



Perspectives
Gail Drake
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The Albany HERALD



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Top farm dog
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ALBANYHERALD.COM

THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2026

ALBANY’S RESTAURANT PROBLEM: Too many, too few customers to go around

By Kathryn Crockett
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ALBANY — In a county where the number of restaurants appears to exceed the spending power of its customer base, the pending closure of Harold’s Chicken — the latest in a string of recent shut-

downs — is prompting renewed scrutiny of how and why food businesses struggle to survive in Dougherty County. Open less than a year, the restaurant’s announcement drew swift and familiar reactions. “Albany doesn’t need any more chicken or wings res-

taurants, hotels or gas stations,” one resident said. Others pointed to culture. “It’s Albany — nothing lasts here because of the people,” another said. Location and marketing challenges also were cited. “First time hearing about them. Didn’t know they were in Albany — that could be one

of the reasons,” said another commenter. Despite the strong community response, available data suggest broader structural pressures shape outcomes long before a restaurant opens its doors.

See **PROBLEM**, 2A



Staff Photo: Kathryn Crockett

A closure notice is posted on the door of Harold’s Chicken, which announced it will close April 3 after less than a year in operation.



File Photo

The Tift Park Community Market has been bringing crafts and fun to the historic park for 12 years. Market hours are 9 a.m.-1 p.m. each Saturday through the end of October.

Tift Park Community Market’s 13th season is under way

By Alan Mauldin
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ALBANY — Each year the Tift Park Community Market blooms in the spring, and this year is no exception for the seasonal gathering spot sponsored by Friends of Tift Park. The 13th season for the market is underway, with weekly opportunities to get out and see what’s being offered by local and area vendors. Located at 1301 N. Monroe St., the market is open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The 2026 season ends on Halloween Day. “It’s really a big time for everybody,” Friends’ President Stephen Brimberry said of the opening. “Our first month we had the Evergreen Family Band. We’re going to try to have live music at least (once) every month. “Our mission is to preserve, promote and protect our his-

toric Tift Park. I think we’ve done a good job.” On Saturdays, individuals looking for a weekend outing from near and far can find merchandise for sale, including hand-made jewelry, baked goods and fresh produce. Currently, the market is ranked No. 1 on Tripadvisor’s things to do in Albany as well as the site’s list of cheap things to do in the city. The Friends group has been advocating for years for the city of Albany to invest in the park, and that is finally becoming reality with the first phase of investment in the Tift Park in some time. In September 2025, the Albany City Commission approved a \$131,850 contract for the design of four pickleball courts, a dog park, restrooms and a parking lot. The costs for those improve-

ments will be nowhere near the cost of other multimillion-dollar projects at some city community centers, Brimberry said. “We keep on hoping for the improvements to come around,” he said. “We’re hoping Phase 1 is the excitement and movement we need. We’re going to try to play off of pickleball and maybe host some tournaments. “We don’t need an \$8.5 million anything. We just need signage ... things you see in a park.” Also planned for this season are animal adoption opportunities through Covey Hill Animal Rescue, which also is accepting items for dogs, and a walk to raise awareness of necrotizing enterocolitis. “We don’t charge for set-up, and we have a booth with a cause,” Brimberry said.

Three Dougherty schools post major gains, closing long-standing gaps

By Kathryn Crockett
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ALBANY — Three Dougherty County schools once among the state’s lowest-performing are showing measurable academic gains, with district leaders pointing to steady progress in student achievement and early literacy as signs of momentum taking hold.

During a recent school board meeting, Deputy Superintendent Vinson Davis presented updated data on Alice Coachman Elementary, Robert H. Harvey Elementary and Turner Elementary, schools that were previously identified for federal or state intervention. While challenges remain,

See **GAPS**, 2A



Staff Photo: Kathryn Crockett

Dougherty School System Superintendent Kenneth Dyer, left, recognized principals, from left, Anita Mathis, Karen Riggins and Vince Grace for their leadership and sustained school improvement efforts at Alice Coachman, Robert H. Harvey and Turner elementary schools during a DCSS Board Meeting.

Fridays on the Flint returns with ‘River Revival’

Staff Reports
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ALBANY -- What to do on Friday nights gets easier to figure out starting Friday, as Visit Albany and Invision Technologies bring Fridays on the Flint back to the Veterans Park Amphitheatre. The Fox Brothers will pro-

vide entertainment for the downtown Albany gathering, dubbed the “River Revival,” at the 100 W. Oglethorpe venue, which kicks off at 6 p.m. and runs until 9 p.m. In addition to the Fox Brothers, the community celebration of the Flint River will

See **REVIVAL**, 2A

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Papa Mountain bread rolls take grand prize in Flavor of Georgia competition

Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

ATHENS -- Papa Mountain secured the top spot in the 2026 Flavor of Georgia food product competition for its garlic and herb bread rolls, rising to the top of 180 products entered in 12 categories.

Flavor of Georgia is the state's proving ground for small, upstart food companies as well as established products looking for recognition or new markets. More than 2,410 products have been entered into the contest since 2007. "What started nine years ago in Ziploc bags and farmers markets has turned into an award-winning brand," Papa Mountain founder and owner Solomon Cohen said. "As a single father of three boys, a full-time super dad, I put my life, blood and soul into this company. We have a great product, and we are just getting started."

A contest for established

or market-ready foods and beverages made in the state, Flavor of Georgia is hosted by the department of food science and technology at the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

A CAES Signature Event, Flavor of Georgia is supported by presenting sponsor Massey Ferguson as well as the Georgia Department of Agriculture and Georgia Grown, the CAES Alumni Association, Farm Credit Associations of Georgia, Corteva Agriscience, the Georgia Agribusiness Council and The Dairy Alliance.

"UGA is proud to help Georgia food businesses grow, innovate and succeed, and the Flavor of Georgia contest is a delicious opportunity to show the state what you've got," FoodPIC Director James Gratzek said.

Winners are listed by product name, company and city within the 12 competition categories.

- Baked Goods: Garlic and Herb Bread Rolls by Papa Mountain in Augusta

- Barbecue Sauces and Seasonings: Crunchy Peanut Seasoning by PODI Life



Special Photo: Justin Evans, UGA

Papa Mountain won the grand prize at the 2026 Flavor of Georgia food product competition for its Garlic and Herb Bread Rolls. CAES Dean and Director Nick T. Place, left, handed the award to, from left, Everett Cohen and Solomon Cohen.

- in Cumming
- Beverages: Caribbean Hibiscus by Caribbean Hibiscus in Decatur
- Cakes: Sweet Potato Cheesecake by Dorothy's Desserts in Atlanta
- Condiments and Sauces: Summertime Blues by Atlanta Burns in Pine Lake
- Confections: The Complete Georgia Collection by Xocolatl Chocolate in Atlanta
- Dairy Products: Honey Peach Pecan Cream Cheese by Now Schmear This! in Austell
- Honey, Syrups, Jams and Jellies: Summer Berries and Wine Spread by Georgia Jams in Williamson
- Meats and Seafood: Picasso: Chicken, Bacon, and Spinach Pie by Pouch Pies in Norcross
- Miscellaneous: Stone-Ground Grits by Artisan Milling Co. in Rome
- Pickled Vegetables, Relish and Salsas: The Green

- Tomatoes by [PICKLES] Evergreen and Market in Tucker
- Snack Foods: Sugar Fried Pecans by Ocmulgee Orchards in Hawkinsville
- A People's Choice Award, chosen by event attendees, went to Ocmulgee Orchards for Sugar Fried Pecans.

Each entry in the Flavor of Georgia contest is featured in the digital product directory, including a professional photograph and brief overview, which is seen by leading food industry buyers and media outlets. The finalists received a personalized news release, use of the Flavor of Georgia finalist logo on their label and promotional materials, and the opportunity to present their product to a panel of food industry experts at the final judging event.

Finalists also received a one-year Georgia Grown membership, courtesy of the Georgia Department of Agriculture.

From 1A REVIVAL

include kayak and canoe demonstrations, outdoor recre-

ation vendors, conservation and education booths, food trucks and a kid's zone. Admission is free, and the community is invited to help kick off the monthly celebration.

APRIL 3

FREE ADMISSION

CLEAR BAG POLICY IN EFFECT

6PM - 9PM

RIVER REVIVAL

VETERANS PARK AMPHITHEATRE

FOX BROTHERS BAND

Special Illustration

From 1A GAPS

Davis said the data tell a story of growth.

"You don't go from A to Z in one step," he told board members. "There are steps."

At Alice Coachman Elementary, still designated as a Tier 4 school under state guidelines, academic indicators have improved significantly over the past four years. The school's overall content mastery score — a measure of student performance across tested subjects — rose from 24.1 in 2022 to 39.4 in 2025. Gains also were seen in math and readiness indicators, including literacy and attendance.

Its College and Career Ready Performance Index score climbed from 57.7 in 2019 to 72.7 in 2025, narrowing the gap with the state average, which slightly declined over the same period.

"That demonstrates they are closing the gap," Davis said.

At Robert H. Harvey Elementary, the turnaround has been even more dramatic. Once identified as a turnaround-eligible school for multiple

years, the campus exited the state's lowest-performing category in 2022 — a milestone district leaders described as a major achievement.

Since then, performance has continued to rise. Content mastery increased from 31.5 in 2022 to 53.2 in 2025, while the school's CCRPI score jumped from 50.2 in 2019 to 79.4 in 2025 — just shy of 80.

"When you look at the raw results, it shows the work that's left to do," Davis said. "But this progress is undeniable."

Turner Elementary, which was identified as a turnaround-eligible school in 2017 for one year, also has maintained steady improvement. The school's content mastery score increased from 31 in 2022 to 46.4 in 2025, while its CCRPI score rose from 64.2 in 2019 to 76.2 in 2025.

Collectively, all three schools have moved from CCRPI scores in the 50s to the 70s — a shift that reflects movement away from the state's lowest-performing tier.

In Georgia, a turnaround-eligible school is one identified as performing in the bottom 5% statewide based on CCRPI scores over multiple years, while a Tier 4 designa-

tion places a school among the lowest-performing under federal accountability rules, requiring sustained intervention. Across the state, many schools with these designations remain in the lowest tiers for extended periods, struggling to produce significant gains. In contrast, these Dougherty County schools have raised scores by double digits and moved into the 70s, reflecting sustained progress driven by classroom instruction and school leadership.

Davis emphasized that school improvement rarely follows a linear path.

"It's very difficult for improvement to be in a straight line," he said. "You go up, you go down, then you go up again — that's the trajectory."

He noted that even with gains, schools continue to face challenges, including staff turnover and the need to support new groups of students each year.

District leaders credited a strong emphasis on early literacy as a key driver behind the gains. Investments have included literacy specialists, teacher training, classroom resources and expanded student supports — efforts Da-

vis said are reflected both in test scores and in classrooms.

"The numbers matter," he said, "but where you really see it is in the faces of students when they meet their literacy goals."

Despite the progress, Davis said the work is ongoing — and demanding.

"Improvement is relentless," he said. "You never get to a place where you think you've got it all together."

Superintendent Kenneth Dyer, visibly emotional following the presentation, reflected on the demands and purpose of the work, framing it as a continuous, shared effort across educators.

"It's a race," Dyer said. "But this race doesn't have a finish line. It's a relay race — and when it's your turn to run, you pick up the baton and run as fast as you can for as long as you can. And when you're done, you hand it off to someone else."

His remarks underscored the collective nature of school improvement, where progress is built over time through the sustained efforts of teachers, administrators and staff working toward long-term gains for students.

From 1A PROBLEM

Dougherty County, with a population of roughly 82,000, supports an estimated 300

to 340 permitted food establishments, according to local health department data, approximately one restaurant for every 240 to 270 residents. National benchmarks typically range closer to one per 300 to 400 people. Along

Slappey Boulevard, one of Albany's primary commercial corridors, that density is visible: National chains, regional brands and independent operators often sit within blocks of one another, competing for the same lim-

ited pool of customers.

At the same time, the customer base those businesses depend on is under sustained economic pressure. Roughly 23% to 26% of residents live below the poverty line. An estimated 28,000 people — about 35% of the population — receive SNAP benefits or other forms of food assistance. The unemployment rate hovers just under 5%, a figure that does not account for underemployment or discouraged workers. Regional data indicate that nearly 38% of children live in food-insecure households.

Taken together, the implications are clear: A significant portion of the population has limited discretionary income, constraining how often residents can dine out — and how much they can spend when they do.

The number of restaurants is growing. The pool of reliable customers is not.

In this environment, industry research suggests restaurant failure is rarely sudden — or surprising. Instead, it is often rooted in decisions made before opening.

Studies consistently identify cash flow instability as the leading cause of small business failure, with U.S. Bank data showing that 82% of businesses that close cite cash flow problems as a primary factor. In the restaurant industry, those pressures are amplified by high fixed costs — including rent, labor and food inventory — combined with narrow profit margins that leave little room for error.

At the same time, many operators enter the market without fully validating demand. Research shows that inadequate market analysis — including failure to assess local income levels, spending patterns and competition — is a leading contributor to early closures. Concepts are often built on assumptions rather than data, particularly in smaller markets where customer bases are finite.

Those risks intensify in oversaturated trade areas. A simple search for "Albany fried chicken" yields more than 29 establishments offering similar menu items.

Still, business owners say longevity depends on more than differentiation alone.

"You have to have a great product, but you also need excellent customer service, and there's something to be said for customer loyalty — we take care of our customers and they always remember that," said one longtime Slappey Boulevard business operator.

Along corridors like Slappey Boulevard, where quick-service chains, fast-casual concepts and locally owned establishments cluster tightly, even well-executed businesses can struggle to generate consistent traffic. Academic studies have found that higher restaurant density is directly correlated with increased failure rates, as competition divides an already limited customer base.

Still, some residents say the issue is not willingness to support local businesses, but limited means.

"How do they expect people to eat at all these restaurants when they only bring minimum wage jobs around here?" one commenter said.

The result is a market with little margin for miscalculation.

Experts say the restaurants most at risk share common traits: They open undercapitalized, without a clearly defined or validated customer base, and in areas where economic conditions cannot support additional entrants. In many cases, those vulnerabilities are present from Day 1.

Along corridors like Slappey Boulevard, frequent turnover can leave behind vacant storefronts, disrupt employment and contribute to uneven economic development. At the same time, lower barriers to entry create opportunities for new entrepreneurs willing to take calculated risks in a competitive landscape.

Local leaders and small business advocates say the most effective interventions focus not on restriction, but on preparation: improving access to market data, strengthening small business development resources and encouraging differentiation in an increasingly crowded field.

The closure of Harold's Chicken reflects more than a single business outcome. It underscores a broader reality: In Albany, restaurant success depends not only on execution, but on alignment — between concept, capital and a customer base with limited capacity to spend.

Albany Area Chamber of Commerce

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The Albany Area Chamber of Commerce proudly recognizes SA Recycling as this week's Star Business of the Week.

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With a strong commitment to safety and organization, SA Recycling maintains clean, well-managed facilities to create a safe environment for employees, customers, and partners alike.

