



Perspectives
Marc Hyden
• Page 5A

The Albany HERALD



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Off to college
Sherwood star signs
• Page 9A



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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2026

ALBANY RACQUET COMPLEX

‘We do it together or not at all’

By Carlton Fletcher
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ALBANY – For years that turned into decades, Albany and Dougherty County officials could not agree on how to use tax money that had been collected to build a tennis/racquet center.

There were fits and starts, studies, plans made and plans abandoned. But the project languished.

However, the stalled project got new life at a meeting between an Albany businessman

and a Dougherty County Commissioner. That confab ended up creating the spark that led to plans to build a pickleball/racquet center at – of all places – land adjacent to the Albany Mall, the once retail Mecca of southwest Georgia that had

fallen prey to the plague of e-commerce.

As it turned out, it was the insistence of Albany developer Milan Patel that “We do this together or we don’t do it at all” that helped make the complex a reality, agreed upon through

a memorandum of understanding approved by both the city and county, setting up the first joint construction project by the two groups since the building of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center.

See RACQUET, 2A



MILAN PATEL

Annual Georgia Quail Hunt puts southwest Georgia in spotlight



Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

ALBANY – For the last 37 years, the Georgia Quail Hunt has brought business leaders from across the country and around the world to southwest Georgia, the event credited with bringing in billions of dollars in economic investment over the years.

One of two premiere state showcases of the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, the other being the Red Carpet Tour held during the Masters Golf Tournament in Augusta, the Georgia Quail Hunt gives attendees the opportunity to enjoy some

Southern hospitality. The hunt brings together state officials, development officials and potential industrial prospects. It is described as a “soft sell” to highlight the area, with the goal of forging relationships over time.

“Taurus (USA) came to the quail hunt for 10 years before we located them in Bainbridge,” Georgia Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Chris Clark said of the firearms manufacturer.

Clark, along with Gov. Brian Kemp, are among the state leaders who made the trip to

See QUAIL, 2A

File Photo
The Georgia Quail Hunt, an annual event that brings industrial prospects and state leaders to Albany each year, is being held at local plantations this week.



Special Photo:
Phoebe Dr. Estrellita Redmon is president of Phoebe Physicians.

Phoebe celebrates National Women Physicians Day

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

ALBANY -- In recognition of National Women Physicians Day, Phoebe Putney Health System is celebrating the women physicians who are advancing health care, expanding access, mentoring future leaders, and strengthening communities across southwest Georgia.

Phoebe employs 49 female physicians in 20 specialties across the health system, reflecting its continued commitment to excellence, access and patient-centered care.

Phoebe’s women physicians serve patients in the following specialties: behavioral health, car-

See PHOEBE, 2A

Periodical — Mail Label

Albany City Commission OKs plan to raze dilapidated apartment building

By Alan Mauldin
alan.mauldin@albanyherald.com

ALBANY – An Albany housing development that city officials and tenants say are not fit for human habitation could be coming down, and a scramble is on to get the remaining residents out of the building.

The Albany City Commission on Tuesday gave its approval to a request from the Albany Housing Authority to demolish the Hudson Malone Towers apartment complex. The 401 Flint Ave. complex houses low-income residents with disabilities.

In the resolution, the commission

See RAZE, 11A



Staff Photo: Alan Mauldin

The Albany City Commission is working to get the final 34 tenants moved out of the Hudson Malone Towers apartment building in downtown Albany and is supporting the demolition of the building completed in the mid-1980s.

INDEX

Classifieds 11A | Crosswords 7-8A, 11A | Locals 4A | Sports 9A-10A | TV - What to Watch 6A
Comics 7-8A | Horoscopes 3A | Perspectives 5A | Squawkbox 3A | Weather 3A



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From 1A

RACQUET

“This project came about because the Albany City Manager, Terrell Jacobs, and the County Administrator, Deron King, came to it with a very collaborative spirit,” Patel said. “They convinced their boards to put their egos aside and focus on what’s best for Albany, not for north, south, east or west.”

“I understand that commissioners have strong passion for their wards and their districts, but they all represent Albany. For some, it was difficult for them to give up this idea that they are the ‘kings’ or ‘queens’ of their wards. But the more

we discussed it, the more both groups came around.”

The center will include pickleball and tennis courts on 2.7 acres of land gifted by Patel. He had purchased one of three tracts at the mall (the Sears tract) and came up with a plan that brought an Academy Sports franchise that recently opened, a hotel that is set to be built soon and a booming Chik-fil-A establishment that is one of the city’s most successful franchises.

But there was one parcel left. “We started looking at that property, trying to come up with what was best for Albany,” Patel said. “Another store just didn’t feel right. So I did a lot of thinking about what we could do. Then I read a newspaper

story about the proposed tennis complex that had been on the drawing board for, what, 25 years?”

“The proposal to put the courts at Albany State University, near Phoebe and at the existing Darton courts just didn’t feel right. So I started thinking about that land at the mall.”

Patel became so intrigued he had engineer friend Bobby Donnelly draw up plans on how the property might be used to bring the racquet complex to the northwest Albany retail center.

“I had talked with people about the idea, and everyone pretty much said it was ridiculous, and I didn’t really argue” he said. “But when I saw the plan, I felt this was it.”

As fate would have it, after he’d decided the mall area was the right place for the complex, Patel got the chance to sit down with District 5 Dougherty County Commissioner Anthony Jones. The commissioner admits he was surprised at the tone of the meeting.

“I knew Milan had cleaned up a lot of property in east and west Albany, so when he mentioned meeting, I said yes,” Jones said. “One thing I learned from that meeting is that his heart is in the right place. He’s a man who does business on both sides of the tracks – he doesn’t see col-

or, he sees the heart of a man. “And another thing that struck me is that it’s not just about money with him. He loves this community.”

Jones said Patel’s plan to utilize land at the Mall was a big plus.

“When Milan called me and told me had something he wanted me to see, I didn’t know what he was planning,” Jones said. “The first, immediate, selling point for this project was that he wanted to put this complex at the Albany Mall, which, frankly, was on life support at the time.”

“The timing was perfect. The next day, (the County Commission) went on its retreat. I showed the plan to Commission Chairman (Lorenzo) Heard, and he agreed that it was an idea that could have a positive impact on the city and county. So we rolled it out at the retreat.”

Patel said he came away encouraged after what turned into a four-hour conversation with Jones.

“I think Anthony was impressed that I knew the people who came to my (east Albany) establishment, where we met,” the developer said. “I think he might have thought I was just some fast-talking city boy who was only interested in investing on the west side of town

“During our conversation, I showed him the drawings, changing lives.”

Redmon has also remained committed to mentoring young women interested in medicine and advancing representation in executive leadership and underrepresented subspecialties.

Kasongo, the medical director of emergency medicine at Phoebe Worth Medical Center, has practiced emergency medicine for nearly 20 years. Inspired at age 6 by watching her mother work as a certified nursing assistant, Kasongo’s path to medicine included earning a master’s degree in journalism from Columbia University before returning to medical school at Rush Medical College. She completed her emergency medicine residency in 2006.

“There is no single blueprint for becoming a physician,” she said. “My journey took unexpected turns, but every experience shaped the doctor I am today.”

Kasongo’s global experiences, including time spent living in Liberia and participating in medical missions in Haiti and Kenya, reinforced her commitment to improving health care access. Today, she leads the Emergency Department at Phoebe Worth and helped guide the facility to become a certified remote stroke center.

“In the emergency department, we meet patients in some of the most critical moments of their lives,” Kasongo said. “Empathy and strong communication help build trust when it matters most.”

Tott, a general surgeon at Phoebe Sumter Medical Center, has been practicing for 18 years. After graduating from the Medical College of Georgia and completing her general surgery residency in 2013, she joined Phoebe, where she has served patients for the past 13 years.

and it turned into what this complex could mean to the city and county. Anthony became a champion for the project, and things took off from there.”

Jacobs, who’d been the city manager for a short period at the time, said he approached the project as one that was overdue to move forward.

“What I saw was a well-planned project and the start of a great partnership between the land owner and our city and county officials,” the city manager said. “When we all got together in the same room and discussed things, I think everyone could see the potential value.”

“I think it should be pointed out that this group of elected officials has a great working relationship. They saw a project that was ripe for the picking, and it all came together at a pivotal time.”

King agreed, noting that he and Jacobs came to Albany near the same time and have had an opportunity to build a rapport.

“I can’t say enough about the spirit of cooperation with this project,” he said. “From the land owner, Mr. Patel, to the commissions on both sides, everyone worked together to be part of something that will grow our community.”

“Pickleball is a sport that’s be-

come popular across the country, and this project gives us an opportunity to build on the natural synergy it can bring. Plus, this is going to be a huge boost for the mall, and that’s important. A mall success is a success for the county and the city.”

Jones said news of the project already has paid dividends.

“I talked with a gentleman – I won’t say his name – the other day who has a business at the mall,” the commissioner said. “He told me, ‘I think I’m ready to move out.’ I told him about the racquet center, and he said, ‘I’d heard talk about that, but it hasn’t been confirmed as far as I know.’”

“I told him that the center has been confirmed, that everything’s in place, and the next time I saw him he told he’s decided to stick around.”

That’s the kind of news that stokes the fires of community in Patel.

“I never really spend a lot of time celebrating wins; I’ve learned to celebrate internally,” he said. “But this has the potential to be part of a turnaround in Albany. What it took was everyone deciding to work together, to put what’s good for all of Albany first.”

“I’ve heard leaders talk about ‘my people,’ and that’s not something I believe in. My parents taught me – and I believe – everyone should be treated the same. I believe that; my diverse group of friends are black, white, brown, yellow, old, young ... they come from all walks of life. There are no rule books for different people.” Patel said groundbreaking on the project is scheduled for this summer. Other plans for the property include a “Dave and Busters-like restaurant.”

From 1A
QUAIL

Albany for this year’s hunt. While the event is a statewide effort, it does put the spotlight on the Albany area.

“It’s really the only effort in the state that showcases specifically southwest Georgia,” Clark said. “There’s almost a 40-year history of us being able to bring prospects to Georgia. We’re into the tens of thousands of jobs created from this event.”

Over the nearly four decades, the Quail Hunt has led to companies locating or expanding in the region, Albany Area Chamber of Commerce interim President and CEO Matt Reed said.

“It’s just a great event to put Albany and southwest Georgia on the map for a lot of people,” he said. “We do bring prospects who are looking at Albany. It has been a useful tool for us for sure. It’s a great way to market Albany.”

More than 50 volunteers, some of whom have been involved for 20 years or more, are part of the local effort, Reed said.

“Hosting this event allows us to bring all of these state partners to southwest Georgia,” he said. “It’s just a great event. It’s a big community effort. We’re just blessed to host this every year and bring all these people to Albany.”



Special Photo

Milan Patel, right, works with his business partners on local projects.

From 1A

PHOEBE

diology, critical care, emergency medicine, gastroenterology, general surgery, hematology/oncology, inpatient medicine, maternal/fetal medicine, neonatology, neurology, neurosurgery, pain management, pediatric inpatient medicine, plastic surgery, primary care, pulmonology, radiology, rheumatology and trauma surgery.

Among those physicians are Dr. Estrellita Redmon, Dr. Mana Kasongo, and Dr. Kristin Tott, three leaders whose collective experience spans 78 years in medicine.

As president of Phoebe Phy-

sicians, Redmon oversees the health system’s integrated network of providers that includes more than 360 physicians and advanced practice providers and 1,200 total employees. She has been in the medical field for nearly 40 years, including almost 37 years since completing residency and 25 years in leadership roles. She was inspired to pursue medicine at age 12, she said, after witnessing her great-grandfather suffer a fatal heart attack at a time when there were no African American female physicians in her hometown of Tallahassee, Fla.

“When I began my career, I was often the only woman in the room. Rather than seeing that as a barrier, I saw it as an

opportunity to open doors for others,” Redmon said.

Throughout her career, Redmon has prioritized improving access to care, particularly in rural areas. As a clinician, she encouraged her teams to say “yes” whenever possible to patients seeking appointments, understanding that delayed access can lead to worsening outcomes. In executive leadership, she has championed a decentralized model of care, expanding primary and specialty services closer to the communities Phoebe serves.

“Access to care is one of the most powerful ways to improve health outcomes,” Redmon said “When we bring care closer to our communities, we are strengthening families and

a better way to primary care

We are pleased to welcome Emily Burford, FNP-C, to the Phoebe Physicians Family. She has joined Karen Campbell, MD, Patrina Lockette, MD, and Stephen Stocking, PA-C at Phoebe Primary Care at Laurel Place.

Emily, a board-certified family Nurse Practitioner, earned her master’s degree and bachelor’s degree from Walden University in Minneapolis, MN.

To schedule an appointment call 229-312-7490.

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Daily Horoscopes

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Today and tomorrow are below-zero days with below-zero odds for anything you begin. Saturday is a bit better, later next week brings significantly better days offering better assistance from the Universe.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): When torn between integrity and cutting corners in a gray area, choose your integrity every time — it's one of the most powerful ways to build self-esteem. Give with sincerity but start nothing new today.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Wait to make a move until Universal stars offer better support. The difference between surfing the Universal wave in happy alignment, and trying to cross-thread against the Universe, is no contest.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Universal stars aren't correct for a money move, which works for you as some key facts still remain unknown. Use the next week or so to dig into details and clarify the picture. Once all is known and stars are strong, then act.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): No matter how much you may want to believe in something, don't carry water for anything that is directly against your own wellbeing — sometimes you might without realizing it. Always keep your eyes and ears open.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): An important understanding about how to do the most good could be absent — ask the actual people you want to help, don't assume, and don't only talk to self-appointed spokespeople.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): A few days of potential creative blocks could frustrate you if you're counting on having the inspiration to complete a project. Within a week, you'll likely feel the artistry and flow returning.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Better to stick with an agreed strategy than to fall into a non-consensual and unrealistic plan that may not deliver equal results. Impulse

moves are even less likely to work out under below-zero stars.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Not much slides by, most things eventually come to light one way or another. Stay on the right side of your ethics. Adhere tightly to facts if you need to deliver a summary or report.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Basic teamwork will take you further than a long reach for a pie in the sky now. The more of a stretch something is, the more important to wait for good Universal stars to up your odds.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Represent yourself with pride, you can do it without any doubts when you've repeatedly earned your own self-respect. Postpone a new meeting or starting a project until late next week if possible.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Learn the lesson once, down deep, and you never need to repeat the exact situation again. If the lesson spirals around again later, it will be at a higher octave. If you avoid and learn nothing, you can repeat endlessly.

