



Veenstra, Foura recognized for stellar soccer seasons...

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2017

Since 1895 Vol. 123, Issue #264 75¢



Three Rivers COMMERCIAL-NEWS

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'The last full measure of devotion'

Left, John Thomas of Marcellus served three years and on more than 500 missions with the Army's elite Caisson platoon. (Photo by William A. Baltz) Right, Sgt. Thomas and the Caisson platoon prepare to roll out on another mission at Arlington National Cemetery. Photo courtesy of John Thomas

TR honors young veteran from 'The Old Guard'

By William Allen Baltz Special to the Commercial-News

This is part one of a two-part story on veteran John Thomas, with part two to appear in the Friday, Nov. 10 edition of the Commercial-News.

It is at once a somber and stirring scene: Soldiers in full dress uniforms mounted on majestic Percheron horses, equally dignified in their appearance.

Together, in perfect order, they pull a flag-draped casket on a black artillery caisson through the hallowed grounds of Arlington National Cemetery.

The only sound in the otherwise serene and peaceful setting is the rhythmic clip-clop of the horses moving in unison—until that moment when they come to a full stop.

The Caisson platoon of the 1st Battalion, 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment, has arrived at its appointed destination—the final resting place for one so honored by a grateful nation.

The soldiers, sitting ramrod straight on their mounts, know their duty is sacred. Out of respect and by decree they show no sign of emotion.

The horses, having gone through much of the same rigorous training, seem to understand the solemn nature of their task as well—heads high with bodies taught and controlled.

John Thomas, who resides in Marcellus and works in Three Rivers, is intimately familiar with this scene. He knows the meticulous preparation involved to make each military funeral conducted by the Caisson platoon a reverent ceremony of the highest order and, for those who have died in the line of duty, one that honors "the last full measure of devotion" as Abraham Lincoln so eloquently stated in his Gettysburg Address.

"Everything must be perfect every time," says Thomas, who served three years with the Caisson platoon of the 3rd Infantry, which traces its roots to March 17, 1776, when George Washington called Alpha Company "The Old Guard." It is the oldest active duty regiment in the United States Army—and steeped in tradition.

Thomas enlisted in the Army in 2005, motivated to serve after the events of September 11, 2001, when terrorists attacked America. Since childhood, he wanted to become an Airborne Ranger.

During basic training at Fort Benning, Georgia, Thomas attended a briefing about the distinguished history and duties of the 3rd Infantry, which is primarily responsible for overseeing diplomatic arrivals and departures, maintaining the perpetual guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns, and conducting memorial affairs and special events that represent the U.S. Army.

As an infantry unit—and first line of

defense in the National Capital Region/Military District of Washington—it is also required to meet all standards for combat certification.

"After his talk, the recruiter asked us if there were questions. He was looking for any sign of interest. I raised my hand and asked a question. That was sufficient interest to send me to The Old Guard," Thomas says with a smile.

He then went to the 3rd Infantry's base at Fort Myer, Virginia, and for approximately 18 months served in the Commander in Chief Guard and the Spirit of America, a traveling production that features music, historical narration and live-action dramatization to tell the Army's history to public audiences.

Thomas served behind the scenes at presidential inaugurations for George W. Bush and Barack Obama, and in 2006 escorted Betty Ford during the state funeral for her husband, President Gerald Ford, at the U.S. Capitol with further funeral services at Washington National Cathedral.

"I've stood where most people will never stand," he says. "When you stand over a president's casket, it's awe inspiring."

When the Caisson platoon approached Thomas to assess his interest in joining its elite ranks, he seized the opportunity. "As a farm boy from Michigan, I jumped at the chance to get out of the city and into the country."

See THE OLD GUARD, page 3

City Commission approves site plan for sports complex

By Samantha May Staff Writer

THREE RIVERS — The Three Rivers City Commission approved a site plan recommended by the planning commission for the youth sports complex the city intends to build in Lockport Township, following a public hearing that received no comments on Tuesday, Nov. 7.

"Obviously we are in several court cases over this issue, but our intention as a city is to still build this complex next year. When I say complex, I mean that it is a bunch of fields, a bathroom, and concessions, other than that it is a bunch of fields and we want to keep going as judiciously as possible while we wait until next year to build this," Mayor Tom Lowry said.

The approved site plan includes about 79 acres of land with most of the perimeter lined with fencing, gates, and high evergreen ferns mainly to provide a sound barrier. Lowry said, "T-ball and little league, AYSO, which is soccer, and flag football" will be played on the proposed six soccer fields, three football fields, and four baseball fields. The site plan also includes four additional baseball fields, a parking lot, and another building as "future work."

Plans for a playground near the center of the property was also confirmed, after Commissioner Carolyn McNary made a comment about considering an "area for smaller children."

Lowry said after hearing comments from the public over the last four years concerning the project, changes were implemented by the planning commission before the site plan was brought before the commission.

"This is a project that has been four years in the making and we heard from many citizens, both pros and cons. Even the people that were dead set against it had some good ideas that we have implemented and I wanted to acknowledge that," Lowry said.

Lowry said the site plan could see some "tweaking," if needed.

"So, it looks good. Still with additional room if we need to justify it in the future," he said.

A detailed site plan for the sports complex can be viewed online at www.threeriversmi.org, under the City Commission Meeting Minutes and Agendas tab, in the Nov. 7, 2017 city commission meeting agenda packet.

Samantha May can be reached at 279-7488 ext. 23 or samantha@threeriversnews.com.

City authorizes additional funds for citywide sidewalk project

Construction on Day Drive discussed

By Samantha May Staff Writer

THREE RIVERS — The Three Rivers City Commission approved the allocation of additional funds for a citywide sidewalk project on Tuesday,

Nov. 7. The additional funds bring the total purchase order from \$97,000, which was approved on Oct. 3, to around \$102,800.

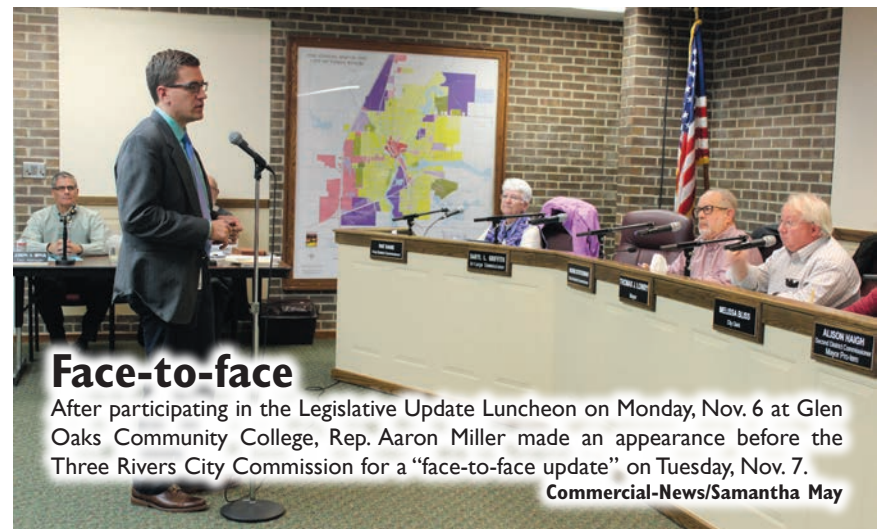
Mayor Tom Lowry said 17 years ago the commission approved the street and sidewalk millage to ensure that "there will be sidewalk on one side of the street on every single block in the city." In 2016, citizens of the city voted to renew the millage for an additional

15 years.

Lowry said the project is 98 percent complete, but Department of Public Services Director Amy Roth said there is still sidewalk in every district that needs extra funds, and "creative options" could be required.

"For example, Oak Street comes to mind in the first district, you have one side that is vacant property and the other side that is kind of the more

See SIDEWALK PROJECT, page 3



Face-to-face

After participating in the Legislative Update Luncheon on Monday, Nov. 6 at Glen Oaks Community College, Rep. Aaron Miller made an appearance before the Three Rivers City Commission for a "face-to-face update" on Tuesday, Nov. 7.

Commercial-News/Samantha May

Christy Linn Senior Loan Officer NMLS: 560488 269.506.5935 christy.linn@ruoff.com www.ruoff.com/christylinn

RIVIERA THEATRE & BAR - Upcoming Events: Bruce Shockley Fri, Nov. 10 8:00 p.m. Free; The Whiskey Charmers Sat, Nov. 11 8:00 p.m. Free



WHAT WE'RE WORKING ON: Meet the Three Rivers Public Library's children's librarian HAVE A GREAT DAY: Gary and Mary Orr



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Friday, Nov. 10

- Childhelp meeting, 6-8 p.m., Firm Foundation Ministries, Centreville.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, 7 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 320 N. Main St., Three Rivers.

Sunday, Nov. 12

- Alcoholics Anonymous meeting with speaker, free and open to the public, 7 p.m., George Washington Carver Center, 436 Jefferson St., Three Rivers.

Monday, Nov. 13

- Three Rivers Airport Board, 6 p.m., airport lounge.
- Constantine School Board, 6 p.m., Mason Township Hall
- Animal Rescue Fund meeting, 7 p.m., ISD office, Centreville.
- Healing Hearts, Christ-centered support group for those who grieve, 7-8:30 p.m., Centreville United Methodist Church.
- Lockport Township Board, 7 p.m., township hall, corner of Holtom and River roads.
- Mendon Village Council, 7 p.m., village hall, 206 W. Main St.

