

County takes a look at Emergency Management Agency

By HOLLY GASKILL A potential shake-up of the county's Emergency Management Agency may come with a significant compensation increase for its

director. During a Wells County Council meeting on Tuesday, member Seth Whicker asked the council to consider increasing compensation from roughly \$42,000 to approximately \$65,000 to remain competitive with neighboring counties. Because part of this amount is paid through federal grants, Whicker said the county's increase would be between \$16,000-\$18,000.

Whicker stated the county commissioners are in a "process of evaluating EMA." Commissioner Blake Gerber, who was present for the council meeting, said the commissioners have four more interviews with candidates for the appointed director position, including director Rick Velasquez.

Whicker added that the compensation would also accommodate an increased workload as the commissioners hope to capitalize on more grant opportunities.

"Could be a current candidate, could be a different candidate," Whicker said. "But just to be able to say, 'OK, here's more that's going to be expected out of this job ... Because it's not going to (Continued on Page 2)

Markle council raises employee salaries

By JONATHAN SNYDER

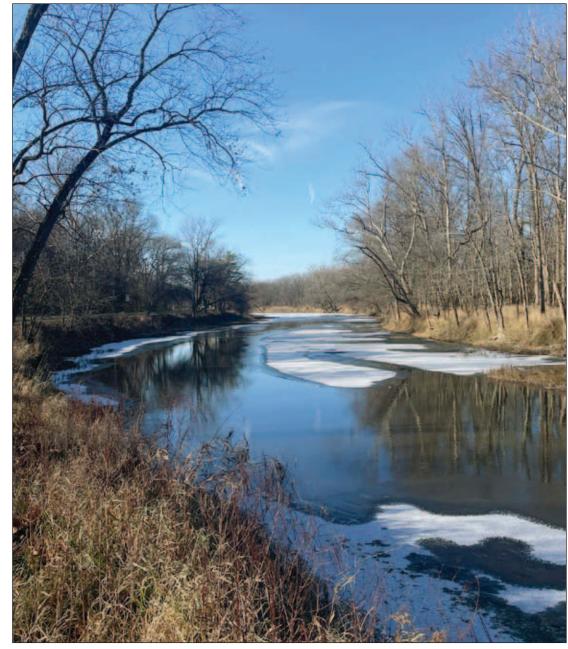
Markle Employee Salaries will be given a 5% increase, decided by the town council in a special meeting Wednesday.

Initially, a 3% increase was budgeted and introduced in the council's Nov. 20 meeting, but council member Blake Caley warned that 3% may not be enough to cover cost of living increases. Council member Matthew Doss described price increases as in a "weird state of flux" throughout the past five years, but his and the council's priority was to ensure the town keeps the employees they have.

"In my opinion, we have employees who are long long term," Doss said. "How many times have you (Caley) seen where you have a workforce where 90% of them are (tenured) seven years or more? I think that we have to recognize that longevity."

"I think we've got the right employees," Caley said. "The cost of going out to recruit the level of talent that we have currently is way more than what our cost of living adjustment would be. I want to be a good caretaker of our citizens' tax dollars, but at the same time, we do not have a better investment than what we have in the staff right here."

Further investigation by Clerk-Treasurer Stephanie Hensley (Continued on Page 2)



When the river freezes over

With the first real cold snap of the season, ice has begun sprawling over the Wabash River. Pictured is the river from nearby Rotary Park. (Photo by Holly Gaskill)

Wells County innkeeper's tax shows a small decline this year

Gov.-elect Braun puts forth first-term agenda

By LESLIE BONILLA MUÑIZ Indiana Capital Chronicle

Indiana Gov.-elect Mike Braun on Tuesday pitched his first policy agenda since his November electoral victory — largely reemphasizing his commitment to campaign promises.

Braun's "Freedom and Opportunity Agenda" focuses on tax relief, government efficiency, economic development, public health and quality of life factors like public safety, energy affordability and water cleanliness.

Taxes

A news release indicated Braun wants to bring "historic" tax relief to Indiana families.

"As Hoosiers contend with inflation, the State should provide comprehensive tax relief that protects taxpayers from runaway property taxes, supports retirees and families with targeted relief, and reduces the burden on Main Street businesses," it read.

The agenda includes limiting property tax increases 2%-3% annually and "resetting homeowner bills" to pre-pandemic levels.

But the state can't get too heavy-handed. It must abide by a decades-old ruling declaring Indiana's previous tax system, which wasn't based on the market, unconstitutional.

Braun also wants to ditch state taxes on retirement income, establish farm savings accounts, change the formula used to assess farmland for property taxes, and introducing new sales tax holidays on things like back-to-school supplies.

Efficiencies

Braun leaned into his business roots in the agenda's second priority: efficiency.

"Unlike the private sector, where real economics incentivizes effectiveness and lower overhead, government at every level has grown unchecked," the agenda reads.

It goes on to suggest new performance metrics and trims of "unnecessary or underperforming" positions and programs. Indiana should also review its regulations to cut outdated requirements and lighten the load for agencies, it says.

Braun also hopes to get agencies digital: automate eligibility verification procedures for veteran health care, streamline document processing at the Bureau of Motor Vehicles and create a one-stop portal for farmer services.

He's already gotten started on (Continued on Page 2)

By HOLLY GASKILL

This year's innkeepers' tax collections have slightly declined compared to 2023.

In a quarterly report to the Wells County Council on Tuesday, Tourism Coordinator Audry Dudley said she hasn't observed a notable decline in overnight stays, but that local hotels and Airbnbs have lowered their prices. The innkeeper's tax, implemented in February 2023, places a 5% tax on overnight accommodations.

Wells County innkeeper's tax revenue shows a 4% decrease from January through September 2024 compared to February through September 2023. Dudley noted, however, that monthto-month trends have differed between the two years.

Wells County collected \$95,268 through the tax in 2023, and \$71,188 through September of this year.

The Wells County Convention and Visitors Commission, which oversees the use of these funds for tourism, then met on Wednesday to discuss 2025 plans. This year, Dudley has put together visitor materials and maps for Ouabache State Park and downtown businesses, coordinated grants for local businesses and groups to market events, and digital marketing campaigns, among other projects.

In 2025, the Visitors Commission will continue working with Britton Marketing of Fort Wayne to create marketing assets and advertise through social media. The board through the \$50,000 contract with Britton in August.

Dudley said the board may also reassess its budget for marketing grants in 2025 - \$16,653 was awarded to local groups in 2024.

No new board appointments are currently expected in 2025. Board members Justin Osborne, Jay Esparza, Steve Higgins, Scott Elzey, Brandy Fiechter, Michelle Blount and Zane Herr were present Wednesday; members Jon Winne and Jeff Reed were absent. The board will meet next at 8 a.m. on Jan. 8 at the Wells County Commerce and Visitors Centre.

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Two children wounded and gunman dead after shooting at California school

PALERMO, Calif. (AP) — Two children were wounded Wednesday in a shooting at a tiny religious K-8 school in Northern California and deputies arrived to find the gunman on the ground near the playground, dead after apparently shooting himself, sheriff's officials said.

The children, ages 5 and 6, were taken to nearby hospitals and their conditions were not immediately known, officials said. One was airlifted to a nearby hospital.

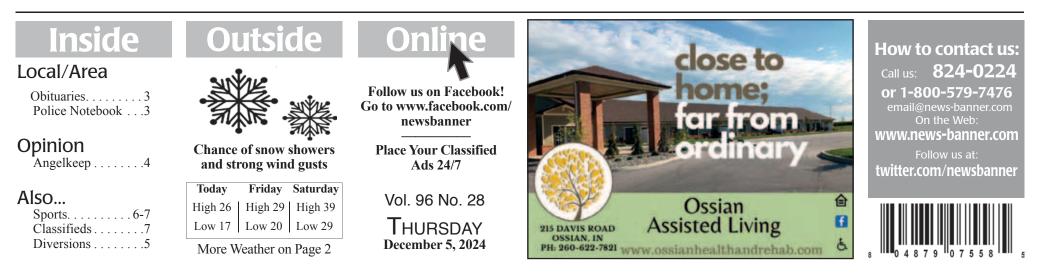
The shooting occurred shortly

after 1 p.m. at the Feather River School of Seventh-Day Adventists, a private school in Palermo with fewer than three dozen students. Palermo has about 5,500 people and is about 65 miles north of Sacramento.

It was the the latest among dozens of school shootings across the U.S. in recent years, including especially deadly ones in Newtown, Connecticut; Parkland, Florida; and Uvalde, Texas. The shootings have set off fervent debates about gun control and frayed the nerves of parents whose children are growing up accustomed to doing active shooter drills in their classrooms.

But school shootings have done little to move the needle on national gun laws. Firearms were the leading cause of death among children in 2020 and 2021, according to KFF, a nonprofit that researches health care issues.

"My heart is breaking for everyone impacted by this tragedy," (Continued on Page 2)



LOCAL/NATION

Emergency Management Agency

(Continued from Page 1) be the same job it is now. I wouldn't envision it being that way.

No action was taken on the matter on Tuesday.

Also during the meeting, the council approved multiple 2025 board appointments - all but one of which were approved unanimously. The council

Markle council

(Continued from Page 1)

reported that a \$50,000 cushion for emergency hires and overtime was budgeted into general employee salaries. Hensley said that the expectation is to roll that money into next year's budget when it is not used. She did not foresee a situation where they would use the entire \$50,000.

After figuring the total salary num-

voted 6-1 to re-appoint Judy Affolder to a two-year term on the Property Tax Assessment Board of Appeals; council members Whicker, Vicki Andrews, Scott Elzey, Todd Mahnensmith, Steve Huggins and Brian Lambert were in favor and Brandon Harnish opposed.

Andrews was chosen

replace Jerome Markley's vacancy on the Area Plan Commission. Her appointment will continue through the duration of her four-year term.

The following one-year term re-appointments were approved: Andrews to the Solid Waste Management District board, Elzey to among three applicants to Bluffton NOW!, Whicker

to the 911 Advisory Board, Huggins to the Economic Development Commission, Mahnensmith to the EMA and EMS advisory boards, Lambert to Wells County Trails and Tony Garton to the Alcoholic Beverage Board. Daryl Shrock was also re-appointed to a fouryear term on the Huntington City-Twp Public Library

bers for all Markle employees, a 5% County Economic Development Corincrease would be approximately a poration. Executive Director Mark \$10,000 total increase for the town Wickersham reported that the price and according to Caley. Adjustments for a scope of their purposes will be identimerit-based pay scale and local comcal from last year. Wickersham also petitiveness were discussed, but further said that 10 projects for the Markle details will be discussed in executive area, with an approximate \$41.5 million worth of capital investment, were Additionally, the town extended completed last year.

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First-term agenda

(Continued from Page 1) another bullet point in the list - last month, Braun unveiled plans for a reorganized cabinet focusing on eight policy areas.

He also hopes to present a balanced budget that "addresses the state's deficit while reforming Medicaid spending," per the release.

Economy

Braun's agenda views Indiana's future prosperity as dependent on educating and developing a skilled workforce.

He proposed implementing universal school choice, although Indiana is almost there. A recent hike in the income requirement means all but the state's wealthiest families qualify for vouchers to private schools.

The release also includes increases in teacher base pay, new performance-based pay, a focus on better literacy and math skills, and a dedicated school safety office.

Braun also wants to push workforce development, with: a new workforce investment tax credit, a "restructured" Indiana Economic Development Corp, and more regional cooperation for creating jobs.

sessions mid-2025.

their contract with the Huntington

Health

Braun, who was active in the health care arena in the U.S. Senate, hopes to take aim at high prices and increase accessibility while promoting industry innovation.

Indiana faces expanding Medicaid costs and lowerthan-expected revenues, however. Braun's team said there weren't plans to cut services. Instead, the gov.elect hopes to find efficiencies to save money.

Though states have little control over private employer-employee insurance deals, Braun's team said he could still impact costs with more aggressive price transparency requirements, prior authorization reforms and pharmacy benefit manager regulations.

The agenda also highlights rural health, calling for new incentives to draw health care facilities to rural areas — including obstetrics access- and better telehealth coverage.

And it emphasizes continued coverage of pre-existing conditions, proposed a new primary care access revolving loan funding to support new facilities, and mental health treatment reforms intended to lift weight from the criminal justice system

Other quality of life

Braun continued his focus on public safety in Tuesday's agenda.

"Hoosier families and communities deserve to know that their safety and security are the top priority of the state government," it reads. "In today's interconnected world, national issues like illegal immigration and the flow of illegal drugs like fentanyl and methamphetamine have a real impact on communities across the state and country. Because of the complexity of modern public safety, it is imperative that the State supports our law enforcement officers in the line of duty.

