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Beyond the Bridge
Leaders from the Greater Lafayette area hosted a community Q&A session to confront issues facing homeless people in the region.



Pg. 3
SK hynix protest
Residents gathered ahead of a hearing on Purdue Research Foundation's rezoning request, arguing the proposed SK hynix semiconductor site is too close to homes and community spaces.



Pg. 7
The Kissing Tree
A historic oak tree is being removed to make way for safety and accessibility, leaving behind decades of community memories and the legacy of a former mayor's first kiss.

'Hoosiers in danger'

Community voices concerns over gender marker changes

BY JULIA MORRISS AND SRUTHI RANGA
Asst. City Editor and Staff Reporter

As snow fell upon Hoosiers in early February, so did the news Indiana's Bureau of Motor Vehicles was going to stop allowing changes to be made to gender markers on state IDs. Its decision came quietly and with only a week's notice.

In a statement from the BMV, it said the decision was an attempt to align with Governor Mike Braun's Executive Order 25-36, which called for the removal of modern gender ideology from Executive Branch Agencies, and a 2024 Indiana Court of Appeals decision, which concluded gender and sex are synonymous.

According to the BMV's website, it can only issue IDs containing a gender designation that reflects the sex of the applicant.

"The rule is not aimed at discriminating against gender-diverse Hoosiers or denying gender diversity; rather, it is aimed at ensuring the effective and efficient functioning of government systems and processes and maintaining compliance with state and federal laws and regulations," the BMV said.

Christopher Seto, an assistant professor of sociology at Purdue, said that in his opinion, residents having IDs that don't reflect their appearance can create problems.

"There are far-reaching consequences of not being able to access an ID that accurately reflects one's gender identity. Think about all the things you need a driver's license or other official ID to do. Driving, flying, getting a job, renting an apartment, etc." Seto said. "An ID with the wrong gender marker makes all of this harder, more stigmatizing, and higher risk."

This is a common concern when it comes to the implementation of this new rule. James Lathrop, a sophomore in agronomy and the media director for the Purdue College Republicans, said that although he agrees with the rule change on a moral level, he worries about the administrative execution of the change.

"I don't believe a person can change their gender. On the level of moral conviction, (the BMV decision) is consistent with my personal philosophy on gender," Lathrop said. "Administratively, I have my doubts. If a person is identified as a woman on their driver's license and looks like a man, that can cause confusion and mess up the purpose of a driver's license."

Derrick Jones, the executive director of Pride Lafayette, said this decision not only complicates matters of identification but also leaves trans and nonbinary people in a vulner-

able position.

"I think (the BMV's decision) puts trans and nonbinary Hoosiers in danger," Jones said. "To have an ID that doesn't match your gender identity puts you at direct risk. For example, a trans person may go into a bar and present their ID. If it doesn't match their appearance, it can open them up to ridicule right in front of everybody."

For some, the impacts of this decision extend beyond just the administrative ones.

"I think it speaks to a broader effort, not only by the state but by the federal government, to see what they can get away with, see what people will tolerate before they push back," Jones said.

Legislation impact

To Jones, this decision, combined with other recent anti-trans legislation, sends the message transgender and nonbinary people aren't welcome in Indiana.

This is a sentiment shared by Mina Korff, a sophomore in nuclear engineering. Korff said this decision is a clear indication of the attitudes of Indiana lawmakers towards the trans and nonbinary communities.

"It's crystal clear the legislators and policymakers in charge of a change like this have nothing but pure contempt for trans and gender non-conforming people," Korff said. "It's all but certain Hoosiers in the queer community will be put in jeopardy."

Seto said this decision's impacts are likely to be extensive.

"Based on this research, I think the harms of Indiana's new policy for trans and nonbinary residents are likely to be far-reaching," Seto said. "(It could lead to a) higher risk of violence, harassment, worse mental health, reduced access to healthcare or state services, and diminished ability to participate in public life," Seto said.

Korff said she has a deep fear of harassment or rejection because of policies like the BMV's.

"In professional and career spaces where our gender presentation doesn't align with what documentation says, it serves to open doors to harassment," Korff said. "It's something I've dealt with before and is a deep worry of mine as I continue my degree here at Purdue."

A Purdue professor, knowledgeable in LG-BTQ+ topics but chose to remain anonymous due to fear of losing their job, pointed out the various underlying psychological and cultural impacts associated with the BMV's decision. They said it's important to examine the deci-



ELLA BRAUN | CITY EDITOR

Individual poses while holding an Indiana ID. The information is covered by the colors of the transgender flag.

sion from both the lawmakers' and the impacted parties' perspectives.

"(Lawmakers) may feel threatened by challenges to the gender-sex binary as they are used to it, and they may have psychological benefits from (removing them)," the anonymous professor said.

The anonymous professor also said these policies can be incredibly detrimental to the mental health of trans and nonbinary individuals.

"There's evidence showing these anti-trans policies can increase mental health struggles for trans and nonbinary people, particularly when young trans and nonbinary people are not in a supportive environment," the anonymous professor said. "It very much feels like they're not protected by the government, but rather the government is supporting the people who are causing them harm."

Research indicates transgender and nonbinary individuals experience increased stress and mental health challenges when exposed to discriminatory policies. According to the Trevor Project, in 2024, 90% of young LGBTQ+ people said their well-being was negatively impacted due to recent politics.

Seto says this fear of harm isn't necessarily unfounded. He said hate crime rates tend to be responsive to policy changes and political events. He said he believes the passage of policies that restrict trans rights will increase the risk of anti-trans violence.

According to the Human Rights Campaign, between Nov 2024 and Nov 2025, there were 27 cases of fatal violence against trans and

nonbinary people in the United States. Additionally, 43.9% of trans and nonbinary people had experienced discrimination based on their sex, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity/expression.

Community resources

Despite these challenges, Jones said many in the local community remain determined to continue living openly.

"Within our trans and nonbinary community, what I've seen is resilience and a resolve to continue living their lives unapologetically," Jones said.

In times like these, it's crucial members of the LGBTQ+ community have resources available to them, Jones said.

"(On campus) we've got the LGBTQ Center. The resources they've got, the events they do, it is phenomenal, and kind of a gathering space," Jones said. "More broadly, we've got the Pride Center down on Main Street over in Lafayette. We're open every night of the week."

He added that there is a trans support group through the Pride Center as well. Trans Lafayette meets twice a month and has an online Discord server for those interested.

Jones said these resources create a network of support for trans and nonbinary people at a time when they desperately need them. He said these resources and communities are representative of a larger movement.

"Mike Braun, Jim Banks, and Jim Baird are on the wrong side of history, and we will prove that to them every day," Jones said. "They can try and legislate us out of existence, but that doesn't mean we're going anywhere."

CS students face uncertain job market as AI reshapes industry

BY SRUTHI RANGA
Staff Reporter

Concerns about layoffs and artificial intelligence have left many computer science students feeling uncertain about their future careers, even as faculty say the job market is shifting rather than collapsing.

Tiffany Yung, a sophomore in computer science, said she sees mixed signals about the industry online.

"I don't know exactly how to feel because I spend a lot of time on LinkedIn. I see people getting jobs every single day, but I also see a lot of people posting about getting laid off and whatnot," Yung said. "There's a lot of opportunities still, but it's definitely competitive, and there's definitely a bigger risk of being laid off at certain companies."

For Marc Miller, a freshman in computer science, the uncertainty was personal.

"Seeing how much the industry has changed over such a short time makes me worried that the job market that I love, writing code, is not going to be available to me when I graduate," Miller said. Students' concerns haven't gone unnoticed.

"I really do understand why students feel some anxiety right now. AI is moving fast, headlines can be dramatic, and the hiring market feels different from what it was a few years ago," said Petros Drineas, the head of Purdue's Department of Computer Science.

Many students worry about job prospects, but the data show something else. The faculty said the overall computer science market remains stable. According to Drineas, the data shows a steady number of graduates being employed post-graduation.

"For the Class of 2025, over 87% reported being employed just three months after graduation when we conducted our exit surveys," Drineas said. "Despite all the headlines about tech slowdowns, we did not see any employment issues last year."

Drineas also said that employer interest in graduates remains strong, even if hiring strategies have changed.

"Employer engagement remains strong, but it has evolved," Drineas said. "Companies aren't just hiring at scale anymore. They are hiring strategically. They're looking for students who can contribute to AI initiatives, advanced systems work, cybersecurity, and interdisciplinary applications."

Kevin Mumford, a Purdue professor of economics, said he believes some of the uncertainty students feel comes from the broader computer science market. When referencing the current computer science unemployment rate of 8%, Mumford said this is troublesome for individuals in this field.

"It looks as though the demand for recent college graduates

has declined, and yet the supply hasn't slowed down," Mumford said. "So there's this little bit of imbalance which is causing wages to just hold steady, and is showing up as an unemployment rate, around 8% as opposed to around 4% for everybody else."

Mumford traced this unusual balance back to recent trends in demand and wages.

