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THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2026

DCSS logistics team recognized among nation’s best in procurement

By Alan Mauldin
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ALBANY — For the second consecutive year, the Dougherty County School System has earned one of the nation’s highest honors in public purchasing, placing the district among just 30

school districts nationwide recognized for excellence in procurement.

The National Procurement Institute Inc. recently announced that 251 public and nonprofit organizations earned the 2026 Achievement of Excellence in Procurement Award, which recognizes or-

ganizational excellence in public procurement through a rigorous evaluation of innovation, professionalism, productivity, leadership and e-procurement practices.

Dougherty County Schools is one of only 30 school districts in the country to receive the award this year, marking the

district’s second time earning the national recognition.

Superintendent Kenneth Dyer recognized the achievement during last week’s Board of Education meeting, calling attention to a department whose work often takes place behind the scenes.

“I really enjoy recognizing

our employees for the excellent work that they do,” Dyer told board members. “A lot of times, they go unseen, and they certainly deserve it.”

The district’s Logistical Services Department oversees purchasing for a school system serving approximately 12,000 students and 2,500

employees. Its responsibilities include procuring classroom supplies, instructional technology, transportation equipment, maintenance materials and services that support the district’s daily operations.

The Achievement of Excel-

See **DCSS**, 2A

Albany Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director

Cedric Scott adds registered nurse to his titles



By Alan Mauldin
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ALBANY – At a time in their lives when most people are looking back on college as something well in the rearview mirror and possibly contemplating a future retirement, Albany Fire Chief Cedric Scott is looking forward to new adventures in nursing.

About two weeks ago, the 60-year-old Scott, who has been on the job in Albany since 2018, added a registered nursing degree to his master’s and associate’s degrees in business administration and associate’s degrees in fire service administration

and health and paramedic technician.

While much of the motivation is related to his desire to have a better perspective on his job and the upcoming expansion of firefighters’ duties in emergency medicine, Scott plans to put on the uniform and pull some shifts in area medical facilities when time allows. On top of being the fire chief for the department that serves the city and rural Dougherty County, Scott’s duties also include that of emergency management director.

Among his particular inter-

See **SCOTT**, 2A

Special Photo: Reginald Christian/ASU

Albany Fire Chief Cedric Scott, in white nursing scrubs, recently completed his nursing studies at Albany State University. Scott, who also serves as the county’s emergency management director, had work-related and personal reasons for pursuing a degree, and he challenged others to look at pursuing goals later in life.

Lee Commissioners to vote Aug. 11 on roundabout after 48 emergency calls since 2021

By Kathryn Crockett
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LEESBURG — Lee County commissioners will decide Aug. 11 whether to apply for state funding to build a \$2.3 million roundabout at a three-way cluster of intersections where emergency responders have been dispatched 48 times since 2021.

County Manager Scott Addison brought the proposal to the Board of Commissioners’ July 28 voting session but did not ask for a vote. Chairman Luke Singletary deferred action to the board’s next meeting so commissioners could ask questions, leaving a narrow window with applications for the state program due Aug. 21.



Illustration Courtesy of Google Maps

An aerial view shows the intersection of Oakland Road, Palmyra Road and James Pond Road in Lee County, where commissioners are considering seeking state funding for a proposed \$2.3 million roundabout.

Planning Director Kara Hanson said staff is conducting additional research, and the board is expected to take up

the proposal Aug. 11. The project would build a round-

See **VOTE**, 2A

Albany Area Primary Health Care celebrates 47 years during Health Center Week

Staff Reports
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ALBANY — Albany Area Primary Health Care has joined the National Association of Community Health Centers and more than 1,500 Community Health Centers across the country in celebrating National Health Center Week and recognizing the vital role health centers play in providing affordable, effective, comprehensive primary care to more than 52 million Americans, regardless of insurance status or ability to pay.

This year, the National Association of Community Health Centers celebrates how health centers use innovation to reach more patients and improve outcomes. For 47 years,



Shelley Spires

See **AAPHC**, 2A

Periodical — Mail Label

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Celebrating National Health Center Week
August 2 - 8, 2026

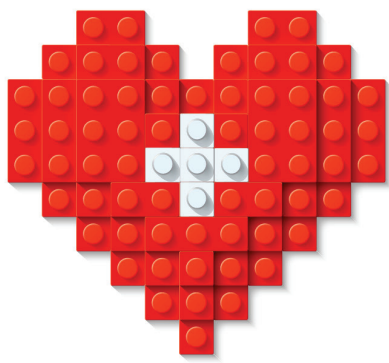


AAPHC
Albany Area Primary Health Care



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS®

**Building Innovative Care
Where It Matters Most.**



From 1A

DCSS

lence in Procurement Award was established in 1995 by the National Procurement Institute to recognize organizations that demonstrate best practices in public purchasing. Award recipients are evaluated on innovation, ethical procurement, opera-

tional efficiency, leadership and the effective use of technology in procurement. While procurement departments rarely receive public attention, their work directly affects how efficiently school systems spend taxpayer dollars. Every competitive bid, contract negotiation and purchasing decision helps determine whether schools receive needed goods and services in a timely, transparent and cost-effective manner. Dyer recognized Sharonda Thompson, director of Logistical Services; Vachel Reese, assistant director of Logistical Services; and Charles Caldwell, facilities director, for their contributions to the department's success. Caldwell was unable to attend the meeting when the recognition was presented. The national recognition builds on the department's

historic first AEP Award in 2023, when Dougherty County Schools became one of only 25 school districts nationwide to receive the honor. Maintaining the award requires organizations to continue demonstrating excellence in procurement practices each year. "Excellence personified," Dyer said as the board applauded the department's achievement.

Ag Commissioner Tyler Harper celebrates Georgia Farmers Market Week

Staff Reports
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ATLANTA – Georgia Agriculture Commissioner Tyler Harper has signed a proclamation designating August 3–9 as "Georgia Farmers Market Week" in recognition of National Farmers Market Week and the important role farmers markets play in supporting Georgia farmers, consumers and local communities. "Farmers markets connect Georgians directly with the farmers and producers who grow the food we put on our tables," Harper said. "When you buy local, you support Georgia farm families, strengthen our

food supply chain, and help keep dollars in your community. I encourage all Georgians to visit a local farmers market this week, buy Georgia Grown, and support the hard-working men and women who keep our state fed." Georgia is home to a network of nine State Farmers Markets that provide fresh fruits and vegetables throughout Georgia and the Southeast and support more than \$1 billion in sales each year. To find a Georgia Grown-certified farmers' market or farm retail location, visit the Georgia Grown Farmers Market Map at <https://georgia-grown.com/farmers-markets/>.

From 1A

AAPHC

Albany Area Primary Health Care has provided quality care to southwest Georgia. Beginning with the foundation of primary care in Lee County, AAPHC now offers aesthetics, behavioral health, dentistry, family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, midwifery, podiatry and ophthalmology. With more than 90 providers across 30 locations, AAPHC is one of the region's largest community health centers. Through the value of compassionate care, community connection and continuous improvement, AAPHC is committed to providing quality health care to everyone.

"AAPHC is proud to be a trusted health care provider to over 53,000 patients annually," AAPHC CEO, Shelley Spires said. "Being a community health center, we believe health care should be accessible to everyone. "Our teams across 11 counties come to work each day because we love our patients and the communities we serve. During National Health Center Week, we not only recognize the impact CHCs have on the communities they serve, but also the com-

mitment that each of our teams has to our mission – to provide quality health care to everyone." Health centers do not just expand access. They improve outcomes and save money. For just 1% of national health care spending, CHCs deliver primary care to 14% of the U.S. population and save the health care system billions of dollars each year by preventing costly hospital visits. One-way AAPHC continues to impact the health of southwest Georgia is through the School-Based Health Centers. Through partnerships with seven county school systems, AAPHC manages 14 centers located in schools. At the various locations, students, faculty, staff and parents may have access to primary care, vision, dental and behavioral health services. "Removing students from school for a necessary routine check-up can be disruptive to the student, teacher, the rest of the class and parents' work schedule," School-Based Health Center Supervisor Bebe Hale said. "With AAPHC School-Based Health Centers, we are able to provide care onsite, meaning students spend less time away from learning." To learn more about Albany Area Primary Care, visit aaphc.org.



Members of the Dougherty County School System's Logistical Services Department are recognized by the School Board after earning the 2026 Achievement of Excellence in Procurement Award, placing the district among just 31 school systems nationwide to receive the honor. From left are School Board member Geraldine West-Hudley, Vachel Reese and Sharonda Thompson.

Staff Photo: Kathryn Crockett

From 1A

SCOTT

ests are phlebotomy, kidney dialysis and nursing home care. "They have opportunities for an evening shift or a weekend shift, so I'll be able to put this to use," Scott said. "I really enjoy serving others, being a face of calmness, a face that someone can look at and see there is someone here to make me feel better." As someone who rode an ambulance as an emergency medical technician (EMT) and paramedic for 13 years, the nursing training extends his knowledge of emergency medical care as well. That training will be of use both in emergency situations and in passing that knowledge along to city firefighters as well as in the event of another pandemic such as the one COVID-19 brought to Albany in 2020.

For the fire department, Scott said he wants to create a standard of medical care that allows for a seamless transition in first response, turning a patient over to Dougherty County Emergency Medical Services and their eventual arrival and treatment at a hospital. "Now I understand why it's important to get them the care they need pre-hospital and how that contributes to the chain of care," Scott said. "I just think the knowledge I've gained gives me a broader perspective on why our job is important as we get ready to start providing EMS services." While Scott attended a number of colleges and universities along the way, this was his first time attending one of the historically black colleges and universities and makes him an Albany State University alumnus. Joining that contingent has a special meaning, the fire chief said. After he took on the position in Albany, he actually adopted the university's theme of "Excellence Is the Standard" for the fire department. "It is rewarding because I am so happy to be a graduate of Albany State University," he said. "I have so much respect for this institution and what it means for the community. Albany State has a tremendous history here. Even before I went to school, it has been a motivator to me. It is a top-quality school that I will forever be thankful for having the opportunity to (attend)." Another motivation was his wife, Lydia, herself a registered nurse who was able to quiz him on class material and provide encouragement. "Nursing school is very hard, so you've got to have that spirit," Scott said. "Lydia, that's my inspiration to me ... just watching her be a nurse and the way she cares about her patients. She's af-

ected the people she meets. She's my top inspiration in all of this." Albany City Manager Terrell Jacobs also provided support for Scott to pursue his late-middle-age dream of taking on a new educational challenge. His fellow students, who were much younger, also were part of that adventure as was his "fire department family." "We have embarked on an incredible journey together," Scott said. "It took a lot of people to make it through this. "Hopefully, my journey will inspire others to go back and do something they always wanted to do and that it's never too late. It doesn't have to be nursing; it can be music ... or something else they wanted to do."

From 1A

VOTE

about where Oakland Road meets Palmyra and James Pond roads. "We have where Palmyra comes in and then immediately after you have James Pond connecting," Addison told the board, adding that a roundabout "could be a good project." Singletary said he drives the road often and described traffic backups during the school year. "Eight, nine months out of the year, school traffic there is pretty bad," Singletary said. "It gets backed up if anybody goes from the west side of the county toward Leesburg at school hours or in the afternoon." He called the intersection confusing and said flashing red stop signs installed there have "probably helped some" but that wrecks continue. "People running one of the stop signs, whether it be at James Pond or Palmyra," Singletary said. "I would be in favor of this project. I like the idea." Addison told commissioners he pulled accident reports for the location and found 48 over the past five years. Records provided by the county describe a somewhat broader picture. Hanson said the figure was compiled from Lee County E-911 calls-for-service records dated Jan. 1, 2021, through July 28, 2026,

and covers three intersections in the immediate area. His records show 23 calls at Oakland and Palmyra roads, 19 at Palmyra and James Pond roads, and six at Oakland and James Pond roads. The county does not have a confirmed breakdown of how many of the calls involved injuries, Hanson said. Addison proposed applying to the Georgia Transportation Infrastructure Bank, a grant and low-interest loan program administered by the State Road and Tollway Authority. He told commissioners the county could seek a 70% grant, which would leave a local share of about \$690,000. Lee County's Fiscal 2027 allocation under the state's Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant program is \$845,135, according to the Georgia Department of Transportation's formula amounts report. Hanson confirmed those funds are eligible to serve as the local match, though she noted the board has not approved the application or the use of the money. The county would pay Still Waters Engineering \$3,500 to prepare the application. Chad R. Griffin is the firm's CEO. Addison said the firm has assisted other south Georgia counties with successful applications. Singletary pressed on the downside risk. "So at worst, we're out \$3,500 for the application," he said. Addison said design, planning and potential land ac-

quisition could be included in the grant request. He said the board's authorization is required because the application must carry a signature showing the county supports it. Gov. Brian Kemp and the State Road and Tollway Authority board approved \$26 million in transportation infrastructure bank grants and loans in June, supporting 20 roadway projects and two airport hangar projects statewide. Terrell County was among the recipients, receiving a \$713,757 loan and a \$1,740,718 grant to resurface roughly nine miles of Callis, Cemetery and Pleasant Hill roads. Worth County and the Albany-Westover Community Improvement District also received awards. The state evaluates applications on transportation benefits, engineering merit, economic value, matching funds, project readiness and overall feasibility. Addison noted that Palmyra is a state route and said the county could ask the Georgia Department of Transportation for help if the project moves forward and shifts traffic patterns. Commissioners took no action July 28. The board meets again at 6 p.m. Aug. 11 in the Opal Cannon Auditorium of the T. Page Tharp Governmental Building at 102 Starksville Ave. N. Awards are expected to be announced in December, according to the state's call for projects.