Law enforcement offices could win higher salaries and better benefits packages, more training opportunities and non-discretionary minimum bail requirements for violent crimes. Braun also promised to protect qualified immunity.

He also hit at drug trafficking and unauthorized immigration, with proposals for stronger drug distribution penalties, more interdiction powers for state police, sanctuary city ban enforcement and more.

The agenda concludes with a push for lower energy costs

"Over the last decade, Hoosiers' electricity bills have increased dramatically, outpacing the national average," it says. "Indiana needs strong leadership to navigate these challenges and improve energy accessibility. The Braun administration will ensure that the State has enough affordable and reliable electricity to meet the needs of residents and attract new economic development."

Braun reemphasized commitment to an "all-ofthe-above" energy strategy, deregulation and stilldevelopment small modular nuclear reactor technology.

His team expects combine executive actions, agency-level reforms and legislation to accomplish his priorities, according to the release.

Weather

Thursday, December 5, 2024 (24-hour observations at 8:29 p.m. Wednesday) High: 39; Low: 21; Precipitation: None Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.12 feet at 8:45 p.m. Wednesday

Wells County forecast

Today: A 30% chance of snow showers, mainly after 4 p.m. Partly sunny, with a high near 26. West wind around 20 mph, with gusts as high as 40 mph.

Tonight: A 30% chance of snow showers before 7 p.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 17. West wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

Friday: Sunny, with a high near 29. West wind 5 to 10 mph.

Friday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 20. Southwest wind 5 to 10 mph.

Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 39.

Saturday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 29. Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 49.

Sunday Night: Showers likely, mainly after 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 40. Chance of precipitation is 70%.

Monday: Showers likely, mainly before 1 p.m. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 52. Chance of precipitation is 70%.

Monday Night: A 50% chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 37.

Tuesday: A 30% chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 45

Tuesday Night: A slight chance of rain and snow showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 25.

Wednesday: A slight chance of rain and snow showers. Partly sunny, with a high near 33.

U.S.: At least 8 U.S. telecom firms, dozens of nations impacted by China hacking

WASHINGTON (AP) - A top White House official on Wednesday said at least eight U.S. telecom firms and dozens of nations have been impacted by a Chinese hacking campaign.

Deputy national security adviser Anne Neuberger offered new details about the breadth of the sprawling Chinese hacking campaign that gave officials in Beijing access to private texts and phone conversations of an unknown number of Americans.

Neuberger divulged the scope of the hack a day after the FBI and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency issued guidance intended to help root out the hackers and prevent similar cyberespionage in the future. White House officials cautioned that the number of telecommunication firms and countries impacted could still grow.

The U.S. believes that the hackers were able to gain access to communications of senior U.S. government officials and prominent political figures through the hack, Neuberger said.

We don't believe any classified communications has been compromised," Neuberger added during a call with reporters.

She noted that because the hack appeared to be targeting a relatively small group of individuals, only a small number of Americans' phone calls and texts have been compromised. Neuberger added that impacted companies are all responding, but none "have fully removed the Chinese actors from these networks."

"So there is a risk of ongoing compromises to communications until U.S. companies address the cybersecurity gaps the Chinese are likely to maintain their access," Neuberger

School shooting

(Continued from Page 1) Assemblyman James Gallagher, whose

releasing his name. Near the school's slide and other

went into the office, we closed the curtains, locked the doors, basically did

area includes Palermo, said in a statement. "As a community, we'll all be hugging our loved ones closer today as we pray for the victims and try to make sense of something so senseless.²

Butte County Sheriff Kory L. Honea said they had received information that the shooter was in a meeting with the principal about enrolling a child at the school, though the meeting wasn't yet verified by investigators. Shortly after, shots rang out, Honea said. Earlier, officials had said they did not believe the shooter had any connection to the school.

The motive was not immediately known. Honea said they were trying to contact the shooter's family before playground equipment was the shooter's body, covered in a blue tarp, as officers stood nearby to secure the scene. The school abuts ranchland where cattle graze.

Authorities rushed students initially to a gymnasium where they stayed until a bus arrived to take them off the grounds and to the Oroville Church of the Nazarene to be reunited with their families, Honea said.

Sixth grader Jocelyn Orlando described what happened to CBS News Sacramento.

"We were going in for lunch recess and basically everybody in my classroom heard shooting and most people were screaming," she said. "We all

what we would do in a school shooting, and then one of the teachers came and we all ran into the gym.'

Rev. Travis Marshall, the senior pastor for the Oroville Church of the Nazarene, called the reunification between parents and their children 'very moving.'

"Šome of the children were incred-ibly emotional," he said. "One woman was raising her hands up, praising the Lord" when she found her child.

Representatives for the Northern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists could not immediately be reached for comment.

The school has been open since 1965, according to its website.

U.S. senators grill airline officials about fees for seats and checked bags

By DAVID KOENIG ÅP Airlines Writer

Members of a U.S. Senate subcommittee took aim at airline executives Wednesday for using an expanding menu of fees to charge customers for early boarding, better seats and other comforts that used to be part of the ticket price.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., said he thinks the federal government should review and perhaps fine the airlines for their use of what he called junk fees.

Blumenthal, the chairman of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, said seat fees were pure profit for the airlines because they don't have to create new seats or incur other expenses by allowing customers to pick where to sit.

Some senators expressed frustration during Wednesday's hearing when airline executives could not explain how they set the amount of various fees. They said the vagaries of airline pricing make it hard for consumers to budget for trips.

"We're all captives on your airplanes at a certain point. You just say, 'You want to pick seat? We're just going to charge you some random amount more," Sen. Maggie Hassan, D-N.H., said. "It would be good if you guys could be transparent about what you do and why."

The fees don't seem to be discouraging anybody. Americans are flying more than ever.

The Transportation Security Administration reported screening nearly 3.1 million travelers at airports around the country on Sunday, a new single-day record. The 15 busiest days in TSA history have all occurred this year, with traffic at airport checkpoints up 5% over 2023.

Airline executives bristle at the term "junk fees," and argue they are merely giving consumers what they want: choices.

'Our customers who prioritize affordability have the option to choose a lower-fare product and, in doing so, opt out of paying for additional services that they do not want," Andrew Nocella, the chief commercial officer of United Airlines, said in testimony prepared for the panel's hearing. "But we also have customers who seek more services, and they retain the

ability to choose the services they value, for an incremental fee, like a seat with extra legroom or checked bags."

Airlines have been adding fees on desirable seats to take advantage of increasing demand.

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said.

She said that President Joe Biden has been briefed on the findings and that the White House "has made it a priority for the federal government to do everything it can to get to the bottom this.'

The Chinese embassy in Washington on Tuesday rejected the accusations that it was responsible for the hack after the U.S. federal authorities issued new guidance.

"The U.S. needs to stop its own cyberattacks against other countries and refrain from using cyber security to smear and slander China," embassy spokesperson Liu Pengyu said.

The embassy did not immediately respond to messages on Wednesday.

White House officials believe that the hacking was regionally targeted and the focus was on very senior government officials.

Federal authorities confirmed in October that hackers linked to China targeted the phones of then-presidential candidate Donald Trump and his running mate, Sen. JD Vance, along with people associated with Democratic candidate Vice President Kamala Harris.

The number of countries impacted by the hack is currently believed to be in the "low, couple dozen," according to a senior administration official.

The official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity under ground rules set by the White House, said they believed the hacks started at least a year or two ago.



OBITUARIES

Jean Gleim, 96

Jean Gleim, 96, of Uniondale, passed away on the morning of Dec. 4, 2024 at Stillwater Hospice Home in Fort Wayne.

Jean had worked as an Avon lady and babysitter for many years. She also worked at Richards Restaurant in Bluffton for over 20 years. She was a lifetime member of Markle Church of Christ where she taught Sunday school and Wednesday Nights for over 25 years. Jean was a Girl

Scout leader and then director for several years and a member of the Red Hatters. She loved spending time with her great grandkids, doing word search puzzles, gardening and working in her flower beds.

Jean was born on March 20, 1928, in Uniondale, a daughter of the late Clarence W. and Grace (Derr) Platt .

She was united in marriage to Robert M. Gleim on Aug. 30, 1958, in Markle. He preceded her in death on March 10, 1981.

Survivors include a daughter, Dawn Davis of Uniondale; a sister, Shirley (Kay) Mounsey of Warren; two sister-in-laws, Anna Louise Platt of Uniondale and Dottie Platt of Texas; a grandson, Matthew (Jessica) Davis

Helton, Kentucky; three great-granddaughters: of Natasha, Matelynn (Dylan) and Maddison; and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by two brothers, Wayne Platt and Butch Platt, and her son-in-law, Rick Davis.

Visitation will take place from 4-6 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 9, 2024, at the Markle Church of Christ, 455 E. Morse St. in Markle.

Funeral Services will take place at 6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 9, 2024, following visitation at the church.

Interment will be at later date at the Horeb Cemetery in Uniondale, IN.

Preferred Memorials can be made out to the Stillwater Hospice in care of Myers Funeral Home, PO Box 403, Markle, IN 46770.

Howard Denial Perry, 84

Howard Denial Perry, 84, passed away Tuesday evening, Dec. 3, 2024, at his residence following an extended illness.

Howard was born in Bluffton on Feb. 19, 1940, to Kenneth E. and Mary Jane (Grogg) Perry, both parents preceded him in death. He married Bev A. (Bunyard) in Bluffton on Dec. 9, 1962, she survives in Bluffton.

He was a Bluffton High School Class of 1958 graduate, follow-

ing graduation, he served in the United States Air Force for four years. Howard retired from the City of Bluffton Police Dept. in 1989, serving as a patrolman and dispatcher for 26 1/2 years. Following retirement, he moved to North Webster, Indiana and worked part-time for the local grocery as a carry-out, where the locals knew Howard as the Birthday singer to local customers. He enjoyed singing, fishing and hunting, fixing up bicycles, lawn mowers and treasure hunting the streets of Bluffton. Howard never met a stranger and was always ready to lend a helping hand. Howard served as secretary for the Bluffton Men's Monday Nite bowling league for several years.

In addition to his wife, Howard is survived by two daughters, Beth (Kenny) Garrison of Bluffton and Holly McAfee of Tocsin, Indiana; five grandchildren, Kara L. Rockwell, Leah (Trent) Miller, Josh (Ashley) McAfee, Caleb (Becca) McAfee and Amy (Chris) Barbknecht; five great-grandchildren, JJ McAfee, Iva McAfee, Eli Miller, Adelaide Miller and Raema Miller; a brother, Kenneth Perry of Keystone; and a sister, Roxanna Thompson of Poneto; and a half sister, Jessica (Lowell) Lynn of Coatesville Indiana

Howard was preceded in death by his parents; a son-

INCIDENTS

City:

Tuesday, 4:17 p.m., Peyton's Northern Distribution Center. Report of stolen wallet.

County:

Tuesday, 1:32 p.m., 6713 E 800 S, Bluffton. Report of 10 dogs running loose. Officer did not observe loose dogs, but warned owner about report.

Tuesday, 2:34 p.m., 8161

Police Notebook

\$5,000.

S 700 E, Bluffton. Report of stray dogs.

Tuesday, 2:53 p.m., Wells County Jail. Warrant served to inmate.

Tuesday, 8:07 p.m., 1739 W 300 S, Bluffton. Car vs. deer.

Wednesday, 6:02 a.m., Wells County Jail. Warrant

served. ACCIDENTS

City:

Friday, 6:55 p.m., Mar-

ket Street at Johnson Street. exceeded \$5,000.

ARRESTS

Donnelle Nicole Harris, 42, Fairfield, Illinois; probation violation, a Level 6 felony. Bond not set.

Cheryl Darlene Blevins, Saturday, 7:05 p.m., S.R. 124 west of West-39, Bluffton; assisting a criminal, a Level 6 felony. Bond set at \$5,000.

Kyle Wayne Souter, 42, Decatur; probation violation, westbound on S.R. 124 a Level 6 felony. Bond not and struck a deer. Damage set.

Death row inmate's mental illness warrants delayed execution for case review, lawyers say

By CASEY SMITH

Indiana Capital Chronicle In new court documents, Joseph Corcoran's legal team doubled down that the Indiana death row inmate's

"severe" mental illness has prevented him from properly requesting post-conviction relief. The filing, submitted to

the Indiana Supreme Court on Tuesday, was in response to state attorneys' insistence that Corcoran "is competent to be executed." Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita has adamantly rejected requests to put the execution on hold.

Corcoran's execution will take place in two weeks currently scheduled before sunrise on Dec. 18 unless the state's high court justices grant the inmate's request for a stay and an opportunity to have his case reviewed.

So far, however, Corcoran has been unwilling to sign the necessary paperwork to initiate a clemency review or other avenues that could result in his removal from death row.

