

Perspectives  
Ralph Nader  
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# The Albany HERALD



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D-W in finals  
Knights advance  
• Page 9A



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THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2026

## Westover Principal William Chunn sees 5,000th student cross the graduation stage



WILLIAM CHUNN

By Alan Mauldin  
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ALBANY – When one of Westover High School’s 2026 graduates received his or her diploma on Saturday from Principal William Chunn, it marked a milestone for the veteran educator, one that gave him a great sense of satisfaction.

“During my tenure as principal at Westover, I’ve surpassed 5,000 (graduates) in my 18 years,” he said. “That’s a lot of hard work, a lot of perseverance. I am so proud and honored for all the help people have given me for all those years.”

While many still refer to Chunn

as “Coach Chunn” due to his time spent as head football coach at Monroe High School, this week he wanted to talk about his administrative career. Among his accomplishments in athletics was bringing volleyball to the school system, he said.

The last 26 years of his 40-

year career in education have been spent at Westover, eight as assistant principal.

“I will be forever grateful to (former Superintendent) Dr. Sally Whatley for giving me the opportunity to become principal at Westover,” Chunn said. “This was extremely special for me, as I am the first Af-

rican American principal at Westover. It was always my intention to make her proud.”

The Dougherty County School System graduated its latest group of students over the weekend at the Albany Civic Center, starting with Monroe

See CHUNN, 2A

## Five furry foxes freed from fir farm are newest exhibit at Chehaw

By Alan Mauldin  
alan.mauldin@albanyherald.com

ALBANY – Five foxes freed from a life of cramped cages and waiting to be “harvested” for their fur have found a home in southwest Georgia, and on Friday they were officially welcomed to a new habitat.

Some of the red foxes, whose coloration is decidedly not red, were happily munching on mice distributed by a Chehaw Park & Zoo staffer and were mostly oblivious to the group of humans gathered for the groundbreaking at their new exhibit area.

Rescued from a fur mill in the North Central United States, the foxes were not candidates for release into the wild or for breeding.

The arrived in Albany in 2023, but their exhibit area was not completed until a few months ago, making them available for viewing. Prior to their ar-

rival, the foxes had a decidedly harsh life, Samantha Sassone, the living collections director at the zoo, said.

“The animals were in very small cages, I think 3-foot x 5-foot enclosures” she said. “They were on mesh their entire life. It appears that when they got here was the first time they had ever touched grass.”

Most of the foxes appear to be about a year old, and one is perhaps a little older, Sassone said.

Members of the family that has formed in Albany were among about 500 foxes rescued from the fur farm and were likely inbred, which is why they are not candidates for breeding and were neutered, Sassone said.

“We got a beautiful variety of colors,” she said. “We didn’t request particular colors. Red foxes are native really globally. They’re pretty much ev-



Staff Photo: Alan Mauldin

A ribbon-cutting held on Friday at Chehaw Park & Zoo formally introduced the latest exhibit to open, an exhibit space for five red foxes rescued from a fir farm

## Albany State relaunches Presidential Scholars Program

Staff Reports  
news@albanyherald.com

ALBANY – Albany State University has announced the relaunch of its Presidential Scholars Program, a transformative, needs-based scholarship initiative set to begin in fall 2026. Reimagined under the leadership of President Robert Scott, the program reflects a renewed institutional commitment to attracting high-achieving students, advancing academic excellence, and strengthening student success outcomes.

“The Presidential Scholars Program represents a landmark \$2 million investment – one that draws elite, needs-based scholars from the 3.25–4.0+

See ASU, 2A

Albany State University

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Special Illustration

## Houston, Ford advance in contentious Lee County school board race

By Kathryn Crockett  
kathryn@albanyherald.com

LEESBURG – The race for the District 1 seat on the Lee County School System Board is headed to a June 16 runoff after no candidate

secured the majority of votes needed to win outright in last week’s election.

According to unofficial election results, challenger George Parrish Houston led

See LEE, 2A



Staff Photo: Kathryn Crockett

Members of the Lee County Board of Education address budget concerns during a March 2026 meeting as the district continues facing public scrutiny over school funding, property tax issues and future infrastructure needs.

### Periodical — Mail Label

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# Portman's Music Superstore celebrates 90 years

## Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

**ALBANY** – Georgia's oldest continuously operated music retailer is celebrating its 90th anniversary this year, and Albany is part of this musical legacy that is based on the motto "Everything for the Musician."

Portman's Music Superstore,

which has locations in Albany, Augusta, Brunswick and Savannah, grew to be a music retailer and music education resource across Georgia and South Carolina.

Founded in 1936 by Sam Portman, the grandfather of current owner Jerry Portman, the history dates back even farther to as early as 1910 when

Sam Portman was selling musical instruments on Broughton Street.

His son, Ben Portman, and wife Pearl Portman built on that entrepreneurship to formalize in 1936 the business that would become Portman's Music Superstore as it is known today.

Portman's Music was also recognized as the first full-line music store in the state of Georgia, a pioneering achievement that set the standard for music retail across the Southeast. It was recognized by the National Association of Music Merchants as a Top 100 music dealer in 2022, 2023 and 2025.

Jerry Portman began working alongside his father as a pre-teen in the 1950s and has guided the company's growth ever since with wife Myra Portman. As Portman's celebrates another milestone anniversary,



Special Photo

Portman's Music Superstore credits its origins back to its founding in 1936 in Savannah. It has locations in Albany, Augusta, Brunswick and Savannah. Portman's is celebrating its 90th anniversary this year.

ry, Jerry and Myra are still the driving force behind the com-

pany's commitment to each customer who walk through

See **PORTMAN**, 5A

## From 1A

### ASU

GPA range with awards up to \$10,000 annually," Scott said in a news release. "We are removing financial barriers, rewarding academic excellence through meaningful renewal standards, and positioning Albany State University as a national leader in student success."

The Presidential Scholars Program represents a strategic \$2 million institutional investment over four years and will support incoming undergraduate students annually. Through renewable, needs-based scholarships ranging from \$3,000 to \$10,000 per year, the program is designed to expand access, improve retention, and increase four-year graduation rates while positioning ASU as a national leader in student success.

"Investing in our students is the most powerful way we can invest in the future of Albany State University and the communities we serve," Albany State Foundation Chairman Gregory Hylick said. "The Presidential Scholars Program reflects our commitment to removing financial barriers while recognizing high achievers and rewarding academic excellence."

"Through this initiative, we are supporting talented students, and helping to develop the next generation of leaders who will make a lasting im-

pact far beyond our campus."

The cohort-based model fosters not only academic excellence but also leadership development, career readiness, and sustained engagement — key elements in preparing a workforce equipped with the critical thinking, adaptability, and professional skills required by today's employers. As scholars persist, graduate, and enter the workforce, this investment directly supports regional economic growth by retaining top talent, reducing workforce gaps, and supplying employers with highly qualified, locally educated professionals.

Collectively, the program's strategic, tiered investment model accelerates student success, strengthens institutional outcomes, and advances a sustainable talent development ecosystem that fuels workforce readiness and long-term regional prosperity.

"This program transforms the enrollment landscape by providing substantial, needs-based scholarships to high-achieving students while creating a clear and supported pathway from admission to graduation," Jarrod Benjamin, the vice president for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management at Albany State, said. "It reflects our commitment to access, achievement, and building a strong, thriving ASU community."

The Presidential Scholars Program directly advances

See **ASU**, 5A

## From 1A

### FOXES

erywhere. They're very social animals."

The new exhibit is just one of several on tap for the zoo, with wart hogs, fruit bats and possibly river otters coming in the future, Chehaw board President Tom Seegmueller said.

"We've got a binturong exhibit now," he said. "It's a small mammal that looks like a bear/panda. We're working with a design team to come up with four new exhibits. We're working with SPLOST (special-purpose local-option sales tax) money to fund the next exhibit."

Chehaw officials also are working with the Junior League of Albany to build a handicap-inclusive play park, Seegmuel-

er said. Other plans include a concession stand in the park and restoring the large wooded areas of the park to a native longleaf pine/wiregrass habitat.

During his remarks to the audience prior to the ribbon-cutting, Albany Mayor Bo Dorough urged Lee County to take a more active financial role in the park, most of which is actually inside Lee County. Dougherty County and contiguous

counties are eligible to have a member on Chehaw's board.

"The thinking was if we gave Lee County and Dougherty County Board of Commissioners each one appointment, then those entities would contribute to the park," the mayor said. "It's always nice to get to the finish line like we are today, but we are not to the end of the finish line."

## From 1A

### LEE

the three-candidate field with 534 votes, or 42%, followed by incumbent Donna Ford with 478 votes, or 37.6%. Candidate Lavendra Shootes received 261 votes, or 20.5%.

Because no candidate surpassed the 50% threshold required for victory, Houston and Ford will advance to a runoff election next month.

The results underscored the increasingly competitive and

politically charged nature of the race, which has evolved into a broader public debate over taxes, school spending, transparency and trust in local leadership.

Houston has campaigned as a reform-oriented candidate focused on parental involvement, fiscal oversight and accountability. Following the election, he thanked supporters and emphasized that his campaign priorities remained centered on "Safe Schools, Strong Standards, Smart Spending."

"This campaign has always been about our kids, our schools, and the future of Lee County," Houston said in a social media statement following the election.

In a separate interview, Houston said he believes residents are increasingly frustrated by what he described as a disconnect between the school board and the broader community.

"The current school board seems a little insulated from the community," Houston said. "That's why when I go from door to door trying to connect with voters, I'm handing out my cell phone number. I want to be accessible to parents and members of the community when an issue or concern comes up."

Houston also pointed to his professional background and personal experience raising children in the county as factors shaping his approach to school governance.

"My background is in HR. I have a masters degree in Human Resource Management," Houston said, adding that his experience working across multiple industries, combined with raising six children in the school system, gives him insight into what employers are looking for as educational

decisions are made.

Houston has said he believes maintaining rigorous and competitive educational programs is critical to ensuring students are prepared for both higher education and the workforce.

Ford, meanwhile, has leaned heavily on her decades of educational experience and institutional knowledge while defending the school system's operational and financial decisions amid mounting public scrutiny.

The runoff comes as county and school officials continue responding to fallout from the ongoing rollback-rate controversy after leaders acknowledged residents overpaid property taxes because of what officials described as an erroneous rollback calculation tied to the county tax digest.

The Lee County Board of Commissioners has publicly stated taxpayers overpaid approximately \$1.5 million to county government. The school system has not publicly released an estimate of potential overpayments tied to school taxes.

During an April candidate forum, the distinctions between Houston and Ford became particularly apparent on issues surrounding taxes, borrowing and school governance.

Houston repeatedly framed himself as a candidate willing to challenge existing practices and ask difficult financial questions.

"When things don't look right, we've got to have the courage to speak up and raise our hand and do a stop, think and ask," Houston said during the forum.

He also questioned continued borrowing against future Education Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax revenues while discussing district finances.

"I was looking at the budgets this week over the past three years," Houston said. "We are paying down some of the debts over the school board budget. It was just kind of head scratching, like, why would we continue to borrow for that?"

Ford defended the district's financial approach, arguing that delaying major projects could ultimately increase long-term costs for taxpayers.

"Everything has gone up so much that sometimes it seems more efficient to be able to borrow the money now," Ford said during the same forum.

She also defended the board's decision to opt out of House Bill 581, the statewide homestead tax relief legislation designed to limit annual increases in taxable property assessments for many homeowners.

"If we have to lose money as a result of this House Bill 581, we're going to have to increase class size," Ford said.

Beyond taxes and budgeting, the race has increasingly centered on communication and public trust.

Ford recently said she prefers direct, in-person conversations with residents over social media engagement, while Houston has consistently framed his campaign around change, accountability and stronger parental representation on the board.

The failed E-SPLOST referendum earlier this year has also added additional pressure to the contest, particularly as district leaders continue warning about aging infrastructure needs, including roof and HVAC replacement projects at several schools.

Advance voting for the runoff is scheduled June 8-12 from 8:15 a.m. to 5 p.m. Election Day is June 16.

# Congratulations to the Class of 2026

Here's to the next step, the next goal, and a future worth investing in.

From all of us at Georgia Community Bank, congratulations to this year's graduates. We're honored to support the schools and families across South Georgia who help students reach moments like this, and we wish the Class of 2026 the very best in what comes next.



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## From 1A CHUNN

on Friday, followed by Westover on Saturday morning and Dougherty County High on Saturday afternoon.

While Chunn said he feels pride in topping the 5,000 graduate mark, it was a team effort.

"It took the hard work of administrators here at Westover, staff and faculty, students and parents," he said. "They've been supporting me for 18 years. I'm very proud of them as well. No, sir, you do not do this alone."

Chunn, who turns 63 in August, said he does not plan to end his 40 years working



Special Photo

The Westover High School class of 2026 marked a milestone for Principal William Chunn, as the graduates put him over the 5,000 mark in the number of graduates during his tenure.

in the school system just yet. Before he retires, he said he would like to see through the completion of renovations at the campus.

"I started the renovation process here at Westover 13 years

ago," the principal said. "They came to Westover first, went on to other places and said 'We'll be back.' I didn't know it would take 13 years. My goal is to see the renovation process through at Westover."

# Daily Horoscopes

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** Believing in something can feel good but may not be advisable if facts are not in your favor. Be especially cautious if you're asked to invest based solely on trust, in the absence of full disclosure.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Supporting someone can mean seeing them, seeing their efforts, trusting their capacity and capabilities, standing in solidarity with them against enemies. Finances should clarify and grow.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** You create your world with your deepest beliefs and biases, including whether tasks seem easy or hard, and what shows up in your health. One thing you may be navigating now is your money identity.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** Play if you can, create, sing, dance, dream. It's the moments of lightness and joy that makes the weight of the burdens worthwhile. Build abundance within yourself to experience it in the outer world.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Despair, cynicism, and apathy move no needles, accomplish nothing, bring no progress or satisfaction. On some level, you have to believe you can make things happen, even if you don't, until you do.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** It may simply come down to money — sometimes that's the pivot. Remember that this isn't always the case, and assuming it's only about money can poison things. However, for the next few days, it could really be just about the money.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** There's a continues focus on finances. What you believe or want to believe might be disputed by a greater authority or shot down by a confrontation with facts. Go with what's proven, not a happy illusion.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** Stand firm in your identity and know it matters. Self-respect and self-belief get built every time you take a

risk and live to tell the story. There's an emphasis on money for your sign too, today. It should grow.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Have hard conversations with yourself. Be accountable. This is how trust in yourself is built, through rigorous self-honesty. Financial dealings with a partner could be clearing up.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** The truest friendships need few words, much is transmitted through energetic understanding and shared jokes, and shared history. If hard work won't do the trick, try a financial sweetener.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Something that may have held you back or kept you stuck should have loosened its grip, and you could be moving toward greater financial abundance. Pour your truest self into your contributions to the world.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** You could be more prone than usual to believing in a mirage, or to someone weaponizing your beliefs. Get actual data, not just talking points. Find your roots and ground yourself so you can ultimately soar.

**IF TODAY IS YOUR BIRTHDAY:** A financial opportunity could open up before you quite soon. It could be very welcome, much of 2026 so far looks to have been quite a challenge. Take a breath as things lighten up but also prepare to fully check things out before you leap. Money should continue to flow into June, along with creativity, charm, and grace. July would be a great time to revisit dreams, goals, and plans and refine your approach, getting clear can relieve your mind. Also, the Universe should have your back during this period. August brings a test, and you'll want to pass it, if you fail it, the lesson could be harsh. Don't succumb to the little devil on your shoulder, listen to the angel on your other shoulder so you don't fool around and find out. Later August could deliver a nice surprise.

