

BRIEFS
STATE

INDIANAPOLIS

Play back to its original form after complaints

A school production of "Ragtime" will go on as it was first intended after a group of black ministers protested a decision to eliminate some objectionable language but leave in a racial epithet. Perry Township School Superintendent H. Douglas Williams said Tuesday that officials decided to keep the script intact for Thursday's premiere of the student musical at Perry Meridian High School. Members of the Concerned Clergy group had objected to the school's decision to omit references to masturbation and swearing in God's name at the request of white parents but leave racial slurs in the script. Williams said producers originally decided the religious reference could be removed without affecting the play's integrity. Removing the slur, which appears seven times, would diminish one of the main anti-racist messages of the play, he said.

INDIANAPOLIS

State would pay \$25M in fees in toll road deal

The \$3.85 billion lease of the Indiana Toll Road proposed by Gov. Mitch Daniels would also see the state paying out about \$25 million in fees for work by an investment firm, lawyers, engineers and a title company. The largest chunk of that money, about \$20 million, would go to New York-based Goldman Sachs for helping market the road to private bidders and manage the project since it's launch by Daniels last year. The plan to lease the 157-mile highway across northern Indiana to an Australian-Spanish consortium that would operate and maintain the road for 75 years is pending in the state Senate after it won narrow approval last month in the Indiana House.

BRIEFS
NATION

NEW YORK
Economic signs pointing to solid spring growth

A closely watched gauge of future economic activity rose sharply in January, suggesting the nation's economy could see robust growth in the spring, a private research group said Tuesday. The Conference Board said its Index of Leading Economic Indicators, a measure of the economy's well-being in the near term, rose 1.1 percent last month, better than the 0.5 percent gain expected by market analysts. January's increase follows a 0.3 percent increase in December. The gain in December's leading economic indicator was revised upward from what was originally reported as a 0.1 percent increase, Ken Goldstein, the Conference Board's labor economist said. "The coincident economic indicators have been rising moderately but steadily in recent months, suggesting the economy is sustaining a relatively moderate pace," he said in a statement accompanying the data. "The Leading Economic Index, however, rose sharply in three of the last four months. That could be a signal of a faster pace this spring."

WASHINGTON

Fed: Interest-rate actions may be less predictable

Federal Reserve policymakers indicated in January that interest-rate decisions could become less predictable, relying more heavily on short-term economic prospects than sweeping monetary strategy. Minutes of the Fed's closed-door Jan. 31 meeting were released Tuesday and offered insight into policymakers' thinking as they contemplated what might be the appropriate end point in the Fed's nearly two-year credit tightening campaign and as they prepared for new chief, Ben Bernanke. At the meeting, the Federal Reserve boosted the federal funds rate by one-quarter percentage point to 4.50 percent, the highest in nearly five years. That was the 14th increase of that size since the Fed began to tighten credit in June 2004. In the future, though, the path of interest rates might not be nearly as predictable as it had been, Fed policymakers indicated in the minutes.

WASHINGTON

Dear taxpayers: Want a piece of \$2 billion?

Taxpayers who have fallen behind on paperwork have a \$2 billion incentive to get caught up. The IRS owes more than \$2 billion to more than 1.7 million people who never filed tax returns for 2002. To collect the refunds, taxpayers must file a 2002 tax return before this year's April 17 filing deadline. Forms and instructions for prior years can be found on the IRS Web site, or they can be ordered by calling (800) 829-3676. The IRS also has a toll-free help line, (800) 829-1040.

Local taxing options still alive in Senate

Panel supports idea, but House GOP lukewarm

By Mike Smith
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS

A Republican-controlled Senate panel kept alternative funding sources for local governments alive on Tuesday even though House Republican leaders had shown little interest in tackling the issue this session. The Senate Tax Committee gutted several provisions of a House-passed bill and replaced them with new or revised proposals.



"Personally I have been ... supportive of income tax alternatives to property tax so long as they were a dollar-for-dollar exchange."

Rep. Jeff Espich, R-Uniondale on being open to discussing new property tax proposal

They would provide tax relief to some homeowners and allow local governments to raise local income taxes higher in order to reduce their reliance on property taxes. New funding and spending options in the revamped bill, which was endorsed unanimously and sent to the full, GOP-ruled Senate, are more limited and restrictive than previous plans by Gov. Mitch Daniels and the Indiana Association of Cities and Towns. Those would give local governments more revenue-raising alternatives and allow some of the new money to be spent on things other than property tax relief. Rep. Jeff Espich of Uniondale, the fiscal leader for House Republicans, had said he was not interested in giving local governments any new revenue to spend beyond that allowed through annu-

ally capped property tax increases. It is likely that property tax relief will end up in a House-Senate conference committee, where compromises would be sought. Lawmakers feel pressured to do something because a variety of factors is expected to result in significant increases in bills over the next few years. Espich said he was hopeful that some compromises could be reached on property tax relief, and he was open to discussing the more restrictive local funding proposal. "Personally I have been over the years very supportive of income tax alternatives to property tax so long as they were a dollar-for-dollar exchange, or not new spendable money for local units of government," Espich said. The new plan would allow counties, with input from other local gov-

ernments such as cities and schools, to use local option income taxes, instead of levy hikes, to fund spending increases for operating costs. Three existing local income taxes would be combined into one, and counties could raise the overall rate an additional 1 percent if the money was used to reduce property taxes outright instead of just offsetting increases in them. Sen. Gary Dillon, R-Columbia City, said he offered the new proposal because he wanted to keep local alternative funding alive this session. Some Senate Democrats said many local governments were strapped for cash and should be able to spend a portion of the alternative revenue on things other than property tax relief. But they said they endorsed the plan anyway to keep the issue alive.

