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Man denied bond reduction on child solicitation charge

By SYDNEY KENT

A man was denied a bond reduction nine months after he was arrested for child solicitation.

Jonathon Dickey, 53, Poneto, was caught by the non-profit group Predator Catchers Inc. in June 2023. Dickey was one of nearly 10 PCI arrests facilitated in the county in recent years.

During a pretrial conference in the Wells Circuit Court in mid-March, Dickey requested a reduction in his \$55,000 bond.

The prosecution pointed out that even if Dickey was released, he would be arrested in Howard County for a pending warrant for operating a vehicle after forfeiture of a license, a Level 5 felony.

According to a probable cause affidavit, Dickey sent sexually suggestive and explicit messages to who he believed to be 12- and 13-year-old girls named "Katie" and "Grace." Both girls were the same decoy from PCI.

The app "Mingle2" was used to begin the conversations.

Dickey is the only suspect so far that is charged with a Level 5 felony rather than a Level 4 felony for child solicitation. The nature of Dickey's arrest differs as well.

In similar cases, the sting was arranged at a local store like Walmart or Kroger. In Dickey's case, he allegedly gave the decoy his home address after a failed attempt to meet at the Southern Wells High School in June.

Members of PCI confronted Dickey at his address and posed as the mother of one of the underage girls until officers arrived.

Dickey is scheduled for a three-day trial by jury in this case at 9 a.m. on May 20.

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Silly rabbit, eggs are for kids

Good weather and spirits made for a lively Easter egg hunt at Christian Care Retirement Community Saturday afternoon. At left, Gene Gerber helps scout out eggs with granddaughter Haven Isch. Meanwhile, Krew Gerber, shown below at left, leaves his basket behind as he grabs multiple eggs in his hands. After the hunt was over, Elsie Quinn, below, couldn't wait until she was home to enjoy her treats. (Photos by Holly Gaskill)



Crews at Baltimore bridge continue removing debris

By MIKE PESOLI and JEFFREY COLLINS
Associated Press

BALTIMORE (AP) — As divers assisted crews with the complicated and meticulous operation of removing the steel and concrete from the fallen Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore, some near the site took time on Easter Sunday to reflect on the six workers presumed to have plunged to their deaths.

As cranes periodically swung into place and workers measured and cut the steel to prepare to lift sections of twisted steel, Rev. Ako Walker held a Mass in Spanish at Sacred Heart of Jesus, about 5 miles (8 kilometers) up the Patapsco River from the collapse.

"Yes we can rebuild a bridge, but we have to look at the way in which migrant workers are treated and how best we can improve their situation as they come to the United States of America," Walker said of the men who were from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador and were patching potholes.

Dive teams were in the river Sunday surveying parts of the bridge underwater and checking on the ship to ensure it can be safely floated away once the wreckage is lifted. Workers in lifts used torches earlier to cut parts of the twisted steel superstructure above water.

The bridge fell early Tuesday as the crew of the cargo ship Dali lost power and control. They called in a mayday, which allowed just enough time for police to stop vehicles from getting on the bridge, but not enough time to get a crew of eight workers off the structure.

Two workers survived, two bodies were found in a submerged pickup and four more men are presumed dead. Weather conditions and the tangled debris underwater have made it too dangerous for divers to search for their bodies.

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U.S. military says it destroyed Houthi drones over the Red Sea and in Yemen

By SAMY MAGDY
Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — The U.S. military said Sunday its forces destroyed one unmanned aerial vehicle in a Houthi rebel-held area of war-ravaged Yemen and another over a crucial shipping route in the Red Sea. It was the latest development in months of tension between the Iran-backed rebels and the U.S.

The drones, which were destroyed Saturday morning, posed a threat to U.S. and coalition forces and merchant vessels in the region, said the U.S. Central Command.

It said that one drone was destroyed over the Red Sea, while the second was destroyed on the ground as it was prepared to launch.

"These actions are necessary to protect our forces, ensure freedom of navigation, and make international waters safer and more secure for U.S., coalition, and merchant vessels," CENTCOM said.

There was no comment from the Houthi rebels, which control much of Yemen's north and west.

The rebels launched a campaign of drone and missile attacks on shipping in the Red Sea in November. They have also fired missiles toward Israel, although those have largely fallen short or been intercepted.

The rebels have described their campaign as an effort to pressure Israel to end its war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip. The ships targeted by the Houthis, however, largely have had little or no connection to Israel, the U.S. or other nations involved in the war.

The Houthis have kept up their campaign of attacks despite more than two months of U.S.-led airstrikes.

Earlier this month, CENTCOM said its forces also destroyed four unmanned aerial vehicles in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen. It also said Houthis fired four anti-ship ballistic missiles toward the Red Sea, but no injuries or damages were reported by U.S., coalition or commercial ships.

The escalation in the Red Sea and the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza impacted the U.N.-led efforts to relaunch political talks to end Yemen's yearslong conflict, according to the U.N. envoy for Yemen.

Hans Grundberg told the U.N. Security Council in mid-March that he had hoped to reach an agreement on

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Google revolutionized email 20 years ago with Gmail

People thought it was an April Fool's Day joke

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE
AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Google co-founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin loved pulling pranks, so much so they began rolling outlandish ideas every April Fool's Day not long after starting their company more than

a quarter century ago. One year, Google posted a job opening for a Copernicus research center on the moon. Another year, the company said it planned to roll out a "scratch and sniff" feature on its search engine.

The jokes were so consistently over-the-top that people learned to

laugh them off as another example of Google mischief. And that's why Page and Brin decided to unveil something no one would believe was possible 20 years ago on April Fool's Day.

It was Gmail, a free service boasting 1 gigabyte of storage per account, an amount that sounds almost pedestrian in an age of one-terabyte iPhones. But it sounded

like a preposterous amount of email capacity back then, enough to store about 13,500 emails before running out of space compared to just 30 to 60 emails in the then-leading webmail services run by Yahoo and Microsoft. That translated into 250 to 500 times more email storage space.

Besides the quantum leap in storage, Gmail also came equipped

with Google's search technology so users could quickly retrieve a tidbit from an old email, photo or other personal information stored on the service. It also automatically threaded together a string of communications about the same topic so everything flowed together as if it was a single conversation.

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Outside

Mother Nature's greatest April Fool's joke: rain

Today	Tuesday	Wed.
High 52	High 51	High 40
Low 41	Low 35	Low 32

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Crews at Baltimore

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Each part of the bridge removed from the water will be lifted onto a barge and floated downstream to the Tradeport Atlantic logistics center, where it will be inspected, Coast Guard Rear Adm. Shannon Gilreath said.

Everything the salvage crews do affects what happens next and ultimately how long it will take to remove all the debris and reopen the ship channel and the blocked Port of Baltimore, Maryland Gov. Wes Moore said.

It can also alter the course of the National Transportation Safety Board investigation, which Moore said is important to ensure this doesn't happen again.

"We need to have answers on what happened. We need to know who should be accountable for this. And we need to make sure we're holding them accountable," Moore said Sunday on CNN.

The crew of the Dali, which is as long as the Eiffel Tower is tall, remains onboard the ship. The vessel is tangled in 3,000 to 4,000 tons of debris. Most of its containers remain intact, but some were torn open or knocked away by the falling debris.

The Dali is managed by Synergy Marine Group and owned by Grace

Ocean Private Ltd. Danish shipping giant Maersk chartered Dali, which was on its way out of port when it hit the bridge's support column.

Along with clearing the shipping channel to reopen the port, officials are trying to figure out how to rebuild the major bridge, which was completed in 1977 and carried Interstate 695 around southeast Baltimore and was a vital link to the city's centuries of maritime culture.

It took five years to build the original bridge. President Joe Biden's administration has promised to pay the full cost to rebuild and state and federal transportation officials said they will work as quickly as possible.

But exactly how long the new bridge will take can't be figured out now. Engineers haven't been able to assess the condition of the ramps and smaller bridges leading to the collapsed structure to get the full scope of what must be done.

Congress is expected to consider aid packages to help people who lose jobs or businesses because of the prolonged closure of the Port of Baltimore. The port handles more cars and farm equipment than any other U.S. facility.

"This matters to folks in rural North Carolina, in Kansas, and Iowa. This

matters to the global economy. And it should not be something that has anything or any conversation around party. We are talking about an American tragedy to an American city," Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott told CBS' "Face the Nation" on Sunday.

On Monday the Small Business Administration will open a center in Dundalk, Maryland, to help small businesses get loans to help them with losses caused by the disruption of the bridge collapse.

The workers weren't parishioners at Sacred Heart of Jesus, whose pews were packed Sunday for mass. But its pastor, Walker, reached out to the families because as he said the Latino community in Baltimore is large in number but closely connected.

He said in an interview before mass that they were good men working not just for their families in the U.S. but also for relatives in their countries.

Walker hopes their stories encourage people to embrace migrant workers who want to improve their lives and grow their communities.

"We have to be bridges for one another even in this most difficult situations. Our lives must be small bridges of mercy of hope of togetherness and of building communities," Walker said.

Google revolutionized email

(Continued from Page 1)

"The original pitch we put together was all about the three 'S's' — storage, search and speed," said former Google executive Marissa Mayer, who helped design Gmail and other company products before later becoming Yahoo's CEO.

It was such a mind-bending concept that shortly after The Associated Press published a story about Gmail late on the afternoon of April Fool's 2004, readers began calling and emailing to inform the news agency it had been duped by Google's pranksters.

"That was part of the charm, making a product that people won't believe is real. It kind of changed people's perceptions about the kinds of applications that were possible within a web browser," former Google engineer Paul Buchheit recalled during a recent AP interview about his efforts to build Gmail.

It took three years to do as part of a project called "Caribou" — a reference to a running gag in the Dilbert comic strip. "There was something sort of absurd about the name Caribou, it just made me laugh," said Buchheit, the 23rd employee hired at a company that now employs more than 180,000 people.

The AP knew Google wasn't joking about Gmail because an AP reporter had been abruptly asked to come down from San Francisco to the company's Mountain

View, California, headquarters to see something that would make the trip worthwhile.

After arriving at a still-developing corporate campus that would soon blossom into what became known as the "Googleplex," the AP reporter was ushered into a small office where Page was wearing an impish grin while sitting in front of his laptop computer.

Page, then just 31 years old, proceeded to show off Gmail's sleekly designed inbox and demonstrated how quickly it operated within Microsoft's now-retired Explorer web browser. And he pointed out there was no delete button featured in the main control window because it wouldn't be necessary, given Gmail had so much storage and could be so easily searched. "I think people are really going to like this," Page predicted.

As with so many other things, Page was right. Gmail now has an estimated 1.8 billion active accounts — each one now offering 15 gigabytes of free storage bundled with Google Photos and Google Drive. Even though that's 15 times more storage than Gmail initially offered, it's still not enough for many users who rarely see the need to purge their accounts, just as Google hoped.

The digital hoarding of email, photos and other content is why Google, Apple and other companies now make money from selling additional storage capac-

ity in their data centers. (In Google's case, it charges anywhere from \$30 annually for 200 gigabytes of storage to \$250 annually for 5 terabytes of storage). Gmail's existence is also why other free email services and the internal email accounts that employees use on their jobs offer far more storage than was fathomed 20 years ago.

"We were trying to shift the way people had been thinking because people were working in this model of storage scarcity for so long that deleting became a default action," Buchheit said.

Gmail was a game changer in several other ways while becoming the first building block in the expansion of Google's internet empire beyond its still-dominant search engine.

After Gmail came Google Maps and Google Docs with word processing and spreadsheet applications. Then came the acquisition of video site YouTube, followed by the introduction of the Chrome browser and the Android operating system that powers most of the world's smartphones. With Gmail's explicitly stated intention to scan the content of emails to get a better understanding of users' interests, Google also left little doubt that digital surveillance in pursuit of selling more ads would be part of its expanding ambitions.

Although it immediately generated a buzz, Gmail started out with a limited

scope because Google initially only had enough computing capacity to support a small audience of users.

"When we launched, we only had 300 machines and they were really old machines that no one else wanted," Buchheit said, with a chuckle. "We only had enough capacity for 10,000 users, which is a little absurd."

But that scarcity created an air of exclusivity around Gmail that drove feverish demand for an elusive invitation to sign up. At one point, invitations to open a Gmail account were selling for \$250 apiece on eBay. "It became a bit like a social currency, where people would go, 'Hey, I got a Gmail invite, you want one?'" Buchheit said.

Although signing up for Gmail became increasingly easier as more of Google's network of massive data centers came online, the company didn't begin accepting all comers to the email service until it opened the floodgates as a Valentine's Day present to the world in 2007.

A few weeks later on April Fool's Day in 2007, Google would announce a new feature called "Gmail Paper" offering users the chance to have Google print out their email archive on "94% post-consumer organic soybean sputum" and then have it sent to them through the Postal Service. Google really was joking around that time.

Weather

Monday, April 1, 2024

(24-hour observations at 10:49 p.m. Sunday)

High: 57; Low: 42; Precipitation: 0.03 inches of rain
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.55 feet at 7:45 p.m. Sunday

Wells County forecast

Today: Showers likely, with thunderstorms also possible after 2 p.m. Cloudy, with a high near 52. East wind 10 to 15 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60%. New rainfall amounts between a tenth and quarter of an inch, except higher amounts possible in thunderstorms.

Tonight: Showers and possibly a thunderstorm. Low around 41. East wind around 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 90%. New rainfall amounts between three quarters and one inch possible.

Tuesday: Showers and possibly a thunderstorm before 8 a.m., then showers between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m., then showers and possibly a thunderstorm after 2 p.m. High near 51. Northeast wind around 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 80%. New rainfall amounts between a quarter and half of an inch possible.

Tuesday Night: A chance of rain showers before 2 a.m., then a chance of rain and snow showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 35. West wind 10 to 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph. Chance of precipitation is 40%.

