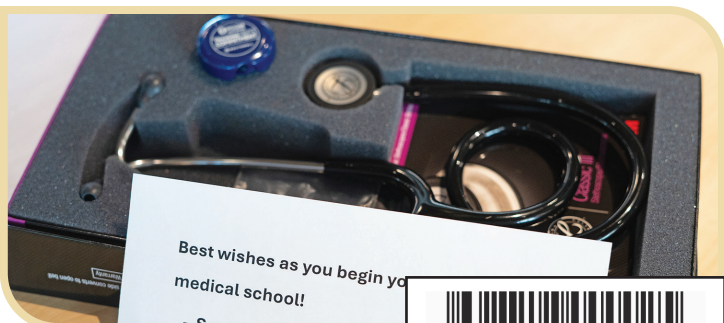




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New class at PCOM
Future doctors get useful gift
• Page 12A



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ALBANYHERALD.COM

THURSDAY, JULY 16, 2026

Albany among local governments looking at data centers

By Alan Mauldin
alan.mauldin@albanyherald.com

ALBANY – Officials in Dougherty County say it’s only a matter of time before a data center developer, depending on one’s point of view, blesses or targets the community.

There have been a few inquiries, but no concrete pro-

posal in Albany or Dougherty County, but the growing industry is looking to place data centers in nearby Crisp and Early counties.

On Tuesday, the Early County Commission approved an ordinance regulating data centers, with opponents of the centers expressing concerns about potential contamination of water

and pollution.

On Monday, three speakers urged the Dougherty County Commission to enact a temporary moratorium on data center projects. Dougherty County Attorney Alex Shalishali is currently drafting an ordinance to regulate data centers.

The three speakers who gave comments on Monday are part

of the Sowega Aquifer Alliance.

“Our understanding is that data center developments look like an easy fix for the problems that face rural America, but this is a Faustian deal at best,” Dougherty County resident James Malphrus said. “You can see the effects in communities across the state and country.

“In Newton County, Georgia, families found their wells polluted and running dry after Meta began construction of a facility there. In Coweta County, Georgia Power is using eminent domain, stripping away family homes, to make way for high-transmission power lines to feed these facilities.”

While the companies bring

promises of revenue and jobs, those promises are a lie, Malphrus said. He urged the commission to enact a one-year moratorium to give it time to research and measure potential outcomes and to prepare and adopt ordinances to protect people and the environment.

See DATA, 2A



Special Photo: ASU
The Albany State University Marching Rams Show Band will make history this fall as the first historically black college and university’s band to perform in America’s Thanksgiving Parade in Detroit.

ASU Marching Rams first HBCU band invited to perform in Thanksgiving parade

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

ALBANY – The Albany State University Marching Rams Show Band will make history this fall as the first historically black college and university’s band to perform in America’s Thanksgiving Parade in Detroit.

“We are honored to have Albany State University in the

100th America’s Thanksgiving Parade presented by Gardner White,” Tony Michaels, the president and CEO of the Parade Company, said. “We welcome them to Detroit and look forward to seeing this wonderful band on Woodward Avenue, Thanksgiving morning.”

The milestone performance will take place during the pa-

rade’s 100th anniversary celebration on Nov. 26. One of the nation’s oldest and most celebrated holiday traditions, the parade draws hundreds of thousands of spectators along its three-mile route and millions more through televised broadcasts.

ASU Director of Bands William Brooks’s connection to

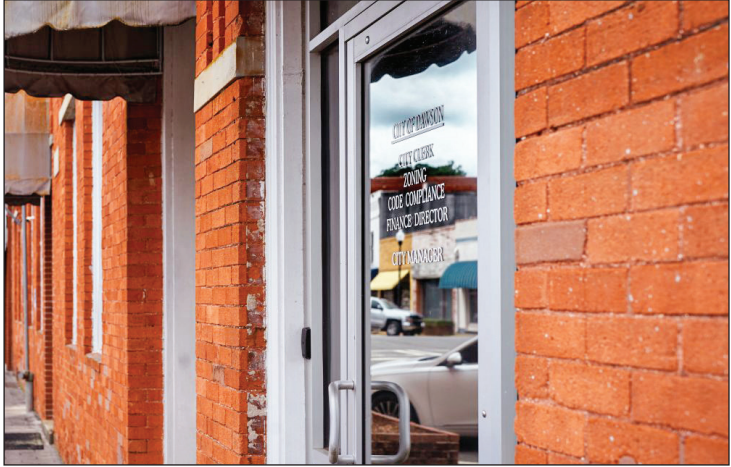
America’s Thanksgiving Parade spans decades, making this moment especially meaningful. As a Detroit native, he first participated in the parade as a middle and high school student, later returning as a high school band director, where he led his Tennessee-based band to a first-place finish.

Now, as Albany State’s band

director, Brooks returns once again — this time leading the Marching Rams Show Band — marking a full-circle moment as he brings his students to perform on the same streets that helped shape his musical journey.

“This parade is such a special moment for me,” Brooks

See HBCU, 2A



Staff Photo: Kathryn Crockett

The city of Dawson is confronting a widening financial crisis after officials acknowledged overstated revenue projections, proposed borrowing up to \$420,000 to maintain operations and outlined a hazy multi-year financial recovery plan.

Dawson proposes borrowing up to \$420,000 to stay afloat as finances unravel

By Kathryn Crockett
kathryn@albanyherald.com

DAWSON — The city of Dawson is operating with a structural budget deficit of at least \$300,000, according to its proposed Fiscal Year 2026-27 budget, which projects \$5.88 million in recurring revenue against \$6.18 million in planned spending.

On a monthly basis, the city estimates recurring operating revenue of about \$448,000

while carrying approximately \$441,703 in recurring payroll, insurance, retirement, utility, vendor and solid waste obligations before accounting for many other routine operating expenses, leaving little room for unexpected costs or declining collections.

Documents obtained by The Dawson News show city officials are proposing to balance the budget through a transfer from the Public Utilities Fund while simultaneously seeking

authority to borrow as much as \$420,000 from a private financial institution to continue meeting payroll and other operating expenses as Dawson works to complete financial audits that have remained unfinished since 2023.

During last week’s budget presentation, City Manager Roxie Powell told the mayor and council that a review of the city’s finances uncovered

See DAWSON, 2A

Periodical — Mail Label

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Back to School starts with Wellness Check-ups!

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Legislative panel to confront state’s ‘broken’ post-conviction system

By **Maya Homan**
Georgia Recorder

ATLANTA -- A legislative study committee aimed at improving the appeals process for those convicted of crimes in Georgia recently held its first meeting to address a system that Georgia Supreme Court Chief Justice Nels Peterson labeled “broken” and “a mess” in an

opinion issued earlier this year. The case centered around Joshua Sanders, an Alabama man who was convicted in 2023 of killing two Georgia women in Vidalia. The day after he was sentenced, he filed a motion for a new trial, which was later denied. In an appeal to that denial, he claimed that his court-appointed lawyers were ineffective during his trial, and

that the lawyers who filed the appeal did not mention his ineffective counsel claims when requesting a new trial. Joshua B. Smith, Sanders’ current attorney, argued that his client’s claim of ineffective counsel fulfilled a two-prong requirement that the legal representation be deficient and that the deficiency alter the outcome of the case. The trial

court attorney, he said, failed to properly shape his client’s narrative, leading him to reveal incriminating information about his drug use and plans to start an escort business to the jury. “All competent lawyers know to avoid asking their clients questions on the stand that would paint them as pimps or drug dealers, and do nothing to add or support any poten-

tial defense,” Smith wrote in a brief filed with the Georgia Supreme Court. But briefs filed by both the Georgia attorney general’s office and the Middle Judicial Circuit district attorney’s office dispute Smith’s claims, arguing that the claim of ineffective counsel would not have prevented Sanders’ conviction and didn’t follow proper procedure that requires such claims to be raised during the motion for the new trial. Sanders “has not shown that there would be a reasonable probability of a different outcome at trial if this testimony had been curtailed,” officials in the attorney general’s office wrote in their brief. The state Supreme Court ultimately upheld the conviction in a unanimous decision released in March. But in a concurring opinion, Peterson wrote that the case highlights a much broader set of problems within the state’s legal system. Most states allow ineffective trial claims to be filed through a habeas corpus petition, which can be filed even after a defendant has exhausted all other options

for appealing their case. The fact that Georgia requires ineffective counsel claims to be raised during the motion for a new trial, Peterson argued, makes the state an “outlier,” bogging down the system and ultimately increasing costs for both district attorneys and public defenders. “No rational person would have chosen the system we have today if presented with it as a whole,” Peterson said in his opinion. Improving the system unilaterally “far exceeds the judicial power,” he added, calling on the Legislature to address the issues. For trial court lawyers who are legitimately inadequate, Holcomb said, “that person is not going to say ‘I didn’t do my job and I was ineffective.’” According to Holcomb, separating those two processes will likely have bipartisan support. But the question of how to provide legal representation to allow defendants to file habeas petitions “is going to be a little bit more complicated, and there will be some potential costs to the state,” Holcomb said.

From 1A DAWSON

a budget built on revenue the city never actually received. “As we’ve reviewed our revenue, we’ve found that some of the revenue listed in the Fiscal Year 2026 budget has never actually been collected,” Powell said. “I don’t know where some of those numbers came from, but our revenue was overstated.” Powell said the city now expects to miss at least \$200,000 in revenue included in the current year’s budget. “Because of that, the Fiscal Year 2027 budget will be significantly smaller,” she said. Those statements closely mirror findings contained in the city’s proposed budget summary. “The proposed budget is balanced only through the inclusion of an authorized interfund transfer from the Public Utili-

ties Fund,” the report states. “Without this transfer, General Fund revenues would not be sufficient to support current operating expenditures.” The report further states that city officials rebuilt revenue estimates using actual collections after determining previous budgets had significantly overstated anticipated revenues. “During the budget preparation process, it was identified that previous budgets had significantly overstated anticipated revenues,” the report states. “In addition, certain one-time transfers, including Right-of-Way (ROW) proceeds from the Utility Fund, had previously been budgeted as recurring General Fund revenue, resulting in unrealistic revenue expectations.” The city’s financial presentation also revealed mounting cash-flow concerns. Powell told the council monthly revenue has ranged from approximately \$451,000 to \$349,000, while payroll alone averages roughly \$200,000 every month. “As a result, we’re running a deficit for July,” Powell said. “We’re also projecting deficits for August, and likely into September.” City records presented with the budget show total monthly collections falling from \$543,934 in February to \$349,020 in June. Property tax collections dropped from \$54,078 in February to just over \$4,000 in June following the primary tax collection season. Utility billing collections also declined sharply, from \$365,979 in February to \$267,622 in June. As officials discussed improving cash flow, Powell acknowledged problems with the city’s utility collection practices. “We discovered that some customers who should have been disconnected for non-payment were not being disconnected, so we’ve changed those assignments,” she said. The budget proposal attributes the city’s financial condition to rising personnel costs, inflation, aging infrastructure, increasing maintenance expenses, stagnant local revenue growth, water loss, declining

operational efficiency and utility rates that have not been adjusted since 2011. “We’re still operating on revenue levels established approximately 15 years ago, while inflation and operating costs have continued to increase,” Powell told the council. To address the shortfall, Powell recommended immediate spending controls. “We’re also recommending a hiring freeze and a freeze on discretionary spending unless it’s an emergency repair or replacement that’s necessary for operations,” she said. The proposed recovery plan recommends monthly budget monitoring, restructuring departments, improving utility collections, identifying water leaks, strengthening purchasing controls, pursuing additional grant funding and exploring new revenue sources, including stormwater utility fees and fire service fees. It also recommends immediately liquidating certificate of deposit reserves held at Georgia Community Bank and Bank of Dawson for payroll and accounts payable while authorizing a short-term Revenue Anticipation Note to finance operating costs until additional funding becomes available. During the council discussion, Powell formally requested authorization to pursue outside financing, without which the city will not be able to maintain current daily operations, including payroll, through September. “Because of that, we’re requesting authorization to either apply for a short-term loan, for 12 months or less, or use our certificates of deposit as collateral,” she said. Mayor Robert Aaron then pressed staff for additional details. “Do we know exactly how much we would need to borrow?” Aaron asked. Powell replied the city anticipated borrowing “probably around \$400,000 to \$420,000.” The discussion then shifted to the city’s incomplete financial audits. One council member asked, “How are we going to move forward with the loan

when we still haven’t completed the audit?” Powell then responded that because the proposed financing would be secured through the city’s certificates of deposit rather than a state or federal lending program, completed audits would not be required. “We can do that with the CDs because it’s not a state or federal loan,” she said. “It’s through our local bank, and the CDs serve as the collateral. We don’t have to have the audit completed for that.” Powell also recommended leaving the vacant city clerk position unfilled for the coming fiscal year as a cost-saving measure. “The two of us can split those duties at no additional cost to the city,” she said, referencing herself and finance director, Dawn Williford. “That would save approximately \$70,000 when you consider salary, taxes, training and the other associated expenses.” Despite the scope of the proposed recovery plan, a detailed line-item budget had not been publicly presented as of publication, and requests submitted by The Dawson News under the Georgia Open Records Act seeking supporting financial records, budget documents and related materials had not received a response. The budget summary itself recommends that the mayor and council hold a dedicated work session before adopting the Fiscal Year 2026-27 budget “to review departmental budgets and ask questions to gain a clearer understanding of the city’s financial plan before the final approval.” The city’s stated goals include stabilizing cash flow within 12 months, rebuilding operating reserves within one to three years and restoring structurally balanced budgets within three to five years. Whether those objectives can be achieved — and independently verified — will largely depend on the city’s implementation of the proposed recovery plan, completion of overdue audits and public access to the financial records needed to measure its progress.

From 1A HBCU

said. “I was born and raised in Detroit. To return now as a college band director, bringing my students to my hometown, is truly a full-circle moment. What makes it even more meaningful is that we are making history.” The parade will step off at 8:45 a.m. at Woodward Avenue and Kirby Street, traveling through downtown Detroit before concluding at Woodward Avenue and Congress Street. Leading up to the performance, the Marching Rams Show Band will engage in community outreach across the Detroit area, including visits to K-12 schools for recruitment, performances and cultural exchange. The band will showcase its signature identity as the “Soul of Southwest Georgia,” highlighting both Albany State University and the region on a national stage. “This is an impactful moment for many of us,” ASU junior music education major and clarinetist Christopher Pennyman said. “We have the opportunity to share our talent, passion, and dedication while upholding the standard of excellence of HBCUs on a

national stage. Every note we play reflects our preparation, commitment and pride.” Recognized as one of the nation’s premier HBCU marching ensembles, the Marching Rams Show Band is known for its dynamic performances, precision and sound. Under Brooks’ leadership since 2023, the program has experienced significant growth and national recognition, including participation in the National Battle of the Bands and being named an ESPN “Band to Watch.” Under Brook’s leadership, the band has expanded from just 26 musicians to reaching its goal of 160 members in only four years. “This is more than a performance; it’s an opportunity to represent Albany State University, honor the legacy of HBCU bands, and share this experience with the city that helped shape who I am,” Brooks said. The invitation to perform in America’s Thanksgiving Parade not only highlights the band’s excellence, but also reflects Albany State University’s continued commitment to showcasing student talent, cultural pride, and academic achievement on some of the nation’s most prestigious stages.

