

The News - Banner

www.News-Banner.com

FRIDAY, AUGUST 2, 2024

BLUFFTON, INDIANA • Wells County's Hometown Connection

\$1.00

APC recommends Almco zoning request

By JONATHAN SNYDER
Almco Steel's rezoning request from agricultural-residential to heavy-industrial land north of Lancaster, Union and Baldwin streets was given a seven to three do-pass recommendation by the Wells County Area Plan Commission Thursday.

The original petition was heard at the APC's June 13 meeting, which was continued after significant public backlash. Almco's Jim Almdale and Gary Aschliman

have since reworked their petition, creating a 100-foot setback that will be kept as agricultural-residential on the south, west and east boundaries of the property. Almdale stated that the setback will involve planting trees and shrubs to create a natural buffer.

The change reduces the rezoned area from 38.82 acres to approximately 34 acres. Almco requested to rezone the area to accommodate its expansion.

Susan Grove of Lancaster

Street presented another petition to deny the rezoning to the APC, stating that 94 additional signatures were added to the over 190 signatures the first petition had. Grove questioned the lack of a development plan for Almco's expansion and expressed concerns about the increase in semi-truck traffic, the location of Almco's planned expansion, and the preservation of property values.

Kent Thompson, who owns property north of the rezoned area,

seconded Grove's comments. Thompson referenced a Boys and Girls Club location near Almco's site, noting that the increased truck traffic would pose a safety concern. Thompson also believed that Almco does not need the entire 34 acres of land, stating that Almco currently sits on seven or eight acres.

"All they did was put a buffer around and call that agriculture, which it will never be agriculture," Thompson said.

Ron Nelson of West Lancaster Street, Carolyn Ritchey of Baldwin, Ron and Arlene Whetler of Wabash street, and Bruce Miller all either had questions or spoke in opposition to the plan. Ritchey echoed the safety sentiments, citing multiple instances where her internet cables have been ripped out by semi-trucks passing through.

Miller's questions concerned the buffer on the north side of

(Continued on Page 2)

Bluffton man facing rape and strangulation charges requests speedy trial

By SYDNEY KENT
A man charged with raping a woman outside of a Bluffton gas station on Mother's Day has requested a speedy trial.

Joshua Gabehart, 32, Bluffton, was charged with rape, a Level 1 felony, and strangulation, a Level 6 felony.

According to a probable cause affidavit, a woman reported that she was strangled and raped at the Shell Gas Station, located at 1303 South Main St., shortly before 10 p.m. on May 12.

The woman reported that she rode her bike to the gas station where a heavily tattooed man wearing basketball shorts asked her for a cigarette. During a brief conversation, the man reportedly told the woman his name was "Tattoo Josh."

The woman then reported that Gabehart grabbed her by her hair and told her to follow him or he would "make her." Gabehart allegedly strangled and raped the woman against a brick wall on the outside of the

building. She was able to escape and call for help around 9:50 p.m.

The victim, who had no prior connection to Gabehart, identified him after looking through six photos of suspects.

Approximately three hours after the rape was reported, officers with the Bluffton Police Department located Gabehart at his residence, a local motel. Cocaine and additional drugs were allegedly in plain sight, prompting officers to apply for a search warrant of the room. The warrant was granted. Additional charges for possession of cocaine, a Level 6 felony, and possession of marijuana, a Class B misdemeanor were filed.

Gabehart's defense, Robert Thonert, filed a motion requesting that the charges for rape and strangulation be tried separately from the charges he acquired during his arrest.

(Continued on Page 2)

Things to know about the largest U.S.-Russia prisoner swap in post-Soviet history

By ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press
WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. and Russia on Thursday completed their largest prisoner swap in post-Soviet history, a deal involving 24 people, many months of negotiations and concessions from other European countries who released Russians in their custody as part of the exchange.

Here are some things to know:
Who was freed
The 24 people — some prominent, some not — included a collection of journalists and political dissidents, suspected spies, a computer hacker and a fraudster. Even a man convicted of murder.

Russia released 16 people, including Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich and Paul Whelan, a corporate security executive from Michigan. Both were facing long prison sentences after being convicted in Russia's heavily politicized legal system of espionage charges that the U.S. government called baseless.

Also freed by Moscow was Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty journalist Alsu Kurmasheva, a dual U.S.-Russian citizen convicted in July of spreading false information about the Russian military — accusations her family and employer have rejected — and Vladimir Kara-Murza, a Kremlin critic and Pulitzer Prize-winning writer serving 25 years on charges of treason widely seen as politically motivated.

The most infamous of the eight people Russia got back is Vadim Krasikov, who was convicted in Germany in 2021 of killing a former Chechen rebel in a Berlin park two years earlier, apparently on the orders of

Moscow's security services. It also received two alleged "sleeper" agents who were jailed in Slovenia, three men charged by federal authorities in the U.S. and two men returned from Norway and Poland.

A breakthrough in US-Russia relations?
That's unlikely.

The U.S. and Russia have reached several prior prisoner swaps during the course of Russia's war with Ukraine, including a December 2022 trade in which Moscow freed WNBA star Brittney Griner in exchange for notorious arms trafficker Viktor Bout.

But none of those exchanges resulted in a meaningful warming of relations, particularly at a time when Russian President Vladimir Putin has refused to halt his aggression against Ukraine and as Washington continues to send significant military support to Kyiv.

Prisoner exchanges have been a rare source of compromise and an alignment of mutually agreeable interests rather than a reflection of anything broader. Even so, the fact that the countries were able to get the deal done at a time of open hostility is notable.

The Americans left behind
Though Thursday's deal involves the most well-known of the Americans held in Russia, including two who have been formally designated as wrongfully detained, there are still several others who remain.

That group includes Travis Leake, a musician convicted on drug charges and sentenced to prison; Gordon Black, an

(Continued on Page 2)



Let the Games Begin

Celebrate another successful Wells County 4-H season with the 4-H Scrapbook, inserted in today's News-Banner. Pictured are snapshots from this year's fair — above, Destiny Mason proudly takes care of one of the horses. Maleah and Shaylee Baumgartner pet one of the sheep at left. (Photos by Jonathan Snyder)

Hezbollah leader: War with Israel enters 'new phase' after killings of top militant figures

By ABBY SEWELL and KAREEM CHEHAYEB
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Hezbollah's leader warned Thursday that the conflict with Israel has entered a "new phase," as he addressed mourners at the funeral of a commander from the group who was killed by an Israeli airstrike this week in Beirut.

Meanwhile in Tehran, Iran's supreme leader prayed over the body of Hamas' political leader, who was killed in a presumed Israeli assassination.

The back-to-back killings have increased fears of an escalation into a wider war, leaving the region waiting to see how Iran and ally Hezbollah will respond. Iran has vowed retaliation against Israel for the strike that killed Hamas' Ismail Haniyeh on Wednesday in the Iranian capital of Tehran.

Israel has not claimed responsibility for

Haniyeh's assassination, but comments by Israeli military spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari stopped short of an outright denial.

"There was no additional airstrike, not a missile and not an Israeli drone, in the entire Middle East that night," he said Thursday, fueling speculation that Israel could have used other means to kill Haniyeh.

Israel did confirm it carried out the strike Tuesday in Beirut that killed Hezbollah commander Fouad Shukur, along with an Iranian military adviser and at least five civilians. Israel said Shukur was behind a rocket attack days earlier that hit a soccer field in the Israeli-held Golan Heights, killing 12 children. Hezbollah denied being behind that strike, a denial that Nasrallah reiterated.

In a speech via video link to mourners gathered with Shukur's coffin at an auditorium in a Beirut suburb, Hezbollah leader

(Continued on Page 2)

Inside

Local/Area
Obituaries 3
Pedal pull winners . . 3

Opinion
Tom Purcell 4

Also...
Sports 6-7
Classifieds 7
Diversions 5

Outside

Toss a coin, that's our chance of showers today

Today	Saturday	Sunday
High 80	High 84	High 84
Low 68	Low 63	Low 66

More Weather on Page 2

Online

Follow us on Facebook!
Go to www.facebook.com/newsbanner

Place Your Classified Ads 24/7

Vol. 95 No. 232

FRIDAY
August 2, 2024

We Specialize in TOTAL CAR CARE
with FULL SERVICE & TRANSMISSION EXPERTS

2883 E.S.R. 124 • Bluffton | 104 Belmont Rd. • Decatur
260-824-4929 • 260-724-2434 • www.experttrans.com

How to contact us:
Call us: 824-0224
or 1-800-579-7476
email@news-banner.com

On the Web:
www.news-banner.com

Follow us at:
twitter.com/newsbanner

APC recommends request

(Continued from Page 1)

the rezoned land and Nelson asked if the semi-truck entryway for the new facility would be directly in front of his house, stating that he once counted 87 trucks going west in front of his house in a six-hour time frame.

“No one’s opposed to them expanding because we want businesses to grow,” Whetler said. “But when you’re impeding on residential areas where people have bought their homes and invested years into these homes ... it’s going to ruin those property values.”

Potential pollutants were also a concern for Arlene Whetler. Both noise and chemical waste are possible with Almco’s expansion according to her. Ron Whetler also shared his concern that the 100-foot barrier is not enough space to disperse the potential noise.

In response to the questions, the APC clarified that they do not require a development plan at this portion of the process. APC Executive Director Mike Lautzenheiser stated that if the property were to sell tomorrow, the needs would change and the development plan would change. Tacking on an approved development plan to the rezoning petition

— a portion that normally comes in a further meeting — could cause significant issues with developers down the road, according to Lautzenheiser.

Almdale resented the noise claims, stating that very few people would actually measure how loud their facilities are during day-to-day operations. Almdale also stated that those 34 acres would all be developed in one way or another and that shrinking that area was not feasible for their goals.

The board and Almdale also understood the public’s traffic concerns, but Almdale said that many different businesses use those roads, not just his company. APC member Chandler Gerber stated that most truck drivers use GPS navigation, which does not account for signage against truck traffic.

“GPS is very difficult to monitor,” Gerber said, referencing Bluffton Deputy Chief Andrew Ellis. “There is almost no practical way that we can prohibit this. We can stop semi after semi, but there are truckers from out of state dropping a delivery off, they’re following their maps, and they don’t know how to use Bluffton. This is where it says to go and so it directs them onto these streets.”

Property value discussions were addressed by APC member Geoff Lance, who acknowledged the need to pay reasonable regard to them. In response, Lance stated that job protection and creation are an important part of increasing the value of the city and the new jobs that Almco could create with their expansion would help matters.

“I don’t think that there’s anything that will lower property values in this city, county and municipality faster than losing 1,000 jobs,” Lance said. “And I’m not saying that’s what’s on the table here, but nothing will lower housing values faster than that.”

The APC also cited the Wells County Vision 2025 and 2035 plans, which both identify the area as ideal for industrial uses. Gerber clarified that balancing the rights of both the residents and Almco is a delicate act. Gerber called the situation “sticky” but noted that the issues with road traffic, utility and sidewalk deficiencies would need to be addressed later.

“Almco has been here in Bluffton for 80 years,” Gerber said. “They’ve been good for Bluffton, they employ 100 people right now. It’s not that anybody is a huge Almco cheerleader,

but at the same time in balancing this we can’t just rule against them either.”

APC Members Tyson Brooks, Melissa Woodworth and Tim Rohr voted against the rezoning plan, with Brooks leading the charge. Brooks stated that putting heavy industrial properties near residential areas is like “cramming a square peg in a round hole.” Woodworth additionally shared Gerber’s thoughts on balancing the respect of both sides, while sympathizing with the residential owners.