Wednesday: Rain, possibly mixed with snow showers. High near 40. Breezy. Chance of precipitation is 80%. Little or no snow accumulation expected.

Wednesday Night: Rain, possibly mixed with snow showers, mainly before 8 p.m. Low around 32. Breezy. Chance of precipitation is 80%.

Thursday: A slight chance of rain and snow showers before 8 a.m., then a chance of rain showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 43. Chance of precipitation is 30%.

Thursday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 30.

Friday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 47.

Friday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 29.

Saturday: Sunny, with a high near 53.

Saturday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 32.

Sunday: Sunny, with a high near 59.

Houthi drones

(Continued from Page 1)

a nationwide cease-fire in Yemen by the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which began early in March.

He warned that Yemen could be propelled back into war, saying that "the longer the escalatory environment (in the region) continues, the more challenging Yemen's mediation space will become."

The war between the Houthis and pro-government forces backed by a coalition of Gulf Arab states has raged since 2014, when the

Houthi swept down from the mountains, seized much of northern Yemen and the country's capital, Sanaa, and forced the internationally recognized government to flee into exile to Saudi Arabia.

Since then, more than 150,000 people have been killed by the violence and 3 million have been displaced.

Fighting has decreased markedly in Yemen since a truce in April 2022, but there are still hotspots in the country.

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Pope overcomes health concerns to preside over Easter Mass and appeal for peace in Gaza, Ukraine

ROME (AP) — Pope Francis rallied from a winter-long bout of respiratory problems to lead some 60,000 people in Easter celebrations Sunday, making a strong appeal for a cease-fire in Gaza and a prisoner swap between Russia and Ukraine.

Francis presided over Easter Sunday Mass in a flower-decked St. Peter's Square and then delivered a heartfelt prayer for peace in his annual roundup of global crises. Gaza's people, including the small Christian community there, have been a source of constant concern for Francis and Easter in the Holy Land overall was a somber affair this year given the war.

"Peace is never made with weapons, but with outstretched hands and open hearts," Francis said from the loggia overlooking the square, to applause from the wind-swept crowd below.

Francis appeared in good form, despite having celebrated the 2½-hour nighttime Easter Vigil just hours before. The pontiff, who had part of one lung removed as a young man, has been battling respiratory problems all winter and his full participation in Easter services was not entirely guaranteed, especially after he skipped the traditional Good Friday procession.

But in a sign the 87-year-old pontiff was feeling OK, he made several loops around the piazza in his popemobile after Mass, greeting well-wishers.

The Vatican said some 60,000 people attended the Mass, with more packing the Via della Conciliazione boulevard leading to the piazza. At the start of the service, a gust of wind knocked over a large religious icon on the altar just a few feet from the pope; ushers quickly righted it.

Easter Mass is one of the most

important dates on the liturgical calendar, celebrating what the faithful believe was Jesus' resurrection after his crucifixion. The Mass precedes the "Urbi et Orbi" (to the city and the world) blessing, in which the pope traditionally offers a laundry list of the threats afflicting humanity.

This year, Francis said his thoughts went particularly to people in Ukraine and Gaza and all those facing war, particularly the children who he said had "forgotten how to smile."

"In calling for respect for the principles of international law, I express my hope for a general exchange of all prisoners between Russia and Ukraine: all for the sake of all," he said.

He called for the "prompt" release of prisoners taken from Israel on Oct. 7, an immediate cease-fire in Gaza and for humanitarian access to reach Palestinians.

"Let us not allow the current hostilities to continue to have grave repercussions on the civil population, by now at the limit of its endurance, and above all on the children," he said in a speech that also touched on the plight of Haitians, the Rohingya and victims of human trafficking.

For the past few weeks, Francis has generally avoided delivering long speeches to avoid the strain on his breathing. He ditched his Palm Sunday homily last week and decided at the last minute to stay home from the Good Friday procession at the Colosseum.

The Vatican said in a brief explanation that the decision was made to "conserve his health."

The decision clearly paid off, as Francis was able to recite the prayers of the lengthy Saturday night Easter Vigil service, including administering

the sacraments of baptism and First Communion to eight new Catholics, and preside over Easter Sunday Mass and deliver his speech.

Francis wasn't the only leader whose mere presence at Easter offered a reassuring sign of stability and normalcy.

In Britain, King Charles III joined the queen and other members of the royal family for an Easter service at Windsor Castle in his most significant public outing since he was diagnosed with cancer last month.

The monarch offered a cheery wave to spectators as he walked into St. George's Chapel, and then spent time shaking hands and greeting well-wishers after the service. "You're very brave to stand out here in the cold," Charles told them.

But things were hardly normal in Jerusalem, where Easter Mass came and went at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Only a few dozen faithful attended the service as the Israel-Hamas war rages on in Gaza.

The medieval church in the Old City is the holy site where Christians believe Jesus was crucified, buried and resurrected.

In years past, the church has been packed with worshippers and tourists. But the bloody conflict in Gaza, now into its sixth month, has seen a huge downturn in tourism and pilgrimages across Israel and the Palestinian territories.

The streets of the old city were also absent of Palestinian Christians from the West Bank, who normally flock to the city for Easter. Since the conflict erupted, Palestinian worshippers from the Israeli-occupied territory have needed special permission to cross checkpoints into Jerusalem.

OBITUARIES

David Wesley Brown, 76

David Wesley Brown, 76, of Bluffton, passed away on Saturday morning, March 30, 2024, at Kingston Care Center in Fort Wayne.



David was born Oct. 24, 1947, in Fort Wayne, to Roy and Phyllis (Fry) Brown. David attended Petroleum High School and furthered his education at Indiana University. He was a professor of Education. He honorably served his country in the Air Force for 8 years.

On Nov. 30, 2003, in Canada, David and Tomjari "Jari" Tanner-Starks were married. Jari passed away in January 2019.

Survivors include his children Travis (Melissa) Brown of Ossian and Kimberly (Nickolas) Rumschlag of Decatur; along with seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He is also survived by his siblings, Judi Sturgis of Fort Wayne and Cheri (Phil) Habegger of Bluffton.

He is preceded in death by his parents; his spouse, Jari; and a son Christopher Brown.

A Celebration of Life Gathering will take place from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, April 6, 2024, at the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton. Memorials may be made to Honor Flight of Northeast Indiana and can be directed to the funeral home.

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.

Indiana Public Access Counselor opines on redacted invoices for Rokita's disciplinary case

The PAC said redactions are allowed, but maintained that documents so far provided to media don't ensure transparency.

By CASEY SMITH
Indiana Capital Chronicle

A new opinion from Indiana's Public Access Counselor critiqued redactions to public records that make it difficult to determine the amount of public dollars spent to defend Attorney General Todd Rokita's law license.

The opinion came in response to a joint complaint filed by the Indiana Capital Chronicle and the Indiana Citizen.

At issue are 44 pages of heavily redacted attorney invoices from the Scherr Jaffe law firm. The redactions were made by the Indiana Comptroller, who pays the invoices.

The Washington, D.C.-based law firm was hired by the state to defend Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita, whom the Indiana Supreme Court Disciplinary Commission began investigating in early 2023, as first reported by the Indiana Citizen.

The investigation — and ultimate reprimand — stemmed from the Republican attorney general's televised comments about Indianapolis doctor Caitlin Bernard, who

oversaw a medication abortion for a 10-year-old rape victim from Ohio in 2022.

But the same firm was handling the attorney general's medical licensure case against Bernard, along with other cases, making it impossible to distinguish which expenditures were related to Rokita's disciplinary matter.

Luke Britt, the Indiana Public Access Counselor said in his March 12 report that some redactions are appropriate, but recommended that state officials only block out portions of the documents "consistent with basic tenets of transparency and good governance."

redactions are much more effective at accomplishing that goal."

Rokita's office did not comment on the PAC ruling or indicate if the office would release the invoices with lighter redactions.

The Indiana Comptroller handled the initial request but Rokita's office has a pending request from October from the Indiana Citizen that it hasn't filled.

Schaerr Jaffe's contract with the state was first signed between the attorney general's office and law firm in 2020. At that time, the agreement involved just one federal case. The contract has since been amended six times to include several other matters, including legal defense for Rokita's law license.

But black-outs to the invoice descriptions make it unclear what line items are associated with each case. The redactions were made by the comptroller's office after "solicit(ing) input" from the attorney general's office, according to the PAC's opinion.

Britt made clear that "to demonstrate the work performed, law firms

will often include certain descriptive statements" in their itemizations "that could be construed to allow a public agency to withhold it as part of its enjoyment of the attorney-client privilege."

As such, a public agency "may disclose communication sent and received as part of an attorney-client relationship," but because that relationship is privileged, "it stands to reason it would be protective of that communication, and rightfully so."

Even so, Britt said the amount of redaction is "unusually high. Without being able to see what exactly was withheld from the documents, though, "we cannot make a conclusive determination as to compliance" or if a violation occurred.

Court News

Wells Superior Court Criminal Cases

Joseph W. Tarlton, 27, Homeless; Sentenced to 455 days in the Indiana Department of Correction with 359 days suspended. Tarlton received 96 days of jail credit towards his sentence for time spent awaiting disposition in this case.

Wells Circuit Court Criminal Cases

Cassie Abercrombie, 34, Bluffton, pled guilty to dealing in methamphetamine between 1 and 5 grams, a Level 4 felony. Abercrombie is scheduled for a sentencing hearing in the case at 9 a.m. on May 15 in the Wells Circuit Court.

Austin Kolkman, 22, Fort Wayne, pled guilty during his hearing in the Wells Circuit Court last week. In December, Kolkman was charged with one count of battery by means of a deadly weapon, a Level

5 felony, and criminal recklessness committed with a deadly weapon, a Level 6 felony.

Kolkman was identified as one of two suspects who were allegedly involved in an assault in the 300 block of West Dustman Road. The victim told police Kolkman and another subject assaulted him while in a truck. While running back to his apartment following the assault, the victim stated he heard gunshots.

Kolkman later received additional charges for possession of a controlled substance and dealing in marijuana for drugs that were located during his arrest. He also pled guilty to these charges last week. Kolkman is scheduled for a sentencing hearing in both matters at 1 p.m. on May 15 in the Wells Circuit Court.

Shooting outside Indy's Circle Center Mall wounds 7 youths

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Seven young people between the ages of 12 and 17 were wounded in a shooting outside a shopping mall in downtown Indianapolis late Saturday night, police said.

Police officers patrolling the area heard shots fired near the Circle Centre Mall shortly after 11:30 p.m., Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department Deputy Chief Tanya Terry said.

The officers found "a large group of juveniles" at the scene, including six who had gunshot wounds and were transported to area hospitals, Terry said during a news briefing at the scene early Sunday morning.

One of the victims was upgraded from critical to stable condition. The other victims all were listed in stable condition, said Terry, who was not able to immediately provide the genders of the victims.

A seventh juvenile with a gunshot wound arrived separately at a hospital and was in stable condition, she said.

"Once again, we have a situation in which young people are resolving conflict with firearms, and it has to stop," Terry said, later adding, "Conflict should not lead to somebody pulling out a gun and trying to resolve it. The consequences are eternal."

Investigators believe there was more than one gun used in the shooting, Terry said.

No arrests were made and police did not have any suspects, she said.

FW Mayor Henry dies Thursday following cancer battle

By WHITNEY DOWNARD, Indiana Capital Chronicle

Fort Wayne Mayor Tom Henry died Thursday night following a battle with stomach cancer. Earlier in the day, his family announced the city leader was in hospice care after suffering a medical emergency on Wednesday.

In his stead, Deputy Mayor Karl Bandemer will lead the city. A caucus of precinct committee persons will choose a successor within 30 days.

In late February Henry, a Democrat, called a press conference informing the public that he had been diagnosed with Stage 3 stomach cancer and would soon start chemotherapy. He was in the first year of his fifth term as Fort Wayne mayor, a position he has held since 2008.

His wife, Cindy, died in January following complications with pancreatic cancer.

Top statewide officials shared their condolences with the Henry family following the news.

"For anyone involved in statewide public service, Mayor Tom Henry was synonymous with Fort Wayne. The love and support the city long showered upon him was surpassed only by his unwavering affection for it. No matter where you were from, Mayor Tom was the kind of positive leader who made you feel like moving there because of the long list of new things going on and he was smiling about it," Gov. Eric Holcomb said in a statement.

"I'll treasure our conversations, sharing a stage, and his inspirational dignified demeanor. He was a Mayor's mayor, but also a Governor's Mayor. You could call him for anything, for advice or about a loved one, and I did. Janet and I extend our heartfelt condolences to his community of friends, coworkers and most importantly his blessed legendary family during such a difficult time. It's been said, that for those who walk with the Lord, goodbyes are never forever. It's my hope and prayer, that now that he has been reunited with his bride, Cindy, his soul can rest knowing his work here is done, and we shall all meet again for a laugh or two," he concluded.

Two House Democrats representing Fort Wayne also praised the work accomplished by Henry.

"In losing Tom, Fort Wayne has truly lost an icon, but his legacy lives on. As we move forward, our community will honor the progress he made in Fort Wayne during his tenure. I want to personally extend my condolences to Tom's family, and I look forward to celebrating his life and accomplishments as a community," said Rep. Kyle Miller.

House Minority Leader Phil GiaQuinta called Henry "a giant in the history of our city," crediting the city's growth to his leadership.