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR PACKAGE OF BEER AND WINE LICENSE

Notice is hereby given that **Kiaara Americus LLC**, doing business as **New Era Albany**, located at **906 N Slappey Blvd., Albany, Georgia 31701**, has made application for an **Alcoholic Beverage License** for the **off-premises package** sell of beer and wine for consideration and approval by the appropriate governing authority. This notice shall be published in the Albany Herald on **July 16th, 18th and 21st** in compliance with applicable law.

Albany Area Chamber of Commerce

Yard Candi Pops



The Albany Area Chamber of Commerce proudly recognizes Yard Candi Pops as this week's Star Business of the Week.

Yard Candi Pops has become a local favorite for transforming ordinary celebrations into unforgettable memories with eye-catching yard sign displays and personalized greetings. Whether it's a birthday, graduation, anniversary, new baby, retirement, school achievement, or special event, their custom yard displays add a fun and festive touch that makes every occasion even more memorable.

Known for their creativity, reliability, and outstanding customer service, Yard Candi Pops is dedicated to helping families, businesses, schools, and organizations celebrate life's biggest milestones in a unique way. Their colorful displays continue to spread joy throughout the Albany community, one yard at a time.

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



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Staff Photo: Alan Mauldin
Dougherty County Commissioner Russell Gray, left, speaks with Sowega Aquifer Alliance member James Malphrus at the conclusion of Tuesday’s commission meeting. Malphrus and two other speakers addressed the commission requesting the group place a moratorium on data centers.

From 1A DATA

The group has been gathering research in order to provide a framework for ordinances, information that it will present to the county when its work is completed, he said. At the conclusion of the meeting, Shalishali told The Albany Herald that he intended to present a draft ordinance to the commission to regulate data centers within a few weeks. “We’re not rushing to get anything,” Commission Chairman Lorenzo Heard said. “We can do a moratorium, but the truth of the matter is we’re going to make sure our taxpayers are (protected).”

The commission’s rules do not allow for the board to pass a motion during a work session meeting to meet the requests of alliance member Megan Weaver, a Lee County resident who urged that commissioners immediately consider a moratorium, the chairman said. “You are missing a very important layer of protection (without) a moratorium,” Weaver said. The Sowega Alliance was to be at the Early County meeting, Malphrus told a Herald reporter at the conclusion of the meeting. In addition, the group planned to attend meetings in Baker, Lee and Mitchell counties. The city of Albany also has been discussing data centers and has had commentators request that the city impose

a pause on permitting data centers. The city cannot legally prohibit data centers altogether, City Commissioner Chad Warbington said. “If we do it (moratorium), it would be a pause so we can get a stricter and tougher ordinance,” he said. “All communities across the state and the country are trying to get something in place. Right now, we don’t have any of that in place. You can’t have a moratorium forever.” The city has two public meetings scheduled next week to get input and present information to the community. Through an ordinance, the city can ensure that the facilities pay their fair share and are not a detriment to residents, Warbington said.

Daily Horoscopes

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Today could be the right day to find a hack to smooth day-to-day routines. If it feels light, graceful, and natural, it's likely the right move. Later or tomorrow, you could feel pushed toward something that would not be a fit.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Speak it or write it out. Writing by hand actually taps different parts of your brain, this is why it's deeper work to journal by hand. If anxieties arise at home, wait for clarity before taking action.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Concern about something that was said, or wasn't said, could balloon into a full spate of intrusive thinking. Stars are juicing anxiety around communication for you, all could actually be just fine.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): While money matters could be a little opaque, any kind of panic is likely not warranted at all. Wait for worries to pass and don't take action on finances or make a major or installment purchase today.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): The more you work on yourself, the more tools you have on your toolbelt, and the more efficiently and effectively you can construct your dream life. Any concerns about appearances should dissolve within hours.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Friendships and groups could remain a focal point for another week or so, then a period of greater introspection could beckon. If today or late yesterday felt really off, it is/was a brief unstable period inside your subconscious mind.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): If you deal with rejection sensitivity, it could be more up than usual now. So much of that is a legacy of earlier wounds and it can be healed when you put in the time and effort of self-work. Keep building your dreams.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Some emotional fallout from yesterday's foolishness could persist today, but it's unlikely to roll into tomorrow. There could be a lot to discover if you open the figurative curtains and let in some

new light.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): The inmates could be running the online asylum again today, don't get caught up in someone else's drama if there's no action you can take. Finances could be building nicely.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Just as yesterday, instability, uncertainty, and fear are dominating your financial sectors. Don't make any decisions, investments, or major purchases now. Partnership could be on your mind.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): The simple act of getting things done can be more satisfying when you validate yourself for your efforts ... and why not? Learning self-validation frees you from chasing applause from others.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Creativity continues to be highlighted for the next week or so. Sweetness and affection could be a hallmark of a relationship today, but individual cycles could dampen that. What's important is not to force anything.

IF TODAY IS YOUR BIRTHDAY: The early 2026 roller coaster should be leveling out for the most part now, more good and fewer challenges are likely. A big opportunity or just quiet fulfillment of needs and wants should unfold quite soon. A vision into the next part of your lifelong journey could come to you within just a few weeks. Don't let this vision somehow become anxiety over the unknown, each specific step will be revealed at the moment of your perfect readiness. Trust the Universe. Mid-August could be a time to check in with your inner child; late August or early September likely bring your next opportunity, improving cash flow and also bringing creative inspiration. Mid-September could bring a test, whether to self-sabotage in a moment of clowning, or not. Not will be better. October could bring an unexpected surprise and potentially, the best advice of your life, whether from a person or from your guardian angels.



1935 - The world's first parking meter is installed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

1942 - The government of Vichy France orders the arrest of 13,152 Jews and holds them at the Winter Velodrome in Paris before deporting them to Auschwitz

1945 - Under the Manhattan Project, the U.S. successfully detonates a plutonium based test nuclear weapon near Alamogordo, New Mexico

1956 - Last Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus under a tent as they switch to arenas

1960 - The US submarine USS George Washington successfully test fires the first ballistic missile while submerged

1965 - The Mont Blanc Road tunnel between France and Italy opens

1969 - Apollo 11, the first space

CALENDAR OF OBSERVANCES

- Get to Know Your Customer Day
- Guinea Pig Appreciation Day
- Hot Dog Night
- National Cherry Day
- National Corn Fritters Day

- National Fresh Spinach Day
- National Personal Chef's Day
- Ratha Yatra
- World Snake Day

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Life loves to be taken by the lapel and told, 'I'm with you kid. Let's go.'"

Maya Angelou,
poet (1928-2014)

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

Albany postmaster: It is very evident that you do not administer any sort of cognitive test to your employees. Over around Golf Course, Ashford and East Doublegate, the people that live in this area sort the mail in their boxes every day and deliver it to the mailboxes of the address which it was supposed to be delivered to. New carriers, substitutes, too hot, etc. must be the cause. Does the post office have any responsible people these days?

Amen, Fletcher. Until this city and county vote in some responsible commissioners with at least a hint of business sense, we will continue to hand out tax money to virtual tours, crooked builders and nonprofits that do not account for the funding.

Israel has openly stated that Islam is a broom being used by them to wipe out the West.

You don't have to worry about cameras and plate readers if you aren't doing something you're not supposed to.

There comes a point in life's journey when you have more road behind you than you have in front of you.

I'm glad that the catfish basket is back at Jack's for the summer. But why are guests at the counter ignored while drive-through orders are filled? This is not good customer service. Yes, the food is good, especially the catfish and biscuits; but inside guests should be treated just like those who choose to stay in their cars.

The state of Ohio is now the No. 1 state to do business in. Like the football team, the state of Georgia has dropped down to No. 7.

Kathryn Crockett's story on the history of the Ritz Theatre is compelling reading. I'm afraid that the latest efforts to restore it will be like most other such projects in downtown Albany: It will be a shining example of urban renewal for maybe a year or two, then disinterest and poor management will lead to it sinking again into disrepair, taking millions of taxpayer dollars with it.

Wait a minute: The city is going to use a half-million taxpayer dollars to rebuild a skate park -- that will be used by a dozen or so people -- at the same place where they tore down ... a skate park? Another example of the "leadership" that is bringing a once-thriving community to ruin.

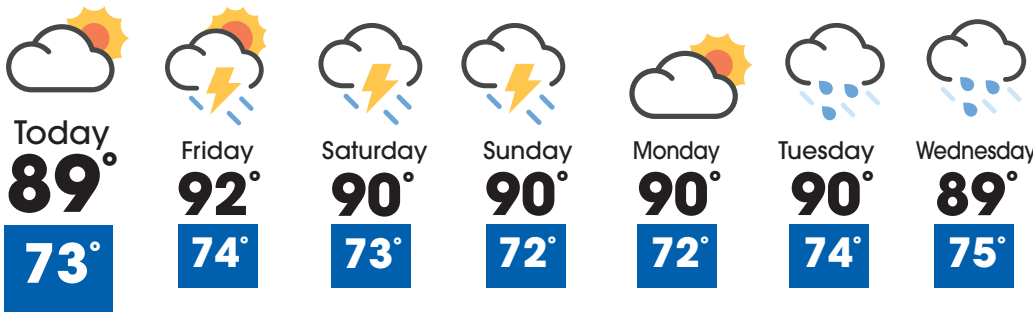
I keep checking every day for that virtual Civil Rights tour, and I keep seeing nothing. Oops, there goes another \$195,000 of taxpayer money, frittered away by the officials who were elected to look out for this community's best interests. Like you said in your column, the incompetence of our elected officials has led to a decline in this community's relevance.

"Iran's deeply radicalized form of Islam hates America and believes that we are the Great Satan that Allah has commanded them to destroy."

I keep hearing rumors that Albany/Dougherty County is being considered for a data center, which would bolster our tax base but, sadly, give our incompetent leaders more money to frivolously hand out to special interest groups and their "special" friends.

ADS: Advertising can be placed by phone, email and/or in person Mon.-Fri., 8:30 am - 5 pm or call 229-888-9300. For classifieds and display/public notices/online ads email Phil Cody at phil.cody@albanyherald.com or call 229-888-9300. Our office is at 306 W. Broad Ave., Albany, GA 31701. **BILLING:** Business hours are Monday-Friday 8:30 am-5 pm, contact number: 229-888-9300.

Weather Forecast



Daily Bridge Club

Picking a topic

By Frank Stewart

Tribune Content Agency

In the club lounge, one of our members told us that his wife is a member of MENSA.

"You can pick any topic," he

NORTH			
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♣ 9 7 5 4			
South	West	North	East
1 ♠	3 ♥	Dbl	4 ♥
5 ♦	All Pass		
Opening lead - ♥ K			
©2026 Tribune Content Agency, LLC			



Frank Stewart

said proudly, "and she can discourse on it at length."

"You're fortunate," Unlucky Louie told him.

"My wife doesn't need a topic."

I'll spend my 150 words for today on the topic of loser-on-loser end plays. Against South's five diamonds, West led the king of hearts. (Had he been omniscient, he would have found the queen of clubs.) South took the ace and drew trumps. He could have led a club to dummy's king next, but since West had preempted, South wasn't confident of finding him with the ace of clubs.

HIGH SPADES

So South took his three high spades, pitching a club. He ruffed dummy's last heart, led a trump to dummy and returned the last

spade. When East covered, declarer threw another club -- a loser on a loser.

Then East had to lead a club, letting dummy's king score, or lead his last spade or last heart, conceding a ruff-sluff. Either way, South was home.

DAILY QUESTION

You hold: S A 4 H A D K Q 10 9 5 3 C 9 7 5 4. You open one diamond, your partner bids one heart, you rebid two diamonds and he rebids two hearts. The opponents pass. What do you say?

ANSWER: Two hearts is not the contract you aspired to, but you must pass. Partner will usually have a six-card heart suit but fewer than 10 points. Game is impossible, and his hand may win a few tricks only if hearts are trumps. Don't fight the misfit. Just stop bidding.

South dealer
N-S vulnerable

Advice Columnist

Meet-and-greet with musician leads to infatuation

By Eric Thomas

Tribune Content Agency

Dear Eric: I'm 70 and very happily married (together 38 years). We both love music and lately after seeing a performance, there's a meet-and-greet with the musicians. A particular musician and I have chatted several times. The last time, I got an autograph and a hug. I am on cloud 9!

I love my spouse (I would never cheat) and I have assured my spouse it's like when I was a kid and loved Paul in the Beatles. But now I just can't shake my infatuation and look forward to meeting this musician again. How do I handle my feelings?
— *Infatuated*

Dear Infatuated: Try to right-size your feelings by reminding yourself that what you're responding to is a sometimes-intoxicating combination of performance charisma, talent, perhaps celebrity and music, which we all know carries a lot of emotional weight. In short, you're not really responding to the musician as a person; you're responding to the way the musician's craft and presence make you feel.

It doesn't seem like your spouse has any jealousy about it, nor reason to. This is good. The crush does appear to be wholly innocuous. It's common to develop a parasocial relationship with a celebrity -- or even a non-celebrity -- when we get glimpses into their lives or enjoy their work. Remind yourself that these giddy infatuated feelings are all part of the act. They're not fake, but they don't have anything to do with your life.

Don't dwell on them, though. It can be unhealthy to give into the temptation to fantasize about another meeting or to spend too much time scrolling through the musician's social media ac-

count, for instance. Instead, redirect it to the music. You're a fan and that's fine. That's what you want and that's what the musician wants. Play the tape out: what do you want to happen next? Probably just another chat, right? You don't have intentions of running away together. Remind yourself of that.

You might even make your fandom part of your relationship with your spouse by listening to the music together or even making one of the songs "your song."

Dear Eric: I'm writing from the Delta Sky Club in Atlanta, where I'm honestly stunned by the number of people taking loud business calls on their cellphones.

This isn't a case of one person speaking a little too loudly. There are multiple people, all around the lounge, carrying on full-volume business conversations as if the rest of us are simply part of their office. It makes what should be a quieter, more comfortable travel experience feel like a noisy open-floor call center.

I understand that travel days can be workdays, and sometimes people need to take calls. But there seems to be very little awareness that others nearby may be trying to relax, read, eat or simply enjoy a few minutes of peace before boarding a flight.

What is the polite way to handle this? Is it ever appropriate to say something directly to the person? Should I ask lounge staff to intervene? Or is this just the new reality of travel, where everyone is expected to tolerate loud business calls in shared spaces?

— *Headache in ATL*

Dear Headache: I placed a call to Delta about this -- in an



Eric Thomas

appropriate place. Unfortunately, I didn't hear back. But whether one is in a lounge or some other public space, it's easy for private conversations to become a public concern, whether it's because of sheer volume or one person's volume.

