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Happy NEW Year

2025



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All in a day's work

Local college student making waves as new Christian recording artist

BY MANDY LOEHR
EXAMINER STAFF WRITER

A Bellefontaine area college sophomore and Calvary Christian High School graduate is wrapping up an exhilarating year of making a major break-through into the Christian music recording industry, releasing her first single this fall with national recording artists Citizen Way.

Brooklyn Horner, who now has adopted Brookabella as her recording artist name, said it has been a "big ripple effect" since she got back into songwriting over the summer months, and wrote the upbeat single, "Praise."

She initially showed the song to her parents, Shawna and Donald Horner, and also recorded a video of herself singing "Praise." Her father, who has connections in the Christian music and film industry, instantly loved the song (along with her

mother, who gave her the nickname Brookabella as a youngster). Donald sent the video to Ben Calhoun of Citizen Way, whom he met several years ago at Rise FM's Rock the Lake concert.

Before she knew it, Brooklyn said she was meeting with Calhoun and then recording the song during July in Nashville at a studio owned by Michael Tait, former member of Grammy Award-winning D.C. Talk.

"It's been this big rollercoaster and it's been

so much fun," she said earlier this month from her Bellefontaine residence, while she was home for Christmas break from Mount Vernon Nazarene University.

"Ben is someone I've looked up to since I was young, and it's so amazing that he's helping me with my music.

"He asked me if we could collaborate on 'Praise' with Citizen Way, and my reaction was an absolute 'yes.' That is such an honor and it's been an awesome opportunity."

"Praise" was released in October and it reached 18,000 listeners in its first week. It's available on all major streaming platforms. Brooklyn said it's also been surreal to hear her song on traditional radio stations and on MVNU's college radio station WNZR, where she also works in between her busy schedule as an MVNU cheerleader and triple major, studying music; visual art; and communication/film and media.

While she was in Nashville, Calhoun connected her with a record label, Dvout Music. During a meeting with the label representatives, she sang for them on the spot and then signed a five-song contract, which has been "such a blessing," the 2023 CCS graduate said.

Next on the agenda for the 20-year-old is the release of two more new songs in January, "Promises" and "Zion," along with the Spanish version of "Praise."

Calhoun mentioned to the singer-songwriter that releasing her songs in Spanish could be another avenue to explore.

Brooklyn speaks fluent Spanish and took seven Spanish courses at Benjamin Logan Schools prior to her high school graduation.

She's thrilled for the opportunity to pay homage to her own Hispanic heritage and Salvadorian roots. Translating her songs from English to Spanish isn't as simple as directly translating all of the lyrics, she noted, but it was a task that was she eager to perform.

"I was working at the studio all day during the summer, and then I'd stay up late at night working on the Spanish translations," the city resident noted.

"I'd love to reach as many people as possible with my music, so being a female Christian Spanish recording artist are exciting shoes to fill."

In her younger years, Brooklyn said she always loved to sing and enjoyed singing with her older sister, Sydney, (who is a twin, to fellow sister Savannah).

Brooklyn got her start singing in the Columbus Children's Choir, starting at the age of 4, continuing for five or six years. She's also appeared on the musical theater stage, including at the Holland Theatre, playing Alice in Alice in Wonderland and Snoopy in a Charlie Brown production, among others.

"I found a passion for performance that is extremely rewarding. When I was young, I didn't necessarily picture myself as a Christian recording artist, but knew I absolutely loved to be on stage, or

See ARTIST on P8

Otterbein SeniorLife finalizes affiliation with Green Hills

BY THE EXAMINER STAFF

Green Hills Community and Universal Home Health and Hospice (a Green Hills operated home-based services entity) will become part of the Otterbein SeniorLife organization, effective immediately, representatives announced Monday, Dec. 30.

The Otterbein Green Hills SeniorLife Community, as it is now called, is one of 26 entities in the Otterbein senior care network. The Otterbein network is comprised of 11 senior communities, nine stand-alone nursing neighborhoods, two home health agencies, three hospice agencies and a staffing agency.

"We are so very pleased to join forces with Green Hills Community," said Jill Wilson, Otterbein president and CEO, in announcing the finalization of the affiliation to Otterbein Green Hills residents and employees said,

"Their track record of providing faith-based care and specializing in lifestyle choices that enhance the physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual aspects of residents, while respecting the need for independence, privacy and self-esteem, will strengthen our organization and open up all kinds of strategic opportunities to carry out our mission."

Bill Brownson, Otterbein SeniorLife board chair, said the board could not pass up the opportunity "to affiliate with a like-minded organization, committed to exceptional stewardship."

Otterbein Green Hills Executive Director Mike Ray said the affiliation with Otterbein gives Green Hills Community a number of advantages for future growth and success.

"These include a vision to reposition the community and increase investment in the campus, both the result of enhanced access to debt restructuring and capital. By joining forces with a large, multi-site entity, Green Hills Community can increase its resources and purchasing power, which ultimately leads to providing enhanced facilities and continued excellence in care."

Members of the Otterbein executive leadership team have been on the Green Hills campus several times throughout the affiliation process and met with partners (employees) and residents, answering a wide variety of questions about the affiliation and future direction of the community.

Otterbein Green Hills SeniorLife Community and Universal Home Health and Hospice is retaining staff, leadership team, and the local board of directors; but now with support from a home office team to enhance leverage for sales, marketing, communications, financial analyses, strategic planning, procurement, human resources, etc.

"I am very pleased the affiliation is complete, and ready for the opportunity ahead to continue the Otterbein mission — 'inspired by faith, we strive to enrich individual life journeys for all,'" Ray said.

Patrol warns against driving impaired for New Year's holiday

BY THE EXAMINER STAFF

COLUMBUS — As Ohioans countdown to the new year, troopers of the Ohio State Highway Patrol will be highly visible, keeping the roads safe.

Troopers are urging those celebrating New Year's to plan ahead and designate a sober driver.

The New Year's holiday reporting period runs Tuesday, Dec. 31, through Wednesday, Jan. 1. The patrol's zero-tolerance policy is part of the Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over enforcement campaign.