Tuesday, Nov. 14

- Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous (FA), 8:30 a.m., Trinity Episcopal Church, 321 N. Main St., Three Rivers.
- Three Rivers Food Site open, 9 a.m. – noon, 18 Railroad Drive.
- St. Joseph County Transportation Authority, 9:10 a.m., ISD office, 62445 Shimmel Road, Centreville.
- Three Rivers Community Kitchen, 4-5:30 p.m., Trinity Episcopal Church, 321 N. Main St., Three Rivers.
- St. Joseph County Area Marine Corps League, 5:30 p.m., Mendon Village Hall.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, 7 p.m., George Washington Carver Center, 436 Jefferson St., Three Rivers.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, 8 p.m., St. Clare's Catholic Church, 229 N. Dean St., Centreville.

Wednesday, Nov. 15

- Community Corrections Advisory Board, noon, Lake Room of the New Courts Building in Centreville.
- Three Rivers/Mendon Great Start Parent Coalition (GSPC), noon, Riverside Church, 207 E. Michigan Ave., Three Rivers.
- Commission on Aging Board, 1:30 p.m., Three Rivers Community Center, 103 S. Douglas Ave./Enrichment Center, 306 N. Franks Ave., Sturgis
- St. Joseph County Road Commission, 5 p.m., Road Commission office, 20914 M-86, Centreville.
- St. Joseph County Conservation District board, 6 p.m., Conservation District office, 693 E. Main St., Centreville.
- St. Joseph County Animal Control Advisory Board, 7 p.m., St. Joseph County Parks building.
- White Pigeon Village Council, 7 p.m., village office, 118 S. Kalamazoo St.

Honoring Women Veterans

Abiel Fellows Chapter and Amos Sturgis Chapter DAR invite all women veterans of the area to a reception and program on Sunday, November 12 at 2:30 p.m. at the Centreville United Methodist Church. Vern Stillwell of the Air Zoo

and Cameron Brown of Sturgis will present a program. Women are urged to bring items from their service to share. Questions or to RSVP: Jo Cherry 651-1036 or Rebecca Shank 435-4795.

DIVORCES

CENTREVILLE — According to the records in the Office of the St. Joseph County Clerk, Lindsay Joseph County Clerk, Lindsay Oswald, the following divorces were granted by the St. Joseph County Circuit Court.

Timothy Paul Bower of White Cloud and Jenny Anne Bower of Centreville

Kenneth Harold Scott of Three Rivers and Kimberly Renea Scott of Constantine

Troy Matthew Crotser and Jennifer Sue Bailey, both of Three Rivers

Jay Allen Hart of White Pigeon and Ashley Morgan Hart of Grand Rapids

Scott Allen French and Christine Marie French, both of Sturgis

David Lewis Bruischart of

Baldwin and Terry Marie Weinberg of Nottawa

Douglas John Adams and Debra Jean Adams, both of Sturgis

Ronald Ray Ranney, Jr. of Marquette and Kerri Lynn Ranney of Colon

Johnathan Jay Gard and Lisa Diane Gard, both of Three Rivers

Erik Alan William Templin of Three Rivers and Casey Nicole Templin of Florida

David Joe Abner, Jr. and Amelia Sue Abner, both of White Pigeon

Jorge Reyes of Sturgis and Veronica Luna of Indiana

Jason Douglas Hopkins and Kristy Kay Hopkins, both of Sturgis

Stephen Weaver of Constantine and Emilee Weaver of Indiana



Runner makes school history

Three Rivers High School girls' golf coach Josh Bell recognizes senior Carissa Kelley's cross country achievements, which includes being the third fastest runner in school history and receiving the second highest grade-point average in her class.

Commercial-News/Samantha May



Golf stars

Three Rivers High School varsity golf coach Mark Zeimet acknowledges senior Erin Taylor and junior Heidi Hines at the Three Rivers Board of Education meeting on Monday. The girls competed in the Division 3 state girls' golf finals at a course on Michigan State University's campus. Taylor finished in 12th place with a two-day total of 179, while Hines finished with an overall score of 183.

Commercial-News/Samantha May

THE MARKET IN REVIEW

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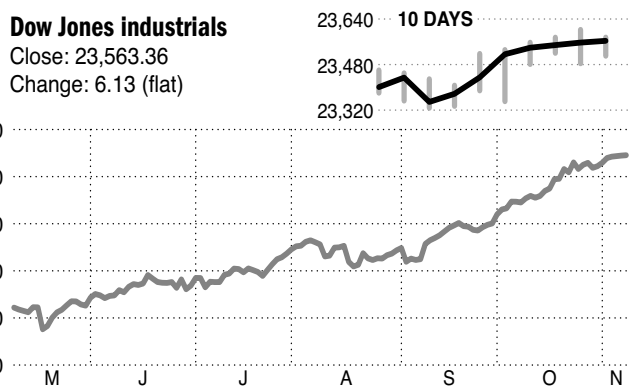


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STOCKS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Name	Ex	Div	Yld	PE	Last	Chg %Chg	YTD	Name	Ex	Div	Yld	PE	Last	Chg %Chg	YTD
AT&T Inc	NY	1.96	5.9	13	33.44	+37	-21.4	HomeDp	NY	3.56	2.2	24	164.05	+39	+22.4
AbbottLab	NY	1.06	1.9	25	55.25	+09	+43.8	Intel	NA	1.09	2.3	20	46.70	-08	+28.8
AmAxl	NY	5	17.56	-35	-9.0	JohnJn	NY	3.36	2.4	20	141.32	+155	+22.7
AEP	NY	2.36	3.1	20	75.52	+33	+19.9	Kadant	NY	.84	8	26	104.30	-15	+70.4
BP PLC	NY	2.38	5.7	30	41.40	-08	+10.8	Kellogg	NY	2.16	3.4	15	62.82	+1.98	-14.8
Cisco	NA	1.16	3.4	18	34.50	+10	+14.2	McDnlds	NY	4.04	2.4	29	170.10	-67	+39.7
CocaCola	NY	1.48	3.2	28	46.18	+24	+11.4	Microsoft	NA	1.68	2.0	30	84.56	+29	+36.1
ConAgra	NY	.85	2.5	19	34.31	+55	-13.2	Oracle	NY	.76	1.5	23	50.54	+05	+32.0
Disney	NY	1.56	1.5	18	101.18	-43	-2.9	PeppiCo	NY	3.22	2.9	23	112.00	+1.53	+7.0
Eaton	NY	2.40	3.0	18	79.05	+38	+17.8	Perrigo	NY	.64	8	...	81.20	+5.0	-2.4
ExxonMbl	NY	3.08	3.7	32	83.47	-11	-7.5	Pfizer	NY	1.28	3.6	14	35.34	-02	+8.8
FifthThird	NA	.64	2.3	11	28.30	-15	+4.9	Stryker	NY	1.70	1.1	27	156.46	+24	+30.6
FordM	NY	.60	5.0	11	12.06	-10	-6	VerizonCm	NY	2.36	5.2	9	45.46	-11	-14.8
GenElec	NY	.96	4.8	17	20.12	-09	-36.3	WalMart	NY	2.04	2.3	20	90.26	+1.31	+30.6
HP Inc	NY	.53	2.5	14	21.42	+04	+44.3	WalBoots	NA	1.60	2.3	14	68.90	+9.8	-16.7
HarleyD	NY	1.45	3.2	14	45.51	+73	-22.0	WellsFargo	NY	1.56	2.9	13	54.26	-7.9	-1.5

Stock Footnotes: g = Dividends and earnings in Canadian dollars. h = Does not meet continued-listing standards. If = Late filing with SEC. n = New in past 52 weeks. pf = Preferred. rs = Stock has undergone a reverse stock split of at least 50 percent within the past year. rt = Right to buy security at a specified price. s = Stock has split by at least 20 percent within the last year. un = Units. vj = In bankruptcy or receivership. wd = When distributed. wi = When issued. wt = Warrants.
Mutual Fund Footnotes: b = Fee covering market costs is paid from fund assets. d = Deferred sales charge, or redemption fee. f = front load (sales charges). m = Multiple fees are charged. NA = not available. p = previous day's net asset value. s = fund split shares during the week. x = fund paid a distribution during the week. Source: The Associated Press. Sales figures are unofficial.

STOCK MARKET INDEXES

52-Week High	Low	Name	Last	Net Chg	%Chg	YTD %Chg	12-mo %Chg
23,602.12	17,994.64	Dow Industrials	23,563.36	+6.13	+0.3	+19.23	+26.75
10,080.51	8,116.68	Dow Transportation	9,630.77	-41.02	-4.2	+6.49	+14.69
759.67	616.19	Dow Utilities	759.59	+6.7	+0.9	+15.16	+17.57
12,443.80	10,416.34	NYSE Composite	12,384.71	+13.47	+1.1	+12.01	+16.36
6,795.52	5,122.77	S&P Composite	6,789.12	+21.34	+3.2	+26.12	+29.29
1,146.19	930.22	S&P 100	1,145.43	+1.29	+1.1	+15.53	+19.38
2,597.02	2,100.59	S&P 500	2,594.38	+3.74	+1.4	+15.88	+19.93
1,845.20	1,498.03	S&P MidCap	1,836.09	+5.47	+3.0	+10.57	+19.18
26,951.57	21,884.59	Wilshire 5000	26,892.52	+37.36	+1.4	+14.80	+19.81
1,514.94	1,164.57	Russell 2000	1,481.73	+2.64	+1.8	+9.18	+20.25

