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## Pregnant woman receives jail time on drug charges

By SYDNEY KENT

A mother of a newborn will spend the next year in jail after she tested positive for drugs during her pregnancy. She was on probation at the time of the violation. Riley Paige Schorey, 28, Bluffton, appeared in the Wells Circuit Court for the tear-filled hearing on Wednesday morning. In April of 2021, Schorey was sentenced to four years in the Indiana Department of Corrections for possession of a narcotic, a Level 5 felony.

According to a probable cause affidavit, the conviction stems from an incident in October 2020 at the Wells County Jail. A jail confinement officer reportedly spotted a small, clear plastic bag with white powder inside the cell where Schorey was sleeping. The substance later tested positive for fentanyl.

Schorey was incarcerated on drug-related charges at the time after she passed out in her vehicle at the Wabash Street Pak-A-Sak

several months earlier. A deputy ordered a toxicology test when he noticed that she appeared lethargic. The results showed Schorey's blood was positive for fentanyl, methadone, amphetamine, methamphetamine, and THC.

Multiple people petitioned the court for leniency and a chance at recovery at sentencing for Schorey.

In a letter dated Feb. 27, 2021, Schorey's mother told the court that her past and present criminal

history was due to the disease of addiction. She also stated that she and Schorey's father were incarcerated at the time of her first offense — and many years after.

"Riley had little guidance and few positive role models to teach her life skills," her mother wrote. "I know firsthand the great distance between self-hatred and forgiveness. Addressing the issues that create such strong addictive patterns is paramount to her recovery."

The director for Kick the Addiction also wrote to the court to request that Schorey be placed at a recovery home in Indianapolis.

Finally, Schorey herself wrote a three-page letter to Judge Kenton Kiracofe begging for the court to "save her from herself" and to show mercy. She advised that she still had a chance to be a part of her son's life at the time. Her son was not referenced in the hearing (Continued on Page 2)



### Cook, Talk, Taste

Wells County Public Library hosted this month's Cook Talk Taste event on Tuesday. Lemon Meringue pastries were the main attraction on the menu. Above, Virginia Ostrander, left, and Barbara Irwin enjoy the snacks. At right, Brenda Barkdull serves up her pastry and Lynn Elliott decides what she would like. (Photos by Jonathan Snyder)



## 'Message received' on call for housing task force; Indiana slips in affordability

By WHITNEY DOWNARD  
Indiana Capital Chronicle

In light of a new report finding Indiana's housing affordability worsened over the last year, a group of advocates on Thursday called on Gov. Eric Holcomb to establish a dedicated task force, saying lawmakers haven't done enough to solve the state's housing crisis.

An analysis from Prosperity Indiana and the National Low Income Housing Coalition found that the Hoosier State now ranks slightly below the national average for its affordable housing supply. In terms of the housing cost burden for extremely low-income renter households, Indiana is now tenth-worst in the nation.

"The supply of affordable rental housing for extremely low-income households remains deeply inadequate nationwide and specifically here in Indiana," said Aspen Clemons, the executive director of Prosperity Indiana. "... We often hear that Indiana is an affordable place to live. The data contained in today's report reveals that — for a growing number of Hoosiers, particularly extremely low-income Hoosier households, aging Hoosiers, Black Hoosiers and brown Hoosiers — this claim is simply untrue."

In response, the Hoosier Housing Needs Coalition called on Holcomb to establish a task force in the vein of his public health commission, which advanced a significant measure to increase state funding for local public health efforts. The group acknowledged efforts by Holcomb in the past, including a veto on a controversial measure

and support during the COVID-19 pandemic but said more work was needed.

In response, Holcomb highlighted recent legislative efforts and noted that roughly one-third of requests for state READI funding were housing related.

"But message received by those folks because we do find ourselves in a global environment. Certainly in our nation, where mortgage rates are high, people are holding onto their homes because they don't want to fall into a higher mortgage rate which puts pressure on the system," Holcomb said during an unrelated press availability later that day. "But here in Indiana, we have done a lot to make sure that local communities, homebuyers — whether you're renting or owning — have some assistance where eligible."

### The report

Roughly 210,000 Hoosiers qualify as extremely low income, meaning their incomes fall below the poverty level or below 30% of their area median income, whichever is greater. But that group, which grew from the 2023 report, only has access to 70,000 affordable and available housing units, a decrease from the previous year.

For every 100 low-income households, there are roughly 34 units available. Additionally, 76% of these families are "severely house cost burdened."

"What this means is that they spend more than 50% of their income on housing, leaving very little leftover for food, health care and other basic necessities for life," said (Continued on Page 2)

## Tornadoes kill 3, leave trails of destruction in central U.S.

By JOSHUA A. BICKEL and JOHN SEEWER

Associated Press

LAKEVIEW, Ohio (AP) — Blaine Schmidt sifted through the broken glass and splintered wood throughout his Ohio home Friday, salvaging a guitar and a bundle of diapers.

His couch and a crib had been ripped apart by one of many tornadoes that tore through the central U.S., killing three people and injuring dozens more. The storm peeled open his living room wall, but at least the house was standing. The one next door was flattened.

"I'm lucky to be alive," Schmidt said hours after he and his roommate took shelter in a bathtub, using the shower curtain to protect them from flying window glass.

Thursday night's storms left trails of destruction across parts of Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana and Arkansas. About 40 people were injured and dozens of homes were damaged in one Indiana community. Tornadoes were also reported in Illinois and Missouri.

The Indian Lake area in Ohio's Logan County was one of the hardest hit. Three people died in the county northwest of Columbus, said Sheriff Randy Dodds.

Much of the damage was in the villages of Russells Point and Lakeview, where Schmidt lives. The villages are dotted with cottages owned by people who come for fishing and boating.

Search crews and cadaver dogs didn't find any more victims Friday after going into neighborhoods that had been blocked

by gas leaks and fallen trees overnight, Dodds said.

"When you see this damage, you'll be surprised it was only three," the sheriff said.

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine, who assessed the damage and met with residents, said it was fortunate the storm did not hit on a summer weekend.

Sandy Smith took shelter with her family in a laundry room of their Lakeview home after hearing the storm sirens. Seconds later, they heard debris batter the house. Her husband watched the garage blow away.

She went upstairs to rescue their cat who was trapped under a bookshelf. As soon she came back down, the roof collapsed.

A campground, an RV park and a laundromat were among the many businesses damaged. The storm produced fires in some spots and draped power lines through home windows, said Amber Fagan, president of the local chamber of commerce.

About 25 people were treated for mostly broken bones and internal injuries at the nearest hospital in Bellefontaine, said Laura Miller, a spokesperson for Mary Rutan Hospital.

About a half-dozen residents in Lakeview who were interviewed by The Associated Press said they heard tornado sirens 10 minutes before the storm hit, after they went off earlier.

Weather officials were assessing damage and confirming the tornadoes, counting at least five that touched down in Ohio alone.

In Indiana, a tornado injured 38 people in Winchester, where the mayor said some (Continued on Page 3)

## Higher education officials weigh in on new state laws

By CASEY SMITH  
Indiana Capital Chronicle

State lawmakers approved a slew of new laws affecting Indiana's colleges and universities during the 2024 legislative session — but questions remain about how some of those measures will be implemented.

The newest provisions — including several dealing with hot-button issues — were outlined during the Indiana Commission for Higher Education's meeting on Thursday.

Among those are laws to affect tenure and promotion requirements for college faculty, reform high school diploma requirements and expand scholarships and work-based learning opportunities for students.

It's still not clear if Gov. Eric Holcomb will sign into law a debated bill to define and ban antisemitism on Indiana's college campuses, though.

"This was an eventful session. I know in January I had thought — and I think we'd been told — that this would not be that eventful," said Josh Garrison, senior associate commissioner. "But I think going forward, we will see — as higher education and K-12 and the workforce ... as the lines are blurred — there will be more emphasis on the work that we do."

Here's a look at major bills discussed at Thursday's meeting:

### Senate Enrolled Act 202

Senate Enrolled Act 202, one of this year's most debated higher education bills — was touted by GOP lawmakers as a way to increase "intellectual diversity" in publicly funded college classrooms.

Although faculty and students overwhelmingly contended the proposal would micromanage their institutions and have a "chilling effect" on free expression, the governor signed the bill into law on Wednesday.

Included are changes to institutions' diversity-oriented positions and their policies for tenure, contract renewals, performance reviews and more. It also establishes new reporting and survey requirements based on "free inquiry, free expression, and intellectual diversity."

Garrison noted that, as part of Senate Enrolled Act 202, Indiana "is one of the few states" that now requires boards of trustees to establish diversity committees on our campuses.

Under the new law, those diversity committees must make recommendations promoting recruitment and retention of "under (Continued on Page 2)

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**Outside**

A beautiful, but windy, day in the neighborhood

Today	Sunday	Monday
High 61	High 42	High 35
Low 33	Low 27	Low 25

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# Drug charges

(Continued from Page 1)

on Wednesday. Schorey also referred to her battle with addiction as “life or death” in the letter.

As a part of her original four-year sentence, Schorey was recommended for Purposeful Incarceration, a program that reduces an offender’s sentence upon completion of a substance abuse treatment program.

The program proved to be temporarily successful for Schorey. In October of 2022, her sentence was modified to suspend 563 days due to her progress. She was released and required to report to probation the following week.

Less than six months later in May 2023, a petition to revoke the modified sentence was filed due to a failed drug test. Schorey immediately placed herself into an intensive inpatient recovery program. She again wrote to Kiracofe to request that he recall the warrant as she sought help. The request was granted.

Approximately five months later, Schorey failed a drug screen again. She was in her third trimester of pregnancy at the time.

At a hearing to potentially revoke the suspended time last November, the judge, prosecutor, and public defender all emphasized concern for Schorey’s unborn child. Schorey’s public defender, Cory Spreen, requested home detention due to her high risk pregnancy.

