

The News - Banner

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 2, 2025 BLUFFTON, INDIANA • Wells County's Hometown Connection \$1.00

Change order is approved for sewer lining projects

By JONATHAN SNYDER
The cost of sewer lining spot repairs was approved by the Board of Public Works and Safety Tuesday.
Utility Director Jon Oman reported that several areas of repair took more effort and material than expected, which the expenditure is addressing. Work on South Johnson, Wabash, Arnold and Wayne streets were cited in the spot repairs. The repairs will cost \$76,711.62, negotiated down from the initially proposed \$89,000 due to certain projects running longer than expected. The funds will come out of the project's work allowance budget, which still has over \$303,000 left for any future work requests.
Additionally, the board accepted Christopher B. Burke Engineering's proposal to continue helping the city with municipal separate storm sewer (MS4) requirements.

Burke helps the city stay in compliance with state guidelines for MS4 properties. In 2024, the city was not to pay more than \$50,000 worth for Burke's services through the year, and the city officially spent \$37,856. The new agreement will see the city pay no more than \$45,000 for 2025, with Oman expecting the city to spend between \$30,000 and \$32,000.
Oman and Mayor John Whicker both described the relationship between Burke and the city as "positive". Oman additionally noted that the more they learn from Burke, the more the city can handle on its own and the less need for Burke's services. Questions about the budget line item used led to Clerk-Treasurer Bri Lautzenheiser clarifying that payment will be made through the sewage fund, which has approximately \$1,900,000 in the account.
jonathan@news-banner.com

At least 15 people killed in New Orleans terrorist attack

By ERIC TUCKER, JIM MUSTIAN, KEVIN MCGILL and JACK BROOK
Associated Press
NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A U.S. Army veteran driving a pickup truck that bore the flag of the Islamic State group wrought carnage on New Orleans' raucous New Year's celebration, killing 15 people as he steered around a police blockade and slammed into revelers before being shot dead by police.
The FBI said it is investigating the attack early Wednesday as a terrorist act and does not believe the driver acted alone. Investigators found guns and what appeared to be an improvised explosive device in the vehicle, along with other devices elsewhere in the city's famed French Quarter.
President Joe Biden said Wednesday evening that the FBI

found videos that the driver had posted to social media hours before the attack in which he said he was inspired by the Islamic State group and expressed a desire to kill.
The rampage turned festive Bourbon Street into a macabre mayhem of maimed victims, bloodied bodies and pedestrians fleeing for safety inside nightclubs and restaurants. In addition to the dead, dozens of people were hurt. A college football playoff game at the nearby Superdome was postponed until Thursday.
Zion Parsons, 18, of Gulfport, Mississippi, said he saw the truck "barreling through, throwing people like in a movie scene, throwing people into the air."
"Bodies, bodies all up and down the street, everybody screaming and hollering," said Parsons, whose friend Nikyra
(Continued on Page 2)

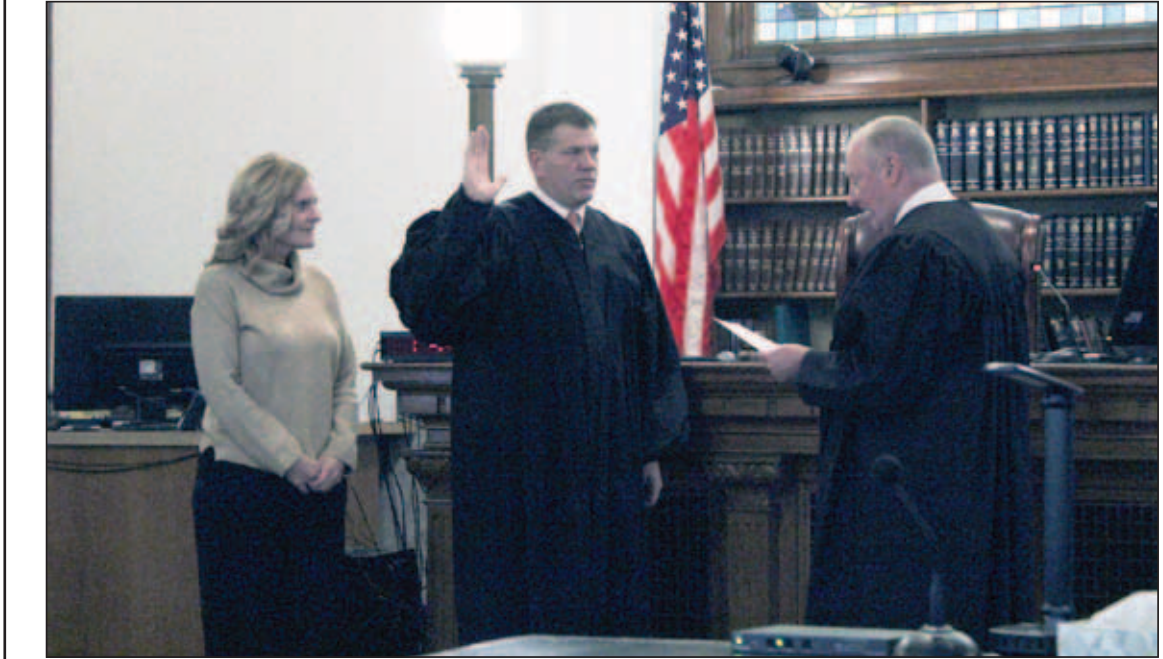
Jimmy Carter mourned around the world

By RUSS BYNUM, SHARON JOHNSON and BILL BARROW
Associated Press
PLAINS, Ga. (AP) — Johnny Jones found out about Jimmy Carter's death within a matter of minutes. That's how it works in a small town, even for a former U.S. president and Nobel Peace Prize winner known throughout the world.
"Somebody texted my wife and told her about it — that's when I found out," Jones said Monday, a day after the 39th president died at the age of 100, surrounded by family in the one-story house he and his late wife, Rosalynn, built

before he launched his first political campaign more than 60 years ago.
"His presence here in Plains has really boosted the morale of everyone who lives here," said Jones, 85, as he recalled warm exchanges with "Mr. Jimmy" and "Ms. Rosalynn," who died in November 2023.
Indeed, the Carters put this town of fewer than 700 people — not much bigger than when Carter was born Oct. 1, 1924 — on the world stage. His remarkable rise to the White House, landslide defeat in 1980 and rehabilitation thereafter as a freelance diplomat and
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Sworn to service
Recently elected officials were sworn into office Tuesday at the Wells County Courthouse. At left, Southern Wells School Board member Gregory Vanover is sworn in by Judge Andrew Antrim. Kari Vanover stands along with Gregg.



Below, Wells County Circuit Court Judge Kenton Kiracofe (right) is sworn in by Antrim. Theresa Kiracofe stands along with Kenton.

Bottom left, Wells County Treasurer Pam Gregory is sworn in by Antrim. At bottom right, County Commissioner member Blake Gerber is sworn in by Antrim. **More Photos on Page 8.** (Photos by Jonathan Snyder)



Lawmakers seek road-funding changes, hope to avoid fiscal cliff

By LESLIE BONILLA MUÑIZ
Indiana Capital Chronicle
While education dominates half of Indiana's budget and Medicaid costs worry lawmakers, a projected transportation infrastructure funding shortfall creeps closer.
Motor fuel taxation yields eight of every 10 state dollars that fund roads and bridges for both the Indiana Department of Transportation and local governments. But as Hoosiers upgrade to more fuel-efficient vehicles — or try electric and hybrid options — there'll be less money to work with.
And inflation means those dollars aren't stretching as far.
"I believe we are about to hit a cliff, and it's going to be in 2030," said Rep. Jim Pressel, R-Rolling Prairie. He chairs the House's transportation-focused committee.
He and other key lawmakers spent almost two years studying up on revenue-raising possibilities at the state and local level. They

haven't yet coalesced around any single fix.
But with the budget-writing legislative session beginning in January, they're hoping to take action.
State-level prospects
Indiana found in 2017 what was hailed as a long-term solution. Lawmakers that year added 10 cents to the 18-cent, road-funding gasoline excise tax and baked in an inflation index raising it by a penny annually. In 2023, they added a three-year extension to the annual index.
But inflation, federal fuel-efficiency standards and the state's registration fee setup are eroding INDOT's income, according to a November 2023 presentation. The agency expects revenue to slump in 2030, per a July revenue study; purchasing power is projected to fall sooner and more steeply.
That's as INDOT recommends spending \$1.3 billion annually for

the next 10 years on improving road and bridge conditions. The agency also wants to spend \$280 million per year on other assets, like signs and retaining walls.
In its revenue study, INDOT offered more than a dozen ways to raise revenue, including by increasing existing transportation fees and taxes.
But lawmakers appear to be souring on gasoline excise tax hikes.
Although Appropriations Committee Chair Sen. Ryan Mishler, R-Mishawaka, told reporters this month that "everything" is on the table, he cautioned that taxes ideally cover a broad base and have low rates. Pressel said an increase would be "foolish" because the per-gallon revenue tax is a "terrible model," while the Senate's transportation lead, Sen. Michael Crider, R-Greenfield, called it "outdated" and "not ... effective"
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Outside

Sunny today with snow showers tonight

Today	Friday	Saturday
High 32	High 26	High 21
Low 22	Low 14	Low 13

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New Orleans attack

(Continued from Page 1)
Dedeaux was among the people killed.

"This is not just an act of terrorism. This is evil," New Orleans Police Superintendent Anne Kirkpatrick said.

The driver "defeated" safety measures in place to protect pedestrians, Kirkpatrick said, and was "hell-bent on creating the carnage and the damage that he did."

The FBI identified the driver as Shamsud-Din Jabbar, 42, a U.S. citizen from Texas, and said it is working to determine his potential associations with terrorist organizations.

"We do not believe that Jabbar was solely responsible," FBI Assistant Special Agent in Charge Alethea Duncan said at a news conference.

Investigators found multiple improvised explosives, including two pipe bombs that were concealed within coolers and wired for remote detonation, according to a Louisiana State Police intelligence bulletin obtained by The Associated Press.

The bulletin, relying on preliminary information gathered soon after the attack, also said surveillance footage showed three men and a woman placing one of the devices, but federal officials did not immediately confirm that detail and it wasn't clear who they were or what connection they had to the attack, if any.

Jabbar drove a rented

pickup truck onto a sidewalk, going around a police car that was positioned to block vehicular traffic, authorities said. A barrier system meant to prevent vehicle attacks was being repaired in preparation for the Super Bowl in February.

Jabbar was killed by police after he exited the truck and opened fire on responding officers, Kirkpatrick said. Three officers returned fire. Two were shot and are in stable condition.

