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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2024 BLUFFTON, INDIANA • Wells County's Hometown Connection \$1.00

A family business is still a family business

Hiday Automotive sold to Winchester couple

By MARK MILLER

Wednesday marked the end of an era in Bluffton, as the Hiday Automotive Group became Freedom Chevrolet and Freedom Dodge-Chrysler-Jeep.

"It was a family decision," to sell the two dealerships, Greg Hiday said, adding that it wasn't an easy one, "but we all had to come together and we agreed that this was the right thing to do."

The two car dealerships on Bluffton's north side remains a family business however, as Travis and Sandy Henchon have added them to their existing Freedom GMC store in Richmond.

"The only change people will see is I want to get more inventory here, more options for our local customers," Tra-

vis said. "We're keeping all of the same employees. We have the same philosophy as the Hiday family that our focus is on our customers — being honest with them and delivering on what we promise."

While Greg Hiday, who has led the Chevrolet side of the business, is "retiring from the car business," he said, younger brother Brent will continue as the general manager of both dealerships. Sherry Hiday will also continue to serve as comptroller.

"I'm looking at this as a new partnership with Travis," Brent Hiday said. "My role will actually be expanded, and I'm excited about that. It's kind of a new challenge and a new chapter, but we're going to continue the same commitment we've had since 1975: great products and great service."



On hand for the official transfer of ownership of the Chevrolet and Chrysler dealerships in Bluffton from the Hiday family to the Henchon family were, from left: Brent, Larry, Greg, Nedra and Sherry Hiday; Sandy and Travis Henchon; and Chevrolet representatives Kerry Mumma and Nick Bradley. (Photo by Mark Miller)

The Henchons are residents of rural Winchester in Randolph County where they both grew up. After graduating from Winchester High School in 1995, Travis attend-

ed Saint Francis University where he played basketball. He began working part time at what was then Johnny Morris Chevrolet in (Continued on Page 2)



Pictured from left to right are AJ Reynolds, Ryder Kumfer, Kody Kumfer, Bryant Kumfer and Ashley Kumfer holding baby Amina Kumfer. (Photos by Sydney Kent)

Kumfer awarded Lance Hunter Humanitarian Award

By SYDNEY KENT

Kody Kumfer stood at the back of the tent continuing to serve food on Thursday evening. His wife, Ashley, rocked their newborn baby while she proudly watched him make his way towards the front. As he walked, Ossian Days Inc. President AJ Reynolds continued to speak.

"This year's recipient of the Lance Hunter Humanitarian Award has made a profound impact on Ossian and Wells County through both his career and his dedication to serving others," Reynolds began.

He also acknowledged that this would be the second year that the award was given in absence of the late Joyce Hunter, the mother of Lance Hunter, and that their legacies of love are intertwined with the honor.

Reynolds went on to detail Kumfer's life. A 2008 Norwell High School graduate, Kumfer was also an active contributor to the school's baseball team, and as a senior, he was selected for Norwell's annual Bobby Moser Mental Attitude Award.

He continued his education at Ivy Tech Community College and later earned his bachelor's degree in business administration and accounting from Trine University in 2012. After starting his career at First Bank of Berne, he quickly rose through the ranks,



Ashley Kumfer (pictured) smiles as she rocks her daughter, Amina, and watches her husband receive the honor.

ultimately serving as assistant vice president before making a major career transition in 2021.

Since March 2021, Kumfer has served as the associate executive director at Forgotten Children Worldwide, a nonprofit organization focused on protecting and empowering vulnerable children. He previously served on the board of directors for the organization and has continued to make a difference in that role. His work extends beyond his career, as he is deeply involved in his church, community, and various local initiatives.

"This year's winner lives out what it (Continued on Page 2)

Downtown shooter intended to 'settle a civil dispute'

By HOLLY GASKILL

In an update Thursday evening, the Bluffton Police Department stated that the man who shot himself and injured another in downtown Bluffton last week intended to "settle a civil dispute."

Law enforcement was initially dispatched at approximately 7:24 a.m. on Sept. 5 to the 200 block of Washington Street on a report of a male suspect with shots fired. The suspect, now identified as 38-year-old Kyle Wyandt of Van Wert, Ohio, was found dead upon arrival.

The BPD advised that Wyandt had entered the Washington Street residence "with the intention of committing multiple criminal acts" to settle a dispute that reportedly began in Ohio.

The press release states that Wyandt knocked on the residence door and, with a semi-automatic handgun, forced himself past the man who opened the door to confront a woman inside. The man who opened the door called 911 with the help of another individual downtown.

Wyandt reportedly struck the woman with the gun with enough force to break and dislodge the magazine, leaving just one bullet in the chamber. He shot himself, and the woman fled the residence. The press release immediately following the incident stated the woman was transported to the hospital for non-life-threatening injuries.

The BPD advised that no further information about the incident would be released.

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Record-breaking pies

On Thursday, Helen Witte sold two pies for a total of \$11,200, bringing her total money raised for Ossian Revitalization to \$70,025 since 2009. Sam Haiflich auctioned the pies at the annual event.

The first pie sold for a record-breaking \$6,000. Pictured at left, the winners were, from left to right, Chad Harris with F&M Bank, Witte, Perry Gerber with Les Gerber Insurance, Casey Robins with F&M Bank, and Sam Haiflich with BKM Real Estate and Auction. The second pie sold for \$5,200. Part of this group includes Barkley Builders, Monte and Bonnie Fisher with Energy Control, John and Donna Emshwiller, the Steffen Group and the First Bank of Berne.

Pictured bottom left are additional buyers: from left to right, Nathan Shelton holding Tucker Shelton, Anna Shelton holding Truitt Shelton all from Shelton Financial; Alice and Phil DiNovo, Witte, Larry and Mic Heckber, Sarah Smith and Larry Smith from Edward Jones. (Photos by Sydney Kent)

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Outside

Nothing but blue skies smiling on Wells County

Today	Saturday	Sunday
High 84	High 88	High 87
Low 59	Low 62	Low 61

More Weather on Page 2

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Still a family business

(Continued from Page 1)

Muncie in their sales department. After graduating from Saint Francis, he became the finance and insurance manager there before being promoted to general manager.

In 2020, he was given an opportunity to purchase the GMC dealership in Richmond.

"My parents worked in a factory," he said, "now my family works together in the car business." Their son Tristen is the finance manager and daughter Shaylah works in the office in Richmond. "It's all about hard work and working hard for our customers," he said.

The process of the transition goes back a full year when Henchon reached out to the Hiday family to see if there was any interest in selling.

"We're weren't for sale," Greg Hiday said, "but we were open to a discussion. It just kind of went from there. The better we got to know Travis and Sandy, the better we felt about it."

Larry Hiday, who sold his first car in 1960, celebrated his 84th birthday Thursday, Sept. 12.

"Yes, my age was a factor in our decision," he said, "and we also don't have any grandkids interested in the business." He can share the number of changes he has seen in the industry over those decades and mentioned the challenges being brought by further changes in the industry, "but in the end it was just too good of an offer to turn down, and they're such good people. It's the right people to turn this over to."

A Pennville native, Larry Hiday was 20-years-old and working on the production lines at Franklin Electric when he went to the Don Kaade Pontiac-Buick-Cadillac-GMC dealership to order his first new car.

Long story short: Kaade was impressed enough with the young man to offer him a job selling cars. Hiday kept his day job for a while, working at Kaade's evenings and weekends, but was soon the top salesperson.

In 1971, he decided to open his own used car store on North Main Street next to what was then the Chalet Real Estate A-frame building. Just four years later, his former boss offered him an opportunity to buy the GM dealership. With all of his assets committed to his new business, the first few weeks brought some new challenges.

"I took over on a Monday morning," he shared. "Magdalene Hogg, my secretary there — a great gal, she was with me for years — came to me Thursday afternoon and said, 'Larry, we have to sell a car or we won't be able to make payroll tomorrow.' So I came in Friday knowing that and by golly, I sold a car."

The next Thursday, Hogg came to him with the same news. "And we sold another car," he said.

"The third week, I went in Thursday morning and asked Magdalene how we're doing," he continued. "She gave me a thumbs-up and said 'We're good.'"

Sometime in 1984, Hiday was out on the lot one Saturday morning when a representative from Chrysler Corporation stopped by.

