

# The News - Banner

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MONDAY, APRIL 22, 2024 BLUFFTON, INDIANA • Wells County's Hometown Connection \$1.00

## Vera Cruz paddlesports site set for summer finish

**By JONATHAN SNYDER**  
A new launch site for paddlesports will be constructed in Vera Cruz sometime in the summer.  
Currently, a Wabash River trip from Linn Grove to the White Bridge in Bluffton takes about six hours. The new site creates two three-hour trips, which is a more feasible length of time, says Brandy Fiechter, parks department superintendent and Bluffton Kayak Club member.  
"So this is a good way of having a stopping point," Fiechter said. "You can go from Linn Grove to there at Vera Cruz, or you can go from Vera Cruz to Bluffton and not be committed to being on the river for like five or six hours."  
The project is a combined effort from the Bluffton Kayak and Hiking Clubs, Vera

Cruz, Wells County Commissioners and Wells County Trails. The commissioners helped to hire engineering and wetlands studies so the project met permit requirements from the state.  
The Kayak Club originally brought the idea to Wells County Trails President Mike Lautzenheiser, who brought in a \$50,000 matching grant from the state for the project. An online fundraiser met the \$50,000 match goal on Jan. 11.  
Paddlesports has become more popular in Bluffton ever since the White Bridge launch site was constructed, according to Fiechter. The Bluffton Kayak Club currently has 610 members on Facebook.  
The Kayak Club and Lautzenheiser also cited safety as a reason for the project. Lautzenheiser also had a backpack. He asked if he could give the bag to his fiancé, Cassie Abercrombie.  
A search of the backpack revealed 33.8 grams of methamphetamine in an orange pill bottle. Additionally, police found a  
(Continued on Page 2)



**Earth Day 5K**  
Runners took to the Rivergreenway trail, for a 5K run to celebrate Earth Day on Saturday. The Parks Department recycled old T-shirts from previous events and gave them, along with a small plant to the runners. At left, Kayden Robbins is just about to enter the final stretch. Below, Doug Sundling runs the 5K with his dogs, Ginger and Meqo, by his side. (Photos by Jonathan Snyder)

## Bluffton man receives 6 years after armed theft

**By SYDNEY KENT**  
A man from Bluffton received six years in prison in connection to an armed theft at the Shell gas station in Bluffton. He received a significant plea deal in the case.  
Howard Michael Bryant, 35, was convicted of possession of methamphetamine, a Level 4 felony. Charges for dealing methamphetamine, a Level 2 felony, intimidation using a deadly weapon, a Level 5 felony, and theft, a Class A misdemeanor, were all dismissed.  
According to a probable cause affidavit, an employee from the gas station reported that a theft suspect was fighting with another

employee on Oct. 10. The manager later told police that the man had pulled out a knife during the incident.  
Police located Bryant outside of a nearby business with a large knife in a sheath on his right side. Several knives, brass knuckles and a butterfly knife were removed from Bryant's person.  
Bryant also had a backpack. He asked if he could give the bag to his fiancé, Cassie Abercrombie.  
A search of the backpack revealed 33.8 grams of methamphetamine in an orange pill bottle. Additionally, police found a  
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## Mentzer, mayor to meet with petitioners on lighting project

**By JONATHAN SNYDER**  
After a petition about the a project meant to light the Rivergreenway reached Mayor John Whicker's desk, both he and Common Council member Scott Mentzer, who were mentioned in the petition, will meet with the signers at a later date to address their concerns.  
The petition, also published as a Letter to the Editor in Friday's News-Banner, states that there are concerns that the project seems to be happening "behind closed doors" and that no formal communication had been given to the affected property owners. Mentzer stated that he reached out to the signers of the petition to meet at a later time. Mentzer proposed a meeting Saturday morning, but due to conflicts, the petitioners could not meet that day.  
Whicker and Mentzer said a results of a survey about potential park improvements — available on the Parks Department 5-Year Master Plan — states that lighting the Rivergreenway is "very impor-

tant" to 101 people who took the survey. Forty-seven people said the improvement is "important," 20 said it was "somewhat important" and six said it was "not important."  
Whicker and Mentzer referenced a column publishing last September where Parks Department Superintendent Brandy Fiechter wrote: "Another piece of exciting news that came to us recently is that the Caylor Nickel Foundation has generously offered to pay for street lighting on River Road that will improve both the safety of the street and provide a source of light for the Rivergreenway Trail up to the city limits at the red bridge."  
Multiple mentions of the prospective project have been published in The News-Banner, dating back to 2021.  
The city is preparing the legal right-of-way documentation to present to the petitioners in their meeting. An official date for the meeting has not yet been set.  
jonathan@news-banner.com

## House passes billions in aid for Ukraine, Israel after months of struggle, next is the Senate

**By STEPHEN GROVES and LISA MASCARO**  
**Associated Press**  
WASHINGTON (AP) — The House has approved \$95 billion in foreign aid for Ukraine, Israel and other U.S. allies in a rare weekend session as Democrats and Republicans banded together after months of hard-right resistance over renewed

American support for repelling Russia's invasion. With an overwhelming vote Saturday, the \$61 billion in aid for Ukraine passed in a matter of minutes, a strong showing as American lawmakers race to deliver a fresh round of U.S. support to the war-torn ally. Many Democrats cheered on the House floor

and waved blue-and-yellow flags of Ukraine. Aid to Israel and the other allies also won approval by healthy margins, as did a measure to clamp down on the popular platform TikTok, with unique coalitions forming to push the separate bills forward. The whole package  
(Continued on Page 2)

## Lawsuits over voting create a shadow war for 2024 election

**By CHRISTINE FERNANDO**  
**Associated Press**  
CHICAGO (AP) — As President Joe Biden and Donald Trump step up their campaigning in swing states, a quieter battle is taking place in the shadows of their White House rematch.  
The Republican National Committee, newly reconstituted under Trump, has filed election-related lawsuits in nearly half the states. Recent lawsuits over voter roll maintenance in Michigan and

Nevada are part of a larger strategy targeting various aspects of voting and election administration. It's not a new strategy. But with recent internal changes at the RNC and added pressure from the former president, the legal maneuvering is expected to play an increasingly significant role for the party as Election Day in November approaches. The lawsuits are useful for campaign messaging, fundraising and raising doubts about the validity of the election.

Danielle Alvarez, a senior adviser to the RNC and the Trump campaign, said the lawsuits were one of the organization's main priorities this year.  
"This is something that's very important to President Trump," she said. "He has said that this is something the RNC should do year-round."  
Democrats and legal experts are warning about how the lawsuits might overwhelm election officials and undermine voter confidence in

the the results of the balloting. The Democratic National Committee has a legal strategy of its own, building "a robust voter protection operation, investing tens of millions of dollars," to counter the GOP's efforts that seek to restrict access to the polls, spokesperson Alex Floyd said.  
"The RNC is actively deploying an army of lawyers to make it harder for Americans' ballots to be counted," he said.  
Election litigation soared after

the 2020 election as Trump and his allies unsuccessfully challenged his loss to Biden in dozens of lawsuits. Experts that year wondered whether the blitz of legal action was an aberration caused by false claims of a stolen election and changes to voting processes due to the COVID-19 pandemic, said Miriam Seifter, attorney with the State Democracy Research Initiative at the University of Wisconsin  
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**Outside**  
  
**Winter throws a frosty curve ball this morning**  
Today High 62 Low 47  
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# Vera Cruz paddlesports

(Continued from Page 1)  
zenheiser mentioned that launching a kayak out of Vera Cruz would require someone to go over an 8-10 ft. steep bank, which could cause a fall or tipped kayak. "Our goal is to make the river more accessible to people of all paddling skill levels, not just those that are willing to get muddy and then work their way through," Lautzenheiser said.

Fiechter also noted that a concrete launch ramp will also avoid any tree roots or other debris at the banks of

the river. Along with being more slip-resistant, the ramp would give a smoother entry into the water.

"Just having ... something solid that you can walk into and out of like that, it really makes a difference," Fiechter said.

The new launch site will include a stone parking lot, a 12-foot access driveway and a concrete launch ramp. The project will be constructed by Isch Excavating out of Adams County. Their bid for the project totaled \$82,351, allowing for a maintenance

account for the site.

"We've set ourselves in a really good spot," Lautzenheiser said. "Not only to construct but also to maintain the properties and also add additional features if we wanted to do security cameras or signage — things like that on the site that we'd be able to take care of."

Lautzenheiser hopes the construction will be completed in the summer of this year but noted that delays could happen with the excavation.

Fiechter added that peo-

ple could use the site for lots of different water activities, not just paddlesports.

"We're just glad to have more connecting pieces that will make tourism in this area something that's better able to accommodate people. And not only for kayakers, but you will see sometimes people fishing at those boat launches because they've got a nice place to park, they've got a nice easy entrance to the river, so it's kind of a good thing for all watersports."

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# Weather

Monday, April 22, 2024

(24-hour observations at 9:41 p.m. Sunday)

High: 54; Low: 39; Precipitation: None

Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 3.59 feet at 8:45 p.m. Sunday

## Wells County forecast

**Today:** Areas of frost before 8 a.m. Otherwise, sunny, with a high near 62. Southwest wind 5 to 10 mph.

**Tonight:** Mostly cloudy, with a low around 47. Southwest wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

**Tuesday:** Showers, with thunderstorms also possible after 5 p.m. High near 58. Southwest wind around 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph. Chance of precipitation is 90%. New rainfall amounts between a quarter and half of an inch possible.

**Tuesday Night:** Showers and thunderstorms before 11 p.m., then a chance of showers between 11 p.m. and 2 a.m. Low around 38. West wind around 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph. Chance of precipitation is 80%. New precipitation amounts between a tenth and quarter of an inch, except higher amounts possible in thunderstorms.

**Wednesday:** Mostly sunny, with a high near 53.

**Wednesday Night:** Widespread frost, mainly after 4 a.m. Otherwise, mostly clear, with a low around 31.

**Thursday:** Widespread frost, mainly before 7 a.m. Otherwise, sunny, with a high near 59.

**Thursday Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 38.

**Friday:** A chance of showers, with thunderstorms also possible after 2 p.m. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 65. Chance of precipitation is 50%.

**Friday Night:** Showers and thunderstorms likely. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 56. Breezy. Chance of precipitation is 70%.

**Saturday:** Showers and thunderstorms likely. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 74. Breezy. Chance of precipitation is 60%.

**Saturday Night:** A chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 61. Breezy.

**Sunday:** A chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly sunny, with a high near 79.

# House passes aid

(Continued from Page 1)  
will go to the Senate, which could pass it as soon as Tuesday. President Joe Biden has promised to sign it immediately.

"We did our work here, and I think history will judge it well," said a weary Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., who risked his own job to marshal the package to passage.

Biden spoke separately with Johnson and Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries to thank them for "putting our national security first" by advancing the legislation, the White House said.

"I urge the Senate to quickly send this package to my desk so that I can sign it into law and we can quickly send weapons and equipment to Ukraine to meet their urgent battlefield needs," the president said.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine said he was "grateful" to both parties in the House and "personally Speaker Mike Johnson for the decision that keeps history on the right track," he said on X, formerly Twitter.

"Thank you, America!" he said.

The scene in Congress was a striking display of action after months of dysfunction and stalemate fueled by Republicans, who hold the majority but are deeply split over foreign aid, particularly for Ukraine. Johnson relied on Democrats to ensure the military and humanitarian funding — the first major package for Ukraine since December 2022 — won approval.

The morning opened with a somber and serious debate and an unusual sense of purpose as Republican and Democratic leaders united to urge quick approval, saying that would ensure the United States supported its allies and remained a leader on the world stage. The House's visitor galleries were crowded with onlookers.

"The eyes of the world are upon us, and history will judge what we do here and now," said Rep. Michael McCaul, R-Texas, chairman of the House For-

eign Affairs Committee

Passage through the House cleared away the biggest hurdle to Biden's funding request, first made in October as Ukraine's military supplies began to run low.

The GOP-controlled House struggled for months over what to do, first demanding that any assistance for Ukraine be tied to policy changes at the U.S.-Mexico border, only to immediately reject a bipartisan Senate offer along those very lines.

Reaching an endgame has been an excruciating lift for Johnson that has tested both his resolve and his support among Republicans, with a small but growing number now openly urging his removal from the speaker's office. Yet congressional leaders cast the votes as a turning point in history — an urgent sacrifice as U.S. allies are beleaguered by wars and threats from continental Europe to the Middle East to the Indo-Pacific.