VISITATION & SERVICES
Wanda Mae (Kiefer) Steffen
Calling: 1-2 p.m.
Monday, April 1.
Service: 2 p.m.
Monday, April 1 at the funeral home.
Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home
308 W. Washington St.
824-3850
www.thomarich.com

VISITATION & SERVICES
James "Jim" A. Myers
Calling: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Tuesday, April 2 at The Lighthouse Church of Monroe.
Graveside Service: 1 p.m. Tuesday, April 2 at Ray Cemetery in Monroe.
Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home
308 W. Washington St.
824-3850
www.thomarich.com

Financial Focus
Slow and steady: A smart way to invest
You may have heard about investors who get in on the ground floor of a hot new company and quickly make a fortune — but that's rare and certainly not a viable plan for most people. Instead, try to follow a slow-and-steady strategy.
With this approach, you can start out small. If you're beginning your career and you can't afford to invest large amounts, put away what you can each month into stocks or mutual funds. When your salary goes up, you can increase your contributions.
And take advantage of your employer's 401(k) or similar retirement plan. At least try to put in enough to earn your employer's matching contribution, if one is offered.
Also, don't let the inevitable drops in the market throw you off from consistently investing — ups and downs are a normal feature of the investment landscape.
Finally, check your progress regularly by comparing where you are today versus where you were last year — and where you want to be in the future.
"Slow and steady" may not sound like an exciting approach to investing. But a little less excitement, and a lot more diligence, can prove to be quite effective.
This content was provided by Edward Jones for use by Jeremy Todd, your Edward Jones financial advisor at 260-824-0686.
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Public records request on taxpayer dollars not so simple

It seemed like a simple question: how many taxpayer dollars are being spent to defend Attorney General Todd Rokita's law license?

The office has paid \$400,000 to an outside law firm but it is unclear how much of that went to the disciplinary matter.

I first sent an email in February 2023 inquiring about the representation hired on behalf of the state's leading attorney and I still don't have the answer. The initial inquiry wasn't a formal records request but an attempt to handle a question quickly. Since then, it has escalated to a public records debate before the Indiana Public Access Counselor.



Niki Kelly

Hoosier Opinions

The Indiana Public Access Counselor last week issued a ruling that took a slight jab at the Indiana Comptroller and Attorney General's Office but didn't rule in our favor. The question is whether legal invoices by an outside attorney representing Rokita were redacted too much.

"All descriptions of work performed have been redacted. This does not allow the public to know whether it got the benefit of the bargain from the service provider hired by the state," the ruling said. "As stated previously, attorney invoices may have more redactions than other types of service providers, nonetheless, the public is entitled to know that its money is going to good use. Pinpoint, specific redactions are much more effective at accomplishing that goal."

Where it started

Let me tell you what this fight has been like.

The Indiana Supreme Court Disciplinary Commission began investigating Rokita in early 2023. It was Marilyn Odendahl of the Indiana Citizen who first reported on Feb. 8, 2023, that the state was paying Washington, D.C., law firm Schaerr Jaffe to defend Rokita in that matter.

Former Attorney General Curtis Hill paid for his own legal defense when he was charged with misconduct. But, to be fair, that incident was at a bar and outside his official duties. Rokita was being investigated for comments he made as part of his office's work.

After the Citizen's report I sent an email asking generally about the legal representation. It initially got no response from the Attorney General's Office. A follow-up said the office would get back to me. It never did.

At some point, separately, both Odendahl and I asked the Indiana Comptroller for invoices related to payments to Schaerr Jaffe because the AG's office had not been helpful.

The payments are under a contract first signed between the Attorney General's office and Schaerr Jaffe in 2020 involving one federal case. Since then, it has been amended six times to include multiple other matters. The contract is also being used to pay to defend Rokita's law license.

When the invoices came from the Comptroller, we were hoping to piece together what taxpayer money was being spent on what legal matter.

But the invoices only list the original federal court case, which concluded in September 2023, and there is no way to identify what costs are going to which issue, matter or case.

The Comptroller was efficient — responding with documents in about a week — but redacted nearly everything from the invoices, meaning I couldn't tell anything about the work being done.

The complaint

Odendahl and I decided to file a public access complaint. We understand redactions are allowed — and even proper — to protect attorney-client privilege. But when they redact virtually every word, the invoices become useless.

Simultaneously, Odendahl sought invoices directly from Rokita's office in case their redactions were different. The Comptroller said in its response to our complaint that it did solicit input from the Attorney General's Office in making the redactions.

That request to the Attorney General's Office was sent Oct. 30, by the way. They still have not provided the documents — almost five months later.

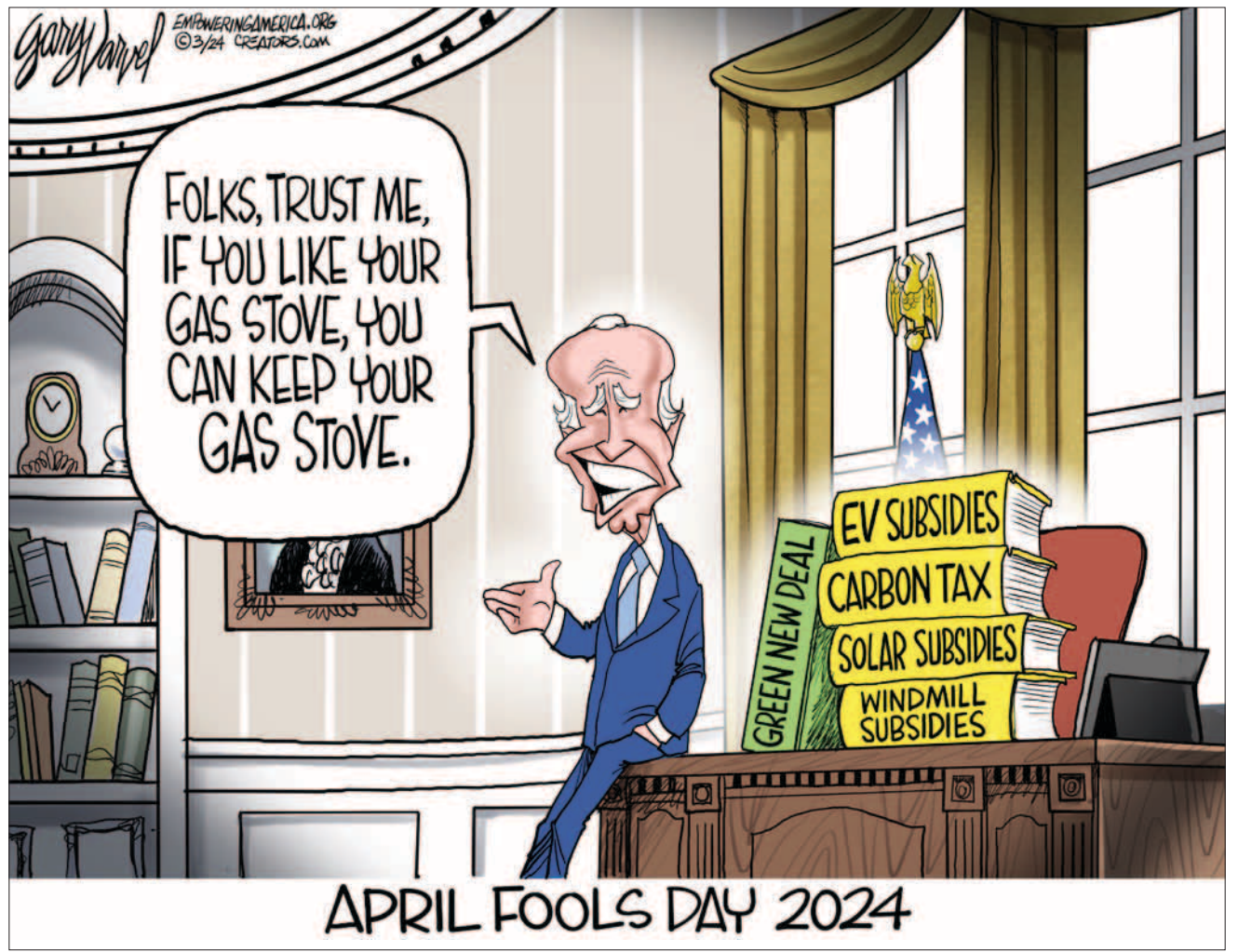
Public Access Counselor Luke Britt said the amount of redaction is "unusually high" but without the benefit of seeing the unredacted copy he can't say definitively that a violation occurred.

"It is my recommendation, however, that the OAG revisit these materials and potentially redact the invoices with a much lighter touch so that the documentation is objectively readable," he said.

Notably, a second disciplinary investigation is underway and the office has also hired another law firm for "claims and disciplinary complaints which may arise against State of Indiana employees and state officials in the scope of their employment."

This could all easily be avoided if Rokita's office would simply answer the question. How much in state taxpayer dollars have been spent so far on the his disciplinary defense?

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



APRIL FOOLS DAY 2024

Sen. Braun wearing a GOP primary target

Of the six Republicans seeking the gubernatorial nomination on May 7, U.S. Sen. Mike Braun is the one with the proverbial target on his back.

He entered last week's two-debate sequence still as the widely-perceived front-runner (an Emerson College poll earlier this month had him leading by more than 20% with 34%, probably enough to win the race if it were held in March).

According to AdImpact, Braun had been outspent on the TV ad race \$11 million to \$2 million this past month. As of March 13, the Brad Chambers campaign had spent \$5.7 million, the Eric Doden campaign \$4.1 million and the campaign of Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch \$1.15 million. Most of the Doden and Chambers buys were devoted to attack ads and contrast ads against Braun, who had \$1.8 million in the ad pipeline, compared to just over \$100,000 for his three primary challengers.

On the night of March 22, a shallow backwater of the World Wide Web lit up: U.S. Sen. Braun had missed a \$1.2 trillion budget vote. The Doden campaign's spin was this: "Braun's campaign sent a desperate fundraising solicitation to supporters just hours after skipping the vote. In it the campaign said: 'We may have to scale back our get-out-the-vote efforts if we don't hit our goal. And with less than two months until Election Day, that would be devastating for our campaign.'"

The Importanville substack site followed with this post on X: "Braun's explanation for missing the vote was literally no, I didn't miss it because of a fundraiser that ended at 7 p.m on Friday night but because actually I wanted to go home and sleep in my own bed."

When four of the six candidates gathered for the Fox59/CBS4 debate Tuesday night, the "missed vote" storm had passed. It never came up.

During the debate, Chambers was asked to identify opponents feeding the public what he had called "stale soundbites and lousy results." He responded, "Sen. Braun has been down for three or four photo ops at the border and nothing's changed. There was a bipartisan bill ... a month ago. He was quoted in the paper saying, 'We don't want to vote on that because we don't want to help [President] Biden. That is not serving Hoosiers. [Braun is] now on his third position on qualified immunity. No one in Indiana can unsee the Tucker Carlson interview and in his own words talking about Black Lives Matter being a great institution.'"

Braun responded, "Everybody clearly knows when I made that reference that was to somebody exercising their 1st Amendment rights. That was never, ever to support an umbrella group, BLM. Hoosiers know that. That's been out there for four years. You can try that kind of retreat, but when you're doing that it's because you're in single digits" in the polls.

Chambers also cited Sen. Braun's vote against U.S. Sen. Todd Young's CHIPS Act, which is creating thousands of jobs in Indiana.

Braun then took aim at Chambers over the LEAP Lebanon Innovation District: "This guy over here has been with his fat-cat buddies," Braun said of Chambers, pointing to a contribution from former Eli Lilly CEO John Lechleiter (who gave Chambers \$25,000 on Feb. 26 and \$10,000 to Crouch). "Competition, transparency,

spread the wealth on economic development. That's not been occurring under his regime," Braun said.

That exchange had whiffs of a 2004 exchange between Gov. Joe Kernan and Republican challenger Mitch Daniels. When Kernan attacked Daniels on the prescription drug issue, Daniels turned the tables and said, "I never thought I'd hear an Indiana governor bash Eli Lilly."

Chambers, Doden and Braun continued to spar over the LEAP District, of which Eli Lilly and Company would be a key investor and tenant. Chambers defended his two years heading the IEDC for \$1 a year, saying it had "record results, higher wages, investments all over the state. So I am flattered the business community supports my campaign."

Braun also attacked Doden's tenure at the IEDC: "When he was involved in economic development, he had issues where he wasn't actually doing things to help small towns. He was maybe trying to help his own friends and business. He got an ethics watch about it and ignored it four times."

At the WISH-TV debate on Wednesday, Braun received incoming from Chambers, Doden and former attorney general Curtis Hill, who wasn't invited to the Tuesday event. Lt. Gov. Crouch, however, mostly abstained from criticizing Braun directly during the debate. She is hoping that Chambers and Doden rough up the frontrunner, giving her a lane to emerge as the winner on May 7 with the \$5 million she has.

Hill lambasted Braun for the latter's claim of being a political "outsider," saying the senator has "been in the system long enough." Chambers arguing that a candidate who has been on the ballot as often as Braun couldn't hold the title. Braun, a state lawmaker from 2014 to 2017 and a U.S. senator since 2019, said he still considered himself a political outsider, choosing to define the term by "what you have done for most of your life."

Braun added that the "ultimate outsider" — former President Donald Trump — had endorsed him.

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



Brian Howey

Politicking

Thank God for the internal combustion engine

One of Joe Biden's notable digressions when getting deposed by Special Counsel Robert Hur was about driving his beloved 1967 Corvette Stingray convertible.

Which wasn't surprising — the president genuinely loves his car. And why not? It's a thing of beauty and, for its time, was a splendid feat of engineering.

A paradox of the Biden's administration is that the old-school car enthusiast is — in the name of the future and of saving the planet — waging a war on the internal-combustion-engine cars that he so admires and that have helped define American life over the last 100 years.

The internal-combustion-engine automobile ranks as one of the modern world's most transformative innovations. Prior to the advent of trains, travel by land was an absolute misery, even for the wealthy and privileged. Then, the car, in effect, took the train and put it in the hands of individuals.

