



**Perspectives**  
Tara Fletcher  
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# The Albany HERALD

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**Post 30 Flag Day**  
Lee JROTC joins program  
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THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2026

## Three summertime fun nights planned for young people at Albany Civic Center

By Alan Mauldin  
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ALBANY — A summer series of nighttime activities with movies, music and more will help local teenagers shake the summertime blues in a safe and secure environment that could give them something to do and help them

stay out of trouble at unsupervised venues.

The Safe Haven project for the summer will provide supervised activities for young people on July 10 and July 31, with an Aug. 7 event planned in conjunction with the annual Fridays on the Flint concert series.

Albany Police Department Chief Michael Persley gave an update on the project to the Dougherty County Commission during the commission's Monday meeting.

Each of the events will run from 6-9 p.m., with activities provided by the operators of the Flint River Entertainment

Complex.

"You see people drop their kids off to do something," the chief said. "If you're going to drop them off, at least drop them off with us."

"This is just the start. The Commission Chairman (Lo-

See **SUMMERTIME**, 2A



Staff Photo: Alan Mauldin  
Dougherty County Commissioners Victor Edwards, left, and Clinton Johnson have a conversation prior to the start of Monday's regular commission meeting.

*How does your garden grow?*



Staff Photo: Tara Fletcher

With summer set to officially start Sunday, steady rains mixed with good old south Georgia heat have led to some pretty impressive flower growth in the region.

## JONNY'S ANGELS LAUNCHES IN ALBANY TO SUPPORT PARENTS, SIBLINGS LIVING WITH LOSS OF A CHILD



Special Photo

Kathryn Anderson joins her family in an undated photograph. Anderson says the profound losses she experienced, including the death of her son, Jonny, ultimately led her to Albany and inspired her mission to create Jonny's Angels, a support network for grieving families.

Kathryn Anderson

By Kathryn Crockett  
kathryn@albanyherald.com

ALBANY — Kathryn Anderson doesn't tell her story as though she belongs entirely to this world.

She tells it as someone who believes she has already seen what comes next, and speaks as knowingly of what is as well as what could be.

The newly arrived Albany resident sits surrounded by paintings, children's books and illustrations, all of them artifacts of a life she never expected to live. Once, she says, she was a numbers person — a financial consultant, a wife and mother whose world revolved around raising her children and caring for her family. "I always loved God very much," she said, smiling. "Since I was a little girl, I wanted to be a nun."

Life, she says, had other plans. She raised her children in church and homeschooled them for a time. Her two sons became valedictorians. They were kind, compassionate young men who loved people and loved helping others. "They were just good eggs," she said.

Then, about a dozen years

ago, everything changed. Anderson became gravely ill.

For nearly three years, she says she searched desperately for answers. She went to doctors and researched possible explanations while simultaneously caring for her parents — her mother, who had suffered a broken neck and traumatic brain injury, and her father, who was battling Guillain-Barré syndrome.

"I was very sick," she said. "I could barely take care of my children and my parents. That was all I could do."

Eventually, she says she heard something she can only describe as a quiet instruction. "Stop researching. Stop going to doctors. Just stop and be with me."

So she did. She spent long periods of time alone, praying. Then one evening, she says, she felt an unmistakable invitation to accept an unknown calling.

"I said, 'Yes,'" she reveals. Not long afterward, she says she believes she died.

She doesn't claim to understand what happened. She only knows what she experienced. Her former husband likewise believed she was dying. Then,

in what many would describe as a near-death experience, Anderson says she felt a familiar touch on her left shoulder. Anderson turned toward the touch and recognized the person immediately. It was her grandmother, who had already died.

What happened next defies logic, but Anderson says an indescribable feeling of love overcame her.

"This love — it's not anything that's here — this incredible love just jolted through me," she said.

"And she (her grandmother) wasn't old. She was beautiful again. I could see her skin, her lips, her teeth, her hair. Everything."

Then, Anderson says, she was suddenly somewhere else.

"When you get taken up, you're surrounded by such love that it heals every broken bit of you," she said. "I can't explain it here."

She says she remembers feeling completely healed. More than anything, she remembers love.

"He loves us so much," she said. "All of this division, all of this us versus them, it's all

See **JONNY**, 2A

## Roxie Powell named Dawson city manager after years of service

By Kathryn Crockett  
kathryn@albanyherald.com

DAWSON — For most of her life, Roxie Powell has watched Dawson change.

She remembers a downtown filled with department stores, grocery stores and bustling sidewalks, where residents could find nearly everything they needed without leaving town. Now, as Dawson's new city manager, she wants to help write the city's next chapter.

Powell, who previously served as Dawson's city clerk, has been promoted to city manager after years of helping guide the city through administrative turnover, financial challenges and compliance issues. Her appointment followed a divided vote by the Dawson City Council, reflecting

both the high stakes and deep challenges facing city government.

Born and raised in Dawson, Powell graduated as valedictorian of her high school class in 2003 before attending Albany State University to study accounting.

"I started out in government in 2013," Powell said. "Then in 2015, I came over here as a customer service clerk, and in 2019, I became city clerk."

No one grows up dreaming of becoming a city manager, Powell acknowledged with a laugh. But after years spent learning the inner workings of city government, she said she welcomes the challenge.

"I honestly just enjoy people; I love meeting new peo-

See **POWELL**, 2A

Periodical — Mail Label

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## From 1A SUMMER-TIME

renzo Heard) has said he wants this to continue, and I think Mr. (Terrell) Jacobs (Albany's city manager) is right there with him. At least we give them something safe where they don't have to worry about the next gunshot or the next fist fight to break out."

The estimated cost for each night is \$7,500, or a total of about \$22,500, Persley said.

The initial two will be held at the Albany Civic Center, with a movie in the ballroom area, music in the arena and an arts and activities offering. "I'm for it," Commissioner Anthony Jones said. "That's the best \$7,500 you can spend, (spending) it on our youth."

The nighttime events harken back to the days when the late Brady Keys provided similar entertainment for young people in the community, Commissioner Victor Edwards said. Those activities drew up to 500 or so young people, and the advertising

that Keys provided ensured a large attendance.

The Flint Entertainment staff, along with police officers, will provide security, and his department is looking for some volunteers to assist, Persley said.

Security measures will include a clear-bag policy, screening, wrist bands issued to ensure that individuals are cleared to be inside and a prohibition on loitering in the parking lot.

"We have identified that kids sometimes just want to go hang out at a structured

event," Persley said.

The city and county will provide some funding, and local businesses and individuals also will be asked to help pay the costs for the three nights of entertainment, Heard said. He predicted that providing a safe environment where young people can interact with law enforcement in a positive way will be a benefit.

"I think any time you invest in children and youth, you're always making a great investment," the chairman said. "I think it should be a good experience."

## Fort Valley State Presidential Search Committee named

**Staff Reports**  
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**FORT VALLEY** -- The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia has named members of the Fort Valley State University Presidential Search Committee. The committee will conduct a national search for a new president to lead one of only three public historically black colleges and universities in Georgia, and the state's only 1890 land-grant institution.

In January 2026, current FVSU President Paul Jones announced his plans to retire, concluding a decade of service as the university's 10th president and more than 24

years of service within the university system. Jones will remain in place until his successor is named.

"President Paul Jones has spent the past decade making FVSU into one of the South's best public HBCUs," USG Chancellor Sonny Perdue said. "That work has laid a strong foundation for a university that plays a critical role in the vitality of the state and especially rural Georgia. It allows the next president to keep building on its 130-year legacy. Most importantly, it keeps the focus right where it belongs: on student success and making a real impact in the community."

## From 1A POWELL

ple," she said. "I think I have an excellent staff. They're a team. We just operate as a team.

"And I'll be honest: I love a challenge."

Among Powell's immediate priorities are addressing the city's infrastructure concerns, including potholes, sewer issues and problems with the billing system.

"The thing I'm most looking forward to is trying to move Dawson forward and fix some of the problems we have," Powell said.

She said completing the city's overdue financial audits is critical because compliance will re-open opportunities for grants and outside funding.

"Hopefully, the audits will be finished, all three years, by December of this year," she said.

If compliance is restored, Powell said the city could

pursue Community Development Block Grant funding to address sewer problems and seek additional transportation and infrastructure grants.

Just as important to her is rebuilding trust between city government and residents.

"We have what I like to call an open-door policy," Powell said. "If you ever have a complaint, want to see any information that is governed by the Open Records Act, or if you just want to tour City Hall or you have any questions or concerns, just come up here. We're not hiding anything. It's an open door. You can come in anytime and get the information that you need."

Powell acknowledged that years of administrative turnover and operational challenges cannot be corrected quickly.

"Dawson didn't get this way overnight, so it's not going to be fixed overnight either," she said. "It's going to take several years in order to get stuff going. But I want the public to know we're trying

to make progress, we're trying to make a change. We just need time."

Despite the obstacles, Powell says her commitment to the city remains deeply personal.

"I'm born and raised here; I love Dawson," she said.

She remembers a downtown that served as a vibrant commercial center and says she hopes to see vacant buildings become active again.

"When I was growing up, downtown was thriving; it was booming," Powell said. "People actually came to Dawson to shop, and I want to see that happen again."

"I want to see these vacant buildings downtown thrive and do something. Even if we were to convert the upper levels to housing or studio apartments, something to bring people back downtown would be great."

She also pointed to employee retention as one of the city's greatest challenges, noting that Dawson struggles to compete on wages with larger municipalities.

"The hardest thing for the city, unfortunately, is retention," she said. "We don't have the greatest pay scale here, and while we try to pay the most we can, sometimes it's still not enough."

Still, Powell said she remains optimistic about the city's future and the people working to improve it.

"All my life, I have just been myself. I come to work, I do my job right, and I'm always up for a challenge," she said. "I hope people see how long I've worked for the city and see my commitment as a positive thing. I want to see Dawson thrive again."

While she knows change will take time, Powell said she believes there is no one better than Dawson's own residents and employees to help move the city forward.

"I'm big on positivity, and I do my best to operate by the book," she said. "I believe in my team, and I think we have what we need here to make real progress."



Staff Photo: Kathryn Crockett

Roxie Powell, a Dawson native and former city clerk, was recently named the city's new manager.

## From 1A JONNY

so silly. We are His children. He loves us so, so, so much."

She says she returned from the experience with a different understanding of her purpose.

She began painting. Poems poured out of her. Books followed.

"I never did any of that before," she said. "I had to figure it all out from scratch."

The former financial executive suddenly found herself writing children's books for adults, composing songs and creating artwork, all centered on messages of love, forgiveness and healing.

Then came another series of losses and divine messages Anderson says she believes were opportunities that al-

lowed her to prepare for what was to come. Her father died. Then her younger brother. Then her mother. And finally, the loss that would change everything.

Her son, Jonny.

Anderson remembers September 2022 with startling clarity.

Jonny was a young Christian actor, husband and father. He loved filmmaking and his faith. He was away with his wife and daughter when Anderson says she felt something unusual during prayer. She became convinced his guardian angel was Gabriel and shared it with him, which he received with exuberance.

But the next day, her phone rang. Her son had collapsed. Her daughter-in-law's voice was filled with fear and despair.

"They've been working on him. He's coded. He's been

dead for 20 minutes," she said.

Anderson says she prayed and, before long, heard that he had started breathing again as emergency medical personnel transported him to the hospital. It was there, at the hospital, she says she received another message.

"We need him here," she says she was told. "There's work to do. He'll be with you to see it through."

In her heart, Anderson said that was the moment she knew that Jonny was not coming home. She held him and sang to him. It was the same song she had sung when he entered the world.

"I sang it when he arrived, and I sang it when he left."

She says knowing where she believed God had taken Jonny made his death both easier and infinitely harder. The difficult part wasn't believing he still existed, it was

everything that he had left behind.

"The fallout on the family is the hardest part," she said, explaining that some of the losses that followed made dealing with grief a complex and unpredictable experience that many will struggle to understand without having lived it themselves.

Anderson compares losing a child to pulling a piece from a Jenga tower. Everything else begins collapsing around it.

There is grief. There is rage. Relationships change.

Children grieve differently than adults. Spouses grieve differently than grandparents. Siblings often become invisible.

Her granddaughter, devastated by her father's death, struggled to understand why the people she loved suddenly seemed so far away. Anderson said her surviving son became angry in ways she had never seen before.

"He'd never had anger before," she said. "It wasn't something I'd experienced with him."

As Anderson struggled to move forward, she began discovering stories much like her own from other parents who had lost children and, in the aftermath, lost relationships. After some time, the initial support started to fail her and those around her.

"Through no fault of their own, people just think, 'OK, it's time. You need to get over this and move forward,'" she said. "But that's just not how it works for many families who lose a child."

Families start to simply stop speaking about the person they lost because they don't know how to talk about them or who to talk about them with.

"When you try to talk about your child, people freeze," she said. "They don't know what to say."

The result, she says, is profound isolation. Anderson says many parents begin to feel like strangers in their own communities. Even churches can feel unbearable for many parents struggling with the death of a child.

"You feel like an alien," she said.

Anderson said she believes

healing requires something most grieving families never receive. A witness.

"You have to have a witness to your grief to heal," she said. "Someone who sees you."

It was this simple realization that ultimately led her to Albany just two short months ago. The move wasn't random. She believes it was Jonny's idea.

"He loved faith-based filmmaking and admired the Kendrick brothers' movies, many of which have roots in Albany," Anderson said. "He had always wanted to live here."

Without warning, Anderson says she began feeling pulled here, too.

"This is where he wanted to be," she said, which was evidence enough for Anderson to uproot her whole life, leave behind friends and family and head south.

According to Anderson, she believes she has another mission, and she says she hopes to spend the rest of her life building it.

Her ministry is called Healing Waters Ministry, and she operates grief support groups specifically for parents who have lost children and their siblings. She calls the group Jonny's Angels.

In addition to hosting a weekly grief support group for bereaved parents and siblings, Anderson offers one-to-one support sessions and a songwriting service in which she composes and records custom songs and lyrics drawn from the feelings and memories associated with a lost loved one. Anderson says the songs often aid parents during healing and beyond.

Eventually, Anderson says she hopes Jonny's Angels becomes something much larger — a nationwide network of support groups, mentors and resources for families who have lost children, something she says she would have clung to during the dark days following her son's death.

Anderson says she wants the support groups to function as a safe space for sharing memories and hopes parents will bring photographs and tell stories about their children.

She also wants siblings to have a place where some-

one sees them and recognizes their pain. Her hope is that through becoming part of this growing community, grieving families will know they do not need to hide their children from conversation.

Most of all, she wants parents to know they are not broken or beyond the reach of having joy in their lives again.

"There is still beauty," she said. "There is still joy. There is still purpose. Grief changes you forever, but it does not have to end your story."

Anderson says she believes the people who have lost children carry a unique capacity to love and serve others because they understand suffering in a way few people ever will.

"Angel parents — that's what I call parents who have lost a child — are some of the most beautiful people I've ever met," she said.

She says she hopes those parents eventually become mentors for one another and that the bonds they form with others on similar journeys will encourage them to volunteer, serve and build a stronger community together.

After all of her losses, after illness and heartbreak and what she believes was a journey to heaven and back, Anderson has arrived in Albany carrying a simple message.

"You don't have to fix it," she said. "You just need someone to sit there and hear you."