"Sometimes when you are living history, as we are today, you don't understand the significance of the actions of the votes that we make on this House floor, of the effect that it will have down the road," said New York Rep. Gregory Meeks, the top Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. "This is a historic moment."

Opponents, particularly the hard-right Republicans from Johnson's majority, argued that the U.S. should focus on the home front, addressing domestic border security and the nation's rising debt load, and they warned against spending more money, which largely flows to American defense manufacturers, to produce weaponry used overseas.

Still, Congress has seen a stream of world leaders visit in recent months, from Zelenskyy to Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, all but pleading with lawmakers to approve the aid. Globally, the delay left many question-

ing America's commitment to its allies.

At stake has been one of Biden's top foreign policy priorities — halting Russian President Vladimir Putin's advance in Europe. After engaging in quiet talks with Johnson, the president quickly endorsed Johnson's plan, paving the way for Democrats to give their rare support to clear the procedural hurdles needed for a final vote.

"We have a responsibility, not as Democrats or Republicans, but as Americans to defend democracy wherever it is at risk," Jeffries said during the debate.

While aid for Ukraine failed to win a majority of Republicans, several dozen progressive Democrats voted against the bill aiding Israel as they demanded an end to the bombardment of Gaza that has killed thousands of civilians. A group of roughly 20 hard-right Republicans voted against every portion of the aid package, including for allies like Israel and Taiwan that have traditionally enjoyed support from the GOP.

Some Republicans also angrily objected to their counterparts waving Ukrainian flags during the vote. Rep. Kat Cammack, a Florida Republican, said on X she was "infuriated" by the display and was working on legislation to prohibit the flags of foreign nations on the House floor.

At the same time, Donald Trump, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, has loomed large over the fight, weighing in from afar via social media statements and direct phone calls with lawmakers as he tilts the GOP to a more isolationist stance with his "America First" brand of politics.

Ukraine's defense once enjoyed robust, bipartisan support in Congress, but as the war enters its third year, a majority of Republicans opposed further aid. Trump ally Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., offered an amendment to zero out the money, but it was rejected.

# Lawsuits over voting

(Continued from Page 1)  
Law School.

They quickly realized that wasn't the case as the 2022 midterms also generated a high number of election-related lawsuits. This year is projected to be similar, she said.

"Litigation seems to now be a fixture of each parties' political and electoral strategies," Seifter said.

Voter ID rules, mail ballots and voter roll maintenance are among the RNC's litigation targets. The latest is a lawsuit this month alleging that Michigan has failed to keep its voter rolls up to date.

Maintaining accurate voter rolls by updating voters' status is routine for election officials, who watch for death notices, changes in motor vehicle records or election mail being repeatedly returned. Michigan also uses ERIC, an interstate data-sharing pact that helps states update voter lists but has been targeted by conspiracy theories.

Opponents of the lawsuit have said it relies on unsubstantiated, flawed data and runs the risk of purging legitimate voters.

"They're claiming there's a problem because one piece of data doesn't match another piece of data," said Justin Levitt, a Loyola Law School professor. "But the pieces of data they're trying to match don't measure the same thing. It's like saying, 'I just looked at the clock and it's

different from the temperature on my thermometer."

This is not a new tactic, said Caren Short, director of legal and research for the League of Women Voters, which has filed to intervene in the Michigan lawsuit. She said most previous lawsuits have been from "more fringe groups" rather than directly from the RNC.

"Now seeing a prominent political party attempting to purge people from the rolls, it's very concerning," she said.

In the past four years, Michigan's voter rolls have been targeted in three similar unsuccessful lawsuits. Just days after the Michigan lawsuit was filed, the RNC filed a similar one in Nevada.

A federal appeals court earlier sided with the RNC in a lawsuit in Pennsylvania questioning whether officials should count improperly dated absentee ballots. A Wisconsin lawsuit is targeting absentee voting procedures and ballot drop boxes. An RNC lawsuit in Arizona is aiming to invalidate or adjust the state's 200-page elections manual while another in Mississippi seeks to prevent mail ballots from being counted if they are postmarked by Election Day but received days later.

Various other groups have filed similar litigation recently, including a lawsuit against the Maryland State Board of Elections claiming the state's voting system is

not in compliance with federal and state law.

Marly Hornik, CEO of United Sovereign Americans, one of the groups behind the Maryland lawsuit, said more lawsuits are intended in other states this year. On its website, United Sovereign Americans, which Hornik said formed last summer, announced plans to file lawsuits in 23 states.

The GOP and affiliated groups are involved in dozens of other cases with more on the way, RNC officials have said. In this election cycle, the RNC's legal team has been involved in more than 80 lawsuits in 23 states, said Alvarez, the RNC spokesperson.

She said part of the reason for the flurry of lawsuits was the lifting of a federal consent decree in 2018 that had sharply limited the RNC's ability to challenge voter verification and other "ballot security."

During an interview this month with Fox News, the RNC chairman, Michael

Whately, emphasized the party's plans to prioritize election-related litigation. He said the RNC is recruiting and training tens of thousands of poll observers and working with thousands of attorneys.

On Friday, the RNC announced plans to train poll watchers, poll workers and lawyers and send out more than 100,000 attorneys and volunteers to monitor vote-counting across battleground states in November.

Prioritizing election litigation also is reflected in recent changes within the RNC since Whately and Lara Trump, the former president's daughter-in-law, took control and reshaped the organization with a renewed focus on "election integrity." The RNC now has "election integrity directors" in 13 states.

# Armed theft

(Continued from Page 1)  
digital pocket scale, a glass smoking pipe, drug paraphernalia and the stolen pop.

Bryant claimed that the drinks inside of his backpack were already there. The items, worth \$17.43, were returned to the gas station.

During his transport to the jail, Bryant reportedly told police he should not be charged with intimidation because he was defending himself from the employees, who told him to return the items.

Bryant received 198 days of credit towards his sentence awaiting disposition in the case. In December, he requested to be released without bond. Bryant alleged he needed to continue working main-

tenance at the complex where he lived for his fiancé to avoid becoming homeless.

However, she was also arrested on dealing charges and appeared in court hours before the hearing. Abercrombie, 34, was charged with dealing methamphetamine and dealing in a narcotic drug, both Level 4 felonies. She has since pled guilty to the charges. She is scheduled for a sentencing hearing in the case at 9 a.m. on May 15 in the Wells Circuit Court.

As part of his sentence, Bryant was also recommended for evaluation for a clinically appropriate substance abuse treatment center. The completion of the program will not allow for him to serve less time.

sydney@news-banner.com

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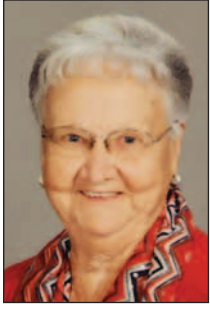
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OBITUARIES

**Carolyn June Bailey, 91**

Carolyn June Bailey, 91, of Warren, passed away Wednesday, April 17, 2024, at Bluffton Regional Medical Center.



Carolyn was born April 7, 1933, in Huntington County, to Guy L. and Edna (Fahl) Will. She graduated from Rock Creek Township High School in 1951 and married Fred D. Bailey Jan. 31, 1959 at the Markle Church of the Brethren.

Carolyn enjoyed working on the dairy farm with her husband and raising her family. She was a fan of the Chicago Cubs and Purdue. She was a great bowler and bowled in leagues for many years. Carolyn loved her church, Mt. Etna Community Life Church and after Fred passed, she loved to get involved with church activities.

Carolyn was preceded in death by her parents, Guy and Edna Will; her husband, Fred D. Bailey; and sister, Hilda Dill.

Loving survivors include her children, Marilyn (Steve) Boxell, Rhonda (Kent Seabolt) Droke, and Mark (Rikki) Bailey; grandchildren, Jill (Cory) Worthington, Jon (Tiffany) Jennings, Nathan (Lisa) Boxell, Kaitlyn (Dereck Durham) Boxell, Grace (Trevor) Bower, Ian Boxell, Ashlyn (Zach) Walker, Jessica Bailey, Lauren (Josh) Pohler, Tyler Campbell, Brandon (Alicia) Whitton, Brady Whitton, Kinzi Whitton and Railin Bailey; great-grandchildren, Taylor, Hunter, Austin, Camron, Case, Owen, Rhett, Charlee, Wyatt, Cameron, Jordan, Olivia, Paisley, and Wyatt; siblings, Terry Will, John Will, Pat (Jerry) Duncan, and Tom (Pam) Will; and several nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held at Mt. Etna Community Life Church located at 6383 W 600 S, Huntington, IN 46750, Saturday, April 27, 2024, at 1 p.m. with visitation from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Pastor Mike Gallant will officiate.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to: Mt. Etna Community Life Church 6383 W 600 S, Huntington, IN 46750.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Glancy-H. Brown & Son Funeral Home in Warren, Indiana.

**Edward P. Jambora, 82**

Edward P. Jambora, 82, of Bluffton, passed away Sunday morning, April 21, 2024, at his residence, surrounded by his family.

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

**Charles McKinley, 92**

Charles "Chuck" McKinley, 92, passed away Friday afternoon, April 19, 2024, at his residence in Fort Wayne.

Funeral arrangements are pending with Goodwin - Cale & Harnish Memorial Chapel, Bluffton, IN.

**Donald "Gene" Stewart, 86**

Donald "Gene" Stewart, 86, passed away Sunday morning, April 21, 2024, at his residence in Poneto, following an extended illness.

Funeral arrangements are pending with Goodwin - Cale & Harnish Memorial Chapel Bluffton, IN.

# Wells Court Docket

**Wells Superior Court Criminal Cases**

Jessy Colten Gardner, 23, Bluffton, pled guilty to one count of failure to register as a sex or violent offender, a Level 6 felony. Gardner is scheduled for a sentencing hearing at 9 a.m. June 25, in the Wells Superior Court.

Gardner is required to register as a sex offender after he was convicted of sexual misconduct with a minor, a Level 5 felony, in June

2020. Gardner received two years of probation and a suspended two year sentence for his relationship with a minor that resulted in the birth of a child.

Ellen Marie Lamb, 39, Marion, was sentenced to one year in the Wells County Jail with all but two days suspended. Lamb pled guilty to one count of operating while intoxicated, endangering a person, a Class A misdemeanor. She is also required to serve

363 days of probation and pay court costs and filing fees in the amount of \$389.50.

Susan Louise Wright, 42, Claypool, appeared in the Wells Superior Court for a change of plea hearing last week. Wright pled guilty to one count of operating a vehicle while intoxicated with a prior conviction within seven years, a Level 6 felony. A sentencing hearing is scheduled in the matter at 9 a.m. June 20.

## Norwell school board receives state honors

Gene Donaghy, Angie Topp and Chad Kline, school board members for the Norwell Community Schools, have been recognized by the Indiana School Boards Association (ISBA) with an Exemplary Governance Award for calendar year 2023 for demonstrating an outstanding commitment to professional learning and student success.

The Exemplary Governance Awards (EGA) are conferred annually by the Indiana School Boards Association to school boards and school board members who have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to

professional learning and student success.

Awards are conferred across four levels of distinction. This year's honors include 109 Commendable Awards (Level 1), 78 Advanced Awards (Level 2), 54 Distinguished Awards (Level 3) and 29 Exemplary Awards (Level 4).

"On behalf of ISBA, I would like to commend this most exceptional group of school board members," said ISBA Executive Director Terry Spradlin. "School boards perform a vital public service, and members who actively participate in pro-

fessional learning are better equipped to perform their duties effectively."

Honorees received their awards at ISBA's Spring Regional Meeting held for District 3 in Fort Wayne on Thursday, April 18.

"These individuals are leading the way as models who strive for effective school board governance, and they should be proud of their accomplishments," said ISBA President Rebecca Gardenour.

In addition to the individual accolades, Norwell's board also earned board Level 2 award for the sec-

ond consecutive year. Level 1 and Level 2 Board awards are based on the collective point totals earned by board members, while Level 3 and Level 4 Board awards require the completion of additional criteria, such as a retreat with an outside facilitator.

ISBA provides a full range of professional learning opportunities to help board members govern effectively. At dozens of events throughout the year, ISBA informs and educates board members about best practices, legislative issues, policy development, school law, and more.

## Councilwoman chosen as new Fort Wayne mayor

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (AP) — A Fort Wayne city councilwoman was chosen Saturday as the new mayor of Indiana's second most populous city, and its first Black leader, during a caucus to replace its late mayor, who died in March.

Councilwoman Sharon Tucker, a Democrat, will also become the second woman to serve as mayor of the northeastern Indiana city. She was elected in the second round of voting during a Democratic caucus when she met the requirement of 50% of the votes plus one, The Journal Gazette reported.

