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Former POW shares leadership concepts

Retired colonel who served in Vietnam explains lessons he learned

BY BRUCE MILLS
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MORE ON COL. LEE ELLIS

To read Ellis' leadership blog or watch videos released monthly, go to www.leadingwithhonor.com.

A leadership expert from a similar background but with likely a different perspective on the concept spoke to about 400 airmen at Shaw Air Force Base on Friday.

Retired Air Force Col. Lee Ellis, a former Vietnam prisoner of war, addressed members of the 20th

Fighter Wing on Friday as part of a motivational speaking engagement called "Leading with Honor."

A POW for five-and-a-half years at the Hanoi Hilton in North Vietnam during the Vietnam War, Ellis shared many familiar "leadership checklist" concepts — such as the importance of courage, staying positive and being resilient — but also shared some deeper concepts only learned through faith in God

SEE ELLIS, PAGE A8

Bars behind bars



PHOTOS BY MICAH GREEN / THE SUMTER ITEM

Inmates perform during a musical with Carnegie Hall musicians at Lee Correctional Institution in Bishopville on Thursday.

Lee Correctional inmates strike a chord with musicians of Carnegie Hall to create, perform 90-minute musical

BY KAYLA ROBINS
kayla@theitem.com

Within walls wired with razor-sharp coils, a group of men dressed in prison tan gathered, organized, rehearsed with one goal. They would be heard.

Inmates held in their hands something they chose to help get their message

out. Some items were large, some small.

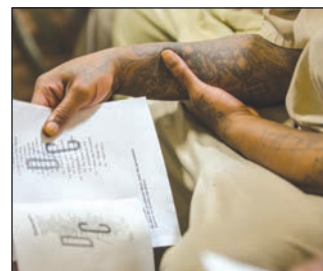
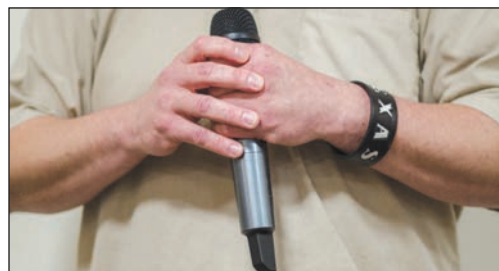
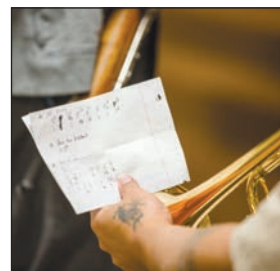
"Standing up for what's right / It's not a debate / It's a fight."

The scene on Thursday in the chapel at Lee Correctional Institution in Bishopville, one of the state's most dangerous prisons with a track record that includes a six-day standoff in 2015 and fatal stabbings as recently as February, featured descriptions that could be taken out of context to insinuate such sinister actions. That was not the case.

Inmates involved in Decoda,

a nonprofit chamber ensemble that, for six years now, has brought Carnegie Hall musicians to the maximum-security prison for male offenders often sentenced to decades of incarceration for violent crimes, used the large and small items — guitars, a drum set, a trumpet, a saxophone, microphones — to perform "Lincoln Portrait: Part 2." The men wrote lyrics, melodies, instrumentals and skit scripts for the 90-minute show modeled after the Broadway hit "Hamilton: An American Musical."

SEE MUSICAL, PAGE A7



Inmates perform their roles during the musical at the prison, one of the state's most dangerous.

Volunteer firefighters, EMS honored at banquet

Top first responders of the year named

BY KAYLA ROBINS
kayla@theitem.com

Kids often play cops and robbers and pretend to be doctors and firemen in their back yards or during recess, but a dedicated group of kids who became adults no longer play pretend.

They live it.

Not all of those kids grow up to be paid firefighters and emergency medical services personnel, blasting water from big red trucks and saving people's lives in the back of an ambulance, but that hasn't stopped the group of men and women who were honored Thursday night for their volunteer services by Sumter County Fire Department and EMS officials.

"It takes somebody who is dedicated and committed to public service," said

Bobby Hingst, director of Sumter County EMS, at the volunteer firefighters and EMS awards banquet at Sumter County Civic Center. "You're not gonna get rich. If that's your ambition, stay away from public service. But the feeling of helping people, it's immensely overwhelming at times."

Hingst has been in the business since 1998 and said he appreciates both the volunteers and the partnership EMS has with the fire department. Most fire calls respond with an

ambulance, he said.

"It's very fluent on the scene. Everybody knows what's got to be done. It's seamless," he said. "They do a great job, and the thing about the volunteers is they get up out of their bed, some of them leave their families at dinner-time. They sacrifice a lot to make sure we're able to do what we do."

The difference in paid, full-time firefighters is not skill level or service.

SEE AWARDS, PAGE A7



SECOND FRONT

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S.C. representatives offer secession bill over guns

COLUMBIA (AP) — South Carolina debated seceding from the Union more than 150 years ago, one of the opening salvos of the Civil War. Now, the topic has come up again, amid a national debate over firearms and gun rights.

A trio of state House Republicans on Thursday quietly introduced a bill that would allow lawmakers to debate seceding from the U.S. "if the federal government confiscates legally purchased firearms in this State."

Rep. Mike Pitts, the measure's chief sponsor, acknowledged Friday in an interview with The Associated Press that the bill has no chance of passage this year but pledged to continue to raise the issue based on what he described as a defense of the Bill of Rights.

"Without a Bill of Rights, our nation is not what it is," Pitts said. "I see a lot of stuff where people even talk about totally repealing the Second Amendment,

I'm not promoting secession. I served this country, and I don't want to see it broken up.'

REP. MIKE PITTS

Longtime law officer, Army veteran

which separates us from the entire rest of the world."

Pitts, an ardent supporter of gun rights, said he had been mulling such a proposal for a while and felt it was necessary to bring the bill forward. He said he wasn't spurred by recent comments by retired Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens, who recently wrote in an

op-ed that a repeal of the Second Amendment "would be simple and would do more to weaken the N.R.A.'s ability to stymie legislative debate and block constructive gun control legislation than any other available option."

South Carolina was the first state to secede from the Union before the Civil War, voting in December 1860 to make the decision based on "increasing hostility on the part of the non-slaveholding States to the Institution of Slavery." Other states have proposed secession-related measures. In 2013, several counties moved to secede from Colorado and form their own state, an unsuccessful movement in part driven by new gun control laws passed by the Democratic legislature.

A proposed ballot measure seeks to make California an independent nation, but proponents failed to gather enough signatures. Technically, the initiative

would have formed a commission to recommend avenues for California to pursue its independence and delete part of the state constitution that says it is an inseparable part of the United States.

The measure would also instruct the governor and California's congressional delegation to negotiate more autonomy for the state.

South Carolina's bill, co-sponsored by Reps. Jonathon Hill and Ashley Trantham, has no real chance this session, although Pitts said he would be sure to re-introduce it for debate next year. The deadline for bills to move from one chamber to the other is April 10.

Pitts, a longtime law officer and Army veteran, said his bill isn't a call for secession but merely a proposal to make the action possible if events warrant.

"I'm not promoting secession. I served this country, and I don't want to see it broken up."

24-hour fundraiser to support sexual violence survivors

BY KAYLA ROBINS

kayla@theitem.com

If you've ever been told to walk a mile in someone else's shoes to understand where they're coming from or what they're experiencing, you can do so while also raising money for a sexual violence prevention nonprofit.

Sexual Trauma Services of the Midlands is hosting its Day of Healing on Tuesday, a 24-hour fundraising effort for the group's ninth-annual Walk A Mile In Their Shoes event later in the week.

The Day of Healing event encourages the 1,300 registered WAM participants to raise at least \$10 for survivors of sexual assault, STSM and the no-cost services the organization provides in the fight against sexual violence.

"Ten dollars provides a change of clothing to a survivor in the hospital who has their clothing confiscated during the evidence collection process of a sexual assault exam," said Mary Dell Hayes, executive director of STSM, a United Way community partner that serves Sumter, Clarendon, Richland, Lexington and Newberry counties.

STSM provides free support to sexual assault survivors including a 24-hour crisis hotline, hospital accompaniment, court accompaniment, personal advocacy and individual and group counseling.

The WAM event will take place at the South Carolina Statehouse Grounds on Thursday at 5:30 p.m. The family friendly event encourages the community to stand up against sexual violence in the state and stand with survivors.

Interested individuals can donate online at www.walkamilesc.com/donate, on STSM's Facebook Fundraiser hosted by Hayes or at the Day of Healing percent night from 4 to 10 p.m. at PDQ Columbia, 4456 Devine St.

"We ask all Walk A Mile participants and individuals in the Midlands to show their support of ending sexual violence in our community and help us break a record," Hayes said. "Raise \$10,000 in 24 hours for survivors of sexual assault in South Carolina."

LOCAL BRIEFS

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Mental health walk at Dillon Park on Wednesday

Eta Zeta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. and National Alliance On Mental Illness of Sumter County will host a mental health awareness walk from 6 to 7 p.m. on Wednesday at Dillon Park, 1210 Clara Louise Kellogg Drive.

The walk is free and open to the public.

The event is sponsored by AKA sorority, NAMI and Mental Health America of Sumter County.

Deputies need help to ID robbery suspect

Authorities need the public's help in identifying a suspect in an armed robbery of a Mayesville

store from Friday night.

According to a Sumter County Sheriff's Office news release, deputies responded about 8:35 p.m. Friday to an armed robbery at The Station convenience store, 5480 Florence Highway in Mayesville.

According to the release, deputies discovered the store clerk had been hit on the head by an unknown object.

Investigators reviewed footage from the store's security system and observed a black man (about 5'10", 180 pounds), with a thin beard, wearing dark clothing, a black fishing/'boonie' style hat and a pair of white gloves.

After the assault, the suspect went behind the counter and took money from the cash register and several other items before fleeing on foot, according to footage.

The victim was in stable condition Saturday at McLeod Health in

Florence.

Anyone with information is asked to call Sumter County Sheriff's Office Investigator Jennifer Thomas at (803) 436-2002 or CrimeStoppers at (803) 436-2718 or 1-888-CRIMESC. You do not have to give your name and could get a cash reward.

Red Cross gets check from Tom Garrity BBQ Challenge

Phylliss Clark, retired U.S. Army veteran and a member of the Sumter Combat Veterans Group, presented a check in the amount of \$9,029.33 to Rebecca Jordan, executive director of the Central chapter of the American Red Cross Palmetto SC Region. The money was collected during the Tom Garrity BBQ Firefighters' Challenge held in November

Consolidation proposal headlines Sumter school board meeting

BY BRUCE MILLS

bruce@theitem.com

What will Sumter School District's Board of Trustees do with the district administration's school consolidation proposal is the big question heading into its upcoming meeting on Tuesday at Lakewood High School.

A district staff member distributed the meeting agenda to the media last week.

The agenda states the board will take some action related to the proposal on Tuesday after returning from executive session behind closed doors.

Before that, in open session, Interim Superintendent Debbie Hamm will provide more information on the proposal during her regular report to the board.

At the board's last meeting on March 26, Hamm — in her report to the trustees — pulled a potential merger of Rafting Creek Elementary School into Hillcrest Middle School as a revamped K-8 magnet

school from her original consolidation proposal. Hamm said she did so after obtaining information from an independent facilities' consultant on extensive work necessary to upgrade Hillcrest to accommodate more students.

Following the March 26 meeting, Hamm said Rafting Creek Elementary would stay open for at least next school year in any proposal.

As of last week, Hamm's revised proposal still included the consolidation of Mayewood Middle School at the end of this school year into R.E. Davis Elementary School, which would become a revamped K-8 school with a magnet program curriculum, and the consolidation of F.J. DeLaine Elementary School into Cherrylvale Elementary School as a combined elementary school.

Following Hamm's original release of the administration's draft proposal in early March, the district and board held a series of six "community conversation sessions" at different schools throughout the county to gather community input.

Most community members in attendance at each session said they were opposed to closing any schools, partly due to their belief that the area communities would deteriorate with the loss of the schools.

