

# The News - Banner

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 2024

BLUFFTON, INDIANA • Wells County's Hometown Connection

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## Health department will host 'Community baby shower' Sept. 5

By HOLLY GASKILL

A "Community Baby Shower" will be coming to the Timber Ridge Event Center in September.

The baby shower, hosted by the Wells County Health Department, aims to provide information and support to families and expectant mothers in the area. There will be booths with information regarding local child-care opportunities, lactation consultants, support groups, immunizations and more, as well as free food and gifts.

The shower will be from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sept. 5. Wells on Wheels will also provide free transportation to and from the event for those who need it.

Health Department Administrator Sahara Wall said that MDWise, Anthem and Care Source partnered with the department for the event following the closure

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## Health First Indiana grant applications open

By HOLLY GASKILL

Applications for the Wells County Health Department grants have opened.

The department has allocated \$135,000 for grants through Health First Indiana funding. The applications and further information are posted on the department's website, [wellscounty.org/health-department](http://wellscounty.org/health-department), and are open through Sept. 27.

Grants are intended to support local groups already addressing health needs within the community, like maternal and infant health or tobacco use prevention. Health Department Administrator Sahara Wall said a subcommittee of the Health Board will review applications, and recipients will be approved by Dec. 19 for 2025.

Wall also advised the Health Board may move its regular meetings from Thursdays to Mondays to accommodate Health Officer Dr. Brandon Huggins' work schedule. The board met this past Monday but did not motion to approve the permanent change, she said.

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### Committed to graduate

Freshmen at Bluffton High School made their commitment to graduate Thursday morning by signing a class banner, as pictured above. At left, Principal Steve Baker shows the students his own high school diploma while talking about the value of a diploma and finishing high school. The Class of 2028 shook Baker's hand, as they will in four years, before signing their name on the banner. (Photos by Holly Gaskill)



## Latest IREAD scores show slight improvements, but state third graders still behind

By CASEY SMITH

### Indiana Capital Chronicle

Foundational reading competency among Indiana's third graders improved slightly from last year, according to new standardized test results released Wednesday. But overall IREAD performance is still low, with roughly one in five test takers struggling to read.

Data from the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) shows 82.5% out of the roughly 82,000 third graders at public and private schools in Indiana passed the 2024 Indiana Reading Evaluation and Determination, also called the IREAD test. Tests were administered statewide this spring and summer.

Public school students passed at a rate of 81.5%, compared to 92.5% of students attending private schools.

The results ticked up from the last academic year, when 81.9% of students' scores indicated reading mastery. The state education department's goal is that 95% of students in third grade can read proficiently by 2027.

As of this spring, 277 elementary schools have reached that goal — an increase from 242 schools a year ago. IDOE officials noted 20% of participating Indiana elementary schools received a proficiency rate of

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## Zelensky: Ukrainian troops have taken full control of the Russian town of Sudzha

By SAMYA KULLAB and HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Thursday that his country's troops had taken full control of Sudzha, the largest Russian town to fall to Ukraine's forces since the start of their cross-border incursion more than a week ago.

Although it had a prewar population of only around 5,000 people, Sudzha is the administrative center for the border area of Russia's Kursk region and is larger than any of the other towns or settlements that Ukraine says it has taken since the incursion began on Aug. 6.

Zelensky said Ukraine was setting up a military command office in Sudzha, which suggests that Ukraine might plan to remain in the Kursk region long-term — or just signal Moscow that it may intend to do so. He didn't elaborate on what functions the office might handle, though he said earlier this week that Ukraine would be distributing humanitarian aid to Sudzha residents.

Russia didn't immediately respond to Zelensky's claims, but its defense ministry said earlier Thursday that Russian forces had blocked Ukrainian attempts to take several other communities.

The surprise Ukrainian incursion has reframed the war and caused chaos in the Kursk region, leading to the evacuation of more than 120,000 civilians, according to Russian authorities, and the capture of at least 100 Russian troops, according to Kyiv.

Zelensky has said one of the reasons for the incursion was to protect neighboring Ukrainian regions. "The more Russian military presence is destroyed in the border regions, the closer peace and real security will be for our state. The Russian state must be responsible for what it has done," he said Tuesday.

Russia has seen previous raids of its territory in the war, but the Kursk incursion is notable for its size, speed, the reported involvement of battle-hardened Ukrainian brigades, and the length of time they have stayed

inside Russia. As many as 10,000 Ukrainian troops are involved, according to Western military analysts.

The incursion also marks the first time foreign troops have invaded and held Russian territory since Nazi Germany did in World War II.

Although Russian military bloggers reported that Russian reserves sent to the Kursk region had slowed Ukrainian advances, questions remain over whether the incursion might force Moscow to move troops to Kursk from front-line positions in eastern Ukraine, where they've made slow but steady advances this year.

As Kyiv was trumpeting its gains in Kursk on Thursday, officials in the eastern Ukrainian city of Pokrovsk, which had a prewar population of about 60,000, warned civilians to evacuate ahead of rapidly approaching Russian troops, who were about 6 miles from the city's outskirts. If Russian troops capture Pokrovsk, where they've been trying to breach Ukrainian defenses

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### Kindergarten kick-off

Southern Wells Elementary welcomed the Class of 2037 with the annual Kindergarten Kick-Off. Pictured, the group blows bubbles and enjoy the beautiful morning with their classmates. (Photo provided)

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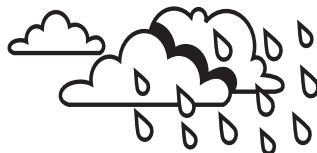
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### Outside



#### Florida weather makes a visit to Indiana

Today	Saturday	Sunday
High 84	High 79	High 77
Low 67	Low 65	Low 61

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### Online

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## Indiana third graders

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95% or higher.

“Ensuring Hoosier students are able to read is key to not only the future of Indiana, but to the individual success of every child,” Gov. Eric Holcomb said in a statement. “The historic literacy investments we have made over the past several years are beginning to show return on investment, which is a testament to the hard work of teachers, families and students in every corner of our state. Let’s keep this positive momentum going.”

### Test score breakdown

The latest results indicate Indiana’s younger students also still lag behind pre-pandemic reading fluency.

Black students:

- 3.2 percentage point increase from 2023 to 2024

- 6.6 percentage point increase from 2021 to 2024

Students in special education:

- 2.2 percentage point increase from 2023 to 2024

- 4.7 percentage point increase from 2021 to 2024

Students receiving free/reduced price meals:

- 1.8 percentage point increase from 2023 to 2024

- 3.4 percentage point increase from 2021 to 2024

Scores are 4.8% behind the results from the 2018-2019 school year, which is the last data set available prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Indiana schools did not give standardized tests in 2019-2020 due to the pandemic.

Reading scores were on the decline even before the pandemic, however. The Hoosier literacy rate has seen a significant drop from Indiana’s high of 91.4% in 2012-13.

In total, about 14,300 Hoosier third grade students — more than 17% of those in the state — will need additional support to meet grade-level read-

ing standards, according to state officials. A student who does not pass the IREAD-3 test typically must receive remediation, or risk being retained in third grade.

The IREAD-3 scores roll in as the state shifts its literacy instruction to implement the science of reading as part of an effort to improve students’ reading skills.

The phonics-based literacy approach incorporates phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Education experts say it gives students the skills to “decode” any word they don’t recognize.

During the 2024 session, state lawmakers additionally approved a separate requirement for schools to administer the statewide IREAD test in second grade — a year earlier than current requirements. Local educators must direct new, targeted support to at-risk students and those struggling to pass the literacy exam.

But if, after three tries, a third grader can’t meet the IREAD standard, legislators want school districts to hold them back.

Those changes take effect in the upcoming 2024-25 school year.

### IDOE officials optimistic

State leaders touted that the 2024 proficiency rates for students increased 0.6 percentage points, marking the largest single-year increase since the assessment was launched in 2013.

“What we’re looking at right here is an outstanding thing,” said Katie Jenner, Indiana Secretary of Education. “It’s unbelievably exciting because it moved the needle significantly more.”

IDOE officials boasted, too, that literacy rates for Black students, students in special education, and students receiving free/reduced price meals have increased for three consecutive

years. However, Hispanic students and English learners both saw decreases in literacy rates of 0.3 and 0.4 percentage points each this year, respectively.

Even so, the pass rate for Black and Hispanic groups was 68.6% — nearly 14 percentage points lower than the state average. White students continue to pass at a higher rate of 88.3%, according to the latest numbers.

Jenner emphasized that educators already trained in the science of reading through the state’s literacy cadre program helped students in their schools to earn higher scores on IREAD — some schools in the program jumped more than 20 percentage points on the assessment, according to IDOE. Around 75% of eligible schools have already opted into the cadre.

Students at participating schools passed the standardized exam with an 82% rate in 2024 — up from 54% in 2021.

Jenner said expanding the test to younger students has also helped. About 78% of schools administered IREAD to second grade students in 2024, a jump from just 38% of schools that participated the year before.

“Allowing that to be taken in grade two was in many respects, a big bet for us as a board, because it’s another assessment,” Jenner said. “We allowed it to be opt-in. We saw the numbers grow with schools who opted in.”