MUTUAL FUNDS

Name	Total Assets Obj (\$Mlns)	NAV	4-wk	12-mo	5-year	Pct Load	Min Init
American Funds AMCPa m	LG	28,790	31.99	+2.0	+23.8/D	+16.0/C	5.75 250
American Funds AmrcnBalA m	MA	62,016	27.56	+1.4	+15.2/B	+11.2/A	5.75 250
American Funds AmrcnMutA m	LV	25,577	41.29	+0.9	+19.2/C	+13.3/C	5.75 250
American Funds BdfAmrcA m	CI	19,730	12.96	+0.2	+1.4/C	+2.0/C	3.75 250
American Funds CptWldGrncA m	WS	56,398	52.59	+2.3	+24.0/C	+11.7/C	5.75 250
American Funds CptWldGrncA m	IH	71,515	63.10	+0.6	+13.6/C	+8.0/B	5.75 250
American Funds EuroPacGrA m	FG	29,114	57.38	+2.7	+28.0/B	+10.1/B	5.75 250
American Funds FdmTlnvsA m	LB	52,942	63.97	+2.5	+24.6/B	+15.9/A	5.75 250
American Funds GrlAmrcA m	LG	84,435	51.83	+3.0	+26.7/C	+16.8/B	5.75 250
American Funds IncAmrcA m	AL	77,067	23.51	+0.8	+14.1/E	+9.7/C	5.75 250
American Funds InvCmrcA m	LB	62,268	41.39	+1.6	+20.4/D	+15.0/C	5.75 250
American Funds NwPrspctA m	WS	41,713	45.23	+2.7	+28.0/A	+13.8/A	5.75 250
American Funds WAMTlnvsA m	LV	56,163	45.58	+1.3	+22.4/A	+14.7/A	5.75 250
Federated EqInc,IncA f	LV	853	25.25	+1.9	+20.3/B	+11.2/E	5.50 1,500
Franklin Templeton WldA m	WS	4,330	17.46	-0.2	+18.3/E	+9.3/E	5.75 1,000
George Putnam BalA m	MA	989	19.81	+1.5	+16.3/A	+10.0/A	5.75 0
Hartford BalC m	MA	168	23.62	+1.0	+14.0/C	+9.1/C	1.00 2,000
Hartford HCC m	SH	242	28.82	-4.1	+21.5/C	+18.4/C	1.00 2,000
Lord Abbett AffiliatedA m	LV	5,777	16.76	+1.0	+19.5/C	+14.1/B	5.75 1,000
Lord Abbett AffiliatedC m	LV	334	16.76	+0.9	+18.7/C	+13.3/C	1.00 1,000
Lord Abbett BdfDebA m	MU	4,444	8.28	+0.6	+10.2/A	+6.5/A	2.25 1,000
Lord Abbett BdfDebC m	MU	1,836	8.30	+0.4	+9.5/A	+5.9/A	1.00 1,000
Lord Abbett MltAsstBalOppA m	MA	1,389	12.14	+0.8	+13.0/D	+8.5/D	2.25 1,500
Vanguard 500IdxAdmrl	LB	224,167	239.83	+1.8	+23.6/B	+15.9/A	NL 10,000
Vanguard IntlSdXlns	LB	138,536	236.62	+1.9	+23.6/B	+15.9/A	NL 5,000,000
Vanguard InsdXlnsPlus	LB	92,835	236.64	+1.9	+23.7/B	+15.9/A	NL 200,000,000
Vanguard TltnSdXlnv	FB	116,279	18.03	+2.3	+25.8/B	+8.2/C	NL 3,000
Vanguard TltnSdXlnvAdmrl	LB	182,030	64.76	+1.4	+23.8/B	+15.7/A	NL 10,000
Vanguard TltnSdXlns	LB	108,166	64.77	+1.4	+23.8/B	+15.7/A	NL 5,000,000
Vanguard TltnSdXlnv	LB	123,434	64.74	+1.4	+23.7/B	+15.6/B	NL 3,000

CI - Intermediate-Term Bond, FB - Foreign Large Blend, IH - World Allocation, LB - Large Blend, LG - Large Growth, LV - Large Value, MA - Moderate Allocation, SH - Health, MU - Multisector Bond, WS - World Stock, Total Return: Chg in NAV with dividends reinvested. Rank: How fund performed vs. others with same objective: A is in top 20%, E in bottom 20%. Min Init Inv: Minimum \$ needed to invest in fund. Source: Morningstar.

THE OLD GUARD

Continued from page 1

He successfully completed an intensive 10-week, 400-hour course on the platoon, its mission and caring for horses. "I grew up on a cow and pig farm with little horse riding experience. When I did, I rode a Western saddle—a Cadillac compared to the McClellan saddle we rode in Caisson, which is just wood, rawhide, leather and brass. There's no padding. All the comfort is for the horse."

The black caissons, two-wheeled wagons originally designed and built in 1918 to haul ammunition and tools for 75mm cannons, feature a flat deck to transport the casket for

each funeral—or mission as it is called by the platoon.

Thomas notes that when the platoon required additional caissons, old ones in disrepair were sent to decedents of the same Amish family that built the original wagons—and came back "as good as new."

The caisson is pulled by a team of six horses, either all black or all white to ensure uniformity, with three riders. The first two horses, nearest the caisson, are called the wheel team; next is the swing team and in front is the lead team.

By tradition, soldiers ride only on the left, or near side. In the

past, horses on the off (right) side carried the rider's gear so they remain empty. Each soldier is responsible for controlling the adjacent horse.

"The wheel team is most important because that's the gas and brakes," Thomas explains. "The swing team turns the caisson—moving in a direction opposite to the turn—and the lead team points the way."

The section sergeant, ultimately in charge of each mission, rides separate from the draft team next to the lead and is the liaison between the platoon and Arlington National Cemetery.

When Thomas served in the Caisson platoon, it consisted of about 40 soldiers and 56 horses with four riding teams. At any given time, two squads are conducting four missions, sometimes five, per day. The other two squads work in the stables and farrier caring for horses of various breeds including Percheron, Morgan and Quarter Horse that come from various states carefully selected for their temperament, build and other specific requirements.

Squads alternate duties each week, which are named: primary, backup, stables and cowboy. "We

train like any other infantry unit during cowboy week. Once we traveled to an abandoned prison to practice clearing a building. You need to be on your game and do what it takes. I was on leave once and no sooner did I get home to Michigan when I was ordered to report back due to an alert. I got four hours sleep and drove 12 hours back to Fort Myer."

For Thomas and others the day began at 4 a.m. by reporting to the Caisson stables to commence with a multitude of tasks including washing horses, fitting their shoes, and thoroughly cleaning barn stalls.

A vast array of regular and ceremonial tack worn by the horses is meticulously shined before fitting the horses with saddles and bridles, then hooking them up to the caissons.

Each quarter, horses and equipment are completely removed from the barns for an extra deep scouring. "We start at 4 a.m. and work until everything is spotless. You are totally exhausted by the end of the day."

(To be continued in Friday's edition of the Commercial-News)

William Allen Baltz is a writer and journalist. His stories can be found at williambaltz.com.

EDITOR'S NOTE

The numbers reported for the city election in Wednesday's paper match the unofficial results posted by the St. Joseph County Clerk's Office, so an additional story about the election numbers has proved to be unnecessary. Out of 261 ballots cast, Tom

Lowry received 199 votes for mayor of Three Rivers, Janell Hart received 218 votes for at-large commissioner, Pat Dane received 207 votes for 1st District commissioner, and Norm Stutesman received 223 votes for 3rd District commissioner.

SIDEWALK PROJECT

Continued from page 1

natural choice. There are very large trees right in the right-of-way," Roth said. "You can't go around them either way, so those become the sidewalks that, do you wait for those trees to die or do you remove the trees to put sidewalk in? So, that is where we are going now, looking at those final stretches and what creative option can we come up with to get sidewalk through there."

Commissioner Carolyn McNary said, "A lot of people don't want a sidewalk in front of their house," and asked if the city considered that before installing sidewalks.

City Manager Joe Bippus said when the project began it was very easy to please the city's residents when it came to the location of sidewalks, but "now

that we are down to the nitty-gritty," more direct methods of sidewalk construction have taken place.

"Now that we are down to the nitty-gritty, its been more known that we have to do it, we are down here, we have been more forceful and more direct when doing it," Bippus said. "As always we try to be accommodating but there comes a point, this is a commission's directive and that the mayor asks every year, that we are trying to fulfill, so if we are not supposed to fulfill it, we need direction on that."

Lowry said the project has been in action for many years and should continue until completed.

"So sometimes we upset some

people but the greater good is what, I think, has to prevail. We want it safe, we want to get kids out of the street, we want access,"

Lowry said. "We told the voters when they passed the millage that we were going to put a sidewalk on every single block."

Roth said she has concerns about the addition of sidewalk along Day Drive. During the meeting on Tuesday, the commission approved the transfer of \$97,000 toward the reconstruction of Day Drive during the 2018 fiscal year.

Bippus said the road has been significantly damaged over the years and "is in terrible condition." He said while other roads in the city also need work, Day Drive should be a priority because it will become the detour

or alternative route for local traffic when US-131 is closed for construction in a couple of years.

"The road is in terrible condition. It does have industries that use it, so I think it is important to have some good alternative streets. We want to do this before 131 goes into construction," Bippus said. "And if you've been down on it recently, it is a mess."

During the time Day Drive is closed for reconstruction, Roth said she hopes to come up with a plan for the addition of a sidewalk, although "it is tight" and a "creative option" is not yet in place.

Samantha May can be reached at 279-7488 ext. 23 or samantha@threeriversnews.com.

Spiritual Renewal Sunday
 First United Methodist Church
 215 Main St.
 Special Speaker
 Dr. Ted Lee
 Special Musician
 Dr. Brian Allen
 Sunday
 Nov. 19, 2017
 10:30 a.m.

