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# The Record

## AG Derek Schmidt Joins Coalition Urging Facebook To Abandon Plans To Launch Instagram For Kids

TOPEKA – Plans for a children’s version of Facebook’s Instagram social media platform raises serious concerns about the safety and well-being of children and the growing harm of a toxic social media environment, Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt said today.

Schmidt joined a bipartisan coalition of 44 attorneys general in a letter to Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg. The coalition contends that social media can be detrimental to children for myriad reasons and that Facebook has historically failed to protect the welfare of children on its platforms. Facebook is planning the new platform aimed at children under the age of 13.

In their letter, the attorneys general express concerns over Facebook’s proposal, including research that social media can be harmful to the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of children; rapidly worsening concerns about cyberbullying on Instagram; use of the platform by predators to target children; Facebook’s checkered record in protecting the welfare of children on its platforms; and children’s lack of capacity to navigate the complexities of what they encounter online, including advertising, inappropriate content and relationships with strangers.

At a Congressional hearing in March, Zuckerberg dismissed the idea that social media is harmful to children, despite strong data and research that has shown a link between young people’s use of social media and an increase in mental distress, self-injurious behavior and suicidality. Instagram has been frequently flagged for increasing suicidal ideation, depression and body image concerns in children.

Additionally, the attorneys general argue, young children are not equipped to handle the many challenges that come with having an Instagram account, including that they often lack a developed understanding of privacy. There is also a risk that predators may exploit children online and cloak their identities using the anonymity of the internet.

The attorneys general also cast doubt on Facebook’s ability to protect children on their proposed Instagram platform and comply with relevant privacy laws such as the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). They point out that the company has a record of failing to protect the safety and privacy of children. For instance, Facebook’s Messenger Kids app contained a glitch that allowed children to circumvent restrictions and join group chats with strangers.

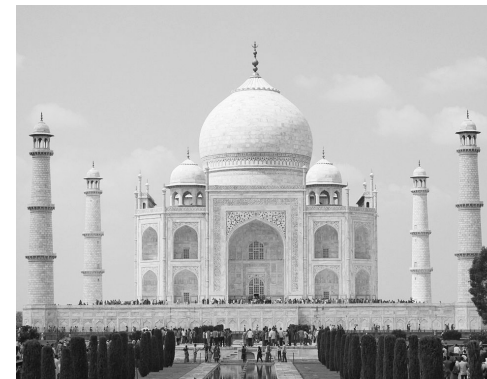
To assist parents in protecting their children in online activities, Schmidt’s office provides free resources for internet safety for children and teenagers at <https://ag.ks.gov/public-safety/internet-safety>. The information includes tips for monitoring online activities and filtering harmful content.

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# Hooray for History!

By Dr. Jim Haas

In her April 15 *Record* column “Comin’ & Goin’ Turner Style,” Sharon Hoover explained how some recent reading set in Fascist Italy before and during World War II had persuaded her that “world history and a true picture of American history should be taught in school ....” Well, amen to that.



As a child of what Tom Brokaw called The Greatest Generation, most of the men I knew while growing up had served overseas and seen a bit of the world. I wanted to see it, too, and be comfortable in it, so I took world history and a foreign language in high school.

The learning that changed my life, though, was my university’s required Western and Eastern civilizations courses. I learned that literature, architecture, the fine arts, and the sciences are as much a part of history as economic and political trends, and that a building like the Taj Mahal can reveal more about the culture that created it than all the lists of kings, battles, and treaties. When I later became a teacher of both American and world history, I cheerfully ignored the district curricula and often misleading textbooks in favor of the deeper vision of history I had learned. Students found it more appealing, too.

The story of humanity is a story of triumphant achievement and of dismal failure, but it’s our story and a necessary foundation of a stable, open, humane society. While STEM subjects offer the promise of healthier, more comfortable, and more convenient lives, history and the humanities, according to the late Carnegie Corporation president Vartan Gregorian, prepare students to “appreciate the difference between earning a living and actually living; to cultivate more than a passing familiarity with ethics, history, science, and culture; and to perceive the tragic chasm between the world as it is and the world as it could and ought to be.”

