

The News - Banner

Fire chief voices concern with township contract



Ossian Volunteer Fire Department Chief Ben Fenstermaker (right) speaks to the Ossian Town Council. Also pictured are members Dennis Ealing (middle) and Glen Werling (left). (Photo by Sydney Kent)

By SYDNEY KENT
 “The Jefferson Township Board is putting their constituents at risk.”
 Ossian Fire Chief Ben Fenstermaker used no uncertain terms during Monday’s town council meeting. Fenstermaker’s comment followed a report outlining the history of the issues between the department and the Jefferson Township Advisory Board regarding fire protection.
 The OFD services both the town of Ossian and Jefferson Township equally. Historically, the township has not paid for an equal portion of the costs. Over the last few months, all three parties have worked towards updating a new contract to resolve the issue to no avail.
 The township advisory board is unwilling to pay the department a flat check for its share of the costs and has requested a complicated arrangement of payments with

stipulations. For example, the board said in a recent meeting that they are only willing to pay up to \$35,000 in manpower, regardless of the total cost or the fact that this stipulation prevented them from providing their required portion.
 During Monday’s meeting, Fenstermaker told the council that one of the township advisory board members is seeking services elsewhere. He advised that on June 3, the Preble Fire Department informed him that a member of the township advisory board offered the PFD \$80,000 to provide fire protection services — with no stipulations. Uniondale Fire Department was reportedly also contacted about providing fire protection services to the township.
 “So, they’ll write them a check for 80K, but they won’t write us a check for 80K,” council member Dennis Ealing said. “They
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June report shows 28% of customers did not pay RSD bill

By HOLLY GASKILL
 A nearly 20% delinquency for bills from the Regional Sewer District has left some board members frustrated and looking for solutions.
 “It’s not like a rounding error that I’m frustrated with,” board member Andy Stoller said. “I’m frustrated with the fact this is a (80%) of collections. I don’t know what to do about it.”
 The RSD collected over \$5,000, or roughly 17%, less than it should have in the June report. The number of customers paying their bills is even less — roughly 72%. Board member Leon Berning emphasized that delinquency wasn’t concentrated in one area.
 Because of this, Stoller argued the board needed consistent enforcement of their bills.
 “This is a major problem. I mean, this cash flow is going to continue to be a major problem,” Stoller said.
 Superintendent Lewis Brown

said the board has previously filed liens against properties, sent pre-lien notices, and he had personally spoken with some property owners. This time, the board unanimously agreed there were too many property owners for Brown to manage them this closely.
 Stoller said the board should also investigate other options for collections, which board attorney Mark Burry said he would do. Stoller emphasized that this pattern couldn’t be continued with their budget, which the other board members concurred.
 “We don’t have a council that supports us as far as I can throw this table, alright? So we’re not going to get bailed out by anybody else,” Stoller concluded.
 Also during the meeting, Brown said the board should consider adding a penalty fee for a failure to update billing information.
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Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb (left) looks at an aerial overview of Google’s data center project in Fort Wayne during an announcement and groundbreaking ceremony on April 26, 2024. (From Holcomb’s official Flickr)

Data centers are choosing Indiana: Is the state’s electricity supply ready?

By LESLIE BONILLA MUÑIZ
Indiana Capital Chronicle
 They’re cryptocurrency miners and social media businesses. They’re software providers and cloud computing companies.
 And they’re increasingly setting up shop in Indiana, via data centers: windowless stretches of buildings that house computing equipment, network infrastructure and digital storage.
 In the five years since lawmakers approved generous financial incentives specific to data centers, eight have located to Indiana. Four announcements have come in the last six months alone.
 But the advent of the Hoosier data center has fueled debate between those who fear the state may struggle to meet rising demand and those who say there’s plenty to go around.
 Utilities, meanwhile, say they’ll serve their new industrial customers — including with creative deals — while protecting current customers from price hikes and outages.
Announcements pile up
 The companies behind Indiana’s nascent data center boom cumulatively plan to invest at least \$14 billion into their facilities.
 Amazon Web Services’ \$11 billion project is the bulk of the total, followed by a \$2 billion Google project and \$1 billion initiative from Microsoft.
 Meta, the parent company to Facebook and Instagram, is set to invest at least \$800,000 into a sprawling facility, but could spend

upwards of \$3 billion, according to its incentive contract with the state.
 Each of the companies — minus a cryptocurrency mining operation from AboutBit — is set to receive decades of benefits from the state in exchange for their investments.
 Lawmakers in 2019 approved a sales and use tax exemption aimed at luring in data centers, wiping out those taxes on purchases of qualifying data center equipment and energy. Projects worth less than \$750 million qualify for 25 years of the exemption, while pricier initiatives can qualify for up to 50 years.
 “Like other states ... Indiana created some incentives to bring these types of businesses to the state, and we’re seeing the fruit of those efforts,” said David Ober, the Indiana Chamber of Commerce’s senior vice president of business operations and finance.
 “These types of projects center us in this information economy,” Ober continued. “And it’s a bit of a validation on how ... we’re situated from a regulatory standpoint that these businesses want to invest significant capital here. So, from our perspective, it signifies that Indiana is a place where you want to do business.”
‘New capacity — period’
 Indiana is no stranger to industry, but data centers differ. They run all day, every day. Each facility requires massive amounts of electricity for power and water to cool itself.

“A single, 100-megawatt data center site can require as much energy as all of the homes in Fort Wayne,” I&M spokesperson Scott Blake said in a statement. “Requests for 300 to 1,000 megawatts are becoming common. These facilities also require this energy around the clock.”
 Data centers are about 3% of the country’s total power demand now. That’s expected to rise to 8% in just six years, according to an April 2024 analysis by Goldman Sachs.
 Some observers fear the power-guzzlers could strain the state’s energy supply.
 “We are supportive of all forms of economic development. And certainly, we want the state of Indiana to be a leader. But we are concerned about where the power for this data center revolution comes from,” said Jon Ford, a former lawmaker now leading fossil fuels interest group Reliable Energy, Inc.
 “Right now, let’s pump the brakes. Let’s not shut down any fossil fuel generators,” he said. “And then let’s make a move to put new generation online. That’s renewables. That would include gas. But there’s no doubt we’re at a point in Indiana where we can’t be taking things offline. We need to add new capacity — period.”
 Kerwin Olson, who leads ratepayer advocacy group Citizens Action Coalition, acknowledged the data center spurt as a “challenge,” but cautioned against hyperbole.
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Inflation data this week could help determine Fed’s timetable for cuts

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
AP Economics Writer
 WASHINGTON (AP) — After Federal Reserve officials meet this week, a statement they will issue may suggest that they’ve seen meaningful progress on inflation this year — a prelude to eventual interest rate cuts.
 Yet it’s hard to say, because the officials themselves may not know for sure until they begin their meeting. That’s because the government’s latest snapshot of U.S. inflation will be released Wednesday morning, just before the Fed begins the second day of its policy discussions.
 One key issue is a sentence the Fed added to its statement after its last meeting May 1: It said “there has been a lack of further progress” in bringing inflation back to the central bank’s 2% target.
 Inflation had come in uncomfortably high in the first three months of this year, dimming hopes that it would continue to steadily cool, as it had in the second half of last year.
 In April, though, consumer inflation did resume slowing, if only slightly. And if the May inflation report being released Wednesday shows further signs of improvement, it’s possible the Fed could drop that sentence from its statement. It would be an encouraging sign that the policymakers may cut their benchmark rate within a few months. Rate cuts would eventually lead to lower costs for mortgages, auto loans and other forms of consumer and business borrowing.
 But whether or not the sentence is dropped or altered, most economists think no rate cuts are likely before September at the earliest. Chair Jerome Powell is likely to
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Outside

Sunny and warm days and cool nights ahead

Today	Wed.	Thursday
High 77	High 85	High 91
Low 55	Low 65	Low 68

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Township contract

(Continued from Page 1)
have to pick and choose what they pay? That doesn't make sense. Why wouldn't you want to stay in Ossian?"

Fenstermaker emphasized that not only would response times to places like Silo Farms nearly double, but insurance rates for Jefferson Township residents would increase significantly. Fenstermaker cited a friend in the township whose insurance would rise from \$2,982 to \$5,220 annually.

Fenstermaker offered to speak with anyone with concerns in the future.

Township Trustee Larry Heckber requested the council approve an amendment to the current outdated contract, which would allow for the township to pay \$35,000 towards manpower this year as they offered. The council approved. The motion will be taken to the next township advisory board meeting in July.

"I want to apologize that one of my board members was talking to other fire departments," Heckber concluded. "I had no idea this was going on. If this per-

son wanted to talk to other departments I should have been included in that conversation and I was not. Right now I don't believe my board respects everything the town of Ossian has done. The board that I'm dealing with is making your lives miserable."

Heckber said that he would continue to work with the board on a budget for 2025.

The council also addressed an ongoing issue with a different kind of misery: thistles. According to Phil DiNovo, Ossian resident, as well as Heckber with Ossian Revitalization, purple and Canadian thistles are invading large portions of areas at Archbold-Wilson Park. DiNovo asked the council for permission to clean the offending areas. DiNovo attached a News-Banner photograph dated June 6, showing volunteers removing and replacing invasive plants from Ouabache State Park. He also cited the thistles continue to give up to 100,000 seeds per plant, blowing into ditches and growing in other plac-

es. The council approved a motion to pay for special weed control to help with the problem.

Ossian Police Commissioner Caleb Chichester requested to pay \$16,793 to Motorola Solutions for an in-car camera system, contingent on what account the funds could be used from. He also requested \$1,300 for repairs on one of the department vehicles. Both requests were unanimously approved.

Baseball parents will likely see an increase in costs for participation next season in Ossian. The council discussed raising the current fee from \$10 per child to \$40 per child. Surrounding counties charge anywhere from \$65-\$80 per child to participate in the sport. Town manager Crystal Chapman told the board the funds are needed for improvements to equipment and batting cages. Parks Department President Jay Esparza said that the league is in favor of raising the fee, though not to \$60.

The council also:
• Adopted an MOU

(memorandum of understanding) between Biggs, Inc. and the town for the new 168-lot residential housing development, Farm Meadows. The purpose of the MOU is to use a portion of funds from the READI grant to reimburse the developer for ongoing improvements.

- Approved a CF-1 for Energy Control.

- Approved ordinance 24-6-2 for law enforcement body camera recording. The ordinance outlines the rules and fees around obtaining a recording.

- Approved ordinance 24-6-1, which is a modification to another ordinance, which allows for golf cart drivers to be fined up to \$100 for repeated violations.

- Approved a \$68,455.81 payment to Wayne Asphalt for work on Hillside Court and Melching Court. Funds for this project are part of the CCMG grant the town was awarded.

- Agreed to work on a resolution to gift back approximately two acres of land that was donated and unused by OD, Inc.

sydney@news-banner.com

June report

(Continued from Page 1)
tion within 10 days of closing on a property. Brown said realtors have not been accountable for communicating about billing, and a fee may encourage compliance.

Brown said he was working to resolve an issue in Craigville, where ants were "causing havoc" with a control panel. Several more sewer connections have been made in the area in the meantime. In Liberty Center,

the last house needing to be connected has been sold to a new owner who will begin the process soon.

Brown then presented a job description for part-time help. He also discussed hiring some help with siphoning issues, but the board worried about training procedures.

Additionally, there may be an interlocal agreement with Adams County for maintenance, but Brown said he was told that an agreement

might be "lopsided" since Adams County had more manpower.

Also during the meeting:

- A resident expressed concern that the RSD's website was not current with project updates. Stoller advised the board did not have the finances to do so.

- The board discussed adding connection information to properties on GIS.

holly@news-banner.com

Indiana data centers

(Continued from Page 1)
"This is classic exploitation of concerns around blackouts and brownouts if we don't build new power plants and keep these coal plants open," Olson said.

He pushed for alternatives — energy efficiencies, energy storage, micro-grids, and more — to avoid "spending billions and billions, if not trillions, of public money."

Ober, who previously served on the powerful Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission, said he takes a "middle" view.

He described utilities' demand projections for the last decade as "pretty flat" — and noted electrification is pushing demand higher.

"We have not accommodated for that level of demand growth in utility planning over the past 10 years," Ober continued. "... It complicates an equation. But utility companies and these types of businesses, they look, they take a long view, and I'm confident that there's really smart people who are able to determine how much power is needed and how to make sure that we've got enough for all the users on the system."

'Ample' supply

Others are bullish on Indiana's electricity capabilities.

Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb told reporters last month that Amazon, for example, "wouldn't have made the commitment without the confidence that we can supply both the power and the water."