For Kathryn Anderson, that is the work she believes she was called to do. To sit with people in the darkest chapters of their lives. To witness their grief.

And, somehow, to help them believe that love still has the final word.

For now, Jonny's Angels support groups meet at St. Andrews Church at 6:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month, with additional meeting dates expected to be added in the coming days. For more information about Jonny's Angels, Healing Waters Ministry or one-to-one grief support services, or to learn how to get involved, Anderson can be reached at (716) 289-1245 or by email at jonnysangelsupportgroup@gmail.com.

Albany Area Chamber of Commerce

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OF THE WEEK



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# Daily Horoscopes

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** If your individual success cycles are outstanding, next week could be your time to launch, stars are building toward the highest-scoring day so far in 2026. High scores bring the best odds personally and professionally.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Emotional currents could feel like a riptide for a day or so, don't compound fast-dissolving problems with reactions that make things worse. Keep building stability in the financial realm.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Better to delay a communiqué than to speak in a way that defeats your original purpose. There could be too much intensity and too much that slips out, wait out 'poor judgment' stars and let clarity return.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** You might be done with invisibility for a while and ready to step onto center stage. Tidy up any last bits of inner work and prepare for a debut of some kind. Put a pin in financial moves for another day or two.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** There's a gap between grounded authenticity and just doing anything for that comes to mind and calling it 'being yourself.' Today could tempt you toward a destabilized or destabilizing action. Keep your cool.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Subtle misalignment could bring some stress today. It's likely almost too deep down to diagnose, but the vibe should pass within a day or so. Don't let inner imbalance drive self-sabotaging choices.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** A friend could seem in a hurry to make a foolish choice, with the outcome clear as day beforehand. If you can't intervene, at least hold space while they pick up the pieces. A cycle of learning could be nearing completion.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** Acting out could bring career catastrophe, process frustrations before you land in the workplace so feelings

don't drive explosive outcomes. Do your part to keep things calm, there will be better days to drive needed change.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Dysregulation could drive a lot of behavior now, including publicly if you have a platform and allow emotion to overrule wisdom. Better to keep your thumbs off of your device for another day or two.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** Today is another day to refrain from making financial moves, making budgetary plans, or having discussions for the same reasons as yesterday. Little good is likely to transpire and the chaos factor is high.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Relationships could again feel destabilized today — if you sometimes need to walk on eggshells, today is likely to be one of those days. Wait for calmer stars to make decisions and take needed steps.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** You might need saintly patience to get through normal routines today, the potential for disruption is strong. Stick to known and proven methods, it would be a poor day to experiment with anything new.

**IF TODAY IS YOUR BIRTHDAY:** The next 30 days could reveal important clues to your ultimate destiny, pay attention to every intuition, glimmer, and miracle — your mind should be stronger than usual. So many of 2026's challenges should be behind you now, you may be able to relax in a way you haven't for a while. July may show you more of the Universe's protection and benevolence, let go of fears and soak up the calm. An opportunity to improve cash flow could arrive approximately early August, do your homework before you jump. Some emotion disruption could land about mid-August. Avoid reactivity, avoid extremes, and avoid impulses which could sabotage your world. It's a test you pass by staying centered and neutral. A nice surprise or windfall could land in September.

**Dear Eric:** I'm mid-50s and I have three jobs (two part time as a college professor). I also have three grown children, a husband, my parents and many friends. I constantly get requests from co-workers and other friends for happy hours, dinners, brunches, workshops, seminars and other events.

**Dear Overworked:** Anyone working as much as you are, deserves as much or as little brunch, workshoping or sleeping as they want. It does sound like you're prioritizing a lot — some of it, like your jobs, by necessity. You're doing what you have to do to make your life work and to show up as much as you can for those closest to you. If you're not feeling the need right now to expand your professional network through socializing, and you're not receiving any informed feedback that would suggest said socializing might materially benefit you, then you're fine to skip it. It's just not something that works for you right now.

**Right now is not forever.** You're free to change your mind, change your schedule, say yes to one thing and no to 100 other things. We all do this. No one is universally available for every plan.

It's important to remember that other people's priorities aren't

crashes near Tokyo killing 129 servicemen

**1972** - A BEA Trident crashes two minutes after take off from London's Heathrow Airport killing 118

**1981** - The first aircraft designed around stealth technology, the Lockheed F-117 Nighthawk makes its first flight

**1983** - Astronaut Sally Ride becomes the first American Woman in Space on the STS-7

**1996** - The suspected Unabomber, serial murderer and domestic terrorist, Ted Kaczynski is indicted on ten criminal counts

**2017** - A 6.1 earthquake hits Northern Osaka, Japan

**1928** - American aviator Amelia Earhart becomes the 1st woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean (as a passenger)

**1892** - Macadamia nuts are planted in Hawaii for the first time

**1815** - During the Battle of Waterloo, Napoleon Bonaparte is defeated by British forces led by the Duke of Wellington

**1873** - Susan B. Anthony is fined \$100 for trying to vote for President in the 1872 presidential election

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**1928** - American aviator Amelia Earhart becomes the 1st woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean (as a passenger)

**1953** - A USAF C-124

## CALENDAR OF OBSERVANCES

- Autistic Pride Day
- Go Fishing Day
- International Panic Day
- International Picnic Day
- International Sushi Day
- National Cheesemaker's Day
- National Cherry Tart Day
- National Dump the Pump Day
- National Splurge Day
- Recess at Work Day
- World Tapas Day

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## QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Beautiful young people are accidents of nature, but beautiful old people are works of art."

Eleanor Roosevelt,  
U.S. first lady (1884-1962)

## 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

Thank you, Tara, for your incredibly brave column about an abusive person in your past. Sadly, we live in a society that still believes men have control over the women in their lives. Maybe your touching column will open some eyes.

Michael Ferguson, you -- unfortunately -- hit the nail on the head. When a family comes under attack for celebrating on its own property, we've reached a level of lawlessness that brings back an era when such hideous actions were not only tolerated, they were encouraged. Your words eloquently explain why such things cannot happen in a country that purports to be free.

Your column on Lewis Grizzard had me going into my files for some of his columns I'd saved, and as I read them, I disagreed with your assessment. I believe Grizzard's columns are definitely relatable today. Many of them could have been written about Trump and his band of misfits. It was fun going back to those days, and, yes, you are right. The columnists who "ape" Grizzard fail miserably.

Iran was secretly paid through Arab intermediaries to back off and let our fleet leave in one piece. TACO has learned from this "win."

SMRs, if the early settlers in the colonies never let immigrants in, you and your trailer park friends would be playing soccer somewhere in Europe today.

Our Founding Fathers must be spinning in their graves after the spectacle that was allowed on the White House grounds this weekend. Trump's ego is more important to him than anything else, even the welfare of the American people.

According to neoconservative Bill Kristol: "The UFC event captures something about this moment in our history. After all, it's vulgar, it's violent, it's commercial, it's grandiose, it's tacky, and it dishonors a place once worthy of care and respect. In other words, it's Donald Trump." That Man Without a Family

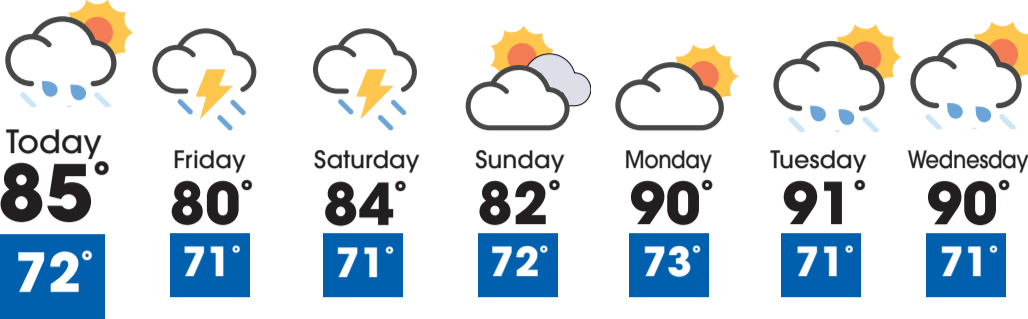
I always laugh when I read comments from people in this forum that tell us exactly what's happening in Washington and across the world, as if they have some kind of wisdom or insight. No south Georgia bumpkin has any idea about such things. Keep your opinions for your own group at Burger King.

Hey, Albany Democrats, try one last time to get a grip on reality. You all voted a geriatric fool into the presidency, voted like-minded Reps and Senators into office, and then stood idly by while they wrecked our country. Enough of the childish blather. You all, not Republicans, are solely to blame for Trump's Triumph.

Imagine Clennon King calling anyone racist. Got a mirror, dude?

Imagine if Bezos, Oprah or Musk came to Albany to build and open an office and offer many jobs. DCSS, Miller, Phoebe and P&G would likely be elated, as would most of our families. But our city and county commissioners would simply yell at each other and at the CEOs about more affordable housing and being a "beacon for the poor." CEOs hastily leave. Great opportunities lost for the city's jobless. This has played out a hundred times here. We need smarter leadership in Albany.

## Weather Forecast



## Daily Bridge Club

### Knowing better

By Frank Stewart  
Tribune Content Agency

"By the time you're old enough to know better than to do something," a senior member of my club told me, "you're also too old

NORTH			
S 10 4			
H A K 7			
D A J 10 9			
C A J 9 3			
WEST		EAST	
S A Q 9 7 5 2		S J 3	
H Q J 8 2		H 10 9 6 5 4	
D 7 6 3		D K 8 5	
C None		C 10 8 5	
SOUTH			
S K 8 6			
H 3			
D Q 4 2			
C K Q 7 6 4 2			
West	North	East	South
Pass	1 NT	Pass	3 C
3 S	5 C	All Pass	
Opening lead -- H Q			
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to care much about doing it. That sums up the state of my game."

As declarer at five clubs, he took the ace of hearts, drew trumps and led the queen of diamonds to finesse. East won and led the jack of spades, and West took the A-Q. Down one.

"I've been around long enough to know to plan before I play," my friend said. "I guess I'm getting lazy in my old age."

**PASSED HAND**  
South must let West's queen of hearts win. If West leads another heart, South takes the A-K, pitching diamonds. He draws trumps, goes to the ace of diamonds and returns the jack for a ruffing finesse. (South can't be sure who has the king, but West, a passed hand, showed



Frank Stewart

the Q-J of hearts and probably has the ace of spades and another spade honor.) If East covers, South ruffs and returns a trump to dummy to discard spades on the 10-9 of diamonds. He loses one spade and one heart.

### DAILY QUESTION

**You hold:** S 10 4 H A K 7 D A J 10 9 C A J 9 3. Your partner opens one spade, you respond two diamonds, he rebids two spades and you bid three clubs. Partner then bids 3NT. What do you say?

**ANSWER:** Slam is possible. Even if partner has a minimum hand such as AKQ93, Q106, Q7, 1042, he will have a decent play for 12 tricks, and he may have more. Bid 4NT, not a Blackwood ace-asking call but a "quantitative" raise of notrump. Let your partner use his judgment.

West dealer  
N-S vulnerable

## Advice Columnist

### Busy professional avoids socializing

By Eric Thomas  
Tribune Content Agency

**Dear Eric:** I'm mid-50s and I have three jobs (two part time as a college professor). I also have three grown children, a husband, my parents and many friends. I constantly get requests from co-workers and other friends for happy hours, dinners, brunches, workshops, seminars and other events.

As it is, I have a brutal work schedule of about 60 to 80 hours per week, not including personal tasks and then social events. It's not impacting my health, yet.

How do I respond with "I just want some peace and quiet" without offending people? Or, perhaps, a better question is, am I prioritizing the right things in my life?

— Overworked in Colorado

**Dear Overworked:** Anyone working as much as you are, deserves as much or as little brunch, workshoping or sleeping as they want. It does sound like you're prioritizing a lot — some of it, like your jobs, by necessity. You're doing what you have to do to make your life work and to show up as much as you can for those closest to you. If you're not feeling the need right now to expand your professional network through socializing, and you're not receiving any informed feedback that would suggest said socializing might materially benefit you, then you're fine to skip it. It's just not something that works for you right now.

Right now is not forever. You're free to change your mind, change your schedule, say yes to one thing and no to 100 other things. We all do this. No one is universally available for every plan.

It's important to remember that other people's priorities aren't

your priorities. So, if someone gets offended by you saying, "I appreciate the invite, but I'm at capacity right now," that's not a problem you need to clean up.

Peace and quiet is absolutely a valid reason to decline plans. You can't pour from an empty cup.

At some point, you might want to read "How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy" by Jenny Odell. (But only if you have the time!)

**Dear Eric:** I am 72 years old and have been divorced for almost 25 years. For the first 12 years or so after my divorce, I dated a lot. I met men through dating websites and through mutual friends. However, I finally left the dating scene for several reasons.

I am content with my single-ness. I have many friends and acquaintances through church, where I also volunteer.

Earlier this year, I became Facebook friends with a man who is a cousin of a mutual friend. I am really not interested in becoming serious with anyone. After weeks of communicating through Facebook Messenger, he mentioned meeting for lunch. I agreed, thinking it would be nice to have a male friend to do things together occasionally, like dining out or going to the movies.

However, I didn't mention this during our online correspondence.

I had a great time, and we have quite a few things in common. He is funny and made me laugh.

However, I made no mention during our lunch that I only wanted friendship. Why? Because of his table manners (talking with his mouth full of food) and his hygiene (his fingernails were ragged and dirty). I can't



Eric Thomas

see myself spending any more time in his presence.

Since then, he has hinted, through Facebook correspondence, at getting together again. I wouldn't mind a friendship, but how can I let him know why I don't want to spend time with him? I don't want to hurt his feelings.

— Seeking Friendship

**Dear Friendship:** It sounds like you might have some conflicting impulses with regard to this person, which is fine. You write that you enjoyed your time and wouldn't mind a friendship. But you also write that you can't see yourself spending more time in his presence. These are both reasonable feelings — you're entitled to your opinion. But it leads me to believe this just isn't a match for you right now.

Now, if you were interested in developing a friendship, you could certainly express what you'd like to change for it to happen, i.e., suggesting that you not go out to eat because you prefer not to see people talking with food in their mouths. It would also be appropriate in this conversation to set an expectation about what kind of relationship you're looking for, i.e., friendship and nothing romantic. It's never too late to define the boundary.

The things you found objectionable about him are relatively minor and can be worked around or adjusted. That's part of what friendship entails: meeting each other in the middle. If you do think it's worth pursuing, be upfront and kind. But if you don't want to pursue it, you don't have to go into detail. Just saying you appreciate his time but it's not a match is fine.

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 [rericthomas.com](http://rericthomas.com).

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THE ALBANY HERALD

# Perspectives

The Albany  
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Carlton Fletcher  
EDITOR

— Georgia Trust for —  
**LOCAL NEWS**

TODAY'S  
BIBLE  
VERSE

"He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."  
Psalms 23:3

COLUMNIST ■ TARA FLETCHER

## Women are often trapped by abusive partners

Like a lot of people, I like to listen to podcasts while I drive. This morning, the subject was abuse, and the person being interviewed was a survivor of extreme domestic violence. She said she had no family support, and when she confided in two male relatives about her situation, she later overheard them laughing and saying, "Why doesn't she leave?" and "She must like it."

Subsequently, the woman was doused with gasoline and set on fire.