“There are two people we’re dealing with here,” Prosecutor Colin Andrews said. “I ask the court to impose some of the strictest conditions it has in a case like this — simply because of the health risk to Miss Schorey and the child.”

Schorey covered her face and

sobbed in her seat.

“Miss Schorey, look at me,” Kiracofe said firmly. “I am going to grant the request with certain conditions here. If I have to make sure this child is born without substances in their system, I will put you in jail and you will have the child in jail.”

Kiracofe informed Schorey that the Department of Child Services could remove the child from her care should they be born with drugs in their system. Kiracofe also emphasized that Vicki Kale with Wells County Probation “stuck her neck out” for Schorey.

Schorey was immediately released on home detention to complete her pregnancy outside of incarceration.

Several months later, a warrant for Schorey’s arrest was filed due to a failed drug screen, as well as failure to comply with Community Corrections.

During the hearing, Schorey claimed to have not known that she was using methamphetamine and that she had “gone out and got a pill” to deal with the pain.

“It wasn’t that I went out and used to get high,” Schorey said through tears. “I know it ultimately doesn’t matter. I was not breastfeeding my baby when that was happening though, I would never do that. I ask that you give me mercy because I want to be a mom again.”

Prosecutor Colin Andrews asked Kale a series of questions to confirm that she had expressed concerns with Suboxone in her infant’s system while breastfeeding. Kale confirmed.

“So — big concerns for her and the baby,” Andrews reiterated. “What can probation do for her now?”

Kale’s outlook was a stark contrast from Schorey’s previous hearing as she detailed the long list of inpatient and outpatient services that had been attempted throughout Schorey’s time in the criminal justice system.

“I feel like we have been through the gambit,” Kale stated. “I believe we have utilized the services we have available.”

Kale requested that Schorey not be placed on probation. With this, the state requested a period of incarceration.

“It is heartbreaking that we have to do these things,” Andrews said. “But I don’t know what else we can do. I will defer to the court as far as the length of the sentence.”

“I’m not sure what other options are left but to decide how much time Miss Schorey has left to serve before she tries to be a mom again,” Cory Spreen, Schorey’s public defender, said. “Although we’re here for the bad reasons, over the months I’ve been working with Riley she’s made substantial progress.”

“I’m sympathetic to the child you have,” Kiracofe said before he issued his ruling. “But it cuts both ways. I told you in November, you were using at that time and I was concerned about the health of this child. I can’t ignore you are on probation for possession of a narcotic, a level 5 felony.”

Kiracofe advised Schorey to take advantage of resources through the Department of Child Services following her release from incarceration.

“That child will need you when you get out,” Kiracofe concluded. “Hopefully you’re there for that child.”

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# Weather

Saturday, March 16, 2024

(24-hour observations at 10:03 p.m. Friday)

High: 58; Low: 43; Precipitation: None

Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 6.94 feet at 8:45 p.m. Friday

## Wells County forecast

**Today:** Sunny, with a high near 61. Breezy, with a southwest wind 10 to 15 mph increasing to 20 to 25 mph in the afternoon. Winds could gust as high as 35 mph.

**Tonight:** Mostly cloudy, with a low around 33. West wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

**Sunday:** Mostly sunny, with a high near 42. West wind around 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

**Sunday Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 27. Northwest wind around 10 mph.

**Monday:** A 20% chance of snow showers before 2 p.m. Partly sunny, with a high near 35.

**Monday Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 25.

**Tuesday:** Partly sunny, with a high near 49. Breezy.

**Tuesday Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 28.

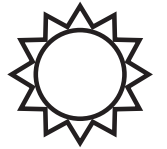
**Wednesday:** Sunny, with a high near 48.

**Wednesday Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 32.

**Thursday:** A 20% chance of showers. Mostly sunny, with a high near 55.

**Thursday Night:** A chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 39.

**Friday:** A chance of showers. Partly sunny, with a high near 53.



# Housing task force

(Continued from Page 1)

Clemons.

The national average for the number of units available per 100 families is 33.89, above the state’s rate of 33.57 homes. Andrew Bradley, Prosperity Indiana’s Policy Director, notes that traditionally expensive states — including Hawaii, New York and Massachusetts — now rank higher than Indiana for affordability. Every Midwest state, with the exception of Nebraska, has a better rate when it comes to affordable and available housing for vulnerable renters.

“This report confirms what Indiana’s housing advocates have been saying for years: that the state’s largest housing gaps and cost burdens are borne by the lowest-income Hoosier renters, who make up the most vulnerable populations in the state,” Bradley said.

He noted that one-third

of extremely low-income households were in the workforce and another 28% were elderly. An additional 22% were disabled. In total, 71% worked more than part time. Extremely low-income renters were also disproportionately likely to be Hoosiers of color.

Additional speakers at the Thursday event included: Kim Irwin, of Health by Design and the Indiana Public Health Association; Chelsea Haring-Cozzi, of the Coalition of Homelessness Intervention and Prevention; Derris “Dee” Ross, of the Ross Foundation; Tirish Jacobs, a graduate of the St. Vincent de Paul’s Changing Lives Forever; Lauren Murfee, of the Community Action Poverty Institute; and Alexander Minguo, of the Indiana Catholic Conference.

Several other non-profit organizations demonstrated their support at the event, including AARP Indiana and

United Way.

Advocates decry Statehouse inaction

Bradley acknowledged that the General Assembly previously convened its own housing task force, even granting the Hoosier Housing Needs Coalition “a seat at the table.”

But he said, “that task force has not resulted in legislation to reduce the gap in affordable housing. In fact, the signature piece of legislation ... ultimately created a housing infrastructure revolving fund that is exclusively designed to subsidize already profitable market rate developments.”

House Enrolled Act 1005, enacted in the 2023 session, places an emphasis on areas with less than 50,000 residents, deprioritizing areas like Indianapolis, and spends \$75 million over two years.

Bradley additionally pointed to this year’s failure

of Senate Bill 277, which would have substantially changed the balance of power in Indiana’s landlord-friendly laws by allowing tenants to pay rent into an escrow account when landlords fail to make essential repairs.

“The legislature has not yet found the will to move forward with solutions on their own, even while Indiana’s housing crisis has grown,” Bradley said.

Priorities for such a body would include aligning existing housing resources at state and local levels and clearing up confusion about code enforcement when it comes to health and safety in housing.

# Higher education

(Continued from Page 1)

represented” students rather than the “minority students” specified in current law.

But the commission is not releasing guidance on how Hoosier colleges and universities should handle the process, Garrison said. Rather, state institutions are given “autonomy to decide how it works best.”

In addition, since many of them already have a review process of getting there for other faculty. It’s going to be handled differently at each institution.”

Other higher education bills:

House Enrolled Act 1042: The Transition to Teaching Scholarship was created during the 2023 legislative session. One-hundred recipients were selected for the inaugural year of the \$10,000 scholarship. House Enrolled Act 1042 will allow CHE to use the remaining balance of the Next Generation Hoosier Educators Scholarship fund to award additional Transition to Teaching Scholarships. New eligibility guidelines stipulate that applicants must have a household income of \$100,000 or less.

House Enrolled Act 1243: As part of Indiana’s ongoing push to increase work-based learning opportunities, the State Board of Education will be required to establish a new diploma to start with current seventh graders. Students who graduate after Jan. 1, 2029, will additionally have to complete a computer science course.

Senate Enrolled Act 270: Included in the new law is a requirement for the commission to study and make recommendations for Ivy Tech Community College to award bachelor’s degrees and Vincennes University

to offer additional programs that lead to a bachelor’s degree.

House Enrolled Act 1179: Language approved by the General Assembly prohibits higher education institutions from using state funds to “engage,” “contract with,” or “support” any foreign “sources” located in foreign adversaries, like China, Iran, North Korea or Russia. It also allows Indiana’s attorney general to sue state higher education institutions that fail to report any contracts of value with or gifts from such sources and requires CHE to create and maintain a website for the public to access information about disclosed gifts and contracts.

Garrison said the new law also codifies tenure in Indiana code for the first time. It further outlines protections for professors to be able to “dissent, engage in political activity and other

items” that were not in state law already.

Senate Enrolled Act 202 requires a five-year review process for Hoosier education institutions, as well. Even so, “many of our institutions already have some level of review for tenure of faculty members,” Garrison said, “so this just puts a timeline on all of those.”

The law additionally requires institutions to establish complaint procedures in which school students and staff can accuse faculty members and contractors of not meeting free-expression criteria.

Institutions will have to refer those complaints to human resource professionals and supervisors “for consideration in employee reviews and tenure and promotion decisions,” according to the law. In “limited circumstances,” complaints could be advanced to the commission, Garrison said.

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# Local Roundup

## Solid Waste District board will meet Monday afternoon

The board of the Wells County Solid Waste District will meet at 4 p.m. Monday, March 18, in Room 105, the multi-purpose room on the lower level of the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St.

## County Drainage Board will meet Monday afternoon

The Wells County Drainage Board will meet at 4:30 p.m. Monday, March 18, in Room 105, the multi-purpose room on the lower level of the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St.

Topics on the agenda include:

- Tile replace on Ferguson Prong 4 Drain in Jefferson Township.
- Project updates and miscellaneous matters.

## County Commissioners will meet Monday evening

The Wells County Commissioners will meet at 5 p.m. Monday, March 18, in Room 105, the multi-purpose room on the lower level of the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St.

Topics on the agenda include:

- An update regarding Economic Development.
- Department updates from Highway Supervisor Shawn Bonar and Sheriff Scott Holliday.
- A funding request for the Wells County Master Plan from Economic Development Executive Director Chad Kline.
- A proposal for Economic Development advisory assistance.
- Confirmation of a public health officer appointment.
- Consideration of an ordinance amendment for the Wells County Zoning Ordinance and Zone Maps.
- Appointment to the Community Corrections board.
- Right-of-way or utility agreements.