"As wages just kept going up, computer science and computer engineering had the highest wages of any major at Purdue. And this was true nationally as well," Mumford said. "It's just been in the last couple (of) years that wages have stagnated. Wages are often kind of sticky; they don't drop. And so what's happened is they've just kind of stalled."

Students are noticing that AI is changing what it means to be a software engineer. Yung's internship manager from the past summer gave her some advice that stuck with her.

"The most important skill you can build as a college student right now is to be able to use AI in your work as a software engineer."

Anthony Dierkes, a freshman in data science, noticed a similar trend.

"I think there is a shift in the expectation of just sitting down and writing code, and more of managing a system that creates code with artificial intelligence," Dierkes said.

Mumford said that while AI is becoming an important tool, its impact on the labor market is still developing.

"With the exception of some tech firms, most companies are just trying to figure out how (to) use this new tool," Mumford said. "I don't think it's had very big labor market effects yet."

As artificial intelligence becomes more involved in the industry, employers are also changing what they prioritize and look for in employees.

Drineas said the need for computing talent hasn't changed. "Companies are looking for strong fundamentals, systems-level thinking, and students who understand AI and emerging technologies. Students who can explain how something works, why it works, and where it might fail are standing out," Drineas said.

Dierkes agreed that a strong foundation of these concepts was still important.

"You're only as good as what you're building with, so it's important to understand basic coding fundamentals and how certain tools work."

Despite short-term uncertainty, experts say that the long-term aspect of the computer job market is still very strong.

"I'm not concerned about the long-run path for computer sci-

ence," Mumford said. "They're going to be the people that do really well, because they're going to know how to use AI and use it effectively, and they'll be in great demand."

Drineas said that the demand for computer science has expanded beyond standard tech fields.

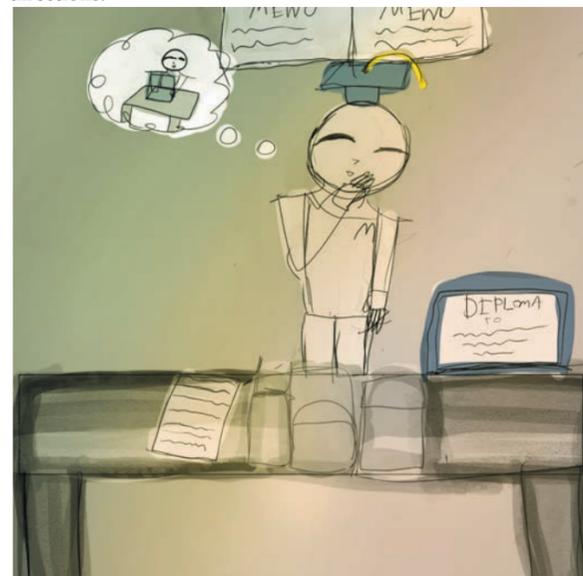
"We're also seeing strong interest from industries beyond traditional tech. Healthcare, agriculture, manufacturing, and finance are all investing heavily in computing and AI talent," Drineas said.

Mumford suggests that students should continue building their skills and remain patient as the job market adjusts.

"Rather than take a job in a completely different industry that doesn't use the skills you've developed, I would keep searching in the industry you've invested (in) so those skills are maintained."

Drineas encourages students not to lose confidence during this period of uncertainty.

"My message to students is this: (continue persevering and) don't interpret a slower response as a verdict on your potential," he said. "Periods of disruption can feel unsettling when you're in them. But they also reshape industries and create new directions."



ASHLEY BROADSTREET | GRAPHICS ARTIST

Greater Lafayette panel offers resources for homeless people, speaks on housing affordability crisis

BY AMELIA ANGELONE
Asst. Campus Editor

Recently, Senate Bill 285 was signed into law by Gov. Mike Braun, effectively criminalizing being homeless in the state of Indiana. Homeless people and those looking to help are now wondering what steps must be taken in order to help those in need while their existence is made a crime.

The Connection Point Church of West Lafayette hosted local leaders alongside members of the community to speak on issues of homelessness, some from their own personal experience, without Lafayette. Housing resources like Lafayette Transitional Housing Center Homeless Services and Lafayette Urban Ministry attended a community Q&A session Tuesday evening, working with members of the community to address concerns held about housing in Greater Lafayette.

The session gave community members a space to talk about the resources currently available for homeless citizens of Greater Lafayette, how these leaders plan to expand resources, challenges to expansion of housing resources, and major local issues, including housing affordability, and S.B. 285, which criminalized homelessness in the state of Indiana.

"There are no throwaway people," said Wes Tillett, Executive Director of Lafayette Urban Ministry, at the beginning of the event. "Every person has dignity and deserves to have their needs met ... The real work begins after we leave this room, strengthening these collaborations, aligning our efforts, continuing to build a community where everyone has a place to call home."

The homeless population in Greater Lafayette has expanded over the past decade, with a spike from 2024 onwards, leaving more people reliant on an already strained system for their continued survival.

"It's not a lack of effort we see, but our local systems are constantly maxed out," Tillett said.

The Greater Lafayette area has multiple housing resources, including LTHC Homeless Services, located at 815 N. 12th St.; Lafayette Urban Ministry's Emergency Shelter, located at 525 N. 4th St.; the YWCA Greater Lafayette, located at 624 N. 6th St.; the Greater Lafayette Family Shelter, located at 2010 Elmwood Ave.; and the Tippecanoe Housing Solutions Coalition, located at 1114 E. State St.

While these resources are available and can house over 100 individuals, Jennifer Layton, the president and CEO of LTHC, said these resources are insufficient for helping everyone in need within the community.

"We're creating a net, but we need to get people out of the net," Layton said. "We need to get people into affordable housing solutions."

Layton, and others on the Q&A panel, said the biggest challenge facing Lafayette's homeless community is affordability. The price of housing is often the largest hurdle people must overcome in order to have a stable environment to grow in.

During the panel, attendees also commented on how the recent criminalization of homeless-



EVAN SVERAK | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Executive Director of Lafayette Urban Ministry Wes Tillett describes the history of homeless services in the greater Lafayette area during Tuesday's Beyond the Bridge event at Connection Point Church.

ness under S.B. 285 can give homeless people even greater difficulty in being able to find long-term homes.

Criminal records, even non-violent ones, can pose a significant challenge to being able to find housing. If people are unable to find a stable home to recover in, it becomes less likely they will recover at all.

Dawn Baldwin, an advocate for housing resources for the homeless, spoke on how an arrest made during a time when she was homeless made recovery harder than if she had been given other resources to get back on her feet. She had been reported for public intoxication, but said there was no testing of whether she was before she was incarcerated.

"No breathalyzer, no blood draw ... The officers just handcuffed me and took me to jail ... just threw me in jail without my meds. It was horrific," Baldwin said. "So when I went to (go) get housing, that was on my record. I didn't get to choose anywhere I wanted to go. I had to find a compassionate landlord that would work with me, considering my criminal history."

When housing is already difficult, criminalization and punishment do not help solve the issue of homelessness, but rather make it worse for those seeking recovery. When combined with affordability struggles, many home-

less people in Indiana are not able to find reliable housing to get them off the streets.

Local solutions

Lafayette Mayor Tony Roswarski said there are challenges with federal funding, and private funding can help build up affordable housing for those in need.

A loss of funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has also intensified the pressure on individual towns to fund their own solutions, the panel said during the event.

A housing project looking to house about 25 additional people is roughly \$7 million, Layton said.

Layton said she was still short \$345,000. At the end of the event, attendees were given the opportunity to sign a pledge to help make up the rest of this monetary goal.

Roswarski said Lafayette is starting a land trust in town to attempt to create an area of affordable housing for the community.

"We hope to be able to start getting some of those parcels of land where that land cost won't be in the cost of the house," Roswarski said. "But it's another one of those things that we are trying to do thinking outside of the box. I don't think (a land trust) ever has been tried around here to see if that can help put a dent in

(homelessness)."

Jennifer Millton, COO of United Way of Greater Lafayette, said housing already present in the Lafayette community has become more and more expensive, and thus less and less accessible for those trying to break out of homelessness.

While building new homes can help, Millton said the best way to tackle affordability and homelessness is to form a community where people are willing to help one another.

"We can't build our way out of (the affordability crisis)," she said. "Having more affordable units obviously would help, but that's not the only solution."

Instead, groups like the Housing Solutions Coalition are working on creative solutions like creating a landlord incentive fund. This would build relationships with landlords and help them take clients they might not normally take.

On top of this, the community wants to make sure the affordable housing provided to those in need is of a livable quality, Chris Campbell, representative for District 26, said.

"(Apartment renters) are telling me that their floors are sagging, their walls are paper-thin, their plumbing and their heating don't work ..." Campbell said. "What I have seen is we keep passing bills to bring down the cost of building, but I'm not seeing a lot of that savings going on to those people renting or buying housing."

West Lafayette Mayor Erin Easter said Lafayette's population density is unique in Indiana due to its proximity to Purdue University. Due to population influx from students and the desirability of housing close to campus, even neighborhoods across the Wabash River are facing shortages as housing goes to students and increases in rent.

