

# The News - Banner

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2024

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State Sen. Travis Holdman, right, makes his presentation of the recommendations of the two-year State and Local Tax Review task force Wednesday afternoon in the Statehouse. At left is Rep. Jeffery Thompson, who co-chaired the joint study commission. (Screen capture from streamed video feed of the hearing)

## State taxes task force concludes two-year run, makes nine recommendations to legislature

By MARK MILLER

The State and Local Tax Review task force wrapped up its two-year effort Wednesday afternoon, adopting nine recommendations to forward the Indiana Legislature.

The task force was formed in 2023, established by Senate Enrolled Act 3-2023 authored by Sen. Travis Holdman of Markle. He co-chaired the task force along with fellow Republican Rep. Jeffery Thompson. It was comprised of four members

from each branch of the legislature and four other staff members of the the state government. The group met four times in 2023 and another four times this year, during which they heard from 55 witnesses.

While the initial impetus for forming the task force was centered on studying the feasibility of eliminating the state's income tax, the group's studies became a more wholistic overview of

(Continued on Page 2)

## Markle discusses water, trash and wastewater increase

By JONATHAN SNYDER

Water, wastewater and trash pickup rates were all introduced by the Markle Town Council Wednesday.

Operations manager Mike Grant and Clerk-Treasurer Stephanie Hensley noted that the rates for water and wastewater will increase by 30% compared to the previous rate increase in January 2018 — the last time the council raised rates. The council stated that the increase is on par with other communities over the past six years.

Tap fees will also increase, but any leak adjustment fees will be removed from Markle ordinance code. The proposed rates will be heard again during Markle's December meeting.

Additionally, council member Nicolas Lund stated that it would be prudent to look into having a rate study done every two years by Baker Tilly. Hensley noted that the town has discussed getting on a schedule, but nothing official was decided.

GFL Environmental, responsible for trash pickup in the area, also announced that their rates will increase by 3% on Dec. 1, according to their letter sent to the council.

Later, changes to the Unified Development Ordinance in Markle were approved by the council.

Huntington County's Executive Director for Community Development Kim Hostetler stated that they are removing certain divisions of land from the exemption list, forcing those divisions to be reviewed by appropriate committees. Additionally, subdivided lots where the parent lot is still 20 acres or larger can have unlimited minor subdivisions as long as each is 20 acres or more in size. Two minor subdivisions are allowed for parcels under 20 acres in size.

"We feel that if you have a large enough piece — let's say you have 80 acres and you split it off into four 20-acre pieces, you should be able to split those 20-acre pieces again," Hostetler said. "As it was written before this amendment ... you cannot split those child parcels ever again."

The divisions of land that will now require review include divisions of land into two or more tracts which are all at least 10 acres in size, divisions of land less than 10 acres in size per calendar year per parent parcel, and divisions of land for agricultural uses not involving new streets or easements.

Discussions on tax abatements possibilities for smaller businesses were also heard by the council.

Operations manager Mike (Continued on Page 2)

## Bluffton native gets Michigan lifetime achievement award for legal career

By MARK MILLER

Bluffton native Charles "Chuck" Barbieri was recently recognized by the Ingham County Bar Association with its Lifetime Achievement Award, honoring his achievements of a nearly 45-year legal career. Barbieri recently retired from full-time practice as a partner with the Foster Swift Collins & Smith in Lansing, Michigan.

"It's all very flattering of course," he told the News-Banner Monday afternoon. "You wonder sometimes whether you're having any impact, so it is very nice to find out that something you've enjoyed doing gets recognized."

A member of the Bluffton High School class of 1973, he earned a bachelors degree from DePauw University in 1977 with magna cum laude honors and his law degree from Indiana University in 1980 with cum laude recognition. He had clerked for the law firm in

Lansing during the summer of '79 as part of his studies and was subsequently offered a position there upon graduation.

Barbieri developed a specialty in two areas of the law: environmental and First Amendment and media law, "both really more by accident than intent," he said.

"There was a major change in environmental statutes and regulations right at the end of the Carter administration" which coincided with his graduation, that essentially created a new area for legal representation. "Up until then, law schools didn't have any classes in environmental law, but now they all do. So I kind of learned on the job. It was very interesting and exciting."

Additionally, "I was fortunate that our law firm was already representing the local paper — the Lansing State Journal — when I arrived here," he added. Dur-

ing this career he has represented other major newspapers including the Detroit Free Press and the New York Times.

In his retirement, Barbieri continues to represent a few clients in the environmental field.

"I seem to have developed a specialty in the waste water field, so there are a couple of municipalities I continue to work with," he said.

Barbieri and his wife Lorie split their time between a home in Colorado where his daughter and her family reside and their home in Lansing. "I really enjoy my mornings there when I can have a leisurely cup of coffee and spend some time with our granddaughter," he said.

He conceded to likely getting some "writing and editing genes" from his late father, long-time News-Banner editor Jim Barbieri (Continued on Page 2)



Chuck Barbieri, left, accepts the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Lansing-area bar association's annual dinner Thursday evening. Presenting the award are emcees Greg and Cynthia Ward. (Photo provided)

## U.S. to give Ukraine antipersonnel mines to slow Russian advance

By SAMYA KULLAB, ILLIA NOVIKOV, MATTHEW LEE and LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — The Biden administration announced Wednesday that it will give Ukraine antipersonnel mines to help it slow Russia's battlefield advances, marking the second major shift on U.S. military support for Kyiv in days.

After allowing Ukraine to use longer-range American missiles

to launch strikes deeper into Russia, U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said the shift in Washington's policy on antipersonnel land mines for Ukraine was needed to counter changing Russian tactics.

The war, which reached its 1,000-day milestone on Tuesday, has largely been going Russia's way. Moscow's bigger army is slowly pushing Ukraine's forces backward in the eastern Donetsk region, while Ukrainian civilians are being maimed and killed by Russian drones and missiles often

fired from inside Russia.

Individual ground troops, rather than forces more protected in armored carriers, are leading the Russian battlefield advance, so Ukraine has "a need for things that can help slow down that effort," Austin said during a trip to Laos.

The announcement comes two months before Donald Trump replaces Joe Biden in the White House. Trump has pledged to swiftly end the war and has criticized the amount the U.S. has spent on supporting Ukraine.

Biden administration officials say they are determined to help Ukraine as much as possible before he leaves office, and they announced Wednesday that the U.S. intends to cancel half of the debt — some \$4.6 billion — Ukraine owes to the country. State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said U.S. lawmakers were informed of the move this week, and that he doesn't expect them to pass a resolution of disapproval to try to stop the loan forgiveness because of the bipartisan support

for Ukraine in the current Congress.

The steps taken to help Ukraine — along with unconfirmed reports Wednesday of Ukraine firing a certain British cruise missile at Russia for the first time — were likely to vex Moscow.

The U.S. and some other Western embassies in Kyiv temporarily closed on Wednesday in response to the threat of a potentially major Russian aerial attack on the Ukrainian capital.

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**Outside**

Early Christmas decor leads to early snow showers

Today	Friday	Saturday
High 35	High 46	High 47
Low 29	Low 39	Low 33

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Vol. 96 No. 17

**THURSDAY**  
November 21, 2024

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## State taxes tax force

(Continued from Page 1)

Indiana's tax system and then eventually almost totally focused on property taxes.

Holdman provided an overview of the task force's efforts and details on the complexity of property taxes during the group's final meeting Wednesday afternoon.

"While it has been demonstrated that Indiana has a competitive and taxpayer friendly system," Holdman opened his remarks, "help for the taxpayer is on the way. However, it may take some time to work its way through the established system as well as the General Assembly."

In their formal final report, the task force made six recommendations regarding property taxes and three recommendations regarding local income taxes:

### Property Taxes:

- Enact more effective controls on property tax

rate.

• All eligible over 65 property taxpayers should receive a credit to ensure a reduction on their property tax bill.

• Refine the agricultural land base rate methodology.

• Increase the de minimis business personal property tax exemption to help small Hoosier businesses.

• Reduce the 30% floor for all business personal property to spur economic development.

• Make progress towards a transparent and accountable property tax system that enables taxpayers to see a reduction in their property tax bill when their local unit reduces its tax rate, particularly homeowners.

### Local Income Taxes:

• Enable the collection and distribution of LIT revenue within a county by utilizing Geographic Information Systems.

• Phase in a reduction to the overall LIT rate cap to match the state income tax

rate. Permit larger municipalities to adopt their own LIT rate under the overall LIT rate cap.

After Holdman's presentation, there was considerable discussion for the remainder of the approximately 40-minute meeting. There were repeated concerns expressed about the impact of rising property taxes on senior citizens. Rep. Edward DeLaney, (D-Indianapolis), told the group he could not support the final product however, stating he does not feel the recommendations adequately address the "tax shift" that has "increased the reliance on homeowners while decreasing the reliance on businesses" and other categories, he told the group.

