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FRIDAY, MAY 17, 2024

BLUFFTON, INDIANA • Wells County's Hometown Connection

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Making a better path

Wells County students recognized at annual Turnaround Awards

By HOLLY GASKILL

Three students from Wells County were honored Thursday for choices they made to overcome obstacles, better themselves and create a better path for their future.

The Turnaround Awards is a partnership between the Wells County Foundation and the City of Bluffton's mayor to honor students who have turned their lives or behaviors around after experiencing problems. Each high school selects a recipient, who receives a \$3,000 scholarship to continue their education.

Bluffton High School's Alyssia Heffern accrued over 100 absences and 40 tardies between her freshman and junior years, stated counselor Sebastian Baxter. She encountered obstacles with home and personal situations, struggled academically and often wanted to drop out.

After Heffern adopted new structures halfway through her junior year, she took responsibility for her education and made bounds toward better outcomes. In her senior year, Baxter said, Heffern has had almost no unexcused absences, and her grade point average has jumped from a 2.4

to a 3.5.

Haffern also began working with the school's pre-employment transition specialist and identified a potential career pathway as a paramedic after shadowing with Wells County EMS. She plans to attend Ivy Tech this fall.

"As educators, we often talk about the transformative power of education and its ability to uplift and empower individuals to reach their fullest potential — (Heffern) embodies this ideal," Baxter said. "She seized the opportunity for change, eventually embraced the support and guidance offered to her, and emerged stronger, wiser and more determined than ever."

Norwell High School math teacher Lexi Newton first met Hudson Roller when he was a freshman planning a prank in the cafeteria. After the encounter, Newton was not looking forward to having him in her classroom the following year.

"I will never forget how anxious I was to get the 'prankster' next year, as I was not looking forward to the clowning around I expected," she said. "Fast forward to his sophomore year, I was shocked. This kid



Pictured are the Turnaround Award recipients, Alyssia Heffern from Bluffton High School, Erik Habegger from Southern Wells Jr./Sr. High School, and Hudson Roller from Norwell High School. (Photo by Holly Gaskill)

wasn't a prankster, he was a hard worker, he was smart, he was curious, and he would — and still does — ask math questions that stump me. Not only does he challenge himself, but he challenges others in ways that help both of them grow."

After poor grades in middle school and a rough start in high school, Roller worked

hard to graduate with both academic and technical honors. He plans to attend Purdue University to study aviation and has already received his pilot's license.

These accomplishments did not come without obstacles, Newton noted. Roller experienced loss and grief during his high school years.

(Continued on Page 2)



Taking the field

With less than a week left of school, Lancaster Elementary School students cut loose and took part in a variety of field day activities on Thursday. At one station, students could cool off with water blasters operated by their teacher and volunteers. Pictured above, Cooper Harnish, Kenzlie Tyree, Addisyn Laws and Brooklyn Bertsch brace for impact, while Corbin Karst and Preston Sailors antagonize the water blaster operators at right. Below left, Samantha Myers jumps over a hay bale in an obstacle course, and below right, Adeline Bushee dons an inflatable shark and oversized glasses in a race. (Photos by Holly Gaskill)



U.S. Coast Guard says Texas barge collision may have spilled up to 2K gallons of oil

By LEKAN OYEKANMI and VALERIE GONZALEZ Associated Press

GALVESTON, Texas (AP) — Early estimates indicate up to 2,000 gallons of oil may have spilled into surrounding waters when a barge carrying fuel broke free from a tugboat and slammed into a bridge near Galveston, Texas, the U.S. Coast Guard said Thursday.

The barge crashed into a pillar supporting the Pelican Island Causeway span on Wednesday. The impact caused the bridge to partially collapse and cut off the only road connecting Galveston to Pelican Island, the Coast Guard said.

Video shows splotches of oil had spilled from the barge into Galveston Bay. Jeff Davis of the Texas General Land Office said during a news conference Thursday that early cleanup efforts have not identified any impacted wildlife.

The barge has the capacity to hold 30,000 barrels, but was holding 23,000 barrels —

approximately 966,000 gallons — when it struck the bridge, Rick Freed, the vice president of barge operator Martin Marine, said at the news conference. Freed said the only tank that was compromised in the crash was holding approximately 160,000 gallons, which is the "complete risk."

"We're pretty confident there was much less oil introduced to the water than we initially estimated," Coast Guard Capt. Keith Donohue said.

"We've recovered over 605 gallons of oily water mixture from the environment, as well as an additional 5,640 gallons of oil product from the top of the barge that did not go into the water," Donohue said.

The Coast Guard said earlier that it had deployed a boom, or barrier, to contain the spill, which forced the closure of about 6.5 miles (10.5 kilometers) of the waterway.

A tugboat lost control of the 321-foot barge "due to a break in the coupling" that had connected the two vessels, the Coast Guard said.

(Continued on Page 2)

U.S. prisoners are being assigned dangerous jobs

But what happens if they are hurt or killed?

By MARGIE MASON and ROBIN McDOWELL Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Blas Sanchez was nearing the end of a 20-year stretch in an Arizona prison when he was leased out to work at Hickman's Family Farms, which sells eggs that have ended up in the supply chains of huge companies like McDonald's, Target and Albertsons. While assigned to a machine that churns chicken droppings into compost, his right leg got pulled into a chute with a large spiraling auger.

"I could hear 'crunch, crunch, crunch, crunch,'" Sanchez said. "I couldn't feel anything, but I could hear the crunch."

He recalled frantically clawing through mounds of manure to tie a tourniquet around his bleeding limb. He then waited for what felt like hours while rescuers struggled to free him so he could be airlifted to a hospital.

His leg was amputated below the knee.

Nationwide, hundreds of thousands of prisoners are put to work every year, some of whom are seriously injured or killed after being given dangerous jobs with little or no training, The Associated Press found. They include prisoners fighting wildfires, operating heavy machinery or working on industrial-sized farms and meat-processing plants tied to the supply chains of leading brands. These men and women are part of a labor system that — often by design — largely denies them basic rights and protections guaranteed to other American workers.

The findings are part of a broader two-year AP investigation that linked some of the world's largest and best-known companies — from Cargill and Walmart to Burger King — to prisoners who can be paid pennies an hour or nothing at all.

(Continued on Page 2)

Inside

Local/Area

- Obituaries 3
- Police Notebook . . . 3

Opinion

- Michael Hicks 4

Also...

- Sports 6-7
- Classifieds 7
- Diversions 5

Outside



Whoever is praying for rain can stop now

Today	Saturday	Sunday
High 76	High 79	High 83
Low 60	Low 59	Low 60

More Weather on Page 2

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Vol. 95 No. 168

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Turnaround awards

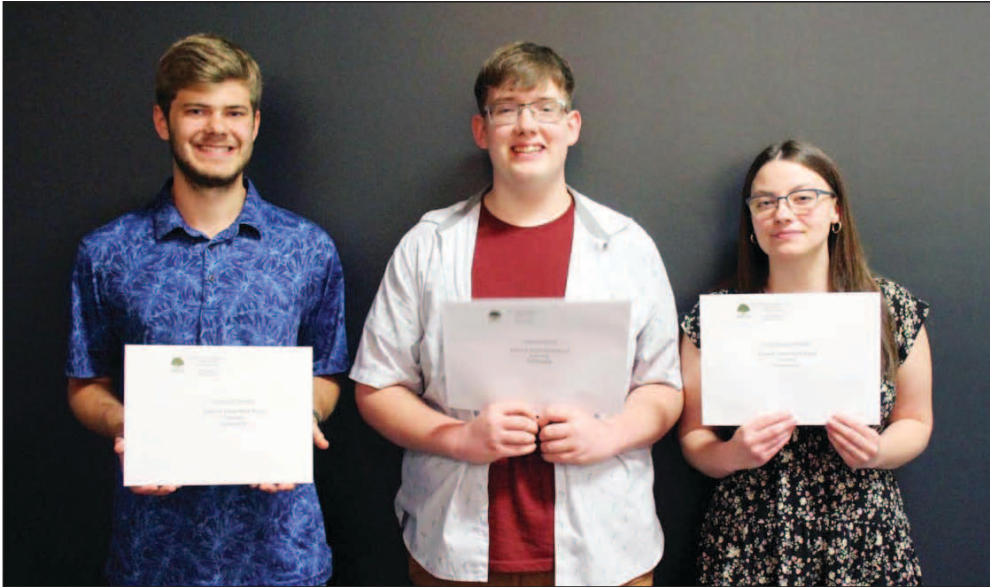
(Continued from Page 1)

school career but used this as motivation to “do what others didn’t get the chance to do during their lifetime.”

“Not too long ago, (Roller) thanked me for making him cry, because sometimes, this is exactly what we need in order to keep going and keep succeeding in life,” Newton said. “(Roller’s) work ethic, curiosity, goal setting, drive and perseverance have led him to be the fine young man that he is today.”

As a Southern Wells freshman, Erik Habegger was unmotivated to complete his school work and lacked interest in engaging with his peers. In his junior and senior years, he became involved in the HVAC class and used his excitement as momentum to earn better grades in other classes as well. He also connected with other students, even attending prom.

It was a particularly special celebration for award presenter Judy Lawrence, a special education teacher. She had begun working at the district when Habegger and several of his friends



Work-based learning awards were given to Tristen Worster of Southern Wells Jr./Sr. High School, Cameron Straub of Bluffton High School and Coral Neuenschwander of Norwell High School. (Photo by Holly Gaskill)

were freshmen with respective academic difficulties.

“I vowed then that we were going to finish high school together,” Lawrence said. “So they’re graduating, and I’m retiring.”

Lawrence and Habegger sometimes quite literally worked side-by-side to get through homework assignments. Now, Habegger is planning on attending Ivy

Tech to study auto mechanics.

“To say that I’m proud of (Habegger) isn’t enough,” Lawrence said. “I truly love this kid. He has a piece of my heart for life.”

Three students were also recognized with work-based learning awards and \$1,000 scholarships. Previously referred to as the ICE program, it provides

students the opportunity to work during part of their school day.

Those recognized were Cameron Straub of BHS, employed at Kroger; Coral Neuenschwander of NHS, employed at Walmart; and Tristen Worster of Southern Wells Jr./Sr. High School, employed at Shuttleworth.

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Barge collision

(Continued from Page 1)

Guard said. “Weather was not a factor, at all, during the coupling issue,” Freed said. When pressed for more details on how the two vessels became disconnected, he said: “It’s under investigation right now, and I really can’t disclose anything further until the investigation is through.”

On Thursday, the barge remained beside the bridge, weighed in place by debris including rail lines that fell onto it after the crash.

The bridge, which provides the only road access between Galveston and Pelican Island, remained closed to incoming traffic, but vehicles leaving Pelican Island and pedestrians in both directions were able to cross.

Texas A&M University at Galveston, which has a campus on Pelican Island, urged staff and faculty to leave and said it was closing the campus, although essential personnel would remain.

“Given the rapidly changing conditions and uncertainty regarding the outage of the Pelican Island Bridge, the Galveston Campus administration will be relocating all Texas A&M Pelican Island residents,” through at least Sunday, it said in a statement late Wednesday.

Fewer than 200 people related to the school were on the island when the barge hit the bridge. Spokesperson Shantelle Patterson-Swanson said the university would provide transportation and cover the housing costs of

those who choose to leave, but underlined that the school has not issued a mandatory evacuation.