"He left a form and said 'If you're interested in being a Chrysler dealer, fill this out and send it in,'" he said. Monday, he mailed the form and thus became a Chrysler dealer.

It was good timing. "It was the same year Chrysler came out with the minivan," Greg Hiday added.

Hiday Chevrolet had been located at 633 N. Main St. in Bluffton since it was purchased from Kaade, but



The Hiday family gathered in front of the Chevrolet building on Bluffton's north side during the process of closing the transaction to sell the businesses to the Henchon family from Winchester. "We can't thank the community enough for their support over the years," Larry Hiday said. From left: Greg, Larry, Sherry, Nedra and Stephanie and Brent Hiday. (Photo by Mark Miller)

moved into a new building adjacent to the Chrysler dealership in 2016.

Three of Larry and Nedra Hiday's four children joined the business. While daughter LuAnn became a nurse, serving for years on the Lutheran Air Ambulance staff, daughter Sherry and sons Brent and Greg eventually would assume day-to-day management. Nedra was also involved and has filled in over the years as an interim parts manager, service manager, warranty clerk and as an accountant.

"I couldn't have done it without her," Larry added.

"If I may though, I would really want to thank our

employees and all of the loyal customers — the people who have stayed with us through the years. Without them, we would have nothing," he continued. "I was always blessed with having the best group of employees you could hope for, and still do."

Although he has been retired from day-to-day duties for several years, he has spent some time each day whenever he and Nedra were in town, something he intends to keep doing despite no longer being "the boss."

"Yes, I'll be here, so don't be surprised to see me wandering around," he said.

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Humanitarian award

(Continued from Page 1)

means to be an international and local humanitarian in some of the truest sense of the word," Reynolds said.

Kumfer also serves as the president of the Ossian Revitalization Committee, where he spearheaded the fundraising drive for the construction of the amphitheater in Archbold/Wilson Memorial Park.

He is a past president of the Ossian Business and Professionals Association and has been a staple at many Ossian events. His commitment to youth is evident in his time spent coaching T-ball and serving on numerous advisory boards, including those for Norwell Agriculture, Lifewise Academy and Youth for Christ.

In 2023, Kumfer was named Wells County Citizen of the Year. He was nominated for that recognition by his friend and fellow Wells County Chamber of Commerce ambassador Sam Haiflich. In his nominating letter, Haiflich referred to Kumfer as an "unrecognized hero," observing that his friend is "quietly and unselfishly making a difference in this community and beyond."

"Kody is the best friend, husband and father of my kids I could ever ask for," Ashley Kumfer, Kody's wife, wrote. "He loves us all and the Lord with all his heart."

"Despite his impressive record of service, what truly sets him apart is the content of his character," Reynolds concluded. "He serves with humil-

ity, dedication, and integrity. He never seeks the spotlight but consistently works to make Ossian and Wells County a better place for everyone. Whether he's lending his leadership to a community board or serving pork chops here tonight. He is a true example of selfless service."

Kumfer humbly accepted the award with a final message for the audience — more pork chops are available to purchase if anyone is hungry.

"Nothing I do would be possible without the support of my wife, Ashley," Kumfer said after the event. "And my loving kids. They are the ones that sacrifice when I am gone. I am thankful for them."

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Boeing factory workers vote whether to strike and shut down aircraft production

By DAVID KOENIG and MANUEL VALDES Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Boeing waited to learn Thursday whether 33,000 aircraft assembly workers, most of them in the Seattle area, will go on strike and shut down production of the company's best-selling planes.

Members of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers were voting on whether to approve a contract offer that includes 25% pay raises over four years. If the factory workers reject the contract and two-thirds of them vote to strike, a work stoppage would begin Friday at 12:01 a.m. PDT.

A walkout would not cause flight cancellations or directly affect airline passengers, but it would be another blow to Boeing's reputation and finances in a year marked by problems in its airplane, defense and space operations.

New CEO Kelly Ortberg made a last-ditch effort to avert a strike, telling machinists Wednesday that "no one wins" in a walkout.

"For Boeing, it is no secret that our business is in a difficult period, in part due to our own mistakes in the past," he said. "Working together, I know that we can get back on track, but a

strike would put our shared recovery in jeopardy, further eroding trust with our customers and hurting our ability to determine our future together."

Many union members have posted complaints about the deal all week on social media. On Thursday, several dozen blew whistles, banged drums and held up signs calling for a strike as they marched to a union hall near Boeing's 737 Max plant in Renton, Washington.

"As you can see, the solidarity is here," said Chase Sparkman, a quality-assurance worker. "I'm expecting my union brothers and sisters to stand shoulder to shoulder, arm in arm, and let our company know that, hey, we deserve more."

The machinists make \$75,608 per year on average, not counting overtime, and that would rise to \$106,350 at the end of the four-year contract, according to Boeing.

However, the deal fell short of the union's initial demand for pay raises of 40% over three years. The union also wanted to restore traditional pensions that were axed a decade ago but settled for an increase in Boeing contributions to employee's 401(k) retirement accounts.

Although the bargaining committee that negotiated the contract recommended ratification, IAM District 751 President Jon Holden predicted earlier this week that workers would vote to strike.

Boeing worker Adam Vogel called the 25% raise "a load of crap. We haven't had a raise in 16 years."

Broderick Conway, another quality-assurance worker and 16-year Boeing employee, said the company can afford more.

"A lot of the members are pretty upset about our first offer. We're hoping that the second offer is what we're looking for," he said. "If not ... we're going to keep striking and stand up for ourselves."

The head of Boeing's commercial-airplanes business, Stephanie Pope, tried earlier this week to discour-

age workers from thinking a strike would result in a better offer.

"We bargained in absolute good faith with the IAM team that represents you and your interests," she said. "Let me be clear: We did not hold back with an eye on a second vote."

Voting began at 5 a.m. local time at union halls in Washington state, Portland, Oregon, and a smattering of other locations. The union planned to announce the results Thursday night.

A strike would stop production of the 737 Max, the company's best-selling airliner, along with the 777 or "triple-seven" jet and the 767 cargo plane at factories in Everett and Renton, Washington, near Seattle. It likely would not affect Boeing 787 Dreamliners, which are built by nonunion workers in South Carolina.

Weather

Friday, September 13, 2024

(24-hour observations at 10:03 p.m. Thursday)

High: 89; Low: 57; Precipitation: None

Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.09 feet at 7:45 p.m. Thursday

Wells County forecast

Today: Partly sunny, with a high near 84. Southeast wind 5 to 15 mph.

Tonight: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 59. East wind 5 to 10 mph.

Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 88. East wind 5 to 10 mph.

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 62. East wind around 5 mph.

Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 87.

Sunday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 61.

Monday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 85.

Monday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 60.

Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 85.

Tuesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 61.

Wednesday: Sunny, with a high near 85.

Wednesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 60.

Thursday: Sunny, with a high near 85.

Blinken wraps up Ukraine-focused Europe trip in Poland

WARSAW (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken wrapped up a three-nation, Ukraine-focused European tour in Poland on Thursday after hearing repeated appeals from Ukrainian officials to use Western-supplied weaponry for long-range strikes inside Russia.

Blinken traveled to Warsaw after spending a day in Kyiv with British Foreign Secretary David Lammy during which they pledged to bring the Ukrainian requests to their leaders.

U.S. President Joe Biden and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer are to meet in the United States on Friday amid signs both Washington and London are growing more receptive to allowing the Ukrainians to use their arms to hit targets farther inside Russia than previously okayed.

"As what Russia's doing has changed, as the battlefield has changed, we've adapted," Blinken said at a news conference in Warsaw.

Biden has allowed Ukraine to fire U.S.-provided missiles across the border into Russia in self-defense, but has largely limited the distance they can be fired.

Just last week Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin met with Ukraine president Volodymyr Zelenskyy and pushed back on the long-range ask, noting that Ukraine has already been able to strike inside Russia with its own internally produced systems including drones.

One of the key requests from Kyiv is to strike with U.S.-produced Army Tactical Missile Systems, or ATACMS. The Pentagon has noted they wouldn't be the answer to the main threat Ukraine faces from long-range Russian fired glide bombs, which are being fired from more than 300 kilometers away, beyond the ATACMS reach, said Pentagon spokesman Lt. Col. Charlie Dietz.