See WARNING on Page 8



Ben Calhoun of Citizen Way, left, and Brooklyn Horner (Brookabella) are pictured on the cover for their single, "Praise." (BROOKABELLA MUSIC VIA FACEBOOK)



Brooklyn Horner works at the Mount Vernon Nazarene University campus radio station WNZR, excitedly announcing her song "Praise" this fall. (BROOKABELLA MUSIC VIA FACEBOOK)

EVOLVING STORY UPDATE

Teen now charged with murder in Christmas Eve shooting death

BY THE EXAMINER STAFF

A 15-year-old Bellefontaine boy is facing charges of murder, felonious assault and firearm specifications related to a Christmas Eve shooting death, the Logan County Prosecutor's Office reports.

The defendant, Charly Yuretich, was taken into custody by officers of the Bellefontaine Police Department Tuesday

morning, Dec. 24, as a person of interest after Nathaniel G. Jones, 23, was found with multiple gunshot wounds inside a residence at 227 N. Detroit St., Bellefontaine. Officers responded to the residence about 10:22 a.m. following a 911 call about a shooting there.

Jones was transported to Mary Rutan Hospital, where he was pronounced dead, officers previously reported.

Since Yuretich is 15, the complaint from the prosecutor's office was filed in juvenile court. However, the prosecutor's office filed a motion to have him bound over to adult court to be tried as an adult, Logan County Prosecutor Eric Stewart said.

The juvenile court will hold several hearings to determine whether or not he should be bound over.

Yuretich will next appear in court at 2

p.m. Thursday, Jan. 2, where the court will appoint him an attorney and set a probable cause hearing.

Officers on the scene Tuesday were assisted by Bellefontaine Fire & EMS and Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation.

The investigation into this matter continues and those with relevant information are asked to contact the Bellefontaine Police Department at (937) 599-1010.

Tigers roll past West Jefferson

BY MIKE FRANK
 EXAMINER SPORTS WRITER

It was a matter of adjustments that paid off big. West Liberty-Salem wrapped up 2024 with a 55-30 victory at home over West Jefferson on Monday night in Ohio Heritage Conference boys basketball action.

The Tigers now sit at 4-1 in the OHC and 4-2 overall.

West Liberty-Salem built an early lead and kept in front, although West Jefferson stayed close. The Roughriders tied it a couple times late in the first half and were down just two at the break.

Things shifted dramatically in the third period, as West Liberty-Salem held the Riders to just four points and drained shots from all over the court to seize control. They kept the big margin safe down the home stretch.

The Tigers had good balance on offense, with 15 by Brevin Louden and 10 from Carson Poppe, plus nine by Garrett Wallen and seven by Isaiah Reames.

"I think our full-court zone pressure threw them off, just chemistry-wise," said Tigers coach Darrin Leichty. "It wore them down mentally by the end of the third quarter. Then you sprinkle a few shots that we had, and it was kind of a dagger for them."

As noted, the Tigers got contributions from several players, as Taran Logwood is currently sidelined with an injury. "Carson (Poppe)



Garrett Wallen of West Liberty-Salem takes a shot from 3-point range during Monday's game against West Jefferson. Defending for the Roughriders is Nick Fitzpatrick (EXAMINER PHOTO | MIKE FRANK)

kind of spearheaded that. His physicality really bothered the Buescher kid. The guys followed the scouting report and did exactly what they were supposed to do."

For West Jefferson (2-3 OHC, 3-4 overall), Austin Buescher had nine points and Nick Fitzpatrick scored eight.

After trading baskets a couple of times to begin the contest, WL-S got a baseline runner by Louden and a bucket by Sutton Wilcoxon, then a steal and layup by

Reames to go up 10-4. The Roughriders broke a drought with just under three minutes to go on a basket by Fitzpatrick. Wallen nailed a corner three in response. The Riders' Logan Hart got a shot to drop with a minute to play, making it 13-8 after the first.

The teams spent a good chunk of the second quarter going back and forth, with neither able to add to its tally. The first points came with 4:35 to go on a three by

West Jeff's Colton Kincade. Buescher did hit a couple of shots after that, but the Tigers answered both times. The first was by Poppe and the other came from Reames. After one more score by the Riders, WL-S fired up a long shot with a couple seconds remaining. The ball hit off the backboard, with Wilcoxon able to put it back up and in at the horn for a 19-17 advantage.

Following the intermission, Reames opened mat-

ters with a three-pointer, followed by a score from Louden. West Jefferson got baskets by Evan Switalski and Fitzpatrick. However, it would prove to be their only ones of the entire period.

Three scores by West Liberty-Salem — a drive by Louden, Caleb Hershberger from deep, and Poppe on a nice drop step — led to a Riders timeout with 2 1/2 minutes left.

Things kept piling up for the Tigers, though, and they were ahead 39-21, heading

| WEST LIBERTY-SALEM 55, | | | | | WEST JEFFERSON 30 | | | | | |
|--|----|---|----|----|-------------------|----|--|--|--|--|
| ROUGHRIDERS | 8 | 9 | 4 | 9 | - | 30 | | | | |
| TIGERS | 13 | 6 | 20 | 15 | - | 55 | | | | |
| WEST JEFFERSON (2-3, 3-4) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Nate Godínez 0 0-0 0; Colton Kincade 1 0-0 3; Austin Buescher 4 0-0 9; Carter Romans 1 0-0 2; Evan Switalski 2 0-0 4; Logan Hart 2 0-0 4; Nick Fitzpatrick 3 2-2 8; Memphis Book 0 0-0 0; Braxton Vance 0 0-0 0; Brodie Quinn 0 0-0 0. | | | | | | | | | | |
| TOTALS 13 2-2 30. | | | | | | | | | | |
| WEST LIBERTY-SALEM (4-1, 4-2) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Isaiah Reames 3 0-2 7; Troy Christison 1 0-0 2; Sutton Wilcoxon 2 0-1 4; Sam Strapp 1 0-0 2; Conner Leichty 0 0-0 0; Beckett Sullivan 0 0-0 0; Caleb Hershberger 2 0-0 6; Brevin Louden 7 0-0 15; Carson Poppe 5 0-2 10; Garrett Wallen 3 0-0 9; Jesiah Johnson 0 0-0 0. | | | | | | | | | | |
| TOTALS 24 0-5 55. | | | | | | | | | | |

to the fourth period. Wallen drained his third three-pointer to the right from the corner to start the final stanza and Poppe followed with a score to push the lead over 20 points.

