



LAKERS SWEEP

IL boys, girls win over Ben Logan

Bellefontaine Examiner WEEKENDER

Vol. 134 • No. 8

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 2025

1 DOLLAR



SATURDAY
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SUNDAY
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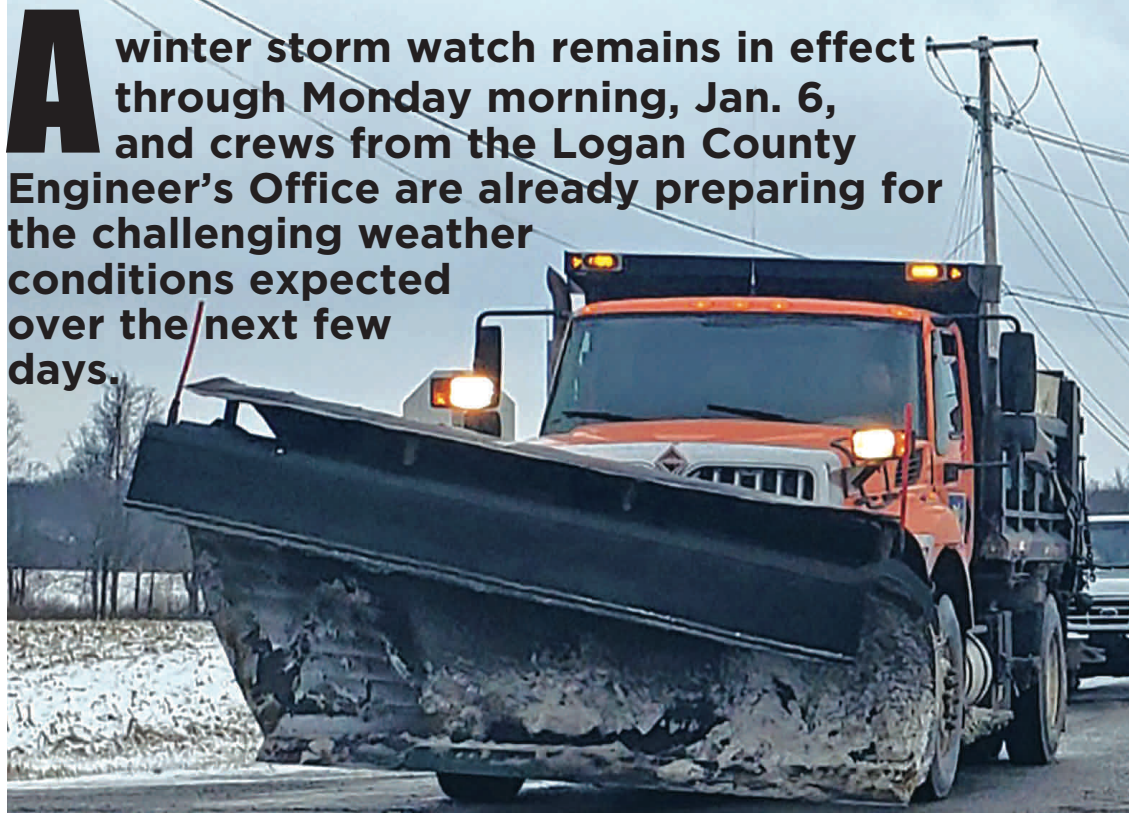


DEVELOPING WEATHER CONDITIONS

Preparations underway for next round of winter

BY NATE SMITH | EXAMINER STAFF WRITER

A winter storm watch remains in effect through Monday morning, Jan. 6, and crews from the Logan County Engineer's Office are already preparing for the challenging weather conditions expected over the next few days.



HEARTWARMING DELIVERY

A plow truck from the Logan County Engineer's Office makes it way Friday, Jan. 3, along County Road 32. (EXAMINER PHOTO | NATE SMITH)

Logan County Engineer Scott Coleman reported that preparations began in the early morning hours of Jan. 3, during a snow event that blanketed the area and prompted a Level 1 snow emergency.

"We started calling people in at about 2:30 a.m., and crews were probably on the roads by 4:00 a.m.," he said. "We will be dealing with similar cold temperatures, and the (pre-treatment) will help to melt snow and ice at lower temperatures."