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

SA Recycling

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Daily Horoscopes

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Today's day score is back into sunshine, you've got stellar momentum again. A partner or someone close to you could bring the perfect combo: Clear, calm insight and a big warm hug. Keep centering your future.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): When things make sense, it's easier to get behind them — clarify what's needed, formulate a plan of action, then jump in wholeheartedly. So much foundational work happens inside you where no one else can see.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): True friends are allies who help you anchor your strength and your dreams, frenemies can be envious and actively or passively sabotaging. Truth is in patterns of behavior, they'll both be smiling at you.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Move for yourself in the world but also read the room, sometimes wisdom or safety need to outweigh authenticity in a situation. Invest into your living space, not necessarily in money, but in thought and care.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Ideas can move from the inside out, or the outside in. Keep what's worthwhile, share what's worthwhile, discard the rest — not every thought is genius. Notice who could benefit from encouraging you in a certain mindset.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Shared values are important in almost any kind of relationship. It's hard to keep things balanced with someone who isn't interested in balance, ethical if someone lacks integrity, or accountable if they won't be.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Calm and centered while heartfelt and present is quite a combination and a reason people love you. Sometimes someone has to fool around and find out, let consequences be natural, organic teachers.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Tangible and aligned actions, emotional support, and prayer are all ways to contribute to your local community and the community of

Earth. Give, receive, give, receive, give is the circle of reciprocity.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Good friends and good times are some of life's rewards, today could be a day to enjoy both. If you can't escape today, make a plan for when you can. Someone could need emotional support.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Work-life balance was never easy, these days it's a joke for so many people. Do what you can, with what you have, from where you are — life can surprise you pleasantly, too. Keep hope on your team, always.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Something you encounter could really hit your sweet spot and become a long-term life or mindset hack. Keep knowledge flowing between you and others, it's a way to connect and support each other.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): A deeper kind of alignment needs to happen when people invest together, whether into a personal relationship, joint business venture, or financial opportunity. Objectives and methods must be shared.

IF TODAY IS YOUR BIRTHDAY: So much good is lining up for you for 2026, the first quarter brought most of the problems you'll see for the year, though there is likely one more to weather in April. Forgive, learn any and all lessons, and remember that when the Universe takes something away, it brings something more aligned in its place. You might not know how to process the abundance that shows up before month-end, it could seem like too much until you have time to fully process. Expect cash flow, artistry, and practical skills to combine. By May, even more money could arrive. Avoid a pothole, then onward to the potential for new freedom or increased media exposure, and relentless ambition. June could bring a few worries, but they should quickly be extinguished by an influx of clarity for your journey, and unexpected good fortune.



1792 – The Coinage Act is passed establishing the United States Mint.

1792 - US authorizes \$10 Eagle, \$5 half-Eagle & 2.50 quarter-Eagle gold coins & silver dollar, 1/2 dollar, quarter, dime & half-dime

1827 - Joseph Dixon begins manufacturing lead pencils

1872 - George B Brayton patents gasoline powered engine

1877 - 1st Easter egg roll held on White House lawn

1902 - 1st motion picture theater opens in Los Angeles

1911 – The Australian Bureau of Statistics conducts the country's first national census

1917 – US President Woodrow Wilson asks the U.S. Congress for a declaration of war on Germany (World War I)

1932 - Charles Lindbergh turns over \$50,000 as a ransom for his kidnapped son

1935 - Mary Hirsch, becomes the 1st woman licensed as a horse trainer

1978 - TV show Dallas premieres on CBS

CALENDAR OF OBSERVANCES

- Holy Thursday
- International Children's Book Day
- International Fact-Checking Day
- Maundy Thursday
- National Burrito Day
- National DIY Day
- National Ferret Day

- National Love Your Produce Manager Day
- National Peanut Butter and Jelly Day
- Rainn Day (Rape Abuse Incest National Network)
- Reconciliation Day
- World Autism Awareness Day

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Nothing is particularly hard if you divide it into small jobs."

Henry Ford,
industrialist (1863-1947)

CORRECTION

Due to an editing error, Derrick Dooley was listed as a gubernatorial candidate in a story that appeared on Page 1A of Tuesday's Albany Herald. Dooley is running for the U.S. Senate.

SQUAWKBOX

squawkbox@albanyherald.com

I laughed out loud when I read the squawk about the marchers of March 28 (No Kings) wasting their time. Trump being the greatest president this country has ever had "because he's bending a few rules." You are the exact reason that most of us who are not in your cult now attempt to "vet" every person we hire (house painters, yard people, realtors, financial advisors, tax preparers, dog sitters etc.). The slippery moral values you are so willing to reward with our nuclear codes and tax dollars make us wonder about things like how much sex abuse is OK with people like you.

Over a week has passed since the tragic street racing deaths, including a 4-year-old child. What has happened since then to make our roads safer? Nothing. Just more street racing. Constantly. Every night. No action by the city. Nothing done by the county, APD or DCP. Could our mayor and chairman be any lazier or more incompetent?

For all those city leaders and those at KADB who like to coddle those who litter and spend your well-meaning effort to pick up after them, please come to my home alley and pick up the condoms. It's forbidden to write a squawk about such things, but OK for families and children who walk the alley to step over them. Not so sure it's the Good Life City, but convinced it's well protected.

Indeed, let's give those employees of a badly failing school system more of our tax money. You don't have to worry about this local bunch burning out: They're aware that they couldn't get a job anywhere else.

The actions of Dougherty County's coroner investigation of the Jake Embert case is unbelievable. He walked into the room with the body, took some pictures and was finished within an hour. He asked two young cops there what they thought, and they replied suicide. No test of gun residue on anyone's hands and let the wife cremate him the next day. Another great example of Albany's elected people.

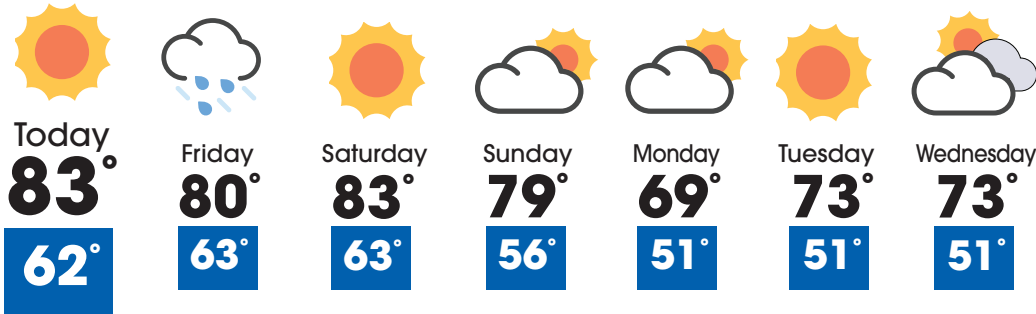
Socialism destroys the economy gradually ... then quickly.

I say we quit using taxpayer money to clean up after the slobs whose property quickly turns into a garbage heap. If they want to live in garbage, let them ... at least until their garbage starts impacting neighbors. Then, either make them clean it up themselves or put them in jail.

I laughed out loud when I read a poster in this forum talk about how "classy" the first lady is after watching her ridiculous "documentary." (I call it a boring home movie.) I don't think I'd call a woman whose nude pictures while making out with another woman are readily available on the internet "classy."

Don't worry, all you phony, paid protesters, our greatest president will not be king. He will remain our president as long as he wants to be.

Weather Forecast



Daily Bridge Club

Eyes on the goal

By Frank Stewart
Tribune Content Agency

I've heard an obstacle defined as what you see when you take your eyes off your goal. When you defend against a major-suit

NORTH			
♠	A 7 6 4		
♥	A 4		
♦	A K 10		
♣	J 7 6 3		
WEST			
♠	Q 3		
♥	8 2		
♦	J 8 4 3		
♣	A K 10 8 2		
EAST			
♠	K J 10 9 8		
♥	K 9		
♦	Q 9 7 2		
♣	9 4		
SOUTH			
♠	5 2		
♥	Q J 10 7 6 5 3		
♦	6 5		
♣	Q 5		
South	West	North	East
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass
Opening lead – ♣ K			
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game, your goal is clear enough.

Against today's four hearts, West led the king of clubs: three, nine, five. He continued with the ace; all followed. When West then led the ten, dummy played the seven, East threw a spade, and South ruffed and led the queen of hearts for a finesse. East took the king and returned a trump – and South claimed, making four: He could pitch his spade loser on dummy's high jack of clubs.

SOLID HEARTS

It takes four tricks to beat four hearts, but West lost sight of his goal. If South has seven solid hearts for his vulnerable preempt, he is sure of 10 tricks, so West must assume that East has a trump trick. Even so, East-West will probably need a spade



Frank Stewart

trick as well.

Instead of making a winner out of dummy's jack of clubs, West must shift to the queen of spades at Trick Two. Then the defense is sure of a spade, two clubs and a trump.

DAILY QUESTION

You hold: S 5 2 H Q J 10 7 6 5 3 D 6 5 C Q 5. Both sides vulnerable. South in today's deal opened three hearts as dealer with this hand. Do you agree with that action?

ANSWER: Many players, perhaps most experts, would agree. The modern style is to indulge in obstructive calls – preempts and weak two-bids – despite all sorts of flaws. But 7-2-2-2 distribution is the least attractive for a preempt, and your partner may misjudge your offensive prospects. I would admire anyone who passed.

South dealer
Both sides vulnerable

Advice Columnist

Brother's book reveals traumatic family secret without permission

By Eric Thomas
Tribune Content Agency

Dear Eric: My brother just released a book and as I was reading his acknowledgments in the online sample, I was blown away that he disclosed a very personal incident that happened when we were children.

I have been going to therapy sessions for years discussing things that happened to me as a child. It was very shocking to read this and caused a couple nights of no sleep.

When I discussed it with him, I lost my temper and said a few things and raised my voice. He finally said sorry on a text a couple days later, but it really wasn't heartfelt.

In the acknowledgments, he even gave a shout-out to his dogs. The only thing he said about me was "my older brother" when he described the incident in question.

Now that a couple of weeks have past and I feel better about it now, was I wrong for wanting a heads-up, a warning from him before it was released? A chance to say my opinion about not really wanting that part released?

– Mad Brother

Dear Brother: You're not wrong at all. He owed you a heads-up at the very least, but he should have asked your permission before sharing something personal, even if it wasn't something sensitive. There are so many points in a publishing journey during which a writer can send a draft to other people. He failed in his duty as a writer and as a sibling, and by not offering a meaningful apology, he's made it worse.

We have the right to tell our own stories in our own

time. Had he written a memoir, there might have been a lot of overlap between what story is his to tell and what's yours. He'd still be responsible for talking things through with you beforehand.

But an acknowledgments section is meant to thank and honor those who supported a writer along their path to publication. This did not achieve that aim.

You write that you're feeling better – I'm glad about that. You may decide that what's healthiest is to leave the past in the past. That's fine. But if you feel compelled to address it with your brother again, either to be sure that you've been heard or to see what remedies he can offer in changing the electronic copies or future editions, don't hesitate to do so.

Dear Eric: I'm hoping you can give me your thoughts on the situation between me and my estranged brother in another state.

I'm his older sister by 11 years. We're of different political parties and although I am not vocal about politics, he has decided our younger sister and I represent everything he hates about the other party.

His communications have been full of anger and obscenities, and saying he wishes I would "just die."

I've blocked his messages, but I sent an email wishing him happy birthday – just that, nothing more. He came back raging with obscenities and the usual wish for my death.

It's amazing how he's changed in the last few years. He has had several surgeries, and I think maybe his brain has been affected. I don't know if his wife shares his politics and encourages his anger. We weren't in contact much



Eric Thomas

even before the present situation. Do you think it's possible to defuse his anger so there can be some kind of contact? If so, how to proceed?

– Different Sides

Dear Sides: In general, change is possible for all of us. But it seems unlikely that you're in the best position to affect that change in him. Moreover, this isn't your responsibility, particularly after a history of such vicious attacks.

In this case, it may be helpful to think about what he's actually angry about and what could possibly be done to assuage said anger. If you'd committed an offense against him, for instance, you could apologize and seek to make amends. And, in time, his anger might fade. But, from your telling, it doesn't seem that you've done anything. So, the burden isn't on you.

This is not the behavior of someone who is looking for a way to connect, nor is it the behavior of someone who is looking to convince you. His response makes conversation all but impossible. That's not on you. And it isn't about what you believe or what he believes. People disagree about all kinds of things and still find ways of being in a relationship with each other. He's chosen violent language as his primary, and seemingly only, form of contact. You might consider reaching out to his wife to express your concern or to see if there's something you can do. But proceed with caution; the contact that you want may not be the kind of contact he's willing to have.

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 rerictomas.com.

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THE ALBANY HERALD

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Carlton Fletcher

EDITOR

—Georgia Trust for—

LOCAL NEWS

TODAY'S
BIBLE
VERSE

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

John 14:27

COLUMNIST ■ GAIL DRAKE

As it pertains to Christ, the evidence speaks

"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables ... but were eyewitnesses of his majesty."

II Peter 1:16

I still remember my first contested hearing as a rookie lawyer. It was an adult guardianship dispute between three siblings (my clients) and their sister “June,” who had agreed to take on power of attorney to care for their elderly mother, “Betsy.” While June had taken

mother to church, medical appointments and the grocery store, there were incidents over the past few years that indicated their mother had dementia and their sister had neglected her.

I was up against a 25-year attorney who was an expert at bluster. After a deeper dive into medical and financial records, the neglect turned out to be worse than expected. I’d like to say I won the case because of my trial skills. I did win the case – because of the evidence.

The retired neighbor who testified that she had observed Betsy walking down the street in July in a winter coat and hat, and had told June about it. The five years of bank records that showed dozens of checks, signed by June, for large grocery bills, numerous gasoline receipts, hotel expenses in Kentucky, where June’s son was incarcerated, and numerous unexplained payments.

And what about that \$5,000 for a hot tub? Betsy did not have a hot tub at her house.

Cases are usually won by evidence that proves what did or did not occur. Eyewitnesses. Certified business records. Corroborating evidence from independent, neutral sources. Scientific evidence, like fingerprints.

In his New York Times bestselling book, “The Case for Christ,” Chicago Tribune investigative journalist Lee Strobel, an atheist, published his journey investigating “the outrageous claims of Jesus.” His book explored the evidence of the existence of Christ and His resurrection, including interviews with scholars and reviewing ancient records.

What evidence exists concerning the resurrection of the crucified Christ? The four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John), written by a tax collector, interpreter, physician and apostle/pastor, respectively, detail events during the life of Christ from four different viewpoints. All four authors record the crucifixion of Christ and the resurrection, which, along with the book of Acts, detail 11 post-resurrection appearances with a lot of different people.

Some saw Jesus individually, some in groups, in different locations. Some touched Jesus and some ate with him. Finally, a large crowd watched Him ascend up from the Mount of Olives.

The first eyewitnesses were women: Mary Magdalene, another Mary and Salome. While ancient Roman and Greek law sometimes permitted women as witnesses, Jewish law did not. If early Jewish Christian writers were trying to fabricate religious

Gail Drake practices probate, adoption, mediation and children’s law in Albany. She is a frequent contributor to The Albany Herald.

events, they would not have cited several women as the first witnesses. And a fabricator of a story sure would not have cited characters with the same name.

Strobel also explored corroborating evidence from outside historical sources. Scholar Edwin Yamouchi cited Josephus, a Jewish first-century historian for Rome who wrote the Jewish history called “The Antiquities.” Josephus was disliked by the Jews and was not a Christian.

Yamauchi addressed the controversies of the oft-cited Josephus writing called “Testimonium Flavianum.”

“About this time there lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed one ought to call him a man. For

he was one who wrought surprising feats and was a teacher of such people as accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. He was the Christ.

When Pilate, upon hearing him accused by men of the highest standing among us, had condemned him to be crucified. ... On the third day he appeared to them restored to life, for the prophets of God had prophesied. ... And the tribe of Christians, so called after him, has to this day not disappeared.”

Yamauchi’s conclusion was that Josephus was a reliable historian, and this specific writing is generally authentic but contains three obvious interpolations inserted by early Christians. Removing those interpolations, the writing still corroborates Jesus as the martyred leader crucified under Pilate at the instigation of Jewish leaders, and described Jesus as a wise teacher with a large, lasting following.

Roman historian and governor Tacitus also recorded a reference to Jesus written in AD 115. Tacitus specifically stated that Emperor Nero persecuted Christian as scapegoats for the fires that burned Rome in AD 64.

“Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christian by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origins, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilate, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judaea ... but even in Rome.”

Yamauchi concluded that Tacitus proved “there was a movement based on a crucified man that had to be explained,” and that the prolonged “superstition” was best identified as the belief in Christ’s resurrection.