Derek Camp, chairman of the Allen County Democratic Party, said Tucker would be sworn in as mayor early next week. He said he would not reveal how many votes Tucker received in the caucus so that the party can unite behind Fort Wayne's new mayor.

The local Democratic party said in a statement that it was excited to have "Mayor Tucker at the helm leading Fort Wayne into the future."

"Today, Mayor Tucker proved that she has the energy and support of our party, and we can't wait to support her as she works to continue moving our community forward together," the statement adds.

Seven candidates, including Indiana Democratic House leader state Rep. Phil GiaQuinta, ran in Saturday's party caucus, where 92 precinct committee members cast votes.

The mayor's office became vacant when Mayor Tom Henry died March 28 after experiencing a medical emergency related to his stomach cancer. He was 72.

Henry, a Democrat, was elected in November to his fifth term as mayor of

the city with about 270,000 residents. He announced his diagnosis of late-stage stomach cancer during a news conference Feb. 26 and had started chemotherapy at the beginning of March.

Tucker will serve the remainder of Henry's mayoral term, which runs through Dec. 31, 2027, Camp said.

He said that in addition to becoming the first Black person to serve as Fort Wayne mayor, Tucker will also become its second female mayor. The first was Cosette Simon, who served 11 days as mayor in 1985 after fellow Democrat Winfield Moses resigned as part of a plea agreement involving alleged campaign finance violations.

Her term ended when Moses won a party mayoral caucus to replace himself, The Journal Gazette reported.

## Democratic caucus selects Indy City-County Councilor Jackson for Senate vacancy

By WHITNEY DOWNARD  
Indiana Capital Chronicle

Indianapolis City-County Councilor La Keisha Jackson won a caucus Thursday night to fill the remaining term of the late state Sen. Jean Breaux, according to a release from the Indiana Democratic Party.

Breaux, an Indianapolis Democrat, died last month following a prolonged illness that took her away from the entire 2024 legislative session.

Jackson and Chunia Graves, the vice president of the Marion County Young Democrats, both filed to fill the seat and addressed the precinct for several minutes before a vote — which Jackson won with 30 of 45 votes.

"What I want to say tonight is that Senator Jean Breaux's legacy will live on," said Jackson in her acceptance speech. "I cannot walk in her shoes because those are big shoes to follow. But what I do promise you is I will advocate, work hard, listen, and fight the good fight!"

Because the seat was up for re-election, and Breaux was the only one appearing on the primary ballot, a second caucus will occur after May 7 and before July 3 to fill the November ballot vacancy for the four-year term. Jackson's swearing-in ceremony will be scheduled at a later date.

## Man who won primary election convicted of manslaughter

LEBANON, Ind. (AP) — A central Indiana man who won a primary election for a township board position while charged with killing his estranged wife has been found guilty of the lesser charge of voluntary manslaughter.

A Boone County jury convicted Andrew Wilhoite, 41, of Lebanon on Thursday, local news outlets reported.

Wilhoite was charged with murder in the death of his wife, 41-year-old Elizabeth "Nikki" Wil-

hoite, who was reported missing by coworkers on March 25, 2022, when she did not show up for work. Her body was found in a creek near her home the next day.

She had filed for divorce on March 17 and had recently finished chemotherapy treatments for cancer.

Wilhoite told police he struck his wife with a flowerpot during an argument, then dumped her body in the creek.

He faces 10 to 30 years in prison when he is sen-

tenced on June 4.

One of his attorneys, Jennifer Lukemeyer, said she had no comment on the verdict.

Wilhoite was one of three Republican candidates who advanced in a 2022 primary for a township board position

before later withdrawing from the race. He received 60 of the 276 total votes for Republicans for three positions on the Clinton Township Board, Boone County election results showed. The race drew only three candidates.

**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.

Area funeral homes will provide details on the policy and will coordinate obituary publication.

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## Holcomb's legacy: Stronger than some like to admit

Gov. Eric Holcomb is in the final months of his eight years leading the state, and his legacy is coming into focus. So is his popularity.

In the last few years — since the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 — a loud group of ultra-conservative Republicans have demeaned Holcomb's leadership and record. But a new poll from State Affairs/Howey Politics shows the governor remains popular within his party.

His approval rating among Republicans and GOP-leaning independents is 69%. That's 10 percentage points higher than U.S. Sen. Mike Braun's approval in the same poll, but not nearly as high as former President Donald Trump at 83%.

The real question is whether Holcomb's popularity translates into lasting accomplishments. Over the years, Holcomb has established several key goals, and it's time to see if they will come to fruition.

### Grading the goals

One of Holcomb's top priorities has been that 95% of students in third grade can read proficiently by 2027. Obviously, the progress can't be measured yet, but a bill this year to increase literacy support and hold back third graders who fail the state's reading assessment three times will likely have an impact. This will be a heavy lift since the most recent numbers showed one in five students aren't reading proficiently.

The Times of Northwest Indiana recently reported that Holcomb almost certainly won't achieve his goal of reducing Indiana's infant mortality rate to the lowest in the Midwest. Indiana has lagged most states in the region for at least a decade, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.

A recent report from the Indiana Department of Health found that infant mortality in the Hoosier State rose to 7.2 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2022, up from 6.7 in 2021 and 6.6 in 2020. The state health agency said preliminary data suggests Indiana's infant mortality rate is due to fall to 6.5 deaths per 1,000 live births for 2023. But that early result remains subject to revision and is unlikely to be official for months to come.

Holcomb has a good shot at another of his objectives: raising average Indiana teacher pay to \$60,000. He even went ahead and called it a win in his 2024 State of the State Address.

"Thanks to the historic investments this body has made, average teacher pay across the state will reach our salary goal of \$60,000 a year," the governor said in January.

The average teacher salary in Indiana was \$58,531 during the 2022-23 school year — up from about \$57,000 the year prior — according to the most recent state teacher compensation report by the Indiana Education Employment Relations Board (IEERB). Another report will come at the end of the year and include any new negotiated salary increases.

Holcomb's last major goal focuses on college attainment and looks to be well out of reach. He hoped to have 60% of Hoosiers equipped with a quality degree or credential beyond high school by 2025.

A 2022 report found that Indiana's college-going rate not only lags behind the nation but is also declining. Currently, the rate is just over 48%. But many Hoosiers are obtaining credentials so that's a positive.

### More than numbers

Holcomb is far more popular than he gets credit for, largely due to a few key decisions he made during the pandemic. And while he won't reach all his goals, he also has other accomplishments to be proud of.

One is the ongoing economic development investment keeping Indiana in the running for a top spot to locate and grow jobs. Another is \$1 billion funneled to regions around the state to improve quality of place.

Holcomb also gets credit for a much-needed infusion of cash into Indiana's public health system. This one has the most chance of a long-term gain in reducing Hoosiers' poor health rankings. And don't forget lower individual income taxes, less state debt and the 70,000 households and businesses now connected to broadband.

Frankly, the next Indiana governor has big cowboy boots to fill.

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

## Today in History

### By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, April 22, the 113th day of 2024. There are 253 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On April 22, 2000, in a dramatic pre-dawn raid, armed immigration agents seized 6-year-old Elian Gonzalez, the Cuban boy at the center of a custody dispute, from his relatives' home in Miami; Elian was reunited with his father at Andrews Air Force Base near Washington.

On this date: In 1889, the Oklahoma

Land Rush began at noon as thousands of homesteaders staked claims.

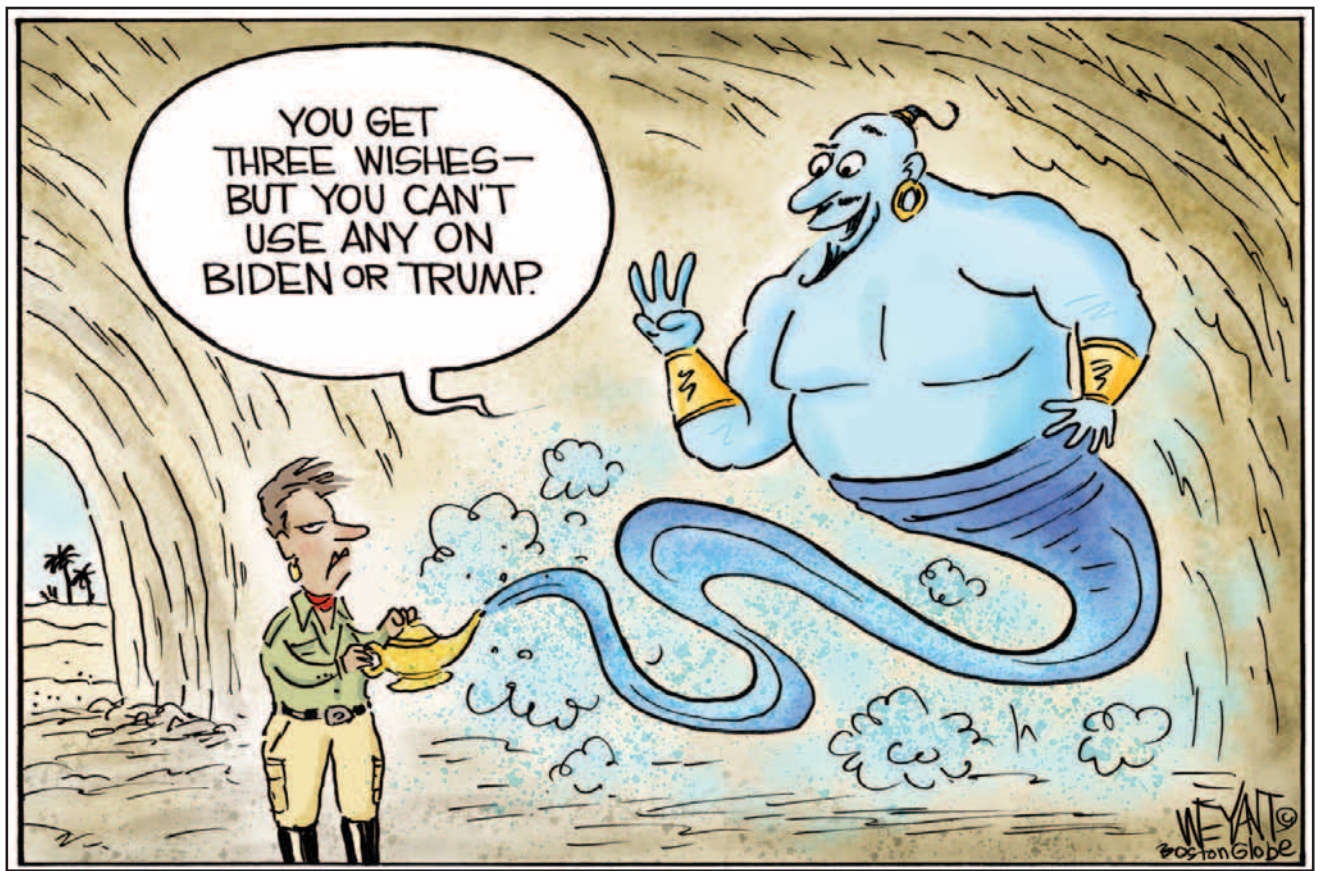
In 1915, the first full-scale use of deadly chemicals in warfare took place as German forces unleashed chlorine gas against Allied troops at the start of the Second Battle of Ypres in Belgium during World War I; thousands of soldiers are believed to have died.

In 1937, thousands of college students in New York City staged a "peace strike" opposing American entry into another possible world conflict.



Niki Kelly

## Hoosier Opinions



## Hoosier congressional self-funders on spending benders

It used to be that any middle class Hoosier schmoe could run for Congress ... and actually win. Republican Mike Pence and Democrat Jim Jontz won races in bygone decades by pedaling bicycles to campaign events across their sprawling congressional districts.

But these days Indiana congressional seats are being staked out and won by the rich. A self-funding spending spree is happening in four Indiana congressional districts, with Republican candidates loaning their campaigns an unprecedented \$13.88 million, according to Federal Election Commission filings on campaign activity through March 31.

Former Indianapolis mayoral candidate Jefferson Shreve's two-year political wallet blitz continues after he reported \$4.5 million in loans to his 6th Congressional District campaign, an open seat being vacated by U.S. Rep. Greg Pence. Rival candidates include Siddharth Mahant (who has spent \$2 million of his own money); State Rep. Mike Speedy, who has loaned his campaign \$1.3 million; and Greenwood businessman Jamison Carrier, who is in for \$750,000. State Sen. Jeff Raatz is a relative piker, committing a mere \$5,000.