The National Weather Service in Wilmington has issued a winter storm watch from Sunday morning through Monday, with snow accumulations of between four and eight inches throughout the area. These conditions could make travel very difficult, especially as the Monday morning commute approaches.

Still, Coleman is cautiously optimistic about the storm's track.

"It looks like the rain/ice mix will go south of us, and we may be on the northern edge of the snow, based on the model I saw," he said. "Weather.com is predicting around 2-4 inches of snow from Sunday through

Monday, which should be very treatable. Fingers crossed that it tracks further south, but we are prepared for anything. "We should be able to get some snow melt with the 26-degree temperature, as long as we don't get any ice," he added. The National Weather Service advises residents to slow down and use caution

while traveling. Potentially hazardous roads are expected, and outdoor surfaces may be icy. Those planning to travel should also check road conditions at ohgo.com for the latest updates.

As always, the Logan County Engineer's Office encourages residents to be prepared and stay safe, Coleman emphasized.



RELATED ITEMS PAGE 8

RTC Transportation Services announces public transit shut down

BY THE EXAMINER STAFF

RTC Transportation Services has announced that its last day of providing general public transportation will be Friday, Jan. 17.

"It has been an honor to serve the Logan County community in this capacity for the last 10 years, and RTC will continue to look for ways to meet the needs of our community," the organization shared on its website.

While public transit services will end, RTC will continue offering limited transportation options for Logan County residents who meet specific eligibility criteria. Individuals can contact RTC at (937) 592-0534, Option 1, to determine if they qualify for these services.

RTC Transportation had provided general public transportation to Logan County residents and visitors by way of door-to-door, demand-response services. The organization catered to both ambulatory and non-ambulatory passengers.

The affordable \$4 fare per trip within Logan County made RTC an accessible option for errands such as medical appointments, grocery trips and even to and from work. RTC provided tens of thousands of rides per year.

According to its most recent publicly-available annual report, RTC gave 55,785 rides in 2021, up from 42,834 rides in 2020. The program was funded by ODOT, local contracts and Medicaid waivers.



Officer takes oath; accepts promotion to lieutenant status



Bellefontaine Mayor David Chrissman swears in the city's newest police lieutenant, Jason Lapp, during a ceremony on Friday, Jan. 3. (EXAMINER PHOTO | SHARYN KOPF)

BY SHARYN KOPF
EXAMINER STAFF WRITER

Officer Jason Lapp went from sergeant to lieutenant during his swearing-in ceremony on Friday, Jan. 3, at the Bellefontaine City Council Chambers. And, according to Chief of Police Christopher Marlow, the promotion was long overdue.

"He was hired shortly after me, so he's been here a long time. And," Marlow explained,

Lapp "will fill the vacancy left since I was promoted to chief."

Lapp's new assignment moves him from patrol duty to behind a desk where he'll take care of administrative duties. This includes the implementation of policy, maintaining equipment and hiring new staff.

A patrol officer from 2001 to 2015, Lapp was then promoted to sergeant for the next nine

See OFFICER on P2

Investitures ceremony sets up Logan County government for 2025

BY SHARYN KOPF
EXAMINER STAFF WRITER

The 2024 Logan County Investitures Ceremony took place on Tuesday, Dec. 31, at the county courthouse in Bellefontaine. Six people took the oath of office as administered by Ohio Supreme Court Justice Patrick Fischer.

In his opening remarks, Fischer called for a better relationship between the executive and judicial branches of government.

"We have too many laws. It's got to stop," he stated. "I believe in the rule of law, but when it's too many that's a problem."

See CEREMONY on P8



Six people were sworn in during the 2024 Investitures Ceremony on Tuesday, Dec. 31, at the Bellefontaine courthouse. Pictured, from left, are: Scott Coleman, engineer; Joe Antram, commissioner; Marianne Antram; John Christopher O'Connor, coroner; Rhonda Stafford, treasurer; Pat Myers, recorder; Kathy McCulla; and Jackie Prater, clerk of courts. (EXAMINER PHOTO | SHARYN KOPF)

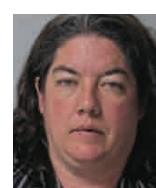
Defendant imprisoned for theft from tornado victims

BY THE EXAMINER STAFF

The last of a trio of suspects charged with stealing from tornado victims was sentenced to a multi-year prison term Thursday, Jan. 2, in Logan County Common Pleas Court.