Corcoran's lawyers said his ability to do so has been hampered by "the nature of his paranoid schizophrenia" and the "persistent, painful delusions he suffers from." Corcoran, his counsel emphasized, "is detached from reality."

"There exist serious concerns about Corcoran's mental state as his execution looms," Corcoran's defense attorney wrote in the latest court filing. "But two things are clear: Corcoran suffers from severe paranoid schizophrenia, and the manifestations of that schizophrenia prevent him from rationally understanding that the State intends to execute him because a jury found him guilty of murder. He does not understand why he is about to be executed, and there is no deterrence or retribution served. His execution would serve no purpose other than to inflict unconstitutionally inhumane cruel and unusual punishment."

evidentiary hearing on a late petition for post-conviction relief.

A final plea for relief

Corcoran – then 22 – killed his brother, James Corcoran, 30; Robert Scott Turner, 32; Douglas A. Stillwell, 30; and Timothy G. Bricker, 30, on July 26, 1997. He committed the murders at the home he shared with his brother and a sister.

Joseph Corcoran told police at the time that the four men had been talking about him. He first placed his 7-year-old niece in an upstairs bedroom to protect her from the gunfire before killing the four men.

He then laid down the rifle, went to a neighbor's house, and asked them to call the police. A search of his room and attic, to which only he had access, uncovered over 30 firearms, several munitions, explosives, guerrilla tactic military issue books, and a copy of "The Turner Diaries.'

At his original sentencing, Corcoran stated that he wanted to waive all his appeals. And in the early 2000s, when the time was still ripe for Corcoran to initiate post-conviction review, he refused to sign the postconviction petition.

Those refusals are now at the center of a debate between Corcoran's lawyers at the Indiana Attorney General's Office.

In their Tuesday filing, the inmate's legal team argued that Corcoran's persistent "irrationality" is the "hallmark of the case."

"[H]is decisions rejecting a life plea offer, refusing to pursue post-conviction relief, and seeking his own execution are not motivated by clear thinking, but are instead the product of his desire to relieve the pain he feels from delusions (and his desire to prove his delusions - which to him are very real - are not actually delusions)," Corcoran's defense attorney wrote.

He refused, however, saying he would only agree to the terms if the state "would sever his vocal cords first because his involuntary speech allowed others to know his innermost thoughts.'

Michael Dove, 62, Bluff-

ton, was backing a 2019

Dodge Grand Caravan and

struck a parked Chevrolet

Express. Damage exceeded

field Drive. David Butler,

59, Bluffton, was driving

a 2015 Dodge Durango

Later, at his criminal trial, two mental health experts questioned Corcoran's competency to proceed, the inmate's lawyers recalled. The experts noted Corcoran was not competent to stand trial "because his mental illness rendered him incapable of assisting counsel in his own defense."

In post-conviction, 'Corcoran continued to act irrationally," his lawyers said in their latest filing.

"... Corcoran's decisionmaking regarding whether to pursue state post-conviction review was irrational because it was motivated by a delusion that the prison tortured him with an ultrasound machine," they added.

Ongoing mental illness

Separately, Corcoran's clemency request has yet to be accepted by the Indiana Parole Board. Although his lawyers have filed the petition on his behalf, Corcoran himself has not signed the necessary paperwork.

As of Tuesday, Indiana Parole Board chairwoman Gwendolyn Horth told the Capital Chronicle had not received the clemency petition with Corcoran's signature and therefore "currently have no plans for a clemency hearing." A decision regarding the last-ditch plea would be left to Indiana's governor.

But Corcoran's lawyers maintain that "if his mental whether it makes sense to deprive a mentally ill person access to the court to litigate competency simply because they do not sign a petition," the lawyers wrote. "Subjecting the seriously mentally ill to such requirements imposes a penalty for suffering from a mental illness. It would, in effect, deprive them access to the courts to evaluate their mental illness because of their mental illness. Particularly, in cases such as Corcoran's, where they seek to minimize their mental illness, an attorney must be able to litigate their competency on their behalf.'

State attorneys assert that Corcoran wants to be executed and has "a rational understanding of the reason for his execution.' The attorney general has additionally pointed to a 2006 letter and statements in years past in which Corcoran "admitted he fabricated this delusion."

But the inmate's lawyers emphasized that his statements "reflect only the dissonance of someone attempting to mask their mental illness." They said, too, the most recent mental health professionals to evaluate Corcoran "have all questioned [his] competence under trial and post-conviction standards.'

"His denials are feeble considering the evidence, and simply prove his desire to mask his illness," Corcoran's lawyers said. "That these proclamations of fabrication came from the person whose paranoid schizophrenia removes him from reality and causes erratic thoughts and behavior alone



in-law, Jann MicAtee; three brothers, Max, Harold and Steve Perry; and a sister, Mary Lucille Angelo.

Visitation will be held on Sunday, Dec. 8, 2024, from 1:00 until 6:00 p.m. at Goodwin - Cale & Harnish Memorial Chapel in Bluffton. A funeral service will be held on Monday, Dec. 9, 2024, at 10:30 a.m. at the funeral home with visitation one hour prior to the service. Pastor Steve Austin will officiate. Burial will follow at Six Mile Cemetery in Bluffton, with military honor's performed by the United States Air Force and the American Legion Post 111 Honor Guard.

Memorials can be made to Wells County Food Bank or Helping Hands.

Online condolences can be made to www.goodwincaleharnish.com.

Perry Lyle Hanlin, 68

Perry Lyle Hanlin, 68, passed away Nov.8, 2024 after an extended illness. Perry was born Dec. 29, 1955 in Bluffton, at Wells County Hospital to George "Ace" Hanlin and Esther C (Axe) Hanlin of Pennville.

Preceding him in death were his parents and grandparents.

He is survived by wife, Jackie Whitcomb; sons, Sean Whitcomb, Mason Reisen; brother, Patrick (Susie) Hanlin; sister, Peggy (Steve) Manor; and will be missed by many nieces and nephews.

There will be a Celebration of Life on Dec. 7, 2024, in the Pennville Gym in Pennville, Indiana from 1-5 p.m.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Walker & Glancy Funeral Home, Montpelier, IN.

Gingrbread contest goes virtual

This year if you want to enter the city's Gingerbread Decorating Contest it must be done virtually and emailed before Dec. 13.

The categories include: Youth (9 & under/adults may help), ages 10-15 and Adults (16+).

Children's houses may be made of graham crackers with all decorations edible, except the base. Size must not exceed 12 by 12 inches. Awards will be given in each category. Photos with name, phone number and category should be emailed to events@ blufftonindiana.gov before Dec. 13.

Voting will take place on the Bluffton Parks Department Facebook page from Dec. 16-19. Each like will count as a vote.

On his behalf, Corcoran's attorneys asked the state's supreme court to stay - delay - the execution and allow the Allen County Superior Court to hold an

They outlined a history in which Corcoran's mental illness affected trial and postconviction proceedings.

State attorneys originally offered Corcoran a life sentence if he would accept a plea or waive jury. illness prevents him from affixing his signature to a claim that he is severely mentally ill, it would be a Catch-22 (and an unconstitutional one, at that), to still require his signature.'

"He would be prevented from litigating his mental illness because he is mentally ill," the state and federal defense attorneys continued. Requiring Corcoran's signature, rather, would violate his Eighth Amendment and constitutional rights, they said.

"This Court should consider as a policy question

renders the statements suspect."

Further, defense counsel pointed to a short book Corcoran published in September, under the pseudonym of J.C. Chase, called, "A Whistle-blower report: Electronic Harassment.'

"The prison note and Corcoran's book demonstrate that his delusions have not abated even with prison-administered psychotropic medication," Corcoran's attorneys wrote. "The book alone demonstrates the throes of the mental illness and how resistant to treat-

Former Indiana AG Curtis Hill to stand trial after judge denies accusers' requested delay

By LESLIE BONILLA MUÑIZ Indiana Capital Chronicle

Former Indiana Attorney General Curtis Hill is set to stand trial before a jury next week, following two years of delays — and nearly seven years since Hill allegedly groped a lawmaker and three staffers during a party.

At a final pre-trial conference Tuesday, counsel representing the four plaintiffs asked Marion Superior Court Judge Patrick Dietrick to delay proceedings. The judge declined.

Instead, Dietrick gave preliminary instructions. He led both sides' lawyers through the upcoming jury selection process, detailed his approach to direct examination and outlined a rough schedule for the five-day civil battery trial.

It's set to run Monday through Friday. Dietrick said he hoped to have the jury seated by lunchtime Monday so that counsel could give opening statements that afternoon.

Plaintiffs Niki DaSilva, Samantha Lozano, Gabrielle McLemore and former Rep. Maria Candelaria Reardon accused then-Attorney General Hill of unwanted touching during a bar gathering celebrating the legislative session's end on March 15, 2018.

He has consistently denied the allegations, calling them "false" and "vicious."

A special prosecutor was assigned to the case and chose not to bring criminal charges. But the Indiana Supreme Court found in 2020, after a disciplinary commission complaint, that Hill had committed criminal battery. It suspended his law license for 30 days.

The four plaintiffs originally filed suit in the U.S. District Court for Southern District in 2019, but the court dismissed it in 2020. They re-filed in state court that year.

That's also the year Hill sought reelection to his post, losing to current Attorney General Todd Rokita at the Indiana Republican Party's convention.

Hill launched a gubernatorial bid last year, in an attempted political comeback. But he came in sixth last — according to the state's primary election records.

Amid the jockeying for the Republican nomination, Hill was still fighting the case.

He was scheduled to go on trial the month before the primary election, but Dietrick vacated jury proceedings five days ahead of time. The trial was delayed several times in the two years prior.

What do you do when you're 101 years old? Keep growing. James & Sara Briggs Medical Office Building 북는 adams Primary Care • Obstetrics • Radiology • Laboratory Services 🕈 in Geneva Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy

OPINION

An evening with a Congressman

What questions would you ask a newly elected Congressman if you and a few close friends have a long evening of his undivided attention?

My monthly Socratic discussion group faced just this challenge recently as Third District Congressman Marlin Stutzman, an occasional participant in our group, met with us to discuss our post-election outlook on Congress, President Donald Trump and the nation.

We modified our semi-strict rules of engagement by allowing him about

15 minutes of introductory remarks before the questioning began. Truth be told, we couldn't contain our inquisitiveness for the whole 15 minutes as the questions queued up. That was fine with him, as he is

familiar with our methodology of structured questions and answers.

Our group sees our annual federal deficit and mounting national debt as the existential issue for America, an apocalyptic event just waiting to happen. Is there any sense of urgency in Washington about a potential government default on debt service? Yes and no, apparently. Yes, in that any person of average intelligence knows that this can't go on indefinitely. But no, in that it will take a massive infusion of political courage to stand up and shout "Stop!"

The monkey is on the Republicans' back in that they won the trifecta on Nov. 5. With control of the White House, Senate and House of Representatives, they should be able to achieve their legislative priorities. Elon Musk and his Department of Governmental Efficiency generate daily headlines, but let's see what actually happens after January 20. Recall Trump's 2016 promise to drain the swamp. It appears to many out here in flyover land that the alligators are meaner and more numerous than ever.

We could have spent the whole two hours on this topic but there are other pressing issues that Congressman Stutzman and his colleagues must address. Artificial intelligence is a hot topic, perhaps the greatest unknown but one just begging for governmental attention, for good or for bad. China is high on the list as an economic antagonist and perhaps also a military one. Both of these topics were addressed by our group in the past year.

It was Vladimir Putin and the war in Ukraine that received the lion's share of our time. We had a special guest, a Marine who did four tours in Iraq and earned seven medals before being honorably discharged due to his many wounds.

It's easy for us armchair generals to propose strategies for thwarting Putin's designs on former Soviet republics now recognized as independent nations. Putin calls these breakaways as the "near abroad," a term loaded with menace. Putin, a 21st century Russian tsar, wants them reunited with Mother Russia. Restoring the Russian empire of Peter the Great and Joseph Stalin is very much alive in Putin's fevered brain. This is a classic case of what political scientists term irredentism, or an attitude of "we had it before and we want it back."

So how do we stop him? Encourage domestic opposition that results in a coup d'etat? Increase our support of Ukraine through weapons shipments? Involve NATO in a more formal manner, perhaps including the sending of combat units?

All of these ideas have rather significant downsides. Putin is essentially a dictator, able to suppress domestic opposition in a ruthless manner. Will more Western weapons systems or NATO troops push Putin to introduce nuclear weapons in response?

This was the point in time when we asked our Marine veteran guest to offer his opinion. To him the answer was simple: figure out how to work with Putin. A Marine who is risk averse? Yes, if you are a Marine who has seen the business end of war multiple times.