Investigators recovered a handgun and AR-style rifle, according to a law enforcement official who was not authorized to discuss the investigation publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

There were also deadly explosions in Honolulu and outside a Las Vegas hotel owned by President-elect Donald Trump. Biden said the FBI is looking into whether the Las Vegas explosion was connected to the New Orleans attack but had "nothing to report" as of Wednesday evening.

A photo circulated among law enforcement officials showed a bearded Jabbar wearing camouflage next to the truck after he was killed. The intelligence bulletin obtained by the AP said he was wearing a ballistic vest and helmet. The flag of the Islamic State group was on the truck's trailer hitch, the FBI said.

"For those people who don't believe in objective evil, all you have to do is look at what happened in our city early this morning," U.S. Sen. John Kennedy, a Louisiana Republican, said. "If this doesn't trigger the gag reflex of every American, every fair-minded American, I'll be very surprised."

Jabbar joined the Army in 2007, serving on active duty in human resources and information technology and deploying to Afghanistan from 2009 to 2010, the service said. He transferred to the Army Reserve in 2015 and left in 2020 with the rank of staff sergeant.

Hours after the attack, several coroner's office vans were parked on the corner of Bourbon and Canal streets, cordoned off by police tape with crowds of dazed tourists standing around, some trying to navigate their luggage through the labyrinth of blockades.

Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry urged people to avoid the area, which remained an active crime scene.

"We looked out our front door and saw caution tape and dead silence and it's eerie," said Tessa Cundiff, an Indiana native who moved to the French Quarter a few years ago. "This is not what we fell in love with, it's sad."

Nearby, life went on as normal in the city known

to some for a motto that translates to "let the good times roll." At a cafe a block from where the truck came to rest, people crowded in for breakfast as upbeat pop music played. Two blocks away, people drank at a bar, seemingly as if nothing happened.

Biden, speaking from the presidential retreat at Camp David, called the attack a "despicable" and "heinous act." Addressing the victims and the people of New Orleans, he said: "I want you to know I grieve with you. Our nation grieves with you as you mourn and as you heal."

"My heart goes out to the victims and their families who were simply trying to celebrate the holiday," Biden said in a statement. "There is no justification for violence of any kind, and we will not tolerate any attack on any of our nation's communities."

The attack is the latest example of a vehicle being used as a weapon to carry out mass violence and the deadliest IS-inspired assault on U.S. soil in years.

FBI officials have repeatedly warned about an elevated international terrorism threat due to the Israel-Hamas war. In the last year, the agency has disrupted other potential attacks, including in October when it arrested an Afghan man in Oklahoma for an alleged Election Day plot targeting large crowds.

Road-funding changes

(Continued from Page 1)
long term."

That could be good news for truckers.

Indiana Motor Truck Association President Gary Langston observed that his industry doesn't yet have widespread access to alternative fuels. Electric batteries are too heavy and take too long to charge.

"We're still going to trudge along at our six-and-a-half to seven miles per gallon," Langston said — with truckers consistently paying taxes on that diesel fuel.

INDOT also suggested tying registration fees to vehicle age or fuel efficiency, taxing electric vehicle charging, adding truck-specific usage fees, pulling from sales or income taxes, tolling more roads and bridges, adding road usage fees, and more.

Pressel, who plans to introduce legislation, didn't want to penalize specific demographics, like electric vehicle-owners and truckers. Dipping into taxes that fuel the General Fund was another no-go.

"I'm pretty dead-set on, if we're gonna pay for transportation, we're going to pay through our road-funding revenue streams," Pressel said.

His bill will explore the for-hire ride service fee and parcel delivery fee suggested by INDOT. "Is it a good idea? Is it bad idea? I don't know, but I want to have a good conversation about it," Pressel said.

Equal-opportunity road user charge (RUC) systems will also be part of the conversation, he said.

They're billed as a fair way to fund roads: those who drive more will pay more, and vice versa. Three states have implemented RUC programs, according to INDOT, and 15 others have studied the concept.

But it comes with technology challenges and a privacy backlash — and wouldn't achieve lawmakers' goal of charging out-of-state vehicles if begun before national interoperability. A program logging vehicle miles isn't expected to gain much traction.

Lawmakers have placed

another kind of use fee firmly in the governor's hands. Outgoing-Gov. Eric Holcomb never took them up on the offer to add new tolls.

One problem — the state's registration fee setup — comes with a simpler fix.

Indiana directs "supplemental" registration fees paid by electric- and hybrid-vehicle owners toward the Community Crossings Matching Grant Fund, which helps pay for community road and bridge projects. When Hoosiers upgrade, they buy less or no gasoline — and don't pay taxes on it. Under a "conservative" scenario, in which the switch to such vehicles is slower, INDOT predicted it would lose more than \$200 million to Community Crossings by 2033; locals could lose out on nearly \$90 million.

Some of that money could be re-routed. Pressel said he'd like to keep \$150 million for Community Crossings, which would send about \$75 million directly to INDOT and locals.

Local possibilities

Cities, towns and counties have a potentially tough road ahead.

In an August report, Purdue University's Local Technical Assistance Program estimated an annual funding gap of nearly \$500 million per year in construction costs just to keep road conditions as-is. The gap grew to \$1.2 billion annually to improve conditions, and to \$1.9 billion to eliminate "poor" roads.

Indiana's single dedicated bridge-funding mechanism further left counties facing a gap of about \$500 million annually, according to the report, although some likely used road funding to plug holes.

Even if eligible municipalities and counties maxed out local tools like the wheel tax and excise surtax, there's still an annual \$650 million deficit simply to maintain current road and bridge conditions.

"While the data certainly shows that we have improved, you can't stop investing. You have to maintain the investment to make sure you don't start backsliding," said Ryan Hoff, the government affairs direc-

tor and general counsel for the Association of Indiana Counties.

That's because fixing lightly-battered roads costs significantly less than re-doing failed ones.

Roads in "good" condition need basic seals, fills and rejuvenators that cost less than \$10,000 per mile, according to the Local Technical Assistance Program's report. "Fair" condition might require seals, micro-surfaces and overlays that cost under \$100,000 per mile. But the worst roads can only be fixed with major rehabilitation — or full reconstruction — of between \$150,000 and \$1.5 million per mile.

Similarly, per the report, it's 50% cheaper to get a "fair"-rated bridge into "good" shape than it is to get a "poor" bridge into "good" territory.

If lawmakers add more revenue streams to the funding formula, locals will benefit. But Pressel also plans to introduce some other funding tools.

Community Crossings, for instance, could see more changes.

Smaller communities complained of having to save for years to match a grant, while larger communities grumbled about how low the \$1 million award cap is compared to their funding needs. Pressel envisions a tiered process.

Hoff said the association hadn't taken a position based on community size. Instead, the group has called for recognition of counties' additional statutory transportation infrastructure responsibilities: counties have to take care of all bridges over 20 feet long.

Pressel also plans to propose bringing back Local

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Weather

Thursday, January 2, 2025

(24-hour observations at 9:30 p.m. Wednesday)

High: 36; Low: 29; Precipitation: Trace of snow and rain
Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 6.18 feet at 8:45 p.m. Wednesday

Wells County forecast

Today: Partly sunny, with a high near 32. West wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

Tonight: Snow showers. Low around 22. West wind 5 to 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 80%. New snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches possible.

Friday: Mostly cloudy, with a high near 26. West wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

Friday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 14. West wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 21.

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 13.

Sunday: A 40% chance of snow, mainly after 1 p.m. Partly sunny, with a high near 25.

Sunday Night: Snow likely. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 18. Chance of precipitation is 60%.

Monday: A 50% chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 26.

Monday Night: A 20% chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 15.

Tuesday: Partly sunny, with a high near 24.

Tuesday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 11.

Wednesday: Mostly cloudy and cold, with a high near 20.

Fireworks, gas cannisters inside Tesla that exploded outside Trump's hotel

By TY O'NEIL and ANITA SNOW

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Firework mortars and camp fuel canisters were found stuffed into the back of the Tesla Cybertruck that exploded outside President-elect Donald Trump's Las Vegas hotel early Wednesday, killing a suspect inside the vehicle and sparking an intense investigation into possible terrorism.

Las Vegas Metropolitan Police and Clark County Fire Department officials said that a person died inside the futuristic-looking pickup truck and seven people nearby suffered minor injuries.

By late Wednesday afternoon, authorities were still working to get the body out of the vehicle and start processing the evidence inside. President Joe Biden was briefed on the explosion.

"Our number one goal is to ensure that we have the proper identification of the subject involved in this incident," said Jeremy Schwartz, acting special agent in charge for the FBI's Las Vegas office. "Following that, our second objective is to determine whether this was an act of terrorism or not."

Police Department Sheriff Kevin McMahaill said authorities know who rented the truck with the Turo app in Colorado, but are not releasing the name until investigators determine if it is the same person who died.

McMahaill said video captured at Tesla charging stations provided by CEO Elon Musk helped authorities track the vehicle's journey, arriving in Las Vegas about 7:30 A.M. then driving about an hour later into the valet area of the Trump International Hotel, where it sat 15 to 20 seconds before the explosion occurred.

Video presented at an afternoon news conference showed a tumble of charred fireworks mortars, cannisters and other explosive devices crowded into the back of the pickup. The truck bed walls were still intact because the blast shot straight up rather than to the sides.

Musk said Wednesday afternoon on X that "we have now confirmed that the explosion was caused by very large fireworks and/or a bomb carried in the bed of the rented Cybertruck and is unrelated to the vehicle itself. All vehicle telemetry was positive at the time of the explosion."

Musk said in an earlier post on the platform that his entire senior term was investigating the explosion, adding, "We've never seen anything like this."

Musk has recently become a member of Trump's inner circle and attended a New Year's Eve party at the Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida that was not attended by the president elect.

"This is a Tesla truck, and we know that Elon Musk is working with President-elect Trump, and it's the Trump Tower," McMahaill said when reporters asked about possible political connections. "So there's obviously things to be concerned about and it's something we continue to look at."

The truck explosion came hours after a driver rammed a truck into a crowd in New Orleans' famed French Quarter early on New Year's Day, killing at least 15 people before being shot to death by police. That crash was being investigated as a terrorist attack and police believe the driver was not acting alone.

"We are absolutely investigating any connectivity to what happened in New Orleans as well as other attacks that have been occurring around the world," McMahaill said. "We aren't ruling anything out."

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OBITUARIES

Nicholas K. Dunn, 72

Nicholas K. Dunn, 72, of Ossian, passed away on Monday evening, Dec. 30, 2024, at Stillwater Hospice Home in Fort Wayne.



