

Q&As with candidates for U.S. House of Representatives, District 6, Republican primary

We've asked what qualifies them and what they hope to do; Q&As for other seats will be published ahead of primary **A3**

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Sumter mayor, stakeholders address recent area violence

BY ALAYSHA MAPLE
alaysha@theitem.com

On the afternoon of Wednesday, May 29, mere miles from the heart of downtown Sumter inside the Birnie HOPE Center on South Purdy Street, Sumter Mayor David Merchant and community stakeholders dove into a conversation on how to address and eradicate the violence that has surged in the city.

The roundtable discussion featured faith leaders, including the Rev. Marion Newton and the Rev. Albert Sims; economic development and business leaders, such as Sumter Economic Development CEO Jay Schwedler and Greater

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A10

Sumter Chamber of Commerce President Chris Hardy; health care stakeholders, like Tandem Health Vice President of Business Development Curt Ackerman and Prisma Health Tuomey Foundation Manager Beth Lubert; education directors like Sumter School District Board of Trustees Chairman the Rev. Ralph Canty and several coaches from high school

SEE **VIOLENCE**, PAGE A12



An EFP mainline worker inspects a foam packaging product on Thursday inside the manufacturer's new facility in the I-20 Industrial Center.

BRUCE MILLS / THE SUMTER ITEM

Newest manufacturer, EFP, opens in Lee County

Industry plans fast growth model at Bishopville facility

BY BRUCE MILLS
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BISHOPVILLE — It was a long time coming, but Lee County's newest industrial employer is off and running.

A crowd of at least 50 dignitaries rolled out the red carpet here as Engineered Foam Packaging, a leader in the design and manufacturing of custom protective packaging, held its grand-opening ceremony Thursday in the I-20 Industrial Center near Interstate 20.

EFP — as the firm is known for short — actually started operations earlier this month and currently has 30 employ-

ees at the 117,000-square-foot facility at U.S. 15 North and Browntown Road, where it also has distribution operations.

For EFP, headquartered in Elkhart, Indiana, the Bishopville operation is its sixth facility and first in South Carolina.

According to company

SEE **EFP**, PAGE A9

Head of the Class of '24



PHOTOS BY ADAM FLASH / THE SUMTER ITEM

From left, Crestwood High School valedictorian Reymart Velasco, Lakewood High School valedictorian Lakira McCauley and Sumter High School valedictorian Jeshua Espiritu graduated last week and spoke with The Sumter Item about their high school years, their next steps and their goals for the future.

Sumter public school valedictorians say parents their biggest influencers, describe busy high school years

BY BRUCE MILLS
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Sumter School District's three valedictorians for the Class of 2024 all made straight A's throughout high school, survived their freshman

year in a pandemic and consider their parents their biggest influencers in life.

The top seniors from Lakewood, Crestwood and Sumter high schools — Lakira McCauley, Reymart Velasco and Jeshua Espiritu, respectively —

spoke this week to *The Sumter Item* on how a mix of school coming naturally and overachievement fueled their success and their immediate plans moving forward.

...

Lakewood High School senior Lakira McCauley ranked No. 1 in a class of 182 students this year with a 5.426 weighted GPA, which was a perfect 4.0 on the 4.0 scale.

SEE **VALEDICTORIANS**, PAGE A9

Sumter officials define list for what penny tax could pay for

BY BRYN EDDY
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Improvements to multiple parks, both the city of Sumter's downtown and that of

the town of Mayesville, road improvements and more are on the list for what the penny tax, if approved, might cover.

The 2024 Capital Penny Sales Tax Commission was the

brainpower behind creating the proposed list, and Sumter County Council has the power to vote up or down the list, and they cannot make changes to it, Chairman Jim McCain said

during the May 28, Sumter County Council meeting.

Sumter County officials named six locals to the 2024 Capital Penny Sales Tax Commission earlier this year.

Public documents detail what area each person represents as well as race and gender.

SEE **TAX**, PAGE A12

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DEATHS, B6

Tavares McFadden
Jerry Deans Evans Sr.
Raymond E. Williams
Gail Catherine Jackson
Claudis Lee Frazier Jr.
Cassandra P. Claude
William Charles Hatfield Jr.

Abie Dingle
Levan Stukes
David Hart
Gwendolyn Faye Nash
Milagros Rodriguez
Thomas Palka
Willie O'Brian Dean

Danni Lunsford Nunley
Catherine Jackson
Betty Condrey McLees
Stanley Brown
Edward L. Bick Jr.
Thomas Daniel Ardis
Elisha Montgomery

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SECOND FRONT

E-mail: pressrelease@theitem.com

BizTalk: PetSmart expected to open in Sumter in October



BRUCE MILLS / THE SUMTER ITEM

The Crossing at Camden Highway plaza is finally complete, as a PetSmart pet superstore chain is moving in beside Burlington. Both Hobby Lobby and Burlington opened in the plaza in 2021. According to Mimms Contracting Site Superintendent Michael Jolly, PetSmart plans to open in October. According to its corporate website, PetSmart sells pet food, pet supplies, pet accessories and small pets, and its biggest direct competitor in North America is Petco.



Sumter police seek public's help in locating 20-year-old suspect, 1 minor suspect in S. Guignard Drive shooting

19-year-old in custody

BY ALAYSHA MAPLE
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Sumter Police Department has identified a third suspect in the fatal shooting on South Guignard Drive.

Fernando Quintez Adams, 20, of Beckridge Drive, is wanted on charges of murder and attempted murder in connection to the killing of Tavares McFadden and injury of a passenger riding with McFadden on Monday, May 27, according to Tonyia McGirt, public information officer for the police department.

Officers are working to find Adams and a second suspect, a minor whose name has not been released. The other suspect, Curtis Jefferson Jr., 19, of Mayesville, is in custody at Sumter County Sheriff's Office Detention Center.

McFadden and the passenger were stopped at a traffic light at the intersection of Green Swamp Road and South Guignard Drive when gunshots fired from a white sedan, stopped alongside



PHOTO PROVIDED BY SUMTER POLICE DEPARTMENT

A white sedan was seen during a shooting the morning of May 27 at Green Swamp Road and South Guignard Drive that left Tavares McFadden dead and his passenger injured.



ADAMS SOUGHT



JEFFERSON IN CUSTODY

\$5,000 REWARD OFFERED

Anyone with information regarding this crime is asked to contact the Sumter Police Department immediately at (803) 436-2700. Tips can also be submitted by calling Crime Stoppers at 1-888-CRIME-SC, submitted online at p3tips.com or by using the P3 Tips app available for mobile devices.

A reward of \$5,000 is available for information leading to an arrest.

them, struck them both, according to the police department. The white sedan then sped off onto South Guignard Drive.

Sumter Adult Ed receives \$10K grant from Dollar General Literacy Foundation

STAFF REPORT

A \$10,000 grant from Dollar General Literacy Foundation recently awarded to Sumter Adult Education will be utilized to address digital literacy deficiencies throughout Sumter, according to a news release from Sumter School District. The grant is a part of the foundation's more than \$10.6 million donated to support adult, family and summer literacy programs in the 48 states in which Dollar General operates.

"Our literacy program at Sumter Adult Education is designed to provide personalized and accessible learning opportunities for adults in our community. From basic literacy skills to GED preparation and beyond, we strive to meet the diverse needs of our community. The generous support from the DGLF will enable us to expand our reach, enhance our resources and make a meaningful impact on the lives of adult learners in Sumter County," said Director of Sumter Adult Literacy Vanessa Smith-Canty.

According to the release, Sumter Adult Education served more than 350 adults and provided more than 24,000 hours of direct instruction to students this academic year.

"We believe individuals of all ages deserve access to a quality education, and the Dollar General Literacy Foundation is

thrilled to support thousands of learners across the country as they enrich their lives with literacy and education," said Denine Torr, executive director of the Dollar General Literacy Foundation. "This year's spring grant cycle is equally exciting as we surpass impacting more than 20 million individuals. We hope these funds provide resources needed to positively change students' lives, helping them to build a brighter future for themselves and generations to come."

The Dollar General Literacy Foundation supports organizations that increase access to educational programming, stimulate and enable innovation in the delivery of educational instruction and inspire a love of reading. Each year, DGLF awards funds to nonprofit organizations, schools and libraries within a 15-mile radius of a Dollar General store or distribution center to support adult, family, summer and youth literacy programs.

The foundation also offers a student referral program for individuals interested in learning how to read, speak English or prepare for the high school equivalency exam. Referrals to a local organization that provides free literacy services are available online at www.dgliteracy.org/program-locator/ or through referral cards found in the Learn to Read brochures that are available at the cash register of every Dollar General store.



SMITH-CANTY

Sumter sheriff's office says microwave mistake cause of deadly fire on Kolb Road

BY ALAYSHA MAPLE
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Sumter County Sheriff's Office released an update on the fatal fire that occurred on Thursday, May 23, on Kolb Road.

The victim was identified as Thommie Ruth Jackson, 67, of Kolb Road, according to Coroner Robbie Baker.

Deputies with the sheriff's office responded to a Kolb Road residence at about 8:30 p.m. last Thursday. Sumter Fire Department stated initial reports indicated there were no occupants in the home; however, deputies and firefighters arrived to find one person trapped inside.

Smoke was seen coming from the home and screams for help were heard coming from inside, according to Mark Bordeaux, public information officer for the sheriff's office.

The sister of Jackson, who also lived in the home, managed to escape and directed deputies to a window where she thought

Jackson remained. Firefighters continued to work on the rescue and on extinguishing the fire, Bordeaux said.

Witness statements indicated one of the residents attempted to warm a sandwich in packaging containing foil in the microwave. The sandwich wrapper burst into flames, and attempts to extinguish the fire were unsuccessful.

State Fire Marshal's Office and Sumter Fire Department determined the fire was accidental and its cause was "placing an aluminum foil wrapper inside the microwave and poor living conditions that hindered the extinguishing of the fire and facilitating its spread," according to Bordeaux.

Jackson was removed from the home, and Sumter EMS worked to save her life. She was taken to Prisma Health Tuomey Hospital, where she died. The cause of death is pending autopsy results at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston.

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Get to know the candidates for U.S. House of Representatives, District 6, Republican Primary

BY BRUCE MILLS
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Two Republicans will face each other in the June primary to vie for the chance to then face longtime incumbent U.S. Rep. Jim Clyburn and unopposed nominees for other parties for the District 6 congressional seat in the capitol.

South Carolina's 6th Congressional District covers downtown Sumter and the historic residential district and Swan Lake area up to where Main Street and North Pike East meet, South and East Sumter; Clarendon County; Columbia; Kingstree; Lake City; Orangeburg; Denmark, Allendale; Ridgeland; Hardeeville; and Charleston. Clyburn, who was born in Sumter, was elected to Congress in 1993.

For the primary, Duke Buckner and Justin Scott will be on the Republican ballot. The winner will face Clyburn (Democrat), Gregg Marcel Dixon (United Citizens), Joseph Oddo (Alliance) and Michael Simpson (Libertarian).

Early voting for the primaries is open now through June 7, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m., at Sumter County Courthouse and Delaine Elementary School, Monday-Friday. Polls countywide will be open 7 a.m.-7 p.m. on Tuesday, June 11.

Candidates were given the same questions, which are answered below.

Duke Buckner

Why are you running?

U.S. Rep. Jim Clyburn (D-S.C.) has been in office for more than 30 years. He will be 84 years old in July, and it is time for new leadership. The 6th



BUCKNER

Congressional District has been stagnant economically since Mr. Clyburn has been in office. Despite having high rank and influence in Congress, his district remains the poorest in South Carolina and one of the poorest in the country. While

the rest of the state is booming and doing well, the "forgotten" counties of Allendale, Bamberg, Colleton, Calhoun, Clarendon, Hampton, Jasper, Williamsburg and parts of Orangeburg, Florence, Charleston, Richland, Dorchester and Sumter as a whole have lost population and good-paying jobs. Young people have little opportunity; therefore, some leave the district and sometimes even the entire state to find a decent job to take care of their family. Educationally, our schools are not performing as well as they should. As a result, crime has increased and is a major problem. I am running to change all that — to put us at the top and not continually remain at the bottom.

Have you run for political office before? If so, explain:

I won a seat on Walterboro City Council in 2009 and ran for U.S. Senate in 2020. I also was the Republican party's nominee for the 6th Congressional District in 2022 when we received the highest percentage of votes any Republican has ever received in the 6th District at 37.8%.

How long have you lived in the district that you are running for office for?

I have lived in my district for pretty much my whole life outside of law school. I moved to south Florida in 2003 to earn my law degree and practiced there for a short time. I came back home to Walterboro in 2009 and have lived there ever since.

Current job/profession:

I am a practicing attorney in Walterboro. I am licensed to practice law in South Carolina and Florida. I started Buckner Law Firm, P.A. in 2012. In August, we will have been in business for 12 years.

What makes you qualified for the seat?

I believe many of the problems facing District 6

can be solved by getting people and groups to sit down and work together. I am a licensed attorney in South Carolina and a trained mediator. I was a middle and high school English teacher and owned and operated a weekly newspaper. I know how important planning is for success. I believe I can be a catalyst for positive change and also be a positive role model that can bring people together to help come up with solutions for the problems facing the 6th District. As an attorney, I am also an advocate for my clients and will be the same for the citizens of the 6th District in Washington.

What challenges/concerns do you see in your district and how do you intend to improve them?

I. The state of the economy is a major issue facing the district. "Bidenomics" has resulted in higher prices for food, gas, housing and other necessities. As a result, the economic condition in the 6th District has not improved but has gotten worse. To bring jobs and economic growth back to the 6th Congressional District, we must first reduce the corporate tax rate, not increase it to 21% as proposed by the Biden administration. Burdensome taxes and regulations on businesses take away their incentive to grow, expand and hire more people. The same is true for nonprofits who find it extremely difficult and challenging to complete grant applications that are hard to fill out. Second, we need to secure our borders. Some illegal immigrants are taking jobs and resources that should be for citizens. Last, we must bring back manufacturing jobs by providing incentives for companies to locate in the 6th District. Good-paying jobs belong to the 6th District, and as your congressman, I am going to fight to make sure we get them and more money for nonprofit organizations.

II. Crime is another serious problem facing the district. Many people do not feel safe in their homes and neighborhoods. Shootings, murders, robberies and thefts have become commonplace. In many instances, illegal drugs and substance abuse are factors in the crimes being committed. Therefore, to fix the problem, I would support a zero-tolerance approach to illegal drugs that poison our communities. In addition, I would support increased funding for drug and alcohol abuse centers including mental health facilities where people can get help.

III. Lastly, we must improve education for our children. Currently, too many students cannot read or are not testing on grade level. We can improve education by implementing school choice so that the money follows the child and not the institution. Children should not be forced to stay in a failing school. In addition, we must increase standards and focus on reading, writing and arithmetic. Last, we must look to abolish the U.S. Department of Education so that we can raise teacher pay, reduce class sizes, enforce discipline and ensure parents have a say in their child's education.

What successes have you seen in your district that you want to build on?

District 6 contains the I-95 corridor, one of the busiest interstates in the country. However, because of neglect, many parts of it have fallen in desperate need of repair. As your congressman, I will work to expand I-95 to three lanes, resurface areas that have pot holes and beautify the landscape to make it pristine. In addition, we have great colleges and universities in the 6th District. I would like to coordinate efforts with industry leaders and school officials to make sure that graduates are obtaining marketable skills. Last, we need a representative who will look at the big picture and work to get our district booming. South Carolina's economy is ranked 22nd out of the 50 states, according to U.S. News and World Report. It is time for the 6th District to enjoy the economic prosperity the rest of the state has enjoyed.

Are you actively involved in the community? How so?

I have been active in my local church for many years. In addition, I have supported the athletic department and the band program at Colleton County High School. Furthermore, I have represented the good people of the 6th District in legal matters for the last 11 years as a practicing attorney.

I want to utilize my skills as a former English teacher, newspaperman and attorney to serve the people of the 6th Congressional District.

Anything else about yourself you want to add?

I believe that the days of African Americans voting straight Democratic Party ticket are over! In addition, I have come to the conclusion that the Democratic Party of today is not the Democratic Party of our parents. Progressive Democrats have taken over the party and have swung it so far to the left that it no longer represents the values and beliefs of the African American community. Furthermore, I believe the Democratic Party has become hostile, condescending and demeaning towards Black people. Its leaders use "shame" as a political tactic to keep Black people in line, and their policies keep Black people in economic slavery. Mr. Clyburn and his progressive Democratic party have had control over the 6th Congressional District for more than 30 years, and under his leadership, I have watched them run it into the ground. The citizens deserve better representation, and I plan to give it to them as their next congressman.

...

Justin Scott

Why are you running?

To effect change to leave this country a better place for the children of the future. Preserve values that make America great.



SCOTT

Have you run for political office before? If so, explain:

No

How long have you lived in the district that you are running for

office for?

Seven years

Current job/profession:

Business owner — welder/fabricator

What makes you qualified for the seat?

Qualification is set forth by the U.S. Constitution. I meet all requirements to hold office for the U.S. House of Representatives. Other than that, I believe in limited federal government that follows the Constitution. Beyond that, all other decisions should go to the states since they can better make rules that support their communities.

What challenges/concerns do you see in your district and how do you intend to improve them?

Low income/poverty and education. Wages have been stagnant for decades, and that is something that needs to be addressed, especially with the current rate of inflation.

What successes have you seen in your district that you want to build on?

N/A

Are you actively involved in the community? How so?

Currently not as much as I would like. Most of my time has been focused on running a start-up business for the last four years.

Anything else about yourself you want to add?

I'm here as a candidate that would like to support policy decisions that benefit the middle- and lower-class working families. I feel today we have been left behind in most of the decisions that politicians have been making as of late.

Clerk over Murdaugh trial spent thousands on bonuses, meals and gifts, ethics complaint says

COLUMBIA (AP) — South Carolina officials have filed 76 counts of ethics violations against the court clerk who handled the Alex Murdaugh murder trial.

The 25 pages of allegations accuse former Colleton County Clerk of Court Becky Hill of allowing a photo of Murdaugh in a holding cell to be taken to promote her book on the trial, giving herself bonuses and using county money to buy dozens of lunches for her staff, prosecutors and a vendor.

Hill also struck a deal with a documentary maker to use the county courtroom in exchange for promoting her book on the trial, which later she admitted had plagiarized passages, according to the South Carolina Ethics Commission complaint earlier this month.

The commission will hold a hearing similar to a trial in December on the accusations unless Hill and her lawyer settle the case before then. Hill could have to reimburse the expenses and face thousands of dollars or more in fines. And if the commission thinks she broke any laws, they can forward the information to prosecutors.

A criminal investigation into whether Hill tampered with the Murdaugh jury or misused her office continues, the State Law Enforcement Division said Thursday.

Hill resigned in March during the last year of her four-year term, citing the public scrutiny of Murdaugh's trial and wanting to spend time with her grandchildren. She hasn't publicly addressed the ethics allegations, and her lawyer didn't return a message Thursday.

Murdaugh was convicted of killing his wife and younger son after a six-week trial in Colleton County last year.

Murdaugh is appealing his conviction and life without parole sentence in part accusing Hill of trying to influence jurors to vote guilty and being biased against Murdaugh for her book. Murdaugh is also serving decades in prison for admitting to stealing millions of dollars from settlements for clients who suffered horrible injuries or deaths and from his family's law firm.

An initial appeal was denied, but the judge said she wasn't sure Hill told the truth about her dealings with jurors and was "attracted by the siren call of celebrity."

The ethics allegations against Hill say she bought lunches for prosecutors and then paid herself back with county money. One count said she spent \$543.89 for food and alcohol for a going-away lunch for an employee in a local prosecutor's office.

None of the allegations mention spending for public defenders or defense attorneys.

Hill gave herself nearly \$10,000 in bonuses from federal money that is meant to improve child support collection but has few rules on how it is spent, according to the complaint.

The former clerk used public money to buy meals for her staff, her family, judges, court employees and others 36 times. She reimbursed herself for gifts bought for jurors and her staff on Valentine's Day and for her employees on Mother's Day, Father's Day and Easter, the complaint said.

Expenses included \$481 for a 50th birthday party for a staffer and dog food, bones and a pet bed for another, ethics officials said. In all, Hill is accused of spending nearly \$20,000 in county money in ways she shouldn't, according to the complaint.



PHOTOS BY BRYN EDDY / THE SUMTER ITEM

Retired Maj. Gen. Scott Zobrist speaks at the dedication ceremony for the on-site memorial honoring veterans at Sumter Historic Cemetery on Tuesday, May 28.

Veterans honored with Sumter Historic Cemetery memorial dedication ceremony

BY BRYN EDDY
bryn@theitem.com

On Tuesday, May 28, at Sumter Historic Cemetery, there was a dedication ceremony for the new on-site memorial honoring veterans, both local and worldwide.



The ceremony featured the Shaw Air Force Base color guard raising the flag and providing a three-man gun salute, and retired Maj. Gen. Scott Zobrist spoke.

More than 2,000 veterans are buried at the historic cemetery, and it has been confirmed that there are veterans there from all but one of the major wars fought by the United States. The project to bring this memorial to fruition started in 2023, and the May 28 ceremony brought that chapter to a close with the memorial's dedication to the veterans buried there.

There are multiple elements to the memorial which either honor specific people or commemorate sacrifices made in entire wars. There are bricks memorializing individuals and larger parts dedicated to each major war. There are plenty of blank bricks as well, which are open to engraving to honor more veterans.

"In conjunction with the memorial, a 3-foot brick path has been added around the perimeter to allow people to memorialize family and friends. Engraved bricks will cost \$75. What remains after engraving costs will be used to fund additional memorial projects and historic features," according to the Sumter Cemetery website.

To start the process of participating in the memorial brick program, fill out a form at <http://sumtercemetery.org>.



The ER on a hot night with a full moon ...

During my seminary days, I was a hospital chaplain one summer. Unfortunately, I drew my first night on call over Memorial Day weekend. University Hospital was the Level III trauma center for central Kentucky, so all the gunshot victims, car accident survivors and drug overdoses came to our emergency room.

As I reported for duty, one of the nurses warned me it would be a busy night. "It's Memorial Day weekend and a full moon," she said. "Plus, it will stay in the 80s tonight. That's three strikes. Don't expect to get any rest tonight." She was right.

The Rev. Dr. Clay Smith

I had been on duty for about an hour when the first accident victims came in. There were screams of pain as the doctors and nurses swarmed around the stretchers. The man had a broken leg; the woman had lacerations to her head and fractured ribs. At the appropriate time (after they gave them something for the pain), I prayed with them. They both told me their accident was a wake-up call from God. They were stitched up, put in casts and discharged. I hope they stayed awake for God.

The next trauma case was two guys in a bar fight. Lots of stitches. Other folks were in the ER waiting room with various aches and pains. One man had an ice bag he held against his head.

It was about 9 p.m. when I was paged up to labor and delivery. There was a woman in the stirrups, sweating and panting. An anxious young man by her side looked at me and asked, "Are you the preacher?" I told him yes, deciding this was not the moment to distinguish between "chaplain" and "preacher." He said, "We want to get married." She let out a soft moan. I replied, "That's probably a good idea." He looked at me as if I wasn't getting the message. "Can you do it now?" he asked. She moaned again, a little louder this time.

Never in my short ministerial career had I been asked to perform a wedding with such urgency. I asked if they had a license. This earnest young man, in all sincerity, asked, "You need a license to get married?" I explained being married in the eyes of God and in the eyes of the state, but I kept my explanation short. The woman's moans were louder and coming more often. It turned out he wanted to be sure the baby had his last name. When he discovered they could give the baby his last name without being married, his anxiety diminished.

It was midnight when I made it back down to the ER. I was walking by a gurney when a resident grabbed me and said, "Hold this guy down." They were about to do a gastric lavage to see if there was internal bleeding. I watched as they sliced open the man's skin, then inserted a tube to see if there was any blood. This particular ministerial duty was not covered in seminary. I had dreams about that procedure for a long time. Once they packed off the tube, the resident tapped me on my shoulder and



said, "Nice work, Chap." That was the only time I have ever been praised for my skill of holding people down.

I looked in on a drug addict who was in restraints. He was coming off a bad trip and didn't want to talk to the chaplain.

In another bay, there was a body with a sheet over it. The doctor saw me and said, "Come with me, Chap. I'm about to tell the family he didn't make it." We walked into the consultation room, and I saw the anxious eyes of the family scan the doctor's face. They were crying before he started to speak. He told them the nature of the injuries, and how they had tried to save their loved one. But, the doctor said, he succumbed to his injuries. An old man, maybe the deceased's father, said, "What does succumbed mean? The doctor hesitated, and it fell to me to say, "It means he passed away." Tears ran down the old man's face. I prayed with the family, knowing my words would not take away the pain. They had started the day with plans and chores, and before the next day dawned, their lives had changed forever. The family's pastor showed up shortly thereafter, and it was plain to see he was better able to minister to that family than I was.

At about 2 a.m. a young girl was brought in to have her stomach pumped. She had swallowed a bunch of pills to prove a point to her boyfriend. When I talked to her, she said she couldn't believe she was so stupid. She hadn't really wanted to kill herself, she just wanted him to pay attention to her.

There were a few more car accident victims that night, one burn case from someone whose grill got away from him (who grills at 3 a.m.?). Around 5 a.m., things started to slow down. The guy with the gastric lavage had the tube removed and was headed upstairs to a room. The drug overdose guy let me pray with him. I checked back with the couple in labor and delivery. The baby had arrived and was doing fine. There was no further mention of marriage.

My relief showed up at 8 a.m., and I went back to my dorm room, exhausted. Before I drifted off to a fitful sleep, I thought about all I had seen on that hot, full-moon night. This thought crossed my mind: Jesus loved every one of those people I saw. He loved the accident victims, the drug overdose girl, the odd couple in labor and delivery, the guy who didn't make it, his family, plus all the doctors and nurses, and the very tired student chaplain. He was at work in each of those lives. The hot, full-moon night didn't chase him away.

Friendship reforged goes silent again after spending day together

DEAR ABBY: I am a male scientist at a large university. Four years ago, I was surprised to receive an email from someone with whom I'd been

friends many years ago, when he was a postdoctoral fellow in our department. We were good friends back then, but we lost contact when he moved east and quit research. He now works in computer security. After he reinitiated contact, we resumed the friendship, with regular phone calls and emails.

Two years ago, he invited me to spend the day with him and his wife (whom I'd never met), when I visited my family on the East Coast. Since my family lives near him, I took him up on the offer and spent a very pleasant day with them at their home.

Abby, I never heard from him again! After sending several emails and a postcard thanking him and his wife for being gracious hosts, there has been silence ever since. Incidentally, we're both Jewish, as is his wife. During the years before he reconnected with me, he became Orthodox and very observant, which I am not. Any thoughts about what is going on and what, if anything, I can do about it?

BAFFLED IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR BAFFLED: What might have happened during your visit with this old/new friend is anybody's guess. I doubt your lack of religiosity has anything to do with this. Perhaps his wife discouraged further contact. Because he never explained why he was withdrawing, you may never know. But as things stand, I don't think there's anything you can do about it. If you hear from him in another few years, feel free to ask him.

DEAR ABBY: I have been in my relationship for almost five years and believe that "nothing is constant but change." My partner has caviar taste with tuna fish money. They like expensive things but can't afford to maintain them. They rob from Peter to pay Paul, make purchases with high-interest charge cards and complain constantly they don't have any extra money. They are presently looking for another job to make more money to spend.

I live on a fixed income. I'm trying to control spending but end up in arguments about not having money to do things. My partner has mastered the art of spending other people's money, including mine, which I think is selfish. Any suggestions about how to work out these money issues?

ALL ABOUT THE MONEY

DEAR ALL ABOUT THE MONEY: You and your partner have very different values when it comes to finances. **THEY AREN'T GOING TO CHANGE.** This is one of the subjects that most frequently causes couples to break up. (Others include politics, sex, religion and child rearing.) My suggestion: End the relationship before this person causes you to go bankrupt.

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.)

Hurricane season has begun; get ready now

BY FEMA

ATLANTA — With the recent announcement of new coastal hurricane evacuation zones in South Carolina, it's more important than ever for residents to stay informed as hurricane season begins.

FEMA and South Carolina Emergency Management Division urge all South Carolina residents to prepare themselves, their families and their property now, whether or not they live in a coastal area.

"Hurricanes are not just a coastal problem," said Robert Samaan, FEMA Region 4 administrator, cautioning against complacency from non-coastal communities. "Heavy rain, wind, floodwaters and even tornadoes happen far inland from where a hurricane or tropical storm makes landfall. That's why it's so important for everyone to know what threats they face and how best to prepare."

Forecasts predict a very active season, with global weather patterns and historically high ocean temperatures creating enhanced conditions for tropical development.

"Given the approaching busy hurricane season, it is crucial for South Carolina residents to take proactive steps in preparing their homes and families," said Kim Stenson, South Carolina Emergency Management director. "This is the time to gather supplies, thoroughly review your emergency plans and con-

'This is the time to gather supplies, thoroughly review your emergency plans and confirm your evacuation zone.'

KIM STENSON

S.C. Emergency Management director

firm your evacuation zone."

There are other simple steps South Carolinians can take now to get prepared:

- Find your hurricane evacuation zone at <https://hurricane.sc/> and assess your risk;
- Visit Hurricane.SC for step-by-step emergency planning in your state;
- Evacuate if told to do so. Text SHELTER to 43362 to find nearby emergency shelters in case of evacuation; and
- Download the FEMA App at <https://www.ready.gov/fema-app> to receive real-time weather emergency alerts for up to five different locations.

Bottom line: Don't put off your family's safety — get prepared for hurricane season now. Find more information at Ready.Gov/Hurricanes in English or Ready.Gov/ES/Hurricanes in Spanish.



