

LOCAL

The New York state average is \$3.75 for a gallon of gasoline, up 7 cents from last week.



Page 3

SPORTS

The Cortland/Homer ice hockey team cruised to an 8-1 win over Whitesboro in the Section III Division II semis.



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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2022

CORTLAND, N.Y.

County OKs funds for police cams, other projects

By KEVIN CONLON
City Editor

The Cortland County Legislature approved nearly \$1.6 million in federal pandemic stimulus funds Thursday for county Courthouse renovations, a child-care center, a central county senior center and cameras for sheriff's officers.

The allocations unanimously approved were:

- \$1 million to repair the courthouse.
- \$200,000 to the Cortland County Community Action Program, or

CAPCO, to fund two-year positions of construction manager and project manager for the Cortland Community Early Learning Center.

■ \$175,000 for the Cortland County Area Agency on Aging to fund building repairs and equipment for the Cortland County Age Well Center, a central senior center being developed on Main Street in Cortland.

■ \$200,000 for body cameras for about 35 sheriff's officers and 35 for cameras in the vehicles they drive, and evidence management software.

The only comment made by a legislator during the approval of the fund-

ing was by Chairman Kevin Fitch (R-Homer, Preble, Scott), in support of the sheriff's department cameras.

"I think this is something that is well deserved and another tool we will have," Fitch said.

About half of the courthouse funding will go toward the exterior stairs and the balance could be used for other work, including masonry restoration, replacing the roof, entrance door and elevator and renovating the building's heating and cooling systems

The Area Agency on Aging requested money for furniture and telecommunications equipment for the new central

senior center at Crescent Commons.

The county switched to a central hub and satellite sites model for its senior centers and agency officials plan to rely on technology to connect seniors at outlying locations with one another.

The money will pay for furniture, wheelchair-accessible tables, dishware, smart TVs and computer tablets.

CAPCO Executive Director Greg Richards said in a Feb. 16 email that the federal stimulus funds will help with the project to renovate the former Parker Elementary School in Cortland to create a child-care center.

The county received \$9.2 million

from the American Rescue Plan funds. It previously approved funds for nonprofit organizations and some county projects.

Among them, the Legislature in November approved \$1.7 million for 16 projects, including nonprofit groups' projects, economic development funding, Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District stream corridor management projects, a village of McGraw sewer repair and job development funding.

The county still has about \$3.2 million to spend from the American Rescue Plan allocation.

Russia presses Ukraine attack

Blasts heard in Kyiv; more than 100 killed

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Explosions were heard in the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv early today as Russian forces pressed on with a full-scale invasion that resulted in the deaths of more than 100 Ukrainians in the first full day of fighting and could eventually rewrite the global post-Cold War security order.

After using airstrikes on cities and military bases, Russian military units moved swiftly to take on

Ukraine's seat of government and its largest city in what U.S. officials suspect is a brazen attempt by Russian President Vladimir Putin to dismantle the government and replace it with his own regime.

Ukrainian leaders pleaded for help as civilians piled into trains and cars to flee, and hotels in Kyiv were being evacuated amid early indications of an assault.

Ukrainian forces braced for more attacks after enduring for hours a Russian barrage of land- and sea-based missiles, an assault that one senior U.S. defense official described as the first salvo in a likely multi-phase invasion aimed at seizing key population centers and "decapitating" Ukraine's government. Already, Ukraine officials said they had lost control of the decommissioned Chernobyl nuclear power plant, scene of the world's worst nuclear disaster.

In unleashing the largest ground war in Europe since World War II, Putin ignored global condemnation and cascading new sanctions. With a chilling reference to his country's nuclear arsenal, he threatened any country trying to interfere with "consequences you have never seen," as a once-hoped-for diplomatic resolution now appeared impossible.

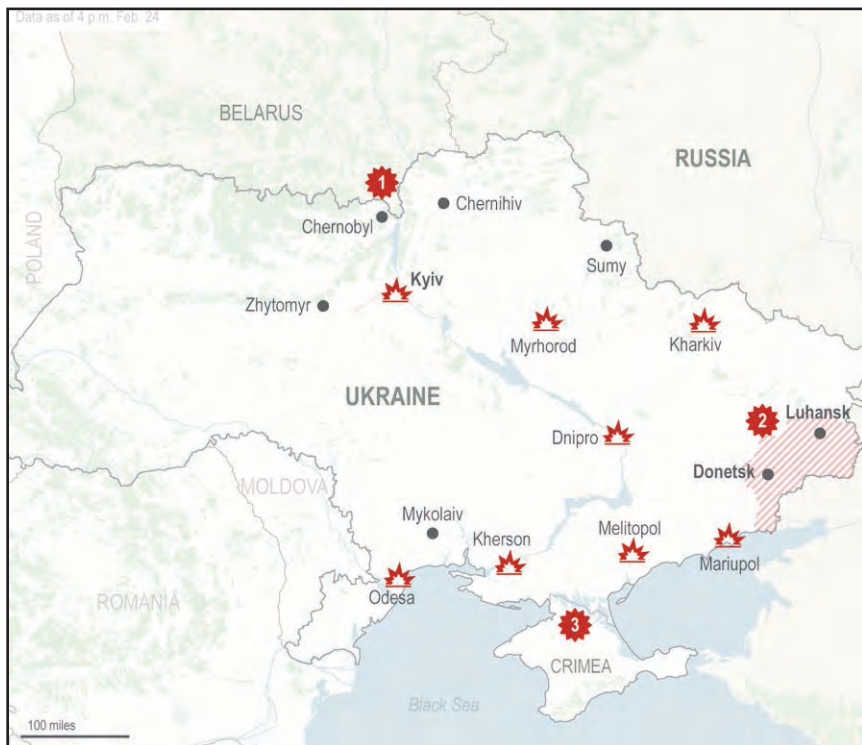
"Russia has embarked on a path of evil, but Ukraine is defending itself and won't give up its freedom," Zelenskyy tweeted. His grasp on power increasingly tenuous, he pleaded Thursday for even more severe sanctions than the ones imposed by Western allies and ordered a full military mobilization that would last 90 days.

Zelenskyy said in a video address that 137 "heroes," including 10 military officers, had been killed and 316 people wounded. The dead included all border guards on the Zmiinyi Island



Ukrainian servicemen sit atop armored personnel carriers driving on a road Thursday in the Donetsk region, eastern Ukraine.

Russia launches military strikes across Ukraine



1 Northern attack: Russian military attacks from Belarus 2 Eastern attack: Russian troops attack from Donetsk and Luhansk separatist regions 3 Southern attack: Russia attacks from Crimea

in the Odesa region, which was taken over by Russians.

He concluded an emotional speech by saying that "the fate of the country depends fully on our army, security forces, all of our defenders." He also said the country had heard from

Moscow that "they want to talk about Ukraine's neutral status."

U.S. President Joe Biden announced new sanctions against Russia, saying Putin "chose this war" and had exhibited a "sinister" view of the world in

See UKRAINE, page 6

Sale ends legal fight over plans for Dollar General

By KEVIN CONLON
City Editor

A development company that sued the village of Homer for rejecting its application to build a Dollar General store on South West Road has withdrawn its application after the site was sold to someone else, court records show.

Homer Mayor Darren "Hal" McCabe announced briefly at Tuesday's Village Board of Trustees meeting that the legal challenge was over.

"We did have official notice that the Dollar General project is no more in the village, the lawsuit has been dismissed and that's that," McCabe said.

Homer DG LLC applied to the village Planning board in August 2020 for site plan approval to build a 9,100-square-foot Dollar General on a 1.9-acre site at 15 S. West Road, the location of the Super Scoops ice cream shop.

The proposal drew opposition from residents and the Planning Board rejected the plan on April 12, 2021.

The developer filed suit May 17, 2021, to challenge the rejection, noting the planning board did not provide a written explanation of its decision, although the village code required the creation of such a document.

"The board's lack of evidence-based findings with respect to how the access driveway, as designed, will adversely affect the surrounding areas is especially egregious here because the proposed project involves the construction of a retail store in the Villages B-2, 'General Business District,' where retail stores are classified as an allowed use as of right," the documents read.

The board acknowledged that it did not provide written findings, but argued that the record of its review supported its decision as reasonable.

Between September 2020 and April 2021, the planning board met six times to review the site application but voted, 3-1, to deny the site plan, documents show. It was sent back for review several times and both Homer DG, LLC and its engineer reviewed the plans and made changes.

See HOMER, page 6

US intel predicted Russia's invasion plans. Did it matter?

WASHINGTON (AP) — For months, the White House made highly unusual releases of intelligence findings about Russian President Vladimir Putin's plans to attack Ukraine. Hoping to preempt an invasion, it released details of Russian troop buildups and warned repeatedly that a major assault was imminent.

In the end, Putin attacked anyway.

Critics of U.S. intelligence — including Russian officials who dismissed invasion allegations as fantasy — had been pointing to past failures like the false identification of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. But Russia's invasion so far has played out largely as the Biden administration said it would back in December, with nearly 200,000 troops striking from several sides of Ukraine.

Lawmakers from both political parties on Thursday said the accurate predictions were a credit to the often-criticized U.S. intelligence community.

But whether the White House's unprecedented public campaign delayed or limited Putin's plans could be debated for years. And some say both Washington and Kyiv could have done more with the information the two governments had beforehand.

Ukrainians are fighting a vastly

See INTEL, page 6

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WEATHER

Partly sunny
Tomorrow's Weather:
Chance of snow showers.
High near 27.
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ONLINE

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MAKING IT RIGHT

The Cortland Standard will print corrections and clarifications of news articles. If you find mistakes or omissions, call the managing editor at 607-756-5665, ext. 166 or email news@cortlandstandard.net.



Judge to question Maxwell juror

By LARRY NEUMEISTER
Associated Press

NEW YORK — A judge said Thursday that she'll question a juror under oath during a rare post-verdict evidentiary hearing about the answers he gave during jury selection for the criminal trial of Ghislaine Maxwell after he told news outlets that he didn't recall being asked about prior sexual abuse.



Epstein

U.S. District Judge Alison J. Nathan said in a written order that she'll question the juror March 8 at a public court hearing.

She also said she had rejected a request by Maxwell's attorneys that she order a new trial without gathering more information. Maxwell, 60, remains incarcerated after she was convicted of sex trafficking, among other charges, during a December trial in which she was portrayed as the chief recruiter of teenage girls for financier Jeffrey Epstein to sexually abuse. Prosecutors said she also sometimes joined in the abuse.

In interviews with news outlets, the juror described a moment during the deliberations when he told fellow jurors that, like some of the victims of Epstein, he had been sexually abused as a child. And he said he convinced other jurors that a victim's imperfect memory of sex abuse doesn't mean it didn't happen.

Nathan said it was not easy for parties to obtain the kind of hearing she will conduct regarding the juror's conduct.

But she said she had concluded, and prosecutors had conceded, that the high standard required to stage a post-verdict evidentiary hearing was met "as to whether Juror 50 failed to respond truthfully during the jury selection process to whether he was a victim of sexual abuse."

She said he had "made several direct,



Associated Press

In this courtroom sketch, Ghislaine Maxwell enters the courtroom escorted by U.S. Marshalls at the start of her trial Nov. 29, 2021, in New York.

unambiguous statements to multiple media outlets about his own experience that do not pertain to jury deliberations and that cast doubt on the accuracy of his responses during jury selection."

She added: "To be clear, the potential impropriety is not that someone with a history of sexual abuse may have served on the jury. Rather, it is the potential failure to respond truthfully to questions during the jury selection process that asked for that material information so that any potential bias could be explored."

Potential jurors in Maxwell's case were asked to fill out a questionnaire asking: "Have you or a friend or family member ever been the victim of sexual harassment, sexual abuse, or sexual assault?"

Nathan said in her order that the juror's questionnaire will be unsealed.

Meanwhile, a Jan. 10 submission to the judge from a lawyer for the juror was unsealed Thursday.

In the letter, attorney Todd Spodek asked the judge to release to attorneys the written juror questionnaire that his client had filled out as the trial began.

Spodek said the juror does not recall answering questions during jury selection about his prior experience with sexual assault.

Spodek said the juror, identified only as "Juror 50," wanted to protect his privacy rights and his right to avoid self-incrimination.

Maxwell has been behind bars since her July 2020 arrest. Epstein, 66, was arrested a year earlier on sex trafficking charges, but he took his life in a Manhattan federal lockup in August 2019.

Weather

Local

Rest of today: A chance of snow showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 11. Northwest wind 5 to 9 mph becoming calm after midnight. Chance of precipitation is 50%. New snow accumulation of less than one inch possible.

Saturday: A slight chance of snow showers before 8 a.m., then scattered flurries between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. Partly sunny, with a high near 27.

Extended

Saturday night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 15. Calm wind becoming southwest around 6 mph after midnight.

Sunday: Scattered flurries between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m., then scattered snow showers after 2 p.m. Partly sunny, with a high near 33. Chance of precipitation is 50%.

Sunday night: Scattered snow showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 5.

Skies Today

Friday, Feb. 25, 2022

Sunset today	5:48 p.m.
Sunrise tomorrow	6:46 a.m.
Normal high temperature	34
Normal low temperature	17
Average temperature	26
New moon	March 2

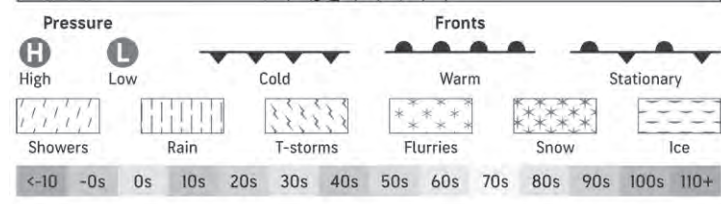
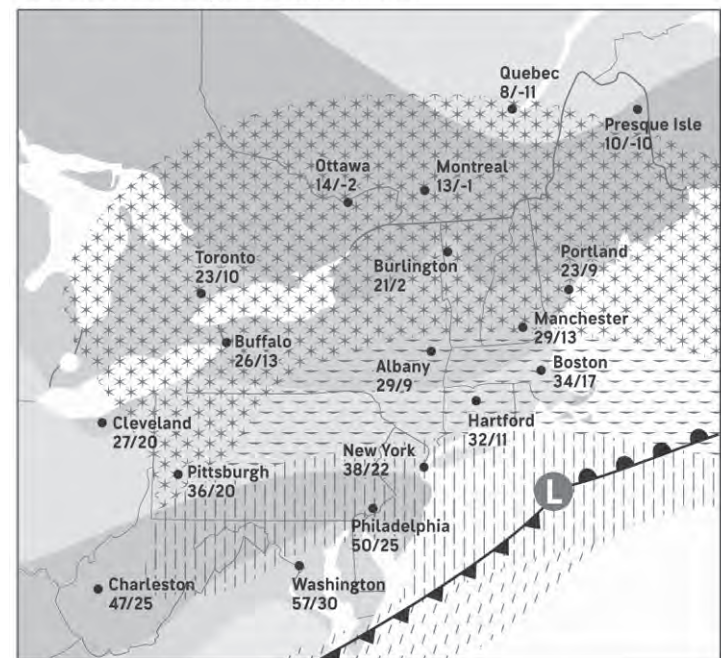
City Snowfall

Feb. 23-24	Trace
Season to date	32.5 inches

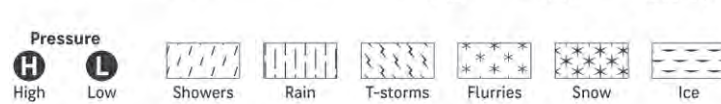
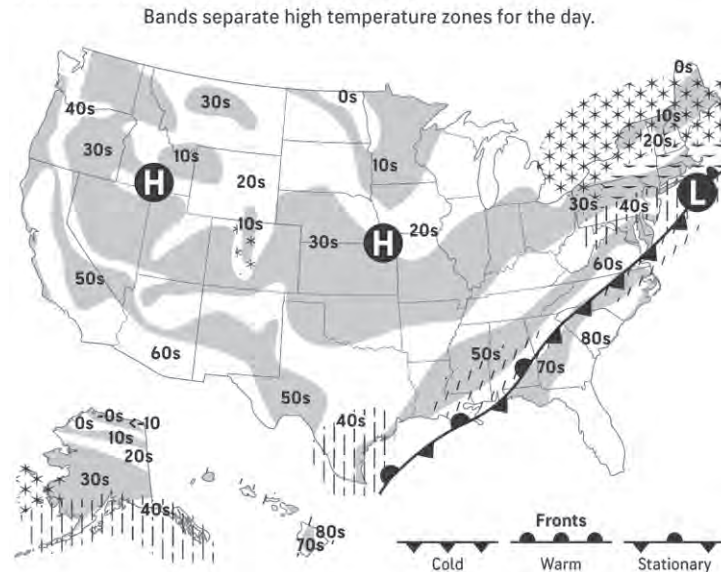
Precipitation

Feb. 23-24	Trace
Month to date	1.05 inches

Forecast for Friday, February 25, 2022



Forecast for Friday, February 25, 2022



NATIONAL SUMMARY: A potent winter storm will deposit a general 6-12 inches of snow with locally higher amounts from upstate New York to New England today. Ice will glaze surfaces farther south for a time over parts of the mid-Atlantic region. Rain showers will extend farther south to the Gulf coast. Much of the rest of the nation will be dry.

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Lottery Winners

ALBANY (AP) — Here are the winning numbers selected Thursday in the New York State Lottery:

Numbers: Midday: 7-2-7, Evening: 6-0-7; **WinFour:** Midday: 5-2-0-3, Evening: 4-5-0-9; **Pick 10:** 5-9-13-19-22-25-30-34-37-38-40-43-45-48-55-59-68-72-77-79; **Take Five:** Midday: 4-15-22-24-31, Evening: 12-16-32-34-37; **Cash4Life:** 16-21-27-56-58, Cash Ball: 2

Making It Right

The Cortland Standard will print corrections and clarifications of news articles in this space. If you find mistakes or omissions, call the managing editor at 607-756-5665 x 166.

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Obituaries

John E. Blair

John E. Blair, 84, formerly of Cortland, passed away on February 20, 2022 in the Cayuga Ridge Nursing Center, Ithaca, where he had been a resident since 2016.

He was born October 12, 1937 in Sherburne, a son of Walter and Elizabeth Cashman Blair.