## TODAY IN HISTORY

**1830** - U.S. President Andrew Jackson signs the Indian Removal Act that relocates Native Americans

**1892** - John Muir organizes the Sierra Club in San Francisco, CA

**1937** - Volkswagen, the German automobile manufacturer is founded

**1940** - During world War II, the battle of Belgium ends when Belgium surrenders to

Nazi Germany

**1952** - Women in Greece are granted the right to vote

**1993** - Monaco and Eritrea join the United Nations

**1999** - The Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci is put back on display in Milan, Italy, after 22 years of restoration work

**2002** - NATO declares Russia a limited partner in the Western alliance

## CALENDAR OF OBSERVANCES

- Amnesty International Day
- Eat More Fruits & Vegetables Day
- International Hamburger Day

- Menstrual Hygiene Day
- National Brisket Day
- National Hamburger Day
- Slugs Return from Capistrano Day
- Whooping Crane Day

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## QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Whatever you are, be a good one."

Abraham Lincoln,  
U.S. president (1809-1865)

## 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

To the Good Samaritan who found/returned my wallet to customer service at the Gillionville Walmart Neighborhood Store on 5/22: Thank you so much! You not only saved my sanity but also restored my faith that there are still good people who will do the right thing.

Google Dr. Edward Brown, our new District 12 Senator. Born and raised in Albany, graduated from Deerfield. He works for the family's Fred Taylor Co. He went off and got very well-educated in economics and public policy -- several masters degrees and a PhD from Cambridge University. Then he worked in Washington for the President's Council on Economic Advisors and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. He's come back here to work to revitalize southwest Georgia. Fabulous!

That city of Albany officials would allow trash to be piled up just off one of our main streets in the city and around our main retail sector is deplorable. That, after having it pointed out last week by The Albany Herald, the trash is still there is an abomination. People should be fired over this travesty.

"The care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only legitimate object of good government." — Thomas Jefferson (1809)

I read with deep sadness Mr. Fletcher's column on the decline of the city of Albany. I agree wholeheartedly with your assessment, and much like our great nation, I don't see any improvement coming with the people we have in charge right now.

The current two-week ceasefire started two months ago. When Iran says "negotiate," they are really saying delay. They will never agree to a deal on our terms. It's time to finish the job.

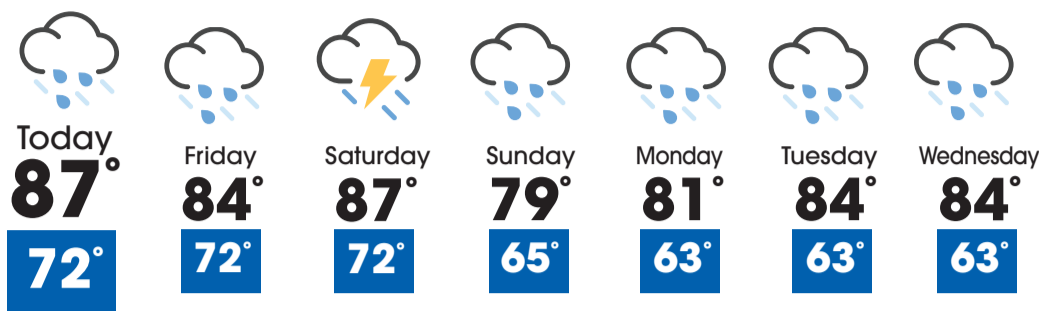
You people criticizing our great president are a disgrace to America. We've never had such a great man running our country, and all you left-leaning weenies can't stand it that such a strong man is in charge. He is righteous, and his will is strong. He alone can save America.

Today's Albany and Dougherty commissioners would prefer to give you a free dirty apartment and food stamps, rather than attract a new job opportunity for you and a way to climb out of poverty. The trick is your commissioner can hire their friend to build that apartment. Then they preach at church they are divinely responsible for providing the monthly check from the government, so you vote for them. It's all a scam.

Thank you, Mr. Clockadale, for what you're doing to help law enforcement officers across the state through the Georgia Police Foundation. While others want to defund the police and let lawlessness reign, you and others like you are doing what you can to serve these brave men and women. As a first-responder, I thank you for your service.

While it made local news as a big event, I find it sad and depressing that Dougherty County has to even have a "warrant forgiveness day." What kind of community needs to have such a celebration?

## Weather Forecast



## Daily Bridge Club

### Offensive defense

By Frank Stewart  
Tribune Content Agency

My friend the English professor says that most people aren't offended by an occasional typo. Bridge players, though, tend

<b>NORTH</b>			
♠ 5 3			
♥ A K Q			
♦ Q J 10 9 4			
♣ A K 10			
<b>WEST</b>		<b>EAST</b>	
♠ 9 4		♥ K Q J 6 2	
♦ 8 7 4 3 2		♦ 9 5	
♣ K 5		♣ A 3 2	
♠ 6 5 3 2		♦ 8 7 4	
<b>SOUTH</b>			
♠ A 10 8 7			
♥ J 10 6			
♦ 8 7 6			
♣ Q J 9			
North	East	South	West
1♦	1♠	1NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		
Opening lead — ♠ 9			
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to be less tolerant of partner's errors than their own.

In today's deal, East had overcalled in spades, so West led the nine against 3NT. East played the jack, and South played low. When East led the king next, South took the ace and started the diamonds.

The defenders were stuck. If East won, he could lead the queen and another spade to set up his fifth spade, but he would never get in to cash it. West actually rose with the king of diamonds but had no spade to lead, so South lost only two spades and two diamonds.

#### FIRST SPADE

East's defense was offensive; West thought so, at least. Since South's spades are almost surely



Frank Stewart

A-10-x-x, East must play low on the first spade, forcing South to win one of his spade tricks while West still has a spade.

Then when South leads a diamond at Trick Two, West wins to lead his last spade. The defense gets five tricks.

#### DAILY QUESTION

**You hold:** S K Q J 6 2 H 9 5 D A 3 2 C 8 7 4. Your partner opens one club, you respond one spade and he bids 1NT. The opponents pass. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Game is possible. If partner has a suitable maximum such as 104, AQ2, KQ4, QJ932, he would have a good chance at 3NT, so if vulnerable with more to gain, you might raise to 2NT. Since partners rarely have exactly the right hand, I suspect most experts would pass or sign off at two spades.

North dealer  
N-S vulnerable

## Advice Columnist

### Atheist offended by others' prayers

By Eric Thomas  
Tribune Content Agency

**Dear Eric:** I'm writing this to get your opinion about something that has been bothering me for a while but has been exacerbated by the recent illness of my mother.

Although I was brought up Catholic, in my adult life I am a practicing atheist. I'm not one to ever bring that up unless in a safe environment to do so, or if I know I am among folks who lean the same way.

I am of the opinion that all should be allowed their own religious beliefs — however, proselytizing is and should be off limits.

As an atheist, I am offended when people say they will keep my mom in their thoughts "and prayers." I sound unappreciative — I'm not at all and try to hint to my friends and family where I stand by replying or even stating upfront "please keep her in your thoughts" or "thanks for keeping her in your thoughts," hoping people will get the hint. They usually don't.

Is there a better way to humbly communicate how I'm feeling, without sounding ungrateful?

I am always careful, when the shoe is on the other foot, to say to those with sick loved ones, I will keep them "in my thoughts."

Would those who pray appreciate me adding "but not prayers because I'm not that sort?" I think not, but I feel like they "push" their prayers on me!

— *Semi-Closeted and Offended Atheist*

**Dear Atheist:** Is it always clear to whom or what these prayers are being directed? That is to say, must it always be a prayer spoken to a god you don't believe in, or is it

possible that they could also be prayers sent up to the universe or nature or something else entirely? Perhaps that difference is a cold comfort to you, but often "thoughts and prayers" becomes a shorthand for well wishes or condolences.

It's perfectly fair for you to ask others not to pray for you. But might be freeing to think of "and prayers" in the context of your mother less as proselytizing and more as friends expressing their own internal practice? Other people's prayers aren't necessarily a commentary on your beliefs. And if your mother does practice a religion, the comment may be more for her benefit.

It's perfectly fine to say, "I am an atheist and I don't believe in prayer, but I respect that you do and I thank you for the energy you're sending my mother's way."

**Dear Eric:** You've received numerous letters from those who say their gestures of friendship are not reciprocated. Some friendships, like the example by "Uncelebrated", whose friends didn't recognize or celebrate a cancer battle, have spanned weeks, months, or even years of a seemingly one-sided promotion of the relationship with the lopsided sacrificial investment of time and energy. It boggles my mind that I have yet to hear two possible explanations: One, "introvert" versus "extrovert" personalities. And two, that the unresponsive "friend" doesn't enjoy their company and would prefer to not meet with them.

I've yet to see you or others side with the friend who wants more space or even in some cases, apparently isn't interested in continuing the relationship. My thought is,

Send questions to R. Eric Thomas at [eric@askingeric.com](mailto:eric@askingeric.com) or P.O. Box 22474, Philadelphia, PA 19110. Follow him on Instagram and sign up for his weekly newsletter at [erichthomas.com](http://erichthomas.com).

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# THE ALBANY HERALD

## Perspectives

The Albany  
**HERALD**  
ALBANYHERALD.COM

**Carlton Fletcher**  
EDITOR

— Georgia Trust for —  
**LOCAL NEWS**

### TODAY'S BIBLE VERSE

*"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*  
**1 John 1:9**

COLUMNIST ■ MARC HYDEN

## Local news can survive its existential crisis

I recently had the privilege of attending a journalism conference with media professionals from around the globe. What could have been a joyous reunion was partially marred by a disturbing theme: The future of local news appears bleak.

So when a young woman told me she was majoring in journalism, my first thought was, "Oh no, don't do that." That might have been too harsh a reaction because, despite all the doom and gloom around local news, there are ways it can thrive, and I certainly love writing for newspapers. Considering the public good they provide, everyone should want them to flourish. They may, but first, the bad news. "Since 2005, more than 3,200 print newspapers have vanished. Newspapers continue to disappear at a rate of more than two per week," Northwestern University reported. "In addition to these closures and mergers, papers are reducing their print coverage."



HYDEN

Given this trend, it is not surprising that the number of journalists has declined by 75% since 2002.

The basic problem boils down to revenue. Newspapers have historically relied on advertising, including classifieds, and subscriptions to stay in business. Advertising revenue has long since dwindled, and newspaper subscriptions have, too. According to Pew Research, only 15% of people paid for local news in 2023.

There is also the problem of demographics. Most subscribers are older and sadly won't be around forever. Even so, people continue to get the news. Others get it by word of mouth, blogs, social media or television, even though 85% say that local news is at least somewhat important.

"Research shows that the loss of local news is having an insidious effect on our democracy — contributing to polarization, decrease in voting, and government accountability," the American Journalism Project notes. Local papers can serve as a kind of fabric connecting community members.

The fact that you're reading this means that there are newspapers doing it right, but there are plenty of others facing serious struggles. The Atlanta Journal Constitution, for instance, no longer publishes a daily print edition, and has laid off about 15% of its workforce. So how do we preserve local media?

While at the journalism conference, a German reporter suggested the United States should follow Germany's example and force taxpayers to fund local journalism. The moderator quickly shot down that statement, and rightly so. It's a problematic idea. If

you want to imperil independent media, put government bureaucrats in charge of it. Their funding could quickly become dependent on editorial decisions.

Instead, as R Street Institute co-founder Eli Lehrer suggested, the government could create a streamlined method for newspapers to become nonprofits, freeing them from corporate taxes. They can switch their status now, but it is a convoluted process and provides an awkward fit that limits editorial independence. The creation of a new nonprofit status could fix this and enshrine their First Amendment freedoms, allowing papers to operate with the leeway they have enjoyed for years.

There are other paths forward that don't involve government's heavy hand or taxpayer handouts. In recent years, philanthropic organizations and corporations have offered support and resources to newspapers. This has totaled hundreds of millions of dollars, which has helped significantly, although there is not enough grant money to bankroll all local news. This is more or less supplemental support.

Other approaches include pooling shared services with other newspapers (like staff lawyers, design services, consultants, research and so forth); diversifying revenue streams to include different subscriptions for various products; and of course, integrating artificial intelligence into their business models.

Some papers are already experimenting with this. The AJC disclosed as early as 2022 that it was using an AI tool to help with high school sports reporting, and there are many other AI applications that could free up journalists to focus on other tasks. Someone still needs to do the gumshoe reporting that's the foundation of good journalism. However, it is important that these AI tools not only improve efficiency, but also make news better.

None of these offers a silver bullet to the nagging existential crisis facing media, but they might help papers weather the storm. In the end, the news industry will have to evolve, but the original subscriber business model will likely continue for years to come. If you enjoy local news, you should continue supporting it and ask your friends to join you.

Time will tell whether the young woman I met at the journalism conference made the right choice by majoring in journalism or if my knee-jerk reaction was right. As it stands, if my child decides to major in journalism, I will probably suggest a double-major to include a more lucrative backup plan. Either way, I hope local media is here to stay.

COLUMNIST ■ DICK YARBROUGH

## The elections aren't over until they are over

The good news is that the primary elections are over. The bad news is the primary elections are not over. We now have the runoffs. Then it will all be over. Except it won't all be over. The general election is Nov. 3.

The runoffs mean another month of self-serving ads promising us (inhale) lower taxes, reduced crime, shrinking the size of government, creating jobs, standing up to powerful special interest groups, fighting bureaucracy, securing our borders, taking care of our veterans, improving education and last, but not least, fixing Medicare (exhale).

There have been more self-styled political pundits analyzing what happened in the primary than a yard dog has fleas. But since you pay me the big bucks, consider this clip-and-save stuff that you can trot out at your next church social or cocktail party. Or both.

No one else has access to the expertise of Junior E. Lee, general manager of the Yarbrough Worldwide Media and Pest Control Co., located in Greater Garfield, Georgia. Junior is a highly respected political analyst and a certified pest control professional, as well. The man is one-of-a-kind. Can you imagine Tucker Carlson in your crawl space spraying for termites?

In the governor's race, it will be a runoff between Lt. Gov. Burt Jones and healthcare executive Rick Jackson for the Republican nomination. Jones received 38% of the vote in the primary and Jackson, 33%. Junior says pigs down around Garfield have asked him about renting out their sties for the runoff so that both candidates have an ample supply of mud to sling.

Jones comes from a wealthy and politically powerful Georgia family and has contributed \$19 million to his campaign thus far. Billionaire Jackson has already put more than \$83 million into the race. All for a job that pays \$182,000.

Whoever wins the nomination will face Democrat Keisha Lance Bottoms, the former Atlanta mayor who won her party's nomination without a runoff. I stopped making predictions after publicly stating that an obscure Republican state senator from Bonaire would never beat a powerful incumbent Democratic

governor. We all know how that turned out.

But if the Republican nominee, whichever one it is, can't beat Bottoms, it will be due to the party's predilection for being unable to figure out who the enemy is. (The Cobb County GOP publicly censured Republican Gov. Brian Kemp, if that gives you a clue.)

Bottoms was a totally ineffective mayor and served only one term before getting bailed out by the Biden Administration to be director of nothing in particular in Washington. She couldn't manage Atlanta, and we are going to trust her with the



YARBROUGH

whole state?

Speaking of Gov. Kemp, he has shown himself to be one of the few Republicans in the state who isn't a complete and total Trump toady. He promoted Derek Dooley, son of legendary UGA football coach Vince Dooley, for the U.S. senate seat currently held by Jon Ossoff, and has gotten him into a runoff with Mike Collins, who professes unyielding fealty to Trump.