## Bluffton-Harrison school board will meet Monday

The board of the Bluffton-Harrison Metropolitan School District will meet at 6 p.m. Monday, March 18, in the school district's administration building at 803 E. Harrison St. in Bluffton.

Topics on the agenda include:

- Financial and personnel matters.
- Reports from the assistant superintendent and superintendent.
- Bluffton High School Indiana College Core report
- Approval of the 2024 graduation date
- Updates regarding the high school building envelope project and athletic facility needs.

## Bluffton Board of Works to meet Tuesday afternoon

The Bluffton Board of Public Works and Safety will meet at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 19, in the meeting room on the first floor of City Hall, 128 E. Market St.

## Bluffton Common Council will meet Tuesday evening

The Bluffton Common Council will meet at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 19, in the Council Chambers on the second floor of City Hall, 128 E. Market St.

## Southern Wells school board will meet Tuesday

The board of the Southern Wells Community Schools will meet at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 19, in the high school media center of the SWCS campus.

Topics on the agenda include:

- Spotlight on Raider success.
- Financial and personnel matters.
- Consideration of a bus purchase.
- Fundraiser, field trip and conference requests.
- Superintendent information.

## Wells County BZA will meet Tuesday evening

The Wells County Board of Zoning Appeals will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 19, in Room 214 on the ground floor of the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St. in Bluffton.

Topics on the agenda include:

- A request from AMZ Rentals Inc. for a reduced rear yard setback from 5 ft. to 4 ft. for a building addition at 702 W. Washington St. in Bluffton.
- A variance request from Scott and Dayle Mentzer to increase the size allowance of a residential accessory structure from 1500 sq. ft. to 2432 sq. ft. for a garage including an attached porch at 628 E. South St. in Bluffton. The property is zoned R-1.
- A variance request from Neu-Hope Dairy Inc. to the front yard setback from 60 ft. to 44 ft. for a 16 ft. barn addition at 673 South 500 East in Bluffton.

## County Election Board will meet Thursday morning

The Wells County Election Board will meet at approximately 10 a.m. Thursday, March 21, in the clerk's office in the Wells County Courthouse, 102 W. Market St. The meeting will directly follow a routine test of the Electronic Voting System and the Automatic Tabulating Machine to determine the accuracy of the machines.

## Area Plan Commission will meet Thursday evening

The Wells County Area Plan Commission will meet at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 21, in Room 105, the multi-purpose room on the lower level of the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St.

Topics on the agenda include:

- A request from Solid Rock Rentals to rezone 328 S. Union St. in Bluffton to R-3. The property is currently zoned R-2.
- A rezoning request from FIT Development LLC for an eight lot major subdivision on a property located on County Road 300 East just south of S.R. 116. The property is zoned R-1.
- A B-3 rezoning request from Jason and Casandra Meyer for 10350 N. S.R. 1 in Ossian. The property is currently zoned R-1.

# Police Notebook

### INCIDENTS

**City:**  
 Thursday, 5:33 p.m., 500 block of Cottonwood Court. Report of a civil issue with living situation.  
 Thursday, 9:42 p.m., 200 block of East Townley Street. Report of a large tree limb that fell on callers house causing damage.  
 Thursday, 9:45 p.m., Walmart. Caller reported people were "in relations" in the back of a vehicle. Officer noted they were still relating to one another in the back seat as he arrived and told them that Walmart doesn't want them to get to know each other like that in their parking lot. They understood and left.

Friday, 1:30 a.m., S.R. 1 and East 300 North. Driver cited for driving while suspended.  
 Friday, 3:29 a.m., Valley Park Apartments. Caller reported a man hit him on the head with a hammer before he shut the door. Officer found no evidence of the battery, however, caller was heavily intoxicated. Officers will follow up.  
 Friday, 4:20 a.m., West Washington and South Oak streets. Officer transported driver to gas station for gas; vehicle was dead upon return. Officer jumped vehicle for the driver.  
 Friday, 5:26 a.m., North Main and East Market streets. Driver cited for expired plates.

Friday, 6:36 a.m., South Main and East Spring streets. Report of broken traffic light.  
 Friday, 7:24 a.m., 400 block of West Cherry Street. Report of a vehicle in lot, shouldn't be on property.  
 Friday, 8:26 a.m., 500 block of West Wabash Street. Subject reported someone else cashed her check at Kroger.  
**County:**  
 Thursday, 2:54 p.m., Wells County Jail. Warrant served to Brandon Rainey.  
 Thursday, 4:24 p.m., North 450 East and East 100 North, Bluffton. Report of an accident involving driver that had never been licensed in the United States.

(Continued on Page 6)

# Bluffton Parks & Rec News & Notes



By Brandy Fiechter

## Destination Recreation

Yay! Spring break starts Friday, so we went ahead and put the tennis nets up at Washington and Lion's Park. Both courts are lined with Pickleball, so get out there and enjoy some fresh air.

Speaking of Pickleball, we will have a pre-construction meeting soon with the contractor installing the new dedicated courts at Lancaster Park. Stay tuned for upcoming information on when this park will close while a new parking lot and pickleball courts are installed.

**The Winter 100 Challenge** ends next week, and if you haven't already picked up your shirt and medal, you can stop by our office on the 2nd floor of City Hall to get them. Great job to everyone who completed all 100 miles. If you want to keep the momentum going, be sure to sign up for the following walking/running events.

**The Race without a Trace Earth Day 5 K**, is scheduled for Saturday, April 20, at 9:00 a.m. at the Bluffton City Gym (128 E Market St., Bluffton, IN). This is a no-frills, no-fuss, inexpensive 5k run (or walk) to celebrate Earth Day. We are minimizing our footprint for this event by giving away past event shirts until they are gone. Even our awards are live plants and trees. Register online at <https://raceroster.com/events/2024/86614/earth-day-5k>.

**The 5 in 5 series** will challenge you to do five 5ks in five weeks. Join us at 7 p.m. on Tuesday nights starting June 11, for "just for fun" 5k walks or runs. The cost is only \$1 each night. There is no official timing or awards, but this is a great way to motivate yourself and connect with other runners and walkers. Water and snacks will be provided. If you participate on four of the five dates, you

can earn a FREE series of T-shirts.

Ladies, join us for the popular **Chicks Run** on Thursday, June 20, at 7 p.m. at Pickett's Run Park. Enjoy a "Just for the Girls" 5K Fun Run on Bluffton's River Greenway. Whether fast or slow, we run and walk for the pure love of being active and moving with our girlfriends. Sure, we give awards to Speedy Chicks, but we also celebrate those women who inspire us with their stories, enthusiasm, and dedication! So... Grab a friend, neighbor, co-worker, mother, daughter, aunt, or grandma (dress up in fun outfits if you want — we give prizes for that!) and join us for the CHICKS RUN!

We are also excited to announce that registration has opened for the 50th anniversary **Parlor City Trot!** The event is scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 31. We have 50th anniversary commemorative awards, finisher medals, and awesome, high-quality event shirts. Sign up online at <https://raceroster.com/events/2024/82437/parlor-city-trot>.

We want to send a special thank you to Kappa Kappa Kappa for their donation. We truly appreciate the continued support they have given us and their constant desire to uplift our community.

We also want to thank the recent Kehoe Concert Sponsors Isaac Stoller of Steffen Group Real Estate and Auctions and National Oil and concert donors First Bank of Berne, Bluffton Family Eye Care and CJ's Flooring. We are at the halfway point of being funded, so there is still time to donate to this well-attended series.

Kids, don't forget to turn in your coloring contest at the end of this month before you head out to spring break.

**Have a great week!**

## Tornadoes

(Continued from Page 1)

130 homes and a Taco Bell restaurant were damaged or destroyed. Three people were in critical condition, but their injuries were not life-threatening, authorities said.

Residents, who said they got plenty of warning to take shelter, picked tree branches and sheet metal from their yards. Shingles littered streets and fields in the town northeast of Indianapolis.

Carey Todd, 55, said the tornado looked like "a bunch of black birds."

Across from a church that was destroyed, a hymnal was blown open to No. 118, "Shelter in Time of Storm."

Mayor Bob McCoy said he and his wife hunkered in

a closet.

"I've never heard that sound before; I don't want to hear it again," McCoy said.

West of Winchester, officials said as many as half the structures in the town of Selma, population 750, might have been damaged. Only minor injuries were reported, emergency officials said in a news release.

Gov. Eric Holcomb praised first responders in Indiana, saying: "By the grace of God, everyone has lived through it all."

Storms also damaged homes and trailers in the

Ohio River communities of Hanover and Lamb in Indiana.

In Milton, Kentucky, two people were injured when their car was hit by debris from a tornado that damaged as many as 100 homes and businesses, said Trimble County Emergency Management Director Andrew Stark.

In Arkansas, a tornado struck the retirement community of Hot Springs Village, southwest of Little Rock, but there were no reports of fatalities or injuries, according to National Weather Service meteorologist Erik Green.

## 2024-2025 Kindergarten Registration Open House



April 10, 2024 • 3:30-6:00pm

Please enter door #20. Bring Birth Certificate & Proof of Residency. Students are encouraged to attend. Tours will be offered. Sign up for screening held in May.

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# There are more than two factors that go into the formula.

It is not just the assessor's fault.

## Saturday's Sub



Mark Miller

If you read the account in Wednesday's edition of the Norwell Community School Board's Tuesday evening meeting, you were told that you are a taxpayer in the school district and not happy with the increase you have seen in your 2024 tax bill, don't blame them. The NWCS district rate stayed the same. "You need to talk to the assessor about raising your assessed value," board member Corey Krug said.

"Our tax rate stayed the same," superintendent Mike Springer said. "So that didn't raise your taxes."

Mike and I talked about this last week as I was working on an overview of the changes in 2024 property tax bills. We disagreed about how tax rates play into the complicated property tax formula, but the issue wasn't pertinent to my analysis published last Saturday. However, the Tuesday night discussion calls out for further review — if for no other reason to defend an already beleaguered assessor's office.

