

The News - Banner

www.News-Banner.com

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2024 BLUFFTON, INDIANA • Wells County's Hometown Connection \$1.00

Markle plans water main replacements for spring

By JONATHAN SNYDER
Planned replacements to water mains are expected to start next spring as part of three different drinking water projects in Markle. The immediate project, set to begin next spring, will replace

water mains at Lee and Sparks Street. Current improvements to gas and fiber optic mains currently make it impossible for crews to start on the water improvements. Other projects include installing a loop for a dead end main

near 100 North Street and updates to the water treatment facility. The latter two projects start dates are unknown, as cost factors and engineering plans still need to be made. Lee and Sparks street mains, currently at six inches in diameter,

are being replaced with eight-inch pipes. Markle Operations Manager Mike Grant stated that the increase will bring the area up to state codes for the area. Approximately 2500 ft. of main will be replaced for \$1.25 million, paid for in part

by an SRF bond and through Community Crossings Matching Grants. "That's an original water main that was installed in 1918," Grant said. "It's literally one of the first (Continued on Page 2)

Wells County Council tables raise discussion

By HOLLY GASKILL
Hoping to avoid setting a bad precedent, the Wells County Council deferred action on raising a new employee's salary. IT Director Roger Richardson requested that an experienced new employee be credited for about five years of experience within the county's pay matrix, an increase of about \$1,400 annually. While the council believed this was a first for a position within the courthouse, Sheriff Scott Holliday noted that his department credits new deputies for their experience. Ultimately, the council agreed to wait on the choice until 2026's budget is created. Since the employee had already started working, the council didn't feel it necessary to secure the position. "There's no way I can get on board if he's already started ... We need to remember, we're not a daycare, we're not a charity," council member Brandon Harnish said. "If they accept the wage, they can work for it (a raise). If they want to quit, we can play a game of chicken."

"Not sure I'd state it that way, but I'd rather not set a precedent," council member Steve Huggins said. Also during the meeting, the council approved a contract for additional IT services for the jail as they transition that work from the old to the new employee. The contract costs \$3,300 monthly. The council also approved a series of contract renewals with the sheriff, surveyor and Purdue Extension Office, as well as the 2025 salary ordinance. Additionally, they approved a series of additional appropriation requests and transfers. Additional appropriations were:
• \$13,000 to the Wells County Circuit Court for pauper attorney services.
• \$6,600 to the jail for contracting services for IT support.
• \$35,075 to the Sheriff's Department for overtime, to be reimbursed through a grant. Transfers were:
• Highway Department: \$75,000 from (Continued on Page 2)



Johnson Street work
Crews were working at Johnson Street throughout the afternoon Wednesday. Utility Director Jon Oman said that the sewer and manholes were being lined to ensure a seamless transition from the new pipe installed earlier in the year to the older infrastructure. (Photo by Jonathan Snyder)

Meth found in traffic stop, driver gets 12 years

By SYDNEY KENT
A 30-year-old man was sentenced to 12 years in prison after a traffic stop in Bluffton discovered 23.5 grams of methamphetamine in early February. Nicholas Aaron Brewster, of Carlisle, was sentenced to 12 years in the Indiana Department of Correction with two years suspended last week in the Wells Circuit Court. Brewster pled guilty to one count of dealing in methamphetamine, a Level 3 felony. According to a probable cause affi-

davit, Detective Marijean Heckel with the Bluffton Police Department noticed Brewster, who had a suspended license, driving a silver van. Heckel also noted that the department received multiple tips regarding (Continued on Page 2)



Nicholas Aaron Brewster

Trump wins the White House in a political comeback

By ZEKE MILLER, MICHELLE L. PRICE, WILL WEISSERT and JILL COLVIN Associated Press
WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump was elected the 47th president of the United States on Wednesday. With a win in Wisconsin, Trump cleared the 270 electoral votes needed to clinch the presidency. He won Michigan on Wednesday afternoon, sweeping the "blue wall" along with Pennsylvania — the one-time Democrat-leaning, swing states that all went for Trump in 2016 before flipping to President Joe Biden in 2020. His Democratic rival, Vice President Kamala Harris, called Trump on Wednesday afternoon to concede the race and congratulate him. A short time later, Biden also called Trump to congratulate him and to invite the president-elect to the White House, formally kicking off the transition ahead of Inauguration Day, the White House said. Foreign leaders called Trump too, including Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and French President Emmanuel Macron. "I want to thank the American people for the extraordinary honor of being elected your 47th president and your 45th president," Trump told throngs of cheering supporters in Florida before his victory was confirmed.

In state after state, Trump outperformed what he did in the 2020 election while Harris failed to do as well as Joe Biden did in winning the presidency four years ago. Upon taking office again, Trump will work with a Senate that will now be in Republican hands, while control of the House hasn't been determined. "We've been through so much together, and today you showed up in record numbers to deliver a victory," Trump said. "This was something special and we're going to pay you back," he said. The U.S. stock market, Elon Musk's Tesla, banks and bitcoin all stormed higher Wednesday, as investors looked favorably on a smooth election and Trump returning to the White House. In his second term, Trump has vowed to pursue an agenda centered on dramatically reshaping the federal government and pursuing retribution against his perceived enemies. The results cap a historically tumultuous and competitive election season that (Continued on Page 2)



Donald Trump

Rokita cruises to victory in Indiana attorney general race

By LESLIE BONILLA MUÑIZ Indiana Capital Chronicle
Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita, a Republican, claimed a knockout victory over Democrat challenger Destiny Wells on Tuesday. The Associated Press called the race shortly before 9 p.m. Eastern, with Rokita leading 59.5% to Wells' 40.5%. About 48% of the vote was in. "The people of Indiana have rejected this push to the left, and because of this overwhelming vote tonight, I will continue to put us first, to put Indiana first," Rokita told a supportive crowd at an Indiana Republican Party election event. Rokita said he had run a "positive campaign" for attorney general, noting that he hadn't once mentioned Wells. His challenger, meanwhile, campaigned on restraint — drawing a sharp contrast to Rokita's combative approach. "I called Todd tonight. ... He said it was a good fight, right?" Wells told the crowd

at the Indiana Democratic Party's election event. "I also said to him, 'I very much look forward to a peaceful transition of power, no matter the Presidential outcome,' she added, in a potential dig referencing Rokita's absence from a bipartisan condemnation of election violence. "Let me ask you: Are we going to let them win?" he asked Republican delegates while onstage — in red boxing gloves — at a June convention. "I'd say now is the time to keep fighting, to lead boldly, to take the gloves off to protect Hoosiers, preserve and defend liberty in this country," he bellowed. Rokita has led legal fights over policies put forth by President Joe Biden's administration on unauthorized immigration, climate regulations and more. "We'll protect our economy from this green new scam and all the other things," he said, as the crowd whooped. (Continued on Page 2)

Indiana's top justices retained despite pushback

By NIKI KELLY Indiana Capital Chronicle
The three Indiana Supreme Court justices up for retention will stay on the state's top court, unofficial election night returns showed. An Indiana Election Division update from 10:30 p.m. Tuesday night showed Chief Justice Loretta Rush, Justice Mark Massa and Justice Derek Molter easily winning approval. Judicial retention is usually a foregone conclusion during election season, but a grassroots social media campaign sprung

up to remove the three because they upheld Indiana's abortion ban. About 71% of Hoosiers voted to retain Rush, 69% Massa and 69% Molter. Both Rush and Massa were up for retention in 2014; their approval then was 69% and 67%, respectively. Tuesday was Molter's first retention vote, as he was appointed in 2022. Indiana has used a merit selection process to choose and retain its appellate judges for the past 50 years. Once appointed, a judge must stand for retention (Continued on Page 2)

Inside
Local/Area
Police Notebook ... 3
Local Roundup ... 3
Opinion
Angelkeep ... 4
Also...
Sports ... 6-7
Classifieds ... 7
Diversions ... 5

Outside
Another sunny but cold and breezy day
Today High 59 Low 37
Friday High 60 Low 35
Saturday High 61 Low 47
More Weather on Page 2

Online
Follow us on Facebook! Go to www.facebook.com/newsbanner
Place Your Classified Ads 24/7
Vol. 96 No. 6
THURSDAY
November 7, 2024

SALES — SERVICE — INSTALLATION
Stylus Technologies
961 North Main Street Bluffton, IN
Comprehensive Technology Systems Integrator
Consulting, Design, Installation
Equipment Training, Maintenance
260-824-8888 • www.stylusav.com • Like us on Facebook

How to contact us:
Call us: 824-0224 or 1-800-579-7476 email@news-banner.com
On the Web: www.news-banner.com
Follow us at: twitter.com/newsbanner



Markle water main

(Continued from Page 1)

water mains ever installed in Markle. I think we got our money's worth out of it."

Grant also stated that dead end water mains, like the one near the industrial park, create some water quality issues, the reason why Markle is looking into this project. The plan is to bring the new main under I-69, across 100 North and 600 East, then head south back into town. The city is currently working with Huntington County for financial

help on the sewer portion of the project, but the expected \$8 million total price tag means that Markle will need more assistance.

"That water main is 12 inches in diameter," Grant said. "They're not pulling enough water. During the months when they (residents and businesses) are not using much water, we have to go out there and flush it ... It's keeping our chlorine residual up, and we don't want to continue to do that."

Grant also reported that

the filtration system in Markle's water treatment facility is nearing the end of its useful life. While repairs have kept it going, Grant said that decisions regarding a potential size increase for the new filter and any add-ons to the facility itself will need to be made before any concrete plans are drawn.

"How much are we going to grow?" Grant said. "Are we going to ... consider upsizing that filter now so that it's large enough to accommodate the growth

that we could potentially see in the next 10 years? Do we put the same size filter back in? And if we do that, does it make sense to add on to the water treatment facility at that time? There's just about three different scenarios we are trying to toss around and (asking) what makes the most sense."

Neither the industrial park nor the filtration system have not been bid yet, and official action is likely months if not years away.

jonathan@news-banner.com

County Council

(Continued from Page 1)

gas, oil and lube to group health insurance to more employees enrolling in health insurance. \$5,000 from tree removal to culvert tile/sewer pipe. Also, \$40,000 from road painting and striping and \$32,000 from stone/gravel to the bituminous line item for an increased use of oil.

• Community Corrections: \$1,500 from office supplies, \$4,000 from vehicle supplies, \$500 from drug testing supplies, \$1,000 from truck main-

tenance, and \$1,000 from computer maintenance to cover a \$5,000 shortfall in the indigent line item and \$3,000 in monitoring fees. Also, \$500 from vehicle supplies to travel/lodging.

• 911: \$33,100 from lease/maintenance to dispatch/contract fees.

• Prosecutor: \$720 from travel, lodging and conference fees to dues and subscriptions.

• Election Board: \$400 from capital equipment and \$70 from software licensing to miscellaneous supplies.

In a letter to the council, Clerk Beth Davis said she overspent this line item to replace outdated iPads.

• Health Department: \$15,520 from part-time medical assistant to health office. Also, \$197 from vehicle fuel to vehicle.

• Commissioners: \$5,601 from unemployment compensation to workers' compensation due to a shortfall.

• Purdue Extension Office: \$6.93 from secretary to part-time work.

holly@news-banner.com

Trump wins White House

(Continued from Page 1)

included two assassination attempts targeting Trump and a shift to a new Democratic nominee just a month before the party's convention. Trump will inherit a range of challenges when he assumes office on Jan. 20, including heightened political polarization and global crises that are testing America's influence abroad.

His win against Harris, the first woman of color to lead a major party ticket, marks the second time he has defeated a female rival in a general election. Harris, the current vice president, rose to the top of the ticket after Biden exited the race amid alarm about his age. Despite an initial surge of energy around her campaign, she struggled during a compressed timeline to convince disillusioned voters that she represented a break from an unpopular administration.

Trump is the first former president to return to power since Grover Cleveland regained the White House in the 1892 election. He is the first person convicted of a

felony to be elected president and, at 78, is the oldest person elected to the office. His vice president, 40-year-old Ohio Sen. JD Vance.

One defining moment came in July when a gunman opened fire at a Trump rally in Butler, Pennsylvania. A bullet grazed Trump's ear and killed a supporter. His face streaked with blood, Trump stood and raised his fist in the air, shouting "Fight! Fight! Fight!" Weeks later, a second assassination attempt was thwarted after a Secret Service agent spotted the barrel of a gun poking through the greenery while Trump was playing golf.

Trump's return to the White House seemed unlikely when he left Washington in early 2021 as a diminished figure whose lies about his defeat sparked a violent insurrection at the U.S. Capitol. Democrats who controlled the U.S. House quickly impeached him for his role in the insurrection, making him the only president to be impeached twice. He was acquitted by the

Senate, where many Republicans argued that he no longer posed a threat because he had left office.

But if Trump's future was in doubt, that changed in 2023 when he faced a wave of state and federal indictments for his role in the insurrection, his handling of classified information and election interference. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who challenged Trump for the Republican nomination, lamented that the indictments "sucked out all the oxygen" from the GOP primary. Trump easily captured his party's nomination without participating in a debate against DeSantis or other GOP candidates.

With Trump dominating the Republican contest, a New York jury found him guilty in May of 34 felony charges in a scheme to illegally influence the 2016 election through a hush money payment to a porn actor who said the two had sex. He faces sentencing this month.

He also has been found liable in two other New York civil cases: one for inflating

his assets and another for sexually abusing advice columnist E. Jean Carroll in 1996.

Trump is subject to additional criminal charges in an election-interference case in Georgia that has become bogged down. On the federal level, he's been indicted for his role in trying to overturn the results of the 2020 election and improperly handling classified material. When he becomes president, Trump could appoint an attorney general who would erase the federal charges.

