



**Perspectives**  
Michael Ferguson II  
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**AMA showcase**  
Exhibits set to open  
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THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 2026

## Albany Police Chief Michael Persley to retire in February after 33-year career

By Alan Mauldin  
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**ALBANY** – After 33 years as a law enforcement officer, Albany Police Chief Michael Persley will be handing in his badge in early 2027.

The veteran lawman's decision was announced during a Tuesday Albany City Commis-

sion work session. City Manager Terrell Jacobs said that Persley had informed him of his decision this week.

"It's time," Persley, who has been chief for 11 1/2 years, told an Albany Herald reporter at the conclusion of the meeting. "It's time to go. You want to do some other things, explore some other

opportunities.

"Chiefs, leaders ... I would say for police chiefs, you've got a season. However long the season is, you've got to continue to improve and develop the officers. That's been my commitment from Day 1."

During his tenure, Persley has introduced several initiatives to the city's public safety

community. In recent years, that has been a conflict resolution center and the pairing of a mental health counselor with an officer to assist individuals who may be having a mental health crisis.

The chief has also exhibited compassion for individuals

See **PERSLEY**, 2A



File Photo  
Albany Police Chief Michael Persley announced his plans Tuesday to retire in February next year.

# Regional catering business finds new home at Warrior Creek Mercantile



Staff Photo: Kathryn Crockett

The Marchbanks family gathers inside Grace's Cafe & Catering at Warrior Creek Mercantile in Sylvester. From left are Winn Marchbanks, Jed Marchbanks, Hannah Marchbanks, ArlieMae Hendley, Flint Hendley and Carole Sholar, whose bakery creations help anchor the family-owned business.

By Kathryn Crockett  
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**SYLVESTER** – When Lee County resident Hannah Marchbanks launched a small catering business from a 300-square-foot kitchen in Smithville in late 2021, she wasn't pursuing a carefully crafted business plan.

She was answering a prayer. For months, Marchbanks said she had been asking God for an opportunity to serve others.

"I just kept praying, 'God, use me as a servant,'" she recalled. "I didn't care what it was. I just wanted to be used to help people."

At Thanksgiving that year, an idea took root. Friends and family had long encouraged her to sell the meals she regularly prepared for gatherings, church events and community functions. Though hesitant at first, but encouraged by her husband, she decided to take a leap of faith.

She set a goal for herself and gave the business until her February birthday to

prove it could succeed.

Instead, it exceeded her expectations within weeks.

What began as a modest catering operation quickly gained momentum. The business outgrew its original kitchen within months and eventually expanded throughout Lee County as demand continued to grow.

From Smithville, Marchbanks moved into a larger commercial kitchen in a leased restaurant space along U.S. Highway 19 in Leesburg, where Grace's Cafe & Catering continued to expand its reach across southwest Georgia. Today, the company serves customers throughout the region and caters events as far away as Jacksonville, Fla., and Dahlonega.

The larger space gave the family an opportunity to experiment with ideas for a future cafe concept while continuing to grow the catering business. Along the way, Marchbanks said she learned valuable lessons and built a

See **CATERING**, 2A

## Albany officials ponder future needs, mull tax hike

By Alan Mauldin  
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**ALBANY** – The days of kicking the can down the road should be a thing of the past, according to Albany City Manager Terrell Jacobs, and as an example he used the city's aging water system.

The city manager made his remarks during a Tuesday Albany City Commission work session in relation to the city's budget, which could require a tax increase for the budget year starting on July 1, although there are other options that could avoid a tax hike but could also prove unpopular.

Last year, the city completed a mandated upgrade of its stormwater and sewage drainage systems, a mandate that

required achieving 80% separation of the two in order to reduce sewage discharges into

the Flint River. That effort came at great expense and was boost-

See **TAX**, 2A



Staff Photo: Alan Mauldin

From left, Albany City Commissioners Chad Warbington, Collette Jenkins and Vilnis Gaines participate in Tuesday's commission work session. The 2026-2027 budget, for which a tax increase was mentioned, was the topic of a public hearing during the meeting.

## Visit Albany launches 'Stay Cool in Albany' summer campaign

Staff Reports  
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**ALBANY** – Visit Albany GA is inviting residents and visitors to beat the south Georgia heat this summer with its new "Stay Cool in Albany" campaign, running through July 31.

The interactive summer campaign encourages participants to visit featured attractions, entertainment venues, and cool treat locations throughout Albany while earning prizes along the way.

Participants may explore 12 participating locations across Albany and earn one "cool point" for each stop visited. To participate, guests must



Special Logo

take a photo featuring themselves and the activity or treat at each location. Once six cool points are earned, participants may submit their photos and contact information through the official online entry form available on the Visit Albany website.

"This campaign is designed to encourage both residents and visitors to explore Albany – in a fun and engaging way during the summer months,"

See **COOL**, 2A

### Periodical — Mail Label

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# Georgia Southwestern, Albany Tech renew partnership to expand transfer opportunities

## Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

**AMERICUS** — Georgia Southwestern State University and Albany Technical College have renewed a memorandum of understanding designed to

create a seamless pathway for students seeking to continue their education from Albany Tech to GSW.

Students who complete an associate's degree at Albany Tech may transfer into select bachelor's degree programs

at GSW, including accounting, information technology, early childhood education and nursing.

"There's power in partnership. When institutions work together, rather than in isolation, we multiply our impact," GSW President Michelle Johnston said. "This partnership allows us to meet students where they are and walk alongside them through their entire educational journey."

Albany Tech President Emmett Griswold emphasized the shared commitment of both institutions to student success and work force development in southwest Georgia.

"This partnership with Georgia Southwestern State Uni-

versity gives Albany Technical College students a stronger bridge from technical education to continued academic and career advancement," Griswold said. "The agreement supports a smoother transfer process and expands opportunities for students in business, information technology, education and nursing to pursue bachelor's degree pathways while building on the foundation they established at Albany Tech."

The renewed agreement builds upon a successful partnership first established in 2017 and reflects both institutions' ongoing commitment to expanding educational opportunities and strengthening the work force throughout southwest Georgia.



Special Photo: GSW

Albany Technical College President Emmett Griswold and Georgia Southwestern State University President Michelle Johnston have renewed a memorandum of understanding designed to create a seamless pathway for students seeking to continue their education from Albany Tech to GSW.



Special Illustration

## From 1A

### PERSLEY

who may run afoul of the law, particularly those battling substance addiction. During a September 2025 drug-awareness event at the Change Center in Albany, Persley shared a personal story of a step-brother whose early death was likely related to drug use.

That step-brother's funeral was held the same week he graduated from the police academy. That experience and his work as a narcotics agent earlier in his career granted Persley a sense of empathy for drug users, who, he said, are victims.

"After being a narcotics agent for about a year, you find out they're the most vulnerable people in the world," he said during that event. "My perception of people who use drugs, it was changing. As my perception changed, it didn't matter your socio-economic status. It didn't matter anything, because anybody can become vulnerable to this. My thinking changed to how we can change things."

That empathy led to the chief encouraging individuals to take advantage of the state's "Good Samaritan" law that allows someone who reports a drug overdose to

avoid prosecution in most instances.

Persley also has sought to understand the reasoning behind the increase in young people turning to gun violence.

With the proliferation of gangs, the department has made use of statistics and crime reports to try and determine what areas are most susceptible to crime. Officers seek out patterns that allow them to utilize available resources in high-crime areas.

The department also focuses on retaliation.

"If there is any kind of gang violence, it's very likely that there will be some form of retaliation," he said during a 2025 Albany Herald interview. "So we increase patrols in areas where gangs are known to hang out."

When he retires on Feb. 26, 2027, Persley, 55, said on Tuesday, he will remain active and looking for ways to improve public safety in the community in some capacity.

"That doesn't mean I'm going to disappear from Albany, Georgia," he said. "There are other things I will be involved in. This is not retire and go just sit in the rocking chair."

"When I turned 50, my prayer was for me to be able to continue serving the community as long as possible."

## From 1A

### TAX

ed by federal grant funding. It also required an extension of a state Environmental Protection Division deadline.

"I think from my analysis of what has transpired over many administrations is the can has been kicked down the road," Jacobs said. "Downtown, the

water main is probably over a hundred years old, or a couple of our lines, that have never been touched."

In previous years the city was able to utilize trust funds and profits from the city's utility operations in order to cover expenses. The city also made use of federal grants from the

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and American Rescue Plan Act, both passed during the administration of Presi-

dent Joe Biden.

The city also was able to cover expenses because a large number of staffing positions went unfilled, particularly in public safety, whose ranks are now filling, removing that cushion that the city enjoyed in the past.

"Those trust funds are gone," Jacobs told commissioners. "In essence, we've got to pay the full cost of running the government. I know it's hard. The days of for whatever reason people

thinking there's free money out there from the federal government (are gone). I know it's tough to hear. That's why people put you in these positions — to make tough decisions."

To modernize aging utility infrastructure, the amount of money the city depends on for general operations will need to be reduced, the city manager said.

"Utilities have to sustain themselves," he said. "They can't be fleeced. They can't be (starved) to the point they can't provide the services."

"There's nothing wrong with transfers. But you can't fleece it to the point where it can't sustain itself."

One option to balance the budget for the 2026-2027 budget year is to increase the property tax millage rate by 1%. Other options are to forego a cost of living adjustment for employees or to reduce services, city CFO Michael Eaton told commissioners.

Staff will provide options to the commission ahead of making final decisions, Jacobs said.

Commissioner Willie Weaver suggested that staff should engage in long-term planning to ensure that the can doesn't get kicked around any longer.

Currently, the staff prepares for contingencies looking five years into the future, something that could be extended to look at a decade in advance, Eaton said in response.

## From 1A

### CATERING

loyal community of customers and supporters.

Those relationships also revealed opportunities to serve families facing hardship, illness or loss.

For Marchbanks, success has never been measured solely by growth. The purpose behind the business is reflected in its name.

"One thing people always ask is where the name 'Grace' comes from," Marchbanks said. "The name represents the Grace of God. Without the grace He has shown me

throughout the years, I would not be where I am today or have been able to provide for my family through this business."

She said she wanted the company to stand for something larger than food.

"I wanted this business to be more than just food," she said. "I wanted it to be a daily reminder of how wonderful God is and how faithful He has been through every season of life."

That philosophy remains woven into every aspect of the business.

Throughout the year, Grace's donates meals to families experiencing hardship, provides food to local ministries and

shelters, and looks for opportunities to support people facing difficult circumstances. This summer alone, Marchbanks said she hopes to provide meals to more than 20 families in need.

"We've been blessed, so we want to bless other people," she said.

For Marchbanks, growth itself is not the goal.

"Our goal is always to grow more so we can give back more," she said. "That's really my underlying goal — to be able to serve others in everything we do."

Earlier this year, Marchbanks took another significant step toward that goal by opening Grace's Cafe & Ca-

tering inside Warrior Creek Mercantile in Sylvester.

The move allowed her to finally pursue a vision she had carried from the beginning: creating a cafe and bakery alongside her thriving catering operation.

"My dream was always a cafe and bakery," she said. "We just weren't in a position to do it before."

The new location offers sandwiches, salads, baked goods and grab-and-go items while serving as a destination for visitors traveling through the area.

"We want it to be somewhere people come not just to eat, but to enjoy being here," she said.

The cafe is continuing to expand its offerings, with breakfast service next on the checklist.

"We're going to be open for breakfast soon," Marchbanks said. "Once we're open for breakfast, we'll be serving breakfast and lunch starting at 6:30 a.m., and we're hoping to meet more members of the community that way, too."

While the cafe is a new chapter, catering remains the backbone of the business. Grace's is expected to cater approximately 75 weddings this year, surpassing last year's total of 63.

The family-centered nature of the business is evident throughout the cafe.

Marchbanks' mother, Carole Sholar, oversees her own enterprise, The Flour Market, within the cafe. The Flour Market produces the specialty baked goods sold alongside the cafe menu. A retired educator, Sholar never envisioned herself running a bakery, but she embraced the challenge after joining her daughter in the venture.

"I've always liked a challenge," Sholar said.

Many of the bakery's most popular offerings were developed through experimentation and years of family cooking traditions. Home-made oatmeal cream pies

have become an unexpected customer favorite, while Scholar's signature "Kissing Cousins" chicken salad and cheese spread have developed loyal followings among customers.

The partnership is the latest chapter in a long history of working together. Mother and daughter previously operated a boutique and have collaborated on numerous projects over the years.

The business has also become a family affair for Marchbanks' children, who help when needed and have grown up witnessing the realities of entrepreneurship firsthand.

"I want them to see what it takes to build something," Marchbanks said. "Maybe one day they'll take it over."

Building that future has required long hours, persistence and a willingness to take risks. Marchbanks credits much of the company's growth to customer service, consistency and relentless marketing efforts.

"This is our livelihood," she said. "You can't just wait for business to come to you."

Hours spent managing social media, networking with brides and maintaining relationships with customers have become just as important as time spent in the kitchen. Yet despite the rapid expansion, Marchbanks remains focused on the values that inspired the business from the beginning.

"Every meal we serve, every wedding we cater, every customer who walks through our doors is something we are truly thankful for," she said. "Grace's Cafe & Catering was built with faith, hard work and a heart for serving others."

Looking around the bustling cafe she now calls home, Marchbanks sees more than a successful business. She sees answered prayers.

And for her, the opportunity to continue serving others remains the greatest blessing of all.

Albany Area Chamber of Commerce

**Albany Motorcars / BMW of Albany**

STAR BUSINESS OF THE WEEK

The Albany Area Chamber of Commerce proudly recognizes Albany Motorcars / BMW of Albany as this week's Star Business of the Week.

With a team of 37 employees, Albany Motorcars is committed to providing exceptional automotive sales and service to customers throughout Albany, Leesburg, Tifton, and the surrounding region. Their knowledgeable staff helps customers navigate everything from new and pre-owned vehicle purchases to financing options and ongoing vehicle maintenance.

In addition to serving Mercedes-Benz and BMW owners, their service department works on a variety of vehicles, including trade-ins, ensuring customers receive reliable automotive care regardless of the make or model they drive.

Through their commitment to customer service, quality workmanship, and community involvement, Albany Motorcars continues to be a trusted automotive resource and valued business partner in Southwest Georgia.

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

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## Georgia protected species list open for nominations

### Staff Reports

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**SOCIAL CIRCLE** — Georgia's list of protected wildlife is being updated. And during June, the state Department of Natural Resources is asking Georgians for their recommendations on native animals and plants to add or remove as part of the first comprehensive changes in 20 years.

Last updated in 2006, the state list includes species protected under the Georgia Endangered Wildlife Act of 1973 or Georgia Wildflower Preservation Act of 1973. These species are considered the ones most in need of conservation. Examples vary from saltmarsh sparrows and gopher tortoises to pink lady's-slipper orchids and monarch butterflies.

Species changes can be nominated at <https://georgiawildlife.com/ProtectedSpeciesList> from June 1-30. After June 30, nominations will be reviewed, the draft list revised as needed and an updated lineup provided for public comment.