How Trump can end the war in Ukraine for good

As the bloodiest century in human history drew to a close, Americans looked back at the catastrophic mistakes that paved the way for World War II and the Cold War. Chief among them: the 1938 Munich agreement, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's misguided effort to appease Adolf Hitler, and the disastrous 1945 Yalta agreement that partitioned Europe and left the world teetering on the brink of nuclear Armageddon.

At the start of a hopeful new century came a new axiom of U.S. foreign policy: No more Munichs, no more Yaltas.

To which we must add: No more Budapests. On Dec. 5, the world will mark the 30th

anniversary of the Budapest Memorandum of Security Assurances, the disastrous agreement that paved the way to today's bloody war in Ukraine. As President-elect Donald Trump prepares to negotiate an end to that struggle, he should heed the lessons of Budapest — so he does not repeat them.

After the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Ukraine inherited nearly 2,000 nuclear weapons, along with intercontinental ballistic missiles and strategic bombers to deliver them - making it the world's third-largest nuclear power. So, in 1994, President Bill Clinton brokered an agreement among Russia, Ukraine, the United States and Britain in which Ukraine agreed to give up those weapons. In exchange, Russia pledged to "respect the independence and sovereignty and the existing borders of Ukraine" and to "refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine." Moscow also agreed to refrain from the "threat of aggression in which nuclear weapons are used." And the United States and Britain gave Ukraine security guarantees, promising "to provide assistance to Ukraine ... if Ukraine should become a victim of an act of aggression."

Those guarantees proved empty. In 2014, Russian President Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine and annexed Crimea, in direct violation of the pledges Russia made in Budapest. In the face of this aggression, President Barack Obama's administration failed to hold up the United States' end of the bargain, refusing to provide Ukraine with weapons to defend itself. Instead, out of fear that arming Ukraine would provoke Moscow, Obama offered Ukraine only nonlethal aid. When Trump took office, he reversed Obama's policy of appeasement and became the first president to provide Kyiv with lethal aid. Trump also got tough on Putin in a host of other ways — imposing crippling sanctions on Moscow, expelling Russian diplomats, launching a cyberattack on Russia targeting St. Petersburg's Internet Research Agency, giving the green light for the U.S. military to take out hundreds of Wagner Group mercenaries



in eastern Syria and persuading NATO members to increase their defense spending by \$400 billion. Result? Putin paused his aggression during Trump's term.

But after Joe Biden took office, Putin resumed
his conquest of Ukraine. In the wake of Putin's
2022 full-scale invasion, Clinton acknowledged
that the Budapest agreement he negotiated was to
blame. "I feel a personal stake because I got them
to agree to give up their nuclear weapons," Clin-
ton told Irish broadcaster RTÉ. "None of them
believe that Russia would have pulled this stunt if
Ukraine still had their weapons."

What lessons can we learn from the failure of the Budapest accord?

First, Putin does not want peace; he wants Ukraine. He will violate any international agreement Russia signs to achieve his objective. The only way to stop him is to make his objective impossible to achieve. As we have seen, Putin believes he can wait out a strong U.S. president until another weak one replaces him. If allowed to do so, he simply will use a cessation of hostilities to pause, reconstitute his forces and resume his invasion when the time is right. If Trump wants a peace that outlasts his presidency, that agreement must create conditions that make a resumption of war impossible.

Second, Western security guarantees are worthless unless they are backed up with Western military might. A lasting peace will require that whatever agreement Trump negotiates creates defensible borders, with a demilitarized zone enforced by an international peacekeeping force (made up of European, not U.S., troops). Putin must understand that this agreement is final, and that if he ever tries to resume his invasion, he will not be fighting just Ukraine.

Third, Ukraine must be militarily strong enough to deter Russia. Giving up its nuclear deterrent, and depending on others to protect it, was a mistake. Ukraine will need to create a conventional deterrent so powerful that Russia will never take it on. This means that, even if Trump succeeds in forging peace, the imperative to arm Ukraine will continue. We must find mechanisms to increase the flow of U.S. weapons headed to Kyiv that do not require U.S. taxpayers to bear the cost. If Trump wants to avoid presiding over a historic failure like Budapest, he needs to avoid the trap of trying to appease Putin with promises of Ukrainian neutrality and disarmament. He does not want to join Neville Chamberlain in the pantheon of leaders who promised peace in our time but delivered the opposite. Trump says he wants to prevent World War III. If that is the case, he should do what he did in his first term and secure peace through strength.



Mark

Franke

Sometimes, you just have to live for another day.

Therein may lie the problem. We Americans just can't see beyond today. How many times have you heard superlatives used in describing current events? The most important election in our history! The most critical Supreme Court appointment ever! Climate change will end life as we know it! — it does get tiresome.

Marlin Stutzman participated fully in these discussions, answering our questions and asking his own. He clearly is prepared to engage these difficult issues in the new Congress. The obvious question for Stutzman, who served in Congress from 2010 to 2016, was why would he want to go back? There was a cynicism underlying this question. I should know; I asked it.

Stutzman replied he is more optimistic now than when he first went to D. C. in 2010. Seriously? Yes, due to his high opinion of the uniqueness of the American people in their ability to meet challenges. Then there is all the good the United States has done for the world at large, current woke wisdom aside.

Stutzman's optimism, not my cynicism, is what the country needs now in abundance.

Mark Franke, an adjunct scholar of the Indiana Policy Review, is formerly an associate vice chancellor at Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne.



By The Associated Press Today is Thursday, Dec. 5, the 340th day of 2024. There are 26 days left in the year.

Today in history: On Dec. 5, 2013, Nelson Mandela, the anti-apartheid leader who became South Africa's first Black president, died at age 95. Also on this date: In 1848, in an address to Congress, President James K. Polk sparked the Gold Rush of '49 by confirming that gold had been discovered in California.

In 1933, national Prohibition came to an end as Utah became the 36th state to ratify the 21st Amendment to the Constitution, repealing the 18th Amendment.

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Anticipation and Christmas preparations

Keeping the Daugherty tradition of Christmas pizza had become a bit of a problem. It began when Mom, aka Dorothy, fell and broke an arm. It rendered her unable to provide a meal for the multitude

provide a meal for the multitude of kids and grandkids on the weekend prior to Christmas. Dad ordered TJ's pizza. Probably the largest pizza's ever made in the world. It took three to feed the clan. From then on it was expected. Desired. Called for. Delicious. Tradition.

Ordering pizza on Christmas Day created a problem. Buy frozen in advance? Reheat leftover local pizzeria pizza? Make one from scratch? Pillsbury pizza crust in a tube? Do they continue to sell Chef Boy-ar-dee Pizza's in a box like the 1960s? Pizza on a French baguette satisfies fillingly and unfailingly.

In 1899, Murray, Indiana, received a pre-Christmas surprise of, not pizza but Christmas fish for everyone. The Bible held a story of feeding the multitude with fish and bread. The Murrayites' smaller size multitude became just as grateful. Every inhabitant received their fill of fine pike, suckers, and bass.

"There were no carp in the lot." Hundreds of fish weighing in at "about a hundred pounds were caught in all, some of them of very fair size." The pre-Christmas Wabash River suddenly "thawed and immediately after the ice broke fish began running down the mill race above the dam. Evidently the fish were about frozen so they swam lazily on top of the water and a crowd lifted them out easily. What caused them to migrate in this style is a mystery, but Murray-

Angelkeep Journals

ites are not questioning the whys and wherefores. They are satisfied to eat the fish."

Craigville's Daugherty-homemade pizza often became a last min-

ute evening decision. A meat topping depended on what the refrigerator held. Never pepperoni. Sometimes bologna. Hot dog chunks. Tuna. Yes, we actually ate tuna pizza.

The large Daugherty family invented the thinner-thinnest crust. One pizza mix was spread to all four edges of the largest cookie sheet. Chopped onion and celery always added bulk to the topping.

Extra cheese? Never. The only cheese came from the box mix's cellophane packet of dry grated parmesan which looked more like a light dusting of sawdust.

In adult years of stricter dieting, pizza had been produced with a thawed loaf of frozen bread spread as crust on a cookie sheet. Toppings included fresh spinach, celery for the great crunch factor, sliced olives, feta cheese, all placed over tomato sauce garnish with lots of oregano. A magical topper included dropped dobs-tothe-measure-in-globs of thick tomato paste.

With Angelkeep's children and grandchildren spread out to all corners of the United States, gifts were already prepared for mailing. Gifts purposely came predetermined as to



Alan Daugherty having to have to fit inside a Christmas card. Gift card. Check. Cash. Today, Christmas cards have become nearly as rare as the feeding of fishes to the Murrayites' multitude.

When Murrayites raked in the holiday fish bonanza, Blufftonites were told to expect packages to arrive via the mail during the two-three days prior to Christmas Sunday. Postmen began looking like Santa with his overloaded bag of goodies. The post office gifted the mail carriers welcome relief by putting off package deliveries. Those items would be sent out on a wagon, not a sleigh, for delivery.

Christmas Day at Angelkeep will be a welcome, quiet, two-person celebration. It's become a tradition. One old couple, snuggled under a warm cover on the davenport (an oldschool term,) watching new Christmas DVDs selected recently. Chosen together as a jointly-purchased Christmas gift for each other.

With Ma and her tea cup, and Pa with a hand in a large bowl of party mix, the celebration will be quiet. Blessedly quiet.

There will be pizza. However at this point in the pre-Christmas preparations, the type of pizza had yet to have been determined. As a last-minute option to keep tradition alive, the freezer contained a package of pizza rolls.

The pantry's stocked with Doritos triple cheese pizza, loaded pepperoni pizza, and pizza supreme flavored chips. The last option always available: toast with Contadina Pizza Squeeze and tuna.

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

GREG

+MOR

WALKER

Senioritis struggles: Fed up and counting down

Dear Annie: I'm a 17-year-old girl, college applicaand I will be turning 18 next month. I'm a senior in high school, and my grades are excellent! I've applied to all of my colleges, and now I'm waiting for the decisions, which I will find out very soon. I live in Arizona, and the schools are in New York, D.C. and North Carolina (with my first choice being in New York).

My problem is this: senioritis. Before can't help but dwell on the negative, rec-I was a senior, I heard that senioritis is inevitable, and I also heard that it can result in a drop in grades, plus procrastination. I don't have those problems, my problem is that everything and everyone is irritating the heck out of me!

Let me give you some examples. The bus: we have a new bus driver and she's not reliable. One day, she didn't come and me and my neighbors had to wait 30 minutes for a substitute bus to come, plus, I had a math test first period! That ruined my mood for the test, but luckily, I still got a 90 percent on the test.

Also, the other students: I have been having negative feelings toward my peers, and it resulted in me getting into a small argument with two of them in my ceramics class. My feelings about high school and the people in it are heavily pessimistic. I'm also heavily against making any new connections with the students in my school, because to me, there's no point, especially when I'm going to school out of state. However, I'll still engage in conversations with some students. Other than that, I just close myself off from everyone. I know that's not a good thing, but that's just the way I like it. I need that fresh start from everything and everyone at my school. My ceramics teacher has seen the spike in my negativity and is trying to help me fix it, but I just can't. I'm tired of everything! Is this normal? Please help! — Girl Suffering from Senioritis

Dear Senioritis: Sounds like you're ready for green pastures – but don't be so quick to write off your high school. The pressure is easing off now that your

tions are in, so you can take this final semester to appreciate all the little things you DO enjoy about senior vear.

And if you just

ognize that learning how to cope with irritations and frustrations will be a necessary skill in college and beyond.

The fresh start you want is right around the corner, but how you end this chapter matters, too.

Dear Annie: I just read the letter about the woman who was with a man for three vears, and then he was diagnosed with multiple myeloma.

My husband died of multiple myeloma. He suffered eight years with this cancer. There is no cure. Treatment only prolongs life with the cancer. There are times of remission, which I call the hibernating bear. It comes back.

Maybe he ended the relationship because he knows this and is trying to spare her. She lost one husband; he doesn't want her to go through it again. If this might be the possible case, I understand what he is doing.

It just might be easier to recover from a bad break-up than it is another death. Believe me, I know. - Heartbreak

Dear Heartbreak: There is no greater pain than losing a loved one. Thank you for providing this alternative perspective for "In Shock." It goes to show that we should never jump to conclusions when judging someone's choices.

How Can I Forgive My Cheating Partner?" features favorite columns on marriage, infidelity, communication and reconciliation. It 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.

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Question: My heart breaks to watch the horrors of what is happening in Israel and the Arab states. I hear both sides cry for peace, but they've had little. Would they even know how to recognize peace? – S.P.

Answer: Peace carries with it the idea of unity, completeness, rest, ease and security. In the Old Testament, the word was shalom. The Jewish people greet others with shalom. Often, the Arab people use the word salam. For centuries these people have known little peace. The Prophet Isaiah reminded God's people that God "will keep [them] in perfect peace (Isaiah 26:3, NKJV). How can this hap-

God will give us the strength to believe and trust in Him

pen? By looking to the Prince of Peace, the Lord Himself.