In addition, the U.S. supply of ATACMS missiles, which can cost up to \$1.5 million each depending on the variant, are "finite," Dietz said. "We need to be judicious about where and when they are deployed."

At Ramstein Air Base last week Austin said the arguments the Ukrainians have used for long range strikes are like the discussions the U.S. had with Ukraine over Abrams tanks. While those systems were ultimately provided, they are currently not being used.

"I don't believe one specific capability will be decisive, and I stand by that comment," Austin said in Germany.

At the Pentagon Thursday, press secretary Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder would not say if Austin's views had changed since last week.

"As of right now, the policy has not changed. I'll just leave it there," Ryder said.

In Warsaw, Blinken said, "One of the purposes of my visit to Kyiv yesterday was to hear from our Ukrainian partners what they believe they need now to deal with the current battlefield, including in eastern Ukraine and other parts of the country"

"I can tell you that as we go forward we will do exactly what we have already done, which is we will adjust as necessary ... in order to defend against Russian aggression," Blinken said.

He delivered a similar message in Kyiv a day earlier. In both cases, the language was similar to that which he used in May, shortly before the U.S. green-lit Ukrainian use of U.S. weapons just inside Russian territory.

The diplomatic visit unfolded as Russia's bigger and better-equipped army bears down on Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region and conducts aerial attacks on cities across the country using missiles, glide bombs and drones that claim many civilian casualties.

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OBITUARIES

Mary Louise Cruice, 96

Beloved daughter of Robert Sr. and Anita B. Cruice, Mary Louise was born Dec. 27, 1927. She passed away Sept. 8, 2024.

She was preceded in death by her sister, Patricia C. Bernal, and brothers, Robert Jr., Donald and Gerard Sr. Cruice.

She is survived by sister-in-law and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins. A native of Algiers and a long resident of Mandeville, Louisiana. Ms. Mary Lou was a retired teacher. All services are being held privately.

Arrangements by Bagnell and Son Funeral Home, Covington, Louisiana. To view and share the guestbook please visit www.Bagnellfuneralhome.com

Myrna Carnes McDaniel, 78

Myrna Carnes McDaniel, 78, of Morristown, Tennessee, passed away after a brief illness on Sept. 10, 2024.

She was born in Bluffton and resided in southern Wells County, graduating from Chester Center High School in 1964.

She is survived by nieces Kim (Doug) Anderson, Lisa Copeland and Kelly Carnes, all of Bluffton, as well as a lifelong friend, Ann Wheeler of Keystone.

Funeral services will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 16, 2024 at Farrar Funeral Home in Jefferson City, Tennessee.

Richard Frederick, 87

Richard E. Frederick "Dick", 87, passed away on Sept. 11, 2024. Dick was born on Nov. 27, 1936 to Raymond and Mina Frederick.

He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Delores "Dee" Frederick, children, Patsy (Gary) Hoobler and Sheryl (Steve) Cline, six grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, sister, Karen Sue (Susie) Laugle, and many beloved nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, four siblings and their spouses, Marilyn (Chuck) Hare, Janet (Ferd) Meehan, Bud (Elaine) Fredericks and Margie (Bud) McBride of Markle, and four nieces.

Friends and family may gather from 4-8 p.m. on Sept. 15, 2024, at 801 Huntington Ave. in Warren. A funeral service will be held at 11:30 a.m. Sept. 16, 2024 with visitation one hour prior. Burial will follow in Spring Hill Cemetery located on the Heritage Pointe campus.

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



Ossian Days begin

Above, the Ossian Revitalization Committee recognized Roembke Mfg. & Design, Inc. as the Ossian Business of the Year on Thursday evening. The business began with the owners, two employees and a 2,500 square foot family-owned building. Today, the family has grown to employ over 50 people in a state-of-the-art 62,000 square foot facility. Greg Roembke (left) now runs the business that his father, John Roembke (right) and mother Betty began in 1977.

Pictured at left, Eli Beer excitedly waits for kids to enjoy a game. Beer was spotted making children laugh and smile as they walked by. (Photos by Sydney Kent)

More than 70K Hoosier Medicare enrollees will save on prescriptions

By WHITNEY DOWNARD, Indiana Capital Chronicle

Older Hoosiers with costly prescriptions may see some relief at the pharmacy next year following a new spending cap for Medicare beneficiaries. The average American who qualifies could save as much as \$1,500 in out-of-pocket drug expenses, according to an analysis from AARP.

"In combination with other provisions in the 2022 drug law that will address high prescription drug prices and related costs, this change will help ensure that more Medicare beneficiaries have affordable access to the prescription drugs they need," the August report concluded.

Nearly 56 million Americans receive their prescription drug coverage from Medicare Part D, including 1.1 million Hoosiers. Under the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act, out-of-pocket spending for the program's enrollees is capped at \$2,000 annually, starting in 2025.

Previously, costs for seniors could exceed \$10,000 per year, especially for cancer treatment drugs, according to an analysis from KFF. Part D's original design required Medicare beneficiaries to pay 5% of their prescription drug costs with no limit. The AARP, which advocates on behalf of older Americans, said that millions of seniors resorted to "cost-coping strategies, such as not filling a prescription or skipping doses to save money" and offset rising drug costs.

In order to determine how much the average American might save under the new cap, AARP commissioned consulting firm Avalere to provide an analysis. The final report excludes the "Extra Help" program for those Part D enrollees who receive a low-income subsidy to further reduce costs.

Prior to the change, championed by President Joe Biden and supported by AARP, the average program user could expect to spend \$2,600 in out-of-pocket expenses in 2025. Following the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act, which also includes the \$35 per month insulin cap, that anticipated spending fell to \$1,100 for the average enrollee.

The number of Americans — and Hoosiers — benefiting from the cap will increase between 2025 and 2029, the Avalere analysis concluded, though not every one of the 56 million Americans utilizing Medicare Part D will hit \$2,000 in out-of-pocket drug costs.

Roughly 3.2 million enrollees will benefit from the cap in 2025 compared to 4.1 million beneficiaries in 2029 — all of whom fall under the "catastrophic coverage phase" of Medicare Part D. In Indiana, an estimated 70,600 Hoosiers will see a benefit from the program in the first year, growing to nearly 91,000 by 2029.

Police Notebook

INCIDENTS

City:
Wednesday, 2:27 p.m., 700 block of South Johnson Street. Report of harassing messages.

Wednesday, 3:15 p.m., 1169 N Main St. Vehicle struck parked vehicle.

Wednesday, 5:37 p.m., 1500 block of Greenfield Lane. Debit card and tablet reported stolen.

Wednesday, 6:33 p.m., Bluffton Woods. Vehicle reported stolen.

Wednesday, 8:23 p.m., 450 E and Elm Grove Road. Caller reported vehicle swerving in its lane. Driver detained for operating while intoxicated.

Wednesday, 9 p.m., 407 N Main St. Driver detained, suspected of driving under the influence.

Wednesday, 9:40 p.m., KOA Campground. Semi truck backed into speed limit sign.

Wednesday, 10:02 p.m., 600 block of Beth Avenue. Report of threatening messages.

ACCIDENTS

City:
Sunday, 1:25 a.m., S.R. 1. Officer responded to an area for debris in the roadway, and found apparent evidence that a vehicle had hit two median signs south of the intersection. The driver, Alexander D. Lobo,

22, Bluffton, reported the incident in his Ram 1500 on Tuesday. He said he had been drinking, which is why hadn't reported the incident earlier and left the scene. Damage did not exceed \$25,000. Lobo cited for 9-26-1-1.1(A)(1), 9-21-8-2(A).

Tuesday, 5:26 p.m., S.R. 1 at Water Street. Dakota R. Flowers, 26, Bluffton, was driving a 2016 Ram 2500 pick-up truck northbound on S.R. 1 when the vehicles in front had suddenly hit their breaks and Flowers reportedly could not avoid rear-ending a 2013 Dodge Avenger driven by Quinton Stacy, 20, Bluffton. Stacy said the

vehicle in front of him had also stopped suddenly. Damage did not exceed \$2,500.

Wednesday, 5:21 p.m., Stogdill Road at River Road. Elizabeth West, 26, Bluffton, stopped her 2016 GMC Acadia SUV at the intersection, waiting for a 2022 Kia Telluride driven by Laura E. Thomas, 39, Bluffton, to turn ahead of her. West said she was looking left at possible coming traffic and rolled forward bumping the rear of the Telluride. Damage did not exceed \$2,500.

