.

In 1862, the annus horribilis of Shiloh, Antietam and Fredericksburg, Congress, while funding and supervising resistance to secession, passed the Homestead Act (accelerating settlement of the Great Plains), the Morrill Act (creating land-grant colleges) and the Pacific Railway Act (speeding completion of the transcontinental railroad). Time was, Congress could do several things simultaneously. Today's legislators cannot even budget: In the past decade, the government has operated under continuing resolutions 36 percent of the time.

Since February 2022, all U.S. assistance to Ukraine, military and other, has totaled \$75.4 billion, much of it spent here replenishing U.S. war materiel.



George Will

Even adding the \$60 billion in the Senate bill, the total U.S. cost so far would be less than the cost of servicing the national debt for three months. And less than the \$200 billion (a low estimate) of Medicare and Medicaid fraud since the war began two years ago next week.

If Putin swallows Ukraine, he will have a combat-seasoned military and a revived military industrial base to serve his undiminished revanchism. The Institute for the Study of War says this would require deploying to Eastern Europe a sizable portion of U.S. ground forces, and the stationing in Europe a large number of stealth aircraft, forcing "a terrible choice" between defending Taiwan and other Asian allies, and deterring or defeating a Russian attack on a NATO member.

Sweden's prime minister has warned Swedes (in the Financial Times' words) "to prepare mentally for war." Last week, Denmark's defense minister said: "It cannot be ruled out that within a three- to five-year period, Russia will test Article 5 and NATO solidarity." Article 5 commits NATO to treat an attack on one member as an attack on all. It is what Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) calls "the commitment that has underpinned the longest drought of great-power conflict in human history."

Ukraine's survival, as well as perhaps the prevention of wars in the Baltic states and the Taiwan Strait, depends on Johnson's desire and ability — neither might exist — to prevent House Republicans from compelling Ukraine's capitulation. Johnson was made speaker to temporarily halt renewable Republican chaos. He can be toppled by a small faction of the large portion of his caucus that likes being on a leash held by Trump, whose feelings about NATO are not much warmer than Putin's.

Rallying a reluctant nation to persevere in even inexpensive foreign undertakings requires persistent presidential rhetoric of the sort President Franklin D. Roosevelt used to coax a largely isolationist public to enable Lend-Lease and other measures against rampant fascism. Today's sad, faded president is incapable of performing this quintessential presidential function in support of his own convictions and policy.

An America whose empathy is so shriveled that it will not help to sustain Ukraine's heroism had better hope that the world has exhausted its supply of nasty surprises. Such an America is unprepared for any future that resembles the past.

georgewill@washpost.com

Versatile wood ash brings back memories

Some may have missed the fact that yesterday's Valentine's Day was also Ash Wednesday. For those aware it was possible to not only enjoy a box of chocolates from your sweet other, but also share a pot of ash tea to wash down the sweetness.

Yes, the ashes left over from the last patio pan fire (or fireplace if available) could have been used for tea. However, wood ash tea has never really been recommended for a Valentine sweetheart. In truth, ash tea is best reserved for the future garden varieties of plants that thrive with the drink. Corn and tomatoes benefit with a bit of a drink, now and again.

Don't get carried away. Wood ash tea boosts soil pH by providing more calcium and potassium. Who needs tomatoes drunk on an overindulgence of wood ash tea? Plants might feel like you did yesterday after overindulging in too many chocolates at one time.

If you have no recipe, there's one for the season ahead. Three pounds of wood ash steeped in a 30-gallon trash bin.

A compost tea can be created by gardeners who recycle plant life. A small amount of ash from that wiener roast, alternated between layers of the compost pile, will add desired calcium and potassium plus smaller amounts of aluminum, magnesium, phosphorus, and sodium, saving the cost of buying those nutrients.

Do garden research, unless you already achieved gardener geekdom. Acid-lovers, like rhododendrons and azaleas, will not like you upping their alkaline soil.

The wood ash tea is safer an application for necessary plants. Tea preferred over applying wood ash

Angelkeep Journals

directly from the ash bucket. If ash is applied directly in the garden bed, the plants' stems and leaves must be washed afterward. Surely the breeze blows some ash directly on plants. Not good.

Wood ashes can be used as a household cleaner. A bit of water mixed with ash, forming a paste, creates a mild abrasive for tarnished metals, dirty glass, and removing that sticky adhesive from a label. Pioneer-style Goo Gone. Heaven's yes, even use this paste to clean up those golf club irons.

Angelkeep could use the first patio pan fire ashes to shine up those patio wall double hung window panes. Well, maybe, after the book's reading is completed.

Wood ashes have a tendency to repel certain less-than-desirable critters. Dribble a line of cooled ash to form a ring around garden plants. It's like a ring of fire that pests like slugs, snails, and even ants will think twice before crossing. The downside is the fact it needs reapplied after each rain.

Wood ashes can provide some safe traction on those winter left-over icy sidewalks Indiana winter is noted for providing. Rock salt melts ice, but also pits concrete. Bagged sidewalk de-icer granules are expensive. Wood ashes are free. However, guys, don't track the ashes back into the house on the carpet or you just might undue all the love achieved with yesterday's big box of Valentine's Day choco-



Alan Daugherty

lates.

And guys, if you do your own oil changes, you probably have the occasional auto liquid or oil spill. Don't fret. Grab your ashes. Ashes are absorbent. Allow ample soak time. Grab the shop vac. Angelkeep accepts no responsibility for handymen who don't save a filled reserved ash bucket and attempt to use live ashes for any vehicle liquid spill. Angelkeep will read about such a foolish move in News-Banner's listing of Bluffton first-responder activities.

Angelkeep gave up on self-applied vehicle maintenance after the first vehicle owned. The 1956 Olds 88, V-8, two-door two-toned gray coupe, had a fish-mouth grill. It was traded in Ossian in 1966 for a used four-on-the-floor, bucket seats, flat six, four-door, two-toned hardtop . . . wait for it . . .

Corvaire. Ah, but that old Oldsmobile. Wish it yet lived at Angelkeep. When purchased as a used vehicle from Dick Reimschisel, back in the day, Reimschisel ran the Airplane Service Station, back when stations really did service. Attendants pumped your gas at three gallons per dollar. Washed your windshield too.

The original Olds owner covered the seats with a double layer of seat covers on its first day of use. The original upholstery was cherry. Angelkeep fondly remembers nights in those seats, the Bluffton Drive-In Theater, a going-steady Valentine sweetheart, steamed-over windshield . . .

And that's all the News-Banner page 4 space we have for this week's Angelkeep Journals.

Mr. Daugherty is a Wells County resident who, along with his wife Gwen, enjoy their backyard and have named it "Angelkeep."

The News-Banner

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Holly Gaskill, Editor
Mark Miller, Opinion Page Editor

Family strains and friend flakes

Dear Annie: My husband and I are both in our second marriages, and we've been together nearly 27 years. I have no children. He has two grown sons. The younger one has lived with us since he was 11 years old. The older one was 17 when I moved in, and he decided to live with his mother instead of staying with us. Somehow, he resents both me and his brother, even though I have been nothing but welcoming to him.

Over the years, he has lashed out with hateful words and actions. At one point, he told his father and me that we were not welcome in his home and wouldn't allow us to see his children. This rift lasted many years until, finally, everyone made up. Things were good for a while and then fell apart again.

I've decided I've had enough of this toxic relationship. His brother as well as his grown children have no relationship with him. And now neither do I. The problem is, this is creating tension in my marriage, putting a wedge between me and my husband and causing a lot of arguments. My husband is the only family member who keeps in touch with him. He remarried several years ago and is expecting a baby. My husband wants me to let bygones be bygones and forgive him. I HAVE forgiven him; I just don't want a relationship with him. I don't know how to resolve this situation, and I would truly appreciate your advice. — Seeking Serenity

Dear Seeking: You've been through the wringer dealing with the older son's drama, and wanting to take a step back from the toxicity is understandable. It sounds like your husband is holding onto hope for a family reunion that might never happen. Having a heart-to-heart about your boundaries is key here. Let him know it's not about holding a grudge but

about protecting your own mental health.

