



Perspectives
Lawrence Knighton
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The Albany HERALD



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Rose Frest blooms
Thomasville prepares
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ALBANYHERALD.COM

TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2026

Johnston named Horizons' chief executive officer

By **Kathryn Crockett**
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ALBANY — At a time when the average nonprofit staff tenure lasts just 16 to 18 months, Horizons, South Georgia's Cancer Coalition, is turning to a leader who has spent more than two decades growing alongside the organization.

The Horizons Board of Directors announced the promotion of Jennifer Johnston to chief executive officer, elevating a

long-time internal leader whose tenure spans the organization's modern history.

"Jennifer brings more than 20 years of experience at Horizons to the CEO position," Board Chair Matt Reed said. "She has led the organization as COO and CFO for the past 16 years. We are thrilled to have her lead Horizons forward as it continues to grow in both services and service areas."

Johnston joined Horizons in

2005 as an executive assistant and, over 21 years, has held what she described as "all the titles and roles," advancing alongside the organization as it expanded its reach and refined its mission.

That continuity stands in contrast to broader nonprofit trends, where organizations often face leadership turnover and shorter lifespans. Horizons, now more than 24 years old, has remained a consistent presence in south-west Georgia despite periods of



JENNIFER JOHNSTON

rebranding and program shifts.

Those shifts, Johnston said, have largely been shaped by

See **JOHNSTON**, 2A

THAT'S A WRAP: What did and didn't happen during legislative session



Special Photo: Ross Williams/Georgia Recorder

Senators celebrate the end of the 2026 legislative session by throwing ripped up bills into the air.

By **Ross Williams/Maya Homan/Alander Rocha**
Georgia Recorder

ATLANTA -- Georgia lawmakers put a bow on their 2026 legislative session after 1 a.m. Friday.

Something that did happen: Georgia lawmakers selected a new heritage cattle breed — the pineywoods cattle.

And some things that didn't happen: Lawmakers failed to meet a self-imposed deadline to eliminate QR codes on ballots, setting Georgia up to be out of compliance with its own law. They also did not take any action to rein in data centers despite consumer concerns over rising power prices.

Here are some of the more significant things that happened or pointedly did not happen on sine die.

A bill seeking to expand access for hormonal contraception is headed to Gov. Brian Kemp's desk, though a provision that would have required corn masa to be fortified with folic acid was stripped from the bill before it gained final passage on the last day of the 2026 legislative session.

House Bill 1138 was introduced by Rep. Beth Camp, a Concord Republican who said she was inspired to propose the legislation after her daughter faced a two-month delay renewing her birth control prescription.

If it gets the governor's signature, pharmacists will be able to prescribe contraception like birth control pills and shots directly to patients without needing a doctor to sign off.

A separate bill allowing Georgia residents to access HIV prevention medicine at their local pharmacy gained final passage a few days before the end of the 2026 session.

If you want to take ivermectin in Georgia without a prescription, you will need to be a horse, or shop like one.

Ivermectin is a medication used to kill parasites in humans and livestock and sometimes falsely claimed to be a miracle drug that can help treat cancer or COVID-19, despite no scientific evidence supporting those claims.

Senate Bill 440, a bill that would have made ivermectin available over the counter, passed the House but the Senate did not bring it up.

Johns Creek Democratic state Rep. Michelle Au, who is also a physician, called that a false choice.

"The choice is not between having to take human formulation ivermectin versus veterinary grade ivermectin. The real choice is whether or not people should take medications for the wrong reasons," she said.

The House and Senate agreed on a \$38.5 billion budget that leaders say is a compromise.

"The House gave on its priorities, the Senate

See **WRAP**, 2A

Food Truck Frenzy kicks off 2026 season in downtown Albany



Staff Photo: Alan Mauldin

Kemberly Sossah gets a bite of a sweet treat on Friday from mom Camille Mitchell at the first Food Truck Frenzy held in downtown Albany this year.

By **Alan Mauldin**
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ALBANY — Amy and Terry Carrington were not able to bring their refurbished food truck out on Friday, but the couple are on schedule to make the next one.

The city of Albany's annual Food Truck Frenzy kicked off last week for the Easter weekend, with food, Easter baskets and other treats for sale.

The Carringtons, Albany natives now living in Port St. Joe, Fla., were on hand to check out the event on its opening day and eyeing a potential location to set up once their Beach Burgers & Seafood truck is ready to hit the road.

"We're just out looking, having a good time today and enjoying the weather," Terry Carrington said.

Once their truck is ready, they plan to make Leesburg a regular location

See **FRENZY**, 2A

5k run in Camilla set to raise awareness of drug 'more dangerous than fentanyl'

By **Alan Mauldin**
alan.mauldin@albanyherald.com

CAMILLA — Nitazenes is not a word that is in most people's vocabulary. The synthetic opioid that officials say can be many times more potent than fentanyl just showed up on the radar of law enforcement about seven years ago after initially popping up in overdose deaths



MARQUAVIES BROUGHTON

in the Midwest.

Like fentanyl, nitazenes are a synthetic opioid. But while fentanyl has some medical uses, nitazenes were considered too risky and habit-forming for approval when they were developed in the 1950s.

For a Gwinnett County family, the knowledge of nitazenes came at a high price when Marquavies Broughton became the first known overdose death from the drug in Georgia in April 2025. Broughton reportedly bought the substance thinking it was a prescription pain medication and died in his mother's arms in Lawrenceville.

On Saturday, Cassenda Nelson is looking to bring awareness to the dangers of powerful opioids to the community with a 5k run/walk and community resource fair in Camilla. The event starts at 1 p.m. at 165 West Circle.

"He was the first," Nelson said. "What is in Atlanta is going to

come here. It's (nitazenes) 800 times stronger than morphine. This can reach any family."

Nelson formed the domestic violence nonprofit I&A Divyne Purpose in 2018, the year after her mother's ex-boyfriend killed her mother, Frances Nelson, and aunt, Mamie Childs, in a domestic violence case.

"The person that committed that crime was on drugs," Nelson said. "I wanted to spread this word about domestic violence, mental health and drug addiction in our community."

Broughton's mother, Frederica Roberson, is also holding an event on Saturday in Lawrenceville, she said.

Broughton, 21, had been sober for two months and reportedly relapsed, and the family had difficulties in accessing a treatment center that could immedi-

See **5K RUN**, 2A

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Top Georgia candidates competing in midterms set to debate

By Ross Williams
Georgia Recorder

ATLANTA -- Election season in Georgia is about to heat up even more.

The May 19 primary election, when Georgians will se-

lect party nominees for races up and down the ballot, is a month and a half away, and voters will soon have the chance to meet some of the candidates on their screens.

The Atlanta Press Club Loudermilk-Young Debate Series

is set to host primary election debates for top races April 26-28. Separate debates will be held between members of both major parties. Those who win next month's party primaries will go on to compete in the Nov. 3 general election.

Each debate can be watched live and on demand at GPB.org and The Atlanta Press Club's YouTube Debate channel, with select races also set to broadcast later on Georgia Public Broadcasting.

The April 26 livestream de-

bates are set to include the Republicans seeking to oust U.S. Sen Jon Ossoff, as well as Republicans and Democrats seeking the state's second-highest job, lieutenant governor.

Candidates for two open congressional seats – District 1 along the coast and District 10 in the eastern part of the state – will also get the chance to face off April 26. The districts' current representatives, Republicans Buddy Carter and Mike Collins, are running for U.S. Senate.

Candidates for governor are set to headline the April 27 debates.

Wealthy health care executive Rick Jackson's campaign announced this week that he will participate in the debate.

"Committing to the Loudermilk-Young Debate will provide voters across the state who want to watch a debate the ability to do so while allowing Rick to maximize his time visiting with voters across the state and learning directly from them about their concerns," Jackson campaign spokesman Brian Robinson said in a statement.

The commitment came after a call-out from another leading candidate, Lt. Gov. Burt Jones, who challenged Jackson to a debate on social media.

"I'll let him pick the venue. I'll let him pick the modera-

tor," Jones said.

Jones' campaign has confirmed he will be at the debate. Attorney General Chris Carr and Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger also have committed to participating in the GOP debate.

The big show will come after a couple of warm-up debates featuring members of both parties seeking to replace Republican Congressman Barry Loudermilk in north Georgia's District 11. Loudermilk recently announced he will not seek re-election.

Democrats running in Georgia's 13th Congressional District in the southern Atlanta metro region also will square off on the 27th. That district is represented by long-time Democratic Congressman David Scott.

Debates on the 28th are set to feature candidates from both parties for Georgia attorney general and secretary of state as well as candidates for the Public Service Commission's Districts 3 and 5. In District 3, Republican candidates will vie to take on Democrat Peter Hubbard, who recently flipped the seat in a special off-year election. In District 5, candidates from both parties will debate in an effort to replace Commissioner Tricia Pridemore, who is running for Congress in District 11.

For full details, visit www.atlantapressclub.org/debates.



Special Photo: J. Glenn Photography via Georgia Recorder

Journalist Donna Lowry moderates an Atlanta Press Club debate between 14th Congressional District candidates on Feb. 15. The Atlanta Press Club is set to host another debate series in April ahead of May's primary elections.

From 1A 5K RUN

ately accept him on the day he died, Nelson said.

In interviews with news media, Roberson said that an Uber courier delivered pills that were purportedly

Percocet but were laced with nitazenes.

"One death in Georgia is enough," Nelson said. "We couldn't prevent that one, but maybe we can save someone else. The reason for the walk is overdose prevention, education and support and for youth outreach."

From 1A FRENZY

for their burgers and fresh seafood offerings.

For food truck owner Jamya Peters, the return of the frenzy was exciting.

"The first one is sort of like an introduction to the city: 'Hey, we're here. It's spring,'" she said. "I think it's a wonderful way to support our small businesses and our community. I did all of them last year. This is my second year."

Peters' offerings, which included home-made cakes and cinnamon rolls, were set up in a colorful booth. She brings her creations out to pop-up events, fills private orders and also does catering.

The next scheduled event at the corner of North Washington and Front streets is from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. on May 1.

"We always try to kick off the season of Food Truck Frenzy on Good Friday," Albany Downtown Manager Lequeria Gaskins said. "We are having great vendors who signed on to participate."

Hosting food trucks to bring activity downtown is one of the elements identified in the city of Albany's downtown master plan, Gaskins said.

"We want to execute the things that are in the master plan because that plan came directly from the citizens," the downtown manager said. "It's been very well-received and very well-supported as well."

From 1A JOHNSTON

the realities of grant-based funding.

"Because we are grant-dependent, we sometimes expand our mission to accommodate funding criteria," she said.

Johnston said she views those changes as a reflection of the organization's ability to adapt to the evolving needs of the communities it serves.

While earlier initiatives included programs focused on obesity and diabetes reduction, the organization has since returned its focus to its original mission: improving access to cancer screenings and early detection services.

"I am honored to take on the role of CEO at Horizons," Johnston said. "I'm proud of what this team has accomplished, and I look forward to continuing that good work, making cancer screening more

accessible and helping people overcome barriers to care."

Horizons works to improve cancer screening rates across Georgia by connecting uninsured and underinsured individuals with preventive services through partnerships with health systems and community providers. Its patient navigator model offers one-on-one guidance to help individuals access screenings earlier and more consistently.

Still, Johnston said the barriers to care remain significant and often extend beyond insurance coverage. "Many individuals in the community avoid screening because they might be afraid of a diagnosis, or it may be that they don't have transportation to and from appointments," she said. "Transportation prevents them from getting annual checkups, and so they're not getting referrals for screenings either."

Financial barriers remain a persistent challenge in Dough-

erty County. Current estimates show slightly less than 29% of residents do not have a primary care provider — more than 20,000 people — limiting access to routine checkups where preventive screenings are often initiated.

Johnston said that gap underscores the need for organizations like Horizons.

"When patients get referred to us, we assign them to one of our patient navigators," Johnston said. "A navigator is essentially a lay person — someone without clinical training — who offers one-on-one, step-by-step guidance and care. It's a paid position, and they're essential to what we do."

Those navigators help connect patients directly with providers and hospitals, coordinate follow-up care and answer questions throughout the process. In some cases, they also help remove logistical barriers, including transportation.

According to the organi-

zation's website, Horizons provided more than \$17,000 in direct assistance to cancer patients in 2024 to help cover transportation costs to and from treatment — a form of support Johnston said can make the difference between delayed care and early detection.

"That can save lives," she said.

These days, it may be uncommon for an executive assistant to rise through the ranks to CEO, but Johnston's 21-year journey reflects more than professional growth. It represents a level of continuity that has become increasingly rare in the nonprofit sector and, over time, a steady presence within the community.

As she steps into the role, Johnston said her focus remains on strengthening that foundation while extending its impact — ensuring that longevity is not only a hallmark of Horizons, but a measurable outcome for the people it serves.

From 1A WRAP

gave on its priorities, and the governor's office and (Office of Planning and Budget) was very kind to give on a lot of their priorities," Senate Appropriations Chair Blake Tillery said in a joint press conference with the House appropriations leader Rep. Matt Hatchett.

The Senate had proposed changes to how online classes are funded, with Tillery previously suggesting that online classes cost less to offer than in-person classes and can provide more instructional hours with the same funding. The agreed-upon budget between the House and Senate decreases next year's proposed budget for the University System of Georgia Board of Regents by about \$34 million "to reflect increased credit hour productivity for online courses," according to the budget.

The compromise budget will include \$11.6 million for 500 NOW/COMP waivers,

which are Medicaid waivers designed to help people with disabilities access services in their communities and avoid care in a facility that may be far from home. The Senate had proposed about \$21 million for about 1,200 waivers, which is about the number of people on a waitlist with urgent needs.

The budget also provides funding for 124 new medical residencies slots in the state and includes several increases in some billing codes for Medicaid services.

"We've heard time and time again about the shortage of physicians, and this budget addresses that too," Hatchett said on the House floor, where the House agreed to it on a 153-5 vote. The Senate passed it unanimously.

The race for Georgia governor peeked out a little bit when the Senate passed a bill aimed at wealthy health care executive and Republican gubernatorial candidate Rick Jackson.

Jackson's late entry into the race has complicated life for Lt. Gov. Burt Jones, who was previously seen as the front-

runner in the GOP primary.

Jones raised eyebrows last month when, from the Senate dais, he accused Jackson's company, Jackson Healthcare, of "monopolizing" the health care industry and unfairly benefiting from no-bid state contracts and pledged to stop the alleged unfairness.

Senate Bill 586 was the Senate's attempt at doing so, by barring anyone who has a financial interest in a state agency, including state contracts, from running for office.

The Senate unanimously passed the bill, but the House did not take it up.

Jackson Healthcare has held nearly a billion dollars in state contracts since 2020, according to a Healthbeat analysis. Much of that came from health care staffing services after the pandemic.

In a statement, Jackson campaign spokesman Brian Robinson accused Jones of self-dealing while in office and "corruptly trying to keep his opponent off the ballot."

"Burt Jones uses public office to benefit himself," Robinson said. "That's exactly why Rick Jackson is running; to

stand up for the Georgians who don't have a voice at the Capitol and make government work for the people."

Georgia's first significant needs-based financial aid program passed both chambers and is on its way to the governor's desk.

The DREAMS Scholarship, companion to the merit-based HOPE Scholarship, crossed the finish line as part of Senate Bill 556, a bill combining multiple pieces of higher education legislation, including placing Narcan at colleges and universities and raising the contribution limit to education savings plans.

It is set to include \$25 million to disperse to students in the next two years and a \$300 million endowment to fund future students.

The bill also makes advanced fine arts courses eligible for a student's GPA average for the HOPE Scholarship. That means if the bill becomes law, students who take courses like advanced placement music theory will have those grades help them toward earning HOPE.