Shreve spent more than \$13 million on his unsuccessful Indianapolis mayoral bid in 2023.

In the 5th CD, State Rep. Chuck Goodrich has loaned his campaign \$2.6 million in his race against U.S. Rep. Victoria Spartz, who won a 15-candidate primary in 2020 by spending \$1.1 million of her own money.

In the open 3rd CD being vacated by U.S. Rep. Jim Banks (who is running for the U.S. Senate), former Fort Wayne mayoral nominee Tim Smith has anted up \$1.1 million, Marlin Stutzman has \$500,000 (already paying back \$100,000) and Wendy Davis has spent a relatively meager \$83,200 of her own money.

In what was once known as the "Bloody 8th" (it used to be competitive, but the maps of 2011 and 2021 have rendered it and GOP landslide haven) being vacated by U.S. Rep. Larry Bucshon, Dr. Richard Moss is spending \$545,000, and Dominick Kavanaugh \$500,000, while State Sen. Mark Messmer is doing it the old-fashioned way, by raising money from individual donors and political action committees.

In 2016, Tennessee Republican Trey Hollingsworth spent more than \$3 million of his own money, and his father added \$1.5 million through a super PAC to win Indiana's 9th CD. Hollingsworth defeated Attorney General Greg Zoeller, State Sen. Brent Waltz and current U.S. Rep. Erin Houchin in that race.

Two years later, Mike Braun wrote more than \$10 million in checks to fund a campaign that defeated two sitting congressmen in the primary (Luke Messer and Todd Rokita), and then U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly that November. Donnelly would tell me the following winter that an anonymous "dark money" donor had pumped in \$20 million against him.

Sen. Braun is funding his gubernatorial campaign

this year in a more traditional way, instead of writing personal or business checks. But he did receive a \$1 million donation from Richard Uihlein, an Illinois businessman. Brad Chambers has spent \$9 million of his own funds in that race, and Eric Doden received \$1 million from his parents on April 1.

This unprecedented amount of personal funds flowing comes during an exodus of powerful Republicans from the U.S. House, where close to 30 members, including five committee chairs, aren't seeking reelection or are abruptly heading for the exits.

So, Indiana is tending to elect self-funders to open congressional seats.

And now a new trend line is emerging: The self-funders don't stay long. Hollingsworth left the House after four terms, Pence after three, Spartz after two (until she changed her mind and filed just before the February filing deadline), and Braun after one six-year term. Reps. Pence and Hollingsworth didn't have congressional level communications operations.

They don't communicate. They maintain "zombie" offices that have high staff turnover. They don't do town halls.

With little tenure, Indiana's Capitol Hill clout erodes. For example, the Indiana delegation doesn't have a committee chair. Rep. Houchin is the 2022 Republican class president and is in leadership, but that's it.

Indiana's delegation is lacking in clout, particularly in its House delegation. According to the Center for Effective Lawmaking, a joint project by the University of Virginia and Vanderbilt University, Legislative Effectiveness Scores, Rep. Bucshon was the most effective at 32 out of 222 GOP members gauged (and he's retiring); Banks was ranked 63, Spartz 148, Hollingsworth at 154, the late Jackie Walorski at 165, Pence at 193 and Jim Baird at 199. For Democrats, Rep. Frank Mrvan was 54th out of 232 caucus Democrats, while Rep. Andre Carson ranked 167th.

While the Indiana House delegation wasn't productive on the legislation front, Axios reported the 118th Congress is on track to be one of the most unproductive in modern history. Less than 25 bills have passed and been signed into law. The year 2023 also marks the low point in a years-long trend toward gridlock: Five of the six most unproductive first years have been since 2011.

So it's amusing, in a disturbing kind of way, that these rich candidates aspire to seek jobs in such a dysfunctional body. In February, Gallup measured the favorability of Congress at an embarrassing 12%.

Perhaps they dream of being a rich politician, elevating to that of a statesman, if they decide to stay long enough.

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



Brian Howey

## Politicking

## Needed: Regime change in Iran

Every approach to cur-tailing Iran from its threats and behavior toward Israel and other countries has failed.

In 2023, the Biden administration imposed sanctions on Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps officials accused of planning assassinations overseas. In 2024, it "reapproved a sanctions waiver that unlocks upwards of \$10 billion in frozen funds for the Iranian government."

This after Iran attacked American troops in Syria, and elsewhere through its proxies. Can we know for sure none of that \$10 billion went to fund terrorism?

Diplomacy failed as Iranian "diplomats" have kept the U.S. tied up in endless talks. American negotiators have duped themselves into a baseless faith that a deal might persuade Tehran to give up its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

The U.S. — indeed the world — has only one option left: regime change. T his should be the policy of the United States and other free countries, especially those that have been subjected to terrorist attacks. The goal must be removal of the ayatollahs ruling and ruining Iran and to make sure free and fair elections are held to replace them. As noted two years ago by Amnesty International, "Iran was rocked by an unprecedented popular uprising against the Islamic



Cal Thomas

Republic system. Security forces unlawfully fired live ammunition and metal pellets to crush protests, killing hundreds of men, women and children and injuring thousands."

The missile attack on Israel last weekend was a preview of what could be far worse. As Iran International reported: "Mohammad Faker Meybodi, a faculty member at the Center for Islamic Sciences...

emphasized the need for contemporary armaments to deter adversaries effectively. 'At the time when the verse related to military weapons was revealed in the Quran, the weapon of that era was the swords and spears... Today, it may be necessary for us to possess nuclear weapons to intimidate the enemy. We must equip ourselves with modern weapons.'"

The last known outside regime change effort in Iran occurred during the Carter administration. President Carter thought toppling the shah was good policy. Granted, the shah was no democrat, but he kept the lid on and when he was overthrown, Iran shifted from a pro-Western country to what it is now — the epicenter of fundamentalist Islamic terrorism.

There are many ways to undermine and replace the ayatollahs other than outright war. Opposition groups inside and outside Iran should be supported, financially and politically. A

future U.S. administration can make it clear to Israel that America supports undermining and overthrowing the Tehran dictatorship.

The Biden, Obama and Clinton administrations have tried and thankfully failed to remove Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu from office. Biden should try that approach with Iran. If successful, it would do more to lower the temperature in the Middle East than the undermining of our supposed ally, Netanyahu, perhaps more than any other modern Israeli leader, understands the threat to Israel's existence and how best to deter his country's enemies, especially Iran.

No amount of diplomacy or money will deter the mullahs from attempting to carry out what they believe is the will of their god — the destruction of the Jewish state, the murder of Jews, Christians, and all others they consider "infidels."

The reaction of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh after his three sons were killed in an Israeli air strike in Gaza is telling. When told, Haniyeh barely shrugged his shoulders and declared them martyrs.

If the increasingly secular West does not take seriously the religious fanaticism of Iran's ayatollahs, it can't effectively defeat them. Perhaps supporters of Israel and opponents of Iran can revise a chant now used by anti-Israel protesters: From the river to the sea, Israel and the world must be free ... of Iranian terrorism.

*tcaeditors@tribpub.com*

## The News-Banner

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

# What's happening at the Wells County Public Library

The Wells County Public Library takes its mission to "provide the community with access, knowledge and growth" very seriously and offers a variety of events each week for kids, teens, and adults. Registration is preferred at most events. To sign up, go to [www.wellscolibrary.org](http://www.wellscolibrary.org), click on the Library Event Calendar, navigate to the date of the event, and view more to get to the registration screen. Alternatively, call 260-824-1612 (Bluffton) or 260-622-4691 (Ossian) to register.

**Calming Coloring At Ossian**  
At the Ossian Branch Library: Every Tuesday from 1 to 3 p.m.

Adults. Stress busting afternoon featuring coloring in a restful setting with soft music and snacks. Drop-in program.

**Golden Gamers**  
At the Main Library (Bluffton): Tuesday, April 23 from 3 to 5 p.m.

Adults. Are you bored? Do you need some social interaction? Come and enjoy two hours of socializing, games, and snacks. Registration appreciated.

**Teen Advisory Board**  
At the Main Library (Bluffton): Wednesday, April 24 from 6:00 to 6:45 p.m.  
Grades 6-12. Do you wish you had a say

in Teen Programming at the Library? Do you need volunteer credit? Join the Teen Advisory Board! You don't need to sign up—just show up for the TAB meetings on the last Wednesday of each month.

**Marble Magnets: Try It Night**  
At the Main Library (Bluffton): Monday, April 29 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Adults and teens. Make small refrigerator magnets out of various supplies and clear marbles. Try Registration required. Space is limited.

**LEGO Drop-in At Ossian**  
At the Ossian Branch Library: Tuesday, April 30 from 4 to 7 p.m.

Grades K-6. Create LEGO masterpieces using the library's blocks during this drop-in event. No registration needed.

**Genealogy/Local History Club**  
At the Main Library (Bluffton): Thursday, May 2 from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m.

Ages 12+. Members help each other learn new things and obtain a greater appreciation for local history and genealogy research. Bring your own laptop or share one of ours. Registration appreciated.

**Free Comic Book Day**  
At the Main Library (Bluffton): Saturday,

May 4 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
All ages. WCPL is taking part in Free Comic Book Day! Free single-issue comics will be available as supplies last, on a first-come, first-serve basis. There will also be related activities, movies, and a scavenger hunt going on all day.

**Bingo with Jason**  
At the Main Library (Bluffton): Monday, May 6 from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m.

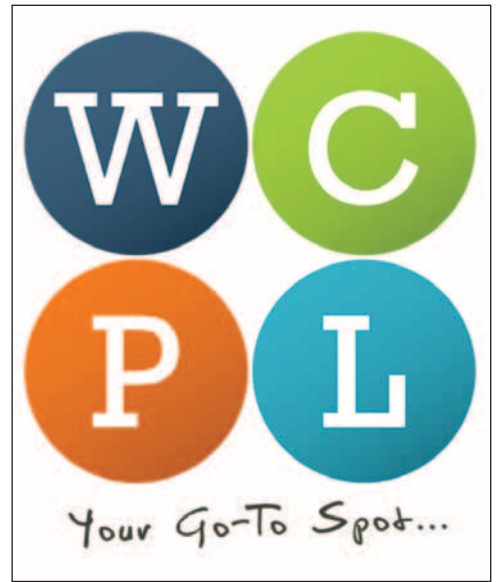
Adults. Enjoy a lively game of Bingo for a chance to win a candy bar with everyone's favorite librarian named Jason! Registration required.

**Teen Gaming Club**  
At the Main Library (Bluffton): Monday, May 6 from 6 to 7 p.m.

Grades 6-12. Enjoy a variety of different games each month, including video games, trading card games, and board games. No registration needed.

**Cooking Basics by the Book At Ossian**  
At the Ossian Branch Library: Tuesday, May 7 from 6 to 7 p.m.

Adults. Join us as we focus on a different cookbook each month and make an easy recipe to taste. This month will be cupcake decorating. Registration required.



**Library Hours**

At the main library in Bluffton — Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

At the Ossian branch library — Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Saturday, 9 a.m. to noon.

Access the library online at [www.wellscolibrary.org](http://www.wellscolibrary.org) for digital books, magazines, online databases, event info, and more.

## Norwell Internship Spotlight award Emmy Heaston

Senior Emmy Heaston has been selected to receive the Norwell High School Interdisciplinary Cooperative Education [ICE] Spotlight award. She has been employed at the Bluffton Walmart store this entire school year with mentor Lori Wile. Emmy is the daughter of Steve and Jody Heaston of Ossian.

Working as a front end associate (cashier) at Walmart has enabled Emmy to focus on customer service. This

involves assisting patrons to find various merchandise throughout the facility and perform check out duties. Emmy operates cash registers and monitors the self-check out areas. She is very helpful with solving problems which makes shopping a pleasant experience for all customers who come her way.

After graduation, Emmy plans to attend Indiana University @ Fort Wayne (IUFW) to study medical imaging (ultra-



Emmy Heaston (sound). She also plans to continue working at Walmart until her college education is completed.

## 1,000 BOOKS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN



Several children recently completed the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten Program at the Wells County Public Library by reading and listening to 1,000 books with the help of family members.

At left, Willa Frauhiger is pictured with her parents, April and Colton. Willa chose "The Everything Book" as her final prize.

At right, Oaklyn McCullough is pictured with his parents, Darien and Nick. Oaklyn chose "Five Little Monkeys" for his final prize.



The 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program is sponsored by the United Way of Wells County, the Wells County Foundation, and the Friends of the Library. The program not only helps prepare children for school, but instills the value of reading and life-long learning. For more information visit the Wells County Public Library's website at [www.wellscolibrary.org](http://www.wellscolibrary.org) and click on the "Children" section.



