

# The News - Banner

www.News-Banner.com

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2024 BLUFFTON, INDIANA • Wells County's Hometown Connection \$1.00



Jack Woods (left) and Pete Olson (middle) of The Veridus Group spoke with the Poneto Town Council about the community's strengths and needs during a special meeting Wednesday night. Council member Paul Miller is pictured at right. (Photo by Holly Gaskill)

## Consulting group meets with county officials for 'master plan'

**By HOLLY GASKILL**  
To develop a "master plan" for economic development, The Veridus Group of Indianapolis has been meeting with local groups to discuss the community's strengths and areas for growth.

Wells County contracted the consulting group for the plan and economic development study in March for \$87,000, \$50,000 of which was covered by a grant from the Wells County Foundation. Veridus also conducted a 2023 housing study of the county

and presented results in February. Veridus Director of Community and Economic Development Jack Woods stated that the group has met with county and Vera Cruz officials, as well as Bluffton NOW! board members. The Poneto Town Council hosted Woods and Pete Olson, Veridus director of government services, in a special meeting on Tuesday.

Woods and Olson outlined four principles in their development of the master plan: prioritizing growth that enhances the quality

of life through housing, infrastructure, jobs and recreational activities; strengthening collaboration among local communities to pool resources; fostering and encouraging civic pride; and encouraging economic growth.

Together, the group and audience discussed Poneto's strengths and weaknesses in the greater picture of the county. Among the town's discussed strengths were its sewer system, churches, community character, quality of

(Continued on Page 2)

## Markle budget met with questions from council

**By JONATHAN SNYDER**

Markle's Town Council held its first reading of the 2025 budget in a special meeting Wednesday, with questions about tax rates and Markle's assessed value at the forefront of the conversation.

Clerk-Treasurer Stephenie Hensley made some edits to the budget and tapped into extra areas, such as LOIT funds for fire and police equipment, to help ease the tax rate for the town. The general fund budget for the town comes out to \$1,177,450 for 2025, a decrease of nearly \$200,000 from last year's fund.

The confusion came with the adopted tax rate portion of the budget. Council member Blake Caley noted that the adopted tax levy was \$2,000 less than last year's number, but that the adopted tax rate went from 1.100 in 2024 to 1.290 in 2025.

"These numbers don't make sense to me," Caley said to Hensley. "I know you're saying that they (state budget representatives) give you that adopted tax rate ... help me understand why when our adopted budget is significantly less than last year's adopted budget as far as dollar numbers ... but yet our adopted tax rate is significantly higher. I can't explain that to my constituents when they say, 'Why did you raise the Markle tax rate so much?' when what I see is we're spending less."

After some investigation, Council member Nicolas Lund found that Markle's assessed values were listed at \$44 million down from \$52 million last year. This caused Hensley and the council to believe that a calculation error occurred during the process. Hensley will contact the

(Continued on Page 2)

## Visitors Commission reviews changes in 2024 budget

**By HOLLY GASKILL**

Looking toward the end of its first full year — and with unexpected financial changes — the Wells County Convention and Visitors Commission discussed its year-end budget on Wednesday.

Tourism Coordinator Audrey Dudley noted some unexpected costs due to the dissolution of the economic development branch of the Chamber of Commerce, where Dudley's role was originally housed. These costs included office rental, \$350 per month, and phone services, \$350.

Because of this, Dudley said the commission would likely not offer as much in marketing grants for the remainder of 2024.

Even so, Dudley shared positive reports from recent grant

recipients, including the Bluffton Parks Department and the Wells County Historical Society. Board member Brandy Fiechter, also parks superintendent, said Parlor City Trot had record-high participation and the majority of participants were from out-of-county.

Dudley also shared an updated contract for one year of services from Britton Marketing, totaling just under \$42,000. The commission will continue to use LC Media for videography.

Board members Michelle Blount, Steve Higgins, Zane Herr, Justin Osborn and Jeff Reed were also present Wednesday; Scott Elzey, Jon Winne and Jay Esparza were absent.

holly@news-banner.com

## Forum for Norwell board trustee candidates to be Oct. 15

Norwell Community Schools will host a forum for its general election board of trustees candidates on Oct. 15.

There are three candidates running for the board — Cathie Peterson and Jeremiah Tomlin for the Lancaster Township seat, currently held by Angie Topp, and Todd Nash for the Jefferson Township seat, currently held by Gene Donaghy.

The forum will begin at 6:30 p.m., or following the regular board meeting scheduled for 5:30 p.m. at the Norwell High School auditorium. All three candidates are expected to be present.

The last day to register to vote is Oct. 7. To register to vote and check voter registration status, visit indi-

anavoters.in.gov.

Early voting begins on Oct. 8 at the Wells County Clerk's Office, and is available from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays through Nov. 1, as well as 8 a.m. to noon on Nov. 4. Absentee or early voting is also available 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 26 and Nov. 2 at the Clerk's Office, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 26 and Nov. 2 at Presbyterian Church, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Oct. 28 and 29 at the Wells County 4-H Park, and 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Oct. 31 and Nov. 1 at Lighted Gardens.

Election Day voting will be available from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Nov. 5 at the 4-H Park, Presbyterian Church, Lighted Gardens, Zanesville Tower Life Center and Southern Wells Community Church.

## NORWELL COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, LANCASTER TOWNSHIP

### Two vie for open Norwell seat

**Cathie Peterson, 4754 E 200 N, Craigville.**

Peterson, 44, is a real estate broker with Steffen Group Auction and Real Estate Company.

She is a Bluffton Elks member and scholarship sponsor, campus life sponsor, and serves on the Wells Community Swim Team Board and Norwell Swim Boosters Board. Peterson also volunteers in the classroom at Lancaster elementary School, Forgotten Children Worldwide, Helping Hands and the children's ministry at Hope Church in Bluffton.



Cathie Peterson

**Qualifications**  
I have had children continuously in Norwell Community Schools since 2009. I have spent a lot of time volunteering in classrooms, getting to know teachers, staff and students at all four of our campuses. I have experience in starting and running multiple successful small businesses and I am invested in not only

(Continued on Page 2)

**Jeremiah Tomlin, 1506 Bell Brook Blvd., Bluffton.**

Tomlin, 36, is a senior project estimator at Hagerman Incorporated, where he's worked since 2014.

He serves as a deacon at Grace Bible Church in Berne and recently became a prayer leader at LifeWise Northern Wells. Tomlin has also been endorsed by the Northeast Indiana Right to Life's Political Action Committee.

**Qualifications**

I'm a concerned parent of two elementary-age children at Norwell Community Schools, and I've maintained a career and community involvement that has developed leadership skills and a knowledge of public K-12 schools.

As a council member at Grace Bible, I've developed the requisite skills to thoughtfully, prayerfully, and collaboratively deliberate and vote on issues that

(Continued on Page 2)



Jeremiah Tomlin

## Candidates spar in the first general election gubernatorial debate

**By WHITNEY DOWNARD, Indiana Capital Chronicle**

Two of Indiana's three gubernatorial candidates spent an hour Wednesday night trading barbs and promoting their campaign platforms in the first televised debate of the general election, hosted by Fox59 and CBS4.

Republican Mike Braun and Democrat Jennifer McCormick each met the polling threshold established by the networks for the gubernatorial debate. A third candidate, Libertarian Donald Rainwater, didn't meet that standard but will appear onstage for Thursday's gubernatorial debate with WISH-TV.

Topics included a recently manipulated advertisement from the Braun campaign and the Republican nominee for lieutenant governor saying the other side invoked a "Jezebel spirit."

The conduct of Braun's running mate, self-described Christian nationalist Micah Beckwith, prompted the harshest back-and-forth between the nominees, with McCormick repeatedly calling for an apology from the campaign.

"It's ridiculous. He's dangerous," she said of Beckwith.

(Continued on Page 3)

### Inside

Local/Area

- Local News . . . . . 3
- Police Notebook . . . 3

Opinion

- Angelkeep . . . . . 4

Also...

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

### Outside



Sunny and breezy today, cool and clear tonight

| Today   | Friday  | Saturday |
|---------|---------|----------|
| High 76 | High 75 | High 76  |
| Low 48  | Low 47  | Low 57   |

More Weather on Page 2

### Online

Follow us on Facebook!  
Go to [www.facebook.com/newsbanner](http://www.facebook.com/newsbanner)

Place Your Classified Ads 24/7

Vol. 95 No. 284

THURSDAY  
October 3, 2024

**RACING NEWS**

**NASCAR** Stay on track with the latest news from the

- Nascar Circuit
- Formula 1
- Indy Car

Every **Thursday & Friday** in the News-Banner

How to contact us:

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

On the Web:  
[www.news-banner.com](http://www.news-banner.com)

Follow us at:  
[twitter.com/newsbanner](https://twitter.com/newsbanner)





# Consulting group

(Continued from Page 1)  
schools, volunteerism, the recent addition of fiber-optic internet and appeal to those interested in living in a small town. Town council members Paul Miller, Kelly Potter and Linda Ogle also discussed the town's cost of living — although housing prices have increased, the area remains somewhat

affordable for families. However, the group recognized Poneto's disadvantages in its distance from grocery stores, gas stations, and other essentials and law enforcement response times. They also cited issues with nuisance dogs, drugs, understanding of government, communication, unity and a lack of funding.

"I don't see it (Poneto) growing much," Ogle said. "I just want to improve what we've got." Potter said the relatively new board would also like to identify more of a long-term plan, and Ogle discussed seeking grants to improve sidewalks and parks. The group was also enthusiastic about the idea of a Dol-

lar General and several new housing additions, if they didn't disrupt the current community's way of living. Woods and Olson said they are meeting next with representatives from the towns of Markle and Ossian. They also expect to promote a survey to the community at the end of the month.  
*holly@news-banner.com*

# Markle budget

(Continued from Page 1)  
state budget representative today and get answers about the assessed values dropping and investigate the tax rate increase. Caley said that it's not fair to see Hensley's budgetary work in minimizing the adopted tax levy undone by a miscalculated tax rate.

"I'm excited that our need is down \$2,000," Caley "I feel like we've done our job, but that doesn't jive with why the tax rate went up significantly. The tax rate should have gone down an equal percentage."

Another reading of the budget is scheduled for the council's Oct. 16 meeting. Other notable numbers in the budget include a lack of tax levy for the Parks fund and a \$200,000 local road and bridge matching grant.

Additionally, the council held a public hearing on different improvements for drinking water in the town. Holly Miller of DLZ presented the three projects that Markle proposed to the state for SRF funding. These include improvements to the water treatment plant, replacing water mains on Lee and Sparks streets and looping the water main from the industrial park back into the town.

Operations Manager Mike Grant stated that the town was required to

give a list of all the projects that they would like to see done, knowing that the town would not do all of them. Grant admitted that a wholesale building extension and filter replacement of the water treatment plant is highly unlikely, due to the high cost of that specific project. The Lee and Sparks streets water main replacements are still planned.

Furthermore, the town read a draft of an ordinance amendment regarding fees for water and wastewater-related utilities. Hensley and Grant stated that rates for water consumption, water meter size, treatment rate, collection system maintenance and tap charges are expected to go up approximately 30%. A rate assessment from Baker Tilly gave them the number, due to inflation and rising equipment costs. There will be no fee for leak adjustments, however.

"That's strictly 30% from our last rate increase, which is mirroring inflation," Grant said. "That's not above and beyond, that's just inflation. They (other communities) are all doing the same thing, they have to. Most people just think, 'I pay taxes (on these).' These are not funded by taxes, these are their own operating businesses that run off of revenue received, and we

can't run a business in the red."

Grant also presented two quotes for widening the Novae Parkway and Ascher Drive intersection. Problems with truck traffic see a need to widen the intersection, according to Grant. TW Excavating had the low bid of \$24,756, which was approved, while API Construction Corporation's bid was over \$10,000 more. Additionally, a pump failure for wastewater at a lift station on Miller Street saw the council pay \$8,300 to replace both pumps, as they have reached the end of their usable life.