FIRES

Thursday, 3:21 p.m., 2671E 900S, Keystone. Tree reported burning in back of property.

Rokita pushes local law enforcement to implement 'zero-tolerance' antisemitism policies

By CASEY SMITH

Indiana Capital Chronicle

A new program spearheaded by Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita seeks to train up the state's law enforcement officials to "combat antisemitism" and implement "zero-tolerance" policies that ensure Jewish Hoosiers are protected.

Staff at the attorney general's office said the training — set for Sept. 20 — is scheduled early in the new academic year as law enforcement, universities and students "prepare for continuation of the protests" and "antisemitic acts we witnessed during the spring semester."

"Antisemitism is on the rise across America. We are seeing it with riots at college campuses, protests

in our streets, and threats against our Jewish friends and neighbors," an office spokesperson told the Indiana Capital Chronicle in a statement. "Because of this, our office is leading the effort to combat this disturbing behavior by providing important legal education and law enforcement training."

The training comes on the heels of a letter sent by Rokita to Hoosier law enforcement in August about the "dramatic rise in antisemitic activity across the United States and in Indiana" since the Oct. 7 attack on Israel by terrorist organization Hamas.

The Republican attorney general called on local prosecutors and police to crack down on antisemitic acts, and refer to the International

Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of antisemitism "as a formal guide to determine when a crime motivated

by antisemitism occurs." Rokita said, too, he wants an increased law enforcement presence at Jewish institutions.

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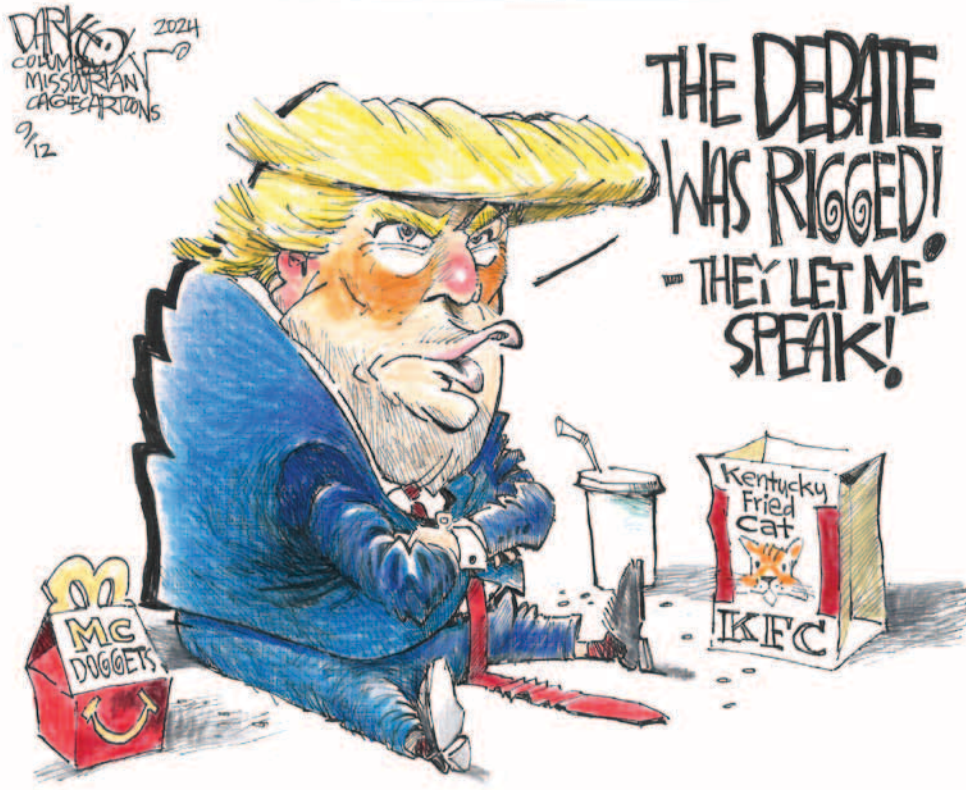
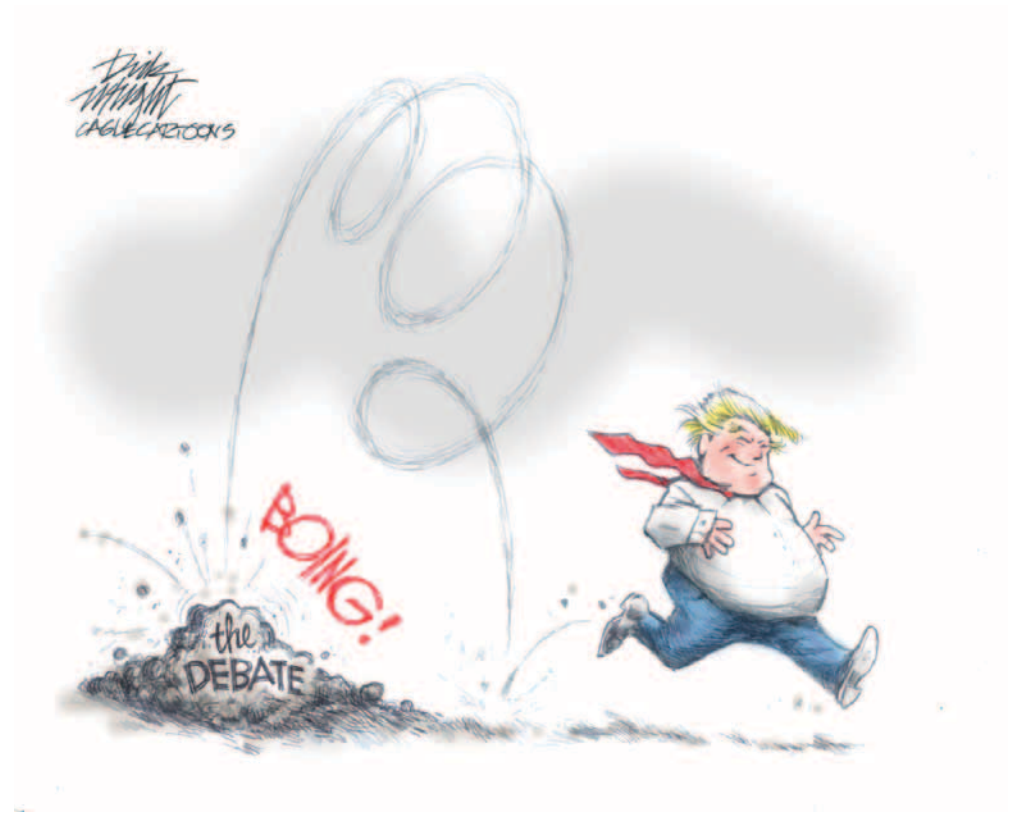
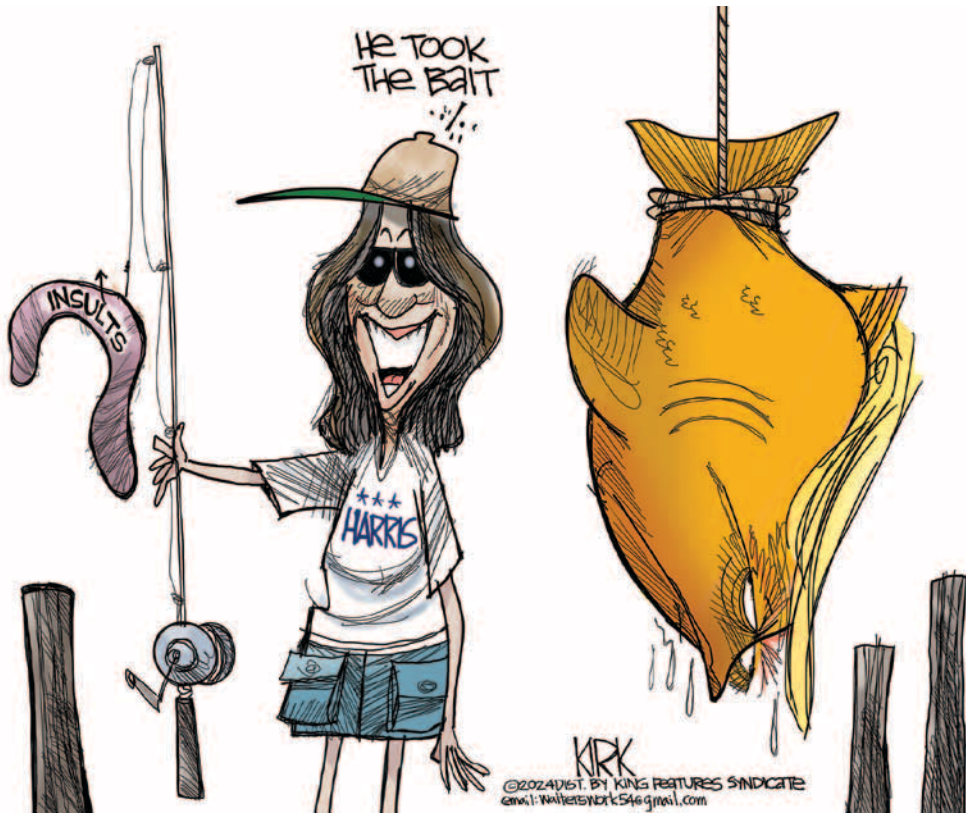
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Another week of Election 2024 - a look through cartoonists' eyes...