Aside from the environmental impact of the oil spill, the region is unlikely to see large economic disruption as a result of the accident, said Maria Burns, a maritime transportation expert at the University of Houston.

The affected area is miles from the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, which sees frequent barge traffic, and the Houston Ship Channel, a large shipping channel for ocean-going vessels.

The accident came weeks after a cargo ship crashed into a support column of the Francis Key Bridge in Baltimore on March 26, killing six construction workers.

U.S. prisoners

(Continued from Page 1)

Prison labor began during slavery and exploded as incarceration rates soared, disproportionately affecting people of color. As laws have steadily changed to make it easier for private companies to tap into the swelling captive workforce, it has grown into a multi-billion-dollar industry that operates with little oversight.

Laws in some states spell it out clearly: Prisoners aren’t classified as employees, whether they’re working inside correctional facilities or for outside businesses through prison contracts or work-release programs. That can exclude them from workers’ compensation benefits, along with state and federal laws that set minimum standards for health and safety on the job.

It’s almost impossible to know how many incarcerated workers are hurt or killed each year, partly because they often don’t report injuries, fearing retaliation or losing privileges like contact with their families. Privacy laws add to the challenges of obtaining specific data. In California, for instance, more than 700 work-related injuries were recorded between 2018 and 2022 in the state’s prison industries program, but the documents provided to the AP were heavily redacted.

At Hickman’s Family Farms, logs obtained by the AP from Arizona’s corrections department listed about 250 prison worker injuries during the same time frame. Most were minor, but some serious cases ranged from deep cuts and sliced-off fingertips to smashed hands.

“They end up being mangled in ways that will affect them for the rest of their lives,” said Joel Robbins, a lawyer who has represented several prisoners hired by Hickman’s. “If you’re going to come out with a good resume, you should come out with two hands and two legs and eyes to work.”

The AP requested comment from the companies it identified as having connections to prison labor. Most did not respond, but Cargill -- the largest private com-

pany in the U.S. with \$177 billion in revenue last year -- said it was continuing to work “to ensure there is no prison labor in our extended supplier network.” Others said they were looking for ways to take action without disrupting crucial supply chains.

Prisoners across the country can be sentenced to hard labor, forced to work and punished if they refuse, including being sent to solitary confinement. They cannot protest against poor conditions, and it’s usually difficult for them to sue.

Most jobs are inside prisons, where inmates typically earn a few cents an hour doing things like laundry and mopping floors. The limited outside positions often pay minimum wage, but some states deduct up to 60% off the top.

In Arizona, jobs at Hickman’s are voluntary and often sought after, not just for the money, but also because employment and affordable housing are offered upon release.

During a daylong guided tour of the company’s egg-packing operations and housing units, two brothers who run the family business stressed to an AP reporter that safety and training are top priorities. Several current and formerly incarcerated workers there praised the company, which markets eggs with brand names like Land O’ Lakes, Egglund’s Best and Hickman’s, and have been sold everywhere from Safeway to Kroger.

“We work on a farm with machinery and live animals, so it is important to follow the instructions,” said Ramona Sullins, who has been employed by Hickman’s for more than eight years before and after her release from prison. “I have heard and seen of people being hurt, but when they were hurt, they weren’t following the guidelines.”

AP reporters spoke with more than 100 current and former prisoners across the country -- along with family members of workers who were killed -- about various prison labor jobs. Roughly a quarter of them related stories involving

injuries or deaths, from severe burns and traumatic head wounds to severed body parts. Reporters also talked to lawyers, researchers and experts, and combed through thousands of documents, including the rare lawsuits that manage to wind their way through the court system.

While many of the jobs are hidden, others are in plain view, like prisoners along busy highways doing road maintenance. In Alabama alone, at least three men have died since 2015, when 21-year-old Braxton Moon was hit by a tractor-trailer that swerved off the interstate. The others were killed while picking up trash.

In many states, laws mandate that prisoners be deployed during emergencies and disasters for jobs like hazardous material cleanup or working on the frontlines of hurricanes while residents evacuate. They’re also sent to fight fires, filling vital worker shortage gaps, including in some rural communities in Georgia where incarcerated firefighters are paid nothing as the sole responders for everything from car wrecks to medical emergencies.

California currently has about 1,250 prisoners trained to fight fires and has used them since the 1940s. It pays its “Angels in Orange” \$2.90 to \$5.12 a day, plus an extra \$1 an hour when they work during emergencies.

When a brush fire broke out in 2016, Shawna Lynn Jones and her crew were sent to the wealthy Malibu beach community near California’s rugged Pacific Coast Highway, which was built by prisoners a century ago. The 22-year-old, who had just six weeks left on her sentence for a non-violent crime, died after a boulder fell 100 feet from a hillside onto her head -- one of 10 incarcerated firefighters killed in the state since 1989.

Unlike many places, California does offer workers’ compensation to prisoners, which Jones’ mother, Diana Baez, said covered hospital expenses and the funeral.

Baez said her daughter

loved being a firefighter and was treated as a fallen hero, but noted that even though she was on life support and never regained consciousness, “When I walked behind the curtain, she was still handcuffed to that damn gun.”

The California corrections department said prisoners must pass a physical skills test to participate in the program, which “encourages incarcerated people to commit to positive change and self-improvement.” But inmates in some places across the country find it can be extremely difficult to transfer their firefighting skills to outside jobs upon their release due to their criminal records.

In most states, public institutions are not liable for incarcerated workers’ injuries or deaths. But in a case last year, the American Civil Liberties Union represented a Nevada crew sent to mop up a wildfire hotspot. It resulted in a \$340,000 settlement that was split eight ways, as well as assurances of better training and equipment going forward.

Rebecca Leavitt said when she and her all-woman team arrived at the site with only classroom training, they did a “hot foot dance” on smoldering embers as their boss yelled “Get back in there!” One crew member’s burned-up boots were duct-taped back together, she said, while others cried out in pain as their socks melted to their feet during nine hours on the ground that paid about \$1 an hour.

Two days later, Leavitt said the women finally were taken to an outside hospital, where doctors carved dead skin off the bottoms of their feet, which had sustained second-degree burns. Because they were prisoners, they were denied pain medicine.

“They treated us like we were animals or something,” said Leavitt, adding that the women were afraid to disobey orders in the field or report their injuries for fear they could be sent to a higher-security facility. “The only reason why any of us had to tell them was because we couldn’t walk.”

Weather

Friday, May 17, 2024

(24-hour observations at 9:50 p.m. Thursday)
High: 77; Low: 54; Precipitation: None
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 2.33 feet at 8:45 p.m. Thursday

Wells County forecast

Today: A 30% chance of showers and thunderstorms, mainly after 2 p.m. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 76. Southwest wind around 5 mph.

Tonight: A chance of showers and thunderstorms before 2 a.m., then a slight chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 60. South wind around 5 mph. Chance of precipitation is 30%.

Saturday: A slight chance of showers, then a chance of showers and thunderstorms after 2 p.m. Mostly sunny, with a high near 79. Calm wind becoming east around 5 mph in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation is 30%.

Saturday Night: A 30% chance of showers and thunderstorms before 8 p.m. Mostly clear, with a low around 59. Northeast wind around 5 mph becoming calm.

Sunday: Sunny, with a high near 83.

Sunday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 60.

Monday: Sunny, with a high near 84.

Monday Night: A 20% chance of showers after 2 a.m. Partly cloudy, with a low around 63.

Tuesday: A 50% chance of showers and thunderstorms, mainly after 8 a.m. Partly sunny, with a high near 83.

Tuesday Night: Showers likely and possibly a thunderstorm. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 62. Chance of precipitation is 60%.

Wednesday: A 50% chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly sunny, with a high near 75.

Wednesday Night: A slight chance of thunderstorms. Mostly clear, with a low around 56.

Thursday: A slight chance of showers and thunderstorms. Sunny, with a high near 77.

Indiana judge opens door for new eatery

Finding ‘tacos and burritos are Mexican-style sandwiches’

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (AP) — An Indiana judge who declared that “tacos and burritos are Mexican-style sandwiches” has cleared the way for the opening of a new restaurant, delighting a restaurateur following a legal battle.

Martin Quintana, 53, has been trying for about three years to open his second The Famous Taco location in Fort Wayne.

But the initial written commitment for the development at a plaza Quintana owns limits the business to “a sandwich bar-style restaurant whose primary business is to sell ‘made-to-order’ or ‘subway-style’ sandwiches.”

Quintana said the nearby Covington Creek Association contacted him to say that his The Famous Taco proposal “somehow ran afoul” to that commitment.

He sued the Fort Wayne Plan Commission in December 2022 after it denied his proposed amendment that would specifically allow his restaurant to offer made-to-order tacos, burritos and other Mexican-style food items, The Journal Gazette reported.

Allen Superior Court Judge Craig Bobay ruled Monday that the plan commission acted correctly when it denied Quintana’s proposed amendment. But the judge also found that his request was not needed and he found that the original commitment allows restaurants like the proposed The Famous Taco.

“The Court agrees with Quintana that tacos and burritos are Mexican-style sandwiches, and the original Written Commitment does not restrict potential restaurants to only American cuisine-style sandwiches,” Bobay wrote.

Quintana said Thursday he is relieved the legal fight is over, and he is looking forward to opening his second The Famous Taco restaurant in Fort Wayne, which is Indiana’s second-most populous city with about 270,000 residents.

“I’m glad this thing is over. We are happy. When you have a decision like this the only thing you can be is happy. We’re excited,” he told The Associated Press.

Quintana said he came to the U.S. from Mexico in 1988, working first as a farm worker in California picking grapes, olives and kiwi fruit before entering the restaurant business in Michigan before moving to Chicago and finally Fort Wayne in 2001. He also operates a second restaurant in the city.

Quintana said his new family-owned The Famous Taco restaurant should open in two or three months. He said that like his other The Famous Taco location that opened nearly seven years ago, customers will be able choose their favored toppings for tacos, burritos or tortas assembled by eatery staff.

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OBITUARIES

John E. Dickason, 80

John E. Dickason, 80, passed away Thursday afternoon, May 16, 2024, at Christian Care Retirement Community following an extended illness.

John was born in Bluffton, on April 19, 1944, to Samuel W. and Geraldine M. (Lincoln) Dickason. He married Sue A. (Kammer) in Bluffton on Oct. 24, 1964. Sue preceded him in death on Jan. 18, 2022.

A 1962 graduate of Chester Center School, John worked in the industrial maintenance field, retiring from Buckhorn Industries in 2012. Following retirement, he worked as a Funeral Assistant with Goodwin – Cale & Harnish Memorial Chapel from 2012 to 2015. John was a member of the Bluffton Masonic Lodge 145, where he served as Worshipful Master from 2009-2010, 32nd degree Scottish Rite Mason and a member of the Mizpah Shrine. He was an avid golfer, enjoyed attending sporting events, coin collecting, following IU Basketball, raising their families' dogs and an avid Corvette owner.

Survivors include two daughters, Tonya (Rich) Brown and Erin (Mark) Prible, both of Bluffton; and a son, Curt Dickason of Ft. Wayne; nine grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; one sister, Kate (Bruce) Stinson of Bluffton; and three brothers, Frank Dickason of Bluffton, Richard (Brenda) Dickason of Ossian and Joe (Trudy) Dickason of Liberty Center.