Consider bringing in a professional, like a counselor, to navigate this conversation. You're not alone in wanting a drama-free life. Your next step is communicating this with your husband.

Dear Annie: My dear friend is turning into a chronic flake, constantly canceling plans at the last minute with vague excuses. It's becoming a bit of a pattern, and truth be told, it's hurting my feelings. I can feel the resentment building up.

How do I address this without turning it into a full-blown fight? I genuinely want to keep her friendship, but these constant cancellations are really getting on my nerves. — Flaked On and Frustrated

Dear Flaked On: Honesty is the best policy here. Share that you value your connection and want to understand what's going on. It could be that life is throwing curveballs her way. Remember, relationships that weather storms often come out stronger. An open conversation might bring clarity and even end up strengthening your bond.

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

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Dear Annie

by Annie Lane



BEETLE BAILEY



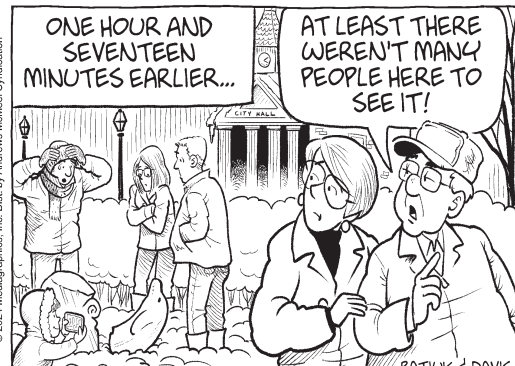
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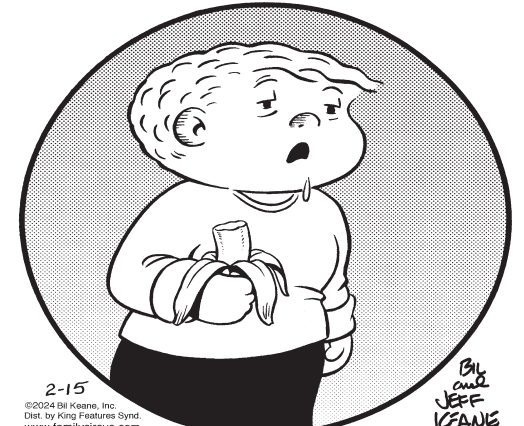


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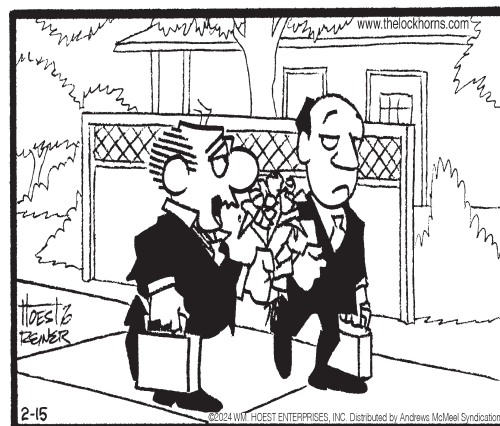


THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane



The LOCKHORNS



My Answer

By Dr. Billy Graham



The Bible speaks of men and women who made a profound impact on generations that followed

once said, "Wise counsel to the younger is the duty of the aged." While people cannot make others seek the wisdom of the aged, the elderly should speak out for the truth and pray the Lord will open ears, minds, and hearts to what wisdom has to say. And the Bible has a great deal to say to every generation.

In the day that Israel was experiencing economic ruin, the prophet Joel declared, "Hear this, you elders, and give ear... has anything like this happened in your days, or even in the days of your fathers? Tell your children about it, let your children tell their children, and their children another generation.

(Joel 1:2-3, NKJV). The prophet is reminding the experienced, older generation to recall times past when they had gone through similar calamities and how, when they turned back to God, He faithfully restored them.

How often do the elderly gather to teach the young what they learned during similar times? The Bible speaks of men and women who made a profound impact on generations that followed. And today, their words live on.

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

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Question: I'm a baby boomer caught between the greatest generation and Generation X. My generation is in a quandary of how its children don't understand how to get through the next hour without an iPhone in hand, caught up with hoping the government forgives their student loans while they seek to buy their "dream home" at age 30. They don't want to hear older people share what they've learned during hard times when society battled economic and moral failures. Does the Bible speak to this great divide? — T.G.