He cited statistics that average property tax bills have increased 92% since 2011.

Sen. Fady Qaddoura (D-Indianapolis) suggest-

ed the words "particularly homeowners" be added to the wording of the recommendations, which was adopted by consensus of the task force.

DeLaney appreciated the inclusion, but replied that the "tax caps have become a failed government promise" in that they are more protective of wealthier homes than lower-priced homes.

Rep. Greg Porter (D-Indianapolis) was not able to attend but submitted other concerns, notably his opposition "to any further relief for businesses."

With two members unable to attend, when Rep. Thompson called the roll call of the 12 members, the proposals passed by a 9-1 vote with the sole "nay" coming from DeLaney.

Holdman shared with the group that there are several senators working on legislation to address some of these issues in the coming session.

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## Weather

Thursday, November 21, 2024

(24-hour observations at 10:05 p.m. Wednesday)  
High: 50; Low: 36; Precipitation: 0.19 inches of rain  
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.21 feet at 8:45 p.m. Wednesday

### Wells County forecast

**Today:** Snow showers, mainly after 11 a.m. High near 35. West wind 15 to 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph. Chance of precipitation is 90%. New snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches possible.

**Tonight:** Snow, possibly mixed with rain before 2 a.m., then a slight chance of snow after 4 a.m. Low around 29. Southwest wind around 10 mph becoming northeast in the evening. Winds could gust as high as 30 mph. Chance of precipitation is 80%. New snow accumulation of less than one inch possible.

**Friday:** A chance of rain and snow showers before 7 a.m., then a chance of rain showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 46. Northwest wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph. Chance of precipitation is 40%.

**Friday Night:** A 40% chance of showers, mainly before 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 39. West wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.

**Saturday:** Mostly cloudy, with a high near 47.

**Saturday Night:** Mostly cloudy, with a low around 33.

**Sunday:** Partly sunny, with a high near 52.

**Sunday Night:** A 40% chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 44.

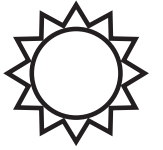
**Monday:** A 50% chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 55.

**Monday Night:** A 50% chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 33.

**Tuesday:** Partly sunny, with a high near 43.

**Tuesday Night:** A slight chance of rain and snow showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 26.

**Wednesday:** A slight chance of showers. Partly sunny, with a high near 41.



## Markle discusses water

(Continued from Page 1)

Grant and the council discussed giving abatements for small businesses going into the downtown area. Council agreed to speak with economic development consultant Chad Kline to discuss the possibility.

Grant additionally noted that the water main replacement project on Lee and Sparks Streets is set to begin in late March or early April. Workers requested flexibility from the council to potentially start as late as July due to time constraints from other projects they will be working on over the winter. Should the project be delayed, however, they would send multiple crews to work on the site and get it done quickly.

Markle also received a letter from FEMA regarding grant money for firefighter assistance. FEMA awarded money to several fire departments within Huntington County, which Mar-

kle used for purchasing essential radio equipment. According to Grant, FEMA is requesting Markle return \$24,000 of those funds due to a miscalculation in the total amount given. In a response letter, which requests that FEMA reconsider, Markle reported that "all applicable guidelines were adhered to, and the awarded funds were approved by the relevant federal grant administration bodies for this designated purpose."

Additional discussion topics included an income survey for the town of Markle to procure grant funding for improvements to the northwest area, a community garden located outside the Markle Church of Christ, and employee salary raises. Hensley and Grant proposed a 3% increase, but council member Blake Caley warned that 3% may not be enough due to the sharp increase in cost of living throughout 2024.

The council also paid \$5,700 for a new mini split air conditioning unit for their wastewater treatment lab. Grant said that the cost to replace the current wall mounted unit runs about \$1,500 every two years.

"I would rather spend \$5,700 for a unit that's probably going to last 20 years than spend (money) every two years putting in a wall mount that wasn't really designed for what we are asking it to do," Grant said.

New body cameras from Axon Products were also purchased by the council, replacing the current systems from Digital Ally. Town Marshal John Markley reported that footage from Digital Ally's cameras has recently gone missing due to a technical glitch. Markley reported that the plan was to move to Axon's cameras at some point, but the glitch was the final straw for the police department.

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## Ukraine antipersonnel mines

(Continued from Page 1)

Humanitarian groups have long criticized the use of antipersonnel mines because they present a lingering threat to civilians. Amnesty International called the U.S. decision "reckless" and a "deeply disappointing setback." And Norway's foreign minister, Espen Barth Eide, called it "very problematic" because Ukraine is a signatory to an international convention opposing the use of land mines.

Austin pointed out that Ukraine already makes its own antipersonnel mines, and that the U.S. has been providing Ukraine with anti-tank mines. He also tried to allay concerns about the new mines the U.S. is giving Kyiv, saying they are not persistent, meaning troops can control when they would self-detonate.

"That makes it far more safer eventually than the things that they are creating on their own," Austin said.

The mines are are electrically fused and powered by batteries so that when the battery runs out, they won't detonate. They can become inert in anywhere from four hours to two weeks.

Russia already uses land mines in Ukraine, but those don't become inert over time.

The United States also sought commitments from the Ukrainians on the use of the mines to limit harm to innocent civilians, according to a U.S. official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations. Ukraine would use the mines in its own country and would not put them in civilian populated areas.

The mines are contained in a \$275 million package of new military assistance announced by the Biden administration Wednesday. Also included in the package are High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, or HIMARS, as well as 155 mm and 105 mm artillery rounds, Javelin anti-armor munitions, and other equipment and spare parts.

The war has taken on a growing international dimension with the arrival of North Korean troops to

help Russia on the battlefield — a development that U.S. officials said prompted Biden's policy shift on allowing Ukraine to fire longer-range U.S. missiles into Russia and that angered the Kremlin.

Britain had been quietly pressing the U.S. to ease restrictions on how Western-supplied missiles are used, and unconfirmed news reports Wednesday said Ukraine had fired British-made Storm Shadow cruise missiles at Russia for the first time. British and Ukrainian officials didn't confirm the reports.

Officials with France's military and president's office, meanwhile, declined to say whether Ukraine is using French long-range SCALP missiles to strike targets in Russia, citing France's military secrecy policy. French President Emmanuel Macron has been pushing for such a step for months.

After the Biden administration allowed Ukraine to attack Russia with longer-range American-made ATACMS missiles, Russian President Vladimir Putin lowered the threshold for using his nuclear arsenal, with the new doctrine announced Tuesday permitting a potential nuclear response by Moscow even to a conventional attack on Russia by any nation that

is supported by a nuclear power.

That could potentially include Ukrainian attacks backed by the U.S.

The American diplomatic mission in Kyiv said Wednesday that it had received a warning about a potentially significant Russian air attack on the Ukrainian capital and closed the embassy for several hours before reopening. The Spanish, Italian and Greek embassies also closed, but the U.K. government and France said that their embassies remained open.

Western leaders dismissed the Russian reaction to the U.S. missile decision as an attempt to deter Ukraine's allies from providing further support to Kyiv, but the escalating tension weighed on stock markets after Ukraine fired ATACMS missiles for the first time at a target inside Russia.

Western and Ukrainian officials say Russia is stockpiling powerful longer-range missiles, possibly in an upcoming effort to crush the Ukrainian power grid as winter approaches.

Military analysts say the U.S. decision on the range over which American-made missiles can be used isn't expected to be a game-changer, but it could help weaken the Russian war

effort, according to the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington think tank.

"Ukrainian long-range strikes against military objects within Russia's rear are crucial for degrading Russian military capabilities throughout the theater," it said.

Meanwhile, North Korea recently supplied additional artillery systems to Russia, according to South Korea. It said that North Korean soldiers were assigned to Russia's marine and airborne forces units and some of them have already begun fighting alongside the Russians on the front lines.

Ukraine struck a factory in Russia's Belgorod region that makes cargo drones for the armed forces in an overnight attack, according to Andrii Kovalenko, the head of the counter-disinformation branch of Ukraine's Security Council.

He also claimed Ukraine hit an arsenal in Russia's Novgorod region, near the town of Kotovo, located about 420 miles behind the Ukrainian border. The arsenal stored artillery ammunition and various types of missiles, he said.

## Achievement

(Continued from Page 1)

and his mother Barb, who still writes for the newspaper. He served as an editor for the Indiana Law Review during his time in Bloomington, a result, he believes, of a law review article he wrote which was then published about a legal case involving the Indiana & Michigan Power Company, which supplies wholesale power to the City of Bluffton Utilities.