Visitation will be held Tuesday, May 21, 2024, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Goodwin – Cale & Harnish Memorial Chapel in Bluffton. A Masonic Memorial Service will be held at 8:00 p.m. at the funeral home following visitation. A private family graveside will take place at a later date at the Elm Grove Cemetery in Bluffton, Pastor Clark Stoller will officiate.

Memorial contributions in John's memory may be made to Bluffton Masonic Lodge 145 in Bluffton.

Online condolences can be made to www.goodwin-cale-harnish.com.



Linda Yvonne Bustos, 73

Linda Yvonne Bustos, 73, of Warren, passed away at her home on Tuesday, May 14, 2024.

Linda was born July 7, 1950, in Dierks, Ark., to Fred Fulcher and Juanita (Lewis) Fulcher Koontz. She married Chris Bustos on May 1, 1971.

Linda was preceded in death by her parents, Fred Fulcher and Juanita Fulcher Koontz; and sister, Brenda Kay Fulcher Krantz.

Survivors include her husband, Chris Bustos; children, Griff Bustos and Emily (Travis) Harris; seven grandchildren; sisters, Shirley (Tommy) Garney, Sandy (Richard) Richison Hinton, Freida Feltner, and Kathy (Ruben) Bustos; and several nieces and nephews.

Friends and family may gather to share and remember on Sunday, May 19, 2024, at Glancy-H. Brown & Son Funeral Home located at 203 N Matilda St. Warren, IN 46792, from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. A funeral service will begin at 3 p.m. with Gage Bustos officiating. Burial will follow at Woodlawn Cemetery in Warren.

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

Betty Jane Howell, 86

Betty Jane Howell, 86, of Markle, formerly of Bluffton, passed away at 5:49 p.m. Tuesday, May 14, 2024, at Stillwater Hospice in Fort Wayne. She was born Friday, April 15, 1938, in Bluffton.

She is survived by her daughter, Jacqueline "Jackie" K. (Ed) Mateyka, Coarsegold, Calif.; sister, Patricia M. (Bob) Glessner, Huntington; two aunts; 11 grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her father, Rev. Delbert S. Brown; mother, Agnes A. (Sutton) Brown; daughter, Rochelle A. Robles; sons, Robert Todd Howell, Timothy Edward Howell; and brothers, Harry E. "Bud" Brown, and David D. Brown.

Family and friends may gather to share and remember at Walker & Glancy Funeral Home located at 109 W Windsor St Montpelier on Sunday, May 19, 2024, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

A service to celebrate Betty's life will follow at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 19, 2024, with Mike Sutton officiating.

Arrangements are being handled by Walker & Glancy Funeral Home in Montpelier.

Online condolences may be made at www.glancyfuneralhomes.com

Police Notebook

INCIDENTS

County:

Wednesday, 12:59 p.m., South Hoosier Highway and East 300 South, Bluffton. Report of horses in the road.

Wednesday, 4:27 p.m., 900 block of South Mulberry Street. Officer requested to stand by for custody exchange.

Wednesday, 5:01 p.m., Lengerich Meats. Report of an email scam.

Wednesday, 9:31 p.m., 5900 North Miller Street, Uniondale. Caller reported someone yelled at them while they were walking a dog.

Thursday, 1:13 a.m., 2700 West Woodview Drive, Zanesville. Report of domestic issue.

Thursday, 3:23 a.m., 6800 East Market Street, Craigville. Report of someone knocking on windows. No issues found, sound came from neighbors.

Thursday, 3:53 a.m., Wells County Jail. Warrant served to Joann Hickman at the jail.

Thursday, 4:59 a.m., Archibald-Wilson Park. Report of vehicle on walking path. It's getting towed for obvious reasons.

Thursday, 6:48 a.m., Wells county Jail. Warrant served to Amy Arnold-Graham.

Thursday, 11:59 a.m., Mitchel Enterprises. Man charged with failure to register as a sex offender after he failed to register his new employment on time.

Ossian:

Wednesday, 12:53 p.m., 2300 East 700 North, Ossian. Report of an issue with contractor that needed to be fixed. Advised it is a civil issue.

ACCIDENTS

County:

Tuesday, 7:31 p.m., S.R. 1 and C.R. 200 South. Timothy Captain, 49, Bluffton, was attempting to turn onto C.R. 200 South when he failed to see an oncoming driver. Captain's Dodge Durango collided with a Kia Forte driven by Brandon Went, 28, Dunkirk. The visibility at the time of the accident was low, with high precipitation. Damages did not exceed \$10,000.

ARRESTS

Joshua Norman, 48, Bluffton; invasion of privacy, a Class A misdemeanor. Bond set at \$25,000.

Xavier Lee Shuman, 20, Fort Wayne; pointing a firearm, a Level 6 felony. Bond set at \$10,000.

Ryan Anthony Aschliman, 49, Bluffton; operating a vehicle with an ACE of .15 or more, a Class A misdemeanor, and operating while intoxicated — prior, a Level 6 felony. Bond set at \$5,000.

Dustin Joe Sanders, 19, Ossian; possession of marijuana, a Class B misdemeanor.

Joann Marie Heckman, 33, Bluffton; possession of methamphetamine, a Level 6 felony, and possession of paraphernalia, a Class C misdemeanor. Bond set at \$5,000.



Bueter's coda concert

Thursday marked BHMSD Band Director Jim Bueter's final concert before his retirement. Former colleagues, students and mentors were present, some playing instruments, to honor Bueter's legacy. Above left, Bueter thanks the crowd and his students for their dedication to the program. Above right, Ash Schoeff keeps time with the tuba. Below, Zara Eisenhut, front, Kristopher Cortez and Dakota Jennings, back, skillfully play. (Photos by Jonathan Snyder)



GOP tries to 'correct the narrative' on use of mailed ballots after conflicting messages

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI and MARGERY BECK Associated Press

Marta Moehring voted the way she prefers in Nebraska's Republican primary Tuesday — in person, at her west Omaha polling place.

She didn't even consider taking advantage of the state's no-excuse mail-in ballot process. In fact, she would prefer to do away with mail-in voting altogether. She's convinced fraudulent mailed ballots cost former President Donald Trump a second term in 2020.

"I don't trust it in general," Moehring, 62, said. "I don't think they're counted correctly."

But now Republican officials — even, sometimes, Trump — are encouraging voters such as Moehring to cast their ballots by mail. The GOP has launched an effort to, in the words of one official, "correct the narrative" on mail voting and get those who were turned off to it by Trump to reconsider for this year's election.

The push is a striking change for a party that amplified dark rumors about mail ballots to explain away Trump's 2020 loss, but it is also seen as a necessary course correction for an election this year that is likely to be decided by razor-thin margins in a handful of swing states.

"We have to get right on using these mail-in ballots for the people who can't get there on Election Day," Rep. Scott Perry, one of Trump's strongest congressional allies in his push to overturn the 2020 election, said at a conservative gathering in his home state of Pennsylvania.

Republicans once were at least as likely as Democrats to vote by mail, but Trump changed the dynamics in 2020. He preemptively began to argue that mail balloting was bad months before voting began in the presidential race.

That alarmed GOP strategists who saw mail voting

as an advantage in campaigns because it lets them "bank" unreliable votes before Election Day and lowers the risk of turnout plummeting because of bad weather or other unpredictable factors at the polls. Trump's own campaign tried to sell Republicans on casting ballots by mail, but his voters listened to the then-president. In 2020, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Democrats were vastly more likely to cast ballots by mail than Republicans.

The trend continued in 2022, and its costs were starkly illustrated in Arizona.

Three top-of-the-ticket Republican candidates there who echoed Trump's lies about the unreliability of mail ballots encouraged their supporters to vote in person on Election Day. An election machine meltdown that day in one-third of the polling places in the state's most populous county led to huge lines and some would-be voters departing in frustration.

The three top Republicans all lost, including falling 17,000 votes short in the governor's race and 500 votes short in the one for attorney general.

This time, Republicans say they're not going to risk leaving ballots behind. Trump's handpicked chair of the Republican National Committee, his daughter-in-law Lara Trump, has vowed to embrace all sorts of legal election methods to boost turnout that Trump falsely blamed for his 2020 loss, including so-called "ballot harvesting" — letting people turn in mail ballots on the behalf of other voters.

"In this election cycle, Republicans will beat Democrats at their own game, by leveraging every legal tactic at our disposal based on the rules of each state," Lara Trump said in an interview with The Associated Press.

Turning Point Action, a prominent, pro-Trump group, is launching a \$100 million campaign to reach infrequent voters in the

swing states of Arizona, Michigan and Wisconsin. That will include offering mail voting as one way to make casting a ballot easier, spokesman Andrew Kolvet said.

"We'd love for elections to be run the way they were before," Kolvet said. "We can spend our time complaining about it or we can get in gear and play by the rules that Democrats, or largely Democrats, used."

The RNC is also continuing to file lawsuits against various aspects of mail voting around the country.