If someone is being particularly loud, you might ask them to keep the volume at a conversational level. Or, if the call is on a speaker, you might be better served talking to a staff member and finding out what their policies are. The staff will also be able to direct you to a more peaceful place in the lounge.

When all else fails, remind yourself that at least it's quieter in the lounge than in the rest of the terminal.

Dear Eric: In response to "Tired of Being Kept in the Dark" whose parents manage properties that the letter writer will inherit, you could have directed the letter writer to begin teaching him or herself how to manage income property by reading books or attending apartment owner's association events near them.

Real estate courses at community colleges are also great.

I took over my parents' real estate holdings when they were still alive and now manage my own.

I learned on the job, asked questions from veterans and read books. I started 70 years ago, still learning, and going strong.

— *On the Job*

Dear Job: I like this. Being proactive about learning the basics may also show the letter writer's parents that the letter writer will be a good steward of the properties that will one day be inherited.

Send questions to R. Eric Thomas at eric@askingeric.com or P.O. Box 22474, Philadelphia, PA 19110. Follow him on Instagram and sign up for his weekly newsletter at erictthomas.com.

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Carlton Fletcher
EDITOR

—Georgia Trust for—
LOCAL NEWS

**TODAY'S
BIBLE
VERSE**

“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”
Ephesians 6:4

COLUMNIST ■ MARC HYDEN

DOGE has been put out of its misery

The once-vaunted Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) – originally led in part by Elon Musk – is officially no more. As of July 4, President Trump allowed the agency to sunset, even though it imploded and virtually ceased to exist as a functioning program in November 2025.

It was an ignominious end to a hyped-up pseudo-government entity that was supposed to rely on private-sector actors to transform the federal government and cut wasteful spending. The results, on the other hand, were as underwhelming as its goals were ambitious, but this was a predictable outcome to just about anyone with an understanding of government budgeting.

Musk suggested in October 2024 that he could identify and eliminate at least \$2 trillion from the federal budget, which stunned many spectators. Two trillion dollars at the time represented about 30% of government spending and was also approximately equal to the federal deficit. Cutting this much would have been an astounding feat and could have put the United States on more stable financial footing.

Musk evidently learned how difficult it would be to achieve this, and by January 2025, he revised his goal to \$1 trillion. A few months later, he altered his projection to a much more modest (well, modest for the spendthrift feds) \$150 billion in the first year. By late April 2025, Musk left his post to return to the private sector, which was a wise decision. He has since become the world’s first trillionaire.

DOGE limped along after his departure, and now with it officially shuttered, the results are in. The agency asserts \$215 billion in savings through a “combination of asset sales, contract/lease cancellations and renegotiations, fraud and improper payment deletion, grant cancellations, interest savings, programmatic changes, regulatory savings, and workforce reductions.”

Considering DOGE’s lauded goals, it is hard to consider it much more than an abject failure. I can already hear my readers grumbling that saving a couple hundred billion dollars is hardly a failure. I readily admit that saving taxpayer money, regardless of how much, is a noble and important cause, but the alleged savings are only about one-tenth of Musk’s initial objective of \$2 trillion.



HYDEN

To put this another way, if Braves manager Walt Weiss promised to win 100 games this season but

only won 10, would you call that a success? No, Braves nation would be calling for his ouster. Of course, baseball and government are not the same thing, but the problems for DOGE don’t end there.

Even suggesting that DOGE saved taxpayers \$215 billion might be misleading. The agency often faced scrutiny over its accounting and whether its numbers were accurate or grossly overstated. What’s more, DOGE’s cuts might cost taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars, which sounds counterintuitive at first. However, DOGE’s activities have led to lawsuits, costly buy-outs related to workforce reductions and may result in lost revenue thanks to a now understaffed IRS. So tax cheats may get away with tax evasion, while people like you and me pay our share.

The reason Musk fell well short of \$2 trillion isn’t necessarily his fault. As a nominal part of the Executive Branch, Musk and DOGE did not have the authority to make the kind of substantive cuts he wanted to facilitate. He could advise Trump to curtail discretionary spending, but the biggest line-items were out of his reach.

Congress holds those purse strings, and it was not going to make serious cuts, despite running deficits for more than two decades. “To eliminate a third of the government, you would have to dramatically eliminate full functions of the federal government. You would have to dramatically scale back programs like Social Security, Medicare, and defense and veterans. It’s not going to happen,” a Manhattan Institute scholar correctly predicted in 2024.

Give credit where it is due. Musk and DOGE tried to tackle a long-standing dilemma: runaway spending and crippling government debt. We are nearly \$40 trillion in debt, and there is no end in sight. Attempting to rein this in was a worthy pursuit, but thanks to government realities, it was a fool’s errand.

Back in January 2025, Musk and the Trump administration probably would have predicted that DOGE would have been wildly successful and garnered great fanfare by its sunset date. However, as its charter’s expiration date came and went, little admiration for DOGE existed. Instead, Trump quietly put the failed project out of its misery.

Marc Hyden is the senior director of state government affairs at the R Street Institute. Follow him on X at @marc_hyden.

COLUMNIST ■ DICK YARBROUGH

A letter, a bracelet and God’s anonymous hand

The woman who shared my name had a refrigerator magnet that said “Coincidence is God’s way of remaining anonymous.” I have just had a number of coincidences that will require some explanation, so bear with me.

Last week, a number of letters were awaiting me when I went to the post office, including a package from Elloree, S.C. Since my column doesn’t run in Elloree (Pop. 570) or anywhere else in South Carolina, that naturally piqued my curiosity.

The writer was Catherine Kennedy. She was writing to tell me about a remarkable coincidence. (Cue the refrigerator magnet.) During the Vietnam War, when she was a child living in Miami, Okla., she requested and received a POW/MIA bracelet and dutifully wore it, hoping to learn the fate of the individual and that he would return home safely.

“Eventually,” she said, “I tucked the bracelet away in a jewelry box, occasionally taking it out and wondering what happened to him. Had he been found? Had he made it home to his loved ones? I could not bring myself to ever let loose of the bracelet. It seemed I had a responsibility to safeguard it.”

Catherine says that she has moved across the country more times than she cares to count, but she held onto the bracelet, although she said, “There were times I couldn’t tell you where it was.”

Here comes another coincidence.

“Yesterday, I reached into a suitcase pocket and pulled out something that had no reason to be there,” she said. It was the long-forgotten bracelet. Ms. Kennedy decided to do a quick search to learn more about the name on the bracelet and found a column I wrote in December 2023. It was about my having discovered the fate of Maj. Paschal (Pat) Boggs, my classmate at Russell High School in East Point and later my fraternity brother at the University of Georgia. It was the name on the bracelet she had worn as a child.

Pat and I lost contact after graduation. All I knew was that

he had joined the military. Later, I found out that he was missing in action. Years passed. I was in Washington and happened to be jogging by the Vietnam Veterans

Memorial on The Mall when something compelled me to stop, walk over and look at the names. Of the approximately 58,000 names on the wall, I looked straight at the name of Maj. Paschal Boggs. A coincidence? It gave me goosebumps, and I wrote a column about that surreal experience.

By coincidence, a reader sent the column to Pat’s brother-in-law, Ron Breuch, in Monterey, Calif. Ron was married to Pat’s younger sister, Cecile, who had since passed away. He filled in the details.

“Ceil was very active in the POW/MIA movement,” he told me. “(She) traveled many times to Washington in attempts to get North Vietnam to follow international rules on POWs and MIAs. It was not until 2005 that North Vietnam finally opened their country to U.S. military teams, and we finally knew the complete story of what happened in August of 1967.”

Pat Boggs was navigator on a two-man Grumman A6 raft launched from a carrier at night and headed to North Vietnam. Their plane hit a karst, a limestone formation prominent on the coast. Total devastation. U.S. military recovery teams later found only their harnesses and a pistol Pat always carried with him. Nothing more.

But now, at least, I finally knew what had happened to my fraternity brother after all these years. It was closure. End of story. Only it wasn’t. By coincidence, Catherine Kennedy, of Elloree, S.C., read the account almost three years later and sent me his bracelet she has had in her possession for 53 years.

In closing, Ms. Kennedy thanked me for “being the next caretaker on this journey of your friend’s bracelet.” It is she that deserves the thanks. I am wearing it as we speak and will continue to do so. I told you this story would be full of coincidences. And it is. God has been working overtime.

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



YARBROUGH

COLUMNIST ■ GARY WISENBAKER

The 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act takes a wrong turn

For the first time in many years, Washington finally seemed to understand what caused America’s housing affordability crisis. The problem is not mysterious. It is not complicated. It is not the result of some hidden economic force beyond our understanding.

The problem is obvious: We have not built enough homes. For decades, policymakers focused almost exclusively on demand-side solutions – subsidies, tax credits, down payment assistance programs, and various government incentives designed to help

buyers compete for a limited supply of housing. But helping more people chase too few homes does not lower prices. It often raises them.

When supply falls short, prices rise. Which is why many housing experts were encouraged when Congress began discussing reforms aimed at reducing regulatory barriers, streamlining permitting, modernizing manufactured housing rules, and encouraging more construction.

Unfortunately, the newly passed Senate version of the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act

combines some worthwhile reforms with a provision that threatens to

undermine the very housing production it claims to promote. As predicted, the Senate created a camel instead of a horse, and a camel that only Massachusetts Democratic Sen. Elizabeth Warren could love.

When it arrives in the House, it should be DOA. Specifically, the legislation imposes sweeping restrictions on institutional investors and build-to-rent housing developments. Large investors would be prohibited from acquiring additional single-family homes once they reach a threshold of 350 homes, and build-to-rent communities face restrictions that ultimately require homes to be sold to individual buyers after a prescribed period.

Since when does restricting building and discouraging investment result in more construction? The reality is that build-to-rent communities have become one of the fastest-growing sources of new single-family housing construction in America. These developments provide an option for families who want a yard, a garage, and access to good schools but are not financially prepared to purchase a home. They serve a growing segment of the population caught between apart-

ment living and homeownership, according to the Washington Post.

More importantly, they add supply. And adding supply is exactly what policymakers claim they want. The problem with government-directed ownership rules is that they alter the financial calculations that make these projects possible in the first place. Developers and investors commit millions of dollars based on long-term projections of risk and return.

When government steps in and dictates who can own a property, how long they can own

it, or when it must be sold, those projections become less predictable. Investment capital, in this environment, will move elsewhere. Investors who face government-imposed ownership restrictions can simply redirect their money into warehouses, office developments, data centers (gasp!), industrial projects, or countless other investments where Washington is not micromanaging business decisions.

When that happens, fewer housing develop-

ments get built, and affordability tanks. This is not rocket science.

Ironically, many of the bill’s strongest provisions recognize this reality. The legislation includes reforms designed to reduce permitting delays, remove unnecessary barriers, expand manufactured housing opportunities, and modernize housing programs. As Reuters reports, those measures acknowledge that excessive regulation often suppresses supply

Yet the investor restrictions substitute government judgment for market judgment. The assumption that Washington knows better than builders, lenders, developers, and local communities how housing markets should function is a dangerous assumption.

None of this means concerns about investor concentration should be ignored. In certain markets, large-scale acquisitions can create challenges for homebuyers. But those concerns should be addressed carefully and locally, not through broad federal mandates that risk discouraging new construc-



WISENBAKER

tion nationwide. What works in Arizona may well not work in Georgia.

Local housing markets differ dramatically, and the housing affordability crisis will not be solved through central planning. It certainly will not be solved by demonizing investment capital or by creating new federal restrictions that discourage housing production. If Congress truly wants housing to become

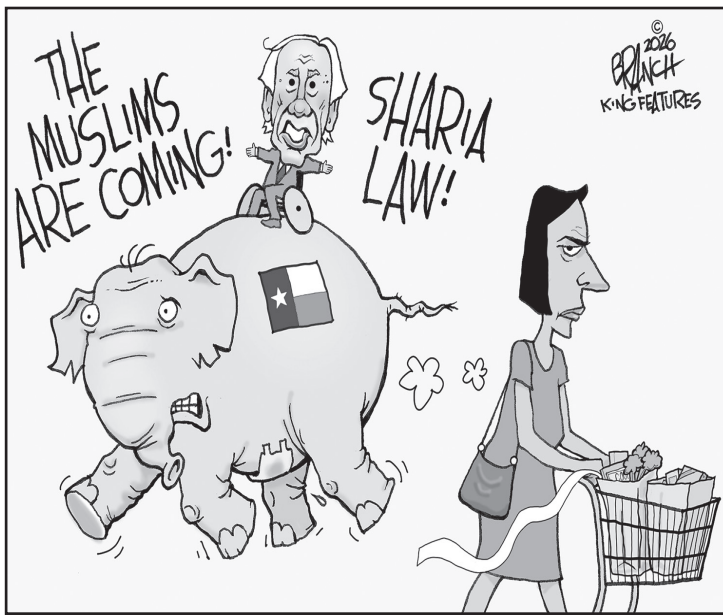
more affordable, the formula is straightforward:

Reduce barriers, encourage construction, streamline regulations, respect local decision-making.

And most importantly, stop punishing the very investment that helps create the housing supply America desperately needs. In short, the solution remains exactly what it has always been: Build more homes.

Gary Wisenbaker is a Realtor with Century 21 Realty Advisors in Valdosta and is licensed in both Georgia and Florida..

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



What to watch THURSDAY

July 16, 2026

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

Golf: The Open Championship: First Round

USA Network & Peacock, 4 a.m. Live

The 154th Open Championship is at England's Royal Birkdale Golf Club, where golf's best compete in the final major tournament of the year. Scottie Scheffler won his first Claret Jug in 2025. USA Network, Peacock and NBC share coverage through Sunday's final round.

MLB Baseball: N.Y. Mets at Philadelphia

ESPN, 7 p.m. Live

The second half of the MLB season opens on ESPN with Juan Soto and the N.Y. Mets starting a three-game series against Kyle Schwarber and the Phillies at Philadelphia's Citizens Bank Park.



The First 48

A&E, 8 p.m. ■ Season Premiere

The hit series takes viewers behind the scenes of real-life investigations as it follows homicide detectives in the critical first 48 hours of murder investigations, giving viewers unprecedented access to crime scenes, interrogations and forensic processing. Tonight's episode follows a North Charleston man, asking for help at a stranger's doorstep, who dies from a gunshot wound to the leg, and the search for the shooter leads in an unexpected direction.

Surviving Earth

NBC, 8 p.m.

In the new episode "When the Oceans Shrank," a sacabambaspis fish journeys to find a mate before his colorful reef is destroyed by freezing waters.

Scott Peterson: The New Evidence, Part 1

A&E, 9 p.m.

Laci Peterson was eight months pregnant when she disappeared from her home in Modesto, California, on Christmas Eve 2002. A nationwide search ended in April 2003 when her remains and those of her unborn son, Conner, were discovered in the San Francisco Bay. Her husband, Scott Peterson, is currently serving a life sentence without the possibility of parole after being charged for their murders. Chris Pixley, veteran defense attorney and ABC News legal consultant, has followed the case through all the twists and turns. He leads the examination in the doc, which brings analysis and updated developments featuring never-heard witness testimony and firsthand insight from Peterson's former defense attorney Mark Geragos.