The world as it is—America as much as any place—is struggling to come to grips with rapid changes in social, economic, and political traditions that can make us feel as if we’re lost on a stormy sea without a compass. Dramatic advances in technology pile on yet more unknowns, drenching us with yet more waves of change. For many people, a changing world is uncomfortable and even frightening.

History and the humanities can help us navigate an uncharted future using the rich legacies of diverse cultures while revealing opportunities to build satisfying lives and contribute to the common good. Too impractical, you say? When introducing a new iPad, Steve Jobs famously said, “It’s in Apple’s DNA that technology alone is not enough—it’s technology married with liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields the result that makes our hearts sing.”

A major benefit of American history is teaching people how to engage in public affairs. That core purpose of both schools and colleges has been lost over the last generation or so as the focus has shifted to career preparation. Informed, active citizenship to help democracy endure has taken a back seat to learning for earning. The high cost of this shift is all too apparent in state voter suppression laws and even the refusal of some people to accept election results. Let’s follow Sharon Hoover’s advice and make truthful history—including world history—a vital part of every student’s education.

President Truman was a lifelong student of history, so let’s give him the last word: “Men make history and not the other way around. In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better.”

## Sue's Sudsy Soapbox By: Sue Reich



Let me tell you readers something about putting things in *The Record*. It is best to give *The Record*, or me, a two week notice before *The Record* comes out. For instance, garage sale, ads, things of that sort. Giving the article the same week will not make it in before print. Just a little heads up.

Well, the last one of the Rube and Liz Larson family passed away today. It was Darlene. She was the youngest daughter of Grandma and Grandpa Larson and she was the last of a very large family. My dad, Bus, was the oldest, and Bob was the youngest, and there were 7 sons and 3 daughters. We were a fairly large family, 28 cousins which 5 of them have passed. I am the last one of 4 girls from Bus and Edna. If any of you knew Darlene, she went all through school in Argentine and graduated in 1951, from AHS. She had 4 sons. Most of us lived in Argentine but the younger ones started leaving and spread out. I can't tell you how many of us are still around. Quite few I suppose. Will miss you Aunt Dar.

Well, maybe but maybe, the all class reunion might take place again. I think it was said in October that half of the people that were going last time aren't around anymore. That is really a shame. I still have a couple of close friends though. But at our age, we just don't get out and do that much like we used to. Janet was a real

neat friend. We used to do the craziest things. We met in 1968 and really had a blast. My other best friend sort of dwindled away after 40 years, my buddy Connie and I have known each other since 1993. Darlene is away for a while. She is the one that is the Mickey Mouse nut. Guess what? She is out there now at Disneyworld.

You'll never guess what. Our computer was messed up and Mr. Ed finally got someone out here to fix it. Didn't put me on it but Mr. Ed had two. So, I tried his and it wouldn't accept Jon Males. Man, I just about had a hissy. So, I called my daughter in law, whom I adore, and she told me how to get on. I had to call her and thank her. That little gal is a real whiz at everything. She is the one that is becoming a Chef. Thanks Matilda.

I am not the only one that has noticed the trash that is accumulating all of the place. A very bad spot is the "turnaround" on the new road. I have chased dumpers out of there myself. They just keep filling that up again. Please, put up signs and a \$1,000 fine. It is on Metropolitan or upper Holliday Drive.

Hey, you bored, restless, edgy people, oh that's me, watch your p's and q's and be kind, okay? Ivya all, sure will be glad when all this crazy stuff is over. Be really careful. Your friend from Argentine. Sue

A writing from *Hand in Hand*: in memory of my 3 sisters, Gayle, Carolyn and Marilyn. When you've made a mistake that you need to get off your chest, tell your sister. She won't be surprised; she's seen you through all sorts of jams. She probably won't be worried either. She's also seen you solve all kinds of problems. To top it off, she probably did something similar that she'll share with you. With your sister's assurance the problem dwindles.



The Larson family is all together again. The last one, Darlene, passed away Wednesday, May 12th.