Dotte McKenzie

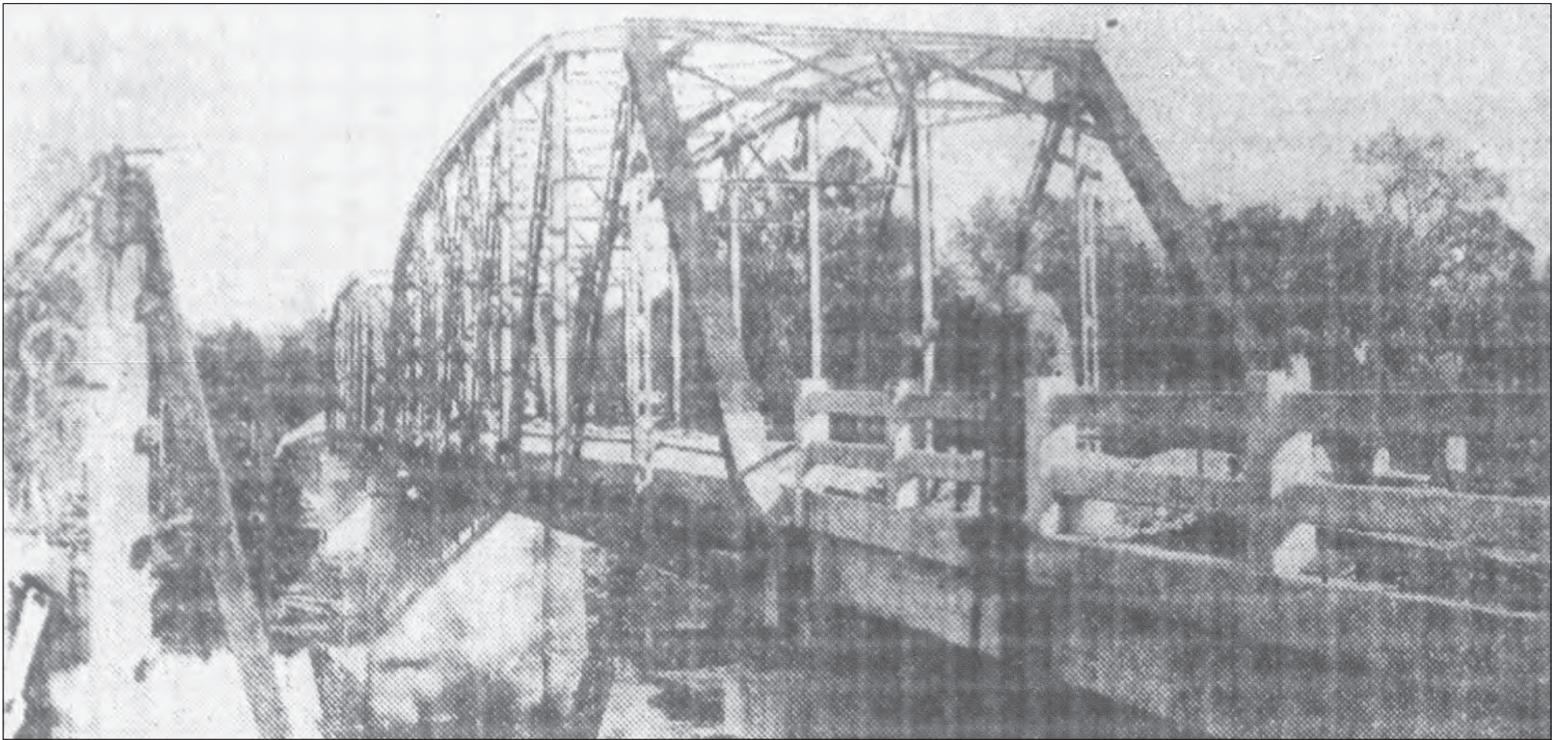
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SUMTER ITEM FILE PHOTOS

The Wateree Bridge structure was completed in late April 1923 and was scheduled to be open to traffic upon completion of the adjoining earth fills on each side of the river. The bridge was 2,037 feet, 8 inches, and was a Federal Aid Project of Richland and Sumter counties jointly.

New Wateree bridge provided convenient highway route

“Businesses will be suspended in Sumter at noon and the balance of the day will be devoted to celebrating the formal opening of the Wateree River bridge at Garner’s Ferry, which is the connecting highway link on the most direct route between the eastern and western divisions of South Carolina, the state heretofore having been separated by the almost impassable Water-



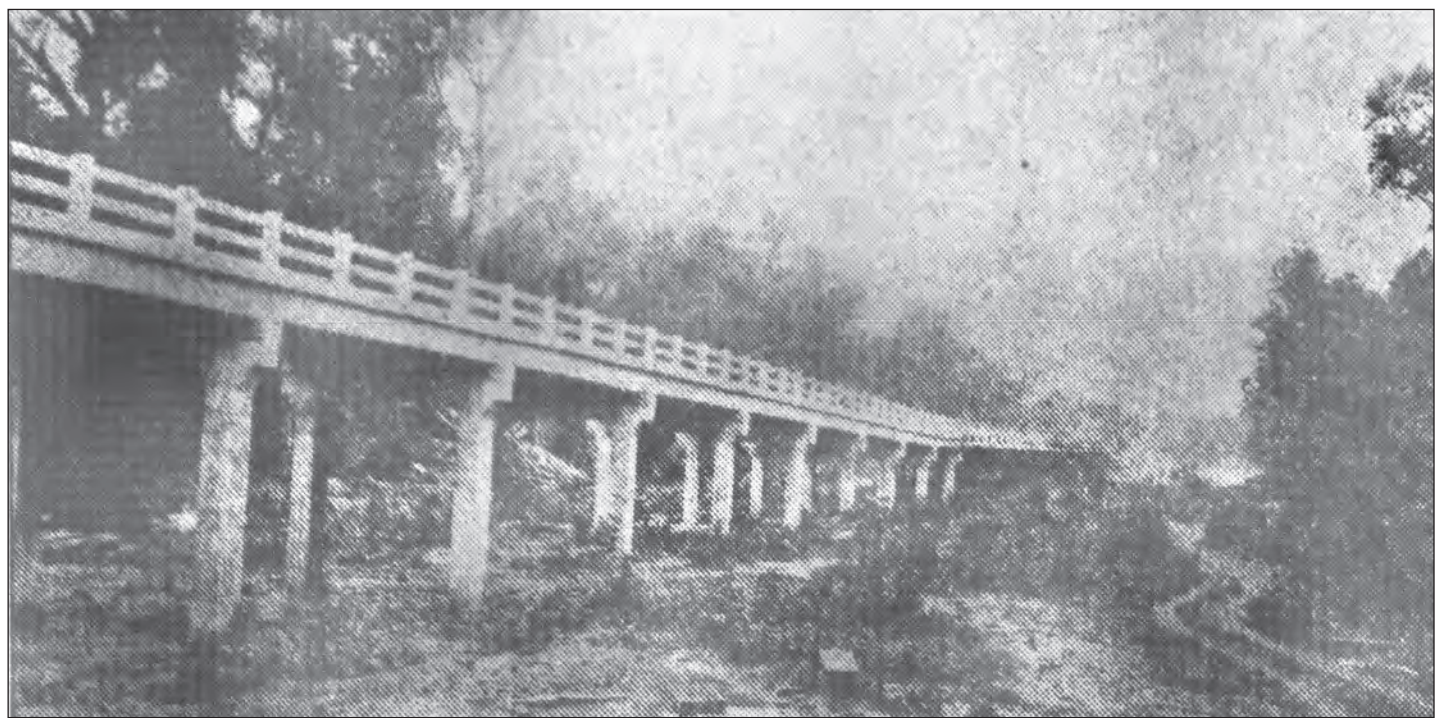
Sammy Way
REFLECTIONS

tee-Santee river from the foot hills at Camden to the sea coast,” *The Sumter Daily Item* reported July 11, 1923.

Reflections revisits the construction of a highway and bridge which provided a solution to a major travel issue between Sumter and Columbia. “The construction of this new bridge across the Wateree swamp came about through a mutual agreement between Sumter and Richland counties.” The information and photos used to prepare this piece were obtained from *The Item* archives.

The Sumter Daily Item in May 1923 reported that the new bridge to be constructed to replace Garner’s Ferry was “a concrete and steel structure measuring 2,037 feet in length, comprised of two 168-foot steel truss river spans on concrete piers, twenty-five 36 ½-foot reinforced concrete beam spans with concrete supports on wooden pile foundations, and forty-nine 16-foot panels of creosoted timber trestle.” The highway commission recommended that the Sumter contract be awarded to Simons & Mayrant of Charleston, low bidders. This construction was a federal aid project with Sumter and Richland counties jointly. The cost of this project (bridge) was approximately \$150,000. The cost of the bridge as it approached from the Richland side was \$20,000 with the county paying half and half being paid by the highway department. On the Sumter side, the cost was approximately \$16,000 with half of this amount paid by Sumter County. The approach to the bridge on the Sumter side was slightly over four miles long and built for temporary use. The plan included building up the approach so that it would not be affected by high water from the Wateree swamp.

The Item in 1923 further reported that “before the bridge was built, the distance from Columbia to Sumter, by way of Camden, was 63 miles. After the construction was completed, the distance was reduced to 40 miles. The bridge itself, as was previously noted, was constructed at a cost of \$150,000 while the approaches from Sumter and Richland were estimated to cost \$35,000 or \$40,000. The bridge and approaches were built by



The concrete trestle approaches to the Wateree River bridge are seen on the Richland side of the river in April 1923.

the two counties with federal aid under the supervision of the S.C. Highway Department. Each county furnished half its share of funds, and this sum was matched by the government in accordance with the usual procedure for federal aid.”

The roads through the swamp, though passable, were not yet fitted for quick traveling. “Capt. J. Roy Pennell announced that about 30 minutes was necessary to travel from high land of one county to that of the other, but no one would complain at that when the bridge is opened. The bridge linked two of the richest sections of the state and was of great importance to the residents of the two districts, many of whom often have expressed the wish for the existence of such a structure.”

The Item reported, “Work on this project took more than two years ... with many delays encountered in various quarters as rain proved a setback in the approaches on the Sumter side, where engineers had to traverse several miles of low swamp land that was often covered with high water.”

The old bridge, constructed in 1922-23, widened in 1938, was considered adequate for two-lane traffic and continued to carry traffic through the swamp until a new structure was built. The engineers made it known that the road through the swamp posed a serious obstacle to safe and quick travel. This issue would be addressed at a later date, requiring movement of large amounts of earth, time and expenditure.



The bridge over the Wateree River is seen under construction during the 1920s. A “spring freshet” had the water level up to the bridge. Bridge engineer Ambrose Gonzales is seen standing on the bridge.



ABOVE: The Wateree bridge is demolished in January 1986.

LEFT: When rain fell, engineers had to use small boats and canoes to make inspection trips along the roadbed.

2 Sumter agribusinesses are awarded grants in ACRE Advanced Entrepreneurship program

STAFF REPORT

Two Sumter agribusinesses were among 12 South Carolina businesses awarded grants by the South Carolina Department of Agriculture's Agribusiness Center for Research and Entrepreneurship (ACRE) as part of its Advanced Entrepreneurship program.

The finalists presented to a panel of judges on May 15 and were scored based on their business plans, a five-minute video and their demonstrated history of business success.

Included in the \$200,000 that was awarded were Oswego Flowers and Bradford Farms, both of Sumter County. In addition to funding, the awardees will also receive access to a network of business advisors and professional assistance with further state and federal grant applications, according to a news release from SCDA.

Oswego Flowers, which focuses on growing unusual cut flower varieties, will use the grant to help purchase a larger greenhouse to extend the growing season of cut flowers to year-round production and begin shifting into wholesale production of cut flowers.

Bradford Farms, which grows, processes and markets its own heirloom crops and acts as a micro-distributor providing South Carolina-grown produce to restaurants in North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia, will use the grant money for mechanized wash stations, mechanical choppers and cold storage with forklift access.

Other grant recipients in the state are:

— **Dragonfly Creek** (Colleton County), a diversified market farm in Walterboro growing seasonal vegetables, herbs, fruits, cut flowers and chicken eggs. As they continue to grow, they plan to develop a weekly Community Supported Agriculture program for Walterboro-area residents. They plan to use ACRE funds to invest in wildlife fencing to protect their crops and drill another well to expand irrigation.

— **Blue Ridge Rabbit Meat Co.** is a family run rabbit farm in Wellford (Spartanburg County) that raises and processes rabbits, shipping the high-quality meat to customers across the country. The company plans to use ACRE funding to add heating and cooling systems throughout their barn.

— **Crossroads Processing** (Lexington County) was founded in Leesville in 2022 with a focus on deer processing but quickly expanded into processing different kinds of meat, including livestock, to address gaps in the local market. Their goals for the company are to increase direct-to-consumer processing, increase local meat processing infrastructure and to shrink the gap between farmers and consumers.

— **Lowcountry Fungi** is an indoor farm on Johns Island (Charleston County) supplying culinary and medicinal mushrooms to restaurants and wholesale customers. The company recently launched a "mushroom coffee" that blends local coffee with fungi grown on the farm. With the ACRE grant, they plan to expand into another

warehouse unit to expand production and add a certified kitchen.

— **Farm in the Wildwood** (Greenville County) uses eco-friendly, no-till and regenerative agricultural methods to grow baby greens, herbs and various vegetables for customers including restaurants in the Greenville area, CSA members and a seasonal farm-stand, as well as agritourism offerings. With the ACRE grant, they intend to make facility improvements, improve marketing and expand their product offerings.

— **The Pickled Pepper People** (Greenville County) makes spicy slaw from fresh vegetables that are locally and sustainably sourced, using a traditional Haitian family recipe. This minority-owned business will use the ACRE grant money for equipment, marketing and social media, and shared kitchen expenses.

— **Growing Green Family Farms** (Greenville County) supplies fresh produce to the Upstate region, using regenerative agricultural practices through compost and interplanting. They aim to expand their Good Agricultural Practices-certified packing shed and walk-in cooler, with which they can increase their own production and support other farmers in need of a food safety-certified space.

— After taking over a pecan farm from their parents, the younger generation of **Yon Family Farms** quickly increased yield through improvements to irrigation and equipment. They operate a retail store in Ridge Spring (Saluda County) that sells pecans and

pecan products while also supporting other local farms by selling local goods from producers across South Carolina. Yon will construct a new permanent freezer space to improve access and inventory management.

— **Heartworks Farm** (Lexington County) is a specialty crop farm producing tomatoes, microgreens and cut flowers. They intend to build on a multi-functional packing and processing building with a dedicated processing area, cold storage and a flexible space for educational workshops and farm events.

— **Hull and Husk** (Beaufort County) uses locally sourced peanut shells, pecan shells, white oak and coffee grounds to produce pellets for wood-burning grills and animal feed. With the help of the ACRE grant, they intend to buy packaging equipment, an air purification system and a drum dryer for materials used in pellet production.

"Every year, I'm so impressed by the creativity, drive and diversity of the entrepreneurs who compete as part of the ACRE Advanced Entrepreneurship program," said ACRE Executive Director Kyle Player in the release.

ACRE was founded in 2018 to help identify and nurture new ideas and businesses in the Palmetto State's agribusiness sector. ACRE also partners with Clemson Extension to offer a fall curriculum program to train and mentor beginning agricultural entrepreneurs and prepare them to seek advanced award funding. To learn more, visit acre-sc.com.

SCDNR biologist recognized as Recovery Champion for work on rare marsh bird

BY SCDNR

When biologist Christy Hand first came to the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources in 2011, she had never heard of the black rail; almost no one in South Carolina had.

Understanding the rare, disappearing marsh bird quickly became one of the centerpieces of her career — and in time, she established one of the country's foremost research and conservation programs for black rails.

Now, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has honored her work with a 2023 Recovery Champion award. Each year, the service recognizes employees and partners for outstanding efforts to conserve and protect endangered and threatened species of fish, wildlife and plants. Hand is this year's Southeast Region Champion, about whom the service wrote the following:

"For nearly a decade, Christy Hand has been at the forefront of conservation and recovery efforts for the federally threatened Eastern black rail, conducting cutting-edge research, designing and implementing comprehensive monitoring programs, informing habitat restoration initiatives and increasing public awareness among many other activities. Hand's research on the



PHOTO PROVIDED

SCDNR biologist Christy Hand serves as the agency's wading and marsh bird biologist.

breeding ecology and molt phenology of the rail in South Carolina has filled critical knowledge gaps for the subspecies and developed methodologies that are now the standard of research."

The Eastern black rail is a dark, sparrow-sized marsh bird that inhabits coastal states from New Jersey to Texas, as well as inland in Colorado. Historically, the species was far more widespread — but habitat loss and other threats have dramatically reduced its population. In 2020, the service listed the Eastern black rail as federally threatened under the Endangered Species Act.



CHRISTY HAND / SCDNR, TAKEN UNDER SCDNR RESEARCH PERMIT BB-20-06

A male Eastern black rail offers an insect to a female during courtship.

Coastal South Carolina remains a bright spot for the species in the Southeast, but Hand's pioneering research has shown just how precarious that position is. In 2021, her team published findings from a camera trap study that identified that molting, when the birds grow new feathers and temporarily become flightless, coincides with hurricane season. As coastal storm and flooding events become increasingly frequent and severe, molting presents an especially vulnerable time of year for black rails.

With the knowledge gained

from their camera trap work, Hand and her team have now begun to test different ways to manage habitat for black rails on both public and private lands.

Fortunately, Hand is no longer alone in her efforts to understand and protect these elusive marsh birds. Thanks in large part to her work, the species is familiar to far more South Carolinians these days, many of whom have become passionate advocates for the bird. A new working group led by Hand, South Carolina Black Rails, has begun mobilizing the energy of a team of

public and private organizations and people who are dedicated to black rail conservation in the state.

"Any species would be lucky to have Christy Hand as an advocate in its corner," said Morgan Wolf, fish and wildlife biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Ecological Services Recovery Planning Team. "She has a unique ability to build consensus and buy-in for the Eastern black rail from a variety of stakeholders by exemplifying humility, capability, resilience and kindness."

Luckily for cooks and gardeners, some herbs come back year after year

BY JESSICA DAMIANO

Associated Press

If you like to cook, odds are you're painfully aware of the price of herbs at the supermarket. But for the cost of a 1- or 2-ounce plastic clamshell packet, you can buy a plant that will produce aromatic herbs for your kitchen all summer long — and even year after year.

Perennial herbs are among the easiest edibles to grow at home. All they require is sunlight (with some shade provided in the Deep South), modest amounts of water (more during hot, dry spells) and well-draining soil. They typically don't even need fertilizer.

WHERE TO PLANT THEM?

You can plant a dedicated herb garden or use herbs as edging plants in your perennial flower beds; many of them are pretty enough. Consider sage's fuzzy, purple-tinged leaves,



JESSICA DAMIANO VIA AP

This May 16 image provided by Jessica Damiano shows perennial onion chives growing in a Long Island, New York, garden.

onion chives' purple spring flowers or garlic chives' white summer blooms. Heck, just stick them wherever you have room, as long as the sun can

reach them.

My thyme, oregano, chives, sage, tarragon and Roman chamomile fill most of a 4-by-4-foot raised bed near the back deck steps, leaving just enough room for me to tuck in some annual herbs. All are cold-hardy down to zone 4, with chives pushing the limit as far north as zone 3.

Rosemary, technically hardy only to zone 8, sometimes surprises me and makes a comeback, but I don't count on it in my zone 7 garden.

And they all can handle heat down to zones 8 or 9, with oregano returning reliably as far south as zone 11.

Mint and lemon balm are fast-spreading perennials hardy in zones 4-9, but they take over your garden if you plant them in the ground. Grow them only in pots, and keep the pots on a porch, deck or patio.

ANNUALS MIGHT COME BACK, TOO

Some annual herbs tend to return,

too. When self-seeders like dill and cilantro (aka coriander) drop seeds at the end of the season, leave them where they lie. They'll germinate and sprout more plants the following spring.

Other herbs are biennials, completing their life cycles at the end of their second growing season. Parsley produces plenty of fragrant foliage in its first year and slightly stunted but still perfectly edible leaves in its second before it flowers and calls it quits.

Caraway, another biennial, produces seeds only in its second year, but getting to boast about growing your own spices makes the wait worthwhile.

At the end of the growing season, you can dry or freeze your home-grown herbs for year-round, fresh-from-the-garden ingredients.

Another bonus? They'll all attract pollinators and other beneficial insects, which will help make the rest of your garden more productive.

Local and regional dignitaries and EFP employees gathered for a group photo at the conclusion of the grand opening ceremony Thursday.

PHOTOS BY BRUCE MILLS / THE SUMTER ITEM

EFP IS HIRING

Go online to efppackaging.com/careers to see available jobs.



EFP FROM PAGE A1

President John Hoeper, the customized foam packaging manufacturer has a focus in the pharmaceutical industry and provides a wide range of cold chain solutions for specialty drugs that must maintain a certain temperature for two to three days in shipping. EFP plans to grow its production of foam products quickly and be at 50 employees by September and about 80 at year's end, Hoeper added. A second-shift operation will begin at the end of June.

According to Plant Manager Vic Corbit, EFP is looking for workers with general manufacturing experience and also people experienced in skilled trades. Mold technicians and maintenance technicians are many of the avail-



Engineered Foam Packaging President John Hoeper speaks to attendees at EFP's grand-opening ceremony.

able positions. Starting wages are above the current Lee County average wage.

Numerous opportunities for the company have opened up since it announced in January 2023 that it was beginning a Bishopville operation with a

\$15 million capital investment, Hoeper said.

EFP already has plans to add on at least an additional 100,000 square feet to the facility to double production within two years and be at about 160 workers, he added.

The manufacturer is the fourth industry to be in the facility since it opened in the late 1990s. Other employers have included King Machine and Ahlstrom, according to Jay Schwedler, president and CEO of TheLink Economic Development Alliance that serves Lee and Sumter counties.

EFP is in the same industrial park as Crown Health Care Laundry Services, which was the last new major industrial announcement for Lee County and opened in November 2017. The small, rural county has had three industrial expansions in the timeframe, Schwedler added.

With a seventh facility opening in Casa Grande, Arizona, later this year, Hoeper said EFP is focused on growth.

"We continue to invest in our business with a focus on

applying our unique capabilities to unlock the value of breakthrough packaging needs," he said. "The opening of EFP's plant in Bishopville augments our capabilities and strengthens our presence nationwide. We look forward to the growth of this facility and what it brings to the Bishopville community."

Gordon Eckley, chairman of TheLink Economic Development Alliance, said the announcement feels great for Lee County.

"We are excited, and EFP has expressed that this facility will probably be its largest in the United States at some point," he said.

At the grand opening, Black River Electric Cooperative CEO Todd Carter also presented EFP with a check for \$200,000 to fund infrastructure development at the site.

VALEDICTORIANS FROM PAGE A1

She will enter University of South Carolina Upstate in Spartanburg with an Associate in Science in tow already after participating in the USC Sumter Early College Program as a junior and senior at Lakewood. That allowed her to get plenty of prerequisites completed, and she will enter USC Upstate as a junior with the opportunity to graduate in two years.

Her initial year of high school was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and on-line learning at home. McCauley said it took a lot of discipline to do virtual learning and that in-person learning in the classroom is much more her preference.

Given the pandemic as a freshman and then being on the campus of USC Sumter for her final two years of high school with the Early College program, she essentially had just one year of traditional high school in the classroom at Lakewood.

She said her parents and her aunt were her biggest influencers and motivators for success.

"They kept me on my toes and kind of encouraged me when I did not believe in myself to get things done and to make sure that I was at the head and not on the tail end of things," McCauley said.

As far as a career goal, she will major in nursing in college and wants to eventually become a neonatal nurse practitioner to premature and ill newborns in a hospital setting.

McCauley said success in high school was both a combination of her studies coming naturally and being an overachiever.

"It was pretty much both for me," she said. "It came easy, but I did not like the bare minimum. Instead, I did the absolute most."

As far as extracurricular activities, McCauley was in Lakewood's gospel choir and was a member of Family, Career and Community Leaders of America and also part of the school's National Honor Society.

...

At Crestwood High, Reynmart Velasco ranked top in a class of 250 students with a 5.313 weighted GPA, which was also a 4.0 on the 4.0 scale.

He is also glad that COVID-19 is in the past now and found that interacting with other students was a big adjustment when in-person learning returned his sopho-

more year.

Velasco has a close bond with his parents, and the family moved from the Philippines to Sumter when he was 8 years old because his great-uncle served in the U.S. Navy.

The adjustment was difficult with his parents working long hours and pursuing side business ventures to help make ends meet financially, he said.

Velasco looks up to his mom and dad for the sacrifices they made, perseverance that they showed and heavy focus they had on education, he said.

In his youth, he recalls that his mom worked at Golden Corral, and after her shift and returning home, she was active in her children's school-work.

"She would look over my school folder to see what I was studying," he said, "and she would hand write practice worksheets, so in that way, I could reinforce what I learned at school. I remember that she would stay up late to make an entire test hand-written. Then she would make me wake up early so I could do that practice test, and when I got to school I would be fully prepared and equipped for the test."

Like McCauley, Velasco also said school somewhat came naturally, but he is an overachiever, others say. He considers that he was just doing his work though after following in his parents' footsteps, he said.

Velasco will attend the University of South Carolina in Columbia and plans to major in computer science and desires to become a software engineer, he added.

A full academic scholarship has been "a dream come true" after he learned a few weeks ago that he earned a prestigious Harmon Scholarship from a local private donor through a Midlands foundation. Before the full ride, Velasco was anxious about how he was going to make ends meet and was considering commuting an hour each way to go to USC in order to avoid the housing cost at college.

As far as extracurricular activities, he was a member of Crestwood's National Honor Society, Junior Civitan International Club and student government. Velasco was also heavily involved in his dad's side venture, which is a lawn-mowing and pressure-washing business, in both advertising and the labor.

...

At Sumter High, Jeshua Espiritu ranked No. 1 in a class of about 446 seniors with a 5.509 weighted GPA, also a 4.0 on the 4.0 scale.

Like Velasco, Espiritu was born in the Philippines and moved to Sumter when he was 7 years old.

He said that he is motivated by challenges, and he definitely took them head on throughout high school. At the start of his senior year, Espiritu was selected as a National Merit Scholarship Commended Student.

He was also one of only four seniors at Sumter High who was a full diploma student in the school's rigorous International Baccalaureate Program. As a full IB student, he took all the core classes that the program offers at Sumter High, he said.

"I am motivated by challenges and trying not to be stagnant but to stay as pro-

ductive as possible, and IB has definitely pushed that," Espiritu said.

His extracurricular activities were about as newsworthy as his academics, as Espiritu was elected president of the Junior Civitan International Club and was Sumter's first student to ever achieve the honor.

In the role, he was the student leader for the entire organization that brings together thousands of middle- and high-school students across the globe to participate in service projects and volunteer activities to better their communities and includes a national summit event.

Espiritu was also drum major his senior year for the Sumter High Marching Band, in the school's wind ensemble and a member of National Honor Society.

He also considered his parents as his biggest supporters,

who were "my biggest cheerleaders but also kept me humble and grounded."

Given his full slate of activities, Espiritu said that he is an overachiever.

"I would like to say it comes naturally, but realistically I am definitely an overachiever because I like to fill up my plate," he said. "I could do the bare minimum, but I also do other stuff like marching band, I play in the jazz band, I participate in lots of volunteer service activities through the Junior Civitan organization, and I am in National Honor Society. So, I think I would classify myself as definitely an overachiever."

In the fall, Espiritu will attend Clemson University and plans to major in computer engineering. Eventually, he would like to work for a high-tech company to pursue computer research, he said.

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OPINION

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From my heart to our city



Alaysha Maple

As journalists, we're taught to be objective, to keep our personal experiences and emotions separate from the stories we cover. But today, I find it impossible to follow that principle.

For the past few days, weeks even, my heart has been heavy writing about the violence that has surged in our city. To see classmates of mine, friends of yours and neighbors of ours fall victim to these violent acts feels surreal, like a dream I so desperately want to wake from.

I was born and raised here. I learned to ride my bike on these streets, attended school in its classrooms and made lifelong friends across the county. Sumter has shaped me into who I am today. For some, it's a blip on the map or a beat to cover, but for me,

it's my community, my home. But lately, home has changed.

As a child, I remember walking in South Sumter, waving at all the elderly neighbors who would shout questions of "How's your grandmama doing?" and "Your granddaddy still does the barbecue at Christmas?" Or when school was finally over and summers were spent playing hide and seek throughout the small family filled neighborhood; even if we weren't related by blood, we were related in our love for one another. I remember when the quiet that settled in the afternoon and well into the evening meant genuine, undisturbed peace. Not the calm before the storm.

A storm that is seen in headlines of another life lost, another family torn apart. And I do my best to write these headlines with the utmost care because behind each number is a person with dreams, a family, a story. And

regardless of what capacity I knew them, they are a part of my community and therefore a part of me. Their pain, the pain of

their loved ones and all who cared for them hits home.

Words can't express how difficult it is to wrap my mind around the passing of my classmate. Though two years shy of a decade of being high school graduates, the interactions we had, though few, were memorable because her lively spirit made an impression. It hurt me to know that her time with friends and family was cut short when she had more to offer. It hurt even more to see people who I care for mourn her loss.

From South Purdy Street to Green Swamp Road to Carrol Drive to North Main Street. These are streets that we all travel, some on our daily commute. And I can't help but to feel weighed down as I turn onto these streets, knowing that someone spent their last moments there — someone who I

knowingly or unknowingly rubbed shoulders with. It's surreal.

But an upside, for lack of a better phrase, to reporting on these tragedies is this career allowed me to be among heavy hitters and stakeholders in our community this past Wednesday who share the same sentiment that what is happening is horrible on both sides — the sides of the victim and of the offender. That there are two mothers who have to mourn the loss of a child — one to violence and one to the system. That there are two families that have to learn to move on, make memories and be whole when a meaningful member is missing. That our community has missed out on their excellence because of harmful decisions.

I find comfort in knowing that these figures are taking steps to address all factors of the issues — from the relationship between the community and law enforcement to providing safe spaces and educational programs for youth to becoming positive, active influences in their lives. I'm aware that one meeting won't eradicate these issues overnight, but it puts us on the right track as long as we all do our part. As a community,

we're affected by what happens on our streets, no matter what side of the bridge or tracks we live on. And as a community, we have to transcend all those factors that seemingly divide us and work together. It won't be easy, and opinions will differ, but our goal should be what unites us every time. This is our city, and we owe it to ourselves and future generations to fight for it. We must remember the names and faces behind the headlines and honor their memories by striving for a better, safer place to live.

Writing this column has been difficult — a two-day process to unpack all that has been settled on my heart for quite some time. But I couldn't continue to author these headlines without expressing my deepest sympathy for what has happened. You don't hear from me in this somber tone often, but I hope the next time I come to you, it's to speak encouragingly about the strides our city has made to quiet the storm.

Alaysha Maple is Sumter Item Next Generation editor and a reporter covering public safety and entertainment for the tri-county area.

COMMENTARY

Our state is increasingly attractive to military retirees

South Carolina is historically a military-friendly state. And it's getting more that way.

With May being Military Appreciation Month, the personal-finance website WalletHub released its report on the Best & Worst States for Military Retirees in 2024. <https://wallethub.com/edu/best-states-for-military-retirees/3915>

South Carolina ranks No. 1, best in the nation.