It was a revolutionary leap ahead for personal freedom and mobility. It changed where we live (catalyzing the growth of the suburbs) and how we work (making it easier to commute). It obviously made it possible to go more places and gave rise to new types of businesses catering to a newly foot-loose population, including motels and fast-food restaurants. It knit the country together via a road network that facilitated untold economic activity, and created the auto-



Rich Lowry

manufacturing industry, as well as industries providing parts and fuel for cars.

To an unusual extent, people feel bonded to their cars. There are car enthusiasts, but not enthusiasts for other 20th century implements that changed our way of life. No one speaks wistfully of the refrigerator they owned 40 years ago, or reads fan magazines devoted to plumbing. Even for consumers who aren't devotees of cars, what to buy is an intensely personal choice; this is why there is a dizzying array of brands offering an immense range of choices.

The Biden administration's push to get people into electric vehicles is running directly into the chief advantage of internal-combustion-engine cars, which is the sheer convenience.

One area of resistance to electric vehicles is "range anxiety," or the fear that an electric vehicle will run out of its charge. That's often exaggerated; electric cars have acquired more range now, and most people aren't driving 300 miles in a single trip. Nevertheless, there are reasonable concerns about the ability to find a charging station and how long it will take to recharge the vehicle compared to filling up at a gas station.

Gas stations already exist (about 145,000 of them with a million gas pumps), and no one had to subsidize their creation. They are convenient, cost-effective and make economic sense.

Making charging stations available on a comparable scale will

present formidable obstacles. As Mark Mills of the National Center for Energy Analytics points out in a paper on electric cars, transporting the large amounts of energy at the necessary scale using electric energy via wires and transformers is much more expensive than doing it with oil via pipelines and tanks. Equipping stations with the super-chargers necessary to make charging somewhat rapid — but still slower than gassing up — will require "a grid power demand comparable to a small town or steel mill."

This isn't to say electric cars aren't attractive to some consumers, especially those with their own garages for overnight charging and with the resources to spend on a fun, interesting second or third car. Tesla has made major inroads in the upscale category. Good for them. More choice is better.

An all-electric-car future is very far off, though, and internal-combustion-engine automobiles aren't embarrassing artifacts of the past. Their cost, convenience, reliability and size — more than half of automobiles sold in the U.S. are SUVs — make them hugely appealing. They are also getting constant upgrades. According to Mills, since 1975, "the average automobile today has 100 more horsepower, weighs 1,000 pounds more and has doubled in fuel efficiency."

Joe Biden's Corvette is now an antique, but the basic technology is as important, and as incredibly user-friendly, as ever.

Rich Lowry is on Twitter @RichLowry

Submit your Letters to the Editor via:

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• 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. Please mark your correspondence as "Letter to the Editor," or if you wish to express an opinion to us but do not want it published, please mark as "Not for Publication."

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Norwell Internship Spotlight award Grant Nash

Senior Grant Nash has been selected to receive the Norwell High School ICE [Interdisciplinary Cooperative Education] Spotlight award. He is employed by his father Doug Nash and grandpa Dale Nash of DC Nash Farms of Craigville. Grant is the son of Doug and Crystal Nash also of Craigville. Grant has grown up on the family farm and has learned a great deal about

planting and harvesting crops. Through the off season, Grant is involved in trucking and machinery maintenance on the farm. He also raises beef cattle and horses for resale. After graduation, Grant plans to continue farming with the family. Soon he will attain his CDL [Class A Commercial Driver's License] and has job offers from a feed mill and agriculture cooperative.



Grant Nash

Historical Society spring meeting April 22

The Spring Dinner Meeting of the Wells County Historical Society will be held at the Wells County Public Library on Monday, April 22, at 5:30 p.m. "Bridges of Wells County" will be the topic of the evening, presented by the group's President Jim Sturgeon. A limited number of the "Wells County Schools: 1837-2022" will be available for purchase

as will Alan Daugherty's book about E. B. Williamson. Corner Depot Catering will provide the dinner, which is priced at \$18. Reservations are needed by April 15th to 260-827-0117. The museum will open Sundays for the season beginning on Sunday, April 14, from 1 to 4 p.m.

May Ribbon Walk by Cancer Services

Cancer Services of Northeast Indiana will hold a Ribbon Walk on Saturday, May 4, from 9 to 11 a.m. at Cancer Services, 6316 Mutual Dr. in Fort Wayne. The family friendly event will feature food, entertainment, remembrance activities and a mile-long walk along the

walking path of Brotherhood Mutual. Participants who raise \$35 or more by April 29th will receive a commemorative Ribbon Walk t-shirt. The fund-raising goal is \$115,000. To donate or to register go to <https://give.cancer-services.org/ribbonwalk2024>.

Zanesville News

by Melba Edwards

Indiana weather is do unpredictable!! Lovely summer type weather changes to freezing cold with lots of wind.

Life goes on no matter what the temperature is.

The coffee cafe is still happening at the Zanesville Community Church of God on weekdays. All are welcome to come and join others from 7:30 to 10:00 a.m. The church is located on the corner of Scott Street and South County and Marzane Road/Indianapolis Road.

We have a great new restaurant in town. Now open Sis & Bub's Kitchen -Where everything is homemade! Brother and sister joined together with the passion of cooking to share their homemade food made with a little bit of pepper and a whole lot of love! They offer military discounts (w/card) and senior portions with special pricing. They also have pre-order family meals with the pricing depending on the family size with 24 hour notice. Holiday meals are offered with 48 hour notice. Grab & Go coffee and sandwich Monday through Friday from 5:30 to 8:00 a.m. They are open Wednesday through Friday from 5:30 am to 2 p.m./5p.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday hours are 7 to 2 and 5 to 8. Sunday hours are 10 to 2 except for the third Sunday of the month they will be closed. The address is 3010 W. Scott Street, Zanesville. Phones are 260 area codes with numbers 409-5187, 410-7372, and 241-2035. Facebook is Sis & Bubs and e-mail is sis.bubskitchen@gmail.com. Come and try out this place and you will be sure to come back soon. I have been there many times already!

Don't forget to patronize the County Line Pizza and Pub as they also have great food and they will sell you Lions Apple Dumpling.

The Zanesville Indiana Lions Club and Community Park have a Gofundme account. If you would like to contribute to it go to this link: <https://gofundme/9101f789>.

Greg Perigo is vice president of the Super Shot board in Allen County. He is asking everyone to be aware of the outbreak of measles in 2024. He reports: "So far in 2024, at least

35 cases have been reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about double the number at this point last year. Indiana is on that list. In 1992 we wept when nearly 30 Allen County children were reported to have contracted measles. In 2000, we cheered when the US and other nations declared that measles - one of the most contagious and dangerous disease to mankind was eradicated. Fast forward 25 years and sadly the story repeats as measles has crept back into our society. I look forward to the day when all vaccine-preventable diseases are tamed and immunizations are unnecessary." Super Shot's main clinic is at 1515 Hobson Road in Ft. Wayne. For available clinic times and questions please refer to www.supershot.org or call 260-424-SHOT (7468).

Please be in prayer for our locals who are suffering from cancer and it's ongoing treatments. Also remember the royal family in England as Kate the princess of Whales, who is the wife of Prince William, and also King Charles III are both going through treatments for this awful disease. Please send up prayers for the Osmun and Smith families of Uniondale at the tragic death of two of their young people killed in a traffic accident Sunday evening March 17.

Norwell's show choirs won multiple awards at the Marysville Showcase in Ohio recently. Mark your calendars for this date:

All the Norwell Show Choirs will perform their competition shows one last time at the annual Reflections concert May 10 in the Norwell Auditorium. The performance will start at 7:30 p.m. with doors opening at 7:00. Tickets are \$10 and will be sold at the door.

We have some celebrities around our area. Congratulations to Liberty Center/Wells County basketball player Dick Harris who was recently inducted into the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame in a ceremony held in Indianapolis. He was written up in the News-Banner on Saturday March 23rd. We at Union Center Alumni were all excited when they built the Hall of Fame museum

at New Castle. My mother paid for bricks to be laid for her sons Darrell and Cedric Botts and Maurice and David McBride. East Union Center Alumni paid for a brick also. I think they also paid for some for coaches at Union. I haven't been down there for a long time but it was a great museum and I expect it is more than great now. It's just a short trip from here so you may want to go. Dick had a long career in basketball so I am sure you can get his life story on the computer. Dick was a senior at Liberty Center in 1964.

Congratulations to Homestead graduate Meridian Prall who recently sang at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City where she became one of 10 finalists. She was chosen as one of the five winners after months of participating in rounds of competition that began in December. The mezzo-soprano is 28 years old and lives now in Edwardsburg, Michigan with her husband.

Not all celebrities are human beings as dogs win contests also. French Bulldogs remained the top breed last year. They also won the top place in 2022. They are bat eared, scaled down bull-these dogs. Small and solidly built, pushed -face dogs have a penchant for comical-pensive expressions and they take city living in stride.

Prices on everything have gone up considerably over the years. In August of 1961 our son Doug was 5 1/2 years old and was diagnosed with diabetes. He had to take an injection of insulin from then on every day. We bought his vial of insulin at the Markle Pharmacy (now the PICKLE) and it cost \$1.50 and lasted for a month. Now your insulin for those who are not on medicare is very expensive.

UNIQUE BLUE
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SPECIALS

Juicy Lucy
Tues., April 2 & Wed., April 3

Bourbon Pecan Chicken
Fri., April 5 & Sat., April 6

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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).

Creative Arts Spring Showcase
Friday, April 26 at 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, April 27 at 3:00 p.m.
Admission: \$5 at the door
We invite you to join us for Creative Arts Youth Dance Company's Spring Showcase! Creative Arts is very proud of our dance academy, and we are excited to present our Spring Showcase this month! Our Ballet, Modern, and Tap dancers will be presenting in this year's showcase. Our Ballet students will be presenting an abridged version of "The Sleeping Beauty" accompanied by Pyotr Tchaikovsky's familiar music. Our Modern dance program features the beginning, intermediate, and advanced classes as they take a sojourn into ancient Egypt. Tap will be performing rhythm and broad way tap styles. We will proudly present two performances, both in the auditorium at 428 S. Oak St in Bluffton.

Beers with the Bard
Tuesday, May 7 at 7 p.m. at The Parlor City Brewing Company

Beers with the Bard is back!
Three of Shakespeare's plays done in ten minutes each?? Is that even possible? You betcha!

Join us on Tuesday, May 7 at Parlor City Brewing Company to watch us do it. But wait, there's more! The Rag Tag Bunch, Fort Wayne's favorite Irish band, will be joining us again this year.

Get ready for an evening of Shakespearean silliness, delicious locally brewed beverages, and great music! Doors open at 6:30, and the show starts at 7 p.m. This is a 21+ event.

Tickets go on sale soon. Presented by Parlor City Shakespeare Company and the Creative Arts Council

Creative Arts Summer Theater Intensive June 2024

Registration is open at: <https://www.wellscocreativearts.com/theater-intensive>

Shrek the Musical JR (Ages 12-18) - 4 spots left!

Auditions: Saturday, May 4, 2024 (must be age 12 by March 1st)

CREATIVE ARTS COUNCIL OF WELLS COUNTY

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 Jungle Book Kids - Registration is full, call to be put on the waiting list

Creative Arts Summer Dance Intensive June 2024

Registration is open at: <https://www.wellscocreativearts.com/summer-dance-intensive>

Dates: June 3-21, 2024

Classes Offered: Creative Movement (Ages 3-5), Pre-Dance (Ages 6-8), Continuing (Ages 9-12) and INT/ADV Class/Entertainment Guide for Saturday, April 13, 2024 - April 19, 2024

Ongoing Activities

Creative Crew: Tuesdays from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.: 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. 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.

Parks Department Earth Day 5K registration

Registration is open for the Bluffton Parks Department's annual Earth Day 5K.

Join Bluffton Parks & Recreation for our minimal footprint 5K to celebrate Earth Day.

Saturday, April 20th at 9 a.m. at the Bluffton City Gym.

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Israelis stage largest protest since war began to pressure Netanyahu

JERUSALEM (AP) — Tens of thousands of Israelis thronged central Jerusalem on Sunday in the largest anti-government protest since the country went to war in October. Protesters urged the government to reach a cease-fire deal to free dozens of hostages held in Gaza by Hamas militants and to hold early elections.

Israeli society was broadly united immediately after Oct. 7, when Hamas killed some 1,200 people during a cross-border attack and took 250 others hostage. Nearly six months of conflict have renewed divisions over the leadership of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, though the country remains largely in favor of the war.

Netanyahu has vowed to destroy Hamas and bring all the hostages home, yet those goals have been elusive. While Hamas has suffered heavy losses, it remains intact.

Roughly half the hostages in Gaza were released during a weeklong cease-fire in November. But attempts by international mediators to bring home the remaining hostages have failed. Talks resumed on

Sunday with no signs that a breakthrough was imminent.

Hostages' families believe time is running out, and they are getting more vocal about their displeasure with Netanyahu.

"We believe that no hostages will come back with this government because they're busy putting sticks in the wheels of negotiations for the hostages," said Boaz Atzili, whose cousin, Aviv Atzili and his wife, Liat, were kidnapped on Oct. 7. Liat was released but Aviv was killed, and his body is in Gaza. "Netanyahu is only working in his private interests."

Protesters blame Netanyahu for the failures of Oct. 7 and say the deep political divisions over his attempted judicial overhaul last year weakened Israel ahead of the attack. Some accuse him of damaging relations with the United States, Israel's most important ally.

Netanyahu is also facing a litany of corruption charges which are slowly making their way through the courts, and critics say his decisions appear to be focused on political survival

over the national interest. Opinion polls show Netanyahu and his coalition trailing far behind their rivals if elections were held today.

Unless his governing coalition falls apart sooner, Netanyahu won't face elections until spring of 2026.