Another Roman historian, Pliny the Younger, another unsympathetic witness, referred to Christianity in his writings to his friend, Emperor Trajan, as those who met regularly “in honor of Christ as if to a god, and also to bind themselves by oath ... to abstain from theft, robbery and adultery.”

Strobel concluded that the volume of evidence supporting the Christian religion far exceeds that of any other religion. Eyewitness accounts, historical accounts, corroborating evidence, in addition to the physical evidence of an empty tomb. It doesn’t take a rookie lawyer to prove this case either.



DRAKE

COLUMNIST ■ SEN. CARDEN SUMMERS

Senate’s approach is to save taxpayers’ money

With just one week left under the Gold Dome, we are not slowing down. We are fulfilling our responsibility to lower costs, protect your family and make sure Georgia continues to lead in responsible government.

While other states continue to spend recklessly, raise taxes and grow government, we’ve taken a different path rooted in discipline and respect for your hard-earned money. That approach is on full display in the Fiscal Year 2027 budget.

This week, the Senate took up House Bill 974, a \$38.5 billion budget that reflects the strength of Georgia’s economy and our commitment to conservative financial stewardship. Unlike the federal government, which continues to rack up debt with no tangible plan to pay it back, Georgia is constitutionally required to balance its budget, and we do it the right way.

We are making targeted investments in education, including \$70 million to place a literacy coach in every K-3 classroom. That’s a strategic investment in our state’s future work force. We’re also expanding the Georgia PROMISE Scholarship to give families more options and more control over their child’s education, because we trust parents, not bureaucracies, to make those decisions.

We’re also standing by the people who have dedicated their lives to public service. By contributing \$100 million to the Employees’ Retirement System, we are ensuring that Georgia’s retirees can remain here, continue contributing to our communities and live with the dignity they’ve earned.

For our district, the budget includes significant funding for the Tifton Veterinary Laboratories, which play key roles in providing services, conducting research, and engaging in educational outreach for companion animals. Our state’s budget also currently allocates \$900,000 to Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College.

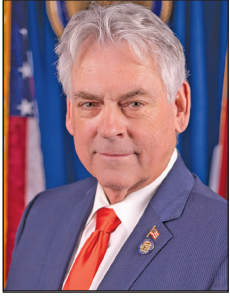
We are continuing to cut through government overreach and protect your wallet through a variety of measures that have also passed through the Senate this week.

House Bill 1247, the Georgia Bureaucratic Deference Elimination Act, and the Red Tape Rollback Act, send a clear message that unelected agencies do not get to make up rules that hurt your bottom line without accountability. For too long, government has expanded through regulations that never faced a vote. We are putting a stop to that and restoring power where it belongs, with the people.

In our classrooms, Senate Republicans are choosing focus and safety over distraction. House Bill 1009 establishes a “bell-to-bell” cellphone ban in high schools. We are also continuing to stand up for Georgia’s rural communities, like the ones that make up our own district, and the industries that keep them strong. The Keep Georgia Forested Act supports our forestry manufacturers, protects jobs and helps stabilize an industry that has been hit hard by economic pressures and storm damage, especially in south Georgia.

I’d like to report that another one of my bills, Senate Bill 443, has passed the House. This bill raises the penalty for blocking a road from a simple misdemeanor to a “high and aggravated misdemeanor” and is a necessary measure to hold people accountable for unlawful protests. Oftentimes, these protestors who clog up our roadways and small towns are not even from Georgia, and we will make sure that our streets are clear as we live and work. The bill will now move on to the governor’s desk for his signature.

As we approach our final legislative day, I encourage you to stay engaged and reach out with any questions or concerns. Your voice matters, and it continues to shape the work we do here under the Gold Dome.



SUMMERS

Sen. Carden Summers serves as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Banking and Financial Institutions. He represents the 13th Senate District. He may be reached by phone at (404) 656-9224 or by email at Carden.Summers@senate.ga.gov.

The Albany Herald encourages letters to the editor on topics of general interest, but reserves the right to edit them for content and length. Letters should be no longer than 400 words and must include the writer’s name, address and daytime phone number for verification purposes.

COLUMNIST ■ REP. GERALD GREENE

Significant measures passed down legislative home stretch

This week, my House colleagues and I returned to the Gold Dome for Legislative Days 36–38, entering the final stretch of the 2026 session. With just one legislative day remaining before Sine Die on April 2, the pace has intensified as we work to advance priority legislation before the session adjourns.

We passed several significant measures this week:

Protecting vulnerable individuals: The House unanimously passed Senate Bill 542, which establishes new criminal offenses for clergy members who abuse positions of spiritual authority to engage in coercive sexual conduct. The bill creates clear penalties and extends the statute of limitations to 15 years, ensuring victims have more time to come forward.

Student focus in schools: House Bill 1009, now awaiting the governor’s signature, would limit student access to personal electronic devices during the school

day, with exceptions for medical or educational needs. This policy aims to reduce distractions and improve academic outcomes.

Mental health support: Senate Bill 428 would expand access to community-based mental health services by allowing the state to pursue federal Medicaid waivers for individuals at risk of homelessness, incarceration or repeated hospitalization — helping provide earlier, more consistent care.

Medical cannabis expansion: Senate Bill 220 would modernize Georgia’s medical cannabis program by expanding available forms, increasing access and adding new qualifying conditions.

Public safety and accountability: We passed Senate Bill 547 to strengthen penalties for human trafficking-related offenses and Senate Bills 540 and 594 to address the misuse of artificial intelligence, includ-

ing protections for minors and safeguards against deceptive AI in elections and online exploitation.

Education initiatives: Several bills focused on strengthening education, including:

Senate Bill 150, supporting teacher work force needs by allowing retired educators to return in high-need areas;

Senate Bill 369, improving accountability and access in nontraditional and virtual education;

Senate Bill 589, expanding pre-K access and requiring student ID cards to include the 988 crisis hotline;

House Bill 1030, the Math Matters Act, which expands advanced math opportunities and strengthens instruction.

Support for foster care and disabilities: We advanced a study committee on rising foster care costs (SR 622) and passed Sen-



GREENE

ate Bill 433, which improves interactions between law enforcement and individuals with autism through specialized license plates and training.

In addition, the House approved a wide range of legislation addressing issues such as insurance reform, tax transparency, work force development, public safety and government accountability.

As we approach the final days of the session, we will continue working long hours to ensure thoughtful consideration of remaining legislation before it reaches the governor’s desk.

I remain committed to supporting policies that protect taxpayers, strengthen families and promote safe, thriving communities across our district and our state. It is an honor to serve you under the Gold Dome. Please do not hesitate to contact me at Gerald.Greene@house.ga.gov or by phone at (404) 656-9210 if I can be of assistance.

What to watch THURSDAY

April 2, 2026

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

Scrabble

The CW, 8 p.m.

Players engage in a noble word battle in pursuit of capturing the \$10,000 throne in the new episode “Reign Check.” Craig Ferguson hosts.

Next Level Chef

FOX, 8 p.m.

The platform is transformed into a pub for the new episode “Ale’s Well That Ends Well.” Chefs must pair proteins with perfectly poured beer to create delicious dishes, with a game of beer pong determining who wins more ingredients.



BRAVO

Law & Order

NBC, 8 p.m.

Tonight’s episode of this long-running drama shows a different side of Detective Vincent Riley (Reid Scott) after things take a turn during the investigation of a woman’s body found in a suitcase. “As a father, Riley internalizes and personalizes cases with young victims,” Scott says. “He pursues this case in a way that borders on reckless, which is unusual for him. He’s not usually the kind of guy who loses control, but in this case, he does.” The result? A car accident while he’s on duty. While waiting to learn the victim’s condition, he spirals. This episode also introduces Riley’s wife, Tara (Cadden Jones).

Ghosts

CBS, 8:30 p.m.

Sam and Jay (Rose Mclver and Utkarsh Ambudkar) try to replace their broken water heater, but Isaac (Brandon Scott Jones) turns the upgrade into a campaign issue in his bid to represent the basement ghosts in the new episode “The Water Heater.”

The Real Housewives of Rhode Island

Bravo, 9 p.m. ■ New Series

The lives of this fresh, charismatic group of women intertwine across the storied coastline of New England luxury, where friendships are built over decades, loyalties are deeply rooted, and secrets are guarded at all costs ... until betrayal strikes. One familiar face in the group of new women is New Jersey Housewife Dolores Catania, who embarks on a new entrepreneurial venture — a menopause gummy brand — while soaking up some sun, fun and a little drama along the way.

Matlock

CBS, 9 p.m.

The stakes are high when Matty (Kathy Bates) represents one of Jacobson Moore’s own on trial in the new episode “The Cavalry Isn’t Coming.”

Going Dutch

FOX, 9:30 p.m.

Stroopdsdorf hosts international peace talks, and Col. Quinn’s (Denis Leary) micromanaging of Maggie’s (Taylor Misiak) simple task during the event has unintended consequences in the new episode “Apache Helicopter Parent.”

Grey’s Anatomy

ABC, 10 p.m.

Jo (Camilla Luddington) returns for her first full day back from leave, and Owen (Kevin McKidd) struggles to keep it together when someone close to him is admitted to Grey Sloan.

MOVIES YOU’LL LOVE



‘The Super Mario Bros. Movie’ NINTENDO AND UNIVERSAL STUDIOS

The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers (2002, Fantasy) Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen **Paramount, 6 p.m.**

I Am Number Four (2011, Action) Alex Pettyfer, Timothy Olyphant **AMC, 6:30 p.m.**

Despicable Me (2010, Children) Steve Carell, Jason Segel **NICK, 7 p.m.**

The Professional (1994, Suspense) Jean Reno, Gary Oldman **BBC America, 7 p.m.**

Mystery Island: House Rules (2025, Adventure) Elizabeth Henstridge, Charlie Weber **Hallmark Mystery, 8 p.m.**

Scarface (1983, Crime drama) Al Pacino, Michelle Pfeiffer **MGM, 8 p.m.**

The Super Mario Bros. Movie (2023, Family) Chris Pratt, Anya Taylor-Joy **USA, 8 p.m.**

Captain Marvel (2019, Action) Brie Larson, Samuel L. Jackson **TNT, 10 p.m.**

Dredd (2012, Action) Karl Urban, Olivia Thirlby **SYFY, 10 p.m.**

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (2002, Children) Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint **USA, 10 p.m.**

The Heat (2013, Comedy) Sandra Bullock, Melissa McCarthy **EI, 10 p.m.**

Tyler Perry’s Madea’s Family Reunion (2006, Comedy) Tyler Perry, Blair Underwood **BET, 10 p.m.**

From the editors of TV Weekly and tvinsider.com



CATCH A CLASSIC

TCM Spotlight: Deep in the Heart of Texas

TCM, beginning at 7:45 p.m.

The Lone Star State takes center stage in tonight’s lineup of classic films set in Texas. It starts playfully with the Looney Tunes short **Oily Hare** (1952), where Bugs Bunny tries to thwart an oil tycoon who wants to drill in his rabbit hole. The tone switches dramatically with the 1956 feature **Giant**, led by Elizabeth Taylor, Rock Hudson and James Dean (who died before the movie’s release). In the epic drama, which clocks in at more than three hours, a poor ranch hand (Dean) strikes it rich when he discovers oil, spurring a decades-long rivalry with a wealthy rancher (Hudson) and his socialite wife (Taylor). Following is 1971’s star-studded **The Last Picture Show** (pictured), a black-and-white portrait of adolescence in a decaying Texas town that won Academy Awards for Ben Johnson and



COLUMBIA PICTURES

Cloris Leachman. Next, in late-night, is the TCM premiere of 1998’s **Dancer, Texas Pop. 81**, chronicling a group of high school friends living in a tiny Texas town who make a pact to move to Los Angeles after graduation. Then, Robert Altman’s absurdist 1970 comedy **Brewster McCloud** finds the titular character living under the Houston Astrodome and dreaming of creating wings that will let him fly. Finally, in the 1964 political thriller **Seven Days in May**, an Army colonel (Kirk Douglas) races to subvert a general’s (Burt Lancaster) plan to overthrow the president from a secret base in El Paso.

Know what to watch. Know where to find it.

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What to watch FRIDAY

April 3, 2026

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

Faith Movies

MOVIES!, beginning at 6:10 a.m. ■

Catch a Classic

Faith and biblical storytelling take center stage throughout the day, with several large-scale religious epics anchoring the lineup beginning with 1954’s **Demetrius and the Gladiators**, starring Victor Mature and Susan Hayward. One of the biggest titles, however, follows with **The Bible** (1966), John Huston’s ambitious film that brings several stories from the Book of Genesis to the screen with an international cast that includes Michael Parks, Ulla Bergryd and George C. Scott. The schedule also features the television miniseries **Jesus of Nazareth** (1977), starring James Earl Jones and Olivia Hussey, and **Moses the Lawgiver** (1975), starring Burt Lancaster as Moses in a sweeping retelling of the Exodus story. **The Robe** (1953) completes the block.

Sheriff Country

CBS, 8 p.m.

In “The Finest,” the first part of tonight’s crossover event with **Fire Country**, a mysterious school bus explosion leaves nine students missing. Sheriff Mickey Fox (Morena Baccarin) and Cal Fire Division Chief Sharon Leone (guest star Diane Farr) must put their differences aside and unite their departments to crack the case.

Fire Country

CBS, 9 p.m.

In “The Bravest,” the second part of tonight’s crossover event with **Sheriff Country**, firefighter Bode Leone (Max Thieriot) and Deputy Nathan Boone (guest star Matt Lauria) must risk it all in order to save students missing after a mysterious school bus explosion.



JOHN MEDLAND, CBS

Boston Blue

CBS, 10 p.m.

In the new episode “Beautiful Broken Things,” Pop Reagan is coming to town! Len Cariou reprises his **Blue Bloods** role, Henry Reagan,

in **Boston Blue**. He’s visiting to see his rookie-cop great-grandson, Sean (Mika Amonsén), in uniform for the first time and to reconnect with some old pals from the Boston PD. But Henry’s also there to deliver a special gift to grandson Danny (Donnie Wahlberg).

CATCH A CLASSIC

Special Theme: Roger Corman

TCM, beginning at 8 p.m.

A themed night spotlights the work of cult director Roger Corman — the “King of the B-movies” — to commemorate the 100th anniversary of his birth on April 5, 1926. The lineup kicks off with the TCM premiere of the 2021 documentary **Roger Corman: Pope of Pop Cinema**, which not only celebrates his work in the low-budget genre, but also reveals a more serious side of the filmmaker: as a mentor to directors such as Martin Scorsese, Francis Ford Coppola and Ron Howard. But the evening is mostly about Corman classics, starting with 1959’s horror/comedy **A Bucket of Blood**, about a lowly busboy who, after accidentally killing a cat and covering it in clay to hide the crime, ends up a murderer who creates “sculptures” from his victims. More murders are on the menu in 1960’s **The Little**



EVERETT COLLECTION

Shop of Horrors (pictured), where a plant with an insatiable appetite for blood forces a floral assistant to begin killing humans to feed it. Things get more serious in 1957’s **Teenage Doll**, a brooding film noir where a member of the teen girl gang the Black Widows is killed, prompting them to seek revenge on the leader of the rival Vandals, who they believe is responsible for the murder. Up next is Corman’s directorial debut — not a horror film, but a Western set during the Civil War, 1955’s **Five Guns West**. The lineup concludes with 1955’s **The Beast With a Million Eyes**.