Additionally, Hensley and the council discussed discontinuing the Markle text alert service due to a lack of sign-ups from the community. Town Marshal John Markley, represented by Hensley, believes that the town is not getting their money's worth for the service. The fee to continue supplying the service is \$2,000 per year, with the invoice due on Oct. 31.

Council member Matthew Doss stated that while he sees the service's advantages, it is not worth the cost if people are not using it. Further discussions, including data on how many people are using the service, will take place at the council's Oct. 16 meeting.  
*jonathan@news-banner.com*

# Peterson

(Continued from Page 1)  
our School Community, but Wells County as a whole.

**Why are you running for this office?**

I believe our local School Board of Trustees is one of the most important government units affecting our daily lives. As my children have gotten older, I have seen the importance of being informed and involved in the issues facing our corporation.

I feel as a parent and involved community member, I have a lot to bring to the table. I am excited to address issues and concerns with the valuable input of parents, staff and other community members. Cultivating a culture of trust is something I feel very passionate about and I believe we are better together.

**As a candidate for an**

**open seat, what initiatives would you continue? What changes or new initiatives are needed?**

First, I would like to bridge the gap between the Norwell Community and the school board. I'm running a campaign that is focusing on bringing accessibility, transparency and accountability.

Even as an active member of the Norwell Community, there will be issues and concerns that other parties can bring to my attention that otherwise might go unnoticed by the board. I would like to be an advocate for transparency in decision making. I will work to bring clear communication regarding budget decisions and policy updates. I want to implement more accessible reporting methods, like newsletters and enhancing our social media updates. The past few years, the focus

has been on attracting new students. While this is important, I believe it is more vital to ensure we are dedicated to our current students and families needs; If we are devoted to becoming the best version of ourselves, others will naturally want to be a part of our community as well.

**What do you feel are the most significant challenges and opportunities for Norwell right now?**

I believe one of the biggest challenges we are facing right now is fiscal responsibility. After speaking with many local taxpayers, there is a concern for the seemingly endless cycle of bond issuances. I have also seen a high turnover of staff over the past few years and would like to explore the causes for these vacancies and solutions to retaining these quality employees.

Furthermore, having kids in the high school, I am concerned with the amount of students that are vaping and using other illegal substances; this is a culture problem and as a school corporation, we need to be exploring ways to combat this issue. We have so many positive organizations pouring into our kids locally, a collaborative approach to addressing the issue is needed.

Norwell Schools have done an outstanding job with the recent addition of many dual credit courses as well as the career technical Education programs. We have an amazing opportunity to leverage that with local employers. I would seek to have more dialogue with county employers to figure out how to retain our students in our community post graduation.

# Tomlin

impact a larger group. As a senior estimator at Hagerman, I've worked on more than a dozen projects with eight regional public-school corporations. When working on these projects, I've worked collaboratively with the board, teachers, coaches, and administrators to create spaces that perform above expectations and will stand the test of time, all while staying within the budget constraints faced by the corporation.

**Why are you running for this office?**

I'm running for this position because I want the best for the children in our community, both mine and yours.

Through my career, I've sat in tough meetings tasked with making the best decisions possible, and I've brought successful construction projects to many other school corporations in Northeast Indiana. As a result of sitting in countless board meetings at these various corporations, I've seen and experienced many of the difficult situations school boards are faced with — dealing with a pandemic, discipline of faculty, budget issues, course offerings, special education, and countless others. I'm running because I'm the right choice to rise

to the challenge and help fortify the future of our children.

**As a candidate for an open seat, what initiatives would you continue? What changes or new initiatives are needed?**

I love the strategic planning meetings, the corporation-wide surveys, and focus groups the corporation has been implementing over the past several years. Our community is stronger together. With insights and opinions from more stakeholders, we can create out-of-the-box solutions to issues that arise, areas that can be optimized, and long-term strategic planning. I would love to see more opportunities to have input from as many of our community members with vested interest as possible. Along the same lines, I'd like to see the school board make a concerted effort to make public comment during meetings more encouraged and comfortable.

I'd like to see Norwell make a greater effort to nurture the bottom 25% and top 25% of learners. This will help strengthen our community as the next generation of Knights become the next generation of citizens, employees, business owners, and parents in north-

ern Wells County. On the flip side, I think we need to allow the top 25% to flourish and grow at their own pace. Although I believe we have a lot of options for advanced learners at the high school level, I would like to see us create more opportunities for advanced learners at the elementary and middle school levels in order to maximize these students' potential.

**What do you feel are the most significant challenges and opportunities for Wells County right now?**

A challenge I'd like to see addressed is staff turnover/retention. I personally know several teachers that have left for other school systems. I'd like to see our

school corporation lead the pack in attractive employment. I feel great staff leads to great education, and I find significant value in continuity.

We've spent significant energy over the past decade renovating our facilities, and in large part, I feel like the short-term facility needs are minor when compared to the actions already taken. With that in mind, our biggest opportunity is the ability to turn our focus toward education, extracurriculars, and student experience for all our students, from kindergarten through their senior year and from our most affluent to those who need the most assistance. I'm excited for what's next.

# Weather

**Thursday, October 3, 2024**  
**(24-hour observations at 11:26 p.m. Wednesday)**  
**High: 73; Low: 45; Precipitation: None**  
**Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.25 feet at 8:45 p.m. Wednesday**

# Wells County forecast

**Today:** Sunny, with a high near 76. Calm wind becoming southwest around 5 mph in the afternoon.  
**Tonight:** Clear, with a low around 48. Southwest wind around 5 mph becoming calm.  
**Friday:** Sunny, with a high near 75. Calm wind becoming north around 5 mph in the afternoon.  
**Friday Night:** Mostly clear, with a low around 47. North wind around 5 mph.  
**Saturday:** Sunny, with a high near 76.  
**Saturday Night:** Clear, with a low around 57.  
**Sunday:** A 20% chance of showers after 2 p.m. Sunny, with a high near 79.  
**Sunday Night:** A 10% chance of showers before 8 p.m. Clear, with a low around 45.  
**Monday:** Sunny, with a high near 67.  
**Monday Night:** Mostly clear, with a low around 41.  
**Tuesday:** Sunny, with a high near 66.  
**Tuesday Night:** Clear, with a low around 41.



Voted #1

Locally Owned Restaurant in Wells County!

260-824-4950

1415 South Main Street, Bluffton, IN 46714

Carpet Binding • Installation • Floor Covering Specialists



136 West Market Street  
Bluffton, IN

Call For Appointment  
260-438-9001

Open by Appointment  
Monday thru Friday

Committed to Serving You Better!




2883 E State Road 124, Bluffton, IN 46714  
**(260) 824-4929**

More Than Just Transmissions  
Heating/AC - Tune-Ups - Brakes  
Computer Diagnostics and More!

In Bluffton since 1979 www.experttrans.com

Finest Wine In Wells County!



HOURS

Thursday - Friday 3:00 - 8:00pm  
Saturday 12:00 - 8:00pm

(765) 727-1027

www.dash90wines.com  
zane@dash90wines.com

6750 W 900 S-90 Warren, IN 46792


Upcoming Events

October 18 - Texas Tenderloin  
October 19 - Texas Tenderloin

FORT WAYNE  
Box Drop

Mattress & Furniture  
260-227-2145

No Credit Needed Financing  
Take it Home Today!



Family Owned & Operated

Amy & Tracy Houtz  
260-227-2145

7824 Bluffton Rd.  
Fort Wayne, IN

Best Selection  
Incredible Savings

By Appointment:  
Tues - Wed - Thurs

Showroom Open:  
Fri & Sat 11am - 4pm

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

www.news-banner.com or www.facebook.com/newsbanner

Surprisingly great rates  
right around the corner.



I'm your one-stop shop for the service you deserve at a price you want. Call me for surprisingly great rates and Good Neighbor service right in your neighborhood.

Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.  
Individual premiums will vary by customer. All applicants subject to State Farm underwriting requirements.



State Farm  
Bloomington, IL  
2001878

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





The photo above features Jessica Bennett and Megan Torrao alongside their family and Chamber Ambassadors. (Photo submitted)

## New dog grooming business comes to town, Divine K-9s LLC

The Wells County Chamber of Commerce, along with its ambassadors, is excited to welcome Divine K-9s to the community with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at their new location, 201 E Market Street, Suite 6 in Bluffton. This new pet grooming business, owned by Jessica Bennett and Megan Torrao, brings years of experience and a passion for pets to Wells County.

During the ribbon-cutting event, Jessica Bennett and Megan Torrao introduced themselves and shared their story. Jessica, an experienced groomer of eight years, explained, "We started Divine K-9s to continue doing what we love—grooming and caring for pets—while also giving back to the community." Megan, who has over 35 years of experience as a veterinary technician and groomer, added, "We're excited to provide a safe, happy environment for pets to be groomed."

Divine K-9s offers a wide variety of grooming services, including baths, nail trimming, ear cleaning, de-shedding treatments, cat nail care, haircuts, teeth brushing, and anal gland expression upon request. Their goal is to ensure every pet is comfortable and leaves looking and feeling great.

Jessica and Megan emphasized that their focus is on providing personalized care for each animal. "We take the time on each pet's needs," said Jessica. "We don't rush, and we make sure they're happy and comfortable the entire time."

Divine K-9s is open Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 5 PM, with Saturdays available as needed, starting at 9 AM. Clients can expect flexible scheduling and personalized grooming services based on their pet's needs.

While Divine K-9s currently offers grooming services, Jessica and Megan hope to expand to include boarding and daycare in the future. "We want to take baby steps," Megan shared. "But our long-term goal is to provide a space where pets can stay with us, play, and get groomed all in one place."

To schedule a grooming appointment, customers can call Divine K-9s at 260-353-3040. The team is currently working on their website and Facebook page, where additional information, including pricing, will be available soon.

Jessica and Megan are thrilled to be part of the Bluffton community and look forward to helping local pet owners care for their furry family members.



## Youth Leadership Forum

The 14th Annual Youth Leadership Forum was held Wednesday at the Wells County Public Library, with all three districts represented. Pictured is this year's group, which included: Sophie Eisenhut, Isla Gibson, Addison Yates, Sierra Clark, Alexandria Koby, Owen Lesh, Elliott Brown, Aaron Streveler, Libby Arnett and Kierstynn Reed from Bluffton High School, Sydney Alstoft from Southern Wells, and Addison Case, Rilyn Ervin, Sam Evans, Tristen Gase, Jaycie Grzych, Melissa Hoag, Ella McIntosh, Alison Simerman, Colton Strunk, Tyler Weaver, Charli Swindell, Campbell Sloan, Adam Mahnen-smith, Cohen Garrett, Eden Stoppenhagen, Lucy Gerber, Kylee Hannie, Grant Tudar, Lucile Thompson, Emmaline Johnson, Emma Miller, Bella Swineford, Camille Cains, Noah Schamerloh, Sophia Gerber, Nolan Weedman, Brady Smith, Gage Reinhard, Kale Fuess and Cayden Cassell from Norwell. (Photo by Holly Gaskill)

## Gubernatorial debate

(Continued from Page 1)

Braun fired back by saying, "when you're focusing on a lieutenant governor, that means you're shaky on what your own plans are going to be. Obviously, in this state, a governor is going to call the shots ... when you focus on that, that means you're afraid you don't have enough to offer Hoosiers (and) address kitchen table issues."

But McCormick said she isn't afraid to lead.

"But I also know, and I'm crystal clear, it's about character. We need someone at the top of that ticket who will represent us well at the national level, and who will also have a running mate who will serve us well."

Braun repeatedly tied McCormick to national Democratic policies, though she has never held an elected position as a Democrat. McCormick, meanwhile, pointed to low quality of life metrics and education outcomes in Indiana under the last two decades of Republican control and called for a change in leadership.

### Gubernatorial debate highlights

Both candidates have released detailed plans outlining their priorities if elected governor, tackling topics such as property taxes, education and economic development.

Moderators asked specifically about ballot initiatives, which have been used in other states to enshrine reproductive health care access. Braun said he was open to such an effort if it gained momentum but affirmed his anti-abortion stance.

