



Sumter Capital Penny Sales Tax referendum will be on November ballot again

BY BRYN EDDY
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Sumter officials have started preparing for the Capital Penny Sales Tax, also called the Penny for Progress initiative, to be on the ballot in November.

If it gets a majority approval from voters, there will be an

added charge of 1% of the sales tax imposed that will fund capital projects, and it will be active for no more than seven years if voters approve it.

During the Jan. 23 Sumter County Council meeting, council unanimously approved the Capital Penny Sales Tax schedule that covers everything that

must be done to get it on the ballot in November.

According to the approved schedule, the item will appear on a county council agenda for a first reading on May 14 and there will be a second and third reading during the two council meetings that follow, and by the end of June, officials must pres-

ent to the election commission how they wish the question to appear on the November ballot.

The last time it appeared on a ballot was in 2022, and according to the county's website, it asked voters to mark whether they are in favor of or opposed

SEE PENNY, PAGE A4

Summerton to hold special election after mayor's death

Darion Canty serving as mayor
pro tempore until seat is filled

BY ASHLEY MILLER
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The Town of Summerton has named a mayor pro tempore and will hold a special election to fill the seat after the death of Tony Junious.

Town council member Darion Canty will serve as mayor pro tempore until the special election is held.

A special election in the town will be held Tuesday, April 2, for the mayor's seat.



CANTY

Filing for anyone wanting to file to run for mayor of the Town of Summerton opens at noon Friday, Feb. 2, and closes at noon Feb. 16. Candidates can file at Clarendon County Voter Registration Office.

The filing fee of \$100 should be made payable to Clarendon County. Candidates are required to file a Statement of Economic Interest and Campaign Disclosure online with the State Ethics Commission. Failure to file these documents can result in a candidate fine but will not disqualify a candidate from the election.

Anyone wanting to register to vote in this election must register no later than March 3. Voter registration by mail application will be accepted if postmarked by March 4.

The early voting period for the election begins March 18 and ends March 29. Clarendon County Voter Registration and Elections at 3 S. Church St. in Manning will be open for the early voting period from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

On April 2, Election Day, there will be three polling places open for voters.

SEE ELECTION, PAGE A4

Sumter students say YES! to the Magic School Bus



PHOTOS BY ADAM FLASH / THE SUMTER ITEM

Sumter Opera House hosted students and teachers from Wilder, Cherryvale, Willow Drive, Crosswell Drive, Pocalla Springs and Oakland Primary elementary schools for two showings of *The Magic School Bus* musical on Wednesday, Jan. 31, as part of the venue's YES! (Youth Education Scholarship) Program. The field trip brought more than 1,000 people to the theater. "Southern Songwriters" with Patrick Davison will come to the downtown theater on Feb. 8 and *Unity in the Community* with Chris Singleton on Feb. 12, as the Opera House continues to diversify its main stage lineup with artists and speakers of all backgrounds, catering to all age groups.



Traffic study for new Clarendon school shows work is needed

BY ASHLEY MILLER
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After residents raised concerns about the new Walker Gamble Elementary School, Freedom of Information Act requests reveal a traffic and environmental study was completed with road work needed for safety.

In November 2023 at a pre-

bid meeting, resident George Frierson said Clarendon County School District had not discussed a traffic or environmental study for the new school site.

At the pre-bid meeting, district Director of Facilities Donald Davis explained to Frierson there was a folder of documents which included plans for the site of WGE in

Turbeville. When Frierson asked if he could see those documents, Davis explained he would be happy to help once an official Freedom of Information Act request was submitted.

On Nov. 29, *The Sumter Item* submitted an FOIA request for the documents. More than a month later, CCSD provided *The Item* with documents per-

taining to a traffic study, environmental study, site plans dated Nov. 7, 2023, and the elementary school's faculty and staff list for the 2023-24 school year.

In early January, *The Sumter Item* reported South Carolina media lawyer Jay Bender said the district failed to comply with FOIA law after the request for the documents in

the folder. After the article was published, CCSD responded with the documents.

At the January meeting for Clarendon County Planning Commission, commissioners approved CCSD's request for zoning certification to permit the placement of the elementary school at 1207 Jakes Road

SEE STUDY, PAGE A4

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Linda Stewart Walton
Hattie Mae Josey
Carolyn Brown Frederick
Lawrence Thomas Nettles Sr.
John Demetrius Lawson Sr.
Mildred Streater English

WEATHER, A8

WARMER

Milder with plenty of sunshine today; partly cloudy tonight
HIGH 63, LOW 38

INSIDE

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SECOND FRONT

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Son of Emanuel Nine victim to share unity message locally

Chris Singleton to speak at Sumter Opera House Feb. 12

BY BRUCE MILLS
bruce@theitem.com

Love being stronger than hate is a theme in the life of a young man who lost his mother in the 2015 Mother Emanuel Church tragedy, and he will bring that message to Sumter soon.

Love, forgiveness, resilience and unity are all characteristics of Charleston native Chris Singleton's life, and he will share his story in a free event for area residents on Feb. 12 at Sumter Opera House, according to Shelley Kile, City of Sumter communications and tourism director.

Since the loss of his mother, who was killed in the mass shooting and hate crime at the historic Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, Singleton's career has included a stint as a minor-league baseball player, author and now a professional speaker.

His most popular book to date is "Different – A Story About Loving Your Neighbor," which is a best-selling children's book.

But Singleton has grown rapidly as a motivational speaker and now shares his message to unite people with his belief in choosing unity, faith and resilience over hate, Kile said.

According to his website, chrissingleton.com, he now speaks to more than 80 organizations across the world annually to include Boeing, Microsoft and Fortune 500 companies and also more than 100,000 students and educators.

Kile said City of Sumter officials heard Singleton speak at a statewide event last year, and she described him as a "dynamic speaker." Mayor David Merchant and city administrators worked to coordinate with Singleton on the upcoming speaking engagement.

"His mission in speaking is more about love being stronger than hate, and he applies that to numerous concepts," Kile said. "He really wants to inspire audiences talking



Chris Singleton sits beside a picture of his mother, who was killed in the 2015 Mother Emanuel Church tragedy in Charleston. Singleton has become a professional speaker and will share his message of love and forgiveness instead of hate on Feb. 12 in Sumter.

PHOTO PROVIDED

WANT TO GO?

WHAT: Unity in the Community with Chris Singleton
WHEN: Monday, Feb. 12, 2 and 6 p.m.
WHERE: Sumter Opera House, 21 N. Main St.
TICKETS: Free, but advance tickets required. Go to www.sumteroperahouse.com/special-events.

about how you as a person can be resilient by pursuing love rather than hate, which I think that makes it a very emotional story considering his backstory with what happened to his mother and that scenario."

Singleton will have two speaking appearances for the public on Feb. 12 at Sumter Opera House, 21 N. Main St. — one at 2 p.m. and another at 6 p.m.

Tickets are free, but getting advance tickets is re-

quired because both sessions are expected to be well attended. Tickets can be reserved from the opera house's special events page, www.sumteroperahouse.com/special-events.

The title of the special event is Unity in the Community with Chris Singleton.

After speaking, Singleton will have a meet-and-greet time with attendees in the lobby area, Kile added. Some of his books will also be for sale.

McLeod Health supports local news with Sumter Today sponsorship

STAFF REPORT

Sumter Today, the pioneer video news show from *The Sumter Item*, has a new cheerleader.

McLeod Health is now a presenting sponsor of Sumter Today, enabling *The Item* to produce and deliver all-positive news to the community for free.

"Sumter Today launched on Feb. 14 in 2018, and what a fitting time to welcome such a great community partner to the show," said Kayla Green, executive editor of *The Item*. "Sumter Today is an all-good news show and a great way for us to celebrate all there is to love about Sumter. Not just on Valentine's Day!"

Because McLeod Health, USC Sumter and Sumter Tourism sponsor Sumter Today, *The Item* is able to make the show free, which gives everyone access to local news.

Part of McLeod Health joining Sumter Today includes the show's expansion into Clarendon County.

"I'm excited to start telling stories in Clarendon County and showcase some of the great people, events and programs there," said Zac Hooks, video editor for *The Item*.

Watch Sumter Today at [Facebook.com/theitem](https://www.facebook.com/theitem) and YouTube @studiosumter.

Manning High School to have e-learning day due to bat activity in gym

BY ASHLEY MILLER
ashley@theitem.com

After bats were discovered in its school gym, Manning High School will have an e-learning day today to keep students safe.

MHS parents were notified Jan. 26 in a letter from South Carolina Department of Environmental Control about bat activity in the school's gymnasium.

DHEC is working with school officials to provide rabies information to parents and help find anyone who may have had direct contact with a bat.

Clarendon County School District reported the bats to a wildlife control operator and said the operator inspected the gym during the past

weekend.

School officials are working with the wildlife control operator to implement suggested repairs to stop the bats from coming into the gymnasium.

According to DHEC, not all bats have rabies, but if infected, they can transmit rabies to people through bites. People can also get rabies if saliva from an infected bat gets into open wounds or areas like the eyes, nose or mouth. Because bats have small teeth, their bites might go unnoticed, and therefore it is important to identify anyone who has had potential contact with a bat.

As of Jan. 31, there were no confirmed cases of exposure to rabies from the bats.

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Learn about free support services for persons facing any type of dementia

STAFF REPORT

The Alzheimer's Association South Carolina Chapter will hold a pop-up community meet and greet from 4 to 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 27, at the Sumter County Public Library, 111 N. Harvin St.

Residents of all ages are invited to drop by to enjoy refreshments while

learning about free support services for anyone facing any type of dementia. Association staff and volunteers will be on hand to chat about care and support programs, advocacy efforts, fundraising events and volunteer opportunities.

Registration is requested by calling (800) 272-3900 or visiting <https://bit.ly/AlzPopUp>.

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SUMTER TODAY

NOW STREAMING ON INSTAGRAM, YOUTUBE AND FACEBOOK

Morris College students and Sumter locals heard from multiple state and national Democratic figures Thursday, Jan. 25. Coming ahead of the Democratic primary on Feb. 3, speakers California Gov. Gavin Newsom, Congressman Dean Phillips and DNC Chairman Jaime Harrison encouraged Morris College students to get out and vote.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KjbRIMub-W4>

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Sumter County Museum welcomes Orangeburg native, author to annual Meet the Author series on Saturday

BY ALAYSHA MAPLE
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Sumter County Museum will once again open its doors for a South Carolinian author who wants to explore the significance of African Americans during a pivotal time in our country's, and county's, history.

Native to Orangeburg, Walter B. Curry Jr. will present a program on "South Carolina African American Confederate Pensioners," which will explore "the reasons why South Carolina used African American labor and their roles during the Civil War; South Carolina approval of Confederate pensions for African Americans; notable features of the pension application; and notable South Carolina African American pen-



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Walter B. Curry Jr. will be in conversation at the Sumter County Museum on Feb. 3.

sioners, including two from Sumter County," according to museum Executive Director Annie Rivers.

This topic stems from Cur-

ry's recent book, a 2019 International Book Award Winner by the African American Historical and Genealogical Society Inc., "The Thompson Family: Untold Stories from the Past (1830-1960)." The book focuses on the rich history of a prominent African American family from the Wagener and Salley communities in Aiken County. The stories of enslaved ancestors and notable relatives were scribed in the pages of this book, breathing life into the journeys of individuals who were enslaved, served in the Civil War, achieved entrepreneurial success during the Jim Crow era and much more.

Curry also authored "The Awakening: The Seawright-Ellison Family Saga, Vol 1, A Narrative History,"

comprised of stories about the lineage of his ancestry from slavery, the Civil War, the Reconstruction era and family life near Salley, South Carolina, and beyond.

As a South Carolina State University graduate with a bachelor's degree in political science and graduate degrees from Argosy University in Sarasota, Florida, he has also launched Renaissance Publications LLC, a self-publishing company that focuses on publishing and producing works in literary arts, specializing in historical scholarships through ancestry and local history. He is also an Author In Residence at the Aiken Center for the Arts, has received numerous accolades for his work and service and also serves as a member of the South Carolina Confeder-

ate Relic Room and Military Museum Commission, the South Carolina Arts Directory and the South Carolina Humanities Speakers Bureau.

As Sumter County Museum explores historical experiences through programs and exhibits to inform and shape the future of our community, having Curry speak about his research and knowledge of the topic fulfills such a mission.

The event will begin at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 3, inside the museum's McKenzie Hall, 122 N. Washington St. A reception will follow Curry's talk with refreshments and an opportunity to purchase books and meet the author.

For more information or to check out future programs, visit sumtercountymuseum.org.

Sumter sheriff presents award to adult education director



PHOTO PROVIDED

Sheriff Anthony Dennis presented Vanessa Canty with the Citizen of the Year award for her partnership and collaboration with the Sumter/Lee Detention Center. Canty is the director of Sumter Adult Education.

Sign up for community cleanup happening Feb. 17

STAFF REPORT

The City of Sumter will hold its next community cleanup on Saturday, Feb. 17, with everyone welcome to pitch in to beautify the city they live in.

According to the city's Facebook page, "Volunteers are a vital

part of our success. Make plans to join thousands of volunteers of all ages who will be taking part in the efforts to clean up and improve our local community this year. These events are held every two months and we are asking for the community's help and support."

The scheduled cleanup days for this year are on Saturdays: Feb. 17, April 20, June 15, Aug. 17, Oct. 19 and Dec. 14.

The city will provide supplies for volunteers and pick up the bags after the events.

Fill out a volunteer form at <https://tinyurl.com/fmxxkavkp>.

National nonprofit awards grant to Sumter's Windy Ridge Rescue

SUBMITTED

Windy Ridge Rescue received a \$25,000 grant from national nonprofit Petco Love in support of its lifesaving work for animals in Sumter.

Petco Love is a national nonprofit leading change for pets by harnessing the power of love to make communities and pet families closer, stronger and healthier. Since its founding in 1999, Petco Love has invested \$375 million in adoption and other lifesaving efforts. And Petco Love helps find loving homes for pets in partnership with Petco and more than 4,000 organizations — like Windy Ridge — across North America, with 6.75 million pets adopted and counting.