Gone from the political scene is Republican state Sen. Steve Gooch, who was running for lieutenant governor. This is the guy who said legislation wasn't needed to save the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge from drilling for toothpaste whitener. Let unselected bureaucrats handle that issue. Albert the Alligator says good riddance.

Also gone are two Democratic candidates for the state Supreme Court, attorney Miracle Rankin and former state Sen. Jen Jordan, who told us how they were going to vote, if elected. I thought judges were supposed to hear all the evidence before making a decision. Fortunately, the voters made the decision for them.

Two nuts dropped from the political tree. Kandiss Taylor got 12.8% of the vote for the GOP nomination in Georgia's 1st Congressional District. She said she represented Jesus. Jesus said that was news to him. Colton Moore, who has all the class of a tree stump, debased the memory of the late Georgia Speaker of the House David Ralston in front of Ralston's family. He got less than 7% in the 14th District GOP primary. May they both find their way into everlasting political obscurity.

COLUMNIST ■ RALPH NADER:

## Columnist exposes Trump/Musk policies that bring death to children

A skeptical friend reading the New York Times asked me why columnist Nicholas Kristof keeps writing columns about recurring poverty in less developed countries. My answer is simple. Because he keeps going to these remote areas populated by brutalized human beings living in dire impoverishment and sickness.



NADER

At no small risk to himself (Kristof caught malaria in the Congo), he goes to where the most deprived people on Earth live for his stories. He does what few columnists are willing or able to do by exposing how children, the elderly, and entire families are dying under the most unimaginable cruelty.

I suspect that what keeps Kristof going is that he sees how inexpensively many of these mortalities and morbidities can and have been prevented. For example, a \$4 vaccine can prevent cervical cancer, which kills more than 900 women worldwide every day!

Knowing all this has led to his sharp denunciation of Tyrant Trump and DOGE Director Felon Elon Musk's immediate and illegal closure of the Agency for International Development (USAID). Soon after the failed gambling czar re-disgraced the White House on Jan. 20, 2025, the world heard Musk's sadistic boast, "We spent the weekend feeding USAID into the woodchipper."

Why on Earth would these callous corporatists criminally destroy an agency with an average budget of \$23 billion a year (about 10 days of the Trump-bloated Pentagon war budget) to save the lives of millions of babies, children, women, and men?

The Trump/Musk cabal sadistically exuded glee, declaring they were saving taxpayer money. The money spent by USAID is a small price to pay for preventing the atrocities they visited on those most in need of humanitarian assistance on the planet. Given the reputation of the U. S.'s invasive military empire all over Asia, Africa, and South America, war criminal Trump failed to understand the benefit that such aid — often called "soft power" — does to improve Uncle Sam's tarnished reputation.

In his latest column, dated May 10, 2026, and titled "The Children America Abandoned," Kristof makes the following points:

"A year after some of the world's richest men cut aid for the world's poorest children, ..." Trump and Musk retained "some lifesaving programs, particularly for H.I.V./AIDS ..." However, Trump's "71% cut in humanitarian aid from 2024 to 2025 ..." led to the loss of "750,000 lives worldwide" in Trump's first year, citing a study by a Boston University researcher. The prestigious British medical journal *The Lancet* projected that at present official development assistance defunding rates, 9.4

million lives will be lost worldwide, including 2.5 million among children 5 years and younger, by 2030.

While these enormous preventable death numbers may shock most Americans, it is because USAID over decades has not been encouraged by its cautious superiors in the White House to toot its own horn for fear of enraging right-wing ideologists in Congress who have long wanted foreign aid abolished.

"A few doses of a \$3 malaria vaccine can now save a Congolese child's life," Kristof wrote. Tuberculosis is a major contagious killer in Africa, mostly among children and pregnant women. A series of regular TB drugs, consistently administered by clinics, can sharply reduce this epidemic. Again, very cost-effective.

What these clenched-jawed Trumpty Muskites ignore is that catching precursors of pandemics in African or Asian countries can prevent deadly viruses and bacteria from migrating to the United States. Without funds and diligent monitoring, the current Ebola emergency in the Congo is spreading.

These are the human costs of the American people electing politicians whose military death cult keeps getting more Pentagon funding from Congress, displacing programs sustaining life. Trump's war crimes are used to seek an increase of a staggering 50 percent budget increase or \$500 billion for the Pentagon. Trump wants to use deficit financing to further bloat the Pentagon budget so he can keep cutting taxes for the super-rich, himself, and giant corporations for the next fiscal year.

The Democratic Party refuses to make the runaway military budget, now overconsuming half of the entire federal operating budget, a political campaign issue. Worse, they eagerly join the Congressional Republicans in the yearly hoopla for ever more megadollars for the Pentagon. Serious appropriations hearings in the House and Senate are a long-ago memory for this untouchable depravity of blank checks, stealing from the many unmet necessities of the American people and their children here at home, which also cost many American lives.

So Kristof, who has written devastating critiques of Trump, ends his column with "The truth is ugly: The world's richest men are crushing the world's poorest children."

As I have said many times, with Trump, it is only going to get worse, much worse. In addition to manipulating districts, he is openly intending worse takeovers of the November elections, having said in January, "... we shouldn't even have an election" in November. What are our politicians and the mainstream media waiting for? It is time for them to summon the courage of their declared convictions.



# What to watch

## THURSDAY

May 28, 2026

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

### Scrabble

The CW, 8 p.m.

Word warriors face off to conquer their opponents in their journey toward a \$10,000 prize in the new episode "Drawn to the Quest." Craig Ferguson hosts.

### Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire: 'The Fall'

History, 8 p.m.

The second part of this two-night special chronicles Rome's fall. While wars fuel unprecedented expansion across Europe, Rome reaches its cultural peak, attracting philosophers, doctors and dignitaries from around the world, and the Colosseum plays host to ever more lavish games. But in the 160s CE, disaster strikes: Germanic invasions, the plague and a new leader, Emperor Commodus, plunge Rome into chaos. His chaotic reign sparks civil wars and widespread famine, and pushes Rome to the brink of bankruptcy. Rome's culture is also changing. But on the horizon, even bigger threats emerge: the Visigoths, the Vandals and Attila the Hun – fearsome invaders intent on sacking Rome and bringing an empire that has reigned for a thousand years to its knees.

### Trivial Pursuit

The CW, 9 p.m.

A mathematician tries to model the right equation in the six iconic Trivial Pursuit categories to try to win \$20,000 in the new episode "By the Numbers." LeVar Burton hosts.

### Half Man

HBO, 9 p.m. ■ **Series Finale**

Catch the conclusion of the limited drama series capturing 30 years in the lives of friends Ruben (Richard Gadd) and Niall (Jamie Bell), and exploring the brotherhood, violence and intense fragility of male relationships.



'Half Man'

HBO

### That Thrifting Show With Lara Spencer

Freeform, 10 p.m. ■ **Season Finale**

The final interior design duos race against the clock to transform their rooms in only two days with \$2,000, and every "new" piece

thrifed, upcycled or creatively reimaged. In the season finale, "Dorm Sweet Dorm," Lara Spencer challenges both husband-and-wife design teams to transform a dorm room with Southern charm or boho flair. The couples go wild with patterns, macramé and bold details to create cozy, standout spaces.

## CATCH A CLASSIC

### Mildred Pierce

MOVIES!, 9:45 p.m.

Mother/daughter relationships can be complicated, but nothing compares to this one in the 1945 classic *Mildred Pierce*. Joan Crawford stars as Mildred, an independent mother of two daughters, who divorces her failing husband and starts her own financial success in the restaurant industry. When an investigation into the death of her second husband turns eyes on her, Mildred must explore the complexities of her relationship with her resentful oldest daughter. The film received six Oscar nominations, with Crawford taking home the gold for Best Actress in a Leading Role.



EVERETT COLLECTION

## MOVIES YOU'LL LOVE



'Rambo: Last Blood'

YANA BLAJEVA

**A Complete Unknown** (2024, Biography) Timothée Chalamet, Edward Norton **HBO, 6:35 p.m.**

**Cruella** (2021, Comedy) Emma Stone, Emma Thompson **Freeform, 6:50 p.m.**

**A League of Their Own** (1992, Comedy-drama) Tom Hanks, Geena Davis **E!, 7 p.m.**

**The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge Out of Water** (2015, Children) Tom Kenny, Bill Fagerbakke **NICK, 7 p.m.**

**Accused: The Karen Read Story** (2026, Docudrama) Katie Cassidy, Luke Humphrey **LMN, 8 p.m.**

**He Got Game** (1998, Drama) Denzel Washington, Ray Allen **VH1, 8 p.m.**

**There She Goes** (2024, Romance-comedy) Utkarsh Ambudkar, Rachael Leigh Cook **FOX, 8 p.m.**

**Tyler Perry's Acrimony** (2018, Suspense) Taraji P. Henson, Lyric Burt **BET, 9 p.m.**

**Contact** (1997, Science fiction) Jodie Foster, Matthew McConaughey **MGM, 10 p.m.**

**Rambo: Last Blood** (2019, Action) Sylvester Stallone, Paz Vega **BBC America, 10 p.m.**

**Jupiter Ascending** (2015, Science fiction) Channing Tatum, Mila Kunis **SYFY, 10:30 p.m.**

**Dead Presidents** (1995, Drama) Larenz Tate, Keith David **VH1, 11 p.m.**

From the editors of

TV Weekly and tvinsider.com



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Enhancing institutional competitiveness and visibility within Georgia and beyond, positioning Albany State as a destination of choice for top talent committed to leadership, service, and innovation

Advancing a distinctive workforce preparation model, equipping graduates with critical thinking, professional competencies, and global awareness needed to contribute effectively to regional industries, statewide economic priorities, and an increasingly interconnected global workforce

The program will be collaboratively administered by Enrollment Management, Financial Aid, and Student Affairs to ensure seamless implementation and comprehensive student support.

Presidential Scholarship applications will open on Tuesday, May 26, 2026.

SCAN TO VIEW SPORTS ONLINE



From 2A

## PORTMAN

the door at a Portman's store location.

"My father coined the phrase, 'Everything for the musician,' and that's still absolutely true in 2026," Jerry Portman said.

"Our top priorities have always been taking care of the customers, offering the best equipment from the best brands and providing excellent music

education options for anyone who wants to learn to play.

"For years, people I see in the grocery store or in a restaurant will tell me they learned to play an instrument at Portman's Music, and now they're coming to us for their children or grandchildren."

Each Portman's Music store has instructional studios as well as a faculty of instructors covering a wide variety of instruments. In Savannah, Portman's was instrumental in

helping start band programs in virtually every public and private school in Coastal Georgia, south Georgia and the South Carolina lowcountry."

Countless students have taken their first musical steps with an instrument and instruction from Portman's – a legacy that now spans multiple generations of families. Band and orchestra instruments have always been the foundation upon which Portman's Music was built.

In recent years, Portman's Music has expanded beyond instruments and music education to become a leading regional provider of professional sound systems and public address systems, outfitting stadiums, churches, schools and gymnasiums throughout Georgia and South Carolina with state-of-the-art audio equipment.

"Over the 90 years, our business has changed with the music and sound industry,"

Jerry Portman said. "When our family started the business, we helped organize band programs for just about every school in and around Savannah, and now we've installed incredible sound systems in the stadiums and gymnasiums for those same schools and more facilities all over the state of Georgia. The business grew by providing everything that the musician needs, and that's how we have been able to stay on top for 90 years."

## NOTICE

THIS SERVES TO ADVISE THAT LOGIC AND ACCURACY TESTING OF THE BALLOT MARKING DEVICES TO BE USED FOR THE JUNE 16, 2026 GENERAL PRIMARY RUNOFF ELECTION WILL BEGIN ON MONDAY, JUNE 1, 2026 BEGINNING AT 8:30 A.M. AND SHALL CONTINUE UNTIL COMPLETION. TESTING WILL BE CONDUCTED IN THE ELECTIONS OFFICE LOCATED AT 222 PINE AVE. AS WELL AS THE ELECTIONS WAREHOUSE LOCATED AT 2507 DAWSON ROAD (NORTHWEST LIBRARY).

ALL CANDIDATES, MEDIA AND INTERESTED PARTIES ARE INVITED TO BE PRESENT TO OBSERVE TESTING.

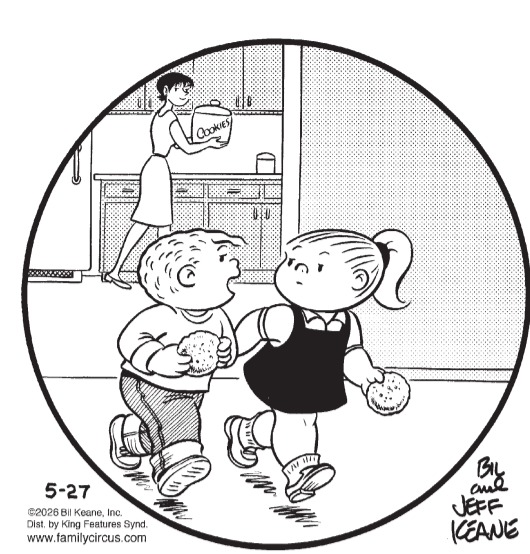
GINGER P. NICKERSON, SUPERVISOR  
FOR THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

**CLOSE TO HOME** John McPherson



Online college graduation ceremonies.

**THE FAMILY CIRCUS** Bill Keane



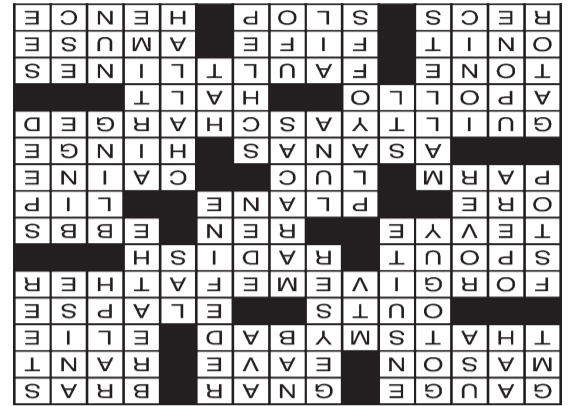
"When I grow taller than Mommy I'm going to marry her."

**Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle**

Edited by Patti Varol

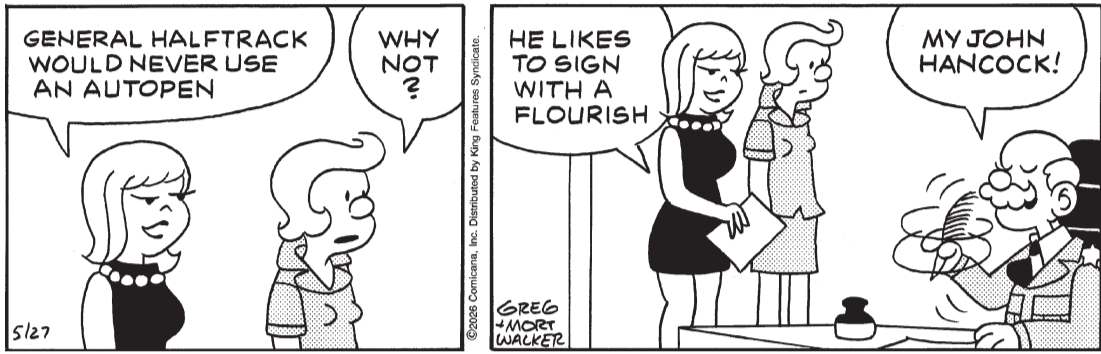
- ACROSS**
- 1 Measuring device
  - 6 Shred the \_\_\_: crush a black diamond run, say
  - 10 Bikini tops
  - 14 Stoneworker
  - 15 Roof overhang
  - 16 Sound off
  - 17 "I messed up"
  - 19 Writer Wiesel
  - 20 Half-inning trio
  - 21 Go by
  - 23 First words in a confession booth, often
  - 28 Electric kettle part
  - 29 Oft-pickled taco topper
  - 30 "Fiddler on the Roof" milkman
  - 31 Kyo of "Star Wars"
  - 32 Flows back
  - 36 Mined find
  - 37 Piper Cub, e.g.
  - 39 Gloss target
  - 40 Pasta topper, for short
  - 42 "Star Trek" captain Jean—Picard
  - 43 "Alfie" star Michael
  - 45 Poses such as happy baby and humble warrior
  - 48 Hardware not found on a sliding door
  - 49 "I totally did that, yep"
  - 53 Historic Harlem theater
  - 54 Put an end to
  - 55 Muscle quality
  - 56 Fractured spots in the earth's crust, or what 17-, 23-, and 49-Across are
  - 62 Currently working the problem
  - 63 Military flute
  - 64 \_\_\_-bouche: bite-size freebie
  - 65 Critics' picks, informally
  - 66 Meal for a pig
  - 67 Consequently
- DOWN**
- 2 Relaxing sound?
  - 3 Olympic ice hockey gold medalists: Abbr.
  - 4 Right-hand man
  - 5 Like a Jack and Jill bathroom
  - 6 Old Faithful, e.g.
  - 7 Scoop up
  - 8 Director DuVernay
  - 9 Change the meaning of
  - 10 Get some air?
  - 11 Actor Fiennes
  - 12 Sambuca flavor
  - 13 Turn a corner, perhaps
  - 18 "RuPaul's Drag Race" network
  - 22 \_\_\_ Vegas Aces
  - 23 Camera setting that affects depth
  - 24 Rossini work
  - 25 App that connects pet sitters and pet owners
  - 26 Musical rattles
  - 27 Old Testament garden
  - 33 Flashy accessories
  - 34 Watch episode after episode of
  - 35 Floor it
  - 37 Some postseason games
  - 38 Moon goddess
  - 41 Whac-a-Mole whackers
  - 43 Rosh Hashanah bread
  - 44 Broadcast slot
  - 46 Letters on a Cardinal
  - 47 Inconvenient trip
  - 49 Croc kin
  - 50 Holding a small lead
  - 51 Like some chemical bonds
  - 52 Lid
  - 57 Feel crummy
  - 58 Blurry craft in tabloid pics
  - 59 Religious sister
  - 60 Corner PC key
  - 61 Match, in poker

**TODAY'S SOLUTION:**

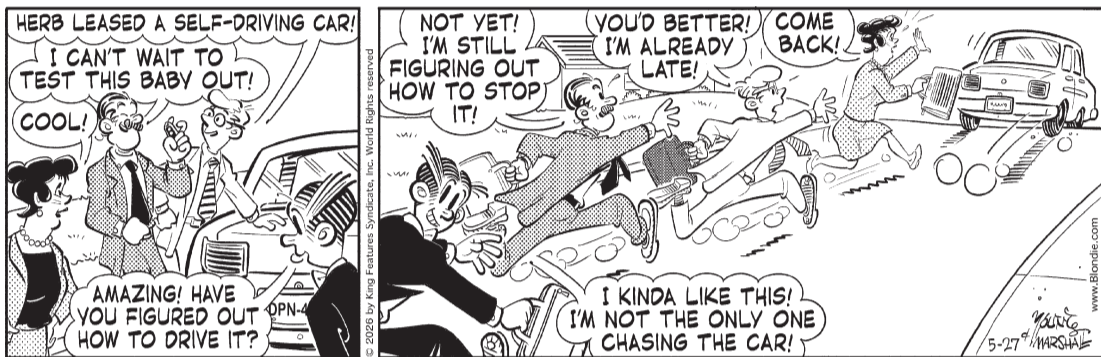


05/27/26

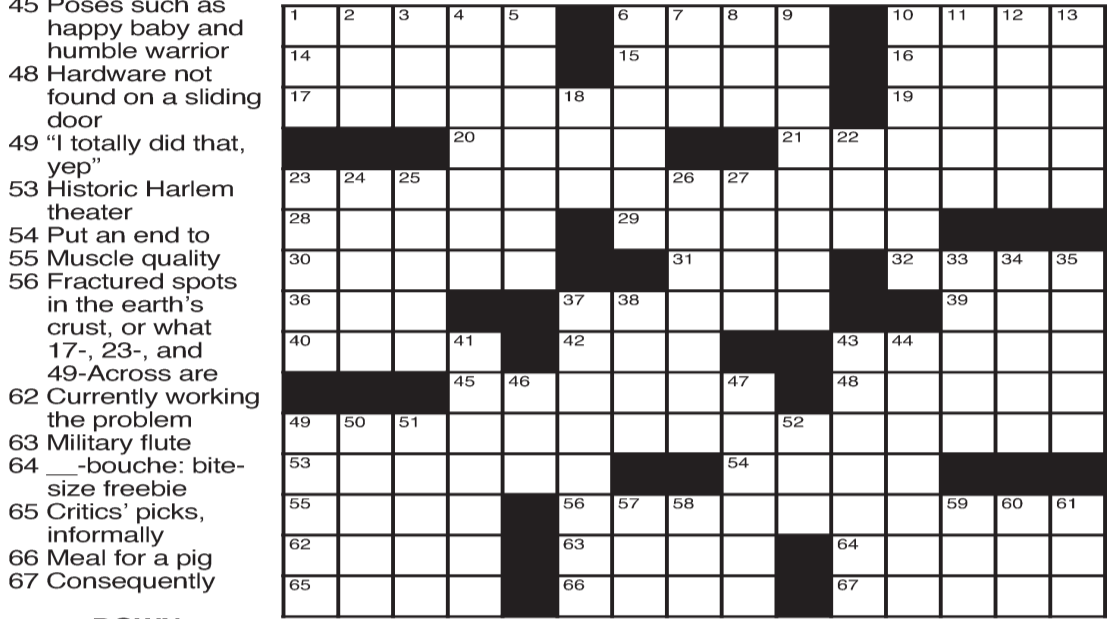
**BEETLE BAILEY** Mort & Greg Walker



**BLONDIE** Dean Young & John Marshall



**THE BORN LOSER** Art & Chip Sansom



**DOWN**  
1 Clock-setting std.

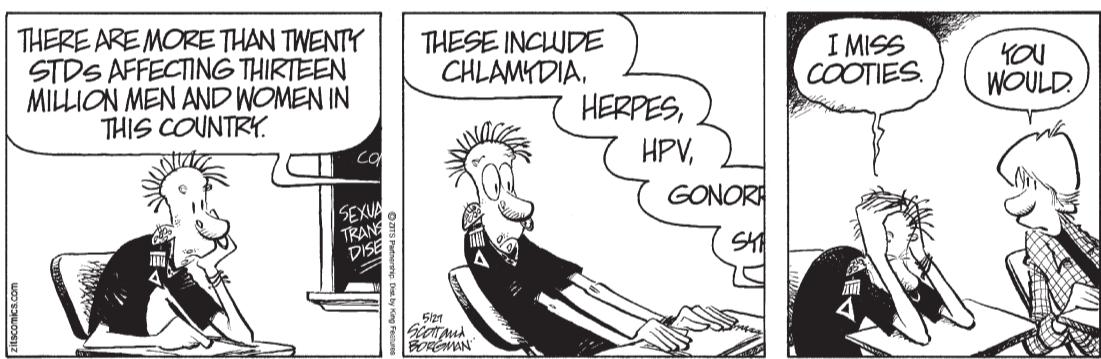
By Sala Wanettek  
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05/27/26

**HAGAR THE HORRIBLE** Chris Browne



**ZITS** Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



**PEANUTS** Charles M. Schulz



**GARFIELD** Jim Davis



**POOCH CAFE** Paul Gilligan



**PICKLES** Brian Crane



**WONDERWORD**

By DAVID OUELLET

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

A SPATE OF ...

Solution: 10 letters

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

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5/27

Batch, Birds, Books, Boxes, Candy, Cars, Cluster, Comics, Cookies, Doll, Fireworks, Fish, Flowers, Flurry, Food, Friends, Fruit, Hats, Herbs, Information, Ingredients, Keys, Love, Mickle, News, Orders, Pictures, Raft, Rain, Rings, Rocks, Rush, Sales, Shoes, Snacks, Snow, Stack, Stamps, Tests, Texts, Tiles, Tokens, Tools, Tourists, Toys, Water, Weeds, Words

**TODAY'S ANSWER:** Unpleasant

**SUDOKU**

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

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

**WHATZIT?**

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

job in job

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

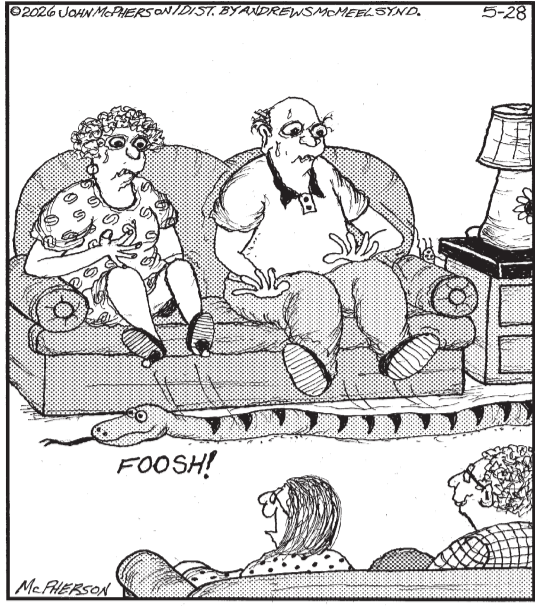
**TODAY'S SUDOKU SOLUTION:**

8	6	1	8	7	7	9	9	9
7	9	8	5	6	7	2	8	1
7	5	2	9	1	8	6	8	7
2	8	5	6	7	1	1	9	8
9	7	1	8	5	2	8	1	6
1	8	6	1	8	9	5	7	2
5	1	9	2	8	8	1	6	7
6	2	7	1	9	5	8	1	8
8	1	8	7	1	6	9	2	5

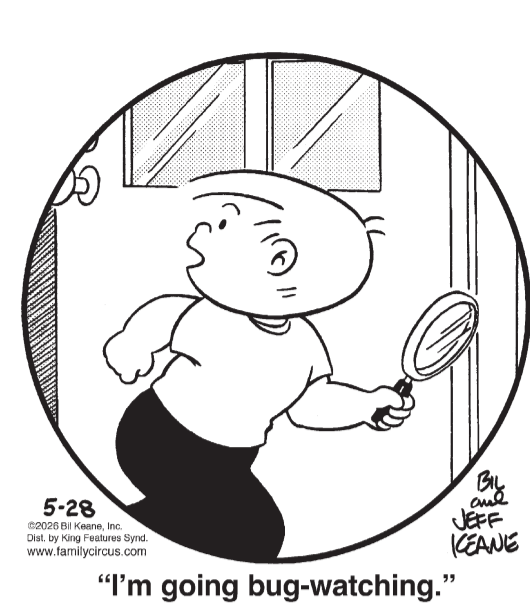
**TODAY'S WHATZIT SOLUTION:**

sojof naewtdeq uj

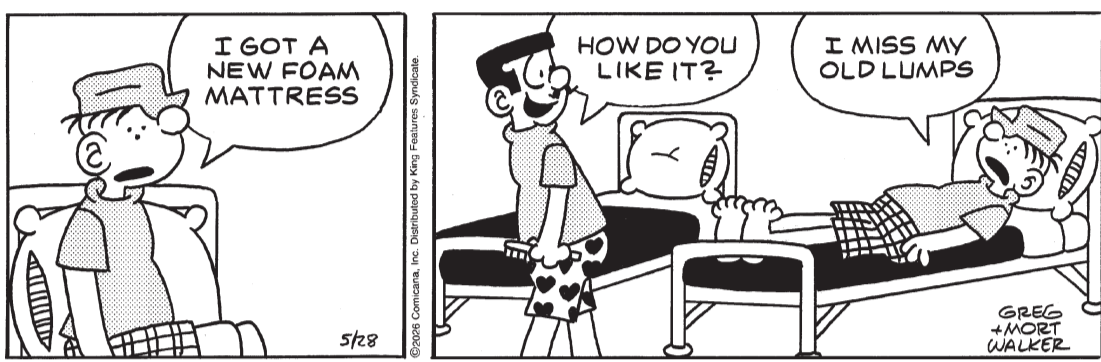
**CLOSE TO HOME** John McPherson



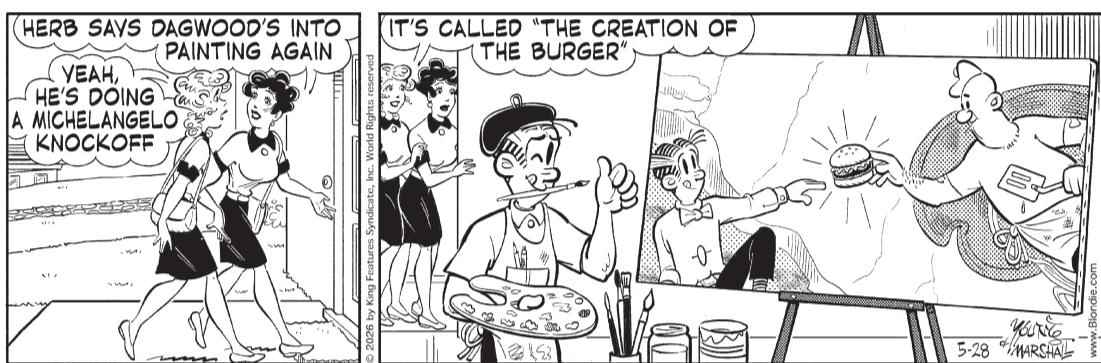
**THE FAMILY CIRCUS** Bill Keane



**BEETLE BAILEY** Mort & Greg Walker



**BLONDIE** Dean Young & John Marshall



**THE BORN LOSER** Art & Chip Sansom



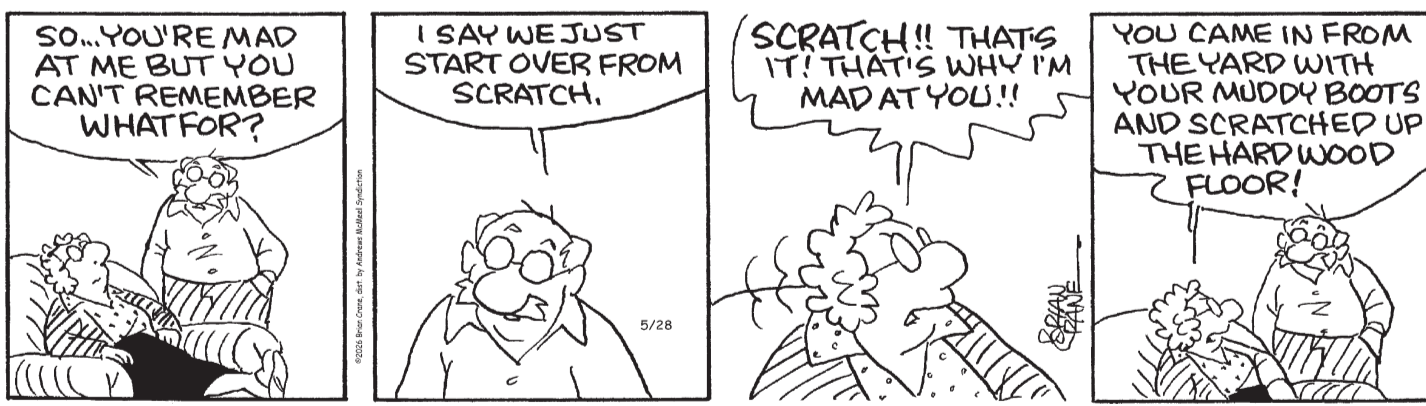
**ZITS** Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