"When you have a set amount of houses, and your population increases, that does impact your housing circumstance, regardless of what kind of housing it is," Easter said. "We have slowly watched our near-campus neighborhoods convert to more rental housing instead of owner-occupied housing. It increases the price because (housing) is becoming more scarce."

Changes on campus can happen very quickly, making it so that the city must also make decisions on infrastructure and housing on a shorter time scale than they otherwise may have, Easter said.

When combining all of these factors, Layton said Lafayette must work to not only expand their emergency resources for homeless people but also work to make the city more cohesive and multifaceted in its attempts to make long-term solutions to homelessness.

"I am all about helping people pull themselves up by the bootstraps, but I will make damn sure that people have boots. Let's provide you with some basic necessities, and then once you have those basic building blocks, then let's help you thrive," Layton said.

The panel will continue working with communities and faith centers in Lafayette in April 2026 to try to further coordinate community action and funding to aid the homeless.

Religious Directory

Assembly of God

River City Church @ Lafayette
108 Beck Ln, Lafayette, IN 47909
765-474-1432
www.rivercity.info facebook.com/WearECC
Lead Pastor: Robby & Tracey Bradford
Sunday: 9:00 am & 11:00 am
Wednesday: 6:15 pm - Dinner
7:00 pm - Worship Starts

Baptist

Faith Church
One Church - Three Locations
www.faithlafayette.org
On Facebook @FaithChurchLafayette
West Campus: 1920 Northwestern Avenue, WL
Sunday Worship: 9:30 and 11:00am
North Campus: 2000 Elmwood Ave., Lafayette
Sunday Worship: 9:30 and 11:00am
East Campus: 5526 ST RD 26 E, Lafayette
Sunday Worship: 8, 9:30, & 11:00am
Purdue Bible Fellowship & International Student Ministry
www.faithlafayette.org/pbf
On Facebook @PurdueBibleFellowship

Kossuth Street Baptist Church
2901 Kossuth Street, Lafayette, IN
Sunday Worship Service: 10:30 am
Sunday Connections Hour: 9:15 am
www.ksbcc.net

Tippecanoe Bible Church

3990 St. Rd 38 East, Lafayette, IN 47905
Church times: Sunday 10:30am and Thursday 6pm
www.tippecanoebible.org

Bible

Battle Ground Bible Church
2430 W. 600 N., West Lafayette, IN
Worship Service: 9:00am
Fellowship Groups: 10:30 am
Pastor: Kenny Loehe
www.bgbc.org
seo@bgbc.org

Catholic

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Center
535 W. Mitch Daniels Boulevard*
765-743-4652 Daily Mass
Monday-Saturday: 11:30am
Monday, Tuesday & Thursday: 5:30pm*
Wednesday: 9pm*
Weekend Mass
Saturday Vigil: 5:30pm
Sunday: 9am, 11:30am, 7pm* & 9pm*
*when Purdue is in session
http://www.boiler Catholics.org

Disciples of Christ

First Christian Church
Sunday worship 10:15 am
Live streaming on FB and YouTube
Book Study 9 am in the Chapel "Separation of Church and Hate" beginning March 1. Join anytime.
Children's Church during 10:15 am service.
We are an open and affirming congregation.
www.fcclaf.org | 329 N. 6th St. Lafayette, IN 47901

Episcopal

**Episcopal Campus Ministry
Chapel of the Good Shepherd**
The Rev. Dr. Hilary Cooke, Chaplain
610 Meridian Street (near Mackey Arena)
Online Morning Prayer - Sundays at 9:00 am
Holy Communion - Sundays at 10:00 am & 7:00 pm
765-743-1347 * www.goodshp.org

Evangelical Covenant Church

The Grove Covenant Church
3600 S. 9th Street, Lafayette
(765) 474-4842 * www.thegrovecov.church
Worship Service: Sundays 10:30 am
Streaming Online: www.thegrovecov.church/worship

Evangelical Charismatic

Calvary Chapel
2111 State St, Lafayette IN 47905
(765) 477-7744 www.cchapel.org
Sunday Meets: 10:30 am
Understanding the RAPTURE! Join us as we study the RAPTURE. WHEN will it happen? WHO will it involve? WHY will it occur? IS it in the Bible? (HINT: 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52)

Evangelical Presbyterian

Covenant Church
211 Knox Dr., West Lafayette, IN
Sundays:
9:00 am - Worship Service
10:30 am - Worship Service
CovenantEPC.org or call 765-463-7303

Faith Presbyterian Church
Traditional worship with reverence, awe, and joy
Sunday 9:30 am
faithpresbyterian.org/livestream
IG @faithpresw
FB @faithpresbyterianchurchwl
(765) 743-3683
office@faithpresbyterian.org

Interdenominational

Federated Church of West Lafayette
www.federatedchurch.net
2400 Sycamore Lane 463-5564
Nursery available
Sunday School (all ages) 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
PreK - 1st grade 10:45 am
Disciples of Christ & American Baptist
"Traditional with a Twist"

Islam

Islamic Educational Center of Lafayette
1744 Everett Street, Lafayette, IN 47905
951-316-4484 | iecol.org
"Spiritual gatherings for the love of God and Ahlul-beyt
*Fresh ideas and thoughtful remembrances.
*Friday congregational prayers.

Lutheran

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church (ELCA)
Rev. Elizabeth Lee, Pastor
1005 N 21st Street, Lafayette
Sunday Services @ 10:00 AM
Christian Education @ 9:00 AM
Wheelchair Accessible
765-447-4205
www.holytrinitylafayette.com
All are welcome!

Our Saviour Lutheran Church (ELCA)
Corner of Fowler & Vine, West Lafayette
(One Block East of Knoy Hall)
Congregational Pastor: Randy Schroeder
Sunday 9 AM Worship & 5 PM Dinner Church
The 9 AM is also streamed on Zoom & Facebook Live
https://www.facebook.com/osluth/
Request the Zoom link at randy@osluth.org
www.plm.org | plm@plm.org
www.osluth.org | info@osluth.org

Methodist

**Wesley Campus Ministry
(all students welcome)**
Wesley Foundation Student Center @ 200 N Russell St.
(Sharing Space with the Baptist Student Foundation)
Open M - F 8 am to 10 pm, Sat-Sun 1 pm to 10 pm
Worship: Sunday 4:30pm (Dinner afterwards) Spiritual Support Group 3pm Sundays
Interactive Devotion & Bible Study: Tues 7:30pm
Global Connections Meal: Friday 6:30pm (intercultural & interfaith discussion with home-cooked meal)
Recreation, Service, and Travel Opportunities!
Love Always Wins (GIQ): LGBTQ + Allies group.
www.WesleyFoundation.org

Non-Denominational

The Gathering with Dr. Will Miller
(formerly University Church)
"We do church differently"
522 Columbia Str. Lafayette, IN 47901
Held in the TCHS History Center
at the corner of 6th & Columbia
Live contemporary service Sundays at 11:00 am
youtube.com/thegathering6674/streams
765-532-0804 | drwillm@mac.com

Upper Room Christian Fellowship

2234 Indian Trail Dr. West Lafayette
Sunday Service: 10:30 am
Call: 765-463-7380
www.urcfellowship.org
www.facebook.org/urcfellowship

Victory Christian Center

Sharing The Love, Acceptance, And Forgiveness of Jesus. Pastors Bill & Pam Mickler
Sunday Service-10:00am
Wednesday Service-6:30pm
325 Burnetts Rd, West Lafayette, IN 47906
765-447-7777 | www.victorylafayette.org

West Lafayette Christian Church

1980 Lindberg Road West Lafayette, IN 47906
765-463-7995 | www.wlchristian.com
Sunday Worship Service: 10:10 a.m.

Orthodox

St. Alexis Orthodox Church
2115 Indiana 225 East, Battle Ground, IN 47920
Sunday: 8:15am - Matins | 9:30am - Divine Liturgy
Tuesday: 7:00am - 1st Hour
Wednesday: 7:00am - 1st Hour
Thursday: 7:00am - 1st Hour
Friday: 7:00am - 1st Hour
Saturday: 5:30pm - Vespers
Priest: Father Gregory Allard
www.saintalexios.org

Presbyterian USA

Central Presbyterian Church
Open! Affirming! Come Worship With Us!
Worship at 10:00 am
7th & Columbia, Lafayette, Indiana 47901
www.centralpreschurch.org
Find Us On Facebook!

Unitarian Universalist

Unitarian Universalist Church of Tippecanoe County
Currently worshipping in-person and Online
(http://uucf.org/sunday) Sundays at 10:30 a.m. Everyone
Welcome! 333 Meridian St., West Lafayette, IN 47906
765-743-8812, Website: uucf.org

Please join us on **Sunday, March 1 at 10:30 a.m.**

United Church of Christ

Immanuel United Church of Christ
9:00 am Christian Ed for all ages
9:45 am Coffee & Conversation
10:00 am Worship
In-Person & Online (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter)
Facebook.com/uccimmanuel
Pastor: Dr. TJ Jenney
1526 S 16th St. Lafayette, IN 47906
www.uuc-immanuel.org
Everyone Welcome!