Brandy N. Durnell, 38, of West Mansfield, was sentenced to seven-and-a-half years in prison for engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity, a second-degree felony, and seven counts of breaking and entering, fifth-degree felonies.

Durnell's crimes were part of



DURNELL

an organized crime operation, causing significant economic losses to the victims, Judge Braig said. Some of the thefts occurred following the March 2024 tornado, while others stemmed from storage unit thefts predating the storm.

"You actively participated in a criminal business that victimized innocent people who were already victims of a natural disaster," Judge Braig said. "Your conduct was calculated and predatory."

The court reviewed recorded jail calls between Durnell and co-defendant Edward Langley that demonstrated Durnell's active role in the criminal activity.

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NEWS Local & State

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ABE MARTIN



"When you meet a great talker, put it down that it's th' best thing he does."

Written prior, 1931, by Kin Hubbard, a world-famous newspaper humorist and father of late T.E. Hubbard, former Examiner owner/publisher

Biden blocks \$14 billion acquisition of US Steel by Japan's Nippon Steel

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden has blocked the nearly \$15 billion proposed deal for Nippon Steel of Japan to purchase Pittsburgh-based U.S. Steel — affirming his earlier vow on the presidential campaign trail to prevent the acquisition of Steeltown USA's most storied steel company.
 The proposed deal kicked up an election year political maelstrom across America's industrial heartland and blocking it drew a threat of litigation from Nippon Steel. "We need major U.S. companies representing the major share of US steelmaking capacity to keep leading the fight on behalf of America's national interests," Biden said in a Friday

morning statement. Nippon Steel and U.S. Steel blasted the decision, saying in a joint statement that Biden's blocking the deal "reflects a clear violation of due process and the law" in a process it said was "manipulated" to advance Biden's political agenda. It also insisted that Biden cited no credible evidence of the deal presenting a national security problem and suggested it will sue, saying "we are left with no choice but to take all appropriate action to protect our legal rights." Biden's decision comes after the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, known as CFIUS, failed to reach consensus on the possible national security risks of the

deal last month, and sent a long-awaited report on the merger to Biden. He had 15 days to reach a final decision. The committee, chaired by Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and made up of other Cabinet members, can recommend that the president block a transaction, and federal law gives the president that power. A U.S. official familiar with the matter, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told The Associated Press last month that some federal agencies represented on the panel were skeptical that allowing a Japanese company to buy an American-owned steelmaker would create national security risks.

OFFICER

Continued from Page 1

years. His history with the department means he's worked with Marlow and Lieutenant Scott Marlow for over 20 years. "We kind of grew up together. We have a great rapport," Lapp said. As for his new assignment, Lapp is ready and

proud to continue working with the Bellefontaine PD. "Not everyone can do this job," he admitted. "It's about doing the right things for the right reasons." Joining Lapp at the ceremony Friday were his mother, Linda Popp; father, Gail Lapp; wife, Gretchen; and sons Riggs, Bayes and Mills.

OBITUARIES

Miriam Joann Ansley

Miriam Joann Ansley, a beloved wife, mother, and friend, passed away on December 7, 2024, in The Villages, Florida. Born on November 9, 1932, in Springfield, Ohio, Miriam lived a life filled with love and dedication to her family. She graduated from high school and began her career as a machine operator before embarking on an incredible journey of partnership with her husband James B. Ansley. They were married shortly after graduation on August 9th, 1951—a union that would span an extraordinary 73 years. Their love story was one marked by unwavering support for each other through the joys and challenges of life.



Miriam was not only devoted to her family but also embraced activities that brought joy into her life. She found great pleasure in golf and as a member of The Briar Meadow water aerobics club—activities that kept her active and connected with friends throughout the years. Miriam is survived by her loving husband James; their daughter Rhonda Dipple; and son James R. Ansley. In honoring Miriam's wishes during this time of reflection for those who loved her dearly there will be no formal service held at this time. Instead we encourage all who knew Miriam to celebrate her remarkable spirit in their own way—whether it's sharing stories or enjoying a round of golf under the sun.