WalletHub compared the 50 states and the District of Columbia across 28 key indicators of retirement-friendliness for veterans. The data set ranges from job opportunities for veterans to housing affordability to the quality of VA hospitals.

Military retirement in South Carolina (1=best; 25=average):

1. Overall rank: 1st
2. 7th – Veterans per capita

3. 18th – Percent of homeless veterans

4. 25th – Housing affordability

5. 4th – Percent of veteran-owned businesses

6. 9th – Number of VA benefits-administration facilities per number of veterans

7. 4th – Quality of VA hospital
South Carolina is home to eight major military installations and more than 344,000 veterans. The state has the 15th-highest veteran population.

In 2022, the state took another step to boost its military connection and attractiveness to military retirees.

Gov. Henry McMaster signed the Workforce Enhancement and Military Recognition Act, which exempts all military retirement pay that is included in South Carolina taxable income from the state's income tax, no matter the taxpayer's age. The deduction also

can be claimed by a surviving spouse.

According to the SCDVA, military retirees can start, stop or change State Income Tax Withholding (SITW) by using myPay, filling out a DD Form 2866 Retiree Change of Address/State Tax Withholding Request, or sending a written request that includes all of the necessary information. If they choose to send a DD Form 2866 or a written request, mail to: Defense Finance and Accounting Service, U.S. Military Retirement Pay, 8899 E 56th Street, Indianapolis, IN 46249-1200. Do not send either document to the S.C. Department of Revenue.

Other military-related income tax exclusions offered by the state are:

Any federal tax-exempt pension or compensation provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Combat pay and certain benefits not included in federal taxable income.

Retirement income paid by the U.S. government for service in the Reserves or National Guard.

Income received for service in the National Guard or the Reserves for customary annual training, weekend drills and other inactive duty training.

Service pay for non-resident military personnel on active duty in South Carolina who are legal residents of other states.

The state also offers property tax exemptions to veterans deemed totally and permanently service-connected disabled.

Military tax deductions and exemptions are another important way in which South Carolina serves the nation well by accommodating our military and those serving and having served.

This editorial was originally published by the Times and Democrat on May 23.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ZELL WILL BE TRANSPARENT, CARING LEADER IN S.C. SENATE

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for Jeff Zell as the next South Carolina state senator for District 36. In these challenging times, our community needs a leader who embodies integrity, vision and a genuine commitment to public service — qualities that Jeff Zell possesses in abundance.

Jeff Zell has a proven track record of dedication to our community. As a retired Air Force veteran, current school board trustee and long-time resident of the area, Jeff understands the unique challenges and opportunities we face. His career in public service and community engagement demonstrates his deep-rooted commitment to improving the lives of his fellow citizens.

One of Jeff's most commendable qualities is his unwavering dedication to education. He has consistently advocated for increased funding for our public schools, ensuring that our children receive the quality education they deserve. Jeff understands that investing in education is investing in the future of South Carolina.

Moreover, Jeff Zell is a strong proponent of economic development and job creation. He has outlined clear plans to attract new business-

es to our district, support local entrepreneurs and create sustainable job opportunities. Jeff's vision for economic growth is both inclusive and forward-thinking, prioritizing the needs of all residents.

In addition to his policy expertise, Jeff Zell is a man of integrity and transparency. He values open communication with his constituents and is always willing to listen to their concerns. Jeff's leadership style fosters trust and collaboration, which are essential for effective governance.

I believe that Jeff Zell is the ideal candidate to represent us in the South Carolina Senate. His dedication to education, economic development and transparent leadership make him the right choice for District 36. I urge my fellow residents to support Jeff Zell in the upcoming election.

Together, we can bring positive change to our community by electing a leader who truly cares about our future. Vote for Jeff Zell for South Carolina state Senate District 36.

MARK A. DUBOSE
Founder/CEO
Palmetto State Audit

THANK YOU TO VOTERS FOR SUPPORT FOR 20 YEARS; LEE WOULD SERVE SUMTER WELL

This is an "open letter" to the voters and children of

Sumter County Council District 7. I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you for 20 years (Jan. 1, 2005, to Dec. 31, 2024). As your councilman, I greatly appreciated your confidence and trust in me to make decisions that were best for you, our children and Sumter County. I will forever be grateful for this honor.

I am also grateful to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Living by His words to "Treat others like you want to be treated," I was blessed to meet many wonderful people who have my same virtues.

One of those individuals is the Rev. Dr. Gloria R. Lee.

Dr. Lee and I are executive committee members of the Sumter Branch NAACP. In this capacity, we work for equal rights, justice and treatment for "all" people regardless of their race or gender.

Dr. Lee has been employed with South Carolina Department of Corrections for 29 years.

In her position as a program reentry specialist, she helps inmates to make positive changes in their behavior and level of education. This is similar to my past employment with the Sumter Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (now Sumter Behavioral Health Services) as a master social worker and executive director. We both have a

genuine concern for the welfare of others.

Dr. Lee is a former member of the Sumter School District Board of Trustees. She has a strong compassion to help children, in all grades, to improve their level of education for a better quality of life. As a former substitute teacher and member of the Sumter Career and Technology Center Board of Advisors, I have the same desire to help build a quality workforce for future economic development. Dr. Lee and I both agree that our children are our future.

I highly, without hesitation, endorse Dr. Gloria Rose Lee to replace me as the Sumter County Council District 7 representative. She will be an outstanding addition to Team Sumter.

Your Vote for LEE is a vote for ME. Stay focused.

EUGENE R. BATEN,
LMSW
Sumter County Council,
District 7

MORE MEMBERS OF CITY, COUNTY GOVERNMENT SHOULD HAVE ATTENDED MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY

My husband and I attended the Memorial Day ceremony at Sumter Veterans Flag Park, as we have every year. Thank you to Col. Bush Hanson and the host of volunteers who helped create such

a solemn ceremony. My father and his two brothers served in World War II and, thankfully, were able to return home. Memorial Day honors the ultimate sacrifice made by brave Americans.

However, I am so disappointed that one Sumter County Council member, Eugene Baten, a military veteran, and the city's mayor pro tem were the only members of our city and county government introduced. As integral as Shaw Air Force Base and the Third Army are to the social and economic fabric of our community, it was a sad commentary on the indifference shown by those who should have been there. The men and women of Sumter, who gave their lives in service to our country, deserve better.

SUSAN SCOUTEN
Sumter

PRIMARY ELECTION SUBMISSIONS

Columns and letters to the editor regarding the Tuesday, June 11, primaries should be submitted on or before Monday, June 3, for inclusion before the election.



BLACK COWBOY FESTIVAL RETURNS



For the 27th year, Sandra Myers and her husband, Mark, opened their Greenfield Farm to thousands of rodeo-loving folks for the Black Cowboy Festival. From May 23-26, the farm activities centered on the contributions of African American cowboys to American history. There were bucking broncos, calf roping, pole racing, guided trail rides, interactive workshops and informative documentaries.

PHOTOS BY ADAM FLASH / THE SUMTER ITEM



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TAX

FROM PAGE A1

Herb McClary represents Sumter County and is a Black man.
 David Bagwell represents Sumter County and is a white man.
 Traci Nelson represents Sumter County and is a white woman.
 Earl Wilson represents the City of Sumter and is a Black man.
 Kimberly Rauschenbach represents the City of Sumter and is a white woman.
 Nancy Williams represents the town of Mayesville and is a Black woman.
 If the Capital Penny Sales Tax, also called the Penny for Progress initiative, gets a majority approval from voters this November, 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.
 This added charge of 1% of the sales tax would apply to most items except non-prepared food items (groceries), prescription drugs and medical supplies.
 The proposed list of projects for the penny to cover unanimously passed first reading and must undergo two more readings with council to become official, but even then, voters have to pass the penny tax this November for any dirt to start moving.
 Second reading should take place

during the June 11 council meeting, and third and final reading should take place during the June 25 council meeting.
 “We firmly believe the projects will move us forward and best prepare our entire community for generations of growth and prosperity,” Wilson told council and the public during the May 28 meeting.
 Here is the proposed list:
 1. \$13,000,000 toward emergency radios and pagers
 2. \$14,000,000 toward county fire trucks
 3. \$5,000,000 toward city fire trucks
 4. \$1,500,000 toward an EMS station on Stadium Road. This would be a “new 4,000 sq. ft. satellite facility to include a two-bay truck port,” according to public documents.
 5. \$1,000,000 toward four new EMS ambulances
 6. \$2,000,000 toward industrial infrastructure. It’s to “construct a ‘Pad Ready’ industrial site approximately 200,000 sq. ft. with options to expand for industrial recruitment,” according to public documents.
 7. \$1,750,000 toward intersection safety improvements
 8. \$2,500,000 toward Bobby Richardson Park Improvements. It’s to “transform the park into a state-of-the-art Baseball Complex to include a practice facility, increased parking capacity, and two new entrances for better accessibility,” according to

public documents.
 9. \$2,800,000 toward 15 new Patriot Park pickleball courts and added parking
 10. \$2,750,000 toward downtown building improvements and acquisitions, including Liberty Center upgrades
 11. \$21,000,000 toward county paving and resurfacing
 12. \$3,000,000 toward rebuilding the Stadium Road Fire Station
 13. \$1,000,000 toward a fire department training facility
 14. \$6,000,000 toward federal state road construction on U.S. 378. It’s to reconnect “the communities and services north and south of the US-378 Bypass at Wesmark and Miller Roads to improve safety for drivers and pedestrians and enhance mobility for all travelers,” according to public documents.
 15. \$10,000,000 toward a state road resurfacing match. “This project will be used to draw down additional funds from the State Department of Transportation to prioritize and expedite critical state road projects in Sumter County,” according to public documents.
 16. \$3,250,000 toward improving the public services buildings
 17. \$1,500,000 toward industrial property acquisition
 18. \$2,600,000 toward Dillon Park improvements
 19. \$4,000,000 toward community

park playground improvements. It would “[e]nhance public parks with infrastructure that adds safety and security, as well as modern playground equipment accessible for all children to include Swan Lake, Birnie Center, Crosswell, Catchall-Shaw, Shiloh, Rafting Creek, and others,” according to public documents.
 20. \$1,000,000 toward a Central Carolina facility upgrade to the health center building
 21. \$1,500,000 toward Mayesville Main Street revitalization
 22. \$1,200,000 toward Pinewood Road paving.
 23. \$9,500,000 toward a Dugan Street and downtown parking facility
 24. \$1,250,000 toward a Delaine Community Center. It would construct “a new community center for seniors and youth with approximately 4,000 sq. ft. to replace the current center located near the old Delaine School,” according to public documents.
 25. \$3,000,000 toward the South Sumter Gym
 26. \$1,500,000 toward Harvin Street redesign and streetscape
 27. \$300,000 toward Pinewood sidewalks
 28. \$3,500,000 toward community sidewalks and activity paths
 29. \$1,000,000 toward airport facility upgrade
 30. \$2,500,000 toward community-wide acquisition of distressed structures

VIOLENCE

FROM PAGE A1

and middle school athletics; community stakeholders, like Ivan Sanders, founder and director of 803 United, and Midlands Fatherhood Coalition Director of Programs Keith Ivey; and public safety officials, Police Chief Russell Roark, Assistant Police Chief Jeffery Jackson and Sheriff Anthony Dennis. Merchant was joined by Sumter City Councilman Calvin Hastie and Mayor Pro Tem James Blassingame, Sumter County Council Chairman Jim McCain as well as his wife, Laurie Merchant. Community members from across the county were in attendance, waiting patiently for their chance to share their opinions and potential solutions.
 With such a diverse panel of movers and thinkers, Merchant informed them all that this special meeting — which was not an official city council public meeting of the law but only a forum of members of the public body for the purposes of discussing and deciding on public business, hence no agenda of public notes was posted, Merchant explained — was not meant to point fingers at “They,” “Y’all” or “Somebody” but to focus on what “We” as a community can do to address the increased violence in the city and county.
 Within the past three weeks, there have been four reported fatal shootings — two of which occurred a day apart — that have claimed the lives of four individuals and injured one. As of press time on Friday, May 31, suspects are in custody in two of the shootings, while the remaining two cases have suspects at large. Anyone with information in the killing of 25-year-old Keyirra Walker on May 13 along Carrol Drive or information leading to the arrest of Fernando Adams in connection to the killing of Tavares McFadden on May 27 along Green Swamp Road is asked to contact Sumter Po-

lice Department at (803) 436-2700.
 The community came together to offer various solutions on what may be the cause and how Sumter could offer solutions.
 Ivey reported a recent spike in referrals to the fatherhood program, highlighting a cycle of violence perpetuated by parents, especially in front of their children. He highlighted how these cases could, and have, led to women being killed and a cycle of violence that children exhibit once they are adults. “It’s tiresome to see that,” he said, and encouraged community members who work closely with youth, like coaches, to be committed to being genuine positive influences in their lives.
 “We can’t use our titles to impose influence over them. They don’t care about your title; they want you to care about them,” he said.
 When caring about them, it goes a long way in times of turmoil, Sanders found out at a recent football tournament. 803 United was out of town competing when a disagreement and showcase of “disrespect” among the young players led to a player on the local team being shot 16 times. And it wasn’t by the player of the rival team, but one of their supporters, a young teen. The young teen survived, Sanders being by his side throughout the entire process as not only a coach, but also a mentor.
 “I had a rough patch in my life which enables me to really form a relationship, and I’m a licensed counselor, so kids feel when you’re genuine with them,” Sanders explained. “If you’re not genuine, you don’t have a chance.”
 Genuineness and commitment were common themes among the community members. As with Roark and Jackson, they understand and teach to incoming officers the importance of empathy when coming into law enforcement, especially in such a tight-knit community. Jackson, born and raised in



Sumter Mayor David Merchant speaks to community stakeholders about the importance of collaboration on solutions to the increased violence within the city and county at a special community meeting on Wednesday, May 30, at Birnie HOPE Center.

James Village, knows how far empathy and genuineness can go in a community that cares about the well-being of its people. Roark meets with every new officer about how his or her badge is more than a decoration; it’s an honor, and it’s a reminder of their responsibility. That when you go out into this community, you are one of them and you have to feel for them.
 “People make mistakes. Not everybody’s a bad person. You got to understand how they were raised,” Roark shared. “People learn behaviors and emulate the behavior, good and bad. We got a problem; we got a problem with young men, primarily with guns.”
 Dennis explained how suspects in these violent cases often have a rap sheet dating back to their juvenile years, as early as elementary school, including a stint or two at an alternative school. Community members of all professions being involved in the lives of our young people alongside law enforcement implementing different enforcement methods — from educational programs or



Tayvian Gass, constituent and community manager for S.C. Speaker of the House Murrell Smith, speaks during Mayor David Merchant’s special community meeting on Wednesday.

events to increasing their presence in the community and schools for familiarity purposes — can aid in changing the course for youth and our community.
 But Tayvian Gass, a constituent and community manager for S.C. House of Representatives Speaker Murrell Smith and the youngest member at the discussion at age 23, encouraged to the community taking their commitment a step further to “speak peace.” Growing up in South Sumter, Gass realized that having a village of family and community members, like Newton and Jackson, to keep him grounded was a privilege and not everyone has that. As he went off to Wofford College in Spartanburg, he wasn’t completely ignorant to what happened in his hometown; he just didn’t know it was that bad.
 “I’m not here to point fingers. I’m saying that we all have our own part to play in it,” Gass told the group. “I’m here to say it is our task, our responsibility to speak peace. Whatever that capacity may be, speak peace. You know that you have a resource you can give, be that resource.”
 Gass said as he continues to learn from Rep. Smith and

other pillars of the community, when it’s time to pass the baton to him, he plans to run with it and continue to do his part in making Sumter better.
 For those who didn’t speak, it didn’t fall on deaf ears. For many in the room, this forum was also about learning, learning what goes on in the parts of town you only hear about in headlines. Learning about how the current state of our city impacts people you rarely meet. Learning how you can play a role in the city’s improvement by not quietly contributing to its demise.
 For those in the room who voiced their concerns and questioned efforts out of curiosity, there were many proposed solutions to come as a result: a resurgence of free community programs, hopefully backed by state grants and filled with diverse participants; fostering a better relationship and open communication with law enforcement about what goes on in the neighborhood before it’s too late; and a continuation of these public meetings, ones that allow community and constituents to be in one room speaking on one matter to meet one main goal: keeping Sumter safe.



Community stakeholders with economic development, faith, education, public safety and more gather at Birnie HOPE Center on South Purdy Street on Wednesday, May 30.

Clarendon and Lee county schools participating in S.C. First Steps annual Countdown to Kindergarten campaign

STAFF REPORT

A 2023 survey of 2,727 parents and caregivers in South Carolina revealed that 75% of parents need help knowing how to prepare their child for kindergarten, according to a news release from South Carolina First Steps.

On Wednesday, May 29, South Carolina First Steps announced the kickoff of Countdown to Kindergarten, an annual initiative focused on preparing young children for success in school. Through partnerships with schools and community organizations across the state, Countdown to Kindergarten provides rising kindergartners and their families with resources and support for a smooth transition to the classroom.

"Every child deserves a positive start in school, and Countdown to Kindergarten is our commitment to making that happen," said

PREPARE YOUR CHILD FOR KINDERGARTEN

Families are encouraged to visit countdownsc.org for useful information to help prepare children for kindergarten. The website features helpful tips, resources, a school directory and a calendar showcasing local Countdown to Kindergarten events.

Janice Kilburn, school transition coordinator at South Carolina First Steps. "By working together with educators and community partners, we are helping families across the state build the confidence and connections they need to support their child's academic success from the very beginning."

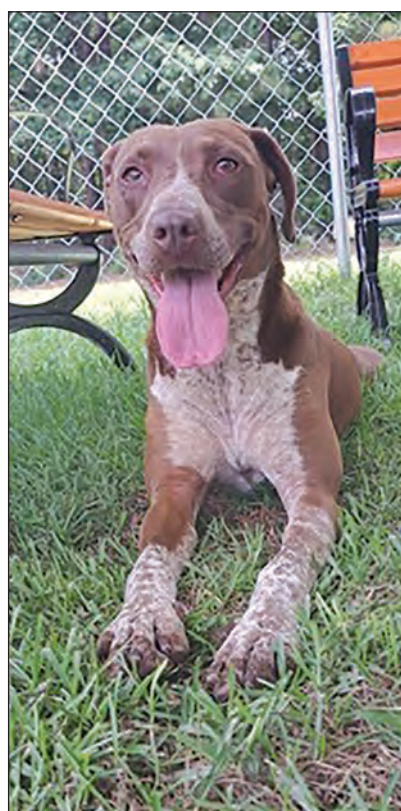
This year, South Carolina First Steps partnered with 94 school districts and community organizations in 33

counties including Clarendon County First Steps, Clarendon County School District, Lee County First Steps, Lee County School District and Tomorrow's Leaders (Lee).

Through a variety of activities and resources, Countdown to Kindergarten helps prepare students through a variety of activities and resources designed to engage children, families and communities. These efforts focus on encouraging early registration, fostering connections with schools, promoting school readiness and linking families with community resources.

Families are encouraged to visit countdownsc.org for useful information to help prepare children for kindergarten. The website features helpful tips, resources, a school directory and a calendar showcasing local Countdown to Kindergarten events.

Pets of the week



Birdie is a 2-year-old, brown-and-white, female German Shorthair Pointer mix. Birdie is current on vaccinations, spayed, microchipped and tested negative for heartworms. She weighs about 45 pounds. Birdie is an extremely high-energy dog and needs an active family. It appears she hasn't had much structure or any kind of obedience training. Birdie loves to run and needs lots of daily activity. She seems to get along with other dogs. Birdie loves people and seems eager to please. She has been at the shelter for more than a year and would really love to find her forever home. If you are interested in adopting Birdie, you can get preapproved to adopt by submitting your adoption application online at www.ASecondChanceAnimalShelter.com. Our adoption fee for dogs is \$125.

Nash is a 1-year-old, gray tabby, male domestic short-hair cat. Nash is current on all age-appropriate shots, has been neutered and tested negative for Feline Leukemia and AIDs. He seems to get along with other cats. Nash can be a little shy at first, but he is very friendly once he warms up. Nash is playful and energetic. Please stop by the shelter to see this adorable cat. We are currently running a special for our cats over a year old, so Nash's adoption fee is \$50. If you are interested in adopting Nash, you can get preapproved to adopt by submitting your adoption application online at www.ASecondChanceAnimalShelter.com.



Nash

Briefs

CLARENDON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT SUMMER FEEDING PROGRAM

MANNING — The Clarendon County School District Summer Feeding Program is sponsored by the district's Office of Student Nutrition.

No-charge breakfast and lunch will be available for all children ages 18 and younger. Breakfast will be served from 7:30 to 8:15 a.m., and lunch will be served from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. All food must be consumed on site. Sites are:

- Dr. Rose H. Wilder Elementary Cafeteria, 9297 Alex Harvin Highway, Summerton;
- Manning Elementary School Cafeteria, 311 W. Boyce St., Manning;
- Manning Early Childhood Center

Cafeteria, 2759 Raccoon Road, Manning; — Manning High School Cafeteria, 2155 Paxville Highway, Manning; and — East Clarendon Middle and High School Cafeteria, 1171 Pope St., Turbeville.

CO-ED KICKBALL LEAGUE BEGINS JUNE 11, REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS JUNE 3

MANNING — A new Co-Ed Kickball League will begin games at 6 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays in June. The first game will be held on June 11.

Team registration is \$250. Registration fee is due by Monday, June 3. Players must be 18 years old by June 1, 2024.

For more information, call Clarendon County Recreation Department at (803) 473-3543.

THE Clarendon Sun

CLASSIFIEDS

DEADLINE TUESDAY 11AM

LEGAL NOTICES

Summons & Notice

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF CLARENDON IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS FOR THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT CASE NO.: 2024-CP-14-00184 SUMMONS

Mary Stuckey Stone, Plaintiff,

vs.

John Doe, a fictitious person representing any person who has or may claim to have an interest in or to the subject property herein. Defendant.

TO THE DEFENDANT JOHN DOE:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and required to answer the Complaint in this action, a copy of which is herewith served upon you, and to serve a copy of your Answer to the said Complaint on the subscriber Geddings Law Firm at their office, 20 South Brooks Street, Manning, South Carolina, within thirty (30) days after the service hereof, exclusive of the date of such service, and if you fail to answer the Complaint within the time aforesaid, Plaintiff in this action will apply to the Court for relief demanded in the Complaint. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the original Complaint in the above entitled action was filed in the office of the Clerk of Court for Clarendon County on May 8, 2024.

GEDDINGS LAW FIRM BY: S/ W. T. Geddings, Jr. Attorney for the Plaintiff 20 South Brooks Street Manning, South Carolina 29102 (803) 435-4770 SC BAR NO.: 11300 May 14, 2024

Notice of Sale

NOTICE OF SALE CIVIL ACTION NO. 2019-CP-14-00488 BY VIRTUE OF the decree heretofore granted in the case of: Wells Fargo Bank, National Association, as Trustee for Asset Backed Securities Corporation Home Equity Loan Trust, Series OOMC 2005-HE6, Asset Backed Pass-Through Certificates, Series OOMC 2005-HE6 vs. Robert J. Murray; Emma H. Murray; South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control; Melissa Lide, the undersigned Master In Equity for Clarendon County, South Carolina, will sell on June 3, at 11:00 AM, or on another date, thereafter as

Notice of Sale

approved by the Court, at the Court House, 3 West Keitt Street City of Manning, State of South Carolina, to the highest bidder: ALL THAT CERTAIN PIECE, PARCEL OR LOT OF LAND, WITH IMPROVEMENTS THEREON, LYING AND BEING SITUATE IN THE COUNTY OF CLARENDON, STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA, BOUNDING NOW OR FORMERLY AS FOLLOWS: ON THE NORTH BY LANDS OF G.H. HARDY AND MEASURING THEREON 367.37 FEET; ON THE EAST BY LANDS OF G.H. HARDY AND MEASURING THEREON 120.75 FEET; ON THE SOUTH BY LANDS OF G.H. HARDY AND MEASURING THEREON 334.18 FEET; AND ON THE WEST BY LANDS OF GEORGIA PACIFIC CORPORATION AND MEASURING THEREON 121.45 FEET. FOR A MORE PARTICULAR DESCRIPTION, REFERENCE IS HEREBY MADE TO THAT PLAT BY H. F. OLIVER AND ASSOCIATES DATED MAY 27, 1977, RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK "30" AT PAGE "52."

SUBJECT TO ANY AND ALL RESTRICTIONS, COVENANTS, EASEMENTS AND RIGHTS OF WAY OF RECORD.

THIS BEING A PORTION OF THE PROPERTY CONVEYED TO ROBERT J. MURRAY AND EMMA H. MURRAY BY DEED OF THE BANK OF CLARENDON DATED JULY 20, 2001, AND RECORDED AUGUST 31, 2001, IN DEED BOOK A448 AT PAGE 84 IN THE RECORDS FOR CLARENDON COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA.

CURRENT ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 1613 Shadewater Way, Manning, SC 29102 TMS: 293-00-01-006-00

TERMS OF SALE: The successful bidder, other than the Plaintiff, will deposit with the Master In Equity, at conclusion of the bidding, five percent (5%) of his bid, in cash or equivalent, as evidence of good faith, same to be applied to the purchase price in case of compliance, but in the case of non-compliance to be forfeited and first applied to the costs incurred by the Plaintiff related to the sale and the balance then applied to the Plaintiff's debt in a manner suitable to the Plaintiff. Should the last and highest bidder fail to comply with the other terms of the bid within thirty (30) days, then the Master In Equity may re-sell the property on the same terms and conditions on some subsequent Sales Day.

No personal or deficiency judgment being demanded, the bidding shall not remain open after the date of sale and shall be final on that date, and compliance with the bid may be made immediately.

Purchaser to pay for documentary

Notice of Sale

stamps on the Deed. The successful bidder will be required to pay interest on the amount of the balance of the bid from date of sale to date of compliance with the bid at the rate of 4.375% per annum. The sale shall be subject to taxes and assessments, existing easements and restrictions, easements and restrictions of record and any other senior encumbrances. The Honorable Joseph K. Coffey Master In Equity for Clarendon County

Brock & Scott, PLLC 3800 Fernandina Road, Suite 110 Columbia, SC 29210 Attorney for the Plaintiff Phone: 803-454-3540 Fax: 803-454-3541

Estate Notice Clarendon County

NOTICE TO CREDITORS OF ESTATES

All persons having claims against the following estates MUST file their claims on FORM #371ES with the Probate Court of Clarendon County, the address of which is 411 Sunset Dr. Manning, SC 29102, within eight (8) months after the date of the first publication of this Notice to Creditors or within one (1) year from date of death, whichever is earlier (SCPC 62-3-801, et seq.), or such persons shall be forever barred as to their claims. All claims are required to be presented in written statements on the prescribed form (FORM #371ES) indicating the name and address of the claimant, the basis of the claim, the amount claimed, the date when the claim will become due, the nature of any uncertainty as to the claim, and a description of any security as to the claim.

Estate: William Winn Rowe #2024ES1400117 Personal Representative:

Michael M. Nunn 3132 Harvard Way Florence, SC 29501 William H. Johnson Attorney at Law PO Box 137 Manning, SC 29102

Estate: Monty John Bryan Hicks #2024ES1400121 Personal Representative:

Monty John Bryan Hicks II 1102 Maxcey Road New Zion, SC 29111 William H. Johnson Attorney at Law PO Box 137 Manning, SC 29102

Estate Notice Clarendon County

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Estate: Roberta Elizabeth Clack Brakefield #2024ES1400118 Personal Representative:

Marion Epps Dubose, IV 2265 Greeleyville HWY Manning, SC 29102 Ricci Land Welch, Esq Attorney at Law PO Box 138 Manning, SC 29102

Estate: Larry Edwards McKnight, Sr. #2023ES1400365 Personal Representative:

Elmer Hodge 1077 Herriott St. Manning, SC 29102

Estate: Rosa Mae Junius Williams #2023ES1400388 Personal Representative:

Deloris Williams Jiggetts 3181 Liberty Hill Rd Summerton, SC 29148

Estate: Clarence Thomas Snyder #2024ES1400019 Personal Representative:

Sherry Lynn Snyder 1465 Bloomville Road Manning, SC 29102

WT Geddings, Jr. Attorney at Law 20 S. Brooks St. Manning, SC 29102

Estate Notice Clarendon County

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Estate: Jerry Wayne Ham #2024ES1400112 Personal Representative:

Matthew W. Ham 842 Waterloo Ct. Charleston, SC 29412

Andrew Todd Ham 315 Throne Ct. Chapin, SC 29036

William H. Johnson Attorney at Law PO Box 137 Manning, SC 29102

Estate: Euline Thomas #2024ES1400110 Personal Representative:

Edith Murray 1350 Burton Road Pinewood, SC 29125

Estate: William Earl Vanscoy #2024ES1400115 Personal Representative:

Shelia Kay Vanscoy 115 Oakview Circle Manning, SC 29102

Estate: Gale Patsy Bailey #2024ES1400114 Personal Representative:

Lisa Sayne 8021 Mobile Drive Charlotte, NC 28269

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PUBLIC AGENDA

SANTEE-LYNCHES REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Monday, June 3, 6 p.m., Central Carolina Technical College, 506 N. Guignard Drive, Building M400, Room 401

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS BOARD MEETING

Monday, June 3, 5:30 p.m., Sumter Sheriff's Office conference room

CLARENDON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Monday, June 3, 5:30 p.m., Manning High School, lecture hall, 2155 Paxville Highway, Manning

SUMTER CITY COUNCIL

Tuesday, June 4, at 1 p.m., Sumter Opera House, 21 N. Main St.

BISHOPVILLE CITY COUNCIL

Tuesday, June 4, at 5:30 p.m., Colclough Building, 109 E. Council St., Bishopville

TOWN OF LYNCHBURG PLANNING COMMISSION

Wednesday, June 5, at 4 p.m., Lynchburg Municipal Building, 81 Magnolia St., Lynchburg

CLARENDON COUNTY COUNCIL

Monday, June 10, at 6 p.m., Administration Building, Council Chambers, 411 Sunset Drive, Manning

SUMTER SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Monday, June 10, 6 p.m., 1345 Wilson Hall Road

AROUND TOWN

To correct any information or to make a submission to Around Town, email pressrelease@theitem.com with Around Town in subject line.

Moms of Sumter Addicts (MOSA) Prayer Group meets the second Thursday of each month from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Birnie Hope Center, 210 S. Purdy St., Sumter. This is not a step program or a self-help group but is a group of mothers of addicts spending time in prayer and working to understand and encourage the building of a personal support network. MOSA does not judge, criticize, give advice or discuss other members' situations. For information on the group, contact MOSA.prayer@gmail.com.