From there, West Liberty-Salem kept working and firing, with younger players taking the court in the final couple of minutes. They would hold West Jefferson to nine, meaning they did not reach double digits in any period.

Both junior varsity teams won to remain undefeated at 6-0.

The "A" team won 53-15. Casey Boyer had 18 points and Beckett Sullivan scored 10, with six by Sam Strapp for the Tigers.

In the "B" game, WL-S defeated London 42-38. Brayton Gullett (12) and Zeke Longshore (10) were the leading scorers for the Tigers.

West Liberty-Salem kicks off the new year with a game Friday at Northeastern.



The Bellefontaine girls bowling team took first place at the BHS Classic Tournament on Monday at T-P Lanes. (SUBMITTED PHOTO)

BHS girls win tournament

BY THE EXAMINER STAFF

The Bellefontaine girls bowling team added another tournament victory to their collection in 2024, taking first place at the BHS Classic at T-P Lanes on Monday.

The format was three regular games and six Baker games, with the winner decided by total pins.

The Lady Chieftains finished with a total score of 3,945. They had 2,814 in regular games (947-892-975) and 1,131 in the Baker round (185, 205, 157, 164,

228 and 192).

Gracie Hood had the high three-game series at 643 (259-180-206), followed by Chloe Heminger at 613 (187-237-189), Nevaeh LaFollette with 564 (151-192-221), and Avery Mullins at 514 (179-146-189). Haylee Yelton had games of 173 and 170.

Hood and Heminger were named to the all-tournament team.

The "B" squad for Bellefontaine took seventh out of the field of 16. They had a total of 2,277 in regular games and 1,036 in the Baker games

for an overall total of 3,313.

Isabelle Gunnett had a 546 series (191-161-193), then it was Kinzie Bernard 479 (155-176-148), Addison Prosser 465 (172-135-168).

Other scores were Kyras Moon (156) and Rhiana Bear (146, 148).

Graham took second place with 3,756 pins. Fort Recovery, Urbana and Coldwater rounded out the top five. Indian Lake finished eighth with a score of 3,212.

Bellefontaine will face London at Friday at 4 p.m.

Lakers girls down USV

BY THE EXAMINER STAFF

Indian Lake defeated Upper Scioto Valley 60-33 in nonleague girls basketball play on Monday.

Mackenzie Dixon had 21 points, Carly Strayer had 13, and Terra Beltz had 10 points and 10 rebounds.

Rounding out the scoring were Courtney Altstaetter 6, Rya Pequignot 4, Alivia Kinney 4, and Kennedy Schwaderer 2.

Indian Lake led by nine after one period and was ahead 35-20 at halftime. They got 14 and 11 in the other two period, holding the Rams to 13 total.

The Indian Lake outscored USV 21-11 in two quarters. Beltz and Haley Metzger had eight points each.

Indian Lake will be at Benjamin Logan Friday in the first game of a varsity doubleheader. The girls play at 6, followed by the boys at 7:30 p.m.

WRESTLING

Tigers in action at tournaments

The West Liberty-Salem boys wrestling team participated in the GMVWA Holiday Classic tournament this past weekend at Butler.

Silas Krabill had two pins and a major decision at 165 pounds. Sam Bradford had a pin and major decision at 215. Tyler Langhardt got two points at 138, and Madden Kilgore got wins by fall and major decision at 120. Also getting victories were Wyatt Shoemaker (106) and Zayden Shafer (113).

West Liberty-Salem also hosted tournaments on Dec. 20-22 for middle school as well as high school boys and girls.

The varsity boys finished third out of 13 teams.

Taking first place were Shoemaker (106) with two pins; Kilgore (120) with two pins and three tech falls; and Langhardt (138) with five pins.

Shafer (113, two major decisions) and Krabill (165, two pins, two tech falls), and Bradford (215, four pins), all finished second.

See **ROUNDUP** on Page 5

Kelly returns to Rose Bowl with Ohio State

BY JOE REEDY
 AP SPORTS WRITER

Of all the things Chip Kelly is looking forward to in his return trip to southern California, there is one that rises above everything else.

"Gotta get more sun-screen looking at the weather report, because we haven't seen the sun for a little while in Columbus," said Kelly with a wry smile.

The eighth-seeded Buckeyes will face top-seeded Oregon on

Wednesday in the Rose Bowl in a College Football Playoff quarterfinal matchup. The game in the venerable stadium is a homecoming for Kelly, who resigned from UCLA in February after six seasons to become Ohio State's offensive coordinator.

Kelly had a 35-34 record with the Bruins, including 25-13 in his final three seasons. UCLA though appeared to reach its ceiling under Kelly after going 8-5 last season when it was expected to contend for a

title in its final season in the Pac-12.

Kelly was on the hot seat a year ago going into the Southern California game, but a 38-20 victory appeared to give him another season. But Kelly said coaching quarterbacks leading up to the LA Bowl after staff departures made him realize that he enjoyed being in the position meeting rooms more than overseeing an entire program.

After pursuing a couple NFL assistant openings,

Kelly decided to reunite with longtime friend Ryan Day.

"I had a great time when I was at UCLA. I had a great staff and an unbelievable group of players there, too. I think as a head coach, you wear a lot of different hats. Obviously, as a coordinator and just coaching the quarterbacks, it's a little bit different," Kelly said. "It's been fun. I've enjoyed being back in the meeting room with the players on a day-to-day basis. As a head coach, you

bounced around to different meeting rooms, but as the coordinator, you're with the quarterbacks all the time, so I really enjoyed that aspect of it."

With Kelly calling the plays, Ohio State is 11th in the nation in scoring offense, averaging 36 points, and 32nd in total offense at 427.3 yards a game.

Quarterback Will Howard, tied with Oregon's Dillon Gabriel for second nationally with a 73.2% completion rate, grew up as a Philadelphia

Eagles fan, where Kelly coached for two-plus seasons (2013-15). Gabriel was surprised but also thought it was cool when Kelly brought up Eagles clips to study in the quarterback room.

"The more that this year has gone on, I feel like we're in sync right now. We both kind of see things the same way sometimes," said Howard, who has thrown for 29 touchdowns and nine interceptions.