STATE OF GEORGIA
CALHOUN COUNTY
MORGAN, GA 39866

PUBLIC NOTICE

LOGIC & ACCURACY TESTING

APRIL 2, 2026

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. §21-2-374(b) and §21-2-379(c), notice is hereby given that Logic and Accuracy Testing will be conducted on voting equipment to be used in the:

**GENERAL PRIMARY / NONPARTISAN ELECTION
MAY 19, 2026**

TESTING WILL BEGIN AT
9:00 A.M. ON SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 2026

Testing will continue daily from approximately 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. until completed.

For updates regarding testing times or completion status, please contact:
229-849-2972

LOCATION

Calhoun County Courthouse
31 Court Street
Morgan, GA 39866

THIS TESTING PROCESS IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

All interested citizens are encouraged to attend and observe.

Zakenya Cook
Zakenya Cook
Election Superintendent & Registrar
Calhoun County

Daily Horoscopes

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Stars are sinking today through Thursday, Friday brings back the sunshine. Friday has a positive day score, Saturday's score is even stronger. The higher the day score, the better your odds for anything you do.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Use caution with anything you come across when Universal day scores are in the swamp — an emotional attachment to new intel could blind you to its flaws. Keep faith in yourself.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Poor days for initiatives, like today and tomorrow, can be great days to work on building foundations to support your actions. Do the boring stuff, the uninspiring stuff, and the inner work. Gets you staged for when stars rise.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): While career and/or other worldly matters look poised to grow, today and tomorrow are days to stay under the radar. As long as you avoid major risk and go mindfully, you should be able to get basic stuff handled.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): It's not the day for a big move, neither is tomorrow, but you might enjoy some satisfying self-expression anyway. Be discerning about what you consume electronically, not every online 'guru' is benevolent.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Home should be a place for nurture and safety. If it's not, think about fixes, sometimes even a small change can make a big difference. A new financial opportunity could arrive in the next week or two.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): The right inspirational message or even a meme could shift your mindset toward healing now — a lot could be becoming clearer. Partnership could soon be taking on a new, freer form, bringing much greater potential.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): While making a money move is a bad idea today or tomorrow, a lot could be gradually coming right in

your finances. Wait until Friday or after for anything important. A new hack could make life easier.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Be the balm that someone needs in the world today, be the reminder that there are good people out there. A lighter vibe should continue for a couple of weeks before you buckle down again.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You might be feeling more grounded and settled in your living space after a period of upheaval, even if it was temporary and relatively minor. Stay on your inner growth path, progress remains heightened now.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): While your communication sector is less burdened than it's been, today and tomorrow aren't days for risks due to underwater Universal stars. By Friday or Saturday, your messaging can go out with better odds.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): It isn't automatically bad policy to care about your work. Even if you hate your current situation, it can be deeply and spiritually satisfying to take pride in your contribution within yourself. Hold off on money moves.

IF TODAY IS YOUR BIRTHDAY: 2026, after a few fits and starts, could begin to smooth out for you now that the first quarter is past. April is bringing some significant improvements. A completely new idea, vision or opportunity could be your chance to hit it out of the park. Love, family, and/or career could be slated for a significant rise. Take a few breaths if too much good hits too quickly, and no need to wait for the shoe to drop. A pragmatic direction could bring even more cash in the door. And, there's yet more money likely in May. May will ask you to avoid a no-win situation so you can move toward fame or popularity, helpful change, and a new level of dedication. A new path could emerge in June, don't let anxiety derail you, or bravado push you too fast. In the rest of 2026, the Universe brings answers, benefits, and some wish fulfillment.



1827 - John Walker, an English chemist, invents wooden matches
1906 - Mount Vesuvius erupts in the Gulf of Naples, Italy, and kills over 100 people.
1940 - Booker T. Washington becomes the first African American to appear on a U.S. Postage Stamp.
1978 - President Carter cancels production of the neutron bomb
1980 - The US breaks rela-

tions with the Islamic Republic of Iran, during the hostage crisis.
2001 - Mars Odyssey is launched
2003 - U.S. troops capture Baghdad, the capital of Iraq and two days later Saddam Hussein's regime falls.
2017 - A stolen truck slams into people at high speed in Stockholm, Sweden, killing four and injuring fifteen others.

CALENDAR OF OBSERVANCES

- Coffee Cake Day
- Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Rwanda Genocide
- Empowered Women Entrepreneurs Day
- International Beaver Day
- International Snailpapers Day
- Metric System Day
- National Beer Day
- National Girl Me Too Day
- National Handmade Day
- National Making the First

- Move Day
- National Pet Health Insurance Day
- National Sexual Assault Awareness Month's Day of Action
- No Housework Day
- Public Television Day
- SAAM Day of Action (Sexual Assault Awareness Day)
- World Health Day
- World Health Organization Day

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Let us make one point, that we meet each other with a smile, when it is difficult to smile. Smile at each other, make time for each other in your family."

Mother Teresa,
Catholic saint (1910-1997)

CORRECTION

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

SQUAWKBOX

squawkbox@albanyherald.com

SMRs, in about 250 days the liberals will win the mid-term elections and impeach your king.

All of you people criticizing our great president will bow down in respect soon when he turns America back into the great country it once was.

Can someone tell me why there hasn't been any updates on U.S. casualties since March 12? There are continuing drone strikes on U.S. bases, but nothing in the way of damage reports, injuries or casualties. Either the Iranians are much better at blowing up buildings and sparing lives than we are, or we are in full-blown New-speak doublethink mode. Somebody dig up Walter Cronkite; we need him.

Here is an idea: Instead of a \$2,000 retention bonus paid to our teachers, how about a \$2,000 bonus for signing new teachers? Our current teachers have our schools as some of the state's lowest performing.

The main reason restaurants don't survive Albany is the employees. They are rude and inconsiderate like they don't want to be there. Hire better employees and maybe customers will come back. Even Sylvester and Lee county are getting that way.

Giving King \$190,000 of our tax money for his idiotic "virtual tour" was only the tip of the iceberg. Now the city and county leaders, whose coffers are in the red, are giving \$5 million to a phony preacher, a con man and a thief who ripped off the city he represented. Everyone with a connection to these city and county crooks has a hand out.

Lousy customer service is what's leading to many restaurants' demise. What owners/managers should do is send their new hires to Chik-fil-A to watch those employees. They greet customers with a smile and with the knowledge that these customers pay their salaries. That's how it should be done.

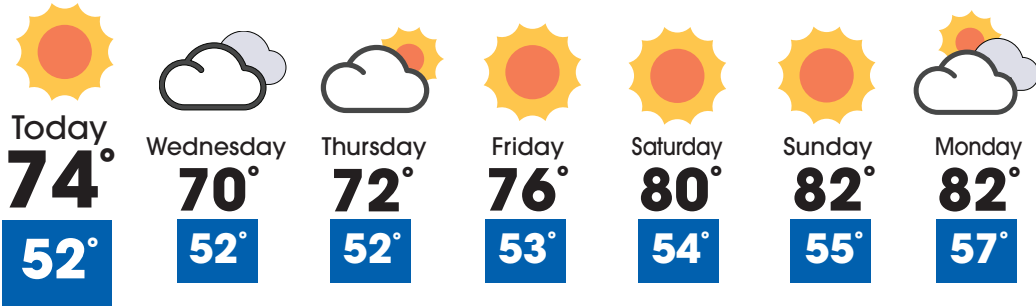
Hey, I attended the "No Kings" protest and was not paid. I could not even get phone numbers from all of those hot liberal women there.

I've got a perfect name for King's ludicrous social media tour of Albany civil rights places of interest: The Screw-over Taxpayer Tour.

UGA All-American/Dolphins All-Pro Bill Stanfill, late of Albany, always spoke of the 1966 game when Stanfill was playing defensive end as a sophomore, and George Patton was on the other end and Jake Scott in secondary. UGA went down and kicked Spurrier's undefeated Gators' butt. Stanfill always said Spurrier was a crybaby even back then. Stanfill said after every play that he and Patton sacked or tackled Spurrier, he would jump up and cry to the refs, "Roughing the passer, roughing the passer!"

The president is like E F Hutton. He talks, people listen ... and stocks drop when he talks.

Weather Forecast



Daily Bridge Club

Tangled web

By Frank Stewart

Tribune Content Agency

Oh, what a tangled web we weave ... when we drop a box of coat hangers on the floor. Declarers can often weave a web

NORTH ♠ A K ♥ Q 7 6 5 4 ♦ J 4 ♣ A J 9 2		
WEST ♠ Q 5 ♥ 10 8 3 ♦ K 9 8 5 3 ♣ 8 6 4		EAST ♠ J 9 8 7 2 ♥ J 9 2 ♦ Q 7 6 2 ♣ K
SOUTH ♠ 10 6 4 3 ♥ A K ♦ A 10 ♣ Q 10 7 5 3		
South 1 ♠ 1 ♥ 3 NT	West Pass All Pass	North 1 ♠ 1 ♥ 3 ♣ Pass
Opening lead - ♦ 5		
©2026 Tribune Content Agency, LLC		



Frank Stewart

"count": So West played the three, East the deuce.

South trusted his opponents: He continued with the ace of hearts and a club to dummy's ace, playing for 3-3 hearts. When the king happened to fall from East, South made four overtricks.

DAILY QUESTION

You hold: S 10 6 4 3 H A K D A 10 C Q 10 7 5 3. Your side is vulnerable. The dealer, at your left, opens one club. Your partner doubles, and the next player passes. What do you say?

ANSWER: You can probably beat one club, though your club holding is ragged, and declarer might win a lot of club tricks. Try for a vulnerable game instead. Start with a strength-showing cue bid of two clubs. You can bid spades and notrump next to look for your best spot.

South dealer
N-S vulnerable

Advice Columnist

Reader questions how to find fulfillment in life

By Eric Thomas

Tribune Content Agency

Dear Eric: I guess I'm tired of reading all the problems people have with their marriages or children or coworkers.

Here's my problem: none. How do I stay engaged, feel completely fulfilled and happy with my life?

— Happy Life

Dear Life: My answer is going to sound simple, maybe, but I've found it to be one of the most complex practices in my life: gratitude.

Let's start with the first part of your letter: you get tired of reading about other people's problems. Not for nothing, but that's kind of the bread and butter of an advice column. However, instead of feeling fatigue when you flip the page of your newspaper, perhaps consider other people's problems with empathy, which can trigger gratitude that their problems aren't what you're facing, or that you've made it to the other side of a similar issue.

I also find that reading about other people's challenges makes me think about life in a different, more expansive way. Another thing for which to be grateful.

Gratitude will also help you stay engaged in your own life. It is imperative that you not take your life for granted. Happiness is a gift. And it's important that you recognize it, that you honor it and that you thank it. You can express gratitude to the people who improve your life, to a higher power if you believe in one and to yourself.

Don't let one happy day go by without stopping to recognize that happiness is not a given. When you go to bed and when you wake up, make a list of what you're grateful

for, what you're looking forward to and what's making you happy. That's how you stay engaged with your own life. And that's how you build an emotional fortitude that will help you navigate problems when they come.

Dear Eric: I would like to add another perspective to your response to "Tired of Being Fixed" who often received unsolicited medical advice from a friend. While unsolicited advice is generally unwelcome and not necessary, when sharing difficulties, worries or problems with anyone, it is reasonable to expect a response. The sharer has no control over that response, which is indeed often more than just support.

However, the sharer can control their own response and decide to ignore any advice given. It seems reasonable to me that any person hearing a friend's concerns will offer their take on things. This does not mean the sharer needs to accept the listener's response. Just my opinion.

— You Talk, I Talk Back

Dear Talk Back: I think this is a fair take. Part of conversation is response. Most of the time, when we share things in conversation, we're hoping that the person we're talking to will have some opinion or reflection on what we've shared. It's possible that the friendship described in the letter involves one party sharing a lot of medical issues that the other party thinks that the unsolicited advice is the only way to engage.

Your letter reminds me of a question I find enormously helpful in all kinds of relationships: "are you looking for advice or do you simply need to be heard?" There's a very



Eric Thomas

clear distinction between the two. Sometimes, we just need to get our thoughts out. That said, getting one's thoughts out isn't always something a friend or loved one can handle at the moment. It's important to know our audience and to manage expectations on all sides.

Dear Eric: I just read about the son who is trying to help his 98-year-old father with dementia, and that the father's friends have stopped visiting ("Caring for Dad"). My husband and I aren't that old yet, but we have lost our parents, and several other siblings and close friends. My husband has a gift for these people when they are dying, and sometimes not in the present. He talks about the past. The things that they have shared together, interests, anything to get their mind to where they used to be, even if the stories have changed.

Maybe "Caring for Dad" can have his father's friends try this, just like the old times. I think sometimes it's difficult when we don't know what to say, when someone isn't in the moment.

— Good Memories

Dear Memories: This is a lovely suggestion, and it could be very helpful to the letter writer and others. Sometimes when friends or loved ones experience medical challenges that change the way they operate in the world, or even change their level of cognitive ability, it can be hard to adjust. Walking down memory lane with a person whose short-term memory is failing can be a good way to recognize the present, while appreciating the past for what it gave you.

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 rerictthomas.com.

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THE ALBANY HERALD

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Carlton Fletcher

EDITOR

— Georgia Trust for —

LOCAL NEWS

TODAY’S
BIBLE
VERSE

“Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”

John 11:25

GUEST COLUMNIST ■ LAWRENCE KNIGHTON

It’s time to make a change

I didn’t start worrying about education in our city because of headlines or a report. I started worrying because of what I saw every day inside our schools.

From 1999 through 2005, I served as a youth pastor and spent time in Dougherty County Schools on a daily basis. During this time, I talked with a number of students, teachers and parents. I sat in classrooms, walked hallways, and watched how our children were being prepared for the future. What I witnessed 20 years ago helps explain why our city looks the way it does today.

Every summer, our church held a camp for children. The first week, we brought in certified teachers to teach at the grade level the children had just completed. That first week exposed something I wasn’t prepared for: About 23% of the students in our camp earned “honor roll” in the previous school year, yet their work did not reflect what should be identified as “honor roll.” In 2002, I met with the superintendent and the curriculum director at that time to ask for an explanation. They did not have one.

That was my first wake-up call that something was deeply off in our school system. Our children were being promoted, congratulated and graduated, but many were not being educated at the level required to succeed in life.

Two decades later, we are living with the results. Our city has one of the highest poverty rates in the state. We struggle with crime, work force participation, and generational cycles that do not seem to break. People talk about the symptoms, but rarely the root. The root is education.

Today, our graduation rate is 90.1%, which sounds great on paper. But when you look at the proficiency (students on grade level) rate of these graduates, the picture changes. Recent state data show only around 22% of students are proficient in reading and roughly 16% are proficient in math. That means most students are graduating without the basic academic skills needed for college, occupational trades, or modern employment. We are celebrating diplomas while ignoring preparation. Our kids are being pushed through, not pulled up.

A high poverty rate did not just show up overnight in Albany. It has increased year after year by a school system that promotes children who are not mastering the basics. When a child cannot read on grade level by the third grade, it is no longer a school problem, it is a life problem. It affects employment, income, family stability and even health outcomes. It affects whether a young person can fill out an application, pass an entrance exam, or stay competitive in an ever-evolving job market. Literacy is not a luxury. It is a survival skill.

Crime also did not just show up out of nowhere. When you combine low academic preparation with limited opportunity and high poverty, the streets fill the gap. We can hire more police, build more prisons, and add more

patrol cars, but none of those things fixes the pipeline that produced the problem in the first place.

Employers in Albany have also been sounding the alarm for years. They struggle to find workers who can communicate clearly, problem solve effectively, or even perform basic tasks without constant supervision. That is not a character issue. That is an education issue. When the work force is not prepared, businesses will not invest, and economic growth stalls. Our children pay for it first and then the entire city and community pay for it later.

We cannot keep acting like this is normal. It is not normal. And it is not acceptable for a city that wants to grow.