"We're a right to life state," Braun said, throwing his support behind the state's near-total abortion ban. "It is a bill that sanctifies life, we're a state that does that with reasonable exceptions. And I think the people have spoken, the legislature listened and we got a bill that seems to be working."

Striking that ban has been a key part of McCormick's campaign and she claimed women have already died due to the ban. She said she would "absolutely" support an effort for ballot questions.

"I'm the only person on stage who's been pregnant; I'm the only person on this stage who's given birth ... and I understand firsthand the complexities associated with pregnancy," McCormick said. "I know my opponent said that ... he thought we got it right. And when you make comments like that, we put a lot of women's lives at risk."

An educator and the state's last elected Superintendent of Public Instruction, McCormick called for increasing teacher salaries to \$60,000, saying "if we can't get education right, we can't get the economy right."

"We do need to pay our teacher the way their non-educator peers are being paid or we're never going to attract them," McCormick said. "When I was in office, Indiana was ranked 35th in the nation ... since I left, we have fallen to 41st. So we're going in the wrong direction."

Braun repeated his call to expand school choice - Indiana currently offers vouchers to nearly all Hoosier families, something that McCormick would "pause" to lift up

teacher salaries - and criticized district-level spending.

"If you look at what we invest in a classroom - building, utilities, maintenance, upkeep - including teacher pay, it's about \$245,000 per classroom ... you're putting that much into buildings and maintenance and upkeep, and you're not getting the most important thing right, which is teacher pay and benefits," Braun, a former school board member, said. "To me, \$60,000 is way too modest."

Salary increases would be paid by identifying ways to run classrooms more efficiently and not putting money into buildings or operations, he said.

McCormick repeated her call for Indiana to start its own marijuana legalization process, first medicinally followed by recreationally, while Braun said he was open to legalizing the drug for medical purposes. He cautioned, though, that he would weigh law enforcement concerns heavily.

### National topics

Gubernatorial debate moderators also asked questions related to national politics, including border security and Medicaid growth.

Braun said the immigration plan of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris, the latter of whom is running on the Democratic ticket for president, was to "open the borders," bringing in fentanyl and cartels.

"... now all states are border states and we're putting up with the complications of it," Braun said.

McCormick, meanwhile, pointed to Braun's 'no' vote on a bipartisan border funding bill that would have hired more patrol officers, accusing Braun of "playing politics" to sink the measure.

Braun said it would have allowed too many border crossings, though Biden took executive action to enact limitations that would have been included in the bill and border crossings fell.

Nationwide, Medicaid costs are growing alongside general health care costs.

In Indiana, growth in demand for certain services led to a \$1 billion shortfall and the end of attendant care wages for parents as well as a waiting list for services for both disabled and elderly Hoosiers. Even more recently, a whistleblower lawsuit accused hospitals and insurers of \$700 million in fraud.

"I've been on the phone (with) a lot of families who are quite upset because their children or adults are not receiving services that they don't only need, but they deserve," McCormick said. "A third of Indiana is on Medicaid, that's massive ... having been in charge of a state agency over half of the state's budget ... I would have had some answers if I would have had a shortfall or misappropriated money to that degree."

McCormick slightly overestimated the number of Hoosiers on Medicaid, which is closer to one in four Hoosiers following an effort to unwind federal protections under COVID-19.

## Police Notebook

### INCIDENTS

**City:**  
Tuesday, 6:05 p.m., 1200 block of Sycamore Lane. Tree fallen in roadway. Removed.

Tuesday, 8:02 p.m., 745 N Main St. Citation issued for no valid license.

Tuesday, 9:29 p.m., Welches All Vehicle Repair. Suspicious man walking through parking lot. Gerald Steger arrested on warrant.

Tuesday, 10:07 p.m., 100 block of West Wiley Avenue. Report of stolen yard decorations and flag.

Wednesday, 9:25 a.m., Bluffton-Harrison Middle School. School resource officer received two referrals for possible neglect.

### County:

Tuesday, 1:08 p.m., Wells County Jail. Warrant served on Michael Kidwell.

Tuesday, 5:32 p.m., Wells County Highway Garage. Alarm. Nothing found, believed the wind likely blew one of the doors open.

Tuesday, 8:21 p.m., 300 W and S.R. 116, Markle. Car vs. deer.

Wednesday, 9:59 a.m., Wells County Jail. Warrant served on Sonshez Malekhi Stiles-Olin.

**Ossian:**  
Tuesday, 8:44 p.m., 4549 N S.R. 1, Ossian. Deer with broken legs put down by officer.

Wednesday, 12:19 a.m., S.R. 1 and U.S. 224, Ossian.

Driver cited for 74 in a 55 mph zone.

### FIRES

Tuesday, 11:20 p.m., 1211 Lancaster St., Bluffton. Report of a ceiling fan on fire. Bluffton, Liberty Township and Ossian fire departments responded.

### ARRESTS

Michael Alexander Kidwell, 26, Uniondale; probation violation, a Level 6 felony. Bond not set.

Gerald Lee Steger Jr., 33, Bluffton; invasion of privacy, a Class A misdemeanor. Bond set at \$25,000.

Sonshez Malekhi Stiles-Olin, 20, Fort Wayne; invasion of privacy, a Class A misdemeanor. Bond set at \$25,000.

## All-you-can-eat Fish, Chicken and Tenderloin supper

The Twin Bridge Conservation Club in Mt. Zion will host a fish, chicken and tenderloin supper from 4:30 to 7 p.m. on Satur-

day, October 5.

Cost for the meal will be \$12 for adults and \$6 for children ages 6-12.

## Obituary Policy

The News-Banner and Ossian Journal publishes "basic" obituaries free of charge for "local" deaths. "Basic" obituaries will include the deceased's name, age, community of record, date and place of death, basic genealogical information, the date, time and location of calling hours and services and the name of the funeral home handling arrangements.

If additional information and/or a photo is desired to be included, or if the deceased does not meet the definitions of a "local" person, there is a charge.

Area funeral homes will provide details on the policy and will coordinate obituary publication.

**WE HELP YOU GET SOCIAL SECURITY, MEDICARE AND MEDICAID READY!**

**Jerry Flack & Associates**  
WE REPRESENT MANY - MANY - MANY INSURANCE COMPANIES  
WE HAVE ALL THE MEDICARE AND MEDICAID OPTIONS AVAILABLE

**PRESTON KAHR - JULIE MYERS - CONNIE VANGELAKOS**

**MARKETPLACE ANNUAL ENROLLMENT IS NOV 1<sup>ST</sup> - DEC 15<sup>TH</sup>**  
**The Price Tag is the Same Everywhere Consider Local for Better Service**  
**MEDICARE ANNUAL ENROLLMENT OCT 15 TO DEC 7 CALL US**

**WHEN YOU HAVE PROBLEMS AND YOU WILL HAVE PROBLEMS YOU WILL HAVE US TO COUNT ON**  
**MEDICARE SUPPLEMENTS - MEDICARE ADVANTAGE PLANS - PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLANS.**

**Life Insurance - Long Term Care Insurance - Investments - Individual and Small Group Health - Dental - Vision - Hearing - Cancer Insurance**

**Folks on Medicare A and B and Diabetic can get FREE Nice Looking Diabetic Shoes Every Year from Us** | **We Do FREE Information/ Education Seminars In Your Business (Again Former Teachers)**

**WE CAN MEET: IN OUR OFFICE - IN YOUR HOME - IN A FAVORED LOCATION**

**In the 1882 Building at Main & Market with the mural on the outside wall • 260-824-1618**

**FAST, RELIABLE FIBER INTERNET**

SOLUTIONS FOR HOME AND BUSINESS  
UNLIMITED DATA | UP TO 1\* GBPS | 24/7 SUPPORT

**SERVICE NOW AVAILABLE IN MANY AREAS.**  
Sign up today or get fiber-ready by signing the underground agreement.  
**Call for more details!**  
833.727.5563  
twncomm.com/heartland

\*Services provided by TWN Communications. Not available in all areas. Restrictions, terms and conditions apply. Taxes, regulatory, surcharges and other charges are applicable. A line connection fee may be applicable. Call for details or visit twncomm.com/terms-conditions for additional information and terms and conditions of services. Residential customers on qualifying internet plans will receive download/upload speeds of 25.0 Mbps to 1.0 Gbps, per respective plan. A 30-day notice is required to cancel service.



## Schools face mounting financial pressures on non-discretionary costs

The 37-member Indiana Urban Schools Association, representing approximately one-third of all students in traditional public schools, plays a crucial role in preparing the next generation of Hoosier leaders for employment, enlistment, or higher education. However, like other local entities, school districts across Indiana are facing growing financial pressures, particularly from escalating non-discretionary costs, while trying to balance property tax constraints and meet community expectations.



David Marcotte

### Hoosier Opinions

Property tax reforms implemented in the early 2010s, combined with the lingering effects of the 2008 recession, led to a significant reduction in property tax revenue per student from 2010 to 2012. While revenues have rebounded, growing 7.6% annually from 2021 to 2023, the overall growth rate from 2010 to 2023 remains at just 2% per year. This limited recovery has not been enough to fully address the financial restraints many school districts still face when meeting local expectations and providing mandated services like serving special education students.

From 2010 and 2023, inflation consistently outpaced the revenue growth in Indiana's schools Operations Fund. While inflation averaged 2.9% annually, Operations Fund revenue grew by 1.5%, eroding purchasing power and making it harder for districts to manage fixed costs and other non-discretionary costs. Non-discretionary costs are services and expenses school districts are obligated to provide and paid for out of the Operations Fund which is funded by local property taxes.

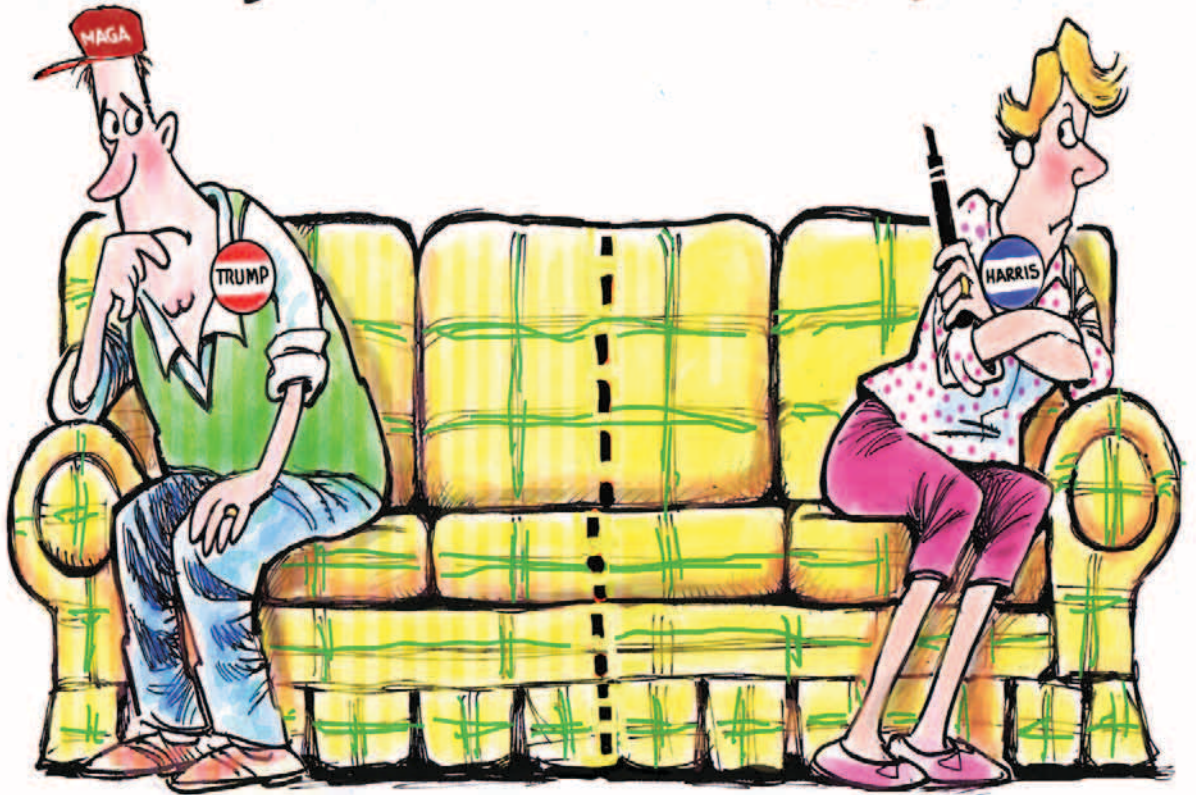
*School funding will be a key part of 2025 property tax and budget discussions.*

Transportation, utilities, and property/casualty insurance, three non-discretionary costs, account for over 75% of the Operations Fund's total revenue in many school districts. In those districts most impacted by property tax caps, these three non-discretionary costs exceed the total revenue generated from property taxes. This forces districts to rely either on referendums, borrowing the money (debt), or transferring dollars from the state-provided Education Fund, which is intended to pay for teacher salaries and benefits. As a result, schools have little room left in their budgets for other critical needs such as student support services, building maintenance, technology upgrades and preparing to meet the demands of a new diploma structure.