Patricia K. Liles

Patricia K. Liles, 83, of Bellefontaine, peacefully went home to be with the Lord, while surrounded by family, on Tuesday morning, December 31, 2024, at Logan Acres Care Center.

Pat was born in Findlay, Ohio, on November 28, 1941, to the late Paul L. Thomas and Meredith E. (Bateson) Springer. She married Paul Joseph "Joe" Liles on April 2, 1960, and he preceded her in death on November 21, 2012. Pat was also preceded in death by son Scott J. Liles; and 2 brothers: Carl Thomas and Donald Springer.



Pat is survived by children: Mike (Jackie) Liles of Huntsville, Brad Liles of Lakeview, and Vicki (David Carr) Stratton of Bellefontaine; 3 grandchildren: Sara Kite, Kierstin Liles, and Kyler (Kayla) Liles; 3 step-grandchildren: Nate (Sarah) Godsey, Heather (Josh) Frazier, and Ashley (Stefan) Minnig; 10 step-great-grandchildren and a step-great-granddaughter due in January; a sister Barbara Emmons of Findlay; and many nieces and nephews. Pat worked as a grocery clerk for many years, primarily at Super Value, and also at Kroger and Community Market. She was a member of St. Patrick Catholic Church and attended the sack lunch Bible study group. She was also a member of the Olentangy Valley Doll Club of Columbus. A former den mother for Boy Scouts, Pat enjoyed photography, scrapbooking, shopping, and long car rides especially in the fall. She also enjoyed many years of boating, and traveling with family. Pat treasured the time she spent with her family, and her bird Bonnie.

Friends may call on Monday, January 6, 2025, from 5-7pm at the Eichholtz Daring & Sanford Funeral Home & Cremation Center, Bellefontaine. Fr. Shawn Landenwitch will officiate Pat's funeral mass on Tuesday, January 7, 2025, at 11am at St. Patrick Catholic Church. Burial will follow in Bellefontaine Cemetery.

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

Have an extra \$4 million?

You could buy the 'Breaking Bad' house

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — The house made famous by the "Breaking Bad" TV series is up for sale, and the owners of the otherwise unassuming home in one of Albuquerque's older neighborhoods are hoping the property's role in the long-running series will help them fetch a pretty penny. Centered on mythical methamphetamine cookers Walter White and Jesse Pinkman, the series wrapped up more than a decade ago, but its legacy continues to draw looky-loos to the home and other associated filming spots around town. New Mexico's governor also recently tapped the Walter White character, played by Bryan Cranston, to star in a campaign against littering in New Mexico. While "Breaking Bad" certainly has left its mark on New Mexico and this quiet block in Albuquerque, the listing is sure to reignite interest. **Time to move on** Fans often flock to the home, sometimes with hundreds of cars driving by in a

single day, Joanne Quintana told Albuquerque television station KOB-TV. Quintana said her parents purchased the home in the 1970s and that she and her siblings grew up there. As her parents got older and the show's popularity skyrocketed, it became harder to protect them. The family was forced to put up a metal fence and install security cameras to keep fans at bay. "This was our family home from 1973, almost 52 years," she told the station. "So we're going to walk away with just our memories. It's time to move on. We're done. There's no reason to fight anymore." **Hollywood magic** It was 2006 when a film scout first approached Quintana's mother about shooting a pilot episode at the home. Within months, the equipment was set up and filming began. The family got to meet Cranston and the other stars and watched from behind the scenes as crew members worked their magic. Quintana's mother was always sure to have cookies for the cast and crew. The inside of the home was used to prep, while interior scenes were shot in a studio. For the famous pizza

scene, Quintana remembers boxes of pizza lining the sidewalk. Plenty of unsliced cheese and pepperoni props were at the ready in case Cranston didn't nail it first try. He did — landing the pizza face-up on the roof after his character's wife shut the door in his face. The homeowners had a hard time keeping fans from attempting their own pizza tosses or trying to sneak dips in the iconic backyard pool. **Priced to sell?** The housing market in New Mexico's largest city certainly isn't what it would have been when Walter White was applying for a mortgage, and the price paid by Quintana's parents five decades ago is unimaginable now. The median price in the Albuquerque area is approaching \$400,000, online real estate calculators put the estimated market value of the four-bedroom ranch-style home at just over \$340,000. But with the star power of "Breaking Bad" behind it, the global luxury realty service that is listing the home for Quintana and her family has it priced at just under \$4 million. The listing company has set up a website to showcase the property, billing it as a chance to own a piece of pop culture history.