## Norwell artists to exhibit in high school art show

The annual High School Art Exhibit, sponsored by the Beta Phi chapter of Tri Kappa, will be held on Sunday, April 28, at the Commerce & Visitors Centre, 211 West Water St., Bluffton from 1 to 4 p.m. Norwell High School students planning to have items in the exhibit are pictured above with their instructor Joe Van Zant, at left. Left to right in the front row are Dani-Lyn Allen, Benji Garrett, Kayla Dillion, Jade-Lyn Volz and Ava Cavanaugh while behind them are Carly Wolf, Jack Orta, Dalton Tomasek, Katherine Rickard, Addilynn Page, Izzy Herrera, Rebecca Settle, Jenna Osborn and Shae Brooks. The exhibit, featuring art from all of the county's public high schools, will be viewable through May 1st. (Photo by Barbara Barbieri)

## Zanesville News

by Melba Edwards

Today is a beautiful spring day and it reminds us that it will soon be May and time for the East Union Center Alumni Banquet.

Before I tell you about this gathering I want to let you read about what was happening 30 years ago in May:

In 1994 the alumni was meeting at the 4-H building in Bluffton and during this meeting the officers were checking on refurbishing the war memorial on the Union Center School grounds on State Road 303. The theme of the evening was "Good Ole' Days".

They did refurbish the brick memorial and I am getting ready to take another display of all the servicemen of East Union to the Historical Museum in Bluffton.

Now you need to mark your calendars and get your reservations into Beverly Baker Perry by Thursday, April 25.

I am just reading my invite and I just now see that my class of 1954 along with 1964 are to be honored this year. If you didn't get an invitation or you just want to be a part of the celebration, or because you have ties to the school, you can call Beverly at 765-499-9884.

Here is the information. Hope to see you there.

Our alumni will be May 4. It will be at Lighted Gardens on State Road 1 north of Ossian. We are going to be in the Garden Room. It is the front room of the restaurant. It's the smaller of the two

dining rooms. Go in the front door to get there. Our dinner will be served at 5 p.m., and doors will open at 4:30 p.m.

We will not have music playing during our meal. Our menu will be braised swiss steak, whipped potatoes, corn, dinner rolls, carrot or chocolate sheet cake, hot or cold drinks.

We have had a donation put in our alumni funds, so we are going to give you a

reduction in the cost of our meal. The cost will be \$13 per meal. This is \$2 less than we charged last year. We have not been able to do this before!

Our entertainment will be provided by Joe Welches. He is quite an accomplished singer. He has been active in music both in churches and musicals. He graduated from Norwell. We hope you enjoy his talent!

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All three Wells County schools participated in the South Adams Invitational at Wabash Valley Golf Course on Saturday morning. At left, Norwell's Derek Smith eyes up one of his shots during the meet, helping the Norwell Knights take home the grand prize. Middle, Bluffton's Conner Klopfenstein leans forward, hoping his putt will go in. At right, Southern Wells' Gabe McElhane follows through on his putt during the event. (Photos by Ryan Walker)

## Knights deliver in South Adams Invite, takes home 1st

Saturday morning was the first golf invitational of the season for all three Wells County schools, and all three participated in the same one.

Norwell was the top dog at the South Adams Invitational played on Wabash Valley's course. As a team, the Knights scored a 328 to take home first and was 12 points ahead of the runners-up Fremont.

Bluffton was the next of the 12 competing schools, scoring a 377 in eighth place, and Southern Wells were behind the Tigers in ninth with a score of 418.

The top individual went to Ashland Benner of Fremont,

but Norwell's Derek Smith was one stroke behind at 79 for the day. Bodie Zimmer finished in third at 80, Chase Hulvey (84, seventh) and Ashton Federspiel and Cooper Sloan (85, 10th) also cracked the top 10.

Bluffton's top golfers were Declan Grieser and Conner Klopfenstein, who finished tied for 13th overall with a score of 85. Following them were: Kade Abbett (98), Anthony Hartman (107) and Max White (108).

For Southern Wells, Cash Banter was the top Raider with a score of 101, followed by Gabe McElhane and Tristen Woster (103) Chandler Oswald (111) and Dirk Frauhiger (113).

### Team Scores

1. Norwell (328 points) 2. Fremont (340) 3. Jay County (342) 4. Monroe Central (357) 5. South Adams 360 6. Adams Central (364) 7. Northeastern (370) 8. Bluffton (377) 9. Southern Wells (418) 10. Belmont (438) 11. Winchester (480) 12. Marion 468.

Norwell's next match will be against Columbia City on the road starting at 5 p.m. Monday, April 22.

Bluffton will host Woodlan at 5 p.m. Tuesday, April 30. Southern Wells will visit Wabash at 5 p.m. Thursday, April 25.

## Sports Roundup

### Knights end perfect season with close loss to Cadets

Norwell dropped its first girls' tennis match of the season, falling to Concordia 3-2 on the road.

The Knights fall to 6-1 on the year.

#### Individual results:

- Lauren Harris (C) defeated Addy Heyerly 6-1, 6-0 at No. 1 singles.
- Emma Jansing (C) defeated Delaney Hoover 6-1, 6-0 at No. 2 singles.
- Macie Saalfrank (N) defeated Liz Beverly 6-2, 6-0 at No. 3 singles.
- Annabelle Johnson and Macy Felger (N) defeated Anna Pennekamp and Ruth Dolde 6-4, 6-1 at No. 1 doubles.
- Mallory Bean and Abby Scheiderer (C) defeated Jordyn Xayyayack and Ciera Hiester 2-6, 7-5, 6-0 at No. 2 doubles.

Norwell won the junior varsity match by a score of 7-3.

#### Results for JV:

Concordia did not provide some of the names in the match.

- Aubrey Meyer (N) defeated Na'Saya Lowe 8-2.
- Gabbi Hoepfner (N) defeated Lydia Mays 8-0.
- Leah Mallory (C) defeated Lucy Gerbers 8-2.
- Aubrey Meyer (N) defeated Concordia 6-0.
- Gabbi Hoepfner (N) defeated Concordia 6-0.
- Lucy Gerbers (N) defeated Concordia 6-0.
- Hope Mitchell and Emmaline Johnson (N) defeated Elyse Mets and Caroline Stamm 8-3.
- Mia Till and Kalina Druley (C) defeated Sam Evans and Aubryn Keller 8-4.
- Concordia defeated Hope Mitchell and Emmaline Johnson 7-5.
- Sam Evans and Aubryn Keller (N) defeated Concordia 6-3.

Norwell will be at Homestead at 4:45 p.m. Wednesday, April 22.

### Bluffton splits at Argyll girls' tennis invitational

Bluffton went 1-1 during its two games at the Argyll Invitational at Madison-Grant Saturday.

The Tigers lost the first round to Lewis Cass 4-1.

#### Individual results:

- Guadalupa Gonzalez (LC) defeated Emma Schwartz 6-1, 6-4 at No. 1 singles.
- Eliana Cicelo (LC) defeated Eve Corkwell 1-6, 6-4, 10-3 at No. 2 singles.
- Gretchen Crist (B) defeated Lyndsey Norwood 6-1, 6-0 at No. 3 singles.
- Dixie Wagoner and Abbey Hileman (LC) defeated Hazel Pfister and Sophie Eisenhut 6-1, 6-1 at No.1 doubles.
- Marya Zeek and Nia Maroney (LC) defeated Alexis Grover and Kinzie Fiechter 7-5, 7-5 at No. 2 doubles.

In Round 2, Bluffton won over Madison-Grant 4-1.

#### Individual results:

- Emma Schwartz (B) defeated Lexi Terwiler 6-1, 6-1 at No. 1 singles.
- Gretchen Crist (B) defeated Josie Engle 6-4, 6-3 at No. 2 singles.

- Emily Drayer (B) defeated Lorelai Warner 6-1, 6-0 at No. 3 singles.
- Lainey Lutterman and Kairley Dickenson (MG) defeated Hazel Pfister and Sophie Eisenhut 6-1, 6-2 at No. 1 doubles.
- Alexis Grover and Avery Hunt (B) defeated Maddie Freel and Lauren Wilson 6-2, 6-0 at No. 2 doubles.

Bluffton will host South Adams in ACAC contest No. 2 of the season at 5 p.m. Tuesday, April 23.

### Raiders place 1st in 8th grade girls' track invitational

Southern Wells competed against eight other schools at the Southwood Invitational on Saturday.

The eighth grade girls' team won the meet and the seventh graders finished in second. The boys' seventh grade team finished in fourth.

The other schools at the invite were: Southwood, Rochester, Northwestern, Wabash, RJ Baskett, Maconaquah, Eastern and Peru.

#### Event winners:

- Trenton Heshner in the high jump.
- Adam Aulbach in the high jump.
- Bailey Jenkins in the 100m dash and 200m hurdles.
- Leighann Carpenter in the 200m hurdles.
- The 4x100m team of Kameron Hawkins, Lucy Fairchild, Keely Miller and Bailey Jenkins.
- 4x400m team of Aubree Neuen-schwander, Reese Prible, Holly Pearson, and Grace Rogers.

Second place:

- Hunter Durham in the 200m dash and 400m.
- Jacob Miller in the discus.
- Kameron Hawkins in the 100m.
- Grace Rogers in the 400m and 1600m.
- Reese Prible in the 800m.
- Bailey Jenkins in the 100m hurdles.
- Leighann Carpenter in the long jump.
- Addison Miller in the discus.

### Knights drop three in a row in junior varsity softball

Norwell's junior varsity team lost to Homestead on Friday and the two games at East Noble in Saturday this weekend.

At home against Homestead, the Knights fell 21-6.

Angie Rogers and Kaitlee Reinhard had multi-hit games, while Ayla Nern had a double. Carli Fausz, Alli Crow, Bria Reinhard and Brielle Foss had RBI.

Bria Reinhard picked up the loss. In Game 1, on Saturday, Norwell fell 11-0 to East Noble.

The Knights had one hit, and it went to Bridget Wilson.

Fausz got the loss.

In Game 2, Norwell fell 25-13.

Hayden Herman went 4-4 to lead the Knights with a double and three RBI.

Bria Reinhard went 2-4 with two RBI, Allie Dillion went 2-4 with an RBI and Kaitlee Reinhard went 2-4 with two RBI. Makayla Young doubled and went 2-4. Fausz had an RBI.

Bria Reinhard picked up the loss.



Southern Wells competed at the Southwood middle school track and field invitational Saturday. Above, Kameron Hawkins (second from left) and Bailey Jenkins (fourth from left) race in the 100 meter hurdles. (Photo provided)

## High School Calendar

**MONDAY, APRIL 22**  
 BASEBALL: Norwell at Concordia, 5 p.m.  
 BOYS GOLF: Norwell at Columbia City, 5 p.m.  
 GIRLS TENNIS: Norwell at Homestead, 4:45 p.m.  
 SOFTBALL: Norwell at Leo, 5:30 p.m.; Union City at Bluffton, 5 p.m.; South Side at Southern Wells, 5:30 p.m.  
 TRACK & FIELD (CO-ED): Bluffton at Blackford, 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.; South Adams at Southern Wells, 5:30 p.m.  
**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24**  
 GIRLS TENNIS: Bluffton at Huntington North, 5 p.m.  
 SOFTBALL: Norwell at Belmont, 5:30 p.m.; Southern Wells at Daleville, 5 p.m.  
**THURSDAY, APRIL 25**

BASEBALL: Belmont at Norwell, 5:30 p.m.; Woodlan at Bluffton, 5:30 p.m.; Southern Wells at Heritage, 5 p.m.  
 BOYS GOLF: Southern Wells at Wabash, 5 p.m.  
 GIRLS TENNIS: Belmont at Norwell, 4:30 p.m.; Bluffton at Wayne, 5 p.m.  
 SOFTBALL: Woodlan at Bluffton, 5:30 p.m.; Southern Wells at Heritage, 5:30 p.m.  
 TRACK & FIELD (CO-ED): Northfield at Southern Wells, 5 p.m.  
**FRIDAY, APRIL 26**  
 BASEBALL: Carroll at Norwell, 5:30 p.m.  
 GIRLS TENNIS: Blackhawk Christian at Norwell 4:30 p.m.; Southwood at Bluffton, 5 p.m.  
 SOFTBALL: Heritage at Norwell, 5:30 p.m.  
 TRACK & FIELD (CO-ED): Norwell, Bluffton at South Adams Invitational, 5:30 p.m.  
**SATURDAY, APRIL 27**  
 BASEBALL: Southern Wells at UC Dylan Williams Memorial at Union City, 9 a.m.; Norwell at Heritage, 10 a.m.  
 BOYS GOLF: Canterbury Invitational, 8:30 a.m.  
 GIRLS TENNIS: Bluffton at DeKalb, 9 a.m.; Southern Wells at Daleville, 10 a.m.; Southern Wells at Dylan Williams Memorial at Union City, 10 a.m.

