

The News - Banner

www.News-Banner.com

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2024 BLUFFTON, INDIANA • Wells County's Hometown Connection \$1.00



APC will hold special meeting for solar petition

By JONATHAN SNYDER

In anticipation of a large audience, the Wells County Area Plan Commission will host its March 7 meeting in a new location to discuss a petition from Paddlefish Solar.

This petition requests overlaying 49 parcels of land south of Liberty Center Township and north of Southern Wells Community Schools with a P-1 zoning layer. These parcels sit between county roads South 600 West and South 400 West, just north of Ind. 218. The APC will meet at 6 p.m. in the Wells County 4-H Park expo hall.

The requested zoning layer allows large-scale electric power plants to be developed on the parcel of land. The Wells County Zoning Ordinance does not allow areas to be rezoned only for a power plant; it only allows for an additional layer.

"Many of the properties will retain parts of the property that will be undeveloped," said Mike Lautzenheiser, APC executive director. "The lease only includes the parts that they (Paddlefish Solar) are actually developing."

Wells County approved agreements with Paddlefish Solar in December regarding decommissioning solar equipment and road use. This zoning layer is the next step prior to approval of a development plan. The exact location and the logistics of how the solar panels will be installed are not yet known.

On Feb. 1, the Area Plan Commission took time to review zoning procedures. This included an emphasis on five compliance terms — paying regard to the comprehensive plan for Wells County, the current conditions of the land, the most desirable use for the land, how any rezoning will affect the property values of the land, and how any development will help the county grow.

"This is (reviewing) the bigger picture, and it's based off of the review of the five compliance terms," said Lautzenheiser. "It is a discussion about the merits of the project compared to the five items that we will be reviewing if off of."

(Continued on Page 2)

On to state

With Knight students surrounding her and Knight fans in the stands behind her, Norwell girls' basketball center Dekota Hubble holds high the trophy Saturday after the Knights won the north semi-state at Huntington North High School. Norwell dispatched top-ranked Hamilton Heights in the morning game 64-50 and then obliterated unranked Bremen in the nightcap 64-20. The Knights will play third-ranked Gibson Southern, a school just north of Evansville, for the Class 3A state championship at 6 p.m. Saturday at Gainbridge Field House in Indianapolis.

At right, a blue handkerchief is tied to the rim of the north basket of Bob Straight Court, honoring a tradition begun in 1973 when the Norwell boys' basketball team won its first regional. At far right, Coach Eric Thornton hugs Norwell guard Lilly Norris while hanging onto the trophy after the game. At right bottom, the team poses with a championship trophy for the third time in as many weeks. **Photos and story on Page 6.** (Photos by Glen Werling)



Book lists names of Japanese American WWII detainees

By AKIRA OLIVIA KUMAMOTO, Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Samantha Sumiko Pinedo and her grandparents file into a dimly lit enclosure at the Japanese American National Museum and approach a massive book splayed open to reveal columns of names. Pinedo is hoping the list includes her great-grandparents, who were detained in Japanese American incarceration camps during World War II.

"For a lot of people, it feels like so long ago because it was World War II. But I grew up with my Bumpa (great-grandpa), who was in the internment camps," Pinedo says.

A docent at the museum in Los Angeles gently flips to the middle of the book — called the Ireicho — and locates Kaneo Sakatani near the center of a page. This was Pinedo's great-grandfather, and his family can now honor him.

On Feb. 19, 1942, following the attack by Imperial Japan on Pearl Harbor and the United States' entry to WWII, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 authorizing the incarceration of people of Japanese ancestry who were considered potentially dangerous.

From the extreme heat of the Gila River center in Arizona, to the biting winters of Heart Mountain in Wyoming, Japanese Americans were forced into hastily built barracks, with no insulation or privacy, and surrounded by barbed wire. They shared bathrooms and mess halls, and families of up to eight were squeezed into 20-by-25 foot rooms. Armed U.S. soldiers in guard towers ensured nobody tried to flee.

Approximately two-thirds of the detainees were American. (Continued on Page 2)

Jimmy Carter entered hospice and a year later advocates hope he drives awareness

By BILL BARROW
Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Since Jimmy Carter entered hospice care at his home in south Georgia one year ago, the former U.S. president has celebrated his 99th birthday, enjoyed tributes to his legacy and lost his wife of 77 years.

Rosalynn Carter, who died in November, about six months after the Carter family disclosed her dementia diagnosis, lived only a few days under

hospice supervision, with her frail husband at her bedside.

Experts on end-of-life care say the Carters' different paths show the range of an oft-misunderstood service. Those advocates commend the Carter family for demonstrating the realities of aging, dementia and death. They express hope that the attention spurs more Americans to seek out services intended to help patients and families in the latter stages of life.

"It's been massive to have the Carters be so public," said Angela Novas, chief medical officer for the Hospice Foundation of America, based in Washington. "It has shed hospice in a new light, and it's raised questions" for people to learn more.

The Carter family released a statement ahead of Sunday, the one-year anniversary of their announcement that the 39th president would forgo future (Continued on Page 2)

Israel vows to 'finish the job' as War Cabinet member threatens Rafah

By WAFSA SHURAF, KAREEM CHEHAYEB and MELANIE LIDMAN
Associated Press

RAFAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday brushed off growing calls to halt the military offensive in Gaza, vowing to "finish the job" as a member

of his War Cabinet threatened to invade the southern city of Rafah if remaining Israeli hostages are not freed by the upcoming Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

Israel's government has not publicly discussed a timeline for a ground offensive on Rafah, where more than half the enclave's 2.3 million Palestinians have sought

refuge. Retired general Benny Gantz, part of Netanyahu's three-member War Cabinet, represents an influential voice but not the final word on what might lie ahead.

"If by Ramadan our hostages are not home, the fighting will continue to the Rafah area," Gantz told a conference of Jewish American

leaders. Ramadan, expected to begin March 10, is historically a tense time in the region.

As cease-fire negotiations struggle after signs of progress in recent weeks, Netanyahu has called demands by Gaza's ruling Hamas militant group "delusional."

The United States, Israel's top

ally, says it still hopes to broker a cease-fire and hostage-release agreement, and envisions a wider resolution of the war sparked by Hamas' deadly Oct. 7 attack in southern Israel.

The U.S. also says it will veto another draft U.N. resolution calling for a cease-fire, with its U.N. (Continued on Page 2)

Inside

Local/Area

Obituaries 3
Court Docket 3


Opinion

Niki Kelly 4

Also...

Sports 6-7
Classifieds 9
Diversions 8

Outside



Early morning fog, sunny and breezy today

Today	Tuesday	Wed.
High 37	High 44	High 52
Low 23	Low 32	Low 39

More Weather on Page 2

Online

Follow us on Facebook!
Go to www.facebook.com/newsbanner

Place Your Classified Ads 24/7

Vol. 95 No. 92

MONDAY
February 19, 2024

Get Ready for Winter.
Call and Schedule a Check Up Today!



MR. KOOL
Heating and Cooling

260 824-1126 • mrkoolbluffton@gmail.com
610 N. Main St. Bluffton, IN 46714

CO5210004

How to contact us:

Call us: 824-0224
or 1-800-579-7476
email@news-banner.com

On the Web:
www.news-banner.com

Follow us at:
twitter.com/newsbanner



8 04879 07558 5

APC meeting

(Continued from Page 1)

Lautzenheiser also stressed that the financial ability of the petitioner, any political agendas and procedures, and the current owners of the land will not be considered in the rezoning decision.

The meeting on March 7 will solely be about whether or not the land meets the requirements to have the

rezoning layer. Lautzenheiser noted that the guidelines are different than the ones used when the development plan is presented. For example, things like setbacks and screening or how the project will be built are not considered until the development plan is presented, according to Lautzenheiser.

The March 7 meeting

will only have the rezoning issue and no other items, which allows time for public comment. Each person's time will be limited, however. The board stressed that people should avoid going in line multiple times for comments to allow everyone to have their say.

Lautzenheiser also stated that the information gath-

ered by the APC office, which includes the petition itself, is all available to the public for review.

"We'd be glad to answer email questions, phone call questions," said Lautzenheiser. "We'd like to have those conversations and provide that information to them between now and (March 7)."

jonathan@news-banner.com

Japanese Americans

(Continued from Page 1)

can citizens.

When the 75 holding facilities on U.S. soil closed in 1946, the government published Final Accountability Rosters listing the name, sex, date of birth and marital status of the Japanese Americans held at the 10 largest facilities. There was no clear consensus of who or how many had been detained nationwide.

Duncan Ryūken Williams, the director of the Shinso Ito Center for Japanese Religions and Culture at the University of Southern California, knew those rosters were incomplete and riddled with errors, so he and a team of researchers took on the mammoth task of identifying all the detainees and honoring them with a three-part monument called "Irei: National Monument for the WWII Japanese American Incarceration."

"We wanted to repair that moment in American history by thinking of the fact that this is a group of people, Japanese Americans, that was targeted by the government. As long as you had one drop of Japanese blood in you, the government told you you didn't belong," Williams said.

The Irei project was inspired by stone Buddhist monuments called Ireitōs that were built by detainees at camps in Manzanar, California, and Amache, Colorado, to memorialize and console the spirits of internees who died.

The first part of the Irei monument is the Ireichō, the sacred book listing 125,284 verified names of Japanese American detainees.

"We felt like we needed to bring dignity and personhood and individuality back to all these people," Williams said. "The best way we thought we could do that was to give them their names back."

The second element, the Ireizō, is a website set to launch on Monday, the Day of Remembrance, which visitors can use to search for additional information about detainees. Ireihi is the final part: A collection of light installations at incarceration sites and the Japanese American National Museum.

Williams and his team spent more than three years reaching out to camp survivors and their relatives, correcting misspelled names and data errors and filling in the gaps. They analyzed records in the National Archives of detainee transfers, as well as Enemy Alien identification cards and directories created by detainees.

"We feel fairly confident that we're at least 99% accurate with that list," Williams said.

The team recorded every name in order of age, from the oldest person who entered the camps to the last baby born there.

Williams, who is a Buddhist priest, invited leaders from different faiths, Native American tribes and social justice groups to attend a ceremony introducing the Ireichō to the museum.

Crowds of people gathered in the Little Tokyo neighborhood to watch camp survivors and descendants of detainees file into the museum, one by one, holding wooden pillars, called sobata, bearing the names of each of the camps. At the end of the procession, the massive, weighty book of names was carried inside by multiple faith leaders. Williams read Buddhist scripture and led chants to honor the detainees.

Those sobata now line the walls of the serene enclosure where the Ireichō will remain until Dec. 1. Each bears the name — in English and Japanese — of the camp it represents. Suspended from

each post is a jar containing soil from the named site.

Visitors are encouraged to look for their loved ones in the Ireichō and leave a mark under their names using a Japanese stamp called a hanko.

The first people to stamp it were some of the last surviving camp detainees.

So far, 40,000 visitors have made their mark. For Williams, that interaction is essential.

"To honor each person by placing a stamp in the book means that you are changing the monument every day," Williams said.

Sharon Matsuura, who visited the Ireichō to commemorate her parents and husband who were incarcerated in Camp Amache, says the monument has an important role to play in raising awareness, especially for young people who may not know about this harsh chapter in America's story.

"It was a very shameful part of history that the young men and women were good enough to fight and die for the country, but they had to live in terrible conditions and camps," Matsuura says. "We want people to realize these things happened."

Many survivors remain silent about what they endured, not wanting to relive it, Matsuura says.

Pinedo watches as her grandmother, Bernice Yoshi Pinedo, carefully stamps a blue dot beneath her father's name. The family stands back in silence, taking in the moment, yellow light casting shadows from the jars of soil on the walls.

Kaneo Sakatani was only 14 when he was detained in Tule Lake, in far northern California.

"It's sad," Bernice says. "But I feel very proud that my parents' names were in there."

Jimmy Carter

(Continued from Page 1)

hospital stays and enter end-of-life care at home in Plains.

"President Carter continues to be at home with his family," the statement said. "The family is pleased that his decision last year to enter hospice care has sparked so many family discussions across the country on an important subject."

To be clear, the family has not confirmed whether Jimmy Carter remains in hospice care or has been discharged, as sometimes happens when even a frail patient's health stabilizes.

HOSPICE SERVES EVERYONE, EVEN THE RICH AND POWERFUL

Mollie Gurian is vice president of Leading Age, a national network of more than 5,000 nonprofit elder-care agencies. She described hospice as "holistic care ... for someone who is trying to live the end of their life as fully as possible" but no longer seeks a cure for a terminal condition.

Hospice offers multiple practitioners for each patient: nurses, physicians and social-service professionals like chaplains and secular grief counselors. Home hospice features in-home visits but not round-the-clock or even full-shift care.

Initial eligibility requires a physician's certification of a terminal condition, with the expectation that a person will not live longer than six months; there are also disease-specific parameters.