As he prepares to return to the White House, Trump has vowed to swiftly enact a radical agenda that would transform nearly every aspect of American government. That includes plans to launch the largest deportation effort in the nation's history, to use the Justice Department to punish his enemies, to dramatically expand the use of tariffs and to again pursue a zero-sum approach to foreign policy that threatens to upend longstanding foreign alliances, including the NATO pact.

Rokita cruises to victory

(Continued from Page 1)

He has also taken on Indiana schools through his "Eyes on Education" portal, which collects documents purporting to expose critical race theory materials and gender identity policies.

And he's championed "pro-life" policies, pushing the state to release abortion records to anti-abortion activists and leading a campaign against an Indianapolis doctor after she performed an abortion on a 10-year-old rape survivor. Rokita's complaint led to a licensing board reprimand for Dr. Caitlin Bernard — but his own public comments about the doctor earned him rebuke from the state's top court.

Rokita on Tuesday said he'd stay on that path, and defend anti-transgender laws.

"We will continue to ensure boys do not compete in girls sports — and stay out of their bathrooms," he said to loud cheers. "Because of your great General Assembly, we are able to make sure that those surgeries on minors, those transgender surgeries, are stopped and prohibited in the State of the Union."

Rokita has also fought allegedly abusive landlords in courts on behalf of Hoosier tenants, and has been active in the state's efforts to hold opioid manufacturers and distributors accountable for the deadly crisis.

On Tuesday, he emphasized his work overseeing the state's unclaimed property division, returning millions to residents.

"We will do all this and more," Rokita said. "We will never forget that we get our marching orders from the people of this state, and not the other way around."

Wells, meanwhile, told disappointed Democrats, "You cannot live in your losses and your sadness. You have to live in the joy ..."

"Let's continue to get to work. Let's identify those areas that we struggled tonight," Wells continued. "We know where they are. We've known for a while, right?"

Wildfire evacuations begin in Southern California

CAMARILLO, Calif. (AP) — California was lashed by powerful winds Wednesday that fed a fast-moving wildfire, which destroyed dozens of homes and forced thousands of residents to flee as forecasters warned of the potential for "extreme and life-threatening" blazes.

Northwest of Los Angeles, the Mountain Fire exploded in size and prompted evacuation orders for more than 10,000 people as it threatened 3,500 structures in suburban communities, ranches and agricultural areas around Camarillo, according to a statement from Gov. Gavin Newsom. The area east of the Pacific coast city of Ventura will receive federal assistance after a request from Newsom was granted, the Federal Emergency Management Agency said Wednesday.

The blaze was burning in a region that has seen some of California's most destructive fires over the years. A thick plume of smoke rose hundreds of feet into the sky Wednesday, blanketing whole neighborhoods and

limiting visibility for firefighters and evacuees. The fire grew from less than half of a square mile to 16 square miles in little more than five hours.

Ventura County Fire Captain Trevor Johnson described crews racing with their engines to homes threatened by the flames to save lives.

"This is as intense as it gets. The hair on the back of the firefighters' neck I'm sure was standing up," he said during a news conference Wednesday afternoon.

At one spot, flames licked the burning remains of a home. Its roof was reduced to only a few charred shingles.

Two people suffered apparent smoke inhalation and were taken to hospitals, fire officials said. No firefighters reported significant injuries.

The erratic winds and limited visibility grounded fixed-wing aircraft, and gusts topped 61 mph, said weather service meteorologist Bryan Lewis. Water-dropping helicopters were still flying.

First responders pleaded with residents to evacuate.

Deputies made contact with 14,000 people to urge them to leave as embers spread up to 2.5 miles away and sparked new flames.

"This fire is moving dangerously fast," Ventura County Fire Chief Dustin Gardner said.

Aerial footage from local television networks showed dozens of homes in flames across several neighborhoods as embers were whipped from home to home. Other footage captured horses trotting alongside evacuating vehicles.

Jade Katz, who said she is disabled and does not drive, waited for a friend to pick her up near her Camarillo Heights home with a suitcase full of medication and Bella, her Great Dane service dog. But the friend couldn't reach her, so first responders sent a squad car to escort her out Wednesday afternoon as a helicopter dropped water on the house across from her home.

"On the way out of the neighborhood, there were five or eight houses that had already burnt to the ground," said Katz, 35, who was sitting in a car with

housemate Shannon Kelly, 28. They plan to spend the night with a friend in Los Angeles.

Weather

Thursday, November 7, 2024

(24-hour observations at 10:56 p.m. Wednesday)
High: 66; Low: 51; Precipitation: 0.68 inches of rain
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.16 feet at 10:45 p.m. Wednesday

Wells County forecast

Today: Mostly sunny, with a high near 59. North wind 5 to 10 mph.

Tonight: Mostly clear, with a low around 37. Northwest wind around 5 mph.

Friday: Sunny, with a high near 60. West wind 5 to 10 mph.

Friday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 35. Northwest wind around 5 mph becoming calm in the evening.

Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 61.

Saturday Night: A chance of showers, then showers and possibly a thunderstorm after 1 a.m. Low around 47. Chance of precipitation is 90%.

Sunday: Showers and possibly a thunderstorm before 1 p.m., then a chance of showers and thunderstorms after 1 p.m. High near 67. Chance of precipitation is 80%.

Sunday Night: A 30% chance of showers and thunderstorms before 1 a.m. Partly cloudy, with a low around 46.

Veterans Day: Mostly sunny, with a high near 60.

Monday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 39.

Meth found

(Continued from Page 1)

Brewster selling drugs.

Heckel observed Brewster and an unknown woman entering the van at Walmart in Bluffton. Brewster was stopped less than a mile away from the business near Main Street and Willowbrook Trail.

K-9 Letty with the Wells County Sheriff's Department assisted officers with a free sniff of the vehicle, locating 23.5 grams of methamphetamine, unused clear plastic jewelry bags and a digital scale. Two cell phones, both

belonging to Brewster, were also located in the vehicle.

Officers found a clear jewelry bag with white residue and a \$5 bill in Tarvin's purse, which tested positive for fentanyl.

Tarvin received one count of possession of a narcotic drug, a Level 6 felony.

The court recommended Brewster for the purposeful incarceration program in prison, which has the potential to modify his sentence upon completion.

sydney@news-banner.com

Indiana justices

(Continued from Page 1)

tion at the first statewide general election after the judge has served for two full years. If retained, the judge is on the retention ballot every 10 years. The retention system is designed to allow appellate judges to decide cases fairly and impartially, free from campaign finance considerations, and with-

out influence by partisan politics.

No Indiana Supreme Court justice has lost a retention vote since the process was instituted in 1970, according to the Indiana Lawyer.

Hoosier voters also retained two appellate judges: Judge Rudolph "Rudy" Pyle III and Judge Peter Foley.



REALTORS-AUCTIONEERS

Bart Lehman

Email: bartlehman66@gmail.com

265 W Main St, Berne, IN 46711

Berne, IN * 260-589-2903 * www.mizlehman.com

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

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

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.

Governor-elect taps transition team, lays out first priorities

By WHITNEY DOWNARD
Indiana Capital Chronicle

Just over 12 hours after claiming victory on Election Night, Governor-elect Mike Braun announced the team of Hoosiers that will guide the transition of power, relying on several well-known politicians to oversee the changeover.

Such a team, as well as the future appointments for state agency heads, “will be people that understand that it’s going to be my vision of being an entrepreneurial governor. That’s going to be conservative on the financial side but very entrepreneurial on the problem-fixing side,” Braun told reporters in Indianapolis on Wednesday.

Braun didn’t rule out keeping some department heads from fellow Republican Gov. Eric Holcomb’s administration, though he has previously singled out both the Family and Social Services Administration and the Department of Child Services as agencies in need of improvement.

Victor Smith, who previously worked as commerce secretary under former Gov. Mike Pence, will chair Braun’s transition team. Josh Kelley, Braun’s chief of staff in the U.S. Senate, will be transition director.

Former GOP Chair Anne Hathaway will lead the inaugural committee while Emily Daniels Spaulding will be the inaugural director.

Three of the members tapped for Braun’s transition team are alums of former Gov. Mitch Daniels’ administration: Betsy Wiley, a pro-school choice advocate who was Daniels’ deputy chief of staff; Ryan Kitchell, who previously oversaw the Office of Management and Budget; and Brad Rateike, who was Daniels’ deputy press secretary.

A handful are members of the Braun campaign’s foundation arm, including Wiley, conservative attorney Jim Bopp and lobbyist James Purucker.

Remaining members include GOP Chair Randy Head, lobbyist and former Indiana Rep. Matt Bell and former Indiana Rep. Dan Dumezich.

“It’s been a heck of a journey”

On the campaign trail, Braun and his opponents fought bitterly over rivaling property tax relief plans, with the Republican favoring a proposal that some said would trigger local cuts to public services like law enforcement.

“Hopefully that can be Senate Bill 1, House Bill 1,” Braun said about a property tax relief plan. “That has been, by far, the thing I’ve heard most about over the last two years.”

Other topics could take several years to fully address, including health care. Braun said health care costs and reform measures weren’t tackled effectively because “it’s got a political risk to it,” but was one of the areas in which Indiana needed to improve the most.

“It’s the one we have the worst results (in) compared to most other states, measuring it down as finitely as infant and maternal mortality,” Braun said.

Indiana’s high maternal and infant mortality rates are among the worst in the nation and the developed world. The state also ranks poorly across several public health measures and has some of the nation’s highest health care costs.

“Those percentages are shameful,” Braun said.

Braun contrasted Indiana, which is constitutionally required to have a balanced budget and maintains a low debt ratio, to Washington D.C., where he served for the last six years as one of the Hoosier State’s U.S. senators. While Republicans appear poised to regain control of the U.S. Senate, several U.S. House races are still too close to call.

“I think there’s more potential back here at home,” Braun said. “I think the biggest issue D.C. is going to deal with, regardless of the outcome of the election, is the fact

that they can’t run the place functionally and financially responsibly.”

In particular, Braun pointed to the Indiana House and Senate, which are both controlled by Republican supermajorities. Having the General Assembly on the same page would allow him to enact more priorities, Braun said.

Asked whether winning by such a large margin — or 54.6% of the vote as of 1 p.m. Wednesday — would give him sway over the legislative bodies, Braun said, “It does.”

“I think it’s an honor and it’s a big ... platter of opportunity. And I’ll accept it humbly and try to engage everyone in my own party along with good ideas across the aisle,” Braun said.

However, initial budget forecasts appear to be signaling smaller revenues than previous cycles, when Indiana was buoyed by an influx of federal dollars. At the same time, lawmakers will be considering several expensive priorities — including education, which takes up roughly half of the budget, as well as Medicaid and road funding.

“I’ve always done more with the same or less. That’s being effective and creative,” Braun said about the transition. “... Don’t assume that you got to have more to get more done. That doesn’t mean in some areas you’re not going to need to invest more to accomplish it, but that is something that I would say I’ve been most trained (for).”

Braun has repeatedly been critical of the funding formula for schools, claiming that a Hoosier classroom costs, on average, \$245,000 annually and that just \$60,000 typically goes to teachers. Too much is spent, he said, on overhead administrative costs and buildings.

That has bolstered his support for school choice, though he said rural areas would need to grow economically in order to support such a model. Such growth should prioritize “homegrown entrepreneurs” over large outside businesses, he said, a criticism of the direction of Indiana’s state economic policy under Holcomb.

Micah Beckwith as second-in-command
Micah Beckwith’s addition to the team as the lieutenant governor nominee was “kind of unexpected,” Braun acknowledged. Party delegates selected Beckwith, a self-described Christian nationalist, over Braun’s choice, Indianapolis Rep. Julie McGuire.

“It’s been a benefit, in a way, because it’s kind of brought the party together. The part of the party he represents is where all the passion is,” Braun said. “... It’s my job to make sure that the full spectrum of what being a Republican is about in the state (of Indiana) is then going to be focused on the kitchen table issues I’ve been talking about.”

Such “kitchen table issues” for his transition team wouldn’t delve into the social topics Beckwith has touted, such as striking Indiana’s abortion ban exceptions for victims of rape or incest.

“Everyone’s going to have an opinion on the issues that divide us, and the emphasis is that they divide us. You’re probably not going to get much beyond that,” Braun said.

He noted that preliminary election results appeared to favor incumbents, many of whom wrote Indiana’s current near-total abortion ban — indicating support from their constituents.

“He’s going to have his own duties ... and his input will be there for me to consider,” Braun said about Beckwith. “I’m going to clearly be setting the agenda (and) listening to all the folks that helped me get here in the first place.”

In contrast, he criticized the campaign of his Democratic opponent Jennifer McCormick for being singularly focused on abortion access — “a critical error.”

“I think it was probably disingenuous and foolish to think that that was going to carry the day in a state that had just looked at it a couple years ago,” Braun said.

Legion Will host Veterans Day meal

The American Post Legion 111 will offer a free ham and beans dinner from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 11. All veterans are invited, including non

members. Guests are also invited for a low price. Call Commander George Thomas, 260-223-1247, with questions.

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.

Police Notebook

INCIDENTS

City:
Tuesday, 2:36 p.m., Bluffton Police Department. Report of threatening messages.

Tuesday, 9:59 p.m., Echo Lane and Parkway Drive. Tree fallen in roadway.

Wednesday, 9:52 a.m., Wells County Lock-Up. Criminal trespassing warning. Subject was belligerent and also warned for disorderly conduct.

County:
Monday, 2:31 p.m., Williams and Silver streets, Bluffton. Driver advised to renew plates and bring proof.

Monday, 6:37 p.m., S.R. 116 and North 200 W, Markle. Car versus deer.