See **KELLY** on Page 5

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SPORTS

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James reflects on career as he reaches 40th birthday

BY GREG BEACHAM
 AP SPORTS WRITER

EL SEGUNDO, Calif. — LeBron James celebrated his 40th birthday on Monday with gratitude for his basketball longevity and optimism about his future with the Los Angeles Lakers.

And when James was asked how he'll know when it's finally time to retire, the top scorer in NBA history offered a frank assessment of his still-formidable skills. "To be honest, if I really wanted to, I could probably play this game at a high level for about another — weird that I might say this — but about another five or seven years, if I wanted to," James said. "But I'm not going to do that."

James already has one of the longest careers in NBA history, but he knows it's nearing an end. He has repeatedly said he won't overstay his welcome in basketball, yet that moment clearly hasn't arrived: James is still a dominant force for the Pacific Division-leading Lakers, averaging 23.5 points, 9.0 assists and 7.9 rebounds this season.

"It's kind of laughable, really, to know where I am, to see where I am still, playing the game at a high level," James said. "Still being such a young man, but old in the scheme of how many years I've got in this profession. (I) just think back to when I came into the league. That's like the first thing I thought about. You came in as an 18-year-old kid, and now you're sitting here as a 40-year-old, a 22-year vet, with a 20-year-old in



LeBron James

the NBA as well. It's pretty cool."

James is already in his 22nd NBA campaign — more than any player except Vince Carter, who also played 22 seasons — and he will join the slightly larger list of NBA players to suit up after their 40th birthdays on Tuesday night when the Lakers host the Cleveland Cavaliers. The Akron, Ohio native won Cleveland's only major pro sports championship with the Cavs in 2016.

James said he reacted to his milestone birthday with a disbelief familiar to anybody whose life odometer has rolled over to a number they still haven't processed.

"I had a decade of the 30s, so to just wake up and just be like, 'Oh shoot, oh damn, you're 40?'" James said with a grin.

James said he already felt the march of time two months ago when he and his son, Bronny, became the first father and son to play in the NBA together.

LeBron is also encouraged by a solid season so far with the Lakers, who have looked livelier in their first year under new coach J.J. Redick.

Los Angeles got tougher and deeper Sunday when it traded D'Angelo Russell to

Brooklyn for veteran wing defender Dorian Finney-Smith and guard Shake Milton.

"Right now, I think we're a very good team," James said. "I think we have a chance to compete with anybody in the league. Are we at a championship level? Can we win a championship right now? No, I don't think so. That's good, because we have so much room to improve, and we also just added two new guys as well. We'll see how we incorporate those guys. It should be fun as well. But we'll see. I don't know if that determines if I stick around longer, because it doesn't change my career in any sense or fashion."

James also isn't thinking beyond Los Angeles, where he has settled into a comfortable California life with his family since 2018. He still expects the Lakers to be his final stop whenever he decides to close his epic career.

"I would love for it to end here," James said. "That would be the plan. I came here to play the last stage of my career and to finish it off here. But I'm also not silly or too jaded to know the business of the game as well, to know the business of basketball. But I think my relationship with this organization speaks for itself."



The West Liberty-Salem fifth grade boys basketball team finished second at the Red Raider Winter Slam in London recently. They defeated London 21-18 and Greeneview 30-27, while losing to Urbana 31-16. Pictured, from left to right, are Braxton Loudon, Brantley Eichoff, Hayes Robinson, Parker Knight, Jackson Barth, Ozzy Anders, Isaac Fallon, Maddux Dobberstein, Calvin Cotrell, Joe Fullenkamp, and Jack Troyer. (SUBMITTED PHOTO)

Kelly

Continued from Page 4

"We're also able to have that healthy discussion of what do you like here? What do you not like here? I've thoroughly enjoyed my time working with him."

Day said that he has also seen Kelly's comfort level increase as he has developed a better understanding of Ohio State's personnel as well as going through the Big Ten for the first time.

Day also noted that he was happy with the Buckeyes' balance in their 42-17 victory over Tennessee in the first round Dec. 21. Howard completed 24 of 29 passes for 311 yards with two touchdowns and an interception, while the running game had 156 yards and averaged 4.7

yards per carry.

"He's got a great understanding of the entire game of football, offensive football, whether it's wide open and spread and tempo or getting with multiple tight ends in the game, huddling, different styles of play, and he's always said, and we've always said that the No. 1 job of the coordinator is to put the offense in the best position to be successful."

Coming back to the Rose Bowl isn't the only connection Kelly has to the game. He was Oregon's head coach from 2009 through '12, and had a 46-7 record before leaving for the NFL. Kelly is winless in six games against the Ducks, including a 32-31 loss in Eugene in prime time Oct. 12.

Kelly said the offensive staff has reviewed all 13

Oregon games from this season.

Ducks defensive end Jordan Burch did not play in the first meeting, which is one of the biggest differences on defense. The other is that the first game took place in the middle of the season as both teams have played seven games since then.

"I think every game is different. It's always the matchups and the individual matchups, our offensive line versus their defensive line, which I think is one of the best lines in the country," Kelly said. "Our job is to put these guys in position to make plays and then let them go play. We've got a great group from that standpoint that is a joy to coach because of how they approach every single day."

Roundup

Continued from Page 4

Others in action were Tim Krabill (190, 3-2, 4th place); Lance Saylor (132, 3-2, 5th place); Derek Wall (144, 2-3, 6th place); Maverick Reames (HVY, 1-1); and Robert Park (157).

The middle school team had six wrestlers in action. Walker Williams (80 pounds) had two pins and took first place. Milo Matthews (86) got two pins and was second. Gabe Dunham and Malachi Titus both competed at 92 pounds. Dunham had two pins and a tech fall to finish second. Titus had one win.

Josh Collins (98) got three pins and a decision to take second. Logan Calhoun gained experience

at 205 pounds.

The four Tigers girls wrestlers were in action on Sunday and placed fourth out of 13 teams.

Chloe Griffith got two pins at 110 pounds. Jenna Cline got a pin at 120, Shelby Vincent competed at 125 and Brianna Blair was in action at 130.