The Mayesville Senior Citizen Group will hold a fundraiser from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, June 1, at Mayesville Community Center, 10 Pringle St., Mayesville. There will be drinks and food for sale including fried fish, hotdogs with condiments, french fries and more. A yard sale will be held with gently used items, household goods, antiques, collectibles, toys, furniture and more. There will also be a raffle for a flatscreen TV, a handmade quilt and an air fryer. Tickets will be sold for \$1. You do not need to be present to win.

Sumter Senior Services will host a yard sale at 119 S. Sumter St. on Saturday, June 1, from 8 a.m. to noon. Come find your treasure in a little bit of everything from knickknacks, clothing, kitchen utensils, kitchenware, decorations, shoes, brand new items and slightly used items. All proceeds will benefit Sumter Senior Services Home-Delivered Meals and other senior programs.

The Palmetto Optimist Club's Burger Cookoff event returns to downtown Sumter Sept. 14 to help raise money for families battling childhood cancer, and the club is already looking for people to sign up. Teams interested in participating can email PalmettoOptimistClub@gmail.com for details.

SOLUTION TO THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD



THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

BOTH SIDES NOW: With equal time for each by Steve Faiella

ACROSS

- 1 Nuclear energy source
- 5 Catches some rays
- 10 Pop group from Stockholm
- 14 Many stroller users
- 19 Japanese noodles
- 20 Loosen, as laces
- 21 Chunk of concrete
- 22 Expunge
- 23 Lutheran, for one
- 25 Tinkers (with)
- 26 Started the day
- 27 Girder metal
- 28 Yolk holder
- 29 River through Florence
- 30 Needing a break
- 31 "How silly of me!"
- 33 Worker efficiency measure
- 36 Acorn bearer
- 39 Blueprint, for instance
- 43 Busy as ___
- 44 Undertaken for gain
- 47 Lead performer
- 48 Omelet option
- 51 Citrus hybrid
- 52 USSR's CIA
- 53 Evenings, on marquees
- 55 Prepare for takeoff
- 56 Shrewd swindler
- 59 "Consider it done"
- 61 Tweak, as text
- 62 Flooding protection
- 66 70-Down measuring device
- 68 Radio noise
- 71 In the manner of
- 72 Go astray
- 73 At your residence
- 74 Handyman for hire
- 76 Lose altitude
- 78 Bus Stop playwright
- 79 Prestigious prizes
- 81 Basic nature
- 85 Keep in a folder
- 86 Cellist's accessory
- 87 Latin eggs

- 89 Pepper grinder
- 90 Skating surface
- 91 Playstation maker
- 93 Like a "tell all" biography
- 97 Close attention
- 98 Roof timbers
- 99 Hurricane center
- 100 Electrical-channeling power
- 106 Hispanic cheer
- 108 Add decorations to
- 109 Wine category
- 110 Tint
- 113 Borden bovine
- 117 Give access to
- 118 Author Austen
- 119 Game show participant
- 121 Strong suit
- 122 Color of the ocean
- 123 Share views
- 124 Grumpy Hanks role of '23
- 125 Scornful look
- 126 Fail to notice
- 127 Bit of a blossom
- 128 Gas for store signs

DOWN

- 1 Egyptian cobras
- 2 Wrongful act, in law
- 3 Woodwind instrument
- 4 Beat at chess
- 5 Urban transportation
- 6 Starting poker stake
- 7 Father of a fawn
- 8 Large bed size
- 9 Complete collection
- 10 Prefix for physics
- 11 Guy with golden hair
- 12 Louisiana wetland
- 13 Tummy muscles
- 14 More substantial
- 15 Show up
- 16 New Zealand native
- 17 Strong point
- 18 Dilapidated
- 24 Avoid artfully
- 29 High fashion suit brand
- 32 ___ Majesty Charles III
- 33 Bad review
- 34 Watch a friend's feline

WEATHER

Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2024

AccuWeather® five-day forecast for Sumter

TODAY	TONIGHT	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
85°	63°	85° / 68°	88° / 68°	91° / 71°	91° / 70°
Chance of rain: 5%	Chance of rain: 5%	Chance of rain: 25%	Chance of rain: 25%	Chance of rain: 25%	Chance of rain: 25%
ESE 4-8 mph	SSE 4-8 mph	S 6-12 mph	SSW 4-8 mph	S 4-8 mph	SSE 6-12 mph

TODAY'S SOUTH CAROLINA WEATHER

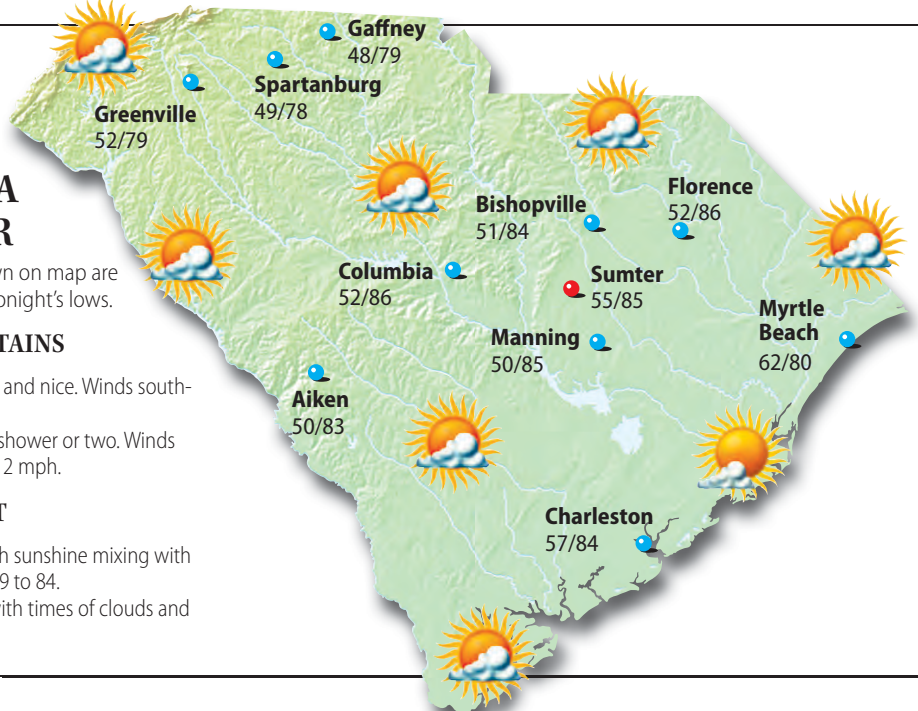
Temperatures shown on map are today's highs and tonight's lows.

IN THE MOUNTAINS

Today: Partly sunny and nice. Winds south-east 6-12 mph.
Sunday: A passing shower or two. Winds south-southwest 6-12 mph.

ON THE COAST

Today: Pleasant with sunshine mixing with some clouds. High 79 to 84.
Sunday: Pleasant with times of clouds and sun. High 80 to 85.



LOCAL ALMANAC

SUMTER THURSDAY

Temperature	Precipitation
High 83°	Thursday 0.00"
Low 63°	Month to date 3.00"
Normal high 84°	Normal month to date 3.63"
Normal low 62°	Year to date 13.77"
Record high 100° in 2019	Last year to date 19.28"
Record low 50° in 1992	Normal year to date 18.08"

LAKE LEVELS

Lake	Full pool	7 a.m. yest.	24-hr chg
Murray	360	358.11	+0.01
Marion	76.8	75.66	-0.01
Moultrie	75.5	75.42	none
Wateree	100	95.33	+0.12

RIVER STAGES

River	Flood stage	7 a.m. yest.	24-hr chg
Black River	12	4.13	-0.03
Congaree River	19	4.15	+0.07
Lynches River	14	3.95	-0.28
Saluda River	14	3.31	-0.01
Up. Santee River	80	N.A.	N.A.
Wateree River	24	5.37	-1.23

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise	6:12 a.m.	Sunset	8:28 p.m.
Moonrise	2:51 a.m.	Moonset	3:22 p.m.



TIDES

AT MYRTLE BEACH				
	High	Ht.	Low	Ht.
Today	4:54 a.m.	3.0	11:53 a.m.	-0.2
	5:35 p.m.	3.2	---	---
Sun.	5:55 a.m.	2.9	12:33 a.m.	0.2
	6:35 p.m.	3.3	12:48 p.m.	-0.3

NATIONAL CITIES

City	Sat. Hi/Lo/W	Sun. Hi/Lo/W
Atlanta	77/66/pc	81/69/t
Chicago	69/61/r	77/64/pc
Dallas	87/71/t	87/75/t
Detroit	79/61/r	73/60/r
Houston	91/77/t	92/78/r
Los Angeles	74/58/pc	75/59/pc
New Orleans	86/76/t	86/76/t
New York	84/65/s	80/64/pc
Orlando	87/69/s	89/69/pc
Philadelphia	84/62/s	82/65/pc
Phoenix	105/76/s	103/77/s
San Francisco	66/55/pc	66/56/pc
Wash., DC	84/63/s	80/64/sh

REGIONAL CITIES

City	Sat. Hi/Lo/W	Sun. Hi/Lo/W	City	Sat. Hi/Lo/W	Sun. Hi/Lo/W
Asheville	75/57/pc	74/58/t	Florence	86/60/pc	85/68/pc
Athens	79/63/pc	83/66/t	Gainesville	87/63/s	88/66/pc
Augusta	84/62/pc	85/65/pc	Gastonia	81/59/pc	78/63/c
Beaufort	84/70/pc	85/72/pc	Goldsboro	84/59/s	83/67/pc
Cape Hatteras	80/66/s	81/72/s	Goose Creek	84/61/s	84/67/pc
Charleston	84/64/s	84/68/pc	Greensboro	80/60/pc	79/64/pc
Charlotte	81/63/pc	79/65/c	Greenville	79/61/pc	79/64/t
Clemson	78/63/pc	79/64/t	Hickory	80/60/pc	78/61/c
Columbia	86/62/pc	87/66/c	Hilton Head	82/68/s	84/72/pc
Darlington	85/61/pc	84/66/pc	Jacksonville, FL	84/64/c	86/66/pc
Elizabeth City	82/59/s	83/66/pc	La Grange	80/65/pc	83/67/t
Elizabethtown	84/58/s	85/68/pc	Macon	81/65/pc	85/65/t
Fayetteville	84/58/pc	86/66/pc	Marietta	77/66/pc	80/67/t
Marion	79/55/pc	79/60/t	Mt. Pleasant	82/66/s	84/72/pc
Mt. Pleasant	82/66/s	84/72/pc	Myrtle Beach	80/66/s	83/72/pc
Orangeburg	87/62/pc	86/67/pc	Port Royal	82/69/pc	83/71/pc
Port Royal	82/69/pc	83/71/pc	Raleigh	84/62/pc	83/66/pc
Raleigh	84/62/pc	83/66/pc	Rock Hill	82/61/pc	81/63/c
Rock Hill	82/61/pc	81/63/c	Rockingham	84/60/pc	84/63/pc
Savannah	84/66/pc	84/66/pc	Spartanburg	78/60/pc	80/62/c
Spartanburg	78/60/pc	80/62/c	Summerville	84/61/s	85/65/pc
Summerville	84/61/s	85/65/pc	Wilmington	82/63/s	85/68/pc
Wilmington	82/63/s	85/68/pc	Winston-Salem	82/62/pc	82/65/c

Weather(W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice

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19				20					21				22							
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51					52				53	54				55						
56				57	58				59				60	61						
				62			63	64	65			66		67						
68	69	70					71					72		73						
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85							86					87	88			89				
90							91	92				93			94		95	96		
							97					98						99		
100	101	102							103	104	105				106		107			
108									109				110	111	112		113	114	115	116
117									118											
121									122											124
125									126											128

92 Tolkien brute

94 Thumbs-down vote

95 "Sold Out" sign

96 Oahu and Maui

97 Stat on S&L windows

100 ___ liver (iron-rich dish)

101 "___ a Grecian Urn"

102 University of ___ Dame

103 Baghdad, for one

104 Williams of tennis

105 Creative thoughts

107 Sir ___ John

110 Optimistic emotion

111 Military group

112 Sicilian spewer

114 Fill to excess

115 Very keen on

116 School that Shelley went to

118 Toast topping

119 Beat walker

120 "Slippery" fish

Voting open for Hines Furniture Athlete of the Year



STAFF REPORT

After another year of the Hines Furniture Athlete of the Week, the yearly bracket has officially arrived.

Voting for the Hines Furniture Athlete of the Year opened on Friday morning.

The bracket consists of the 32 weekly winners from throughout the 2023-24 school year. Athletes from nearly every sport, from foot-

ball to track and shooting sports, will now compete to be the Hines Furniture Athlete of the Year. The winner of the annual bracket will be celebrated at The Bobbys, *The Sumter Item's* Espys-style awards show, on June 20 at Sumter Opera House.

The bracket for Hines Furniture Athlete of the Year will last for four rounds of voting. The first round runs until Sunday at noon, with the second round kicking off

at midnight on Monday. The second round is open until Wednesday at noon. The third round, which will trim our field down to four finalists, runs from midnight on Thursday, June 6, until Saturday, June 8, at noon. You can vote for each matchup once per round.

Voting for the final four will begin on Monday, June 10, and will end on Friday, June 14, at noon. You can vote for the final four once daily. See all the brackets on B4.



Put a ring on it



The Sumter High School girls basketball team shows off their newly acquired championship rings during a ceremony on Thursday, May 30.

PHOTOS BY ADAM FLASH / THE SUMTER ITEM

Sumter High girls get their championship bling

BY TIM LEIBLE
tim@theitem.com

The girls basketball team at Sumter High School had plenty to celebrate this year.

They finished a perfect season with a state championship against Rock Hill on March 1, claiming their first title in girls basketball in four decades. Since then, they've had parades through the school and the city. Last week, they watched as most of their starting lineup graduated from Sumter High.

But the moment they'll carry with them the longest happened on Thursday, May 30.

The Lady Gamecocks came together in the school's auditorium to receive their championship rings, putting a cherry on top of their unbelievable season.

One by one, the SHS girls

took the stage as athletic director Crasten Davis ran through the roster. Assistant coach Chris Vandevander handed out the bling, while head coach Jeff Schaffer and Principal Anamaria Sandor got pictures with each champion. Once everyone was on stage, Schaffer counted down for the revealing of the rings, and the girls erupted with excitement. The newly iced-out Lady Gamecocks were quick to show off their rings, each being personalized to the player with her name along the side.

SEE RINGS, PAGE B2



LEFT: Sumter High's Keziah Sanders reaches out to shake the hand of Principal Anamaria Sandor during a ceremony to receive the championship rings for the Lady Gamecock basketball team on Thursday.

RINGS FROM PAGE B1

The moment could only be surpassed by the sound of the final buzzer of their championship over Rock Hill. The Lady Gamecocks had a spectacular performance in the 60-42 win despite playing most of the second half without SCHSL 5A player of the year Kiara Croskey, who got into early foul trouble. Fellow all-state guard Rickell Brown was named player of the game after scoring 19 points in the victory.

The title capped off a perfect 25-0 season for Sumter High. It was a revenge tour for the Lady Gamecocks, who made it to the final four of SCHSL 5A in each of the previous three seasons. They made the state semifinals at the end of the 2022-23 season despite playing without Croskey, who injured her ACL in the offseason. Determined to make a final run with a senior core of Croskey, Brown, Keziah Sanders and Dalashia Brunson, SHS locked in for their first girls basketball title in 40 years. Now those four seniors will go their separate ways, as each signed to continue her career in college. Croskey is headed to Francis Marion, Brown signed with Newberry, Sanders inked a letter of intent with Erskine, and Brunson will play for Catawba.



The Sumter High girls basketball team received their rings after winning the SCHSL 5A state championship during a ceremony on Thursday.

PHOTOS BY ADAM FLASH / THE SUMTER ITEM



the Sumter ITEM SCOREBOARD

BASEBALL

FRI. MAY 31 **MANNING-SAN @ WINNSBORO**
LATE

SUN. JUNE 2 **MANNING-SAN @ ROCK HILL**

FRI. MAY 31 **WINNSBORO @ SUMTER P-155**
LATE

SUN. JUNE 2 **ROCK HILL @ SUMTER P-155**

SAT. JUNE 1 **MANNING-SAN @ SUMTER P-155**



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www.DentalTeamofSumter.com

Crestwood team to host annual youth basketball camp this week

STAFF REPORT

The Crestwood boys basketball team will host its annual youth camp starting on Monday. The camp is open to young hoopers entering first through sixth grade. The Knights will teach basketball fundamentals from 6 to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Registration for the camp is \$50. You can

contact head coach Aric Samuel at aric.samuel@sumterschools.net with any questions.

"We're working with the youth to ensure a positive future," Samuel said.

The camp comes on the heels of the free football camp the CHS football team hosts on Saturday. The camp kicks off at 8 a.m. for ages 8-14 at the Knights' home field at Hillcrest Middle School.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE NJCAA

Former Sumter High standout and current Florence-Darlington pitcher and infielder Bryce Coulter (14) celebrates with his teammates during a comeback win against Southern Nevada on Wednesday at the Junior College World Series in Grand Junction, Colorado.

Florence-Darlington finishes 4th at Junior College World Series

STAFF REPORT

The baseball team at Florence-Darlington, which is led by Sumter native Preston McDonald, put together a spectacular showing in the Junior College World Series this week but fell just short of this week-end's national championship in Grand Junction, Colorado.

The Stingers made tournament history in their finale, playing Blinn in the longest regulation game in tournament history on Thursday, but eventually fell 21-19 in an offensive marathon.

"First off, congratulations to Blinn. Every time we punched, they punched back," McDonald said after the game. "We were talking about it, whoever scores 20 first is going to win, and that's 100% what we said in the dugout. I felt pretty good being up 19-18 after battling back from being nine down. How impressive is that? This group of guys is so special. They're never out of it; they really believe in each other. They're such a talented group, and I'm so proud of them."

Blinn got out to a 5-0 lead after a four-run second inning, but the Stingers tied the game with five of their



Florence-Darlington head coach Preston McDonald speaks to an umpire during the Stingers' loss to Blinn on Tuesday, May 28, in the Junior College World Series in Grand Junction, Colorado.

"If I could do it all again, I'd go with Derek Duval again," McDonald said. "We don't get to this point in the season without him. That was the first earned runs he's given up since March 5. There's no second-guessing ourselves."

The game featured a total of seven home runs, five of which came from the Stingers. Along with Mitchell,

of his three hits. After a day off on Sunday, Flo-Dar rallied for four runs in the bottom of the eighth to outlast Southern Nevada 9-8. Mitchell delivered the game-winning RBI with a sacrifice fly after a sac fly from Josh Campos and an RBI single from Plyler. Duval got the save with a perfect inning in the ninth, and Mike Joyce earned the win with 2 1/3 innings of shutout ball in relief.

The Stingers then moved into the elimination bracket with a 17-7 loss to Blinn on Tuesday. Blinn jumped out to a 6-0 lead in the first and never slowed down in the romp. Coulter made his lone appearance of the week against Blinn, allowing four runs on four hits in an inning of work. He struck out one and allowed a two-run homer to end the game in five innings.

But Florence-Darlington bounced back with a thriller over Southern Nevada on Wednesday. Trailing 3-1 entering the sixth inning, Flo-Dar poured in five runs thanks to two-run homers from Plyler and Jackson Proctor in a comeback 6-4 win. Marcus Locklear earned the win and Duval got the save with three shutout innings to close out the victory. The win set up Thursday's dramatic season finale for the Stingers.

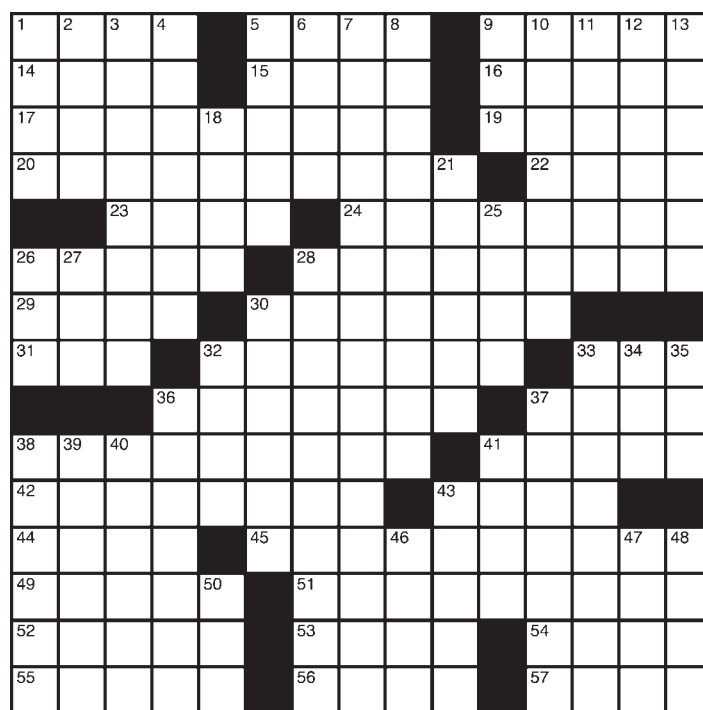
"This group of guys is so special. They're never out of it; they really believe in each other. They're such a talented group, and I'm so proud of them."

PRESTON McDONALD

Florence-Darlington head coach

own in the third. The game was back and forth all afternoon, as a seven-run seventh kept Flo-Dar in the game before they jumped ahead 19-18 in the eighth on the back of a three-run dinger by Devin Mitchell. But Blinn pushed three runs across in the ninth on a series of bases-loaded walks by Derek Duval and Aydin Palmer to send the Stingers packing. Florence-Darlington got two runners on base in the bottom of the ninth but left them stranded on a ground out.

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 Duel invitation
- 5 Advanced
- 9 Donnybrook
- 14 Bring (down)
- 15 Farm
- 16 Harris of NPR's "Pop Culture Happy Hour"
- 17 Target of some orthodontic work
- 19 Keypad key
- 20 Taxi driver?
- 22 Louganis who is the only man to sweep the diving events in consecutive Olympics
- 23 Deux et trois
- 24 Burning
- 26 Operative
- 28 Ones on a roll
- 29 "___ in there"
- 30 Part of Reno's nickname
- 31 Brew made with warm fermentation
- 32 Authority on acts of congress
- 33 Letters with a link, maybe
- 36 Some banners
- 37 Satyr kin
- 38 Propulsion devices
- 41 Prepares for a break
- 42 Tight squeezes
- 43 ___ sock
- 44 Terse confirmation
- 45 Public image
- 49 Lets
- 51 Tick off
- 52 Flag
- 53 Edge (into)
- 54 Weldon of NPR's "Pop Culture Happy Hour"
- 55 Boyo
- 56 Really go downhill
- 57 2021 US Open winner Radu-canu

DOWN

- 1 Important element in lath and plaster construction
- 2 "RuPaul's Drag Race" guest judge Love
- 3 Finish line?
- 4 Leaf
- 5 Letters of orientation
- 6 NHL great Lindros
- 7 "This isn't about you"
- 8 Elementary school grads, typically
- 9 PDA participant, possibly
- 10 Curl
- 11 Off the mark
- 12 Allergy sound
- 13 Cup sizes
- 15 Fulminate
- 21 Ones using yard sticks?
- 25 Top
- 26 Clicking sound?
- 27 Actress Gadot
- 28 Parlor game that produces a Bacon number
- 30 Pummel
- 32 Casual meeting
- 33 "What were they thinking" gesture
- 34 Guffaw
- 35 Connections
- 36 Harlem Renaissance figure
- 37 Creator of Imperial Easter eggs
- 38 Classic Fords
- 39 Straight
- 40 Spoil, perhaps
- 41 Rock, in a way
- 43 On the clock
- 46 Circuit component
- 47 Article
- 48 "Peacemaker" star John
- 50 Notice

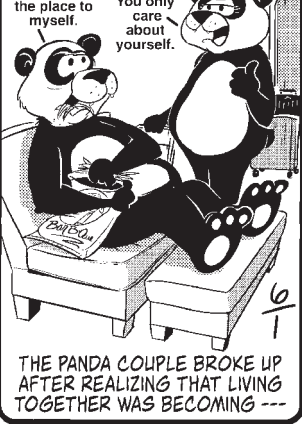
JUMBLE

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

BYABG
 ALVEE
 RUUENS
 NGADEM

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



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

Answer here:

SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

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

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

SOLUTIONS

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

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

Jumbles: GABBY LEAVE UNSURE MANAGE
 Answer: The panda couple broke up after realizing that living together was becoming UNBEARABLE

VS

BRYCE ALLEN
SUMTER HIGH
FOOTBALL

SHANE GOINES
LAURENCE MANNING
BASKETBALL

ATHLETE of THE YEAR
Presented by **Hines**
Furniture and Bedding Co.

VS

ANN WEATHERS
BLANKENSIP
WILSON HALL
SHOTGUN

TYMARIES THOMPSON-DURANT
SUMTER HIGH
FOOTBALL

ATHLETE of THE YEAR
Presented by **Hines**
Furniture and Bedding Co.

VS

ELI BRITT
SUMTER HIGH
BASKETBALL

NOAH STEELE-ALLEN
THOMAS SUMTER
FOOTBALL

ATHLETE of THE YEAR
Presented by **Hines**
Furniture and Bedding Co.

VS

RICKELL BROWN
SUMTER HIGH
BASKETBALL

CHUCK HARRY
LEE CENTRAL
FOOTBALL

ATHLETE of THE YEAR
Presented by **Hines**
Furniture and Bedding Co.

VS

JACKSON BRUNSON
LAURENCE MANNING
FOOTBALL

LAURYN NESMITH
LAKEWOOD
BASKETBALL

ATHLETE of THE YEAR
Presented by **Hines**
Furniture and Bedding Co.

VS

DANIEL BURTON
WILSON HALL
BASKETBALL

QUINTON DAÏS
LAKEWOOD
TRACK AND FIELD

ATHLETE of THE YEAR
Presented by **Hines**
Furniture and Bedding Co.

VS

KIARA CROSKY
SUMTER HIGH
BASKETBALL

KASON CARTER
THOMAS SUMTER
SOFTBALL

ATHLETE of THE YEAR
Presented by **Hines**
Furniture and Bedding Co.

VS

MALAYIA ENGLISH
THOMAS SUMTER
BASKETBALL

GRAHAM NEWSOME
EAST CLARENDON
BASEBALL

ATHLETE of THE YEAR
Presented by **Hines**
Furniture and Bedding Co.

VS

PEYTON FRIERSON
MANNING
BASKETBALL

DASHAN SCRIVEN
CRESTWOOD
FOOTBALL

ATHLETE of THE YEAR
Presented by **Hines**
Furniture and Bedding Co.

VS

SHAWN MICHAEL MATTHEWS
WILSON HALL
BASKETBALL

JACEN KRAMMER
THOMAS SUMTER
SOCCER

ATHLETE of THE YEAR
Presented by **Hines**
Furniture and Bedding Co.

VS

SENECA MOORE
CRESTWOOD
FOOTBALL

CALEB COKER
EAST CLARENDON
BASEBALL

ATHLETE of THE YEAR
Presented by **Hines**
Furniture and Bedding Co.

VS

THELLEN NAAS
CLARENDON HALL
FOOTBALL

ARAINA ROSS
SUMTER HIGH
BASKETBALL

ATHLETE of THE YEAR
Presented by **Hines**
Furniture and Bedding Co.

VS

HANNAH REAMES
LEE CENTRAL
VOLLEYBALL

LILLIE IVEY
SUMTER HIGH
SOFTBALL

ATHLETE of THE YEAR
Presented by **Hines**
Furniture and Bedding Co.

VS

LILA KATE STINES
THOMAS SUMTER
SOFTBALL

BEN REYNOLDS
WILSON HALL
BASEBALL

ATHLETE of THE YEAR
Presented by **Hines**
Furniture and Bedding Co.

VS

CAULDER WILLIAMSON
WILSON HALL
CROSS COUNTRY

ROD SHAW
EAST CLARENDON
FOOTBALL

ATHLETE of THE YEAR
Presented by **Hines**
Furniture and Bedding Co.

VS

AZARIAN YATES
CRESTWOOD
FOOTBALL

TALAN GRIFFIN
WILSON HALL
SOFTBALL

ATHLETE of THE YEAR
Presented by **Hines**
Furniture and Bedding Co.

Braves OF Acuña deals with emotions of a second season-ending knee injury

BY CHARLES ODUM
Associated Press

ATLANTA — Ronald Acuña Jr. is emboldened at the start of his journey through a second major knee surgery and recovery by the knowledge he enjoyed such a successful comeback from his first procedure.

Acuña said Thursday that hasn't stopped the tears from flowing as he adjusts to the reality his season ended when he suffered a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee on Sunday in Pittsburgh.

After the Braves announced Sunday night that an MRI showed a complete tear in the ligament, support started to come in for Acuña, the reigning NL MVP.

"I haven't gotten around to replying to a lot of those messages because those messages come from a place of support," Acuña said through a translator. "I just sort of break down and start crying. ... I know they just want what's best for me."

This is Acuña's second season-ending knee injury. He tore his right ACL on July 20, 2021, and came back strong with his 2023 MVP season. Even though few players have had to recover from torn ACLs in both knees, he said his familiarity with the surgery and rehab gives him confidence.

"I think it has been easier to process this go around because I went through the process two years ago," Acuña said.

Acuña said the surgery will be per-



Atlanta Braves right fielder Ronald Acuña suffered a torn ACL in his left knee on Sunday, May 26, and will miss the remainder of the season.

formed by Dr. Neal ElAttrache in Los Angeles on Tuesday. ElAttrache also was the surgeon for the 2021 procedure. Acuña expects to spend a least one month in Los Angeles as he begins his rehabilitation with hopes of returning for the start of the 2025 season.

Acuña was hurt after opening Sunday's 8-1 win over the Pirates with a double and then breaking from second base on a stolen base attempt. His left knee gave way when he stopped in an

attempt to return to second base.

Acuña is a native of Venezuela and another native of his home country, former catcher Wilson Ramos, is one of the few players to continue playing following ACL repairs to both knees. Ramos injured his left knee in 2012 and his right knee in 2016, each time with Washington and then hurt his left knee again in 2021 with Cleveland.

Acuña said he has not reached out to Ramos or any player for advice. "Fortunately for me it feels the same

because I've already been through it," he said.

Acuña said that despite "overwhelming" good wishes from fans, teammates and coaches, "all that support finds me at home crying by myself because I feel like I'm the one abandoning the team," he said. "It feels like I'm the one letting everyone down."

Manager Brian Snitker said he worries more about Acuña than the team.