Albany Area Chamber of Commerce

Baymont Inn & Suites

Baymont Inn & Suites

2720 Dawson Rd
Albany, GA 31707

The Albany Area Chamber of Commerce proudly recognizes Baymont Inn & Suites as this week's Star Business of the Week.

Baymont Inn & Suites is dedicated to providing comfortable accommodations and exceptional hospitality for visitors traveling to Albany for business, leisure, and special events. Conveniently located and committed to outstanding customer service, the hotel offers guests a welcoming stay with amenities designed to make every visit enjoyable and stress-free.

Whether welcoming business travelers, families, sports teams, or tourists exploring Southwest Georgia, Baymont Inn & Suites takes pride in creating a positive guest experience while supporting the local community and economy. Their friendly staff and commitment to hospitality make them a valued part of Albany's lodging industry.

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

Daily Horoscopes

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Align with your destiny, it's waiting for you with open arms — find clues in your artistic and musical impulses and talents. A new financial decision or commitment could serve you well.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Your magic isn't just glowing, it's relatable and accessible now. Touch people with your kindness. A clear path forward should be emerging in your living space, it could uplevel things more than you know.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Your inner child holds gifts, not just wounds. Cultivate them as an ally to express yourself fully and avoid self-sabotage. A clear communication should land well but could possibly be misconstrued.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): A friend with whom you share history is a precious resource, they can see your long view, but with fresher eyes. Lean in. A clear direction for financial growth could get easier to bring into focus.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): When you are genuinely aligned with your authenticity, your path, and your mission, it radiates out and other people notice. While hard skills are needed, soft skills can make a big difference in how things feel.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): It can be easier to connect to a message with heart than to something you can't or don't feel or relate to. Great treasures can be unearthed with inner work now, the building blocks of your highest expression and best life.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Your most important next steps could come into focus through a friend or group, listen well and consider how to implement ideas. You could have a financial guardian angel behind the scenes.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): As along as your individual cycles also align, this could be the moment to put exciting new plans into play.

A partner or pet could offer you, or need, extra tender loving care now.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Give something a little more of yourself, don't be afraid to bring more vulnerability and sincerity into the mix. Teach what you've learned over time to circulate knowledge and awareness.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You could feel free enough today to soar with eagles, create beauty, and dance like no one's watching. Then, there's daily life — do that too. Much could be coming into alignment financially.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): A new relationship could be born, or an existing one could move more fully into its ultimate form. Your closest people are your strongest influencers, align with those with similar values and destinations.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): New and improved ways of doing old things or new and improved things could become part of daily life — enjoy every tiny uplevel. If your message is ready, it could be time to let it fly.

IF TODAY IS YOUR BIRTHDAY: This could be the year you really come into your own, despite what the early portion of 2026 dished out. A lot has begun to line up for you, even July may have been easier, August and beyond look to be easier still. But not just easier — also bringing gifts to help you meet your future. You've been preparing your whole life, don't let a glimpse of your future journey frighten you. September could bring new cash flow which should be embraced, and an opportunity for self-sabotage which should be sidestepped. October could bring cosmic answers, miracles, happy surprises, and a lot of good to believe in. Then November could even top that as the Universe brings you the money, help, ideas, and other resources needed for your best life. Enjoy!!!



1819 - The first private military school in the United States, Norwich University is founded in Vermont

1862 - During the American Civil War, the Confederate ironclad CSS Arkansas is badly damaged in a Union attack

1890 - At Auburn Prison in New York, murderer William Kemmler becomes the first person to be executed by electric chair

1901 - Kiowa land in Oklahoma is opened for white settlement

1914 - During World War I, Serbia declares war on Germany, and Austria declares war on Russia

1930 - Supreme Court Justice Joseph Force Crater steps into a taxi in New York City and disappears

1945 - An atomic bomb is dropped on Hiroshima, Japan by the U.S. B-29 Superfortress

Enola Gay. Around 70,000 people are killed instantly, and tens of thousands die in subsequent years from radiation poisoning and burns

1962 - Jamaica becomes independent from the United Kingdom after 300 years of British rule.

1965 - U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Voting Rights Act which prohibits voting discrimination against minorities.

1997 - Korean Air Flight 801 crashes in the U.S. territory of Guam, killing 228 people, 26 lived

2011 - A helicopter containing members of U.S. Navy SEAL Team 6 is shot down in Afghanistan killing 38.

2012 - Mount Tongariro in New Zealand erupts for the first time in a century.

2013 - A series of car bombs in Baghdad, Iraq kills 25 and injuries 60 people

CALENDAR OF OBSERVANCES

- Balloons to Heaven Day
- Corporate Baby Name Day
- Farmworker Appreciation Day
- Hiroshima Day
- India Pale Ale Beer Day
- (IPA Day)
- National Fresh Breath Day
- National Gossip Day
- National Root Beer Float Day
- Wiggle Your Toes Day

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

A celebrity is one who is known to many persons he is glad he doesn't know.

H. L. Mencken,
(1880 - 1956)

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

Our “beacon for the poor” commissioners are the absolute worst, saying they want more project apartments. They must think APD isn't busy enough with calls to the drug den hotels every night. They must want even more than 35 kids in their grandkid's classes at DCSS. They must think the ER nurses at Phoebe haven't been overwhelmed for years. Albany's teachers, medical staff, first responders, and church volunteers work hard to support our citizens including the poor. Only for evil commissioners to attract bad actors here in search of a lawless community where they can easily get free housing and take advantage of good, honest people.

Do you ever think it is strange that these shady oldmen “pastors” and their politician friends always want to provide free government housing and some sort of food giveaway, but they never want to help the poor find a job? A real reason is that project housing and financial donations to fund giveaways both provide opportunities for these men to put some of the money in their own pockets. But they can't make any money by helping needy people get jobs. Wake up, people. These jokers are scamming you.

Keisha Lance Bottoms was such a bad mayor that Buckhead wanted to split from Atlanta. Keisha doesn't care about Georgians; she only cares about herself. She is corrupt and, if elected, Georgians will see higher taxes, higher crime rates and lower quality of living.

Thank goodness Tommy Coleman and the Edison city officials didn't give up when the GBI said “Not interested.” This lady was living an enhanced lifestyle at the citizens' expense, and the fact that she was “a good lady” doesn't change that. Here's hoping she gets some jail time to think about how she impacted this community.

Global and national water reserves are exhausting beyond replenishable. Mined fossil water is exhausting in Texas, Kansas, Oklahoma, Nebraska, California; rivers in Colorado and Mississippi, Lakes Mead and Powell, Florida and Biscayne aquifers, and Florida salt water intrusions. An Albany data facility is another permanent straw in a shared, finite aquifer whose recharge comes from rainfall that climate is making less reliable. Data center decisions must be “collective,” not one facility/community individually.

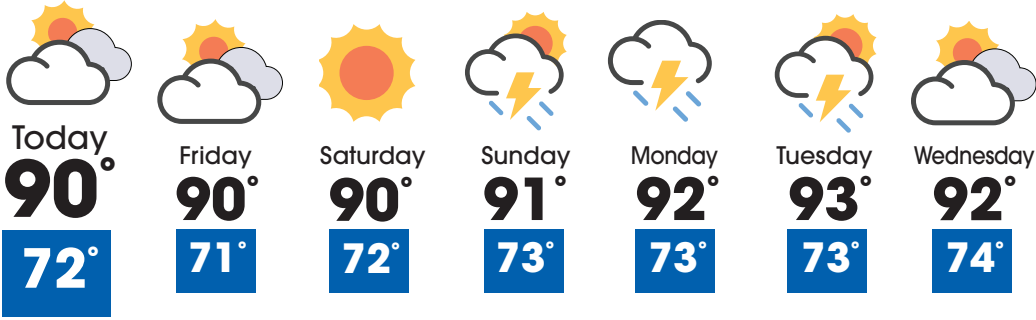
Working taxpayers probably should wonder if our tax dollars are being spent wisely on “affordable housing?” Looks like one of the Section 8 large apartment complexes on Whispering Pines is in foreclosure to the tune of \$2.5 million and another Section 8 complex on West Gordon is in foreclosure for \$9 million. Affordable housing must not be a good business to be in.

Carlton, I don't always agree with you, but I love reading your columns.

I'll go ahead and call y'all out before the Braves play another game: Where are all the front-runner Braves fans who said the team would be out of first place by the All-Star break?

I agree with Ken Dyer: The school system does need a truancy officer. But more than that, it needs competent teachers who don't ignore state guidelines and teach the kind of lessons that fit into their twisted lifestyles.

Weather Forecast

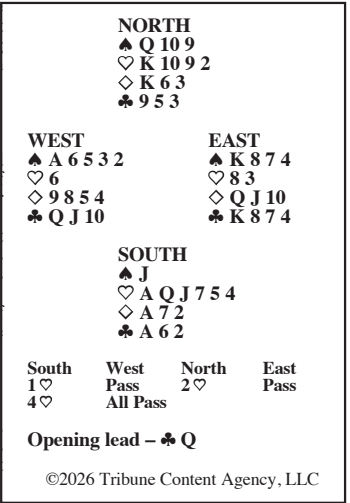


Daily Bridge Club

Millard's good defense

By Frank Stewart
Tribune Content Agency

“Millard is sweet,” Rose told me, “but his elevator doesn't go to the top floor. He said he saw an auto accident but he couldn't



Frank Stewart

call 911 because there is no 11 on his phone.”

Millard Pringle gets lost in the maze of defensive “rules.” He was East, and at four hearts, South ducked the first club, won the next, led a trump to dummy and returned the nine of spades.

“I was West,” Rose said. “Millard paused, trying to sort out the rules. He knew about ‘second hand low,’ but there also was a rule about ‘covering an honor.’ The nine was almost an honor, so he finally put up his king.”

DOWN ONE

When the king won, Millard cashed his king of clubs and led the queen of diamonds. South lost a diamond for down one.

If Millard plays low on the first

spade, South succeeds. Later, he takes a ruffing finesse against Millard's king to get a diamond discard.

Maybe Millard's play was right: If South had the ace of spades, the game might be unbeatable.

DAILY QUESTION

You hold: S Q 10 9 H K 10 9 2 D K 6 3 C 9 5 3. Your partner opens one diamond, you respond one heart and he bids one spade. The opponents pass. What do you say?

ANSWER: This is a judgment call. Game is not ruled out -- partner could have as many as 18 points -- and some players would continue with a return to two diamonds or (despite the weak clubs) a bid of 1NT. Since neither action is attractive, I would pass and hope for a plus score.

South dealer
N-S vulnerable

Advice Columnist

Neighbor offended but won't say why

By Eric Thomas
Tribune Content Agency

Dear Eric: My 77-year-old boyfriend has a lovely 95-year-old neighbor whom I visit with him, and sometimes on my own. Recently, my boyfriend has been ill and has been staying with me. His neighbor has called me a couple of times to hear how he is doing.

Yesterday, he felt well enough to go back to his home and she confided in him that she will never call me again as I said something that hurt her feelings. She told him not to tell me.

So, what does he do? He tells me.

I was so distraught as I cannot think of what I said to hurt her, and I feel he should not have told me since she told him not to. I have known her for four years. I hug her hello and goodbye, have brought her flowers and have always admired her.

He did not want to keep “a secret” from me and that's why he told me. I feel that he should have honored her wishes, or told her not to involve him, but to talk to me directly. I don't feel I can address her about this issue, or she will know he did not abide by her wishes. And now I will feel very awkward around her. He insists he was right to have told me. Am I wrong for not wanting to know? Had he not told me, I feel she would have eventually gotten over it or would have told me directly.

— Upset

Dear Upset: His intentions may have been good but I'm not sure what he thought he was accomplishing by telling you that his neighbor was angry with you, especially since

he didn't know the cause. This just puts an unsolvable conflict in your lap. It would be most helpful if he talked to his neighbor again and asked her what offended her and what you can do to make it right. You then would have more information and could decide if you want to address it or leave it be.

The fault isn't all his, however. It's not right for her to tell him that she's upset with you and then tell him not to tell you. This solves nothing either. But, if your boyfriend won't address it with her again, it may be best to acknowledge that his neighbor wasn't really looking for solutions. Hopefully, he remains well and doesn't have to stay at your home for an extended period again, thereby alleviating the need for her to call.

Dear Eric: I hired a cleaning lady who was great, but she would also often bring help with her or send someone in her place. This other person accidentally broke a decorative piece in the bathroom which upon the fall, broke a sink, resulting in a hole in the porcelain.

This, in turn, resulted in a bathroom remodel because the entire two-sink vanity needed to be replaced.

The cleaning lady was very apologetic and offered to pay for the sink itself. Since then, a new vanity has been installed.

The assistant has taken over our account for all the cleanings going forward since January and I deal directly with her only. But after our last cleaning, it was apparent that some things were placed on the counter which stripped the finish on the countertop,



Eric Thomas

marks were left in the shape of rings from the bottom of containers that essentially removed the glossy surface of the counter.

I can't find any product to restore it without getting some kind of professional to resurface the whole counter.

I told the cleaning person that I would like to skip this month. Her response seemed defensive, asking, “If you need to say something, you can tell me, OK?”

I would like to avoid any future mishaps, but the only way to guarantee it, is going back to cleaning my own house. How should I gently break the news to end this professional relationship?

— Double Vanity

Dear Vanity: It sounds like she's giving you the out that you're looking for. Because this is a professional relationship, it's fine to say, “I've decided to go a different way” or “I appreciate your services and I know mistakes happen, but this isn't working for me anymore.”

While the first incident seems to have been handled fairly, it's a little concerning that some product was placed on your vanity that stripped the finish. Either this is an issue of carelessness or a lack of communication between you and the cleaning service. Neither is unfixable. But it sounds like the trust that you have about these people being in your home is faltering and so it may always be an issue. It's OK to say, “we've reached the end of our road” and wish her well.