IF TODAY IS YOUR BIRTHDAY: Keep your circle tight for the next about 8 weeks, while there are good energies available to assist you, there are also challenging energies which could function as tests or lessons. Tests happen to test your growth, respond differently and the lesson doesn't repeat. Fail a test, and you get another round of the lesson. What could be tested during this time are your ability to see reality over wishful thinking, self-confidence despite setbacks, feeling lovable even if someone doesn't come through, showing up even if someone else doesn't. Keep your inner self strong through your self-work. Once stars shift, so much goodness is waiting to land: Love, family, money, new beginnings, visibility/positive exposure, renewed drive, a clear path and real help from the Universe.

— During WWI, a German U-boat torpedoed the British liner SS Tuscania in the Irish Sea, resulting in over 200 deaths.

1922: Reader's Digest Debuts — The very first edition of the popular magazine Reader's Digest was published.

1937: FDR's Court-Packing Plan — President Franklin D. Roosevelt proposed a plan to expand the U.S. Supreme Court, a move critics labeled "court-packing".

1971: Apollo 14 Moon Landing — Astronauts Alan Shepard and Edgar Mitchell successfully stepped onto the lunar surface for their first excursion.



146 BCE: Destruction of Carthage — The Roman Republic finally defeated its rival, Carthage, marking the end of the Punic Wars and establishing Rome as the dominant power in the Western Mediterranean.

1811: British Regency Begins — George, the Prince of Wales, was named Prince Regent due to the mental illness of his father, King George III.

1917: Mexican Constitution Adopted — Mexico officially adopted its current constitution, which introduced significant social reforms regarding labor and land ownership.

1918: SS Tuscania Sinking

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The quantity of civilization is measured by the quality of imagination.

Victor Hugo, writer (1802-1885)

CORRECTION

This newspaper is committed to publishing fair and accurate information. Errors should be brought to the attention of Editor Carlton Fletcher at (229) 888-9300. Corrections or clarifications will appear in this space.

SQUAWKBOX

squawkbox@albanyherald.com

Not a Trump man, at all, but Carlton your weekend editorial about Trump dividing us is wrong. Obama's eight years divided the nation so badly that America voted for anyone but a Democrat. Then Biden wins and after four years of whomever was calling the shots, Americans knew we had to change. America wanted to change from Democrats so badly they voted for Trump again. Blame the entire change on the thinking of America, and you must look at the very liberal radical left-thinking America.

Fifty is the new 29 ... and I am not referring to age but inflation.

Over the last year, the homicide rate has dropped by 21% in America, demonstrating that Trump's enforcement of the nation's laws is effective.

It's a shame that Donald Trump is more concerned with the lives of protesters in Iran than he is about the lives of protesters in the United States.

If you support career criminals roaming our streets committing more crimes instead of being deported, you are most likely a Democrat.

Can someone please explain to me how there's supposed to be separation of church and state and yet we have clergy in government?

The Page Brothers rule ... excellent review of their album.

Racism is not dead, but it is on life support, kept alive by politicians, race hustlers and people who get a sense of superiority by denouncing others as "racists." — Thomas Sowell

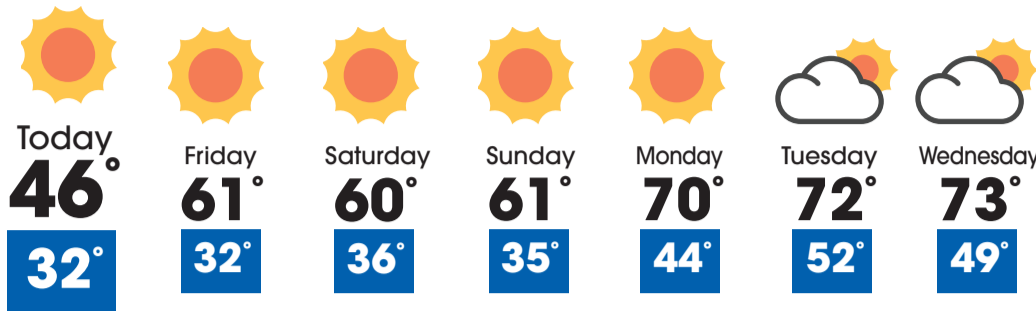
Gun ownership is up. Murders are down. Over 500,000 firearms privately owned. Murders dramatically declined during the first year of the second Trump administration's increased law enforcement.

The City Commission should have called Chad on his threat to sue. Just like most bullying real estate developers, they are so willing to quote chapter and verse to keep others in the confines of law and procedure, but when there is a dime to be made from their holdings, it's to hell with it all. Notice how quick to say "I'm going to sue," and the red meat crowd loudly voices harumph.

Albany taxpayers should take a visit to city and county offices. Multiple employees in every department staring at their smartphones, perpetually empty offices, six people working at the recycling station, long lunches taken, early afternoon departures. The waste is blatant and out of hand. We are paying higher taxes. This needs to be addressed.

During the Obama administration 176 people were killed by ICE. Not one demonstration or riot. During the Trump administration, two people were killed by ICE. Demonstrations and riots destroying Minneapolis.

Weather Forecast



By Frank Stewart
Tribune Content Agency

NORTH	WEST	EAST	SOUTH
▲ J 10	♥ 9 8 7 6	▲ A 3 2	▲ K Q 5 4
♦ A 7 6 4	♥ 10 5	♥ J 9 8 2	♥ K Q 3
♦ K 10 3 2	♦ 9 8 6 5	♦ Q J	♦ A 7 4
♣ J 5	♣ 9 4 3	♣ 10 7 6 2	♣ A K 8

South 2 NT
West Pass
North 4 NT
East Pass

Opening lead — ♠ 9

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Daily Bridge Club In denial

Cy the Cynic says that people could learn from their mistakes if they weren't so busy denying they'd made them.

West led a high spade against today's 6NT, and East took the ace and returned a spade to dummy's jack. South had 11 tricks. He took three clubs and the ace, king and queen of hearts. When West discarded a spade, South continued with the K-Q of spades. West threw a diamond, East a club. Dummy let go the last heart and a diamond.

DOWN TWO

At the 11th trick, South took the ace of diamonds: six, deuce, queen. On the next diamond, West followed with the nine, and declarer ... played dummy's ten. East produced the jack — and the jack of hearts. Down two.

South defended himself. He invoked the idea of "restricted choice," insisting it was right to play East for a singleton dia-

mond honor.

In truth, South failed to count. At the end, East was known to have held three spades, four hearts and four clubs, so two diamonds. South should have put up the king at Trick 12.

DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ A 3 2 ♥ J 9 8 2 ♦ Q J ♣ 10 7 6 2. Your partner opens one diamond, you respond one heart and he bids two clubs. What do you say?

ANSWER: This problem is taxing in a natural system. Opener's nonjump change of suit covers a wide range of hands. Partner may hold K 7 6, None, A K 10 6 5, A Q 9 4 3 (a club slam would be odds-on) or 8 7, Q 5, A K 10 6 5, K J 8 4 (eight tricks at clubs might be the limit). Pass. You would raise to three clubs with A 3 2, J 9 8 2, 4 3, A J 6 2.

South dealer
N-S vulnerable

ADVICE COLUMNIST ■ ERIC THOMAS

Wellness check severs decades-old friendship



Dear Eric: I'm a 73-year-old female who happily maintained a friendship I made my freshman year in college.

Two years ago, I noticed changes in my friend's ability to carry on conversations and her lack of awareness of current events. After Covid's isolation, she and her husband seldom left their house, and her husband spent more time on his computer.

My friend's calls to me became more frequent and repetitive even though she had no news or reason to phone. She repeated the same three or four stories and often within a five-minute span. I expressed my concerns about cognitive issues to her. She proudly reported that she was especially healthy, took no medications and came from a family who lived long lives. She thought she was fine.

We have always lived in different states, so I reached out to a niece and expressed my concerns about her aunt. The niece phoned her and said I made contact to "check up on her." Her niece sent me a text that she spoke with her aunt and she seemed "just fine."

The anger from my friend "interfering in her life" was vitriolic. I have my own mental health concerns and could not deal with the drama. I blocked contact, leaving behind a 54-year friendship. Did I fail her?

— Concerned, not Interfering

Dear Concerned: Reaching out to your friend and to a family member was the right thing. The Alzheimer's Association (alz.org) has a 10-step guide for how to approach a friend or loved one about whom you have memory-related concerns; I refer to it often. Part of that plan involves alerting the friend or loved one to the changes you're

seeing and asking if they've noticed the same things. Another part of that plan involves reaching out to someone closer who can help or who might be able to confirm what you're seeing (or refute it).

These conversations are not always easy. Sometimes people experience shame when others speak to them about their health. Others might feel that people are talking about them behind their backs, which can be hard to handle.

I'm sorry that the conversations you had prompted vitriol from your friend. But I'd encourage you to unblock her. After 54 years, it's worth allowing her some grace, apologizing for any perceived overstepping, and starting over. A grudge won't do either of you any good. But a five-decade connection that allows for ups, downs, and changes, can continue to benefit you both.

Dear Eric: We had been friends with another couple for more than 50 years. They were always jealous about little things we did or bought, like a new sofa, new appliances, et cetera. But when we built a new house, that ended our relationship. They never came to visit and we haven't talked since.

That was 21 years ago. How can anybody be that jealous and what causes it? Small things they would get over in a week or so, but this was too big for them to handle.

— Jealousy Ruined the Friendship

Dear Friendship: It sounds like that couple was never really in the right place to be friends with you. The green-eyed monster pokes its head out on occasion in even the healthiest of relationships, but I struggle to

see what they thought they were getting out of this friendship or adding to it.

As this has been on your mind for two decades, I suspect that you'd like some resolution about it. Alas, that may not come. The simple truth is that sometimes other people's internal struggles manifest externally and keep them from the happiness they say they want.

Dear Eric: This is in response to "You Gonna Finish That?," who was concerned about restaurant food waste and wanted to ask strangers for their leftovers at restaurants. There is an app called "Too Good To Go," where participating restaurants and food servers like convenience stores can sell "mystery bags" of their food left over at the end of the day/night at discounted prices. The app provides time windows in which to pick up the items, usually shortly before closing. This cuts down on food waste and allows restaurants to recover some of their food costs. It also lets people try new restaurants at a reduced cost. There's a delicious bagel shop near me that participates in the app, and I've frequently gotten a dozen assorted bagels at cost. Win-win!

— Too Good

Dear Too Good: Thanks for this suggestion. I've checked out the app in the past and it does a great job helping restaurants to reduce food waste. Restaurants have to adhere to strict guidelines around food service, including never serving one guest food that's been served to another guest. Apps like "Too Good to Go" help make use of unused food without exposing the restaurant to liability.

Send questions to R. Eric Thomas at eric@askingeric.com or P.O. Box 22474, Philadelphia, Pa. 19110. Follow him on Instagram and sign up for his weekly newsletter at ericthomas.com.

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vocate, 475 L' Enfant Plaza SW, Washington, D.C. 20260

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AB&T closes 2025 with continued success, positive community outcomes

Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

ALBANY – Numbers have long defined what happens in the banking world. They often dictate direction, what happens next, and when. And, of course, numbers paint a picture after the fact, a measure of a certain season's successes or failures.

In boardrooms across the country, executives and shareholders are discussing -- likely obsessing over -- the latest round of numbers, chasing those ever-desired lifts in things like output, production, profitability ... the list is nearly endless. And while those numbers are certainly important and necessary metrics to monitor, it's often easy to get lost in them and not see the forest for the trees.

For the leadership of AB&T and its holding company, Community Capital Bancshares Inc., numbers are certainly important, and watched closely.

Great pride is taken when the company reports things like its total assets growing \$12.2 million in 2025, driven by \$19.3 million in loan growth, pushing that piece of the balance sheet to \$186.9 million, a benchmark not reached in the bank's history.

The company closed 2025 with a deposit base that grew by \$10.3 million, an equity position strengthened by \$2.7 million, and a growth in net income of \$4.9 million, itself an increase of 10.2% year over year, and the best the bank has ever seen.

The bank's stock closed 2025 trading at \$29.25 per share after closing the prior year trading at \$21.34. That represents a stock appreciation yield of roughly 37%. Add in a \$2 dividend per share, paid to shareholders in June of 2025, which generated a 9.37% dividend yield, and that's a roughly 46% total yield for shareholders.

Those numbers show more

than the strength of a financial institution in southwest Georgia. They illuminate something far more powerful, and far more important: the strength of the community it serves. The stories behind those numbers, the lives they represent, are far more crucial.

AB&T's impressive metrics are only a reflection, just a glimpse of a more important story.

Take that \$19 million in loan growth. A peek below the surface reveals a young couple tapping into home equity to add a third bedroom for their expanding family; a father helping his college freshman get in a suitable vehicle he can drive into a bright future.

Those loan dollars highlight a local company bravely innovating and striving to expand the market for industrial waste re-use, or a small retailer bolstering inventory and thereby creating a new

part-time job that will serve as a young man's first foray into the working world. That money bought new equipment for the small business run by a neighbor that employs area residents and provides a much-needed service to the public. The list goes on.

While the "A" in AB&T doesn't officially stand for Albany anymore, the community is forever ingrained in the bank. And, the mission has always been for the bank to be forever ingrained in the community. There will always be Albany in AB&T. Because when the dust settles, the calendar flips to a new year, and there's a fresh period to measure, the only thing that truly matters is community.

For a community bank with less than 30 employees to have the sustained run of success AB&T has seen in the past year-plus is impressive. But what those efforts have generated in the community is the true measure of success. The



Special Logo

real pride comes in knowing that a job well-done by the men and women of AB&T means a prosperous and robust community.

More importantly, though, 2025 was just another step down a long road of commitment and dedication; dedication to craft and to the community being served.

When the folks at AB&T turn off their alarms and gear up for another day, the mission will not be to go sell a checking account or uncover a loan

opportunity. Their mission will be what it was yesterday and what it will be tomorrow: to build community and care for their neighbors.

Community Capital Bancshares Inc. is a bank holding company located in Albany whose principal activity is ownership and management of its wholly bank subsidiary, AB&T, which offers a full range of commercial and retail banking services at its three locations in Dougherty and Lee counties.