That's not the first time I've heard of people being critical of women who don't leave their abusers. So, let me tell you a story about a woman I know who, in her mid-40s, met a man she believed was kind and gentle. Their relationship moved quickly, and he asked her to marry him in just a couple of months. She said yes, then moved into his home.

The woman drove an older vehicle, and her new husband convinced her to sell it. He later brought home a new car just for her. A few times, he lost his temper and yelled, and although it scared her, she chalked it up to stress and moved along.

He suggested, to save money, that she put her phone on his mobile plan. He even convinced her to quit her job and come to work for him. They got married in a small courthouse wedding. That night, he had a little too much to drink and after some odd comments, he pinned her against the wall, squeezed her face and let her know that he was the boss.

The next morning, he apologized, said he would never do that again and blamed the alcohol. But it did happen again, and it got worse. When she started thinking about leaving, she quickly realized she had been set up. Her car was in his name, her phone was in his name, she lived in his house and he was her employer.

She was embarrassed to tell the people closest to her that she had been so stupid. Her confidence and self-worth dwindled, and she didn't know what to do. Each incident was followed by a day of contrition that for a time gave her hope that there would be a positive change.

There wasn't.

There was a broken wrist, bruises, busted lips, with-

holding money, threats and mental chaos. The neighbors called the police once when they heard her scream, and even though she was covered in bruises, her clothes were torn and he fought the officers, he still got out of jail the next day and wasn't charged with anything.

The police were not going to save her, so she made a plan and got a job. She started saving all the cash she could. She thought it would take at least \$10,000 to set her up in a rental house and get the things she needed. She put an emergency overnight bag in her car ... a change of clothes, toothbrush etc.

One early July morning (at 3 a.m.) he dragged her sleeping body from her bed. Her head hit the floor, and it took a few seconds to realize what was happening. He kicked, punched and cursed her. But she determined it would be the last time. When he walked to the bathroom, she hoped she would have enough time to get to her car and go. She grabbed the purse that contained her freedom -- \$6,000 that she had squirreled away for 18 months -- and she ran to her car with him close behind. She locked the doors, cranked up, sped away and never went back.

You may have guessed by now that the woman I'm talking about is me. So I'm qualified to tell you why it's so hard for women to leave. These abusers are good at what they do; they're charming, and they've had a lot of practice manipulating women. Many times the women have children and nowhere to go. They are threatened, their children are threatened, their self-esteem is non-existent, they have no income. It is a helpless feeling.

In my case, people knew this person had a violent past, but they were too afraid of him to warn me and for the same reason offered no help when called on.

The threats these men make aren't empty. Battered-womensupportservice.com published a study that says 77% of women who are murdered by their partners are killed soon after the initial separation. Today, and every day after, in the United States, three women will be murdered by their significant other. There is good reason to be scared to leave. No, we don't like it. No, we're not ignorant. We just trusted the wrong people.



FLETCHER

COLUMNIST ■ MARC HYDEN

## Waffle House to MARTA, soccer fans see Georgia unvarnished

Policymakers were thrilled when a World Cup Committee chose Atlanta to host eight soccer matches. Being a host venue would put Atlanta back on the world stage, generate revenue and allow Georgians to showcase our amenities, like Mercedes-Benz Stadium.

As the matches approached, the refrain among local leaders has largely been the same: Georgia will be or is ready for prime-time. But that seems only partially true. Sure, we boast a world-class sports arena, the world's busiest airport and myriad hotels -- all of which are prepared for the events and influx of travelers.

Wholesome viral social media posts likewise show that the South's natural appeal is winning over foreign soccer fans. However, Atlanta's Achilles' heel predictably seems related to transportation, especially crime on MARTA, which has left officials demanding answers. More on that in a moment.

If you are part of the throngs of X users, then you may have come across @FreddyLA7 who apparently is a German soccer fan visiting the South. His viral posts show that without much effort, Southern charm is endearing foreigners to Georgia and the rest of the South.

His X account has been chronicling his trek through the Southeast as he experiences what we have to offer, including restaurants and gas stations, quirky cities and locals' kindness. "I love Americans. We were about to walk an hour to the stadium in the rain to save on an Uber, and the receptionist at the hotel we were parked in front of decided to drive us there," he tweeted.

We call that Southern hospitality, and his glowing reviews didn't end there. "Just had our first Waffle House experience at 1 a.m.," he said. "Great food, great prices, and friendly staff. 10/10, we will be coming back."

On a drive through Georgia, he came across the faux Bavarian city of Helen and remarked, "We found a German village in the mountains of north Georgia lol. I feel right at home." @FreddyLA7 also seemed impressed with Buc-ee's, Walmart, Chili's and so forth. At this point, we should make him an honorary Southerner, but it wasn't all good news.

He decided to give MARTA a try -- with a less than positive experience. "[Not going to lie] riding the metro

in Atlanta is a bit scary," he remarked. "If any of you guys are going to a game there, I'd probably recommend getting an Uber instead. It's like a [Grand Theft Auto] lobby; one person next to us taking off his shirt and declaring war on Donald Trump while another person is moonwalking across the platform."

Recent events on MARTA have also captured the attention of lawmakers. "Within the last week, there have been two violent stabbings and a shooting [on the MARTA system]. One of them being fatal resulting in the death of a 66-year-old grandmother, Margaret Swan. These events have continued to raise our concerns regarding security measures throughout the transit system," Senate Majority Leader Jason Anavitate and House Majority Leader Chuck Efration said in a June 7 letter to MARTA's interim general manager and CEO.

"As Atlanta prepares to welcome millions of visitors for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, these concerns take on even greater significance," the letter continued. "MARTA will play a central role in transporting residents and visitors to venues, hotels, and events associated with the tournament."

The majority leaders then requested information on how MARTA will safeguard employees and customers. MARTA's leadership evidently feels as though they have a plan.

"MARTA has rolled out a World Cup operations plan that adds more officers, longer shifts and outside support to handle the expected surge in riders and visitors. MARTA will use six-day workweeks with 12-hour shifts for officers, especially on match days and during other large World Cup events. MARTA will also deploy transit police officers from Denver to Atlanta for the tournament," an Atlanta TV station reported.

It is not clear whether this will be enough or not. Gov. Brian Kemp has offered additional state resources to Atlanta, and explained all Atlanta needs to do is ask for help and the state will provide it. While Georgia has clearly proven itself a gem to World Cup fans, no venue is perfect, and MARTA risks being a blemish on visitors' Atlanta experience. With the international spotlight on Atlanta, the pressure is on officials to ensure a safe and welcoming environment.

COLUMNIST ■ MICHAEL FERGUSON II

## A family reunion, an AR-15, and the truth America must face

In the 250th year of this nation's founding, many have commented on the significance of America's anniversary. There will be speeches, celebrations, patriotic songs, fireworks, and reflections on the meaning of freedom.

Yet I find myself once again with the task of speaking from a perspective or explained away. As a citizen of southwest Georgia, this hits close to home.

Lee County has now made national news because of an incident that should disturb every person of conscience. A black family that had gathered for a reunion -- a moment meant for love, laughter, memory and generational connection -- was allegedly confronted by racial slurs, gunfire, body armor, and an AR-15-style rifle.

A family reunion should never become a battlefield.

W.E.B. Du Bois captured the contradiction of the black experience in America when he wrote: "One ever feels his twoness -- an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder."

That twoness remains painfully relevant. Black Americans are expected to believe in the promise of America while repeatedly being forced to defend our right to simply exist within it. We are told to celebrate progress, and, yes, gains have been made. But the deeper truth is that we should not have to fight for gains concerning rights that were inherently ours from the beginning.

This nation's creed declares the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Those words were not meant to be seasonal. They were not meant to apply only when black citizens are quiet, agreeable or invisible. They were not meant to disappear when a black family gathers in a front yard, celebrates kinship, and enjoys the peace promised to every American household.

What allegedly happened in Leesburg is not merely a verbal altercation. When racial slurs are paired with an AR-15-style rifle and body armor, the matter moves beyond disagreement. It becomes racial intimidation. It becomes domestic terror in its most recognizable form. It becomes a reminder that while America prepares to celebrate 250 years of independence, black families are still being forced to demand the most basic independence of all: the right to live without fear.

This is why language matters. This is why truth matters. This is why we cannot sanitize racial violence until it becomes more comfortable for public consumption.

I salute my fellow veteran

who, while armed, returned fire and injured the coward who



FERGUSON

allegedly attacked his family. In that moment, the oath to defend this nation against foreign and domestic threats was not theoretical. It was met with courage, restraint and the lawful defense of innocent life.

Let us be clear: Black families have no desire to live in a state of war. We desire peace, safety, dignity and the full protection of the law. But when terror arrives armed, armored, and determined to harm innocent people, no family should be expected to stand defenseless and die.

That veteran's response should remind America of a hard truth: Black citizenship includes the right to self-defense. The Constitution does not stop at the edge of a black neighborhood, a black church, a black home or a black family reunion.

The black experience in America has always carried the burden of proving loyalty to a nation that has too often failed to prove equal loyalty in return. And yet, despite slavery, segregation, racial terror, redlining, voter suppression, mass incarceration, and modern political hostility, black America has continued to believe, build, serve, vote, pray, fight, forgive and lead.

That is not weakness. That is strength.

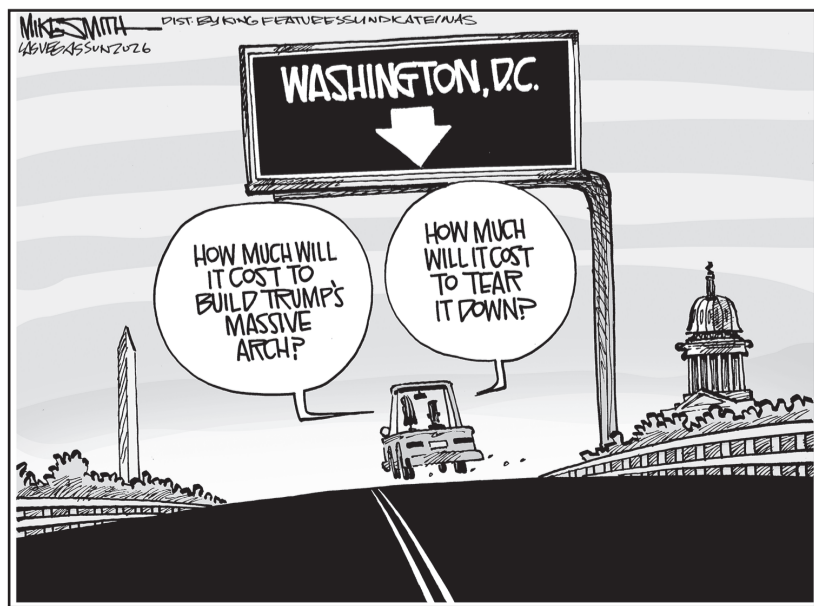
But strength should not be mistaken for silence. Forgiveness should not be mistaken for permission. Patience should not be mistaken for surrender.

The accused in this case placed many lives in danger. Although no death occurred, that was not because of any lack of effort on his part. When a man allegedly brings racial hatred, body armor, and an AR-15-style rifle to a family gathering, the community has every right to demand accountability. He should be prosecuted and, if convicted, punished to the full extent of the law.

In this 250th year, America must decide whether its founding words are ceremonial decorations or living obligations. If life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness means anything, it must mean that black families in Leesburg, Albany, Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, Houston, and every corner of this nation have the right to gather without being targeted, threatened, or terrorized.

We are Americans. We are descendants of people who built, bled, prayed, labored, fought, served and died in this land. Our claim to this nation is not borrowed. It is not conditional. It is not up for debate. And neither is our right to live.

We will be following this case closely. Justice must not be negotiated, minimized, or softened for public comfort. Govern yourselves accordingly.



# What to watch THURSDAY

June 18, 2026

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

## Golf: U.S. Open: First Round

USA Network, 6:30 a.m. Live

The U.S. Open Championship is at Shinnecock Hills Golf Club in Southampton, New York, for the second major tournament of the year. J.J. Spaun won his first major at last year's U.S. Open. USA Network and NBC air coverage through Sunday's final round.

## 2026 FIFA World Cup FOX & FS1, beginning at noon Live

Group play continues with Czechia vs. South Africa (Group A) in Atlanta on FOX, Switzerland vs. Bosnia-Herzegovina (Group B) in Los Angeles on FOX, Canada vs. Qatar (Group B) in Vancouver on FS1 and Mexico vs. Korea Republic (Group A) in Guadalajara on FOX.

## Scrabble

The CW, 8 p.m.

Players hope the right bonus tiles will align to give them a chance of winning \$10,000 in the new episode "Manifest Destiny." Craig Ferguson hosts.



## Surviving Earth

NBC, 8 p.m.

The nature documentary series continues with the new episode "When the Climate Broke," which follows an Ischigualastia hatchling who grows to be a leader of her herd, helping ensure the survival for future generations.

## Trivial Pursuit

The CW, 9 p.m.

A pair of college professors match wits in the six iconic Trivial Pursuit categories to try to win \$20,000 in the new episode "School Ties."

## House Hunters International

HGTV, 9 p.m.

Two new episodes debut tonight. In "Small Town Nama-Stay: Costa Rica and Cambodia," young travelers seek peace by combining yoga with back-to-basics living. Then, in "Melbourne Family Shift," two Texas dads facing a midlife crisis are ready for a new chapter in Melbourne, Australia.

## Killer Investigations

A&E, 10 p.m.

In "The First Date Murder," Milwaukee resident Sade Robinson, who was just 19, was reported missing when she didn't show up for work one day. When a woman's severed leg washed up on the shores of Lake Michigan, locals feared there might be another Jeffrey Dahmer on the loose.

## MOVIES YOU'LL LOVE



**Major League** (1989, Comedy) Tom Berenger, Charlie Sheen **Paramount, 6 p.m.**

**Minions** (2015, Children) Sandra Bullock, Jon Hamm **NICK, 7 p.m.**

**About Last Night** (2014, Romance-comedy) Kevin Hart, Michael Ealy **VH1, 8 p.m.**

**Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings** (2021, Action) Simu Liu, Awkwafina **FX, 8 p.m.**

**Twitches** (2005, Children) Tia Mowry, Tamera Mowry **Disney, 8 p.m.**

**The Goonies** (1985, Family) Sean Astin, Josh Brolin **Paramount, 8:30 p.m.**

**A Few Good Men** (1992, Drama) Tom Cruise, Jack Nicholson **BBC America, 9 p.m.**

**Desire: A Temptations Story** (2025, Suspense) Tasha Smith, Adrian Holmes **LMN, 10 p.m.**

**Coming to America** (1988, Comedy) Eddie Murphy, Arsenio Hall **VH1, 10:30 p.m.**

**The Wedding Singer** (1998, Romance-comedy) Adam Sandler, Drew Barrymore **E!, 10:30 p.m.**

**The Long Walk** (2025, Suspense) Cooper Hoffman, Mark Hamill **Starz, 10:45 p.m.**

**Gladiator** (2000, Historical drama) Russell Crowe, Joaquin Phoenix **AMC, 11 p.m.**

**Spider-Man: Homecoming** (2017, Action) Tom Holland, Michael Keaton **USA, 11 p.m.**

From the editors of **weekly tv** TV Weekly and tvinsider.com

## CATCH A CLASSIC

### Another Man's Poison

MOVIES!, 8 p.m.