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 rerichthomas.com.

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THE ALBANY HERALD

Perspectives

The Albany HERALD
ALBANYHERALD.COM

Carlton Fletcher
EDITOR

—Georgia Trust for—
LOCAL NEWS

TODAY'S
BIBLE
VERSE

*"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin;
that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."*
2 Corinthians 5:21

GUEST COLUMNIST ■ KIM GREENE

Higher electric prices, lower reliability? Not in Georgia

If you're reading the headlines, you may have noticed a seemingly nationwide crisis – the increased use of artificial intelligence and cloud storage by all of us is driving an electricity demand surge unlike anything in recent memory. Companies are racing to build data centers and, in state after state, the grid is not ready. Electric rates are rising. Reliability is under pressure – residents of some states even live in fear of potential blackouts. Families and small businesses are absorbing costs that were never designed to land on them. New businesses are re-evaluating where they build or operate because reliable power is not readily available in some markets.

As the CEO of the largest electric company in the state, serving millions of homes and businesses, I want to assure you that is not happening in Georgia.

At Georgia Power, we've built and maintained the infrastructure our state needs for more than 140 years. From the beginning of the electric age, when lanterns gave way to electric lights, to the advent of air conditioning in the 1960s, to the internet boom of the 1990s, we know how to come together to face moments of rapid technological change and opportunity and keep Georgia moving in the right direction. Working alongside the Georgia Public Service Commission and state leaders, we've taken deliberate steps that position our state differently. We believe growth can be a benefit – not a burden – and we've planned accordingly.

As temperatures climb and families across Georgia adjust their thermostats this summer, I want our customers to know two things: The energy you need will be there, and we are working every day to keep it affordable. In May, the PSC approved a plan that will deliver approximately \$285 million in annual savings for customers, or about \$50 in yearly savings for the typical residential household. That means the overall rate you are paying for electricity from Georgia Power is lower than it was this time last year. Very few utilities can say the same.

Those savings build on other recent good news for customers: stable rates through 2028, along with more than \$100 in additional annual savings planned beginning in 2029. This isn't accidental. It



GREENE

reflects a deliberate strategy to manage Georgia's economic growth and rising electricity demand while keeping costs down for customers.

So how are we able to deliver these benefits when other states are struggling?

Because we have a system that allows us to plan, invest, and deliver, for today and for 20 years from today.

Years ago, we recognized that large energy users, like data centers, could reshape the demand for electricity. Working with the PSC, we put protections in place to ensure residential and small business customers wouldn't bear the cost of that growth. We created new rules

and regulations that require them to pay for the infrastructure needed to serve them, commit to longer contract terms, minimum bills, termination payments, and financial security provisions.

Simply put: They pay more, so you pay less.

This rate-reducing load growth is also resulting in a stronger, more resilient power grid for you, and for future generations of Georgians. We're adding new power plants across the state, including natural gas, solar and battery storage, as well as increasing the output of the country's largest generator of clean energy at Plant Vogtle. We're also building new transmission lines that serve as the backbone of our electric grid, reliably moving energy from power plants to the communities that depend on it.

This is what it looks like when growth is matched with preparation. Higher reliability and lower costs as we work to ensure that Georgia's success benefits the people who call this state home.

At Georgia Power, our job is to make sure the infrastructure we build keeps pace with our state's bright future – and serves everyone. The families watching their bills every month. The small business owners who can't afford a reliability failure. The next generation of Georgians who deserve opportunity, stability, and a future in the state they know and love.

Georgia Power is built for this moment. On behalf of thousands of employees working across the state, we are grateful and honored to serve you, your family, and your business.

Kim Greene is chairman, president and CEO of Georgia Power.

COLUMNIST ■ MARC HYDEN

Ignore Trump and Dems; Georgia elections among fairest in nation

Georgia Republicans braced for the worst when President Trump recently teased a major announcement on election security. Given his sordid history of disputing Georgia's 2020 election results – and the role those claims may have played in Republicans losing the state's two Senate seats – many feared he would once again target the state's elections.

During his primetime TV address earlier this month, Trump stopped short of declaring Georgia's current senators illegitimate, but he continued casting doubt on the integrity of American elections. Despite his frequent tirades and claims of stolen elections, every audit and lawsuit has shown that our elections are fair and legitimate. If any compelling evidence existed proving otherwise, his lawyers would have presented it in the courts long ago, but they never did because it doesn't exist.

This comes against the backdrop of many on the political left calling Georgia's voting laws Jim Crow 2.0 and an attempt to suppress voting. While the left has griped about our voting laws and Trump has been busy re-litigating old grievances, new reports show that Georgia has one of the country's best and most trustworthy elections systems.

"In an era when confidence in elections is too often shaped by partisan rhetoric rather than proven results, Georgia has taken a different approach: Build the nation's gold standard for election administration and prove its success at every election," Secretary of

State Brad Raffensperger noted in a recent op-ed. "Confidence in the system can't be dictated from above. It is earned through transparency, accountability and results. That's the standard Georgia has set, and that's the standard we will continue to uphold."

Some readers may respond that these are just the empty claims of a politician, but Raffensperger has reason to project this confidence. Following Georgia's June 16 primary run-off, his office conducted a couple of audits to ensure the results were correct. "1,111,856 ballot images were audited, and 23 discrepancies were detected, demonstrating an overall accuracy rate of 99.9979%," reads a Secretary of State press release.

"Detailed analysis of the data shows that the 23 discrepancies all occurred in ballots that [had] been marked by hand, while none of the 1,079,408 ballots utilizing a ballot-marking device showed discrepancies," the release continued. "The machine-marked ballots were 100% accurate, while the hand-marked ballots were 99.93% accurate."

As my friends at Peach Pundit noted, this is a little misleading.

"Some of the errors came from hand-marked ballots, while our machines also misassigned votes, attached the wrong electronic records, and repeated a programming failure we already saw in DeKalb four years ago," Peach

Pundit's Scot Turner noted.

Regardless of how the secretary of state presents the 23 discrepancies, no election is perfect. Voters are guaranteed to make weird mistakes, and machines aren't completely free of errors. What the audit shows, however, is that Georgia's system is highly accurate and there are processes in place to quickly identify and address any possible discrepancies. What's more, Georgia witnessed record voter turnout in the May primaries – suggesting that the Jim Crow 2.0 attacks were not only unfair but patently untrue. This should provide Georgia voters with ample confidence.

If that still isn't enough, then consider a recent study from one of my R Street Institute colleagues, elections expert Chris McIsaac. He conducted a 50-state survey and ranked each state by how well they administer elections.

"This scorecard," he wrote, "identifies and evaluates states on a set of policies that are especially important for conducting elections worthy of public trust."

The study considered six policies, including those governing voter eligibility, verifying voter identities, voter registration, voter list maintenance and vote tabulation and audits.

While the scorecard found that states across the board do a relatively good job at elections



HYDEN

COLUMNIST ■ GAIL DRAKE

Rebounding from failure to founder

"Blessed is he that considers the poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble."
- Psalm 41:1

A year ago we were doing our family adventure across Switzerland (where I lived for a year during my childhood). We got off the train near downtown Zurich and walked down the main street past businesses, stores and monuments. Then I saw it.

Most statues feature a man with a horse or a sword. This statue featured a man protectively holding a young boy. The base read, "Joh Heinrich Pestalozzi, 1746-1827". He was a Swiss education reformer from around the time our nation was founded.

In honor of "back to school," I did a little Google research. It's hard for modern Americans to imagine, but 250 years ago, education was handled mostly by local parishes (Catholic or Protestant), which taught reading, writing, and catechism. Much of it was through rote memorization (verbal repetition).

Wealthy families often hired private tutors. Well-off boys could then attend Latin schools to learn classical languages, logic and rhetoric to prepare for a post in the pulpit or public administration. School was not mandatory and not regulated. Poor children were often sent to work on farms or factories, never learning to read or write.

The literacy rates in Europe in some regions ranged from 15-50%. A poor clergyman named Pestalozzi changed all that in Switzerland. As the name suggests, Pestalozzi's father, an Italian surgeon, fled Italy due to his Protestant faith.

Pestalozzi would visit his Swiss grandfather, a country pastor, and traveled with him to visit schools and homes. He saw firsthand the poverty, with young children working in factories. Their suffering and inability to help themselves made a lifetime impression.

In learning about Pestalozzi, the first thing that struck me was how many times he failed. He studied to be a clergyman, but failed with his first sermon. He then decided to pursue a career in law and political justice. He joined the Helvetic Society and brought attention to several cases of government corruption. But he was falsely accused and arrested, which destroyed his legal career.



DRAKE

He then decided to be a farmer and bought land that proved to be unsuitable for farming, and that failed. His desire grew to help the poor, since he certainly understood poor. He wanted to provide orphans an education, and he tried to convert his farmhouse into an industrial school.

To fund this venture, Pestalozzi wrote for periodicals. Over two decades, he wrote numerous literary works such as articles, pamphlets and stories, mostly promoting education and morality of the individual. Some works were published and read, others were not. The school failed, and Pestalozzi's family lived in poverty.

Another characteristic of Pestalozzi is that he persisted despite the failures. When serfdom was abolished in Switzerland in 1798, Pestalozzi turned to education and submitted a plan to the new government education minister, who asked him to run a government orphanage.

When war with France interrupted, he was moved to other towns and schools, where he finally found success with his teaching philosophy. Pestalozzi utilized a homelike atmosphere of love and security, serving as a nurturing father. He embraced a novel teaching method known as "Romanticism," a child-centered approach based on individual differences and sense perception.

Students were guided to discover through observation. Subject matter was reduced to its basic elements to better understand it. He promoted all aspects of a child's life, including the family, moral education and physical education, inner peace and a belief in God.

Pestalozzi settled in a city called Yverdon, where his Institute became famous across Europe and attracted visitors for 20 years. Students were admitted regardless of family background, and their health and happiness were considered along with individual experiences. His publication "Views and Experiences" explained his view of a balanced education of "head, heart and hands."

He returned to his hometown to build a school for poor children but died while it was under construction. By the time of his death in 1830, illiteracy in Switzerland was almost completely overcome. His grave marker reads: "Savior of the Poor ... Preacher to the People ... Father to the orphan ... Founder of the New Primary Education ... He did everything for others, nothing for himself."

Southwest Georgia has several dedicated educators who use their talents and time to grow our students. Our lives are better because of them. Thank you, teachers.

Gail Drake practices probate, adoption, mediation and children's law in Albany. She is a frequent contributor to The Albany Herald.

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

August 6, 2026

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

NFL Preseason Football: Carolina vs. Arizona

NBC, 8 p.m. Live

The NFL preseason opens in Canton, Ohio, as the league celebrates the enshrinement of the Pro Football Hall of Fame Class of 2026 with the Carolina Panthers vs. the Arizona Cardinals in an exhibition game at Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium.

The Bear

FX, 9 p.m. ■ Series Finale

“Yes, Chef.” Those words will forever be remembered for this cultural phenomenon, which comes to an end after five seasons with “The Original Beef of Chicagoland,” as Carmy (Jeremy Allen White), Richie (Ebon Moss-Bachrach) and Sydney (Ayo Edebiri) weigh their futures. “I knew for about two years when it was going to end and how it was going to end, so there was a lot of time to prepare,” White told *The Hollywood Reporter*. “It’s a hard thing to say goodbye to anything you love.” And we couldn’t agree more.

Ancient Aliens

History, 10 p.m. ■ Season Finale

Ancient Aliens explores the controversial theory that extraterrestrials have been visiting Earth for millions of years. The origins of humanity can be traced back to Africa, and some of the oldest religious traditions across the continent describe mysterious beings who descended from the sky in thunderous vehicles. Could it be that the ancient mythology of Africa describes our first encounters with extra-terrestrials?

From the editors of  TV Weekly and tvinsider.com



‘The Bear’

FX

CATCH A CLASSIC

Summer Under the Stars: Diane Keaton

TCM, beginning at 6 a.m.

Beloved actress Diane Hall — better known as Diane Keaton — was known for wearing many hats throughout her life (literally). Today, she makes her debut in the annual Summer Under the Stars marathon on Turner Classic Movies. The 12-film lineup features the TCM debuts of two films: **Father of the Bride Part II** (1995), in which Keaton and onscreen daughter Kimberly Williams are pregnant at the same time, and 1984’s **The Little Drummer Girl**, where Keaton plays an anti-Zionist actress entangled in an Israeli espionage plot. Also showing are comedies like the feminist classic **Baby Boom** (1987) and 1991’s



TOUCHSTONE PICTURES

Father of the Bride (pictured), which features comedy legends Steve Martin and Martin Short. The day also includes many of Keaton’s works with longtime collaborator Woody Allen, such as Best Picture Oscar winner **Annie Hall** (1977), which earned Keaton her only Best Actress Oscar; **Interiors** (1978), a psychological drama showcasing Keaton’s dramatic acting chops; **Manhattan Murder Mystery** (1993), a black comedy/mystery costarring Alan Alda and Anjelica Huston; and more.

TV REIMAGINED
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What to watch FRIDAY

August 7, 2026

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

Power Book III: Raising Kvanan

Starz, 8 p.m. ■ Series Finale

The *Power* prequel spinoff concludes after five seasons, but this isn’t the end for drug kingpin Kanan Stark (Mekai Curtis) and his pursuit of power: It’s just the beginning. Shameik Moore and Patina Miller also star.

Life, Larry and the Pursuit of Unhappiness

HBO, 9 p.m. ■ Season Finale

Larry David and a cast of guest stars comically reimagine great moments and figures in American history as the series wraps up its first season.