Feast Day of Epiphany: A celebration for all religions

By Fran Pappas

Special to The Albany Herald

The final feast day of the season of Epiphany always falls on Feb. 2, concluding Jesus' infancy from His birth on Christmas through His next 40 days. It is this final epiphany and feast day where Jesus is revealed as the "light for revelation to the Gentiles" and our Savior.

This feast day completes the period related to the Nativity of Christ, a period that began with the Nativity fast on Nov. 15 as people cleansed their hearts with prayer and repentance. This fast is known by many names: the presentation of Jesus in the Temple, the purification of the Virgin Mary, the meeting of our Lord and God, or Candlemas.

Candlemas is celebrated primarily in Western nations, especially

by Catholics, Anglicans, and some Protestant denominations, including Lutherans and Methodists. Many Christians take their candles to their local church, where they are blessed and then used for the rest of the year. The blessed candles serve as a symbol of Jesus Christ, who is referred to as the Light of the World.

In the Eastern Orthodox Church, Feb. 2 is also known as one of the Great Feasts, an eastern tradition often called the presentation of Jesus in the Temple because the hymns of the day emphasize Jesus meeting with his people. Orthodox Christians light candles before an icon in the Narthex each time they enter the church year-round, make the sign of the cross, and kiss the icon as a sign of their faith and hope

in God's help.

According to Jewish law, and the law of Moses, a first-born male child belongs to God, and his parents need to "buy him back," redeem him, on the 40th day after his birth with an offering. Joseph and Mary offered a pair of turtledoves, or two pigeons, indicating perhaps that Joseph and Mary were not wealthy.

In the Eastern Orthodox Church, both baby boys and girls are taken to church on the 40th day of their birth in remembrance of Mary and Joseph taking the infant Jesus to the Temple. I remember young mothers were taught not to leave the house after the birth of their child, nor take their baby out, until 40 days after the baby's birth.

As written in Luke 2:22-29, when Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the

Temple in Jerusalem when he was 40 days old, they met Simeon, an old man who was holy and a noted scholar. The Jewish people were waiting for the Messiah to come and deliver Israel from their conquerors. Simeon had spent years in prayer for the Messiah to come, and one day he heard the voice of God promising him he would not die until he had seen the Messiah.

Guided by the Holy Spirit, Simeon entered the temple courts at the precise moment Mary and Joseph brought in the child Jesus. Upon seeing the infant, Simeon took Him in his arms and praising God, he prayed, "Lord, now let your servant go in peace according to your promise for I have seen Your salvation which You have prepared, a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles,

and the glory to your people Israel."

When Simeon returned Jesus to his parents, he and Anna the prophetess, an 84-year old widow who spent her time worshipping, were amazed. It appears that the Holy Spirit had given both Simeon and Anna the ability to see things that others couldn't. God used both Simeon and Anna as examples in telling us that every single person has abilities and gifts given by God.

Recognizing the gifts of God given to our parishioners, and inviting them into service will enable us to grow into united powerful communities. Bringing each denomination in closeness and harmony will help unify Albany, make it one of the best cities in the state of Georgia; if not the country, thereby fulfilling God's promise.



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"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."
Luke 12:32

COLUMNIST ■ MARC HYDEN

Legislature gets second chance to address electricity costs

Go just about anywhere in the Gold Dome, and odds are good that you will hear a lawmaker drop the A-word. No, not that A-word, the other one: affordability. Voters are losing their patience with elected officials they hold responsible.

The sour public mood is not new, which makes it even more puzzling that the Legislature balked last year at a commonsense measure that would have established safeguards to ensure fairer electric rates. Senate Bill 34, sponsored by Sen. Chuck Hufstetler, R-Rome, would have forbidden electric utilities from passing the massive costs associated with data center electricity demand onto residential customers.

Now that two of the incumbent Republican Public Service Commission's members were trounced in recent elections, a solidly Republican seat in the Georgia House of Representatives flipped to the Democrats and a state senate special election is focusing on data centers, the General Assembly has expressed willingness to revisit Hufstetler's bill. Given the electorate's frustration and important elections looming, legislative action cannot come soon enough.

In most cases, I would write an issue like this off as a decision for private companies to make, and if I, as a customer, don't like their decision, then I can instead do business with another company. However, that is not how the electricity market works in Georgia. Electric companies are given vast geographical monopolies. Residential customers have zero choice over which company to use. In exchange for their monopoly status, the Public Service Commission is allowed to regulate electric companies and their rates, and data centers are becoming a central topic.

As they flood into Georgia, demands on the electric grid are coming into focus. Data centers devour excessive amounts of electricity. Some even consume levels used by small cities, and the fear is that their emergence will require the construction of more power plants. Hufstetler has a plan for this. He does not want captive residential rate-payers to have to pay for data centers' energy needs. Rather, data centers should be on the hook for them. That's the crux of his bill.



HYDEN

Some have asserted that this issue is outside of the Legislature's scope, and there is no need for this legislation anyway. The Public Service Commission adopted a rule similar to Hufstetler's bill last year. What's more, as WABE reported, in advance of Public Service Commissioner elections last year, "the commission voted unanimously to freeze base power rates for the next three years." Case closed, right? Far from it.

The Public Service Commission can change its own rules, and there are worries about how long the current rule regarding data centers will remain in effect. Meanwhile, captive rate-payers have reason to be wary. While the commission has put a moratorium on base rate increases, it left some wiggle room to raise electric bills due to fuel costs and hurricane cleanup.

Moreover, the commission has seemed happy to approve rate increases in the past. "Georgia Power bills have gone up six times in the last three years: three times as part of an overall rate hike, twice to pay for new nuclear reactors at Plant Vogtle, and once to cover high natural gas prices," WABE reported in October 2025.

Considering the Public Service Commission's track record and the deluge of data centers coming to Georgia, it seems appropriate for the Legislature to assert its authority and safeguard consumers. They should not have to subsidize data centers' energy usage, and passing SB 34 is a no-nonsense way of accomplishing this and addressing issues of affordability.

While the General Assembly has worked hard on affordability — including passing tort reform, decreasing taxes and offering tax rebates — recent elections and polls show the writing on the wall. Georgians want more relief and action. There is, truthfully, only so much state lawmakers can do to alleviate nationwide price inflation — the root problems are likely out of their hands — but passing a bill like Hufstetler's will give consumers confidence that they won't be forced to subsidize data centers' energy use. This is a step in the right direction.

If lawmakers punt on this issue again, given how surly the electorate has been, then I worry voters might start throwing around a different A-word.

COLUMNIST ■ REP. BILL YEARTA

Legislature gets down to work on state budget

Each legislative session, the Georgia General Assembly's sole constitutional obligation is to pass a balanced budget, which has been the focus of our work the past two weeks. The

General Assembly is responsible for passing the Amended Fiscal Year 2026 budget, which appropriates spending for the remainder of the current fiscal year.

This budget, often referred to as the "little budget," uses a more accurate estimate of state revenue to account for any differences between the previous estimate and actual revenue obtained until June 30. We also are required to pass the Fiscal Year 2027 budget, which establishes state spending for the upcoming fiscal year beginning July 1, using a projected state revenue estimate.

For the budget process, first Gov. (Brian) Kemp presents his requests to the Georgia House and Senate, and then we vote on and amend as needed. The governor's AFY 2026 budget proposal is set by a revised revenue estimate of \$42.3 billion. Along with expected revenue growth, the governor's AFY 2026 budget estimate includes \$3.3 billion in undesignated surplus funds, resulting in a total revenue adjustment of an 11.9% increase over the original FY 2026 budget estimate.

The governor's FY 2027 budget is set by a revenue estimate of \$38.5 billion, representing a 2% increase over the original FY 2026 budget.

Building on the record of returning taxpayer dollars, the governor's AFY 2026 budget proposal includes an additional one-time tax rebate, which would return \$1 billion to Georgia families to offset the increased cost of living and continued pressure from higher prices in recent years. Kemp's AFY 2026 proposal also allocates \$625 million to provide a one-time salary supplement of \$2,000 to full-time, regular state employees and school personnel, recognizing their continued service to Georgia. Of those funds, \$384 million is designated for K-12 teachers, school nurses, nutrition workers and bus drivers, as well as pre-K lead and assistant teachers.

The state's proposed FY 2027 budget includes an increase of more than \$218 million in formula funds for the University System of Georgia, reflecting a 5% increase in enrollment. It also includes more than \$34 million in additional formula funds for the Technical College System of Georgia, reflecting an enrollment increase of almost 10%.

The governor also emphasized that many students either delay attending college or are unable to complete their education due to tuition costs, while others graduate with significant student debt. To help ease this burden, the FY 2027 budget proposal allocates an additional \$58 million to fully fund the HOPE scholarship to 100% of its promise, which helped nearly a quarter of a million students attend post-secondary institutions last year.

In addition to fully funding the HOPE scholarship, the proposed budget includes a one-time endowment of \$325 million in his AFY 2026 budget proposal to establish the Dedicating Resources to Educationally Advance More Students scholarship program, the first needs-based aid pro-

gram of its kind in Georgia history.

Gov. Kemp's proposed FY 2027 budget also includes \$2.5 million to establish the Georgia Foster Care Scholarship, which would provide post-secondary education grants to eligible students who are current or former foster youth. The grant program was made possible through the bipartisan passage of Senate Bill 85 during the 2025 legislative session, which was later signed into law by the governor.

Finally, Gov. Kemp concluded his remarks to the joint committee by underscoring his commitment to working alongside members of the General Assembly throughout this budget process to keep Georgia moving forward for every family.

After the governor addressed the joint committee, we continued our work throughout the week hearing from other officials and state agencies as they delved deeper into their specific budgetary needs.

Georgia's State Economist Robert Buschman also briefed the joint committee on the state's revenue outlook, outlining various factors behind recent growth, as well as potential risks ahead. He noted that state revenues have increased by approximately \$9 billion, about 36%, over the past five years, with nearly all of that growth occurring in FY 2021 and FY 2022.

This past week, I signed on to sponsor the Georgia Homeownership Opportunity and Market Equalization Act of 2026, or House Bill 1116. After hearing from constituents across the district, one of their biggest worries is not being able to afford to stay in their homes due to property taxes. The bill would enable the full elimination of homestead property taxes on primary residences by 2032 and would provide tools for local governments to make up for lost revenue.

To help offset potential revenue losses, the legislation would authorize an optional, flexible five-penny local sales tax, as well as optional local assessments and fees. This legislation would provide immediate relief by doubling state homestead exemption every other year until the mandate takes effect. This provision will provide an average of \$500 returned to families.

HB 1116 was filed last week, and I'll be sure to update you on its progress.

I am excited to announce that the House Page Program begins next week. This program offers Georgia students ages 12 to 18 the opportunity to visit the state Capitol and assist members of the Georgia House on the House floor. I encourage anyone interested to visit the House Page Program website to learn more and apply: <https://www.legis.ga.gov/house/page-program>. Both of my children participated in this program when they were growing up and I cannot wait for my grandkids to participate.

As we move through the session, I look forward to continuing to advance policies and legislation that benefit you, your families and our community. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns about the work happening at the Capitol.



YEARTA

GUEST COLUMNIST ■ BRAD RAFFENSPERGER

2026 is about affordability, public safety

It's a new year, but the same truth remains: if Republicans fail to focus on the issues that matter most to hard-working Georgians, we will pay the price at the ballot box. Distraction — or worse, indifference — is not a winning strategy. And when we lose sight

of voters' real risk under-

poll after same story: polling con-

top concerns ingly eco- are feeling inflation, ris-

taxes, higher grocery and gas prices, and a growing sense of job insecurity. Whatever labels we attach to these challenges, the message from voters is unmistakable: They want leaders focused on making life more affordable.

And you don't need a poll to understand that reality. Just travel the state and listen. From Albany to Augusta, Gainesville to Rome, Georgians are working harder than ever, but their

paychecks aren't stretching nearly as far. Many are picking up extra shifts, or even second jobs, and still struggling to keep up. That isn't sustainable, and we can do better.

Alongside affordability, public safety remains a major concern in communities large and small. Failed federal border policies have fueled human trafficking, drug smuggling, and violent crime that now reaches far beyond the border states. Fentanyl has devastated families across the country with overdose deaths now taking more than 100,000 lives each year.

President Trump was right to call attention to the scale of this crisis, designating fentanyl as a weapon of mass destruction. It is not abstract to me. My own son died from an overdose in 2018; that's a loss no parent should ever have to endure.

Georgia parents are deeply concerned about the safety and focus of their local schools. They need assurance that classrooms are places for learning and growth, not soft targets for violence or platforms for political ideology. This moment presents both a challenge and an opportunity for Republicans. Voters are looking for leaders who understand their anxieties, empathize with their struggles, and offer serious, conservative solutions that improve daily life. Anything else, such as political theater or endless re-litigation of the past, is a distraction.

As a businessman who has built companies and created jobs — and now as a candidate for governor — I've made it a priority not just to talk about these challenges, but to put forward serious, workable solutions. I've proposed a comprehensive property tax relief plan that would cap property taxes for all Georgians and fully eliminate non-public safety, non-education property taxes for seniors.

I've always believed that many of our major affordability problems can be solved by good-paying jobs across Georgia. To that end, I've released a jobs plan focused on creating good-paying opportunities across every region of the state. The plan builds on Georgia's existing economic development strengths, using targeted, performance-based incentives to attract re-shored jobs in strategic, high-growth industries.

A centerpiece of this effort is the Re-Shore Georgia Employee Income Tax Holiday, which would provide a one-time, 0% state income tax year for qualifying employees who relocate to Georgia for a re-shored project or for Georgians who accept jobs tied to designated re-shoring investments. To further accelerate job creation, I've proposed the creation of a Georgia Jobs Fund to support major re-shoring projects, headquarters relocations, and transformative county-level investments.

Finally, to keep Georgia competitive, my plan establishes a permitting fast lane for strategic projects specifically designed to create new jobs. This initiative would streamline approvals for new facilities in priority sectors and fast-track permitting for on-site power generation and critical infrastructure.

In the months ahead, I will continue to roll out policy prescriptions like expanding technical and trade education, incentivizing apprenticeships, and partnering with employers to meet real work force needs. On public safety, that means doubling school safety grants, fully

funding law enforcement, and supporting law enforcement recruitment and retention with competitive pay and modern equipment.