John is survived by his children, Jerry (Michelle) Blair of Cortland; Lisa A. Blair of Liverpool; Lori A. Blair of Cortland; Kimberly S. (Tom) Hill of Damascus, MD; Shelley B. (Lawrence) Love of Newfield and John C. (Stacie) Blair of Fayetteville; his siblings, Sarah (George) Rickey of Iowa City, IA; Ann (Jai) Misir of Niskayuna; Greg (Leslie) Robinson of Waterloo; and Glen (Maureen) Robinson of Erieville. Also surviving are his grandchildren, Jessica Blair; Chelsea and Brandon Hill; Samantha and Benjamin Love; and Natalie Blair; his great grandchildren, Rylan Phillips; Braydan Phillips; Madelyn Hill-Raley and Hailey Jordan as well several nieces, nephews and cousins.

He was predeceased his wife, Holly Baldwin Blair in 2016. There will be a celebration of John's life on Saturday, March 19, 2022 at 11:00 am at the Homer Avenue Methodist Church, 30 Homer Ave., Cortland, followed by a luncheon.

To offer online condolences visit www.DonaldLBarberFuneralHome.com.

Lucille 'Jane' Doran

Lucille "Jane" Doran, 90, of Cortland, NY, passed away on Wednesday, February 23, 2022, at the Crown Park Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, Cortland, NY.

Born in E. Homer, NY, on May 31, 1931, Jane was the daughter of the late Harold and Dorothy Mead. For several years, she served as a crossing guard in the City of Cortland.

She is survived by her husband of over 73 years, Carl Doran, and their son, Clayton D. Doran of Cortland.

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by a daughter, Sigrid Doran, on June 16, 2019, and a son, Jimmie Doran.

In keeping with her wishes, there will be no services. Expressions of sympathy in memory of Jane may be directed to the Cincinnati Emergency Squad, c/o Elaine Oros, 5771 McFarlane Road, Cincinnati, NY 13040. To leave a personal message for the family, please visit www.klsharpfuneralhome.com.

John G. Sinclair

John G. Sinclair, 78, of Cortland, NY, passed away February 21, 2022.

John was born in Syracuse, NY on September 25, 1943 to Paul and Gladys (Wiborn) Sinclair. He was brought up, and graduated high school, in Mexico, NY, served in the US Air Force in Maine until 1966. He was employed by SCM and Marietta in Cortland and Wilcox Press in Ithaca and retired in 2008.

He is survived by his wife, Nancy Sinclair. In addition to his parents, John was predeceased by his sister Joyce E. (Robert) Babbitt of Mexico, NY.

Because of John's desire for privacy, there will be no funeral services.

Wright-Beard Funeral Home, Inc. is assisting the family.

To offer online condolences, please visit www.wright-beard.com.

Death Notices

BLAIR — John E. Blair, 84, formerly of Cortland, died Feb. 20, 2022. There will be a celebration of life at 11 a.m. March 19 at the Homer Avenue Methodist Church, 30 Homer Ave., Cortland. A luncheon will follow.

BROWN — Jeffery Parker Brown, 46, of Grayson, Ky., and formerly of Cincinnati, died Feb. 23, 2022. Arrangements are incomplete and will be announced by the K.L. Sharp Funeral Home, Cincinnati.

DORAN — Lucille "Jane" Doran, 90, of Cortland, died Feb. 23, 2022. There will be no services.

SINCLAIR — John G. Sinclair, 78, of Cortland, died Feb. 21, 2022. There will be no services.

Parents of teenager charged in Michigan shooting to stand trial

By COREY WILLIAMS
Associated Press

A judge on Thursday ordered the parents of a 15-year-old boy charged with killing four students at his Michigan high school to stand trial on involuntary manslaughter charges.

Rochester Hills District Court Judge Julie Nicholson said following the preliminary examination for Jennifer and James Crumbley that she found enough evidence to send their case to circuit court.

They are charged with involuntary manslaughter and accused of making the gun used in the shooting available to the teen.

The couple is also accused of failing to intervene when he showed signs of mental distress at home and at school.

Ethan Crumbley is charged as an adult with first-degree murder, assault with intent to murder, terrorism and gun charges in the Nov. 30 shooting at Oxford High School, about 30 miles (50 kilometers) north of Detroit. In addition to the four students slain, six other students and a teacher were wounded.

The gun used in the shooting was given to Ethan Crumbley as an early Christmas present, prosecutors have said.

"The court finds that the deaths of the four victims could have been avoided if James and Jennifer Crumbley exercised ordinary care and diligence in the care of their son," Nicholson said.

Nicholson said prosecutors showed Ethan Crumbley presented a danger to the community and "that danger was apparent to an ordinary mind." Testimony showed that Ethan Crumbley was a "troubled young man" and his parents knew it, she said.

"But they purchased a gun which he believed was his," Nicholson added.

The Crumbleys' attorneys insisted the couple didn't know their son might plan an attack and didn't make the gun easy to find in their home, but Oakland County Prosecutor Karen McDonald said Thursday that Ethan Crumbley reached out to his parents for help.

And while no help was forthcoming, the coming trouble was foreseeable, she said.

"You're allowed to be a terrible parent," McDonald said. "If that's all this was, we wouldn't be here."

Ethan Crumbley's counselor

at Oxford High School testified earlier Thursday that he told the teen's parents the morning of the shootings that he believed their son was a threat to himself and needed mental health support.

"I said as soon as possible, today if possible," Shawn Hopkins said. But, he testified, Jennifer Crumbley told him, "Today was not an option because they had to return to work."

"I didn't want Ethan to be alone at home," Hopkins added.

On the morning of the shooting, Ethan's parents were summoned to the school and confronted with his drawings, which included a handgun and the words: "The thoughts won't stop. Help me." Authorities said the parents refused to take him home after the 13-minute meeting.

"I wrote Ethan a pass back to class," Hopkins continued. "I told him, 'I just want you to know I care about you.' I don't remember them saying goodbye (to Ethan)."

Earlier Thursday, defense attorneys asked Oakland County sheriff's Detective Edward Wargowski whether he thought Jennifer and James Crumbley were aware their son was planning the shooting.

CROWN CITY CINEMAS

255 Tompkins St.
607-753-6300
crowncitycinemas.com

Thursday, February 24th
 Dog (PG13) - 3:15pm 7:00pm 9:00pm
 Uncharted (PG13) - 3:30pm 7:00pm 9:00pm
 Sing 2 (PG) - 3:00pm 6:45pm 9:00pm
 Merry Me (PG13) - 3:30pm 6:45pm 9:00pm
 Jackass Forever (R) - 3:15pm 7:00pm 9:15pm

Friday, February 25th
 Death on the Nile (PG13) - 3:30pm 6:45pm 9:00pm
 Hotel Transylvania: Transformania (PG) - 3:00pm 5:00pm 6:45pm 8:45pm
 Dog (PG13) - 3:15pm 7:00pm 9:15pm
 Uncharted (PG13) - 3:30pm 7:00pm 9:00pm
 Jackass Forever (R) - 3:15pm 7:00pm 9:15pm

Saturday, February 26th
 Death on the Nile (PG13) - 12:15pm 3:30pm 6:45pm 9:00pm
 Hotel Transylvania: Transformania (PG) - 12:30pm 3:00pm 5:00pm 6:45pm 8:45pm
 Dog (PG13) - 12:30pm 3:15pm 7:00pm 9:15pm
 Uncharted (PG13) - 12:15pm 3:30pm 7:00pm 9:00pm
 Jackass Forever (R) - 12:15pm 3:15pm 7:00pm 9:15pm

Sunday, February 27th
 Death on the Nile (PG13) - 3:30pm 6:45pm 9:00pm
 Hotel Transylvania: Transformania (PG) - 3:00pm 5:00pm 6:45pm 8:45pm
 Dog (PG13) - 3:15pm 7:00pm 9:15pm
 Uncharted (PG13) - 3:30pm 7:00pm 9:00pm
 Jackass Forever (R) - 3:15pm 7:00pm 9:15pm

Community

Republican starts Congressional campaign in 22nd

From Staff Reports

Brandon Williams, of Sennett, in Cayuga County, announced his candidacy Thursday for the 22nd District Congressional seat representing northern Cortland County.

Williams is the first Republican to announce his candidacy for the seat, which has already drawn five Democrats and an unaffiliated candidate.

Brandon said Central New York lacks economic opportunity, causing lost jobs, closed businesses and popula-

tion decline. He also said government is overreaching in limiting personal liberties and needs more commitment to ensure public safety.

"We must have safe streets and a return to the rule of law in our country," Williams said. "The woke policies of New York City, Los Angeles and Seattle have no place in our community or in our election rules. Re-fund the police and enforce the laws."

"I want to see Central New York prosper again," he said. "Generational

prosperity starts with education — quality public schools that are free from left-wing indoctrination, trade schools that lead to solid skills and wages, and affordable community colleges."

The first-time candidate is a Navy veteran and head of business development and marketing for a California-based software company.

He and his wife, Stephanie, have two adult children and own and operate an orchard growing hazelnut trees to culti-

vate Burgundy truffles.

Five Democrats have already announced their candidacies for the seat, which includes all of Onondaga and Tompkins counties, southern Cayuga, parts of Madison and Seneca counties.

■ Francis Conole of Syracuse, a Navy reserve commander and onetime policy adviser to Defense secretaries Ash Carter and Jim Mattis.

■ Vanessa Fajans-Turner of Ithaca, the principal of the nonprofit Investable Oceans and the executive director of

Bank FWD.

■ Mikayla Ridley of Endicott, an activist and college admissions counselor.

■ Josh Riley of Endicott, a lawyer who once worked for the U.S. Senate.

■ Sam Roberts of Syracuse, a former state Assembly member and former commissioner of the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance.

Unaffiliated candidate Hal Stewart of Binghamton, a Navy veteran, is also running for the two-year term.



Yuner Gao/staff reporter

Skye Bohanan fills his tank at the Sunoco gas station on 3817 Route 11 Thursday as he has to travel from Homer to Ithaca to work every day. "I feel like it's expensive. it has gone up quite a bit."

High, and going higher

Rising price of gasoline pre-dates conflict in Ukraine

By YUNER GAO
Staff Reporter

ygao@cortlandstandard.com

Skye Bohanan was filling up at the Sunoco station at 3817 Route 11 in Polkville — not just Thursday, almost every day.

"I am putting \$45 or more to fill up the tank," Bohanan said. "I feel like it's expensive. It has gone up quite a bit."

Bohanan commutes daily from Homer to Ithaca. In 2019, he spent about \$30 to fill his tank.

Similarly, Adrian Butler, who lives in Marathon, drives to Cortland every day.

"The prices are kinda high right now," Butler said. "I have to fill up after every two days for gas. I think it affects everybody, especially myself when I have to work."

The state average is \$3.75 a gallon, up 7 cents from last week. A year ago, the average was \$2.69, reports the American Automobile Association of Western and Central New York.

The increase comes as the price of crude oil rises, reports the federal Energy Information Agency.

The price for a barrel of oil topped \$87 in January and continued rising in February to \$98.73 for North Sea Brent, faster than the administration predicted.

The agency says the increase comes because:

- Global inventories are shrinking.
- Fear is rising of possible supply chain disruptions — in part from unrest, and now

fighting — in and around Ukraine.

■ The decline of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 may change travel patterns.

■ Refineries are earning record profits because they base the retail price on the price of crude oil, regardless of the stable cost to refine oil into distillate products.

The agency's prediction was from earlier this month, before Russia attacked Ukraine Wednesday night. And changes in gasoline prices tend to follow by a few weeks the price of crude.

Normally, gas prices would be at their lowest level of the year now, because of lower demand than summer and the lower cost to produce the winter blend of gasoline, said Elizabeth Carey, the public relations and corporate communications director at AAA.

But not this year. "Obviously I would rather have them go back down. I don't like it," Eric Tillman said as he fueled his truck. "I have to do this driving. There's nothing I can do about it."

However, Aisha Thomas does expect that the government can do something to control the gas price. It already tapped the nation's strategic petroleum reserve in November.

"That's why we put them in the office," she said. As a real estate agent, she has to travel all around the county. "They're drastically going up. It costs a lot more."

Will White had the same thought. "The president cares about his people," White said. "He may do something."

Still, he's not happy.

"It's not right. People are trying to make ends meet," White said. "We're trying to feed our family with the price of food going up."

Laura Hoelscher of Rochester was skeptical about the government's ability to affect prices, as she was at the Polkville gas station.

"I don't think they can. At this point, it's up to OPEC," she said. "It's very hurting. I am sure it's going to go even higher now that Russia has invaded Ukraine."

"The tension is pushing up oil prices, and oil prices have a direct impact on what we pay at the pump for gasoline," Carey said Thursday in an email. "Gas prices will most definitely increase due to that jump in oil prices. The oil prices went up in reaction to the situation in Russia/Ukraine. Russia has threatened to withhold oil from the global market, which drove up oil prices."

While the Energy Information Agency's predictions pre-date the Russian invasion, it said prices would remain high, and go even higher, for the first half of the year, but might drop off in the second half.

Carey gave some suggestions on how to cope.

"Drivers should also make sure tire pressure is at the vehicle's recommended level for the best gas mileage while removing any unnecessary and bulky items from the car since it takes more fuel to accelerate a heavy vehicle," she said.

Police/fi e

Cortland man faces weapons charges

A Cortland man was charged recently with pointing a loaded handgun at a woman and her daughter near Main Street and Clinton Avenue in Cortland, police said.

Corey D. Grier, 38, of 4 Washington St., Apt. 1, brandished the .22-caliber weapon about 11:10 a.m. Feb. 14 while driving south on Church Street, police said. The 42-year-old woman and her 16-year-old daughter did not know Grier, but did get his license plate number.

Police said a Cortland County sheriff's officer found the vehicle in the parking lot of Thrifty Shopper on Route 222 in Cortlandville.

Cortland police recovered the semiautomatic handgun, which bore no make, model or serial number. They also found Grier with oxycodone pills for which he had no prescription.

Grier was charged with two counts of second-degree possession of a seapon, second-degree criminal use of a firearm, felonies; endangering the welfare of a child, second-

degree menacing and seventh-degree criminal possession of a controlled substance, misdemeanors.

Grier was sent to the Cortland County Jail without bail pending a future court appearance, details of which were unavailable.

Police: Woman used stolen credit card

Accused: Kaitlin R. Duff, 20, of 8 South Ave., Apt. 2, Cortland

Charges: Fourth-degree criminal possession of stolen property, second-degree identity theft, felonies.

Details: Duff tried to make a purchase about 10:30 a.m. Monday from The Daily Grind at 22 Main St. using a credit card that had been reported stolen, Cortland police said.

Legal Actions: Duff was ticketed to appear march 7 in Cortland City Court.

Cortland man charged with felony assault

Accused: Troy A. Schermerhorn, 32, of 32 South Ave., Apt. 2, Cortland

Charges: Second-degree assault and third-degree criminal possession of a weapon, felonies; and second-degree menacing, a misdemeanor.

Details: Schermerhorn was involved in an altercation about 2:15 p.m. Saturday with a 57-year-old acquaintance, during which Schermerhorn pulled a knife and cut the man twice, police said.

The victim refused medical treatment.

Legal Actions: Schermerhorn was ticketed to appear March 11 in Cortland City Court.

Vehicle break-ins probed in Truxton

Cortland County sheriff's officers are investigating the theft of items from a number of vehicles that were locked and parked in the parking lot of Labrador Mountain in Truxton.

Police said someone smashed the windows and removed items from the vehicles in the early afternoon of Sunday.

Police ask that anyone who has information about the thefts call investigators at 607-758-6151.

Coronavirus briefs

Cortland County: 8 new cases

Cortland County saw eight new cases of COVID-19, the state Health Department reported Thursday, bringing the county to a total of 10,255 cases since the pandemic began.

Tompkins and Cayuga counties reported 34 new cases, and one death the state reported Thursday.

The three counties have seen 43,111 cases since the pandemic began in March 2020. The number of people who have died from the virus has risen to 336.

■ No new COVID patients were admitted to Guthrie Cortland Medical Center on Wednesday, the state reported Thursday. The hospital had two COVID patients. Since the pandemic began, 594 Cortland County residents have been hospitalized for COVID. The state Health Department reports 267,117 tests have been administered. The state has reported 113 deaths.

■ Tompkins County saw 17 new cases, the state Health Department reported Thursday. The number of confirmed cases rose to 17,296. The state reports 2,931,798 tests have been administered. Eighty-one Tompkins residents have died.

■ In Cayuga County, the state Health Department reported on Thursday 17 new cases, and one death. Confirmed cases rose to 15,560. The state reports 333,620 tests have been administered, and 143 people have died.

162,018 receive COVID vaccine

The state Health Department reports 29,176 Cortland County

residents have received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine, or 61% of the county's total population. A total of 57.5% of the county has been fully vaccinated.

In Tompkins County, 83,848 people have received at least one dose, or 81.6% of the population; 74.3% are fully vaccinated.

In Cayuga County, 48,994 residents have received at least one dose, or 63.5% of the total population; 59.1% are fully vaccinated.

Statewide, 16.35 million people have received at least one dose, or 88.8% of the state's population; 75.4% of the total population is fully vaccinated.

Cortland County rate now at 174 per 100,000

Cortland County reported 83 new cases of coronavirus from Feb. 17 to Wednesday.

The national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Cortland has 174.44 new cases per 100,000 people over the past week.

Cortland County was listed as having a "high risk" of transmission.

The CDC recommends indoor masking in counties that exceed 50 cases per 100,000 over seven days.

The rates and risk, from the CDC:

Cortland: 174.44 — high
Tompkins: 212.37 — high
Cayuga: 135.81 — high
Onondaga: 167.63 — high
Broome: 216.81 — high
Chenango: 167.35 — high
Tioga: 174.26 — high
Madison: 140.96 — high

Opening night gala for art show moved

Cortland Repertory Theatre Downtown's "Creative Cortland: Community Visual Arts Gallery" opening night gala has been delayed one day, and will now be 5 to 8 p.m. Saturday.

The show has been put off because of a coming storm expected to drop 7 to 10 inches of snow on the greater Cortland area.

The grand hall at 24-26 Port Watson St., is showcasing some of Cortland's best visual artists with this juried exhibition.