Bette Davis and then-husband Gary Merrill lead the cast of this 1951 British film noir about cold-hearted mystery novelist Janet (Davis), who poisons her estranged husband to protect a secret affair but has her plans derailed by the arrival of his bank-robbler accomplice, George (Merrill). To avoid the police, George forces Janet into a blackmail-fueled masquerade by posing as her living husband, triggering a



psychological game of cat and mouse. Despite marrying less than a year and a half earlier, the stars' relationship was filled with hostility that dripped onto the screen, giving the film a sinister edge and standing out as one of Davis' more villainous roles.

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# What to watch FRIDAY

June 19, 2026

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

## 2026 FIFA World Cup FOX & FS1, beginning at 3 p.m. Live

The USA takes on Australia in a Group D match in Seattle on FOX to kick off the day's World Cup slate. Action continues with Scotland vs. Morocco (Group C) in Boston on FOX, Brazil vs. Haiti (Group C) in Philadelphia on FOX and Türkiye vs. Paraguay (Group D) in San Francisco on FS1.

## The Clash of Nations: Joe Louis vs. Max Schmeling

History, 8 p.m.

In this documentary special, see how Joe Louis and Max Schmeling's battles for boxing's heavyweight crown in 1936 and '38 became symbols of a global showdown between the United States' vision of democracy and Nazi Germany's violent fascism.

## Zillow Gone Wild

HGTV, 9:30 p.m.

Jack McBrayer's hunt for wild continues in the new episode "Guess Who's Coming to Tour" as he takes a peekaboo inside a Brooklyn brownstone and travels to Reunion, Florida, to tour a themed home with special guest David Bromstad.



'The Clash of Nations: Joe Louis vs. Max Schmeling'

HISTORY

## CATCH A CLASSIC

### Perry Mason: The Case of the Reckless Romeo

MOVIES!, 6 p.m.

It's Friday night, which means it's Perry Mason night on MOVIES! In 1992's *The Case of the Reckless Romeo*, sleazy tabloid talk show host Ted Mayne (the perfectly cast Geraldo Rivera) enrages several high-profile women after publishing a scandalous, kiss-and-tell memoir detailing his past affairs. When an actress publicly threatens him and Mayne is subsequently found stabbed to death, she is arrested as the prime suspect. Renowned defense



EVERETT COLLECTION

attorney Perry Mason (Raymond Burr) takes the case, using his trademark courtroom wit to untangle a web of blackmail, hidden motives and false identities to unmask the real killer.

## MOVIES YOU'LL LOVE



**Wonder** (2017, Drama) Julia Roberts, Owen Wilson **MGM, 6:05 p.m.**

**Red** (2010, Action) Bruce Willis, Morgan Freeman **SYFY, 6:30 p.m.**

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

**Beetlejuice Beetlejuice** (2024, Comedy) Michael Keaton, Winona Ryder **TBS, 8 p.m.**

**Good Burger** (1997, Comedy) Kel Mitchell, Kenan Thompson **VH1, 8 p.m.**

**The Little Mermaid** (2023, Family) Halle Bailey, Jonah Hauer-King **Freeform, 8 p.m.**

**Who Killed My Husband's Mistress** (2026, Suspense) Jenny Raven, Natalie Jane **LMN, 8 p.m.**

**Captain America: The Winter Soldier** (2014, Action) Chris Evans, Scarlett Johansson **AMC, 8:15 p.m.**

**Barbershop** (2002, Comedy) Ice Cube, Anthony Anderson **BET, 9 p.m.**

**Finding Neverland** (2004, Children) Johnny Depp, Kate Winslet **MGM, 9:55 p.m.**

**Scary Movie** (2000, Comedy) Shawn Wayans, Marlon Wayans **VH1, 10 p.m.**

**The Departed** (2006, Crime drama) Leonardo DiCaprio, Matt Damon **Paramount, 10 p.m.**

**Dirty Dancing** (1987, Romance) Jennifer Grey, Patrick Swayze **IFC, 10:45 p.m.**



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TV - What to watch

**CLOSE TO HOME** John McPherson



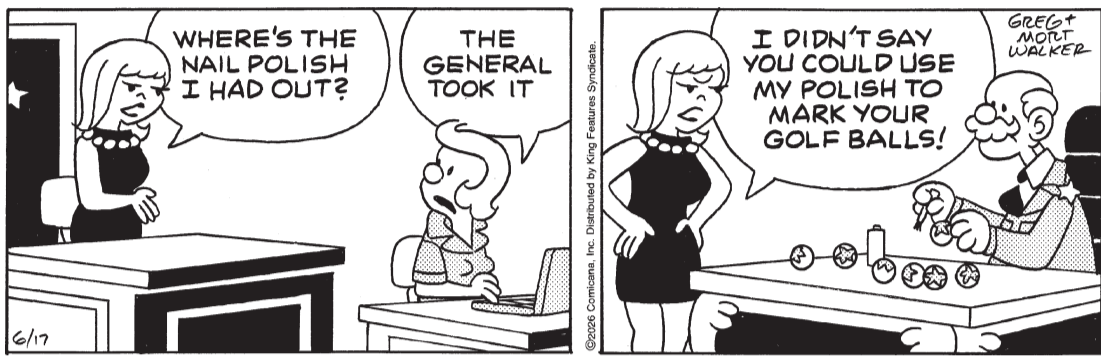
"I have HAD it with you kids and your violent video games!"

**THE FAMILY CIRCUS** Bill Keane



He always gets me a good seat at the parade.

**BEETLE BAILEY** Mort & Greg Walker



**BLONDIE** Dean Young & John Marshall



**THE BORN LOSER** Art & Chip Sansom



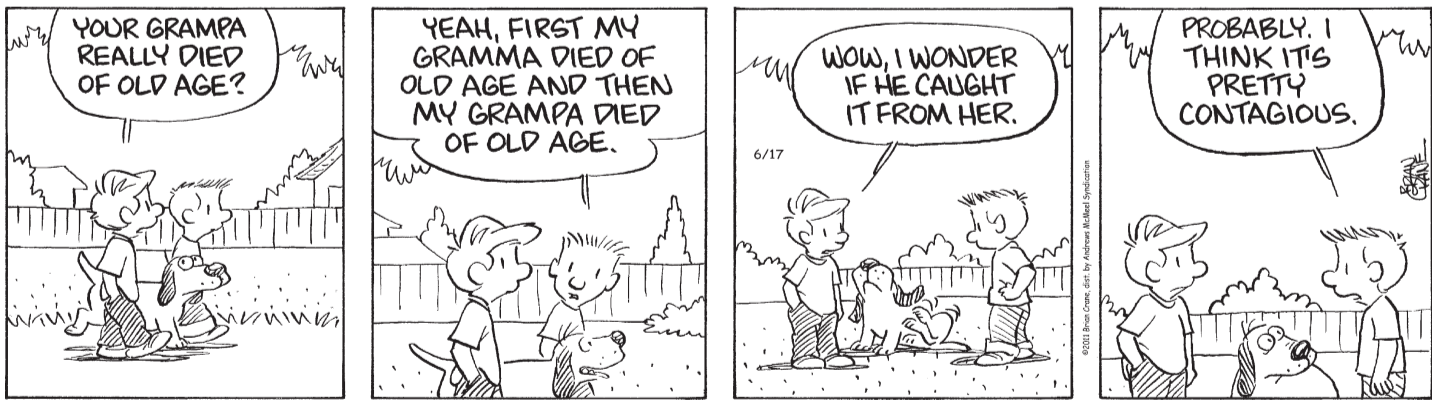
**ZITS** Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



**GARFIELD** Jim Davis



**PICKLES** Brian Crane



**Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle**

Edited by Patti Varol

- ACROSS**
- 1 Ctrl+V action
  - 6 Stage accessory
  - 10 Spring bloom
  - 14 Affirms
  - 15 \_\_\_ and hearty
  - 16 List that may drop with a click
  - 17 Golfer's gouge
  - 18 Leave out
  - 19 Bus charge
  - 20 Govt. support program
  - 21 Summons one's last bits of energy
  - 24 Wipe clean
  - 26 Feel unwell
  - 27 Sets of eight
  - 29 Complete fluke
  - 34 Italian grandma
  - 35 Lung sections
  - 36 Vietnamese soup
  - 37 Division d'une nation
  - 38 Congregation areas
  - 39 Mallorca, por ejemplo
  - 40 Off-rd. ride
  - 41 Meal with charoset and maror
  - 42 Drum major's stick
  - 43 Nursery outfits
  - 45 Poet Langston
  - 46 Japanese honorific
  - 47 River rental
  - 48 Feature of a prestige miniseries, perhaps
  - 53 Easter mo., often
  - 56 Luke's twin
  - 57 Lofgren of the E Street Band
  - 58 "Same old same old" feeling
  - 60 Like some energy bars
  - 61 Campus sports gp.
  - 62 Back in fashion
  - 63 Squeezes (out)
  - 64 Longings
  - 65 Like some energy bars
- DOWN**
- 1 Removable parts of some bras
  - 2 Alamo rival
  - 3 Cold War force that included the Baltic Fleet and the Caspian Flotilla
  - 4 Retired jersey number for Derek Jeter
  - 5 Erik who played Poncherello on "CHiPs"
  - 6 Give a buzz
  - 7 Los Angeles team
  - 8 Hodgepodge
  - 9 Terms of endearment
  - 10 "No more for me, thanks"
  - 11 500 sheets
  - 12 Memo header
  - 13 Takes legal action
  - 22 Aircraft carrier letters
  - 23 Bits of baloney
  - 25 Deliver a tirade
  - 27 Oscar winner Tatum
  - 28 Terra-\_\_\_ flowerpot
  - 29 Cooing birds
  - 30 Get a lift, but not a Lyft
  - 31 Increases both risk and reward, or what 3-, 9-, or 38-Down does?
  - 32 Olympic snowboarder Kim
  - 33 Zen paradoxes
  - 35 Stow, as cargo
  - 38 Parental control software
  - 39 Othello's false friend
  - 41 "Right now!"
  - 42 Players known to make sacrifices
  - 44 Op-ed pieces, e.g.
  - 45 \_\_\_been
  - 47 Durango dwellings
  - 48 Succulent with medicinal uses
  - 49 Showerhead problem
  - 50 Miller option
  - 51 Texas school with an owl mascot
  - 52 Tight-knit group
  - 54 Undiluted
  - 55 Laugh-a-minute type
  - 59 Green, in a way

**TODAY'S SOLUTION:**

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

06/17/26

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				
48	49	50						51	52			53	54	55
56								57				58	59	
60												62		
63												64		

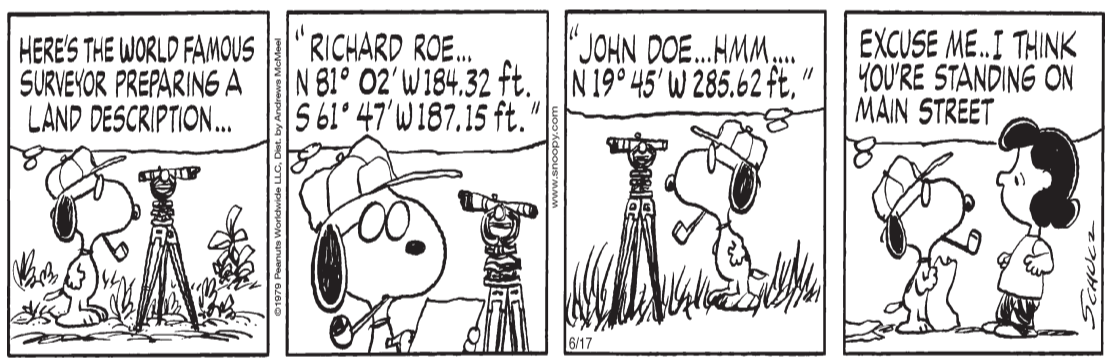
By Jeanne D. Breen ©2026 Tribune Content Agency, LLC

06/17/26

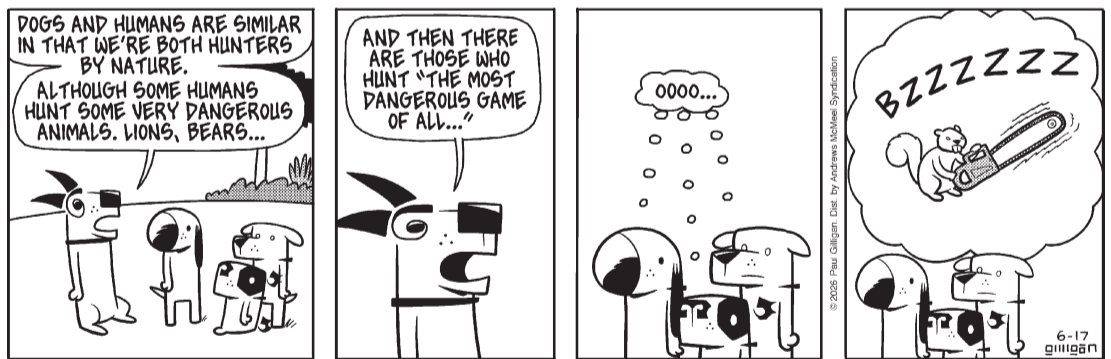
**HAGAR THE HORRIBLE** Chris Browne



**PEANUTS** Charles M. Schulz



**POOCH CAFE** Paul Gilligan



**WONDERWORD** By DAVID OUELLET

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

TALLINN, ESTONIA Solution: 9 letters

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

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Alexander, All-Linn, Baltic, Castle, Cave, Festival, Film, Gothic, Hanseatic, Harbor, Harju, Helsinki, Independence, Kadriorg, Kesklinn, Kumu, Laulupidu, Marzipan, Mikkel, Museum, Nevsky, Nomme, North, Old Town, Patkuli, Peter the Great, Pirita, Platform, Port, Ramparts, Reval, Rocca Al Mare, Toompea, Tour, Tram, Valjak, Vana

**TODAY'S ANSWER:** Cathedral

**SUDOKU**

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

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

**WHATZIT?**

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



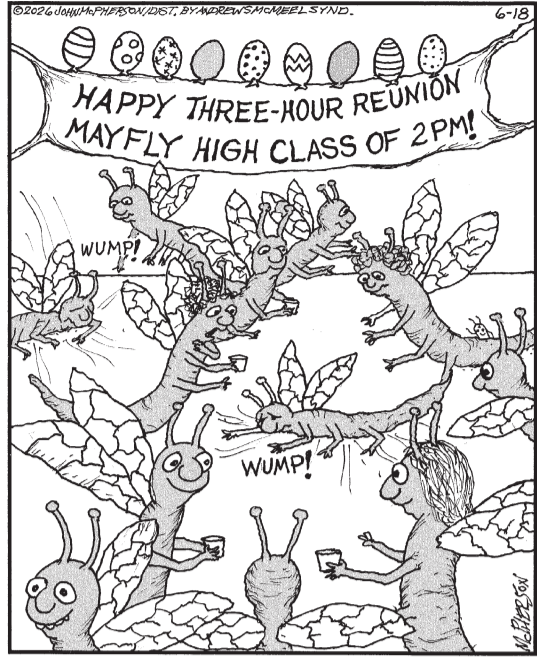
**SUDOKU INSTRUCTIONS:** Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.