The three schools originally proposed for closure all are low-enrollment schools and have faced significant enrollment declines in the last 10 to 15 years, according to official data.

When discussing the proposal at the March 26 meeting in open session, board members seemed mixed on the consolidation plan, based on their comments. Some spoke in favor of Hamm's proposals; others had concerns.

To accommodate potentially a larger number of community members in attendance, Tuesday's meeting will be at Lakewood High School's fine arts center. Like all board-related meetings, Tuesday's meeting is open to the public and public participation is listed on the agenda.

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The Sumter Item is published
five days a week except for
July 4, Thanksgiving, Christmas
and New Years Day (unless those
fall on a Sunday) by Osteen
Publishing Co., 36 W. Liberty St.,
Sumter, SC 29150.
Periodical postage paid at
Sumter, SC 29150.

Postmaster: Send address
changes to Osteen Publishing
Co., 36 W. Liberty St., Sumter, SC
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S.C. brewery business booms thanks to pro-craft-beer laws

Industry has grown to more than 50 statewide

BY SEANNA ADCOX
The Post and Courier of Charleston

COLUMBIA — A decade ago, it was still illegal in South Carolina to sell specialty beers with a higher alcohol content than a Budweiser. But a succession of pro-craft-beer laws has created a booming brewery business in this Bible Belt state. "We've certainly come a long way. There's never been a better time to be a brewer in South Carolina than right now," Brook Bristow, director of the South Carolina Brewers Guild, said. Since 2007, the craft brewery industry has grown from just a few to more than 50 statewide, with the heaviest concentration in the Charleston region.

In 2016, South Carolina's breweries produced 101,200 barrels of beer collectively and pumped an estimated \$650 million into the state's economy, according to the Colorado-based Brewers Association.

Tom Davis, co-owner of Thomas Creek Brewery in Greenville, called the 2007 law a "game changer." Lifting the 6 percent alcohol-by-volume cap on beer "started the trend of South Carolina embracing craft beer," said Davis, whose business celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. Previously, Davis could make higher-octane beer but couldn't sell it anywhere in the state.

That "Pop the Cap" effort was followed by a 2010 law that allowed limited on-site sampling of breweries' concoctions — 2 to 4 ounces per sample, depending on the alcohol content, of up to four brands — provided customers first took a tour. It also allowed each customer to buy up to a case of beer to go.

At the time, there were five craft breweries statewide.

Advocates sold the changes as a way to increase brewers' sales while boosting tourism — potentially making South Carolina a travel destination for beer connoisseurs, akin to wine enthusiasts trekking to Napa Valley, California.

But it wasn't until after the 2013 "pint law" allowed customers to buy up to three pints onsite that the industry really got brewing. The following year, legislators allowed breweries to sell food, too.

"Before, while South Carolina had a great tourism industry, it was not for beer," Bristow said. "Now that has changed completely. It is a big-time industry here."

Davis said the laws have increased Thomas Creek Brewery's sales and brought an influx of group tours, as well as customers who come to fill their growlers or grab a case.

The laws have also changed where breweries locate, as well as how they build and operate, said Davis, whose beer is sold in seven states.

"When we opened up, our only avenue for revenue was outside our doors. We were just looking for warehouse space. We had to build a tap room out of something we

didn't have," he said. "Now breweries are opening with the intent to sell onsite, building them like restaurants. ... It becomes about location, location, location."

Freehouse Brewery opened along the Ashley River in North Charleston in 2013 as legislators debated the pint law.

"We were going for it either way," but the changes certainly helped, said co-owner Arthur Lucas. A busy week can bring hundreds of tourists, he said.

Freehouse's beer sales have increased five-fold since 2013, largely from onsite sales. The brewery didn't start canning its certified organic beer for grocery stores until last summer. Plans for 2018 include a major expansion of the tap room, with screened porches where customers can hang out and enjoy the riverside view, Lucas said.

"When people are deciding where to visit, it used to be good enough to just be a

brewery," Lucas said. "Now, with the competition, people are spending millions on beautiful tap rooms."

State Sen. Sean Bennett, a sponsor of several pro-craft-beer laws, said the industry has grown even faster than he expected.

Bennett, R-Summerville, said his own "affinity for craft beers" made him an advocate of the brew masters he met.

"It was really pretty cool to watch," he said. "These are true American entrepreneurs ... excited about the companies they've built, but yet running headfirst into big brother governmental regulations that made little sense to those entrepreneurs."

Laws passed last year, which Bennett sponsored, allowed breweries to participate in nonprofit events and let breweries sell liquor. The latter essentially erased the distinction between a brewery and a brewpub, such as Edmund's Oast in Charleston, which, as a brewpub, couldn't sell the beer it made

beyond its own doors.

Despite the growth, South Carolina's brewery industry remains far behind North Carolina's, where 200 craft breweries produced 1.3 million barrels of beer in 2016, according to the national Brewers Association. It ranks North Carolina fifth nationwide in craft beer production, while South Carolina is ranked 34th.

South Carolina brewery owners say the biggest remaining difference is that North Carolina has cut out the middle man, allowing small breweries to sell directly to grocery stores and restaurants. In South Carolina, state law mandates a three-

tiered system involving distributors.

Rep. Leon Stavrinakis, D-Charleston, a co-sponsor of the 2013 pint law, said he's heard grumblings about the distributor requirements and how that potentially inflates customers' costs, but changing that could be very difficult.

Bennett said he's open to the idea, but he also understands distributors' resistance to change.

"They've invested millions in capital to operate in the business they were told to operate under," he said. "I get the desire for an open system, but we can't change everything overnight."

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Marathoner with dwarfism defies doctor's orders

BY WILLIAM J. KOLE
Associated Press

SALEM, Massachusetts — Most marathoners take 35,000 steps to reach the finish line. John Young needs 80,000.

The high school math teacher from Canada is part of a rare and spirited breed of athlete: those who've overcome the daunting challenges of dwarfism to conquer the 26.2-mile distance.

Many endure not just the usual rigors of training but cruel taunts from onlookers — "Hey, check out the midget" — as they put in their miles.

But Young, who lightheartedly refers to himself as an LP ("little person"), has become an inspiration to others with dwarfism — and his accomplishments have won him respect and admiration around the globe.

"A lot of people in my life, especially when I was younger, said, 'You can't do that — you're too small. You can't do that — you're too short. You might get hurt,'" Young, 52, said at his home in Salem.

"I heard that a lot, and I used to listen," he said. "Now I don't listen."

Young is a member of an elite club: Only four athletes with dwarfism are known to have completed marathons, and he's finished the most — 10 — including four Boston Marathons and three New York City Marathons. He's also competed in 50 triathlons — including Ironman Maryland — and his latest goal, starting with Boston on April 16, is to run 12 marathons in 12 months.

He stands only 4 feet 4 inches, but he's the biggest little person Boston Marathon race director Dave McGillivray knows.

"He's an example of somebody who's overcome his own physical challenges and inspired thousands of



Marathon runner John Young, of Salem, Massachusetts, makes his way along a training route in Salem. Young was born with dwarfism, but that hasn't stopped him from conquering multiple marathons and triathlons.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

people to live their dreams," McGillivray said. "He trains and competes just like every other athlete. He says, 'I am who I am. I'm going to succeed at my level, and I'm going to feel good about myself.'"

That wasn't always the case for Young.

Born in Toronto with achondroplasia, the most common form of dwarfism, he grew up in foster care. "People asked, 'Are you going to be in the circus? Are you going to be a midget wrestler? Are you going to be an entertainer?' And I was like, 'No, I like school. I like math. I want to go to college,'" he said.

Young, who graduated as valedictorian, swam and played street and pond hockey. But he never ran — doctors worried the pounding would

cause back problems.

"They always said, 'Don't run, don't run, it's not a good idea, stay away from it,'" he said.

Over the years, Young's weight ballooned to nearly 200 pounds — dangerously obese for his height — and he developed sleep apnea. To shed pounds, he returned to the pool and took up cycling. He entered a triathlon but skipped the run portion, still worried it might cripple him.

Finally, he caved, and he couldn't believe what he'd been missing.

"What I found was the more I ran, the less my back actually hurt," said Young, whose light running style enables him to recover remarkably quickly.

Colleagues noticed other benefits. "When I first met John, he was fall-

ing asleep at his desk," said Eric Olson, who teaches math with Young at the Pingree School, a private academy in nearby Hamilton. "Today he's such a productive guy. He oxygenates his brain. He really is an elite athlete — he takes what he does super seriously."

Former student Veronica Monteiro, 23, says Young inspired her to run her first Boston Marathon. "I look up to him so much," she said, giggling at her phrasing.

Young appreciates the humor. (He's been known to slip a subtle "Snow White" reference into a conversation: "I'm a little sleepy today. I'm also a little sneezy.") But he's not amused by others' heckling or snickering — especially if it's aimed at his wife, Sue Casey, or 15-year-old son, Owen, who also have dwarfism.

His pet peeve: when strangers run past in a race and say, "Thanks for being out here."

"I'm like, 'Thank you, too,'" he said. "I know what they're trying to say. But I'm not out there for them. If I motivate you because of some part of my story, that's great. But if all you're looking at is the physical fact that I'm a little person and I'm running, that's the wrong message."

Young's no speedster. He averages 13 minutes per mile, and in marathons, he usually walks a minute for every nine minutes he runs. His personal best is 5 hours 50 minutes.

But that's plenty fast enough to inspire.

His son now runs track and cross-country, breaking his old man's 5K times. Little People of America, a non-profit group, hails him as a hero. And Young gets emails from the parents of children with dwarfism thanking him for being a role model.

"That's the part I treasure," he said. "I don't know how long I can keep doing it, but I don't have an end date in mind. I'm going to keep going as long as I can."

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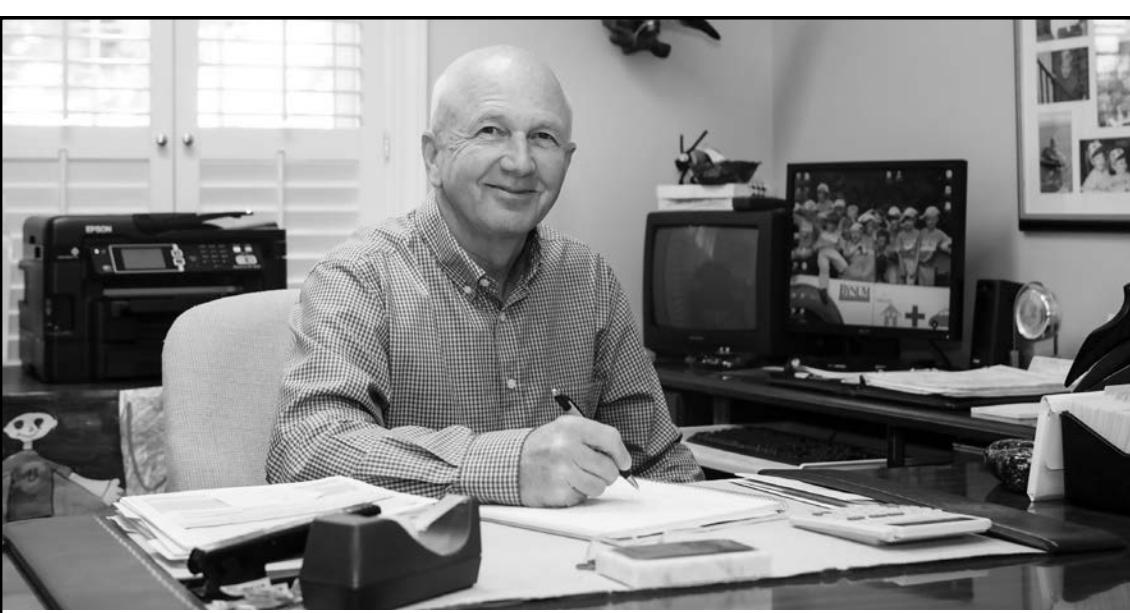
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'A Southern Girl's Gotta Have It' at Sumter Opera House

Satirical comedy 'hilarious, outrageous'

BY IVY MOORE
Special to The Sumter Item

The self-proclaimed "inventor" of the mullet, a Gamecock alumna determined to get her rejected daughter admitted to her alma mater, and a thrift shop owner willing to do most anything to get a low-budget zombie movie part are just a few of the characters in "A Southern Girl's Gotta Have It," playing Saturday at the Sumter Opera House.