"I actually got the idea for the review from reading dad's stories in the News-Banner," he said.

Barbieri has received other awards during his career, including an Out-

standing Lawyer of the Year in Lansing honor. He has also been involved in professional and community affairs, including serving as the president of the bar association and for Michigan State University's "Inns of Court" organization in which local attorneys help mentor the law school students. He also "had the privilege of being a local scoutmaster." He has also served on the DePauw University's Alumni Board.

"I've been very fortunate, really very lucky," he said. The award was made Thursday, Nov. 14 in Lansing.

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## OBITUARIES

## Eugene "Gene" Weber, 89

Gene Weber, 89, of Decatur went to be with the Lord on Nov. 15, 2024, at Adams Memorial Hospital.

Gene was born Aug. 17, 1935, to Clarence and Helena (Etzler) Weber, both of whom predecease him. He married Beverly A. (Isnogle) Weber on August 25, 1961.

In addition to his wife, Bev, Gene is survived by his three children, Joyce (Kevin) Price of Dayton, Ohio, Daniel (Karen Wyss) Weber of Decatur, and Steven (Michael Satterfield) Weber of Atlanta, Georgia. He is also survived by 11 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. His sister, Ruth Mae (Weber) Heffemire of Atlanta, and his brother, Donald Weber of South Carolina, both survive, and he was predeceased by one sister, Delores (Weber) Rumble.

Gene was a member of Zion Lutheran Church in Decatur. He was previously a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Preble for over 80 years. Gene was a retired farmer and also retired from the Adams County Highway Department after 26 years of service. Gene served for 12 years in the Indiana Air National Guard at Fort Wayne.

A memorial service will be held at Zion Lutheran Church in Decatur on Saturday, Nov. 23, including military honors by American Legion Post 43 Color Guard, with Pastor Zach Oedewaldt officiating. The service will begin at noon, with visitation for family and friends one hour prior to the service at the church. Arrangements by Northern Indiana Funeral Care.

In lieu of flowers, preferred memorials are to the Preble Volunteer Fire Department, Zion Lutheran Church in Decatur, American Legion Post 43 Color Guard, or Worship Anew.



# Legislative leaders talk energy and taxes in Indiana Chamber Q&A

**By LESLIE BONILLA MUÑIZ**  
**Indiana Capital Chronicle**

Indiana's legislative leaders — minus one embattled dropout — talked budget, energy, taxes and more in downtown Indianapolis on Monday morning. They spoke at an annual preview from the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, which also released new tax recommendations.

"I think it's going to be a challenge, obviously, a budget year with a fewer dollars than we've had in the last three budget years or so," Senate President Pro Tempore Rodric Bray said.

"The main issues that we're looking at this year, none of them seem to have a really clear resolution. So we're looking forward to ... working with all of you to try to find some good solutions," he told the crowd.

House Speaker Todd Huston extolled the Legislature's past successes while House Minority Leader Phil GiaQuinta acknowledged "a little more uncertainty this year," and expressed interest in the state's forthcoming revenue forecast.

Missing was Senate Minority Leader Greg Taylor, who abruptly pulled out of his scheduled Q&A session. His absence coincided with Monday morning news: the Indianapolis Star reported three women have accused Taylor of sexual harassment. He was reinstated as caucus leader hours later.

Rebecca Patrick, the chamber's senior vice president of communications and marketing, told reporters that her organization learned shortly before the event that

Taylor wouldn't be able to make it.

## Leaders talk possible changes

Bray cited the state's worsening fiscal position for being more open to a \$2 cigarette tax hike. The chamber and health advocates have long pushed for an increase, citing revenue and public health benefits. The House has approved legislation — not the Senate.

"(It's) more likely this year than past," Bray said. "... The other added feature this year is that we've got a Medicaid challenge, financially. ... And, so, there's some added motivation to maybe do this tax as a result of that, to try and help shore that up a little bit."

Chamber leader Vanessa Green Sindlers didn't have the other leaders weigh in.

But all three expressed concerns as Indiana works to bring power to a slate of extant and forthcoming power-guzzling data centers and tries to attract other heavy industrial electricity users.

"That capacity is beginning to limit us," Bray said. He added that whatever action lawmakers take should help expand capacity. He also expressed frustration over rising electricity prices, calling them "a slip in the (state's) competitiveness" and saying policies should "reflect the need to adjust those things."

GiaQuinta, whose community is set to host a massive Google data center, said he had concerns about energy supply but believed there was enough available to "keep Google going." He wanted to ensure utility customers didn't end up on the hook for data center-related

utility company investments.

Huston said he expected the state's energy companies to meet large users' needs, adding, "I don't want to hear differently, so figure it out."

"These are huge economic opportunities," Huston continued. He said the state's energy policy shouldn't be a "hindrance" to such boons, and called for greater capacity development.

Asked if lawmakers would pass stopgap or transformative road funding changes, Bray predicted significant discussion. As more drivers switch to electric or hybrid cars, Indiana's gas tax — which funds road construction and maintenance for the state and locals — is expected to collect less money.

GiaQuinta, meanwhile, said he wanted larger communities to get their fair share under the road-funding formula. Most are "donors," with populations that contribute more in taxes than the cities receive.

Huston commended GiaQuinta's community for tapping into its wheel tax — he said that's the first thing he asks when communities push him for more road money — and said he wanted a plan to get Interstates 65 and 70 to be three lanes each way from border to border.

Asked how lawmakers could further align education with business needs, Bray and Huston agreed that they "like the trajectory" that Indiana is on. Republicans have led successful efforts to push work-based learning, apprenticeships and more.

Don't expect big tax

changes, despite the upcoming conclusion of what was billed as a potentially transformational two-year examination of the state's tax system. Some lawmakers had hoped to ditch the income tax but heard little support, and gradually shifted the task force's focus to property taxes.

Bray said his top takeaway was that Indiana is "extremely competitive."

"I don't know that you'll see really big changes happen this year, maybe some tweaks to ... help people feel a little less of a pinch than they have," he said of property tax reform. "You'll see maybe some changes to that, maybe some opportunities to increase local government's ability to do local income tax as well, and perhaps some larger reforms maybe down the road."

GiaQuinta said he thought the state's individual income tax was competitive and should be kept "the way it is. He noted that property tax changes impact locals and should come with replacement revenue."

Huston noted that lawmakers have already built in some income tax reductions but agreed that there'd be some focus on "the property tax issue."

## Chamber releases study

The chamber also published the final phase of its tax study — the advocacy element.

An earlier phase found that Indiana's tax system is less competitive in capital-intensive industries like manufacturing and life sciences but is better for siting headquarters.

In this phase, the chamber had consultant Ernst

## Doris Hiner, 87

Doris Hiner, 87, of Warren, Indiana, passed away at her daughter's home on Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2024, at 9:27 a.m.

Doris was born on Jan. 27, 1937, in Hartford, Connecticut to Walter and Doris (Gustafson) Smith. She married Leo D. McClain in 1953 and he preceded her in death in 2001.

Doris was preceded in death by her parents; husband; son, Walter "Randy" McClain; stepfather, Walter Campbell; siblings, Barbara Stell, Harold Smith, Floyd Smith, Wally Smith, Gilbert Smith and Donald "Doc" Smith; and three great-grandchildren.

Loving survivors include her children, Terry (Renee) McClain of Shoal, Indiana, Tammy (Jim) McNamy of Warren, Brian (Barbie) McClain of Poinciana, Florida, Barbie (Dan) Stroud of Warren, and Shawn (Dee) McClain of Poneto; brother, Wesley (Sandy) Smith of Huntington; and sister-in-law Diane Smith of Warren; 20 grandchildren, 34 great-grandchildren, seven great-great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

Friends and family may gather to share and remember on Monday, Nov. 25, 2024, from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. and again on Tuesday, Nov. 26, from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Glancy-H. Brown & Son Funeral Home located at 203 N Matilda St. Warren, IN 46792. A funeral service will begin at 3 p.m. Tuesday. Burial will follow at Woodlawn Cemetery.

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

## Police Notebook

## INCIDENTS

**County:**  
Tuesday, 3:27 p.m., 1955 W Lancaster St. Car vs. dumpster.

Tuesday, 4:38 p.m., Airplane Express. Syringe found in bathroom. Collected and disposed.

Wednesday, 8:40 a.m., Hardees. Semi accident. Report to follow.

Wednesday, 10:35 a.m., Bluffton Regional Medical Center. Two vehicle accident.

Wednesday, 12:46 p.m., Comfort Inn & Suites. Report of a protective order violation.

## County:

Wednesday, 7:14 a.m., 100 N and 100 E, Bluffton. Report of a vehicle in ditch. Unable to locate.