MOVIES YOU’LL LOVE



‘The Art of Racing in the Rain’ DOANE GREGORY

Get Shorty (1995, Comedy) John Travolta, Gene Hackman **MGM, 6:15 p.m.**

Ocean’s Eleven (2001, Comedy-drama) George Clooney, Matt Damon **WE, 6:15 p.m.**

Back to the Future (1985, Comedy) Michael J. Fox, Christopher Lloyd **AMC, 7 p.m.**

Despicable Me 2 (2013, Children) Steve Carell, Kristen Wiig **NICK, 7 p.m.**

Superbad (2007, Comedy) Jonah Hill, Michael Cera **MGM, 8 p.m.**

Zombies 4: Dawn of the Vampires (2025, Musical comedy) Milo Manheim, Meg Donnelly **Disney, 8 p.m.**

Dazed and Confused (1993, Comedy) Jason London, Wiley Wiggins **IFC, 8:45 p.m.**

Danger in the Countryside (2025, Suspense) Nicole Reddinger, Paul Van Scott **LMN, 10 p.m.**

Death at a Funeral (2010, Comedy-drama) Keith David, Loretta Devine **BET, 10 p.m.**

The Big Lebowski (1998, Comedy) Jeff Bridges, John Goodman **IFC, 11 p.m.**

The Art of Racing in the Rain (2019, Comedy-drama) Milo Ventimiglia, Amanda Seyfried **FXM, 11:15 p.m.**

From the editors of TV Weekly and tvinsider.com

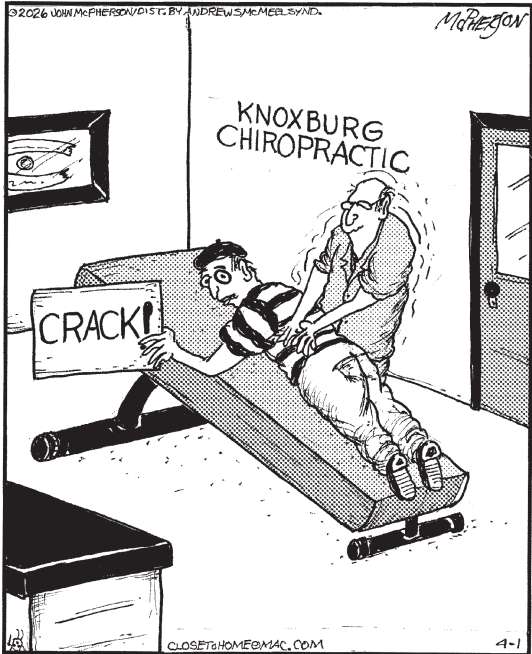


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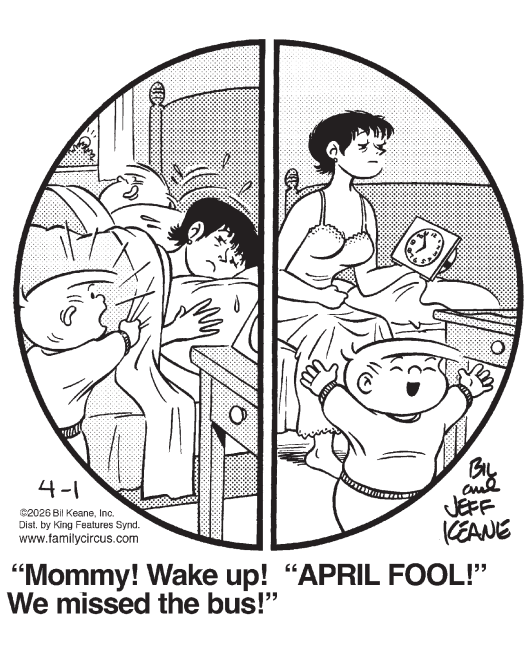
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CLOSE TO HOME John McPherson



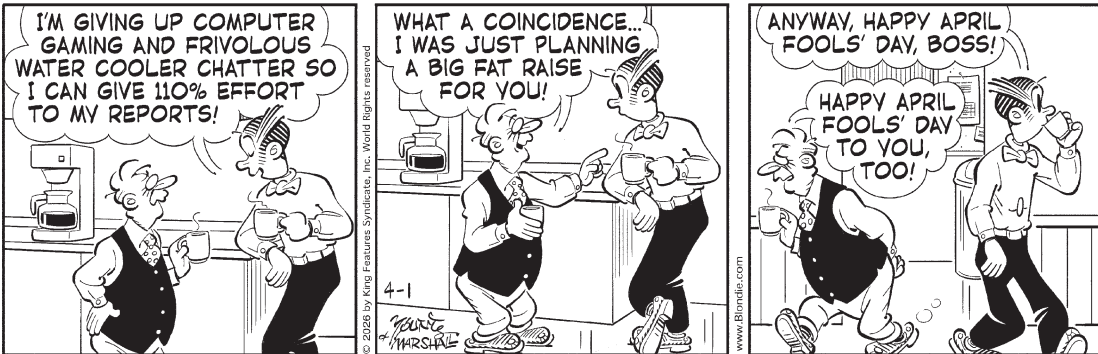
THE FAMILY CIRCUS Bil Keane



BEETLE BAILEY Mort & Greg Walker



BLONDIE Dean Young & John Marshall



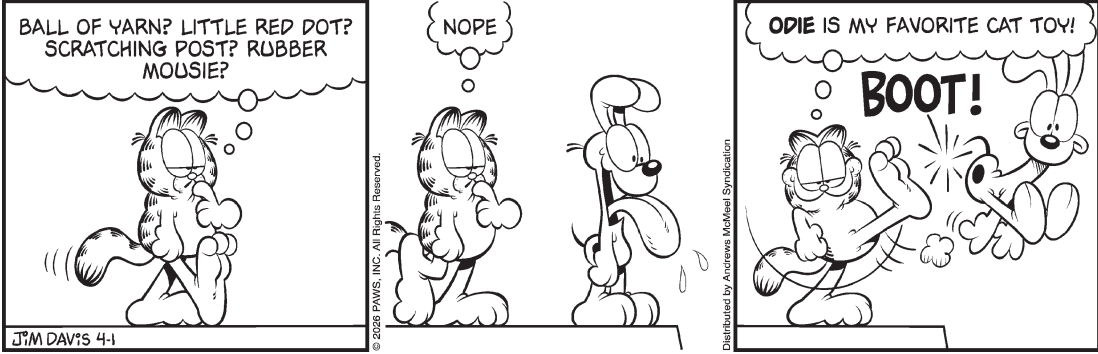
THE BORN LOSER Art & Chip Sansom



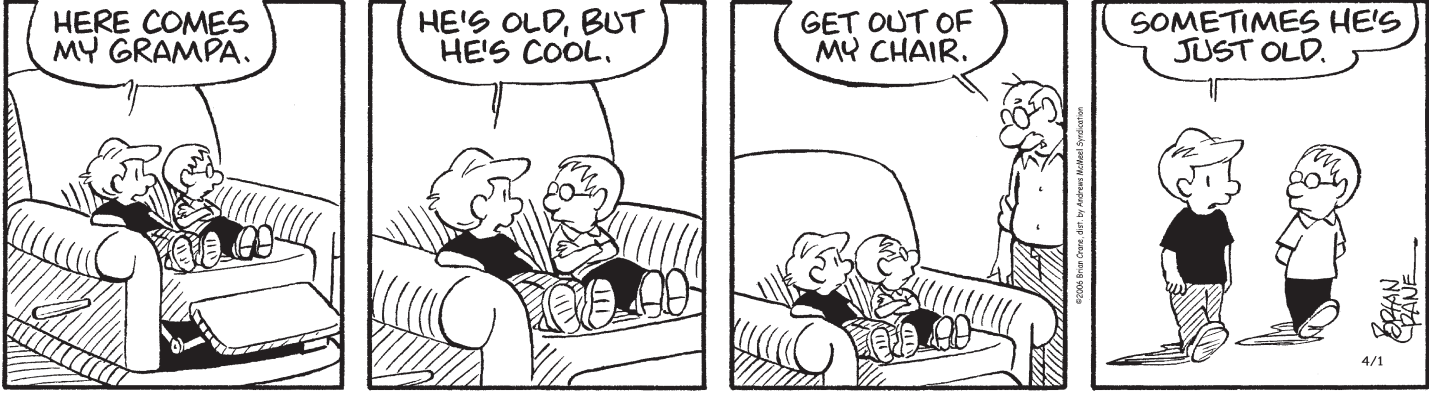
ZITS Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



GARFIELD Jim Davis



PICKLES Brian Crane



SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

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

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 WHATZIT SOLUTION:
Pick a card, any card

Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

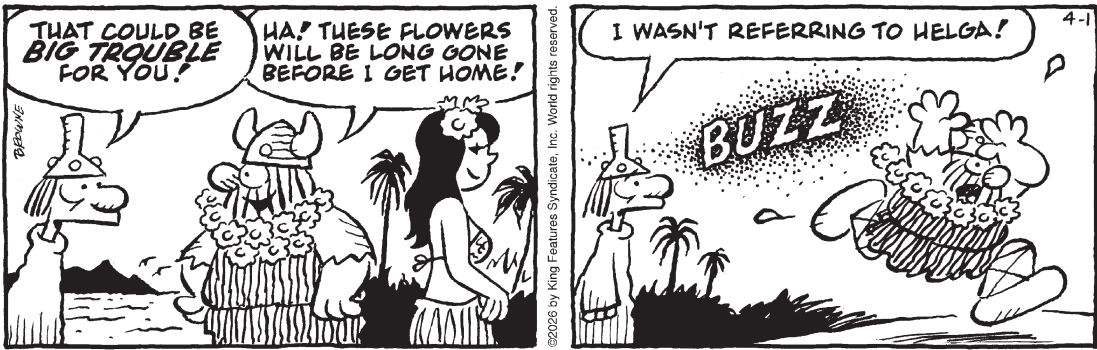
Edited by Patti Varol

- ACROSS**
- 1 Tops (off)
 - 5 Shopping aids
 - 10 Loops in on the sly
 - 14 Tons
 - 15 Foe
 - 16 "Excuse me ..."
 - 17 "That's the last time!"
 - 19 monster
 - 20 Standard
 - 21 Bright
 - 23 The Proclaimers hit subtitled "500 Miles"
 - 28 Watchful
 - 29 D.C. figure
 - 30 Yardstick, e.g.
 - 32 Top no. in a blood pressure reading
 - 33 Baby's bodysuit
 - 37 Some high-end insulated mugs
 - 39 Is apathetic
 - 44 squash
 - 45 Balanced
 - 46 Pronoun for Miss Piggy
 - 49 "West Side Story" role for Rita and Ariana
 - 51 With it, once
 - 52 Bank nos.
 - 54 "Should've listened to me!"
 - 58 Markets
 - 60 Like a turkey burger
 - 61 "Song of Solomon" novelist Morrison
 - 62 Began to relax
 - 68 Many a four-hour film
 - 69 Made a 43-Down, say
 - 70 Pre-migraine experience, for some
 - 71 With 73-Across, classic internet prank pulled by this puzzle's longest answers
 - 72 Financial obligations
 - 73 See 71-Across
- DOWN**
- 1 Country with the world's largest moose population: Abbr.
 - 2 Craft brewer's brew
 - 3 Perspective, for short
 - 4 Courtroom fig.
 - 5 Take in, in a way
 - 6 Director Bergman
 - 7 Body of water
 - 8 "That's enough!" letters
 - 9 Lip-
 - 10 Bread traditionally boiled then baked
 - 11 Scallion relatives
 - 12 The "log" in the snack ants on a log
 - 13 Really stings
 - 18 Actor Perlman
 - 22 Ring in a rodeo ring
 - 23 Apple gadget
 - 24 Part of MSG
 - 25 Merriment
 - 26 Accept the truth of
 - 27 Mtn. stat
 - 31 Summers in France
 - 34 Govt. ID issuer
 - 35 To be safe
 - 36 mess: classic English dessert
 - 38 Pronoun for Miss Piggy
 - 40 Moxie
 - 41 Island known as "The Gathering Place"
 - 42 Words of appreciation
 - 43 Form instead of from, e.g.
 - 46 Ibsen's "The Builder"
 - 47 Cuttlefish cousins
 - 48 Legendary
 - 50 "Ready?"
 - 53 Treat alternative
 - 55 Monopoly cards
 - 56 Celebrity chef Martin
 - 57 Like some headphones
 - 59 Vehicle often steered with the feet
 - 63 Underground rock
 - 64 Round figure?
 - 65 Twosome
 - 66 Clickable link
 - 67 Bestie

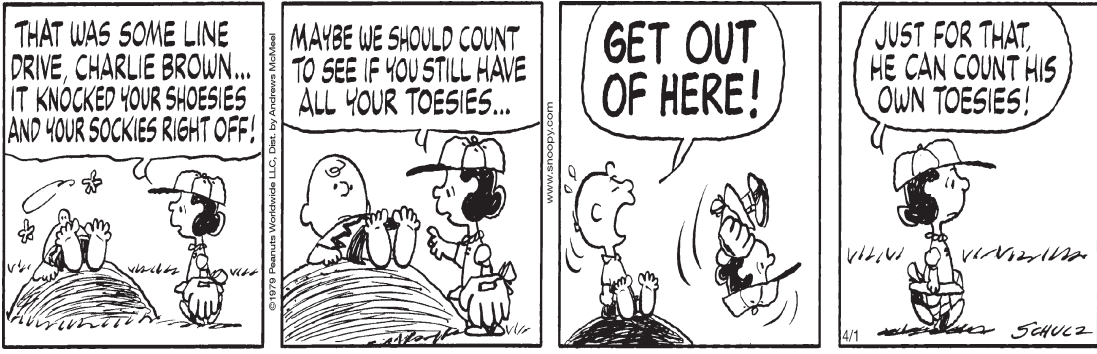
TODAY'S SOLUTION:

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					59			60				
61					62	63	64			65	66	67
68					69					70		
71					72					73		

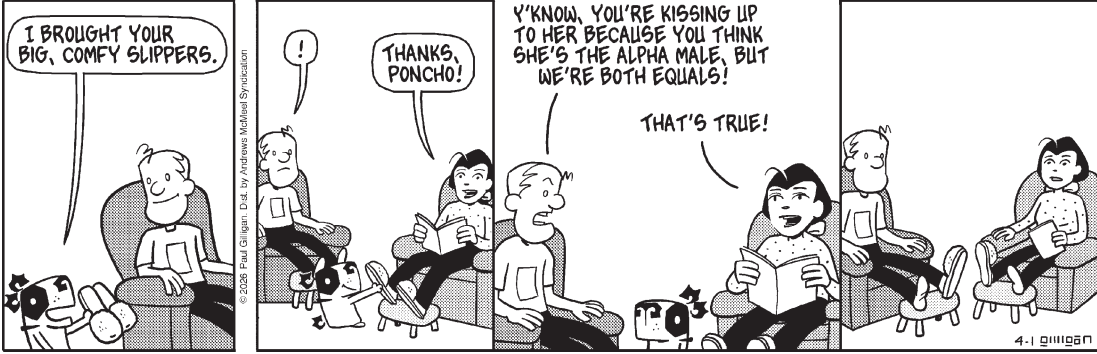
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE Chris Browne



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.