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Jason Awe
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Michigan Senate OKs concealed guns in schools, bars

LANSING (AP) — Licensed gun owners with extra training could legally carry inside schools, churches, bars and other pistol-free zones under hotly contested legislation that was approved Wednesday by the Republican-led Michigan Senate, days after the Texas church massacre.

The bills were sent to the GOP-led House for consideration next. They face an uncertain future because Gov. Rick Snyder, a Republican, vetoed a similar plan in 2012 following the mass shooting of elementary schoolchildren in Connecticut.

Snyder is not commenting on the new legislation until or if it wins final legislative passage.

In Michigan, it is illegal for the nearly 618,000 people with concealed weapons permits to carry in designated gun-free zones: schools, day cares, stadiums, large concert halls, taverns, places of worship, hospitals, many college dorms or classrooms, and casinos.

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with Commercial-News readers.

Please fill in the following form and send, along with your recipe, to Three Rivers Media, 124 N. Main St. Three Rivers, 49093 or email to info@threeriversnews.com.

Your Name: _____
 City: _____
 Recipe Name: _____
 I like this recipe because: _____

Please submit by Monday, Nov. 13 to be included in our special Holiday publication which is distributed Wednesday, Nov. 22.

OPINION

VIEWPOINT

Why there's a revolving prison door

New research suggests that strict parole rules contribute to inflated prison populations

By Kahryn Riley

A study released this month by University of Michigan scholar Dr. Jeffrey Morenoff suggests that overly strict criminal justice systems create a self-perpetuating prison population. That is, the practices used to supervise released ex-convicts could be responsible for many of them returning to prison.

Criminal justice researchers often use the phrase “revolving prison door” to refer to the fact that many released ex-offenders end up right back in prison. Morenoff concludes that this is impacted by the stringent post-release supervision requirements that are difficult to comply with. Violation of such requirements then result in re-imprisonment.

Morenoff notes that the great majority of people serving time in Michigan prisons are released on parole under the supervision of the Michigan Department of Corrections before they have served their maximum sentence. (The number of offenders who “max out,” or serve their maximum sentence and are then released without supervision, is very small, only about 3 percent.)

Parole is only a conditional release from prison that a felon is granted in exchange for following a number of rules, such as observing a curfew, participating in mandatory programs, checking in with parole officers and refraining from associating with other felons. If a parolee breaks these rules, he could end up back in prison. This rule-breaking behavior would not result in imprisonment except for the fact that it was committed by a parolee and may be a leading reason why so many felons end up back in prison again.

Morenoff compared the outcomes of felons sentenced to prison versus those placed on probation in their community under the supervision of a court. In Michigan, people who commit felonies have their cases randomly assigned to circuit court judges, allowing Morenoff to approximate a controlled study in which people convicted

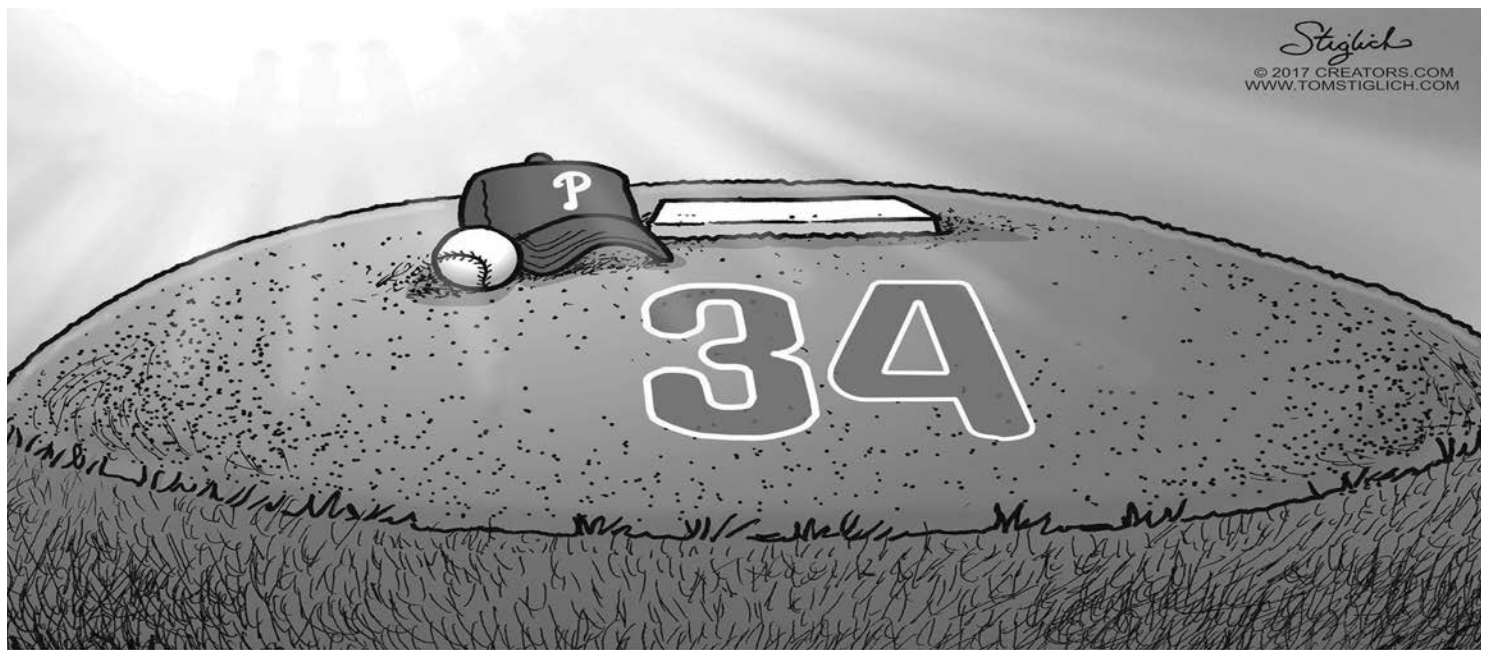
of felonies are assigned to either prison or probation. He found that those assigned to prison had a 20 percent higher chance of returning to prison within five years compared to the probationers. But prisoners did not have a higher likelihood of committing another felony. He said that the study “is one caution that [more punitive] policies could increase the size of our prison population without measureable gains in public safety.”

Other research has found that 13 percent of parolees will violate the terms of their supervision. In 2013, over 2,000 parolees were returned to prison in Michigan for this reason, where they served an average of 13.9 months. Dividing the \$2 billion annual corrections budget by the state prison population provides a rough estimate of what it costs to incarcerate a person for a year in Michigan. By this math, the state spent over \$93 million in 2013 imprisoning people for noncriminal behavior with, by Morenoff's estimation, no additional benefit to public safety.

Let's be clear: There are very good reasons for requiring felons on conditional release from prison to check in with their parole officers, to keep law-abiding company, to participate in treatment programs when appropriate and to disclose where they're living. And there must be a method to enforce these conditions. But it's worth asking whether expensive prison stays are the most effective method for punishing parolees for violating these rules.

An alternative that is gaining in popularity is to use short jail stays every single time a violation occurs, rather than letting them pile up until one final straw sends a parolee back inside for months. Legislation passed earlier this year requires MDOC to test this in five counties, in the hope that early successes with the method can be replicated and sustained. If Morenoff's research is right, this might bolster public safety and reduce Michigan's prison population at the same time.

Kahryn Riley is a Mackinac Center policy analyst. She joined the criminal justice reform initiative in June 2016, after working for two years as a regional advancement officer at the Center.



ROY “DOC” HALLADAY 1977–2017

Dems' tax demagoguery



“LIBERTY BELLE”
Betsy McCaughey

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and the Democratic Party are trying to torpedo the biggest tax cut since 1986. Schumer accuses GOP tax cutters of “messing up the good economy the president inherited from President Obama and hurting the middle class.” The senator must think we're stupid. The Obama economy wasn't “good.” It was lousy, sputtering along at a pathetic 2.1 percent, far below the 3.8 percent norm for this nation. Who got clobbered? The middle class, who had to settle for almost no increase in wages and disappointing job prospects.

The Tax Cut and Jobs Act, unveiled by House Republicans on Thursday, is designed to ignite the nation's economy, producing higher wages and more job opportunities for workers. America taxes corporations at the highest rate of any industrialized country. That drives companies overseas, sabotaging our workforce. The GOP tax cut lowers the corporate from 35 to 20 percent, to make the U.S. competitive again.

As for the middle class, they'll benefit in two ways — from a faster growing economy and from tax breaks for individual filers. The GOP plan nearly doubles the

standard deduction to \$12,200 for single filers and \$24,400 for married couples, and lowers most rates. It pays for those changes by eliminating certain deductions.

The impact on your wallet will depend on the deductions you're used to taking. But a typical family earning \$73,000 a year would save about \$1,600 the first year.

The House and Senate aim to pass bills before Thanksgiving, and then smooth out their differences and enact a final law by Christmas. Changes would be effective Jan. 1 — if reform passes.

What are the prospects? Certainly better than the GOP's thwarted Obamacare repeal. Despite hardened efforts by Schumer and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi to keep Democrats lined up against tax reform, a handful might vote “yes.” It's harder to vilify tax cutters than to scaremonger over losing health insurance. Most people like keeping more of what they earn.

Schumer, undaunted by facts, proclaims that “tax cuts like these benefit the wealthy and the powerful to the exclusion of the middle class.” Sorry, Senator. That's untrue.

Start with the corporate tax cuts, which are the lion's share — about

80 percent — of the cuts. The president's Council of Economic Advisors shows that in numerous countries, lowering corporate tax rates boosted wages. It will work here too, argue economists Gregory Mankiw of Harvard and Casey Mulligan of the University of Chicago. Schumer trivializes their evidence as “fake math.”