**Ossian:**  
Tuesday, 5:39 p.m., 450 E and 1000 N, Ossian. Citation issued for 70 in a 45 mph zone.

## ACCIDENTS

**County:**  
Tuesday, 6:08 p.m., S.R. 3 at S.R. 218, Mount Zion. Cody Runkle, 35, Poneto, was driving a 2021 Toyota Camry eastbound on S.R. 218 and struck a deer. Vehicle towed from scene. Damage exceeded \$2,500.

## 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.

## Democrat women push state party to act on sexual harassment allegations

**By NIKI KELLY**  
**Indiana Capital Chronicle**

Forty Democrat women sent a scathing letter Wednesday calling on state party Chair Mike Schmuhl to take action following another case of sexual harassment.

"These allegations and the many preceding them are shamefully ignored by Party leadership. Women who bravely come forward to report sexual harassment and assault are repeatedly met not with accountability or even acknowledgement but with silence and complicity," the letter said.

Schmuhl released a statement saying the topic deserves more attention than a simple response or press statement, and he appreciates the women voicing their concerns.

"We have taken a number of steps to address sexual harassment at the Indiana Democratic Party during my time as chair and we will be sharing more of that information with our state central committee at our next meeting. I think it's also important to note that IDP is a separate employer from a political campaign, city

government, or state government. That being said, our values are vital and I will work with these leaders and all stakeholders to build more trust within the party for the future."

The move comes after the Indianapolis Star revealed three women were allegedly harassed by Indianapolis Democrat Sen. Greg Taylor. Taylor did not deny the allegations and he was re-elected to lead the Senate Democrat caucus within hours.

Most of the women went through the Hoosier Women Forward program, a separate nonprofit described as a "political and civic leadership training program designed to empower Democratic women to become more active participants in politics and leaders in their communities."

Others who signed on are Democrat delegates, precinct committeepersons, or city and county councilwomen.

The letter said "leadership's deplorable inaction repeatedly leaves survivors no choice but to risk further trauma by recounting their injuries to the media in search of accountability. This is reprehensible and profoundly

unjust. While recent public outcry has elicited a few tepid statements of condemnation from Party leadership, these statements lack substance, conviction, and most critically, solutions. These hollow statements and the silence of others within the Democratic Party, whether born of apathy or complicity, send the devastating and unmistakable message to women across the state: Indiana Democrats do not care about you."

In addition to the incidents involving Taylor, Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett has drawn criticism for not firing a top aide after several harassment situations. And Sen. David Niezgodski, D-South Bend, allegedly harassed a young, female former employee: at the office, in voicemails, over texts, and even showed up to her home. His company settled with the former employee for \$8,000, according to the Star.

The letter goes on to accuse the Indiana Democratic party of hiding allegations and sheltering offenders. It also demands transparent investigations into any and all allegations of sexual harassment and assault involving party members.

**VISITATION & SERVICES**  
**Dr. Denise Downs**  
**Celebration of Life:**  
11 a.m. Thursday, November 21 at the First United Methodist Church.

**Thoma/Rich, Lemler**  
**Funeral Home**  
308 W. Washington St.  
824-3850  
[www.thomarich.com](http://www.thomarich.com)

**Regina M. Stapleton**  
**Henderson Huffman**  
Calling: 12 - 2 p.m.  
Friday, November 22  
**Funeral:** 2 p.m.  
Friday, November 22 at the funeral home.

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St. Rd. 124 East, Bluffton  
824-3852

**VISITATION & SERVICES**  
**Donna Marie (Smith) Kammerer**  
Calling: 4-6 p.m.  
Friday, November 22 at the funeral home.

**Thoma/Rich, Lemler**  
**Funeral Home**  
308 W. Washington St.  
824-3850  
[www.thomarich.com](http://www.thomarich.com)

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## Recognizing the good in a busy season

It was about this time a couple of weeks ago I sat at my desk, checking my calendar and scribbling notes when it hit me — it's that time of the year.

Following Election Day, we're seemingly launched into a holiday and end-of-the-year preparation frenzy with a litany of to-dos and events. And that's no overstatement — after staying up until around 3 a.m. the night of the election (or Wednesday morning, more accurately), I woke up to a text message from a sibling asking when I planned to travel for Thanksgiving. I was not particularly apt to answer that question at the moment.

Our N-B team, in particular, finds ourselves spread even a bit thinner as we also adjust our coverage without Sydney Kent.

We're thrilled about her new role with the YWCA of Northeast Indiana, despite our sadness to see her go. If a quick search of our archive is correct, Sydney and I directly worked on a few dozen stories together during her time at the N-B — the coffees, conversation and encouragement are a bit harder to quantify.

You may still see Sydney's byline for the occasional tear-jerking feature, but I'm sure her puns will be sorely missed from the Police Notebook.

All that said, this season does bring a lot of "good busy," so to speak.

While I lamented a particularly late night at the office earlier this week, I was nonetheless excited to head over to an elementary classroom first thing the next morning for an upcoming Thanksgiving story. There's also great fun in these end-of-the-year staple stories, like recent teachers of the year coverage, which are often uplifting and downright sappy.

Of course, the recent decoration of Bluffton's "Merry Christmas" sign and snowflakes signal that Parlor City Christmas, Christmas At the Mansion, and other exciting events are just down the road. That may sound appalling for the holiday season purists — and surely there is too early of a time to think about Christmas — but I like to think harvesttime thankfulness and Christmas joy can co-exist.

Things are busy, but all sorts of "good busy." Before we know it, we'll be putting together our top stories of the year.

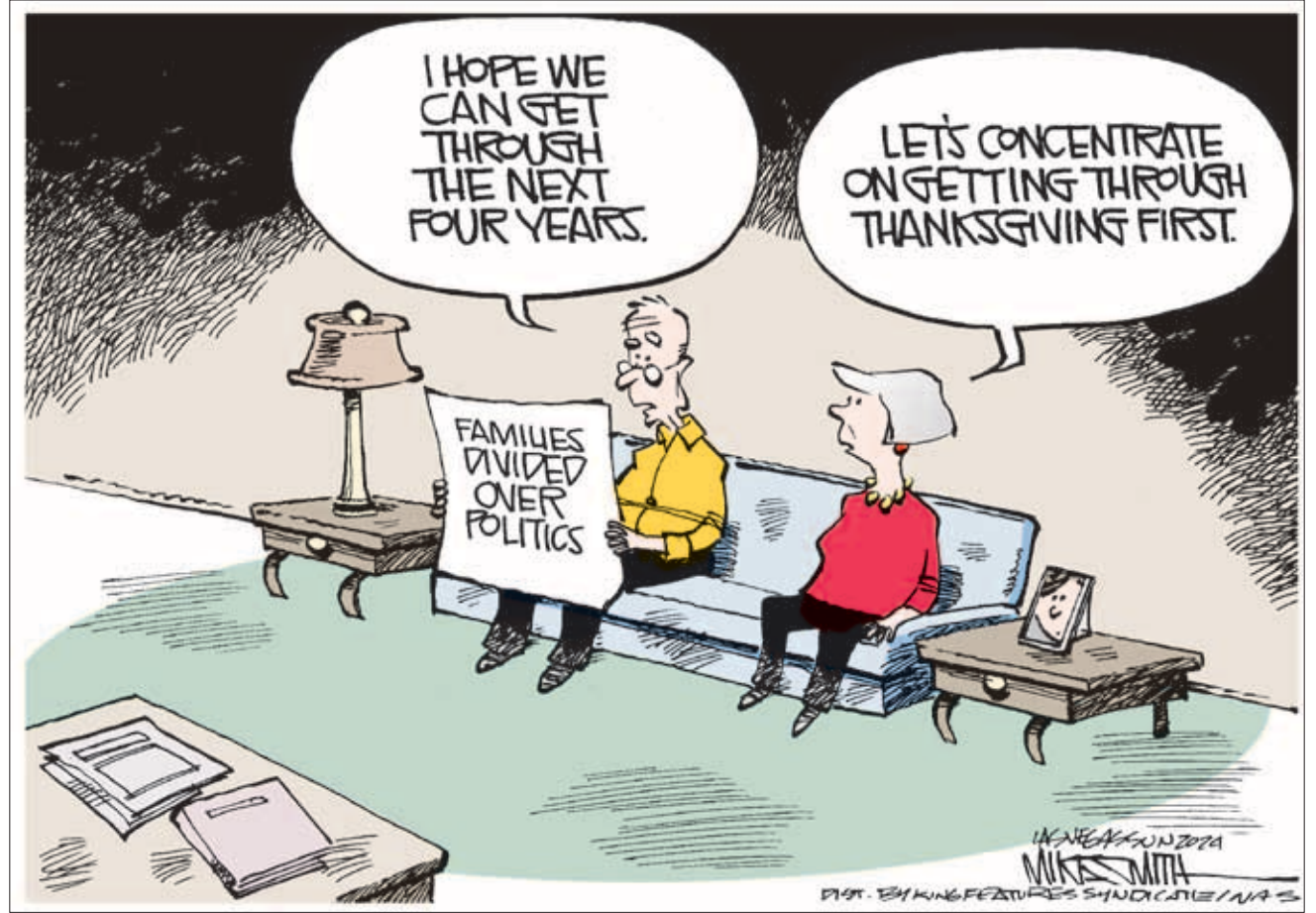
And though I've grumbled about my to-do list much of this week, it will likely be forgotten next week somewhere between baking pies with my mom and sisters and the (hopefully) good-natured chaos of nine nieces and nephews running around in one house.