"Our investment in Windy Ridge Rescue is part of more than \$15M in investments recently announced by Petco Love to power local organizations across the country as part of our commitment to create a future in which no pet is unnecessarily euthanized," said Susanne Kogut, president of Petco Love. "Our local investments are only part of our strategy to empower animal lovers to drive lifesaving change right alongside us. We launched Petco Love Lost, a national lost-and-found database that uses patented image-recognition technology to simplify the search for lost pets."

Windy Ridge Rescue is a nonprofit organization that is alone in Sumter County trying to tackle the overpopulation of community cats through the Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate and Release (TNR) program. Many community colonies have young kittens who can be domesticated easily and are made available for adoption. Since 2017, Windy Ridge Rescue has found homes for almost 2,000 friendly cats, many placed in stable and protected outdoor living areas like barns and warehouses, and TNR'd almost 3,000 community cats.

"We absolutely could not accomplish as much as we have without this lifesaving investment and partnership with Petco Love," said Dana Fazekas, executive director of Windy Ridge Rescue. "We work

tirelessly in Sumter County doing TNR and trying to better control the population of community cats. This partnership with Petco Love is crucial, as we could only accomplish a fraction of the spay and neuter surgeries we do each year if we relied solely on donations from volunteers and individual residents of the community."

For more information about Windy Ridge Rescue, visit windyridgerescue.org. Learn more about Petco Love at petcolove.org.

ABOUT WINDY RIDGE RESCUE

Windy Ridge is a group of people dedicated to saving animals in our community from being euthanized in shelters, living as strays or ending up in abusive situations. Since 2016, the unpaid volunteers of Windy Ridge Rescue have found loving families for hundreds of previously unwanted cats, kittens, dogs and puppies. Their focus in Sumter has been redirected to primarily Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate and Release (TNR) of community cats while trying to find homes for the kittens who can be domesticated or those community cats who are friendly and found themselves part of a community colony. The group does still help dogs in the community by providing donated dog food and supplies to pet owners in need and sponsoring medical care when donations are available.

According to Fazekas, "At last count for 2023, we TNR'd 792 feral community cats and found homes for 396 friendly cats and sent 60 friendly kittens to a like-minded rescue in the Northeast (we made four trips to transport them). We also paid for eight euculeation/entropiron surgeries, eight hernia repairs, three dental/teeth extractions and two amputations, among other things like respiratory infections that need medication daily, FIP treatments (84 daily injections) and watching ferals have kittens in the trap and then not being able to have surgery for weeks. It's exhausting, and we couldn't do it without this grant and without the volunteers and the help of the community."

PENNY FROM PAGE A1

to "imposing the tax and issuing General Obligation Bonds."

It was voted down that year by a small margin, according to earlier reporting from *The Item*. The penny sales tax was active for 14 years before 50.84%, or 13,909 people, voted against the third Capital Penny Sales Tax.

The first referendum funded 16 projects and ushered in a \$75 million boost to the county's economy, and the second funded 28 projects and cost \$75.6 million. The projects fell under four categories: public safety, infrastructure and facilities, transportation and quality of life.

The third penny that was voted down in 2022 was projected to rake in \$117 million during seven years to fund 34 projects at a total of \$107,266,500 in projected revenue; the remaining \$10 million was to be used as a "cushion."

If it had been approved, the penny would have paid for projects involving public safety, roads, park improvements, blight removal and more.

Because it was voted down in 2022, the penny stopped showing up on Sumterites' receipts in April 2023.

Officials have not said if the question will be worded differently on November's ballot, and they have also not disclosed if the projects that the 2022 penny were supposed to fund, had voters not denied it, will be the same projects that the penny is projected to cover if voters approve it this year.

More information on the projects that were supposed to be covered by the third penny tax before it was denied is available on the county's website.

Deal on wartime aid and border security stalls in Congress as time runs short to bolster Ukraine

BY STEPHEN GROVES, LISA MASCARO and MARY CLARE JALONICK
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — With time slipping to bolster Ukraine's defenses, Senate negotiators struggled Wednesday to finalize a bipartisan deal that would pair policy changes at the U.S. southern border with wartime aid for Kyiv as their carefully negotiated compromise ran into strong resistance from House Republicans and Donald Trump.

Senate negotiators have kept a close hold on the details of a bipartisan package on border enforcement and immigration policies that was supposed to unlock Republican support in Congress for aiding Ukraine. But conservatives view the tens of billions of dollars in proposed support with growing skepticism, unmoved by arguments about the larger stakes for global security. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg was making the case for the aid on Capitol Hill on Wednesday, including at the Heritage Foundation, a power center for Trump's allies in Washington.

President Joe Biden, who is pushing for a deal alongside Republican and Democratic leaders in the Senate, faces a daunting task in convincing Republicans to defy Trump's wishes and embrace the deal — especially in the midst of an election year.

Republican leaders, including House Speaker Mike Johnson, had looked to February as a potential deadline to approve another tranche of military aid for Ukraine. But the \$110 billion national security package that congressional leaders say is essential to buttressing

American allies around the globe, including Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan, has been swept up in the fight about border policies.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian troops are running short of weapons, including air defenses and artillery to defend against Russia's ongoing attack. The Pentagon reported last week it is out of money for Ukraine.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer warned in a morning floor speech that "the survival of Ukraine is on the line."

"The only way we'll rise to the occasion is if both sides are serious about finding a bipartisan compromise," he said, adding, "We have not concluded negotiations, so we will keep going to get this done."

Even if the Senate is able to finish the deal and pass it, resistance is strong in the House, where Trump, the likely Republican presidential nominee, holds significant sway over lawmakers. His opposition has left Republican leaders increasingly questioning whether the border legislation should be jettisoned from the package in a last-ditch effort to get the Ukraine funding through Congress.

"It's time for us to move something, hopefully including a border agreement, but we need to get help to Israel and to Ukraine quickly," said Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell.

Johnson discussed the idea of splitting up parts of the national security package in a Tuesday meeting with the speakers of the parliaments of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania but did not commit to any course of action, according to a person familiar with the meeting who spoke anonymously about the private discussion.

The speaker has long been skeptical of sending economic assistance to Kyiv, though he has also said he wants to halt Russian President Vladimir Putin's advance in Europe. But a large portion of Johnson's conference in the House is more firmly against the aid.

Stoltenberg, the longest-serving chief in NATO's history, pleaded Wednesday for lawmakers to act. In a speech Wednesday at the Trump-aligned Heritage Foundation, he warned that Putin's ambitions don't just end with Ukraine. He said the Russian president is intent on "reestablishing Russia's sphere of influence and shaping an alternative world order."

As Russian forces and drone attacks pummel the region, the Ukrainians will face increasing difficulty defending their cities and populations from incoming assaults.

Yet Republicans also want to cut portions of the package that would not go directly to Ukraine's defenses. Of the \$61 billion in the package for Ukraine, a portion, about \$16 billion, would go toward economic, security and operational assistance.

The U.S. economic aid has been keeping the Ukrainian government functioning, paying for public works and employees and the services they provide, but Republicans prefer the U.S. focus its spending on military hardware to win the war.

The economic assistance for Ukraine is expected to be trimmed back in the final supplemental package, according to a person familiar with the situation and granted anonymity to discuss it. The person said changes in the amount of humanitarian aid for Gaza, which was stripped from the package by House Republicans, are also being discussed.

ELECTION FROM PAGE A1

Voters can check their voter registration information and find where they can vote at scvotes.org. The polling location is also listed on a voter's registration card.

For Summerton 1, the polling place will be Summerton Fire Station at 6 N. Canty St. Summerton 2's polling place will be at Summerton Cultural Arts Center on 12 S. Church St., and Summerton 3's polling place will be Clarendon 1 Resource Center Gym at 1154 41st St.

STUDY FROM PAGE A1

in Turbeville.

Four folders were given to *The Item* after the FOIA documents were submitted, labeled "WGE 23-24," "SCDOT School Operation Site Traffic Report," "WGE Plan" and "Environmental."

SCDOT SCHOOL OPERATION SITE TRAFFIC REPORT

According to the traffic report for constructing a new school to replace the existing Walker Gamble Elementary School, student enrollment is projected to be 575 students initially, with up to 650 students maximum.

South Carolina Department of Transportation determined two access locations on Jakes Road, one for car riders and staff/visitor parking and the other for bus/delivery and staff parking only. SCDOT recommended an exit-only access from the car rider loop to be on Seloc Road.

To ensure safe and efficient traffic flow for both the school and through traffic, roadway improvements were deemed necessary. These improvements include turn provisions at the school driveways and the intersection of Seloc and Jakes roads. The school district is responsible for covering the associated costs, and the work should be completed before the school's opening. School district officials were advised to anticipate and budget for the improvements, as well as any costs related to purchasing additional rights of way and utilities.

SCDOT also indicated the



The new Walker Gamble Elementary School is expected to be completed in 2025.

design professionals hired by the district will coordinate with SCDOT's School Operations Office during development of the roadway and school site plans. Those plans will be reviewed and concurred with by S.C. Department of Education's Office of School Facilities.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY FINDS NO ISSUES WITH SCHOOL LAND

An environmental study was completed Feb. 20, 2023, to identify environmental conditions in connection with the school property. The study was valid for 180 days after March 28, 2023.

According to the study, the property has been agricultural and wooded land since 1920. Historical resources indicate multiple structures were present on the property from 1920 to 1983.

A site reconnaissance was conducted by S&ME's Will

Trotter on April 11, 2023, to evaluate the property for drainage patterns, vegetation patterns, stains, discoloration, surrounding land use and other visual aspects. No environmental findings were observed.

The assessment revealed no evidence of hazardous material, controlled recognized environmental conditions or historical recognized environmental conditions in connection with the property.

While the documents were

provided to *The Item* regarding the environmental study, the cost of the study was reduced.

SCHOOL PLANS PROVIDED

The documents provided through FOIA are older documents. Newer documentation was provided during the January Clarendon County Planning Commission meeting.

The parcel will be approximately 32 acres and will be served by public water and sewer from the Town of Tur-

beville. During inspection, the area was found to be moderately populated, primarily residential single-family housing and stick-built homes. The immediate area consists of a residential single-family, manufactured home subdivision.

After reviewing the proposed project, staff found the setbacks for the proposed school are 40 inches from the front property line. The side property setbacks are 10 inches, the rear property line setback is 25 inches, and these setbacks are acceptable.

The school proposed an impervious surface ratio, a measure of the intensity of land use, of 0.202, which was found acceptable.

The site plan proposed 135 parking spaces, six of which are handicapped parking, which was found to be sufficient.

Construction of the new school is set to begin this month with an estimated completion date of June 2025.

"This date will give the current school and district time to move things over to the new location during the summer before the new 2025-26 school year," Thompson Turner Construction Project Manager Bradley Holeman said.

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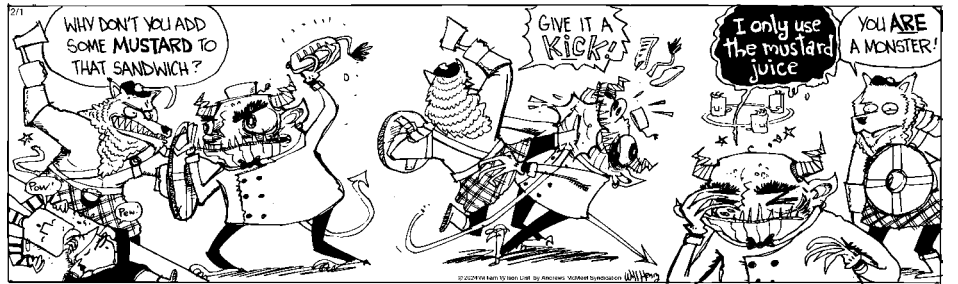
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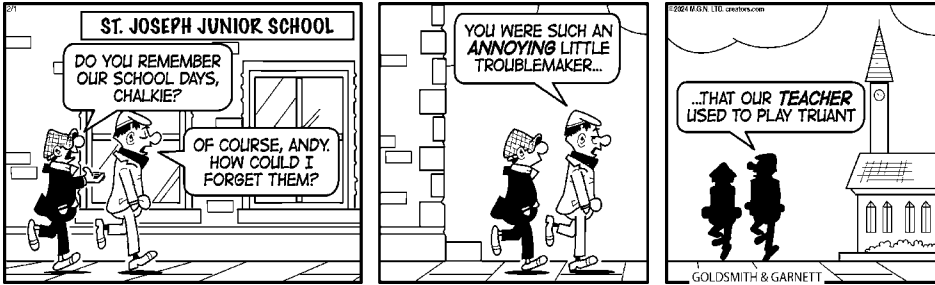
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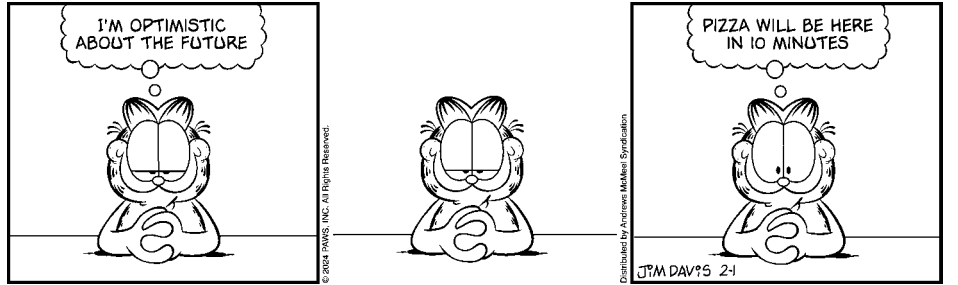
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ANDY CAPP