It is also time to stop pretending that high graduation rates mean we are doing well. Graduation without proficiency is not a victory, it is a warning. Albany’s lack of growth and development has been warning us for more than 20 years. Many people were not getting involved, they were simply leaving in silence taking their revenue, their skill sets and their growth mindsets.

At some point, Albany must demand better. Parents must demand better. Taxpayers must demand better. And leadership must answer for outcomes, not intentions.

This is where we have to stop speaking generally and start naming things directly. The Dougherty County School System must own the results it produces. Our city has spent decades celebrating optics instead of outcomes while our young people leave school unprepared to compete. That is not fair to them, and it is not fair to the community they will eventually lead.

But here is the hopeful truth: It is reversible. Cities have fixed this before, not with slogans, but with strategy. The solutions are not mysterious:

- Third-grade literacy must become a top priority. If a child cannot read by the third grade, everything after that becomes harder.
- Proficiency must matter more than promotion. Do not promote students who have not mastered core skills for that particular grade level.
- Teachers need support, training, and accountability. We cannot fix outcomes without fixing instruction.
- Parents must be partners, not spectators. Education starts at home and is strengthened at school.
- Employers must help shape the pipeline. If we want jobs, we have to prepare people to fill them.
- The data must be honest and public. If we cannot look the truth in the eye, we cannot solve the problem.

Albany deserves a future that looks better than its past. But, that future does not begin with speeches or photo ops. It begins with the courage to admit what has not worked and the will and desire to fix it.

We have waited long enough. It is time to make a change.



KNIGHTON

COLUMNIST ■ THOMAS KNAPP

Stop pretending military spending is about defense

1.5 trillion. With a “t.” That’s how much President Trump wants Congress to appropriate for military (falsely called “defense”) spending in 2027.

And that number — there’s no other way to put this — is insane. The only proper date for such a spending request, followed by a winking grin emoji, is April 1.

Let’s compare. At the height of the U.S. war in Vietnam in 1969, the U.S. government spent about \$85.5 billion (\$761 billion in inflated 2026 dollars) on “defense.”

In 1991, when the U.S. deployed hundreds of thousands of troops for Desert Storm, th government spent about \$313 billion, or \$750 billion accounting for inflation.

In 2004, while fighting wars in both Iraq and Afghanistan, that number was about \$450 billion, or \$780 billion in 2026 dollars.

Yes, it’s wartime again. As usual, the war — this time with Iran — is entirely illegal/unconstitutional (only Congress can declare war, and it hasn’t).

And, as usual, the war is entirely optional and serves no defensive purpose whatsoever.

The president keeps telling us this war will be over real soon now, and he started talking about a \$1.5 trillion military budget months before he launched Operation Epic Fail, so the 40% bump clearly isn’t about Iran.

In what universe does the already bloated U.S. military need nearly half again as much money next year as this year, and twice as much as it needed during previous

wars? I’m not one of those people who waxes sentimental over what the government could spend money on rather than fake “defense.”



KNAPP

That money should be left in the wallets of taxpayers rather than being taxed from them or borrowed in their names.

But I guess it’s worth mentioning that Trump wants to partially “pay for” Operation Epic Dumb Idea with a 10% cut (less than \$75 billion) to “nondefense spending” programs that he considers “woke.”

If the current “defense” budget was cut by 90%, a country that’s geographically isolated from credible enemies by two oceans, hasn’t been invaded since the War of 1812, and never really gets in a fight unless its government actively seeks one out, would still have far more actual “defense” than it needs.

Everything beyond that \$100 billion (at most) falls into one or more of three categories: waste, fraud, abuse.

Perhaps congressional pushback will trim Trump’s demands ... but don’t bet on it. Congress usually ends up giving the Department of Defense more than the president asks for as Representatives and Senators advocate for military contracts that pad the bottom lines of campaign contributors’ businesses in their districts and states.

If Congress won’t cut off Pete Hegseth and take away his car keys, American taxpayers should cut off Congress and take theirs. Type “National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee” into your favorite search engine for more information.

COLUMNIST ■ DICK YARBROUGH

The proposal may be cheap but not the commitment

If you are looking at how oil at \$110 per barrel and gas approaching \$5 per gallon will Make America Great Again, I refer you to the Trump Toadies on Fox News. I am sure they can explain it. They might even possibly believe it.



YARBROUGH

On the other hand, if you think boys-turned-into-girls should be allowed to compete in women’s sports — an issue that affects a whopping 0.002% of U.S. college athletes — then you need to go to Weenie World, aka, MS NOW. No question they do believe it.

However, if you are seeking some juicy inside information to share at your next Sunday School social or cocktail party — or both — and wow the crowd, you have come to the right place. Making you the envy of the neighborhood is my sacred duty.

For example, did you know that Chick-fil-A is the No. 1 choice of Georgia men who would consider proposing in a fast food restaurant? That comes from Ace.com, a social casino website. They say they surveyed 3,020 men as to which fast food chains they believe give them the best odds of hearing “yes.”

The premise is that with the cost of living being so high these days, a candlelit dinner -- once the gold standard for asking the question -- is increasingly being swapped out for proposals over fries and a soft drink.

More than one in three Georgia males admit that rising dining costs make them more likely to consider a budget-friendly venue, suggesting romance is increasingly being balanced with practicality. (“Darling, two questions: Will you marry me and are you going to finish those fries?”)

They also asked 100 women what they thought of the idea. Forty-nine percent said it would be funny but memorable and 24% said they would find it romantic. That tells me 76% percent don’t find it romantic and would prefer a candlelit dinner with wine in a glass and not a vanilla milkshake with a straw. So if I were the guys, I would think that proposal idea over very carefully.

Why Chick-fil-A? Ace.com says the chain is known for its “relentlessly polite service and calm, family-friendly atmosphere. For

many Georgia men, it feels like the place where the odds quietly tilt in their favor without trying too hard.” It is also where the staff always says, “My pleasure” instead of “No problem.” I hate “no problem.” I don’t care if it is a problem or not. That’s their problem. Not mine.

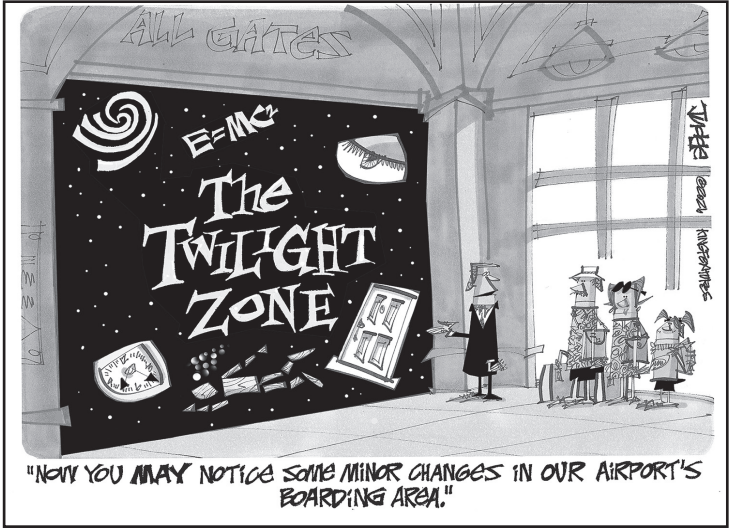
I didn’t propose to my late wife at a fast food restaurant. I proposed to her in a chateau and black Ford Fairlane. It wasn’t a surprise and, frankly, not particularly romantic. We knew we were getting married. She had already picked out the ring and I had bought it with money I made carrying mail over the Christmas holidays. I don’t think fries and a Coke would have made much of a difference, except it would have been like me to spill the Coke in the front seat and get fussed at.

There is no chance I would have proposed at a local Chick-fil-A because it didn’t exist then. Our only option would have been the Dwarf Grill on Central Avenue in Hapeville, down from the train depot. It was run by a gentleman named Truett Cathy. The place was very small — hence the name Dwarf Grill — and kind of smoky. Mr. Cathy’s wife, Jeannette, taught my late wife in a girl’s Sunday School class at Jefferson Avenue Baptist Church and Mr. Cathy taught the boys. They also served really good hamburgers as I recall.

Somehow, between frying hamburgers and praising the Lord, Truett Cathy found a way to create a chicken sandwich and an international restaurant chain with more than 3,000 stores and \$22 billion in annual revenue. A long way from the Dwarf Grill. By the way, if you plan propose at your local Chick-fil-A, make it sometime between Monday and Saturday. They aren’t open on Sunday.

Ace.com says Georgia boys have named other alternate chains where they would consider popping the question, like Dairy Queen, McDonald’s and Taco Bell. That is all well and good, but it’s not where you propose that counts, be it a fast food restaurant or a chateau and black Ford Fairlane. It is the commitment you are about to make. It’s not cheap. It is for a lifetime. Think carefully and don’t bite off more than you can chew.

Contact Dick Yarbrough at dick@dickyarbrough.com or at P.O. Box 725373, Atlanta, Ga. 31139.



What to watch

TUESDAY

April 7, 2026

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

Will Trent

ABC, 8 p.m.

Will, Nico and Angie (Ramón Rodríguez, Cora Lu Tran and Erika Christensen) are trapped in a hospital during a hostage crisis in the new episode “A Flag in the Mud.”

NCIS

CBS, 8 p.m.

In the new episode “Knick-Knack,” a murder aboard a museum ship becomes a cryptic treasure hunt after a dying Navy captain leaves a final clue.

Best Medicine

FOX, 8 p.m. ■ **Season Finale**

The drama following Dr. Martin Best (Josh Charles), a brilliant surgeon who abruptly leaves his illustrious career in Boston to become the general practitioner in a quaint East Coast fishing village, concludes Season 1. FOX has ordered a second season.

High Potential

ABC, 9 p.m. ■ **Season Finale**

Season 2 of the drama starring Kaitlin Olson and Daniel Sunjata wraps up with “Family Tree.” *High Potential* has been renewed for Season 3.

Doc

FOX, 9 p.m.

On Michael’s (Omar Metwally) first day as chief of internal medicine, Joan (Felicity Huffman) arrives at the hospital as a patient in dire straits in the new episode “The Big Chair.”

Lucy Worsley Investigates: The American Revolution

PBS, 9 p.m. ■ **New Series**

British historian Lucy Worsley presents this two-part series looking at the American Revolution from the redcoats’ perspective, examining the human drama, radical ideas, and political and diplomatic miscalculations that led to King George III losing the 13 American Colonies. In the first episode, Worsley visits New York’s City Hall Park, site of many rallies and protests held by the Sons of Liberty. Back in England, Worsley studies King George’s maps, visits Benjamin Franklin’s home in London, and explores how Parliament’s Stamp Act of 1765 and its taxation without representation drew colonists’ ire. In Boston, she looks at the Boston Massacre and Boston Tea Party, major flash-points that ignited the fires of revolution.



ANDREW ECCLES, DISNEY

R.J. Decker

ABC, 10 p.m.

R.J. (Scott Speedman) helps a young woman uncover the truth behind her boyfriend’s sudden death, and a dangerous figure from R.J.’s past resurfaces in the new episode “Brenner’s Back.”

NCIS: Sydney

CBS, 10 p.m.

In the new episode “Death Card,” the team is drawn into the mystical world of fortune-telling when a tarot card is found near a drowned U.S. Navy officer depicting the exact manner of his death.

Frontline

PBS, 10 p.m.

This new edition of *Frontline* — “The Deal: Trump, Bukele & the Gangs of El Salvador” — explores Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele’s deal with President Donald Trump to imprison deportees and what each stood to gain.



EVERETT COLLECTION

the formation of the U.S. Army’s 1st Ranger Battalion. Rounding out the lineup is 1969’s **Marlowe**, a neo-noir thriller based on Raymond Chandler’s novel *The Little Sister* that follows a streetwise detective in seedy 1960s Los Angeles.

MOVIES YOU’LL LOVE



MARVEL

Terminator: Dark Fate (2019, Science fiction) Linda Hamilton, Arnold Schwarzenegger **Paramount, 6 p.m.**

Signs (2002, Suspense) Mel Gibson, Joaquin Phoenix **AMC, 7 p.m.**

Couples Retreat Murder (2024, Suspense) Jessica Morris, Rib Hillis **LMN, 8 p.m.**

The Aviator (2004, Biography) Leonardo DiCaprio, Cate Blanchett **SHO, 8 p.m.**

Thor (2011, Action) Chris Hemsworth, Natalie Portman **FX, 8 p.m.**

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (2005, Children) Johnny Depp, Freddie Highmore **Freeform, 8:25 p.m.**

The Karate Kid Part II (1986, Drama) Ralph Macchio, Nori-yuki “Pat” Morita **BBC America, 8:30 p.m.**

Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga (2024, Action) Anya Taylor-Joy, Chris Hemsworth **TNT, 8:45 p.m.**

The Sixth Sense (1999, Suspense) Bruce Willis, Haley Joel Osment **AMC, 9:30 p.m.**

The Wrong Marriage (2025, Suspense) Vivica A. Fox, Jackée Harry **LMN, 10 p.m.**

The Hoax (2006, Historical drama) Richard Gere, Alfred Molina **SHO, 11 p.m.**

Regretting You (2025, Drama) Allison Williams, Mckenna Grace **MGM, 11:20 p.m.**

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What to watch

WEDNESDAY

April 8, 2026

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

Scrubs

ABC, 8 p.m.

J.D. (Zach Braff) has finally hit his stride as the new chief of medicine, only to be shaken by an unexpected visit in the new episode “My Odds.”

The Floor

FOX, 8 p.m. ■ **Season Premiere**

Tune in tonight for the two-episode Season 5 premiere of the fast-paced quiz show hosted by Rob Lowe. In “New Year, New Floor” and “The Expert-Slayer Strikes,” 100 new trivia players dive straight in to take their shot at \$250,000. This season, they will feel a chill when a new advantage sends one contestant into the final stages of the game.

Nature

PBS, 8 p.m.

This two-part *Nature* series, “Becoming Elephant: The Orphans of Reteti,” follows the journey of orphaned elephants at Reteti, the first community-owned elephant sanctuary in Africa. In “Baby Steps,” caregivers help a disabled orphan elephant named Long’uro find his confidence, nurse a sick calf back from the brink and manage an unexpected encounter inside an enclosure. The series concludes next week.

Abbott Elementary

ABC, 8:30 p.m.

Janine and Gregory (Quinta Brunson and Tyler James Williams) plan a vacation, and one of Melissa’s (Lisa Ann Walter) most successful former students comes back for a visit in the new episode “Trip.”

Chicago Fire

NBC, 9 p.m.

After a devastating fire erupts at a surgery center, Kidd (Miranda Rae Mayo) works to hunt down the true cause in the new episode “Sway.”



DAN SMITH, FOX

FEDS

Investigation Discovery, 9 p.m. ■ **Season Finale**

Season 2 of this true-crime series closes up with “Hired to Kill.” Over two years, a killer shot multiple people dead in Philadelphia, but the killer’s identity and motive remained unclear. The FBI and a dedicated Task Force soon uncovered that they were dealing with a real-life hitman who called himself the Real John Wick.

America’s Culinary Cup

CBS, 9:30 p.m.

The chefs have hit the halfway point of the competition in the new episode “Good vs. Evil.” The final eight competitors must each create two desserts, one heavenly and one devilish, using a shocking forbidden ingredient chosen by their rivals. Padma Lakshmi hosts.

CATCH A CLASSIC

Directed by George Cukor

TCM, beginning at 8 p.m.

TCM shines the spotlight on Academy Award-winning director George Cukor, known for creating hilariously sophisticated comedies and play-to-film adaptations. The evening starts with Cukor’s **Born Yesterday** (1950), a romantic comedy inspired by the 1946 stage play of the same name. The film follows the unscrupulous Harry Brock (Broderick Crawford), a wealthy con artist whose goal is to go to Washington, D.C., to “buy” a congressman. Harry brings along his former-showgirl girlfriend Billie Dawn (Judy Holliday in an Oscar-winning performance), who lacks political savvy along with manners. When Harry hires journalist



EVERETT COLLECTION

Paul Verrall (William Holden) to build up Billie’s intelligence, things really take an interesting twist. The night continues with **Pat and Mike** (1952), **Travels With My Aunt** (1972), 1939’s **The Women** (pictured) and **Dinner at Eight** (1933). All have strong female leads who bring a conversational wit and chemistry to the films, a testament Cukor’s strong directing.