“You can see that 97% of our second graders are on-track passing, and obviously our schools and our teachers are providing interventions to those students who are at risk,” Jenner continued, adding that 56% of all second graders who took IREAD in 2024 already earned passing scores. “What an opportunity we have to turn that corner even more and get a higher percentage of students who are at-risk to passing.”

## Ukrainian troops

(Continued from Page 1)

for weeks, they would further advance toward their goal of capturing Ukraine’s entire Donetsk region.

White House national security spokesman John Kirby said Thursday that Russia had withdrawn some forces, including infantry units, from Ukraine and was shifting them to Kursk, but that the U.S. didn’t know how many troops were involved.

However, a U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity because of not being authorized to comment publicly, said it doesn’t appear that Russia has moved a sufficient number of armored battalions or other types of combat power from the front line in Ukraine to Kursk, and that Moscow will need to shift more troops to repel Kyiv’s forces.

Asked Thursday if the Pentagon was considering limiting any support to Ukraine in light of the latest incursion, spokeswoman Sabrina Singh said it doesn’t affect what the U.S. is sending, but that, “you’ve seen us modify and give different capabilities over time, and

we reserve that right to continue to do that.”

Russian military bloggers reported that small Ukrainian mechanized groups have continued to probe Russian defenses. And satellite images analyzed by The Associated Press on Thursday show that a Ukrainian drone attack on Russian air bases damaged at least two hangars and other areas.

Images taken Wednesday by Planet Labs PBC show that two hangars at Borisoglebsk Air Base have been struck, with a field of debris around both. It was not immediately clear what purpose the hangars served. There also appeared to be potential damage to two fighter aircraft at the base.

Separately, at Savasleika Air Base, one burn mark could be seen just off the runway in images Wednesday, though there was no apparent damage to the fighter jets and other aircraft there.

As of Thursday, the Ukrainian military claimed to be holding more than 80 towns and settlements in the Kursk region.

Kursk’s acting governor,

Alexei Smirnov, on Thursday ordered the evacuation of the Glushkovo region, about 28 miles northwest of Sudzha. The order suggests Ukrainian forces were gradually advancing toward the area.

At a facility receiving evacuees, Tatyana Anikeyeva told Russian state television about her ordeal fleeing from the fighting. “We were rushing from Sudzha. ... We hid in the bushes. Volunteers were handing out water, food, bread to people on the go. The sound of the cannonade continued without any break. The house was shaking.”

Evacuees milled around and waited in long lines for food and other supplies. One man stroked his pet dog and tried to comfort her, while saying that he felt nauseous and had no appetite.

Russia also declared a federal-level state of emergency in the Belgorod region, a day after a regional-level declaration was made for the area. The change in status suggests that officials believe the situation is worsening and hampering the region’s ability to deliver aid.

## White House: Prescription drug deals will produce billions in savings for taxpayers, seniors

WASHINGTON (AP) — Taxpayers are expected to save billions after the Biden administration inked deals with pharmaceutical companies to knock down the lists prices for 10 of Medicare’s costliest drugs.

But how much older Americans can expect to save when they fill a prescription at their local pharmacy remains unclear, since the list cost isn’t the final price people pay.

After months of negotiations with manufacturers, list prices will be reduced by hundreds — in some cases, thousands — of dollars for 30-day supplies of popular drugs used by millions of people on Medicare, including blood thinners, diabetes drugs and blood cancer medications. The reductions, which range between 38% and 79%, take effect in 2026.

“I’ve been waiting for this moment for a long long time,” President Joe Biden said Thursday, during his first policy-oriented appearance with Vice President Kamala Harris since leaving the presidential race. “We pay more for prescription drugs, it’s not hyperbole, than any advanced nation in the world.”

Taxpayers spend more than \$50 billion yearly on the 10 drugs, which include popular blood thinners Xarelto and Eliquis and diabetes drugs Jardiance and Januvia.

With the new prices, the administration says savings are expected to total \$6 billion for taxpayers and \$1.5 billion overall for some of the 67 million people who rely on Medicare. Details on those calculations, however, have not been released. And the White House said it could not provide an average cost-savings for individual Medicare enrollees who use the drugs.

That’s because there are a number of factors — from discounts to the coinsurance or copays for the person’s Medicare drug plan — that determine the final price a person pays when they pick up their drugs at a pharmacy.

The new drug prices are likely to most benefit people who use one of the negotiated drugs and are enrolled in a Medicare plan with coinsurance that leaves enrollees to pay a percentage of a drug’s cost after they’ve met the deductible, said Tricia Neuman, an executive director at the health policy research nonprofit KFF.

“It is hard to say, exactly, what any enrollee will save because it depends on their particular plan and their coinsurance,” Neuman said. “But for the many people who are in the plans that charge coinsurance, the lower negotiated price should translate directly to lower out-of-pocket costs.”

Those savings won’t kick in until 2026. Until then, some Medicare enrollees should see relief from drug prices in a new rule starting next year that caps how much they pay annually on drugs to \$2,000.

Vice President Kamala Harris, however, wasted no time Thursday campaigning on the new drug deals, especially since no Republicans supported the law, called the Inflation Reduction Act, and it barely passed Congress in 2022.

“Two years ago, as vice president, I was proud to cast the tie-breaking vote that gave Medicare the power to negotiate,” Harris said to cheering crowds. “In the two years since, we’ve been using this new power to lower the price of life-saving medication.”

Prior to dropping out of the race, Biden had centered his reelection bid around

Ukraine’s chief military officer, Gen. Oleksandr Syrskyi, said earlier this week that Ukrainian forces had taken about 390 square miles of the Kursk region, though his claim couldn’t be independently verified. The contact lines in Kursk have remained fluid, allowing both sides to maneuver easily, unlike the static front line in eastern Ukraine, where it has taken Russian forces months to achieve even incremental gains.

Russian officials have pushed back on Syrskyi’s territorial claim. Speaking to reporters Wednesday at the U.N., Russia’s deputy ambassador, Dmitry Polyanski, called the incursion an “absolutely reckless and mad operation,” and said Ukraine’s aim to force Russia to move its troops from eastern Ukraine is not happening because “we have enough troops there.”

Sudzha has a measuring station for Russian natural gas that flows through Ukrainian pipelines and accounts for about 3% of Europe’s imports. There has been no indication of any disruption to the gas flow.

lowering health care and drug costs. But the messaging failed to resonate deeply with Americans, in part because the savings have not had widespread reach.

## Weather

Friday, August 16, 2024

(24-hour observations at XXX p.m. Thursday)

High: XX; Low: XX; Precipitation: XXXX

Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.09 feet at 8:45 p.m. Thursday

## Wells County forecast

**Today:** Showers likely and possibly a thunderstorm before 9 a.m., then a chance of showers and thunderstorms, mainly between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 84. Southwest wind around 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60%. New rainfall amounts between a tenth and quarter of an inch, except higher amounts possible in thunderstorms.

**Tonight:** A 30% chance of showers and thunderstorms before 2 a.m. Partly cloudy, with a low around 67. Southwest wind 5 to 10 mph.

**Saturday:** A chance of showers before 11 a.m., then a chance of showers and thunderstorms between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., then showers likely and possibly a thunderstorm after 2 p.m. Mostly sunny, with a high near 79. West wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60%.

**Saturday Night:** Showers likely and possibly a thunderstorm before 8 p.m. Partly cloudy, with a low around 65. West wind 5 to 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60%.

**Sunday:** A chance of showers before 11 a.m., then a chance of showers and thunderstorms between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., then showers likely and possibly a thunderstorm after 2 p.m. Partly sunny, with a high near 77. Chance of precipitation is 60%.

**Sunday Night:** Showers likely and possibly a thunderstorm before 8 p.m. Partly cloudy, with a low around 61. Chance of precipitation is 60%.

**Monday:** Mostly sunny, with a high near 76.

**Monday Night:** Mostly clear, with a low around 52.

**Tuesday:** Sunny, with a high near 75.

**Tuesday Night:** Mostly clear, with a low around 51.

**Wednesday:** Sunny, with a high near 77.

**Wednesday Night:** Mostly clear, with a low around 54.

**Thursday:** Sunny, with a high near 81.

## Baby shower

(Continued from Page 1)

of Bluffton Regional Medical Center’s labor and delivery unit. Timber Ridge has also donated the space.

Wall recalled her own experience moving to the county and being unsure where to find resources. “Our goal is just to provide information to moms and new moms, like if you need this thing, here are people that you can go to,” she

explained.

While the baby shower will be like an open house, Public Health Nurse Lynn Blevins said they plan to have some breakout group speakers on specific topics. More information will be available as the event approaches and will be posted on the Wells County Health Department Facebook page.

holly@news-banner.com

## Taliban have deprived 1.4M Afghan girls of schooling through bans

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — The Taliban have deliberately deprived 1.4 million Afghan girls of schooling through bans, a United Nations agency said Thursday. Afghanistan is the only country in the world that bans female secondary and higher education.

The Taliban, who took power in 2021, barred education for girls above sixth grade because they said it didn’t comply with their interpretation of Sharia, or Islamic law. They didn’t stop it for boys and show no sign of taking the steps needed to reopen classrooms and campuses for girls and women.