Bill aims to keep federal court out of statehouse prayer issue

The Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS

Rep. Mike Sodrel said Tuesday that he has introduced legislation to bar federal judges from ruling on the content of prayer in state legislatures. The legislation, which will be co-sponsored by Indiana's five other Republican congressmen, would remove from federal courts jurisdiction over reviewing the content of speech in legislatures, Sodrel said during a Statehouse news conference.



SODREL

In November, U.S. District Judge David Hamilton banned prayers during Indiana House proceedings from mentioning Jesus Christ or endorsing any particular religion. Sodrel called Hamilton's ruling a clear example of judicial activism. Sodrel said his bill would provide immunity for content of speech for lawmakers or their guests during a legislative session, excluding witnesses and excluding speech that constitutes treason, an admission of a crime or a breach of the peace. The bill would also prohibit the use of federal funds to enforce a decision like Hamilton's. Ken Falk, an attorney with the

American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana, called Sodrel's effort "a complete disservice to judges and the American legal system." The civil liberties union filed the lawsuit that resulted in Hamilton's decision. House Speaker Brian C. Bosma, R-Indianapolis, has asked the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to halt the order. Rep. Bill Friend, the House majority floor leader, applauded Sodrel's effort to prevent decisions from being made against other state legislatures. "He's attempting to keep the court from coming into the legislative jurisdiction and telling folks how they can speak or not speak," said Friend, R-Macy.

WINTER CLEARANCE
SAVE 60% to 80%

- 2 PC SETS \$3
- FLEECE SETS \$5
- KNIT TOPS 99¢
- SWEATERS \$2
- BLOUSES \$3
- ALFRED DUNNER \$9 to \$15

LIMITED QUANTITIES - BROKEN SIZES & COLORS
Small - Medium - Large - 1x - 2x - 3x

CLOTHES CLOSET
Meridian Parke Shoppes • St. Rd. 135 & Fairview Dr.
Greenwood (Kroger Center) Hours: Mon thru Sat 10-5

WE'RE STILL HERE!
YES, WE CLOSED OUR STORE IN FRANKLIN, BUT OUR AMITY STORE IS GOING STRONG.

\$\$\$ SALE \$\$\$
Save Big Now on new and used furniture for every room in your home!

Long's Furniture & WORLD

Home of World's Largest Rocking Chair
5 mi S. of Franklin on US 31 • OPEN 6 DAYS • 738-3302

Buy it.
Sell it.
Find it.
Call Classified:
736-2700

We've Got The Prescription For All Your Health Care Needs!

Medicare & private insurance billing

Henderson Pharmacy & Home Health Care
100 E. Jefferson St., Franklin
736-5631
Your Community Health Source

2006 Home-A-Rama CLAYBOURNE

TERRY CONSTRUCTION, INC.

Terry Construction, Inc. is one of 6 home builders that will be participating in this year's Home-A-Rama located in Claybourne in Johnson County. Mike Terry established Terry Construction in 1980. Mike has primarily built in Johnson County in Kensington Grove, but has ventured into surrounding counties to build his custom homes.

Mike's son Damien has now taken over the responsibilities and duties as president of Terry Construction. Damien has worked with his dad since he was about ten years old. After graduating high school, Damien continued on to work with Air-Tron for two years as a certified service technician. Damien is married to Brandy, and they have one son, Blane.

In 1997, Terry Construction participated in the Home-A-Rama in Greystone where they received the People's Choice Award for their home. This year's home will be Damien's first show as president of Terry Construction, where he designed the home all on his own.

The home they will be featuring in this year's Home-A-Rama is a ranch style home designed for the empty nester. The main level has 4,763 square feet and features oversized hallways. It has 3 bedrooms, 3.5 baths, family room, media room, formal dining room, study with a see-through fireplace into the billiard room, kitchen with a breakfast nook and a 4-car garage. In addition there is a finished basement with an additional 2,044 square feet. There is a fourth bedroom, a recreation room with a bar, and an exercise room. The home sits on just about one acre. Come see what Terry Construction can build for you.

Proud Partners of Terry Construction, Inc.

KELLIE PLUMBING, INC.
"We Design with You in Mind"
317-738-2707
555 Industrial Dr., Franklin

MORGAN WIGHTMAN
3250 N. Post Rd., Ste 225, Indy
317-895-9595

EDGEWOOD BUILDING SUPPLY
430 W. Carmel Dr., Carmel 317-846-6060
1580 E. Epler Avenue, Indy 317-786-9208
6319 E. US 36, Danville 272-6404

84 LUMBER
Celebrating 50 Years!
484 E. Worthsville Rd., Greenwood 887-6809

ASHLEY FURNITURE Homestore
Carmel, IN • 317-846-2347
Greenwood, IN • 317-885-1171

OLD NATIONAL BANK
900 S. State Rd. 135
317-885-3305

Proudly supplying quality products to builders, remodelers and multi-family developments throughout the Midwest.

- High-Definition Flat Screen TV
- Gladiator™ Garage Works
- Built-In Appliances
- Appliances & Electronics
- Pro-Style Stainless Steel Appliances
- Distributed Audio
- Digital Satellite Systems

hhgregg
www.hhgregg.com

8921 South US 31 • (317) 298-4918 • Commercial Sales Division (317) 848-8644 or 1-800-264-8644