**GARFIELD** Jim Davis



**PICKLES** Brian Crane



**SUDOKU**

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

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

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**WHATZIT?**

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

**SGART**

**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:** Start all over again

**CROSSWORD**

**ACROSS**

- Liquor made from sugarcane
- Sit for a painter
- Maple genus
- Letter before theta
- Eden occupant
- Commotion (Hyph.)
- Fastener
- Not working
- Old garment
- statesman
- Followed
- Shakespearean king
- Alphabet starter
- Secret listening device
- Jack-of- — -trades
- Item in a pod
- Shut
- Mountain on Crete

**DOWN**

- Ash-filled container
- Poetic preposition
- Bronze
- Striped animal
- Method
- Usual routine
- Annex
- Distress call letters
- Actress — Kudrow
- Outcomes
- Spikes
- On the summit of
- Repeat
- Fountain pen filler
- Unadulterated
- Foray
- Opposite of NNW
- Wedding cake part
- Diminutive suffix

**TODAY'S SOLUTION:**

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

**60 Actor — Danson**

**DOWN**

- Repulse
- Serviceable
- Required
- Twosome

**5 Bet in roulette**

**6 — of the earth**

**7 "The — City of Oz"**

**8 Storage room**

**9 Chilly**

**10 Advantage**

**11 Highway or byway**

**19 Taylor Swift's "The — Tour"**

**21 Burning**

**25 Lorry fuel**

**26 "— She Sweet"**

**27 Press agent**

**28 Goof**

**29 Santa —, California**

**30 Bovine creature**

**31 — & Perrins sauces**

**36 Spartan**

**38 Jazz great — Fitzgerald**

**42 "Terrific!"**

**44 Meaning**

**45 Inquired**

**46 Spellbound**

**47 Small case**

**48 Angry**

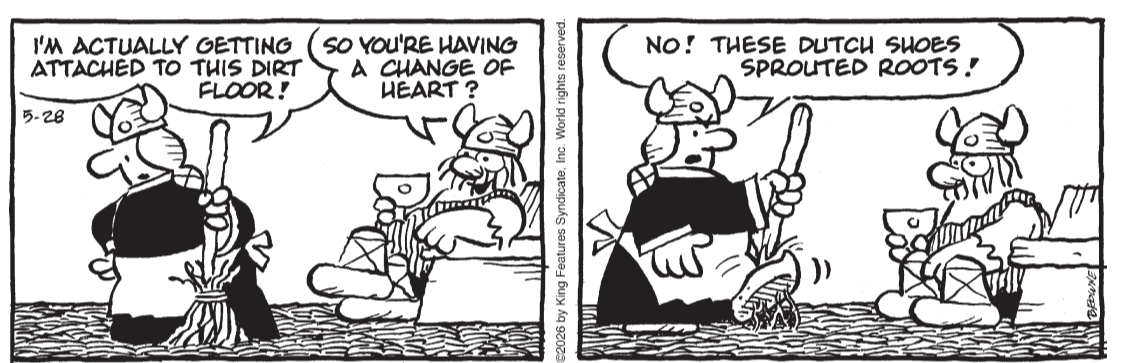
**49 "Begone!"**

**50 Ore deposit**

**53 Chart-topper**

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		

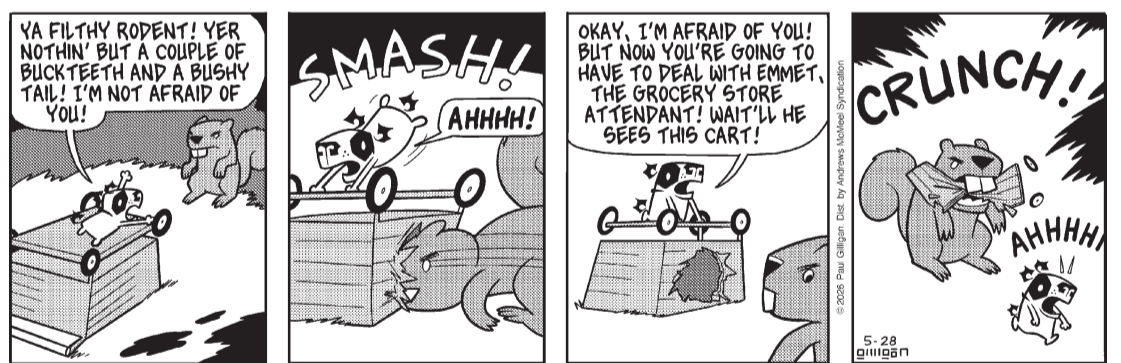
**HAGAR THE HORRIBLE** Chris Browne



**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.

**THE HIDDEN LIVES OF ANTS** Solution: 8 letters

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

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Abdomen, Acid, Adaptation, Antennae, Army, Black, Boreal, Caste, Complex, Diet, Digger, Drone, Dune, Entomology, Foraging, Formicidae, Hierarchy, Incisor, Invasive, Mating, Nest, Nocturnal, Odorous, Omnivorous, Ootheca, Oviposition, Pheromone, Queen, Resin, Sand, Scout, Seeds, Sentry, Soldier, Swarming, Symbiosis, Trophallaxis

**TODAY'S ANSWER:** Colonies

# Phoebe to host Ribbon Walk to celebrate cancer survivors

**Staff Reports**

news@albanyherald.com

ALBANY – Phoebe Putney Health System is inviting the community to come together for the Ribbon Walk, an event dedicated to honoring, celebrating, and remembering those affected by cancer. The walk will take place on Saturday beginning at 9 a.m. at Meredyth Place.

The Ribbon Walk is a one-mile community event designed to bring people together in support of cancer

awareness and survivorship. Participants are encouraged to walk in honor of loved ones, celebrate survivors, and remember those lost to cancer. Attendees may show their support by wearing specific cancer ribbon colors that represent different types of cancer, creating a powerful visual display of unity and hope.

“This event is an opportunity for our community to stand together in support of those touched by cancer,”



Keisa Mansfield, community outreach manager for the

Phoebe Cancer Center, said. “Whether you are a survivor,

caregiver, family member or friend, the Ribbon Walk offers a space to connect, reflect, and celebrate strength and resilience.”

Following the walk, participants are invited to enjoy a variety of entertainment, food and celebratory activities for all ages.

Registration for the Ribbon Walk is free and open to the public, making it easy for individuals, families, and groups to participate. For more information about the Ribbon Walk, contact (229)

312-5440.

Event Details:  
Event: Ribbon Walk  
Date: Saturday  
Time: 9 a.m.  
Location: Meredyth Place, Albany  
Cost: Free  
Phoebe Putney Health System officials say they are proud to host this special event and encourage the community to join in showing support, raising awareness, and celebrating those impacted by cancer.

## GSW President Michelle Johnston accepts new role in Alabama

**Staff Reports**

news@albanyherald.com

AMERICUS – Georgia Southwestern State University President Michelle Johnston has been named president of the University of Montevallo in Alabama.

Johnston accepted the position after it was officially approved and announced by UM’s Board of Trustees on May 22. Her final day at GSW will be June 30.

Johnston shared the announcement with the GSW campus community and expressed her gratitude to the faculty, staff, students, alumni and supporters who have helped shape the university’s continued success during her two-year tenure.

“Serving as president of Georgia Southwestern has been one of the greatest honors of my professional life,” Johnston said. “I am deeply thankful for the incredible faculty, staff, students, alumni and community members who have made these past two years so meaningful. Together, we have celebrated remarkable growth and positioned GSW for an even



Michelle Johnston

brighter future.

“While this decision was not easy, I will forever cherish my time at GSW and the relationships built here.”

Under Johnston’s leadership, Georgia Southwestern has continued its historic enrollment momentum. In fall 2025, GSW welcomed the largest enrollment in the university’s history with 4,017 students, representing an 8.5% increase over the previous year. GSW also has been awarded the Chancellor’s Cup multiple times by the University System of Georgia, recognizing it as one of the best in its academic sector for enrollment growth.

“Michelle Johnston has been a strong leader for Georgia Southwestern State Univer-

sity, and her genuine care for the campus community shows in everything she does,” USG Chancellor Sonny Perdue said. “Under her watch, GSW didn’t just grow. It set enrollment records because she knows how to bring people together behind a common goal. While we’re sad to see her leave the USG family, this move will allow her to be closer to her family. We’re deeply grateful for her dedicated service to our students and wish her the very best at the University of Montevallo.”

Johnston guided the development of GSW’s next Strategic Plan and a comprehensive 10-year Facilities Master Plan. Upon completion this summer, both initiatives will position the university to build upon its recent growth and help advance student success, academic excellence and regional impact for years to come.

In addition, Johnston has played a key role in leading GSW’s Rising Together, Shaping Futures comprehensive fundraising campaign to raise \$12.5 million in support of student success, student access, and faculty and staff excellence.

“Georgia Southwestern is a truly special place filled with passionate people who care deeply about students and this community,” Johnston said. “The university’s future is incredibly bright, and I have no doubt GSW will continue to thrive. I will always be proud to be part of the Hurricane family.”



Special Photo

Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia announced recently the organization’s 2026 Highest Awards recipients. These ceremonies honor Girl Scouts who took note of issues taking place in their communities and made a plan to change them for the better, and also to honor the adults who guide them.

## Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia honors Highest Awards recipients

**Staff Reports**

news@albanyherald.com

ALBANY – Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia is proud to announce the organization’s 2026 Highest Awards recipients. These ceremonies honor Girl Scouts who took note of issues taking place in their communities and made a plan to change them for the better, and also to honor the adults who guide them.

Locally, Ashlyn Marshall of Troop 40584 was a Silver Award Girl Scout, and 9 Bronze Award Girl Scouts were recognized.

Bronze Award: Earned by Juniors (grades 4–5). Requires teaming up with other girls to tackle a local issue,

completing a suggested minimum of 20 project hours.

Silver Award: Earned by Cadettes (grades 6–8). Requires researching an issue, creating a plan, and acting individually or in a small group, with a suggested minimum of 50 project hours.

Gold Award: The ultimate achievement in Girl Scouting, earned individually. It requires developing and executing a sustainable, measurable project that addresses the root cause of a community issue, requiring at least 80 project hours.

Across the Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia footprint, 9 Girl Scouts earned their Gold Award, the highest award a Girl Scout can earn: These re-

cipients include Emily David of Jefferson, Karli Hardy of Loganville, Maddie Conner of Athens, Molly Smith of Watkinsville, Tynsley Smith of Martinez, Brianna Atchinson of Savannah, Lucy Perry of Savannah, Callie Smith of Columbus, and Isabelle Peek of Kathleen.

In addition to these accomplished Girl Scouts, 49 Girl Scout Cadettes earned Silver Awards, 156 Girl Scout Juniors earned Bronze Awards, and 73 individuals and teams with adult award honors and recognitions.

Interested persons can view this year’s Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia yearbook on the www.gshg.org website.

## Albany author, history teacher provides program for Daffodil Garden Club

**Staff Reports**

news@albanyherald.com

ALBANY – The Daffodil Garden Club held its May meeting on the 19th with 17 members and one guest in attendance.

Members enjoyed a covered dish luncheon with Asian-themed table decorations provided by club President Penny Williams. The program for the meeting was presented by Robert Rusconi, a retired history teacher, traveler, and author from Albany.

Rusconi gave an informative presentation comparing Japanese and American gardens, focusing on their philosophy, purpose, and plant selection. He explained that Japanese gardens are designed to inspire peace, reflection and harmony with nature, often using evergreens, foliage and carefully placed open spaces. In contrast, American gardens are typically designed for enjoyment, entertainment and colorful seasonal displays.

Rusconi is also a published author of “The Warao Chronicles,” a four-part fantasy saga, and “Where the Tea Grows Cold,” a historical novel set in 1930s Shanghai. His new book, “Where We Belong,” is set to be released at the end of this month and is a nostalgic coming-of-age novel set against the backdrop of growing up in Albany during the 1980s.

All books are available on Amazon.

The Daffodil Garden Club is adjourned until Sept. 19. Its Radium Springs project, Yard of the Month selections and social media will continue to be active through the summer.



Special Photo

Robert Rusconi, a retired history teacher, traveler, and author from Albany, was the guest speaker at the Daffodil Garden Club’s May Meeting.

**PARENTS:  
KNOW THE CURFEW.**

The City of Albany is committed to keeping our community safe for all.

**CITY OF ALBANY CURFEW HOURS**

SUNDAY – THURSDAY	FRIDAY & SATURDAY
 <b>11:00 P.M.</b> TO <b>6:00 A.M.</b> <small>OF THE FOLLOWING DAY</small>	 <b>12:00 MIDNIGHT</b> TO <b>6:00 A.M.</b> <small>OF THE FOLLOWING DAY</small>

It shall be unlawful for any minor under the age of 18 years to loiter, wander, stroll, or play in or upon the public streets, highways, roads, alleys, parks, playgrounds or other public grounds, public places, public buildings, places of amusement, eating places, vacant lots, or any place unsupervised by an adult having the lawful authority to be at such places between the hours of 11:00 p.m. on any day and 6:00 a.m. of the following day; provided, however, that on Fridays and Saturdays the effective hours are between 12:00 midnight and 6:00 a.m. of the following day; and, provided further that the provisions of this section shall not apply in the following instances:

**HELP KEEP OUR YOUTH SAFE.**  
Talk with your children about curfew and responsibility.

**STRONG FAMILIES. STRONG COMMUNITY.**  
Working together for a safer Albany.

**QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?**  
Contact the Albany Police Department, 229-431-2100

ALBANY POLICE DEPARTMENT ★ PROTECTING & SERVING OUR COMMUNITY



Special Illustration

## City of Arlington Budget Public Hearing

A Public Hearing will be held Thursday, June 4, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at the Jimmie C. Harpe Community Center (326 MLKing Drive). The purpose of the Public Hearing is to review the proposed budget 2026-2027. Anyone wishing to be heard on the budget may appear at the Jimmie C Harpe Community Center (326 MLKing Drive). A copy of the budget is on file at City Hall. Anyone wishing to review the budget may do so during normal business hours from 7:30 am to 4:00 PM (Monday-Friday).

## 'KJ' Acree lands NIL deal with PUMA

By Joe Whitfield  
Sports Editor

ALBANY — Long before Kie'Aundria Acree became Monroe High School's "PUMA girl," she was simply a young player in Albany with a basketball in her hands, a fierce competitive streak and dreams that stretched far beyond South Georgia.

Now one of the world's largest athletic brands is betting on those dreams too.

The rising Monroe senior has signed a Name, Image and Likeness deal with PUMA, becoming part of the company's first-ever high school basketball NIL class — a select national group featuring some of the country's top rising stars.

Acree, known throughout Southwest Georgia as "KJ," is the only athlete from Georgia chosen for the inaugural class. The Monroe standout will travel to Boston this summer as part of the partnership and will help promote the PUMA basketball brand through social media and marketing opportunities.

"We are so grateful. KJ is very

thankful to be included in this first group of high school athletes to be chosen," Monroe girls basketball coach Jennifer Acree said.