UNESCO said at least 1.4 million girls have been deliberately denied access to secondary education since the takeover, an increase of 300,000 since its previous count in April 2023, with more girls reaching the age limit of 12 every year.

“If we add the girls who were already out of school before the bans were introduced, there are now almost 2.5 million girls in the country deprived of their right to education, representing 80% of Afghan school-age girls,” UNESCO said.

The Taliban did not respond to requests for comment.

Access to primary education has also fallen since the Taliban took power in Aug. 2021, with 1.1 million fewer girls and boys attending school, according to UNESCO data.

The U.N. agency warned that authorities have “almost wiped out” two decades of steady progress for education in Afghanistan. “The future of an entire generation is now in jeopardy,” it added.

It said Afghanistan had 5.7 million girls and boys in primary school in 2022, compared with 6.8 million in 2019. The enrollment drop was the result of the Taliban decision to bar female teachers from teaching boys, UNESCO said, but could also be explained by a lack of parental incentive to send their children to school in an increasingly tough economic environment.

Center for Energy Education

# Let's Talk Solar 101

## Workshop Topics

- Environmental & Safety Impacts of Solar Technology
- Economic Impacts of Utility-Scale Solar Projects
- Understanding Utility-Scale Solar Development in Your Community

Scan or Click to Register:  
<https://forms.gle/EH1oMdiV67gtkAe9>

### Date & Location

<p style="margin: 0;"><b>Thursday, August 22</b></p> <p style="margin: 5px 0;">Session 1: 4:00pm</p> <p style="margin: 5px 0;">Session 2: 6:00pm</p>	<p style="margin: 0;">Wells County Public Library</p> <p style="margin: 5px 0;">200 W Washington St,</p> <p style="margin: 5px 0;">Bluffton, IN</p>
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The Center for Energy Education (C4EE) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and a center for renewable energy research, education, and workforce development

OBITUARIES

Addison "Addi" Miller-Columbus, 13

Addison "Addi" Nikole Miller-Columbus, 13, of Bluffton, passed away peacefully at her residence with her parents by her side, on Thursday morning, Aug. 15, 2024.

Addi was born in Kettering, Ohio, on Nov. 23, 2010, to Chris A. Columbus and Ashley L. (Smith) Miller. Both parents survive in Bluffton.

Addi attended Bluffton-Harrison Elementary School until more recently when her illness led her to be homeschooled. She loved Lelo and Stitch, loved to paint and do crafts, and also loved working on cars with her dad.

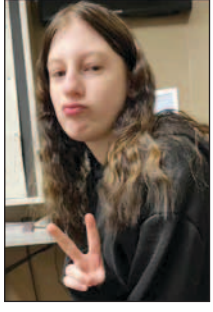
In addition to her parents, Addi is survived by two brothers, Bentlee Miller and Jamison Webster; three sisters, Cheyane Smith, Cali Columbus and Summer Columbus; her paternal grandfather, Harold Anderson of Ansonia, Ohio; and maternal grandmother, Loretta Smith (Josh Kessler) of Troy, Ohio.

Addi was preceded in death by her paternal grandmother, Dalena Ramos-Columbus, and maternal grandfather, John Smith.

Visitation will be from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 17, 2024, at Goodwin - Cale & Harnish Memorial Chapel in Bluffton, followed immediately by a funeral service at 2:30 p.m. at the funeral home. John Reinhard will officiate. Burial will follow at Fairview Cemetery in Bluffton.

Memorial contributions may be made to the family and can be made directly to Goodwin - Cale & Harnish Memorial Chapel, or to Riley Hospital for Children.

Online condolences may be shared at [www.goodwincaleharnish.com](http://www.goodwincaleharnish.com).



Joan M. Swartz, 95

Joan M. Swartz, 95, of Bluffton, passed away peacefully at her home on Thursday morning, August 15, 2024, surrounded by her loving family.

Funeral arrangements are currently pending with the Lemler family of Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton

Professor 'intellectual diversity' lawsuit dismissed

By LESLIE BONILLA MUÑIZ  
Indiana Capital Chronicle

A federal judge on Wednesday dismissed a professor-led lawsuit alleging the state's new university "intellectual diversity" requirements are unconstitutionally vague, and declined to issue a preliminary injunction blocking enforcement of the new law.

Judge Sarah Evans Barker, of the U.S. District Court in Indiana's Southern District, ruled that the professors' allegations are "premature" because their universities haven't finalized policies implementing the new law.

"The source of Plaintiffs' alleged injury (or) injuries lies in university policies that do not yet exist, rendering their allegations unfit for judicial review," Barker wrote in the 17-page order.

Legislators approved the law, Senate Enrolled Act 202, in March. It deals with public institutions for higher education and their boards of trustees: altering diversity-oriented positions and policies for tenure, contract renewals, performance reviews and more. The law also establishes new reporting and survey requirements based on "free inquiry, free expression, and intellectual diversity."

The bill's supporters said conservative faculty members and students are increasingly ostracized at progressively liberal college and university settings — or at least perceive such shunning. Faculty and students, who overwhelmingly opposed the law, said it would micromanage their institutions and have a "chilling effect" on free expression.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana filed a lawsuit in May, initially on behalf of two Purdue University Fort Wayne professors.

Professors Steven Alan Carr and David Schuster worried the law could require faculty to give "debunked" theories equal time in their classrooms alongside "rigorously studied academic analysis." Carr, for example, teaches about the Holocaust and doesn't want to indulge Holocaust denialism or revisionism, per the lawsuit.

Two Indiana University professors — David McDonald of the Bloomington campus and James Scheurich of the Indianapolis campus — have since joined.

The plaintiffs alleged that the law is so vague — "intellectual diversity" is defined but "free inquiry" and "free expression" are not — that they're unsure how to "avoid running afoul" of its requirements. They said they've already engaged in self-censorship via changes to their courses, like scrapping previously included materials and adding materials they otherwise wouldn't have used.

They sought a preliminary injunction. But the defendant universities and the state — as an intervenor — moved to dismiss the complaint. They argued the professors lacked standing because the potential harm faced would come from university policies; neither institution has finished such rules.

The judge agreed. Barker wrote that federal courts can only solve "concrete disputes" involving real harms faced independently of "contingent future events." In First Amendment cases, plaintiffs can allege harm before facing enforcement and through self-censorship, but their fear of enforcement can't be speculative.

The judge observed that the law deals explicitly with institutions and their boards of trustees, not individual educators.

Because the policies aren't yet finalized, she wrote, "it is impossible to determine whether Plaintiffs do in fact have an 'objectively good reason'" for self-censoring. When the universities implement and enforce their policies, "those steps will inform whether such policies conflict with Plaintiffs' conceptions of intellectual diversity; compel changes in their curricula; or otherwise infringe on their asserted constitutional right to academic freedom."

Police Notebook

INCIDENTS

City:

Wednesday, 4:02 p.m., Capri Meadows Apartments. Subject requested information regarding a protection order.

Wednesday, 5:07 p.m., 500 block of South Indiana Street. Caller reported issue with a child, issue was resolved.

Wednesday, 8:54 p.m., 600 block of West Market Street. Subject reported five

vehicles parked improperly. Wednesday, 9:00 p.m., 600 block of West Cherry Street. Report of theft.

Thursday, 6:34 a.m., Bluffton Waste Water. Report of a verbal dispute over a road rage incident.

Thursday, 1:20 p.m., Bluffton Senior Villas. Report of fraud, money missing from bank account.

County: Wednesday, 1:22 p.m.,

Wells County Jail. Warrant served at the jail.

Wednesday, 1:45 p.m., 7000E 400N, Craigville. Caller reported trash falling out of the trash truck.

Wednesday, 10:48 p.m., Wells County Jail. Warrant served to Casey Sills.

Thursday, 11:12 a.m., Lancaster Trustees Office. Protective order served, subject refused to sign it.

ARRESTS

John Robert Stiles, 17, Ossian; battery - aggravated, a Level 3 felony. Bond set at \$10,000.

Noah Christopher Nolan, 26, Bluffton; theft, a Class A misdemeanor. Bond set at \$1,500.

Casey Marie Sills, 31, Winchester; domestic battery, a Class A misdemeanor, and disorderly conduct, a Class B misdemeanor. No bond set.

McCormick releases property tax proposal

By WHITNEY DOWNARD  
Indiana Capital Chronicle

Indiana's Democratic nominee for governor unveiled her \$600 million plan Thursday for addressing rising property taxes, including fiscal impact and estimated savings for taxpayers.

Jennifer McCormick's campaign team published a fact sheet Thursday morning, touting the plan as a way to provide "targeted relief to those who need it most without cutting essential police, fire, and school services to Hoosiers."

"It impacts a lot of Hoosiers, our plan ... not everyone, but most Hoosiers, gain a little bit. That was the goal: that Hoosiers would have some relief — and not just this group or this group," McCormick said in a virtual press conference. "And ... not place the burden solely on our towns and local governments."

Similar proposals released by her Republican and Libertarian opponents — U.S. Sen. Mike Braun and Donald Rainwater, respectively — have been criticized for not providing fiscal estimates or naming alternative funding sources for key local services like public safety.

McCormick relied on bipartisan lawmaker proposals previously vetted by the General Assembly's Legislative Services Agencies, a nonpartisan entity which calculates a fiscal impact for each bill filed by legislators.