Commerce Secretary David Rosenberg, head of the Indiana Economic Development Corp., said the state has "ample amounts of both" power and water, adding, "Indiana's very blessed."

The IEDC has never declined an economic development opportunity over energy supply, according to spokeswoman Erin Sweitzer.

Rosenberg also told reporters his agency has been "very strategic" in pointing companies to locations with plenty.

Utilities have also guided interested businesses.

For instance, it was utility Indi-

ana Michigan Power that brought the Google project to Fort Wayne, John Urbahns told the Capital Chronicle. He is president and CEO of the area's chamber of commerce, Greater Fort Wayne Inc.

"The specific area that was chosen was really the confluence of electric capacity and water capacity," Urbahns said.

"I feel confident in their planning, where they're heading and how they're working to ramp up to serve different projects, and that we've got the capacity to serve additional projects," he said of the area's utilities. "... Our conversations with them have been making sure that we have the capacity to continue to grow."

Forecasting for the future

Utilities say they've got it under control.

"Our energy companies have an obligation to serve, and we are investing in the energy future to meet those demands today and tomorrow," Indiana Energy Association President Danielle McGrath said. The trade association represents the state's investor-owned electric utilities and several natural gas utilities.

McGrath said utilities are preparing via integrated resource plans. They forecast demand and how they'll meet it with service that's safe, reliable and priced at "just and reasonable" rates.

Utilities must hold public meetings while formulating the plans, and must submit them to the state's regulators every three years.

Three of the state's big five investor-owned electric utilities are in the midst of the planning process.

"We're planning now for tomorrow's energy needs, including the future potential load growth scenarios and needs associated with large-scale projects such as data centers," Northern Indiana Public Service Company spokesman Rick Calinski said in a statement.

Accordingly, data centers are named multiple times — as drivers of load uncertainty that NIPSCO will model individually — in the utility's IRP public meeting slides.

Calinski said NIPSCO would avoid

harming people already in its service territory.

"We will not compromise the reliability of the service we provide, and a key priority is to ensure that existing customers are appropriately protected (in terms of both reliability and cost) with the addition of any new customer growth," he said.

He said the facilities could even benefit other customers.

"Data centers help diversify NIPSCO's large customer makeup and reduce exposure to potential volatility from unforeseen changes in the steel and manufacturing industry — which can have an adverse effect on customers as a result," Calinski said. "Additionally, all customers benefit from the shared services costs that can be spread across an expanded customer base."

I&M spokesman Blake said the utility's teams are "working with these large customers and regulators as we plan to power the next century of the Indiana economy. Our process will continue to focus on developing long-term plans that protect residential customers, while allowing our economy to thrive."

"We have the resources to support our current customers, commercial and light industrial expansion, and new residents," Blake said. "I&M will continue to be a partner in bringing job-creating industries, like EV battery manufacturers, to our service territory."

I&M disclosed in filings with the IURC that it expects "more than a gigawatt increase" in its capacity requirements by regional transmission organization PJM's 2027/2028 planning year. The projects cited included the Amazon and Google data centers, along with an electric vehicle battery plant.

Duke Energy Indiana spokeswoman Angeline Protogere noted the utility's IRP is due in November.

In public meeting slides, Duke projected industrial sales would continue to rise, noting, "Economic Development efforts have attracted large industrial projects over the near term, beyond what is support by (the) existing composition of customers."

Inflation data

(Continued from Page 1)
underscore at a news conference Wednesday that the policymakers will need to see several more months of low inflation readings before they would consider reducing their key rate.

A Fed rate cut might give the economy a modest lift, which would be welcomed by President Joe Biden's reelection campaign, which is struggling to counter many voters' unhappiness with the inflation spike of the past several years. Though consumer inflation has slowed dramatically since peaking at 9.1% in mid-2022, it was still 3.4% in April, well

above the Fed's target.

The Fed would reduce rates faster if growth were to stall and companies were to lay off many workers. But on Friday, the government reported a robust job gain in May, with employers across a range of industries adding jobs. The report led Wall Street traders to downgrade their forecast for Fed rate cuts to just one this year, from two.

The Fed is set Wednesday to keep its benchmark rate unchanged at roughly 5.3%, its highest level in 23 years, where it has stood since July. The policymakers will also issue updated eco-

nomie projections, which are expected to show that they envision one or two rate cuts by year's end, down from a forecast of three in March.

At his news conference, Powell will likely reiterate that Fed officials need more confidence that inflation is returning to 2% before they would consider rate cuts, and that this will likely take additional time.

"The Fed's narrative is going to be very similar to what we've been hearing: 'We've made progress bringing down inflation; we're not in a hurry to cut rates,'" said Nathan Sheets, a former senior economist at

the Fed who is global chief economist at Citi.

Another issue Powell may address is whether the economy is starting to weaken. Growth slowed sharply in the first three months of the year, to an annual rate of just 1.3%, down from 3.4% in last year's final quarter.

The number of open jobs fell in April to the lowest level in three years, though the number remains high by historic standards. And consumers actually cut back on their spending in April, after adjusting for inflation, a sign that high prices and elevated interest rates are pressuring Americans' finances.

Weather

Tuesday, June 11, 2024
(24-hour observations at 11:30 p.m. Monday at the Fort Wayne International Airport)

High: 71; Low: 55; Precipitation: None
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.78 feet at 8:45 p.m. Monday

Wells County forecast

Today: Sunny, with a high near 77. Calm wind becoming west around 5 mph.

Tonight: Partly cloudy, with a low around 55. West wind around 5 mph becoming calm.

Wednesday: Sunny, with a high near 85. Southwest wind 5 to 10 mph.

Wednesday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 65. Southwest wind around 5 mph.

Thursday: Mostly sunny and hot, with a high near 91.

Thursday Night: A 40% chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly cloudy, with a low around 68.

Friday: A 20% chance of showers and thunderstorms before 2 p.m. Mostly sunny, with a high near 87.

Friday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 59.

Saturday: Sunny, with a high near 85.

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OBITUARIES

Clarence "Scotty" Cottrell, 91

Clarence Grover "Scotty" Cottrell, Jr., 91 of Bluffton, passed away on Friday morning, June 7, 2024, as a result of an automobile accident in Bluffton.

Scotty was born on November 23, 1932, in Decatur to Electa Glancy (Marsh) and Clarence Grover Cottrell, Sr. He graduated from Decatur High School in 1950, before enlisting in the Army. Scotty dedicated 22 years of his life to the Army, serving in the Korean Conflict and the Vietnam Conflict. He retired in April 1972 with a rank of SFC (E7).

Scotty was a member of the American Legion Post 111 of Bluffton, where he served as the Sargent of Arms for 24 years and as a Finance Officer for one year. He was a member of Moose Lodge 242 of Bluffton and served as a junior governor for two years.

He is survived by three nieces, Debra (Alan) Aeschliman of Berne, Kathy Geisel of Bluffton, and Linda Mills of Bluffton; one nephew, Steven Geisel of Richwood,



Ohio; and many great-nieces and great-nephews.

Scotty is preceded in death by his parents, a brother, Richard Cottrell, and a sister, Dorothy (James) Geisel.

Visitation will be held 10 a.m. to noon on Thursday, June 13, 2024, at the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton. Funeral services will follow visitation at noon on Thursday at the funeral home, with Jeff Lemler officiating. Burial will follow at Elm Grove Cemetery with Full Military Honors by the United States Army Honor Guard and American Legion Honor Guard of Post 111.

Memorials may be made to the American Legion Post 111 Honor Guard Fund and can be directed to the funeral home.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Lemler family of Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton. Friends can send online condolences to the family at www.thomarich.com.

Clarren L. Gehring, 92

Clarren L. Gehring, 92, passed away Monday morning, June 10, 2024, at Christian Care Retirement Community in Bluffton.

Clarren was born in Bluffton on Feb. 5, 1932, to Homer and Ida (Stauffer) Gehring, both parents preceded him in death. He married Joyce J. (Grandlind) on May 25, 1952, she preceded him in death on Jan. 24, 2024, they were married 71 years.

He worked for International Harvester in Ft. Wayne, retiring in 1983. After retirement, Clarren worked part-time at Christian Care Retirement Community and Habegger Lumber in Bluffton. Clarren was a member of the Apostolic Christian Church in Bluffton. He enjoyed camping, traveling with friends and was very handy. Clarren had the ability to fix almost anything.

Clarren is survived by six children,

Sharon Gehring of Clearwater, Fla., Kent (Barb) Gehring of Ossian, Scott (Chris) Gehring of Boise, Idaho, Bruce (Marsha) Gehring of Tocsin, Lynn Gehring (Robert Wedding) of Bluffton and Aleda Braun of Clearwater, Fla.; 14 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren.

In addition to his parents and wife, Clarren is preceded in death by two sisters and one brother.

Visitation will be from 11:00 until 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 13, 2024, at Goodwin – Cale & Harnish Memorial Chapel in Bluffton, followed immediately by a funeral service at 2:00 p.m. Ron Kipfer will officiate. Burial will be held at Apostolic Christian Cemetery in Adams County.

Memorials can be made in Clarren's memory to the Apostolic Christian Church.

Online condolences can be made at www.goodwincaleharnish.com

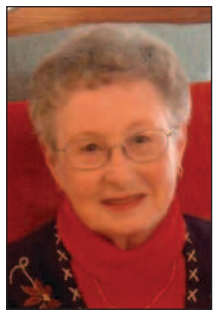
Marjorie G. Grover, 99

Marjorie G. Grover, 99, of Liberty Center, passed away early Monday morning, June 10, 2024, at Heritage Pointe in Warren.

Marjorie was born on Feb. 19, 1925 in Huntington County to Alfred and Margaret (Burley) Dennis. She graduated from Lafayette Central High School in 1943. She was a dietetic assistant at Wells Community Hospital for 22 years, retiring in May 1990. Marjorie was a member of Liberty Center United Methodist Church, United Methodist Women and PBS (Papa Baby Sits), which was started in 1950. She loved to camp and spend time with her family.

On November 18, 1944, Marjorie and Cloyd E. Grover were married in Liberty Center. They shared 57 years of marriage together before his passing on May 16, 2002.

Survivors include her children, Cathy (Phillip) Best of Englewood, Ohio, Darrel (Kathy) Grover of Liberty Center and Douglas (Lona) Grover of Huntertown, Ind., and a daughter-in-law, Rebecca J. Grover of Jackson Township, Wells County; along with seven grandchildren,



Brandon (Sarah) Best of Markle, Lorena (Geoffrey) Clark of Englewood, Ohio, Lora (Jake) Warner of Markle, Melinda (Rex) Holloway of Uniondale, Brian (Becky) Grover of Bluffton, Michael (Jodi) Grover of Maria Stein, Ohio, and Anyssa (Adrian) Adams of Indianapolis; and 17 great-grandchildren.

She is preceded in death by her parents; her husband Cloyd; and a son, Dennis L. Grover in December 2023; and her sisters, Alfreda Mossburg, Dorothy Curtis and Mary Murphy.

Visitation will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, June 15, 2024, at the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton. Funeral services will take place after visitation at 1 p.m. on Saturday at the funeral home. Burial will follow at Woodlawn Cemetery in Warren.

Memorials may be made to Liberty Center Community Church and can be directed to the funeral home.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Lemler family of Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton. Friends can send online condolences at www.thomarich.com.

Lawrence "Larry" Schmidt, 65

Lawrence "Larry" G. Schmidt, 65, of Bluffton, passed away early Thursday morning, June 6, 2024, at his residence, surrounded by his family.

He was born on Aug. 6, 1958, in Janesville, Wisconsin, to Robert Lawrence and Jacqueline J. (Phillips) Schmidt. Lawrence graduated from Milton High School in Wisconsin with the class of 1977. He served in the Military Police, U.S. Army and Indiana National Guard for 24 years. Larry worked for General Motors in Janesville, Wisconsin, and moved to the Fort Wayne Production plant to finish his 36-year career with GM, retiring in 2023.

He loved to go hunting and fishing and spending time at the family cabin on the lake. He was a true "tinkerer" and was always fixing or making something with his hands.

Survivors include his three sons, Brian (Amy) Schmidt of Bluffton, Robert (fiancé Amanda Green) Schmidt of Fort Wayne, and Adam Schmidt of Bluffton. He was a



loving grandpa to three grandchildren, Zoey Schmidt, Bree Schmidt and Kynn Stiles.

He is also survived by a brother, John (Diane) Schmidt of Milton, Wisconsin, and a sister, Laura "Lori" Schmidt of Union Grove, Wisconsin.