First, understand that the assessor is only following set rules. Assessments are one factor of many that go into the process, certainly one of the most significant. Yes, there is some room for subjectivity, and we've expressed our frustrations with the inconsistencies that result but the complex assessment process does not provide many options. Additionally, taxpayers can appeal. Additionally, a not-so-insignificant portion of the overall increase this year was the Agriculture land adjustments, of which the assessor has no control.

Meanwhile, taxing units have many options and decisions to make on what their financial needs (or wants) are. Every decision every taxing unit makes ultimately has an impact on your tax bill.

So let's talk about some tax rate basics.

In general, operating fund budgets for the coming year are discussed and decided during meetings typically held in August and September. Preliminary tax rates are advertised based on a percentage of the current year's certified assessed value of properties within that taxing unit's district. The state then certifies the new AVs, reviews the budgets utilizing some set criteria and then computes the tax rate that will raise the required amount (called a tax levy) for each taxing unit.

Meanwhile, each taxing unit can establish their own rates — within some parameters — for the debt service category and any cumulative fund, such as the county's cumulative bridge fund or the cumulative capital fund that several taxing units have.

That borders on overly simplistic, but two people heavily involved in the process say "OK."

Of Wells County's 24 taxing units, 14 of the taxing units' tax rates are lower in 2024 than they were in 2023. This is due in no small part to the 9.16% increase in the county's Total AV. The county's general fund is a good example of the relationship between rates and AVs. The county's tax rate — which impacts everyone in the county — went down 3.81% but due to the increase in AVs, the tax levy went up almost exactly 5%. (I guess we need to add the term "Gross increase" since the state has certified that, after what remains to me (so far) mysterious adjustments, the 2024 county levy slides in under the 4% Maximum Levy Growth Quotient. See last week's entry on this page for details.)

The point here is: Is county council leader Seth Whicker saying "we lowered our rate, it's not our fault"? Short answer: no.

With that 9.16% increase in AV, anything but a decrease in a taxing unit's rate should be questioned. And that's where this year's efforts have been focused: on what has caused significant increases — more than 13% — in the total tax levies. This has led to analyzing the new Bluffton Fire Territory, how school and municipal debt works and what exceptions exist concerning the state's Maximum Levy Growth Quotient. While you often find explainable answers, sometimes you don't and have to keep digging. It is worth mentioning that the NWCS's total assessed value increased 11.53% and now totals more than \$1 billion. The school board made a conscious decision to capture some of that AV growth with the \$6-million General Obligation bonds that added to the district's debt service fund, all within state-established limitations, all discussed and approved in open public meetings. If they had not done that, the school's tax rate would have gone down.

Mike's slides he shared at the meeting about comparative rates and AVs with 24 school systems in our vicinity have a point. Indeed, they are in line with the observation we made in late 2022 that Wells County's

tax rates are generally lower than our neighboring counties. So I'm not hammering the school district board for spending foolishly or making bad decisions about what the district needs. The money bonded last year for the debt service fund is for overdue improvements needed at Ossian Elementary and the high school campus' athletic facilities. To be clear, that is my opinion. Yours may be different.

But that is not the issue.

The issue is the claim that decisions made in the NWCS board room had zero impact on their patrons' 2024 tax bills.

In the case of our home in the Bluffton-LancasterNW district, my wife and I will pay a tax bill 27-point-whatever percent higher than last year. The factors that made that change indeed include a 20% increase in our home's AV, but there is also the new Bluffton Fire Territory, the county's decision to reduce the property tax credits and the NWCS board's decision to issue about \$6 million in bonds to fund needed improvements.

Since last Saturday's articles I have heard from a number of taxpayers who have looked up their changes. One homeowner's taxes on Sutton Circle (the same taxing district as ours) has gone up nearly 45%.

Homeowners in Ossian should note a 5.28% decline in the town's tax rate, but significant increases in both the Jefferson and Lancaster town-

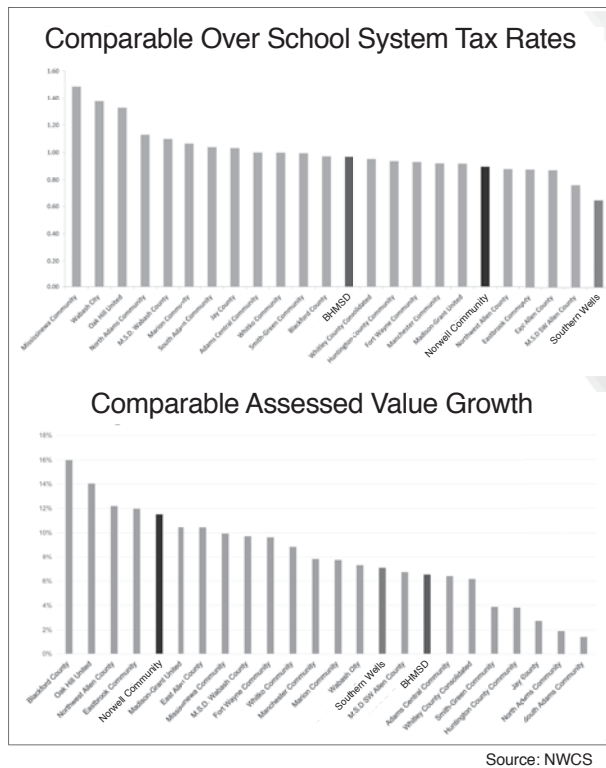
ships' rates. Yes, their school system's rate stayed the same but it could have been lower if the bond issue had been delayed.

Mike and I have discussed this again in the wake of Tuesday night's meeting. His conclusion remains: "It is factual to say that there were two variables affecting a tax bill: 1) Norwell's overall tax rate; and 2) The Net AV. Only one variable changed."

Agreed. That is indeed a factual statement. But it does not begin to describe the complex property tax formula. As Paul Harvey would say, there's "the rest off the story." And it begins with:

It is not just the assessor's fault.

miller@news-banner.com



## Other Opinions

### Russian elections in the shadow of Navalny

Article 13 of the Russian constitution promises political pluralism. Article 29 guarantees freedom of speech. It is a brave citizen who insists on those rights.

Although Russia will hold a presidential election at the end of this week, the result is a foregone conclusion. Vladimir Putin will win comfortably. The spirit of post-Soviet democratisation is all but dead. The flame is kept alive by a courageous few.

Thousands turned out at the Moscow funeral of Alexei Navalny, the jailed opposition leader generally assumed to have been murdered by order of the Kremlin. There were chants calling for "Russia without Putin". That is high-risk activity. Open dissent against the regime is punishable by fines and prison sentences. OVD-Info, a human rights group, has catalogued hundreds of detentions in dozens of cities after vigils in honour of Mr Navalny.

It has been the largest show of opposition since the invasion of Ukraine, but the numbers are not huge for a country of 144 million. What the majority of Russians think about their president and his war is opaque. Opinion polls show majorities in favour of both, but it is hard to conduct accurate surveys in a climate where deviation from the official line is legally proscribed.

Independent analysts say the picture is nuanced — a spectrum of sentiment with ideological pro-Kremlin conviction shading into looser patriotic sympathy with the army and then degrees of apathy, low-level discontent, grim resignation, despair and a kernel of committed anti-regime activists.

Mr Putin's position is secured by brute force and cultivated disbelief that any alternative is viable. He achieves this by eliminating rivals and propagating a personality cult that depicts Russia as the target of a foreign dismemberment plot and himself as the only person able to hold the country together. This speaks to a deep-rooted national anxiety about the Motherland unravelling in chaos. Something like that happened recently enough for older generations in particular to see democracy as a risk not worth taking.

This week's election is not meant to fool anyone into thinking that Russians have a choice. It is a ritual affirmation of incumbent power, a pastiche of democracy to demoralise those who dream of peaceful regime change. But even the pretence of a ballot gives the opposition something to rally around. Yulia Navalnaya, the murdered dissident's widow, has called for anti-Putin voters to converge on polling stations at midday on Sunday even if they don't intend to vote. The point is to be visible. The authorities can hardly ban such gatherings when they are laying on the election.

These are wholly symbolic gestures, but that doesn't mean they are futile. Russians who dare to speak up for democracy, and those who silently crave the end of Mr Putin, need reminding that they are not alone. There is a role also for those outside Russia who can amplify voices of courage and hope. There are jailed opposition figures — Ilya Yashin and Vladimir Kara-Murza — at risk of suffering the same fate as Mr Navalny. The more conspicuous their plight, the harder it is for Mr Putin to pretend his is the only vision of Russian politics.

The freedoms that are promised in Russia's constitution feel remote today, as this week's election will sadly demonstrate. But it will show also that the spirit of opposition cannot be extinguished.

THE GUARDIAN (London)  
Distributed by The Associated Press

## I want to support Trump. He keeps making that harder for me.

I want to vote for Donald Trump in November. The question is: Will he let me?

I'm not a Never Trumper. To the contrary, I've spilled gallons of ink in the pages of this newspaper defending him. Based on his record in office, Trump should be considered one of the greatest conservative presidents we've had. But I'm deeply concerned that his second term, if he is elected this year, would not be the one that millions of Americans voted for in 2020.

Case in point: After meeting with Trump at Mar-a-Lago on Friday, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban said that Trump assured him he "will not give a penny" to help Ukraine defend itself from Russian aggression. If true, that's not the Trump I want to vote for.

I want to vote for the president who, on taking office, reversed the Obama-Biden policy of denying Ukraine the lethal aid and sent Kyiv Javelin antitank missiles — weapons that later helped turn back Russia's effort to march on the Ukrainian capital in 2022. "I sent them military equipment and Obama sent them nothing," he boasted to me during a 2020 interview. I can't vote for a candidate who would abandon Ukraine to Vladimir Putin.

