

BUSINESS

▲ DOW 33376.48 (+526.74)	▲ NASDAQ 10709.37 (+162.26)	▲ NYSE 15219.54 (+218.92)	▲ S&P 500 3878.44 (+56.82)
— GOLD (OZ) \$1815.90 (...)	▼ SILVER (OZ) \$24.04 (-.05)	▼ PLATINUM (OZ) \$1002.00 (-11.00)	▲ COPPER (LB) \$3.81 (+.01)
▲ CRUDE OIL (BBL) \$78.29 (+2.06)	— NATURAL GAS (BTU) \$5.33 (...)	▲ UNLEADED GAS (GAL) \$2.26 (+.04)	▲ CORN (BU) \$6.62 (+1.0)

MonoSol contract vote set

Teamsters to make decision Monday

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LAPORTE — Teamsters union members will vote Monday on a new contract proposal from MonoSol, possibly putting an end to a weeks-long stalemate.

About 190 union workers have been locked out of MonoSol's LaPorte plant, which makes water-soluble film for single-use detergents and dishwasher soaps

for companies including Procter & Gamble.

The Merrillville-based subsidiary of Japan-based Kuraray Co. Ltd., has been in talks with Teamsters Local 135 with the help of a mediator.

"The mediator proposed an agreement in which MonoSol will increase the signing bonus, add to fourth-year wages and guarantee no mandatory overtime for two years with the option to extend to a third year," said Matthew Vander Laan, MonoSol vice president of corporate communications and public affairs. "MonoSol agreed to these concessions."

The union has been picketing outside the plant since workers were locked out in late November. They've raised a number of concerns, including discrimination against workers based on race and gender and more pay after workers worked through the coronavirus pandemic without any bonuses workers at similar factories elsewhere got.

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weather, so we made that offer to be fair."

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overtime. Workers at that plant have been required to work as much as 22 hours of overtime a week, and he said they're tired of the grind that becomes, and of not being able to take time off when sick or have a need to spend time with family or taking care of household emergencies.

He said the plant was not adequately staffed, forcing workers to put in grueling workweeks to keep it running around the clock to satisfy the demand for Tide Pods, Cascade Pods and similar products.

NIPSCO aids local charities

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NIPSCO raised \$75,000 to help those in need through its annual Hope for the Holidays giving campaign.

The Merrillville-based gas and electric utility donated the funds to benefit nonprofits throughout its service territory in Northern Indiana.

The utility donated to St. Jude House in Crown Point, The Caring Place in Valparaiso, Shop with a Cop in Michigan City, Community Harvest Food Bank, United Way of LaPorte County, the Salvation Army, One Warm Coat and Blue Jacket Fantasy of Lights in Fort Wayne.

NIPSCO employees also gave more than 600 toys for Toys of Tots groups, including in Lake, Porter, LaPorte, Starke and Jasper Counties.

"Our annual Hope for the Holidays campaign remains a favorite of our employees," said Rick Calinski, NIPSCO's director of public affairs and economic development. "NIPSCO employees are always excited to come together to donate to worthy causes and were happy to be able to do so in person once again. Our culture of helping others is what allows us to make the season brighter for families throughout northern Indiana."

NIPSCO's clerical union, United Steelworkers Local 13796, also organized a coat drive to support One Warm Coat. The charity gives children and adults in need free coats and "is committed to sharing warmth, without discrimination, one coat at a time."

NIPSCO employees have given coats, winter hats, scarves, gloves, sweatshirts and sweaters to help people in need stay warm in the winter. They will continue to donate the winterwear through January.

The utility serves 850,000 natural gas and 483,000 electric customers across 32 counties in Northern Indiana, including the Calumet Region where it's always been headquartered. More than a century old, NIPSCO is a subsidiary of NiSource, one of the largest fully regulated utility companies in the United States with more than 3.7 million customers across the Midwest and East Coast.

For more information, visit NIPSCO.com/GivingBack.



PROVIDED

Alverno Laboratories is partnering with Ibox Medical Analytics to provide accurate cancer diagnosis and improved care.

Alverno adds AI diagnostic tech

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Hammond-based Alverno Laboratories recently inked a major deal with Ibox Medical Analytics that means Northwest Indiana patients will be some of the first in the country to benefit from artificial intelligence-assisted cancer screenings.

Alverno, which manages 32 hospital laboratories while supporting many others in Indiana and Illinois, just closed on the deal with Israel-based Ibox to gain access to the Galen computer platform.