For-profit businesses or

nonprofit agencies typically provide the care and employ the providers. Medicare pays those agencies a per-day rate for each patient. There are four levels of care and daily rates. The concept was developed after World War II and has been part of the Medicare program since the early 1980s. Private insurance plans also typically cover hospice.

In 2021, 1.7 million Medicare beneficiaries enrolled in hospice at a taxpayer cost of \$23.1 billion, according to the federal Medicare Payment Advisory Commission. Almost half of Medicare patients who died that year did so under hospice care.

HOSPICE IS MORE THAN THE 'MORPHINE MYTH'

Hospice can elicit images of "someone doped up and bedridden," but it is not "just providing enough morphine to make it through the end," Gurian said.

Indeed, patients give up curative treatments and many medicines. Cancer patients no longer receive radiation or chemotherapy. Those with late-stage Alzheimer's, Parkinson's or another degenerative neurological disease typically ditch cholesterol and blood-pressure medication — and eventually drugs that regulate their acute condition.

But Novas and Gurian said treatment is case-by-case. Some agencies might allow someone with end-stage kidney disease to get dialysis or take regulatory

medication. They simply have to absorb the cost, because Medicare almost certainly does not pay separately for those treatments.

Further, hospice does not necessarily mean forgoing treatments for certain complications that threaten comfort: antibiotics for a urinary tract infection or infected bed sores, for example. That said, patients or families may forgo such treatments, especially in cases of end-stage neurological disease.

Chip Carter, one of Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter's four children, confirmed to The Washington Post that his mother was suffering from a severe urinary tract infection at the time of her hospice admission and death. In those cases, Novas explained, patients are administered pain management drugs.

JIMMY CARTER'S ENDURANCE IS NOT UNUSUAL

In 2021, the average stay of hospice patients who died was 92 days, MedPAC calculated. The median was 17 days — about two weeks longer than the time between when the Carters' announced the former first lady had entered hospice and when she died.

About 10% of enrollees who die in hospice care stayed more than 264 days.

Appreciation Lunch March 1st
Please Join Us!


 101 N. Jefferson - Ossian, IN • 260-622-4197
 Fax: 260-622-6099 • Steve Hiser, store manager

 **Filters FOR Days**
 SALES EVENT

NAPAGold™ FILTERS ARE ON SALE!
February 19 - March 2, 2024


SPECIALS
Grilled Cheeseque
 Tues., Feb. 20 - Wed., Feb. 21


Scallops & Grits
 Fri., Feb. 23 & Sat., Feb. 24

205 W. Market St.
 Bluffton, IN
 Mon-Sat 10am - 3am • Closed Sunday

Weather

Monday, February 19, 2024
(24-hour observations at 9:27 p.m. Sunday)
High: 32; Low: 13; Precipitation: None
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.40 feet at 8:45 p.m. Sunday

Wells County forecast

Today: Patchy fog before 9 a.m. Otherwise, mostly sunny, with a high near 37. Calm wind becoming south around 5 mph in the morning.

Tonight: Partly cloudy, with a low around 23. Southeast wind around 5 mph.

Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 44. South wind around 10 mph.

Tuesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 32. South wind 5 to 10 mph.

Wednesday: Partly sunny, with a high near 52.

Wednesday Night: A 30 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 39.

Thursday: A 40 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 51.

Thursday Night: A 20 percent chance of rain before 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 31.

Friday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 42.

Friday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 27.

Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 40.

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 29.

Sunday: Sunny, with a high near 52.

Israel-Gaza war

(Continued from Page 1)

ambassador warning against measures that could jeopardize "the opportunity for an enduring resolution of hostilities."

But Netanyahu opposes Palestinian statehood, which the U.S. calls a key element in a broader vision for normalization of relations between Israel and regional heavyweight Saudi Arabia. His Cabinet adopted a declaration Sunday saying Israel "categorically rejects international edicts on a permanent arrangement with the Palestinians" and opposes any unilateral recognition of a Palestinian state.

The international community overwhelmingly supports an independent Palestinian state as part of a future peace agreement. Netanyahu's government is filled with hard-liners who oppose Palestinian independence.

Netanyahu wants Israel to achieve "total victory" over Hamas. In response to international concern over a Rafah offensive, he has said Palestinian civilians will be evacuated. Where they will go in largely devastated Gaza is not clear.

The suggested timing for the offensive came as the World Health Organization chief said southern Gaza's main medical center, Nasser Hospital, "is not functional anymore" after Israeli forces raided it in Khan Younis last week.

Israeli strikes across Gaza continued, killing at least 18 people overnight into Sunday, according to medics and witnesses. A strike in Rafah killed six

people, including a woman and three children, and another killed five in Khan Younis, the main target of the southern Gaza offensive in recent weeks. Associated Press journalists saw the bodies.


"All those who were martyred were those whom the Jews asked to move to safe places," said a bystander after the Rafah strike, Ahmad Abu Rezeq.

In Gaza City, which suffered widespread destruction early in the war, an airstrike flattened a home, killing seven people, including three women, according to relative Sayed al-Affifi.

Israel's military rarely comments on individual strikes and blames civilian casualties on Hamas because the militants operate in dense residential areas.

Financial Focus
How will higher rates affect you?
 As you know, interest rates have risen considerably over the past couple of years.
 How does this affect you as a consumer and as an investor?
 From a consumer's standpoint, you'll likely pay more in interest on new or refinanced mortgages, along with car loans and credit cards. Paying these loans and debts at higher rates can affect your cash flow, so you may have to make some choices about your overall budgeting and spending plans.
 As an investor, higher rates can mean different things. Some stocks do better than others in a high-interest-rate environment, but when considering any stock or stock-based investment, you'll want to look at its merits and fundamentals.
 If you own bonds, their value might go down when interest rates rise. That's because investors won't pay full price for your bonds when they can get newer ones issued at higher rates. However, you, too, can invest in new bonds that pay these higher rates, providing you with bigger interest payments.
 In any case, it's useful to be aware of what's happening with interest rates. The more you know about the factors affecting your investments, the better off you'll be.
This content was provided by Edward Jones for use by Jeremy Todd, your Edward Jones financial advisor at 260-824-0686.

JEREMY M. TODD
 CFP® AAMS®
 Financial Advisor
 1169 N. Main St.
 Suite 2
 Bluffton, IN 46714
 260-824-0686



 www.edwardjones.com Member SIPC
 Edward Jones, its employees and financial advisors are not estate planners and cannot provide tax or legal advice. Please consult your estate-planning attorney or qualified tax advisor regarding your situation.

Edward Jones
 MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING
 This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

TROUBLED?
TRY PRAYER!
 deweeseappliance.com
DeWeese
 SOFTWATER & APPLIANCES
 We Service All Appliances
 1-800-356-4440 • 231 N. Wayne St., Warren

FAST, RELIABLE FIBER INTERNET
 SOLUTIONS FOR HOME AND BUSINESS
 UNLIMITED DATA | UP TO 1* GBPS | 24/7 SUPPORT

SERVICE NOW AVAILABLE IN MANY AREAS.
 Sign up today or get fiber-ready by signing the underground agreement.
Call for more details!
 833.727.5563
 twncomm.com/heartland




*Services provided by TWN Communications. Not available in all areas. Restrictions, terms and conditions apply. Taxes, regulatory, surcharges and other charges are applicable. A line connection fee may be applicable. Call for details or visit twncomm.com/terms-conditions for additional information and terms and conditions of services. Residential customers on qualifying internet plans will receive download/upload speeds of 25.0 Mbps to 1.0 Gbps, per respective plan. A 30-day notice is required to cancel service.

OBITUARIES

Frances Gloria Witkus, 89

Frances Gloria Witkus, 89, of Bluffton, passed away on Saturday afternoon, Feb. 17, 2024, at Bluffton Regional Medical Center. She was born April 8, 1934, in Jay County to Merl E. and Lena (Showalter) Glessner. Gloria attended Portland High School and worked at Jets for a few years in Portland. She was a longtime member of Old Country Church in Hartford City. Her main focus in life was that of a loving wife, mother and grandmother.



On June 1, 1980, Gloria married Ronald "Ron" P. Witkus in Portland. He preceded her in death on March 12, 2015. Survivors include her children, Steven (Linda) W. Cavanaugh of Geneva, Chris L. (Tina) Cavanaugh of Portland, Sherry W. Baker of Lebanon, Tenn., Wendell (Melinda) Butcher II of Bluffton. She is also survived by 7 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. She is preceded in death by her husband, Ron; a son Rocky A. Cavanaugh; her siblings, Elizabeth Jordan, Mary Steveson, and Margaret Booher; and a grandchild. A funeral service to celebrate Gloria's life will be held at 1 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2024, at the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton. Calling hours will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., prior to the service. Burial will follow at Fairview Cemetery in Bluffton. Memorials may be made in Gloria's memory to the Bluffton Fire Department for Fire Safety in our local schools. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Lemler family of Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton. Friends can send online condolences to the family at www.thomarich.com.

Shirley J. Blocker, 89

Shirley J. Blocker, 89, of Bluffton, died Sunday morning, Feb. 18, 2024, surrounded by her loving family. Funeral arrangements are pending at this time with the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton.

Richard D. Lautzenheiser, 86

Richard "Dick" D. Lautzenheiser, 86, of Bluffton, died Sunday morning, Feb. 18, 2024, at his residence. Funeral arrangements are pending with Goodwin - Cale & Harnish Memorial Chapel in Bluffton.



Moms vs. sons

Pictured at left, April Alig caught in the act of payback seconds after her son nailed her with the Nerf gun at the Bluffton Parks Department's Mother-Son Nerf Gun War on Sunday. Bottom left, Caylynne Moore was forced to surrender as the boys had her surrounded. Bottom right, an astronaut posing as Karla Fritts (pictured) leading moms and sons alike to an epic alien nerf war. (Photos by Sydney Kent)



Indiana National Guard deployment to Texas will cost \$7 million

By **LESLIE BONILLA MUÑIZ**
Indiana Capital Chronicle

The Indiana National Guard expects to spend about \$7.1 million deploying 50 soldiers to the U.S.-Mexico border at Texas for up to 10 months. Master Sgt. Jeff Lowry, the guard's spokesman, told the Capital Chronicle the costs include pay and allowances, accommodations, transportation, supplies and maintenance. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott and a growing number of Republican governors — including Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb — say President Joe Biden's administration isn't doing enough to stem the flow of unauthorized migrants. Texas and the federal government are clashing over a recent U.S. Supreme Court order on razor wire, access to a park along the border and more. Holcomb announced Indiana's deployment last Friday, after a "recent direct request" from Abbott. Nearly a dozen other states have guard soldiers in Texas or have pledged to send some, according to the right-wing Texas Scorecard. Indiana's soldiers are mobilizing and will have a week of training at Camp Atterbury on the "operations of the mission." Lowry said the guard is first taking volunteers for the mission. The soldiers are expected to arrive in Texas in mid-March. They're being called up under State Active Duty, meaning the state of Indiana pays their salaries. An earlier statement from the guard said it had sufficient funds to cover the costs.

It isn't the first time that Indiana National Guard members have been deployed outside the Indiana border. In 2021, the guard was sent on federal detail to Washington D.C. to help secure the U.S. Capitol during the presidential inauguration. At other times, soldiers have been sent to other states to help with the aftermath of natural disasters such as hurricanes and tornadoes. Numerous Republican policy leaders have said they "fully support" Holcomb's decision in constituent newsletters. Democrats have criticized the move. "Gov. Holcomb using Hoosier National Guardsmen as political props is a shameful move," State Rep. Kyle Miller, D-Fort Wayne said in a statement last week. "This border controversy is a longstanding culture war and dog-whistle continuously initiated by Republicans from around the country. ... It should always be a last resort to send troops away from their homes and families, and the issues happening at the border do not warrant Hoosiers being called to action."

Wells Court Docket

Wells Superior Court
Criminal Cases

Daniel Flores Vega, 31, Bluffton, was sentenced to one year in the Indiana Department of Correction with 185 days suspended and 114 days of jail credit. The sentence was issued after Vega pled guilty to one count of battery against a public safety official, a Level 6 felony, and criminal trespassing, a Class A misdemeanor.

Vega was also ordered to serve 730 days to the Indiana Department of Correction with all but 20 days suspended, concurrent to the previous case. This sentence was issued after Vega pled guilty to one count of operating a vehicle with an ACE of .15 or more, a Level 6 felony. Vega was also ordered to serve 525 days on probation and pay court costs and filing fees in the amount of \$1,049.50.

'Magic mushrooms,' or psilocybin, research gets OK from House committee

By **WHITNEY DOWARD**
Indiana Capital Chronicle

For Caroline Hagedorn, a nurse in Fishers, the intrusive thoughts and compulsions from her obsessive-compulsive disorder had become unbearable. Cognitive behavioral therapy, exposure response therapy and medications had done little to stem the tide and Hagedorn avoided large areas of her home and backyard due to contamination fears. "Driving became one of the hardest things for me. I would take twice as long driving to places due to circling back and rechecking," Hagedorn told a House Public Health Committee on Tuesday. "This is just the tip of the iceberg of my OCD battles over the years. It has changed my career path and friendships and caused me to even question God."