A FEW GREEK WORDS

Solution: 6 letters

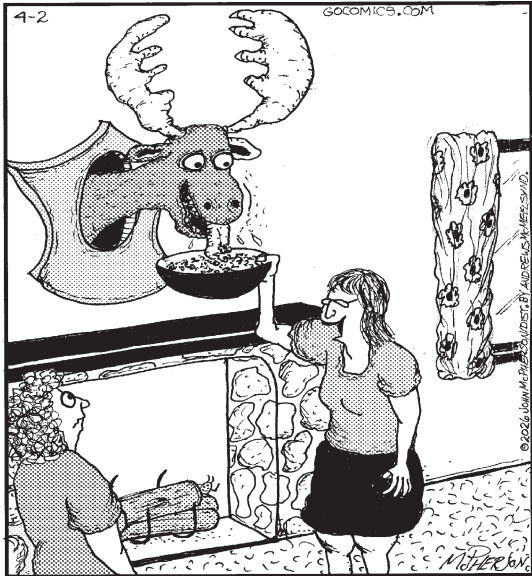
MA O D Y S S E U S U C S I D
S O R A S U D E M H E R O S S
S O U O E K A R O E T E M E P
I A U S H A E R E U P P E R A
L N R V S P I F L C Z L G A N
O E K A L A M A T A O O A O A
P H B I T A K A O E O R N T K
O T A I K S K A T I D E F S O
R A K K G I O I S H H E U U P
C I L O Y M Z T I T E E S E I
A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

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Acropolis, Alpha, Amphora, Aphrodite, Ares, Aristotle, Artemis, Athena, Athens, Baklava, Corfu, Crete, Discus, Eros, Gyros, Horiatici, Kalamata, Keftedes, Koukla, Medusa, Meteora, Meze, Moussaka, Obol, Odysseus, Omega, Orpheus, Ouzo, Parthenon, Pastitsio, Perseus, Plato, Saganaki, Sigma, Souvlaki, Spanakopita, Sparta, Syros, Tzatziki, Zeus

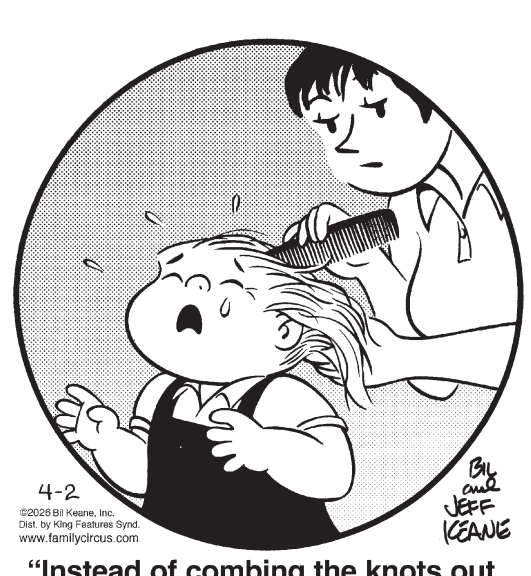
TODAY'S ANSWER: Apollo

CLOSE TO HOME John McPherson



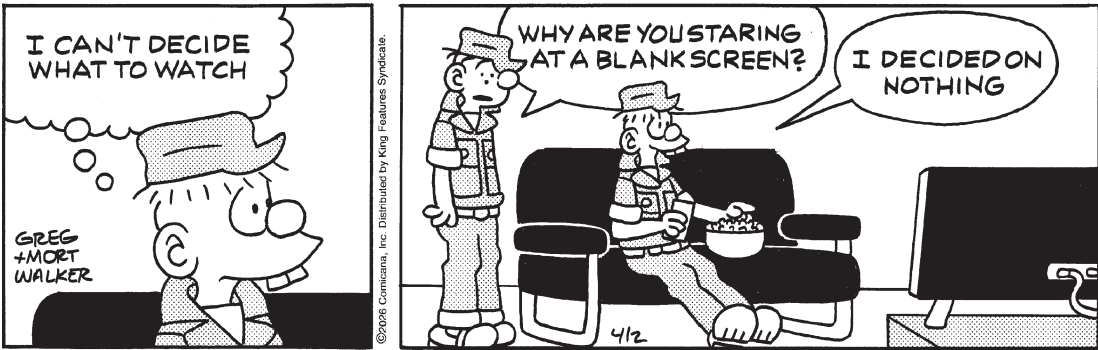
"We always dreamed of having a fireplace with a moose head over it but couldn't bear the thought of one of them being killed."

THE FAMILY CIRCUS Bil Keane

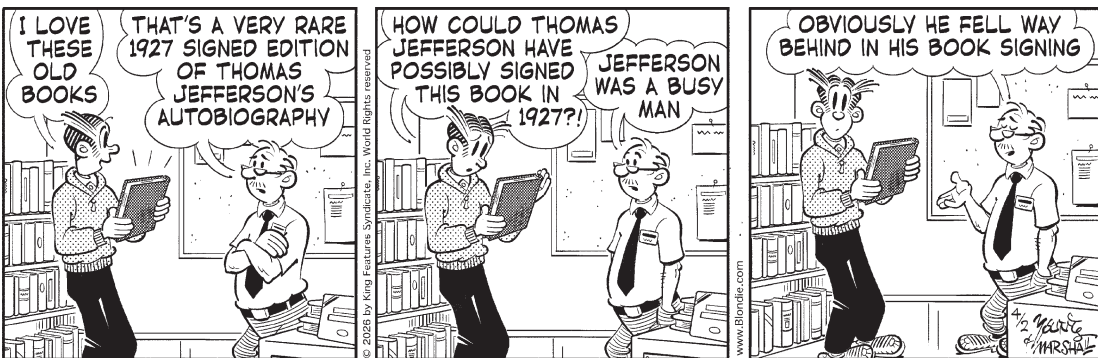


"Instead of combing the knots out, couldn't you just UNTIE them?"

BEETLE BAILEY Mort & Greg Walker



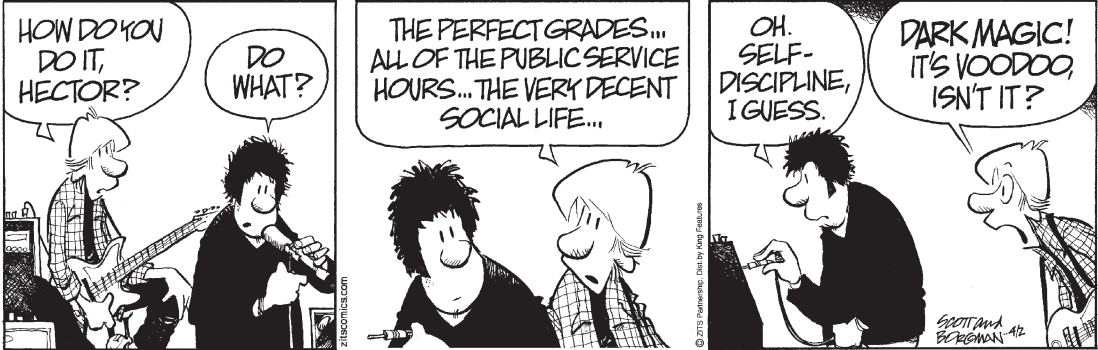
BLONDIE Dean Young & John Marshall



THE BORN LOSER Art & Chip Sansom



ZITS Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



GARFIELD Jim Davis



PICKLES Brian Crane



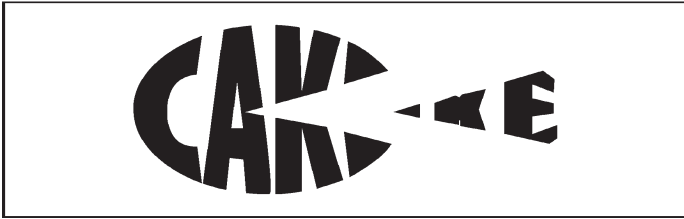
SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ☆☆☆☆☆

		2	4	1				
	4	7		2				
9				6	8	2		
				3		5		6
2		6		4		9		7
5		8		7				
		3	1	8				5
				5		1	9	
			9	6	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 WHATZIT SOLUTION:

A piece of cake

CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 1 Bill and —
4 Until now (2 wds.)
9 Soft food for babies
12 "— the President's Men"
13 Developed
14 "I've got it!"
15 Cover
16 "2 — 2 Quit"
17 Use needle and thread
18 Tie-up
20 Mideast ruler
22 Was ahead
23 Peruses
24 Ink stain
26 Nonstandard language
29 Poet's preposition
30 Female bird
31 Monster
35 Simple toy on a string (Hyph.)
- 37 Cheerios — Crunch
38 Handle
39 Sierra —
41 Pain
42 Steady and sober
45 "Breaking —"
46 Synagogue VIP
48 Collect
51 Assn.
52 Countrified
54 Oklahoma city
55 Friend
56 Run off to wed
57 Insect egg
58 Compass pt.
59 Dissuade
60 — Moines, Iowa

- DOWN**
- 1 Name
2 Miscellaneous mixture

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						38		
				39	40				41			
42	43	44						45				
46					47		48				49	50
51				52		53				54		
55				56						57		
58				59						60		

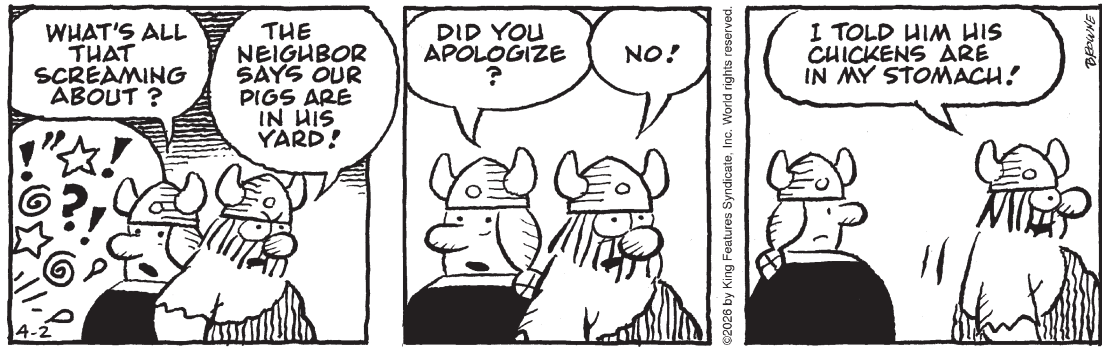
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TODAY'S SOLUTION:

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

- 3 The Stars and Stripes (2 wds.)
4 Lunch choice
5 Utah city
6 Steam up
7 With no changes (Hyph.)
- 8 Point of no —
9 Boiled food
10 In future days
11 Chess men
19 Airliner
21 Toy blocks maker
24 Lad
25 Star sign
26 Wearing shoes
27 Nonsense poet
28 Part of A.M.
32 Meet cheerfully (Hyph.)
33 Operate
34 Item in a nest
36 Leave out
40 Loved
41 Butter serving
42 Range
43 "— Bulba"
44 Fish with hook and line
45 Farm machine
47 Govern
48 Stand wide open
49 Actress — Adams
50 Rodents
53 Go bad

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.

ROBERT DUVAL (1931-2026)

Solution: 6 letters

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

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4/2

A Civil Action, Actor, Apocalypse Now, Apostle, Bull, Colonel, Dogs, Award, Barbara, Broken Trail, Brophy, Bull, Colonel, Dogs, Emmy, Film, Gail, Jack, Jerome, Joseph, Kilgore, Lonesome Dove, Luciana, Mac Sledge, Open, Palmer, Pedraza, Ritter, Role, Sharon, Star, Stoic, Talent, Tender Mercies, The Godfather, The Great Santini, Tom Hagen, Youngs

TODAY'S ANSWER: Napalm

Hall of Famer Fred McGriff to headline Boys & Girls Clubs fundraiser

By Kathryn Crockett
kathryn@albanyherald.com

ALBANY — For Jacqueline Robinson, CEO of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Albany, the mission isn’t defined by programs alone. It’s defined by possibility.

“The needs of young people have shifted drastically,” Robinson said. “And we remain agile to serve the whole child and the whole family.”

That mission will take center stage April 16, when the organization hosts its 38th annual Steak & Burger Dinner, featuring Baseball Hall of Famer Fred McGriff as keynote speaker. More than a fundraiser, Robinson said the event is designed to connect Albany’s leaders directly with the young people the organization serves, and to demonstrate what’s possible when those connections are made early.

“For nearly four decades, this event has connected our community with the young people we serve in a powerful and personal way,” Robinson said. “It’s an opportunity to see the impact up close.”

McGriff’s story mirrors the organization’s mission.

A 2023 inductee into the National Baseball Hall of Fame, McGriff built a 19-year Major League Baseball career defined by consistency and power. A five-time All-Star, he recorded 493 home runs and 1,550 RBIs, helping lead the Atlanta Braves to a World Series championship in 1995.

But Robinson said it’s what came before baseball that matters most.

McGriff, a Boys & Girls Club alumnus from Tampa, credits the organization with helping shape his path — a journey that later earned him induction into the Boys & Girls Clubs of America Alumni Hall

of Fame.

“His story is a testament to the impact of Boys & Girls Clubs,” Robinson said. “We are honored to welcome him to Albany to inspire both our youth and our community partners.”

The Steak & Burger Dinner — now in its 38th year — is the organization’s largest annual fundraiser, typically drawing more than 700 attendees.

Robinson said the event’s deeper purpose is relationship-building.

During the dinner, club members host local leaders over a shared meal, a format designed to break down barriers and create meaningful mentorship opportunities.

“It’s a community catalyst event,” Robinson said. “People leave asking, ‘How can I do more?’”

The evening also highlights the organization’s top youth leaders, including finalists in its Youth of the Year program, a rigorous, months-long competition involving essays, interviews and public speaking.

“Being named Youth of the Year is the highest honor a club member can achieve,” Robinson said. “These teens

are standing in front of hundreds of people, sharing their stories. That kind of growth is life-changing.”

Founded more than 60 years ago, Boys & Girls Clubs of Albany now serves more than 2,000 students annually across Dougherty, Macon and Sumter counties through eight club locations. Programs include after-school academic support, summer enrichment and meals, leadership and character development, and workforce and college readiness initiatives.

Robinson said the organization’s role has expanded as economic pressures on families have intensified.

“We get the privilege of making sure our kids have a safe place, a hot meal and access to opportunity,” she said. “But we can’t do it alone, partnerships are critical.”

That support, she said, has measurable impact. A recent statewide study found that for every dollar invested in Boys & Girls Clubs, communities see a return of more than \$10 through improved outcomes for youth and families.

The fundraiser also helps support the organization’s eight-week summer program, which Robinson described as

critical for both students and working families.

Operating throughout the summer months, the program is designed to prevent learning loss while providing a safe, structured environment during hours when many parents are at work. Mornings focus on academic enrichment, including STEM activities, literacy and math instruction, while afternoons incorporate recreational programming, field trips and hands-on learning experiences.

“We want to do our part to mitigate summer learning loss,” Robinson said. “But beyond that, we’re creating an environment where kids can explore, build confidence and stay engaged.”

A cornerstone of the program is its Learn to Swim and water safety component, which serves hundreds of children each year and reflects the organization’s broader focus on safety and life skills.

Robinson said the goal is to ensure no child is turned away due to financial barriers.

“Cost should never be a barrier to participation,” she said. “This program exists because our community believes in making opportunity accessible to every child.”



Fred McGriff

The event will be held at 6 p.m. April 16 at Albany State University’s West Campus Arena.

For sponsorship opportunities or additional information, contact Eddie McBride

at jmcbride@bgcalbany.org or call (229) 439-0196.

“Albany needs Club kids,” Robinson said. “And Boys & Girls Clubs wouldn’t be possible without our community.”



Tickets on sale for 26th Albany senior citizens prom

By Alan Mauldin
alan.mauldin@albanyherald.com

ALBANY — Around 200 Albany and area senior citizens will get the red carpet treatment during a Hollywood-themed senior prom that will allow participants to put on their finest and dance the night away.

“A Night on the Hollywood Red Carpet” will be the theme of the 26th edition of the annual dance tailored for dancing

enthusiasts ages 50s through their 90s. The Senior Citizen Prom is scheduled for June 26 at the Albany Civic Center.

Tickets are on sale for \$30 and are available at the Albany Recreation & Parks Department’s 1301 N. Monroe St. office or by visiting recdesk.arpd.com.

“I’m very excited and I’m looking forward to this,” ARPD Supervisor Tee Taylor said. “It will be a good time. It’s

just like Hollywood. Once you come on the red carpet, we will acknowledge you and we will have the lights. We’re going to do a Hollywood red carpet and celebrate 26 years.”

Tickets usually sell out fast, so individuals who want to be a part of the celebration are encouraged to act quickly.

Joining the revelers will be a number of groups whose men are expected to serve as dance partners for ladies who come alone. These include a motorcycle club, Men on a Mission, Al Rakim Temple No. 142, Albany and Dougherty County employees and Marines from Marine Corps Logistics Base-Albany.