He is preceded in death by his parents, a brother, Thomas Schmidt, and a granddaughter, Myah Schmidt.

Visitation will take place from 6-8 p.m. on Thursday, June 13, 2024, at the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton. A casual family time of sharing will take place at the conclusion of calling hours.

Memorials may be made in Lawrence's memory to the Disabled American Veterans.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Lemler family of Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton. Friends can send online condolences to the family at www.thomarich.com.

Steven L. Tumbleton, 64

Steven L. Tumbleton, 64, of Warren, passed away Wednesday, June 5, 2024, at Stillwater Hospice in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Steve was born May 3, 1960, in Huntington County to Gene E. and Jo Ann (Buzzard) Tumbleton. Steve married Nancy Ruble on August 19, 1979, at the Central Christian Church in Huntington.

Survivors include his wife of 44 years, Nancy Tumbleton of Warren; daughters, Mandy (Bill) Russo and Stephanie (Eddie)

Wielosinski; son, Eric (Breanna) Tumbleton; six grandchildren; as well as his sister, Susie (Doug) Chapin of Huntington.

Steve was preceded in death by his parents, Gene and Jo Ann Tumbleton; and his sister, Sherry Tumbleton.

In honoring Steve's wishes, a private celebration of life will be held in "his shop" at a later date.

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

Police Notebook

INCIDENTS

City:

Friday, 6:50 p.m., 400 block of East Cherry Street. Caller reported someone dumped concrete in her gravel while she was gone for an extended amount of time.

Friday, 6:56 p.m., Wings Etc. Report of customers that paid with a fake \$100 bill, likely unknowingly.

Friday, 10:11 p.m., 100 block of Capri Court. Caller reported walker was stolen.

Friday, 11:22 p.m., 600 block of Hagrid Blvd. Caller reported garage door was open, nothing missing but a recent visit from an assessor in Wells County made them suspicious.

Friday, 11:33 p.m., East Monroe Street and Kensington Drive. Report of a noise complaint in the general area. Homeowner advised he would turn down music.

Saturday, 7:00 a.m., Yergys State Road BBQ. Driver cited for expired plates.

Saturday, 8:20 a.m., 900 block of South Johnson Street. Caller reported an assault that occurred in Bluffton in January.

Saturday, 5:16 p.m., Pine Grove Apartments. Caller reported that neighbor has wind chimes that give her anxiety.

Saturday, 7:27 p.m., South Midway and West South streets. Report of three young children in the middle of the road. Officer walked kids back to their home.

Saturday, 7:48 p.m., Renovate Counseling. Report of juveniles panhandling in parking lot.

Saturday, 10:08 p.m., 1200 block of Lancaster Street. Report of loud music.

Saturday, 11:12 p.m., 1100 block of West Central Avenue. Report of fighting via BB gun.

Sunday, 2:00 p.m., Walmart. Caller requested to trespass small family.

Sunday, 4:25 p.m., 100 block of North Morgan Street. Caller reported someone threw something out of the window that hit an elderly woman in the leg.

Sunday, 7:17 p.m., 600 block of East Spring Street. Caller reported two men,

one woman and a child screaming outside. Man and his daughter left the residence.

Sunday, 8:45 p.m., 400 block of Cottonwood Court. Caller reported smell of marijuana.

Sunday, 11:23 p.m., S.R. 1 and East 800 North. Driver cited for speeding.

Monday, 12:36 a.m., 500 block of Westfield Drive. Caller reported two hooded men breaking into vehicles.

Monday, 12:29 p.m., 300 block of West Central Avenue. Caller complained about dirt in driveway.

Monday, 12:34 p.m., 1100 West Central Avenue. Report of a smashed mirror. Seven years of back luck has started.

County:

Friday, 1:13 p.m., Wells County Jail. Warrant served to Nathan Payton.

Friday, 6:41 p.m., 6600N 500W, Markle. Caller reported subject spinning tires in front of house.

Saturday, 11:50 a.m., 90 block of East Washington Street, Poneto. Report of neighbors parking in alley.

Saturday, 12:39 p.m., 1100 Southeast Jeff Road, Montpelier. Officer gave courtesy transport to subject involved in a car accident.

Saturday, 2:59 p.m., S.R. 116 and East 300S, Bluffton. Report of two Amish boys roller blading in the road and not moving for traffic.

Saturday, 8:45 p.m., 14 block of East Washington Street, Poneto. Report of a stray dog. Owners advised that the dog had dug itself out in under thirty minutes and were actively reenforcing the fence when police arrived. Owner told police to tell the neighbors to insert profanity here, and then said she would do it herself — and she did. Warned for disorderly conduct and repeated animal escape issues.

Sunday, 1:41 p.m., 6800 East Market Street, Craigville. Officer requested to watch someone take something from a house.

Sunday, 4:15 p.m., 9300S 1200W, Marion. Caller reported that their barn was shot twice. Source

unknown.

Sunday, 9:13 p.m., 1200N 500W, Bluffton. Caller reported dog barking for over an hour.

Sunday, 9:47 p.m., 6700 South 250E, Bluffton. Warrant served to Charles Sills, while serving the warrant officers located drugs and paraphernalia.

Monday, 6:44 a.m., All American. Driver cited for driving while suspended. Parked his car and waited for a ride.

Ossian:

Sunday, 6:38 a.m., 800E 1100N, Ossian. Mailbox injuries continue to grip the county with a recent report of damage to a large mailbox via a rogue firework.

Sunday, 8:49 p.m., 2900E U.S. 224, Ossian. Report of an abandoned vehicle with tag ripped off.

ARRESTS

Chelsea Kay Patton, 34, Bluffton; possession of syringe or needle and theft, and possession of narcotic drug and possession of methamphetamine, all Level 6 felonies. Bond set at \$20,000.

Douglas William Parks-Schauer, 30, Bluffton; possession of a narcotic drug and theft, both Level 6 felonies. Bond set at \$10,000.

Richard Lee Sprow, 88, Bluffton; reckless driving, a Class C misdemeanor.

Nathan Daniel Payton, 24, Fort Wayne; public indecency and two counts of invasion of privacy, all Class A misdemeanors, and one count of public intoxication, a Class B misdemeanor. Bond set at \$50,000.

Michael Jeffrey Mock, 52, Bluffton; intimidation, a Level 6 felony, and disorderly conduct, a Class B misdemeanor. Bond set at \$6,000.

Pastor Ochoa Espinoza, 37, Bluffton; operating with an ACE of .15 or more and operating while intoxicated, both Class A misdemeanors. Bond set at \$1,500.

Charles Edward Sills Jr., 51, Bluffton; operating with an ACE of .15 or more and operating while intoxicated, both Class A misdemeanors. Bond set at \$1,500.

Congressional Kiley Adolph to hold Meet the Candidate event

Democratic congressional candidate Kiley Adolph will host an event 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 19th at the Wells County Public Library to meet with voters, talk about the November election, and discuss building community in 2024. All are welcome.

"We are looking forward to being back in Bluffton," Adolph said. "Showing up for people matters, being

present matters, and the input from residents, including those in Wells County, on how we can build a stronger northeast Indiana — matters."

Kiley, a native of Steuben County, became the first woman from Steuben to ever earn a nomination for Congress after winning all 13 counties, in the third district, in May's Democratic Primary. She is a former

educator and nonprofit vice president running for Congress in the November 5th General Election.

Wells County Public Library Meeting Room Disclaimer: "The use of the Wells County Public Library's meeting facility does not constitute the library's endorsement and sponsorship of the program or the organizer's policies and beliefs."

DNC awards \$70,000 to Indiana Democratic Party in down-ballot 'boost'

By LESLIE BONILLA MUÑIZ

The Democratic National Committee on Monday announced \$2 million in state party grants — including nearly \$70,000 to Hoosier efforts — to support down-ballot races.

The Indiana Democratic Party hopes to break GOP supermajorities in the legislature.

The funds will go toward hiring organizers and improving data capabilities, according to a news release.

The Indiana House has 70 Republicans and 30 Democrats.

The Indiana Senate has 40 Republicans and 10 Democrats.

"Everywhere Democrats are on the ballot this November — from the

school board to the White House — we're fighting to win," DNC Chair Jaime Harrison said.

He called the investment "a boost to the DNC's record-setting support for

state parties under President (Joe) Biden." Under Biden and Harrison's leadership, according to the release, the DNC has increased its annual investment in state parties by 25%.

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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A Hoosier economist's take on inflation and you

Consumer price index Inflation ran at 2.1 percent per year from 1997 to 2019. Then came the pandemic recession and recovery. Inflation dropped to 1.3 percent in 2020 — including 3 months of deflation, when prices were falling — then soared to 8 percent in 2022, the highest inflation rate in 40 years. The peak month was in June that year, when consumer prices averaged 8.9 percent higher than in June of 2021.



Larry DeBoer

Hoosier Opinions

Since then inflation has come down a lot. As of November 2023, prices were 3.1 percent higher than a year before. That's good news.

Consumers don't seem very happy about lower inflation, though. Perhaps that's because lower inflation means prices are rising more slowly, when we'd really like prices to return to where they were before COVID.

Unfortunately, that would require deflation. Deflation is rare, and comes with strings attached. The COVID lockdown caused three months of deflation in 2020. A big drop in oil prices caused a year of deflation in 2008. The Great Depression caused four years of deflation from 1929 to 1933. Lower oil prices would be welcome, but lockdowns and depressions are certainly not. We'll have to get used to post-COVID prices and take whatever comfort we can in smaller price increases.

The Federal Reserve's Open Market Committee is not satisfied with lower inflation either. In their policy statement in mid-December, they said "inflation has eased over the past year but remains elevated" and "the Committee remains highly attentive to inflation risks" and "the Committee is strongly committed to returning inflation to its 2 percent objective." Inflation is down, but not to the 2 percent target, and risks of higher inflation remain. The Fed will not be cutting interest rates until more progress is made and risks are reduced.

One way to consider those risks is to take that 3.1 percent inflation rate apart. Let's look at three categories of prices in the overall Consumer Price Index: durable goods, non-durable goods, and services. Consumer durables include cars, appliances, and things with screens, such as televisions, computers and smartphones. Over the 1997-2019 period, durable goods prices fell by almost 1 percent per year. Much of the price reduction reflects improving quality. For the same price, TV screens are bigger, computers are more powerful, and smartphones are smarter. Improvements in technology and factory productivity are the reasons.

Pandemic supply problems caused a jump in durable goods prices. In February 2022, prices were 19 percent higher than they'd been the year before. Supply channels have recovered since then, and as of November prices were down 1.6 percent from the year before. Goods deflation is back to normal.

Non-durable goods inflation varies up and down much more than overall inflation. The main reason is gasoline. Gasoline price per gallon averaged \$1.20 in 1997, \$3.25 in 2008, \$2.14 in 2016, and \$3.95 in 2022. The average for 2023 is \$3.54. Despite all those ups and downs, overall non-durable goods inflation averaged 2 percent from 1997 to 2019, similar to overall inflation. The drop in gas prices in 2023 put the 12-month non-durable inflation rate at 0.7 percent in November. Non-durable goods inflation is back to normal.

That leaves services. Services include medical care and entertainment, but the biggest service expense is the cost of housing. The Consumer Price Index uses rents to measure the cost of housing. Service inflation averaged 2.8 percent from 1997 to 2019, but the 12-month rate as of November was 5.2 percent. Services are the price category that is holding inflation above the Fed's 2 percent target.

And rent is keeping service inflation high. Rent inflation averaged 3.2 percent from 1997 to 2019. But the rate increased after the pandemic, peaking in March 2023 at 8.8 percent. It has fallen since then, but only to 6.9 percent. Rent tends to change about a year after other prices. That's partly because people sign leases that last a year or longer. Rents change only when the lease is up.

More than anything else, the outlook for inflation depends on rents. Rent inflation has been slowly falling since March. If it keeps falling, perhaps the Fed will be persuaded that inflation risk has lessened, and will consider reductions in interest rates.

Larry DeBoer is a Purdue University economist. He wrote this for Indiana newspapers.

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, June 11, the 163rd day of 2024. There are 203 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On June 11, 1955, in motor racing's worst disaster, more than 80 people were killed during the 24 Hours of Le Mans in France when two of the cars collided and crashed into spectators.

On this date:

In 1770, Captain James Cook, commander of the British ship Endeavour, "discovered" the Great Barrier Reef off Australia by running onto it.

In 1776, the Continental Congress formed a committee to draft a Declaration of Independence calling for freedom from Britain.