MOVIES YOU’LL LOVE



JOE LEDERER

Kindergarten Cop (1990, Comedy) Arnold Schwarzenegger, Penelope Ann Miller **BBC America, 6 p.m.**

Guardians of the Galaxy (2014, Science fiction) Chris Pratt, Zoe Saldana **FX, 7 p.m.**

65 (2023, Science fiction) Adam Driver, Ariana Greenblatt **HBO, 7:25 p.m.**

Moana (2016, Children) Auli’i Cravalho, Dwayne Johnson **Freeform, 7:35 p.m.**

2012 (2009, Action) John Cusack, Chiwetel Ejiofor **MGM, 8 p.m.**

A Season to Blossom (2026, Romance) Carlo Marks, Emily Tennant **Hallmark, 8 p.m.**

Armageddon (1998, Science fiction) Bruce Willis, Billy Bob Thornton **AMC, 8 p.m.**

Ferris Bueller’s Day Off (1986, Comedy) Matthew Broderick, Alan Ruck **BBC America, 8:30 p.m.**

The Departed (2006, Crime drama) Leonardo DiCaprio, Matt Damon **Paramount, 9 p.m.**

Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2 (2017, Science fiction) Chris Pratt, Zoe Saldana **FX, 9:30 p.m.**

Sugar Mama (2025, Suspense) Latarsha Rose, Jibre Hordges **LMN, 10 p.m.**

Days of Thunder (1990, Action) Tom Cruise, Robert Duvall **AMC, 11:30 p.m.**

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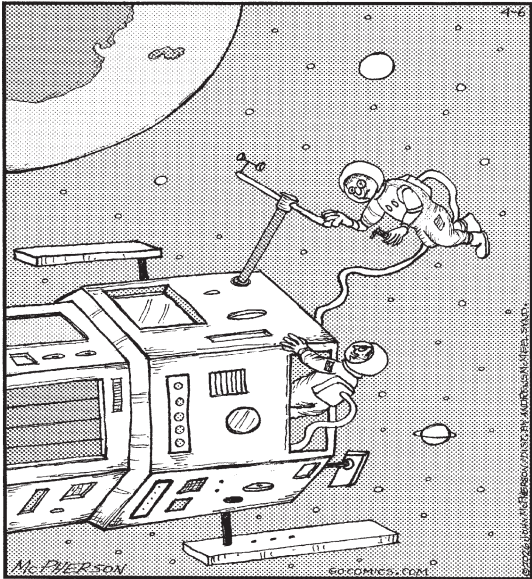
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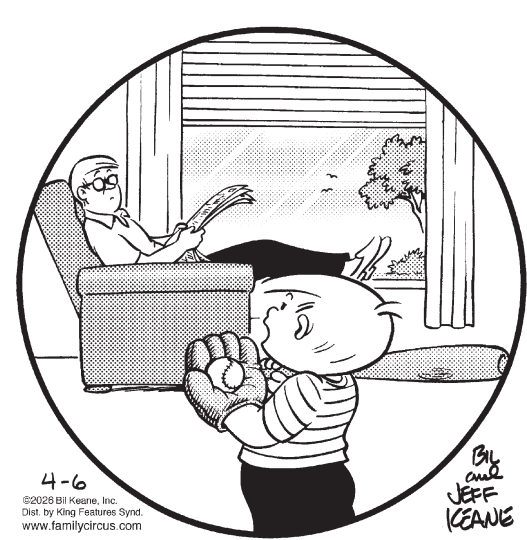
TV - What to watch

CLOSE TO HOME John McPherson



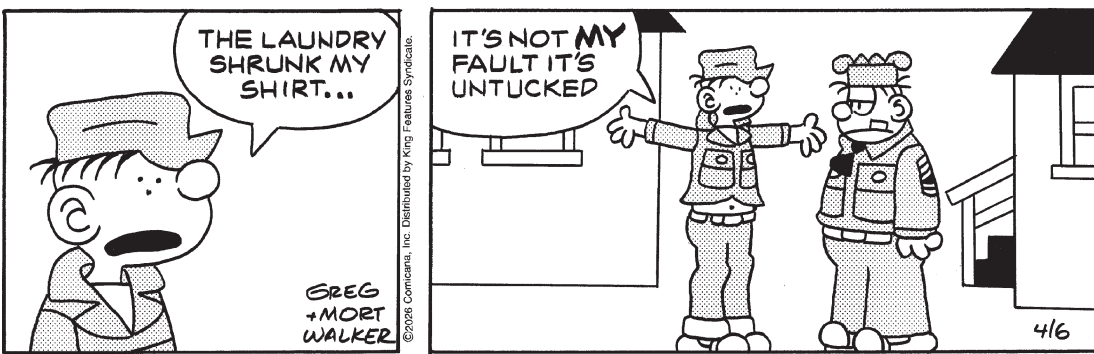
"Mike, never mind fixing the feed to Houston. Get the cable going! The NCAA final starts in five minutes."

THE FAMILY CIRCUS Bil Keane



**“Anytime you’re ready, Daddy,
I’ll be sitting outside
growing older.”**

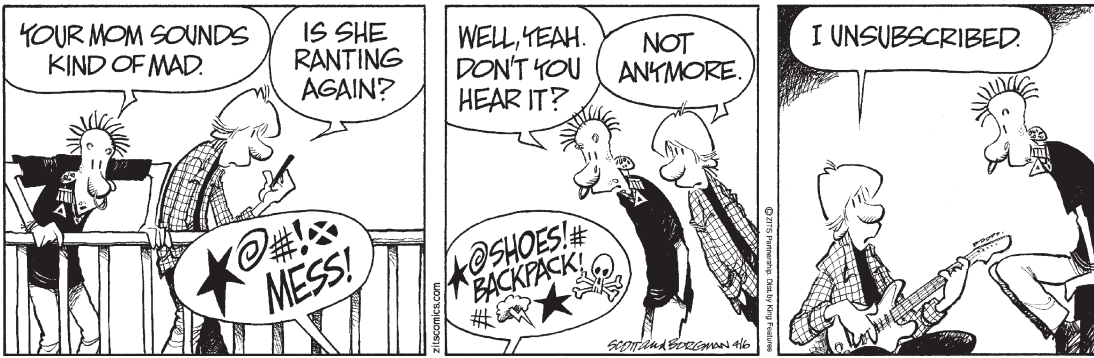
BEETLE BAILEY Mort & Greg Walker



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: ★☆☆☆☆

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WHATZIT?™

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

M T NOD WAVE

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:
Empty gestures

Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Patti Varol

ACROSS

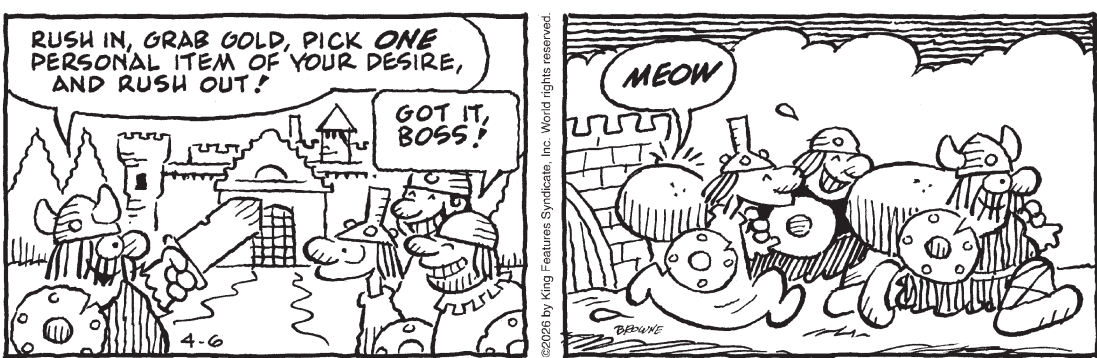
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| 6 Open just a crack | 4 George who played Sulu | 40 Investment options with tax advantages | documentarian | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 Twinge of hunger | 5 Sci-fi time standard | 45 O'er and o'er again | Morris | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 14 Ferret kin | 6 Some pub pints | 47 Bread purchase | 54 Fragrance | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 Misplaced | 7 Biblical man on the inside? | 49 Rascal | 57 Television award | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 16 Febreze target | 8 Sun Devils sch. | 50 Put a blanket on, e.g. | 59 Tug-of— | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 17 Manhattan thoroughfare known for ritzy residences | 9 GPS display | 51 ___ acids: protein components | 60 Snacked on | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 19 Roused | 10 One with advanced technical capabilities | | 61 "The Waste Land" poet's monogram | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 20 Nobel-winning Mother | 11 Cherish | | 62 Knight's title in "A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms" | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 21 Giving ghostly vibes | 12 Finnish telecom giant | TODAY'S SOLUTION: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 22 Scold | 13 Avarice | <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr><td>E</td><td>B</td><td>B</td><td>V</td><td>S</td><td></td><td>A</td><td>T</td><td>E</td><td>R</td><td></td><td>P</td><td>O</td><td>R</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>E</td><td>N</td><td>W</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>O</td><td>L</td><td>V</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>E</td><td>W</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>T</td><td>N</td><td>O</td><td>R</td><td>F</td><td>W</td><td>R</td><td>V</td><td>W</td><td></td><td></td><td>D</td><td>I</td><td>A</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>S</td><td>H</td><td>I</td><td>V</td><td>E</td><td>R</td><td></td><td></td><td>T</td><td></td><td>E</td><td>W</td><td>O</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>E</td><td>R</td><td>V</td><td>H</td><td>O</td><td></td><td>E</td><td>C</td><td>V</td><td>F</td><td>E</td><td>A</td><td>C</td></tr> <tr><td>T</td><td>R</td><td>V</td><td></td><td></td><td>T</td><td>V</td><td></td><td></td><td>I</td><td>T</td><td>O</td><td>R</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>V</td><td>C</td><td>O</td><td>H</td><td></td><td>K</td><td>N</td><td>V</td><td></td><td></td><td>I</td><td>T</td><td>N</td><td>V</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>T</td><td>S</td><td>E</td><td>R</td><td>E</td><td>T</td><td>N</td><td>I</td><td>D</td><td>E</td><td>T</td><td>S</td><td>E</td><td>A</td></tr> <tr><td>V</td><td>S</td><td>O</td><td>S</td><td></td><td>N</td><td>E</td><td>I</td><td>T</td><td></td><td>T</td><td>S</td><td>A</td><td>V</td><td>A</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>K</td><td>O</td><td>R</td><td></td><td></td><td>C</td><td>R</td><td>V</td><td></td><td>E</td><td>O</td></tr> <tr><td>D</td><td>V</td><td>E</td><td>H</td><td>E</td><td>T</td><td>V</td><td>H</td><td></td><td>E</td><td>D</td><td>E</td><td>I</td><td>H</td><td>C</td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>I</td><td>E</td><td>E</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>V</td><td>S</td><td>E</td><td>R</td><td></td><td></td><td>T</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td>K</td><td>O</td><td>M</td><td></td><td>E</td><td>N</td><td>E</td><td>E</td><td>V</td><td>A</td><td>V</td><td>R</td><td>V</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr><td>R</td><td>O</td><td>D</td><td>O</td><td></td><td>T</td><td>S</td><td>O</td><td>T</td><td></td><td>V</td><td>T</td><td>O</td><td>T</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>G</td><td>N</td><td>V</td><td>P</td><td></td><td>V</td><td>A</td><td>J</td><td>V</td><td></td><td>S</td><td>T</td><td>N</td><td>E</td><td>T</td></tr> </tbody> </table> | | | | E | B | B | V | S | | A | T | E | R | | P | O | R | P | S | E | N | W | | | | | O | L | V | | N | E | W | S | T | N | O | R | F | W | R | V | W | | | D | I | A | | | S | H | I | V | E | R | | | T | | E | W | O | | | E | R | V | H | O | | E | C | V | F | E | A | C | T | R | V | | | T | V | | | I | T | O | R | | | S | V | C | O | H | | K | N | V | | | I | T | N | V | S | T | S | E | R | E | T | N | I | D | E | T | S | E | A | V | S | O | S | | N | E | I | T | | T | S | A | V | A | | | | | K | O | R | | | C | R | V | | E | O | D | V | E | H | E | T | V | H | | E | D | E | I | H | C | E | I | E | E | | | | V | S | E | R | | | T | | E | K | O | M | | E | N | E | E | V | A | V | R | V | P | R | O | D | O | | T | S | O | T | | V | T | O | T | | G | N | V | P | | V | A | J | V | | S | T | N | E | T |
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| 23 Endure a book just to write a scathing review, perhaps | 14 Change course suddenly | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 26 Coffee, in slang | 21 Shriek of fear | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 27 Paris's ___ de Triomphe | 22 Group of witches | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 29 Big name in video streaming | 24 "Respect" singer Franklin | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 30 Nautical "Halt!" | 25 "Don't use that ___ of voice with me!" | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 32 Legal claim placed on a house | 26 Coffee, in slang | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 34 Former Cubs slugger Sammy | 28 Medical center | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 38 Personal stakes | 31 Worked into a state | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 41 Not in support of | 33 Pen filler | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 42 Egyptian cross | 35 Slight during awards season | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 43 Black-and-white whales | 36 Unblinking look | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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				

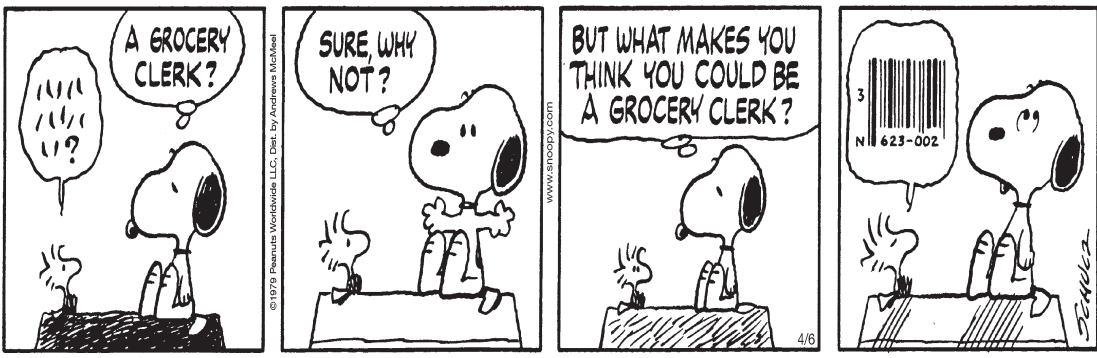
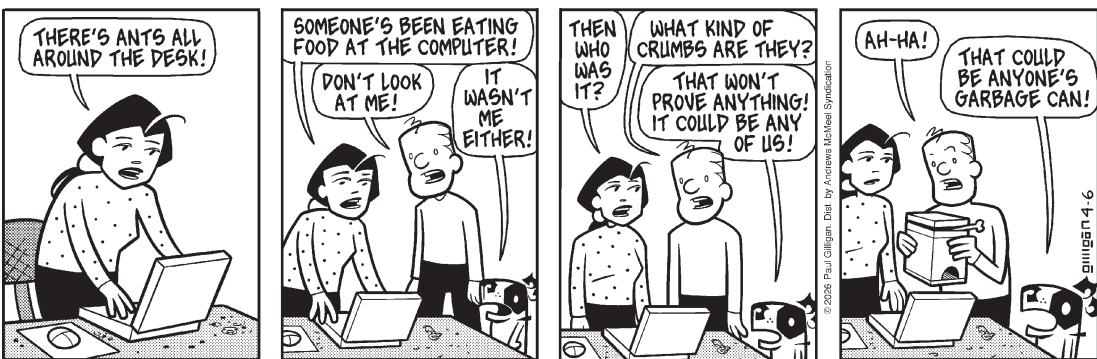
By Jodi Davenport

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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**.