"It's a first application of artificial intelligence in the diagnostic laboratory," Alverno Laboratories President and CEO Sam Terese said. "This started a couple of years ago when we built out our digital platform. When they take a biopsy to diagnose cancers, for years and years a pathologist would look under a microscope and render an interpretation. Now instead of a pathologist looking at a microscope, we digitize the same image on the computer screen. Ibox enhances that even more."

Ibox's cutting-edge AI technology also helps pathologists scan the biopsy images with greater and more granular detail.

"When they do is they take a digital image and apply an algorithm so the computer looks at that image for abnormalities. It's really the next level up," he said.

"It assists the pathologist, who's also looking at that particular

slide for anything obvious but might not be able to see a single cell or a couple of cells. It's a breakthrough technology like the cell phone was. I'm old enough to remember rotary phones and party lines, which are so antiquated you would never do them today. This is kind of the next step to using modern tools."

Alverno Laboratories will be an early adopter of the technology.

"Northwest Indiana will be the first again," Terese said. "We've had microbiology innovation right here in our neighborhood. This clearly enhances the accuracy and can improve outcomes for patients. With cancer, the earlier it gets diagnosed the more likely patients will get to a good outcome."

Initially, Alverno Laboratories will use the AI technology to detect prostate, breast and gastrointestinal cancers, which are among the most common. It will eventually be applied more broadly as it gets regulatory approval to do so.

"It will become more common as they develop the algorithm. It took us a year to get to this point," he said. "It will become more prevalent as we continue down this journey. You have to start somewhere and we'll grow that list. As we expand on its journey, it's kind of like the Wizard of Oz while you follow the Yellow Brick Road."

Terese said Alverno wanted to be at the forefront of the new technology's adoption.

"The sooner you can identify and diagnose a disease, the sooner you can treat it," he said. "Going back a few decades, cancer was a life-ending or life-threatening diagnosis. Now early detection has made it more treatable. Everyone knows someone, maybe someone in their family, who survived cancer. Anything we can do to improve speed will get an earlier diagnosis. This has the potential to extend the lives of patients. It's really cool to be among the first to do this."

Alverno employs more than 2,100 people who manage more than 30 hospital laboratories in Indiana and Illinois, including AMITA Health hospitals in Chicago and Franciscan Health hospitals in Indiana.

"Northwest Indiana patients will get access to it now versus years from now," he said. "We touch millions of people with our testing. If we do a small improvement and it impacts just one person, is it worth it? That's an intriguing question."

Alverno was not motivated to make the investment for strictly business reasons but hopes the enhanced testing capability may ultimately help drive more business its way, Terese said.

"In the business we're in, diagnostic capabilities are one of the main drivers," he said. "With a challenging labor market, it adds more to the need to be more efficient. We're ultimately driven by the goal to improve care."

Guard against freezing pipes

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Indiana American Water, the water utility that serves customers throughout Northwest Indiana, is urging customers to protect their homes and businesses in anticipation of the winter storm that's expected to bring frigid temperatures, blustery winds and snow to the Region.

The utility asks homeowners and business owners to prevent frozen pipes, such as by letting water drip from a faucet.

"With much colder temperatures in the forecast, we are encouraging customers to act now to protect their plumbing system against the extreme cold," said Indiana American Water President Matt Prine. "Failing to protect your plumbing from cold temperatures can be disruptive and very costly. When ice expands inside pipes, it creates tremendous pressure that can crack and burst them, leaving homeowners with a costly plumbing bill, and thousands of dollars in water damage."

Indiana American Water encourages property owners to let faucets drip to keep water flowing, open cabinet doors to keep warm air circulating and close the doors to the garage, crawl space and vents. They should move any cleaners or chemicals stored behind cabinet doors if they have young kids.

Property owners should seal cracks in walls and foundations to keep cold air away from pipes, caulking holes where cables or phone lines enter the house. They should disconnect hoses from the spigot, drain the lines and shut off the water to the hose bibs.

They should know where the main water shut-off valve is in case of an emergency and find any uninsulated pipes, especially in unheated areas. They could wrap pipes in foam insulation or electrical heating tape but should follow the manufacturer's instructions to avoid fire hazards. They also can wrap their water heater in an insulation blanket, which can help lower heating bills.

They should set thermostats no lower than 55 degrees if leaving town and drain and shut off the water to unoccupied properties.