Many families of hostages had refrained from publicly denouncing Netanyahu to avoid antagonizing the leadership and making the hostages' plight a political issue. But as their anger grows, some now want to change course — and they played a major role in Sunday's anti-government protest.

The crowd on Sunday stretched for blocks around the Knesset, or parliament building, and organizers vowed to continue the demonstration for several days. They urged the government to hold new elections nearly two years ahead of schedule. Thousands also demonstrated Sunday in Tel Aviv, where there was a large protest the night before.

Netanyahu, in a nationally televised speech before undergoing hernia surgery later Sunday, said he understood families' pain. But he

said calling new elections — in what he described as a moment before victory — would paralyze Israel for six to eight months and stall the hostage talks. For now, Netanyahu's governing coalition appears to remain firmly intact.

Some hostage families agree that now is not the time for elections.

"I don't think that changing the prime minister now is what will advance and help my son to come home," Sheli Shem Tov, whose son Omer was kidnapped from a music festival, told Israel's Channel 12. "To go to elections now will just push to the side the most burning issue, which is to return the hostages home."

In his Sunday address, Netanyahu also repeated his vow for a military ground offensive in Rafah, the southern Gaza city where more than half of territory's population of 2.3 million now shelters after fleeing fighting elsewhere. "There is no victory without going into Rafah," he said, adding that U.S. pressure would not deter him. Israel's military says Hamas battalions remain there.

In another reminder of Israel's divisions, a group of reservists and retired officers demonstrated in an ultra-Orthodox neighborhood.

Ultra-Orthodox men for generations have received exemptions from military service, which is compulsory for most Jewish men and women. Resentment over that has deepened during the war. Netanyahu's government has been ordered to present a new plan for a more equitable draft law by Monday.

Netanyahu, who relies heavily on the support of ultra-Orthodox parties, last week asked for an extension.

The Bank of Israel said in its annual report on Sunday that there could be economic damage if large numbers of ultra-Orthodox men continue not to serve in Israel's military.

Also Sunday, an Israeli airstrike hit a tent camp in the courtyard of a crowded hospital in central Gaza,

killing two Palestinians and wounding another 15, including journalists working nearby.

An Associated Press reporter filmed the strike and aftermath at Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir al-Balah, where thousands of people have sheltered. The Israeli military said it struck a command center of the Islamic Jihad militant group.

Tens of thousands of people have sought shelter in Gaza's hospitals, viewing them as relatively safe from airstrikes. Israel accuses Hamas and other militants of operating in and around medical facilities, which Gaza's health officials deny.

Israeli troops have been raiding Shifa Hospital, Gaza's largest, for nearly two weeks and say they have killed scores of fighters, including senior Hamas operatives. Gaza's Health Ministry said more than 100 patients remain with no potable water and septic wounds, while doctors use plastic bags for gloves.

Drought in southern Africa leaves millions hungry

MANGWE, Zimbabwe (AP) — Delicately and with intense concentration, Zanywe Ncube poured her small share of precious golden cooking oil into a plastic bottle at a food aid distribution site deep in rural Zimbabwe.

"I don't want to lose a single drop," she said.

Her relief at the handout — paid for by the United States government as her southern African country deals with a severe drought — was tempered when aid workers gently broke the news that this would be their last visit.

Ncube and her 7-month-old son she carried on her back were among 2,000 people who received rations of cooking oil, sorghum, peas and other supplies in the Mangwe district in southwestern Zimbabwe. The food distribution is part of a program funded by American aid agency USAID and rolled out by the United Nations' World Food Programme.

They're aiming to help some of the 2.7 million people in rural Zimbabwe threatened with hunger because of the drought that has enveloped large parts of southern Africa since late 2023. It has scorched the crops that tens of millions of people grow themselves and rely on to survive, helped by what should be the rainy season.

They can rely on their crops and the weather less and less.

The drought in Zimbabwe, neighboring Zambia and Malawi has reached crisis levels. Zambia and Malawi have declared national disasters. Zimbabwe could be on the brink of doing the same. The drought has reached Botswana and Angola to the west, and Mozambique and Madagascar to the east.

A year ago, much of this region was drenched by deadly tropical storms and floods. It is in the midst of

a vicious weather cycle: too much rain, then not enough. It's a story of the climate extremes that scientists say are becoming more frequent and more damaging, especially for the world's most vulnerable people.

In Mangwe, the young and the old lined up for food, some with donkey carts to carry home whatever they might get, others with wheelbarrows. Those waiting their turn sat on the dusty ground. Nearby, a goat tried its luck with a nibble on a thorny, scraggly bush.

Ncube, 39, would normally be harvesting her crops now — food for her, her two children and a niece she also looks after. Maybe there would even be a little extra to sell.

The driest February in Zimbabwe in her lifetime, according to the World Food Programme's seasonal monitor, put an end to that.

"We have nothing in the fields, not a single grain," she said. "Everything has been burnt (by the drought)."

The United Nations Children's Fund says there are "overlapping crises" of extreme weather in eastern and southern Africa, with both regions lurching between storms and floods and heat and drought in the past year.

In southern Africa, an estimated 9 million people, half of them children, need help in Malawi. More than 6 million in Zambia, 3 million of them children, are impacted by the drought, UNICEF said. That's nearly half of Malawi's population and 30% of Zambia's.

"Distressingly, extreme weather is expected to be the norm in eastern and southern Africa in the years to come," said Eva Kadilli, UNICEF's regional director.

While human-made climate change has spurred more erratic weather glob-

ally, there is something else parching southern Africa this year.

El Niño, the naturally occurring climatic phenomenon that warms parts of the Pacific Ocean every two to seven years, has varied effects on the world's weather. In southern Africa, it means below-average rainfall, sometimes drought, and is being blamed for the current situation.

The impact is more severe for those in Mangwe, where it's notoriously arid. People grow the cereal grain sorghum and pearl millet, crops that are drought resistant and offer a chance at harvests, but even they failed to withstand the conditions this year.

Francesca Erdelmann, the World Food Programme's country director for Zimbabwe, said last year's harvest was bad, but this season is even worse. "This is not a normal circumstance," she said.

The first few months of the year are traditionally the "lean months" when households run short as they wait for the new harvest. However, there is little hope for replenishment this year.

Joseph Nleya, a 77-year-old traditional leader in Mangwe, said he doesn't remember it being this hot, this dry, this desperate. "Dams have no water, riverbeds are dry and boreholes are few. We were relying on wild fruits, but they have also dried up," he said.

People are illegally crossing into Botswana to search for food and "hunger is turning otherwise hard-working people into criminals," he added.

Multiple aid agencies warned last year of the impending disaster.

Since then, Zambian President Hakainde Hichilema has said that 1 million of the 2.2 million hectares of his country's staple corn

crop have been destroyed. Malawian President Lazarus Chakwera has appealed for \$200 million in humanitarian assistance.

The 2.7 million struggling in rural Zimbabwe is not even the full picture. A nationwide crop assessment is underway and authorities are dreading the results, with the number needing help likely to skyrocket, said the WFP's Erdelmann.

With this year's harvest a write-off, millions in Zimbabwe, southern Malawi, Mozambique and Madagascar won't be able to feed themselves well into 2025. USAID's Famine Early Warning System estimated that 20 million people would require food relief in southern Africa in the first few months of 2024.

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Edey aids Purdue to first Final Four since 1980 with a win over Tennessee

By **EDDIE PELLIS**
AP National Writer

DETROIT (AP) — By the time all the scrapping and scratching and diving on the floor was over, it felt like a shame that both those teams, and both those players, weren't moving onto the Final Four.

Just don't expect Purdue to feel bad about it.

Boilermakers big man Zach Edey went for a career high 40 points Sunday to muscle Purdue within two wins of the title for the first time since 1980 with a 72-66 victory over Dalton Knecht and his never-say-quit Tennessee teammates.

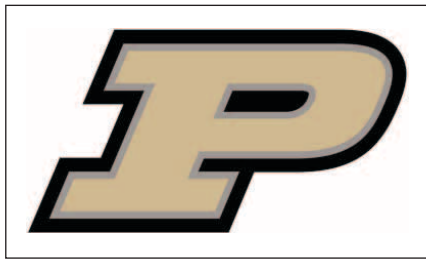
The 7-foot-4 Edey, a unanimous AP All-American, didn't even need a ladder to cut down the net after edging out Knecht, another All-American, who finished with 37 points.

The game's top two players, and their teams, went back and forth all day. How close was it? There were six ties and eight lead changes. With 5 minutes left and the score knotted at 58, both players had scored 31 points on 12 field goals. According to OptaSTATS, this was the first time opposing players scored more than half their squads' points in an NCAA Tournament game.

"You're not trying to take away 100 percent, you're trying to take away maybe 80 percent of what he's trying to get accomplished," Purdue coach Matt Painter said of Knecht. "But we don't take Zach for granted. He could've scored 50 tonight if he'd made his free throws."

Edey missed eight of his 22 attempts from the foul line. One of those misses sparked the play of the game. After Tennessee grabbed the rebound and worked the ball downcourt, Edey swatted away Knecht's layup as he drove to the basket while trailing by five with 33 seconds left.

It was Edey's only block of the day, and it put an end to the Vols' desperate comeback hopes.



"I was just trying to get back, and make my presence felt on the defensive end of the court, and make up for it," Edey said.

Top-seeded Purdue (33-4) set aside last year's grand disappointment — a first-round loss as a No. 1 seed — to book the trip to Glendale, Arizona. On Saturday, Edey and the Boilermakers will face big man DJ Burns Jr. and 11th-seeded North Carolina State in the national semifinals.

"We had to take it," Painter said of the abuse that came last year. "Sometimes when you sit in it and you're honest with yourself and you take it, some great things can happen."

Tennessee (27-9), a No. 2 seed, was seeking its first Final Four, and Vols coach Rick Barnes was denied the second trip of his 38-year career to college basketball's promised land.

This was a slugfest of a game, a welcome break from the action over the first two weeks of a March Madness that has been more sleepy than mad. It was played in front of an ear-splitting crowd packed with Purdue fans who made their way up from Indiana.

They were looking for history, and they got it — along with the game ball that Boilermakers guard Fletcher Loyer chucked about 20 rows into the crowd when the buzzer went off.

The school's 87-year-old former coach, Gene Keedy, watched from the stands — then, afterward, came onto the floor to receive a piece of the freshly cut net from Edey.

"It shows people if you do things the right way, it will pay off," the ex-

coach told The Associated Press.

At times, the game looked like the sort Keedy might have coached back in the '80s and '90s.

Purdue pounded the ball to Edey in the post, and though the grabby, swatty UT defense made some inroads — even blocking two of his shots — foul trouble piled up for Tennessee and Edey wore them down. He finished 13 of 21 from the floor.

Barnes refused to make an issue out of Edey's 22 free throws or the final foul tally: Tennessee 25, Purdue 12.

"He's a difficult guy to guard against, but he's a difficult guy for referees to officiate, too," Barnes said. "He's a hard guy to do that with because he's a unique guy in terms of how he plays."

Meanwhile, the 3-point arc that was six years from coming into existence at Purdue's last trip to the Final Four was barely a factor for the Boilermakers. They went 3 for 15 from long range.

And yet, it was a trio of 3-point attempts that turned this game. Knecht missed a pair of open looks, first with his team trailing by three at the 3:09 mark, then again on the next possession when down by six.

In between, Lance Jones spotted up from the corner for a 3 that gave Purdue a 66-60 lead.

The coup de grace came with Tennessee trying to carve into a 69-64 deficit. Knecht drove down the lane and went up, but Edey, who played just a few seconds short of the full 40 minutes, scooted over and cleanly swatted the shot.

"A great play, you've got to give him credit," Barnes said.

Knecht finished 14 of 31 from the floor. After making his first four 3-pointers, he went 2 for 8.

"I don't think I put the team on my back," Knecht said. "I think all of us carried each other. I think every single one of us did what we needed to do. At the end of the day, they were just the better team."

Knights finish with 2-1 record in first baseball weekend

The Norwell baseball team fell 10-2 in its first loss of the season against Edgewood Saturday.

The Knights fell to 2-1 on the opening weekend after defeating No. 6 in 2A Brownstown Central and Evansville Christian on Friday.

Norwell scrapped for only three hits in the contest — two were solo home runs by Collin Burns and Logan Cotton in the fifth and sixth innings. Korben Neuenchwander had a base hit.

Edgewood plated 10 runs on five hits and walked nine times.

Noah Schamerloh was the losing pitcher for Norwell.

The Knights will visit South Adams at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, April 3.

High School Calendar

MONDAY, APRIL 1

No events scheduled.

TUESDAY, APRIL 2

BASEBALL: Norwell at South Adams, 5 p.m.; Bluffton at New Haven, 5 p.m.; Southern Wells at Oak Hill, 5 p.m.

SOFTBALL: Bluffton at Eastbrook, 5:30 p.m.

TRACK & FIELD (CO-ED): Eastbrook at Bluffton, 5:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3

SOFTBALL: Norwell at Southern Wells, 5 p.m.; Belmont at Bluffton, 5 p.m.

TRACK & FIELD: Eastbrook at Bluffton, 5:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, APRIL 4

BASEBALL: Bluffton at Blackford, 5 p.m.; Southern Wells at Liberty Christian, 5 p.m.

GIRLS TENNIS: Norwell at Bluffton, 4:30 p.m.

SOFTBALL: Eastbrook at Norwell 5:30 p.m.

TRACK & FIELD (CO-ED): Southern Wells/Madison-Grant at Daleville Invite, 5 p.m.

FRIDAY, APRIL 5

BASEBALL: Eastbrook at Norwell, 5 p.m.; Bluffton at Howard County Invitational vs. Rossville at Northwestern High School, 7:30 p.m.