“If we can put a football field space in between there and they could buffer it, I would change my opinion,” Brooks said. “A reasonable buffer is not 100 feet for heavy industrial zoning. I’ve lost that fight personally and now I have a lot of noisy neighbors behind my house.”

The issue is now directed to the Bluffton Common Council’s meeting on Aug. 20. The council has the final say in whether the project is approved for development or not.

The Thursday APC meeting lasted nearly four hours and also covered a continued petition from Meyer Renovation. Further coverage will be in Saturday’s News-Banner.

jonathan@news-banner.com

Weather

Friday, August 2, 2024

(24-hour observations at 10:05 p.m. Thursday)
High: 84; **Low:** 69; **Precipitation:** None
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.16 feet at 8:45 p.m. Thursday

Wells County forecast

Friday: A 50% chance of showers and thunderstorms, mainly after 7 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 80. Southwest wind around 5 mph becoming northwest in the afternoon.

Friday Night: A 40% chance of showers and thunderstorms, mainly before 2 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 68. Northwest wind around 5 mph.

Saturday: A 20% chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly sunny, with a high near 84. North wind around 5 mph.

Saturday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 63. North wind around 5 mph becoming calm in the evening.

Sunday: Sunny, with a high near 84.

Sunday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 66.

Monday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 82.

Monday Night: A 20% chance of showers and thunderstorms after 2 a.m. Partly cloudy, with a low around 65.

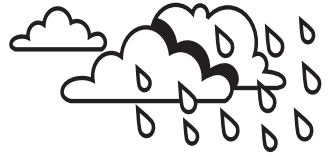
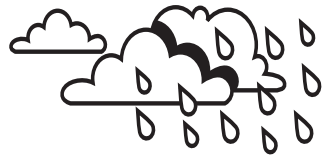
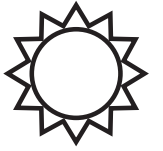
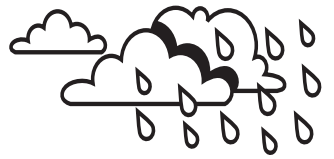
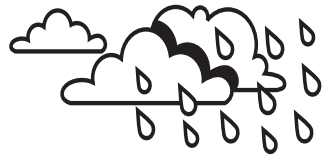
Tuesday: A 30% chance of showers and thunderstorms, mainly between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. Mostly sunny, with a high near 81.

Tuesday Night: A 20% chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly cloudy, with a low around 62.

Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 78.

Wednesday Night: A slight chance of showers. Partly cloudy, with a low around 61.

Thursday: A slight chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly sunny, with a high near 79.



Speedy trial request

(Continued from Page 1)

The request was denied. Thonert also filed a “Notice of Alibi” on June 20, which did not contain any information. The state responded to the notice with a motion to strike the alibi altogether.

“The defendant’s Notice of Alibi fails to comply (with Indiana Code),”

Prosecutor Colin Andrews wrote in the document. “It fails to allege that the defendant was anywhere at any time.”

Gabehart requested a fast and speedy trial. This means a trial must commence within 70 days from the date the information was filed, or from the date the defendant appears

before an officer of the court in which the charge is pending — whichever is later. No trial date is set as of the time of publication.

Gabehart is currently incarcerated at the Wells County Jail. The News-Banner will continue to follow this case for updates.

sydney@news-banner.com

U.S.-Russia prisoner swap

(Continued from Page 1)

American soldier convicted of stealing and making threats of murder; Marc Fogel, a teacher also sentenced on drug charges; and Ksenia Khavana, who was arrested in Yekaterinburg in February on treason charges, accused of collecting money for Ukraine’s military.

Khavana had returned to Russia to visit family. The owner of the spa in California where Khavana had been working previously told The Associated Press that Khavana actually was collecting funds for humanitarian aid.

In a statement after the deal was announced, Fogel’s family said it was “inconceivable” that he had not been included and urged the Biden administration to prioritize his release.

A senior administration official, who briefed reporters before the swap on condition of anonymity under ground rules set by the White House, said the administration would be redoubling its efforts to get remaining Americans home.

The imbalance in participants

In prisoner exchanges over the past few years, the U.S. government has released criminals convicted

of significant crimes, including drug and weapons traffickers and a Taliban drug lord.

The latest deal was no exception, with the U.S. and Western allies agreeing to hand back to Russia criminals regarded as properly charged and convicted.

The most notable example of that, by far, was Vadim Krasikov, who was convicted in the Aug. 23, 2019, killing of Zelimkhan “Tornike” Khangoshvili, a 40-year-old Georgian citizen who had fought Russian troops in Chechnya and later claimed asylum in Germany.

At Krasikov’s sentencing to life in prison in 2021, German judges said he had acted on the orders of Russian authorities, who gave him a false identity, passport and the resources to carry out the killing.

Throughout the course of negotiations, Russia remained adamant about getting Krasikov back, making it clear that he topped the wish list. Putin hinted earlier this year that he was interested in such a trade to free a “patriot” held in Germany.

By contrast, the Americans and Europeans released by Russia include people who were either designated

by the U.S. as wrongfully detained — like Gershkovich and Whelan — or generally regarded as held on baseless charges.

“Deals like this one come with tough calls,” Biden said but added: “There’s nothing that matters more to me than protecting Americans at home and abroad.”

It could have included Navalny

Central to the deal was a man who never got to be part of it: Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny.

At the time of his death in February, officials were discussing a possible exchange involving him and Krasikov as a way to satisfy Russia’s relentless demand for Krasikov and unlock the imprisoned Americans.

Administration officials described the sudden and unexplained death of Navalny as a setback to that effort, but drew up a new plan to present to German Chancellor Olaf Scholz.

In the end, several associates of Navalny were released.

The politics of it all

Biden had foreshadowed his commitment to a deal last week, when he said in an Oval Office address announcing his plan to

abandon his reelection bid: “We’re also working around the clock to bring home Americans being unjustly detained all around the world.”

On Thursday, he basked in the success of a diplomatic feat executed in the final months of his administration as he welcomed the families of the returning Americans to the White House. In an apparent jab at the “America First” mantra of Donald Trump, the former president and current Republican nominee, Biden said: “Today is a powerful example of why it’s vital to have friends in this world.”

Trump, who during his presidency had also taken an interest in hostages and wrongfully detained Americans, claimed during the June debate with Biden that he would get Gershkovich out as soon as he won the election.

On Thursday, he bashed the deal, suggesting incorrectly on his Truth Social platform that the U.S. had given Russia cash for the deal.

“Are we releasing murderers, killers, or thugs? Just curious because we never make good deals, at anything, but especially hostage swaps,” Trump wrote.

War with Israel

(Continued from Page 1)

Hassan Nasrallah said, “We ... have entered a new phase that is different from the previous period.”

“Do they expect that Hajj Ismail Haniyeh will be killed in Iran and Iran will remain silent?” he said of the Israelis. Addressing Israelis who celebrated the two killings, he said, “Laugh a bit and you will cry a lot.”

But as he often does, Nasrallah kept his comments vague, vowing a “very well-studied retaliation” without saying what form it would take. He said only that Israel “will have to wait for the anger of the region’s honorable people.”

“The enemy and the one who is behind the enemy” — an apparent reference to Israel’s chief ally, the United States — “will have to wait for our coming response,” he said.

International officials have been scrambling to avert a cycle of retaliation before it spirals into a greater war. Since the Gaza war began in October, Hezbollah and Israel have traded fire almost daily across the border in exchanges that have caused deaths and the evacuation of tens of thousands from their homes. But they have also stayed within limits.

Several times, strikes that appeared to cross red lines raised fears of an

acceleration into full-fledged war, but outside diplomacy reined in the two sides. Hezbollah faces strong pressure not to draw Lebanon into a repeat of the militant group’s 2006 war with Israel, which wreaked heavy death and destruction in the country.

Israel and Iran risked plunging into war earlier this year when Israel hit Iran’s embassy in Damascus in April. Iran retaliated, and Israel countered in an unprecedented exchange of strikes on each other’s soil, but international efforts succeeded in containing that cycle before it spun out of control.

In Beirut’s southern suburbs, the biggest Shiite district in the capital, hundreds of black-clad mourners packed the auditorium, many of them holding Hezbollah flags or photos of Shukur. An escort of red-capped fighters carried Shukur’s coffin, also draped in a Hezbollah flag, down the aisle to the backing of a military band.

In his speech, Nasrallah praised Shukur as a veteran commander and denied that Hezbollah carried out the deadly strike on the soccer field in the mainly Druze town of Majdal Shams in the Golan.

“We have the courage to take responsibility for where we strike,

even if it’s a mistake. If we made a mistake, we would admit and apologize,” he said, adding, “The enemy made itself the judge, jury, and executioner without any evidence.”

An unusual relative calm prevailed Thursday on the Lebanon-Israel border. Hezbollah claimed no rocket launches into Israel during the day. The Lebanese state news agency said a strike hit the house of a Syrian family in a southern Lebanese town, killing at least four people and wounding several others. Afterward, Hezbollah announced it had launched a barrage of rockets into Israel in retaliation.

Nasrallah said Hezbollah’s fighters would return to regular military operations Friday, ending the period of mourning for Shukur, but that the renewed strikes would be unrelated to the retaliation for his killing.

Earlier Thursday in Tehran, Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei prayed over Haniyeh’s coffin in a ceremony at Tehran University, with the new president, Masoud Pezeshkian, next to him. State television later showed the coffin placed in a truck and moved on the street toward Azadi Square in Tehran and people throwing flowers at it.



Perfect Pet

Food, Accessories,
Training, and Grooming

HOURS: Mon.-Fri. 9-6 • Sat. 9-5 • Sun. 11-2

Emily Striker & Amanda Clark Owners

Curb Side Service Available

Call in Your Order for Convenience

618 N. Main St., Bluffton (beside Taco Bell) • **260-846-0276**

www.PerfectPetBluffton.com

Finest Wine In Wells County!



HOURS

Thursday - Friday 3:00 - 8:00pm

Saturday 12:00 - 8:00pm

(765) 727-1027

www.dash90wines.com

zane@dash90wines.com

6750 W 900 S-90 Warren, IN 46792

Upcoming Events

August 17 - JB's Cuisine Machine w/
live music from Bob Thompson

August 31 - Live music from the
Trevor Hunt Band

ONLINE ONLY REAL ESTATE

AUCTION

OLD CREEK SUBDIVISION

ONLINE BIDDING ON THURSDAY, AUG. 8TH FROM 9:00AM - 6:00PM

PROPERTY LOCATION: 1420 BROOKHAVEN CT, BLUFFTON, IN 46714



RENOVATION OPPORTUNITY

- 2 POSSIBLY 3 BEDROOMS / 2 BATHS
- 1,920 SF ON LARGE LOT
- OVERSIZED 4 CAR ATTACHED GARAGE - 60'x 23'
- CLOSE TO BLUFFTON SCHOOLS

VISIT STEFFENGRP.COM/AUCTIONS FOR MORE INFORMATION

SALE MANAGERS: BRANDON STEFFEN (260.710.5684)
ROD FETTERS (260.557.8451)

SELLER: THE ESTATE OF RICHARD W. STULTZ

INSPECTION DATE: TUESDAY, JULY 30TH (5:00PM - 6:00PM)
TUESDAY, AUGUST 6TH (5:00PM - 6:00PM)



260.426.3006
STEFFENGRP.COM
AU19600168 - AC30500053

Follow us on Twitter at...twitter.com/newsbanner

OBITUARIES

Dault Dean Wilkerson, 67

Dault Dean Wilkerson, 67, of rural Warren, joined his family and friends in heaven on Tuesday, July 30, 2024, at Stillwater Hospice in Fort Wayne. He was born on Thursday, August 9, 1956, in Huntington. He will be sadly missed by his brothers, Randy (Lana) Wilkerson, Montpelier and Taryl Wilkerson, Warren; sisters, Zedra Miller, Frisco City, Ala., and Dalaine (Ronald) Warner, Markle; nieces and nephews and several great-nieces and great-nephews; and lifelong friends. He was preceded in death by his father, Robert E. Wilkerson; mother, Mary L. (Rochelle) Wilkerson; brother-in-law, Dennis Miller; and nephew, Joseph Robert Wilkerson.