Admission is \$10.

The gallery will be open for viewing noon to 4 p.m. Saturday and then will close from 4 to 5 p.m. for cleaning. CRT will reopen for the Gala Opening Event from 5 to 8 p.m.

Artists will meet guests and the show will feature live, in-person painting displays, a cash bar and snacks.

The gallery will also be open for viewing from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays through March 6, and noon to 5 p.m. weekends. There will be a First Friday event 5 to 8 p.m. March 4. Entrance at these times is \$5.

For gallery opening and the First Friday event, show proof of vaccination and a photo ID.

To visit the gallery at other times, proof of vaccination not required.

Masks are required to be worn when moving around the building and are highly encouraged except when eating or drinking.

50 evacuated as pool chemicals mixed at hotel

Fifty people were evacuated Wednesday afternoon from the Hampton Inn Hotel on River Street in Cortland after pool chemicals were mixed, creating chlorine gas, city firefighters said.

Someone accidentally mixed muriatic acid and sodium hypochlorite, creating the toxic gas, about 1:54 p.m. Deputy Chief Michael Ten Kate said in a release.

The hotel began evacuating people before firefighters arrived.

Firefighters in protective gear and respirators competed the evacuation and ventilated the building.

The hazardous materials team then removed the chemicals.

The building was declared safe to reoccupy by 8:30 p.m.

Both chemical are common in commercial and residential settings, firefighters said, advising people to keep them separated and in clearly labeled containers.

Two people were evaluated by medics at the scene.

Cortlandville and Homer fire departments provided mutual aid.

The state Office of Emergency Management, the state Department of Environmental Conservation, the Cortland County Health Department, state Office of Fire Prevention and Control, TNR Environmental Services and TLC Emergency Medical Service all responded.

Romer, Chasing Neon up for SAMMY awards

By KATIE KEYSER
Living and Leisure Editor
living@cortlandstandard.net

Musician Steve Romer is up for a Best Rock Award for his "Slow Demise" album in this year's Syracuse Area Music Awards, which honors the best work in the past year by regional artists. Chasing Neon of Cortland and Groton is in the running for People's Choice award, facing Bryan Syrell for the honor. Anyone can vote in this category, a web-based competition to see "whose fans are the most psyched about their favorites," according to SAMMY officials.



Romer
Voting runs through Monday at syracuseareamusic.com/peoples-choice.

This year's SAMMY slate saw 161 artists submit 171 recordings. An independent panel of music industry professionals and educators from around the country review submissions.

A Hall of Fame induction dinner takes place 7 to 10 p.m. March 3 at Dinosaur Barbecue in Syracuse. Tickets are \$30 and can be obtained at syracuseareamusic.com/tickets. People can see the ceremony at a free online streaming event.

The SAMMY award show will take place 7 p.m. March 4 at Oncenter Crouse Hinds Theater in Syracuse. Tickets are \$25 at ticketmaster.com. Online streaming is available for \$15.

Romer, a regular at breweries and bars, is being considered in the Best Rock category for his five-song release, "Slow Demise," which can be heard on YouTube, Spotify and Ama-



Chasing Neon, from left: Scott Marlette, standing, Nick Stark and Paul Dudek on drums.

zon. Romer plays solo, in duos and in full bands.

Other musicians in the Best Rock category are Everneau for "Revolution," Jeff Gordon's "Local Boy," McWray's "Thunderlin," Not Robots! "Not Robots," and Tommy Gunn's "Chulo."

Nick Stark of Freeville, singer/guitarist, Paul Dudek of Cortland, drummer and Scott Marlette of Groton, lead guitarist and backing vocals, are Chasing Neon. Chauncy Bennett IV, sound engineer, is just as integral to the band, Stark said.

"I am super excited about it," Stark said of the People's Choice award. "We thought about doing it last year. We were still growing. It's a lot of work to push this sort of thing.

There are seven weeks of voting to the finals. We wanted to make sure we were ready for it."

Chasing Neon, a party band that plays covers, is looking at its third year as a group in November. It plays wineries, breweries, big concerts and NASCAR races around the country, performing Garth Brooks, Tom Petty, Britney Spears songs, "whatever gets people moving," said Stark, former member of Small Town Shade. The band will appear Saturday at the St. Charles Hotel in Cortland.

Chasing Neon has landed gigs at Turning Stone and will head to Florida for a gig at Daytona Beach. It regularly plays at American Flat Track Motorcycle races around the

South. Band mates all have full-time jobs. Stark has previously won the same award twice with Small Town Shade. "I'm excited for my bandmates to experience this."

Stark plugged Romer's nomination and said Lonnie Park of Freeville produced Marcellus man Jon Rogalia's album being considered in the Best Country category.

Stark said a Kegs Canalside gig at Weedsport that featured Lee Brice was a highlight for him, playing for 4,500 people. "It was a defining moment for us. I felt like drunk on adrenaline. We got off stage. 'Oh my God. I don't remember any of that.' The crowd, you could stop singing and hear the crowd."

Olympics and history

I've been thinking about the Winter Olympics. By the time this column runs, the Olympics will be over, but as I write on Feb. 17, they are as entertaining as ever with the closing ceremony coming up in just a few days.

My wife, Alex, and I always get into the Olympic spirit and spend night after night watching NBC's coverage of the events. This year has been no different. Every night, we settle in to watch highlights and live events of the Beijing games. We love the competition, the drama and, yes, the history attached to the Olympics. But this year it feels a bit like we're the only ones watching.

There is a lot going on in the world. Ukraine is under threat from Russia. The fallout from the war in Afghanistan continues. China stands accused of genocide of the Uyghur people group. Canada's truck drivers have blocked bridges.

The global economy is topsy turvy. Oh, and in case anyone forgot, there's COVID-19. With so much worldwide uncertainty, the Olympics might not look very important at the moment.

NBC has stated that its ratings for the Winter Olympics are its lowest yet. The Winter Olympics are already much less popular in the United States than the summer games, where American athletes dominate a range of competitions.

But historically, the winter games create drama and history that become part of our American identity: the Miracle on Ice in 1980; the 1932 and 1980 winter games in our state's very own Lake Placid; and Shaun White winning medal after medal in snowboarding.

And these Beijing games perhaps haven't lived up to America's expectations. Mikaela Shiffrin did not earn any medals after dominating the world of skiing for years. Men's hockey was eliminated early, women's hockey lost in the gold medal game, and even Shaun White finished fourth and off the podium. And then there's been the doping controversy surrounding Russian figure skater Kamila Valieva.

But if you look a bit closer,

you can find reasons for optimism and joy with these Winter Olympics.

First, while it's easy to focus on the negative of some failed U.S. expectations, look at the successes American athletes have had. Two Americans — Kaillie Humphries and Elena Meyers Taylor won gold and silver, respectively, in women's monobob. If you don't know what monobob is, check it out online. You won't be sorry.

Lindsey Jacobellis won gold in women's snowboard-cross. The amazing Chloe Kim won another gold for snowboarding halfpipe. Erin Jackson won gold for the 500 meter women's speedskating. And there have been plenty of silver and bronze medals won, too. Oh, and Nathan Chen! Wow!

Deep down, I'm disappointed that not as many people have gotten into the Olympics like Alex and I have.

There's so much joy, hope and goodwill associated with the Winter Olympics. And it's just plain fun to talk about. We cheer hard for U.S. athletes, but it's a global event of goodwill, and so we also feel good when men and women from other countries master their craft and earn a medal.

I don't want to sound like I'm scolding people for not tuning in. That's OK if the Olympics aren't your thing. I just think the Olympics offer one big reason for optimism in our crazy world.

And the games have such a long history, and by getting into the spirit of things with each new set of games, we become part of that history, even if we're just sitting on our couch. It's bigger than the host city and the athletes themselves. It fosters a sense of shared history and shared global society. I think we need that spirit nowadays.

The next Olympics are just around the corner. So, if you want to give them a try, stay tuned for the summer games in Paris in 2024. I'll watch with you. Well, I'll be on the couch, but we can catch up on what happened the day after.

Evan Faulkenbury is a history professor at SUNY Cortland.

Historian's take



Evan Faulkenbury

'Possessing Harriet' now at Dowd Theatre

SUNY Cortland's Performing Arts Department will stage "Possessing Harriet," through Sunday at Dowd Fine Arts Theatre.

The play, which was commissioned by the Onondaga Historical Association and debuted in 2018 at Syracuse Stage, tells the true story of a slave, Harriet Powell, who escaped from a Syracuse hotel in 1839 with the aid of Thomas Leonard, a free Black man, and found refuge on the Smith estate in Madison County.

The show explores themes

of slavery, racism and freedom. Tatiana Padro plays Harriet Powell, who was sold at auction in New Orleans at age 14. She came to Syracuse as servant to a wealthy couple visiting from Mississippi.

Playwright Kyle Bass, an assistant professor of theater at Colgate University, met with SUNY Cortland's student actors to talk about the characters. Bass urged them to not worry so much about depicting these characters exactly as they were, but to find the truth in the emotions they grapple with.

With just four actors in the cast, "Possessing Harriet" will use an extended stage that brings the play closer to the audience.

The curtain raises at 7:30 p.m. tonight, Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$10 to \$20 and are available at suncortlandtickets.universitytickets.com/w/ or at the Dowd Fine Arts Center Box Office 9 a.m. to noon Friday.

Face coverings are required. Proof of COVID-19 vaccination, with an ID, or proof of a recent negative PCR test are also required.



Photo provided by SUNY Cortland "Possessing Harriet" is playing at SUNY Cortland's Dowd Theatre.

Notebook

Alanon offered in Cortland

Alanon meetings are available online, via telephone and face to face for those who have been affected by someone else's drinking.

Meetings take place weekly in Cortland and Homer. Call Mary at 607-844-4707 for details. An in-person meeting takes place 7:30 p.m. Sundays at Grace and Holy Spirit Church, 13 Court St., Cortland.

Starting in March, Alanon and Alateen will be live 7 p.m. Thursdays at the YWCA, 14 Clayton Ave., Cortland.

People encourage one another in a confidential setting. There are no dues or fees for membership and no appointment is required.

Generous couple wants to leave waitresses a huge tip

DEAR AMY: My husband and I usually have breakfast several times a week at a local coffee shop.

Over the years, we have become friendly with several of the waitresses.

At this time, there are two women that we would like to give special financial gifts to. One is a single mom whose daughter is a straight-A student and needs money for a school trip to Washington, D.C.; the other one is putting herself through nursing school while working as a waitress and just passed her nursing exam.

Both of these ladies are hard-working, lovely people.

We would like to give them each a financial gift of about \$500, but my husband is afraid that if we do, the word will get around to the other employees at the coffee shop and we will make ourselves targets for anyone who needs money. We can't do this for everyone. How can we handle giving these two gifts without making ourselves look like "soft touches" for anyone else who needs money? We need

your help on this one.

— Frequent Diners

DEAR DINERS: I love your instincts, but I wonder if your worry is misplaced. The biggest hazard here might be that the recipients of your generosity would feel awkward accepting, which would affect the dynamic at your favorite spot.

If you have developed a personal connection with these women, you can approach them and ask for their home address so you can send them a card.

For the first recipient, you can enclose a note saying that you would like to sponsor her daughter's school trip to Washington. For the second, say that you would like to congratulate her on her hard work and that you hope your gift helps to defray some of her school costs.

In your notes, say, "We hope you will keep this gift private. We only ask that someday, if you have the opportunity, you might pay it forward to someone else."

There are also ways to give

Ask Amy By Amy Dickinson

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anonymously (do an internet search).

Anonymous giving is a high-caliber form of generosity, and would also help you to continue to drink your coffee at your favorite spot, knowing that you are a most virtuous tipper.

DEAR AMY: I'm wondering if you are familiar with marriage retreats that supposedly offer a concentrated three-day format to immerse and attack all issues affecting a poor marriage.

These can be very expensive, ranging from \$4,000 to \$12,000 — not including transportation, lodging, and meals. Are they worth it?

Do you have any experience or recommendations?

— Curious

DEAR CURIOUS: I don't have any personal experience with marriage retreats (or "relationship intensives," as they are sometimes called).

I don't see a big downside to leaving one's home in order to concentrate fully on a relationship, although I do believe that a lot of wisdom can also be gleaned by intentionally spending time with couples who have successful long-term relationships, and by learning the various ways they negotiate their way toward solutions.

I believe the main utility of a marriage retreat might ac-

tually be that the decision to attend a marriage retreat together helps to demonstrate to each spouse that their partner has a commitment to trying to improve the relationship. Then, when you are in proximity to other similarly committed couples being guided through various communication exercises, the atmosphere can become one of healing and change.

If this works longer term, obviously it would be extremely valuable. Learning to communicate in a new way can completely change a relationship.

If you can afford to try one of these retreats, research it completely before you commit to going. Going into debt to attend an expensive workshop would only amplify your problems.

Attending marriage counseling over the longer term can also be useful, and if you haven't tried that yet, it might be a good place to start.

DEAR AMY: "Loving Hus-

band's" wife wanted to start a new business. He mentions that among his wife's many strong attributes, "being a natural entrepreneur is not one of them."

I believe the couple would benefit from the free assistance of their local SCORE chapter.

SCORE (score.org) is a resource partner of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) with the nation's largest network of volunteer, expert business mentors.

— SCORE Mentor

DEAR MENTOR: During this period of economic and personal "churn," the help and advice offered by SCORE is invaluable.

Seekers can be paired with volunteer mentors by entering their ZIP code on the website.

Kudos for what you and other volunteer mentors do for budding entrepreneurs.

You can email Amy Dickinson at askamy@amydickinson.com or send a letter to Ask Amy, P.O. Box 194, Freeville, NY 13068. You can also follow her on Twitter @askingamy or Facebook.

Our Opinion

Cameras would help police, public

The Cortland County Legislature has considered funding a variety of projects with some of its \$9 million share of federal pandemic stimulus funds.

One of the most recent — and intriguing options — was to buy body cameras for all sheriff's officers and cameras for their vehicles, a proposal approved Thursday night.

The \$200,000 cost of the cameras and related equipment and software is well worth the expense, even when the equipment must eventually be replaced as it ages. After the initial purchase, it would cost \$87,000 a year to maintain the estimated 35 body cameras and 35 dashboard cameras.

The cameras are a great idea. They will show whether police officers act properly in doing their jobs or improperly, should that be the case. It will also record people accused of crimes and may be used to demonstrate their guilt or innocence.

Sheriff Mark Helms was a strong supporter of equipping officers with cameras during a review of the proposed purchase and a state-mandated review of all police agencies that led to his agency's Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative plans in March 2021.

Trust in police has eroded over the years, in large part because of the misdeeds of some of them. We have all seen the news media coverage of high-profile court cases that call into question the actions of some officers, including the murder in May 2020 of George Floyd under the knee of a Minneapolis police officer, caught on video by a bystander.

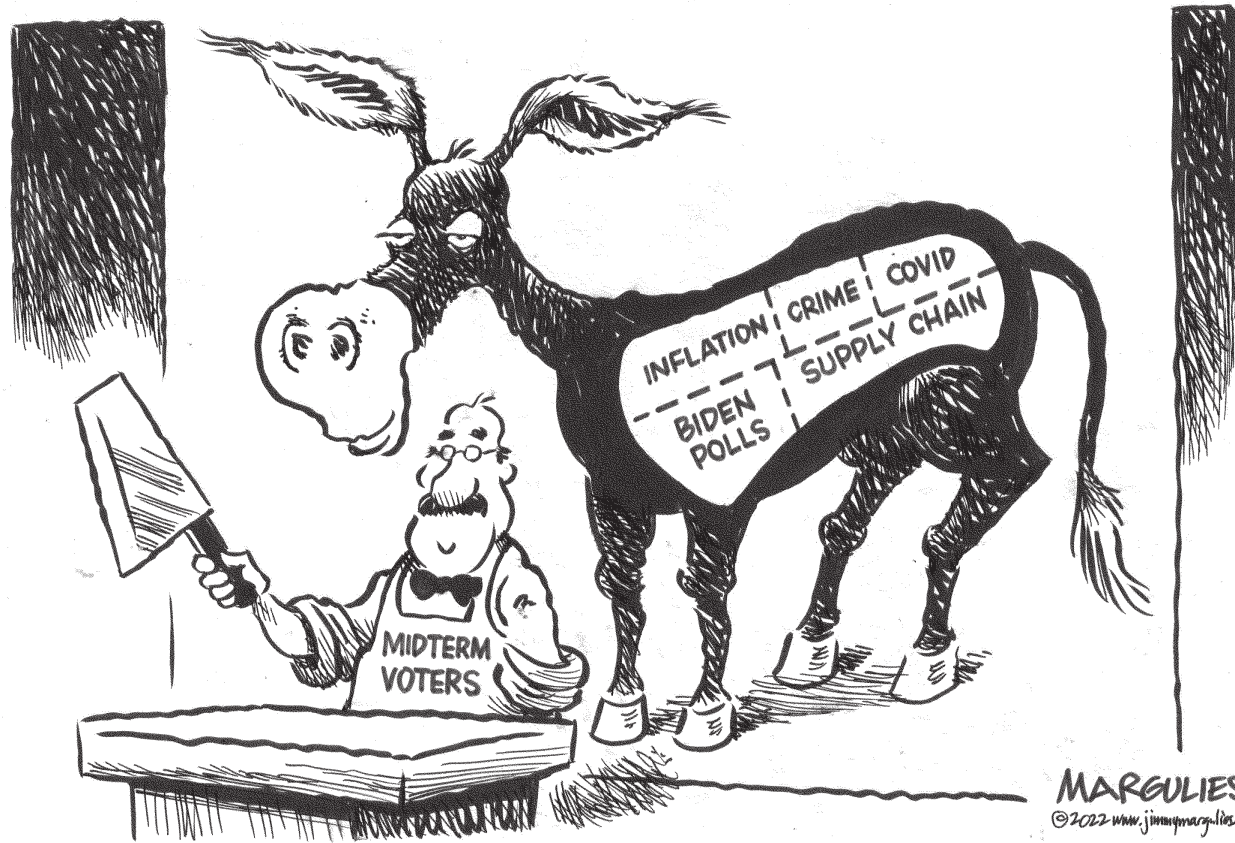
Just Wednesday, a federal court handed down convictions for three men accused of chasing and killing Ahmaud Arbery, a 25-year-old unarmed Black man who had been jogging in their neighborhood in South Georgia.