The Bear

FX, 9 p.m.

A traffic jam causes chaos for the restaurant staff in the new episode "Raspberries."

MOVIES YOU'LL LOVE



SAM EMERSON

Encanto (2021, Children) Stephanie Beatriz, María Cecilia Botero **Disney, 6:15 p.m.**

The Proposal (2009, Romance-comedy) Sandra Bullock, Ryan Reynolds **FX, 6:30 p.m.**

Sing 2 (2021, Children) Matthew McConaughey, Reese Witherspoon **NICK, 7 p.m.**

Descendants: Wicked Wonderland (2026, Comedy) Kylie Cantrall, Malia Baker **Disney, 8 p.m.**

Fame: A Temptations Story (2025, Suspense) Keri Hilson, Keisha Chante **LMN, 8 p.m.**

Twister (1996, Action) Helen Hunt, Bill Paxton **USA, 8 p.m.**

Tyler Perry's Madea's Big Happy Family (2011, Comedy-drama) Tyler Perry, Shad "Bow Wow" Moss **BET, 9 p.m.**

Mrs. Doubtfire (1993, Children) Robin Williams, Sally Field **FX, 9:30 p.m.**

Rambo III (1988, Action) Sylvester Stallone, Richard Crenna **BBC America, 9:30 p.m.**

The Da Vinci Code (2006, Mystery) Tom Hanks, Audrey Tautou **SVFY, 10:30 p.m.**

O Brother, Where Art Thou? (2000, Comedy-drama) George Clooney, John Turturro **TNT, 10:45 p.m.**

Eight Men Out (1988, Historical drama) John Cusack, Clifton James **MGM, 11:30 p.m.**

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

CATCH A CLASSIC

TCM Birthday Tribute: Ginger Rogers

TCM, beginning at 6:15 a.m.

Celebrate legendary actress, dancer and singer Ginger Rogers with a full day of films on Turner Classic Movies. Rogers is still most closely linked with Fred Astaire, and several of their beloved collaborations are part of today's lineup, including 1934's **Top Hat (pictured)**, **Shall We Dance** (1937), **Carefree** (1938) and **The Barkleys of Broadway** (1949), their final film together. But the day also makes room for Rogers' career beyond those elegant dance partnerships. **Having Wonderful Time** (1938), **Primrose Path** (1940) and **Romance in Manhattan** (1934) show her range in com-



RKO RADIO PICTURES

edy and drama, while **Kitty Foyle** (1940) remains one of her defining nonmusical showcases. Rogers won the Best Actress Oscar for playing a working woman torn between love and societal expectations, proving she was much more than half of one of Hollywood's most famous dance teams.

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What to watch FRIDAY

July 17, 2026

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

WNBA Basketball

ION, beginning at 7:30 p.m. Live

Viewers will see either the Seattle Storm at the Indiana Fever, the Atlanta Dream at the Toronto Tempo or the L.A. Sparks at the Chicago Sky in ION's regional WNBA game. The second matchup features the Connecticut Sun at the Phoenix Mercury.

MLS Soccer

FOX, beginning at 8 p.m. Live

A Major League Soccer doubleheader on FOX has Atlanta United FC at Nashville SC and LAFC at the LA Galaxy.

The Best Romcoms Ever!

The CW, 8 p.m.

This two-hour special celebrates *Pretty Woman*, *Jerry Maguire*, *The Proposal*, *Sweet Home Alabama*, *Pretty in Pink* and more classic romantic comedies. Comedians, actors and filmmakers and other commentators weigh in and rank the genre's 20 best movies ever.

Scott Peterson: The New Evidence, Part 2

A&E, 8 p.m.

Chris Pixley, veteran defense attorney and ABC News legal consultant, has followed the Scott Peterson case through all the twists and turns and leads the examination in this docuseries. "This series looks at the human element with the kind of pressures everyone was under and how those affected the decisions that were made, the testimony that was given and how it's still affecting the case," he concludes.



'The Best Romances Ever!'

TOUCHSTONE PICTURES

Diners, Drive-Ins & Dives

Food Network, 9 p.m.

In the new episode "From Bunny Chow to Chicken Oysters," Guy Fieri's digging into the unexpected. A South African spot in Black

Mountain, North Carolina, is cooking lights-out lamb curry; a chef in San Jose, California, is bringing big flavor to beef barbacoa; and a Boynton Beach, Florida, joint is serving up chicken oysters.

CATCH A CLASSIC

Special Theme: Summer of Darkness

TCM, beginning at 8 p.m.

TCM's Summer of Darkness continues tonight with a trio of 1950 noirs that show the genre moving into some of its richest and most psychologically complex territory. First is **The Asphalt Jungle**, John Huston's influential heist drama about a carefully planned jewel robbery that begins to unravel through greed, mistrust and bad luck. Thrilling Hayden leads the ensemble, while Marilyn Monroe appears in one of her early breakthrough roles. Next is **In a Lonely Place**, starring Humphrey Bogart, in one of his most unsettling performances, as a troubled screenwriter suspected of murder, opposite Gloria Grahame as the woman who wants to trust him. The main lineup closes with **The Breaking Point**



WARNER BROS.

(pictured), Michael Curtiz's adaptation of Ernest Hemingway's *To Have and Have Not*, with John Garfield giving one of his finest late-career performances as a boat captain pushed toward crime. The overnight neo-noir lineup continues with the TCM premiere of *Sea of Love* (1989), starring Al Pacino and Ellen Barkin, followed by *Klute* (1971), the thriller that won Jane Fonda a Best Actress Oscar.

MOVIES YOU'LL LOVE



GUS CASTILLO

American Pie (1999, Comedy) Jason Biggs, Shannon Elizabeth **WE, 6 p.m.**

Risky Business (1983, Comedy) Tom Cruise, Rebecca De Mornay **Sundance, 6 p.m.**

The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie (2004, Children) Tom Kenny, Bill Fagerbakke **NICK, 7 p.m.**

O Brother, Where Art Thou? (2000, Comedy-drama) George Clooney, John Turturro **TNT, 7:45 p.m.**

Do the Right Thing (1989, Drama) Danny Aiello, Ossie Davis **VH1, 8 p.m.**

Is God Is (2026, Suspense) Kara Young, Mallori Johnson **MGM, 8 p.m.**

My Daughter's Trapped in a Throuple (2026, Suspense) Alicia Blasingame, Geffen Aviva **LMN, 8 p.m.**

Just Wright (2010, Romance-comedy) Queen Latifah, Common **BET, 9 p.m.**

Shelter (2026, Action) Jason Statham, Bodhi Rae Breathnach **Encore, 9 p.m.**

The Silence of the Lambs (1991, Suspense) Jodie Foster, Anthony Hopkins **MGM, 9:40 p.m.**

Catch Me if You Can (2002, Comedy-drama) Leonardo DiCaprio, Tom Hanks **E!, 10 p.m.**

Mile 22 (2018, Action) Mark Wahlberg, Lauren Cohan **TNT, 10 p.m.**

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



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TV - What to watch

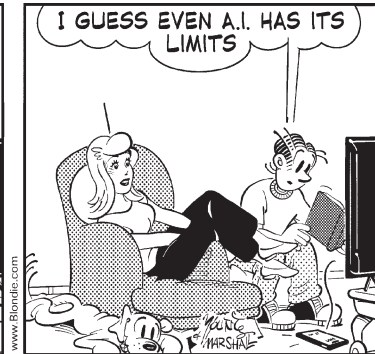
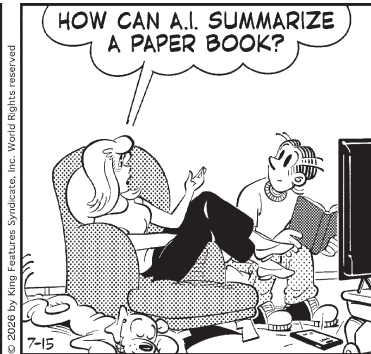
CLOSE TO HOME John McPherson



BEETLE BAILEY Mort & Greg Walker



BLONDIE Dean Young & John Marshall



THE BORN LOSER Art & Chip Sansom



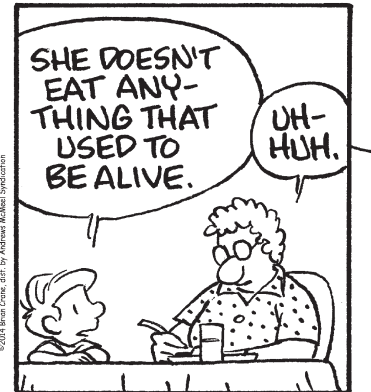
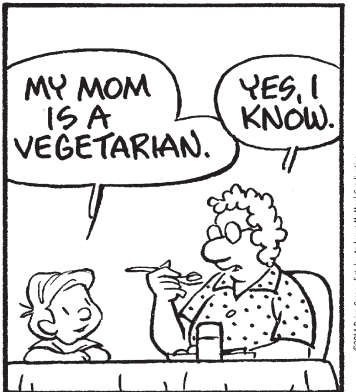
ZITS Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



GARFIELD Jim Davis



PICKLES Brian Crane



SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING:☆☆☆☆☆

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

WHATZIT?

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



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

TODAY'S WHATZIT SOLUTION: Throw your hat in the ring

Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Patti Varol

- ACROSS**
- 1 Gerrit who won the 2023 AL Cy Young Award
- 5 Patient contributions
- 11 Capitol Hill fig.
- 14 Assert
- 15 Natural light shows
- 16 Pub quaff
- 17 "Yet-to-be-revealed ability
- 19 Sleep acronym
- 20 Menopause treatment, briefly
- 21 Fragrances
- 22 Nonverbal greeting
- 23 Consecrate
- 25 "Fundraising events for some libraries
- 28 Flat tire problem
- 31 Playwright O'Neill
- 32 Nevada city near Lake Tahoe
- 33 Horned equine
- 37 Capital of Switzerland?
- 38 "Airport announcement events for some libraries
- 41 Moody rock genre
- 44 "Now, listen ..."
- 45 Speller's phrase
- 49 Martin of TV's "Mission: Impossible"
- 51 Person from Ljubljana, e.g.
- 53 "First Amendment guarantee
- 57 Audacity
- 58 Challenge for a biker
- 59 "Rebecca" novelist du Maurier
- 62 ___ al-Fitr
- 63 De Armas of "Knives Out"
- 64 Spies with divided loyalties, and what the answers to the starred clues are
- 67 First number in many countdowns
- 68 Likable enough
- 69 Get together
- 70 NNW opposite
- 71 Warnings

- 72 Bygone Palm smartphone
- DOWN**
- 1 Feature of some wedding receptions
- 2 Rest on top of
- 3 Speaker's stand
- 4 Go wrong
- 5 Adorable
- 6 Toothbrush brand
- 7 Arroz con ___: chicken dish
- 8 Childish retort
- 9 PBS chef Martin
- 10 Retired boomer, for short
- 11 Frozen brand that "nobody doesn't like"
- 12 Gridiron sides
- 13 Formidable rivals
- 15 Bread box?
- 18 Being, in Latin
- 22 Dog's nonverbal greeting
- 24 Plod along
- 26 Part of an ear
- 27 Belted out
- 29 Stylish filmmaker
- 30 Leg-bending joint
- 34 German pronoun
- 35 "Evita" narrator

- 36 Boathouse collection
- 39 "Now!"
- 40 Roof overhang
- 41 Toppers in Santa's workshop
- 42 Military branch at Camp Pendleton
- 43 Narrow, as some bridges
- 46 More calm
- 47 Possible guest
- 48 Must

- 50 Wilmington's st.
- 52 Universal donor's type, briefly
- 54 Bring out
- 55 ___toothed cat
- 56 Challenge for a bowler
- 60 Gas brand with toy trucks
- 61 "Uh-uh"
- 64 Genetic info carrier
- 65 Canola ___
- 66 CPR giver

TODAY'S SOLUTION:

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

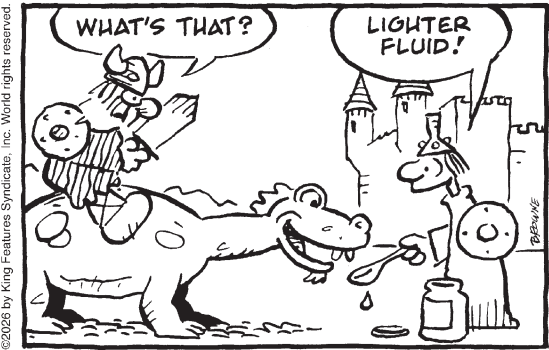
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53						54	55	56			57			
58						59			60	61			62	
63				64	65							66		
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70				71								72		

By Norman M. Aaronson
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07/15/26

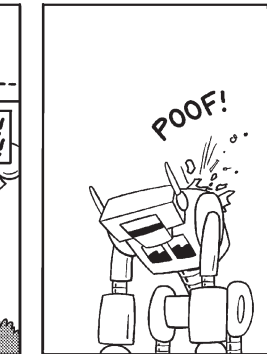
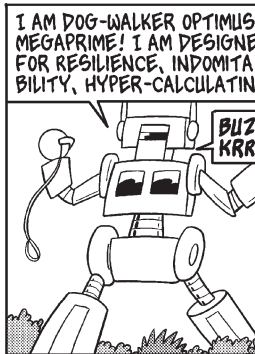
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE Chris Browne



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.

HUMP ISLAND OYSTER CO.