## Lillard's 35-point 1st half helps Bucks beat Pacers in playoff opener

By STEVE MEGARGE  
 AP Sports Writer

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Damian Lillard scored all 35 of his points before halftime and the Milwaukee Bucks withstood the absence of Giannis Antetokounmpo to defeat the Indiana Pacers 109-94 on Sunday in their Eastern Conference playoff opener.

The Bucks needed Lillard to step up without Antetokounmpo, whose return date is uncertain as he deals with a strained left calf that also caused him to miss

Milwaukee's final three regular-season games.

With Antetokounmpo watching from the bench, Lillard came through by setting a Bucks record for points in either half of a playoff game.

Pascal Siakam had 36 points and 13 rebounds for the Pacers, who hadn't scored fewer than 99 points in the regular season while averaging a league-high 123.3 points per game. The Pacers shot 8 of 39 from 3-point range.

Indiana is making its first

playoff appearance since 2020 and is seeking to get beyond the opening round for the first time since 2014.

Khris Middleton had 23 points and 10 rebounds for the Bucks, while Bobby Portis added 15 points and 11 rebounds.

Game 2 is Tuesday in Milwaukee.

Lillard had 19 points in the opening period, the highest first-quarter point total by any player in a playoff opener since at least 1997. He had the highest

(Continued on Page 7)

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# News-Banner Scoreboard

## BASKETBALL

**NBA**  
**FIRST ROUND**  
 (Best-of-7; x-if necessary)  
**Saturday, April 20**  
 Cleveland 97, Orlando 83, Cleveland leads series 1 - 0  
 Minnesota 120, Phoenix 95, Minnesota leads series 1 - 0  
 New York 111, Philadelphia 104, New York leads series 1 - 0  
 Denver 114, L.A. Lakers 103, Denver leads series 1 - 0  
**Sunday, April 21**  
 Boston 114, Miami 94, Boston leads series 1 - 0  
 L.A. Clippers 109, Dallas 97, L.A. Clippers leads series 1 - 0  
 Indiana at Milwaukee, 7 p.m.  
 New Orleans at Oklahoma City, late  
**Monday, April 22**  
 Orlando at Cleveland, 7 p.m.  
 Philadelphia at New York, 7:30 p.m.  
 L.A. Lakers at Denver, 10 p.m.  
**Tuesday, April 23**  
 Phoenix at Minnesota, 7:30 p.m.  
 Indiana at Milwaukee, 8:30 p.m.  
 Dallas at L.A. Clippers, 10 p.m.

## HOCKEY

**NHL**  
**FIRST ROUND**  
 (Best-of-7; x-if necessary)  
**EASTERN CONFERENCE**  
**Carolina 1, N.Y. Islanders 0**  
 Saturday, April 20: Carolina 3, N.Y. Islanders 1  
 Monday, April 22: N.Y. Islanders at Carolina, 7:30 p.m.  
**Florida 1, Tampa Bay 0**  
 Sunday, April 21: Florida 3, Tampa Bay 2  
 Tuesday, April 23: Tampa Bay at Florida, 7:30 p.m.  
 Thursday, April 25: Florida at Tampa Bay, 7 p.m.  
 Saturday, April 27: Florida at Tampa Bay, 5 p.m.  
 x-Monday, April 29: Tampa Bay at Florida, TBA  
 x-Wednesday, May 1: Florida at Tampa Bay, TBA  
 x-Saturday, May 4: Tampa Bay at Florida, TBA  
**Boston 1, Toronto 0**  
 Saturday, April 20: Boston 5, Toronto 1  
 Monday, April 22: Toronto at Boston, 7 p.m.  
 Wednesday, April 24: Boston at Toronto, 7 p.m.  
**N.Y. Rangers 1, Washington 0**  
 Sunday, April 21: N.Y. Rangers 4, Washington 1  
 Tuesday, April 23: Washington at N.Y. Rangers, 7 p.m.  
**WESTERN CONFERENCE**  
**Winnipeg 1, Colorado 0**  
 Sunday, April 21: Winnipeg 7, Colorado 6  
 Tuesday, April 23: Colorado at Winnipeg, 9:30 p.m.  
**Edmonton vs. Los Angeles**  
 Monday, April 22: Los Angeles at Edmonton, 10 p.m.  
 Wednesday, April 24: Los Angeles at Edmonton, 10 p.m.  
**Vancouver vs. Nashville**  
 Sunday, April 21: Nashville at Vancouver, late  
 Tuesday, April 23: Nashville at Vancouver, 10 p.m.  
**Dallas vs. Vegas**  
 Monday, April 22: Vegas at Dallas, 9:30 p.m.  
 Wednesday, April 24: Vegas at Dallas, 9:30 p.m.

**BASEBALL**  
**MLB**  
**AMERICAN LEAGUE**  
**East Division**  

W	L	Pct	GB
New York	15	7 .682	—
Baltimore	14	7 .667	½
Boston	13	10 .565	2½
Toronto	12	10 .545	3
Tampa Bay	12	11 .522	3½

**Central Division**  

W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	16	6 .727	—
Kansas City	13	9 .591	3
Detroit	12	10 .545	4
Minnesota	7	13 .350	8
Chicago	3	18 .143	12½

**West Division**  

W	L	Pct	GB
Texas	12	11 .522	—
Seattle	10	11 .476	1
Los Angeles	9	13 .409	2½
Oakland	8	14 .364	3½
Houston	7	16 .304	5

**Saturday's Games**  
 Tampa Bay 2, N.Y. Yankees 0, 10 innings  
 Minnesota 4, Detroit 3  
 Washington 5, Houston 4, 10 innings  
 Boston 4, Pittsburgh 2  
 Cleveland 6, Oakland 3  
 Philadelphia 9, Chicago White Sox 5  
 Cincinnati 7, L.A. Angels 5  
 Atlanta 5, Texas 2  
 Baltimore 9, Kansas City 7  
 Seattle 7, Colorado 0  
 Toronto 5, San Diego 2  
**Sunday's Games**  
 Washington 6, Houston 0  
 Philadelphia 8, Chicago White Sox 2  
 Cincinnati 3, L.A. Angels 0  
 N.Y. Yankees 5, Tampa Bay 4  
 Cleveland 6, Oakland 2  
 Boston 6, Pittsburgh 1  
 Detroit 6, Minnesota 1  
 Baltimore 5, Kansas City 0  
 Colorado 2, Seattle 1, 10 innings, 1st game  
 San Diego 6, Toronto 3  
 Texas 6, Atlanta 4  
 Seattle at Colorado, late 2nd game  
**Monday's Games**  
 Oakland (Sears 1-1) at N.Y. Yankees (Roddon 1-1), 1:05 p.m.  
 Detroit (Skubal 2-0) at Tampa Bay (Littell 1-0), 6:50 p.m.  
 Chicago White Sox (Cannon 0-0) at Minnesota (Paddock 0-1), 7:40 p.m.  
 Toronto (Kikuchi 1-1) at Kansas City (Singer 2-0), 7:40 p.m.  
 Baltimore (Suárez 0-0) at L.A. Angels (Delmers 3-0), 9:38 p.m.  
**Tuesday's Games**  
 Boston at Cleveland, 6:10 p.m.  
 Detroit at Tampa Bay, 6:50 p.m.  
 Oakland at N.Y. Yankees, 7:05 p.m.  
 Chicago White Sox at Minnesota, 7:40 p.m.  
 Houston at Chicago Cubs, 7:40 p.m.  
 Toronto at Kansas City, 7:40 p.m.  
 Seattle at Texas, 8:05 p.m.  
 Baltimore at L.A. Angels, 9:38 p.m.

**NATIONAL LEAGUE**  
**East Division**  

W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	14	6 .700	—
Philadelphia	14	8 .636	1
New York	12	9 .571	2½
Washington	10	11 .476	4½
Miami	6	17 .261	9½

**Central Division**  

W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	14	6 .700	—
Chicago	13	9 .591	2
Cincinnati	12	9 .571	2½
Pittsburgh	11	11 .500	4
St. Louis	9	13 .409	6

**West Division**  

W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	13	11 .542	—
San Diego	12	12 .500	1
Arizona	11	12 .478	1½
San Francisco	10	13 .435	2½
Colorado	5	16 .238	6½

**Saturday's Games**  
 Miami 3, Chicago Cubs 2, 1st game  
 Milwaukee 12, St. Louis 5  
 San Francisco 7, Arizona 3  
 Washington 5, Houston 4, 10

**innings**  
 Boston 4, Pittsburgh 2  
 N.Y. Mets 6, L.A. Dodgers 4  
 Philadelphia 9, Chicago White Sox 5  
 Cincinnati 7, L.A. Angels 5  
 Atlanta 5, Texas 2  
 Chicago Cubs 5, Miami 3, 2nd game  
 Seattle 7, Colorado 0  
 Toronto 5, San Diego 2  
**Sunday's Games**  
 Washington 6, Houston 0  
 Philadelphia 8, Chicago White Sox 2  
 Cincinnati 3, L.A. Angels 0  
 Boston 6, Pittsburgh 1  
 Milwaukee 2, St. Louis 0  
 Miami 6, Chicago Cubs 3  
 Colorado 2, Seattle 1, 10 innings, 1st game  
 L.A. Dodgers 10, N.Y. Mets 0  
 San Diego 6, Toronto 3  
 Arizona 5, San Francisco 3  
 Texas 6, Atlanta 4  
 Seattle at Colorado, late, 2nd game  
**Monday's Games**  
 Milwaukee (Ross 1-1) at Pittsburgh (Jones 1-2), 6:40 p.m.  
 Philadelphia (Suárez 3-0) at Cincinnati (Greene 0-1), 6:40 p.m.  
 Miami (Weathers 2-1) at Atlanta (López 2-0), 7:20 p.m.  
 Arizona (Pfaadt 1-1) at St. Louis (Lynn 1-0), 7:45 p.m.  
 San Diego (Cease 2-1) at Colorado (Gomber 0-1), 8:40 p.m.  
 N.Y. Mets (Quintana 1-1) at San Francisco (Winn 1-3), 9:45 p.m.  
**Tuesday's Games**  
 Milwaukee at Pittsburgh, 6:40 p.m.  
 Philadelphia at Cincinnati, 6:40 p.m.  
 L.A. Dodgers at Washington, 6:45 p.m.  
 Miami at Atlanta, 7:20 p.m.  
 Houston at Chicago Cubs, 7:40 p.m.  
 Arizona at St. Louis, 7:45 p.m.  
 San Diego at Colorado, 8:40 p.m.  
 N.Y. Mets at San Francisco, 9:45 p.m.

**Midwest League**  
**Saturday's Games**  
 Great Lakes 9, West Michigan 8  
 Fort Wayne 7, Dayton 5  
 Beloit 10, South Bend 3  
 Wisconsin 14, Cedar Rapids 8  
 Lake County 12, Lansing 4  
 Quad Cities 3, Peoria 1  
**Sunday's Games**  
 Lansing 10, Lake County 4  
 West Michigan 8, Great Lakes 4  
 Fort Wayne 5, Dayton 3, 10 innings  
 Peoria 4, Quad Cities 2  
 South Bend 8, Beloit 6, 10 innings  
 Wisconsin 2, Cedar Rapids 0  
**Monday's Games**  
 No games scheduled  
 Tuesday's Games  
 Dayton at Lansing, 6:05 p.m.  
 Lake County at West Michigan, 6:35 p.m.  
 Great Lakes at Fort Wayne, 6:35 p.m.  
 Quad Cities at South Bend, 7:05 p.m.  
 Wisconsin at Peoria, 7:05 p.m.  
 Beloit at Cedar Rapids, 7:35 p.m.  
 Lake County at West Michigan, 12:05 p.m.  
 Dayton at Lansing, 6:05 p.m.  
 Great Lakes at Fort Wayne, 6:35 p.m.  
 Quad Cities at South Bend, 7:05 p.m.  
 Beloit at Cedar Rapids, 7:35 p.m.