GARFIELD



BETLE BAILEY



BORN LOSER



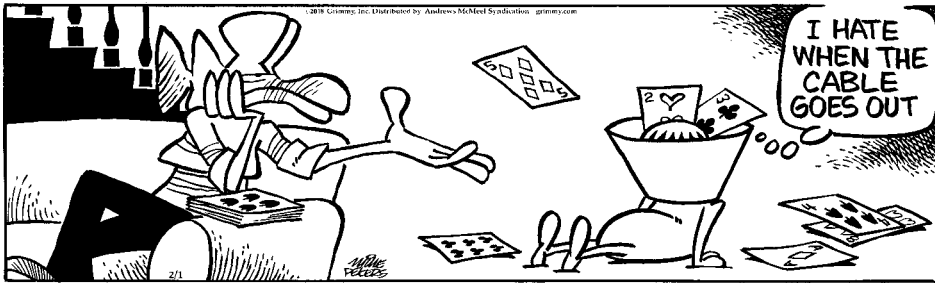
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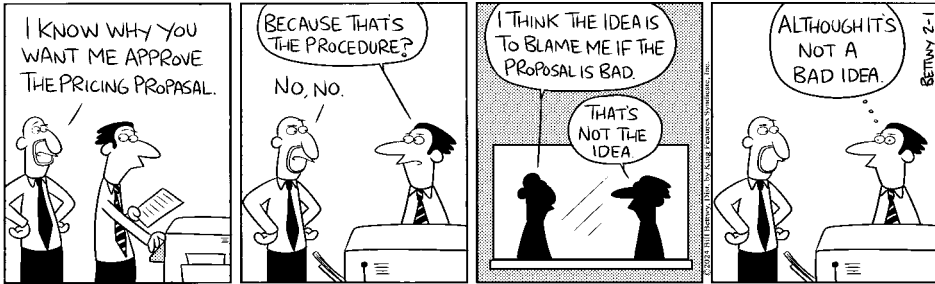
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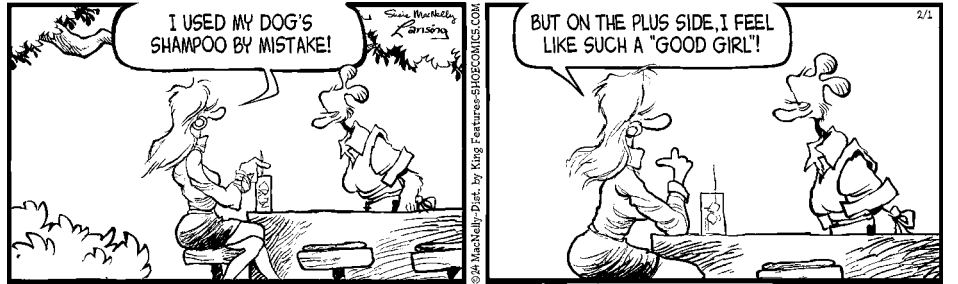
HERB AND JAMAAL



TAKE IT FROM THE TINKERSONS



JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE



Friend consistently flakes out on social engagements



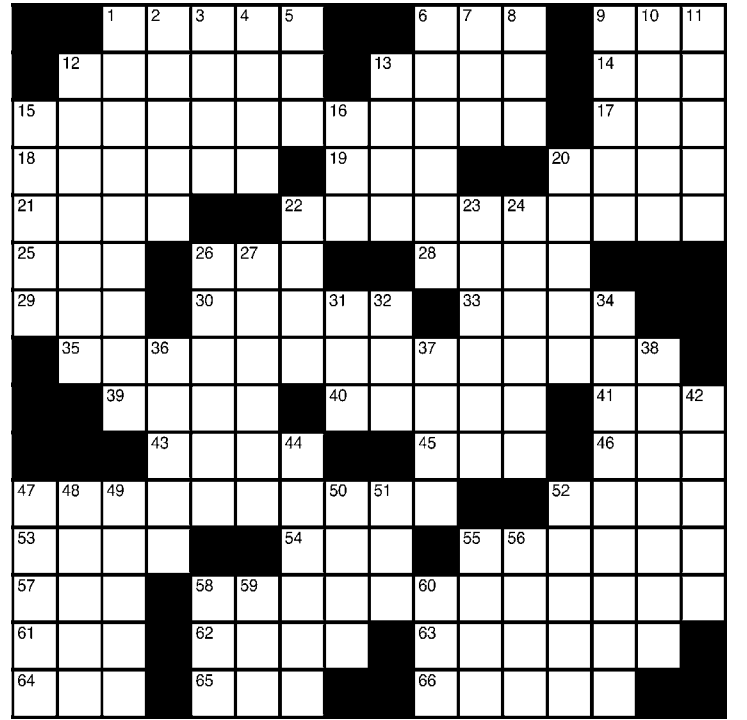
Dear Abby ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY — I'm a widow. I have a friend I'll call "Greta," whom I have known since high school. I was very shy back then. She was more outgoing, but our group of friends was small. Over the years, I have become more outgoing, while Greta seems to be withdrawing socially. She often tells me she will go to an event only if I go with her, but when I commit to it and pay for my part, she usually backs out. The problem is, Greta picks events I would otherwise not choose to attend or that none of my

other friends are attending, so I must go alone or lose the money. I'm about to retire, so I'll have less income. I am also working on widening my circle of friends so I can remain active. Greta wants to be invited and gets upset if I don't ask her to join me. However, she sees no problem with her constant no-shows. This is putting a strain on our relationship and on my newly formed friendships. I feel guilty for moving on socially, but I'm afraid I'll end up isolated if I try to meet her demands. What can I do to meet my own needs and still maintain her friendship? Navigating friendship DEAR NAVIGATING — You may not be able to do both. Have

you pointed out to Greta that what she has been doing is unfair, not to mention expensive? If you haven't, do it now. If you have told her and have been ignored, remind her. When you do, express plainly that what she has been doing is rude, and if it happens again, you will no longer buy tickets for her events. Then step back and see her less often, and only one-on-one if you see her at all. Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069. To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby -- Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

THE DAILY CROSSWORD PUZZLE



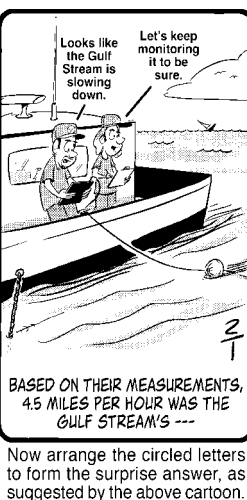
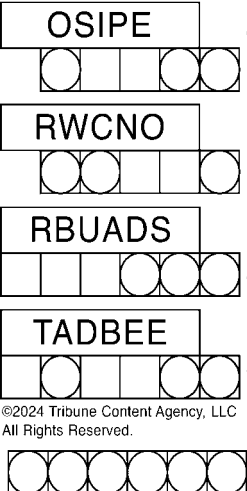
Emet Ozar 2/1/24

- CROSSWORD ANSWERS: ACROSS 1 Yogurt-based drink, 6 Choose, 9 "The Equalizer" network, 12 Pins included in many Ikea furniture kits, 13 Oberlin College's state, 14 Horde member in Tolkien, 15 *Device sold with some sheets of hard candy, 17 "The Marvels" director DaCosta, 18 Zaftig, 19 Genetic strand, 20 Happily after, 21 Pastoral poem, 22 *Took from the top, 25 Label, 26 "Nova" subj., 28 Suffers, 29 Tokyo, long ago, 30 Diner patron, 33 Yuletide, 35 Some partners, and what can be found in the answers to the starred clues?, 39 Stew meat, 40 Style, 41 Amber, for one, 43 Brand of kitchen bags, 45 Dudes, 46 "It's -brainer!", 47 *The Irishman" role for Al Pacino, 52 "Not only that ...", 53 Neck of the woods, 54 Salad dressing base, 55 Crazy about 57 Pop, 58 *Teenage vampire slayer of film and TV, 61 Fig. affected by weather, 62 Lago contents, 63 Removes, as a knot, 64 Marina __ Rey, California, 65 Signs of pleasure reducers, 66 Visibility reducers, 11 Beginner's knitting project, perhaps, 12 Tchotchkes, 13 Universal opening?, 15 Hackneyed mad, 16 Genesis boat, 20 Unsuccessful Ford, 22 Locale, 23 Microscopic, 24 Gets together quietly, 26 Proper, 27 World Heritage Site in Algiers, 31 Business card no., 32 Kelly Clarkson's first record label, 34 Cost of a suit?, 36 Molten rock, 37 Federal org. that inspects workplaces, 38 Features of many alarms, 42 Heath-covered wastelands, 44 Foolish one, 47 Over it all, 48 Hopping mad, 49 Purple Heart, e.g., 50 Sports org. based in Zurich, 51 Pop __, 52 Let in or let on, 55 Public transit system in San Francisco, familiarly, 56 Tsp. and tbsps., 58 Pasture sound, 59 "Blah", 60 Dim __: cuisine often served in steamer baskets, DOWN 1 Ambitious aspiration, 2 Nasty, 3 Observed, 4 Winter coaster, 5 "More or less" "Wowza", 6 Thanksgiving dessert, 8 The Blue Jays, on sports crawls, 9 Chat sesh, 10 Terse

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME By David L Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



LOOKS LIKE THE GULF STREAM IS SLOWING DOWN. Let's keep monitoring it to be sure. BASED ON THEIR MEASUREMENTS, 4.5 MILES PER HOUR WAS THE GULF STREAM'S ...

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon. (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: POUND TIGHT LONELY TOMORROW Answer: To learn about the Mariana Trench, you can go online to -- GET THE LOWDOWN

SUDOKU

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

PREVIOUS SOLUTION grid with numbers 1-9.

Sudoku grid with difficulty rating and numbers 1-9.

AP Decision Notes: What to expect in S.C.'s Democratic presidential primary

BY ROBERT YOON
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — For the first time ever, the race for the Democratic presidential nomination officially kicks off this Saturday in South Carolina, the state that resurrected then-candidate Joe Biden's foundering presidential campaign in 2020 and put him on a footing to win his party's nod and, eventually, the White House.

Unlike four years ago, President Biden now looks to South Carolina voters to cement his campaign as the overwhelming favorite, as opposed to rescuing it from near-oblivion.

At Biden's urging, the Democratic National Committee rearranged the 2024 primary calendar and slotted South Carolina as the first contest of the campaign season, citing in part the state's far more racially diverse electorate than the traditional first-in-the-nation states of Iowa and New Hampshire, which are overwhelmingly white. New Hampshire held a leadoff primary anyway in defiance of the DNC, but without the president's or the national party's backing and no delegates at stake, the contest amounted to little more than a non-binding beauty contest. Biden won New Hampshire by a sizable margin nonetheless after supporters mounted a write-in campaign on his behalf.

Challenging Biden on the South Carolina ballot are U.S. Rep. Dean Phillips of Minnesota and author Marianne Williamson. Phillips received about 20% of the vote in New Hampshire, while Williamson received about 4%. Williamson was part of the crowded 2020 field that included Biden, but she dropped out before the first contests.

The South Carolina primary will be the first opportunity this year for Democratic candidates to begin accumulating the nearly 2,000 delegates needed to clinch the party's nomination.

Here's a look at what to expect on Saturday:

PRIMARY NIGHT

The South Carolina Democratic presidential primary will be held on Saturday. Polls close statewide at 7 p.m.

WHAT'S ON THE BALLOT

The Associated Press will provide coverage for the Democratic presidential primary. It is the only contest that night. The ballot will list three candidates: Biden, Phillips and Williamson.

WHO GETS TO VOTE

South Carolina has an open primary system, which means any registered voter may participate in any party's primary. Voters may only participate in one party's presidential primary, so those who vote on Saturday may not vote in the Republican contest on Feb. 24.

DELEGATE ALLOCATION RULES

Proportional by statewide and congressional district votes with a 15% threshold. South Carolina's 55 pledged Democratic delegates are allocated according to the national party's standard rules.

Twelve at-large delegates are allocated in proportion to the statewide vote, as are seven PLEO delegates, or "party leaders and elected officials." The state's seven congressional districts have a combined 36 delegates at stake, which are allocated in proportion to the vote results in each district. Candidates must receive at least 15% of the statewide vote to qualify for any statewide delegates and 15% of the vote in a congressional district to qualify for delegates in that district.

DECISION NOTES

Biden's decisive victory in the 2020 South Carolina primary offers some useful benchmarks in determining the winner on Saturday night as votes are being counted.

In 2020, then-candidate Biden carried all 46 counties in the state. His strongest geographic regions were in the Pee Dee and Waccamaw River valley areas in the state's eastern region and in central South Carolina, including the state capital of Columbia. He received about 54% of the vote in both areas. He was also the top choice among Democratic primary voters in the state's Democratic and Republican strongholds, as well as in the more moderate areas in between.

But the key to Biden's 2020 win in South Carolina was his strength among the state's Black voters. AP's VoteCast survey of 2020 South Carolina primary voters found that 64% of Black voters supported Biden, compared with 33% of white voters. Black voters made up about half of the Democratic primary electorate that year, according to VoteCast.

If Biden matches or outpaces his performance in counties with large Black populations in initial results throughout the state, it is a strong indicator of another decisive win in the Palmetto State.

One notable difference is that Biden faced a much more competitive field in 2020, which included Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and former South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, who were the top two vote-getters in both the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary that year. Biden received 49% of the vote against six other active candidates, as well as five

former candidates who were still listed on the ballot. He more than doubled the 20% that second-place finisher Sanders received.

This year, Biden faces fewer and less competitive challengers and enters South Carolina as the overwhelming front-runner, coming off a 44-point victory over his nearest competitor in the New Hampshire primary on Jan. 23.

The AP does not make projections and will declare a winner only when it's determined there is no scenario that would allow the trailing candidates to close the gap. If a race has not been called, the AP will continue to cover any newsworthy developments, such as concessions or declarations of victory. In doing so, the AP will make clear that it has not yet declared a winner and explain why.

WHAT DO TURNOUT AND ADVANCE VOTE LOOK LIKE?

There are about 3.3 million registered voters in South Carolina. Voters do not register by party. Turnout in the 2020 Democratic primary was about 16% of registered voters. It was about 13% in the 2016 primary.

Saturday's event will be the first presidential primary held in the state since a new early voting law was enacted in May 2022. The law allows voters to cast ballots in person up to about two weeks before Election Day without an excuse. In the 2016 Democratic primary, when voters had to provide an excuse to cast an absentee ballot, about 14% of votes were cast before Election Day. In the 2022 midterm primaries, after the new law went into effect, pre-Election Day voting was at about 21%.

As of Monday, nearly 24,000 voters had already cast their ballots.