In 1919, Sir Barton won the Belmont Stakes, becoming horse racing's first Triple Crown winner.

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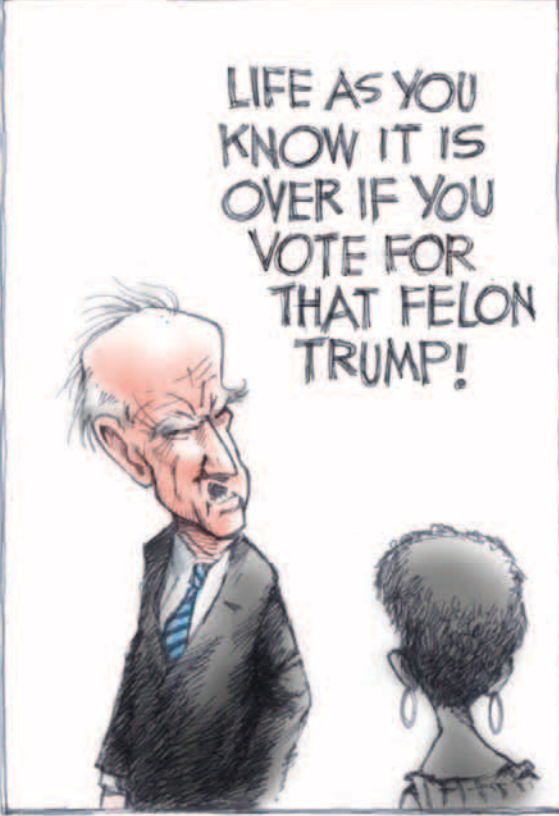
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Dick Wright ASIECARTOONS



REALLY?! YOU MEAN I CAN QUIT ONE OF MY JOBS?! MAYBE BUY A HOUSE?? EAT STEAK AGAIN?!!



The Biden administration is the most progressive in U.S. history

Although climate change is supposedly an "existential" crisis, the threat to existence seems to be of secondary importance, given the latest depletion of government petroleum reserves to encourage low gasoline prices, and high gratitude among voters.

The million-barrel release (one-ninth of the nation's average daily use) will have no noticeable effect on prices. It is, however, congruent with President Biden's "whole of government" approach not only to promoting his reelection, but also to the progressive agenda of swarming American life with government. Beyond serial student loan forgiveness, marijuana liberalization and multiple other mini-panders, Biden can truthfully boast that he has provided the most progressive governance in U.S. history.

Two defining characteristics of progressivism are: the goal of minimizing the market's role by maximizing government's role in allocating society's resources and opportunities. And confidence that the world is plastic to progressive government's touch, and the future is transparent to progressives' gaze.

Having unleashed the worst inflation in 40 years, Biden is banning (through a 100 percent tariff) Chinese electric vehicles. This will keep U.S.-made EVs prohibitively expensive for most consumers, giving Biden a reason to continue subsidizing purchasers. Protected U.S. vehicle manufacturers will raise prices, enabling Biden to call this "reindustrialization." This artificial (because government-subsidized) manufacturing "revival" will stop if the subsidies do, so they won't.

Progressives focus on jobs protected or provided by government, especially since the 2000-2015 "China shock," although the Economist calls this supposed shock "insignificant": "A plausible upper limit for American jobs lost ... is around 2m. That is a small fraction of the size of the workforce (130m in 2000). Over that period people left jobs about 900m times ... The vast majority found work again quickly ... 'Despite some localised hardships, the China shock is really a rounding error for the US workforce overall,' says Adam Posen of the Peterson Institute."

The "shock" is the gift that keeps giving progressives an excuse to socialize the economy through government "partnerships." While denouncing "tax breaks" for "Big Pharma" and "Big Oil," Biden (notes the Cato Institute's Chris Edwards) favors trillions of dollars for "Big Semiconductor, Big Wind, Big Solar, Big Battery, Big Automaker, Big Utility."

Automakers are now public utilities, whose future investments and product decisions are dictated by



George Will

government. Twenty-first-century progressives preserve the shell of the (formerly) private sector as government's appendage, but any vestiges of private autonomy are subordinated to the "existential" urgency of decarbonizing, which makes *everything* the government's concern.

Jake Sullivan — technically, Biden's national security adviser; actually, a roving savant-without-borders — says government dispensing trillions of dollars is "not picking winners and losers," it is merely picking "sectors vital to our national well-being." This is a distinction without a difference because

"well-being" encompasses *everything*.

Biden says, more earnestly than grammatically, "Every American willing to work hard should be able to get a job no matter where they are ... and keep their roots where they grew up." So, government planning will render geographic mobility, hitherto a source of national vitality and modernity, optional: Stasis is an entitlement. Already Americans are only half as likely to move between states as they were in 1980.

Writing in the Financial Times, Ruchir Sharma, chair of Rockefeller International, says: "Something has been changing in the culture. Just as the American 'revolution in pain management,' which insisted on treating even moderate injuries with powerful opiates, was hooking the nation on OxyContin, its approach to economic pain management was addicting the system to a drip feed of government support."

In the 2008 recession, Washington "scattered relief like rain: unsolicited offers of help for companies large and small, distressed or not, hundreds of billions in cash to more than half the country, 170mn Americans, jobless or not," Sharma says. A substantial portion to people earning more than \$100,000.

Republicans, whose leader calls himself "Tariff Man," are complicit. After the 1987 stock market crash, the Federal Reserve under Republican Alan Greenspan promised to support financial markets, and joined what Sharma calls "the constant stimulus project." And "the pre-Depression instinct to 'liquidate' weak companies in a crisis gave way to the opposite excess: 'liquefy, liquefy, liquefy.' Why not rescue everyone, all the time, when governments can borrow for free?"

During the past three decades, Sharma says, the federal government, under both parties, eliminated a total of just 20 rules, while adding about 3,000 a year. Biden 2.0 would make matters even worse than would Trump 2.0, but it sometimes takes an ideological micrometer to measure the difference between today's competing statists.

georgewill@washpost.com.

The secretary of transportation who couldn't

Rarely has a cabinet secretary done so little with such vast resources.

On the CBS show "Face the Nation," Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg had to defend the Biden administration's woeful record of building new electric-vehicle charging stations that are key to unlocking its hoped-for EV nirvana.

Host Margaret Brennan asked how it could be that, with \$7.5 billion allocated for this purpose two years ago, the administration has managed to build eight. Not eight thousand, or even eighty. Eight.

Buttigieg said that President Joe Biden plans on building 500,000 chargers by the end of the decade, and — implying this is some sort of an accomplishment — "the very first handful of chargers are now already being physically built."

It's true that eight is better than zero, and the administration is now only 499,992 chargers away from its goal rather than 500,000 away.

At this rate, though, the Emperor Hadrian wouldn't have finished his wall prior to the fall of the Western Roman Empire, and we'd still be constructing the Hoover Dam to this day.

The administration that made "Build Back Better" the catchphrase of its economic agenda turns out not to be any good at building.

Surely, the pace of the construction



Rich Lowry

of charging stations will pick up, but the slowness out of the gate is a symptom of the folly of attempting to force a radical change in vehicular transportation via government fiat.

Buttigieg insists that "the EV revolution will happen with or without us," yet it's off to a sputtering start. It's less a revolution than a shift in consumer preferences at the margins, especially at the high end of the market among people who can afford to make their second or third car an electric vehicle.

There are signs that the uptake of EVs is slowing down. The New York Times reported that Ford and other automakers have tapped the brakes on EVs, a shift "prompted largely by the companies' difficulties in making and selling enough electric cars and doing so profitably."

Is that all? Even Tesla has been taking a hit.

Part of the resistance to EVs is so-called range anxiety, the fear that if you can't charge up in your garage or if you are on a long trip, you might not find a charging station. Hence, the imperative to build a more robust network of charging stations that has, so far, been going so poorly.

One problem with trying to build back better, or build at all, in the contemporary United States is that needless complexity and regulatory obstacles make it so difficult. Even when the future of the planet is supposedly at stake, nothing is simple or

easy. According to a Politico report on the slow rollout of the charging stations, "States and the charger industry blame the delays mostly on the labyrinth of new contracting and performance requirements they have to navigate to receive federal funds."

The CEO of a charging manufacturer told the publication that "design, engineering, installation and utility upgrades could extend the wait by years even after the contracts to build stations are awarded."

On top of this, the existing charging infrastructure is glitchy and prone to failure.

The contrast with gas stations, which are ubiquitous and highly convenient, couldn't be starker. The government didn't have to subsidize the oil companies to construct gas stations at the beginning of the 20th century, or tell them to offer free maps, branch out into oil changes and other services, or begin to stay open 24 hours.

There is, no doubt, a niche market for electric cars that will grow over time. Rather than letting this happen organically and in keeping with consumer preferences and sensible business choices by car manufacturers, the mandarins of the Biden administration are trying to force a transformation that drivers aren't ready for and the infrastructure doesn't yet exist to support.

Secretary Buttigieg so far has had to explain away failure, and he might have to get used to it.

Rich Lowry is on Twitter @RichLowry

Gloria's children nurse a sick lamb back to health

I sighed a slight sigh when I decided what I'll be telling you about this week. We all like good stories with good endings, right? Well, you know how it is; the time that lapses before a good ending can be stressful.

Earlier this spring I had told you I'll be filling you in, on our expectant ewes. When the first lamb was born, we had six excited children (seven with mom). This particular little ram was born to first time mother which was mostly white with some black markings. The adorable newborn looked so much like its mama with black ears and a few black spots.

The children were elated when they discovered it was tame enough for them to hold. The new mama was not amused, so we went easy so as not to upset her too much.

Today when we went out to check on her she was not her usual self, it was evident that she didn't have her usual energy to romp after her mother.

Oh my, now I enjoy animals, but a sick lamb... what do I do? I searched my brain for Daniel's expertise on baby animals. It seemed like he could just kind of take a look and know what they needed. If there were something like dialing 1-800- Daniel, that's what I would have done.

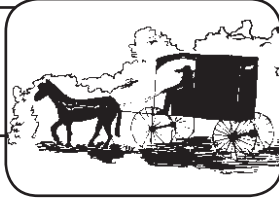
This is where we are and Daniel is where he is, so why not dig in and make the best of things?

We brought it to the house and gave her a bottle of goat milk. I was surprised how well she did though my delight was short-lived. She kept going backward.

The children did all they could.

The Amish Cook

by Gloria Yoder



After it had a nice long nap Hosanna walked around the house cradling it in her arms with its floppy head on her shoulders. It looked too sweet to think that we might not be able to keep it. The afternoon wore on. I tried not to worry about the lamb and the sadness it would be sure to bring the children, should they need to part with it. I gave the burden to God and decided he can take care of it the best, regardless of the outcome.

"Sheep give up easily," I explained to the children.

Hosanna was not ready to give in- not yet. Her nurse instincts kicked in on high gear. "Mom, may I give it some more of her supplements?" she wanted to know.

"Sure, use the syringe without the needle, and only a wee bit at a time."

"Mom, I think I should check her heart rate," was the next idea.

"Yes, you may get the stethoscope in the bathroom closet." I said smiling to myself. Once more I marveled over the reality that despite the intensity of raising children who have gone through adoption, there surely are so many added blessings. Jesse was by her side, hardly able to stand to see the little lamb suffer.

We had our supper on the deck while the lamb stayed in the house on Hosanna's favorite blanket. After our supper song Hosanna had one thing in mind. Her job with the dishes was only half done when she ran over to her 'baby'. "Mom!!

Look, it can stand!" How could it be, why this little thing didn't even as much as pick up her head before supper. We all crowded around and rejoiced together.

Jesse ran to get his snuggle blanket so it could have a clean blanket. (Blankets are washable and memories are non-perishable, right?) Their little cups of joy were running over. "Mom, I was sad a little bit ago, but now I am happy, I am even happier than I was when it was born," one of them exclaimed.

I reflected over those words. "Happier than I was when it was born." Yes, when we come face to face with hard things, we become thankful for what used to be an everyday thing we took for-granted.

Now as I write I hear happy shouts of children, their worries have faded away. Oh here comes Jesse with the prized lamb in his arms, giving me a detailed update on how its doing.

Hi there, a day later the lamb has been reunited with its mama and is able to drink on her own. What a relief! Its mama is quite possessive of it and has no idea we saved her baby's life.

Soon after we put the lamb out with its mama this afternoon the boys came running to me with big smiles. They found the first ripe raspberries and picked one for me. Bless these dear little hearts. What



will I do once I don't have my little boys to look after me?