Mysteries From Above

History, 10 p.m. ■ Season Finale

In the season finale, “Mysteries of the Abandoned,” teams of researchers continue to investigate significant historic and contemporary sites from the revealing



‘Anna Pigeon’

SALLY MONTANA, USA NETWORK

vantage points of drone, satellite and aerial photography. Tonight’s episode looks at a complex of abandoned pods, a mysterious concrete channel, a collection of out-of-place shapes in Greenland and a baffling building with a mythical guardian.

Anna Pigeon

USA Network, 10 p.m. ■ New Series

Lea Thompson (*Back to the Future*) serves as a director/executive producer of this

10-episode mystery-of-the-week drama, based on Nevada Barr’s expansive book series. Playing the titular role of the stubborn detective park ranger is *Chicago P.D.* vet Tracy Spiridakos. Following the shocking death of her husband (Jordan Sledz, in flashbacks), Anna left her New York life behind and followed her calling as a park ranger, which takes her to many parks until she finally settles into Glacier National Park, where she finds far more adventures and problems.

CATCH A CLASSIC

Summer Under the Stars: Basil Rathbone

TCM, beginning at 6 a.m.

The game is afoot today as Basil Rathbone, the English actor best known for playing Sherlock Holmes, returns to Turner Classic Movies’ Summer Under the Stars. The lineup begins with **The Last of Mrs. Cheyney**

(1929), where Rathbone plays the libertine Lord Arthur Dilling. Be sure to catch Rathbone as Arthur Conan Doyle’s iconically cunning detective in **Sherlock Holmes in Dressed to Kill** (1946) before watching the range of villains he portrayed, including Pontius Pilate in **The Last Days of Pompeii** (1935), the abusive Edward Mordstone in **David Copperfield** (1935), the assassin Guy of Gisbourne in 1938’s **The Adventures of Robin Hood** (pictured) — in which Rathbone applied his background as a fencer — and more.



WARNER BROS.

MOVIES YOU’LL LOVE



‘Mike and Dave Need Wedding Dates’
GEMMA LAMANA

Bridesmaids (2011, Comedy) Kristen Wiig, Maya Rudolph **WE, 6 p.m.**

Transformers: Age of Extinction (2014, Action) Mark Wahlberg, Stanley Tucci **SYFY, 6:30 p.m.**

Magic Mike XXL (2015, Comedy-drama) Channing Tatum, Matt Bomer **FX, 7 p.m.**

PAW Patrol: The Movie (2021, Children) Iain Armitage, Marsai Martin **NICK, 7 p.m.**

Trading Places (1983, Comedy) Dan Aykroyd, Eddie Murphy **Sundance, 7:30 p.m.**

Goodfellas (1990, Crime drama) Robert De Niro, Ray Liotta **AMC, 8 p.m.**

The Secret Lives of Suburban Housewives (2026, Suspense) Analisa Wall, Ian Reier Michaels **LMN, 8 p.m.**

Honey (2003, Drama) Jessica Alba, Mekhi Phifer **BET, 9 p.m.**

The Dark Knight Rises (2012, Action) Christian Bale, Anne Hathaway **TNT, 9 p.m.**

Mike and Dave Need Wedding Dates (2016, Comedy) Zac Efron, Adam Devine **FXM, 9:05 p.m.**

The Proposal (2009, Romance-comedy) Sandra Bullock, Ryan Reynolds **FX, 9:30 p.m.**

Selena (1997, Biography) Jennifer Lopez, Edward James Olmos **VH1, 10:30 p.m.**

From the editors of  TV Weekly and tvinsider.com

StayTuned
What to Watch All Month Long!



“BLUE” HEADS TO BOSTON
Donnie Wahlberg

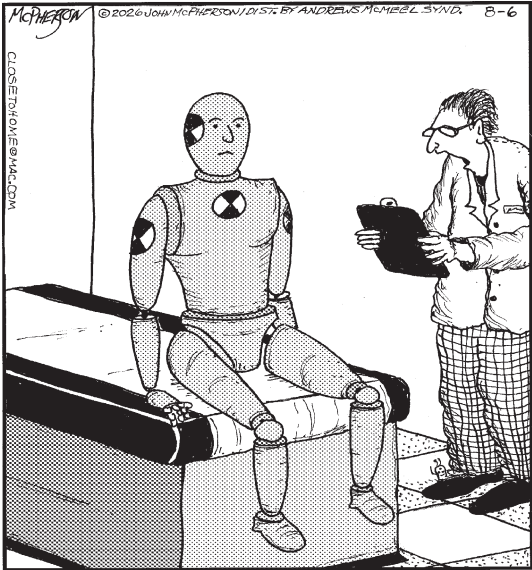
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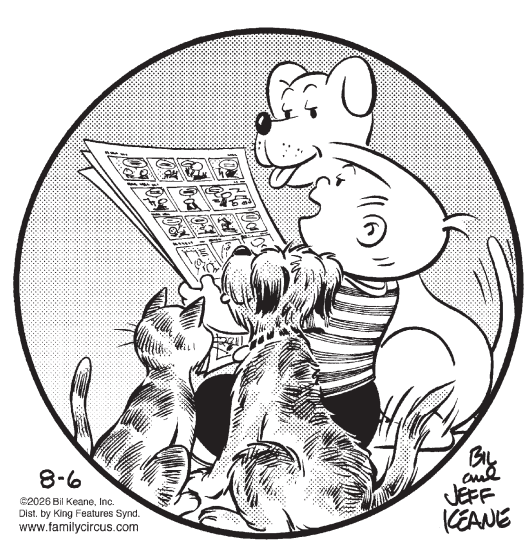
TV - What to watch

CLOSE TO HOME John McPherson



"I'm looking at your history here, Mr. Dummynski, and you seem to be a bit accident-prone."

THE FAMILY CIRCUS Bil Keane

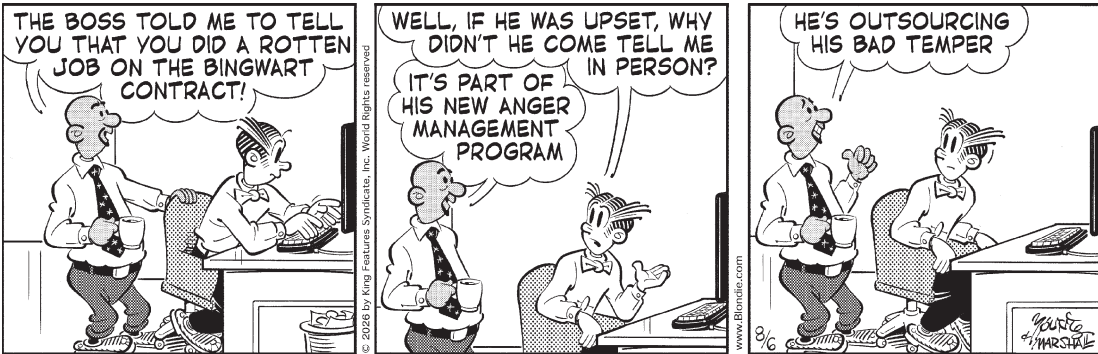


"...and that's what Marmaduke is doing today. Next up—Garfield the cat..."

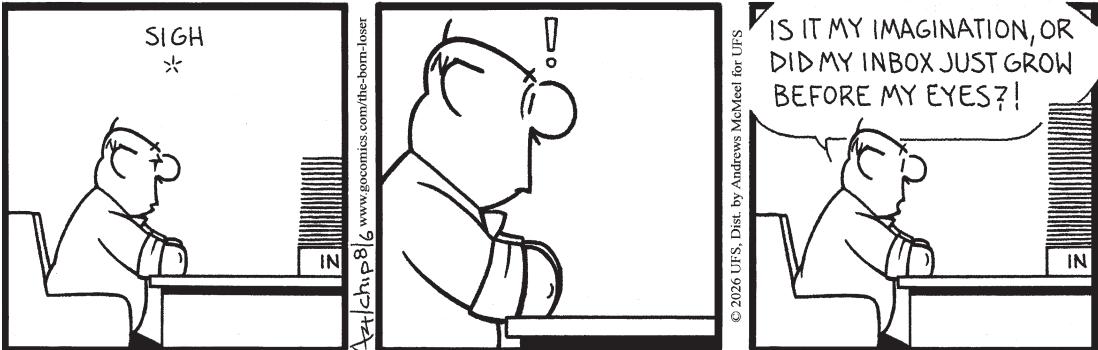
BEETLE BAILEY Mort & Greg Walker



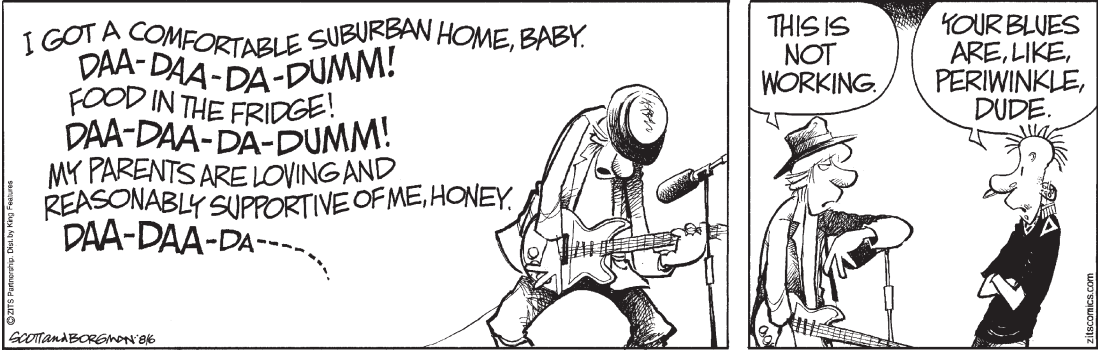
BLONDIE Dean Young & John Marshall



THE BORN LOSER Art & Chip Sansom



ZITS Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



GARFIELD Jim Davis



PICKLES Brian Crane



SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

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

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:

Come out to play

CROSSWORD

- ACROSS
- 1 "We're — to see the wizard ..."
- 4 Pole
- 8 Ordinance
- 11 "La — Bonita"
- 12 Birthright seller
- 13 Crete's Mount —
- 14 Old pronoun
- 15 Slender
- 16 Bed
- 17 Shallow dish
- 19 "A Streetcar Named —"
- 21 Infamous emperor
- 22 Sheer
- 23 "It — Be You"
- 25 Item for a superhero
- 27 Holiday time
- 28 Graceful bird
- 30 State near Conn.
- 34 Nothing more than
- 36 Ardor
- 38 Impair
- 39 Gourmet cook
- 41 Uncloses
- 43 Coffee flavor
- 46 Arab ruler
- 47 On the beach
- 49 Mock
- 52 Cravat
- 53 Pull
- 55 High cards
- 56 Done to a —
- 57 Peru's capital
- 58 Bugle call
- 59 "To — is human ..."
- 60 Calendar span
- 61 Med. specialty
- DOWN
- 1 Job-safety org.
- 2 Flop around
- 3 Spigot

TODAY'S SOLUTION:

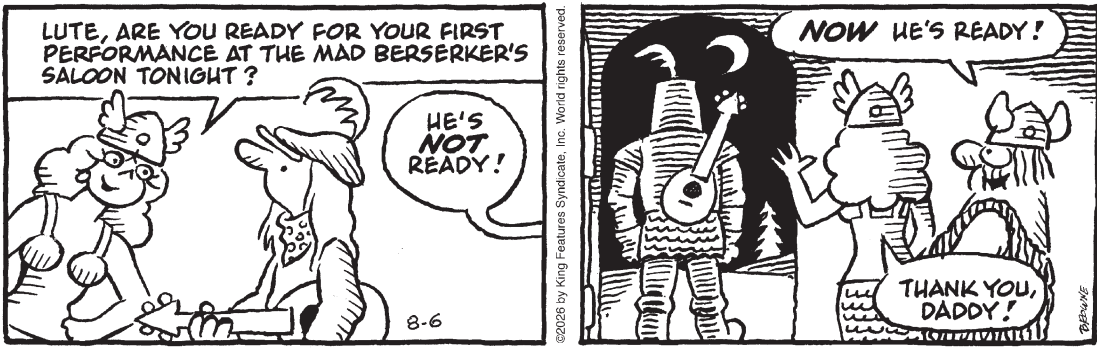
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E	D	E	R	E	D	E		R	E	O	H	S
C	R	I	E		M	I		A	H	O	C	O
S	N	E	P	O		F	E	H	C			
R	V	M			V	L	E		E	R	E	M
S	S	V	M		N	V	M	S		E	V	E
			E	P	A	C	O	T	A	D	V	H
R	E	L	T	U		O	R	E	N			
E	R	I	S	D		R	E	C	U	N	V	S
T	O	C		N	I	H	L		U	O	H	L
V	I	D		U	V	E	S	V	L	A	S	I
L	V		L	A	S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

- 4 Subway in Paris
- 5 Fireplace residue
- 6 Uttered
- 7 Garage service (Hyph.)
- 8 Legal
- 9 Love
- 10 Irrigate
- 11 "— a girl!"
- 18 Greek god of love
- 20 Plant part
- 23 Garment edge
- 24 Rd.
- 25 Young farm animal
- 26 Literary collection
- 29 Tiny
- 31 "— Idol"
- 32 Word in place names
- 33 AARP members
- 35 Repeat
- 37 Alaska city
- 40 Scarcely
- 42 Buccaneer
- 43 Dull surface
- 44 Willow rod
- 45 Gladden
- 46 — Allan Poe
- 48 Port in Pennsylvania
- 50 division
- 51 Curvy letter
- 54 "I — Camera"