Monday, 9:03 p.m., S.R. 1 and East 300 N, Bluffton. Car versus deer.

Tuesday, 12:26 a.m., 100 W and 1000 N, Markle. Officer removed deer from roadway.

Tuesday, 6:59 a.m., 300 W and 200 S, Liberty Center. Car versus deer.

Tuesday, 4:11 p.m., West Lancaster and South Adams streets, Bluffton. Driver cited for speeding 82 in a 55 mph zone.

Tuesday, 5:22 p.m., Wells County Jail. Report of subject causing issues in lobby.

Tuesday, 7:35 p.m., S.R. 116 and 300 N, Bluffton.

Officer assisted subject with a ride.

Wednesday, 6:17 a.m., S.R. 116 and 600 E, Bluffton. Car versus deer.

Wednesday, 10:44 a.m., Wells County Jail. Warrant served.

ACCIDENTS

City:
Monday, 2:48 p.m., 275 E Jackson St. Teresa Gerwig, 53, Bluffton, was backing a 2020 Ford Escape and hit the bumper of a parked 2017 Ford Edge. Damage did not exceed \$1,000.

Tuesday, 8:56 a.m., 116 E Dustman Road. Margaret A. Epelding, 71, Craigville, was driving a 2009 Ford F-150 through a parking lot a mistook the accelerator for the brake, hitting a parked 2023 Honda Accord head-on. Damage exceeded \$10,000.

Wednesday, 12:01 a.m., 2951 E S.R. 124. Stacy Patton, 55, Bluffton, was driving a 2000 GMC Sonoma eastbound on S.R. 124 and hydroplaned, exiting the roadway on the north side of S.R.124 and struck a speed limit sign, then a utility box, and then a garage at 2951 E S.R. 124. The Sonoma went partially through the wall and damaged two vehicles inside the garage, a 2009 Ford F-150 and a 2011 Jeep Grand Cherokee. Damage exceeded \$10,000.

FIRES

Tuesday, 12:26 p.m., 11080 N S.R. 1. Report of gas smell.

ARRESTS

Christina L Barger, 49, Alexandria; corrupt business influence, a Level 5 felony, fraud, a Level 6 felony, and intimidation, a Class A misdemeanor, No bond set.

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

Bryon Edward Gordon, 43, Markle; probation violation, a Class A misdemeanor. No bond set.

Leaha Jenae Sherman-Pope, 26, Dunkirk; operating while intoxicated with passenger under 18, a Level 6 felony, driving while suspended — prior and operating a vehicle with an ACE of .15 or more, both Class A misdemeanors, and operating without financial responsibility, a Class C misdemeanor. Bond set at \$7,000.

Zeil Quil Depree Aton Hairston, 23, Fort Wayne; operating without obtaining license, a Class C misdemeanor. Booked and released.

Caleb Lee Tungate, 35, Bluffton; criminal trespassing, a Class A misdemeanor. Booked and released.

Local Roundup

Ossian police commissioners will meet tonight

The Ossian Board of Metropolitan Police Commissioners will meet at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 7, at Collier’s, 215 North Jefferson St. Their original meeting for

Tuesday was canceled. Items on the agenda include:
• Updates on vehicle outfitting and K-9.
• Watchguard updates.
• Discussion regarding a new part-time officer.

AES Indiana wins approval for natural gas conversion

By NIKI KELLY
Indiana Capital Chronicle

The Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission on Wednesday cleared the way for AES Indiana to transition two units at its Petersburg Generating Station from coal to gas.

The move came after opposition from the coal industry and even U.S. Sen. Mike Braun, who was elected governor Tuesday night.

“AES Indiana has no plans to retire Petersburg Units 3 and 4, as it views these units as valuable capacity and energy resources. AES Indiana proposes to repower these units to reduce operating costs and environmental regulatory risk so that the units may further the utility’s provision of reliable, affordable, and environmentally sustainable service,” the IURC order said.

“Substantial evidence demonstrates that the proposed repowering of Petersburg to natural gas is a long-term, low-cost solution that will help provide resource adequacy for a long period of time.”

Evidence in the case is that the Petersburg conversion will save \$281 million over a 20-year period compared to keeping the units on coal.

The approval will allow AES Indiana to be the first

Hoosier investor-owned electric utility to stop burning coal, according to the Indiana Utility Report.

Braun sent a letter last month to the state’s top utility regulators, saying he was concerned that “taking offline legacy sources of energy too quickly will have lasting implications that cannot be reversed.”

The conversion process will temporarily — not permanently — close the units.

The repowering will be staggered so that only one unit is offline at a time. Unit 3 conversion is expected to start in February 2026 and be completed in May 2026. Once completed, it will take about one month for startup, commissioning, and testing to reach a commercial operation date in June 2026. Unit 4’s outage would start in June 2026 and be completed in October 2026.

Braun urged commissioners to deny the conversion, and encouraged collaboration with policymakers to preserve coal’s role — “the most reliable baseload fuel” — while looking to the future.

The order said the energy

industry and commission have long operated under uncertain environmental, regulatory and political conditions.

“Because neither the Commission nor the parties are capable of predicting the future, we must make decisions in the face of uncertainty. We do so by logically and reasonably assessing the extent of uncertainty and the possible effects of this uncertainty, avoiding supposition,” the order said.

The five utility commissioners agreed that the project will have positive social and economic impacts on the community of Petersburg and Pike County.

Konnie Sue Hyde
Calling: 4 - 6 p.m.
Friday, November 8.
Funeral: 6 p.m.
Friday, November 8
at the funeral home.

Goodwin-Cato & Harnish
MEMORIAL CHAPEL
A Tradition of Caring
Locally Owned and Operated Since 1922
St. Rd. 124 East, Bluffton
824-3852

Finest Wine In Wells County!

Think Holiday!



DASH 90 WINES

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

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

State Farm
Bloomington, IL
2001878

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

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

Policies to cut Hoosier homeowner property taxes

Editor's Note: Property taxes were one of the main issues the Indiana gubernatorial race and will be a main topic in the 2025 session of the Indiana Legislature. The SALTR task force, co-chaired by local State Sen. Travis Holdman, will issue its recommendations based on two years of hearings later this month. Meanwhile, herewith is one of the state's top authorities' latest thoughts on property taxes:

Suppose we want to cut property taxes for homeowners. How could we do that?

Probably we should start with another question: Why would we want to cut property taxes for homeowners? One reason — property taxes on homesteads increased 17 percent across the state in 2023, and another 7 percent in 2024. The pandemic caused it. Housing supply was restricted by rising costs of building materials, and low mortgage rates boosted demand. Home prices spiked upward in 2021. County assessors incorporated these higher prices into assessed values in 2022, which were used to set tax bills in 2023.



Larry DeBoer

Hoosier Opinions

So how could homeowner taxes be cut?

We could tell assessors not to raise assessments more than some maximum percentage. That would address the cause of the problem. But the Indiana Supreme Court says we can't do that. It's unconstitutional. The 1998 Town of St. Johns decision said that assessments must be based on "objective measures of property wealth," so assessments reflect market values, at the property's current use. Placing a legal limit on assessments would prevent the accurate measure of property values.

There's an alternative, though. We must assess the full value of a house, but we don't have to tax the full value. Deductions are subtracted from gross assessed value, so taxable assessed value is less.

We have homestead deductions that reduce their taxable assessed values by about half statewide. The General Assembly raised one of these, the supplemental deduction, for taxes in 2024 and 2025. Without that increase, homestead taxes probably would have increased 10 percent or more this year, instead of 7 percent.

Higher deductions mean lower taxes for homeowners, but they shift those taxes to landlords, farmers and businesses. That's because local governments recalculate tax rates every year. They figure out how much must be raised from the property tax to provide services, then divide that amount by the net assessed value within their borders. That becomes the tax rate. If higher homestead deductions make taxable assessed value smaller, the tax rate will be higher, and that raises tax bills for property owners who don't get the higher deduction.

We could tighten the maximum levy. That's a state-imposed limit on the amount that local governments can raise with property taxes. With the maximum, big increases in assessed values cause big decreases in tax rates. Tax rates did fall in 2023, just not as much as assessed value went up. The reason is that the maximum didn't apply to levies for debt service or those passed by referendum. They increased with the rise in assessed value.

The General Assembly cut the percentage that the maximum levy could increase in 2024, to 4 percent, and limited some referendum levy increases to 3 percent. Overall, 2024 levies increased by 6 percent statewide, down from 9 percent in 2023.

Population growth and inflation mean that governments may need more revenue for schools, roads, public safety and more. A tighter limit on levies means that local governments can't raise as much. Less revenue may mean fewer services.

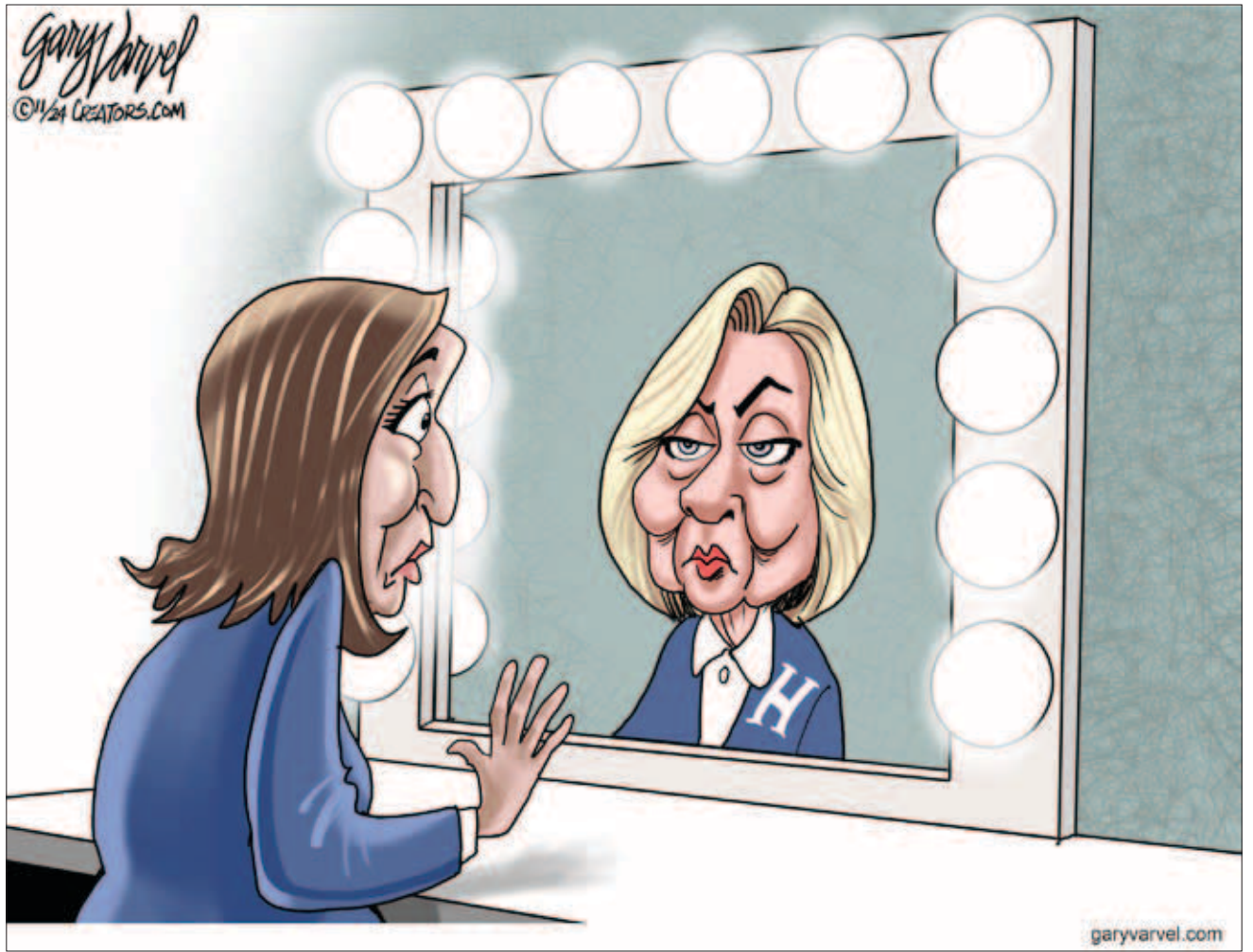
We could replace the property tax with some other revenue source. Some counties use local income taxes to fund credits to reduce property taxes. These credits don't shift property taxes to other property owners. They shift taxes to income earners instead.

Three times in the past 50 years the state increased sales taxes to reduce property taxes. Most recently, in 2008 the sales tax rose to 7 percent to provide funds to eliminate property taxes for school classroom expenses. Property owners received tax cuts. People who buy taxable goods and services paid more.

Credits don't have to be funded. The constitutional circuit breaker caps provide credits to property owners without replacing the revenue with some other tax. Taxpayers get credits if their tax bills are higher than their caps. These credits cut property taxes by more than a billion dollars in 2024, about 10 percent. That's revenue local governments don't receive, which may mean fewer services.

We have lots of policy options for reducing homeowner property taxes. But every option affects other property owners, other taxpayers, or local governments. That doesn't mean we shouldn't consider these policies, just that we should remember to consider the consequences.

Larry DeBoer is a Purdue University economist. He wrote this for Indiana newspapers.



Republican self-degradation continues. Democratic self-sabotage helped.

Conducting a thorough autopsy on the cadaver of Kamala Harris's campaign will require the scalpel of voting data not yet sharpened. Two things, however, are obvious. Democrats should have remembered the ancient axiom "be careful what you wish for." And they should have remembered the warning attributed to their hero Franklin D. Roosevelt (regarding Gen. Douglas MacArthur): "Never underestimate a man who overestimates himself."