Christians recognize that life is a spiritual battle. We know that while we are faced with troubles all around, our spirits don't have to be troubled, for God is in control. Christians know who holds the future; for God holds the key to the future. We do



Dear

Annie

by Annie Lane

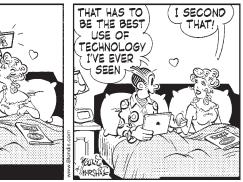
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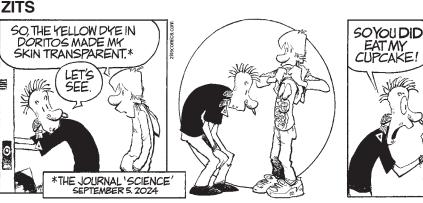
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CRANKSHAFT



THE FAMILY CIRCUS



By Bil Keane

12-5 The LOCKHORNS



so far I just hafta sit and watch her dance.'



RENGE

"NOW CAN I GET SOMETHING FOR THE FROSTBITE FROM YOUR STETHOSCOPE?"

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer ACROSS 39 Cushion 61 "Houdini" 20 Gloomy

41 Rowing 1 Sound of singer 21 Phoenix relief need Lipa 4 Latvia's 42 Corp. cagers 22 Suffix capital symbols DOWN 8 Boot 44 Nuanced 1 Bat wood with 2 Year in camp 46 More "techno" 23 Bro. VIPs interest-Spain 12 — -cone ing, as 3 Grasp maybe 13 Lawyer gossip 4 Tennis 27 Energy Clooney 50 "Unh-unh" 29 Sturdy star 14 Mideast 51 Taj Mahal Nadal place to airline 5 "stand citv 15 Cling 52 Keep Believer" 30 Alike (Fr.) Doll's back 6 React in 31 Achy 33 Pariah 56 Sorts ouse" horror 57 "Born 7 Wedding 35 Some eroine Free" setting coll. lioness 8 Mali degrees bod 38 Texter's ed" 58 Horror neighbor "Enough!" noulder-9 Dollop star Chaney 10 Poi base 40 "Girls" ngth do a 59 Roster 11 Do in star Lena **60** 500 16 Mafia 43 Waste scuits oor sheets boss conduit 45 "Humver offee bug!" Solution time: 24 mins. 46 Hooseessel tress gow 47 Wrinkly ıylor aults fruit 48 Annoys ost-WII 49 Anger iance 53 Airport sill org. tcher 54 Brock of ING orporate baseball mbol LUTE P | T 55 "CSI" GOAD ortly Yesterday's answer evidence 12-5 2 10 11 13 14 17 16 18 19 20 22 23 24 26 28 30 27 29 33 35 36 34 38 40 39 41

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and peace. Only the Holy Spirit can give us peace in the midst of the storms of restlessness and despair. We should not grieve our Guide by indulging in worry or paying undue attention to self, or hoping in others we believe can fix what is wrong.

How do we begin yielding to worry? We must learn to trust Him each day – each moment: entrusting into God's hands our souls, and let our lips be filled with prayer and praise.

not tremble at the rock; for we know who made the rock.

God will give us the strength to believe and trust in Him, no one else; not political leaders, not even pastors and teachers, but Christ alone.

When we yield to worry, we deny our God the right to lead us in confidence

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

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Raiders dismantle Owls for 8th victory, one more than last year's season total

By RYAN WALKER

It's only been nine games, but the Southern Wells Raiders have already topped their win total from last season.

The 63-28 blowout over Muncie Burris (1-6) at the Raider Dome Wednesday night tallied eight straight victories since the opening night loss to Northfield. The Raiders are 8-1 now after a 7-16 season a year ago.

In every victory this season, Southern Wells has won by over 10 points. The Indiana Coaches of Girls Sports Association ranked them No. 15 in 1A in their most recent poll. It's clear that the team has taken a ginormous step forward.

"I knew I had 10 or 12 girls that are varsity level players, and most schools our size don't have 10 that they can play, and so it's such an advantage," Southern Wells head coach Kyle Penrod said after the game. "And so that depth gives me an advantage that if somebody's not having their best night, I can still win. And a lot of teams that we play, if their best player has an off night, they're done for. That's one big advantage.

All 10 players that played meaningful mintues throughout the game had an impact at some point in different ways. Eight of the 10 scored, while all 10 tallied at least one rebound.

The defensive energy of playing a rotation of 10 players also helped, as the team forced Muncie Burris to concede possession 18 times

Ashlie Needler (16) and Erika Beavans (11) put up double figures, while Kaylee Davis added nine on 3-4 shooting. Kaylea Coffel picked up six points, mostly in tran-sition, while Kenzie Paxson went a perfect 4-4 down by the block.

The key for Penrod's group is the way they start. There's been a handful of times Penrod has seen a quarter or two fly by in a bit of a slump. Against the Owls, it was the exact opposite.

Needler hit the first two buckets of the

game for the Raiders and Davis got one of her own. That freed up Collena Reeves for a three and the points just kept falling.

Muncie Burris got its first shot to fall in the paint from Layiana ElDeeb. Since that bucket in the 7:02 mark, it was an almost six-minute dry spell.

Sydney Jackson got a pair of layups in for the Owls, but the spread was already 19-8.

In the next two quarters, the Raiders kept the energy and scored 18 points back-toback and made the lead insurmountable.

In the third quarter, the team shot 8-9 and was perfect on the first six attempts.

"We got off to a good start," Penrod said. "That makes the defense flow in, and then when people come in, those good vibes are contagious.'

The points and the defense was set up by the junior varsity contest when Southern Wells defeated Muncie Burris 30-0 in two quarters. Ellie DeWeese scored seven to lead the team, and Cadence Watkins, Lexi Pennington and Lillian Paxson scored six each.

Southern Wells will host Bluffton in ACAC play at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 7. ryan@news-banner.com

SOUTHERN WELLS 63, MUNCIE BURRIS 28

A Southern Wells 63, MUNCLE BURRIS 28 at Southern Wells MUNCIE BURRIS (1-6): Sydney Jackson 7-19 22, Lay-iana ElDeeb 2-8 0-0 4, Ja'Maria Jackson 1-5 0-0 2, Anna Murray 0-3 0-0 0, Grace Murray 0-6 0- 0, Kylie Bernier 0-0 0-0 0, Lauren Richmond 0-1 0-0 0, Avery Johnson 0-1 0-0 0. TOTALS: 10-42 8-14 28. SOUTHERN WELLS (8-1): Ashlie Needler 8-13 0-0

0. TOTALS: 10-42 8-14 28. **SOUTHERN WELLS (8-1)**: Ashlie Needler 8-13 0-0 16, Erika Beavans 4-10 1-2 11, Kaylee Davis 3-4 2-2 9, Kenzie Paxson 4-4 0-2 8, Kaylea Coffel 3-5 0-0 6, Kyah Thomas 1-3 0-0 3, Remi Holmes 1-4 0-0 3, Cadence Wat-kins 1-2 0-0 2, Callie Ripperger 0-4 0-0 0, Aubree Meyer 0-0 0-0 0, Lillian Paxson 0-1 0-0 0. TOTALS: 27-55 3-8 63. **Muncie Burris 8 5 2 13 — 28 Southern Wells 19 18 18 8 — 63** Three-point Shooting: Muncie Burris 0-6 (S. Jackson 0-2, A Murray 0-2 G. Murray 0-1. Johnson 0-1). Southern Wells

A. Murray 0-2, G. Murray 0-1, Johnson 0-1), Southern Wells 6-19 (Beavans 2-6, Reeves 1-4, Davis 1-1, Thomas 1-2, Holmes 1-3, Coffel 0-2, Rieperger 0-2). Rebounds: Muncie Burris 19 (J. Jackson 9, A. Murray 3, G. Murray 3, ElDeeb 2, S. Jackson 1, Richmond 1), Southern Wells 32 (Needler 8, Reeves 6, Thomas 4, Coffel 3, Ripperger 3, Davis 3, Beav-na 2, Paycen 1, Murray 1, Homes 1). Turpovers: Muncie ans 2, Paxson 1, Meyer 1, Holmes 1). Turnovers: Muncie Burris 18, Southern Wells 12. Fouls: Muncie Burris 6, Southern Wells 9. Fouled out: None. Technicals: None. JV: 30-0 Southern Wells



Southern Wells' defenders Kaylee Davis (left) and Callie Ripperger (right) swarm Muncie Burris' Anna Murray during the nonconference contest Wednesday night. The Raiders' defense led the way in a 63-28 victory over the Owls. (Photos by Ryan Walker)



Raiders' Collena Reeves (back) uses her wingspan to defend Owls' Layiana ElDeeb.

High School Calendar

THURSDAY, DEC 5 GIRLS BÁSKETBALL: Blackford at Bluffton, 7:30

(co-ed): Bishop Luers/Blackhawk at Bluffton, 5:30 p.m.;

SWIMMING & DIVING

Leo at Norwell, 5:30 p.m. WRESTLING: Bluffton at Wayne, 6 p.m.; Southern Wells at Tri-Central, 6:30 p.m. FRIDAY, DEC 6

BOYS BASKETBALL: Bluffton at South Adams, 7:30 p.m.; Adams Central at Southern Wells, 7:30 p.m. GIRLS BASKETBALL:

Norwell at Huntington North,

SATURDAY, DEC 7 BOYS BASKETBALL: Oak

Hill at Norwell, 1:30 p.m. GIRLS BASKETBALL: Bluffton at Southern Wells,

7:30 p.m. WRESTLING: Norwell at Shamrock Duals, 9 a.m.

Tigers defeat Summit in two big hoops matches

Bluffton-Harrison Middle School got two big wins over Summit Middle School Wednesday night.

The eighth grade team picked up a 45-41 nail-biter to improve to 5-1 on the season. Chase Kistler led the team with 16 points and nine rebounds, Maddox White and Wyatt Holmes

(11), Vince Lambert (4) and Ethan Ribich (3).

The seventh grade team won 25-17 and also improved to 5-1 on the season. Davin Drayer led the team with nine points and had eight rebounds. Kreigh Ault and Riker Beste (6), Easton Schipper and Simeon Terry (2).

Day admits mistakes in Ohio State's loss to Michigan and looks to playoffs to redeem himself

By MITCH STACY AP Sports Writer

Ohio State coach Ryan Day said Wednesday he was "in shock" after losing to rival Michigan for the fourth straight year and looks to the College Football Playoff as a chance to redeem himself and his team.

The calls to fire Day have been growing louder since Saturday's 13-10 loss to underdog Michigan, a team that just became bowl eligible the previous week.

What may be saving Day's job immediately is that Ohio State is No. 6 in the latest College Football Playoff rankings and will have a national playoff game, possibly at home, on Dec. 21 or 22. If the Buckeyes win a national championship, all will be forgiven.

"There's no way to defend losing four years in a row," Day said during his signing day news conference. "But I know this: We're going to play really hard in this game. We're going to swing as hard as we possibly can.'

Day acknowledged what everyone who watched Saturday's game saw: The Buckeyes stayed with running plays that weren't working, pass protection was lousy, they faltered in the red zone and had special-teams problems, including two missed field goals by Jaden Fielding.

"I was in shock after the game, I really was," Day said.

"There were some things that happened in the game that, you know, I'm responsible for that can never happen again. I don't know how else to say it," he said. "And then other things that, you know, it's still a game of football. Certain things that are going to happen in the game affect the outcome. That's just how it goes."

To make matters worse, a postgame brawl started when jubilant Michigan players tried to plant their flag in the middle of the block O at midfield, raising the ire of Buckeyes players. Police had to use pepper spray to get the teams apart. The Big Ten Conference subsequently fined each school \$100,000.

The optics were bad for everyone concerned.

Despite all the outside noise, Day said everybody at the university has been behind him. Ohio State athletic director Ross Bjork expressed his "full support" for the coach.

"We got an opportunity to go win the national championship and, you know, everybody, around here has been very supportive on that, focusing on that," Day said. 'And that's really what it is. And I know what the job is. I know where the focus needs to be. And there hasn't been a ton of communication other than that.

Construction of A's Las Vegas ballpark cost rises to \$1.75 billion

By MARK ANDERSON AP Sports Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — The Athletics' move to southern Nevada is expected to take a major step forward Thursday when the 30-year lease, non-relocation and development documents are likely to be approved by the Las Vegas Stadium Authority following a rise in the estimated cost of the ballpark by \$250 million to \$1.75 billion.

Those agreements could be the last major hurdles before construction can begin in the spring on a Las Vegas Strip stadium projected to open for the start of the 2028 season, a ballpark in which underseat cooling is planned.