The comedy troupe Hot Mess Players, based in Charlotte, will bring to life with hilarity and respect characters most Southerners will recognize, according to director and award-winning playwright Elaine Alexander, who also plays Verleen in "Down with Duane," one of the six stand-alone comedies in the two-act show.

Verleen "has given up Krispy Kreme and Twinkies, determined to get back her figure, but can she give up Duane?" Alexander said of the play.

Alexander herself is a "Southern girl," having grown up on the family farm in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

"I know these characters," she said.

After a successful career as a journalist, Alexander, who said she has "always acted on the side," turned to playwriting, basing her characters and plots on "wild, outrageous people I've met growing up" in the South and on people she met while working at a Southern newspaper.

"I've worked in factories, as a waitress, and I played on a country club tennis team," like several of the characters she created, Alexander said. She credits a playwriting class taught by Terry



WANT TO GO?

WHERE: Sumter Opera House, 21 N. Main St.

WHEN: 7:30 p.m. Saturday, April 14

TICKETS: \$20 general admission (adults and teenagers only)

MORE INFORMATION: (803) 436-2616, www.SumterOperaHouse.com

Roueche, whose play "Ugly Art" premiered at the Sumter Opera House several years ago, and "intensive acting classes with J.D. Lewis at Actor's Lab" for helping to get her started as a playwright and director.

The Hot Mess Players, Alexander said, are "really good actors," who have studied and worked with teachers and trained with talented performers, some of them Oscar nominees. "They're all

pros, with really great acting experience."

All of the plays were written by Alexander, who noted that "They're all scripted; there's no improv. The show is very fast-paced with lots of physical comedy, but it's a satire about outrageous, determined Carolina women.

"There's music and shagging, beauty queens, Miss Hushpuppy 1985 ..."

"A Southern Girl's Gotta Have It" is a change for the Sumter Opera House's Main Stage Series, Cultural Manager Seth Reimer said, describing the play as "hilarious, quirky and oddly revealing to those born and raised in the South. ... This is certainly something different" from the usual fare in the series.

The show opens with "Let's Mullet Over," set in Eunice's Bait and Tackle, Beauty and

Barber Shop with "Mullet Master" Beau E. trying to give a Northern customer his signature cut. But Eunice has different plans for the handsome stranger.

"The Great Divide" features a tennis match between a "Southern country club queen" and a "tough-talking" Northern transplant.

Other titles include "Hellbound for Gamecock Heaven," "There Will Be Fruitcake" and "Die Zombie Extra, Die."

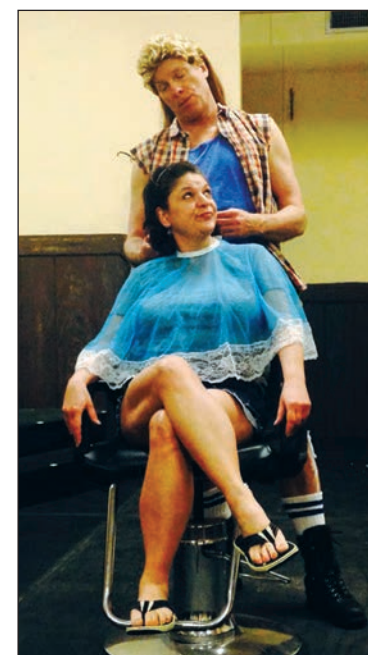
Saturday's presentation of "A Southern Girl's Gotta Have It" will be the Hot Mess Players' debut in South Carolina, although they've performed throughout North Carolina and elsewhere, Reimer said. Alexander's satires have been performed in New York City; Los Angeles; Cuenca, Ecuador; and Sydney, Australia. She is currently writing a



PHOTOS PROVIDED

Award-winning playwright Elaine Alexander is a self-proclaimed Southern girl.

Melissa Bowden and Tom Ollis are Donna and Dwight, who are awaiting the arrival of their daughter returning home for Christmas break from her freshman year at college. When they learn she's not coming home, Mama Donna sets out for revenge in the comedy-satire "A Southern Girl's Gotta Have It." See it Saturday at Sumter Opera House.



Keith Hopkins as self-proclaimed inventor of the mullet, Beau E., gives boss Eunice, played by Angela Luksch, a trim at Eunice's Bait and Tackle, Beauty and Barber Shop in this scene from "Let's Mullet Over," one of six shorter comedies in "A Southern Girl's Gotta Have It." The comedy will be presented Saturday in the Main Stage Series at Sumter Opera House.

full-length musical.

The Hot Mess Players will present "A Southern Girl's Gotta to Have It" at the Sumter Opera House, 21 N. Main St., for one show only at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 14. The show is recommended for mature audiences — adults and older teenagers — only. Tickets are \$20 for general admission seating. Ample free parking is available. For more information about this show and any other upcoming shows, visit www.SumterOperaHouse.com or call (803) 436-2616.

CLUB DIGEST

SUMTER ART ASSOCIATION

President Patti Sosnowski called the annual business meeting of the Sumter Art Association to order on March 20 in the parish hall of the Church of the Holy Comforter. She welcomed the 39 members who were present.

Rosemary Drakeford gave a devotional based on the image of God as the potter and us as the clay. She concluded with a prayer.

Andrena Ray read aloud the minutes

from Feb. 20. There were no additions or corrections, and the minutes were approved as read.

Exhibits chairman Linda Hogon announced a wide variety of cultural events and activities taking place in Sumter and the surrounding area, particularly noting that Art Association member Linda Brown and her husband, David, will have their art on display at Covenant Place until June 8.

Nominating committee chairman Becky Pritchard reported that Susan Brabham has agreed to assume the duties of treasurer for 2018-19. Patti

thanked Carla Young for her excellent service as treasurer during the past two years.

Awards chairman Kathy Creech asked that any suggestions for deserving award recipients be communicated to her as soon as possible.

Mary Gene White read aloud seven letters of nomination for new members. Mary Gene conducted the election by secret ballot and announced that all seven nominees were elected. They will receive letters of invitation and, if they accept, will be invited to attend our May meeting as new members.

Following the program, Patti announced that the next meeting will be April 17. She then adjourned the business meeting and invited everyone to the tea table, thanking the hostess committee for their hospitality. Chairwoman was Marjorie Hooks, who also created the beautiful table centerpiece. Randa Edmunds served as co-chairwoman. Committee members assisting were Jeanne Anne Baldwin, Susan Brabham, Anna Bynum, Rosemary Drakeford, Margaret Hunter, Jeannette Price, Marian Shaw, Janice Stavrou, Debbie Thomas and Dottie Todd.

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WEDDING

Hodge-Bostic

Kelley Alysa Hodge of Hartsville and Charles Bobo Bostic III of Sumter were united in marriage at 5:30 p.m. Saturday, April 7, 2018, at Grace Baptist Church in Sumter.

The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James M. Hodge Jr. and the granddaughter of Mrs. Lorene Norris and the late Mr. Lecile Franklin Norris, and the late Mrs. Ila Aurora Hodge and the late Mr. James M. Hodge Sr., all of Hartsville. She graduated from Francis Marion University with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and from the University of South Carolina with a Master of Science in Nursing. She is employed as a nurse practitioner at Palmetto Heart-USC Medical Group.

The bridegroom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Bobo Bostic Jr. and the grandson of Mrs. Polly S. Bostic and the late Mr. Charles Bobo Bostic Sr., Mr. Bogan Carl Dees and Mrs. Patsy C. Dees and the late Mrs. Barbara Hall Dees, all of Sumter. He graduated from the University of South Carolina with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. He is the owner of Amerispec Inspection Services.

The Rev. Dr. Stephen D. Williams officiated the ceremony. Music was provided by Sherril Ray, organist, and Allison Nance and Debra T. Moore, vocalists.

Escorted by her father, the bride wore an ivory tulle and satin A-line gown featuring an embroidered sweetheart neckline. She carried a hand-tied bouquet of white hydrangea and peach garden rose varieties surrounded by garden greenery.

Whitney Carole Dixon served as maid of honor, with Brittany Elizabeth Hughes as matron of honor. Bridesmaids were Ashley Caroline Hodge,



MRS. CHARLES BOBO BOSTIC III

sister-in-law of the bride; Kacey Nash Segars; Lauren Bostic Locklear, sister of the bridegroom; Carli Young Cornell; Jordan Teale Timmons; and Pearl Catherine Caroline Hughes. Bayley Grace Hodge and Grace Ann Locklear served as flower girls.

The bridegroom's father served as best man. Groomsmen were Stephen McLaurin Lowder; Christopher Allen Locklear, brother-in-law of the bridegroom; Hayden Forrest Harrington; Justin Wade Cromer; Daniel Todd Brown; Travis James Lamb; and James Cory Glasscock. Colton Louis Hodge and Hank Arthur Hughes served as ring bearers.

James Brandon Hodge and Kevin Norris Hodge, brothers of the bride, served as ushers.

The reception was given by the bride's parents at The O'Donnell House in Sumter.

The rehearsal party was given by the bridegroom's parents at their home.

Following a wedding trip to Riviera Cancun, Mexico, the couple will reside in Sumter.

CAMPUS CORNER

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

TUSCALOOSA, Alabama — **Angela Williams** of Sumter has been selected as an Honors College ambassador at The University of Alabama for the 2018-19 school year. Honors ambassadors represent the Honors College at recruitment and alumni events and host prospective students during campus visits. Honors College ambassadors must be actively involved in the college; demonstrate knowledge of college and campus resources and opportunities; and possess excellent public speaking abilities.

TROY UNIVERSITY

TROY, Alabama — **September Craft** of Sumter has been named to the Provost's List at Troy University for Term 3 of the 2017-18 academic year.

The Provost's List honors full-time undergraduate students who are registered for at least 12 semester hours and who have a grade-point average of at least 3.65.

COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

CONWAY — Phi Eta Sigma, a prestigious national honor society for freshmen, inducted 135 Coastal Carolina University students on April 3 in the Johnson Auditorium in the E. Craig Wall Sr. College of Business Administration including **Tionna Brogdon** from New Zion and **Gabrielle Richbow** from Rembert. Membership celebrates outstanding academic performance after the completion of one full semester of college work. The society is chartered on 378 different campuses across the nation.

To be eligible, students must have held a 3.5 grade-point average or higher during their first semester of college.

Coastal Carolina University students hosted their mentees on CCU's campus on March 23 to give a real college experience to Horry County elementary and middle school students. The day was also meant to motivate those students to consider higher education in their own futures.

CCU students who participated were **Kishona Avant**, **Tiana James** and **Ra'quan Bennett**, all of Manning, and **Hannah Corvin** and **Brianna Hicks**, both of Sumter.

THE CITADEL

CHARLESTON — After weeks of rigorous training and tryouts, The Citadel Class of 2019 Summerall Guards were introduced on March 24. The 61 rising-senior cadets held their first performance after a rifle exchange ceremony with the 2018 guards.

The following area cadets were among those selected to the Class of 2019 Summerall Guards: **Talmadge Johnson** of Mayesville, **William Watson** of Sumter and **Keelan Kane-Yearman** of Sumter.

The Summerall Guards are a silent precision drill platoon first formed more than 85 years ago. Through a unique series of movements based on the old military close-order drills, the Summerall Guards aspire to exemplify the precise and meticulous training of a Citadel cadet. The intricate movements of the drill are taught from one class to the next and have never been formally recorded. The platoon is named for Gen. Charles P. Summerall, former chief of staff of the U.S. Army and Citadel president from 1931 until 1953.

Earning the title of Summerall Guard is one of the highest honors that can be achieved by a member of the South Carolina Corps of Cadets at The Citadel. The selection process includes weeks of Bond Volunteer Aspirant training. More than 100 junior cadets who pass an initial physical fitness test progress to six weeks of

BVA training and tryout sessions. They must perform military pushups, sit-ups and rifle-bearing training, exhibiting exceptional physical condition and stamina.