But here's what I know: None of these ideas can become reality without Republican control in Congress and the Georgia General Assembly. That's why I urge my friends and colleagues to stay focused on what actually wins elections and, more importantly, what improves lives.

Let's resist the temptation to chase online outrage, fight yesterday's battles, or get pulled into distractions that don't move our state forward. This is 2026, and it's our opportunity to lead. Let's take ownership of this moment and work together to make our state more affordable and safer for every hard-working Georgian.

Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger is running for the Republican gubernatorial nomination.



RAFFENSPERGER



What to watch

THURSDAY

February 5, 2026

All times Eastern. Start times can vary based on cable/satellite provider. Confirm times on your on-screen guide.

The Lincoln Lawyer

Netflix ■ **Season Premiere**

The fourth season is based on the sixth book, *The Law of Innocence*, of renowned author Michael Connelly's *The Lincoln Lawyer* series. Mickey Haller (Manuel Garcia-Rulfo) faces his toughest case yet as he and his team work tirelessly to prove his innocence in the murder of a former client, Sam Scales. To clear his name, they must unravel Sam's final scam, forcing them to go head-to-head with the DA's office, the FBI and ghosts from Mickey's own past.



Animal Control

FOX, 9 p.m.

In the new episode "French Bulldogs and White Broncos," Patel's (Ravi Patel) fundraising event takes an unexpected turn when a prize-winning breeder dog is neutered by mistake.

NBA Basketball

Prime Video, beginning at 7:30 p.m. **Live**

A pair of NBA matchups on Prime Video has the Chicago Bulls in Toronto to face the Raptors and the Golden State Warriors at the Mortgage Matchup Center in Phoenix to take on the Suns.

Scrabble

The CW, 8 p.m.

A librarian takes on the returning champion for his shot at winning \$10,000 in the new episode "Conan the Librarian." Craig Ferguson hosts.

Next Level Chef

FOX, 8 p.m.

The new episode "Auditions — Social Media Chefs" has eight social-media savvy chefs leveling up corner-store staples in an effort to cook their way to the top kitchen.

Trivial Pursuit

The CW, 9 p.m.

A legal assistant and a fashion coordinator test their knowledge in the six iconic Trivial Pursuit categories with the goal of winning \$20,000 in the new episode "Law and Orders." LeVar Burton hosts.

Ancient Aliens History, 9 p.m.

From the precisely cut stone blocks at Puma Punku to the gigantic temples of Malta and the megalithic city of Nan Madol, could these mysterious sites contain evidence of extraterrestrial contact in the distant past? Find out in the episode "Extraterrestrial Engineering."

NFL Honors

NBC & NFL Network, 9 p.m. **Live**

Jon Hamm hosts the NFL Honors ceremony at San Francisco's Palace of Fine Arts. The annual awards for MVP, Rookie of the Year, Coach of the Year, Walter Payton Man of the Year and more are presented. The Pro Football Hall of Fame Class of 2026 is also announced.

Going Dutch

FOX, 9:30 p.m.

Maggie (Taylor Misiak) believes she is cursed with dating bad men, so Dana (Laci Mosley) convinces her to go to a singles' mixer in the new episode "None of the Good Guys."

Discovered by Disaster

Nat Geo, 9:55 p.m. ■ **Season Finale**

Season 1 of this docuseries exploring how catastrophic natural events unveil hidden treasures and reshape our understanding of history concludes with "Lost Treasures and Resilient Civilizations."

CATCH A CLASSIC

John Carradine Birthday Celebration

TCM, beginning at 6:30 a.m.

Like the Barrymores, the Carradines occupy a notable place among acting families. Patriarch John Carradine — father of actors David (*Kung Fu*), Keith and Robert, and grandfather of actors Martha Plimpton and Ever Carradine — was born on this day in 1906, and TCM celebrates with a daytime marathon of seven of his early films from 1936 to 1939, airing in chronological order. A few of these showcase Carradine's long partnership with director John Ford: 1936's **Mary of Scotland** (pictured), where the actor plays the Queen of Scots' private secretary, and the monumental Western



Stagecoach (1939). In other film offerings, Carradine portrays Abraham Lincoln in **Of Human Hearts** (1938); stars with Lucille Ball in an early version of the disaster-film genre, 1939's **Five Came Back**; and even appears in a Western-style tale of colonial Australia, 1939's **Captain Fury**. All of today's films are an excellent glimpse into the early honing of Carradine's celebrated acting prowess.

MOVIES YOU'LL LOVE



The Sweetest Heart (2018, Romance) Julie Gonzalo, Chris McNally **Hallmark, 6 p.m.**

Toy Story (1995, Children) Tom Hanks, Tim Allen **Freeform, 7 p.m.**

Jerry Maguire (1996, Romance-comedy) Tom Cruise, Cuba Gooding Jr. **MGM, 8 p.m.**

Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle (2017, Adventure) Dwayne Johnson, Kevin Hart **FX, 8 p.m.**

Knock at the Cabin (2023, Suspense) Dave Bautista, Jonathan Groff **SYFY, 8 p.m.**

The 13th Wife: Escaping Polygamy, Part 1 (2025, Docudrama) Felicity Huffman, Olga Petsa **LMN, 8 p.m.**

The Fifth Element (1997, Science fiction) Bruce Willis, Gary Oldman **BBC America, 8 p.m.**

The Strangers: Chapter 2 (2025, Horror) Madelaine Petsch, Gabriel Basso **Starz, 8:20 p.m.**

Godzilla vs. Kong (2021, Science fiction) Alexander Skarsgård, Millie Bobby Brown **TNT, 10:30 p.m.**

Legally Blonde (2001, Comedy) Reese Witherspoon, Luke Wilson **Paramount, 11 p.m.**

The Hangover (2009, Comedy) Bradley Cooper, Ed Helms **TBS, 11:30 p.m.**

Uncut Gems (2019, Suspense) Adam Sandler, LaKeith Stanfield **HBO, 11:45 p.m.**

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What to watch

FRIDAY

February 6, 2026

All times Eastern. Start times can vary based on cable/satellite provider. Confirm times on your on-screen guide.

Salvador

Netflix ■ **New Series**

Originating from Spain, *Salvador* tells the story of a father who discovers that his daughter belongs to a neo-Nazi group, which he must approach in order to try to rescue her and understand what led her there.



Finding Harmony: A King's Vision

Prime Video

Kate Winslet narrates this documentary about King Charles III of England's philosophy of humankind achieving harmony with nature. The film explores how King Charles' vision has sparked global movements in food production, urbanism, community regeneration, sustainable textiles and traditional skills. It also features his own reflections on his lifelong commitment to promoting a sustainable world.

NBA Basketball

Prime Video, beginning at 7:30 p.m. Live Friday night NBA action on Prime Video has the N.Y. Knicks at Detroit's Little Caesars Arena for a clash with the Pistons and the L.A. Clippers heading north to Sacramento for an audience with the Kings.

Spartacus: House of Ashur

Starz, 9 p.m. ■ **Season Finale**

Season 1 of this *Spartacus* spinoff exploring an alternate history in which Ashur (Nick E. Tarabay) killed Spartacus and took over his gladiator school concludes with "Hail Caesar."

CATCH A CLASSIC

Man in the Wilderness

TCM, 8:30 p.m.

If you are a fan of 2015's Oscar-winning *The Revenant* with Leonardo DiCaprio, you must see this 1971 version of the same survival story of 19th century fur trapper Hugh Glass, starring Richard Harris in the title role (called Zach Bass in this film). With a screenplay by Jack DeWitt, the same

writer for the gruesome, and also Harris-starring, *A Man Called Horse* of a year earlier, the film relates an incident in which Bass, traveling with an expedition in the American Northwest, is mauled by a bear and left by his party to die. He lives, however, and manages to track down his companions for revenge. The film also stars John Huston as expedition leader Captain Henry (based on the historical Gen. Ashley) and was shot over two to three months in Spain in, interestingly, some of the same places as David Lean's *Doctor Zhivago*.



MOVIES YOU'LL LOVE



Barron's Cove (2024, Crime drama) Garrett Hedlund, Hamish Linklater **SHO, 6 p.m.**

Toy Story 3 (2010, Children) Tom Hanks, Tim Allen **Freeform, 6:30 p.m.**

Boyz n the Hood (1991, Drama) Larry Fishburne, Ice Cube **BET, 7 p.m.**

Dawn of the Planet of the Apes (2014, Science fiction) Andy Serkis, Jason Clarke **FXM, 7:10 p.m.**

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix (2007, Fantasy) Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint **E!, 7:30 p.m.**

My Amish Double Life (2025, Suspense) Lexi Minetree, Rachel Coopes **LMN, 8 p.m.**

Wildcat (2025, Suspense) Kate Beckinsale, Lewis Tan **MGM, 8 p.m.**

MacGruber (2010, Comedy) Will Forte, Kristen Wiig **HBO, 8:25 p.m.**

Ski School (1991, Comedy) Dean Cameron, Tom Breznahan **IFC, 9:15 p.m.**

Air Force One (1997, Suspense) Harrison Ford, Gary Oldman **MGM, 9:45 p.m.**

Chaos Walking (2021, Science fiction) Daisy Ridley, Tom Holland **SYFY, 10 p.m.**

The Troubles (2020, Drama) Emily Marie Palmer, Paul Burke **BBC America, 10 p.m.**

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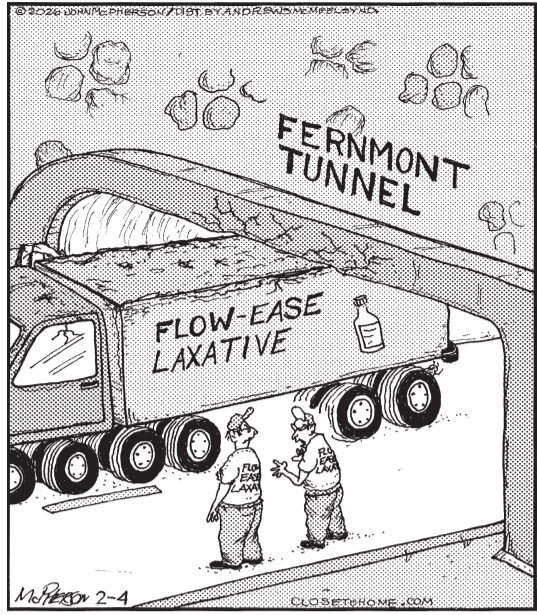
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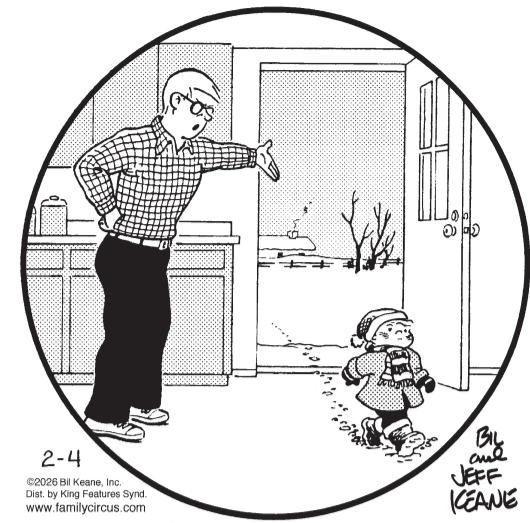
TV - What to watch

CLOSE TO HOME John McPherson



"Will you just shut up about how ironic this is?!"

THE FAMILY CIRCUS Bill Keane

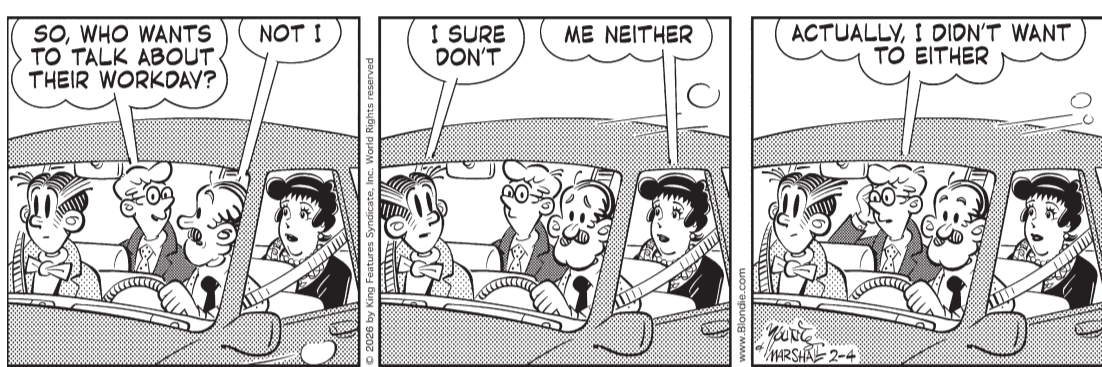


"Do you realize YOU are the main cause of global warming?"