Family and friends may gather to share and remember at Walker & Glancy Funeral Home located at 109 W Windsor St, Montpelier, on Wednesday, Aug. 7, 2024, from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, Aug. 8, 2024. A service to celebrate his life will be at Walker & Glancy Funeral Home at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, Aug. 8, 2024, with Pastor Steven Lakie officiating. Interment will be at the Gardens of Memory at a later date. Arrangements are being handled by Walker & Glancy Funeral Home in Montpelier. Online condolences may be made at www.glancyfuneralhomes.com

Optimist Club Pedal Pull

The Bluffton Optimist Club held its annual Kids Pedal Tractor Pull at the Wells County 4-H Fair. A total of 44 youth participated in the event and were presented with awards. The next kids pedal will be at the Bluffton Street Fair on Saturday morning, September 21 in front of the Wells County Public Library. Participants can weigh no more than 60lbs. The Bluff-

ton Optimist Club is a service club for women and men in the community. The group meets each Wednesday 11:30 am for lunch and a program (community speaker) at the Hoosier House Restaurant at the south edge of Bluffton. Guests are welcome to attend. For more information about Optimist Club and the programs they support and sponsor, contact Steve Higgins, 260-273-2711.

Local attorney Kristin Steckbeck receives certification from NELF

The law firm of Dale Huffman & Babcock is pleased to announce that firm partner Kristin L. Steckbeck has been certified as an elder law attorney by the National Elder Law Foundation as accredited by the American Bar Association. To become a certified elder law attorney, one must have worked many years in the discipline and pass a rigorous examination to prove their knowledge of tax, public benefits, trusts and estates and other disciplines comprising elder law. CELAs are required to update their skills and knowledge throughout their careers and are subject to peer review. Steckbeck has focused her practice on estate planning, guardianships, long-term care planning, and special needs planning, as well as probate, estate, and trust administration, since 2007. Steckbeck received her undergraduate degree Magna Cum Laude from the University of Notre Dame in 2004, and graduated Cum Laude from the Indiana University Maurer School of Law in 2007. Steckbeck is certified as a specialist by the Indiana State Bar Association's Trust & Estate Specialty Board since 2017, and she also serves as a current member of the TESB Board of Directors. She is also a member of

the Special Needs Alliance, a nationwide, invitation-only network of experienced special needs planners. Steckbeck served as the President of the Board of Directors of the Allen County Bar Association from 2017-2018. She remains an active member of the Allen County Bar Association, presently serving as the chairperson of the Probate Section. She is also a member of the Wells County Bar Association, Indiana State Bar Association, National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys and the Bluffton, Indiana Rotary Club. Steckbeck is also a current member of the Board of Directors of Indiana Legal Services (a statewide nonprofit organization offering free legal services to those in need), and serves as an active volunteer for the Volunteer Lawyer Program of Northeast Indiana. She also serves as a member of the Board of Directors of Plymouth Congregational Church in Fort Wayne, Indiana and as a volunteer wildlife rehabber for Soarin' Hawk Raptor Rescue in Hometown, Indiana. The Law Firm of Dale Huffman & Babcock is located at 30 Premier Ave Bluffton, Indiana 46714 with an additional office in Fort Wayne, IN. For more information or to schedule a consultation, call 260-824-5566 or visit www.dhblaw.com.

Mysterious "Protect Patients Indiana" group drops \$50K on vague health ads

By CASEY SMITH
Indiana Capital Chronicle
A vague television commercial streaming across Hoosiers' screens during the airing of the Olympic Games seems to call for increased patient protections and less government regulation over health care. But details about "Protect Patients Indiana" are scarce, and the mysterious group — which has so far funneled more than \$54,000 in ads — appears to be based out of state, in Ohio. The 30-second ad features generic clips of doctors and patients inside hospitals. An off-camera narrator says Protect Patients Indiana "is committed to safeguarding our health care" by "reducing red tape, supporting local hospitals and their staff" and "ensuring access for all Hoosiers."

Chronicle's requests for comment. Tim Phelps, vice president of Hathaway Strategies in Indianapolis, is listed as a contact for Protect Patients Indiana on the WXIN form. He is also listed as chairman of the group. Reached via email Phelps didn't provide additional details and only said in a statement that "Protect Patients Indiana is an organization that advocates for minimal government intervention, trust in healthcare providers and access to a range of healthcare options in every Indiana community."

for increased government regulation in health care; the "vital role" of community hospitals that provide essential services and preventive to low-income patients; and advocacy for "for policies prioritizing patient-provider relationships, fostering trust in healthcare institutions, and minimizing government interference in medical decisions." Both the Indiana Hospital Association and Hoosiers for Affordable Healthcare said they are not affiliated with the effort. Website users are asked to sign an inconspicuous online petition to "secure the future of community healthcare in Indiana." The form asks for a name, email, zip code and phone number. No agents or contacts are mentioned anywhere on the advertisement or website. An inquiry into the website's domain shows it was additionally registered anonymously.

A "join us" callout at the end of the video points viewers to a website under the same name. Absent from the ad and website, however, is any information about Protect Patients Indiana, its financial supporters, or any other details about the group. Though it's not made clear in the campaign materials, the ad appears to be the work of Protect Patients Indiana, a limited liability company registered in Ohio in June. It's one of 83 LLCs or nonprofits created since 2023 by Cincinnati-based Langdon Law, according to Ohio's Secretary of State. The firm is run by David Langdon, described as a behind-the-scenes conservative lawyer, who over the last decade has quietly helped nonprofits and super-PACs pour millions of dollars into elections. Langdon did not return the Indiana Capital Chronicle's request for comment.

The wording mirrors the group's website, which says its mission is to "advocate for minimal government intervention, trust in healthcare providers, and support for community hospitals." That includes "safeguard(ing)" local health care services, addressing "workforce challenges," and promoting policies that "protect and enhance access to care for all individuals across the state." A video of the TV ad is the first to pop up when visiting the website: "When your life's on the line, you shouldn't have to worry if the local hospital is open, if there's enough staff, or if government regulations will affect your care," the narrator said in the video. "Four in 10 Hoosiers will need hospitalization this year. That's why Protect Patients Indiana is committed to safeguarding our health care; by reducing red tape, supporting local hospitals and their staff, ensuring access for all Hoosiers. Prioritizing health in every community, Join us."

What is Langdon Law? Currently, 72 of the LLCs or nonprofits created by Langdon are active, per Ohio records. Most were registered in 2023. Protect Patients Indiana, along with the Nevada

Few details exist about Protect Patients Indiana. Federal Communications Commission records indicate that Protect Patients Indiana purchased 39 ad spots to air between July 15 and Aug. 25 on WTHR, the Indianapolis NBC-affiliate. Another 23 ad spots were purchased to air between July 15 and Aug. 31 on Indianapolis WXIN's FOX 59. The commercials are scheduled to run during local news hours, as well as throughout primetime evening shows like NBC Nightly News, Wheel of Fortune, Jeopardy and coverage of the 2024 Olympic Games. FCC records show the ads were purchased in early July by Denver-based M2 Placements LLC. Representatives from the group did not respond to the Capital

The hospitalization statistic is more than four times the state's current hospitalization rate. According to the American Hospital Directory, there were roughly 653,000 hospital patient discharges in 2022, equal to about one in 10 Hoosiers. An "issues" page on the website further highlights "staff shortages and workforce concerns" in Indiana's health care system; concerns over rural hospital closures; Hoosiers' "minimal appetite"

What is Langdon Law? Currently, 72 of the LLCs or nonprofits created by Langdon are active, per Ohio records. Most were registered in 2023. Protect Patients Indiana, along with the Nevada

Youth under 30 lbs.

Pictured, left to right, is Tate Prible, Annie Frauhiger, Emma Oswalt, Henry Baker, Ryker Ehrman and Evan Klefeker with Grandfather Mark Grimm in back. (Photos provided)



Youth 31-40 lbs.

Pictured, left to right, is Ruby Frauhiger, Kenzie Morgan, Kayden Roberts, Hudson Klefeker, first place; Rodney Frauhiger, second place; Colt Roop, third place; Daisy Frauhiger, Ruby Johnson and Raylee Ehrman. Not pictured is Easton Jack and Hudson Fiechter.



Youth 41-50 lbs.

Pictured, left to right, is Carter Johnloz, James Caster, Roxy Frauhiger, Ivy Frauhiger, William Frauhiger, first place; Kreigh Reinhard, second place; Artie Benefiel, third place; Tate Pfister, Sophie Morgan, Owen Oswalt and Halle Fiechter.



Youth 51 - 60 lbs.

Pictured, left to right, is Layla Klefeker, Evie Bales, Delcie Roop, Raven Baker, (behind); Luna Benefiel, Beau Slusher, Cohen Reinhard, first place; Brayden Slusher, second place; Brody Morgan, Joshua Frauhiger, third place; Abram Oswalt, Mack Pfister and Shepherd Dubbeld. Not pictured is Royal Frauhiger.

Tim Atkins speaking at St. Luke Aug. 4

Sunday, Aug. 4, is Sunday School Promotion Sunday at St. Luke Church. Tim Atkins will be the guest speaker for the 9 a.m. service. Tim and his wife Patty have been in the Bluffton community for many years and have served in a variety of capacities. St. Luke Church is located just seven miles east of Bluffton on Dustman Rd. The public welcome to attend.

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.

The
HIDEAWAY
BEER & BOURBON
THURSDAY - Dollar Off Drinks (Excludes Pop)
WEDNESDAY - KARAOKE
FRI. & SAT. - Live Music
Follow us on for our Events.
123 S JOHNSON ST. • 824-0455

Friday & Saturday Bands
Friday Night Aug. 2nd
8-12 pm - Bad Moon!
Saturday Night Aug. 3rd
8-12 pm - Mt. Dewe Boys!
Weekly Drink Specials and Events!
Sundays Biscuits & Gravy
9am - until GONE!

Here's the deal. You switch. You save.