“There are so many that come out and help us with this,” Taylor said. “We also do a lot of line dancing. So we kind of mix it up.”

Having hosted the dance for many years, Taylor said that she is honored to have been a part of the event that has been a hit for nearly three decades.



File Photo: Alan Mauldin

An enthusiastic crowd of more than 200 celebrated the return in 2023 of the Senior Citizens Prom after the event was canceled for three years due to COVID-19.

“It’s great because we get to have fun, meet new friends, dance and, most of all, they are dancing with their age group,” she said. “They get to hear the oldies. Some of them go back to the ‘50s. You have people who are 86, even people who are 92.”

When Taylor says that people can make new friends,

she is not kidding.

“I had a young lady who ended up getting married, and they said they met at the prom,” she said. “This is just a way of giving back to our seniors, just to have fun and dance the night away. We want to encourage them to come out, dress up and have a good time.”

Dougherty Commission gets update on \$190,000 black history trail project

By Alan Mauldin
alan.mauldin@albanyherald.com

ALBANY — Dougherty County commissioners got an update on Monday on a black history trail project that is scheduled for completion at the end of the year.

Clennon King, an Albany native, documentary filmmaker and journalist who is spearheading the project, addressed the commission’s Governmental Affairs Committee about the project.

King, who has frequently referred to the area as “holy ground” when it comes to black history, has dubbed the work “The Resistance Trail of Southwest Georgia.”

He said the project will include historical events including what King described as the largest slave sale in Georgia’s history that took place at the site of today’s court-

house building in downtown Albany.

The sale of 566 people netted a reported \$580,000 at the time, or nearly \$21 million in 2025 dollars, he said.

The trail will include an online description of the story of some of the county’s more famous former inhabitants, like Ray Charles, who was born in Albany. It will also give directions to visit sites in person.

Others that King mentioned on Monday include an aunt of actor Denzel Washington. whom King said is buried in an unmarked grave in Mitchell County, and singer Patti LaBelle’s father, who was born in southwest Georgia.

The commission approved the black history trail project in February 2025 in a 5-2 vote at a cost of \$190,000.

During an update last year, King said the focus was writ-

ing 20 scripts for historic sites. On Monday, he said that the project would include 100 topics and people, including some outside Dougherty County.

One criticism during the committee meeting came from Commissioner Russell Gray, who asked whether individuals would be drawn to visit Dougherty County when so much information will be available online.

“Now the world can see what we have,” Commissioner Victor Edwards said. “It’s just showing the world what we have. I like this because otherwise we would not be able to share our story.”

Commission Chairman Lorenzo Heard also disagreed with Gray’s take.

“I’m saying to you this is what draws tourism,” he said. “I think we are creating what we need to drive traffic.”

DARTS MPO
NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING
The Dougherty Area Regional Transportation Study (DARTS) will hold its quarterly committee meetings on Wednesday, April 8, 2026 and Thursday, April 16, 2026. DARTS meetings are open to the public and will be held hybrid via Zoom or In-Person at 240 Pine Avenue, Suite 380.

Citizens Transportation Committee
April 8, 2026 at 9:00 A.M.
Join Zoom Meeting Link:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85264147723?pwd=agr6CF4aahi5klFxiTbL27RHxfVRdd.1>
Meeting ID: 852 6414 7723
Passcode: 170327

Technical Coordinating Committee
April 16, 2026 at 9:00 A.M.
Join Zoom Meeting Link:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82860195144?pwd=cXFcW0TSQJn27AhgMEtSr1d8dK9fNC.1>
Meeting ID: 828 6019 5144
Passcode: 466352

Policy Committee
April 16, 2026 at 10:00 A.M.
Join Zoom Meeting Link:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89900069975?pwd=6FHI716cRtEUIVYtexRQsoAQ7B3pQZ.1>
Meeting ID: 899 0006 9975
Passcode: 094563

City of Albany Planning & Development Services
240 Pine Avenue, Suite 300, Albany, GA 31701

If you have any questions, please contact Transportation Planner, Tanner Anderson, at (229) 302-1843 or taanderson@albanyga.gov

DARTS MPO
AVISO DE REUNIÓN PÚBLICA
El Estudio Regional de Transporte del Área de Dougherty (DARTS) llevará a cabo sus reuniones trimestrales de comité el miércoles 8 de abril de 2026 y el jueves 16 de abril de 2026. Las reuniones de DARTS están abiertas al público y se realizarán de forma híbrida a través de Zoom o en persona en 240 Pine Avenue, Suite 380.

Comité de Transporte Ciudadano
8 de abril de 2026 a las 9:00 a.m.
Enlace para unirse a la reunión de Zoom:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85264147723?pwd=agr6CF4aahi5klFxiTbL27RHxfVRdd.1>
ID de la reunión: 852 6414 7723
Código de acceso: 170327

Comité de Coordinación Técnica
16 de abril de 2026 a las 9:00 a.m.
Enlace para unirse a la reunión de Zoom:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82860195144?pwd=cXFcW0TSQJn27AhgMEtSr1d8dK9fNC.1>
ID de la reunión: 828 6019 5144
Código de acceso: 466352

Comité de Políticas
16 de abril de 2026 a las 10:00 a.m.
Enlace para unirse a la reunión de Zoom:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89900069975?pwd=6FHI716cRtEUIVYtexRQsoAQ7B3pQZ.1>
ID de la reunión: 899 0006 9975
Código de acceso: 094563

Servicios de Planificación y Desarrollo de la Ciudad de Albany
240 Pine Avenue, Suite 300, Albany, GA 31701

Si tiene alguna pregunta, comuníquese con el Planificador de Transporte, Tanner Anderson, al (229) 302-1843 o al correo electrónico taanderson@albanyga.gov

Golden Rams win 20th game, beat Middle Georgia, 6-3

By Joe Whitfield
Sports Editor

After dropping a 9-6 decision to Middle Georgia earlier this month in Cochran, the Golden Rams got their answer Tuesday afternoon — and they got it with pitching, patience and just enough timely hitting to finish the job. Behind a dominant bullpen and a steady offensive approach, Albany State pulled away for a 6-3 non-conference victory at ASU West, pushing the Golden Rams to 20-12 on the season and an impressive 15-1 mark at home. “We needed that one!” Albany State head coach Scot Hemmings said. “We held our free passes to five and pitched the ball really well. Nunez got off to a good start and Will Pridgen and Riley Barker were great out of the pen. I wish we would have had some more timely hitting as we left 20 runners on base, but I am proud of our Tuesday win. I

think we are trending in the right direction.” The Golden Rams wasted little time setting the tone. Albany State struck for two runs in the first inning when Mason Turner delivered an RBI single and Ty Grover followed with a productive at-bat to make it 2-0. But Middle Georgia answered in the third, stringing together three runs on three hits to briefly take a 3-2 lead. That momentum didn’t last long. The Golden Rams responded immediately in the bottom half of the inning, reclaiming control with a two-run rally. Emory Stephens tied the game with an RBI single before Ryan Brown followed with a run-scoring hit to give Albany State a 4-3 advantage — a lead it would not relinquish. From there, the game belonged to Albany State’s pitching staff. After starter Armando Nunez worked through the early innings, the bullpen

took over and slammed the door. Pridgen earned the win with 2.2 scoreless innings, striking out five and allowing no hits. Riley Barker, Luke Hayes and Dereck Foster followed with shut-down efforts, combining to hold Middle Georgia scoreless over the final six innings. Foster closed things out with a clean ninth to record his third save of the season. In all, Albany State pitchers limited Middle Georgia to just six hits while striking out seven and stranding multiple scoring threats. Offensively, the Golden Rams created chances all afternoon — sometimes more than they could cash in. Albany State drew 11 walks and had traffic on the bases throughout the game, finishing with nine hits and leaving 20 runners on base. Still, the lineup produced in key moments.



Staff Photo: Joe Whitfield
Albany State first baseman Ty Grover stretches for an out as Middle Georgia’s Dayton Taylor races toward the base.
See **RAMS**, 10A



Staff Photo: Joe Whitfield
Dougherty’s Terrance Noel is the Albany Herald Coach of the Year after taking the Trojans to the Elite Eight in his first season leading the program.



Staff Photo: Joe Whitfield
Monroe senior Brayden Burns is the Albany Herald Player of the Year after averaging 20.7 points per game for the Golden Tornadoes.

Terrance Noel, Brayden Burns lead Albany Herald’s All-Albany team

By Joe Whitfield
Sports Editor

Some years, the choices fall into place. This wasn’t one of them. This was a season of arguments — the good kind. The kind that start in gyms and carry into text messages, barbershops and late-night conversations. The kind that force you to look twice at résumés that, in most years, would stand alone. Start with the sideline. Westover’s Dallis Smith — the standard-bearer, the constant — did what he has always done. He built another winner. The Patriots ran the table in region play, climbed to No. 1 in the state rankings at one

point, and finished No. 5 in the final poll. Dominance, sustained and expected. At Deerfield-Windsor, Rundy Foster orchestrated something just as impressive. The Knights flirted with perfection, their only real resistance coming from Brookwood. They had positioned themselves for a serious postseason push before circumstances — illness to one player, suspension to another — changed everything at the worst possible time. Both were worthy. In most years, either would have been the choice. But this year wasn’t most years. This year belonged to Dougherty’s

Terrance Noel. First year on the job. Eight seniors gone from an Elite Eight team. A roster leaning heavily on freshmen. The kind of setup that usually signals a step back — a reset. Instead, Noel pushed forward. He trusted youth. He accelerated growth. And by season’s end, the Trojans were right back where they started — in the Elite Eight. Not rebuilding. Reloading. That’s why Terrance Noel is the Albany Herald’s Coach of the Year. If Noel reshaped expectations from the bench, Monroe’s Brayden Burns controlled them on the court.

See **ALL-ALBANYX**, 10A

Andy Ibanez and Jacob Wilson spark offense as A’s beat Braves

Field Level Media

Andy Ibanez and Jacob Wilson both drove in their first two runs of the season to help the visiting Athletics earn their first victory of the season, beating the Atlanta Braves 5-2 on Tuesday. The A’s had lost four straight games to start the season for the first time since 2021. Ibanez went 2-for-4, scored a run and drove in two. Wilson was 2-for-4 with a double and two RBIs. The Athletics, who were shut out on Monday, went 3-for-6 with runners in scoring position. A’s starter Aaron Civale (1-0), signed as a free agent in the offseason, looked solid in his first start of the season. He worked five innings and allowed two runs on four hits and one walk, striking out three, and posted his first career victory against Atlanta. The bullpen covered the final four innings for the Athletics, with Hogan Harris, Justin Sterner, Scott Barlow and Mark Leiter Jr. each pitching a scoreless frame. The Braves made it interesting in the ninth, placing runners at first and second with one out. But Leiter struck out Ronald Acuna Jr. and retired Drake Baldwin on a popup



Special Photo: Brett Davis-Imagn Images
Oakland’s Jacob Wilson swings during Tuesday night’s game against the Braves in Atlanta. Wilson knocked in two runs to help the A’s record their first win of the year.

to earn his first save. The losing pitcher was opener Jose Suarez (0-1), who pitched 3 2/3 innings and allowed four runs on five hits and three walks, with six strikeouts. Joel Payamps followed and allowed one run in one inning and Martin Perez worked the final 4 1/3 innings without giving up a run. Atlanta scored in the first inning on a solo homer from Baldwin, his third.

The A’s answered with three runs in the second. Ibanez drove in one with a single and Wilson hit a bases-loaded ground-rule double to add two more. Ibanez drove home Max Muncy, who led off with a double, in the fourth. Shea Langeliers hit a solo homer, his fourth, in the fifth inning to extend the lead to 5-1. The Braves cut into the lead in the fifth inning on a sacrifice fly from Acuna.

Baconton Charter edges Miller County 2-1

By Joe Whitfield
Sports Editor

BACONTON — In a game that felt every bit like a postseason preview, Baconton Charter leaned on the steady left arm of Hudson Coronati and a timely two-out hit from C.J. Richardson to slip past Miller County, 2-1, Tuesday afternoon in a battle for first place in Region 1-A. With both teams entering the day tied atop the standings, the matchup delivered exactly what was expected — a tight, tense pitcher’s duel between two of the region’s top left-handers in Coronati and Miller County’s Thomas Cook. Coronati was masterful. The Baconton ace went the distance, allowing just three hits and one unearned run across seven innings while striking out eight and walking two. Time and again, he worked out of trouble, none bigger than in the third inning when Miller County threatened with two runners on base before a brief delay caused by an altercation in the Pirates’ dugout. When play resumed, Coronati calmly returned to the mound and struck out the next batter to end the inning and preserve Baconton’s early lead. That lead came in the second inning, though it nearly slipped away before it ever materialized. The Blazers loaded the bases in the first but came up empty. An inning later, Victor Esquivel reached on an error and advanced into scoring position on another miscue. With two outs, Preston Hurst delivered, ripping a hard ground ball single to bring Esquivel home for a 1-0 advantage. Baconton threatened for more, but Miller County cut down pinch runner Grant Shiver in a rundown to limit the damage. Miller County answered in the fourth without the benefit of a hit. After Cook reached on a Baconton error and was replaced by pinch runner Gabriel Lopez, the Pirates used a single from Tucker Clay to set the table. Lopez eventually scored on a double play ball off the bat of Tucker Cook, tying the game at 1-1. From there, it was a matter of which team would blink first. Baconton didn’t. Daniel Cruz sparked the decisive fifth inning with a leadoff walk and moved to second on a sacrifice bunt by Kayden Logue. After Miller County intentionally walked Quinten Peterson with two outs, Richardson stepped in and delivered the biggest swing of the day — a single to center field that scored Cruz and gave the Blazers a 2-1 lead they would not relinquish.

Hurst, Baconton’s leadoff hitter, finished with two hits to pace the offense, while Richardson’s clutch knock proved to be the difference. Cook took the loss for Miller County despite a strong outing, allowing five hits and two runs — only one earned — over 4 2/3 innings while striking out seven and walking four. Dru Johnson closed out the game on the mound for the Pirates, who also got hits from Tucker Clay, Hezekiah Judkins and Creek Durden. The win lifts Baconton Charter to 12-1 in Region 1-A and 15-5 overall, keeping the Blazers alone atop the standings. Miller County falls to 12-1 in the region and 12-9 overall. With the region race now razor-tight, the two teams won’t have to wait long for the next chapter. The rematch is set for Thursday in Colquitt — and if Tuesday was any indication, another classic could be on the way.



Staff Photo: Joe Whitfield
Baconton Charter senior Hudson Coronati threw a gem Tuesday afternoon. The southpaw pitched a complete game, allowing just three hits and one unearned run as the Blazers beat Miller County, 2-1.

Hawks beat Celtics for 13th straight home win

Field Level Media

Jalen Johnson collected 20 points, 12 rebounds and five assists as the Atlanta Hawks extended their home winning streak to 13 games with a 112-102 victory over the Boston Celtics on Monday night.

Atlanta (43-33) received 20 points, 10 rebounds and three assists from Onyeka Okongwu, plus 18 points from Dyson Daniels. The Hawks have won 16 of their past 18 games.

Jaylen Brown led Boston with 29 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists, but he shot 9 of 29 from the field and committed six turnovers. Luka Garza added 20 points and nine boards for the Celtics (50-25), and Payton Pritchard finished with 16 points.

Boston had its three-game winning streak end.

The Celtics played without Jayson Tatum (injury management) and Neemias Queta (sprained thumb). Tatum scored 32 points on Sunday in Boston's 114-99 road victory over the Charlotte Hornets.

Atlanta's Jock Landale was ruled out due to illness.

It was the second meeting between the teams in the past four days. Boston prevailed 109-102 at home on Friday.

The Celtics shot 57.1% from the field in the first quarter and had a 30-29 lead after 12 minutes. Atlanta scored the first seven points of the second quarter to take a 36-30 lead, but Boston went back in front 42-41 on a Derrick White 3-pointer with 6:04

left in the half. The score was 54-54 at halftime.