Jameson Totty of Sumter received the Outstanding Freshman in Computer Science Award from the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science during The Citadel Academy of Science and Mathematics Awards Banquet on March 22. The banquet highlighted more than 50 outstanding students, alumni and faculty in science and mathematics at The Citadel. This year, the event also displayed student research for 48 projects conducted through The Citadel Undergraduate Research Experience.

More than 80 men and women from the Reserved Officer Training Corps in the South Carolina Corps of Cadets are being recognized for their academic and military leadership and excellence.

The Citadel ROTC departments provide cadets with officer training during college to allow them to begin their military careers as officers after graduation. Through the departments, which include Air Force ROTC, Army ROTC, Marines ROTC and Navy ROTC, The Citadel is one of the nation's proven producers of top military leaders. This spring, more than 100 cadets are expected to commission to all branches of the military.

Annually, the departments nominate their finest cadets and active-duty students for awards. This year's award recipients were honored on March 29 in McAllister Field House. Local cadets who received awards include:

- **Katherine Walker** (Navy) of Sumter received the Military Order of the World Wars Award. The Military Order of the World Wars Award is presented to one member in the second, third and fourth class from each branch of service for their diligence in demonstrating military excellence and outstanding accomplishments during the year.

- **Keelan Kane-Yearman** (Navy) of Sumter received the Reserve Officers Association of the United States Award. The Reserve Officers Association Award is presented to cadets who have demonstrated outstanding competence in the arts and sciences of national defense.

SAFE FEDERAL SCHOLARSHIPS

SAFE Federal Credit Union named 18 Midlands high school students as recipients of its yearly college scholarships at its annual meeting March 19. The scholarships, worth \$1,000 each toward tuition, were awarded to public and private school students in the areas SAFE serves, based on financial need. The students were chosen by their respective school districts.

"Education is the most valuable long-term investment that we can make as a credit union," Darrell Merkel, CEO of SAFE Federal Credit Union, said. "We recognize that these students will be the ones who lead us tomorrow, and we are honored to help them further their education. We salute each of them."

Area students receiving scholarships are:

- **Joshua Clayton Pringle Jr.**, Scotts Branch High School;
- **Deborah Lorraine Footman**, Manning High School;
- **Jailah Smith**, East Clarendon High School;
- **Marissa DeAnn Griffin**, Sumter High School;
- **Madison M. Kidd**, Clarendon Hall;
- **Harrison William Berry**, Laurence Manning Academy;
- **James Edwin Walker**, Robert E. Lee Academy; and
- **Dazjuan Sy'Lek Butler**, Thomas Sumter Academy.

CELEBRATIONS POLICY

Engagement, wedding, birth and wedding anniversaries (25th, 50th and above) of local interest are published on Sundays except during holiday / vacation weeks. The normal deadline is noon on the preceding Monday.

Forms may be obtained at *The Sumter Item* or downloaded from www.theitem.com. Click on the drop-down arrow next to the Lifestyle tab on the navigation bar of the site.

When filling out the form, please type or print all information, paying particular attention to names. Do not print in all capital letters.

Photographs must be vertical and of reproduction quality and must be received by the Monday noon deadline.

For additional information, call (803) 774-1264.

Email wedding and engagement forms and photos to brides@theitem.com. For additional information, call (803) 774-1264. Email birth and wedding anniversary forms and photos to sandra@theitem.com. For additional information, call (803) 774-1226.

For defenders and judges, comfort dogs do opposite

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — As dogs and other animals are increasingly used in courts to comfort and calm prosecution witnesses, a few voices are calling for keeping the practice on a short leash, saying they could bias juries.

The use of dogs in courts has spread quickly across the U.S. with a growing number of laws and rulings in its favor — and, outside the legal world, a significant increase in the use of emotional support animals by the public.

There are now more than 155 "court-house facility dogs" working in 35 states, compared with 41 dogs in 19 states five years ago, according to the Courthouse Dogs Foundation in Bellevue, Washington. And that's not counting an untold number of "emotional support dogs" that have been allowed case by case in many states. Many witnesses have been child sexual assault victims.

There has been a divide among judges, however, with some not allowing dogs because of potential bias against defendants. And many defense lawyers don't like the practice.

Having dogs and other emotional support animals in the witness box can illegitimately boost witness credibility and prejudice juries against defendants, Denver defense lawyer Christopher Decker argues. He has

unsuccessfully fought the use of dogs in criminal trials several times.

"I think it distracts the jurors from what their job is, which is to determine the truthfulness of the testimony," Decker said. "It tends to imply or infer that there has been some victimization. It tends to engender sympathy. It's highly prejudicial."

Facility dogs are trained to provide companionship without disruption in courthouses, prosecutors' offices and other legal settings. They work at courthouses all day, then go home with their handlers. Emotional support and "therapy" dogs are pets that can be registered with organizations and may or may not have been specially trained.

Proponents say dogs help reduce the anxiety of traumatized victims, especially children, so they can overcome the stress of telling their stories in a deposition room or courtroom.

"We need to address how traumatizing it is for children to go through this process," said Ellen O'Neill-Stephens, a former prosecutor who founded the Courthouse Dogs Foundation. "The whole point for me is I want to make it easier for people to engage in this process without suffering additional emotional trauma."

At least eight states have laws allowing the use of dogs to comfort children



Ivy Jacobsen of Lake Stevens, Washington, said three facility dogs helped her get through the three trials required before her father was convicted of sexually assaulting her as a teenager.

COURTESY OF IVY JACOBSEN VIA AP

and other vulnerable witnesses. Similar proposed laws are pending in at least another four states, while court rulings in a handful of states have set precedents allowing the use of emotional support dogs.

Ivy Jacobsen, of Lake Stevens, Washington, said three facility dogs helped her get through the three trials it took before her father was convicted of sexually assaulting her when she was a teenager. After two hung juries, he was convicted at the third trial and sentenced to 16 years in prison in 2013.

The judge in Jacobsen's case did not allow a dog to accompany her on the witness stand during the trials because of objections by the defense. The animals helped her outside the courtroom, she said, during private questioning by defense lawyers, counseling sessions and in courtroom hallways after proceedings.

"It made it easier to talk knowing he was there," said Jacobsen, now 23 and a police officer, referring to one of the dogs that helped her during a tense

deposition. "I felt like he was in a way whispering toward me that everything was going to be OK. I was 16 or 17 at this time having to talk about very explicit, very uncomfortable things that I was not willing to say out loud."

It's not clear how, or whether, the dogs are affecting juries and verdicts because of a lack of research.

Studies by researchers at Wofford College in South Carolina involving mock jurors reviewing real cases have shown dogs have no effect on verdicts or witness credibility. The findings surprised the researchers, and they're trying to determine why there is no effect.

"We consistently find that the presence of a dog makes no difference," said Wofford psychology professor Dawn McQuiston, a lead researcher. "It seems absolutely intuitive that it will elicit sympathy, that it will make the victim seem more like a victim, that it will make you feel sorry for them. We certainly expected these dogs would have an impact, so we were surprised when they didn't."

Dogs also are being used to comfort trial witnesses in other parts of the world including South America, Europe and Australia. One jurisdiction in Australia recently rejected emotional support dogs in courts, *The Canberra Times* reported.

MUSICAL FROM PAGE A1

a 90-minute musical performance," Juilliard-trained cellist Claire Bryant said. "And it's not usual."

Led by Bryant, Decoda spends a week with inmates in the BLIC (Better Living Incentive Community) in workshops and rehearsals, culminating in the 19-song performance that spans the life and death of the 16th president.

BLIC opened after a riot at the prison in 2012 for inmates with a clean record while imprisoned. Accepted applicants live in a separate dorm, receive more lax security and can take classes.

"It's a good outlet for the folks that are incarcerated. It gives them something to look forward to," said Bryan Stirling, director of the South Carolina Department of Corrections, of Decoda. "And it's a reward for being on good behavior because if you have any discipline or anything like that, you would not be able to participate in this program."

The men involved are not the ones who took the guards hostage. They're not the ones who murdered fellow inmates during fights. They're the ones who spent a year researching the history of Lincoln, from his eternal love for Mary Todd Lincoln (song No. 5) to the adversarial members of his cabinet (song No. 9) to the sudden death of his young son, Willie (song No. 10).

"Let it rain, rain on me / Lord let this rain wash this pain from me."

"I was sitting there wondering where they got those lyrics from, and they explained they wrote them themselves. They match them to the music. They memorize it. It's a lot of talent," Stirling said.

The show was performed in front of other BLIC inmates, prison staff, visiting family members and the media, all of whom got a sense of prison by separating themselves from cell phones, wallets and any communication to the outside while the inmates got a sense of the outside by attending the show and using musical instruments, devices

and situations not afforded to just any of the more than 1,500 men incarcerated there.

"Security is also important," Stirling said, "but programming can keep an institution safe."

He said he hopes the positive reinforcement the program gives inmates is a "glimmer that if they do the right things that when they get out, they will have a future and they won't come back to the Department of Corrections."

The connection to life on the other side of the bars, the life where you can open your own door, is in the music for the 25-year-old inmate who

played the central character — in asking for help from friends with a report on Lincoln, he introduced each number with a short skit.

"I always wanted to be an actor," he said.

He said he wrote a play that was performed while he was at Kirkland Correctional Institution in Columbia about a man who robbed a bank when his mother fell ill but that it was "mind-blowing to work with the ensemble from Carnegie Hall. They're on a major scale."

"I remember being 4 or 5 years old, and my mother got me and my brother rehearsing for talent shows," he said.

Learning history through music, through writing lyrics for rock songs and rap ballads, helped him.

"If I was a school principal, I would use music for the kids to get them to learn because I learned so much about Lincoln it's ridiculous," he said.

"One day, I'm gonna be somebody / One day, I'm gonna make a change / One day, I'm gonna be somebody / One day, the world's gonna know my name."

"Music here actually gives me the opportunity to escape from prison. These couple hours, matter fact this whole week working on the Lincoln project, I was not in prison," he said. "All I had time to do was work on this, take a shower and lay down. So, it's really an escape. So, it's tranquility for me here."



MICAH GREEN / THE SUMTER ITEM

A Lee Correctional Institution inmate sings with others.



MICAH GREEN / THE SUMTER ITEM

Dexter Davis, chaplain and character coach for the Atlanta Falcons, addresses volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel Thursday at Sumter County Civic Center.

AWARDS FROM PAGE A1

They go through the same training as paid firefighters and first responders.

Hingst said the EMS department gets an average of 63 calls a day in Sumter County, which are answered by seven ambulances.

"They work hard. They put in a lot of hours," he said.

Awards were presented at the banquet for the top volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel, and attendees were treated to a keynote speech from Dexter Davis, the team chaplain and character coach for the Atlanta Falcons.

Davis, a Sumter native, member of the '87 Sumter High School state championship football team and Clemson University star cornerback, made connections between being a first responder and a football player.

Both have to work as a team and have each other's back, he said, but there is a main difference — in football when there is a breakdown, "we might give up a touchdown. We might give up a sack. You might give up a life."

"What you do," he said, "you're the real heroes."

Sumter County Fire Chief Karl Ford said the volunteers cannot be thanked enough for what they do.

"The little bit of pay they get, the stipend they get, is enough for gas. These people do this out of the goodness of their heart because they care about their community," he said.

"This type of heart, the volunteer heart, is hard to get away from."

Ford said volunteers initiated the fire service when family members, farmers, "close-knit groups in the community" needed fire protection.

Volunteer firefighters are on call instead of working shifts.

"When it gets in your heart, it's hard to give it up," he said. "You don't like to see anybody lose anything, but you like to help."

He said working with EMS and honoring them at the same banquet makes sense because they both are on one team, "just different tasks, different duties."