Progressives, which most Democrats more or less are, are defined by their confidence that clever people (they have themselves in mind) can manipulate society and fine-tune its complex processes. So, many months before President Joe Biden's disqualifying decline, which many leading Democrats had fiercely denied until it became undeniable, Democrats worked to see that Republicans selected the nominee who would be best for Biden: Donald Trump.

Republican opposition to Trump's nomination became untenable after the August 2022 FBI raid on Mar-a-Lago (pertaining to classified documents), then his indictment in the hush money case. This was concocted by an elected, flamboyantly anti-Trump Democratic prosecutor in Manhattan, who, in a marvel akin to the multiplication of the fishes and loaves, transformed a bookkeeping misdemeanor into 34 federal felonies. Democrats, who call Trump an "existential" threat to everything, endeavored to secure him another presidential nomination.

Enough has been said about the Republican Party's eight years of self-degradation. More needs to be said about the Democratic Party's self-sabotage, via identity politics (race, gender), that made Harris vice president. And then, via Democratic Party high-handedness, foisted her on the nation as the party's nominee. She did not pass through the toughening furnace of competition that reveals mettle, or its absence.

Her campaign, although short, was too long for her talents. They do not include the skill of making her synthetic centrism — her repudiation of her entire public profile prior to July — seem authentic.

A wit once asked, can the phrase "insipid beyond words" be applied to words? Harris segued from vapidity ("joy!") to hysteria ("fascism!"), from Beethoven ("Ode to Joy," without the music) to Wagner ("Götterdämmerung," staged for swing states). She mocked Trump for being such a feeble president that he could not even build his border wall. Simultaneously, she intimated that in a second term the triumph of his Hitlerian will would steamroller America's democratic institutions. Perhaps voters detected a contradiction.

And perhaps some of them thought: Before claiming to sniff Nazism on the other party (and its supporters), Harris's party should deal with the stench of its antisemitic faction that is pro-Hamas and therefore pro-genocide.

Harris, who called Trump "weird" (an unusual, for her, understatement), leads a party hospitable to advanced thinkers who believe that men can menstruate. Speaking of weird, the Biden-Harris administration's secretary of Health and Human Services could not be cajoled, during Senate testimony, to refer to "mothers" as other than "birthing people." And perhaps Harris's difficulties with male voters had something to do with her party having too many members who think that in their favored phrase, "toxic masculinity," the adjective is actually redundant. Trump has hardly monopolized the supply of weirdness.

In October, the Obamas descended from Olympus to remind us of the meaning of "insufferable." And to demonstrate why progressives persuade only themselves. The Obamas scolded approximately half the electorate for disappointing the Obamas, who are weary to the point of irritability by the chore of teaching their deplorable inferiors this: If you will please just vote as we Obamas consider hygienic, you will disguise your moral backwardness that requires us to stoop to instructing you.

A minimally articulate Democratic nominee would have contrasted nicely with Trump's rhetorical style of digressions piled upon previous digressions. Instead, Harris got lost in her syntactical labyrinths. And she spent too much time belaboring two subjects: Trump's boorishness and abortion.

The former is familiar to everyone and appealing to many. The latter issue was heated to a red glow by the Supreme Court's June 2022 overturning of the constitutional right to abortion. But by 2024, it had cooled somewhat as various states, including some red ones, passed pro-choice laws and/or state constitutional amendments, and sentient people recognized that it is politically impossible for Congress to pass a national abortion ban.

It has been said that the future is a mirror without glass in it. But Trump's scatterbrained approach to almost everything makes it likely that he will fail to do much of what he has vowed to do. Then, in 2028, Americans get to do this again. That is the good and bad news.

georgewill@washpost.com.



George Will

Patio ponderings of natural phenomena

Angelkeep claims no expertise, only querosity. That's questions (query) of a curious nature.

Weather becomes the life flow of nature regardless of where events occur. Angelkeep spent many a balmy day reading on the patio in perfect weather conditions while fearing harm towards family, friends, and even strangers caught up in the southeast hurricanes unleashing record 2024 havoc.

Angelkeep did not pass through the year with no damage. It was minor. Losses limited to trees.

One local storm snapped the top of a dead tree trunk. The top half became a raft floating across Angelpond. Eventually a homemade lasso, of sorts, pulled the log to the pond's edge and out onto land to dry for patio firewood. The end of the long log gave evidence of the primary reason a storm could snap the trunk. A woodpecker nest, carving out the center 2/3rds of the trunk, weakened the dead tree prior to the storm. It was not the first Angelkeep woodpecker lumberjack tree-falling discovery.

Another storm of the summer snapped two live trees at the center trunk with diameters of 5-6 inches. The querosity of this storm came in the fact that one tree snapped and fell eastward, while the other curiously broke and dropped the opposite direction. At the same time. Same storm moment.

There simply are some nature events that refuse to fall under the canopy of "Global Warming."

What will folks reading historical accounts on Global Warming think in the next century?

Angelkeep Journals

Daylight Savings Time ended at the beginning of this week. Not Global Warming, but perhaps "Global Slowing." Angelkeep drifted back to March 8, 1895, and found British mathematician William Thomson, aka Lord Kelvin, identifying the slowing of Earth. He then assured, "But it need not alarm one seriously, yet."

Earth was slowing, not warming, by 22 seconds per century. He blamed tide friction acting as a brake. Earth growth took some blame as well, due to the globe being struck and collecting meteoric dust at the rate of one foot per 4,000 years.

His report surprised Angelkeep when he came close to Global Warming verbiage. "The annual growth and melting of snow and ice at the poles is capable of introducing irregularities into the problem. The growth at the poles, by abstracting water from the other parts of the ocean accelerating the earth's motion, and the melting, by restoring the water, retarding it."

Before you brush off Lord Kelvin's nature evolving theories, be aware he had been admitted to the University of Glasgow at age 10. There he won the University gold medal at age 15 for "An Essay on the Figure of the Earth." His Queen Victoria knighting in 1866 came after his work for the Atlantic Telegraph



Alan Daugherty

Cable, and his patented telegraph receiver called a mirror galvanometer. His work regarding Global Slowing in 1895 at age 71 calculated the earth slowed by seven seconds from 1850 to 1862. It gained eight seconds over the next decade.

Angelkeep professes to be no professor of physics, but the math is doable. A seven-second loss preceding an eight-second gain equals a one second faster speed over two decades. Speed creates friction. Friction creates heat. Thus Global Slowing might be the cause of Global Warming. What will folks who historically read these facts in the next century think about that?

Who knows, carrying Lord Kelvin's work into year 2024, did the earth suddenly slow or speed up during that storm which caused Angelkeep to lose the tops of two growing live trees, one falling east as one simultaneously fell west?

And just what would Lord Kelvin think about Sunday's attempt to alter time by setting clocks back one hour? That annual changes of clocks for so many years may be the science behind Global Warming, or Global Slowing. Is "Springing Forward" and "Falling Back" over and over and over causing Earth malfunctions?

Angelkeep suggests you try it. Experiment. Run across your living room, stop suddenly, and reverse to running back. Repeat this ridiculous notion for as many years as Daylight Savings Time has been in use. Then stop and feel your forehead. Do you feel a "Warming?"

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

Submit your Letters to the Editor via: • Our website link (Submit your Letter) • E-Mail: 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."

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

Navigating burnout and feeling left behind

Dear Annie: It's been a long journey for my wife and I. I left grad school and we got married in 2008, just as the economy collapsed. It took us a while to get our careers going. After 10 years of struggle, we moved to a new state for new jobs, and right before the pandemic, my wife started working on her teaching degree. During all of this, our oldest child had behavior issues, and our youngest was young and hyper and wouldn't fall asleep at a reasonable hour.

We've struggled with things like "us time," date nights, etc. Many weekends we don't even leave the house. On top of that, she's had a chronic illness, which we just now have under control. We've made mistakes in our relationship. We've been stressed, and this year we decided that if we could plan ahead, then we could have work as well as life outside of work.

A few weeks into that, and it's too much for her. She has bipolar II disorder, so it could be bipolar fatigue. This weekend, she hit a wall of burnout and told me she had to scale back on things — no more outings, doing a birthday thing for me this month was too much for her. I had a huge work victory and wanted to be celebrated but that has to be delayed, too, as it's too much for her.

I do all the driving, most of the cooking and half the laundry. I help with the cleaning, and I get the kids to all their activities. We are behind on things like dentist appointments. We are struggling to keep up, and it feels like 1) I'm expected to take on more so she's not overwhelmed and 2) The things she needs to scale back on are all related to how she sees or appreciates me.

I love this person. She has the best laugh, the sharpest mind and is so talented. She's a great mom. I love having her in my life, but I don't know how to navigate the burnout and how to hold the idea that the thing she needs to do to be healthy is to not hold space for me.

In the past, I've jumped into helping

mode: How can we make things easier, how can we take things off her plate, what resources can I find? But so much of what I suggest falls on deaf ears or isn't reciprocated. I'm all out of ideas. — At a Loss

Dear At a Loss: It's clear that you care deeply for your wife and your children. And while it's great to be supportive, don't lose sight of your own needs; your well-being will directly impact hers.

Bipolar II can make consistency difficult, and burnout is real. Scaling back may feel to her like a lifeline, even though it comes at the cost of you feeling valued and supported.

Now more than ever, it's important not to give up on setting aside "us time" for the two of you — even if it's only 30 minutes a week, hanging out at home. It's important that you remain on the same team and don't let resentment build.

You should also reach out for outside support. If you have a family member or nanny to assist in child care, then great, but if not, take advantage of free or low-cost child care offered at schools, churches, or nonprofits like a YMCA or Boys & Girls Club. Additionally, a couples counselor can help you two figure out a sustainable plan moving forward.

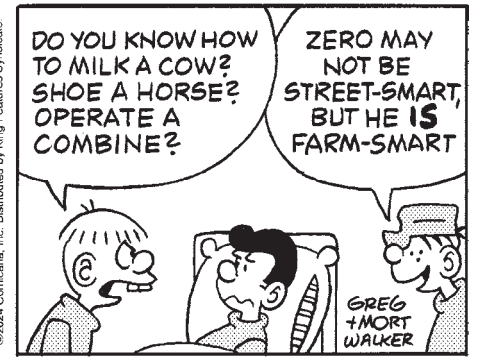
"How Can I Forgive My Cheating Partner?" is out now! Annie Lane's second anthology — featuring favorite columns on marriage, infidelity, communication and reconciliation — is available as a paperback and e-book. Visit <http://www.creatorspublishing.com> for more information. Send your questions for Annie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

© 2024 CREATORS.COM

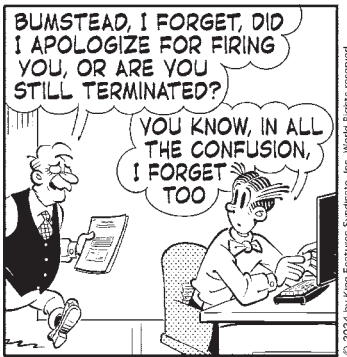
Dear Annie



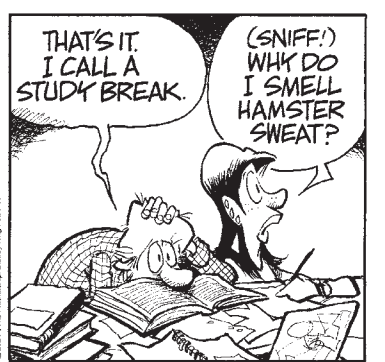
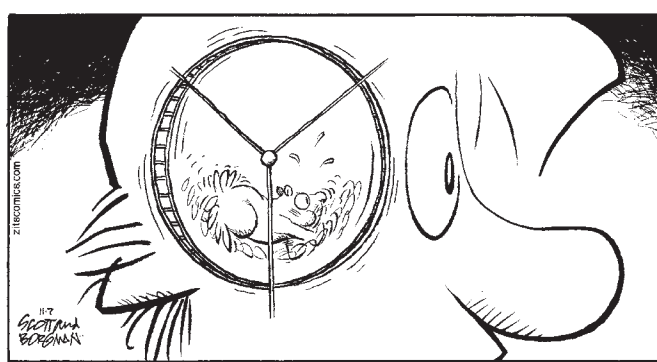
BEETLE BAILEY



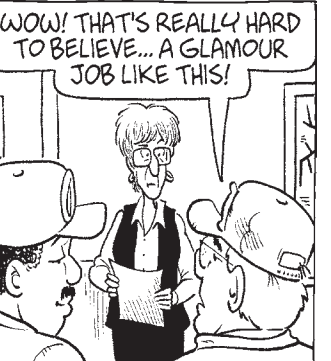
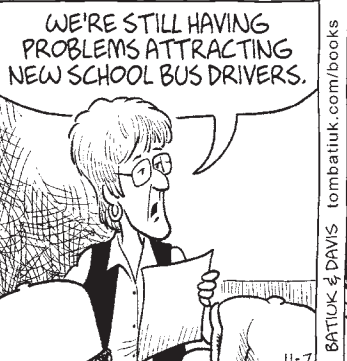
BLONDIE



ZITS



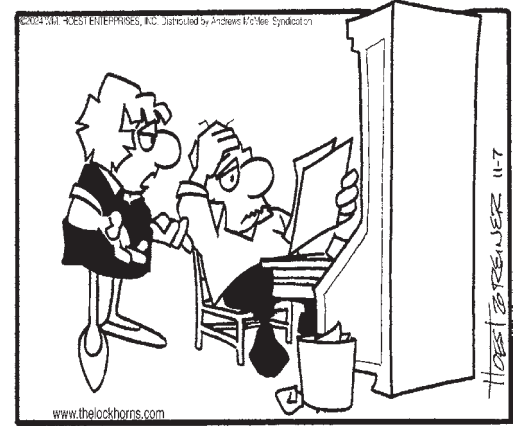
CRANKSHAFT



THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane

The LOCKHORNS



My Answer

By Dr. Billy Graham



We can't put ourselves in God's place

place? How would you treat them in light of their rebellion and neglect and mockery?