INSTALLATION MANUALS

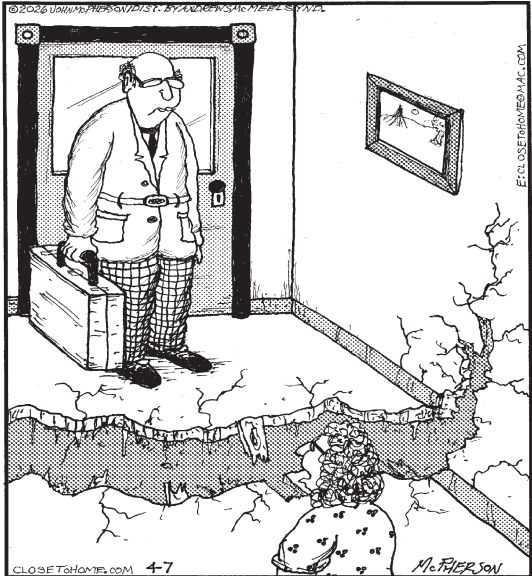
Solution: 8 letters

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

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Ability, Adjust, Assemble, Attach, Check, Clamp, Clean, Close, Cut, Disconnect, Drill, Examine, Extend, Flip, Ground, Hammer, Help, Insert, Lock, Loosen, Lubricate, Mount, Nails, Pages, Position, Protect, Remove, Replace, Screws, Seal, Secure, Space, Steps, Store, Support, Tension, Thread, Tighten, Turn, Unload, Unpack, Unplug, Users, Vent, Washer, Wipe

CLOSE TO HOME John McPherson



"Our builder says it's normal for a house to settle a bit in its first year and is sending us 14 free tubes of caulk."

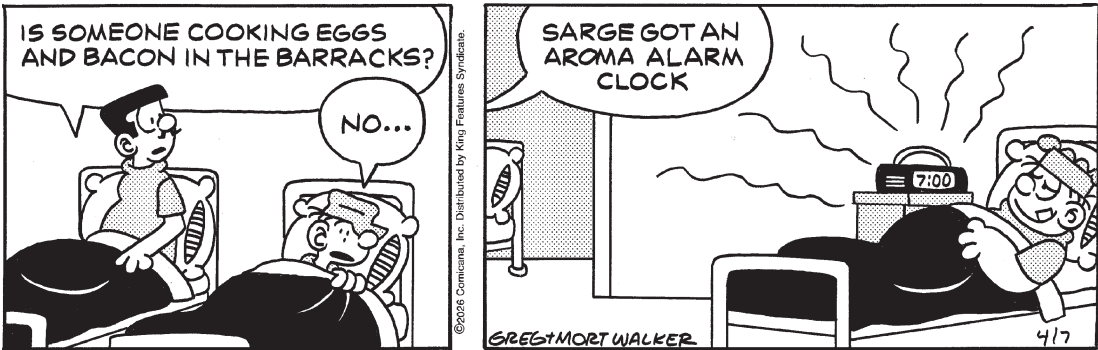
THE FAMILY CIRCUS Bil Keane



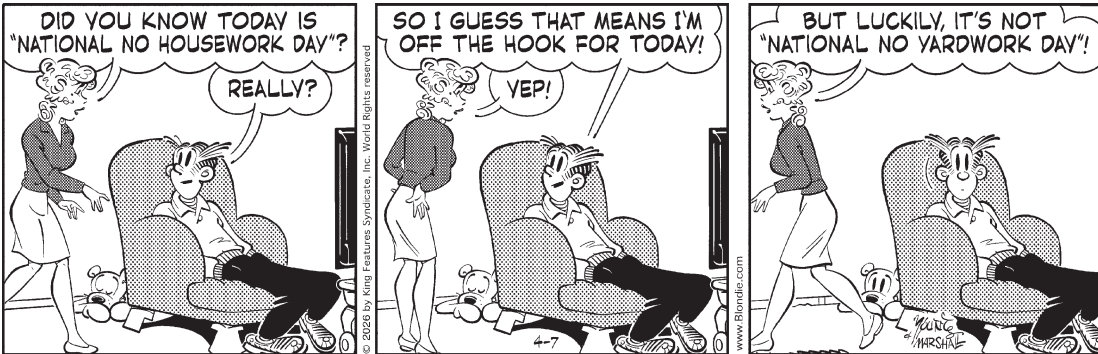
4-7
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"How many feathers does a bird have?"

BEETLE BAILEY Mort & Greg Walker



BLONDIE Dean Young & John Marshall



THE BORN LOSER Art & Chip Sansom



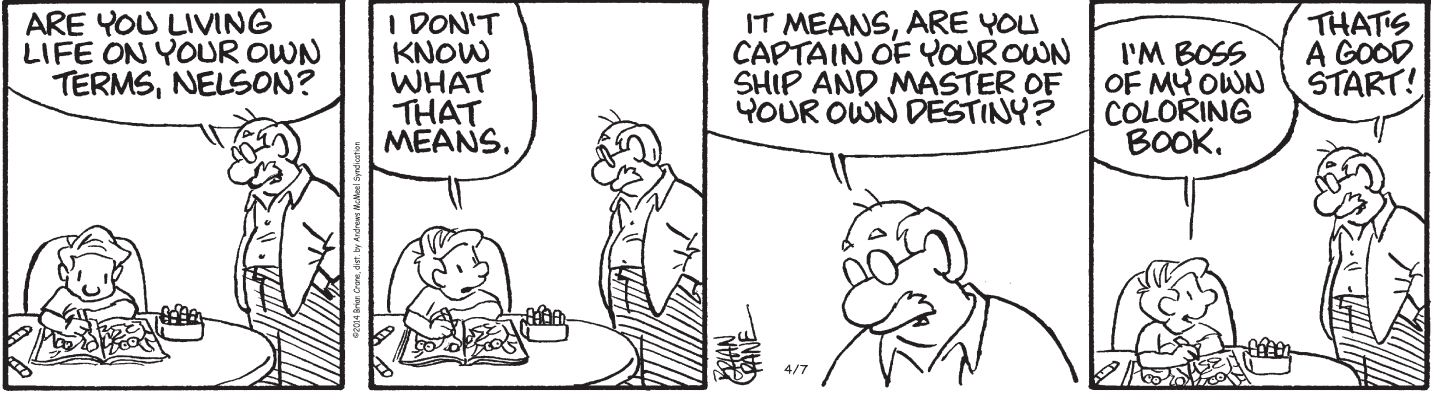
ZITS Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



GARFIELD Jim Davis



PICKLES Brian Crane



SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

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

WHATZIT?

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

breakfast

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:
Fast food

CROSSWORD

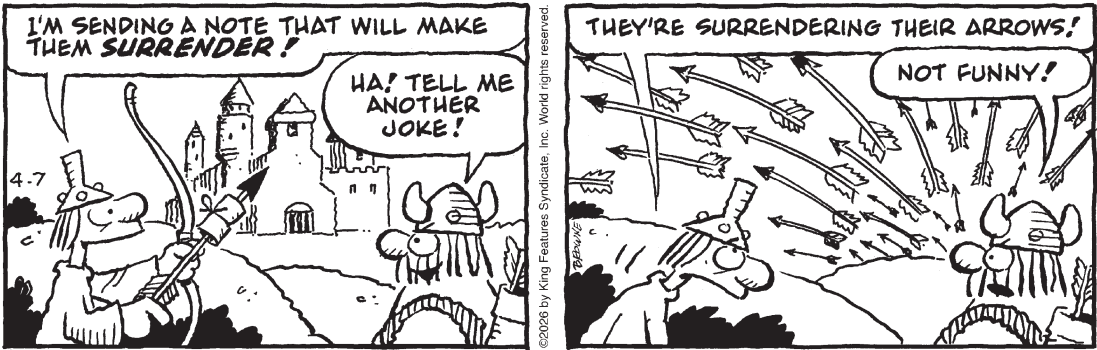
- ACROSS**
- 1 Opposite of NNW
4 Scrub
9 "Beverly Hills —"
12 Villain — Luthor
13 Big blood vessel
14 Exist
15 Curve
16 Shatter
17 NSA cousin
18 Ladybug
20 To this place
22 Fib
23 Hard outer covering
24 Soapstone
26 Recess
29 Mimic
30 Actress — Gabor
31 Beer ingredient
35 Fashion
37 Disreputable paper
- DOWN**
- 1 Thick piece
2 Withered
- 38 Golf standard
39 Hum
41 Grand Ole —
42 Treat at tea time
45 Color
46 Trinidad and —
48 Farm animals
51 Part of speech (Abbr.)
52 Greek epic
54 "— Sam"
55 Turn right
56 About 39 inches, in England
57 Tiny —
58 Defunct jetliner
59 Facilitates
60 Baseball stat.

TODAY'S SOLUTION:

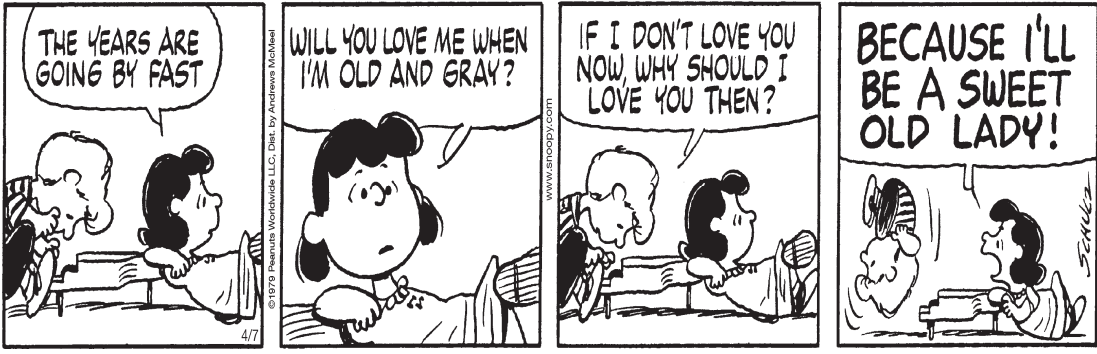
V	R	E	S	E	S	V	E	T	S	S
W	I	T	E	R	E	W	E	E	G	
W	V	I	D	V	I	I	J	D	V	
E	T	E	V	C	O	G	V	O	T	
			H							
Y	R	P	O	E	N	O	R	D		
R	A	P		G	A	R	E	D	O	W
T	L	A	M	A	V	E		E	P	A
			E	H	C	I	N	C	T	A
L	T	E	S	H	S		E	I	T	
R	E	H	T	I	H	E	T	E	B	
A	I	C	K	A	V	E	R	B	C	A
R	E	A	V	A	T	O	R	A	X	E
C	O	P		C	O	U	R	C	S	S

- 3 Did well
4 Costly fur
5 Apple remnant
6 Mineral
7 Four Corners state
8 Devil-may-care
- 9 Hidden supply
10 Bay window
11 Mother-of- —
19 Twitch
21 Those people
24 Scot's cap
25 Mil. address part
26 Infamous emperor
27 — the Terrible
28 Imprison
32 Desire for food
33 Household god
34 Endeavor — Ferber
36 Novelist
40 Ruling group
41 Unfashionable
42 Antlered animals
43 Ciphers
44 — d'art
45 Underworld god
47 Genus of olives
48 Concern
49 Den
50 Jane Austen novel
53 "— a boy!"

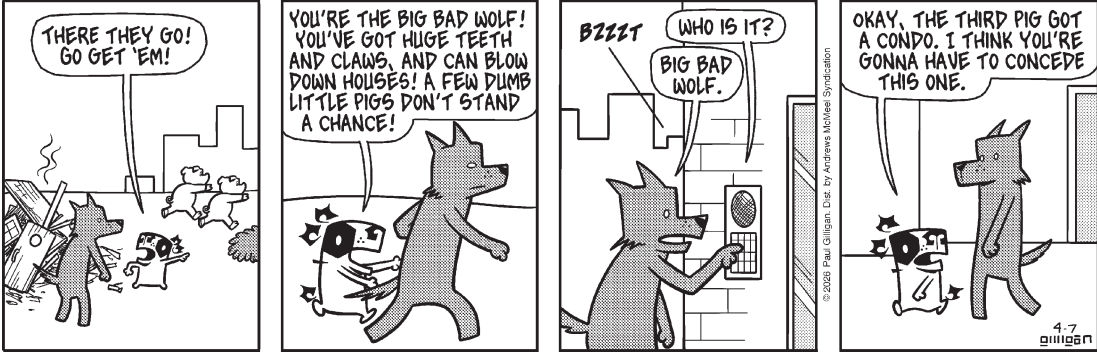
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE Chris Browne



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.

MATTRESS ADVERTISING Solution: 6 letters

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

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Affordable, Back, Bedtime, Boxed, Breathable, Care, Coil, Cooling, Cover, Cozy, Cycle, Delivery, Dense, Dream, Durability, Firm, Foam, Full, Gel, Haven, Health, Hybrid, Hypoallergenic, King, Lasting, Latex, Layer, Longevity, Memory, Motion, Orthopedic, Plush, Rejuvenate, Relax, Room, Side, Size, Sleep, Smart, Soft, Spacious, Spine, Spring, Twin, Warranty

TODAY'S ANSWER: Choice



Special Photo: GSW
Georgia Southwestern State University has been ranked as offering the No. 1 most affordable Master’s of Business Administration (MBA) program in the United States.

Georgia Southwestern State University named most affordable MBA in U.S.

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

AMERICUS — Georgia Southwestern State University has been ranked as offering the No. 1 most affordable Master’s of Business Administration (MBA) program in the United States, according to a recent ranking by MBA Grad Schools.

This recognition is featured in its list of the Most Affordable Online MBA Programs in the U.S., highlighting GSW’s continued commitment to delivering high-quality, accessible graduate education for working professionals and students nationwide.

GSW’s fully online MBA program stands out for its combination of Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation, flexible online delivery, and a curriculum designed to prepare graduates for leadership in today’s global and multicultural business environment.

“This recognition reinforces GSW’s mission to provide exceptional value without compromising quality,” Gaynor Cheokas, dean of GSW’s College of Business and Computing, said. “We are proud to offer an MBA program that empowers students to advance their careers while remaining financially accessible.”

GSW’s affordability is paired with strong academic credentials. The MBA program is accredited by the AACSB, a distinction held by fewer than 6% of business schools worldwide, ensuring a rigorous and respected educational experience.

Designed with working professionals in mind, the program allows students to progress at their own pace, with many completing their degree in as little as 18 months. The curriculum emphasizes practical business knowledge, leadership development and real-world application.

“Our MBA program focuses on developing key competencies needed for long-term success,” Jim Aller, GSW’s MBA program director, said.

“Students gain a strong foundation across disciplines such as finance, ethics, international business, management, and marketing, preparing them to lead effectively in a variety of professional settings.”

This latest recognition adds to GSW’s growing list of national accolades for affordability and academic excellence, further positioning the university as a leader in delivering high-value education.

Learn more about GSW’s MBA program at gsw.edu/MBA.

Phoebe highlights commitment to pediatric organ donation

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

ALBANY— In recognition of National Donate Life Month in April, Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital is highlighting its commitment to organ and tissue donation through participation in LifeLink of Georgia’s Pediatric Donation Symposium. Seven Phoebe team members recently joined nearly 60 health care professionals from across the state for this important educational event, reinforcing the hospital’s dedication to compassionate, collaborative donation practices.

The symposium brought together both in-person and virtual attendees for a day focused on strengthening partnerships between hospitals and LifeLink to ensure every potential donation opportunity is recognized and handled with the highest level of care, compassion, and respect for patients and their families. Phoebe’s representation reflected the organization’s dedication to education, teamwork and excellence in patient-centered care.