Please check websites and social media or call your preferred organization to confirm service dates & times.

If you would like your organization to be listed in the Religious Directory, Call 765-743-1111 Ext.205
addirector@purdueexponent.org

Find more listings at:
ExponentHub.org

Protesters urge officials to rethink SK hynix rezoning near WL neighborhoods

BY ROBERT LANGEN
Staff Reporter

A group of residents gathered outside the Tippecanoe County Courthouse Monday morning ahead of a public hearing on the Purdue Research Foundation's request to rezone about 121 acres north of Kalberer Road, between Yeager Road and County Road 50 West/Salisbury Street, from residential to industrial for SK hynix's preferred West Lafayette site.

The South Korean chipmaker announced in 2024 that it planned to invest close to \$4 billion in an advanced packaging fabrication and R&D facility for AI products in Purdue Research Park.

Among those speaking at the protest was Purdue graduate and longtime resident Helen DeMarco, who described herself as a spokesperson for the group.

"We're here today to support the hearing that's gonna be happening in a little bit," DeMarco said, arguing the proposed facility would place heavy industry too close to residential neighborhoods.

DeMarco said residents are worried about potential air and water impacts from industrial processes and about the project's proximity to homes, a senior living community, and local community facilities.

DeMarco said her opposition is not to the semiconductor industry itself, but to the chosen location.

"I know that there's a need for us to have this industry," she said. "They need to put it in a place where it can be operated as safely as possible. And this does not feel as safe as possible."

She also pushed back on the argument that West Lafayette must accept the project or risk losing it to another state.

"I'm not concerned about what other states are doing," DeMarco said. "I'm

concerned about what we're doing in Indiana."

DeMarco said she was especially frustrated by what she sees as Purdue's role in backing the project. She also said the debate has made her question the university's commitment to the community surrounding it.

"For me, it just shows, I think, how far Purdue has fallen in terms of commitment to the communities that support them," she said.

Charles Bouman, another protestor and a Purdue professor of electrical and computer engineering, said the issue is not whether SK hynix should expand in Indiana, but whether this site makes sense for the company or the community.

"We're trying to stop the construction of a huge factory in the middle of a college town community," Bouman said. "There's so many places a company like that could locate that would be more effective, and better for them, better for SK hynix."

Bouman argued that city leaders had not produced enough evidence to justify claims about the project's benefits.

"I think it's absolutely outrageous that there has been no study at all on the economic impact of this factory, on the environmental impact of this factory, on the site location of this factory," he said.

He also said the project could reshape housing patterns around Purdue and further strain an already tight market in West Lafayette. Bouman said younger faculty members are already reluctant to buy homes near the proposed site.

"This is bad for Purdue University. This is bad for SK hynix, and this is bad for the community," Bouman said. "So the question that comes to my mind is, 'Who is it good for?'"

The protest came as Purdue and state

leaders continue to pitch semiconductors as central to Indiana's economic future. Purdue has publicly tied the SK hynix project to its broader semiconductor strategy and to a "Tech Corridor" linking West Lafayette and Indianapolis in a recent interview with AMD CEO Lisa Su.

But for residents at the protest, the message was less about rejecting growth than demanding a different version of it.

DeMarco and Bouman said Indiana can pursue high-tech investment without placing a large industrial facility next to established neighborhoods — Bouman said that is why residents need to keep showing up.

"They need to come out to these sorts of protests," he said, "so that they can make it clear to our elected officials ... that the community does not want this."



ANDREW COLEMAN | PHOTO & VIDEO EDITOR
Purdue graduate and longtime resident Helen DeMarco holds a sign while speaking with another attendee of Monday's protest against SK hynix at the Tippecanoe County Courthouse.

Lafayette man charged will alleged battery, recklessness

STAFF REPORTS

Lafayette police officers were called to a residence on Paige Road Saturday at approximately 5:40 p.m. following reports of a man with a gun. The alleged victim reportedly told police they were being held inside their home by Jeris Johnson, 39, according to a probable cause affidavit.

When officers arrived, the alleged victim reportedly told police they were afraid of being shot by Johnson. Officers then reportedly entered the residence

and located the alleged victim and Johnson, the affidavit said.

Officers then reportedly detained Johnson and removed the alleged victim from the residence, according to the probable cause affidavit.

During an interview, the alleged victim reportedly told officers that Johnson allegedly grabbed their gun after being told to leave the residence, the PCA said. Johnson then allegedly blocked the alleged victim from leaving and allegedly pointed the firearm at the individual.

Johnson is being charged with five felony counts of pointing a firearm, criminal recklessness, domestic battery resulting in bodily harm to a pregnant woman, intimidation, and criminal confinement. Johnson is also being charged with two misdemeanor counts of domestic battery and criminal trespass.

Johnson is being held at the Tippecanoe County Jail for a bond of \$250,000, according to the Tippecanoe County Prosecutor's Office.

Ken McCammon, president of Downtown Lafayette, passes away

STAFF REPORTS

A long-standing member of the Lafayette community passed away at the age of 74 last Friday.

According to a Facebook post from Friends of Downtown, a non-profit organization whose goal is to promote and enhance the vitality of downtown Lafayette through events and community partnerships, Ken McCammon, the organization's president, passed away.

Friends of Downtown Lafayette's website attributes McCammon as the founder of Mosey Down Mainstreet, a series of

street celebrations brought to Lafayette by the artistic community.

"Ken believed deeply in bringing people together. If there was an idea that could support local businesses, create community, or fill Main Street with life, Ken was usually somewhere helping make it happen," the Friends of Downtown's Facebook post said.

According to Fisher Funeral Chapel's obituary of McCammon, a Celebration of Ken's Life will be taking place at Lafayette Brew Company from 4-7 p.m. on Sunday.



EXPOSITORY FILE PHOTO
A crowd of people form outside the Lafayette Brewing Company during Mosey Down Mainstreet in the summer of 2023.

POLICE BEAT PURDUE

Friday

A package with various clothing items, valued at about \$60, was reported stolen about 3:20 p.m. in the 1000 block of West Stadium Avenue.

A theft of a backpack was reported about 10:15 p.m. at the Purdue University Police Department. The backpack was reportedly stolen Wednesday about 9 p.m. from Earhart Dining Hall.

Saturday

A food delivery theft, valued at \$35, was reported about 11:50 p.m. in the 1300 block of Third Street. The food was reportedly delivered about 9:25 p.m., and the investigation is ongoing, according to PUPD Capt. Song Kang.

Sunday

An online scam was reported about 9 p.m. after someone was reportedly posing as a law enforcement investigator, claiming the victim was under investigation, and demanding an online payment.

WEST LAFAYETTE

Friday

Three individuals were banned about 12:45 a.m. from Dos Amigos Mexican Restaurant after a reported battery.

A theft was reported about 4:30 p.m. from the Walmart on Northwestern Avenue.

Saturday

Purdue students, Bianca Miranda-Plaza, 19, and Austin Godrich, 20, were arrested about 1:15 a.m. in the 300 block of North Grant Street for alleged possession of marijuana.

Christina Humphries, 36, was arrested about 2:35 a.m. in the 100 block of South River Road for alleged public intoxication.

Purdue student Ross McElmurry, 22, was arrested about 2:35 a.m. near the intersection of West Fowler and North Chaucery Avenues for allegedly driving while intoxicated.

The theft of a firearm from a car was reported about 3:50 a.m. in the 300 block of West State Street, according to West Lafayette Police Department logs.

An individual was banned about 4:15 a.m. from the 100 block of East Stadium Avenue.

Purdue student Robert Cummings, 23, was arrested about 9:35 p.m. at the Walmart on Northwestern Avenue for alleged theft and resisting law enforcement.

Sunday

Brooklyn Treece, 23, was arrested about 4:30 a.m. near the intersection of North 4th and South Streets for alleged driving while intoxicated.

A theft was reported about 11:15 a.m. from the Menards on US Highway 52.

A window was reportedly broken out of a vehicle about 2:20 p.m. in the 400 block of Northwestern Avenue.

Monday

Alexandra Seldomridge, 20, was arrested about 12:15 a.m. near the intersection of North Grant Street and Leslie Avenue for alleged driving while intoxicated.

All person(s) charged or preliminarily charged are presumed innocent until found guilty in a court of law.
-Compiled by Addison Walter, asst. campus editor



EXPOSITORY FILE PHOTO

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THINGS TO DO

THURSDAY

Thursday Music night

Enjoy a musical night filled with stirring melodies and vibrant rhythms. The event starts at 7:30 p.m. at the Rat Pak Venue, located at 102 N. 3rd St. in Lafayette. The price for the tickets is \$20.

The Degas Collection at Purdue

Join Purdue Galleries as it presents a collection of 74 bronze sculptures inspired by French Impressionist Edgar Degas, believed to be the only completed collection on display. The exhibit is from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the Purdue Memorial Union, Room 231, located at 101 Grant St.

