





River waters still high

The recent rain has kept the water level of certain rivers in Wells County high, leading to some flooding issues. Above and at right are photos of the Wabash River near the White Bridge on South County Road 450 East. Below, the Wabash river is running high near the Southwest Church Road Bridge near Vera Cruz. (Photos by Jonathan Snyder



Special session needed to approve county's insurance

By HOLLY GASKILL

Wells County Commissioners again delayed approval of an insurance policy. They will hold a special session before the county's current policy expires.

Representatives from Walker-Hughes returned with quotes during the commissioners' meeting on Monday. However, the commissioners again stated the quotes undervalued county property, specifically the Wells County Jail and Carnegie Annex.

The same item had been discussed earlier this month, where the commissioners had asked for new quotes raising the value of the jail from \$15 million to \$25-30 million and new consideration for the annex, courthouse and highway garage. At both meetings, Commissioner Jeff Stringer said the county would be underinsured in the event of a total loss.

Representative Danica Dunwiddie assured she would have new quotes by the end of the week, but the policy would need approval by May. The commissioners' next meeting is scheduled for 5 p.m. on May 6.

As the conversation concluded, Stringer stated this has not been the first time they've had to hold a special session for a quote issue.

Also during the meeting, the commissioners were introduced to Ashleigh King, the recently hired director of Imagine Early. Imagine Early is a coalition between Adams and Wells counties to serve childcare needs.

King said she is working with Reusser on branding design and a website. She also plans to spend the first six months meeting with parents, providers and businesses to create an understanding of the current childcare needs in our community, noting that data often doesn't capture the greater story at hand.

The commissioners have committed to support the organization with \$25,000 annually for three years.

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Markle council vies for 'seat at the table' with economic development

By JONATHAN SNYDER

Markle's Town Council members have expressed its frustration with not being included in conversations about Wells County economic development.

During Wednesday's meeting, Council President Matthew Doss stressed that Markle's Town Council has not been contacted for input on the hiring process of a new economic development director, despite previous statements of desiring a unified plan for the county. Council Vice-President Nicolas Lund noted that Markle is in a unique situation with the town split between Huntington and Wells counties. Because of the split, Markle has traditionally supported an economic development commission for both counties. Lund stated that Chad Kline, the former Wells director, had represented the town well

Markle must be a part of Wells County's initiative in hiring a new economic development director and wants Markle to be a part of the interview process for the role. The council decided that Doss would be proactive in ensuring Markle's seat at the table. "It sounds like I'm madder than I actually am," Doss said. "But there are a lot of extra questions that we are not being keyed in on.' The council also stated that regardless of what happens with the EDC situation, they should look into all possible opportunities. One avenue mentioned was contracting an independent third party for the Wells County portion of Markle. Markle also renewed its insurance contract with WalkerHughes. While the contract was approved as presented, the council will be able to look at a revised policy to increase the collision deductible (Continued on Page 2)

Doss also stated he feels that

Boeing put under Senate scrutiny during hearings on safety

By DAVID KOENIG AP Airlines Writer

An engineer at Boeing said Wednesday that the aircraft company, in rushing to produce as many planes as possible, is taking manufacturing shortcuts that could lead to jetliners breaking apart.

"They are putting out defective airplanes," the engineer, Sam Salehpour, told members of a Senate subcommittee.

Salehpour was testifying about Boeing's 787 Dreamliner, hundreds of which are in use by airlines, mostly on international routes. He spoke while another Senate committee held a separate hearing on the safety culture at Boeing.

The dual hearings were a sign of the intense pressure on Boeing since a door-plug panel blew off a 737 Max jetliner during an Alaska Airlines flight in January. The company is under multiple investigations, and the FBI has told passengers from the flight that they might be victims of a crime. Regulators limited Boeing's rate of aircraft production, and even minor incidents involving its planes attract news coverage.

Salehpour alleged that workers at a Boeing factory used excessive force to jam together sections of fuselage on the Dreamliner. The extra force could compromise the carbon-composite material used for the plane's frame, he said.

The engineer said he studied Boeing's own data and concluded "that the company is taking manufacturing shortcuts on the 787 program that could significantly reduce the airplane's safety and the life cycle."

Salehpour said that when he raised concern about the matter, his boss asked whether he was "in or out" – part of the team, or not. "'Are you going to just shut up?'

... that's how i interpreted it," he said.

Boeing said retaliation is strictly prohibited. A spokesperson said the company encourages employees to speak up, and that since January it has seen more than a 500% increase in employee reports on a company portal.

The hearing of the investigations subcommittee marked the first time Salehpour has described his concern about the 787 and another plane, the Boeing 777, in public. Senators said they were shocked and appalled by the information. Democrats and Republicans alike expressed their dismay with the iconic American aircraft manufacturer.

The company says claims about the Dreamliner's structural integrity are false. Two Boeing engineering executives said this week that in both design testing and inspections of planes — some of them 12 years old — there were no findings of fatigue or cracking in the composite panels. They suggested that the material, formed from carbon fibers and resin, is nearly impervious to fatigue, which is a constant worry with conventional aluminum fuselages.

The Boeing officials also dismissed another of Salehpour's allegations: that he saw factory workers jumping on sections of fuselage on another one of Boeing's largest passenger planes, the 777, to make them align.

Separately on Wednesday, the (Continued on Page 2)



LOCAL/NATION

Economic development

(Continued from Page 1)

from \$1,000 to \$2,500. Premium rates will drop if they decide to change the contract.

The council also passed three resolutions, the first of which allows the Markle Plan Commission to add new projects to the Markle Economic Development Plan. The second resolution gives Doss the authority to sign off on any agreements with the Indiana Department of Transportation, specifically Community Crossings Matching Grants, on behalf of the council.

The third resolution is part of an agreement between Markle and multiple other communities in the region to apply for the Indiana Stellar Pathways program. This program allows participating communities to apply for funding and support from Indiana agencies like the Department of Natural Resources.

Additionally, Grant stated that the South Clark Street Bridge will be reconstructed by INDOT in 2025. Because of this, two light poles on that bridge will need to be removed and the electricity disconnected. While seemingly simple, there remains a slight issue in who will be responsible for this — Duke Energy owns the light poles but no longer supports the electricity.

Duke will sell the poles and power

Boeing safety hearings

(Continued from Page 1) Senate Commerce Committee heard testimony from members of an expert panel that found serious flaws in Boeing's safety culture.

One of the panel members, MIT aeronautics lecturer Javier de Luis, said employees hear Boeing leadership talk about safety, but workers feel pressure to push planes through the factory as fast as they can.

In talking to Boeing workers, de Luis said he heard "there was a very real fear of payback and retribution if you held your ground."

The dual hearings added to criticism that has been heaped on Boeing since the door plug blew off an Alaska Airlines Boeing 737 Max as it flew over Oregon. Major safety failures have pushed Boeing into a crisis that has already resulted in a management shakeup, including the CEO's decision to step down at the end of this year.

Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas,

said the public is looking to Washington to assure that boarding a plane is not getting more dangerous.

"Flying commercial remains the safest way to travel, but understandably, recent incidents have left the flying public worried. The perception is things are getting worse," he said.

The Federal Aviation Administration, which regulates airlines and aircraft manufacturers, was also heavily criticized during Wednesday's hearings.

The FAA was battered for the way it approved the 737 Max nearly a decade ago without fully understanding a key flight-control system. Two Max jets crashed in 2018 and 2019, killing 346 people. Critics continue to accuse the agency of being too cozy with Boeing.

"The FAA needs to be a regulator. They need to do their job. That's the missing piece right now," Joe Jacobsen, a former Boeing and FAA engineer, told the inves-

tigations subcommittee.

The FAA is now under a new administrator, Mike Whitaker, who has taken a tougher approach to Boeing. He limited Boeing's production of 737 Max jets and gave the company until May 28 to produce a detailed plan for how it will fix manufacturing problems and resolve safety concerns.

Boeing is facing separate investigations by the FAA, the Justice Department and the National Transportation Safety Board. The Justice Department could reopen a 2021 agreement in which Boeing avoided criminal prosecution on a charge of misleading regulators about the Max. In exchange, the company agreed to pay \$2.5 billion — mostly to airline customers.

All the attention is taking a chunk from Boeing stock, which has tumbled in price by nearly one-third since the Alaska Airlines panel blowout. Shares of the Arlington, Virginia, company have lost 32% — more than \$47 billion in market value.

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to Markle but remove the fixtures at

the top. Grant said the company told

him it was against their policy to sell

that the lights on that bridge are needed

for safety reasons, as the bridge is used

frequently by Markle citizens. Clerk-

Treasurer Stephenie Hensley stated

that Grant tried his hardest to keep the

Lastly, Markle will begin advertis-

ing bids for solid waste collection and

recycling in Markle. Markle's contract

with Republic Services expires in May.

Bids will be opened at the council's

Council member Blake Caley stated

the fixtures to the town.

fixtures on the poles.

next meeting on May 15.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal, the Connecticut Democrat who chairs the investigations subcommittee, and the panel's senior Republican, Sen. Ron Johnson of Wisconsin, have asked Boeing and the FAA for troves of documents going back six years. Blumenthal said his subcommittee plans to hold more hearings on Boeing and hopes to hear from CEO David Calhoun.

In interviews and messages to employees, Calhoun has said many times that Boeing is taking steps to improve its manufacturing quality and safety culture. He called the Alaska Airlines accident a "watershed moment" from which a better Boeing will emerge.

There is plenty of skepticism about comments like that.

"We need to look at what Boeing does, not just what it says it's doing," said Sen. Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill.



Thursday, April 18, 2024 (24-hour observations at 9:33 p.m. Wednesday) High: 73; Low: 58; Precipitation: 0.50 inches of rain Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 7.11 feet at 9:45 p.m. Wednesday

Wells County forecast

Today: Mostly sunny, with a high near 72. Southwest wind around 5 mph.