Compounding these challenges are the increasing costs associated with the Debt Service Fund, also funded by local property taxes. Inflation in construction and capital outlay costs has driven school construction expenses up by 5.5% annually, yet debt service revenue has only grown by 2.6% per year since 2010. This gap places additional strain on school district budgets as they struggle to manage both existing facilities and future capital projects.

As lawmakers prepare to consider property tax reform, Indiana's schools around the state are navigating an increasingly difficult financial landscape while meeting the demands of their local community. The rapid rise in non-discretionary costs restricts schools' ability to invest in critical areas such as technology, infrastructure, and student services at a time when new diploma requirements are being rolled out. As essential costs continue to rise, Indiana's school corporations are forced to dedicate a growing portion of their budgets to cover these unavoidable expenses. With little flexibility for discretionary spending, there is an urgent need for financial strategies that address these structural challenges so schools can continue to prepare students to serve their communities and shape Indiana's future.

David Marcotte is executive director of the Indiana Urban Schools Association.



©VAVEGRANLUND.COM  
POLITICAL CARTOONS.COM

## Between Harris and Trump, it's hard to tell who's worse on economic matters

If cynics are people prematurely disappointed about the future, they might now constitute something recently elusive: an American consensus. With voting well underway a month before Election Day (actually, during election autumn), gaze upon the campaign's stricken landscape:

Kamala Harris got a modest bounce after winning what former speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) calls, with imperturbable sangfroid, "an open primary." (You missed it? Pay attention!) Perhaps the vice president's bounce occurred because many voters resemble the one in 1984 who said he supported Colorado Sen. Gary Hart's presidential candidacy because Hart was the only candidate he had not heard of a month before.

Harris is parsimonious with interviews, but who cares? They can only reveal today's batch of her views, which tend to expire in batches. It would, however, be fun to find out if there is any question — e.g., are there enough submarines for the AUKUS partners? — she will not answer by saying, "I was raised a middle-class kid, okay?"

Former president Donald Trump still resembles the "Bleak House" character about whom Charles Dickens wrote: "When he has nothing else to do, he can always contemplate his own greatness. It is a considerable advantage to a man, to have so inexhaustible a subject." But Trump's ongoing choices of colorful companions raises a question: Has a ship's hull ever become so encrusted with barnacles that the weight of them sank the vessel? The Trump campaign should wonder. He evidently enjoys the company of the dregs of America's political culture — Holocaust deniers, 9/11 "truthers," Tucker Carlson, who praises a "historian" who thinks Winston Churchill was beastly to Adolf Hitler.

Trump, whose churchgoing seems to be, at most, intermittent, nevertheless enjoys the support of many evangelicals. They forgive his seaminess because he is pro-life. Or was for a while, after he stopped being pro-choice, before he recently became that again.

Trump says Harris is inconstant and her running mate is risky. His own — JD ("I don't really care what happens to Ukraine") Vance — could at any moment (Trump is 78) take his governing experience (so far, not quite one-third of a Senate term) into the chair behind the Resolute Desk.

One way to locate candidates on the left-right spectrum is to determine how much they favor govern-

ment manipulations of economic processes. It is unclear which candidate promises the furthest-left fidgets.

Harris, an artist — a Rembrandt — of vagueness, says she will "seek practical solutions to problems" based on "realistic assessments" and apply "metrics" and "facts" and stay "focused." Clear enough? She also says: "I will engage in what Franklin D. Roosevelt called 'bold, persistent experimentation.'" (FDR's goal was to put Americans back to work. In mid-1938, after almost five years of bold, persistent experimenting, unemployment was 20 percent, fewer than four points better than in January 1933.)

Harris wants to increase corporate taxation, which must come at the expense of employee compensation, shareholders (which include pension funds) or consumers of products whose prices are raised to compensate for government siphoning corporate revenue. Harris thinks the rich are not paying their "fair share." (The top 0.1 percent of earners pay 33.5 percent of federal income taxes; the top 10 percent pay 27 percent; the bottom 50 percent, 2.3 percent.) Eighty percent of those harvesting the Biden-Harris tax credits for buying electric vehicles earn more than \$100,000 a year.

Her industrial policy will pick winners (and therefore, necessarily, losers), directing government subsidies to the most promising industries of the future. She has not said how her political career equipped her for such economic clairvoyance.

Trump evidently believes that the tax code is insufficiently complex, budget deficits are too small, the cost of living is too low and presidents should cudgel companies into behaving as presidents want. So far (he has time to enlarge his menu of economic micro-managements) he proposes:

Ending taxation of Social Security benefits, tips and overtime. (How many trillions this would diminish revenue and enlarge the national debt would depend on how imaginatively people fiddled their compensation packages to expand the portion from tips and overtime.) Consumers would pay Trump's tariffs on all imports, including tariffs imposed to express presidential pique. He says that if machinery manufacturer John Deere shifts some production to Mexico, he will slap 200 percent tariffs on every Deere product imported for U.S. consumers.

So, there is your choice. Be careful, lest you pick the wrong one.

georgewill@washpost.com.



George Will

## Today in History

By The Associated Press  
Today is Thursday, Oct. 3, the 277th day of 2024. There are 89 days left in the year.

Today in history: On Oct. 3, 1990, West Germany and East Germany ended 45 years of postwar division, declaring the creation of a reunified country.

Also on this date:  
In 1944, during World War II, U.S. Army troops cracked the Siegfried Line north of Aachen, Germany.

In 1951, the New York Giants captured the National League pennant by a score of 5-4 as Bobby Thomson hit a three-run homer off Ralph Branca of the Brooklyn Dodgers, which became known as the "Shot Heard

"Round the World."

In 1974, Frank Robinson was named the American League's first Black manager after he was hired by the Cleveland Indians.

In 1995, the jury in the O.J. Simpson murder trial in Los Angeles found the former football star not guilty of the 1994 slayings of his former wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and Ronald Goldman.

In 2008, O.J. Simpson was found guilty of robbing two sports-memorabilia dealers at gunpoint in a Las Vegas hotel room. (Simpson was later sentenced to nine to 33 years in prison; he was granted parole in July 2017 and released from prison in October of that year.)

Angelkeep looked at the Jack-O-Lantern created for our Halloween décor. Its broad toothy smile displayed the joy of the holiday that runs rampant all month for children and candy merchants.

Abundant candy was represented by gaps between the Jack-O-Lantern's teeth. The upside-down triangle nose failed to sniff the tendrils of burning leaf smoke wafting around the neighborhood. Two pyramid eyes cannot see. They miss the peak of nature's colors unfolding this week.

Those blind eyes are sad indeed. Angelkeep remembered the time — shy but a year from a quarter century ago — when doctors noticed advanced stages of eyesight loss to this columnist. Due diligence, doctors' care, medications, and God's Grace kept the sight intact, only diminished. The initial fear and concern recently had been found, although written by Eliza Cook in poetic form and published in 1857.

With fall's focus on the human senses being delighted, the apple and cider focusing on taste, this poem became very special to Angelkeep. It's shared here, 167 years later, to encourage all Angelkeep Journals readers to be especially aware of nature in October. It's more than Halloween's approach.

**The Blind Boy at Play.**

The blind boy's been at play, mother,  
And merry games we had!  
We led him on his way, mother,  
And when we found a starry flower,  
And praised its varied hue,  
A tear came trembling down his cheek,  
Just like a drop of dew.

## Angelkeep Journals

"We took him to the mill, mother,  
Where falling waters made  
A rainbow o'er the rill, mother,  
As golden sun-rays played;  
But when we shouted at the scene,  
And hail'd the clear, blue sky,  
He stood quite still upon the bank,  
And breathed a long, long sigh.  
"We asked him why he wept, mother;  
Where'er we found the spots  
Where periwinkles crept, mother,  
O'er wild forget-me-nots.  
'Ah me!' he said, while tears ran down  
As fast as summer showers —  
'It is because I cannot see  
The sunshine and the flowers.'  
"Oh! That poor, sightless boy, mother,  
Has taught me that I'm blest;  
For I can look with joy, mother,  
On all I love the best;  
And when I see the dancing stream,  
And daisies red and white,  
I kneel upon the meadow sod,  
And thank my God for sight."



Alan Daugherty

Autumn's changing colors can astound the eyes. Not only do the leaves magically change colors but also native plants erupt with blooms matching the colors of the overhead leaves. Many of the weeds of summer suddenly become blooming wildflowers of the season prior to winter. God provides one last burst of vibrant

hues before turning the earth into neutrals and whites. All too soon the warm colors of autumn will be found only on the birds.

Some of the birds changed colors. Bright yellow male finches turned to a drab olive. The lesser colored female golden finches put on a neutral feathery coat against the winter months. Deer darkened from their amber summer glow to deep brown. In some cases a predominant gray. Many other examples of color loss in winter served as reason enough to get outdoors. Bask in the colorful and sensual display autumn offered.

While walking about, it might be wise to seek a pearl crescent identifiable with the bright orange color against black markings. It appeared as though its creation came as a reminder of Halloween's approach. Its last flights disappear soon after that holiday. It recently became a new Angelkeep discovery. It measured only about an inch in width. The white crescent moon-shaped designs at the base of each hindwing give more credence to association with Halloween.

Its first science discovery came in 1773. Additionally it held shapes that appeared like the outline of a pumpkin with a frowning crescent mouth. They lingered around the last of the blooming asters. Asters were another colorful fall flower that will cease to display vibrant hues after Halloween. Asters, once called Michaelmass daisies, were named that due to blooming on and after September 29, the ancient feast day of St. Michael the Archangel.

Mr. Daugherty is a Wells County resident who, along with his wife Gwen, enjoy their backyard and have named it "Angelkeep."

## The News-Banner

(USPS 059-200)

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

### News-Banner Publications, Inc.

George B. Witwer, Chairman of the Board  
Doug Brown, President, Publisher  
Dianne Witwer, Secretary/Treasurer

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

Holly Gaskill, Editor  
Mark Miller, Opinion Page Editor

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







# Knights, Tigers get sweeps; will meet in sectional championship for a Wells County rematch

By RYAN WALKER

It's time to get the brooms out and let the rivalry banter begin.

Both Bluffton and Norwell got their sweeps in the boys' tennis sectional on Wednesday and will clash together for the championship at 4:30 p.m. tonight.

The defending champion Knights were the first off the courts in a 5-0 victory over Northeast 8 competitor Belmont with ease.

The win comes with a solid weekend at the Delta Invitational, going 1-1 with a win to Muncie Burriss and a loss to state-ranked Delta before rain canceled the fun.

Now, Norwell will roll up down the road for a chance at a repeat.

"It was really good to have this match and to be able to have a win going into tomorrow," Norwell head coach Noah Tobias said. "I think these couple of wins have boosted our confidence even more. We've had really a tough couple of weeks just because we've played such good competition. To go into the sectional championship with a couple of wins here recently, I think it's going to really help us as a whole."

The defending runner-up Tigers took care of South Adams in a more unconventional way.