IMPRISONED

Continued from Page 1

Logan County Prosecutors recommended Durnell receive the same sentence as her co-defendants, Jeffrey Rivers and Edward Langley, who were each previously sentenced to five to seven-and-a-half year prison terms. Durnell's pre-sentence investigation showed that she profited from selling stolen items through yard sales and Facebook

Marketplace. The case began in late March 2024 when Logan County Sheriff's deputies observed an SUV pulling a loaded trailer in a parking lot on County Road 130. Durnell, the driver, claimed she and her passengers, Langley and Rivers, were cleaning out a storage unit in Russells Point. Deputies noticed a motorcycle on the trailer with Ohio registration

plates. When questioned, Durnell said she didn't know the owner and claimed the motorcycle came from Lakeview storage units, and said that they were taking it to law enforcement. Bellefontaine Police contacted the motorcycle's owner, who confirmed it was stolen. Deputies arrested Durnell, Langley and Rivers, charging them with grand theft of a motor vehicle.

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CEREMONY

Continued from P1

Fischer also called on the lawyers and judges of Ohio to be leaders in bringing back civil conversation. "We have to be able to talk with our friends with whom we disagree politically," he concluded.

Two other local officials were scheduled to be sworn in on Tuesday. Sheriff Randy Dodds, who couldn't attend due to illness, will take his oath at a later date.

Newly elected Logan County Commissioner Greg Fitzpatrick, who replaces Mark Robinson, requested his oath be taken separately and administered by Logan County Municipal Court Judge Jacob Estes.

Fitzpatrick said he has had a personal connection with Judge Estes since the latter started working in Logan County as a juvenile probation officer. That relationship grew out of a professional association—Fitzpatrick served the county for 30 years in the sheriff's office as a jail administrator, then, for more than a decade, as the juvenile detention administrator.

Though Fitzpatrick retired from law enforcement almost five years ago, he still has a desire to serve his community. "I'm humbled to have this job," he later stated, "and thankful the citizens gave me this opportunity."

Fitzpatrick joined fellow commissioners Joe Antram and Mike Yoder for his first day at work on Thursday, Jan. 2.



Incoming County Commissioner Greg Fitzpatrick was sworn in separately, requesting that Judge Jacob Estes administer his oath of office due to their history. Fitzpatrick's wife, Patty, held the Bible for the ceremony. (EXAMINER PHOTO | SHARYN KOPF)

Request goes out for help at local warming shelter

BY THE EXAMINER STAFF

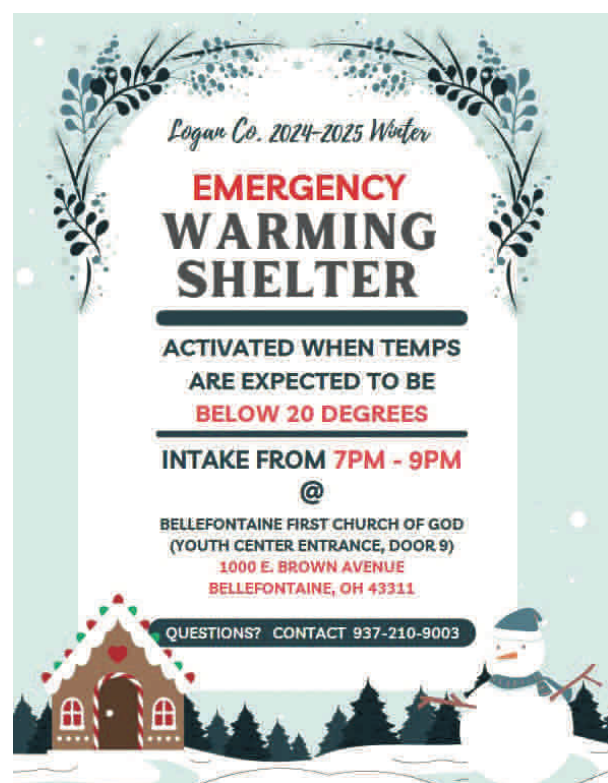
With the frigid temperatures of January hitting the area this weekend, an urgent request has gone out from the Bellefontaine First Church of God (BFCOG) for volunteers at their winter warming shelter.