**TODAY'S SUDOKU SOLUTION:**

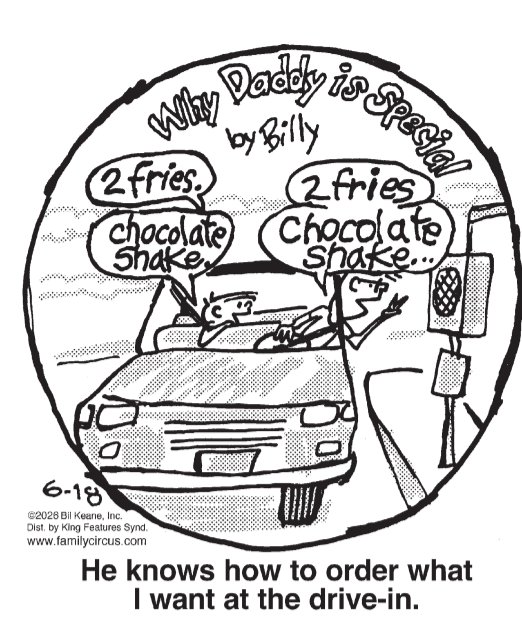
6	1	5	7	8	4	9	2	3
2	8	1	9	6	7	4	5	3
7	4	9	5	2	8	6	1	3
9	5	8	2	1	4	7	6	3
1	7	4	6	2	9	5	8	3
8	2	6	5	7	3	1	9	4
5	9	1	4	6	8	2	7	3
3	6	1	2	5	7	9	8	4
4	8	7	9	1	3	6	5	2

**TODAY'S WHATZIT SOLUTION:** Too many irons in the fire

**CLOSE TO HOME** John McPherson



**THE FAMILY CIRCUS** Bill Keane



**BEETLE BAILEY** Mort & Greg Walker



**BLONDIE** Dean Young & John Marshall



**THE BORN LOSER** Art & Chip Sansom



**ZITS** Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



**GARFIELD** Jim Davis



**PICKLES** Brian Crane



**CROSSWORD**

- ACROSS**
- 1 Murmuring sound
  - 4 —-faced lie
  - 8 Strongbox
  - 12 Barley bristle
  - 13 Inter —
  - 14 Walk with heavy steps
  - 15 Wildebeest
  - 16 Peel
  - 17 Fat
  - 18 Inherent nature
  - 20 Like Chicago
  - 21 Lawyer's charge
  - 22 Brooch
  - 23 Delicious
  - 26 Daydream
  - 30 A vital statistic
  - 31 Girl
  - 32 "Live and Let —"
  - 33 Balloon basket
  - 34 Cash dispenser, for short
- DOWN**
- 1 Zoo enclosure
  - 2 Has
  - 3 Burden of proof
  - 4 Friendly dinosaur

**TODAY'S SOLUTION:**

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

- 5 Juvenile heroine
- 6 Wrinkle
- 7 Family guy
- 8 Narrow wood piece
- 9 Actor — Alda
- 10 Tennessee Ernie —
- 11 Whirlpool
- 19 Newt
- 20 Come in first
- 22 Tropical tree
- 23 Diplomacy
- 24 Culture medium
- 25 Withered
- 26 Destiny
- 27 Name in Genesis
- 28 One way to address a king
- 29 "The — of Living Dangerously"
- 31 Burst of laughter
- 37 Stick
- 38 Billiards stick
- 39 Labored
- 40 Doctrine
- 42 Polish
- 43 Players on a stage
- 44 Palo —, California
- 45 Invent
- 46 — de grace
- 47 Granular snow field
- 48 Abbr. in citations
- 49 Pull
- 51 Rds.

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

**HAGAR THE HORRIBLE** Chris Browne



**PEANUTS** Charles M. Schulz



**POOCH CAFE** Paul Gilligan



**SUDOKU**

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

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

**WHATZIT?**

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

**ton C**

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

TODAY'S WHATZIT SOLUTION: Wait and see

**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.

DR. DRE (MUSICIAN) Solution: 9 letters

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

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Actor, Adult, Aftermath, Album, Andre Jr., Beats, Billboard, Blues, Chronic, Compton, Concrete Roots, Cover, Curtis, Drum, Firm, Game, Grammys, Hip-hop, Jewell, King T, LaTanya, Marcel, Mel Man, Music, Nicole, NWA, Producer, Radio, Rapper, Record, Rhythm, Shakur, Single, Snoop Dogg, So Bad, Studio, Truice, Truly, Verse, Wash, West Coast, Young

TODAY'S ANSWER: Brickhard

# American Legion Post 30 presents flag program with Navy JROTC cadets

## Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

**ALBANY** – American Legion Post 30 members and guests were treated to an informative and patriotic presentation this week as Post 30 Adjutant Gary Fowler delivered a detailed program on the history and meaning of each flag flown throughout America's past. The event offered a look at how our nation's identity has evolved through the flags that have represented it.

The program featured a chronological display of the

many flags that have flown over the United States from early colonial designs to the familiar Stars and Stripes of today. Fowler explained the origins, symbolism and historical context of each flag, giving attendees a deeper appreciation for the struggles, triumphs and ideals that shaped our country.

Adding to the ceremony's impact, the flags were presented by the Navy JROTC cadets of Lee County High School.

"These patriotic programs help ensure that younger generations understand the sig-

nificance of our nation's symbols," Fowler said. "Their involvement reflects the strong bond between the American Legion and our community's youth leadership programs."

The event served as Post 30's Flag Day celebration, a reminder of the enduring values represented by our nation's flags and the importance of passing that knowledge on to the next generation.

American Legion Post 30 officials extended their appreciation to Fowler for his dedication to educating the community, and to the Navy JROTC cadets for their sup-



Special Photo: American Legion Post 30

Post 30 Adjutant Gary Fowler is joined by Lee County Navy JROTC cadets, from left, Rylee Summerlin, Georgia Waters, Madison Smith, Braylyn Miller, Hailey Benstine, Scott White, Aiden Alday and Isaiah Waters during Post 30's recent Flag Day program.

port in honoring America's heritage.

For additional informa-

tion about the American Legion and the many programs and services the organization

provides to veterans and the community, contact the local post at (229) 435-5450.

# Congress Votes

## By Targeted News Service

news@albanyherald.com

**WASHINGTON** – Here's a look at how Georgia's members of Congress voted over the previous week.

Along with its roll call votes this week, the Senate also passed the Recruiting Families Using Data Act (S. 162) to improve foster and adoptive parent recruitment and retention; and the Cross-Boundary Wildfire Solutions Act (S. 2033) to require a study on existing programs, rules and authorities that enable or inhibit wildfire mitigation across land ownership boundaries on federal and non-federal land.

The House also passed these measures: the Bonuses for Cost-Cutters Act (H.R. 428) to enhance the authority under which federal agencies may pay cash awards to employees for making cost saving disclosures; the Block the Use of Transatlantic Technology in Iranian Made Drones Act (H.R. 2505) to require the development of strategies and options to prevent the export to Iran of certain technologies related to unmanned aircraft systems; the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom Reauthorization Act (H.R. 1744) to reauthorize the Commission through 2028; the Tehran Incitement to Violence Act (H.R. 6230) to designate certain individuals as specially designated global terrorists; and the Stop Illegal Fishing Act (H.R. 6338) to require the imposition of sanctions on foreign persons and foreign vessels that engage in illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing.

## HOUSE VOTES:

**BORDER SECURITY FUNDING:** The House has passed the Secure America Act (S. 2) sponsored by Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C. The bill would provide about \$68 billion through Fiscal 2029 for the Customs and Border Protection and Immigration and Customs Enforcement agencies, and border and immigra-

tion enforcement activities at other agencies of the Homeland Security Department. The vote, on June 9, was 214 yeas to 212 nays.

**YEAS:** Loudermilk R-GA (11th), Allen R-GA (12th), Scott, Austin R-GA (8th), Clyde R-GA (9th), Carter R-GA (1st), Jack R-GA (3rd), McCormick R-GA (7th), Collins R-GA (10th)

**NAYS:** Bishop D-GA (2nd), McBath D-GA (6th), Johnson D-GA (4th), Williams D-GA (5th)

**FRAUD AND EMERGENCY SPENDING:** The House has passed the Taxpayer Resources Used in Emergencies Accountability Act (H.R. 8466) sponsored by Rep. Andy Biggs, R-Ariz., to require federal agencies to make plans for preventing wasteful and fraudulent spending under a federally declared emergency, such as a hurricane or other natural disaster. Biggs said: "It is time to bring some accountability to our government so that we stop losing untold amounts of hard-earned taxpayer money." The vote, on June 8, was unanimous with 384 yeas.

**YEAS:** Entire Georgia delegation

**TRAINING FOR FRAUD PREVENTION:** The House has passed the Federal Fraud Prevention Workforce Training Act (H.R. 8428) sponsored by Rep. Glenn Grothman, R-Wis., to require the adoption of anti-fraud training programs to be undertaken by managers of federal government programs. Grothman said currently, "too many federal employees and program administrators are left without training, guidance, or tools they need to identify risks before taxpayer dollars go out the door. The bill takes a commonsense step to fix that." The vote, on June 8, was unanimous with 393 yeas.

**YEAS:** Entire Georgia delegation.

**COLLECTIVE BARGAINING CONTRACTS:** The House has passed the Faster Labor Contracts Act (H.R. 5408) sponsored by Rep. Donald Norcross, D-N.J., to adopt measures with the goal of speeding the



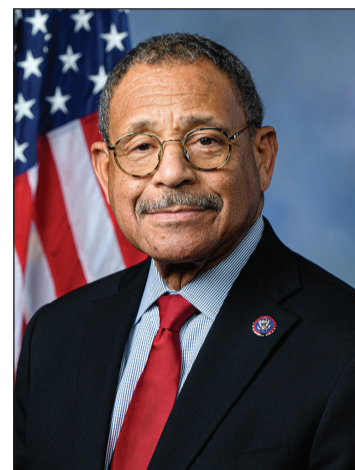
Jon Ossoff



Raphael Warnock



Austin Scott



Sanford Bishop

finalization of initial collective bargaining contracts between newly organized union workers and their employers. Norcross cited the advantage against workers that an employer can win by delaying contract adoption, and said that "by leveling the playing field, the Faster Labor Contracts Act would be the most significant new protection for workers since before World War II." The vote, on June 9, was 230 yeas to 193 nays.

**NAYS:** Loudermilk R-GA (11th), Allen R-GA (12th), Scott, Austin R-GA (8th), Clyde R-GA (9th), Jack R-GA (3rd), McCormick R-GA (7th), Collins R-GA (10th)

**YEAS:** Bishop D-GA (2nd), McBath D-GA (6th), Johnson D-GA (4th), Williams D-GA (5th)

**NOT VOTING:** Carter R-GA (1st)

**FEDERAL AID TO COLLEGE STUDENTS:** The House has passed the No Aid for Ghost Students Act (H.R. 7892) sponsored by Rep. Burgess Owens, R-Utah, to require the Education Department to use methods for preventing identity theft by fraudulent users of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) program for college students. Owens cited the need to "identify suspicious student aid applications and ensure these applicants are who they say they are before dollars go out the door." A bill opponent, Rep. Christian D. Menefee, D-Texas, said minorities and members of disadvantaged groups would be over-represented among those students who are wrongly flagged by a fraud detection algorithm."

The vote, on June 10, was 249 yeas to 172 nays.

**YEAS:** Loudermilk R-GA (11th), Bishop D-GA (2nd), Allen R-GA (12th), Scott, Austin R-GA (8th), Clyde R-GA (9th), Jack R-GA (3rd), McCormick R-GA (7th), Collins R-GA (10th)

**NAYS:** McBath D-GA (6th), Johnson D-GA (4th), Williams D-GA (5th)

**NOT VOTING:** Carter R-GA (1st)

**PREVENTING FRAUDULENT PAYMENTS:** The House has passed the Fraud Prevention and Accountability Act (H.R. 8312) sponsored by Rep. Pete Sessions, R-Texas, to develop various efforts at the Treasury Department, including a new inspector general office, aimed at auditing federal government spending and detecting and preventing fraudulent payments. An opponent, Rep. James R. Walkinshaw, D-Va., said: "This bill would undercut independent inspectors general, which is one of the most powerful tools we have to combat waste, fraud, and abuse." The vote, on June 10, was 240 yeas to 181 nays.

**YEAS:** Loudermilk R-GA (11th), Allen R-GA (12th), Scott, Austin R-GA (8th), Clyde R-GA (9th), Jack R-GA (3rd), McCormick R-GA (7th), Collins R-GA (10th)

**NAYS:** Bishop D-GA (2nd), McBath D-GA (6th), Johnson D-GA (4th), Williams D-GA (5th)

**NOT VOTING:** Carter R-GA (1st)

**FRAUD PREVENTION METHODS:** The House has passed the Stopping Fraudulent Payments Act (H.R. 8464)

sponsored by Rep. James Comer, R-Ky., to set out several required methods for government agencies to adopt for halting payments if they suspect an elevated risk of fraud is present. The vote, on June 10, was 218 yeas to 200 nays.

**YEAS:** Loudermilk R-GA (11th), Allen R-GA (12th), Scott, Austin R-GA (8th), Clyde R-GA (9th), Jack R-GA (3rd), McCormick R-GA (7th), Collins R-GA (10th)

**NAYS:** Bishop D-GA (2nd), McBath D-GA (6th), Johnson D-GA (4th), Williams D-GA (5th)

**NOT VOTING:** Carter R-GA (1st)

**FISA PROGRAMS:** The House has rejected a bill (H.R. 9238) sponsored by Rep. Rick Crawford, R-Ark., that would have extended, until July 2, surveillance programs authorized by the seventh title of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, including the Section 702 program. Crawford said the temporary extension of Section 702 was needed given the country's "elevated threat level with FIFA World Cup games beginning this week, America's 250th birthday and related celebrations coming up this summer, Iran and its proxies are targeting U.S. military personnel daily." The vote, on June 11, was 198 yeas to 218 nays.

**YEAS:** Loudermilk R-GA (11th), Allen R-GA (12th), Scott, Austin R-GA (8th), Carter R-GA (1st), Jack R-GA (3rd), McCormick R-GA (7th), Collins R-GA (10th)

**NAYS:** Bishop D-GA (2nd), Clyde R-GA (9th), McBath D-GA (6th), Johnson D-GA (4th), Williams D-GA (5th)

**STATEMENT ON FRAUD:** The House has passed a bill (H. Res. 1335) sponsored by Rep. Pat Fallon, R-Texas, expressing the sense of the House that adopting widespread fraud and improper payment prevention efforts in the federal government would have a meaningful benefit for financial prosperity. A bill opponent, Rep. James R. Walkinshaw, D-Va., said it "turns what should be a bipartisan effort into a partisan political attack that points the finger only at Democratic-led states and governors while pretending the problem does not exist in Republican-led states." The vote, on June 11, was 235 yeas to 177 nays, with 2 yeas pending.