VOLUNTEERS HONORED AT BANQUET

Firefighter of the Year

Camrin Northrop, Cherryvale station

Officer of the Year

Sean Sutton, Wedgefield station

EMT of the Year

Renee King

EMT Manager of the Year

Kevin Moye

Advanced EMT of the Year

Hayward Pack

EMT Paramedic of the Year

Christopher McKenzie

Station Firefighters of the Year

Camrin Northrop, Cherryvale
Dana Cadena, Pinewood
David Walker, Graham
Kenny Reynolds, Pleasant Grove
Selena Smith, Mayesville
Michael Carnes, Dalzell
Amber Soward, Wedgefield
Edgar Sanders, Rembert
Justin McCoy, Concord
William Forte, Horatio
Brian Newman, Dubose
Nicholas Ireland, Bethel
Randy Jones, Oswego
Callie Bunyea, Beech Creek
Frank Nesbitt, Byrds
Richie Brogdon, Dabbs

Station Officers of the Year

Terry Holmes, Cherryvale
KJ Hall, Pinewood
Harold Nash, Graham
Ted Compton, Pleasant Grove
Xander Compton, Mayesville
David Bagwell, Dalzell
Sean Sutton, Wedgefield
Jeff Grant, Rembert
Robbie Watts, Concord
John Cavey, Horatio
Chris Mahoney, Dubose
Dan Thomas, Bethel
TJ Mullen, Oswego
Aaron Bunyea, Beech Creek
Roger Nesbitt, Byrds
Johnny Watts, Dabbs

Explorer of the Year

J-Quan Jenkins-Johnson

Career Center Student of the Year

J-Quan Jenkins-Johnson

Skills USA 2018 Teams Competition — Fire

Gavin Foxworth
Hunter Cockerill

Skills USA 2018 Team Competition — Medical

J-Quan Jenkins-Johnson
Kirkland Hanks

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2. Between March 20 and April 9, vote daily for your favorite ugly sofa. Invite your friends and family!
3. The entry with the most votes will win a FREE sofa (up to \$800 Value) from Hines Furniture or \$800 off a new sofa.

the Sumter ITEM



Retired Air Force Col. Lee Ellis, a former Vietnam prisoner of war, speaks to members of the 20th Fighter Wing on Friday at Shaw Air Force Base as a cover image of his book, *Leading with Honor*, is shown in the background.

PHOTOS BY BRUCE MILLS / THE SUMTER ITEM

ELLIS FROM PAGE A1

and during heavy trials and suffering, he said.

On Nov. 7, 1967, Ellis, then a 24-year-old combat fighter pilot in the Air Force, was shot down by the North Vietnamese, captured and held as a POW at the Hanoi Hilton until March 1973.

Now a corporate leadership consultant, speaker and author, Ellis shared lessons he learned from his own actions and those of other American POWs at the camp on the importance of persevering in “doing the right thing,” confronting your doubts and fears in life and being confident but staying humble.

Ellis said always doing the right thing and “not believing you’re a victim” was hard to do at the camp when constantly faced with torture and interrogation by the North Vietnamese Army.

While the enemy’s goal was getting anti-war propaganda from the POWs, Ellis said living up to the military code of conduct and “returning home with honor, on our terms,” was the prisoners’ goal.

“That was going to be the battle day after day because they



Retired Air Force Col. Lee Ellis, a former Vietnam prisoner of war, talks Friday at Shaw Air Force Base about being a POW as a war-time poster of himself is shown.

wanted us to go the other way,” Ellis said. “Somehow, we had to find a way to stay positive. When you go negative and believe you’re a victim, you’re gone. Somehow, we’re going to fight this battle day by day, and we’re going to come out the other end.”

Ellis said the POWs needed the mutual support of one another to do this.

One of the most fundamental leadership concepts, according to Ellis, is leading yourself first and the necessity to change your behavior, if necessary.

“Know yourself,” Ellis said. “Know the fact that you will be afraid and scared and put things off sometimes because you have doubts and fears. Everybody’s got them. There are no perfect leaders, so managing yourself and growing yourself is very important.”

Finally, Ellis said, great leaders and successful people are able to accomplish the organizational mission and are also able to take care of the people, as well. Their subordinates and others know the leader cares for them.

A critical piece to this, according to Ellis, is being confident but also humble and not self-centered.

“This idea of leading — and being a successful person even — it’s really about taking two things that don’t seemingly go together. They’re paradoxical, but you got to do both,” Ellis said. “And that’s the key to life and leadership — being able to do both. Knowing when to be friendly and caring and when to be tough. You can be caring and tough. You can be tough and caring.”

Hiring slows in March, but job market healthy

BY CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — U.S. employers added a modest 103,000 jobs in March after several months of robust gains, though the government’s overall jobs report Friday suggested that the labor market remains fundamentally healthy.

The unemployment rate remained at 4.1 percent, a 17-year low, for a sixth-straight month, the government said. Average hourly pay ticked up, climbing 2.7 percent compared with a year earlier.

The government also revised down its estimate of job growth for January and February by a combined 50,000. Still, during the past six months, employers have added a healthy average of 211,000 jobs a month, evidence that hiring in the United States remains strong and the economy on solid footing in its ninth year of recovery from the Great Recession.

The pullback in hiring last month was likely payback for an explosive gain in February, economists said. Employers added 326,000 jobs that month — the largest monthly haul in two years.

“Overall, looking through the volatility, employment growth is trending higher, and wage growth is starting to heat up,” said Paul Ashworth, an economist at Capital Economics.

Last month’s modest job gain may indicate that some employers want to hire more but are struggling to find the workers they need. A separate government report last month showed that there was nearly one open job for

every unemployed person, the lowest ratio on records dating back two decades.

Edward Daniel, chief executive of Metropolitan Health Services, says he has raised pay and sweetened benefits to try to fill his 740-person company’s roughly 80 open jobs. Daniel’s firm, based in Herndon, Virginia, provides services to hospitals, such as valet parking and “sitters,” who stay with elderly or mentally ill patients after



An employee of Aldi, right, takes an application from a job applicant at a JobNewsUSA job fair in Miami Lakes, Florida, on Jan. 30.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

they’ve been sent home from operations.

“Across the board, hiring is a challenge,” Daniel said.

His pay for sitters has increased from \$10 to \$12 an hour, mostly to keep up with raises at retailers and fast food restaurants.

The company now offers a 401(k) to all employees after 30 days on the job and provides a prescription drug discount card. By June of next year, it plans to pay

half its employees’ educational costs.

It’s a big change, Daniel said, from a decade ago, when the company offered no benefits at all.

Some of the drop-off in hiring for March was likely weather-related, with late spring snowstorms blanketing the Northeast, closing construction sites and potentially postponing shopping trips for spring clothes. Construction companies cut 15,000 jobs, the

sharpest monthly drop in three years, after five months of big gains. Retailers shed 4,400 jobs.

Hotels and restaurants added just 4,300 workers, the fewest in six months.

Some higher-paying sectors still posted solid gains: Manufacturers added 22,000 jobs. Professional and business services, which includes fields such as accounting and architecture, gained 33,000 positions.

The U.S. economy appears to be sturdy, with the recovery from the 2008-09 Great Recession now the second-longest expansion since the 1850s, when economists began tracking recessions and recoveries. Still, the expansion has been puzzlingly slow, with economic growth averaging just 2.2 percent a year — about a percentage point below the historical average. But its durability has been broadly beneficial.

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- Broadband Internet access service which includes the capability to send data to and receive data from the Internet, but excludes dial-up service.

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OPINION

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COMMENTARY

Trump is threatening to repeat Obama's mistakes

WASHINGTON — During the 2016 campaign, Donald Trump excoriated President Barack Obama for “the way he got out of Iraq,” which Trump said “was the founding of” the Islamic State. As president, Trump reiterated during a meeting with Iraq’s prime minister that “we should never ever have left. A vacuum was created.”



Marc Thiessen

Trump was right. Obama’s withdrawal did create a vacuum the Islamic State quickly filled. So why is Trump now threatening to repeat Obama’s mistakes by withdrawing U.S. forces from Syria?

The president recently announced that U.S. troops will be “coming out of Syria ... very soon” because “we were very successful against ISIS,” and it is time to “let the other people take care of it now.” That is exactly the rationale Obama used when he pulled

U.S. forces out of Iraq.

The terrorists had been driven from their strongholds, and, according to then-CIA Director John Brennan, they had just “700-or-so adherents left.” So Obama decided, with the Islamic State apparently defeated, that it was time for the United States to come out and let Iraqis “take responsibility for their country.” But when Obama took the boot off of the terrorists’ necks, it allowed the Islamic State to regroup and reconstitute itself.

Trump corrected this catastrophic mistake when he took the gloves off our military and drove the Islamic State from its physical caliphate. He deserves credit for this achievement. But the Islamic State is not defeated; it has simply reverted into an insurgency and remains a terrorist network with global reach. And it is not the only terrorist threat in Syria. Al-Qaeda also has an army there waiting in the wings to replace the Islamic State. According to the Institute for the Study of War and the American Enterprise Institute’s Critical Threats Project, “Al Qaeda ... is more dangerous than ISIS,” be-

cause although they share “the same aims as ISIS, including the intention of attacking and destroying the West,” al-Qaeda is less focused on developing a physical caliphate and more on “insinuating itself inside Sunni insurgencies by harnessing popular grievances ... while continuing to build capabilities that could be turned against the West.”

If Trump pulls out of Syria now, he will leave behind a haven for al-Qaeda. And his withdrawal could also precipitate the comeback of the Islamic State. The Trump administration drove the Islamic State from its strongholds by working with Kurdish proxies despised by Turkey. If the United States leaves, Turkey will go after our Kurdish allies, leaving the Islamic State free to regroup and reconstitute — just as it did after Obama’s disastrous withdrawal from Iraq.

That’s not all. A U.S. withdrawal would create an Obama-style vacuum that would be filled by Iran, Hezbollah, Russia and the Assad regime. Iran and Syrian President Bashar al-Assad would

escalate their brutal campaign of atrocities in Syria — including crossing Trump’s red line on the use of poison gas — which would radicalize the Sunni population, driving them into the waiting arms of al-Qaeda. This could also create a new refugee crisis, with hundreds of thousands of Syrians fleeing to the West.

An Obama-style withdrawal from Syria could also free Iran to establish a massive military presence in southwestern Syria, which could spark a catastrophic war with Israel. Israel recently shot down an Iranian drone that had infiltrated its airspace from Syria and accused Iran of building sites in Syria to produce precision-guided missiles. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that Israel “will not allow a regime hell bent on the annihilation of the Jewish state ... to entrench itself militarily in Syria,” and warned that if Iran tried to do so, Israel would act “not only against Iranian proxies that are attacking us, but against Iran itself.” If our goal is to protect Israel and constrain Iran, withdrawal from Syria would

do the opposite.

What should Trump be doing in Syria? He should maintain a U.S. presence to secure our military’s gains, protect our Kurdish allies, keep the Islamic State down and prevent al-Qaeda from capitalizing on the Islamic State’s demise. He should prevent Iran from entrenching itself in Syria, expanding its military presence and threatening Israel. And in the longer run, he should be working to separate the Sunni population from al-Qaeda by cultivating Sunni partners in Syria who are allied with the United States against the Salafi-jihadist cause, as well as the growing Iranian-Russian-Assad-Hezbollah alliance.

The temptation to declare victory in Syria and withdraw is understandable. But before he does so, Trump should ask himself:

What would Obama do? Then he should do the opposite.

Follow Marc A. Thiessen on Twitter, @marcthiessen.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

TRUMP SHOULD KNOW ABOUT HALEY’S DISLOYALTY

Nikki Haley has a history of, shall we say, “political flexibility,” not so dissimilar from her fellow S.C. neocon Lindsay Graham. Both are accomplished “press hounds” by anyone’s standards. But Nikki was elected with the support of Sarah Palin as a solid right-winger. In 2015, opportunity came knocking for national publicity, when a homicidal maniac killed nine in a church in Charleston.

Haley then moved left, not unlike numbers of Republicans who have recently joined Democrats in blaming the Florida shootings on the NRA, by “going national” and joining Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson on the Statehouse steps to cast blame on her former allies who supported flying the Confederate flag at the Confederate monument in Columbia.