FRIDAY

The Randy Travis tour

Join for a live tour as James Dupré sings Randy Travis's famous hits, his original band plays the music, and Randy Travis appears on stage. The event starts at 7:30 p.m. at Long Center for the Performing Arts, located at 111 N. 6th St. in Lafayette. Tickets start at \$49.

The Jungle Book

Join to watch this exciting adaptation of Disney's "The Jungle Book." The musical includes Disney tunes, colorful characters, and that toe-tapping jungle rhythm. The musical starts at 7:30 p.m. at the Civic Theatre of Greater Lafayette, located at 313 N. 5th St., Lafayette. The box office opens an hour before the show.

SATURDAY

Timberdoodle Trot

Join the naturalist to look for the American Woodcock or the Timberdoodle. Join to learn about the critters, bring your own binoculars, and dress for the weather. The event will take place from 7-8:30 p.m. at the visitor center at Prophetstown State Park, located at 5545 Swisher Rd. The event is free with park admission.

St. Patrick's Family Day

Join Nine Irish Brothers to celebrate St. Patrick's Family Day. The event will start at 10 a.m. and will feature live music by Lucas Harry at 2 p.m. and Matt Hill at 7 p.m. The event will take place at Nine Irish Brothers, located at 119 Howard Ave., West Lafayette.

SUNDAY

The Music Man musical

Enjoy a performance of The Music Man musical by McCutcheon High School. The musical is about Harold Hill, a traveling con man who convinces locals to form a band, and he plans to leave as soon as he gets the money. The musical takes place from 3-5:30 p.m. for \$10, located at 4951 US-231, Lafayette.

Art Museum of Greater Lafayette exhibits

Enjoy art exhibits: LaDonna Vohar: "LaDonna's Melange" in the Shook Gallery, and Alice Baber: "From the Permanent Collection" at the Weill Gallery, from Wednesday to May 10, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The event takes place at the Art Museum of Greater Lafayette, located at 102 S. 10th St. in Lafayette.

ONGOING

Art Museum of Greater Lafayette exhibits

Enjoy art exhibits: LaDonna Vohar: "LaDonna's Melange" in the Shook Gallery, and Alice Baber: "From the Permanent Collection" at the Weill Gallery, from Wednesday to May 10, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The event takes place at the Art Museum of Greater Lafayette, located at 102 S. 10th St. in Lafayette.

Executive Forum with Steven Emch

Join President of Orr Fellowship Steven Emch as he provides high-achieving college graduates with professional development and networking opportunities. Everyone is welcome to come together and discuss issues facing businesses and management. The event takes place from 11:30 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. Friday in Krannert Auditorium, Room 140, located at 403 Mitch Daniels Blvd.

UPCOMING

St. Patrick's celebration

Join in on a St. Patrick's Day celebration with Nine Irish Brothers. The event will start at 11 a.m. on Tuesday and features bagpipers and Irish dancers located at 3520 State Rte. 38 in Lafayette. Attendees must be 21+ years of age.

Purduettes spring spectacular

Join the Purduettes for its 2026 spring spectacular performance. The event is 7:30 p.m. on April 25 at the Long Center for the Performing Arts, located at 111 North Sixth Street. Tickets can be purchased ahead online through the Long Center website, or one hour prior to the concert.



On This Day
March 12, 1992

SARAH WIEDERKEHR | GRAPHICS ARTIST

On this day, March 12, 1992, The Purdue Exponent published an article about the Varsity Glee Club's celebration for its 100th anniversary. Following tradition, the club delivered its annual All-Campus Serenade in the Purdue Memorial Union's ballrooms. The concert was meant to "lift everyone's spirits" after periods of cold weather and featured historical favorites as well as a few surprises.

Mutually Assured Distraction



GRAYDEN ARTUSI | GRAPHICS ARTIST

HOROSCOPES

BY KENNEDI THOMAS
Graphics Artist

ARIES: March 21-April 20
Gaining new perspectives may mean the reshaping of some areas of your life. Be open to this much-needed change.

LIBRA: Sept. 23-Oct. 23
Recognize that you are in control of your reactions. When unexpected things occur, reflect on your emotions.

TAURUS: April 21-May 21
Events on the horizon and recent times with close connections may fill you with more optimism. Take on this new outlook.

SCORPIO: Oct. 24-Nov. 22
Planning is most important as you enter this uncertain time in your life, but recognize that there is only so much you can control.

GEMINI: May 22-June 21
Find ways to touch base with all of your relationships. Those you aren't prioritizing may indicate a need to reevaluate.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov. 23-Dec. 21
As your personal sector has begun to calm down, you may be more prepared to tackle personal challenges.

CANCER: June 22-July 22
Maintain your focused and driven mindset. Keeping your eyes set on your goals and projects is key.

CAPRICORN: Dec. 22-Jan. 20
Do not change yourself to fit the mold of others. Presenting your truest self will be more rewarding in the long term.

LEO: July 23-Aug. 23
Creating a more positive headspace will be crucial as you enter this chaotic time of life. Make your space restorative.

AQUARIUS: Jan. 21-Feb. 18
Find passion in what you do professionally and personally. Projects will be more fulfilling with this mindset.

VIRGO: Aug. 24-Sept. 22
Don't be afraid to take a step back from projects or proceed with them more slowly. Doing so is important for reevaluation.

PISCES: Feb. 19-March 20
It can be easy to get wrapped up in specific visions you have for the future. Recognize that the unexpected happens often.



Movies and Mankind:

OPINIONS

The strange world of the modern trailer

Column

BY CJ ACEVEDO
Columnist

I'm sure many of you can think of times where you watched a trailer for something — whether it be a movie, TV show, or video game — and it got you super excited. For me, it was the first teaser for “Avengers: Infinity War.” I had been a fan of Marvel for a long time at that point, and to see that so many of my favorite characters would meet each other and participate in a huge battle for the fate of the universe got me ecstatic!

And while to this day I absolutely love that movie, I have to admit the trailers weren't completely honest. Most scenes from that first teaser, the one that got me hyped, weren't even in the final film.

I know of many people, including The Exponent's own columnist John Miles, who refuse to watch trailers for fear of getting the entire movie revealed to them. Others hate them because they lean into classic trailer cliches (voice-over, weird dramatic remixes of songs, taking itself too seriously) or because of instances like “Infinity War,” where the trailer, whether on purpose or by accident, gave people the wrong impression of the final product.

Because of this, people rightfully have pretty mixed feelings about trailers, so I'd like to share a few interesting instances where they caused quite a stir.

Sonic the Hedgehog

With such a beloved character as Sonic, people were very attentive to the progress of the speedy-blue hedgehog's first foray into live action. Fans were excited, and the casting of Jim Carrey (who hadn't booked a big film role in some time) just amplified that excitement.

But the first trailer left people ... confused and enraged.

For those who don't know, the first teaser revealed the design for Sonic, and he looked odd. He featured oddly humanoid eyes, limbs, and teeth, which frankly made him terrifying and nothing like the class Sonic design.

Many people (myself included) were simply fascinated by the choice to make Sonic look so unrecognizable. His design has hardly changed over the years, so to see him so egregiously different and uncanny definitely left people perplexed and angry.

Fans immediately posted their complaints and insults to social media in droves. It got so bad that the creators of the movie eventually delayed the entire film so that they could go back and redesign Sonic to appear more accurate to his classic look.

If you can allow me to put my conspiracy hat on, but some people believe the whole teaser was a marketing stunt, and the filmmakers had no intention of actually using that awful design. Now, it might not make sense for a popular character like Sonic to need a viral marketing stunt to generate hype, but I personally believe in this theory because it would take so much work to go back and redo the movie. But also ... Why in the world would anyone approve that atrocious design?

Halo 5: Guardians

Video game trailers are inherently in a tricky situation. For huge AAA games, companies have to create a teaser often right

when development starts, meaning so much is going to change between the time of the teaser's release and the game's actual launch.

Additionally, they usually have to spend money animating cinematic trailers to give audiences a feel for the story, as well as follow-up trailers integrating the often-changing gameplay.

Still, there's no excuse for the horrendous marketing of “Halo 5: Guardians.”

I love Halo! A lot! And little me was so excited to play Halo 5 despite my mixed feelings on Halo 4. I was truly too young to really critique anything that stimulated me at that age.

But a big part of my hype revolved around the marketing for “Halo 5: Guardians,” which showed the protagonist supersoldier Master Chief going rogue and getting hunted down by former ally Spartan Locke. Every teaser and commercial ended with the tagline: “Hunt the Truth,” which referenced a companion podcast that released with each new trailer. Little me was expecting a huge battle between the two as the mighty Master Chief goes on a gritty mission to find out some secrets!

Spoiler alert: That's not at all how the game plays out. At all. The plot is almost completely different. After pitting Locke and Chief against each other in all the trailers, the two hardly interact in the game, and their “big battle” culminates in a pathetic fist fight that lasts maybe one minute, and that podcast? Turns out it was outsourced, and even the game developers were surprised by it.