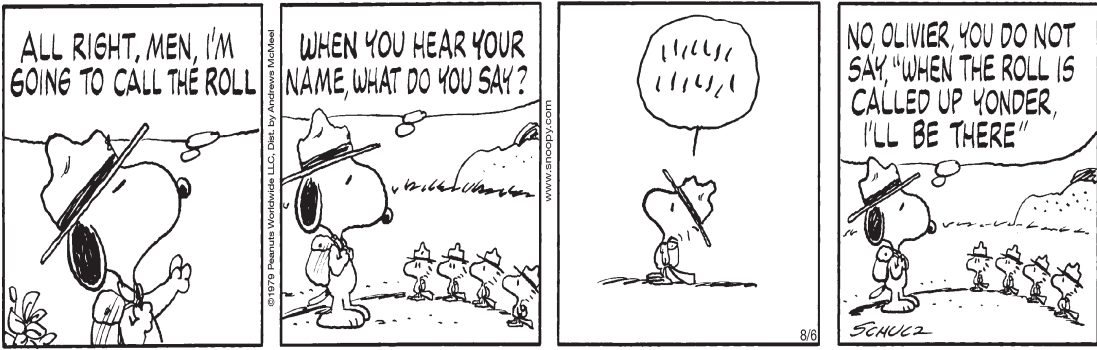
	1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10
11					12					13		
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27					28	29			30	31	32	33
34			35		36			37		38		
			39	40				41	42			
43	44	45					46					
47					48		49			50	51	
52				53		54			55			
56				57					58			
59				60					61			

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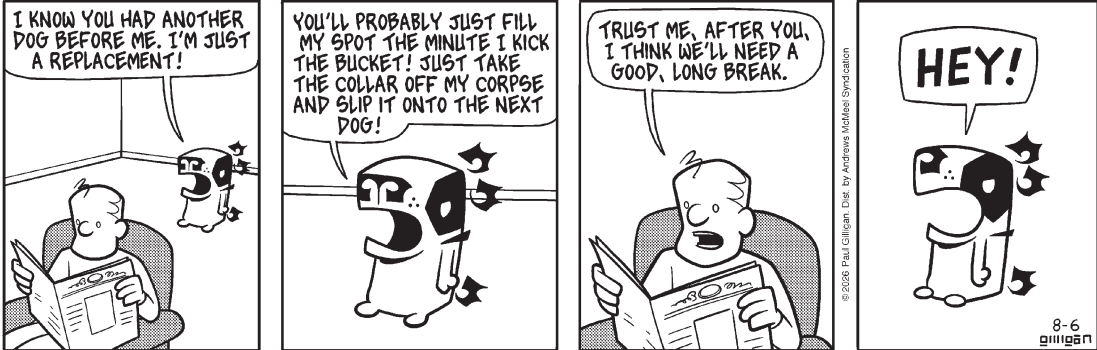
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE Chris Browne



PEANUTS Charles M. Schulz



POOCH CAFE Paul Gilligan



WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

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

TRIESTE, ITALY Solution: 7 letters

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

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8/6

Aperitivo, Borsa, Brovada, Café, Caldaia, Canal Grande, Carso, Castle, Faro, Friulano, Friuli, Giulia, Grotta Gigante, Groves, Gulf, Italian, Medieval, Molo Audace, Multicultural, Museo, Olive, Opicina, Pinza, Porto, Prosciutto, Rilke Trail, Roman, San Giusto, Scala, Tommaseo, Vecchio, Venetian, Venezia, Vineyards

TODAY'S ANSWER: Seaport

Daffodil Garden Club names Yard of the Month

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

ALBANY - Brenda and Tom Murphy's Marbury Lane home in the Lake Park Merry Acres area of Albany has been named the Daffodil Garden Club Yard of the Month.

The Murphys' home is an example of classic curb appeal, featuring a lush, meticulously maintained lawn that creates a striking first impression. Neatly trimmed shrubs, graceful crepe myrtles, and well-balanced foundation plantings frame the home, while colorful beds of white flowers add a soft, welcoming touch. The gently curving walkway leads visitors to an inviting front porch, enhancing the home's warmth and charm.

Every element of the landscape reflects careful planning, pride of ownership, and consistent attention to detail.



Brenda and Tom Murphy's Marbury Lane home in the Lake Park Merry Acres area of Albany has been named the Daffodil Garden Club Yard of the Month.

The Murphys' beautifully manicured yard is a wonderful contribution to the neighborhood and a deserving

recipient of this month's honor, garden club officials said.

The Daffodil Garden Club

recognizes Garden of the Month winners' efforts to make Albany an even more beautiful place to call home.



Special Logo

Albany Utilities sends out continuous water flow notifications

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

ALBANY – Albany Utilities began issuing “continuous flow” water usage notifications on Monday. This usage alert is designed to help identify situations where water on the customer's side of their water service is running continuously for a 24-hour period. The purpose of this notification

is to provide customers with timely information so they can check for potential issues, such as a leaking toilet, dripping faucet, irrigation system problem, or another source of ongoing water use.

Receiving an alert does not necessarily mean there is an emergency or a major leak. However, because a “continuous water flow alert” is being registered by a customer's meter, it is an indication that water is flowing somewhere beyond the meter (on the customer's side of the water service).

Customers who receive an alert are encouraged to take a few simple steps:

- Check faucets, toilets, irrigation systems, and outdoor spigots for water that may be running unexpectedly.
- Look for signs of leaks inside and outside the home or business.
- If the water use is expected, for example, filling a pool or another planned activity, no action may be needed.
- Anyone who discovers a leak should arrange for repairs as soon as possible to help prevent higher water bills and unnecessary water loss.

Prompt attention to unexpected water use can save water, avoid higher utility bills, and prevent more significant service-related problems from developing.



Colquitt Regional Medical Center has earned the Leapfrog Full Transparency Badge, recognizing the health system's commitment to publicly reporting patient safety and quality information through the annual Leapfrog Hospital Survey.

Colquitt Regional earns full transparency badge from Leapfrog

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

MOULTRIE — Colquitt Regional Medical Center has earned the Leapfrog Full Transparency Badge, recognizing the health system's commitment to publicly reporting patient safety and quality information through the annual Leapfrog Hospital Survey.

The Full Transparency Badge is awarded to hospitals that complete, affirm, and submit all sections of the Leapfrog Hospital Survey, one of the nation's leading voluntary reporting programs focused on patient safety, quality and transparency. The designation reflects Colquitt Regional's ongoing dedication to providing patients and families with meaningful information about the quality and safety of the care they receive.

“Transparency is an essential part of delivering exceptional healthcare,” Colquitt Regional President and CEO Jim Matney said. “Patients deserve access to reliable information that helps them make informed healthcare decisions, and we are proud to openly share our performance through The Leapfrog Group. Earning the Full Transparency Badge reflects our commitment to accountability, continuous improvement, and providing the highest standard of care for the communities we serve.”

Colquitt Regional has long prioritized patient safety, quality improvement, and clinical excellence through ongoing investments in advanced technology, physician recruitment, employee education, and evidence-based care. The health system has earned numerous national recognitions, including being named a Leapfrog Top Rural Hospital twice, receiving 22 “A” Hospital Safety

Grades from The Leapfrog Group, being recognized among Becker's Healthcare's Great Community Hospitals, and earning multiple American Heart Association Get With The Guidelines stroke care awards.

By participating in the Leapfrog Hospital Survey each year, Colquitt Regional provides patients with transparent, independently verified information about hospital safety practices, quality measures, and patient outcomes. This commitment supports the organization's mission of continuously improving healthcare while building trust with the communities it serves.

“We are proud to support a culture that values openness, accountability and excellence,” Hospital Authority Chairman John Griffin said. “Transparency not only strengthens patient confidence, but it also challenges healthcare organizations to continually improve. This recognition reflects the dedication of our physicians, nurses, and employees who work every day to provide safe, high-quality care for south Georgia.”

The Leapfrog Full Transparency Badge appears on Leapfrog's public ratings website and identifies hospitals that have committed to openly sharing information about their performance. The designation helps patients and families identify healthcare organizations that prioritize transparency and voluntarily report comprehensive information about patient safety and quality.

“We applaud Colquitt Regional Medical Center for its commitment to transparency,” Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group, said. “Transparency is one of the most powerful drivers of improvement in health care. By fully participating in the Leapfrog Hospital Survey,

Colquitt Regional Medical Center is helping patients and families access meaningful

information about the safety and quality of their care.”

For more information about

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

Relationship focus continues to drive success for AB&T

Staff Reports
news@albanyherald.com

ALBANY – For the leadership of Albany's Community Capital Bancshares and its wholly owned subsidiary, AB&T, there is a great sense of pride around the strength of the bank's balance sheet and the strong financial performance the company has enjoyed for the past several quarters, including through the second quarter for 2026, where the bank saw solid growth in several key metrics.

But when it comes to truly measuring the institution's ongoing success, nothing is more important, or powerful, than the bank's laser focus on true relationship banking. Put simply, there will always be opportunities to grow loans, grow deposits and delight shareholders, when the client is understood and the focus remains on ensuring their successes.

Leadership was once again reminded of that powerful symbiosis earlier this year, when the leaders of local airplane manufacturer Thrush Aircraft LLC, took an important step into a brighter future, thanks in no small part to the expertise and relational focus of AB&T and its premier banker, President Matt Rushton.

With a history in Albany dating back more than a half-century, Thrush has weathered many a season in this community, enjoying tremendous successes to crushing lows, natural disasters and multiple ownership changes. But as the Albany community inched closer to becoming ground zero for a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic, it faced perhaps its toughest challenge, as a new ownership group came in to pick up the pieces of a failed enterprise in 2019. “We were a customer of Thrush's,” current CEO Mark McDonald said recently. “When Thrush got in a little

bit of trouble, they called and said, ‘Can you come down and help?’ And shortly thereafter, the prior ownership filed for bankruptcy.

“We wanted to make sure the company survived because we saw all sorts of value. At the time, we didn't really have any interest in purchasing the company, we just wanted to continue to buy aircraft for our other businesses.”

McDonald, who has a long history working in aerospace, was joined in the endeavor by two partners, including CFO Clint Hubbard, who grew up in north Georgia and cut his teeth in the carpet world, before working with McDonald years ago in another venture.

“I ended up meeting Mark after 20-something years in the carpet business and ended up working with a defense and aerospace company in North Carolina that was using the Thrush aircraft for a particular contract we had,” Hubbard said. “We got to know Thrush in that way, and ultimately that's what brought us to Albany, to purchase the company back in 2019.”

Both Hubbard and McDonald thought the purchase was worth the risk, based on several key factors, not the least of which was the overall quality of the Thrush aircraft that has been a leader in the industry for decades.

While McDonald praised the talented individuals employed by the company, he also lauded Rushton, who had provided banking services and expertise to past ownership groups for more than 20 years. According to McDonald, it didn't take them long to see why prior owners had dealt with Rushton.

“My understanding is AB&T's history with Thrush is a lot longer than our history with Thrush,” McDonald said. “And it was apparent very early on that we were going to use

AB&T, not just because of their experience with Thrush, but also because of the people we met at AB&T.

“We've never looked back. That relationship has been great. That's the main reason we're here today.”

Pressed about the particulars of that experience, McDonald deferred to Hubbard, who over the long course of his career in finance has not only dealt with myriad bankers, but had served on a community bank board as well.

“When we say we manufacture airplanes, we manufacture airplanes from sheet metal, and there's a very significant working capital requirement,” Hubbard explained. “And, also, when you're selling a product, and this goes to sort of the community banking and having a relationship banker, when you have a business that has significant working capital requirements, and is also a product where you have big tickets — you have a \$2 million airplane — you need understanding.

“But every time we got into a need, the creativity that Matt and his team had was phenomenal.”

What also resonated with Hubbard was the way he went above and beyond to truly understand the company, the new owners and what was important to them.

“I'm coming from the perspective of a CFO who has been running companies and working with banks for 35 years now,” Hubbard said. “We got with Matt early on in the process and he was completely supportive of everything we needed from the day we started.

“He did what many of the larger banks couldn't or wouldn't do. Banking is very regulated. It's a highly regulated environment. And I'm not saying AB&T doesn't dot all the ‘I's’ and cross all the



Matt Rushton

“T's’ 100%. But there's still a difference in community banking and the big regionals and Matt personifies that. I've dealt with a lot of bankers in my life and no question Matt's the best.”

McDonald concurred, even growing somewhat emotional talking about his dealings with Rushton and AB&T.

“I would echo what Clint said,” he added. “I don't have Clint's experience with banks or banking institutions. I've never been on the board of a bank. When we were going through a phase of growth and looking for additional capital, and as the company grew, we knew we were going to get to a point in time where we were beyond AB&T's lending limit. And it was a question of do we want to go to a bigger bank.

“And there were two takeaways from that process for me personally. One was Matt was going to help us grow out of the bank. And he offered to be supportive of the process and look at bank documents and all that stuff to help us grow beyond AB&T. And my thought was that was pretty impressive.”

Thanks to Rushton's efforts and diligence, Thrush was able to once again thrive, and earlier this year made a significant announcement about the company's future, as it recently merged with another airplane manufacturing stalwart, Air Tractor, to streamline operations and set the newly combined entity on a path to even greater future success.



Staff Photo: Joe Whitfield

Lee County wide receiver Jaden Upshaw was named to the Georgia High School Football Daily Class 6A Preseason All-State Team. The Texas A&M commit is one of three Trojans honored, joining offensive lineman Shavezz Dixon and linebacker Gregory Batson.