I want to vote for the Trump who proudly told me in that interview, "Nobody has been tougher on Russia than I have" — and then offered a litany of actions he had taken to counteract Russia — from arming Ukraine, to blocking the Nord Stream 2 natural-gas pipeline, to taking out hundreds of Russian Wagner mercenaries in Syria, to launching a cyberattack against Russia's Internet Research Agency, the troll farm that spearheaded Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.

Or take Trump's recent flip-flop on forcing the sale of TikTok in the United States. That's not the Trump I want to vote for. I want to vote for the commander in chief who signed an executive order barring U.S. companies from transactions with TikTok's Chinese-controlled owner ByteDance, warning that TikTok allows "the Chinese Communist Party access to Americans' personal and proprietary information," which could allow Beijing to "build dossiers of personal information for blackmail, and conduct corporate espionage." I want to vote for the president who took on China's predatory trade practices, signed the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act, and sanctioned Beijing for its suppression of the Uyghurs.

I also want to vote for the Trump who was willing to flex U.S. military might on the world stage — the president took out Iranian terrorist mastermind Qasem Soleimani and twice launched military strikes against Syria for using chemical weapons against civilians, and whose policy of peace through strength

produced three Arab-Israeli peace accords. Now, I worry that he is surrounding himself with neo-isolationists such as Tulsi Gabbard, J.D. Vance, Tucker Carlson and Vivek Ramaswamy rather than the Reagan Republicans who helped him achieve so much. He seems more concerned with seeking retribution and weeding out "RINOs" than working with the best, most capable people.

I also want to vote against some things. I want to vote against Joe Biden, the president who gave us the worst border crisis in U.S. history, the worst inflation in four decades, and highest gas prices ever recorded in the United States. I want to vote against a president whose administration weaponized the FBI to intimidate parents who show up at school board meetings, allowed a Chinese spy balloon to violate U.S. airspace, let Iranian proxies attack U.S. forces with impunity, and presided over the most shameful foreign policy calamity in my lifetime: the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. I want to vote against a president who promised to put his "whole soul" into uniting the country but then accused Republicans of standing with racists and traitors like George Wallace, Bull Connor and Jefferson Davis.

And I want to vote against a Democratic Party that has shamefully weaponized our legal system against Trump — seeking to jail and bankrupt him and abusing our Constitution in an effort to keep him off the ballot.

But I can't do that if I believe that Trump's second term won't be a continuation of the best elements of his first, but a radical departure focused on revenge and retreat from the world.

I know that many other voters might have different concerns than I do. Many liked Trump's policies, but don't like how he behaved in office — particularly after the 2020 election. Trump needs to make a concerted effort to win their support. He might believe they have no choice but to vote for him. They do. There will be third parties on the ballot, and voters can write in other candidates, split their tickets, or just stay home.

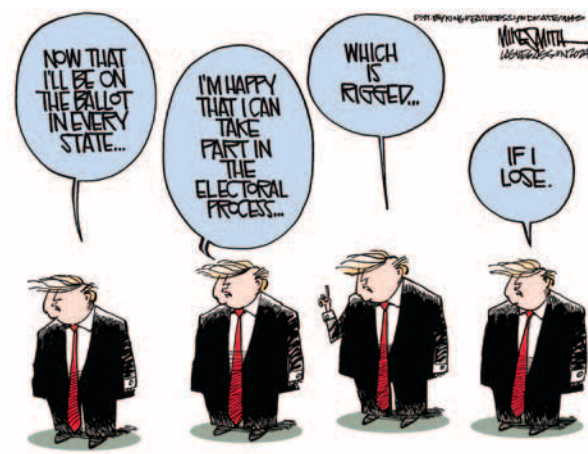
As for me, while Jan. 6, 2021, was a disgrace, the system of strong checks and balances our Founding Fathers established held that day. So, I don't believe the hyperbolic warnings that Trump will be a dictator. I'm just worried he will let real dictators prevail. I can't vote for that.

With less than eight months to go, this much is certain: I'll never vote for Joe Biden. He is the worst president in my lifetime. And I want to vote for Trump. But he needs to give me — and millions like me — permission to do so.

Follow Marc A. Thiessen @marcthiessen on X



Marc Thiessen



Submit your Letters to the Editor via: • Our website link (Submit your Letter) • E-Mail: email@news-banner.com • Fax: (260) 824-0700 • Mail: PO Box 436, Bluffton IN 46714 • Drop-off: 125 N. Johnson St., Bluffton. All letters must be signed and must include a phone number or address in case verification is desired. Letters are edited for brevity and clarity. **Letters must be no more than 500 words.**

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# Why are voters frustrated by the U.S. economy? It's home prices

By **JOSH BOAK**  
**Associated Press**  
 WASHINGTON (AP) — Lori Shelton can't fathom ever having the money to buy a home — and that's a major reason why so many voters feel down on the economy ahead of this year's presidential election.

Shelton, 67, drives an Uber to help pay rent in Aurora, Colorado. An advance on her pay covered her apartment's security deposit. But it also cut into her next paycheck, leaving her bank account dangerously low when the rent was due — a cycle that never seems to end.

"I'm always one step behind," said Shelton, her voice choking up. "It's a nightmare, it's a freaking nightmare right now."

The United States is slogging through a housing affordability crisis that was decades in the making. At the root of this problem: America failed to build enough homes for its growing population. The shortage strikes at the heart of the American dream of homeownership — dampening President Joe Biden's assurances that the U.S. economy is strong and underscoring the degree to which Republican Donald Trump, the former president and presumptive GOP nominee for 2024, has largely overlooked the shortage.

The lack of housing has caused a record number of renters to devote an ex-

sive amount of income to housing, according to a Harvard University analysis. Not enough homes are for sale or being built, keeping prices elevated. Average mortgage rates have more than doubled and further worsened affordability.

In fact, the Census Bureau reported that homeownership fell slightly at the end of last year in an otherwise solid economy. If it wasn't for shelter costs, inflation — Biden's most pronounced economic problem — would be running at a healthy and stable 1.8%. Instead, it's hovering around 3.2%.

Administration officials are confident that shelter inflation will soon cool, but the damage across several years is apparent to advocates and economists.

"I've been doing housing work for 30 years — the housing affordability challenge is the worst I've ever seen in my career," said Shaun Donovan, a former secretary of Housing and Urban Development in the Obama years who now leads the nonprofit Enterprise Community Partners.

Donovan noted that this is an increasingly bipartisan challenge that could bring the political parties together. Expensive housing was once the domain of Democratic areas such as New York City and San Francisco. It's now moved into Republican states as places such as Boise, Idaho, grap-

ple with higher prices.

"It is a first-tier issue almost everywhere," he said. "And that is changing the national politics around it in a way that I think is quite different than I've ever seen."

Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics, said that the outcome of the November election could ultimately depend on the path of 30-year mortgage rates.

Rates currently average about 6.74%. If they dropped closer to 6%, the odds of a Biden victory would increase. But rates moving near 8% might enable Trump to prevail, Zandi said.

"Given the current housing affordability crisis, higher rates will make owning a home completely out of reach for nearly all potential first-time homebuyers," he said. "Since homeownership is a key part of the American dream, if it appears unattainable, this will deeply impact voters' sense of the economy."

Biden, a Democrat, acknowledged the pain many are feeling in his State of the Union address earlier this month and in his budget proposal released on Monday.

The president wants to fund the building and preservation of 2 million housing units — a meaningful sum, but not enough to solve the shortage. He also proposed a tax credit worth

up to \$10,000 to homebuyers. Over the past three years, he has increased rental assistance to 100,000 households.

"The bottom line is we have to build, build, build," Biden said Monday in a speech to the National League of Cities. "That's how we bring down housing costs for good."

Rapidly climbing home prices were also a festering problem under Trump, who first achieved celebrity status as a real estate developer. While president, Trump called for limiting construction in the suburbs. He claimed during the 2020 election that Biden's policies to spur building and affordability would "destroy your neighborhood."

During the 2018 to 2020 years of Trump's presidency, the country's housing shortage surged 52% to 3.8 million units, according to the mortgage company Freddie Mac.

The Associated Press contacted Trump's campaign for his policy plans but did not get a response. The America First Policy Institute, a think tank promoting Trump's vision, said the key is to cut government borrowing to reduce mortgage rates. The former president has pledged to reduce deficits, but an analysis by the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget shows that his policies in office will have likely added more than \$8 trillion to the

national debt.

"The best way for us to improve access to homeownership for young people is to get interest rates back down, not to provide subsidies that cause housing unaffordability to worsen," said Mike Faulkender, chief economist at the institute.

Lower rates might play well with voters, but most economists say they would at best offer temporary financial relief. Purchase prices would likely adjust upward in response to greater demand from falling rates.

Construction, the more enduring solution, would take years to achieve and require new rules by states and cities. The administration is trying to incentivize zoning changes, but the major choices are outside the White House's control.

"Even as incomes are going up and the economy is doing well and inflation is coming down, people can't buy homes," said Daryl Fairweather, chief economist at the brokerage Red-

fin. "That's like the biggest problem for Biden because it's not one that he can solve."

The general rule of thumb is that people should pay no more than 30% of their income on rent or a mortgage. A typical household looking to buy a home would have to devote 41% of its income to mortgage payments, according to Redfin.

There are far-reaching economic risks because of this. High housing costs can lead people to cut back spending elsewhere. Advocates said it enables landlords to neglect their properties since there is always a ready tenant.

Evictions can worsen health and educational outcomes for children and exact an even wider cost on society, said Zach Neumann, a Denver-based lawyer who provides more than \$30 million annually in rental assistance through the nonprofit Community Economic Defense Project.

## Police Notebook

(Continued from Page 3)  
 Driver taken to the Wells County Jail where he then blew a .149% PBT.

Thursday, 7:17 p.m., S.R. 3 and West 700 South, Warren. Report of barriers that had blown over. INDOT contacted.