Tonight: Showers and possibly a thunderstorm. Low around 48. Southeast wind 5 to 15 mph becoming west after midnight. Winds could gust as high as 20 mph. Chance of precipitation is 80%. New rainfall amounts between a quarter and half of an inch possible.

Friday: Showers likely before 8 a.m. Partly sunny, with a high near 57. Northwest wind around 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60%.

Friday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 43. West wind around 10 mph.

Saturday: Partly sunny, with a high near 54. Breezy.

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 33. **Sunday:** Partly sunny, with a high near 54.

Sunday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 35.

Monday: Sunny, with a high near 60.

Monday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 45. Tuesday: A 50 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 61.

Tuesday Night: A slight chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly cloudy, with a low around 43.

Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 62.

Netanyahu: Israel will decide how to respond to Iran's attack

By JULIA FRANKEL and TIA GOLDENBERG Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Wednesday his country would be the one to decide whether and how to respond to Iran's major air assault earlier this week, brushing off calls for restraint from close allies.

Israel has vowed to respond to Iran's unprecedented attack without saying when or how, leaving the region bracing for further escalation after months of unrest linked to the ongoing war in Gaza.

Israel's allies have been urging Israel since the attack to hold back on any response that could spiral. These calls were repeated on Wednesday during visits by the British and German foreign ministers.

The diplomatic pressures came as Iran's president warned that even the "tiniest" invasion of its territory would bring a "massive and harsh" response. Violence meanwhile surged on Wednesday between Israel and the Iran-backed Lebanese militant Hezbollah group, which fired a volley of rockets and drones on northern Israel. The attack wounded at least 14 Israeli soldiers, six seriously, the army said. The military said it struck Hezbollah targets deep inside Lebanon in response.

Speaking to a meeting of his Cabinet, Netanyahu said he met Wednesday with both visiting foreign ministers and thanked them for their countries' support. But he said Israel would make the call on its own on how to respond despite "all sorts of suggestions and advice" coming from Israel's allies, some of whom — including the United States, the United Kingdom and France — helped Israel repel Iran's drone and missile assault.

"I want to be clear: we will make our decisions ourselves.

Biden vows to shield U.S. steel industry by blocking Japanese merger, seeking Chinese tariffs

PITTSBURGH (AP) — President Joe Biden promised cheering, unionized steelworkers on Wednesday that his administration would block the acquisition of U.S. Steel by a Japanese company, and he called for a tripling of tariffs on Chinese steel, seeking to use trade policy to win over working-class votes in the battleground state of Penninternational trade policy with his reelection effort, although the White House insisted they were more about shielding American manufacturing from unfair trade practices overseas than firing up a union audience.

The current tariff rate is 7.5% for both steel and aluminum but could climb to 25% under Biden's proposal. The president said he was asking his trade representative to seek the increase, and separate tariffs of 10% on aluminum and 25% on steel would also remain in place. The U.S. imported roughly \$6.1 billion in steel products in the 12 months ending in February 2023, but just 3% of those imports came from China, according to Census Bureau figures. Citing existing trade barriers, the American Iron and Steel Institute said China last year accounted for even less – just 2.1% of U.S. steel imports - making it America's seventh-biggest source of foreign steel. However, a senior administration official said there are concerns about China ramping up exports, making the higher tariff levels necessary as a preventative measure. Liu Pengyu, a spokesman for the Chinese Embassy in Washington, said the "U.S. is making the same mistake again and again" by seeking increased tariffs. In a statement, he also dismissed levies already in place as "the embodiment of unilateralism and protectionism of the U.S. Biden insisted that getting tougher on China was sound policy, including when it comes to preventing the exportation of advanced technologies that could "undermine our national security.' He said he delivered a similar message to Chinese President Xi Jinping during previous conversations, telling him, "You'll use them for all the wrong reasons, so you're not going to get those advanced computer chips."

Biden criticized Trump for failing to take such steps, saying that "for all his tough talk on China, it never occurred to my predecessor to do any of that."

The administration also promised to pursue invesligations against countries and importers that try to saturate existing markets with Chinese steel, and said it was working with Mexico to ensure that Chinese companies cannot circumvent the tariffs by shipping steel there for subsequent export to the United States. "The president understands we must invest in American manufacturing. But we also have to protect those investments and those workers from unfair exports associated with China's industrial overcapacity," said White House national economic adviser Lael Brainard. U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai said Wednesday that her office, acting on a petition from five national labor unions, was investigating China for "targeting the maritime, logistics and shipbuilding sectors for dominance." China produces about half of the world's steel and is making far more than its domestic market needs. It sells steel on the world market for less than half what U.S.-produced steel costs, senior Biden administration officials said.

The first step to the higher tariffs is the completion of a review of Chinese trade practices. Once Biden gives the official authorization, there will be a public notice and a comment period that could take weeks.

Biden is on a three-day Pennsylvania swing that began in his childhood hometown of Scranton on Tuesday and will include a visit to Philadelphia on Thursday. After ignoring the first two days of Trump's hush money trial in New York, Biden made a veiled reference to it on Wednesday, joking that his predecessor is "busy right now."

sylvania.

The Democratic president's pitch comes as Donald Trump, his likely Republican opponent, tries to chart a path back to the White House with tough-on-China rhetoric and steep tariff proposals of his own.

During a visit to the Pittsburgh headquarters of United Steelworkers, Biden said U.S. Steel "has been an iconic American company for more than a century and it should remain totally American."

Administration officials are reviewing the proposed acquisition of U.S. Steel by Japan's Nippon Steel, and Biden said last month he would oppose the deal, saying it was "vital for it to remain an American steel company that is domestically owned and operated."

But in front of a union audience, he went much further in pledging to block the sale.

"American-owned, American-operated by American union steelworkers — the best in the world — and that's going to happen, I promise you," he said.

In another step that his administration argues can protect domestic steelworkers, Biden also announced that he will push for higher tariffs on Chinese steel and aluminum, aiming to insulate American producers from a flood of cheap imports.

Biden's push on steel reflects the intersection of

Biden's announcement on steel tariffs was cheered by U.S. steelmakers. Kevin Dempsey, president of the American Iron and Steel Institute, accused China of disrupting "world markets both by subsidizing the production of steel and other products, and by dumping those products in the U.S. and other markets."

To coincide with the announcement, Biden's campaign released a 60-second ad that will air on Pennsylvania television for the next five days. It features a steelworker, who is also a small-town mayor, praising the president's economic policies.

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The state of Israel will do whatever is necessary to defend itself," Netanyahu said.

Despite the tough rhetoric, Israel appears unlikely to attack Iran directly without at least the support of its top ally, the U.S. But it could resort to more covert methods such as targeting senior Iranian commanders or Iranbacked groups in other countries, or launching a cyber attack.

It's unclear how Iran would then respond, given the heightened tensions — any miscalculation by either side risks setting off a regional war.

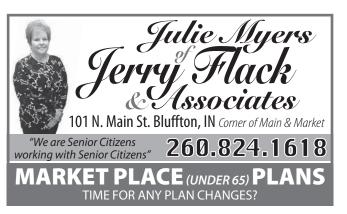
President Joe Biden's administration on Tuesday said it would place new sanctions on Iran and has worked to coordinate a global rebuke of the attack while urging all sides to de-escalate. U.S. officials said earlier this week that Biden told Netanyahu that Washington would not participate in any offensive action against Iran.

Over the weekend, Iran launched hundreds of missiles and drones at Israel in response to an apparent Israeli strike on Iran's Embassy compound in Syria on April 1 that killed 12 people, including two Iranian generals.

İsrael says it and its partners successfully intercepted nearly all the missiles and drones. A 7-year-old girl was wounded in the attack, which did not cause any deaths or major damage.

Israel and Iran have waged a shadow war for decades, but the strike over the weekend was the first direct Iranian military attack on Israel.





OBITUARIES

Larry Hoffman, 79

Larry L. Hoffman, 79, of Bluffton, passed away Tuesday morning, April 16, 2024, at Stillwater Hospice Home in Fort Wayne, following an extended illness.

Larry was born in Berne on Sept. 22, 1944, to Ralph and Evelyn (Biberstein) Hoffman; both parents preceded him in death. He married Marlyce "Mickie" (Crump) in Franklin, Indiana, on Oct. 20, 1968; she survives in Bluffton.



Larry was a 1962 graduate of Adams Central High School and was a member of Calvary Lutheran Church in Bluffton. Larry was a truck driver for Supervalu-Food Marketing, retiring in 2006. He worked part-time following retirement, driving for local farmers and businesses and helping his brother with Hoffman Sales in Monroe. Larry enjoyed attending his grandchildren's sporting events and his morning breakfast club with friends at various local restaurants.

In addition to his wife of 51 years, Larry is survived by two sons, Jason Hoffman of Bluffton and Jeff (Tonya) Hoffman of Decatur; two grandchildren, Jace Hill of Decatur and Dane (Alyssa) Hoffman of New Haven; one great-grandson due in May; one brother, Bryce (Carol) Hoffman of Monroe; and 2 sisters, Lou Ann (Merlin) Frank of Berne and Donna (Randy) Beber of Decatur.

Larry was preceded in death by his parents, one grandson, Drake Hill, and two brothers, Jim Hoffman and a twin brother Gary Hoffman.

In accordance with Larry's wishes, no public services will be held. Burial will take place at a later date.

Memorials can be made to Friends Who Care Cancer Relief Foundation in care of the funeral home.

Online condolences can be made at goodwincaleharnish.com.

Goodwin - Cale & Harnish Memorial Chapel in Bluffton have been entrusted with funeral arrangements.

Mary Jane Trent, 80

Mary Jane Trent, 80, formally of Craigville, passed away on Wednesday, April 17, 2024, at Ossian Health & Rehabilitation Center.

Funeral arrangements are pending at this time with the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton.