"This team has developed so much over the last few years," said Tigers coach Andy Hartshorn. "And while this has a lot to do with the caliber of kids we have, and the work they put in, it so extremely clear that this would not be possible with the incredible families and support systems they all have in place at home. These tournaments were a huge success

in our eyes. It was our chance to really showcase what we can do in front of a home crowd. And we were able to focus on the wrestling and coaching parts, only because of how these families stepped up. Concessions, cooking food for a hospitality room, table workers, picking up an extra mat, taking tickets, preparing our wrestlers, supporting them on the mats, and the rest of their families all at the same time. It is incredible what this group of parents and families did to make this all happen. To our entire WL-S Tiger wrestling family, we thank you. This success is every bit as much yours as it is the wrestlers and coaches."

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Entertainment

How American presidents have planned their own funerals

WASHINGTON (AP) — Jimmy Carter's memorial journey will end at his house in the tiny town of Plains, Georgia, where he grew up on a peanut farm. That is where his wife, Rosalynn, was laid to rest last year in a burial plot that they chose years ago.

But before Carter reaches his humble final destination, there will be an interstate choreography of grief, ceremony and logistics that is characteristic of state funerals. Ever since the nation's founding, America has bid farewell to former presidents with an intricate series of events weaving together longstanding traditions and personal touches.

Funerals often are planned by the presidents themselves, who usually have years after leaving the White House to ponder how they want to be memorialized.

"They are very much involved in the planning process, and the decisions that they make tell us a lot about who they are, how they see the presidency, and how they want to be remem-

bered by the American people," said Matthew Costello, senior historian for the White House Historical Association, who co-wrote a book called "Mourning the Presidents: Loss and Legacy in American Culture."

Carter had more time to plan than most. He lived for 43 years after his presidency ended, the longest post-presidency in U.S. history, before dying Sunday at 100.

Many details of his funeral remain under wraps, at the discretion of the family and military units that are responsible for carrying out the plans. Most presidents lie in state in the U.S. Capitol, and there is usually a service at Washington National Cathedral.

President Joe Biden let slip last year that Carter had asked him to give an eulogy. ("Excuse me, I shouldn't say that," Biden admitted.)

Biden said Sunday his team is working with Carter's family and others "to see to it that he is remembered appropriately, here in the United States and around the world." Carter's son Chip is his main point of contact,

though Biden said he has spoken with all the Carter children.

He described a process underway "that will take a little time" but will result in a "major service in Washington, D.C." for Carter, which Biden scheduled for Jan. 9.

Sometimes former presidents help with even the smallest details.

Jeffrey Engel, director of the Center for Presidential History at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, recalled meeting with George H.W. Bush shortly after the former president revised the seating chart for his funeral.

"And I said, 'Is that weird? You know, it's your own death,'" Engel recalled. "And he said, 'You know, you do it every three months. You kind of get used to it.'"

President Dwight Eisenhower, who commanded Allied troops during World War II before becoming a politician, wanted to be buried in an \$80 government-issued casket. Apart from a glass seal that was added to the design, it was

indistinguishable from the casket of any other soldier.

Details of the processions also can reflect aspects of a president's life. Ronald Reagan's casket was carried up the west steps of the U.S. Capitol, which face his home state of California. When Gerald Ford died, his casket was brought through the House side of the building, a nod to his years as a lawmaker.

The job of carrying out presidential funerals falls to the Joint Task Force-National Capital Region, which includes 4,000 military and civilian personnel. The unit said in a statement that it "is privileged to provide this support on behalf of the nation."

Presidential funerals can leave lasting marks on the American consciousness. One of the most memorable descriptions of George Washington — "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen" — came from an eulogy that was widely reprinted when the country's first leader died.

After John F. Kennedy was assassinated, his son

John Jr. was photographed saluting the casket.

Kennedy's casket was transported down Pennsylvania Avenue on the same caisson that carried Abraham Lincoln after he was assassinated a century earlier, and a riderless horse was included in the procession.

Kennedy's was the first presidential funeral to be widely televised.

"Technology has made mourning in a way more accessible, more democratic. More people have the opportunity to take a moment and reflect upon what this person meant," Costello said. "And I think it also opens the door to more people being involved in the grieving process."

In many democratic countries, the head of state and the head of government are two different people. The United States combines both roles, ceremonial and chief executive, into the office of the presidency.

"Since we have no national figure other than the president, we've essentially taken all the traditional weight and civic emotion that is put on

to the death or the birth or a wedding for a sovereign or a king and placed it on the heads of the presidents," Engel said. "And there aren't that many of them, to be honest. So whenever one of them passes, it's unusual and a big deal."

He described funerals as a moment to remember "that we're all in this together" and "this man was the president for all of us, whether you're a Republican or a Democrat."

However, in today's divided politics, state funerals can produce awkward, even tense, moments.

During George H.W. Bush's funeral in 2018, the audience included President Donald Trump. He shook hands with former President Barack Obama, his predecessor, but did not interact with Hillary Clinton, who he defeated in the 2016 election, or her husband, former President Bill Clinton.

"These funerals are always political," Engel said. "Whatever happens in the Carter funeral is going to be political, frankly, whether people around the Carter family want it to be or not."