HOW LONG DOES VOTE-COUNTING USUALLY TAKE?

In the 2020 South Carolina Democratic primary, the AP first reported results at 7:09 p.m.

Primary night tabulation ended at 12:17 a.m. with 98% of votes counted.

ARE WE THERE YET?

As of Saturday, there will be 198 days until the start of the Democratic National Convention in Chicago and 276 days until the November general election.

Federal Reserve signals interest rate cuts aren't imminent, leaves them unchanged for now

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Federal Reserve indicated Wednesday that it's nearing a long-awaited shift toward cutting interest rates, a sign that officials are confident that they're close to fully taming inflation.

The Fed kept its key rate unchanged at about 5.4%, a 22-year high. But in a statement, it signaled a shift by dropping previous wording that had said it was still considering further hikes.

Still, the central bank cautioned that it "does not expect it will be appropriate" to cut rates "until it has gained greater confidence that inflation is moving sustainably" to its 2% target. That suggests that a rate reduction is unlikely at its next meeting in March.

The overall changes to the statement — compared with its last meeting in December — indicate that the Fed has definitively shifted toward considering rate reductions while still maintaining flexibility. In December, the officials had signaled that they expected to carry out three quarter-point rate cuts this year. Yet they have said little about when those cuts might begin, though senior officials have emphasized that the Fed would proceed cautiously.

The change in the Fed's stance Wednesday comes as the economy is showing

surprising durability after a series of 11 rate hikes helped drastically slow inflation, which hit a four-decade high 18 months ago. During the past six months, prices have risen at an annual rate of just below 2%, consistent with the Fed's target level, according to its preferred inflation gauge. And growth remains healthy. In the final three months of last year, the economy expanded at a 3.3% annual rate, the government said last week.

The Fed is assessing inflation and the economy at a time when the intensifying presidential campaign is pivoting in no small part on voters' perceptions of President Joe Biden's economic stewardship. Republicans in Congress have attacked Biden about the high inflation that gripped the nation beginning in 2021 as the economy emerged from recession. But the latest economic data — ranging from steady consumer spending to solid job growth to the slowdown in inflation — has been bolstering consumer confidence.

Most economists have said they expect the Fed to start cutting its benchmark rate in May or June. Rate cuts would eventually lead to lower borrowing costs for America's consumers and businesses, including for mortgages, auto loans and credit cards.

PUBLIC NOTICE OF (SPECIAL) ELECTION

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA TOWN OF SUMMERTON

A special election in the Town of Summerton will be held on Tuesday, April 2, 2024. Any person wishing to register to vote in this election must do so no later than Sunday, March 3, 2024. Voter registration by mail applications will be accepted if postmarked by Monday, March 4, 2024.

The early voting period for this election begins on Monday, March 18, 2024 and ends on Friday, March 29, 2024. The following early voting centers will be open during the early voting period from 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday (closed weekends).

Clarendon County Voter Registration & Elections Office - 3 South Church St. Manning, SC 29102

The following offices shall be included in this election:

Mayor

Candidate Filing Period:

Filing Opens: 12:00 p.m. Noon on Friday, February 2, 2024.
Filing Closes: 12:00 p.m. Noon on Friday February 16, 2024.

Filing Hours:

Weekdays: (8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)

Locations:

Clarendon County Voter Registration Office - 3 South Church St. Manning, SC (803)435-8215

Filing Fee: The filing fee for Mayor is \$100.00.

Filing fee checks should be made payable to (Clarendon County).

State Ethics Filings: Candidates are required to file a Statement of Economic Interests and a Campaign Disclosure online with the State Ethics Commission at <http://ethics.sc.gov>. Failure to file these documents may result in a candidate fine but will not disqualify a candidate from the election. Contact the State Ethics Commission for more information.

At 9:00 a.m. on April 2, 2024, the day of the election, the County Board of Voter Registration and Elections will begin its examination of the absentee ballot return envelopes at Clarendon County Voter Registration & Elections 3 South Church Street Manning, SC 29102.

On Thursday, April 4, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. the County Board of Voter Registration & Elections will hold a hearing to determine the validity of all provisional ballots cast in the special election. These hearings will be held at Clarendon County Voter Registration & Elections Office, 3 South Church Street Manning, SC 29102

The following precincts and polling places will be open during this election from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.:

Precincts	Polling Place
Summerton 1	Summerton Fire Station - 6 N Canty St. Summerton SC 29148
Summerton 2	Summerton Cultural Arts Ctr - 12 South Church St Summerton SC 29148
Summerton 3	Clarendon 1 Resource Center Gym - 1154 41 st Street Summerton SC 29148

We're Celebrating Valentine's Day All Week

February 12-17 after 5pm
Special Valentine Menu Available

Dinner includes:
A starter, appetizer, two entrees, two sides,
and two desserts for \$79
*Reservations are not required but are encouraged.

Full Bar & Menu
Live Music

THE RESTAURANT
at Second Mill

SUNDAY BUFFET 11am - 4pm
Breakfast 7 days a week 6:00am-11am Menu Only
Open: Mon.-Thurs. 6am-9pm,
Fri.- Sat. 6am-10pm, Sun. 6am-4pm
2390 Broad St. (Inside Quality Inn)
803-774-0270

N.G. Osteen 1843-1936
THE WATCHMAN AND SOUTHRON

H.G. Osteen 1870-1955
FOUNDER, THE ITEM

H.D. Osteen 1904-1987
THE ITEM

Margaret W. Osteen 1908-1996
THE ITEM

Hubert D. Osteen Jr. 1936-2020
THE SUMTER ITEM



OPINION

36 W. LIBERTY ST., SUMTER, SOUTH CAROLINA 29150 • Founded October 15, 1894

Jacqueline B. Osteen CO-OWNER

Graham Osteen CO-OWNER

Kyle Osteen CO-OWNER

Jack Osteen CO-OWNER

Vince Johnson PUBLISHER

COMMENTARY

Haley is last candle fending off darkness. And she's fired up.

KIAWAH ISLAND — Until Feb. 24, the geography of 2024's presidential politics will suggest a satisfying symmetry. The first state that voted for secession can put the nation on a path away from today's political vitriol — the worst since the 1850s. A South Carolinian who lives here, 27 miles from the Charleston harbor fort at which the Civil War's first shots were fired, is neither in a surrendering mood nor short of ammunition.

South Carolinian truculence threatened the nation's unity 163 years ago. Today, that trait has the state's former governor Nikki Haley, a self-described "street fighter in heels," spoiling for a fight. Almost the entire Republican elite, in Washington and in this state, is prostrate before Donald Trump, the supposed populist scourge of the "establishment." She is, however, approved by 76 percent of this state's voters. They remember that Haley earned the enmity of the state's political establishment by enforcing transparency: Before she did, only 8 percent of

House and 1 percent of Senate decisions were by recorded votes.

This state's voters also might reasonably resent Trump's apparent belief that



George Will

her continuing candidacy is an affront to his grandeur. And his impertinence that their primary election is a nullity, given his inevitability. Calling herself a "happy warrior," looking inexplicably rested and exuding an exuberant pugnacity, she is wagering that Trump cannot keep his composure for four weeks. And that a majority of voters, already embarrassed and exhausted by Trump, will be more so if he has a testosterone spill when she relentlessly needles him about being afraid to debate someone with two X chromosomes.

President Biden's handlers cannot allow him out campaigning for nine months because they know what voters

will see. Trump's operatives cannot know what he does not know: what he will say next. One of Haley's tasks is to trigger him.

In South Carolina, independents can vote in either party's primary. Many of them — especially independent suburban women, who are apt to be decisive in November — are weary of behavior from Trump that they would not tolerate from their children.

A British diplomat, one of Theodore Roosevelt's close friends, when asked to explain TR, said: You must understand that the president is about 6 years old. The ambassador was referring to TR's overflowing enthusiasm, energy and curiosity. Trump only has a 6-year-old's defects: lack of impulse control and a penchant for infantile insults — e.g., referring to Haley as "birdbrain."

Laughing at him might not be Haley's preferred mode of attack. Voters, however, are in no mood for policy speeches, such as the one she gave at the Hudson Institute in 2020 — a luminous defense of economic freedom against the statism, corporatism and

protectionism that make Biden and Trump kindred spirits. For perhaps the first time in U.S. history, and certainly for the first time in modern polling, voters' concerns about immigration — Biden's chaos at the border — eclipse all other issues, including the economy.

This fact. And Trump's weirdness. (Between his inauguration and his expulsion from the platform, he tweeted 26,237 times — about 18 times a day). And his increasingly erratic behavior under the pressure of his legal difficulties. And Haley revealing his manifold insecurities. All these facts require her to run a MANA campaign: Make America Normal Again.

Trump's electoral weakness is as obvious as is the probability of a Haley landslide against Biden. Trump was weaker in the Iowa caucuses (51 percent) than in the 2020 election in Iowa (53 percent). He won just 30 percent of independents in New Hampshire, where 21 percent of voters in the Republican primary said they would not support Trump in November. In 21 coming Republican pri-

maries, including 11 of the 15 on Super Tuesday (March 5), voters do not have to be registered Republicans.

South Carolinians, remember this: In 2020, Trump lost the suburbs by 10 percent. And 6 percent more women than men voted. *And Biden carried women by a larger margin than Trump carried men.* Why would anyone consider Trump a stronger candidate than Haley against Biden?

This is a cliché: It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness. This is a fact: Haley is the last candle fending off darkness.

Many South Carolinians are eager to snuff out Republican competition by supporting Trump. Do they wonder why Biden, too, ardently wants Trump's nomination guaranteed immediately? If, however, South Carolina prolongs the nominating process by supporting Haley, there will be time for pleasant Republican surprises and sudden Democratic forebodings.

Reach George Will at george-will@washpost.com.

COMMENTARY

Removing Sumter sheriff's review of business license applicants would make people more vulnerable

BY NEIL NEADERHISER

Should Sumter County's most vulnerable citizens be protected from potentially unscrupulous business owners? If County Councilman Carlton Washington's proposed rule change is approved, that could be the case. At the Jan. 23, 2024, Sumter County Council meeting, he announced his desire to amend the Sumter County Business License Ordinance to eliminate a background screening of recent felons who apply for a business license. This is a bad idea.

The current Sumter County ordinance provides that business license applicants convicted of certain crimes within the past 10 years be screened by the Sumter County sheriff. The sheriff then makes a recommendation of whether the application should be approved or denied. This is a small, but important tool for the sheriff's mission to "protect and defend" the citizens of Sumter County.

Should someone convicted of animal cruelty qualify to operate a dog grooming salon or animal kennel?

Should someone convicted of elder abuse qualify for an adult daycare center?

Should someone convicted of counterfeiting checks qualify for a check-cashing business?

Should someone convicted of forging signatures qualify for a tax preparation business?

Should someone convicted of pedophilia qualify for a photography studio?

According to a Department of Justice Bulletin titled Criminal Victimization 2021, the national rate of violent victimization for persons living in households earning less than \$25,000 annually (the poorest demographic delineation in the study) was higher than the rate for all other household income groups at 29.6 per 1,000. Those individuals also experienced the highest rate of violent crime excluding simple as-

sault at 11.7 per 1,000. While not all felony convictions are for violent crimes, the analysis is clear that our poorest fellow citizens are also those most vulnerable to crime. Removing the sheriff's review would increase their vulnerability in Sumter County.

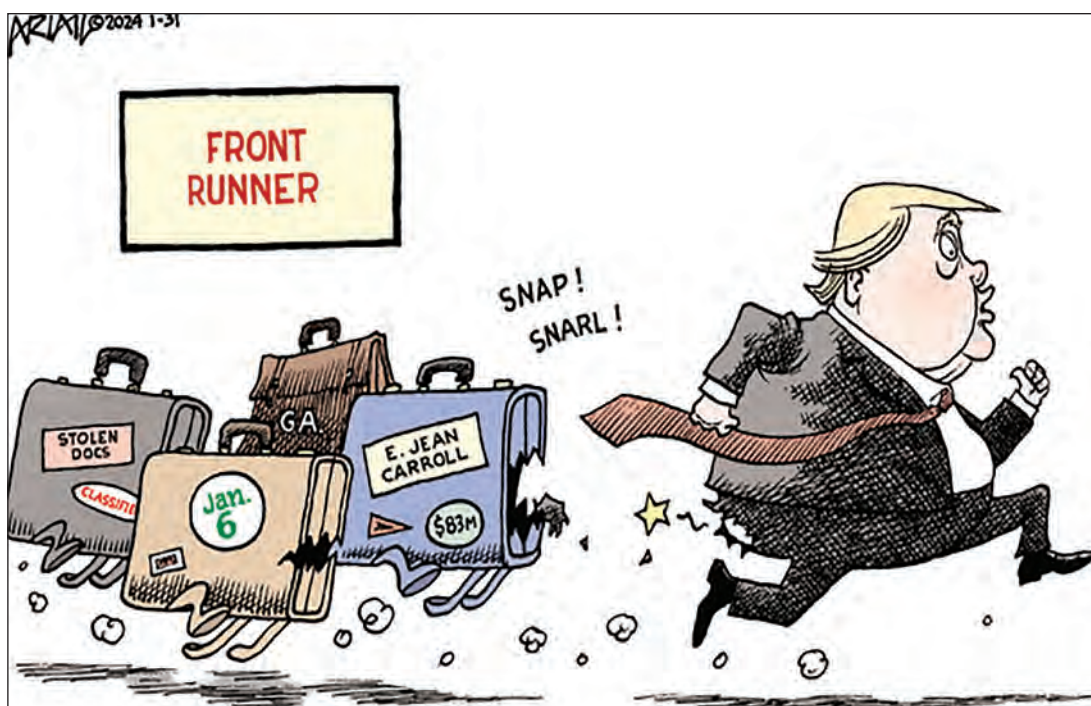
I cannot fathom why Councilman Washington wants to remove these protections for Sumter County residents.

An additional concern is the area surrounding Shaw AFB. I'm particularly sensitive to Shaw since that is what originally brought our family to the town we fell in love with. Shaw is an economic juggernaut for Sumter County and the entire state. It is almost entirely bordered by Sumter County, not the Sumter City limits. This includes Highway 378 and Peach Orchard Road that directly border Shaw.