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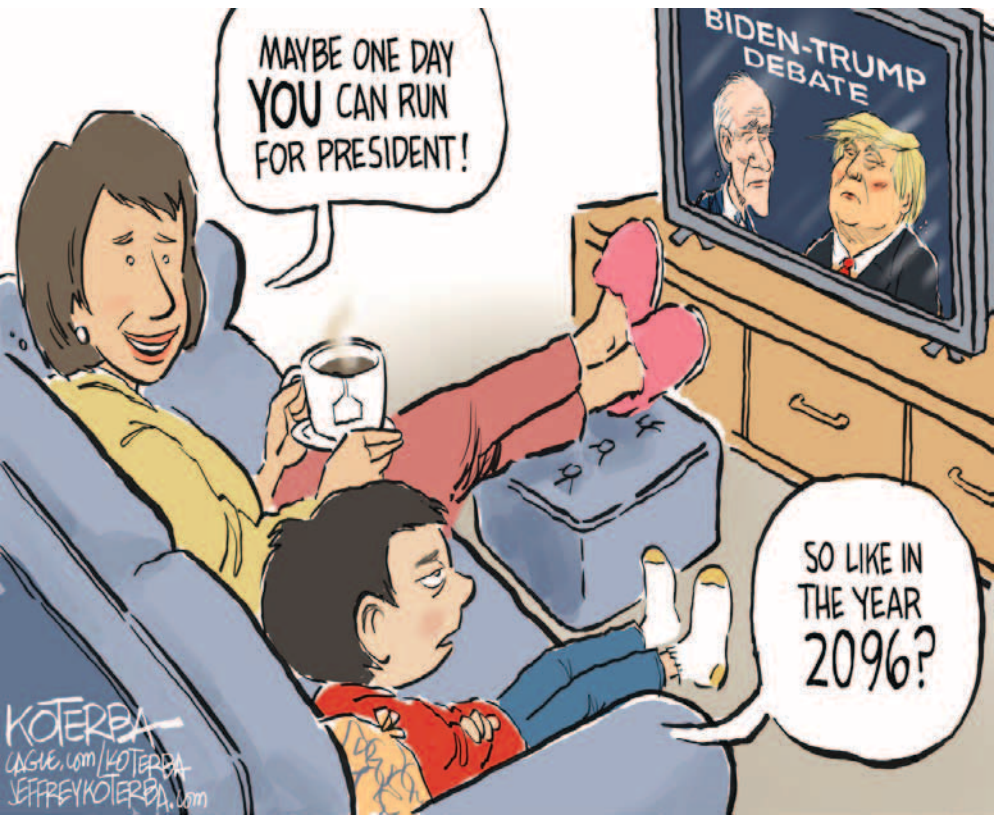
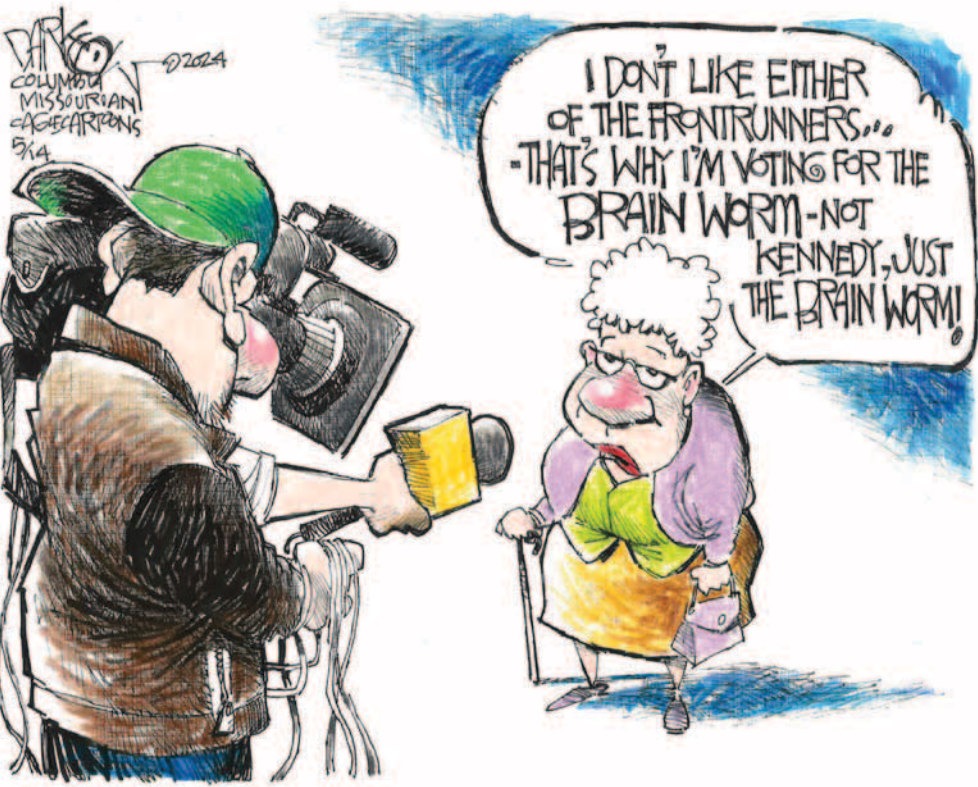
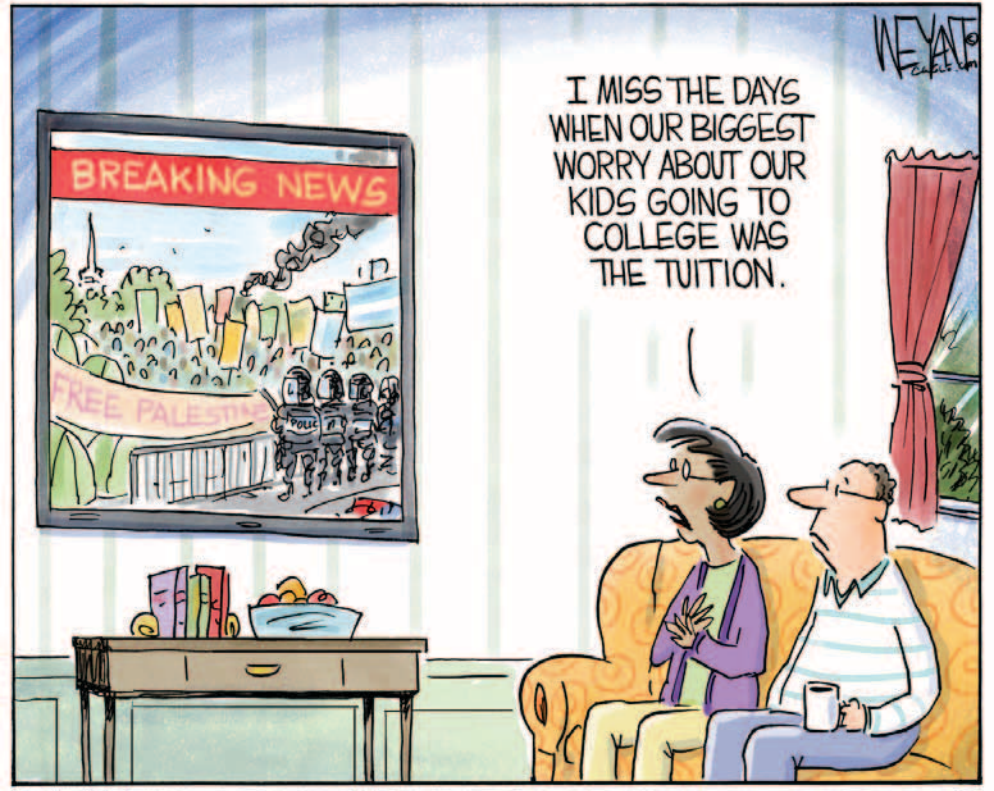
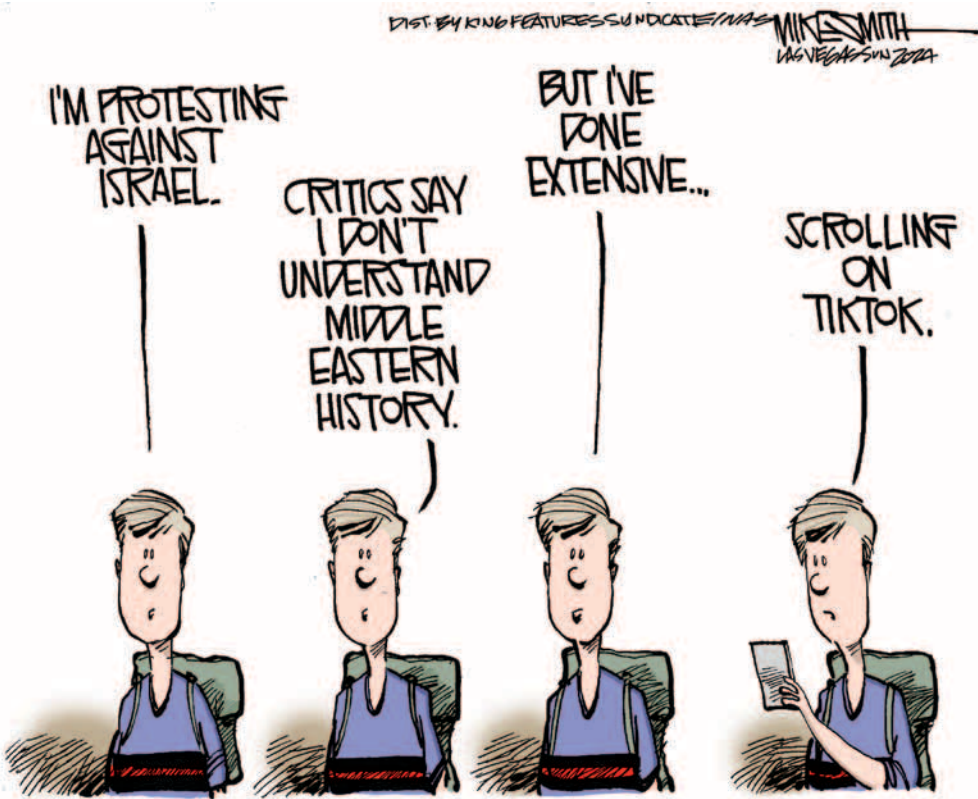
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The Week That Was - a look back through cartoonists' eyes...



Other Opinions

Who will win Trump's Veep Sweepstakes?

Donald Trump is doing his "Apprentice" thing and publicly auditioning candidates for Vice President. One exception: Nikki Haley is nowhere to be found. No sooner did Axios report that Ms. Haley was being considered than Mr. Trump issued a personal statement this weekend that she's out of the running. Mr. Trump at least said he wishes her well, but rejecting her doesn't solve his main campaign problem of appealing to Haley voters.

Vice Presidents are rarely decisive in presidential elections, but they can matter for governing and the country's future. This year the VP choice may matter more than usual on all of those counts. If Mr. Trump wins he'd be an immediate lame duck who can serve only one term. He turns 78 in June, and he'd be the second oldest President after the current one.

Mike Pence was an excellent choice in 2016 as an experienced, steady hand who also reassured social conservatives. He helped to populate the first Trump Administration with talented policy experts. On Jan. 6 he stood up to Mr. Trump's bullying and put the Constitution ahead of his own ambition.

Mr. Trump needs a comparably reassuring choice this year to win over the suburban, college-educated and women voters who cost him re-election in 2020. They're still giving Ms. Haley upwards of 20% in the GOP primaries, though she long ago ended her campaign.

Ms. Haley ought to be in the VP mix given her strong primary performance. She outlasted everyone but Mr. Trump and did well in debates. She has foreign-policy experience and was a two-term Governor of South Carolina. She'd provide a notable contrast in competence and charisma to Vice President Kamala Harris.

The conventional wisdom is that Mr. Trump can't accept someone with strong views of her own, which would rule out Ms. Haley. That's probably the safest bet, and Ms. Haley hasn't endorsed him. But choosing a strong woman would be surprising enough that it might cause skeptical swing voters to take another look at the former President. The MAGA diehards would howl, but they aren't going to stay home or vote for Mr. Biden.

This assumes Ms. Haley would accept the VP offer, which carries more risk for her than for Mr. Trump. A second Trump term is likely to be as chaotic and divisive as the first, with Democrats implacably opposed to everything. Second terms are rarely a success, and the VP would go down with the ship. Then again, few people turn down the chance to be so close to power.

Who else could unite the party by reassuring Haley voters? A strong and logical choice would be Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin, who has shown he can win and govern in a swing state. He's smart, likable and a conservative who is impossible for the left to portray as crazy. He'd signal that Mr. Trump realizes he can't win with MAGA alone. The Trump campaign is boasting that it will target Virginia this year, and if that's more than spin Mr. Youngkin can help.

The biggest question is whether Mr. Trump wants his VP choice to expand his coalition or be a MAGA echo.

Republicans are increasingly confident they can win this year, but the presidential race is still in the margin of error. Mr. Trump's choice as VP is an opportunity to showcase a contrast to Ms. Harris, who could become President if Mr. Biden wins. He needs Haley voters, whether or not he chooses Ms. Haley.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
Distributed by The Associated Press

The good, the bad and the antisemitic ugliness on campus

The anti-Israel protests on campuses revealed some of the good, bad and ugly of our universities. Behind it lies the hints of Critical Theory, which has captured so many campuses, robbing faculty and students of reason and judgment.

The good news is that protests involved fewer than one in every thousand college students. That means, for every one protesting student, hundreds of others were studying for final exams, completing term papers or preparing end-of-course presentations.