# Daily Horoscopes

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** You might learn something that's a game-changer, and you still have a few good above-zero days to implement it before stars sink next week. Career could seem especially important now, trust your intuition.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Always be wise when dealing with any type of guru or leader, many toxic individuals gravitate toward positions of trust. Financial matters could continue to clarify and improve.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Fewer planetary influences in a sector help you blaze your own trail instead of being pushed by the stars. Find the energy you want to exemplify, how that energy shows up in form is then completely unforced.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** You have a couple of weeks more of inner work before you undergo a metaphorical debut. Make the most of this time—plan to be ultimately honed and ready to rock your own world. Connect with someone close.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Time with friends or with a group you belong to could fill your heart with love of community. A last bit of emotional effort could push something significant over the top and into completion.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** A period of career building could continue for a few more weeks before the focus shifts. While you may think you know what someone needs, ask them for specifics rather than assuming what's needed.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** If you are single and dating, beware a tendency toward wishful thinking, power plays or obsession, in you or in dates. Bring knowledge into enough proximity to be able to understand it and use it well.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** Some kind of fake out could happen in your home space today, facts could be unknown or unavailable, someone could try to force

something. Be heads up. Don't let intrusive thoughts rule your mind.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Someone could try to come across as the ultimate authority while actually being a poser, don't let this be you. Putting energy into a close relationship can reap many benefits if the relationship is equitable.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** Stay away from money moves for today at least, facts could be uncertain or hidden, and emotion could sway you too. Focus on clearing your decks of small projects that could be quick to wind up.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Stay away from hair dye, scissors, and tattoo parlors today—an impulse appearance change could become regrettable within only hours. Instead, express your individuality with art, crafting, or music.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** The deeper and more solid your roots, the higher you can stretch your branches. Invest in making the foundational part of your life a strong support, from there every effort becomes easier.

**IF TODAY IS YOUR BIRTHDAY:** June can be a month for clear thinking and clear communication, use the time well. Most of 2026's challenges should already be behind you, the rest of the year should bring less stress. July could be an important month, cash flow looks strong, and you may get a new understanding of the steps along the path toward your dreams. The Universe is likely to step up for you in July, even if at the last moment. Later July could bring a time of unrest or extreme emotions, try to keep yourself grounded and cautious about taking action under strong feelings. Caution should again be deployed in August, when you could be tempted to something that could turn around and bite you, fast. Be thoughtful and measured at that time to avoid self-sabotage. A happy surprise could land late in the month.



**1792** - Captain George Vancouver claims Puget Sound in Washington for Great Britain

**1876** - The Transcontinental Express arrives in San Francisco, 83 hours and 39 minutes after leaving New York City on the First Transcontinental Railroad

**1912** - The State of Massachusetts becomes the first state in the US to set a minimum wage

**1919** - The US Congress approves the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution, which guarantees suffrage to women

**1942** - The Battle of Midway begins

**1944** - The US Navy captures the German submarine U-505

**1989** - The Tiananmen Square protests end in Beijing with at least 241 dead.

## CALENDAR OF OBSERVANCES

- Audacity to Hope Day
- Do-Dah Day
- Hug Your Cat Day
- International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression
- National Cheese Day
- National Cognac Day
- National Safe Day
- Old Maid's Day
- Shopping Cart Day

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## QUOTE OF THE DAY

"In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends."

**Martin Luther King Jr.,**  
civil rights leader (1929-1968)

## 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

There's nothing wrong with Democrats reminding voters of all the problems created by Trump's Republican party. However, they need to tell people some positive things they would do if elected instead of focusing solely on Trump. Voters have known what he is for years. They need to give reasons to vote Democratic instead of telling them why they don't need to vote Republican. That Man Without a Family

A squawker comments that Democrats have no idea how to handle the economy. Please type into your search bar. Who controls the White House, the House, the Senate and, unfortunately, the Supreme Court. Now, which party has no idea how to govern or handle the economy? Republicans do, however, know how to enrich themselves. Google the growth in net worth the past 18 months of Trump, his family, each cabinet member, close staff members and Republican leadership. Deal with the truth, not Fox Not Really News propaganda.

Under Trump's economic policies the Wall Street crowd is making a lot of money. The Main Street MAGA voters? They are not doing good at all. Something to think about.

If I hear another group talking about children not eating during the summer when the school is not feeding them, I am going to scream. Georgia elected not to send out the \$120 checks that have been mailed to mothers in the past. I saw an interview with a mother saying her grocery bill has gone up with the kids out of school. I feel sure she was getting food stamps every month. If she does not use them to feed her children, she should go to jail.

Carlton makes some folks smile, while he drives others to drink.

It would be wonderful to have virtual tours of every piece of Georgia history. But Albany taxpayers' wallets can't afford pet projects. First, we have to address the city's dangerous roadways and daily drag racing, multiple dangerous drug motels, a growing population of homeless based in by other cities, police leadership that insists on being soft on crime, and corrupt commissioners who yell at each other.

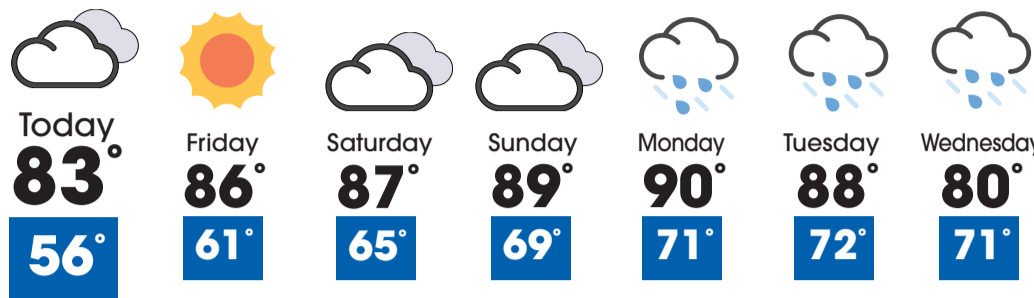
Not a bad list, Fletcher, but what about The Highwaymen, more Willie and Kris Kristoferson, more Hank and some Hank Jr. and the king of them all, George Strait?

What happened to the hundred million dollars that was authorized by Congress to fix the Albany sewer system? The mayor and some of the commissioners said they would be responsible for it and that was almost seven years ago. Now this problem is worse.

The State of Isreal has manipulated our Republican genius president into getting the U.S. into a war he can not figure out how to get out of.

A fundamental challenge for Dougherty and Albany taxpayers is with our elected officials. Commissioners and judges fear fixing waste of tax revenue around government housing, quiet quitting by city and county employees, and special interest pet projects because they suspect it will cost them votes from those who steal from taxpayers. These people are corrupt and immoral and technology will root them out in coming years.

## Weather Forecast



## Daily Bridge Club

### A pat on the back

By Frank Stewart  
Tribune Content Agency

The human body is a wondrous thing: If you pat it on the back, its head will swell.

When I watched today's deal in my

<b>NORTH</b>			
♠ K Q 10 5			
♥ J 10			
♦ A K Q 2			
♣ 7 6 5			
<b>WEST</b>		<b>EAST</b>	
♠ A 4		♠ 9 8 7 3	
♥ K 4		♥ 7 6 3	
♦ 10 9 8 4 3		♦ 6	
♣ K 10 4 2		♣ Q J 9 8 3	
<b>SOUTH</b>			
♠ J 6 2			
♥ A Q 9 8 5 2			
♦ J 7 5			
♣ A			
North	East	South	West
1 ♠	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
4 ♥	All Pass		
Opening lead - ♣ 2			
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Frank Stewart

"You drew the inference," Rose praised Louie. "Well done."

I could see Louie's head swell with pride.

South could and should have led the A-Q of trumps instead of finessing; he succumbed to the lure of overtricks.

## DAILY QUESTION

**You hold:** S K Q 10 5 H J 10 D A K Q 2 C 7 6 5. Your partner opens one spade, you respond 2NT (a conventional forcing raise) and he bids three diamonds. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** As part of using 2NT as a forcing raise, partner's three diamonds shows a singleton diamond. The idea is to let you judge whether you have useful or "wasted" honors. You would rather hold KQ105, A10, A862, Q75, but your high diamonds will be winners. Cue-bid four diamonds. North dealer N-S vulnerable

## Advice Columnist

### Sister's boyfriend is terrible influence on nephew

By Eric Thomas  
Tribune Content Agency

**Dear Eric:** My sister divorced her husband over three years ago and had the man she had been having an affair with move into her married home roughly a year after the divorce.

This man swears in front of my nephew. He's made comments about hitting my sister if she did or said something he'd disliked. He constantly makes belittling or offensive comments.

I'm deeply concerned about the negative impact my nephew's toxic and narcissistic mother has had on him.

It's exasperating to talk to my sister as it usually ends up in a screaming match when things don't go her way. My mother is worse and anything I say, I'm either villainized or completely dismissed. My mother backs my sister 110 percent and anyone who stands in her path will be demonized, including my father.

Currently my father wants to evict this man from the house (my father bought it for my sister and her then-husband but it's still in my father's name). I'm worried where all this will lead and the impact it will have on the family dynamic, more importantly my nephew.

I just need advice on how to proceed as I feel like this toxic family dynamic is likely to implode at some point.

- Family Peace

**Dear Family:** If you fear your nephew is in danger, you need to contact Child Protective Services. I don't write this lightly, but if the threat of abuse is present, or if he is being mistreated in other ways, it's necessary to get support. Taking a step back, if your

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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nephew is safe but nevertheless in an environment with people who are making unhealthy life choices, his relationship will be really important as he'll need external support and role models. Invest your energies there, rather than in trying to debate with your mother or inserting yourself into the conflict between your father and this man. There's a lot of tension here; there's a lot of unhappiness here. You can't change all of it, but you can be a steady and positive presence for your nephew.

**Dear Eric:** I am 64 years old and I have a wonderful son and daughter-in-law. They have twin boys, four months old and my 2-year-old beautiful autistic grandson.

I worked in management in the corporate world for many years. As my children married and moved into their own home, I provided them many things. Appliances, a car, help with the down payment. They have always been very appreciative. They have never asked me for anything; I have always offered. We have a beautiful relationship.

I retired early so I could babysit my 2-year-old grandson. I started when he was four months old. I cut down my bills greatly so I could do this. I live in a tiny home on the kids' property so we can have our separate lives.

The problem is, watching their children is very taxing. I really have no life. They've adjusted their schedule, so I only watch the children seven hours a day instead of 12, but it's still too much. I have five years before these children go to school, and I feel so trapped.

They cannot afford daycare



Eric Thomas

and even if they could we don't want the children in daycare. They have no other relatives that can help. I've chosen to do this. I'm just not sure what to do to have some sort of life beyond my family. I'm so exhausted all the time.

What should I do?  
- Exhausted Grandmother

**Dear Grandmother:** You've sacrificed and given a lot. It sounds like you were happy to do so, but it's still important that it's said. It's also important to acknowledge that help happily given can sometimes still be burdensome.

To that end, talk to your son and daughter-in-law about what's going on with you and enlist them in helping to come up with a plan that works for everyone. It's absolutely OK to say, "I changed my life so that I could help; I still want to help, but it's not sustainable for me to keep helping in the way that I have been." And then talk to them about what an ideal situation would look like for you and ask to brainstorm together how that can be achieved.

The solution may involve options that aren't their first choice, like a day or two in daycare per week, but are still healthy for the kids. That's OK. Right now, it sounds like you don't have any choice (or at least that's the way you feel). This isn't sustainable long term. You don't have to hide the reality of their lives from them. You're a part of their lives and it will empower them and you to tell them what's going on before it becomes a crisis that threatens the whole arrangement.

## The Albany Herald

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# THE ALBANY HERALD

## Perspectives

The Albany  
**HERALD**  
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**Carlton Fletcher**  
EDITOR

— Georgia Trust for —  
**LOCAL NEWS**

**TODAY'S  
BIBLE  
VERSE**

*"For I know that my redeemer liveth,  
and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth."*  
**Job 19:25**

**COLUMNIST ■ MICHAEL FERGUSON II**

## The black vote is not monolithic: Culture, gender and common ground in Georgia

Black America has never been one-dimensional. We are rural and urban, working class and professional, church-rooted and culturally independent. We are conservative in some traditions and progressive in some demands. We are shaped by survival, but we are not limited to suffering. We are also shaped by faith, family, education, military service, entrepreneurship, music, land, labor, and the deep desire to be respected as full citizens.

That is why any serious conversation about the black vote in Georgia must begin with an honest truth: The black vote is not monolithic; it is not without meaning. There are shared concerns that connect black voters from southwest Georgia to metro Atlanta, but there are also regional differences that political leaders ignore at their own peril.

In southwest Georgia, black politics is often personal. People know your family, your church, your work history, and whether you showed up when the cameras were gone. The political culture is tied to land, legacy, courthouse access, school boards, county commissions, utility bills, local jobs, hospitals, roads and whether young people see a future worth staying for.

In metro Atlanta, black politics operates on a larger and more diverse stage. Atlanta's black community remains powerful, but it now shares space with rapid growth, corporate influence, higher education, immigration, suburban expansion and shifting racial demographics. Atlanta politics often speaks the language of branding, coalition-building, media visibility and regional economics.

Southwest Georgia politics often speaks the language of survival, relationship, memory and direct community impact. Neither culture is superior. But they are different.

The danger comes when one region assumes it speaks for all black people in Georgia. Atlanta may be the capital, but it is not the whole culture. Southwest Georgia may carry deep civil rights memory, but it cannot afford to ignore the changing political and economic realities shaping the rest of the state.

The path forward is not to pretend these differences do not exist. The path forward is to name them honestly and build around shared interests. Black voters in southwest Georgia and north Georgia can meet around basic but powerful questions: Can our children afford to stay here? Can black men and women build families with dignity? Can our elders retire safely? Can our schools prepare students for real opportunity? Can our communities attract industry without losing identity? Can public safety exist without over-policing? Can black leadership represent the whole community, not just one gender, one class, one clique or one political circle?

That is where common ground begins, with agenda over identity alone. This brings us to another sensitive but necessary conversation: gender and representation. The rise of black women on the ballot should not be viewed as a threat to black men. Black women have earned political space through decades of organizing, voting, fundraising, educating, church leadership, and community labor.

In many communities, black women kept civic life alive when institutions failed, families struggled and political machines ignored the people they claimed to serve. That leadership deserves

respect. But representation also must be accountable. If ballots become overwhelmingly female, the question should not be whether black women should lead. They should. The better question is whether the political agenda being offered fully addresses the needs of the entire black family, including black men, especially younger black men between 18 and 40.

Black male interests cannot be reduced to symbolism, slogans or last-minute campaign outreach. Younger black men are asking practical questions: Where are the jobs? Where is the path to ownership? Where is the mental health support? Where is the fatherhood policy? Where is the protection from violence? Where is the re-entry plan? Where is the vocational training? Where is the space to be heard without being blamed, dismissed or politically managed?

Black men between 18 and 40 are not politically apathetic by nature. Many are politically unconvinced. They have seen campaigns come to barber-shops, churches, fraternities, cookouts, and community events asking for votes. But they have not always seen policy follow-up that speaks directly to their lives. Some are fathers. Some are veterans. Some are entrepreneurs. Some are returning citizens. Some are college graduates. Some are working two jobs. Some are emotionally exhausted and economically boxed in.

If political leadership wants their participation, it must move beyond scolding and start listening. The question is not simply, "Why won't black men vote?" The deeper question is, "What have political institutions done to convince black men that their vote produces power, protection and possibility?"

Southwest Georgia cannot simply import Atlanta's political language and expect it to fit. Rural and small-city black communities need leadership that understands agriculture, hospitals, transportation, broadband, utility costs, school closures, poverty, land loss and the quiet drain of young talent leaving home because opportunity is somewhere else.

At the same time, southwest Georgia can learn from Atlanta's infrastructure: coalition-building, media strategy, fundraising, policy institutions, and regional economic development. And Atlanta can learn from southwest Georgia's rootedness, relational organizing, church networks, civil-rights memory and community accountability.