Raspberries are getting me geared up for raspberry desserts. Thanks to Daniel for planting raspberry plants a year before he passed. We are thankful for his motivation back then that blesses us in many little ways today. Sister Mary told me about this white chocolate raspberry cake she made for her widow friend, so tonight I'll pass it on for you to try for yourself.

WHITE CHOCOLATE RASPBERRY CAKE

- 1 box of white cake mix
- 1/4 cup red raspberry jam
- 6 ounces red raspberries
- Frosting:
 - 1 cup butter, softened
 - 2 pounds powdered sugar
 - 8 ounces white baking chocolate

1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
2 teaspoons vanilla
Mix cake according to directions of box. Bake in two 8-inch round cake pans.

Top one cake with fresh raspberries
Cool.

For the frosting, cream softened butter until fluffy
Slowly add in powdered sugar, mix until crumbly.

Melt white chocolate, slowly pour into butter mixture. Whip well.

Add cream until desired consistency. Stir in vanilla.

Alternate raspberry jam and icing between cake layers, starting with frosting.

Use rest of frosting to cover side of cake. Cover sides of cake with white chocolate shavings.

Garnish with red raspberries and whipped cream.



The Northmen & Cathy in concert at Ossian UMC

The Northmen & Cathy will be in concert at the Ossian United Methodist Church Sunday, June 16 at 9 a.m. The church is located at 201 W. Mill St. in Ossian. The Northmen & Cathy are celebrating 35 years as a Christian music ministry. Cathy Godsey sings alto and plays piano, and is from Marion, Indiana- living in Fort Wayne. Singing baritone is Brad Luzadder, who is also from Marion, Indiana. Singing lead is Mathew Henry, who currently lives in Dublin, Ohio. (Photo submitted)

Plattner named to Harding's dean's list

Jake Plattner, a Junior studying psychology and theological studies, is among more than 1,300 Harding University students recognized for their academic excellence from grades achieved during the Spring 2024 semester.

The dean's list is published each semester by Dr. Marty Spears, University provost, honoring those who have achieved high scholarship. To be eligible, a student must be carrying 12 or more hours with a

3.65 or higher grade-point average and no incompletes.

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Meet the cast of Shrek Jr.



Ready to entertain you

Paul Morgan (Shrek), at left, and Elizabeth Seder (Fiona) will be ready to entertain you on Friday and Saturday as they appear in Shrek Jr. the Musical at the Auditorium Theatre 428 S. Oak St. in Bluffton. The curtain will go up at 7 p.m. on Friday and Saturday with a matinee on Saturday at 3 p.m. Admission is \$11. (Photos provided)



The Nights from Shrek Jr.

Taking the parts of Knights are left to right Emily Maggard, Addison Cincotta, Jordyn Grzych and Morgan Blair.



Meet the bear family

Members of the bear family in the production of Shrek Jr. are left to right Mama Bear (Bristol Smith), Baby Bear (Parker Grandlienard) and Papa Bear (Judah Snaars).



More cast members

Left to right are Pinocchio (Elias Nussbaum), Lord Farquaad (Tobiah Lipsey) and Gingy (Otto Fiechter).

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Dan Hurley turns down offer from Lakers, will stay at UConn

By **TIM REYNOLDS**
AP Basketball Writer

The Los Angeles Lakers offered Dan Hurley what would have seemed like a basketball coach's dream: a chance to coach one of the world's most popular franchises, possibly an opportunity to work with LeBron James and a salary that would have doubled his current one.



Dan Hurley

Hurley passed. He's staying at Connecticut, he said Monday, turning down the Lakers and ending several days of speculation about his future. The lure of trying to win a third consecutive NCAA championship with the Huskies, evidently, was just too strong.

"Our MVP Coach is staying in CT," Gov. Ned Lamont posted on social media.

ESPN first reported Hurley's decision, plus was first to report last week that he was a serious candidate for the Lakers job. Hurley met with Lakers officials — owner Jeanie Buss and general manager Rob Pelinka among them — in Los Angeles on Friday, then spent the weekend weighing his options.

The word came Monday. The Huskies had practice Monday afternoon, and before that session in Storrs, Connecticut, Hurley gave the word that the players — and probably every basketball fan in the state — wanted to hear. The NBA can wait.

"I am humbled by this entire experience," Hurley said in a statement distributed by UConn. "At the end of the day, I am extremely proud of the championship culture we have built at Connecticut. We met as a team before today's workout and our focus right now is getting better this summer and connecting as a team as we continue to pursue championships."

It seems likely that Hurley will soon be richly rewarded for staying at UConn. Lamont, who was in contact with Hurley throughout the weekend, told reporters Monday that the state will "make sure he's the top-paid college coach." Hurley got a six-year, \$32.1 million deal a year ago after the Huskies won the 2023 NCAA title; another new deal seems certain now.

"We are thrilled that Dan Hurley has made the decision to stay at UConn and continue building upon our championship tradition," UConn athletic director David Benedict said. "He has helped return our men's basketball program back to the pinnacle of the sport, including back-to-back NCAA Championships, and we're grateful for his loyalty to UConn."

"We look forward to Dan's continued leadership on and off the court at UConn. He will continue to bring great pride to Husky fans everywhere as we work toward a three-peat."

Reaction from UConn was as expected — people were thrilled. Assistant coach



Luke Murray, who has worked with Hurley at Wagner, Rhode Island and UConn, posted a video of Hurley lifting his arms in the air in celebration of the national title. There was no caption; the post's meaning was clear enough.

"Now let's get ready for a #3peat, because Connecticut knows champions are built here!" Lamont wrote.

Hurley had the option of taking over one of the most famed franchises in pro sports, not to mention perhaps the chance to coach James, the NBA's all-time scoring leader. But in the end, his stay in the coaching version of the transfer portal was brief — and he will remain at UConn, where he has gone 68-11 over the last two title-winning seasons.

On the way to those two titles, the fiery Hurley and the tough-as-nails Huskies have left no doubt — 12-0 in NCAA tournament games, winning by a staggering average of 21.7 points per contest. UConn will try to become the second program to win three straight men's national titles; UCLA, the only men's program to do better than going back-to-back, won seven in a row from 1967 through 1973.

Hurley will chase something rare by turning down the opportunity to something just as rare: leaving the reigning NCAA champions for the NBA.

The last time a coach made such a move was after the 1987-88 season, when Kansas won the NCAA title and Larry Brown decided to leave for the NBA. He took over

the San Antonio Spurs, and Roy Williams became coach of the Jayhawks.

The Spurs gave Brown \$3.5 million for five years, which was enormous money at the time yet nothing compared to what Hurley would have commanded from the Lakers — likely more than \$10 million per season, or about double what he currently makes at UConn. And Brown went on to become the only coach to win both an NCAA title and an NBA championship; he got that title with Detroit in 2004.

Hurley had the chance to try to follow that same path. Hurley is 141-58 in his six seasons at UConn and 292-163 overall in 14 seasons as a collegiate coach — adding in his years at Wagner and Rhode Island.

He's gone through four losing seasons in that span; his first year at Wagner, his first two at Rhode Island and his first year at UConn. Once he gets it rolling, the wins just pile up: take away how those stops started, and Hurley's record is 241-90 — a .728 winning percentage.

So, he remains in Storrs, just like women's coach Geno Auriemma. UConn signed Auriemma last week to a five-year extension worth nearly \$19 million.

"We're going to try to replicate it again," Hurley said in April after winning the second straight national title. "We're going to maintain a championship culture. We're bringing in some very talented high school freshmen. Our returning players, through player development, will take a big jump. We'll strategically add through the portal. I don't think that we're going anywhere."

The Lakers almost got him to change his mind.

Week 3 results, standings and leaders for Pennville Soccer League

The third week of the Pennville Soccer League took place over the weekend.

Below are the results and league leaders from each division.

Stinger

A Place to Grow Wasps 3, Patriot Sportswear Hornets 3. Kenna Penrod three goals, Grant Cosner two.

A Place to Grow Wasps 4, AgBest Express Bees 0. Penrod three goals.

Space

Dave's Heating and Cooling Asteroids 3, New Beginnings Holiness Church Rockets 2. Owen Ehrhart two goals.

Ohio Valley Gas Stars 1, Vinson Rental Properties Galaxy 1. Goals by Madalyn Malyska and Calvin Minch.

Bro Shadow Meteors 7, Vinson Rental Properties Galaxy 0. Neymar Carreno five goals.

Wild Cat

WPGW Lions 4, Portland Insurance Cougars 3. Lyle Beiswanger three goals, Jade Westgerdes two.

Penrod Monuments Jaguars 1, POET Biorefining Cheetahs 1. Goals by Carsten Penrod and Liam Thompson.

WPGW Lions 2, Pennville General Store Tigers 0. Goals by Karsen Kuhn and Charlee Peters.

Standings & Goal leaders

Stinger

T1. A Place to Grow Wasps 2-1-1, 7

points.

T1. Patriot Sportswear Hornets 2-1-1, 7 points.

3. AgBest Express Bees, 3 points.

Goal Leaders: Kenna Penrod (8), Mabel Leonhard (6), Raelyn McClain (5).

Space

1. Bro Shadow Meteors 4-0-0, 12 points.

2. Dave's Heating and Cooling Asteroids 2-1-1, 7 points.

3. Vinson Rental Properties Galaxy 1-2-1, 4 points.

4. Ohio Valley Gas Stars 0-1-2, 2 points.

5. New Beginnings Holiness Church Rockets 0-3-0, 0 points.

Goal Leaders: Neymar Carreno (11), Owen Ehrhart (5), Liam Phipps (4).

Wild Cat

1. WPGW Lions 3-0-1, 10 points.

2. Penrod Monuments Jaguars 0-4-4, 4 points.

T3. Portland Insurance Cougars 1-2-0, 3 points.

T3. Pennville General Store Tigers 1-2-0, 3 points.

4. POET Biorefining Cheetahs 0-1-2, 2 points.

Lyle Beiswanger (8), Jade Westgerdes (4), Blake Jellison, Karen Kuhn, Charlee Peterson and Liam Thompson (3).

Salt Lake City Olympic bid projects \$4 billion in total costs to stage 2034 Winter Games

By **EDDIE PELLIS**
AP National Writer

Organizers for the proposed 2034 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City released their first budget estimate Monday, projecting total costs of just under \$4 billion, with \$2.84 billion of that slated for operational costs.

The committee said even though there will be 40% more events than the last time Salt Lake City hosted the Olympics, the number for operational costs for 2034 is 1% lower than that for 2002 when adjusted for inflation.

The IOC will study the numbers later this month and is expected to officially award the 2034 Games to Utah's capital at a meeting on July 24 in the lead-up to the Paris Olympics.

Salt Lake City has been focused on using many of the venues that were in play for 2002. It says no new venue construction is planned for 2034, as it will use facilities that have been kept in use and upgraded since 2002.

Olympics are notorious for coming in over budget, and also for being difficult to track money-wise — in part because of the different elements that make up "operating" and "total" costs and also because of an often-opaque process used in filtering those numbers through governments and the IOC to the public.

"One of the statements that Fraser makes often is that Olympic budgeting is, in fact, an unofficial Olympic sport," said bid chief operating officer Brett Hopkins, who explained the budget in a media call along with bid CEO Fraser Bullock. "There is just a tremendous amount that



goes in behind the scenes."

If Salt Lake City can come close to these numbers, it would represent a remarkable shift from the last few Winter Games.

Russia famously spent a reported \$51 billion on staging the 2014 Olympics in Sochi, which included massive transportation and housing projects.

Four years later, South Korea spent \$12.9 billion for the 2018 Games that were originally projected at between \$7 billion and \$8 billion.

There's no definitive price tag on the last Winter Olympics in China, though one report placed the cost at more than \$38.5 billion after an initial projection of around \$3.9 billion.

The Salt Lake organizers released projected revenue figures that estimate they will break even with the help of a target of \$1.8 billion in domestic sponsorship.

The committee is budgeting for a \$260 million legacy contribution to support local community sports programs, which is part of the non-operational spending and could be diminished if the numbers don't add up.

Bullock acknowledged the ever-shifting nature of Olympic budgets, but said it was Salt Lake City's mission to not spend more than it makes on the 2034 Games.

"This budget we've gone through, we're probably on iteration 'over a hundred,'" he said. "That's just the dynamics of budgets for games. As you learn more and you get more information, they constantly evolve."

Clark left off of Olympic team, hopes to make team in future

By **DOUG FEINBERG**
AP Basketball Writer

Caitlin Clark hopes to play for the U.S. Olympic team one day. It just won't be in Paris next month.