Indiana National Guard member reportedly shot at migrant stabbing others

By NIKI KELLY Indiana Capital Chronicle

An Indiana National Guard member was involved in a shooting at the southern border Sunday but details are scant while an investigation continues.

According to a NewsNation report, the soldier saw an individual stabbing a fellow migrant along the river's edge in El Paso, which is on U.S. soil. The soldier shot at the individual, who ran back into Mexico. It is unclear what they were shot with or whether they were struck.

Indiana National Guard

assignment after Easter. The company is set for a 10-month deployment meant to reinforce Texas Gov. Greg Abbott's efforts to close off his state's share of the U.S.-Mexico border. It will cost Indiana about \$7 million.

At the departure ceremony, Gov. Eric Holcomb who authorized the mission - said Indiana soldiers would focus on observation and reporting.

"Our role is to assist, not to arrest or apprehend," he said. "We are there as a complement - reporting, watching — to our Texan counterparts." According to the Border Report, investigators determined that two individuals had been stabbed. An El Paso Fire and Rescue crew responded a short time later and treated the migrants for what they described as "superficial wounds" that weren't considered lifethreatening. The bulletin says the Texas Department of Public Safety sealed off the area and that no U.S. Border Patrol agent was allowed in or has been allowed in the secured area or allowed to speak with the individuals involved. However, one agent did escort the medics who took one of the migrants to a hospital, and border agents will help identify and process the migrants.

INCIDENTS

City:

Tuesday, 6:15 a.m., Perfect Pet Food and Accessories. Driver stopped for registration that showed license was suspended. Keith Russell Green charged with driving while suspended.

Tuesday, 2:41 p.m., 200 block of North Bond Street. Caller reported man urinat-

ing off of front porch. Tuesday, 3:43 p.m., 900 block of West Market Street, Bluffton. Warrant served for the arrest of Marshall Dylan Smith on probation violation in case from Adams County.

Police Notebook

block of Kathryn Circle. Caller reported that they possibly found their stolen dirt bike at a residence.

Tuesday, 8:45 p.m., Bluffton Police Department. Subject arrived at department to speak to officer regarding drugs.

Tuesday, 11:26 p.m., 80 block of Sunset Drive. Report of a domestic dispute.

Wednesday, 11:07 a.m., 100 block of West South Street. Caller reported that the grass is a foot and a half long at this location.

County:

Tuesday, 7:29 p.m., 400 East 300 North, Bluffton. Report of vehicle in roadway that appeared to have lost a tire while driving.

Tuesday, 10:11 a.m., 600 East S.R. 124, Bluffton. Caller reported he found a bone that looked suspicious, possibly human. It was a deer bone.

Tuesday, 11:06 a.m., 1000 South Meridian Road, Bluffton. Caller reported hearing fireworks.

Tuesday, 12:41 p.m., Tri County New Holland. Report of theft of skid loader.

Tuesday, 1:04 p.m., S.R. 116 and North 100 West, vehicle, a Level 5 felony. No Tuesday, 4:51 a.m., 1800 Markle. Driver cited for bond set.

speeding.

Tuesday, 3:05 p.m., West 300 South and South 100 West, Bluffton. Report of wood in roadway.

Tuesday, 5:28 p.m., Wells County Jail. Caller reported they found a bag with purse straps, ID, and credit cards in the woods. Bag belonged to woman deceased since 2016.

ARRESTS

Joseph James Roth-Bradley, 28, Berne; invasion of privacy, a Level 6 felony. No bond set.

Clayton Isham Peace, 44, Redkey; theft from motor

Republicans drive Indiana House primary challenges

Most incumbents face no primary competition, but eight open seats have drawn two-dozen hopefuls

By LESLIE BONILLA MUÑIZ

Indiana Capital Chronicle Some Hoosier primary election voters will have options as the Indiana House of Representatives' 100 seats go on the ballot. The May 7 primary boasts 26 contested GOP races and six contested Democrat ones. Eight open seats have drawn two-dozen hopefuls.

That leaves many of the chamber's incumbents facing no primary competition.

Those pulling GOP ballots are more likely to have multiple names to pick from: 38 of the 47 hopefuls facing candidates from their own parties are Republicans.

'Here in Indiana, we have really had a lot of success -20 some years of legislative and executive achievements

... We feel like we have a deep bench of talent here in the Republican Party," Hoosier GOP Executive Director Joe Elsener told the Capital Chronicle.

"It's not surprising to me that a lot of people have stepped up to lead and want to be part of that. And I think that's good for the process," he continued.

Just nine of the primary challengers are Democrats.

"It's kind of how things shake out. Some folks think I have the power to say who can run and who can't run for office. That's not true,' Indiana Democratic Party Chair Mike Schmuhl said. "In our country — at least

for anyone on either side of the aisle that puts their name forward to run for office and (I) appreciate folks willing to do that," Elsener said. "It's not easy."

Open seats

Eight incumbents announced they won's seek reelection, putting their seats up for grabs for the first time in years - and even decades.

Legislative retirees include Republican Reps. Bob Cherry of Greenfield, Randy Lyness of West Harrison, Donna Schaibley of Carmel, Jerry Torr of Carmel and Denny Zent of Angola.

Open seats include districts 24, 29, 39, 51, 53, 68, 77 and 90. Find your elected officials using a tool provided through the Indiana Secretary of State's Office.

Three others forwent reelection to run for other offices, including Democratic Rep. Ryan Hatfield of Evansville, who is pursuing a judgeship for the Vanderburgh Circuit Court. GOP Reps. Chuck Goodrich of Noblesville and Mike Speedy of Indianapolis have waded into crowded congressional races.

Incumbents typically enjoy major advantages: stockpiled donations, political connections, experienced campaign teams and more.

Open seats, therefore, can attract throngs of com-

Brian Evans,

• Indiana National Guard employee and Hancock County Republican Party Vice-Chair Ethan Lawson, and

• Businessman Kevin Mandrell.

Another four Republicans are competing for House District 90, previously Speedy's seat:

Attorney Andrew Ireland, who previously worked as a deputy Indiana attorney general,

Substitute school bus driver Tim McVey,

David Waters, and

Business owner Elizabeth Williams.

In District 24, previously held by Schaibley, Republicans Bill Gutrich and former Indianapolis Colts punter Hunter Smith will face off.

So will Republicans Laura Alerding and Alaina Shonkwiler in District 29, previously held by Goodrich, plus Tony Isa and Rhonda Sharp in Distrit 51, previously held by Zent.

Other contested

primary races

Nearly 20 GOP representatives face primary challengers. Other Republicans will compete in attempts to unseat Democrat incumbents in the general election:

They include Jeff Larson and Manuel Maldonado in District 10 - held by Democrat Chuck Moselev of Portage - and Scott Hawkins and James McClure Jr. in District 71,

trict 95) and Justin Moed of Indianapolis (District 97) face primary challengers.

Democrat hopefuls Jim Phillips and John E. Bartlett will compete to challenge the winner of the Prescott-LeMaster contest in the general election.

Democrats Rick Cannon and Jennifer David will also meet in the primary; the victor will face the winner of the Payne-Baker matchup. Starr Joy Hairston and Stephanie Jo Yocum, both Democrats, will similarly vie to challenge Republican Rep. Chris Jeter of Fishers (District 88).



Obituary Policy

The News-Banner and Ossian Journal publishes "basic" obituaries free of charge for "local" deaths. 'Basic" obituaries will include the deceased's name, age, community of record, date and place of death, basic genealogical information, the date, time and location of calling hours and services and the name of the funeral home handling arrangements.

If additional information and/or a photo is desired to be included, or if the deceased does not meet the definitions of a "local" person, there is a charge. Ărea funeral homes will provide details on the policy and will coordinate obituary publication.

generate interest

officials deferred specific questions to Texas military officials.

"The Indiana National Guard is aware of the incident that happened Sunday, April 14. We support and care for our soldiers and airmen supporting Operation Lone Star," the Guard said in a statement.

The Texas Military Department released a statement saying "Early on the afternoon of 14 April, a National Guard Servicemember assigned to Operation Lone Star discharged a weapon in a border-related incident. The incident is under investigation. More information will be made available as the investigation progresses."

Fifty Indiana National Guard soldiers left Indiana for the volunteer Texas

for the next few years – anybody can step up and run for office as long as they meet the requirements."

Schmuhl indicated his party has prioritized offering voter choices at the November general election by putting up candidates in twothirds of the races.

House Democrats have remained a superminority for more than a decade, meaning that Republicans don't need a single one present to conduct legislative business. The Democratic Party has thus launched a new effort to "break the supermajority."

Despite that campaign, Elsener said he'd "never" describe the Republican Party as being "on defense." Nearly 200 Hoosiers

from both parties are running for the House, including incumbents. "I have a lot of respect

petitive candidates.

"It kind of has every candidate starting from the same place," Schmuhl said.

Several of the vacated seats representing suburban Indianapolis communities have sparked multi-way competitions, according to a candidate list from the Secretary of State's Office.

Four Republicans are vying to win their party's nomination to House District 53, Cherry's old seat:

• Financial planning consultant and at-large Hancock County Council representative Keely Butrum,

• Veteran and veteran's group outreach executive held by Democrat Rita Fleming of Jeffersonville.

Meanwhile: Democrat Reps. Ragen Hatcher of Gary (District 3), John L. Bartlett of Indianapolis (Dis-







ΟΡΙ

You're used to how Congress does budgets. You shouldn't be

There was lots of drama back at the end of March, when Congress-six months behind schedule-finally funded the federal government for the rest of the fiscal year. You may remember some of the highlights: The \$1.2 trillion package funded defense, homeland security, and other key agencies (others had gotten their funding a few weeks earlier) and Congress passed it mere hours before a government shutdown.

This, of course, was characterized as a great success, though Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, a Democrat, was straightforward about what it took. "It's been a long day, a long week



Lee

Hamilton

and a very long few months," he told the press. "It's no small feat to get a package like this done in divided government." Over in the House, the fact that Republican Speaker Mike Johnson played ball with Democrats to get the package through led to the first stage of a move by Rep. Marjorie Taylor Green to seek his ouster as speaker.