The common ground is achieved when Atlanta stops looking down on rural Georgia, and rural Georgia stops assuming Atlanta has lost its soul. Both need each other.

The true culture of black America is not found in one city, one gender, one party, one church, or one generation. It is found in the continuing struggle to turn survival into power and power into policy. In Georgia, that means southwest Georgia and metro Atlanta must talk to each other, not past each other.

The future of Black politics in Georgia will not be secured by identity alone. It will be secured by an agenda that protects the black family, respects regional differences and builds common ground around the real issues of life: work, safety, dignity, ownership, health, education, and hope.

That is where culture becomes power. And that is where the vote becomes more than a ritual; it becomes a tool for renewal.



FERGUSON

**COLUMNIST ■ MARC HYDEN**

## Unraveling Democrats' mysterious judicial election losses

The stars recently seemed aligned for Georgia Democrats to accomplish something truly extraordinary: unseating two Republican-appointed Georgia Supreme Court justices. It has been over a century since a challenger defeated an incumbent justice, and this became the Democrats' top electoral priority. They even dumped a whopping \$8 million into supporting Jen Jordan's quest to defeat Justice Sarah Hawkins Warren and Miracle Rankin's effort to capture Justice Charlie Bethel's seat.



HYDEN

Unlike most races, Georgia Supreme Court and appellate elections are decided in the state's primaries, and turnout suggested that a Democratic victory was practically a fait accompli. More than 1 million Georgians pulled Democratic ballots, compared to around 940,000 pulling Republican ballots. When the votes were tallied, however, Warren trounced Jordan 59.33% to 40.67% and Bethel eked out a victory over Rankin by 51.12% to 48.88%.

How did Democrats manage to snatch defeat out of the jaws of victory? That is a question political scientists will mull for years to come, but a few theories are already circulating in the news and on social media that could explain the unexpected turn of events.

To begin with, judicial races are nonpartisan in Georgia and appear the same on all ballots, regardless of party affiliation. So when many Georgians requested a Democratic ballot and saw that Warren and Bethel were incumbents, a considerable number of people may have assumed that they were incumbent Democrats, given that they were listed on a Democratic ballot. This may have mistakenly induced them to cast their vote for the two sitting justices. Perhaps a more thorough public education campaign would have changed this.

Another possible factor also relates to the nonpartisan nature of judicial races. When Democrats made Jordan and Rankin's campaigns their top priority, they, along with the candidates, made them decidedly partisan. Activists attacked Warren and Bethel as "MAGA Republicans," former president Barack Obama endorsed the challengers, and Jordan and Rankin promised to restore abortion privileges, which is a key plank in the Democratic platform.

On top of this, Jordan is a former Democratic state senator and former Democratic nominee for attorney general. There is nothing wrong with that, but it is hard to claim the mantle of a nonpartisan under these condi-

tions. This could have rankled an untold number of voters who are accustomed to the nonpartisan nature of judicial races – thereby driving them to vote for the incumbents.

There was also the issue of an official complaint lodged against the challengers, which loomed over their campaigns.

"In statements that became publicly available [before the election, the Judicial Qualifications Commission] committee said it 'reasonably believes' that Jordan and Rankin violated the judicial code by publicly endorsing one another and promising to restore abortion rights," The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported.

The commission forbids judges and judicial candidates from endorsing others for public office or committing to legal outcomes that are likely to come before the court. Regardless of the merits of the ruling, this could not have done much to help Jordan or Rankin.

Beyond this, it is certainly possible that many Democrats were pleased enough with the incumbents to support them. Combined, this may explain why the Democratic-backed candidates fell short, and according to Georgia State University professor Michael Fix, the outcome may have been predictable.

"It's absolutely unsurprising, and the reason is completely structural," he said. "Many voters don't have information about the high-profile races, let alone judicial races. They don't think it impacts them, so why would they care?"

"Nonpartisan elections are the worst kinds of elections. If the average voter has low information about the races, what do you have if you have nothing else when you go to vote? You see the R or D by their name. And when you take that away, you take away the one thing about the candidate most people know."

Considering this, the real question is not why Democrats fell short, but why Jordan far underperformed Rankin. That is a mystery. Perhaps Democrats found her opposition more favorable than Rankin's, but that is pure speculation.

Even though this was a nonpartisan election, Republicans have widely celebrated the result as a win, but they should be wary. Democrats flooded the polls at higher rates than Republicans. If they manage to do this in November, then Democrats could do something much more shocking than toppling incumbent judges: They could undermine Republican control of a historically red state.

**COLUMNIST ■ DICK YARBROUGH**

## A reminder of the privilege and responsibility for these words

As if this job isn't hard enough already, trying to get nouns and verbs to agree (nouns and verbs can be very disagreeable, trust me on that), I have learned that this column is a subject for regular dissection by a group of discerning ladies in Dalton. Uh-oh.

Ann Viamonte wrote to tell me that an assemblage convenes weekly at the Oakwood Restaurant in town and includes a reading and discussion of my column. She even sent me a picture of the group gathered around the table and under a giant painting of Uga who, if you are from another planet or California (same difference), is the Bulldog of the Georgia Bulldogs. To quote Humphrey Bogart in Casablanca, "I think this is the beginning of a beautiful friendship."

The Oakwood is owned and operated by state Rep. Kasey Carpenter, the man responsible for getting cornbread designated as our state's Official State Bread by the Legislature. My hero.

Admittedly, they don't get around to my column, Ms. Viamonte says, until they have discussed their children and grandchildren, their aches and pains, who is in or out of the hospital or, sadly, who is not around anymore. First things first.

Her note was nice, appreciated, humbling – yes, I can be humble, but I try not to make it a habit – but most importantly, it was a reminder of a privilege I have been given and the responsibility that goes with it.

I have been at the opinion business for 28 years now. I wrote a one-time column for one publication, shellacking the city of Atlanta, its inept government, a timid business community and a local media in over their heads regarding

their respective roles in 1996 Centennial Olympic Games. The Games were great. That bunch was not, and I said so terms.

Elliott Brack, a veteran newsman, thought should be syndicated and another man, Bill Shipp, some 3,000 locally, Elliott Brack week, and with- ment, we might this conversation Elliott. Rest in



YARBROUGH

And a conversation is what this is. When I first began this effort, my wife gave me one order and one piece of advice. The order: Do not put her name in the column. She preferred a low profile. So I didn't. But she didn't say anything about me calling her "The Woman Who Shares My Name," which I did. A lot. She should have been more specific.

The advice: Don't write about politics all the time. Write about things that readers would be interested in.

Her advice was sound, as always. A couple of weeks ago, I wrote a column about junk drawers. It generated a large amount of reader response. It seems that most every law-abiding citizen has a junk drawer, and many of you shared with me the contents of yours. Several chided me for not mentioning that any self-respecting junk drawer also contains keys. Keys to who knows what. But who would dare throw away keys? That's just not done.

The best antidote in this matter is humor. The humor may be barbed, Will Rogers-style, which a lot of politicians don't find funny. Sometimes it is self-deprecating. I take this job very seriously, but not myself. There are too many people in this business that do.

So thank you Ann, Judy, Connie, Rita, Anita, Loretta, Betty, Judy, Alice and JoAnn at the Oakwood Restaurant in Dalton for reminding me why I do this. And thank you Rep. Carpenter for giving cornbread the respect it deserves. Now if you will excuse me, I must go. It seems a couple of nouns and verbs are being very disagreeable.



# What to watch

## THURSDAY

June 4, 2026

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

### MLB Baseball: Pittsburgh at Houston

FS1, 8 p.m. Live

Brandon Lowe and the Pittsburgh Pirates are at Houston's Daikin Park for the finale of a three-game series against Yordan Álvarez and the Astros.

### Scrabble

The CW, 8 p.m.

Three players use their strong wordplay and take the spotlight in the final round to play for a \$10,000 prize in the new episode "Scrabble Hands." Craig Ferguson hosts.

### The Americas

NBC, beginning at 8 p.m.

On Thursday nights this summer, NBC presents encores of last year's groundbreaking nature documentary series *The Americas*, now enhanced with fun facts displayed throughout the episodes. Tonight features "Mexico" and "The Frozen North."

### Trivial Pursuit

The CW, 9 p.m.

A social media advertising director battles the defending champ in the six iconic Trivial Pursuit categories to try to win \$20,000 in the new episode "Queen of the Pop Up." LeVar Burton hosts.



BBC STUDIOS

### Beat Bobby Flay

Food Network, 9 p.m.

Katie Lee Biegel and comedian and podcaster Paul Scheer want to call cut on Bobby Flay and get chefs Rashida Holmes and Dave White their close-ups in the new episode "Lights! Camera! Distraction!"

### Killer Investigations:

A&E, 10 p.m.

In the new episode, farmer Ryan Cooper is found shot in his armchair in the middle of the night in a peaceful Iowa town. His wife becomes the center of a tense investigation filled with secrets and explosive revelations.

## CATCH A CLASSIC

### Blues in the Movies

TCM, beginning at 8 p.m.

Do not be blue for tonight's TCM lineup, featuring the stories of one of the most influential music genres — blues. **St. Louis Blues** (1958) counts us off with the life story and rise to fame of W.C. Handy, the

unofficial father of the blues. W.C. Handy is played by the accomplished jazz artist Nat King Cole. The dramatization of this story is only amplified by musical performances, including those from Ella Fitzgerald. Skipping to the next track, TCM airs 1980's **The Blues Brothers** (pictured) and **Leadbelly** (1976), which follows the influential life of blues singer Huddie Ledbetter (aka Leadbelly). **Blues in the Night** (1941) and **Pete Kelly's Blues** (1955) conclude the acts of the night.



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# What to watch

## FRIDAY

June 5, 2026

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

### Belle Collective

OWN, 8 p.m. ■

#### New Episodes

The Belles are back, reclaiming Friday nights with all-new episodes. Kerri Paul, Lateshia Pearson, Latrice Rogers, Marie Hamilton-Abston, Selena Johnson and Tandra Cherie return as the dynamic group of powerhouse entrepreneurs redefining what it means to be a modern Southern belle, balancing ambition, family and friendship in Jackson, Mississippi. Kerri's decision to collaborate with Latrice on an influencer event sparks questions from Marie about where her allegiance stands, especially as longtime friendships begin to feel the strain.

### My Lottery Dream Home

HGTV, 9 p.m.

In the new episode "BFF Lottery," after winning \$3 million, a woman and her best friend are ready to search for a place in Rochester, New York. She wants to find her daughter a dream home, so David Bromstad is also bringing along his bestie to help the duo find the perfect place.

### Amadeus

Starz, 9 p.m. ■

#### Series Finale

This adaptation of Peter Shaffer's acclaimed 1979 play following the rivalry between musical genius Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (Will Sharpe) and envious court composer Antonio Salieri (Paul Bettany) in 1780s Vienna concludes.



'Amadeus'

ADRIENN SZABO

## CATCH A CLASSIC

### Special Theme: Summer of Darkness

TCM, beginning at 8 p.m.

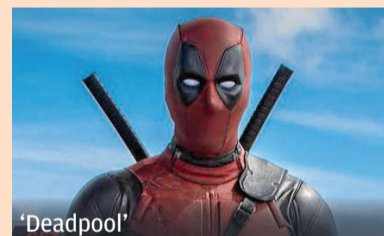
Noir and crime meet new heights in tonight's TCM marathon. Kicking off the themed marathon is **The Maltese Falcon** (1941) starring Humphrey Bogart as the private detective Sam Spade, who takes on a mysterious case from a secretive femme fatale (Mary Astor). After a murder shakes up the hunt for a priceless statuette, Sam gets entangled in a web of trouble and crime. The film received three Academy Award nominations. Following is 1944's unforgettable **Double Indemnity** (pictured), where lonely insurance salesman Walter Neff (Fred MacMurray) gets roped into a scheme of murder and insurance fraud when he falls for the scheming Phyllis Dietrichson, played by



PARAMOUNT PICTURES

Barbara Stanwyck. With seven Academy Award nominations, the film remains a classic in the noir genre. Closing out the night is the thriller **Detour** (1945), in which pianist Al Roberts' (Tom Neal) life turns upside down when he hitchhikes to California to live with his girlfriend, landing him alone with the dead body of his driver after a freak accident, when he assumes the late driver's identity.

## MOVIES YOU'LL LOVE



'Deadpool'

FOX

**Rudy** (1993, Drama) Sean Astin, Ned Beatty **MGM, 6:05 p.m.**

**Finding Nemo** (2003, Children) Albert Brooks, Ellen DeGeneres **Freeform, 6:30 p.m.**

**Dirty Harry** (1971, Action) Clint Eastwood, Harry Guardino **Sundance, 7:15 p.m.**

**Her Husband's Double Life** (2026, Suspense) Tanisha Thammavongsa, Justin Nurse **LMN, 8 p.m.**

**Greenland 2: Migration** (2026, Action) Gerard Butler, Morena Baccarin **HBO, 8:20 p.m.**

**Carmen: A Hip Hopera** (2001, Musical) Beyoncé Knowles, Mekhi Phifer **BET, 9 p.m.**

**Deadpool** (2016, Action) Ryan Reynolds, Morena Baccarin **FX, 9 p.m.**

**Resident Evil: Apocalypse** (2004, Horror) Milla Jovovich, Sienna Guillory **SYFY, 9:30 p.m.**

**Good Burger** (1997, Comedy) Kel Mitchell, Kenan Thompson **VH1, 10 p.m.**

**National Treasure: Book of Secrets** (2007, Action) Nicolas Cage, Jon Voight **AMC, 10 p.m.**

**Night Patrol** (2025, Horror) Jermaine Fowler, Justin Long **IFC, 10:30 p.m.**

**The Wolverine** (2013, Action) Hugh Jackman, Hiroyuki Sanada **FX, 11:30 p.m.**

From the editors of  
TV Weekly and tvinsider.com



# TV - What to watch



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**CLOSE TO HOME** John McPherson



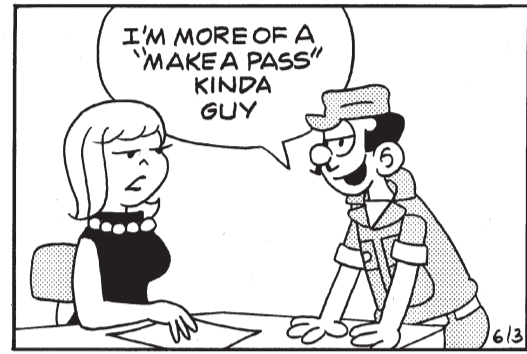
"When it's full, you just light the fuse and... FOOSH! It's out the window and into the woods where it will quickly decompose!"

**THE FAMILY CIRCUS** Bill Keane



"PJ and I are putting on a play: 'Snow White and the Dwarf.'"