The case initially two years ago did not result in charges against the men until video of the incident became public. While the video was not from police, it demonstrated the power of video evidence. Police camera evidence after the shooting provided additional context that jurors considered in the defendants' state cases.

Still, audio and video can tell only so much. It is an important piece of telling the stories of police and their interactions with the public.

What they show can lack context. They unblinkingly record what is directly in view or within the range of microphones, but they can miss something beyond that.

Cameras are but one tool, but they can be an important tool, for both the police and the public.



The headlines about the polls are right, of course. President Joe Biden's approval rating is in the toilet, right down there with presidents who stumble into wars, hostage crises, gas shortages and other calamities. Or worse.

Biden has done none of those things, thankfully.

We stumbled out of a war, not into one. Fewer troops are in harm's way. The economy, while certainly not as strong as the administration's cheerleaders relentlessly claim, is by no means foundering the way it was when both inflation and unemployment were in the double digits, not to mention America being held hostage.

Yes, the president has been seen closing his eyes at inappropriate moments. And, more seriously, the administration has come to be seen as unreliable when it comes to the pandemic, the proof being the growing divide between the governors and the public, on the one hand, and the administration on the other. It is one thing to have governors against you; the public is another matter.

But the underlying reason we can even think of getting rid of our masks is that the pandemic has become more manageable in the year since Biden became president. No, he didn't cure it, and he didn't stop it, but enough people got vaccinated so that

Biden goes to Ohio

Susan Estrich



our hospitals no longer face the prospect of turning people away — "rationing care" being the euphemism — that so terrified us for two years.

A year ago, it took persistence and more to get a vaccine even if you were in one of the first tiers. I remember the feeling of lifesaving relief when my family was vaccinated. Those appointments were like gold. Today, it takes one call to your local CVS and they'll take you the same day. Vaccines are available to all comers. Antiviral treatments are finally available. Home tests are free.

What more should Biden have done?

Meat costs way too much. So does gasoline, especially in California, where stations literally advertise \$6 gas. There are obvious problems with the supply chain, whatever that entails. The cost of housing, also espe-

cially in California, is absurd, and the prospects for young people buying their first home are an affront to the old definition of the American dream.

Even so. The right job may still be tough to find, both for young and not so young people, but a job for right now has never been easier to find, and the pay has never been better. The complaints you hear these days are more likely to be from employers trying to fill shifts than from employees looking to fill them.

But does anyone give Biden credit for a full employment economy?

Do people say, "Thanks, Joe," when they cash their paycheck?

You can be sure we'd be blaming him for unemployment, if there were any.

And do we say, "Thanks, Joe," when we take off our

masks? With the anti-vax movement, and all the snafus, most Americans got fully vaccinated. Do we give the administration credit? Imagine the hell there would be to pay if it were otherwise.

We may be doing OK, but how many people feel secure about the future? There is the rub.

Former President Donald Trump — and mind you, I'm not yearning for him — was in our faces, all the time. He was many, many things, most of them bad for democracy, but he was relevant, on an hourly and daily basis.

Biden is relevant inside of the Beltway, I have no doubt of that. It's just outside the Beltway where he fades away. He is not in our faces. But he's not in our future either.

Oh, he is taking the requisite trip to Ohio to tout his infrastructure bill, the sort of trip Democrats take for such things. Is that really newsworthy? Are we already running in Ohio?

Political communication has changed. A trip to Ohio won't do it. The Beltway view doesn't sell. Irrelevance easily becomes disapproval. Biden needs to engage people on what matters, on their lives and their insecurities, and until he does, those insecurities will continue to fester at his expense. After all, who else is there to blame?

Good Old Days

February 25, 1972

Sheryl Thompson and her brother Gerry are shown with their coach, Franz Ruedorfer, after an announcement of their selection to the 15-member New York State Alpine Racing Team. Sheryl and Gerry, children of Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Thompson, 11 Hooker Ave., Homer, and members of the Greek Peak Ski Team, were chosen on the basis of their performance in a series of downhill slalom and giant slalom races.

February 25, 1997

Joe Salzano plays the flute for Smith Elementary School students Monday morning. The Choctaw Indian and Italian-American musical artist is acclaimed nationally for his talents as a flutist, recording artist, saxophonist, Composer and educator. Salzano had students join him for tribal dances and they joined in by playing his assortment of hand-made percussion instruments.

February 25, 2012

DRYDEN — Tompkins Cortland Community College plans to lead the way in making the printed textbook obsolete.

Provost John Conners says the college is preparing its next round of grant proposals, to build on the \$70,000 it used this year to help faculty develop and learn to use online course materials that would be free for students — or less expensive than books. The term for them is open source materials.

College students spend hundreds of dollars each semester on textbooks and course materials such as reading packets and workbooks. Conners said Friday it can cost \$2,000 per year, a significant chunk of a student's expenses.

The college shared \$750,000 in funding from Next Generation Learning Challenges, as part of an eight-college consortium called Project Kaleidoscope.

Today in History

The Associated Press

Today is Friday, Feb. 25, the 56th day of 2022. There are 309 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 25, 1964, Muhammad Ali (then known as Cassius Clay) became world heavyweight boxing champion as he defeated Sonny Liston in Miami Beach.

On this date:

In 1901, United States Steel Corp. was incorporated by J.P. Morgan.

In 1913, the 16th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, giving Congress the power to levy and collect income taxes, was declared in effect by Secretary of State Philander Chase Knox.

In 1919, Oregon became the first state to tax gasoline, at one cent per gallon.

In 1954, Gamal Abdel Nasser became Egypt's prime minister after the country's president, Mohammed Naguib, was effectively ousted in a coup.

In 1957, the Supreme Court, in *Butler v. Michigan*, overturned a Michigan statute making it a misdemeanor to sell books containing obscene language that would tend to corrupt "the morals of youth."

In 1973, the Stephen Sondheim musical "A Little Night Music" opened at Broadway's Shubert Theater.

In 1986, President Ferdinand Marcos fled the Philippines after 20 years of rule in the wake of a tainted election; Corazon Aquino assumed the presidency.

In 1991, during the Persian Gulf War, 28 Americans were killed when an Iraqi Scud missile hit a U.S. barracks in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

In 1994, American-born Jewish settler Baruch Goldstein opened fire with an automatic rifle inside the Tomb of the Patriarchs in the West Bank, killing 29 Muslims before he was beaten to death by worshippers.

In 1997, a jury in Media, Pennsylvania, convicted chemical fortune heir John E. du Pont of third-degree murder, deciding he was mentally ill when he shot and killed world-class wrestler David Schultz. (Du Pont died in prison in December 2010 while serving a 13- to 30-year sentence; he was 72.)

In 2010, in Vancouver, the Canadian women beat the United States 2-0 for their third straight Olympic hockey title.

In 2020, U.S. health officials warned that the coronavirus was certain to spread more widely in the United States; the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urged Americans to be prepared. President Donald Trump, speaking in India, said the virus was "very well under control" in the U.S.

By far the top team performance in this year's Winter Olympics in Beijing has been corporate America's breathtaking double-twist ethical backflips.

This is a group of leading brand names that have so loudly been touting their code of ethics, pledging to stand against repressive regimes that abuse human rights.

But here came the Olympic games in China, posing their first test, and it was not really a tough one. They were not asked to do anything, but merely to NOT do something — specifically, don't provide ethical legitimacy to the brutally repressive Chinese regime by sponsoring their propagandistic use of the Olympics.

Human rights advocates worldwide had called on global corporate giants to use their economic leverage to send a powerful message of disapproval to the Chinese dictatorship that is routinely committing acts of genocide and political suppression against Uyghurs, Tibetans, Hong Kong citizens and any other dissidents under their rule. Corporate leaders would not have to march, picket or otherwise muss up their high-dollar suits — just don't pay millions of shareholders' dollars to link arms and reputations with rank repression.

Well, if you've watched any of the Olympic broadcasts, you've witnessed the corporate choice: a collective backflip

Corporations win Olympic gold

Jim Hightower



from the high ethical bar of human rights into the pits of crass, unprincipled commercialism. Look, there's the flag of Coca-Cola, and Visa, and Pizza Hut, AirBnb, Intel, Procter & Gamble... and a who's who of America's corporate all-stars. They've paid more than a billion dollars to be proud sponsors of the regime's Olympic show, choosing access to China's leaders and markets over soft goals like ethics.

Well, sniffed one sponsor, raising tizzy political issues "would not advance the cause of sport in which our commitment lies." Really, how sporting is genocide? Another barked that "nobody, nobody cares what happens to Uyghurs, OK?" No, it's not OK, and also not true. And yet another clueless corporate boss cavalierly dismissed ethics by declaring, "Ski and sport have no business in politics... It's common sense."

No, it's cowardice, stupidity and un-Olympian.

Corporate America's CEOs are mostly well-heeled money people who would hardly be considered athletic. Yet, every now and then a few of these soft elites bust out as championship players of an old game called Duck & Dodge.

It's a sport of political finesse played when social conditions reach a boiling point, threatening problems for the corporate order.

In those moments, a few leading executives suddenly come out as social activists to side with the aggrieved. Ducking and dodging their own responsibility for grievances, these players claim that they will fix the system. When public attention drifts, however, so do the fixers, returning to business as usual.

You might recall, for example, the huffing and puffing leaders a year ago when our very democracy was under siege, not only by seditious right-wing extremist groups that stormed the U.S.

Capitol, but also by a clique of pusillanimous, right-wing Congress critters who joined the coup attempt to overthrow the people's democratic vote.

"Outrageous!" shouted some 700 corporate powerhouses in unison, pledging that they would save our democracy. How?

By cutting off the huge campaign donations they'd been giving to those 147 Republican lawmakers who voted to overthrow the election.

Let's pause here for a hypocrisy check: Aren't these born-again democracy champions the very same corporations that've been using their unlimited special-interest cash to purchase lawmakers wholesale and steal the people's political power? Yes... yet they now want us to believe they're our saviors.

But they've quickly reverted to their true selves. Within weeks of so sternly chastising members of Congress' "sedition caucus," the corporate donor class — shhhhh — quietly returned to lavishing bribery bucks on them. AT&T, Boeing, Citigroup, GM, Pfizer and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce are among the corporate phantoms that slipped \$2.4 million in donations last year to members of Congress they had publicly condemned as un-American. It'd make more sense to trust a coyote to guard your last lamb chop than to think that corporations value anything but their own profit.

Letters

The Cortland Standard welcomes letters from readers for publication on this page. All letters submitted must be signed by the writer and include the writer's home address and daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for length and content. Letters are limited to 300 words in length. Letters endorsing or opposing the election of candidates for public office are limited to 200 words. Thank-you notes will not be accepted.

UKRAINE

continued from page 1

which nations take what they want by force. Other nations also announced sanctions, or said they would shortly.

"It was always about naked aggression, about Putin's desire for empire by any means necessary — by bullying Russia's neighbors through coercion and corruption, by changing borders by force, and, ultimately, by choosing a war without a cause," Biden said.

Blinken said in television interviews that he was convinced that Russia was intent on overthrowing the Ukrainian government, telling CBS that Putin wants to "reconstitute the Soviet empire."

Fearing a Russian attack on the capital city, thousands of people went deep underground as night fell, jamming Kyiv's subway stations.

At times it felt almost cheerful. Families ate dinner. Children played. Adults chatted. People brought sleeping bags or dogs or crossword puzzles — anything to alleviate the waiting and the long night ahead.

But the exhaustion was clear on many faces. And the worries.

"Nobody believed that this war would start and that they would take Kyiv directly," said Anton Mironov, waiting out the night in one of the old Soviet metro stations. "I feel mostly fatigue. None of it feels real."

The invasion began early Thursday with a series of mis-

sile strikes, many on key government and military installations, quickly followed by a three-pronged ground assault. Ukrainian and U.S. officials said Russian forces were attacking from the east toward Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city; from the southern region of Crimea, which Russia annexed in 2014; and from Belarus to the north.

Zelenskyy, who had earlier cut diplomatic ties with Moscow and declared martial law, appealed to global leaders, saying that "if you don't help us now, if you fail to offer a powerful assistance to Ukraine, tomorrow the war will knock on your door."

Though Biden said he had no plans to speak with Putin, the Russian leader did have what the Kremlin described as a "serious and frank exchange" with French President Emmanuel Macron.

Both sides claimed to have destroyed some of the other's aircraft and military hardware, though little of that could be confirmed.

Hours after the invasion began, Russian forces seized control of the now-unused Chernobyl plant and its surrounding exclusion zone after a fierce battle, presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak told The Associated Press.

The Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency said it was told by Ukraine of the takeover, adding that there had been "no casualties or destruction at the industrial site."

The 1986 disaster occurred when a nuclear reactor at the plant 130 kilometers (80 miles) north of Kyiv exploded, sending a radioactive cloud across Europe. The damaged reactor was later covered by a protective shell to prevent leaks.

Alyona Shevtsova, adviser to the commander of Ukraine's ground forces, wrote on Facebook that staff members at the Chernobyl plant had been "taken hostage." The White House said it was "outraged" by reports of the detentions.

The Ukrainian Ministry of Defense issued an update saying that though the plant was "likely captured," the country's forces had halted Russia's advance toward Chernihiv and that it was unlikely that Russia had achieved its planned Day One military objectives.

The chief of the NATO alliance, Jens Stoltenberg, said the "brutal act of war" shattered peace in Europe, joining a chorus of world leaders decrying an attack that could cause massive casualties and topple Ukraine's democratically elected government. The conflict shook global financial markets: Stocks plunged and oil prices soared amid concerns that heating bills and food prices would skyrocket.

Condemnation came not only from the U.S. and Europe, but from South Korea, Australia and beyond — and many governments readied new sanctions. Even friendly leaders like Hungary's Viktor Orban sought to distance themselves from Putin.

INTEL

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more powerful Russian army all over their country, with deaths reported on both sides and explosions in several cities. There are fears Russia may try to depose Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, even as Putin claims — in the face of the U.S. intelligence — that Russia is only trying to protect residents of two separatist territories in eastern Ukraine.

Announcing new sanctions on Thursday, President Joe Biden cited his administration's moves to warn of what it knew of Putin's intentions.

"We shared declassified evidence about Russia's plans and false pretext so that there could be no confusion or cover-up about what Putin's doing," he said. "Putin is the aggressor. Putin chose this war. And now he and his country will bear the consequences."

Sen. Mark Warner, a Virginia Democrat who chairs the Senate Intelligence Committee, noted several results of the public campaign: weakening any potential move by Putin to create a "false-flag" operation to justify war, undercutting any potential coup in Kyiv that might have appeared to be led by Ukrainians, and unifying allies who quickly denounced Putin's aggression this week and backed tough sanctions.

"The intelligence community usually doesn't like to share information; they want to hold it close," Warner said in an interview. "What they've done is push the Russian timeline back.

They've also, I think, allowed us to build this coalition that is virtually unprecedented."

Ohio Rep. Mike Turner, the top Republican on the House Intelligence Committee, said the Biden administration's declassifying of information was "incredibly important."

"This has both impacted the international community's view of Putin and has slowed his actions," Turner said. "The goal in releasing intelligence is to permit Ukraine to plan, and any delay in Putin's actions helped Ukraine in the planning to defend itself."

But Turner said the White House should have provided more lethal weapons and air defense capability to Ukraine in advance. He also said that the White House was initially reluctant to provide some of its intelligence findings to Kyiv.

One U.S. official familiar with the intelligence gathering, who was not authorized to comment publicly by name, said the White House shared intelligence with Ukraine about Russia even before the troop buildup began last year and accelerated its sharing throughout the crisis. The official added that the administration reduced constraints to allow findings to be shared with the Ukrainians and more broadly with allies.

Still, Washington and Kyiv were often publicly and privately at odds about the nature of the Russian threat and what needed to be done.

Zelenskyy for months tried to publicly downplay American warnings of an imminent major

outbreak, noting that Ukraine remained locked in an eight-year war over the eastern Donbas region fighting Russian-backed separatists. Zelenskyy did not call up military reservists until Wednesday, when he also announced a 30-day state of emergency.

"The one area that I wish we could have been more effective is convincing the Ukrainians themselves to further mobilize their troops, their reserves," Warner said Thursday. "I'm not saying that would have stopped the Russian invasion. The Russian forces are so overwhelming. But it might have allowed a bit of a better fight."

A Ukrainian government official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive intelligence said Kyiv was convinced about two weeks ago that Russia would invade.

But the government publicly tamped down concerns about an invasion to limit damage to Ukraine's economy and panic in the country, the official said. Any mass mobilization of Ukrainian forces could have given additional pretext to Putin, who repeatedly and falsely claimed Ukraine was planning to attack separatist-held parts of the Donbas.

The official also noted that only on Wednesday did the U.S. sanction the company that built the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline. Zelenskyy and lawmakers from both parties had long pushed for the sanctions on the pipeline, which would carry natural gas from Russia to Germany and bypass Ukraine.

Source: GOP Sen. Inhofe to retire

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Republican Sen. Jim Inhofe plans to announce soon that he will retire from Congress before his six-year term is up, triggering a special election this year in Oklahoma to pick his replacement, according to a person with direct knowledge of the senator's plans.

Inhofe, 87, is expected to serve until the current session of Congress ends in January, the person said. He was elected to a fifth Senate term in 2020.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensi-

tive details.

The timing of the announcement is related to a quirk in Oklahoma law that requires the governor to call a special election if a lawmaker announces they intend to retire before March 1.

The special election would be held concurrently with the statewide primary, runoff and general election. Inhofe's chief of staff is expected to run for the Senate seat and Inhofe is expected to support his candidacy, the person said.

Republicans will be heavily favored to retain the seat, as

Oklahoma hasn't sent a Democrat to the Senate since 1990.

Inhofe's announcement is likely to trigger a series of announcements from Republicans planning to run for the seat.

Among those expected to consider the race are Republican U.S. Reps. Kevin Hern and Markwayne Mullin, former Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives T.W. Shannon, who ran for U.S. Senate in 2014, and Tulsa attorney Gentner Drummond, who is currently running for attorney general. Oklahoma's three-day filing period begins April 13.