"He loves to play and it's tough because he does know what he's in for," Snitker said. "It's good and bad."

Snitker expects a successful recovery for Acuña, 26.

"He's done it before and he'll do it again," Snitker said. "He's young and strong."

The Braves have lost two key players to season-ending injuries. All-Star right-hander Spencer Strider's season ended on April 13 when he had internal brace surgery to repair the ulnar collateral ligament in his pitching elbow.

"I'm going to take everything in stride," Acuña said. "It's another opportunity. Who knows? Maybe I can come back and win another MVP."

Acuña said "the best of all" reminders is that the team won the 2021 World Series following his first injury. The offense has struggled during a sluggish showing in May.

"We're here for a reason; every player on that roster is here for a reason," Acuña said. "They're certainly capable. They don't need me to win a World Series."

French Open players deal with stress of schedule-changing rain

BY HOWARD FENDRICH
Associated Press

PARIS — For 2021 U.S. Open runner-up Leylah Fernandez, the biggest question at this rainy-as-can-be French Open was: Should I eat a full lunch or just have a tiny snack? Her second-round match, like many others, was being delayed by heavy showers, and she couldn't possibly know when it would resume.

Turned out the 31st-seeded Canadian didn't get back on court later that day at all, so her coach made the right call by telling her to go ahead and have a plate of pasta — along with some croissants, a banana and an orange. Then, after returning to Roland Garros the next morning, Fernandez had to wait until about 5 p.m. to pick things back up on Court 8 and, eventually, finish off her victory.

The wet weather just keeps coming this week at the French Open. It has been delaying and postponing matches — including on Friday — jumbling the schedule, prompting court changes and, all in all, creating stress and uncertainty for the world's best tennis players.

"It is hard, more mentally than physically. You don't know when you can mentally relax a little bit. You kind of have to be switched on all the time," Fernandez said after winning Thursday to set up a third-round match against two-time Grand Slam finalist Ons Jabeur. "Even when your coaches tell you can take a nap — 'Close your eyes; we'll be on top of things' — for me, it's like, 'No, I can't fully switch off.' I need to be ready for whatever happens."

There were hours and hours of rain on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, when the last second-round match did not get finished until a minute shy of 1 a.m. — after the calendar had flipped to Friday.

The other bad news? There was more rain on Friday afternoon, pausing play for at least an hour. The "lousy weather," as tournament director Amélie Mauresmo called it, prompted her to push up the start times on some courts to 10 a.m., an hour earlier than usual, mainly to try to fit in a bunch of doubles matches that have been in a holding pattern.

Some players handle the

conditions caused by the downpours better than others, of course, whether it's the way the dampness of the courts and the soggy balls affect the footing and the shot-making or the way the start-and-stop-and-restart rhythm — or lack thereof — can affect the body and the mind.

"Just this whole week, every day, you just kind of don't know what to expect. You have to accept that," said Peyton Stearns, the unseeded American who beat No. 10 Daria Kasatkina on Thursday in a match that didn't start until after 9 p.m. "So today when I woke up, it was blue skies. It looked like a great day. But in the back of my mind, I was like, 'I could play right now or at 8 p.m., and I just have to be ready for both and be very flexible with what's happening.' Just having that kind of a peace of mind helped a lot."

The ideal situation is to have a match at Court Philippe Chatrier or Court Suzanne Lenglen, the two largest stadiums — and the only ones equipped with retractable roofs that allow for competition no matter what.

Those also have the most expensive seats and so tend to be reserved for the players with the most past success and most drawing power. That's why stars such as Novak Djokovic, Carlos Alcaraz, Iga Swiatek and Coco Gauff, along with their foes, tend to find themselves there, removing any weather-related fretting.

"It's not easy. You kind of wish you were one of the top seeds playing on Lenglen or Chatrier and you didn't have to worry about rain delays or when you're playing, because things are moving smoothly when you have a roof," said No. 15 Ben Shelton, an American who won an NCAA title at the University of Florida and is in his second full year on tour.

Players whose matches are suspended in progress will try to guess when the action might get going again, because they need to warm up physically and get themselves in the right head space.

"Getting the engine started over and over," Shelton said, "and getting cold and then warm again and then cold — it takes a big toll."

Mavericks punch ticket to NBA Finals against Celtics

BY TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

Kyrie Irving returning to Boston. Luka Dončić's first trip to the title round. Jaylen Brown and Jayson Tatum, getting another chance at a ring. Kristaps Porziņģis facing his former team, too.

Pick a storyline. There are many in these NBA Finals.

The matchup is now set: It'll be Boston against Dallas for the Larry O'Brien Trophy, a series that starts on the Celtics' home floor on June 6 — meaning everyone will be sitting around and waiting for about a week, a byproduct of the Celtics and Mavericks making short work of their respective conference finals.

Dallas eliminated Minnesota on Thursday night, winning 124-103 to finish off a 4-1 victory in the Western Conference finals. Boston's spot was clinched Monday night, after the Celtics beat Indiana 108-105 to cap a 4-0 series in the East.

"We're going to the NBA Finals," Dončić said during the on-court celebration in Minneapolis on Thursday night. "Just can't believe it, man."

It's Boston's second time in the finals in the last three seasons, after falling to Golden State in six games in 2022. Dallas is in the title round for the first time since winning the championship against Miami in 2011.

Much will be made, and rightly so, of Irving and the Celtics meeting with a title on the line. Boston made a blockbuster move in 2017 by trading for Irving, with the hopes of seeing him grace its parquet floor in the NBA Finals.

Hey, it'll happen now — just not as the sides envisioned seven years ago.

Irving was an All-Star in both of his Boston seasons, then left as a free agent to join the Brooklyn Nets in 2019 a few months after saying — vowing, really — that he would be staying with the Celtics. There have been some interesting moments in his returns to Boston; he's been routinely booed and had a water bottle thrown at him, while he's been fined for making an obscene gesture and raised ire by stomping on the Celtics' leprechaun logo at midcourt fol-



Dallas Mavericks guard Luka Dončić smiles during a news conference after the team's win over the Minnesota Timberwolves in Game 5 of the Western Conference Finals on Thursday, May 30, in Minneapolis.

lowing a Brooklyn playoff win there.

"Boston's in the way and in between our goal," Irving said when the West finals ended Thursday night.

Irving's message to the Mavericks: Enjoy this moment.

"Nothing's guaranteed in this league, especially making it to the finals every year," said Irving, who won a title playing alongside LeBron James with Cleveland in 2016. "We couldn't have done it without a collective responsibility, us working together every single day, practicing hard, doing the little things. We should reward ourselves by playing hard."

Porziņģis spent nearly three years in Dallas after being traded there by the New York Knicks in 2019. He's in his first season in Boston and has been a huge part of the Celtics' success — but got hurt in Round 1 against Miami and hasn't played since, though it seems reasonable to think he may be ready for the NBA Finals.

"He's progressing well and he's working really hard to get back," Celtics coach Joe Mazzulla said. The Celtics won the two head-to-head meetings against the Mavericks in the regular season, 119-110 at Dallas on Jan. 22 and then 138-110 in Boston on March 1. The Mavericks didn't have an answer for Tatum; he had 39 points in the January game, 32 in the March matchup. The Celtics didn't have an answer for Dončić;

he had triple-doubles in both games — 33 points, 18 rebounds and 13 assists in January, then 37 points, 12 rebounds and 11 assists in March.

Those games won't mean much now.

"This group believes," said Mavericks coach Jason Kidd, who played for the Dallas team that won a title in 2011. "They believe in each other. ... This is a special group."

The Celtics are seeking their 18th title overall, which would break a tie with the Los Angeles Lakers for the most in NBA history, and their first championship since 2008.

Against the Warriors two years ago, the championship experience of Golden State prevailed. Lessons were learned then, Boston has insisted since, and the Celtics will get a chance to finish the season differently this time.

"It's a new challenge. It's a different situation," Celtics center Al Horford said. "I'm just excited to be in this position and to have this opportunity."

The Celtics will have spent more than a week without a game before the finals start. Mazzulla said all that downtime won't be spent idly.

"Nothing's really valuable if you let it go to waste," Mazzulla said. "Between now and June 6th, we have to take every experience that we've been through, and we've got to make sure we take advantage of it and that we utilize it to put ourselves in the best position to win."

TAVARES MCFADDEN

Tavares "Key" McFadden departed this life on Monday, May 27, 2024, in Sumter.

He was born March 27, 1992, in Sumter to Michelle McKnight (Absolum Jr.) McFadden and the late Wilbert Frank.

The family is receiving friends at 7345 Scales Road, Rembert.

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

JERRY DEANS EVANS SR.

Jerry Deans Evans Sr., 62, husband of Sarah Champion Evans and son of Mattie Wise

**EVANS**

Evans and the late Prest Evans, was born on Sept. 30, 1961, in Gable. He departed this life on Monday, May 27, 2024, at Sumter East Health and Rehabilitation Center in Sumter.

Public viewing was held on Friday, May 31, 2024, from 2 to 6 p.m. at Job's Mortuary Inc.

Funeral services will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday, June 1, 2024, at Salem Chapel & Heritage Center, 101 S. Salem Ave., Sumter, SC 29150 with Rev. Channing Brown, officiating.

Interment will follow in Old McFadden Cemetery, New Zion.

Family will receive friends at the home of his son, Ethan Evans, 3350 Wilton Drive, Sumter, daily from 3 to 8 p.m.

Job's Mortuary Inc., 312 S. Main St., 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.

RAYMOND E. WILLIAMS

HAMPTON — Raymond E. Williams, 80, died on Tuesday, May 28, 2024, at Trident Medical Center in North Charleston.

You may go to www.bullockfuneralhome.com and sign the family's guest book.

The family has chosen Bullock Funeral Home for the arrangements.

**GAIL CATHERINE JACKSON**

Gail Catherine Jackson was born on Dec. 13, 1962, in Florence County to the late Lonnie Burgess and Lease Wise Witherspoon Burgess. She departed this life on Thursday, May 23, 2024, at Prisma Health Tuomey Hospital, Sumter.

Gail attended the Florence County Public Schools. At an early age, she attended Emwell Freewill Baptist Church in Olanta. Later, she was a member of New Life Church in Sumter.

Funeral services were held at 1 p.m. Thursday, May 30, 2024, at Emwell Freewill Baptist Church, 3050 Amwell Church Road, Lynchburg, with Pastor O'Neal Graham, eulogist.

Interment followed in Emwell Freewill Baptist Church Cemetery.

The family will receive relatives and friends at the home, 2614 Hilldale Drive, Sumter.

Services directed by the management and staff of Williams Funeral Home Inc., 821 N. Main St., Sumter. Online memorial messages may be sent to the family at williamsfuneralhome@sc.rr.com. Visit us on the web at www.WilliamsFuneralHomeInc.com.

CLAUDIS LEE FRAZIER JR.

NEW YORK, New York — Claudis Lee Frazier Jr., 69, died on Friday, May 24, 2024, at his residence

**FRAZIER**

1155 Lawrenceville Hwy., Lawrenceville, Georgia. He was born June 6, 1954, a son of Mary A. Buckson-Frazier and the late Claudis Lee Frazier Sr.

Public viewing was held Thursday, May 30, 2024, at Hayes F. Samuels Sr. Memorial Chapel.

Funeral services were held at 1 p.m. Friday, May 31, 2024, at Providence AME Church,

with burial in Churchyard Cemetery.

These services have been entrusted to Samuels Funeral Home LLC of Manning.

CASSANDRA P. CLAUDE

MANNING — Cassandra P. Claude, 49, died Wednesday, May 29, 2024, at her residence, 1246 Waynes Drive, Manning. She was born Sept. 25, 1974, in Baltimore, Maryland, a daughter of Laurence Claude and Barbara Jean Dozier.

These services have been entrusted to Samuels Funeral Home LLC of Manning.

WILLIAM CHARLES HATFIELD JR.

MANNING — William Charles Hatfield Jr., 77, died on Tuesday, May 28, 2024, at Continuecare Hospital at Palmetto Health Baptist, Richland.

You may go to www.bullockfuneralhome.com and sign the family's guest book.

The family has chosen Bullock Funeral Home for the arrangements.

**ABIE DINGLE**

Abie Dingle, 65, passed away on Saturday, May 25, 2024, in Orangeburg, South Carolina.

Funeral service will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, June 1, 2024, at Prayer House Mission, 5076 Bald Eagle Road, Summerton.

Services have been entrusted to Clarendon Funeral Home LLC of Summerton.

LEVAN STUKES

Levan Stukes, 66, son of the late Ferdinand Stukes and Lillie Myrtle Brunson Stukes,

**STUKES**

was born on Nov. 17, 1957, in Sumter. He departed this life on Monday, May 27, 2024, at Springdale Healthcare Center, Camden.

Public viewing will be held on Monday, June 3, 2024, from 4 to 6 p.m. at Job's Mortuary.

Funeral services will be held at 1 p.m. Tuesday, June 4, 2024, at Salem Chapel & Heritage Center, 101 S. Salem Ave., Sumter, with Pastor Melaine Dees, officiating, and Elder William Hairston, eulogist.

Interment will follow in Stukes Cemetery, Sumter.

Job's Mortuary Inc., 312 S. Main St., 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.

DAVID HART

David Hart, 90, widower of Janie Maxine McCoy Hart and son of the late Sanders Hart Sr. and Drusiella Lee Hart, was born on April 23, 1934, in Bishopville. He departed this life on Wednesday, May 22, 2024, at Grady Memorial Hospital, Delaware, Ohio.

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

GWENDOLYN FAYE NASH

LEXINGTON — Gwendolyn Faye Nash, 68, died Wednesday, May 29, 2024, at Lexington Medical Center.

Please visit www.sumterfunerals.com for the full obituary.

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

**MILAGROS RODRIGUEZ**

Milagros Rodriguez, 87, wife of Wilfredo Ramos, died Wednesday, May 29, 2024, at her home in Sumter. Born in Carolina, Puerto Rico, on Jan. 6, 1937, she was the daughter of the late Biennenicle Rodriguez and Petra Mecardo.

The family will receive relatives and friends at the home, 3230 N. Main St., Sumter.

Funeral arrangements are incomplete and will be an-

nounced by the management of Williams Funeral Home Inc., 821 N. Main St., Sumter.

THOMAS PALKA

Thomas Palka, 63, husband of Helen Palka, died Thursday, May 30, 2024, at his home.

Services will be announced by Elmore Hill McCreight Funeral Home & Crematory, 221 Broad St., Sumter, (803) 775-9386.

**WILLIE O'BRIAN DEAN**

Willie O'Brian Dean, 50, son of Willie Dean and Viola Mack Harry, was born on June 11, 1973, in Sumter. He departed this life on Wednesday, May 29, 2024, in Sumter.

Family will receive friends at the home, 885 Bama Lane Apt #1, Sumter, daily from 5 to 9 p.m.

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

DANNI LUNSFORD NUNLEY

Danni Lunsford Nunley, 68, beloved wife of 52 years to Albert E. Nunley, died on Tuesday, May 28, 2024, at Prisma Health Richland Hospital.

You may go to www.bullockfuneralhome.com and sign the family's guest book.

The family has chosen Bullock Funeral Home for the arrangements.

**CATHERINE JACKSON**

Catherine "Cathie" Jackson of Horatio died on Wednesday, May 15, 2024. She was born in Kittery, Maine, on July 27, 1954. She received a Bachelor of Science and Wildlife and Fisheries Biology from Clemson University and served for over 20 years as a steward with the National Steeplechase Association.

Also a Sumter Master Gardener, Cathie cultivated beauty in her yard and garden, reflecting her dedication to nature conservancy. Above all, Cathie's greatest joy was her love of God, family, animals and the natural world. Cathie was a devoted wife, and she often shared with her family about her faith in the Lord, love of nature and the joys of life.

Cathie is survived by her mother, Gerry; sisters, Nancy and Sally; two nephews, two nieces and their children. A Celebration of Life Service will be held at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, June 11, 2024, at Church of the Holy Comforter in Sumter. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Palmetto Animal Assisted Life Services (<https://www.paals.org/donate>).

BETTY C. MCLEES

COLUMBIA and LAURENS — Betty Condy McLees, age 96, passed away peacefully on Saturday, May 25, 2024, surrounded by loving family.

**MCLEES**

Formerly of Columbia, she was a resident of Martha Franks Retirement Center at the time of her death. She is survived by her children Betsy Ross (Ed) Carey of Laurens and Myrtle Beach; John Gavin McLees of Marietta; her beloved grandchildren Lindsay Ross (Mike) Henry of Summerville, Travis McLees of Leesville and Jamie Leigh Barrs of Cayce; great-grandchildren Jayleigh Guillebeau, Brantley Crider

of Cayce, Lillian (Lily) Henry of Summerville and Caroline McLees of Leesville; and nieces and nephews Debbie (Ed) Neal of Sumter, Jimmy (Dianne) Condy of Sumter and Dick Condy of Myrtle Beach. She was predeceased by her husband of 56 years, John Harlan McLees, and her son Richard (Ty) McLees of Columbia; brother Richard C. Condy of Sumter; and sister Ethel Ruth (Lucy) Griffin of Sumter.

The daughter of the late Edith Barkley Condy and Richard Crawford Condy, Betty was born in Wedgefield and graduated with honors from Edmond High School in 1945. After high school, she was employed by the Federal Land Bank in Sumter. She married Harlan, and their journey together carried her to professional careers at Clemson College, the University of Georgia, Wofford College and the University of South Carolina, where she retired in 1993 after 30 years' service from the College of Business Administration.

During her tenure, she witnessed the growth of the School of Business Administration, the International School of Business and the Darla Moore School of Business, working with Dr. James L. Athearn and the J. Frank Hipp Trust, Dr. Travis Pritchett, Dr. John Stinton and Deans Jim Kane and Bill Putnam.

Betty developed a close relationship with beloved assistant dean and advisor Ada Thomas; both cared deeply about the students' personal and professional lives. Betty believed the greatest gift you could leave future generations was a good education.

Herself a life-long learner, researcher and editor for four Risk and Insurance textbooks, she led by example and maintained contact until her death with many of the students she nurtured, tutored and "adopted" as her own during their college years. She always enjoyed delivering her famous divinity fudge and brownies to countless students who needed extra hugs away from home. During Coach Frank McGuire's tenure at USC, he once told Betty she deserved credit for the winning season, having tutored some of the team students to help them pass their courses.

During her stay at Martha Franks Retirement Center, Betty was affectionately nicknamed Nannie. The family would like to extend their heartfelt appreciation to the wonderful caregivers, administrators and her physicians for their loving care.

A memorial service is scheduled for Sunday, June 23, 2024, 2 p.m. at The Kennedy Mortuary Chapel, Laurens, South Carolina.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorials to Martha Franks Retirement Community, 1 Martha Franks Drive, Laurens, SC, or First United Methodist Church, 244 W. Main St., Laurens, SC.

Condolences may be expressed online at www.thekennedymortuary.com.

The Kennedy Mortuary and Crematory

STANLEY BROWN

Stanley Brown, 71, husband of Dolores Budden Brown and son of the late Rufus Brown and Lean Holiday Brown, was born on March 14, 1953, in Clarendon County. He departed this life Friday, May 31, 2024, at Sumter East Health Rehabilitation Center in Sumter.

Family will receive friends at the home, 2920 Ervin Lane, Sumter, daily from 3 to 7 p.m.

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

EDWARD L. BICK JR.

Edward L. Bick Jr., "Buzz," passed away peacefully on Wednesday, May 29, 2024, at MUSC Charleston.

You may go to www.bullockfuneralhome.com and sign the family's guest book.

The family has chosen Bullock Funeral Home for the arrangements.

**THOMAS DANIEL ARDIS**

Thomas Daniel Ardis (Tommy), husband of 54 years to Delores Earles Ardis, went home to be with the Lord on Friday, May 31, 2024, after a long battle with Alzheimer's. Tommy was born on Jan. 20, 1944, to the late Fred Ardis and Be-

**ARDIS**

atrice Ardis.

Tommy was a veteran of the United States Army. After returning home, he worked a few years at Winn Dixie before becoming a federal food inspector with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

He was of the Baptist faith and was a member of Lakewood Baptist Church. There he served as a deacon and taught the adult Sunday School class when needed.

Even though Alzheimer's robbed him of his memory, he never forgot who his Lord and Savior was.

Along with his wife, he leaves behind two children, Janet Moore (Fred) and Wesley Ardis (Jennifer); seven grandchildren, Logan Moore Baker (Josh), Koby Ardis, Hailey Ardis, Aubree Ardis, Thomas Ardis, Porter Ardis and Paisley Moore. He has one remaining sister, Earlene Skelcher, currently living in California.

In addition to his parents, Tommy was predeceased by three sisters, Virginia Verhoven, Vivian Earles and Dianne Arrants; and four brothers, Will (Sonny) Ardis, John Ardis, Henry Ardis and Wayne Ardis, as well as an adopted son, Mike Godfrey.

Funeral service will be held at 3 p.m. Sunday, June 2, 2024, in Elmore-Cannon-Stephens Funeral Home Chapel officiated by the Rev. Tim Hinson. Burial will be in Evergreen Memorial Park Cemetery with military honors.

Pallbearers are Wesley Ardis, Fred Moore, Josh Baker, Louie Brown, Lathan Earles and Kevin Ardis.

The family will receive friends from 2 to 3 p.m. Sunday, June 2, 2024, at Elmore-Cannon-Stephens Funeral Home and other times at the home.

The family offers special thanks to Dr. Robert Eageron, Kari, Marcia and Jake with McLeod's Hospice Program. We would also like to thank our special friend Roger Holman.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Men's Ministry of Lakewood Baptist Church, 3140 Nazarene Church Road, Sumter, SC 29154, or to the Alzheimer's Association, 140 Stoneridge Dr #640, Columbia, SC 29210.

Elmore-Cannon-Stephens Funeral Home and Crematorium of Sumter is in charge of the arrangements.

ELISHA MONTGOMERY

BISHOPVILLE — Elisha Montgomery, 95, transitioned from labor to reward on Sunday, May 26, 2024, at his home, 413 Williamson Road, Bishopville.

The family is receiving friends at his residence.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to Square Deal Funeral Home, 106 McIntosh St., Bishopville.



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LEGAL NOTICES

Legal Notice

Notice of Public Information Meeting: Expansion of Kershaw Lugoff Wastewater Treatment Plant Capacity

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on June 19, 2024, from 5:00 - 7:00 PM in the Kershaw County Government Complex at 515 Walnut St. Camden, South Carolina, a public information meeting will be held to provide information and entertain questions concerning the expansion of wastewater treatment capacity for the Kershaw Lugoff Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The Kershaw Lugoff WWTP is seeking an amendment to the Santee-Lynches Regional Water Quality Management Plan to expand its treatment capacity from 2.0 million gals./day to 3.0 million gals./day. The facility is currently permitted to discharge treated effluent under NPDES Permit No. SC0039870.

This public information meeting and the matters to be discussed are subject to the provisions of the Santee-Lynches Regional Water Quality Management Plan, developed in accordance with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control's statewide water quality management program.

Background information and justification for the amendment is available for review at the Santee-Lynches Council of Governments office at 3219 Broad St., Sumter, SC, or at www.santeelyncscog.org/environmental-planning. Questions concerning the public information meeting may be directed to Jeff Parkey at jparkey@slcog.org.

Beer & Wine License

Notice Of Application

Notice is hereby given that Sidebar, LLC, intends to apply to the South Carolina Department of Revenue for a license permit that will allow the sale and ON premises consumption of beer, wine and liquor at 30 North Main Street, Sumter, SC 29150. To object to the issuance of this permit / license, written protest must be postmarked no later than June 17, 2024. For a protest to be valid, it must be in writing, and should include the following information: (1) the name, address and telephone number of the person filing the protest; (2) the specific reasons why the application should be denied; (3) that the person protesting is willing to attend a hearing (if one is requested by the applicant); (4) that the person protesting resides in the same county where the proposed place of business is located or within five miles of the business; and (5) the name of the applicant and the address of the premises to be licensed. Protests must be mailed to: S.C. Department of Revenue, ABL, P.O. Box 125, Columbia, South Carolina 29214-0907; or Faxed to: (803) 896-0110.

Notice Of Application

Notice is hereby given that Diego Lopez intends to apply to the South Carolina Department of Revenue for a license permit that will allow the sale and ON premises consumption of Beer & Liquor at 1029 Broad Street, Sumter, SC 29150. To object to the issuance of this permit / license, written protest must be postmarked no later than June 11, 2024. For a protest to be valid, it must be in writing, and should include the following information: (1) the name, address and telephone number of the person filing the protest; (2) the specific reasons why the application should be denied; (3) that the person protesting is willing to attend a hearing (if one is requested by the applicant); (4) that the person protesting resides in the same county where the proposed place of business is located or within five miles of the business; and (5) the name of the applicant and the address of the premises to be licensed. Protests must be submitted online e-mailed to: ABL@dor.sc.gov Attn: S.C. Department of Revenue, ABL Section.

Notice is hereby given that QuikTrip Corporation intends to apply to the South Carolina Department of Revenue for a license and/or permit that will allow the sale and OFF premises consumption of Beer / Wine at 2840 Paxville Hwy, Manning, SC 29102. To object to the issuance of this license and/or permit, submit an ABL-20 protest form by June 17, 2024. Submit the ABL-20 online at MyDORWAY.dor.sc.gov, or email to ABL@dor.sc.gov.

Bid Notices

INVITATION TO BID

The Sumter County Public Works is soliciting separate sealed bids from qualified vendors for the following projects:

PAVING OF SUMTER COUNTY ROADS: COLCLOUGH PLANTATION RD, WAYCROSS CIR, AND HAPPY HOMES SUBDIVISION (HAPPY AVE, EASY ST, RANCH RD, & PINESIDE DR)

Bids will be received until 10:00 A.M. Wednesday, June 19, 2024 in the Sumter County Public Works Conference Room located at 1289 North Main Street, Sumter, South Carolina 29153. Plans and bid documents may be obtained from:

Sumter County Public Works 1289 North Main Street Sumter, South Carolina 29153 Email: khyatt@sumtercountysc.org Phone: (803) 436-2241

Or Davis & Floyd, Inc. 240 Stoneridge Dr., Suite 305 Columbia, SC 29210 Email: twarren@davisfloyd.com Phone: (803) 256-4121

Any written questions should be emailed to twarren@davisfloyd.com no later than Friday June 14, 2024 at

Bid Notices

4:00 pm. The County of Sumter reserves the right to reject any or all bids. The County of Sumter reserves the right to waive any or all technicalities.

Mandatory Pre-bid Meeting Wednesday June 12th @ 9:00 am Meet at Public Works Office 1289 N. Main St. Sumter, SC 29153

Summons & Notice

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS COUNTY OF SUMTER C/A NO. 2024CP4300858

Road/Route U. S. Route 521 Shoulder Improvement Project ID No. P037062 Tract 69

South Carolina Department of Transportation Condemnor, VS.

Chick M. Wells and Lillie Mae Coleman, deceased, Landowner(s), and

John Doe and Mary Roe, representing all unknown persons having or claiming to have any right, title or interest in or to, or lien on the lands described herein, including all unknown heirs of Lillie Mae Coleman, deceased, Unknown Claimant(s).

TO: THE LANDOWNER(S) AND UNKNOWN CLAIMANTS:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED, advised and notified, that pursuant to the South Carolina Eminent Domain Procedures Act, Section 28-2-10, et seq., the within Condemnation Notice and Tender of Payment, a copy of which is herewith served upon you, has been filed with the Clerk of Court for SUMTER County. The purpose of this lawsuit is to enable the Condemnor, the South Carolina Department of Transportation, to acquire certain real property for its public purposes, as is more fully stated in the attached Condemnation Notice and Tender of Payment. Responsive pleadings to the Condemnation Notice and Tender of Payment are not necessary.

LIS PENDENS NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Condemnor above named pursuant to the South Carolina Eminent Domain Procedures Act, Section 28-2-10, et seq., of the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, as amended, has brought an action against the Condemnee(s) above named to acquire the real property described herein for public purposes, to-wit:

ALL THAT parcel or strip of land, in fee simple, with improvements thereon, if any, containing 0.014 acre (596 sq. ft.) of land and being described as follows: Within 37.5 feet of the survey centerline of U. S. Route 521, on the right, between approximate survey stations 274+00 and 274+50. Tax Map Number 138-01-01-019 The property sought herein is to be acquired for public purposes, more particularly for the construction of a section of U. S. Route 521 Shoulder Improvement.

J. Calhoun Land, IV Attorney for Condemnor (SCDOT) Land Parker Welch, LLC P. O. Box 138 Manning, SC 29102 Telephone: (803) 435-8894

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA IN THE FAMILY COURT THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COUNTY OF SUMTER DOCKET NO.: 2023-DR-43-00029 SUMMONS AND NOTICE BY PUBLICATION

South Carolina Department of Social Services, Plaintiff, vs.

Shayla Smith Jermaine Williams Anthony Thomas John Doe Defendants.

IN THE INTEREST OF: CHILD Born: 2022 CHILD Born: 2022 CHILD Born: 2015 CHILD Born: 2010 Minors Under the Age of 18 Years.

TO DEFENDANT: Anthony Thomas

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and required to answer the Complaint for Ex Parte Removal and Supplemental Complaint for Termination of Parental Rights in this Action, the original of which has been filed in the Office of the Clerk of Court for Sumter County, on January 11, 2023 and March 8, 2024, respectively, copies of which will be delivered to you upon request; and to serve a copy of your Answer to the Complaint and Supplemental Complaint upon the undersigned attorney for the Plaintiff at 105 N. Magnolia St., Sumter, South Carolina 29151, within thirty (30) days following the date of service upon you, exclusive of the day of such service; and if you fail to answer the Complaint within the time stated, the Plaintiff will apply for Judgment by Default against the Defendant for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that a termination of parental rights hearing and a permanency planning hearing in the above referenced matter has been scheduled on August 1, 2024 at 9:30 AM, in the Sumter County Family Court located at 215 N. Harvin St Sumter, SC 29150. PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that, as a named defendant in this action, you have the right to be present and represented by an attorney. If you cannot afford an attorney, the Court will appoint an attorney to represent you. It is your responsibility to contact the Clerk of Court's Office, 215 N. Harvin St Sumter, SC 29150, to apply for appointment of an attorney to represent you if you cannot afford an attorney.