We can't really put ourselves in God's place, of course; He is far greater. But if you were God, wouldn't you be tempted to wipe out the human race and blot them from your memory? Why would you even try to do anything good for them, knowing they'd probably reject it?

But this isn't God's way — and the proof is Jesus Christ. Many have heard it said that God hates the sinner — but loves the sinner. When Adam and Eve rebelled against God, He punished them by sending death on the human race. But He also

refused to stamp them out and even promised an eventual way of salvation. That way is Jesus Christ, who loved us so much that He gave His life for us. Thank God today for His grace to mankind — grace that is greater than all our sin.

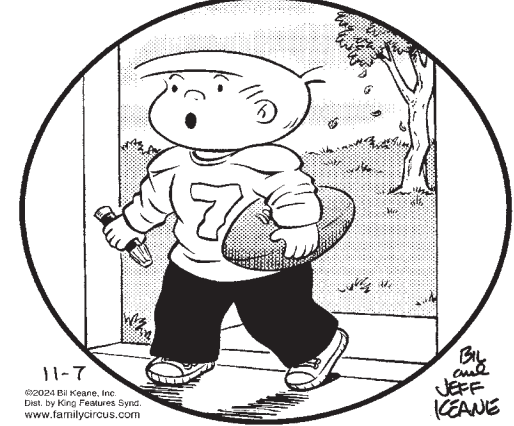
May we never doubt the depth of the love of Christ. "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8, NKJV).

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

©2024 Billy Graham Literary Trust. Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Question: Why does God put up with all the corruption of governments, nations, corporations, and with so many who defile everything God has made and blessed? Since He is so powerful, He certainly can stop the disgrace like what happened at the Summer Olympics' opening ceremony. Such corruptness was clearly against Him and what He stands for. I don't know why He remains silent toward such behavior from the world. I certainly cannot. — P.O.

Answer: Have you ever asked yourself what you would do with the human race if you were in God's



"Is it okay if we draw goalposts on the side of the house?"

**BUY IT
SELL IT
RENT IT
FIND IT
FILL IT
GET IT
DO IT**

IN THE CLASSIFIEDS!

Place Your Ad 24/7/365!
www.news-banner.com

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 — goes there? (4)
4 Pyramid, maybe (5)
8 Third son (4)
12 Not 'neath (5)
13 Actress Perlman (6)
14 152, in old Rome (5)
15 Speeches (6)
17 Band boosters (6)
18 Fanatic (5)
19 Red algae (5)
21 Main circus tent (6)
24 Poorly lit (5)
25 "A Chorus Line" song (5)
26 Eye under (5)
28 Argue against (5)
32 Farm fraction (5)
34 Aachen article (5)
36 Judicial garb (5)
37 Limerick feature (5)
39 Pre-schooler (5)
41 "Angie" actor Stephen (5)

DOWN

1 Romance (5)
2 That girl (5)
3 Citrus green-house (5)
4 Poseidon's son (5)
5 "So that's it!" (5)
6 Clothing store section (5)
7 Founded (on) (5)
8 Con artist (5)
9 Sailor's saint (5)
10 Gratuities (5)
11 Radiator sound (5)
16 Boy king (5)
20 Melody (5)
21 Piglet's dad (5)
22 Foot fraction (5)
23 Writer's block? (5)
43 Vatican-related (5)
45 "How frustrating!" (5)
46 Rhine feeder (5)
47 Pride parade initials (5)
48 "But," in French (5)
49 Advertising award (5)
53 URL ender (5)
54 Shower curtain holder (5)
55 Navarro of "The View" (5)

Solution time: 24 mins.

Yesterday's answer 11-7

11/07	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
WINM (12)	11	26	63		Washington Watch With Tony Perkins		News-w	Creflo Dollar	Joseph Prince	Turning Point	TCT Today	Joyce Meyer	Perry Stone	Life Today with	Robert Jeffress	Jewish Jesus	Andrew Womack	Ask the Pastor		Today With God
CBS WANE (15)	2	2	15	15	News (N)	Inside Edition (N)	News at 6 (N)	CBS News (N)	Wheel of Fortune (N)	Jeopardy! (N)	George & M. (N)	Ghosts (N)	Matlock "Claws" (N)	Elsbeth "Elisbeth's Eleven" (N)	Nightcast (N)	(35) Late Show-Colbert (N)	(35) After Midnight (N)			
Antenna-2 WANE-2 (152)	106	20			Chicago P.D.		Chicago P.D.	"Disco Bob"	Chicago P.D. "A Little Devil Complex"	"Unpacking"	Chicago P.D. "9-1-1 (N)		Chicago P.D. "Retread" (N)	Chicago P.D. "Erin's Mom"	Chicago P.D. "What Do You Do"	Chicago P.D. "What Do You Do"	Chicago P.D. "What Do You Do"	Chicago P.D. "What Do You Do"	Chicago P.D. "What Do You Do"	Chicago P.D. "What Do You Do"
ABC WPTA (21)	4	3	21	21	ABC21 News at 5 (N)		ABC21 (N)	ABC World News (N)	ABC21 News (N)	Ent. Tonight (N)			Doctor Odyssey (N)	Grey's Anatomy (N)	ABC21 (N)	(35) Jimmy Kimmel (N)	(35) Nightline (N)			
NBC WPTA-2 (212)	7	8		14	Family Feud	25 Words or Less	News (N)	NBC News (N)	Family Feud (N)	Family Feud (N)	Law & Order "Time Will Tell" (N)		Law & Order: SVU "Rorschach" (N)	Found "Missing While Gabi Moseley" (N)	News (N)	(35) Tonight Show (N)	(35) Seth Meyers (N)			
MNT WPTA-3 (213)	10	9	56	34	Bob Hearts Abishola	Bob Hearts Abishola	Modern Family	News (N)	Last Man Standing	Last Man Standing	Dateline		Dateline	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	The Conners	The Conners	The Goldbergs	Goldbergs "Fiddler" (N)	
CV WISE (33)	8	4	33	33	The Steve Wilkos Show		TMZ Live (N)		TMZ (N)	True Crime News (N)	Scrabble "Dictionary Divas" (N)		Trivial Pursuit "Take That, Coach K!" (N)	Friends	Friends	TMZ (N)	Dish Nation (N)	True Crime News	Chicago P.D.	
PBS WFWA (39)	13	5	39	39	Craft in America "Miniatures"		PBS News Hour (N)		BBC News America	Arts In Focus (N)	This Old House (N)	Old House (N)	Velvet "The Designer" (N)	This Old House	Amanpour and Company (N)	This Old House	This Old House	Ask This Old House		
PBS WFP (49)	3				Craft in America "Miniatures"		Context	The Day	PBS News Hour (N)	Now Enter "Tipton 2"	Saboteur	Broadchurch	Nina "In Her Image"	Amanpour and Company (N)	This Old House	This Old House	Neighbor	Neighbor		
FOX WFFT (55)	6	6	55	55	WFFT Fox News at 5 (N)		WFFT Fox News at 6 (N)		Big Bang	Big Bang	Hell's Kitchen (N)		Crime Scene Kitchen (N)	FOX 55 News First at 10 (N)	Young Sheldon	Young Sheldon				
CABLE CHANNELS																				
LIFE	23	113	108	252	The Rookie "Simone"		Castle "Watershed"		Castle "Valkyrie"		Castle "Dreamworld"		Castle "Need to Know"	(05) Castle "Number One Fan"	(05) Castle "Time Will Tell"		Castle "Dreamworld"			
FX	24	132	136	148	*** Transformers: Dark of the Moon		*** Transformers: Dark of the Moon		*** Transformers: Age of Extinction (14) Stanley Tucci, Li Bingbing, Mark Wahlberg		*** Transformers: The Last Knight (17) Mark Wahlberg		*** Transformers: The Last Knight (17) Mark Wahlberg		*** Transformers: The Last Knight (17) Mark Wahlberg		*** Transformers: The Last Knight (17) Mark Wahlberg			
TVLAND	25		106	304	Andy Griffith		Andy Griffith		Andy Griffith		Andy Griffith		Andy Griffith		Andy Griffith		Andy Griffith			
E!	26	142	114	236	Bridesmaids		*** Bridesmaids (2011, Comedy) Maya Rudolph, Rose Byrne, Kristen Wiig		*** Bridesmaids (2011, Comedy) Maya Rudolph, Rose Byrne, Kristen Wiig		*** Bridesmaids (2011, Comedy) Maya Rudolph, Rose Byrne, Kristen Wiig		*** Bridesmaids (2011, Comedy) Maya Rudolph, Rose Byrne, Kristen Wiig		*** Bridesmaids (2011, Comedy) Maya Rudolph, Rose Byrne, Kristen Wiig		*** Bridesmaids (2011, Comedy) Maya Rudolph, Rose Byrne, Kristen Wiig			
PARMT	30		241	241	Two and a Half Men		Two and a Half Men		Two and a Half Men		Two and a Half Men		Two and a Half Men		Two and a Half Men		Two and a Half Men			
ESPN	31	50	140	206	Around (N)		Pardon (L)		ESPN Original Documentaries (L)		College Football Teams TBA All the action from NCAA college football. (L)		College Football Teams TBA All the action from NCAA college football. (L)		College Football Teams TBA All the action from NCAA college football. (L)		College Football Teams TBA All the action from NCAA college football. (L)			
ESPN2	32	54	143	209	NFL Live (N)		ESPN BET Live		The Point		College Football Teams TBA (L)		College Football Teams TBA (L)		College Football Teams TBA (L)		College Football Teams TBA (L)			
FSMW	33		418	671	Foul Territory		NASCAR 2022 NASCAR Cup Series Championship		Golf Life		Pregame (L)		NHL Hockey Utah Hockey Club at St. Louis Blues From Enterprise Center in Saint Louis, Mo. (L)		Blues Post. (L)		Warehouse Games		NHL Hockey	
USA	34	133	105	242	Law & Order: SVU "Betrayal's Climax"		Law & Order: SVU "Wednesday's Child"		Law & Order: SVU "Downloaded Child"		*** The Fate of the Furious (2017, Action) Dwayne Johnson, Charlize Theron, Vin Diesel.		*** The Fate of the Furious (2017, Action) Dwayne Johnson, Charlize Theron, Vin Diesel.		*** The Fate of the Furious (2017, Action) Dwayne Johnson, Charlize Theron, Vin Diesel.		*** The Fate of the Furious (2017, Action) Dwayne Johnson, Charlize Theron, Vin Diesel.			
DISC	35	72	182	278	Homestead "Black Hills Hope"		Homestead Rescue "Volcano's Edge"		Homestead Rescue		Homestead Rescue		Homestead Rescue		Homestead Rescue		Homestead Rescue			
TLC	36	73	183	280	Couple "Namaste"		The Little Couple		The Little Couple		To Be Announced		To Be Announced		To Be Announced		To Be Announced			
HIST	38	77	120	269	Pawn Stars "Rick's Big Triumph"		Pawn Stars "Pawm Pawns Cry"		Pawn Stars "When Pawm Pawns Cry"		Mountain Men "Apex Predator"		Mountain Men "Chasing the Ghost"		Mountain Men "Chasing the Ghost"		Mountain Men "Chasing the Ghost"			
A&E	39	134	118	265	The First 48 "Taken"		The First 48		The First 48		After the First 48 (N)		Alaska PD (N)		Interrogation Raw (N)		(05) The First 48		(05) After the First 48	
HALL	40	117	185	312	*** 'Twas the Date Before Christmas		*** 'Twas the Date Before Christmas		*** 'Twas the Date Before Christmas		*** 'Twas the Date Before Christmas		*** 'Twas the Date Before Christmas		*** 'Twas the Date Before Christmas		*** 'Twas the Date Before Christmas			
SYFY	41	135	122	244	*** Skyscraper (2018, Action) Neve Campbell, Chin Han, Dwayne Johnson.		*** Skyscraper (2018, Action) Neve Campbell, Chin Han, Dwayne Johnson.		*** Skyscraper (2018, Action) Neve Campbell, Chin Han, Dwayne Johnson.		*** Skyscraper (2018, Action) Neve Campbell, Chin Han, Dwayne Johnson.		*** Skyscraper (2018, Action) Neve Campbell, Chin Han, Dwayne Johnson.		*** Skyscraper (2018, Action) Neve Campbell, Chin Han, Dwayne Johnson.		*** Skyscraper (2018, Action) Neve Campbell, Chin Han, Dwayne Johnson.			
TBS	43	130	139	247	Big Bang		Big Bang		Big Bang		Big Bang		Big Bang		Big Bang		Big Bang			
TNT	44	131	138	245	*** Ant-Man and The Wasp (18, Act) Evangeline Lilly, Michael Douglas, Paul Rudd.		*** Ant-Man and The Wasp (18, Act) Evangeline Lilly, Michael Douglas, Paul Rudd.		*** Ant-Man and The Wasp (18, Act) Evangeline Lilly, Michael Douglas, Paul Rudd.		*** Ant-Man and The Wasp (18, Act) Evangeline Lilly, Michael Douglas, Paul Rudd.		*** Ant-Man and The Wasp (18, Act) Evangeline Lilly, Michael Douglas, Paul Rudd.		*** Ant-Man and The Wasp (18, Act) Evangeline Lilly, Michael Douglas, Paul Rudd.		*** Ant-Man and The Wasp (18, Act) Evangeline Lilly, Michael Douglas, Paul Rudd.			
AMC	45		131	254	*** Moneyball (2011, Drama) Jonah Hill, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Brad Pitt.		*** Moneyball (2011, Drama) Jonah Hill, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Brad Pitt.		*** Moneyball (2011, Drama) Jonah Hill, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Brad Pitt.		*** Moneyball (2011, Drama) Jonah Hill, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Brad Pitt.		*** Moneyball (2011, Drama) Jonah Hill, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Brad Pitt.		*** Moneyball (2011, Drama) Jonah Hill, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Brad Pitt.		*** Moneyball (2011, Drama) Jonah Hill, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Brad Pitt.			
COM	47		107	249	The Office		The Office		The Office		The Office		The Office		The Office		The Office			
FS1	48	64	150	219	Speak Joy Taylor, Keyshawn Johnson and Paul Pierce discuss the biggest sports topics of the day.		Kevin H		Kevin H		College Basketball Prairie View A&M at DePaul From Wintrust Arena in Chicago. (L)		College Basketball Prairie View A&M at DePaul From Wintrust Arena in Chicago. (L)		College Basketball Prairie View A&M at DePaul From Wintrust Arena in Chicago. (L)		College Basketball Prairie View A&M at DePaul From Wintrust Arena in Chicago. (L)			
WE	53		307	307	Bones Report (L)		The Hill (L)		On Balance (L)		Comos (L)		Dan Abrams Live (L)		Banfield (L)		Cuomo		Dan Abrams Live	
WGN	57		128	260	Bones		Bones		Bones		Bones		Bones		Bones		Bones			
FOOD	59	153	110	231	Beat Bobby Flay		Christmas Cookie		Christmas Cookie		Christmas Cookie		Christmas Cookie (N)		WatchWhatHousewives/OC		Southern Charm		Real SLC	
BRavo	60	140	129	237	Housewives of NJ		Housewives/OC		Housewives/OC		Housewives/OC		Housewives/OC		Housewives/OC		Housewives/OC			
NICK	68		170	299	SpongeBob		SpongeBob		SpongeBob		SpongeBob		SpongeBob		SpongeBob		SpongeBob			
DISN	69	30	172	290	Bluey		Bluey		Bluey		Big City		Big City		Big City		Big City			
FREEFORM	70	32	180	311	*** The Nightmare Before Christmas '93		*** Frozen (2013, Animated) Voices of Idina Menzel, Jonathan Groff, Kristen Bell.		*** Frozen (2013, Animated) Voices of Idina Menzel, Jonathan Groff, Kristen Bell.		*** Frozen (2013, Animated) Voices of Idina Menzel, Jonathan Groff, Kristen Bell.		*** Frozen (2013, Animated) Voices of Idina Menzel, Jonathan Groff, Kristen Bell.		*** Frozen (2013, Animated) Voices of Idina Menzel, Jonathan Groff, Kristen Bell.		*** Frozen (2013, Animated) Voices of Idina Menzel, Jonathan Groff, Kristen Bell.			
HBO	301		300	301	*** Breath of Fire		My Brilliant Friend: Story of the Lost Child		The Franchise		Somebody		The Penguin		(50) Janet Planet (2023, Drama) Zoe Siedler, Elias Koteas, Julianne Nicholson.		(45) *** Love Lies Bleeding (24) Katy O'Brian, Kristen Stewart.			
MAX	325		310	515	*** Ghost Dog: The Way of Samurai (1999) John Tormey, Forest Whitaker. (P)		*** American Reno (2013, Action) James Franco, Winona Ryder, Jason Statham.		*** The Wolf of Wall Street (2013, Comedy Drama) Jonah Hill, Margot Robbie, Leonardo DiCaprio.		*** Private Parts (1997, Comedy) Mary McCormack, (P)		*** Private Parts (1997, Comedy) Mary McCormack, (P)		*** Private Parts (1997, Comedy) Mary McCormack, (P)		*** Private Parts (1997, Comedy) Mary McCormack, (P)			
PARSHO	331	851	318	545	*** Heart (1995, Crime Story) Robert De Niro, Val Kilmer, Al Pacino.		*** Earth Mama (2023, Drama) Erika Alexander, Doechii, Tia Nomore.		*** Hustle & Flow (05) Anthony Anderson, Taryn Manning, Terrence Dashon Howard.		*** Private Parts (1997, Comedy) Mary McCormack, (P)		*** Private Parts (