I take some comfort from the fact that the government is now funded through September and Congress can move on to a full agenda of pressing business. But I take no comfort at all from the fact-indeed, I'm genuinely outraged-that we're just going to go through all this again at some point down the road. The congressional budget process is deeply and fundamentally broken.

What I find most distressing is that there's now an entire generation of Americans and members of Congress who know only this: that the budget consists of a gargantuan bill hammered out by congressional leaders and the White House and some key staff, then is rushed through with very little debate and even less insight into what it contains, other than some key topline figures. The fact that in the world's greatest democracy this is how we handle the fundamental blueprint of our government, and its priorities should not be a point of pride. As veteran budget analyst Alice Rivlin put it, it is "frightening and embarrassing that the world's most experienced democracy is currently unable to carry out even the basic responsibility of funding the services that Americans are expecting from their government." That was in 2018, the year before her death.

That's especially true because we know how to do better. Though I've done this before, let me remind you of what you're missing. Up until the mid-1990s, Congress followed a process that had been honed over decades. It divided the budget into a dozen different areas, and then handled their appropriations through separate committee hearings. These allowed committees-and the rank-and-file members who sat on them-to gather expert opinions, propose changes, and thoroughly vet federal spending decisions in both chambers before sending each bill on to the President. It was not a perfect process, but it was transparent, far more democratic, orderly, and a politically rational way to decide on our priorities and how to fund them.

These days, we just take it for granted that we have to live with high-stakes fiscal brinksmanship. And that the myriad crucial decisions that undergird our government's operations will be contained in omnibus spending bills or continuing resolutions that basically put the government on automatic pilot and get no real scrutiny. Congress's historical role as a nurturer of innovation and creative approaches to problem-solving? Nowhere in



Whee! The nation flies past another trillion-dollar milestone.

This nation, tobogganing swiftly down a steep slope of fiscal irresponsibility, barely notices a blur of alarming milestones. Last week, we sped past this one: A \$1.1 trillion deficit in the first six months of fiscal year 2024 that began Oct. 1 resulted in almost as many dollars spent on debt service (\$429 billion) as on defense (\$433 billion).

This, at the most menacing geopolitical moment since 1945, makes one hope that JPMorgan Chase CEO Jamie Dimon was radically wrong in saying recently that interest rates could reach 8 percent or more in coming years. If they do, deficits will explode even before the Social Security and Medicare trust funds are exhausted, within 10 years.

The Federal Reserve was instrumental in igniting inflation with too-cheap money for too long, and then was serene about inflation's supposedly "transitory" nature. In 2012, the Fed announced its hubristic plan to achieve its *aspiration* of exactly 2 percent inflation. Even if evidence indicated the Fed capable of such precision (evidence does not), Joseph C. Sternberg's question in the Wall Street Journal is apposite: "Who elected these folks to aim for a 50% loss in purchasing power of a dollar every 35 years?"

In a recent report, the Manhattan Institute's Dan Katz and Stephen Miran argue that "the Fed's current governance has facilitated groupthink that has led to significant monetary-policy errors while allowing the Fed the flexibility to unwisely expand its remit into inherently political areas such as credit rationing and banking regulation." Here is groupthink: "Despite the biggest monetary errors in four decades," Katz and Miran write, none of the nine recent appointees to the Board of Governors was on record as having made accurate predictions about inflation's path. Mission creep: The Fed has moved beyond its traditional technocratic role and "pursued a much more expansive monetary and regulatory agenda that is more consistent with an explicitly political institution."

This has included allocating credit, thereby picking private-sector winners and losers; urging Congress to favor the Democrats' stimulus proposal (10 times the size of the Republicans' proposal) a month before the 2020 presidential election; allowing racial inducement in its operations; and injecting environmental considerations into financial regulations. What the Fed calls "climate-related financial risks" are fictitious. This column has previously noted that the Hoover Institution's John Cochrane is correct: Measurable climate risk to the financial system's "resilience" in the time

frame that regulation can foresee and control — five years or so — simply does not exist.

In July 2019, Fed Chair Jerome H. Powell said: "We don't have authority ... to lend to state and local governments." Nine months later the Fed did that. Randal K. Quarles, leaving as the Fed's vice chair for supervision in 2020, said, "Those whose plans are grand and whose patience with democratic accountability low" will ask "why the Fed can't fund repairs of the country's aging infrastructure, or finance the building of a border wall, or purchase trillions of dollars of green energy bonds." Perhaps it could. Who would stop it? Congress cannot even budget but is a geyser of opinions about everything. As government's institutions fail at their primary missions (the Fed's is to preserve the currency as a store of value), the institutions pursue grandeur through mission creep. This is perhaps partly for the pleasure of being where political fashion locates excitement (today, "equity" and climate change).

Katz and Miran recommend shortening the terms of members of the Fed's Board of Governors, and making them removable by the president. The authors would balance this increased democratic control by nationalizing the reserve banks, which are privately owned by local banking consortia. Katz and Miran say, somewhat puzzlingly, that making the reserve banks government institutions subject to political accountability would somehow make them a counterweight to the Board of Governors whose members would be removable by the president.

It is counterintuitive to advocate more direct political control of the Fed amid accumulating evidence that politics is the problem. That the biggest threat to American democracy is American democracy. The fiscal incontinence propelling the nation toward an utterly predictable crisis reflects the majority's preference: Let's make unconsenting (because unborn) future taxpayers — debt is taxation, including the tax of inflation, deferred – pay for a significant portion of our consumption of government services. Institutional tinkering with the Fed is no substitute for mature politics. In recreational toboggan rides, the exhilaration of synthetic danger subsides as the sleds glide to a stop. Today's fiscal plunge will not end so tranquilly.



George Will

sight.

I don't know what it's going to take to improve matters. There are plenty of members of the GOP majority in the House who ran two years ago on restoring the "regular order" of the appropriations process. And in all my conversations with public officials in recent years, I've never heard a single one defend what goes on now. So, in theory, there should be plenty of motivation to restore a saner approach to budgeting.

But there's also reality. After returning from their recess, members of Congress are settling in to work on the next appropriations round, facing an Oct. 1 deadline to keep the government funded. It's an election year. Any bets that they'll get the job done in orderly fashion and without resorting to a stopgap spending measure in September? I didn't think so.

Lee Hamilton is a distinguished scholar with the IU School of Global and International Studies. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

Today in History

By The Associated Press Today is Thursday, April 18, the 109th day of 2024. There are 257 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On April 18, 1906, a devastating earthquake struck San Francisco, followed by raging fires; estimates of the final death toll range between 3,000 and 6,000.

On this date:

In 1775, Paul Revere began his famous ride from Charlestown to Lexington, Massachusetts, warning colonists that British Regular troops were approaching.

In 1865, Confederate Gen. Joseph Johnston surrendered to Union Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman near Durham Station in North Carolina, bringing further closure to the Civil War, which had formally ended.

In 1923, the first game was played at the original Yankee Stadium in New York; the Yankees defeated the Boston Red Sox 4-1.

In 1954, Gamal Abdel Nasser seized power as he became prime minister of Egypt.

In 1955, physicist Albert Einstein died in Princeton, New Jersey, at age 76.

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Angelkeep near-death by drowning

Last week's column recalled death on Angelkeep ground as a result of deer being the losers from an encounter with a massive railroad loco-

like the two-foot-plus hawk appear-

purpose of finding live animals for

its food supply. God-created nature

included a cycle of life. That must be

Witnessed deaths at Angelkeep

typically come with an instant of

image. Some are limited to the sec-

onds needed to fully swallow a kick-

ing frog disappearing down the long

demise at the stroke of a swatter takes

beak of a heron. A yellow jacket's

but two seconds. One stroke down,

table of one more yellow jacket. It's

Wasps are feared, but few attack.

Even with Angelpond's habitat, mos-

quitoes are few, and if palm-slapped,

dragonflies take care of most of that

steps. Ants have been observed drag-

ging a deceased comrade across the

patio cement. Angelkeep's assump-

tion was that the ant was not intend-

Antpestcontrol.com stated "in

most cases, it happens when it's an

Pest controller, termmax.net, con-

nibalistic with their own?

ant from another colony."

ing a burial but a buffet. Are ants can-

Ant deaths are typically accidental

it is but a knee-jerk reaction, fully

provoked. Feathered friends and

annoyance. Death by digestion.

about the only animal despised by

Angelkeep's columnist.

one stroke horizontal, ridding the

understood to fully enjoy it, even its

deaths.

ing recently, swept in for the singular

Angelkeep Journals

lished, "No, this is a myth. They actually will bury their dead to protect

The truth? A Few Good Men

have stated "You can't handle the truth." But ants are a diversion of the death this column intended to focus on. We'll save ants for another day.

Angelpond was dug in 1999, filled with water in Y2K. Since then the threat of a visiting animal going through the ice seemed alarming. A meandering cat known for being the first animals to cross Angelpond's ice each winter once jumped off the pier and went through the too-thin ice layer. The incident proved that cats' nine lives included swimming ability. It swam to the shore, breaking the ice skim with each stroke.

In the latest past winter's final days a doe munched on an arborvitae shrub between the patio and Angelpond. Snow fell as wet groundcover that also blanketed the doe's back and head. A camera auto-focused on the action in video mode. The doe circled while munching, ending with its hind legs on the slope of ground at the pond's edge. Suddenly it slide downward, out of sight.

A race to a bedroom window allowed a new view of the doe half submerged with front legs and head on land. It frantically attempted to jump out, failing several times. Video rolled once again. At the same time thoughts flashed as to who to call for



Alan Daugherty help. Police? Animal shelter? Fire department? God was petitioned. Then with a short, frigid rest the doe lunged again, all caught on

video. This time it gained some footage. Hoof contact with mud under the pond, inspired repeated frantic 4-legged leaps. Persistence succeeded. The doe soon stood dripping muck, scum, ice, and water along the bank of Angelpond. Like the cat of years ago, this doe refused to be drowned by Angelpond. Thank you Lord.