Steve Hill, president and CEO of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, has maintained for several months those items would be approved and didn't change his view this week. A backup meeting is scheduled for Dec. 12 in case the approval isn't finalized Thursday, but Hill said he anticipated canceling that second session.

"Obviously, our board still has an opportunity to review everything and ask questions," Hill said. "But we have been through drafts of all the outstanding documents at this point a number of times over a long period of time, and so I think the questions have been answered. I think we're ready to approve."



FORMULA1 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix Site: Yas Island, Abu Dhabi.

Schedule: Friday, practice, 4:30 a.m., and 8 a.m.; Saturday, practice, 5:30 a.m., and qualifying, 9 a.m.; Sunday, race, 8 a.m. (ESPN).

Track: Yas Marina Circuit.

Race distance: 58 laps, 190.253 miles.

Last race: Verstappen, already crowned the season champion for the fourth straight year, won in Qatar for his second victory in three races and ninth of the season.

Fast facts: Heading into the season finale, Verstappen has won 53 of 89 races in his championship seasons, or 59.6%. ... Verstappen can match Michael Schumacher's record of five straight F1 season titles (2000-04) by winning again next year. ... Verstappen joined Schumacher, Lewis Hamilton (2017-20), Sebastian Vettel (2010-13) and Juan Manuel Fangio (1954-57) as drivers with four straight championships. ... Esteban Ocon, 14th in the point standings, has been released by Alpine and Jack Doohan will replace him in the season finale, making his F1 debut.

Next race: March 16, Melbourne, Australia.

NASCAR Cup Series

Last race: Joey Logano led 107 laps to dominate the winner-take-all finale at Phoenix Raceway on Nov. 10, earning his third championship and completing a remarkable turnaround after initially missing the second-round cut before earning a reprieve with another driver's disqualification. Team Penske clinched its third motorsports crown in less than a month.

Next race: Feb. 16, 2025, Daytona Beach, Florida. **NASCAR Xfinity Series**

Last race: Justin Allgaier took his first series title. Next race: Feb. 15, 2025, Daytona Beach, Florida.

NASCAR Truck Series

Last race: Ty Majeski dominated from the pole in a Ford to earn his first championship, holding off playoff drivers Corey Heim and Christian Eckes in the 150-mile finale at Phoenix Raceway.

Next race: Feb. 14, 2025, Daytona Beach, Florida. 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: Drag racers ended their season in Pomona, California, with Antron Brown winning the Top Fuel title at the In-N-Out Burger NHRA Finals and taking his fourth world championship.

Next event: March 6-9, 2025, Gainesville, Florida.

World of Outlaws Sprint Cars Last event: David Gravel won in Concord, North Car-

olina, on Nov. 7 and clinched the series crown a day later. Gravel finished fourth in the Nov. 8 race, which was enough to lock up the title.

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



SPORTS

News-Banner Scoreboard

FOOTBALL

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.917 383 203 .833 297 219 .750 318 240 10 2 9 3 10 0 Minnesota Green Bay 4 8 0 .333 241 240 Chicago West W L 7 5 Pct PF PA **T** 0 Seattle .583 272 265 L.A. Rams 6 6 0 San Francisco 5 7 .500 266 259 .500 254 290 0.417 270 295 e-Eliminated from playoffs x-clinched playoff spot y-clinched division Thursday's Games Detroit 23, Chicago 20 Dallas 27, N.Y. Giants 20 Green Bay 30, Miami 17 Friday's Games Kansas City 19, Las Vegas 17 Sunday's Games Houston 23, Jacksonville 20 Indianapolis 25, New England 24 L.A. Chargers 17, Atlanta 13 Minnesota 23, Arizona 22 Pittsburgh 44, Cincinnati 38 Seattle 26, N.Y. Jets 21 Washington 42, Tennessee 19 L.A. Rams 21, New Orleans 14 Tampa Bay 26, Carolina 23, OT Philadelphia 24, Baltimore 19 Buffalo 35, San Francisco 10 Monday's Games Cleveland at Denver, late Thursday, Dec. 5 Thursday Night Football: Green Bay at Detroit, 8:15 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 8 Sunday, Dec. 8 Atlanta at Minnesota, 1 p.m. Carolina at Philadelphia, 1 p.m. Cleveland at Pittsburgh, 1 p.m. Jacksonville at Tennessee, 1 p.m. Las Vegas at Tampa Bay, 1 p.m. N.Y. Jets at Miami, 1 p.m. New Orleans at N.Y. Giants, 1 p.m.

Detroit

11

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Seattle at Arizona, 4:05 p.m. Buffalo at L.A. Rams, 4:25 p.m. Chicago at San Francisco, 4:25 p.m. Sunday Night Football: L.A. Char-gers at Kansas City, 8:20 p.m. Open: Baltimore, Denver, Houston, Indianapolis, New England, Washington

Monday, Dec. 9 Monday Night Football: Cincinnati at Dallas, 8:15 p.m.

BASKETBALL

High School

Wednesday Boys' Scores Eminence 41, Indpls International 37 Guerin Catholic High School 58, Muncie Central 33 Hagerstown 57, Seton Catholic 48 Leo 50, Ft. Wayne Wayne 43 Cass County Invitational First Round Logansport 65, Caston 53

Wednesday Girls' Scores Austin 46. Charlestown 37 Culver Academy 48, Tri-Township 42 Delta 57, Winchester 47 Eastern (Greene) 58, Union (Dug-ger) 37

- Évansville Central 66, Evansville Harrison 26
- Evansville Reitz 50, Evansville Mater Dei 43
- Hamilton Southeastern 49. Noblesville 45 LaVille 25, Triton 23
- Lafayette Central Catholic High School 38, Lafayette Harrison 26 Lafayette Jeff 57, Kokomo 36 Lawrenceburg 39, Lloyd Memorial,
- Ky. 32 Manchester 74, Eastern (Green-

town) 37 McCutcheon 65, Tri-West 30 Michigan City Marquette 65, Oregon-Davis 25 Monroe Central 48, Union City 26 N. Posey 54, Boonville 33 Rochester 45, Culver 27 S. Bend Riley 34, Jimtown 20 South Knox 79, Sullivan 28 Southern Wells 63, Muncie Burris 26 Tri-Central 58, Wes-Del 9 Valparaiso 67, Western 54

College

Men's Scores Wednesday, Dec. 4 EAST

Maryland 83, Ohio St. 59 UConn 76, Baylor 72 Youngstown St. 72, Robert Morris 58 SOUTH Alabama 94, North Carolina 79 Florida 87, Virginia 69 Memphis 81, Louisiana Tech 71 MIDWEST

IU Indianapolis 84, Green Bay 75 Iowa St. 81, Marquette 70 Michigan St. 90, Minnesota 72 Wichita St. 78, Alcorn St. 54 SOUTHWEST Oklahoma St. 76, Tulsa 55

Women's Scores Wednesday, Dec. 4 EAST EASI Buffalo 74, Binghamton 51 Columbia 81, San Francisco 79 SOUTH Furman 61, Elon 57 Georgetown 55, Richmond 53 Georgia Tech 78, Mississippi St. 75 Oklahoma 78, Louisville 72 Tennessee 79, Florida St. 77

Vanderbilt 88. Miami 70 Virginia Tech 70, Georgia 61 Wake Forest 63, Campbell 46

MIDWEST Akron 79, Slippery Rock 43 Cent. Michigan 68, Concordia (MI) Cleveland St. 67, N. Kentucky 54 Creighton 82, Xavier 54 Detroit 67, Wright St. 56 Fort Wayne 68, Robert Morris 57 Green Bay 78, IUPUI 56 Indiana 67, S. Indiana 63 Northwestern 64, DePaul 56

Volumestern 04, Deradu 36 Purdue 60, Maine 51 Valparaiso 67, W. Michigan 54 Youngstown St. 66, Milwaukee 50 **SOUTHWEST** Baylor 101, Texas Southern 29 Oklahoma St. 93, Houston Christian

39 TCU 78, FAU 42 Texas A&M 57, Syracuse 45 **FAR WEST** N. Arizona 87, Oral Roberts 80

NBA

Tuesday's Games Cleveland 118, Washington 87 Milwaukee 128, Detroit 107 Philadelphia 110, Charlotte 104 Toronto 122, Indiana 111 loronto 122, Indiana 111 New York 121, Orlando 106 Oklahoma City 133, Utah 106 Dallas 121, Memphis 116 Phoenix 104, San Antonio 93 Sacramento 120, Houston 111 Denver 119, Golden State 115 L.A. Clippers 127, Portland 105 Wednesday's Games Miami 134, L.A. Lakers 93 Boston 130, Detroit 120 Brooklyn 99, Indiana 90

Orlando 106, Philadelphia 102 Atlanta at Milwaukee, late Minnesota at L.A. Clippers, late Thursday's Games Dallas at Washington, 7 p.m. Denver at Cleveland, 7 p.m. Charlotte at New York, 7:30 p.m. Oklahoma City at Toronto, 7:30

p.m. Chicago at San Antonio, 8 p.m. Phoenix at New Orleans, 8 p.m. Sacramento at Memphis, 8 p.m. Houston at Golden State, 10 p.m.

HOCKEY

NHL

Tuesday's Games Montreal 2, N.Y. Islanders 1, OT Seattle 4, Carolina 2 Colorado 5, Buffalo 4 San Jose 2, Washington 1, OT Pittsburgh 5, Florida 4, OT Boston 3, Detroit 2, OT Minnesota 3, Vancouver 2, OT St. Louis 4, Winnipeg 1 Calgary 3, Columbus 0 Vegas 1, Edmonton 0 Wednesday's Games

Boston 4, Chicago 2 Toronto 3, Nashville 2 Dallas at Los Angeles, late Vegas at Anaheim, late

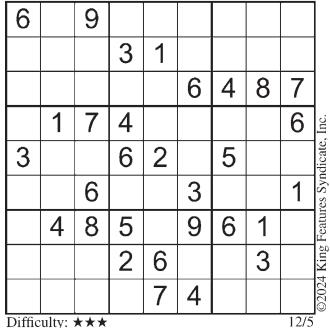
Thursday's Games Colorado at Carolina, 7 p.m. Detroit at Ottawa, 7 p.m. Florida at Philadelphia, 7 p.m. Nashville at Montreal, 7 p.m. Winnipeg at Buffalo, 7 p.m. Seattle at N.Y. Islanders, 7:30 p.m. Columbus at Edmonton, 9 p.m. St. Louis at Calgary, 9 p.m.



UDOKU

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

King Classic Sudoku



Difficulty: $\star \star \star$

EMPLOYMENT Help Wanted

COUNTY BUILDING INSPECTOR

Help Wanted

WELLS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE is currently seeking applicants for the position of Full Time Deputy Sheriff. Applicants must be a US Citizen,

FOR SALE

Miscellaneous

THIS OU MICHIGAN CHRISTMAS TREES! Tim Murray's Fresh Christmas Trees Cut Wreaths, Grave Blankets and Boughs! Also Michigan Maple Syrup. Located at Bummies Root Beer Stand, S. 1263 Main Street. Bluffton. Open Daily at 10am beginning Saturday, Nov. 30. Phone: 231-920-6194.

VEHICLES

Campers/RV's 2018 THOR HURRICANE,

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

SERVICES

Services

DON'T LET THE stairs limit your mobility! Discover the ideal solution for anyone who struggles on the stairs, is concerned about a fall or wants to regain access to their entire home. Call AmeriGlide today! 1-855-967-4960 (I)

CONSUMER CELLULAR - the same reliable, nationwide coverage as the largest carriers. ng-term cor tract den 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)

Services

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

GET A BREAK on your taxes! Donate your car, truck, or SUV to assist the blind and visually impaired. Arrange a swift, nocost vehicle pickup and secure a generous tax credit for 2025. Call Heritage for the Blind To-day at 1-833-587-2145 today! (I)

828 E. 200 S. Bluffton, IN 46714 Phone: (260) 824-6430 Fax: (260) 824-6431 highway@wellscounty.org REQUIREMENTS FOR BIDDING 2025 Annual Bid Package

Bid Date: Monday December

Time: 5:00 pm. Place: Conference room

orm 1 Bids for items 1 through 3 shall be accompanied by a 10% bid bond or certified check in the amount of 10% of the bid. (Outof-State companies must have

Services

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

ACCULEVEL. YOUR FOUN-DATION repair and basement waterproofing experts. Whether basement, crawl space or concrete slab we'll guide you on the right path to a healthy home. Act now! Up to \$600 off. Restrictions apply. Call for a free consultation. 1-877-229-0197 (I)

and must be able to attend a man-datory onsite preconstruction meet-ing with Owner and provide an onsite inspection during construc-tion by an employee of the culvert manufacturer if required.