It's that time of year, and I'm glad.

[holly@news-banner.com](mailto:holly@news-banner.com)



Holly Gaskill



## Schumer to GOP: Please don't do what we were going to do to you

When the Democratic convention took place in August, with new nominee Kamala Harris rising in the polls, Democrats were giddy with a sense of impending victory. In Chicago for the convention, Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer of New York visited with party officials and reporters to outline his plans for a glorious new age in Washington with Democrats in control of the White House, Senate and House of Representatives.

Schumer's top priority in the new Harris administration would have been to eliminate the legislative filibuster that has long protected minority rights in the Senate. That way, even if the Senate were tied between 50 Democrats and 50 Republicans, those 50 Democrats, with the tiebreaking vote of Vice President Tim Walz, could enact far-reaching legislation without any input at all from Republicans. Washington would have true one-party rule, and the minority party would have no say in things whatsoever.

Democrats had tried to kill the filibuster in 2022, when Democrats had just 50 votes, but fell two votes short when two independent-minded Democratic senators, Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema, refused to go along with the party. In 2022, Democrats picked up another seat, giving them a 51-49 majority in the Senate. That put them one vote closer to killing the filibuster.

Schumer believed 2024 would be the year Democrats could finally erase any Republican power in the Senate. Manchin and Sinema were both leaving the Senate, Schumer explained at his talk in Chicago. Manchin's seat would be won by a Republican, so it still would be unavailable for Democrats. But Sinema's seat would be won by Democrat Ruben Gallego, Schumer said, and Gallego would go along with the party on the filibuster. That would give Democrats the 50 votes they needed, provided there was a Vice President Walz to break the tie.

"We got it up to 48, but, of course, Sinema and Manchin voted no; that's why we couldn't change the rules," Schumer explained. "Well, they're both gone. Ruben Gallego is for it, and we have 51. So even losing Manchin, we still have 50." And if there were 50 Democrats, and given his confidence that there would be a Vice President Walz, Schumer would be preparing at this moment to destroy the filibuster and prepare a wave of legislation so objectionable to moderates and conservatives that they would be passed on Democratic votes alone.

But it didn't happen. The Democrats lost votes in the election. Republicans will have a 53-to-47 majority in the Senate. Schumer is headed toward being the minority leader. And there will be no Vice President

Walz. None of Schumer's dreams came true.

So this week, Schumer went to the well of the Senate and addressed some remarks to his Republican colleagues. "Another closely contested election now comes to an end," he said. "To my Republican colleagues, I offer a word of caution in good faith: Take care not to misread the will of the people, and do not abandon the need for bipartisanship. After winning an election, the temptation may be to go to the extreme. We've seen that happen over the decades, and it has consistently backfired on the party in power. So, instead of going to the extremes, I remind my colleagues that this body is most effective when it's bipartisan. If we want the next four years in the Senate to be as productive as the last four, the only way that will happen is through bipartisan cooperation."

The short version of that is: Please don't do to us what we were going to do to you. Schumer is obviously concerned that Republicans might embrace a scheme to eliminate the filibuster and pass all sorts of consequential legislation with no Democratic input at all. That wouldn't be bipartisan! Fortunately for Schumer, Republicans have been more principled than Democrats when it comes to the legislative filibuster, and to the filibuster in general. Republicans realize that even though they will have the majority for the next two years, they might be back in the minority at any time after that. So Schumer will not get it good and hard the way he planned to give it to Republicans.

The filibuster has always been the subject of hypocrisy in the Senate. The late Sen. Fred Thompson used to explain it this way: When we are in the majority, the filibuster is bad. When we are in the minority, the filibuster is good. It's an issue that some lawmakers hop back and forth on, depending on whether their party is in the majority or minority.

But Schumer's brand of hypocrisy is particularly egregious. He was not advocating whether this or that individual bill should or should not be filibustered. That goes on all the time. He was advocating changing Senate rules, on an entirely partisan basis, to eliminate the minority party's ability to demand a higher standard of approval for controversial legislation. And then, when Schumer's party loses, he instantly turns around and becomes Mr. Bipartisanship. For that, there should be a word that goes beyond mere hypocrisy.

[byork@washingtonexaminer.com](mailto:byork@washingtonexaminer.com)



Byron York

## Who's Who

A continuing series on how to contact government officials

### Wells County Elected Officials

Lisa McCormick (R) **County Auditor**, Courthouse, Suite 205, Bluffton, phone 824-6470.

Beth Davis (R) **County Clerk**, Courthouse, Suite 201, Bluffton, phone 824-6479. (Also County Election Board chairman and Passport Information office supervisor).

Kathy Peeper (R) **County Treasurer**, Courthouse, Suite 204, Bluffton, phone 824-6512.

Carolyn Bertsch (R) **County Recorder**, Courthouse, Suite 203, Bluffton, phone 824-6507.

Laura Roberts (R) **County Assessor**, Courthouse, Suite 202, Bluffton, phone 824-6476.

Jarrold Hahn (R) **County Surveyor**, Courthouse, Suite 102, Bluffton, phone 824-6414.

Kenton Kiracofe (R) **Wells Circuit Court Judge**, Courthouse, Suite 302, Bluffton, phone 824-6485.

Andrew Antrim (R) **Wells Superior Court Judge**, Courthouse, Suite 303, phone 824-6508.

Colin Andrews (R) **Prosecuting Attorney**, Courthouse, Suite 405, phone 824-4102.

Scott Holliday (R) **County Sheriff**, 1615 W. Western Ave. (Wells County Jail), phone 824-3426.

Hilarie Gaskill (R) **County Coroner**, Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St., Room 206, Bluffton. Phone 273-4013.

Submit your Letters to the Editor via: • Our website link (Submit your Letter) • E-Mail: [email@news-banner.com](mailto:email@news-banner.com) • Mail: PO Box 436, Bluffton IN 46714 • Drop-off: 125 N. Johnson St., Bluffton. All letters must be signed and must include a phone number or address in case verification is desired. Letters are edited for brevity and clarity. Letters must be no more than 500 words. Please mark your correspondence as a "Letter to the Editor," or if you wish to express an opinion to us but do not want it published, please mark as "Not for Publication."

## Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Nov. 21, the 326th day of 2024. There are 40 days left in the year.

Today in history: On Nov. 21, 1980, 85 people died, most because of smoke inhalation, after a fire broke out at the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas.

Also on this date:

In 1920, on "Bloody Sunday," the Irish Republican Army killed 14 suspected British intelligence officers in the Dublin area; British forces responded by

raiding a soccer match, killing 14 civilians.

In 1980, an estimated 83 million TV viewers tuned in to the CBS prime-time soap opera "Dallas" to find out "who shot J.R." (The shooter turned out to be J.R. Ewing's sister-in-law, Kristin Shepard.)

In 1985, U.S. Navy intelligence analyst Jonathan Jay Pollard was arrested and accused of spying for Israel. (Pollard later pleaded guilty to espionage and was sentenced to life in prison, but was released in 2015.)

## Flip-flop dreams of horticulture

Angelkeep gardening evolved from bare excavated clay into multiple types of uses. It constantly changed. Surprisingly, one form came as a dream.

Rotisserie sleeping evolved into flip-flop slumber once the elder ages arrived. In a semi-unconscious state, an alarm clock's time-check took place with each flop to the right side. Dreams often continued, interrupted only by a flip or a flop. One case in point involved a consideration to return to teaching Horticulture 101, a university level of study.

Flips routinely occurred near the half-hour time slot, flops amazingly and routinely within five minutes of the hour mark.

Semi-awakened thoughts included what should be included in the synopsis. Should it be general or an Angelkeep garden focus? What did the University Dean of Horticulture desire? The flop view of the clock approached midnight. Amidst the slumber of someone already retired and of late-70s age, the dream recalled a feeling of both opportunity and despair.

On the next flip moment of semi-awareness, the higher educational level had diminished the potential of high school's pre-college-level instruction. Perhaps the inclusion of cooking both produce and natural vegetation from the garden would excite this younger crowd of knowledge seekers. The dream struggled with how to convert a good portion of the curriculum into cell phone activity.