**YEAS:** Loudermilk R-GA (11th), Allen R-GA (12th), Scott, Austin R-GA (8th), Clyde R-GA (9th), Carter R-GA (1st), Jack R-GA (3rd), McCormick R-GA (7th), Collins R-GA (10th)

**NAYS:** Bishop D-GA (2nd), McBath D-GA (6th), Johnson D-GA (4th), Williams D-GA (5th)

## SENATE VOTES:

**KANSAS JUDGE:** The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Anthony Mattivi to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for Kansas. Mattivi has headed Kansas's Bureau of Investigation for three years, after two decades as an assistant U.S. attorney for the Kansas district. A supporter, Sen. Jerry Moran, R-Kan., said Mattivi "has demonstrated his devotion to serving Kansans and improving the judicial system, and I am confident his experience in the courtroom and in law enforcement will aid him well on the federal bench." The vote, on June 9, was 51 yeas to 46 nays.

**NAYS:** Ossoff D-GA, Warnock D-GA

**SECOND KANSAS JUDGE:** The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Anthony J. Powell to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for Kansas. Powell had been Kansas's solicitor general for three years after a decade as an appeals court judge in the state; he was previously a legislator in the Kansas House for four terms. A supporter, Sen. Jerry Moran, R-Kan., said: "I believe he has the qualifications, the integrity, and the commitment necessary to serve Kansans." The vote, on June 10, was 50 yeas to 44 nays.

**NAYS:** Ossoff D-GA, Warnock D-GA

**STATE DEPARTMENT:** The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Brock Dahl to be the State Department's legal adviser. Most recently a lawyer at the Freshfields law firm, Dahl had been a lawyer at the National Security Agency and Treasury Department, and at several international law firms. The vote, on June 11, was 49 yeas to 44 nays.

**NAYS:** Ossoff D-GA, Warnock D-GA

## PUBLIC NOTICE BUDGETS ADOPTION FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGETS DOUGHERTY COUNTY

The proposed budgets will be adopted in the Special Called Session of the Dougherty County Board of Commissioners on **June 29, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.** in Room 100 of the Government Center, 222 Pine Avenue. The proposed FY2027 Budgets are the General, Alternate Dispute Resolution, Special Services District, Solid Waste Enterprise, Confiscated Assets, DHS Building Lease, Lease-Commercial, Grants, Law Library, Drug Abuse Treatment Education, ARPA, and Opioid Epidemic Litigation. The proposed budgets are available for review in the County Administrator's Office in Room 540 of the Government Center, 222 Pine Avenue or online at [www.dougherty.ga.us](http://www.dougherty.ga.us) under the Finance Department section.

## Oklahoma sends Bulldogs to rematch

By Joe Whitfield  
Sports Editor

OMAHA, Neb. — For the first time in more than a month, Georgia walked off the field on the losing end.

Oklahoma used a three-run first inning and held off a late Georgia rally Monday night to claim a 4-3 victory in the College World Series, sending the third-seeded Bulldogs into an elimination game against Texas.

Georgia (52-13) had won nine straight games entering Monday's matchup, a streak that dated back to May 16. Now the Bulldogs find themselves in a familiar position against a familiar opponent.

Texas, which Georgia defeated 7-1 in its College World Series opener, advanced through the elimination bracket by knocking out Alabama and earned a rematch with the Bulldogs. The winner would keep its national championship hopes alive while the loser would see its season come to an end.

The road ahead is daunting. The winner of the Georgia-Texas game must beat Oklahoma on consecutive days to reach the College World Series championship series.

"We've got to clean up a few things,

and we'll be ready to go tomorrow night," Georgia coach Wes Johnson said. "I thought it was a really good ball game tonight. We had some opportunities to get back into the game, and we didn't cash in on those."

Georgia nearly did. After falling behind 3-0 in the first inning, the Bulldogs chipped away throughout the night behind a trio of home runs.

Kenny Ishikawa connected for a two-out solo homer in the fourth inning to get Georgia on the board. Oklahoma answered in the bottom half of the inning when Brendan Brock launched a solo shot to restore the Sooners' three-run cushion at 4-1.

Brennan Hudson led off the fifth with his 22nd home run of the season to cut the deficit to 4-2.

Then came another big swing from Daniel Jackson.

The Golden Spikes Award finalist blasted his team-leading 32nd home run of the year with one out in the eighth inning, a 447-foot drive that trimmed Oklahoma's lead to 4-3 and gave the Bulldogs life. The homer was Georgia's 178th of the season.

But the Bulldogs couldn't find the tying run.

Oklahoma reliever Jackson Cleveland escaped trouble in both the eighth and ninth innings to record his ninth save. Georgia put runners aboard in its final two at-bats, but Cleveland retired Jackson on a fly ball to right field with two runners on to end the game.

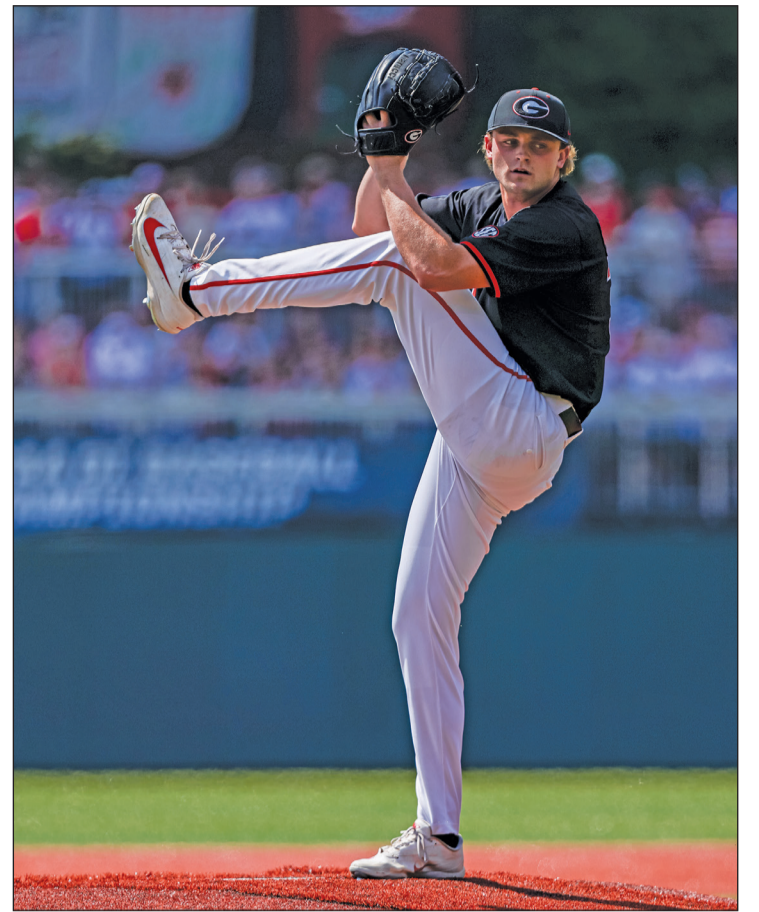
While the offense searched for answers early, graduate right-hander Caden Aoki kept Georgia within striking distance.

After Oklahoma scored three times in the opening inning, Aoki settled down and delivered one of the most important outings of Georgia's postseason run. He worked eight innings, allowing four runs on eight hits while striking out six and walking none.

"I thought Caden was awesome tonight," Johnson said. "We had a hiccup there in the first and for him to finish the game for us was massive as you look forward in saving your bullpen."

The game also featured a College World Series first. Georgia shortstop Kolby Branch and Oklahoma second

See **BULLDOGS**, 10A



Special Photo: UGAAA

Georgia pitcher Joey Volchko pitched a complete game and struck out 15 Longhorn batters in the Bulldogs' first game in the College World Series. Georgia and Texas were scheduled to face each other again in an elimination game Tuesday night in Omaha.



Special Photo: Braves.com

Atlanta Braves manager Walt Weiss watches from the dugout during a game this season. Weiss said the Braves' winning culture has helped veteran newcomers such as Mauricio Dubón, Dominic Smith and Martín Pérez thrive in Atlanta.

## Braves enjoying 'best version' of veteran newcomers

By Mark Bowman  
Braves.com

NEW YORK — Just one day before legendary Atlanta rap group OutKast dropped its seminal 1998 album "Aquemini," Walt Weiss was putting the finishing touches on his first campaign with the Braves at 34 years old in his 12th year in the big leagues. Weiss had won the AL Rookie of the Year with the Athletics in 1988, but it wasn't until that first season in Atlanta that the former shortstop earned his only All-Star selection, slashing .280/.386/.343 on one of the more famous squads of the 1990s.

During the Braves' series against the Mets this past weekend, Atlanta's current manager was asked about why there seems to be a tradition of veteran players finding a welcoming and productive home in the organization.

"It's hard to say," Weiss said. "I do think even going back to the times when I played, Atlanta typically tends to get the best version of guys. I do think there's something to do with the winning culture here, and I think it elevates a player's game. We've done a lot of winning here over the [past] few decades.

"So, when I think guys come in, it's infectious. And their mindset is just trying to help us continue to win."

This 2026 Braves team fits neatly into that legacy. A slew of newcomers -- Mauricio Dubón,

Dominic Smith, Martín Pérez, Mike Yastrzemski and Jorge Mateo -- have joined the fray to make positive contributions up and down the lineup, all across the field.

And for a club that's bolted out to the best record in the Majors with a first-year manager and a number of high-profile names like Ronald Acuña Jr., Spencer Strider and Sean Murphy on the injured list, there's an uncanny timing to the first-time Braves' biggest moments this season. And they feel it too once they arrive.

"When I was on different teams and I saw this team playing, the way they enjoy the game -- it's different than other teams," Pérez said on Saturday after tossing 5 1/3 innings of one-run ball to help stop a three-game losing streak. "So, I got here, and it felt like I was here before. It made me feel good."

It'd be easy enough just to point to cumulative totals like fWAR to quantify the impact of the new players' infusion. Pérez is third in fWAR among Braves starters with 0.8 -- behind Chris Sale and Bryce Elder -- and lowered his ERA to 2.90 after Saturday's 3-1 win -- his lowest mark through 14 games in his career since 2022. Dubón is fifth among position players with 1.5 fWAR, with Smith and Yastrzemski trailing behind as statistically positive presences.

See **BRAVES**, 10A



Special Photo: UGAAA

The Georgia women's track and field team celebrates after capturing its second consecutive NCAA Outdoor National Championship in Eugene, Ore. The Lady Bulldogs scored 50 points and were powered by collegiate-record performances from Adaejah Hodge and Dejana Oakley.

## Track and Field: Georgia women repeat as national champions

Staff Reports  
news@albanyherald.com

EUGENE, Ore. — Powered by a pair of collegiate records, the Lady Bulldogs scored 50 points to win their second consecutive outdoor title to wrap up the NCAA Championships Saturday.

Redshirt freshman Adaejah Hodge, who set a collegiate record in the 100-meter dash on Thursday during the semifinal, returned to establish a fresh No. 1 all-time national mark in the 200m final. Three events before, senior teammate Dejana Oakley locked down the NCAA record in the 400m to also pick up a national individual crown.

This marks the Lady Bulldogs' second straight national title after registering the

2025 championship. The program now has 10 top five finishes all-time.

Florida finished second in the women's race with 43 points, Arkansas was third with 38 and Oregon finished fourth on its home track with 36 points.

The Georgia men finished second behind Arkansas on Friday, marking the Bulldogs' top finish since winning the 2018 crown.

Oakley, a senior from Jamaica, parlayed her runner-up finish in 2025 into a gold medal in the 400m with a collegiate record finish (48.79). This bumped Oakley at the No. 2 spot past the 48.89 set in 2024 for the nation's No. 1 all-time finish.

Hodge, who was the runner-up in the 100m final, blasted a 21.68 to leave Kentucky's Abby Steiner (21.80 -- 2022) in a

distance second for the record. The legendary Gwen Torrence (1987) and Debbie Ferguson (1998) were the other two women's 200m champions in school history prior to Saturday.

The Georgia women's track and field team joins women's swim and dive, (1999-2001), equestrian (2008-10), gymnastics (2005-09) and women's tennis (2025-26) as UGA squads to capture at least three straight national championships counting track's 2025 outdoor, 2026 indoor and 2026 outdoor titles. Georgia's Director of Track & Field Caryl Smith Gilbert joins Texas' Bev Kearney (1998-99) as the only female coaches to win two consecutive women's outdoor

See **CHAMPIONS**, 10A

## Spaun seeks repeat at U.S. Open

Field Level Media

J.J. Spaun says he's trying to replicate the same blueprint that delivered him to the U.S. Open title last year. Unfortunately, his daughter is following suit.

Spaun spent the early hours of Father's Day 2025 finding a CVS to get medicine for one of his daughters, who had a stomach bug and was vomiting. That was hours before Spaun shot a final-round 72 and made a 64-foot birdie putt on No. 18 to win his first major.

Speaking to reporters Monday at Shinnecock Hills Golf Club, Spaun was asked if he had two healthy kids this week. Fortright as usual, Spaun said his older daughter Emerson had "been through the ringer" lately. "She broke her collarbone at the Trust (Championship), so like a month ago at the daycare," Spaun said. "Then she had a tooth pulled on Wednesday, poor thing."

Ironically, Spaun referred to "taking your medicine" soon after that, but in the figurative sense.

Resilience, he said, would be the asset he hopes to carry over from Oakmont to Shinnecock Hills as he eyes a repeat this week.

"It was nice to get off to a really hot start in the first round, but I think that's the biggest thing at U.S. Opens is being resilient, taking all the punches that are thrown at you, taking your medicine," Spaun said.

"It's not going to be easy golf. It's not going to be ho-hum, very boring golf. But the way I persevered and was resilient last year, I've been trying to use that since then, as well."

Spaun has maintained his position as a top-10 golfer in the world rankings with some respectable play this year, including a victory at the Valero Texas Open in April. But he has missed the cut at the first two majors of 2026.

Spaun pointed to the greens at Aronimink Golf Club, the site of the PGA Championship, as his downfall.



Special Photo: Bill Streicher-Imagn Images

Defending U.S. Open champion J.J. Spaun plays a shot during a practice round at Shinnecock Hills Golf Club, where he will attempt to defend his title this week.

"I just think I got a little caught up in the putting portion of Aronimink," he said. "My putting has been very hot and cold this year. That's kind of been the only thing holding me back."

"I got too caught up in, like, thinking I was the only one putting poorly at Aronimink,

See **SPAUN**, 10A

# Pearce rejoins Falcons for minicamp

## Field Level Media

ATLANTA — Atlanta Falcons linebacker James Pearce Jr. was back with the team this week as the Falcons wrapped up their mandatory minicamp, marking his first extended participation in team activities since resolving the immediate legal issues stemming from an offseason domestic dispute case.

Pearce, 22, reported to the Falcons' facility earlier this week and took part in the organization's final formal workouts before training camp opens next month. The former first-round



Special Photo: Mark J. Rebilas-Imagn Images

Atlanta Falcons linebacker James Pearce Jr. rejoined the team during mandatory minicamp this week as he prepares for his second NFL season. Pearce led the Falcons with 10.5 sacks in 2025.

draft pick spent much of the spring away from the

team during voluntary workouts while his legal situation played out. In May, Pearce entered a pretrial intervention program related to felony charges that arose from a Feb. 7 incident involving his former girlfriend, WNBA player Rickea Jackson.

Under the terms of the court-supervised diversion program, Pearce must successfully complete a year-long program before he can petition to have the charges dismissed.

With the legal matter now being handled through the intervention process, Pearce's attention shifts back

to football and his role in the Falcons' defense heading into the 2026 season.

Atlanta invested heavily in Pearce's future when it traded back into the first round of the 2025 NFL Draft to select the former Tennessee standout with the No. 26 overall pick. The move cost the Falcons a 2026 first-round selection.