Solution: 9 letters

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

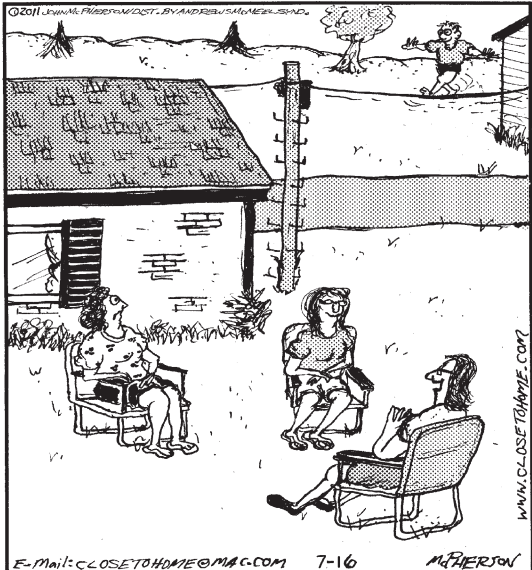
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Carbon, Certification, Clover Passage, Cold Chain, Compliance, Crabs, Crop, Culinary, Cycling, E-commerce, Engineer, Environment, Farm, Feeder, Filter, Grow, Host, Longline, Mariculture, Nursery, Off Bottom, Raft, Recipe, Restaurants, Retail, Safety, Sande, Seafood, Seed, Selective, Spat, System, Tetraploid, Triploid

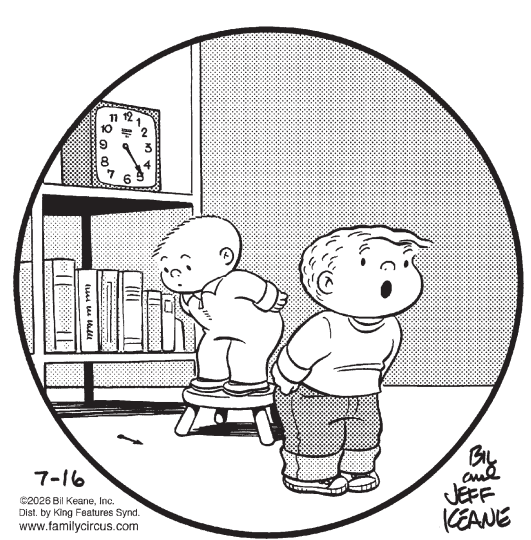
TODAY'S ANSWER: Shellfish

CLOSE TO HOME John McPherson



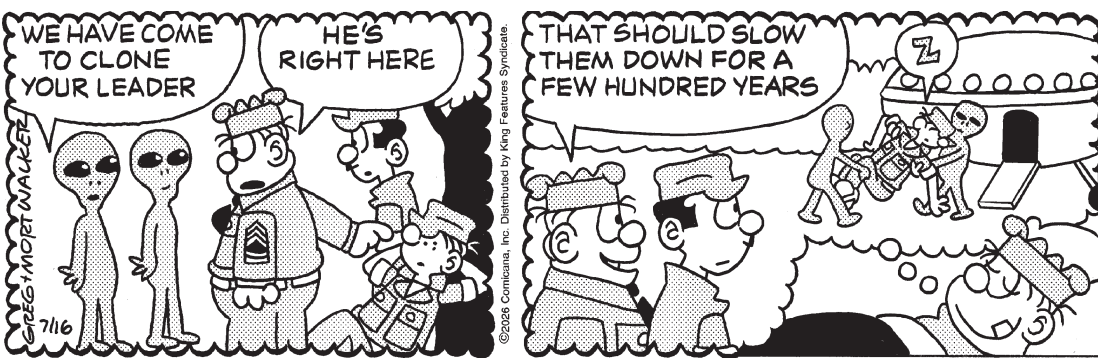
"I think everyone is like that. With the first two kids, we watched 'em like hawks. With the last, we're much more laid-back."

THE FAMILY CIRCUS Bil Keane



"What time is it when the big hand is on five and the little hand is on the floor?"

BEETLE BAILEY Mort & Greg Walker



BLONDIE Dean Young & John Marshall



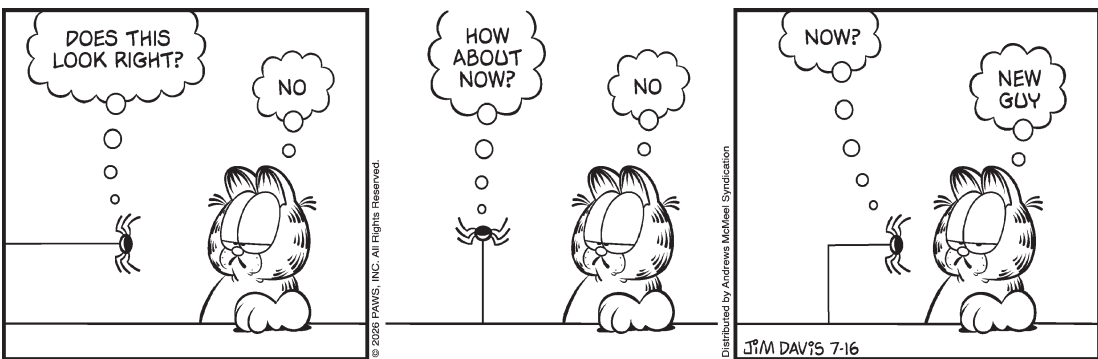
THE BORN LOSER Art & Chip Sansom



ZITS Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



GARFIELD Jim Davis



PICKLES Brian Crane



SUDOKU

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

WHATZIT?

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

PINNACLES

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: Friends in high places

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Pan for stir frying

4 Gone by

8 Rara —

12 Eagle

13 Church area containing the altar

14 Nota —

15 Very hot day

17 Comedian — Johnson

18 Straw matting floor covering in Japan

19 Meat for Irish stew

21 Bouncer

22 Actor — Marvin

23 Playing card

26 Club member

28 UK media org.

31 Stat. in baseball

32 Singer — Horne

33 "Go team!"

34 Pinch

35 Hoofed animal

36 — Baba

37 "Gloria in excelsis —"

38 Your and my

39 Unripe

41 Kid

43 Greek letter

44 Treatment facility

47 Circles the earth

51 Singer — Minnelli

52 Finger-to-thumb distance

54 — corner

55 Fencing weapon

56 — Lanka

57 Pie a la —

58 Sported

59 Choose

DOWN

1 60s TV's "Wild Wild —"

2 Killer whale

3 Tangle

4 80s video game

5 Plant louse

6 Opp. of NNW

7 Word

8 Die down

9 Backbone bones

10 Dividing

11 Perceived

16 Indy 500, e.g.

20 Skeletal part

23 Dispatch

24 A Great Lake

25 Annihilated

26 Dread

27 Insect

29 Hay in a bundle

30 Goatee location

32 Actor — Diamond Phillips

35 Asian desert

39 "I Never Promised You a Rose —"

40 Chafes

42 Silly

43 Dry ink

44 Seafood item

45 Stretched car

46 Masticate

48 — facto

49 Field cover

50 Agitated state

53 Mil. address part

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

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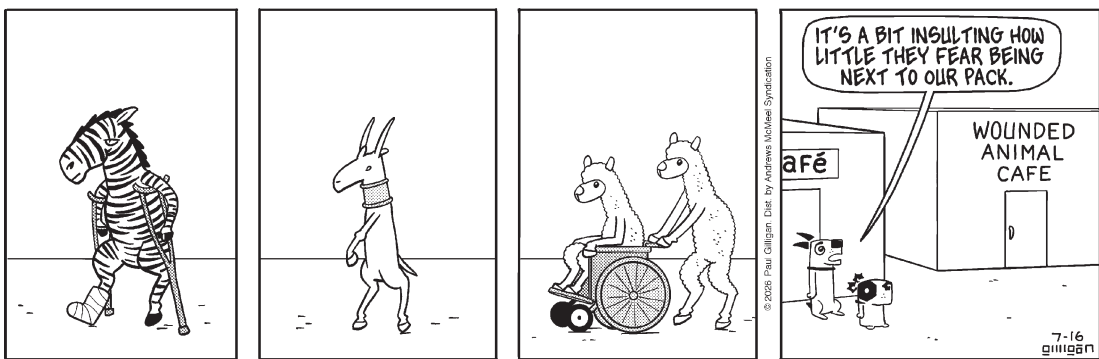
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE Chris Browne



PEANUTS Charles M. Schulz



POOCH CAFE Paul Gilligan



WONDERWORD

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.

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

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Acrobat, Arcade, Balloons, Barbecue, Birthday, Block, Cake, Carnival, Carousel, City, Community, Concert, Concessions, Confetti, Contest, Costume, Entertainment, Festival, Floats, Food, Friends, Hot Dogs, Ice Cream, Lemonade, Lively, Loud, Music, Neighborhood, Night, Park, Party, Picnic, Pretzel, Procession, Public, Road, Smile, Soda, Vendors

TODAY'S ANSWER: Clown

‘Just Africa’ festival scheduled for third weekend in September in downtown Albany

By Alan Mauldin
alan.mauldin@albanyherald.com

ALBANY — A taste of the Caribbean and Africa is coming to Albany with a fall festival that will also bring African dance, a parade of children’s fashions, as well as vendors, live bands, and arts and crafts.

The inaugural “Just Africa: A Celebration of African & Caribbean Culture” festival is set for Sept. 18-20 at the Riverfront Park in downtown Albany.

The occasion is also an invitation for former Albany citizens to return and share their accomplishments. While most people know that Albany was the birthplace of Ray Charles, there are many other people with success stories who were born and lived in Albany, Daaiyah Salaam, who is helping organize Just Africa with her father, Albany businessman Omar Salaam, said. “Albany. Georgia, is rich

with a lot of history, culture, and there have been an enormous number of people who have come out of Albany and done tremendous things in the world,” she said. “We know Albany has tremendous challenges. We also know Albany, Georgia, has a tremendous amount of talent, everyday people that are talented, that are intelligent, that are creative that we want to highlight.”

Celebrating that talent and the cultures that have come together in the Good Life City is a big part of the festival.

“This weekend, Sept. 18-20, is a celebration of all of those things: food, dance, creativity, all of these things,” Daaiyah Salaam said. “It is an opportunity for people to come together to experience joy in Albany, Georgia.”

The father and daughter have formed a board of eight people from various walks of life who are helping with the planning. They also have



Omar Salaam

Staff Photo: Alan Mauldin

consulted with young people to get their take on what they would like included.

“(It’s) not what we think they should want but what they think should be included,” Daaiyah Salaam said.

ed, and we are incorporating that,” Daaiyah Salaam said. “We did a survey and got their input, what they would like to see, what the celebration will look like in terms of art. There’s a place for their creativity. One of the priorities was to ensure that we got the youth involved.”

The scheduled events include Jamaica and Caribbean night on the opening Friday, with reggae, dancehall, soca and more. Saturday is dedicated to African dance, music and culture with live bands and a parade of kid’s fashions. The closing Sunday will be a “cool-out day” featuring vendors and a live band.

Omar Salaam, who operated a clothing store downtown for years, started an African Heritage Day festival in 1988 that ran for six years, said that local performers and dancers as well as out-of-town artists will be among the performers. “We’ve got more surprises

coming to Albany that the kids will really love, (like) the world’s first virtual reality theme park,” he said. “We want to have a safe, successful event.

“We want people to experience the good food, the reconnection of Albany with the people who have left here. We want them to come back.”

Entry to the event will come at no charge, Omar Salaam said. Individuals interested in participating can go to daaiyah.salaam@gmail.com, at dtmarket56@yahoo.com or by calling (229) 291-7728.

“We want everybody to come to Albany that weekend for a super great time,” he said. “Everybody is invited. The overall intent is to give people a sense of belonging, to be proud to be in Albany again, to be part of Albany again. We are trying to enhance what the local governments are trying to do to build a better community.”

Southwest Georgia Regional Commission **swgrc** serving local communities Special logo

Southwest Georgia Regional Commission launches older adult home modification program

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

CAMILLA — The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission has announced the official launch of the Older Adult Home Modification Program (OAHMP). Backed by a \$1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, this initiative will provide free, essential home safety and accessibility modifications to approximately 100 to 120 low-income senior citizens (ages 62 and older) across the region.

The program focuses heavily on rural, underserved, and persistent poverty communities across 14 counties. Eligible participants can receive an estimated \$5,000 to \$15,000 per household in low-cost, high-impact improvements tailored to their needs. Covered

modifications include the installation of safety ramps, grab bars, handrails, door widening, and critical accessibility upgrades for bathrooms and kitchens.

Changes will target crucial repairs to improve general safety, health, and energy efficiency. To maximize safety outcomes, SW-GRC is partnering with licensed Occupational Therapists who will conduct personal, in-home assessments using specialized Home for Life Design digital software. This data-driven framework measures environmental barriers and customizes every repair plan.

Approved, licensed contractors will execute the construction work, and all homes will undergo an inspection to ensure compliance with HUD, local, and historical preservation standards before a final homeowner sign-off.



Special Photo

Staff at South Georgia Smiles, a new pediatric dental practice set to open in Albany, will host a Community Back-to-School Bash on July 29 at the practice’s 2607 Gillionville Road location.

South Georgia Smiles set to open, host back-to-school giveaway

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

ALBANY — South Georgia Smiles, a new pediatric dental practice dedicated to helping children build healthy, confident smiles, is celebrating its arrival in Albany by hosting a free Community Back-to-School Bash on July 29 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at its office, located at 2607 Gillionville Road in Albany.

Designed to support local families as they prepare for the upcoming school year, the event will feature free backpacks and school supplies while supplies last, oral health education, community partner booths, giveaways, and family-friendly activities.

South Georgia Smiles was created with a simple mission: to provide exceptional pediatric dental care in a welcoming environment where children feel comfortable and families feel supported. The practice offers comprehensive dental services for infants, children and adolescents, emphasizing preven-

tion, education and personalized care to help every child develop lifelong healthy habits.

“Opening our doors is about more than providing dental care: It’s about becoming a trusted partner in the Albany community,” South Georgia Smiles Office Manager Courtney Troupe said in a news release. “We want every child to begin the school year with the confidence that comes from a healthy smile and the resources they need to succeed in the classroom.”

The Community Back-to-School Bash reflects the practice’s commitment to giving back and building lasting relationships with local families and community organizations. Families are encouraged to stop by, meet the South Georgia Smiles team, learn about children’s oral health, connect with community partners, and enjoy an afternoon of fun before the school year begins.

For more information about South Georgia Smiles and its pediatric dental services, visit the practice website or contact the office directly.

Area students recognized by colleges and universities

By Carlton Fletcher
carlton.fletcher@albanyherald.com

Georgia Tech Faculty Honors, Dean’s List, Graduates

ATLANTA — The following students earned the distinction of Faculty Honors for spring 2026 at the Georgia Institute of Technology. This designation is awarded to undergraduate students who have earned a 4.0 academic average for the semester. Local students honored include:

Chris Dowling of Leesburg
Hannah Glass of Camilla
Ella Hamsley of Leesburg
Jack Ly of Camilla
Sarah Noel of Leesburg
Sarah Overman of Meigs
Sophie Singleton of Albany

The following students have earned the distinction of Dean’s List at the Georgia Institute of Technology for Spring 2026. This designation is awarded to undergraduate students who have earned a 3.0 or higher academic average for the semester.