BEETLE BAILEY Mort & Greg Walker



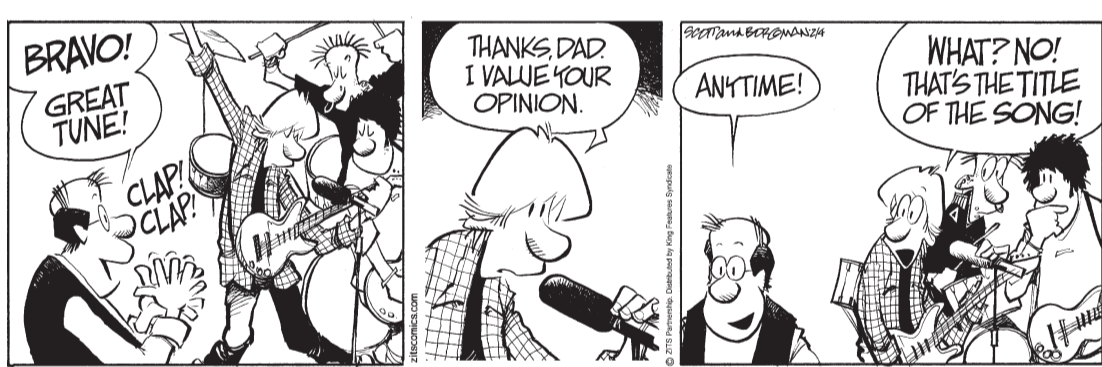
BLONDIE Dean Young & John Marshall



THE BORN LOSER Art & Chip Sansom



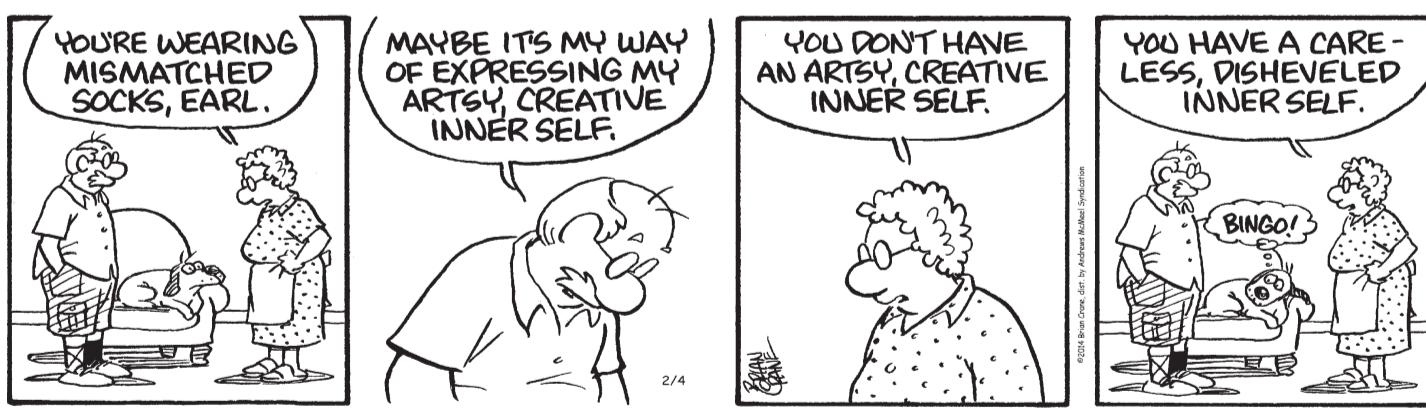
ZITS Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



GARFIELD Jim Davis



PICKLES Brian Crane

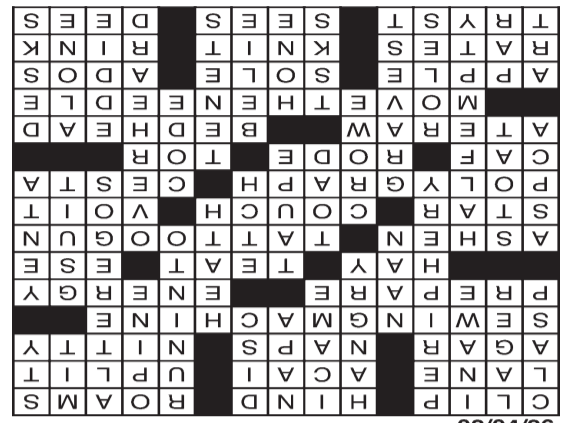


Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

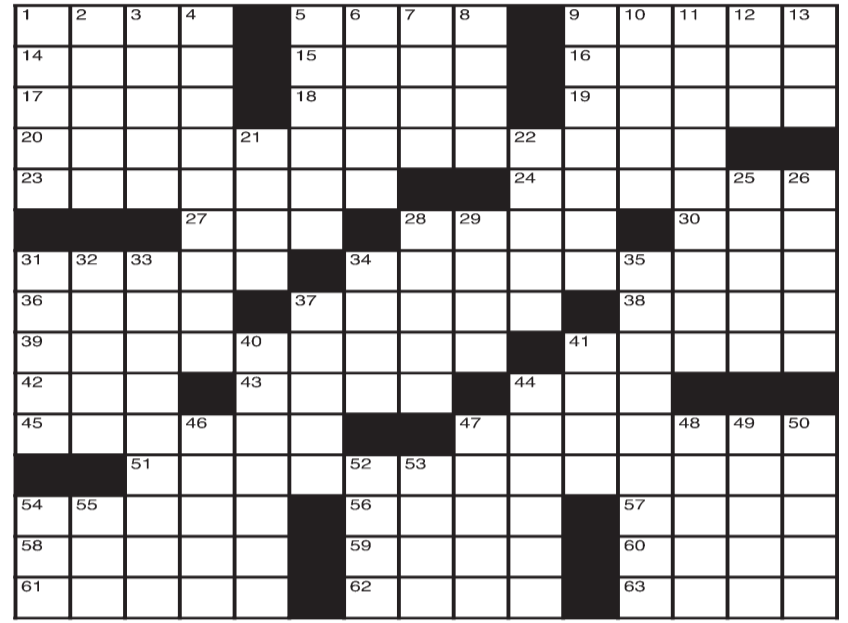
Edited by Patti Varol

- ACROSS**
- 1 Excerpt from a film
 - 5 Like back legs
 - 9 Wanders
 - 14 Highway division
 - 15 Purple berry in healthy smoothies
 - 16 Illuminated from below
 - 17 Food thickener made from seaweed
 - 18 Takes a snooze
 - 19 —gritty
 - 20 *Tailor's tool
 - 23 Get ready
 - 24 Word before bar or drink
 - 27 Contents of a barn stack
 - 28 Nursing spot
 - 30 WNW's opposite
 - 31 Very pale
 - 34 *Inker's tool
 - 36 The sun, for one
 - 37 Common living room piece
 - 38 Big name in volleyballs
 - 39 *Intelligence agent's tool
 - 41 Jai alai basket
 - 42 Shorthand in a coffee order
 - 43 Went as a passenger
 - 44 Only Canadian MLB city, for short
 - 45 Consumed uncooked
 - 47 Look of the recently woken
 - 51 Make a measurable difference, or what the answers to the starred clues do
 - 54 Honeycrisp, e.g.
 - 56 Shoe bottom
 - 57 Hubbubs
 - 58 Gives stars to
 - 59 Work with yarn
 - 60 NHL venue
 - 61 Romantic meeting
 - 62 Goes out with
 - 63 Disappointing report card grades
- DOWN**
- 1 Jewelry fastener
 - 2 Golden beer
 - 3 Amazed
 - 4 Outer edge
 - 5 Grumpy due to lack of food
 - 6 Start of Caesar's boast
 - 7 California wine valley
 - 8 Many a drink coaster
 - 9 Encounter
 - 10 State one's view
 - 11 Mr. Incredible and Elastigirl, e.g.
 - 12 Cambridge univ.
 - 13 Total dump
 - 21 Flat bread served with curry
 - 22 Toffee bar brand
 - 25 "Top Gun" outfit
 - 26 Gossipy sort
 - 28 Brownish gray
 - 29 Engrave
 - 31 Pet adoption org.
 - 32 Weasel with a short black-tipped tail
 - 33 Pessimist's description of a glass, perhaps
- 34** Super Mario character who looks like a mushroom
- 46** Parts
- 47** Contradict
- 48** Pearl Jam vocalist Vedder
- 49** Without company
- 50** Classroom workspaces
- 52** Sounds of disapproval
- 53** Sharpen, as a knife
- 54** Gallery display
- 55** Golf course standard

TODAY'S SOLUTION:



02/04/26



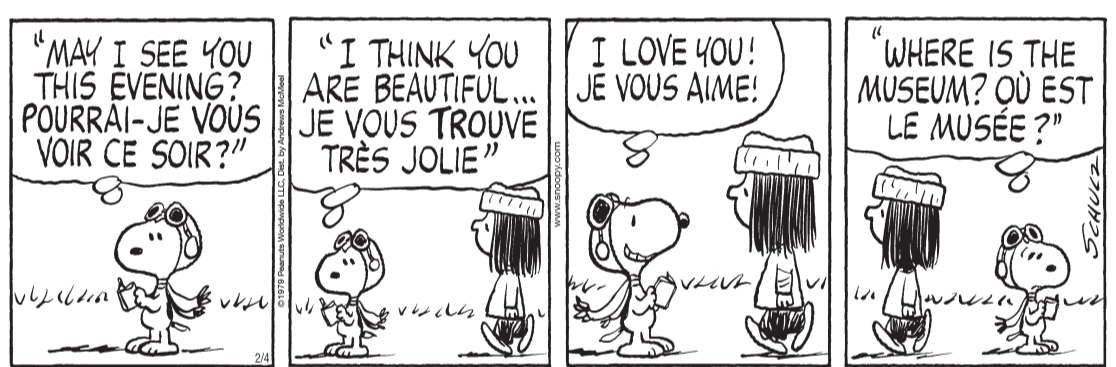
By Nate Curry & Zhou Zhang
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02/04/26

HAGAR THE HORRIBLE Chris Browne



PEANUTS Charles M. Schulz



POOCH CAFE Paul Gilligan



WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

THINGS THAT ARE DELICATE

Solution: 7 letters

E C B L O U S E L B R A M B R
D C A R E H T A E L V A S E E
E N A S E S U E D E N O N B I
L I O L H U T C H I F F O N L
D N L M K M K N A T B L O E E
N S B R A C E L E T G F L T D
A T B S O I E R L M R W L A N
C R G L P C D N E A A I A L A
I U C U R R I N G S E N B O H
M M R O Y T N I A D U D R C C
A E P L S P L A N T S O S O A
R N J E W E L S T E S W L H N
E T S C A K E F R U I T R C D
C O B A B Y L F R E T T U B Y
R S F L I M S Y I N S E C T S

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2/4

Baby, Balloons, Blouse, Bracelet, Butterfly, Cake, Candle, Candy, Cashmere, Ceramic, Chandelier, Chiffon, Chocolate, Clock, Curls, Dainty, Diamond, Elegant, Flimsy, Fragile, Fruit, Globe, Insects, Instrument, Jewels, Leather, Marble, Mugs, Necklace, Ornaments, Plants, Porcelain, Pure, Rings, Roses, Shells, Soft, Suede, Tissue, Vase, Window

TODAY'S ANSWER: Bubbles

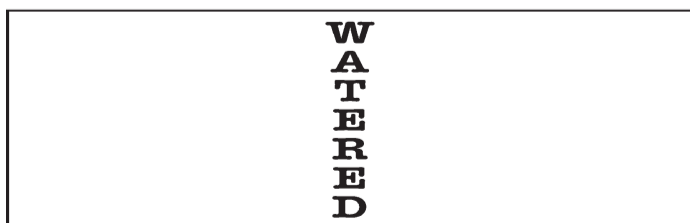
SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

5		1		8	6	
7	3	6			2	
6	9		8	5		3
		5	3			
	4		9		1	
		6	2			
9		5	3		7	8
	1		7	2		4
7	2		4			3

WHATZIT?

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.



SUDOKU INSTRUCTIONS:

Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.

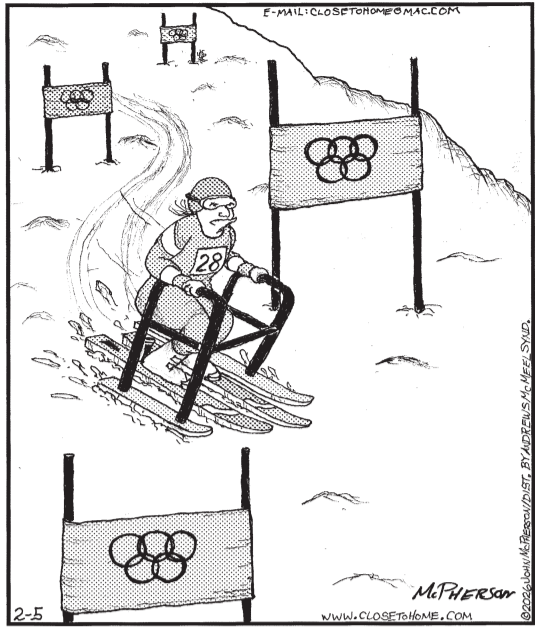
TODAY'S SUDOKU SOLUTION:

1	5	9	7	6	8	2	4	
6	7	2	4	8	5	1	3	
8	4	1	5	9	7	6	2	
4	9	5	7	2	9	6	1	
2	9	1	8	6	4	7	5	
7	6	8	5	1	4	9	2	
3	1	4	9	8	7	2	6	
5	2	4	6	9	3	1	7	8
9	8	6	7	2	3	5	4	

TODAY'S WHATZIT SOLUTION:

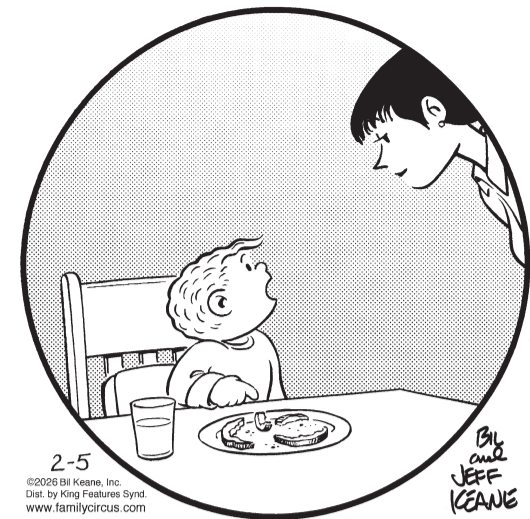
Diluted

CLOSE TO HOME John McPherson



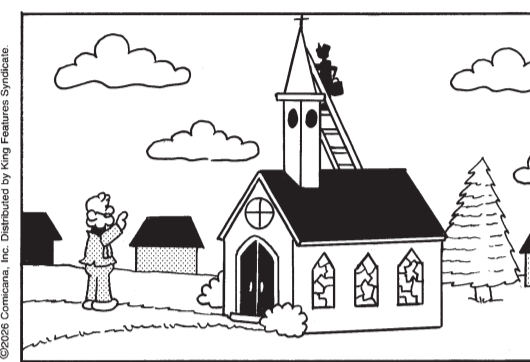
Lindsey Vonn at the 2074 Olympics.

THE FAMILY CIRCUS Bill Keane

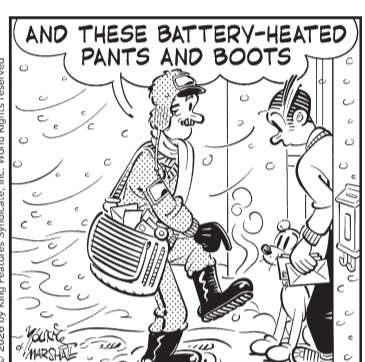
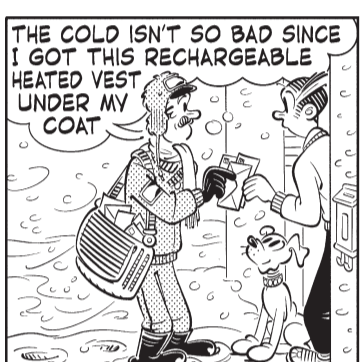


"If the crust is the best part of the bread, why do they put so much white part in the middle?"