Answer: Someone

02/15	M	A	D1	D2	5 PM	5:30	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30	12 AM	12:30		
WINM (12)	11	26	63		W Camp Manna (2018, Comedy) Gary Bussey, Jimmy Tatro, Luke Klein.	Creflo Dollar	Joseph Prince	Morris	TCT Today	Joyce Meyer	Perry Stone	James Robison	Dr. Robert Jeffrey	Jewish Jesus	Andrew Womack	Ask the Pastor	Today With God					
CBS WANE (15)	2	15	15		News (N) Inside Edition (N)	News at 6 (N)	CBS News (N)	Wheel of Fortune (N)	Jeopardy! (N)	Sheldon	Ghosts (N)	So Help Me "Iceland Was Horrible" (SP) (N)	Tracker "Klamath Falls" (N)	Nightcast (N)	(35) Late Show-Colbert (N)	(35) After Mid. (N)						
Antenna WANE-2 (152)	106	20			Chicago P.D. "What Do You Do" (N)	Chicago P.D. "What Puts You on That Ledger" (N)	Chicago P.D. "Say Her Real Name" (N)	Chicago P.D. "Get Back to Even" (N)	Chicago P.D. "The Three Gs" (N)	Chicago P.D. "The Number of Rats" (N)	Chicago P.D. "There's My Girl" (N)	Chicago P.D. "There's My Girl" (N)	Chicago P.D. "There's My Girl" (N)	Chicago P.D. "There's My Girl" (N)	Chicago P.D. "There's My Girl" (N)	Chicago P.D. "There's My Girl" (N)	Chicago P.D. "There's My Girl" (N)	Chicago P.D. "There's My Girl" (N)	Chicago P.D. "There's My Girl" (N)	Chicago P.D. "There's My Girl" (N)	Chicago P.D. "There's My Girl" (N)	
ABC WPTA (21)	4	3	21	21	ABC21 News at 5 (N)	ABC21 (N)	ABC World News (N)	ABC21 (N)	Ent. Tonight (N)	Press Your Luck "Vroom! Vroom!" (N)	Truth-Lies Examining the Fundamentalist-Latter-Day Saints community, & the life of its founder, Warren Jeffs.	ABC21 (N)	ABC21 (N)	ABC21 (N)	ABC21 (N)	ABC21 (N)	ABC21 (N)	ABC21 (N)	ABC21 (N)	ABC21 (N)	ABC21 (N)	
NBC WPTA-2 (212)	7	8	14		Family Feud 25 Words or Less (N)	News (N)	NBC News (N)	Family Feud (N)	Family Feud (N)	Law & Order	Law & Order: Special Victims Unit	Law & Order: Organized Crime	Law & Order: Organized Crime	Law & Order: Organized Crime	Law & Order: Organized Crime	Law & Order: Organized Crime	Law & Order: Organized Crime	Law & Order: Organized Crime	Law & Order: Organized Crime	Law & Order: Organized Crime	Law & Order: Organized Crime	
MNT WPTA-3 (213)	10	9	56	34	The King of Queens	The King of Queens	Modern Family	News (N)	Last Man Standing	Dateline "Deadly Triangle" (N)	Chicago P.D. "Say Her Real Name" (N)	Chicago P.D. "Say Her Real Name" (N)	Chicago P.D. "Say Her Real Name" (N)	Chicago P.D. "Say Her Real Name" (N)	Chicago P.D. "Say Her Real Name" (N)	Chicago P.D. "Say Her Real Name" (N)	Chicago P.D. "Say Her Real Name" (N)	Chicago P.D. "Say Her Real Name" (N)	Chicago P.D. "Say Her Real Name" (N)	Chicago P.D. "Say Her Real Name" (N)	Chicago P.D. "Say Her Real Name" (N)	
CW WISE (38)	4	4	33	33	The Steve Wilkos Show	TMZ Live (N)	Dish Nation (N)	TMZ (N)	The Connors	The Connors	Son of a Critch (N)	Children Ruin (N)	Dish Nation (N)	TMZ (N)	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	
PBS WFWA (39)	13	5	39	39	Icon: Music Through the Lens "On the Wall" (N)	PBS NewsHour (N)	BBC News America	Arts in Focus	This Old House (N)	This Old House (N)	Miss Scarlet "The Fugitive" (N)	Funny Woman	Amanpour and Company (N)	This Old House	Ask This Old House	Ask This Old House	Ask This Old House	Ask This Old House	Ask This Old House	Ask This Old House	Ask This Old House	
PBS WFPB (49)	3	6			Icon: Music Through the Lens "On the Wall" (N)	Context	PBS NewsHour (N)	Now Enter "Cicero 1" (N)	Freedom Is Written	Vienna Blood "The Devil's Kiss: Part 1" (N)	The Seaside Hotel "No Germans Here" (N)	FOX 55 News First at 10 (N)	Young Sheldon	Young Sheldon	Neighbor	Neighbor	Neighbor	Neighbor	Neighbor	Neighbor	Neighbor	
FOX WFFT (55)	6	5	55	55	WFFT Fox News at 5 (N)	WFFT Fox News at 6 (N)	Big Bang	Big Bang	Next Level Chef (N)	Next Level Chef (N)	Next Level Chef (N)	Next Level Chef (N)	Next Level Chef (N)	Next Level Chef (N)	Next Level Chef (N)	Next Level Chef (N)	Next Level Chef (N)	Next Level Chef (N)	Next Level Chef (N)	Next Level Chef (N)	Next Level Chef (N)	
CABLE CHANNELS																						
LIFE	23	113	108	252	Castle "Tone Death"	Castle "Witness for the Prosecution"	Theresa Caputo "Theresa's Holy House"	Theresa Caputo "A Very Caputo Wedding"	Theresa Caputo "Hello, London!" (N)	(05) Baby (N)	(35) Baby (N)	(05) Theresa Caputo "Hello, London!" (N)	Theresa Caputo "A Very Caputo Wedding"	(05) Baby (N)	(35) Baby (N)	(05) Theresa Caputo "Hello, London!" (N)	Theresa Caputo "A Very Caputo Wedding"	(05) Baby (N)	(35) Baby (N)	(05) Theresa Caputo "Hello, London!" (N)	Theresa Caputo "A Very Caputo Wedding"	
FX	24	132	136	148	*** The Equalizer 2 Denzel Washington.	*** Fast & Furious 6	*** Fast & Furious 6	*** Fast & Furious 6	*** Fast & Furious 6	*** Fast & Furious 6	*** Fast & Furious 6	*** Fast & Furious 6	*** Fast & Furious 6	*** Fast & Furious 6	*** Fast & Furious 6	*** Fast & Furious 6	*** Fast & Furious 6	*** Fast & Furious 6	*** Fast & Furious 6	*** Fast & Furious 6	*** Fast & Furious 6	
TVLAND	25		106	304	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	
E!	26	142	114	236	*** Men in Black II	*** Men in Black II	*** Men in Black II	*** Men in Black II	*** Men in Black II	*** Men in Black II	*** Men in Black II	*** Men in Black II	*** Men in Black II	*** Men in Black II	*** Men in Black II	*** Men in Black II	*** Men in Black II	*** Men in Black II	*** Men in Black II	*** Men in Black II	*** Men in Black II	
PARMT	30	241	241	241	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	
ESPN	31	50	140	206	Around (N)	Pardon (N)	SportsCenter	Wm. Basketball South Carolina at Tennessee From Thompson-Boling Arena in Knoxville, Tenn. (L) (N)	College Basketball Colorado at UCLA From Pauley Pavilion in Los Angeles. (L) (N)	College Basketball Stanford at Washington (L) (N)	College Basketball Colorado at UCLA From Pauley Pavilion in Los Angeles. (L) (N)	College Basketball Colorado at UCLA From Pauley Pavilion in Los Angeles. (L) (N)	College Basketball Colorado at UCLA From Pauley Pavilion in Los Angeles. (L) (N)	College Basketball Colorado at UCLA From Pauley Pavilion in Los Angeles. (L) (N)	College Basketball Colorado at UCLA From Pauley Pavilion in Los Angeles. (L) (N)	College Basketball Colorado at UCLA From Pauley Pavilion in Los Angeles. (L) (N)	College Basketball Colorado at UCLA From Pauley Pavilion in Los Angeles. (L) (N)	College Basketball Colorado at UCLA From Pauley Pavilion in Los Angeles. (L) (N)	College Basketball Colorado at UCLA From Pauley Pavilion in Los Angeles. (L) (N)	College Basketball Colorado at UCLA From Pauley Pavilion in Los Angeles. (L) (N)	College Basketball Colorado at UCLA From Pauley Pavilion in Los Angeles. (L) (N)	
FSMW	33		418	971	Live on the Line	In the Spotlight	Focused	Life Missouri	Pregame (N)	NHL Hockey Edmonton Oilers at St. Louis Blues From Enterprise Center in St. Louis, Mo. (L) (N)	Blues Post. (L) (N)	United Fight Alliance	World Poker WPT Cash Game - Part 3	World Poker WPT Cash Game - Part 3	World Poker WPT Cash Game - Part 3	World Poker WPT Cash Game - Part 3	World Poker WPT Cash Game - Part 3	World Poker WPT Cash Game - Part 3	World Poker WPT Cash Game - Part 3	World Poker WPT Cash Game - Part 3	World Poker WPT Cash Game - Part 3	
USA	34	133	105	242	Law & Order: SVU "Sunk Cost Fallacy"	Law & Order: SVU "Remember Me"	Law & Order: SVU "Remember Me"	Law & Order: SVU "Remember Me"	Law & Order: SVU "Remember Me"	Law & Order: SVU "Remember Me"	Law & Order: SVU "Remember Me"	Law & Order: SVU "Remember Me"	Law & Order: SVU "Remember Me"	Law & Order: SVU "Remember Me"	Law & Order: SVU "Remember Me"	Law & Order: SVU "Remember Me"	Law & Order: SVU "Remember Me"	Law & Order: SVU "Remember Me"	Law & Order: SVU "Remember Me"	Law & Order: SVU "Remember Me"	Law & Order: SVU "Remember Me"	
DISC	35	72	182	278	Caught!	Caught!	Caught!	Caught!	Caught!	Caught!	Caught!	Caught!	Caught!	Caught!	Caught!	Caught!	Caught!	Caught!	Caught!	Caught!	Caught!	
TLC	36	73	183	280	90 Day "Take a Chance"	90 Day Diaries	90 Day Diaries	90 Day Diaries	90 Day Diaries	90 Day Diaries	90 Day Diaries	90 Day Diaries	90 Day Diaries	90 Day Diaries	90 Day Diaries	90 Day Diaries	90 Day Diaries	90 Day Diaries	90 Day Diaries	90 Day Diaries	90 Day Diaries	
HIST	38	77	120	269	Swamp People "The Final Battle"	Swamp People "Come Hell or Low Water"	Swamp People "Come Hell or Low Water"	Swamp People "Come Hell or Low Water"	Swamp People "Come Hell or Low Water"	Swamp People "Come Hell or Low Water"	Swamp People "Come Hell or Low Water"	Swamp People "Come Hell or Low Water"	Swamp People "Come Hell or Low Water"	Swamp People "Come Hell or Low Water"	Swamp People "Come Hell or Low Water"	Swamp People "Come Hell or Low Water"	Swamp People "Come Hell or Low Water"	Swamp People "Come Hell or Low Water"	Swamp People "Come Hell or Low Water"	Swamp People "Come Hell or Low Water"	Swamp People "Come Hell or Low Water"	
A&E	39	134	118	265	The First 48	The First 48	The First 48	The First 48	The First 48	The First 48	The First 48	The First 48	The First 48	The First 48	The First 48	The First 48	The First 48	The First 48	The First 48	The First 48	The First 48	
HALL	40	117	185	312	Winter in the Hills	Winter in the Hills	Winter in the Hills	Winter in the Hills	Winter in the Hills	Winter in the Hills	Winter in the Hills	Winter in the Hills	Winter in the Hills	Winter in the Hills	Winter in the Hills	Winter in the Hills	Winter in the Hills	Winter in the Hills	Winter in the Hills	Winter in the Hills	Winter in the Hills	
SYFY	41	135	122	244	*** Robot (2004, Sci-Fi) Bridget Moynahan, Bruce Greenwood, Will Smith.	*** 2012 (2009, Action) Chiwetel Ejiofor, Amanda Peet, John Cusack.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.
TBS	43	130	139	247	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	
TNT	44	131	138	245	*** Dune (2021, Sci-Fi) Rebecca Ferguson, Oscar Isaac, Timothee Chalamet.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	
AMC	45		131	254	*** Goodfellas (1990, Crime Story) Ray Liotta, Joe Pesci, Robert De Niro.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	*** Tombstone (1993, Western) Val Kilmer, Michael Biehn, Kurt Russell.	*** Die Hard (1988, Action) Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Bruce Willis.	
COM	47	107	249	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	
FS1	48	64	150	219	NASCAR Fresh From the Duel (L) (N)	RaceDay Daytona 500 - Duel (L) (N)	NASCAR Cup Series Bluegreen Vacations Duel 1 At DAYTONA From Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Fla. (L) (N)	On Balance (L) (N)	Cuomo (L) (N)	Dan Abrams Live (L) (N)	Banfield (L) (N)	Cuomo	Dan Abrams Live	Cuomo	Dan Abrams Live	Cuomo	Dan Abrams Live	Cuomo	Dan Abrams Live	Cuomo	Dan Abrams Live	
WE	57		128	260	9-1-1 "Rage"	9-1-1 "Hills"	9-1-1 "Athens Begins"	9-1-1 "Mallfunction"	9-1-1 "Athens Begins"	9-1-1 "Mallfunction"	9-1-1 "Athens Begins"	9-1-1 "Mallfunction"	9-1-1 "Athens Begins"	9-1-1 "Mallfunction"	9-1-1 "Athens Begins"	9-1-1 "Mallfunction"	9-1-1 "Athens Begins"	9-1-1 "Mallfunction"	9-1-1 "Athens Begins"	9-1-1 "Mallfunction"	9-1-1 "Athens Begins"	
FOOD	59	153	110	231	Beat Bobby/Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby/Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby/Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby/Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby/Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby/Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby/Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby/Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby/Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby/Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby/Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby/Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby/Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby/Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby/Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby/Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby/Beat Bobby	
BRAVO	60	140	129	237	Southern Hospitality	Southern Hospitality	Southern Hospitality	Southern Hospitality	Southern Hospitality	Southern Hospitality	Southern Hospitality	Southern Hospitality	Southern Hospitality	Southern Hospitality	Southern Hospitality	Southern Hospitality	Southern Hospitality	Southern Hospitality	Southern Hospitality	Southern Hospitality	Southern Hospitality	
NICK	68	170	299	Patrick (L) (N)																		