Business licenses in the areas next to Shaw AFB are not subject to the City of Sumter's rules, so rescinding Sumter County's law enforcement review would open the area around the base to un-screened, felon-owned businesses. Ironically, Councilman Washington represents District 1, which includes those areas. I'm old enough to remember the days when military bases were surrounded by sketchy businesses, and I don't want a return to that. I would hope that he would be more protective of the multi-billion-dollar asset in his district.

As a society, we can certainly do a better job of reintegrating people into society following an incarceration. But a felony conviction warrants increased scrutiny, at least for a few years. Removing this small measure of protection for potential future victims is not the answer. Please contact county council and ask them to stop this initiative right now.

Neil Neaderhiser is retired from the U.S. Air Force and has resided in Sumter for over 16 years.



COMMENTARY

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem

Today, I want to conclude the thought that we've been looking at with "Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem." My text is Psalm 122:6, where we see, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee." (KJV)

We've been looking at the Prophet Zechariah's prophecy concerning the environment in which Israel and Jerusalem will be in during the Great Tribulation, but today, I want to look at an opportunity as well as a responsibility that the people of God from that day to this are directed to do, which is, "pray for the peace of Jerusalem." That was true for Old Testament Israel, and I believe it remains true for the church today. God has promised to prosper those who so desire peace in Israel and pray toward that end. The focus is the promise which God made to Abraham in Genesis 12:3, where God promised, "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." (KJV) This is referred to as the Abrahamic Covenant. This covenant was made to Abram whom God later renamed Abraham, and this covenant was also made to Abraham's son Isaac, and also Isaac's son Jacob whom God renamed Israel.

As we have been bringing to your heart, Israel and Jerusalem are experiencing great turmoil and trials that easily show us there is no peace there. I believe Israel is fighting a continual war with this

world's animosity, hatred, and as history has shown us, even military campaigns to eliminate her existence. Israel will never be eliminated by the Palestinians or Iran or Russia or anyone else for that matter, because of the covenant God made with Abraham, and we can be sure that God always keeps His promises! My privilege today is to "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem," and there is a lot involved within those words. Before peace comes to the "City of Peace," the true church will be raptured off of planet earth and Israel will sign a peace treaty with the Antichrist for seven years which will begin the Tribulation Period on this earth. Then at the close of that seven-year time period of Jacob's trouble, Jesus Christ will return to rescue Israel, defeat the Antichrist in the Valley of Megiddo and put the Antichrist and the False Prophet into the Lake of Fire and also shut Satan up for 1,000 glorious years, known as the Millennial Reign of Jesus Christ on this earth.

Then will there be peace as Jesus Christ rules this planet from His throne in the Millennial Temple in the city of Jerusalem. So in the meantime, the believing Jew and also the church can "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee."

Joey Durham is pastor at Open Bible Baptist Church at 180 Old Manning Road in Sumter. You can contact Pastor Durham at durham.joey@yahoo.com or call the church office at (803) 481-9315.



Joey Durham

HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY? Send your letter to letters@theitem.com, drop it off at *The Sumter Item* office, 36 W. Liberty St., or mail it to *The Sumter Item*, P.O. Box 1677, Sumter, SC 29151, along with the writer's full name, address and telephone number (for verification purposes only). Letters that exceed 350 words will be cut accordingly in the print edition, but available in their entirety at www.theitem.com/opinion/letters_to_editor.

Sumter High's Brown shows off on senior night en route to Hines Furniture Athlete of the Week

BY TIM LEIBLE
tim@theitem.com

The Sumter High girls basketball team is on the tail end of a truly dominant regular season.

The Lady Gamecocks are a perfect 18-0 and ranked No. 1 in SCHSL 5A with a senior-heavy squad. They've only had one game that was decided by fewer than 10 points, a 45-38 win over Bishop Kenny, a 20-3 squad from Jacksonville, Florida.

Along the way, Sumter High has spread the wealth between their talented seniors and eighth-grader Arina Ross.

Last week, Rickell Brown got to step to the forefront.

After a solid showing against Conway, Brown lit it up on senior night, pouring in five threes in a 22-point performance. Her hot hand also helped the senior earn recognition as the Hines Furniture Athlete of the Week.

"I'm thankful to have a great, supportive group around me, my teammates and family and the crowd," Brown said. "They really are supporters, and I'm thankful for that."

The Lady Gamecocks are in control of their own destiny at this point, and Brown is loving every minute of it.

"Right now, the atmosphere is really great. I love this group," she said. "Throughout our whole season, there's so much energy. Everybody really wants it. I feel like that's what's so great this year. Of course, we're trying to come back from losing last year, so this year, we just really want it."

Sumter High head coach Jeff Schaffer is impressed by the way Brown continues to work. She's a top-flight shooter, but Brown's been hot and cold from behind the arc this season. Schaffer loves the way she continues to work to improve but also finds other ways to contribute if her shot isn't falling.

"She is continuing to work on her



Sumter High's Rickell Brown averaged 18.5 points per game in a pair of region wins against Conway and Socastee to earn Hines Furniture Athlete of the Week honors.

game. She was struggling with her outside shot a little bit earlier this season, and it seems like that's starting to come around," Schaffer said. "There are a couple of little fundamental things that we're working on to tweak that a little bit. She's starting to see where the mistake was coming from and starting to correct it."

Last week was a prime example of how streaky shooting can be. Brown went 0-5 from long range in an 80-30 win over Conway but found other ways to contribute offensively by driving to the basket. She still finished with 14 points while adding some great defensive play with six steals, adding six rebounds and three assists.

"I know that I'm a shooter. I like to shoot, but when I have games like against Conway, I really don't try to force it anymore. I know I can contribute to my team by more than just put-

ting up shots. I can drive to the basket, I can kick out assists, I can do all the little things to contribute to my team."

That mindset of finding ways to contribute, even when things aren't perfect, is exactly what Schaffer is looking for out of his players.

"I tell them all the time, if the shots are not falling, you've got to do something else," Schaffer said. "You've got to play defense, rebound or you have to get to the basket. She's starting to see that more and more every game."

"Especially in the Socastee game, but she's been so much more aggressive on the perimeter, and that's what we've been asking her to do," the SHS head coach continued about Brown's defense. "We're asking her to play a couple of different spots on defense because she's so athletic and we've got multiple different defenses that we use,

and she's an integral part of that."

On senior night, Brown put on a show. She found her shot quickly, burying a total of five threes in the victory. Brown finished with 22 points, adding three rebounds, three steals and a pair of assists. She said the key to success was simply letting the game come to her.

"I don't try to overthink it. I know I have a shot, so I just try to get myself as open as I can get," Brown said. "I don't try to force it; I just let it come to me."

"Going into that game, there was a lot of energy knowing it was our senior night. The atmosphere was great, so that really does a lot. When we see the crowd is for us and everyone is going crazy in the gym, that boosts us to do better on the court."

Last week also showed how dangerous Sumter High can be because of the way they spread the ball around. On any given night, someone is going to get hot, which takes a little pressure off everyone. They aren't relying on one player to go an average 20 points a game to come out on top.

"When all five players on the floor are getting after it and playing together, it makes us really hard to defend because we're athletic and quick," Schaffer said. "When you've got people on the perimeter that can get after it like that, it makes for very hard matchups for most teams. That's why we stress, it's not who gets 20 tonight, it's the W at the end of the night, and if you get 20, fine. If you don't, it's not that big of a deal."

Brown thinks that mindset is the key to bringing home a state championship trophy on March 1.

"Falling short the last few years makes us really want it," Brown said. "Our biggest idea is for us to really stay humble and stay poised knowing that any night can be anybody's night but that we're going to make it our night every night, including winning a state championship."

AREA ROUNDUP

East Clarendon's Hayden White had a double-double with 21 points and 10 rebounds against Johnsonville on Tuesday.

ADAM FLASH / THE SUMTER ITEM



Wolverines sweep region battle with Johnsonville

STAFF REPORT

The East Clarendon basketball teams faced off against Johnsonville on Tuesday to kick off a busy week on the court. Both EC squads took home victories as they look to make a push at the top of the region.

The sixth-ranked Lady Wolverines started with a 64-38 win. Hayden White was dominant in the win, pouring in 21 points and 10 rebounds to go with six steals. Cherish Cochran added 11 points, Kierstin Woods scored eight points with five rebounds, and Jasmyne Lloyd chipped in with eight points, six rebounds and four steals. Court-

ney McFadden, Hailey Robinson and Cayli Harcrow each scored five points.

With the win, the No. 6 EC girls improved to 16-3 and prepared to make a trip to No. 3 Carvers Bay on Wednesday.

The East Clarendon boys followed with a 44-36 win, keeping the door open as they push for a home playoff game. The Wolverine defense was electric out of the gate, holding Johnsonville to just one free throw in the opening quarter. EC then used a big second quarter to go into the half with a comfortable 27-9 lead. They held on from there, though Johnsonville made a

SEE ROUNDUP, PAGE B2

Cooper, Mack lead the way as Gamecocks upset No. 5 Vols

BY AL LESAR
Associated Press

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — Ta'Lon Cooper hit a critical 3-pointer with 40 seconds left and scored 18 points, and B.J. Mack added 16 points to lead South Carolina to a 63-59 victory over No. 5 Tennessee on Tuesday night.

Myles Stute scored 13 points for the Gamecocks (18-3, 6-2 Southeastern Conference), who have beaten the conference's two highest-ranked teams. They knocked off No. 10 Kentucky on Jan. 23.

"(The players) have a lot of respect," Gamecocks coach Lamont Paris said. "They have a lot of believers. They're a confident group."

The victory was South Carolina's first road win over a top-5 team since 1997.

"Our group just battled," Paris said. "We really had success breaking down some action plans: block out and rebound; take care of the ball."

Dalton Knecht scored 12 points in the final three minutes and finished with 31 points, and Santiago Vescovi added 10 points for the Volunteers (15-5, 5-2), who had won four straight games and 11 of their last 12 entering the game.

Tennessee had its lowest point total of the season.

"(South Carolina) scored 63," Vols coach Rick Barnes said. "Our goal is to keep our opponent under 69. We were not a very good offensive team."

Barnes lamented his team missing 10



ASSOCIATED PRESS

South Carolina head coach Lamont Paris and the Gamecocks upset No. 5 Tennessee on Tuesday.

layups and going 12 of 20 from the line.

"You can't miss 10 point-blank layups," Barnes said, "and shoot like we did from the free-throw line and win."

South Carolina led by three points with 30 seconds left when Stute hit two free throws. Knecht hit a 3-pointer with 5 seconds remaining that cut the Tennessee deficit to two points. Stute hit two more free throws with 4 seconds left to seal the win.

SEE USC, PAGE B2

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SUMTER'S BEDDING HEADQUARTERS



Sumter High wrestling splits match with EC, Conway

STAFF REPORT

The Sumter High wrestling team hit the mat on Tuesday night with a local matchup against East Clarendon and a Region V-5A battle with Conway. The Gamecocks were able to pull out a 42-30 win over EC, but Conway got the best of SHS 57-24.

The night started with the region duel. Sumter High was on the back foot from the start, sitting in a 24-6 hole after forfeits against a very full Conway lineup.

The Gamecocks earned three wins on the night, as Johnny Century pinned Judson Johnson at 144 and Christian Ingram pinned Hunter Onley at 150. Bryce Holland

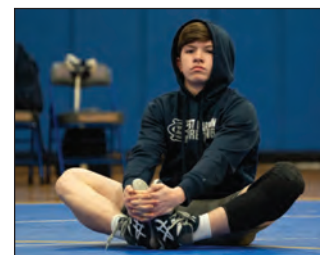
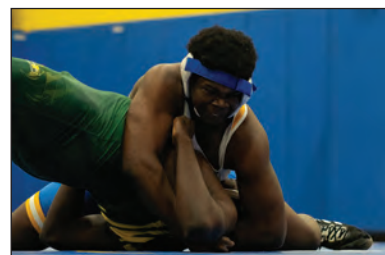
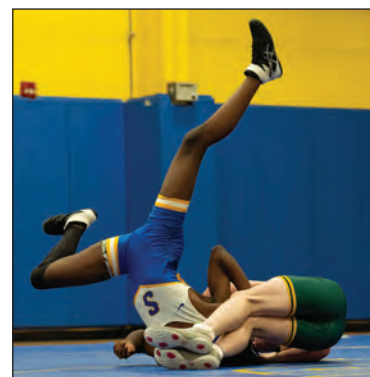
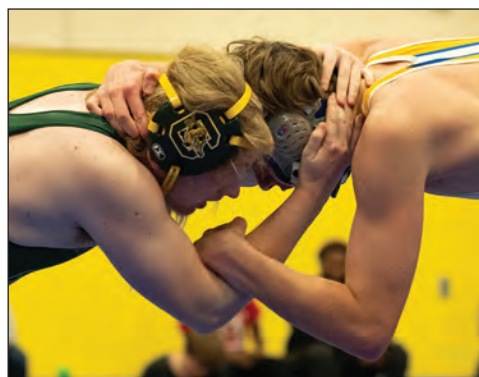
later earned a pin against Michael Hughes at 215. Kaim Schnyder also had a great match at 157 but lost a tough battle to Zachary Baxter 5-3.

In the nightcap, Sumter High had the advantage from the start, grabbing a 24-12 lead on forfeits. East Clarendon's Tryson Underwood was able to pin Brandon Pitts at 132 before Sumter High's Brian Wilson II pinned Jefferson Reyna-Midence at 138. EC's Takoda Cornelius then pinned Century at 144 before Schnyder pinned Damien McKnight at 157. Holland finished his night 2-0 with a win of Jordan Wright at 215, before EC heavyweight Jordan Wright pinned Anthony Spears.



The wrestling teams from Sumter High, East Clarendon and Conway hit the mat on Tuesday. The Gamecocks took down EC but fell to Conway.

PHOTOS BY ADAM FLASH / THE SUMTER ITEM



ROUNDUP FROM PAGE B1

late push with 16 in the fourth.

James Gamble led the Wolverines with 17 points, while Ryan Sullivan and Darius McCray each added six.