SOFTBALL: Bluffton at Eastbrook, 5:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 6

BASEBALL: Bluffton at Howard County Invitational vs. TBD, 10 a.m.; Wes-Del at Southern Wells, 10 a.m.

SOFTBALL: Bluffton at Central Noble, 12 p.m.; Southern Wells at Winchester, 11 a.m.

TRACK & FIELD (CO-ED): Southern Wells at Muncie Burriss Owl Invite, 10 a.m.

MONDAY, APRIL 8

SOFTBALL: Bluffton at Oak Hill, 5:30 p.m.

Happ's walk with bases-loaded helps Cubs beat Rangers



ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — Ian Happ tied his career high with four hits and drew a tiebreaking bases-loaded walk from José Leclerc in a four-run ninth inning, helping the Chicago Cubs beat the Texas Rangers 9-5 on Sunday to salvage the finale of their opening three-game series.

With the score 5-5, Leclerc (0-1) walked Michael Busch with one out, allowed Nico Hoerner's swinging-bunt single down the third-base line and walked Mike Tauchman.

Miles Mastrobuoni grounded into a forceout at the plate, Happ fell behind in the count 1-2 but walked on a full-count fastball that sailed wide and Seiya Suzuki greeted Jacob Latz with a two-run single. Cody Bellinger singled in the final run.

"Once I got down 1-2, just staying alive," Happ said. "He's had a lot of success throughout his career, so I was just trying to find something I could handle. Good eyes in that at-bat."

Craig Counsell after earned his first victory with the Cubs after 707 wins over nine seasons with Milwaukee.

"Great at-bats all over the ninth inning, for sure," Counsell said. "Guys just being patient, kind of taking what was given to them at the start. Ian kind of getting down in the count and working that walk is obviously the big one. And then followed that up with some good at-bats to add some runs."

Héctor Neris (1-0) pitched a one-hit eighth. Four Chicago relievers shut out

Texas over the final five innings on two singles and one walk with seven strikeouts.

Rangers pitchers walked nine while allowing 12 hits.

Chicago was 4 for 14 with runners in scoring position and left 13 runners on base. Texas was 3 for 12 and left nine on.

Christopher Morel hit a three-run homer in the first off Jon Gray, who allowed five runs — four earned — seven hits and three walks in 3 2/3 innings.

Marcus Semien hit a two-run single in the second against Jordan Wicks. Happ had an RBI double in the fourth, with another run scoring for a 5-2 lead when center fielder Leody Taveras misplayed the ball for an error.

Semien hit an RBI double in the fourth and scored on rookie Wyatt Langford's tying two-run triple that one-hopped the 410-foot sign in center.

Langford, hitting second in the order with Corey Seager given a day off, also made a sliding, snow-cone catch in his first major league game in the outfield.

"I put him in the two-hole, three-hole, five-hole, wherever, and it doesn't faze him," Rangers manager Bruce Bochy said. "So, good game by him."

Wicks gave up five runs — two earned, — five hits and three walks in four innings. Cubs starters pitched 12 1/3 innings in the series.

UP NEXT

Cubs: LHP Shota Imanaga will start the team's home opener on Monday against Colorado RHP Dakota Hudson.

Jack Flaherty shines in debut, Tigers sweep White Sox on Ibañez's single in the 9th inning

By **SARAH TROTTO**

Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Jack Flaherty pitched six effective innings in his Detroit debut and Andy Ibañez snapped a tie with a pinch-hit single in the ninth, sending the Tigers to a 3-2 victory over the Chicago White Sox on Sunday.

Kerry Carpenter and Jake Rogers homered for the Tigers, who are 3-0 for the first time since 2016. Each of their wins in their season-opening series at Chicago was decided by one run.

"The adrenaline and the energy this team has shown so far you can see in the results," Ibañez said through a translator.

Paul DeJong and Corey Lee went deep for the White Sox.

Tyler Holton (1-0) earned the win by

striking out four in 1 1/3 innings. Jason Foley got Andrew Vaughn and Braden Shewmake to ground out to earn his second save.

Detroit manager A.J. Hinch sent Ibañez up to hit for Parker Meadows with runners on first and second and two out. He responded with a single to left and left-hander Tim Hill, driving in pinch-runner Matt Vierling for a 3-2 lead.

"You've got to be prepared for it," Hinch said. "The players did an unbelievable job all weekend being ready for situations and there was a lot of action in that last inning."

Steven Wilson (0-1) was tagged with the loss after he allowed a hit and a walk while recording two outs.

The White Sox are 0-3 for the first time

(Continued on Page A2)

N.C. State headed to 1st Final Four since 1983 after win over Duke

By **STEPHEN HAWKINS**
AP Sports Writer

DALLAS (AP) — Bruising big man DJ Burns Jr. plays with plenty of joy, skipping on and off the floor and interacting with North Carolina State fans that he often works into a frenzy with slick moves and a soft-touch shot.

"I was raised in a happy environment," Burns said. "I try to take that with me everywhere I go."

Now he can take that to the desert for the Wolfpack's first Final Four in four decades.

Burns scored a season-high 29 points on 13-of-19 shooting. DJ Horne had 20 and 11th-seeded N.C. State beat Atlantic Coast Conference rival Duke 76-64 in the South Region final Sunday.

N.C. State is back on basketball's biggest stage for the first time since the late Jim Valvano was sprinting around the court looking for someone to hug after winning the 1983 national title with an upset over Houston and Phi Slama Jama.

"These guys are so special," seventh-year coach Kevin Keatts said. "Nine elimination games or you go home."

These Wolfpack (26-14) head to Glendale, Arizona, on a winning streak that began after losing their last four regular-season games, and seven of nine. They had to win five games against past national champions in five days in the ACC Tournament, including a win over Duke in the quarterfinal round, just to get into the 68-team NCAA Tournament field.

Now they will play 7-foot-4 All-American Zach Edey and Purdue in the first national semifinal game, before defending champion UConn takes on Alabama.

"I'll say like I've been saying the whole tournament. When I stop having fun with basketball, I'll stop playing," said Burns, who was voted the South Region's most outstanding player. "There's just been a total switch in our commit-

ment. Nobody's being late to things. Nobody's being a problem on the court. Everybody's come together."

Fourth-seeded Duke (27-9), which ousted top seed Houston in the Sweet 16 two nights earlier, missed out on its second Final Four in three seasons after leading by six at halftime and maintaining that margin with 16 1/2 minutes left.

But soon after Keatts was called for a technical foul with 8 minutes left, his team was well on its way to becoming the seventh double-digit seed to make the Final Four since the tournament expanded to 64 teams in 1985.

Jared McCain made both free throws for the technical that Keatts got after officials ruled a missed shot by Duke's Kyle Filipowski that went over the backboard and off the shot clock went off one of his players. Replays showed that while maybe there should have been a foul since Burns made contact with the 7-foot Filipowski's arm, the hand of the Wolfpack's 6-foot-9, 275-pound forward wasn't even close to the ball.

A minute later, Ben Middlebrooks had a steal that led to a fast-break 3-pointer by Michael O'Connell. There was a foul called while the ball was in the air, so the Wolfpack got the trey, kept possession and Burns made another nifty basket for a 53-42 lead.

O'Connell had six points, also finishing with 11 rebounds and six assists.

McCain led Duke with 32 points, the freshman guard hitting 8 of 20 shots and making all 11 of his free throws. Jeremy Roach had 13 points while sophomore center Filipowski had 11 points and nine rebounds before fouling out with 4:52 left and the Blue Devils already down eight.

"Just give credit to State. They're on a hell of a run right now," Roach said. "We weren't us today."

None of the double-digit seeds have even made it to

the national championship game, but Wolfpack fans chanted "Why not us, why not us?" before their team cut down the nets in Big D — about 1,200 miles from Tobacco Road where the N.C. State and Duke campuses are only about a half-hour drive from each other.

During the game's first media timeout, they even got to watch on the big video boards in the arena as the N.C. State women dribbled out the final 26 seconds of their regional final victory over Texas to also advance to the Final Four.

Burns, who had only four points in the regional semifinal against Marquette, hit short jumpers on the Wolfpack's first two shots of the game. But those were their only consecutive makes before halftime while shooting 26.5% (9 of 34) and trailing 27-21.

They certainly turned that around with a 55-point second half in which they made 19 of 26 shots (73.1%). Burns, who had eight points in the game's first nine minutes before his second foul, went 9 of 11 after halftime.

Duke made only 19 field goals the entire game, shooting a season-worst 32.2% on its 59 attempts. The Blue Devils became the sixth consecutive opponent held under 40% shooting by N.C. State.

"We never had any rhythm on offense," second-year Duke coach Jon Scheyer said. "They started to score more and our offense, it was probably the most disjointed game that we've played all year."

NO TITLE THIS TIME

Duke had held its first three March Madness opponents to fewer than 60 points. The only other times the Blue Devils had three-game streaks like that in tourney were in 2010 and 2015 — their last two national championships. Scheyer was part of both of those, first as a player and then an assistant coach under Mike Krzyzewski.

News-Banner Scoreboard Tigers sweep Sox

BASKETBALL High School

**Boys' Basketball State Final
Saturday's Scores**
IHSAA State Championship
Class 4A
Fishers 65, Ben Davis 56
Class 3A
Scottsburg 67, S. Bend St. Joseph's 57
Class 2A
Brownstown 55, Wapahani 36
Class 1A
Ft. Wayne Canterbury 48, Bethesda Christian 41

College

Men's Basketball Scores
Sunday, Mar. 31
NC State 76, Duke 64
Purdue 72, Tennessee 66
Saturday, Mar. 30
UConn 77, Illinois 52
Alabama 89, Clemson 82

Women's Basketball Scores
Women's College Basketball Scores
Sunday, Mar. 31
South Carolina 70, Oregon St. 58
NC State 76, Texas 66
Saturday, Mar. 30
No Games.

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE
Atlantic Division
W L Pct GB
z-Boston 58 16 .784 —
New York 44 30 .595 14
Philadelphia 40 35 .533 18½
Brooklyn 29 46 .387 29½
Toronto 23 51 .311 35
Southeast Division
W L Pct GB
Orlando 43 31 .581 —
Miami 41 33 .554 2
Atlanta 34 40 .459 9
Charlotte 18 56 .243 25
Washington 14 61 .187 29½
Central Division
W L Pct GB
Milwaukee 47 27 .635 —
Cleveland 45 30 .600 2½
Indiana 42 33 .560 5½
Chicago 36 39 .480 11½
Detroit 13 61 .176 34

WESTERN CONFERENCE
Southwest Division
W L Pct GB
Dallas 45 29 .608 —
New Orleans 45 29 .608 —
Houston 38 36 .514 7
Memphis 24 50 .324 21
San Antonio 18 57 .240 27½
Northwest Division
W L Pct GB
Oklahoma City 52 22 .703 —
Denver 52 23 .693 ½
Minnesota 51 23 .689 1
Utah 29 45 .392 23
Portland 19 55 .257 33

Pacific Division
W L Pct GB
L.A. Clippers 47 27 .635 —
Phoenix 43 31 .581 4
Sacramento 42 31 .575 4½
L.A. Lakers 42 33 .560 5½
Golden State 40 34 .541 7
z-clinched conference

Saturday's Games
Boston 104, New Orleans 92
Orlando 118, Memphis 88
Milwaukee 122, Atlanta 113
Sunday's Games
Denver 130, Cleveland 101
L.A. Lakers 116, Brooklyn 104
Philadelphia 135, Toronto 120
Miami 119, Washington 107
L.A. Clippers 130, Charlotte 118
Dallas 125, Houston 107
Chicago 109, Minnesota 101
Golden State 117, San Antonio 113
Oklahoma City 113, New York 112
Utah at Sacramento, 9 p.m.

Monday's Games
Boston at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
Brooklyn at Indiana, 7 p.m.
Memphis at Detroit, 7 p.m.

Portland at Orlando, 7 p.m.
Atlanta at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Phoenix at New Orleans, 8 p.m.

HOCKEY

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE
Atlantic Division
GP W L OTpts GF GA
x-Boston 75 43 17 15101249 208
x-Florida 74 47 22 5 99239 182
Toronto 73 42 22 9 93269 227
Tampa Bay 73 41 25 7 89257 237
Detroit 74 36 30 8 80247 247
Buffalo 75 35 35 5 75223 227
Ottawa 73 33 36 4 70236 253
Montreal 73 28 33 12 68200 249
Metropolitan Division
GP W L OTpts GF GA
x-NY Rangers 74 50 20 4104257 206
x-Carolina 75 47 21 7 101255 199
Washington 73 36 27 10 82201 232
Philadelphia 73 36 29 10 82219 235
N.Y. Islanders 73 31 27 15 77216 245
New Jersey 74 36 34 4 76243 252
Pittsburgh 73 32 30 11 75215 220
Columbus 74 24 38 12 60213 272

WESTERN CONFERENCE
Central Division
GP W L OTpts GF GA
x-Dallas 75 47 19 9103276 220
Edmonton 72 45 23 4 94262 206
Vegas 74 41 25 8 90238 216
Los Angeles 73 38 24 11 87226 193
Calgary 73 34 34 5 73224 238
Seattle 73 30 30 13 73193 211
Anaheim 75 24 47 4 52182 272
San Jose 73 17 48 8 42163 294
Pacific Division
GP W L OTpts GF GA
x-Vancouver 74 46 20 8100255 197
Edmonton 72 45 23 4 94262 206
Vegas 74 41 25 8 90238 216
Los Angeles 73 38 24 11 87226 193
Calgary 73 34 34 5 73224 238
Seattle 73 30 30 13 73193 211
Anaheim 75 24 47 4 52182 272
San Jose 73 17 48 8 42163 294

NOTE: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.
x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division
z-clinched conference

Saturday's Games
Florida 3, Detroit 2, SO
Vegas 2, Minnesota 1, OT
Edmonton 6, Anaheim 1
N.Y. Rangers 8, Arizona 5
Colorado 7, Nashville 4
Chicago 5, Philadelphia 1
Ottawa 3, Winnipeg 2
Carolina 3, Montreal 0
Toronto 3, Buffalo 0
Tampa Bay 4, N.Y. Islanders 1
Boston 3, Washington 2, SO
Columbus 4, Pittsburgh 3, SO
San Jose 4, St. Louis 0
Dallas 3, Seattle 0
Calgary 4, Los Angeles 2

Sunday's Games
Vancouver 3, Anaheim 2
Monday's Games
Colorado at Columbus, 7 p.m.
Detroit at Tampa Bay, 7 p.m.
Florida at Toronto, 7 p.m.
N.Y. Islanders at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Pittsburgh at N.Y. Rangers, 7 p.m.
Edmonton at St. Louis, 9 p.m.
Los Angeles at Winnipeg, 9 p.m.
Seattle at San Jose, 10:30 p.m.