"The mental prison OCD built in my mind was getting harder and harder to navigate while raising three kids and attempting to live a normal life," she continued. But an experimental psilocybin trial with Johns Hopkins was life-changing for Hagedorn and now, three months after treatment, she said "intrusive thoughts are the exception, not the norm." Hagedorn was one of a handful of Hoosiers urging the committee to consider a bill that would establish a fund for continued psilocybin research, otherwise known as "magic mushrooms." There is no initial state appropriation in Senate Bill 139 but it creates a special fund consisting of money received from state or federal grants and programs, gifts, donations, or transfers made to the fund.

While no research institutions are explicitly identified, bill discussion focused on Indiana University and Purdue University as two likely applicants to apply for the grant, which would be administered by the Indiana Department of Health.

Daily Lunch Special



American Legion Post III

Open to Public

- Tuesday**
Tenderloin Basket
 - Wednesday**
Chicken Wings
 - Thursday**
Taco's, Nacho's, Taco Salad
 - Friday**
Cheese Burger Basket
- Ask About Our Homemade Soup**
Chilli served daily!

3 Night Gospel Sing Revival
THE NEW BEGINNING CHURCH
2187 W. St. Rd. 218 Bluffton, IN
2 miles West of Poneto on 218 or 5 miles East of 3 on 218
February 22, 23, 24
Singing at **6:00 p.m.**
Every Night
OPEN MIC
Two Songs
Come out and join us. A time of refreshing and spiritual encouragement.
Call: Steve - 765.348.9405 • Jamie - 260.249.3768

FRESH • VARIETY • LOCAL • QUALITY
3095 VAN HORN ST., ZANESVILLE
LOCALLY SUPPLIED • LOCALLY OWNED
Lengerich
MEATS • SPECIALS
260.638.4123
Mon.- Thur. 9 - 5 • Fri. 9 - 6 • Sat. 8 - 1
(Subject to change)
Beef Arm Roast \$6.69/lb.
Smoked Boneless Pork Chops \$7.09/lb.
German Bologna \$4.39/lb.
Bun Size Cheddar Cheese..... \$5.39/lb.
Sides of Beef Available at Market Prices
Whole or Half Hog..... dressed weight \$2.99/lb.
www.lengerichmeats.com PRICES GOOD Feb. 19 - Feb. 24, 2024
GET YOUR EASTER HAM
Pulled Pork with or without BBQ sauce • Sloppy Joe • Smoked Pork Chops
Meat & Cheese Trays • Roasting Hogs • Homemade Chicken and Ham Salad
CALL IN ADVANCE FOR ALL SPECIAL ORDERS

WE HELP YOU GET SOCIAL SECURITY, MEDICARE AND MEDICAID READY!
Jerry Flack & Associates
WE REPRESENT MANY - MANY - MANY INSURANCE COMPANIES
WE HAVE ALL THE MEDICARE AND MEDICAID OPTIONS AVAILABLE
The Price Tag is the Same Everywhere Consider Local for Better Service
WE HAVE THE MARKETPLACE UNDER 65 PRODUCTS.
WHEN YOU HAVE PROBLEMS AND YOU WILL HAVE PROBLEMS YOU WILL HAVE US TO COUNT ON
MEDICARE SUPPLEMENTS - MEDICARE ADVANTAGE PLANS - PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLANS
Life Insurance - Long Term Care Insurance - Investments - Individual and Small Group Health - Dental - Vision - Hearing - Cancer Insurance
Folks on Medicare A and B and Diabetic can get **FREE** Nice Looking Diabetic Shoes Every Year from Us | We Do **FREE** Information/ Education Seminars In Your Business (Again Former Teachers)
WE CAN MEET: IN OUR OFFICE - IN YOUR HOME - IN A FAVORED LOCATION
In the 1882 Building at Main & Market with the mural on the outside wall • 260-824-1618

Veterans bills among the many passing with universal support

People are often surprised when I tell them that vast majority of bills that pass the Indiana General Assembly have overwhelming support from both Republicans and Democrats. The first half of session showed just that.



Niki Kelly

In the House, 446 bills were introduced and 112 passed; 97 percent of bills received bipartisan support and 55 percent received unanimous support.

In the Senate, 297 bills were introduced and 110 passed; 88 percent of bills received bipartisan support and 58 percent received unanimous support.

Hoosier Opinions

I often forget that citizens don't regularly see the proposals that move through smoothly versus larger bills that draw opposition and controversy. But there are many smaller measures that address topics or problems that aren't in dispute.

Just like this year's bills helping Indiana veterans.

- Senate Bill 15, authored by Sen. Jim Tomes, R-Wadesville, requires state agencies to create a veteran's benefits and services poster. Businesses with more than 50 employees must place a poster in a conspicuous place. Eleven other states have done it. The bill also requires the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs to make the posters available for business, nonprofit or government agency that wants to post them. It passed the Senate unanimously and is now in the House.

- Senate Bill 49, authored by Sen. Susan Glick, R-LaGrange, creates a catastrophically disabled hunting season for veterans paired with the youth hunting weekend. Supporters said when hunters need a guide or special equipment in the woods, they often give up the activity they love. This bill would enable such disabled veterans to keep enjoying the sport during a time when other hunters are not in the woods. The youth hunting season already requires the youth to have a guide. The bill passed the Senate unanimously and is now in the House.

- House Bill 1021, authored by Rep. Mitch Gore, D-Indianapolis, creates a green alert for veterans in crisis and defines a veteran in crisis. This gives advocates and law enforcement another tool to help a missing veteran missing by activating the green alert. This is similar to an Amber Alert for missing children and Silver Alert for missing senior citizens. The bill passed the House unanimously and is now in the Senate.

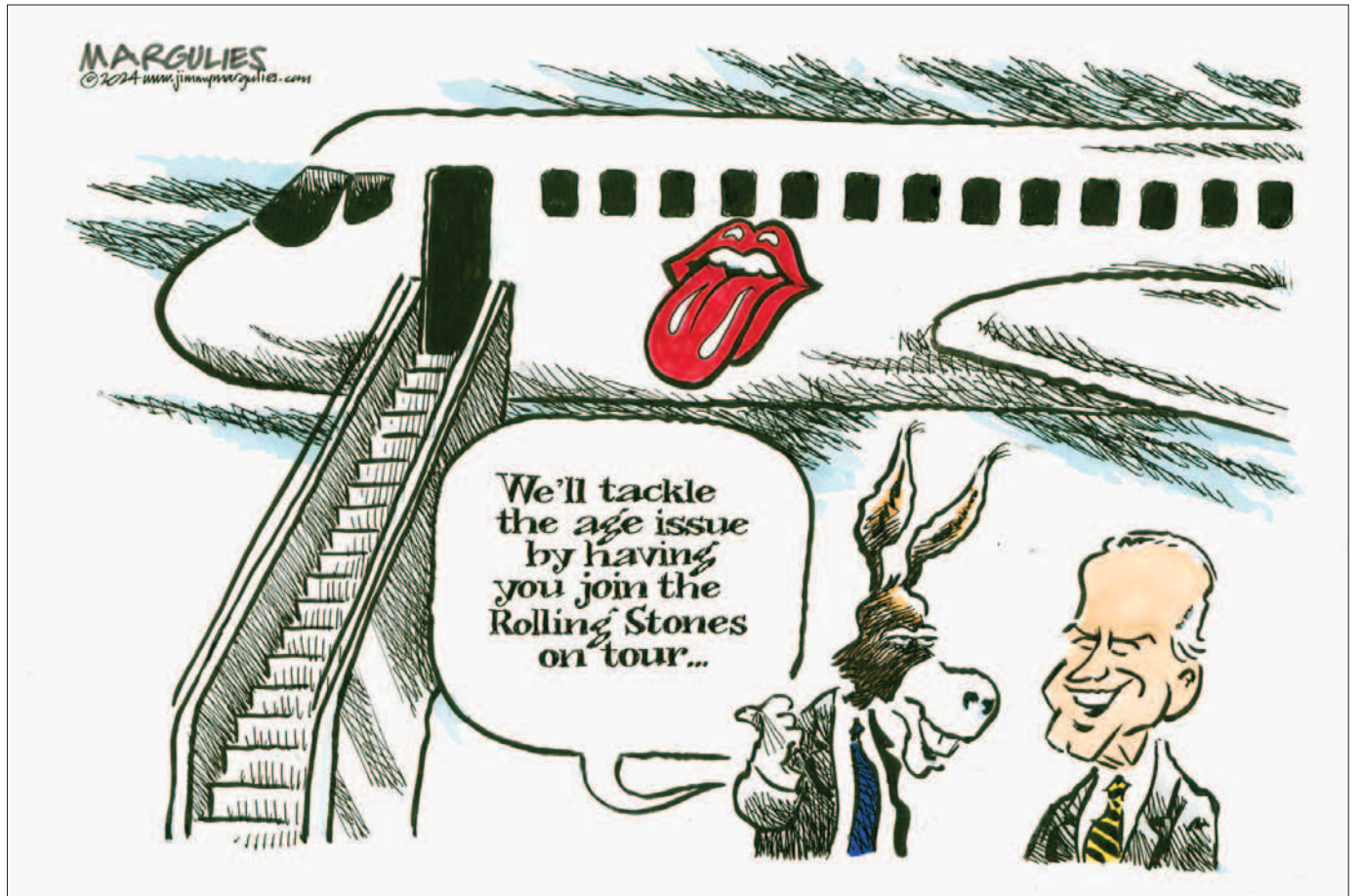
- House Bill 1120, authored by Rep. Jeff Thompson, R-Lizton, is an omnibus property tax bill that includes a provision raising the value of the home a disabled veteran can use a property tax deduction. Currently, there is no benefit if the home is valued above \$200,000. This bill raises the limit to \$240,000. This bill passed the House 73-21 and is now in the Senate.

- House Bill 1202, authored by Rep. Stephen Bartels, R-Eckerty, raises the amount of an award that can be given from the Military Family Relief Fund from \$2,500 to \$3,500. It also establishes an annual increase in the award amount in the future. The fund is stable at over \$11 million and takes in more than it pays out annually. The bill passed the House unanimously and now is in the Senate.

"For a short session, we are getting some things done for veterans and their families!" said veterans advocate Lisa Wilken. "The catastrophically disabled hunting season has been a three-year effort. I am very pleased to see the property tax issue addressed in a non-budget year."

Indiana has more than 325,000 veterans living here and they should be aware of the efforts being made to help them.

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



Braun, Young disagree on allies, enemies and appeasement

Since the Russian dictator Vladimir Putin began his vicious genocidal assault on Ukraine two years ago, more than 10,000 civilians have been killed and over 18,500 injured, according to the United Nations human rights office. More than 10 million Ukrainians have fled their homes, and 6.3 million have sought refuge outside the country.

Heat and electricity in much of the eastern and southern parts of Ukraine have been knocked out this winter. Children are attending school in subway bomb shelters while Russian missiles and drones rain down on civilians. Dams have been blown up, and nuclear power plants have come under attack.

This all comes after a generation ago, when the United States, NATO and Russia persuaded Ukraine to give up its nuclear arsenal in exchange for security guarantees that Putin has violated with the most violent methods.

The Council on Foreign Relations observed in 2023: "A year after Russia's invasion, Ukraine is suffering a catastrophic humanitarian crisis. The outflow of millions of refugees has placed a strain on neighboring countries. ... In addition, the war has taken a tremendous toll on Ukraine's infrastructure. Russian air strikes have hit healthcare facilities, residential neighborhoods, and power plants, leaving millions of people without electricity during the winter."

Former President Donald Trump called Putin's Ukraine strategy "savvy" and "genius" in the hours after the invasion began. Reuters reported in December that a declassified U.S. intelligence report revealed 315,000 Russian soldiers had been killed or injured, or nearly 90% of its invasion personnel. "The scale of losses has forced Russia to take extraordinary measures to sustain its ability to fight. Russia declared a partial mobilization of 300,000 personnel in late 2022, and has relaxed standards to allow recruitment of convicts and older civilians," the assessment said.

Is that really the result of a savvy and genius strategy? The toll on the Ukraine military has been severe. According to Reuters, a Ukrainian civic group said it has confirmed through open sources 24,500 combat and non-combat deaths. But if many of the 15,000 troops listed as missing are also dead, the figure could be much higher, according to a report published in the Ukrainian journal Tyzhden.

Today, Trump is attempting to throw his fellow dictator a lifeline. Ukraine is running out of ammunition and soldiers. Trump is marshaling congressional Republicans to deny aid to Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan and to secure the southern border. That is exactly what Putin wants, to let Ukraine wither and starve. He is attempting to outlast the U.S. and NATO, which has not lost a single life in this conflict.

This past week, the U.S. Senate by a 70-29 margin passed a \$95 billion supplemental funding bill.