Nick was born on Nov. 7, 1952, in Bluffton to Everett J. "Junior" and Doris J. (Tarr) Dunn. He graduated from Southern Wells High School in 1971. He started working for Bowmar LLC in Waynedale. He then moved to Lafayette to work for Caterpillar as a quality control operator, where he was a self-taught computer programmer. Nick eventually moved to Sanford, North Carolina to continue working for Caterpillar in Quality Control before retiring in 2015. Upon retirement, Nick returned to Ossian to be closer to family.

Nick enjoyed golfing, fishing and watching IU basketball. He was a very talented artist and enjoyed wood-working, especially making clocks. He loved spending time with Riley, his beloved shih tzu.

Survivors include his daughter, Jennifer (Doug) Roller of Uniondale. He will be remembered as "Grandpa Nick" to his five grandchildren, Collin (Jasmine) Roller of Ossian, Kaylee (Max) Dove of Fort Wayne, Kendyl Roller of Indianapolis, Kris (Jessica) Dunn and Maddie (Taylor) Trent, all of Fort Wayne; and four great-grandchildren, Maddox, Theodore and Parker Roller of Ossian and Josie Dunn of Fort Wayne.

He is preceded in death by his son, Michael E. Dunn in 2002; his parents, Junior and Doris Dunn; and his brother, Kris M. Dunn.

Visitation will take place from 4 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 2, 2025, at the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton and for one hour prior to the service. Funeral services will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Friday, Jan. 3, 2025, at the funeral home with Pastor Gary Aupperle officiating. A private family burial will take place at Fairview Cemetery.

Memorials may be made in Nick's memory to Stillwater Hospice and directed thru the funeral home.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Lemler family of Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton. Friends are welcome to share online condolences with the family at www.thomarich.com.

Robert P. "Bob" Hulvey, 79

Robert P. "Bob" Hulvey, 79, of rural Yoder, Indiana passed away on Saturday, Dec. 28, 2024 at his home, surrounded by his family. Bob was born on Oct. 3, 1945, in Fort Wayne, the son of the late James and Norma (Hibbert) Hulvey.



He was a third generation and lifelong farmer in the local community.

Surviving family include his wife of 61 years, Linda Hulvey; children, Tom (Brenda) Hulvey, Jane (Bob Wright) Hulvey, Lisa (Sam) Haiflich, Bobbie (Randy) Weikel, and Nick (Angela) Hulvey; 11 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren with two more on the way.

Funeral service will be 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 4, 2025, at Elzey-Patterson-Rodak Funeral Home, 120 West Mill Street, Ossian with visitation one hour prior. Visitation will also be from 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 3, 2025, at the funeral home. Burial will be in Hoverstock Cemetery, Zanesville, Indiana.

Memorials in Bob's memory may be made to Fairview Church of God, Yoder.

Condolences and memories of him may be left online at www.elzey-patterson-rodak.com.

Larry E. Melton, 72

Larry E. Melton, 72, of rural Liberty Center, passed away on Tuesday morning, Dec. 31, 2024, at his residence, surrounded by his family.



Larry was born on July 22, 1952, in Bluffton to Vernon and Audrey (Lovell) Melton. He graduated from Bluffton High School in 1971. He worked for various companies including Fleetwood, Bluffton Rubber, Walmart and Briner Building, Inc.

Larry was an independent construction contractor who could fix anything. He enjoyed being outdoors, hunting fishing and gardening. He would grow his vegetables and sell them at local farm markets. He enjoyed building bird houses. Larry loved to play cards, watch his Indianapolis Colts with his sister, Linda, and spending time with his extended family at the Wagon Wheel in Warren.

Larry is survived by his children, Tiffany Melton of Liberty Center, Aaron Melton of Bluffton, Amy Steinhaber of Washington, and Taylor Short (Gavin Newman) of Lachlan Foy, Tennessee; along with three grandchildren. He will be remembered by his siblings, Sonja (Bill) Habig of Georgia, Linda Dolby of Fort Wayne, Peggy (Jeff) Nash and Randy (Theresa) Melton of Bluffton; and his ex-wife, Leigh Melton of Liberty Center.

He is preceded in death by his parents.

Per Larry's request, no formal services will be held. Memorials may be made to Bi-County Services and directed through the funeral home.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Lemler family of Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton. Friends may share online condolences with the family at www.thomarich.com.

Obituary Policy

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

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

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

Police Notebook

INCIDENTS

City:

Monday, 8:18 p.m., Pak A Sak North. Unwanted party, warned for trespassing.

Monday, 8:18 p.m., Pak A Sak South. Unwanted party. Robert D. Bodenheimer, 45, Yoder, arrested for criminal trespassing, a Class A misdemeanor. Booked and released.

Tuesday, 12:22 a.m., 1000 block of Clark Avenue. Report of battery.

Tuesday, 9:05 a.m., Taco Bell. Report of an abandoned vehicle.

County: Monday, 12:22 p.m., 1248 E 100 N, Bluffton. Semi backed into ditch, tow truck pulled it out.

ACCIDENTS

City: Sunday, 3:58 p.m., S.R. 1 at Wabash Street. Elizabeth Terry, 36, Bluffton, was driving a 2021 Kia Forte north-

bound on S.R. 1 when a 2012 Lexus CT driven by Anthony Shively, 60, Bluffton, entered the lane and struck the Forte on the driver's side. Damage exceeded \$5,000.

Tuesday, 6:28 a.m., 1111 S Adams St. Brent W. Stultz, 54, Bluffton, was backing a 2023 Ford Transit from a parking spot and failed to see a stopped 2019 Nissan Altima driven by Mo S. Far, 36, Fort Wayne. Damage

exceeded \$2,500.

ARRESTS

Abraham Philip Pearson, 18, Keystone; minor in possession of an alcoholic beverage. Booked and released.

Michael Arthur Musco, 39, Bluffton; battery against public safety official engaged in official duty, a Level 6 felony, and disorderly conduct, a Class B misdemeanor. Bond set at \$6,000. Bonded.

Medicaid, prior authorization to be major topics in 2025 session

By WHITNEY DOWNARD

Indiana Capital Chronicle

A revenue report from mid-December determined that incoming monies would be sluggish over the next two years, with barely any new dollars expected to hit Indiana's coffers. Much of that funding will be swallowed up by Medicaid costs, which are growing at a faster rate than the state's revenues.

Unlike many of his colleagues, Sen. Ed Charbonneau remains upbeat, noting that projected funds are still above current levels and not dipping lower — allowing for some wiggle room.

"I'm approaching this next session, I think, a little bit more positively than most everybody else," said the Valparaiso Republican at an annual legislative conference in mid-December. "My fear was that if the revenue projections were not ... as good as they are ... (budget writers would) go ahead and start looking for places to cut."

But Republican leaders quickly dismissed any notion that 2025 could be the year Indiana ends its prohibition on marijuana. In addition to Charbonneau, House Speaker Todd Huston and Senate Majority Leader Rodric Bray both expressed concerns about legalizing the drug for either medicinal or recreational use.

Bray said states like Colorado, one of the first to legalize the drug for recreational use, aren't making much tax revenue because proceeds have to be reinvested into social services and crime prevention. Huston, R-Fishers, pointed to an uptick in cannabis use disorder and conflicting studies about mental health benefits.

"It's no secret that I am not for this. I don't have people coming to me with really compelling medical cases as to why it's so beneficial," said Bray, R-Martinsville. "And any case that I've ever seen, or any state that I've seen, pass medical marijuana is essentially passing recreational marijuana."

Gov.-elect Mike Braun, also a Republican, has indicated his openness to exploring medical marijuana but opposed legalizing cannabis for recreational use.

Senate Democrats, on the other hand, pushed for legalization, pointing to the potential for revenue, its popularity among Hoosiers and potential for treating medical conditions.

"Polls suggest it is very highly desired by Hoosiers, I think, and brings in additional tax revenue. Sooner or later, We're going to have to create more policy because all the states around us (have access)," said Sen. David Niezgodski, whose South Bend district borders Michigan, which has recreational access.

"People are going across and they're buying more than the residents," the



Rep. Robin Shackleford, D-Indianapolis, and Rep. Brad Barrett, R-Richmond, at the Dec. 18, 2024 annual legislative conference. (Photo by Whitney Downard)

Democrat continued.

The future of Medicaid

Even as funds dwindle, Democrat Rep. Robin Shackleford said the services provided by Medicaid are also a way to measure the program, which covers nearly two million Hoosiers.

"I know we have less revenues coming in and Medicaid rates increasingly keep going up, but, at the end of the day, I'm going to define success in what our Medicaid program looks like," Shackleford said.

Shackleford, an insurance broker, pointed to the need for more dollars invested in prevention. For elderly Hoosiers, falls — which can be averted by installing bars or using bath seats — are the number one cause of injury-related deaths.

And though elderly Hoosiers account for a smaller portion of Medicaid enrollees, just 6%, this same population accounts for 44% of Medicaid expenditures.

Additionally, most of Indiana's Medicaid costs are covered by the federal government — roughly two-thirds of most programs and 90% of Healthy Indiana Plan beneficiaries. The remaining 10% of the latter program is covered by cigarette taxes and hospital fees.

Rep. Brad Barrett, at the same panel, noted that both the state and federal governments will have new leaders, bringing the potential for massive change.

"Where all these other pieces are changing, I feel like we have an opportunity," said Barrett, a Republican from Richmond.

One particular focus for Shackleford and Barrett will be lowering Indiana's obesity rate, which Shackleford said cost the state economy \$9.3 billion in 2022, \$966 million of which had a direct impact on the state budget.

"One of my pieces of legislation is to see if Medicaid can cover those drugs for chronic obesity," Shackleford said, referring to the coverage of GLP-1s. That drug category includes medications produced by Eli Lilly but can be prohibitively expensive for insurance plans to cover.

"I haven't received the fiscal impact on it but, in my eyes, to do a true cost-benefit analysis on it you will have to think about what is our investment that we pay for this drug versus someone now having to come off

of all their diabetic drugs," Shackleford said.

What to expect in terms of legislation

At least one bill in the upcoming session will be familiar to the legislature: a bill seeking to restrict the use of prior authorization.

Emergency room physician Sen. Tyler Johnson said he regularly saw patients in the emergency department whose health worsened while waiting for prior authorization approvals or had previously been denied care.

"If you're in the physician world for two seconds, you realize very quickly that it's just a strain on the system," said Johnson, R-Leo. "I didn't go into medicine to fight back and forth with the insurance company to get paid for something or give the patient an appropriate procedure, right?"