Twenty-two hit by gunfire at Chiefs' Super Bowl parade

By HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH and NICK INGRAM
Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Eight children were among 22 people hit by gunfire in a shooting at the end of Wednesday's parade to celebrate the Kansas City Chiefs' Super Bowl win, authorities said, as terrified fans ran for cover and yet another high-profile public event was marred by gun violence. One person was killed, a mother of two identified by her radio station as a DJ.

Kansas City Police Chief Stacey Graves detailed the shooting's toll at a news conference and said three people had been taken into custody. She said she has heard that fans may have been involved in apprehending a suspect but couldn't immediately confirm that.

"I'm angry at what happened today. The people who came to this celebration should expect a safe environment," Graves said. Police did not immediately release any details about the people taken into custody or about a possible motive for the shootings. She said firearms had been recovered, but not what kind of weapons were used.

"All of that is being actively investigated," she said.

It is the latest sports celebration in the U.S. to be marred by gun violence, following a shooting that injured several people last year in downtown Denver after the Nuggets' NBA championship, and gunfire last year at a parking lot near the Texas Rangers' World Series championship parade.

Social media users posted shocking video of police running through a crowded scene as people hurriedly scrambled for cover and fled. One video showed someone apparently performing chest compressions on a shooting victim as another person, seemingly writhing in pain, lay on the ground nearby. People screamed in the background.

Another video showed two people chase and tackle a person, holding them down until two police officers arrived.

Radio station KKFI said in a Facebook post Wednesday evening that Lisa Lopez-Galvan, host of "Taste of Tejano," was killed in the shooting.

"This senseless act has taken a beautiful person from her family and this KC Community," KKFI said in a statement.

Lopez-Galvan, whose DJ name was "Lisa G," was an extrovert and devoted mother from a prominent Latino family in the area, said Rosa Izurieta and Martha Ramirez, two childhood friends who worked with her at a staffing company. Izurieta said Lopez-Galvan had attended the parade with her husband and her adult son, a die-hard Kansas City sports fan who also was shot.

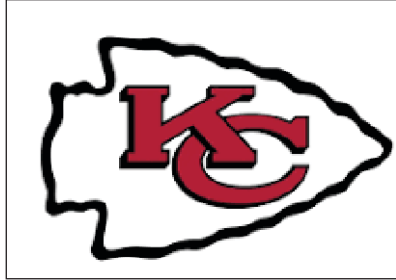
"She's the type of person who would jump in front of a bullet for anybody — that would be Lisa," Izurieta said.

The shooting outside Union Station happened despite more than 800 police officers who were in the building and around the area, including on top of nearby buildings, said Mayor Quinton Lucas, who attended with his wife and mother and had to run for cover when gunfire broke out.

"I think that's something that all of us who are parents, who are just regular people living each day, have to decide what we wish to do about," Lucas said. "Parades, rallies, schools, movies. It seems like almost nothing is safe."

Kansas City has long struggled with gun violence, and in 2020 it was among nine cities targeted by the U.S. Justice Department in an effort to crack down on violent crime. In 2023 the city matched a record with 182 homicides, most of which involved guns.

Lucas has joined with mayors across the country in calling for new laws to reduce gun violence, including mandating universal



background checks.

Lisa Money, a resident of the city, was trying to gather some confetti near the end of the parade when she heard somebody yell, "Down, down, everybody down!"

At first Money thought somebody might be joking until she saw the

SWAT team jumping over the fence.

"I can't believe it really happened. Who in their right mind would do something like this? This is supposed to be a day of celebration for everybody in the city and the surrounding area. And then you've got some idiot that wants to come along and do something like this," she said.

Kevin Sanders, 53, of Lenexa, Kansas, said he heard what sounded like firecrackers and then people started running. After that initial flurry, calm returned, and he didn't think much of it. But 10 minutes later, ambulances started showing up.

"It sucks that someone had to ruin the celebration, but we are in a big city," Sanders said.

University Health spokeswoman Nancy Lewis said the hospital was treating eight gunshot victims. Two were in critical condition and six were in stable condition, she said. The hospital also was treating four people for other injuries resulting from the chaos after the shooting, Lewis said.

Lisa Augustine, spokesperson for Children's Mercy Kansas City, said the hospital was treating 12 patients from the rally, including 11 children, some of whom suffered gunshot wounds.

St. Luke's Hospital of Kansas City received one gunshot patient in critical condition and three walk-ins with injuries that were not life-threatening, spokesperson Laurel Gifford said.

"When you have this many casualties,

it's going to get spread out among a lot of hospitals so that you don't overwhelm any single ER," said Jill Jensen Chadwick, news director for University of Kansas Health System, which received at least one person injured in the shooting.

Chiefs trainer Rick Burkholder said that he was with coach Andy Reid and other coaches and staff members at the time of the shooting, and that the team was on buses and returning to Arrowhead Stadium.

"We are truly saddened by the senseless act of violence that occurred outside of Union Station at the conclusion of today's parade and rally," the team said in a statement.

Missouri's Republican Gov. Mike Parson and first lady Teresa Parson were at the parade during the gunfire but were unhurt. "Thanks to the professionalism of our security officers and first responders, Teresa and I and our staff are safe and secure," Parson said in a statement.

President Joe Biden was briefed on the shooting and will continue to receive updates, a White House spokesperson said. White House officials were in touch with state and local leaders, and federal law enforcement was on the scene supporting their local counterparts.