Summons & Notice

in this action to represent the best interests of the child will provide the Family Court with a written report that includes an evaluation and assessment of the issues brought before the Court along with recommendations; (2) the Guardian ad Litem's written report will be available for review twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the hearing; (3) you may review the report at the Guardian ad Litem Program county office. S. C. DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Steven B. Suchomski Attorney for Plaintiff South Carolina Department of Social Services 105 N. Magnolia St. Sumter, SC 29151 (803) 773-5531 (Telephone) S.C. Bar No. 75341

May 13, 2024 Sumter, South Carolina

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF SUMTER IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS C/A NO. 2024CP4300810

Road/Route U. S. Route 521 Shoulder Improvement Project ID No. P037062 Tract 87

South Carolina Department of Transportation Condemnor, VS.

Jimmie Dennis, Jr. a/k/a Jimmy Dennis, Jr. a/k/a James Dennis, Jr., deceased, Landowner(s), and

Lottie B. Dennis a/k/a Lottie Boyd Dennis, deceased, Anthony Dennis, Gregory Dennis, Larry Dennis and Jimmie Dennis, III, as their interest may appear, South Carolina Department of Revenue, State Tax Lien, Republic Finance, Judgment, Other Condemnee(s), and

John Doe and Mary Roe, representing all unknown persons having or claiming to have any right, title or interest in or to, or lien on the lands described herein, including all unknown heirs of, Jimmie Dennis, Jr. a/k/a Jimmy Dennis, Jr. a/k/a James Dennis, Jr., deceased, Lottie B. Dennis a/k/a Lottie Boyd Dennis, deceased, Unknown Claimant(s).

SUMMONS

TO: THE LANDOWNER(S), OTHER CONDEMNEE(S) AND UNKNOWN CLAIMANTS ABOVE NAMED: YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED, advised and notified, that pursuant to the South Carolina Eminent Domain Procedures Act, Section 28-2-10, et seq., the within Condemnation Notice and Tender of Payment, a copy of which is herewith served upon you, has been filed with the Clerk of Court for Sumter County. The purpose of this lawsuit is to enable the Condemnor, the South Carolina Department of Transportation, to acquire certain real property for its public purposes, as is more fully stated in the attached Condemnation Notice and Tender of Payment. Responsive pleadings to the Condemnation Notice and Tender of Payment are not necessary.

LIS PENDENS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Condemnor above named pursuant to the South Carolina Eminent Domain Procedures Act, Section 28-2-10, et seq., of the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, as amended, has brought an action against the Condemnee(s) above named to acquire the real property described herein for public purposes, to-wit: All that parcel or strip of land, in fee simple, with improvements thereon, if any, containing 0.126 acre (5,460 sq. ft.) of land and being described as follows: Within 37.5 feet of the survey centerline of U. S. Route 521, on the right, between approximate survey stations 231+64 and 232+70. Also, within 37.5 feet of the survey centerline of U. S. Route 521, on the left, between approximate survey stations 232+15.09 and 232+69. And also, within 50 feet, of the survey centerline of U. S. Route 521, on the left, between approximate survey stations 234+58.24 and 235+55, thence within 37.5 feet between approximate survey stations 235+55 and 236+64. Tax Map Number 138-00-01-038 The property sought herein is to be acquired for public purposes, more particularly for the construction of a section of U. S. Route 521 Shoulder Improvement.

J. Calhoun Land, IV Attorney for Condemnor (SCDOT) Land Parker Welch, LLC P. O. Box 138 Manning, SC 29102 Telephone: (803) 435-8894 Manning, South Carolina

Notice of Sale

NOTICE OF SALE

BY VIRTUE of a decree heretofore granted in the case of: Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, as Trustee for the benefit of the Freddie Mac Seasoned Loans Structured Transaction Trust, Series 2021-2 vs. Andrew Nathan Alford, IV; Jessica N Alford; C/A No. 2023CP4301690. The following property will be sold on June 3, 2024, at 12:00 Noon at the Sumter County Courthouse to the highest bidder: All that lot of land with the improvements thereon situate in Sumter County, South Carolina, represented as 5.2 acres on plat of Baughman Land Surveyors, Inc., dated May 11, 1971, recorded in the office of the Sumter County Register of Deeds in Plat Book Z-40 at Page 37. Pursuant to Section 30-5-250 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina, (1976, as amended) reference to said

Notice of Sale

plat is hereby made for the metes, bounds, courses and/or distances of the property delineated thereon. This property is known as 4325 Bethel Church Road and is shown on the Auditor's map of Sumter County as tax parcel 176-00-02-045. This also includes a mobile home: 1994 Fleetwood BF, 26.7X48.3, VIN GAFLR54A&B75888HS. Derivation: Deed Book 1087 at Page 953

4325 Bethel Church Rd, Pinewood, SC 29125 TMS/PIN# 176-00-02-045

SUBJECT TO ASSESSMENTS, SUMTER COUNTY AD VALOREM TAXES, EASEMENTS AND/OR, RESTRICTIONS OF RECORD, AND OTHER SENIOR ENCUMBRANCES.

TERMS OF SALE: A 5% deposit in certified funds is required. The deposit will be applied towards the purchase price unless the bidder defaults, in which case the deposit will be forfeited. If the successful bidder fails, or refuses, to make the required deposit on the day of sale or fails or refuses to comply with the bid within 20 days, then the property will be resold at the bidder's risk. No personal or deficiency judgment being demanded, the bidding will not remain open after the date of sale, but compliance with the bid may be made immediately. The successful bidder will be required to pay interest on the balance of the bid after the deposit is applied from date of sale to date of compliance with the bid at the rate of 3.625% per annum. If for any reason the Plaintiff's agent does not appear to bid at the sale, the sale will be deemed canceled. For complete terms of sale, see Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale filed with the Sumter County Clerk of Court at C/A # 2023CP4301690.

NOTICE: The foreclosure deed is not a warranty deed. Interested bidders should satisfy themselves as to the quality of title to be conveyed by obtaining an independent title search prior to the foreclosure sale date.

NOTICE: This sale will occur outdoors, on the front steps of the historical courthouse, facing N. Main St. All persons in attendance are subject to having their temperature taken (non-touch or temple touch). Anyone that is visually or audibly symptomatic (fever, cough, shortness of breath, nasal or throat congestion, etc.) may be denied in person participation. Anyone that is otherwise symptomatic (loss of taste or smell, muscle aches, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, etc.) should not attend. Masts or facial coverings are not required but may be worn. Social distancing will be observed with at least six foot distancing between participants.

Michael M. Jordan Master In Equity for Sumter County

Brian P. Yoho, Esq. Attorney for Plaintiff P.O. Box 100290 Columbia, SC 29202-3200 (803) 744-4444 (803) 471-05190 Website: www.rogerstownsend.com (see link to Resources/Foreclosure Sales

NOTICE OF SALE CIVIL ACTION NO. 2023CP4301827 BY VIRTUE of the decree heretofore granted in the case of: MORTGAGE ASSETS MANAGEMENT, LLC F/K/A REVERSE MORTGAGE SOLUTIONS, INC v. BEVERLY A. TOUCHBERRY; SYNCHRONY BANK; UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ACTING BY AND THROUGH ITS AGENCY THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, the undersigned Master In Equity for Clerk of Court of Sumter County South Carolina, will sell on June 3, 2024, at 12:00 PM, at the SUMTER County Courthouse, 215 North Main Street, Sumter, SC 29150, to the highest bidder: ALL THAT CERTAIN PIECE, PARCEL, OR LOT OF LAND, TOGETHER WITH THE IMPROVEMENTS THEREON, IF ANY, SITUATE, LYING, AND BEING IN THE TOWNSHIP OF SUMTER, COUNTY OF SUMTER, STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA, BEING SHOWN AND DESIGNATED AS LOT #16, TWIN LAKES, SECTION NO. 50, AS SHOWN ON THAT CERTAIN PLAT PREPARED BY JOSEPH R. EDWARDS, RLS, DATED AUGUST 26, 1991, AND RECORDED IN THE OFFICE OF THE ROD FOR SUMTER COUNTY IN PLAT BOOK 91, PAGE 1194, AND HAVING SUCH METES AND BOUNDS AS ARE SHOWN ON SAID PLAT, THIS DESCRIPTION BEING IN LIEU OF METES AND BOUNDS. AS PERMITTED UNDER SECTION 30-5-250 OF THE 1976 CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, AS AMENDED.

THIS BEING THE SAME PROPERTY CONVEYED TO BEVERLY A. TOUCHBERRY BY DEED JACKIE C. JENKINS AND JANICE G. JENKINS, RECORDED ON OCTOBER 6, 2005 IN BOOK 1000, PAGE 00672, IN THE OFFICE OF THE ROD FOR SUMTER COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA. TMS No.: 2080105003 Property Address: 2655 CARRIAGE DRIVE, SUMTER, SC 29154

TERMS OF SALE: The successful bidder, other than the Plaintiff, will deposit with the Master In Equity, at conclusion of the bidding, five percent (5%) of his bid, in cash or equivalent, as evidence of good faith, same to be applied to the purchase price in case of compliance, but in the case of non-compliance to be forfeited and first applied to the cost incurred by the Plaintiff related to the sale and the balance then applied to the Plaintiff's debt in the manner suitable to the Plaintiff. Should the last and highest bidder fail to comply with the other terms of the bid within thirty (30) days, then the Master In Equity may re-sell the property on the same terms and conditions on some subsequent Sales Day.

A personal or deficiency judgment being waived by Plaintiff, the sale shall close on the day of the Sale. Purchaser to pay for documentary stamps on the deed. The successful bidder will be required to pay interest on the amount of the balance of the bid from the date of sale to the date of compliance with the bid at the rate of 7.74% per annum. The sale shall be subject to any past due or accruing property taxes, assessments, existing easements and restrictions of record and any other senior encumbrances. The within property shall be withdrawn from sale and sold at the next available sales date upon the terms and conditions as set forth in the Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale or such terms as may be set forth in a supplemental order.

Notice of Sale

taxes, assessments, existing easements and restrictions of record and any other senior encumbrances. The sale shall be subject to all title matters of record and any interested party should consider performing an independent title examination of the subject property as no warranty is given. Neither the Plaintiff no its counsel make representations as to the integrity of the title or the fair market value of the property offered for sale. Prior to bidding, you may wish to review the current state law or seek the advice of any attorney licensed in South Carolina. In the event an agent of the Plaintiff does not appear at the time of sale. The within property shall be withdrawn from sale and sold at the next available sales date upon the terms and conditions as set forth in the Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale or such terms as may be set forth in a supplemental order.

The Honorable Michael M. Jordan Master In Equity for SUMTER County Robertson, Anschutz, Schneid, Crane & Partners, PLLC Attorneys for Plaintiff 110 Frederick, Suite 200 Greenville, SC 29607 Telephone: (470) 321-7112 Facsimile: (404) 393-1425

MASTER-IN-EQUITY'S SALE CASE NO. 2022-CP-43-00122

BY VIRTUE of a decree heretofore granted in the case of Provident Funding Associates, L.P. against Clifton N. Witherspoon and Fiesta W. Brooks, et al., I, the Master-in-Equity for Sumter County, will sell on Monday, June 3, 2024, at 12:00 o'clock noon, at the Sumter County Courthouse, Sumter, South Carolina, to the highest bidder: All that certain piece, parcel, or lot of land, with improvements situate, lying and being in the County of Sumter, State of South Carolina identified as Lot #2 on a plat prepared by Lewis E. Leavell, Jr., RLS, dated 7/17/1968 and recorded in Plat Book Z-25 at Page 134 in the RMC Office for Sumter County. TMS#: 131-00-02-020

ALSO: All that piece, parcel, or lot of land, with improvements thereon, situate, lying and being in the County of Sumter, State of South Carolina, identified as Lot #1, containing 0.70 acres, more or less as shown on that plat prepared by Joseph R. Edwards, PLS, dated 11/5/2001 and recorded in Plat Book 2002 at Page 47, in the Register of Deeds office for Sumter County. TMS#: 131-00-02-043

The above two parcels are incorporated herein and reference is craved thereto by a plat prepared for Clifton Witherspoon dated 7/22/2008 by James D. Willson, R.L.S. recorded in Plat Book 2008 at Page 270 in the Register of Deeds office for Sumter County.

This being the same property conveyed to James Witherspoon and Clifton N. Witherspoon by Deed of Peachberry Builders, LLC, dated March 5, 2009, and recorded April 6, 2009 in Deed Book 1121, Page 401 in the Office of the Register of Deeds for Sumter County, South Carolina, thereafter reformed by removing Clifton N. Witherspoon as grantee by Order entered in Case No. 2022-CP-43-00122. Subsequently, James Witherspoon died on June 3, 2020, and a one-half interest in the properties was conveyed unto Fiesta W. Brooks by virtue of that Deed of Distribution dated July 2, 2021, and recorded on July 8, 2021 in the office of the Register of Deeds for Sumter County, South Carolina in Deed Book 1288 at Page 795, and also by virtue of that Last Will and Testament of James Witherspoon dated May 18, 2020 and recorded in the Probate Court in Sumter County, South Carolina, Case No. 2020ES4300499. 5835 Cane Savannah Road Wedgefield, South Carolina 29168

TERMS OF SALE: The successful bidder, other than the plaintiff, will deposit with the Master-in-Equity for Sumter County at conclusion of the bidding, five percent (5%) of the bid, in cash or equivalent, as evidence of good faith, same to be applied to the purchase price in case of compliance, but to be forfeited and applied first to costs and then to plaintiff's debt in the case of non-compliance. If the Plaintiff's representative is not in attendance at the scheduled time of the sale, the sale shall be canceled and the property sold on some subsequent sales day after due advertisement. Should the last and highest bidder fail or refuse to make the required deposit at time of bid or comply with the other terms of the bid within thirty (30) days, the deposit shall be forfeited and the Master-in-Equity for Sumter County may re-sell the property on the same terms and conditions on some subsequent Sales Day (at the risk of the said highest bidder). As a deficiency judgment is being waived, the bidding will not remain open thirty days after the date of sale. Purchaser shall pay for preparation of deed, documentary stamps on the deed, and recording of the deed. The successful bidder will be required to pay interest on the amount of the bid from date of sale to date of compliance with the bid at the rate of 4.00% per annum. The sale shall be subject to assessments, Sumter County taxes, easements, easements and restrictions of record, and any other senior encumbrances.

s/Ryan J. Patane S.C. Bar No. 103116 Benjamin E. Grimsley S.C. Bar No. 70335 D'Alberto, Graham & Grimsley, LLC Attorneys for the Plaintiff PO Box 11682 Columbia, SC 29211 803-233-1177 rpatane@dgglegal.com bgrimsley@dgglegal.com

NOTICE OF SALE CIVIL ACTION NO. 2023CP4301861 BY VIRTUE of the decree heretofore granted in the case of: THE BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON F/K/A THE BANK OF NEW YORK, AS SUCCESSOR IN INTEREST TO JPMORGAN CHASE BANK, AS TRUSTEE FOR CENTEX HOME EQUITY LOAN TRUST 2004-A v. VERNON WASHINGTON; PEGGY K. WASHINGTON FKA PEGGY A. KNIGHT, the undersigned Master In Equity for SUMTER County, South Carolina, will sell on June 3, 2024, at 12:00 PM, at the SUMTER County Courthouse, 215 North Main Street, Sumter, SC 29150, to the highest bidder: ALL THAT CERTAIN PIECE, PARCEL OR LOT OF LAND, TOGETHER WITH ANY

Notice of Sale

IMPROVEMENTS THEREON, SITUATE, LYING AND BEING IN THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SUMTER, STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA, DESIGNATED AS LOT NO. 15 OF BLOCK J AS SHOWN ON THAT CERTAIN PLAT BY H.S. WILLSON, R.L.S., DATED FEBRUARY 28, 1966 AND RECORDED IN THE R.M.C. OFFICE FOR SUMTER COUNTY IN PLAT BOOK Z-23 AT PAGE 1. THE EXACT BOUNDARIES AND MEASUREMENTS OF WHICH CAN BE DETERMINED BY REFERENCE TO SAID PLAT. SAID LOT NO. 15 BEING BOUNDED AND MEASURING ACCORDING TO SAID PLAT AS FOLLOWS: ON THE NORTHEAST BY LOT NO. 16 OF BLOCK J AND MEASURING THEREON 60.00 FEET; ON THE SOUTHEAST BY LOT NO. 18 OF BLOCK J AND MEASURING THEREON 124.80 FEET; ON THE SOUTHWEST BY SHULER DRIVE AND FRONTING THEREON 60.00 FEET; AND ON THE NORTHWEST BY LOT NO. 14 OF BLOCK J AND MEASURING THEREON 124.50 FEET. BE ALL OF SAID MEASUREMENTS A LITTLE MORE OR A LITTLE LESS AND ACCORDING TO SAID PLAT.

THIS BEING THE SAME PROPERTY CONVEYED UNTO PEGGY A. KNIGHT AND MELLIE G. WEBB BY DEED OF DALTEY C. BURBAGE AND SHELBY M. BURBAGE RECORDED DECEMBER 28, 1976 IN BOOK E-10 AT PAGE 1476. SUBSEQUENTLY, PEGGY A. KNIGHT AKA PEGGY K. WASHINGTON AND MELLIE G. WEBB CONVEYED THE SUBJECT PROPERTY TO PEGGY K. WASHINGTON AND VERNON WASHINGTON BY DEED RECORDED ON JULY 17, 1990 IN BOOK 510, PAGE 459, COUNTY OF SUMTER, STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA. TMS No.: 229-06-02-033 Property Address: 17 SHULER DRIVE, SUMTER, SC 29150

TERMS OF SALE: The successful bidder, other than the Plaintiff, will deposit with the Master In Equity, at conclusion of the bidding, five percent (5%) of his bid, in cash or equivalent, as evidence of good faith, same to be applied to the purchase price in case of compliance, but in the case of non-compliance to be forfeited and first applied to the cost incurred by the Plaintiff related to the sale and the balance then applied to the Plaintiff's debt in the manner suitable to the Plaintiff. Should the last and highest bidder fail to comply with the other terms of the bid within thirty (30) days, then the Master In Equity may re-sell the property on the same terms and conditions on some subsequent Sales Day.

A personal or deficiency judgment being waived by Plaintiff, the sale shall close on the day of the Sale. Purchaser to pay for documentary stamps on the deed. The successful bidder will be required to pay interest on the balance of the bid from the date of sale to the date of compliance with the bid at the rate of 4.750% per annum. The sale shall be subject to any past due or accruing property taxes, assessments, existing easements and restrictions of record and any other senior encumbrances. The sale shall be subject to all title matters of record and any interested party should consider performing an independent title examination of the subject property as no warranty is given.

Neither the Plaintiff no its counsel make representations as to the integrity of the title or the fair market value of the property offered for sale. Prior to bidding, you may wish to review the current state law or seek the advice of any attorney licensed in South Carolina. In the event an agent of the Plaintiff does not appear at the time of sale. The within property shall be withdrawn from sale and sold at the next available sales date upon the terms and conditions as set forth in the Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale or such terms as may be set forth in a supplemental order.

The Honorable Michael M. Jordan Master In Equity for SUMTER County ROBERTSON, ANSCHUTZ, SCHNEID, CRANE & PARTNERS, PLLC Attorney for Plaintiff 651 Brookfield Parkway, Suite 103 Greenville, SC 29617 Telephone: (470) 321-7112 Facsimile: (404) 393-1425

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My name is CHA CHA and I'm a 7 week old tan and white female Hound/Shepherd mix.



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My name is DOODLE and I'm a 7 week old orange tabby male American Shorthair.



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My name is DRAKO and I'm a 3 year old black and tan male German Shepherd.



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My name is JERRY and I'm a 2 year old black male American Shorthair.



LORENZO

My name is LORENZO and I'm a 2 year old tan and black male German Shepherd mix.



MARCUS

My name is MARCUS and I'm a 2 year old gray tabby male American Shorthair.



NINA

My name is NINA and I'm an 8 year old tan and white female Pit mix.



PEACH

My name is PEACH and I'm a 2 year old gray tabby male American Shorthair.



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My name is PUDDY TAT and I'm a 2 year old white and gray tabby female American Shorthair.



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My name is RHEA and I'm a 7 week old dilute tortoiseshell/calico female American Shorthair.



ROMEO

My name is ROMEO and I'm a 2 year old black and tan male German Shepherd/Australian Shepherd mix.



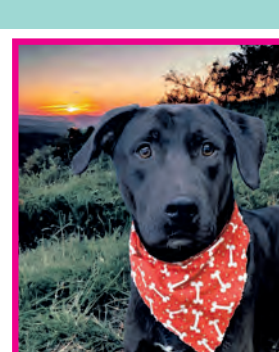
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SASHA

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The Summer Scene

June 01 - June 07, 2024



A bittersweet goodbye: 'Sweet Tooth' streams its final season

BY SARAH PASSINGHAM

One boy's long, adventurous quest to be reunited with his mother comes to a close when "Sweet Tooth," the award-winning Netflix fantasy drama, returns for its third and final season on Thursday, June 6. The family series, based on the comic book series by Canadian author Jeff Lemire, follows human-deer hybrid boy Gus, portrayed by Christian Convery ("Mom," 2024), living in a post-apocalyptic world.

In the upcoming season, Gus travels to Alaska in search of his mother, Birdie (Amy Seimetz, "The Killing"), a geneticist who has been researching the origin of "the virus" for years in the land of the midnight sun. Joining Gus on his adventure are fellow hybrid Wendy (Naledi Murray, "The Undoing"), Animal Army founder Becky (Stefania LaVie Owen, "Messiah") and their protector, Tommy Jepperd (Nonso Anozie, "Ted Lasso"). The race to find a cure for the virus has scientists going to extreme lengths to conduct their research, including Dr. Aditya Singh (Adeel Akhtar, "Fool Me Once"), who encounters Gus on his trek north.

Threats come at Gus and his friends from all directions, and a new group, the Wolf Boys, appears on their radar. Led by Helen Zhang (Rosalind Chao, "3 Body Problem") and her daughter Rosie (Kelly Marie Tran, "Sorry For Your Loss"), the group sees Gus as the answer to its objective to restart human

birth.

It seems all roads point to Gus when it comes to not only a cure for the Sick, but a greater future for humanity, but all he wants is to be reunited with Birdie, his family.

The story of "Sweet Tooth" began 10 years after the events of "The Great Crumble," which brought societal collapse following the devastation brought by the mysterious H5G9 virus. "The Sick," as they called it, killed nearly half of the global population, and suddenly babies were being born with animal characteristics. Whether the two events were connected, no one knew, and without answers, a dangerous division was drawn.

These hybrid children and their families lived in fear of those who sought to hurt them, protecting themselves from being hunted by poachers guided by their fear of the unknown. To keep Gus safe, his father, whom he called Pubba (Will Forte, "MacGruber"), raised him deep in the woods in a secure site, as far as possible from threatening people and the Sick.

When Pubba unexpectedly dies, Gus is left an orphan at only nine years old, naive to how vulnerable he is as a hybrid child in the cruel world outside of his forest home. After nearly being trapped by poachers, Gus is saved by a stranger, Tommy, who reluctantly agrees to accompany Gus as he begins

his search for his mother. Unbeknownst to Gus, Tommy is a reformed member of the Last Men who has left his hunting days behind him in search of a better way.

While even some of the most anticipated and beloved fantasy streaming series in recent memory have been abruptly cut short — think "The OA" and "The Dark Crystal: Age of Resistance" on Netflix and "Willow" on Disney+ — "Sweet Tooth" has been bestowed a different, more pleasant fate.

Showrunner Jim Mickle ("Hap and Leonard") talked to Netflix about "Sweet Tooth" ending with its third season, saying, "In a lot of ways, it's exactly the story that I imagined we would tell, and in a lot of ways, it takes on its own life."

About having a vision for adapting the comic book, Mickle said, "At the beginning, I think you set out to tell these landmark pieces of Gus's story and the big pieces of the comic book, but the beauty of long-form storytelling and Gus's journey over 24 episodes is the characters themselves tell you what they want to be."

Praising everyone who helped make the show come to life, Mickle added, "The crew and cast bring so much depth and point of view to who the characters are and where they've come from and where they're going."

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TAURUS
You'll take the necessary steps to move forward and improve your situation. Inaction isn't the answer. You'll overcome your fears and move towards your aspirations and ambitions.

GEMINI
You may discover new artistic talents. Your creativity will shine, and you could volunteer for a cause close to your heart. You could find new skills by following your intuition.

CANCER
It's time to get rid of friends who don't respect you. Avoid lending money to those close to you. Transparency will help strengthen any relationship.

LEO
You could be given more stimulating responsibilities at work. A promising opportunity will present itself if you're looking for a job. A friend could also help you professionally.

VIRGO
A summer getaway is on the horizon. You're on a tight deadline, so don't overlook your preparations. All forms of learning will lead to contentment. Your social life could lead you towards physical, psychological and spiritual well-being.

LIBRA
You'll be determined to rise to any challenge despite feeling some intense emotions. Moving house or changing jobs could bring you closer to a dream. Sometimes, you must step out of your comfort zone to change and grow.

SCORPIO
You'll be thinking a lot about your love life. Thoughts of love may make you feel anxious. Relationships involve commitment, and you'll take time to reflect before taking this all-important step.

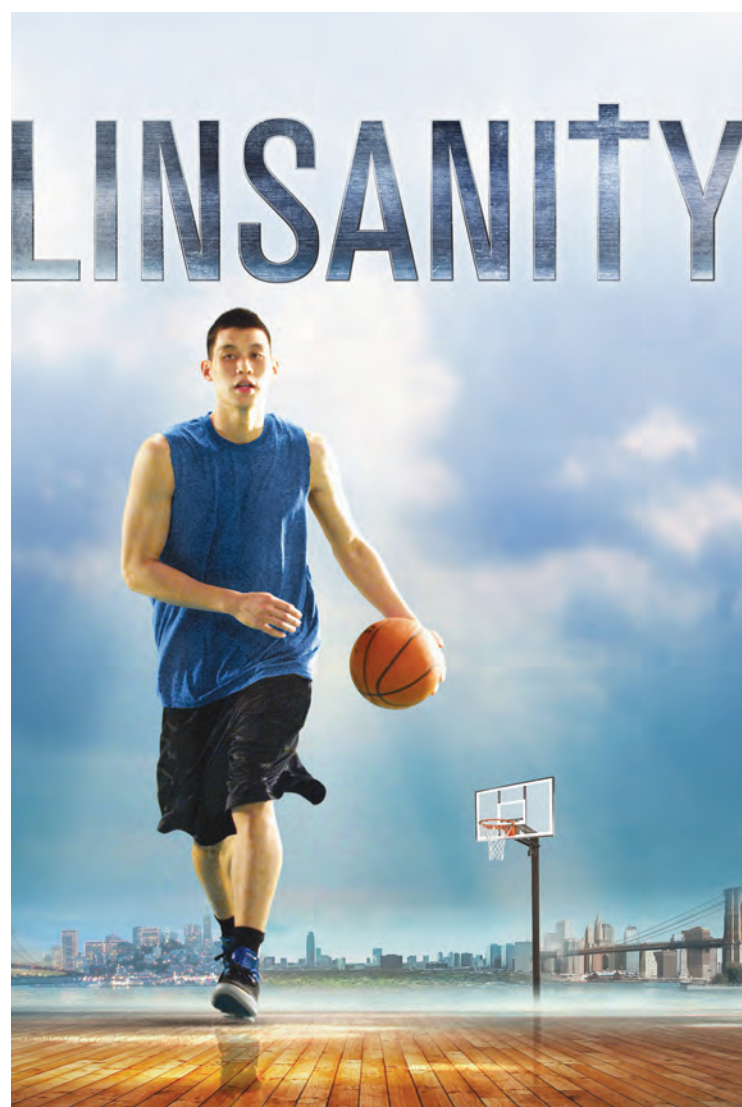
SAGITTARIUS
Your health is top of mind, and you'll start a diet better suited to your goals. Although you're considering starting a home-based business, it will take some time and patience to turn it into a stable source of income.

CAPRICORN
You'll experience a boost in your self-esteem, making you more aware of your worth. This will increase your self-confidence. Your nearest and dearest will express their appreciation for you, helping you to feel better about yourself.

AQUARIUS
You'll focus all your attention on your family this week. You may have a spat with someone close to you and need a little distance to calm down. If a move is imminent, anxiety could increase as time goes on.

PISCES
If you're worried about something, you'll find someone to confide in. You won't go out of your way to talk about what's bothering you, knowing you can use words that won't hurt anyone.

New Streaming Movies & Shows



"Linsanity" (Available Now)

In February 2012, an entire nation of basketball fans unexpectedly went 'Linsane.' Stuck in the mire of a disappointing season, the New York Knicks did what no other NBA team had thought about doing — they gave backup point guard Jeremy Lin an opportunity to prove himself. He took full advantage, scoring more points in his first five NBA starts than any other player in the modern era, and created a legitimate public frenzy in the process.



"Clipped" (June 4)

Based on the hit ESPN "30 for 30" podcast, "The Sterling Affairs," this limited series charts the downfall of Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling (Ed O'Neill) and his monumental clash with famed coach Doc Rivers (Laurence Fishburne). As Doc Rivers took the team through a drive to win a championship, the remainder of Sterling's reputation crumbled on a worldwide digital stage.

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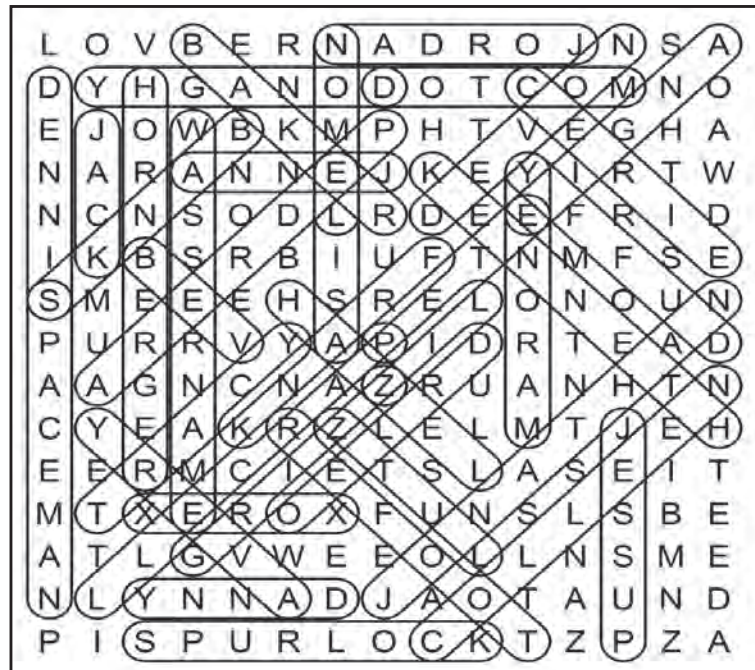
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"Jo Koy: Live From Brooklyn" (June 4)

Jo Koy returns to Netflix in typical style, sharing his unfiltered opinions on social media, aging and moving into a new phase of his life — his "zaddy" phase. The special was filmed at the historic King's Theatre in Brooklyn, New York.