"That's really the answer: we're providing something that we think the patient needs and now the insurance company is saying, 'Well, they don't need that,'" he continued.

According to the American Medical Association, 94% of physicians reported care delays due to prior authorization, including 24% who reported that such delays had led to a serious adverse event.

Johnson's effort in the 2024 legislative session was considered a priority by his caucus but didn't get out of the chamber. To improve its chances in 2025, Johnson said he spent the interim meeting regularly with stakeholders to identify "sticking points."

"We've found a very good framework on how to (improve) the back and forth between the insurer and the hospitals. They both really didn't like how they interacted with each other, but could never really come to a solution," Johnson said. "... hopefully we can streamline and get a lot of questions and inefficiency out of it."

Other familiar topics include the potential to regulate pharmacy benefit managers, non-compete agreements for health care providers, scrutinizing medical debt and increasing tobacco taxes.

The House has passed such an increase a handful of times but Johnson and Charbonneau's chamber has declined to act.

Charbonneau said circumstances could be different in 2025 with such a tight budget.

"With the revenue picture looking like it does, with Medicaid being such a huge part of the problem, maybe it's time we really look at this," Charbonneau said.

The committee chair also had at least one previously unheard idea: prohibiting any Hoosier born after June 30, 2004 from ever purchasing tobacco products. He said he believed the fiscal impact would be relatively small but rewards could be huge — Indiana has a higher adult smoking rate than the national average, according to the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids. Curbing tobacco use is frequently a target of public health funding efforts because it brings down Indiana's overall health metrics.

According to the state's public health program, youth e-cigarette use — or vaping — has exploded, increasing from 3.8% in 2012 to 19.8% in 2021.

"It's going to take 50 years or something but we'll be smoke free," Charbonneau said.

Another potential target could be gathering information on Indiana hospital enrollment in the national 340B program, which is funded by medication discounts meant to help safety net hospitals. Some question whether the program actually assists needy patients or simply helps hospitals generate more revenue.

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School choice is a good, not great thing... sort of

I have long supported school choice. There are many good reasons to share my position. At the same time, school choice in Indiana has not delivered the broad success its defenders claim.

School choice in Indiana began in 2000 with the first authorization of charter schools. Then, in 2008, the Mitch Daniels administration pushed for broader school choice, adding a limited voucher program and local school choice.

That local school choice, allowing state tax dollars to follow students to whichever school they attended, ended up being the biggest innovation. Since the Daniels reforms, the state has expanded the voucher program to include all but about 5 percent of the richest Hoosier families.

Back in 2000, about 12 percent of Hoosier children attended private schools. Today, it is about half that. The number of kids in charter schools (public schools operating on somewhat different rules than local public schools) has risen, but most students in charters are enrolled in those operated by local public school districts.

Ironically, the big winners of school choice, in terms of enrollment, are local public schools. Of course, that masks the reality that high-performing public schools are doing well with enrollment, while poorly performing public schools are losing enrollment.

That is the point of school choice.

School choice imposes competition into the marketplace for K-12 educations—and yes, it is a marketplace, but has hitherto been mostly limited to more affluent families. Today, a much higher share of families can access schools they feel better serve their children. In places like Gary, more than 6 in 10 kids take advantage of school choice, and in Muncie it is more than 4 in 10.

Imagine what would have happened to those city populations if families were unable to access better schools.

Still, there are several things we don't know about the effects of school choice in Indiana. We do not have a good estimate of the causal effect of competition on underperforming schools. The preliminary evidence, from one as-yet unpublished study and from NAEP scores statewide, suggest it had a small positive effect. But these results are not yet conclusive.

We also don't have the studies on charter school performance we need to draw big conclusions, and we have almost no longitudinal studies of student outcomes.

The saddest part of our ignorance on these matters is that it seems purposeful. Indiana has spent tens of millions of dollars on data collection of individuals in school and employment, and almost nothing on causal estimates of the effects of school choice (or almost anything else education or workforce related). Indiana is a full two decades behind West Virginia and Tennessee on education and workforce research. It shows.

Fortunately, we do know a few things. My work (with Dagney Faulk) finds that simple test scores and proximity of schools are driving most of the transfers from local public schools. So, families are choosing better schools that are nearby—important, but hardly surprising results.

Two studies, by Mark Berends at Notre Dame and Joseph Waddington at Kentucky, shed more detailed light on individual outcomes for transferring students. In one study, they find that low-income children transferring from local public to private schools experience a decline in math test scores, for as long as students were tracked.

A second study focused on a broad set of school choice options in Indianapolis. It reports similar declines in students moving to magnet schools, private schools (including Catholic schools), but no effect for those students transferring to charter schools.

This research team also reports large differences in accountability between charter authorizers, which most likely affects student outcomes. There are numerous studies reporting poorer learning outcomes from online classes.

The best studies are performed by tracking students as they move between schools, as in these studies by Berends and Waddington. Their results, based on different times using individual student scores before and after changing schools, offers very robust conclusions.

Of course, school choice may have many other benefits for families and students. But when it comes to improving Indiana's educational outcomes, the period of school choice has been a clear failure.

In 2008, when the Daniels administration expanded school choice, Indiana's economy was already suffering from poor educational outcomes. The bellwether measure—adult educational attainment—was then a whopping 6.5 percentage points below the nation as a whole. By 2019, it had collapsed to 9.1 percentage points below. That loss stabilized after COVID-19 but is poised to worsen.

Unsurprisingly, this decline affected employment and wages across the state. One example is the quality of jobs. From 2000 to 2023, the average Hoosier worker saw their wages decline from 5.8 percent below the national average to 16.2 percent below. Indiana is a magnet for low-wage jobs.

With almost a quarter-century of school choice, Indiana's economy is in a relatively worse place today, with a less-educated workforce and declining relative wages. The prognosis is for more of the same.

Poor educational outcomes are the fundamental cause of our economic woes. Recent cuts to education spending have magnified the problem.

Indiana now spends less money per student on K-12 and higher education than we did when the big changes to school choice came about (2008 to 2010). In fact, this year is probably the lowest per student spending by state and local governments in the past several decades. And yes, those data are adjusted for inflation, a quick and honest calculation that the governor and several lawmakers seem to struggle with.

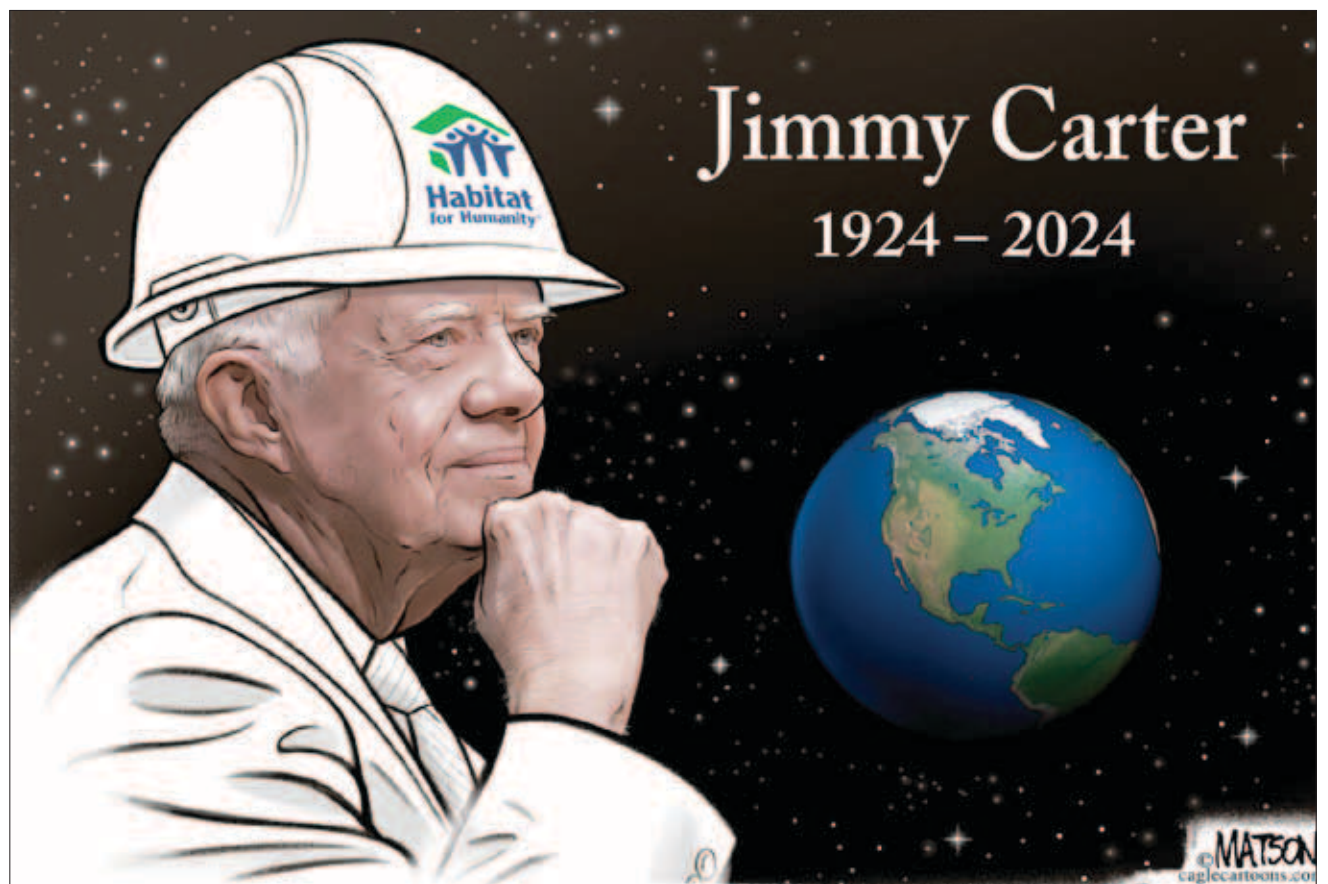
Some of the blame must attend to those of us who supported school choice. We overestimated the benefits, so it is time to set the record straight. I still believe school choice is good for Indiana families. But insofar as it has been used to justify cuts in per student educational spending, it risks being Indiana's single most damaging economic policy of the 21st century.

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



Michael Hicks

Hoosier Opinions



Jimmy Carter was the president who made Ronald Reagan necessary

Jimmy Carter's melancholy fate was to be a largely derivative figure: He was a reaction against his elected predecessor and the precursor of his successor. Richard M. Nixon made Carter tempting; Carter made Ronald Reagan necessary.