BEETLE BAILEY Mort & Greg Walker



BLONDIE Dean Young & John Marshall



THE BORN LOSER Art & Chip Sansom



CROSSWORD

ACROSS
 1 Satchel
 4 Field yield
 8 Barbecue fare
 12 "— Town"
 13 Tramp
 14 Light color
 15 Feasted
 16 Leave unmentioned
 17 Skyrocket
 18 Dinghy or wherry
 20 Chop finely
 21 Service branch (Abbr.)
 22 —, borrow or steal
 23 Fence comprised of shrubs
 26 Premeditated
 30 Cakes and —
 31 Tiny
 32 Japanese wrestling
 33 Transgressions

DOWN
 1 Male swine
 2 Camera setting

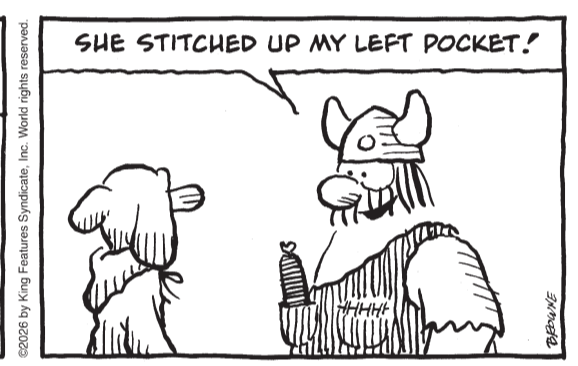
35 Hem and —
 36 Racket
 37 Short-handled ax
 39 "— the Boys Are"
 41 Crude dwelling
 42 Dove's cry
 43 Action figure in uniform (2 wds.)
 46 Sawbones
 50 Spoken
 51 Galley supply
 52 Get older
 53 Far-out art movement
 54 Seedy joint
 55 Ocean
 56 Crystal-gazer
 57 Place of perfection
 58 Nevertheless

TODAY'S SOLUTION:

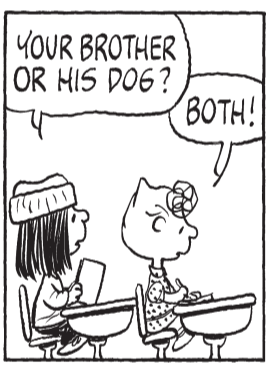
T	E	L	N	E	D	R	E	E	S
V	E	S	E	A	I	D	V	A	D
A	G	E	R	S	A	V	A	R	O
N	O	E	G	R	S	O	E	O	I
	O	O	C		L	H			
E	R	E	H	M		E	H	C	V
N	I	D		M	A	H	S	N	I
O	M	S	E	E	M		L	E	A
D	E	N	N	E	P	L	A	G	E
E	C	E	N	I	M		T	A	V
R	A	O	S		T	I	M	O	E
U	C	R	E	C	R	O	B	O	H
S	R	I	B	O	P	C	R	O	B

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14		
15				16				17		
18			19				20			
			21			22				
23	24	25			26			27	28	29
30				31				32		
33			34		35			36		
37				38			39	40		
			41			42				
43	44	45			46			47	48	49
50				51				52		
53				54				55		
56				57				58		

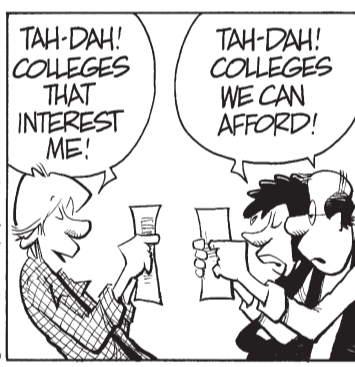
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE Chris Browne



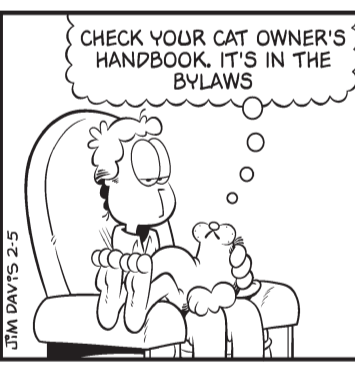
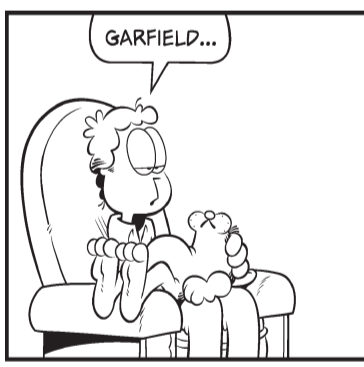
PEANUTS Charles M. Schulz



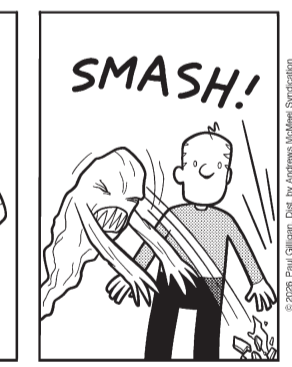
ZITS Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



GARFIELD Jim Davis



POOCH CAFE Paul Gilligan



PICKLES Brian Crane



SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

			6	3		2		
6	1		9		5	7		
		5	1		8			
			2		1		8	
	6		4				9	
3		9	5					
	6		8		3			
	8	3	7			5	4	
	7		1	3				

WHATZIT?

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.



SUDOKU INSTRUCTIONS: Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.

TODAY'S SUDOKU SOLUTION:

2	8	9	5	1	7	4	6	
4	6	9	2	2	8	1		
7	1	4	8	6	9	5		
9	7	1	5	8	6	2		
5	6	2	7	4	1	9	8	
8	1	6	2	9	7	5		
6	9	8	2	1	5	4	7	
3	7	9	8	6	4	2	1	9
1	2	4	4	9	5	8	6	7

TODAY'S WHATZIT SOLUTION: Off to one side

WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

NEWS REPORTERS Solution: 4 letters

B	E	H	R	E	E	R	A	C	H	A	N	N	E	L
E	R	C	S	C	R	E	E	N	N	D	A	E	L	L
B	T	E	N	I	E	M	R	O	F	N	I	T	D	A
R	P	I	A	E	O	G	I	N	V	I	E	W	A	N
O	R	N	S	K	I	S	A	A	O	P	H	O	T	O
A	O	E	L	B	I	D	E	R	C	I	Y	R	A	I
D	D	Z	T	V	E	N	U	R	E	R	H	K	H	S
C	U	Y	E	E	C	W	G	A	A	V	R	S	E	S
A	C	L	L	A	N	O	I	T	A	N	O	S	A	E
S	E	A	D	A	E	R	N	E	E	O	H	C	D	F
T	R	N	L	I	V	E	E	T	V	T	C	R	L	O
A	S	A	R	E	M	A	C	T	E	E	N	I	R	
L	L	I	A	M	S	H	O	W	N	N	A	P	N	P
K	M	R	O	F	T	A	L	P	T	I	T	T	E	T
M	I	C	R	O	P	H	O	N	E	D	I	T	O	R

TODAY'S ANSWER: Host

Braves' broadcast plans hint at wider access

By Joe Whitfield
Sports Editor

ATLANTA — For the first time since the days when Ted Turner put every Atlanta Braves game on WTBS, the franchise is moving toward a major shift in how its games will be broadcast — and the changes could bring Braves baseball back to free, over-the-air television for large portions of Braves Country.

The Braves confirmed Monday that they are preparing “a new era in Braves broadcasting” following the end of their partnership with Main Street Sports Group, the parent company of FanDuel Sports Net-

work, formerly Bally Sports. According to a report from Sports Business Journal, the Braves and eight other Major League Baseball teams officially severed ties with Main Street, which has faced mounting financial difficulties.

While the other eight MLB clubs are expected to shift their game production and distribution to MLB's central media arm, the Braves appear poised to chart a different course — one that could involve creating their own broadcast network and expanding access across one of the league's largest television territories.

“The Atlanta Braves are aware of the re-

ports regarding Main Street Sports Group,” the team said in a statement. “While disappointed with this development, we have been actively preparing for this outcome and are well on our way towards launching a new era in Braves broadcasting. ... We will be ready for the 2026 season, and all Atlanta Braves games will be broadcast across the entirety of Braves Country.”

That reference to “Braves Country” has fueled speculation that Gray Media could play a key role in the team's future plans. Gray, which owns WANF and Peachtree TV, already has an established relationship with the Braves. Last season, Gray aired 10 spring

training games and simulcast 15 regular-season games across 24 markets in six states — Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.

A deeper partnership could expand that model, allowing fans to watch at least some Braves games for free with an over-the-air antenna — a significant change after years of limited access tied to cable and streaming subscriptions.

Industry observers believe the Braves may pursue a hybrid approach similar to what the Texas Rangers launched in 2025. The

See **BRAVES** 10A

Tripp Roberts signs with Georgia Military College

By Joe Whitfield
Sports Editor

ALBANY — By the time Tripp Roberts sat down to sign his national letter of intent Monday morning, his place in Sherwood Christian Academy football history had already been secured.

Roberts, a four-year starter at quarterback, signed to play college football at Georgia Military College during a ceremony in the Sherwood Christian gymnasium, closing a high school career that included a 45-2 record, four state championship game appearances and three state titles.

“I am so grateful for this opportunity,” Roberts told the crowd of family, teammates, coaches and classmates. “I thank my coaches, my parents, my family and all of you who helped me make this possible. I wouldn't be here without the Lord and all of you. I am also thankful that Georgia Military College is willing to take a chance on a kid from a small Christian school in Albany.”

Few players leave behind a résumé as complete as Roberts' at Sherwood Christian Academy. He never missed a game in four seasons and rarely left the field, guiding the Eagles to the state title game every year of his career. Along the way, he rewrote the school's passing records, throwing for



The Roberts family joins Tripp Roberts, seated center, before his signing ceremony Monday at Sherwood Christian Academy. Standing, from left, are Lizzy Roberts, Katie Roberts, Jack Roberts, Maggie Roberts, and Bekah Roberts. Seated from left are his mother, Christy Roberts, Tripp Roberts, and his father, Kenny Roberts.

8,278 yards with 128 touchdowns and just 15 interceptions. He also added 56 rushing touchdowns.

“I don't say this lightly when I say that Tripp is a generational talent,” Sherwood head coach Doug Eason said. “He is a great leader, a great football player and a godly young man. Georgia Military College is not only getting a great football player, they are getting a great person.”

Eason was among several speakers during the ceremony, which also included remarks from athletic director Jay Flynt, Roberts' first football coach in elementary school, Trey Alderman, and Sherwood offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach Corey Eason.

Sherwood headmaster Kenny Roberts, Tripp's father, offered a personal look at how the journey began.

“When Tripp was about five years old, he would watch the Georgia football games and then disappear during the timeouts and halftime,” Kenny Roberts said. “He'd be out in the backyard throwing the football. His older sisters weren't interested in playing, so he would throw it to himself. One of my favorite memories is watching him throw the ball up and dive into the bushes in front of my mom and dad's house to catch it.”

See **ROBERTS**, 10A



Special Photo: Kirby Lee-Imagn Images

Seattle Seahawks quarterback Sam Darnold will lead the team into Super Bowl LX Sunday in Santa Clara, Calif.

Ghosts are gone from view of Seahawks' Sam Darnold

Field Level Media

SAN JOSE, Calif. — It was during a 2019 Monday night game against the New England Patriots that a young Sam Darnold was caught on the telecast telling his coaches on the sideline he was “seeing ghosts.”

It was a comment that haunted Darnold for years.

Of course, it wasn't that surprising.

The New York Jets, who selected Darnold with the No. 3 overall draft pick a year earlier out of Southern California, were getting pummeled 24-0 en route to losing 33-0. Darnold completed 11 of 32 passes that night for 86 yards and four interceptions and also lost a fumble.

Since then, Darnold played for the Carolina Panthers, San Francisco 49ers and Minnesota Vikings before signing with the Seattle Seahawks last March.

On Sunday, Darnold will lead the NFC champion Seahawks into Super Bowl LX against the Patriots in Santa Clara, Calif.

Darnold retraced his unlikely path to the title game Monday at Super Bowl Opening Night.

“I take every experience as its own, no matter what happens,”

he said. “I was really blessed to get drafted to the Jets and obviously things didn't work out the way I wanted to there and then went to the Carolina Panthers, where I made a lot of really great friends and learned some great football as well. Just part of my journey.”

“Then went to San Francisco and was able to be a backup there for a great player in Brock Purdy, learned under a great coach in Kyle Shanahan, Brian Griese, the Kubiaks obviously, then went to Minnesota and was with some really great coaches and really great players as well. Everything I do, I just take one day at a time and I think that's the mantra for myself and what I've been able to do over the past couple of years.”

One thing that has helped Darnold win 14-plus games each of the past two seasons — he is the only quarterback in NFL history to do so in consecutive years with different teams — has been a dependable running game.

Aaron Jones rushed for more than 1,000 yards for the Vikings last season and Kenneth Walker III did the same for the

See **SEAHAWKS'**, 10A



Special Photo: Submitted

The Sherwood Christian Academy middle school boys and cheerleaders stand together after winning the region championship Saturday in Americus.

Sherwood middle school boys win region title

By Joe Whitfield
Sports Editor

AMERICUS - The Sherwood Christian Academy middle school boys basketball team captured the region championship Saturday at Southland Academy, continuing a run of success that has become familiar for the Eagles.

Sherwood claimed the title in a region that included host Southland Academy, SGA and Georgia Christian Academy. Georgia Christian won the girls region championship.

The boys title marked back-to-back middle school region championships for Sherwood, a reflection of the pro-

gram's depth and steady development at the lower levels.

Dyson Harris led the Eagles with 11 points in the championship game, while Kayden James added nine as Sherwood leaned on balanced scoring and disciplined defense to secure the win.

Head middle school boys basketball coach Ranzik Hines said the championship was about more than the final score.

“The character and resilience these young men showed throughout the season was rewarding,” Hines said. “Selfless and defensive basketball. I am proud of the growth of these young men and we are glad to be a

part of such a deserving group.”

Sherwood athletic director Jay Flynt echoed that sentiment, pointing to the bigger picture for the program moving forward.