SCOTT'S BRANCH SWEEPS HEMINGWAY

The Scott's Branch basketball teams earned a pair of region wins over Hemingway on Tuesday. The Lady Eagles opened with a comfortable 56-23 win before the boys earned a 55-47 victory.

The girls game was close for a quarter, but the Lady Eagles went off for 19 in the second quarter to put the game away quickly. With a 29-11 lead at the half, Scott's Branch cruised to the win with a solid second half.

Siara Lundy led a balanced scoring effort with 13, eight of which came in the second quarter. Zamaria Lowery also had 13, while Saniya House added 10 and Ziaier Bryant chipped in with nine.

The boys game was a little more tight. The Eagles never built a comfortable lead but were ahead 25-21 at the break before outscoring Hemingway by four in the second half to earn the win.

Nyren Bowman had a double-double with 12 points and 10 rebounds, adding five steals and two blocks. Jordan Kind had another 12 points, six rebounds, four steals and a block. Nigel Lawson had 11 points, three rebounds and four steals. Chris Barringer added six points and five steals.

WILSON HALL HANDLES CAMDEN MILITARY

The Wilson Hall boys basketball team traveled to Camden Military on Tuesday, earning a 63-46 region victory in the process.

The Barons spread the ball around in the victory, as nine players scored and four reached double figures. Daniel Burton led the pack with 14 points, while Knox Buxton added 13, Shawn Michael Matthews had 11 and Ford Wilder finished with 10.

It's a quick turnaround for the Barons, as they follow the win with a trip to Cardinal Newman on Wednesday.

The Lady Baron B Team was also in action on Monday, beating Williamsburg Academy 18-5. They were led by Siena LeDeatte and Marsha Kate Skey, who each scored five points.

SUMTER CHRISTIAN ROLLS PAST CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

The Sumter Christian boys basketball team traveled to Carolina Christian on Tuesday, dominating on their way to an 85-66 win.

Sumter Christian held a commanding

51-25 lead at the half and handled business from there.

AJ Danzy was a monster, scoring 42 points in the win. Larry Rodgers caught fire and added 19, while Caden Atkinson added 12 and Quayshawn White chipped in with eight.

RAGIN PREP WINS BY FORFEIT

The Ragin Prep basketball team was slated to travel to Sandhills on Tuesday, but the opposing varsity squad was forced to forfeit because of illness.

The middle school teams were able to face off, with Ragin Prep winning 47-27. Jamere Baxter led the Rams with 15 points and Trent Tomlin added 14.

LAKEWOOD SPLITS WITH MARLBORO

The Lakewood basketball teams traveled to Marlboro on Tuesday. The Lady Gators won easily 52-28, while the boys fell 56-43.

The LHS girls took control immediately, sprinting out to a 19-3 lead in the first. They went into the half with a commanding 25-10 lead and didn't slow down as they coasted to a win.

Zakiya Hodge dominated in the win, scoring 20 points. She hit a three in every quarter, knocking down five in total. Lauryn Nesmith added 12, and Iesha Shaw scored 11.

The boys followed with a tough battle. After falling behind 14-11 in the first quarter, the Gators scored a combined 17 points in the next two quarters, digging a 38-28 hole they couldn't climb out of.

Cedric Cisse tried to will Lakewood to a victory, scoring 23 points, while Darius Spann added eight, all of which came in the second half.

The loss leaves the Gators in fifth place in Region VI-3A, a half game behind Marlboro County. Lakewood has two region games left, a pair of home contests with the top two teams in SCHSL 3A, Crestwood and Darlington.

MANNING SPLITS WITH GEORGETOWN

The Manning basketball teams faced off against Georgetown on Tuesday, splitting a pair of region contests.

The girls took home a 57-39 win, their second victory of the season. After falling behind 18-16 in the first half, the Lady Monarch offense came to life in the second half. They scored 14 in the third to jump out in front before burying Georgetown with 25 in the fourth. Tahirah Wellington led the pack with 16 points, while Aysia Moore added 15 and Taniya Johnson scored 13.

With the win, the Lady Monarchs are tied with Aynor for the final playoff spot heading into their matchup on Thursday.

The boys followed with a tough loss. The Monarchs got out to a solid start, leading 27-22 at the half. But the Monarch offense started to dry up after halftime. Georgetown closed the gap in the fourth, jumping ahead 40-39 before Manning scored just five in the fourth and the Bulldogs pulled away with 18.

CLARENDON HALL SPLITS WITH CALHOUN ACADEMY

The Clarendon Hall basketball teams hosted Calhoun Academy on Tuesday.

The Lady Saints opened the night with a 39-34 win behind a 15-point performance from Sidney Berry. She also added five rebounds.

The CH boys, meanwhile, were undone by a rough third quarter. Already trailing 28-22 at the half, the Clarendon Hall defense couldn't slow down Calhoun. The Cavs went off for 30 in the quarter, putting the game out of reach. The Saints tried to make a late push with 21 in the fourth, 11 of which came from Bryce Jordan, but it wasn't enough.

Jordan finished with 24 in the loss, while Darius Aiken added 19 and Kole Elliott chipped in with 10.

LMA DROPS PAIR TO HAMMOND

The Laurence Manning basketball teams faced off against Hammond on Tuesday, suffering a pair of losses.

The Lady Swampcats fell 57-32 as Hammond got out to a 32-18 lead at the half. Ashley Rae Hodge led the team with 10 points in the defeat.

The LMA boys couldn't slow down the Hammond offense in a 77-48 loss. The first quarter was tight, finishing in an 18-18 tie, but the Skyhawks kept rolling with two more 18-point quarters before an explosive 23-point fourth. LMA couldn't keep pace, as the game got out of hand in the fourth as the 'Cats scored just six points.

Shane Goines finished with 23 for Laurence Manning while Tyleek "Scoop" Dennis added nine.

TSA SWEPT BY PALMETTO CHRISTIAN

The Thomas Sumter basketball teams struggled in a pair of losses to Palmetto Christian on Tuesday.

The Lady Generals opened with a 73-36 loss, getting behind 17-10 in the first before Palmetto went off for 25 in the second to put the game out of reach.

Malaya English led TSA with 15, while Gabby Russell added 14.

The Thomas Sumter boys then fell 57-12, struggling to find any sort of offensive rhythm. A 23-5 hole in the first quarter proved to be too much to dig out of. Christian Williams and Calvin Hamlin each scored five in the loss.

USC

FROM PAGE B1

"(Stute) respected the moment," Paris said. "He made the shots."

Tennessee shot 36% (21 for 58) from the field and 24% (5 for 21) from 3-point distance. South Carolina hit 10 of 29 (35%) 3-pointers, which was better than their 34% (19 for 56) shooting from the field.

South Carolina handled Tennessee's aggressive defense in the first half and led 30-26 at the break.

Cooper had 10 points and Mack nine for the Gamecocks in the first half. Knecht had 13 points to pace Tennessee, which shot 2 for 11 (18%) from long distance.

The Gamecocks had a 21-19 rebounding edge and limited Tennessee to 36% (12 for 33) shooting to build its lead in the first half.

THE TAKEAWAY

South Carolina: Nine new players on the roster have given the Gamecocks new life after struggling to an 11-21 record a year ago. ... Paris has brought the group together quickly and the Gamecocks have responded with a great start to their season.

Tennessee: Vescovi established a program record by making his 130th start. ... The Vols had their 13-game home winning streak snapped, 11 of those have come this season.

NEXT UP

South Carolina: The Gamecocks get their shot at revenge when they host Georgia on Saturday. The Bulldogs won by five points on Jan. 16.

Tennessee: The Vols will have another tough game Saturday when they visit No. 10 Kentucky.

Sumter High's Addison talks South Carolina recruitment, Clemson hits the trenches

Sumter High DE Anthony Addison (6'3," 215 lbs.) has become a prime target for South Carolina in the 2025 class, and Saturday he was back for a junior day, which gave him a chance to discuss things in more detail with head coach Shane Beamer and defensive ends coach Sterling Lucas.



Phil Kornblut
RECRUITING
CORNER

Addison visited last March and was in for a game in November.

"Just see how I fit in their defensive scheme, because that's what matters at the end of the day," Addison said prior to the visit.

Prepping him for the visit was Lucas. The two talk on a regular basis.

"He was just telling me it's going to be a good time, it's going to be a basketball game and stuff like that," Addison said. "Getting to know the coaches better. I'll probably be able to speak to Coach Beamer a little bit more on this visit and see how I would fit into their program if I choose to go to South Carolina. I like them, but I'm still keeping my options open. Stuff might change."

This was the first recruiting visit of the year for Addison. He will visit Tennessee this weekend. Florida State has been coming on strong and he'd like to visit there as well. This month coaches from Tennessee, Florida State, Cincinnati, Charlotte and Wake Forest have been by the school. Addison plans to eventually narrow his focus to a small number of schools and then go from there with his decision.

"I want to take official visits to at least a couple of schools before I try to make a decision on where I'm going to go," Addison said.

Last season Addison was a key part of the Sumter defense with 96 tackles, 25 tackles for loss and six sacks.

Clemson hosted several highly regarded offensive line targets for their junior day Saturday, and Sunday afternoon OT Brayden Jacobs (6'7," 310 lbs.) of Buford, Georgia, became the first of the group to announce a commitment to the Tigers. He's the son of former NFL running back Brandon Jacobs. Jacobs was offered by Clemson last summer and was in to see a game in September. Some of his other offers were South Carolina, Ohio State, Oregon, Nebraska, Colorado, Arkansas, Florida, Michigan, Florida State, LSU, Auburn, Georgia Tech, Miami, Missouri, Maryland and Ole Miss?

OG Jaylan Beckley (6'4," 290 lbs.) of Addison, Texas, announced his commitment to the Tigers roughly a half hour after Jacobs' public commitment. Beckley was offered by Clemson last summer following a camp session. Beckley was one of the first linemen new offensive line coach Matt Luke contacted when he replaced Thomas Austin, and the two immediately hit it off. Some of the other top programs with Beckley were Oklahoma State and Oklahoma, Kansas, LSU, Texas A&M, and Duke. He also had offers from Florida State, Georgia, Tennessee and LSU. Beckley gives Clemson ten commitments for their 2025 class and the third for the offensive line.

The Tigers continued its recruiting roll on Monday with a commitment from DT Isaiah Campbell (6'5," 265 lbs.) of Durham, North Carolina. Campbell chose Clemson from a short list that also included Alabama, Oklahoma, Notre Dame, LSU, Duke, Penn State, North Carolina, NC State and Miami. He visited Clemson for a junior day last year, and he was back for the Notre Dame game last season.

"They provide a lot of academic support," Campbell said in October. "I saw the academic system on junior day, and it showed us everything and that when you come to Clemson you will be prepared, and you will

have everything you need to succeed and be on the right path. I like the development of the front. I could be all the way out to a wide nine all the way to a three (technique), so, I could be developed in different aspects.

"Coach (Nick) Eason and Coach (Dabo) Swinney, I feel like they are great men. I've been talking to Coach Eason is meticulous and it's like a clinic with the D-line. He helps them gain just a little bit of an edge to prepare yourself for the next level and prepare yourself for the next game of life and football."

Clemson gained a public commitment from DE Ari Watford (6'6," 235 lbs.) of Norfolk Virginia, last Wednesday. Recruiting analysts have tabbed Watford as the No. 1 prospect in Virginia for the 2025 class and the No. 1 edge rusher in the country. Watford had previously listed a top six of Clemson, USC, Ohio State, Virginia Tech, Penn State and Syracuse.

CLEMSON'S 2025 COMMITMENTS:

- * GIDEON DAVIDSON RB 5'11," 184 LBS., LYNCHBURG, VA
- * BLAKE HEBERT QB 6'4," 215 LBS., LAWRENCE, MA.
- * EASTON WARE OT 6'5," 280 LBS., LYNCHBURG, VA.
- * BRAYDEN JACOBS OT 6'7," 310 LBS., BUFORD, GA.
- * JAYLAN BECKLEY OT 6'4," 290 LBS., ADDISON, TX
- * LOGAN BROOKING TE 6'4," 220 LBS., SAVANNAH
- * JUJU PRESTON WR 5'10," 150 LBS., WOODBRIDGE, VA
- * AMARE ADAMS DT 6'6," 280 LBS., SOUTH FLORENCE
- * MARQUISE HENDERSON SAF 5'10," 170 LBS., BELTON-HONEA PATH
- * ARI WATFORD DE 6'6," 235 LBS., NORFOLK, VA

Twenty-two prospects made it to Clemson over the weekend including most of those already committed to the Tigers for the 2025 class. The other non-committed prospects who had planned to visit were:

- CB Dallas Golden
- CB Mark Manfred
- DE Bryce Davis
- DL Elijah Griffin
- DL Isaiah Campbell
- LB Brett Clatterbaugh
- LB Jaedon Harmon
- OL Chauncey Gooden
- OL David Sanders
- OL Gavin Blanchard
- OL Mal Waldrep
- OL Mason Short
- S Jordan Young

USC hosted a junior day Saturday for the second-straight weekend. Among the non-committed targets who planned to be in Columbia were:

2025 CLASS:

- WR Dillon Alfred
- DE Anthony Addison of Sumter High
- DE Jared Smith
- DE Isaiah Gibson
- OL Jaylen Gilchrist
- OL Juan Gaston
- CB Jontae Gilbert
- CB Shamari Earls
- ATH AJ Brand
- ATH Zeke Marshall

2026 CLASS:

- WR Jordon Gidron
- WR Donovan Murph
- DE Zavion Griffin-Haynes
- New USC offers: RB Antwan Raymond (5'11," 195 lbs.) of Clearwater, FL
- SAF DeShawn Stewart (6'2," 185 lbs.) of Wayne, NJ.
- TE Nicholas Townsend (6'4," 225 lbs.) of Houston.
- WR Tanook Hines (6'1," 180 lbs.) of Houston.
- 2026 DT Cameron Brickle II (6'3," 295 lbs.) of Rancho Santa Margarita, CA.
- 2026 OT Anthony Baxter (6'3," 335 lbs.) of South Pointe
- 2027 CB Kenton Dopson III of Miami.