**BEETLE BAILEY** Mort & Greg Walker



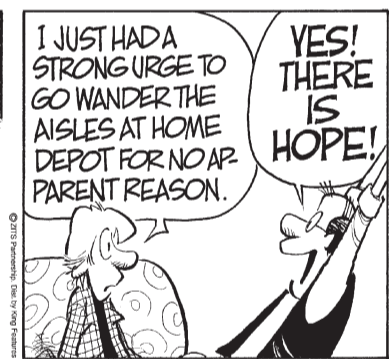
**BLONDIE** Dean Young & John Marshall



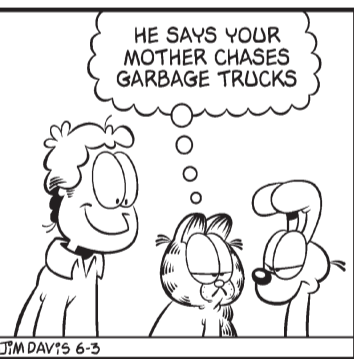
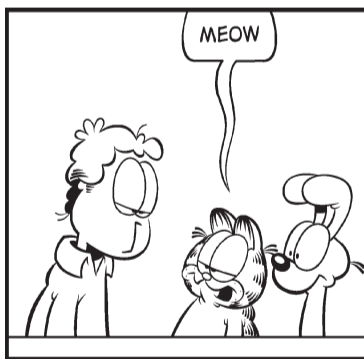
**THE BORN LOSER** Art & Chip Sansom



**ZITS** Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



**GARFIELD** Jim Davis

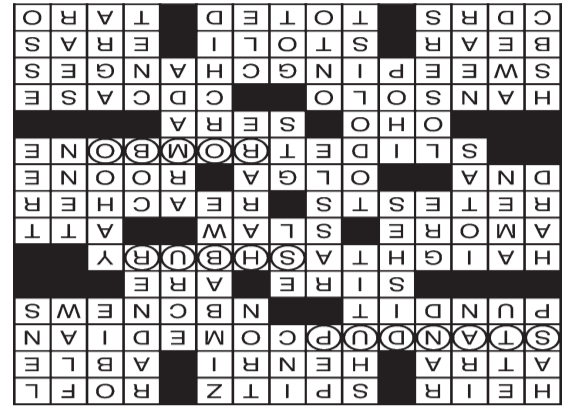


**Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle**

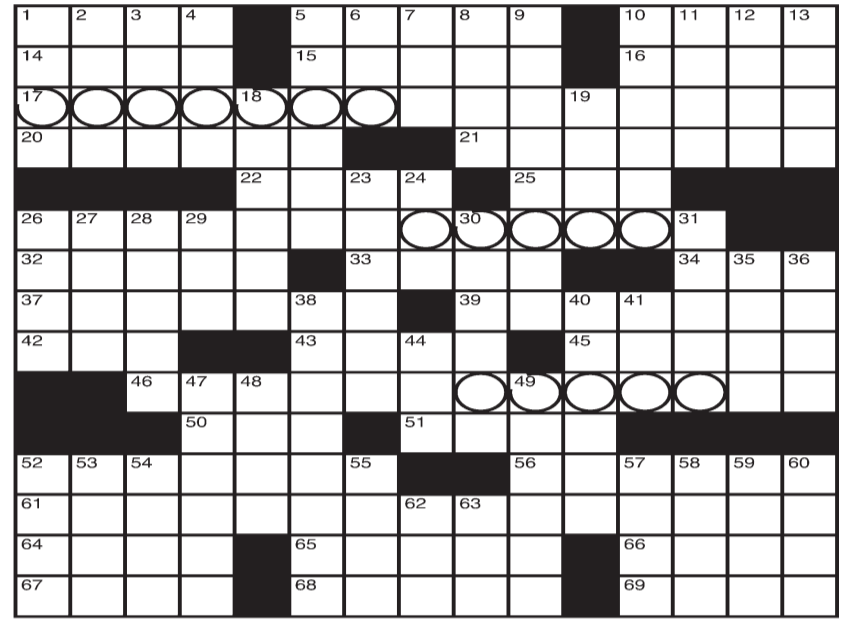
Edited by Patti Varol

- ACROSS**
- 1 Will beneficiary
  - 5 Thick-furred dog whose tail curls over its back
  - 10 "hahahahaha"
  - 14 Gillette razor
  - 15 "Yellow Odalisque" painter Matisse
  - 16 Adept
  - 17 One skilled in routine deliveries?
  - 20 Many a Sunday talk show panelist
  - 21 "Today" producer
  - 22 Foal's father
  - 25 "Rules \_\_\_ rules"
  - 26 San Francisco counterculture center of the 1960s
  - 32 Love, in Verona
  - 33 Cabbage side
  - 34 Fig. in a QB's completion percentage
  - 37 Second chances for students
  - 39 Lee Child protagonist
  - 42 Genetic material
  - 43 Gymnast Korbut
  - 45 TV executive Arledge
  - 46 Instrument that makes the sound of adults talking in "Peanuts" cartoons
  - 50 Smug cry
  - 51 Blood bank fluids
  - 52 Kylo Ren's father in "Star Wars"
  - 56 Jewel box
  - 61 Overhauls that have lasting effects, or what can be found in this puzzle's circled letters
  - 64 Paddington, but not Waterloo
  - 65 Grey Goose rival
  - 66 History book sections
  - 67 USN officers
  - 68 Schleppe
  - 69 Starchy root in poi
- DOWN**
- 1 Strongbox fastener
  - 2 Words said to Marcus Junius Brutus
  - 3 Modern Persia
  - 4 Pretoria currency
  - 5 "Quit yapping!"
  - 6 Cheer team feeling
  - 7 Company abbr.
  - 8 Jumbo suffix
  - 9 Country between the Zambezi and Limpopo rivers
  - 10 "It's Always Something" memoirist Gilda
  - 11 Theater honor
  - 12 Fault
  - 13 Camera part
  - 18 Sink accumulation
  - 19 Sandy shade
  - 23 Do a bit of grappin' subj.
  - 24 Night school subj.
  - 26 Like some cider
  - 27 Blessing response
  - 28 Bitty bits
  - 29 Pre-MBA hurdle
  - 30 Capital of 9-Down
  - 31 "Hot diggity dog!"
  - 35 Miss. neighbor
  - 36 Cypress or cedar
  - 38 Task manager?
  - 40 Ocean fleet
  - 41 Corn core
  - 44 Some classic muscle cars
  - 47 Total failures
  - 48 Waffle House rival
  - 49 Dragon's mouth, e.g.
  - 52 U.K.-based bank
  - 53 Wowed
  - 54 Close by
  - 55 "I think you're \_\_\_ something"
  - 57 Tech trends site
  - 58 Indian tourist city with a mausoleum
  - 59 Step in a scallops recipe
  - 60 Petro-Canada rival
  - 62 Realized
  - 63 Guardians, on a scoreboard

**TODAY'S SOLUTION:**



06/03/26



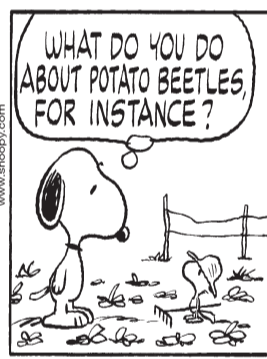
By Shmuel Schmill ©2026 Tribune Content Agency, LLC

06/03/26

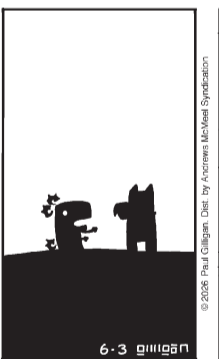
**HAGAR THE HORRIBLE** Chris Browne



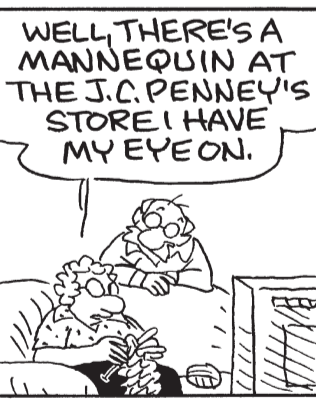
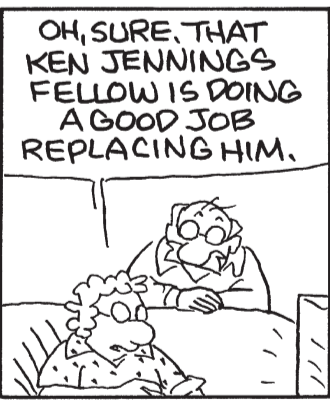
**PEANUTS** Charles M. Schulz



**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.

**LIFE'S ACQUISITIONS**

Solution: 5 letters

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

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6/3

Adult, Advice, Athlete, Bonus, Born, Cars, Children, Effort, Exams, Experience, Family, Goals, Graduation, Happy, Health, Heirloom, Hobby, Home, Hope, Humble, Income, Independent, Learn, License, Love, Marriage, Memory, Mentor, Owner, Parents, Pregnancy, Promotion, Read, Retirement, Ribbon, Skills, Teach, Travel, Trophy, Vacation, Value

**TODAY'S ANSWER:** Faith

**SUDOKU**

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

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

**WHATZIT?**

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

SEVER  
 SLEEP

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

**TODAY'S WHATZIT SOLUTION:**

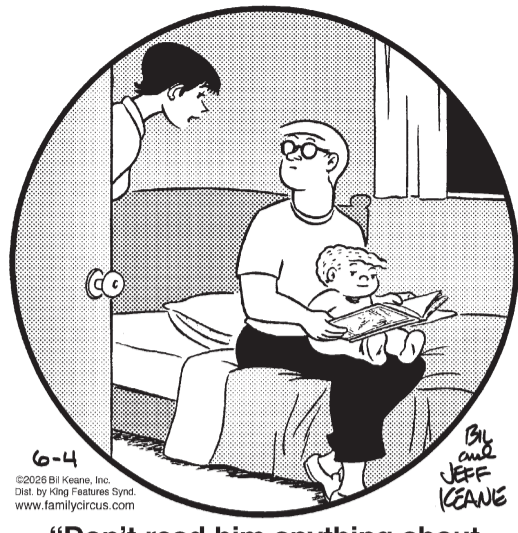
A cut above the rest

**CLOSE TO HOME** John McPherson



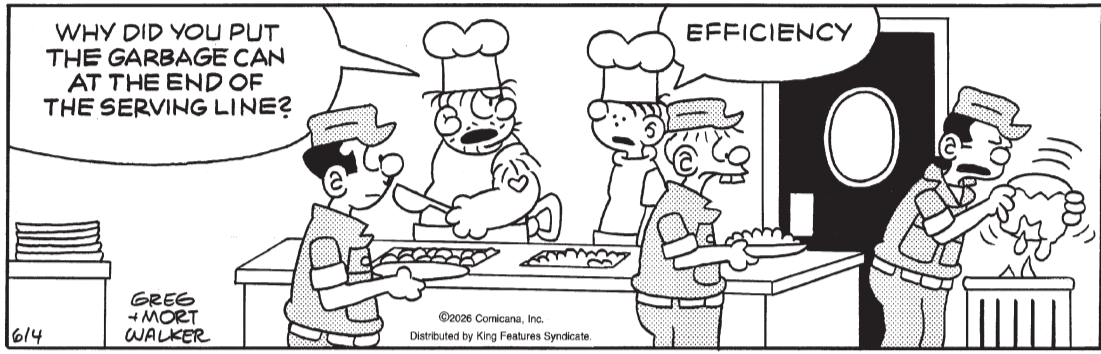
"Mom! It's me, Zoey, from 35 years in the future! I'm 42 now, and people think I'm 60! Slather me every day with SPF 30!"

**THE FAMILY CIRCUS** Bill Keane

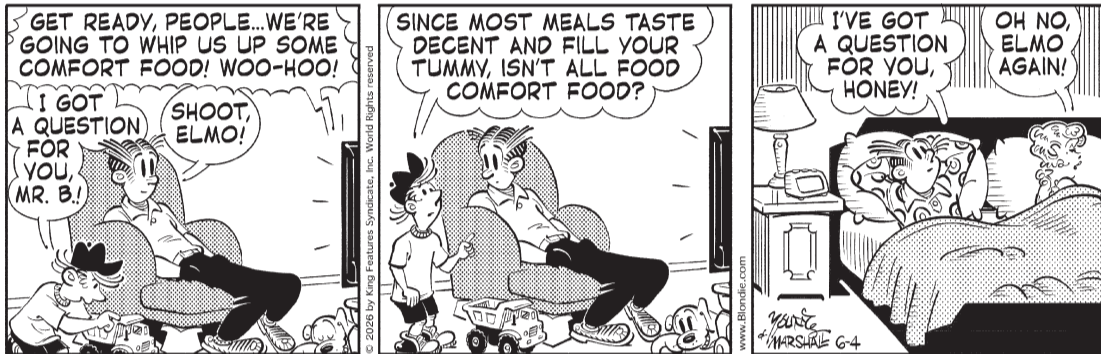


"Don't read him anything about food unless YOU'D like to handle room service."

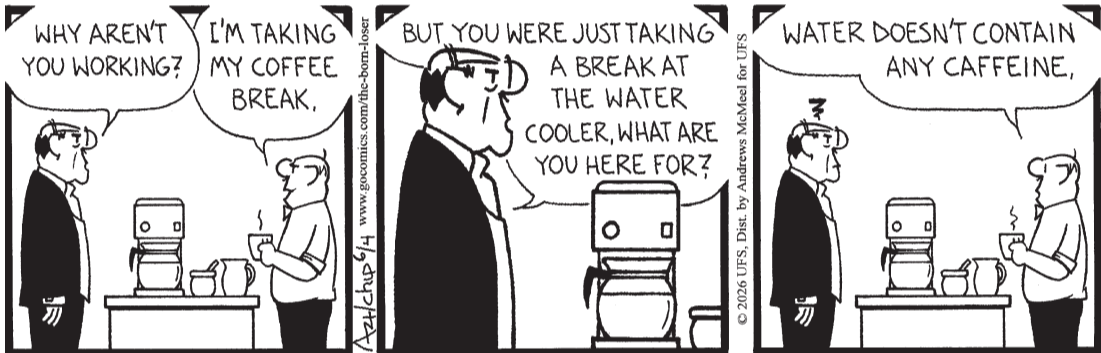
**BEETLE BAILEY** Mort & Greg Walker



**BLONDIE** Dean Young & John Marshall



**THE BORN LOSER** Art & Chip Sansom



**CROSSWORD**

- ACROSS**
- 1 Spigot
  - 4 Players in a play
  - 8 Skips a class
  - 12 Historic time
  - 13 Fever
  - 14 Old world buffalo
  - 15 — Force One
  - 16 Business abbr.
  - 17 Fuzzy fluff
  - 18 Tie down with a rope
  - 20 Limited
  - 22 Tell a fib
  - 23 Winter mo.
  - 24 Place of refuge
  - 28 Hard work
  - 31 Villain in Shakespeare
  - 32 Certain party mem.
  - 34 Cogito ergo —
  - 36 School org.
  - 37 Role in "The Matrix"
- DOWN**
- 1 "— With Mussolini"