The deceptions and crimes of Nixon's imperial presidency bred Carter's pompous crusade against pomp. Carter proclaimed "I'll never lie to you" while claiming that he was a "nuclear physicist." He denied saying what a tape proved he said about Lyndon B. Johnson's "lying, cheating and distorting the truth."

Carter's signature achievement, peace between Israel and Egypt, diminished the threat of another conventional Middle East war. In his post-presidency interventions in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, however, his hostility toward Israel was proportional to his admiration for the terrorist Yasser Arafat. Here Carter was mostly harmless because the "peace process" was mostly chimeric.

But for President Gerald Ford's debate blunder in 1976 — "There is no Soviet domination of Eastern Europe" — Carter probably would not have become president. He won 50.1 percent of the vote, lost the vote outside the South, and a switch of a total of 18,000 votes in Ohio — home of many of Eastern European origins — and Hawaii would have elected Ford (disregarding a faithless elector in Washington state).

Carter was the first nonincumbent elected from the South since the Civil War and the most conservative Democratic president since Grover Cleveland, which is why the liberal post-Watergate congressional Democrats would have despised him even if he had disguised his contempt for them. With airlines, he began the deregulation project inimical to progressives and excellent for the nation.

Candidate Carter proclaimed himself "optimistic about America's third century" and promised "a government as good as the people." As president, however, he decided Americans were deeply defective, making him the right foil for Reagan, the human sunbeam. In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson ebulliently vowed to legislate Americans to a Great Society "where the meaning of our lives matches the marvelous products of our labor." Fifteen years later, the next Democratic president morosely said "all the legislation in the world can't fix what's wrong with America," which included the "worship" of the "consumption" of those marvelous products.

The 1970s were a decade of self-absorption in the name of "self-actualization," and of apocalyptic forebodings, such as those of Paul Ehrlich, the environmental hysteric who suggested that Americans should delay mass starvation by killing their pets.

So, in July 1979, in one of the weirder episodes in presidential history, Carter went to earth at Camp David, to which he invited more than 100 liberal savants. There he brooded about Americans' failings, then delivered a nationally televised speech in which he diagnosed Americans' "crisis of confidence" and "self-indulgence," and announced an insight: "We've discovered that owning things and consuming things does not satisfy our longing for meaning."

Actually, Americans were longing for gasoline, which Carter's baroque allocation scheme had made scarce. He urged Americans "to park your car one extra day per week." And, "Whenever you have a chance, say something good about our country."

"We are," he said, "at a turning point in our history." Voters emphatically agreed: In October 1979, Gallup recorded his job approval at 31 percent. Twelve months later, Carter lost 44 states, becoming the only 20th-century president defeated after his party had held the office for only four years. His campaign scurrilities against Reagan — accusing him of racism and other vices — were, the liberal New Republic said, "frightful distortions, bordering on outright lies." The Post said that Carter had "few limits beyond which he will not go in the abuse of opponents and reconstruction of history."

Carter's closest aide, Hamilton Jordan, called him "the world's worst loser," and less than three weeks after the election Carter wrote in his diary, which he would publish in 2010, that "dictators around the world are rejoicing because of the outcome of the election." Not those behind the Iron Curtain, or Fidel Castro. Carter later said he and Castro were "old friends."

As ex-president, Carter's freelance diplomacy included hijacking the Clinton administration's policy toward North Korea's nuclear weapons program. Time magazine's Lance Morrow described Carter as "a psalm-singing global circuit rider and moral interventionist" who behaved "as if the election of 1980 had been only some kind of ghastly mistake, a technicality of democratic punctilio."

His postpresidential involvement with Habitat for Humanity illustrated the large reverberation of a good example. Of his presidency, let us charitably say what he said of his disastrous Iranian hostage rescue mission, in which eight helicopters invaded a nation larger than Alaska. It was, he said, "an incomplete success."

georgewill@washpost.com



George Will

Yearling birds' first winter snow

Angelkeep hadn't had enough of auld lang syne. First snowflakes struck prior to Thanksgiving. Sweet Gwen celebrated. She stood alone in the bliss. It not only became the first snowflake of the season, but the first ground cover.

Birds huddled in the lilac bush yet holding green summer leaves. The leaves were flocked in snow. The lilac offered some protection from wind and "the white falling stuff." Parents of several types of birds brought their new fledglings to the feeders beside that lilac with instructions on the where and how, with assurance that food would always be available. Fledglings liked being spoon-fed and fluttered their wings. They chirped. A beak gaped wide for a morsel. After a short training period the adults left the juveniles to their own survival. This all happened in warm weather with the sun also shining.

Angelkeep imagined the thoughts and chirp conversation among the feathered friends caught up in their first experience of snowfall. "The sky is falling. The sky is falling," a female cardinal seemed to say as she huddled beneath a clump of lilac leaves wearing a white toboggan cap. She cried out, "Mommy. Daddy. Help!"

A male cardinal perched on a nearby limb covered beneath a single leaf. It held a solitary snowflake at its beak's base, near its right eye. Perhaps it appeared there as a remnant of a tear of terror for the cold white stuff falling in every direction. It probably never saw anything like it. He too cried out for parental instruction on how to deal with this

Angelkeep Journals

new unspeakable adversary of life. His head snapped left and right. Up. Down. He studied the situation. He wondered why his parents left him behind with no education as to how to deal with this frightening white calamity.

A jay commanded an upper lilac branch. Being larger they demanded the first, the most, and the best of everything. It remained hard for the male cardinal to determine if the cold turned one of his kind to blue feathers, or if the blue colored bird was one of the flock that Ma and Pa Cardinal had warned about being allowed priority access to the feeder.

The blue-feathered-one shouted every cardinal. "Mommy-J. Daddy-J. Where are you? I need you now. My blue feathers are being covered with a white fleece. My beautiful blue is beginning to look like my belly and underwings. What am I to do? Where are you? I need you to pick off this white shawl. Other yearling blue jays are beginning to laugh at me and call me 'Whitey.' It's awful. So humiliating. Why didn't you tell me this could happen?"

Following blue's plea, he belted out a squawk. The loud squelch loosened one white snow clump from a leaf nearby. Snow dropped on his head like a crystal bomb. The shock sent him "off into the wild white yonder."

An alarmed cardinal below stared



Alan Daugherty

cross-eyed at the clump of white that fell onto its own beak. It blotted out all yellow. The cardinal blew. Puff. Again. Piff. The white would not go. "I shall die," he cried. "My cold frozen beak will never be able to break open a sunflower seed again. Oh, the humanity."

"Hey, sissy-bird. Don't cry. Duh! I'm your sister. Remember me?" asked a female on the feeder frantically looking for a sunflower seed that remained all in black, sans the cold white stuff. "Come have a seed with me. It's probably our last meal. The white stuff must be the dooms day fallout warned about by that Gospel-crying, black-coated, preacher of the wood. He always crowed about 'final days' here at Angelkeep. You know, Angelkeep. It's on the mailbox."

"Hey, come down here," cried out a junco. "There's plenty to eat off the ground. I'm from up north. We're used to white flakes. We migrate to keep up with them. I just flew in yesterday in front of a snowstorm. That's what the white is. Snow. It's like gravy on a sunflower seed. That's the way I see it, anyhow. It adds moisture to each bite making it easier to swallow."

"No way," the female cardinal replied. "I can see it's already turned your belly white. You look like you've been dipped in white paint. You are so doomed."

"Hey, Gwen, come here and look at the snowstorm with me. I swear the birds are talking to each other. Maybe I best lay off the Starbucks Espresso for a day. I should get my eyes tested. The outdoors has gone black and white on me. Overnight."

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

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When father's vision doesn't match your own

Dear Annie by Annie Lane



Dear Annie: I am 36 years old, and I recently spoke to my dad. He raised me, and we have always been like best friends until I moved to Virginia, just because of the distance.

I have an older sister who lives at home and doesn't care to work, and my dad basically raises her son. I told my dad my future ambitions so to adopt a child, and his response was so incredibly negative.

I asked him why he treats me so harshly, and he said, "Because you're the only daughter I have left to do something good with her life."

I understand where he's coming from, but I don't want the things that he wants for me. I'm grown, pay my bills, have made it through school and have gotten married. How do I proceed respectfully? His opinion is important but to what degree?

Annie, your opinions are always honest. Please help. — Upset Daughter

Dear Upset Daughter: Your dad's words come from his love for you, but they are also hurtful and dismissive of your independence.

Next time he insults one of your choices, tell him that you appreciate his concern and take his opinion seriously. Then explain that you have your own goals, and you're not looking for feedback. He can either support them, or he can opt out of the conversation.

While it's understandable to want his blessing, you also need to realize that you don't need your father's approval to pursue your dreams.

Dear Annie: I just read the letter from the mother of two sons who felt like she was not included the way

her daughter-in-law's mom was. I used to be in the exact same boat. I realized that I had to make my own place in my son's family's lives, so here's what I did.

I would text and ask if the kids can come out and play on either this date or that date. Or I would say, "Hey, can we stop by sometime this week? I bought some apples and thought the kids might enjoy them."

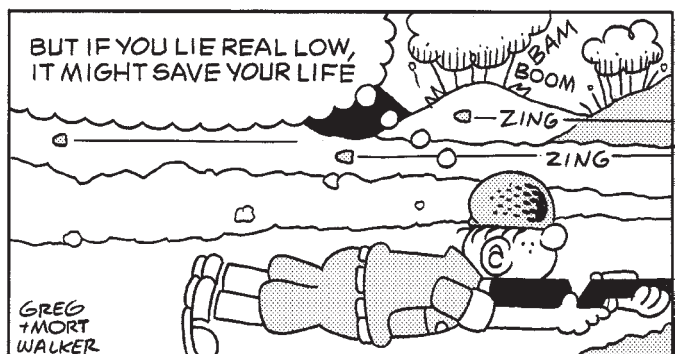
I always gave a couple time or date options and then waited for my daughter-in-law to pick and respond. At first, it was kind of a slow process, but after a few times, she not only responded quicker but also made some suggestions for other things. It showed we wanted to be more involved and not an afterthought. I hope this helps. — Loving Being Involved

Dear Love Being Involved: This is a great example of how taking initiative and refraining from taking things personally can change an entire family dynamic. Thank you for sharing.