6. <u>Precast Concrete Arch</u> <u>Structures and Boxes</u> - Provide unit pricing for all sizes and acces-sories available, including but not limited to shell, invert, headwalls, wingwells, and foundations. Drise wingwalls, and foundations. Price structures for HL93, HS25, and HS20 load ratings. Bidder must provide signed and sealed fabrication, layout, and design calcu-lations by manufacturer for any structure ordered by Owner. Bid-der must have an Indiana Registered Professional Engineer (PE) on staff to assist Owner in design and sizing of these type structures if required and must be able to attend a mandatory onsite preconstruction meeting with Owner and provide an onsite inspection during

Public Notices

LEGAL NOTICE OF EVIDENTIARY HEARING INDIANA UTILITY REGULATORY

COMMISSION CAUSE NO. 46070 IN THE MATTER OF THE COMMISSION'S TRIENNIAL REVIEW OF THE INDIANA UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND

Notice is hereby given that the Indiana Utility Regulatory Com-

mission will conduct a public Evi-dentiary Hearing in the above-cap-tioned Cause in Room 224 of the PNC Center, 101 W. Washington Street, Indianapolis, Indiana, commencing at 10:00 AM on January 14, 2025. This hearing is open to the public.

If an accommodation is required to allow an individual with a disability to participate, please contact the Office of the Executive Secretary of the IURC at 317.232.2701 or TDD 317. 232.8556 at least 48 hours in advance

INDIANA UTILITY REGULATORY COMMISSION OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE

SECRETARY
317.232.2701
BY: IURC - Ann Pagonis,

ALJ DATE: December 2, 2024 nb 12/5 hspaxlp

Town of Ossian, Indiana

Notice of Receipt of Bids Project: Town of Ossian CCMG 2024-2 Street Improve-ments ("Project"). Summary: Along Meadow

Lane in Ossian, Indiana, the Proj-ect shall consist of pavement milling and resurfacing, driveway improvements, storm sewer and drainage swale improvements, underdrains, erosion control, and surface restoration. All qualified Contractors are invited to bid the work. General Plans and Specifications: Complete digital project bidding documents are available at www.questcdn.com. Quest CDN will serve as the Issuing Office and maintain the plan holder list. Digital Bidding Documents may be downloaded for a non-refundable fee of \$22 by inputting Quest proj-ect number QuestCDN eBidDoc #9404054 on the website's proj-ects search page. Please contact QuestCDN Customer Support at 952.233.1632 or info@questCdn. com for assistance in member-ship registration, downloading, and working with digital project informavorking with digital project informa-tion. No paper copies will be pro-vided by the Owner. **Pre-Bid Meeting:** Beginning at 10:00 a.m., on Thursday, Decem-ber 5, 2024, a pre-bid meeting will be held at the Ossian Town Hall, 1672 N. Jefferson Stroot Ossian 507 N. Jefferson Street, Ossian, Indiana 46777. Prospective bidders are strongly encouraged to attend Bids: All bids must be submit-ted to the Town of Ossian by noon, Thursday, December 19, 2024, to be considered for the work. Bids submitted prior to 11:45 a.m. on December 19, 2024, shall be submitted at the Ossian Town Hall, 507 N. Jefferson Street. Ossian IN 46777. Bids submitted after 11:45 a.m. on December 19, 2024, must be delivered to the Ossian Town Council meeting location at Collier's Comfort, 215 N. Jefferson St., Ossian, IN, between 11:45 a.m. and 12:00 noon. Bidders are responsible for the timely delivery of their bids. All bids shall be in sealed envelopes bearing the Project title, "Town of Ossian CCMG 2024-2 Street Improvements", and include the name and address of the bidder. All bids shall include fully completed and exe-cuted Contractor's Bid for Public Work – Form 96 and E-Verify and Iran Investment Certification. Bids shall be accompanied by a bidder's bond or certified check equal to 5% of the bid amount. Bids arriving after the time set will be returned unopened and only complete bids with all required materials will be considered. Review and Consideration: All bids timely received shall be publicly opened and read aloud at Collier's Comfort, 215 N. Jefferson St., Ossian, IN at noon, Decem-ber 19, 2024. The Town of Ossian, Indiana, reserves the right to reject all bids, waive defects and amend the Project's scope. It is anticipated that the Ossian Town Council will take bids received under advise-ment and that a determination may be made by January 13, 2024. By: Town Manager,

WELLS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

16, 2024

Wells County Carnegie Annex, 223 W Washington St., Bluffton All bids to be submitted on Wells County Highway Annual Bid

checks.) The Board of Wells County Commissioners reserves the right

Wells County Government is accepting resumes for a County Building Inspector. The Wells County Commissioners as the county executive are seeking to employ a full-time county building inspector. This person is responsible for planning and overseeing county construc-tion and final inspection, under the direction of the county executive. The county building inspector shall, subject to the policies of the county executive, perform the following functions and have related experience:

Coordinates the preparation and presentation of an annual budget for the Building Department; directs the implementation of the department's budget: plans for and reviews specifications for new or replaced equipment. Construct and establish a local building code based off state code requirements and needs of the county.

Controls the expenditure of departmental appropriations Receives complaints, investigates, and issues unsafe building violations, nuisance violations and minimum housing standards violations, as appropriate.

Completes continuing educa-tion classes on building codes and practices, as needed

Reviews the building plan for the County. Approves the building per-

mits, issues permits, and collects the fees for the permits, as necessary.

Issues certificates of occupancy, as needed.

Maintains an effective communication process with the Commissioners.

(B.A. Bachelor's degree /B.S.) from a four-year college or university; and five years related experience and/or training; or equivalent combination of education and experience. CBO Certification is required. Previous experience in buildina construction or related field is required. Previous supervisory experience is required.

Starting salary for this posi-tion is up to \$70,000/yr. plus all county benefits. Interested applicants can send their resumes to Wells County Auditor, 102 W Market, Suite 205, Bluffton, IN 46714 10 auditor@wellscounty.org. Resumes will be accepted until December 16, 2024.

at least 21 years of age upon graduation from police academy, possess a high school diploma or equivalent as well as a valid Indiana Operators License. Applicant can't have any felony convictions. Applicants must pass all aspects of the hiring process including physical agility testing, written examination, background in-vestigation, oral interview, polygraph and psychological evaluation. Selected applicant must be able to graduate from the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy. ILEA certified applicants do not have to attend the physical agility and written examination portion of the process. 20-vear matrix salary rangefor a Deputy Sheriff (no rank) is \$58,300 - \$70,500. Years of service and experience will be honored for a starting salary up to five years in the pay matrix. Application can be found on our website at www.wellscountysheriff.com. Once application is completed, details on the testing date and location will be emailed to the applicant. The application must be completed by Decem-

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.

ber 27, 2024.



DIRECTV- ALL YOUR entertainment. Nothing on your roof! Sign up for Directv and get your first three months of Max, Paramount+, Showtime, Starz, MGM+ and Cinemax included. Choice package \$84.99/mo. Some restrictions apply. Call DIRECTV 1-888-885-8931 (I)

Lottery Numbers

Wednesday's Drawings **HOOSIER LOTTERY** Cash 5 - 05-07-39-41-

Lotto Plus — 01-03-14-30-36-37

Cash4Life — 10-11-29-40-59, Cash Ball: 03

Quick Draw Midday -18-21-22-23-27-29-31-32-34-38-47-51-54-56-61-64-68-71-73-78, BE: 27

Daily Three-Midday -04-07-03, SB: 01

Daily Three-Evening — 04-05-09, SB: 07

Daily Four-Midday — 02-09-08-03, SB: 01

Daily Four-Evening -07-00-03-06, SB: 07

Quick Draw Evening 05-08-22-23-29-31-33-44-49-51-52-53-59-67-70-72-73-74-78-79 BE: 52

Hoosier Lotto — 03-05-24-28-29-45

MEGA MILLIONS Estimated jackpot (for Friday): \$579 million POWERBALL

01-23-25-28-61 Power-

ball: 13; Power Play: 2X

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to reject any or all bids, or to accept the one which, in their judgment, will be in the best interest of Wells County, and will be the best and/ or lowest responsive and responsible bidder for each line or class of materials

Materials. <u>COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPART-</u> <u>MENT REQUISITION</u> 1. <u>Bituminous Dust Control</u> <u>Material Liquid</u> – 75,000 gallons or less liquid asphalt emulsions for dust control. No demurrage can be charred charged. Application rate for in front

of homes is below. Please quote the product alone and also quote the product distributed throughout Wells County at selected locations if you are able to provide both ser-vices. If you can only provide the material OR only the distribution, quote them individually.

Two applications A. First application 15' wide @ .40 gallon per square yard

B. Second application 15' wide @ .20 gallon per square yard Quote price per gallon for each application rate.

2. <u>Stone/Aggregate</u> - 45,000 tons or less of various sizes of stone crushed aggregate includ-ing screenings. Materials to meet INDOT standard specifications, gradation and approval of the Wells County Commissioners and High-

 Way Department.
Bituminous Material Liq-uid – 440,000 gallons or less liq-uid asphalt emulsions of various grades. Materials to meet Indi-ana Department of Transportation Specifications except remove stone coating. No demurrage can be charged. Bid price at cents/gal-lon and dollars/ton.

4. <u>Fuel</u> – provide pricing for Regular unleaded fuel and Premium on-road and off-road diesel fuel to be delivered to the Wells County Highway Department and 3 off site fueling locations. On-Road Diesel to be delivered to Wells County Highway Garage 828 East CR 200 S, Bluffton, IN location and Off-Road Diesel to be delivered to three separate county fueling sites. Total of 45,000 gallons of On-Road and Off-Road Diesel in Regular and Winter Mix with kero-sene rates, as appropriate. Pricing to include all taxes applicable to a governmental agency. Price per gallon should also include delivery cost in addition to any other fees that may apply. Bidder agrees to monitor tank levels and maintain volume appropriate for emergencv operations as determined by Superintendent. Bidders should not include biodiesel

5. Aluminum Box Culverts - Provide unit pricing for all sizes and accessories available, including but not limited to shell, invert, headwalls, wingwalls, corner pan-els, toe walls, receiving channel, and footing pads. Price structures for HL93, HS25, and HS20 load ratings. Bidder must provide signed and caeled fabrication. plate lav and sealed fabrication, plate lay out, and design calculations by manufacturer for any structure ordered by Owner. Bidder must have an Indiana Registered Pro-fessional Engineer (PE) on staff to assist Owner in design and sizing of these type structures if required

construction by an employee of the culvert manufacturer if required.

7. All Steel Bridge Pack ages Including Beam Span and Truss Structures - Provide unit pricing for all sizes and accessories available. Price structures for HL93, HS25, and HS20 load ratings. Bidder must provide signed and sealed fabrication. lavout, and design calculations by manufacturer for any structure ordered by Owner. Bidder must have an Indiana Registered Professional Engi-neer (PE) on staff to assist Owner in design and sizing of these type structures if required and must be able to attend a mandatory onsite preconstruction meeting with Owner and provide an onsite inspection during construction by an employee of the bridge manufacturer if required.

8. <u>Bridge Decking Products</u> - Provide unit pricing for Structural Plate Bridge Flooring, corrugations 2" to 6" and 3" to 9" in all gauges available. Price both punched and un punched matural un-punched material. 9. <u>Treated</u> Tin

Treated Timber Bridge **Products** - Provide unit pricing for treated timber bridge rail, decks, pilings, salt/sand storage building package components, and galva-

nized attaching hardware. 10. <u>Steel Pipe Products</u> - Pro-vide unit pricing for corrugated steel pipe products on a per foot or unit price basis from 12" thru 144" diameter for both standard and elliptical in 16aa thru 40aa Driae elliptical in 16ga thru 10ga. Price galvanized, aluminized-T2 and polymer coated pipes.

11. <u>Misc Pipe & Fittings</u> -Provide unit pricing for corrugated High Density Polyethylene pipe products on a per foot basis from 4" diameter thru 60". Include pric-ing for standard fittings.

12. Misc Guardrail Posts, Rails, Ends, Fittings & Hardware - Provide unit pricing for INDOT specification compliant standard guardrail sections, posts, ends and hardware. The submittal must include a description and part num-

ber on the pricing sheet. Successful Bidder must have a representative available to assist Owner in sizing and installation of pipe, culvert, timber or precast structures materials for all items. Bidder must provide a profession-al engineer (PE) on products as noted.

Items 6 through 12 shall be considered as a unit, with bid to be complete for all items and material to be delivered and unloaded as specified by the Owner. Quote net prices only. The delivery time and availabil-

ity of material are to be listed and

nsidered as part of the bid. All materials must meet all federal and state highway specifica-tions with a design load capacity to meet AASHTO guidelines. Manu-facturer's material certification sheets must accompany bid where appropriate.