**TODAY'S SOLUTION:**

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

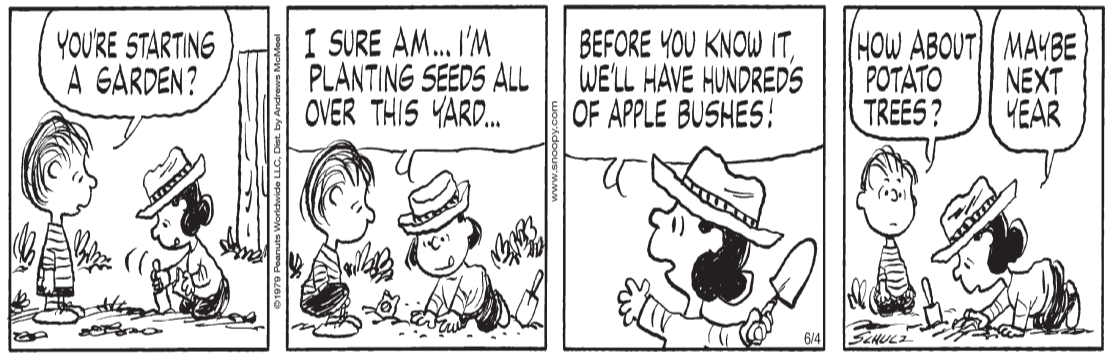
- 2 Pomegranate seed cover
- 3 Attorney's aide
- 4 Prestige
- 5 In the past
- 6 Ride a wave
- 7 Lukewarm
- 8 Printed cotton fabric
- 9 Module
- 10 Moderate (with "down")
- 11 Perched
- 19 Farm tower
- 21 Snood
- 24 Drink
- 25 Millinery
- 26 Sea eagle (Var.)
- 27 Submerged coral ridge
- 29 Solitude
- 30 Stringed instrument
- 33 Luau fare
- 35 Impair
- 38 Baseless, as a rumor
- 40 Esoteric
- 41 Acquire quickly
- 43 Goes
- 45 Dummy
- 47 Mob VIP
- 48 Singer Tori —
- 49 Body and —
- 51 Edison's middle name
- 52 Mire
- 54 Provide with weapons
- 56 Throw high

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14		
15				16				17		
18			19			20		21		
22						23				
24	25			26	27		28		29	30
31				32	33			34		35
36				37				38		
39			40	41		42		43		
44				45				46		
47	48			49				50		51
52				53	54			55		56
57				58				59		
60				61				62		

**HAGAR THE HORRIBLE** Chris Browne



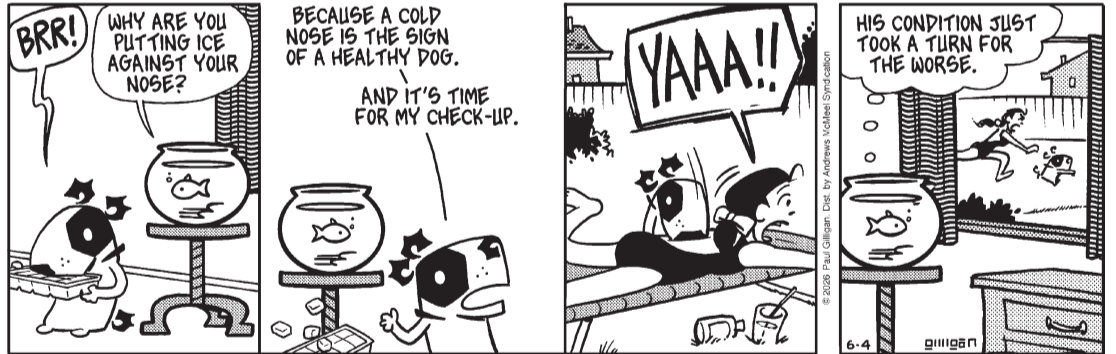
**PEANUTS** Charles M. Schulz



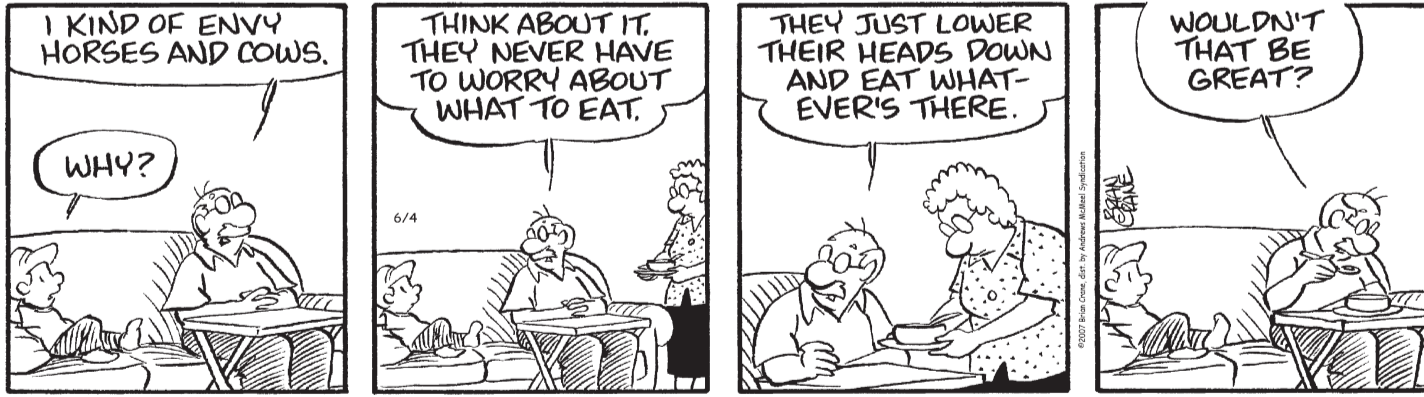
**GARFIELD** Jim Davis



**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.

**JELLY ROLL (MUSICIAN)** Solution: 9 letters

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

**SUDOKU**

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

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

**WHATZIT?**

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

**ARTIFICIAL**

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

**TODAY'S SUDOKU SOLUTION:**

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

**TODAY'S WHATZIT SOLUTION:** Artificial intelligence

# Opening reception for Albany Museum of Art summer exhibits Thursday

## Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

**ALBANY** — Five new exhibitions at the Albany Museum of Art, led by Vitus Shell: “Power of Sight,” the Louisiana artist’s first solo exhibition in Georgia, will be celebrated at an opening reception on Thursday at the museum. The reception starts at 5:30 p.m.

The summer lineup includes two exhibitions that focus on Albany’s history: “Sense of Place: Green Book Sites in Albany, GA,” and the multimedia “Moments in the Good Life City: An Oral History of Albany, GA.” Works by the two winning artists in the AMA’s second annual open call for artists also are on view: “The Middle Way,” photography by Rylan Steele of Columbus, and “The House of a Bird,” works by Jessica Ambadipudi of Leesburg.

“Each of these exhibitions illuminate how art allows us to discover who we are,” AMA Executive Director Andrew James Wulf said. “From portraits to photographs, personal memory to regional history, there is an opportunity to view our community, our region and ourselves through many prisms. Taken together, they will make for a powerful experience for our visitors.”

Artists Shell, Steele, and Ambadipudi are expected to attend the reception, as are local residents who were interviewed for “Moments in

the Good Life City” and who provided information about Green Book sites for “Sense of Place.” The reception is free for AMA donors at the Reciprocal Level or higher. Tickets are \$10 for AMA Artist Guild donors and \$15 for the general public. For the RSVP link, visit [www.albanymuseum.com/event/summer-2026-reception/](http://www.albanymuseum.com/event/summer-2026-reception/).

“Vitus Shell: Power of Sight” in the Haley Gallery is the first solo presentation in Georgia for Shell. In the larger-than-life works in his “Gold Everything Series,” the subjects of his paintings are shrouded in and surrounded by classic golden motifs and filigree, as in historic European portraiture.

“His work focuses on the weight of contemporary black portraiture and the idea of sightedness,” Curator of African Collections and African Diasporic Art Sidney Pettice said.

With the nation’s semiquincentennial fast approaching, “Sense of Place” in the East Gallery connects Albany’s history with visual art, highlighting Albany locations listed in The Negro Motorist Green Book from 1937 to 1945

“The Green Book” was an invaluable tool for black travelers in the United States, especially in the South during the Jim Crow era,” Pettice said. “Named for its author, Victor Hugo Green, the book

provided motorists with lists of safe gas stations, rest areas, restaurants, hotels, and tourist homes.”

Community leader and photographer Adrian Jenkins photographed the Albany locations for the exhibition.

“Moments in the Good Life City” presents an oral history project created through a partnership between the Albany Museum of Art and the South Georgia Archives at the Thronateeska Heritage Center.

Billye Sands, of BILLYAY Films, filmed the interviews with Patricia Chatmon Perryman, Pamela Chatmon Washington, Michael Harper, Angelia Gibson Jones and Adrian Jenkins. Those interviews are presented on-screen in the Hodges Gallery, and the recordings will be permanently housed in the South Georgia Archives.

In summer 2025, the AMA issued its second call for artists to apply for a juried solo exhibition this summer at the museum. The first call in 2024-25 was for Georgia artists, but the 2025-26 call was expanded to include Alabama.

“We had originally planned to show one artist’s work, but because we had unique circumstances with our exhibition calendar, we were able to award exhibitions to two artists,” Director of Curatorial Affairs Katie Dillard said.



Special Photo: AMA

“Vitus Shell: Power of Sight” is one of the five new summer exhibitions on view through Aug 29 at the Albany Museum of Art. The opening reception for the exhibitions is at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday at the museum’s 311 Meadowlark Drive location.

Selected were Jessica Ambadipudi, of Leesburg and Rylan Steele of Columbus.

Ambadipudi’s work in “The Home of Birds” is on view in the West Gallery. A native of India, she began in animation before transitioning into illustration and visual storytelling. Her move to the U.S. in pursuit of her MFA at the Savannah College of Art and Design led her to address homesickness and what home really is through the symbolism of stars and birds, the latter migratory creatures that create homes at any location.

Steele’s work is on view in

“The Middle Way” in the McCormack Gallery. A photographer and associate professor of photography at Columbus State University, Steele was inspired by a rereading of “To Kill a Mockingbird” to tell the story of childhood and the pivotal parts of growing up by photographing his son, Owen, over the past nine years, showing his evolution from a child to a teenager. Steele and Owen are collaborators in this body of work, with the documentation of the series constructed from their conversations.

“While both of the artists are from Georgia, we had a

strong response from Alabama artists,” Dillard said. “When we issue our third call this summer, we plan to expand further and include Florida artists. Through this open call exhibition, we aim to bring the art of the South to the foreground by uplifting Southern artists and ensuring their stories are recognized as vital contributions to the larger landscape of American fine art.”

The five exhibitions will continue through Aug 29. AMA galleries are open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays. Admission is free for everyone.

## Area students recognized by colleges, universities

By Carlton Fletcher

carlton.fletcher@albanyherald.com

### Georgia State University – President’s List

**ATLANTA** -- To be eligible for the President’s List, degree-seeking students must have earned a GPA of at least 4.0 for a minimum of nine semester hours of academic credit taken at Georgia State during the fall or spring term with no incompletes for the semester. Eligible students must have a minimum GPA of 2.0 for all classes taken at Georgia State.

Students from southwest Georgia qualifying for the honor include

Chantis Billings of Leesburg  
Tamira Collins of Albany  
Camryn Foyt of Leesburg  
Emedelia Garcia-Romero of Albany

Claude Geer of Albany  
Annie Ho of Leesburg  
Suntrell Mitchell of Albany  
Wa’Naeshia Phillips of Albany

Kassiel Robinson of Albany  
Madelin Vasquez of Albany  
**Jacksonville State University -- Dean’s List**

**JACKSONVILLE, Ala.** -- More than 1,200 students have been named to the Dean’s List for their outstanding academic performance at Jacksonville State University in spring 2026, including Zemira Webb of Warwick.

### Georgia College and State University – President’s, Dean’s Lists

**MILLEDGEVILLE** -- Georgia College & State University recognizes its students from the College of Arts & Sciences for making the President’s List for the spring 2026 term, including, from southwest Georgia:

Luke Bergrab of Albany  
Caroline Mei Montgomery of Leesburg

Mary Piper of Albany  
Emma Sinderson

Chad Oosterveen of Albany and Sarah Barnhart of Leesburg were named to the spring 2026 Dean’s List for the J. Whitney Bunting College of Business & Technology and the College of Arts & Sciences, respectively, at Georgia College and State University.

To earn distinction on the dean’s list, undergraduate students must achieve a minimum 3.5 semester GPA while completing at least 12 hours of coursework.

### University of North Georgia -- Graduation

**DAHLONEGA** -- For the spring 2026 semester, the University of North Georgia awarded more than 1,700 degrees and certificates to graduates. Among the graduates were:

Jessie Baer of Albany, Bachelor of Science degree in Ele-

mentary & Special Education; Mckenzie Darrow of Albany, Bachelor of Science degree in Kinesiology with a Health & Fitness Concentration;

Kevin Jackson of Leesburg, Doctorate in Nursing Practice degree on the Nursing Executive Track;

Stevie Lewis of Albany, Bachelor of Science degree in Kinesiology with a Health & Fitness Concentration;

Burton Roberts of Leesburg, Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Marketing and a Certificate in Military Leadership;

Stephen Taylor of Leesburg, Bachelor of Business Administration in Information Systems.

### Piedmont University Graduation

**DEMOREST** -- Piedmont University recently 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, who earned a Master of Science degree in Speech Language Pathology;

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

## ArcelorMittal Building Solutions to establish headquarters in Macon

### Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

**ATLANTA**— ArcelorMittal Building Solutions will establish its North American headquarters and a new manufacturing facility in Macon-Bibb County. The initial investment will bring roughly \$57 million and up to 70 new jobs to the community, with plans for an additional \$50 million in investment and as many as 70 more jobs over the next several years.

“As Georgia continues to break economic records, ArcelorMittal Building Solutions’ new manufacturing facility comes at the right time to help meet growing demand across the state,” Gov. Brian Kemp said. “Their decision to establish the North American headquarters in Macon-Bibb is also further proof that Georgia is the best place for business and opportunity, well beyond our state borders.”

ArcelorMittal Building Solutions designs and manufactures high-performance building envelope systems used to insulate and protect warehouses, factories, data centers and commercial buildings. Its insulated panels combine structural strength, thermal efficiency, and fast installation, helping customers reduce construction time and energy consumption. ArcelorMittal Building Solutions serves a broad range of construction markets through more than 50 manufacturing and office locations worldwide.

The new operation will build on ArcelorMittal’s longstanding presence in the United States, which includes world-class steel-making, finishing, manufacturing, research and



Pat Wilson

development, and sales/support locations that employ more than 3,200 people across nine states.

“This investment in Macon marks the launch of ArcelorMittal Building Solutions in North America,” Jean Christophe Kennel, CEO of ArcelorMittal Building Solutions, said. “We see strong and sustained demand for high-performance building solutions, driven by growth in logistics, manufacturing, and data center infrastructure.

“We are bringing advanced insulated panel manufacturing closer to our customers, with a focus on speed, reliability and consistent quality. The facility will operate with state-of-the-art production technology and support a broad range of building applications across the region. We selected Macon for its workforce, industrial base, and the strong support from local and state partners.”

The new ArcelorMittal Building Solutions headquarters and manufacturing operation, which will also include a new training facility, will be located at the Airport South site in Macon. Construction is expected to begin in the second half of 2026,

with operations targeted to commence in the second half of 2027, subject to customary permitting and approvals. The company plans to hire for roles in production, logistics, management, and sales. Interested individuals can learn more about working at ArcelorMittal at [buildingsolutions-us.arcelormittal.com/en](http://buildingsolutions-us.arcelormittal.com/en).

“We are truly building a community where people and businesses can come together, and that shows in our growth, our ready work force, and our sense of place that attracts businesses to put down roots here,” Macon Mayor Lester Miller said. “These 140 jobs aren’t just numbers; they are real opportunities for people and families to earn strong wages and have a better future. This is exactly the kind of growth we’re working to deliver, and we’re proud to welcome it to Macon.”

Statewide Project Manager Kimberlyn Daniel represented the Georgia Department of Economic Development on this competitive project in partnership with the Macon-Bibb County Industrial Authority, Georgia EMC and Georgia Quick Start.