Atlanta had the first double-digit lead of the game after a Jonathan Kuminga basket put the Hawks up 79-68 with 4:27 remaining in the third quarter. The Hawks outscored the Celtics 36-22 in the period and had a 90-76 advantage entering the final quarter.

The Hawks had their largest lead, 101-80, following a Zaccharie Risacher 3-pointer with 8:29 to play. Boston responded with a 15-2 run to pull within eight on a 3-pointer by Brown with 2:13 remaining, but Atlanta led by at least eight the rest of the way.



Special Photo: Kameron Taylor
Atlanta's Jalen Johnson, right, scored 20 points and grabbed 12 rebounds Monday night as the Hawks beat the Celtics 112-102 in Atlanta.

ALBANY STATE UNIVERSITY TRACK & FIELD

teams shine in Atlanta



Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

ATLANTA — Albany State's track and field teams didn't just show up at the Morehouse Relays.

They showed out.

Over three days of competition against a deep and talented field, the Golden Rams turned in one of their most complete performances of the season — the women finishing second overall and the men placing fourth — powered by a blend of star performances, depth and balance across nearly every event.

It was the kind of meet that revealed not just speed, but staying power.

On the women's side, Albany State leaned on its sprinters early and often, and few were better than Cadence Cray. The standout junior swept the 100-meter dash (11.81) and 200-meter dash (24.10), establishing herself as one of the meet's most dominant performers.

She wasn't alone.

Chavondria Crimes added a second-place finish in the 100 meters, while TyAsia Brown followed with a runner-up finish in the 200, giving the Lady Golden Rams a commanding presence in the sprint finals.

In the field events, Kaylee

Holloway delivered a powerful weekend, winning the discus with a throw of 43.86 meters and finishing second in the shot put. Skye Zwirner added a second-place finish in the javelin, and Cadence Tanner cleared 1.66 meters to win the high jump.

Albany State's depth showed up in the distance events as well.

Faith Thompson placed second in the 10,000-meter run, while Sydney Haywood contributed key points in both the 1,500 and 5,000 meters. Brea Vann added a fourth-place finish in the 800, rounding out a strong showing across multiple disciplines.

The Lady Golden Rams also made their mark in the multi-events, where DeAna Albert turned in one of the meet's most impressive all-around performances. Albert finished second in the heptathlon, highlighted by first-place finishes in the 100-meter hurdles and 200-meter dash.

Savannah Sparks (fifth) and Jasiyah McCutchen (seventh) added valuable points in the event, further underscoring Albany State's depth.

The weekend ended the way it began — with speed.

The Lady Golden Rams' 4x100-meter relay team captured first place with a time

of 46.06, putting an exclamation point on a dominant sprint performance.

The Albany State men matched that energy with a strong showing of their own, highlighted by explosive performances on the track and steady production in the field.

Jace Weaver led the way with a first-place finish in the 100-meter dash (10.66), while teammate Sanaljay Bentley, who posted the fastest time in the preliminaries, finished fourth in the finals.

Adoni Nembhard-Belcher added another victory for the Golden Rams, winning the 400 meters in 47.37, showcasing both speed and control down the stretch.

In the middle distances, Bangally Touray delivered a pair of podium finishes, placing third in both the 800 and 1,500 meters. Rayshawn Goodman added a fourth-place finish in the 800.

The field events provided steady points throughout the meet.

Michael Trimble placed second in the shot put, and he joined Tyler Nonnombro with scoring finishes in the hammer throw. Jamari Craig added a top-five finish in the discus, helping anchor a productive weekend for Albany State's throwers.

The Golden Rams also made noise in the relays.

The 4x100-meter relay team captured first place with a time of 41.69, while the 4x400 team added a fourth-place finish.

Freshman Skyler Pittman turned in one of the most complete performances on the men's side, finishing fourth in the decathlon. Pittman placed second in the high jump and finished in the top three in the long jump, 400 meters, pole vault and javelin, signaling a rising presence for the Golden Rams.

Las Vegas to host Super Bowl LXIII in February 2029

Field Level Media

The Raiders' home of Allegiant Stadium, just off the Las Vegas Strip, will host its second Super Bowl in a six-season span following the 2028 NFL campaign.

Super Bowl LXIII officially was awarded to Las Vegas on Monday during the owners' annual meetings in Phoenix. The game will be played on a TBD date in February 2029.

The city, long avoided by major leagues until the advent of legalized sports betting, hosted its first Super Bowl on Feb. 11, 2024, when the Kansas City Chiefs beat the San Francisco 49ers, 25-22, in Super Bowl LVIII.

"We're excited to bring the Super Bowl back to Las Vegas and provide our fans another incredible experience in one of America's greatest sport and entertainment destinations," NFL commissioner Roger Goodell said in a statement. "Super Bowl LVIII demonstrated the scale, energy and hospitality the city brings to global events, and we look forward to working alongside the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, the Raiders and the community to deliver an even greater experience this time around."

"We're excited that the Super Bowl will be returning

to Las Vegas and Allegiant Stadium in 2029," Las Vegas Raiders owner Mark Davis said. "It's a testament to the Raiders, the LVCVA, civic leaders, the community, and the NFL working together as one. Super Bowl LVIII set a high bar, and for Super Bowl LXIII we are committed to raising it even further."

SoFi Stadium, the home of the Los Angeles Rams and Chargers in Inglewood, Calif., will host its second Super Bowl next year while Atlanta's Mercedes-Benz Stadium returns to the rotation for Super Bowl LXII in February 2028.

Tiger Woods pleads not guilty, to seek treatment

Field Level Media

Tiger Woods released his first public statement since his rollover crash on Friday, announcing he would step away from golf to seek treatment in hopes of "lasting recovery."

Woods' statement Tuesday came soon after his attorney entered a plea of not guilty in a Florida court to charges stemming from the accident.

Woods, 50, is charged with misdemeanor driving under the influence with property damage, and refusal to submit to a urinalysis, according to court documents.

"I know and understand the seriousness of the situation I find myself in today," Woods' statement read. "I am stepping away for a period of time to seek treatment and focus on my health. This is necessary in order for me to prioritize my well-being and work toward lasting recovery."

"I'm committed to taking the time needed to return in a healthier, stronger and

more focused place, both personally and professionally. I appreciate your understanding and support, and ask for privacy for my family, loved ones and myself at this time."

"Tiger Woods is a legend of our sport whose impact extends far beyond his achievements on the course," the PGA Tour said in statement. "But above all else, Tiger is a person, and our focus is on his health and well-being. Tiger continues to have our full support as he takes this important step."

Attorney Douglas Duncan represented Woods, who was not present in Martin County Circuit Court in Stuart, Fla. Duncan submitted the plea as well as the demand for a jury trial.

The 15-time major champion waived his arraignment hearing that was slated for April 23. The defense has 10 days to file motions in the case, to be heard in Florida's 19th Judicial Circuit.

Woods told police he was looking at his cellphone and changing the radio station before his Land Rover crashed near his home in Jupiter Island, Fla., according to the arrest affidavit released on Tuesday by the Martin County Sheriff's Office. Woods said he didn't see a truck that was hauling a trailer slow down, per the affidavit, and his car clipped the trailer and rolled onto its side.

The golfer was jailed on a charge of suspicion of misdemeanor DUI with property damage following the accident and was released on a \$1,000 bond about eight hours later.

Martin County Sheriff John Budensiek said a breathalyzer test showed no signs of alcohol, but that Woods refused a urinalysis test for other drugs.

Woods was "sweating profusely" and his movements were "lethargic and slow" during an interview with sheriff's deputy Tatiana Levenar, she



Special Photo:
Tiger Woods

wrote in the arrest affidavit.

Another deputy "observed several signs of impairment and requested I conduct a DUI Investigation to ensure Woods was able to operate the motor vehicle in a safe manner at the time of the collision," Levenar wrote in the affidavit.

During the field sobriety exercises, the deputy wrote that Woods was "limping and stumbling to the right." Woods told the deputy he had undergone seven back surgeries and more than 20 operations on his right leg since a major car accident near Los Angeles in 2021.

Duncan also represented Woods in that case. Woods, arrested on suspicion of DUI, later pleaded guilty to reckless driving and agreed to enter a diversion program.

Woods had said in the 2021 incident that he had taken a bad mix of painkillers. In the Martin County arrest report from last week, Woods denied consuming any alcohol but said he had taken "a few" prescription pills that morning.

Names of the medications were redacted in the affidavit, however, another Martin County Sheriff's deputy found two hydrocodone pills in Woods' left pants pocket. Hydrocodone was found in Woods' system in his 2017 arrest.

Levenar noted in the report that Woods' eyes were "blood-shot and glassy" and his pupils were "extremely dilated."

"Based on my observations of Woods, how he performed the exercises and based on my training, knowledge, and experience, I believed his normal facilities were impaired, and he was unable to safely operate the motor vehicle," Levenar wrote.

From 9A ALL- ALBANY

Burns, the Albany Herald Player of the Year, was relentless. His 20.7 points per game only tell part of the story. He was the shot-maker when possessions broke down, the scorer when Monroe needed a run, the player opponents built entire game plans around — and still couldn't contain.

Westover's Gregory Williams earned Offensive Player of the Year honors by doing what great offensive players do: produce, consistently and efficiently. His 14.3 points per game came within the rhythm of a balanced attack, but when the moment called for more, Williams delivered.

Lee County's TJ Williams anchored the defensive end with a different kind of impact — the kind that doesn't always show up in the box score but changes everything. He guarded the best, disrupted the rest, and earned Defensive Player of the Year honors with effort that never dipped.

And at Dougherty, the future is already arriving.

Jherel Gibson, the Freshman of the Year, wasn't just promising — he was productive. A key piece of Noel's rotation, Gibson helped fuel a run that few saw coming this quickly.

What emerges from this year's All-Albany team is a picture of depth — across programs, across styles, across experience levels.

From established contenders to rising groups, the talent ran deep.

First Team

Josiah Franklin, Lee County
Marcus Heath Jr., Dougherty
Jalen Holmes, Westover
David Hutchins, Deerfield-Windsor
TK Johnson, Westover
Tristan Terry, Monroe
Jaxon Reese, Westover
Elijah Rivers, Monroe

Second Team

Jack Moore, Deerfield-Windsor
Trecori Green, Lee County
David Burgess, Dougherty
Owen McFarlin, Byne Baptist
Tripp Roberts, Sherwood Christian
Mikel Roberts, Dougherty
Jashawn Maddox, Lee County
Landon Horne, Byne Baptist

From 9A RAMS

Turner led the way with two hits and two RBIs, while Stephens and Brown each delivered run-scoring hits during the pivotal third inning. Isaiah Haygood and Aiden Payne reached base multiple times at the top of the order, and Luke Addison set the table with three walks.

The Golden Rams added insurance runs in the seventh and eighth innings — one scoring on a hit-by-pitch with the bases loaded and another on a bases-loaded walk — taking advantage of their disciplined approach

at the plate to extend the lead to 6-3.

For a team that has made a habit of protecting its home field, Tuesday's win followed a familiar script: early production, bullpen dominance and enough execution late to finish.

Now, with momentum building and a milestone 20th win secured, the Golden Rams will turn their attention back to conference play.

Albany State travels to Atlanta this weekend for a key SIAC series against Morehouse, beginning Friday and continuing with a Saturday doubleheader — another opportunity to prove Hemmings' message is taking hold.

Georgia Power begins construction of newest battery storage facility

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

WADLEY – Georgia Power recently started construction on a new 260-megawatt battery energy storage system in Jefferson County, just outside of the city of Wadley. The project, approved by the Georgia Public Service Commission, is located beside the existing third-party-owned Wadley solar facility and near existing transmission infrastructure. The new Wadley BESS is a company-owned asset that strengthens the grid and the area's growing renewable energy resources.

Members of the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners, the Wadley City Council, and other community partners joined Georgia Power leaders to break ground on the project, underscoring the strong partnerships that will help bring this project to life. The event spotlighted not only the importance of the project but also the lasting economic

impact and benefits it will bring to Jefferson County.

“On behalf of the Jefferson County community, we welcome this Georgia Power project,” Mitchell McGraw, chairman of the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners, said. “We’re so proud to have your investment in Jefferson County, and we hope for more in the future.”

Designed to quickly dispatch stored energy over a four-hour period, the 260 MW system will strengthen reliability and support the growing mix of renewable resources on Georgia’s electric system. At this battery and solar co-located facility, battery energy storage helps capture power generated by renewable resources to use during peak demand periods, such as on cold winter mornings.

Battery energy storage helps capture renewable resources produced during periods when the demand for electricity is lower, to use when the demand is higher,

such as on cold winter mornings. These projects help to address the state’s growing power needs identified in the 2025 Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) in a cost-effective and strategic manner.

“At Georgia Power, our collaboration with the Georgia PSC and other stakeholders is key to making necessary investments for a reliable and resilient power grid,” Kerry Bridges, region executive for Georgia Power, said. “With the construction of the 260 MW BESS in Jefferson County, we are able to better serve our customers today and support Georgia’s growth.

“As we expand our energy mix to include more renewable sources, these batteries will play an invaluable role in helping ensure reliability and flexibility, particularly when renewable sources are not available.”

The Wadley BESS project, constructed by Burns & McDonnell, is expected to be completed in 2027.

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.

“ U T M K B M H Z U T T Z ’ O I K V , O T Y R T X R . . .
O S T Z R K Z Z Y V Y H M M T M O K X I H N K I S T
J T N T E M O P H S N T E S O R R H X J Y V O R Z U ! ”
— D K Y R O U M K X F T

Previous Solution: “Every novel begins with the speculative question, ‘What if ‘X’ happened?’ That’s how you start.” — Tom Clancy
TODAY’S CLUE: *d s i e n b e g*
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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 F Z S L X H M H S M Z U K Y , L I U L S J B
V H U K B I T Z G B L T L S J G B T T . L ’ W B T G B O Y
V U Z V B U Z X . ” — U L M F B U X T Z G L Y

Previous Solution: “For April Fool’s Day, someone ... stole ALL my mirrors and I had to go hours without seeing myself!” — James Franco
TODAY’S CLUE: *m s i e n b e g*
© NEA, Inc., dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication 4-2

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
1 pedaling a bike (7)
2 spots for studs (8)
3 overstated (11)
4 tries to spin (10)
5 all thumbs (5)
6 widening of the eyes (8)
7 beginning of the end (6)

SOLUTIONS

RC EXAG EA CYC OB
LING ED LA GER OATS
ES INE SUGA RL DILA
PT LY TION ST AT

Tuesday’s Answers: 1. OVER 2. OLIVER 3. ERUPTION
4. TRUNK 5. VEGGIES 6. ASTUTE 7. SCALLOP

© 2026 Blue Ox Family Games, Inc., Dist. by Andrews McMeel

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
1 highest points (9)
2 completely surprise (11)
3 in a very hesitant way (11)
4 a full inbox, perhaps (7)
5 trait of a skinflint (9)
6 largest Canadian bay (6)
7 Italian composer Paganini (7)

SOLUTIONS

NIC PIN CLES OG RELU
TLY AP GAST SON FL
HUD ABB CHE NA KL
ER COLO BAC CTAN NESS

Wednesday’s Answers: 1. CYCLING 2. EARLOBES 3. EXAGGERATED
4. SUGARCOATS 5. INEPT 6. DILATION 7. LASTLY

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Mr. David Taylor
William David Taylor, age 80 passed away peacefully on March 22 of Pneumonia complications at Harborview Tifton Skilled Nursing Facility in the wonderful care of their Hospice team after bravely battling cancer for many years. David was born in Albany, GA to Charles “CW” and Alice Taylor on March 12, 1946. He earned a Business degree from University of Georgia and was proudly enlisted in the United States Air Force as a Navigation and Bombing Trainer Specialist before working for over 25 years for Dekalb county making a successful career as a tax appraiser assisting small businesses. He set roots in Decatur GA, building a family and life there for 30 years that he was extremely proud of. He was active in many youth sport events, school concerts, marching band performances, essentially every single thing he could do to support his son Daniel.