"We did not want to go out on a limb here by ourselves and be irresponsible. We feel like that's what the Braun and (running mate Michah Beckwith) plan did," McCormick said. "Also, we want to stay away from targeting and taking away critical services to Hoosiers and really putting a burden on our local government. That's not our intent and we feel like our plan certainly did not do that."

McCormick seemed optimistic that relief could be adopted quickly by the General Assembly under her plan because it used bills — and fiscal reports — from both Republican and Democrat lawmakers.

"The big piece of this is it's ready on day one. We did not want a plan that people had to take time to figure out the fiscal impact, to figure out what would work to get that bipartisan buy-in. It's already there," McCormick said.

According to an analysis by the Association of Indiana Counties and Policy Analytics, the gross assessed value of homes jumped 16.5% on average between 2022 and 2023 and property tax bills increased by 18.2% on average.

Plan details

McCormick's plan includes capping property tax increases at 10%, combined with increasing the homeowner property tax deduction by 40%; increasing personal exemptions by 150%; and increasing the renters tax deduction by

33%. All changes provide relief through tax filings, as opposed to reforming the underlying system.

That had the benefit of addressing property taxes in light of a Hoosier's entire tax burden, said running mate Terry Goodin, a former state lawmaker.

"What we've done is we've actually taken a comprehensive look, because taxes are taxes, right? ... What we've figured out is, 'Hey, it's better to take this comprehensive approach and weld these together and make it into one machine instead of just all these different parts,'" Goodin said.

Justin Ross, an economist and professor with the Indiana University's School of Public and Environmental Affairs, is a member of the state's two-year State and Local Tax Review Task Force. He likened McCormick's proposal to a subsidy for local governments paid for by the state.

"What they're looking to do is grant property tax relief through the income tax system, rather than restricting what local governments can raise or how they can raise money," Ross said. "... One advantage of that type of thing is that it holds local governments harmless in granting property tax relief. A second thing is that it's easier to build in progressivity with means testing."

"So, if you're trying to restrict what property taxes can be raised from somebody on the basis of their income, that's hard to do in our existing property tax system. Because the property tax system doesn't track income," Ross continued. "Whereas (in) our income tax system, that's what we're doing."

Indiana already provides some property tax relief through its income tax system, including through some of the areas that McCormick suggests increasing.

"I want to give credit where credit is due," McCormick repeatedly emphasized, citing the legislation and lawmakers that inspired the proposals.

She also said that committee members serving on the state's two-year task force — which includes Ross — might have new ideas that could be adopted.

Ross said the task force had heard many of the same concerns motivating gubernatorial candidates to propose relief. The committee, which met last in April and doesn't yet have another meeting scheduled, has not

Public Notice

NOTICE

Grove Cemetery Association will hold their annual meeting Monday, August 19, 2024 at 7:00 pm. Please meet at the cemetery. Bring a lawn chair. If it is raining, we will meet at Don & Linda Athan's home. Any questions, call Mike Poulson (260-525-8761).

nb 8/7, 8/16  
hspaxlp

Celebrating 60 Years of Marriage



Don & Pauline Haines

Mr. & Mrs. Don D. Haines were wed on August 16, 1964. For years, the couple owned and operated Haines Barber & Beauty from their home in Bryant where Don was a rural mail carrier and farmer. The Haines' would later move to Bluffton where they continue to reside. They are grateful for their children, Danny (Robin) Haines of Geneva, Dave (Rene) Haines of Portland, and Deanna (Dave) Rinehart of Markle, their grandchildren, and their great-grandchildren. They praise God for a loving family, good health, and 60 years together!



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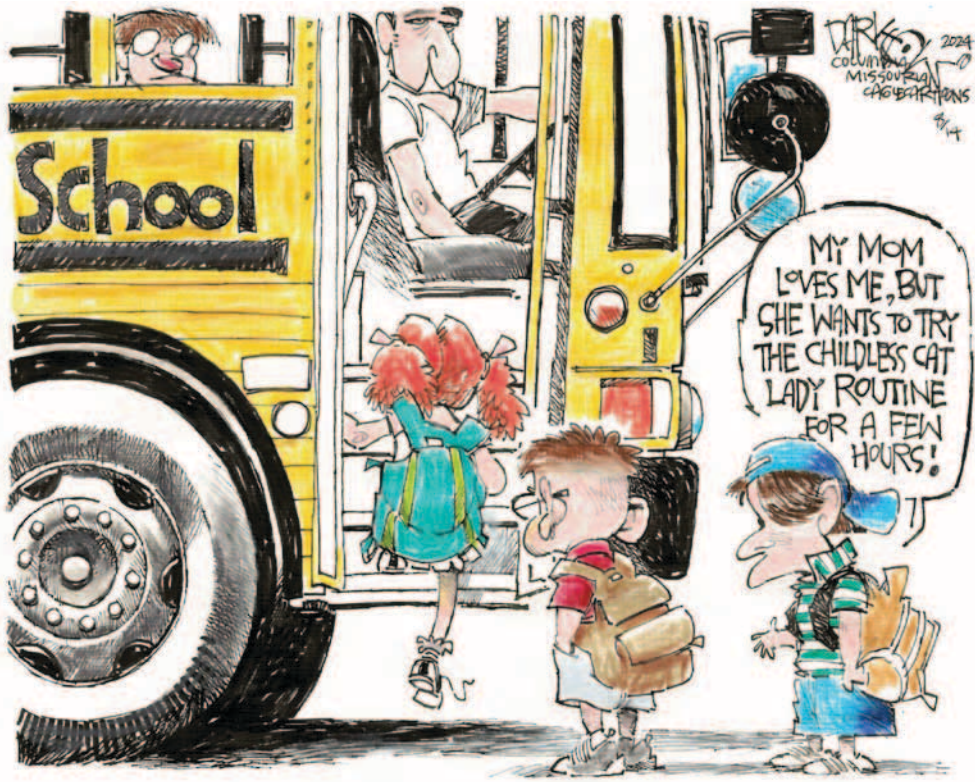
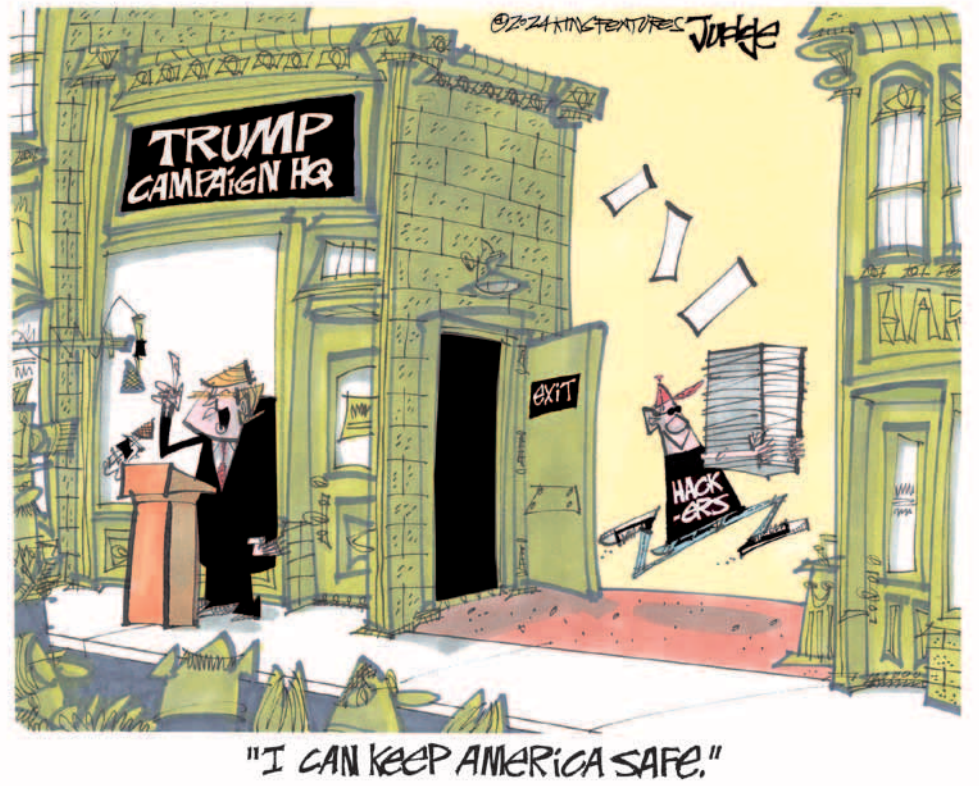
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The 2024 Election Cometh, Vol. 5 - a look through cartoonists' eyes...



Budget season: It's the best time of the year

More than a few times I've joked that the first day of county budgeting hearings is my favorite day of the year. It's a roughly six-hour meeting predominantly about budgeting and numbers — what's not to love?

Nonetheless, there's a lot to appreciate about the process.

For one, it's often a line-by-line dissection of how taxpayer dollars are used. I did not particularly like math in school, but I do love the opportunity to learn more about how a particular department functions. It's also a dedicated opportunity to check in with leaders who do a lot of work behind the scenes.

This year in particular I found myself quite curious to get my three-ring binder of budget proposals, graciously organized by Auditor Lisa McCormick for the council members and myself.