Other Opinions

Russia gets Iranian ballistic missiles

If you want another example of vanishing U.S. deterrence (see nearby), consider the Biden Administration's failure to stop Iran from providing Russia with ballistic missiles.

Citing unidentified U.S. and European officials, the Journal reports that a recent arms shipment from Tehran to Moscow included hundreds of short-range ballistic missiles. Iranian lawmaker Ahmad Bakshayesh Ardestani this week described how "one part of the barter" with Russia "includes sending missiles" in exchange for food exports and help with sanctions evasion.

The authoritarian axis now flaunts how it ignores U.S. warnings. Last month State Department deputy spokesman Vedant Patel said such a missile shipment would "represent a dramatic escalation in Iran's support for Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine." The U.S. and its G-7 and NATO partners "are prepared to deliver a swift and severe response if Iran were to move forward with the transfer of ballistic missiles," he added.

Swift and severe, you say? We're waiting. In 2022 Iran began providing Russia with Shahed drones, artillery shells and ammunition. In 2023 Iran began building a drone factory in Russia. Yet that fall the Biden Administration allowed United Nations restrictions on Iran's missile program to lapse.

Ukraine relies on U.S. Patriot defense batteries to counter ballistic missiles. Iran's shipment to Russia will further strain its scarce air defenses as Russia continues to attack civilians and energy infrastructure.

Meanwhile, Tehran is learning from Moscow's military experience, and its complex April 13 drone and missile attack against Israel was "remarkably similar to Russian-perpetrated attacks on Ukraine," Dana Stroul of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy told U.S. lawmakers this year.

In exchange for ballistic missiles, Russia "agreed to supply Iran with its advanced Su-35 fighter jets, attack helicopters, and training aircraft," Gen. Erik Kurilla of U.S. Central Command said in March.

The strategic perversity here is that the Biden Administration's refusal to enforce sanctions on Iranian oil sales has enriched the regime so it can afford to build more missiles. It then supplies those missiles to Russia, which uses them to bombard Ukraine, which the U.S. is supplying with defenses against those missiles. Wouldn't it make sense to stop enriching Iran in the first place?

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
Distributed by The Associated Press

You probably don't want to ask how we can balance our federal budget

One glaring omission from both the Democratic and Republican platforms are substantive proposals to curb the deficit. To be fair, both platforms hint at the issue, but neither deals honestly with the challenge before us. The clear reason is that honesty is probably electoral disaster for either party. For that, we must blame ourselves.

It is too early to know if compromise will happen after the next election, or if we'll have to wait until things worsen enough to force compromise. Until then, its best to think about the magnitude of the problem, and what types of policies might be a basis for a budget solution.

First, the current debt is not at crisis level, but our debt-to-GDP ratio is now high enough that it threatens long-term increases to our borrowing costs. It is akin to paying more of our monthly credit card bill in interest than on things we might wish to buy, like national defense, public health or infrastructure.

Right now, the federal government is spending about 23.3% of our GDP, while collecting about 19.4% of GDP in tax revenue. That gap is about \$6.5 trillion dollars, or roughly \$19,350 per citizen. It seems like we could easily cut spending — until you understand what we are spending money on.

We spend 28% on Medicaid and Medicare, 25.3% on Social Security and a further 22.2% on national defense, including veteran benefits. Those three things sum to 74.5% of our federal budget, but our annual deficit last year was close to 74.3%.

So, without cutting Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security or defense, we'd need to cut everything else and still would not balance the budget. But what would such a drastic step really mean?

Even if we stopped maintaining federal roads, closed all federal parks, cut all science funding, housing, education and agriculture subsidies, closed the FAA and fired air traffic controllers, ended pensions for all retired federal employees, abolished NASA, and stopped all border enforcement, we still couldn't balance the budget.

It is clear to most adults that nothing like that is going to happen. There aren't votes to fire air traffic controllers, cut farm subsidies or let the interstate road system disappear. There aren't places within the federal budget to make big enough cuts to close the annual deficit without deep cuts to defense, Medicaid and Medicare, or Social Security.

It is necessary to point out that we are spending less of our GDP on national defense — including aid to allies, like Ukraine — than at any time since the end of World War II. The "fat" in the federal budget is in the form of Medicaid, Medicare and especially Social Security. Any fix involves these programs and higher taxes.

Social Security has always been an intergenerational transfer from working adults to retired adults. This works fine if there is steady population growth of younger people relative to older people. But a large baby boom and longer life expectancy means the program collects too little money in payroll taxes. Medicare is much the same.

There are several ways to deal with these problems. The first is to boost payroll taxes by a percent or two. The second would be to make income taxes more progressive for Social Security recipients, exposing more affluent ones with higher taxes. Finally, we could collect Social Security and Medi-

care taxes on all income, not just the first \$168,600 as we currently do.

None of these are ideal policies. All have costs and benefits, as well as winners and losers. So, this is an area ripe for political compromise.

The Medicaid program has more options. The Affordable Care Act (Obama-care) ended up being a large Medicaid expansion with protections for pre-existing conditions. So, it was neither as great as supporters claim, nor as damaging as its enemies contend. However, it could be modified in ways to significantly improve the federal budget.

Medicaid could have an expanded copay system, like Indiana's HIP 2.0. Also, the federal government could tax nonprofit hospitals for windfall profits.

The biggest savings in Medicaid would come from treating all states the same and ending the practice of rich states subsidizing poor states. Currently, individual states pay between 38.9% and 14.3% of their total Medicaid costs. The federal government picks up the remainder of the bill. Part of this huge difference is because states may choose to vary some aspects of their Medicaid offering. But, most of the difference is simply that Medicaid's formula pays more to states that are poorer.

If all states were required to pay the same share as the highest state share, the total federal cost of Medicaid would drop by more than \$82 billion a year, or more than 10%. Of course, for many states, that is an eye-watering budget shock. Just hitting the national average would cost Indiana \$1.03 billion per year, and matching the highest state level would cost Hoosier taxpayers \$2.75 billion per year.

It should be obvious why the Medicaid formula would be a ripe target for congressional compromise, but the real issue runs a bit deeper. Not only do rich states pay a larger share for Medicaid out of their own budgets, but also the progressive federal income tax collects a higher share of earnings from residents of richer states, like Massachusetts, New York and Connecticut.

So, rich states get a triple whammy on Medicaid. Their residents pay a higher federal tax and then get less back in Medicaid payments. This forces them to also raise state taxes to provide the same level of Medicaid to their residents as poor states.

For example, the average Illinois resident pays \$91 more in state taxes each year to fund their state's higher share of Medicaid than the average Hoosier. Illinois gets back a whopping \$680 less per resident from the federal government for Medicaid than Indiana, while at the same time, the average Illinois resident pays \$90 more in federal taxes than the average Hoosier.

Just to further complicate the issue, 24 of the 25 states with the lowest state share of Medicaid are firmly Republican, while 21 of the 25 states with the highest Medicaid share are firmly Democratic. So, I would expect every budget negotiation to include equalizing Medicaid payment share across states.

I have no idea where the discussion will end up, but it will undoubtedly be part of negotiations for the coming years.