Thursday, 10:27 p.m., S.R. 124 and North 800 East, Bluffton. Bradley R. Lothridge transferred from Adams County to Wells County Jail.

Friday, 3:30 a.m., 300 block of West Dustman Road, Bluffton. Officer

assisted city police with a report of domestic battery with a hammer involved.

**Ossian:**  
 Friday, 7:32 a.m., Norwell High School. Students vehicle broke down and blocked entrance to school.

**ACCIDENTS**  
**City:**  
 Wednesday, 3:28 p.m., S.R. 1 and Washington Street. Kathie Mower, 65, Markle, was turning right when her Buick Enclave collided with a Ford Explorer Sport Trac driven by Connor Collins, 17, Bluffton. Both

vehicles sustained damage and were towed from the scene. No injuries reported.

**ARRESTS**  
 Milot Larose, 29, Bluffton; Operating without ever obtaining a license, a Class A misdemeanor, and operating a vehicle while intoxicated, a Class A misdemeanor. Bond set at \$1,500.

Bradley Ryan Lothridge, 37, Decatur; Battery, a criminal misdemeanor. Bond set at \$5,000.

Brandon James Rainey, 28, Portland; Probation violation of a Level 6 felony.



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## No. 3 Purdue hangs on to beat MSU in Big Ten tourney

By **DAVE CAMPBELL**  
AP Sports Writer

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Zach Edey had 29 points and 12 rebounds for third-ranked Purdue, and the Boilermakers recovered from a blown 12-point lead to beat Michigan State 67-62 in a hard-nosed quarterfinal game in the Big Ten Tournament on Friday.

Lance Jones had 10 points and three steals with just one turnover for the Boilermakers (29-3), who advanced to play Wisconsin in the semifinals on Saturday despite matching their season-low score and being outrebounded (37-36) for only the second time all season.

“As long as we keep guarding and taking care of the basketball, we’re going to give ourselves a chance,” head coach Matt Painter said.

Tyson Walker had 15 points, Malik Hall pitched in 12 points and Tre Holloman scored 10 points for the Spartans (19-14), who had an 18-0 edge in fast-break points and tied the game late before falling short in head coach Tom Izzo’s 1,000th game on the bench.

“Guarding Edey is a load. We tried it a number of different ways. We tried doubling. We tried digging. We tried regular head up,” Izzo said. “Matt does such a great job of getting them the

ball in different spots.”

Walker, the fifth-year guard, stepped up down the stretch to lead the surge. He knocked down a mid-range jumper for the tie with 1:41 left, the closest the Spartans came since a 3-2 lead, but Fletcher Loyer answered with a 3-pointer on the other end for Purdue.

Xavier Booker had a clear look at the top of the key from 3 with 1:05 remaining to tie it back up, but the ball rolled around the inside of the rim and bounced out.

The Boilermakers had a scare midway through the second half when first team All-Big Ten point guard Braden Smith hobbled off the court with an injury to his right calf muscle. But Smith was able to re-enter about four minutes later with Purdue leading by five, and Jones deftly handled the ball in his absence.

The Boilermakers are two wins away from matching Michigan State (1999, 2000) as the only Big Ten program to win both the outright regular season title and the conference tournament in consecutive years. The Spartans used that feat 24 years ago as a launching pad for the national championship, which still stands as the last time a Big Ten team won it all.

One step at a time for Purdue, of course, with that

crushing loss to 16th-seeded Farleigh Dickinson in the first round of the NCAA Tournament still unanswered until the Big Dance begins anew. The Spartans, despite five losses in their last seven games, should be on the safe side of the bubble.

This matchup of the Big Ten’s two most successful programs over the last three decades predictably resembled a football game at times, with the Spartans sending Carson Cooper, Jaxon Kohler and Mady Sissoko into the post to try to somehow disrupt the rhythm of the reigning AP Player of the Year, and though they were successful at times the 7-foot-4 Edey got plenty of soft hooks to fall.

He stared down and pressed his forearm on Holloman at one point, after the Minneapolis native fouled Loyer and was too close to Edey’s liking. Both players picked up a technical foul for that exchange.

Cooper got whacked in the nose by the downswing of Cam Heide’s arm on his drive to the hoop late in the first half, forcing the 6-foot-11 Cooper to play with gauze in his nose.

“Every game we’ve ever played Michigan State, it’s been a physical, tough game,” sixth man Mason Gillis said. “You’ve got to just be there for it.”

There were 46 fouls called in the game — 29 on the Spartans. Sissoko fouled out in 10 minutes, with seven rebounds.

“The bigs played as well as they could play, battled down there,” Walker said.

## Michigan fires Juwan Howard after five seasons

By **LARRY LAGE**  
AP Sports Writer

ANN ARBOR, Mich. (AP) — Michigan fired coach Juwan Howard on Friday after five seasons, parting ways with the former Fab Five star whose return to his alma mater included a Big Ten title and advancing in two NCAA Tournaments before closing with two straight disappointing seasons.

Howard finished with an 82-67 record with the Wolverines, reaching some highs and lows. He won a conference regular season championship and was a win away from the Final Four in 2021, when he was named The Associated Press coach of the year.

He lost a school-record 24 games this season as Michigan plummeted to a last-place finish in the Big Ten for the first time since 1967.

Michigan athletic director Warde Manuel made the call to fire Howard without cause two days after an eight-win season ended with a loss to Penn State in the opening round of the Big Ten Tournament.

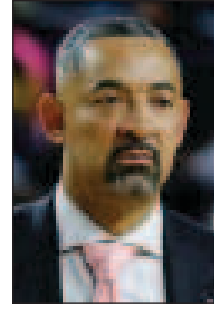
“After a comprehensive review of the program, I have decided that Juwan will not return as our men’s basketball coach,” Manuel said in a statement from the school that did not include a comment from Howard. “Juwan is among the greatest Wolverines to ever be associated with our basketball program.”

“I know how much it meant, to not only Juwan, but to all of us for him to return here to lead this program. Despite his love of his alma mater and the positive experience that our student-athletes had under his leadership, it was clear to me that the program was not living up to our expectations and not trending in the right direction.”

Manuel hired Howard, who had tears of joy at his introductory news conference in May 2019 when John Beilein bolted to coach the Cleveland Cavaliers after turning the Wolverines into a national power.

A message seeking comment was left with Beilein, who is potentially a candidate to return to Michigan.

Early in the 2021-22 season, following a run to an NCAA Tournament regional final, Manuel gave Howard a five-year exten-



Juwan Howard

sion worth more than \$16.9 million that had him under contract through the 2025-26 season.

Michigan will owe Howard about \$7 million for his base salary and additional compensation plus a lump-sum payment of \$3 million for firing him without cause in year three of his deal, according to terms of his contract.

The 51-year-old Howard had heart surgery in September and returned to his head coaching duties in mid-December after a review of an incident involving several individuals during a team practice. Former strength and conditioning coach Jon Sanderson did not join the team on the sideline for its Dec. 10 game at Iowa, and was not on the team’s bench in subsequent games.

Sanderson resigned last week and was hired by Illinois’ basketball program as a sports performance consultant on Thursday.

Manuel said in a Dec. 15 statement that a “thorough internal review” did not uncover anything that warranted disciplinary action for anyone involved.

Two years ago, Howard was suspended for the final five games of the regular season and fined \$40,000 for hitting a Wisconsin assistant in the head and triggering a postgame melee. The previous season, Howard got into a shouting match with then-Maryland coach Mark Turgeon and had to be restrained during the conference tournament. Howard drew two technical fouls and was ejected from that game.

Howard, who is from Chicago, was a key player on Michigan’s Fab Five teams with Chris Webber, Jalen Rose, Jimmy King and Ray Jackson that reached the 1992 and 1993 national championship games.

Washington drafted Howard No. 5 overall in 1994 and the one-time All-Star forward averaged 13.4 points during his career that ended in 2013 after winning two NBA titles with the Miami Heat. Howard’s coaching career started as an assistant focused on player development with the Heat before being promoted to an assistant coach.

He had two sons play for him at Michigan: Jett, who was drafted No. 11 overall this year by the Orlando Magic, and Jace, a reserve guard on this season’s team.

## High School Calendar

**FRIDAY, MARCH 15**  
TRACK & FIELD (CO-ED): Bluffton, Norwell at Taylor University Qualifier, 5:30 p.m.

**SATURDAY, MARCH 16**  
No events scheduled.

**MONDAY, MARCH 18**  
No events scheduled.

**TUESDAY, MARCH 19**

No events scheduled.

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20**  
No events scheduled.

**THURSDAY, MARCH 21**  
No events scheduled.

**FRIDAY, MARCH 22**  
No events scheduled.

**SATURDAY, MARCH 23**  
No events scheduled.

## Cardinals extend manager Oliver Marmol through 2026

JUPITER, Fla. (AP) — Coming off a last-place finish in the NL Central, the St. Louis Cardinals displayed confidence in manager Oliver Marmol and announced a two-year contract extension through 2026.

“The most important thing for Oli, the coaches or players is to know that we stand behind them,” Cardinals President of Baseball Operations John Mozeliak said Friday. “We believe in that, and to go into the season — what’s the phrase: the lame duck manager? — just seemed to be like the wrong strategy.”

The 37-year-old former Cardinals minor leaguer led the team to an NL Central title in his first season, winning 93 games in 2022 and becoming the youngest manager to reach the playoffs since a 31-year-old Lou Boudreau took Cleveland to the World Series in 1946. St. Louis went 71-91 last year.

“We believe that he’s the right person for this job,” Mozeliak said. “And we’re excited to know who will be

here for the for the next few years. So it was important to us to get this done. We’re glad it’s behind us and we look forward to the future.”

Mozeliak and CEO Bill DeWitt Jr. first approached Marmol about an extension on Thursday.

“We talked through a couple things and they made it clear that they wanted me to be the one to continue to lead here for the next several years,” Marmol said. “It was great news.”