Tayshaun Adams of Sylvester
Logan English of Sylvester
Jonathan Mandouma of Leesburg
Brody Morris of Albany
Paresh Patel of Albany
Maggie Taylor of Leesburg
The Georgia Institute of Technology presented degrees to 7,129 undergraduate and graduate students during the Institute’s 270th Commencement exercises at McCamish Pavilion (Ph.D. and bachelor’s) and Bobby Dodd Stadium (master’s). Area students recognized include:

Darnell Chen of Leesburg
Aralyn Cooper of Meigs
Johnathan Ham of Albany
Chimdinma Ohamadike of Albany
Joshua Pratt of Albany
Christopher Tipper of Sylvester
Richard Williams of Albany

Georgia Southern President’s, Dean’s List

STATESBORO -- Georgia Southern University recently recognized approximately 2,420 students for excellence in academics on the spring 2026 President’s List. To be eligible for the President’s List, a student must have at least a 4.0 grade-point average and carry a minimum of 12 hours for the semester. Area students recognized include:

Briley Brokamp of Leesburg
Frankie Brooks of Albany
Weston Bryan of Albany
Eddie Carpenter of Sylvester
Miracle Cohen of Albany
Logan Conley of Leesburg

Austin Dyes of Leesburg
Gracie Hallman of Albany
A’niyah Hawkins of Camilla
Phong Lam of Leesburg
Chamaia Lindsey of Albany
Mallory Lindsey of Leesburg
Sara Lunn of Warwick
Olivia Mccoy of Albany
Ethan Moss of Camilla
Vincent Nguyen of Albany
Abigail Perrin of Poulan
Jillian Pollock of Camilla
Olivia Santos of Camilla
Alex Smith of Leesburg
Brent Smith of Leesburg
Mason Wade of Leesburg
Robert Williams of Leesburg

Georgia Southern University recently recognized approximately 4,020 students for excellence in academics on the spring 2026 Dean’s List. To be eligible for the Dean’s List, a student must have at least a 3.5 grade-point average and carry a minimum of 12 hours for the semester. Local students recognized include:

James Austin of Albany
Eboni Beale of Albany
Kinslie Bennett of Sylvester
Ja’nasia Bradley of Albany
Sarah Briscoe of Camilla
Jonathan Brown of Leesburg
Ryshari Burley of Albany
Alexis Cannon of Meigs
Campbell Chapman of Albany

Brooks Chatman of Leesburg
Brinson Chesnut of Albany
Ayanna Cintron of Leesburg
Brock Donley of Albany
Tucker Dowdy of Ty Ty
Nkemjika Ebubedike of Albany

Hanna Elmore of Albany
Libby Graham of Leesburg
Trae’vana Graye of Leesburg
Addison Green of Leesburg
Addison Grimsley of Leesburg
Ella Hoerner of Albany
Mckenzie Holland of Leesburg

Jacqueline Houston of Albany
Alyssa Howell of Pelham
Aaron Hudson of Albany
Daniel Iriarte-Cruz of Albany

Maddux Jacques of Sylvester
Kallan Jenkins of Leesburg
Aaron Johnson of Albany
Jalen Johnson of Albany
John Johnson of Camilla
Jay Lanier of Camilla
Marteia Mann of Albany
Jackson Manry of Leesburg

William Melvin of Albany
Abbigail Milliorn of Leesburg
Geoffrey Mills of Leesburg
Jack Mitchell of Leesburg
Jace Molden of Leesburg

Ella Moore of Warwick
Richard Morris of Albany
Regan Nayeli of Baconton
Gabrielle Naylor of Albany
Ellie Northrop of Albany
Rahne Parker of Leesburg
Jacob Perrin of Poulan
Cooper Powers of Smithville

Maddox Powers of Smithville
Jeniah Richardson of Leesburg
Kenneth Sellers of Albany
Aniston Shugart of Leesburg

Mackenzie Sinderson of Albany
Alayna Thompson of Albany
Lauren Tumlin of Leesburg
Morgan Webb of Leesburg
Kirmaya Williams of Leesburg

University of Mississippi Graduates, Chancellor’s Honor Roll

UNIVERSITY, Miss. -- More than 3,800 students graduated from the University of Mississippi recently. Undergraduate and graduate candidates received degrees from the College of Liberal Arts, General Studies and schools of Accountancy, Applied Sciences, Business Administration, Education, Engineering, Journalism and New Media, Law and Pharmacy. Robert Holton of Albany, who majored in Accountancy, received a Bachelor of Accountancy degree from the Patterson School of Accountancy.

The University of Mississippi announced students named to the spring 2026 Honor Roll lists, including Chancellor’s Honor Roll. Among students honored was:

Natalee Medders of Sylvester in the B.S. in Forensic Chemistry program, was named to the Chancellor’s Honor Roll, which is reserved for students who earn a semester GPA of 3.75-4.00.

Troy University -- Graduates, Chancellor’s, Provost, Dean’s Lists

TROY, Ala. -- Troy University has recognized students who completed the requirements for graduation during the spring semester and Term 4 of the 2025-2026 academic year. The spring semester includes graduates from the Troy, Ala., campus. Term 4 graduates include students at Troy’s campuses in Dothan and Montgomery, Ala., along with teaching sites outside of Alabama and online. Local students recognized include:

Cassenda Nelson of Camilla
Candace Whitehead Cabral of Leesburg



Special Logo

Carli Bentley of Camilla
Alisa Wheeler of Albany
Lenora Williams of Leesburg

Pascha Spence of Camilla
Troy University announced the names of students who have been named to the Chancellor’s List for the spring semester and Term 4 of the 2025-2026 academic year. Full-time undergraduate students who are registered for at least 12 semester hours and who earn a grade-point average of 4.0 qualify for the Chancellor’s List. Area students recognized include:

Adeline Barden of Leesburg
Carli Bentley of Camilla
Ava Sudderth of Dawson
Troy University announced the names of students who have been named to the Provost’s List for the spring semester and Term 4 of the 2025-2026 academic year. Full-time undergraduate students who are registered for at least 12 semester hours and who have a grade-point average of at least 3.65 qualify for the Provost’s List. Local students recognized include:

Jaxson Haire of Camilla
Kinsley White of Camilla
Carey Molden of Albany
The University of Mississippi announced students named to the spring 2026 Honor Roll lists, including Dean’s Honor Roll. Students honored include:

Owen Hancock, of Sylvester in the B.M.D.S. in Multi-Disciplinary Studies program, was named to the Dean’s Honor Roll, which is reserved for students who earn a semester GPA of 3.50-3.74.

Marjorie Morgan of Albany in the B.S.E.S. in Exercise Science program, was named to the Dean’s Honor Roll.

University of Arkansas Graduates

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. -- The University of Arkansas honored its most recent graduating class with a series of spring commencement ceremonies at Bud Walton Arena and Barnhill Arena.

Kathy Goodpasture of Albany graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from the College of Education and Health Professions.



Special Photo: Kameron Taylor

The Minnesota Twins selected Georgia Tech’s Vahn Lackey with the third pick in last week’s MLB draft, one of eight Yellow Jackets taken in the draft - two in the Top 10. Meanwhile, the Georgia Bulldogs had 13 players selected.

Bulldogs, Jackets taken in MLB Draft

By Joe Whitfield
Sports Editor

For years, college football has been Georgia’s calling card. This weekend, college baseball made a compelling case that it deserves a seat at the head table.

The University of Georgia and Georgia Tech combined to place 21 players into professional baseball during the 2026 Major League Baseball Draft, an extraordinary total that reflected the remarkable seasons both programs enjoyed and underscored the growing strength of baseball across the state.

Georgia led the nation with a school-record 13 draft picks after winning 53 games, sweeping the Southeastern Conference regular-season and tournament championships and advancing to the College World Series. Not to be outdone, Georgia Tech produced eight selections, including two of the first eight players taken overall and a program-record five players selected in the first five rounds.

It’s difficult to overstate what those numbers mean.

Not only did Georgia finish atop every college program in the country with 13 selections, but Georgia Tech’s first-day performance placed the Yellow Jackets among the nation’s elite talent producers. Together, the state’s flagship programs

turned the draft into a celebration of college baseball in Georgia.

The Bulldogs’ draft class was anchored by Daniel Jackson, whose spectacular season earned him virtually every major national award in college baseball.

The Colorado Rockies selected the catcher with the 37th overall pick after Jackson became just the third Division I player — and the first catcher — to produce a season with at least 25 home runs and 25 stolen bases. He also captured the SEC Triple Crown, batting .379 with 32 home runs and a school-record 87 RBIs while taking home the Golden Spikes Award, Dick Howser Trophy and Buster Posey Collegiate Catcher of the Year Award.

Georgia also saw ace Joey Volchko go to the Chicago White Sox in the third round after an 11-win season highlighted by a dominant complete-game victory over Texas at the College World Series. Outfielder Rylan Lujo joined them on the draft’s opening day when the Los Angeles Angels selected the first-team All-SEC performer in the fourth round before 10 more Bulldogs heard their names called Sunday.

If Georgia dominated with depth, Georgia Tech made its statement at the very top of the draft.

Catcher Vahn Lackey became the second-highest draft pick in school history when the Minnesota Twins selected him

third overall. Five picks later, the Athletics took center fielder Drew Burress, making the duo the first teammates in Georgia Tech history to be drafted among the top 10 selections in the same year.

That accomplishment alone would have made history.

Instead, it became only the beginning. Second baseman Jarren Advincula and shortstop Carson Kerce followed in the second round, giving Georgia Tech four players selected in the first 53 picks. By the time the draft concluded, Alex Hernandez, Parker Brosius, Tate McKee and Porter Buursema had joined them, giving the Yellow Jackets eight selections overall.

The accomplishments mirrored what both teams accomplished on the field.

Georgia built one of the finest seasons in program history behind a relentless lineup and dominant pitching, while Georgia Tech paired one of the nation’s most explosive offenses with an ACC championship run that returned the Yellow Jackets to national prominence.

Professional scouts noticed.

Now, so will baseball fans across the country.

Twenty-one players. Two powerhouse programs. One unmistakable message.

College baseball in the state of Georgia has never been stronger.

Championship expectations return to Sherwood

By Joe Whitfield
Sports Editor

ALBANY — Winning a state championship is difficult.

Defending one can be even harder.

Sherwood Christian Academy’s girls cross country team will find out this fall as the defending GIAA Class AA state champions begin a season with a target squarely on their backs. Meanwhile, the Eagles’ boys team enters the year with unfinished business after falling one spot short of a region championship a year ago.

Together, the two teams give Sherwood reason to believe another memorable season could be on the horizon.

Leading the Lady Eagles is senior standout Kaylee Hatcher, who rewrote the school record book last season by becoming the first Sherwood runner to break the 20-minute barrier. Hatcher’s school-record time of 19 minutes, 58.53 seconds helped propel the Lady Eagles to both the region and GIAA Class AA state championships while earning her a fifth-place finish at the state meet.

Now, the challenge changes.

Instead of chasing a championship, the Lady Eagles will spend the season trying to defend one.

The Sherwood boys have a different mission.

After finishing as the region runner-up last fall, the Eagles return determined to climb one spot higher. Leading that pursuit is Natnael Russell, whose school-record time of 16:47.62 established him as one of the state’s premier distance runners.

If Sherwood hopes to sweep the region titles this season, the road won’t be easy.

In fact, it may be the program’s toughest challenge yet.

Region realignment has added perennial contenders Valwood School and Brookwood School to GIAA Class AA, creating what could become one of the state’s most competitive cross country regions. Brookwood, in particular, has built one of Georgia’s strongest programs, giving Sherwood another measuring stick as it pursues championships.

Rather than shy away from the tougher competition, the Eagles welcome it.

Athletic director Jay Flynt believes the challenge will only make the program stronger.

“I’m excited for the fall and the new changes,” Flynt said. “I think our cross-country team is ready for another run

this fall, too. Coach Byrd does a great job, and we’re excited for their season that starts soon.”

Sherwood officially opens the season Aug. 15 by hosting the Sherwood

While championships remain the goal, Flynt said the program’s purpose reaches far beyond the finish line.

“Our chief purpose is to bring glory to God in everything we do, whether in competition, training, academics or the way we represent Christ off the course,” Flynt said. “We believe success is measured by more than trophies and medals, and we strive to honor God through excellence, character and service.”

If another championship trophy finds its way back to Sherwood this fall, the Eagles will gladly celebrate it.

Inside the program, however, Flynt said success has always been measured by something greater than a place on the podium.



Special Photo: Submitted

The Sherwood Christian Cross Country teams are preparing for the upcoming fall season that will open Aug. 15 at Sherwood with the annual “Around the Cross” Cross Country meet.

Around the Cross Invitational, giving the Eagles an opportunity to begin the year in front of family, friends and community supporters.



Special Photo: Submitted

Georgia Heat wins Battle of the South

Members of the Georgia Heat of Warner Robins accept the championship trophy from Dougherty County Coroner Michael Fowler, who presented the award following the 31st annual Battle of the South basketball tournament at Monroe High School. The Heat defeated the 50 Boys, a team of Westover High School alumni, in the championship game.

Braves take AJ Gracia with No. 9 pick

By Mark Bowman
Braves.com

ATLANTA — 991 will always be a special year for Braves fans. So, there may be reason to be excited about the fact that Atlanta drafted a collegiate outfielder in the first round for the first time in 35 years.

The Braves took AJ Gracia with the first of their two first-round selections (ninth overall) in the 2026 MLB Draft on Saturday afternoon. The University of Virginia outfielder was MLB Pipeline’s No. 19 Draft prospect.

“That was really cool,” Gracia said. “I didn’t really know what was going to happen until about three minutes before the pick. It was definitely a last-minute thing. But I’m super excited and super happy to be a Brave.”

Gracia is the first collegiate outfielder the Braves have taken in the first round since Arizona State outfielder Mike Kelly was nabbed with the second overall selection in 1991. Atlanta won the first of 14 consecutive division titles that year and earned the first of the five NL pennants it captured during the 1990s.

“He’s been one of the best college performers for three years,” Braves vice president of amateur scouting Ronit Shah said. “Team USA guy, Cape Cod. He hit everywhere he’s gone. This time a year ago, our scouts were telling me, ‘This should be our guy next year.’”

Gracia has been known for his superb consistency throughout three years in college. Gracia, 21, posted an OPS over 1.000 each season, peaking at 1.121 this past spring. He also hit 43 homers (14, 15 and 14 again) and 39 doubles on a .317 average over his career.

“He’s always shown such an advanced ability to control the zone,” Shah said. “He knows

what pitches to swing at. He knows what pitches he can hit, or hit for power.”

Starting his career at Duke, Gracia burst onto the scene with Freshman All-American honors after he set Blue Devils rookie records in homers and RBIs. He experimented with a swing change his sophomore year that may have contributed to a slow start, but the numbers stabilized right back after he ditched that change. Gracia then followed head coach Chris Pollard from Duke to Virginia for the 2026 campaign, when he and the Cavaliers made it to an NCAA Regional.

“My freshman Fall [season] I hit like .080 and I was like ‘Man, I’ve got to switch something up,’” Gracia said. “That’s kind of when I started making some changes and stuff like that. Nothing too crazy in terms of my swing itself. It was more so just a setup [change] I started standing pretty tall, like how I am now, and for whatever reason, something kind of clicked, and I just ran with it. It’s kind of been history since then.”

Gracia fully solidified his prospect status with an excellent junior campaign. He earned second-team, third-team or honorable mention All-American honors from various outlets, as well as second-team All-ACC.

The New Jersey native owns a sweet lefty swing from an upright stance, which he compared in an MLB Network interview to former NL MVP and current Yankee Cody Bellinger’s stroke. He stands 6-foot-3 and 195 pounds with a projectable frame that could add more strength in the professional ranks.

“There are two guys I love to watch,” Gracia said. “One is Cody Bellinger. He’s got a lofty swing. I see a lot of myself in him. I think we

have some similarities. I also love watching Juan Soto hit. I mean, he’s just a really competitive guy. He never gives an at-bat away.”

Gracia earns strong 55 grades for both his hit tool and raw power, while an advanced approach at the plate -- 152 walks to 129 strikeouts in his career -- aid his overall offering.

He also earns above-average marks with 50 fielding. Evaluators believe he may stick in center field because of strong instincts and efficient routes, though if he moves to a corner, his 45-grade arm may play better in left field.