Yesterday

The movie “Yesterday” is about the only man to remember The Beatles in a world where they never existed. It received mixed reviews, but an interesting incident about the movie occurred because of its marketing.

Some trailers for the film included actress Ana de Armas, whose scenes were actually cut from the final film.

While it is relatively common for some actors

to be cut from final films, this particular instance led to some die-hard Ana de Armas fans filing a lawsuit against Universal Studios for false advertising ... yikes.

After a rather intense legal battle, the case was ultimately dismissed, but the ramifications have caused studios to be slightly more honest with their advertising.

Marvel Movies and Spider-Man

I already mentioned “Avengers: Infinity War,” but Marvel trailers are famous for many, sometimes contradictory reasons.

Trailers for movies like “Captain America: Civil War,” “Avengers: Endgame,” and “Spider-Man: No Way Home” include scenes that are purposely edited to exclude certain characters or environments to both mislead audiences and avoid major reveals. “Spider-Man” was edited out of early marketing for “Civil War.” There are a ton of edits made for the marketing of “Endgame,” and “Spider-Man: No Way Home” famously removed any sign of Andrew Garfield or Tobey Maguire from the trailers.

• Recently, “Thunderbolts” actually edited characters into the trailer to make an early death that much more of a surprise.

But on the same token, Marvel movies are so heavily marketed that if you keep up with all their marketing, you'll practically see the entire movie! I liked “Fantastic Four: First Steps,” but certain surprises or twists meant nothing because I knew there were clips from the trailer that hadn't been shown yet.

Even then, fans are demanding some sort of trailer for the upcoming “Spider-Man: Brand New Day,” which, despite releasing in July, has had no form or marketing at the time of writing.

I don't think trailers are going anywhere.

They're a huge part of the theater experience and the process of generating hype. But I think what we're all in the mood for is a trailer that gets us excited, sets the tone, but leaves us wanting more!



The front of GQT Wabash Landing 9 stands near State Street.

SARAH WIEDERKEHR | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

THE EXPONENT

HOUSING FAIR

APRIL 1

10am - 2pm

Purdue's Memorial Mall



Kissing the tree goodbye

The “Kissing Tree” stands in its final moments with the Greater Lafayette community

BY ALEX KIM
Staff Reporter

On Monday, a small crowd of West Lafayette residents gathered for a commemorative event for an oak tree, affectionately known as the Kissing Tree.

A notable landmark for residents on Grant Street who live past the West Lafayette Junior/Senior High School, the tree earned its name from the former West Lafayette mayor, John Dennis. Dennis supposedly had his first kiss under the tree, leading to the “big tree on the corner of Forest Hill and Grant Street” to become known as the Kissing Tree.

Amongst the small crowd were Danielle Gaylord and James Farr, a couple who had previously owned the house right behind the Kissing Tree. They had bought the house in 1991 and sold it in 2019, after raising their five children in the house.

The two had stated they didn’t realize the tree in front of their house was called the Kissing Tree until the commemorative event occurred.

“(It’s) kind of sad (for the tree to be removed). It’s been here for so long,” Farr said.

The two did agree that, though it is sad, the tree did need to be removed for safety reasons.

“The tree was a hazard, because, as old as it is, it shed branches,” Gaylord said. “Some of the branches were pretty darn big, and they fell off. A huge wind ... broke (off one of the branches). It did not hit the house, but it suddenly did (snap off). I was always very nervous about all the falling because the walking traffic is so heavy through (here).”

Gaylord and Farr shared fun, personal memories with the tree. Many of their family pictures included the tree. They later noted two of their sons had told them they used to throw acorns at cars from behind the tree. The couple also shared that they later learned their daughter had her first kiss behind the tree.

After the house had been sold by Gaylord and Farr, Cedric D’Hue became its current owner in the middle of 2020.

D’Hue bought the property and set the house up as a fur-

nished rental. At the time of purchasing, D’Hue didn’t know about the significance of the tree.

“It’s been a great addition to our portfolio of properties,” D’Hue said. “And it’s a great opportunity to be a part of the community. (The tree) has its benefits, and it also has some challenges associated with it. I think the city’s making the right decision.”

During the event, West Lafayette Mayor Erin Easter was also in attendance. Easter mentioned efforts were made in earlier years to maintain the Kissing Tree.

“We keep an inventory of all our street trees across the city of West Lafayette,” Easter said. “We’ve had our eyes on this tree for quite some time, to make sure it was healthy enough to be maintained as a street tree.”

Easter said the tree has some canopy issues where the branches are dying. The effort to take down the tree is to prevent property damage before the tree eventually falls down.

“(Another) one of the big reasons this tree is an issue for us is that the sidewalk is not an ADA-compliant area,” Easter said.

Over the 150-200 years the oak tree has been in the community, the tree has displaced the concrete curbing and damaged the sidewalk.

Currently, there are ideas to preserve the wood from the tree to be able to use for other projects and for members of the community.

To commemorate the original location, a plaque will be put up for the Kissing Tree. 126 new trees are also set to be planted during the year, as well as a potential new oak tree in a different, appropriate location to be designated as the new Kissing Tree.

A new six-foot-wide ADA-compliant sidewalk will be installed, with a new retaining wall to support the corridor.

The removal of the tree will occur during the West Lafayette Community School Corporation’s spring break from March 16 to 21. The construction process of the sidewalk and wall is aimed to be completed by the end of April, according to the City of West Lafayette website.



ANDREW COLEMAN | PHOTO & VIDEO EDITOR

The Kissing Tree sits Wednesday on Grant Street before its upcoming removal.

Purdue dominates in 17-1 win against Milwaukee

BY CARYS BAGLIA
Staff Reporter

After a tough loss to Oregon this past weekend, Purdue bounced back with a 17-1 win against Milwaukee at home on Tuesday afternoon.

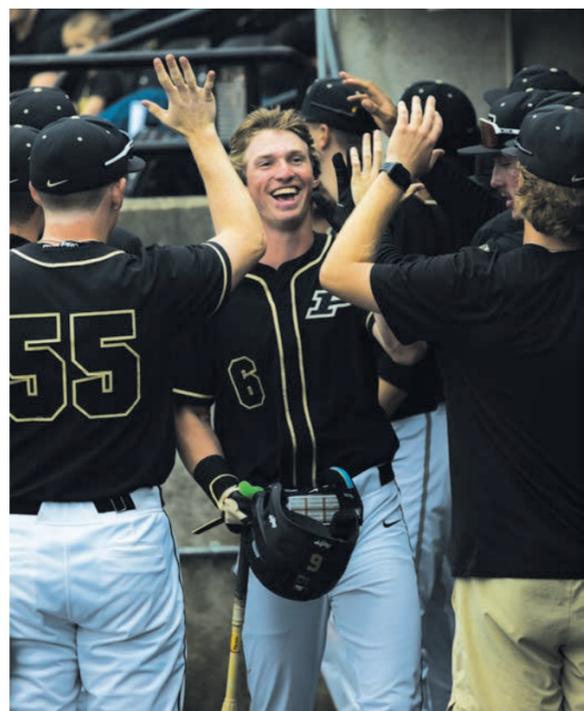
Purdue wasted little time building the lead, scoring four runs in the first inning before adding six more in the second. The early offensive surge came from contributions throughout the lineup, with multiple Boilermakers recording hits as Purdue quickly seized control of the game. Overall, the team had 17 hits and 17 runs, one of its biggest home offensive performances in recent seasons.

Senior infielder Sam Flores was yet again the big name for Purdue’s offense, going 3-for-4 with two RBIs and a home run in the third inning. Flores continues to be a consistent star for the Boiler’s offense, leading the team with four home runs and batting 0.362 on the season.

However, Flores wasn’t the only Boilermaker to contribute to Purdue’s dominant win. Production came from across the lineup, with 10 of the 15 players who saw an at-bat recording a hit, and nine of those recording an RBI.

Eight Purdue pitchers worked together to allow no earned runs and only seven hits, starting with sophomore Joe Trenner and finishing with senior Nick Kolze. After allowing one unearned run in the first inning, the pitching staff settled in and achieved eight scoreless innings. Ultimately, senior right-handed pitcher Austin Klug earned the win, improving to a 3-1 record this season.

Tuesday’s win served as a strong midweek rebound and confidence-builder ahead of an important Big Ten series against Maryland starting Friday at Alexander Field.



EVAN SVERAK | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Freshman shortstop Westin Boyle celebrates with the dug-out after scoring during Tuesday’s game against Milwaukee. Boyle also knocked in a run on a single in the second inning.



EVAN SVERAK | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Freshman shortstop Westin Boyle connects for an RBI single during Tuesday’s game. The Boilermakers buried Milwaukee early, putting up 15 runs in the first three innings.

The 2026 Purdue men’s basketball roster breakdown

BY AVANEESH SANKAR
Asst. Sports Editor

Matt Painter — Head Coach

There’s a reason why Painter has been able to stick around for 21 seasons and counting. The head coach is one of the most respected coaches in the Big Ten and NCAA, being instrumental in Purdue’s success in basketball for the past two decades. The highlight of Painter’s career so far has been his trip to the NCAA National Championship against UConn, where Zach Edey led the Boilermakers but ultimately fell to the Huskies. While AP’s preseason number one team has been marred with inconsistency as of late, Painter’s presence brings stability and experience going into the postseason.