The year has undoubtedly held a lot of changes at the county level as staffing and funding have changed significantly within the Health Department, economic development has moved from the Wells County Chamber of Commerce to the county, and building projects have come to a close, among probably half a dozen other things. Each of those things will impact how the council uses taxpayer money and, in turn, will also affect the future of public services, infrastructure, and community development.

There's also always more coming down the pipeline.

In the next year, the commissioners requested to add a new building inspector position and Building Department, the council wants to tackle more rural clean-up efforts, and the Highway Department hopes to incorporate a new software for road monitoring — all of which were items discussed in the first hour of the day Tuesday. More are detailed in Thursday's News-Banner.

The budget season doesn't always come with a salacious headline or big, contentious argument to slash a budget. In fact, there's quite a bit less pressure this year as the county has \$800,000 in excess from department proposals.

That said, it's an important building block to the community we're living in. Consider this my argument to tune in.



Holly Gaskill

holly@news-banner.com

For the Democratic convention playlist: 'The Blue State Governance Blues'

Democrats will convene next Monday in a state whose condition illustrates a political pathology named for a Democratic mayor. The Curley Effect explains the political rewards for those who inflict prolonged misgovernance.

James Michael Curley served four nonconsecutive terms as Boston's mayor, part of the last while imprisoned for the graft that, combined with intensified taxation of the city's WASP elite that his Irish American supporters despised, lubricated his machine. He served two congressional terms 30 years apart, and one term as governor, but as mayor he produced the Curley Effect, so named by two academic economists, and explained by the Manhattan Institute's Steven Malanga: Those most likely to oppose his depredations fled Boston, which enhanced his power.

By a similar dynamic, the Democratic Party's strangling grip on Illinois has been tightened, to the benefit of other states, especially the five contiguous ones. Formerly the Land of Lincoln, now the Land of Blue State Governance Blues, Illinois is as follows:

Its population has declined for 10 consecutive years. It is one of only three states (Mississippi, West Virginia) to lose population 2010-2020. And another 230,000 (more than twice Peoria's population) since then. Since 2000, more than 1.5 million have fled, costing an estimated \$3.6 billion in income tax revenue in 2022 alone, a year the net loss of 87,000 residents subtracted \$9.8 billion in adjusted gross income. In the past six years, \$47.5 billion AGI has left. A net loser of households in every age and income bracket, Illinois leads the nation in net losses of households making \$200,000 or more.

Fewer Illinoisans are employed than when Democrat J.B. Pritzker became governor in 2019. The state's 5 percent unemployment rate is the nation's third-worst; its Black unemployment rate is second-worst. Since 2010, manufacturing jobs have increased an average of 21 percent in six nearby states; in Illinois, 1 percent. Last year, 75 percent of its cities shrank. Illinois, which had had 24 congressional seats in 1970, has 17 today and probably will lose two after the 2030 Census.

Under billionaire Pritzker, who sends his children to private schools (his family foundation has given \$8.3 million to the Massachusetts boarding school he attended), Illinois this year became the first state ever to retreat from school choice (18 have created or expanded choice programs since 2023), killing, to please teachers unions, a small

tax-credit scholarship program that served mostly poor and minority pupils.

The indispensable Illinois Policy Institute, a think tank, documents that although Illinois spends almost \$24,000 per pupil (up 97 percent since 2007), only 35 percent of pupils read at grade level (1.2 million do not), only 27 percent are proficient in math (1.4 million are not). In Decatur, 7 percent can read at grade level; in Peoria, 15 percent. In 67 schools, no child recently tested proficient in math; in 37, none were proficient in reading. Yet officials celebrate the state's high (87.6 percent) graduation rate. The online publication Wirepoints reports that school administrators (18 superintendents made more than \$300,000 in 2022) have increased 70 percent since 1998 while enrollments have declined about 100,000. No wonder Illinois ranks 40th among the states in social mobility measured by the likelihood of earning more than the previous generation.

The state has more local government units - not counting school districts - than any state: 1,000 more than neighbors Indiana, Kentucky and Iowa combined. Last year, more than 140,000 government workers and retirees in Illinois received more than \$100,000 in salaries or pensions.

Illinois, one of 17 states whose inflation-adjusted household income decreased in 2022, has the nation's second highest property taxes, ranks last nationally in home value appreciation since 2000, has the highest state and local taxes on U.S. median income households, the second highest gas taxes and corporate income tax rate and recently enacted \$1.1 billion in tax increases. Yet its unfunded state pensions liability has, according to the state, grown under Pritzker from \$137 billion to \$142 billion. However, according to Moody's, state pension debt is nearly \$300 billion, and state and local shortfalls reached \$530 billion four years ago. Illinois, a self-declared "sanctuary state," spent about \$2.2 billion taxpayer dollars over two years supporting illegal immigrants.

Democrats will convene Monday in a state that in a recent year lost 28,477 net residents not to Sun Belt states with milder climates, but to its five contiguous states. Judging by the policies advocated for years by both members of the Kamala Harris-Tim Walz ticket, both should feel comfortable in Illinois, where their progressivism is practiced.

georgewill@washpost.com



George Will

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, Aug. 16, the 229th day of 2024. There are 137 days left in the year.

Today in history: On Aug. 16, 1977, Elvis Presley died at his Graceland estate in Memphis, Tennessee at the age of 42; forty-one years later, in 2018, singer Aretha Franklin, known as the "Queen of Soul," died in Detroit at the age of 76.

Also on this date: In 1777, American forces won the Battle of Bennington in what was considered a turning point of the Revolutionary War.

In 1861, President Abraham Lincoln issued Proclamation 86, which prohibited the states of the Union

from engaging in commercial trade with states that were in rebellion — i.e., the Confederacy.

In 1896, gold was discovered in Canada's Yukon Territory, sparking the "Klondike Fever" that would draw tens of thousands to the region in search of fortune.

In 1948, baseball legend Babe Ruth died in New York at age 53.

In 1962, the Beatles fired their original drummer, Pete Best, replacing him with Ringo Starr.

In 1978, James Earl Ray, convicted assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., told a Capitol Hill hearing he did not commit the crime, saying he'd been set up by a mysterious man called "Raoul."

In 1987, people worldwide began a two-day celebration of the "Harmonic Convergence," which heralded what believers called the start of a new, purer age of humankind.

In 2014, Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon declared a state of emergency and imposed a curfew in the St. Louis suburb of Ferguson, where police and protesters repeatedly clashed in the week since a Black 18-year-old, Michael Brown, was shot to death by a white police officer.

In 2020, lightning sparked the August Complex wildfire in California. More than 1,600 square miles—greater than the size of Rhode Island—would burn over the following three months.

The News-Banner

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Holly Gaskill, Editor  
Mark Miller, Opinion Page Editor



## Raiders top Patriots, Tigers fall to Southwood Knights in girls' golf

Southern Wells remained unbeaten while Bluffton fell in girls' golf action on Thursday. Below are the results.

### Southern Wells at Heritage

Southern Wells traveled to face its first ACAC girls' golf team of the season at Heritage, and it left with a victory.

The Raiders are now 2-0 on the season in the 200-210 victory over the Patriots. Callie Ripberger was the top golfer for the team, shooting a 43. Kolbie Beavans went next at 46, Erkia Beavans (55) and Collena Reeves (56).

Southern Wells will travel with Norwell to Eastbrook for a 4:30 p.m. match on Tuesday, Aug. 20.

### Southwood at Bluffton

Bluffton lost 197-200 to Southwood at Timber Ridge on Thursday evening.

This was the first loss of the season for the Tigers.

Emma Schwartz led the way with 46, followed by Eve Corkwell (48), Piper Morgan and Addison Kauffman (53) and Tressa Renner (56).

Bluffton also sent six junior varsity golfers. Rylee Todd led the way with a 60, followed by Aleeah Grover (61), Sy'Annah Jordan-Turner (62), Isabella Stout (64), Madelyn Funk (67) and Addison Gehring (68).

Bluffton will travel to Woodlan at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 20.

## High School Calendar

### FRIDAY, AUG. 16

No events scheduled.

### SATURDAY, AUG. 17

CROSS COUNTRY (co-ed): Bluffton, Norwell, Southern Wells at Norwell Invitational, 9 a.m.

### MONDAY, AUG. 19

BOYS SOCCER: Wayne at Norwell, 5:30 p.m.

VOLLEYBALL: Huntington North at Bluffton, 7:30 p.m.; North Side at Norwell, 7:30 p.m.

### TUESDAY, AUG. 20

GIRLS GOLF: Bluffton at Woodlan, 4:30 p.m.; Norwell and Southern Wells at Eastbrook, 4:30 p.m.

VOLLEYBALL: Norwell at Northrop, 6:45 p.m.; Eastbrook at Southern Wells, 7:30 p.m.

### WEDNESDAY, AUG. 21

BOYS TENNIS: Norwell at Concordia, 4:30

p.m.

GIRLS GOLF: Bluffton at Northfield, 5 p.m.; Norwell at Wayne, 5:30 p.m.

### THURSDAY, AUG. 22

BOYS TENNIS: Bluffton at Bellmont, 4:30 p.m.; Jay County at Norwell, 5 p.m.

BOYS SOCCER: Norwell at Blackhawk, 6:30 p.m.