“This type of learning opportunity is essential to ensuring our teams are prepared to support families during incredibly difficult moments,” Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital CEO Deb Angerami said. “Participation in events like this reinforces our commitment to honoring

patients’ wishes and saving lives through donation.”

The program was chaired by Dr. Nga Pham, pediatric intensivist at Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta Arthur M. Blank Hospital, whose leadership guided meaningful discussions among multidisciplinary health care teams. Under her direction, participants explored the pediatric donation process, best practices for identifying potential donors, and the importance of timely, clear communication between hospital staff and LifeLink coordinators.

Throughout the day, sessions emphasized how collaboration between hospitals and LifeLink supports families through end-of-life decisions while maintaining the highest standards of clinical care. Attendees examined the different pathways for organ and tissue donation, and the critical role hospital teams play in ensuring a compassionate, respectful process from start to finish.

The educational discussions also highlighted the growing national need for organ donation. Every eight minutes, another person is added to the transplant waiting list. More than 100,000 people in the United States are currently waiting for a lifesaving transplant. Tragically, approximately 5,600 people die each year while waiting, equating to 13 lives



Special Photo: Phoebe
Seven Phoebe Putney Health System team members recently joined nearly 60 health care professionals from across the state for LifeLink of Georgia’s Pediatric Donation Symposium.

lost every day. One organ donor, however, can save up to eight lives, restore sight to two individuals through cornea donation, and help heal up to 75 people through tissue donation.

“Education and collaboration are essential to ensuring every potential donor opportunity is recognized and honored,” Professional Programs Liaison Kim Kottemann said. “This symposium allowed health care professionals to deepen their understanding of the donation process while reinforcing our shared mission to save and heal lives through

organ and tissue donation.”

LifeLink of Georgia is the federally designated organ procurement organization partnering with hospitals across Georgia to facilitate organ donation and transplantation. Through continued collaboration and education, LifeLink and health care organizations like Phoebe remain dedicated to honoring donor decisions and supporting families with compassion and integrity.

For more information about organ and tissue donation, contact LifeLink of Georgia at (800) 544-6667 or visit www.LifeLinkFoundation.org.

Giving from the HEART: Program has \$79.2 million-plus impact

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

ATLANTA — The Georgia HEART Hospital Program announced in the release of its 2025 annual report another record-breaking year of support for rural hospitals across the state. In 2025, more HEART tax credits were consumed than ever before, with a total of \$79.2 million contributed to rural hospitals statewide.

In the CEO’s letter to supporters, Ben Saylor emphasizes the continued growth and impact of the program.

“Since 2017, thousands of Georgians have chosen to redirect a portion of their state income tax dollars to support rural hospitals through the Georgia Rural Hospital Tax Credit program,” Saylor said. “Year after year, this unique partnership between individuals, businesses, and hospitals has strengthened access to health care in communities across our state.”

The 2025 report details how HEART tax credit contributions are making a tangible difference in communities statewide. Eligible hospitals have used HEART funds to expand access to care, enhance emergency and diagnostic services, upgrade facilities, and invest in innovative technologies that improve patient outcomes. From new medical

equipment and expanded service lines to infrastructure improvements and work force support, these investments are ensuring that high-quality health care remains accessible close to home.

Business and individual taxpayers alike continue to play a critical role in the program’s success. In 2025, businesses and business owners accounted for 62% of total contributions, demonstrating the strong partnership between Georgia’s business community and rural hospitals. The report also highlights the growing engagement of health care leaders, donors and com-

munity partners, including the inaugural 2025 Georgia HEART Conference, which brought together rural hospital leaders from across the state to share ideas, strengthen partnerships, and advance solutions for rural health care.

By turning state income tax payments into direct support for rural hospitals, Georgia HEART continues to provide a powerful and innovative way for taxpayers to make a lasting impact on the health and prosperity of their communities.

For more details on the 2025 annual report and to learn how to participate in the 2026 tax credit program, visit www.georgiaheart.org.



File Photo
Phoebe Sumter Medical Center in Americus is one of the state’s rural hospitals that has benefited from the state’s HEART program.

Small Georgia towns block ICE immigration centers

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

SOCIAL CIRCLE — A small town about 45 miles east of Atlanta is pushing back against a massive immigration detention center leaders say will stretch its infrastructure past the breaking point.

Social Circle City Manager Eric Taylor said there is a lock on the water meter at the facility, and it will stay there until U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement can demonstrate that it can operate the facility without overburdening water and sewer services.

“There is a lock on the meter,” Taylor said in a statement. “A representative from ICE was informed about the lock on the meter shortly after the sale of the property when she inquired about how to establish an account. The lock is there until ICE indicates how water and sewer will be served without exceeding our limited infrastructure capacity. The city of Social Circle is not satisfied that an adequate engineering analysis has been conducted.”

Taylor said information provided by ICE officials suggests the facility, originally built to be an industrial warehouse, would exceed the water and sewer capacity of the town. Plans call for the facility to house up to 10,000 detainees at a time and employ up to 2,500 people, according to city officials.



Special Photo by Elijah Nouvelage/Getty Images via Georgia Recorder
Local officials in Social Circle have expressed frustration over a planned ICE detention facility.

Social Circle’s population is around 5,000.

The detention center is part of ICE’s \$38.6 billion Detention Reengineering Initiative funded by to facilitate the Trump administration’s controversial mass deportation plans, but Social Circle leaders reported being blindsided by the plans late last year when they became public.

According to ICE documents shared by Social Circle, the project is set to include more than 2.3 million square feet of space across three buildings on 183 acres of land.

Other planning documents show that eight large-scale detention centers across the country, including the one planned in Social Circle, would house detainees for “periods averaging less than 60 days” before they are deported.

In addition to dormitories for detainees, the agency says the facilities will include lobbies, recreational space, courtrooms, intake and processing zones and cafeterias as well as amenities for ICE

agents and contractor staff like offices and exercise facilities.

ICE expects all of its new facilities to be in operation by the end of November, the documents show.

The Trump administration’s mass deportation policy and ICE’s aggressive tactics have been subject to scrutiny — and protest, especially after the high-profile deaths of civilians in Minneapolis. But Latino Community Fund Georgia Deputy Executive Director Jean-Luc Rivera said opposition to the facility has gone beyond politics or immigration policy.

“Social Circle is doing what they need to protect their residents and make sure they still have access to water and the utilities they need,” he said. “I think this is probably being seen as obviously more a pushback on the detention center being built in regards to immigration, but also I think a really important factor here in this story is that this is also to protect the residents of Social Circle and

make sure they have access to the utilities because of the huge drain that this is going to put on the infrastructure there that’s not built for this.”

Social Circle is located mostly in Walton County, where Trump won more than 70% of the vote in 2024.

Officials in another conservative Georgia city are pushing back against another, smaller ICE facility. Earlier this month, the Oakwood City Council voted unanimously to call for a stay on construction of a planned ICE detention center there.

Oakwood, which is south of Gainesville, is located in Hall County, which also gave more than 70% of its vote to Trump.

According to Georgia Republican Congressman Andrew Clyde, the Oakwood facility would serve as a regional processing center rather than a detention center. That means the capacity would be up to 1,600 detainees, who would spend up to a week there on average before being moved to a detention center.

“Based on ICE’s economic impact analysis, track record, and unwavering commitment to protecting the American people, I am confident that the Oakwood ICE facility will be a safe and prosperous addition to the Ninth District,” Clyde said in a statement.



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Grover knocks in 13 runs; ASU takes two of three in Atlanta

By Joe Whitfield
Sports Editor

ATLANTA — Baseball seasons don’t always announce themselves when they turn. Sometimes it’s subtle — a well-pitched inning, a seeing-eye single, a break that finally goes your way. And sometimes, it sounds like this.

Three swings. Three home runs. A dozen-plus runs driven in. A lineup that suddenly looks alive again.

For Albany State, the turning point came Saturday, and it came off the bat of Ty Grover.

A junior first baseman from Springfield, Florida, in his third year with the program,

Grover didn’t just lead the Golden Rams — he carried them through a weekend that may prove to be a pivot point in their season.

A day after watching a late lead slip away in a 14-7 loss to Morehouse, Albany State responded with authority, sweeping a doubleheader and bludgeoning its way to wins behind one of the most remarkable individual performances head coach Scot Hemmings has witnessed.

“It ended up being a good weekend,” Hemmings said. “We had a little trouble in our bullpen last night and had an uncharacteristic outing, which will happen from time



Staff Photo: Joe Whitfield
Albany State first baseman Ty Grover hit three home runs and knocked in 13 runs Saturday as the Golden Rams swept a doubleheader at Morehouse College in Atlanta.

to time. Today was really fun to watch Ty Grover have one of the greatest statistical days that I’ve ever been a part of. I know he had three homers and 12 or 13 RBIs.”

That might sound like exaggeration — until you look closer. Grover finished the weekend going 8-for-13 with three home runs, three doubles and 13 RBIs, including an eight-RBI explosion in Saturday’s opener.

Yes — opener.

Because Albany State didn’t just bounce back Saturday. It erupted.

In the first game of the doubleheader, the Golden Rams unleashed one of their most complete offensive perfor-

mances of the season, rolling to a 22-8 win behind a relentless attack that produced 18 hits and runs in bunches.

Grover was everywhere.

He homered twice, doubled twice and drove in eight runs, delivering blows in nearly every key moment as Albany State turned a competitive game into a runaway.

If that game cracked the door open, the second game slammed it shut.

Behind another strong effort on the mound — this time from Sam Crew — Albany State completed the sweep with an 11-5 victory, pairing

See **ASU** 10A

UCLA wins first NCAA women’s hoops title

Field Level Media

PHOENIX — Gabriela Jaquez scored 21 points, Lauren Betts posted her 15th double-double of the season and UCLA won its first women’s basketball national championship in the NCAA era with a suffocating 79-51 victory over South Carolina in the final Sunday afternoon.

Betts had 14 points and 11 rebounds, Jaquez added 10 rebounds and five assists and the Bruins (37-1) never trailed while finishing the season on a 31-game winning streak.

Jaquez’s fastback layup gave the balanced Bruins a 48-26 lead midway through the third quarter, and 3-pointers from Jaquez and Gianna Kneepkens keyed a 13-0 run to propel them to a 61-32 lead after three.

With the 6-foot-7 Betts anchoring the middle, the Bruins limited South Carolina to 29.0% shooting from the field



Special Photo: Joe Rondone/The Republic
UCLA’s Angela Dugalić looks to pass while defended by South Carolina’s Agot Makeer during the NCAA women’s national championship game Sunday in Phoenix; teammate Gabriela Jaquez is in the background.

and had a 49-37 rebounding edge.

Tessa Johnson scored 14 points and Agot Makeer put up 11 for the Gamecocks (31-4), who were never closer than 28 in the fourth quarter.

South Carolina leading scorer Joyce Edwards was held to eight points after averaging

19.5 points coming in. She had 11 rebounds.

The Bruins held Texas leading scorer Madison Booker to six points on 3-of-23 shooting in their 51-44 semifinal win, when the Longhorns shot 30.8%.

All five UCLA senior starters scored in double figures.

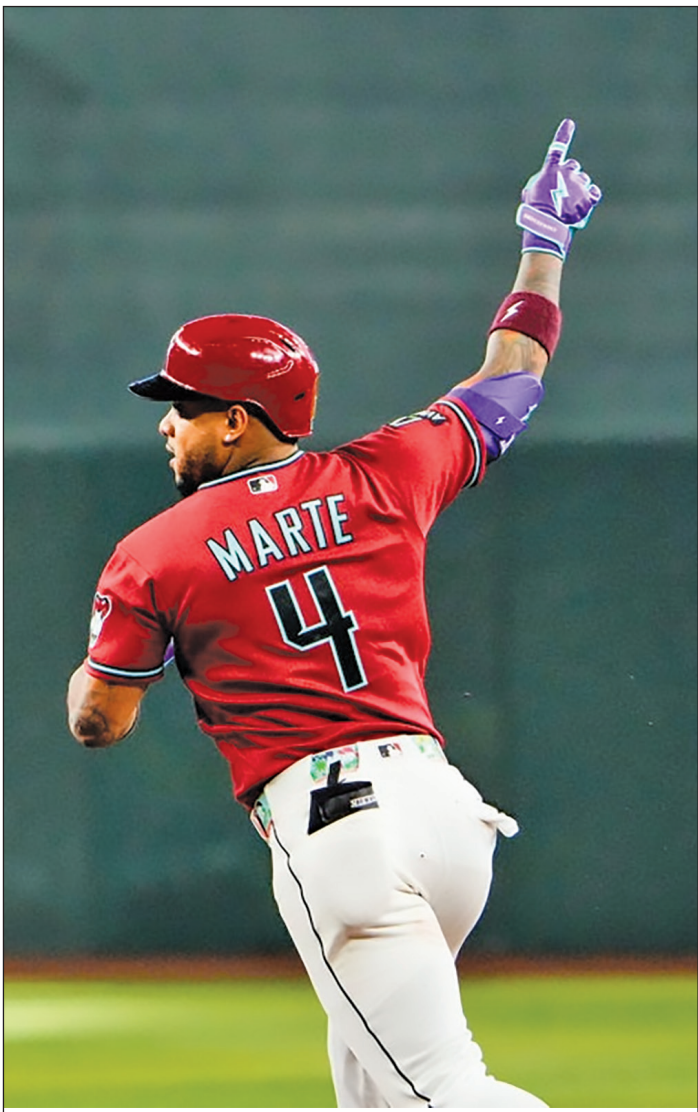
Kneepkens had 15 points, Charlissee Leger-Walker had 10 points and Kiki Rice added 10 points, six rebounds and five assists.

The Bruins never trailed in either Final Four game in their second straight appearance, a program first. They won the 1978 national AIAW championship. The NCAA era began in 1982.

UCLA has won two in a row in the series after breaking the Gamecocks’ 43-game winning streak in a 77-62 victory in their last meeting Nov. 24, 2024, in Pauley Pavilion.

The Bruins were on the other side of a blowout in the Final Four last season, failing 85-51 to eventual champion UConn in the semifinals.

Betts went to the bench with 2:14 remaining in the first period, when cameras caught her saying, “I have something stuck in my throat.” She returned with 8:41 left in the first half.



Special Photo: Arianna Grainey-Imagn Images
Arizona’s Ketel Marte gestures as he heads toward second base after lining a double to score the winning run in the bottom of the tenth inning Sunday in Phoenix.

Baseball Roundup: Lee County sharp, Worth sweeps, Baconton battles

By Joe Whitfield
Sports Editor

LEESBURG — The timing couldn’t be much more significant.

With No. 2-ranked Houston County coming to town this week for a critical three-game region series, Lee County appears to be finding its footing at just the right moment.

Behind a dominant outing from sophomore Cole French, the Trojans earned their second straight shutout Thursday with a 3-0 win over Wayne County — a performance that sets the tone heading into one of the most important stretches of the season.

French was in control from the first pitch, striking out 12 batters while allowing just three hits and one walk in a complete-game effort.

“Cole found the strike zone early and pitched really, really well,” Lee County head coach Wes Shiver said.



Staff Photo: Joe Whitfield
Lee County sophomore Cole French struck out 12 batters Thursday and the Trojans beat visiting Wayne County 3-0 in Leesburg.

French also led the way offensively, going 2-for-3 with a double and two RBIs. He helped his own cause with an RBI single in the first inning and added a run-scoring double in the third.

The Trojans didn’t overwhelm Wayne County with offense, but they executed in key moments — something Shiver has emphasized.

“We had three two-out hits that scored runs,” he said. “We’ve been working on that intentionally and today it paid off.”

Colten Marshall added two hits as Lee County finished with seven, while Wayne County managed just three hits against French.