Erin Daugherty, Agent
1085 N Main Street Suite B
Bluffton, IN 46714
Bus: 260-827-0527
erin@myblufftonsfagent.com

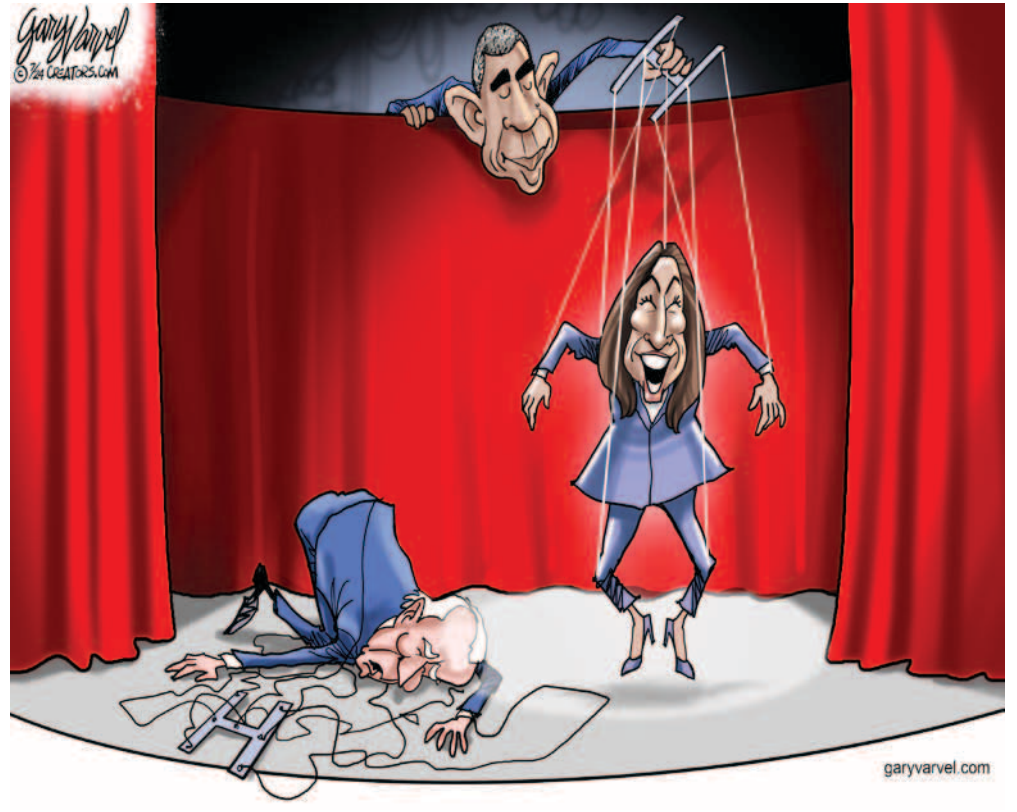
The right insurance at the right price is available now. On average, you'll save \$597*! All you need to do is make the switch. It's easy. Just call me today.

Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.™

State Farm

*Average annual per household savings based on a 2021 national survey by State Farm™ of new policyholders who reported savings by switching to State Farm.
State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company
State Farm Indemnity Company
Bloomington, IL
State Farm County Mutual Insurance Company
Richardson, TX
2001310

The 2024 Election Cometh, Vol. 3 - a look through cartoonists' eyes...



Forgetting our Olympic woes

Bowling didn't make the cut again. Neither will baseball and softball, ballroom dancing, pole dancing and a host of other sports be featured in the 2024 Summer Olympics games in Paris.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is picky about the sports it chooses.

A sport must be widely practiced globally, draw a high level of interest among the media and public and also not pose too many cost and scheduling obstacles, such as the need to build large baseball stadiums.

But in a perfect world, wouldn't it be great if the Olympics emphasized the world's most entertaining sports — events that would help us take our minds off our woes? Golf, which has been included since the 2016 Olympics, certainly accomplishes that.

Millions can relate to Olympics golfers who, after missing a putt, fight the urge to toss their clubs into the lake.

And show me another sport in which the athlete pays another guy to carry his bag, which includes an ice chest to keep his beer cold?

Skateboarding has been an Olympic sport since the 2021 Olympics, which is pretty dang cool.

However, the IOC should include agitated middle-aged "Karens" and "Kens," who tell the skateboarders they're not permitted to skate there and that the police are on their way.

It's not fair that bowling was left out.

Bowlers have greater stamina than most Olympians. Only a real pro can drink three pitchers of Pabst Blue Ribbon and still win a gold medal.

Besides, it's much easier for viewers to keep track of their favorite competitor, as each bowler displays a name tag on his front-shirt pocket — right under the "Bob's Heating and Cooling" logo.

I think it's a tremendous IOC oversight that ballroom dancing failed to make the cut.

Not only does ballroom dancing require the finesse of American legends Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire, but it's rife with risks you won't find in other sports.

You'll never see an Olympic sprinter blow out a knee after tripping on a buffet table.

That brings us to pole dancing.

Advocates argue that pole dancing requires superhuman strength, but because this "sport" is better associated with scantily clad ladies who dance in smoky bars for dollar bills, the IOC keeps rejecting it.

Whatever the case, IOC, it's the thick of summer and we need a break from our woes.

In America, a trying presidential election is underway. One guy dropped out under bizarre circumstances and another just survived an assassination attempt under even more bizarre circumstances.

Elsewhere in the world, endless wars are being waged. Intense hatred and conflict are bringing us all down.

We look to the 2024 Olympics for an escape from our woes — not more politics and more woes.

We didn't want to be lectured about inclusion and diversity in a dazzling opening ceremony that featured pagan themes that alienated a couple billion Christians.

No, we want to be unified as we watch dedicated athletes display their skills and enjoy the fruits of their labors.

To borrow from the "Wide World of Sports," we want to see the world's finest athletes enjoy the thrill of victory as they risk the agony of defeat.

Look, IOC, you could really help us escape our troubles by bringing us pole dancing — and by featuring world-class female athletes, who practiced their pole-twisting prowess in some of the world's dingiest pubs.

I'd pay good money (again) to see that.

Tom Purcell is a Pittsburgh Tribune-Review humor columnist. tom@TomPurcell.com.



Tom Purcell

Kamala Harris and the 'flashy thing'

In the film "Men in Black," a pen-like device causes people to forget everything they have seen and heard. Actor Will Smith calls it a "flashy thing."

It appears the media and Democrats are metaphorically using a similar device, hoping voters will forget everything Vice President Kamala Harris has said and done in the past — even the recent past — and accept that what she is saying today are her true beliefs, even when they contradict previous statements and supposed "convictions."

Not that the media need any help in following their largely leftist biases, which have usually favored Democrats and progressives, but their already low approval numbers won't be helped by this story from semafor.com: "(Harris) has invited a parade of prominent television anchors and media executives to dine with her at the Naval Observatory, given personal tours of her garden to journalists from diverse backgrounds, and shaped trips to do media appearances with the outlets serving Democratic-leaning groups the White House refers to as 'coalition media.'"

Coalition media? Sounds Orwellian, as in "group think."

There is so much the media and Harris' fellow Democrats want to forget she said and did that the flashy thing might need to be constantly re-charged.

Just a few of many examples: During the height of the Black Lives Matter movement, Harris promoted a bail fund that freed men convicted of murder and sexual assault. While on bail some committed additional crimes. Sounds like what happened to Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis (D) when Willie Horton, a convicted murderer who had been sentenced to life without parole, received a weekend furlough, traveled to Maryland where he twice raped a woman after pistol-whipping, stabbing, binding, and gagging her fiance. He then stole the car belonging to the man he had assaulted. A TV ad about Horton helped ruin Dukakis' 1988 presidential campaign, helping George H.W. Bush win.

As a senator, Harris supported what a Wall Street Journal editorial called "the spending blowouts that

cause inflation." Flashy thing.

As a typical California progressive from San Francisco, perhaps the most liberal city in America, Harris is apparently all-in on the Green New Deal, expansion of entitlements which are the cause of much of our \$35 trillion debt, student loan forgiveness (which the Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional), tax increases, which President Biden favors as the Trump tax cuts are to expire next year, a guaranteed income for families making up to \$100,000 a year (shades of George McGovern in 1972), free college tuition for families



Cal Thomas

making up to \$100,000 a year (co-sponsored by ultra-progressive. Bernie Sanders, (I-VT.), and Rep. Pramila Jayapal, (D-Wash), single-payer health care, which would mean turning our health care over to government which does so many things poorly, Medicare for all (unaffordable and see previous comment about government). Flashy.

She's also in favor of Biden's proposal to transform the Supreme Court into a permanent liberal body.

Again, as The Wall Street Journal notes: "As California Attorney General (she launched) an investigation into Exxon Mobil over its carbon omissions ... and in 2019 she endorsed a nationwide ban on oil and gas fracking, a position she has now reversed because she needs those Pennsylvania electoral votes. Flashy.

And let's not forget that Harris once compared the KKK to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) which, along with Border Patrol agents, have been impossibly overburdened by the Biden-Harris open border policy. Flashy.

There's much more about her opinions and record, making things more difficult to forget. But the flashy thing, also known as the major media, has the power to make it happen. Will voters make an effort to remember?

tcaeditors@tribpub.com



Today in History

By The Associated Press
Today is Friday, Aug. 2, the 215th day of 2024. There are 151 days left in the year.

Today in history: On August 2, 1921, a jury in Chicago acquitted several former members of the Chicago White Sox baseball team and two others of conspiring to defraud the public in the notorious "Black Sox" scandal (though they would be banned from Major League Baseball for life by Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis).

Also on this date: In 1776, members of the Second Continental Congress began attaching their signatures to the Declaration of Independence.

In 1790, the first United States Census was conducted under the supervision of Thomas Jefferson; a total of 3,929,214 U.S. residents were counted.

In 1873, inventor Andrew S. Hallidie successfully tested a cable car he had designed for the city of San Francisco.

On Aug. 2, 1923, the 29th president of the United States, Warren G. Harding, died in San Francisco; Vice President Calvin Coolidge became president.

In 1934, German President Paul von Hindenburg died, paving the way for Adolf Hitler's complete takeover.

In 1939, Albert Einstein signed a letter to President Franklin D. Roosevelt urging creation of an atomic weapons research program.

The News-Banner
(USPS 059-200)

Periodicals Postage Paid at Bluffton, IN 46714. Published every day except Sundays and principal holidays at 125 N. Johnson St., Bluffton IN 46714, Post Office Box 436

Evening News est. 1892 • Evening Banner est. 1899 • Consolidated 1929

News-Banner Publications, Inc.
George B. Witwer, Chairman of the Board
Doug Brown, President, Publisher
Dianne Witwer, Secretary/Treasurer
Holly Gaskill, Editor
Mark Miller, Opinion Page Editor

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

U.S. women's basketball clinches quarterfinal berth

By DOUG FEINBERG
AP Basketball Writer

VILLENEUVE-D'ASCQ, France (AP) — The U.S. faced a challenge from Belgium that only a few countries have provided during the Americans' long Olympic win streak.

The pro-Belgium crowd of just over 25,000 fans were whipped into a frenzy when the Cats cut a double-digit deficit to four in the third quarter. And then, just like that, Breanna Stewart and A'ja Wilson took over for the U.S.

Stewart scored 26 points and Wilson had 23 points and 13 rebounds, helping the U.S. beat Belgium 87-74 on Thursday night. The Americans secured a spot in the Paris quarterfinals with a 57th consecutive victory in Olympic play.

"You just want to go out there and play your best game," Wilson said. "And I think we did that. I think on the defensive end, it was a great showing and I love when the crowd goes against us. I feel like that is a beautiful thing about our game is playing in those atmospheres and proving people

wrong. Wanting to hush the crowd a little bit. So I'm glad we were able to execute that."

The U.S. was tested by Belgium while extending its record Olympic winning streak that dates to the 1992 Barcelona Games.

This was one of the closer games during the historic run of seven consecutive gold medals. Only three contests have been single-digit victories.

"They're just a really good team," U.S. guard Diana Taurasi said. "A really, really good team. They probably are one of the best teams in the world. I mean it's great you know, I think that it just shows how much they love basketball in Europe."

The Americans (2-0) faced a loud, spirited pro-Belgium crowd that made up most



of the 25,044 in attendance. The arena is about 30 minutes away from the country's border.

"Being so close to Belgium and the way that they continue to show support," Stewart said, "it's what you want in the Olympics. And, I just said, on TV, it's like, I hope when we get to LA, we have that, you know, because the amount of

pride in representing your country is. It's like no other."