BASEBALL
MLB
AMERICAN LEAGUE
East Division
W L Pct GB
New York 4 0 1.000 —
Baltimore 2 1 .667 1½
Boston 2 2 .500 2
Tampa Bay 2 2 .500 2
Toronto 2 2 .500 2
Central Division
W L Pct GB
Detroit 3 0 1.000 —
Cleveland 3 1 .750 ½

NATIONAL LEAGUE
East Division
W L Pct GB
Atlanta 2 1 .667 —
Philadelphia 1 2 .333 1
Washington 1 2 .333 1
New York 0 3 .000 2
Miami 0 4 .000 2½
Central Division
W L Pct GB
Pittsburgh 4 0 1.000 —
Milwaukee 3 0 1.000 ½
Cincinnati 2 1 .667 1½
Chicago 1 2 .333 2½
St. Louis 1 3 .250 3
West Division
W L Pct GB
Arizona 3 1 .750 —
Los Angeles 4 2 .667 1
San Diego 3 2 .500 1
San Francisco 2 2 .500 1
Colorado 1 3 .250 2

Saturday's Games
Milwaukee 7, N.Y. Mets 6
Pittsburgh 9, Miami 3
Atlanta 12, Philadelphia 4
Washington 7, Cincinnati 6
Texas 11, Chicago Cubs 2
San Francisco 9, San Diego 6
Colorado 9, Arizona 4
St. Louis 6, L.A. Dodgers 5, 10 innings

Sunday's Games
Philadelphia 5, Atlanta 4
Milwaukee 4, N.Y. Mets 1
Cincinnati 6, Washington 5
Pittsburgh 9, Miami 7, 10 innings
Chicago Cubs 9, Texas 5
Arizona 5, Colorado 1
San Diego 13, San Francisco 4
L.A. Dodgers 5, St. Louis 4
Monday's Games
Atlanta (Morton 0-0) at Chicago White Sox (Flexen 0-0), 2:10 p.m.
Colorado (Hudson 0-0) at Chicago Cubs (Manaea 0-0), 2:20 p.m.
Pittsburgh (Gonzales 0-0) at Washington (Gore 0-0), 4:05 p.m.
Cincinnati (Abbott 0-0) at Philadelphia (Sánchez 0-0), 6:40 p.m.
L.A. Angels (Silseth 0-0) at Miami (Meyer 0-0), 6:40 p.m.
Detroit (Olson 0-0) at N.Y. Mets (Manaea 0-0), 7:10 p.m.
N.Y. Yankees (Gil 0-0) at Arizona (Nelsson 0-0), 9:40 p.m.
St. Louis (Gibson 0-0) at San Diego (Waldron 0-0), 9:40 p.m.
San Francisco (Winn 0-0) at L.A. Dodgers (Paxton 0-0), 10:10 p.m.
Tuesday's Games

Minnesota 2 1 .667 1
Kansas City 1 2 .333 2
Chicago 0 3 .000 3

West Division
W L Pct GB
Texas 2 1 .667 —
Seattle 2 2 .500 ½
Los Angeles 1 2 .333 1
Oakland 1 3 .250 1½
Houston 0 4 .000 2½

Saturday's Games
Detroit 7, Chicago White Sox 6, 10 innings
Minnesota 5, Kansas City 1
Tampa Bay 5, Toronto 1
Baltimore 13, L.A. Angels 4
Cleveland 12, Oakland 3
Texas 11, Chicago Cubs 2
N.Y. Yankees 5, Houston 3
Seattle 4, Boston 3, 10 innings

Sunday's Games
L.A. Angels 4, Baltimore 1
Toronto 9, Tampa Bay 2
Kansas City 11, Minnesota 0
Detroit 3, Chicago White Sox 2
N.Y. Yankees 4, Houston 3
Chicago Cubs 9, Texas 5
Oakland 4, Cleveland 3
Boston 5, Seattle 1
Monday's Games
Atlanta at Chicago White Sox, 2:10 p.m.
Kansas City at Baltimore, 6:35 p.m.
L.A. Angels at Miami, 6:40 p.m.
Texas at Tampa Bay, 6:50 p.m.
Detroit at N.Y. Mets, 7:10 p.m.
Toronto at Houston, 8:10 p.m.
Boston at Oakland, 9:40 p.m.
Cleveland at Seattle, 9:40 p.m.
N.Y. Yankees at Arizona, 9:40 p.m.

Tigers sweep Sox

(Continued from Page A1)
since 2015.

Flaherty gave up a run and four hits while striking out seven. The right-hander signed a \$14 million, one-year contract with the Tigers in free agency.

Lee homered on Flaherty's first pitch in the third. DeJong tied it at 2 when he went deep on the first pitch from Andrew Chafin in the seventh.

Carpenter connected in the fourth and Rogers added another solo shot off Erick Fedde in the fifth.

Mark Canha was thrown out at home in the sixth, bumping into catcher Lee. They briefly exchanged words before both teams headed to their dugouts.

Canha had tried to score on shortstop DeJong's errant throw into right field on a grounder.

"These are heartbreakers, three one-run games," White Sox manager Pedro Grifol said. "Could have gone our way. Didn't go our way. Our pitching was excellent. Our defense, we had one miscue today and we

backed it up with good defense back there."

Fedde struck out seven and allowed five hits in 4 2/3 innings in his Chicago debut. The right-hander signed a \$15 million, two-year contract in December after pitching in South Korea last season.

"I just kept pulling my sweeper over the left side to the point where it wasn't competitive today," Fedde said.

TRAINER'S ROOM
White Sox: DH Eloy Jiménez (left adductor soreness) exited after grounding out in the sixth. Grifol said Jiménez felt it when he was running.

UP NEXT
Tigers: RHP Reese Olson will start Monday at New York, and LHP Sean Manaea will make his Mets debut. Olson went 5-7 with a 3.99 ERA as a rookie last season. Manaea finalized a \$28 million, two-year deal in January.

White Sox: RHP Chris Flexen will face Atlanta and RHP Charlie Morton on Monday. Flexen signed with Chicago in free agency.

Jaeger wins Houston Open for 1st PGA Tour title. Scheffler's bid for 3 in a row ends on 5-foot putt

HOUSTON (AP) — Stephan Jaeger couldn't have dreamed up a better scenario for his first PGA Tour victory. He played the final 36 holes with the best player in the world, and he won the Houston Open on Sunday to earn his first trip to the Masters.

"It feels amazing," Jaeger said.

Scottie Scheffler couldn't imagine a tougher way for his March winning streak to end — a clutch shot to 5 feet on the final hole, and a birdie putt he thought was good until he looked up and realized it wasn't.

"I hit two or three really good shots into 18 to give myself a chance and I feel like I made the putt and I looked up and it was breaking off," Scheffler said. "So a bit disappointing, but Stephan played great this week and he's a deserving champion."

Jaeger closed with nine straight pars, and that was just enough for a 3-under 67 to finally win in his 135th attempt on the PGA Tour.

Jaeger was preparing for a playoff after narrowly missing a 20-foot birdie putt that would have assured the victory. But then Scheffler, who gave himself three good looks down the stretch, saw his putt burn the left edge of the cup.

"I expected him to make it, and I'm not mad at him for missing it," Jaeger said.

Scheffler was trying to become the first player in seven years to win three straight starts on the PGA Tour, and he was right there with a chance. Two shots behind, he had a 20-foot eagle putt on the par-5 16th

and settled for birdie. He missed from 12 feet for birdie on the 17th, and stayed alive when Jaeger missed from 7 feet on the reachable par-4 17th.

His last chance was from 5 feet.

"It would be one thing if I pulled it or something like that," Scheffler said. "I just misread it. I don't know why I misread it, it's part of the game. Maybe I could have hit it with some more speed, I felt like I hit a nice putt kind of how I wanted to, just didn't go."

Jaeger, a 34-year-old German who came to high school in Tennessee when he was 16, earned his first trip to the Masters with the victory. He also is in the remaining four \$20 million signature events this season.

Alejandro Tosti had a chance to become the fourth PGA Tour rookie to win this early in the year. He was tied for the lead until chipping too strong on the 18th and missing the 18-foot par putt for a 68.

There was a five-way tie for the lead at the start — the largest on tour since 2009 — and eight players had at least a share of the lead at some point during the round.

Jaeger was always in the mix, taking the lead with an 8-foot birdie putt on the par-3 ninth hole at Memorial Park. That was his last birdie of the day, and no one could beat him.

"I was just trying to stay within myself," Jaeger said. "Birdies eluded me on the back nine. But this golf course plays difficult, especially when you're around the lead. I'm just super happy."



What buyers can do to get the best mortgage rate

Mortgage interest rates have been headlining financial news segments for several years running. Much of that news has been met with less than open arms, as rates have risen dramatically in recent years, an increase that is related to the ripple effect of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mortgage interest rates did not immediately spike after the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic in March 2020. In fact, data from the lender Freddie Mac indicates mortgage rates were still well below 4 percent on January 1, 2022. However, those rates hovered around 7 percent by the end of that year, and were still around that level at the start of 2024.

With such high interest rates, it's understandable if prospective home buyers feel helpless. However, there's much buyers can do to help themselves as they seek to secure the lowest mortgage interest

rate possible.

- Read your credit report and improve your score, if necessary. Many prospective home buyers save up for years in anticipation of the day when they will purchase their own home. During this period, buyers can read their credit reports and address any discrepancies while taking steps to improve their credit scores. Lenders consider a host of variables to determine an applicant's credit worthiness, and credit history and credit scores bear significant influence. The higher an applicant's credit score, the more favorable mortgage rate he or she is likely to get.

- Take control of your debt-to-income ratio. Debt-to-income (DTI) ratio refers to what you owe in relation to how much you earn. The lower your DTI, the better you look to lenders. According to Bankrate, lenders typically want to avoid issuing mortgages to individuals if the monthly

payment will exceed 28 percent of their gross monthly income, and people who may be near that threshold for a given home may be denied a mortgage if their DTI is high. Prospective home buyers currently carrying significant debt, including consumer debt like credit cards and/or student loan debts, should make a concerted effort to pay down that debt prior to applying for a mortgage. Prioritize paying off consumer

debt before applying for a mortgage.

- Maintain a strong employment record. Steady employment and consistent earnings make mortgage applicants more attractive in the eyes of lenders. If you are currently shopping for a home or about to make an offer, now might not be the best time to switch jobs. Self-employed individuals and freelancers working multiple jobs can still qualify for a good mortgage rate,

but they may need to provide more extensive documentation that indicates their earnings going back several years. Individuals who have been working full-time for the same company for years may only need to provide W-2 forms from the two most recent tax years.

- Shop around for rates. Rates may not fluctuate much between lenders, but it's still worth shopping around for mortgage rates. A study from

Freddie Mac found that the benefits of shopping around for a mortgage rate were especially notable in 2022 compared to the decade prior, saving borrowers who took the time to shop for rates substantial sums of money.

Mortgage rates remain high compared to a half decade ago, but prospective home buyers can take steps to increase their chances of qualifying for a favorable rate.

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Friend yells at me in my own house

Dear Annie: My longtime friend seems to be outspoken when I'm around her lately. I have a nervous habit of biting my nails, and when my friend is at my house, she yells at me to stop doing that, saying it's disgusting. It made me angry and hurt to be yelled at in my own house, but I only replied, "It's a nervous habit."

Aside from that, she has made remarks that I never offer her wine, and after I made her coffee, she remarked that there was so little in the cup — which was 8 ounces.

How do I respond to her outspokenness? — Nervous Habit

Dear Nervous: No wonder you are nervous. You have a guest over who is very demanding and judgmental — two qualities that cause anyone to feel nervous. I know she is a longtime friend, but if her behavior continues like this, it might be time to find a new friend and accept the fact that you grew apart. As for your nail biting, it is probably something that should be treated. Consult a professional to help you manage this behavior.

Dear Annie: My stepdaughter moved out of our house about five months ago to be with a guy she met online.

Things are not going well. For starters, he doesn't work; she does. He manipulates her and threatens to take her money, and last but not

least, he beats her.

This whole situation is breaking my wife's heart and mine. She left him for about a week but then went back — because he said he has changed. Bull. We were very close, but since she's been with him, she's been told not to contact me in any way nor to see me. What do I do? — Feeling Helpless

Dear Feeling Helpless: This is a very serious situation. Your stepdaughter needs help and support immediately. Please encourage her to contact www.thehotline.org. In addition, if you have a local YWCA organization, contact them. They usually have great resources. She must get out of this situation as quickly as possible.