Mathurin's 20 leads balanced Pacers offense past Magic

By PHILLIP B. WILSON

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Benedict Mathurin scored 20 points, four teammates each had 17, and the Indiana Pacers defeated the Orlando Magic 118-111 on Wednesday night.

Ahead two in the final minute, the Pacers' Tyrese Haliburton sank a 3 and Mathurin made two foul shots. Six of nine Pacers scored in double digits. Haliburton, Myles Turner, Pascal Siakam and Jarace Walker each scored 17. T.J. McConnell had 15.

Orlando's Franz Wagner led all scorers with 28. Jalen Suggs added 15 and Moritz Wagner had 14 off the bench.

TAKEAWAYS

Magic: Lost fifth in a row in a humbling road trip. Orlando's last win was at home against the Pacers on Oct. 28. Suggs disappeared early as the 17.6-point scorer mustered just two points in

the first 19 minutes.

Pacers: After a sluggish 1-3 start, Indiana has won three of four because the Pacers are sharing the ball better and pushing the pace. It helps that Haliburton has regained more of his All-Star form after being slowed by a back injury.

KEY MOMENT

Down 97-96 with 8:45 remaining, the Pacers went on a 16-6 run in 4:05 as four players contributed. Turner hit a 3 with a dunk and Haliburton sank a trey with a layup. The Magic never led again.

KEY STAT

Walker, a second-year pro, set a new career best in points as he made all seven shots, including three 3s. He also had six rebounds.

UP NEXT

The Magic host New Orleans on Friday, and the Pacers visit Charlotte on Friday.

Mgbako scores career-high 31 points, Hoosiers win in opener

By MICHAEL MAROT

AP Sports Writer

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. (AP) — Mackenzie Mgbako scored 19 of his career-high 31 points in the first half Wednesday and Malik Reneau added 15 points and seven rebounds to lead No. 17 Indiana past SIU Edwardsville 80-61 in Wednesday's season opener.

Mgbako made 8 of his first 10 shots and finished 13 of 17 from the field while going 4 of 5 on 3-pointers, making his only free throw attempt and grabbing nine rebounds.

The Cougars (1-1) were led by Ray Sean Taylor with 17 points and Arnas Sakenis, who had eight points and nine rebounds.

Indiana honored former USF coach Amir Abdur-Rahim before the game with a moment of silence. The 43-year-old Abdur-Rahim died in late October from complications while he was undergoing a procedure at a Tampa-area hospital.

The Hoosiers also honored SIUE forward Kyle Thomas, the son of the late Daryl Thomas, before tip-off. Daryl Thomas played on Indiana's 1986-87 national championship team.

TAKEAWAYS

SIUE: After posting their first back-to-



back winning seasons since moving to Division I, the Cougars played better than expected for 15 minutes. Then things went awry quickly. The good news: Better days are ahead for coach Brian Barone's program.

Indiana: The new-look Hoosiers certainly showed some promising things in the first game that counts. Three of the six transfers started and four played key roles. But after a somewhat ragged performance, coach Mike Woodson needs to get these players in sync fast.

KEY MOMENT

After SIUE scored seven straight points to tie the score at 27 late in the first half, Mgbako answered with a 3-pointer, a steal and a three-point play. His flurry fueled a 15-3 run to close the first half, giving the Hoosiers a 42-30 lead.

KEY STAT

The Hoosiers drew plenty of fouls and improved significantly on last season's 66.4% free throw percentage by going 14 of 17. Indiana also outscored SIUE 23-14 off turnovers.

UP NEXT

The Cougars face another daunting challenge Friday when they visit Illinois while the Hoosiers host Eastern Illinois on Sunday.

Guardians bring back catcher Austin Hedges for 2025 season

By TOM WITHERS

AP Sports Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — Austin Hedges' contributions went well beyond being just a light-hitting backup catcher for the Guardians last season. He was a mentor, advisor, wise-cracking teammate and clubhouse leader.

He'll be one for Cleveland again.

The popular catcher agreed to a \$4 million, one-year contract Wednesday to return to the AL Central champions, who credited Hedges' leadership as a major factor in the team's unexpected success in 2024.

The Guardians took over first place in April and stayed there, going 92-69 and winning the AL Central under rookie manager Stephen Vogt. Cleveland beat Detroit in a tight Division Series before losing in five games to the New York Yankees in the American League Championship Series.

Hedges was a clubhouse conduit for Vogt, who immediately had to navigate around several injuries to his pitching staff early in the year. The 32-year-old Hedges mentored young catcher Bo Naylor during his first full major league season and also appeared in eight of Cleveland's 10 postseason games.

Hedges said he became the kind of selfless player every team wants by necessity.

"Well, it kind of all started with not hitting very well," joked the .186 career hitter over 10 major league seasons.

Hedges found value in being a teammate young players could lean on, and in doing so made himself an indispensable asset.

"I had to look myself in the mirror and be like, how am I going to stay in the game?" he said. "Because I don't want to get back to the minor leagues. I don't want to get another

job. I love the big leagues. I love playing in the big leagues. It's the only thing I've ever wanted in life."

Hedges had expressed interest in coming back during his exit interviews, and the team's feeling was mutual.

"He's not just the mascot. This is a really good player," Vogt said following the season. "He's so much more to us than what any outside source can see. He helps us get better. He helps me get better. He challenges the coaching staff. He challenges his teammates and he brings the energy every single day.

"And, he's a very, very good major league baseball player. You don't stay in the league as long as he's been here by accident."

Hedges played for Cleveland from 2020-22 and then re-signed with the Guardians for \$4 million last season after spending 2023 with Pittsburgh and Texas, where he won a World Series title.

He believes the Guardians are on their way to one as well.

"We have a road map now for what to do," Hedges said. "We had an idea of what the road map looked like after 2022, but now we know exactly what it takes to get to the World Series and what it's going to take to then win that thing.

"So for us, we don't have to change much."

The Guardians went 26-20 in Hedges' 46 starts. While he struggled as a hitter, because of his experience, Hedges started in the playoffs and also replaced Naylor late in some pressure-packed postseason games.

Hedges spent five-plus seasons with San Diego before he came to Cleveland in a trade midway through the 2020 season.

Kyle Hendricks, Angels agree to \$2.5 million, 1-year contract

By RONALD BLUM

AP Baseball Writer

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Right-hander Kyle Hendricks and the Los Angeles Angels have agreed to a \$2.5 million, one-year contract, a person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal was subject to a successful physical.

Hendricks has spent his entire big league career with the Chicago Cubs and is 97-81 with a 3.68 ERA in 270 starts and six relief appearances over 11 seasons. He was the

last Cubs player remaining from their 2016 World Series champions, who won the team's first title since 1908.

He was an All-Star in 2016, going 16-8 with a major league-best 2.13 ERA. He pitched 4 1/3 shutout innings as the Cubs lost Game 3 to Cleveland 1-0 and 4 2/3 innings in Chicago's 8-7, 10-inning win in Game 7.

Hendricks, who turns 35 on Dec. 7, was 4-12 with a 6.27 ERA in 24 starts this year and had a 3.14 ERA in five relief appearances from May 23 to June 14. He completed a \$70 million, five-year contract.

High School Calendar

WEDNESDAY, NOV 6
No events scheduled.
THURSDAY, NOV 7
GIRLS BASKETBALL: Southern Wells at Cowan, 7:30 p.m.
FRIDAY, NOV 8

GIRLS BASKETBALL: Cathedral at Norwell, 7:30 p.m.
SATURDAY, NOV 9
GIRLS BASKETBALL: Warsaw at Norwell, 7:30 p.m.; Canterbury at Bluffton, 7 p.m.; Southern Wells at Union City, 7:30 p.m.

Boras indicates Soto may try to top Ohtani's record \$700M

By RONALD BLUM

AP Baseball Writer

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Agent Scott Boras indicated Juan Soto may be seeking to top Shohei Ohtani's record \$700 million contract because he is three years younger than the Japanese two-way star was when he reached his deal with the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Boras gave a pun-filled, 48-minute assessment of the market at the general managers meetings on Wednesday, calling Soto "the Mona Lisa of the museum." Boras said only a handful of players have matched Soto's accomplishments at age 26, mentioning Willie Mays, Hank Aaron and Ted Williams, and boasted "he has literally 15 years more of his prime to offer."

"You're talking about a business opportunity where you can make literally billions of dollars by acquiring somebody," Boras said. "You can really see that owners, general managers, that they're kind of called upon to be championship magicians. ... It's hard to do, to put together that magic of a championship run, but behind every great magician obviously is the magic Juan."

Ohtani agreed to his 10-year contract late last year and helped lead the team to its second World Series title in five years. The deal contains \$680 million in deferred money payable from 2034-43, reducing its average annual value for purposes of baseball's luxury tax to approximately \$46.08 million.

"I don't think Ohtani has much to do with Juan Soto, at all," Boras said. "It's not something we discuss or consider. Juan Soto is — he's in an age category that separates him from all."

He wouldn't publicly discuss specifics of what Soto is seeking.

"I'm not going to talk about dollars and cents. That's something we'll take care of with the clubs," Boras said.

He dismissed the idea of Soto accepting deferred money similar to Ohtani.

"I don't think that tax considerations are the focal point when you're talking about a business opportunity where you can make literally billions of dollars by acquiring somebody," he said.

Boras sprinkled in attempts at humor when discussing several of his top free agents:

— First baseman Pete Alonso, nicknamed the Polar Bear: "We hear a lot about the bear market for power-hitting first baseman and for Pete's sake, it's the polar opposite."