Now, the focus shifts to Houston County, which enters the week atop the region standings. Lee County sits fourth behind Houston, Thomas County Central and Veterans, making the upcoming series pivotal in shaping the playoff picture.

The Trojans will travel to Warner Robins on Tuesday before hosting the Bears in a

Friday doubleheader in what could define their postseason positioning.

In Sylvester, Worth County delivered a strong response on the field — even as emotions off the field ran heavy.

The Rams swept a Friday doubleheader against Berrien, winning 4-3 before rolling to a 10-0 victory behind a dominant pitching performance from Avery Kilcrease.

In the opener, Worth County rallied from an early deficit, tying the game on a sacrifice fly from Colby Griffis before

taking the lead for good in the fourth inning on an RBI groundout by Caleb Parten.

DJ Easom earned the win, allowing three runs (two earned) over six innings, while Kilcrease closed it out with a scoreless seventh.

Cully Hendley and Brady Weaver led the offense with two hits apiece, while Weaver also homered earlier in the game.

In game two, Kilcrease took center stage.

The right-hander struck out 15 batters over six innings, allowing just two hits and no runs in a dominant performance that highlighted Worth County’s potential when it’s clicking.

Offensively, the Rams backed him with 11 hits, including multi-hit efforts from Lyndon Worthy, Hayden Short, Luke Rogers and Kilcrease himself.

Worthy, Short and Weaver each drove in two runs.

The doubleheader, however, stretched late into the night due to weather delays, not ending until after 11 p.m.

And the following day brought a much different kind of weight.

Seven Worth County players served as pallbearers Saturday for beloved teacher Jim “Jimbo” Houston, who was killed last week by a drunk driver — a reminder that some moments extend far beyond the game.

The Rams will return to action Thursday at home against Cairo.

Ketel Marte, D-backs walk off Braves in 10th

Field Level Media

Corbin Carroll went 3-for-4 with an RBI triple, while Ildemaro Vargas drove in two runs on a triple for the Diamondbacks, who earned consecutive one-run wins to split the four-game series.

Taylor Rashi (1-0) earned his first career win, throwing a perfect top of the 10th in his season debut. In the bottom of the frame, Marte doubled on the first pitch from Joel Payamps (0-1) to score the automatic runner and end the game.

Brandon Pfaadt threw 4 2/3 innings of three-run ball, allowing six hits while striking out two and walking two.

Drake Baldwin went 3-for-5 with a homer and four RBIs for the Braves. Martin Perez allowed four runs on five hits in his first start of the season, striking out one and walking one.

Against Jonathan Loaisiga in the top of the ninth, Jorge Mateo, Ronald Acuna Jr. and Baldwin laced consecutive singles to pull the Braves even at 5-5. Raisel Iglesias threw a perfect bottom of the ninth to send the game to extras.

Atlanta struck first two bat-

ters in, as Baldwin cracked his fourth homer of the season to give the visitors a 1-0 lead.

Marte began the bottom of the first with a double and scored on Geraldo Perdomo’s one-out sacrifice fly.

After Carroll’s single and Nolan Arenado’s one-out walk in the fourth, Vargas drove in both runners with a triple to right to give Arizona a 3-1 lead.

The Braves tied the game in the top of the fifth. Mauricio Dubon led off with a double and scored on Pfaadt’s wild pitch. Mateo then walked, Acuna singled and Baldwin knotted the score at three apiece with an RBI single.

Taylor Clarke relieved Pfaadt after 79 pitches.

Carroll chased Perez with a leadoff single in the bottom of the sixth. After Carroll stole second, Tyler Kinley allowed Arenado’s go-ahead single.

Atlanta answered again as Baldwin’s RBI single off reliever Ryan Thompson tied the score at four in the top of the seventh.

Atlanta’s Dylan Lee surrendered Jorge Barrosa’s double and Carroll’s triple in the eighth, returning the lead to Arizona.

Knights bounce back after tough Thursday loss

By Joe Whitfield
Sports Editor

ALBANY — For Deerfield-Windsor, the formula has been consistent during its recent stretch.

Pitch it well. Play clean. Do just enough at the plate.

Over three games in three days, the Knights experienced both sides of that formula.

After a frustrating 2-0 loss at home to Wilcox County on Thursday snapped an eight-game winning streak, Deerfield-Windsor responded with a pair of wins Friday in Abbeville, Alabama — beating Abbeville Christian 7-1 and rallying past Lowndes Academy 15-9 to close the week on a high note.

Thursday's loss was the kind that lingered.

Despite a complete-game effort from senior right-hander David Hutchins, the Knights couldn't find the timely hit they needed. Hutchins allowed just five hits and two runs (one earned) over seven

innings, striking out six and walking one while recording all 21 outs.

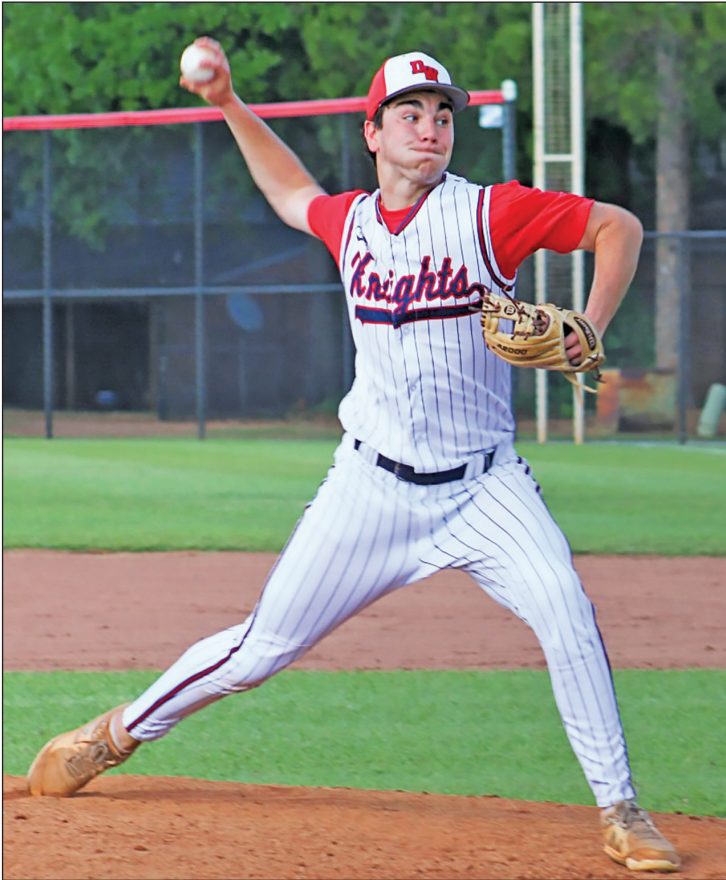
"It was a tough day," head coach Kyle Keen said. "We didn't play our game. David Hutchins threw a gem and it sucks that he gets a loss. We have too many guys trying to yank the ball."

Wilcox County broke a scoreless tie in the sixth inning on a sacrifice fly and added another run, while Deerfield-Windsor managed just three hits. The Knights loaded the bases with two outs in the seventh but couldn't deliver the tying hit.

If Thursday was about missed chances, Friday was about taking advantage of them.

In the opener against Abbeville Christian, Deerfield-Windsor used a four-run second inning to take control and never looked back in a 7-1 win.

The Knights capitalized on a mix of patience and pressure — scoring on an error, a double by Grier Morey, a



Staff Photo: Joe Whitfield
Deerfield-Windsor senior David Hutchins delivers a pitch during Thursday's game against Wilcox County in Albany. He pitched a complete game, allowing just one earned run, but the Knights lost 2-0.

groundout by Brantley Michlig and a wild pitch in the decisive inning.

Morey added a sacrifice fly in the third as Deerfield-Windsor built a 5-0 lead.

Gage Tomlinson handled the rest.

The right-hander pitched six strong innings, allowing just one run on four hits while striking out six. West Rush-ton added a scoreless inning in relief to close it out.

Deerfield-Windsor showed discipline at the plate with six walks and aggressiveness on the bases, stealing five bags, including two by Boyd Pollock. The Knights also played clean defensively, committing no errors.

If the first game was controlled, the second required resilience.

Facing Lowndes Academy, Deerfield-Windsor fell behind 8-1 by the fourth inning and appeared headed for a long afternoon.

Instead, the Knights flipped the script.

Led by Hutchins at the plate, Deerfield-Windsor rallied with seven runs in the sixth inning to turn a deficit into a 15-9 victory. Hutchins drove in four runs, collecting three hits, including a two-run double in the decisive frame.

The Knights pounded out 13 hits in the game, with Collins Clark, Morey and Sam Keating each recording multiple hits as the offense found a rhythm that had been missing a day earlier.

After struggling to generate timely offense Thursday, Deerfield-Windsor delivered when it mattered most Friday — first by building an early lead, then by erasing a big deficit.

It was a response that reflected both the frustration of the loss and the potential of the lineup when it clicks.

The Knights will look to carry that momentum into their next game Thursday at home against Schley County.

Ayla Guzzardo takes over Georgia women's basketball

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

ATHENS — Ayla Guzzardo, who led McNeese State to the best single-season turnaround in NCAA Division I women's basketball with a school-record 29 wins this past season, has been named the next head coach of Georgia Lady Bulldog basketball, J. Reid Parker Director of Athletics Josh Brooks announced Sunday.

The three-time Southland Conference champion and Coach of the Year engineered a 19-win improvement in her lone season with the Cowgirls, taking the team from a 10-21 record the year before her arrival to a 29-6 mark during the 2025-26 campaign.

In addition to a school-record win total, the team won just the third conference title in McNeese State history. The Cowgirls also recorded their first victory over a Power 4 team since 2014.

"We are excited to welcome Ayla and her family to the University of Georgia," Brooks said. "This is a great day for our women's basketball program. When looking for the next head coach, our goal was to find someone who would connect with our fans, support our student-athletes

and continue to build on the proud tradition of Lady Bulldog basketball. Ayla's passion is unmatched. She is a proven winner and someone our fans will love following. We can't wait for her to get started."

Guzzardo spent one season at McNeese State after leading Southeastern Louisiana on a historic run. She guided the Lions to the 2023 NCAA Tournament, with an average of 22 wins, a pair of Southland Conference titles and an impressive 47-9 league record over her final three seasons.

"I want to thank President Morehead, Josh Brooks, Darrice Griffin and the entire Georgia family for entrusting me with this dream opportunity," Guzzardo said. "To everyone at McNeese State, I cannot thank you enough for all your love and support during our time with you. Georgia is a special program that helped lay the foundation for the success of our sport. From Coach Landers to our great alumni and our passionate fan base, Lady Bulldog basketball has a storied history and is set up for continued excellence moving forward. I am humbled with the trust you have placed in me and look and for-



Special Graphic

ward to working with our staff and student-athletes to build special relationships with our students, this University and the Athens community. Go Dawgs!"

A native of Hammond, La., Guzzardo joined the Southeastern staff in 2016-17 as an assistant coach before being elevated to head coach in 2017-18. She spent the next eight seasons building a powerhouse in the Southland Conference.

Guzzardo began her coaching career at her alma mater, Akron University, where she served for four seasons. She then moved back to Hammond to become a successful high school coach at St. Thomas Aquinas, leading the team to the 2014-15 Top 28.

"We are delighted to welcome Coach Ayla Guzzardo to the University of Georgia," said UGA President Jere W. Morehead.

"We take great pride in the tradition of our women's basketball program, and we are excited about the future of Lady Bulldog basketball under her leadership. Coach Guzzardo brings a record of success and a strong commitment to student-athlete development, and we look forward to all she will accomplish in Athens."

A 2010 graduate of Akron University, Guzzardo ranked among conference leaders in assists, assist-to-turnover ratio and steals per game during her playing career. In just two seasons with the Zips, she owns the ninth-best career assists total with 238.

Guzzardo began her collegiate career at Shelton State Community College, where she helped lead the team to a 62-9 record and a pair of conference titles.

Guzzardo has three children — Cameron, Madden and Lumen.



Georgia Tech sweeps Cal to win 8th straight

BERKELEY, Calif. — No. 3 Georgia Tech didn't just take care of business on the West Coast.

The Yellow Jackets overwhelmed it.

Georgia Tech completed a three-game sweep of California with a 9-3 victory Sunday at Stu Gordon Stadium, extending its winning streak to eight games and continuing what has become one of the most explosive offensive stretches in program history.

The Jackets (26-5, 12-3 ACC) jumped out early for the third straight game in the series and never looked back, improving to 10-0 all-time against Cal since the Golden Bears joined the ACC.

Georgia Tech set the tone immediately when junior Drew Burress led off the game with a home run — his 50th career blast — putting him among elite company in program history.

From there, the Jackets methodically built the lead.

After stretching the advantage to 4-0 through three innings, Georgia Tech delivered the knockout punch in the sixth, scoring five runs with two outs behind a flurry of hits and disciplined at-bats to push the lead to 9-0.

California (14-16, 1-11 ACC) broke up the shutout with three runs in the eighth, but the outcome was never in doubt.

Georgia Tech's offense continues to operate at a historic pace.

The Jackets have now scored 353 runs through their first 31 games — the most in program history at that point and the highest total by any Power 4 team in the BBOR era.

They are averaging 11.4 runs per game, well above the program's previous record of 10.3 set in 1984.

Burress led the way Sunday, going 3-for-5 with a home run and three runs scored, extending his hitting streak to six games.

Jarren Advincula added another strong performance, going 3-for-5 with a double and a triple, while driving in three runs and extending his hitting streak to 15 games.

Sophomore Alex Hernandez also stayed hot at the plate, going 3-for-4 with a double and two RBIs while extending his on-base streak to 33 consecutive games.

On the mound, sophomore Jackson Blakely continued his breakout season, tossing 5.1 scoreless innings while allowing just two hits and striking out six.

Blakely has now allowed runs in just one of his appearances this season and lowered his ERA to a team-best 1.82.

Georgia Tech's pitching staff has held opponents under five runs in eight straight games, its longest such streak in more than a decade.

The sweep marked the Jackets' second consecutive ACC series sweep — following a sweep of No. 14 NC State — and the first time since 2010-11 Georgia Tech has accomplished that feat in back-to-back seasons.

First-year head coach James Ramsey is now tied with former coach Danny Hall for the best record through 31 games in program history.

Georgia Tech returns home Tuesday to face Kennesaw State before continuing ACC play.

From 9A

ASU

timely hitting with just enough pitching to stay in control.

Grover wasn't finished there, either.

He drove in five more runs in the nightcap, including a two-run double in the first inning and a three-run home run in the sixth, giving him 13 RBIs across the doubleheader — the kind of production that doesn't just win games, it defines weekends.

"He swung the bat really well," Hemmings said, before widening the lens. "We all did."

And that may have been the most important development of all.

For weeks, Albany State had been searching for consistency at the plate. The pitching had often been good enough, but the offense had yet to find rhythm.

Saturday looked different.

"We swung the bats really well, played good defense and got another great outing out of Sam Crew in game one," Hemmings said. "Collin Loeffler and Chase Ledger came out of the bullpen and

threw the ball really well."

More telling than the numbers, perhaps, was the approach.

"I saw some signs of us busting out of our hitting woes and really buying into a plan and approach," Hemmings said. "We put up some great numbers with a lot of extra base hits."

That combination — power, patience and pitching — is what gives a team staying power this time of year.

And if Saturday was any indication, the Golden Rams may be finding it at just the right time.

The Golden Rams will be at home Tuesday to take on Georgia Southwestern with first pitch set for 5 p.m. Albany State will then head to South Carolina for a three-game SIAC series against Benedict College Saturday and Sunday.

Ketel Marte laced a walk-off double in the bottom of the 10th to propel the Arizona Diamondbacks to a 6-5 victory over the Atlanta Braves on Sunday in Phoenix.

Corbin Carroll went 3-for-4 with an RBI triple, while Ildemaro Vargas drove in two runs on a triple for the Diamondbacks, who earned consecutive one-run wins to split

the four-game series.