The investment paid immediate dividends during Pearce's rookie campaign. He led Atlanta with 10.5 sacks and 16 quarterback hits while emerging as one of the league's promising young pass rushers.



Special Logo

## Andrew College joins Appalachian Athletic Conference

### Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

CUTHBERT — Andrew College has been approved to join the Appalachian Athletic Conference (AAC), a move that marks another major step in the institution's transition to the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA).

The AAC Council of Presidents approved Andrew's membership during its annual meeting on June 5. The college will become a football affiliate member alongside Faulkner University of Alabama.

AAC Commissioner Bill Popp said the conference is excited to welcome both institutions as it continues to expand its football footprint.

"We are so excited to add both Faulkner University and Andrew College to the AAC football family," Popp said in a statement. "Both fit the mission of the AAC and help us continue to grow football in a positive way and help to create a very competitive environment for all of our teams."

With the addition of Andrew and Faulkner, the conference will feature nine football-playing institutions beginning with the 2027 season. The league's football membership will include Bluefield University (Virginia), Kentucky Christian University, the University of Pikeville (Kentucky), Point University, Reinhardt University, the University of Rio Grande (Ohio), Union Commonwealth University (Kentucky), Andrew College and Faulkner.

The AAC began sponsoring football as a championship sport in 2022 and has experienced steady growth since its inaugural season. Reinhardt has dominated the league during that span, winning or sharing each of the conference's four football championships, including a shared title with Pikeville in 2024.

For Andrew College, the conference invitation represents another milestone as the school prepares to officially join the NAIA on July 1. The move is expected to provide the Tigers with a more stable competitive home and expanded opportunities as the athletic department continues its transition to four-year athletics competition.

Andrew College officials view the AAC membership as an important piece of the institution's long-term athletic growth strategy as it prepares for the next chapter in the school's athletic history.



Special Photo: Imagn Images

Atlanta's Angel Reese drives to the basket against Toronto defenders during the Dream's 102-77 victory over the Tempo on Sunday in a WNBA Commissioner's Cup game. Reese finished with 15 points and 17 rebounds for her ninth double-double of the season.

## Dream top Toronto after sluggish start

### Field Level Media

Allisha Gray led all scorers with 26 points and Angel Reese produced her ninth double-double of the season with 15 points and 17 rebounds as the Atlanta Dream won 102-77 over the host Toronto Tempo on Sunday afternoon in a Commissioner's Cup matchup.

Gray made five 3-pointers and dished out seven assists while Rhyne Howard made four treys and scored 24 to go along with six rebounds and three blocks. Isobel Borlase poured in 17 points off the bench for the Dream (9-4, 4-2 Commissioner's Cup), who have won three of their last four games.

Isabelle Harrison scored 17 points for the expansion Tempo (7-7, 2-3) before her day ended with 6:05 left in the third quarter after wrapping up Reese and fouling her hard near the basket. Harrison was called for a Flagrant 2 and ejected.

Julie Allemand tallied 13 points and six assists for Toronto, which has lost two straight. Maria Conde and Brittney Sykes scored 12 and 11 points, respectively.

Atlanta opened the second half with five straight points, including a 3-pointer by Gray that stretched its lead to 52-39 at the 8:43 mark.

Toronto was within eight at 62-54 with 2:06 left after Allemand knocked down a 3-pointer but Howard answered with a three-ball as Atlanta

carried a 70-59 lead into the fourth. The Dream pulled away in the final quarter, outscoring the Tempo 32-18.

This was the teams' first-ever meeting. The Tempo started strong, making six of their first 10 shots, including a 3-pointer in the corner from Harrison, and led 14-6 with four minutes left in the first quarter.

Sykes' jumper less than a minute later gave the Tempo their first double-digit advantage at 16-6.

The Dream struggled to answer, missing their first nine attempts from 3-point range before Howard buried a deep shot with 1:29 left that ended an 8-0 run and cut the Toronto lead to 19-9.

The Tempo led 25-13 after one quarter but the Dream opened the second quarter on a 5-0 run, getting within 25-18 after Gray drilled a 3-pointer with 9:14 to go.

The Dream kept the pressure on and closed their gap to 30-26 after Borlase knocked down a long range shot with 7:04 remaining in the half.

Borlase tied the score at 30-all on a layup at the 6:15 mark. The Dream grabbed their first lead when Naz Hillmon drew a foul on a made layup and hit the ensuing free throw for a 35-33 lead with 4:53 to play.

Howard finished the half strong, scoring inside and drawing a foul with three seconds left. Her free throw helped Atlanta cap a quarter where it outscored Toronto 34-14 and led 47-39 at the break.

## From 9A SPAUN

but apparently everyone was, like, three-putting. I think if I would have just accepted that, I would have done less of three-putting, and maybe it would have been a different week."

It was another example of Spaun's mental game being at the center of his result, whether good or bad.

Spaun, 35, said becoming a major champion had flipped the script from playing with nothing to lose to playing like he had to validate his newfound ranking and achievements.

He took inspiration from — where else — his daughter, and the key phrase from one of her favorite Disney movies, "Frozen."

"Yeah, the whole 'Let It Go,'

that was definitely a mantra that I had kind of all year," Spaun said.

"... I felt like every week at the start of the year I had to be that guy that needed to show up and play well and kind of validate where I was in the world rankings and what I had achieved this season. So it was the complete opposite of letting it go. I put more pressure on myself, put way more emphasis on outcome instead of just focusing on my process."

"It was a nice corner I turned at The Players (Championship) where I tried to just forget about trying to be this perfect golfer that I thought I was last year, when in reality I just was doing the same things. I just was mentally a little bit more nice to myself, I guess, and not so worried about being perfect. That's what led to better golf."

## From 9A

### BULLDOG

baseman Kyle Branch became the first brothers to start against each other in a CWS game.

Despite the setback, Georgia remained confident heading into its win-or-go-home

matchup with Texas.

"It's the same process. It's the same mindset that we've had all season," Aoki said. "If we change something now, that's when it all goes bad. We're going to stick to our approach and stick to what we do. This team has the most courage in the country, and we're going to come back strong."

## From 9A

### BRAVES

But digging into situational splits reveals that there may be a clutch gene coursing through this set of players, who seem uniquely equipped to bridge the gap and lengthen Atlanta's lineup. Dubón, who was acquired in November from the Astros, might be the most sterling example: he's hitting .339 with 32 RBIs in 65 plate appearances with runners in scoring position. When it gets to two outs with runners in scoring position, he gets even better, sporting a .379 average and 1.162 OPS.

Smith is similarly clutch, slashing .325/.326/.577 with three home runs and 26 RBIs in 47 plate appearances with runners in scoring position, with no bigger example than his walk-off grand slam in his Atlanta debut on March 29. Same with Yastrzemski, who is hitting above .300 with RISP after arriving from a stellar second half of 2025 in Kansas City. Even in small sample sizes, the speedster Mateo -- who signed with the Braves following five seasons in Baltimore from 2021-25 -- has gone 4-for-10 with RISP and two outs.

"I mean, we're dogs, man, we're dogs," Dubón said. "Dom hasn't got a good chance to go out there and show. I never had a good chance to go out there, and I knew it. We've got Mateo over here doing his thing now. ... Now we're getting the chance with Walt. He's trusting us to go out there and putting us in the right spot for us to have success. And it's showing, man."

Hitting, for all its evolution and intricacies, is still contagious. You could see it on Friday, when Smith and Yastrzemski both notched two-strike RBI singles with two outs in the second inning, as the Braves' offense threatened to explode again. When it comes from a slew of newcomers who have bought in from day one, it becomes inspiring.

"I think they really understand the situation and have an honest approach in those situations to get the job done," Michael Harris II said. "They don't really give in to the pitcher. I mean, even if they do, they're just fighting off to get a better pitch on the next one and get the job done. They've done that numerous times this season, and I can see them continue to do that throughout the rest of the season as well."



## ATLANTA DREAM

## From 9A

### CHAMPIONS

titles and Smith Gilbert also becomes the first female head coach to win four NCAA outdoor women's championships (two while at USC).

What Bulldogs Scored On Day Four: Here is a summary of what Georgia women scored on Saturday:

\*Kaila Jackson, Hodge, Reign Redmond and Jassani Carter passed the baton to a third-place finish with a school record. The relay last scored in 2023 with Jackson as one of the legs. She finishes her career as a 12-time scoring indoor/outdoor All-American.

\*Hodge blazed to her fifth sub-11 second 100m to earn silver. This was the second of three events Hodge ran in during the meet's final day.

\*Oakley then popped a collegiate record in the 400m to give Georgia back-to-back titles in the event after Aaliyah Butler won in 2025.

\*Sophomore Michelle Smith made it two-for-two scoring at the NCAA meet after taking fourth in the 400m hurdles.

\*Hodge took the track in the 200m after her silver in the 100m and ran a determined collegiate record to put Georgia on track to capture the team title.

\*In the meet's finale, the Lady Bulldogs came through with a runner-up finish in the

4x400m relay to pull off their seven-point team victory.

The Bulldogs had five scorers on Friday: Kimani Jack, high jump — 1st; men's 4x400m relay — 1st; Jonathan Simms, 400m — 2nd; Sidi Njie, 400m — 3rd; Riyon Rankin, high jump — 5th Junior Nina Ndubuisi was Georgia's sole scorer on Thursday with a sixth-place finish in the women's shot put.

On Wednesday, Georgia had three scorers for the men: Jordan Davis — javelin, 4th; Nick Reynolds — javelin, 5th; Jayden Keys — long jump, 7th.

Meet Breakdown: Other than the decathlon running Wednesday-Thursday and the heptathlon going Friday-Saturday, the meet was set up to be a men's competition on Wednesday and Friday and a women's competition on Thursday and Saturday.

Heptathlon Summary: Senior Ella Rush tallied 5,709 points through the seven events over two days and finished 14th with 5,709 points.

Rush was in 19th with 3,370 points going into Saturday's final three events.

Live Results: To check out results, please check: <https://gado.gs/evp>

The Lowdown: Georgia competed in five events, two relays and the last three events of the heptathlon on Saturday.

Oakley took the track after the 100m final in the 400m and promptly broke a two-

year-old collegiate record (Nickisha Pryce, Arkansas — 48.89). Oakley came around on the final turn and muscled past USC's Madison Whyte (48.97) for the women's first national championship of the meet. Oakley is now the third Georgia woman to win it after Olympic medalist Lynna Irby captured gold in 2018.

Three events after Oakley's collegiate record in the 400m, Hodge complemented her collegiate 100m record on Thursday with another NCAA record in the 200m. The second-year sprinter shot past the rest of the field in the straightaway to record a 21.68. This time shattered Steiner's former collegiate No. 1 mark of 21.80 at this meet in 2022.

Oakley then used a 48.79 anchor split on the 4x400m relay to help clinch silver with a 3:20.96. This trimmed two seconds off the school record and clinched the team victory. Freshman Tianna Springer posted her yet another strong leg, going 50.07 before the handoff to Oakley. Vimbayi Maisvovewa and Michelle Smith also took part in the second-place relay.

The Lady Bulldog foursome finished third after clocking a blistering 41.89 in the first event on the track. Jackson, Hodge, Redmond and Carter took over their own school record set during the semifinal and moved to No. 4 on the all-time collegiate performer list.

Prior to Saturday, the best finish for a UGA 4x100m relay team was fourth in 1999.

Hodge returned to the track in the 100m final and clocked a 10.93 to finish second by just .05. After setting the collegiate record in the event during the semifinal, Hodge had three events to recover before her third final of Saturday, the 200m.

Smith, who earned a bronze medal as a freshman in 2025, made her lap with the hurdles in 55.10 to collect another expected First Team All-America certificate by taking fourth.

Rush began the final three events of the heptathlon in the long jump. The fourth-year competitor answered a second attempt foul with a mark of 6.29m/20-7.75 to give her fourth in the event and surged her into 11th from 19th overall.

She returned in the javelin and approached her personal best with a third throw of 34.86m/114-4. This earned her a 17th spot in the competition and placed her 16th overall going into the hep's finale. Rush wrapped up her seven events by taking 12th in the 800m with a 2:19.54.

In the women's triple jump, sophomore Danah Nembhard hit a top effort of 12.90m/42-4 on her opening attempt and that gave her expected Second Team All-America honors with a 16th-place finish.



Special Photo: MCC

Drivers are increasingly interested in ways to conserve fuel and stretch their dollars further.

## Conserving fuel as prices rise

(MCC) Fuel is a necessity for millions of drivers on the country's roadways. According to a recent report from Experian Automotive, approximately 1.4 percent of the 292.3 million cars and trucks on the road in the United States in 2024 were electric. Even though the number of EVs is rising, there are still plenty of people behind the wheels of gas-powered vehicles that require routine fill-ups.

As of late March 2026, Canadian gas prices surged to an average of roughly \$1.68-\$1.86 per liter (there are roughly 3.785 liters in a gallon). The national average gas price in the United States at the same time was \$3.98 per gallon. When gas prices rise due to various factors, drivers are increasingly interested in ways to conserve fuel and stretch their dollars further. Here are some ways to mitigate rising gas prices.

• **Reduce your speed.** Driving at moderate speeds

increases efficient consumption of fuel. Some vehicles may feature an "ECO" mode that optimizes fuel consumption by restricting engine power, among other changes, or notifies the driver when they are driving in a manner that is using fuel wisely. Driving above 50 miles per hour reduces fuel economy considerably.

• **Practice smooth driving.** Drivers should avoid aggressive starts (gunning it) and hard braking, which can eat into fuel efficiency. Letting off the accelerator early and coasting to red lights or stop signs helps.

• **Rely on cruise control.** Cruise control helps maintain a steady speed, which can save fuel on highway travel.

• **Keep tires inflated.** Properly inflating tires to the manufacturer's recommended PSI can improve fuel economy by roughly 0.6 percent to 3 percent for most drivers, offers the U.S. Department of

Energy. Driving on tires that are 20 percent under-inflated can reduce fuel economy by as much as 10 percent. Removing unnecessary heavy items from the vehicle also can help to reduce drag.

• **Limit idling and combine trips.** Turn off the vehicle when stopped for more than a few minutes. When running errands, combine short trips to keep the engine warm, which is more efficient.

• **Skip the premium fuel.** Unless a vehicle owner's manual specifically recommends filling up with premium fuel, drivers will not see an increase in performance by choosing this more expensive option, offers Progressive Insurance. A person will just be paying more for premium, which is always more expensive than standard 87-octane fuel.

Drivers can use various strategies to conserve fuel when gas becomes more expensive.

## Obituary announcements

**Rachel Louise Akstulewicz**  
Rachel Akstulewicz, 88, of Albany, died Saturday, June 13, 2026 at Evergreen Assisted Living in Albany, GA.

Mrs. Akstulewicz was born in Neenah, WI. She played the organ in church at Concordia Lutheran Church in Barstow, CA. She loved to paint, read, watch old movies, older music and the outdoors. She was preceded in death by her husband, David William Akstulewicz.

Survivors include her children Kevin Akstulewicz and Calyn Akstulewicz.