HOMER

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Among its concerns, the board cited the location of a truck access point as being dangerously close to a neighboring house on the north side of the property.

State Supreme Court Justice Mark Masler sent the matter back to the village Planning Board on Nov. 29 to provide the

company with a written record explaining the reasons for its decision.

Masler gave the developer 30 days after receiving the Planning Board's document to revise its lawsuit.

Masler issued a stipulation of discontinuation Feb. 4, noting the site was sold to an unnamed party after he sent the matter

back to the planning board, and the developer had withdrawn its application.

According to the Cortland County Real Property Tax Services office, GVN, the company that owned the site when the application was submitted to the village Planning Board, sold the property on Dec. 29 to DM3 of Cortland for \$525,000.

CDC to significantly ease pandemic mask guidelines

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration will significantly loosen federal mask-wearing guidelines to protect against COVID-19 transmission today, according to two people familiar with the matter, meaning most Americans will no longer be advised to wear masks in indoor public settings.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention today will announce a change to the metrics it uses to determine whether to recommend face coverings, shifting from looking at COVID-19 case counts to a more holistic view of risk from the coronavirus to a community. Under current guidelines, masks are recommended for people residing in communities of substantial or high transmission — roughly 95% of U.S. counties, according to the latest data.

The new metrics will still consider caseloads, but also take into account hospitalizations and local hospital capac-

ity, which have been markedly improved during the emergence of the omicron variant. That strain is highly transmissible, but indications are that it is less severe than earlier strains, particularly for people who are fully vaccinated and boosted. Under the new guidelines, the vast majority of Americans will no longer live in areas where indoor masking in public is recommended, based on current data.

The new policy comes as the Biden administration moves to shift its focus to preventing serious illness and death from COVID-19, rather than all instances of infection, as part of a strategy adjustment for a new "phase" in the response as the virus becomes endemic.

The two people familiar with the change spoke on the condition of anonymity to preview the CDC's action before the announcement.

The change comes as nearly all U.S. states that had put in place indoor mask-wearing

mandates for the winter omicron surge are letting them lapse as cases have precipitously dropped nationwide. Some have eliminated the mandates entirely, while others have kept mask-wearing requirements in place for schools and medical facilities.

It was not immediately clear how the new CDC guidance would affect U.S. federal mandates requiring face covering on public transportation.

The CDC's director, Dr. Rochelle Walensky, has said a change has been in the works.

"We must consider hospital capacity as an additional important barometer. Our hospitals need to be able to take care of people with heart attacks and strokes. Our emergency departments can't be so overwhelmed that patients with emergent issues have to wait in line," she said during a White House briefing last week.

However, she declined to give a specific day when the CDC would announce a change.

3 former cops convicted of rights violations in George Floyd killing

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Three former Minneapolis police officers were convicted Thursday of violating George Floyd's civil rights, as a federal jury rejected their arguments that inexperience, improper training or the distraction of shouting bystanders excused them from failing to prevent Floyd's killing.

Tou Thao, J. Alexander Kueng and Thomas Lane were convicted of depriving Floyd of his right to medical care as the 46-year-old Black man was pinned under fellow Officer Derek Chauvin's knee for 9 1/2 minutes while handcuffed, face-down on the street on May 25,

2020. Kueng knelt on Floyd's back, Lane held his legs and Thao kept bystanders back.

Thao and Kueng were also convicted of failing to intervene to stop Chauvin in the videotaped killing that sparked protests in Minneapolis and around the globe as part of a reckoning over racial injustice.

Lane shook his head and looked at his attorney as his verdict was read, according to a pool report. Thao and Kueng showed no visible emotion. Their attorneys declined to comment immediately after the verdict was read.

Acting United States Attorney Charles Kovats called the

convictions a reminder that all sworn law enforcement officers have a duty to intervene.

"These officers had a moral responsibility, a legal obligation and a duty to intervene, and by failing to do so, they committed a crime," Kovats said.

The jury that appeared to be all-white reached the verdicts after two days of deliberations. Lane is white, Kueng is Black and Thao is Hmong American.

Conviction of a federal civil rights violation that results in death is punishable by life in prison or even death, but such sentences are extremely rare. The former officers will remain free on bond pending sentencing.



A Parent's Guide to Cortland County Teens



Myth #4: Allowing kids to drink at home is a "safe" option.

Fact: A recent study found that there is no protective benefit of parental supply of alcohol. Kids who were provided alcohol by their parents had higher odds of binge drinking, alcohol related harm, and symptoms of alcohol use disorder than kids with no supply of alcohol. Cortland County also has a social host ordinance that holds adults responsible for allowing minors to consume alcohol on their property (violators could be faced with a \$250 fine or up to 15 days in jail).

5 Myths About Underage Drinking in Cortland County (and Beyond) Debunked

Do you know the difference between these myths and facts about underage drinking in Cortland County and beyond? Let's clear the air.

Myth #1: Most kids in Cortland County drink alcohol.

Fact: Based on the 2019 youth development survey of over 2,000 7th-12th graders in Cortland County, only 21% of teens report using alcohol at least once in the past 30 days. Only 43% report using alcohol in their lifetime. Most kids in our community are not drinking alcohol.

Myth #2: I can't do anything to stop my kid from drinking, they'll do it no matter what.

Fact: Kids who have a trusting, supportive relationship with their parents, and are provided with clear family rules about alcohol use, are more likely to wait longer before drinking. Not only that, but parents are in a unique position to physically limit access their child has to alcohol in their own home (which survey data shows is the most common place teens in Cortland County access alcohol).

Myth #3: It's better to wait until kids are older to talk about the dangers of alcohol.

Fact: The American Academy of Pediatrics, recommends that parents start talking about the dangers and consequences of alcohol use with their children as early as nine years of age. Based on our youth survey, 5.0% of 7th grade students in Cortland County report drinking alcohol at least one time in the past 30 days. Your child may be exposed to alcohol, or pressured to drink, at a younger age than you might expect so communication early and often is essential.

Myth #5: European teens drink more responsibly because they are "taught" to drink at a younger age at home compared to kids in the U.S.

Fact: Studies show that teens in European countries drink more frequently and get drunk younger than teens in the United States. The percentage of American youth who report drinking in the past 30 days is lower than youth in all Western European Countries with the exception of Iceland.

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Visit upstreamparent.org to read more articles.



Major League Baseball

Deadline looms, labor talks crawl forward

► Steinbrenner joins negotiations, but little progress made

By RONALD BLUM
AP Baseball Writer

JUPITER, Fla. — With less than 4 1/2 days until Major League Baseball's deadline for a labor deal to salvage opening day and a 162-game season, New York Yankees owner Hal Steinbrenner, Houston pitcher Lance McCullers Jr. and Miami infielder Miguel Rojas joined negotiations Thursday.

The sides met for the fourth straight day at Roger Dean Stadium, the idle spring training home of the Marlins and the St. Louis Cardinals. The union made proposals in two small areas, narrowing the number of young players who could earn additional major league service for accomplishments and loosening the union's proposed restrictions on high amateur draft picks in consecutive years. The latter would be an attempt to assist lower revenue teams.

They scheduled another day of talks on Friday.

Players who remained from earlier in the week included the Yankees' Gerrit

Cole and Jameson Taillon, the Mets' Max Scherzer and Francisco Lindor, the Cardinals' Paul Goldschmidt, the Chicago Cubs' Ian Happ, the Brewers' Brent Suter and free agent Andrew Miller.

Players gathered in the first base parking lot with union head Tony Clark, chief negotiator Bruce Meyer and staff before entering the ballpark just before 1 p.m. Steinbrenner, Colorado Rockies CEO Dick Monfort, and San Diego Padres vice chairman Ron Fowler were part of a management delegation that appeared to meet with the union for about 30 minutes before returning to

MLB's meeting room.

MLB told the union that it will cancel regular-season games if a contract is not agreed to by the end of Monday, then made its stance public Wednesday.

Players have not accepted Monday as a deadline and have suggested any missed games could be made up as part of doubleheaders, a method MLB said it will not agree to.

The union told MLB if games are missed and salaries are lost, clubs should not expect players to agree to management's proposals to expand the postseason and to allow advertisements on uniforms and helmets.

Baseball's ninth work stoppage was in its 85th day, and the sessions this week increased the total on core economic issues to just 10 since the lock-out began Dec. 2.

Commissioner Rob Manfred said on Feb. 10 that a minimum of four weeks of training are needed before starting the season. A deal by Monday would allow that plus a few days for players to report to camps in Arizona and Florida.

Players and teams remain far apart on luxury tax thresholds, salary arbitration eligibility, revenue sharing and the size of a pool of money that would go to pre-arbitration players.

High School Basketball

Cincy, Tully, DeRuyter one win from finals

► Section III play ramps up this weekend

By PAUL CIFONELLI
Sports Editor

pcifonelli@cortlandstandard.net
Three local boys basketball teams will have a chance to earn a trip to the Section III finals this weekend.

Cincinnati and DeRuyter will play Saturday in the Class D semifinals at 11 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. Saturday, respectively.

Tully will have its chance to make the championship game at 11:45 a.m. Sunday.

All games will be at the SRC Arena at Onondaga Community College.

Cincinnati, the No. 3 seed, will face No. 15 Town of Webb, also called Old Forge. The Lions got to this point by beating No. 6 Madison 64-58 in overtime at home Tuesday. Cincinnati is the No. 6-ranked team in the state in Class D and currently has a 17-1 record. The Lions are also on a 13-game win streak.

Old Forge is sporting a 9-14 record entering the semifinals and is the Cinderella story of the tournament. The Eskimos topped No. 18 Remsen 67-57 in the play-in round, then upset No. 2 Sackets Harbor on the road, 55-54. Sackets Harbor was 19-1 and No. 7 in the state before that game. Old Forge followed that up with another road win over No. 11 Manlius Pebble Hill, 47-43, in the quarterfinals.

Cincinnati head coach Jim Halstrom knows that Old Forge is not a team to be taken lightly, even if the Lions do feel they're better.

"I know that's what Sackets

Harbor thought, and I'm sure Manlius Pebble Hill thought the same thing," Halstrom said. "But they're a senior-heavy team that's hungry, I know that."

Halstrom believes his team's defense will play an important part in his team advancing to the sectional finals.

"We know a little bit about them, very little, but they probably haven't seen a defense like ours," Halstrom said. "They're a bigger team than we are, so we've got to rebound the ball and play defense."

No. 5 DeRuyter will have a tall task Saturday, as the Rockets will face No. 1 Hamilton. DeRuyter picked up a home win over No. 12 Faith Heritage, 66-50, in the first round, then went on the road and topped No. 4 Belleville-Henderson 69-65 in overtime in the quarterfinals.

Hamilton is one of eight teams that remain unbeaten in New York State in all classes. The Emerald Knights are 22-0 and ranked No. 4 in the state. The team has a 23-game win streak dating back to last season. Hamilton's closest game all season was a 13-point win over Class C Westmoreland, which finished its season 10-12. The Emerald Knights are also coached by Tom Blackford, the winningest coach in Section III boys basketball history. Hamilton beat No. 17 McGraw 85-14 in the first round and No. 8 Oriskany 73-45 in the quarterfinals to reach the semifinals.

DeRuyter head coach Ric Barnes knows that this won't be an easy game, but says his players will be able to handle the big moment.

"We have three players who have played in these games before," Barnes said. "We have

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High School Hockey



Matt Czeitner/staff reporter

Cortland/Homer's Tanner Douglass looks for an opening against Whitesboro. Douglass had two goals and two assists in the Golden Eagles' 8-1 victory at home Thursday night.

Fast start, quick finish

Golden Eagles win big, will play Lakers for sectional title

By MATT CZEITNER
Sports Reporter

mczeitner@cortlandstandard.net

The Cortland/Homer ice hockey team got off to an early lead and maintained control of the game from start to finish, cruising to an 8-1 victory over Whitesboro in the semifinals of the Section III Division II tournament.

Cortland/Homer wasted no time getting on the board, as Tanner Douglass scored with 13:55 remaining in the first period. A minute later, Tucker Gabriel made it 2-0 when he smoked a wrist shot past Whitesboro goalie Kristian Matthews.

Douglass scored again with 8:29 left in the period on a wonderful assist from Andrew Partigianoni from behind the net. That was followed by a one-timer from Cooper Swartz on a pass from Liam O'Connor.

Just like that it was 4-0, and Cortland/Homer wouldn't be challenged the rest of the way.

Getting off to a quick start has been a weak area for the Golden Eagles all season, but

Homer/Cortland
Whitesboro

8
1

BOYS ICE HOCKEY

head coach Matt Caron believes the time off before their game Thursday played a huge factor in the early-game success.

"I think the time away made us really hungry, we haven't been in this building in a month and it was nice to come home to our home fans," Caron said. "We really came out in that first period with a lot of energy. It was nice to see that lead after one."

In the second period, Whitesboro got an early goal, but Cortland/Homer responded with three goals of its own to increase the lead to 7-1.

It began when Douglass found Partigianoni for a short-handed goal with 8:48 left. With 5:52 left, after the puck bounced around in front of the crease, Cooper Swartz scored his second goal of the night. With 45 seconds left, Gabriel also netted his second

of the night. Logan Goodman scored a goal in the third period to cap off the win.

Although the offense exploded in the win, the defense was also tremendous. Cortland/Homer held Whitesboro to only 11 shots on goal and did not allow the Warriors to get anything going offensively.

"We've asked our defense to join the offensive flow, we've asked them not to stay home, be more aggressive and be that fourth forward in the zone," Caron said. "It makes a tremendous difference with them moving forward. When our defense is doing that, we are a much better team."

Douglass finished with two goals and two assists. Cooper Swartz and Gabriel each had two goals, Partigianoni had four assists to go along with his lone goal. Goodman had one goal and one assist. Logan Swartz (2), Jacob Couture (2), O'Connor (2) and Hunter Everle (1) also registered assists.

Cortland/Homer is set to take on Skaneateles in the Section III Division II title

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Tennis

Kyrgios: I had suicidal thoughts

By HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Tennis Writer

Tennis pro Nick Kyrgios says he had "suicidal thoughts" and dealt with depression and abuse of drugs and alcohol in the past, the latest in a series of high-profile athletes to speak publicly and frankly about their mental health.

The 26-year-old Australian, who has been ranked as high as No. 13 in singles and recently won the Australian Open men's doubles title, wrote in a message posted Thursday on his verified Instagram account that he now is "proud to say I've completely turned myself around and have a completely different outlook on everything."

Kyrgios included a photograph of himself sitting at a tennis court that he

said was taken three years ago at the Australian Open.

He called that time "one of my darkest periods" and pointed out that his right arm in that photo displays what he called evidence of "self harm."

"I was having suicidal thoughts and was literally struggling to get out of bed, let alone play in front of millions. I was lonely, depressed, negative, abusing alcohol, drugs, pushed away family & friends," Kyrgios wrote. "I felt as if I couldn't talk or trust anyone. This was a result of not opening up and refusing to lean on my loved ones and simply just push myself little by little to be positive."

Kyrgios, currently ranked 137th, is one of the most entertaining, enigmatic

and polarizing athletes in his sport, simultaneously supremely talented and unconventional on the court and someone who never has been shy about expressing his opinions off it.

This was his most self-revelatory discussion of his mindset, struggles and new perspective.

And he offered to try to help others.

"I know that day to day life can seem extremely exhausting, impossible at times. I understand that you feel if you open up it may make you feel weak, or scared. I'm telling you right now, it's OK, you are not alone. I've been through those times when it seemed as if those positive energetic vibes were

See KYRGIOS, page 8

I was lonely, depressed, negative, abusing alcohol, drugs, pushed away family & friends. I felt as if I couldn't talk or trust anyone.
— Nick Kyrgios



Associated Press

Nick Kyrgios posted Thursday on his Instagram account that he now is "proud to say I've completely turned myself around."

Road Racing

NYC Marathon will increase field to 50,000 runners again

NEW YORK (AP) — The New York City Marathon will return to full capacity with 50,000 runners this year after the race was canceled in 2020 and limited last fall due to the coronavirus.

The announcement for the Nov. 6 event was made Thursday by New York Road Runners, which operates the marathon.

After the 2019 NYC Marathon set a world record with 53,627 finishers, the 2020 race was called off that June as the city dealt with a public health crisis created by COVID-19.

The marathon returned for its 50th running in November with a shrunken field of 25,010 runners, all of whom were required to show either proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test within 48 hours of the race. Spectators were encouraged to maintain social distancing, and some race-adjacent entertainment elements were scaled back.

Organizers hope the 2022 race will bring the event back to its former standard, including the restoration of on-course entertainment throughout the five-borough course. Runners will have to show proof of full vaccination to enter.

“Every year, runners from all over the world come to New York City because there’s no better race than the New York City Marathon,” New York Mayor Eric Adams said in a statement released by NYRR. “This race is the strongest proof of New York’s unrelenting spirit and determination, and we are proud to announce that, this year, we’ll be back at full capacity.”

NYRR will open an entry drawing for runners in March. There are also chances to enroll via charities and fundraising associated with the marathon. Runners slated to participate in the canceled 2020 race were given the option to re-enter in 2021, 2022 or 2023.

Bills LB coach Bob Babich retires, son takes over job

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. (AP) — Buffalo Bills linebackers coach Bob Babich has retired and is being replaced by his son, Bobby.

The Bills announced several coaching moves Thursday, including the retirement of the elder Babich, who served as their linebackers coach for the past five seasons. He has coached in the NFL since 2003 with the Rams, then with the Bears, Jaguars and Chargers.

His son has been in Buffalo for five seasons, most recently working with the safeties.

John Butler keeps his defensive backs coaching title and also will be the passing game coordinator for head coach Sean McDermott.

Also, Jim Salgado will handle safeties; Marcus West will be an assistant defensive line coach; Cory Harkey an assistant on special teams; Kyle Shurmur and Jaylon Finner as defensive quality control coaches; Nick Lacy a strength and conditioning assistant; and Austin Gund a fellowship coach.

Djokovic loses in Dubai; Medvedev will be No. 1

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Novak Djokovic will fall from No. 1 in the ATP rankings and be replaced by Daniil Medvedev after losing 6-4, 7-6 (4) to Czech qualifier Jiri Vesely in the quarterfinals of the Dubai Championships on Thursday.