GIRLS GOLF: Norwell at Bellmont, 4 p.m.

GIRLS SOCCER: Northrop at Norwell, 7

p.m.

VOLLEYBALL: Bluffton at Wabash, 7:30 p.m.; Norwell at Heritage, 7 p.m.; Northfield at Southern Wells, 7:30 p.m.

### FRIDAY, AUG. 23

FOOTBALL: Blackhawk at Bluffton, 7 p.m.; Norwell at Mississinewa, 7 p.m.; Elwood at Southern Wells, 7 p.m.



Bluffton's Piper Morgan concentrates on a putt during the home match against Southwood Thursday at Timber Ridge Golf Course. (Photos by Ryan Walker)



Tigers' golfer Addison Kauffman watches her putt trail toward the hole as a sprinkle of raindrops fall.

## Indianapolis to host 2025 WNBA All-Star Game with Fever leading league's surge in popularity

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Indianapolis will host the 2025 WNBA All-Star Game for the first time at Gainbridge Fieldhouse on July 19, the league announced Wednesday.

This summer's game featured the All-Star team against the U.S. Olympic team and was played in front of a sellout crowd of 16,407 at the Footprint Center in Phoenix. A television audience of 3.44 million watched the All-Stars win 117-109 on July 20 in the most-watched WNBA All-Star Game.

"The city of Indianapolis and the entire state of Indiana have such an incredible and enduring passion for the game of basketball, making the region the perfect host to celebrate the WNBA and the game's greatest stars," WNBA commissioner Cathy Engelbert said.

A 3-point shooting contest and skills challenge will be held July 18.



The Indiana Fever, fueled by the buzz surrounding rookie sensation Caitlin Clark, are the focal point for the dramatic increase in the WNBA's popularity this year. The Fever's average attendance of just under 17,000 leads the WNBA, and 10 of their games have set league TV viewership records.

"We are in the middle of a pivotal, transformational moment in the history of the WNBA and women's basketball, and we are thrilled Indiana will be the center of it all with the game's biggest stars on display during next season's All-Star Game," said Mel Raines, CEO of Pacers Sports & Entertainment.

"Leaders across our community are going to do what we do best: welcome fans from around the nation and the globe to Indiana, raise the bar for future host cities, and leave a lasting legacy for our city and state."

## Will Howard wins No. 2 Ohio State's quarterback competition

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Will Howard has won Ohio State's quarterback battle against Devin Brown and will be the starter when the No. 2 Buckeyes open against Akron on Aug. 31, coach Ryan Day said Thursday.

Howard transferred from Kansas State after starting 28 games over four seasons, and he graded out the highest through nearly 30 practices over the spring and pre-season.

Brown is the No. 2 quarterback, but Day said Lincoln Kienholz, Julian Sayin and Air Noland would be given an opportunity to continue competing for the top backup job.

"We're excited about Will being the starter," Day said. "Will has really taken a command of the offense, I believe. You feel him in the huddle, you feel his experience. He did a real good job of changing his body in the offseason so he's become a threat both with his legs and his arm."

Howard led Kansas State to the 2022 Big 12 championship and set the school career record with 48 touchdown passes. He tied

the K-State single-season record with 24 TD passes last season. He also rushed for 921 yards and 19 TDs in his career for the Wildcats.

Day said Howard had an excellent summer coming off an up-and-down spring, and he showed up to preseason practice with a much greater understanding of coordinator Chip Kelly's offensive system.

"You could see him playing faster, his feet were moving, the ball was coming out with more pace," Day said. "After the first week, you started to see him take control, make good decisions."

It was the second straight year Brown has been beaten out. Last year he lost a close competition against Kyle McCord, who transferred to Syracuse after the season.

"Devin has shown the ability to do just about everything we ask him to do," Day said. "It's the consistency part and taking care of the football part that he's got to make sure he does a great job of moving forward. If he can do that, he can play and be a contributor for us."

## Wrigley Field will host a pair of college hockey doubleheaders

CHICAGO (AP) — Wrigley Field will host two college hockey doubleheaders in January after the NHL's Winter Classic is played there, the Big Ten and Chicago Cubs announced Thursday.

"The Frozen Confines: Big Ten Hockey Series" will feature three men's games and one women's game. The Chicago Blackhawks will play the St. Louis Blues at Wrigley on Dec. 31.

The men's college games are Penn State vs. Notre Dame and Ohio State vs. Michi-

gan on Jan. 3 and Wisconsin vs. Michigan State on Jan. 4. Defending national champion Ohio State will play Wisconsin in a women's game on Jan. 4.

Each of the men's teams were ranked in the top 20 last season, and Michigan reached the NCAA Frozen Four. On the women's side, Ohio State and Wisconsin have combined to win the last five national championships and have met in the last two NCAA title games.

## Javier Báez's HR lifts Tigers vs. M's

By DAVE HOGG Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Javier Báez hit a two-run homer in the eighth inning and the Detroit Tigers held the Seattle Mariners to one hit and rallied for a 2-1 win on Thursday to complete a three-game sweep.

The teams were playing for the sixth time in nine days. Detroit won two of three last week in Seattle.

"What an emotional turnaround at the end of a game that was tremendously pitched on both sides," Tigers manager A.J. Hinch said. "This was a fun sweep."



## Daly to take over No. 78 car for Hollinger Racing for rest of the season

By DAVE SKRETTA  
AP Sports Writer

IndyCar veteran Conor Daly will drive the No. 78 car for Juncos Hollinger Racing for the remainder of the season, beginning with this weekend's race at World Wide Technology Raceway near St. Louis, the team announced Wednesday.

Daly is taking over for Agustín Canapino, who parted ways with the team last week after a series of social media firestorms. "I am extremely pleased to reunite with (team co-owner) Ricardo Juncos after our success together in the Road to Indy," Daly said, referring to the IndyCar feeder system. "Ricardo took a chance on me when I was young and it made a huge difference in my career. There are a lot of people on this team that I've worked with before and that gives me a lot of confidence."

Canapino stepped away from Juncos Hollinger Racing in June before a race at Road America after disputing claims that rival driver Théo Pourchaire of Arrow McLaren Racing had received online death threats from Canapino's fans following an on-track incident between the two. Arrow McLaren wound up severing its technical and marketing relationship with the team.

Another driver, former Juncos Hollinger teammate Callum Iott, has said Canapino's passionate fan base had made threatening comments last season. Iott said he felt he never received support from the team and was released at the end of last season.

Meanwhile, Canapino's performance also had been on a downward spiral. A string of five consecutive finishes of 18th or worse had dropped him to 23rd in the standings, and in danger of falling out of the top 22 of the \$1 million Leaders Circle.

Daly will be driving for his third team this season. He drove from 29th to 10th in the Indianapolis 500 in an entry for Dreyer & Reinbold Racing, and he replaced the injured Jack Harvey for Dale Coyne Racing for a race at Iowa in July.

Daly will work with Juncos Hollinger teammate Romain Grosjean for the remainder of the season.

"Having Conor Daly back in a JHR car after many years is like a flashback to some great memories," Juncos said. "We achieved a lot together. Now it's time to focus on what's ahead and aim for strong results for the rest of the NTT IndyCar Series season."

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News-Banner Scoreboard

BASKETBALL

WNBA Eastern Conference, Western Conference, Wednesday's Games, Thursday's Games, Friday's Games, Saturday's Games, Sunday's Games.

AMERICAN LEAGUE East Division

Table with columns: Team, W, L, Pct, GB. Includes Central Division, West Division, Wednesday's Games, Thursday's Games, Friday's Games.

NATIONAL LEAGUE East Division, West Division, Wednesday's Games, Thursday's Games, Friday's Games, Saturday's Games.

Los Angeles 71 51 .582 —, Arizona 69 53 .566 2, San Diego 69 53 .566 2, San Francisco 62 62 .500 10, Colorado 44 78 .361 27.

Miami at N.Y. Mets, 4:10 p.m. Washington at Philadelphia, 6:05 p.m. Kansas City at Cincinnati, 6:40 p.m. San Francisco at Oakland, 7:07 p.m. Cleveland at Milwaukee, 7:15 p.m. L.A. Dodgers at St. Louis, 7:15 p.m. San Diego at Colorado, 8:10 p.m. Atlanta at L.A. Angels, 9:38 p.m.

to Scranton/Wilkes-Barre (IL). Reinstated C Jose Trevino from the 10-day IL. TAMPA BAY RAYS — Optioned RHP Cole Sulser to Durham (IL). NATIONAL LEAGUE — Sent RHP Trevor Megill to Wisconsin (ML) on a rehab assignment. PITTSBURGH PIRATES — Agreed to terms with RHP Beau Sulser on a minor league contract. SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS — Placed RHP Randy Rodríguez on the 15-day IL, retroactive to Aug. 14. Recalled RHP Spencer Bivens from Sacramento (PCL). FOOTBALL — BUFFALO BILLS — Released WR Chase Claypool from injured reserve with an injury settlement. DALLAS COWBOYS — Signed DL Carl Lawson to a contract. Waived DL Carl Davis. DENVER BRONCOS — Waived LB Jaylon Allen. GREEN BAY PACKERS — Waived S Tyler Coyle and LS Peter Bowden. INDIANAPOLIS COLTS — Waived S Kendall Brooks. PITTSBURGH STEELERS — Placed DB Grayland Arnold on injured reserve. Signed DB Kiondre Thomas to a contract. SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS — Waived WR Terrence Owens with an injury settlement. WASHINGTON COMMANDERS — Signed QB Trace McSorley to a contract. Waived OT Alex Akingbulu. HOCKEY National Hockey Hockey WASHINGTON CAPITALS — Agreed to terms with LW Jakub Vrana on professional trout agreement (PTO).