## Trash in our Neighborhood



# Comin' & Goin' Turner Style



By Sharon Hoover

I hope everyone has started planting their flowers and vegetables. The cool weather may hinder their growth somewhat; however, with the warmer temperatures and rain on the way, those plants should start growing like crazy. Our peonies were beaten down a bit in the last rainstorm but now those buds are bursting open. The white ones came out earlier and now the yellows and reds are just beautiful. My folks used to put peonies on the graves on Memorial Day. They cut

them early, wrapped them and put them in the refrigerator. They always looked so pretty. Calvin and I tried to do that for several years, but our flowers never looked particularly good, so we gave up. We didn't have that magic touch. Now we just enjoy at home.

I see that the Kansas City Community College is holding a Summer Job Fair at the Tech Center (65 & State Avenue) on May 26, 2021 from 10 am to 2 pm. Thirty employers will be participating. Internships and on the job training offered. It is a free event and walk ins are welcome. Bring your resume. Register early and learn more about the participating employers. [www.workforcepartnership.com](http://www.workforcepartnership.com).

BPU has offered an energy audit for its customers for years for a small fee. Recently, BPU has instituted a low income family weatherization program that is funded by the DOE and LIEAP and regulated by the Kansas Housing Resources

Corporation. Income eligible families can receive a comprehensive home energy audit at no charge. Certified energy auditors will look for inefficiencies and safety concerns and identify a customized account of areas for cost-effective improvements. The upgrades will be provided free of charge by a network of professionals. For more information – [www.eckan.org/weaterization](http://www.eckan.org/weaterization) or call 1 785-242- 6413.

For young fisherman, mark your calendars! Turner Recreation Commission is holding a free Fishing Derby at Pierson Park from 8 am to 11 am on Saturday, June 6, 2021. Open to ages 1-15, awards will be given in four age groups, 1-4, 5-7, 8-11, and 12-15. No pre-registration required. Complete rules can be found on the Turner website - [turner-rec.org](http://turner-rec.org) or call 913 287- 2111 with questions.

Until next time, stay safe and please be kind to those around you.

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# IRS Offers Overview Of Tax Provisions In American Rescue Plan

## Retroactive tax benefits help many people now preparing 2020 returns Taxpayers with children should file returns soon for advance payments of Child Tax Credit

The Internal Revenue Service today provided an overview of some of the key tax provisions in the American Rescue Plan Act.

Several provisions affect the 2020 tax return people are filing out this filing season, including one exempting up to \$10,200 in unemployment compensation from tax and another benefiting many people who purchased subsidized health coverage through either federal or state Health Insurance Marketplaces. In addition, the law also includes a third round of Economic Impact Payments, now going out to eligible Americans, that are generally equal to \$1,400 per person for most people, as well as several other key changes for tax-year 2021.

The best way to keep up with tax law developments is by regularly checking IRS.gov.

In the meantime, the IRS urges taxpayers who have already filed their 2020 returns to avoid filing amended returns, refund claims or contacting the IRS about obtaining newly-enacted tax benefits. Taking any of these actions now will not speed up a future refund and may even slow down an existing refund claim. Instead, as noted below, the IRS will automatically provide these benefits to eligible filers.

### Retroactive changes for 2020

#### Some unemployment compensation not taxed for many

For tax year 2020 only, the first \$10,200 of unemployment compensation is not taxable for most households. This tax benefit is only available to those whose modified adjusted gross income is below \$150,000 during 2020. The same income cap applies to all filing statuses.

This means that those eligible who haven't filed a 2020 return yet can subtract the first \$10,200 from the total compensation received and only include the difference in their taxable income. For couples where both spouses received unemployment compensation, each spouse can subtract \$10,200. Details, including a worksheet, are available at IRS.gov/Form1040.

For any eligible taxpayer who

has already filed and reported their compensation as fully taxable, the IRS is automatically adjusting their return and providing them this tax benefit. Refunds, based on this adjustment, are being issued in May and continuing through the summer.