Djokovic’s latest stay atop the rankings began on Feb. 3, 2020, and his total of 361 weeks there are the most for any man since the tour’s computerized rankings began in 1973.

On Monday, Medvedev will move up from No. 2 for the first time and become the 27th man to reach No. 1. He won the U.S. Open last September and was the Australian Open runner-up each of the past two years.

Djokovic congratulated Medvedev on Twitter, saying the Russian was “very deserving” of the No. 1 spot.

Medvedev is the first man other than Djokovic, Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal or Andy Murray to be No. 1 since Feb. 1, 2004.

“It’s great for tennis, I think, to have somebody new at world No. 1 again.”

Hot Rangers roll over Caps

NEW YORK (AP) — Alexis Lafrenière and Mika Zibanejad each had a goal and an assist, and the New York Rangers beat the Washington Capitals 4-1 on Thursday night.

Chris Kreider and Barclay Goodrow also scored and Igor Shesterkin stopped 36 shots to help New York win for the fifth time in six games. The Rangers have won eight of their last 11 overall (8-2-1) and nine of 12 (9-1-2) at home.

Alex Ovechkin scored and Ilya Samsonov had 17 saves for Wash-

ington, which had won three of its last four but was playing for the first time since beating Philadelphia a week earlier.

Shesterkin denied T.J. Oshie’s deflection of a point shot by Justin Schultz on a Capitals power play in the opening minute of the third, and then stopped Evgeny Kuznetsov’s follow attempt on the right doorstep. The Rangers’ goalie also had a save on a slap shot by Oshie 3 1/2 minutes into the period.

Kreider made it 3-0 at 6:57 with his 34th of the season. Krieder is two goals behind Toronto’s Auston Mat-

thews for the league lead.

PREDS RETIRE RINNE’S NUMBER

Pekka Rinne, who led the Nashville Predators to their lone Stanley Cup Final in 2017, is adding another first to his long list of accomplishments. The longtime goaltender became the first player to have his jersey retired by the organization when the Predators raised Rinne’s No. 35 to the rafters before Thursday night’s game against Dallas.

“A huge honor. It is. I consider myself very fortunate,” he said.

Kitayama’s 64 good for Honda lead

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP Sports Writer

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. — Kurt Kitayama came into the Honda Classic with 25 previous appearances on the PGA Tour, most of them ending by missing the cut.

He’s on track to do a bit better this week in the Honda Classic.

Kitayama — ranked No. 289 in the world — was nearly flawless at PGA National on Thursday, shooting a 6-under 64 to take a one-shot lead over Daniel Berger, Chris Kirk and Rory Sabbatini. It was Kitayama’s best score in 69 rounds on the PGA Tour, fueled by a career-best run of four consecutive birdies on his second nine.

He qualifies as a surprise leader, considering even he didn’t expect a start like this.

“Maybe not a start like that, but I felt like I’ve been playing well, and I’ve started to figure out my putting to kind of find this kind of round,” said Kitayama, a California native and former UNLV player who has missed cuts 64% of the time — 16 out of 25 — in tour events.

Berger also was bogey-free, and missed an 8-foot birdie try on the par-5 18th to settle for 65.

Peter Uihlein and Danny Willett were among the group at 67. Brooks Koepka, a Palm Beach County native basically playing a home game this week, was in a group at 68. And Joaquin Niemann, the Genesis last week at Riviera in Los Angeles, was 4 under through 12 before giving it all back and settling for an even-par 70.

“I didn’t do anything to really deserve to be 4 or 5 under,” Koepka said. “That’s a great score here. Just



Associated Press

Kurt Kitayama surprised himself by shooting a 64 in the opening round of the Honda Classic. Kitayama has missed the cut 64% of the time.

kind of ho-hummed it around.”

After several days of off-course drama coming from Phil Mickelson’s words, Greg Norman’s wants and the PGA Tour going on the offensive, there may have been hope that on-course events would return to the forefront.

Norman decided he wanted otherwise.

Norman — who runs LIV Golf Investments, the group financed mainly by the Saudi Arabia sovereign wealth fund chaired by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman — offered the latest twist by releasing a letter he sent to PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan. Norman accused Monahan of “bullying and intimidating” players into staying on the tour and spurning the proposed super league Norman has been working on with the Saudis.

He says players want to play. It’s unclear who does; many top players in recent days have insisted other-

wise, and Rory McIlroy went as far as to say the notion was “dead in the water.”

“I know for a fact that many PGA players were and still are interested in playing for a new league, in addition to playing for the Tour,” Norman wrote to Monahan. “What is wrong with that?”

Monahan said this week that players who sign up for a Saudi golf league will lose their PGA Tour membership and should not expect to get it back.

In other news, actual golf was played.

Kitayama started on the back nine, opened with three consecutive birdies, then had the run of four consecutive birdies — capped by rolling in a 20-footer from just off the green on the par-4 6th, his 15th hole of the day.

“Conditions of the course are perfect,” Kitayama said. “It’s just really tough.”

Russia out as Champions League host

By ROB HARRIS
AP Global Soccer Writer

The Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) will no longer host the Champions League final in St. Petersburg after Russia launched a wide-ranging attack on Ukraine Thursday, The Associated Press has learned.

An extraordinary meeting of the UEFA executive committee will be held today to discuss the geopolitical crisis and when officials are set to confirm taking the May 28 showpiece game out of Russia, a person with knowledge of the process said on Thursday. The person spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss private talks.

UEFA did publicly rebuke Russia and said it was dealing with the “situation with the utmost seriousness and

urgency” while confirming the meeting for 0900 GMT today.

“UEFA shares the international community’s significant concern for the security situation developing in Europe and strongly condemns the ongoing Russian military invasion in Ukraine,” the governing body said in a statement.

“We remain resolute in our solidarity with the football community in Ukraine and stand ready to extend our hand to the Ukrainian people.”

The Ukrainian soccer federation issued a statement calling for the Champions League final to be moved and for all Russian club and national teams to be suspended from international competitions.

As Russia’s threats toward Ukraine had grown through the week, the British government and fan groups had already called for the final not to be played in St. Petersburg, where the sta-

dium is sponsored by Russian state-owned energy giant Gazprom.

The company is also the main sponsor of Schalke, but the German second-division club said on Thursday that the Gazprom logo was being removed from its jerseys.

A senior Gazprom executive also quit the supervisory board of the Gelsenkirchen-based club after being a target of U.S. sanctions. Matthias Wamig is CEO of the newly built but never operated Russia-to-Germany Nord Stream 2 pipeline which is a multibillion-dollar project of Gazprom and European companies.

Critics said Schalke was used to popularize Gazprom in Germany as it pushed to construct the gas pipelines under the Baltic Sea, which bypassed Ukraine. Gazprom has been a sponsor since 2006 and provided the cash that fueled a run to the Champions League semifinals in 2011.

KYRGIOS

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never ever going to be reality,” Kyrgios wrote. “Please, don’t feel as if you are alone, if you feel as if you can’t talk to anyone, I’m here, reach out.” He closed with: “This life is beautiful.”

At Melbourne Park in January, Kyrgios and longtime friend Thanasi Kokkinakis became the first pair of Australians to win the men’s doubles title at the Australian Open since 1997.

This was just the fourth appearance as a pair in the main draw of a major tournament for Kyrgios and Kokkinakis.

In singles at the Australian Open, Kyrgios lost in the second round to eventual runner-up Daniil Medvedev.

Kyrgios is known for both booming serves and attempting to catch opponents by surprise with underarm serves. He’s as likely to try a between-the-legs shot as he is to smack a 100 mph forehand. He relishes playing to, and interacting with, a crowd, even chatting with spectators between points to ask where he should hit the ball. He also has been

accused of not always giving his best effort.

When he’s on top of his game, Kyrgios can beat anyone. He is one of only two players, along with Lleyton Hewitt, to win each of his initial matchups against Rafael Nadal, Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic.

His 2014 debut at Wimbledon — as a teenager who was ranked 144th — included a victory against Nadal on the way to the quarterfinals. Kyrgios also made it to the quarterfinals at the 2015 Australian Open, but hasn’t been past the fourth round at a Grand Slam tournament since.

Kyrgios has run into trouble for his words and actions.

In 2019, he was placed on a six-month probation by the ATP Tour after being fined \$113,000 for eight infractions at the Western & Southern Open in Ohio, including insulting a chair umpire and leaving the court to smash a pair of rackets.

Earlier that season, he was defaulted from a match at the Italian Open after throwing a chair. In 2016, he was suspended by the ATP for not trying to win and for insulting fans during the Shanghai Masters.

Chara sets record for games by defenseman

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) — Zdeno Chara broke the NHL record for games by a defenseman Thursday night. The seven-time All-Star was on the ice for the New York Islanders for the opening faceoff against San Jose for his 1,652nd regular-season game. He broke the mark set by Hall of Famer Chris Chelios.

HOCKEY

continued from page 7

game at 5 p.m. Monday at Upstate Medical Arena in Syracuse. The Lakers have defeated the Golden Eagles twice this year and are 20-1 on the season, but the Golden Eagles are very confident heading into the matchup.

“We’ve been expecting this game for a long time and there are no secrets between us, we know what they have and they know what we have,” Caron said. “I think we are going to throw the kitchen sink at them; we are going to attack all day. The pressure is squarely on them, not us. They’ve got to perform and if not, we are going to hopefully steam roll right over them. I think we are hungry and ready to go. I think it will be a good game.”

SECTION

continued from page 7

the experience on this court and in these games that none of the Hamilton players have. We have to limit turnovers to help stop their run outs. Easier said than done, but everyone is aware of what has to happen. We cannot be sloppy with the ball or they will hurt us.”

No. 1 Tully had been a wrecking ball all season until its last game, a 58-57 win over No. 9 Herkimer. The Black Knights will face No. 5 Dolgeville in the semifinals.

Tully hammered No. 16 LaFayette 67-46 in the first round. Tully (21-1) is currently No. 2 in the state in Class C and, before the Herkimer game, had only won one game decided by fewer than 10 points.

Dolgeville is 18-4 and in the same league as West Canada Valley and Waterville, the other two semifinalists. Two of the Blue Devils’ losses this season came to West Canada Valley. To get to this point, Dolgeville had to get through No. 12 Saquoit Valley, 72-34, and No. 4 Weedsport, one of Tully’s league rivals, 65-36. The Blue Devils are ranked No. 18 in the state in Class C.

Despite being the favorites all season, Tully head coach Ryan Dando knows his team will need to continue playing well to make the finals.

“Dolgeville is going to be a huge challenge for us,” Dando said. “They are a very skilled and talented team. They present a lot of challenges, both because of their size but also their athleticism. They like to play up-tempo and get out on the break. When they can set up their press they are at their best, we need to do a good job controlling the tempo of the game and limiting their fastbreak opportunities. We are excited for the challenge, we have proven all year to be at our best in big moments.”

Tickets for this weekend’s games are available at www.section3.org and will also be sold at the door.

Bowling

PARAGON HOME LOANS LEAGUE
Scott Record and Nikolai Grihin were the top two bowlers in the league, with Record’s 693 series topping Grihin’s 676 and Grihin’s 278 game besting Record’s 251.

Scott Evener (246), Jon LaRock (246), Mike Quintero (236), Greg Rotunda (236), Jim Grant Jr. (234) and James Evener (233) bowled games higher than 225 on the men’s side as well. Grant (673), Quintero (660), LaRock (648), Tom DeRusso (597), Jon Talbot (584), Joshua Scott (578), Roger Allen (577), James Evener (576) and Scott Evener (576) added in series scores better than 575.

Stacey Eldred threw a 233 game and a 649 series to lead the women, but Calista VanEpps followed her up with a 232 game and 639 set.

Jaime Rumsey (224), Jackie Newton (215), Kim Record (213), Wahneeta Evener (198), Jenn Hamilton (191), Beth Moon (168), Joan Robinson (161) and Angela Grant (150) notched games of 150 or better. Record (601), Rumsey (557), Hamilton (555), Newton (555) and Evener (522) topped 500 with their series.

Phillips (646), Tuttle (642), Lansdowne (623), Scott (622), Burns (615), Guy (613), Dewey (606), Esposito (603), Platt (595), Kash (582) and Pepper (575) had the series scores of at least 575.

Hi-Lanes leads the league with 380 1/2 points. Total Auto Care (378), Luke Searies Plumbing (356), Cortland Dental (312), Osborne Floor Coverings (308) and Dewey Machine & Tool (290 1/2) round out the league.

GARY’S AUTO/CROWN CITY LEAGUE
Clayton Skinner barely missed a perfect game, finishing with a 290. Billy Maui had the league’s high series with a 740. Maui’s best game was a 258.

Dave Benjamin (298), Gary Hollenbeck (278), Josh Cook (268), Jason Bennett (268), Jim Grant Jr. (268), Ryan Rot (267), David McGowan Jr. (267), Chris Bush (267), Jeramie Hale (264), Sean Babcock (263), Bill Newton (261), Brian Bartholomew (257), Matt Cook (256), Chuck Pitts (256), Gage Rot (255), Tony Blackwell (250), Bill Young (249), Power Wash Kings (249), Paragon Home Loans (248 1/2), Dery’s Midnite Bowlers (47), Jones Shop (45 1/2), Weekend Chaos 2.0 (41), MJ Excavation (35), The Handicappers (34 1/2) and Moon Hill (31 1/2).

TOTAL AUTO CARE LEAGUE
Kenny Counts had a 669 series to lead the league as his team, Hi-Lanes, maintains the top spot in the standings. Joey Esposito’s 258 game was the top in the league.

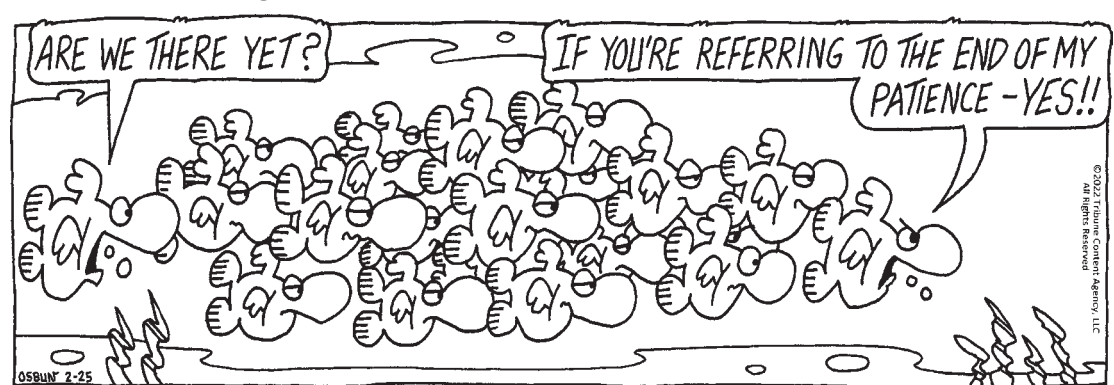
Fred Guy (254, 208), Brian Phillips (246, 215), Devon Tuttle (239, 205), Josh Scott (235), Chris Dewey III (234, 212), Counts (233), Brian Pepper (228), Gary Lansdowne (224, 223), JD Burns (222, 222), Joe Kash II (218), Kory Platt (217, 210), Jim McMullin (210), John Dey (204), Duffy Grippin (202), Mike Paterson (201), Steve Sprouse (201) and Brandon Aylesworth (200) also bowled games of 200 or better.

Phillips (646), Tuttle (642), Lansdowne (623), Scott (622), Burns (615), Guy (613), Dewey (606), Esposito (603), Platt (595), Kash (582) and Pepper (575) had the series scores of at least 575.

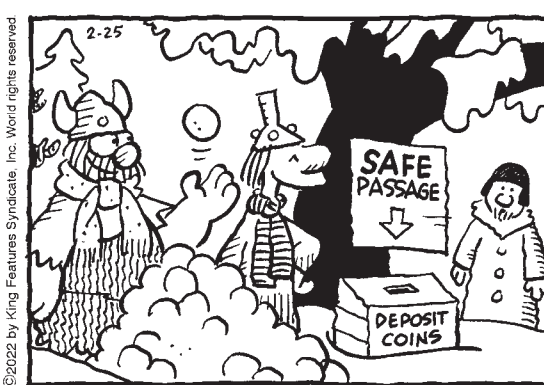
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NE RENOVATIONS leads the league with 63 1/2 points, followed by Schular-Haas Electric (56), David Quail Trucking (55), Jones Shop (54), Bru 64 (54), Pin Hoes (54), 10 in the pit (51) and Wild Ducks (50).