St. Louis added starters Sonny Gray, Lance Lynn and Kyle Gibson during the offseason along with relievers Kenyan Middleton, Andrew Kittredge and Nick Robertson plus shortstop Brandon Crawford and designated hitter Matt Carpenter.

“Given the fact that the roster we’ve assembled we believe is going to be competitive, has a chance to be exciting, and we just didn’t want something — if we have a stumble or get off to a slow start, all of the sudden, everybody’s looking

over their shoulders,” Mozeliak said. “It’s just not fair to everybody involved. So the timing of this, as we started thinking more and more about it, had to be dealt with now and not something midseason or at the end of the year.”

Marmol joined the Cardinals organization in 2007 as a utilityman and coached in the minors for five seasons before joining the major league coaching staff in 2017. He was fourth in the voting for NL Manager of the Year in 2022, when St. Louis won its first division title since 2019.

“When I’m looking at it, this position, this seat was the best job in all baseball, one of the top jobs in all sports,” Marmol said. “I want to do this well and I want to do it here for a long time.”

A couple dozen Cardinals spilled out of the clubhouse to watch the outdoor news conference.

“They are excited about it,” Marmol said. “I’m excited about it.”

## NHL and NHLPA reach deal on Blackhawks’ Corey Perry contract

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**  
AP Hockey Writer

The NHL and NHL Players’ Association have reached an undisclosed settlement to resolve Corey Perry’s situation with the Chicago Blackhawks when they terminated his contract, two people with knowledge of the decision told The Associated Press on Thursday.

The people spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because the settlement is not being made public. A grievance was threatened but never filed, and the league and union agreed to extend the window to consider it beyond the 60-day deadline specified by the collective bargaining agreement.

“I’m pleased that we were able to resolve this dispute to everyone’s satisfaction,” NHLPA executive director Marty Walsh said in a statement Friday. “In its role as collective bargaining representative, the union has no job more important than protecting the integrity of players’ guaranteed contract.”

(Continued on Page A2)

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**DeA:** Del Rey-Blount silt loams, 0 to 1 percent slopes

**Mh:** Milford silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes

**Pm:** Pewamo silty clay loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes

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# Blackhawks Corey Perry

(Continued from Page A1)

Chicago cut ties with Perry in late November, saying he violated his standard player contract and team policies “intended to promote professional and safe work environments.” Neither Perry nor general manager Kyle Davidson was willing to provide any details about what happened to lead to the termination.

and said he’d begun seeking help for alcohol abuse. He asked for a meeting with Gary Bettman and spoke with the commissioner in January, then was back in the NHL less than two weeks later after signing with the Edmonton Oilers for the rest of the season. Asked Feb. 2 at NHL All-Star Weekend in Toronto about the handling of the situation, Bettman took no issue with what the Blackhawks did. “He took a little time away,” Bett-

man said. “In the final analysis, clubs will decide what they’re comfortable with to a certain extent and what they’re not, and in this case the Blackhawks decided it was best if he was away from the team.” Perry, a veteran winger who won the Stanley Cup with Anaheim in 2006 and reached the final three consecutive years from 2020-22, has seven points in 20 games with Edmonton — already more than he played with Chicago.

# Conferences, ND agree on 6-year deal to keep College football playoff through 2031

**By RALPH D. RUSSO**  
**AP College Football Writer**  
The nine Bowl Subdivision conferences and Notre Dame reached an agreement Friday on a six-year deal to continue the College Football Playoff through the 2031 season, a significant step that establishes a revenue-sharing plan and allows the CFP to finalize a media rights agreement.

make a decision, Hancock said. Hancock said the conference commissioners who manage the CFP might want to let the coming season play out and evaluate the first iteration of the 12-team model. “We’re going to take a deep breath, step back, and begin those conversations whenever it’s appropriate,” he said. Hancock said the Pac-12, which is set to operate as a two-team league with just Washington State and Oregon State next season, didn’t sign the agreement because of its uncertainty beyond 2025.

The CFP implemented a rule recently that a conference had to have at least eight teams to be eligible to qualify for access to the playoff.

Hancock said it was unclear whether the Pac-12, if rebuilt will be able to join the agreement.

The CFP has an agreement in principle with ESPN on a new media rights agreement worth \$7.8 billion that adjusts the value of the last two years of the current 12-year contract to account for more playoff games and runs through 2031.

The CFP couldn’t complete that deal without the conferences first agreeing to participate in the playoff and a revenue-sharing plan.

“We are still negotiating with ESPN,” Hancock said. “We’re encouraged about the position we are in. But we still have work to do.” Hancock declined to give details of the revenue-sharing agreement.

It has been previously reported — and confirmed by AP — the Southeastern Conference and Big Ten will receive more than 50% of the distributed CFP revenue, with the Atlantic Coast Conference and Big 12 getting about 30% combined and the Group of Five Conferences and Notre Dame the rest.

Big Ten and SEC schools will

receive an annual payout of about \$22 million per year.

Notre Dame’s share will be about \$12 million per year, about the same as ACC and Big 12 schools. Schools in Group of Five conferences will earn about \$2 million per year.

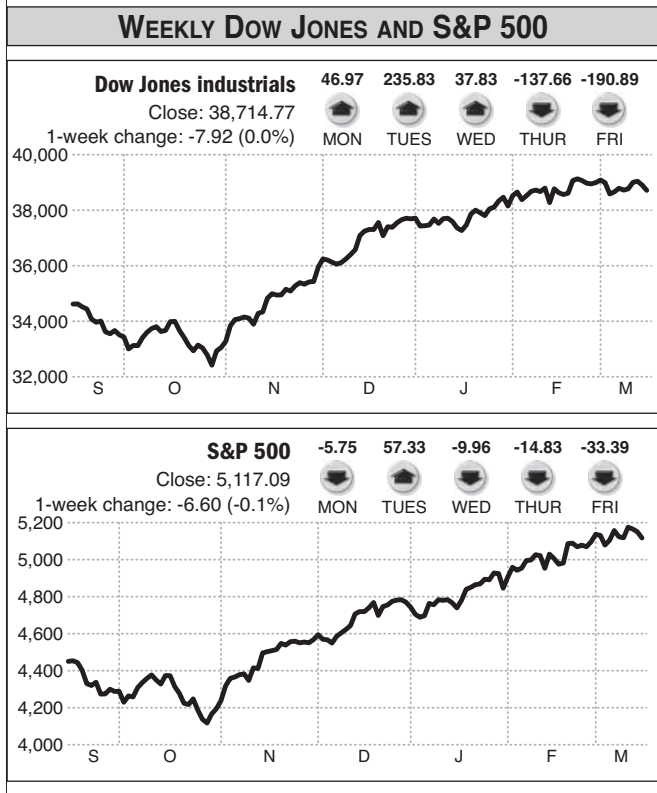
Bonuses for participation — currently \$6 million for reaching the semifinals and \$4 million for other New Year’s Six bowls — will be eliminated for all but independents. Notre Dame and UConn will be the only official football independents in FBS by 2025, when Massachusetts joins the MAC.

But the deal calls for Washington State and Oregon State to be treated as non-Notre Dame independents, receiving annual payments of \$360,000 per year, starting in 2026, according to another person with direct knowledge of the agreement. The schools have been making about \$5 million per year in the current CFP deal as part of the Pac-12.

Washington State President Kirk Schulz and Oregon State President Jayathi Murthy said in a statement the CFP’s decision to “drastically reduce the Pac-12 Conference’s rightful share of CFP revenues” will cause the financial gap the Pacific Northwest schools are already facing to widen.

“Negotiations with the CFP continue, and we continue all options on behalf of student-athletes and our universities,” they said. The deal also includes a look-in by 2028 that could provide an opportunity to make adjustments. “This agreement is a really important next step for the CFP,” Hancock said. “It ensures that fans will continue to have a postseason football tournament to enjoy, and they will see the best teams in the country competing for the national championship.”

# THE WEEK IN REVIEW



STOCK MARKET INDEXES table with columns for 52-Week High/Low, Name, Last, Wk Chg, Wk %Chg, YTD %Chg, and 12mo %Chg. Lists Dow Jones Industrials, NYSE Composite, S&P 500, etc.

STOCK EXCHANGE HIGHLIGHTS table with columns for NYSE GAINERS, NYSE LOSERS, NYSE ACTIVES, NASDAQ GAINERS, NASDAQ LOSERS, and NASDAQ ACTIVES. Lists stock names and their performance.

STOCKS OF LOCAL INTEREST table with columns for Name, Div, Last, Wk Chg, Wk %Chg, YTD %Chg. Lists local stocks like AFLAC, AT&T Inc, AMD, Amazon, etc.

## BASKETBALL High School

**Boys' Basketball**  
**IHSAA Semi-State Scheudle**  
**4A North (Elkhart)**  
Crown Point (20-5) vs. Fishers (26-1), 10 a.m.  
Fort Wayne Wayne (22-3) vs. Mishawaka (20-7), 11:45 a.m.  
Semi-State Championship at 7:30 p.m.  
**4A South (New Castle)**  
Center Grove (21-4) vs. Ben Davis (21-5), 10 a.m.  
Jessfersontonville (19-7) vs. Lawrence North (25-3), 12 p.m.  
Championship at 8 p.m.  
**3A North (Logansport)**  
Peru (16-10) vs. South Bend Joseph (18-9), 10 a.m.  
Delta (22-6) vs. Fairfield (20-6), 12 p.m.  
Championship at 8 p.m.  
**3A South (Seymour)**  
Guerin Catholic (21-7) vs. Danville Community (22-3), 10 a.m.  
Evansville Bosse (15-10) vs. Scottsburg (22-5), 12 p.m.  
Championship at 8 p.m.  
**2A North (Lafayette Jefferson)**  
North Judson-San Pierre (21-6) vs. Wapahani (24-2), 10 a.m.  
Wabash (21-5) vs. Fort Wayne Blackhawk Christian (21-6), 12 p.m.  
Championship at 8 p.m.  
**2A South (Southport)**  
Park Tudor (20-5) vs. Brownstown Central (25-4), 10 a.m.  
Forest Park (18-9) vs. Parke Heritage (23-5), 11:45 p.m.  
Championship at 7:30 p.m.  
**1A North (Michigan City)**  
Liberty Christian (17-9) vs. Marquette Catholic (12-15), 10 a.m.  
Elkhart Christian (17-9) vs. Fort Wayne Canterbury (16-9), 12 p.m.  
Championship at 7:30 p.m.  
**1A South (Washington)**  
Greenwood Christian (18-7) vs. Bethesda Christian (21-7), 10 a.m.  
Evansville Christian (24-2) vs. Barr-Reeve (24-2), 11:45 p.m.  
Championship at 7:30 p.m.