#### Repayment of excess Advance Premium Tax Credit suspended

Taxpayers who purchased health insurance through a federal or state Health Insurance Marketplace won't report an excess repayment or attach Form 8962, Premium Tax Credit, when they file. Taxpayers use Form 8962 to figure the amount of the premium tax credit (PTC) they are entitled to receive and reconcile it with any advance premium tax credit (APTC) they receive through the Marketplace. If the advance payment was too little, they claim a net premium tax credit. The process remains unchanged for taxpayers claiming a net PTC for 2020. They must file Form 8962 when they file their 2020 tax return.

However, if the advance payment was higher than their allowable PTC, they need to pay back the difference, known as the excess APTC.

The new law suspends the repayment requirement for 2020. This means that affected taxpayers do not need to report excess APTC or file Form 8962. The IRS will automatically reduce the repayment amount to zero. In addition, the agency will automatically reimburse anyone who has already repaid their 2020 excess APTC.

#### Looking ahead to the 2021 tax season

#### Child and dependent care credit increased for 2021 only

The new law increases the amount of the credit and eligible expenses for child and dependent care, modifies the phase-out of the credit for higher earners and makes it refundable.

For 2021, the top credit percentage of qualifying expenses increased from 35% to 50%.

In addition, eligible taxpayers can claim qualifying child and dependent care expenses of up to:

- \$8,000 for one qualifying child or dependent, up from

\$3,000 in prior years, or

- \$16,000 for two or more qualifying dependents, up from \$6,000 before 2021.

This means that the maximum credit in 2021 of 50% for one dependent's qualifying expenses is \$4,000, or \$8,000 for two or more dependents.

When figuring the credit, employer-provided dependent care benefits, such as those provided through a flexible spending account (FSA), must be subtracted from total eligible expenses.

As before, the more a taxpayer earns, the lower the credit percentage. But under the new law, more people will qualify for the new maximum 50% credit rate. That's because the adjusted gross income (AGI) level at which the credit percentage is reduced is raised substantially from \$15,000 to \$125,000.

Above \$125,000, the 50% credit percentage is reduced as income rises, plateauing at a 20% rate for taxpayers with an AGI above \$183,000. The credit percentage level remains at 20% until reaching \$400,000 and is then phased out above that level. It is completely unavailable for any taxpayer with AGI exceeding \$438,000.

In 2021, for the first time, the credit is fully refundable. This means that an eligible family can get it, even if they owe no federal income tax.

#### Workers can set aside more in a Dependent Care FSA

For 2021, the maximum amount of tax-free employer-provided dependent care benefits increased from \$5,000 to \$10,500. This means that an employee can set aside \$10,500 in a dependent care FSA, if their employer has one, instead of the normal \$5,000.

Workers can only do that if their employer adopts this change. Interested employees should contact their employer for details.

#### Childless EITC expanded for 2021

For 2021 only, more childless workers and couples can qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), a fully refundable tax benefit that helps many low- and moderate-income workers and working families. That's because the maximum credit is nearly tri-

pled for these taxpayers and is, for the first time, made available to both younger workers and senior citizens.

In 2021, the maximum EITC for those with no dependents is \$1,502, up from \$538 in 2020. Available to filers with an AGI below \$27,380 in 2021, it can be claimed by eligible workers who are at least 19 years of age. Full-time students under age 24 don't qualify. In the past, the EITC for those with no dependents was only available to people ages 25 to 64.

Another change is available to both childless workers and families with dependents. For 2021, it allows them to choose to figure the EITC using their 2019 income, as long as it was higher than their 2021 income. In some instances, this option will give them a larger credit.

#### Changes expanding EITC for 2021 and future years

Changes expanding the EITC for 2021 and future years include:

- Singles and couples who have Social Security numbers can claim the credit, even if their children don't have SSNs. In this instance, they would get the smaller credit available to childless workers. In the past, these filers didn't qualify for the credit

- More workers and working families who also have investment income can get the credit. Starting in 2021, the limit on investment income is increased to \$10,000. After 2021, the \$10,000 limit is indexed for inflation. The current limit is \$3,650.