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



Michael Hicks

Hoosier Opinions

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Holly Gaskill, Editor
Mark Miller, Opinion Page Editor

Husband and son won't stop drinking

Dear Annie: My husband and I have been married for 34 years. We have two grown children, both of whom still live with us. They work and pay rent toward our mortgage. I have no problem with their living at home, and I don't think my husband does either. The problem I have is that both my husband and my son are alcoholics. They both work hard, but when they are off, they get drunk, and my daughter and I have a hard time dealing with all the issues.

My son is a closet alcoholic. He stays in his room and drinks, and when he comes out, he is very talkative and emotional, and he gets depressed. My husband can drink beer all day and spend his day doing yard work. In the afternoon, he takes a nap, and when he wakes up, he continues to drink.

They both know they need help, but neither one is making any effort to get that help. My son went to a detox center over a year ago. Unfortunately, since the pandemic hit just after he was released, he did not get follow-up counseling and ended up relapsing.

I spend a lot of time with my best friend, who I've known all my life. Once a year, we go on a small trip. The problem is my husband makes me feel guilty and gets angry at me for these trips. But I just need to get away and have someone to whom I can vent. It seems like my husband just expects me to stay home while he is out doing yard work. Should I be trying to do more to get them to quit drinking? Am I in the wrong here for spending time with friends? — Between a Rock and a Hard Place

Dear Between: No and no. It's up to your husband and son to get the help that they both clearly need. Spending time with your friends outside the house is a very healthy thing, a way of setting boundaries. Unfortunately, your husband is rearing against those boundaries. It seems he's not content to just self-destruct; he wants to drag you down with him. If things continue this way, you may need to consider whether you can truly live under the same roof as

him without it taking a toll on your mental health. To gain some clarity and insight, I encourage you to make an appointment with a therapist who specializes in addiction. You may also find solace and strength in support groups such as Al-Anon (https://www.al-anon.org) or SMART Recovery Family and Friends (https://www.smartrecovery.org/family).

Dear Annie: I've been in a relationship with "Wanda" for three years, living with her for eight months. She's cheated on me many times. When I found out, we'd already been dating for two years, so I figured I'd stay. However, I suspect it's still happening. On top of this, she hits me, spits on my face and calls me names. I guess it's pretty clear that I need to walk away, but for some reason, I don't. I think it's because I'm 38 and have never had a serious relationship work out in the long term. Call me crazy, but I just can't seem to leave. What advice do you have for me? — Beleaguered Boyfriend

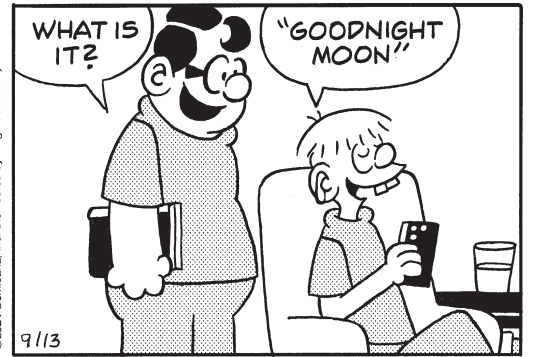
Dear Beleaguered: You deserve better. You owe it to yourself to get out of that house and out of that relationship. Please call the National Domestic Violence Hotline (800-799-7233) — which deals with all forms of domestic abuse — for emotional support and assistance making an exit plan. Give yourself the chance to live the life you're meant to live.

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

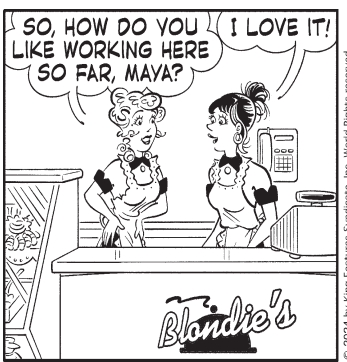
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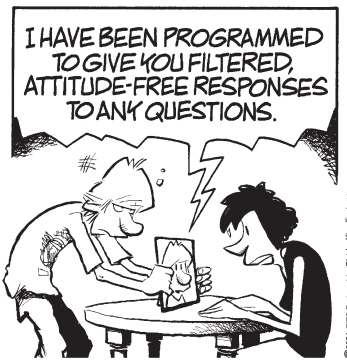
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My Answer

By Dr. Billy Graham



The wonders of God

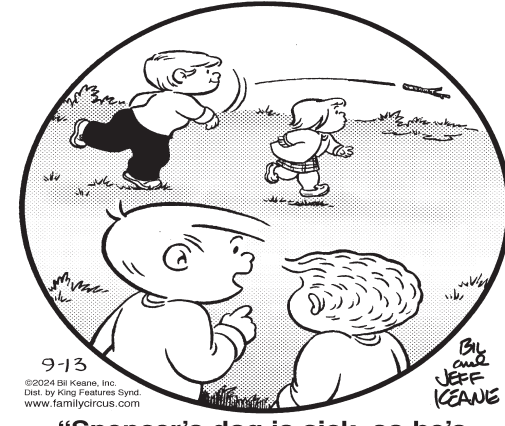
insight. A bar of raw steel may be purchased for a few dollars. But when that bar of steel has been thrust into the fires and processed, when it has been tempered and forged and made into tiny watch springs for expensive watches, that bar of raw steel is turned into something worth thousands of dollars. Fire and the skilled hands of master artisans make the difference in the value.

Just as the sun by its heat and light performs a thousand miracles a day in the plant kingdom, God through the refining fire of His Spirit performs a thousand miracles a day in the spiritual realm. His regenerating power can take the dull and ordinary things of our lives — even

the burned-out ashes of our past — and forge them into something useful, even beautiful, for His purposes. The Apostle Peter wrote concerning trials, "In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to [glorify] ... Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:7, NKJV).

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

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"Spencer's dog is sick, so he's teachin' his little sister to fetch."

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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words. Includes a solution time of 25 mins and a grid for yesterday's answer.

Table with 12 columns (Time slots) and 24 rows (Channels) listing TV programming for Friday, September 13, 2024.

Knights top Tigers, Patriots in girls' golf in preparation for the conference meet

Norwell took the girls' golf match over county rival Bluffton and Heritage at Timber Ridge on Thursday.

The Knights shot a 177, the Tigers 193 and the Patriots 229.

The medalist was Norwell's Ellie Gatton, followed by Savanna Simerman (42), Emma Burnau and Jessica Bynum (47) and Jordyn Schroyer (50).

The Tigers' top golfer was Emma Schwartz with a 45, followed by Piper Morgan and Addison Kauffman (49), Eve Corkwell (50) and Tressa Renner (52).

The Knights also won the junior varsity match, shooting a 233 to the Tigers' 235 and Patriots 242.

Kyle Nevius was the medalist at 49, followed by Jacquelyn Mayer (54), Emma Miller (62) and Maddie Dean (68).

For the Tigers, it was Aleeah Grover with a 53, Isabella Stout (58), SyAnnah Jordan-Turner (59), Rylee Todd (65) and Madelyn Funk (67).

It was senior recognition night for Bluff-

ton, who has two on the team with Renner and Stout.

The match comes on the brink of the NE8 and ACAC meets. Both will be played at Cross Creek with times yet to be determined. Coaches will know by Friday when tee times will be.

The Knights are seeking a strong showing after a solid dual-match season, but have and NE8 regular season champion state-ranked DeKalbahead of them.

The Tigers are looking for a back-to-back title campaign in the ACAC, however, the 2022 champs Southern Wells has made a name for itself with an 11-1 dual-match record and recent win over Bluffton at Dogwood Glen.

An important note for the ACAC is that the conference meet has been moved from its usual location at Celina Linx in Ohio. Coaches have wanted out of that site and have a closer-by, neutral site. Cross Creek meets that criteria as none of the seven schools call that course home.



Norwell's Savanna Simerman (left) takes a cut during the match, and Emma Burnau chips against county rival Bluffton. (Photos by Ryan Walker)

Sports Roundup

Raiders keep winning in girls' golf, defeat Cavaliers

Southern Wells won the girls' golf match on the road at Canterbury on Thursday.

The Raiders shot a 206 compared to the Cavaliers' 246. With the win, Southern Wells is now 11-1 in dual matches this season.