All materials must be manufac-tured and fabricated in the United ates of America

Nate Whitacre Wells County Engineer oj, nb 11/21, 12/5 hspaxlp

Crystal Chapman Town of Ossian, Indiana oj, nb 11/21, 12/5 hspaxlp



Justice Department rules Memphis police use excessive force against Black people

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — The Memphis Police Department uses excessive force and discriminates against Black people, according to the findings of a U.S. Department of Justice investigation launched after the beating death of Tyre Nichols after a traffic stop in 2023.

A report released Wednesday marked the conclusion of the investigation that began six months after Nichols was kicked, punched and hit with a police baton as five officers tried to arrest him after he fled a traffic stop.

The report says that "Memphis police officers regularly violate the rights of the people they are sworn to serve."

"The people of Memphis deserve a police department and city that protects their civil and constitutional rights, garners trust and keeps them safe," Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division said in an emailed statement.

The city said in a letter released earlier Wednesday that it would not agree to negotiate federal oversight of its police department until it could review and challenge results of the investigation.

City officials had no immediate comment on the report but said they plan to hold a news conference Thursday after Justice Department officials hold their own news conference in Memphis on Thursday morning to address the findings.

Police video showed officers pepper spraying Nichols and hitting him with a Taser before he ran away from a traffic stop. Five officers chased down Nichols and kicked, punched and hit him with a police baton just steps from his home as he called out for his mother. The video showed the officers milling about, talking and laughing as Nichols struggled with his injuries.

Nichols died on Jan. 10, 2023, three days after the beating. The five officers — Tadarrius Bean, Demetrius Haley, Emmitt Martin, Desmond Mills Jr. and Justin Smith — were fired, charged in state court with murder, and indicted by a federal grand jury on civil rights and witness tampering charges.

Nichols was Black, as are the former officers. His death led to national protests, raised the volume on calls for police reforms in the U.S., and directed intense scrutiny towards the police department in Memphis, a majority Black city. The Memphis Police Department is more than 50 percent Black, and police chief Cerelyn "CJ" Davis is also Black.

The report specifically mentions the Nichols case, and it addresses the police department's practice of using traffic stops to address violent crime. The police department has encouraged officers in specialized units, task forces, and on patrol to prioritize street enforcement, and officers and community members have described this approach as "saturation," or flooding neighborhoods with traffic stops, the report said. "This strategy involves frequent contact with the public and gives wide discretion to officers, which requires close supervision and clear rules to direct officers' activity," the report said. "But

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — The MPD does not ensure that officers conemphis Police Department uses duct themselves in a lawful manner."

The report said prosecutors and judges told federal investigators that officers do not understand the constitutional limits on their authority. Officers stop and detain people without adequate justification, and they conduct invasive searches of people and cars, the report said.

"Black people in Memphis disproportionately experience these violations," the report said. "MPD has never assessed its practices for evidence of discrimination. We found that officers treat Black people more harshly than white people who engage in similar conduct."

The investigation found that Memphis officers resort to force likely to cause pain or injury "almost immediately in response to low-level, nonviolent offenses, even when people are not aggressive."

The report says officers pepper sprayed, kicked and fired a Taser at an unarmed man with a mental illness who tried to take a \$2 soda from a gas station. By the end of an encounter outside the gas station, at least nine police cars and 12 officers had responded to the incident, for which the man served two days in jail for theft and disorderly conduct.

In a letter to the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division released earlier Wednesday, Memphis City Attorney Tannera George Gibson said the city had received a request from the DOJ to enter into an agreement that would require it to "negotiate a consent decree aimed at institutional police and emergency services."

A consent decree is an agreement requiring reforms that are overseen by an independent monitor and are approved by a federal judge. The federal oversight can continue for years, and violations could result in fines paid by the city.

It remains to be seen what will happen to attempts to reach such agreements between cities and the Justice Department once President-elect Donald Trump returns to office and installs new department leadership. The Justice Department under the first Trump administration curtailed the use of consent decrees, and the Republican president-elect is expected to again radically reshape the department's priorities around civil rights.

"Until the Čity has had the opportunity to review, analyze, and challenge the specific allegations that support your forthcoming findings report, the City cannot — and will not — agree to work toward or enter into a consent decree that will likely be in place for years to come and will cost the residents of Memphis hundreds of millions of dollars," the letter said.

Memphis police never adopted policies and procedures to direct the unit, despite alarms that it was minimally

Police hunt for UnitedHealthcare CEO's masked killer after 'brazen, targeted' attack on NYC street

NEW YORK (AP) — A gunman killed UnitedHealthcare's CEO on Wednesday in a "brazen, targeted attack" outside a Manhattan hotel where the health insurer was holding its investor conference, police said, setting off a massive search for the fleeing assailant hours before the annual Rockefeller Center Christmas tree lighting nearby.

Brian Thompson, 50, was shot around 6:45 a.m. as he walked alone to the New York Hilton Midtown from a nearby hotel, police said. The shooter appeared to be "lying in wait for several minutes" before approaching Thompson from behind and opening fire, New York City Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch said. Police had not yet established a motive.

"Many people passed the suspect, but he appeared to wait for his intended target," Tisch said, adding that the shooting "does not appear to be a random act of violence."

Surveillance video reviewed by investigators shows someone emerging from behind a parked car, pointing a gun at Thompson's back, then firing multiple times from several feet away. The gunman continues firing, interrupted by a brief gun jam, as Thompson stumbles forward and falls to the sidewalk. He then walks past Thompson and out of the frame.

"From watching the video, it does seem that he's proficient in the use of firearms as he was able to clear the malfunctions pretty quickly," NYPD Chief of Detectives Joseph Kenny said.

Thompson was shot at least once in the back and once in the calf, Tisch said.

The shooter, who wore a jacket, face mask and large backpack, fled through Midtown on foot before pedaling an electric bike into Central Park a few blocks away, police said. The assailant remained at large Wednesday afternoon, sparking a search that included police drones, helicopters and dogs.

Police issued a poster showing a surveillance image of the man pointing what appeared to be a gun and another image that appeared to show the same person on a bicycle. Minutes before the shooting, he stopped at a nearby Starbucks, according to additional surveillance photos released by police on Wednesday afternoon. They offered a reward of up to \$10,000 for information leading to an arrest and conviction.

Thompson's wife, Paulette Thompson, told NBC News that he told her "there were some people that had been threatening him." She didn't have details but suggested the threats may have involved issues with insurance coverage.

Eric Werner, the police chief in the Minneapolis suburb where Thompson lived, said his department had not received any reports of threats against the executive.

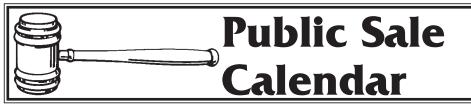
Investigators recovered several 9 mm shell casings from outside the hotel and a cellphone from the alleyway through which the shooter fled. They were also searching Thompson's hotel room, interviewing his United-Healthcare colleagues and reviewing his social media, Kenny said.

Police initially said the shooter rode into Central Park on a bicycle from the city's bike-share program, CitiBike. But a spokesperson for the program's operator, Lyft, said police officials informed the company Wednesday afternoon that the bike was not from the CitiBike fleet.

Health care giant UnitedHealth Group was holding its annual meeting with investors to update Wall Street on the company's direction and expectations for the coming year. The company ended the conference early in the wake of Thompson's death.



supervised, according to the Justice Department report. Some prosecutors told department investigators that there were some "outrageous" inconsistences between body camera footage and arrest reports, and if the cases went to trial, they would be "laughed out of court." The report found that the unit's misconduct led to dozens of criminal cases being dismissed.



DECEMBER 5 & 6 - 9 a.m. - Secured creditors & various consignors, owners. 815 Adams, St., Decatur. Day 1: Online bidding only. Over 300+ lots including skid loader attachments, tool boxes, workbenches, iron gates, chains & binders, 1 trip 40' high side shipping container w/side doors, dome shelter containers, much more! Day 2 truck & equipment auction! Onsite and online bidding offering 600+ lots! Cars, SUV, 1/2 ton & 3/4 ton pickup trucks, cargo & passenger vans, dump trucks, large group of box trucks, utility & semi trailers, SUV's pickup trucks, various skid steer attachments, much more! Accepting consignments! *Krueckeberg Auction & Real-ty LLC*, 260-724-7402, Kjauction.com.

DECEMBER 8-15 - 2 p.m. - (Online only personal property) - Thomas B. & Mary Lou Woodward, seller. 2016 JD 1025R diesel utility tractor, Frontier RT1149 tiller, 2016 Grasshopper zero turn mower, 2020 Club Car Carryall 1700, mowers, lawn & garden, patio furniture, antique & modern furniture, vintage framed art work, lithograph prints, vintage pickle castors, glassware, collectibles, more. Preview Dec. 8, 2-5 p.m., Dec. 12, 3-6 p.m., 301 N. Highland Ave., Ossian. Patrick Carter, sale manager, 260-824-3006, *The Steffen Group Inc.*, www.steffengrp. com, 260-824-3006.

DECEMBER 9 - 4 p.m.- 6 p.m. ET - (Online) - Crandall Farm, seller. Property location: Two miles northeast of Gas, IN, near intersection of E 300 S and S 550 E, Mill Township, Grant County. 81.59+/- total acres, tillable, woods, recreational land, potential building sites. Tract 1: 27.59+/- acres, 18.4+/- tillable, 8+/- woods, 1.19+/- non-tillable. Tract 2: 54+/- acres, 28.91+/- tillable, 23.34+/- woods, 1.75+/- nontillable. Rick Johnloz, 260-827-8181, Emma Barr, 260-494-0992, Jason Johnloz, 260-273-9177, Halderman Real Estate & Farm Management, 800-424-2324, halderman.com.

DECEMBER 14-DECEMBER 21 - Bidding starts closing at 1 p.m. - Private collection, seller. 20 Marolf Ct., Fremont, IN. Extensive collection of exotic mounts (over 140) including zebras, black bears, antelope, water buffalo and more, antique boat motors, bows, hunting equipment, vintage fishing lures, watches and fine jewelry, tools, vintage nautical items, much more. *The Steffen Group Inc.*, www.steffengrp. com, 260-824-3006.

BIDDING CLOSES DECEMBER 15 - 6 p.m.

- Online Only - Jim Baker, owner. AIRPLA-CO Pumpmaster MJ-16 concrete slab jacking pump system including pump, mixer and tandem trailer, concrete hole drill, Campbell Hausfeld stationary air compressor, smoker grill, handmade rustic furniture, beautiful antique furniture, Husqvarna garden tractor, 2 table saws, hand tools, power tools, building supplies, TV, modem furniture and much more! Preview Dec. 7, 9-10 a.m., 5388 SW. State Road 116-1, Bluffton, IN. Pick up Dec. 17, 12-6 p.m. Full list at Towncountry auctions.com, click Fliers. *Town and Country Auctioneers/Realtors*, 260-223-7352, Shaw *Real Estate & Auction, Inc.*, 260-824-2116.

DECEMBER 17 - 9 a.m.-6 p.m. - (Online Only) - Thomas B. & Mary Lou Woodward, seller. One of a kind picturesque real estate offering. Outstanding 4,014 SF on 8.45 acres, 4 bedroom, 3 bath home with a 2 car detached garage. Scenic backyard with multiple utility sheds and gazebo, Wells County. Open houses Dec. 8 from 2-5 p.m., and Dec. 12 from 3-6 p.m., 301 N. Highland Ave., Ossian, IN. Pat Carter, sale manager, 260-273-8294, *The Steffen Group Inc.*, www.steffengrp.com, 260-426-0633.

DECEMBER 22-DECEMBER 31 - Bidding starts closing at 2 p.m. - Estate of Richard Gerken and others, sellers. "Outstanding year end auction." Very high quality art deco, mid century modern and Art Nouveau home furnishings, International Harvester collection, 2011 Platinum Ford F150 in pristine condition, 3,500 record albums, vintage Schwinn bicycles, advertising memorabilia, antique gas pump, country primitives and more. Open house Dec. 26 and Dec. 30 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., 102 S. Jefferson St., Ossian, IN. *The Steffen Group Inc.*, 260-824-3006, steffengrp.com.

824-3006, steffengrp.com. DECEMBER 29-JANUARY 5 - Bidding starts closing at 2 p.m. - The Estate of Eldrid Tinkel, seller. Large antique and collectible auction including country primitives, vintage farm toys, vintage toy trucks, early cast iron, brass cash register, large antique and rare collection of vintage graniteware, Fenton, Marion advertising, vintage beer signs, long guns, coins. Open house Dec. 29 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and Jan. 4 from 10 a.m. to noon, 1910 N Meridian St., Marion, IN. *The Steffen Group Inc.*, Steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006.