The two teams met in a pre-Olympic qualifying tournament in February in Belgium, and the U.S. needed a tip-in from Stewart at the buzzer to come away with that win.

On Thursday, the U.S. built an early 13-point lead behind Stewart, but Belgium cut it to eight at the half and closed to 50-46 in the third quarter. Napheesa Col-

lier capped an 8-1 spurt with five straight points, and her 3 with 2:03 left restored a double-digit advantage for the U.S.

The Americans led 60-53 heading into the fourth and then scored eight of the first 10 points to go up 13. Antonia Delaere tried to keep Belgium in the game with consecutive 3's, but it wasn't enough.

"Every Olympics is hard. You know, I can go back to the last five, and there's always moments that are really hard for us as a team," Taurasi said. "And, you know, tonight was a really hard moment for us. And you know, we came through."

Emma Meesseman scored 24 points and Delaere added 16 for Belgium (0-2), which needs to win its final game against Japan to have any shot of advancing to the elimination round. Julie Vanloo had 11.

The U.S. closes out pool play on Sunday against Germany, which also is 2-0.

In other games on Thursday, Germany and France both advanced to the quarterfinals with wins over Japan and Nigeria respectively. Australia topped Canada to keep its hopes of advancing alive.

Tiger Passes are on sale now

Bluffton's Athletic Department is currently selling Tiger passes for the 2024-25 school year.

All passes can be found and purchased online at blufftonathletics.com/tickets. All Tiger passes and tickets for individual games for high school and middle school will be through Eventlink. Cash will not be accepted for game day tickets.

The four Tiger pass options for purchase before fees are Tiger Family for \$200, Tiger Adult for \$90, Tiger Student for \$18 and Tiger Senior Citizen for \$50. Individual game tickets will be \$6.85 and lower-level events for \$5.85 with fees included.

It is important to note that these passes are not accepted for all IHSAA or ACAC tournament games.

Former Michigan State football coach Mel Tucker sues university over firing

By RICK CALLAHAN
Associated Press

and exploiting her. He also says former Michigan State University head football coach Mel Tucker is suing the university and school leaders, alleging that they wrongfully fired him last year and violated his constitutional rights after he was accused of sexual harassment.

The federal lawsuit filed Wednesday in Michigan accuses school officials of undertaking an "improper, sham investigation" of allegations that Tucker sexually harassed and exploited rape survivor and activist Brenda Tracy.

The suit, which seeks unspecified damages, alleges that Michigan State officials violated his rights to due process and equal protection as well as his employment agreement with the school.

The complaint also contends that interim president Teresa Woodruff and athletic director Alan Haller made "false and defamatory" public statements against Tucker, "further destroying Plaintiff's reputation, his professional standing, and his livelihood."

In addition, the suit contends school leaders "manipulated the process to create a pretextual and false basis to terminate Plaintiff's employment."

"By improperly weaponizing the University's investigative procedures against Plaintiff, the Defendants have caused, and continue to cause, Plaintiff to experience severe emotional harm and suffering, and have caused hundreds of millions in damages," the suit states.

At the time of his firing, Tucker was in the third year of a \$95 million, 10-year contract. He was due to earn about \$80 million remaining on the deal.

The lawsuit names as defendants the university, Woodruff, Haller, the school's eight trustees and its general counsel, Brian Quinn.

University spokesperson Emily Gerkin Guerrant said via email Thursday that "the university does not have a comment at this

time" and said it had not been formally served with the suit as of Thursday morning.

Tracy, who is known for educating college athletes about sexual violence, became friends with Tucker over her advocacy work. Michigan State paid her \$10,000 to share with the football team her story about being gang-raped in 1998. Tucker's lawsuit states that Tracy spoke to Michigan State's football team on Aug. 14, 2021.

Tucker and Tracy's relationship took a turn in April 2022. According to USA Today, Tucker masturbated during a phone call with her. Tracy filed a complaint with the school in December 2022, saying Tucker had sexually harassed her during the phone call. Months later, she filed a complaint with the school's Office for Civil Rights and Title IX Education. Tucker told investigators that he and Tracy had consensual phone sex.

Her allegations against Tucker were made public by USA Today on Sept. 10, 2023, in an story that mentioned the Larry Nassar sexual abuse scandal, the suit alleges. Nassar was a Michigan State sports doctor as well as a doctor at Indianapolis-based USA Gymnastics. He is serving decades in prison for assaulting female athletes, including medal-winning Olympic gymnasts, under the guise of treatment.

Tucker's suit contends that school officials deprived him "of his right to a confidential and fair investigative process" and that they "cared nothing about the damage being inflicted" on him.

"Instead, the Defendants were alarmed that that the USA Today articles once again made MSU's history of failing to properly deal with sexual abuse allegations the subject of national media attention," it states.

Tucker was suspended in September and Michigan State fired him later that month, saying he had subjected the institution to ridicule, breaching his contract and moral turpitude.

A resolution officer concluded in October that Tucker engaged in behavior that violated the school's Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct and Title IX Policy by sexually harassing and sexually exploiting Tracy.

In January, the school denied Tucker's appeal of these findings. An attorney hired by the school as an equity review officer said Tucker had failed to prove error or bias.

White Sox sending Orioles \$4 million as part of Eloy Jiménez deal

By RONALD BLUM
AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Chicago White Sox are sending Baltimore \$4 million as part of Tuesday's trade of outfielder Eloy Jiménez to the Orioles, among 11 deals in the two days before the deadline that included cash transactions.

Jiménez had \$4,263,441 remaining of his \$13 million salary, part of a deal that includes a 2025 team option with a \$3 million buyout. The trade includes a conditional \$1.5 million payment that would be made if the option is declined, leaving the net cost to the Orioles at \$1,763,441.

Toronto agreed to pay \$4.66 million in cash this year and just over \$1.2 million in 2025 as part of three trades. The Blue Jays have been paring payroll, hoping to get under the luxury tax threshold.

Toronto will give \$1.66 million to the Dodgers as part of the trade that sent four-time Gold Glove outfielder Kevin Kiermaier to Los Angeles, and will pay \$2 million as part of Monday's deal that sent third baseman Justin Turner to Seattle. In the agreement sending infielder/outfielder Isiah Kiner-

Falefa to Pittsburgh, the Blue Jays said they will pay the Pirates \$1 million this season and \$1,216,989 in 2025.

Kiermaier's \$10.5 million contract had \$3,443,548 remaining, so the cost to the Dodgers is about \$1.78 million. Turner's \$13 million contract had about \$4.33 million left, while Kiner-Falefa was owed about \$2.46 million from this year's salary and has a \$7.5 million salary next year.

Miami will pay Arizona \$3,161,290 in the trade that sent first baseman Josh Bell to Arizona, reducing his net cost to the Diamondbacks to \$2.25 million. Bell had \$5,411,290 remaining from his \$16.5 million salary.

Seattle is sending Cincinnati \$1,294,758 as part of Monday's trade to the Reds of third baseman Ty France, who has a \$6,775,000 salary.

Milwaukee will give \$1.09 million to Cincinnati as part of Monday's deal that sent right-hander Frankie Montas from the Reds to the Brewers for right-hander Jakob Junis and outfielder Joey Wiemer. The Brewers agreed to send an additional \$160,000 to the Reds if Junis' \$8 million mutual option for 2025 is not exercised and he is owed a \$3 million buyout.

U.S. wins first rowing gold medal in the men's four class since 1960

By TALES AZZONI
AP Sports Writer

VAIRES-SUR-MARNE, France (AP) — When Liam Corrigan yelled out "red!" entering the final stages of the regatta, the rest of the American crew knew it was time to go hard.

They all gave it an extra push, picking up the pace just in time to fend off an attack from their rivals and secure the United States its first rowing gold medal in the men's four class since 1960. It also was the first rowing gold for the U.S. at the Paris Olympics.

Corrigan, Justin Best, Michael Grady and Nick Mead won the elusive gold on Thursday by beating out New Zealand and defending world champion Britain.

"When you make that call, 'red!', you see 'red,'" Best said. "You put your bowball out in front, some of the bigger strokes that you take in the race. Liam made that call 'red!' and I went with him, and I know Nick went and I could see Brady going because he's right in front of me."

"That was enough to kind of like

double that move and take us into our sprint," he said. "So it was pretty flawless execution on the call. And we trusted each other to all make that move together. And it was effective."

The last time the U.S. men's four had stood on the Olympic podium was in 2012 in London, where it won bronze.

All four Americans who got the gold on Thursday were at the Tokyo Games three years ago but left without any medals. Best, Mead and Corrigan finished fourth in the eight class and Grady finished fifth in the four.

The four rowers have been together since last season, winning silver at the world championships last year and gold at the world cup race in Lucerne earlier this year.

"It's literally unbelievable," Corrigan said. "I crossed the line, I thought I was going to have some kind of celebration, but I was just in disbelief, like my hands were on my head. It was just crazy."

In the men's double sculls, Ben Davison and Sorin Koszyk came up short of a medal, finishing fourth.



Ferrari driver Sainz agrees on two-year deal to join Williams Formula 1 team

GROVE, England (AP) — Ferrari driver Carlos Sainz has agreed on a two-year deal to join Williams.

"Carlos will race alongside Alex Albon for Williams Racing for 2025 and into the new F1 regulations era as the formidable pairing look to spearhead the team's mission to return to the front of the grid," the team said in a statement on Monday.

"Williams Racing would also like to thank Logan Sargeant for his hard work and dedication over the past two years. Logan became the first U.S. driver to score a point for 30 years when he finished 10th in Austin last year, and has played a fundamental role in developing the team.

"Williams will give Logan every support as he looks to continue his racing career for 2025 and into the future."

Sargeant is the only American driver on the F1 grid, and the first since 2015.

Spanish driver Sainz, 29, has achieved three race victories, 23 podiums, more than 1,100 career points and is fifth in the current standings.

After becoming the only non-Red Bull driver to win a race in 2023, Sainz won the Australian Grand Prix in March, just 10 days after surgery for appendicitis. He has another four podiums this season.

"It is no secret that this year's driver market has been exceptionally complex for various reasons and that it has taken me some time to announce my decision," Sainz said. "However, I am fully confident that Williams is the right place for me to continue my F1 journey, and I am extremely proud of joining such a historic and successful team, where many of my childhood heroes drove in the past and made their mark on our sport."

"The ultimate goal of bringing Williams back to where it belongs, at the front of the grid, is a challenge that I embrace with excitement and positivity. I am convinced that this team has all the right ingredients to make history again and, starting on Jan. 1, I will give my absolute best to drive Williams forward alongside every single member of the team."

Williams has an option on Sainz to extend his contract beyond 2026.

INNOVATIVE CONCEPTS
AUDIO VIDEO SECURITY NETWORKING

UTV

Marine

Motorcycle Sound Systems

Jockford Fosgate

(260) 724-2276
1421 Manchester St., Decatur
1/2 block west of U.S. 27 North
www.icav.us

PRECISION SERVICE
Family, Farm and Fleet Vehicle Repair
FLEET ACCOUNTS AVAILABLE
0520 S. Decker Dr.
Bluffton
"The Quality Service You Deserve!"
260-824-9149

Bluffton Tire Inc.
1308 S. Main St.
Bluffton

10% OFF Discontinued Closeout Tires
1-260-824-0418

WAKE UP!
Now That We Have Your Attention... Visit Us For High Quality Great Service And Low Pricing.

HIDAY AUTOMOTIVE GROUP
CHRYSLER-DODGE-JEEP-RAM CHEVROLET
1791 N. Main St., Bluffton 1743 N. Main St., Bluffton
260-824-1931 • 888-824-0901 260-824-0900 • 800-824-0901
www.hidaymotors.com

Service with a Smile!