Oregon 67, Arizona 59  
**Southeastern**  
Quarterfinal  
Mississippi St. 73, Tennessee 56  
Auburn 86, South Carolina 55  
Texas A&M 97, Kentucky 87  
**Southwestern Athletic**  
Semifinal  
Grambling St. 65, Bethune-Cookman 53  
**Western Athletic**  
Semifinal  
UTEP 65, Sam Houston St. 63  
**Women's Basketball Scores**  
**Friday, Mar. 15**  
**TOURNAMENT**  
**America East**  
Championship  
Maine 64, Vermont 48  
**Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference**  
Semifinal  
Norfolk St. 73, Coppin St. 44  
Howard 69, NC Central 56  
**Missouri Valley**  
Quarterfinal  
Drake 79, Indiana St. 57  
N. Iowa 79, Illinois St. 75  
Belmont 70, Ill. Chicago 65

**College**  
**Men's Basketball Scores**  
**Friday, Mar. 15**  
**TOURNAMENT**  
**American Athletic**  
Quarterfinal  
South Florida 81, East Carolina 59  
UAB 72, Wichita St. 60  
FAU 77, North Texas 71  
**Atlantic Coast**  
Semifinal  
North Carolina 72, Pittsburgh 65  
**Big 12**  
Semifinal  
Houston 82, Texas Tech 59  
**Big East**  
Semifinal  
UConn 95, St. John's 90  
Marquette 79, Providence 68  
**Big Ten**  
Quarterfinal  
Purdue 67, Michigan St. 62  
Wisconsin 70, Northwestern 61  
Illinois 77, Ohio St. 74  
Nebraska 93, Indiana 56  
**Conference USA**  
Semifinal  
W. Kentucky 85, Middle Tennessee 54  
**Metro Atlantic Athletic**  
Semifinal  
St. Peter's 62, Quinnipiac 60  
**Mid-American**  
Semifinal  
Kent St. 73, Bowling Green 60  
**Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference**  
Semifinal  
Howard 80, Norfolk St. 74  
**Pac-12**

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MONEY RATES table with columns for Last, Pvs Day. Lists Prime Rate, Discount Rate, Federal Funds Rate, etc.  
CURRENCIES table with columns for Last, Pvs Day. Lists Australia, Britain, Canada, Euro, Japan, Mexico, Switzerland, etc.

MUTUAL FUNDS table with columns for Name, Total Assets, NAV, Total Return/Rank, Pct Load. Lists various mutual funds like American Funds, Fidelity, etc.

Stock Footnotes: g = Dividends and earnings in Canadian dollars. h = Does not meet continued-listing standards. If = Late filing with SEC. n = New in past 52 weeks. pf = Preferred. rs = Stock has undergone a reverse stock split of at least 50 percent within the past year. rt = Right to buy security at a specified price. s = Stock has split by at least 20 percent within the last year. un = Units. vj = In bankruptcy or receivership. wd = When distributed. wj = Warrants. Mutual Fund Footnotes: b = Fee covering market costs is paid from fund assets. d = Deferred sales charge, or redemption fee. f = front load (sales charges), m = Multiple fees are charged. NA = not available. p = previous day's net asset value. s = fund split shares during the week. x = fund paid a distribution during the week. Source: The Associated Press. Sales figures are unoficial.



# Haunted by granddaughter's addiction and death

Dear Annie: Our granddaughter had been on drugs for several years. She had been in and out of jail and rehabs. She had two children, ages 1 and 2. She basically abandoned them, so we all decided tough love and prayer were the answer.

She was found by the side of the road where someone dumped her, dead or dying from a drug overdose. Now we all feel guilty that we should have done something other than the tough love approach. She was only 23 years old.

What should we have done? — Heartbroken Grandpa

Dear Heartbroken: I'm terribly sorry for the loss of your granddaughter. Death is always painful, but it's especially devastating given how young she was.

You and your family are not the first to hope a tough love approach would be the answer, but addiction is a cruel beast, and your granddaughter was so much more than hers.

It's easy following tragedy to think of all the things you wish you'd done differently — maybe staging an intervention, helping your granddaughter get into treatment or obtain counseling — but you must remember, in that moment of time, you did what you thought was best. What happened to her is not your fault.

Right now, try to focus on grieving and honoring her memory, coming together with your loved ones to cherish the light and beauty she brought to this world and to your family.

Dear Annie: The letter from "Caregiver Not Good Enough," who is the sole caretaker for her partner with dementia and other serious health problems, really resonated with me, not because I'm in that situation myself, but because I'm a nurse case manager who sees it all the time with my patients and their spouses.

I often make the same suggestions you did, but what I'm finding is that so many of these people don't have friends or family to lean on. Dementia tends to isolate both the person who has it and the caregiver. It can occur slowly

over the years as friends and family drift away, or sometimes they were never there to begin with.

Online support groups can be beyond the capability of many seniors, especially when motivation is lacking or there's no one to show them how to do it.

Unfortunately, in this country, we do not do a very good job of taking care of our elders. Government funding for respite care is hard to come by for anyone except extremely low-income folks, and there is a long wait even when you qualify. Paying for caregivers is costly and outside the realm of possibility for many.

This caregiver is clearly suffering from depression, which could be a long-standing problem or may just be situational. I'd highly recommend she start by talking to her primary care physician. An antidepressant could be life-changing, even for situational depression. Other suggestions would be to reach out to a local place of worship, which can be a great source of support. Most cities have a senior center, and I know mine has a support group that meets in person for spouses of people with Alzheimer's and dementia. I wish her all the best. — Nursing Knowledge

Dear Nursing Knowledge: Thank you for your response and recommendations. Other readers agreed with you that "Caregiver" was clearly depressed herself and could benefit from medical care. Hopefully she will begin prioritizing her own health the same way she does her partner's and realize what a difference it can make on her overall well-being.

Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

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## Dear Annie

by Annie Lane



## BEETLE BAILEY



## BLONDIE



## ZITS



## CRANKSHAFT



## THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane

## The LOCKHORNS



## My Answer

By Dr. Billy Graham



## Do not be trapped by the world's darkness

Question: I fight discouragement daily though I am a strong believer and follower of Jesus Christ. I read devotionals that make me feel ashamed because I don't measure up to the standard of being happy by others' expectations. I don't find the word "happy" in the Bible, but there are lots of references to being joyful in the midst of trials. Is this true? — F.D.

Answer: It's important to remember that the devil wants us to live discouraged lives. If we focus on what is bad, we pull the shade on future's light. Wearing a smile and having a glimmer in the eye

encourages those we come in contact with. Many may be more discouraged than we are.

We must desire to live an outflowing life in the context of eternity. When Jesus left this earth after His resurrection, He said, "It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you" (John 16:7, NKJV). That Helper is the Holy Spirit of the living God.

Do not be trapped by the world's darkness. If you belong to Jesus Christ, you are a child of light. Remember, if you are discouraged, imagine how

much more discouraged others are. Make a point to be pleasant and smile. People from every race and culture respond to a smile. Try it and you will see. There is indeed so much unpleasantness in this world, but the Bible says that the kingdom of God is "peace and joy" (Romans 14:17, NKJV).

Living a joyful life, in spite of discouragement, is a strong testimony that Christ lives in us. This makes for sweeter days.

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

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## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS  
1 Hard work  
6 Plants firmly  
12 Restaurant fan  
13 Algonquian tribe  
14 Hit song by the Oak Ridge Boys  
15 Peeved  
16 Borscht  
17 "Toodledo!"  
19 Ninny  
20 Frau's mate  
22 "Pachinko" author Min-lee  
24 Do something  
27 "Phooey!"  
29 Taxis  
32 Fruit-filled pastry  
35 Spanish greeting  
36 Fly like an eagle  
37 Whatever  
38 Prefix with gram or center  
40 Wall St. market  
42 Dadaist Jean  
44 CEO's appointments  
46 Colorado resort  
50 Hardly sufficient  
52 — Rico  
54 Boat  
55 Beyond belief  
56 Droid's rival  
57 Sum  
3 Author Wharton  
4 Melody  
5 Carriers of brewed drinks  
6 Send forth  
7 "Pink Friday" singer Nicki  
8 Cote cry  
9 Mexican entree  
10 Conks  
11 Swift jets  
12 Valentine's Day  
13 "That is to say..."  
14 Tennis star  
15 Mess up  
16 Both (Pref.)  
17 Harvest  
18 Locality  
19 Slanted type (Abbr.)  
20 Texter's chuckle  
21 Logical beginning?  
22 Family card game  
Solution time: 26 mins.

11x11 crossword grid with numbers 1-37 and 38-57.

TV schedule table with columns for time slots (5 PM, 5:30, 6 PM, 6:30, 7 PM, 7:30, 8 PM, 8:30, 9 PM, 9:30, 10 PM, 10:30, 11 PM, 11:30, 12 AM, 12:30) and rows for various channels (WINM, CBS, Antenna, ABC, NBC, MNT, CW, PBS, FOX, etc.).