The depiction of many protesters as over-privileged and under-informed may be fair, but that is not what I see on campus. Most students arrive with a little intellectual humility and a desire to learn and thrive. Harassing fellow students or barricading campus are not why they came to college.

The bad was also apparent. Many universities were unprepared, if not confused, regarding how to handle protests. Any president who has not rehearsed a plan to ensure free speech while also protecting property should be looking for a different job. Many failed at that simple task and should go. The harder challenge came with antisemitic threats, which risk creating environments that violate federal civil rights law and campus policies.

Still, after decades of colleges carefully curating students, staff and faculty for a very narrow set of ideologies, many schools seemed shocked to discover there is more than one point of view. This has left some of them helpless and hapless in their response.

There was also more than a little hypocrisy on display. Many faculty members criticized last-minute policy changes or were angered by the police presence, or the techniques they used to disperse students. Those complaints are fair.

Still, try to imagine the level of faculty outrage if campus officials summoned armed police to disperse a crowd of students chanting "they will not replace us" or some other noxious white supremacist mantra. There would be none.

To be fair, the protesters and counter-protestors came in many forms. Those outside my office were neither disruptive nor plainly antisemitic. The Middle East has many deep issues that would benefit from honest discussion, and there are there are fair critiques of all sides. There is also more than sufficient suffering to make us care and sympathize with victims.



Michael Hicks

Hoosier Opinions

However, in many places, a deep ugliness descended on American campuses that we must confront.

The overall climate of these protests was antisemitic and frankly pro-terrorist. I cannot write about this without disclosing my own experience in Middle East wars and in peacekeeping missions designed to prevent another Arab-Israeli conflict.

As a young officer, I was in the midst of some of the most horrific violence the region has seen, including vast refugee columns, devastated cities and murdered civilians. My experiences yield both context and nightmares.

From Chababar west to Casablanca, from the Mediterranean through the southern Sahara, the neighborhood is a wreck. In that region of 26 nations, there is one functioning democracy — Israel. The rest range from failed states, such as Sudan, to medieval monarchies, such as Saudi Arabia, to full-scale civil wars, such as Syria or Yemen.

Ethnic cleansing is common across the region. Indeed, there's only one nation with a religious minority that is larger today than in 1970 — Israel.

Many Middle Eastern nations are full of courageous citizens and struggling governments that wish to craft democracy from the ruins of despotism, imperialism and terror movements. Since the Arab Spring, pro-democracy volunteers continue to fight and die in desperate civil wars in Niger, Libya, Sudan, Yemen, Iraq and especially Syria. They fight radical terrorists, they fight armed groups of thugs and they fight Cold War despots.

A reasonable person might suppose American students would vigorously support that one liberal, multicultural democracy in the region. Or, perhaps there would be student rallies to support those pro-democracy movements. After all, no human being in the world basks more fully in the blessings of liberty and democracy than a progressive college student.

One might suppose that students would devote themselves to protesting the region's despots, who operate military dictatorships or 12th-century monarchies. These would surely be targets of an informed, progressive movement.

Most especially, we should expect

student protestors to rally forcefully against the radical terrorists. After all, these movements don't wish women to suffer the inconvenience of education, voting or choosing their husband. The LGBT+ community, which is so active on campus, is largely silent in radical terrorist circles, because they have been murdered.

None of this has happened. The protests on American campuses targeted the sole liberal, multicultural democracy in the Middle East. There is something else at work, an ancient and noxious hatred that has no place on campus. It is antisemitism. We must accept that's what it is and stand against it.

The claims of Israeli genocide are preposterous. If you believe Hamas' fabricated numbers, fewer than 1 percent of Palestinians have died in this war. The Syrian Civil War has killed 20 times the number, without any campus protests.

The protestors would have you believe that Israel has both a powerful and criminal military but lacks the competence to conduct a proper ethnic cleansing. The claims of genocide and ethnic cleansing are just a modern antisemitic trope, without facts or merit.

Many protestors waved the flags of Hamas and Hezbollah, two groups that won popular elections in Gaza and the West Bank. Both explicitly call for the elimination of Israel and Jews. It is time to state clearly that waving a Hamas or Hezbollah flag is functionally identical to waving a NAZI flag. We should treat them all with scorn.

The pro-Hamas, anti-Israel protests are funded, directed and promoted by groups with a deep hatred of our liberal democratic values. I doubt most students know this, but faculty and staff participants are well aware.

Hatred of Israel is taught on campuses under the umbrella of Critical Theory. In this view, Israel is depicted as an "oppressor" and Jews who support Israel are depicted as the epitome of privileged Zionists. This view justifies Hamas and the Oct. 7 murders that precipitated this war.

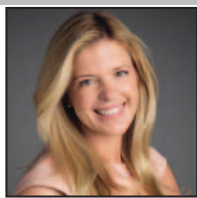
It is impossible to understand the current explosion of antisemitic protests without appealing to Critical Theory and its anti-liberal focus on race, religion and oppressor status. It is well past time university presidents end Critical Theory-based programming and policies on campus. If not, legislators should do so to prevent these antisemitic protests from becoming more ugly.

Michael Hicks is the George and Frances Ball Distinguished Professor of Economics and the director of the Center for Business and Economic Research at Ball State University.

THE NEWS-BANNER
(USPS 059-200)
Evening News est. 1892 • Evening Banner est. 1899 • Consolidated 1929
Telephone Number 260-824-0224
George B. Witwer, Chairman of the Board
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Holly Gaskill, Editor
Fax Number 260-824-0700
Periodicals Postage Paid at Bluffton, IN. Published every day except Sundays and Principal Holidays at 125 N. Johnson Street, Bluffton, IN. 46714. Post Office Box 436.
Opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily represent the views of this newspaper.

Celebrating mothers and their enduring love

Dear Annie by Annie Lane



Dear Readers: Wishing you all had a Happy Mother's Day. Below are some beautiful quotes to enjoy. "We are born of love; love is our mother." — Rumi "To describe my mother would be to write about a hurricane in its perfect power. Or the climbing, falling colors of a rainbow." — Maya Angelou "I am sure that if the mothers of various nations could meet, there would be no more wars." — E. M. Forster "My mother was the most beautiful woman I ever saw. All I am I owe to my mother. I attribute my success in life to the moral, intellectual and physical education I received from her." — George Washington "All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother." — Abraham Lincoln "I remember my mother's prayers, and they have always followed me. They have clung to me all my life." — Abraham Lincoln "Over the years, I learned so much from mom. She taught me about the importance of home and history and family and tradition. She also taught me that aging need not mean narrowing the scope of your activities and interests or a diminution of the great pleasures to be had in the everyday." — Martha Stewart "Sons are the anchors of a mother's life." — Sophocles "The best place to cry is on a mother's arms." — Jodi Picoult "Mother's love is peace. It need not be acquired, it need not be deserved." — Erich Fromm "God could not be everywhere, and therefore he made mothers." — Rudyard Kipling "Men are what their mothers made them." — Ralph Waldo Emerson "As is the mother, so is her daughter." — Ezekiel 16:4 "A mother takes 20 years to make a man of her boy, and another woman makes a fool of him in 20 minutes." —

Robert Frost "A mother is a mother still, the holiest thing alive." — Samuel Taylor Coleridge "A mother's arms are made of tenderness, and children sleep soundly in them." — Victor Hugo "Life began with waking up and loving my mother's face." — George Eliot "A mother understands what a child does not say." — Jewish proverb "Most mothers are instinctive philosophers." — Harriet Beecher Stowe "It may be possible to gild pure gold, but who can make his mother more beautiful?" — Mahatma Gandhi "My mother had a slender, small body, but a large heart — a heart so large that everybody's joys found welcome in it, and hospitable accommodation." — Mark Twain "When you are a mother, you are never really alone in your thoughts. A mother always has to think twice, once for herself and once for her child." — Sophia Loren "Biology is the least of what makes someone a mother." — Oprah Winfrey "I believe the choice to become a mother is the choice to become one of the greatest spiritual teachers there is." — Oprah Winfrey What makes a mother is someone who is caring, nurturing and loving.

Annie Lane's second anthology, "How Can I Forgive My Cheating Partner?" — featuring favorite columns on marriage, infidelity, communication and reconciliation — is available as a paperback and e-book. Visit http://www.creatorspublishing.com for more information. Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com. © 2024 CREATORS.COM

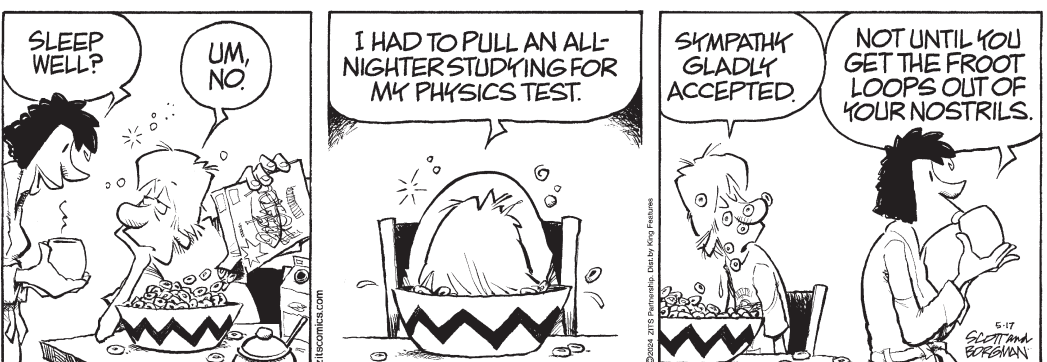
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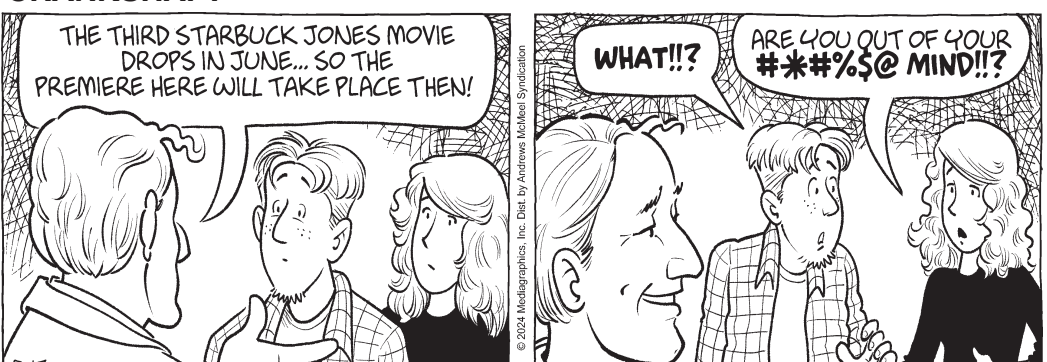
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My Answer



By Dr. Billy Graham Question: There's sure a lot of religious lingo that is hard to understand including sin, sanctification, and salvation. What does "Gospel of crisis" mean? I thought the Gospel was a message from God. — G.C. Answer: Christianity is centered on the Gospel that brings conviction, confession, and change. But an unbelieving world sees Christianity as a Gospel of crisis because it boldly proclaims that the world's days are numbered. Every cemetery testifies to this. The Bible teaches that life is only a vapor that appears for a moment and then vanishes. This is why God calls out to people and nations

Christianity is centered on the Gospel

of the world to get right with Him. It's possible through sin to harden our hearts against God so long that we lose all desire for God. The Scripture says, "God also gave them up" (Romans 1:24, KJV). This is the crisis that the Gospel answers. We have all fallen short of God's plan, but God's love, mercy, and grace have provided a way out of the crisis of eternal death and separation from God. His sacrifice on the cross and His love for mankind made a way for our redemption. Don't delay settling things with Christ today; don't wait and let sin's deceitfulness harden your heart. The Gospel shows people their wounds and bestows on them love. It shows them their bondage and supplies the hammer to knock away their chains. It shows them their nakedness and provides them the garments of purity. It shows them their poverty and pours into their lives the wealth of Heaven. It shows them their sins and points them to the Savior. People don't like to hear that they are sinners — we are all sinners. But God saves the lost soul who repents and turns to Him. They leave their sins behind and begin a new life. (This column is based on the words and writings of the late Rev. Billy Graham.) ©2024 Billy Graham Literary Trust. Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

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By Bil Keane



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Table with columns for date, time, and program details. Includes sections for 'CROSSWORD' and 'Yesterday's answer 5-17'.