Barry Scott Service Manager
Tyler Shaffer Parts Manager
Marion Wells Service Consultant

Hiday Motors
1743 N. Main St., Bluffton • 824-0900

News-Banner Scoreboard

BASKETBALL

WNBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

W	L	Pct	GB	
New York	21	4	.840	—
Connecticut	18	6	.750	2½
Indiana	11	15	.423	10½
Chicago	10	14	.417	10½
Atlanta	7	17	.292	13½
Washington	6	19	.240	15

WESTERN CONFERENCE

W	L	Pct	GB	
Minnesota	17	8	.680	—
Seattle	17	8	.680	—
Las Vegas	16	8	.667	½
Phoenix	13	12	.520	4
Los Angeles	6	18	.250	10½
Dallas	6	19	.240	11

Wednesday's Games
No games scheduled.

Thursday's Games
No games scheduled.

Friday's Games
No games scheduled.

Saturday's Games
No games scheduled.

Sunday's Games
No games scheduled.

Friday's Games

Kansas City (Ragans 7-7) at Detroit (Skubal 12-3), 6:40 p.m.

Toronto (Gausman 9-8) at N.Y. Yankees (Stroman 7-5), 7:05 p.m.

Baltimore (Kremer 4-7) at Cleveland (Cantillo 0-0), 7:10 p.m.

Boston (Crawford 6-8) at Texas (Ureña 3-5), 8:05 p.m.

Chicago White Sox (Martin 0-0) at Minnesota (Ryan 6-7), 8:10 p.m.

Tampa Bay (Baz 0-1) at Houston (Kikuchi 4-9), 8:10 p.m.

N.Y. Mets (Blackburn 4-2) at L.A. Angels (Anderson 8-9), 9:38 p.m.

L.A. Dodgers (Stone 9-4) at Oakland (Estes 4-4), 9:40 p.m.

Philadelphia (Phillips 3-0) at Seattle (Woo 4-1), 9:40 p.m.

Saturday's Games

Toronto at N.Y. Yankees, 1:05 p.m.

Kansas City at Detroit, 6:10 p.m.

Boston at Texas, 7:05 p.m.

Chicago White Sox at Minnesota, 7:10 p.m.

Baltimore at Cleveland, 7:15 p.m.

Tampa Bay at Houston, 7:15 p.m.

L.A. Dodgers at Oakland, 9:07 p.m.

N.Y. Mets at L.A. Angels, 9:38 p.m.

Philadelphia at Seattle, 9:40 p.m.

Milwaukee (Montas 4-8) at Washington (Irvin 8-8), 6:45 p.m.

San Francisco (Harrison 6-4) at Cincinnati (Abbott 9-7), 7:10 p.m.

Miami (TBD) at Atlanta (Schwellenbach 4-5), 7:20 p.m.

N.Y. Mets (Blackburn 4-2) at L.A. Angels (Anderson 8-9), 9:38 p.m.

Colorado (Gomber 2-7) at San Diego (Vásquez 3-6), 9:40 p.m.

L.A. Dodgers (Stone 9-4) at Oakland (Estes 4-4), 9:40 p.m.

Philadelphia (Phillips 3-0) at Seattle (Woo 4-1), 9:40 p.m.

Saturday's Games

St. Louis at Chicago Cubs, 2:20 p.m.

Milwaukee at Washington, 4:05 p.m.

Arizona at Pittsburgh, 6:40 p.m.

San Francisco at Cincinnati, 7:15 p.m.

Miami at Atlanta, 7:20 p.m.

Colorado at San Diego, 8:40 p.m.

L.A. Dodgers at Oakland, 9:07 p.m.

N.Y. Mets at L.A. Angels, 9:38 p.m.

Philadelphia at Seattle, 9:40 p.m.

Midwest League

High-A Midwest League Glance

Saturday, July 27
Fort Wayne 13, Dayton 4

Sunday, July 28
Dayton 8, Fort Wayne 6

Monday, July 29
No games scheduled

Tuesday, July 30
West Michigan 6, Fort Wayne 4

Wednesday, July 31
West Michigan 6, Fort Wayne 5 (11 innings)

Thursday's Games
West Michigan 5, Fort Wayne 4

Friday's Games
West Michigan at Fort Wayne, 7:05 p.m.

Saturday's Games
West Michigan at Fort Wayne, 6:35 p.m.

Sunday's Games
West Michigan at Fort Wayne, 1:05 p.m.

BASEBALL

MLB

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
Baltimore	65	45	.591	—
New York	65	45	.591	—
Boston	57	50	.533	6½
Tampa Bay	55	53	.509	9
Toronto	50	59	.459	14½

Central Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
Cleveland	66	42	.611	—
Kansas City	61	49	.555	6
Minnesota	59	48	.551	6½
Detroit	52	58	.473	15
Chicago	27	84	.243	40½

West Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
Houston	56	52	.519	—
Seattle	57	53	.518	—
Texas	52	57	.477	4½
Los Angeles	47	61	.435	9
Oakland	45	65	.409	12

Wednesday's Games

Miami 6, Tampa Bay 2

N.Y. Yankees 6, Philadelphia 5

Baltimore 10, Toronto 4

Minnesota 8, N.Y. Mets 3

Kansas City 10, Chicago White Sox 3

St. Louis 10, Texas 1

Boston 3, Seattle 2, 10 innings

Houston 5, Pittsburgh 4

San Francisco 1, Oakland 0

Colorado 2, L.A. Angels 1

Thursday's Games

Kansas City 7, Detroit 1

Cleveland 10, Baltimore 3

Colorado at L.A. Angels, late

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
Philadelphia	65	43	.602	—
Atlanta	59	49	.546	6
New York	57	51	.528	8
Washington	49	60	.450	16½
Miami	40	69	.367	25½

Central Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
Milwaukee	61	47	.565	—
St. Louis	56	53	.514	5½
Pittsburgh	55	53	.509	6
Cincinnati	52	56	.481	9
Chicago	53	58	.477	9½

West Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
Los Angeles	63	46	.578	—
San Diego	59	51	.536	4½
Arizona	58	51	.532	5
San Francisco	54	56	.491	9½
Colorado	39	70	.358	24

Wednesday's Games

Miami 6, Tampa Bay 2

N.Y. Yankees 6, Philadelphia 5

Minnesota 8, N.Y. Mets 3

St. Louis 10, Texas 1

Atlanta 6, Milwaukee 2

Arizona 5, Washington 4

Chicago Cubs 13, Cincinnati 4

Houston 5, Pittsburgh 4

San Diego 8, L.A. Dodgers 1

San Francisco 1, Oakland 0

Colorado 2, L.A. Angels 1

Thursday's Games

Atlanta 4, Miami 2

Chicago Cubs 5, St. Louis 4

Colorado at L.A. Angels, late

Friday's Games

St. Louis (Fedde 7-4) at Chicago Cubs (Assad 5-3), 2:20 p.m.

Arizona (Pfaadt 5-6) at Pittsburgh (Ortiz 5-2), 6:40 p.m.

TRANSACTIONS

Thursday's Transactions

BASEBALL

Major League Baseball

American League

CLEVELAND GUARDIANS — Sent LHP Matthew Boyd to Columbus (IL) on a rehab assignment.

DETROIT TIGERS — Reinstated INF Javier Baez from the medical/bereavement list. Selected the contract of RHP Brennan Hanifee and LHP Sean Guenther from Toledo (IL).

National League

CINCINNATI REDS — Agreed to terms with RHP Victor Diaz on a minor league contract.

ST. LOUIS CARDINALS — Activated RHPs Shawn Armstrong and Erick Fedde. Optioned RHPs Michael McGreevy and Ryan Loutos to Memphis (IL).

U.S. table tennis players call for more resources after Olympic run in Paris

By **TALES AZZONI**
AP Sports Writer

PARIS (AP) — U.S. Olympians are often medal favorites in the events they compete in.

Not in table tennis, one of the few Olympic sports in which no American has ever won a medal.

In Paris, U.S. competitors are hoping for more exposure — and resources — after Kanak Jha made history by becoming the first American man to reach the round of 16 on Wednesday.

Jha, 24, who is ranked No. 120 in the world and trains and competes mostly in Germany, had to resort to crowdfunding to help support his career and his Olympic preparations.

He raised more than \$29,000 through a GoFundMe account put together to help cover costs for training, travel, accommodation and hiring a private coach.

"It's impossible to be a professional table tennis player living in the U.S. Financially, it's impossible," Jha told The Associated Press.

While there are well-established professional leagues both in Europe and Asia, the U.S. only launched its own league — Major League Table Tennis — last year after being founded by software entrepreneur and table tennis enthusiast Flint Lane.

"For the men's side there were no real high-level training groups that you can train full time in," Jha said. "Now there are also a few starting up, so it's coming slowly, but you still cannot compare it with Asia and Europe, which have huge systems in place for the sport."

Asian nations dominate table tennis, but the Europeans are also steps ahead of the United States. China has been the most successful nation since the sport was added to the Olympic program at Seoul in 1988.

Before Jha reached the round of 16, where he lost to Tokyo silver medalist Fan Zhendong, no U.S. men's player had even made it to the round of 32 since Jimmy

Butler at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics.

The best U.S. women's result so far is a quarterfinal appearance by Wang Cheng in Beijing in 2008.

"It's not easy," U.S. national team coach Jun Gao told the AP. "You see other countries, they have a team, they have a physio, doctor... they have everything. And then we have nothing."

Women's player Lily Zhang, who lost in the round of 16 in Paris this week, said she "would love to see more being done for the sport" in the U.S. She works part-time — for her sponsor — to be able to make enough money to train and compete.

"It's definitely not easy because we don't really have a system to support professional players," said Zhang, 28. "If you do choose to go down that path, you most likely have to go overseas, either to Europe or Asia, join the leagues there to be able to earn a living because you are not really able to make a career out of it in the U.S."

USA Table Tennis said it has been taking steps to grow the sport and improve conditions for athletes back home. It said it "has been increasing funding and growing participation in the sport over the past few years," and designated two national training centers for Olympic and Paralympic athletes as "the building blocks to our future success."

Zhang, who is ranked 29th in the world, said one of the main challenges is not having the resources needed for athletes to travel to competitions, with the trips often being self-funded or provided by sponsors.

"I think we really need more exposure because a lot of people in the U.S. don't really understand table tennis as a sport. They think of it more as like a hobby sport, a basement sport," she said. "But I think what matters most is to have more exposure, more eyes, because once they actually get to watch it in person, I think that changes a lot of their minds and they realize how much it really takes. And I think it's only starting."

The Classifieds

Place Your Ad 24/7: GO TO www.news-banner.com AND CLICK ON "Classifieds"

OR CALL 824-0224 MON-FRI 8-5 • TOLLFREE 800-579-7476 • FAX 824-0700

WE ACCEPT   

Plus! SEE your ad published every day in Wells County homes ...

All ads are searchable at classifieds.news-banner.com...

SUDOKU

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

King Classic Sudoku

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

Difficulty: ★★★★★ 8/2

©2024 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

This Week's Garage Sales

Clip & Save

429 GREENBRIAR DR Thurs Aug 1: 8-6 & Fri Aug 2: 8-5 Girls 4-5, boys 10/12, Womens M-3X, toys, games, puzzles, housewares, fishing equip.

MOVING SALE AUG. 2 & 3, Friday 8 a.m.-4 p.m. and Saturday 8 a.m.-noon, 222 Briarcrest Pl., Bluffton. Furniture, kitchen items, tools, small motors, home decor, patio furniture, outdoor items, Christmas items, and antiques.