“Georgia continues to attract international companies seeking to establish strategic operations in North America, supported by our skilled workforce, global connectivity and access to key markets,” GDEd Commissioner Pat Wilson said. “We are excited to welcome ArcelorMittal Building Solutions’ North American headquarters and advanced manufacturing operations to Macon-Bibb County, further strengthening Georgia’s position as a leader in advanced manufacturing and international investment.”

## City of Arlington Budget Adoption

The 2026-2027 Budget Adoption will be held Thursday, June 18, 2026, at 7:00 pm at the Jimmie C Harpe 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).



Special Photo: Georgia Tech athletics

Georgia Tech's Drew Burrell is greeted after belting a two-run home run in the third inning Monday against Oklahoma at Russ Chandler Stadium in Atlanta. The former Houston County standout helped spark a comeback that gave the Yellow Jackets a four-run lead before the Sooners rallied for an 8-7 victory in 10 innings to win the NCAA Atlanta Regional.

## Sooners stun Georgia Tech to end historic run

By Joe Whitfield  
Sports Editor

ATLANTA — For six innings Monday afternoon, Georgia Tech looked every bit like the team that earned the No. 2 national seed in the NCAA Tournament.

For the final four, Oklahoma looked like a team that simply refused to go away.

And when it finally ended, it ended suddenly.

Dayton Tockey led off the bottom of the 10th inning with a towering home run to center field, lifting Oklahoma to an 8-7 victory over Georgia Tech in the winner-take-all championship game of the NCAA Atlanta Regional at Russ Chandler Stadium.

Just like that, a historic season was over.

The Yellow Jackets finished 50-11, the winningest 61-game start in program history and one of the most prolific offensive teams college baseball has ever seen. But instead of celebrating a trip to the Super Regional round for the first time since 2006, Tech was left watching Oklahoma celebrate on its home field.

The Sooners (39-20) advance to face Kansas in the Super Regional round.

"It's hard right now," one could almost hear throughout a stunned Russ Chandler Stadium, where Georgia Tech appeared firmly in control for much of the afternoon.

After falling behind 3-0 in the first inning, the Yellow Jackets responded with the kind of offensive firepower that carried them all season.

Drew Burrell ignited the comeback

with a two-run homer in the third inning. Parker Brosius tied the game with a solo blast in the fifth, and Caleb Daniel followed moments later by sending another ball over the wall to give Tech a 4-3 lead.

An inning later, the Yellow Jackets appeared to seize complete control.

Alex Hernandez started the rally with a walk, Kent Schmidt followed with a single and Tech took advantage of an Oklahoma error to score three runs. Brosius drove in one with a groundout, Daniel added an RBI single and Carson Kerce delivered another run-scoring hit as the Jackets stretched the lead to 7-3.

At that point, the crowd of 4,000-plus could almost envision a Super Regional berth.

See **SOONERS**, 10A



Staff Photo: Joe Whitfield

Intensity was high Monday as Pelham's Lajardan Jenkins, left, and Chineil Tillman work against Amaad Jones Jr. during the Hornets' first summer workout under new head coach Mykel Edwards. Pelham heads to Tallahassee, Fla., for team camp this weekend and later will compete at the HoopSeen Summer Jam in Atlanta.

## Pelham's Edwards gets first look

By Joe Whitfield  
Sports Editor

PELHAM — The first basketball practice of the summer wasn't really about basketball.

It was about a new beginning.

Just weeks after being named Pelham High School's boys basketball coach, Mykel Edwards stepped onto the floor of the Hornets' Nest on Monday and got his first extended look at the players he hopes can help elevate the program.

What he saw left him encouraged.

"I had seen them play on film from last year," Edwards said. "But today they looked more eager, more excited to play."

That energy filled the gym as 25 players participated in the Hornets' first summer workout following the GHSA's annual dead week.

For Edwards, a longtime assistant coach at Lee County, Monday was less about installing plays and more about establishing a culture and getting to know his players.

One player who immediately stood out was rising senior Anthony Battle, a 6-foot-7 center who could become a key piece of Pelham's success this season.

Edwards was impressed not only by Battle's play, but by the leadership he displayed throughout the workout.

"I was really happy to see Anthony Battle step up and show leadership," Edwards said. "His vocal support of his teammates and helping get players in the right spot was good to see."

Battle's emergence as a leader could be important for a Pelham team that returns much of last season's roster. The Hornets finished 7-18 a year ago, but they did so with a young team that featured only one senior.

Now those players return older and more experienced, while adjusting to the ex-

pectations of a new coach.

One challenge Edwards faces is that many of his players are also key contributors on the football team.

"We have to share a lot of our guys with the football team, so we will be working around that," Edwards said.

Regardless of who is available on a given day, Edwards already knows the identity he wants his team to embrace.

Defense will come first.

"I love slam dunks and layups, but I'm a defensive-minded coach," Edwards said. "We are going to play strong defense. If we get good defense and get the stop, that will allow us to run and get those baskets."

The coming weeks will provide plenty of opportunities to begin putting that philosophy into action.

Pelham's June schedule is packed with practices, camps and summer competition. The Hornets will travel to Florida A&M University this weekend for a team camp before spending much of the month on the road.

Summer games are scheduled in Columbus, Bainbridge, Ashburn, Thomasville and Leesburg, giving Edwards and his staff opportunities to evaluate players while continuing to install their system.

The month will conclude with a trip to the HoopSeen Summer Finale in Atlanta, one of the state's premier summer basketball events.

Edwards knows next season won't be determined in June. Championships aren't won during summer workouts.

Still, after one afternoon in the Hornets' Nest, there were signs that something positive is taking shape.

A new coach. A veteran centerpiece in Battle. A gym full of eager players.

For Pelham basketball, Monday felt like the first step toward building something better.



Special Photo: Kameron Taylor

Georgia's Tre Phelps begins his home-run trot after a two-run homer against Liberty in the NCAA Athens Regional. Phelps was ejected following the play and will miss Saturday's Super Regional opener against Mississippi State. Georgia maintained he was waving to family members, not taunting Liberty players.

## Bulldogs advance as Phelps' ejection sparks debate

Media Reports

ATHENS, Ga. — Georgia's path to Omaha now runs through a familiar opponent.

The Bulldogs will host Mississippi State in an NCAA Super Regional beginning Saturday at Foley Field, with the winner advancing to the College World Series. First pitch for Game 1 is set for 11 a.m. Saturday, followed by Game 2 at noon Sunday. If necessary, a deciding third game will be played Monday.

The matchup reunites two SEC rivals who have already played four tightly contested games this season.

Georgia swept Mississippi State in Starkville in April and later beat the Bulldogs 5-3 in the SEC Tournament quarterfinals. The four games were decided by a combined eight runs.

"You just knew it was going

to be a heavyweight fight," Georgia coach Wes Johnson said after the SEC Tournament meeting. "It was going to take 15 rounds to get it done."

The stakes are even higher this time.

Georgia is seeking its first College World Series appearance since 2008, while Mississippi State is trying to return to Omaha for the first time since winning the national championship in 2021.

Both teams arrive with momentum.

Mississippi State rolled through the Starkville Regional, outscoring Cincinnati, Louisiana and Lipscomb by a combined 39-11. The Bulldogs scored at least 10 runs in all three games and clinched the regional title with a 19-5 victory over Louisiana.

Georgia was equally impressive in Athens, going 3-0

while defeating Long Island, Boston College and Liberty. The Bulldogs outscored Long Island and Liberty by a combined 30-5 before finishing off Liberty 6-1 in Sunday's regional championship game.

Sophomore left-hander Caden Aoki led the way in the clincher, striking out a career-high 11 batters over six innings.

The decisive moment came in the sixth inning. After Ryan Black was hit by a pitch, Tre Phelps launched a two-run home run over the left-field wall to give Georgia a 2-1 lead.

The celebration quickly turned controversial.

Phelps was ejected during his home-run trot, and Johnson was later tossed while arguing the call. Georgia never lost control, however, as Michael O'Shaughnessy added a home run in the eighth inning and Zach Brown closed

out the final three innings.

The ejection carries added significance because Phelps will miss Game 1 of the Super Regional.

One of Georgia's top offensive threats, Phelps enters the weekend batting .370 with 19 home runs and 57 RBIs. O'Shaughnessy, who replaced him Sunday and also has 18 home runs this season, is expected to fill the vacancy.

Georgia has overcome plenty this season on its way to winning the SEC regular-season championship and earning the No. 3 national seed.

Now the Bulldogs are just two wins away from ending an 18-year trip back to college baseball's biggest stage.

Standing in their way is a Mississippi State team that knows them well — and has another chance to change the ending.

## Gauntlet awaits: Three area teams face toughest schedules in Georgia

By Joe Whitfield  
Sports Editor

If scheduling tough opponents is the best way to prepare for a championship run, Lee County, Worth County and Crisp County should be among the most battle-tested teams in Georgia by the time November arrives.

According to rankings released this week by ITG Next, all three Southwest Georgia programs own schedules ranked among the 10 toughest in the state for the 2026 season. Lee County checks in at No. 3, Worth County is No. 6 and Crisp County rounds

out the list at No. 10.

The rankings were based on opponents' records from last season, playoff success, state championships and returning talent.

Not surprisingly, Lee County's schedule earned the highest ranking among area teams.

The Trojans have become one of Georgia's premier football programs under coach Dean Fabrizio, but that success comes with a challenge.

"First thing, it's really hard for us to get people to play," Fabrizio said. "No one seems to want to play us. It would be nice if some of the teams right around us would play,

but none of them are willing. Our kids and community like to play big games and big atmospheres. And we like to challenge ourselves. We're excited about the team we have this year and can't wait for the season to come."

Lee County's opening month alone would test almost any program in the state.

The Trojans open against Hapeville Charter, which reached the Class 2A state championship game last season, before hosting Miami Carol City of Florida and traveling to Sequoyah. Then comes Colquitt County, one of Georgia's most successful Class



File Photo

Lee County coach Dean Fabrizio has guided the Trojans into one of Georgia's premier football programs. According to ITG Next, Lee County will face the state's third-toughest schedule this fall.

7A programs over the past two decades.

The schedule only gets tougher.

See **SCHEDULES**, 10A

## Schwellenbach targets return before season ends

By Theo DeRosa  
Braves.com

With Chris Sale and Spencer Strider at the top, Bryce Elder enjoying a breakout year and Grant Holmes and Martín Pérez having solid seasons, the Braves' rotation has been one of the best in the Majors.

And there's a chance it could get even better for the season's stretch run.

Right-hander Spencer Schwellenbach, whose promising 2025 was derailed by an elbow fracture in late June,

was cleared to begin throwing in May and is targeting a late-season return.

"We were just waiting for the bone to fully heal. Got the green light [in early May] to start going, and just kind of working through the progressions now with throwing at 75 feet," Schwellenbach told The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. "Everything feels really good and just trying to keep on building from there."

Schwellenbach joined the Braves for last weekend's se-

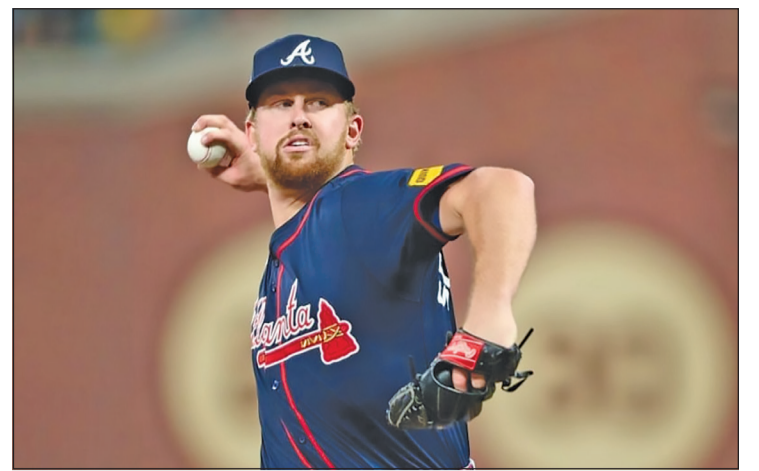
ries in Cincinnati, a relatively short trip from his Saginaw, Mich., hometown. After undergoing surgery in February to remove bone spurs from his elbow, he's hoping to make it back by the end of 2026.

"Honestly, I spent the last 11 months asking about timelines: 'Hey, if everything goes well, what's it gonna look like for me?' And now I'm just kind of like, 'Hey, what's tomorrow look like?'" he told The AJC. "I'm trying to be as present as I can, and as long as I can keep stacking good days, then I think

we'll have a good chance to be back this year. That's the goal."

If so, it would be big news for a Braves club with the best record in MLB at 40-20. Schwellenbach was one of the top starters in the National League in 2025 before his injury, posting a 3.09 ERA in 17 starts and striking out 108 in 110 2/3 innings.

Atlanta's second-round Draft pick in 2021 out of Nebraska -- where he primarily played shortstop -- Schwellenbach made his debut in 2024, posting a 3.35 ERA in 21 starts.



Special Photo: Braves.com

Atlanta Braves pitcher Spencer Schwellenbach is progressing through his recovery from an elbow injury and hopes to return to the rotation later this season. Schwellenbach was one of Atlanta's top starters before being sidelined in June 2025.

## Bulldogs reel in four commitments

By Joe Whitfield  
Sports Editor

ATHENS — Kirby Smart's recruiting machine kicked into overdrive this weekend.

Georgia landed commitments from four prospects in less than 24 hours, including a priority in-state linebacker, one of the nation's top offensive tackle prospects, its first wide receiver pledge in the Class of 2027 and a fast-rising edge rusher from metro Atlanta.

The flurry of commitments pushed the Bulldogs' 2027 recruiting class to 11 commitments and continued the momentum generated by a busy weekend of official visits in Athens.

The biggest addition may have come Sunday night when McEachern linebacker Joakim Gouda announced his commitment to Georgia over Texas, Florida and Auburn.

The 6-foot-2, 225-pound linebacker had been one of Georgia's top defensive priorities for months. Though other schools made strong pushes late in the process, Gouda said his relationship with defensive coordinator Glenn Schumann and the Bulldogs' track record of developing linebackers ultimately made the difference.

"It's the relationship I built with the whole staff, especially Coach Schumann," Gouda told 247Sports. "He got to know my family on a personal level."

Gouda said Georgia's ability to consistently develop elite defenders and send them to the NFL played a major role in his decision.

"What made me feel comfortable is he didn't only do it once," Gouda said. "He's done it back-to-back-to-back yearly."

Georgia also strengthened the foundation of its future offensive line by securing a commitment from massive Mississippi offensive tackle DJ Dotson.

The 6-foot-7, 330-pound prospect from Oak Grove High School committed following his official visit to Athens, choosing the Bulldogs over Ole Miss, LSU, Georgia Tech and numerous other programs.

Dotson, whose father Damar Dotson enjoyed an 11-year NFL career with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Denver Broncos, cited Georgia's recent success developing offensive linemen as a key factor in his decision. "The production in Georgia in the past years, especially in my position, has been more than any school and has been amazing," Dotson told Dawgs247.

The Bulldogs also secured a commitment from one of their top receiver targets when Mount Vernon Presbyterian standout Taurean Rawlins announced his pledge.

Rawlins became Georgia's first wide receiver commitment in the 2027 class after choosing the Bulldogs over Ohio State, Indiana and Arkansas.

The 6-foot, 180-pound receiver said he knew for months that Georgia was where he wanted to play, with his conviction growing after attending spring practice.

"I had seen everything I



File Photo

Georgia coach Kirby Smart and the Bulldogs added four commitments after a big recruiting weekend in Athens, but Georgia is still not among the leaders in the rankings for the Class of 2027.

needed to see," Rawlins told 247Sports. "I knew I wanted to be there from that moment."