Bluffton knew South Adams was coming with an edge that nearly beat the Tigers earlier in the year 3-2 and got them last season for a loss. This postseason matchup wasn't any different except for the score, but there's more to the story.

Bluffton was ahead 2-0, ahead at No. 3 singles with Jacob Ribich, and a neck-and-neck at No. 2 singles and No. 3 singles with Anthony Hartman and Nolan Lambert.

Ribich's match was wrapped up, and his opponent chucked his racket at the net in frustration. Blake Childs, the tournament director from Huntington North, caught the display and awarded Bluffton a rightful code of conduct penalty in their favor.

This was the second offense, as the same player already whacked his racket against the ground, but the match with Ribich was already over. That meant that the next highest match on the courts would get punished.

The first offense is a point penalty, but the second is a game. So Lambert's match with Kade Sprunger would be the punished game.

Lambert won the first set, but trailed 4-3 in the second. Sprunger was serving when he was told his match was getting a game punishment and his serving chance was over. The match was then tied, and Lambert won the final two games to ultimately win 6-4 for the sweep.

The match's implications were high, as No. 1 singles and doubles players that continue the postseason undefeated can advance as individuals when the season is over. So Sprunger is eliminated and Lambert stays alive.

"Selfishly, they took care of their ole ball coach tonight because they know how much I don't like losing to South Adams," Vanderkolk said. "To come out and win pretty decisively early on and to have those extra two points ... the guys are excited and they also know we've got one more match

to win."

With both county schools advancing, it will be a repeat of the sectional championship from last season.

Norwell captured it 3-2, and Vanderkolk famously called his shot to win it the next season.

The Tigers edged the Knights 3-2 earlier in the year, but this time the stakes are much higher. Anything can happen in the postseason.

It would be the Knights' shot at two in a row, while the Tigers want the second in Vanderkolk's tenure and first since 2015.

Norwell hasn't changed its lineup since that match, but Bluffton will be getting back Anthony Hartman at No. 2 singles, who was out the previous meeting.

That forced Ribich up to No. 2 singles, in which he won, but junior varsity player, Reid Abbett got the call to play against Norwell's Landon Diver and fell 6-3, 6-4.

Thursday will bring out the best of both teams. The county rivalry continues between the two coaches, who are alumni of the teams they now coaching. The trophy, the bragging rights — a story of redemption or of repeated success.

"I think we can do it tomorrow," Tobias said. "Whenever we faced Bluffton earlier this year, it was 3-2 and they were close matches. Those games were so close and almost went to deuce every game. We were right there, and I think we play better than our county rivals as we feel like there's more on the line, but now that we've been working towards this all season and we're finally here, I'm excited to see our guys go out and play."

"They're starving for this," Vanderkolk said. "Practice, matches, walking the halls in the school. They stop by the classroom just to chit-chat for a minute. This is an easy group to coach because I don't have to push and motivate them ... I know I jokingly say it, but there's never a doubt when these guys hit the courts."

#### Individual results:

**Norwell vs. Belmont**  
• Gavin Reynolds defeated Hayden Huss 6-1, 6-3 at No. 1 singles.

• Braylonn Troutt defeated Kasey Teeter 6-0, 6-0 at No. 2 singles.

• Landon Diver defeated Larry Knous 6-3, 6-3 at No. 3 singles.

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

• Rylan Heyerly and Dylan Randol defeated Raiden Knittle and Ben Mendoza 6-2, 6-4 at No. 2 doubles.

**Bluffton vs. South Adams**  
• Nolan Lambert defeated Kade Sprunger 6-2, 6-4 at No. 1 singles.

• Anthony Hartman defeated Cole Hyman 4-6, 6-2, 7-5 at No. 2 singles.

• Jacob Ribich defeated Kade Sturwold 6-1, 6-3 at No. 3 singles.

• Ben Maggard and Coy Lantz defeated Gabe Neuenschwander and Ian Neuenschwander 6-3, 6-2 at No. 1 doubles.

• Kade Abbett and Dane Schlagenhauf defeated Isaiah Conrad and Ben Dubach 6-0, 6-0 at No. 2 doubles.



Norwell's Braylonn Troutt (right) sends a forehand to Belmont's Kasey Teeter during the No. 2 singles match in the sectionals at Bluffton Wednesday. Troutt swept Teeter and helped the Knights to a 5-0 sweep and championship berth. (Photos by Ryan Walker)



Bluffton's Anthony Hartman (right) prepares to dish a return to his opponent of South Adams with head coach Robert Vanderkolk (middle) and assistant coach Hunter Cunningham watching. His win over Cole Hyman, his first loss of the season, led the Tigers back to the championship for the second year in a row with a 5-0 sweep.

## Mann scores six goals and places third in state, Knights rout Warriors

Norwell finished the regular season for girls' soccer with a 7-0 rout over Woodlan on Wednesday.

The Knights finished with an 11-5 record, their third-straight winning season.

Grace Mann scored six of the seven goals for Norwell; Olivia Daniel scored the other. Ridley Sheets, Karrigan Melcher, Aubrey Meyer, Issie Isch and Shae Brooks recorded an assist.

In net, Abby Wagner and Maggie Neuenschwander pitched the shutout.

With the six goals, Mann has 40 now on the season — that ties for second in the state and sixth in the country according to Max-Preps. Other matches will add statistics by the end of the week.

In the junior varsity match, Norwell won 1-0 (one half). Kayleigh Hartup scored the lone goal. Kaylee Bennett assisted. Emma Garner was in net.

Norwell will play the winner of Woodlan and Canterbury at 5 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 10 at home for the sectional.

## High School Calendar

### THURSDAY, OCT 3

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

VOLLEYBALL: Norwell at New Haven, 7 p.m.; Woodlan at Southern Wells, 7 p.m.

### FRIDAY, OCT 4

FOOTBALL: Heritage at Bluffton, 7 p.m.; DeKalb at Norwell, 7 p.m.; Southern Wells at Adams Central, 7 p.m.

### SATURDAY, OCT 5

CROSS COUNTRY (co-ed): Bluffton at the Bluffton Invitational, 10 a.m.; Norwell NE8 meet at Huntington North, 10 a.m.

### MONDAY, OCT 7

VOLLEYBALL: Norwell at Bluffton, 7 p.m.

### TUESDAY, OCT 8

BOYS SOCCER: (Sectional) Norwell vs. Woodlan at Concordia, 7 p.m.

GIRLS SOCCER: (Sectional) Norwell at home vs. Canterbury/Heritage.

VOLLEYBALL: East Noble at Norwell, 7 p.m.; Anderson Prep at Southern Wells, 7 p.m.

### WEDNESDAY, OCT 9

VOLLEYBALL: North Side at Bluffton, 7 p.m.; Wes-Del at Southern Wells, 7 p.m.

### THURSDAY, OCT 10

GIRLS SOCCER: (Sectional) TBD at Norwell, 5 p.m.

VOLLEYBALL: Huntington North at Norwell, 7 p.m.; Southern Wells at Adams Central, 7 p.m.

## Gritty Tigers close out playoff sweep of Astros with victory in Game 2 of Wild Card Series

By KRISTIE RIEKEN

AP Sports Writer

HOUSTON (AP) — Manager A.J. Hinch wanted his Detroit Tigers to embody their home city. Hard-working with a never-give-up attitude, but most of all a team that had grit.

That's how they stormed into October — and just kept going.

Andy Ibanez hit a tie-breaking three-run double in Detroit's four-run eighth inning, and the Tigers swept the Houston Astros with a 5-2 victory in Game 2 of their AL Wild Card Series on Wednesday.

"Our city is built on grit," a jubilant Hinch said in a prosecco-soaked clubhouse. "That's what it is. I remember saying that I wanted to have a team that this city is proud of. I think the city is pretty proud of what we're doing and how we're doing it and the fight that this team shows."

Parker Meadows homered as Detroit ended Houston's run of seven consecutive appearances in the AL Championship Series. It was a sweet moment for Hinch, who led Houston to a championship in 2017 and was fired in the aftermath of the Astros'



sign-stealing scandal.

"This is what you play for," he said. "Baseball's great."

Next up for the wild-card Tigers is a trip to Cleveland to take on the AL Central champions in a best-of-five AL Division Series. Game 1 is on Saturday.

"Regardless that nobody was rooting for us, regardless that nobody was putting us in the playoffs in a good spot, we didn't care," Ibanez said. "We just put in hard work ... to make the results come."

Kerry Carpenter sparked Detroit's eighth-inning rally with a one-out single off Ryan Pressly (0-1), who converted his first 14 postseason save opportunities. Carpenter advanced to third on a single by Matt Vierling and scored on a wild pitch, tying it at 2.

Pressly departed after Colt Keith reached on a two-out walk, and closer Josh Hader walked Spencer Torkelson to load the bases.

Hinch then sent Ibanez up to hit for Zach McKinstry, and he lined a 1-2 sinker into the corner in left for a 5-2 lead.

Ibanez hadn't driven in a run since Sept. 10. He hit just .167 in September.

(Continued on Page 7)



### NASCAR Cup Series

#### YellaWood 500

Site: Talladega, Alabama.

Schedule: Saturday, qualifying, 1:30 p.m., Sunday, race, 2 p.m. (NBC)

Track: Talladega Superspeedway.

Last race: Ross Chastain took the lead from Martin Truex Jr. on a restart with 20 laps to go and held off playoff leader William Byron to win for the first time this season at Kansas. Truex was third in his final season of racing.

Next race: Oct. 6, Talladega, Alabama.

### NASCAR Xfinity Series

#### United Rentals 250.

Schedule: Saturday, qualifying, 11:30 a.m.; race, 4 p.m. (CW)

Last race: Aric Almirola ran down Xfinity playoff leader and defending series champion Cole Custer to win at Kansas.

Next race: Oct. 12, Concord, North Carolina.

### NASCAR Truck Series

#### Love's RV Stop 225

Schedule: Friday, qualifying 2 p.m.; race, 4:30 p.m. (FS1)

Last race: Corey Heim sped past faltering Ty Mejeski to win a playoff elimination race at Kansas.

Next race: Oct. 26, Homestead, Florida.

### Formula 1

Last race: Lando Norris chipped seven points from Max Verstappen's lead with a dominating victory at the Singapore Grand Prix from the pole on Sept. 22.

### IndyCar

Last race: Alex Palou claimed his second consecutive IndyCar championship and third in four years at Nashville Superspeedway three weeks ago.

Next race: March 2, 2025, St. Petersburg, Florida.

### NHRA Drag Racing

Last event: Jack Beckman, driving for John Force Racing, took the Funny Car title at the NHRA Mid-West Nationals, outracing fellow veteran Ron Capps for the title.

Next event: Oct. 9-13, Ennis, Texas.

### World of Outlaws

Weis Markets National Open, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania.

Last events: The races at Sharon Speedway in Hampton, Ohio, last weekend were canceled due to persistent rain from Hurricane Helene.

INNOVATIVE CONCEPTS AUDIO VIDEO SECURITY NETWORKING

UTV

Marine

Motorcycle Sound Systems

Jockford Fosgate

(260) 724-2276

1421 Manchester St., Decatur

1/2 block west of U.S. 27 North

www.icav.us

PRECISION SERVICE

Family, Farm and Fleet Vehicle Repair

FLEET ACCOUNTS AVAILABLE

0520 S. Decker Dr. Bluffton

"The Quality Service You Deserve!"

260-824-9149

Bluffton Tire Inc.

1308 S. Main St. Bluffton

10% OFF

Discontinued Closeout Tires

1-260-824-0418



# Gritty Tigers

(Continued from Page 6)

“He’s had a tough stretch,” Hinch said. “But his season restarts in October, and he’s showing that.”

Vierling, Keith and Torkelson jumped around and high-fived in celebration after scoring on Ibáñez’s clutch swing. Ibáñez raised his arms high above his head and smiled as he reached second.

Hader, who signed a \$95 million, five-year contract with Houston in January, allowed three hits and walked two in 1 1/3 innings.

Detroit used seven different pitchers a day after pitching Triple Crown winner Tarik Skubal got the win in the series opener. Sean Guenther pitched 1 2/3 innings for the win in Game 2, and Will Vest handled the ninth for the save.