The Indiana Fever rookie confirmed on Sunday that she isn't on the roster for this year's Olympics.

"I think it just gives you something to work for," Clark told reporters after practice. "It's a dream. Hopefully one day I can be there. I think it's just a little more motivation. You remember that. Hopefully when four years comes back around, I can be there."

The next Summer Olympics are in Los Angeles in 2028.

Clark has averaged 16.8 points, 5.3 rebounds and 6.3 assists so far in her young professional career with the Fever.

She wasn't included on the U.S. roster that was provided to The Associated Press on Saturday by a person familiar with the team. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because no official announcement had been made.

The roster includes A'ja Wilson, Breanna Stewart and Diana Taurasi, who is going for a record sixth Olympic gold medal.

"I'm excited for the girls that are on the team," Clark said. "I know it's the most competitive team in the world, and I know

it could have gone either way of me being on the team or me not being on the team. I'm excited for them. Going to be rooting them on to win gold. I was a kid that grew up watching the Olympics. It'll be fun to watch them."

The U.S. has won every gold medal in women's basketball starting with the 1996 Atlanta Games.

Clark said she received a phone call letting her know she wasn't chosen for this year's team.

"They called me and let me know before everything came out, which was really respectful of them, and I appreciate that," Clark said. "They did the same for every girl that made the team or every girl that didn't make the team. There's a lot of players in the Olympic pool. It wasn't like I was the only one they had to call. They had to make quite a few calls."

Beginning with her record-breaking collegiate career at Iowa, Clark has brought millions of new fans to women's basketball. The U.S. has specific selection procedures in determining who is on the national team that include availability, position played and versatility.

Based on her inclusion in the U.S. national team pool, Clark could be chosen as an alternate if one of the 12 players is injured and can't play. Anyone in the pool is eligible to be an alternate.

News-Banner Scoreboard

BASKETBALL

NBA FINALS

(Best-of-7; x-if necessary)
Thursday, June 6
Boston 107, Dallas 89

Sunday, June 9
Boston 105, Dallas 98

Wednesday, June 12
Boston at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.

Friday, June 14
Boston at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.

Monday, June 17
x-Dallas at Boston, TBA

Thursday, June 20
x-Boston at Dallas, TBA

Sunday, June 23
x-Dallas at Boston, TBA

WNBA EASTERN CONFERENCE

W	L	Pct	GB	
Connecticut	10	1	.909	—
New York	11	2	.846	—
Atlanta	5	4	.556	4
Chicago	4	6	.400	5½
Indiana	3	10	.231	8
Washington	0	12	.000	10½

W	L	Pct	GB	
Minnesota	8	3	.727	—
Seattle	7	4	.636	1
Las Vegas	5	4	.556	2
Phoenix	6	6	.500	2½
Los Angeles	4	7	.364	4
Dallas	3	7	.300	4½

Sunday's Games
New York 93, Washington 88
Phoenix 97, Dallas 90, 2OT
Minnesota 83, Seattle 64
Los Angeles 96, Las Vegas 92

Monday's Games
Connecticut 89, Indiana 72

Tuesday's Games
Washington at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.
Los Angeles at Seattle, 10 p.m.
Minnesota at Las Vegas, 10 p.m.

Wednesday's Games
Connecticut at Chicago, 8 p.m.

Thursday's Games
Atlanta at Indiana, 7 p.m.
Seattle at Dallas, 7 p.m.
Las Vegas at Phoenix, 10 p.m.

HOCKEY

NHL FINALS

(Best-of-7)
(x-if necessary)
Saturday, June 8
Florida 3, Edmonton 0

Monday, June 10
Florida 4, Edmonton, 1

Thursday, June 13
Florida at Edmonton, 8 p.m.

Saturday, June 15
Florida at Edmonton, 8 p.m.

Tuesday, June 18
x-Edmonton at Florida, TBA

Friday, June 21
x-Florida at Edmonton, TBA

Monday, June 24
x-Edmonton at Florida, TBA

BASEBALL

MLB AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
New York	47	21	.691	—
Baltimore	43	22	.662	2½
Boston	33	33	.500	13
Toronto	32	34	.485	14
Tampa Bay	31	35	.470	15

Central Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
Cleveland	42	22	.656	—
Kansas City	39	28	.582	4½
Minnesota	35	31	.530	8
Detroit	32	33	.492	10½
Chicago	17	49	.258	26

West Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
Seattle	37	30	.552	—
Texas	31	34	.477	5
Houston	30	36	.455	6½
Oakland	26	41	.388	11
Los Angeles	25	40	.385	11

Sunday's Games
Texas 7, San Francisco 2
Detroit 10, Milwaukee 2
Cleveland 6, Miami 3
Baltimore 9, Tampa Bay 2
Minnesota 11, Pittsburgh 5, 10

innings
Seattle 6, Kansas City 5, 10 innings
Boston 6, Chicago White Sox 4, 10

innings
Toronto 6, Oakland 4, 10 innings
L.A. Angels 9, Houston 7
N.Y. Yankees 6, L.A. Dodgers 4

Monday's Games
Baltimore 5, Tampa Bay 2
Minnesota 5, Colorado 0
Milwaukee 3, Toronto 1
N.Y. Yankees 4, Kansas City 2
Chicago White Sox at Seattle, 9:40

p.m.
Oakland at San Diego, 9:40 p.m.
Houston at San Francisco, 9:45 p.m.

Tuesday's Games
Atlanta (Fried 6-2) at Baltimore (Suarez 2-0), 6:35 p.m.
Washington (Parker 4-3) at Detroit (Maeda 2-2), 6:40 p.m.

Chicago Cubs (Tailon 3-2) at Tampa Bay (Eflin 3-4), 6:50 p.m.

Cleveland (McKenzie 2-3) at Cincinnati (TBD), 7:10 p.m.

Philadelphia (Wheeler 7-3) at Boston (Crawford 2-5), 7:10 p.m.

Colorado (Quattrill 5-4) at Minnesota (Varland 0-4), 7:40 p.m.

N.Y. Yankees (Stroman 5-2) at Kansas City (Singer 4-2), 8:10 p.m.

Toronto (Kikuchi 3-5) at Milwaukee (TBD), 8:10 p.m.

Chicago White Sox (Thorpe 0-0) at Seattle (Woo 3-0), 9:40 p.m.

L.A. Angels (Suarez 1-0) at Arizona (Montgomery 3-4), 9:40 p.m.

Oakland (Sears 4-5) at San Diego (Vasquez 1-3), 9:40 p.m.

Houston (Blanco 5-2) at San Francisco (Hicks 4-2), 9:45 p.m.

Texas (Dunning 4-4) at L.A. Dodgers (Paxton 5-1), 10:10 p.m.

Wednesday's Games
Colorado at Minnesota, 1:10 p.m.
Toronto at Milwaukee, 2:10 p.m.
Houston at San Francisco, 3:45 p.m.
Oakland at San Diego, 4:10 p.m.
Atlanta at Baltimore, 6:35 p.m.
Washington at Detroit, 6:40 p.m.
Chicago Cubs at Tampa Bay, 6:50

p.m.
Cleveland at Cincinnati, 7:10 p.m.
Philadelphia at Boston, 7:10 p.m.
N.Y. Yankees at Kansas City, 8:10

p.m.
Chicago White Sox at Seattle, 9:40

p.m.
L.A. Angels at Arizona, 9:40 p.m.
Texas at L.A. Dodgers, 10:10 p.m.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
Philadelphia	45	20	.692	—
Atlanta	35	28	.556	9
Washington	30	35	.462	15
New York	28	36	.438	16½
Miami	22	43	.338	23

Central Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
Milwaukee	39	27	.591	—
Chicago	32	34	.485	7
Cincinnati	32	34	.485	7
St. Louis	31	33	.484	7
Pittsburgh	31	34	.477	7½

West Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
Los Angeles	41	26	.612	—
San Diego	34	35	.493	8
San Francisco	32	34	.485	8½
Arizona	31	35	.470	9½
Colorado	23	43	.348	17½

Sunday's Games
N.Y. Mets 6, Philadelphia 5
Texas 7, San Francisco 2
Detroit 10, Milwaukee 2
Cleveland 6, Miami 3
Washington 8, Atlanta 5
Chicago Cubs 4, Cincinnati 2
St. Louis 5, Colorado 1
Minnesota 11, Pittsburgh 5, 10

innings
Arizona 9, San Diego 3
N.Y. Yankees 6, L.A. Dodgers 4

Monday's Games
Minnesota 5, Colorado 0
Milwaukee 3, Toronto 1
Oakland at San Diego, 9:40 p.m.
Houston at San Francisco, 9:45 p.m.

Tuesday's Games
Atlanta (Fried 6-2) at Baltimore (Suarez 2-0), 6:35 p.m.
Washington (Parker 4-3) at Detroit (Maeda 2-2), 6:40 p.m.

Chicago Cubs (Tailon 3-2) at Tampa Bay (Eflin 3-4), 7:40 p.m.

Cleveland (McKenzie 2-3) at Cincinnati (TBD), 7:10 p.m.

Miami (Luzardo 2-5) at N.Y. Mets (Megill 1-2), 7

America's farmers are counting on farm bill passage

By AGDAILY

Debates linking food aid for needy families with crop subsidies for American farmers could hinder the renewal of a comprehensive agricultural policy law — the next modernized farm bill.

Concerns that the delay could push Congress to postpone action on the \$1.5 trillion proposal mean America's farmers and ranchers are in a holding pattern, counting on Congress to make the next move and pass the farm bill.

Congressional leaders face two options: a short-term extension that might allow for an agreement on the farm bill during the post-

election session, or a longer-term extension due to persistent disagreements over the bill. The 2018 farm law was passed after a series of negotiations following the mid-term elections.

"America's farmers and ranchers are counting on Congress to pass a new, modernized farm bill," was the message delivered by Kevin Lussier, the chair of American Farm Bureau's Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee, who testified Tuesday before the Senate Agriculture Subcommittee on Commodities, Risk Management, and Trade.

Kevin is a third-generation farmer from Haw-

thorne, Florida, where he and his wife operate a dairy farm and serve as members of Florida Farm Bureau. "The future of American dairy farming depends on investment in the next generation. By increasing access to credit and enhancing risk management programs, we can ensure that the next generation of farmers have the tools and resources we need to thrive," Lussier told lawmakers. "I urge the committee to consider these vital programs and to take action to support young farmers across the country by passing a bipartisan farm bill this year. Young farmers like us cannot afford continued

delays by Congress." Lussier emphasized the importance of affordable credit for young and beginning farmers. He credits USDA-backed loans and grants for enabling him to grow his business during difficult times.

"Traditional lending institutions often view agriculture as a high-risk industry. When you combine that with the limited or zero credit history many young farmers and ranchers have, it makes it difficult for them to secure loans through private lending institutions on favorable terms. Programs like the FSA's Guaranteed and Direct Farm Ownership and Operating Loans

have been invaluable to the success of our farm and to many other young farmers and ranchers," he said.

Lussier advocated for improvements to risk management programs, like Dairy Margin Coverage. Suggested enhancements include increasing the cap on Tier 1 coverage above 5 million pounds, providing a premium discount for farmers who choose to enroll in DMC for the life of the farm bill, and restoring the "higher of" formula for the class I mover. "Strengthening and expanding the DMC pro-

gram will help young dairy farmers like myself manage the inherent risks in agriculture and ensure a more stable, predictable income," Lussier said.

Another member, representing the Mississippi Farm Bureau, also testified yesterday. Christian Good and his wife operate a corn and soybean farm in Macon, Mississippi. Good is speaking on needed farm bill improvements to reference prices, crop insurance eligibility, rural broadband, and increased funding for conservation programs.

Highlight photography talents with the Indiana Ag Photo Contest in June

During the month of June, the Indiana State Department of Agriculture will accept submissions for the 17th annual Indiana Agriculture Photo Contest. The contest is open to all Indiana residents and was created to recognize the hard work and contributions of Hoosier farmers, as well as the beauty of the state's agricultural landscape.

"Each and every Hoosier is welcome to submit an entry to the contest," said Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch, Indiana's Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development. "No matter the camera equipment you own, we

encourage you to submit your best images showcasing Indiana agriculture."

Participants are encouraged to submit photos reflecting the wide array of agriculture. The categories photos can be entered under are:

- On the Farm: Showcasing any building, piece of equipment or activity that is a part of life on an Indiana farm.

- Faces of Agriculture: Featuring those who grow and produce food, fuel and fiber in Indiana.

- Agritourism: Spotighting Indiana's seasonal and agricultural destinations,

such as orchards, wineries and farmers markets.