The GOP tax plan also allows businesses to write off the full cost of equipment when purchased, encouraging businesses to invest in productivity-enhancing tools. Workers who produce more get paid more.

These reforms promise to liberate workers from wage stagnation.

Among individual taxpayers, there'll be more winners than losers. But you'll no longer be able to deduct state income and sales tax — bad news if you live in tax hell, meaning New York, New Jersey and California. Let it be an incentive to retire the taxaholics and profligate spenders controlling politics in these states.

If you're planning on buying a home, you'll be able to deduct interest only on the first \$500,000 borrowed for a primary residence, and nothing for vacation homes. But stay tuned — this provision may

change.

Huge medical expenses will no longer be deductible. Nor will interest on student loans or alimony.

Most taxpayers won't feel the pain because of the bigger standard deduction. But lobbyists are in a frenzy. Every current deduction has defenders, including homebuilders, mortgage lenders and politicians from high-tax states gorging at the public trough. They'll likely win some concessions in the coming days.

The surest losers are tax accountants and lawyers. Simplifying the tax code enables people to file on their own.

In the end, it's a battle between the overtaxed public and insiders who make their living off our tax payments.

Betsy McCaughey is a senior fellow at the London Center for Policy Research and a former lieutenant governor of New York State. Contact her at betsy@betsymccaughey.com. To find out more about Betsy McCaughey and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate website at www.creators.com.

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YESTERDAY

10 Years Ago
November 9, 2007

CONSTANTINE TOWNSHIP — An 11-year-old girl was found dead yesterday evening in the Constantine Township Cemetery, according to the Constantine Police Department. That department, along with the St. Joseph County Major Crime Task Force, are investigating the death of Riverside Elementary student Jodi Christine Parrack, who disappeared at about 4:45 p.m. Thursday from central Constantine. The cause of death is undetermined and an autopsy was to be conducted in Grand Rapids this morning.

THREE RIVERS — The Three Rivers Commercial-News Community Profile featured Taylor Snow. Some say that Taylor Snow just likes to be a president, as he has been one of three difference organizations. But to Snow it is more than just being the “head guy.” “Being involved gives you a feeling of accomplishment,” Snow said. “It's all about giving back.” Snow is perhaps best known in Three Rivers for his work at First National Bank, where he was head of the trust department, then became Executive Vice President, and then later President. He was also the president of the Chamber of Commerce and of Rotary. And he held the position of the Three Rivers mayor for two years.

25 Years Ago
November 9, 1992

A select group of America's teachers are being honored by their toughest critics, their former students, in the second edition of Who's Who Among America's Teachers, 1992. Local educators honored in Who's Who Among America's Teachers, 1992 include: Centreville: Maribeth Carlisle and Norma J. Wellington. Constantine: Brenda Potts, Riverside Elementary School. Three Rivers: Diane Ford, Three Rivers High School; Betty (Ostrom) Ruhlig, Norton Elementary; Waneta Truckey, Three Rivers Community Schools. White Pigeon: Elizabeth Hocesvar, White Pigeon High School; Debora (Gest) Poley, White Pigeon Middle School.

BATH — Mendon freshman Stephanie Klein came back the big winner from the state cross-country meets. Klein earned All-State honors at the Class D meet at Bath High School with a fifth place finish in the individual race, completing the 5,000-meter course in 20:55. Klein's brother, Marty, just missed earning All-State honors in the men's individual race by placing seventh.

50 Years Ago
November 9, 1967

THREE RIVERS — Richard Wade received the second highest number of votes for the position of municipal judge in Tuesday's election with 72 votes, City Clerk Jane Sebo reported after final tabulation of the write-in ballots. The election, on write-in votes, was won by attorney Kenneth Olson, who received 606 votes. Olson was the only lawyer prior to the election who said he would serve in the part-time post. In a tie for third place in the voting, attorneys Leonard Weiner and C. L. Stickler each received 33 votes. Olson will serve as municipal judge for a one-year term.

THREE RIVERS — A yearling deer that was born in Scidmore Park a year ago was in a horn-to-horn battle with his father, the senior buck at the park. The yearling was getting the worst of the battle and the park crew managed to separate the animals. As they took the yearling out of the fenced-in area the young deer got loose and ran away. The deer was spotted near the intersection of Wheeler Street and Armitage Avenue; near the Pealer Street Bridge; and behind the police department. Three Rivers police report that Conservation Officer Dale Randal said, “If the deer was creating a problem in town, it would have to be shot.”



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Three Rivers
COMMERCIAL-NEWS

Published daily, except Sunday and holidays,
by Three Rivers Commercial Inc.

124 North Main Street, P.O. Box 130
Three Rivers, MI 49093

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Newsstand and Subscription Rates

75¢ per copy. Motor route: \$13.50 per month. In-county mail: \$247.50 per year.

Other rates upon request. Subscriptions may be transferred but not refunded.

Your carrier strives to give you the best service possible. If you do not receive your newspaper by 5 p.m. weekdays or 8 a.m. Saturday, please call our office at 269-279-7488.

Member: Michigan Press Association, National Newspaper Association

Periodical postage paid at Three Rivers, Michigan. Publication Number 628380. Consolidating and succeeding Hustler, established 1895; Commercial Hustler, established 1902; Daily Commercial Hustler, established 1902.

Postmaster:

Send address changes to The Three Rivers Commercial-News, 124 N. Main St., P.O. Box 130, Three Rivers, MI 49093.



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'Dear Annie' Annie Lane

www.creators.com

Dear Annie: I occasionally have lunch with a relative whose company I enjoy. We usually have a nice time, but lately she has been bringing a last-minute guest with her without telling me. Sometimes it is another relative, and sometimes it is a person I've never met. This has caused seating confusion and a less desirable room at places where we have reservations. Does this mean she doesn't care for my company, or is it just a lack of manners? -- *Mystified in Michigan*

Dear Mystified: I can't divine this woman's reasons. Perhaps she's trying to save time by consolidating her lunch dates (which, I agree, would be bad manners). But there's no need to consult a crystal ball. The next time you're making plans and wondering whether she'll invite anyone else, just ask.

Dear Annie: My sons were the topic of a recent letter published in your column. It was from "Concerned Grandfather," my dad. He told you he's worried that my sons

are overly affectionate with each other. (He admitted he had written the letter when I confronted him.)

I appreciate your thoughtful answer to my father's letter. For the record, my sons know that their grandfather disapproves of their closeness. They think he is being silly. I explained to my elder son, "Steven," that his grandfather grew up in a time when affection between brothers or a father and a son was frowned upon. His response was: "That's messed up."

My husband, their dad, was extremely affectionate to them, so I think that kind of openness and love is what they are used to. When their dad died, the boys were devastated. When the younger boy, "Frederick," wanted to sleep with Steven because he was having nightmares, I let him. Steven would comfort him by holding him in his arms all night. Now, six years later, Frederick gets scared because I sometimes work a third shift. He says he feels safer with Steven by

his side when I am gone overnight.

It is true; they hug a lot. And yes, they do exchange pecks on the cheek, but it is not constant as my father described.

My sons love each other. I certainly will not do anything or say anything to make them feel their behavior is dirty or inappropriate. How different would the world be if boys gave and received more affection?

My sons are well-adjusted. They play sports, get excellent grades and have friends other than each other. My father has often said they need to see a counselor to end their disgusting affection for each other. There is no way I would ever take them for counseling to break something that I think is beautiful and normal. My prayer and wish is they will always stay close and openly affectionate. -- *Loving Mom*

Dear Loving Mom: Thanks for sharing. I'd like to add that you shouldn't automatically discount the notion of counseling for your sons -- not because they are affectionate but because they lost their father at a young age.

Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com. To find out more about Annie Lane and read features by other Creators Syndicate columnists and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate website at www.creators.com.

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'Horoscopes by Holiday' Holiday Mathis

www.creators.com

It's not that you don't admire the people you're close to. Of course you do! But the familiarity you share makes it very difficult to get back to the perspective of seeing this clearly about one another. In these early stages of Venus in Scorpio, getting a little distance from your nearest and dearest can be very positive for your perspective.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You bring out the brilliance in others by asking the right question. It's an understated one that does the trick. This is great because your mind is hungry for intelligent conversation, and it will do something for your heart, as well.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You want to acquire as much knowledge as you can about your area of interest, even if that means learning the mean side of it. To learn the unsavory truth is a rite of passage.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). It's not a matter of simply thinking positively about things that are obviously not ideal. That's just called lying to yourself. Rather, you'll see a positive potential and explore it bit by bit until it opens up.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). As for the people who are close to you, you choose them for a reason and that rea-

son will become apparent as the day unfolds. Don't keep your insights to yourself. This is something worth mentioning.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You still remember the first impression a person made on you, for better or worse. Now something about that impression will seem prophetic -- just more proof that you really have terrific intuition.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Uncertainty is a stage of learning. Be patient with yourself. Accept your natural rhythms and process. It's not always going to be a string of "aha!" moments. You may fumble around lost for a while, and that's part of it, too.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). In the past you were driven to accomplish certain aims to the point of single-mindedness. Now your life is bigger, but you have the ability to focus with intensity if you still want the same goal. All that's left to do? Decide.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). There are those who can't relate to your plans and won't come onboard. Don't worry about convincing them: They're not your audience. Focus on the ones who get you and build from there.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).