In the postseason for the first time since 2014, Detroit also got a solo home run from Meadows in the sixth to help the franchise to its first playoff series win since the 2013 ALDS.

Just making it to the playoffs seemed improbable before Detroit went 31-13 down the stretch in the regular season, helped along by the leadership of Hinch — who knows a little something about October success from his time with the Astros.

“They did everything right to win the series,” Houston second baseman Jose Altuve said.

Eight of the first nine Wild Card Series since they began in 2002 have been sweeps. It’s the fourth sweep in postseason history for the Tigers, who previously swept the AL Championship Series in 1984, 2006 and 2012.

The Astros jumped in front in the seventh, but they lost their seventh straight postseason game at home. Houston’s ALCS streak included four World Series appearances and two titles.

“It’s tough,” manager Joe Espada said. “But I want our guys to be proud of how far we’ve come. It was a very challenging season, and we reached the postseason — that’s our goal every year. We win the division, and then play deep into the playoffs. It didn’t happen for us this year, but I want our guys to be proud of their resiliency and how tough this season was.”

The AL West champions failed to get the big hits they relied on in the regular season, but manufactured a pair of runs with hustle plays in the seventh.

Mauricio Dubón hit a bunt single to load the bases with no outs. Pinch-hitter Jon Singleton hit a chopper that was fielded by first baseman Torkelson, who threw home from his knees. The throw was in front of the plate and not in time to beat Victor Caratini.

Torkelson, who was given an error on the play, smacked the ground in disgust after Caratini touched home, tying it at 1.

Altuve then hit a flyball that Vierling caught in foul territory in right, but his throw home wasn’t in time to beat the speedy Jeremy Peña.

Houston designated hitter Yordan Alvarez returned for this series after sitting out since spraining his right knee Sept. 22. He had two hits Tuesday, but he went 0 for 3 with a walk in Game 2 while clearly still struggling with the injury.

Asked if he would have played if these were regular-season games, he said: “That’s a really good question, I don’t know.”

Houston starter Hunter Brown had allowed just one hit on a double in the second when Meadows smacked his home run off the foul pole in right field to start the sixth.

Brown struck out nine in 5 1/3 innings in his eighth postseason game and first start.

# News-Banner Scoreboard

## FOOTBALL

### NFL AMERICAN CONFERENCE

| East        |   |   |     |      |        |
|-------------|---|---|-----|------|--------|
| W           | L | T | Pct | PF   | PA     |
| Buffalo     | 3 | 1 | 0   | .750 | 122 83 |
| N.Y. Jets   | 2 | 2 | 0   | .500 | 76 62  |
| Miami       | 1 | 3 | 0   | .250 | 45 103 |
| New England | 1 | 3 | 0   | .250 | 52 87  |

| South        |   |   |     |      |        |
|--------------|---|---|-----|------|--------|
| W            | L | T | Pct | PF   | PA     |
| Houston      | 3 | 1 | 0   | .750 | 79 94  |
| Indianapolis | 2 | 2 | 0   | .500 | 85 85  |
| Tennessee    | 1 | 3 | 0   | .250 | 79 90  |
| Jacksonville | 0 | 4 | 0   | .000 | 60 109 |

| North      |   |   |     |      |         |
|------------|---|---|-----|------|---------|
| W          | L | T | Pct | PF   | PA      |
| Pittsburgh | 3 | 1 | 0   | .750 | 75 53   |
| Baltimore  | 2 | 2 | 0   | .500 | 106 88  |
| Cincinnati | 1 | 3 | 0   | .250 | 102 104 |
| Cleveland  | 1 | 3 | 0   | .250 | 66 87   |

| West          |   |   |     |       |       |
|---------------|---|---|-----|-------|-------|
| W             | L | T | Pct | PF    | PA    |
| Kansas City   | 4 | 0 | 0   | 1.000 | 92 72 |
| Denver        | 2 | 2 | 0   | .500  | 62 55 |
| L.A. Chargers | 2 | 2 | 0   | .500  | 68 50 |
| Las Vegas     | 2 | 2 | 0   | .500  | 78 97 |

### NATIONAL CONFERENCE

| East         |   |   |     |      |         |
|--------------|---|---|-----|------|---------|
| W            | L | T | Pct | PF   | PA      |
| Washington   | 3 | 1 | 0   | .750 | 121 102 |
| Dallas       | 2 | 2 | 0   | .500 | 97 104  |
| Philadelphia | 2 | 2 | 0   | .500 | 86 96   |
| N.Y. Giants  | 1 | 3 | 0   | .250 | 60 84   |

| South       |   |   |     |      |        |
|-------------|---|---|-----|------|--------|
| W           | L | T | Pct | PF   | PA     |
| Tampa Bay   | 3 | 1 | 0   | .750 | 97 78  |
| Atlanta     | 2 | 2 | 0   | .500 | 75 85  |
| New Orleans | 2 | 2 | 0   | .500 | 127 70 |
| Carolina    | 1 | 3 | 0   | .250 | 73 129 |

| North     |   |   |     |       |        |
|-----------|---|---|-----|-------|--------|
| W         | L | T | Pct | PF    | PA     |
| Minnesota | 4 | 0 | 0   | 1.000 | 116 59 |
| Detroit   | 3 | 1 | 0   | .750  | 104 82 |
| Chicago   | 2 | 2 | 0   | .500  | 77 75  |
| Green Bay | 2 | 2 | 0   | .500  | 104 89 |

| West          |   |   |     |      |        |
|---------------|---|---|-----|------|--------|
| W             | L | T | Pct | PF   | PA     |
| Seattle       | 3 | 1 | 0   | .750 | 102 85 |
| San Francisco | 2 | 2 | 0   | .500 | 103 82 |
| Arizona       | 1 | 3 | 0   | .250 | 96 106 |
| L.A. Rams     | 1 | 3 | 0   | .250 | 75 115 |

### Thursday's Games

|                                |
|--------------------------------|
| Dallas 20, N.Y. Giants 15      |
| <b>Sunday's Games</b>          |
| Atlanta 26, New Orleans 24     |
| Chicago 24, L.A. Rams 18       |
| Cincinnati 34, Carolina 24     |
| Denver 10, N.Y. Jets 9         |
| Houston 24, Jacksonville 20    |
| Indianapolis 27, Pittsburgh 24 |
| Minnesota 31, Green Bay 29     |

Tampa Bay 33, Philadelphia 16  
San Francisco 30, New England 13  
Washington 42, Arizona 14  
Kansas City 17, L.A. Chargers 10  
Las Vegas 20, Cleveland 16  
Buffalo 35, Buffalo 10

### Monday's Games

Tennessee 31, Miami 12  
Detroit 42, Seattle 29

### Thursday, Oct. 3

Tampa Bay at Atlanta, 8:15 p.m.  
Sunday, Oct. 6  
N.Y. Jets vs Minnesota at London, GBR, 9:30 a.m.

Baltimore at Cincinnati, 1 p.m.  
Buffalo at Houston, 1 p.m.  
Carolina at Chicago, 1 p.m.  
Cleveland at Washington, 1 p.m.  
Indianapolis at Jacksonville, 1 p.m.  
Miami at New England, 1 p.m.  
Arizona at San Francisco, 4:05 p.m.

Las Vegas at Denver, 4:05 p.m.  
Green Bay at L.A. Rams, 4:25 p.m.  
N.Y. Giants at Seattle, 4:25 p.m.  
Dallas at Pittsburgh, 8:20 p.m.  
Open: L.A. Chargers, Tennessee, Detroit, Philadelphia  
Monday, Oct. 7  
New Orleans at Kansas City, 8:15 p.m.

## BASKETBALL

### WNBA Semifinals

No. 1  
New York 2, No. 4 Las Vegas 0  
Sunday, Sept. 29: New York 87, Las Vegas 77  
Tuesday, Oct. 1: New York 88, Las Vegas 84  
Friday, Oct. 4: New York at Las Vegas, 9:30 p.m.  
x-Sunday, Oct. 6: New York at Las Vegas, TBD  
x-Tuesday, Oct. 8: Las Vegas at New York, TBD

No. 2 Minnesota 1, No. 3 Connecticut 1  
Sunday, Sept. 29: Connecticut 73, Minnesota 70  
Tuesday, Oct. 1: Minnesota 77, Connecticut 70  
Friday, Oct. 4: Minnesota at Connecticut, 7:30 p.m.  
Sunday, Oct. 6: Minnesota at Connecticut, TBD  
x-Tuesday, Oct. 8: Connecticut at Minnesota, TBD  
WNBA Finals  
Thursday, Oct. 10: Game 1, TBD

## BASEBALL

### MLB

#### MLB Postseason Glance WILD CARD SERIES (Best-of-3)

**American League**  
Detroit 2, Houston 0  
Tuesday, Oct. 1: Detroit 3, Houston 1  
Wednesday, Oct. 2: Detroit 5, Houston 2  
Kansas City 2, Baltimore 0  
Tuesday, Oct. 1: Kansas City 1, Baltimore 0  
Wednesday, Oct. 2: Kansas City 2, Baltimore 1  
National League  
New York 1, Milwaukee 0  
Tuesday, Oct. 1: New York 8, Milwaukee 4  
Wednesday, Oct. 2: New York (Manaea 12-6) at Milwaukee (Montas 7-11), 7:38 p.m. (ESPN)  
x-Thursday, Oct. 3: New York at Milwaukee (Myers 9-6), 8:38 p.m. (ESPN2)  
San Diego 1, Atlanta 0  
Tuesday, Oct. 1: San Diego 4, Atlanta 0  
Wednesday, Oct. 2: Atlanta (Fried 11-10) at San Diego (Mussgrove 6-5), 8:38 p.m. (ESPN2)  
x-Thursday, Oct. 3: Atlanta at San Diego (Cease 14-11), 7:08 p.m. (ESPN2)

#### DIVISION SERIES (Best-of-5)

**American League**  
(TBS, truTV, Max)  
New York vs. Baltimore or Kansas City  
Saturday, Oct. 5: Kansas City at New York (Cole 8-5), 6:38 p.m.  
Monday, Oct. 7: Kansas City at New York (Rodón 16-9), 7:38 p.m.  
Cleveland vs. Detroit  
Saturday, Oct. 5: Detroit at Cleveland (Bibee 12-8), 1:08 p.m.  
Monday, Oct. 7: Detroit at Cleveland, 4:08 p.m.

**National League**  
(Fox, FS1)  
Los Angeles vs. San Diego or Atlanta  
Saturday, Oct. 5: San Diego-Atlanta winner at Los Angeles (Flaherty 13-7), 8:38 p.m.  
Sunday, Oct. 6: San Diego-Atlanta winner at Los Angeles (Yamamoto 7-2), 8:03 p.m.

## WEDNESDAY'S DRAWINGS

### HOOSIER LOTTERY

Cash 5 — 03-08-10-39-43  
Lotto Plus — 03-09-10-18-35  
Cash4Life — 03-12-13-37-60, Cash Ball: 01  
Quick Draw Midday — 01-07-09-12-14-17-18-20-22-23-32-35-36-37-43-48-53-66-78-79, BE: 01  
Daily Three-Midday — 05-07-04, SB: 01  
Daily Three-Evening — 02-04-09, SB: 08  
Daily Four-Midday — 08-00-02-09, SB: 01  
Daily Four-Evening — 00-07-04-05, SB: 08  
Quick Draw Evening — 01-02-03-20-21-34-36-37-38-39-43-44-54-55-58-60-61-63-69-71, BE: 01  
Hoosier Lotto — 06-08-09-10-18-35

### MEGA MILLIONS

Estimated jackpot (for Friday): \$108 million  
**POWERBALL**  
01-02-21-37-43 Powerball: 21; Power Play: 3X

## Lottery Numbers

# The Classifieds

Place Your Ad 24/7: GO TO [www.news-banner.com](http://www.news-banner.com) AND CLICK ON "Classifieds"  
OR CALL 824-0224 MON-FRI 8-5 • TOLLFREE 800-579-7476 • FAX 824-0700

**Plus!** SEE your ad published every day in Wells County homes ...  
All ads are searchable at [classifieds.news-banner.com](http://classifieds.news-banner.com)...