**TRANSACTIONS**  
**Sunday's Transactions**  
 CHICAGO CUBS — Optioned LHP Luke Little to Iowa (IL).

## Bucks beat Pacers

(Continued from Page 6)  
 first-half point total for any player in a postseason contest since Kevin Durant had 38 at the break for the Golden State Warriors in a 2019 first-round game with the Los Angeles Clippers.  
 He then got some help from his teammates while taking a well-deserved breather. Milwaukee outscored Indiana 14-3 while Lillard was on the bench for

nearly the first five minutes of the second quarter.  
 Once Lillard returned, he picked up right where he'd left off. He sank a 3-pointer while getting fouled and completed a four-point play to extend Milwaukee's lead to 65-35. The Bucks were ahead 69-42 at halftime.  
 The Pacers made a game of it in the second half as they finally shut down Lillard, who shot 0 for 5 after half-

time. Indiana closed the third quarter with nine straight points to get Milwaukee's lead down to 83-71.  
 But the Bucks regained control from there.  
 Jae Crowder and Malik Beasley made 3-pointers on consecutive possessions to start an 8-0 run that extended Milwaukee's lead to 99-77 with 8:10 left. Milwaukee stayed ahead by at least 14 the rest of the way.

## Reddick pulls off a Talladega buzzer-beater for Michael Jordan

By PAUL NEWBERRY  
 AP National Writer  
**TALLADEGA, Ala. (AP)** — So much for Michael Jordan being a jinx at the race track.  
 The Basketball Hall of Famer celebrated as if he was still on the court after Tyler Reddick stole a NASCAR Cup victory at Talladega Superspeedway, speeding across the line after front-runner Michael McDowell — swerving back and forth in a desperate bid to hold the lead — crashed with the finish line in sight.  
 It was another wild Talladega finish — and marked the first time that Jordan, co-owner of the 23XI Racing along with Denny Hamlin, has been at the track to witness a victory for one of his drivers.  
 “Denny keeps saying I was bad luck when I come to the track, and today we proved him wrong,” a beaming Jordan said in Victory Lane. “I’m very happy to be here to see it. Everybody tells me when we win we can have a good celebration, but this is the first time I’ve been here.”

McDowell, the pole-sitter, dominated the closing laps and was in position to give Ford its much-needed first victory of the year. But his desperate efforts to block Keselowski, another Ford driver, wound up costing them both.  
 McDowell spun out, Keselowski had to check up and Reddick sped by to claim his sixth career Cup victory by 0.208 seconds.  
 A pile of cars behind them were taken out, as well. Corey LaJoie's No. 7 machine slid across the finish line on its side, pinned against the wall in front of the massive grandstands.  
 Reddick climbed out of his No. 45 car and scurried up the fence like Spider-Man.  
 “Was that crazy, guys?” he screamed to the fans. “That was chaos. That's Talladega for you.”

For Jordan, it sparked memories of his former life, the one where he won six NBA championships and hit countless buzzer-beaters.  
 Yet maybe no mistake: Jordan's passion these days is stock car racing.  
 “To me, this is like an NBA playoff game,” the 61-year-old said. “For us to win a big race like this, it means so much to me. I'm all in. I

love it. It replaces a lot of the competitiveness that I had in basketball. But this is even worse, because I have no control. If I was playing basketball, I'd have total control. But I have no control, so I live vicariously through the drivers, crew chiefs and everybody.”  
 Keselowski settled for the runner-up spot, failing again to pick up his first win since he triumphed three years ago at this 2.66-mile trioval in east Alabama.  
 “We went to make a move and Michael covered it,” Keselowski said. “We went the other way and had nowhere to go when Michael came back down. It's just the way this stuff goes.”  
 McDowell was apologetic to Keselowski and everyone who crashed behind him.  
 “He pushed me out. I drove back to him and was able to get in front of him that very first time. But when I came back down, I barely wasn't clear,” McDowell said. “It's Talladega. You're going for it, trying to get a win. We just came up short and took a lot of guys out with me.”  
 Reddick's victory redeemed a botched strategy that knocked out a bunch of Toyota contenders, including Hamlin, who co-owns 23XI while driving for Joe Gibbs Racing.  
 All three Toyota teams pitted in tandem with 37 laps to go, going with a strategy that would've allowed them to push the pace on the rest of the fuel-saving field — with an idea of drafting all the way to the front for the checkered flag.  
 Unfortunately, they couldn't keep their cars straight.  
 Just four laps later, with the Toyota train running at a blistering, single-file pace and chasing down the lead pack, John Hunter Nemechek appeared to get into the bumper of Bubba Wallace, who is Reddick's teammate at 23XI. Wallace then clipped Erik Jones, which sent him smashing hard into the outside wall.  
 Nemechek then slid down the track and took out Hamlin, as well.  
 “We had a plan,” Wallace said. “We just didn't execute it as well as we should have. I hate it. It doesn't make us look good at all.”

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# Celebrating Passover and Earth Day

Dear Annie: Over the years, I have worked in day care centers for 2-year-olds, and my husband is a speech therapist. I have a family friend who is raising a 2-year-old from the community. We see their child continuously and think that he is behind developmentally, especially in speech.

They could hypothetically wait until he is old enough to go to school and, hopefully, the school figures it out, but I have worked with those who have special needs and know that the earlier the intervention, the better the outcome.

The only issue is how to tell the mom that we think they should apply for speech therapy without freaking them out that their child is behind. I just know that with all of these therapies, it may help this child in the future for success. He is an only child. — Family Friend

Dear Family Friend: I would make doubly sure that you are correct in your diagnosis before you speak with your friend, but once you do, tell your friend your thoughts about the toddler's speech. You and your husband could even offer to help out while you find a good professional, assuming she is up for that. Friends tell friends the truth even if it is difficult. If she is truly a good friend, she will appreciate that you helped her get early intervention.

Dear Readers: Wishing you all a very Happy Passover and Happy Earth Day.

## Dear Annie

by Annie Lane

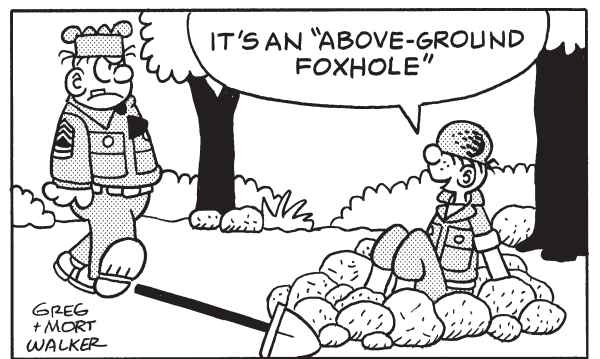


Below is a poem by a great lover of nature, Henry David Thoreau.

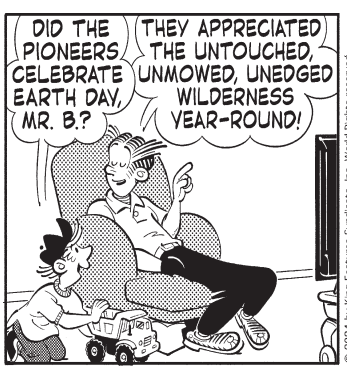
"O Nature! I do not aspire To be the highest in thy quire, — To be a meteor in the sky, Or comet that may range on high; Only a zephyr that may blow Among the reeds by the river low; Give me thy most privy place Where to run my airy race. In some withdrawn, unpublic mead Let me sigh upon a reed, Or in the woods, with leafy din, Whisper the still evening in: Some still work give me to do, — Only — be it near to you! For I'd rather be thy child And pupil, in the forest wild, Than be the king of men elsewhere, And most sovereign slave of care: To have one moment of thy dawn, Than share the city's year for-lorn."

"How Can I Forgive My Cheating Partner?" features favorite columns on marriage, infidelity, communication and reconciliation. It 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](mailto:dearannie@creators.com). © 2024 CREATORS.COM

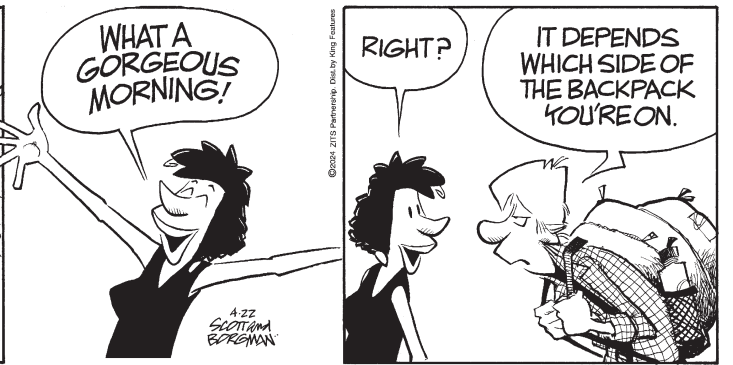
## BEETLE BAILEY



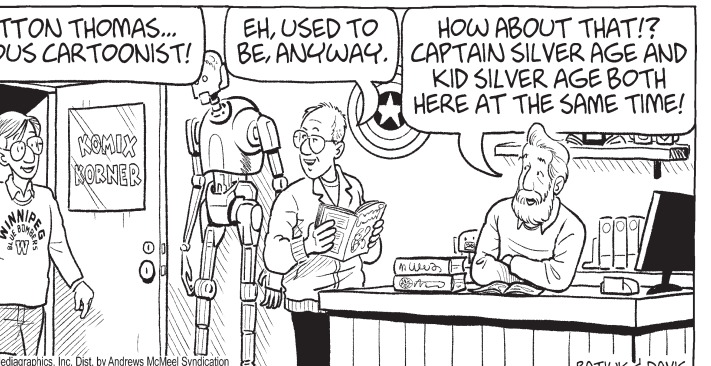
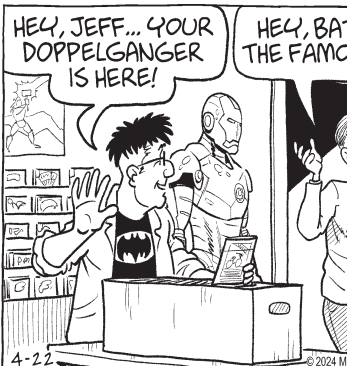
## BLONDIE



## ZITS



## CRANKSHAFT



## My Answer

By Dr. Billy Graham



## Christians are called to speak God's truth

Question: I have an opportunity to become a life coach. When I see how easily influenced people are by the culture, I'm reluctant to tell others how to get through life in a wholesome way. Should I leave this to the experts or can I share my own experience of living the Christian life? — W.I.

Answer: Advertisers know people are more likely to buy a product if they can convince us everyone likes it. They hope people will say to themselves, "If everyone else is using it, then it must be good, so I should buy it too." But Christians are called to speak God's truth to those in our sphere of

influence. We are all influencers in some way.

Satan puts such things in our minds: "Look at the way most people are living," he'll whisper in our ear. "Look at all the others out there in the world having a good time — enjoying all that life has to offer; living for themselves, absorbed in the moment, not bothering about God or eternity. Follow them — that's the path to real life!"

But such a whisper is a lie. Jesus warned that Satan's way will lead only to destruction. Jesus calls us to take another path — His path. It may be harder, less popular, and far fewer take it. But it alone offers us true peace and joy — the

kind that can come only from knowing God. The pathway to Him leads to eternal life.

The feet of the Christian should tread the narrow path that the Savior trod, keeping in step with Him. God wants to put us on a new path, a better path — His path. Choosing God's path is of supreme importance: it leads us to Heaven. The Bible's message is indispensable, and its influence on individuals and society over the centuries has been enormous.

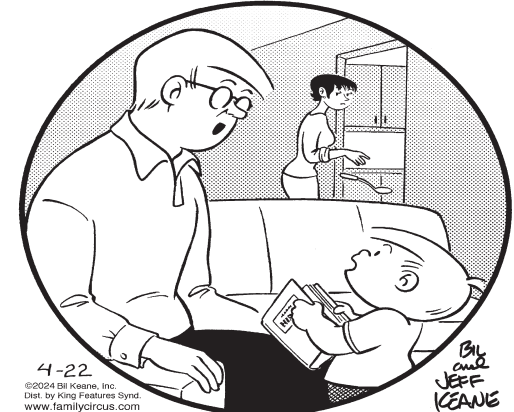
(This column is based on the words and writings of the late Rev. Billy Graham.)

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## THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane

## The LOCKHORNS



"What are they teaching you in history these days, Billy?" "The 2000s."

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Table with columns for date, channel, and program listings for various networks including WINM, CBS, Antenna, ABC, NBC, PBS, FOX, and others.

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words. Includes a solution time of 21 mins and Saturday's answer 4-22.

Grid for Saturday's crossword puzzle answer 4-22, showing numbers 1 through 51.