"Erased: WW2's Heroes of Color" (June 4)

Narrated by executive producer Idris Elba, this docuseries uses archival footage and dramatizations to uncover the legacies of soldiers of Color during World War II. The series sheds light on the contributions of over eight million individuals who fought for the Allied forces, yet whose stories have largely gone untold.



Q&A: Kelly Clarkson

BY JAY BOBBIN

Q: Will "The Kelly Clarkson Show" continue to broadcast from New York, rather than return to Los Angeles?

A: Apparently so, since Clarkson – who initiated that switch of coasts last year, to satisfy her personal wishes – seems quite happy to be based in the Big Apple now. It was part of an overall strategy that also involved a very noticeable change in her physical appearance, and it certainly hasn't harmed her ability to get big-name guests. That might have been more of a challenge if the original relocation that had been considered, to Montana, had taken effect.

The move also hasn't harmed Clarkson's ability to accept other work, which she has proven in recent months by hosting NBC's "Christmas in Rockefeller Center" special, and she'll also be a big factor in the NBC Universal networks' coverage of the Summer Olympics. From an award standpoint, "The Kelly Clarkson Show" remains a contender, since it and its host are Daytime Emmy nominees again. (They have won those honors both of the past two years.)



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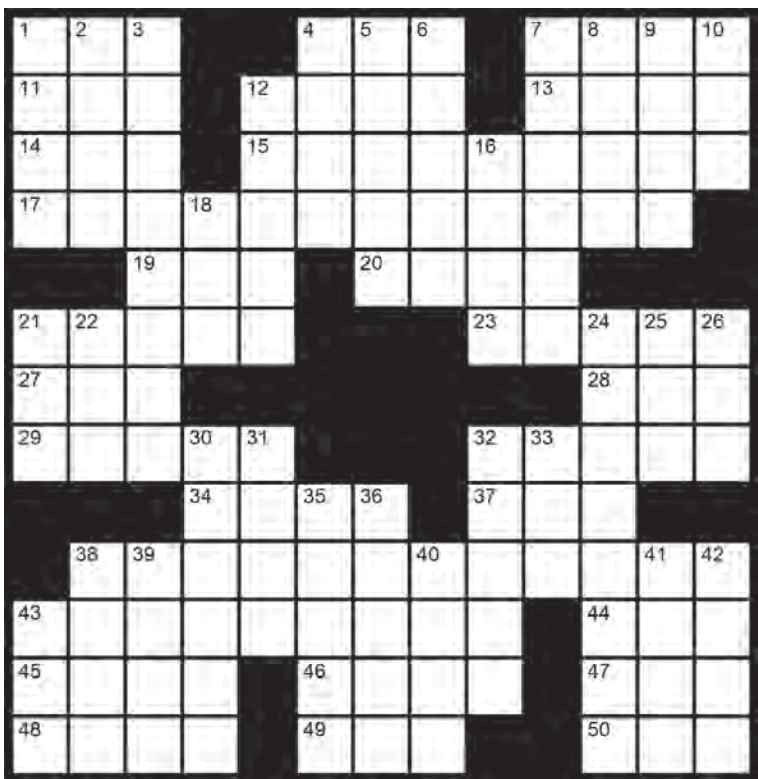
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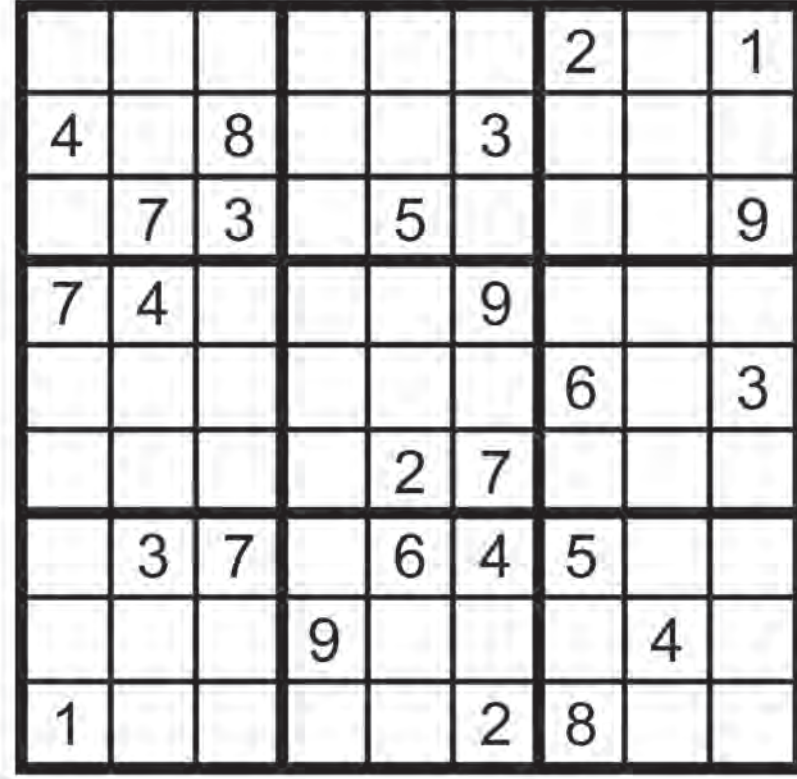
- Across**
- ___-AFTRA (actor's union)
 - Written name: Abbr.
 - Reduplicative greeting
 - Org. with body scanners
 - Mr. Bill's cry
 - Baseball analyst Hershiser
 - Target
 - Eric Cartman's show
 - Richard Gadd Netflix drama
 - "Hawaii Five-0" wreath
 - TV actors Selleck and Arnold
 - Tassimo's answer to the K-Cup
 - Specks
 - Pundit Coulter
 - "The Sympathizer" aier
 - "___ with a spoon!"
 - "Scooby-Doo and ___ Who?"
 - Trader Joe's rival
 - Tolkien creature
 - Lauren Graham series
 - Time traveler in a Tardis
 - "Knives ___" (2019)
 - Instrument in a wind quintet
 - Paper or pepper source
 - Like some humor
 - Posterior
 - ___-Cat (winter vehicle)
 - Winona Ryder ___ Horowitz

- Down**
- Run through
 - "Shogun" setting
 - "World Series of Poker," e.g.
 - "Red ___ Diaries"
 - Indigenous Canadian
 - "Ain't ___" ("Hair" 1979 tune)

- "I'm crossing my fingers!"
- Requiem Mass word
- Frau's partner
- Kind
- "Hamlet" courtier
- Port in many an LCD TV
- Network that shows Yankees games
- Identify
- Genetic stuff
- Claire Foy Netflix series
- Exercise target
- Brillo rival
- Fountain treat
- Muppet
- "Taras Bulba" author
- William Tell's canton
- College housing
- "Crocodile Hunter" Steve
- Mongolian desert
- Clickable image
- Craig, one-time Atlanta Hawk
- Play the siren
- Eye affliction
- Homer's cry



Sudoku



To complete this puzzle, place the numbers 1-9 in the empty cells, so that every row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold outline) contains all nine digits.

Each number 1-9 may appear only once in each row, column and 3-by-3 box.

SOLUTION

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

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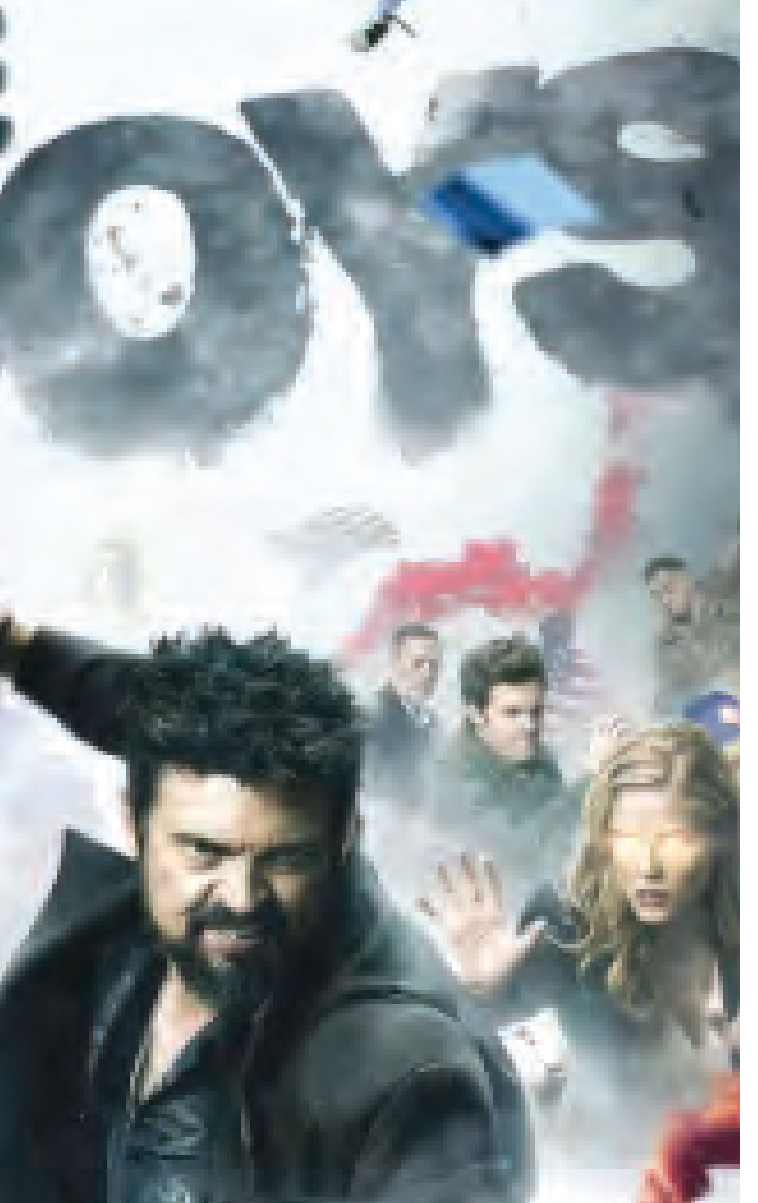
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90°	—	143°
94°	—	145°



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Table with columns: MONDAY EVENING, SP=Spectrum, FTC=Farm, DTV=DirectTV, MOVIES, SPORTS, KIDS, JUNE 3, 2024. Rows include channels like WIS, WKTC, WOLO, WACH, NWSN, WLTX, WRJA, WZRB, NICK, TOON, DISNEY, FREFRM, BSSE, NATGEO, TNT, TBS, USA, ESPN, TRUTV, SHOPHQ, TWC, CNBC, FNC, HGTV, FOOD, ANPL, DISCV, HIST, A&E, AMC, TCM, LIFE, HALL, FX, TVLAND, EI, COMEDY, SYFY, BET, PARMT, LMN, GOLF, OWN, OXY, NBATV, HBO, MAX, PARSHO, TMC, STARZ.

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Tom Hanks does multiple jobs in 'That Thing You Do!'

BY JAY BOBBIN

Courtesy of a music group named The Wonders, which didn't actually exist, the fans of "That Thing You Do!" are many as it nears its 30th anniversary.

Written by co-star Tom Hanks, who also made his directing debut on the film, the 1996 musical-comedy — currently streaming on Hulu — charts the rapid rise and equally fast fall of a small-town 1960s band that hits it big after the suddenly necessary replacement of its drummer, played by Tom Everett Scott. He sets a new beat for the group, literally, and their locally popular single (which shares the movie's title) zooms up the charts as a result.

That's thanks to a savvy talent agent (Hanks) who steers The Wonders on a path that many actual music acts of the era followed ... appearing in a concert tour, in a "Beach Party"-type movie, and on an "Ed Sullivan Show"-type variety series. Hanks clearly has a deep affinity for that era, since all of those events are depicted with loving authenticity that's warmly nostalgic at the same time it's knowingly amusing.

The other Wonders are represented superbly by the rest of the main cast: Steve Zahn as the wry guitar player who maintains a healthy skepticism about what's happening to all of them; Ethan Embry as the naive bass player who's happy to go along simply for wherever the ride takes them; and Johnathon Schaech as the moody, hyper-serious songwriter and and sing-

er and guitarist. Liv Tyler is charming as the latter's girlfriend, who travels with the band as the members' "wardrobe mistress," though she's principally their prime cheerleader.

Much of the music (cleverly evoking familiar '60s hits) for "That Thing You Do!" was composed by Adam Schlesinger, the later "Crazy Ex-Girlfriend" maestro who very sadly became an early casualty of the coronavirus pandemic. Hanks also had a big hand on composing the soundtrack, which ranges from bouncy tunes to sentimental ballads, and even to the theme of the aforementioned TV variety show that enjoyably features Hanks' late "Bosom Buddies" partner Peter Scolari as host "Troy Chesterfield." (Also notable on that fake show: a pre-stardom Bryan Cranston, intentionally stiff as novice-celebrity astronaut Gus Grissom.)

The wonderful irony of "That Thing You Do!" is that by being set in a certain time, it's timeless. A viewer will find even more to love by recognizing its pop-culture elements of the period (extending to a clip from the marionette-starring adventure series "Fireball XL5"), but even if audience members lack that knowledge, multiple-threat talent Hanks created a piece of entertainment that will continue to enchant generations.

Best JOHN FORD MOVIES

BY JAY BOBBIN

"The Informer" (1935): Ford scored his first Oscar for directing this intense drama with a great performance by Victor McLaglen as an Irish Republican Army rebel whose actions endanger him.

"Stagecoach" (1939): The film that really put Ford on the map in box-office terms, this Western classic also boosted John Wayne (who would be a frequent Ford collaborator) to stardom as a fugitive who crosses paths with travelers crossing dangerous territory. The movie leads a Turner Classic Movies night of Ford features Wednesday, June 5, promoting a new edition of the TCM podcast "The Plot Thickens" about the director.

"The Grapes of Wrath" (1940): One of the greatest American screen dramas, Ford's version of the John Steinbeck novel about a migrant family earned him his second directing Oscar and gave significant roles to Henry Fonda and fellow Academy Award recipient Jane Darwell.

"How Green Was My Valley" (1941): Ford earned another Oscar for directing this drama, deemed its year's best picture at the Academy Awards, about a Welsh mining family. Co-star Donald Crisp also emerged an Oscar winner.

"The Quiet Man" (1952): Yet another movie that brought Ford an Oscar, this spirited St. Patrick's Day television staple boasts the wonderful-looking combination of John Wayne, Maureen O'Hara and Ireland.

"Mister Roberts" (1955): Ford started the screen version of the stage hit about a Navy ship's crew toward the end of World War II, but conflict with title star Henry Fonda and health matters resulted in Mervyn LeRoy taking over the directing.

"The Searchers" (1956): Understandably considered by many to be the greatest Western ever made, this Ford saga teams him again with John Wayne, playing a Civil War veteran who spends years seeking his Comanche-abducted niece (Natalie Wood).

"The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance" (1961): The memorable teaming of Stewart as a lawyer and Wayne as a rancher who backs him against a vicious bully (Lee Marvin) informs this Western from Ford.

"How the West Was Won" (1962): With several directors participating in this massive production, Ford's contribution was the Civil War-related portion that starred George Peppard.

"Donovan's Reef" (1963): The last of the many films Ford made with John Wayne is a boisterous, French Polynesia-set comedy that folds in a number of social issues.



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Darkness and light: 'The Acolyte' rises on Disney+

BY SARAH PASSINGHAM

A new threat to the Jedi way of life rises. "The Acolyte," the newest entry into the Star Wars universe, makes its series premiere Tuesday, June 4, on Disney+.

Based, as always, on the world, characters and original stories by Star Wars creator George Lucas, this new series takes a turn to the thrilling and mysterious side of sci-fi. Set in the High Republic era — for the first time in a live-action series — "The Acolyte" moves from the intergalactic battles of the Empire to smaller, more personal battles during this time of rare peace in the galaxy far far away.

"In 'Star Wars: The Acolyte,'" says the official Disney+ press release, "an investigation into a shocking crime spree pits a respected Jedi Master [Lee Jung-jae, "Squid Game"] against a dangerous warrior from his past [Amandla Stenberg, "The Hunger Games," 2012]. As more clues emerge, they travel down a dark path where sinister forces reveal all is not what it seems..."

While further plot details are being kept tightly under wraps, series creator and showrunner Leslye

Headland ("Russian Doll") assures audiences that the series is set to move beyond the binaries of a battle of good versus evil, with twists and turns that are sure to keep viewers on their toes.

"If Star Wars is about the underdog versus the institution, [in 'The Acolyte,'] the Jedi are the institution," Headland said in an interview with Kristin Bayer, associate editor of StarWars.com. "I was so interested in a storyline where the Jedi were at the height of their power — and I don't mean [The Phantom Menace], because at that point, there's a Sith Lord in the Senate that they're not picking up on."

She later continued, "If the bad guys are actually the underdog, it just seemed like a cool reversal."

Included in the main series cast are Jung-jae as Jedi Master Sol, alongside Carrie-Anne Moss ("The Matrix," 1999) as Master Indara. Stenberg's character is Mae, a former padawan who grew to become a dangerous warrior.

Also included in the series ensemble cast is Jodie Turner-Smith ("The Last Ship"), whose character details have yet to be released to the public. But, when speaking to Collider's editor-in-chief Steve Weintraub, she revealed that: "I'm allowed to say ... I'm really powerful. I use the Force, but I'm not a Jedi or a Sith."

"My character is a very powerful leader," she continued, leaving an intriguing breadcrumb for fans.

The remainder of the series cast is filled out by Manny Jacinto ("The Good Place"), Dafne Keen ("His Dark Materials"), Charlie Barnett ("Russian Doll"), Rebecca Henderson ("Single Drunk Female"), Dean-Charles Chapman ("Game of Thrones") and Joonas Suotamo ("Solo: A Star Wars Story," 2018).

Don't let your eyes deceive you, this is a Star Wars adventure like never before. As Headland noted to Bayer, "whatever you think 'The Acolyte' is, it's not that. It's a drop in the bucket, baby. Just hang in there and check it out."

"Star Wars: The Acolyte" premieres Tuesday, June 4, on Disney+.



Question quest: 'The 1% Club' makes its American cable debut



BY CAROLINE COLLACUTT

Time to shake the cobwebs off your logic and critical thinking skills, as this once-British game show, "The 1% Club," makes its American debut Monday, June 3, on Fox.

Having initially dropped on Prime Video eight days earlier, "The 1% Club" acts as the first game show to make its debut on the streaming service, further spreading the reach of this international format. Since its launch in the U.K., the series has since found its footing in the Netherlands, Australia, Germany, France, Israel, Spain and Turkey, now finding yet another home in the U.S. with this brand-new version.

In each episode of the game show, funnyman Patton Oswalt — from the likes of "Ratatouille" (2007), "The King of Queens," "The Goldbergs" and "The Sandman" — asks contestants a series of "increasingly difficult, logic-based questions," says Fox.

Based on a scientific survey made to test the nation's problem-solving skills, this compelling and hilarious game show "does not test intelligence; instead, it inquires on the way your brain works through 15 entertaining questions," the network went on to explain.

The questions begin easy with the

"90% question" — one that 90 out of 100 surveyed people answered correctly — and from there, each question builds in difficulty until the final, "1% question," which was only answered correctly by one person asked.

"Whether you're a contestant vying for the cash prize or a viewer playing with your friends and family on the app, answer enough questions correctly and you could earn yourself a place in the 1% Club: an elite group of people who can honestly say they've outwitted 99% of the population," Fox concludes.

Speaking to Deadline, Oswalt chimed in with his classic sense of self-aware humor: "As a proud member of the 90%, it's a privilege to host this show."

Lauren Anderson, head of AVOD Originals, unscripted and targeted programming at Amazon MGM Studios, added: "Patton exudes all attributes of an iconic host, and we are thrilled he has joined us for the first-ever game show on Prime Video [His] distinct combination of warmth and wit made him the ideal person."

Produced by BBC Studios Los Angeles Productions and Magnum Media, "The 1% Club" premieres Monday, June 3, on Fox.

View from the Couch

AS Adult situations
P Profanity

Family Viewing Ratings
V Violence
N Nudity

GV Graphic Violence



"PLATOON"

Writer-director Oliver Stone's controversial, gripping and Oscar-winning 1986 Vietnam War drama (which Stone based on his own military experiences) gets a home-video relaunch in a 4K Ultra HD Steelbook edition. Charlie Sheen has the young role of an impressionable central soldier who finds himself at the crux of a battle of wills between two sergeants (Tom Berenger, Willem Dafoe). Professional politics come into play as much as personality conflicts as the Army members try to deal with the grueling conditions and the sheer tension. Even almost 40 years later, the violence quotient of the film — whose four Academy Awards included those for best picture and

BY JAY BOBBIN

director — makes it not for the weak of stomach; the superb cast also includes Keith David, Forest Whitaker, Kevin Dillon, John C. McGinley, Johnny Depp, Tony Todd and Dale Dye. **** (R: AS, N, P, GV)

"MANIFEST: THE COMPLETE SERIES"

A big hit for NBC when it began in 2018, this involving drama series ultimately ended its run with a fourth and last season of original episodes made for Netflix. When a passenger plane lands in New York after encountering severe turbulence, those aboard discover that more than five years have passed, and many people close to them believed they had perished. As they try to resume their lives, the travelers — who include a police detective and her professor brother, played by Melissa Roxburgh and Josh Dallas — have to deal not only with differences in their loved ones, but with supernatural and threatening remnants of their flight. A television version of a puzzle in many ways, the show (which included "Back to the Future" filmmaker Robert Zemeckis among its executive producers) also features Athena Karkanis, J.R. Ramirez, Luna Blaise, Jack Messina, Parveen Kaur and Matt Long. *** (Not rated: AS, P, V)

"THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN"

A fabulous cast enlivens director John Sturges' classic 1960 Western, an Americanization of Akira Kurosawa's "Seven Samurai" that is being reissued in a 4K Ultra HD Steelbook edition. Yul Brynner gets top billing as a gunslinger who

recruits others to help him defend the residents of a Mexican village against a bandit (Eli Wallach) and the latter's gang. The rest of the "Seven" all have their own individual stories and are played by Steve McQueen, Charles Bronson, James Coburn, Robert Vaughn, Brad Dexter and (in his "And Introducing" job) Horst Buchholz. The iconic theme music, composed by Elmer Bernstein, has been used many times since. Brynner's robot-gun-fighter character in 1973's "Westworld" was pretty much based on the image he projected here. McQueen, Bronson and Coburn would work with Sturges again in another action staple, "The Great Escape" (1963). This picture inspired several sequels, though Brynner was the only star to return (and only for the first one), and a TV series — as well as a 2016 movie reboot that featured Denzel Washington. **** (Not rated: AS, V)

"GLORY"

Now in its 35th-anniversary year, director Edward Zwick's historical Civil War drama — newly offered in a 4K Ultra HD Steelbook version — earned Denzel Washington his first Oscar. He plays an escaped slave who becomes one of the soldiers in the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, a principally Black division of the Union Army, with Matthew Broderick as the commanding officer, Captain Robert Gould Shaw (whose personal letters were among the sources of Kevin Jarre's screenplay). Racial matters came into play as the unit trained for a takeover of Fort Wagner, a mission that seemed destined to result in

considerable casualties, given the open beach that the soldiers would have to charge. Morgan Freeman, Cary Elwes, Andre Braugher and Cliff DeYoung also star in the 1989 film; special features include deleted scenes, an audio commentary by filmmaker Zwick and an interactive map of pivotal Civil War sites. The picture also earned Academy Awards for cinematography and sound. **** (R: P, V)

"D-DAY: 80TH ANNIVERSARY"

Being released in the same week when the anniversary actually occurs — on June 6 — this documentary compiles footage of related events, both in political chambers and on battlefields, that ultimately led to the invasion of Normandy by Allied forces to launch what was known by the code name Operation Overlord. It remains one of the largest such assaults via air and sea in history, and this recollection of it includes comments by military experts and some of those who actually participated in the mission, as well as images that have remained indelible since they first were captured. (Those visuals also have been sources for dramatic re-creations since, as with the memorable opening of the Steven Spielberg-directed "Saving Private Ryan.") *** (Not rated: V)

"MY FAVORITE THINGS: THE RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN 80TH-ANNIVERSARY CONCERT"

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many of the best-loved tunes by one of the top teams in musical theater. "The Sound of Music," "South Pacific," "Oklahoma!" and "Carousel" are among the stage classics excerpted by talents including Joanna Ampil, Michael Ball, Maria Friedman, Daniel Dae Kim ("The Good Doctor"), six-time Tony Award winner Audra McDonald (with one of those honors for "Carousel"), Julian Ovenden, Lucy St. Louis, Tony recipient Aaron Tveit, Marisha Wallace and Patrick Wilson (the latter of whom was Tony-nominated for an "Oklahoma!" revival). Ensuring lush renderings of the songs, the vocalists are backed by a 40-piece orchestra in the event, which was recorded at London's Theatre Royal Drury Lane. *** (Not rated)

Coming Home Soon

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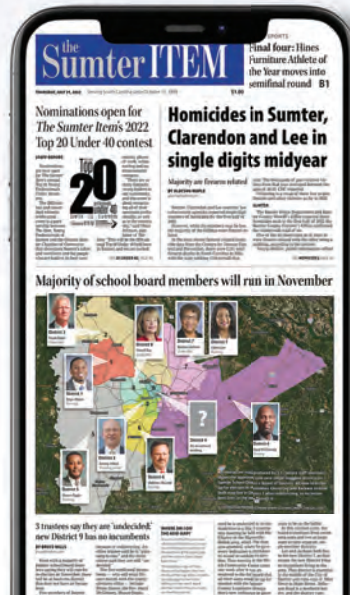
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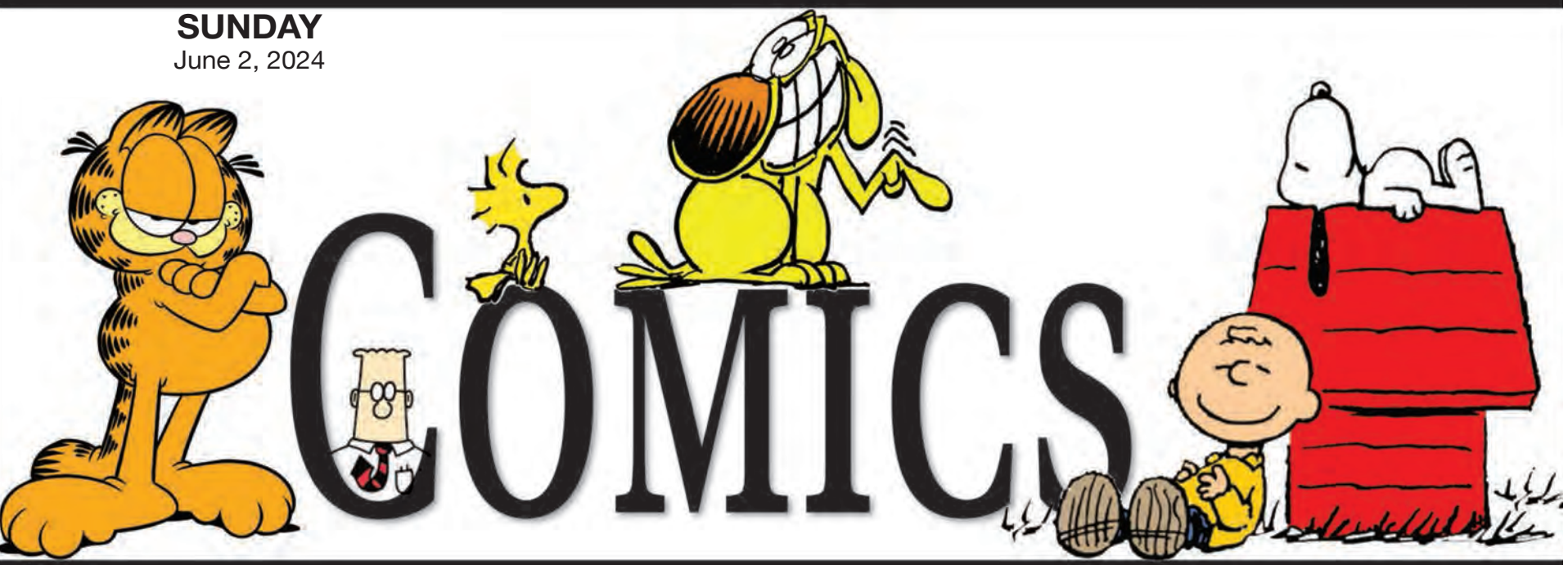
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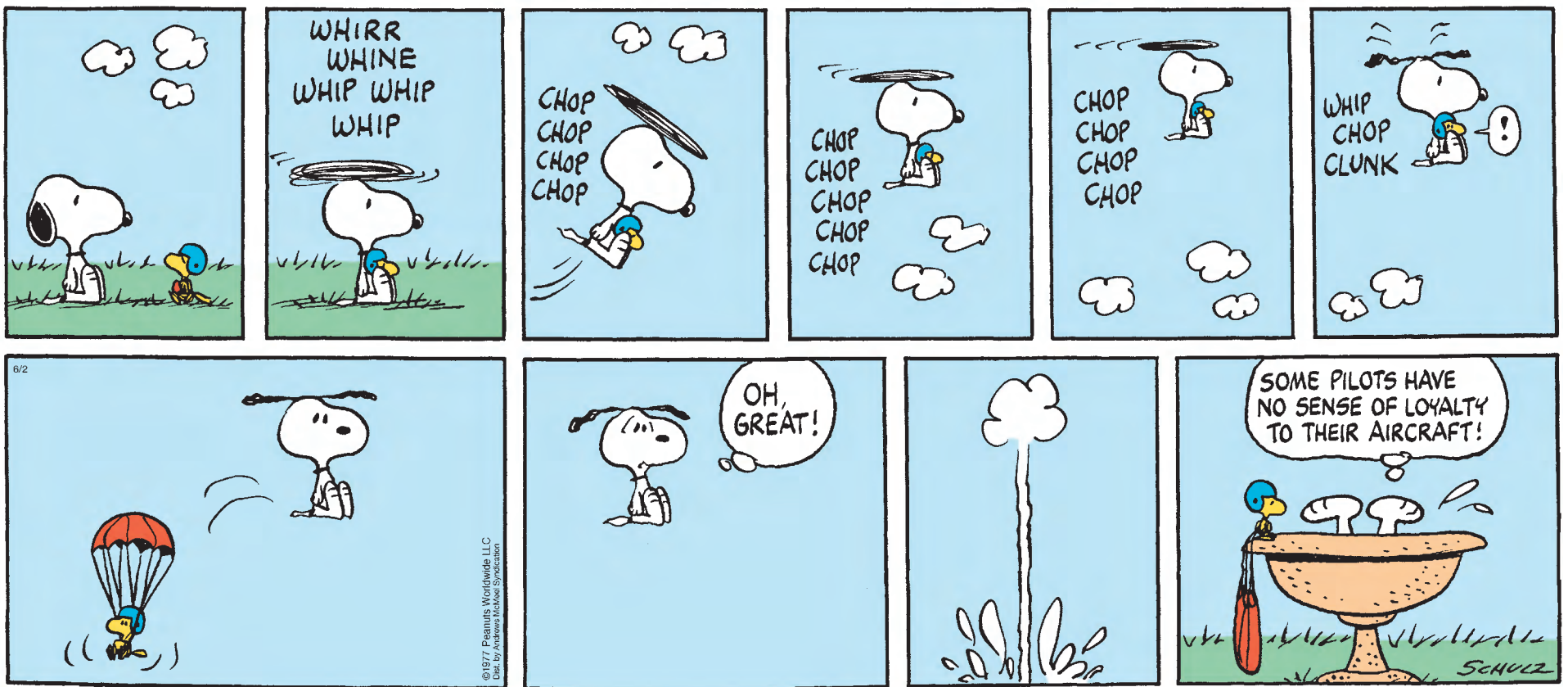
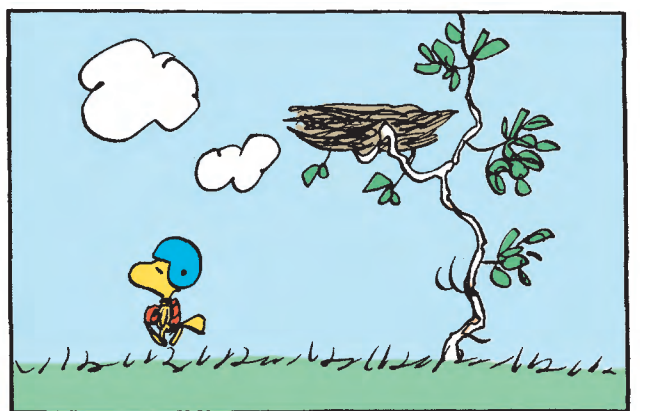
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SUNDAY
June 2, 2024