Indiana's two Republican U.S. senators voted on

opposite sides. Sen. Mike Braun opposed it, posting on X: "In the middle of the night, the Senate will vote to give away \$70B of borrowed money to foreign nations — not 1 dollar of it a loan, paid for, or offset with cuts. By paying the world's bills & ignoring our own \$34T debt, we are neglecting our duty to our kids & grandkids."

Sen. Todd Young backed the bill. "This legislation provides vital security assistance to Israel, Ukraine, and Taiwan. We cannot abandon these allies and partners as they face existential threats."

Young said in a statement. "This bill also will help rebuild our defense industrial base, which has significantly diminished in recent years. Restoring our military readiness — from artillery to semiconductors — is critical not to promoting war but to deterring conflict. And the legislation takes steps to interrupt the illicit global drug trade and help disrupt the sale of fentanyl in our communities. Abandoning our allies and partners will empower and embolden authoritarian powers such as China and Russia. Leadership comes with a price, but it also comes with rewards."

The Council on Foreign Relations reported that the Biden administration and Congress have directed "more than \$75 billion in assistance to Ukraine, which includes humanitarian, financial and military support, according to the Kiel Institute for the World Economy, a German research institute."

But congressional Republicans appear to be on a path to do Putin's (and Trump's) bidding. House Speaker Mike Johnson said in a statement: "Now, in the absence of having received any single border policy change from the Senate, the House will have to continue to work its own will on these important matters. America deserves better than the Senate's status quo."

And that is complete BS. House Republicans have refused to consider this Senate aid legislation and a border bill that many liberals despise.

Watching all of this inhumanity and dysfunction with delight is Chinese President Xi Jinping. If the United States abandons its commitment to Ukraine, that will green-light Xi's plans to invade Taiwan, and if that happens, American lives will be lost.

If Taiwan were to fall, it would diminish the U.S. Navy's ability to reach the Chinese mainland in a future conflict. China has been trying to push the U.S. out of that range, constructing a series of manmade islands that will be used in a coming war.

There is a term for this type of backstabbing an ally: appeasement.

The West tried that strategy before World War II, and the results were catastrophic.

The columnist is publisher of *Howey Politics Indiana* at www.howeypolitics.com. Find him on Facebook and Twitter @hwypol.



Brian Howey

Politicking

Russia is a civilizational adversary

The poet Robert Frost once said that a liberal is someone too broad-minded to take his own side in a fight.

What would he say about those on the right who seem to be confused about the same question?

Over the last few days, Donald Trump told a rally about how he'd supposedly warned the leader of a NATO nation that he'd encourage the Russians "to do whatever the hell they want" against countries that weren't spending enough on defense, while the former Fox News personality Tucker Carlson broadcast videos from Moscow praising its grocery stores and subways as superior to those in the United States.

For its part, the Republican-controlled House of Representatives is refusing to approve another tranche of aid to Ukraine as it runs short of artillery shells in a defensive war against Russia.

What's notable about all of this is that people who, in other contexts, are fierce about the need to defend Western civilization are unenthusiastic about a core institution of the modern West — namely, NATO — and feel little urgency about checking the aggression of a Russia that is an avowed and long-time civilizational adversary of the West.

There are legitimate policy disagreements about NATO and the Ukraine war, but there shouldn't be any doubt about the larger significance of Vladimir Putin's challenge to the West's interests, values and resolve.



Rich Lowry

In his classic book "The Clash of Civilizations," the late social scientist Samuel Huntington wrote of an "Orthodox civilization, centered in Russia and separate from Western Christendom as a result of its Byzantine parentage, distinct religion, 200 years of Tatar rule, bureaucratic despotism, and limited exposure to the Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment, and other central Western experiences."

There's some ambiguity about this, as Russia has always had a conflicted relationship with the West. In the early 18th Century, Peter the Great grabbed his country by the neck and forced it to adopt more Western ways. He built St. Petersburg as a European-style city, and pursued a dizzying array of military, administrative, educational, legal and cultural reforms. Peter's mode of Westernizing, though, was profoundly Russian — an exalted ruler wielding brutish, centralized power.

It also caused an anti-Western reaction — as the historian Orlando Figes points out in his book "The Story of Russia" — among the so-called Slavophiles who believed Russia had turned away from what should be its true, distinctive path.

For his part, Putin made a nod toward the Petrine tradition initially upon taking power. He stated his ambition to become "part of western European culture." But this gave way,

under the pressure of NATO expansion and of Russia's traditional resentments and insecurities, to a determinedly anti-Western view that draws on Slavophile thought.

Putin believes in authoritarianism, in a strong Russian state, in the rehabilitation of the country's Soviet past, and in a Russian civilization that is superior to a West corrupted by secularism and individualism.

He seeks to reunite "the Russian world," a concept, according to Figes, he got from the patriarch of the Orthodox Church. He wants to protect the "family" of Slavs and the "tens of millions of our citizens" lost to the Russian state after the supposed disaster of the fall of the Soviet Union.

It's the misfortune of Ukraine, which straddles the line of Western and Orthodox civilization, to use Huntington's terms, to be in the firing line of these grandiose ambitions. Ukraine's desire to be a sovereign state of its own and, in particular, to align itself with the hated West is intolerable for Putin. He's explained at great length why he believes Ukraine has no legitimacy as an independent nation, and his model of a neo-tsarism where elections are fake and opposition leaders die in Arctic prisons would be threatened by a Ukraine that successfully embraced a version of the Western model.

Give Putin this — at least he's defying what he considers his civilizational birthright of despotism and illiberalism. Any true friend of our own should be appalled.

Rich Lowry is on Twitter @RichLowry

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, Feb. 19, the 50th day of 2024. There are 316 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Feb. 19, 1942, during World War II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which paved the way for the relocation and internment of people of Japanese ancestry, including U.S.-born citizens.

On this date:

In 1473, astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus was born in Torun, Poland.

In 1807, former Vice President Aaron Burr, accused of treason, was arrested in the Mississippi Territory, in present-day Alabama. (Burr was acquitted at trial.)

In 1945, Operation Detachment began during World War II as some 30,000 U.S. Marines began landing on Iwo Jima, where they commenced a successful month-long battle to seize control of the island from Japanese forces.

The News-Banner

(USPS 059-200)

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

News-Banner Publications, Inc.

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

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

Holly Gaskill, Editor
Mark Miller, Opinion Page Editor

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

Events at the Creative Arts Council of Wells County

428 S. Oak Street in Bluffton
260-824-5222
www.wellscocreativearts.com
creativeartscouncil@gmail.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/wellscocreativearts
Instagram: @creativeartscouncil
Creative Arts office hours — Monday through Thursday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Friday (by appointment only).

DRUM LESSONS

beginner, intermediate & advanced
We are excited to expand our repertoire of musical instrument lessons by offering drum lessons! Lesson will be Monday nights. Private lessons are \$25 per half hour session. There is a possibility for group lessons if we have enough interest for beginners. Limited Spots available
Lessons will be taught by Alex Cornett, a worship/rock drummer with 25 years of experience. He has toured with several worship bands across the country and overseas, and has played at dozens of churches, both as a fill in and an every week musician. With a degree in audio engineering and a history of studio work, Alex has a unique collection of musical knowledge and technical ability. He is offering beginner, intermediate, and advanced classes.

If you are interested in finding out more, please call the Creative Arts office at (260) 824- 5222.

Creative Arts Summer Camps

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

Disney The Jungle Book Kids (Ages 8-11); Auditions: Saturday, May 11, 2024 (must be age 8 by March 1st); Rehearsals: June 17-18; Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to Noon; Performances: June 28 at 7 p.m. and June 29 at 3 p.m.; (Attendance is required at all 10 days of camp plus both performances); Tuition: \$100

Summer Dance Intensive
Registration Opens – March 1, 2024;
Dates: June 3-21, 2024

Creative Movement (Ages 3-5); For 3-5 year old students, the 45 minute Creative Movement class meets twice a week for three weeks.

Choose 1 session; Tuesday and Thursday
Session A from 10:00 to 10:45 a.m.
Session B from 10:45 to 11:30 a.m.
Tuition: \$50

Pre-Dance (Ages 6-8); The Pre-Dance class is geared toward 6-8 year old students. Students will take two 45 minute



classes (one in ballet and one dance elective) twice a week for three weeks.; Tuesday and Thursday from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m.; Tuition: \$90

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

Intermediate/Advanced Class; For students that have reached an intermediate to advanced level of classical ballet. Students will take 1.5 to 2.5 hours of class three times a week for three weeks. Classes offered will include ballet, pointe, and contemporary dance styles.

Monday from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Wednesday from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Friday from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Tuition: \$190

Ongoing Activities

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

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

Important Scheduling Note: Changes can occur after the Creative Happenings column has been published. Please confirm dates and times before planning to participate in programs and activities

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



LiGHT Steering committee members display a sampling of the available gowns. From left, Kristen Prible, Laura Gerber, Kim Gentis, Jessica Beste, Tammi Daughtery and Tammy Slater. (Photo provided)

Wells County Prom dress exchange 2024

The steering committee of LiGHT announces dates for the 2024 Wells County Prom Dress Exchange.

The 2024 sale dates have been set for Friday, March 8 from 4 to 7 p.m. and Saturday, March 9 from 10 a.m. to noon at the First United Methodist Church in Bluffton. All dresses are \$10; additionally, purses, shoes and jewelry are available free of charge.

Proceeds of the event benefit LiGHT, a women's giving initiative of The Wells County Foundation, Inc.

Prom or bridesmaids dresses are still being accepted for the event and may be dropped off Monday through Friday at the First United Methodist Church from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. or the Wells County Foundation from 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Inquiries regarding the Prom Dress Exchange can be directed to the office of The Wells County Foundation, Inc. Follow the Wells County Prom Dress Exchange page on facebook for current information as well.

Norwell Internship Spotlight award Coby Hartzler

Senior Coby Hartzler has been selected to receive the Norwell High School Internship Spotlight award. He has been doing his experience at Precision Service of Bluffton with owner Kevin Morris and supervisor Jason Rekeweg. Coby is the son of Steve and Trudy Hartzler of Markle.

tenance which includes oil changes, tires, fluid levels, and inspecting for potential problems. He is also getting experience working with brake systems, body mounts, and exhaust work.

Upon graduation, Coby plans to attend the University of Northwestern in Lima Ohio [UNOH] to study auto-diesel mechanics.



Coby Hartzler

Gloria offers a belated Valentine's Day memory and recipe

At the time of writing, Valentine's Day is almost here; memories are here already.

Two years ago was our last Valentine's Day together. Daniel had come home from town a few days before with heart balloons fastened to a clear container hosting a huge chocolate kiss wrapped in red.

Knowing my weakness of saving things for the perfect occasion and no longer as fresh tasting, he remarked, "Now don't wait to eat it until it is not good anymore!"

One day, when the children weren't watching, I carefully took it out and shaved a bit off the backside, and re-wrapped it.

Soon after Daniel passed, I didn't know how I could possibly eat it, knowing that it would no longer be on my dresser. Two years later, it is still sitting there.

The children keep asking me if they can eat some of it. My response remains the same, "If I eat it, it's gone! It won't be there for me to enjoy anymore."

It doesn't make sense

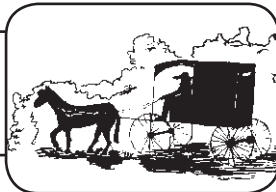
in their young minds why you'd want it if you'd not even enjoy it by munching it down.

I don't have Daniel this year as I did for 12 years, yet the Lover of my soul who designed me in my mother's womb holds me and lavishes all the love I need. Do I miss Daniel? Deeply. Does God provide? Yes, completely.

A year ago, when February 14th rolled around, the ache was coupled with peace. That morning, God gave me a beautiful sunrise. I stood inside my east kitchen window, soaking it in. Quite intrigued by the splendor of it as it circled the south, I opened the south window. I leaned out, intrigued by what met my gaze. Soft pink ringlets of clouds floated against the beautiful blue morning sky. Rising from the east, they spread across the sky and banked in the west. I kept watching. In awe, I realized that before me, a few pink rings formed into hearts. I questioned my sanity, yet it was too pronounced

The Amish Cook

by Gloria Yoder



to deny. As the pink hearts disappeared, several more made their appearance. It was more than I could fathom. By the time I returned to the kitchen and real life, I had counted seven rings, which had transformed into pink hearts.

In a new way, I was prepared to face the day without Daniel. I would not be alone; my Maker would accompany me in an authentic way. Not only do we claim him as our Maker, but certainly the Maker of the universe.

Daniel was delighted each time I made this Valentine dessert especially for him. Enjoy!