“We are excited about this eighth-grade bunch,” Flynt said. “This group mirrors the senior class that is leaving in May, and we're excited about a new crop of Eagles ready to step up and face the challenges, including being in a new region in the fall of 2026.”

With another region title in hand, Sherwood's middle school boys program continues to set the foundation for future success at the varsity level.

Florida State's Gus Malzahn retires after 35 years of coaching

Field Level Media

Florida State offensive coordinator Gus Malzahn announced his retirement Monday after 35 years in coaching.

The former Auburn, University of Central Florida and Arkansas State head coach spent just one season with the Seminoles in 2025.

"After 35 years, it's time for me to step away from coaching," Malzahn said in a statement. "I am excited to spend more time with my family and focus on the next chapter of my life. I want to thank Coach (Mike) Norvell for giving me the opportunity to coach at such a prestigious program."

Norvell promoted co-offensive coordinator and receivers coach Tim Harris to replace Malzahn, 60.

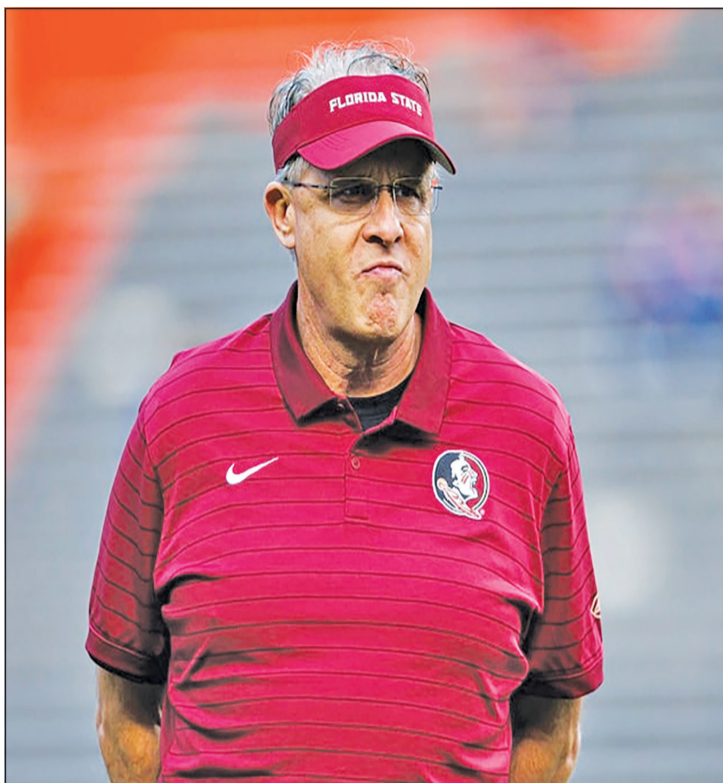
Florida State led the Atlantic Coast Conference in rushing (218.7 yards per game) and total offense (472.1) in Malzahn's lone season as the

play-caller in Tallahassee.

Malzahn compiled a 105-62 record as head coach at Arkansas State (2012), Auburn (2013-20) and UCF (2021-24), including a 3-7 record in bowl games.

During his first season at Auburn in 2013, the Tigers lost 34-31 to Florida State in the BCS Championship game and finished 12-2. Malzahn was named the national and SEC Coach of the Year.

Malzahn coached in the high school ranks from 1991-2005 before becoming the offensive coordinator at Arkansas in 2006. After two seasons as an assistant coach at Tulsa (2007-08), he joined Auburn as the offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach from 2009-11. In 2010, Tigers quarterback Cam Newton won the Heisman Trophy and Auburn completed a 14-0 season with a national championship.



Special Photo: Matt Pendleton-Imagn Images

Former Auburn head coach and, most recently, Florida State offensive coordinator, Gus Malzahn announced Monday that he is retiring after 35 years of coaching. He spent just one season with the Seminoles in Tallahassee.



SIAC fines Morehouse after Tuskegee coach handcuffed

By Joe Whiffield
Sports Editor

ATLANTA — The Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference has fined Morehouse College and mandated corrective action following an investigation into a postgame incident involving Tuskegee University head men's basketball coach Benjy Taylor at the conclusion of Saturday's conference game.

In an official statement released Monday, the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference said its review determined that Morehouse College failed to meet required security standards as a host institution, citing deficiencies in crowd control and the safe entry and exit of visiting teams and game participants.

The incident occurred following Tuskegee's road game at Morehouse, when Taylor was briefly handcuffed and escorted from the court by a member of the host school's security staff during postgame activities. Video of the encounter circulated widely on social media, drawing national attention across the HBCU sports landscape and prompting questions regarding postgame security procedures.

Following what the conference described as a "comprehensive review of all available video, reports, and on-site observations," SIAC Commissioner Anthony Holloman, Ed.D., concluded that Morehouse was not in compliance with SIAC Policy 1.9, which governs

game security.

As a result, the conference imposed a fine on Morehouse College of an undisclosed amount and will require the institution to implement corrective measures to ensure full compliance with conference security policies moving forward.

"The SIAC holds its member institutions to the highest standards of sportsmanship, professionalism, and institutional accountability," Holloman said in the statement. "Our historic institutions are expected to provide competitive environments that prioritize the safety, dignity, and mutual respect of student-athletes, coaches, officials, and fans. The conference remains committed to upholding these expectations and to ensuring that all SIAC contests are conducted in a manner consistent with our shared values."

The situation has drawn continued attention since the game, with Taylor retaining civil rights attorneys in the days following the incident. No criminal charges were filed, and Taylor rejoined his team shortly after the encounter.

According to earlier reporting by HBCU Gameday, the conference's investigation focused on postgame security protocols and crowd management, particularly during the handshake line and team exit from the court.

Neither Tuskegee University nor Morehouse College issued additional public statements following the SIAC's announcement.

Two SGTC players among nation's top 100

Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

AMERICUS - Two members of the South Georgia Technical College men's basketball team have earned national recognition, landing in the initial JucoRecruiting.com Top 100 player rankings for the 2026 JUCO class.

Sophomore center Matt Mbole, a 6-foot-11 post player from Cameroon, was ranked 11th nationally, while sophomore guard Jalexs Ewing, a 6-foot-2 guard from Augusta, checked in at No. 70.

The rankings are based on a combination of on-court production at the junior college level, projected performance at the next level and overall evaluation by JUCO recruiting analysts.

Mbole has been a force in the paint for the Jets this season. He ranks third on the team in scoring with 179 points while leading the Jets in rebounding with 206 boards and blocked shots with 36. In 18 games, Mbole has pulled down 76 offensive rebounds and 130 defensive rebounds, while also adding 13 assists and 14 steals.

As a freshman, Mbole to-

taled 77 points, 111 rebounds and 35 blocked shots, showing early signs of the interior presence he has developed into this season.

Ewing has been the Jets' primary scoring option, leading the team with 336 points in 17 games. He has also contributed 94 rebounds, 32 assists and 10 steals. Ewing is shooting 52.9 percent from two-point range and 63.3 percent from the free-throw line, while connecting on 29 percent of his attempts from beyond the arc.

During the 2024-25 conference season, Ewing scored 227 points and posted 92 rebounds, 54 assists, 20 steals and 10 blocked shots, appearing in 16 games as a freshman.

South Georgia Tech currently sits third in the Georgia Collegiate Athletic Association Division I standings with a 4-2 conference record, trailing Central Georgia Tech (6-0) and South Georgia State College (4-1). The Jets have won four straight games and will return to action Wednesday, Feb. 4, hosting Gordon College in a GCAA matchup at 7 p.m. at The Hangar.



Special Photo: Submitted

SGTC's Matt Mbole dunks during a recent game in Americus. Mbole and teammate Jalexs Ewing are among the nation's top 100 junior college prospects in the nation.

NFL to play first game in Paris, return to Madrid

Field Level Media

The NFL will play its first regular-season game in Paris next season with the New Orleans Saints named Monday as one of the participants.

The game will take place at the 80,000-seat Stade de France, France's national stadium which served as the host site for the opening and closing ceremonies at the 2024 Paris Olympics.

"Bringing a regular season game to Paris in 2026 marks an exciting next step in the continued expansion of the league's global footprint," said NFL commissioner Roger Goodell. "Paris is one of the world's greatest sporting and cultural cities with tremendous success in hosting global events that unite fans on the biggest stages. Playing

our first-ever regular-season game at the impressive Stade de France, together with the New Orleans Saints, underlines our continued global growth ambitions and we look forward to bringing the NFL to our passionate fans in France."

The Saints have international marketing rights in France, where the NFL claims to have more than 14 million fans.

"We are excited to be selected to play in the first regular season game to be held in France," said Saints owner Gayle Benson. "This moment is special not only because of the strong cultural connection between Louisiana and France, but also because we will compete before a growing Saints fan base in Paris."

Also Monday, the NFL announced it is returning to Madrid in 2026 with a new multi-year agreement.

The league staged its first game in Spain during the 2025 season when the Miami Dolphins defeated the Washington Commanders 16-13 in overtime on Nov. 16.

The game drew 78,610 fans to Real Madrid's Bernabeu Stadium, which will once again serve as the venue under Monday's deal.

"It is an honor and a privilege for Real Madrid to host the NFL once again at the Bernabeu stadium," said Real Madrid director of institutional relations Emilio Butragueno. "We experienced a historic first NFL Madrid game a few months ago, and this new

agreement will allow the alliance between our club, the Community of Madrid, the City Council and the NFL to continue, strengthening the image of our capital and the Spanish brand around the world."

The Chicago Bears, Kansas City Chiefs and Dolphins have marketing rights in Spain, where the NFL counts 11 million fans.

In addition to Paris and Madrid, the NFL in 2026 will play its first-ever game in Australia in Melbourne with the Los Angeles Rams as one of the participants. There will also be three games in London and one each in Munich, Germany, and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

From 9A SEAHAWKS

Seahawks this year. Darnold never had a back accomplish that feat while with the Jets or the Panthers.

NFL Network analyst Michael Robinson, who won a Super Bowl as a fullback with the Seahawks, suggested Darnold has his own "Ghostbuster" in Walker.

Darnold also praised the Seahawks' "Dark Side" defense that led the league in fewest points allowed during the regular season.

From 9A

BRAVES

Rangers created their own sports network, distributing games through cable, satellite and streaming services while also offering a direct-to-consumer package and airing a select number of games on over-the-air television. That model provided broader access while keeping revenue within the organization.

The Braves' situation is unique given the size of their fan base and television footprint, which stretches across much of the Southeast. A partnership with Gray would give the broadcaster valuable live sports content while offering the Braves increased visibility

"Having a really good defense helps a lot," he said. "It makes those decisions down in the red zone or when you're in field-goal range a lot easier. I never feel like I have to force the ball."

Patriots quarterback Drake Maye, the No. 3 overall pick in 2024, got to know Darnold at the Pro Bowl last season.

Maye admires Darnold's perseverance.

"What a career he's had," Maye said on Monday. "... He's made them pay ever since (other teams moved on)."

and accessibility — a win for both sides and, potentially, for fans long frustrated by blackout restrictions.

While details of the Braves' 2026 broadcast plans remain unsettled, the organization emphasized that all games will continue to be televised and that more information will be shared in the coming weeks. The team is also expected to retain its popular broadcast crew of Brandon Gaudin, C.J. Nitkowski and Wiley Ballard.

For now, the picture is still coming into focus. But for Braves fans who remember the WTBS era — and for a new generation of cord-cutters — the possibility of seeing Braves baseball return to free television appears closer than it has been in decades.

From 9A

ROBERTS

Though Kenny Roberts is a longtime basketball coach, football eventually became Tripp's passion. Still, his athletic range showed elsewhere. Roberts was recently honored for reaching the 1,000-point mark in his high school basketball career.

"Tripp had a basketball in his hand at age two," Kenny Roberts said. "He was always around basketball with me

coaching, but somewhere along the line he fell in love with football. We got totally behind that. Today is the day Tripp has dreamed of and worked toward for years. People see what he does on Friday nights. They don't see the work he puts in when no one is watching."

Years after throwing passes to himself in a backyard, Roberts now takes the next step forward — this time with a college future in front of him and a legacy firmly established behind him.



Staff Photo: Joe Whiffield

Sherwood Christian senior Tripp Roberts signs his national letter of intent to play college football at Georgia Military College during a ceremony Monday morning at Sherwood. His mother, Christy, left, and father, Kenny, watch.

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Program Director needed for managing the daily operations of a substance use treatment program in Cuthbert, GA. Minimum requirements include a Bachelor’s Degree in a relevant field from an accredited institution, a CAC Level II, one (1) year supervisory experience and five (5) years experience working with chemically dependent individuals. For more information and application instructions, go to www.voase.org/careers. EOE/Drug Free Workplace/E-Verify.

Albany Legals

Construction/Service Bids

Public Notice

Request For Proposals (RFP) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Services Out of School Youth (ages 16-24)

In accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), a Request for Proposals is being issued by the City of Colquitt, Georgia, serving as Grant Administrator and Fiscal Agent for the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board to solicit proposals from experienced professional individuals, firms, organizations and/or companies to provide year-round services for out of school youth who are eligible to participate in training provided under the federally-funded WIOA.

This solicitation seeks proposals for out of school youth programs for the specific Southwest Georgia counties of Baker, Calhoun, Colquitt, Decatur, Dougherty, Early, Grady, Miller, Mitchell, Lee, Seminole, Terrell, Thomas and Worth. The approximate level of WIOA youth funding available for program year 2026 (June 15, 2026 – June 30, 2027) is \$400,000. This WIOA bid solicitation is fully supported by the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor as part of an award totaling \$529,096.

Respondents should have experience working with out-of-school youth (ages 16-24) who are unemployed, underemployed, and need assistance with career planning leading to employment in a high-demand career at a high wage. WIOA youth year-round service is a comprehensive program to develop

youth career pathway plans that include stackable credentials; secondary and postsecondary education; employer recruitment, job skills and leadership instruction, mentoring, and assisting participants in attaining and sustaining employment that will lead to long-term careers.

This RFP will be available to the public beginning Tuesday, February 10, 2026. The submission date is Monday, March 23, 2026 by 12:00 p.m. Eastern Time. The tentative effective date of the contract is June 15, 2026.