This day will bring awareness to the emotional payoff you've been seeking (probably unconsciously until now). How will you feel when you get what you want? And might there be other ways to arrive at that feeling?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You like contributing to the happiness, comfort and adventure of others. You like making people laugh. Your drive to entertain and delight will be much stronger than usual, and you'll effectively follow through.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Ultimately, you'll feel lighter when you let go of some of your demands on life. The ones that fit in the past may not be the right size and shape for you now. Re-think your goals for the new cycle ahead.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). What used to be a tedious and time-consuming project can now be accomplished in a few minutes when you delegate the main action to a human or a technological process. Even if it costs a little more this way, it will be worth it.

Answer to previous puzzle

BODE	RAPS	BETON
OPUS	EDIT	ATONE
CAST	AVOTE	TASTE
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ALIST	THROW	AFIT
ROGUE	RAIN	PROD
ETHER	ADDS	EONS

Newsday Crossword

30-DAY CALENDAR by Greg Johnson
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

- ACROSS**
- 1 Up-and-down signals
 - 5 Pokémon video genre
 - 10 Folklore brute
 - 14 *Rigoletto* solo
 - 15 "Do right" lesson
 - 16 Offering to a judge
 - 17 Many a Civil War image
 - 19 Even-number Interstate heading
 - 20 Supermodel Crawford
 - 21 Some cutter crew
 - 23 Sports-drink brand suffix
 - 24 That *femme*
 - 26 Hosiery thread
 - 29 "Phooey!"
 - 31 Sweet bread spread
 - 34 "Big Blue" business
 - 36 Elitist
 - 37 Biceps location
 - 38 "No fooling?"
 - 42 What a pointer might say
 - 44 Venerable news source
 - 45 Doodled
 - 47 Barcelona bravo
 - 48 Place for odds and ends
 - 51 Play makeup
 - 55 Bit of a subscription
 - 56 Liking a lot
 - 58 On like a lantern
 - 59 Native (to)
 - 62 Safe IRA investment
 - 64 Pirate's beverage
 - 66 A Maritime province

- 68 lrk
- 69 Psi follower
- 70 Hoax
- 71 Essence of vegan "meatballs"
- 72 Fully filled
- 73 Some lady birds

- DOWN**
- 1 Speedway acronym
 - 2 Big potato processor
 - 3 Aquarium scoop
 - 4 Spoken
 - 5 Band's blaster
 - 6 Useless
 - 7 Laundry staff
 - 8 Padded play surfaces
 - 9 Wells' idle race
 - 10 Gift giver's encouragement
 - 11 Boxer's vulnerability
 - 12 Hi- graphics
 - 13 Cook's encouragement
 - 18 Matey's assent
 - 22 Planet-wide
 - 25 Hedy of Hollywood
 - 27 Zhivago's love
 - 28 Honor for a sitcom
 - 30 Knightly title
 - 32 Bank acct.
 - 33 Accrual
 - 35 Accomplish
 - 35 Went to sleep, with "down"
 - 38 Japan's highest peak
 - 39 Composer's numbered piece
 - 40 Remove suds from
 - 41 Grazing expanse
 - 43 It may be in the bag
 - 46 GI Bill beneficiary
 - 49 Self-defense skill
 - 50 Confine, as a canary
 - 52 Give garb to
 - 53 Italian Renaissance artist
 - 54 Cooks, as dim sum
 - 57 Non-prescription, for short
 - 60 Son of Seth
 - 61 NY home of Chagalls
 - 63 Quick bite
 - 64 BBC clock setting
 - 65 Site of the last Olympics
 - 67 Unfortunate

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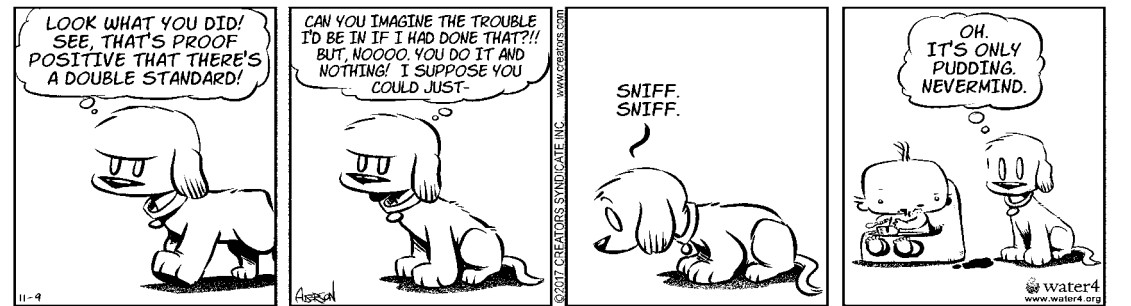
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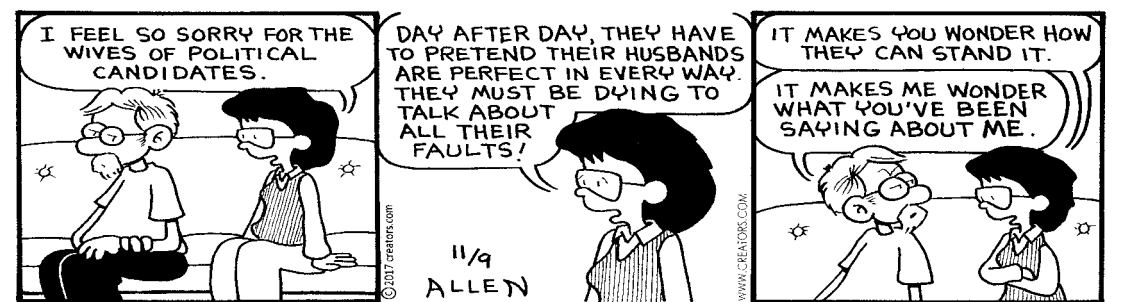
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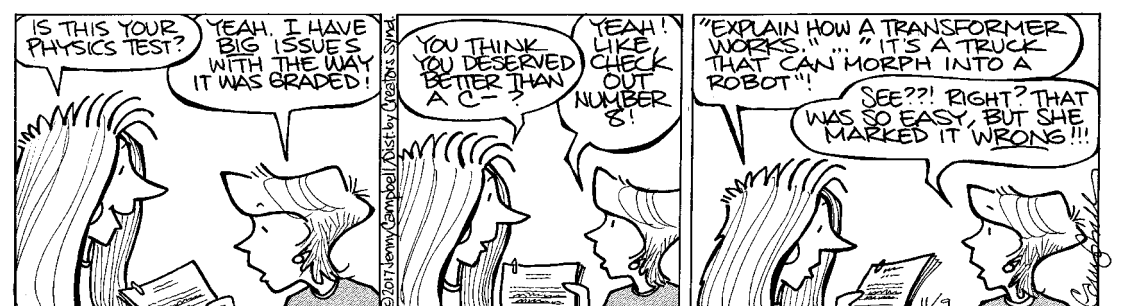
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RUGRATS



FLO & FRIENDS



THE OTHER COAST

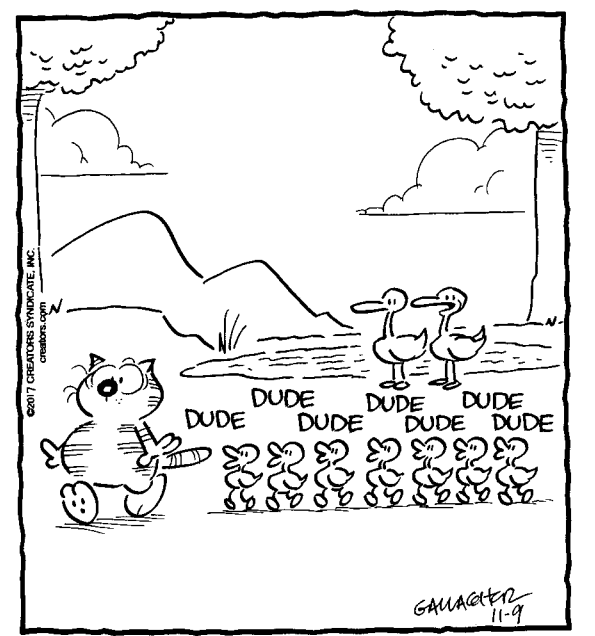


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BEFORE CHRISTMAS MINI SALE - Sat./Nov. 11th, 9-1. 1st Methodist (215 N. Main St.) 3 desk, 3 piece Oak corner w/chair, table w/3 leaves, 6 chairs. Malibu pilates machine, excise bike, Ab lounge ultra, like new, 2 Formals sizes (5 & 7), 4 women's winter coats size sm., 12.

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FREE: Refrigerator, good working condition. You haul after 11-13-17. For more info call: 269-625-5544.

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Timber

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Help Wanted

BOOKKEEPING POSITION - Requirements: MUST be efficient in Word and Excel, as well in AP AR Payroll. Serious inquiries only please. Apply at office@kdbody.com.

CUSTODIAN - Full time, 2nd shift position Monday - Friday. Send resume to: St. Joseph County ISD, 62445 Shimmel Road, Centreville, MI 49032, apply online at www.sjcisd.org or call 269-467-5343.

DESIGNER NEEDED: The Three Rivers Commercial-News is looking for a Graphic Designer/Paginator with graphic/advertising design experience for their Design Dept. This candidate must be flexible, a self-starter with the ability to work on their own and troubleshoot situations as they arise. Must also work well in a team environment. Experience with Adobe InDesign, Photoshop, CS and/or similar applications is a must. Duties include the layout of daily news, classified and comics pages and the update, design and composition of advertising, and maintaining our website by updating daily. With some experience we can train the right person. The hours are approx. 30-35 hours per week may be up to 40 if needed. Flexibility is a plus. Please send resume to jobs@threeriversnews.com or mail to P.O. Box 130, Three Rivers, MI 49093, Attn: General Manager. No phone calls please.