Knights place 3rd at sectional, Tigers crown two champs and break 4x400m school record

By RYAN WALKER
MARION — Thursday night was the boys' track and field championships, and there were several events that represented Wells County with pride.

For starters, the Norwell Knights came in third place at the meet, finishing with a team score of 102. The champions of this sectional were Oak Hill and Marion, who split the trophy with scores of 118.

Bluffton had two sectional champions in its events — Johnny Cruz in the shot put for the third consecutive year and Jude Baumgartner in the 200m dash.

Altogether, the Knights had nine and the Bluffton Tigers had five advance to the regional next week at Carroll. Both coaches' strategies were to get as many as they can one more week.

"We got several individuals out and a relay out in a meet like this against these opponents you're running against, that's what you're trying to do," Bluffton head coach Brent Kunkel said. "Pretty happy with our guys for sure. Great way to cap the team part of our season."

"We challenged them to outperform their performance listed in the seed, and across the board, our guys did a great job with that," Norwell acting head coach Josh Gerber said. "We got guys who weren't scheduled to score in the throws — we got guys to score throws, and stuff like that, and you're just proud of the way the kids performed."

Head coach Adam Prater was not in attendance for Norwell.

Not only did the Tigers get their 4x400m relay team to get out of the sectional, but broke the school's record with a time of 3:28.06. But to earn it wasn't the way it was planned too. In fact, it was the first time all season that the four runners did it together at the same time — Tyler Godwin, Baumgartner, Trey Bustos and Maksym Laishevkin.

Kunkel shared that Eli Kerner had been running the event all season, but the plan was to get events to regionals — not to go for team points. Kerner stepped up for the team and took a seat to allow Godwin, who did not run his typical 1600m and 3200m to prepare for the 4x400m, to enter.

"It's awesome. Feel great for those guys," Kunkel said. "We kind of shuffled a four-by-four lineup tonight because we want to Tyler Godwin to get a chance to run at the regionals knowing it's going to be tough. A kid like Eli Kerner, I just wanted to shout him out. I mean, he's ran that race all year and kind of stepped aside tonight. It says a lot about him and his character. Super proud of Eli, I know it's tough for him, but he's got three more years to do this and he's going to be really good runner for us."

It also was a rough night for another leg of the 4x400.

In the 110m hurdles, Andrew Hunt, who had a good shot at advancing to the regional meet, fell to the ground after injuring part of his lower body. Trainers and Kunkel had to lift him off the track and he was unable

to run the 300m and the 4x400m relay.

Bustos was then called upon to replace him, cutting the usual relay team in half and still breaking the record. Norwell was top-dog in the county in terms of numbers for next week's regional.

"Really proud of our kids where they competed and gave it run, just didn't have enough in the end there," Gerber said. "But you know, moved a lot of guys on the regional meet, proud of the way they competed. Can't really complain."

Gerber didn't hesitate to shout out his specific coaching area though, mentioning Will Gerber and Alex Fojtik for scoring points in the throwing events.

But the Knights were an all-around bunch — advancing in sprints, field events, hurdles and throwing while also scoring in distance.

There were no champions, but the 4x100m team, Hayden Bennett in the 300m hurdles, Trevon Stoppenhagen in the 200m, Jasper Kreigh in the pole vault and Jase Harmon in the high jump all got the team eight points with second place finishes.

Southern Wells finished last, but got points from three events: the 4x800m relay team Andrew Aker, Joshua Bricker, Kelton Barr and Miles Garrett; the 4x100m relay team of Aiden Carroll, Peyton Ellis, Kane Jenkins; and Malaki Capper and Capper in the high jump.

"I thought we got better as the year went on," head coach Gary Paxson said. "We don't have the depth that a lot of the other schools have, therefore, we had to put kids in more events throughout the year and that put a lot of unnecessary stress on our bodies. But if you looked at our kids during meets, you wouldn't know they were hurting. We have some tough kids that do not like to disappoint each other, so they continually do the things we ask them to do."

The Raiders didn't have a ton of numbers, but were highlighted by their freshman Capper, who made the finals in the 100m dash and in the high jump.

"Malaki Capper made the finals in the 100m and that is hard to do as a freshman," Paxson said.

The Raiders are also excited to bring in a new group of talented freshmen next season. The girls recently won the ACAC middle school track meet, while the boys placed fourth.

The regional meet at Carroll will begin at 6 p.m. Thursday, May 23.

ryan@news-banner.com

Top-eight finishes:
Bluffton
• The 4x800m relay team of Jude Baumgartner, Ayden Teeple, Levi Johns and Tyler Godwin fifth at 8:24.35.
• Eli Bertsch seventh in the 110m hurdles with a time of 16.97.
• The 4x100m relay team of Alex Mechling, Ben Ramseyer, Trey Bustos and Khamel Moore sixth with a time of 45.03.
• Baumgartner first in the 400m with a time of 50.65, qualifying for the regional

meet and Maksym Laishevkin eighth at 53.65.

• Godwin sixth in the 800m with a time of 2:02.08.

• The 4x400m relay team of Godwin, Laishevkin, Bustos and Baumgartner third with a time of 3:28.06, breaking the school record and qualifying for the regional meet.

• Tavin Frees third in the discus at 135-3, qualifying for the regional meet.

• Bertsch eighth in the high jump at 5-8.

• Bustos second in the long jump at 20-4.50, qualifying for the regional meet and Laishevkin eighth at 19-0.

• Johnny Cruz first in the shot put at 52-2.75, qualifying for the regional meet.

Norwell
• The 4x800m relay team of Gavin Threewits, Tyler Morris, Caiden Petrie and Luke Johnson fourth with a time of 8:22.04.
• Zane Borne sixth in the 110m hurdles with a time of 16.24.

• Trevon Stoppenhagen fourth in the 100m with a time of 11.06 and Devin Dale fifth at 11.10.
• Gavin Threewits eighth in the 1600m with a time of 4:49.43.

• The 4x100m team of Borne, Stoppenhagen, Jase Harmon and Dale second with a time of 43.08, qualifying for the regional meet.
• Mathew Hernandez third in the 400m with a time of 51.68, qualifying for the regional meet and Cohen Bailey seventh at 53.42.

• Hayden Bennett second in the 300m hurdles with a time of 42.00 and Borne third at 42.73 both qualifying for the regional meet.
• Stoppenhagen second in the 200m with a time of 22.47 and Dale third at 22.49, both qualifying for the regional meet.

• The 4x400m relay team of Morris, Bailey, Dale and Stoppenhagen seventh with a time of 3:41.10.
• Jasper Kreigh second in the pole vault at 12-6, qualifying for the regional meet and Easton Scherrer fifth at 11-0.

• William Gerber seventh in the discus at 120-10.
• Harmon tied for second in the high jump at 5-10, qualifying for the regional meet and Trace Moser fifth at 5-8.
• Bailey third in the long jump at 20-3.75, qualifying for the regional meet and Harmon fourth at 20-0.

• Alex Fojtik eighth in the shot put at 42-3.75.
Southern Wells
• The 4x800m relay team of Andrew Aker, Joshua Bricker, Kelton Barr and Miles Garrett eighth with a time of 9:19.73.
• The 4x100m relay team of Aiden Carroll, Peyton Ellis, Kane Jenkins and Malaki Capper eighth with a time of 47.30.
• Capper sixth in the high jump at 5-8.

Team Scores
T1. Oak Hill (118 points), T1. Marion (118), 3. Norwell (102), 4. Wabash (83), 5. Bluffton (60.50), 6. Mississinewa (41), 7. Eastbrook (33), 8. Frankton (25), 9. Northfield (17), 10. Blackford (8), T11. Alexandria Monroe (7), 13. Southern Wells (4.50).



Bluffton's 4x400m relay team holds the baton that was passed during their record-breaking night at Marion High School in the sectional meet. The team from left to right, Trey Bustos, Maksym Laishevkin, Tyler Godwin and Jude Baumgartner clocked in at 3:28.06, a new school record. The four's next stop is the regional next week at Carroll. (Photos by Ryan Walker)



Norwell's Trevon Stoppenhagen (left) sprints during the 100m dash, as does Southern Wells' Malaki Capper (right). Stoppenhagen finished fourth and is hoping for a callback, but did get second in the 200m to qualify for the regional meet next week. Capper is a promising freshman who qualified for the finals in this race, placed sixth in the high jump and helped the 4x100m relay team score a point.

Sports Roundup

Knights top Braves in tennis sectional sems, goes for title

Norwell swept Bellmont in the girls' tennis sectional semi-finals at Bluffton High School Thursday night.

The team's victory send them to the sectional championship in hopes to win back-to-back-to-back and ninth in program history.

Norwell will face off with Adams Central for the sectional final at 4:30 p.m. Friday, May 17. The Jets defeated Bluffton and South Adams 4-1 to reach the championship game.

Individual results:

• Addy Heyerly defeated Leila Jin 6-4, 6-4 at No. 1 singles.
• Delaney Hoover defeated Lillian Jin 6-3, 6-2 at No. 2 singles.
• Macie Saalfrank defeated Emma Fueling 6-1, 6-0 at No. 3 singles.
• Annabelle Johnson and Macy Felger defeated Marison Jackson and Isabelle Ortiz 6-3, 6-3 at No. 1 doubles.
• Jordyn Xayyachack and Ciera Hiester defeated Ella Ross and Lilyana Suarez 6-4, 6-3 at No. 2 doubles.

Tigers shut down Vikings in road baseball victory

Bluffton visited Huntington North and shut them out 4-0 in baseball Thursday night. The Tigers improved their record to 14-8 on the season.

The Tigers had five hits, two from Brody Lewis, who hit two double and had three RBI. Dane Schlagenhauf had an RBI. Nick Pastore, A.J. Streveler and Lukas Gehrett had hits.

Braxton Betancourt got the win, throwing seven innings, allowing no runs, two hits and nine strikeouts.
Bluffton will at Southwood at 10 a.m. Saturday, May 18.

Knights blank Chargers in baseball season finale

Norwell hosted and defeated Carroll 2-0 in its baseball regular-season finale Thursday night.