NASCAR Cup Series

NASCAR Cup Series Championship

Site: Avondale, Arizona.
Schedule: Friday, practice, 6:05 p.m.; Saturday, qualifying, 5:05 p.m.; Sunday, race, 3 p.m. (NBC, Peacock).

Track: Phoenix Raceway.

Race distance: 312 laps, 312 miles.

Last race: Defending champion Ryan Blaney raced his way into the championship four with a victory at Martinsville Speedway that featured controversy. William Byron finished fifth for Hendrick Motorsports and ultimately became the fourth qualifier when NASCAR officials ruled after a lengthy delay that Christopher Bell's last-lap smash into the outside wall for momentum that would've pushed him one point past Byron was illegal. Bell was dropped four spots to 22nd.

Next race: Feb. 16, 2025, Daytona Beach, Florida.

NASCAR Xfinity Series

NASCAR Xfinity Series Championship

Site: Avondale, Arizona.
Schedule: Friday, practice, 5:05 p.m.; Saturday, qualifying 4 p.m.; race, 7 p.m. (CW).

Last race: Xfinity part-timer Aric Almirola completed a season sweep at Martinsville, Virginia, with his third victory in a tension-filled race that allowed fourth-place Cole Custer to defend his series title at Phoenix.

Next race: Feb. 15, 2025, Daytona Beach, Florida.

NASCAR Truck Series

NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series Championship
Schedule: Thursday, practice, 7 p.m.; Friday, qualifying, 4:05 p.m.; race, 8 p.m. (FS1).

Race distance: 150 laps, 150 miles.

Next race: Feb. 14, 2025, Daytona Beach, Florida.

Formula 1

Last race: Max Verstappen overcame penalties that left him starting 17th and then the rain to win the Brazilian Grand Prix in Sao Paulo and take a huge step toward securing his fourth consecutive title.

Next race: Nov. 23, Las Vegas.

IndyCar

Last race: Alex Palou claimed his second consecutive IndyCar championship and third in four years at Nashville Superspeedway, where Colton Herta won the Music City Grand Prix for Andretti Global.

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

NHRA Drag Racing

Last event: Brittany Force earned her first Top Fuel victory in 39 races, beating defending champion Doug Kalitta in Las Vegas. Teammate Austin Prock defeated Paul Lee in Funny Car to move to the brink of his first championship.

Next event: Nov. 14-17, Pomona, California.

World of Outlaws Sprint Cars

World of Outlaws Finals, Concord, North Carolina, Wednesday-Saturday.

Last event: Carson Macedo won in West Memphis, Arkansas, last Friday, taking the pole and then driving away after a late dustup with a lapped car.

Next race: Feb. 5-8, 2025, Barberville, Florida.

INNOVATIVE CONCEPTS AUDIO VIDEO SECURITY NETWORKING

Be Summer Ready

The Best On The Water. Loud & Clear!
• Sound Systems for boats

Powerful Sound For Off-Road Adventure
• RV's • Golf Carts • ATV's



(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
FREE estimates

Bluffton Tire Inc.
1308 S. Main St.
Bluffton

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

FREEDOM
Chevrolet, Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, RAM
FORMALLY HIDAAY AUTOMOTIVE

NEW NAME,
SAME GREAT SERVICE!

Chevrolet 260-824-0900
Chrysler, Dodge Jeep, RAM 260-824-1931
WWW.FREEDOMCHEVROLETBLUFFTON.COM
WWW.FREEDOMCHRYSLERDODGEJEEPBLUFFTON.COM

News-Banner Scoreboard

FOOTBALL

NFL

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East

W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Buffalo	7	2	0	.778	260 173
N.Y. Jets	3	6	0	.333	171 183
Miami	2	6	0	.250	140 187
New England	2	7	0	.222	148 217

South

W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Houston	6	3	0	.667	201 200
Indianapolis	4	5	0	.444	188 193
Tennessee	2	6	0	.250	140 213
Jacksonville	2	7	0	.222	139 202

North

W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Pittsburgh	6	2	0	1.000	207 119
Baltimore	6	3	0	.667	233 243
Cincinnati	4	5	0	.444	236 227
Cleveland	2	7	0	.222	148 212

West

W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Kansas City	8	0	0	1.000	203 147
L.A. Chargers	5	3	0	.625	159 101
Denver	5	4	0	.556	183 161
Las Vegas	2	7	0	.222	168 251

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East

W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Washington	7	2	0	.778	263 189
Philadelphia	6	2	0	.750	199 155
Dallas	3	5	0	.375	171 225
N.Y. Giants	2	7	0	.222	139 202

South

W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Atlanta	6	3	0	.667	221 216
Tampa Bay	4	5	0	.444	259 243
Carolina	2	7	0	.222	147 293
New Orleans	2	7	0	.222	207 229

North

W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Detroit	7	1	0	.875	258 148
Minnesota	6	2	0	.750	209 150
Green Bay	6	3	0	.667	230 194
Chicago	4	4	0	.500	172 148

West

W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Arizona	5	4	0	.556	207 214
L.A. Rams	4	4	0	.500	170 194
San Francisco	4	4	0	.500	210 182
Seattle	4	5	0	.444	210 221

Thursday's Games

Thursday, Nov. 7

Thursday Night Football: Cincinnati at Baltimore, 8:15 p.m.

Sunday, Nov. 10

N.Y. Giants vs Carolina at Munich, DEU, 9:30 a.m.

Atlanta at New Orleans, 1 p.m.

Buffalo at Indianapolis, 1 p.m.

Denver at Kansas City, 1 p.m.

Minnesota at Jacksonville, 1 p.m.

New England at Chicago, 1 p.m.

Pittsburgh at Washington, 1 p.m.

San Francisco at Tampa Bay, 1 p.m.

Tennessee at L.A. Chargers, 4:05 p.m.

N.Y. Jets at Arizona, 4:25 p.m.

Philadelphia at Dallas, 4:25 p.m.

Sunday Night Football: Detroit at Houston, 8:20 p.m.

Open: Cleveland, Las Vegas, Green Bay, Seattle

Monday, Nov. 11

Monday Night Football: Miami at L.A. Rams, 8:15 p.m.

College

Wednesday's Scores

N. Illinois 42, W. Michigan 28
Ohio 41, Kent St. 0

BASKETBALL

High School

Wednesday's Scores

Covenant Christian High School 45, Indpls Park Tudor 43
Culver Academy 52, Washington Twp. 24
Edinburgh 52, Indpls Ritter 45
Fishers 48, Indpls Ben Davis 29
Glenn 59, Triton 27
Griffith 46, Boone Grove 29
Indpls Herron 49, Indpls Irvington 5
Indpls Tindley 33, Christel House Manual 12
Kokomo 62, Blackford 17
Maconaquah 53, Marion 33
Plainfield 66, McCutcheon 56
Portage 60, Bowman 21
Prairie Heights 30, Jimtown 11
Union City 54, Union (Modoc) 53, 2OT
Wabash 59, Taylor 46
Warsaw 66, Ft. Wayne North 12
Wawasee 54, Manchester 37

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
Boston	7	2	.778	—
Brooklyn	4	4	.500	2½
New York	3	4	.429	3
Toronto	2	6	.250	4½
Philadelphia	1	5	.167	4½

Southwest Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
Miami	3	3	.500	—
Atlanta	4	5	.444	½
Charlotte	3	5	.375	1
Orlando	3	6	.333	1½
Washington	2	4	.333	1

Central Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
Cleveland	9	0	1.000	—
Indiana	4	4	.500	4½
Chicago	3	5	.375	5½
Detroit	3	6	.333	6
Milwaukee	1	6	.143	7

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
Houston	5	3	.625	—
Dallas	5	3	.625	—
Memphis	5	4	.556	½
San Antonio	3	5	.375	2
New Orleans	3	6	.333	2½

Northwest Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
Oklahoma City	7	0	1.000	—
Minnesota	4	3	.571	3
Denver	4	3	.571	3
Portland	3	5	.375	4½

Utah 1 6 .143 6

Pacific Division

W	L	Pct	GB	
Golden State	7	1	.875	—
Phoenix	6	1	.857	½
Sacramento	4	3	.571	2½
L.A. Lakers	4	4	.500	3
L.A. Clippers	3	4	.429	3½

HOCKEY

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Florida	13	9	3	1	19	48	41
Toronto	14	7	5	2	16	43	39
Tampa Bay	13	7	6	0	14	48	43
Detroit	12	6	5	1	13	33	36
Boston	14	6	7	1	13	34	46
Ottawa	12	6	6	0	12	43	38
Buffalo	13	5	7	1	11	41	43
Montreal	13	4	7	2	10	35	53

Metropolitan Division

GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Carolina	11	9	2	0	18	45	27
Washington	12	9	3	0	18	49	35
New Jersey	15	8	5	2	18	53	42
N.Y. Rangers	11	8	2	1	17	44	24
Columbus	12	5	5	2	12	40	40
N.Y. Islanders	13	5	6	2	12	32	40
Pittsburgh	14	5	7	2	12	41	54
Philadelphia	13	4	8	1	9	35	50

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Central Division

GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Winnipeg	13	12	1	0	24	62	30
Minnesota	12	8	2	2	18	42	33
Dallas	11	7	4	0	14	35	27
St. Louis	13	7	6	0	14	35	40
Utah	13	5	7	3	13	37	45
Colorado	13	6	5	0	12	46	54
Chicago	14	5	8	1	11	38	45
Nashville	13	4	8	1	9	31	44

Pacific Division

GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Los Angeles	14	8	3	3	19	47	41
Vegas	12	8	3	1	17	54	37
Vancouver	11	6	2	3	15	35	34
Calgary	13	7	5	1	15	38	40
Edmonton	13	6	6	1	13	31	41
Seattle	14	5	8	1	11	40	45
Anaheim	12	4	6	2	10	25	36
San Jose	14	4	8	2	10	34	51

College

Men's scores

Wednesday, Nov. 6

EAST

Columbia 90, Villanova 80
Georgetown 85, Lehigh 77
Maine 98, Maine-Fort Kent 47
Rutgers 75, Wagner 52
UCConn 92, Sacred Heart 56

SOUTH

Auburn 94, Vermont 43
Georgia Tech 85, West Georgia 62
LSU 95, Louisiana-Monroe 60
Virginia 65, Campbell 56

MIDWEST

Cleveland St. 91, Baldwin Wallace 53
Indiana 80, SIU-Edwardsville 61
Minnesota 80, Oral Roberts 57
Notre Dame 89, Stonehill 60
Wright St. 89, Ohio Christian 60

SOUTHWEST

Arkansas 76, Lipscomb 60

Women's scores

Wednesday, Nov. 6

EAST

Georgetown 88, Va.-Lynchburg 31
Navy 103, Bryn Athyn 45

SOUTH

Alabama St. 55, Stillman 50

MIDWEST

Butler 87, Chicago St. 45
DePaul 74, Mercyhurst 53
Iowa 91, N. Illinois 73

Za'Darius Smith will report to Lions Friday

By DAVE HOGG
Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — The Detroit Lions didn't acquire Za'Darius Smith to win just any game. They got him to win a Super Bowl.

That's why, in an unusual move, they welcomed their new defensive end to town by sending him home. Smith won't report to the Lions until Friday and coach Dan Campbell isn't sure if he will play on Sunday night against the Houston Texans.

"He's been in the league for a while and (the Browns) were actually going on their bye this week," Campbell said Wednesday. "He got the call from us, everything got done, and now we will let him do what he needs to do, get refreshed and get back here on Friday."

Of course, it helps that Smith knows what he's going to be doing for the Lions defense — rushing the passer. That's the reason the Lions gave up a fifth-round pick in 2025 and swapped a 2026 sixth-round choice for one in the seventh.

"It is hard, especially during the season, to get someone who can rush the passer," Campbell said. "Teams don't want to give those guys up, which is smart."

The obvious reason for going after Smith was losing star pass rusher Aidan Hutchinson to a broken left leg in mid-October. Hutchinson is still tied for fifth place in the league with 7 1/2 sacks and tied for second with 17 quarterback hits, even though he has played four fewer games.

If that were the only injury, though, the Lions would have tried to replace his production with the players they already have. The issue is that their other starting defensive end, Marcus Davenport, is out for the season with an arm injury and linebacker Derrick Barnes and defensive end John Cominsky are on injured reserve with knee injuries. Defensive end Josh Paschal, who dealt with cancer during his college career, has missed the past two games after having a benign growth removed.

"We got hit in one position — we really lost our starters and our depth," Campbell said. "That's why we wanted to try to add someone, but it is tough at that position. It isn't like getting a receiver or a running back."

Paschal is expected to return against the Texans, and Campbell thinks there is a good chance Smith will get some snaps.

"We'll see how many packages and how much of the playbook we can give to him, but we will certainly have a place to use him," he said. "We'll just see how it looks when he gets here on Friday."

The Lions will also get wide receiver Jameson Williams back after his two-game suspension.

"I've learned to be smarter and move smarter in certain situations," he said. "It's big to know how much faith Coach has in me."

Lottery Numbers

Wednesday's Drawings HOOSIER LOTTERY

- Cash 5 — 01-18-22-24-43
- Lotto Plus — 07-14-31-41-42-45
- Cash4Life — 17-18-20-26-59, Cash Ball: 11
- Quick Draw Midday — 03-04-06-07-11-18-22-26-29-40-48-56-59-64-66-70-72-76-79-80, BE: 48
- Daily Three-Midday — 06-03-05, SB: 00
- Daily Three-Evening — 02-09-01, SB: 02
- Daily Four-Midday — 01-08-00-02, SB: 00
- Daily Four-Evening — 08-04-07-01, SB: 02
- Quick Draw Evening — 10-10-16-17-24-30-35-38-41-46-48-49-51-57-58-60-62-64-73-79, BE: 58
- Hoosier Lotto — 01-03-07-09-12-14
- MEGA MILLIONS
- Estimated jackpot (for Friday): \$334 million
- POWERBALL
- 12-17-37-58-62 Powerball: 04; Power Play: 2X

The Classifieds

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

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

Plus! SEE your ad published every day in Wells County homes ... All ads are searchable at classifieds.news-banner.com...