Lee County trio earns preseason All-State honors

By Joe Whitfield
Sports Editor

LEESBURG — Lee County’s tradition of producing elite football talent continues to earn statewide recognition. The Trojans placed three players on the Georgia High School Football Daily Class 6A Preseason All-State Team, highlighted by senior wide receiver Jaden Upshaw, senior offensive lineman Shavezz Dixon and senior linebacker Gregory Batson. For Lee County coach Dean Fabrizio, the recognition comes as no surprise. “All three are very deserving,” Fabrizio said. “They are three-year starters for us and leaders for our team.” The trio is expected to anchor a Lee County team with state championship aspirations this fall. Upshaw, a Texas A&M commitment, has developed into one of Georgia’s premier wide receivers. A dangerous play-

maker with game-breaking speed, he headlines an explosive Lee County offense after earning preseason All-State recognition alongside Thomas County Central’s Jabari Watkins. Protecting the offense will be Dixon, one of the state’s top offensive line prospects. The North Carolina commit gives the Trojans an experienced presence up front and was one of seven offensive linemen selected to the preseason team. Batson rounds out Lee County’s selections after emerging as one of Georgia’s top linebackers. The standout defender is among the state’s most heavily recruited prospects and remains uncommitted after reopening his recruitment earlier this summer following a previous pledge to Florida State. Lee County’s three selections tied Thomas County Central for the second-most preseason All-State picks among Class 6A schools, trailing only Creekside,

which placed four players on the team. The honors are another reminder of the talent assembled in Leesburg. According to the 247Sports Composite rankings, Lee County has five juniors or seniors with state rankings entering the 2026 season, tying Milton for the third-most in Class 6A. Only Creekside and Gainesville, with eight each, have more ranked prospects. Thomas County Central has three ranked players, while Woodward Academy and Kell also have three apiece. The preseason accolades extended beyond the playing field. Georgia High School Football Daily also noted that Fabrizio enters his 18th season as Lee County’s head coach, tying Sequoyah’s James Teter as the longest-tenured head coach in Class 6A. Since taking over the program in 2009, Fabrizio has transformed Lee County

See **LEE**, 10A



Staff Photo: Sonja Stroyls

Deerfield-Windsor senior Gage Tomlinson will be a vital part of the Knight defense this season. The Knights open next Friday night in Valdosta against rival Valwood.

Knights check boxes in preseason tuneup

By Joe Whitfield
Sports Editor

MACON — The scoreboard wasn’t important Friday night. Learning was. Deerfield-Windsor got its first look at the 2026 football team in live competition during an informal preseason scrimmage against Tatnall Square Academy, and while the host Trojans found the end zone more often, Knights coach Jake McCrae left Macon encouraged by what his young team accomplished. The scrimmage featured a series of controlled 10-play offensive possessions rather than a traditional game, giving both coaching staffs an opportunity to evaluate personnel before the regular season.

“Our inexperience showed at times,” McCrae said. “But we did a lot of good things and checked a lot of boxes. It really helped us see what we really need to work on heading into the season.” The evening also came with a price. A pair of Deerfield-Windsor players left with injuries, though McCrae’s biggest takeaway centered on the valuable experience gained by a roster replacing one of the most accomplished senior classes in school history. Among the bright spots were the Knights’ perimeter blocking by the wide receivers, something McCrae said stood out throughout the scrimmage. He was equally pleased with the depth displayed along the defensive line, a unit expected to become one of the team’s strengths

this fall. Those positives came despite expected growing pains from an offense breaking in several new starters. Deerfield-Windsor enters the season with only four offensive players who have significant varsity experience, making Friday’s live repetitions especially valuable. The Knights now turn their attention to preparing for what McCrae believes is one of the toughest opening stretches on their schedule in recent memory. Deerfield-Windsor opens the regular season Aug. 14 against longtime rival Valwood in Valdosta before returning home Aug. 21 to host First Presbyterian Day School of Macon.



Special Photo: Imagn Images

Newly acquired Braves left-hander Brent Suter delivers a pitch while with the Los Angeles Angels this season. Atlanta added the veteran reliever before the MLB trade deadline in a deal that sent infielder Nacho Alvarez Jr. to the Angels.

Atlanta adds depth, but not splash at deadline

Field Level Media

ATLANTA—The Major League Baseball trade deadline came and went Monday without the Atlanta Braves making the kind of splash many fans hoped would address the club’s biggest concerns. While Atlanta added pitching depth and reshuffled its roster with a handful of deals, the Braves did not land a frontline starter or a significant offensive bat, leaving many of the team’s rotation and lineup questions unanswered heading into the stretch run. Atlanta’s most notable addition came before the deadline when the club acquired veteran right-hander Tyler Mahle from the San Francisco Giants in exchange for right-handed reliever Anthony Molina. Mahle, 31, is 3-9 with a 5.13 ERA over 18 starts this season. The veteran owns a 42-55 career record with a 4.19 ERA and has recorded 842 strikeouts in 160 major league appearances.

The Braves also bolstered their bullpen by acquiring veteran left-handed reliever Brent Suter from the Los Angeles Angels for infielder Nacho Alvarez Jr. Suter, 36, has appeared in 41 games this season, posting a 4.12 ERA while striking out 55 batters in 63 1/3 innings. A dependable veteran, Suter owns a career 3.62 ERA over 389 appearances. Atlanta also continued reshaping its roster on deadline day by trading catcher Joey Bart to the Chicago White Sox for right-hander Duncan Davitt and sending versatile outfielder Eli White to the Boston Red Sox in exchange for right-hander Tyler Uberstine. Both Davitt and Uberstine were optioned to Triple-A Gwinnett following the trades. Bart was acquired from Pittsburgh in June but appeared in only 20 games with Atlanta after batting .226 with four home runs and 13 RBIs overall this season.

White, valued for his defensive versatility, hit .233 with five home runs and 17 RBIs in 69 games while playing all three outfield positions. Uberstine made his major league debut with Boston earlier this season and posted a 2.81 ERA in 15 appearances at Triple-A Worcester. Davitt has made two major league relief appearances while spending most of the season at Triple-A Charlotte. Although Atlanta added experienced arms in Mahle and Suter while acquiring a pair of pitching prospects, the Braves stopped short of making the blockbuster moves many expected. The club’s injury-riddled starting rotation has been a concern for much of the season, and the lineup has struggled at times to consistently produce runs. With the deadline now passed, Atlanta will rely largely on its current roster and the health of its returning players as it attempts to make a push over the final weeks of the regular season.

Falcons lock up Bijan Robinson with record deal

Field Level Media

Falcons running back Bijan Robinson agreed to a contract extension valued at a maximum of \$75 million over three years, according to multiple reports, with Atlanta anxious to end the “hold in” status of the All-Pro in training camp. Robinson will become the highest-paid running back in NFL history with \$51 million guaranteed and \$37 million due as a signing bonus, ESPN reported on Tuesday. Robinson, the No. 8 pick in the 2023 NFL Draft, had 2,298 total yards in 2025 with 11 touchdowns and was named first-team All-Pro. He has 34 total TDs in 51 career games (50 starts). He was active in minicamp and mandatory workouts in the offseason under new head coach Kevin Stefanski. But since reporting to training



Special Photo: Dale Zanine-Imagn Images

Atlanta Falcons running back Bijan Robinson agreed to a three-year contract extension worth up to \$75 million, making him the highest-paid running back in NFL history.

camp, Robinson had been attending daily sessions but idling on the sideline while the Falcons address his contract status. Robinson already was signed for the 2026 season and the Falcons picked up his fifth-year option for 2027 before the agreement Tuesday. Robinson is the latest core player to sign a long-term contract to stay with the Falcons since Matt Ryan was named team president of football in January. Wide receiver Drake London, tight end Kyle Pitts and guard Matthew Bergeron all signed for at least three more seasons in the offseason. The Falcons lost Tyler Allgeier in free agency to the Arizona Cardinals but added Brian Robinson, who has played for the Washington Commanders and San Francisco 49ers, and third-down back Tyler Goodson to work behind Bijan Robinson this season.

From 9A

LEE

into one of Georgia’s premier football powers, consistently competing for region championships and deep playoff runs while sending numerous players to the collegiate level. GHFD Preseason Class 6A All-State Team:

Offense
QB: Kharim Hughley, Gainesville
QB: Aidan McPherson, Thomas County Central
RB: Quinterrius Gipson, Kell
RB: Daylan Maxwell, Jackson County
RB: Gary Walker, Creekside
WR: Jaden Upshaw, Lee County
WR: Jabari Watkins, Thomas County Central
TE: Grant Haviland, Milton
OL: Kelsey Adams, Hughes
OL: Jordan Dillon, Effingham County
OL: Tyler Ford, Gainesville
OL: Shavezz Dixon, Lee

County
OL: Jaylon Moore, Creekside
OL: Miller Westerfield, Roswell
PK: Leif Hansen, Sequoyah

Defense
DL: Cassius Burch, Creekside
DL: Prince Che, Thomas County Central
DL: Elijah Patmon, Northside (Warner Robins)
DL/LB: Tavarre Terrell, Creekside
LB: Gregory Batson, Lee County
LB: Blaize Battaglia, Milton
LB: Darryn Williams, Gainesville
LB: Drew Williams, Sequoyah
DB: Jernard Albright, Effingham County
DB: Israel Prince-Oyakhire, Shiloh
DB: Jai’lil Goley, Gainesville
DB: Bryce Woods, Woodward Academy
P: Afton Rowles, Woodward Academy

Falcons bolster support staff

Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

FLOWERY BRANCH — The Atlanta Falcons continued reshaping their football operations department Tuesday, hiring former standout center and Ring of Honor member Todd McClure as coordinator of player development and senior personnel assistant while announcing six other front office additions. McClure returns to the organization where he spent his entire 14-year NFL career. In his new role, he will help oversee the club’s player development program, coordinating cross-functional initiatives while assisting football leadership with player-focused and strategic projects. A seventh-round draft pick in 1999, McClure became one of the most durable and respected offensive linemen in franchise history. After missing his rookie season because of injury, he appeared in 198 games with 195 starts and set a Falcons franchise record by making 144 consecutive starts from 2001-10. McClure helped pave the way for several of the franchise’s top offensive performers, blocking for three different 1,000-yard rushers and helping quarterback Michael Vick and running back Warrick Dunn each eclipse the 1,000-yard rushing mark during the 2006 season. He was inducted into the Falcons Ring of Honor in 2022. Atlanta also strengthened its scouting department by hiring Daniel Clements as a BLESTO scout, Kevin Melore and Keith Earle Jr. as area scouts, Justin Hickman as a national scout and Max Blank as a scouting assistant. Clements joins the Falcons after working as a personnel assistant at Texas last season following three years as

assistant director of player personnel at Texas A&M. Melore earned a promotion after serving as Atlanta’s scouting assistant in 2025. Before joining the Falcons, he worked in player personnel at Texas and previously played quarterback at Long Island University and Pace University. Earle arrives after five seasons with the Chicago Bears, where he progressed from training camp scouting intern to area scout. Hickman brings professional scouting experience from the New England Patriots, XFL and Canadian Football League after a playing career that included time with the Indianapolis Colts. Blank returns to Atlanta after spending the past two seasons as a rotational analyst in the NFL league office. He previously interned with both the Falcons and Los Angeles Rams while attending

the University of Tennessee. The Falcons also named Frank Wintrich assistant director of strength and conditioning. Wintrich brings more than two decades of performance training experience at the professional, collegiate and government levels. Most recently, he served as director of health and fitness for the National Defense University after previously holding leadership positions with the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Army. His collegiate résumé includes stops at UCLA, Virginia, BYU, North Texas, South Florida, The Citadel, Utah State and Arizona State. The hires continue the Falcons’ offseason effort to strengthen both their player development and personnel departments as the organization prepares for the 2026 season.



Special Photo: Florida State Athletics

Florida State wide receiver Duce Robinson, who topped 1,000 receiving yards last season, was named Monday to the preseason watch list for the 2026 Maxwell Award, presented annually to college football’s outstanding player.

FSU’s Robinson, Georgia Tech’s Haynes land on Maxwell Watch List

Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

Florida State wide receiver Duce Robinson and Georgia Tech running back Justice Haynes took the first step toward one of college football’s most prestigious individual honors Monday, earning spots on the preseason watch list for the 2026 Maxwell Award. Presented annually since 1937, the Maxwell Award recognizes the nation’s outstanding college football player. Semifinalists will be announced Nov. 10, finalists will be revealed Nov. 24, and the winner will be honored during the ESPN Home Depot College Football Awards Show on Dec. 10. Robinson enters his senior season after one of the most productive years by a receiver in recent Florida State history. The Phoenix native earned first-team All-ACC honors and was a Biletnikoff Award semifinalist after catching 56 passes for 1,081 yards and six touchdowns in 2025. He became the Seminoles’ first 1,000-yard receiver since 2019 and recorded just the 14th 1,000-yard receiving season in program history. Robinson ranked ninth nationally in receiving yards during the regular season while averaging 19.3 yards per catch. His five 120-yard receiving games were the most among Power Four receivers and the most by a Florida State player since 2014. He also led the ACC with 17 receptions of at least 20 yards, 12 catches of 30 yards or more and six receptions of at least 40 yards. Robinson averaged an ACC-best 102.8 receiving yards per conference game and was named ACC Receiver of the Week twice. Off the field, Robinson became Florida State’s first

first-team Academic All-American since 2012. He was also selected to the preseason All-ACC team and is a nominee for the Good Works Team entering the 2026 season. Georgia Tech’s representative on the watch list is one of college football’s most intriguing newcomers. Haynes transferred home to the Yellow Jackets after rushing for 857 yards and 10 touchdowns in only seven games at Michigan last season. The former Buford High School standout averaged 7.1 yards per carry and 122.4 rushing yards per game, leading the Big Ten in rushing average while falling just short of qualifying for the NCAA statistical rankings because of the number of games played. Haynes topped the 100-yard mark six times in seven games for the Wolverines. Including two seasons at Alabama before transferring to Michigan, the senior has rushed for 19 touchdowns while averaging 6.5 yards per carry over his collegiate career. Georgia Tech had a Maxwell Award semifinalist last season in quarterback Haynes King, who also earned Maxwell National Player of the Week honors twice. Florida State opens its season Aug. 29 against New Mexico State, while Haynes is expected to make his Georgia Tech debut Sept. 3 when the Yellow Jackets host Colorado in a nationally televised opener.