## SUDOKU

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

### King Classic Sudoku

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 7 |
| 5 | 7 |   |   |   | 3 | 8 |   |   |
|   | 4 | 3 |   |   |   |   | 6 |   |
|   |   |   | 2 |   |   | 4 |   | 8 |
|   | 3 | 5 |   |   | 8 |   |   |   |
|   | 2 |   | 4 |   | 6 | 7 |   |   |
| 7 | 6 |   |   | 5 | 2 | 9 |   |   |
|   |   |   | 2 | 6 | 8 |   |   | 5 |
|   | 5 |   | 9 | 7 |   | 2 | 8 |   |

Difficulty: ★★★ 10/3

## VEHICLES

### Campers/RV's

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

## This Week's Garage Sales

Clip & Save

2 HUGE GARAGE sales in Bell Brook, off Dustman, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 8-? 1533: Lots of name brand items (Adidas, Nike, Puma, Ugg, North Face, Skechers, Sperry), baby, kids, adult clothes, various sizes, tons of shoes, boots, purses (Michael Kors, Kate Spade, Coach), breast pumps w/accessories, baby gates, toys, American Girl salon & spa set, Legos, movies, decor, elliptical, homemade pies, cookies.  
1510: Hunting, fishing, maternity clothes, household items, toys, antiques, much more.

1115 SOUTH MORGAN STREET, BLUFFTON ESTATE SALE. Furniture, (including cabinets, couch, dressers, chair, etc) tv, glassware, heaters, misc. tools, cookie jars, chest freezer, air conditioners and collectables. Saturday, Oct. 05, 8:00 AM-5:00 PM. In garage, behind the house. Rain or Shine

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

## EMPLOYMENT

### Help Wanted

**TOWN OF WARREN**, Indiana Hiring Utility Manager. An application period for the position of full time Utility Manager is now open through October 15, 2024, due to retirement. Department to oversee include water, sewer, electric, parks and streets. Duties include employee management, project planning, maintenance of positive relationships with the public, all employees and officers of the Town, representation at workshops and meetings, scheduling of regular day to day and long term operations. The position is a mix of office and field work. Must hold at least a WT3 or DSM license, have at least eight years experience with managerial a plus. Knowledge of Electric Utility also a plus. Base pay of \$28.50 per hour adjusted upward based on experience. Benefit Package available. For information contact Lee Poulson, Utility Manager, at 260-375-3424 or utility1@citiznet.com or Clerk Treasurer Marilyn Morrison at townofwarrenin@gmail.com at 260-375-2656. Application form can be found at warrenindiana.us or by requesting through above contacts. Please include resume.

### MACHINISTS & FABRICATORS

Troyer Brothers is looking for Machinists/CNC Operators as well as Metal Fabricators. Please email your resume to michelle@troyerbrothers.net or complete an application at 6691 W State Road 124, Decatur IN 46733. Office hours are M - Th; 8am-3pm.

Read & recycle this newspaper

## Help Wanted

**THE NEWS-BANNER IS** looking to hire an individual for fast pace jobs including labeling, inserting and delivering bundles of newspapers. Must be willing to work from 4 a.m.-9 a.m. Monday-Saturday. Some heavy lifting, and an Indiana drivers license required. Mail resume, or fill out an application, to News-Banner, P.O. Box 436, 125 N. Johnson St., Bluffton, IN 46714.

## RENTALS

### Office Space Rental

**MAKE YOUR AD STAND OUT!** Add a graphic or photo to a line classified ad for an additional \$5. Contact the News-Banner office at 125 N. Johnson St., Bluffton, (260) 824-0224, or submit online to [www.news-banner.com](http://www.news-banner.com) and click on classifieds.

## SERVICES

### Services

**NEVER PAY FOR** Covered Home Repairs Again! Complete Care Home Warranty COVERS ALL MAJOR SYSTEMS AND APPLIANCES. 30 DAY RISK FREE. \$200.00 OFF 2 FREE Months! 1-855-408-3894 (I)

### NOTICE OF HEARING FOR BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS 09/27/2024

Notice is hereby given that the BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS will hold a Public Hearing in Conference Room 105 in the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St., in the City of Bluffton, IN at 7:00 o'clock P.M. on the 15th day of October, 2024, for the purpose of reviewing and hearing comments on the petition(s) listed below.

1. Request of Benjamin D & Jacqueline N Dailey, 1127 Ridgewood Lane, Bluffton, IN 46714 for the purpose of a Variance.

**Current Zoning: R-1**  
**Proposed Variance:** To reduce the front yard setback from 35' to 20' and side yard setback from 10' to 7' which would allow the shed and pool to remain in the current location.

**Common Location:** The subject property is located along 1127 Ridgewood Lane, Bluffton, Indiana. 46714

Brief Legal: The subject property is described as Lot 79 of G.E. Marckres Subdivision in the NE/4 10-26N-12E in Harrison Township of Wells County.

Dated this 27th day of September, 2024

WELLS COUNTY BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS  
Michael Lautzenheiser, Jr., Director

oj, nb 10/3 hspaxlp

## SUDOKU ANSWER

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 9 | 1 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 6 |   |   |
| 1 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 8 | 9 | 1 |   |   |   |
| 8 | 9 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 8 |   |   |
| 2 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 8 | 7 |   |   |
| 8 | 1 | 7 | 9 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 9 |   |   |
| 6 | 9 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 8 | 7 | 1 |   |   |
| 7 | 2 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 9 |   |   |
| 1 | 8 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 2 |   |   |

## Services

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

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

**SERIOUSLY INJURED IN AN AUTO ACCIDENT?** Let us fight for you! Our network has recovered millions for clients! Call today for a FREE consultation! 844-517-6414 (I)

## Public Notices

**Public Notice:**  
Where and When to vote for the 2024 General Election  
**ELECTION DAY Tuesday November 5, 2024 FROM 6:00AM TO 6:00PM**  
Presbyterian Church, 215 E Dustman Road, Bluffton  
4-H Park, 1240 S 4-H Road, Bluffton  
Lighted Gardens, 10794 N State Road 1, Ossian  
Tower Life Center, 11811 N Wayne, Zanesville  
Southern Wells School, 9120 S 300 W, Poneto

oj, nb 10/3 hspaxlp

## NOTICE

The City of Bluffton will receive sealed quotes for the Pathways Project Maintenance. A Notice to Bidders and a list of the Pathways may be obtained from the office of the Clerk Treasurer, 128 East Market Street, Bluffton IN or online at [www.blufftonindiana.net](http://www.blufftonindiana.net). Quotes must be received at the office of the clerk treasurer by 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 22, 2024 or presented at the time of the meeting to be read aloud at a public meeting of the Board of Public Works and Safety.

nb 10/3, 10/11 hspaxlp

## NOTICE

The City of Bluffton will receive sealed quotes for the Pathways Project Maintenance. A Notice to Bidders and a list of the Pathways may be obtained from the office of the Clerk Treasurer, 128 East Market Street, Bluffton IN or online at [www.blufftonindiana.net](http://www.blufftonindiana.net). Quotes must be received at the office of the clerk treasurer by 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 22, 2024 or presented at the time of the meeting to be read aloud at a public meeting of the Board of Public Works and Safety.

nb 10/3, 10/11 hspaxlp

## NOTICE

The Wells County Property Tax Assessment Board of Appeals (PTABOA) will hold a meeting on Monday October 7, 2024. It will be in the Commissioner's room in the Courthouse Annex at 223 W Washington St. Bluffton, Indiana beginning at 9:00 am. The Board will consider appealed properties that have been filed and scheduled for this date.

Upon completion of the business at hand, the Board will recess sine die until the next scheduled meeting.

This is an open meeting unless private financial information of the appellant is being presented.  
oj, nb 9/26, 10/3 hspaxlp

## LEGAL NOTICE OF GENERAL (OR SPECIAL) ELECTION

The voters of WELLS County are notified by the county election board in accordance with Indiana Code 3-10-2-2 that a general (or special) election will be held in the county on November 5, 2024, with the polls open for voting from 6:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., prevailing local time.

In accordance with the list of candidates and the public questions certified to me by the State of Indiana or this county's election board, and the certificates of candidate selection filed in the office of the circuit court clerk of this county (or the Lake or Porter County election director), the following offices and public questions or judicial retention questions, if applicable, will be on the general (or special) election ballot:

### OFFICES TO BE FILLED BY VOTERS



# Push to map Great Lakes bottom gains momentum

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — Jennifer Boehme grew up scouting beaches around her home in St. Petersburg, Florida, for whatever she could find. Rocks, sand dollars, coquina mollusks — anything the ocean gave up. Now, 40 years later, Boehme wants to launch another treasure hunt. As executive director of the Great Lakes Observing System, she's leading a campaign to map every meter of the lakes' bottom. The effort, the marine scientist says, will pinpoint hundreds of underwater shipwrecks, illuminate topographical features and locate infrastructure. The map, she says, also will help ships avoid submerged hazards, identify fisheries and inform erosion, storm surge and flooding models as climate change intensifies. Only a fraction of the Great Lakes' bottom has been mapped, and those

low-resolution charts were completed decades ago, according to the Great Lakes Observing System, a non-profit that manages data from a network of lake observers and makes it easily accessible. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration certified the Great Lakes Observing System in 2016 as meeting federal standards for data gathering and management, allowing the federal government to use its data without further vetting. The organization has been pushing since 2018 to create high-resolution maps of all five Great Lakes bottoms, but that's a daunting task. The lakes cover 94,250 square miles — an area larger than the state of Kansas. Depths range from 210 feet in Lake Erie to more than 1,300 feet in parts of Lake Superior. The idea is gaining traction since technology has

improved and scientists have completed high-resolution mapping of Florida coastlines and the Gulf of Mexico over the last three years. Two congressional representatives from Michigan — Republican Lisa McClain and Democrat Debbie Dingell — introduced a bill this year that would allocate \$200 million to map the Great Lakes bottoms by 2030. "I believe it's time to take exploration and discovery of the Great Lakes into our own hands," McClain said during a House subcommittee hearing in March. The last effort to map the lakes came in the 1970s. Maps were largely created using single-beam sonar technology similar to today's commercially available depth- and fish-finders. The system produced maps covering only about 15% of mostly coastal lake bottom, said Tim Kearns, a spokes-

person for the Great Lakes Observing System. With a single sounding every 500 meters, the maps were extremely low-resolution and could have missed sink holes, canyons, sand dunes, shipwrecks and infrastructure such as pipelines, cables and intake pipes, Kearns said. Fast forward nearly a half century. Now scientists and engineers have an array of new mapping tools. One is multibeam sonar. Rather than sending a single sound wave, these systems bounce potentially hundreds off the bottom. The technology is so sensitive it can detect air bubbles in the water, according to NOAA. The only drawback is that systems need to be mounted on submersibles or towed under ships to obtain high-resolution images in deep water. Another tool is laser imaging, where scientists

measure how long it takes for a laser beam fired from a plane to reach an object and bounce back, resulting in three-dimensional imaging of bottom topography. A high-resolution map of the lakebed would offer multiple benefits, said Steven Murawski, a biological oceanographer at the University of South Florida who has done extensive bottom mapping of Florida's coast and in the Gulf of Mexico. The Great Lakes map would provide fuller images of bottom features that have changed in the last 50 years due to erosion and shifting sands, giving navigators new depth findings that would improve shipping safety, Murawski said. A map also would help predict how bottom features affect storm surges and flooding as climate change continues, which he said would be invaluable information for insurance companies and

municipal planners. Improved bottom maps also would provide precise locations of infrastructure such as pipelines that have shifted over time, crucial information for dredging and construction projects, Murawski said. He noted he has mapped some 50,000 miles of pipelines in the western Gulf of Mexico and "they're never where they're supposed to be." Additionally, high-resolution maps would identify underwater outcroppings and ledges where fish tend to congregate, enabling scientists to get better fishery population estimates, the oceanographer added. Fully mapping the lakes for the first time also could reveal the location of hundreds of shipwrecks — some estimates put the number of Great Lakes wrecks at around 6,000 — and relics from ancient coastal civilizations, Boehme said.