Basking in national press approbation, Haley moved further left by defying a prohibition of Syrian refugee resettlement in S.C. — without the approval of the county governments affected contained in the 2015 Appropriation Bill passed by the Legislature. She instructed the S.C. Department of Social Services to support the Obama Administration program, despite the disapproval of all counties targeted as resettlement sites.

In 2016, determined to sway the Presidential Primary in S.C. away from Trump, Haley compared his rhetoric on immigration to the KKK and Dylann Roof. Fortunately for her, Trump made a deal with the lieutenant governor to appoint her UN Ambassador, so McMaster could be governor.

Not satisfied with expanding wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, Haley has now chosen to blame the Russian, Syrian and Iranian governments for sarin gas attacks against Syrian civilians — now her problem. In an AP article dated Feb. 2, 2018, Secretary of Defense James Mattis stated that the U.S. has no evidence of culpability against her accused countries. The article also admits that all reports come from Islamist rebels, including those supported by U.S. government funds.

Promoted by Graham, McCain and other “neo cons,” Haley’s hawkish campaign is beginning to resemble the “WMD” report that justified the Iraq war. Trump would be well advised, albeit belatedly, to acquaint himself with her history of self-promotion and disloyalty.

RICHARD T. HINES
Mayesville



COMMENTARY

What George Wallace and Jerry Brown have in common

Who knows where George Wallace went after he left this life, but wherever he is, he must be smiling.

He and the other segregationist governors of the Old South didn’t want the federal government telling them how to live their lives. On June 11, 1963, Wallace stood in the schoolhouse door at the University of Alabama to bar two black students from entering.

Some 50 years later the old “state’s rights” argument has resurfaced. But now it’s not the governor of a regressive state, but the governor of the progressive state of California, along with the sophisticated liberals in the state legislature, who think they can pick and choose which federal laws are worthy of compliance — and which may be undermined.

So they’ve pretty much declared California a sanctuary state. As for federal immigration laws, the enlightened politicians in Sacramento don’t think any more of them than George Wallace thought of federal civil rights laws.

Last year, California Gov. Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill 54, which among other things prohibits state and local law enforcement officials from informing federal officers when an illegal immigrant who has committed a crime is being released from custody.

Ah, but this is not in the same moral universe, progressives will tell you, as what Gov. Wallace and the others did. Wallace shunned federal law to enforce an evil way of life. Jerry

Brown and the Democratic legislature want to help people — not hurt them. They want immigrants who are here illegally to feel free to work with the police if they know something about a crime. If they’re afraid of being arrested, or even deported, they’ll stay in the shadows and remain silent.

There’s some truth to that. But what about the times when an illegal immigrant is released from custody and federal agents are not informed — and he goes out and shoots and kills a young woman on a pier in San Francisco?

And what about that political stunt in Oakland, California, in February when Mayor Libby Schaaf warned illegal aliens of a secret raid by immigration agents? That reckless decision put her own citizens in danger by allowing illegal immigrants, many of whom had committed crimes, to avoid arrest.

How is that making things safer for the community?

Now the federal government is suing California, arguing that states cannot legally undercut federal immigration laws. And several communities in California have taken sides — against the new law.

On March 27, the Orange County Board of Supervisors voted to condemn the sanctuary law and is now working on a way to join the lawsuit on the side of the federal government. Eight days later the city council in Escondido, California, followed Orange County’s lead and voted to file a brief in support of the federal government against the state’s sanctuary cities law.

And the rebellion is spreading. Other California communities are also taking sides: aligning themselves

with the federal government.

And let’s consider where California’s supposed benign thinking could conceivably lead us. What if the Massachusetts legislature decides it doesn’t want to grant rights to gun owners on grounds that gun violence is a danger to the people of the state? What if they think the Second Amendment is up for grabs, that states can honor court decisions on guns — or not? What if Nebraska thinks too much fake news is being passed off as the real thing, that the First Amendment is an irritant and that journalistic bias shouldn’t be tolerated or legally protected?

The American people, by and large, wouldn’t tolerate such state-sponsored anarchy. So why should we tolerate California’s decision to make an end run around federal law? Because Jerry Brown and his allies mean well?

Sometimes it’s important to state the obvious, so here goes: Jerry Brown is not George Wallace. Jerry Brown is a well-educated, thoughtful man. George Wallace was a populist ex-boxer who played to the worst instincts of the people in his state — until he dramatically changed his ways late in life.

Still, Gov. Brown is traveling down the same pot-holed road as Gov. Wallace once did. Jerry Brown says the federal government is “going to war” against his state. He’s convinced he’s doing the right thing for the right reasons. So did George Wallace.

Bernie Goldberg is an opinion writer and a news and media analyst for Fox News’ O’Reilly Factor. He is a graduate of Rutgers University and a member of the school’s Hall of Distinguished Alumni.

FYI

The City of Sumter will accept applications for its Summer Youth Employment Programs through May 5. Students ages 14-15 will work in city government and students age 16 through high school will work in the Co-Op Program for local businesses. Students must live in the city limits and meet income require-

ments set by HUD. Students should see their school guidance counselors for applications and income guidelines or pick up an application 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday from the Liberty Center, 12 W. Liberty St., Office H. Call Carolee Thomas at (803) 774-1652 or Clarence Gaines at (803) 774-1649.

PUBLIC AGENDA

CLARENDON COUNTY COUNCIL Monday, 6 p.m., Administration Building, Council Chambers, 411 Sunset Drive, Manning

SUMTER SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES Tuesday, 6 p.m., Lakewood High School Fine Arts Center

LEE COUNTY COUNCIL Tuesday, 9 a.m., council chambers

LYNCHBURG TOWN COUNCIL Tuesday, 6 p.m., Teen Center on Magnolia Street, Lynchburg

SUMTER HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION Tuesday, noon, Sunset Country Club

SUMTER COUNTY COUNCIL Tuesday, 6 p.m., Sumter County Council Chambers

SUMTER COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES Tuesday, 5 p.m., library

TURBEVILLE TOWN COUNCIL Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., town hall

SUMMERTON TOWN COUNCIL Tuesday, 6 p.m., town hall

MAYESVILLE TOWN COUNCIL Tuesday, 7 p.m., town hall

The last word in astrology

EUGENIA LAST

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Use your finesse, insight and

expect. Romance will encourage a commitment and greater emotional stability.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Take your time and consider the best way to handle a domestic or relationship matter. An impulsive response will add stress to a situation that needs a chance to mellow out before a rational solution can be put in place.

ingenuity to redirect any negativity that comes your way. Be ready to outsmart anyone trying to discount what you have to say or offer. Be prepared with facts, figures and charm.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't let impulsiveness take over when you should be refining your mental, physical and emotional health. Look for a way to improve your lifestyle and make an effort to bring about changes that will curb poor habits and overspending. Romance is highlighted.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't let impulse get the better of you. Remain calm, take care of your responsibilities and look at all sides of a situation before you judge what others do or say. Everyone has a right to an opinion, including you.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Emotional manipulation works some of the time, but if you try to put something over on someone you've known for a long time, you'll find it difficult to get your way. It is best to be honest about your intentions and motives.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): The way you earn your living may be jeopardized if you haven't been paying attention or keeping up with the latest technology or trends. Do your due diligence and pick up as much information as possible to protect your future.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Know what you want ahead of time and don't go into battle unprepared. Anger solves nothing, but practicality, common sense and fairness will help you put any situation that irks you to rest quickly and without resentment. Accept the inevitable.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Make a commitment to yourself as well as to your loved ones to do your best and to take better care of your health and your emotional attitude. Ward off negativity by avoiding people who tend to bring you down.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Emotional ups and downs will leave you wondering if you are on the right path. Tame impulsiveness before you take on something that will be impossible to finish. Focus on what you can do on your own to avoid wasting time.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): A change of plans can be expected. Don't count on someone to make changes or alter his or her opinion. Protect against unnecessary arguments and being taken for granted. If something doesn't sit right with you, walk away.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Physical improvements will pay off. A short trip or signing up for an interesting course or retreat will open a window of opportunity you didn't

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): If you are too easygoing, someone will take advantage of you. Only sign up to do the things you think you might enjoy or benefit from doing. Someone you love will need reassurance. Plan something special as a token of appreciation.

WEATHER

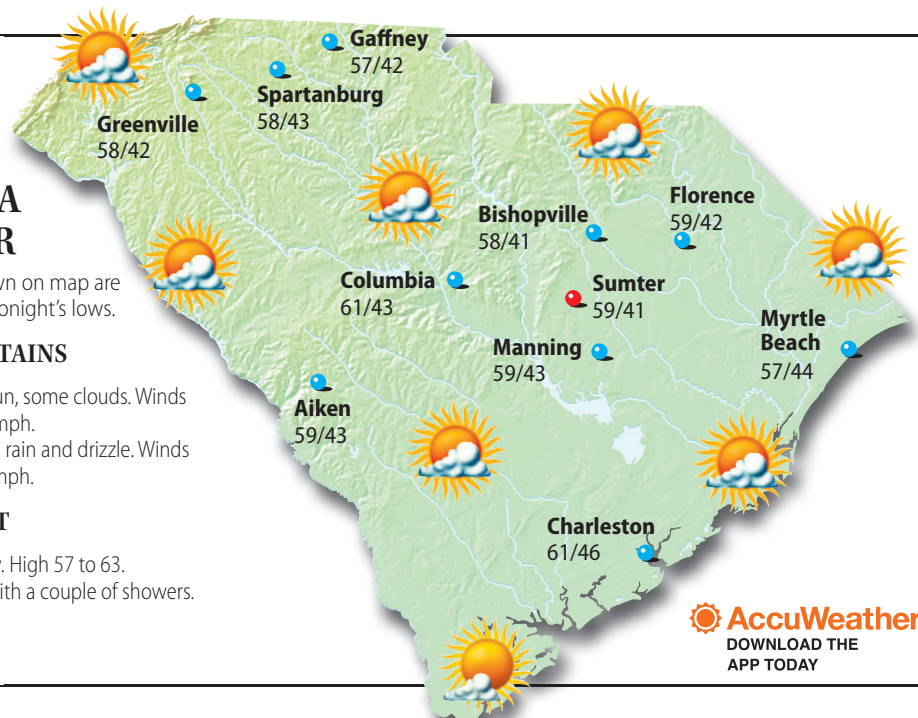
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AccuWeather® five-day forecast for Sumter

Table with 6 columns: TODAY, TONIGHT, MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY. Includes icons, temperatures (59, 41, 58/43, 66/46, 69/45, 77/51), and wind speeds.

TODAY'S SOUTH CAROLINA WEATHER

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



IN THE MOUNTAINS

Today: Cool with sun, some clouds. Winds east-southeast 4-8 mph. Monday: Cool with rain and drizzle. Winds east-northeast 4-8 mph.

ON THE COAST

Today: Partly sunny. High 57 to 63. Monday: Cloudy with a couple of showers. High 60 to 66.

LOCAL ALMANAC

SUMTER THROUGH 2 P.M. YESTERDAY

Table with 2 columns: Temperature (High 65, Low 61, Normal high 73, Normal low 46) and Precipitation (24 hrs ending 2 p.m. yest. 0.19").

LAKE LEVELS

Table with 4 columns: Lake, Full pool, 7 a.m. yest., 24-hr chg. Includes Murray, Marion, Moultrie, Wateree lakes.

SUN AND MOON

Table with 4 columns: Sunrise, Moonrise, Sunset, Moonset. Includes moon phase icons for Apr. 8, 15, 22, 29.

RIVER STAGES

Table with 4 columns: River, Flood stage, 7 a.m. yest., 24-hr chg. Includes Black River, Congaree River, Lynches River, Saluda River, Up. Santee River, Wateree River.

TIDES

Table with 4 columns: High, Low. Includes times for AT MYRTLE BEACH for Today and Mon.

NATIONAL CITIES

Table with 3 columns: City, Today, Mon. Lists major cities like Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, Orlando, Philadelphia, Phoenix, San Francisco, Wash., DC.