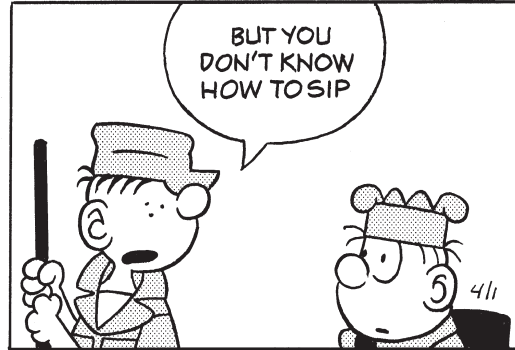
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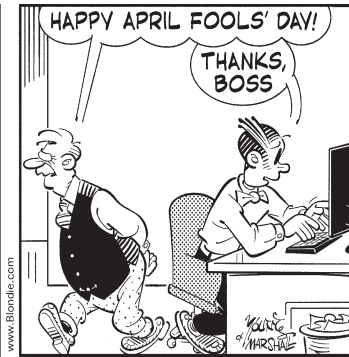
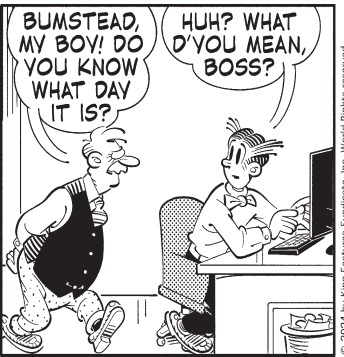
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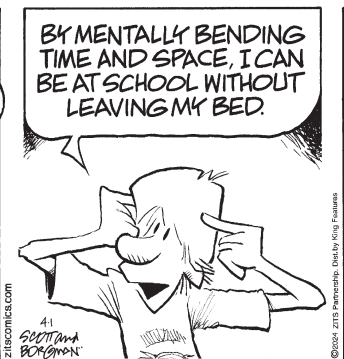
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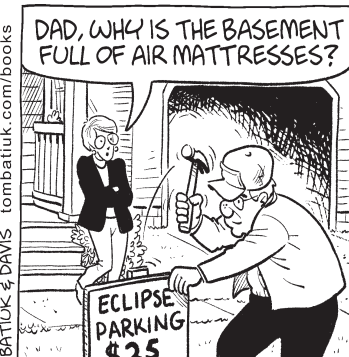
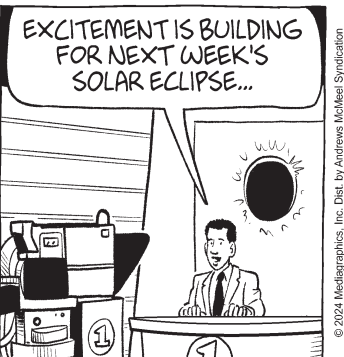
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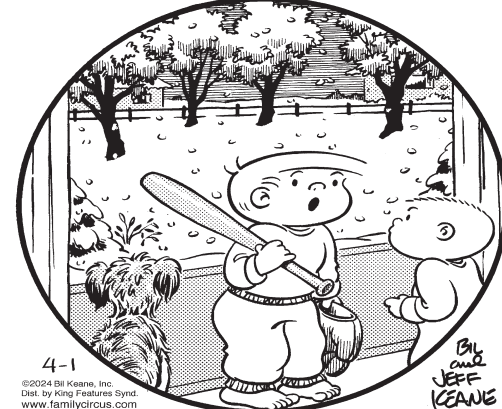
CRANKSHAFT



THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane

The LOCKHORNS



My Answer



By Dr. Billy Graham

When we belong to Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in our hearts

Question: My brother is discouraged in his faith, but he's not walking away from it — at least not yet. His buddies set him up for temptation in such clever ways and he's conflicted whether he should fall in with them. I'm quite a bit older than he is and helped raise him. Now that he's in college, he's starting to doubt what he's been taught. Is there a biblical story that might challenge him in his faith and help him look to God in times of temptation? — S.N.

Answer: What is the most difficult word for people to pronounce? It's the word no. There's a young man in the Scriptures named Dan-

iel who said no. He "purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies" (Daniel 1:8, NKJV). Daniel was a young man who found a purpose in life. As a teenager, he had been captured and taken to Babylon to be trained in all their ways. But Daniel refused to eat from the king's [table] even though he knew how dangerous that refusal would be.

How different Daniel was from those who can't wait to get away from home and live it up. Daniel had a heart for God and didn't want to go the way of the world. He knew that his "no" might mean death (to refuse the king), but this prepared him for the big "no" when he

later faced the den of lions (see Daniel 6:4-23).

When we belong to Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in our hearts. When we take a stand for God and mean it, some of our friends will drift away. The Bible says, "Blessed are you when men ... cast out your name as evil, for [Jesus'] sake" (Luke 6:22, NKJV). Peer pressure leads many astray. When we're faced with temptation, only Christ can give us the power to say no.

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

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"Know what I think, Mommy? God's pulling an April Fools' trick."

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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues and Saturday's answer key.

Television schedule grid with columns for time slots (4:01, 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.).

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SUDOKU

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

King Classic Sudoku

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

Difficulty: ★

4/1

Lottery Numbers

Saturday's Drawings
HOOSIER LOTTERY
Cash 5 — 01-15-16-19-24
Cash4Life — 03-08-36-52-57, Cash Ball: 01
Lotto Plus — 04-21-23-40-43-46
Quick Draw Midday — 04-05-09-12-13-15-16-21-24-25-28-39-45-47-51-58-60-66-72-79, BE: 51
Daily Three-Midday — 01-09-09, SB: 05
Daily Three-Evening — 09-01-03, SB: 05
Daily Four-Midday — 03-03-05-00, SB: 05
Daily Four-Evening — 04-02-06-00, SB: 05
Quick Draw Evening — 02-05-09-11-14-16-20-22-27-32-35-37-40-42-47-49-52-55-60-66, BE: 20
Hoosier Lotto — 01-04-11-13-17-24
POWERBALL
 12-13-33-50-52; Powerball: 23; Power Play: 3X
Sunday's Drawings
HOOSIER LOTTERY
Cash 5 — 03-11-12-27-31
Cash4Life — 25-38-44-55-57, Cash Ball: 04
Quick Draw Midday — 01-11-12-24-34-38-40-41-44-46-51-55-59-60-61-65-75-76-77-80, BE: 80
Daily Three-Midday — 03-01-04, SB: 07
Daily Three-Evening — 09-03-06, SB: 05
Daily Four-Midday — 03-03-01-01, SB: 07
Daily Four-Evening — 04-02-02-05, SB: 05
Quick Draw Evening — 09-10-11-14-17-26-33-34-37-39-41-45-46-48-57-60-62-66-76-77, BE: 17
Hoosier Lotto — Estimated jackpot (for Wednesday): \$8.2 million
MEGA MILLIONS
 Estimated jackpot (for Tuesday): \$36 million
POWERBALL
 Estimated jackpot (for Wednesday): \$975 million

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EMPLOYMENT

Help Wanted

THE CITY OF Bluffton Street Department is accepting applications for a Laborer/Truck Driver. The minimum educational requirement is a high school diploma or equivalent. Applicants must possess and maintain a CDL License or obtain one within the time limit. The City utilizes E-Verify and follows EEOC guidelines. Applications may be obtained from the Clerk Treasurer's office, 128 East Market St, Bluffton, IN between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm Monday-Friday or at www.blufftonindiana.net.

Help Wanted

HOLLEY SALES, INC. is looking for an experienced medium duty / heavy duty truck mechanic. Full-time. Starting pay is \$25.00 per hour. 40-45 hours per week. Some Saturday mornings required. Paid uniforms. Vacation & holiday pay. Please apply in person at 12005 Indianapolis Rd. Yoder, IN 46798 or send your resume to dirk@holleytruckparts.com. For more information, call 260-478-7411.

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 psychological 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. Application can be found on our website at www.wellscountysheriff.com. Once application is completed, details on the testing date and location will be emailed to the applicant. The application must be completed by April 20, 2024.

WELLS COUNTY HIGHWAY Seeking Full Time Bookkeeper. Salaried, eligible for health benefits & pension. Computer knowledge required. Must be proficient with Microsoft Word and Excel. Willing to learn new software programs. Ability to communicate effectively with employees and public. Ability to keep accurate records, organize and maintain office files. Knowledge of county road locations. Application and more information available at wellscounty.org/highway department/ or at the highway office. Send application to 828 E 200 S, Bluffton or highway@wellscounty.org. Accepting applications until April 15th.

Need more employees!
 A 20 word, line classified in the Bluffton News-Banner for a month is \$52.
 Contact the office at 125 N. Johnson St., 824-0224, or submit on-line at classifieds.news-banner.com.

FOR SALE

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

Wanted to Buy

WANTED : ANTIQUES & OLD TOYS Cash Paid for old toys! GI Joe, Transformers, Tin toys, Robots, Pressed Steel Cars/trucks, Action Figures, Antiques of all kinds, etc. Searching for attics, basements, barns, etc to go through. Call or Text! 260-223-8083

This Week's Garage Sales

Clip & Save

SEMI-ANNUAL GARAGE SALE Thurs. & Fri., April 4 & 5, 8-6, Sat., April 6, 8-1, Ossian United Methodist Church, 201 W. Mill St. Contact the office, 260-622-4326, or Sharon, 260-622-6514, w/questions.

Heloise Hint: Looking for a sofa at a garage sale? If you are going to buy an upholstered one, look at it very closely. Examine it for pest infestation. Wipe it down and clean it. Then spray the fabric with a protector and a deodorizer before taking the sofa into your house. Email HELOISE@Heloise.com.

Public Notice

STATE OF INDIANA)
) SS:
 COUNTY OF WELLS)
 IN THE WELLS)
 CIRCUIT COURT)
 ESTATE NO.)
 90C01-2403-ES-00002
 IN RE: THE SUPERVISED)
 ESTATE OF FORREST RANDALL)
 LEWIS, DECEASED)
NOTICE OF SUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION
 Notice is hereby given that Clint R. Lewis was on March 27, 2024 appointed Personal Representative of the Estate of Forrest Randall Lewis, deceased, who died on December 8, 2022.
 All persons who have claims against this estate, whether or not now due, must file the claim in the office of the Clerk of this Court within three (3) months from the date of the first publication of this notice, or within nine (9) months after the decedent's death, whichever is earlier, or the claims will be forever barred.
 Dated at Bluffton, Indiana March 27th, 2024.
 Beth Davis
 Clerk, Wells Circuit Court
 Troy C. Kiefer, (#27910-50)
 Beers Mallers, LLP
 110 West Berry Street, Suite 1100
 Fort Wayne, IN 46802
 Telephone: (260) 426-9706
 Facsimile: (260) 420-1314
 Attorney for Personal Representative

nb 4/1, 4/8
hspaxlp

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Public Sale Calendar

BIDDING STARTS CLOSING APRIL 4 STARTING AT 6 p.m. EST - Joann Groves, Anita Miller & Veda Ewart POA, owner. 6 p.m.: 2,132 sf, 4 bedroom, 1 bath, partial basement, 2-car attached garage, sitting on .4 acre city lot, South Adams Community School, Wabash Township, Adams County. 6:30 p.m.: Furniture, household items, cast iron pans, lots of collectibles, dishes, Zippo lighters & more! Preview March 25, 5-6 p.m., 230 High Street, Geneva. Pick up April 5, 1-5 p.m. **Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC**, 260-724-7402, kjauction.com.
APRIL 7-14 - (Online Only Auction) - Unique Blue Bar and Grill (Formerly Stag Bar), seller. Ongoing needs. Outstanding collection of beer signs, neon signs, beer taps, collectibles, tools, much more. Preview: April 4 and April 11 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 205 W. Market St., Bluffton, IN. **The Steffen Group Inc.**, <http://www.steffengrp.com>, 260-824-3006.
APRIL 8-APRIL 15 - (Online Only Auction) - Fort Wayne Community Schools, seller. Excess needs of FWCS Transportation Department. Mechanic and shop equipment, shelving, computer monitors and electronics, office furniture, parts washer, air compressor, much more. Preview: April 10 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 6006 Ardmore Ave., Fort Wayne, IN. **The Steffen Group Inc.**, 260-824-3006, www.steffengrp.com.
APRIL 9 - 6 p.m. - Michael & Shelley Mossburg, owners. Wells County Chamber of Commerce, 211 Water Street, Bluffton. Commercial real estate & land auction. Seven tracts to be sold in individual tracts or any combinations. Open house March 26, 5-6 p.m. or by appointment, 1600 W. Washington St., Bluffton. **Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC**, 260-724-7402, kjauction.com.
APRIL 12-APRIL 19 - (Online Only Auction) - The Estate of Dr. Hugh and Rhea Gildewell, seller. Huge jewelry and coin auction. Seven Rolex watches,

fine diamond rings, necklaces, earrings, 14ct, 18ct and 22ct gold jewelry, sterling silver jewelry, 350+ Invicta luxury watches, coin collection. Auction preview: April 14 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., 2926 Smith Rd., Fort Wayne, IN. **The Steffen Group Inc.**, 260-824-3006, www.steffengrp.com.
APRIL 13-APRIL 20 - (Online Only Auction) - The Estate of Dr. Hugh and Rhea Gildewell, seller. Major personal property auction. 2008 Mercedes sedan, large quantity of high-end camera equipment, professional telescope, new high end his and her golf clubs and accessories, huge qty. of power and hand tools, modern furniture, sterling silver flatware set, Smith and Wesson revolver, jewelers safes, much more. Auction preview: April 14 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., 2926 Smith Rd., Fort Wayne, IN. **The Steffen Group Inc.**, 260-824-3006, www.steffengrp.com.
APRIL 20 - 10 a.m. - (Live Auction) - Marc and Valerie Hamman, seller. 6530 S. 300 E., Hamilton, IN. Three lots adjacent to Hamilton Lake with 2 car 26'x28' garage. This is the perfect property to build a new home, extra storage and parking. **The Steffen Group Inc.**, 260-824-3006, www.steffengrp.com.

SUDOKU ANSWER

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