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

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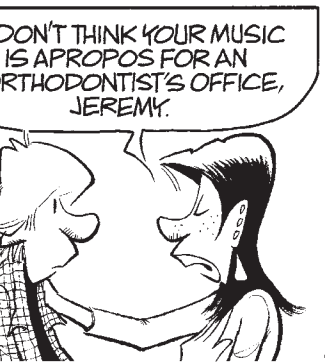
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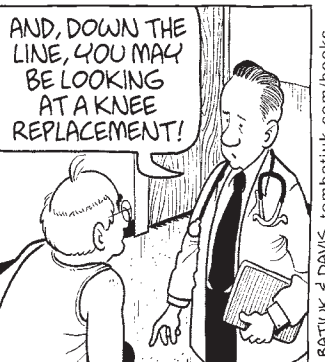
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My Answer

By Dr. Billy Graham



Satan is the great deceiver

Question: I was given a video game for Christmas about Satan and my parents wouldn't let me keep it. They said I had to give it back to my friend. When I did, I was shocked to find out that he had no idea what the game was about and thought the devil was just a cartoon figure. My parents were right. I did have a chance to tell him about Jesus. — T.C.

Answer: The Bible does not give a physical description of Satan. Artists have let their imaginations conjure up a man in a red suit with horns and a tail, holding a pitchfork, but God's Word instead warns us about Satan who is the great deceiver. Satan is

evil, and we should not have anything to do with him. It was Satan who deceived Eve in the garden and the lesson God would have us learn is never to listen to Satan, for he is the father of lies.

Satan can disguise himself so people don't even realize who he is. He can appear in what many consider beautiful ways. "Satan ... transforms himself into an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14, NKJV). His purpose is always to stop God's work and to turn us away from God and away from living a life that pleases God.

Satan is real, but we should never concentrate on him. Instead, we should concentrate on Jesus. Jesus is greater and stronger than Satan,

and by Jesus' death and resurrection. He defeated Satan. The Bible tells us that "the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8).

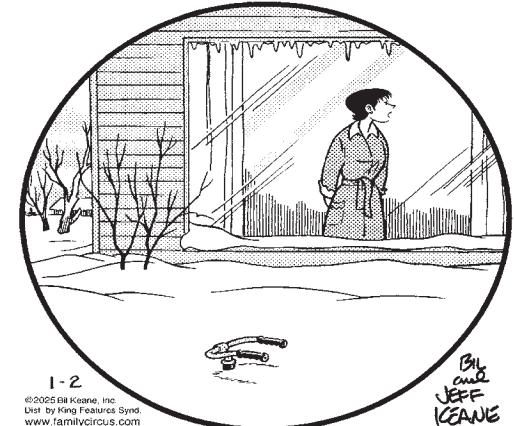
God's Word is truth and we should always be reading it, studying it, and living according to God's loving commands. What a wonderful New Year's resolution this would be, to hide God's Word in our hearts.

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

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THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane



"Billy, did you forget something last night?"

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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

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

Yesterday's answer grid for the crossword puzzle.

Table with columns for time slots (01:02 to 12:30) and rows for various TV channels (WINM, CBS, etc.) listing programs and their durations.

Texas beats Arizona State 39-31 in double overtime at Peach Bowl

By PAUL NEWBERRY
AP National Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — With Arizona State one play away from pulling off a comeback for the ages in the College Football Playoff, Quinn Ewers delivered a throw to Matthew Golden that saved the season for Texas.

Then it was left to Andrew Mukuba to finish off Cam Skattebo and the gritty Sun Devils.

If the Longhorns go on to win the national championship, they'll long remember how they kept their hopes alive in this Peach Bowl quarterfinal classic.

Ewers passed 28 yards to Golden for a touchdown on fourth-and-13 to force a second overtime, and Mukuba's interception clinched a 39-31 victory after Texas squandered a 16-point lead in the fourth quarter and missed two field goal attempts that could've won it in regulation.

"The one thing that I know about our group is when our backs are against the wall and when our best is needed, our best shows up time and time again," coach Steve Sarkisian said. "The resiliency that these guys showed today was something that as a coach makes you really proud."

Skattebo put No. 10 Arizona State ahead for the first time all

day with a 3-yard touchdown run to start overtime against No. 4 Texas, the caper on a brilliant performance that wasn't quite enough to knock off the Longhorns.

The Sun Devils — a two-touchdown underdog, according to BetMGM Sportsbook — had the game in their grasp before Ewers spotted Golden breaking free behind two defenders to haul in the tying score.

"That's just a testament to how mature this team is and just taking advantage of every single opportunity that we have," Ewers said.

After moving to the opposite end of Mercedes-Benz Stadium, Ewers threw a 25-yard touchdown pass to Gunnar Helm on the very next play, followed by a 2-point conversion pass to Golden.

The Longhorns (13-2) finally put Arizona State (11-3) away when Mukuba picked off Sam Leavitt's pass at the 3 to end the game.

"We gave everything we had," Skattebo said. "We never stopped."

After a bunch of lopsided



results through the first five games of the expanded 12-team playoff, the format finally produced the sort of thrilling game that supporters envisioned.

It sends Texas back to its home state for a Cotton Bowl semifinal against No. 6 Ohio State, which routed No. 1 Oregon 41-21 in the Rose Bowl.

Despite being dominated on the stat sheet most of the game, the Longhorns had a seemingly comfortable 24-8 lead after scoring two early touchdowns and getting a 5-yard scoring run from Ewers with just over 10 minutes remaining.

But Skattebo and the Sun Devils were just getting warmed up.

The running back who calls himself the best in the nation, Skattebo backed up his bravado by displaying every facet of his all-around game.

First, he took a pitch on fourth-and-2 and heaved a 42-yard touchdown pass to Malik McClain that gave the Sun Devils a chance when they made the 2-point conversion.

Then, Skattebo broke loose

down the sideline and hauled in a 62-yard throw from Leavitt — getting his helmet ripped off at the end of the play, which seemed like the only way to bring him down.

That set up a 2-yard touchdown run by the bowling ball of a back, and it was only appropriate that Skattebo also powered in for the 2-point conversion that tied the game at 24 with 5 minutes remaining.

Texas had a pair of chances to win in regulation, but Bert Auburn was wide right on a 48-yard field goal attempt and clanked one off the left upright from 38 yards away as time expired.

"We weren't at our best and it felt like an NCAA March Madness basketball game with the swings of emotions and things," Sarkisian said. "I'm just proud of these guys because not every game is going to be pretty and not every game is just going to go exactly how you want it to go."

In the final minute of the third quarter, Texas led 17-8 even though Arizona State had a commanding 303-128 lead in total yards and had held the ball nearly three times longer than the Longhorns, 32:49 to 11:30.

Arizona State finished with 510 yards to 375 for the Longhorns. Despite vomiting on the side-

line before the start of the fourth quarter, Skattebo rushed for 143 yards, made eight catches for another 99 yards and, of course, had that one big completion.

It wasn't quite enough. Ewers threw for 322 yards, with Golden making seven receptions for 149 yards.

After Arizona State drove for a field goal on the opening possession, Texas needed only two plays to claim the lead.

Ewers hooked up with Golden on a 54-yard play, then went to DeAndre Moore Jr. for a 23-yard scoring pass.

Both times, the Longhorns went after Montana Warren, starting in place of Shamari Simmons with the Sun Devils star forced to sit out the first half after being penalized for targeting in the Big 12 championship game.

Arizona State then went three-and-out and Silas Bolden returned the punt 75 yards for another Texas touchdown. Having taken just two snaps, the Longhorns had a 14-3 lead.

But any thoughts of another CFP blowout faded as Texas struggled to finish off the Sun Devils, one of the nation's most surprising teams after going 3-9 a year ago and remaining largely unnoticed until late this season.

No. 6 Ohio State routs top-ranked Oregon 41-21 in the Rose Bowl, advances to CFP semifinals

By GREG BEACHAM
AP Sports Writer

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) — Jeremiah Smith caught two of Will Howard's three long touchdown passes during Ohio State's sensational 34-point first half, and the No. 6 Buckeyes roared into the College Football Playoff semifinals with a 41-21 victory over No. 1 Oregon in the 111th Rose Bowl Game on Wednesday night.

Howard passed for 319 yards, Emeka Egbuka also caught a long TD pass and TreVeyon Henderson made a 66-yard touchdown run in a redemptive Rose Bowl for the Buckeyes (12-2, CFP No. 8 seed), whose big-game execution sometimes hasn't matched their formidable talent this season.

Ohio State has seized the second chances created by the first 12-team CFP, emphatically blowing out the tournament's No. 1 seed. The Buckeyes scored on six of their first seven drives and took a 34-0 lead late in the second quarter on the nation's only remaining unbeaten team in the Granddaddy of Them All.

Ohio State is headed to the Cotton Bowl on Jan. 10 to face No. 4 Texas for a berth in the national title game. The Longhorns barely advanced earlier Wednesday, holding off Arizona State 39-31 in a double-overtime Peach Bowl.

Dillon Gabriel passed for 299 yards and hit Traeshon Holden for two touchdowns for the Ducks (13-1, CFP No. 1 seed), whose dreams of their first national title were flattened on the famed Rose Bowl turf. Oregon's 14-game winning streak also ended.

Eleven days after routing Tennessee to open the Playoff, Ohio State dominated



this rematch of these Big Ten teams' regular-season thriller, won 32-31 by the Ducks in Eugene on Oct. 12. The Ohio State defense that couldn't sack Gabriel in the teams' first meeting dropped the Heisman Trophy finalist eight times in the rematch.

Smith, the Buckeyes' standout freshman playmaker, had a remarkable bowl debut with seven

receptions for 187 yards — including five catches for 161 yards in the first half alone, hauling in scoring passes of 45 and 43 yards. Ohio State turned the CFP's most anticipated quarterfinal matchup into a long celebration at the Rose Bowl, which has hosted several thrilling, close games in recent Januaries. This one pitted two powerhouse programs widely considered to have the top two teams left in the inaugural 12-team Playoff, but the Buckeyes scored early and often at the Rose Bowl.

The Big Ten champion Ducks couldn't make any offensive headway until they trailed by 34 points, failing to create any of the big plays that carried the Ducks to victory in Eugene.

After the usual pregame pageantry in 70-degree sunshine at the venerable stadium in Arroyo Seco, Ohio State needed just three plays and 49 seconds to strike first. Howard threw a short play-action screen pass to Smith, who motored through Oregon's secondary for a 45-yard score.

On the Buckeyes' third drive, Howard feathered an exceptional long pass over three Ducks to the sprinting Egbuka for a 42-yard TD. Howard finished the first quarter with a career-best 212 yards passing, sur-

(Continued on Page 7)

Sugar Bowl CFP quarterfinal between Georgia, Notre Dame postponed after truck attack

By BRETT MARTEL
AP Sports Writer

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — The College Football Playoff quarterfinal at the Sugar Bowl between Georgia and Notre Dame was postponed a day because of an attack about a mile away from the Superdome early Wednesday, when authorities say a truck driver deliberately plowed into a New Year's crowd and killed 15 people.