VALENTINE BROWNIE DESSERT

Brownie layer:

- 1 package chocolate cake mix
- ¾ cup cold butter
- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- Filling:
- 8 oz. Cream cheese
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 cup whipped topping
- Pudding:
- 3 cups milk
- 1 pkg (3.9 oz) chocolate instant pudding
- 1 package (3.9oz) vanilla instant pudding
- 1 teaspoon instant coffee, opt
- 3 cups whipped topping
- Chocolate shavings, opt.
- In a large bowl cut butter into cake mix until mixture resembles coarse crumbs.
- Add egg, mix well.
- Press into a greased 9 by

13 cake pan. Bake at 350 for 15-18 minutes or until set.

Beat cream cheese and powdered sugar, fold in 1 cup whipped topping. Spread over cooled crust, refrigerate until set. In a bowl whisk together milk and both puddings. Let stand

for 5 minutes or until slightly thickened. Spread over cream cheese mixture. Top with 3 cups whipped topping. Sprinkle with chocolate shavings. Refrigerate at least 2 hours before serving. Delicious served with ice cream.

BUSINESS OR PERSONAL

401(k)s | Asset Management | Bonds
College Planning | UITS | Financial Planning | Insurance & Annuities
IRAs | Stocks | Personalized Goal Planning | Mutual Funds
Pension & Profit Sharing Plans | Research | Retirement Planning

RAYMOND JAMES
Raymond James Financial Services, Inc.
Member FINRA/SIPC

INVEST FOR THE FUTURE

Kim Gentis
Financial Advisor
Financial Advisor Wealth Management Professional
(260)824-8070
kim.gentis@raymondjames.com
1245 N. Main St., Bluffton, IN 46714
Investment Advisory Services are offered through Raymond James Financial Services Advisors, Inc.

ONLINE ONLY PERSONAL PROPERTY AUCTION

GLASSWARE, COLLECTIBLES, FURNITURE, TOOLS, PRIMITIVES & MORE!

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH - SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25TH
PREVIEW LOCATION: 102 S JEFFERSON ST, OSSIAN, IN 46777

Outstanding Collection of Vintage Pickle Casters & Brides Baskets - Condiment Sets Cut and Pressed Glassware - Fenton - Carnival - Cranberry - Vaseline - Opalescent Cobalt - Indiana - Uranium - Toothpick Holders - Towle Sterling Silver & Assorted Serving Pieces - Antique & Modern Furniture - Vintage Toys - Primitives - Musical Instruments - Cuckoo Clocks - Pocket Watches - Costume Jewelry - Pottery - Shop Tools Professional Dust Collector - Generator - Drill Press - Double Shaft Grinder - Haviland China - Royal Doulton Figures - Presidential Collectibles - Farm Advertising & More!

VIEW COMPLETE CATALOG AT STEFFENGRP.COM

SELLER: THOMAS & MARY WOODWARD AND OTHER CONSIGNORS - SALE MANAGER: PAT CARTER (260.273.8294)

AUCTION PREVIEW & ONLINE BIDDING ASSISTANCE:
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15TH (3:00 - 6:00 PM) & THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22ND (3:00 - 6:00 PM)

STEFFEN GROUP 260.426.0633
STEFFENGRP.COM
REAL ESTATE & AUCTIONS AU19500212 • AC30500053

IAR NAA
INDIANA ARTS ASSOCIATION AUCTIONEER

FCC (ADAMS), LLC
Berne, IN
TEXT TO APPLY! 1-866-902-0138

If you have home improvement plans ... You won't want to miss out on our upcoming

SPRING HOME IMPROVEMENT

FEATURE

Publishing in the
News - Banner
Week of March 11
Ossian Journal
Thurs., March 14

Advertising Deadline
Tues., March 5 at Noon

Knights knock off No. 1 Huskies, win Semi-State

Norwell took down Hamilton Heights & Bremen to reach its first state title game since 1977

• **Semi-State Game 1 vs. No. 1 Hamilton Heights**
By RYAN WALKER

HUNTINGTON — No. 2 Norwell stunned Class 3A's No. 1 team Hamilton Heights Saturday morning in a Semi-State semifinal heavyweight fight, but the Ossian crew was flat-out the best team on the floor.

The Knights (22-4) jumped out to an early 10-0 lead and never let that lead get under nine points the rest of the game, frustrating the Huskies (24-3) with a 64-50 final score.

The winner of Saturday morning's contest would draw either Bremen or NorthWood in the final, but this game was far and away the best teams in the IHSAA 3A North Region. That was the way Norwell wanted it — a full week of preparation for the best team in 3A, and let the rest of the day play itself out.

"Because our team understands that for us to get to (Gainbridge Fieldhouse, home of the state championship game), we needed to play them first. That allowed us to focus on preparing for them all week," Norwell head coach Eric Thornton explained why they wanted Hamilton Heights first. "I could talk about (Hamilton Heights). If we played them in the second game today, I couldn't mention

their name. It's the perfect path to get to Gainbridge."

"We could prepare all week, and we knew what we had to do, and we got it done," Norwell's top-scorer Kennedy Fuelling said.

The Knights were more than prepared for the same Hamilton Heights team that ended their season in the regional last year. That quick 10-0 advantage in Saturday's game set the tone for the rest of the contest.

Kennedy Fuelling got the scoring going early, swishing her first two three-point attempts on her way to a game-high 5 for 6 from deep and 30 points. Vanessa Rosswurm floated a shot down the middle of the lane to have Huskies' coach Keegan Cherry blow through his first timeout in the opening two minutes.

The run grew to 11-0 before Hadleigh Cherry finally got her team on the board midway through the first quarter.

The Huskies clamped down on Fuelling for a moment out of the timeout, but that freed up Makenzie Fuess for a five-point swing on her first triple.

She, along with Rosswurm and Dekota Hubble scoring in the first, gave Fuelling the

(Continued on Page 7)

will square off at Gainbridge Fieldhouse in Indianapolis for the state championship game Saturday.

"This incredible group," Norwell head coach Eric Thornton said. "I can't put it into words right now what this team means to me. You have a lot of dreams as a coach to be a part of a team that can go to the state championship, and we're going there and we're going there to win. That's this team's goal, and we're going to continue to spend time together this week."

In the morning session, the No. 2 Knights topped No. 1 Hamilton Heights by 14 points. The result of that heavyweight battle would lead to one of the top teams in the state left to face one of the two bottom teams — NorthWood or Bremen — left in the semi-state finals, thanks to the IHSAA's random draw to determine the field.

Anything can happen, especially in the state tournament, but Bremen quickly realized this game wasn't going to be close.

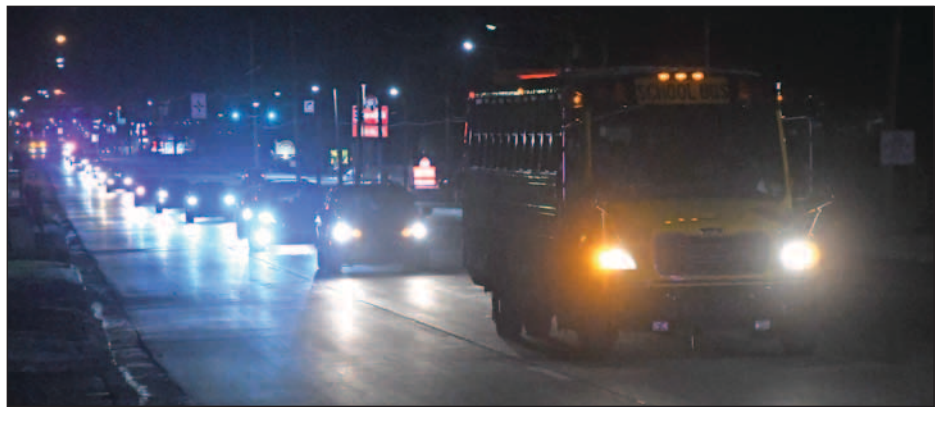
Norwell pounced to a 9-0 lead on three straight three-point plays. Fuess hit the first attempt right off the opening tip and made another in between Vanessa Rosswurm's and-one.

(Continued on Page 7)



Celebrating

Members of the Norwell student section erupt onto Bob Straight Court Saturday Night after the Knights rolled past Bremen 64-20 to advance to the state championship in girls basketball for the first time since 1977. At right, Kennedy Fuelling erupts in celebration as Below, the Knight girls and fan caravan were treated to a police escort through Bluffton Saturday night complete with lights, and sirens and honking horns. The caravan started in Markle and continued east on U.S. 224 and south on Ind. 1. The Lady Knights will play Gibson Southern, which is ranked just behind Norwell in the polls, at 6 p.m. Saturday at Gainbridge Fieldhouse. (Photos by Glen Werling)



• **Semi-State final vs. Bremen**

For the first time since 1977, the Norwell Knights girls' basketball team is heading back to the state championship game.

A 64-20 beatdown over Bremen (16-12) was the second mission on Saturday to capture Norwell's (24-4) second girls' basketball Semi-State title in school history.

"It's an amazing feeling," senior guard Makenzie Fuess said after the game. "All the work that we put in the offseason and during the season, playing the toughest schedule that we've ever played. We've all worked towards this and to finally be able to achieve that. It's a big dream that we all had coming into the season."

"Oh my goodness, I can't even explain the feeling," senior guard Lillian Norris said. "It almost doesn't even feel real yet; it's just exciting. We talked about this before the game — as little girls, we always dreamed of our senior year we'd be at state. Now we're actually here and it feels really cool."

Out of 102 teams in 3A, only Norwell and No. 3 Gibson Southern (25-4) remain in the tournament. The Knights and Titans

Tigersharks win first sectional title in school history, Heyerly, Brooks & more advance to state

By RYAN WALKER

JAY COUNTY — For the first time in school history, Bluffton has a swimming sectional champion.

The boys' team, who won by over 100 team points, was able to hoist the sectional trophy Saturday night, something neither the boys' or girls' programs haven't done.

With 425 points to second place Delta's 291, the Tigersharks didn't need to sweat out until the end to find out they would get it done. Parents were texting head coach Justin Upgraft during the day with live score updates, but he knew after his 200-yard medley relay team won, that was it. The medley relay is also the first race of the day.

"As soon as we jumped in the pool for the medley relay, and we won the medley relay, we didn't look back," Upgraft said.

Even with the domination, the Tigersharks were thrilled to accomplish the sectional title. Upgraft said it still hasn't even sunk in yet.

It's not like the Tigersharks haven't had a good team, winning their 10th Allen County Athletic Conference in a row this year, but this team had an it factor like never before.

A few weeks prior to the sectional, Upgraft was worried about where and who to place some of his guys in the lineup. There were events that had multiple swimmers within a second

or two of one another.

But that is what separates years from the past, the depth on this team was thick top to bottom. In fact, all 15 boys that entered the competition Thursday in preliminaries bussed down to the finals on Saturday. Not everyone makes it to the final rounds, but all of Bluffton's team did.

"I've always wanted a deep team, and I've had deep teams in the past, but I was one or two guys away from being deep all the way through," Upgraft said. "This year is spots one through three, it could have been a coin flip on who is going to touch first."

Their success didn't just stop there with the team, it was individuals too.

To advance to the state finals, an event must finish first or hit the cutoff time. At the Jay County sectional, the swimmers almost always miss the time necessary to move on, so they must finish first. Bluffton will be sending two relay teams and two individual events next week to the state championships on Friday at the IUPUI Natatorium in Indianapolis.

The relay teams were the 200-yard medley of Noah Brooks, Dalton Rodgers, Elija Robles and Isaac Wheeler and the 400-yard freestyle of Brooks, Griffin Linderwell, Rodgers and Wheeler.

In the individual events, Brooks qualified in the 100-yard backstroke, and Wheeler in the 100-yard butterfly.

Robles also will move on to the regional next week in the diving events.

Upgraft has seen it in Brooks, now in his sophomore year the talent he has and was quick to mention his name.

"Coming on the scene last year as a freshman, I knew he was going to be special," Upgraft said. "But he's a freshman, so he's really raw in his actual ability, but I could see it in him ... Then he came back and one of the first weeks of practice he's like, 'Coach, I worked really hard this summer on working on my technique. I'm gonna go hard this year. I'm gonna go to state this year. I'm going to win backstroke.' and he did."

Upgraft also mentioned Wheeler, who he had returned to the butterfly after taking him out previously. Wheeler had done butterfly for the majority of his life, and after a year off, Upgraft wanted him to give it a go. His goal was to get him under a minute in the race. Saturday, his time was 55.51.

Now in his sixth season with the boys' team, Upgraft has built a strong program that now is set to new expectations. The boys know what they're capable of and what the hard work can do for them.