The Knights improved to a 16-7 record on the season.
Of the six hits, Cade Shelton had two of them with an RBI. Korben Neuenschwander, Cayden Cassel, Lane Lewis and Noah Turk had hits. Cassel with the other RBI.
Turk picked up the win, throwing four

innings and allowing no runs on four hit, one walk and one strikeout. Shelton pitched three innings, allowed one hit and no runs while striking out five.

Norwell will play under the lights at home in the sectional against Peru at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 22.

Knights mercy Legends in home softball game

Norwell mercied North Side 15-0 in home softball Thursday night.

The Knights improved to 12-7 on the season.

Norwell had 13 hits led by Kara Brown, who went 3-3 with a triple and a double. Reese Frauhiger had a triple and a double for two RBI. Sami Lemler had two hits including a double and an RBI. Addie Keller went 2-3 with a home run and four RBI. Jordan Markley tripled home two runs.

Lemler picked up the win, throwing three innings and allowed no runs on one hit, one walk and five strikeouts. Keller pitched two innings and allowed no runs on one hit with one walk.

Norwell will host Bluffton at 5 p.m. Friday, May 17.

Norwell bests Bellmont and East Noble in boys' golf meet

Norwell defeated Bellmont and East Noble in boys' golf at Timber Ridge Golf Course Thursday night.

Norwell scored a 155 on the night, Bellmont 166 and East Noble 178.

The Knights finish the conference regular season with a 4-3 record and are now 6-3 overall.

Cooper Sloan led the team and was the medalist with a score of 37, followed by Derek Smith and Chase Hulvey at 39, Bodie Zimmer 40 and Cavin Smithley 51.

Norwell will be at the at the Northeast 8 conference meet at Cobblestone Golf Course starting at 9 a.m. Saturday, May 18.

Raiders defeat the Argylls in boys' golf

Southern Wells topped Madison-Grant at Dogwood Glen Golf Course Thursday night.

The Raiders scored a 187 to the Argylls' 103. Cash Banter was the medalist and led the team with a 43, followed by Chandler Oswalt (47), Tristen Worster (48), Gabe

(Continued on Page 7)

High School Calendar

FRIDAY, MAY 17
BASEBALL: Anderson Prep at Southern Wells, 5:30 p.m.
SOFTBALL: Bluffton at Norwell, 5 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 18
BASEBALL: Bluffton at Southwood, 10 a.m.

BOYS GOLF: Norwell's NE8 Meet at Cobblestone Golf Course, 9 a.m.; Bluffton, Southern Wells' ACAC meet at Celina Linx Golf Course, 9 a.m.

SOFTBALL: Norwell at Whitko (double-header), 10 a.m.

MONDAY, MAY 20
SOFTBALL: Liberty Christian at Southern Wells, 6:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, MAY 21
BOYS GOLF: South Adams at Norwell, 4:30 p.m.; Bluffton at Huntington North, 4:30 p.m.; Southern Wells at Northfield, 4:30 p.m.

SOFTBALL: (Sectional) Norwell vs. Peru at Oak Hill, 5 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 22

BASEBALL: (Sectional) Peru at Norwell, 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, MAY 23
BASEBALL: (Sectional) Bluffton at South Adams, 5:30 p.m.

BOYS GOLF: Bluffton at Norwell, 4 p.m.; Heritage at Southern Wells, 5 p.m.

SOFTBALL: Bluffton vs. TBD at South Adams, 5:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 24
No events scheduled.

SATURDAY, MAY 25
BASEBALL: Southern Wells vs. Liberty Christia at Wes-Del, 5 p.m.

MONDAY, MAY 27
BOYS GOLF: Bluffton, Southern Wells at Southwood Knights Invitational, 10 a.m.

TUESDAY, MAY 28
BOYS GOLF: Adams Central at Norwell, 4:30 p.m.; Southern Wells at Bluffton, 4:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29
No events scheduled.

Sports Roundup

(Continued from Page 6)

McElhaney (39) and Dirk Frauhiger (51). Southern Wells will be at the ACAC championship meet at Celina Linx Golf Course starting at 9 a.m. Saturday, May 18.

Bluffton drop softball game to Bishop Luers

Bluffton fell 10-0 to Bishop Luers in softball on the road Thursday night. The Tigers dropped to 10-12 on the season.

Bluffton had two hits in the game, one by Isabella Stout and one by Averi Petty.

Tyrah Shaw got the loss, throwing four innings.

Bluffton will be at Norwell starting at 5 p.m. Friday, May 17.

Tigers fall to Panthers in boys' golf meet

Bluffton fell against Eastbrook in boys' golf at Timber Ridge Golf Course Thursday night.

The Tigers had a team score of 185 the Panther's 163.

Declan Grieser led the Tigers with a score of 42, followed by Connor Klopfenstein (45), Kade Abbett (48), Max White (50) and Anthony Hartman (57).

Bluffton will be at the ACAC championship meet at Celina Linx Golf Course starting at 9 a.m. Saturday, May 18.

Knights beat Leo in JV baseball

Norwell's junior varsity baseball team defeated Leo on the road Thursday night.

The Knights tallied 11 hits in the game, led by two-hit performances by Nick McBride, Jaxson Dohrman, Luke Ward and Will Case. Ward had a double and two RBI. Dohrman had two RBI and Case one. Cade Thornton went 1-1 with an RBI.

Trey Privett got the win, throwing five innings. Brayden Huffman pitched two innings, no runs and one hit.

Kights fall to the Warriors in JV softball

Norwell's junior varsity softball team fell on the road to Woodlan 13-5.

The Knights tallied 11 hits, led by three from Angie Rogers with a double and a solo home run. Nara Brock went 2-4, while Ayla Nern and Bria Reinhard had singles with RBI.

Carli Fausz threw five innings, allowing two runs (one earned) and two strikeouts. Reinhard got the loss.

Tigers edged by Lions in JV softball

Bluffton fell 7-4 to Leo in junior varsity softball Thursday night.

This was the Tigers last game of the season.

Kierstynn Reed led the Tigers with two hits including a triple 1 being a triple. Jillian Phillippe singled with an RBI. Reese Turnbull doubled with two RBI.

Timberwolves force Game 7 by blowing out Nuggets

By DAVE CAMPBELL
AP Sports Writer

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Anthony Edwards scored 27 points to pull the Minnesota Timberwolves out of their mid-series slump and deliver a flawless 115-70 victory over the Denver Nuggets on Thursday night to force a Game 7 in this roller-coaster playoff matchup.

Jaden McDaniels pitched in 21 points and lockdown defense, and Mike Conley had 13 points in his return from injury. Big men Rudy Gobert, Karl-Anthony Towns and Naz Reid combined for 38 rebounds and a relentless effort to keep NBA MVP Nikola Jokic to a relatively quiet 22 points.

"Guys just believing in themselves," Edwards said. "I think the last three games we were all down on ourselves."

The decisive game for a spot in the Western Conference finals is in Denver on Sunday night.

Jamal Murray struggled again with just 10 points on 4-for-18 shooting while battling a sore elbow for the Nuggets, whose bench was

outscored 36-9 — and seven of those points came in the final five minutes. The Wolves reserves led a 24-0 run in the fourth quarter on the way to a staggering 50-point lead, a fitting follow-up to the 20-0 surge the starters led in the opening frame.

No defending NBA champion had ever lost in the playoffs the following year by more than 36 points until this flop by the Nuggets, who were outrebounded 62-43.

"That to me speaks volumes about the game and our approach," Denver coach Mike Malone said.

Aaron Gordon had 12 points and eight rebounds for the Nuggets, who finished just 7 for 36 from 3-point range and trailed by at least 17 points for the last 31 minutes of the game.

For the Wolves, offense from McDaniels is typically a bonus, but he can't be as quiet as he was over the first five games with a total of 35 points. He was all over the court this time, going 3 of 5 from deep and mixing in some well-timed dunks to ignite the crowd.

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RUMMAGE SALE, BAKE SALE, New Hope Lutheran Church, 8824 N. State Rd. 1, Fri., May 17, 9a-5p, Sat., May 18, 9a-1p.

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

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

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

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5/17

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Lottery Numbers

Thursday's Drawings HOOSIER LOTTERY Cash 5 — 04-10-19-36-42

Cash4Life — 09-33-52-54-57, Cash Ball: 03

Quick Draw Midday — 03-08-11-16-20-22-24-25-38-39-40-41-51-53-59-65-68-70-77-79, BE: 51

Daily Three-Midday — 00-02-05, SB:08

Daily Three-Evening — 02-05-00, SB: 04

Daily Four-Midday — 02-02-02-00, SB: 08

Daily Four-Evening — 05-04-08-03, SB: 04

Quick Draw Evening — 10-11-14-18-20-26-27-30-35-37-38-39-42-43-62-63-64-72-75-79, BE: 10

Hoosier Lotto — Estimated jackpot (for Saturday): \$12.4 million

MEGA MILLIONS Estimated jackpot (for Friday): \$393 million

POWERBALL Estimated jackpot (for Saturday): \$77 million

Public Sale Calendar

BIDDING ENDS 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. *Steffen Group*, 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, Candlewick, Pyrex and much more! Pick up May 20, 1-6 p.m. & May 21, 9 a.m.-noon, 812 Elm Street, Decatur. *Krueckeburg Auction & Realty LLC*, 260-724-7402, kjauction.com.

MAY 21 - 6 p.m. - Patricia Mossburg & Joyce Shady, owners. Wells County 4-H Park, 1240 4-H Rd., Bluffton. Property location: 100S & 200W, Bluffton. 90+/-A, Zoned Agricultural, Liberty Township, Wells County. To be sold in individual tracts or any combination. Tract 1: 54+/-A tillable, frontage on both CR 100S & CR 200W. Tract 2: 12+/-A, 8+/-A tillable, 4+/-A woods, frontage on 100S & 200W. Tract 3: 24+/-A, mostly woods, 6+/-A tillable, frontage on CR 200W. *Krueckeburg Auction & Realty LLC*, 260-724-7402, kjauction.com.

MAY 26-JUNE 2 - (Online Only Auction) - The Estate of John F. Holbrook, seller. 200+ pcs. Roseville, Rookwood, Hull, McCoy, VanBriggle, antique & modern furniture, 1950 Ford Sedan, Coca Cola vintage signs & collectibles, antique tools, 2-pc. Oak kitchen cabinet, JFK political buttons and advertising, vintage toys. Auction preview: May 23 from 3-6 p.m. and May 30 from 3-6 p.m., 10421 W. Yoder Rd., Roanoke, IN. Patrick Carter, sale manager, *The Steffen Group Inc.*, www.steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006.

JUNE 1 - 8:30 a.m. - E & M Blacksmith Shop. 2404 W 350 S, Berne, IN. 13th annual consignment auction. Horses, ponies, horse-drawn machinery, produce equipment, buggies, harness, carts, new tack, saddles, shop tools, lawn & garden tools, sausage grinders & stuffers, new & used furniture, washing machines, hay, straw & firewood. Accepting consignments every evening that week from 4-8 p.m., all day May 30, and May 31 from 7 a.m.-8 p.m. *Troyer Auctions, LLC*, 260-768-7246, ext. 3.