BASEBALL MLB

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Notices

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Public Notices

NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS OF ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS Notice is hereby given the taxpayers of Lancaster Twp. Wells County, Indiana that the proper legal officers will consider the following additional appropriations in excess of the budget for the current year at their regular meeting place at Trustee Office - 915 N. Main St. Ste: 7, at 6:00 o'clock PM, on the 26th day of August 2024.

Table with columns: Fund Name, Amount, Major Budget Classification. Includes Capital Outlays \$125,000, Total for General Fund: \$125,000.

NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS

The Notice to Taxpayers is available online at www.budgetnotices.in.gov or by calling (888) 739-9826. Complete details of budget estimates by fund and/or department may be seen by visiting the office of this unit of government at Trustee Office 915 N. Main St Ste 7 Bluffton, In.

Notice is hereby given to taxpayers of LANCASTER TOWNSHIP, Wells County, Indiana that the proper officers of LANCASTER TOWNSHIP will conduct a public hearing on the year 2025 budget. Following this meeting, any ten or more taxpayers may object to a budget, tax rate, or tax levy by filing an objection petition with the proper officers of LANCASTER TOWNSHIP not more than seven days after the hearing.

Table with columns: Fund Name, Budget Estimate, Maximum Estimated Funds to be Raised (including appeals and levies exempt from maximum levy limitations), Excessive Levy Appeals, Current Tax Levy, Levy Percentage Difference (Column 3/Column 5). Includes items like 0061-RAINY DAY, 0101-GENERAL, 0840-TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE.

Public Sale Calendar

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.

SEPTEMBER 8-SEPTEMBER 15 - (Online Only Auction) - Private Collector, seller. Outstanding collection of 2,000-plus comic books, large assortment of 8-Tracks, cassettes, CD's & DVD's, Star Wars figures, DJ lighting, vintage books, dolls, large Nativity set, toys, collectibles. Previews: Sept. 5 and Sept. 12 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 117 W. Craig St., Ossian. Pat Carter, sale manager, 260-273-8294, The Steffen Group Inc., 260-824-3006, www.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 statues, Brother sewing machine, & much more! Pick up Aug. 19, 2-6 p.m., 9841 N 750 E, Ossian, IN. 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.

AUGUST 22, noon-5 p.m., AUGUST 23, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., AUGUST 24, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. - Estate Sale. 1513 Ridge-wood Lane, Bluffton. Furniture, lamps, glassware, baskets, ironing board, sewing machine, luggage set, hand tools, antique BD electric drill, table saw, hand planer, router table/rower, garden tools, wheel barrow, nail gun, ladders, weed sprayers, DVD and VCR players, Samsung TVs, sound system, old train set, fertilizer spreaders, rowing machine, storage cabinet, 1940's Boy Scout gear, wall hangings, battery charger, albums, tapes, CD's, more items. Call 260-341-5247 for details.

AUGUST 25-SEPTEMBER 1 - Online Only Personal Property - Spaulding, seller. John Deere X304 riding lawn mower, household, modern furniture, vintage collectibles & Christmas, machinist tools, vintage patio furniture, machinist tool boxes, vintage boat motors, power tools, much more. Auction preview & online bidding assistance Aug. 27, 4-6 p.m., 27 Hi Lo Drive, Bluffton, IN. Sale manager Nick Huffman, 260-827-8255, The Steffen Group Inc., 260-426-0633, steffengrp.com.

SEPTEMBER 7 - 9 a.m. - Various consignors, sellers. Lehman Feed Mill, 5111 S 000 Rd., Berne, IN. Farm Machinery Consignment Auction. Tractors, hay wagons, grain carts, discs, planters, plows, trunks, trailers, semis, livestock trailers, tools, lawn & garden equipment, shop equipment, livestock equipment & more! Consign anytime Sept. 4, 5, or 6 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Call Heartland to advertise your items! Heartland Auction & Realty, Inc., 260-724-3499, heartlandauctionreality.com.

SEPTEMBER 15 - (Online Only Auction) - Private Collector, seller. Outstanding collection of 2,000-plus comic books, large assortment of 8-Tracks, cassettes, CD's & DVD's, Star Wars figures, DJ lighting, vintage books, dolls, large Nativity set, toys, collectibles. Previews: Sept. 5 and Sept. 12 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 117 W. Craig St., Ossian. Pat Carter, sale manager, 260-273-8294, The Steffen Group Inc., 260-824-3006, www.steffengrp.com.

SEPTEMBER 17 - 2-6 p.m. ET - Online - Greenbush, Inc., farm. Property location: 1231 N 740 E, Marion. 242.9+/- acres, classified forest, barns, quality farmland, timber, Van Buren Twp., Grant Co. Tract 1: 80+/-A, barns. Tract 2: 55.5+/-A. Tract 3: 18.3+/-A. Tract 4: 7.1+/-A, potential building site, 42'x56' barn, 30'x31' barn. Tract 5: 63+/-A, 55.28+/- classified forest. Tract 6: 19+/-A, 18.7+/- classified forest. Timber value appraisal available. Open house Sept. 7, 1-4 p.m., Steve Goodwin (forester) present. Rick Johnloz, 260-827-8181, Emma Barr, 260-494-0992, Jason Johnloz, 260-273-9177, Halderman Real Estate & Farm Management, 800-424-2324, halderman.com.

SEPTEMBER 24 - 2 p.m.- 6 p.m. ET - Online - Don A. Heckber, farm. Property location: 11648 N SR 1 Ossian, IN. 31.63+/-total acres, agriculture prime farmland, 31.5+/- tillable, 0.13+/- non-tillable, Topography: Level, Zoning: Agricultural, School District: Norwell Community Schools. Rick Johnloz, 260 827 8181, rickj@halderman.com, Jason Johnloz, jasonj@halderman.com, 260-273-9177, Halderman Real Estate & Farm Management, halderman.com, 800-424-2324.

SEPTEMBER 24 - 6 p.m. - Online Only - The Estate of Jeffrey Brown. Two story country home situated on 2.41+/- acres with outbuildings. This 1,876 SF home features 3 bedrooms, large living room, eat-in kitchen, utility room and 1 car garage. Open houses: Sept. 12 and 19 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 7721 N. 300 W. Markle, IN. The Steffen Group Inc., steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006.

SEPTEMBER 25 - 6 p.m. - Online Only - The Estate of Jeffrey Brown. Land location: 1/4 mile west of Marzane Rd on Wells County Rd 1200 N (Scott Street), Zanesville. 9.27+/- acre prime building site in Union Twp., Northern Wells County. Property features open land, wooded acreage, a 24'x48' pole building. Perfect home site, country estate. "Explore the potential of this property." Open houses: Sept. 12 and 19 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. The Steffen Group Inc., 260-824-3006, steffengrp.com.

NOVEMBER 14 - 6 p.m. - Becher Family Farms LLC, sellers. Auction location: Adams Co. 4H Expo Hall, 160 W. Washington St., Monroe, IN. Four tracts, Washington Township, Adams County. Tract 1: 82.88 acres, County Rd. 200 West, Sec 18. Tract 2: 80.2 acres, County Rd. 450 North, Sec 8. Tract 3: 35.05 acres, County Rd. 450 North, Sec 9. Tract 4: 39.97 acres, County Rd. 400 North, Sec 9. Heartland Auction & Realty, Inc., heartlandauctionreality.com, 260-724-3499.

SUDOKU ANSWER

Grid showing the solution to the Sudoku puzzle: 2 8 1 4 6 9 7 5 3, 7 5 9 8 9 2 4 6 1, 6 9 7 1 5 2 8 3 4, 8 6 2 7 3 5 9 4 1, 9 1 5 6 7 9 2 8 3, 9 7 2 1 9 8 3 6 5, 1 2 6 9 8 7 3 5 4, 4 2 9 3 5 6 1 8 7, 3 9 8 9 2 1 6 7 4.

# Small group of nuns vex big companies with investment activism

**By TIFFANY STANLEY Associated Press**  
**ATCHISON, Kansas** (AP) — Among corporate America's most persistent shareholder activists are 80 nuns in a monastery outside Kansas City.

Nestled amid rolling farmland, the Benedictine sisters of Mount St. Scholastica have taken on the likes of Google, Target and Citigroup — calling on major companies to do everything from AI oversight to measuring pesticides to respecting the rights of Indigenous people.

"Some of these companies, they just really hate us," said Sister Barbara McCracken, who leads the nuns' corporate responsibility program. "Because we're small, we're just like a little fly in the ointment trying to irritate them."

At a time when activist investing has become politically polarized, these nuns are no strangers to making a statement. Recently they went viral for denouncing the commencement speech of Kansas City Chiefs kicker Harrison Butker at the nearby college they cofounded.