The doe climbed to level ground. Ten feet from the living room window, it stood in somewhat of a trance for about an hour. A younger deer, presumably her yearling, who had witnessed the near drowning, came to her rescue and began licking off mud and ice to cleanse its mother's hind legs and rump. Mamma licked her own sides and forelegs, even as the falling snow again built a blanket on her back.

Watching a doe's life flash before your eyes was not an experience desired to repeat ever again. The heroic, self-saving, leaping frenzy, while not wanting to be ever repeated, will forever be remembered. Her thrill of escape could not have been any greater than my own as only an observer. Same true for her yearling. The recovery period and clean-up shared by mother and child was a testament to the truth that animals do experience a bonding and a form of family love.

'The Lord's eye is on the sparrow," likewise on the doe.

What a horrific observation experience it had been.

What an awesome reminiscence it became.

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

tradictorily pubmotive. Death at Angelkeep always remains a constant from the slap of a fly swatter to the gulp of a fish going head first down the long neck of a against disease." great blue heron. Hawks of all sizes,

BEETLE BAILEY



Dear Annie: I'm a mom and have been married for nearly six years. But for the past few years, my husband and I have not been on the same path. We can't communicate without fighting, bickering, arguing, etc. Our sex life has been nonexistent. And I have tried talking and suggesting that we do more things together. I have even tried losing weight because I thought maybe the problem was that I was no longer attractive. I tried everything that I could think of. And some days, I just lay in a different room, balled up and crying.

About a year ago, I started a new job and met a man with whom I clicked almost instantly. Eventually, this coworker gave me his number and asked if I wanted to go fishing sometime. That night, I told my husband that another man had offered me his phone number and wanted to take me fishing. I hoped he would see that he needed to step up to the plate before something happened. Instead, he flipped out and started accusing me of trying to control him. He started throwing things around the house - something he does a lot when things don't go his way, often leaving me with bruises and/or him with bruises due to my trying to defend myself. His tantrum that night was the final straw. I decided to take my new colleague up on the fishing trip.

We became close friends but never did anything physical. Then, one day, I found out my husband had been exchanging racy messages with women online. That's when I decided to go ahead and give my body to this new friend. It was nice. It made me feel like a woman again, not like a jacket that's sitting in the closet waiting to be worn.

We continued seeing each other and sleeping together for a few months. But last month, after a night out with him, I confessed everything to my husband. He was upset, of course, but in due time he came around and said he wanted to work things out. Well, that was three months ago, and my husband and I still haven't been intimate. I see no signs of things changing between us. In fact, they've gotten more distant, and I've noticed he now uses a lock code on his phone and computer.

My lover, meanwhile, is waiting in

the wings for me to make my decision. — Between a Rock and Hard Place

Dear Between: More than anything, I'm concerned about your husband's physical aggression. No matter your differences, it is unacceptable for him to hurt you or even



Dear

Annie

by Annie Lane

knowingly endanger you as he does when he hurls things around the house in a rage. But rather than further engage him right now, I encourage you to reach out to the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 for guidance in planning your next steps.

Dear Annie: April is National Alcohol Awareness Month. While I've seen some friends and family really helped by AA, for others, a different approach is needed. I hope you will print these recommendations in your column.

One is SMART Recovery (https:// www.smartrecovery.org), which offers a network of resources and is not just focused on alcohol abuse but addiction in general. LifeRing Secular Recovery (https://lifering.org), like AA, is an abstinence-based anonymous organization that provides safe meeting spaces. Then there are also programs for people who have a nonsevere drinking problem but would like to cut back on their drinking or take a break: Moderation Management (https:// moderation.org), CheckUp and Choices (checkupandchoices.com), and One Year No Beer (https://www.oneyearnobeer. com). Wherever people are, there are tools available.

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

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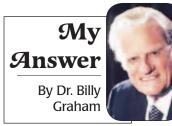






THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane The LOCKHORNS



Ouestion: My best friend all through school and college – best man at my wedding, godfather to my children – has turned on me with no explanation. I've searched my heart to see what I might have done to cause the destruction of a treasured friendship. He blocks me on social media and has even relocated his residence. I am devastated, shocked, and feel helpless to correct whatever has happened to cause such a reaction. I feel that this also has hurt my own testimony since people tell me the horrible accusations he has made about me. How can a Christian deal with this? -L.F

God knows the motive of the heart

Answer: Some of our greatest hurts come from broken relationships. Often people will do most anything to correct the wrongs, except pray. God knows the motive of the heart. And when we call someone's name in prayer, He listens.

God's will is for us to live at peace with everyone (see Romans 12:18). But sometimes in a broken relationship, the door seems closed forever. Marriages suffer, children rebel and run off, fathers abandon their families, business partners turn away in anger, and yes, friends will sometimes forsake us. change. But we can – and should – do everything we can to keep the door open to reconciliation. We shouldn't strike back or condemn; instead, we should pray for them and trust God. Perhaps the relationship, in time, will be restored to the glory of God.

We cannot change the person we're estranged from, but God can. Even when the door seems firmly closed, God is able to open it. We should do all we can to restore broken relationships, and trust God for the outcome.





"I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW THAT SOME OF THE THINGS THAT GO ON IN THE WORLD ARE NOT MY FAULT."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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When someone rejects us and absolutely refuses to have anything to do with us, we can't force them to (This column is based on the words and writings of the late Rev. Billy Graham.)

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Tigers late effort not enough for comeback over the Jets

By RYAN WALKER

It didn't seem like a close match early on, but the Bluffton Tigers made Wednesday's tennis match with Adams Central interesting

Bluffton was down 3-0 quickly, falling at No. 1 and No. 2 singles and No. 2 doubles to its conference foe. Strong performances by No. 3 singles and No. 1 doubles had them coming back to eventually lose 3-2.

Because of the timing of the matches, the Jets were able to secure a victory in those first three games, but in the end, Bluffton had an encouraging finish.

Head coach Spencer Schwartz highlighted the games the Tigers lost to what he calls the best team in the ACAC, slightly above Jay County.

'My one doubles team is a sophomore and a freshman, and they're still just trying to figure out what's going on," he said about Hazel Pfister and Sophie Eisenhut.

The two are playing for the first time with one another and as doubles players in the varsity realm. Pfister spent all of last season playing singles, and Eisenhut is a freshman. But the two are playing like they've done it for multiple seasons now, and beat the Jets' top doubles pair, and they did it in sweeping fashion 2-0.

"We're four matches in after tonight, and I already see the confidence skyrocketing," Schwartz said. "They're talking. They're taking care of the ball. They want everything and they want to put it away and they want to beat everybody.

In the other win, Gretchen Crist topped Macy McClure 6-3, 6-4 in two sets as well. Crist spent time at No. 2 singles last year, but is trying a new role and took a step back.

Because of her experience and skill, Crist has transitioned well to the position. The likely scenario for teams is to place their third-best singles player in this spot rather than No. 1 and No. 2 singles. Since Crist managed No. 2 singles well last year, she is an asset to win a crucial point in the lineup. At the end of the day, all points count the same regardless of where in the lineup.

"Typically, when you get down to the lower end of the lineup, three singles is viewed a little bit more maybe as a weakness, and that's a very important spot to win," Schwartz recognized. "I want to have somebody with the experience that she's had there at three singles to kind of secure that spot up. That's great. That's what we need on this team.

Crist is the only senior on the varsity

roster for the Tigers. As Schwartz and his bunch develop, Bluffton has a chance to build itself into a strong program in his second year.

Even with the excitement of returning six of the seven starters to next year, he understands this year is just as important and not to look down the road to next year.

"I always try and dangle that out in front a little bit, but I also don't like to look too far past the season that we're in with this group that I have," Schwartz said. "I feel like if we show up and play our best tennis." we can beat anybody we go up against."

Bluffton will be at New Haven at 5 p.m.

Thursday, April 18. ryan@news-banner.com

Individual results:

• Hillary Tobias (AC) defeated Emma Schwartz 6-2, 6-0 at No. 1 singles.

• Melanie Bertsch (AC) defeated Eve Corkwell 6-2. 6-1 No. 2 singles.

• Gretchen Crist (B) defeated Macy McClure 6-3, 6-4 at No. 3 singles.

 Hazel Pfister and Sophie Eisenhut (B) defeated Alaina Bertsch and Alayna McCullough 6-3, 6-2 at No. 1 doubles.

• Anna Leyse and Alexa Brotherton (AC) defeated Kinzie Fiechter and Emily Drayer 6-1, 6-0 at No. 2 doubles.

Adams Central took the junior varsity match 8-2.

JV results

• MaKayla Ringger (AC) defeated Gissel Martinez 6-1.

• Josie Shoaf (AC) defeated Isla Gibson 6-3. • Kayva Ashliman (AC) defeated Madison Duncan 6-3.

• Alexis Grover and Avery Hunt (B) defeated Adrienne Johnson and Jayla Biberstine 6-3.

• Alyssa Shearer (AC) and Ella Bluhm defeated Adrienne Johnson and Jayla Biberstine 6-4.

• Ellie Lengerich and Myah Ripple (AC) defeated Madison Murray and Zoey Schmidt 6-0.

 Haley Passwaters and Alyssa Shearer (AC) defeated Aleeah Grover and Anna Zurcher 7-6 (7-5).

 Ellie Lengrich and Myah Ripple (AC) defeated Kenley Falk and Briell Coratti 6-1.

 Isabella Rhoderrick and Olga Jardan (B) defeated Lexie Hamilton and Fatma Ahmed 6-1.

• Adrienne Johnson and Jayla Biberstine (AC) defeated Zainab Ameen and Charos Anorboeva 6-0.