# Helene's flooding swept away 11 workers at Tennessee factory

Now the state is investigating

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Tennessee state authorities said Wednesday they were investigating the company that owns a plastics factory where 11 workers were swept away by cataclysmic flooding unleashed by Hurricane Helene.

As the nearby Nolichucky River swelled from rainfall, employees in the Impact Plastics factory in Erwin, a small community in rural Tennessee, kept working. Several asserted that they weren't allowed to leave in time to avoid the storm's impact. It wasn't until water flooded into the parking lot and the power went out that the plant shut down and sent workers home.

Several never made it. The raging waters swept 11 people away, and only five were rescued. Two of them are confirmed dead and are part of a toll across six states that has surpassed 180. Four others from the factory are still missing since they were washed away Friday in Erwin, where dozens of people were also rescued off the roof of a hospital.

Tennessee Bureau of Investigation spokesperson Leslie Earhart said Wednesday that the agency is investigating allegations involving Impact Plastics at the direction of the local prosecutor.

District Attorney Steven R. Finney said in a statement that he asked the bureau to look into any potential criminal violations related to the "occurrences" on Friday.

"Impact Plastics has not been contacted by the TBI yet but will fully cooperate with their investigation," said the company's spokesperson, Tony Treadway. He said the company is preparing an internal review, which it will release to the public.

Secondary to the Bureau of Investigation, the state's workplace safety office opened its own probe Wednesday into the circumstances behind the deaths. While announcing the investigation, the Tennessee Occupational Safety and Health Administration noted that companies have eight hours to report a workplace death, and it hadn't yet received a fatality report from Impact Plas-

tics as of Wednesday evening. Some workers managed to drive away from the plant, while others got caught on a clogged road where water rose high enough to sweep vehicles away. Videos show the brown floodwaters covering the nearby highway and lapping at the doors of Impact Plastics.

Jacob Ingram, a mold changer at the factory, filmed himself and four others waiting for rescue as bobbing vehicles floated by. He later posted the videos on Facebook with the caption, "Just wanna say im lucky to be alive." Videos of their helicopter rescue were posted on social media later Saturday.

In one video, Ingram looks down at the camera, a green Tennessee National Guard helicopter hovering above him, hoisting one of the other survivors. In another, a soldier rigs the next evacuee in a harness.

Impact Plastics said in a statement Monday that it "continued to monitor weather conditions" Friday and that managers dismissed employees "when water began to cover the parking lot and the adjacent service road, and the plant lost power."

In interviews with local news outlets, two of the workers who made it out of the facility disputed those claims. One told News 5 WCYB that employees were made to wait until it was "too late." Another, Ingram made a similar statement to the Knoxville News Sentinel.

"They should've evacuated when we got the flash flood warnings, and when they saw the parking lot," Ingram said. "We asked them if we should evacuate, and they told us not yet, it wasn't bad enough."

Worker Robert Jarvis told News 5 WCYB that the company should have let them leave earlier.

Jarvis said he tried to drive away in his car, but the water on the main road got too high, and only off-road vehicles were finding ways out of the flood zone.

"The water was coming up," he said. "A guy in a 4x4 came, picked a bunch of us up and saved our lives, or we'd have been dead, too."

The 11 workers found temporary respite

## Public Sale Calendar

**OCTOBER 3 & 4 - 9 a.m. - Secured creditors & various consignors, owners.** 815 Adams St., Decatur. Two day truck & equipment auction. Day 1 (Online bidding only): Over 300+ lots including skid loader attachments, tool boxes, workbenches, iron gates, chains & binders, 1 trip 40' high side shipping container w/ side doors, dome shelter containers, & much more! Day 2 (Onsite and Online bidding): Offering 600+ lots! 100+/- municipal units! Cars, SUV, 1/2 ton & 3/4 ton pickup trucks, cargo & passenger vans, large group of Chevy Impalas, Tahoes, & Dodge Chargers, dump trucks, large group of box trucks, day cabs, sleepers, utility trucks, bucket trucks, mobile food trailer (like new), utility & semi trailers, SUV's, pickup trucks, 100+ various skid loader attachments & much more! **Krueckberg Auction & Realty LLC**, 260-724-7402, kjauction.com.

**OCTOBER 5-OCTOBER 12 - Private Family Collection, seller.** Fine art work including five original pieces by William P. Silva, other quality artwork, 2006 Pontiac Torrent, 2005 Toyota Highlander, outstanding sterling silver, pewter and other serving pieces, early American primitives, unique furniture, antiques, glassware, early collectibles, taxidermy mounts, household, more! Open houses Oct. 8 and Oct. 10 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 102 S. Jefferson St., Ossian, IN. Sale manager Rod Fetters, 260-557-8451, **The Steffen Group Inc.**, www.steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006.

**BIDDING ENDS OCTOBER 6 - (Online Only) - The Estate of Wayne E. Penrod, seller.** Artifacts, art, antiques, collectibles, home goods & decor, electronics, tools, furniture, lawn & garden, sports goods, household, & more! Open house Oct. 5 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., 69 W 1st St., Poneto, IN. Sale manager, Isaac Stoller, 260-413-3515, **The Steffen Group Inc.**, www.steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006.

**OCTOBER 6-OCTOBER 13 (Online Only) - Boots Estate, seller.** 1993 Ford F150, boat mini bike, wagons, Pyrex, Corningware, antiques, collectibles, glassware, jewelry, advertising, furniture, toys, household, electronics, board games, much more. Open houses Oct. 3 and Oct. 10 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 366 W 300 N., Bluffton. Sale manager Bobby Perry, 260-273-7260, **The Steffen Group Inc.**, www.steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006.

**OCTOBER 12 - 9 a.m.-6 p.m. - (Online Only) - The Estate of Robert McNabb, seller.** Spectacular 7,700 SF lake front home on 1.23 acres w/200' of lake frontage on Hamilton Lake. Luxu-

ry home features 6 bedrooms, 7 baths, expansive entertaining space, 4-car attached garage. Selling absolute at or above 1.4 million dollars. Seller's have over 4.7 million invested in this one of kind lake property. Open house Oct. 12, 9 a.m.-noon, 1180 LN 150 Hamilton Lake, Hamilton, IN. Brandon Steffen, sale manager, 260-426-0633, **The Steffen Group Inc.**, 260-426-0633, www.steffengrp.com.

**OCTOBER 13 - 3 p.m. - Multiple consignors, owners.** Online only bidding only. 700+ lots! Furniture, Craftsman band saw and radial arm saw, ice maker, banjo, baseball cards, 100+ Pfaltzgraff, tools, pet doors, live traps, collectible glass, Detecto scales, Generac edger, tiller, yard cart, washer, Dryer 50 pc. Ruby Flash & Kings Crown glass and much more! Preview Oct. 10, 3-5 p.m., 812 Elm Street, Decatur, IN. Pick up Oct. 14, 1-6 p.m. & Oct. 15, 9 a.m.-noon. **Krueckberg Auction & Realty LLC**, 260-724-7402, kjauction.com.

**OCTOBER 13-OCTOBER 20 - (Online Only) - Estate of Larry N. Curry, seller.** 1997 Chevy Express Conversion van, 2013 Chevy Impala LTZ w/73,000 miles, John Deere LA115 riding lawn mower, rare vintage Schwinn bikes, large quantity of hand and power tools, lawn and garden, modern and vintage furniture, household, games, toys, flat screen TV & home decor. Open houses Oct. 15 and Oct. 17 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 419 W. Roe St., Ossian. Sale manager Rod Fetters, 260-557-8451, **The Steffen Group**, www.steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006.

**OCTOBER 24 - 9 a.m.-6 p.m. - (Online Only) - Estate of Larry Curry, seller.** Excellent 1,398 SF, 3 bedroom, 2 bath ranch home in Rose Ann Heights neighborhood on .52 acre lot, 2 car attached garage. Home has a ton of potential. "Explore the Possibilities." Open houses: Oct. 15, Oct. 17 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., Oct. 22 from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m., 419 W. Roe St., Ossian. Sale managers, Brandon Steffen, 260-710-5684, Rod Fetters, 260-557-8451, **The Steffen Group Inc.**, 824-3006, www.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.**, heartlandauctionrealty.com, 260-724-3499.

on the back of a truck driven by a passerby, but it soon tipped over after debris hit it, Ingram said.

Ingram said he survived by grabbing onto plastic pipes that were on the truck. He said he and four others floated for about half a mile before they found safety on a sturdy pile of debris.

Ingram's father, Michael Graham, said Ingram was resting at home Wednesday after getting treated for cuts and lung problems and that his phone wasn't working anymore. He said Ingram had called him from the truck, afraid for his life. "We got a call, Jacob saying, 'I'm stuck

at work, we're on the back of a semitruck. We climbed as high as we can. Just tell everybody I love them if I don't make it out again,'" Graham said.

He welcomed the criminal investigation into the company, saying accountability could save lives in the future.

"It does seem ridiculous to me that this plant wasn't evacuated," Graham said.

"We are devastated by the tragic loss of great employees," Impact Plastics founder Gerald O'Connor said in the statement Monday. "Those who are missing or deceased, and their families are in our thoughts and prayers."

## October

# GOODS & SERVICES DIRECTORY

### Primary Contracting, LLC

Specializing in Building & Remodeling

OWNER: Edwin Wickey

**Call for Spring Scheduling Today!**

**Free Estimates - 260-223-4276**

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

### LANCASTER

Senior Apartments

1800 S. Wayne St. | Bluffton

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

**260 824-5280**

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

## JC'S GARAGE DOOR SALES & SERVICE

All makes & models • broken springs & cables

Owner: James Fisher • Sales: Carl Fisher

"50 Years of Combined Experience"

**Call us at 824-3262**

### A-1 U-Stor

Safe & Secure Self Storage

**824-1846**

- Safety Lighting • Clean Units
- 24 Hr. Access
- Video Cameras

www.a1-ustor.com

**After hours & Saturdays**

**Call 273-9678 or 824-4782**

In Monroe at corner of U.S. 27 and S.R. 124

Office at 1180 N. Main, Bluffton

### LAWN CARE

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

**SCHEDULE TODAY!**

FREE ESTIMATES

**260-223-5884**

### Zap Electric, Inc.

**260-824-2927**

Commercial-Industrial-Residential

**24 Hr. Emergency Service**

Charles Miller-Electrician

1233 W. Cherry St., Bluffton

FREE Estimates

We Carry Prevagen and CBD Oil!

### R Warren Pharmacy

(260)375-2135

Nature's Sunshine Distributor

222 N. Wayne St., Warren • 1-800-895-7035

Terry Daniels, Pharmacist • Melinda Daniels, RN

### Jerry Flack & Associates

Jerry Flack & Julie Myers

Retirement Advisors

A Senior Citizen Answers Our Phone!

OFFICE 260-824-1618 • Corner of Main & Market • Bluffton, IN

ASSISTING IN:

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

### The HIDEAWAY BEER & BOURBON

**THURSDAY - Dollar Off Drinks (Excludes Pop)**

**WEDNESDAY - KARAOKE**

**FRI. & SAT. - Live Music**

Follow us on for our Events.

**123 S JOHNSON ST. • 824-0455**

### AMISH CREW

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

### Home Remodel and Repair

Locally Owned

Repair Bowed Basement Walls

Foundations repaired

Floor joist repair or replaced

Concrete • Doors

Windows • Painting

Tile • Small Jobs Welcome

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

**Jim Baker**

## STOR-N-GO STORAGE UNITS

2740 E. 200 N. • Bluffton, IN • 260.273.8345

with Security Cameras

**\$187**

PER ISSUE

For as little as ...

YOUR BUSINESS IN THE NEWS-BANNER Every Day!

Call 824-0224 or 622-4108 Nov. deadline is Tues, Oct. 22

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

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

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

**SWEARINGEN ELDER LAW**

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

**(260) 888-9256**

FREE INITIAL CONSULTATION!