When he was hired, Upgraft didn't even think his team could get to this point. Six ACAC titles and a

(Continued on Page 7)



Sectional champions

It was a successful sectional final for Bluffton and Norwell at Jay County High School on Saturday. Top, Bluffton's swim team poses with its first-ever sectional championship trophy in program history. The team won with a 425 team score, over 100 points over second-place Delta. Bottom, Norwell's Rylan Heyerly (left) fist bumps with Bluffton's Noah Brooks after the 100-yard freestyle race. Heyerly took first and will advance to the state finals next week at IUPUI's Natatorium in Indianapolis. Brooks got second, but earned first place in the 100-yard backstroke, and helped the Tigersharks take home first in the 200-yard medley and 400-yard freestyle races. (Photos by Ryan Walker)

STEFFEN GROUP

Contact Me!
260.414.6353
cathie.peterson@steffengrp.com

CATHIE PETERSON | REAL ESTATE BROKER

Arnold Lumber Co.
425 S. Winchester St., Decatur, IN
Hours: Mon-Thurs 7AM-5PM
Fri 7AM-4:30PM • Sat 7AM-11:30AM
260-724-3108 • Fax 260-724-4505

FABRAL
METAL WALL AND ROOF SYSTEMS

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

Wells Jay Allen Grant Adams Blackford Huntington

FISHER'S GARAGE DOORS, LLC
SALES & SERVICE

RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL

- Replace Broken Springs & Cables on All Makes
- Replace or Repair Doors & Openers on All Makes

"Large Enough to Serve, Small Enough to Care"

260-849-0206 • www.fishersgaragedoors.com

Semi-State Game 1

(Continued from Page 6)

space she needed. She entered the second quarter with her third three, and nine points for her later, and the Knights were pounding the top dog 39-19 by halftime.

Hamilton Heights' leading scorer and University of Evansville commit Camryn Runner could not find the bottom of the basket. Half of her six total points were at the free-throw line. The first made shot for her came with 1:30 remaining before the break on a three-pointer. Runner averages 27 points per game.

Her counterpart Ella Hickok, who had a team-high 28 points in the Huskies' regional win over Woodlan, scored four points against Norwell.

The Knights' overwhelming 1-3-1 defensive structure forced Hamilton Heights into numerous mistakes. The Knights shaded toward Runner before she had a chance to make a move toward the basket.

That 20-point halftime margin wasn't a fluke. Norwell was much more prepared this time around compared to last year and was fired up to get another chance at Hamilton Heights.

The squad of seven seniors and a full roster from last year prepared all season for these types of games thanks to that 44-40 loss to the Huskies in last year's regional.

Thornton said when Hamilton Heights beat Jennings County in early November, he acquired the tape and began prepping for this potential rematch. This week and the last year was on full display.

"There's a lot of fuel from last year's game to this point and we knew we'd see them at some point ... The revenge factor is real, and not in a bad way but in a good way looking for blame on why we lost and looking within our team within ourselves," Thornton said.

Runner would not be denied in her effort to keep her high school career alive.

She hit a long ball from the start of the third quarter — before all of the fans could even get back into their seats for the second half. That was the first of her three triples in the third frame. The future Ace scored 13 points in the quarter and drew a once 20-point deficit down to 10 heading into the fourth period.

Fuelling was shut out in the third while Runner tore it up, but Fuess, Rosswurm and Hubble kept up as best as they all could. But for the third time, Fuelling made the quarter's opening shot from long-range and picked up where she left off.

The Knights did what they needed to, and fended off the streak the Huskies tried to get on. The 7-0 run by Fuelling and Rosswurm certainly helped, and the Huskies only brought the lead down to nine when Katie Brown got her second three to fall. Fuelling and Fuess put the cherry on top with three straight free throws.

Haley Green, Lillian Norris, Ryland Graft, Ali Riley and Larkin Smith helped check out the starting lineup led by seniors with under a minute to play. Then, the horn sounded, and the blue, gold and white Ossian crowd that nearly filled every seat on their half of the floor erupted in joyful cheers.

"It feels really good," Fuelling said. "We were confident and we knew we could win, and we got it done."

Even though they knocked down the No. 1 team in 3A, business was just getting started. A date with Bremen awaited at 8 p.m. in the Semi-State final.

"I told them, 'We didn't come here to win the morning game — we came here to win both games,'" Thornton said. "That's what we have to do to get to Gainbridge. We want to be together next week, and the only way to do that is to win. Our kids aren't going to look past anybody. The main thing that they've tried to do all year — and they do a lot of things well — but one of the things they do best is make it about that thing. Whether it's that practice today or the game in front of you, they're not going to overlook anybody. This has been their goal all season to get to Gainbridge and win it."

ryan@news-banner.com

NORWELL 64, HAMILTON HEIGHTS 50

At Huntington North
HAMILTON HEIGHTS (24-3): Camryn Runner 6-25 9-10 26, Ella Hickok 3-9 2-2 9, Katie Brown 2-8 0-0 6, Kennedy Cherry 2-4 1-4 5, Hadleigh Cherry 2-6 0-0 4, Presley Cherry 0-0 0-0 0, Kassidy Schakel 0-0 0-0 0, Kamryn Rhoton 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS 15-52 12-16 50

NORWELL (22-4): Kennedy Fuelling 9-15 7-11 30, Makenzie Fuess 3-12 6-8 13, Vanessa Rosswurm 5-10 2-6 13, Annabelle Johnson 1-4 1-2 4, Dekota Hubble 1-3 1-2 3, Addie Norris 0-0 1-2 1, Ryland Graft 0-0 0-0 0, Haley Green 0-1 0-0 0, Lilly Norris 0-0 0-0 0, Ali Riley 0-0 0-0 0, Larkin Smith 0-0 0-0 0, Alivia Green 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS 19-45 18-31 64.

H. Heights 10 9 18 13 — 50
Norwell 19 20 8 17 — 64

Three-Point Field Goals: Hamilton Heights 8-24 (Runner 5-12, Brown 2-7, Hickok 1-4, H. Cherry 0-1), Norwell 8-15 (Fuelling 5-6, Johnson 1-1, Fuess 1-5, Rosswurm 1-3). Rebounds: Hamilton Heights 23 (K. Cherry 6, Runner 5, Brown 4, H. Cherry 3, Shakel 2, Hickok 1), Norwell 30 (Rosswurm 7, Green 7, Hubble 6, Fuelling 4, Johnson 2, Fuess 2, L. Norris 1). Turnovers: Hamilton Heights 15, Norwell 13. Fouls: Hamilton Heights 23, Norwell 13. Fouled Out: None. Technical Fouls: None.

Semi-State final vs. Bremen

(Continued from Page 6)

Kila Foster for the Lions got the team's first make, and Eliana Grubbs ended the first quarter with a bucket as well. But by that point, Norwell had already ran away with a 25-4 lead.

Fuess, Rosswurm and Kennedy Fuelling made three-pointers in the quarter and spun the Lions in a circle trying to keep up.

Bremen was overwhelmed, a term Thornton has used all season to describe how his team plays defense. The Lions had 19 turnovers in the first half alone, and Norwell shut the Lions out in the second period.

The Knights pounded their way to a 42-4 lead at the half. Norwell's 20 points allowed for the game would have been good enough to win in the first quarter. Meanwhile, the Lions didn't score in double digits in any quarter.

All of it was on just a little bit of game prep. Having only a few hours to scout, Thornton thought about implementing some strategy that he believed Bremen would use to try and get to Fuelling, but then decided to just play the style that's gotten the team this far in the tournament.

"For us, it was just 'Let's come out and let's win the first quarter. Let's try to be overwhelming,'" Thornton said. "I thought we overwhelmed them tonight, and I thought that kind of dictated everything else that happened from there."

Midway through the third quarter, Thornton safely started rolling out his bench and replaced the starters. Seniors Haley Green, Lillian Norris and Ali Riley joined Addie Norris and Ryland Graft on the floor.

Riley was able to knock down her only three-point attempt and Lillian Norris got

three buckets to fall for six points.

In the fourth quarter, some of the bench players were mixed with the junior varsity call-ups for the tournament. Freshmen Haley Williamson checked in with Alivia Green.

This moment was special for everyone involved. The Norwell team returned all of its starters from a year ago, and have built everything for the big Semi-State trophy. When they received it after the game, the student section stormed the court in celebration.

"A lot of emotions from this morning that we're trying to reflect right now, now that we know we're going to the state. I'm not sure it's sunk in yet," said the 27th-year coach Thornton, who's heading to the state title for the first time.

Three Knights got into double figures in the game: Fuess with 17, Rosswurm 16, and Fuelling 12.

ryan@news-banner.com

NORWELL 64, BREMEN 20

At Huntington North
NORWELL (23-4): Mackenzie Fuess 6-17 1-2 17, Vanessa Rosswurm 6-15 2-2 16, Kennedy Fuelling 5-12 1-3 12, Lilly Norris 3-4 0-0 6, Addie Norris 2-3 0-0 5, Ali Riley 2-2 0-0 5, Dakota Hubble 1-3 0-1 2, Alivia Green 0-1 1-2 1, Ryland Graft 0-3 0-2 0, Haley Green 0-0 0-0 0, Annabelle Johnson 0-1 0-0 0, Haley Williamson 0-1 0-0 0. TOTALS: 25-62 5-12 64.

BREMEN (16-12): Kila Foster 5-14 0-0 12, Eliana Grubbs 1-7 2-4 4, Mikayla Shively 1-6 0-0 2, Naomi Moyer 1-2 0-0 2, Emma Lawmaster 0-0 0-0 0, Alyssia Lopez 0-0 0-0 0, Emma Kincaid 0-9 0-0 0, Brooke Bellman 0-0 0-0 0, Teagan Feathers 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS: 8-38 2-4 20.

Norwell 25 4 12 10 — 64
Bremen 4 0 9 7 — 20
Three-Point Field Goals: Norwell 9-27 (Fuess 4-10, Rosswurm 2-6, Riley 1-1, A. Norris 1-1, Fuelling 1-7, Graft 0-2), Bremen 2-14 (Foster 2-7, Shively 0-3, Kincaid 0-3, Grubbs 0-1). Rebounds: Norwell 34 (L. Norris 7, Rosswurm 6, Hubble 5, H. Green 5, A. Norris 2, Fuess 2, Riley 2, A. Green 1, Fuelling 1, Graft 1, Johnson 1), Bremen 26 (Grubbs 11, Shively 5, Moyer 3, Foster 3, Kincaid). Turnovers: Norwell 10, Bremen 24. Fouls: Norwell 5, Bremen 11. Fouled Out: None. Technical Fouls: None.

Tigersharks sectional title

(Continued from Page 6)

point. Six ACAC titles and a sectional later, it happened.

"Yeah, not a chance," Upgraft said when asked if he thought he would eventually be a sectional champ. "I would have said Yeah, right. You're kidding me. Then here I stand."

ryan@news-banner.com

Top finishers:

- Bluffton**
- Noah Brooks, Dalton Rodgers, Elija Robles and Isaac Wheeler first in the 200-yard medley relay.
 - Wheeler second in the 200-yard IM.
 - Robles fourth in the diving events.
 - Wheeler first in the 100-yard butterfly.
 - Brooks third in the 100-yard freestyle.
 - Griffin Linderwell second and Jackson Meyer fourth in the 500-yard freestyle.
 - Brooks first, Rodgers third and Rhett Gerber fourth in the 100-yard backstroke.
 - Brooks, Griffin Linderwell, Rodgers and Wheeler first in the 400-yard freestyle

relay.

Norwell

- Rylan Heyerly first in the 200-yard freestyle.
- Kale Meredith third in the 200-yard IM.
- Colten Strunk fourth in the 100-yard butterfly.
- Heyerly first in the 100-yard freestyle.
- Ethan Williamson third in the 500-yard freestyle.
- Meredith, Gage Reinhard, Strunk and Heyerly second in the 200-yard freestyle relay.
- Meredith third in the 100-yard breaststroke.
- Braden Hoag, Meredith, Reinhard and Heyerly third in the 400-yard freestyle relay.

Team Scores:

Bluffton 425, 2. Delta 291, 3. Muncie Central 263.5, 4. Norwell 238, 5. Huntington North 202, 6. Muncie Burris 183, 7. Adams Central 150, 8. Belmont 144.5, 9. Blackford 120, 10. Jay County 115, 11. South Adams 81.

Johnny Cruz places 6th at state

Bluffton's senior wrestler Johnny Cruz finished up his wrestling career in sixth-place at the state meet down in Evansville on Saturday.

In the quarterfinal round, Cruz was edged out 6-5 by decision against Hosa Smith of Indianapolis Cathedral.

In the next round, Cruz pinned Perris Green of Warren Central in 2:01 to head to the fifth-place match. Cruz fell to Brady Beck of Rochester by decision 3-0.

Over the weekend, Cruz eclipsed the 1,000-win mark for his career, and ended 32-4 in his senior campaign.



Bluffton freshman Axton Beste (left) drives the ball around Mississinewa's Jesse Simpkins in the first half of Saturday night's non-conference game in Bluffton. The Tigers fell 48-49 to the Indians. (Photo by Chad Kline)

Tigers couldn't hold off Indians

By ANDREW FEEBACK

For three-and-a-half quarters Saturday night, the Bluffton Tigers had the visiting Mississinewa Indians right where they wanted them.

The Tigers led throughout, once by as many as 12 points, but couldn't withstand a late flurry of three-point shooting from the Indians and fell 49-48.