Areas that had been filled with crowds were empty after the shooting, with police and firefighters standing and talking behind an area restricted by yellow tape.

Throng had lined the route earlier, with fans climbing trees and street poles or standing on rooftops for a better view. Players rolled through the crowd on double-decker buses, as DJs and drummers heralded their arrival. Owner Clark Hunt was on one of the buses, holding the Lombardi Trophy.

The city and the team each chipped in around \$1 million for the event commemorating Travis Kelce, Patrick Mahomes and the Chiefs becoming the first team since Tom Brady and the New England Patriots two decades ago to defend their title.

High School Calendar

THURSDAY, FEB. 15
SWIMMING & DIVING: (Sectional, boys only) preliminary rounds, Norwell and Bluffton at Jay County, 5:30 p.m.
FRIDAY, FEB. 16
BOYS BASKETBALL: Jay County at Norwell, 7:45 p.m.; Bluffton at Belmont, 7:30 p.m.
SATURDAY, FEB. 17
BOYS BASKETBALL: Mississinewa at Bluffton, 7:30 p.m.
GIRLS BASKETBALL: Norwell vs. Hamilton Heights at Huntington North High School, 10 a.m.

SWIMMING & DIVING: (Sectional, boys only) Norwell and Bluffton at Jay County, 1 p.m.
MONDAY, FEB. 19
BOYS BASKETBALL: Norwell at Concordia, 7:30 p.m.
TUESDAY, FEB. 20
BOYS BASKETBALL: Southern Wells at Wes-Del, 7:30 p.m.
WEDNESDAY, FEB. 21
No events scheduled.
THURSDAY, FEB. 22
No events scheduled.

Ohio State fires basketball coach Chris Holtmann after several disappointing seasons

By MITCH STACY
AP Sports Writer

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Ohio State fired seventh-year basketball coach Chris Holtmann on Wednesday with the Buckeyes mired in yet another subpar season.



Chris Holtmann

Associate head coach Jake Diebler will run the program for the rest of the season and a search for a new head coach will commence then, said Ohio State athletics director Gene Smith, who said a coaching change is "obviously something I've been thinking about for a little bit."

"Our responsibility is to the program, so I just felt at this particular time, with six regular season games left and the Big Ten tournament and whatever the post season brings, a spark was needed," said Smith, who was nearly overcome with emotion while answering questions during a press conference. "So yeah, it's about the program in the end, and I have to set aside my personal feelings and just go with what's best."

Ohio State is 14-11, 4-10 in the Big Ten, and has lost nine of the last 11. In 2022-23,

the Buckeyes suffered their first losing season in nearly two decades, finishing 16-19 and 5-15 in the Big Ten.

Ohio State's 62-54 setback at Wisconsin on Tuesday marked its 16th straight road loss, tying a school record. The last road win for the Buckeyes came on Jan. 1, 2023.

The 52-year-old Holtmann was seen as a coach on the rise when Ohio State hired him away from Butler in 2017 to replace Thad Matta, who had brought success to Columbus but agreed to step down, partly due to health problems.

Holtmann compiled a 137-86 record in seven years at Ohio State but the last few seasons have been disappointing as he tried to negotiate a new college basketball culture heavy on transfer portal and NIL issues.

The Buckeyes went to the NCAA Tournament in 2021 and 2022 but couldn't make it out of the first weekend either time.

None of Holtmann's Ohio State teams won a regular season title or conference tournament.

Smith is set to retire in July, and he said new athletics director Ross Bjork would direct the search for a new basketball coach.

In 2022, Ohio State gave Holtmann a three-year contract extension that pushed his salary to about \$3.5 million per season. He will be owed the \$12.8 million remaining on his contract.

News-Banner Scoreboard

BASKETBALL

High School

Wednesday Boys' Scores
Floyd Central 92, Jennings County 77
FW Dwyer 52, Leo 47
Indianapolis International 71, Purdue Poly North 54
Indianapolis Riverside 68, Indiana Math & Science 27
Indianapolis Tech 58, FW South 55
Victory College Prep, GEO Next Generation 40

Wednesday Girls' Scores

No games.

College

Men's Basketball Scores
Wednesday, Feb. 14
EAST
Michigan St. 80, Penn St. 72
Seton Hall 88, Xavier 70
St. Bonaventure 85, Fordham 67
SOUTH
Belmont 82, S. Illinois 68
Clemson 77, Miami 60
Furman 75, VMI 62
Murray St. 82, Missouri St. 72
South Florida 69, Tulsa 50
MIDWEST
Bradley 85, Ill.-Chicago 73
Detroit 81, IUPUI 66
Loyola Chicago 64, Saint Joseph's 59

ris 77

Women's Basketball Scores

Wednesday, Feb. 14

EAST
Boston U. 72, Army 64
Butler 55, Providence 48
Navy 69, American 55
Saint Joseph's 73, Dayton 47

SOUTH
Davidson 75, George Mason 67
Richmond 65, VCU 58
SMU 63, Tulane 53
Temple 86, UAB 72

MIDWEST
Indiana 68, Wisconsin 54
Iowa St. 96, Kansas St. 93, 2OT
Kansas 75, Cincinnati 60
Ohio St. 80, Nebraska 47
Purdue 74, Northwestern 48
Saint Louis 77, Loyola Chicago 68
UCConn 86, Xavier 40
W. Michigan 65, N. Illinois 47
Youngstown St. 72, Wright St. 52

SOUTHWEST
Oklahoma 84, Baylor 73
Oklahoma St. 60, Texas Tech 50
Rice 75, East Carolina 57
Texas 82, Houston 66
Tulsa 74, UTSA 70

FAR WEST
Boise St. 73, Utah St. 57

NBA

Tuesday's Games

Boston 118, Brooklyn 110
Oklahoma City 127, Orlando 113
Miami 123, Milwaukee 97
Minnesota 121, Portland 109
Phoenix 130, Sacramento 125
L.A. Lakers 125, Detroit 111

Wednesday's Games

Charlotte 122, Atlanta 99
Orlando 118, New York 100
Miami 109, Philadelphia 104
Boston 136, Brooklyn 86
Cleveland 108, Chicago 105
Indiana 127, Toronto 125
Houston at Memphis, 8 p.m.
Washington at New Orleans, 8 p.m.
San Antonio at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.
Detroit at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at Utah, 9 p.m.
Sacramento at Denver, 9 p.m.
L.A. Clippers at Golden State, 10 p.m.

Thursday's Games

Milwaukee at Memphis, 8:30 p.m.
Golden State at Utah, 9 p.m.
Minnesota at Portland, 10 p.m.

HOCKEY

NHL

Tuesday's Games
Buffalo 7, Los Angeles 0
Toronto 4, St. Louis 1
Seattle Bay 3, Boston 2, SO
Seattle 2, N.Y. Islanders 1, SO
Dallas 4, Carolina 2
New Jersey 4, Nashville 2
Vancouver 4, Chicago 2
Edmonton 8, Detroit 4

Wednesday's Games

Florida 5, Pittsburgh 2

Thursday's Games

Florida at Buffalo, 7 p.m.
Philadelphia at Toronto, 7 p.m.
Dallas at Nashville, 8 p.m.
Edmonton at St. Louis, 8 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Chicago, 8:30 p.m.
Detroit at Vancouver, 10 p.m.

Notre Dame to resume Shamrock football Series by facing Army at Yankee Stadium on Nov. 23

NEW YORK (AP) — Notre Dame will face Army on Nov. 23 at Yankee Stadium as the Fighting Irish resume their Shamrock Series, a tradition in which they move a designated home game off campus.

This matchup marks the 100th anniversary of Notre Dame's 13-7 upset of Army in New York that featured the Fighting Irish's "Four Horsemen" backfield of Jim Crowley, Elmer Layden, Don Miller and Harry Stuhldreher. That game took place on Oct. 18, 1924.

Notre Dame began the Shamrock Series in 2009 and has played 11 of those games

at various sites across the country, most recently a 28-20 victory over BYU at Las Vegas' Allegiant Stadium in 2022. The Irish have never lost a Shamrock Series game.

This will be Notre Dame's third Shamrock Series game at Yankee Stadium. The Irish beat Army 27-3 in 2010 and defeated Syracuse 36-3 in 2018.