Taylor Rashi (1-0) earned his first career win, throwing a perfect top of the 10th in his season debut. In the bottom of the frame, Marte doubled on the first pitch from Joel Payamps (0-1) to score the automatic runner and end the game.

Brandon Pfaadt threw 4 2/3 innings of three-run ball, allowing six hits while striking out two and walking two.

Drake Baldwin went 3-for-5 with a homer and four RBIs for the Braves. Martin Perez allowed four runs on five hits in his first start of the season, striking out one and walking one.

Against Jonathan Loaisiga in the top of the ninth, Jorge Mateo, Ronald Acuna Jr. and Baldwin laced consecutive singles to pull the Braves even at 5-5. Raisel Iglesias threw a perfect bottom of the ninth to send the game to extras.

Atlanta struck first two batters in, as Baldwin cracked his fourth homer of the season to give the visitors a 1-0 lead.

Marte began the bottom of the first with a double and scored on Geraldo Perdomo's one-out sac-

rifice fly.

After Carroll's single and Nolan Arenado's one-out walk in the fourth, Vargas drove in both runners with a triple to right to give Arizona a 3-1 lead.

The Braves tied the game in the top of the fifth. Mauricio Dubon led off with a double and scored on Pfaadt's wild pitch. Mateo then walked, Acuna singled and Baldwin knotted the score at three apiece with an RBI single.

Taylor Clarke relieved Pfaadt after 79 pitches.

Carroll chased Perez with a lead-off single in the bottom of the sixth. After Carroll stole second, Tyler Kinley allowed Arenado's go-ahead single.

Atlanta answered again as Baldwin's RBI single off reliever Ryan Thompson tied the score at four in the top of the seventh.

Atlanta's Dylan Lee surrendered Jorge Barrosa's double and Carroll's triple in the eighth, returning the lead to Arizona. Ketel Marte laced a walk-off double in the bottom of the 10th to propel the Arizona Diamondbacks to a 6-5 victory over the Atlanta Braves on Sunday in Phoenix.



Special Photo: ABAC

The residence halls at ABAC have been ranked No. 1 in Georgia by niche.com.

ABAC residence halls ranked No. 1 in Georgia

Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

TIFTON — Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College has once again been recognized with top honors for its residence halls, which Niche has ranked No. 1 in Georgia for 2026.

Niche awarded ABAC an “A” rating based on a combination of student surveys, housing costs, capacity and safety data. The recognition marks the second consecutive year ABAC has earned the top ranking in the state.

“We’re honored to be recognized again as having the best residence halls in Georgia,” Director of Residence Life & Housing Trent Hester said in a news release. “Our focus is creating an environment where students feel comfortable, connected, and truly at home from the moment they arrive on campus.”

Student feedback continues

to reflect that experience. According to Niche data, 75% of students rate the social atmosphere of ABAC’s residence halls as great, while 67% give high marks to their overall quality. Reviewers frequently highlight the welcoming environment and comfortable living spaces.

For incoming Elementary Education student Emilee Gruno of Quitman, that sense of belonging played a major role in her college decision. “I chose ABAC because of the quality of academics, but when I visited campus, the residence halls really stood out,” Gruno said. “They were charming and felt like they could truly be my home away from home.”

Beyond comfort, ABAC’s on-campus living experience is designed to foster connection and engagement, placing students at the center of campus life.

The college is also investing

in continued improvements to its residence halls, including updated flooring and enhancements to shared spaces over the next two years, ensuring facilities continue to match the quality of the student experience.

“We understand that creating a safe and welcoming environment is essential to our students’ ability to be successful,” Alan Kramer, assistant vice president for Student Affairs & dean of Students, said. “Our two buildings – ABAC Place and ABAC Lakeside – provide a perfect complement to the 60-plus clubs and organizations our students engage in, helping them immediately connect with the campus community.”

“This recognition reflects our commitment to providing spaces where students can learn, grow, and feel at home, and we are honored to receive it.”

General Assembly passes budget that spends on early literacy, pensions

By Ty Tagami

Capital Beat News Service

ATLANTA — The youngest and oldest people in Georgia to whom the state owes a financial responsibility got something extra in the 2027 fiscal year budget that lawmakers sent to Gov. Brian Kemp.

State retirees could get a bump in their pensions after the state House and Senate agreed to add at least \$65 million in state money to their pension fund.

And children in grades kindergarten through third grade could learn how to read with the help of literacy experts hired with \$70 million in state funds.

That is more money than the House had initially budgeted as a downpayment on hiring more than 1,300 literacy coaches.

The compromise budget also puts the money into a recurring fund, whereas the Senate had proposed a one-time grant.

Grants must be renewed annually, so the House wanted the money engraved in the school funding formula.

The compromise puts the money into the Quality Basic Education funding formula, so it will be there year after year.

“I think QBE is usually a more consistent formula for our schools,” Sen. Blake Til-

lery, R-Vidalia, the chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said. “That should give schools more confidence in hiring employees, an ongoing expense.”

“I think there’s a lot more acceptance by the local school systems that it will be consistent whereas our non-QBE grants sometimes are one of the first to go in recessionary times.”

Rep. Matt Hatchett, R-Dublin, chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, called it “a conservative and fiscally sound budget.” And he said it would help state pensioners who “put in years of hard work only to see inflation decimate” their income, with the first cost-of-living increase in recent history of more than 2%.

The approvals by the House and Senate to House Bill 974 sends the \$38.5 billion budget to Kemp, who has line-item veto authority.

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.

“HOVPNZV MNCCOVCKTV, QNZ’II TKGKL
XVSLV, FZV CNLK OCANLVSTVIQ,
HOVPNZV MNTXOXVKTMQ, QNZ’II
TKGKL WOTOXP.” — EKT BK I
HSXPOTUVNT

Previous Solution: “Out of the darkness of my life ... I put before you the one great thing to love on Earth: the blessed sacrament.” — J.R.R. Tolkien
TODAY’S CLUE: *W sjanbe O*

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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.

“BF NSKF YC FJWP HIPFD JMR THD
FJWP HIPFD. JNHMF BF WJM RH GH
NSIINF; IHXFIPFD BF WJM RH GH
LEWP.” — PFNFM QFN NFD

Previous Solution: “Without commitment, you’ll never start, but more importantly, without consistency, you’ll never finish.” — Denzel Washington
TODAY’S CLUE: *O sjanbe M*

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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	SOLUTIONS
1 Parmesan and feta (7)	_____
2 flappers' decade (8)	_____
3 taking for a ride (8)	_____
4 accords (5)	_____
5 storm in a Shakespeare play (7)	_____
6 most in demand (7)	_____
7 officially selects (10)	_____

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Saturday's Answers: 1. JACKETS 2. FUMBLES 3. YALE 4. UMPED 5. MARTIAN 6. FORGER 7. PENELOPE

4/6

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	SOLUTIONS
1 college residence halls (11)	_____
2 easily set on fire (9)	_____
3 helpful act (5)	_____
4 "Hotel California" band (6)	_____
5 flying disc game (8)	_____
6 Justine and Jason (8)	_____
7 matching in reverse (9)	_____

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Monday's Answers: 1. CHEESES 2. TWENTIES 3. TRICKING 4. DEALS 5. TEMPEST 6. HOTTEST 7. DESIGNATES

4/7

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 "One last thing ..."

8 Gadget for a seafood chef

14 Chewy bits in some oatmeal cookies

15 Estrogen, e.g.

16 Noisy insects that emerge in summer

17 Small crustaceans

18 Luge, for one

19 Get stuff ready for vacation

21 Series of reps in the gym

22 Empty spaces

24 Spanged (off)

26 "—ching!"

28 "Bohemian Rhapsody" Oscar winner Malek

30 "O Sole —"

31 Target

32 Sch. that hosts the Sun Bowl

33 To-do list trip

37 Fuss at the mirror

39 "Euphoria" cable network

41 Chocolate source

42 Made a cozy home

44 Not written down, as a contract

46 Official who calls balls and strikes

47 Laudatory poem

48 Ready, willing, and —

49 Driver's seat?

50 Snack brand named for a Roman moon goddess

53 Dept. of Labor div.

55 Equinox mo.

56 Fool around (with)

58 Kimono sashes

61 Consider anew

63 Seasonal quaffs

65 Awakens

66 Take revenge

67 Electronic keyboards, informally

68 Appetizer-size burgers

DOWN

1 Rainbow shapes

2 Get just right

3 Yahtzee, craps, et al.

4 Carne __ tacos: steak dish

5 Tupperware top

6 Gets short with

7 Mount of Greek myth

8 Offender's defiant challenge

9 Mysterious designs in fields

10 Concert device

11 Start to change?

12 Came to a stop

13 Sit for a spell

15 Long walk

20 Portable writing surface

23 Fruit-filled breakfast treat

25 Jewish wedding dance

26 Crunch's rank in the cereal aisle

27 Fill a job opening

29 "It's alright, I suppose"

34 On the next level, or what 3-, 9-, 20-, and 23-Down literally have

35 First entry on many a form

36 Suss (out), informally

38 School attended by many English statesmen

40 Poetic sphere

43 Fillets, as a flourder

45 Soothing balm for a sunburn

50 Suspicious (of)

51 "The Jungle" writer Sinclair

52 NASA go-aheads

54 Made sharper

55 Sp. titles

57 Staying power

59 Disney CEO before D'Amaro

60 Hyphenated personal IDs

62 Crude dwelling

64 VW hatchback

ANSWER TO TODAY'S PUZZLE:

04/07/26

By Michael Hobin
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04/07/26

NOAA: Most of country can expect above-normal spring temperatures

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

Drought conditions are forecast to worsen or develop for many areas in the West and south-central Plains, according to NOAA’s Spring Outlook released for April through June. Forecasters from NOAA’s National Weather Service also predict above-normal temperatures for the majority of the U.S.

“Factors influencing NOAA’s Spring Outlook include the El Niño-Southern Oscillation, low snowpack in the West and soil moisture content throughout the lower 48 states,” Ken Graham, director of NOAA’s National Weather Service, said in a news release. “This spring will also feature a transition from La Niña to ENSO-neutral conditions, meaning neither El Niño nor La Niña.”

As of mid-March, moderate to exceptional drought conditions exist across 55% of the continental United States.

“Drought conditions worsened or developed for much of the Great Plains, Lower Mississippi Valley, and Southeast U.S. due to warmer and drier-than-normal conditions this winter,” Jon Gottschalck, chief of the Operational Prediction Branch, NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center. “Drought is likely to persist across much of the West while developing in parts of the Pacific Northwest, Great Basin, central Rockies and Southwest. Dry conditions are expected to improve for some areas in the Midwest and Atlantic seaboard.”



File Photo

Even though NOAA is predicting higher temperatures and drier-than-usual weather this spring, the agency warns that sudden rain events can cause flooding.

The temperature outlook for April through June shows above-normal temperatures are favored across the majority of the western U.S. eastward to include much of the Plains, the lower and middle Mississippi Valley, the Ohio Valley, the Tennessee Valley, the Southeast and the southern Mid-Atlantic. The highest likelihood of enhanced warmth ranges from the Southwest to the Inter-Mountain West. Below-normal temperatures are forecast for east central Alaska.

The precipitation outlook favors below-average precipitation for the Pacific Northwest, parts of the Great Basin, Southwest, central High Plains and most of the Rockies. The greatest likelihood of below-average precipitation is forecast from the Pacific Northwest to the central Rockies. While above-normal precipitation is forecast for western Alaska, the eastern Great Lakes, mid-Atlantic and parts of the Southeast.

NOAA’s National Hydrologic Assessment, issued by NOAA’s National Water Center, evaluates a number of factors, including current conditions of snowpack, drought, soil saturation levels, frost depth, streamflow and precipitation.

The overall flood risk across most of the continental U.S. for spring 2026 is currently assessed as normal to below

normal. This risk determination was made primarily because of a dry and warm winter that resulted in dry soils over much of the eastern U.S., mitigating the threat of rainfall-driven flooding. Additionally, a well-below-normal snowpack across most of the country will reduce the risk of snowmelt-driven flooding.

However, the Red River of the north and the lower Ohio Valley typically experience flooding annually; therefore, flooding is anticipated in these basins this year as well.

“We anticipate typical spring flooding this year over portions of the Great Basin, Mississippi River Basin, but the risk for widespread significant flooding is low,” Ed Clark, director of NOAA’s National Water Center, said. “However, it is crucial to remember that heavy rainfall has the potential to lead to a major flooding event.”

Flooding can occur rapidly from intense rainfall, even in regions with a generally low risk. Rainfall intensity and location can only be accurately forecast days in the future, and flood risk can change rapidly. Stay current on flood risks in your area with the latest official watches and warnings at weather.gov. For detailed hydrologic conditions and forecasts, visit water.noaa.gov.

Thomasville prepares for 105th annual Rose Show & Festival

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

THOMASVILLE – From breathtaking rose exhibitions and vibrant floral displays to live music, a classic car and truck show, and the beloved Rose Parade, Thomasville is preparing to host the 105th annual Rose Show & Festival on April 24-25.

This family-friendly weekend promises a lively celebration of roses in full bloom along with the beauty of spring.

“The Rose Show & Festival is packed with family-friendly activities all weekend long,” Community Engagement Manager Brandy Avery said. “With live music, children’s activities, our car and truck show, plus the flower shows and parade, it’s the perfect way to spend a weekend in Thomasville.”

Throughout the festival, visitors can enjoy four historic flower shows featuring roses, orchids, and creative floral designs: Orchids on Parade, the annual Rose Show, the Standard Flower Show, and the Civic Garden Club Flower Show.

The kickoff event is April 24 at 9 a.m. with Orchids on Parade at the Thomasville Municipal Auditorium, showcasing stunning orchid displays presented by the Thomasville Orchid Society. At 1 p.m., the Rose Tent opens at the corner of Broad Street and Remington Avenue for the annual Rose Show, hosted by the Thomasville Rose Society. Growers of all ages and skill levels will present their finest blooms.

Those interested in entering roses may submit entries at the back of the Rose



Submitted photo

Thomasville’s Rose Fest Market will take place on April 25 at the Ritz Amphitheater.

Tent between 7-10 a.m. on the 24th for judging. At 2 p.m., the Thomasville Garden Club will host the annual Standard Flower Show at the Thomasville Garden Center, featuring impressive horticultural exhibits and artistic floral designs.

The day’s festivities conclude with the historic Rose Parade, followed by a street dance featuring live music from The Ray Howard Band.

Flower shows continue April 25 with the opening of the Civic Garden Club Flower Show near The Ritz Amphitheater. Guests can enjoy displays of roses, wildflowers, hanging baskets, and more under the big top tent. The Rose City Symphonic Band will perform during the show’s 10 a.m. opening, followed by the Thomas University Jazz Band from noon-2 p.m.

The 25th also features the Rose Fest Market at The Ritz Amphitheater from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., offering artisan vendors and a variety of food trucks. Local dance groups will perform from 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. on the amphitheater stage.

Car enthusiasts won’t want to miss the Show & Shine Car and Truck Show, taking place

from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. around the Historic Courthouse. Sponsored by the Thomasville Police Department, the event will showcase more than 100 unique vehicles.

Free trolley rides will be available throughout the day on April 25, providing convenient transportation between Festival locations.

The weekend concludes with the Rose Fest Finale Concert and Drone Show at The Ritz Amphitheater, featuring a live performance by local favorite Dana King beginning at 6 p.m. At 8:45 p.m., attendees can look to the sky for a dazzling 15-minute synchronized drone show. Food trucks also will be on site during this event.

More than 40,000 visitors are expected to attend this year’s festival. Admission is free and open to the public. Each flower and rose show will include a special ribbon-cutting ceremony featuring local dignitaries and Thomasville’s Rose Queen and her court.

For more information, contact the city of Thomasville’s Marketing Department at (229) 227-4136 or visit thomasville.org for a full schedule of events.

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