1509 STOGDILL ROAD 3 family garage sale, home decor, sports equip, games, clothes, shoes, household items & lots more! Fri Aug 2/Sat Aug 3, 8-5pm

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

EMPLOYMENT Help Wanted

INDOOR GOLF TEAM MEMBER

Earn \$14 / hour, with full participation in the tip pool and enjoy discounted / free golf and a flexible schedule!

Work Shifts consist of either a 6 hour morning shift, spanning from 8:30a - 3:00p, or a 6 hour evening shift, spanning from 3:00p to 9:30p. Work shifts are based on a swing shift schedule so Team Members will be scheduled to work every other weekend. Both morning and evening shifts are available.

This is a seasonal role. The season spans from September 1st - April 30th.

parandbelow.com
Click "Join Our Team" to fill out an application.

VEHICLES Campers/RV's

2018 THOR HURRICANE, Model 31Z, Class A RV, \$79,000, 260-307-3225.

Read & recycle

SERVICES

Services

MARV'S CONSTRUCTION
Room additions, fix old saggy floors, all types remodeling. Redo bathrooms, old foundation repairs. Marv Schwartz: 260-525-8877.

HANDYMAN SERVICES, NO job too big or too small, 260-353-9339.

GOGO. LIVE AND age your way. Get help with rides, groceries, meals and more. Memberships start as low as \$1 per day. Available 24/7 nationwide. BBB Rated A+ Business. Call GoGo to get started. 1-833-562-1140 (I)

NOTICE

Notices

UPCOMING EVENT HAPPENING?

A 20 word, line classified ad for six days is only \$24.50. Contact the Bluffton News-Banner office at 125 N. Johnson St., 260-824-0224, or submit online to news-banner.com and click on classifieds.

Lottery Numbers

Thursday's Drawings HOOSIER LOTTERY
Cash 5 — 02-03-04-11-15
Cash4Life — 18-46-52-53-58, Cash Ball: 01
Quick Draw Midday — 09-12-14-15-23-29-31-35-37-38-44-52-56-59-61-66-67-71-74-75, BE: 74
Daily Three-Midday — 06-05-04, SB: 02
Daily Three-Evening — 08-03-09, SB: 03
Daily Four-Midday — 01-05-02-05, SB: 02
Daily Four-Evening — 09-05-00-00, SB: 03
Quick Draw Evening — 01-02-03-04-09-10-15-21-28-30-35-37-42-54-55-59-60-61-62-80, BE: 10
Hoosier Lotto — Estimated jackpot (for Saturday): \$18.7 million
MEGA MILLIONS
Estimated jackpot (for Friday): \$358 million
POWERBALL
Estimated jackpot (for Saturday): \$171 million

Public Sale Calendar

AUGUST 8 - BIDDING OPEN FROM 9 A.M. TO 6 P.M. - Online only - Estate of Richard W. Stultz, 1,920 SF tri-level home in desirable Old Creek Neighborhood. Featuring 2 possible 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, oversized 4-car attached garage, 60'x23', large lot, close to Bluffton schools. Property offers prime location and offer "Renovation Opportunity". Explore the possibilities. Open house: Aug. 6 from 5-6 p.m., 1420 Brookhaven, Bluffton, IN. Sale managers Brandon Steffen, 260-710-5684, Rod Fetters, 260-557-8451, *The Steffen Group Inc.*, 260-824-3006, www.steffengrp.com.

BIDDING STARTS CLOSING AUGUST 11 - 6 p.m. & 6:30 p.m. EST - Jeanette Furhman & Robert Furhman estate, owner, 6 p.m.: Cape Cod style, 3 bedroom, 3 1/2 bath, 3,093 sf, full basement w/Hitzer stove, Geothermal w/backup LP furnace, Generac 11 kw whole house generator, pole barns, 2-car attached garage, sitting on 10+/- wooded acres! 6:30: John Deere Gator, Gehl Track loader, John Deere mower, Chevy Silverado, 51k miles, Massey Ferguson tractor, 3 point attachments, tilt bed trailer, outdoor items, large selection of hand & power tools, long & hand guns, antiques, primitives, furniture, household, more! Pick up Aug. 12, 2-6 p.m., 4182 W 900 N, Decatur. *Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC*, kjauction.com, 260-724-7402.

BIDDING ENDS AUGUST 18 AT 2 P.M. - Online only - Various Consignors, sellers, Huge 900+ lot. 2003 Polaris 4 four wheeler, Honda motorcycle, 2008 Lazer EXmark zero turn riding lawn mower, antiques, collectibles, primitives, modern furniture, fishing equipment, vintage toys, farm toys, musical instruments, very early wood canoe, early high school score board, complete in working condition, more. Preview: Aug. 13, Aug. 15, 3-6 p.m., 102 S. Jefferson St., Ossian. Sale managers Rod Fetters, 260-557-8451, Patrick Carter, 260-273-8294. *The Steffen Group Inc.*, 260-824-3006, steffengrp.com.

BIDDING NOW OPEN & STARTS CLOSING AUGUST 18 - 6 p.m. EST - Kathy Stark, owner, Real estate 6 p.m.: Four bedroom, 1 full bath w/ heated flooring, 2,328 sq.

feet, basement, screened in back porch, 28'x30' heated detached garage, beautiful 36'x66' bank barn, famous Minion silo, all sitting on 2.41+/- acres! Personal property 6:30: Vintage outdoor Christmas decorations, extension cords, violin, saxophone, guitars, music, books, power tools, fishing tackle, household items, dog pool, Kobalt air compressor, table saw, sectional sofa/bed/recliner, firetruck bed, dining table & chairs, microwave, Seven Dwarfs cement statenes, Brother sewing machine, & much more! Preview Aug. 5, 5-6 p.m., 9841 N 750 E, Ossian, IN. Pick up Aug. 19, 2-6 p.m. *Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC*, 260-724-7402, kjauction.com.

AUGUST 22-23 - 9 a.m. - Secured creditors & various consignors, owners, 815 Adams St., Decatur. Two day truck & equipment auction. Day 1, online bidding only: 250+

various skid loader attachments, mini excavators, mini skid steers, tool boxes, workbenches, iron gates, chains & binders, 40' high side shipping containers, dome shelters, various truck take off parts & much more! Day 2, onsite and online bidding offering 700+ lots! 2024 Holiday Rambler, large group of off lease day cabs and sleepers, Freightliner day cabs, box, dump, utility & bucket trucks, lots of trailers, shipping containers, skid loader attachments, cars, SUV, pickup trucks, cargo & passenger vans! Accepting consignments! *Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC*, 260-724-7402, kjauction.com.

STATE OF INDIANA)
COUNTY OF WELLS) SS:
IN THE WELLS)
CIRCUIT COURT)
CAUSE NO.:)
90C01-2405-AD-000011)
IN RE: THE ADOPTION OF:)
P.B.)
BRETT ANDREW HUFFMAN)
Petitioner)

Public Notices

NOTICE
In accordance with Indiana Code 5-15-6-3 requiring prior notification to individuals when records will be destroyed:

Notice to any individuals born in the year 2002, who received special education services in Adams and/or Wells Counties. Please contact Adams Wells Special Services no later than August 9, 2024 if you wish to receive copies of your special education records. All records requested for pick-up and not picked up and non-requested records for persons born in the year 2002 will be permanently destroyed after August 16, 2024. If you wish to request records, you must call (260)824-5880 to do so. Records must be picked up by the person who received services unless otherwise legally designated.

nb 6/18 through 8/7 hspaxlp

SUDOKU ANSWER

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

©2024 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Japan Osprey crash caused by cracks in a gear, pilot's choice to keep flying

By TARA COPP
Associated Press
 WASHINGTON (AP) — A deadly Osprey aircraft crash last November off Japan was caused by cracks in a metal gear and the pilot's decision to keep flying rather than heed multiple warnings that he should land, according to an Air Force investigation released Thursday.

The CV-22B Osprey crash killed eight Air Force Special Operations Command service members and led to a monthslong military-wide grounding of the fleet. There have been four fatal Osprey crashes in the past two years, driving investigations into the Osprey's safety record and creating a split among the services about the future role of the unique aircraft that can fly like an airplane but land like a helicopter.

For months, the Air Force would only say an unprecedented component failure caused the crash. On Thursday, it said a toothed piece called a pinion gear — a critical part of the propeller gearbox — was to blame. The propeller gearbox serves as the aircraft's transmission. Inside each gearbox, five pinion gears spin hard to transmit the engine's power to turn the Osprey's masts and rotor blades.

While the Air Force is confident it was the pinion gear that failed, it still does not know why.

But a Pentagon program office in charge of the V-22 Ospreys knew that "total loss of aircraft and crew were possible" if those propeller gearbox components

failed, lead investigator Lt. Gen. Michael Conley told reporters Wednesday before the report's official release. In a rare move, the investigation also faulted that office, saying it did not share safety data that could have educated crews on the severity of the risk.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Conley said he believed it was the pilot's instinct to complete the military exercise that drove his decisions.

"To a degree, it's a way of life here. I mean, we want people in this command that are biased toward 'yes,' biased toward getting the mission done," Conley said. "As we went through the investigation, I saw someone that was confident in the aircraft but not cocky."

On the day of the crash, the Osprey was flying along the coast of mainland Japan headed to Okinawa when the first indications of trouble began.

In aircraft, vibrations are monitored as signs of potential trouble. A data recorder noted vibrations on the left side of the driveshaft that links the two engines and acts as a fail safe in case one engine loses power.

A second vibration followed. This time one of the five pinion gears inside the left propeller gearbox was vibrating.

But pilot Maj. Jeff Hoernemann and his crew never knew about the vibrations because that data can only be downloaded at the end of a flight.

Five minutes after the first vibration, a left propeller

gearbox chip burn warning posted in the cockpit. The warning lets the crew know there was metal flaking coming off the Osprey's gearing, another indication of stress.

Chipping is a common enough occurrence in rotary flight that there is a safety net designed into the Osprey. The chip detector can burn the chips off so they do not travel in the oil and destroy the transmission.

If the burn is successful, the warning clears.

The crew got six chip warnings that day. Each presented an opportunity for Hoernemann to heed the warning and land as a precaution, but he did not, and investigators found that decision was a causal factor in the crash.

When the third chip burn warning posted, the crew was close to mainland Japan and just 10 miles from its nearest airfield. The official guidance after three chip burns was to "land as soon as practical," guidance that still leaves that decision to the pilot's discretion.

According to the voice data recorder, Hoernemann and the crew were looking for secondary indications of a problem, such as the propeller gearbox overheating, but saw none. So Hoernemann instead directed his co-pilot to keep monitoring the situation and elected to continue the 300-nautical-mile flight over water to Okinawa.

Hoernemann was likely balancing split priorities in his decision-making, the investigation found. He was leading the airborne portion

of the military exercise and had spent months planning for it.

Until almost the final minutes of flight, he kept his primary focus on completing the exercise, not the evolving aircraft situation, the investigation found. He rejected his co-pilot's suggestions on using an alternative onboard mapping tool to identify the closest airfield to land. Throughout the flight, the co-pilot was also not direct about "his uneasiness with the evolving issues," the investigation found, based on the recovered voice data.

The fourth and fifth chip burn warnings came fast. Then with the sixth, escalation: just chips. It meant the Osprey could not burn them off. "Land as soon as practical" turned into "land as soon as possible." Still, the crew members did not act with urgency.

In the final minutes of flight, they had begun to position the aircraft to land. The Osprey was half a mile from an airfield at Yakushima, flying about 785 feet above the water.