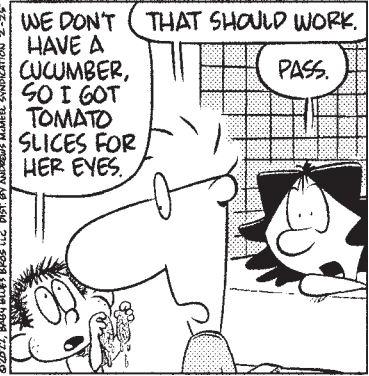
ANIMAL CRACKERS



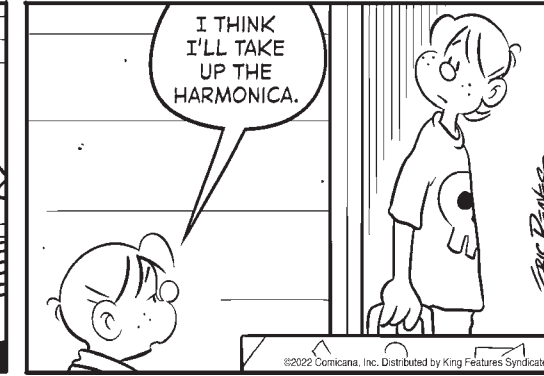
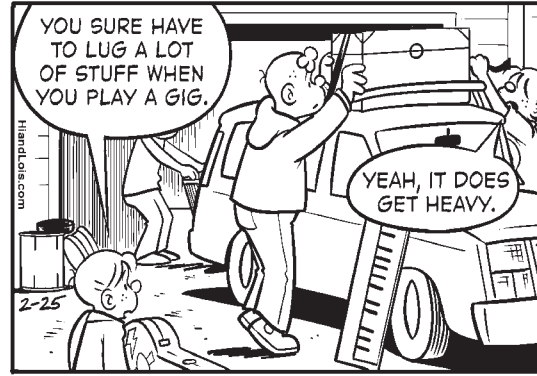
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



BABY BLUES



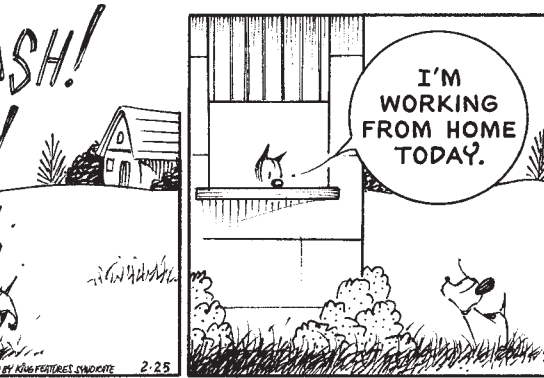
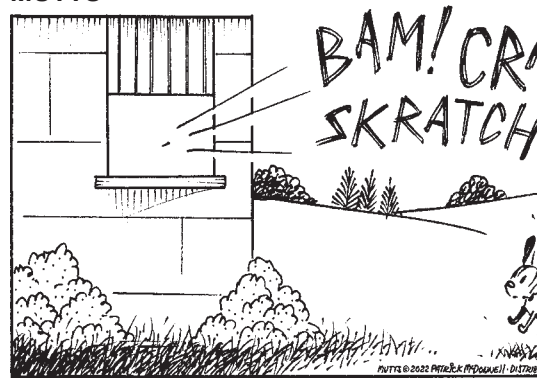
HI AND LOIS



BEETLE BAILEY



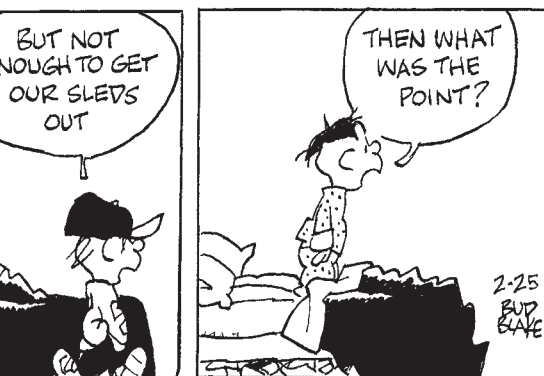
MUTTS



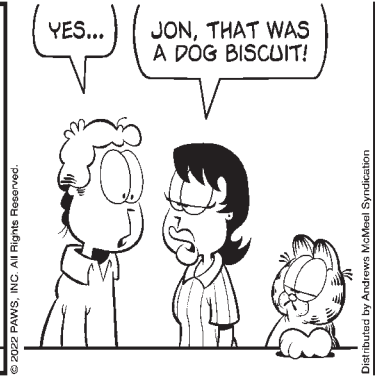
DUSTIN



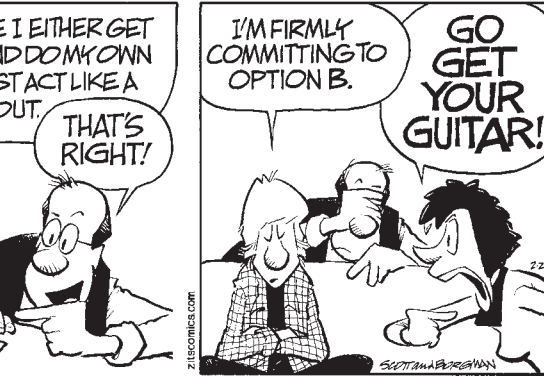
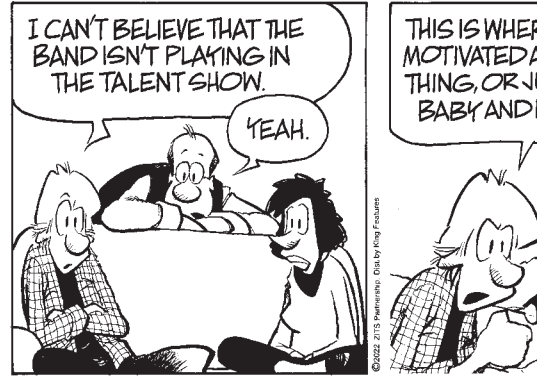
TIGER



GARFIELD



ZITS



Astrological Forecast

By Magi Helena

Saturday, February 26, 2022

BIRTHDAY STAR: Actor Lex Scott Davis was born in Baltimore on this date in 1991.

This birthday star is known to TV fans for her roles as Cass Ray on "Rebel," Quiana Thompson on "The L Word: Generation Q" and Alyse Craig on "Training Day." She also played Kendra on the 2021 mini-series "The Now." On the big screen, Davis' film resume includes performances in "Son of the South," "The First Purge," and "Superfly."

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't pass up a chance to be in the public eye where you might catch an important someone's interest. You could make the right connections to propel your career upwards. Impress new acquaintances with your ingenuity.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Make a splash in your local pond; wear your originality on your sleeve so that you stand out in a crowd. You may receive unexpected advances from a person you have always considered to be just a friend.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): A money-making opportunity might be foremost on your mind. However, a partner or loved one might charm you into spending more time with them.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): This is a time to reap some financial rewards or enjoy the fruits of your labors. You can relax and spend time with congenial companions.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Invoke some team spirit and you should be able to handle any challenging situation. Keep your money in your pocket because you may stumble upon some exciting or unusual items.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): It might be time to heal wounds and soothe hurt feelings. This could be a good period to make amends and put a key relationship back on solid footing.

Explore unusual new concepts and share your findings with loved ones.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Be a contributing member to your community. Your home or neighborhood could be the hub of social activity. Lending a helping hand to a neighbor can bring you in contact with a new network of friends closer to home base.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You and a partner may come up with a plan to increase income. You can overcome a recent misunderstanding by offering a sincere apology. You may learn that reconciliation is not as difficult as you may have feared.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Spread your ideas around like seeds and see if any of them take root. Circulate and meet a variety of new people. You will find that it can be easy to make a good first impression or gain a valuable ally.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Party like it is the best weekend of all time — there should be plenty to celebrate. Friends and allies, as well as casual acquaintances, may influence your ambitions. Keep feelings moderate — don't take anything too personally.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Go with the flow and stop fighting the trends. You might be so wrapped up in wishful thinking that you might not see the opportunity right on your doorstep.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Compromise is the key to making a relationship run smoothly. Someone may have some ideas that bring you together more often, so pay attention to conversations.

IF FEB. 26 IS YOUR BIRTHDAY: Put your financial plans on the back burner during the three to four weeks ahead and focus on developing friendships and a support system.

Sudoku

				8			3	
6								9
3				9	5			1
	2	1				7	5	
			4					8
	8			1				2
	6	9		4				
7								
				2	6	9		

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

1	7	4	6	9	2	8	5	3
6	8	9	1	5	2	4	7	3
5	2	3	7	4	8	6	9	1
2	4	6	3	1	7	9	8	5
8	9	1	2	5	7	4	3	6
3	5	7	9	8	6	1	2	4
4	2	1	7	9	8	6	5	3
9	8	1	5	2	4	7	3	6
7	4	6	3	1	7	9	8	5
2	9	4	1	7	8	5	3	6

ANSWER:

Cryptoquote

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

2-25
CRYPTOQUOTE
ZC VSM G KOH YS HYHIZHD,
VSM KTH KEQ QS FH ZY QGH
DKIH ETHWZBKIH YQ ZY
THXKTW QS CTZHYWD.

— HUFHTQ GMFFKTW
Yesterday's Cryptoquote: WHAT HAPPENS IS NOT AS IMPORTANT AS HOW YOU REACT TO WHAT HAPPENS. — THADDEUS GOLAS

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Caesar subject
 - 6 Fancy neckwear
 - 11 Stand
 - 12 Pound resident
 - 13 Out of style
 - 14 Lazy sort
 - 15 They hold power
 - 16 Writer Brown
 - 18 Bullring cry
 - 19 Swelled head
 - 20 Galoot
 - 21 Sturgeon eggs
 - 22 Finds another purpose for
 - 24 Light touches
 - 25 Took stock?
 - 27 Milk choice
 - 29 Alter, as a program
 - 32 Lot sight
 - 33 Through
 - 34 Writer Stout
 - 35 Bordeaux bud
 - 36 Musical ability
- DOWN**
- 1 Dueling sword
 - 2 Grove fruit
 - 3 Omaha is on it
 - 4 Cart puller
 - 5 Sewing items
 - 6 Imitative
 - 7 Lawn makeup
 - 8 Moab is on it
 - 9 Spotted cat
 - 10 Low cards
 - 17 Neighbor of Germany
 - 23 Total
 - 24 Ab's neighbor
 - 26 Intelligent
 - 27 Egyptian emblem
 - 28 Joe's veep
 - 30 Respectable
 - 31 Brings to bear
 - 33 Air outlets
 - 39 Before, in odes
 - 41 Longoria of TV

B	E	F	I	T	M	A	G	M	A
A	W	A	R	E	A	X	I	O	M
D	E	V	O	N	L	I	N	D	I
O	N	S	E	T	S				
F	A	R	T	R	A	H	I	S	
O	R	A	C	L	E	F	A	D	E
U	N	B	R	E	A	K	A	B	L
L	I	L	I	D	E	N	I	E	D
S	E	E	J	E	T	T	R	I	
						M	A	R	T
C	U	P	I	D					
O	N	I	C	E					
T	O	N	E	D					

Yesterday's answer

- 7 Lawn
- 27 Egyptian
- 8 Moab is on it
- 28 Joe's veep
- 9 Spotted cat
- 30 Respectable
- 10 Low cards
- 31 Brings to bear
- 17 Neighbor of Germany
- 33 Air outlets
- 23 Total
- 39 Before, in odes
- 5 Sewing items
- 41 Longoria of TV
- 26 Intelligent

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11						12			
13						14			
15					16	17		18	
19					20			21	
22			23				24		
		25				26			
27	28				29			30	31
32				33				34	
35				36				37	
38			39			40	41		
42						43			
44						45			

Word of the Day

sashay (sa-SHAY)

Definition: (noun) 1) to make a chassé; 2) a : walk, glide, go; b: to strut or move about in an ostentatious or conspicuous manner; c: to proceed or move in a diagonal or sideways manner

Example of usage: A parade of fashion models sashayed down the catwalk in the designer's latest creations. — Courtesy Merriam-Webster Online

Offerings

St. Anthony's Church welcomes all Sunday

St. Anthony's Church in Cortland welcomes all to 9:30 a.m. Sunday Mass.

The wearing of masks is no longer mandated to attend church services.

The rosary is prayed at 8:50 a.m. before Mass. All are welcome.

St. Anthony's continues to livestream the Sunday Mass at www.facebook.com/stanthonysofcortland.

Weekday Masses are at 5:30 p.m. Monday and 10 a.m. Tuesday.

The Chaplet of Divine Mercy is recited immediately after the Tuesday Mass. All are welcome to join in prayer.

Anthony's will offer its traditional Ash Wednesday simple soup supper March 2. This meal will be take-out only from 4 to 7 p.m. or until gone.

Last year's palms can now be returned to the church.

St. Anthony's accepts donations of nonperishable foods and personal care items for adults and children that will be distributed to local food pantries. Anyone wishing to make a donation is asked to drop off items in the blue bin at the top of the steps at the back entrance of the church.

Confessions are heard by appointment only by calling the parish office at 607-756-9967.

Religious education classes continue to meet weekly directly after Mass. New students are always welcome. Contact Bob or Stephanie at 607-756-6723 or rdensmor@twcny.rr.com for more information.

The church and hall are wheelchair accessible.

Cortland Homer Avenue, Virgil churches to gather

Cortland Homer Avenue and Virgil United Methodist churches will each worship in person this weekend.

Virgil gathers at 9:30 a.m. and Homer Avenue meets at 11 a.m. All ages are welcome.

The readings will be Psalm 99 and 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2. The Gospel reading will be Luke 10:30-37. Pastor Steph's message will be "We Are Called to Radically Break Down Racial Barriers."

The hymns for the day will be "Wounded World that Cries for Healing," "Lift Every Voice and Sing," "Living For Jesus" and "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus."

The Virgil service will be livestreamed at www.facebook.com/VirgilUnitedMethodistChurch/videos.

The Homer Avenue service will be live at www.facebook.com/HAUMC-Live-104156431481016.

McGraw UMC to consider 'The Merciful' Sunday

McGraw United Methodist Church worships at 10 a.m. Sunday.

The reading will be Matthew 5:1-7. Pastor Kim's message will be "The Merciful."

The service is livestreamed at www.facebook.com/McGraw-United-Methodist-Church-2172002063023396/

Bible study and Sunday school are from 9 to 9:30 a.m. The food pantry is open from 6 to 7 p.m. Thursday.

The church building at 20 Main St. is handicapped accessible.

St. Paul Lutheran Church to serve Holy Communion

Pastor Cory Eckstrom will lead the 10:30 a.m. Sunday service will Holy Communion at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Cortland.

The readings will be Deuteronomy 34:1-12, Hebrews 3:1-6 and Luke 9:28-36.

An Ash Wednesday service will be offered at 1 p.m. March 2.

Christ Community Church to explore words of MLK

Christ Community Church worships at 10:30 a.m. Sunday.

The Rev. Rachel MacRose will be preaching. On the final Sunday of Black History Month, the congregation will hear words from the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Worship is offered in person with masks and distance, or online via zoom.

Contact the church at christcommunitychurch-cortland@gmail.com or 607-756-1710 for the Zoom login information.

Christian Science lesson topic: 'Christ Jesus'

This week's Bible lesson in the Christian Science Church is "Christ Jesus."

Jesus commanded His disciples to go out into the world and preach, saying: "The kingdom of God is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." This expectation was for all "them that believe."

Bible stories include Jesus gathering His disciples; teaching in the synagogue "casting out many devils"; throwing the money changers out of the temple and healing "the blind and the lame"; and having to re-gather His disciples after His resurrection to continue their work of preaching and healing.

In "Science and Health," Mary Baker Eddy writes: "Christians are under as direct orders now, as they were then, to be Christlike...to follow the Christ-example, and to heal the sick as well as the sinning."

To hear the entire Bible lesson, all may join worship in-person or via Zoom (on the church website) at 10:30 a.m. Sunday or the testimony meeting at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday.

Visit www.christiansciencedcortland.com for more information and inspiration.

Cortland First UMC meets in person, online

Cortland First United Methodist Church worships in person and via Zoom at 10 a.m. Sunday.

This weekend, the congregation will be celebrating Ash Wednesday Sunday.

The Rev. Eunice Kim's message will be "A Broken Spirit." Her Scripture will be from Psalm 51:1-17.

The liturgist will be Bonnie Heath.

Sunday school begins after the Children's Moment during the worship service.

Women's Bible study is at 6:30 p.m. Monday. The food pantry is open from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Wednesday. The intercessory prayer group is at 1 p.m. Thursday.

A clothing giveaway is the second Saturday of the month.

The church is handicapped accessible.

The new office hours are 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.

'Seeing the Glory' at Homer First UMC

Homer First United Methodist Church has resumed all in-person gatherings and complies with all the rules issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The church offers a livestreaming service on YouTube and public worship at 9:30 a.m. Sunday. Join the livestreaming service using the link from the church website at www.homerfirst.org.

The Rev. Park's message titled "Seeing the Glory" is based on 9:28-36 (37-43).

The food pantry is open from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Tuesdays and 5 to 7 p.m. Thursdays.

Bible study meets at 10 a.m. Tuesdays.

McGrawville Baptist worships in Word, music

McGrawville Baptist Church welcomes all to worship at 9:45 a.m. Sunday.

The hymns will be "O For a Heart to Praise My Lord," "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" and "The Way of the Cross Leads Home."

The Scripture reading will be Matthew 5: 1-12. Pastor Fran Cochran's sermon is titled "You Said What."

The church is handicapped accessible. Safety precautions will be followed.

"Kingdom Adventures" will be offered from 6 to 7:30 p.m. March 3.

Grace and Holy Spirit looks to Luke's Gospel

Grace and Holy Spirit in Cortland offers services at 8 and 10:15 a.m. Sunday in the church sanctuary.

Masks are requested for in-person attendance and services are also offered on Zoom. The 10:15 a.m. service is also on Facebook Live.

This Sunday, the congregation will reflect on the Transfiguration of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke.

A religion class for young children is offered Zoom.

The church offers Cafe Church at 7 p.m. Saturdays in the church hall. Those who wish to join may arrive as early as 6:30 p.m. Coffee, tea, soft drinks and snacks are offered, along with an informal church service. All are welcome.

Lent begins next week with Ash Wednesday. The church will offer in-person and online services at 7:30 a.m., 12:10 p.m. and 7 p.m. Also, "Ashes to Go" will be offered on the street in front of the church from 11 a.m. to noon and 1 to 2 p.m.

The church is a blended Episcopal and ELCA Lutheran community at 13 Court St. in downtown Cortland.

The church is handicapped accessible.

Unitarian Universalist to hold joint worship

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Cortland worships online at 10 a.m. Sunday.

The Revs. Darcey Laine and Mary Grigolia of the Olmsted Unitarian Universalist Congregation will lead a service with the Unitarian Universalist Church of Athens and Sheshequin of Pennsylvania. The program titled "Aging as Awakening."

The church is a welcoming congregation to all who come in peace, no matter the person or whom one loves.

Grace Christian church offers worship, activities

Grace Christian Fellowship in Cortland offers worship services at 8:30 a.m. and 10 a.m. Sunday. Nursery, Grace Kids and Grace Youth worship service are at 10 a.m.

Visit www.gfcccortland.org for more information.

"Your life matters to God, and it matters to us here at Grace Christian Fellowship."

Homer Congregational worships live, online

Homer Congregational Church worships at 10:30 a.m. Sunday.

The Rev. Vicki Burtson will preach based on Exodus 34:29-35 and Luke 9:28-36. The message will explore the moments of decision people face in life.

Faith formation is at 9:30 a.m.

Worship is live or online. Find the link for the service at www.homercc.com.

"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome at the Homer Congregational United Church of Christ."

United Presbyterian welcomes all to worship

United Presbyterian Church in Cortland welcomes all to worship this weekend.

The 9 a.m. informal service in the chapel is followed by the sanctuary service at 10:30 a.m.