Jackie Young sparks Aces in rout of Dream

Field Level Media

The Las Vegas Aces looked every bit of the defending champions as they displayed an accurate offensive performance keyed by All-Star Jackie Young in a 109-87 win Monday over the host Atlanta Dream. Young delivered her third career triple-double with 28 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists after going scoreless in the teams’ May matchup. Las Vegas tied its season high in points while shooting 44 of 71 (62.0%) from the field and 10 of 19 (52.6%) from 3-point range. After a competitive first quarter, a second quarter in which Las Vegas shot 65% and committed no turnovers allowed the Aces to outscore the Dream 33-14 and build a 55-38 halftime edge. Atlanta never pulled closer than 16 points the rest of the game. The Aces (21-9) were paced by Young, who shot 11 of 17, including 4 of 7 from 3-point range. Young scored 19 of her points in the first half, including 14 in the second quarter, then assisted on a Brianna Turner bucket with 2:21 to play to claim a triple-double. Las Vegas’ A’ja Wilson notched 23 points on 8-of-11 shooting from the field while



Special Photo: Brett Davis-Imagn Images

Las Vegas’ Jackie Young drives to the basket while Atlanta’s Angel Reese defends during the Aces’ 109-87 victory over the Dream on Monday. Young recorded the third triple-double of her career with 28 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists as Las Vegas snapped Atlanta’s five-game winning streak.

making all six free-throw attempts. NaLyssa Smith added 18 points and Chelsea Gray contributed 17 points and six assists. Atlanta (18-11) saw a five-game winning streak end despite Angel Reese delivering a double-double with 23 points and 16 rebounds. Reese shot

10 of 19 from the field. Rhyne Howard added 19 points on 7-of-13 shooting, including a trio of 3-pointers. Atlanta was within 41-36 with 3:50 to play in the first half, but Las Vegas went on a 14-2 spurt to close the half. Young contributed nine points in that run, sinking a 3-point-

er, a pair of short floaters near the rim and a pair of free throws. The Aces’ road trip continues against Caitlin Clark and the Fever on Thursday, while Atlanta returns home to play the Mercury and new addition Kelsey Plum on Wednesday.

Hopkins joins Georgia Tech as assistant coach

Field Level Media

Three-time All-Pro DeAndre Hopkins has been hired as an assistant wide receivers coach at Georgia Tech. Yellow Jackets head coach Brent Key made the announcement on Friday for Hopkins, who auditioned for a coaching role last week with the New England Patriots. “DeAndre is one of the greatest receivers of all-time, but his value to our program goes far beyond that,” Key said in a statement. “He has an exceptional knowledge of what we’re doing on offense due to his long relationship with (offensive coordinator) George Godsey and strong familiarity with the ACC, but most importantly, he’s a leader of men that I’m very excited for our players to be around, on and off the field.” Despite his foray into coaching, Hopkins took to social media to note that his playing career isn’t done. “I Haven’t retired from the @NFL ... But if you’re a WR and you want to be great, come to @GeorgiaTechFB,” Hopkins wrote on X on Saturday morning. Hopkins, 34, recorded just 22 catches for 330 yards in 17 games (three starts) last season with the Baltimore



Special Photo: Imagn Images

Veteran NFL wide receiver DeAndre Hopkins has joined Georgia Tech’s coaching staff as an assistant wide receivers coach. The three-time first-team All-Pro said he has not retired from the NFL despite beginning his coaching career with the Yellow Jackets.

Ravens.

He has totaled 1,006 receptions for 13,295 yards and 85 touchdown catches in 195

NFL games (172 starts).

Hopkins has seven career 1,000-yard receiving seasons and has caught over

100 passes four times. He earned first-team All-Pro honors three straight years (2017-19).

Make a cool summer pudding from England

While the 2026 FIFA World Cup was in full swing on screens across the United States and the world, I loved how the cameras put viewers like us in the middle of the action, especially for the third-place playoff match between France and England. Amid all the excitement of England winning the high-scoring match, I began to get curious about local English food.

I decided to make a cultural experience at home and created a taste of London by preparing an old English late-summer dessert called “Summer Pudding.” For the Brits, the word “pudding” (“pud” for short) actually means “dessert,” and this fun recipe from across the pond can become a memorable finale to an August dinner. It’s full of fresh berries, and the easy prep doesn’t require any baking, so the kitchen stays cool. It’s a great use for day-old bread, too!

Kids love to take part in the easy prep, so gather the ingredients and enjoy this fresh, beautiful dessert while it’s still summer.

ENGLISH SUMMER PUDDING

Makes 6-8 servings

-- 16 slices of day-old firm white bread without preservatives

-- 6 cups assorted berries such as blueberries, blackberries, raspberries and strawberries

-- 1 cup sugar

-- 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

-- Whipped cream

In a saucepan, combine berries, sugar and lemon juice. Stir over medium heat until berries release their juices, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and drain berries over a bowl, reserving the juice.

Line the inside of a 5- to 6-cup bowl with plastic wrap. Trim and discard crusts from the bread and cut slices diagonally into 4 pieces.

DONNA ERICKSON'S

BEST BITES





Dip each triangle into the juice, then arrange on the bottom and in a continuous pattern around the inside of the bowl to create a pinwheel effect. Fill any gaps with more bread, saving some for the next step.

Fill the bread-lined bowl almost to the top with the drained berries. Place a single layer of the remaining bread on top of the berries to create a cover. Spoon remaining juice evenly over the top.

Cover the bowl with plastic wrap, then set a small plate on top that fits inside the bowl. Set a heavy 2-pound can on the plate to provide weight. Refrigerate overnight.

To serve, remove the can, plate and plastic wrap, and carefully invert the colorful molded pudding onto a serving plate. Remove the plastic wrap liner. Slice into wedges with a large spoon and serve with a dollop of whipped cream.

Donna Erickson creates relationships and community through food and fun. Find more to nourish and delight you at www.donnaerickson.com.

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Mrs. Utoka Broadaway
Mrs. Utoka Broadaway of Bainbridge, GA, passed away on Tuesday, July 28, 2026. A funeral service was held on Friday, July 31, 2026, at 11:00 AM at Sheffield Funeral Chapel in Colquitt Funeral Home with John Woodrum officiating. Mrs. Utoka was interred at Black Jack Baptist Church Cemetery.

Mrs. Utoka retired from Synovus Bank. She is survived by two sons, Gregory (Rachel) Davis and Kevin Davis; two grandsons, Zekariah Davis and Owen Davis; and five siblings, Wayne, Vernon, Sharon, Leon, and Anna Mae.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Jimmy Broadaway; and parents, Dorcas and Walcie McCollough.

Janice McIntosh Merritt
Janice McIntosh “Jan” Merritt, 76, of Lake Blackshear, Georgia, passed away Sunday, August 2, 2026, at Maple Court Assisted Living, surrounded by her family. Funeral services will be held Wednesday, August 5, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. at Lake Blackshear Baptist Church, with Brother Phil Streetman officiating. Visitation with the family will begin at 1:00 p.m. Graveside services will be held Thursday,

August 6, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. CST at Meadowlawn Memorial Gardens in Enterprise, Alabama. Janice was born April 2, 1950, in Enterprise, Alabama, to Louie and Edna McIntosh. She was raised in Chancellor, Alabama, and graduated from Coffee Springs High School in 1968. She later earned a nursing degree from Wallace Community College and worked for seventeen years at Tift Regional Medical Center. In 2004, she married John Merritt of Weston, Georgia. The couple lived there until retiring in 2019 and relocating to Lake Blackshear. Jan was a member of Lake Blackshear Baptist Church and enjoyed traveling, as well as time spent with family and friends. She is survived by her husband of 22 years, John Merritt of Lake Blackshear, Georgia; her son, Tony Cheshire (Karen) of Coffee Springs, Alabama; her daughter, Jennifer Kelly (Brian) of Sparks, Georgia; her mother, Edna McIntosh of Dothan, Alabama; her granddaughters, Lindsey Troupe (Israel) of Valdosta, Georgia, Katie Jester (Logan) of Enterprise, Alabama, and Haley Morris (Marc) of Coffee Springs, Alabama; and her great-grandchildren, Harper Troupe, Taytum Troupe, Jolie Troupe, Colton Morris, Caroline Morris, Kasen Jester, Ruby Jester, and Jett Jester. She is also survived by her siblings, Carolyn Byrd (David) of Dothan, Alabama, Randall McIntosh (Kathy) of Level Plains, Alabama, and Eloise Tyler of Coffee Springs, Alabama; a special nephew, Rich Merritt; and cousin, Ann Williamson. She was preceded in death by her father, Louie McIntosh; her in-laws, Dick and Iva Lou Merritt; and her brother-in-law, Randy Tyler. Memorial contributions may be made in Jan’s memory to Lake Blackshear Baptist Church, 650 S. Coney Road, Cordele, GA 31015, or to Palmetto Hospice, 212 8th Street E., Tifton, GA 31794.

CELEBRITY CIPHER

by Luis Campos

Celebrity Cipher cryptograms are created from quotations by famous people, past and present. Each letter in the cipher stands for another.

“ R I X C L W M Z G W G V W R Q C D R W A . . .
W A C K C M K E G Q X G I C O I . . . W A C B D G J Z K
X G R L W Q C R L K R O C E W R G L I - W G
I W J K B , W G U C G X C L , W G W A R L P . ” -
W G O R M Q G I

Previous Solution: “Outside of work, what brings me joy is realizing that the sun is shining. It sounds a little trite, but it’s not.” — Jon Bon Jovi

TODAY’S CLUE: a sɪnɒɹ

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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.

“ Z C M L C D D W E W A I W Y E C Y I O D Z W Y G
W E M R T J T D Z W U C M D E M R W Y Y W D M V I
. . . T D ’ O Y C D W U C M D Z C M W D D E I I Y G
C Q D E I G W Z . ” - K E T J T K O I Z R C M V
E C Q Q R W Y

Previous Solution: “I spent a lot of time with ... the dead composers ... they would point me in directions -- to study, to be open, to think.” — Tori Amos

TODAY’S CLUE: ʌ sɪnɒɹ

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Obituary announcements

To place an obituary announcement in the Albany Herald, go to <https://legacy.memoriams.com/network/albanyherald/obituary>. Fill out form online and submit payment.

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7 LITTLE WORDS

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

CLUES

1 sport with a “final four” (10)

2 votes into office (6)

3 devotees (11)

4 move at full speed (8)

5 sit-ups target (10)

6 Olympic gymnast Aly (7)

7 dead as a dodo (7)

SOLUTIONS

AIL

ENT

ALL

BAS

EC

KETB

HIG

EX

HUSI

ABDO

TS

MI

HT

EL

RAIS

NALS

NCT

MAN

TI

ASTS

Tuesday's Answers: 1. ANGRILY 2. PHONING 3. EXHALES
4. DANIEL 5. BUDAPEST 6. GUISE 7. STOMPING

8/5

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 making an album (9)

2 passport “impressions” (6)

3 at rest, perhaps (9)

4 answering machine successor (9)

5 stringy (7)

6 incendiary “tome” (9)

7 like “War and Peace” (7)

SOLUTIONS

NGT

REC

ING

BRO

ARY

CEM

MAT

ENT

LE

STA

OOK

MPS

US

ORD

FI

SED

HY

AIL

VOI

CHB

Wednesday's Answers: 1. BASKETBALL 2. ELECTS 3. ENTHUSIASTS
4. HIGHTAIL 5. ABDOMINALS 6. RAISMAN 7. EXTINCT

8/6

Release Date: Thursday, August 6, 2026

Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Patti Varol

ACROSS

1 “To ___ their own”

5 One with a supporting role?

11 Giggly syllable

14 Potatoes, in Indian dishes

15 Nutty Italian cheese

16 Verbal fillers

17 “I want all the juicy details!”

19 Was introduced to

20 Tightens (up)

21 “If I had to bet ...”

23 “Use your umbrella!”

26 “Aladdin” figure

27 Features of some old socks

29 Figure skating jump that has only been landed in competition by Ilia Malinin

31 Feature of some old socks

32 Replay reviewer

33 First aid pro

34 With 37-Across, place for a pawdicure

35 Emoji from one who’s down

37 See 34-Across

40 Fitting

41 “Gross!”

42 Inner workings

43 Makes a clutch putt, perhaps

46 Key mistakes?

47 Heart chambers

48 “Want to play again?”

50 Global spirits giant that began as a rum maker in Cuba

52 Oscars, e.g.

55 Pretend

56 Wildly successful, or what three black squares in this puzzle literally are

59 ___ lodge

60 Like loose laces

61 Pulitzer-winning novelist Jennifer

62 “Exit full screen” key

63 Get cozy

64 Cries noisily

DOWN

1 Direction that plays first in mahjong

2 Mont Blanc, par exemple

3 Place that welcomes change?

4 Wild West costume accessory

5 Easy mark

6 Kinda sorta

7 Falsehood

8 “Stay the Night” singer Jackson

9 Like 15-Across

10 Occasion to wear away uniforms

11 Compassionate

12 Celebrity chef with a flagship restaurant in New Orleans

13 Cosmetician

18 Grassy expanses

22 Message one may wish to open in private

24 Kicked out of a competition, briefly

25 Scoundrel

27 Word with bell or bar

28 Lines of praise

30 Dealer’s handful

32 “Aw, shoot!”