Braden Smith — G — Sr.

14.9 PTS | 8.7 AST | 3.6 TRB | 1.8 STL | .462 FG% | .388 3P% | .823 FT%

The former All-American saw a dip in his stats compared to his junior year, but was still highly effective as Purdue’s floor general. Despite being a smaller guard, Smith can score against taller defenders with crafty finishing, fadeaways from mid-range, and shot fakes that lead to free throws. The senior is 47 assists away from being crowned the NCAA’s all-time leader in assists, so keep an eye out to see if he can overtake the current leader, Bobby Hurley.

C.J. Cox — G — So.

8.5 PTS | 1.3 AST | 2.5 TRB | .457 FG% | .379 3P% | .833 FT%

The only non-senior starter for Purdue, Cox has solidified himself as a premier “Three-and-D” type of player. The sophomore will be given the tall task of defending the Big Ten’s best backcourt players, but he has proven that he can bring energy on offense as well, with his recent 27-point night, which propelled Purdue to avoid a loss to Northwestern. With the Boilermakers’ defensive struggles, they will certainly be hoping Cox can help limit opposing offenses.

Fletcher Loyer — G — Sr.

13.6 PTS | 1.9 AST | 2.3 TRB | .440 FG% | .419 3P% | .891 FT%

Loyer has been starting since his freshman year, and for good reason. Painter gave him the green light this season, with the senior currently averaging 6.5 threes taken a night. Typically an off-ball player, you’ll often see Loyer sprinting around the perimeter, repositioning for threes. While not the strongest defender, opposing teams certainly won’t want to leave Loyer open on offense.

Trey Kaufman-Renn — F — Sr.

13.4 PPG | 2.7 AST | 8.7 TRB | .564 FG% | .154 3P% | .616 FT%

Alongside Smith and Loyer, Kaufman-Renn has stuck around in West Lafayette all four years, a rare sight in modern college basketball. The senior’s scoring this season dipped by 7 points-per-game, but been an excellent rebounder and interior defender. Kaufman-Renn typically hangs around the post on offense, where he can shake off defenders or shoot a “push shot” from close range. While having a limited ability to space the floor, TKR will be a challenge for opposing interior defenders to guard.

Oscar Cluff — C — Sr.

9.8 PTS | 1.6 AST | 7.1 TRB | .709 FG% | .688 FT%

The Australian big man transferred from South Dakota State to Purdue and has been a key asset to the Boilermakers. Cluff both dominates the glass and scores well from inside alongside

Kaufman-Renn. He is a respectable interior defender, but often opposing guards will try to switch onto him, being able to utilize Cluff’s limited lateral quickness to their advantage. However, when Cluff plays heavy minutes with Kaufman-Renn, Purdue can rebound the best of the best.

Bench

Painter typically runs a nine-man rotation, with freshman guard Omer Mayer, redshirt freshman guard Jack Benter, sophomore guard Gicarri Harris, and sophomore center Daniel Jacobsen rounding out the lineup. Mayer typically runs as backup point guard to Smith, but also earns minutes alongside Smith off-ball. Benter comes in as a forward on small-ball lineups and can hold his own guarding bigger players. Harris fills in the gaps, playing the two typically, and is a respectable defender. Each one can get hot from three on any night, and while Jacobsen does not shoot the ball very often, he serves as a lob threat for Smith to find.



BLACK

Home Wins: 1
Away Wins: 3
Total Losses: 3

57.14% WIN RATE



GOLD

Home Wins: 6
Away Wins: 1
Total Losses: 1

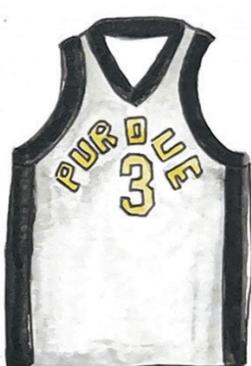
87.5% WIN RATE



WHITE

Home Wins: 5
Away Wins: 3
Total Losses: 2

80% WIN RATE



GRAY

Home Wins: 0
Away Wins: 4
Total Losses: 1

80% WIN RATE

SPORTS

www.purdueexponent.org

Purdue's highlights, lowlights from the regular season



ALEXIS GLEIM | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Senior forward **Trey Kauffman-Renn** matches up with Michigan graduate student forward **Yaxel Lendeborg** on defense during a Feb. 17 game at Mackey Arena.

BY AVANEESH SANKAR
Asst. Sports Editor

For AP's preseason number one team in the country, this season did not go as smoothly as planned.

The No. 18 Purdue Boilermakers (23-8, 13-7 Big Ten) will suit up Thursday to begin the post-season in the Big Ten Tournament after a tumultuous regular season that featured incredible road wins to rock-bottom losses in Mackey Arena.

As the stakes grow for the Boilermakers, we picked our highlights and lowlights from their season so far.

LOWLIGHTS:

Loss to Iowa State at home

Iowa State's 81-58 victory against at-the-time No. 1 Purdue in Mackey was a sign that the Boilermakers were not invincible. Junior forward Milan Momcilovic and six other Cyclones scored over seven points on the night, with Iowa State shooting a blazing 47.8% from three on 23 attempts and completely locking down Purdue's typically consistent offense.

The raucous Mackey crowd was kept quiet alongside Purdue's seniors. While the Boilermaker front court outbounded the Cyclones, Purdue's guards were ineffective on the night, with the loss marking Purdue's first of the season.

The January three-game landslide

Powered by Bruins senior guard Donovan Dent's 23-point and 13-assist offensive clinic, UCLA taking down Purdue 69-67 was not an unreasonable loss considering that the Boilermakers had to make a trip out west for the matchup. Sophomore guard C.J. Cox had a last-second look from outside but was unable to connect, marking a close loss that could have very well looked different.

Illinois defeating Purdue at home, 88-82, was more questionable. Freshman guard Ke-

aton Wagler, walking into Mackey and scoring 46 points, was the catalyst that allowed Illinois to capture a victory in a back-and-forth match.

With strong guard play from Wagler and clutch shots from junior center Tomislav and freshman forward David Mirkovic, the Boilermakers were outrebounded and gifted plenty of second-chance opportunities to the Fighting Illini.

The 72-67 loss to Indiana in Assembly Hall capped a brutal three-game stretch of losses. Senior guard Lamar Wilkerson and junior guard Nick Dorn each shot over 40% from three, with 19 and 18 points respectively, dicing up the Boilermaker defense.

Senior forward Trey Kaufman-Renn's 21 points were not enough to carry the Boilermakers to a win, although the five free throws Kaufman-Renn left on the table matched the deficit Purdue lost by. While Purdue outscored Indiana in the second half, the Boilermakers never were able to erase the 11-point deficit that began at halftime.

Senior night loss to Wisconsin

Losing to Wisconsin 97-93 was a somber end for the senior class in Mackey Arena. The Badgers were not a team to underestimate, even though Purdue had beaten them at home this season previously, with Wisconsin taking down Michigan, Michigan State, and Illinois in each team's respective home arenas.

Purdue shone offensively but ultimately let the Badgers shoot lights out from long range, letting Wisconsin shoot an outstanding 52.9% from three on 34 attempts.

The loss marked not only a less-than-storybook finish for the senior class in Mackey, but also cemented a trend for Purdue at home. The five ranked teams that came to West Lafayette earned a win with the Boilermaker defense collapsing each time. Certainly an unexpected outcome for matchups in one of the loudest college basketball venues nationally.



ANDREW JOHNSON | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Sophomore guard **C.J. Cox** shoots in the corner for a 3-pointer while Ohio State sophomore guard **John Mobley Jr.** contests during the March 1 game at Columbus, Ohio. Cox had 13 points on 5-for-9 from the field.

Despite the loss, the Black-and-Gold faithful remained as loyal as ever, present for a bitter-sweet goodbye to the seniors who have helped make Purdue basketball what it is today.

HIGHLIGHTS:

Road win at Alabama

Tensions were rising as the Boilermakers walked into Tuscaloosa, while at-the-time No. 8 Alabama and the Crimson Tide crowd were ready to hand Purdue a loss.

Facing one of the best teams in the SEC on the road, Purdue certainly did not back down, handing Bama an 87-80 loss. Senior guard Braden Smith and Kaufman-Renn teamed up for a combined 48 points, with Purdue's front-court dominating the glass with 48 rebounds compared to Alabama's 23.

Senior guard Fletcher Loyer's emphatic "Roll Tide" celebration cry marked a road win that was a euphoric high for the team, showcasing what the Boilermakers can do while playing to their best ability, being able to rebound and outpace the NCAA's top teams.

Baha Mar Champions

Purdue traded the West Lafayette winter for the Bahamas, where the Boilermakers captured the Baha Mar Championship after wins against Memphis and at-the-time No. 15 Texas Tech.