The Rev. David H. Johnson will lead worship with a sermon titled "Staying on the Mountain — or Not!" The message is based on Psalm 99 and Luke 9:28-36.

The 10:30 a.m. service is livestreamed via Facebook on the United Presbyterian Church page. The worship bulletin is also available in advance of the service.

After worship, a recording of the service may be viewed on YouTube site at UPC Cortland.

Call the church at 607-756-5689 for more information, to receive a copy of the monthly church newsletter or to leave a message.

Email officeadmin@unitedpresbyterian.net, go online at www.unitedpresbyterian.net or find the church on Facebook.

The church is wheelchair accessible.

St. Margaret's Church looks to Luke 6:39-45

St. Margaret's Church in Homer will worship in person at 4 p.m. Saturday and 10:30 a.m. Sunday.

The Gospel reading will be Luke 6:39-45.

Masks are required to be worn during Mass.

St. Margaret's livestreams Sunday's Mass at www.facebook.com/StMargaretsHomer.

The faith formation program is underway. Visit stmargaret-homer.org to locate the registration form and calendar. Call Lisa Clark at 607-749-2542 for more information.

Anyone who wishes to have a child baptized may contact Deacon Dan Reynolds at dreynolds@syrdio.org.

The church will be organizing an informational meeting for those who might be interested in becoming Catholic through the Rite of Christian Initiation (RCIA) in the near future. Contact Deacon Dan Reynolds at 607-749-2542 or dreynolds@syrdio.org for more information.

Adoration of the blessed Eucharist is offered from noon to 1 p.m. Wednesdays.

St. Margaret's Church is handicapped accessible.

All are welcome.

First Presbyterian Church offers Sunday worship

Worship is at 10 a.m. Sunday at the First Presbyterian Church of Marathon.

Pastor Doug's sermon titled "A Comparison of People" is based on Luke 6:39-49, in which Jesus teaches his disciples about actions being more beneficial than words by using three well-known parables.

Hymns to be sung include "Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty," "My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less" and a closing hymn of congregational choice.

All health and safety precautions will be observed.

Sign-up sheets for workers and supplies for the chicken-and-biscuit dinner March 12 and the Maple Fest on April 2 to 3 are in the church kitchen.

The church is wheelchair accessible.

Preble Congregational gathers for worship

All are welcome to 10 a.m. Sunday worship at Preble Congregational Church.

Bible study meets at 6:30 p.m. Tuesdays.

The community food pantry is held from 4 to 6 p.m. every third Thursday.

The church is at 1953 Preble Road and is handicapped accessible at the side door in the back.

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Bidding quiz

You are South, both sides vulnerable. The bidding has gone:
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1♦ 1♠ Pass ?
What would you bid with each of the following five hands?
1. ♠ A84 ♥ 87 ♦ 653 ♣ KQ974
2. ♠ KJ7 ♥ AJ952 ♦ 64 ♣ K83
3. ♠ 95 ♥ Q83 ♦ A107 ♣ KJ752
4. ♠ Q2 ♥ KJ4 ♦ KQ10 ♣ A10983
5. ♠ J ♥ AQ842 ♦ 985 ♣ J642

1. **Two spades.** It might first be best to define partner's one-spade bid. Most overcalls on the one-level are based on eight to 12 high-card points and a good suit, although partner could have as many as 16 points in high cards. The one-spade overcall should therefore tentatively be regarded as merely a competitive bid and not the equivalent of an opening bid. Though it is not likely that the combined hands contain the wherewithal for game, you should nevertheless raise partner's spades, partly to allow for the possibility that he has a strong hand, and partly to make it more difficult for the opponents to compete. A bid of two clubs would not be wise as it is not forcing and would deny spade support, and at the same time would make it easier for West to bid again at a lower level.

2. **Three spades.** This time game prospects are much brighter, and your three-spade bid invites partner to continue on to four spades if his overall is above the minimum range. Some partnerships play that a cue-bid of two diamonds in this situation would be an invitational spade raise, in which case three spades would be treated as a pre-emptive bid.

3. **One notrump.** Game is unlikely, but it's much better to bid one notrump than to pass. This will give partner another chance to bid if he happens to have a strong hand. It would be wrong to bid two clubs, which would indicate better clubs and would also understate the all-around value of your hand.

4. **Three notrump.** It's hard to imagine a hand partner can have where you won't have a good play for nine tricks. A jump to two notrump (invitational) would be an egregious underbid. Partner might dislike notrump and retreat to four spades, but your values are fully adequate for that contract as well.

5. **Pass.** You shouldn't go looking for trouble by bidding two hearts. Partner's suit should be at least as good as yours, and if he lacked support for hearts and rebid his spades, you'd be worse off than you were before. This is the type of hand that suggests a possible misfit, and experience teaches that the sooner you let go in misfit hands, the better off you will be.

Tomorrow: A giveaway program.
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Low-paying major doesn't have to be a vow of poverty

By ANNA HELHOSKI
NerdWallet

Humanities majors are more than a punchline. Not everyone can or wants to be a STEM major, and the world would be a poorer place if they were.

To have great things to read, music that inspires, perspectives that challenge us — to have a sense of reward and meaning in life — we must have students who pursue college degrees that don't lead directly to a big paycheck.

That turns the pursuit of intellectual curiosity and artistic appreciation into a balancing act: the likelihood you'll make a good living versus the debt you incur along the way.

"I encourage students to find this balance between what they like and what pays," says Nicole Smith, research professor and chief economist at the Georgetown University Center for Education and the Workforce. "I'm not discounting how beneficial these positions are to our society as a whole, but if you can't pay back your student loan, you'll be in a serious state," Smith says.

Liberal arts grads face longer odds compared with science, technology, engineering and mathematics degrees, but a well-chosen humanities major doesn't have to be a vow of poverty.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO RECOUP WHAT YOU PAID?

To assess the value of earning a specific degree at a specific institution, consider the concept of price-to-earnings premium, spearheaded by Michael Itzkowitz, senior fellow of higher education at Third Way, a center-left think tank.

It measures what you pay out of pocket, including loans, against the amount you'll earn each year above the earnings of a typical high school graduate. The results show how quickly you can get a return on investment in your college major.

The majority of liberal arts degrees lead to a "pretty good ROI," says Itzkowitz, but the specific program you graduate with and the type of degree you earn will affect individual outcomes.

The bachelor's degree programs that allow graduates to recoup their costs within five years or less include what you'd expect: Registered nursing, electrical engineering and dental assistants all make the list.

Among the programs with no economic ROI at all: drama, fine arts and anthropology.

Itzkowitz says the majority of college programs enable students to recoup costs within 10 years or less. "College is still worth it the vast majority of the time," he says.

Unfortunately, his research also found nearly one-quarter of all college programs of study show graduates failing to recoup their costs in the 20

years after graduation.

There are several tools that can help you compare data on costs, earnings and debt:

- The College Scorecard, a data tool from the U.S. Department of Education.

- An interactive map of price-to-earnings premiums from Third Way.

- The Buyer Beware tool from the Georgetown Center for Education and the Workforce.

Of course, education and major aren't the only predictors of income. Your wages will also be affected by where you live, your gender and race, whether you work in the public or private sector, and your experience level.

SHOULD YOU GET A GRADUATE DEGREE?

Your humanities degree could go much further if you get an advanced degree — generally, the more education you have, the greater your earnings, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

But you should continue to weigh cost versus benefit since it's also easier to rack up debt. A graduate degree may increase your earning potential, or it may just increase your debt.

For example, if you majored in liberal arts for your bachelor's degree you can expect a median annual wage of \$50,000, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

But if you get a graduate degree in law, taking on more debt, you could earn a median of \$126,930. A master's of fine arts, on the other hand, is unlikely to yield higher earnings: The annual median wage is \$42,000.

Your other options could include a minor in a field with higher earnings, an internship to get on-the-job experience or finding less-expensive graduate programs if your intended field requires it.

If you're taking on additional student debt, remember that the federal government offers payment plans that tie the size of your payment to your income. Most private loans don't.

WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS IF YOUR EARNINGS ARE LOW?

If you're already working in a low-paying field and you have student loan debt, look at how you can lower payments or discharge your debt.

If you're having trouble making payments, consider enrolling in an income-driven repayment plan, which ties payments to your monthly income. Your payment amounts will increase as your earnings do, too.

Those working in public sector fields should learn the ins and outs of public service loan forgiveness, a red-tape-laden process of getting your loans discharged after 10 years of payments on a qualifying payment plan while working full time in a qualifying field.

Treasury: Low-income tenants got bulk of COVID rental aid

WASHINGTON (AP) — More than 80% of the billions of dollars in federal rental assistance aimed at keeping families in their homes during the pandemic went to low-income tenants, the Treasury Department said Thursday.

It also concluded that the largest percentage of tenants receiving pandemic aid were Black followed by households. In the fourth quarter of 2021, Treasury found that more than 40% of tenants getting help were Black and two-thirds of recipients were female-headed households. The data was consistent with what Treasury saw throughout the year.

"This is money that flows from Treasury to every state and territory in the country, and we really have seen a real focus on delivering these dollars," said Noel Andrés Poyo, the deputy assistant secretary for Community Economic Development at Treasury. "It has been encour-

aging from my point of view to see states that are very diverse and to see these agencies lean into something really hard, it was really tough to stand up these programs, this data reflects where the need was."

According to the Eviction Lab at Princeton University, those most likely to face eviction are low-income women, especially women of color. Domestic violence victims and families with children are also at high risk for eviction.

"It's really encouraging to see so much of the rental assistance reaching those most in need: women, Black renters, and low-income households in particular," Peter Hepburn, a research fellow at the Eviction Lab, said. "These are the groups that face highest risk of eviction and who were most severely affected by the economic impacts of the pandemic. They're the ones that this money was meant to help."



Courtesy ParkHouston/TNS

An arrow shows the phony QR code found on a parking station in Houston in January.

Think twice before scanning QR codes

Stateline.org
(TNS)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, people have become accustomed to using their smartphone cameras to scan small black-and-white square bar codes, allowing them instantly to do everything from access restaurant menus to pay bills.

Scanning a Quick Response, or QR code, is convenient and easy. And it is contactless, which can make people feel safer in public places such as restaurants, many of which substituted the codes for paper menus.

But cybersecurity experts say QR codes also created new opportunities for fraudsters, who can tamper with them and direct victims to malicious websites to steal their personal and financial information.

"During the pandemic, they looked at how people were engaging and ways to manipulate that," said Angel Grant, who tracks QR code fraud as vice president of security at F5, a Seattle-based app security company. "Cybercriminals always look for disruption to cause disruption."

One of the newest QR code scams has targeted drivers at pay-to-park kiosks in several large Texas cities.

The scammers slapped stickers with fake QR codes on the pay stations. Drivers who scanned them were directed to a website that asked them to enter their credit card or bank account information.

Just this month, another fake QR code scam targeting drivers popped up in Atlanta. Officials there reported that drivers were finding fake parking tickets with QR codes on their cars, directing them to a phony website. Real parking tickets in Atlanta don't use QR codes.

And sham QR codes aren't just showing up in parking-related scams. They've cropped up on billboards, online ads and in phishing emails, which are designed to trick people into divulging personal information.

Last month, the FBI issued an alert about cybercriminals tampering with QR codes to steal login and financial information. It said the codes not only can redirect payment using phony links but also can contain embedded malware that lets a criminal gain access to a victim's mobile device and financial and personal information.

"It is important to practice caution when entering financial information as well as providing payment through a site navigated to through a QR code," the FBI warned. "Law enforcement cannot guarantee the recovery of lost funds after transfer."

While there is no data on how frequently QR code fraud occurs nationwide, the Better Business Bureau has been seeing a spike in reports about it in the past year. In July, it issued an alert, saying that people may get an email, a direct message on social media, a text message or a piece of mail with a fake QR code. Scanning it can send them to a fraudulent website or automatically launch a payment app.

Among the scams are those dealing with student loans and cryptocurrency.

"Scammers hope you will scan the code right away without taking a closer look," the organization said.

Grant, of the app security company, said she started noticing a surge in QR code scams during the pandemic.

"We saw a huge increase of people using QR codes because of the convenience and the con-

tactless experience," she said. Some of the scammers target people looking for coupons or promotions online or send them an email saying to scan a code to pay their bill, she said. Fraudsters have even struck at restaurants, where they've replaced real QR codes taped to the table that patrons can use to pay for their meal.

"A lot of people have heard of phishing or smishing," she said, referring to phishing that uses text messages. "This is quishing — using a QR code."

Grant said she's also seen more forums on the dark web dedicated to helping cybercriminals understand how they can use QR codes to scam people.

"It's a balance between security and convenience, and people aren't thinking twice about QR codes," she said. "Most people have been trained not to click on something in an email, but we really haven't been educated about QR codes. If you see one taped on the table at a restaurant and it doesn't look right, don't scan it. Just ask for a menu."

The Texas cities that found fake QR codes on their pay-to-park kiosks have hands-on experience dealing with this new form of scam.

Officials first discovered the scheme in San Antonio in late December, and the following month, in Austin and Houston.

"It's unfortunate that this scam happened in Austin," said Jason Redfern, the city's parking manager. "It's definitely taught us some lessons and showed us a vulnerability that we're working very hard to close the loop on, so people will know not to scan the QR code."

Although it appears that so far only Texas cities have been hit by the scam, the Massachusetts State Police issued an alert last month to cities and towns.

"This scam is enticing because QR codes are known for speed and convenience, so a user might prefer this type of payment method to the use of cash or credit card at a pay station," the agency warned.

In Framingham, Massachusetts, police put out a similar warning, noting that the city does not use QR codes.

Nor do any of the three Texas cities that have experienced the problem.

San Antonio Police Lt. Marcus Booth told reporters in December that the QR code stickers were sprinkled on 20 to 40 parking pay stations downtown. He said he thought some drivers had used the phony website and been victimized, although he didn't know how many.

Police spokesperson Mariah Medina told Stateline the department had no additional comment because it is an open investigation.

After San Antonio was struck, officials there notified other Texas cities.

Redfern, Austin's parking manager, said staffers checked all of the city's 900 pay station kiosks in January and discovered phony QR stickers on 29 of them, mostly downtown.

The scammers' web address was somewhat similar to that of the real company that processes payments for city parking, but instead of a .com address it used .xyz, which was a red flag, he said.

Redfern said the city had considered using QR codes for its parking but decided against it. "We were concerned about fraud. And rightfully so, it turns out."

In 2021, Moderna nets \$12B in sales

The Associated Press

COVID-19 vaccine sales jumped 44% for Moderna in the final quarter of 2021, and the drugmaker expects demand for booster shots to fuel more growth in 2022.

Moderna said Thursday it has signed purchase agreements for about \$19 billion in sales for 2022 with options for an additional \$3 billion that would cover any updated boosters the company is developing.

Company leaders told analysts they firmly believe more booster shots will be required next fall, and they expect sales to be greater in the second half of the year.

Shares of the Cambridge, Massachusetts, company soared Thursday, even as broader indexes fell after Russia launched a military attack on Ukraine.

Moderna booster shots have already been administered to more than 40 million people in the U.S.

The company is working to develop several different versions, including one that targets the omicron variant of the virus that started spreading rapidly late last year.

Moderna's Spikevax COVID-19 vaccine is the company's only marketed product and one of three vaccines currently being used in the United States to fight the pandemic. The others are made by Pfizer Inc. and Johnson & Johnson.

The Moderna vaccine is now available in more than 70 countries, and the company is expanding its international manufacturing.

For the full year, Moderna earned \$12.2 billion.

LEGALS

Ella's Treasures LLC. Filed 9/23/21. Office: Cortland Co. SSNY desig. as agent for process & shall mail to: c/o Kelly Yumi Eaton, 4481 State Rte 13, Apt. 1, Truxton, NY 13158. Purpose: General.

Notice of Formation of J&M STONE OF CNY, LLC -- Articles of Organization filed with Secretary of State of New York on 2/3/22. Office location: Cortland County, Secretary of State of New York designated as agent of the limited liability company upon whom process against it may be served. Secretary of State of New York shall mail process to 4866 McDonald Road, Homer, New York 13077 which is the principal office of the limited liability company. The limited liability company was formed for any lawful business purpose.

Notice of Formation of A. FOX OF CNY, LLC -- Articles of Organization filed with Secretary of State of New York on 1/6/22. Office location: Cortland County, Secretary of State of New York designated as agent of the limited liability company upon whom process against it may be served. Secretary of State of New York shall mail process to 42 Burgett Drive, Homer, New York 13077 which is the principal office of the limited liability company. The limited liability company was formed for any lawful business purpose.

Notice of Formation of CARBALLO OF CNY, LLC -- Articles of Organization filed with Secretary of State of New York on 1/6/22. Office location: Cortland County, Secretary of State of New York designated as agent of the limited liability company upon whom process against it may be served. Secretary of State of New York shall mail process to 42 Burgett Drive, Homer, New York 13077. The principal office of the limited liability company is located at 13 Groton Avenue, Cortland, New York 13045. The limited liability company was formed for any lawful business purpose.

NOTICE OF SALE SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF CORTLAND CitiMortgage, Inc., Plaintiff AGAINST Jeffrey L. Harvey, Kendra M Harvey, et al., Defendant(s) Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale duly entered June 1, 2018, I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the Cortland County Courthouse, 46 Greenbush Street, Cortland, NY on March 18, 2022 at 10:00AM, premises known as 3350 Pine Hill Road and Pine Hill Road, Marathon, NY 13803. All that certain plot piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements erected, situate, lying and being in the Town of Marathon, County of Cortland and State of New York, SECTION: 139.00, BLOCK: 02, LOT: 05.000 and 06.000. Approximate amount of judgment \$198,937.34 plus interest and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index #EF17-1121. The aforementioned auction will be conducted in accordance with the CORTLAND County COVID-19 Protocols located on the Office of Court Administration (OCA) website (https://ww2.nycourts.gov/Admin/oca.shtml) and as such all persons must comply with social distancing, wearing masks and screening practices in effect at the time of this foreclosure sale. For sale information, please visit Auction.com at www.Auction.com or call (800) 280-2832. Raymond J. Dague, Esq., Referee Frenkel Lambert Weiss Weisman & Gordon, LLP 53 Gibson Street Bay Shore, NY 11706 01-086348-F00 70664