COMICS

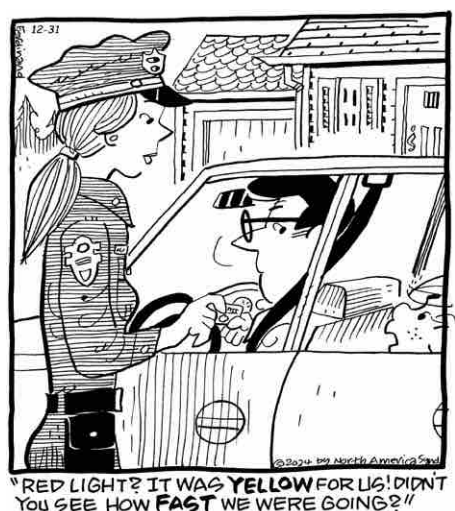
MODERATELY CONFUSED

Jeff Stahler



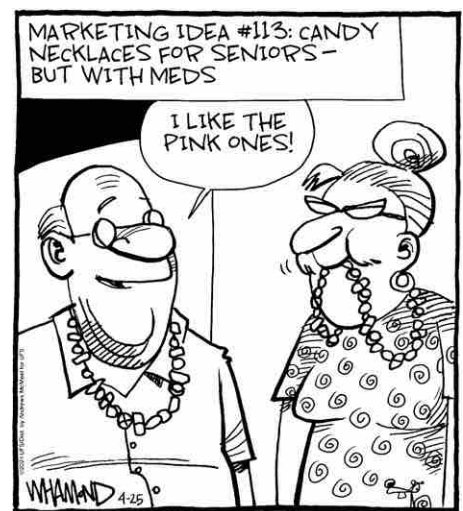
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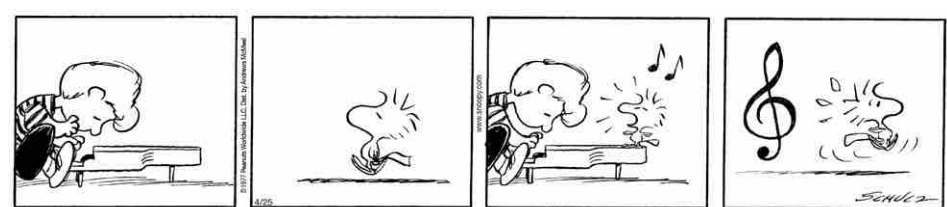
RUBES

Leigh Rubin



PEANUTS

Charles Schulz



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

Stephan Pastis



CROSSWORD

Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 One-named super-model
- 5 Sub shop
- 9 Sit-up targets
- 12 Crêche trio
- 13 Ms. Brock-ovich
- 14 Chou En-___
- 15 Settings for dishes
- 17 Rapper — Kim
- 18 Mr. Kringle
- 19 Immune system agent
- 21 Bagel features
- 24 Cabinet dept. head
- 25 Gas co., for one
- 26 Unusual
- 30 Tyler of "Ad Astra"
- 31 Golf clubs
- 32 Carte lead-in
- 33 Log-on need
- 35 Harrow rival
- 36 Furnace fuel
- 37 Edition
- 38 Some Pacific salmon
- 40 Big D.C. employer
- 42 Actress Gasteyer
- 43 New Year's Eve headwear
- 48 J.D. holder
- 49 Buckeye State
- 50 Way out
- 51 Refusals
- 52 Fork prong
- 53 "Ratatouille" rat
- DOWN**
- 1 Little rascal
- 2 — de mer
- 3 Khan title
- 4 Buffalo coin
- 5 Singer Lovato
- 6 "Taylor Swift: The — Tour" (2023 concert film)
- 7 Set afire
- 8 Shoe parts
- 9 Some city felines
- 10 Release money
- 11 Ledge
- 16 Hosp. areas
- 20 201, in old Rome
- 21 Video-streaming site
- 22 Elevator name
- 23 Real-time customer service options
- 24 "Auld Lang —"
- 26 Asia's — Sea
- 27 Male turkey
- 28 Baseball's Moises
- 29 Bowling place
- 31 Needing help
- 34 Kanga's kid
- 35 Old Testament book
- 37 Wall climber
- 38 "Misery" star James
- 39 Aware of
- 40 Big smile
- 41 Oklahoma tribe
- 44 Sashimi fish
- 45 Chopper
- 46 Dickens boy
- 47 Pigs' digs

Solution time: 21 mins.



Saturday's answer 12-30

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Difficulty: ★★ 12/31

Horoscopes

ROYAL STARS | FROM KING FEATURES SYNDICATE By Georgia Nicols

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Tuesday, Dec. 31, 2024: You are a practical idealist. You are tenacious and set high standards for yourself. Others respect and admire you. This has been a year of service to others. Next year is a time of great reflection for you to ponder spiritual or religious beliefs and explore ideas.

THE STARS SHOW THE KIND OF DAY YOU'LL HAVE: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19) **★★★★** You're high-viz today and this evening, which means people notice you more than usual. Quite likely, something different or unexpected will happen. It could relate to a boss, a parent or someone in a position of authority. (This includes the police. "Busted!") Tonight: A surprise.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) **★★★★** Travel plans might change today. You also might meet someone from another culture or a different country who is intriguing. (You might admire them.) Actually, relations with friends and groups are excellent today, so give yourself a chance to enjoy the company of others. Tonight: Something new!

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) **★★★★** Today Venus is at the top of your chart making you look attractive to everyone! Not only that, you appear to be charming and the soul of diplomacy. Unexpected news about finances or shared property might catch your eye. But with lucky Jupiter in your sign, you have divine protection. Tonight: Check your finances.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) **★★★★** You're high-viz today and this evening, which means people notice you more than usual. Quite likely, something different or unexpected will happen. It could relate to a boss, a parent or someone in a position of authority. (This includes the police. "Busted!") Tonight: A surprise.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) **★★★★** Because retrograde Mars is in your sign right now for the first time in 15 years, you have less energy. Therefore, don't overdo things. Respect your limitations. Realize that until March, you need a bit more sleep. Meanwhile, unexpected interruptions to your job, your health or your pet might occur today. Who knew? Tonight: Be sensible.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) **★★★★** Stay light on your feet and look good, because spontaneous and unexpected invitations might fall in your lap today. Fortunately, you're in the mood to party! Family discussions might take place. Relations with partners and close friends are warm. Enjoy! Tonight: Schmooze!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) **★★★** You're a sociable sign; however, today you might be happy to relax and enjoy the comfort of familiar surroundings at home and with the company of family. This is a positive day at work. Co-workers are supportive. Conversations are bright and interesting. Cocoon at home if you like. Do what pleases you. Tonight: Relax.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) **★★★★** This is a fast-paced, restless day for you. Short trips and conversations with siblings, relatives and neighbors might trigger a surprise. Meanwhile, you feel sociable and eager to meet others. This is a great day for romantic flirtations and fun connections. Tonight: Conversations. SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

erate and be accommodating. But this really isn't a big deal. Enjoy the company of someone "different." Tonight: Stay flexible.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) **★★★★** This is a powerful day! Grab every opportunity to schmooze and talk to neighbors, relatives and siblings. A short trip will delight many of you as well. Don't hesitate to reach out and socialize today, because both the Sun and the Moon are in your sign. Tonight: Something different.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) **★★★★** You're a fabulous networker. You enjoy friends and even love to meet strangers, especially people who are interesting characters. Nevertheless, today and this evening, you might prefer to be low-key and more private. The company of someone younger will please you. Tonight: A hidden surprise.