When Butker suggested the women graduates of Benedictine College would most cherish their roles as wives and mothers, the nuns — who are noticeably neither wives nor mothers — expressed concern with "the assertion that being a homemaker is the highest calling for a woman."

After all, women's education has been a mainstay of their community, which founded dozens of schools. Many of the sisters have doctorates. Most have worked professional jobs — their ranks include a physician, a canon lawyer and a concert violinist — and they

have always shared what they earned.

They invest what little they have in corporations that match their religious ideals, but also keep a bit in some that don't, so they can push those companies to change policies they view as harmful.

This past spring and summer, when many companies gathered for annual meetings with their shareholders, the nuns proposed a string of resolutions based on stock they own, some in amounts as little as \$2,000.

The sisters asked Chevron to assess its human rights policies, and for Amazon to publish its lobbying expenditures. They urged Netflix to implement a more detailed code of ethics to ensure non-discrimination and diversity on its board. They proposed that several pharmaceutical companies reconsider patent practices that could hike drug prices.

Up until the 1990s, the nuns had few investments. That changed as they began to set aside money to care for elderly sisters as the community aged.

"We decided it was really important to do it in a responsible way," said Sister Rose Marie Stallbauer, who was the community's treasurer for years. "We wanted to be sure that we weren't just collecting money to help ourselves at the detriment of others."

Faith-based shareholder activism is often traced to the early 1970s, when religious groups put forth resolutions for American companies to withdraw from South Africa over apartheid. In 2004, the Mount St. Scholastica sisters joined the Benedictine Coalition for Responsible Investment, an umbrella group run by Sister Susan Mika, a nun

based at a Texas monastery who has been working in the field since the 1980s.

The Benedictine Coalition works closely with the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility, which acts as a clearinghouse for shareholder resolutions, coordinating with faith-based groups — including dozens of Catholic orders — to leverage assets and file on social justice-oriented topics.

The Benedictines have played a key role at ICCR for years, said Tim Smith, a senior policy advisor for the center. It can be discouraging work, where the needle only moves slightly each year, but he said the sisters "have the endurance of long-distance runners."

The resolutions rarely pass, and even if they do, they're usually non-binding. But they're still an educational tool and a means to raise awareness inside a corporation. The Benedictine sisters have watched over the years as support for some of their resolutions has gone from low single digits to 30% or even a majority.

Gradually environmental causes and human rights concerns have swayed some shareholders, even as a growing backlash foments against investments involving ESG (environmental, social and governance concerns).

"We don't give up," Mika said. "We just keep persevering and raising the issues."

It's a form of protest, which comes naturally to McCracken, the longtime peace activist who submits the Kansas nuns' resolutions.

"There's not a protest she wouldn't go to," said Sister Anne Shepard, who rattled off McCracken's past involving anti-war, anti-racism, union-backing demonstrations.

# An ex-Kansas police chief who led a raid on a newspaper is charged with obstruction of justice

**By JOHN HANNA, Associated Press**  
**TOPEKA, Kan.** (AP) — A former Kansas police chief who led a raid last year on a weekly newspaper has been charged with felony obstruction of justice and is accused of persuading a potential witness to withhold information from authorities when they later investigated his conduct.

The single charge against former Marion Police Chief Gideon Cody alleges that he knowingly or intentionally influenced the witness to withhold information on the day of the raid of the Marion County Record and the home of its publisher or sometime within the following six days. The charge was filed Monday in state district court in Marion County and is not more specific about Cody's alleged conduct.

The raid sparked a national debate about press freedom focused on Marion, a town of about 1,900 people set among rolling prairie hills about 150 miles (241 kilometers) southwest of Kansas City, Missouri. Also, newspaper Publisher Eric Meyer's mother, who co-owned the newspaper and lived with him, died the next day of a heart attack, and he blames the stress of the raid.

Meyer said last week that authorities appear to be making Cody the "fall guy" for the raid when numerous officials were involved. He said Tuesday that he suspects the criminal case ultimately will be resolved through a plea bargain so that Cody will not have a trial that would more fully disclose details about the raid.

"We're just being basic journalists here," he said. "We want the whole story. We don't want part of it."

A report from two special prosecutors last week referenced text messages between Cody and a local business owner after the raid. The business owner has said that Cody asked her to delete text messages between them, fearing people could get the wrong idea about their relationship, which she said was professional and platonic.

The Associated Press left a message seeking comment at a possible cellphone number for Cody, and it was not immediately returned Tuesday. Attorneys representing Cody in a federal lawsuit over the raid are not representing him in the criminal case and did not immediately know who was representing him.

Cody justified the Aug. 11, 2023, raid by saying he had evidence that Meyer, the newspaper and one of its reporters, Phyllis Zorn, had committed identity theft or other computer crimes in verifying the authenticity of a copy of the business owner's state driving record provided to the newspaper by an acquaintance. The business owner was seeking Marion City Council approval for a liquor license and

the record showed that she potentially had driven without a valid license for years. However, she later had her license reinstated.

The prosecutors' report concluded that no crime was committed by Meyer, Zorn, or the newspaper and that Cody reached an erroneous conclusion about their conduct because of a poor investigation. Zorn used the information she had to legally search an online state database using her own name.

The prosecutors also said police search warrants signed by a judge contained inaccurate information because of the "inadequate investigation" and were not legally justified. But the prosecutors said they couldn't show that Cody had intentionally misled the judge.

The obstruction of justice charge against Cody was filed by one of the special prosecutors, Barry Wilkerson, the top prosecutor in Riley County in northeastern Kansas. The other special prosecutor is Marc Bennett, the district attorney in Sedgwick County, the home to the state's largest city of Wichita.

A conviction for a first-time offender can be punished by up to nine months in prison, though under the state's sentencing guidelines, the typical penalty is 18 months or less of probation.

The Record's publishing company and current and former staffers have filed four federal lawsuits against Cody and other former and current local officials. The publishing company's lawsuit includes a wrongful death claim and suggests total damages exceed \$10 million. The city's current annual budget is about \$9.5 million.

The publishing company also filed an open records lawsuit last month in state district court, seeking to force the city to turn over texts between police and other local officials.

Police body-camera footage of the 2023 raid on the publisher's home shows the publisher's 98-year-old mother, Joan Meyer, visibly upset and telling officers, "Get out of my house!"

The prosecutors said they could not charge Cody or other officers involved in the raid over her death because there was no evidence they believed the raid posed a risk to her life.

The prosecutors also said there was no "gross deviation" from how officers served other search warrants in the past. However, Eric Meyer said seven officers came to the house for the search.

"A couple of weeks earlier, they conducted a raid on the home of a suspected child rapist who was known to have guns in his house, and they only sent two cops for that," he said.

McCracken, who entered the Benedictine community in 1961 and later spent a decade at a Catholic Worker house, calls herself the "odd extrovert" in monastic life, who "hates to miss a party."

She and her sisters live by the rhythms of ancient monasticism, praying and chanting three times a day in their chapel, much as their order has done for 1,500 years.

They follow the Benedictine motto to "pray and work," and together the sisters pool their salaries, retirement funds, inheritances and donations to support their ministries and investments.

At the core of much of what they do is the belief that the wealthy have too much, the poor have too little, and more should be shared for the benefit of everyone. Or as they say in Catholic parlance, for the common good.

"To me, it's a continuation of Catholic social teaching," McCracken said of their activist investing.

Catholic social teaching defies tidy American political categories. It's against abortion and the death penalty, for the poor and the immigrant. Pope Francis has renewed his church's call to care for the Earth through his landmark environmental

writings.

The Mount St. Scholastica sisters have long had an ecological focus: Their college's alumni include Wangari Maathai, the late Kenyan environmental activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner.

One of their top concerns these days is climate change, a frequent target of their shareholder resolutions. To do their part, they use their 53 acres of land for compost, solar panels, community gardens and 18 beehives that produced 800 pounds of honey last year.

Their activism has often led to criticisms that they're too liberal, that they're all Democrats.

One reason for that perception is their community is "not at the forefront of opposition to abortion," McCracken said, though she's clear they follow church teaching on the matter. But with so many Catholic groups leading the anti-abortion movement, they find other causes to champion.

The Butker dust-up also prompted plenty of angry calls and emails to the monastery. And it particularly stung because the sisters are devoted Chiefs fans, known to file into chapel decked out in red and gold on game day.

Sister Mary Elizabeth

Schweiger, the monastery's prioress, wrote the statement's first draft.

"We reject a narrow definition of what it means to be Catholic," it read, in response to Butker's denigration of "the tyranny of diversity, equity and inclusion."

"It came from a very basic understanding of who we are and the values that we hold true," Schweiger said later in her office. "We just thought that voice had to be heard because we believe very much in being inclusive."

For being bold about what they believe, and wading into controversial subjects, they have both lost and gained supporters for decades.

"Living according to the gospel ... it's going to intersect with politics and economics both," McCracken said. "It's just the nature of being an active citizen."

At nearly 85, McCracken can't be as active as she once was. But shareholder activism provides her with "a sit-down job when you can't go to the streets."

The sisters of Mount St. Scholastica don't retire, not really.

"We don't use that word," McCracken said. "If we still have enough wits about us, we just keep going, you know?"

## August

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