STOCKS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Stock	Ticker	Last	Chg	%Chg	Stock	Ticker	Last	Chg	%Chg	Stock	Ticker	Last	Chg	%Chg
AT&T Inc	T	18.15	+08	+4	EmersonEl	EMR	96.78	+1.74	+1.8	Lee Ent Rts	LEE	17.61	+11	+6
Allstate	ALL	134.64	+96	+7	Enbridge	ENB	39.29	+80	+2.1	LeggPlat	LEG	32.06	+4.7	+1.5
ArcelorM	MT	26.43	+69	+2.7	Exelon	EXC	42.63	+57	+1.4	MarathonO	MRO	27.74	+59	+2.2
AveryD	AVY	180.93	+257	+1.4	ExxonMbl	XOM	108.06	+137	+1.3	MarathPt	MPC	114.55	+154	+1.4
BP PLC	BP	35.03	+95	+2.8	FedExCp	FDX	169.99	+564	+3.4	NiSource	NI	27.55	+48	+1.7
Boeing	BA	196.00	+771	+4.1	FFnCIOH	FFBC	24.29	+46	+1.9	PepsiCo	PEP	182.50	+127	+1.7
CME Grp	CME	172.87	+368	+2.2	FstMerch	FRME	40.42	+63	+1.6	RelStlAl	RS	205.19	+249	+1.2
CVS Health	CVS	94.12	-.88	-9	FordM	F	11.78	+31	+2.7	USSteel	X	26.73	+134	+5.3
Caterpillar	CAT	241.73	+659	+2.8	GATX	GATX	109.93	+139	+1.3	VerizonCom	VZ	37.78	+379	+2.1
ClevCliffs	CLF	15.13	+74	+5.1	GenElec	GE	82.98	+265	+3.3	Walgreen	WBA	38.60	-93	-2.4
ConocoPhil	COP	116.28	+363	+3.2	GenMotors	GM	35.90	+70	+2.0	Walmart	WMT	148.22	+1257	+8.5
Elevance	ELV	510.84	+639	+1.2	HorizBcp	WBNC	15.14	+25	+1.7	YumBrnds	YUM	128.78	+19	+1.1
EliLilly	LLY	368.01	+837	+2.3	LearCorp	LEA	125.55	+128	+1.0					

INTEREST RATES

Treasuries	Last	Pvs.	Net Chg	WK	MO	QTR	1 Yr Ago	Consumer Rates	Nat'l Avg.	Wk Ago	6 Mo Ago	1 Yr Ago
3-month T-bill	4.32	4.36	-0.04	▼	▲	▲	.07	48 month new car loan	6.51▲	6.49	6.69	4.56
6-month T-bill	4.68	4.72	-0.04	▼	▲	▲	.16	Money market account	0.33▲	0.32	0.31	0.10
52-wk T-bill	4.62	4.65	-0.03	▼	▼	▲	.29	1 year CD	2.31▲	2.28	2.06	0.77
2-year T-note	4.22	4.26	-0.04	▲	▼	▲	.70	\$30K Home equity loan	8.61▼	8.62	8.58	7.37
5-year T-note	3.78	3.79	-0.01	▲	▲	▲	1.24	30 year fixed mortgage	6.47▼	6.60	6.81	5.89
10-year T-note	3.67	3.69	-0.02	▲	▼	▲	1.48	15 year fixed mortgage	5.83▼	6.00	6.16	5.10
30-year T-bond	3.73	3.75	-0.02	▲	▲	▲	1.89					

Company Spotlight Clamoring for cuts

FedEx had its best day in six weeks Wednesday after it reported better-than-expected profits, which the package delivery company attributed to aggressive cost-cutting measures in the face of declining demand.

Memphis, Tennessee-based FedEx earned \$3.18 per share in the period, better than the \$2.81 per share Wall Street had forecast. Sales of \$22.8 billion came in lower than analysts' targets, but it was not unexpected as the company warned of a drop-off in demand following a two-year pandemic boom.

FedEx shares tumbled close to 30% over a two-week span in September after the company said it was shuttering storefronts and corporate offices while putting off new hires in a belt-tightening move.

In its earnings release late Tuesday, FedEx said that it identified an incremental \$1 billion in cost savings beyond its September forecast.



FedEx (FDX)		Wednesday's close:	\$169.99, +5.64	Total return	1-yr	3-yrs*	5-yrs*
52-WEEK RANGE		Price-earnings ratio: 13		FDX			
\$142 - \$267		(Based on past 12-month results)		-32.9% 6.3% -6.1%			
				Div. yield: 2.7% Dividend: \$4.60			