"I feel bad for the kids," coach Craig Teagle said. "Probably for 28 minutes, that's as well as we've played all year as a team. It's too bad we couldn't find a way to win, but (the Indians are) also 13-7 for a reason. They're a pretty good basketball team."

Bluffton survived one second-half run by Mississinewa, but was unable to survive another.

Leading by eight at the break, the Tigers (10-11) were still ahead 29-21 with about three minutes to play in the third quarter.

The Indians' Kobe Johnson made his first triple of the game moments later, the first of seven treys that proved to be just enough to flip the game in favor of the visitors.

"They're a little quicker than us on the perimeter, and we wanted to have a high hand, but also keep them from driving," Teagle said.

Johnson made another to bring the Indians within 31-29, but Bluffton's Andrew Hunt beat the third quarter buzzer with a three that circled the rim, hit the backboard and dropped in to give the Tigers a five-point edge.

That started a 10-0 run that gave Bluffton its largest lead of the night with 6:07 to play when Tucker Jenkins made two free throws.

The Indians began to press and trap from that point, and although Bluffton turned it over only twice in the final quarter, 11 turnovers for the game resulting in 11 points the other way had consequences.

One of those giveaways led to an A'Jean Johnson triple that cut the Tiger lead to 42-37.

The Tigers found Kaleb Green for an open layup to go up seven before Kobe Johnson nailed another long one.

"I do want to compliment our guys, when we were getting half-court trapped," Teagle said. "We were doing a much better job of attacking and looking to get a basket. In the past, we just moved the ball, but were really not looking to score. We want to be aggressive, and I thought tonight we did that. Except, we were trading twos for threes."

Axton Beste's corner three-pointer had the Tigers up 47-40 with two minutes to go. A'Jean Johnson responded with another one

from the wing.

Again, the Tigers found an opening in the Indians' half-court pressure and got it to Andrew Hunt. But he missed.

Yet another triple from Preston McCann brought the Indians within one with a minute remaining.

Bluffton worked the clock down to 31 seconds before Kaleb Green was fouled. He split a pair from the line, and the Tigers were up two.

This time, Kobe Johnson drove to the hoop, scored and was fouled with 14 seconds left. His free throw gave Mississinewa its first and only lead of the game.

Hunt's three attempt from the top of the key was off the mark, and the Indians snuck out with the victory.

"I can't fault our kids on the threes," Teagle said. "They had to get the ball stopped and recover. Those guys got hot and hit some shots. It was the other end, there were a couple plays we didn't make."

Jenkins led the Tigers with 16 points while Beste had 11.

Kobe Johnson paced the Indians with 16 while Kiontaye Woods added 10.

Bluffton will host Southwood Friday night.

Mississinewa made it a clean sweep by taking the junior varsity and freshman games, 40-29 and 35-33. For the JV Tigers, Nolan Lambert scored 11 points, while Marshal Gerber and Ben Maggard both had five. For the freshmen, Jonah Geisel and Chanley Shaw each scored seven, while Max White and Heath Johnson both had six.

sports@news-banner.com

MISSISSINEWA 49, BLUFFTON 48

At Mississinewa
MISSISSINEWA (13-7): Jesse Simpkins 1-5 0-0 2, A'Jean Johnson 2-4 0-0 6, Grady Schnepf 0-0 0-0 0, Remedy Miranda-May 0-0 0-0 0, Nolan Quaderer 0-1 0-0 0, Preston McCann 3-7 0-0 8, Gannon Smith 1-4 0-0 2, Drew Johnson 0-0 0-0 0, Kobe Johnson 5-7 3-3 16, Jaxson Ott 2-4 1-2 5, Tyvon Jacobs 0-0 0-0 0, Deakon Dilts 0-0 0-0 0, Kiontaye Woods 4-5 2-2 10. TOTALS: 18-37 6-7 49.

BLUFFTON (10-11): Nolan Lambert 0-0 0-0 0, Andrew Hunt 2-6 0-0 5, Elijah Garrett 0-0 0-0 0, Hunter Wenger 0-0 0-0 0, Cameron Williams 2-3 0-0 6, Tucker Jenkins 3-7 10-10 16, Jude Baumgartner 0-0 0-0 0, Axton Beste 4-8 0-0 11, Declan Grieser 1-1 1-2 3, Jared Moser 0-0 0-0 0, Kaleb Green 3-5 1-4 7, Benjamin Maggard 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS: 15-30 12-16 48.

Mississinewa 6 8 15 20 — 49
Bluffton 11 11 12 14 — 48

Three-point Field Goals: Mississinewa 7-16 (McCann 2-5, Kobe Johnson 3-4, A'Jean Johnson 2-3, Simpkins 0-2, Quaderer 0-1, Smith 0-1), Bluffton 6-12 (Beste 3-5, Williams 2-3, Hunt 1-4). Rebounds: Mississinewa 13 (McCann 3, Woods 2, Smith 2, Quaderer 2, Kobe Johnson 2, Dilts 1, Ott 1), Bluffton 18 (Jenkins 7, Green 3, Hunt 2, Williams 2, Beste 2, Grieser 2). Turnovers: Mississinewa 7, Bluffton 11. Fouls: Mississinewa 33, Bluffton 7. Fouled out: None. Technicals: None.

JV: Mississinewa 40, Bluffton 29.
Freshman: Mississinewa 35, Bluffton 33.

High School Calendar

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.

FRIDAY, FEB. 23
BOYS BASKETBALL: Norwell at Homestead, 7:30 p.m.; Bluffton at Southwood, 7:30

p.m.; Cowan at Southern Wells, 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEB. 24
GIRLS BASKETBALL: (State championship) Norwell vs. Gibson Southern at Gainbridge Fieldhouse, 6 p.m.

MONDAY, FEB. 26
 No events scheduled.

TUESDAY, FEB. 27
 No events scheduled.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 28
 No events scheduled.

THURSDAY, FEB. 29
 No events scheduled.

Spring Ag Tab

TUESDAY, MARCH 5

Advertising Deadline:

Friday, February 23

Call Today 260-824-0224

SPECIAL EDITION IN THE

News-Banner, & The Ossian Journal

The Classifieds

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

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

WE ACCEPT



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

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

SUDOKU

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

King Classic Sudoku

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

©2024 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Difficulty: ★

2/19

FOR SALE

Miscellaneous

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

Public Sale Calendar

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! 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: agricultural, residential development potential!, Jefferson Township, Northern Wells School Corporation. *Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC*, 260-724-7402, Kjauction.com.
BIDDING ENDS 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. 22 from 3 p.m.-6 p.m., 102 South Jefferson, Ossian. Sale manager, Patrick Carter, *The Steffen Group Inc.*, www.steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006.
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.*, 260-824-3006, www.steffengrp.com.
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.*, www.steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006.

SELL YOUR STUFF!

All Classified Line Ads automatically appear on the News-Banner website at NO ADDITIONAL CHARGE!

HOT DEAL!

20 Words, 10 Days
just \$25
ADD A PHOTO
for just \$5 more
One item per ad

GUARANTEED SOLD

Your ad runs 'til your item is sold! (6-month maximum) Private party only, one-item in ad. Limited to "For Sale" and "Automotive" categories (Real Estate excluded)

20 words \$39

Add'l Lines: 88 cents each

ADD A PHOTO!

Your "Guaranteed Sold" ad (up to 20 words) with a Photo: \$44
Add'l Lines, 88 cents each

GARAGE SALES

Put your Garage Sale in Wells County's Easy-to-Use Garage Sale Guide!

Get a FREE

GARAGE SALE KIT

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

SELL YOUR WHEELS!

HOT DEAL!

20 Words, 10 Days

just \$25

ADD A PHOTO

for just \$5 more

One item per ad

GUARANTEED SOLD

Your ad runs 'til your item is sold! (6-month maximum). Limited to one-item, private party only.

20 words \$39

Add'l Lines: 88 cents each

ADD A PHOTO!

Your "Guaranteed Sold" ad (up to 20 words) with a Photo: \$44
Add'l Lines, 88 cents each

SERVICES SPECIAL!

Advertise Your Services EVERY DAY in Wells County's Most Popular Daily Marketplace!

20 Words, 2-Month Special: \$97

ATTENTION GRABBERS!

Add a photo or artwork to any ad! You can also add a headline or other attention-getters for less than you'd expect! Place your ad ON-LINE and explore the possibilities!

SERVICES

Services

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

BECOME A PUBLISHED Author. We want to Read Your Book! Dorrance Publishing-Trusted by Authors Since 1920 Book manuscript submissions currently being reviewed. Comprehensive Services: Consultation, Production, Promotion and Distribution Call for Your Free Author's Guide 1-888-965-1444 or visit dorranceinfo.com/hoosier (I)

DIRECTV SPORTS PACK - 3 Months on Us! Watch pro and college sports LIVE. Plus over 40 regional and specialty networks included. NFL, College Football, MLB, NBA, NHL, Golf and more. Some restrictions apply. Call DIRECTV 1-888-885-8931 (I)

Lottery Numbers

Saturday's Drawings HOOSIER LOTTERY
Cash 5 — 22-28-33-38-44
Cash4Life — 05-38-44-48-55, Cash Ball: 03
Lotto Plus — 09-22-26-27-41-42
Quick Draw Midday — 01-02-03-12-17-18-25-26-28-41-43-44-49-52-55-60-65-72-73-76, BE: 01
Daily Three-Midday — 08-01-09, SB: 03
Daily Three-Evening — 07-07-06, SB: 01
Daily Four-Midday — 06-07-04-09, SB: 03
Daily Four-Evening — 02-09-09-00, SB: 01
Quick Draw Evening — 02-15-16-18-20-23-25-26-29-30-31-39-45-48-59-69-75-77-78-80, BE: 59
Hoosier Lotto — 03-07-17-28-29-31
POWERBALL
06-28-59-62-69; Powerball: 21; Power Play: 3X

Sunday's Drawings HOOSIER LOTTERY
Cash 5 — 10-13-15-28-37
Cash4Life — 07-22-28-42-45, Cash Ball: 04
Quick Draw Midday — 05-07-11-14-16-25-29-46-47-48-54-56-60-62-64-72-73-74-76-79, BE: 47
Daily Three-Midday — 01-01-08, SB: 01
Daily Three-Evening — 06-09-07, SB: 04
Daily Four-Midday — 04-01-00-03, SB: 01
Daily Four-Evening — 06-02-06-07, SB: 04
Quick Draw Evening — 01-02-06-07-11-19-21-26-35-36-38-39-43-51-57-59-60-63-64-79, BE: 60
Hoosier Lotto — Estimated jackpot (for Wednesday): \$4.8 million
MEGA MILLIONS
Estimated jackpot (for Tuesday): \$493 million
POWERBALL
Estimated jackpot (for Wednesday): \$330 million

Services

ETHAN'S OUTDOOR SERVICES LLC Lawn Care, Lawn Rolling, Spring & Fall Clean Ups, Landscaping & Grass Seeding. Call Ethan today for a free estimate. 260-827-7945. 260-827-7945
ethansoutdoor@gmail.com

EMPLOYMENT

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.

HELOISE HINT: If you want to succeed at your job. Focus on your work performance, not the performances of others. Try to do your best work every day and be professional at all times in the office. Send your job-success story to HELOISE@Heloise.com.

5 for \$5 SPECIAL!

Earn Extra Cash by selling your "Unwants"! A 20-word, line classified ad is \$5 for 5 Days! For Sale Items Only. Contact the Bluffton News-Banner office at 125 N. Johnson St., 260-824-0224, or classifieds.news-banner.com

HIDEABED COUCH, \$5, floral, queen size, good condition, you pick up, (260) 824-3070.

SUDOKU ANSWER

61/7	8	4	9	1	7	6	9	8
9	7	8	2	4	6	9	1	5
1	5	6	8	9	8	4	7	2
2	9	8	7	8	9	1	4	6
7	4	1	6	2	9	8	5	9
6	8	9	1	8	4	7	2	9
8	6	4	8	7	2	9	9	1
9	2	9	4	6	1	8	8	7
8	1	7	9	9	8	2	6	4

Read & recycle this newspaper

February GOODS & SERVICES DIRECTORY

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

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

The HIDEAWAY BEER & BOURBON
THURSDAY - Dollar Off Drinks (Excludes Pop)
WEDNESDAY - KARAOKE
FRI. & SAT. - Live Music
Follow us on Facebook for our Events.
123 S JOHNSON ST. • 824-0455

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

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

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

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

—OSSIAN—
1645 Hillcrest Dr., Suite 2A
Ossian, IN 46777
Attorney
Gerret J. Swearingen

SWEARINGEN ELDER LAW
• Medicaid Planning • In-Home Healthcare Planning
• Durable Power of Attorney • Wills, Living Wills, & Advance Healthcare Directives
• Estate Planning & Deeds • Special Needs Trusts
• Long Term Care Planning
(260) 888-9256
FREE INITIAL CONSULTATION!