REGIONAL CITIES

Table with 3 columns: City, Today, Mon. Lists regional cities like Asheville, Athens, Augusta, Beaufort, Cape Hatteras, Charleston, Charlotte, Clemson, Columbia, Darlington, Elizabeth City, Elizabethtown, Fayetteville, Florence, Gainesville, Gastonia, Goldsboro, Goose Creek, Greensboro, Greenville, Hickory, Hilton Head, Jacksonville, FL, La Grange, Macon, Marietta.

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

Advertisement for 'We have a NOSE for NEWS' featuring a cartoon dog detective and contact information for The Sumter ITEM.

THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down.

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Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down.

SATURDAY'S ANSWERS

Crossword puzzle grid with answers filled in.

SUDOKU

9x9 Sudoku puzzle grid.

JUMBLE

WINCE BRISK VACANT EXPAND To dream about surfing, the surfer needed — BRAIN WAVES

Word search puzzle with clues for 36-62.

Word search puzzle with clues for 1-35.

THE MASTERS



Green Jacket in sight

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Patrick Reed hits a drive on the 18th hole during the third round of the Masters on Saturday in Augusta, Georgia. Reed leads Rory McIlroy by three strokes entering today's final round.

Reed builds 3-shot lead over McIlroy at Masters

BY DOUG FERGUSON
The Associated Press

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Patrick Reed and Rory McIlroy meet again, this time for a green jacket instead of a gold Ryder Cup trophy.

Reed seized control of the Masters on

a wet Saturday at Augusta National with a pair of eagles on the back nine and a 5-under 67 that gave him a three-shot lead. McIlroy, who chipped in for eagle on the front nine to briefly tie for the lead, made an 18-foot birdie on the final hole for a 65 to nudge a little closer.

This is not match play as it was for

their singles match in Ryder Cup at Hazeltine.

It sure feels like it.

And it sounded about as loud, too, especially with players taking advantage of greens slightly softened by the rain.

SEE MASTERS, PAGE B3

USC WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

USC's Wilson, Villanova's Brunson win women's, men's Wooden Awards

BY BETH HARRIS
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A'Ja Wilson of South Carolina and Jalen Brunson of national champion Villanova won the John R. Wooden Award as national players of the year Friday night.

They received their trophies during the fourth annual College Basketball Awards in a nationally televised show from The Novo in downtown Los Angeles.

Wilson helped South Carolina to its first title last year and averaged 22.6 points and 11.8 rebounds for the team this season before the Gamecocks lost to UConn in the NCAA Tournament regional final. She was also the AP women's player of the year and is expected to be the first pick in the upcoming WNBA draft.

Wilson finished her college career as South Carolina's scoring and blocks leader.

"I'm just blessed to win this award," she said. "This is something huge, this is something deeper than basketball."

Brunson also claimed the Bob Cousy point guard of the year award, having averaged over 18 points while helping Villanova win its second national title in three years. Brunson claimed a slew of honors, including The Associated Press men's player of the year. He helped the Wildcats spend a nation's-best eight weeks at No. 1 in the AP Top 25 this season.

Brunson is the second player to win the national title and Wooden Award in the same year, and the first Wildcats player to earn the Wooden honor.

"It really truly does mean a lot," he said. "There's been so many great players that have come through Villanova. Being the first one is something I take great pride in."

SEE AWARD, PAGE B6



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

South Carolina's A'Ja Wilson, center, won the John R. Wooden Award on Friday as the top women's college basketball player in the country.

AUTO RACING

Sensational start for Stewart-Haas, including 1-2-3 on pole at Texas

BY STEPHEN HAWKINS
The Associated Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Kurt Busch is on the pole, Clint Bowyer is coming off his first victory in six years and Kevin Harvick has won half of the races so far on the NASCAR Cup Series schedule.

Aric Almirola, the newcomer to the team, has been steady, too, finishing 14th or better in every race.

With Stewart-Haas Racing already off to a sensational start this season, the decade-old team will now have the top three starters in a race for the first time Sunday. Busch, Harvick and Bowyer qualified their Fords 1-2-3 at Texas Motor Speedway, while Almirola was 12th at the 1 1/2-mile track.

"We unloaded off the truck here and went right back to the top of the board. That is

pretty cool," said Bowyer, whose victory at Martinsville before the Easter break ended his 190-race winless streak.

"It is crazy how you can get your cars with a good balance on them and really roll them through the corners good," he said. "It seems if they are fast at one track they are going to be fast at the next."

SEE RACE, PAGE B6



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kurt Busch reaches into his car in the garage area during a practice session on Saturday for the Texas 500 today in Fort Worth, Texas, on Saturday. Busch will be sitting on the pole.

USC SUMTER SOFTBALL

Talent starting to mesh for Fire Ants softball team

BY DENNIS BRUNSON
dennis@theitem.com

Adrienne Cataldo believes this is the most talented softball team she's had in her 11 seasons as the head coach of the University of South Carolina Sumter.

Cataldo now believes that talent is starting to mesh together in a special way.

"We've got a lot of talented individuals on this team," Cataldo said. "It's taken some time, but I think we're starting to come together. All of that individual talent is learning to work together and becoming a very good team."

The Fire Ants swept a doubleheader from USC Union on Friday at Patriot Park SportPlex to improve to 15-9 overall and, more importantly,

5-1 in NJCAA Region X. USCS rallied from a 6-0 deficit in the first game to win 8-7 in eight innings before winning the second game 9-4.

The Fire Ants are tied for first in the region with Louisburg College with just one region loss. Louisburg is 7-1 after having its doubleheader with USC Salkehatchie scheduled for Saturday postponed due to rain.

Sumter was scheduled to travel to Union on Saturday, but the games were postponed due to rain.

Union scored four runs in the top of the first of the opener and two more in the second to go up 6-0. Sumter began to work its way back into the contest, scoring one in the bottom of the second and two in the third.

After USCU picked up one in the fifth to go up 7-3, the Fire Ants scored two in the bottom of the inning and two more in the sixth to tie the game. They won the game in the bottom of the eighth, scoring the winning run with one out.

"The girls never quit in this game," Cataldo said. "They just kept working and they were determined they were going to fight back. Coming back like that was big for us."

Ashton Rogers and Kayla McKenzie both went 3-for-4 for USC, which had 12 hits. Rogers hit a solo home run and scored twice. McKenzie scored a run.

Alexis Lyles had two hits and a run batted in, Jayla Cowell and Laurel Shaw each had a hit and two runs and Hannah Bettencourt had two RBI.

SEE ANTS, PAGE B5

THE MASTERS

Tiger Woods no longer dominant, and that's OK

AUGUSTA, Ga. — When Tiger Woods knocked one into the water at Amen Corner for the second day in a row, he headed off toward the Nelson Bridge while his two playing partners took a more familiar route to the 12th green over the Hogan Bridge.

In a sense, those divergent paths were the perfect analogy for where Woods is at this stage of his career.

He might add another major title to his amazing record.

Maybe even two.

But he's not catching Jack Nicklaus, and his days of dominating on the PGA Tour are done.

He's going one way. The kids are going another.

Golf, like all sports, belongs to the youth.

With an exception or two, they'll be the ones battling for the green jacket at Augusta National this weekend. Patrick Reed. Rory McIlroy. Jordan Spieth. Justin Thomas. Rickie Fowler. All members of the 20-something club.

As Stephen Colbert once joked in his previous job as a fake talk show host, "Folks, I don't trust children. They're here to replace us."

Indeed, they are.

For all the warranted excitement over Woods' remarkable comeback from back fusion surgery — and make no mistake, no one gets the patrons going like Tiger — he'll head to Saturday a daunting 13 shots behind the front-running Reed.

The largest 36-hole comeback at the Masters was Jack Burke Jr. rallying from eight shots down to beat Ken Venturi in 1956, and only because the amateur soared to an 80 on the final day.

Woods has no shot of chasing down a star-packed leaderboard that includes eight major winners among the top 14 players, not to mention the guy considered the best without a major title (Fowler) and another potential star in the making (Reed).

The average age of the top 14 players is 32 years old — a decade younger than Woods.

Six of them are under 30.

Sure, there are a few outliers in the group, including a pair of 41-year-olds, Henrik Stenson and Charley Hoffman. There will always be a place for those with experience — especially at a course such as Augusta National.

Sixty-year-old Bernhard Langer made the cut. Ditto for 58-year-old Fred Couples.

While it hasn't shown this week, the Masters will likely be Woods' best shot at winning another major champion-



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tiger Woods, left, didn't have the magical comeback at the Masters in Augusta, Georgia, this weekend for which so many had hoped. Woods won't return to the dominance he showed earlier, but that's OK.

ship, something he hasn't done since hobbling to a playoff victory at the 2008 U.S. Open.

But he even on a course that he clearly knows so well, winning four green jackets, finishing in the top 10 nine other times and never missing the cut at a professional, Woods looked largely overmatched in the first two rounds. After opening with a 73 — and boldly proclaiming that he was right in the mix of things — he struggled to a 3-over 75 Friday.

That matched the second-worst score on his Masters record. The only other time he went higher was a 76 in the opening round of the 2003 tournament.

The bravado was all gone.

"I need help. I'm not in control of my own destiny," he moaned. "I'm so far back."

Since 1900, only 18 players have won a major championship at age 42 and older. The only member of that group to win twice is Julius Boros, who was 43 when he captured the 1963 U.S.

Open and, at age 48, became the oldest major champion with his victory at the 1968 PGA Championship.

Woods has been stuck on 14 major titles for nearly a decade.

Even though his health is as good as it's been in years — and that's certainly good for the game — he is now facing a staggering array of young guns who barely remember a time when Woods was the man to beat on the PGA Tour.

They certainly aren't the least bit intimidated by him.

In Augusta, Woods played the first two rounds with 34-year-old Aussie Marc Leishman and 27-year-old Englishman Tommy Fleetwood, who is easily recognized by his thick beard and long, flowing hair.

Even with the biggest galleries on the course following them around — and pleading over and over again, "You can do it, Tiger!" — they outshot Woods both days.

They certainly saw no reason to fear Woods when he made a mess of the fifth hole, pushing his tee shot into the

trees right of the fairway and knocking his second shot into the thick brush left of the green. He struggled just to find the ball. There was no chance of getting it out.

Woods was forced to take an unplayable lie, leading to a double-bogey that pretty much left him scrambling the rest of the day.

Before the Masters even began, Woods conceded that most of his best days are behind him. There's no more talk of chasing down Nicklaus. He seems content just being able to play without pain, for however long that lasts.

"Six months ago, I didn't know if I was going to play again," Woods said. "It's incredible. I'm just so thankful to have this opportunity to be able to play golf again. Playing at a championship level, playing at a Tour level, is such a bonus. I wanted to play golf again. It's something I've done virtually my whole life. I missed it."

We missed him, too.

And if this is as good as it gets, that's good enough.

MASTERS FROM PAGE B1

Reed ran off three straight birdies around the turn, and he stretched his lead to as many as five shots with his eagles.

He made a 15-foot eagle putt on the 13th, and then he showed he was not in the mood to play it safe on the 15th. From just under 270 yards, as the rain made the air heavy, Reed hit 3-wood just over the water and short of the bunker, and his chip from 80 feet slammed against the pin and dropped. Reed pumped his fist, the kind of emotion he typically saves for the Ryder Cup.

He narrowly missed a 10-foot birdie putt at the end and was at 14-under 202.

McIlroy can only hope he didn't use up all his luck.

A chip that likely would have gone off the green at the par-5 eighth banged into the pin and dropped for eagle. He managed to find his second shot among the azaleas on the 13th to escape with par. And he got into the final group, an ideal position as he goes after the final leg of the career Grand Slam.

"There's a lot more players in this tournament than just Patrick and I," McIlroy said. "It won't be quite as intense, but we'll still be feeling it. Patrick is going for his first (major), and I'm going for ... something else."

He paused to smile when he heard a few chuckles. That "something else" is a collection of four majors that only five other players can claim.

"It's going to be good fun," McIlroy said.

Rickie Fowler made eagle on the par-5 second and was 5 under through eight holes. He cooled until the end of his round, when a pair of birdies over the last two holes gave him a 65 and left him five

shots behind. Jon Rahm of Spain also chipped in for eagle on No. 8 and saved par on the 13th after hitting into the creek in his round of 65. He was at 8-under 208.