- Married but Separated spouses can choose to be treated as not married for EITC purposes. To qualify, the spouse claiming the credit cannot file jointly with the other spouse, cannot have the same principal residence as the other spouse for at least six months out of the year and must have a qualifying child living with them for more than half the year.

#### Expanded Child Tax Credit for 2021 only

The new law increases the amount of the Child Tax Credit, makes it available for 17-year-old dependents, makes it fully refundable and makes it possible for families to receive up to half of it, in advance, during the last half

of 2021. Moreover, families can get the credit, even if they have little or no income from a job, business or other source.

Currently, the credit is worth up to \$2,000 per eligible child. The new law increases it to as much as \$3,000 per child for dependents ages 6 through 17, and \$3,600 for dependents ages 5 and under.

The maximum credit is available to taxpayers with a modified AGI of:

- \$75,000 or less for singles,
- \$112,500 or less for heads of household and
- \$150,000 or less for married couples filing a joint return and qualified widows and widowers.

Above these income thresholds, the extra amount above the original \$2,000 credit — either \$1,000 or \$1,600 per child — is reduced by \$50 for every \$1,000 in modified AGI.

Also, the credit is fully refundable for 2021. Before this year, the refundable portion was limited to \$1,400 per child.

#### Advance Child Tax Credit payments

From July through December 2021, up to half the credit will be advanced to eligible families by Treasury and the IRS. The advance payments will be estimated from their 2020 return, or if not available, their 2019 return.

For that reason, the IRS urges families to file their 2020 return as soon as possible. This includes many low- and moderate-income families who don't normally file returns. Often, those families will qualify for an Economic Impact Payment or tax benefits, such as the EITC. This year, taxpayers have until May 17, 2021, to file a return.

To speed delivery of any refund, be sure to file electronically and choose direct deposit. Doing so will also ensure quick delivery of the Advance Child Tax Credit payments, later this year.

In the next few weeks, eligible families can choose to decline receiving the advance payments. Likewise, families will also be able to notify Treasury and IRS of changes in their income, filing status or number of qualifying children. Details will be available soon.

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# Guest Editorials

## Not One Republican Voted for President Biden's "Pandemic Relief" But That Doesn't Stop Some Of Them From Taking Credit And Promoting Its Benefits!

By: Tom Valverde

Every Republican member of Congress voted against President Biden's relief bill, continuing to serve as obstructionists to anything that would be in the best interest of the American people. Before the bill's passage, House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy referred to President Biden's plan as Socialism. McCarthy said, "This bill will turn the United States into Venezuela." Now, however, McCarthy tops a group of Republican House members who are out promoting the bill's benefits to their constituents. Some even taking credit for its passage, in spite of not voting for it to pass. Hypocrites, opportunists, and liar Politicians are words that come to mind.

Representative Nicole Malliotakis, (R-NY) was celebrating the millions of dollars that now will be flowing into her district, to fund community health centers as being, one of her achievements! What audacity or chutzpah! Representative Madison Cawthorn, (R-NC) took to social media, and said that he was proud to see Taxpayer dollars returning to his district. As if he had anything to do with the passage of the Biden bill.

People have busy lives, so most don't have the time to keep up with legislation in Washington, this allows these do-nothing people to be able to take credit for a successful, useful bill that will serve the many needs of their constituents without a bit of effort on their part. President Biden's, America Families Plan, his next big item of his agenda, has nearly 60% approval by registered voters. This is the same bill that the Senate obstructionist, Mitch McConnell, vows to stop because of the bill's cost of \$1.8 Trillion. \* Politico reported in the same article of the recent poll that, support for the Biden Infrastructure plan was actually 1 point higher when respondents were informed of its cost; 57%, versus 56% approved. (\*In the U.S. Senate, Mitch McConnell said, "100% of my focus is on stopping this new Administration." Why pay Senators to be there only to stop progress?)