"There's so much talent in South Georgia, but sometimes our kids don't always get seen the same way as athletes in larger markets," Jennifer Acree said. "For KJ to be recognized by a global brand like PUMA says a lot about the work she's put in over the years. Hopefully other young athletes around here see this and understand they can reach that level too."

Jennifer Acree smiled while talking about her daughter's newest nickname.

"I call her my PUMA girl," she said. The announcement is the latest milestone for a player who has rapidly become one of the biggest names in Georgia girls basketball.

Acree led Monroe to a 27-4 record and a berth in the Class AAA Final Four during the 2025-26 season while putting together staggering numbers night after night. The explosive guard averaged 30.6 points, 12 rebounds, six assists and four

blocks per game while finishing as the leading scorer in Georgia girls basketball.

Opponents threw double teams, traps and constant defensive attention at Acree throughout the season, but few found a way to slow her down. Her relentless style, competitive fire and ability to take over games helped transform Monroe into one of the state's most dangerous teams.

Her combination of production, athleticism and growing national profile helped place her among seven players selected nationwide for PUMA's inaugural NIL basketball class.

The group also includes Sydney Douglas, De'Andra Minor, Kamora "Momo" Moore, Zion Green, Evan Willis and Howard Williams — nationally recognized prospects viewed as some of the future faces of the sport.

According to PUMA, the class represents "the next generation of the game" and reflects the company's growing investment in grassroots basketball through the NXTPRO and PRO16 circuits.

"The new NIL class represents

the future of basketball, and we're proud to support them as they take the next step in their journey," said Archie McEachern, PUMA's Vice President of Basketball.

For Monroe, the national recognition surrounding Acree continues to shine a spotlight on a program that has steadily climbed among Georgia's elite under Jennifer Acree.

But despite the NIL deals, social media attention and national exposure, one dream still matters most to Kie'Aundria Acree.

A state championship for Monroe High School.

The Lady Nadas return to the court June 1 as summer workouts begin for another season filled with expectations. After falling short of the title during last year's Final Four run, Monroe returns one of the nation's most dynamic players with hopes of bringing a championship trophy back to Albany.

And somewhere between Albany and Boston, Monroe's "PUMA girl" is proving that basketball talent from South Georgia no longer has to wait to be noticed.



Special Photo: Submitted

Monroe basketball standout Kie'Aundria "KJ" Acree, pictured in her Untamed uniform, has signed a NIL deal with PUMA, becoming the only Georgia athlete selected for the company's inaugural high school basketball NIL class. Acree led Monroe to the Class AAA Final Four last season while averaging 30.6 points per game.

## Deerfield-Windsor heads to state championship series

By Joe Whitfield  
Sports Editor

ALBANY — Deerfield-Windsor's road to the state championship series could hardly have been messier.

Rain delays washed away Friday's opener. Mud covered the infield Saturday. One-run losses and tense momentum swings pushed the semifinal series to the edge before the Knights finally broke through Sunday afternoon.

Now Deerfield-Windsor is headed to Statesboro with a state title on the line — and a familiar rival waiting there.

The Knights will face region rival Valwood this week in the GIAA Class AAA state championship series at Georgia Southern University after surviving a dramatic three-game semifinal battle with Frederica Academy.

Game 1 of the best-of-three championship series begins Thursday.

And after the kind of weekend Deerfield-Windsor just endured, the Knights arrive carrying momentum, confidence and a battle-tested roster.

"It was an awesome job today, but we are not finished," Deerfield-Windsor head coach Kyle Keen said after Sunday's clinching victory. "We've got two more games to win."

The semifinal series against Frederica stretched across three days after Friday thunderstorms postponed the opener. Saturday's doubleheader was played on a soft, muddy field before Deerfield-Windsor finally settled the series Sunday with an emphatic 8-1 victory.

The weekend tested everything.

Frederica captured Saturday's opener 5-4 when Deerfield-Windsor committed a seventh-inning error that allowed the winning run to score.

The loss stung because the Knights had battled back repeatedly.

After Frederica grabbed a 3-2 lead in the fourth inning, Boyd Pollock raced home headfirst through the mud on a clutch two-out RBI hit from David Hutchins to tie the game. Deerfield-Windsor tied the game again in the fifth after Frederica misplayed a pickoff attempt, but the Knights stranded the bases loaded before Frederica es-

caped with the win.

Instead of unraveling, Deerfield-Windsor answered immediately.

Collins Clark delivered a complete-game performance in Saturday's second game as the Knights earned a 4-2 victory to force Sunday's decisive Game 3. Lane Seals continued his strong postseason at the plate while Deerfield-Windsor capitalized on Frederica mistakes to keep the season alive.

Then came Sunday's breakthrough.

With fans packed along the fences and the energy around the field building inning by inning, Deerfield-Windsor erupted offensively early and never slowed down.

Lane Seals opened the first inning with a walk before Hutchins ripped a game-tying double to center field. Moments later, Gabe Daniel drove home another run to give the Knights a lead they would never surrender.

The decisive blow came in the second inning.

Boyd Pollock, Seals,



Staff Photo: Joe Whitfield

Deerfield-Windsor's Boyd Pollock slides headfirst into home plate during the weekend series against Frederica Academy. Pollock and the Knights lost game one but won the next two to advance to the GIAA state championship series, which begins Thursday in Statesboro.

Hutchins and Gage Tomlinson delivered consecutive singles before Clark blasted a two-run double to center field. After Frederica changed pitchers, Daniel greeted the new arm with another RBI double as Deerfield-Windsor exploded for five runs in the inning and seized control.

Tomlinson gave the Knights four strong innings on the

mound Sunday before Seals closed out the final three scoreless innings.

Now Deerfield-Windsor turns its attention toward Valwood, a team it knows well.

Valwood won two of the three regular-season meetings between the teams, although Deerfield-Windsor handed the Valiants their only region loss of the season.



Staff Photo: Joe Whitfield

Westover running back Malik Young leaps over defenders during Thursday night's "Junebug Classic" at Hugh Mills Stadium. Young and the Patriot offense gashed Monroe, winning the spring game 34-0.

## Patriots pound Monroe in Junebug Classic

By Joe Whitfield  
Sports Editor

ALBANY — The rain came first.

Then came Westover.

By halftime Thursday night at Hugh Mills Stadium, the Patriots had turned the annual Junebug Classic into a runaway, slicing through Monroe with big plays, deep passes and a quarterback who refused to let grief slow him down in a 34-0 victory over the Golden Tornadoes.

Even with fans dodging early raindrops and dark clouds drifting above Hugh Mills Stadium, a large crowd packed into the stands for Albany's unofficial closing chapter to spring football — the annual rivalry game honoring longtime Dougherty County educator Milton "Junebug" Griffin.

And once Westover found its rhythm, the Patriots looked every bit like a team capable of lighting up scoreboards this fall.

At first, however, the points refused to come.

Westover marched deep into Monroe territory on its opening possession only to come away empty when quarterback Gabriel Hopper narrowly overthrew 6-foot-6 receiver Jo'Siah Daniels on third down before another perfectly thrown fourth-down pass slipped through a receiver's hands in the end zone.

The Patriots moved the ball again on their next drive before a holding penalty stalled the possession, leaving the first quarter scoreless despite Westover dominating the field position battle.

The breakthrough finally came on the Patriots' third possession.

Runs by Malik Young and sharp completions from Hopper to Jordan Joyner, Mikel Simmons and Daniels steadily pushed Westover inside

the Monroe 5-yard line before Hopper slipped across on a one-yard quarterback keeper for the game's first touchdown.

From there, the Patriots overwhelmed Monroe with speed and explosiveness.

Hopper connected with Joyner on the next possession to move Westover to the Monroe 4-yard line before circling the right side himself for another touchdown and a 14-0 lead.

The Patriots struck again late in the half after Daniels hauled in another big pass before Young raced around the left side deep into Monroe territory. With less than two minutes remaining before halftime, Hopper delivered a 33-yard touchdown pass to freshman Ahmad Mitchell, extending Westover's lead to 21-0.

The second half only widened the gap.

Hopper threw two more touchdown passes in the third quarter, including a dazzling 56-yard sideline strike to Simmons. Catching the ball near the Monroe 44, Simmons outran the secondary to the end zone as the Patriots stretched the lead to 34-0.

Hopper finished with more than 270 passing yards and five total touchdowns despite playing through personal tragedy after losing his uncle earlier Thursday morning.

"Gabriel Hopper, who lost his uncle that morning, played a good game," Westover head coach Corey Joyner said. "However, he missed two layups. He threw for over 270 yards with five touchdowns."

Joyner praised his team's energy and offensive balance while also pointing toward areas that still need attention before the regular season arrives.

See JUNEBUG, 10A



Special Photo: UGAAA

The Georgia Bulldogs gather for a photo after winning the SEC tournament championship this past weekend in Hoover, Ala. The Bulldogs earned a No. 3 national seed, right behind arch-rival Georgia Tech, who took the No. 2 seed.

## Georgia, Georgia Tech rise together atop college baseball

By Joe Whitfield  
Sports Editor

The state of Georgia has produced plenty of good baseball teams over the years. Some very good ones, too.

But what's happening right now with the Georgia Bulldogs baseball and Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets baseball is operating on an entirely different level.

These aren't merely two in-state programs having nice seasons at the same time. This isn't Georgia making a regional while Tech sneaks into the field as a No. 3 seed. This isn't one school carrying

the banner for the state while the other tries to catch up.

This is both programs arriving at the NCAA Tournament as legitimate national powers simultaneously.

And that almost never happens.

Georgia Tech won the ACC regular-season and tournament championships and earned the No. 2 overall national seed. Georgia won the SEC regular-season and tournament championships and landed the No. 3 overall seed. Both will host regionals this weekend, with the Yellow Jackets opening in Atlanta and the Bulldogs beginning

postseason play in Athens.

It's difficult to overstate how unusual that is.

Georgia baseball has traditionally lived in the SEC's heavyweight world, where every weekend series feels like a street fight and surviving conference play can be harder than advancing through a regional. Tech baseball, meanwhile, has long built its reputation on offense, swagger and producing major-league talent while playing in the ACC.

Both programs have enjoyed national success. Both

See GEORGIA, 10A

# Knicks finish sweep of Cavs, make first NBA Finals since 1999

By Brian Dulik, Field Level Media

**CLEVELAND** — As the clock wound down, few Cleveland Cavaliers fans could be found. The New York Knicks left them with no reason to stick around.

Karl-Anthony Towns scored 19 points and grabbed 14 rebounds as the Knicks advanced to the NBA Finals for the first time since 1999, routing the Cavaliers 130-93 in Game 4 of the Eastern Conference finals Monday night.

The Knicks extended their franchise playoff-record winning streak to 11 games — matching the third-longest run in a single postseason in league history — and their long-suffering supporters took over Cleveland's arena.

"Growing up in the (New York) area, I feel like the word hope has been gone for a long

while, so to restore that is special," Towns said. "There is nowhere better in the world than when (Madison Square) Garden has hope."

OG Anunoby contributed 17 points and Landry Shamet scored 16 off the bench on 4-for-4 3-point shooting for New York, which built a 29-point lead in the second quarter and went up 123-78 in the fourth.

Jalen Brunson and Mikal Bridges finished with 15 points apiece, and Josh Hart added six points, 11 rebounds and six assists. The former Villanova championship teammates relished the opportunity to win the East together.

"It's something that is surreal," Hart said. "We already share a bond and a brotherhood for life, and we're going to keep adding memories for that."

Brunson was named the series MVP for averaging 25.5 points and 7.8 assists. The Knicks have outscored their opponents by 262 points during their win streak, the most dominant span in league history, playoffs or regular season.

Donovan Mitchell logged 31 points and Evan Mobley posted 15 points and seven rebounds for Cleveland, which reached the East finals for the first time since 2018. James Harden had 12 points and five turnovers while missing all six of his 3-point tries.

"Sometimes you've got to ultimately give the other team credit," Cavaliers coach Kenny Atkinson said. "They played great basketball and they're on a heater."

The Knicks' Mike Brown is off to the NBA Finals for the second time as a head coach, having led the Cavaliers to

their first East crown in 2007.

The 37-point defeat was the Cavaliers' largest ever in a playoff home game.

"We have unfinished business," Mitchell said. "I have no doubt this group can get there."

New York dominated the rebounding battle 60-33 with backup center Mitchell Robinson grabbing 10 boards in 18 minutes.

New York delivered the knockout blow early with a 20-0 run over a span of 4:39 from late in the first quarter into the second. A dunk by Towns punctuated the surge, making the score 50-26.

The Knicks eventually built a 61-32 lead on Shamet's third 3-pointer of the half.

Mitchell scored 10 points and Mobley had seven in the first six minutes, putting the Cavaliers up 17-14. A 9-0 run



Special Photo: Imagn Images

The New York Knicks finished a four-game sweep of the Cleveland Cavaliers Monday to win the NBA's Eastern Conference and move to the NBA finals for the first time since 1999.

then put New York on top for good. Robinson entered for New York and made an impact with six points and four rebounds, sparking a 24-9 run to end the quarter. Cleveland backup point

guard Dennis Schroder was a late scratch with an illness.

Among the Knicks' celebrity fans seated courtside were comedian Tracy Morgan, filmmaker Spike Lee and actor Timothee Chalamet.

## Kirk out as Terrell County football coach

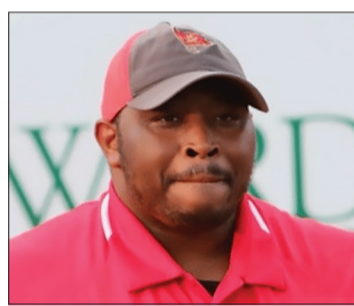
By Joe Whitfield

Sports Editor

**DAWSON** — After just one difficult season trying to rebuild the Terrell County football program, Marco Kirk is moving on.

Kirk announced this week he is stepping down as Greenwave head coach and teacher and will join Dean Fabrizio's staff at Lee County, one of Georgia's premier high school football programs.

"The standard is the standard," Kirk said when con-



File Photo Marco Kirk

tacted about the move.

Kirk took over the Greenwave program last year following the retirement of veter-

eran Terrell County coach Jack Harris, who left to become head coach at Terrell Academy. Kirk inherited a difficult situation as Terrell County continued battling low roster numbers and the challenges of competing against demanding schedules in South Georgia football.

The Greenwave finished 1-9 during Kirk's lone season.

Despite the struggles on the field, Kirk expressed gratitude toward the players and community in a Facebook post announcing his departure.

"Unfortunately, I will not be returning as your head football coach and teacher," Kirk wrote. "The past year has provided me with profound growth and unforgettable experiences."

"To each player, I express my deepest thanks for allowing us to coach and mentor you in the pursuit of excellence," Kirk added. "You will always hold a special place in my heart."

Before taking over at Terrell County, Kirk coached at Worth County, where he developed a reputation as an energetic coach and leader.

Now he moves into a vastly different football environment at Lee County, where Fabrizio has built one of the state's most consistent winning programs. The Trojans have become annual state playoff contenders and remain one of the flagship football programs in South Georgia.

The move also reunites Kirk with a familiar football culture built around high expectations and year-round competition.

Meanwhile, Terrell County once again finds itself searching for stability at one of the area's most challenging football jobs.

Kirk's departure means the Greenwave will begin another coaching search just days before summer workouts begin for the 2026 season.



Special Photo: Submitted

The Sherwood Christian Eagles are pictured on the field in Newnan before facing the top-ranked Heritage team. Heritage showed why they were the top-ranked team, beating Sherwood 8-1.

## Top-ranked Heritage ends Sherwood's season

By Joe Whitfield

Sports Editor

**NEWNAN** — Sherwood Christian's postseason run came to an end against the state's top-ranked team.

The Eagles fell to No. 1-ranked Heritage 8-1 last

week in the GIAA state semifinals, closing the season with a 15-3-1 record and one of the strongest years in program history.