- Conservation: Highlighting Indiana's natural beauty with landscapes, water and wildlife.

In total, ten winners will be selected: two from each category and two overall. Winners will be invited to attend a special ceremony at the Indiana State Fair, where they will be recognized and receive certificates from Lt. Gov. Crouch and Indiana State Department of Agriculture Director Don Lamb. Contest winners will also have their photographs featured in the offices of the Lt. Govern-

or's Family of Business in Indianapolis throughout the year.

"Indiana agriculture is a beautiful thing and we are blessed to be surrounded by so much of it," Lamb said. "I look forward to seeing how that beauty is captured in this year's contest."

Contestants can submit up to five photos in digital format accommodated by a submission form for each photo. Photos will be evaluated based on creativity, composition and category representation. Entries must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on June 30, 2024.

Indiana set to spend \$81.5M in additional rural broadband expansion projects

By HOOSIER AG TODAY

Indiana is set to spend \$81.5 million to expand broadband service to thousands of Hoosier homes and businesses throughout many of the state's rural areas.

According to a press release, the fourth and final round of the Next Level Connections Broadband Grant Program will provide broadband infrastructure to more than 34,000 homes and commercial locations in 54 counties across Indiana.

The fourth round of the grant program leveraged 17 telecommunications providers and utility cooperatives contributing more than \$135 million

in matching funds, resulting in more than \$216 million total investment for broadband.

By providing a 20% match, broadband service providers and utility cooperatives can apply for up to \$5 million to expand service to unserved areas.

"The first-of-its-kind broadband grant program has connected thousands of Hoosiers in nearly every corner of the state," said Gov. Eric Holcomb (R-IN). "It has been a model program that other states have tried to replicate to solve the inequitable technology gap that exists across the country. The program ensures that every

resident has access to information which unlocks the door to opportunity and leads to a brighter better connected future."

The Next Level Connections Broadband Grant Program has awarded \$328 million to connect more than 102,000 homes and commercial locations by funding broadband infrastructure projects. Since 2018, the state has leveraged more than \$426 million in private and local investment. Connectivity projects will have been completed in 88 of Indiana's 92 counties through all rounds of the Next Level Connections Broadband Grant Program.

Farmer sentiments recover; solar lease interest rises

By AGDAILY

U.S. farmers' outlook improved in May as the Purdue University/CME Group Ag Economy Barometer index rose to 108, marking a 9-point increase from April, the lowest reading since June 2022.

Both of the barometer's subindices increased, with the Index of Future Expectations climbing 11 points to 117 and the Current Conditions Index rising 6 points. This month's Ag Economy Barometer survey was conducted from May 13 to 17, 2024.

The boost in the Index of Future Expectations reflects farmers' expectation that conditions will improve, although it's clear that 2024's financial challenges are still a concern. A rise in crop prices from the April survey's date to mid-May played a role in boosting farmer sentiment this month.

By mid-May, Eastern Corn Belt cash corn prices had increased by 6% to 7 percent, and soybean prices had risen by 2 percent to 3 percent since the April survey was conducted. The improvement in prices along with good corn and soybean planting progress contributed to the sentiment improvement.

The Farm Financial Performance Index rose to 82 in May, a 6-point increase from April. The index asks producers to compare their farm's expected financial performance to last year. However, despite the gain, the index remains 15 points lower than at the end of last year, indicating that producers still anticipate 2024 being a more financially challenging year than 2023.

Producers' one-year ahead views on farmland values in May remained steady, with a

small 3-point increase in the Short-Term Farmland Value Expectations Index. Compared to last fall, producers' farmland value outlook has weakened in 2024, as indicated by an average index value of 116 from January to May, down 6 percent from the average of 124 from October to December 2023.

Solar energy production on the rise

Those expecting higher farmland values in the coming year point to nonfarm investor demand and inflation as key drivers for their optimism. Notably, the survey expanded its response categories in April and May to include energy production from wind and solar installations as a possible reason to expect values to rise. In May, 12 percent of optimistic respondents cited energy production as a factor for their positive outlook, up

from 8% in April. While the overall outlook on farmland values showed little change in May, it appears the evolving landscape of energy production is beginning to play a role in producers' views.

Interest in developing Carbon Capture and Storage projects by ethanol plants is rising, partly driven by tax credits in the Inflation Reduction Act. This month's survey inquired about farmers' experiences with potential CCS projects being developed by ethanol plants. Seven percent of respondents reported being approached about such projects. Payment rates per acre ranged from under \$26 to over \$50, indicating there is a lot of payment rate variability. Future surveys will delve deeper into CCS project specifics.

Interest in leasing farmland for solar energy production is on the rise,

according to recent survey findings. In both April and May, approximately 20 percent of respondents — up from just 12 percent in March — have discussed leasing farmland for solar energy production within the last six months.

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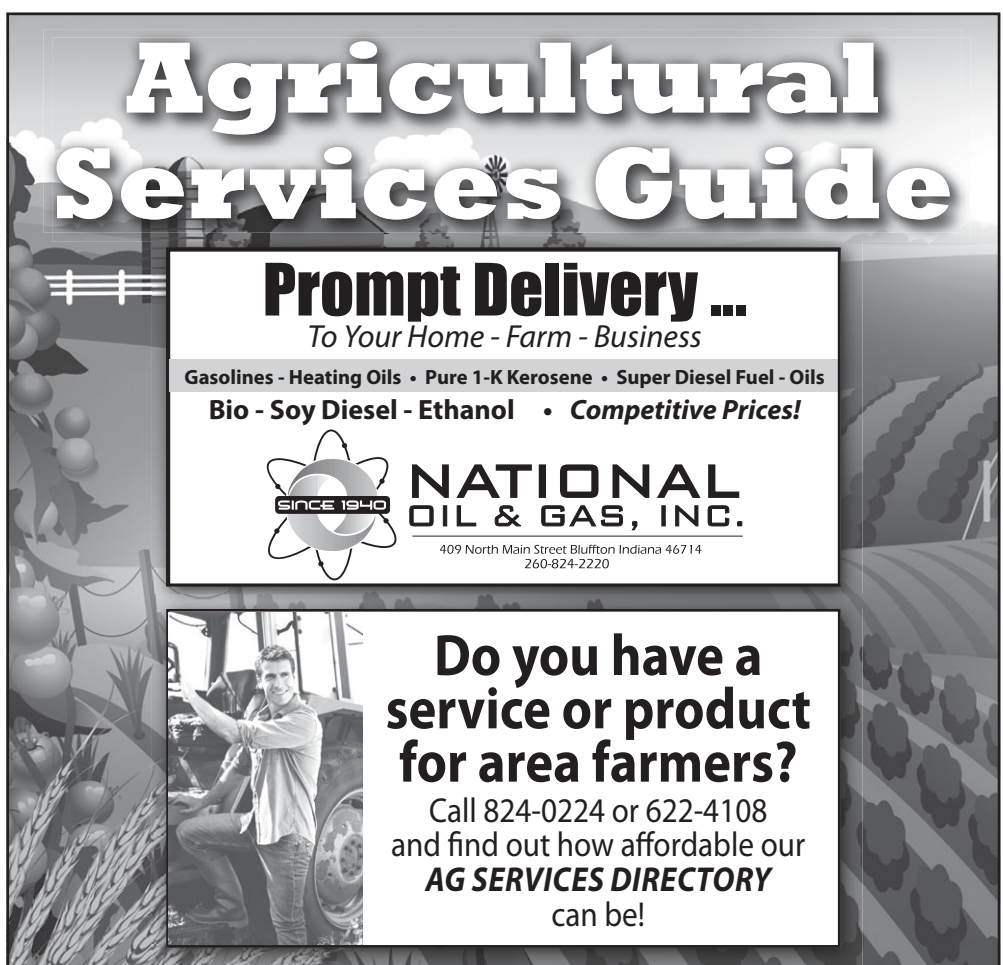
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This Week's Garage Sales

Clip & Save

402 HOMESTEAD AVE., Ossian, Wed., June 12, 9-1:30, Thurs., June 13, 8-3:30, Fri., June 14, 8-2. Kid & adult clothes, shoes, toys, furniture, household, amber glass, outdoor sand box & garage items.

THURSDAY, FRIDAY (JUNE 13, 14), 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., 2830 E 250 N and several in North Oaks Addition. Lots of household, area rug with pad, vintage items, generator, porch swing, welder, yard roller, 2 single garage doors with hardware, Chrome 15 inch rims, Nova parts & much more.

Receive a free garage sale kit when placing a three day line classified ad.

Lottery Numbers

Monday's Drawings HOOSIER LOTTERY
Cash 5 — 01-18-24-36-42
Cash4Life — 06-29-38-41-48, Cash Ball: 02
Quick Draw Midday — 01-02-07-08-11-16-26-32-33-43-46-49-50-51-52-53-55-60-62-65, BE: 49
Daily Three-Midday — 07-09-05, SB: 02
Daily Three-Evening — 08-05-05, SB: 09
Daily Four-Midday — 03-08-09-09, SB: 02
Daily Four-Evening — 03-06-04-07, SB: 09
Quick Draw Evening — 01-03-04-24-27-31-36-43-52-53-55-57-58-61-62-63-72-77-79-80, BE: 31
Hoosier Lotto — Estimated jackpot (for Wednesday): \$14.4 million
MEGA MILLIONS
Estimated jackpot (for Tuesday): \$30 million
POWERBALL
08-38-52-54-64 Powerball: 15; Power Play: 3X

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SUDOKU

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

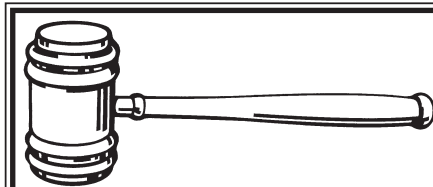
King Classic Sudoku

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

Difficulty: ★★

6/11

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Public Sale Calendar

BIDDING ENDS JUNE 12 - (Online Only Personal Property Auction) - Huston Watters, seller. 2003 Chevy Impala, well cared for modern furniture, holiday decor, glassware, household, woodworking tools, air compressor, hand & power tools, lawn & garden, Toro snowblower, Toro push lawn mowers, much more! Sale manager Brandon Steffen, 260-710-5684, TheSteffenGroupInc.com, 260-426-0633.

JUNE 15-JUNE 22 - (Online Only Personal Property) - Estate of Glen Bowen, seller. Clean 2005 Buick Lesabre Custom w/77,000 miles, 2004 Toyota Sienna LE mini van, 1987 Riviera Cruiser 24' pontoon, 2004 Yamaha XLT jet ski, floating WaveRunner dock, lake equipment, modern furniture, household, electronics, lawn and garden, patio furniture, tools, more. Auction preview & online bidding assistance June 22 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., 500 Lane 101 Jimmerson Lake, Angola, IN. Sale manager Brandon Steffen, 260-710-5684, TheSteffenGroupInc.com, 260-426-0633.

JUNE 16-23 - (Online Only) - Estate of Marilyn McQueary, seller. 2023 GMC Terrain

Denali, AWD Edition w/2,130 miles (like new), 1990 Cadillac Allante, modern furniture, antiques, collectibles, tools, home furnishings, stained glass decorations, leaded glass lamps, home decor, kitchen items, jewelry, clothing, designer purses, Christmas & Halloween decorations, swords, coins & silver, Glock 45 9MM, more. Preview & online bidding assistance June 18, June 20 from 3-6 p.m., 102 S. Jefferson St., Ossian. Sale manager Rod Fetters, 260-557-8451, TheSteffenGroupInc.com, 260-426-0633.

BIDDING ENDS JUNE 17 - Online only firearm - Buroff and others, owners. Rifles, shotguns & handguns. Marlin, Winchester, Remington, Browning, Bush Master, Colt, Walther. Review all registration information before bidding. Auction preview & online bidding assistance June 12, 4 p.m.-6 p.m., 215 E Market, Bluffton, IN. Sale Manager Isaac Stoller, 260-413-3515, TheSteffenGroupInc.com, 260-824-3006, steffengrp.com.

BIDDING STARTS CLOSING JUNE 20 - 10 a.m. - Steve and Dave Bell, owners. Bell's Auto & Truck Sale retirement liquidation! Antiques/primitives, automobile advertising, tool chests, rod iron, vintage enamelled signs, Ford tractor, Mercedes convertible, John Deere mowers, pedal cars/tractors, skid loader, fire hydrants, traffic lights, thermometers, automobiles, automotive tools, shop equipment, more! Preview June 18, 3-5 p.m., 1420 Goshen Ave., Fort Wayne. Pick up June 21, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., June 24, 1-5 p.m., June 25, 9 a.m.-noon. [Krueckeberg Auction](http://KrueckebergAuction.com) & Realty LLC, 260-724-7402, kjauction.com.