A robot that was programmed to vote "No" would save the American Taxpayer Hundreds of millions were they used instead. A robot would be as effective as these do-nothing Senators and not be as offensive! The last 12 years have demonstrated just how weak the Republicans are at governing. They are determined to obstruct the Democrats. Truth is, they are making it much easier for Democrats to write and pass legislation. They are freed from having to negotiate with Republicans as they want nothing to do with Biden's legislation. This is another example of Republican incompetence to govern for the benefit of the American people. And it clearly demonstrates just how little they are concerned with bringing solutions to address the needs of their constituents Being in power is more important to Republicans than, doing the people's work! There is no doubt in my mind that President Biden truly cares about the American people and is the true Patriot!

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## Nearly 1 Million Additional Economic Impact Payments Disbursed

The Internal Revenue Service, the U.S. Department of the Treasury, and the Bureau of the Fiscal Service announced they are disbursing nearly 1 million payments in the ninth batch of Economic Impact Payments from the American Rescue Plan.

Today's announcement brings the total disbursed so far to approximately 165 million payments, with a total value of approximately \$388 billion, since these payments began rolling out to Americans in batches as announced on March 12.

The ninth batch of payments began processing on Friday, May 7, with an official payment date of May 12, with some people receiving direct payments in their accounts earlier as provisional or pending deposits. Here is additional information on this batch of payments:

- In total, this batch includes more than 960,000 payments with a value of more than \$1.8 billion.

- More than 500,000 payments, with a value of over \$1 billion, went to eligible individuals for whom the IRS previously did not have information to issue an Economic Impact Payment but who recently filed a tax return.

- This batch also includes additional ongoing supplemental payments for people who earlier this year received payments based on their 2019 tax returns but are eligible for a new or larger payment based on their recently processed 2020 tax returns. This batch included more than 460,000 of these "plus-up" payments, with a value of more than \$800 million. In all, the IRS has made more than 6 million of these supplemental payments this year.

- Overall, this ninth batch of payments contains nearly 500,000 direct deposit payments (with a total value of \$946 million) with the remainder as paper payments.

Additional information is available on the first eight batches of Economic Impact Payments from the American Rescue Plan,

which processed weekly on April 30, April 23, April 16, April 9, April 2, March 26, March 19 and March 12.

The IRS will continue to make Economic Impact Payments on a weekly basis. Ongoing payments will be sent to eligible individuals for whom the IRS previously did not have information to issue a payment but who recently filed a tax return, as well to people who qualify for "plus-up" payments.

### Special reminder for those who don't normally file a tax return

Although payments are automatic for most people, the IRS continues to urge people who don't normally file a tax return and haven't received Economic Impact Payments to file a 2020 tax return to get all the benefits they're entitled to under the law, including tax credits such as the 2020 Recovery Rebate Credit, the Child Tax Credit, and the Earned Income Tax Credit. Filing a 2020 tax return will also assist the IRS in determining whether someone is eligible for an advance payment of the 2021 Child Tax Credit, which will begin to be disbursed this summer.

For example, some federal benefits recipients may need to file a 2020 tax return – even if they don't usually file – to provide information the IRS needs to send payments for a qualifying dependent. Eligible individuals in this group should file a 2020 tax return as quickly as possible to be considered for an additional payment for their qualifying dependents.

People who don't normally file a tax return and don't receive federal benefits may qualify for these Economic Impact Payments. This includes those experiencing homelessness, the rural poor, and others. Individuals who didn't get a first or second round Economic Impact Payment or got less than the full amounts may be eligible for the 2020 Recovery Rebate Credit, but they'll need to file a

2020 tax return. See the special section on IRS.gov: Claiming the 2020 Recovery Rebate Credit if you aren't required to file a tax return.

### Free tax return preparation is available for qualifying people.

The IRS reminds taxpayers that the income levels in this third round of Economic Impact Payments have changed. This means that some people won't be eligible for the third payment even if they received a first or second Economic Impact Payment or claimed a 2020 Recovery Rebate Credit. Payments will begin to be reduced for individuals making \$75,000 or above in Adjusted Gross Income (\$150,000 for married filing jointly). The payments end at \$80,000 for individuals (\$160,000 for married filing jointly); people with Adjusted Gross Incomes above these levels are ineligible for a payment.