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

LANCASTER Senior Apartments
1800 S. Wayne St. | Bluffton
• 1 & 2 Bedrooms
• Maintenance Free
• All Ground-level
• Private Entrances
• Water Included
260 824-5280
TDD: 7-1-1 For those 62+ or disabled, regardless of age.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

YOUR LOCAL AGENTS, HERE FOR YOU.

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

For as little as ... \$187 PER ISSUE
Call 824-0224 or 622-4108
Feb. deadline is Tues., Jan. 23!

2 officers, 1 first responder killed at the scene of domestic call in Minnesota

BURNSVILLE, Minn. (AP) — A man armed with multiple guns and large amounts of ammunition shot at police officers from inside a suburban Minneapolis home that was filled with children on Sunday, killing two officers and a firefighter who was providing medical aid to one of the wounded, authorities said.

A third officer was wounded in the shooting in a tree-lined neighborhood of two-story homes in Burnsville, Minnesota. The suspect in the shooting also died, officials said.

Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension Superintendent Drew Evans said there was an exchange of gunfire, and authorities were still piecing together details of what he described as a "terrible day."

The firefighter, who also works as a paramedic, was shot while providing aid to an injured officer, Evans said. He told a news conference the paramedic was a part of a SWAT team that had been called to a domestic situation at the home.

Inside, an armed man had barricaded himself with his family, including seven children ranging in age from 2 to 15, Evans said.

He said negotiations lasted for hours before the suspect opened

fire. He wasn't specific on the exact amount of time, but the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association said the standoff lasted four hours before a SWAT team entered the home.

Evans said the suspect had several guns and large amounts of ammunition and shot at the police officers from multiple positions within the home, including the upper and lower floors. Evans said at least one officer was shot inside the home.

"We still don't know the exact exchange of gunfire that occurred," Evans said. "Certainly several officers did return fire."

He said that around 8 a.m. the suspect was found dead and the family and children were released from the home. None of them were hurt.

City officials identified the slain officers as Paul Elmstrand and Matthew Ruge, both 27. Adam Finseth, 40, a firefighter and paramedic for the city since 2019, also was killed.

Elmstrand, a member of the department's mobile command staff, joined the department in 2017. Ruge was hired in 2020 and was part of the department's crisis negotiations team and was a physical evidence officer.

Another police officer, Sgt. Adam Medlicott, was injured and being treated at a hospital with what are believed to be non-life-threatening injuries, the city said.

As the bodies of the dead left a hospital, officers saluted, before they were taken in a convoy to the medical examiner's office. Medical staff watched in scrubs.

"We're hurting," said Police Chief Tanya Schwartz. "Today, three members of our team made the ultimate sacrifice for this community. They are heroes."

Neighbors were startled awake by loud pops about an hour before sunrise.

Alicia McCullum said she and her family dropped to the floor, uncertain whether the noise was gunshots. She and her husband peered out of their sunroom and saw squad cars and a phalanx of police officers.

"I didn't think it was a gunshot at first, but then we opened the windows and we saw police everywhere and police hiding in our neighbors' yards," said McCullum, who lives two houses down from the source of the commotion.

"Then there were three more gunshots," she said. "It was like a bunch of fireworks." That's when she and her husband and two chil-

dren sought safety in a bathroom and dropped to the floor. They prayed.

McCullum said she was relieved to see a woman and children escorted out of their home. "We're so thankful for those police officers that risked their lives to save those kids," McCullum said. "And my heart goes out to that mother."

Fire Chief BJ Jungmann said the community was grieving and asked for privacy for the families. None of the relatives of the officers or the firefighter immediately returned phone messages from The Associated Press seeking comment.

Evans said the medical examiner would identify the suspect and said autopsies were planned for Monday. There was no indication the home had been a source of troubles in the past.

"There have not been many calls for service at all," Evans said.

As the investigation unfolded, the neighborhood was ringed with police cars to keep reporters and the public away. A police armored vehicle had bullet damage to its windshield, and Evans confirmed it sustained the damage in the gunfight.

Police scanner recordings on

Broadcastify.com capture a rattled man saying, "I need any ambulance," as he struggled to catch his breath. Someone later could be heard talking about three being loaded into ambulances, uttering the word "critical."

As news spread, other law enforcement agencies immediately began posting messages of condolence on social media, including images of badges with blue bars through them. It is a mark of solidarity in mourning.

"In times like these, it is essential to come together as a community and support one another through the uncertainty and grief," said Marty Kelly, the sheriff in neighboring Goodhue County.

Flags also were lowered to half-staff, with Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz urging those who walked past them to take a moment and think about the first responders who lost their lives.

"Minnesota mourns with you," he said. "The state stands ready to assist in any way possible."

Dozens of people gathered in front of Burnsville City Hall on Sunday night for a candlelit vigil to remember the victims. Several uniformed officers from other departments also attended, including many from St. Paul.

California forges ahead with food waste recycling. But is it too much, too fast?

CHULA VISTA, Calif. (AP) — Two years after California launched an effort to keep organic waste out of landfills, the state is so far behind on getting food recycling programs up and running that it's widely accepted next year's ambitious waste-reduction targets won't be met.

Over time, food scraps and other organic materials like yard waste emit methane, a gas more potent and damaging in the short-term than carbon emissions from fossil fuels. California's goal is to keep that waste from piling up in landfills, instead turning it into compost or biogas.

Everything from banana peels and used coffee grounds to yard waste and soiled paper products like pizza boxes counts as organic waste. Households and businesses are now supposed to sort that material into a different bin.

But it has been hard to change

people's behavior in such a short period of time and cities were delayed setting up contracts to haul organic waste due to the pandemic. In Southern California, the nation's largest facility to convert food waste into biogas has filed for bankruptcy because it's not getting enough of the organic material.

"We're way behind on implementation," said Coby Skye, the recently retired deputy director for environmental services at Los Angeles County Public Works. "In America, for better or worse, we want convenience, and it's very difficult to spend a lot of time and effort educating people about separation."

Meanwhile, some communities that ramped up collection now have more compost than they know what to do with, a sign that more challenges are yet to come as the nation's most populous state plows ahead with its recycling plans.

Only a handful of states mandate organics recycling, and none are running a program as large as California's, which seeks to slash by 75% the amount of organic waste it sends to landfills by 2025 from 2014 levels.

Reaching that goal within a year would be a stretch, experts said.

About three-quarters of communities are currently collecting organic waste from homes, said Rachel Machi Wagoner, CalRecycle's director. While some places are lagging, her aim isn't to punish them but to help them get started, adding that every bit helps the state move towards its goal of reducing emissions.

"My goal is about figuring out where the challenges are and getting us as quickly as possible to success," she said.

"I don't know when we will reach our 75% goal, but we will

reach it," she added.

CalRecycle hasn't tallied data yet on how much organic waste was diverted from landfills in 2023. Jurisdictions reported diverting 11.2 million tons of organics at the end of 2022, up from 9.9 million tons the prior year, Wagoner said.

Some challenges include getting residents on board with sorting their trash into a third bin and knowing what goes where. Others concern what to do with the nutrient-rich compost once it's been created from collected grass clippings, tree branches and food scraps.

At Otay Landfill near the Mexican border, workers pick through heaps of branches and leaves to pull out plastic bits before the material is placed under tarps. The site processes 200 tons of organic waste daily and hopes to double that amount as more cities ramp up collection, said Gabe Gonzales, the landfill's operations manager.

Once the compost is made, California's law requires cities to use much of it. But many say they don't have enough space to lay it all out.

Chula Vista, a San Diego County city of 275,000 people, is supposed to use 14,000 tons of compost a year but uses a few thousand at best, said Manuel Medrano, the city's environmental services manager. Some is doled out in free compost giveaways for residents, while heaps of the material are stored in a fenced area of a local park.

Food waste also can be converted into biogas to fuel vehicles or industrial operations. But a massive facility built three years ago in the Southern California city of Rialto now finds itself facing bankruptcy after Los Angeles was slow to ramp up collection, leaving the plant with insufficient waste, said Yaniv Scherson, chief operating officer for Anaergia Inc.

Special Feature

Your MONEY \$ Your TAXES

Money management tips for retirees

What constitutes a perfect retirement is different for everyone. Some people may imagine spending their golden years fishing their days away, while others may aspire to finally embrace their inner globetrotter. Though individuals' retirement dreams differ, every retiree will need money, which only underscores the importance of a wise and disciplined approach to money management.

Average life expectancies have risen considerably over the last several decades. According to estimates from the United Nations Population Division, the average life expectancy in Canada for both sexes is just under 83 years, while it's slightly more than 79 in the United States. Those figures are a welcome sign, but they may inspire a little fear among seniors who are concerned that they might outlive their money. No one knows how long they will live, but everyone can embrace a handful of money management strategies to increase the chances that they won't feel a financial pinch in retirement.

• Study up on the tax

implications of withdrawing from your retirement accounts. Every retirement investment vehicle, whether it's an IRA or a 401(k), has tax implications. Money withdrawn too early may incur tax penalties, and even money withdrawn long past retirement age could elevate retirees into a new tax bracket that could prove costly. A financial advisor can help retirees determine the tax implications of withdrawing money from their retirement accounts and may even develop a detailed guideline of when withdrawals should be made and how much should be withdrawn in a given year in order to minimize tax liabilities.

• Prioritize your own needs. Though retirees, particularly those with children and grandchildren, may feel an obligation to help their families in difficult financial times, generosity can be very costly for adults who have stopped working. Retirees may or may not have opportunities to generate new income, and even those who do likely won't make enough to meet their daily financial needs. Given that reality,

retirees must prioritize their own financial needs, including their immediate needs and those they will have for the rest of their lives. Though it might be difficult to turn down loved ones' requests for financial help, retirees must make sure they can pay their bills and maintain a quality of life that won't jeopardize their long-term health.

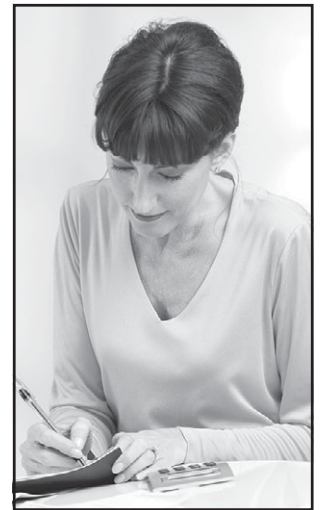
• Examine your housing situation. Equity in a home is a feather in the cap of many retirees. Retirees who own their homes and live in locations with high property taxes might be able to cash in on their equity by

selling their homes and downsizing to a smaller home with lower property taxes. If moving is not a consideration, discuss a reverse mortgage with a financial advisor. A trusted financial advisor can highlight the advantages and disadvantages of reverse mortgages, which are a great option for some people to improve their financial well-being in retirement.

• Stick to a budget during retirement. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reports that roughly 70 percent of individuals who turn 65 will need long-term care in their lifetimes. That's

just one expense retirees must budget for, and it's more sizable than some people may recognize. In fact, the Fidelity Retiree Health Care Cost Estimate found that the average retired couple age 65 in 2022 will need roughly \$315,000 to cover health care expenses in retirement. And health care costs are just one of many expenses retirees can expect to have. Budgeting and avoiding overspending can ensure retirees have the money they need when they need it.

No one wants to outlive their money in retirement. Various strategies can help retirees



effectively manage their money so they can enjoy their golden years without having to worry about their finances.

TOPP CPA FIRM
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT P.C.

Top notch tax service

Dean (Chip) Topp, CPA
chip@toppcca.com

Mon-Friday 8-5; Sat 8-12
Call for evening appointments
159 N. Jefferson St., Berne, IN 46711
260-589-8778

- Individual Taxes
- Corporation Taxes
- Partnership Taxes
- Bookkeeping & Payroll
- Property Taxes
- Quickbook ProAdvisor

Edward Jones

> edwardjones.com Member SIPC

It's never too early to start saving for tomorrow. Give us a call.

BLUFFTON DOUG FEAR, AAMS® Financial Advisor 2035 Commerce Dr., Suite 209 260-565-4134	JEREMY TODD, AAMS®/CFP® Financial Advisor 1169 N. Main St., Suite 2 260-824-0686	JEREMY PENROD, AAMS®/CFP® Financial Advisor 201 E. Market St., Suite 1 260-824-2354	OSSIAN LARRY A. SMITH, AAMS® Financial Advisor 102 S. Jefferson 260-622-7952
---	--	---	---

MKT-58940-A AECSPAD

Your Local Tax Specialists

E&E EMSHWILLER & EMSHWILLER

BUSINESS CONSULTING • TAX PREPARATION
BOOKKEEPING • PAYROLL • QB CONSULTS
IRS REPRESENTATION

JOHN EMSHWILLER, EA
NICK SCHEER, EA
CORY RECKARD, CPA
COLIN PENROD, EA

207 N. Johnson Street, Bluffton, IN 7230 Engle Road, Fort Wayne, IN

www.emshwiller.net • 260.824.1826