Gracia has already played at Truist Park. He was among the players who competed there during the 2022 Hank Aaron Invitational, which featured some of the top undergraduate players from the United States. The game is part of MLB Develops, an initiative by Major League Baseball and USA Baseball dedicated to growing the sport, cultivating diversity and providing elite training for amateur players.

“It’s a really good way to grow the game for sure,” Gracia said. “There’s a lot of good exposure for everyone. There’s a ton of good competition. You play against them in high school and then run into them throughout college. You build a lot of friendships along the way. MLB Develops and that event was amazing. One of my favorite baseball experiences for sure.”

With their second pick in the first round, and 26th overall, the Braves selected outfielder Carter Beck from Indiana State University. A left-handed hitter, Beck was the Missouri Valley Conference Player of the Year.

Tommy Fleetwood chasing hometown heroics at The Open

Field Level Media

Tommy Fleetwood hopes home-field advantage will lead the two-time Grand Slam runner-up to his first major title this week at The Open Championship.

The 35-year-old Englishman grew up down the road from Royal Birkdale Golf Club in Southport, site of the final major on this season's PGA Tour calendar.

"It's obviously very, very special. I think for anybody that was lucky enough to grow up in the town of Southport. It's such a golfing town, and The Open at Birkdale holds such a special place in the area," Fleetwood said at Monday's pre-tournament press conference.

"Yeah, it's a dream just to be competing in an Open here, so I feel very, very lucky. Still

have lots of memories from the 2017 Open here. Yeah, just excited for the opportunity to play in front of everybody. It's very rare to have an opportunity to play a tournament, let alone The Open, in the town where you grew up in front of fans that were all there to support you. Very excited."

Fleetwood enters the 154th Open ranked No. 9 in the world. He has finished in the top five in all four Grand Slams in his career, including second place at the 2018 U.S. Open and the 2019 Open Championship at Royal Portrush in Northern Ireland, where Irishman Shane Lowry ran away to win by six strokes.

This year, Fleetwood finished T11 at the U.S. Open, T33 at the Masters and missed the cut at the PGA Championship. He also has two other top-10 efforts in The Open



Special Photo: Bill Streicher-Imagn Images

England's Tommy Fleetwood speaks to reporters ahead of this week's Open Championship at Royal Birkdale in Southport, England. Fleetwood, who grew up in nearby Southport, is seeking his first major championship on his hometown course.

Championship: T4 in 2022 and T10 in 2023. Fleetwood is not only trying to become the first Englishman to win The Open since Nick Faldo in 1992, but he

also aims to improve on his T27 finish from the last time it was held at Royal Birkdale in 2017.

Fleetwood was asked about the pressure of expectations on his shoulders this week.

"I think what you do have to deal with is how much you want it and your own expectations, but I think at the same time, I'm no different to any other person in terms of every single person that is playing in The Open dreams of winning in The Open and wants to win it," he said.

"There's really nothing different to anybody else in that sense. I just think I am the lucky one that gets to have home support and use that as like really, really positive fuel. "I think the first time I played here in 2017, I obviously had a bad first round (76). I think my round on Friday (69) was

one of the best rounds I ever played to make the cut, and Saturday (66) was a great experience."

Fleetwood admitted sneaking onto the course "once or twice" as a kid.

"Birkdale was always kind of hallowed turf for people that lived in Southport, and I definitely didn't get to play here as much as I would like to," he said.

If it's considered hallowed ground now, imagine what it will be like if a hometown hero hoists the Claret Jug on Sunday.

"Dreams do come true, we watch it all the time, but you'll never find out if yours will unless you chase it," Fleetwood said. "Mine might come true; it might not. I think I've done a lot in my career so far, but yeah, there's still plenty more to go."

Angel Reese stellar as Dream beat Sparks

Field Level Media

Angel Reese posted a 23-point, 13-rebound double-double in her return from injury, helping lift the Atlanta Dream to a 101-92 win over the visiting Los Angeles Sparks on Monday in College Park, Ga.

Reese missed the last game with a lower leg injury. Allisha Gray added 20 points and Jordin Canada had 16 points and nine assists for the Dream (14-10), who had dropped six of their last seven. Rhyne Howard scored 11 points, while Naz Hillmon and Isobel Borlase chipped in 10 apiece.

Erica Wheeler led Los Angeles (10-12) with 20 points, followed by Nneka Ogwu-mike's 19 and Rae Burrell's 18. Ariel Atkins scored 13 points and Dearica Hamby tallied 12 for the Sparks, who dropped their sixth game in nine tries.

The Dream built the margin back to double figures on Reese's two free throws, making it 74-64. Atlanta took an 83-75 lead into the fourth quarter.

The Sparks began the fourth with eight straight points, knotting the score at 83 apiece



Special Photo: Brett Davis-Imagn Images

Atlanta's Angel Reese returned from injury with 23 points and 13 rebounds to lead the Dream to a 101-92 win over the Los Angeles Sparks on Monday in College Park.

on Burrell's layup. With 5:30 remaining, Hamby's layup gave Los Angeles an 87-85 lead — its first lead since the opening minutes of the second quarter.

Gray's bank shot and Reese's go-ahead 3-pointer jump-started a 9-0 Dream run, helping Atlanta grab a 94-87 lead with 1:56 left. Howard's third triple iced the game with 36 seconds remaining.

An early 10-0 run gave Atlanta a 21-13 edge with 2:27 left in the opening quarter. Kiana Williams' 3-pointer to beat the buzzer trimmed the Sparks' deficit to four entering the second.

From there, Gray and Howard made consecutive treys to give the Dream a 32-28 lead. Wheeler's fadeaway pulled the visitors within two at the 4:26 mark of the second.

Reese stamped a 7-0 spurt with her tip-in with less than a second left, giving the Dream a 59-48 halftime lead. Wheeler's 13 first-half points led all scorers, while Reese paced the Dream with 12.

After Atlanta pushed its 11-point halftime lead to 14, the Sparks answered with a 12-2 run, cutting the deficit to four on Atkins' jumper with 4:29 remaining in the third.



Special Photo: ABAC

Cara Parker is the new head softball coach at ABAC. She spent four years at Mercer University in Macon and has also coached in Florida.

ABAC welcomes Cara Parker as head softball coach

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

TIFTON, Ga. — Cara Parker has joined Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College as the new head coach of the Fillies softball team. Parker takes the reins from Mike Reed, who retired at the end of the 2026 season after three years at the helm and several more as an assistant coach.

"Cara Parker is a winner who knows the recruiting world and talent needed for helping continue our winning tradition at ABAC," said ABAC athletic director Charles Wimberly. "I am so pleased to have her as a part of our athletic program and department."

No stranger to college softball or South Georgia, Parker spent four seasons as an assistant at Mercer University, where she helped the Bears win the Southern Conference title in 2025, before becoming a private softball instructor. She played her high school ball at Lowndes County High School before a successful career at Appalachian State University. She has also served as an assistant coach at Santa Fe Community College in Gainesville, Fla.

"It's been awesome with my roots in South Georgia," Parker said. "I like how this team plays." Parker thanked not only Wimberly for the opportunity, but Reed for the work in building the program.

"Having been an accomplished NCAA Division I student-athlete prior to becoming an NCAA Division I assistant coach, Cara Parker brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to our soft-

ball program," Wimberly said. "Cara has a passion for the game and will most definitely continue to lead the ABAC softball program's long history of winning and tradition."

As a college athlete, Parker said the biggest compliment she received was "You're fun to watch." She wants fans to have the same experience at ABAC games.

"The reason I got into coaching is that I want the athletes who play for me to have a great college experience," Parker said.

Entering only its third season of NAIA competition, the Fillies program continues to grow. Parker said the support of the administration, coaches, players and families gives ABAC many opportunities for success.

During Reed's three seasons as head coach, the Fillies won the GCAA and Mid-Atlantic District championships in 2024, ABAC's final NJCAA season, and advanced to the national tournament.

Wimberly said Reed helped build ABAC's softball tradition over the past 15 years as an assistant and head coach. "Coach Reed has pride for our college and will always be a major supporter and help to ABAC softball. His knowledge and support will most definitely help Cara as she takes the reins, and we look for a bright future and tradition to continue to build under her leadership."



Moving the Chains: What in the World Cup soccer?

By Scott Ludwig
MagLudwig1@gmail.com

I've never been a fan of soccer. One of the reasons is that I grew up playing the sports that most of us will end up watching from the couch. Football and basketball, for example.

Another reason I've never been a soccer fan is because when I was a boy hardly anyone talked about it. That is, except for the boys who played it. You had no trouble picking them out because they always fastened the top button on their shirts.

If you want a third reason, it's because it's soccer — so people need to stop calling it football.

I will admit, however, to watching my fair share of World Cup Soccer recently. Call it investigative journalism. You can tell I'm being serious because I capitalized World Cup Soccer.

I've compiled a list of what I've observed. They're not in any particular order, mainly because I have no idea if any of them are important. If they appear to be prioritized in any way, then it's just like when someone scores a goal in soccer. Call it dumb luck.

Here goes:

A soccer official pulls out a yellow card when a player has the misfortune of having their foot land in the exact same spot that an opponent's foot landed a split second before.

There are never more than three consecutive minutes of action without at least one player lying on the field in the fetal position. (The National Basketball Association doesn't have anything on soccer when it comes to flopping.)

There was a foosball table in my college fraternity. All the brothers played the same way: by wildly spinning the little wooden men, hoping they might accidentally kick the tiny ball in the goal. That is, all the brothers except one, who methodically passed the ball back and forth from one player to another. In the process he would lull his opponent to sleep. That's exactly what watching World Cup Soccer reminds me of: Bob Hollingsworth playing foosball at Phi Kappa Tau.

For me, the best part of a match is the overtime shoot-out to decide the outcome of a game that ends with the score tied. That happens a lot in soccer, because 77.3% of all soccer matches end in a scoreless tie — according to a statistic I just made up in my head.

The two biggest stars in soccer are Argentina's Lionel Messi (39) and Portugal's Cristiano Ronald (41). I'm not sure why I brought it up. Probably because they're making such a fuss over how well tennis player Novak Djokovic (39) is doing at Wimbledon

this year. Just forget I mentioned it.

The best strategy for overtime penalty kicks seems to be kicking the ball directly at the center of the goal. That's because it's a common practice for goalies to pounce to either the left or right side of the goal in anticipation of which way the ball might be kicked. By the way, a goalie's reflexes remind me of a cat: not our 17-year-old cat sleeping on the couch at the moment, but a real cat. As Wee Willie Keeler might have said if he'd known about soccer when he was alive, 'kick it where they ain't.'

In the closing minutes of one game I watched, the team that was behind was desperately trying to score a goal to tie the game. One of their players was lying prone on the ground in the end zone (?) while his team played on without — or perhaps oblivious to — him. I'm guessing it was because in soccer the clock never stops running, not even for an injury or when a team celebrates scoring a goal — which they absolutely have a right to do because that happens about as often as tectonic plates shift. So I can understand why his teammates didn't want to waste precious time dragging him over to the team bench.

A soccer official pulling out a red card could result in a player being automatically

suspended for both the game currently being played and, should there be one, the game after that. That's exactly what happened to one of the key players on the team from the United States. That is until our president, who received the FIFA Peace Prize earlier this year, pulled out his trump card. All of a sudden the suspension was reversed and the player was allowed to play in the team's next match. *This caused quite a stir in the soccer world, from what I understand (which I don't because, well, it's soccer). What I do understand, however, is that only POTUS could turn the United States soccer team into the bad guys in their very own country.

*The Union of European Football Associations, Europe's soccer governing body, said FIFA 'crossed a red line' and expressed it's 'disbelief' at a decision it called 'unprecedented, incomprehensible, and unjustifiable.'

Meanwhile, Americans who were accustomed to what goes on in the White House these days merely shrugged as if to collectively say 'what's new?'

I'll wrap this out with two last things I absolutely know for a fact about World Cup Soccer:

There are a lot of people in this world who really, really love it, and under no circumstances will I ever be one of them.

celebrity
extra

by Dana Jackson

Q:Where can I watch reruns of the medical show “House,” and what ever happened to actress Jennifer Morrison? I haven’t seen her in anything in a while. -- M.E.

A:Jennifer Morrison, who played Dr. Allison Cameron on the Fox series “House,” departed the show after six seasons. She went on to star in the fairy-tale drama series “Once Upon a Time” on ABC, and most recently, she played the First Lady of the United States on Netflix’s “The Night Agent.” She’s also developed quite a career as a director of episodic television shows like “Euphoria,” “Dr. Death,” and “The Five-Star Weekend.”

If you have a subscription to Amazon Prime Video or Hulu, you can watch “House” on these platforms.

Q:When’s the new movie about Facebook coming out, and why isn’t Jesse Eisenberg playing Mark Zuckerberg in it? -- E.P.

A:It’s hard to believe that it’s been over 15 years since Aaron Sorkin’s “The Social Network” came out -- the film that he wrote and directed about the early rise of Mark Zuckerberg’s life as a student at Harvard and how Zuckerberg launched Facebook. Jesse Eisenberg could have easily reprised his Oscar-nominated role of the future billionaire in its upcoming sequel, “The Social Reckoning,” but he declined.

Sorkin told Vanity Fair that he spent three days trying to change the actor’s mind, but Eisenberg stated that he “simply did not want to be conflated with Mark Zuckerberg anymore” and that he has his problems with Zuckerberg.

In the sequel, which will hit theaters on Oct. 9, 2026, another Oscar-nominated actor, Jeremy Strong (“The Apprentice” and HBO’s “Succession”), assumes the role of the billionaire. Why a sequel? After the trailer for the movie premiered recently at CinemaCon, Sorkin stat-



Courtesy of Fox

Jennifer Morrison as Dr. Allison Cameron on “House”

ed, “There isn’t a life that Facebook’s algorithm hasn’t touched, and that influence has shaped everything. So, it’s time to say more.”

The film also stars Jeremy Allen White (“The Bear”) as Wall Street Journal reporter Jeff Horwitz and Oscar winner Mikey Madison (“Anora”) as Facebook whistleblower Frances Haugen.

Q: Was that really John Oliver I saw with jet-black hair on “General Hospital” recently? How did this happen? -- M.C.

A:Yes, even though he’s best known as the hilarious Emmy-winning host of HBO’s “Last Week Tonight,” he recently made his daytime soap debut on “General Hospital.” Back in March, he had expressed a strong desire to appear on a soap during one of his “Last Week Tonight” segments. Not only did ABC’s “GH” respond with a resounding “yes,” but so did Peacock’s “Days of Our Lives.”

He will appear in three episodes of “GH” in July as the head of the WSB (World Security Bureau) and has a mystery role on “Days” for another three episodes, which will air on Aug. 11, 12 and 14.

Send me your questions at NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com.

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SCAN TO
VIEW
SPORTS
ONLINE



Obituary
announcement

With my whole heart
I have sought You;
Oh, let me not wander
from your command-
ments!