Individuals can check the Get My Payment tool on IRS.gov to see the payment status of these payments. Additional information on Economic Impact Payments is available on IRS.gov.



## Passings...

By: Sue Reich

Lawrence Peet, age 86, passed away April 29, 2021. Drove school bus for KCK school district.

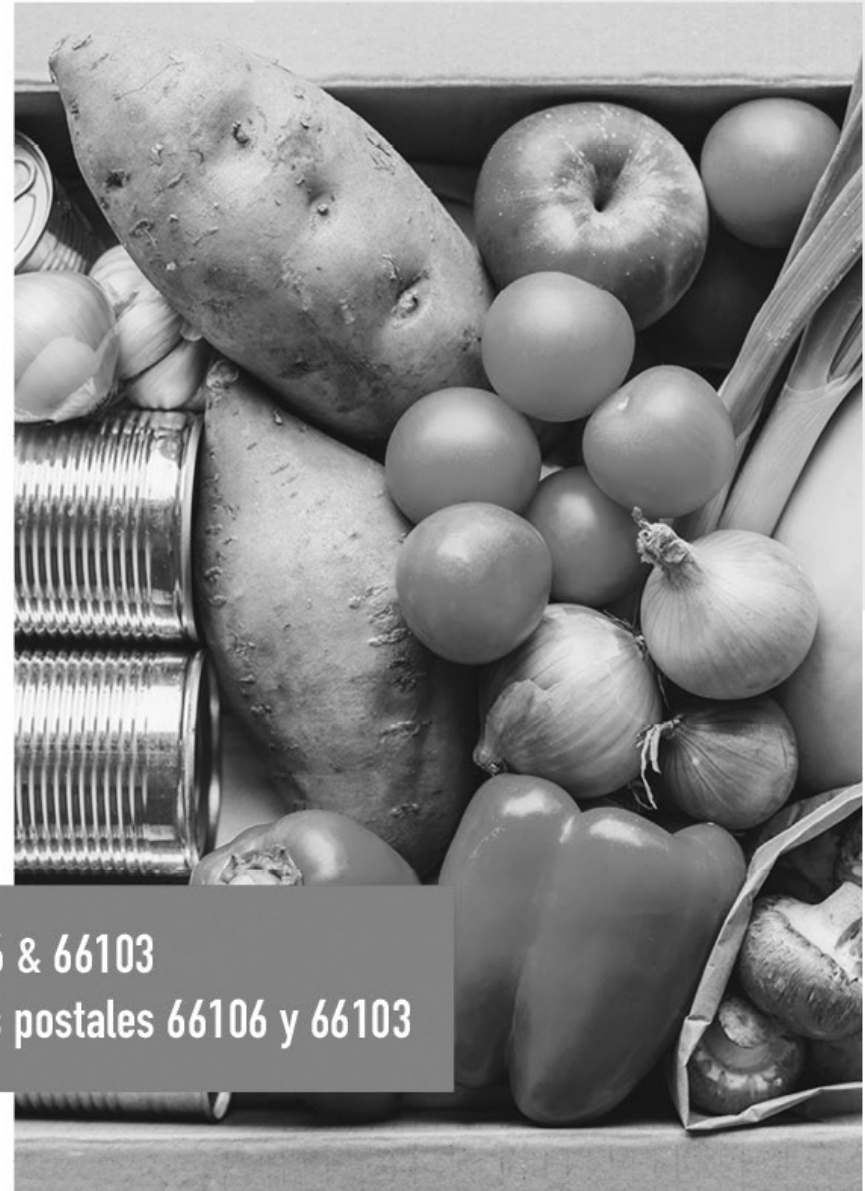
Bobby Unser, age 87, passed away May 2, 2021. Three-time Indianapolis 500 winner.

Dorothy Oberle, age 89, passed away May 7, 2021. Wyandotte High school, class of 1950

Darlene (Larson) Lovich, age 88, passed away May 12, 2021. Argentine High school, class of 1951.

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