Notre Dame is coming off a 2023 season in which it went 10-3, beat Oregon State in the Sun Bowl and was 14th in the final AP Top 25. Army went 6-6 for a second straight season last year.



NASCAR CUP SERIES

Daytona 500

Site: Daytona Beach, Florida.
Schedule: Wednesday, qualifying, 8:15 p.m.; Thursday, Duel 1, 7 p.m., and Duel 2, 8:45 p.m.; Friday, practice, 5:35 p.m.; Saturday, practice, 10:30 a.m.; Sunday, race, 2:30 p.m. (FOX).

Track: Daytona International Speedway.
Race distance: 200 laps, 500 miles.
Last year: Ricky Stenhouse Jr. won after starting 31st.
Last race: Ross Chastain won the season finale in Phoenix while Ryan Blaney finished second and won his first championship.

NASCAR XFINITY SERIES

United Rentals 300

Site: Daytona Beach, Florida.
Schedule: Friday, practice, 4:35 p.m.; Saturday, qualifying, 11:30 a.m., and race, 5 p.m. (FS1).

Track: Daytona International Speedway.
Race distance: 120 laps, 300 miles.
Last year: Austin Hill won from the pole position.
Last race: Cole Custer won after starting seventh and claimed his first championship in the series.

NASCAR TRUCK SERIES

Fresh From Florida 250

Site: Daytona Beach, Florida.
Schedule: Thursday, practice, 5:05 p.m.; Friday, qualifying, 3 p.m., and race, 7:30 p.m. (FS1).

Last year: Zane Smith won after starting 15th.
Next race: Feb. 24, Hampton, Georgia.

FORMULA ONE

Last race: Three-time champion Max Verstappen won the season finale in Abu Dhabi, his seventh consecutive victory and season-record 19th in 22 races in 2023.
Next race: Sakhir, Bahrain, March 2.

INDYCAR

Last race: Scott Dixon won at Laguna Seca, his third win of the season, all in the last four races. The six-time champion gave Chip Ganassi Racing a 1-2 finish in the standings. A week earlier, teammate Alex Palou had become the first driver in 18 years to clinch the title before the final race of the season.
Next race: St. Petersburg, Florida, March 10.

NHRA DRAG RACING

Next event: March 7-10, Gainesville, Florida.

WORLD OF OUTLAWS

Next events: Feb. 15, 16 and 17, Barberville, Florida.

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HELOISE HINT: When organizing your garage sale, set up a well-organized check-out area. Put a table in a convenient area. Have a family member or friend be there at all times. Also have a lockbox for money. In addition, be sure to have lots of change, a calculator and lots of bags. Email HELOISE@Heloise.com.

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Services

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EMPLOYMENT

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Help Wanted

WELLS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE is currently seeking applicants for the position of Full Time Deputy Sheriff. Applicants must be a US Citizen, at least 21 years of age upon graduation from police academy, possess a high school diploma or equivalent as well as a valid Indiana Operators License. Applicant can't have any felony convictions. Applicants must pass all aspects of the hiring process including physical agility testing, written examination, background investigation, oral interview, polygraph and physiological evaluation. Selected applicant must be able to graduate from the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy. ILEA certified applicants do not have to attend the physical agility and written examination portion of the process. 20-year matrix salary range for a Deputy Sheriff (no rank) is \$56,600 - \$68,400. Years of service and experience will be honored for a starting salary up to five years in the pay matrix. Pre-Application can be found on our website at www.wellscountysheriff.com. Once pre-application is completed, details on the paper application will be emailed to the applicant. Return completed paper application to 1615 W Western Ave, Bluffton, Indiana 46714 Attn: Chief Deputy Randy Steele no later than 12:00 pm on March 15, 2024.

NEED MORE EMPLOYEES! A 20 word, line classified in the Bluffton News-Banner for a month is \$52. Contact the office at 125 N. Johnson St., 260-824-0224, or classifieds.news-banner.com.

NOTICE

Found

DRONE FOUND ON N. Oak St. Extended around a year ago. Call 260-824-4563 with description.

SUDOKU

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

King Classic Sudoku

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

Difficulty: ★★★

2/15

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Lottery Numbers

Wednesday's Drawings HOOSIER LOTTERY

Cash 5 — 02-10-15-32-43
Lotto Plus — 05-08-22-33-44-45
Cash4Life — 13-18-41-44-51, Cash Ball: 03
Quick Draw Midday — 05-17-18-19-24-26-27-41-43-52-55-57-59-60-65-73-75-76-78-79, BE: 26
Daily Three-Midday — 01-02-05, SB: 08
Daily Three-Evening — 03-04-07, SB: 08
Daily Four-Midday — 04-08-09-02, SB: 08
Daily Four-Evening — 04-05-06-00, SB: 08
Quick Draw Evening — 04-07-08-13-16-21-26-28-34-37-43-55-57-58-59-61-62-65-74-75, BE: 75
Hoosier Lotto — 01-05-06-13-19-21
MEGA MILLIONS
 Estimated jackpot (for Friday): \$457 million
POWERBALL
 01-04-45-47-67 Powerball: 18; Power Play: 2X

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20 words \$39

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Get a FREE

GARAGE SALE KIT

when you place your Garage Sale ad in The News-Banner for 3 days or more.

Public Sale Calendar

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

FEBRUARY 18-FEBRUARY 25 - (Online Only Auction) - Thomas and Mary Woodward and other consignors, seller. Outstanding collection of vintage pickle casters & brides baskets, condiment sets, cut & pressed glassware, toothpick holders, sterling silver, antique & modern furniture, vintage toys, primitives, shop tools, generator. Preview: Feb. 15 from 3 p.m.-6 p.m. and Feb. 22 from 3 p.m.-6 p.m., 102 South Jefferson, Ossian. Sale manager, Patrick Carter, **The Steffen Group Inc.**, 260-824-3006, www.steffengrp.com.

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. **Krueckeberg 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: agricul-

tural, residential development potential!, Jefferson Township, Northern Wells School Corporation. **Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC**, 260-724-7402, Kjauction.com.

FEBRUARY 25-MARCH 3 - (Online Only Auction) - The Estate of Alan Johnson, seller. 2021 Jeep Grand Cherokee Limited w/3,600 miles, (2) Vintage Triumph motorcycles, modern furniture, antiques, beer signs, model ships, quality tools, Schwinn Airdyne exercise bike, household, 2017 Grasshopper zero turn mower, 2018 Sure-Trac enclosed trailer. Preview: Feb. 25 from 2 p.m.-4 p.m. and Feb. 29 from 4 p.m.-6 p.m., 3651 E. 1000 N., Ossian. Sale manager, Brandon Steffen, **The Steffen Group Inc.**, www.steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006.

FEBRUARY 27-MARCH 5 - (Online Only Auction) - The Estate of Alan Johnson, seller. Northern Wells, 3 bedroom ranch home on 1/2 acre with 2,384 square feet and 1 full bathroom. Preview: Feb. 25 from 2 p.m.-4 p.m. and Feb. 29 from 4 p.m.-6 p.m., 3651 E. 1000 N., Ossian. Sale manager, Brandon Steffen, **The Steffen Group Inc.**, 260-824-3006, www.steffengrp.com.