Sports Roundup

Knights get second in golf

Norwell placed in second in a dual meet on the golf course at Leo Wednesday night. The Knights finished with a score of

169. Leo was first with a 141, while New Haven was last at 224.

Chase Hulvey was the top golfer for the Knights with a score of 40, followed by Derek Smith at 42, Cooper Sloan (43), Bodie Zimmer (44) and Ashton Federspiel

• Macie Saalfrank (N) defeated Caroline Stock 6-1, 6-2 at No. 3 singles.

· Annabelle Johnson and Macy Felger (N) defeated Grace Hansen and Caroline Meier 6-4, 6-7 (4), 6-0 at No. 1 doubles.

• Eliana Schilt and Nadia Cowan (H) Jordyn Xayyachack and Ciera Hiester (N) 7-5, 6-3 at No. 2 doubles.

Homestead won the junior varsity match 8-1.



At left, Bluffton's Gretchen Crist stares down a serve she hit to Macy McClure of Adams Central during a match at Bluffton Wednesday. Crist won her match, leading the Tigers to their first of two points of the afternoon. At right, Tigers' No. 1 singles player Emma Schwartz uses her backhand to return a point during her match. (Photos by Ryan Walker)

High School Calendar

THURSDAY, APRIL 18

BASEBALL: Homestead at Norwell, 5 p.m.; South Adams at Bluffton, 5 p.m.; South-

ern Wells at Adams Central, 5 p.m. BOYS GOLF: Southern Wells at Wapah-

ani, 4:30 p.m. GIRLS TENNIS: Bluffton at New Haven, 5 p.m. SOFTBALL: South Adams at Bluffton, 5 p.m.;

Southern Wells at Adams Central, 5 p.m.

TRACK & FIELD (CO-ED): Yorktown at Bluffton, 6 p.m.

FRIDAY, APRIL 19

BASEBALL: Angola at Norwell, 5:30 p.m. GIRLS TENNIS: Wayne at Norwell, 5:30 p.m. SOFTBALL: Norwell at Homestead, 5 p.m.; Bluffton at Oak Hill, 5:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 20

BASEBALL: Mississinewa at Southern Wells. 10 a.m.

BOYS GOLF: Norwell, Bluffton, Southern Wells at South Adams Golf Invitational, 9 a.m. GIRLS TENNIS: Norwell at Concordia, 10 a.m.; Bluffton at Argyll Invitational, 9 a.m. SOFTBALL: Bluffton at Northfield, 10 a.m.

TRACK & FIELD (CO-ED): Southern Wells at Eastern, 10:30 a.m.

MONDAY, APRIL 22

BASEBALL: Norwell at Concordia, 5 p.m.

SOFTBALL: Leo at Norwell, 5:30 p.m.; Union City at Bluffton, 5 p.m.; South Side at Southern Wells, 5:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, APRIL 23

BASEBALL: Norwell at Leo, 5:30 p.m.; Bluffton at Southern Wells, 5 p.m.

BOYS GOLF: Huntington North at Norwell, 4:30 p.m

GIRLS TENNIS: Norwell at Leo, 5 p.m.; South Adams at Bluffton, 5 p.m.

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

TRACK & FIELD (CO-ED): DeKalb at Norwell, 5:30 p.m.; Woodlan/Adams Central, 5:30 p.m.; Southern Wells at South Adams, 5:30

Tigers get their fourth win in five games, tops Canterbury

Bluffton earned its fourth win in five games, defeating Canterbury on the road 16-0 Wednesday.

The Tigers scored all 16 of their runs in the top of the fifth inning to get the win, bringing their record to 5-5.

Braxton Betancourt went 3-3 to lead the Tigers, all for base hits, and had an RBI. Griffin Morgan went 2-4 with a double and four RBI. Nick Pastore, Colton Arnold and A.J. Streveler had RBI.

Brody Lewis got the win on the mound, allowing no runs on two hits, no walks and struck out three.

Bluffton will begin ACAC play at South Adams at 5 p.m. Thursday, April 18.



(45).

The junior varsity Knights finished in second as well, golfing only two players. Leo came in first with a score of 82, Norwell 93 and New Haven 133.

Norwell was led by Phil Gaier with a 46 and Cavin Smithley 47.

Norwell will be at the South Adams Invitational at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 20.

Bluffon picks up road win at Southwood in boys' golf

Bluffton defeated Southwood on the road at Etna Acres Wednesday afternoon.

The Tigers scored a 193 and were led by the medalist of the match Connor Klopfenstein, who shot a 43. Following Klopfenstein was Kade Abbett (47), Kyler Potter (50), Christian Castaneda (53), Anthony Hartman (56) and Max White (59).

Bluffton scored a 254 in the junior varsity match, but Southwood did not have a team.

Leading the junior varsity team was Will Ault at 56, followed by Hutch Craighead and Landon Crist (65), Graham Linderwell (68) and Connor Collins (69).

Bluffton will be at the South Adams Invitational at Wabash Valley Golf Course at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 20.

Wes-Del squeeks past Southern Wells in softball

Wes-Del defeated the visiting Southern Wells Raiders by one run Wednesday night. The Warriors won 11-10, dropping the

Raiders to 1-4 now on the season.

Collena Reeves led the Raiders with a 3-4 night, hitting two doubles and driving in two runs. Gracie Reeves went 2-5 with a double and an RBI. Morgan Jones, Kyah Thomas and Kenzie Paxson had two RBI.

Thomas got the loss, throwing a complete game and struck out five.

Southern Wells will visit Adams Central at 5 p.m. Thursday, April 17.

Girls tennis between Norwell & Homestead to be continued

Norwell's match at Homestead will have to be decided another time.

At a 2-2 tie, both the Spartans and Knights will have a winner at a later date with the match postponed due to darkness. The rubber match will be between Delaney Hoover and Layla Kelly.

Individual results:

• Macy Parker (H) defeated Addy Heyerly 6-3, 6-1 at No. 1 singles.

JV Results:

• Gabbi Hoeppner (N) defeated Kate Naunas 6-7 (3), 6-3, 10-5.

 Stella Adams defeated Aubrey Meyer 1-6, 6-2, 7-5.

• Cate Kelley defeated Lucy Gerbers 8-1.

• Cate Kelley defeated Charli Swindell 8-0.

· Lydia Pawlak and Ella Goode defeated Hope Mitchell and Emmaline Johnson 4-6, 6-2, 6-2.

• Ava Sanders and Adelyn Hower defeated Sam Evans and Abryn Keller 6-0, 6-1.

· Jenna Karst and Aleena Hower defeated Melissa Hoag and Campbell Sloan 6-1, 6-0.

• Isla Detwiller and Ary Hack defeated Carley Wolf and Isabella Hubble 8-0.

• Sammie Lauer and Ashlyn Sagan defeated Hazel Lewis and Molly Threewits 8-2.

Norwell will host Wayne at 5:30 p.m. Friday, April 19.

Raiders place 2nd, 3rd in track

Southern Wells finished second and third in Tuesday night's track meet at Heritage.

The boys placed second with a score of 39 behind Heritage (105) and Adams Central (12). The girls fell to third with 14 points, Heritage won it with 83 and Adams Central 57.

Top finishers were:

Boys

• The 4x800m relay team of Joshua Bricker, Andrew Aker, Kelton Barr and Myles Garrett second with a time of 9:56.00.

• Peyton Ellis first in the 300m IM with a time of 47.47 and second in the 110m hurdles with a time of 17.29.

• Malaki Capper first in the high jump at 5-8, second in the 100m with a time of 11.20 and second in the 200m with a time of 24.17.

• The 4x100m relay team of Kane Jenkins, Ellis, Caleb Gates and Capper third with a time of 48.88.

• Garrett third in the 800m with a time of 2:37.14.

• Bricker second in the 3200m with a time of 11:02.

• The 4x400m relay team of Barr, Garrett, Kane Jenkins and Ellis with a time of 4:09.68.

• Peyton Long third in the shot put at 39-11.

Girls

• The 4x800m relay team of Ella Lahr, Chanie Mounsey, Dannicka Sorenson and Addie Sabinske third with a time of 14:39.0.

(Continued on Page 7)

NASCAR CUP SERIES **GEICO 500**

Schedule: Saturday, 10:30 a.m. qualifying, Sunday, race, 3 p.m. (FOX).

Last race: Chase Elliott pulled ahead and cleared Ross Chastain on the first lap after the second restart in overtime at Texas, ending a 42-race winless streak.

Next race: April 28, Dover, Delaware.

NASCAR XFINITY SERIES Ag-Pro 300

Schedule: Friday, qualifying, 5:30 p.m., Saturday, race, 4 p.m. (FOX).

Last race: Sam Mayer made a last-lap pass and held on to beat Ryan Sieg in a photo finish at Texas by 0.002 seconds, matching the second-closest finish in series history.

Next race: April 27, Dover, Delaware.

NASCAR TRUCK SERIES

Last race: Kyle Busch overcame a series of late restarts and led 112 of 167 laps to win for the sixth time in the truck series at Texas and the 20th time overall on the 1.5-mile layout.

Next race: May 4, Kansas City, Kansas.

FORMULA ONE

Chinese Grand Prix

Site: Shanghai, China.

Schedule: Thursday, practice, 11:30 p.m.; Friday, Sprint qualifying, 3:30 a.m., and Sprint, 11 p.m.; Saturday, qualifying, 3 a.m.; Sunday, race, 3 a.m. (ESPN).

Last race: Max Verstappen won in Japan, his third win in four races this season.

Next race: May 5, Miami Gardens, Florida.

INDYCAR

Acura Grand Prix of Long Beach

Site: Long Beach, California.

Schedule: Friday, practice, 5:50 p.m., Saturday, practice, 11:25 a.m., and qualifying 2:25 p.m.; Sunday, race, 3 p.m. (USA).