According to the church's Facebook page, they have an immediate need for overnight volunteers to assist the Recovery Zone Emergency

Warming Shelter at 1000 E. Brown Avenue from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. The shelter is activated when temperatures are expected to drop below 20 degrees.

Current weather forecasts indicate the area could see temps getting below zero degrees when the windchill is taken into consideration.

To find out how you can help, please call 937-210-9003 or email the BFCOG church office at office@bfcog.org.



Patrol releases New Year's holiday report, provides winter driving tips

BY THE EXAMINER STAFF

COLUMBUS - Troopers of the Ohio State Highway Patrol are reporting two fatal crashes resulting in three fatalities on Ohio's roadways during the 2024-2025 New Year's holiday, according to provisional statistics.

The two-day reporting period began at midnight Tuesday, Dec. 31, 2024, and ran through 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2025.

Of the three fatalities, one was OVI-related and two were pedestrians who were struck. During the reporting period, troopers made 1,474 traffic enforcement contacts; including 77 OVI arrests, 73 distracted driving and 159 safety belt citations.



In addition, troopers want all motorists to be prepared for inclement winter weather during the month ahead. As some portions of Ohio experienced in late November and early December, the ever-changing winter weather patterns can catch drivers off guard.

The best way to promote safe travel during the winter months is to follow general roadway safety and ensure vehicles are winterized.

"Snowy, icy weather is a fact of life in Ohio," said Governor Mike DeWine. "If you have to travel when the weather is bad, it's important to give yourself plenty of time to get where you're going so you can take it slow."

Last winter, there

were 8,104 crashes on snow, ice or slush-covered roads in Ohio. Of those crashes, 15 were fatal, resulting in 15 deaths.

Many of these crashes are avoidable if drivers would slow down and leave extra distance between them and the vehicle ahead. According to last year's stats, 21 percent of crashes on snow, ice or slush-covered roads were the result of an unsafe speed by the at-fault driver.

Patrol statistics also show that 13 percent of crashes were caused by a driver following too closely to the vehicle ahead.

"Safety is especially important during inclement weather," said Colonel Charles A. Jones, patrol superintendent. "Motorists are encouraged to slow down and use extra caution. Leaving more space between vehicles and staying patient can help ensure a safer trip for everyone."

Remember, Ohio law requires headlights to be on any time the windshield wipers of the vehicle are activated.

If your vehicle becomes stuck in snow, clear the tailpipe of any possible debris to decrease the chance of carbon monoxide poisoning.

If your vehicle breaks down or you are involved in a crash, turn on your hazard lights, safely move your vehicle as far off the roadway as possible, remain in the vehicle and safely call #677 or 9-1-1.

The Patrol reminds drivers to stock their vehicles with a winter car kit that includes an ice scraper, shovel, jumper cables, flashlight, warning devices, blankets, cell phone charger, first aid kit, tow rope, water and food for longer trips. It is also important to ensure your tires have plenty of tread, check your battery and keep your windshield washer reservoir full.

If you must travel in winter weather, visit <http://www.ohgo.com/> for real-time traffic conditions from the Ohio Department of Transportation. The Patrol's winter driving traffic safety bulletin can be found here.

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LEAD
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Why Apple TV+ is offering a free weekend to get in on binge-watching something

NEW YORK (AP) — Apple TV+ is hoping people will make a dent in the Strategic Popcorn Reserve by bingeing its streaming TV and movies for free this weekend. Experts are calling it a canny promotion as the eighth-place streamer looks to up its subscriber base. The two-day offer this Saturday and Sunday is intended to give viewers a

taste of what's behind the Apple pay-wall and get them hooked, ready to fork over \$9.99 a month in the U.S. Michael D. Smith is a professor of information technology and public policy at Carnegie Mellon University. He suspects that Apple will gain lots of data to sharpen its approach to new customers and returning ones.

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