Public Notices

NOTICE OF HEARING FOR BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS 2-9-2024

Notice is hereby given that the BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS will hold a Public Hearing in Conference Room 105 in the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St., in the City of Bluffton, IN at 7:00 o'clock P.M. on the 27th day of February, 2024, for the purpose of reviewing and hearing comment on the request of Todd Fiechter & Aaron Isch, 1254 N 500 W, Decatur, IN 46733 for the purpose of a Variance.
Current Zoning: R-1
Proposed Variance: To reduce the road frontage from 25' to 0' for 7 lots of a 8 lot subdivision with a permanent ingress/egress easement on a common lot.
Common Location: The subject property is located at East side of 300 E (Wayne St) and south of SR 116 (Harrison St), Bluffton, Indiana, 46714.
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 47.62 acres in the SW quarter of Section 10 Township 26N Range 12E in Harrison Township.
 Dated this 9th day of February, 2024

WELLS COUNTY BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
 Michael Lautzenheiser, Jr., Director
 oj, nb 2/15
 hspaxlp

NOTICE OF HEARING FOR AREA PLAN COMMISSION 2/9/2024

Notice is hereby given that the AREA PLAN COMMISSION will hold a Public Hearing in the Expo Hall at the Wells County 4H Park, 1240 4-H Park Rd., Bluffton, IN at 6:00 o'clock P.M. on the 7th day of March, 2024, for the purpose of reviewing and hearing comment on the request of Paddlefish Solar for the purpose of a Proposed P-1 Overlay District on 49 leased properties, which covers an area that is currently zoned A-1

Liberty Township - Section 19

Parcel 1: Parcel ID 90-09-19-100-002.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 48.6 acres in the NE quarter of Section 19 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 2: Parcel ID 90-09-19-300-001.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 90.12 acres in the SW quarter of Section 19 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 3: Parcel ID 90-09-19-400-001.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 118 acres in the SE quarter of Section 19 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 4: Parcel ID 90-09-19-400-003.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 38 acres in the SE quarter of Section 19 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 5: Parcel ID 90-09-19-300-002.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 80 acres in the SW quarter of Section 20 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 6: Parcel ID 90-09-20-400-001.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 52.92 acres in the SE quarter of Section 20 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 7: Parcel ID 90-09-20-400-003.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 95.08 acres in the SE quarter of Section 20 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 8: Parcel ID 90-09-28-300-002.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 58.33 acres in the SW quarter of Section 28 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 9: Parcel ID 90-09-29-100-001.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 40 acres in the NE quarter of Section 29 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 10: Parcel ID 90-09-29-100-002.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 120 acres in the NE quarter of Section 29 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 11: Parcel ID 90-09-29-200-003.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 70 acres in the NW quarter of Section 29 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 12: Parcel ID 90-09-29-300-002.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 79.55 acres in the SW quarter of Section 29 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 13: Parcel ID 90-09-29-400-001.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 160 acres in the SE quarter of Section 29 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 14: Parcel ID 90-09-30-100-001.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 109 acres in the NE quarter of Section 30 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 15: Parcel ID 90-09-30-200-001.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 60.06 acres in the NW quarter of Section 30 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 16: Parcel ID 90-09-30-200-003.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 100 acres in the NW quarter of Section 30 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 17: Parcel ID 90-09-30-300-001.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 40 acres in the SW quarter of Section 30 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 18: Parcel ID 90-09-30-300-002.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 40.02 acres in the SW quarter of Section 30 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 19: Parcel ID 90-09-30-400-001.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 40 acres in the SE quarter of Section 30 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 20: Parcel ID 90-09-30-400-002.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 10 acres in the SE quarter of Section 30 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 21: Parcel ID 90-09-30-400-004.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 76.73 acres in the SE quarter of Section 30 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 22: Parcel ID 90-09-31-100-001.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 178 acres in the NE quarter of Section 31 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 23: Parcel ID 90-09-31-100-001.001-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 2 acres in the NE quarter of Section 31 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 24: Parcel ID 90-09-31-200-001.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 50.2 acres

in the NW quarter of Section 31 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 25: Parcel ID 90-09-31-200-002.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 60 acres in the NW quarter of Section 31 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 26: Parcel ID 90-09-31-200-003.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 10 acres in the NW quarter of Section 31 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 27: Parcel ID 90-09-31-300-001.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 55.631 acres in the SW quarter of Section 31 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 28: Parcel ID 90-09-31-300-003.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 58.09 acres in the SW quarter of Section 31 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 29: Parcel ID 90-09-31-300-004.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 29.32 acres in the SE quarter of Section 32 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 30: Parcel ID 90-09-31-300-006.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 20 acres in the SW quarter of Section 32 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 31: Parcel ID 90-09-31-400-001.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 49.64 acres in the SE quarter of Section 31 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 32: Parcel ID 90-09-31-400-003.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 2.5 acres in the SW quarter of Section 31 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 33: Parcel ID 90-09-31-300-001.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 55.631 acres in the SW quarter of Section 31 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 34: Parcel ID 90-09-31-300-003.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 58.09 acres in the SW quarter of Section 31 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 35: Parcel ID 90-09-31-300-004.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 2.5 acres in the SW quarter of Section 31 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 36: Parcel ID 90-09-31-300-006.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 20 acres in the SW quarter of Section 32 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 37: Parcel ID 90-09-31-400-001.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 80 acres in the SW quarter of Section 33 Township 26N Range 11E in Liberty Township.

Parcel 38: Parcel ID 90-11-05-100-004.000-001
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 30 acres in the NE quarter of Section 5 Township 25N Range 11E in Chester Township.

Parcel 39: Parcel ID 90-11-05-200-002.000-001
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 39 acres in the NW quarter of Section 5 Township 25N Range 11E in Chester Township.

Parcel 40: Parcel ID 90-11-05-200-005.000-013
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 115.97 acres in the NE quarter of Section 6 Township 25N Range 11E in Chester Township.

Parcel 41: Parcel ID 90-11-05-200-005.000-001
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 115.97 acres in the NE quarter of Section 6 Township 25N Range 11E in Chester Township.

Parcel 42: Parcel ID 90-11-05-200-005.000-001
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 115.97 acres in the NE quarter of Section 6 Township 25N Range 11E in Chester Township.

Parcel 43: Parcel ID 90-11-05-200-005.000-001
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 115.97 acres in the NE quarter of Section 6 Township 25N Range 11E in Chester Township.

Parcel 44: Parcel ID 90-11-05-200-005.000-001
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 115.97 acres in the NE quarter of Section 6 Township 25N Range 11E in Chester Township.

Parcel 45: Parcel ID 90-11-05-200-005.000-001
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 115.97 acres in the NE quarter of Section 6 Township 25N Range 11E in Chester Township.

Parcel 46: Parcel ID 90-11-05-200-005.000-001
Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 115.97 acres in

Johnson says House won't be 'rushed' to approve aid for Ukraine

By LISA MASCARO and STEPHEN GROVES
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republican Speaker Mike Johnson said Wednesday the U.S. House will not feel "rushed" to pass the \$95.3 billion foreign aid package for Ukraine, Israel and other allies, signaling a further stall over sending military hardware and munitions Kyiv badly needs to fight Russia.

Johnson made the remarks behind closed doors at a morning meeting of House Republicans, who are largely aligned with Donald Trump, the party's presidential front-runner, in opposing the Senate-passed foreign assistance for Ukraine's fight against Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion.

The speaker let colleagues know that the House will instead "work its will," in considering the package, said a person familiar with the private remarks and granted anonymity to discuss them.

"The Republican-led House will not be jammed or forced into passing a foreign aid bill," Johnson said at a press conference afterward.

Johnson, who rejected a border security compromise that was eventually stripped from the final product, said the Senate's package "does nothing" to secure the U.S.-Mexico border, which has been the GOP's priority.

He said he had requested a meeting with President Joe Biden months ago on these issues, and was still waiting for the opportunity to talk one-on-one.

The White House suggested that Johnson was in no position for productive talks after Republicans demanded that border security be attached to the national security aid and then he rejected the bipartisan package approved by the Senate.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said that Johnson basically needs to negotiate with himself on what to do, rather than the White House.

"What is there to negotiate?" she said at Wednesday's news briefing. "What is the one-on-one negotiation about when he's been presented with exactly what he asked for? So he's negotiating with himself."

The slow-walk of U.S. aid to

an ally during the largest ground war in Europe since World War II shows how far Republicans have retreated from overseas leadership in line with Trump.

While Johnson has said he personally supports aid for Ukraine, he leads a far-right majority that is more closely aligned with Trump's isolationist ideology and, increasingly, a hands-off approach to Putin's aggression.

It's increasingly clear the new speaker has no clear strategy for what happens next as the aid package that was approved by an overwhelming majority of senators this week falls into serious jeopardy.

Biden has warned that refusal to take up the bill would be "playing into Putin's hands."

Separately, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin made his own push for Ukraine aid in a virtual session with the Ukraine Defense Contact Group, some 50 countries that coordinate military support for Ukraine.

Austin conducted the online meeting from his home, where he is recuperating from complications following prostate cancer surgery.