On the flop side of that sequence the dream included the potential for

### Angelkeep Journals

historical edification. Local pioneers utilized the horticulture practice of planting corn in hills, not rows. Added to the hills were climbing bean and squash seeds. The beans climbed the cornstalks which served as the trellis. Squash (pumpkins are squash) vined between the hills using every available space. The leaves' shade helped keep the weeding to a minimum. Pioneers named it a Three Sisters Garden.

Angelkeep never planted corn. Chipmunks planted corn. That occasionally grew in strange places. Semi-awareness at flip-stage rationalized the futility of historical horticulture. Yet the urge to jump from bed and research horticulture delayed the return to full slumber and the horticulture dream world.

Angelkeep flopped again and realized at 2 a.m. an entire night of ongoing dreaming involved a saga of returning to employment in the educational field. Challenging gardeners a half-century or more younger would be difficult. What excites youth today? Perhaps field trips to an Angelkeep garden should be considered. Veggie and floral beds by November predominately contained weeds. Would they challenge students through the sense of taste? Eat a leaf of dandelion. A violet bloom. An insect. Eat whatever



Alan Daugherty

grew available.

At the point of the half-hour flip the continuing dream sequences seemed like something from a Charles Dickens' novel. Were the ghosts of years of past teaching haunting well after Halloween? Angelkeep attempted to recall the previous day's food consumption. Was over-indulgence causing a dream to convert into a nightmare? Slumber resumed prior to the completion of the meal and snack inventory.

At the 3 a.m. flop the nearly awake insanity of the thought of returning to teaching employment forced the morning into full cognition. What was that all about?

Was it time, as in the case of Charles Dickens' Ebenezer, to throw open the window and shout to the next passerby as to the correct day, time, and level of emotional stability? Was it rational to begin thinking about what to fix with the turkey for next week's Thanksgiving Day-long feed? Dream sequences remained lodged in the back of the mind.

Angelkeep living often involves food followed by a nap. More food. Sleep. Snack. Slumber.

Creating a pie or two from local garden products would be a challenge.

A Marie Calendar's Southern Pecan Pie would be purchased. Two? No dream could alter that determination. Flip.

Pie every day until Thanksgiving. Flop.

Happy Thanksgiving Angelkeep friends.

Eat dessert first.

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

## The News-Banner

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Holly Gaskill, Editor

Mark Miller, Opinion Page Editor



Pictured from left are Wells County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Erin Prible, Ben Renkenberger of the United Way of Wells County, Kira Lee of Three Rivers Federal Credit Union, Katie Brindle and Angie Comment of Metropolitan Title, Topher Kirnec, Jennifer Kirnec, owner of Old Ways Book & Curio, Erica Lehman of Lehman Appraisals, Robert Vanover of Premier Clock and Vacuum Service, Kevin Sills of Indiana Farm Bureau Insurance, Angie Topp of Stockton Mortgage, Sarah MacNeill of the Wells County Public Library, Trent Bucher of Hon-egger of Ringger & Co., Julie Thompson of Bluffton Regional, Rachel Reinhard of the Wells County Chamber and Nathan Stauffer of Parlor City Cabinetry. (Photo submitted)

# Old Ways Books & Curio brings cozy charm to downtown Bluffton

The Wells County Chamber of Commerce and its Ambassadors recently celebrated the opening of Old Ways Books & Curio with a ribbon-cutting ceremony in downtown Bluffton. Located at 110 S Johnson Street. This charming bookstore brings together books, houseplants, and vintage home decor, filling a unique niche in the community with its cozy and welcoming atmosphere.

Owner Jennifer Kirnec shared her inspiration for creating Old Ways Books, "The atmosphere I wanted to create was that of a used bookstore — a cozy vibe that you don't find in many places. I paid attention to every detail, from the colors on the walls to the plants and vintage touches, to make it feel like a home environment. I want people to come in, relax, and feel comfortable just sitting and reading a book."

The idea for Old Ways Books originated when Jennifer and her husband were scouting locations for his business. After noticing the space's large windows, Jennifer saw an opportunity to bring something special to Bluffton. Following extensive renovations to modernize the building while preserving its charm, the bookstore was born.

Old Ways Books & Curio offers a curated selection of new and used books, including fiction, non-fiction, children's literature, and Christian titles. Additionally, the shop features vintage home decor, houseplants,

and locally crafted book-themed artwork. Jennifer has also implemented a loyalty program for book enthusiasts, "You get one point for every used book and two points for every new book. Once you reach nine points, you can redeem them for discounts like 25% off a book or a plant, depending on your point total."

Jennifer is already planning exciting additions to the store's offerings. She hopes to host a children's reading hour on Saturdays and expand the online book club, which has its first Facebook discussion next week, with in-person gatherings.

Jennifer and her family, including her husband and five children, moved to Bluffton four years ago to be closer to family. Passionate about creating a space where community members can connect and unwind, she has succeeded in bringing her vision to life.

For the holiday season, Old Ways Books & Curio is open Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m..

Visit Old Ways Books at 110 S Johnson Street, Bluffton, IN, for a unique shopping experience filled with books, plants, and vintage treasures. For more information, contact 260-820-2885 or email oldwaysbooks@gmail.com. Follow them on Facebook and Instagram at @Old Ways Books & Curio for updates and upcoming events.

# Public Notices

Table with columns: Owner of Record, Eligible Nbr of Years, Start Pay Year, Exemption Amt. Includes entries for Almo Steel Products Corp, Brick And Mortar Properties LLC, Gerber Development LLC, etc.

## Abatement Newspaper Advertisement Personal Property 2024pay2025

Large table listing property locations, eligible years, start years, and calculated abatements for various businesses like ALMCO, AT FERREL COMPANY, INC, EDGE MANUFACTURING, INC, etc.

## This Weekend

### Holiday Craft & Vendor Show

A Holiday Craft and Vendor Show will be held at the National Guard Armory in Bluffton on Saturday, Nov. 23, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Over 30 direct sales and hand craft vendors will be on hand. There will be vendor donated raffle items. All money raised from the raffles will be donated to Honor Flight of Northeast Indiana.

Admission is free. For more information, contact Deb Carson at 260-273-7950 or doodlebug\_63@yahoo.com

The National Guard Armory is located at 500 E. Spring St. in Bluffton.

### FW's Christmas on Broadway Friday, Nov. 22

The annual Christmas on Boardway on Fort Wane will be held on Friday, Nov. 22, 5 p.m. with the Boys & Girls Clubs to be highlighted.

The Concordia Lutheran High School Band will lead the parade down Broadway from Broadway and Creighton to the Broadway Plaza. The Colorado blue spruce tree in front of the Shine & Harden office building will be lit with 40,000 colored lights for the 20th year at 6 p.m., along with fireworks.

Other parade participants will include Icy, the Fort Wayne Komets mascot

and hockey team, a sleigh, reindeer float and a vintage 1942 fire truck from the Firefighters Museum.

The Smokin Joe's Food Truck and Travelin Tom's Coffee truck will offer refreshments for purchase.

The event will be telecast over 21 Alive beginning at 4 p.m. on Nov. 22.

### FW's Cinema Center and YWCA team up

On Friday, Nov. 22, Fort Wayne's Cinema Center and the YWCA will combine forces to host a "Holiday Slipper & Clothing Drive, during the screening of WICKED at 4 and 7:30 p.m. Those attending the screening are asked to bring either new-with-tag slippers (bonus if they're ruby) or other article of clothing in exchange for pop corn. For more information check out cinemacenter.org.

### Christmas Caboose Train rides

Rides on the Christmas Caboose Train will depart from the Santa's Workshop in New Haven at 1580 Edgerton Rd. on Nov. 22, 23 & 24.

Santa will be on board for the 20 minute rides and tickets must be purchased in advance. The cars are heated and Travelin' Tom's Coffee will be offering warm beverages and baked goods for

purchase.

Trains run rain or shine and with restrooms available. For more information go to https://www.indianarailexperience.org/christmas-caboose/

### Holiday Lights at Parkview Field

Head to the Tin Caps Ball Field in Fort Wayne to see this display from Nov. 14 to Jan. 4th. One of the attractions will be a small train ride. Admission is \$10 in November and \$12 during December. More information at 250-482-5400.

### Blue Jacket's Fantasy of Lights

Fort Wayne's Fantasy of Lights is held in Franke Park and is open from Nov. 18 through Dec. 31. Admission is \$15 per car to travel the three miles of lit displays. Hours Sunday through Thursday are 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Friday and Saturday: 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Listen to music over 91.7.