Clemson offered LB Ty Jackson (6'2," 200 lbs.) of Loxahatchee, Florida, CB Tae Harris (5'10," 180 lbs.) of Cedar-town, Georgia, and OT Mason Short of Evans, Georgia.

Short, a former Alabama commitment, was reoffered by the new Alabama staff.

Former USC commitment DE Zay Hardy, who is now at

East Mississippi JC, was offered by Mississippi State. He said he is still hearing from South Carolina.

WR Malik Clark of Rock Hill was offered by North Carolina, Cincinnati and Virginia Tech.

Camden DB Jordan Crim was offered by Appalachian State.

RB Zion Dobson of Hampton County committed to N.C. Central.

2026 SAF J'Zavien Currence of South Pointe was offered by Oregon.

2026 OT Anthony Baxter of South Pointe was offered by Duke, ECU, Appalachian State and Virginia Tech.

2026 WR Jordon Gidron of Ridge View was offered by Georgia Tech and Appalachian State.

South Carolina native 2027 QB Mason Holtzclaw of Christ School in Asheville, North Carolina, was offered by Appalachian State and Charlotte.

Clemson head coach Dabo Swinney, offensive coordinator Garrett Riley, offensive line coach Matt Luke, and receivers coach Tyler Grisham all stopped by Sumner High School (Riverview, Florida) recently to say hello to tackle Ziyare Addison (6'5," 270 lbs.).

Addison, whose recruitment has taken off, has had plenty of company recently, as FSU head coach Mike Norvell dropped by, as did Florida's Billy Napier and Oregon's Dan Lanning. Indiana, Tulane, Purdue and Syracuse also offered this week. Tennessee, Nebraska, UCLA, Oklahoma, Oregon, Missouri and Miami are some other offers. This January has been different than a year ago for the multi-sport athlete.

"No, not what I'm used to. Last year, a lot of coaches stopped by, just wanted to see me, just to see my face, said they'll get back with me," Addison explained. "Now, it's to the point where it's multiple head coaches that's coming through on a weekly day basis just to see me and me only. It's just a blessing. It just shows how I'm one of the best players in the country and how all my hard work is paying off."

The visit by the Clemson coaches was a highlight.

"Once again, it's really a blessing. You know what I'm saying? I watched those guys growing up, watching the guys that you see on TV, they come in talking to you, face-to-face. It is crazy," Addison gushed.

He notes that his offer list spans from coast-to-coast.

"It's really great. It shows that I have a lot of options. A school, for example, like UCLA, Oregon, they don't really recruit on this side of the country," Addison said. "So, it's really been blessing that they're out here in the Tampa area, pushing kids to come out that way."

Clemson's message to Addison was simple and to the point.

"To keep God first as well as keep working and don't change who you are, be who you are," he said. "What sticks out to me, they only really give out about 50 offers. They've only given out about 50 so far. It's rare that they offer kids like that. And it's just because of their culture. And they don't go for kids in the portal as well, and that stood out to me. They show that they can really develop kids to get to the next level."

The Florida native has plans to see Penn State and Oregon this spring and he's trying to find the perfect date to make a return trip to Clemson's campus. If he doesn't make it during the spring, he said he wants to take an official visit at some point.

Where do the Tigers stand? "For sure, top five," he said. "No question."

USC coach Shane Beamer and secondary coach Torrian Gray offered Abbeville SAF Damarcus Leach (6'3," 185 lbs.) during a camp last June. They were the first to step up with an offer to the hard-hitting product of one of the state's top programs, and that has given the Gamecocks some what of a leg up in the recruiting competition at this point.

"I've been talking to them a

long time," Leach said. "Coach Gray, Coach Beamer, they are showing a lot of love as far as coming down for a football game. Coach Gray actually came to a basketball game of mine. Only way I can say Coach Gray is favored is because the communication with him has been longer, has been developed more. That's the thing that I'd say has formed an advantage over the other schools." Leach can play any of the three positions in the secondary. In fact, he said Gray sees him as someone who can come in and play in a real position of need for the Gamecocks.

"Sometimes we have conversations about safety. Sometimes we have different conversations about corner," Leach said. "One day we might have a conversation about nickel because he said they couldn't find a natural nickel. Me playing it in high school and my length, and he said of course I'll put on weight, but he's talked to me about any position in the secondary."

Leach was also offered last summer by Virginia Tech following a camp workout. He's also picked up offers from Vanderbilt, Duke and, most recently, Appalachian State. His only visit on the recruiting trail thus far in 2024 was to USC two weekends ago when he and his family spent the day meeting with the coaches and others affiliated with the program.

"It was good and different," Leach said. "I had an uncle who went to play college football many, many years ago, so it's pretty much new to my family, especially to my parents. He's my great uncle, actually, so my mom was just a kid when he was playing, so it's a lot of information she felt like she needed to know, and she got to know. She chit-chat with Coach Gray, chit-chat with some of the different parents that was there, just to hear about the school in general. More from just a football game day visit, more on the academics, the ins and outs of the school, how you can get help. It was real informational."

Leach plans to take more visits in March and April after basketball season and wants to hit up the schools that have offered him. Clemson, which has not offered, has shown interest, and he visited there last season. While indications would point strongly to the Gamecocks as a favorite at this point coming the visit with them, Leach wants to let things play out a little bit longer.

"I wouldn't say yet," regarding a favorite Leach said. "I don't feel like it will be much longer after we go to these spring visits and stuff, and we'll kind of know. I want to be able to wrap the recruiting process up in a couple of months and commit because I plan on doing mid-year enrollment. I plan to wrap up my recruiting process in a couple of months and take the right steps in picking my home, picking my destination. That's kind of what's going on right now."

Beamer and quarterbacks coach/offensive coordinator Dowell Loggains have taken the deep dive for QB Ryan Montgomery of Findlay, Ohio, as their sole quarterback target in the 2025 class. That strategy seems to be working in the Gamecocks' favor with Montgomery and his father Mike. They visited USC two weekends ago, and Beamer and Loggains continue to drive home the point that there's no one else they want at quarterback for the 2025 class than Montgomery.

"They pretty much gave us the red-carpet treatment," Mike Montgomery said. "There was a huge focus on Ryan. The nice thing about South Carolina is they've treated him as their number one priority at that position since the day that Dowell started recruiting him. Obviously, after he saw him throw and gave him that offer, from that point on it was clear that he was Dowell's guy. There's other places where the board is a little different, or they have tiers or want to get your ranking. There's really no

question at South Carolina where he ranks, and there's value in that. Knowing that is awesome. But more important than that is just the way they treated him and the kind of people they are. Just can't say enough good things about the culture that Shane's built and the person that Shane is. The more I'm around him or we speak to him, it's just who he is. How high energy he is and authentic he is, it seems like it might be even rarer in college football at the highest level."

Beamer has to use his personality to a large degree to impress prospects and families until he has a championship level track record to see them on. In this case with Montgomery, Beamer and Loggains are pitching the future and how bright it would be with him in their program.

"That's exactly the point. You have to trust the vision that they have and the execution to get to that plan," Mike Montgomery said. "I think that's happening. I really like the O-line pulls. Nothing happens unless you get protection. I know they've recruited some really highly ranked O-linemen in 2024 and they are on some good ones in '25. I see that coming into play. And the success that Spencer (Rattler) had. We were able to talk to him too while we were there on a Facetime. You could just tell he's super close with Dowell and he's super grateful. Record-wise it wasn't where they wanted to be, development-wise I could tell he's tickled pink with how he went from last year to this year and him going into the Draft. That development is there and that's what's always been an attraction to Ryan. Not only is Dowell a good person, that NFL pedigree...we know how many NFL quarterbacks he's worked with, and for him to have that kind of eye and hone in on Ryan, I know Ryan really, really does not take that for granted, and that's a big deal."

Last weekend the Montgomerys also visited Georgia. They will take this weekend off and then visit Florida Feb. 3. All are showing strong interest in Montgomery, and the question is, where is he viewed as the greatest priority?

"If you had to put out a top three now, it would be South Carolina, Georgia and Florida," Montgomery said. "After the three visits, we'll see if we go on. But I'll say probably South Carolina. I know he's number one at Florida too, but they have other offers out there. Their philosophy is to always have backup plans. I get that but I also appreciate that South Carolina is not going to do much with anybody else unless Ryan were to go elsewhere. Both of them prioritized him and got up here right away, Shane and Billy Napier. Georgia, we went down there, and Mike Bobo is coming up to watch Ryan play basketball next week."

So, the focus has been on three SEC schools for the Montgomerys. And there is a fourth that could come into play.

"We thought we'd hear from Alabama because we know those guys from their time at Washington. We haven't yet," Montgomery said. "As each day goes by, that's less and less likely. Because of the relationship with those two (head coach and OC), we would take that phone call if they did call. If they don't call in the next week or two, good luck to them down there. We weren't being recruited by Nick or Tommy Rees. We were high on the board at Washington. We just didn't want to go out west, it's just too far. We'll see what comes of it. I don't know honestly how that will play out. We're very comfortable with the three that are being visited this month and Feb. 3. We'll see what Georgia comes back with on us. I know we were both pleasantly surprised with how well that went. We weren't quite sure where we ranked there. We had a good conversation with Kirby (Smart) and we've always thought highly of them as well."

Panthers HC Canales begins to fill out staff, hires 4 assistants

CHARLOTTE (AP) — Carolina Panthers coach Dave Canales has begun to fill out his staff.

The Panthers added four offensive coaches on Tuesday: assistant head coach/run game coordinator Harold Goodwin, running backs coach Bernie Parmalee, wide receivers coach Rob Moore and offensive line coach Joe Gilbert.

The Panthers have yet to name any of their three coordinators, although the team is likely to retain defensive coordinator Ejiro Evero. Several teams have reportedly requested to speak with Evero for a lateral move, but the Panthers have thus far refused to grant permission.

Tampa Bay wide receivers coach Brad Idzik is considered a front-runner for the offensive coordinator position.

Carolina's new assistants have

plenty of coaching and playing experience.

Goodwin won two Super Bowls with the Pittsburgh Steelers and Tampa Bay, and served the past five seasons as the Buccaneers' assistant head coach/run game coordinator. He has also spent time with the Chicago Bears, Indianapolis Colts, and Arizona Cardinals.

Parmalee played running back for the New York Jets and Miami Dolphins, and has coached the last three seasons with the Jacksonville Jaguars. He previously was an assistant with four other teams in addition to working at Notre Dame.

Moore played wide receiver for the Jets and Cardinals and has spent the last six seasons with the Tennessee Titans as their wide receivers coach. He has also coached for the Buffalo Bills and Las Vegas Raiders.

Seahawks to hire Ravens DC Macdonald as new coach

RENTON, Wash. (AP) — It was a defensive-centric head coach that brought the Seattle Seahawks their only Super Bowl title.

The Seahawks are hoping a newer — albeit much younger — version can return them to the elite of the NFL.

The Seahawks are hiring Baltimore Ravens defensive coordinator Mike Macdonald as their new head coach, a person informed of the decision told The Associated Press.

Macdonald, 36, will arrive in Seattle as the youngest head coach in the league and half the age of the man he's replacing — Pete Carroll who was let go after 14 seasons in charge during the most successful

run in franchise history.

Macdonald spent the past two years running Baltimore's defense, including this past season when the Ravens finished with the NFL's best regular-season record and reached the AFC championship game before losing to Kansas City.

This will be the first head coaching position at any level for Macdonald. But he's been surrounded by successful coaches as he moved up the ranks, starting with an extended run on the staff of John Harbaugh in Baltimore before spending a season on now-Chargers' coach Jim Harbaugh's staff in college at Michigan.

Weeks after dismissal in Atlanta, Smith nearing deal to join Steelers

BY WILL GRAVES

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — The Pittsburgh Steelers are hoping Arthur Smith can turn around one of the NFL's most under-achieving offenses.

The Steelers are nearing an agreement to make Smith their new offensive coordinator, multiple sources told The Associated Press on Tuesday. The sources spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because the deal was not official.

Smith would come to Pittsburgh just weeks after the Atlanta Falcons fired him as head coach following three straight 7-10 seasons. The magic Smith was able to produce while serving as the offensive coordinator in Tennessee in 2019 and 2020 — when the Titans finished 12th and then second in total offense — never materialized in Atlanta, which finished in the bottom half of the league in yards and points during Smith's tenure.

He could get a fresh start with the Steelers, who managed a 10-7 record and a playoff berth despite an offense that ranked 25th in yards and 28th in points and didn't show any real signs of life until the final three weeks when third-string quarterback Mason Rudolph spurred a late winning streak that helped Pittsburgh sneak into the postseason.

Steelers president Art Rooney II said Monday that while the team still believes in starting quarterback Kenny Pickett — who endured a bumpy first full season as a starter before sustaining an ankle injury in early December that forced him to watch from the sideline — it's also time for Pittsburgh to get "quality play out of the quarterback position going forward."

Rooney also indicated he'd be interested in bringing back the free-agent-to-be Rudolph to compete with Pickett during training camp, praising Rudolph for his play down the stretch.

Smith's charge with whoever is behind center will be to come up with an approach that puts more points on the board to take some of the pressure off Pittsburgh's star-laden defense. The Steelers have finished 21st or worse in scoring in four of the past five seasons, one of the reasons the team took the unusual step of firing offensive coordinator Matt Canada just before Thanksgiving, the club's first in-season dismissal of a coordinator or head



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Former Atlanta Falcons head coach Arthur Smith is finalizing a deal to become the offensive coordinator for the Pittsburgh Steelers.

coach since World War II.

There are players to build around. Pittsburgh has one of the best running back tandems in the league in Najee Harris and Jaylen Warren. Wide receiver George Pickens has shown flashes of brilliance, though those flashes have been tempered with bouts of petulance. Wide receiver Diontae Johnson is one of the league's better route-runners and tight end Pat Freiermuth is a quality playmaker when healthy.

Rooney said on Monday the team was close to making a hire. Less than 24 hours later, the team was closing in on its man.

"We're looking forward to have someone come in and take a fresh approach who can help our young players grow and perform and have the offense perform at a consistently high level," Rooney said.