"They're number one in the state for a reason," Sherwood head coach Roger Russell said. "Their speed and their touch were really good. We had two misses early in the match and they capitalized. I'm glad we got a goal late with Cade Bower before the match ended, but overall really proud of the seniors and the season they had."

Heritage quickly showed why it entered the match as the top-ranked team in the state, controlling the pace and taking advantage of early opportunities to build momentum on its home field in Newnan.

Sherwood battled throughout the match and avoided the shutout when Cade Bower scored late for the Eagles' lone goal.

The loss ended a memorable season for a Sherwood team that consistently ranked among the top programs in the state while piling up victories behind an experienced and talented roster.

Leading the way was senior standout Elim Russell, who earned Region Player of the Year honors after another dominant season. Russell signed in December to continue his soccer career at Bryan College in Dayton, Tennessee.

Sherwood finished the year with eight All-Region selections and established itself as one of the premier small-school soccer programs in Southwest Georgia.

Athletic director Jay Flynt credited both the Eagles' season-long success and the challenge of facing the state's top team in the semifinals.

From 9A

## GEORGIA

have reached Omaha before. Both have spent years ranked among the nation's better programs.

But rarely have they stood this high together.

Not with conference championship trophies in both dugouts.

Not with top-three national seeds beside both names.

Not with Omaha expectations attached to each.

And make no mistake — expectations have changed.

Georgia Tech's season has bordered on ridiculous offensively. The Yellow Jackets lead the nation in several offensive categories and have punished opposing pitching staffs all spring. Drew Burress became Tech's all-time home run leader during the ACC Tournament, and Ryan Zuckerman's monster week helped carry the Jackets to the ACC title.

The result was a No. 2 overall seed and perhaps the clearest sign yet that Tech baseball has returned to the national elite.

Georgia's path looked different but was no less impressive. The Bulldogs survived the SEC, which placed 12 teams in the NCAA Tournament field, then somehow managed to win both the regular-season and tournament championship

ships anyway. That doesn't happen by accident. It happens when a team possesses depth, pitching and enough toughness to survive the grind of the nation's most unforgiving conference.

Now both programs sit in nearly identical positions.

Georgia hosts Boston College, Liberty and Long Island University in Athens. Tech welcomes Oklahoma, The Citadel and UIC to Atlanta. If seeds hold, both schools would host super regionals next week as well.

That possibility would have sounded ambitious in previous years.

Now it sounds expected.

And that's the angle here.

Not that Georgia and Georgia Tech are good. They're often good.

It's that they have climbed to the top of college baseball at exactly the same time.

One won the SEC. One won the ACC.

One earned the No. 2 overall seed. One earned No. 3.

Both enter June believing they can win the national championship.

That's not normal for one state.

That's rare for the sport itself.

And for perhaps the first time in modern college baseball, the road to Omaha may run directly through both Athens and Atlanta.

## Moving the Chains: An officiating tutorial

*Baltimore Orioles manager Earl Weaver once got into an argument with the home plate umpire.*

*After an animated 'conversation,' Weaver walked back to the dugout screaming.*

*'I'm going to check my rule book on that one,' Weaver shouted.*

*'Be my guest, use mine,' the umpired offered.*

*Weaver replied, 'that's no good; I can't read Braille.'*

A friend of mine said he gets frustrated whenever someone refers to a member of the officiating crew at a Major League Baseball game as a referee. "Baseball has umpires, dammit; why don't they just call them that?"

\*Actually, he was also angry about NFL announcers calling all 7 officials 'referees' as well. As you will soon find out, there is only one referee in football. He's the one wearing a white hat. Also, I took a few liberties with what my friend said. For example, he didn't actually say 'dammit.' But using it in lieu of his words makes this story a lot more family-friendly.

Until my friend brought it up, the last time I was interested in baseball was when the Earl Weaver was still coaching. Seeing him kick dirt on umpire's shoes arguing at home plate over any calls that — in Weaver's mind, anyway — the umpires got wrong put some pizzazz into an otherwise mundane game. That was nearly 50 years ago.

And in all those years I'd never given a second thought about what to call the members of the officiating crew. Umpires or referees: it never

really mattered to me. To my friend, however, not knowing the difference constitutes a felony.

Regardless of what you choose to call them, they all wear the exact same blue uniform, except the one behind home plate wears a chest protector and a face mask. Working as a crew, they're responsible for calling balls and strikes, determining if a ball is fair or foul, and whether runners are safe or out.

But feel free to call them anything you like. Just don't get it wrong if my friend is within earshot. He's likely to make a citizen's arrest.

But since we're on the subject, let me go ahead and point out that baseball has a home plate umpire, base umpires, and outfield umpires. No referees; just umpires. Three different kinds of umpires, but all from the same species.

Speaking of species, let's go ahead and move on to the zebras, otherwise known as the officials of the National Football League (NFL) and the National Basketball Association (NBA).

But first, a little background on the black and white striped uniform shirts worn in both leagues.

The black and white design was chosen to distinguish them from the players on the field so they would easily stand out. (Perhaps implying the face masks worn in the NFL and the short pants worn in the NBA — not to mention the players dressed in their team colors — weren't enough to delineate the players from the officials.)

There's also a psychological reason: the contrast of

black and white is considered to be neutral and unbiased, and as such reflects the role of the officials in enforcing the rules without favoritism. (Whatever you do, please don't search 'Tim Donaghy' on the Internet. It will destroy that last point.)

In basketball there's a three-man crew consisting of a crew chief, a referee, and an umpire. Don't ask me which is which because as far as I'm concerned, with all due apologies to my friend, they're all referees. 'Refs' for short. I can sense most of you are nodding in agreement (don't let my friend see you).

Now, football is a bit more complicated. The seven-man crew consists not only of a referee and an umpire, but also — drum roll — judges. Five of them, to be exact. There's a down judge, a line judge, a field judge, a side judge, and a back judge. Raise your hand if you knew that. Now raise both if you can tell them apart. I'm not seeing a lot of hands out there. I'll be honest: until I did a little research, I couldn't tell the difference either.

Now there are judges to go with umpires and referees, making things even more complicated. Leave it to the NFL to muddy the waters.

To me they've always simply been one thing: officials. I knew they all had the same job to do: make sure everyone played by the rules, and to call them out if they didn't.

Referee, umpire, judge. To me that's just semantics. But at least now I understand why my friend gets so frustrated.

From 9A

## JUNEBUG

"We played with great effort and with a great sense of urgency," Joyner said. "However, there were some busted assignments that must be fixed immediately. I thought the overall performance was good. The one impressive part was that several players touched the ball on offense. We are going into the summer on a positive note so that is always a good thing."

Monroe showed flashes during the second half.

Curtis Ware made a spectacular catch for a big gain, and the Golden Tornadoes pieced together a promising drive late in the third quar-

ter that carried inside the Westover 15-yard line. But before Monroe could finish the possession, junior varsity players entered as the final quarter belonged mostly to reserves.

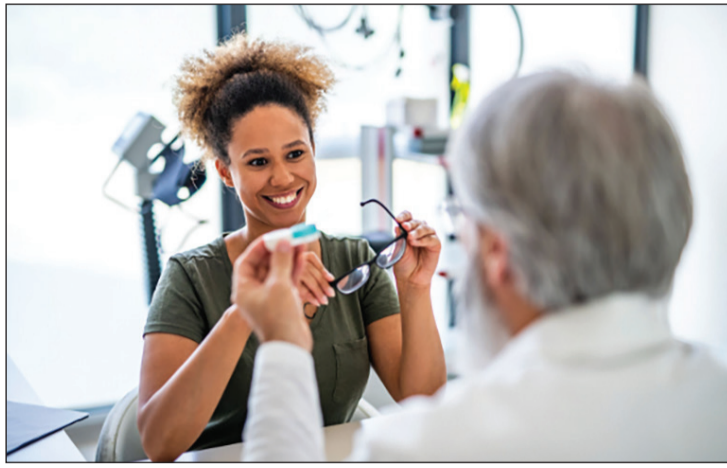
The Golden Tornadoes spent much of the night searching for offensive rhythm while trying to keep pace with a Westover offense that attacked vertically and rarely slowed down.

Now both teams head into the GHSA dead week before summer workouts resume June 1.

If Thursday night offered a glimpse of what Westover might become this fall, Monroe — and perhaps the rest of Albany — received the message early.

# YOU ASKED, EYE DOCTORS ANSWER: Common eye health questions explained

**(StatePoint)** If you've ever turned to the internet with a question about your eyes – whether it's dryness, blurry vision, or an unexpected eye twitch – you're not alone. Eye doctors hear these same questions from patients every day.



(c) AzmanJaka / Getty Images

To help separate fact from fiction during Healthy Vision Month, VSP network doctors Bradley Grant, O.D., of VisionPoint Eye Center in Illinois, and Sonia Chung, O.D., M.Ed, medical director of TSA at Visionworks in Arizona, answer the top questions being asked online and in the exam room.

## Why are my eyes always dry?

**Dr. Grant:** Dry eye is one of the most common and chronic eye conditions we see in patients and occurs when your eyes don't produce sufficient tears or there is a deficiency in the quality of your tears. The tears you produce when you blink are important because they help keep your eyes hydrated and clear of irritants and provide a clear optical surface for stable vision.

Since dry eye can be caused by a variety of factors, such as excessive screen time, contact lens use, or exposure to smoke and allergens, it's important to see your eye doctor for an accurate diagnosis and appropriate treatment.

## Why do my eyes look red and bloodshot?

**Dr. Chung:** Red or bloodshot eyes are often a symptom of an underlying cause, such as allergies, tiredness, dry eyes, contact lens irritation, exposure to smoke or other irritants, or infections, like conjunctivitis (pink eye).

Some of the simplest ways to get relief are trying preservative-free artificial tears you can purchase over the counter, applying a cold compress to your eyes, avoiding environmental irritants, and washing your hands before touching your eyes. Your local eye doctor is a great resource to recommend reputable eye drops and help determine what's causing redness if it doesn't improve or keeps coming back.

## Why does my eye twitch randomly?

**Dr. Grant:** Eye twitching, clinically known as eyelid myokymia, happens when the lower eyelid begins to involuntarily spasm. Minor eye twitching often resolves as quickly as it starts. Fatigue, stress, eye strain, and caffeine or alcohol consumption are the most common causes.

Simple lifestyle changes often help stop twitching. I recommend getting at least eight hours of sleep, increasing hydration, while decreasing caffeine and alcohol intake, and minimizing stressors. If eye twitching is due to eye strain or vision-related stress, you may need corrective lenses or an updated prescription.

## Why is my vision cloudy or blurry?

**Dr. Chung:** Cloudy or blurry vision can happen for a few common reasons, including dry eyes, eye strain, or prescription changes. It can also be related to conditions like cataracts, which cloud the eye's lens.

This is something patients ask about frequently, and at Visionworks, it's often a reminder that eye changes shouldn't be ignored – even when they seem minor. Sometimes, blurry vision can be a sign of broader health issues, like diabetes. That's why it's important to mention any changes in visual clarity during your exam. Your eye doctor can help uncover what's behind it and guide you on next steps.

## Do I really need to see my eye doctor if my vision is clear and I don't wear glasses?

**Dr. Grant:** A comprehensive eye exam plays an important role in preventive

care. During an eye exam, your optometrist can detect signs of more than 270 health conditions, many of which don't show early warning signs and can impact overall wellness – not just vision. That's why it's truly nice to see you every year – an annual eye exam gives us the chance to answer your questions, catch subtle changes, and get a clearer picture of your overall well-being.

To schedule your annual eye exam, find a Visionworks location near you at [www.locations.visionworks.com](http://www.locations.visionworks.com), or locate additional VSP network doctors in your area at [www.vsp.com/eye-doctor](http://www.vsp.com/eye-doctor).

When it comes to your eyes, what you see isn't always the whole story. Annual eye exams provide an opportunity to ask common eye health questions and get personalized answers from an optometrist you trust in the context of your overall health.

## Obituary announcement



**BETTY EXLEY**  
Betty Exley, 82, of Cuthbert, GA passed away on Monday, May 18, 2026, in Southeast Health Medical Center in Dothan, AL. Funeral services will be conducted at 2:00 PM on Thursday, May 21, 2026, in the Cuthbert First Presbyterian Church with Rev. H. K. Johnston and Mac Moyer officiating. Interment will follow in the Cuthbert Eastview Cemetery.

Betty was born on May 7, 1944, in Savannah, GA the daughter of the late Harold Clarke and Ruth Waldhour Exley. She was a graduate of Cuthbert High School and received an associate's degree from Andrew College in Cuthbert. She retired from Life of Georgia Insurance in Atlanta after 45 years of service and was a member of the Cuthbert First Presbyterian Church where she attended for 77 years. She was preceded in death by her parents and a brother, Wayne Clarke Exley. Survivors include her twin sister, Beverly Exley Lumpkin of Cuthbert, 6 nephews, Greg & Tracey Lumpkin, Kevin & Christy Lumpkin, Eric Lumpkin, Chris & Sherry Exley, Stephen & M.K. Exley and Phillip & Sandy Exley, several great nieces and nephews and 1 great great niece.

The family will receive friends on Thursday from 1:00 PM until funeral time at the church. LUNSFORD FUNERAL HOME CUTHBERT, GA 229/732-2148

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**YARD SALE.** American Legion, 2916 Gillionville Road, Saturday **June 6**, starting at 7am. No early sales. Rent a table or donate your items to the auxiliary. 229-347-3935

**Yard Sale Extravaganza**  
Sat., May 30th, 8am-2pm  
3613 Old Dawson Road  
Tools, clothes, shoes, sports & fishing gear, home décor, electronics & more!  
Great deals. Come find your next treasure.  
See you there!

**Estate Sales**

Fabulous Estate Sale Offered by Frances Patrick Estate Sales, LLC 229-347-4848  
Estate of Dr. Walter & Mrs. Martha Judge 4911 Grandview Drive (Hidden Lakes) Albany, Ga. 31721 Fri., May 29th, 8-5,

**Estate Sales**

Sat., May 30th, 9-4, Sun., May 31st, 9-3  
Street parking, driveway for loading only, bring help to load heavy items, Children not allowed on stairway,  
Cash, Check and CC. Sales tax collected.  
Not responsible for accidents.  
Enter front door, exit and check-out in garage. Home is filled to the brim, Sofas, Bernhardt leather recliner, two pair club chairs, Maitland Smith game table w/4 matching chairs, sofa tables, queen poster bed, pair twin beds, matching dressers, & night tables, factory painted soft yellow breakfast table w/6 matching chairs, antique parlor table, lamps, Asian painted curio cabinet, pr. Queen Anne arm chairs, curio cabinet and foyer cabinet with light. Several small side tables, rugs, great glass and brass coffee table, glass and brass dining table with 6 matching chairs, china cabinet, sideboard, and Asian chest. Exceptional collection of sterling silver

**Estate Sales**

flatware, Old Master by Towle and "Windsor Rose" by Watson. plus serving pieces, several sets china & crystal. Wrought iron glass top patio table w/6 matching chairs, garage filled with Christmas to include new in box, 9' tree with lights. Nice jewelry, St. John suit collection, casual clothes, handbags, 30+ pairs name brand shoes, nice table linens, bed and bath linens. See: [estatesales.net](http://estatesales.net) for 300+ photos.

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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.