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## SUDOKU

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

### King Classic Sudoku

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

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Difficulty: ★ 4/22

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### Lottery Numbers

**Saturday's Drawings HOOSIER LOTTERY**  
Cash 5 — 08-15-32-33-41  
Cash4Life — 01-27-35-55-58, Cash Ball: 01  
Lotto Plus — 13-20-26-27-40-41  
Quick Draw Midday — 08-14-16-25-26-30-31-37-40-53-57-58-61-63-69-70-74-77-78-80, BE: 26  
Daily Three-Midday — 05-02-03, SB: 03  
Daily Three-Evening — 08-02-01, SB: 09  
Daily Four-Midday — 03-01-05-07, SB: 03  
Daily Four-Evening — 07-03-04-08, SB: 09  
Quick Draw Evening — 01-03-05-17-22-25-30-35-43-46-48-51-58-62-65-68-71-75-76-80, BE: 03  
Hoosier Lotto — 04-08-12-21-33-43  
POWERBALL  
04-35-41-44-58; Powerball: 25; Power Play: 3X

**Sunday's Drawings HOOSIER LOTTERY**  
Cash 5 — 10-27-30-35-36  
Cash4Life — 02-08-46-53-55, Cash Ball: 02  
Quick Draw Midday — 10-11-13-16-20-21-23-24-28-29-35-39-44-47-52-58-61-66-70-77, BE: 13  
Daily Three-Midday — 05-02-03, SB: 03  
Daily Three-Evening — 01-05-01, SB: 07  
Daily Four-Midday — 08-00-07-08, SB: 04  
Daily Four-Evening — 08-04-01-00, SB: 07  
Quick Draw Evening — 09-14-19-21-22-24-33-34-35-36-37-39-47-50-56-57-62-66-69-76, BE: 37  
Hoosier Lotto — Estimated jackpot (for Wednesday): \$10.5 million  
MEGA MILLIONS  
Estimated jackpot (for Tuesday): \$202 million  
POWERBALL  
Estimated jackpot (for Wednesday): \$115 million

### SUDOKU ANSWER

8	4	0	1	2	9	9	6	3	1
3	2	9	6	1	8	2	7	9	8
6	1	9	3	7	2	1	9	8	9
2	6	8	1	9	9	7	2	3	3
1	2	3	7	6	2	9	8	9	9
9	9	7	8	2	3	1	6	2	2
9	9	2	7	3	7	8	1	6	6
2	8	6	9	2	1	3	9	7	7
7	3	1	9	8	6	9	2	2	2

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## Public Sale Calendar

**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, Harrison 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.](http://SchraderRealEstateandAuctionCompany.com), 800-451-2709, [schraderauction.com](http://schraderauction.com).

**BIDDING ENDS 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.](http://TheSteffenGroup.com), [www.steffengrp.com](http://www.steffengrp.com), 260-824-3006.

**BIDDING ENDS 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 25 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 102 S. Jefferson St., Ossian. Pat Carter, sale manager, [The Steffen Group Inc.](http://TheSteffenGroup.com), [www.steffengrp.com](http://www.steffengrp.com), 260-824-3006.

**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](http://KrueckebergAuction.com), 260-724-7402, [kjauction.com](http://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, vintage 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.](http://TheSteffenGroup.com), [www.steffengrp.com](http://www.steffengrp.com) 260-824-3006.

**MAY 9 & 10 - 9 a.m. - Secured creditors & various consignors, owners.** Two day truck & equipment auction. Day 1 online bidding only: 100+ various skid loader attachments, tool boxes, workbenches, iron gates, chains & binders, 1 trip 40' high side shipping container w/side doors, dome shelter containers, various truck take off parts, plumbing, electrical and mechanical surplus including urinals, toilets, electrical components, more! Day 2 onsite and online bidding offering 700+ lots! 100+/- municipal units! Cars, SUV, 1/2 ton & 3/4 ton pickups, cargo & passenger vans, large group of Chevy Impalas, Tahoes & Dodge Chargers, Harley-Davidson motorcycles, dump trucks, 2012-2014 Freightliner M2106 box trucks, day cabs, sleepers, utility trucks, bucket trucks, utility & semi trailers, SUV's, pickups, 100+ various skid steer attachments, more! [Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC](http://KrueckebergAuction.com), 260-724-7402, [kjauction.com](http://kjauction.com).

**MAY 12-MAY 19 - (Online Only Auction) - Phyllis Montgomery, Seller.** Major auction of fine antiques and collectables. "An Auction of the Year." Extensive cast iron skillet collection, early candy scales, primitives, salesman samples, early rare gum dispenser, De Laval signs, beer signs, firearms, butter churns, large Westmorland glass collection, much more. Preview: May 9 and 16 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 1556 Shadow Run Trail, Bluffton. [Steffen Group, Inc.](http://SteffenGroup.com), [www.steffengrp.com](http://www.steffengrp.com), 824-3006, Pat Carter, sale manager.

**MAY 19 - 4 p.m. - Multiple consignors, owners.** Online only consignment auction. 1,000+ lots! Furniture, oak kitchen table, large assortment of household items, tools, 100+ lots of collectible glass including Fostoria, Fenton, Candelwick, Pyrex and much more! Preview May 16, 3-5 p.m., 812 Elm Street, Decatur. Pick up May 20, 1-6 p.m. & May 21, 9 a.m.-noon. [Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC](http://KrueckebergAuction.com), 260-724-7402, [kjauction.com](http://kjauction.com).

Read & recycle this newspaper

# UAW celebrates win in Tennessee, takes aim at more southern plants

By DAVID KOENIG  
AP Business Writer

DALLAS (AP) — The United Auto Workers' overwhelming election victory at a Volkswagen plant in Tennessee is giving the union hope that it can make broader inroads in the South, the least unionized part of the country.

The UAW won a stunning 73% of the vote at VW after losing elections in 2014 and 2019. It was the union's first win in a Southern assembly plant owned by a foreign automaker.

Union President Shawn Fain said the pundits all told him that the UAW couldn't win in the South.

"But you all said, 'Watch this,' " he told a cheering group of VW organizers at a union hall in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on Friday night, when the UAW victory was clear. "You guys are leading the way. We're going to carry this fight on to Mercedes and everywhere else."

However, the UAW is likely to face a tougher test as it tries to represent workers at two Mercedes-Benz plants in Tuscaloosa,

Alabama. A five-day election is scheduled to start May 13, where the union's campaign has already become heated.

The UAW has accused the German carmaker of violating U.S. and German labor laws with aggressive anti-union tactics, which the company denies.

"They are going to have a much harder road in work sites where they are going to face aggressive management resistance and even community resistance than they faced in Chattanooga," said Harry Katz, a labor-relations professor at Cornell University. "VW management did not aggressively seek to avoid unionization. Mercedes is going to be a good test. It's the deeper South."

Late last year, the UAW announced a drive to represent nearly 150,000 workers at non-union factories largely in the South. The union is targeting U.S. plants run by Toyota, Honda, Hyundai, Nissan, Subaru, Mazda, Volkswagen, Mercedes, BMW and Volvo, along with factories operated by electric-vehicle makers

Tesla, Rivian and Lucid.

The union's last defeat at VW in Chattanooga came at a low-water mark — in the middle of a federal investigation into bribery and embezzlement under a previous president.

Marick Masters, a business professor at Wayne State University in Detroit who studies the UAW, said the union flipped the script by installing new leadership, touting the rich contracts it won last year from Detroit automakers after strikes at targeted factories, and exploiting a climate that is now more favorable to unions. He said the union was also adept at translating signed pro-union authorization cards into votes — partly by pushing for a quick election.

"Now the public and media eyes are going to be on Chattanooga and how quickly the UAW can translate this into a contract," he said. If the union can't quickly get a good contract, it risks losing some of the momentum it gained with Friday's election win, he said.

Unions in other industries are already moving ahead with orga-

nizing campaigns in the South and trying to learn from the UAW's playbook.

The Association of Flight Attendants, which has tried and failed to win over cabin crews at Atlanta-based Delta Air Lines, hopes to collect enough signatures to force another election at Delta by year end. The union's president, Sara Nelson, said she was not surprised at the UAW win after strikes that led to record contracts last year.

"I've been talking about this for a long time — that strikes and taking on the boss is going to spur organizing, and that's exactly what we saw here," Nelson said.

Nelson is trying to secure an industry-leading contract at United Airlines that she can use to court Delta crews. In the meantime, crews at startup Breeze Airways, many of whom live in the South, will vote next month whether to join her union.

The White House issued a statement from President Joe Biden congratulating the UAW. Biden — who joined a UAW picket line in Michigan during the union's strike

against Ford, GM and Stellantis plants last year — praised the success of unions representing auto-workers, Hollywood actors and writers, health care workers and others in gaining better contracts.

"Together, these union wins have helped raise wages and demonstrate once again that the middle-class built America and that unions are still building and expanding the middle class for all workers," Biden said.

Biden criticized six Southern Republican governors, including Bill Lee of Tennessee, who told autoworkers this week that voting for union representation would jeopardize jobs.

Sharon Block, a law professor at Harvard University who worked for the Biden administration on labor and other issues, said the governors' warning rang hollow after nonunion Tesla revealed that it plans to lay off 10% of its workers after disappointing sales results. She said VW workers saw the governors' open letter as "an empty threat and a cynical ploy," and they ignored it.

# Israeli leaders criticize expected U.S. sanctions against military unit

By JOSEF FEDERMAN  
Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli leaders on Sunday harshly criticized an expected decision by the U.S. to impose sanctions on a unit of ultra-Orthodox soldiers in the Israeli military.

The decision, expected as soon as Monday, would mark the first time the U.S. has imposed sanctions on a unit inside the Israeli military and would further strain relations between the two allies, which have grown increasingly tense during Israel's war in Gaza.

While U.S. officials declined to identify the unit expected to be sanctioned, Israeli leaders and local media identified it as Netzah Yehuda — an infantry battalion founded roughly a quarter of a century ago to incorporate ultra-Orthodox men into the military. Many religious men receive exemptions from what is supposed to be compulsory service.

Israeli leaders condemned the anticipated decision as unfair, especially at a time when Israel is at war, and vowed to oppose it.

"If anyone thinks they can impose sanctions on a unit in the IDF, I will fight it with all my might," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said.

Netzah Yehuda, or Judea Forever, has historically been based in the occupied West Bank and some of its members have been linked to abuses against Palestinians. It makes up just a small part of Israel's military presence in the territory.

The unit came under heavy American criticism in 2022 after an elderly Palestinian-American man was found dead shortly after he was detained at a West Bank checkpoint.

A Palestinian autopsy said Omar Assad, 78, had underlying health conditions, but had suffered a heart attack caused by "external violence."

It said doctors found bruises on his head, redness on his wrists from being bound and bleeding in his eyelids from being tightly blindfolded. A military investigation said that Assad was asleep when they cut off the cables binding his hands. They didn't offer medical help when they saw that he was unresponsive and left the scene without checking to see if he was alive.

Assad had lived in the U.S. for four decades. After an outcry from the U.S. government, the Israeli military said the incident "was a grave and unfortunate event, resulting from moral failure and poor decision-making on the part of the soldiers." It said one officer was reprimanded and two other officers reassigned to non-commanding roles, over the incident.

But the army decided against criminal prosecution, saying military inves-

tigators could not directly link their actions to the death of the U.S. citizen.

Human rights groups long have argued that Israel rarely holds soldiers accountable for the deaths of Palestinians.

Investigators said soldiers were forced to restrain Assad because of his "aggressive resistance." Assad's family has expressed skepticism that the behavior of an ailing 78-year-old could justify such harsh treatment.


Amid the uproar with the U.S., Israel moved Netzah Yehuda out of the West Bank in late 2022 and reassigned it to northern Israel. The battalion was moved to the southern border with Gaza after Hamas' Oct. 7 attack triggered the ongoing war.

In a statement Sunday, the army said its Netzah Yehuda soldiers "are currently participating in the war effort in the Gaza Strip."

"The battalion is profes-

sionally and bravely conducting operations in accordance to the IDF Code of Ethics and with full commit-

ment to international law," it said. It said that if the unit is sanctioned, "its consequences will be reviewed."



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COUNCIL ON AGING

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9 am – 2 pm  
**Wells County 4-H Community Building**  
1240 4-H Road, Bluffton, IN

- **The Expo is Open to the Public**
- **There will be over 60 vendors**
- **Free Breakfast** provided by Adams Health Network from **9-10 am**
- **Free Lunch** provided by River Terrace Retirement Community from **11:30 am-12:30 pm**

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