### Walkway of Lights in Marion

This display is set up in Marion's Matter Park from Nov. 23 to Dec. 31. Hours are 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. daily. Admission is \$5 per car (season pass \$25). A Gift Shop offers refreshments some evenings.

## A Talk with Tego



Abby is a 7½-month-old, dilute calico, spayed female.



Cosmo is a seven-month-old, tiger/white, neutered male.



Poe is a two-year old, polydactyl buff/white, neutered male.



Tego

These are just a few pets available for adoption at the Wells County Animal Shelter, 1613 W. Cherry St., Bluffton. For more information call 824-6063.

Tego's Tips: All fixed cats/kittens have waived adoption fees until the end of the year!

# Braves' Chris Sale, Tigers' Tarik Skubal take Cy Young Awards

By STEPHEN HAWKINS  
AP Baseball Writer

Chris Sale was one of the ace left-handers Tarik Skubal idolized as a teenager. Now the two will be linked forever after winning their first Cy Young Awards on Wednesday.

Skubal was a unanimous pick for the American League honor following a brilliant season with the Detroit Tigers. Sale's selection in the National League capped an incredible comeback with the Atlanta Braves after the 35-year-old had been derailed by injuries since helping Boston win the 2018 World Series.

"It means a lot. It's a special night," Sale said. "I just can't express how thankful I am for everybody that stuck by me. It would have been easy to jump ship and write me off."

Skubal and Sale shared the MLB lead with 18 wins this season and dominated their respective leagues.

Sale went 18-3 and topped the NL with 225 strikeouts, while his 2.38 ERA in 29 starts was the best among all major league qualifiers. It was his first season in the National League during a big league career that began in 2010 with the Chicago White Sox.

Skubal, who turned 28 on Wednesday, was 18-4 with a 2.39 ERA and a big league-best 228 strikeouts in 31 starts. The left-hander got all 30 first-place votes in AL balloting by the Baseball Writers' Association of America that was completed before the playoffs.

Sale received 26 firsts, with NL runner-

up Zack Wheeler from Philadelphia getting the other four.

"If you look at his career, it's no surprise that he's winning this award," Skubal said about Sale. "To be able to share this award and win it the same year, and win the same triple crown award in the AL and NL, that's something that's really special to me, and it's awesome. I'll be able to live with that the rest of my life."

Pittsburgh Pirates righty Paul Skenes finished third, two days after being selected NL Rookie of the Year. Kansas City starter Seth Lugo was the AL runner-up, with Cleveland closer Emmanuel Clase (47 saves) coming in third.

It was the first time since 2011 that someone won the pitching triple crown in both leagues. There have been 25 occasions when a pitcher led his league in wins, strikeouts and ERA among qualifiers — and a Cy Young Award followed every time.

Sale didn't have any major injury issues in his Braves debut until he was scratched because of back spasms from their final regular-season game, which they needed to win to make the playoffs. He was then left off the roster for their Wild Card Series loss to San Diego.

Atlanta acquired Sale in a trade last December after he made only 31 starts for



Chris Sale



Tarik Skubal

the Red Sox from 2021-23. He missed the 2020 season and most of 2021 after Tommy John surgery. He made only two starts in 2022 after he fractured a rib and then broke his left pinkie. He broke his right wrist riding a bicycle in August 2023, ending his final season

with Boston.

Sale was named the NL Comeback Player of the Year last week at Major League Baseball's All-MLB Awards Show.

"Talk about motivation, right? To be able to show my sons hard work, dedication and not giving up. My wife had my back the whole time. I'm sure I was a real peach at times during some of those injuries," he said. "And just with my parents, my family, I was talking to my dad the other day about this and whether it did or didn't happen, he was proud of me."

It was the third time Sale finished among the top three in Cy Young Award voting. He was the AL runner-up in 2017 after his first season with Boston behind Corey Kluber, who was also the Cy Young Award winner in 2014 when Sale finished third with the White Sox.

Sale won the eighth Cy Young Award for the Braves organization. Most of those came in the 1990s, when Greg Maddux won three in a row with Atlanta from 1993-95 —

after being the 1992 winner with the Chicago Cubs. Tom Glavine won twice (1991 and 1998), and John Smoltz was the 1996 winner. Warren Spahn was the first in 1957 when the Braves played in Milwaukee.

Detroit now has six Cy Young Awards. Denny McLain won back-to-back in 1968 and 1969, and reliever Willie Hernández was the 1984 winner. Justin Verlander's Cy Young Award with the Tigers came two years before Max Scherzer won in 2013.

Skubal had Tommy John surgery at Seattle University before the Tigers drafted him in the ninth round in 2018. His made his big league debut in 2020, and this season went at least six innings in 25 of his 31 outings. He was 6-0 in his first nine starts and finished the season the same way — 6-0 in his last nine starts while the Tigers made their surprising push to the playoffs.

He made his postseason debut with 17 consecutive scoreless innings before a five-run fifth that included a grand slam by Cleveland's Lane Thomas in the deciding Game 5 of their AL Division Series. That 7-3 loss ended the Tigers' season.

"I was able to kind of get over it relatively quickly just because I was so proud of our team and what we were able to accomplish," Skubal said. "And if I'm going to be the one to fail, I love that, because, you know, it's only going to set our team up to have success in the future."

Based on where they placed in balloting, Clase earned a \$150,000 bonus, Sale and Lugo \$100,000 each and Wheeler \$50,000.

## High School Calendar

### THURSDAY, NOV 21

No events scheduled.

### FRIDAY, NOV 22

GIRLS BASKETBALL: Huntington North at Bluffton, 7:30 p.m.

WRESTLING: Elwood at Southern Wells, 6 p.m.

### SATURDAY, NOV 23

BOYS BASKETBALL: Bluffton at Whitko, 11 a.m.

### GIRLS BASKETBALL:

North Miami at Bluffton, 7:30 p.m.; Oak Hill at Norwell, 7:30 p.m.; Southern Wells at Canterbury, 3:30 p.m.

WRESTLING: Bluffton Super Duals, 9 a.m.; Southern Wells at Bronco Super Duals (Wapahani & Daleville High School), 9 a.m.

MONDAY, NOV 25

No events scheduled.

### TUESDAY, NOV 26

BOYS BASKETBALL: Lakewood Park Christian at Southern Wells, 7:30 p.m.

GIRLS BASKETBALL: Concordia at Norwell, 7:30 p.m.

SWIMMING (Co-ed): Columbia City at Norwell, 5:30 p.m.

## Geno Auriemma earns NCAA record 1,217 victory as No. 2 UConn beats Fairleigh Dickinson

By DOUG FEINBERG  
AP Basketball Writer

STORRS, Conn. (AP) — Geno Auriemma became the winningest coach in NCAA college basketball history, earning his 1,217th victory as No. 2 UConn beat Fairleigh Dickinson 85-41 on Wednesday night.

Auriemma broke a tie with retired Stanford coach Tara VanDerveer for the most victories all-time. Former Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski holds the men's record with 1,202. Auriemma began his journey with UConn in 1985 and is 1,217-162 in his career. He has only had one losing season — his first one with the Huskies.

The Huskies (4-0) celebrated Auriemma and associated head coach Chris Dailey's 40

years at the school with more than 60 alumni, including former UConn greats Sue Bird, Diana Taurasi, Maya Moore and Rebecca Lobo in attendance.

UConn's latest star led the way as Paige Bueckers had 16 points, nine rebounds and five assists. Freshman Sarah Strong had 20 points.

### Takeaways

UConn: The Huskies are finally starting to get healthy which will give Auriemma a deeper bench as the season progresses.

### Up next

FDU hosts Saint Peter's on Saturday while UConn heads to the Bahamas to play in a tournament. The Huskies' first game is against Oregon State on Monday.

## QB Caleb Williams, Bears look to build on positives after tough loss

By GENE CHAMBERLAIN  
Associated Press

L A K E FOREST, Ill. (AP) — Finding a way to build upon positives from a tough loss against Green Bay is the next step for Chicago Bears quarterback Caleb Williams.



Those positives would no doubt be much easier to see without the blocked field goal to end a 20-19 defeat, but Williams found them. He said it started with the way new offensive coordinator Thomas Brown devised a game plan and called plays.

"It started with him stringing things together and doing a good job with that and getting everybody into a rhythm and not necessarily thinking of what's next?" Williams said Wednesday. "Or anything like that. We kind of had an idea of what's next, and from there you go out there, you play, and you play efficient football, it gives you the best chance to win."

Brown replaced fired coordinator Shane Waldron and the Bears gained 113 yards more than their season average of 278 yards. It helped getting 179 yards in the running game, and that could be in jeopardy this week because coach Matt Eberflus revealed Wednesday that running back

D'Andre Swift has a groin injury and missed practice.