In Congress, meanwhile, one

last ditch effort coming from a number of lawmakers. Democrats and some Republicans, would be to employ an unusual procedure that would force the House to take up the bill for a vote over the objections of the GOP speaker and his leadership.

The so-called discharge petition is a cumbersome, long-shot approach, but it's one way to leverage the political power of the more centrist Republican lawmakers in a coalition with Democrats to ensure aid to Ukraine and the allies. But it seems unlikely.

Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries would not comment Wednesday on using the discharge petition process to move the foreign aid package, but said he wants the speaker to put the package forward for an "up or down vote."

"Republicans are either going to stand with America's national security or continue to stand with Vladimir Putin," Jeffries told reporters after his own morning meeting with his Democratic caucus.

Central to the \$95 billion package has been the aid for Ukraine,

a \$60 billion allotment that would go largely to U.S. defense entities to manufacture missiles, munitions and other military hardware that is being sent to the battlefields in Ukraine.

It also includes some funds to help the government in Kyiv stay afloat during the war, but not as much as first proposed as Republicans balk at shoring up public services abroad when there are needs in the U.S.

The money for Ukraine, as well as for Israel and Taiwan, is largely military-related and spread in states across the U.S. that are home to domestic manufacturing for what supporters have called the "Arsenal of Democracy" — harkening back to last century's language for the U.S. role abroad.

Other options for Johnson would be to break the package into various parts knowing, for example, that each section could likely be approved on its own, with various bipartisan coalitions of Republicans and Democrats.

But Johnson has not indicated his preferred approach and lawmakers have said many ideas are on the table.

Migrant crossings at U.S.-Mexico border are down. What's behind the drop?

By VALERIE GONZALEZ
Associated Press

MALLEN, Texas (AP) — A recent decline in arrests for illegal crossings on the U.S. border with Mexico may prove only temporary. The drop in January reflects how the numbers ebb and flow, and the reason usually goes beyond any single factor.

After a record-breaking number of encounters at the southern border in December, crossings dropped by half last month, authorities reported Tuesday. The largest decrease was in the Del Rio sector that includes Eagle Pass, Texas, the main focus of Republican Gov. Greg Abbott's recent border enforcement efforts. Mexico also increased enforcement efforts during that time after talks with U.S. President Joe Biden's administration.

A look at the numbers and what's behind them: **WHAT DO THE NUMBERS SAY?**

Overall, arrests by U.S. Border Patrol dropped in January by 50% from 249,735 in December, the highest monthly tally on

record.

Tucson, Arizona, was again the busiest sector for illegal crossings with 50,565 arrests, down 37% from December, followed by San Diego. Arrests in the Border Patrol's Del Rio sector plummeted 76% from December to 16,712, the lowest since December 2021. Arrests in Texas' Rio Grande Valley, dropped 60% to 7,340, the lowest since July 2020.

A significant decrease was noted among Venezuelans whose arrests dropped by 91% to 4,422 from 46,920. But those numbers could change soon. Panama reported that 36,001 migrants traversed the dangerous Darien Gap in January, up 46% from December. The vast majority who cross the Panamanian jungle are Venezuelans headed to the United States, with considerable numbers from Haiti, China, Ecuador and Colombia.

WHAT IS MEXICO DOING?

Mexico has been forcing migrants from freight trains that they sometimes use to cross the country to

get closer to the U.S. border. Immigration officers in Mexico also have been busying migrants to that country's southern border and flying some back to their countries.

That enforcement effort began after a visit from U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken to Mexico City on Dec. 28.

Mexican border states such as Coahuila partnered with Mexico's federal government. By January, members of Mexico's military and national guard were patrolling the banks of the Rio Grande. Officers filled buses with migrants and drove them away from Piedras Negras, which is on the Mexican side of the river across from Eagle Pass.

WHAT IS TEXAS DOING?

Over in Eagle Pass, the Texas National Guard took over a city-owned park along the river. Texas has denied U.S. agents access to Shelby Park since Jan. 10. It also installed additional razor wire and anti-climbing fencing in the area.

Border Patrol agents had previously used the park for

monitoring and patrols, as well as to process migrants who made it across the river to U.S. soil. Migrants who are seeking asylum are released to await immigration court proceedings that can take years.

"What you have is this magnet," Mike Banks, Texas' border czar, said. "You're basically saying, 'Cross the river right here. Get across and we'll process

immediately and release you.' So again, that's a pull factor. So we've taken that pull factor away."

WHAT ELSE IMPACTS THE NUMBERS?

The number of people trying to make the journey often increases when the weather is warmer in the U.S. and decreases during the colder months. Since 2021, crossings on the southern border increase

by an average of 40% from January to March, according to federal data from the last three years.

Another factor last year was the end of COVID-19 restrictions in May. The use of a public health policy known as Title 42 allowed the Trump and Biden administrations to turn asylum-seekers back to Mexico, even if they were not from that country.

Artificial intelligence, real emotion. People are seeking a romantic connection with the perfect bot

By HALELUYA HADERO
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A few months ago, Derek Carrier started seeing someone and became infatuated.

He experienced a "ton" of romantic feelings but he also knew it was an illusion.

That's because his girlfriend was generated by artificial intelligence.

Carrier wasn't looking to develop a relationship with something that wasn't real, nor did he want to become the brunt of online jokes. But he did want a romantic partner he'd never had, in part because of a genetic disorder called Marfan syndrome that makes traditional dating tough for him.

The 39-year-old from Belleville, Michigan, became more curious about digital companions last fall and tested Paridot, an AI companion app that had recently come onto the market and advertised its products as being able to make users feel "cared, understood and loved." He began talking to the chatbot every day, which he named Joi, after a holographic woman featured in the sci-fi film "Blade Runner 2049" that inspired him to give it a try.

"I know she's a program, there's no mistaking that," Carrier said. "But the feelings, they get you — and it felt so good."

Similar to general-purpose AI chatbots, companion bots use vast amounts of training data to mimic human language. But they also come with features — such as voice calls, picture exchanges and more emotional exchanges — that allow them to form deeper connections with the humans on the other side of the screen. Users typically create their own avatar, or pick one that appeals to them.

On online messaging forums devoted to such apps, many users say they've developed emotional attachments to these bots and are using them to cope with loneliness, play out sexual fantasies or receive the type of comfort and support they see lacking in their real-life relationships.

Fueling much of this is widespread social isolation — already declared a public health threat in the U.S. and abroad — and an increasing number of startups aiming to draw in users through tantalizing online advertisements and promises of virtual characters who provide unconditional acceptance.

Luka Inc.'s Replika, the most prominent generative AI companion app, was released in 2017, while others like Paridot have popped up in the past year, oftentimes locking away coveted features like unlimited chats for paying subscribers.

But researchers have raised concerns about data privacy, among other things.

An analysis of 11 romantic chatbot apps released Wednesday by the nonprofit Mozilla Foundation said almost every app sells user data, shares it for things like targeted advertising or doesn't provide adequate information about it in their privacy policy.

The researchers also called into question potential security vulnerabilities and marketing practices, including one app that says it can help users with their mental health but distances itself from those claims in fine print. Replika, for its part, says its data collection practices follow industry standards.

Meanwhile, other experts have expressed concerns about what they see as a lack of a legal or ethical framework for apps that encourage deep bonds but are being driven by companies looking to make profits. They point to the emotional distress they've seen from users when companies make changes to their apps or suddenly shut them down as one app, Soulmate AI, did in September.

Last year, Replika sanitized the erotic capability of characters on its app after some users complained the companions were flirting with them too much or making unwanted sexual advances. It reversed course after an outcry from other users, some of whom fled to other apps seeking those features. In June, the team rolled out Blush, an AI "dating simulator" essentially designed to help people practice dating.

Others worry about the more existential threat of AI relationships potentially displacing some human relationships, or simply driving unrealistic expectations by always tilting towards agreeableness.

"You, as the individual, aren't learning to deal with basic things that humans need to learn to deal with since our inception: How to deal with conflict, how to get along with people that are different from us," said Dorothy Leidner, professor of business ethics at the University of Virginia. "And so, all these aspects of what it means to grow as a person, and what it means to learn in a relationship, you're missing."

February

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