The Tigers certainly gave Purdue a scare, but Smith's 12 assists alongside 50 combined points from Kaufman-Renn, Cox, and Loyer allowed the Boilermakers to outduel Memphis, proving that Purdue was able to handle adversity.

The Texas Tech win was a different story, with junior forward JT Toppin leading the Red Raiders while not yet finding their footing as a team. Seven different Boilermakers scored over 10 points on the night, allowing Purdue to control the game and leading to a stifling 86-56 victory in front of a predominantly Purdue crowd, despite being all the way in the Bahamas.

Alongside the Baha Mar victories and the win in Gainsbridge Fieldhouse against at-the-time No. 21 Auburn, Purdue has gone 3-0 on neutral courts so far this season. This is something to keep an eye on as we enter the post-season.

Road win at Nebraska

Purdue's best win of the season came on the road in Lincoln, Nebraska. After a shaky 68-64 win against the Oregon Ducks in Mackey, Purdue shushed the naysayers for the moment with an overtime win against at-the-time No. 7 Nebraska.

It appeared that the Boilermakers would coast to a win, holding a 16-point lead going into the half, silencing the Cornhusker offense. Instead, Nebraska fought back, erasing the deficit and having Purdue on the ropes, being able to force overtime.

However, a clutch "and-one" bucket from senior center Oscar Cluff from inside was able to seal the deal for Purdue, on a night where the offense was able to bail out Purdue's collapsing defense. Purdue snagged an outstanding 52 rebounds, giving necessary second chances on a night where the Boilermakers only shot 28.3% from three and 36.8% from the field.

Purdue has gone 8-3 on the road this season, comparable to the Big Ten's best. The Nebraska win displayed the team's resolve and capability to grind out wins, even though the Boilermakers made it harder than it needed to be.

As a whole, Purdue's consistency over the last few years has been remarkable. Although Purdue was never quite able to play up to the preseason expectations, Painter and the big three seniors have brought stability to a team and gifted the Boiler fanbase some incredible memories.

The Black-and-Gold fans certainly hope that as the Boilermakers enter March Madness, and the senior class closes out their playing careers in West Lafayette, that Purdue will be the last ones dancing at the end of the tournament.

OPINION: March Madness outdances all others

BY GABE FRYLING
Staff Reporter

There's just something sweet about March.

We are just a week away from the best competition in American sports, and there's nothing that even comes close to the magic of the NCAA tournament.

I would even say it's the second-best tournament in the world, falling only to the World Cup for the best competition in sports. The World Cup is something special, but March Madness doesn't fall too far off from it.

There's nothing in the country that tops March Madness in terms of stakes, entertainment, and memorable moments, and I've got three reasons to prove this:

Nothing trumps elimination tournaments

There's just something special about a game when it's win or go home. March Madness is the epitome of this, as each team is fighting to keep its season alive.

We've seen comebacks, upsets, buzzer-beaters, and more all come from the first third weekend in March every single year, fueled by players simply wanting their season not to end.

These back-against-the-wall situations have brought out the best in so many March Madness stars, resulting in many of the best games of the year all in a one weekend sitting.

While every sport has its own playoff, tournament, or something similar, nobody does it like March Madness.

March Madness is the most inclusive of all American tournaments

Almost every sport has an elimination tournament, and even though March Madness does it best, there are still competitions like the NBA Playoffs, NFL playoffs, and more that have had their fair share of great moments in a win-or-go-home game.

But March Madness does one thing no other American competition can do by gaining the attention of many different demographics across the world, and it does it so simply with the ability to create a bracket.

Creating a bracket has become a yearly tradition for millions across the country, as they fill out each spot and choose the most improbable upsets in anticipation of the tournament. Filling out a bracket is not limited to only college basketball fanatics; anyone from anywhere can do it.

We've seen children, dogs, and even monkeys create brackets due to their pure simplicity. All you have to do is pick option A or B, making it easily the most inclusive entry into enjoying the games.

Many individuals who create a bracket may not



EXPONENT FILE PHOTO

Then-Houston graduate student guard **L.J. Cryer** wins the tip-off against then-senior forward **Caleb Furst** during a 2025 March Madness Sweet 16 game.

watch a single game, but they will surely check their bracket points to see how they rank in a work, family, or national competition.

The hype around creating a bracket is arguably just as much fun as watching the games themselves, and is just another feature of why it's the best tournament in American sports.

48 games in four days

Having 48 games in four days is not an incredible feat for college basketball on the regular. Even the average weekend in January can have more games during a shorter span.

But the difference is that all 48 games are meaningful and nationally televised.

There is something special about the first Thursday and Friday of the tournament when games start before noon and don't conclude until well beyond midnight.

Every game is placed in near-perfect increments so fans can turn on a game at 11:50 a.m. and never have to stop watching past the midnight hour, all while being able to stay on the same streaming service.

We live in a world where one game is on Peacock, the next is on Fox, and the last is on the Big Ten Network, all requiring different subscriptions that rack up quickly.

But March Madness is different, allowing users to watch all four games with the same streaming service, like YouTube TV or Hulu. Individuals can even watch an hour or two of games for free on the website, and if you know how to, you can never run out of this free trial.

The pure spread of games is what just puts March Madness up to the next tier of untouchable sporting competitions. There's so far nothing that comes close to the NCAA tournament, and I will be one of the many seated and ready come next Thursday.

OPINION: Our sports editor predicts the Big Ten Tournament

BY KYLEE KLEVEN
Sports Editor

For sports fans, March is one of the best times of the year. "Why?" you may ask — it's prime-time bracket season.

The first rounds of the Big Ten men's basketball tournament officially began on Tuesday. While most will be spending time with friends and family in the comfort of a living room, I am studying each game and instead using this as an opportunity to strengthen my bracket prediction skills.

In the recent regular season, I have made mental notes of each Big Ten team and each performance leading up to this moment. I have then taken those notes into deep consideration as I filled out my own personal bracket.

Here are my predictions on what might play out at the Big Ten men's basketball tournament:

The power of an upset

While making my bracket, I took deep consideration of the events that took place during the regular season. Although it does help provide insight into what might happen, there's always the possibility of an upset.

Although Ohio State has had a recent hot run, I don't see it being enough to beat the Iowa Hawkeyes.

I don't predict a major upset within the tournament itself since all of these teams have met previously, but I do predict minor upsets between seeds.

One specific part that I do think is possible is Wisconsin upsetting Illinois. The Badgers have proved growth throughout the regular season, and the cherry on top was closing out with a win against Purdue. Wisconsin also stands as the only Big Ten team to beat Michigan this regular season.

Yes, Illinois' competitive freshmen do give the team an upper hand. When both teams met originally, it was a consistent neck-to-neck battle. Wisconsin finished victoriously, winning by two, and has continued to challenge all of its competitors since then.

Going deeper into the tournament, assuming that Minnesota will face UCLA and the Bruins will progress onward, I do predict that Michigan State will defeat UCLA. This isn't necessarily an upset but more of an observation.

UCLA has the ability to be a tough competitor, but then again, the team has seen fluctuating highs and lows. Especially when both teams met in Spartan territory previously, the

defeat was too serious for Bruins head coach Mick Cronin as he took it out on the press and by ejecting senior forward Steven Jamerson II himself.

As they say, "slow and steady wins the race", and the Spartans know that this mentality will surely put them at a longer stay in the tournament.

Boiler hopes lost in the abyss

Honing in on Purdue specifically, I don't see a tournament championship in its future.

While predicting that Northwestern will beat Indiana Wednesday night, I see it as a possibility for the Boilermakers to take down the Wildcats once again. If that were to happen, Purdue's next opponent would be Nebraska.

Although Purdue beat Nebraska in January, the win was based on pure luck. If the Cornhusker fan had never thrown that beer at the court, senior guard Jamarques Lawrence would have never slipped, which wouldn't have allowed sophomore guard Gicarri Harris to slide in for the steal. The possibilities of this happening again remain very slim, given the security and design of the United Center.

With that, there is a possibility that Purdue can finish on top. The Boilers held the Cornhuskers to high standards, advancing into overtime. Still, Purdue would have to outbeat its current slump to even stand close to Nebraska.

Wolverines remain on top

Michigan stands nearly undefeated in the Big Ten, having lost only to Wisconsin earlier in January. I still see the Wolverines learning from the mistakes that took place earlier and sweeping the Badgers.

Game 17, or the last game of the tournament, I predict it to be a battle of the Michiganans after the Spartans feed families while successfully taking down Nebraska.

Last but certainly not least, I predict the Michigan Wolverines to win it all. They're seriously no joke, standing at No. 1 in the Big Ten and a projected 1-seed for the NCAA Tournament.

Although I do think Michigan State won't go down without a fight, it will truly come down to the final minutes of the game.

The Boilermakers will play their first game of the Big Ten Tournament at 6:30 p.m. Thursday at the United Center in Chicago. Purdue's opponent will be determined based on the outcome of Wednesday night's face-off between Northwestern and Indiana.