Last race: Two-time and reigning IndyCar champion Alex Palou won the Thermal \$1 Million Challenge, leading all 20 laps of IndyCar's first non-points race since 2008.

Next race: April 28. Birmingham, Alabama. NHRA DRAG RACING

Last event: Doug Kalitta won in Top Fuel and Bob Tasca III won in Funny Car in Las Vegas.

Next event: April 28, Concord, North Carolina. WORLD OF OUTLAWS

Next events: April 19, Paducah, Kentucky, and April 20, Haubstadt, Indiana.





Tyler Shaffer Marion Wells

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SPORTS

Sports Roundup

(Continued from Page 6)

• Svdnev Alstoft second in the 100m hurdles with a time of 19.86 and fourth in the 300m IM with a time of 1:08.5.

• The 4x100m relay team of Alstoft, Kinley Allred, Jayda Brown and Makyla Pryor third with a time of 1:00.17.

• The 4x400m relay team of Sabinske, Sorenson, Reagan Needler and Pryor third with a time of 5:26.0.

 Lexie Fiechter third in the long jump at 12-10.

• Ashlie Needler third in the shot put at 33-8.50.

 Karlee Warner second in the discus at 80-6 and Meyer fourth at 70-2.

Southern Wells will be at Eastern High School at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, April 20.

Raiders fall to Warriors in golf

Southern Wells fell to Woodlan in its season opener at Whispering Woods Wednesday.

The Raiders fell by a score of 171-188. Leading Southern Wells was Gabe McElhaney with a score of 44, followed by Cash Banter (46), Tristen Worster (47), Chandler Oswalt (51) and Drik Frauhiger (53)

Southern Wells will be at Wapahani at 4:30 p.m. Thursday April 18.

Norwell JV baseball wins two in a row

The Norwell junior varsity baseball team won both the Tuesday and Wednesday games

In Game 1, the Knights collected a 10-run victory over Adams Central at home.

The Knights scored eight runs in the bottom of the fourth and the final run to walk the game off in a 10-run mercy rule.

Brayden Huffman and Nick McBride led the way with two hits each. Huffman had two RBI and McBride one. Will Case brought home two runs on one hit, while Noah Comer, and Luke Ward brought in RBI.

Cade Thornton threw 2.1 innings worth of three-run ball (two earned) and struck out six. Jaxson Dohrman went 1.2 innings with two runs (none earned) with a hit, no walks and two strikeouts. Josiah Ray threw a near-perfect inning, only allowing a walk.

In Game 2, the Knights won 9-8 at home against the Fort Wayne Crusaders.

Trey Privett led the team with three hits in the game with a triple and two RBI. Dohrman went 2-2 with two RBI, and Ward went 2-3. Comer and McBride had doubles.

Huffman threw six innings worth on the mound, allowing two runs (one earned), seven hits, no walks and eight strikeouts.

Lions defeats Knights twice in MS soccer

Leo beat Norwell in both middle school soccer games Tuesday night.

The boys lost 4-1. Blake Fuess had the lone goal for the Knights.

The girls lost 1-0. Maggie Neuenschwander was in goal for the Knights.



Norwell's Macie Saalfrank runs toward a return in her No. 3 singles match Wednesday afternoon against Homestead in Fort Wayne. Saalfrank won her match 6-1, 6-2. The team will resume their match with the Spartans at a later date due to darkness. (Photo by Chad Kline)

Cody Bellinger hits a go-ahead homer, Cubs beat the D-Backs

PHOENIX (AP) - Cody Bellinger hit a go-ahead solo homer in the sixth inning, Mike Tauchman added an RBI double and the Chicago Cubs beat the Arizona Diamondbacks 5-3 on Wednesday. The Cubs took two of three in the hard-fought series, which included two extra-inning games. Cubs reliever Hayden

Wesneski earned the win in his first game of the season after being called up from Triple-A Iowa. The right-hander threw 3 2/3 innings to save a tired bullpen and gave up just one hit while striking out two. Ketel Marte gave the D-backs a 1-0 lead with his third leadoff homer of the season and eighth of his career.

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EMPLOYMENT Help Wanted

WELLS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE is currently seeking applicants for the position of Full Time Deputy Sheriff. Applicants must be a US Citizen, at least 21 years of age upon graduation from police acade-my, 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 ininterview vestigation, oral 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 examinauo portion of the cess. 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

Help Wanted

THE CITY OF Bluffton is accepting applications for a paid internship at the Animal Shelter. Applicants must have a high school diploma or equiva-lent. The City of Bluffton uti-lizes E-Verify and follows EEOC guidelines. Applications may be obtained from the Clerk Treasurer's Office, 128 E. Market St, Bluffton, IN Mon-Fri 8 am-4:30 pm or online www.blufftonindiana.net. Deadline for applications is May 3, 2024.

LOOKING FOR EMPLOYEES?

Place a 20 word line classified ad for a month for \$52. Add a graphic or photo for an addi-tional \$5. Contact the Bluffton News-Banner, 260-824-0224, 125 N. Johnson St., or online at www.news-banner.com and click on classifieds.

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REHOMING AKC CHOCO-LATE & YELLOW LAB PUP-PIES Be ready April 26th. 1st shots and wormed. 2 vellow females 3 yellow males chocolate females chocolate males Call or text for more info. Portland IN 260-729-7870

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Lottery Numbers

Wednesday's Drawings HOOSIER LOTTERY Cash 5 — 10-26-30-31-41

Lotto Plus — 02-06-09-25-34-41 **Cash4Life** - 10-14-32-

56. Cash Ball: 02

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

King Classic Sudoku

3 8 9 6 1 9 8 5 3 2 6 9 8 Features Syndicate, Inc 9 4 2 8 4 6 3 1 5 7

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HELOISE HINT: To get ahead at work. Experts say to pay attention to your work performance, not the performances of others. Make your supervisors aware of how professional you are by doing a great job. Email HELOISE@ Heloise. com.



APRIL 18, 4-7 p.m., April 19, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Everything 1/2 price on Saturday, April 20, 9 a.m.-noon, 0511 E 100 N, Bluffton. Clothes: girls 6-14, boys 10-14, ladies XS-XL, mang shoes have crib tays mens, shoes, baby crib, toys games, books, shower cur-tains, lamps, area rugs, home decor, holiday items.

RUMMAGE AND BAKE sale plus queen size quilt raffle THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 1 TO 7 P.M., FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 9 A.M. TO 7 P.M., SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 9 A.M. TO 1 P.M., McNatt Church, 9183 W 800 S -90, Warren (Wells County) one mile west of State Road 3 Bake sale and food will be available on Friday and Saturday only!

HELOISE HINT: Prices at ga rage sales are low because the items are used and may not be in the best condition. You may want to only negotiate over the higher-priced items. Fax Heloise @ 210-HELOISE (435-6473).

FOR SALE

Miscellaneous

EVEREST VX3 ICE & WATER MACHINE This VENDING 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

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HELOISE HINT: When your kids bring home their backlunchboxes after packs or school. Make sure they put them up and away from nosy pets who could get into food or other items that they shouldn't be eating. Fax Heloise 210-HELOISE (435-6473). @

SUDOKU ANSWER

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windshield wiper blades often. Rubber blades often last around 6-12 months. Then the rubber can wear down, and they may become ineffective. Write to HELOISE@Heloise.

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Public Notices

NOTICE

The Wells County Property Tax Assessment Board of Appeals PTABOA) will hold a meeting on Monday May 6, 2024. It will be in the Commissioner's room in the Courthouse Annex at 223 W Wash-ington St. Bluffton, Indiana begin-ning at 8:45 am. The Board will consider exempt properties that have been filed and scheduled for this date.

Upon completion of the busi-ness at hand, the Board will recess sine die until the next scheduled

meeting. This is an open meeting unless private financial information of the appellant is being presented. oj, nb 4/11, 4/18 hspaxlp

Quick Draw Midday 04-06-12-17-18-21-22-32-34-39-42-46-52-53-62-70-72-73-76-80, BE: 76

Daily Three-Midday — 06-05-09, SB: 02

Daily Three-Evening -09-08-09, SB: 05

Daily Four-Midday – 07-05-09-03, SB: 02

Daily Four-Evening -00-09-02-00, SB: 05

Quick Draw Evening 01-03-04-05-10-12-34-35-36-37-39-42-47-55-57-64-70-74-78-79, BE: 37

Hoosier Lotto — 01-10-19-20-40-41

MEGA MILLIONS Estimated jackpot (for Friday): \$178 million POWERBALL

24-29-44-47-54 Powerball: 02; Power Play: 2X

STATE OF INDIANA ÌSS

COUNTY OF WELLS) IN THE WELLS COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT CAUSE NO. 90D01-2403-MI-000008 IN RE THE NAME CHANGE OF: DEVON LEE BRICKLEY Petitione

NOTICE OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME Devon Lee Brickley, whose mailing address is: 326 1/2 N. Marion St., Bluffton, IN 46714, and if different, my residence address is: , in the Wells County, Indiana, hereby gives notice that Devon Lee Brickley has filed a petition in the Circuit Court requesting that last name be changed to Devon Lee Catano Lee Castano.

Notice is further given that the hearing will be held on said Petition on May 9, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. Devon Brickley

Petitioner 03/12/24 Date Kenton W. Kiracofe Judicial Officer nb 4/4, 4/11, 4/18 hspaxlp

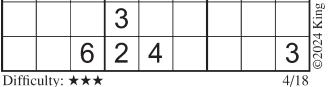
NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS OF ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS Notice is hereby given the taxpayers of Wells County, Indiana, that the County Council of said County, will meet at the Courthouse Annex in Bluffton, Indiana at <u>7:00 O'clock p.m.</u> on <u>Wednesday, the 8th day of May</u> 2024, to consider the following additional appropriations more than the budget for the current year. **ČIRCUIT COURT**

Jurors (1000-30413-000-02032) GIS – AREA PLAN Software Support (1000-30303-000-0753)

\$23,000.00

\$6,208.00 oj, nb 4/18

hspaxlp





BIDDING ENDS APRIL 19 - (Online Only Auction) - The Estate of Dr. Hugh and Rhea Glidewell, 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. The Steffen Group

APRIL 20 - 10 a.m. - (Live Auction) - Marc and Valerie Ham-man, 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.