JUNE 23 - (Online Only Auc-

tion) - Bowen Family, sellers. Well cared for 2 bedroom lake cottage of Jimmerson Lake with 36' of frontage, three season room, 1 car garage, deck with outstanding views of Jimmerson Lake/Part of the Lake James Chain. Open House: June 22 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., 500 Lane 101 Jimmerson Lake, Angola, IN. TheSteffenGroupInc.com, 260-824-3006.

JUNE 23 - 4 p.m. - Multiple consignors, owners. Online only consignment auction! 1,000+ lots! Huge amount of hand tools, large assortment of household items, camping supplies, gun safe, dollhouses, lodge cookware, hunting items, photography accessories, guitar, kitchen items, exercise equipment, restaurant equipment and much more! Preview June 20, 3-5 p.m., 812 Elm Street, Decatur, IN. Pick up June 24, 1-6 p.m. and June 25, 9 a.m.-noon. [Krueckeberg Auction](http://KrueckebergAuction.com) & Realty LLC, 260-724-7402, kjauction.com.

JULY 16 - 2-6 p.m. ET (Online) - Farm: William C. Lee Trust. Property Location: 6 miles south of Angola, IN, along E 700 S in Pleasant Lake, IN. 156+/- total acres, tillable farmland, timber, recreational, pole barn, chicken barn, Steuben Twp., Steuben Co. Tract 1: 101+/- acres. Tract 2: 50+/- acres. Tract 3: 5+/- acres. Open House by appointment: Rick Johnloz, 260-827-8181, Neal Wolhete, 260-336-2219, Jason Johnloz, 260-273-9177. [Halderman Real Estate & Farm Management](http://HaldermanRealEstate.com), 800-424-2324, halderman.com.

STATE OF INDIANA
COUNTY OF WELLS
IN THE WELLS COUNTY
CIRCUIT COURT
CASE No.
90C01-2405-MI-000013

IN RE THE MATTER OF:
Melissa Denise Velasquez
Petitioner

NOTICE OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME
Melissa Denise Velasquez, whose mailing address is: 515 E South St Bluffton, Indiana 46714, and if different, whose residential address is, in the Wells County, Indiana, hereby gives notice that Melissa Denise Velasquez has filed a petition in the Wells County Circuit Court requesting that her name be changed to Missy Melissa Denise Velasquez.

Notice is further given that the hearing will be held on said Petition on: 7-25-24 at 2:30 pm
Melissa Denise Velasquez
Petitioner
5-24-24
Beth Davis
Wells County Clerk
nb 6/4, 6/11, 6/18
hspaxlp

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Public Notices

STATE OF INDIANA)
COUNTY OF WELLS) SS:
IN THE WELLS
CIRCUIT COURT
CAUSE NUMBER:
90C01-2405-JC-000018

IN THE MATTER OF:
LC - DOB 1/19/2016
A CHILD ALLEGED TO BE
AND
ASHLEY MCALKICH (MOTHER)
SUMMONS FOR SERVICE BY PUBLICATION & NOTICE OF CHILD IN NEED OF SERVICES HEARING

TO: Ashley McAlkich
Whereabouts unknown
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the above noted parent whose whereabouts are unknown, that the Indiana Department of Child Services has filed its Verified Petition Alleging the child to be in Need of Services, in accordance with I.C. 31-34-9-3, and that an adjudication hearing has been scheduled with the Court.

YOU ARE HEREBY COMMANDED to appear before the Judge of the Wells Circuit Court, 102 Market Street, Bluffton, IN 46714 - 260-824-6485 for a(n) Fact Finding/Disposition on 8/8/2024 at 8:30 AM.

At said hearing, the Court will consider the Petition and evidence thereon and will render its decision as to whether the above named minor child is child in need of services and shall enter adjudication accordingly. Your failure to appear after lawful notice will be deemed as your default and waiver to be present at said hearing.

UPON ENTRY OF SAID ADJUDICATION, A DISPOSITIONAL HEARING will be held in which the Court will consider (1) Alternatives for the care, treatment, or rehabilitation for the child; (2) The necessity, nature, and extent of your participation in the program of care, treatment, or rehabilitation for the child; and (3) Your financial responsibility for any services provided for the parent, guardian or custodian of the child including child support.

YOU MUST RESPOND by appearing in person or by an attorney within thirty (30) days after the last publication of this notice, and in the event you fail to do so, an adjudication on said petition, judgment by default may be entered against you, or the court may proceed in your absence, without further notice.

Beth Davis
Clerk
Holly N Smith, 31840-49
Attorney, Indiana Department of Child Services
c/o Wells Co DCS
221 W Market St
Bluffton, IN 46714
Office: 260-824-3530
nb 6/11, 6/18, 6/25
hspaxlp

SUDOKU ANSWER

11/9	6	9	2	9	1	8	7	4	8	7	9
	1	9	2	6	7	4	2	8	6	8	9
	7	8	6	6	2	9	1	9	2		
	8	2	6	7	9	1	5	8	4		
	8	2	7	2	9	6	9	8	1		
	9	1	9	4	8	8	2	7	6		
	9	7	8	8	2	9	6	1	2		
	2	8	1	9	6	2	8	7	9		
	2	8	1	9	6	2	8	7	9		

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Jurors in Hunter Biden's gun trial begin deliberating federal charges

WILMINGTON, Del. (AP) — Jurors in Hunter Biden's gun trial began deliberating Monday whether the president's son is guilty of federal firearms charges over a revolver he bought in 2018 when prosecutors say he was addicted to crack cocaine.

Hunter Biden is charged with three felonies in the case that has laid bare some of the darkest moments of his drug-fueled past. Prosecutors have used testimony from former romantic partners, personal text messages and photos of Hunter Biden with drug paraphernalia or partially clothed to make the case that he broke the law.

"No one is above the law," prosecutor Leo Wise told jurors in his closing argument as first lady Jill Biden watched from the front row of the Wilmington, Delaware, courtroom.

Jurors deliberated for less than an hour before leaving the courthouse for the day. Deliberations were to resume Tuesday morning.

President Joe Biden's son has publicly detailed his struggle with a crack cocaine addiction before getting sober more than five years ago. But the defense sought to show that he did not consider himself an "addict" when he bought the gun and checked "no" on the form that asked whether he was "an unlawful user" of drugs or addicted to them.

The case has pitted Hunter Biden against his father's Justice Department in the midst of the Democratic president's reelection campaign. The charges were brought by special counsel David Weiss, who was nominated by Republican former President Donald Trump to be U.S. attorney for Delaware and led the yearslong investigation.

Before the case went to the jury, the prosecutor urged jurors to focus on the "overwhelming" evidence against Hunter Biden and pay no mind to members of the president's family sitting in the courtroom.

"All of this is not evidence," Wise said, extending his hand and directing the jury to look at the gallery. "People sitting in the gallery are not evidence."

First lady Jill Biden and other family members left the courthouse shortly after deliberations began. The first

lady sat through most of the trial, missing only one day last week to attend D-Day anniversary events with the president in France. At one point Monday, Hunter Biden leaned over a railing to whisper in Jill Biden's ear.

Defense attorney Abbe Lowell told jurors in his closing argument that prosecutors had failed to prove their case. Lowell said the his client may have a famous last name, but he is still presumed innocent until proven guilty like any other defendant.

"With my last breath in this case, I ask for the only verdict that will hold the prosecutors to what the law requires of them" — a verdict of not guilty, Lowell said.

Hunter Biden's lawyers have suggested he was trying to turn his life around at the time of the gun purchase, having completed a detoxification and rehabilitation program at the end of August 2018. The defense called three witnesses, including Hunter's daughter Naomi, who told jurors that her father seemed to be improving in the weeks before he bought the gun.

Closing arguments came shortly after the defense rested its case without calling Hunter Biden to the witness stand. He didn't elaborate on his decision when he told U.S. District Judge Maryellen Noreika that he was waiving his right to testify, according to a transcript of the sidebar discussion at

the bench. Hunter Biden smiled as he chatted with members of his defense team and flashed a thumbs-up sign to a supporter in the gallery after the final witness — an FBI agent called by prosecutors in their rebuttal case.

The trial has put a spotlight on a turbulent time in Hunter Biden's life after the 2015 death of his brother, Beau, from brain cancer. The proceedings have played out in the president's home state, where Hunter Biden grew up and where the family is deeply established. Joe Biden spent 36 years as a senator in Delaware, commuting daily to Washington, and Beau Biden was the state's attorney general.

Hunter Biden's ex-wife and two former girlfriends testified for prosecutors about his habitual crack use and their failed efforts to help him get clean. One woman, who met Hunter Biden in 2017 at a strip club where she worked, described him smoking crack every 20 minutes or so while she stayed with him at a hotel.

Jurors have also heard him describe at length his descent into addiction through audio excerpts played in court of his 2021 memoir, "Beautiful Things." The book, written after he got sober, covers the period he had the gun but doesn't mention it specifically.

A key witness for prosecutors was Beau's widow, Hallie, who had a brief,

troubled relationship with Hunter after his brother's death. She found the unloaded gun in Hunter's truck on Oct. 23, 2018, panicked and tossed it into a garbage can at a grocery store in Wilmington, where a man seeking recyclables inadvertently fished it out of the trash.

The prosecutor pointed to text messages he said show Hunter trying to make drug deals in the days around the gun purchase. In one message, Hunter told Hallie he was smoking crack. "That's my truth," Hunter wrote.

"Take the defendant's word for it. That's his truth," Wise said. He urged jurors to reject the defense's suggestion that Hunter did not really mean what he was texting at the time and was simply trying to avoid being with Hallie.

"You don't leave your common sense behind when you come into that jury box," Wise said.

The defense told jurors that there was no actual witness to drug use by Hunter during the 11 days that he had the gun. Lowell also sought to discredit testimony from Hallie and another ex-girlfriend. He told jurors to consider their testimony "with great care and caution," noting that they were given immunity agreements in exchange for taking the witness stand for prosecutors.

Seven leaders conference. Last summer, it looked as if Hunter Biden would avoid prosecution in the gun case altogether, but a deal with prosecutors imploded after the judge, who was nominated to the bench by Trump, raised concerns about it. Hunter Biden also faces a trial scheduled for September on felony charges alleging he failed to pay at least \$1.4 million in taxes over four years.

If convicted in the gun case, he faces up to 25 years in prison, though first-time offenders do not get anywhere near the maximum, and it's unclear whether the judge would give him time behind bars.

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Traditional Children's Event Registration: 4:30-6:30pm; Event: 7pm
Food Court 5-10pm
Bingo @the fire Station 5-9:30pm
Carnival Rides 6-10pm
Adult Beverage Tent 6-11:30pm
Entertainment Tent
Intro of Prince/Princess 5:30pm
Razz 'n Jazz Dance Studio 6:30-7:30pm
Sunny Taylor 8-11pm

Friday, 14th
Lions Club Ice Cream 4:30-11pm
Fish/Tenderloin Dinner 5-8pm
By Dan's Fish; Heritage Boys Soccer Team
Food Court 5-11pm
Carnival Rides 5-9:30pm
Bingo @the Fire Station 6-11pm
Adult Beverage Tent 6-12am
Crowning of Prince & Princess 6:30pm
Demolition Derby 7:30pm
Adult Beverage Tent in Derby Area
Entertainment Tent
Dan Heath & The Iconics 5:30-7:30pm
Janice Anne & Power Train Band 8-12am

Saturday, 15th
Volleyball Tournament 8am
Parade 11am-12pm
Lions Club Ice Cream 11am-10pm
Food Court 12-11pm
Carnival Rides 12:5pm
Bingo @the Fire Station 12-9pm
Kiddie Tractor Pull Registration: 12:30-1:50pm; Event: 2pm
Sensory Fair 2-4pm
BBQ Chicken Dinner 5-8pm
Hoagland Chamber of Commerce
Adult Beverage Tent 5pm-12am
Carnival Rides 6-11pm
Demolition Derby 7:30pm
Adult Beverage Tent in Derby Area
Entertainment Tent
Promise Praise Band 6:30-7:30pm
Turn on 2nd Dance Studio 4-5pm
Tyson Schulte 5:30-7:30pm
OK Boomer Band 8-12am
HAAA Ranger Raffle 10pm
Fireworks 10:15pm

NO CARRY-IN ALCOHOL ALLOWED
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