**Kathryn Jean Bateman (Cato)**

Kathryn Jean Bateman, 72, of Cordele, passed away peacefully on Friday, June 12, 2026, surrounded by her loving family. Kathy was the daughter of the late E.R. and Effie Martin Cato. She was devoted to her family and especially cherished her grandchildren. Kathy had

a passion for designing and growing flowers, enjoyed cooking, and embraced life with enthusiasm and joy. Kathy was preceded in death by her brothers, Bobby Cato and Donald Cato. She is survived by her loving husband of 56 years, Charles Bateman; her daughters, Kimberly Faircloth (Jason), Toni Walker (Rusty), and Laura Stephens (Trace), all of Cordele; her grandchildren, Hannah Miliikin, Alton Stephens (Morgan), Jackson Faircloth, Emma Stephens, and Ella Grace Faircloth; and her great-grandson, Bryson Moate; sisters Joan Pollard and the late Reginald Pollard and Linda Turner (Joe). A Celebration of Life service will be held on Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 11:30 a.m. at Pinecrest Baptist Church. The family will receive friends beginning at 10:00 a.m. at the church prior to the service. Kathy will be remembered for her love of family, her kind spirit, and the joy she brought to those who knew her. Her memory will be treasured by all whose lives she touched through her floral creations at Flint River Pottery.



**Joyce S. Dove (Skandamis)**

Joyce Skandamis Dove passed away peacefully at home on June 13, 2026. Born January 1, 1936, in Albany, Georgia, she was the daughter of Andrew Harry Skandamis and Maggie Vainas Skandamis.

Joyce will be remembered for her deep love of family and her generous, kind spirit. She was the heart of her family, bringing people together and making everyone feel valued. She never missed a birthday or special occasion and supported her church and many charitable causes, including veterans, the homeless, and animal welfare.

A graduate of Albany High School (1954), she earned degrees from Valdosta State University and Georgia State University. She enjoyed a distinguished 30-year career with Trust Company Bank, rising to Vice President in Branch Administration.

A devoted member of the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation, she served faithfully and donated the Dove Chapel in memory of her parents.

She is survived by her cousins Maria Vlattas (Ted Jenkins), Nick Vlattas (Barbara), Alexis and Olga Vainas, and extended family, along with her beloved godchildren and many dear friends.

The family thanks her caregivers, hospice team, and devoted friends for their compassionate care.

Funeral services will be held June 17, 2026, at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation in Atlanta; prayer service and visitation at 10:00 a.m. with funeral services at 11:00 a.m. Interment will be at 10 a.m. on June 20 in Albany, Georgia.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation.

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**Miscellaneous for sale**

For Sale Burial crypt G-70 for two Crown Hill Mausoleum. Market value \$8,000. Call 229-881-3417 with offer

For Sale: 1 Burial Plot in Riverside-Oakview Cemetery. \$550. Call 229-439-4728 or 229-886-1359

**FOR SALE.** 2 Love Seats, good cond. \$199 each. Accent chair with safari design, \$125. Accent chair, gold, \$125. Queen-size bed, wood and medal frame, great cond., \$299. Accent table, half moon, great cond., \$150. Faux leather chair with matching ottoman, brown, \$150. No Delivery, pickup only. 229-669-2222, call or text.

**JOBS**

**Full-Time**

**IRRIGATION TECH** needed for a small irrigation co. Must have driver's license and be willing to learn. Call Tommy at 229-603-1373.

**Volunteers of America Southeast**  
**The Millennium Center - Cuthbert, GA**

**Women's Recovery & Substance Use Services Director**

Program Director needed for managing the daily operations of a substance use treatment program in Cuthbert, GA. Minimum requirements include a

**Full-Time**

Bachelor's Degree in a related field and CAC Level II (or Master's + CAC Level I), 5+ years working with individuals with substance use disorders and at least 1 year of supervisory experience. For more information and application instructions, go to [www.voase.org/careers](http://www.voase.org/careers). EOE/Drug Free Workplace/E-Verify.

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**The Albany HERALD**  
**CALL 229-888-9300**

**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 large cattle farms (7)	_____
2 dime, of a dollar (5)	_____
3 clams and scallops (8)	_____
4 crumbly Greek cheese (4)	_____
5 King Kong's kind (sort of) (8)	_____
6 TV star Russell (4)	_____
7 like a Pringle, perhaps (10)	_____

RI	AL	HES	RA	NTH
NC	TA	TTA	VES	LL
BIV	AS	GO	TE	RI
KE	ED	UNA	CH	FE

Tuesday's Answers: 1. TORSO 2. DIGITS 3. TURTLE 4. UNSTABLE 5. APRICOT 6. WALBERG 7. FRISBEES 6/17

**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 TV show (7)	_____
2 pod contents (4)	_____
3 2002 Oscar winner Halle (5)	_____
4 taking the tiller (8)	_____
5 sector (8)	_____
6 "Kids in America" singer Kim (5)	_____
7 French bun (7)	_____

IG	PRO	AM	AD	ST
RI	NT	RY	CH	PE
DE	AS	RA	GR	QU
BER	NON	NG	EE	WIL

Wednesday's Answers: 1. RANCHES 2. TENTH 3. BIVALVES 4. FETA 5. GORILLAS 6. KERI 7. UNATTACHED 6/18

**Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle**

Edited by Patti Varol

**ACROSS**

- 1 Completely smitten
- 5 Iraq port city
- 10 Policy chief
- 14 Like some history and hygiene
- 15 Cacophonous
- 16 Sharpen
- 17 Kiss, in Cancun
- 18 Piano composition
- 19 Tiny amount
- 20 Email option since 1997
- 22 Genetic messenger molecule
- 23 Big name in the school supply aisle
- 24 Exercise that may wind up in a playground
- 27 Core muscles
- 30 Longtime Buick model
- 31 Acid rock's acid
- 34 Neck wrap
- 35 Share an office workstation
- 36 Debt letters
- 37 "Casablanca" star, affectionately
- 39 Egg cells
- 40 Minor disagreements
- 42 Realm
- 43 Cars singer Ocasek
- 44 "What's Your Country Song" singer Thomas
- 45 In need of a towel
- 46 Tourism prefix
- 47 20-Across alternative
- 48 Gymnast's move
- 50 Current fashion
- 52 Chest muscles
- 55 Exactly
- 57 Winter fishing tool
- 59 Anxiety-related med. condition
- 60 "Say 'aye' forcefully and project confidence," e.g.
- 64 "Chandelier" singer
- 65 Ipanema's city
- 66 Medicine derived from the bark of the willow tree
- 67 Sphere

**DOWN**

- 1 Prefer to be called
- 2 Region
- 3 Nasty wound
- 4 Cool and distant
- 5 Sweetie
- 6 Professional who specializes in oil cleanups?
- 7 "Hug the shore until you reach the ocean," e.g.
- 8 Blip producer
- 9 "you sure?"
- 10 Put on ice
- 11 Google Meet alternative
- 12 Opening payment
- 13 Backup camera's view
- 21 Output of some furnaces
- 23 Marvel assassin played by Jennifer Garner
- 25 Speedwagon
- 26 E-file org.
- 27 "Mamma Mia!" band
- 28 Obnoxious one
- 29 "Pair it with thyme or rosemary," e.g.
- 31 "The cinnamon version tastes better than the original," e.g.
- 32 Out of shape, say
- 33 Sign of disuse
- 38 Lacking skill
- 41 "Wouldn't that be nice!"
- 48 Scandinavian inlet
- 49 Saint \_\_\_\_: Lesser Antilles island
- 50 Body part with 27- and 52-Across
- 51 Use, as a ladle
- 53 City southeast of Alexandria
- 54 Ear cleaners
- 56 Spread
- 58 "Teach Your Children" gp.
- 61 Choose
- 62 Actor Meadows
- 63 401(k) kin

**ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:**

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

By Zachary David Levy ©2026 Tribune Content Agency, LLC 06/18/26

**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.

" Q U W L O V I I H P O Z B O B O X Q J A X I O N  
J I W P Z H O K N , Z N P Q W L Z U Q N W  
L Z G G O B Q J A I J I K B N H K T T , P L C W L O J  
X I P O B O X Q W ? " — U B Z J F H Z U H Z

Previous Solution: "I think the singers that we all respond to ... evoke a story ... It's not just about listening to vocal gymnastics." — Emily Blunt

TODAY'S CLUE: N sjenbe r

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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.

" R V Z F K P D Q T R Y K Z O V R T A R Q X V K  
L X C K K X . M V K Q X V K A Z B O W S K L M V K Q  
R ' S Q W X K Q G W B R Q N R X , R M R T T  
T K Z F K P W X U Z T T . " — T R W Q K T S K L L R

Previous Solution: "If the book we are reading does not wake us, as with a fist hammering on our skull, why then do we read it?" — Franz Kafka

TODAY'S CLUE: O sjenbe M

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## William Binn Community Outreach set for June 27 in Albany

By Michael Ferguson II  
news@albanyherald.com

ALBANY – The William Binn Community Outreach, spearheaded by City on a Hill Faith Ministries, will be held June 27 from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at 500 South Van Buren St. in Albany.

The community outreach event will be held under the theme “Restore, Reach and Rebuilding Generations.” It is designed to bring families, neighbors, churches, volunteers and community partners together for a day of service, support and fellowship.

The outreach will include free health screenings for

uninsured women, food and drinks, games, activities for children, bounce houses, popcorn, snow cones and other family-friendly activities. Albany Technical College will provide free haircuts as part of the day’s outreach efforts.

The event is sponsored in part by Monroe High School Class of 1986 and Level Up Young Man, along with other community partners committed to uplifting families and rebuilding stronger generations in Albany and Southwest Georgia.

In keeping with the mandate of supporting action-based initiatives and placing the spotlight on community lead-

ers who are doing the work, Southwest Georgia Think-tank will continue supporting efforts like this throughout the city and encouraging the community to do the same, reminding everyone “there is nothing wrong with Albany that what is right with Albany cannot remedy.”

The community is invited to engage at Southwest Georgia Thinktank on Facebook to stay current with community conversations, local initiatives and action-based efforts throughout our region.

The public is invited to attend and participate in this free community event.



Special Photo: Colquitt Regional

Colquitt Regional Health System has once again been recognized as one of the top 100 community hospitals in the nation, earning a place on Becker’s Healthcare’s 2026 “Great Community Hospitals” list for the second consecutive year.

## Colquitt Regional among Top 100 Community Hospitals for second consecutive year

Staff Reports  
news@albanyherald.com

MOULTRIE — Colquitt Regional Health System has once again been recognized as one of the top 100 community hospitals in the United States, earning a place on Becker’s Healthcare’s 2026 “Great Community Hospitals” list for the second consecutive year. The national recognition highlights hospitals that provide accessible, affordable, and high-quality care while serving as trusted healthcare anchors in their communities.

Becker’s Healthcare developed the list through editorial research, nominations, and insights from respected national evaluators, including U.S. News & World Report, Healthgrades, CMS, The Leapfrog Group, the National Rural Health Association, and the Chartis Center for Rural Health. Hospitals included on the list are recognized for delivering exceptional care beyond the reach of large urban health systems.

“We are incredibly honored to once again be recognized among the top community hospitals in the country,” Colquitt Regional President and CEO Jim Matney said in a news release. “This distinction reflects the dedication of our physicians, nurses, employees and volunteers who work every day to provide exceptional care. While we continue to grow and expand

services, our focus remains the same: ensuring the people of south Georgia have access to high-quality, compassionate healthcare right here in their community.”

In recognizing Colquitt Regional, Becker’s Healthcare highlighted several accomplishments that reflect the health system’s continued focus on quality, innovation, and patient care. These include earning 22 “A” Hospital Safety Grades from The Leapfrog Group, most recently in spring 2026, achieving one of the nation’s lowest hospital-acquired MRSA infection rates according to CMS data, and receiving the Georgia Hospital Association’s 2026 Patient Safety and Quality Award for its health equity food resources program.

The recognition also noted Colquitt Regional’s continued investments in advanced healthcare technology and expanded access to specialty care. Recent advancements include the addition of the da Vinci 5 robotic surgical system, PET scan services, Aquablation therapy with the HYDROS robotic system for enlarged prostate treatment, and becoming the first hospital in Georgia to offer the Vibwife birth platform for labor support.

In addition, Becker’s recognized Colquitt Regional’s commitment to workforce development and the future of rural healthcare through its family medicine and psy-

chiatry residency programs, which help train physicians for community-based practice.

Becker’s Healthcare also highlighted Colquitt Regional’s Reaching New Heights in Healthcare capital campaign, which will support construction of a new medical patient tower designed to expand maternal and infant care, surgical services, and intensive care while increasing patient capacity to better serve the growing region.

Most recently, Colquitt Regional expanded cardiovascular services at its Hufstetler Heart Center with the addition of a newly renovated cardiac catheterization laboratory and the launch of an interventional cardiology program, allowing patients to receive advanced heart procedures, including cardiac stenting and balloon angioplasty. Previously, patients requiring these procedures had to travel outside the community for care.

As Colquitt Regional continues to expand services and invest in innovation, the organization remains focused on providing exceptional healthcare that exceeds expectations while improving the health and well-being of the communities it serves, hospital officials said.

For more information about Colquitt Regional Health System, contact the marketing department at (229) 890-3552.

## Georgia maintains highest possible bond ratings

Staff Reports  
news@albanyherald.com

ATLANTA – Gov. Brian Kemp has announced that Georgia has again earned the highest possible credit ratings with a stable outlook from each of the three main credit rating agencies: Fitch Ratings, Moody’s Investors Service and S&P Global Ratings. The agencies’ assigned ratings of AAA, Aaa, and AAA, respectively, reflect Georgia’s strong financial position, sound and conservative fiscal management, and long-term economic resilience.

“Because we kept government small and held spending in check, Georgia has again earned these coveted ratings that benefit both job creators and the taxpayer,” Kemp said. “While states like California and New York deal with budget shortfalls, proposed tax increases, and shaky state economies, Georgians -- and investors -- can be confident in the future of our economic

strength and resilience.”

Following two years of funding more than \$3.5 billion in capital projects with cash, Georgia is now returning to the capital markets with a general obligation bond sale totaling approximately \$1.5 billion. The sale will provide approximately \$848 million to finance capital projects statewide and, subject to market conditions, refund a portion of the state’s outstanding debt to achieve debt service savings.

The majority of bond proceeds will support public safety, K-12 education, higher education, and economic development projects throughout Georgia. The state’s AAA ratings will allow Georgia to borrow at the lowest possible interest costs when bids are received on June 24, 2026.

Fitch Ratings: “Georgia’s ‘AAA’ Long-Term IDR reflects the state’s proven willingness and ability to maintain fiscal balance and a broad-based, growth-oriented economy

that supports solid revenue gains over time. The long-term liability burden is low.”

Moody’s Investors Service: “Georgia’s Aaa issuer rating reflects the state’s large and diverse economy, strong population growth, robust reserves and liquidity, strong fiscal governance and flexibility and low direct leverage from debt, pension and OPEB liabilities.”

S&P Global Ratings: “The ‘AAA’ long-term rating reflects our view of Georgia’s demonstrated resilient budgetary performance across credit cycles, coupled with responsive financial management that has enabled the state to make timely adjustments to general fund expenditures. We believe the state’s significant flexibility and additional liquidity will help it navigate potential economic or budgetary disruptions, underpinning our view of Georgia’s long-term credit stability.”



# JUNETEENTH FREEDOM DAY

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**CELEBRATING OUR FUTURE**

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