BORN TODAY Actor Anthony Hopkins (1937), actor Ben Kingsley (1943), actor Val Kilmer (1959)

Find more Georgia Nicols horoscopes at georgianicols.com.

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Longtime public servant passes away at 91

NOTE: His full submitted obituary appears to the right on this page.

BY NATE SMITH
EXAMINER STAFF WRITER

A longtime public servant with over three decades of service to the village of Belle Center passed away on Christmas Eve, leaving behind a legacy of dedication to his community, faith and family.

Gerald Houchin, 91, of Belle Center, passed away Dec. 24. Known for his tireless contributions to the village, Houchin's public service career began on the Belle Center Village Council, where he served from 1964 to 1968. He was then elected mayor, leading the community for 16 years from 1968 to 1984. Later, he returned to public office as a council member from 2003 to 2005 and served as the Village Administrator from 2005 to 2019.

"Belle Center has produced its fair share of great people and heroes over the years, but this man was one of the best," current Belle Center Mayor and Houchin's nephew, Lance Houchin said. "He had been a community leader for sev-

eral decades, and to some, he still will be."

Beyond his official roles, Houchin played an instrumental part in local education, serving as a school board and helping to oversee the construction of the district's new school. His commitment to youth extended to his time as a Boy Scout leader in the late 1950s and as a mentor for countless young people in the community over the past 65 years.

Houchin's deep faith guided much of his life. A lifelong member of the Belle Center Church of Christ, he taught Sunday School for many years and served as an Elder.

Mayor Lance Houchin noted his uncle's influence in all aspects of village life, saying, "His involvement with The American Legion, church, being the mayor of our little village for 16 years — not to mention running our water department and mowing the parks for the township — is just a few things he had done here. And this was all after his term in the Army, serving in Korea."

Born and raised in Belle Center, Gerald Houchin graduated from Belle Center

High School in 1951. He was a U.S. Army veteran who served during the Korean War, retiring as Command Sergeant Major of the 73rd Brigade after 20 years of service.

"He mentored kids for the last 65 or so years and I still talk to folks that remember him for helping them and giving advice," Lance Houchin said. "His knowledge of our street and water infrastructure was invaluable to the guys that had worked in those departments for years."

"He shared memories of growing up in Belle Center with me," Lance continued. "Good times and not so good times. When he would tell us childhood stories it seemed like we had been right there with him. He would talk to me for hours about growing up."

Professionally, Houchin wore many hats, working with the railroad, D.A.B., and as a custodian for Belle Center Schools, now Benjamin Logan Local Schools. He retired as the Water Superintendent for the Belle Center Water Department but continued working as water manager for Lake Ridge Resort and Easton Water. He also main-

tained the Memorial Building and parks for Richland Township.

Lance Houchin fondly recalled his uncle's unmatched knowledge of Belle Center's infrastructure. "His knowledge of our street and water infrastructure was invaluable to the guys that had worked in those departments for years," he said. "He shared memories of growing up in Belle Center with me—good times and not-so-good times. When he would tell us childhood stories, it seemed like we had been right there with him."

Gerald Houchin's commitment to his family, faith and community left a lasting impression on those who knew him.

"This is difficult for me to think of all these great things about him, but I think the best thing I can recall is being able to call him Uncle," his nephew said.

Houchin was a lifetime member of the Willard Stout American Legion Post #266 and the Belle Center Lodge #347, F. & A.M. His remarkable contributions to Belle Center and the surrounding community will be remembered for generations.

OBITUARIES

Gerald Nathaniel Houchin

Gerald Nathaniel Houchin, 91, of Belle Center, passed away on Tuesday, December 24, 2024, at his home. He was born on December 3, 1933, in Hardin County, Ohio to the late Lewis and Iva Maude (Baughman) Houchin.

On March 21, 1955, he married the former Severiana Marie "Ann" Herrera in Lumberton, New Mexico and she preceded him in death on September 24, 2017. He was also preceded in death by a son, Gerald A. "Gary" Houchin, and a great grandson, Maxwell Thimmes.



Surviving are his children, Kathy (Chris) Fulkerson, Susan (Tim) O'Rielly, Tony (Tammy) Houchin, and Diane (Mark) Coleman; daughter-in-law, Lisa Houchin; grandchildren, Andy (Amanda) Fulkerson, Nicole (Nate Harbour), Jill (Matt) Meighan, Becky (Bryan Finfrock) O'Rielly, Eric (Kiersten) Houchin, Tasha Ganson, Jodi Cooper, Billi (Matt) Hurley, Rachelle Ruth, Kasi (Chris) Searle, Shane (Taelor) Quay, Taylor (Nick) Ruble, Kylinn (Corey) Thimmes, Mason (Sydney) Coleman; a beloved "Triple G" to his great-grandchildren, Ethan Fulkerson, Trenton (Summer Petrisko) Fulkerson, Kora Fulkerson, Jett Harbour, Caleb and Carson Meighan, Dawson and Cameron Finfrock, Lenny Houchin, Taryn and Cami Bailey, Austin (Mackenzi) Cooper, Hunter Cooper, Hanna Cooper, Gage Cooper, Kaleb Hurley, Victoria Hurley, Olivia Hurley, Bryce Burton, Audrey Burton, Vayda Ruth, Jackson Searle, Wally Quay, Presley Quay, Harper Ruble, Brooke Ruble, Elliott Thimmes, Maddox Coleman and Nyles Coleman; a great-great granddaughter, Emalyn Cooper; his brother, Don (Linda) Houchin; sister-in-law, Lillian Houchin; special nephew, Lance (Bev) Houchin; and many nieces, nephews, and cousins; along with extended family from out west.

He was a life member of the Belle Center Church of Christ where he taught Sunday School for many years and served as an Elder. He graduated from Belle Center High School in 1951 and was a U.S. Army Veteran serving in the Korean War and retired as Commander Sgt. Major of the 73rd Brigade after 20 years of service.