35 Free diver’s weapon

36 Unit of farmland

37 Id counterpart

38 Vacation hrs.

39 Pack animal

40 Nike rival

42 Takes turns?

43 Library area

44 Powerfully cold

45 Score units

46 AAA offerings

47 Take down a peg

49 Apatow of “Euphoria”

51 Copenhagen native

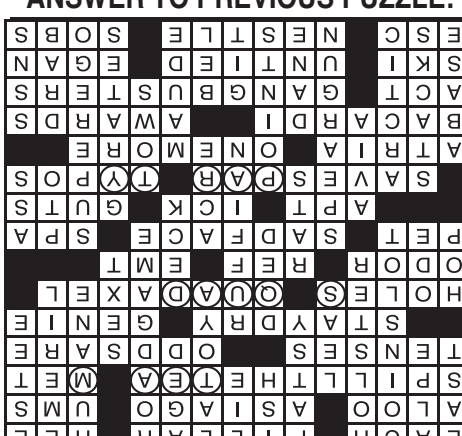
53 Lacking pizzazz

54 Form W-2 digits

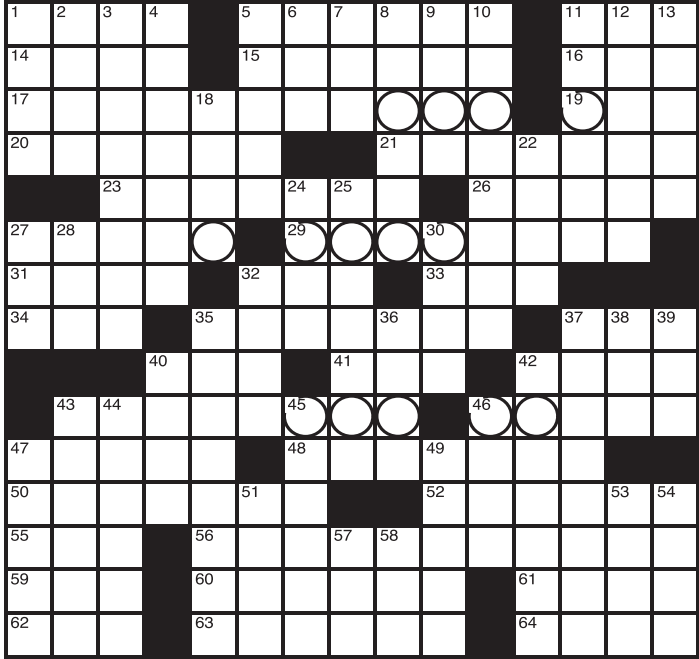
57 “Scram!”

58 ___ canto

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:



08/06/26



By Mark Axel
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08/06/26

Registration Open for Southwest Georgia Career Expo

Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

ALBANY - The Southwest Georgia Career Expo is coming on Sept. 24 to the Albany Civic Center, and organizers are inviting both employers and job seekers to register now for early access. In past years, the expo has welcomed more than 1,000 attendees and more than 50 participating companies from across the region.

Job seekers can sign up to be among the first to complete their profile when registration opens in August. Early birds will be able to upload their resume, showcase their skills and experience, and connect directly with employ-



ers searching for candidates. This is a free event and service for applicants.

Employers may register their organization today to receive early access, create their company profile, post available positions, and begin reviewing candidate profiles before the event.

Powered by the Albany-



Special Photo: Albany-Dougherty EDC

Job seekers and employers alike can fill vital positions or begin careers at the Southwest Georgia Career Expo, scheduled at the Albany Civic Center Sept. 24

Dougherty Economic Development Commission, this initiative supports economic growth by helping employ-

ers find qualified talent and helping individuals discover meaningful career opportunities.

Congress Votes

By Targeted News Service

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

The House has begun its traditional August recess early this year.

Along with its votes this week, the Senate also passed a bill (S. Res. 608) expressing the sense of the Senate that Ghislaine Maxwell should not be granted a presidential pardon or any form of clemency for her crimes with Jeffrey Epstein relating to the sexual exploitation and abuse of minors.

There were no key votes in the House this week.

SENATE VOTES:

INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITY: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Walter "Jay" Clayton to be Director of National Intelligence. Clayton chaired the Securities and Exchange Commission for most of President Trump's first term, then rejoined his former law firm, Sullivan & Cromwell, until 2025 when he was named the U.S. Attorney

for the Southern District of New York. The vote, on July 28, was 51 yeas to 47 nays.

NAYS: Ossoff D-GA, Warnock D-GA

SANCTIONING RUSSIA AND IRAN: The Senate has passed a motion to consider the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia Act (H.R. 5334) sponsored by Rep. Jimmy Panetta, D-Calif. The bill would authorize imposing secondary tariffs on imports from countries that import fossil fuels from Russia, adopt a variety of sanctions against Russia, and extend expiring sanctions on Iran. The vote, on July 29, was 84 yeas to 12 nays.

NAYS: Ossoff D-GA

YEAS: Warnock D-GA

CHILD CARE FUNDING: The Senate has rejected a motion to proceed to a bill (S.J. Res. 199) sponsored by Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., that would have voided a Department of Health and Human Services rule, issued this May, that cancelled regulations in the agency's child care and development subsidies program adopted in 2024. Murray said



Jon Ossoff



Raphael Warnock

the rule ended a 7% cap on co-payments for child care by parents in the program, but restoring the cap would mean savings of as much as \$15,000 a year for a family. The vote, on July 30, was 47 yeas to 52 nays.

YEAS: Ossoff D-GA, Warnock D-GA

IRAN WAR: The Senate has rejected a motion to discharge from its Foreign Relations Committee a bill (S.J. Res. 181) sponsored by Sen. Kirsten E. Gillibrand, D-N.Y., that would have required the end of combat action against Iran in the absence of Congressional authorization. Gillibrand said Congress owed members of the military "a sacred obligation. We do not

send them into harm's way without a clear mission, defined objectives, and the support of the American people." The vote to discharge, on July 30, was 49 yeas to 50 nays.

YEAS: Ossoff D-GA, Warnock D-GA

EN BLOC NOMINEES: The Senate has passed a bill (S. Res. 817) sponsored by Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., to provide for en bloc consideration of 74 presidential nominees to various positions, including ambassadors to Brazil and Norway, several judges, and other judicial branch nominees. The vote, on July 30, was 50 yeas to 47 nays.

NAYS: Ossoff D-GA, Warnock D-GA

Two Georgians sentenced for trafficking fentanyl from China

Staff Reports

news@albanyherald.com

ATHENS — A Georgia inmate and a co-conspirator have been sentenced to federal prison for trafficking fentanyl and a synthetic designer drug from China into the state resulting from a Homeland Security Task Force investigation led by FBI and the United States Postal Inspection Service.

"The defendants took part in an international drug trafficking scheme from behind bars, moving fentanyl and other dangerous drugs from China into southwest Georgia," U.S. Attorney Will Keyes said. "Our office, in collaboration with law enforcement, is dedicated to dismantling criminal organizations, whether they operate from prisons or across borders."

— Devito Duran Young, aka "Big" aka "Big Man," 45, of Macon State Prison and Marietta was sentenced to serve 327 months in prison to be followed by eight years of supervised release after he previously pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute fentanyl and one count of conspiracy to distribute a controlled substance.

— Trace Davrin Works, 29, of Mableton was sentenced to serve 262 months in prison to be followed by eight years of supervised release after he previously pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute fentanyl.

The following co-conspirators pleaded guilty and will be sentenced on Aug. 6:

— Andreaus Benard Oliver Sr., aka "Doomie Oliver," 43, of Cordele pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute a controlled substance and faces a maximum sentence of 30 years in prison and a \$2 million fine.

— Andreaus Benard Oliver



Special Photo

Interior of a residence that served as an illegal drug conversion lab. This image shows papers soaked in pans with synthetic cannabinoid liquid.

Jr., aka "Dray Oliver," 27, of Cordele pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute a controlled substance and faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison and a \$1 million fine.

Two co-conspirators were charged by a federal indictment unsealed on Aug. 7, 2025, and remain at-large:

— Xin Wang, 28, of China, is charged with one count of conspiracy to distribute fentanyl and one count of conspiracy to distribute a controlled substance and faces a maximum sentence of 40 years in prison with a mandatory minimum of five years in prison and a \$5 million fine for the fentanyl charge and a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison and a \$1 million fine for the conspiracy to distribute a controlled substance charge;

— Gao Yong, 29, of China, is charged with one count of conspiracy to distribute a controlled substance and faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison and a \$1 million fine.

According to court documents and statements referenced in court, Young conspired to acquire and distribute fentanyl and synthetic cannabinoids from China to the United States beginning in 2023. At the time, Young was an inmate at Macon State Prison in Oglethorpe, and Oliver was incarcerated at the Macon Transitional Center located on the prison campus.

The shipments of the synthetic cannabinoids arrived at an address occupied by Oliver on 4th Avenue in Cordele. Wang and Yong are alleged to have facilitated the sale and distribution of the synthetic controlled substances from China to customers around the world, including to Oliver and Young.

While in prison, Young placed multiple orders of fentanyl using encrypted chat applications he accessed using a contraband cellphone. Young directed Works to acquire the fentanyl and ship it to customer addresses, including addresses in the Middle District of Georgia, and both

Young and Works paid for the drugs with cryptocurrency.

After a package originating from China was intercepted by law enforcement, agents executed a search warrant at Oliver's residence and found more than 175 metal pans with sheets of paper; multiple jugs and bottles containing suspected cannabinoids; several measuring beakers; more than 350 dried sheets of paper soaked with cannabinoids; return address labels purporting to be from various attorneys; shipping labels addressed to inmates in jail and prison facilities around the country; cash; and ledgers indicating how many sheets had been processed. In addition, \$170,000 in cryptocurrency was seized and forfeited from Wang as part of the investigation.

FBI and the United States Postal Inspection Service investigated the case, with assistance from the GBI and Georgia Department of Corrections. Assistant U.S. Attorney Daniel Peach is prosecuting the case for the Government.



Special Photo: Alander Rocha/Georgia recorder

According to the most recent American Lung Association national State of the Air rankings and report card, Atlanta ranked 42nd-worst for high ozone days.

Georgia Power breaks ground on natural gas plant expansion despite air pollution concerns

By Alander Rocha

Georgia Recorder

EUHARLEE — A major natural gas expansion at Georgia Power's Plant Bowen will hurt air quality in the Atlanta region, which is already struggling with ozone pollution, according to environmental groups challenging a state air permit for the project.

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division in January issued a permit authorizing Georgia Power to build new turbines that will be powered by natural gas, a fossil fuel that is mostly methane, at the Bartow County power plant, which can currently produce about 3,500 megawatts of coal-fired power.

The utility backtracked on plans to retire the coal-fired units by 2028, saying it would need those units to help meet growing demand from data centers. The expansion, which is part of nearly 10,000 megawatts of new electric generating capacity approved by the Public Service Commission in December, largely to power data centers, will add about 1,500 megawatts of natural gas-fired capacity and 500 megawatts of battery energy storage.

During a groundbreaking event, state and federal officials called the expansion a step toward energy reliability and a stronger economy.

"We need this additional generation for Georgia. Georgia is growing. It's an exciting time to be in Georgia," Georgia Power President Kim Greene said. "Many of you may have seen just last week an announcement outside of Savannah, where a customer is coming and needs almost as much generation as is produced at this plant."

The project is being supported by a \$26.5 billion federal loan Southern Company received to prop up projects in Georgia and Alabama that will eventually add more than 16,000 megawatts of electric power capacity. The loan, which is the largest in the Department of Energy's history, also will allow Georgia Power to build nearly as much natural gas generation at Coweta County's Yates Power Plant as at Bowen, but James Danly, deputy secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy, said that the increased demand for energy is a sign of a growing economy, and that growth "is not a problem."

"That is in fact great news," Danly said. "The more demand you have,

that means the more driving your economy. Every time you need more electricity, it's because people are doing things that are valuable and worthwhile with that electricity."

The buildout faces legal pushback. The Southern Environmental Law Center, on behalf of Sierra Club, is challenging the Environmental Protection Division's approval of the air permit and claimed in a court filing that the greater Atlanta area is violating air quality standards again, just four years after it was cleared from federal monitoring to bring down ozone levels. The increase in ozone levels would have triggered its contingency plans for the seven counties in the Atlanta area that were subject to the regulations.

After a state administrative judge ruled in favor of Georgia Power, saying that despite pollution levels increasing again, the utility company followed the correct permitting process after the clearance from stricter regulation in 2022, SELC and Sierra Club appealed the decision to the Superior Court of Fulton County.

"[The Environmental Protection Division] has failed in its obligations to protect Atlantans, to protect Georgians, from bad air quality," Marissa Land, a lawyer with the SELC, said in a phone interview. "They are not applying the most stringent requirements to plant Bowen, even though the Atlanta area is currently experiencing unhealthy levels of ozone."

Sara Lips, a spokesperson for EPD, did not return multiple requests for comment.

According to the most recent American Lung Association State of the Air rankings and report card, Atlanta ranked 42nd-worst for high ozone days — or days with high levels of ozone near the ground — out of 226 metropolitan areas, with Fulton, DeKalb and Henry counties all receiving an F grade, and Gwinnett and Douglas counties receiving a D grade for high ozone days.

That type of pollution, said Sierra Club Georgia chapter director Adrien Webber, a plaintiff in the lawsuit, will only exacerbate current health issues, like asthma, that impact vulnerable populations like children and the elderly, and with the recent wildfires and growth of data center construction, people are paying more attention to how pollution affects their health.