Something that hasn't happened since the height of the "Killer B" era in the mid-2010s when Ben Roethlisberger was throwing passes to Antonio Brown and Le'Veon Bell was one of the most productive all-around backs in the league.

The Steelers have somehow stayed competitive almost in spite of the offense, but they've also been exposed in the postseason. Pittsburgh has dropped five straight playoff games, four of them by double digits.

Smith would seem to be a good stylistic fit with the Steelers. Pittsburgh general manager Omar Khan and assistant general manager Andy Weidl are trying to build a physical team that likes to lean on the run. Smith was able to install a system that exploited the talents of Titans star running back Derrick Henry as Tennessee reached the postseason in each of Smith's two years calling the plays.

OBITUARIES

LINDA STEWART WALTON

Linda Stewart Walton, 74, died on Friday, Jan. 26, 2024, at Prisma Health Tuomey Hospital.



Born in Richmond, Virginia, she was a daughter of the late Joseph Olin Walton and Margaret Jacqueline Stewart Walton. Linda was a former member of St. Stephens Episcopal Church in Richmond and attended Christ Community Church.

Surviving are cousins, Joan Jones (Vic), Priscilla Hodge, Jerry Walton (Sally) and Becky Walton; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by a cousin, James Walton.

Private memorial services will be held at a later date.

Memorials may be made to the Sumter Pregnancy Center, 21 Barnette Drive, Sumter, SC 29150; to Sumter-Young Life, P.O. Box 1141, Sumter, SC 29150; or to Christ Community Church, 320 Loring Mill Road, Sumter, SC 29150.

Online condolences may be sent to www.sumterfunerals.com.

Elmore Hill McCreight Funeral and Crematory, 221 Broad St., Sumter, is in charge of the arrangements, (803) 775-9386.



HATTIE MAE JOSEY

Hattie Mae Josey, 73, was born on Oct. 18, 1950, in Conway, a daughter of the late Richard and Mary Sigler Josey. She departed this life on Wednesday, Jan. 24, 2024, at her residence.

Public viewing will be held from 2 to 6 p.m. today at Job's Mortuary.

Funeral services will be held

at 11 a.m. on Friday at St. Mark 4B Missionary Baptist Church, 2280 Fourbridges Road, Sumter, SC 29153 with the Rev. Michael C. Walker presiding and the Rev. Dr. Sammie D. Simmons, eulogist. Interment will follow in the St. Mark 4B Missionary Baptist Church Cemetery, Sumter, SC 29153.

The family will receive friends from 3 to 6 p.m. daily at the home, 1170 Plowden Mill Road, Sumter, SC 29153.

Job's Mortuary Inc., 312 S. Main St., Sumter, is in charge of arrangements.

Online memorials may be sent to the family at jobsmortuaryinc@gmail.com or visit us on the web at www.jobsmortuary.net.

CAROLYN BROWN FREDERICK

Carolyn Brown Frederick was born on Jan. 2, 1944, in Winnsboro, Louisiana, to Mary Bell Brown and John A. Sims. She entered into eternal rest on Tuesday, Jan. 23, 2024.



Reared in a loving home by her grandparents,

John A. and Annie Brown, she was raised as the youngest of John A. and Annie's 13 children. Carolyn was the "baby" of the family. She attended the public schools of Winnsboro and excelled in academics, eventually graduating as the valedictorian of Franklin Parish High School.

Upon graduation, she matriculated at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, following in the footsteps of her older sister, Geraldine, along with her aunts, Daisy and Helen. Majoring in accounting, Carolyn was a wiz at math and science. While in college, she pledged the Beta Psi Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., following once again in the footsteps of her sister, Geraldine. In May of 1965, she graduated from Southern and, in August of that year, she entered the MBA program at Atlanta University (AU). While at AU, she met Leerou Chavin "L.C." Frederick and, on Dec. 18, 1966, they married in her hometown of Winnsboro. Given that she

completed her MBA in 1966 and he had another year to complete his degree, Carolyn returned to Baton Rouge and taught at her alma mater, Southern University, sending funds back to her husband to support the completion of his degree. When her husband was offered a job back in Sumter to serve as business manager at his alma mater, Morris College, she went to Sumter with him and began teaching in the public school system. Over the years, she taught math, accounting, bookkeeping and typing variously at Lincoln High School, Sumter High School and Hillcrest High School. In addition, she launched out on her entrepreneurial venture and opened a tax business from her home. As a supportive spouse with tremendous business skills, she served simultaneously as office manager for her husband's new insurance and financial services businesses under the umbrella of Frederick and Associates. In 1988, she named her business "Quick Refund Tax Service" and they both eventually moved their businesses into a joint office space.

In 1970, her life would change forever as she gave birth to their first daughter, Mary Frederika. Two years later, she would give birth to their second daughter, Marla Faye. Employed full time outside of the home, she worked quadruple shifts as wife, mother, office manager and school teacher. She was indeed "Every Woman" before Whitney ever sang the song.

Over the years, Carolyn had been a faithful member of First Baptist Missionary Church, where she served early on with the Young Women's Auxiliary (YWA) as both a member and former president. In addition, she served with the Young Adult Choir, the Gospel Choir and the Pastor's Aid Committee. As a golden soror of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., she was actively involved with the Eta Zeta Omega Chapter in Sumter, having served previously as the Tamiochous/Treasurer and she was most recently selected to serve on the audit committee. She also served as

an advocate/guardian ad litem for kids in the foster care system. She took joy in serving her community through many seen and unseen acts of kindness, considering it God's great work.

Carolyn leaves to cherish her memory: two daughters, Frederika (Kelvin) McDuffie and Marla (Eric) Frederick-Prestell; a daughter by marriage, Brenda (Al) Sept. She loved her grandchildren and they will miss her dearly: four granddaughters, Tatyana, Tamera, Talia and Alkeah; two grandsons, Miles and Travis (Robin); six great-grandchildren, Nia, Jordan, Jalia, Imani, Kayla and Kyla; one aunt, Zona Robinson of Houston, Texas; and three sisters, Diane Gipson of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Angela (DeDe) Teats and Mabelle Sims of Winnsboro. In addition, she leaves to mourn her loss and celebrate her memory a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, other relatives and friends.

Public viewing will be held from 2 to 6 p.m. today at Job's Mortuary.

Funeral services will be held at 1 p.m. on Friday at First Baptist Missionary Church, 219 S. Washington St., Sumter, SC 29150 with the Rev. George P. Windley Jr. officiating. Interment will follow in Hillside Memorial Park, Sumter, SC 29150.

Job's Mortuary Inc., 312 S. Main St., Sumter, is in charge of arrangements.

Online memorials may be sent to the family at jobsmortuaryinc@gmail.com or visit us on the web at www.jobsmortuary.net.

LAWRENCE THOMAS NETTLES SR.

LEXINGTON — Lawrence "Larry" Thomas Nettles Sr., 76, widower of Garland



Gulledge Nettles, died on Monday, Jan. 29, 2024, at Lexington Medical Center.

Born on July 7, 1947, in Sumter, he was one of five children born to the late James Pinckney Nettles Sr. and Marjorie Mae Blackburn Nettles. He was the former owner and operator of

Netco Turf & Tractor, and he was a member of Aldersgate United Methodist Church in Sumter. After retiring, he dedicated his time to community service and various charities and received the Clara Barton Award with the American Red Cross.

He is survived by three children, Lawrence Thomas "Lance" Nettles Jr. (Suzanne) of Chapin, Edmund Nettles (Christy) of Darlington and Jackson Nettles (Noelle) of Lexington; seven grandchildren, Chasker, Derrick, Wyatt, Zachary, Dakotah, Dylan and Sabrina (Josh); a brother-in-law, Pebble Gulledge (Sue) of Wedgefield; and several nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday in the chapel of Elmore-Cannon-Stephens Funeral Home, 515 Miller Road, Sumter, with the Rev. Jim Ridenhour officiating.

Visitation will be one hour prior to the service from 10 to 11 a.m. at Elmore-Cannon-Stephens Funeral Home.

Stephens Funeral Home & Crematory, 304 N. Church St., Manning, is in charge of arrangements, (803) 435-2179. www.stephensfuneralhome.org

JOHN DEMETRIUS LAWSON SR.

John Demetrius Lawson Sr. departed this life on Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2024, in Columbia.

John was born on March 18, 1964, in Brooklyn, New York, to Richard Lawson Sr. and the late Dorothy Morgan Baldwin.

Funeral services are incomplete and will be announced later by Whites Mortuary LLC.

MILDRED STREATER ENGLISH

Mildred Streater English, 88, widow of Bishop W.T. English, departed this life on Monday, Jan. 29, 2024, at Prisma Health Richland Hospital in Columbia.

Born on May 24, 1935, in Wadesboro, North Carolina, a daughter of the late Thomas and Carrie Adams Streater.

Job's Mortuary Inc., 312 S. Main St., Sumter, is in charge of arrangements.

THURSDAY EVENING FEBRUARY 1
Table with columns for SP, FT, and time slots (7 PM, 7:30, 8 PM, 8:30, 9 PM, 9:30, 10 PM, 10:30, 11 PM, 11:30, 12 AM). Rows list various TV channels and their programming, including local channels, cable channels, and syndicated shows.

National Geographic's 'Genius' returns with 'MLK/X'

BY KEVIN McDONOUGH

After presenting biographies of Albert Einstein, Pablo Picasso and Aretha Franklin, the National Geographic series "Genius" (9 p.m. ABC, National Geographic, TV-14) presents "MLK/X," a joint biography of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X.

Timed to air during Black History Month, the eight-part biography aims to humanize both figures, recalling anecdotes from their youth and their marriages, departing from the kinds of plaster-saint hagiographies associated with both martyred civil rights leaders.

King (Kelvin Harrison Jr.) is first seen as a young man growing up uneasily in the shadow of his father, a renowned minister. Malcolm X's (Aaron Pierre) background is perhaps better known and has been detailed in the best-selling "Autobiography of Malcolm X," read by generations of readers.

After an early career in Boston's underworld, Malcolm embraced Islam while behind bars. He's seen here in the first episode leading a prison debate team against Ivy League competition, honing his oratorical skills in a stirring denunciation of the death penalty. While Malcolm X has been dead for nearly 60 years, his argument against the inherent injustices of capital punishment continues to resonate, particularly in light of the barbaric nitrogen gas "science experiment" conducted in Alabama just last week.

ABC follows up its broadcast of "Genius" with "Soul of a Nation Presents: X/onerated — The Murder of Malcolm X and 55 Years to Justice" (10:10 p.m.), a look at new evidence in the 1965 murder that cleared the name of Muhammad Abdul Aziz, a man who was wrongfully convicted of Malcolm X's assassination.

Peacock streams the three-part documentary profile "Kings From Queens: The Run DMC Story." It recalls how three young men from Hollis, Queens — Joseph "Rev Run" Simmons, Darryl "DMC" McDaniels, and Jason "Jam Master Jay" Mizell — became the unlikely ambassadors of rap/hip-hop to a much wider audience.

While there were certainly earlier pioneers of the music,



PEACOCK

The three-part documentary series "Kings From Queens: The RUN DMC Story" chronicles how three young men from Hollis, Queens — Joseph "Rev Run" Simmons, pictured, Darryl "DMC" McDaniels and Jason "Jam Master Jay" Mizell — became American hip-hop group Run DMC. The series begins streaming today on Peacock.

it's no exaggeration to suggest that Run DMC's fame represented the tipping point at which hip hop supplanted guitar-based rock as the preferred music of a younger generation. Their 1986 video collaboration with Aerosmith didn't just help them cross over to a wider (and whiter) audience, it pretty much announced that Aerosmith's genre had been eclipsed.

Part of Run DMC's appeal was that they became stars without ever embracing the trappings of celebrity. Rather, they never stopped presenting themselves as guys from Queens. In a way, they followed in the unlikely footsteps of other Queens-based musical acts, including the Ramones and the Shangri-Las, whose lead singer, Mary Weiss, died on Jan. 19.

Look for interviews with surviving members Simmons and McDaniels, who discuss, among other things, their reactions to the 2002 murder of Jam Master Jay.

Paramount+ imports the 10-episode South Korean thriller series "A Bloody Lucky Day."

Oh Taek (Lee Sung-min) is an optimistic cab driver whose fortunes change radically when a young man Geum Hyeok-soo (Yoo Yeon-seok) hails his cab and offers a lucrative fare to deliver him to a distant port. Conversation soon reveals that his passenger is a serial killer.

TONIGHT'S OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

• A strangulation case points to an experienced killer on "Law & Order" (8 p.m., NBC, TV-14).

• "Farmer Wants a Wife" (9 p.m., Fox, TV-PG) enters its second season of Carhartts and flow-ers. Country singer Jennifer Nettles is your host.

CULT CHOICE

After more than half a century, director Stanley Kubrick's 1968 sci-fi masterpiece "2001" (9 p.m., TCM, TV-PG) remains so iconic that its opening scenes inspired a cheeky homage in the 2023 "Barbie" movie.

SERIES NOTES

Georgie's spa weekend on "Young Sheldon" (8 p.m., CBS, r, TV-PG) * The season finale of

"Press Your Luck" (8 p.m., ABC, TV-PG) * Alberta's murder becomes entertaining on "Ghosts" (8:30 p.m., CBS, r, TV-PG) * On two helpings of "So Help Me Todd" (CBS, r, TV-14): Chuck needs a good lawyer (9 p.m.); Margaret's sick day (10 p.m.) * Victim support on "Law & Order: SVU" (9 p.m., NBC, TV-14) * Stabler returns to "Law & Order: Organized Crime" (10 p.m., NBC, TV-14).

LATE NIGHT

John Cena and Kwame Alexander are booked on "The Late Show With Stephen Colbert" (11:35 p.m., CBS) * Jimmy Fallon welcomes Sam Rockwell and Jack Whitehall on "The Tonight Show" (11:35 p.m., NBC) * Timothee Chalamet, Zendaya, Austin Butler, Florence Pugh and Benson Boone appear on "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" (11:35 p.m., ABC) * Larry David and Colleen Clark visit "Late Night With Seth Meyers" (12:35 a.m., NBC) * Taylor Tomlinson hosts Thom-as Lennon on "After Midnight" (12:35 a.m., CBS).

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