The offense had 43 more yards passing than their average with 212 yards, and they were almost twice as good on third downs, converting 56.3%.

Williams received much of the credit for converting a fourth-and-3 with a 21-yard pass to Rome Odunze and with getting the Bears in range for a game-winning field-goal try.

However, he deflected much of it to Brown and partly for getting plays in quickly.

"We didn't reinvent the wheel for those three or four (practice) days that Thomas became the offensive coordinator and play caller," Williams said. "I think the decisiveness, I think all of that came from, one, our meetings, and how we're going to do things. I think it came from being able to get play calls in faster and being able to get up there and not feel like you're rushed or not feel like you need to hurry up and get the ball snapped and things like that."

"I think all of these small things, details of routes, details of the blocking, details of the path of running backs and how we're going to do things, I think that led into all of what happened last week."

The Bears haven't turned the ball over in three straight games, but doing this against coordinator Brian Flores' blitzing Vikings defense will be the goal this week. Minnesota and Buffalo are tied for the league lead with 21 takeaways.

"I think obviously, you know, he's going to blitz you," Williams said. "He's the king of cover-zero blitz and finding a bunch of different ways to do it."

Eberflus views Williams as an effective quarterback against blitzes, if this is the path the Vikings take against him.

"It starts with his natural ability," Eberflus said. "His natural ability is to get the ball out fast. Some players don't have that ability, right? They take it. Their release is slow. But his is very fast."

"I think it helps him. The recognition, the way we set it up on offense I think will help him also. And it's just identifying it before the snap, but also it's natural ability to get the ball out."

Williams saw something else as critical as they try to build on the success they had last week, at least from an offensive standpoint.

"I think communication, I think the attitude and I think we just going out there and being on the details, for myself and for the whole team," Williams said. "I think those three things would be huge for us for this run that we're going to go on."

## MLB will test robot umpires at 13 spring training ballparks

By RONALD BLUM  
AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Major League Baseball will test robot umpires as part of a challenge system during spring training at 13 ballparks hosting 19 teams, which could lead to regular-season use in 2026.

MLB has been experimenting with the automated ball-strike system in the minor leagues since 2019 but is still working on the shape of the strike zone.

An agreement for big league use would have to be reached with the Major League Baseball Umpires Association, whose collective bargaining agreement expires Dec. 1.

"I would be interested in having it in '26," baseball

Commissioner Rob Manfred said Wednesday after an owners' meeting. "We do have a collective bargaining obligation there. That's obviously a term and condition of employment. We're going to have to work through that issue, as well."

Manfred said the spring training experiment will have to be evaluated before MLB determines how to move forward.

"There's two sides to that test," he said. "It's what the clubs think about it and also what do the players think about it? And we're going to have to sort through both of those."

Triple-A ballparks used ABS this year for the second straight season, but there is

little desire to call the strike zone as the cube defined in the rule book and MLB has experimented with modifications during minor league testing.

The ABS currently calls strikes solely based on where the ball crosses the

(Continued on Page 7)

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Ready for marriage, but my boyfriend is hesitant

Dear Annie: I'm a 47-year-old woman, and I've been with my boyfriend, "Greg," for almost six years. I'm really happy with him, and I am at the point where I really can't imagine being with anyone else. There's just one thing: He has not proposed, and I don't know if he ever will.

It's gotten to the point where I feel almost desperate for him to propose, but I don't want to ruin what we have by pushing him away. I also don't want to waste any more years in a relationship that doesn't have a future.

I brought it up once with him, and he sort of brushed it off, saying, "One day, when the time is right." But I'm starting to feel like "one day" might never come? He was married once before and had a messy divorce, and I noticed he always does seem a little bitter about the whole concept. Whenever someone we know gets engaged, he'll make a comment like, "Let's see how long THAT lasts."

Recently, several friends and family members have asked when we're getting married, and it's so embarrassing to me that I don't have an answer. One friend advised me to give him an ultimatum, but I'm too scared it'll backfire. I love him and don't want to lose him, and I know he loves me, too.

How can I bring up marriage in a way that doesn't feel like I'm pressuring him but lets him know how important this is to me? Am I wrong for wanting this commitment, or should I just be happy to be in this good relationship? — Waiting and Wondering

Dear Waiting and Wondering: For some people, marriage is the ultimate symbol of love and commitment. Others could take it or leave it. Still others are fundamentally opposed to it, arguing they don't need paperwork to prove their love.

The only way to figure out Greg's stance is to talk to him directly. It sounds like he is holding onto some bitterness and fear from his first marriage, which can be worked through with com-

munication and the help of a good therapist.

If marriage is a nonnegotiable for you, tell Greg sooner rather than later. You don't want to stay with somebody who can't ultimately give you what you want.

Dear Annie: I have a recommendation for your older readers who are considering getting married: I strongly suggest they talk to a financial adviser about the monetary perils of marriage.

Married people are also liable for each other's debts (think medical expenses). Nothing like suddenly being widowed and facing crushing medical bills. Long-term care also taps into both people's assets if married. I know two couples who got divorced because of this.

Losing even a few hundred dollars a month could make a world of difference in their standard of living. By all means, have a commitment ceremony, but senior citizens should be mindful of the financial hazards of becoming legally married. It could threaten their well-being. — Practical

Dear Practical: Thank you for offering your perspective. All couples, regardless of age, should have a conversation about finances before deciding to get married. The more money is at stake, the more need for professional advice.

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

Dear Annie



BEETLE BAILEY



BLONDIE



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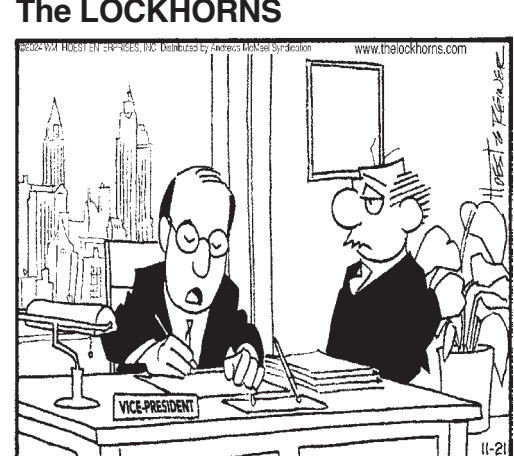
CRANKSHAFT



THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane

The LOCKHORNS



My Answer

By Dr. Billy Graham



The seed of God's Word

Question: An artist friend of mine gave me one of his paintings of a tree growing by the water and added a Bible verse, Psalm 1:3. We had been talking about growing spiritually and I guess this is what prompted his lovely gift to me. What is the significance of a tree planted by water? — P.W.

that eventually sprouts and becomes a new seedling when we are born again. Just as God implants the life cell in the tiny seed that produces the mighty oak, He implants His divine life in the hearts of people who earnestly seek Him through Christ. His Word waters the seed, producing life abundantly.

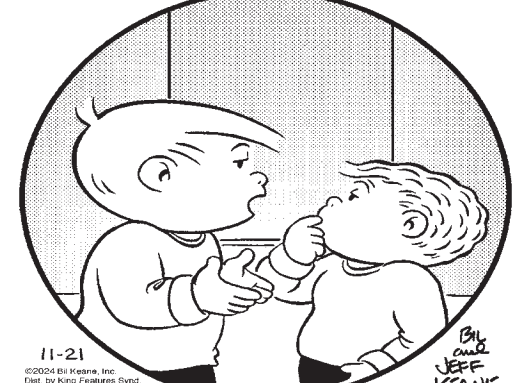
but it is only the first step. God's will is for us to become spiritually mature, growing stronger in our relationship to Christ and our service for Him. Conversion is the work of an instant; spiritual maturity is the work of a lifetime. Word studies from the Bible will teach us many things about ourselves, others, and most certainly the Lord Jesus. "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season" (Psalm 1:3, NKJV)

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

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We are not meant to remain spiritual seedlings, weak and vulnerable to every temptation, doubt, falsehood, or fear. God's will is for us to grow strong in our faith and become mature, grounded in the truth of His Word, and firmly committed to doing His will (see 1 Peter 2:2).

When we give our life to Christ, we are taking the essential first step —



"If you don't learn to count, you'll never be able to play hide-and-seek."

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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

Solution to the crossword puzzle, showing the filled-in grid.

Yesterday's answer crossword puzzle grid.

TV schedule table with columns for time slots (11:21, M, A, D1, D2, 5 PM, 5:30, 6 PM, 6:30, 7 PM, 7:30, 8 PM, 8:30, 9 PM, 9:30, 10 PM, 10:30, 11 PM, 11:30, 12 AM, 12:30) and rows for various channels (WINM, CBS, ANTA, ABC, NBC, MNT, CW, PBS, FOX, etc.) listing programs and their descriptions.