Rawlins, who is coached by former Georgia great Terrence Edwards, said the official visit simply confirmed what he already believed. "The visit was just the cherry on top for me," he said.

Georgia coaches reportedly discussed using Rawlins in a role similar to former Bulldog standout Ladd McCoinkey, now one of the NFL's rising young receivers.

The recruiting surge continued Monday when Lovejoy edge rusher Olayiwola "Gideon" Taiwo announced his commitment.

Taiwo originally planned to continue taking visits before making a decision. Instead, the 6-foot-3, 225-pound prospect called Georgia's coaches after his official visit and informed them he was ready to commit.

Georgia outside linebackers coach Larry Knight played a significant role in that decision, while conversations with Smart helped convince Taiwo that Georgia's focus extended beyond football.

"Coach Kirby Smart, talking with him, made me realize how serious Georgia is about life after football," Taiwo told 247Sports. "If you go to Georgia, you'll get a chance at the NFL, but if you don't, they'll make sure you have something after that."

Taiwo said Georgia's developmental plan for him as an edge defender also stood out. "They know they can get me to the NFL," he said.

The four commitments continue what has become a familiar pattern under Smart. Georgia annually uses official-visit season to build momentum, often landing multiple commitments in rapid succession while reinforcing its reputation as one of college football's recruiting powers.

For now, the Bulldogs appear to be heating up at exactly the right time.

And with recruiting season entering its busiest stretch, this weekend may be only the beginning.

## Lowndes grad dies in Tallahassee shooting

Field Level Media

Gavin Yates-Lyons, 18, an early entrant on the Ball State football team, died as a result of gunshot wounds, according to multiple outlets on Sunday.

Yates-Lyons, a native of Valdosta, Ga., was among three victims of a parking garage shooting in Tallahassee, Fla., on May 24. According to The Tallahassee Democrat, Yates-Lyons was caught in a crossfire in the garage, which is adjacent to off-campus apartments for Florida State University students.

He was taken to a local hospital, but died on Saturday.

Yates-Lyons was a standout defensive back at Lowndes County (Ga.) High School. He graduated early in December 2025 and enrolled at Ball State for the 2026 spring semester.

"Gavin was an extraordinary person and it is difficult to express the grief we all feel," Ball State football chief of staff Pete Roley said in a statement posted to X on Sunday morning.

"Our hearts are with his family, friends and loved ones during this difficult time. Thank you to the Ball State admin, staff and community for the support of our players and staff as we mourn."

Yates-Lyons returned to his high school to attend the graduation ceremony one day before he was shot.

He was among the three victims in the shooting. The other two, both adult males, suffered non-life-threatening injuries.

The suspect or suspects are still at large and the investigation is open and ongoing, according to the Tallahassee Police Department.

From 9A

## SCHEDULES

Lee County will also face defending Class 5A state champion Thomas County Central and perennial state power Coffee, two familiar rivals that share Region 1-5A with the Trojans. Thomas County Central is coming off a state championship season, while Coffee annually finds itself in the conversation among the state's elite programs.

Another difficult challenge awaits Oct. 23 when Lee County travels to Tift County. The Blue Devils showed significant improvement in their first season under head coach Noel Dean and have traditionally played the Trojans tough.

According to ITG Next, Lee County's first four opponents combined for a 45-10 record last season.

While Lee County faces one of the toughest schedules in Class 5A, Worth County enters a new world of challenges after moving up from Class A Division I, where the Rams captured the state championship last season.

Coach Jeff Hammond's team won't get much time to celebrate that accomplishment.

The Rams open against Brooks County before taking on Cairo, Early County, Thomasville and Fitzgerald. Four of those five opponents won at least eight games last season, while Early County advanced to the state semifinals.

Then comes the challenge of Region 1-AAA.

Worth County's final two games may be among the most intriguing in Georgia

this season. The Rams host Sumter County, a 2025 state semifinalist, before closing the regular season on the road against Carver-Columbus.

That matchup carries added significance because both teams enter the season as defending state champions.

Worth County won the Class A Division I title last season, while Carver-Columbus claimed the Class AA championship. Now, both programs find themselves in the same region and classification, creating what could become one of South Georgia's premier rivalries.

Crisp County also faces a daunting road ahead in its first season in Region 1-AAA under coach Justin Newman.

The Cougars open the season at Early County, a state semifinalist a year ago, before hosting Brooks County and Class 6A program Tift County. They also face Dougherty and Landmark Christian before entering a brutal stretch run.

After traveling to face state semifinalist Sumter County, Crisp County hosts defending state champion Worth County before heading to Carver-Columbus the following week.

Few teams in Georgia will face back-to-back opponents with stronger credentials.

Taken together, the schedules facing Lee County, Worth County and Crisp County serve as a reminder of just how difficult football can be in South Georgia. State champions, state finalists, semifinalists and traditional powers fill each calendar.

The upside is that if any of those teams make a deep playoff run this fall, there likely won't be much they haven't already seen.

## Knicks Finals tickets top \$4,000

Field Level Media

The get-in price for tickets to the first NBA Finals game at Madison Square Garden in New York in 27 years — Game 3 on June 8 — have soared back above \$4,000 on the secondary market.

Ticket tracking service TicketData told Field Level Media that Game 2 prices "came back down to reality" in the 48 hours after initially spiking following the Knicks clinching their spot in the Finals a week ago. However, ticket prices have increased 20% over the past three days, with supply extremely limited.

The get-in for Game 3 on June 10 was at \$3,789 on Monday night, while the most expensive for the series was \$5,322 for a potential Game 6 in New York on June 16.

The get-in for Game 3 on June 10 was at \$3,789 on Monday night, while the most expensive for the series was \$5,322 for a potential Game 6 in New York on June 16.

By contrast, ticket prices for games in San Antonio are down nearly 50% from where they were after the Spurs eliminated Oklahoma City in Game 7 of the Western Conference finals. The get-in price to Game 1 on Wednesday night has

dropped 62% over the past three days, while the price for Game 2 on Friday night has dropped 49%.

TicketData said a contributing factor is that fewer Knicks fans are likely to travel than initially expected due to the cost of flights from New York-area airports to San Antonio. That could change if the series goes the distance, with the get-in for a potential Game 7 back in San Antonio still holding at \$3,863.

If ticket prices for games at MSG hold, they would be more expensive than each of the past two Super Bowls, which had day-of-game get-in prices of \$3,251 in 2025 and \$2,002 this year. The average Super Bowl get-in price since the end of the Covid-19 pandemic has been \$3,914, according to TicketData.

The company said the Knicks' focus on making sure their season-ticket holders are fans and not professional resellers has contributed to the limited supply on the secondary market. There is also wide appeal for the matchup against the Spurs and rising superstar Victor Wembanyama.

Outside of the World Cup and the Stanley Cup Finals, the next-most expensive sporting event through the end



Special Photo: Imagn Images

Seats for the Knicks' first NBA Finals appearance in 27 years have pushed secondary-market ticket prices above \$4,000.

of the year is currently UFC 329. The card featuring the return of Conor McGregor

against Max Holloway currently has a get-in price of \$1,432.

## From 9A SOONER

Oklahoma had other plans.

The Sooners began chipping away in the seventh inning, scoring twice to cut the deficit to 7-5. They added another run in the eighth and tied the game in the ninth when Jaxon Willits singled home Camden Johnson.

That erased what had been an outstanding relief perfor-

mance from Mason Patel, who kept Oklahoma largely in check for 6 1/3 innings after starter Carson Ballard exited in the first.

Tech turned to Friday starter Tate McKee in the ninth inning in hopes of preserving the season.

Instead, the game drifted into extra innings.

One batter into the 10th, it was over.

Tockey connected on a pitch and sent it soaring beyond the center-field wall. As Oklaho-

ma players poured from the dugout, Georgia Tech players stood frozen in disbelief.

The numbers from this season will remain remarkable.

The Yellow Jackets entered the tournament with the best 60-game record in school history. They shattered the program's home run record, blasted 140 homers on the season and scored more than 650 runs. Their lineup was among the most feared in college baseball.

Monday's loss won't erase

any of that.

But it will forever become part of the story.

For a Georgia Tech team that spent the spring rewriting portions of the record book and climbing as high as No. 2 nationally, the season ended one victory short of its ultimate goal.

The Yellow Jackets built one of the greatest offensive seasons in school history.

They just never got the final three outs they needed.



Special Photo: StatePoint

# Hot grilling and flavor trends for the summer

**(StatePoint)** Playing with fire has never been hotter when it comes to flavor and summer grilling. A new grilling trend report, released by the McCormick brand, spotlights three red-hot trends centering on new ways grillers are layering flavors, expanding the sizzle beyond steak, and taking advantage of the transformation of appliances.

“Above all, flavor complexity will become the new standard in grilling with global flavor layering, and grillers are continuing to delve beyond meat, poultry and fish with barbecued vegetables and sweet ingredients,” says Jordan Carfagno, Executive Chef at McCormick, which distributes herbs, spices, seasonings and condiments globally. “New technology is also powering our prediction that smart, modular grills will redefine when and where consumers grill.”

Here are the top findings from Fire & Flavor 2026 Grilling Trends issued by McCormick, along with their recipe for Double Stacked Smashed Cheeseburgers.

## The Art of Layering

This trend celebrates the intentional build of flavor, where rubs, marinades, glazes and finishing sauces work in concert to create depth, contrast and complexity. This comes at a time when there’s been a 78% increase in social media mentions for “umami” compared with just two years ago, according to Datassentials, and a 53% increase in U.S. consumers interested in “swicy” – sweet and spicy

combinations, according to research from the Food Institute.

Layering flavor is part of a gourmet trend emphasizing intentional, creative and personalized grilling experiences. Flavor transformation happens within three different stages – Base, Build and Finish. Flavor layering techniques draw inspiration from global cuisines like Indian tandoori, Korean bulgogi and Moroccan tagines.

## More than Steak

From jackfruit to peaches, unexpected ingredients are expanding the boundaries of BBQ. The experts at McCormick predict that grillers will continue to embrace global flavors, vegetables, and sweet ingredients, noting that millennials grill fruit two times more than the average griller.

Favorite flavors beyond steak include juicy bone-in cuts of chicken grilled to the perfect tenderness level, smoky and caramelized veggies enhanced with warm spices and honey for bold, irresistible flavor, and fresh salad made with crisp, ripe tomatoes charred to perfection.

## Appliance Transformation

Grilling is being redefined by smart technology and modular design, turning grills into adaptive, multifunctional hubs that cater to modern lifestyles.

Developments, such as IoT-enabled grills with Wi-Fi and Bluetooth, allow remote temperature control and monitoring via mobile apps for perfect cooking. Modular grills

provide customizability with interchangeable surfaces offering versatile cooking options catering to diverse styles and preferences.

The experts at McCormick note that appliance-enabled flavors include the use of smokers beyond the classic cuts, enhancing deep, complex flavors of various proteins and elevating everyday staples. Flat tops also unlock new extra crispy textures and allow for new techniques. They also note that the global portable grills market is projected to continue to grow, driven by the rise of home entertaining and tailgating.

## New Smashed Burger Recipe

To accompany the release of the trends report, McCormick is spotlighting a new recipe for grillers: the Double Stacked Smashed Cheeseburgers Recipe. These juicy burgers are smashed onto a hot flat top grill or cast-iron skillet to create an epic crust. Seasoned with the new Grill Mates Signature Blend Seasoning and layered with homemade burger sauce, this is bound to be a favorite on the grill this season.

More recipes made for the grill, along with information on McCormick’s top-performing grill spice blends, can be found at <https://www.mccormick.com/pages/fire-and-flavor>.

This season, grill masters should consider innovative ways to level-up summer cooking with global flavors and new techniques.

# Did you know?

**(MCC)** The International Foundation for Gastrointestinal Disorders (IFFGD) estimates that as much as 10 percent of the global population has irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). IBS is a gastrointestinal disorder that contributes to abdominal pain or discomfort and alters bowel habits. Though the exact cause of IBS

is unknown, the IFFGD says the disorder is not caused by stress. However, stress can exacerbate and even trigger symptoms of IBS. A visit to a gastroenterologist can be especially helpful for anyone exhibiting symptoms of IBS, as the IFFGD estimates that between 20 and 40 percent of people who visit gastro-

enterologists do so seeking help with IBS.



**Mr. Robert Bruce Jones**  
Mr. Robert Bruce Jones, 68, of Columbus died Wednesday May 13, 2026 at Piedmont Midtown in Columbus, GA.

A graveside service will be held Sunday June 7, 2026 at Riverside Cemetery. Rev. Ronnie Kinsaul will be officiating.

Born in Albany, GA December 20, 1957 he was the son of William Jones and Minnie Lou Jones. Mr. Jones worked at the Albany Herald early in life and continued his career as a print press operator until he became disabled.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Survivors include his son Brian Jones and spouse David Zitnik; his brothers and sisters Billy Jones and his wife Deana; Martha Davis and her husband Jack; Edgar Jones; Patricia Radke; Faye Grote; 14 nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers please make donations to the Anchorage or any addiction treatment centers or a charity of choice.

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**Call 229-888-9300 to subscribe to the Albany Herald.**

**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 ladder rung (4)	_____
2 carpenters’ storage (9)	_____
3 Springfield’s state (8)	_____
4 2023 Miley Cyrus hit (7)	_____
5 Hackman and Wilder (5)	_____
6 talus’ joint (5)	_____
7 showed up (8)	_____

RS ILL TO ST BOX  
EP FL TE IN GEN  
ES ES OWE OL LE  
ANK ED AT ND OIS

Tuesday’s Answers: 1. COMEDY 2. NECKLACE 3. ACCUSING 4. PARODIES 5. FLINCHES 6. CURTAINS 7. SALINITY 6/3

**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 certainly (6)	_____
2 round of applause (4)	_____
3 Aussie actor Elordi (5)	_____
4 carrying off as booty (10)	_____
5 as much as you can eat (8)	_____
6 realist painter Jamie (5)	_____
7 whiny (9)	_____

RUL IN ED LL PLU  
RI UL COB QUE HA  
ETH ND YF DE BE  
JA OUS NG NDE WY

Wednesday’s Answers: 1. STEP 2. TOOLBOXES 3. ILLINOIS 4. FLOWERS 5. GENES 6. ANKLE 7. ATTENDED 6/4

**Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle**

Edited by Patti Varol

<b>ACROSS</b>	<b>DOWN</b>	<b>ACROSS</b>	<b>DOWN</b>
1 Millennium follower, briefly	1 Mars or Mercury	36 Not having that sinking feeling?	51 Goes out
5 Grass unit	2 Pilot’s approx.	37 Kindle display	52 Go off
10 Sobriquet letters	3 Tiny biters	38 Secret plans	57 Hem, but not how
13 Plains people	4 Followers of epsilons	39 Japanese laptop maker	58 Former telecom co.
14 Tulip: bulb :: oak : ____	5 Where to find a priest, a minister, and a rabbi?	40 Safe Drinking Water Act org.	59 20-volume ref. work
15 “ ____ betcha”	6 “American Dream” band ____ Soundsystem	44 New Deal pres.	60 First host of “Saturday Night Live UK”
16 Evil actions of a cartoon villain, e.g.	7 Early ISP	45 “Sweeney Todd” setting	61 “ ____ you decent?”
19 ____ de cologne	8 Forest nymphs	46 Make certain	62 Color of Lucky Charms balloons
20 Tune	9 Break off a romance	47 City grid feature	
21 Prefix with -metric	10 Vote in favor	48 “Eureka!” cries	
23 Having no chance of success	11 Frazer Lake bear		
28 Greek letter that represents torque in equations	12 One who may say “G’day”		
29 Gold medalist at the 1936 Summer Olympics	17 Motor vehicle		
30 Got on the nerves of ____ mater	18 Beethoven’s Third		
33 Grain in many a Quaker product	22 Vintage		
34 Rank in an around-the-corner straight	23 “Meditative Rose” artist		
35 Forty-second cousin	24 Terse refusal		
41 Little newt	25 Clutter-free		
42 Feel icky	26 Sets up		
43 One of a cereal trio	27 Guitar bars		
44 Thrash about	28 Tiny bit		
47 Cause of interrupted sleep, perhaps	32 Wiped out		
49 Ávila aunt	34 Strike zone?		
50 Alyosha Karamazov, for one			
53 OR workers			
54 Viking weapon			
55 D-backs, in box scores			
56 Final touch for some desserts			
63 Metallurgist’s material			
64 Private pupil			
65 Ivory soap ad word			
66 Word in four state names			
67 Down-at-the-heels			
68 Elevated on the course			

**ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:**

06/04/26

By Kathy Lowden ©2026 Tribune Content Agency, LLC 06/04/26

**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.

“ WEMD EP FVY DBPR MVX BFR VM CP. GCY JZBY VM YZBY? JD ICPY ZBKD LDXPKDXBFUD BFH BGVKD BWV UVFMEHDFUD EF VCXPDWKDP. ”

— IBXED UCXED

Previous Solution: “I do try to have privacy ... I try to be honest to who I am when I am in public, but I also try to keep things for myself.” — Zendaya  
TODAY’S CLUE: *U s i e n b e x*

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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.