Psalm 119:10



Mrs. Arcadia “Runette”
Runette Broome (Williams)

Long-time Albany resident, Runette Broome, went to be with the Lord on July 9, 2026 in Dalton, GA. Preceded in death by her parents, Dave and Effie Williams, and all her siblings: J. D., Fred, Royce, Herman, Horace, Bruce and Marion, Marjorie Williams Harrell, and Hazel Williams Wilcox. Also her husband, Jesse Wiley Broome, and several nieces and nephews.

Mrs. Broome worked for and retired from the Dougherty County School System.

She and her husband Jesse, USAF, traveled to many places, then retired to Albany, GA in 1970, where Mrs. Broome lived until 2020, when she moved to Dalton to be close to her daughters.

She is survived by her children, Janice Broome Littell (Kim) and Joy Broome Jones (Bob), her grandchildren Melanie Childers (Mark Zimmer) of Bogart, GA, Brian Dale (Christi) of Cleveland, TN, Eva Littell Doan of Clearwater, FL, Harrington Littell, III of Dacula, GA, Kevin Jones of Atlanta, GA, and Jill MacInnes of Washington state, as well as 19 great-grandchildren and 17 great-great grandchildren.

She loved teaching 3rd and 4th graders in Sunday School for more than 50 years, most of that time at Byne Memorial Baptist Church in Albany GA. She was an avid mall walker, seamstress, crafter, family reunion organizer, and leader of Happy Hearts at Byne, as well as many other activities.

Burial will be at Blockhouse Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Georgia, on July 13 at 10:30 am, followed by a gathering in the fellowship hall.

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loading only.
No parking on Forrester Pkwy.
Bring help to load items. Our workers
can not load.
Enter front door, exit garage door.
No shopping bags or lg. handbags
brought into home.
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home, no children allowed on stairs.
Home filled with nice furniture to
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chest, Pair foyer chest, great room
reclining sofa, glass and iron coffee
table, wing chair, 6 large rugs, local
art work, mahogany dining table to
seat 6-12 w/ 2 leaves and 10
matching chairs, Carved server and
4 door china cabinet. Glass and iron
breakfast table and chairs, wicker
porch chairs and white rockers on
front. 2 king beds with footboards,
pair hand painted (flowers) chest, lift
chair in BR, 1- queen poster bed and
pair twin beds. Chest and bedside
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Albany Legals

Calhoun Co. Legals

A-677
The Calhoun County Democratic
Committee will hold a meeting on
Monday, August 3, 2026, at 6:00
P.M. The meeting will be held at the
Calhoun County Community Center
(former Boys and Girls Club), 597
Pioneer Road, N. E., Arlington,
Georgia 39813. For additional
information, please contact Rev. Lou
Gene Bush at 229-835-3057
July 16, 2026



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.

“ P ’ I CGGE BL HVAYGZ. YG RVC V
UFFZ BVE, VEI P RVATYGI YPB IF
VCAFEPCTYPEO AYPEOC ... YG EGXGZ
QFCA YPC IPOEPAL.” — CPIEGL
UFPAPGZ

Previous Solution: “The songs I was writing became ... therapy for me. I would
... express all of my feelings through these songs.” — Benson Boone

TODAY’S CLUE: V sɪnbeɪl

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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.

“ ZUGHAQ KW YJWO CHPWUIBFKQO
... KO’W RMBO QUJP CHPWCHZOKLH
KW, BIA QUJ ZBI’O PHBFFQ OHBZM
CHPWCHZOKLH UI OMH RUPFA.”
— DPKWOHI WZMBBF

Previous Solution: “I’d seen my father. He was a poor man, and I watched him
do astonishing things ... He never lost his dignity.” — Sidney Poitier

TODAY’S CLUE: O sɪnbeɪl

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Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Patti Varol

ACROSS

- 1 Kiddie pool filler
- 5 Admin. aide
- 9 General feelings
- 14 The big screen?
- 15 Burrowing rodent
- 16 Vinegary sauce
- 17 Southern region of South America
- 19 Puts up for sale
- 20 Herbal medicines?
- 22 Crew blade
- 23 Covers in goo
- 24 Obscure to protect privacy, perhaps
- 27 Amer. capital
- 28 Affectionate text
- 29 Glasgow refusal
- 30 Veggie dogs?
- 35 Lost
- 36 Chabert of the “Crossword Mysteries” series
- 37 Hosp. scan
- 38 Dancer and choreographer
- 39 Olympic archer?
- 40 Green new deal?
- 42 NLE rival of NYM
- 43 Any of the Tetons: Abbr.
- 44 Arabic for “son of”
- 45 The “T” of T.S. Eliot
- 47 Not great
- 49 System of connected PCs, for short
- 52 Unexceptional, or an apt description of 20-, 30-, and 40-Across?
- 55 Energy-channeling healing technique
- 57 Cloudburst
- 58 “WandaVision” star Elizabeth
- 59 “Dibs!”
- 60 Shorten, in a way
- 61 Our, in French
- 62 Some cold brews
- 63 “What is it?”

- 4 Skills assessment
- 5 State fruit of California
- 6 Ocean waves?
- 7 Ignores a “wet floor” sign, maybe
- 8 Steeped brews
- 9 Silicon ____
- 10 “Could not stop laughing!”
- 11 Brazilian music genre
- 12 SNAP system
- 13 “Mayday!” letters
- 18 Manages
- 21 Browser links
- 25 “Quiet, you”
- 26 Wee
- 27 Four Corners Natives
- 28 Colorful ring
- 30 Sheepish cry?
- 31 Mars neighbor
- 32 Many a climate change expert
- 33 Wolverine’s cohort
- 34 Historical period
- 35 “Wichita Lineman” singer
- 38 Shady areas

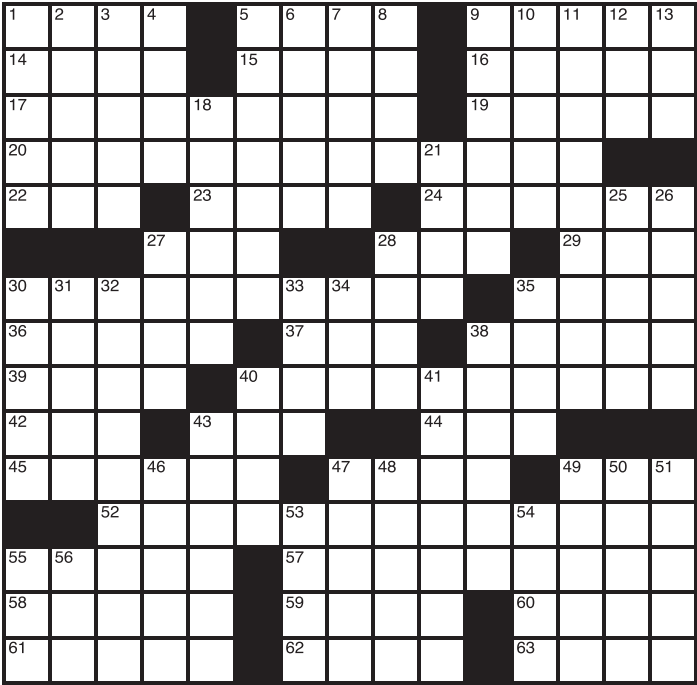
- 40 Condition that may be treated with SSRIs
- 41 Medicinal 8-Down
- 43 Of the sea
- 46 Word with peace or pace
- 47 SpongeBob’s pet, for one
- 48 Just like ewe
- 49 Currency in West Africa

- 50 Interior courtyards
- 51 Forest figure of myth
- 53 Humorist Bombeck
- 54 Wee
- 55 “This Is Us” Emmy winner ____
- 56 “Evil Woman” rock gp.

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

H V E A S E T V E H L O N
D I N S E N I W N E S T O
W H O I S N I V H I X I E R
A J E I R Y V A N E D R Y G
N V T O S O S S V W O H L
N B I N I W T I V
A J V E R L S V E W S O R E
N I A T V I H W A E O V T
E N O G S R E X O B L E E B
E V N A T I D S N
I O V D E R S R V L R Y V O
S E T N S d V O E W A H L
S I S I T V I N O G V L V I
O B O D V E T O A X V W I
S E B I A L S S V E S O H

07/16/26



By Elizabeth Duker-Gold & Devon Moffatt
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07/16/26

7 LITTLE WORDS

Find the 7 words to match the 7 clues. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in each solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

CLUES

- 1 canary and amber (7)
- 2 parking “toll collector” (5)
- 3 common artist’s medium (4)
- 4 metaphor’s cousin (6)
- 5 “Little House” mom (8)
- 6 tedium (8)
- 7 insubstantial quality (11)

SOLUTIONS

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

OLI LS WS YE TER
LLO LE UO SI NE
OI MON CAR ME ONY
OT ESS TEN USN MI

Tuesday’s Answers: 1. SNAIL 2. DENTS 3. GARFIELD
4. PROLONGED 5. HEROES 6. UNFEIGNED 7. MINSTREL 7/15

7 LITTLE WORDS

Find the 7 words to match the 7 clues. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in each solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

CLUES

- 1 raising your voice (8)
- 2 they impart knowledge (8)
- 3 see “untie” for “unite” (7)
- 4 filling the truck, perhaps (7)
- 5 old bones (7)
- 6 place with lots of shells (9)
- 7 South Asian kingdom (6)

SOLUTIONS

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

BHU SHO ING FO SRE
LO ILS MI USE TEA
THO CHE SS UT ING
RS TAN AD AD BOA

Wednesday’s Answers: 1. YELLOW 2. METER 3. OILS
4. SIMILE 5. CAROLINE 6. MONOTONY 7. TENUOUSNESS 7/16



File Photo

The Georgia Department of Agriculture has warned Georgia’s agricultural community to be wary of online scams targeting farmers searching for farm equipment.

State Ag Department warns farmers of online farm equipment scams

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

ATLANTA — The Georgia Department of Agriculture Law Enforcement Division has warned Georgia’s agricultural community to be vigilant after receiving multiple reports of sophisticated online scams targeting farmers searching for farm equipment.

Investigators have identified fraudulent schemes in which scammers create highly convincing websites and online advertisements that appear to represent legitimate farm equipment dealerships. In many cases, the dealerships themselves are real businesses; however, criminals are using artificial intelligence and other advanced technology to imitate those businesses, creating convincing websites, advertisements, emails, and communications designed to deceive potential buyers.

Victims typically locate tractors or other agricultural equipment advertised online at attractive prices. After expressing interest, they are contacted by individuals posing as dealership representatives through telephone calls or text messages. The scammers then instruct buyers to wire funds or electronically transfer money to complete the purchase. Once payment is made, the equip-

ment does not exist or is never delivered, and the funds are often unrecoverable.

“Unfortunately, our state’s No. 1 industry is not immune to crime, and Georgia farmers are being targeted by online scammers,” Georgia Agriculture Commissioner Tyler Harper said in a news release. “The safest approach is to personally visit the dealership, put your own eyes on the equipment, and complete the purchase in person. Taking these extra steps can prevent significant financial losses, while we work to hold the perpetrators accountable.”

The Georgia Department of Agriculture urges farmers and agricultural businesses to exercise caution before purchasing equipment online. Before sending any payment:

Verify the dealership by independently locating its official phone number and contacting the business directly.

Discuss large online purchases with your financial institution before transferring funds.

Be extremely cautious of requests to wire money or send electronic payments to unfamiliar accounts.

Whenever possible, travel to the dealership in person, inspect the equipment yourself, and complete the transaction using a cashier’s check or another secure payment method.

New class of future doctors welcomed to PCOM campus in Moultrie



Special Photo: PCOM South Georgia

A highlight of PCOM South Georgia’s recent orientation was the presentation of stethoscopes to each incoming student by the college’s local partner, Southwell.

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

MOULTRIE -- Nearly 100 future physicians are one step closer to serving communities across south Georgia, as PCOM South Georgia welcomed incoming Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) students to its campus for orientation, marking the beginning of their medical education journey.

The week-long orientation featured a welcome from Dr. Robert J. Lloyd, dean of the osteopathic medicine program, as well as educational sessions and community engagement activities designed to prepare students for the journey ahead.

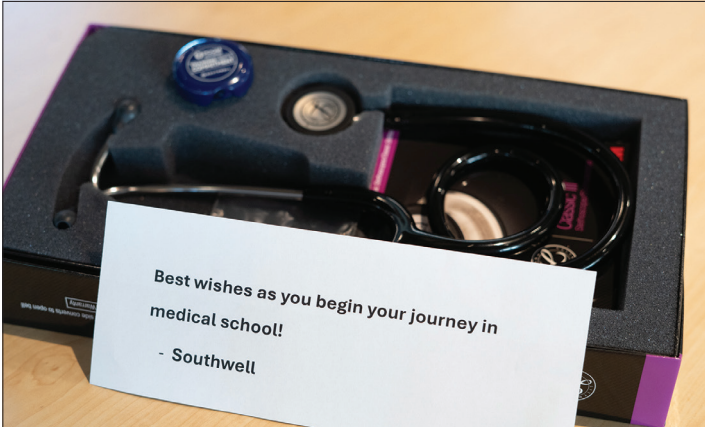
A highlight of orientation was the presentation of Littmann Classic III stethoscopes to each incoming student by the college’s local partner, Southwell, symbolizing the start of their clinical training and commitment to patient care.

“Southwell values our partnership with PCOM South

Georgia and the role the college plays in training future physicians for our region,” Christopher Dorman, president and chief executive officer of Southwell, said. “We are pleased to present these stethoscopes to first-year medical students as they begin their medical education. It is a practical tool but also a reminder of the responsibility and opportunity that come with caring for patients.”

Students also received their first-year clinical uniforms, had professional headshots taken, and participated in a white coat fitting, a symbolic step toward becoming physicians in Georgia.

“I’m used to wearing lab coats, but putting on the stethoscope, receiving my uniform and trying on a white coat made everything feel real,” incoming student Dr. Katherine Markert said. “I chose PCOM South Georgia because I was born and raised in Georgia, and I want to build my career here. I appreciate the holistic approach



Special Photo: PCOM South Georgia

of osteopathic medicine and have seen first-hand how it has helped my family.”

Orientation week concluded with a Community Day of Service, giving students an opportunity to begin serving the south Georgia community they will now call home. Guided by faculty members and second-year medical students, participants completed improvement projects at Stringfellow Elementary School, the Vashti Center for Children and Families, Hope House, and Moultrie-Colquitt County Parks and Recreation facilities.

“This Day of Service allows our students and faculty to

begin their academic year grounded in service, collaboration and community,” said Jennifer Jenkins, the director of the Office of Campus and Community Partnerships at PCOM South Georgia. “By working alongside our community partners, they gain a deeper understanding of the people and communities they will care for in the future.”

Nearly 100 future physicians are one step closer to serving communities across south Georgia, as PCOM South Georgia welcomed incoming Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine students to its campus for orientation.



We've Lowered Rates

As part of our ongoing efforts to help keep costs stable, we've lowered rates, resulting in savings of about \$50 per year for the typical residential customer. See how we're taking actions to help keep energy costs stable and predictable at georgiapower.com/LowerRates.