PEANUTS
featuring
"Good ol' Charlie Brown"
by SCHULZ



GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS



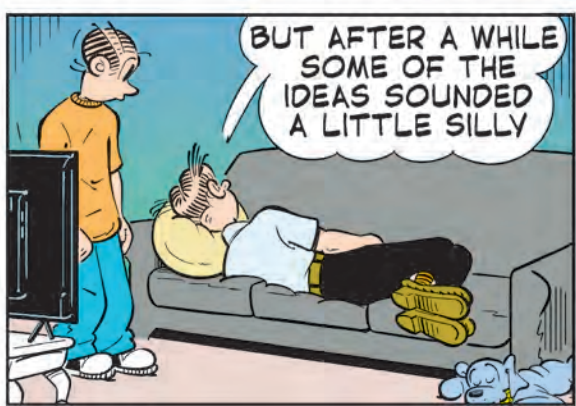
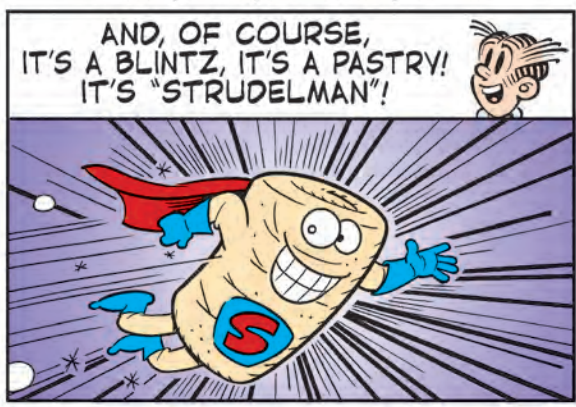
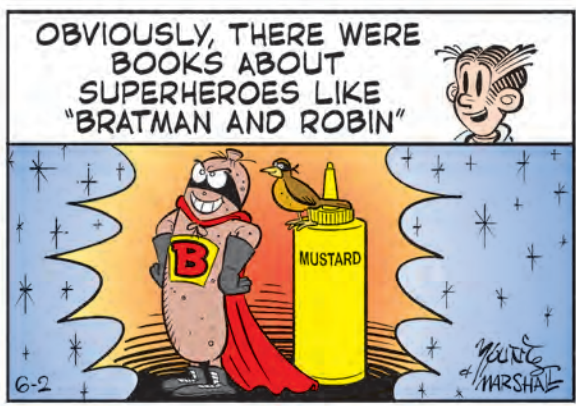
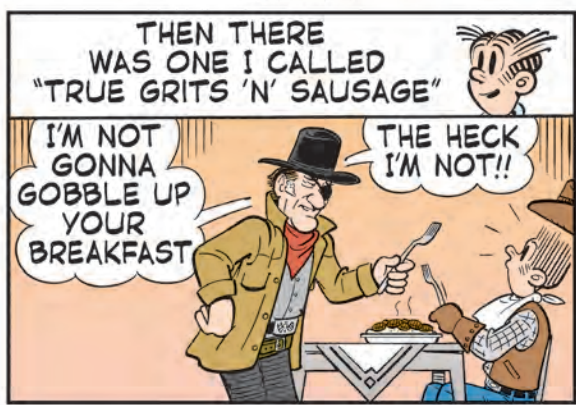
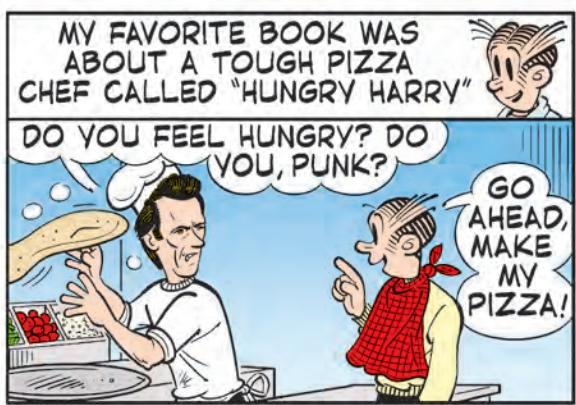
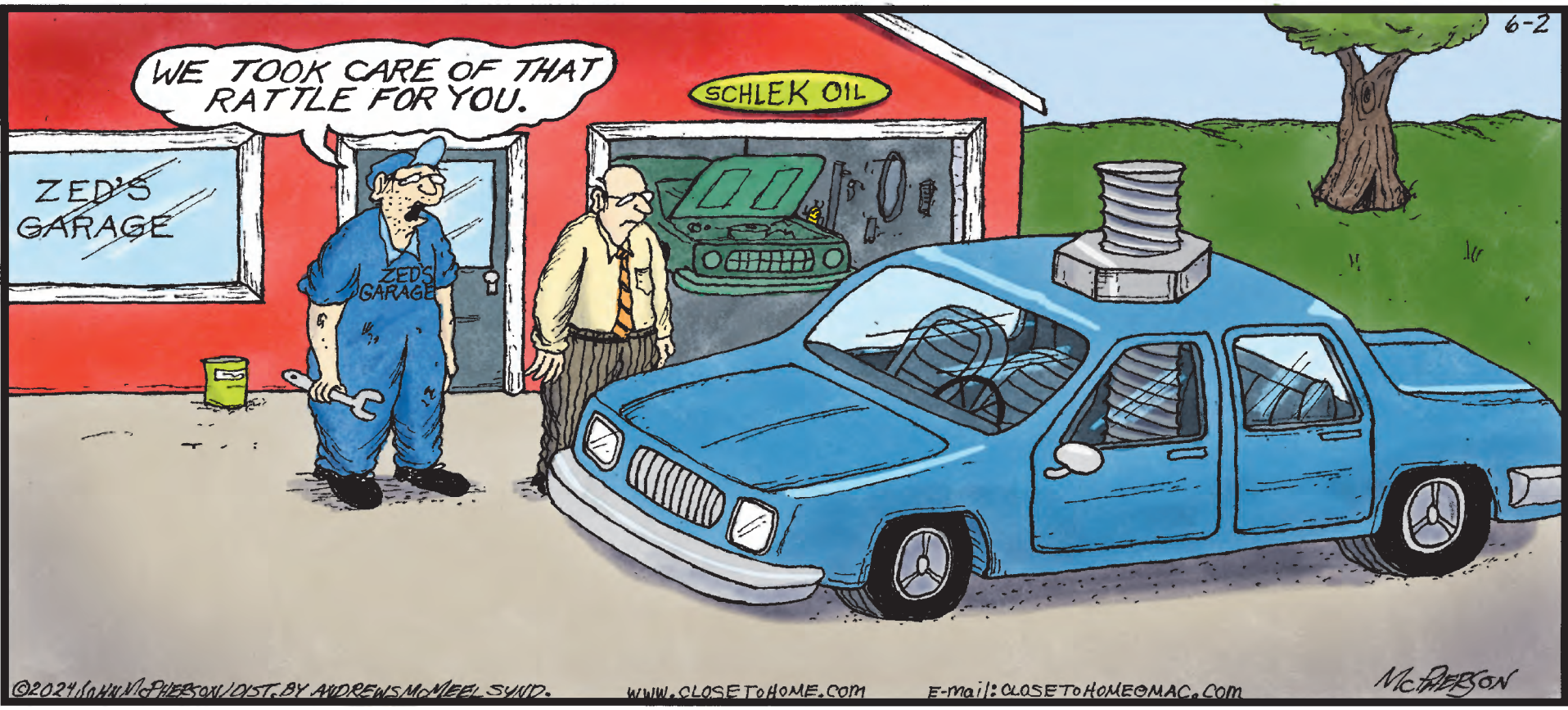
TAKE IT FROM THE TINKERSONS

BY BILL BETTWY



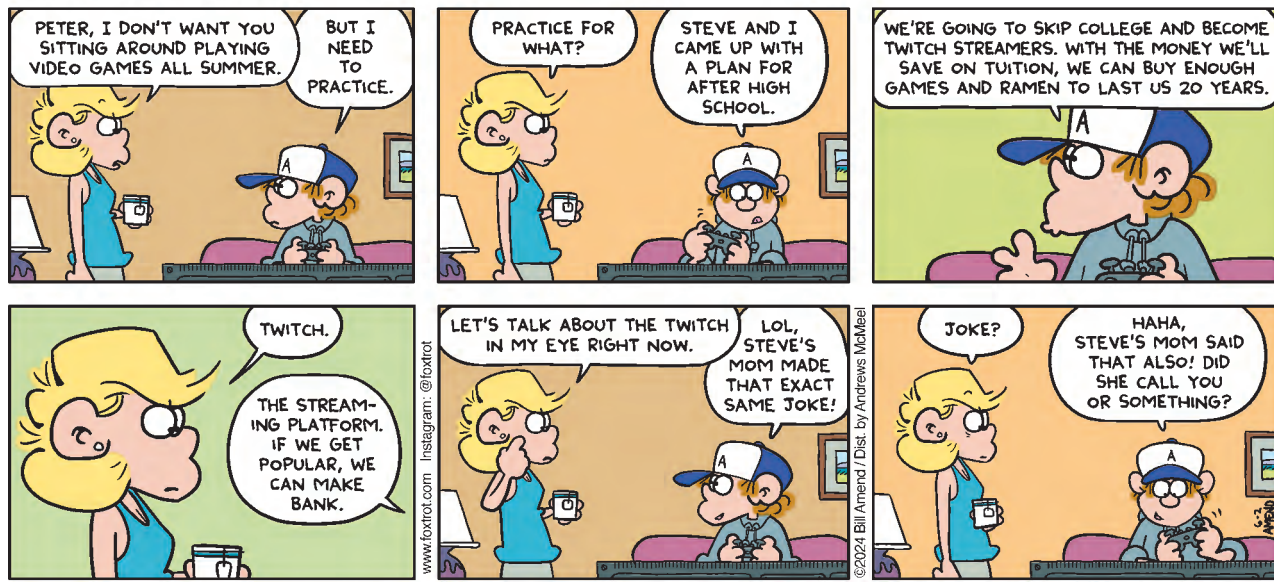
CLOSE TO HOME

BY JOHN McPHERSON



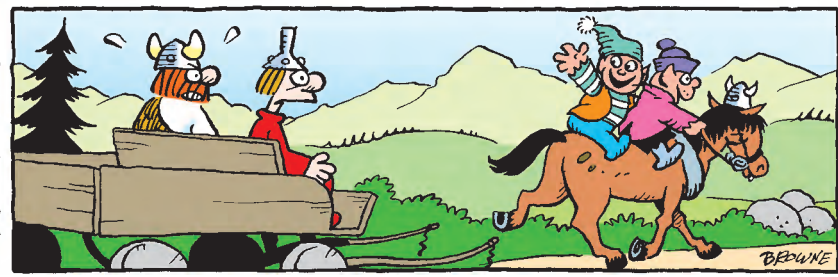
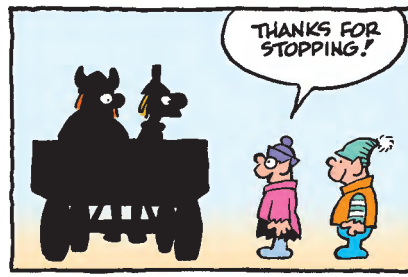
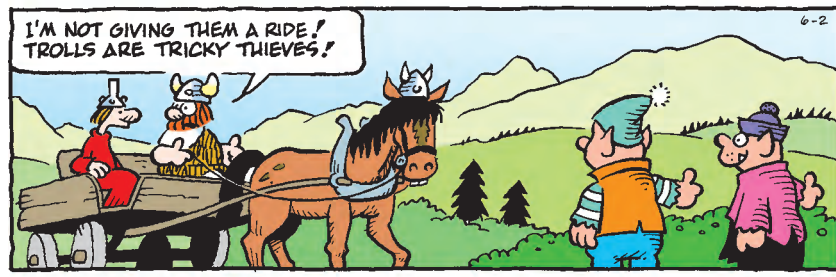
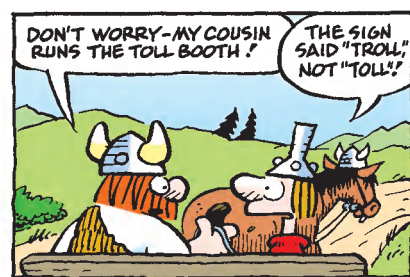
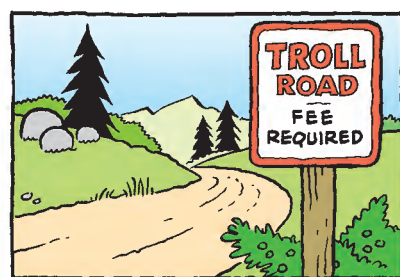
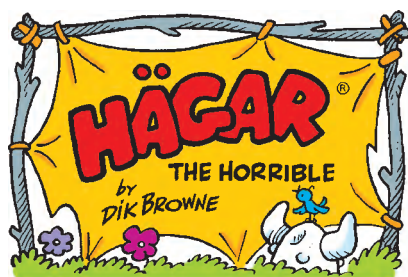
FoxTrot

by Bill Amend



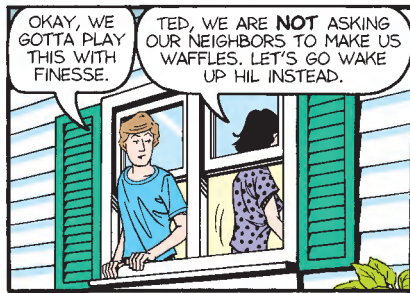
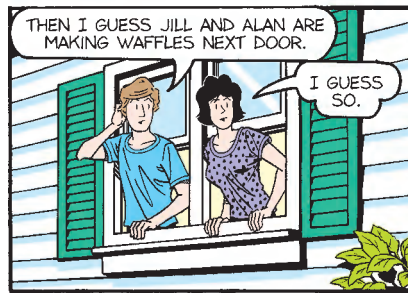
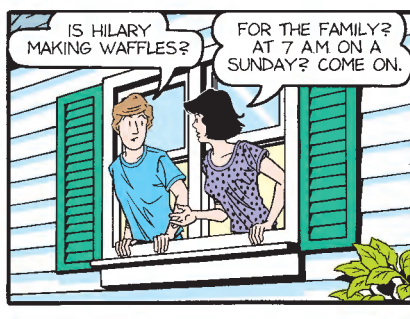
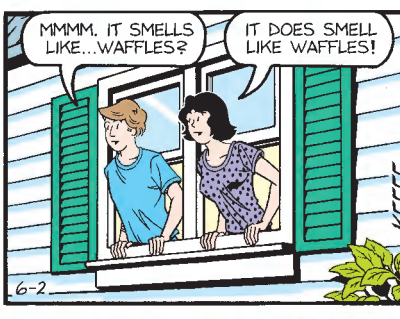
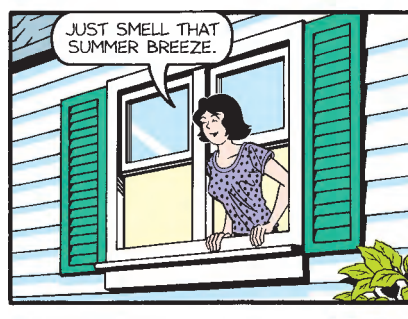
THE FAMILY CIRCUS

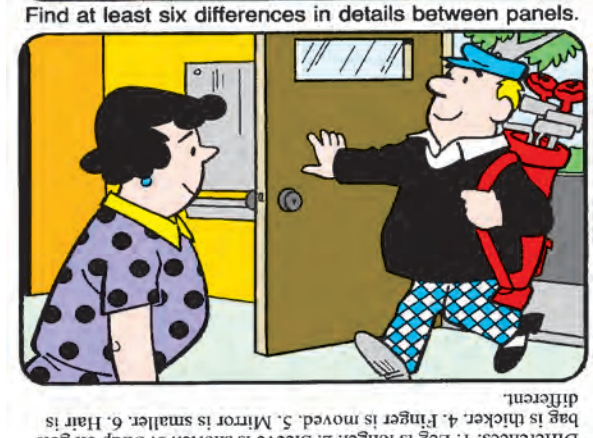
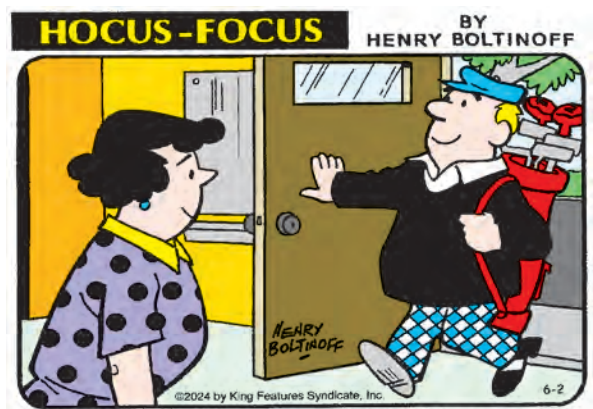
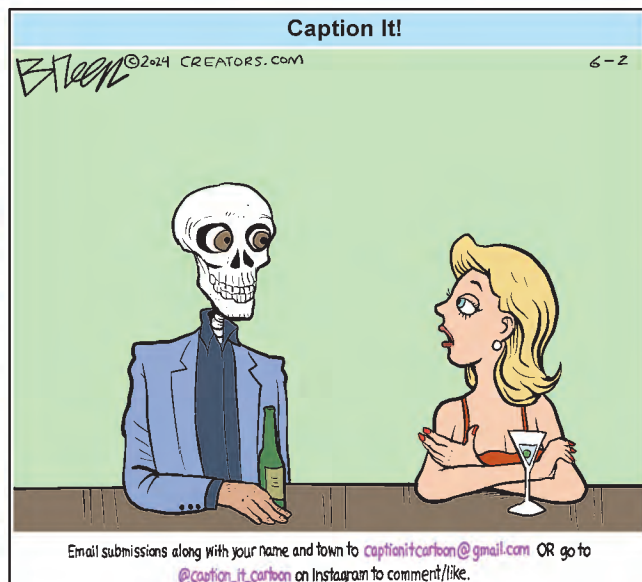
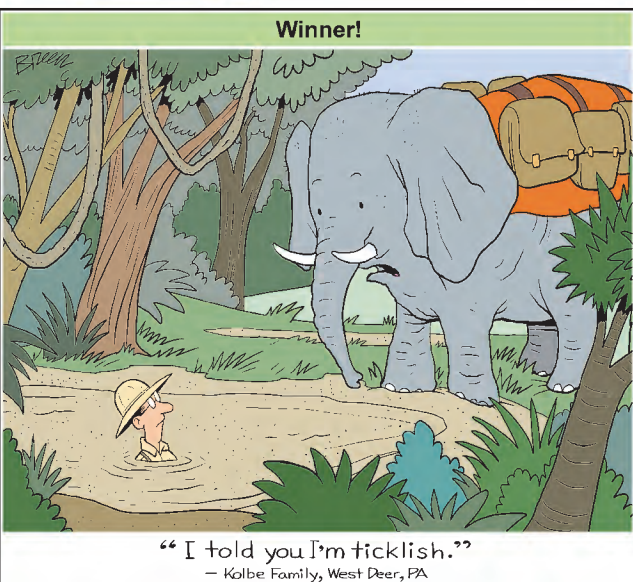
By Bill Keane



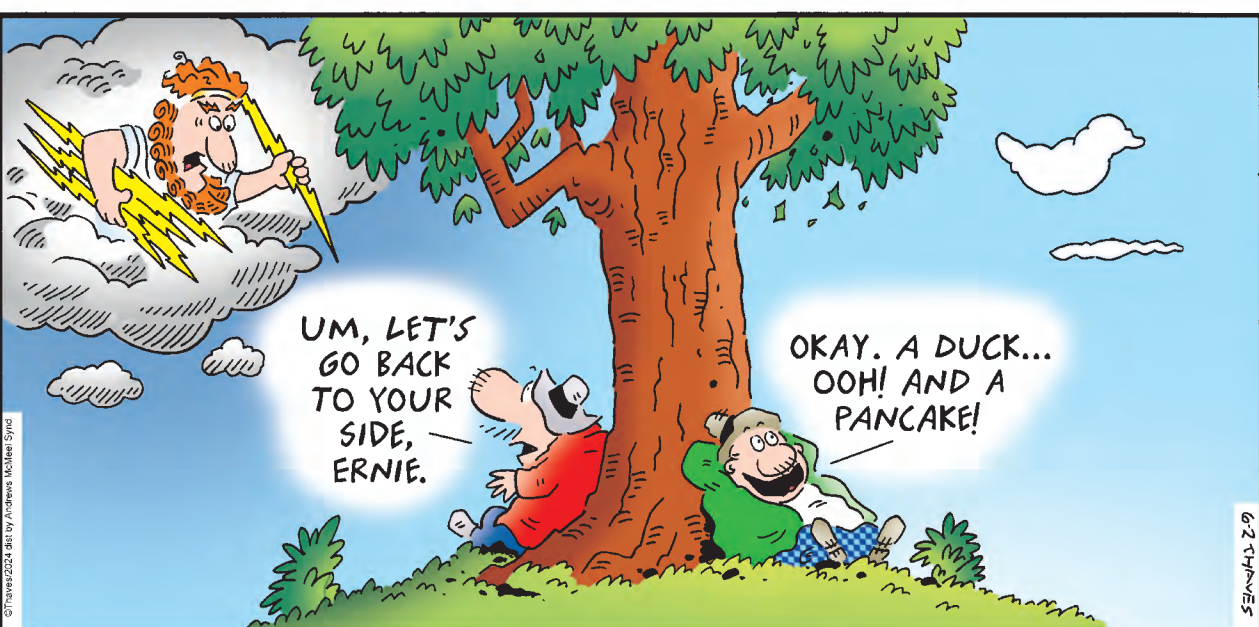
SALLY FORTH

BY FRANCESCO MARCIULIANO & JIM KEEFE



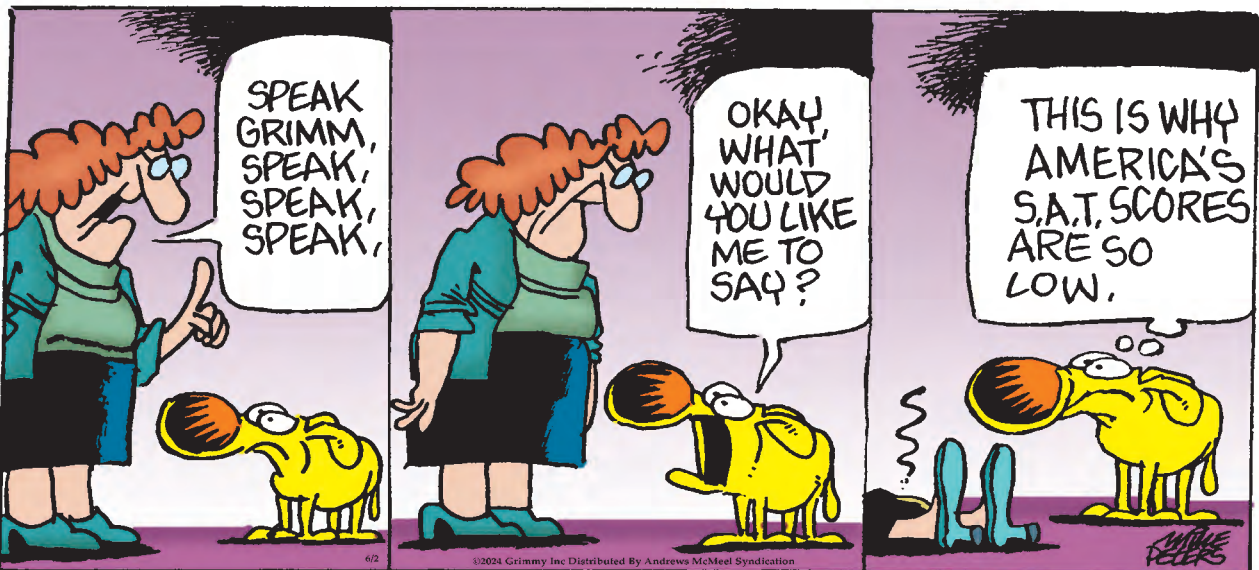


FRANK AND ERNEST



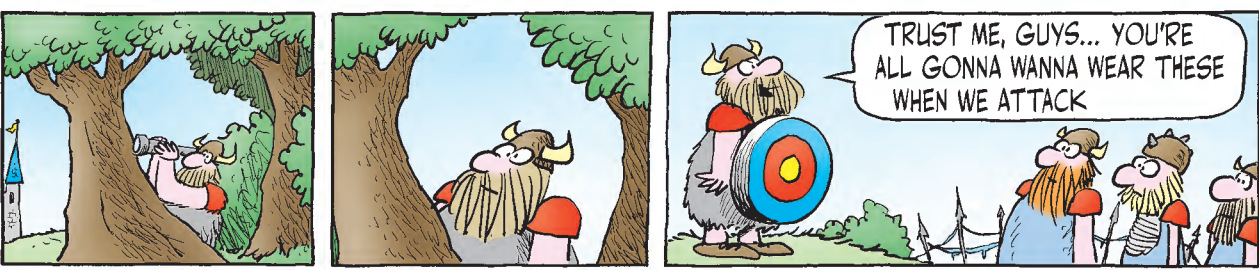
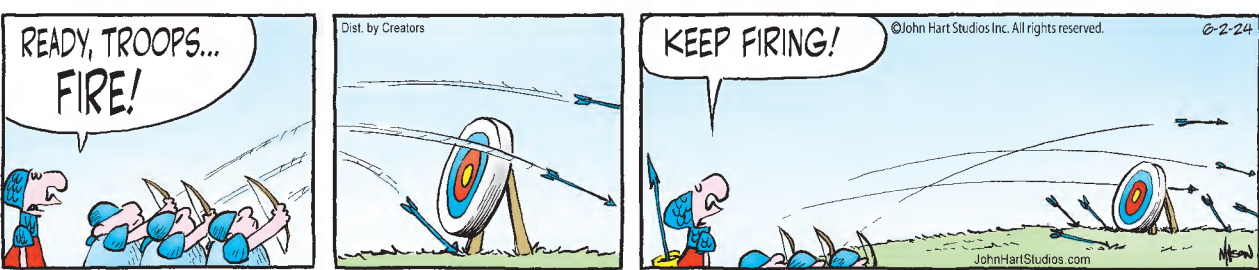
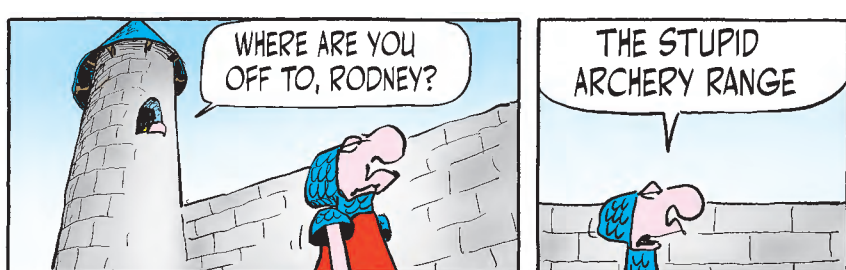
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS



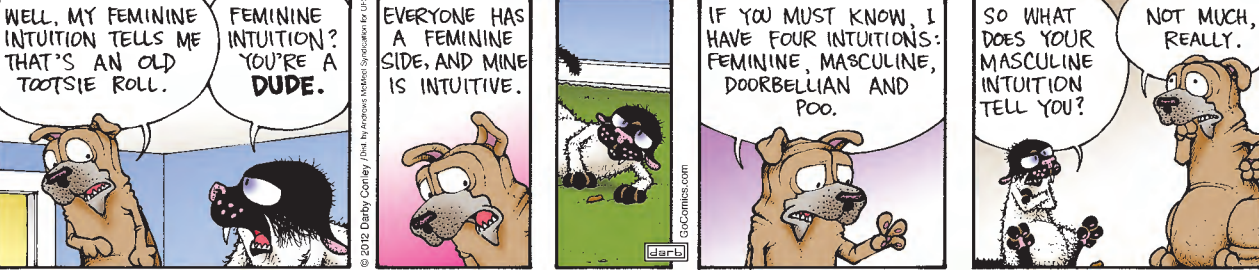
WIZARD OF ID

by Hart, Mastroianni and Parker



GET FUZZY

BY DARBY CONLEY



THE BORN LOSER

by Art & Chip Sansom