He made countless friends through his work and his many hobbies including horseback riding, fishing, golf, fantasy baseball, target shooting, and became a master of caning furniture; and of course cheering for his beloved Georgia Bulldogs and the Atlanta Braves. David’s sense of humor, story telling and quick wit, along with his endless endeavor to help all those around him will be greatly missed by everyone who knew him.

He is survived by his loving wife of 55 years Daniela M. Taylor, his son Daniel W. Taylor (Victoria Meliopoulos), Sister Linda Windham, and brother Mike Taylor (Don Brown) and his true love, his horse Tico.

A memorial will be held at Kimbrell-Stern Funeral Home in Albany, GA, officiated by Rev. Ronnie Kinsaul with prayers by Rev. Caroline Leach on April 3rd. Services will be at 1PM with visitation starting at Noon.

In Leu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to either the Albany Humane Society (<https://albanyhumane.org/donate>) or Tunnel to Towers (<https://t2t.org>)

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Albany Legals

Construction/Service Bids

INVITATION TO SUBMIT QUALIFICATIONS ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES
Bid No. 26-FAC-008

Qualification Packages will be received by Christy Wilkerson, Interim Director Facilities Services, on behalf of the **Dougherty County Board of Education** in the Office of the **Logistical Services Department** located at **601 Flint Avenue, Albany, Georgia, 31701 until 2:00 PM EST on Thursday, April 23, 2026.**

The scope of services includes Architectural Design and Construction Administration Services for New Construction Projects; Renovations, Modifications, and/or Additions Projects; and HVAC/Plumbing Fixture Upgrades associated with Educational SPLOST (ESPLOST), GaDOE Capital Outlay, and other funding sources. The Construction Delivery Method will be Design/Bid/Build with Owner provided, third-party Program Management Services. DCSS's intent is for the selection process to pre-qualify Architectural Firms in order to establish an approved 'pool' of qualified Firms from which to choose for future projects.

There will be a **VIRTUAL PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETING** at **1:00 PM EST on Monday, April 13, 2026 via Google Meet:**

Meeting Code:
meet.google.com/wec-vhaw-rjm
Phone Number: **470-499-0125**
PIN: **610 627 850#**
Firms planning to attend should complete the Virtual Pre-Submittal Meeting Response Form (Exhibit 1) and e-mail it to christy.wilkerson@dccoschools.org. **RFQ Documents** may be obtained from the DCSS Facilities Services Department. Requests for RFQ Documents shall be addressed to Christy Wilkerson via e-mail: christy.wilkerson@dccoschools.org. Christy can be reached by phone at (229) 431-1301. All inquiries or questions concerning the RFQ Documents shall be addressed to Christy Wilkerson.

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ACROSS
1 Rae of "Barbie"
5 Baseball card giant owned by Fanatics
10 Covert summons
14 Court dividers
15 Fast train in the Northeast
16 Hoppy drafts
17 Insta post
18 Untamed
19 Namesake of a speed ratio
20 Cause of inflation
21 Spotty?
23 ____ Lanka
24 Celestial explosions
26 "____ a chance"
27 Bygone anesthetic
29 Standing straight
30 Church headquartered in SLC
31 "Shrinking" actor/co-creator Goldstein
32 The Phanatic's team, on scoreboards
33 Basket made on a rebound
35 Form 1099 agcy.
36 Dry as a desert
37 Soul singer Baker
38 Creative degs.
40 Campaign-funding gps.
41 "The Hunger Games" ally of Katniss
42 Trig ratio
43 Weekly skit show, familiarly
44 Symbol produced by pressing shift+5
46 Cell service letters
47 Just make do
49 Spanish infinitive
50 "Darn it!"
52 Add up to
54 Connecticut Ivy Leaguer
55 Some lead roles, or features of 3-, 7-, and 11-Down?
64 Hat part
65 Indulge
66 Group of three

DOWN
67 Turn down
68 "But of course!"
69 Goes on and on
44 Combustible pile
45 Soft mineral
48 Pleasant, as a summer night
51 Good at banter, say
53 Parrot
54 "I'm all ____!"
55 Up in the air, briefly
34 Bread baked in a tandoor
36 Church recess
39 Observed
59 Poehler who co-founded the Upright Citizens Brigade
60 Fish-to-be
61 Bullpen stat
62 Fabric tear
63 Request for a tropical getaway, perhaps?

ANSWER TO TODAY'S PUZZLE:

S	I	V	A	S	E	A	H	O	A	N	E	O
O	I	B	L	H	O	W	N	H	W	I	B	B
S	H	E	I	O	V	H	O	T	I	L	I	L
			I	T	E							
N	V	W	M	V	H	E	S	A	B	E	X	E
E	L	T	I	N	E	O	H	E	D	T	N	S
E	N	I	S	V	L	E	E	D	S	O	V	D
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By Kiran Pandey
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Jones Welding & Industrial Supplies celebrates 50 years of service

Staff Reports

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ALBANY — Jones Welding & Industrial Supplies Inc., one of the largest independently owned welding and industrial distributors in Georgia, is celebrating its 50th Anniversary with a community open house on Thursday, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at its Albany headquarters.

The celebration comes at a meaningful time, as April is recognized as National Welding Month by the American Welding Society, highlighting the critical role welding plays in infrastructure, manufac-

turing, and work force development across the country.

A special 50th-anniversary ribbon-cutting ceremony and mayoral proclamation will take place at 11 a.m. in partnership with the Albany Area Chamber of Commerce.

Originally founded in 1976 as M&O Welding Supply, the company was taken over in 1984 by Larry and Sheila Jones, laying the foundation for what would become Jones Welding & Industrial Supplies. From its roots as a single-location operation in Albany, the company has grown into a regional leader with 14 locations serving customers across

the tri-state area of Georgia, Florida and Alabama. While the company has expanded significantly over the past five decades, its commitment to service, expertise, and strong customer relationships has remained unchanged.

“Fifty years in business doesn’t happen by accident,” Brandon Jones, the owner of Jones Welding & Industrial Supplies, said. “It takes great people, strong partnerships, and a commitment to doing things the right way every day. We’re proud of where we started, but even more excited about where we’re headed.”

“This milestone is incredibly meaningful to us,” company HR & Marketing Director Candice Godby said. “What started as a small local business has grown into something much bigger, but our focus has never changed — taking care of our customers and supporting the industries and communities we serve.”

The open house will feature: More than 20 vendor representatives on-site;

Live product demonstrations;

Customer giveaways and prize drawings throughout the day;

A customer appreciation



vintage values. modern solutions.



Special Logo

lunch.

Jones Welding & Industrial Supplies continues to play an active role in work force development, supporting welding education programs, technical colleges, and skilled trades initiatives throughout the region — a mission that closely aligns with the purpose of National Welding Month.

The company was recently honored as the Albany Area Chamber of Commerce Small Business of the Year, fur-

ther recognizing its impact on the local economy and community.

Built in Albany and grown across the Southeast, Jones Welding’s 50-year milestone is a reflection of the community, customers, and partnerships that continue to drive its success — and the momentum carrying it into the future.

As the company celebrates its 50th year, its message remains clear: “Vintage values, modern solutions.”



Photo Courtesy of Georgia Farm Bureau

Georgia Farm Bureau’s mascot, Lucky, encourages farm families to enter their furry friends in the 2026 Georgia Farm Dog Contest.

Georgia Farm Bureau accepting entries for farm dog contest

Staff Reports

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MACON — Farm dogs play a special role on the farm. They may herd livestock or guard livestock and property. They also provide companionship and joy to their families.

That’s why Georgia Farm Bureau is looking to recognize a furry farm hero through its 2026 Georgia Farm Dog Contest. GFB is accepting entries for the contest until 10:59 p.m. on May 1 or until 200 entries are received, whichever comes first.

The contest is open to GFB members ages 18 and over. For complete contest rules and

the criteria entered dogs will be judged by, visit <https://gfb.ag/26farmdogcontest>. Judging for the contest will take place in May.

The winning dog and its human will be recognized in October at the 2026 Sunbelt

Ag Expo. The grand prize winner will receive a \$500 gift card.

Georgia farm dogs have some pretty amazing stories to tell, and GFB wants to tell them.

the organization is known for its love of dogs, as Lucky, an Australian Shepherd, has served as the organization’s mascot since 2021.

The 2025 winner of GFB’s second Georgia Farm Dog Contest was Rooster, an

Australian Shepherd from Eatonton. Rooster works beef and dairy cattle for his owner, Shawn Ruff. More is available about Rooster at <https://gfb.ag/roostergfb-farmdog>.

Georgia Farm Bureau is a grassroots organization dedicated to supporting the future of Georgia’s family farms and our access to locally grown food and fiber. Membership is open to everyone.

Environmental groups sue over Georgia Power energy expansion for data centers

By Alander Rocha

Georgia Recorder

ATLANTA — A group of environmental organizations has filed a lawsuit against the Georgia Public Service Commission, appealing the December approval of a massive expansion of power infrastructure for Georgia Power.

The 42-page lawsuit, filed in Fulton County Superior Court, alleges that the commission broke the law by approving nearly 10 gigawatts of new energy generation by not properly demonstrating a need for it, which the lawsuit argues is at the expense of customers. The groups argue that the December decision will leave “captive customers” on the hook for an estimated \$50 to \$60 billion in costs over the coming decades.

“With major energy policy decisions that would lock in Georgia Power ratepayers to paying for excessive, expensive dirty fossil fuel projects through 2075, the need for transparency and thorough review has never been more important,” Maggie Shober, research director for the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, said in a press release.

The lawsuit, filed by the Southern Environmental Law Center representing groups like the Georgia Interfaith Power and Light and the Sierra Club, claims that the commission approved 757 megawatts of resources that even Georgia Power’s own data showed were not needed to meet its projected demand.

Georgia Power said in commission proceedings that the massive request is to serve a projected surge in energy demand, largely driven by power-hungry data centers.

Matthew Kent, a spokesperson for Georgia Power, said in a statement that the commission’s December decision delivers savings of more than \$100 per year for the typical residential customer. Geor-

gia Power lawyers argued to commissioners that their energy infrastructure buildout would provide Georgia Power customers with about \$8.50 in “downward pressure” on monthly energy bills.

“We’re reviewing the petition in more detail, but we don’t agree that this positive, constructive plan for Georgia electric customers needs to be reconsidered,” Kent said.

A PSC spokesperson declined to comment on pending litigation.

But the environmental groups argue this demand is “speculative” and that customers bear all the risk if the growth fails to materialize.

The legal challenge comes after six rate increases for Georgia Power customers since 2023. Codi Norred, the executive director of Georgia In-



Special Photo: Alander Rocha, Georgia Recorder

A lawsuit filed by Georgia environmental groups alleges that the Public Service Commission broke the law by not properly demonstrating a need for nearly 10 gigawatts of new energy generation.

terfaith and Light, said in a phone interview that many congregations are struggling with rising energy costs, impacting their ability to serve their communities and missions.

“Obviously for congregations, the more that they’re

paying and rising utility rates is less money that they can put into the community,” Norred said. “That’s less money that they have to do their missions, and they’re also struggling with their memberships, many of whom are also unable to pay their bills.”

Canoeists, kayakers to compete for \$5,000 in Georgia Rivers Paddle-a-thon prizes

Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

ATHENS — Canoeists, kayakers and paddleboarders can compete for more than \$5,000 in prizes through Georgia Rivers’ annual Paddle-A-Thon competition designed to encourage Georgians to explore the state’s rivers and streams and raise funds to protect those same waterways.

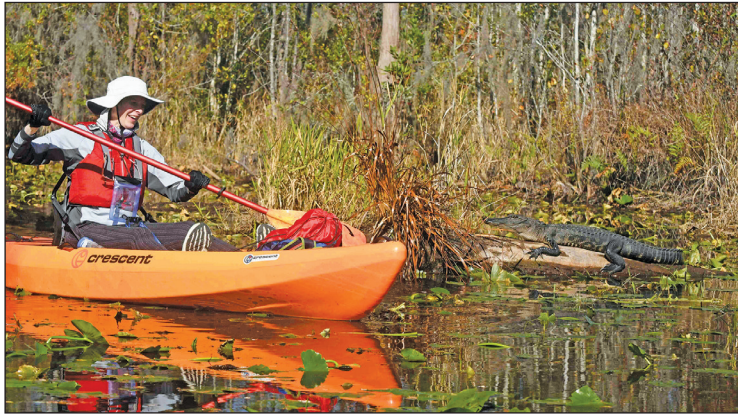
Participants can win prizes two ways: by being a top fundraiser or by simply taking a trip on a Georgia river. Paddle-A-Thon fundraisers have until June 19 to raise funds in the competition. Top fundraisers will be recognized and claim their prizes during Georgia Rivers’ Paddle Georgia 2026, a week-long canoe/kayak adventure on the Coosawattee and Oostanaula rivers set for June 14-20.

Supporters can learn more and register to compete at <https://garivers.org/paddle-georgia/paddleathon/>

The paddling portion of the competition, the Georgia Rivers Paddle-A-Thon Paddle Raffle, runs through Nov. 23. Those wishing to participate need only report their paddle trips to Georgia Rivers through an online form. Each paddle trip report submitted earns the participant a raffle ticket. The more reports submitted; the greater the chances of winning.

The raffle drawing will be held by Dec. 1.

Paddlers can learn more and begin submitting paddle trip reports at <https://garivers.org/paddle-georgia/paddleathon/>. All trips completed between Jan. 1 and Nov. 23, 2026 are eligible for Paddle Raffle tickets. If participants report removing trash from the stream during their trip,



Special Photo: Georgia Rivers

Canoeists, kayakers and paddleboarders can compete for more than \$5,000 in prizes through Georgia Rivers’ annual Paddle-A-Thon competition designed to encourage Georgians to explore the state’s rivers and streams and raise funds to protect those same waterways.

they are eligible for a second raffle ticket. And, all trips that originate, end or pass through a Georgia State Park will earn a raffle ticket to win a two-night stay in a Georgia State Park cottage or cabin.

Among other prizes up for grabs are \$250 gift certificates from Festive Water Paddlesports, a Cumming-based outfitter, and an Old Town kayak courtesy of Appalachian Outfitters in Dahlonega. Prizes from Patagonia in Atlanta, The Canoe House in Rome, The Hike Inn in Dawsonville, Savannah Canoe and Kayak, Southeast Adventure Outfitters in St. Simons, Wildwater Rafting on the Chattooga River, Whitewater Express in Columbus, Westbrook Supply in Atlanta and Mustang Survival also will be up for grabs.

“Paddle-A-Thon not only helps raise important funds to protect our rivers, it also provides us with valuable information about where Georgians are boating,” Georgia Rivers Executive Director Rena Peck said. “As we urge state leaders to protect access to and passage down Georgia’s streams, this information helps us identify popular boating destinations that need protection.”

Georgia Rivers is giving outdoor recreation enthusiasts

plenty of options for exploring the state’s waterways this year. The organization has planned more than two dozen group paddling and kayak fishing opportunities through November. The events include kayaking trips for beginners, kayak fishing classes and excursions, as well as trips celebrating America250, Georgia’s folk art tourist destinations and even wild fruit gathering and jam making. More information is available at: <https://garivers.org/events/>. Individuals interested in exploring the state’s rivers on their own can take advantage of Georgia Rivers’ Georgia River Guide app, available at both android and Apple app stores for free. The app provides detailed information for boaters about how to access and what to expect on dozens of Georgia rivers and streams. Learn more about the app at <https://garivers.org/georgiariverguide/>.

Georgia Rivers, also known as Georgia River Network, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with the mission of connecting people with and protecting Georgia’s rivers. It serves as the Georgia Department of Natural Resources’ nonprofit partner to coordinate the state’s water trail program.

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