A Letter of Intent must be submitted by all agencies interested in submitting a bid in response to this RFP; the letter may be submitted by e-mail to the Programs Manager. Such letter must be received by the Programs Manager by 4:00 PM Eastern Time on Friday, February 27, 2026. Bidders failing to submit a letter of intent by the stated deadline shall be disqualified.

To obtain additional information and/or request a copy of the RFP application packet, please contact:

Rebecca O’Neil, Programs Manager
WorkSource Southwest Georgia
75 West Broad Street
P. O. Box 647
Camilla, Georgia 31730
Phone: (229)336-2378
Fax: 229-336-8190
roneil@colquittga.gov
www.worksourcesouthwestgeorgia.org

MERCHANDISE

Garage Sale

YARD SALE FUNDRAISER
Sat., Feb. 7, 8 am - 2 pm
Porterfield Church
2200 Dawson Rd.
Proceeds benefit Porterfield Missions in El Salvador
Early Bird Shopping (\$5 fee)
Feb. 6, 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

CELEBRITY CIPHER
by Luis Campos

Celebrity Cipher cryptograms are created from quotations by famous people, past and present. Each letter in the cipher stands for another.

“ D X N C R M H Y P X Y F P C R F W E M U R C R D
I L X B H Z P O X M J P L A R H E X M C E H Z A X B P
W P L M P F X I C E A K X B X L A X B P W E M K X I
E B Y R O H . ” – Z R L L D K P R M A H R M H X M

Previous Solution: “Anyone can write a novel given six weeks, pen, paper and no telephone or wife.” – Novelist Evelyn Waugh
TODAY’S CLUE: *1920s*

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CELEBRITY CIPHER
by Luis Campos

Celebrity Cipher cryptograms are created from quotations by famous people, past and present. Each letter in the cipher stands for another.

“ G P S G T N R N V G A R X N U G O I G M O L V A I
L N Y U D A W S O U S G P S M O L L N Y O U S
K N U I O I M G P S M O L L N Y W A I M N Y G
T P L . ” – R O U H G T O A I

Previous Solution: “You want people walking away from the conversation with some kernel of wisdom or some kind of impact.” – Harry Dean Stanton
TODAY’S CLUE: *1920s*

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From 1A

RAZE

gave its support and willingness “to enter into an agreement to allow the Albany Housing Authority to obtain potential financing” for the structure’s demolition and reconstruction. Currently, there are 34 tenants, all living on the first floor, in the five-story building. A resident who had lived on the fifth floor recently told The Albany Herald that the upper floors were abandoned because of air conditioning system leaks that caused mold. The building, completed in the mid-1980s, has also brought complaints of bed bug infestations on several occasions. An assessment performed

ABAC to host scholarship fundraiser

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

TIFTON – An evening supporting Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College scholarships is on the horizon with “The Luck of the Stallions” at An Evening for ABAC 2026. This event will be held Feb. 28 at the Tifton Conference Center. Doors will open at 6 p.m. Dinner, a live auction and dancing will set the stage for a memorable night. Color the Night, a dual-vocal band, will energize attendees with pop, rock and soul hits.

“The atmosphere at An Evening for ABAC is absolutely contagious,” Lynda Fisher, the director of alumni and special events in ABAC’s College of Advancement, said. “It is an unforgettable night filled with excitement and fellowship as the community comes together to support our students.” Tickets are \$150 for singles and \$275 for couples and can be purchased by calling (229) 391-4895 or visiting www.abac.edu/evening. A portion of each ticket is tax-deductible. The deadline to purchase tickets is Feb. 15.

Artist and ABAC alumnus Cris A. Lawson is adding a special element to An Evening for ABAC by painting an original, ABAC masterpiece during the celebration. “The painting will be of a rare occurrence combined with an iconic ABAC symbol,” Lawson said, offering a hint about the live piece.

on the property indicated it would cost as much to repair the aging building as it would to replace it. “We had some tenants in there (and) over a period of time things were not fixed and the property is uninhabitable,” Commissioner Willie Weaver, in whose Ward II the building is located, said during an interview following the Tuesday commission meeting. “Since I’ve been on the commission, I’ve been talking with Commissioner (Jon) Howard and Commissioner (Diane) Brown. We want to get them out. The question we can ask is why they’re still there and they weren’t moved.” No date has been set for when all of the 34 remaining tenants will be out as they need vouchers to help pay for

other housing. “We’ve got to do some other process before we can get them out of that building,” Weaver said. “Even then we don’t know when vouchers will be issued. We still have no idea when the folks are going or where they’re going.” There are 16 units available to be renovated that can house nearly half of those who need to be moved, City Manager Terrell Jacobs said. “I’m going to go look at the conditions and put my eyes on it,” he said. “The mayor and commission did the support letter for the potential demolition and reconstruction of Hudson Malone Towers. “Hopefully, we will place the 34 tenants in housing around Albany/Dougherty (County).”

7 LITTLE WORDS

Find the 7 words to match the 7 clues. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in each solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

CLUES

- one or two (6)
- book flying off the shelves (10)
- nourished (8)
- cashew cousins (10)
- most like a feather (8)
- Romantic composer (6)
- unchanging amount (9)

SOLUTIONS

IOS	TE	BES	NUM	LLER
BER	ST	INV	RED	LIG
FOS	HTE	ACH	TSE	CHO
ST	ANT	PIN	ARI	PI

Tuesday’s Answers: 1. DISCOVER 2. CHEEKBONES 3. CRACKED 4. CAPES 5. PACKING 6. TITANIC 7. EPHEMERAL 2/4

7 LITTLE WORDS

Find the 7 words to match the 7 clues. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in each solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

CLUES

- fellow schoolkid (9)
- sloth-like (8)
- gown (5)
- log burner (9)
- begin to walk (6)
- James’ Sponge and Spiker (5)
- long-nosed monkeys’ features (11)

SOLUTIONS

SCI	CL	SMA	TOD	DR
WOO	AUN	ISH	OBO	TE
PR	SL	DLE	AS	OVE
UGG	SES	DST	ESS	TS

Wednesday’s Answers: 1. NUMBER 2. BESTSELLER 3. FOSTERED 4. PISTACHIOS 5. LIGHTEST 6. CHOPIN 7. INVARIANT 2/5

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Title said with a hat tip, perhaps
- Daddy
- “out!”
- Photographer Geddes
- Wasn’t colorfast
- Complete
- Sign gas
- “Aquaman” star
- Out of order
- “Hey, Soul Sister” rock band
- Cocktail that may be made with Bombay Sapphire
- PC pioneer
- Chow down
- Small battery, or an org. that may help with a car battery
- Iditarod racer
- Suomi speakers
- Ages and ages
- Band with the hit “In the Navy”
- Gyro bread
- Give a bit more
- Accounts with round numbers?
- Spy-fi novelist Deighton
- Visitor in a knock-knock joke that ends, “It’s nothing to cry about!”
- Tricky
- Microsoft Azure competitor
- Herb in caprese salad
- Upper crust
- Children’s show whose title character leaves paw-print hints, and what 18-, 23-, 36-, and 52-Across have in common
- “Sad to say ...”
- Goodyear products
- Legendary rebuke
- Memory units, for short
- Branch of Islam
- Leader whose address ends with .edu
- Bailiwick

DOWN

- Run
- Condition often treated with iron supplements
- Tap, as one’s successor
- High-IQ society
- Many a school sammie
- In the style of
- 55-Across sauce
- Decorates
- Pedicure stone
- Harry and William’s alma mater
- Convenience in a cash-only venue
- Corp. leader
- Shaded section of a timeline
- Execute perfectly
- Slug kin
- Comedian Carvey
- Punchy flavor
- Pop sensation
- Barbecue discard
- Booker T.’s band
- “Nosferatu” actress Lily-Rose
- No longer fizzy

ANSWER TO TODAY’S PUZZLE:

V	E	H	V	N	V	E	D	I	N	N	N	S	
S	O	E	W	N	L	L	E	S	E	B	I	L	
S	V	I	V	S	E	N	T	O	S	E	N	T	B
E	L	I	T	E	T	I	S	S	V	B			
D	N	O	T	O	E	T	O	O	O	O	A	T	S
O	O	B	N	E	T	S	B	V	L	Y	V	B	
E	T	P	O	E	D	E	O	V	T	I	A		
S	N	O	E		S	N	N	I	J				
O	O	D	E	T	S	V	V	V	J	V	E		
W	B	I	O	I	N	O	L	D	N	V	N	I	O
V	O	W	O	W	N	O	S	V	F	N	O	E	V
H	E	L	L	P	D	E	T	B	E	N	N	V	
E	C	V	E	D	V	D	V	D	W	V	V	W	

By Rich Katz ©2026 Tribune Content Agency, LLC 02/05/26

Albany Area Chamber of Commerce

THE ALBANY HERALD

STAR BUSINESS OF THE WEEK

The Albany Area Chamber of Commerce proudly recognizes The Albany Herald as this week’s Star Business of the Week.

A trusted voice in Southwest Georgia for generations, The Albany Herald has long been a cornerstone of our community—keeping readers informed through local news, business coverage, sports, and stories that connect us. Now part of the Georgia Trust for Local News, the Herald is entering an exciting new chapter with a renewed focus on strengthening local journalism and serving the people of our region.

Continuing to evolve, The Albany Herald recently launched Southwest Georgia Outdoors, a new magazine focused on outdoor recreation, lifestyle, and the people who enjoy it across our region.

The Star Business of the Week is presented by WALB News 10 and Fleming & Riles Insurance, with treats provided by Sugar Mama’s Bakery.

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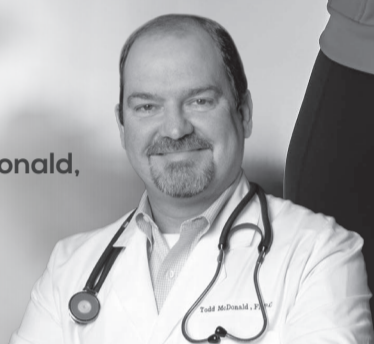
A New Year, A New You.

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You on That.

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Thomasville arts center announces winter 2026 lineup

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

THOMASVILLE – The Thomasville Center for the Arts has announced its winter 2026 lineup, featuring a 40th anniversary Signature Exhibition, premier film screening, free youth and family opportunities, and the return of the beloved adult community dinner “A Seat at the Table.”

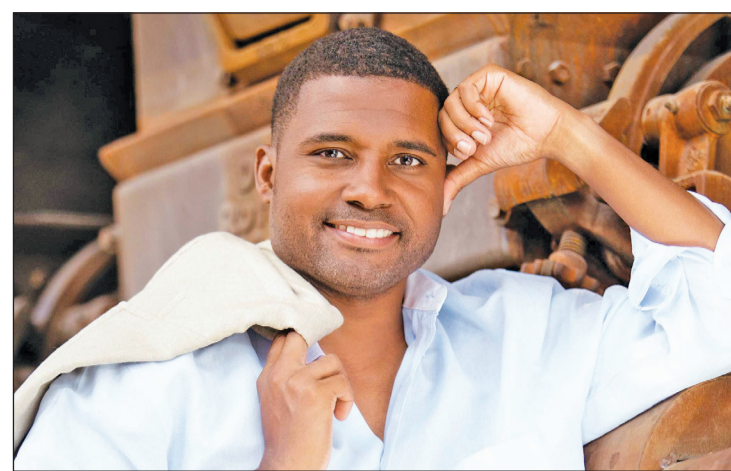
The Center’s signature exhibition, “Rediscovered Treasures: The Parker Poe Exhibition at 40,” kicks off the center’s anniversary and is on view through May 22. The exhibit is guest curated by Amanda Karioth Thompson. Visitors to the exhibit will explore the richness of Poe’s art collection through more than 70 works of esteemed artists, including Ogden Pleissner, Walter Stein, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Audubon and others.

The public is invited to a free opening reception on Feb. 20 at 5 p.m. in the center’s Main Floor Gallery.

Center visitors are also welcome to explore the exhibition “Little Things,” which showcases artwork created by pre-K through 12th-grade students with disabilities. This exhibition is on view in the Ground Floor Gallery through May 12 and is presented in partnership with Friends & Stars and Thomasville City Schools.

For the center’s monthly free Second Saturday on Feb. 14, the center will celebrate black artists and artisans, honoring their many contributions to society as part of Black History Month. Visitors can explore interactive activities inspired by Alma Thomas’ abstract art, Kara Walker’s silhouettes, and El Anatsui’s upcycled creations, alongside healthy snacks, music, movement and more.

Guests are invited to view the materials on loan from



Special Photo

Mike Wiley, a North Carolina-based actor, playwright and director, will present a live performance of his play about Emmett Till at the Thomasville Center for the Arts.

the Jack Hadley Black History Museum on the second floor in the Community Gallery. Guests also can experience a live performance of “Dar He: The Emmett Till Story” by acclaimed performer Mike Wiley, a North Carolina-based actor, playwright and director known for his one-man documentary dramas and full-cast ensemble plays. The performance begins at 11 a.m. in the center’s theater. All activities on Feb. 14 are free.

Thomasville Center for the Arts will host its quarterly community dinner Feb. 23 from 6–9 p.m., featuring acclaimed guest chef Kathryn Fitzgerald of Regina’s Westside in Asheville, N.C. Guests will enjoy a curated menu including a winter citrus salad, whole vinegar chicken, and meringue with fresh citrus, paired with wine, beer, and house-made mocktails, all set against the backdrop of the center’s current exhibition in the Main Gallery.

After dinner, guests will have the opportunity to collaboratively create centerpieces from foraged local flora and craft their own mini bouquets to take home. Tickets are \$45 for members and \$55 for non-members. Tickets are available for purchase at thomas-

villearts.org. The center continues its dedication to supporting youth and families in the community, offering weekly free opportunities for children and parents. Imagine Studio, a thoughtfully crafted creative space for toddlers and elementary-aged students and their caregivers, encourages imaginative play and artmaking.

“As both a parent and a member of the Center team, it’s rewarding to see our mission in action — from watching my son explore his creativity in Imagine Studio to fostering meaningful community experiences with artists and chefs like my friend Kathryn Fitzgerald,” Brittany Shiver, the center’s director of programs and engagement, said. “The center is committed to creating connection and deepening its impact across the community.”

Also open to the public is the Youth Art Library, a colorful and cozy space on the Main Floor offering books about art and artists for pre-schoolers through 12th-graders. For more information about the center’s programs and upcoming events, visit thomasvillearts.org.

FEBRUARY 7, 2026
10AM-4PM



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