Help Wanted

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3	2	5	8	9	7	4	6	1
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SPO RTS



Making the tackle

In this Sunday, Nov. 5, 2017, file photo, Cincinnati Bengals wide receiver A.J. Green (18) takes down Jacksonville Jaguars cornerback Jalen Ramsey (20) during a fight in the first half of an NFL football game in Jacksonville, Fla. Ramsey and running back Leonard Fournette are expected to speak publicly Wednesday, for the first time since Ramsey's ejection for fighting and Fournette's violation of team rules that got him benched for a game.

AP photo

Ramsey has remorse for not getting 'money's worth' vs Green

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP) — Jacksonville Jaguars cornerback Jalen Ramsey wanted to sit down for this one.

The second-year pro and budding star dispelled rumors, discussed his emotions and delivered more trash talk.

Speaking publicly for the first time since he was ejected for instigating a fight with Cincinnati Bengals receiver A.J. Green, Ramsey spent 20 minutes Wednesday explaining everything that happened in the first half of Jacksonville's latest victory.

He offered no apologies but had plenty of remorse for not getting "my money's worth" in a fight that resulted in both players getting ejected.

"If I knew I was going to get kicked out, I would have got active," Ramsey said. "It's cool. Now I know what to do in that situation. If I'm ever in that situation again, best believe I'm going to get active out there."

Ramsey acknowledged walking to the visitors' locker room after halftime in an attempt to continue things with Green.

He was turned away by several security personnel.

Ramsey also denied a rumor that his mother had to be called to calm him down as well as reports that he went over the line in talking smack with Green in the first two quarters.

"It's rumors out there that I said some deep, some personnel stuff," Ramsey said. "I'm going to let y'all know that's not true. I get out, I do my thing, I talk ... But I don't go personal. I don't talk about nobody's wife, nobody's kids, nobody's family. I don't do that."

Ramsey obviously said something that prompted the mild-mannered Green to grab him around the neck, throw him to the ground and starting throwing punches.

"I told him almost every play that he was weak, that he was soft," Ramsey said. Those "are straight facts. He just can't handle the truth. It's facts. I told him his time was almost up. I told him that it was easy, which it was. He had one catch for 6 yards."

"I was just out there spitting facts to him. He got mad."

The NFL said Monday that Green would not be suspended for his actions.

Ramsey was stunned to learn he had been "kicked out for not doing anything."

"I went up to one of the refs and asked him straight up, 'Why am I getting ejected?'" Ramsey said. "He was like, 'To be honest, Jalen, I don't know.' That's exactly what he said, quote for quote."

Ramsey also said he has been told he won't be fined for what happened in the 23-7 victory.

Also Wednesday, Jaguars running back Leonard Fournette called his one-game benching "just another lesson that I have to learn and grow up from."

Coach Doug Marrone made the rookie inactive against the Bengals for violating a team rule. Fournette watched the game from the sideline and later apologized on Twitter.

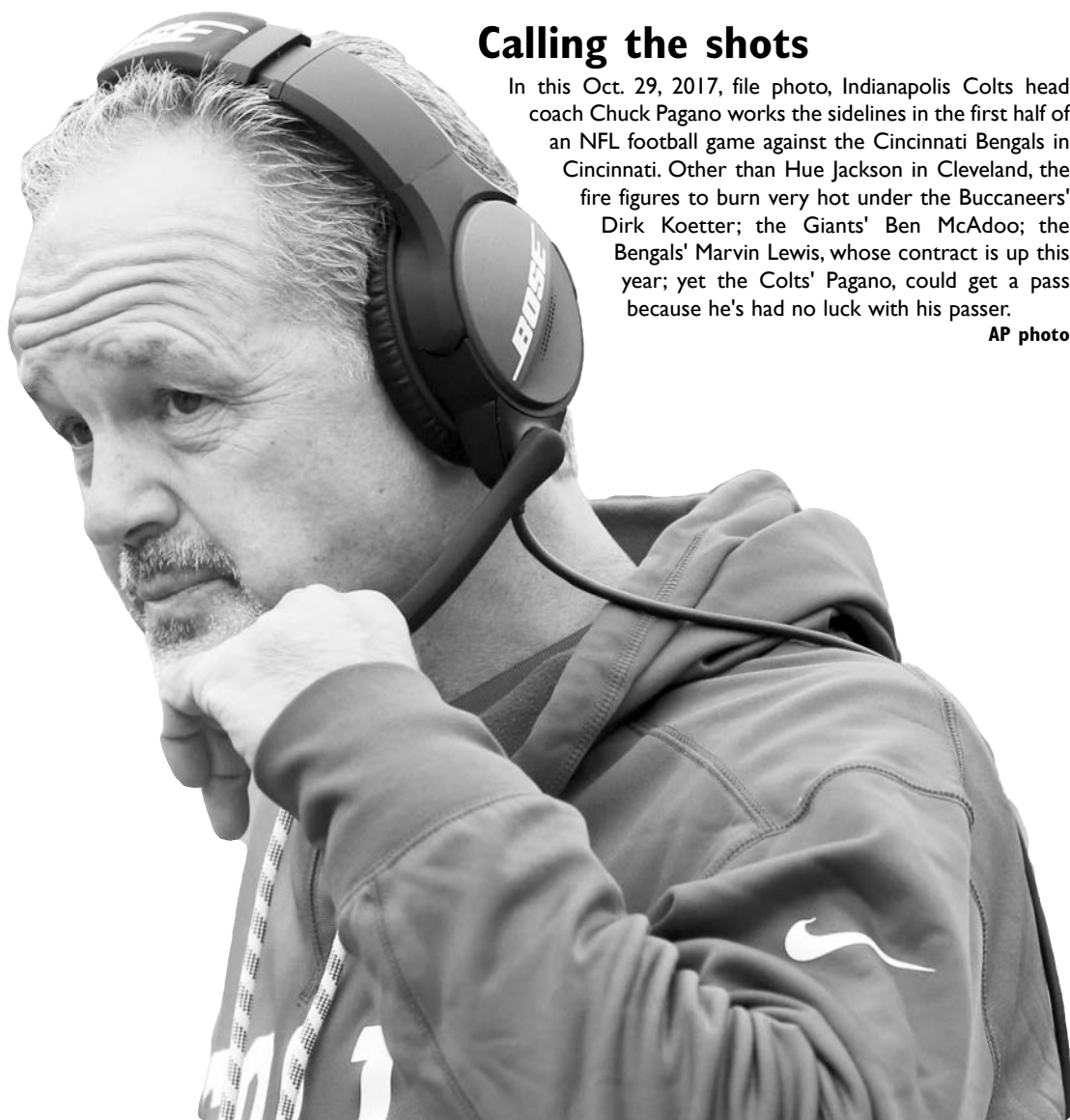
"We just had a misunderstanding," Fournette said. "That's all. That's out the way now. Did my time, did my punishment and now we're on to the L.A. Chargers."

Predicting NFL is more difficult than forecasting the weather

Calling the shots

In this Oct. 29, 2017, file photo, Indianapolis Colts head coach Chuck Pagano works the sidelines in the first half of an NFL football game against the Cincinnati Bengals in Cincinnati. Other than Hue Jackson in Cleveland, the fire figures to burn very hot under the Buccaneers' Dirk Koetter; the Giants' Ben McAdoo; the Bengals' Marvin Lewis, whose contract is up this year; yet the Colts' Pagano, could get a pass because he's had no luck with his passer.

AP photo



By The Associated Press

Predicting what's ahead in an NFL season is no easier than forecasting the weather. Given all the variables, it's probably harder.

The team of September, the Chiefs, went mediocre on us in October and early November. Those struggling Patriots who were 2-2 now seem on course for yet another hosting role in the AFC playoffs.

Early season woes for the Giants that were dismissed as temporary have become chronic. That ugly 0-2 start for the Saints has turned into a beautiful six-game winning streak.

See? No matter. Here are some things to look for as we move through November and December.

MORE QB INJURIES

This has been the overriding story of the season, with Aaron Rodgers, Carson Palmer, sensational rookie Deshaun Watson and Sam Bradford all going down. Ryan Tannehill didn't even make it out of the preseason, and Andrew Luck's shoulder didn't heal enough after winter surgery for him to suit up.

Speculating who might be the next quarterback or three who will suffer a major injury is ghoulish. Consider, though, that nine teams (Tampa Bay, Minnesota, Green Bay, Arizona, Tennessee, Oakland, Houston, Miami and Baltimore) have had to go to backups because of injured starters.

OFFICIATING CONTROVERSY

This one is unavoidable, and will occur weekly. Seems as if no weekend goes by without a pool reporter being sent to talk to game officials about a decision.

As video replay becomes more refined — we can just about count

the blades of grass under a receiver's hands as he cradles (or doesn't) a pass — and the NFL rulebook remains far too complex, officiating will continue to play a huge role in outcomes of games.

One request: no more reversals like what we saw in Falcons-Lions and Patriots-Jets that fans will be questioning into the new year.

HOTTER SEATS

Other than Hue Jackson in Cleveland, the fire figures to burn very hot under the Buccaneers' Dirk Koetter; the Giants' Ben McAdoo; the Bengals' Marvin Lewis, whose contract is up this year; the Colts' Chuck Pagano, who could get a pass because he's had no, ahem, luck with his passer; and possibly the Lions' Jim Caldwell.

New York and Detroit are among the league's biggest underachievers, and that likely won't change in 2017.

PASSION IF NOT SKILL

It would be difficult to find a club that would trade its roster for what the Jets or Bears have. It also would be tough to point out any teams that play with more passion and dedication.