"D'TP CPPI COPUUPY RL ZLKN ZDRJ  
E OLR LH TPRPKEI EMRLKU, EIY D  
ULEN GW OPUULIU HKLV RJPV ODNP E  
UWLIAP." - VDMJEPO C. SLKYEI

Previous Solution: "Courage is more exhilarating than fear and in the long run it is easier. We do not have to become heroes overnight."  
- Eleanor Roosevelt

TODAY'S CLUE: *Isenbe g*  
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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 dealing with problems (6)	_____
2 some canines (5)	_____
3 logging folk hero Paul (6)	_____
4 syrup or dressing action (9)	_____
5 with a keen eye (11)	_____
6 split (5)	_____
7 fainthearted (8)	_____

RO	COP	TE	NT	ZZL
OBS	RIV	DRI	MO	ETH
TI	BUN	LY	ING	VA
YAN	US	ER	ING	EN

Wednesday's Answers: 1. FINALLY 2. ABHORS 3. FLAPS 4. GILDA 5. SPLASHILY 6. BARBACOA 7. STRATIFY 5/28

**Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle**  
Edited by Patti Varol

**ACROSS**

- Command that might precede "paw"
- Response to "You awake?"
- Home of the Zambesi
- Logical beginning?
- Cosmic explosion
- Racket
- Speedwagon
- Malaysian capital
- TV spot sellers
- Dhabi
- Fragrant tree
- Flying reptile of the Mesozoic Era
- Group people are smart to join?
- Approved of, on social media
- "Brokeback Mountain" star Heath
- Method of driving people to the mall?
- Pig
- Unlikely pair?
- Required by etiquette
- Includes on an email
- Physical effort
- Give off
- Request from someone in need of cuddling
- "Way to go!"
- Fields of study
- Frothy cocktail from Peru
- Kringle
- Journalist Rather
- Some dealmakers
- "Correct!," or a phonetic hint to 18-, 24-, 34-, and 52-Across
- "willikers!"
- Stick like glue
- Treat like a pariah
- Surgery ctrs.
- Gives lip to
- Jet stream direction
- Ellipsis component

**DOWN**

- Highest-order angels
- Lipton beverage
- Uncomfortably close to home
- Place to dip a quill
- Creamy chocolate dessert
- Cavaliers sch.
- Country in Micronesia whose largest city is Koror
- Org. with a People Power grassroots network
- Winter bug
- Increased, with "up"
- Encroach (on)
- Advice
- Overdue debts
- Unlike the OED
- Messed up
- Make up on the spot
- List that may be opened with a QR code
- Tell tales
- Before now
- Spoils
- Stately trees
- "Call Me Maybe" singer Carly Jepsen
- Angel who plays for Rose BC in the Unrivaled league
- Energy points in yoga
- Bullfight, in Spain
- Vehicles with runners
- Lunar deity
- Prenatal
- Least loquacious
- 47 Short races
- Mythical figure who flew too close to the sun
- Convincing
- Kung shrimp
- Occupied
- Salon stock
- Three, in Italian
- "I get it now!"

**ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:**

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

By Jared Cappel ©2026 Tribune Content Agency, LLC 05/28/26

**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.

"ZFBVCXQ HY L FVQ QOWHNCVCRHSX  
RWCS JQCV CSE HS RWQ NFSX VBS  
HR HY QCYHQV. UQ EF SFR WCPQ RF  
MQZFLQ WQVFQY FPQVSHXWR."  
- QNQCFSV VFFYQPQNR

Previous Solution: "Why would I ever get cocky? I'm not saving anybody's life. There are doctors who save lives ... I'm making movies." — Jennifer Lawrence

TODAY'S CLUE: *Sjenbe A*  
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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 once and for all (7)	_____
2 detests (6)	_____
3 waves a wing (5)	_____
4 "SNL" OG Radner (5)	_____
5 in an attention-getting way (9)	_____
6 Mexican shredded meat dish (8)	_____
7 layer (8)	_____

HI	APS	LY	FI	ORS
NAL	SPL	RA	GI	LY
FL	BA	AS	ABH	COA
RBA	FY	ST	TI	LDA

Tuesday's Answers: 1. HORN 2. CHILLY 3. HEADS 4. REPOTTING 5. SATELLITE 6. LAWRENCE 7. DORMER 5/27

# Albany State University Foundation appoints W. Anthony Neal as executive director

## Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

**ALBANY** -- The Albany State University Foundation has appointed W. Anthony Neal as executive director, effective June 1. Neal will serve as the foundation's chief advancement officer. In this role, he will guide foundation strategic planning, board development, endowment growth, and financial oversight while cultivating relationships with key donors, alumni, and corporate partners.

Chairman Gregory Hylick acknowledged that Neal's professional experience aligns well with the leadership team President Robert Scott has assembled at Albany State.

"A professional of his caliber will bring collaboration and continuity between the foundation and the university as we 'Build the Future of ASU Together,'" Hylick said. "I am confident Dr. Neal will be a great fit and a significant addition to the staff. I look forward to his interaction with the board, our community and corporate partners, and all other key stakeholders as we continue to strengthen and elevate the ASU Foundation."

Neal has more than two decades of advancement and nonprofit executive leadership experience in higher education. His career spans historically black colleges and universities, technical col-

leges and national nonprofit organizations. Most recently, he served as vice president for university advancement and executive director of the Florida A&M University Foundation, where he restored stability and operational efficiency. Prior to that role, he served as senior vice president at Wiley University in Marshall, Texas, where he helped secure a transformational gift that eliminated educational debt for the Class of 2022.

Neal's professional experience also includes executive leadership roles at LeMoynese Owen College, Georgia Piedmont Technical College, KIPP Charlotte, Bennett College, UNCF, and United Way in

both Central Carolinas and Rome.

Neal is recognized for building high-performing teams, modernizing advancement operations, and cultivating a culture of accountability, transparency, and donor-centered engagement. He has also overseen endowment management and investment governance. His leadership has guided foundations through strategic planning, board development, endowment growth, and operational transformation, focused on student success, institutional resilience and measurable impact.

A native of Memphis, Tenn., a first-generation college graduate and a passionate advo-

cate for educational equity, Neal brings a value-driven approach to philanthropy, grounded in data-informed strategy, collaborative leadership and a deep commitment to expanding opportunity.

"I am honored and energized to join Albany State University as executive director of the ASU Foundation," Neal said. "ASU's mission, values and commitment to student success deeply resonate with me, and I look forward to advancing a culture of philanthropy that strengthens opportunities for every Golden Ram."

Neal holds a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from Jackson State University, an M.S. degree in Public



W. Anthony Neal

Administration from Central Michigan University, and a B.A. degree in Economics from Denison University.

With this appointment, the Albany State University Foundation reinforces its commitment to advancing a culture of philanthropy, strengthening strategic partnerships, and expanding resources that directly support student success and the long-term growth of the university.

## Col. Craig Clemans delivers message at Post 30 Memorial Day Breakfast

### Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

**ALBANY** -- American Legion Post 30 welcomed veterans, families and community members on Memorial Day morning for its annual remembrance breakfast, highlighted by a moving message from Col. Craig Clemans.

During his 28-year career, Clemans has served two combat tours, first in Iraq during "the March Up" with the 1st Marine Division in 2003, then in Afghanistan with the 3d Regimental Combat Team in 2009. He retired in 2023 while assigned to Marine Corps Logistics Command in Albany as the chief of staff. In September 2023, he accepted his current position as director of Command Data and Analytics Office, Marine Corps Logistics Command.

Clemans' remarks set a tone of deep reflection and gratitude as he spoke about the true meaning of the day: honoring

the men and women who gave their lives in service to our nation. He shared heart-felt stories that reminded those in attendance of the courage, sacrifice and unwavering devotion to duty shown by America's fallen heroes. His message encouraged everyone to carry forward their legacy by living with purpose, unity, and gratitude for the freedoms secured at so great a cost.

Attendees described his words as "touching" and "inspiring," as Clemans offered a powerful reminder that Memorial Day is not simply a holiday but a sacred day of remembrance.

The Post 30 Memorial Day Breakfast continues to be a cherished tradition, bringing the community together to honor those who served and to reaffirm the values they fought to protect.

The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 30 members were



Special Photo: American Legion Post 30

Col. Craig Clemans offers remarks during American Legion Post 30's annual Memorial Day Breakfast.

on hand to distribute the Legion's traditional paper poppies. Each poppy was offered as a symbol of remembrance, honoring the brave men and women who sacrificed so much for the country's freedom. Everyone was encouraged to wear a poppy in tribute to our fallen heroes and to keep their memory alive.

For more information on The American Legion or the Auxiliary, contact the Post at (229) 435-5450.

## Southwest Georgia students recognized by colleges, universities

### By Carlton Fletcher

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**Lee University Graduation, Dean's List CLEVELAND, Tenn.** -- Garrett Evan Miller of Albany, GA, graduated Summa Cum Laude with the Bachelor of Science in Music Business, Piano from Lee University during the 196th commencement exercises on May 9, 2026.

Miller was among more than 420 students who received undergraduate and graduate diplomas.

Lee University congratulates students who earned Dean's List honors during the Spring 2026 semester. Dean's List recognition is earned by full-time, undergraduate students with a semester grade point average between 3.7 and 4.00.

Congratulations to these distinguished scholars on earning this academic achievement.

Cohen Kendrick of Albany Garrett Miller of Albany Caroline Orr of Albany Emma Vandenberg of Leesburg

**University of North Georgia Commissioning,**

**President's, Dean's Lists DAHLONEGA** -- In a ceremony held May 12 by the University of North Georgia, 60 graduating cadets were awarded commissions as second lieutenants.

Burton Roberts of Leesburg, GA, commissioned into the Army National Guard, Field Artillery.

University of North Georgia (UNG) President Michael P. Shannon recognized students who achieved a 4.0 GPA during the spring 2026 semester. Students enrolled in 12 or more credit hours in bachelor's degree programs who achieved a 4.0 grade-point average were named to the President's Honor Roll. Students enrolled in associate degree or dual enrollment programs who met the same level of achievement were named to the President's List.

Carter Mallow of Albany (31721) was named to the President's Honor Roll.

Robert Baranko of Leesburg was named to the President's Honor Roll.

Kaylin Hunter of Leesburg was named to the President's Honor Roll.

Ila Smith of Leesburg was named to the President's Honor Roll.

The deans of each of UNG's colleges announced the names of those students who made their respective lists for spring 2026.

Dean's List recognition is achieved by having at least a 3.5 grade-point average, carrying 12 or more credit hours in one semester and having no grade lower than B. Dean's List honorees included: Jacob Hatcher of Albany

Brady Perkins of Albany Harper Coleman of Albany Stevie Lewis of Albany (31701)

Jessie Baer of Albany Robert Waszgis of Camilla Tori Bridges of Leesburg Caley Wiley of Leesburg Anna Arrowood of Leesburg Collier Savelle of Leesburg Taylor Smith of Leesburg Lily Suber of Leesburg Kale Banks of Leesburg Thomas Moye of Pelham Jackson Webb of Smithville

**Troy University**

Chancellor's, Provost Lists

**TROY, Ala.** -- Troy Uni-

versity is proud to announce students who have been named to the Chancellor's List for Term 3 of the 2025-2026 academic year. Full-time undergraduate students who are registered for at least 12 semester hours and who earn a grade point average of 4.0 qualify for the Chancellor's List. Term 3 includes students at TROY's campuses in Dothan and Montgomery, Ala., as well as locations outside of Alabama and online.

Wanda Vaughn of Leesburg

Troy University is proud to

announce students who have been named to the Provost's List for Term 3 of the 2025-2026 academic year. Full-time undergraduate students who are registered for at least 12 semester hours and who have a grade point average of at least 3.65 qualify for the Provost's List. Term 3 includes students at TROY's campuses in Dothan and Montgomery, Ala., along with locations outside of Alabama and online.

Jennifer Mitchell of Dawson (39842)

**Young Harris College Graduation**

**YOUNG HARRIS** -- Graduates from Young Harris College's Class of 2026 walked the stage Saturday, culminating years of education and earning their degrees. Nearly 200 students graduated at Saturday's ceremony on Young Harris College campus.

Commencement capped a week of activity, ranging from the annual Senior Reception to a Baccalaureate Service. The Commencement ceremony, held in the Harp Recreation and Commencement Center, began with the traditional awards given to students recognizing their academic efforts. Reagan Loud was awarded a BS in MARKET.

**Berry College**

**Dean's List, Graduation**

**ROME** -- The Dean's List honors students who posted an academic average of 3.5 or better on a 4.0 scale while carrying a class load of at least 12 hours during the semester.

Brandi Gilford of Albany, GA Rosemarie Goodman of Leesburg, GA

Emma Watson of Sylveston, GA

Berry College recently announced its newest class of graduates for 2026.

Rosemarie Goodman of Leesburg, GA, earned a(n) BS degree in Biology

**Southern New Hampshire University**

**President's, Dean's Lists MANCHESTER, N.H.** --

It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the Spring 2026 President's List. The spring terms run from January to May.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

Heather Smith of Newton William Bennett of Auburn Ashley Kearns of Pelham Patricia Fleuren of Camilla Kamika Willis of Albany Kimbriel Jackson of Albany Alexiana Sims of Albany JonMorgan Harrell of Albany Rachael Hudson of Albany

Tiera Nelson of Albany Carla Harris of Albany Tamere Bell of Albany Corigan Keaton of Albany Alltonese Gray of Albany

It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the Spring 2026 Dean's List. The spring terms run from January to May.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term are named to the Dean's List.

Latoya Grier of Dawson Shaunta Johnson of Albany Letre Smith of Albany Kailah Waiters of Albany Zykeria Jones of Albany Errica Worthy of Albany Dyvonya Walker of Albany

**Piedmont University -- Graduation**

**DEMOREST** -- On Friday, May 8, in two ceremonies, Piedmont University conferred undergraduate degrees to 202 students, including 79 first-generation students, and 105 graduate students, including masters, EdS, and doctorate degrees. The ceremonies were held at the Johnny Mize Athletic Center on the Demorest campus.

Graduates included: Caroline Heard of Newton, GA, who earned a Master of Science in Speech Language Pathology.

Madeline Irvin of Albany, GA, who earned a Bachelor of Science in Forensic Science-Major Field.

## Phoebe Sumter joins Kids Alliance for Better Care

### Staff Reports

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**MACON** -- Mercer University School of Medicine and its Georgia Rural Health Innovation Center, with continued support from Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, are expanding their statewide rural pediatric health initiative for the fourth consecutive year.

The Kids Alliance for Better Care (KidsABC) now includes 28 rural hospitals across the state, including Phoebe Sumter Medical Center in Americus.

The newest hospitals selected to join KidsABC in year four include:

- Appling Healthcare, Appling County

- Dorminy Medical Center, Ben Hill County

- Emanuel Medical Center, Emanuel County

- Memorial Hospital & Manor, Decatur County

- Phoebe Sumter Medical Center, Sumter County

- SGMC Health Lanier, Lanier County

- Union General Hospital, Union County

Launched in February 2023, KidsABC addresses the significant challenges rural hospitals face in delivering pediatric care in their local emergency departments. KidsABC is committed to providing child-friendly equipment, resources and tools, and staff training to support hospitals and staff in delivering effective pediatric care

in their communities.

"Rural hospitals provide excellent care to patients, including children," MUSM Dean Dr. Jean R. Sumner, said in a news release. "The KidsABC program comes alongside these hospitals to expand and strengthen the care they already give. "The staff are dedicated to completing specialized training in pediatric-specific emergency care and enhancing their skillsets, all with the goal of keeping kids close to home whenever possible."

Ensuring these gains are sustainable by expanding the rural pediatric workforce is essential to increasing access to primary care and mental health care for children.

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