The game, originally scheduled for 7:45 p.m. Central at the 70,000-seat Superdome, was pushed back to 3 p.m. Thursday. The winner advances to the Jan. 9 Orange Bowl against Penn State.

"Public safety is paramount," Sugar Bowl CEO Jeff Hundley said at a media briefing alongside federal, state and

local officials, including Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry and New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell. "All parties all agree that it's in the best interest of everybody and public safety that we postpone the game."

U.S. Rep. Troy Carter said the decision to postpone the game "was not done lightly."

"It was done with one single thing in mind: public safety — making sure that the citizens and visitors of this great city, not only for this event, but for every event you come to in Louisiana, that you will be safe," Carter added. "And we will use every resource possible."

Landry said he had a message for those thinking, "Man, do I really want to

(Continued on Page 7)



Max Muhleman, who helped bring pro sports to Charlotte, dies at 88

By STEVE REED, AP Sports Writer

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Sports marketer Max Muhleman, who was credited with the concept of developing the permanent seat license in professional sports and helping the Carolina Panthers and Charlotte Hornets land expansion teams, has died at 88.

Muhleman died on Saturday in Charlotte peacefully after battling some heart-related issues, his son Lee Muhleman told The Associated Press.

Muhleman worked closely with Panthers founder Jerry Richardson in his quest to bring an NFL franchise to the Carolinas in the early 1990s. Muhleman delivered the closing marketing pitch at the October 1993 owners' meetings for Richardson, who would ultimately be unanimously awarded the league's 29th franchise.

The Panthers began playing in 1995. "I don't think a lot of people realize what a big role Max played in getting the expansion team," said former Panthers director of communications Charlie Dayton. "He wasn't out front, he preferred to be in the background. That was him. But he was as valuable as anybody in the process of getting a team. He was there every step of the way."

Muhleman's marketing plan for the Panthers included landing three NFL preseason games in Raleigh and Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and another in Columbia, South Carolina.

All three games sold out, helping prove to league owners that the Carolinas were a viable market.

Still, there was the matter of funding the expansion team. Richardson didn't want to use taxpayer money and the league was worried at the time about him taking on any additional debt.

That is when Muhleman invented the concept of the PSL, where fans could pay a one-time fee for the annual right to buy season tickets. The Panthers sold more than 55,000 PSLs and the millions raised from that venture were used to build the 72,000-seat Bank of America Stadium in downtown Charlotte.

The stadium continues to serve as home of the Panthers and the Charlotte FC Major League Soccer team.

Tamera Green, who worked with Muhleman for more than a decade and now serves as the senior vice president and communications officer with the Panthers, said Muhleman was an incredibly talented and creative man.

"He had some really cool 'firsts' in sports," Green said. "The idea of the PSL almost came out of desperation at the time. It was like a Hail Mary. And it worked."

Several other professional sports franchises have since adopted the idea of PSLs as a means of funding private stadiums and arenas.

Chiefs to start Carson Wentz at QB against Denver, which would clinch a playoff berth with a win

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — The Chiefs will start backup Carson Wentz at quarterback on Sunday in Denver in a game that means nothing to Kansas City, which has already clinched the No. 1 seed in the AFC playoffs, but could mean everything to the Broncos.

Chiefs coach Andy Reid announced his decision to rest Patrick Mahomes on Wednesday, shortly before they returned to practice from an extended break following their Christmas Day win in Pittsburgh. But Reid declined to say who else might spend the day with Mahomes on the sideline, pointing out that only so many players can be rested given roster limitations.

"If someone wants to start messing with it," Reid said, "there's not a whole lot of messing going on. So guys play."

The Broncos would clinch a playoff berth as the No. 7 seed by beating the Chiefs, earning a trip to Buffalo for their postseason opener. If they lose, they would need the Jets to beat

the Dolphins and the Steelers to beat the Bengals.

There is a good chance that Chiefs defensive tackle Chris Jones, who sustained a calf strain a couple of weeks ago, will be one of their veterans getting the week off.

The same could go for running back Isiah Pacheco, who has bruised ribs, right tackle Jawaan Taylor, who has a sore knee, and veteran tight end Travis Kelce, who similarly skipped last year's Week 18 game.

Reid did say that he takes into consideration whether players have salary bonuses that they could achieve. And that could mean three-time All-Pro wide receiver DeAndre Hopkins gets plenty of playing time against the Broncos.

Hopkins, who was acquired by the Chiefs in a midseason trade with Tennessee, needs nine catches to reach 65 and trigger a \$250,000 bonus. He has 610 yards receiving, which means another 140 would earn him another \$250,000. And if one of those catches is a touchdown, Hopkins would earn an additional

\$500,000 for catching six of them this season.

"We want the guys to be able to reach them if they're reachable," Reid said.

It will be up to Wentz to deliver Hopkins the ball on Sunday.

He signed with Kansas City in the offseason as the latest veteran backup to Mahomes, following in the footsteps of Matt Moore, Chad Henne and Blaine Gabbert. And while Wentz has hardly played since the preseason — he was 2 for 2 for 20 yards in closing out a win in Cleveland — the ninth-year pro has earned the respect of just about everyone in the Chiefs locker room.

"I got to train with him in team camp, stuff like that. Carson is an elite QB and a lot of people take that for granted," said fullback Carson Steele, who could be among those who get extra reps at Denver so that Pacheco and Kareem Hunt can get a break.

"It's really cool to see how he performs," Steele said, "especially being a veteran like himself."

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Ohio State routs Oregon

(Continued from Page 6) passing his 160 yards during Ohio State's hot start against Tennessee. Early in the second quarter, Smith got so open near the Ducks' goal line that he had two seconds to settle under Howard's long throw like an outfielder with a fly ball, scoring a 42-yard TD untouched. When Henderson broke a 66-yard TD run down the Oregon

sideline for a 31-0 lead, both sides of the Rose Bowl stands rippled with disbelief. Oregon finally got moving on its final drive before halftime. Gabriel found Holden for a 5-yard TD pass at the gun, and the Ducks added a two-point conversion to salvage something from their horrific half. The Ducks drove for Noah Whittington's 2-yard TD run to open the second half, scoring the

first touchdown allowed in the third quarter all season by Ohio State. Oregon even forced a punt moments later to stir faint hope in its fans, but the Ohio State defense drove the Buckeyes backward for a punt before Howard's group methodically drove for Henderson's second TD. **Takeaways** Ohio State: The full force of the Buckeyes' talent has been on dis-

play for the past two weeks after it fell short against Oregon and Michigan in the regular season. The 12-team playoff opened the chance for redemption. This group is seizing it, and it's awfully fun to watch. Oregon: Having 3 1/2 weeks off with their first-round bye proved to be dangerous for the Ducks. This disconcerting flop doesn't completely ruin a breakthrough Big Ten debut, but the season will

always loom as a missed opportunity in Oregon history. **Up next** Ohio State: The Cotton Bowl will be a preview of both teams' 2025 season opener, since Texas visits Ohio Stadium on Aug. 30. Oregon: The 2025 season opener is at home against Montana State, which faces North Dakota State in the FCS title game Monday night.

Sugar Bowl postponed

(Continued from Page 6) go to the Sugar Bowl tomorrow?" "I tell you one thing: Your governor's going to be there," Landry said. "That is proof, believe you me, that that facility and this city is safer today than it was yesterday." Hundley said work was underway to "set up a safe and efficient and fun environment" at and around the Superdome on Thursday. "We live in the fun-and-games world with what we do, but we certainly recognize the importance of this and support (public safety efforts) 100%." The Superdome was on lockdown for security sweeps on Wednesday morning, when people with offices in the home of the NFL's Saints — including officials with the Sugar Bowl and Sun Belt Conference — were told not to come into work until further notice. Some credentialed Superdome employees were permitted into offices by Wednesday afternoon.

The casualties occurred when a driver rammed a pickup truck into a crowd of revelers in New Orleans' famed French Quarter early on New Year's Day, injuring more than 30 people. The driver was killed in a fire with police following the attack at about 3:15 a.m. along Bourbon Street near Canal Street, the FBI said. The Georgia and Notre Dame football teams arrived in New Orleans on Sunday and have been staying at downtown hotels just blocks away from where the violence occurred. Statements from the University of Georgia Athletic Association and from Notre Dame said both schools had accounted for all team

personnel and members of official travel parties. "To be in solidarity with those who suffer is to exemplify the spirit of Notre Dame," said university president the Rev. Robert A. Dowd. "Today, we are in solidarity with all those impacted by this tragedy." A statement from Georgia athletic director Josh Brooks offered prayers for "everyone involved in this horrific event, and we are here to support them in any way possible."

Georgia president Jere Morehead said the university confirmed that a student was among those critically injured. Morehead said the university is in contact with the student's family to offer support. New Orleans City Council President Helena Moreno told WDSU-TV earlier Wednesday, before the postponement was announced, that the security perimeter around the Superdome was being "extended to be a larger zone." "So expect obviously extra security," she said. "There are more police officers who are coming in." The Superdome, which is about

20 blocks away, also is scheduled to host the Super Bowl on Feb. 9. The first Super Bowl after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, also was held in New Orleans, and there was a massive security perimeter for that game including street closures surrounding the Superdome and officers — including snipers — on the tops of surrounding high-rise buildings, as well as on the roof of the dome itself. "We are deeply saddened by the news of the devastating incident in New Orleans," the NFL said in a statement. "The NFL and the local host committee have been working collaboratively with local, state and federal agencies the past two years and have developed comprehensive security plans. "These planning sessions will continue as they do with all major NFL events," the statement continued. "We are confident attendees will have a safe and enjoyable Super Bowl experience."



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2	8	1				6		4

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Public Notices

NOTICE
Wells County Community Corrections will hold the next Advisory Board Meeting on January 8, 2025 at 7:30am in the Carnegie Annex Building, 223 W. Washington St., Bluffton, IN 46714
nb 1/2 hspaxlp

PUBLIC NOTICE 12/31/2024
Liberty Township Trustee's Office
Jack Chase Gentis - Trustee
Email: libertytownship90@gmail.com
Office Address: 2365 S 300 W, Liberty Center, IN 46766
Phone: 260-694-6300

STATE OF INDIANA)
) SS:
COUNTY OF ALLEN)
IN THE ALLEN Superior Court
CAUSE NUMBER:
02D08-2409-JT-000166
IN THE MATTER OF THE
TERMINATION OF THE
PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP:
JH - DOB 9/6/2024
AND
Mother Unknown (Mother) Alleged
Unknown Father (Alleged Father)
AND ANY UNKNOWN ALLEGED
FATHERS

SUMMONS FOR SERVICE BY PUBLICATION & NOTICE OF TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS HEARING

TO: Alleged Unknown Father and Any Unknown Alleged Father Whereabouts unknown
nb 1/2 hspaxlp

TO: Mother Unknown Whereabouts unknown

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the above noted parent whose whereabouts are unknown, as well as Any Unknown Alleged Fathers, whose whereabouts are also unknown, that the Indiana Department of Child Services has filed a Petition for Involuntary Termination of your Parental Rights, and that an adjudication hearing has been scheduled with the Court.