There's no reason to believe either of them will stop giving their all for 60 minutes. New York is 4-5 in a year some projected it wouldn't win a game and was tanking for the top overall draft pick. With any finishing power, the Jets would be in the playoff hunt.

Chicago is 3-5 despite an inept passing game, and has beaten Pittsburgh and Carolina. The Bears simply don't go away. Maybe they aren't the Monsters of the Midway, but they sure are pesky.

Give tremendous credit to coaches Todd Bowles and John Fox. And expect more of the same from

both teams the rest of the way.

A TIE OR TWO

One thing we've learned from the reduced overtime period (from 15 minutes to 10) is that a tie is hardly unlikely. Indeed, getting more than one possession in OT can be problematic.

So expect at least one deadlock down the stretch, and let's hope it won't figure into playoff tiebreakers.

EARLY CLINCHINGS

With two highly regarded divisions, the AFC West and North, turning soft, watch for the Steelers and Chiefs to be selling playoff tickets by mid-December. Same for the Patriots, but that's a yearly occurrence in the mediocre AFC East.

Barring a stunning turnaround, the Eagles, at 8-1 the league's top team, will be making postseason plans about a month from now. The Saints, too, if their defense remains stout.

A WIN FOR SAN FRANCISCO. AND FOR CLEVELAND.

Just kidding. Actually, the 49ers beating the Giants this Sunday hardly is farfetched, though the odds would be much shorter if Jimmy Garoppolo was ready.

San Francisco then has a bye before hosting Seattle, visiting Chicago and Houston, home for Tennessee and Jacksonville and at the Rams.

The road for Cleveland has a trip to Detroit, home for Jacksonville, at Cincinnati and the Chargers, home for Green Bay and Baltimore, then road games at Chicago and Pittsburgh.

You decide which team — if either — has a better shot at a victory.

Auburn fires indicted basketball assistant Chuck Person

AUBURN, Ala. (AP) — Auburn has fired associate head basketball coach Chuck Person, who has been indicted on federal bribery, conspiracy and fraud charges.

The university announced the move Wednesday, a day after Person and seven others were indicted by a federal grand jury in New York City.

An Auburn statement says

Person "is no longer an employee. As such, this is in the hands of the criminal justice system."

The school says he was fired on Oct. 18. The 53-year-old Person had been suspended without pay following his arrest in September.

His attorney, Theresa Trzaskoma, said Tuesday that Person didn't commit any crimes. Person allegedly received \$91,500

in bribes to steer Auburn players to Pittsburgh financial adviser Marty Blazer when they turn pro. Person told Blazer he gave \$18,500 of that to the families of two Auburn players, according to a federal complaint.

Auburn is indefinitely holding out center Austin Wiley and forward Danjel Purifoy, citing "potential eligibility issues."

Veenstra, Foura recognized for stellar soccer seasons

By Scott Hassinger
Sports Editor

THREE RIVERS — Two Three Rivers varsity soccer players have been recognized by the Wolverine Conference for their performance during the 2017 season.

Junior Derek Veenstra was selected to the first-team All-Conference team.

Veenstra, a forward, recorded

12 goals and five assists for Three Rivers on the season.

Junior Dan Foura was selected honorable mention for the Wildcats.

Four recorded two goals and two assists at defensive center back.

Scott Hassinger can be reached at 279-7488 ext. 25 or sports@threeiversnews.com.



Kentucky freshman PG Green making push to be the starter

LEXINGTON, Ky. (AP) — Quade Green downplays talk of being Kentucky's starting point guard despite making a strong case for the job.

The 6-foot freshman pushed the fast pace that coach John Calipari wanted during the preseason, fed Wildcat teammates with accurate passes and shot well. Most notably, he's showing the stamina and durability needed for the position critical to executing Calipari's offense.

Green has spent a lot of time watching video of past Kentucky stars such as John Wall, Tyler Ulis and even Rajon Rondo, all now in the NBA. They all passed through Lexington this summer for pickup games against the talented young Wildcats, experience that has stoked Green's confidence to make his point — on and off the court.

"It's hard to fill everybody's shoes that have come through here, but I've got my own shoes to fill," said Green, one of five high school All-Americans among eight newcomers for the No. 5 Wildcats.

"I have my own expectations of what I want to do, and I've just got to follow the rules that Cal wants. I've got to do what he wants me to do, and do what I've got to do to be a pro."

Green stresses that he's got a lot of work ahead at Kentucky before thinking about the NBA. Calipari meanwhile is undecided whether Green or 6-6 freshman Shai Gilgeous-Alexander will run the point for Kentucky as it opens the season Friday night against Utah Valley.

Freshman Jemarl Baker (6-4) is out three months after recent left knee surgery, leaving the Wildcats with just three guards. Chances are Green, Gilgeous-Alexander and even 6-5 redshirt Hamidou Diallo will share the responsibility there.

Calipari seems inclined to try a number of combinations with one of his youngest rosters at Kentucky.

"We're a good enough handling team that you could play basically without a point guard," the coach said on media day. "But our teams have been centered on having guys out there that can really control the game somewhat. So I would say two. And they can play together, by

the way, because Shai is big."

Green meanwhile has helped the offense with quickness and impressive shooting. During preseason he made nearly 70 percent from the field — including 64 percent from 3-point range — in addition to passing well and maintaining the tempo.

The Philadelphia native has used the 5-9 Ulis' style as a template to follow, particularly on defense. Studying many of his predecessors has also given Green a blueprint of how to bring Kentucky's latest collection of talent together.

"It's a big transition because you're dealing with more and better players" than high school, Green said. "You've got to get them involved too because

they're trying to get to the same level you're trying to get to. You've got to help them, and they can help you."

With Kentucky playing four games in the season's opening week, including Tuesday in Chicago against No. 4 Kansas, Calipari will use many combinations to determine his rotation. Judging from his swagger and performance, Green wants to be in charge.

"He's the floor general," forward Wenyen Gabriel said of Green. "That is one of the aspects of his game and he just wants to really let that show when he's out on the floor. He gets assists, gets the ball moving and he talks. He shows a lot of leadership while he's playing the game, so that's one of his best aspects."



Bidding for a starter's role

In this Oct. 30, 2017, file photo, Kentucky's Quade Green, front, shoots as Morehead State's Adrian Hicks defends during the first half of an exhibition NCAA college basketball game in Lexington, Ky. Though Kentucky coach John Calipari hasn't officially named his starting point guard, indications are it will be Quade Green

AP photo

Spartans have another big chance against Ohio State

EAST LANSING (AP) — Once again, the biggest game of the Big Ten regular season might be Ohio State against Michigan State.

That's nothing new, but it's also not what was predicted in 2017.

"No one expected us to be here at this point, except for us," Spartans quarterback Brian Lewerke said Tuesday. "It's a big moment. We realize it. I don't think it's one of those where we've got nothing to lose, because we do have stuff to lose — the Big Ten championship on the line, and we definitely want to be there."

Saturday's game at Ohio State will merely be the latest of several matchups between the Buckeyes and Spartans this decade that had major conference title implications. Michigan State beat Ohio State in the 2013 Big Ten title game. Since then, the teams have been in the same division, and in 2014 and 2015, they split two meetings that essentially decided who would play in the league title game.

The matchup lost a lot of its luster last season, when Michigan State went 3-9, but the 13th-ranked Spartans (7-2, 5-1, No. 12 CFP) have rebounded and will have the inside track to a division title if they can beat No. 11 Ohio State (7-2, 5-1, No. 13).

The Buckeyes are double-digit favorites over a

Michigan State team that hasn't won a Big Ten game by more than eight points, and if the Spartans lose, this will still have been an encouraging season with an inexperienced team. After coming this far, however, Michigan State now has high stakes to play for.

"We have a lot to lose. We're in control right now. So we do have a lot to lose and we want to stay in control," coach Mark Dantonio said. "We're excited we have this opportunity, but we've worked for this opportunity and we've channeled everything to get to November, knowing that last week was going to be a challenge, this week and then the following two weeks."

The Spartans edged Penn State last weekend on a last-second field goal.

"We certainly haven't played flawlessly. There's a lot of things we've got to correct and be able to move forward on," Dantonio said. "I think that somebody said we're playing with house money. I don't know. So we'll just keep going."

Michigan State was expected to lean on its running game this season, but Lewerke has become the key to the offense, attempting 113 passes over the past two games and reaching 400 yards passing in each.

Clean and sober' Gordon wants to be NFL's best receiver

BEREA, Ohio (AP) — Through the haze of his troubled past, Josh Gordon still sees a bright future.

Only he can save it.

Declaring himself "clean and sober" and committed to reviving his NFL career, Gordon embarked on yet another new start with the Cleveland Browns, a team he has teased with his immense talent and deeply disappointed.

One week after NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell conditionally reinstated the oft-suspended former Pro Bowl wide receiver, Gordon, who hasn't played since the end of the 2014 season, said his long-term professional goal hasn't changed from making an indelible mark on the game.

"Ultimately my goal is to be the best wide receiver of all time," he said in his first media session since returning to the Browns. "For me, that's always been my goal, and it's just been re-affirmed for me time and time again and now being back in the situation to do it, I plan on seeing it through."

But before he can get back on the field, Gordon has to prove he can maintain his sobriety while earning the trust of new teammates who only know him through highlight tapes.

His body hardened by a renewed commitment to

training, the 26-year-old Gordon remained mostly guarded during two interview sessions on Wednesday.

His first had to be cut short because Gordon had to be at a team meeting, so he was later brought into the facility's media center where Gordon answered

questions while standing next to black-and-white photos of Hall of Famers Otto Graham, Marion Motely and Dante Lavelli.

Once a budding superstar, Gordon has become better known for blowing his chances along with millions of dollars in the process.

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