But they elected to hold for local air traffic to take off, even as Hoernemann confirmed over the radio they had an in-flight emergency.

The Osprey gave its final chip-related warning three minutes before the crash:

chip detector fail. Hoernemann told the crew he was no longer worried, that he now assumed the earlier warnings were errors due to a faulty chip detector.

Investigators later found the fail message occurred because the detector "had so many chips on it, it couldn't keep up," Conley said.

Inside the propeller gearbox, the pinion gear was breaking apart. At least one piece wedged into the teeth of the larger transmission gearing system, jamming and breaking off gearing teeth until the left propeller gearbox could no longer turn the Osprey's left propeller mast.

Within six seconds of the propeller gearbox failing, catastrophic destruction splintered through the Osprey gearing and interconnected drive system. At that point, there was nothing the crew members could have done to save themselves or the aircraft, the investigation found.

The Osprey rolled violently, inverted twice with its left engine housing on fire and crashed into the water, killing all on board.

Following the crash, crews are now directed to land as soon as practical on a first chip burn and as soon as possible on the second. The joint program office is also working on a new system

that would communicate vibration data in real time to pilots, to give them better awareness during flight.

Officials at the Japanese Defense Ministry said one of their Ospreys reported a first chip burn warning last August and made a precautionary landing. After the November crash, Japan grounded its fleet. It has restarted flying operations according to the tighter flight restrictions implemented by the U.S. military — operating within 30 minutes of a landing location and performing more frequent chip checks and maintenance.

The ministry said even though the root cause of the cracking had not been determined, the new precautionary measures suffice.

The V-22 Osprey is jointly produced by Bell Flight and Boeing.

The accident killed Maj. Eric V. Spendlove, 36, of St. George, Utah; Maj. Luke A. Unrath, 34, of Riverside, California; Capt. Terrell K. Brayman, 32, of Pittsford, New York; Tech. Sgt. Zachary E. Lavoy, 33, of Oviedo, Florida; Staff Sgt. Jake M. Turnage, 25, of Kennesaw, Georgia; Senior Airman Brian K. Johnson, 32, of Reynoldsburg, Ohio; Staff Sgt. Jacob M. Gallihier, 24, of Pittsfield, Massachusetts; and Hoernemann, 32, of Andover, Minnesota.

Senate rejects legislation that would expand child tax credit and restore business tax breaks

By KEVIN FREKING, Associated Press
 WASHINGTON (AP) — A bill to expand the child tax credit and restore some tax breaks for businesses failed to advance in the Senate on Thursday as Republicans largely opposed the measure, arguing they would be in position to get a better deal next year.

Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., dared Republicans to vote against the tax cut package before lawmakers headed home for the month. He said they would be voting against tax cuts for many low-income families and local businesses.

The legislation fell far short of the 60 votes needed to advance the measure, with a vote of 48 in favor and 44 opposed. Three Republicans — Sens. Josh Hawley of Missouri, Markwayne Mullin of Oklahoma and Rick Scott of Florida — joined with Democrats in support. Sens. Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Bernie Sanders of Vermont, independents who caucus with Democrats, were opposed.

Both parties are trying to spotlight issues they believe will play well with voters in November. Schumer put the onus on Republicans to block tax cuts that were sought by the business community and that would financially help an estimated 16 million families when fully in effect. He was also looking to counter assertions from Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump's running mate, Sen. JD Vance of Ohio, that Democrats are "anti-family."

"The question is, will Senate Republicans join us to give Americans a tax break or will they stand in the way?" Schumer said before the vote.

The roughly \$79 billion package passed the House overwhelmingly in January by a 357-70 vote, but has stalled in the Senate. Republicans were calling for the bill to go through the Senate Finance Committee, in a process that would allow lawmakers to offer amendments to address their concerns, but that did not happen.

There were behind-the-scenes negotiations, but senators from both parties accused the other of not being serious.

The child tax credit is \$2,000 per qualifying child. The bill aims to make the credit more fully available to low-income families by gradually making more of the credit refundable. Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky said the changes amounted to "cash welfare instead of relief for working taxpayers."

"I'm not so certain the American people are impressed by message votes," McConnell said. "And I don't think they'll give out points for incomplete work."

The bill was fashioned through negotiations by Rep. Jason Smith, R-Mo., chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, and Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. It would restore full, immediate deductions that businesses can take for the purchase of new equipment and machinery, and for domestic research and development expenses. The tax breaks had lapsed as a cost-containment measure under provisions of the 2017 tax bill that Republicans approved under the Trump administration.

The changes in the child tax credit would lift as many as 500,000 out of poverty when the proposal was fully in effect, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a

liberal think tank.

The bill would be paid for by speeding up the cutoff date by which companies could submit retroactive claims for employees they kept on the payrolls during the COVID-19 pandemic. The IRS has said a significant majority of retroactive claims are at a high risk of fraud.

With the bill seemingly lacking the support necessary to overcome procedural hurdles, Schumer had opted for months not to bring it up for a vote. But the election season presented an opportunity for Democrats to spotlight the issue — and Vance. Schumer even referenced "the junior senator from Ohio" when speaking on the Senate floor, leaving no doubt that Vance was part of their thinking in holding the vote.

Vance claimed in a Fox News interview that Vice President Kamala Harris, the leading candidate now to be the Democrats' White House nominee, was calling for an end to the child tax credit. But the Biden administration led the effort to bolster the child tax credit during the pandemic and tried unsuccessfully to continue the expansion, which temporarily increased the credit to \$3,000 a year, added 17-year-olds and boosted the amount to \$3,600 for children under age 6.

Schumer called Vance's claim "plain old nonsense" and said the 2021 expansion was one of the most significant achievements Democrats have had under the Biden-Harris administration.

Vance also suggested in 2021 that political leaders who did not have biological children "don't really have a direct stake" in the country. He reaffirmed those remarks after clips of them resurfaced, saying this week on the SiriusXM radio program "The Megyn Kelly Show" that the Democratic Party had become "anti-family and anti-child."

Vance was in Arizona visiting the U.S.-Mexico border Thursday and did not attend the vote. His office did not reply to a question of how he would have voted.

Wyden, meanwhile, said: "There's always a lot of talk among Republicans about supporting families, competing with China, and cracking down on fraud in government programs, but they just rejected a bill that would accomplish all of that in one package."

Democratic Sens. Sherrod Brown of Ohio and Bob Casey of Pennsylvania, both in competitive races this fall, spoke on the Senate floor in support of the bill. But Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, called Thursday's action the latest in a series of "show votes" designed to fail but would provide Democrats "with a talking point or two on the campaign trail."

South Dakota Sen. John Thune, the second-ranking Senate Republican, said there are good things in the legislation, but "if we're in a position to do this next year, it will be a much stronger bill."

Thune said it won't be hard for Republicans to rebuff criticism that they were insufficiently supportive of tax relief for businesses and families.

"There are certain issues that voters instinctively know that Republicans are better on," Thune said. "They may try to make that argument in a political ad, but I think it'll be hard to sustain when most voters know that it was the Republicans in 2017 that cut taxes and that next year it will be Republicans who extend those tax cuts if we have the majority."

August

GOODS & SERVICES

DIRECTORY

Sure-Flo Seamless Gutters
 5" & 6" Continuous Gutters
 Leaf Protection Systems
 Large Color Selection - FREE Estimates
260-888-5062
 www.seamlessgutter.net

JC'S GARAGE DOOR
 SALES & SERVICE
 All makes & models • broken springs & cables
 Owner: James Fisher • Sales: Carl Fisher
 "50 Years of Combined Experience"
 Call us at **824-3262**

Primary Contracting, LLC
 Specializing in Building & Remodeling
 OWNER: Edwin Wickey
 Call for Spring Scheduling Today!
 Free Estimates - **260-223-4276**

- Pole Barns
- Garages
- Vinyl Siding
- Metal Roofing
- Poly Decks
- Storm Damage

LAWN CARE

- MOWING
- YARD CLEANUP
- LANDSCAPING
- STONE / GRAVEL
- WEED CONTROL

SCHEDULE TODAY!
 FREE ESTIMATES
260-223-5884

A-1 U-Stor
 Safe & Secure Self Storage
824-1846
 • Safety Lighting • Clean Units
 • 24 Hr. Access
 • Video Cameras
 www.a1-ustor.com
 After hours & Saturdays
 Call **273-9678** or **824-4782**
 In Monroe at corner of U.S. 27 and S.R. 124
 Office at 1180 N. Main, Bluffton

Zap Electric, Inc.
260-824-2927
 Commercial-Industrial-Residential
 24 Hr. Emergency Service
 Charles Miller-Electrician
 1233 W. Cherry St., Bluffton
 FREE Estimates

LANCASTER
 Senior Apartments
 1800 S. Wayne St. | Bluffton

- 1 & 2 Bedrooms
- Maintenance Free
- All Ground-level
- Private Entrances
- Water Included

260 824-5280
 TDD: 7-1-1
 For those 62+ or disabled, regardless of age.

Genesis Pest Services
 Locally Owned by Geoffrey Horner
260-227-0742
 geoff@genesispestservices.com

HIDEAWAY BEER & BOURBON
 THURSDAY - Dollar Off Drinks (Excludes Pop)
 WEDNESDAY - KARAOKE
 FRI. & SAT. - Live Music
 Follow us on Facebook for our events.
 123 S JOHNSON ST. • 824-0455

Jerry Flack & Associates
 Jerry Flack & Julie Myers
 Retirement Advisors
 A Senior Citizen Answers Our Phone!
 OFFICE **260-824-1618** • Corner of Main & Market • Bluffton, IN

ASSISTING IN:
 • FREE Medicare Supplement Comparison
 • Life Planning
 • Safe Money Ideas
 • Dental - Vision - Hearing

STOR-N-GO STORAGE UNITS
 2740 E. 200 N. • Bluffton, IN • 260.273.8345
 with Security Cameras

Home Remodel and Repair
 Locally Owned

Repair Basement Walls
 Foundations repaired
 Floor joist repair or replaced
 Concrete • Doors
 Windows • Painting
 Tile • Small Jobs Welcome

Text me at **260-301-1269**
Jim Baker

AMISH CREW
 will do roofing, siding, remodeling, pole barns. Specializing in redoing old barns. Free estimates.
 Call **260-438-2508**

We Carry Prevagen and CBD Oil!
Rx Warren Pharmacy
 (260)375-2135
 Nature's Sunshine Distributor
 222 N. Wayne St., Warren • 1-800-895-7035
 Terry Daniels, Pharmacist • Melinda Daniels, RN

As a resident of the Wells County community for decades, Attorney, Gerret J. Swearingen, has devoted his legal practice to assisting clients in preserving the family assets from the high cost of Nursing Home and In-Home Healthcare.

As your guide through the "Medicaid Planning" process, Swearingen Elder Law will provide the right path to both protect your life savings and receive the quality of care we all deserve.

1645 Hillcrest Dr., Suite 2A
 Ossian, IN 46777

SWEARINGEN ELDER LAW

- Medicaid Planning
- Durable Power of Attorney
- Estate Planning & Deeds
- Special Needs Trusts
- Long Term Care Planning
- In-Home Healthcare Planning
- Wills, Living Wills, & Advance Healthcare Directives

(260) 888-9256
 FREE INITIAL CONSULTATION!

YOUR BUSINESS IN THE NEWS-BANNER Every Day!

For as little as ... **\$187** PER ISSUE
 Plus The Ossian Journal Every Week!
 ... you can keep your name in the public eye!
 Increase your business with regular advertising!

Call 824-0224
or 622-4108
Sept. deadline is Tues., Aug. 20!