BIDDING ENDS APRIL 20 - (Online Only Auction) - The Estate of Dr. Hugh and Rhea Glidewell, seller. Major personal property auction. 2008 Mercedes sedan, large quantity of highend 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. The Steffen Group Inc., 260-824-3006, www.steffengrp.com.

APRIL 20-APRIL 27 - (Online Only Auction) - By order of the secured creditor, seller. Over 400+ designer wedding and bridesmaid dresses, designed by Christina Wu, Morilee, Allure Bridal, Maddison James, Maggie Sottero, and more, all size and styles. Preview: April 24 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 215 E. Market St., Bluffton, IN. The Steffen Group Inc., www.steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006

APRIL 21-APRIL 28 - (Online Only Auction) - The estate of Loring and Sandra McCay, seller. Huge antique and primitive auction. Outstanding collection of antique furniture including primitive cupboards, dry sinks, pie safes, large qty. of country primitives, feather light sewing machines, early quilts, 100's of fabric bolts, crocks, vintage Christmas, costume jewelry. Preview: April 18 and April 25 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 102 S. Jefferson St., Ossian. Pat Carter, sale manager, *The Steffen Group Inc.*, www. steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006.

APRIL 22 - 6 p.m. - Kevin Reinhard, seller. Wells County 4-H Park, 1240 4-H Park Rd., Bluffton. Property: From Bluffton travel 3 miles southwest on Hoosier Highway. Online bidding available. 75+/-A offered in 5 tracts or any combination, Wells County, Har-rison Township. Buyer will have 2024 farming rights. Productive farmland in great location (southwest of Bluffton). Development potential. Truck farm opportunity. Auction manager Al Pfister, 260-760-8922, Schrader Real Estate and Auction Company, Inc. 800-451-2709, schraderauction.com

BIDDING STARTS ENDING APRIL 28 - 6 p.m. EST - Phil Vorhees, owner. 2005 Homiers Farm Pro 2425 4x4 tractor w/ loader & backhoe, Massey Harris 44 Special tractor, 1995 Coachman Catalina 5th wheel camper, several 3 pt attachments, Husqvarna Z248f zero turn mower, yard & garden, hand tools, power tools, muzzleloader pistols .41 cal, household, glassware, furniture, Chrane bedroom suite, WWII video reels, 1960 Roy Smeck steel guitar Gold Edition, more! Preview April 25, 3-5 p.m., 2414 W 1100 S, Geneva. Pick up April 29, 2-6 p.m. Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC, 260-724-7402, kjauction.com.

APRIL 28-MAY 5 - (Online Only Auction) - Various consignors, sellers. Over 4,000+ older and newer comic books, sports trading cards, vintage toys including Cabbage Patch dolls, vin-tage toys, 45 records, much more. Preview: April 30 and May 2 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 118 E. Craig St., Ossian. Rod Fetters, sale manager, The Steffen Group, Inc., www.steffengrp.com 260-824-3006

Communications breakdown left residents without alerts amid Maui fire

HONOLULU (AP) -As unpredictable wildfires roared across Maui last August, the head of the emergency management agency dragged his heels about returning to the island amid the unfolding crisis, while a broad communications breakdown left authorities in the dark and residents without emergency alerts, according to a report released Wednesday.

Communications problems were also encountered by the Hawaiian Electric Company, with officials unable to confirm that power lines were de-energized until well after flames had caused widespread damage, the report from the Hawaii Attorney General's office said.

It was the second of two major assessments out this week about the deadliest U.S. wildfire in a century. A report released Tuesday by the Western Fire Chiefs Association detailed the challenges facing the Maui Fire Department during the unprecedented series of blazes, including one that killed 101 people in the historic town of Lahaina.

Attorney General Anne Lopez presented the latest report along with Steve Kerber, vice president of the Fire Safety Research Institute.

"When Attorney General Lopez contacted us, clearly we were paying a lot of attention to what was going on in Lahaina and really had the same question that she had. How is it possible that something like this could happen?" Kerber said.

Officials did not answer questions about cause or liability, saying it is only an initial reckoning and two more reports will follow. Investigators are still trying to get some documents from Maui County, officials said.

'We're going to continue this investigation, and we will follow it wherever it leads," Lopez said.

The federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives is also investigating, and its report, expected to pinpoint cause, will come out before the one-year anniversary.

The report released Wednesday says that five days before the flames broke out, meteorologists warned that strengthening winds resulting from a hurricane south of Hawaii could lead to extreme wildfire risk Aug. 8. "Confidence in the development of critical fire weather conditions this many days away is quite rare, and we believe that this warrants a heads up to you," a National Weather Service forecaster said in an email to fire contacts Aug. 3.

Kerber described complex and "incredibly fast" fires with flames traveling at a rate of about a mile in 90 minutes.

The Maui Emergency Management Agency had posted to Facebook on Aug. 6 about a "serious fire and damaging wind threat" due to dry conditions as Hurricane Dora passed.

The agency's administrator, Herman Andaya, was off island at a conference on Oahu on Aug. 8 as the fires intensified. His call and text records show that he was getting updates from Gaye Gabuat, an administrative assistant. After a series of evacuations in Lahaina, Gabuat told Andaya that

"multiple people look over-whelmed," according to the report. Andaya asked if he should come home, to which Gabuat responded, "it may look okay."

After the fire had been burning for more than five hours, Gabuat told Andaya that flames had reached Front Street, Lahaina's commercial heart. Only then did Andaya respond that he had "better come home tomorrow."

By that time multiple areas had been evacuated, according to a situation report by Andaya's agency. Front Street had been closed along with the Lahaina bypass road, another key thoroughfare. In Lahaina alone, 29 utility poles were reported downed.

There was no immediate response to attempts Wednesday to reach Andaya, who resigned Aug. 18, via phone, email and social media.

Investigators said they requested incident activity logs and other records from the agency's emergency operations center, or EOC, on multiple occasions. Derek Alkonis, a manager with the fire research institute, said they had received some information but not everything they had requested. "You'll find in the report that there is a difficulty with gaining information from the EOC, Alkonis said. "In terms of the reason for that challenge, it's going to be analyzed in subsequent reports.'

The report also describes a breakdown in communication between police, firefighters and emergency officials after cell networks went down. Police and firefighters had to communicate using their handheld or car radios on closed channels that public officials and others could not listen to.

Meanwhile a stretched and limited dispatch center had single operators monitoring five or six channels at a time to keep up.

"With no cellular communication, residents and tourists were not able to receive emergency alerts, communicate with loved ones and/or to receive incoming or outgoing calls/ texts," the report's authors wrote.

police officer told other responders his daughter had been babysitting in a neighborhood that was hit by the fire. Without cell communications he had no way to check if she escaped, and it took two days before he confirmed she was OK.

Fire crews also became trapped, according to staffing logs included in the report. Around 4:30 p.m., one engine was destroyed and another broke down. A firefighter from one of the engines rescued the crews using a police department SUV, according to the logs.

Hawaiian Electric has acknowledged that a downed power line sparked a fire in Lahaina early on the morning of Aug. 8. Firefighters were still mopping up that fire at noon and waiting for a utility worker to arrive and confirm that the power lines had been deenergized. But he got there, he was unable to confirm the power had been cut off information that would likely have helped fire crews assess the risk of re-ignition as well as the risk posed by other downed lines.

They detailed how one

Senate rejects impeachment articles against Mayorkas, ending trial

WASHINGTON (AP) - The Senate dismissed all impeachment charges against Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas on Wednesday, ending the House Republican push to remove the Cabinet secretary from office over his handling of the the U.S.-Mexico border and shutting down his trial before arguments even began.

Senators voted to dismiss both articles of impeachment and end the proceedings, with Democrats arguing that the articles were unconstitutional. The first article charged Mayorkas with "willful and systemic refusal to comply" with immigration law and second article charged him with a "breach of trust" for saying the border was secure. The votes were 51-48 and 51-49, both along party lines.

Senate Majority Leader

Chuck Schumer said the House Republicans' charges failed to meet "the high standard of high crimes and misdemeanors" and could set a dangerous precedent.

"For the sake of the Senate's integrity and to protect impeachment for those rare cases we truly need it, senators should dismiss today's charges," said Schumer, D-N.Y., as he opened Wednesday's session.

Senate Republicans had argued for a full impeachment trial after the House narrowly voted in February to impeach Mayorkas for his handling of the border, stating in the two articles that he "willfully and systematically" refused to enforce immigration laws.

An outright dismissal of House Republicans' prosecution of Mayorkas, with no chance to argue the case, is an embarrassing defeat for House Republicans and embattled House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., who made the impeachment a priority. And it is likely to resonate politically for both Republicans and Democrats in a presidential election year when border security has been a top issue.

Republicans argue that President Joe Biden has been weak on the border as arrests for illegal crossings skyrocketed to more than 2 million people during the last two years of his term, though they have fallen from a record high of 250,000 in December amid heightened enforcement in Mexico. Democrats say that instead of impeaching Mayorkas, Republicans should have accepted a bipartisan Senate compromise aimed at reducing the number of migrants who come into the U.S. illegally.

House impeachment

managers delivered the

well of the Senate and read- get a chance to present the charges to the Senate on ing them aloud to a captive case before the Senate dis-Tuesday, standing in the audience. But they did not missed it.







'Salute to Seniors" **Special Section**

Include your message of congratulations in this special edition to publish Wed. May 22.

Send your photo to Jim Chilton at jimc@news-banner.com along with a contact phone number, and the message you would like to include.