SUDOKU

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

King Classic Sudoku

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

Difficulty: ★★★

11/7

FOR SALE

Hot Deals!

HOUSE FOR SALE OPEN HOUSE on Sunday, November 10th from 1-3 pm.
419 Wabash St. Bluffton, IN 46714
Lovely well maintained 1 and 1/2 story 3-bedroom and 2-bath home with an attached 2-car garage located in the heart of Bluffton. This home has a newer furnace, heat pump, water heater, and garage doors, and some new windows, clean and freshly painted. Come and make it yours today!
\$220,000.00
260-519-1430
Billie.Shively@exprealty.com
<https://billieshively.exprealty.com/>

SERVICES

Services

CONSUMER CELLULAR - the same reliable, nationwide coverage as the largest carriers. No long-term contract, no hidden fees and activation is free. All plans feature unlimited talk and text, starting at just \$20/month. For more information, call 1-855-572-5165 (I)

ADVERTISE YOUR SERVICES!

A 20 word, line classified in the Bluffton News-Banner for two months is \$97. Contact the office at 125 N. Johnson St., 260-824-0224 or submit online to www.news-banner.com and click on classifieds.

Services

PORTABLE OXYGEN CONCENTRATOR May Be Covered by Medicare! Reclaim independence and mobility with the compact design and long-lasting battery of Inogen One. Free information kit! Call 877-930-3271 (I)

EMPLOYMENT

Help Wanted

LOOKING TO HIRE full or part time for general carpenter. Must have reliable transportation, general construction knowledge, and own tools. Call Scott at 260-353-9339.

EARLY MORNING DRIVER needed to deliver papers to post offices and stores in southern part of county. Must have reliable transportation. Call Natasha or Doug, (260) 824-0224, for more information.

NOW HIRING

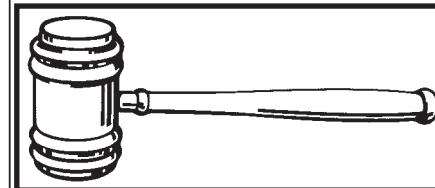
THE NEWS-BANNER IS looking to hire an individual for fast pace jobs including labeling, inserting and delivering bundles of newspapers. Must be willing to work from 4 a.m.-9 a.m. Monday-Saturday. Some heavy lifting, and an Indiana drivers license required. Mail resume, or fill out an application, to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

LOOKING FOR DRIVER to haul Amish, some evenings and weekends. Call (260) 223-4835.

VEHICLES

Campers/RV's

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



Public Sale Calendar

BIDDING ENDS NOVEMBER 10 - (Online Only) - Estate of Elizabeth (Carter) Aeschlieman & others, seller.

Ladies diamond wedding ring, ladies diamond cluster fashion ring, ladies diamond earrings, Sapphire necklace w/matching earrings

Norfolk Southern rule that railcars be inspected in less than a minute sparks concerns

By **JOSH FUNK**
AP Business Writer

Norfolk Southern sparked renewed concerns about flaws being missed during railcar inspections when it told employees this week they should spend no more than a minute looking at each car. But the railroad said the rule simply reflects the current industry standard, and there are no plans for disciplining employees for missing that one-minute target.

Rail unions have been raising the alarm for several years now about inspections being rushed across the industry in the wake of the railroads eliminating one-third of all the jobs as they adopted the current lean operating model that has become the standard.

The Federal Railroad Administration's Chief Safety Officer Karl Alexy said the agency was already tracking inspection times closely across the industry before the new announcement from Norfolk Southern, and the agency will be watching how the railroad implements it.

"If they really are going to be held to that, I'm very concerned about defects not being found, I think that is pretty quick," Alexy said.

Railroad safety concerns became widespread last year after a Norfolk Southern train derailed, spilled hazardous chemicals and caught fire in East Palestine, Ohio, in February.

The railroad — and the entire industry — promised reforms after that disastrous wreck. But Alexy said there hasn't been much significant improvement in railroads' overall safety record in recent years.

The concerns about rushed railcar inspections are part of rail labor's broader concerns about whether the lean Precision Scheduled Railroading (PSR) model railroads are using is more dangerous.

Alexy said that one of the key challenges for the industry right now is that so many experienced workers were lost because of all the job cuts in recent years — both because of the new operating model and the sharp downturn in business during the pandemic — that the railroads are relying on a large number of newer employees who are still learning all the risks of the job.

"There are implications from PSR where they cut too deep their personnel. And Covid happened and they lost more people, and then they had a hard time bringing them back," Alexy said. "So I think that there have been some long-term negative impacts of PSR and of course Covid as well."

Norfolk Southern executives said last year that the railroad would back away from rushing inspections because of safety concerns. But the new directive about minute-long inspections issued not long after Mark George was promoted to be the railroad's new CEO this fall appears to reverse that stance.

Norfolk Southern is not alone in pushing for inspections to be done quickly to keep trains moving.

The Federal Railroad Administration found earlier this year that at all the major freight railroads, carmen spent an average of 1 minute and 38 seconds looking over each car while a federal inspector was watching. But documents

showed that when an inspector isn't there, inspections were being done in about 44 seconds per car.

The Transportation Communications Union that represents the carmen tasked with inspecting railcars maintains it simply isn't possible to check the more than 90 points per side they are supposed to check on each railcar within such a short period of time, so clearly things are being missed.

The union's National Legislative Director David Arouca said carmen on Norfolk Southern went "absolutely ballistic" when they saw the new one-minute rule after they have been raising concerns about the perils of rushed inspections for years.

"You can't place your eyeballs on 90 points of inspection in 30 seconds (per side) and do that repeatedly for 50-100 cars in a row and not miss things," Arouca said.

That is especially true when carmen are inspecting cars that might have been in use for decades while rolling past them on an ATV, which is common. "The idea that this is a comprehensive inspection according to the federal regulations is a joke," he said.

The Federal Railroad Administration found during its checks that between 13% and 15% of all the cars still had defects after they were inspected by the railroads. But most of the problems federal inspectors found then weren't the kind of thing that would cause a derailment. The most common issues the railroads missed were things like bent hand rails workers use when climbing on cars.

Alexy said it seems like "whatever is missed is not resulting in a huge impact to safety across the country."

And Alexy said even if carmen had significantly more time to inspect cars, it is difficult to find the kind of flaws that cause derailments like failing bearings sealed inside an axle or cracked wheels. The East Palestine derailment was caused by a bad bearing that overheated but wasn't caught in time by trackside detectors that are designed to spot temperature increases like that.

Norfolk Southern said this new standard will help them gauge whether they have enough carmen in every location to handle the required inspections because if it is taking longer than one minute they might need more people or the railroad may need to follow up with the shipper that owns the railcar to ensure needed maintenance is being done.

"By no means are employees expected to ignore or disregard safety issues. If a problem is spotted, employees are required to address it, either by correcting the issue on site or by pulling the car for further maintenance," Norfolk Southern spokeswoman Heather Garcia said.

Alexy said if that is truly how this rule is used, it might not be a problem. But he said that if the new one-minute standard is "taken to an extreme, it could be" a step backwards in safety at Norfolk Southern, which has been stressing safety ever since the East Palestine derailment.

The test will be how the rule is implemented by railroad managers in the field across the eastern United States where Norfolk Southern's trains oper-

Hurricane Rafael plows across Cuba as a Category 3 storm after knocking out power on the island

By **ANDREA RODRIGUEZ**
Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — Hurricane Rafael pushed into the Gulf of Mexico on Wednesday night after plowing across western Cuba as a Category 3 hurricane with winds so powerful it knocked out the entire country's power grid.

Massive waves lashed at the shores of Havana as sharp winds and rain whipped at the city's historic center, leaving trees littered on flooded streets on Wednesday evening.

Forecasters warned Rafael could bring "life-threatening" storm surges, winds and flash floods to western swaths of the island after it knocked out power and dumped rain on the Cayman Islands and Jamaica the day before. The extent of the damage was still unclear as of Wednesday night.

The storm was located 55 miles (90 kilometers) west-northwest of Havana on Wednesday. After plowing across the island, it slowed to a Category 2 hurricane. It had maximum sustained winds of 105 mph (170 kph) and was moving northwest at 13 mph (20 kph), according to the National Hurricane Center.

The storm is bad news for Cuba, which is struggling with devastating blackouts while recovering

from another hurricane two weeks ago that killed at least six people in the eastern part of the island.

Earlier on Wednesday, the Cuban government issued an alert for the incoming storm while crews in Havana worked to fortify buildings and clear scraps from seaside areas in anticipation of flooding.

Classes and public transport were suspended on parts of the island and authorities canceled flights in and out Havana and Varadero. Meanwhile, thousands of people in the west of the island were evacuated as a prevention measure.

Silvia Pérez, a 72-year-old retiree living in a coastal area of Havana was among those scrambling to prepare. As other neighbors moved appliances and other furniture from ground floor homes, Pérez stocked up on water and food.

"This is a night I don't want to sleep through, between the battering air and the trees," Pérez said. "I'm scared for my friends and family."

Forecasters expected the storm to weaken over Cuba before emerging in the southeastern Gulf of Mexico as a hurricane.

The U.S. State Department issued an advisory for Cuba on Tuesday afternoon, offering departure flights to non-essential staff

and American citizens, and advising others to "reconsider travel to Cuba due to the potential impact of Tropical Storm Rafael."

On Tuesday morning, the Cuban Civil Defense called on Cubans to prepare as soon as possible, because when the storm makes landfall "it's important to stay where you are."

A hurricane warning was in effect Wednesday for the Cuban provinces of Pinar del Rio, Artemisa, La Habana, Mayabeque, Matanzas and the Isle of Youth.

A tropical storm warning was in effect for the Cuban provinces of Villa Clara, Cienfuegos, Sancti Spiritus and Ciego de Avila, as well as the lower and middle Florida Keys from Key West to west of the Channel 5 Bridge, and Dry Tortugas.

The storm on Tuesday knocked out power in parts of Jamaica and unleashed flooding and landslides. The Jamaica Public Service, the island's electricity provider, said in a statement late Tuesday that impassable roads were preventing crews from restoring power in some areas.

Power outages were reported across the Cayman Islands after a direct hit late Tuesday, and schools remained closed on Wednesday.

November GOODS & SERVICES DIRECTORY

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

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

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

1645 Hillcrest Dr., Suite 2A
Ossian, IN 46777
Attorney
Gerret J. Swearingen

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!

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

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

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

The HIDEAWAY BEER & BOURBON
THURSDAY - Dollar Off Drinks (Excludes Pop)
WEDNESDAY - KARAOKE
FRI. & SAT. - Live Music

Follow us on Facebook for our Events.
123 S JOHNSON ST. • 824-0455

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

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

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

LAWN CARE

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

SCHEDULE TODAY!
FREE ESTIMATES
260-223-5884

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

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

COUNTRY PLACE Apartments
408 Countryside Drive, Ossian

- 1 & 2 Bedrooms
- Laundry Facilities On-Site
- All Ground-level
- Private Entrances
- Equipped Kitchen

260 622-6429
Virtual Tours Offered
TDD: 7-1-1
OssianApartments.com

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

We Carry Prevacen 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

Deforestation in Brazil's Amazon drops by nearly 31% compared to previous year

By **FABIANO MAISONNAVE**
Associated Press

AGUA CLARA, Brazil (AP) — Forest loss in Brazil's Amazon dropped by 30.6% compared to the previous year, officials said Wednesday, the lowest level of destruction in nine years.

In a 12-month span, the Amazon rainforest lost 2,428 square miles, roughly the size of the U.S. state of Delaware.

The results, announced in Brazil's presidential palace, sharply contrast with President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's predecessor, far-right leader Jair Bolsonaro, who prioritized agribusiness expansion over forest protection and weakened environmental agencies. Deforestation hit a 15-year high during his term.

Deforestation in Brazil's vast savannah, known as the Cerrado, decreased by 25.7%, the first decline in five years. The area

destroyed reached 3,156 square miles. Located in central Brazil, it is the world's most biodiverse savannah but has fewer legal protections than the Amazon.

Despite the success in curbing Amazon deforestation, Lula's government has been criticized by environmentalists for backing projects that could harm the region, such as the pavement of a highway that cuts from an old-growth area, oil drilling in the mouth of the Amazon River and building a railway to transport soy to Amazonian ports.

Brazil's deforestation monitoring system tracks Aug. 1 to July 30, so Wednesday's report doesn't capture the destruction from the past few months, as a historic drought opened the way to a surge in forest fires that burned an area larger than Switzerland.

Much of the damage from fires is classified as degrada-

tion, not clearcutting deforestation, as the fire in the Amazon rainforest spreads mostly through leaves on the ground, and not through treetops. But the full impact will be assessed in the following months through further satellite monitoring. Government officials already fear that the deforestation rate may increase next year as the Amazonian city of Belem prepares to host the annual U.N. climate talks, known as COP30.

The Amazon, an area twice the size of India, holds the world's largest rainforest, about two-thirds of it within Brazil. It stores vast amounts of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that causes climate change. The Amazon thus prevents the climate from warming even faster than it would otherwise. The basin also holds about 20% of the world's fresh water and biodiversity includes 16,000 known tree species.