Kolbie Beavans was the medalist at 49, followed by Callie Ripperger (51), Sophie Meeks (52) and Erika Beavans (54).

Southern Wells will be at the ACAC meet at Cross Creek Golf Course with a time to be determined.

Tigers get 1st ACAC boys' tennis win, top Patriots

Bluffton got the first step in an ACAC boys' tennis three-peat on Thursday.

The Tigers defeated Jay County on the road 4-1 in hopes to win another conference championship this year. This was the first of three conference games.

The Tigers are now 7-2 on the season.

Individual results:

- Eli Dirksen (JC) defeated Nolan Lambert 6-2, 6-2 at No. 1 singles.
- Anthony Hartman (B) defeated Tucker Griffin 6-1, 6-1 at No. 2 singles.
- Jacob Ribich (B) defeated Gabe Pinkerton 6-4, 6-2 at No. 3 singles.
- Ben Maggard and Coy Lantz (B) defeated Alex Miller and Kayden Carpenter 6-2, 6-1 at No. 1 doubles.
- Kade Abbett and Dane Schlagenhauf (B) defeated Carter Wellman and Jacob Monroe 6-1, 6-1 at No. 2 doubles.
- Bluffton also won the junior varsity match 6-1.

Results for JV:

- Carter Williams (B) defeated Carson Westerdes 8-3.
- Carson Westerdes (JC) defeated Kenny Mercer 8-4.
- Lance Moser and Jackson Meyer (B) defeated Trap Lex and Kayson Sims 8-1.
- Grant Reifsteck and Jared Moser (B) defeated Trap Lex and Kayson Sims 8-1.
- Jace Draper and Carter Lehman (B) defeated Charles Wellman and Joseph Nichols 8-4.
- Braden Lemler and Chase Houser (B) defeated Charles Wellman and Joseph Nichols 8-0.

Bluffton will be at the Madison-Grant Invitational at 9 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 14.

Knights earn NE8 win over Braves in boys' tennis

Norwell notched an NE8 Conference win at Belmont in boys' tennis on Thursday.

The Knights won by a sweeping score of 5-0. They're now 6-4 on the year.

Individual results:

- Gavin Reynolds defeated Hayden Huss 6-2, 6-2 at No. 1 singles.
- Braylon Troutt defeated Layne Lemaster 6-4, 6-1 at No. 2 singles.
- Landon Diver defeated Larry Knous 6-2, 6-3 at No. 3 singles.

Pac-12 adds Boise State, Fresno State, San Diego State, Colorado State

By RALPH D. RUSSO
AP College Football Writer

After being poached almost into oblivion, the Pac-12 is fighting off extinction by plucking schools from the Mountain West.

The Pac-12 announced Thursday that in 2026 it will add Boise State, Colorado State, Fresno State and San Diego State alongside Oregon State and Washington State in a rebuilt Conference of Champions.

The additions rob the Mountain West of four of its more prominent schools and successful football programs, most notably Boise State. It still leaves the Pac-12 two schools short of the eight it needs to have in place in two years to be recognized as a conference by the NCAA, so more moves are expected.

The Pac-12 and the departing schools will likely be on the hook for about \$110 million in exit fees and penalties to the Mountain West.

It is a remarkable bounce-back move

• Eddie Archbold and Ayden Quintanilla defeated James Miller and Kaden Ramsey 6-1, 6-4 at No. 1 doubles.

• Rylan Heyerly and Dylan Randol defeated Ben Mendoza and Raider Knittle 6-2, 6-1 at No. 2 doubles.

Norwell also won the junior varsity match 2-0

Results for JV:

- Ryan Ewing defeated Kasey Teeter 8-2.
- Greyson Chavis defeated Connor Solomon 8-4.
- Norwell will be at Bluffton for a 4:30 p.m. match Monday, Sept. 16.

Tigers beat Panthers in golf

Bluffton defeated Eastbrook Wednesday in girls' golf at Timber Ridge.

The Tigers shot a 195 to the Panthers' 229.

Emma Schwartz was the medalist at a 40 on the back nine.

The junior varsity team was led by a 51 from Isabella Stout and a 53 by Sy'Annha Jordan-Turner.

Bluffton will be at the ACAC meet at Cross Creek for a time to be determined.

Norwell sweeps Blackford in volleyball match

Norwell swept Blackford on the road in volleyball on Thursday.

The scores were 25-15, 25-17 and 25-11. The Knights are now 8-7 on the season.

Stat leaders: Vanessa Rosswurm 10 kills, Emma Vachon five aces and 22 assists, Izzy Anderson three blocks and Rebecca Settle 14 digs.

Norwell also swept the junior varsity match 2-0 (25-12, 25-15).

Norwell will host Eastbrook at 7 p.m. Monday, Sept. 16.

Tigers drop in straight sets to Starfires in ACAC play

Bluffton hosted and fell to South Adams in ACAC play Thursday night.

The Tigers lost in straight sets by scores of 25-15, 25-23 and 25-16. With the loss, they fell to 2-10 (0-2 ACAC) on the season.

Stat leaders: Maryn Schreiber nine kills, Isla Gibson 15 assists, Marly Drayer two aces and 17 digs, and four players with one block (Konley Ault, Schreiber, Rori Drayer and Gibson).

The Tigers also fell in the junior varsity match 2-0 (25-16, 25-15). Stat leaders: Ava Trexler three kills, Kenley Smith five assists and Jaide Mills seven digs.

Bluffton will host Woodlan at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 17.

Norwell shut out by Bishop Luers in boys' soccer

Norwell fell 9-0 in boys' soccer to Bishop Luers on the road Thursday night.

The Knights also fell in the junior varsity match 4-0.

Norwell will host East Noble in conference play at 6:15 p.m. Monday, Sept. 16.



Bluffton's Eve Corkwell (left) tees off at Timber Ridge Golf Course while Tressa Renner sizes up her next shot vs. Norwell on Thursday.

High School Calendar

FRIDAY, SEPT. 13
FOOTBALL: Woodlan at Bluffton, 7 p.m.; Norwell at Belmont, 7 p.m.; Southern Wells at Wes-Del, 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 14
BOYS TENNIS: Bluffton at Madison Grant Invitational, 9 a.m.

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

GIRLS GOLF: Bluffton, Southern Wells at ACAC meet (Cross Creek), 2 p.m.; Norwell at NE8 meet (Cross Creek), 9 a.m.

VOLLEYBALL: Southern Wells at Lakeland Christian, 3:30 p.m.

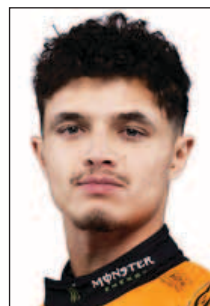
MONDAY, SEPT. 16
BOYS SOCCER: East Noble at Norwell, 7 p.m.

BOYS TENNIS: Norwell at Bluffton, 4:30 p.m.



McLaren set to favor Lando Norris over Oscar Piastri as F1 title race tightens

BAKU, Azerbaijan (AP) — McLaren is set to favor Lando Norris over teammate Oscar Piastri in the final eight races of the Formula 1 season after Norris' title chances were dented by losing the lead to Piastri



Lando Norris

at the previous race in Italy.

Norris goes into this week's Azerbaijan Grand Prix weekend 62 points behind standings leader Max Verstappen but with more momentum. Verstappen is on a run of six races without a win as the Dutch driver struggles with a Red Bull car he's called a "monster."

"We are not classing it as number one and two and I don't think we ever will. But in terms of our process there is a bias towards helping me," Norris said Thursday.

Norris started the last race in Italy on pole posi-

tion but was overtaken by Piastri, giving Ferrari's Charles Leclerc the opportunity to get past Norris for second place too. Leclerc ended up winning the race, with Piastri second and Norris third.

There will be limits to how much Piastri is expected to help Norris, who said he didn't want to be "given" the title, but the exact details remain unclear.

"Second and third (as in Monza) would probably be switched around. In general he will be helping me probably for lower positions. But if he has fought for a win and is deserving of a win then he deserves to win," Norris said.



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U.S. House clears bipartisan package of bills to counter China

By **DIDI TANG**
and **ELSIE CHEN**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. House this week approved a sweeping package of bills to counter China's influence, shoring up a largely bipartisan push to ensure America comes out ahead in the competition between the world's superpowers.