JUNE 1 - 11:30 a.m. - Ardith Smith estate, Cheryl Herl estate & Sonja Bartlett, sellers. 320 Sparks St., Markle, IN. Live on-site. One story, two bedroom home on 1.6 acres, 1,144 sq. ft., 10x18 detached garage. Open house: May 19, 1-2 p.m. Steve Ness, auction manager, 260-417-6556, SteveNess@NessBros.com, *Ness Bros. Realtors & Auctioneers*, www.NessBros.com.

JUNE 4 - (Online Only Auction) - Bidding Opens at 9 a.m. and will close at 6 p.m. - The Estate of John F. Holbrook, seller. 300 W, Markle, IN. Northern Wells containing 6.79 acres in Union Township of vacant agricultural land, outstanding opportunity for potential building site with excellent location. Patrick Carter, sale manager, *The Steffen Group Inc.*, www.steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006.

BIDDING STARTS CLOSING JUNE 9 - 6 p.m. EST - Berry estate, owner. Online only real estate & personal property! 6 p.m. real estate: 1 1/2 story craftsman style home w/covered porch, 1,700+/- square ft. w/ornate woodwork throughout, partial basement, 3-4 bedrooms, 2 1/2 bath, detached 24x24 two-car garage, several older outbuildings all sitting on 6+/- acres, Adams Central School District. 6:30 p.m. personal property: Antique tractors, farm machinery, tools, antiques, primitives, vehicles, furniture, household items, more! Preview May 30, 5-6 p.m., 4854 N 400 W, Decatur. Pick up June 10, 2-6 p.m. *Krueckeburg Auction & Realty LLC*, 260-724-7402, kjauction.com.

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RACING NEWS

F1 driver Alex Albon signs a multiyear deal

GROVE, England (AP) — Formula One driver Alex Albon has ended speculation about his future by signing a multiyear contract extension with Williams in what team principal James Vowles called "a huge vote of confidence" in the once-dominant team's rebuild.

Wednesday's announcement comes after speculation linking Albon with an open seat at Mercedes when Lewis Hamilton leaves for Ferrari at the end of the year, or a possible return to his old team Red Bull. The British-born Thai driver had been under contract at Williams through 2025.

Williams said the new deal will keep Albon at the team "into the new era of Formula 1 regulations," which kick off in 2026. It did not give more details.

Ahead of this weekend's Emilia Romagna Grand Prix, Albon said he hoped signing a new deal would boost the turnaround project under Vowles.

"I'm hoping the fact that I believe in this team, to everyone at the factory, that's reason in itself to realize that we all can do this," Albon said. "And I feel like and hope that I can give that reassurance in some ways to everyone, to know that I believe (in) this journey, so you should too."

Since he arrived in January 2023, Vowles has been trying to modernize Williams, which dominated F1 for much of the 1980s and 1990s but hasn't won a race since 2012.

With backing from U.S.-based investment firm Dorilton Capital, which bought the team from the Williams family in 2020, Vowles has aimed to shake up outdated procedures and technology which had caused costly delays to car design.

The 28-year-old Albon is in his third consecutive season with Williams. He has yet to score a point this year, but has been consistently faster than his teammate, American driver Logan Sargeant.

"It has been a difficult start to the year but since joining Williams we have made significant progress together and I have seen the huge changes happening behind the scenes to take us back to the front of the grid," Albon said.

Albon made his F1 debut in 2019 with Red Bull's junior team, then called Toro Rosso, but was dropped by Red Bull in 2020. Albon last season scored 27 points to Sargeant's one to help Williams finish seventh in the constructors' championship, the team's best result in six years.

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House votes to require delivery of bombs to Israel in GOP-led rebuke of Biden policies

By **STEPHEN GROVES** and **SEUNG MIN KIM**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House delivered a rebuke to President Joe Biden Thursday for pausing a shipment of bombs to Israel, passing legislation that seeks to force the weapons transfer as Republicans worked to highlight Democratic divisions over the Israel-Hamas war.

Seeking to discourage Israel from its offensive on the crowded southern Gaza city of Rafah, the Biden administration this month put on hold a weapons shipment of 3,500 bombs — some as large as 2,000 pounds — that are capable of killing hundreds in populated areas. Republicans were outraged, accusing Biden of abandoning the closest U.S. ally in the Middle East.

Debate over the bill, rushed to the House floor by GOP leadership this week, showed Washington's deeply fractured outlook on the Israel-Hamas war. The White House and Democratic leadership scrambled to rally support from a House caucus that ranges from moderates frustrated that the president would allow any daylight between the U.S. and Israel to progressives outraged that he is still sending any weapons at all.

The bill passed comfortably 224-187 as 16 Democrats joined with most Republicans to vote in favor. Three Republicans voted against it.

On the right, Republicans said the president had no business chiding Israel for how it uses the U.S.-manufactured weapons that are instrumental in its war against Hamas. They have not been satisfied with the Biden administration moving forward this week on a new \$1 billion sale to Israel of tank ammunition, tactical vehicles and mortar rounds.

"We're beyond frustrated," Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell said. "I don't think we should tell the Israelis how to conduct their military campaign, period."

The House bill condemns Biden for initiating the pause on the bomb shipment and would withhold funding for the State Department, Department of Defense and the National Security Council until the delivery is made.

The White House has said Biden would veto the bill if it passes Congress, and the Democratic-led Senate seems certain to reject it.

"It's not going anywhere," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said earlier this week.

Republicans were undeterred. Appearing on the Capitol steps ahead of voting Thursday morning, House Republican leaders argued that passage of the bill in the House would build pressure on Schumer and Biden.

"It is President Biden and Senator Schumer himself who are standing in the way of getting Israel the resources it desperately needs to defend itself," Speaker Mike Johnson said.

Biden placed the hold on the transfer of the bombs this month over concerns the weapons could inflict massive casualties in Rafah and to deter Israel from the attack.

Over 30,000 Palestinians in Gaza have

been killed as Israel tries to eliminate Hamas in retaliation for its Oct. 7 attack that killed 1,200 people in Israel and took about 250 more captive. Hundreds of thousands of people could be at risk of death if Israel attacks Rafah, the United Nations humanitarian aid agency has warned, because so many have fled there for safety.

The heavy toll of the Israeli campaign has prompted intense protests on the left, including on university campuses nationwide and some aimed directly at Biden. In a rare scene on the Capitol steps Thursday, a group of about two dozen House aides gathered just as lawmakers were entering the chamber to vote and displayed a banner that read, "Your staff demands you save Rafah."

At the same time, a group of moderate Democrats in Congress have expressed almost unconditional support for Israel. Roughly two dozen House Democrats last week signed onto a letter to the Biden administration saying they were "deeply concerned about the message" sent by pausing the bomb shipment.

Eager to tamp down the number from Biden's own party who would side with Republicans on the vote, national security adviser Jake Sullivan and deputy national security adviser Jon Finer got on the phone this week with Democratic lawmakers who could possibly defect.

Among their arguments, according to an administration official with knowledge of their conversations and granted anonymity to discuss them, was that the legislation would constrain the president's foreign policy powers, particularly his ability to adjust security aid as needed. Sullivan and Finer also noted in these discussions that what Biden did — pausing aid in order to influence Israel's actions — was similar to President Ronald Reagan's decision in 1982 to halt military aid to Israel amid its invasion of Lebanon.

National Security Council spokeswoman Adrienne Watson said the legislation was intended to "score political points, not help Israel."

"President Biden will take a back seat to no one on his support for Israel and will ensure that Israel has everything it needs to defeat Hamas," she said. "President Biden is also strongly on the record for the protection of innocent civilians. Most Americans agree on both these points, Israel has a right and obligation to protect themselves, but they must do so while avoiding civilian casualties."

House Democratic leadership also worked hard to convince rank-and-file lawmakers to vote against the bill.

"The legislation on the floor today is not a serious effort to strengthen the special relationship between the United States and Israel," said House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries.

He added that he supported the effort to "decisively" defeat Hamas while also advocating for a goal of "Israel living in safety and security side by side with a demilitarized Palestinian state that allows for dignity and self-determination amongst the Palestinian people."

Supreme Court sides with Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, spurning a conservative attack

By **MARK SHERMAN**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court on Thursday rejected a conservative-led attack that could have undermined the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

The justices ruled 7-2 that the way the CFPB is funded does not violate the Constitution, reversing a lower court and drawing praises from consumers. Justice Clarence Thomas wrote the majority opinion, splitting with his frequent allies, Justices Samuel Alito and Neil Gorsuch, who dissented.

The CFPB was created after the 2008 financial crisis to regulate mortgages, car loans and other consumer finance. The case was brought by payday lenders who object to a bureau rule that limits their ability to withdraw funds directly from borrowers' bank accounts. It's among several major challenges to federal regulatory agencies on the docket this term for a court that has for more than a decade been open to limits on their operations.

The CFPB, the brainchild of Democratic Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, has long been opposed by Republicans and their financial backers. The bureau says it has returned \$19 billion to consumers since its creation.

Outside the Supreme Court following the decision, Warren said, "The Supreme Court followed the law, and the CFPB is here to stay."

President Joe Biden, a fellow Democrat who has taken steps to strengthen the bureau, called the ruling "an unmistakable win for American consumers."

Unlike most federal agencies, the consumer bureau does not rely on the annual budget process in Congress. Instead, it is funded directly by the Federal Reserve, with a current annual limit of around \$600 million.

The federal appeals court in New Orleans, in a novel ruling, held that the funding violated the Constitution's appropriations clause because it improperly shields the CFPB from congressional supervision.

Thomas reached back to the earliest days of the Constitution in his majority opinion to note that "the Bureau's funding mechanism fits comfortably with the First Congress'

appropriations practice." In dissent, Alito wrote, "The Court upholds a novel statutory scheme under which the powerful Consumer Financial Protection Bureau may bankroll its own agenda without any congressional control or oversight."

The CFPB case was argued more than seven months ago, during the first week of the court's term. Lopsided decisions like Thursday's 7-2 vote typically don't take so long, but Alito's dissent was longer than the majority opinion, and two other justices, Elena Kagan and Ketanji Brown Jackson, wrote separate opinions even though they both were part of the majority.

Consumer groups cheered the decision, as did a bureau spokesman.

"For years, lawbreaking companies and Wall Street lobbyists have been scheming to defund essential consumer protection enforcement," bureau spokesman Sam Gilford said in a statement. "The Supreme Court has rejected their radical theory that would have devastated the American financial markets. The Court repudiated the arguments of the payday loan lobby and made it clear that the CFPB is here to stay."

Jesse Van Tol, president and CEO of the National Community Reinvestment Coalition, said the decision upholding the consumer bureau's funding structure would have positive effects across the U.S. economy.

"It's always nice to see the courts get something right — especially in this tawdry circumstance where payday loan predators sought to wriggle out of basic oversight using absurd distortions of law and fact," Van Tol said in a statement.

While the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and some other business interests backed the payday lenders, mortgage bankers and other sectors regulated by the CFPB cautioned the court to avoid a broad ruling that could unsettle the markets.

In 2020, the court decided another CFPB case, ruling that Congress had improperly insulated the head of the bureau from removal. The justices said the director could be replaced by the president at will but allowed the bureau to continue to operate.



Pool house donation

The Wells Community Pool house has a new look thanks to the generosity of Barn Builders by LS Construction. The company partnered with the Parks Department and donated over \$14,000 of materials and labor to give this 50-year-old facility a facelift. (Photo provided)

May

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