YOU ARE HEREBY COMMANDED to appear before the Judge of the Allen Superior Court, 715 S. Calhoun Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46802, for a(n) Termination of Parental Rights on 2/11/2025 at 8:30 AM and to answer the Petition for Termination of your Parental Rights of said child.

You are further notified that if the allegations in said petition are true, and/or if you fail to appear at the hearing, the Juvenile Court may terminate your parent-child relationship; and if the Court terminates your parent-child relationship you will lose all parental rights, powers, privileges, immunities, duties and obligations including any rights to custody, control, visitation, or support in said child; and if the Court terminates your parent-child relationship, it will be permanently terminated, and thereafter you may not contest an adoption or other placement of said child.

You are entitled to representation by an attorney, provided by the State if applicable, throughout these proceedings to terminate the parent-child relationship. If you have been appointed an attorney in the Child in Need of Services action involving the above-named child(ren), that attorney may not be automatically appointed to represent you in these proceedings. You must appear at the hearing currently scheduled in this matter and request that the Court appoint an attorney to represent you in these proceedings to terminate the parent-child relationship.

YOU MUST RESPOND by appearing in person or by an attorney within thirty (30) days after the last publication of this notice, and in the event you fail to do so, adjudication on said petition and termination of your parental rights may be entered against you, in your absence, without further notice.

Christopher M. Nancarrow
Clerk of Allen Circuit and Superior Courts (Seal)
Joy Grow, 31027-49
Attorney, Indiana Department of Child Services
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Public Sale Calendar

BIDDING STARTS CLOSING JANUARY 2 at 10 a.m. - (Online Only) - MD Landscaping LLC, owner. Over 170+ Lots. John Deere 5525 W/ Belly Blade, Bobcat Dozer 96" Blade, 2016 International 4300 Box Truck, 2003 Wells Cargo Enclosed/Office Trailer, 84" 3-Point Cultivator, 2008 Ford F-350 W/ Boss Snow Plow, 2007 Jeep Wrangler W/ Truck Bed, Volvo ECR88 Excavator Kawasaki 65TMVB Wheel Loader, Kubota SCL 1000 Mini Skid Steer, Skid Loader Attachments, Hardscape Stone, Walnut Slabs, Assorted Lawn Tools, Power Tools and much more. 3883 US HWY 33 Decatur IN, 46733. Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC, 260-724-7402, kjauction.com.

BIDDING ENDS JANUARY 5 - Bidding starts closing at 2 p.m. - Estate of Eldrid Tinkel, seller. Large antique and collectible auction. Country primitives, early metal toys including vintage tractors, farm implements, trucks, boats, more, antique furniture, cast iron collection, antique brass cash register, antique stoves, large and rare collection of vintage granite ware, Fenton, Marion advertising memorabilia, vintage beer signs, crocks, long guns, coins, more. Open house Jan. 4, 10 a.m.-noon, 1910 N Meridian St., Marion. Sale manager Brandon Steffen, 260-710-5684, TheSteffenGroupInc.com.

Steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006. **BIDDING ENDS JANUARY 7 at 10 a.m. - (Online Only) - Wayne Metals LLC Machining Division, owner.** Offering over 200+ Lots. Roskelle 1440 Lathe, 2007 Haas SL-40T CNC Turning Lathe, Hardinge CHNCI Precision CNC Machine, Delta Floor Drill Press, Omni Turn GT-75 CNC Lathe, Targa Surface Grinder, Acer Milling Machine W/ Phase-2 3 Jaw Chuck, Abex Denison Stamp Machine, OQYA RE-1225H Drilling & Tapping Radial Arm Drill, Cincinnati Milacron Hawk 150 A2100 CNC Lathe, Welders, Tooling Cabinets, Large Selection of pallet racking, Power & Hand Tools and much more. 9312 Avionics Drive, Fort Wayne IN 46809. Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC, 260-724-7402, kjauction.com.

NOTICE OF HEARING FOR BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS 12/27/2024

Notice is hereby given that the BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS will hold a Public Hearing in Conference Room 105 in the Wells Carnegie Government Annex, 223 W. Washington St., in the City of Bluffton, IN at 7:00 o'clock P.M. on the 28th day of January, 2025, for the purpose of reviewing and hearing comments on the petition(s) listed below.

1. Request of Caley Farms, Inc., 7756 N Marzane Rd., Markle, IN 46770 for the purpose of a Variance.

Current Zoning: A-1 Proposed Variance: To reduce the side yard setback from 20' to 10' for a new pole barn.

Common Location: The subject property is located along 8540 N Marzane Rd., Markle, Indiana. 46770

Brief Legal: The subject property is described as 6.37 acres in the SW/4 20-28N-11E in Union Township of Wells County.

Dated this 27th day of December, 2024

WELLS COUNTY BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
Michael Lautzenheiser, Jr., Director
oj, nb 1/2 hspaxlp

SUDOKU ANSWER

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Jimmy Carter

(Continued from Page 1)

global humanitarian were reflected Monday in tributes from Plains' residents and around the world.

Not far from where Jones sat on his front porch, black ribbons hung alongside U.S. flags flying in front of the souvenir shops and cafes that make up the nucleus of Plains' main street, which spans just a few blocks from Carter's 1976 presidential campaign headquarters — the old train depot — to where the family once operated its peanut warehouses. TV cameras and news trucks lined the street that runs in front of the old gas station where the former president's late brother, Billy Carter, once would hold court with national journalists who covered his older brother.

Across the railroad tracks, Philip Kurland stood in his political memorabilia shop, which he opened years after the Carters returned from Washington, and recalled the former president not as a famous figure but an approachable neighbor who once prayed with him when he was sick.

"We're in a state of denial," he said. "I was telling people: Let's start planning for his 101st birthday."

At Maranatha Baptist Church, where the Carters long taught Sunday school, a handful of residents trickled in for a silent vigil Monday evening. A piano played softly as people lit candles at the altar, with lighted Christmas trees standing on either side.

In Washington, plans continued for the state rites that will affirm Carter's global status. President Joe Biden confirmed that Jan. 9, 2025, will be a day of national mourning, with federal offices closed for Carter's state funeral at the National Cathedral. Biden, a longtime Carter friend and political ally, will deliver a eulogy for his fellow Democrat. Congressional leaders have confirmed to the Carter family that the former president will lie in state from Jan. 7 to Jan. 9, when his remains will be transported to the cathedral for the state funeral.

In New York, the 15 members of the U.N. Security Council stood in silent tribute to the Nobel Peace Prize winner. U.S. deputy ambassador Dorothy Shea read a statement from the U.N.'s most powerful body at the start of an emergency meeting on Yemen.

"President Carter was a peacemaker who worked tirelessly and effectively in support of conflict mediation, the furtherance of human rights and the strengthening of democracy, both while he was in office and during his many years of service thereafter," the Security Council statement said.

China's deputy U.N. ambassador, Geng Shuang, remembered Carter as "a driving force" in establishing relations between Beijing and Washington. "We highly commend his achievements," Geng said, stating that Carter "made great contribution over the years to ... cooperation between the two countries."

Prominent Egyptian rights defender Hosam Bahgat, a fierce critic of the government of President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi's govern-

ment, said Carter was among the first to warn of "Israeli apartheid" against Palestinians — a position that put Carter at odds with much of the U.S. foreign policy establishment.

"Such a profile of courage," Bahgat wrote on Facebook. "He warned of Israeli apartheid as early as 2007. He stood by his principles and moral standards because he understood his mission and stayed true to his beliefs without seeking to placate donors or please hedge-funder packed boards."

Back in Georgia, neighbors of the Carter Center in Atlanta congregated near the grounds where Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter would redefine what a post-presidency can be. The Carters established the Carter Center in 1982 and for four decades oversaw diplomatic missions, election monitoring and public health programs with operations that spanned five continents.

"I really appreciate him as an ex-president, what he's done since" leaving office, said Richard Hopkins, an Atlanta resident.

Hopkins said Carter's public service went beyond elected office. A Korean War veteran, Hopkins noted that Carter, a U.S. Naval Academy graduate, was a submarine officer after World War II. He also highlighted the Carters' work with Habitat for Humanity, which builds houses for low-income people. The Carters' Habitat involvement came in addition to their Carter Center work; they headlined their own annual builds into their early 90s.

Habitat for Humanity CEO Jonathan Reckford said the Carters were integral to Habitat's growth.

"Most people think President Carter started and ran Habitat, which is not actually true," he said Monday. "But what is true is Habitat was founded in 1976, and it was a tiny organization in 1984 when President and Mrs. Carter famously rode a bus up from south Georgia to spend a week sleeping in a church basement and rehabbing a tenement building on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. That's when the world found out about Habitat."

Jason Carter, the former president's grandson who now chairs the Carter Center's governing board, said in a recent interview that the former president formed that lifelong commitment to service because of Plains.

"My grandfather could go to a village anywhere in the world," the younger Carter said, and help people without patronizing them. "Because he was from a village like that himself."

"Since the moment Rosalynn passed, he wanted to be with her. So knowing that he's finally reunited with Rosalynn is a wonderful thing. But those of us who selfishly wanted to keep him here forever, I'm in that camp," Stuckey said.

But the Carters, she emphasized, planned long ago to be buried in the same town where they were born, married and spent most of their lives. Rosalynn Carter already is buried in a plot visible from the front porch of the family home. The house and gravesite eventually will be added to the National Park.

WELLS COUNTY OFFICIALS SWORN IN



At left, County Council at-large member Scott Elzey is sworn in by Superior Court Judge Andrew Antrim. Deanna Elzey stands along with Scott.

Middle left, Wells County Surveyor Jarrod Hahn is sworn in by Antrim.

Middle right, Wells County Recorder Rina Stuck is sworn in by Antrim. (Photos by Jonathan Snyder)



At left, Wells County Coronor Cliff Thomas is sworn in by Superior Court Judge Andrew Antrim. Tosha Thomas stands alongside Cliff.

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