The efforts would ban Chinese-made drones, limit China-linked biotech companies from access to the U.S. market, strengthen sanctions and deepen ties with Asian countries. The campaign to target Beijing this week shows how curbing China's power has emerged as a rare issue of political consensus.

But some measures did pass along party lines, with Republicans arguing the need to protect national security when it comes to everything from education to farmland, and Democrats raising concerns about discrimination. The advocacy group Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote also warned about "overly broad anti-China rhetoric."

One contentious measure seeks to revive a Trump-era program to root out Beijing's spying in American universities and institutes. The bills all still need Senate approval.

"The House sent a powerful, bipartisan message to the Chinese Communist Party: the United States will not sit idly by," said Republican Rep. John Moolenaar, chair of the House Select Com-

mittee on the Chinese Communist Party.

The Chinese Embassy in Washington has said the measures would damage bilateral relations and U.S. interests. "China deplors and firmly opposes this and has lodged serious representations to the U.S. side," spokesman Liu Pengyu said.

Here's a look at key topics that the legislation focused on this week:

Technology

Tech dominated the measures, reflecting a "laser-focused" approach to limit the spread of Chinese technology in the U.S. and prevent Beijing from accessing American innovations, said Craig Singleton, senior China fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies think tank.

The House backed a bill to prevent federal money from flowing to five biotech companies with Chinese ties, described as necessary to protect Americans' health data and reduce reliance on China for U.S. medical supplies.

Another bill that cleared the House would outlaw, on national security grounds, devices from Chinese drone maker DJI, a dominant player in the global market.

"Allowing artificially cheap DJI drones to monopolize our sky has decimated American drone manufacturing and given our greatest strategic adversary eyes in our sky," said Rep. Elise Stefanik, R-N.Y.

To patch a loophole in export

controls, the House backed an amendment that supporters say would cut off remote Chinese access — such as through cloud computing services — to advanced U.S. technology to develop artificial intelligence and modernize its military.

Spying at schools

A bill passed along party lines would direct the Justice Department to curb spying by Beijing on U.S. intellectual property and academic institutions and go after people engaged in theft of trade secrets, hacking and economic espionage.

It's House Republicans' attempt to revive the China Initiative, a Trump-era program meant to curb China's spying in U.S. universities and research institutes. It ended in 2022 after multiple unsuccessful prosecutions of researchers and concerns that it had prompted racial and ethnic profiling.

The measure "brings back the shameful China Initiative, which is the new McCarthyism," said Rep. Judy Chu, D-Calif. She criticized the program for assuming that "researchers and scholars in America should be investigated if they had a nexus with China, such as being born there or having relatives from there."

Rep. Lance Gooden, a Texas Republican and bill sponsor, called racism claims baseless.

Another controversial bill would restrict federal funding to universities with cultural institutes funded by the Chinese government or programs linked to certain Chi-

nese schools.

Rep. Michael Guest, R-Miss., called Beijing's influence inside American schools "one of our nation's most glaring vulnerabilities." Fellow Mississippi Rep. Bennie Thompson, a Democrat, argued the measure could shut down legitimate academic programs, such as exchange students, study-abroad opportunities, guest lectures and sports events.

Farmland and electric cars

Several Democratic lawmakers also raised bias concerns about a measure that flags as "reportable" land sales involving citizens from China, North Korea, Russia and Iran.

The bill also would add the agriculture secretary to the U.S. Committee on Foreign Investment, which reviews the national security implications of foreign transactions.

China "has been quietly purchasing American agricultural land at an alarming rate, and this bill is a crucial step towards reversing that trend," said Rep. Dan Newhouse, a Republican from Washington state.

The National Agricultural Law Center estimates 24 states ban or limit foreigners without residency and foreign businesses or governments from owning private farmland. The interest emerged after a Chinese billionaire bought more than 130,000 acres near a U.S. Air Force base in Texas and another Chinese company sought to build a corn plant near an Air Force base

in North Dakota.

The House also narrowly approved an effort to exclude Chinese electric cars from receiving clean-vehicle tax credits. "America's working families should not be forced to subsidize a nation whose decades of unfair trade practices and government subsidies have led to lost jobs, shuttered factories and hollowed out communities right here at home," said Rep. Jason Smith, a Missouri Republican.

Rep. Dan Kildee, a Michigan Democrat, said the bill's "unclear restrictions" would make it unworkable and "leave the auto industry and batter manufacturers to pull back their U.S. investments."

Diplomacy

The House backed several measures to boost sanctions on China and deepen ties with Asia-Pacific countries to counter China's influence.

One could lead Hong Kong's representative offices in the U.S. to close by stripping them of diplomatic privileges if the territory is deemed to have lost autonomy from mainland China.

To deter Chinese aggression toward the self-governed island of Taiwan, a bill goes after the financial assets of Chinese officials and their immediate families.

Addressing concerns over Beijing's rising military influence, a resolution cleared the House to recognize the importance of cooperation with South Korea and Japan.

Federal review of Uvalde shooting finds Border Patrol missteps but does not recommend discipline

By **VALERIE GONZALEZ**
and **JAMIE STENGLE**
Associated Press

U.S. Border Patrol agents who rushed to the school shooting in Uvalde, Texas, in 2022 failed to establish command and had inadequate training to confront what became one of the nation's deadliest classroom attacks, according to a federal report released Thursday. But investigators concluded the agents did not violate rules and no disciplinary action was recommended.

The roughly 200-page report from the Department of Homeland Security does not assign overarching blame for the hesitant police response at Robb Elementary School, where a teenage gunman with an AR-style rifle killed 19 students and two teachers inside a fourth-grade classroom. Nearly 200 U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers were involved in the response, more than any other law enforcement agency.

The gunman was inside the classroom for more than 70 minutes before a tactical team, led by Border Patrol, went inside and killed the shooter.

Much of the report — which the agency says was initiated to "provide transparency and accountability" — retells the chaos, confusion and numerous police missteps that other scathing government reports have already laid bare. Some victims' family members bristled over federal investigators identifying no one deserving of discipline.

"The failure of arriving law enforcement personnel to establish identifiable incident management or command and control protocols led to a disorganized response to the Robb Elementary School shooting," the report stated. "No law enforcement official ever clearly established command at the school during the incident, leading to delays, inaction, and potentially further loss of life."

Customs and Border Protection said in a statement that investigators "concluded none of the CBP personnel operating at the scene were found to have violated any rule, regulation, or law, and no CBP personnel were referred for disciplinary action."

Families of the victims have long sought accountability for the slow law enforcement response.

Jesse Rizo, whose niece Jacklyn Cazares was one of the students killed, said

that while he hadn't seen the report, he was briefed by family members and was disappointed to hear that it held no one accountable.

Federal officials said the report aimed to determine if agents complied with relevant rules and laws, and if anything could improve their performance in the future.

The report catalogs an array of breakdowns and paints a scene of disorder.

One Border Patrol agent said he couldn't determine who was in command because there were so many agencies. Another agent told investigators he was working an overtime shift when he rushed to the school and was allegedly told by a state trooper, "The chief is in the room with the guy." He said that led him to believe it was a standoff, so he began directing traffic.

Some Border Patrol agents drove more than 70 miles to the school, which is located near the U.S.-Mexico border. One agent told investigators the scene looked "like a Hollywood movie with all the lights and chaos." A supervisor said he looked for a command post but no one knew where it was.

According to messages between agents in the Border Patrol's tactical unit, one agent wrote at 11:44 a.m., "Get everyone to Robb

school in Uvalde. There's a possible/shooting guy with AK/AR." A minute later, an agent sends a message: "Barricaded subject is what their calling it."

Among the findings in the report was that agents' active shooter training had not addressed dealing with a shooter behind a locked door or assessing medical needs.

Nearly 400 local, state and federal officers responded, including over 90 state police officials. Multiple federal and state investigations have laid bare cascading problems in law enforcement training, communication, leadership and technology, and questioned whether officers prioritized their own lives over those of children and teachers.

Two of the responding officers now face criminal charges. Former Uvalde school Police Chief Pete Arredondo and former school officer Adrian Gonzales have pleaded not guilty to multiple charges of child abandonment and endangerment. Last week, Arredondo asked a judge to throw out the indictment. He has said he should not have been considered the incident commander and has been "scapegoated" into shouldering the blame for law enforcement failures that day.

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