“ NYNHR LHNW GAYN WLG AI AUKNHNUGDR HAIPR. GKN PNR AI GJ LHNWGN WU NUYAHJUXNUG OKNHN HAIP AI NULJQHWNTZ. ”

— WDNV KAHILK

Previous Solution: “Life is not easy for any of us. But what of that? We must have perseverance and above all confidence in ourselves.” — Marie Curie  
TODAY’S CLUE: *O s i e n b e x*

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## ABAC president establishes elementary education scholarship

### Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

**TIFTON** — Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College's new bachelor's degree in elementary education will have a special honor attached, coming from a familiar name with a long legacy of education.

The Brundage Family Elementary Education Scholarship was established in March 2026. It honors Robert "Leigh" Brundage, ABAC President Tracy Brundage's father and long-time educator.

"Education has always been central to my family's story," Brundage said. "My father devoted his career to elemen-

tary education, his brother was also a teacher, and many of us in the next generation have worked in higher education. This scholarship honors my father's belief that strong schools begin with well-prepared, passionate teachers, and it reflects our family's commitment to supporting those who choose this important profession."

Education and the Brundage surname have long been synonymous. The family has dedicated itself to serving as educators and has impacted multiple generations of students.

Offering an elementary ed-



Special Photo: ABAC

Robert Brundage and Tracy Brundage announced recently the establishment of the Brundage Family Elementary Education Scholarship at ABAC.

education major at ABAC has long been a goal of Brundage since she began as ABAC president in August 2022. The college's first elementary education bachelor's degree cohort will begin this fall.

"This scholarship arrives at a defining moment for ABAC's elementary education program as the college prepares to welcome its inaugural cohort," Melissa Baker, department head for Education and Wellness, said. "Dr. Brundage and Leigh Brundage's investment affirms that preparing highly qualified teachers begins with removing barriers

and opening doors, enabling students to focus on becoming the educators our schools and communities need.

"We are deeply grateful for their leadership and enduring commitment to advancing student success, access and educational opportunity at ABAC."

Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College's Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education offers a high-quality and experiential pathway for students preparing to become skilled and confident pre-K through fifth-grade teachers for Georgia's classrooms.

## Mitchell County Wall of Fame Committee seeks nominations

### Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

**CAMILLA** — The Mitchell County/Mitchell-Baker Eagles Wall of Fame Committee has announced that applications are now being accepted for consideration for the 2026–2027 Wall of Fame induction class.

The induction ceremony will be held during Mitchell County High School's homecoming, Oct. 2. Nominees must have been out of high school 15 or more years.

The Wall of Fame recognizes graduates whose exceptional achievements have brought honor and distinction

to themselves, their communities and their alma mater. Through this recognition, the committee endeavors to inspire current and future students to strive for excellence in their academic, professional and civic pursuits.

Applications may be obtained from Mitchell Coun-

ty Middle School, Mitchell County High School, DeSoto Trail Regional Library and Baker County Library.

Applications are also available from any Wall of Fame Committee member: Patricia English, Jerome Jester, Annie Willingham, Kenneth Ray Harris, Ross Worsham,

Theresa Bishop, Gail Hawkins, Derex Wommum and Bonita White.

To request an application by email, contact: bcswhite71@gmail.com.



Special Logo

## Colquitt Regional expands with new medical tower in Moultrie

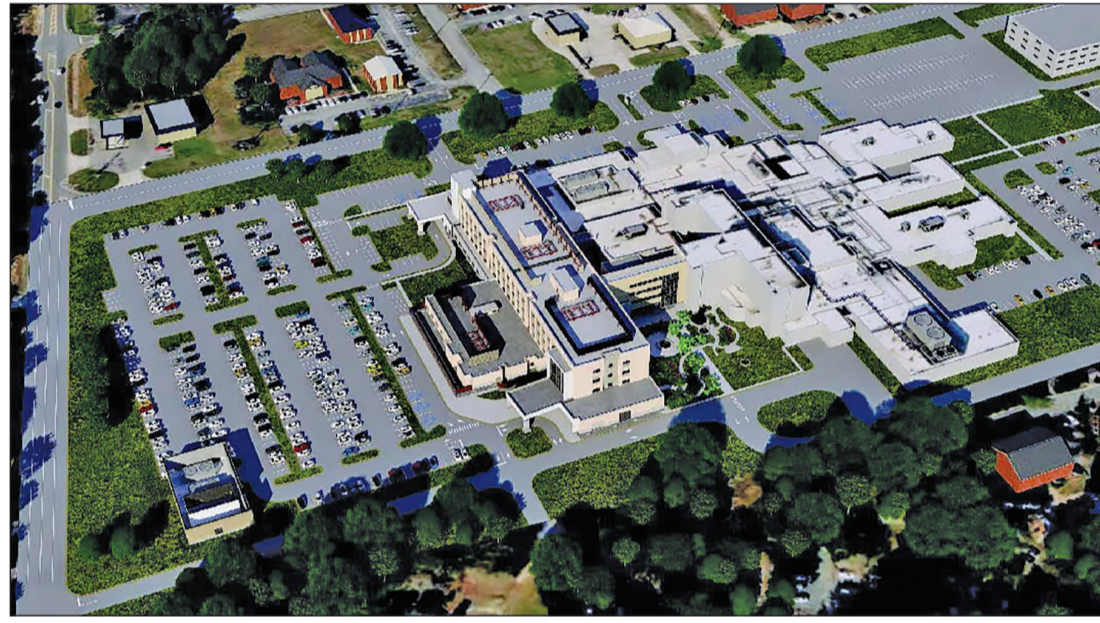
### Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

**MOULTRIE** — Colquitt Regional Medical Foundation has launched its Reaching New Heights in Healthcare campaign, anchored by the construction of a new four-story medical tower at Colquitt Regional Medical Center.

Doster Construction will serve as the project's general contractor, with TMP Architects leading the design. Noli White Group is providing project management, equipment planning, and IT coordination. Construction is set to begin this summer.

The new Hufstetler Tower represents a significant investment in the future of health care for Moultrie, Colquitt County and the surrounding region. The expansion will increase the hospital's licensed bed capacity from 99 to 155, support the addition of 35 physicians, and create approximately 490 new jobs.



Special Photo

Colquitt Regional Medical Foundation has announced the planned construction of a new four-story medical tower at Colquitt Regional Medical Center. Work on the project will start this summer.

The facility will include a new women's unit, expanded surgical and outpatient services on the first floor, and three levels of new patient space above. Plans also include enhancements to the Kate Jeter Memorial Garden, providing a calming outdoor environment for patients and staff, along with interior

design elements inspired by natural surroundings.

"This project is about expanding access and supporting the long-term needs of this community," Michael Mijares, the senior project manager at Doster Construction, said. "Our team is focused on delivering a facility that will serve patients,

families and caregivers well into the future."

Designed to expand access and strengthen key service lines — including surgical, maternal and infant, and critical care — the project positions Colquitt Regional for continued growth while enhancing care across the region.

## Birth Announcements

### Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

Unless otherwise noted, the following births all took place at Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital in Albany between April 28 and May 31, 2026.

Thomas, Memorie Nyelle, daughter was born April 28 to Jayden Wright and Tyler Thomas of Albany.

Oliver, Astin Bleu, son, was born May 6 to Erica Bowen and Quantavious Oliver of Albany.

Burnfin, Amelia Louise, daughter, was born May 9 to Chloe and Chase Burnfin of Leesburg.

Bailey, Jream Le'arce, daughter, was born May 10 to Ji'kerya Bailey of Albany.

Price, Gianni Liliana, daughter, was born May 11 to Alexis Allen and Grenardo Price of Albany.

Pidgeon, Aubrey Janae, daughter, was born May 11 to Alexus Coleman and John Pidgeon of Albany.

Peterson-Bryant, Zarielle Nichelle, daughter, was born May 12 to Gabrielle Peterson and Derik Bryant of Albany.

Vaughn, Reese Camille, daughter, was born May 13 to Shelishia and Dracodi Vaughn of Albany.

Barrientos, Sianni Valentina, daughter, was born May 14 to Brenda Martinez and Diego Barrientos of At-

tapulgus.

Davis-Norris, Kaleb Ge'Sonny, son, was born May 14 to Kaitlyn Davis and Travis Norris of Fort Gaines.

Bridges, Ja'khari James, son, was born May 17 to Makayla Bridges of Dawson.

Brown, Klani Ramir, daughter, was born May 20 to Ja'Ynia Brown of Pelham.

Wade, Tralani Janira, daughter, was born May 20 to Bratisha Bradley and Travis Wade of Albany.

Edwards, Oliver Harrison, son, was born May 27 to Cheyenne and Cullen Edwards of Pelham.

West, Ka'yori Olivia, daughter, was born May 28 to Aliya Daniels and Quintavious West of Albany.

Anglin, Michael Jonas, son, was born May 28 to Lauralee and Michael Anglin Sr. of Albany.

Weeks, Eleanor Louise, daughter, was born May 28 to Katie and James Weeks of Dawson.

Kegler, Zehe Amore, son, was born May 29 to Jasmine Brown and Te'kaya Kegler of Leesburg.

Laster, Esaias Xoan Dys-heen, son, was born May 31 to Ahujinae Arnol and Edwin Laster Jr. of Dawson.

## Unemployment declines in all of Georgia's regions

### Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

**ATLANTA** — The Georgia Department of Labor has announced that all of Georgia's Regional Commissions reported lower unemployment rates in April.

"Georgia has always been a state that rewards hard work, and right now hard work is paying off in a big way," Georgia Labor Commissioner Bárbara Rivera Holmes said in a news release. "Every single metro area in this state added jobs in April; more Georgians are earning mortgage-paying pay-

checks, and our work force is more skilled and competitive than ever. That is what it looks like when Georgia goes to work."

Here are statistics related to each regional commission: Atlanta Regional Commission: The unemployment rate was down five-tenths to 2.8% over the month. The rate was 2.9% one year ago.

Central Savannah River: The unemployment rate was down six-tenths to 3.3% over the month. The rate was 3.4% one year ago.

Coastal Georgia: The unemployment rate was down

six-tenths to 2.5% over the month. The rate was 2.5% one year ago.

Georgia Mountains: The unemployment rate was down five-tenths to 2.5% over-the-month. The rate was 2.5% one year ago.

Heart of Georgia: The unemployment rate was down six-tenths to 3.0% over the month. The rate was 3.1% one year ago.

Middle Georgia: The unemployment rate was down six-tenths to 3.0% over the month. The rate was 3.0% one year ago.

Northeast Georgia: The un-

employment rate was down six-tenths to 2.6% over the month. The rate was 2.7% one year ago.

Northwest Georgia: The unemployment rate was down six-tenths to 2.7% over the month. The rate was 2.8% one year ago.

River Valley: The unemployment rate was down nine-tenths to 3.5% over the month. The rate was 3.5% one year ago.

Southern Georgia: The unemployment rate was down six-tenths to 2.9% over the month. The rate was 3.1% one year ago.

Southwest Georgia: The un-



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Special Logo

employment rate was down five-tenths to 3.1% over the month. The rate was 3.2% one year ago.

Three Rivers: The unemployment rate was down six-tenths to 2.7% over the month. The rate was 2.9% one year ago.

For more information on unemployment benefits, claimants should call (877) 709-8185 or visit their MyUI Claimant Portal. GDOL's Career Centers also provide in-person unemployment insurance benefit services for customers statewide.

## Fat in Georgia's budget may have saved the state's bacon

### By Ty Tagami

Capitol Beat News Service

**ATLANTA** — Things were looking grim for Georgia's wild pig eradication program. The latter sounded like a bounty program to Nick Atwood, an Atlanta volunteer with a loose-knit group called Rooting for Pigs.

Gov. Brian Kemp, in his effort to balance the budget, cut hundreds of millions of dollars in new spending when he signed it earlier this month.

He highlighted some of the major cuts at that time but did not mention the pig eradication projects nestled deep within the 171-page document. A \$1 million public-private

pilot program to manage feral hogs was a victim of his line-item veto, as was a \$200,000 wild pig eradication program.

Studies have shown bounty programs are ineffective at wildlife control, whether for prairie dogs, raccoons or feral hogs, Atwood said. His group sent Kemp a letter in mid-April explaining all this and suggesting that cutting the programs could save taxpayers some money.

Atwood does not know whether the message led to Kemp's line-item vetoes, but he thinks it might have. Asked about this, Kemp's office did not want to engage in the specifics, referring instead to Kemp's comments on May 12 when reporters gathered in his office to watch him sign the budget.

The governor said then that he had to fix a "structural deficit" that had left a roughly \$1 billion hole in the budget. He said he could have left it alone but that he did not want to leave "a mess" for whoever succeeds him as governor next year, or for the next Legislature.

"So what we're doing now is making some tough choices," he said.

The eradication programs had been something of a priority for lawmakers, especially in the House.

Owing to limited time (and attention spans), Rep. Matt Hatchett, R-Dublin, could only detail a small number of items in the \$38.5 billion Fiscal Year 2027 budget when he presented it on the House floor on March 10.

Hatchett, who chairs the House Appropriations Committee, talked about money for big issues, such as education, health care, prisons

and poverty.

But he left time to talk about wild pigs, and the money in the budget to get rid of them.

"Feral hogs are wreaking havoc statewide," he said, "causing millions of dollars of damage to crops and farms each year."

The measure passed the Senate unanimously, after Sen. Lee Anderson, R-Grovetown,

implored his fellow lawmakers to help farmers.

"I just ask each and every one of you to vote green so we can go kill some hogs this afternoon," he told them.

Kemp signed it earlier this month.

So wild hogs still have some worries.

Atwood said they do not deserve the treatment, describing them with words one might use for the teenagers next door (or in your home).

"Pigs are intelligent, curious, adaptable animals that are often misunderstood," he said.