He served on the Belle Center Council from 1964-1968, and then became the Mayor of Belle Center serving 16 years, 1968-1984. He served on the Village Council from 2003 to 2005 and was Village Administrator from 2005 to 2019. He was a lifetime member of the Willard Stout American Legion Post #266, and the Belle Center Lodge #347, F. & A.M. Gerald served on the Benjamin Logan School Board where he played an instrumental role in building the new school.

Gerald worked for the railroad, D.A.B., was custodian for Belle Center Schools (currently known as Benjamin Logan Local Schools) and retired as Water Superintendent for the Belle Center Water Dept. After retirement he continued to work as Water Manager of Lake Ridge Resort and Easton Water. And during that time, he worked for Richland Township taking care of the Memorial Building and the parks.

Pastor Kris Langstaff will officiate a funeral service on Tuesday, January 7th at 11:00 a.m. at the Belle Center Church of Christ, 213 Walnut Street, Belle Center, Ohio. The visitation will be on Monday, January 6th from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Eichholtz Daring & Sanford Funeral Home, 306 N. Elizabeth St., Belle Center, OH 43310. There will be a masonic service beginning at 6:45pm Monday. Burial will be in Fairview Cemetery, Belle Center, with military honors provided by Logan County Veteran Honor Guard.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial contributions be made to the Belle Center Church of Christ, 213 Walnut Street, Belle Center, Ohio 43310 or to Universal Home Health & Hospice, 921 Rush Avenue, Bellefontaine, Ohio 43311.

Eichholtz Daring & Sanford Funeral Home, Belle Center, is honored to serve the Houchin family and encourages anyone to share a fond memory or message of condolence at www.edsfh.com

ARTIST

Continued from Page 1

thought I'd go into a career in science or English," said Brooklyn, who also enjoyed participating in Business Professionals of America while in high school and giving speeches at the national competition. She also sings regularly at her home church in Bellefontaine, Christ Our King Church.

While sitting down to write "Praise" a few months ago, the college student said she was getting back to a hobby she had in middle school.

"I love expressing my creativity through art and songs," she said. "This summer I decided I wanted to get back to song-writing and to create songs like what I want to hear."

"I wanted to write about

being a joyful, optimistic and happy person, and being that light for Christ to uplift others. I'm looking forward to more opportunities to connect with people through music and to be someone that young girls and boys can look up to."

In the upcoming year, Brooklyn is anticipating getting back to the recording studio; branching out into new styles in her music, including R&B and surf/crush; possible gigs in Nashville; and she also has a goal of performing at MVNU's 2025 Christian music festival SonFest.

You can follow Brookabella's music career and recent happenings on Instagram at "brookabellaofficial", on Facebook at "Brookabella Music" or on TikTok and other social media.



Brooklyn Horner, right, records a song in Nashville this past summer, working her producer Ben Calhoun of Citizen Way. In addition to her song, "Praise," which released in October, she has two new songs coming out in January, along with the Spanish version of "Praise." (BROOKABELLA MUSIC VIA FACEBOOK)

WARNING

Continued from Page 1

"We want everyone to start the new year off right by getting home safely after the ball drops," said Governor DeWine. "If you're going out to celebrate, please plan ahead to ride with a sober driver."

During the 2023-2024 four-day New Year's holi-

day reporting period, six fatal crashes killed seven people. Of those, three crashes and four fatalities involved alcohol and/or drugs. In five of the fatalities in which safety belts were available, seven were unbelted.

The patrol reminds drivers to plan ahead, designate a sober driver or make

other arrangements.

"As we welcome the new year, remember that driving under the influence can result in tragic and preventable consequences," said Colonel Charles A. Jones, Patrol superintendent. "If you feel impaired, so is your ability to drive safely."

Troopers also made 280

impaired-driving arrests during the 2023-2024 four-day New Year's holiday reporting period. In addition, 414 drivers were issued safety belt violations.

Motorists are encouraged to safely call #677 to report impaired drivers, drug activity or stranded motorists.



MILESTONE: A significant point in development.

November 13, 2024 I celebrated my significant Milestone of one Century, Ten Decades of being alive. My ability to achieve it has involved many exceptional people during my life's time who's support and encouragements have helped me live my life my independent way.

Currently, these past few years I have had my "squad" of special, tenacious women, including their capable families helping me and without whom I would not be in my cottage home where I want to be starting my 70th year of residency.

With much love, gratitude and appreciation; Amy, Becky, Bonita, Denise, J.J., Joy, Laura, Polly. Wouldn't/Couldn't have arrived here without you.

Thank You Forever. Gloria Vee

BELLEFONTAINE EXAMINER



- **BELLEFONTAINE'S BEST CAR WASH**
\$14 ("BEST" Car Wash) **\$9**
- **CITY SWEETS & CREAMERY**
\$10 **\$7**
\$20 **\$13**
- **CLANCY'S (SIDNEY)**
\$6 **\$4**
- **DONATOS PIZZA, SUBS, SALADS**
\$10 **\$7**
- **DONUT SHOP & BAKERY (RUSSELLS PT.)**
\$10 **\$7**
\$20 **\$13**
- **EASTON WATER**
\$30 **\$18**
*NOTE: (Limit 2-per purchase)
- **INDIAN LAKE ROLLARENA**
\$6 (Fri & Sat 7-10:30 p.m.)..... **\$4.50**
- **KIRK MONT CENTER HABITAT HOUSE**
\$100 (Good for (1) night rental) **\$70**
\$600 (Good for (1) week rental) **\$420**
- **KNEAD MORE MASSAGE**
\$85 (Good for: (1) ONE HOUR MASSAGE) **\$52**
(Only 3 available per month)
- **LEE'S COMFORT SHOES**
\$20 (Only 25 per month, 5 per customer)..... **\$14**
- **MCDONALDS (BFN. NORTH & SOUTH)**
\$10 **\$8**
\$20 **\$15**
- **OHIO FITNESS & MARTIAL ARTS**
\$39.99 **\$28**
(Good for (1) Month Gym Membership)
\$70 **\$49**
(Good for (1) Month Family Gym Membership)
\$79.99 **\$59**
(Good for (1) Month Kids Martial Arts)
\$165 **\$119**
(Good for (1) Month Family Gym & Martial Arts Membership)

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