Tiger Woods had to significantly lower his goal this week. He shot 72, was 18 shots behind and now hopes to finish the tournament under par.

So many others who started the third round with a chance didn't do nearly enough to stay even remotely close to Reed. Justin Thomas (70), Jordan Spieth (71) and Dustin Johnson (71) all are at least nine shots behind.

Reed and McIlroy are linked so indelibly to that singles match at Hazeltine in 2016 when they produced the highest quality of golf amid ear-splitting cheers, making big putts on top of the other. Reed prevailed on the 18th hole in a rare U.S. victory at the Ryder Cup.

Now it's about stroke play. Now it's about history of their own, not a trophy they share.

"All the pressure is on him," McIlroy said. "He went to Augusta State. He's got a lot of support here. I'm hoping to come in and spoil the party."

McIlroy has plenty on him, too.

The Masters is where he threw away a four-shot lead in the final round, and now it's the missing piece of a career slam.

"Hopefully, all I did learn seven years ago, I can put into practice," McIlroy said. "I've been waiting for this chance."

Reed doesn't have a major. He doesn't have experience of a big stage, a big crowd and enormous pressure. That came from Hazeltine and a match described as "one of



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rory McIlroy looks for his ball in the azaleas on the 13th hole during the third round of the Masters on Saturday in Augusta, Georgia. McIlroy managed a par on the hole and is just three shots behind leader Patrick Reed entering today's final round.

MASTERS SCORES

SATURDAY
At Augusta National Golf Club
Augusta, Ga.
Purse: TBA (\$11 million in 2017)
Yardage: 7,435; Par 72
Third Round
a-denotes amateur

Patrick Reed 69-66-67—202
Rory McIlroy 69-71-65—205
Rickie Fowler 70-72-65—207
Jon Rahm 75-68-65—208
Henrik Stenson 69-70-70—209
Tommy Fleetwood 72-72-66—210
Bubba Watson 73-69-68—210
Marc Leishman 70-67-73—210
Jordan Thomas 74-67-70—211
Justin Spieth 66-74-71—211
Dustin Johnson 73-68-71—212
Cameron Smith 71-72-70—213
Justin Rose 72-70-71—213
Louis Oosthuizen 71-71-71—213
Jason Day 75-71-69—215
Jimmy Walker 73-71-71—215
Bernard Wiesberger 70-73-72—215
Matt Kuchar 68-75-72—215
Charley Hoffman 69-73-73—215
Tony Finau 68-74-73—215
Matthew Fitzpatrick 75-74-67—216
Si Woo Kim 75-73-68—216

Kevin Kisner 72-75-69—216
Francesco Molinari 72-74-70—216
Satoshi Kodaira 71-74-71—216
Russell Henley 73-72-71—216
Adam Hadwin 69-75-72—216
Hideki Matsuyama 73-71-72—216
Haotong Li 69-76-72—217
Paul Casey 74-75-69—218
Adam Scott 75-73-70—218
Daniel Berger 73-74-71—218
Ryan Moore 74-72-72—218
Jhonattan Vegas 77-69-72—218
Zach Johnson 70-74-74—218
Webb Simpson 76-73-70—219
Bernhard Langer 74-74-71—219
Fred Couples 72-74-73—219
Rafa Cabrera Bello 69-76-74—219
Tiger Woods 73-75-72—220
Bryson DeChambeau 74-74-72—220
Branden Grace 73-73-74—220
Kiradech Aphibarnrat 79-70-72—221
Xander Schauffele 71-78-72—221
Martin Kaymer 74-73-74—221
Kyle Stanley 72-74-75—221
Tyrrell Hatton 74-75-73—222
a-Doug Ghim 72-76-74—222
Chez Reavie 76-71-75—222
Phil Mickelson 70-79-74—223
Ian Poulter 74-75-74—223
Brian Harman 73-74-76—223
Vijay Singh 71-74-79—224

the best we ever played."

"The biggest thing I can pull from it is going head-to-head with Rory and I was able to put together a good round," he said.

But he shrugged off any other comparisons, starting with the decorum outside the ropes at Augusta National compared with a flag-waving crowd at the Ryder Cup.

Reed also doesn't buy into the idea that the pressure is all on him.

"I am leading," he said. "At the same time, he's going for the career Grand Slam."

PRO BASKETBALL



Toronto guard Kyle Lowry (7) has helped the Raptors earn the No. 1 seed in the Eastern Conference heading into the NBA playoffs.

Toronto tops in East, but road likely goes through LeBron

BY TIM REYNOLDS
The Associated Press

MIAMI — It only looks like parity. Consider it an April tradition: A new postseason, a new No. 1 seed in the Eastern Conference. This time, it's Toronto doing the honors — the Raptors' win over Indiana on Friday makes them the seventh different club in the past seven years to get the top line on the East bracket, following Chicago, Miami, Indiana, Atlanta, Cleveland and Boston. It's an unprecedented run of top-seed diversity for the NBA, at least since the league started seeding by conference in 1973.

Of course, those top seeds usually find out that finishing ahead of LeBron James in April is much easier than ousting him in May. "Listen, it doesn't matter to me if I'm a 6 seed, or a 3 seed, or a 2 seed, or an 8 seed," James said. "If I come into your building for a Game 1, it will be very challenging." So make no mistake, the East still goes through James. He is trying to reach the NBA Finals for the eighth consecutive season. James' teams are 24-2 in East series as the higher seed, 6-2 in East series as the lower seed. And while the Raptors will be the favorites, there will be a certain amount of skepticism until someone knocks James off his perch atop the conference. "What he does in a playoff series is very unique," Atlanta coach Mike Budenholzer said. It's been almost predetermined for the past few years,

regardless of who's seeded where, that James' team would be the one winning the East. But this year, it might not be so simple. "You've got to go through whoever it is anyway," Cavaliers coach Tyronn Lue said. The Raptors are enjoying their best season in history, with a franchise-record 57 wins and counting and now knowing that the road for anyone to win the Eastern Conference title will go through Canada. But while the Raptors haven't exactly been sprinting across the finish line there have been some teams hitting their best stride, namely Cleveland and Philadelphia. And when the East bracket is set, the Raptors know plenty of pundits won't be penciling them in for a trip to the NBA Finals, even with the knowledge that Kyrie Irving — who has had some incredible playoff moments with James and Cleveland in recent years — won't be playing for Boston in these playoffs because of knee surgery. "We really just have to maintain focus on ourselves and not worry about who says this, that, what happens," Toronto guard Kyle Lowry said. "All we can do is focus on our team, our organization and the things that we do. We don't really care to be talked about. We just go out there and have to prove what we need to prove." Thing is, in the East this year and with all due respect to the way James has been playing of late — so well, he has said he would vote for himself as the league MVP — it's hard to envision any team

being fearful of any other. With the exception of Milwaukee, which was swept 3-0 by Miami, every team in the East has beaten every other playoff team in their conference at least once during this regular season. The Cavaliers are 15-10 against the other East playoff-bound clubs; the Bucks are 9-16 and the 76ers are 10-16 against the other East qualifiers. Everyone else falls somewhere in the middle. "Eastern Conference basketball," Miami coach Erik Spoelstra said, "it's the height of competition." The West seems much easier to forecast. Houston has separated itself from everyone, and Golden State — which has been decimated by injuries, but is hopeful of having Stephen Curry back by the second round — is probably still going to be thought of by many as no worse than a co-favorite to reach the NBA Finals for the fourth consecutive time. The East probably has more teams capable of reaching The Finals. But beating James four times is not going to be easy for any of them, regardless of home-court advantage. "Toronto's having a heck of a year, (so is) Boston and everything they're doing with a lot of injuries themselves, and I think some of the teams in the middle and back of the pack are interesting," Budenholzer said. "But until somebody beats whatever team LeBron's playing for, it always feels like the team that he's playing for is the team to beat in the East."

PRO BASKETBALL

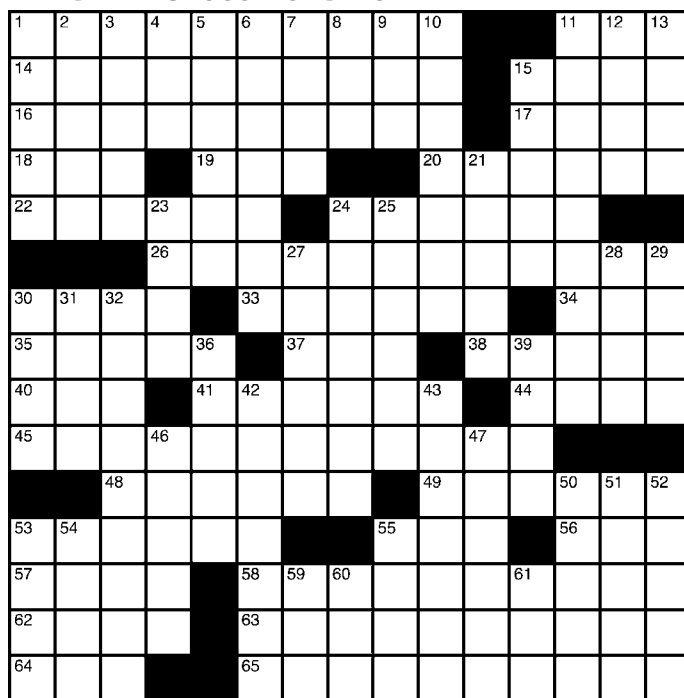
Nuggets eliminate Clippers in 134-115 rout

LOS ANGELES (AP) — After four games with their defense leading the way, the Denver Nuggets turned to their offense Saturday and regained control of their playoff destiny. The Nuggets made 10 of their first 12 shots and they ran off to a 134-115 victory over the Los Angeles Clippers on Saturday. They will reach the postseason if they win their last two games. "At this time of the year, it's all about finding a way to get wins," Nuggets coach Mike Malone said. "We're playing 'Get-It-Done' basketball. We're getting it done. Going into tonight, we'd been playing good defense. We controlled the game, won all four quarters, another big step in the right direction." Will Barton scored 31 points and Nikola Jokic added 23 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists as the Nuggets posted their fifth straight win to pull into a tie with the Minnesota Timberwolves for eighth place in the Western Conference with two games to play. Both teams are 45-35. The Nuggets finish the regular season at home against Portland on Monday night. "I think overall — offensively, defensively, controlling our turnovers, I think we're playing overall our best basketball," Paul Millsap said. "Not our best offense we've played all year, not necessarily our best defense, but to be a good team you have to have balance." It all sets up for the Nuggets' season-ending game against the Timberwolves in Minneapolis on Wednesday night. Minnesota, which

holds the tiebreaker over the Nuggets, hosts Memphis on Monday night. "Our guys have really taken that to heart," Malone said. "There's a belief in that locker room, a lot of positivity. I think we're all in, 100 percent, believing in each other." Meanwhile, the injury-riddled Clippers were eliminated from the playoff race. The Clippers suffered their fourth loss in five games, falling to 42-38, 2½ games out of eighth place with two to play. The elimination ends a run of six consecutive postseason appearances for the Clippers, who previously missed the playoffs in 2010-11. "I don't think I have been more proud of a group, maybe ever, than I have been of this group," said Clippers coach Doc Rivers, who has been forced by injuries to field 35 starting lineups. "We have asked a lot of guys to do a lot of stuff they should not have had to do and yet they did it." On Saturday, the Clippers simply could not keep up with the Nuggets as they had 36 assists on 53 field goals. "The stat that jumps out at me was the fact that we had 36 assists, and eight turnovers," Malone said. "We actually had more assists than rebounds. I've never seen that before." Jamal Murray added 19 points and Wilson Chandler 13 for the Nuggets, who shot their second-best shooting percent (62.4) of the season. "When the ball is moving around like it was tonight, and you're able to shoot 62 percent, guys definitely made shots, but we passed up good shots to get great shots," Malone said.

SATURDAY PUZZLES

THE DAILY CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Claire Muscat 4/7/18

ACROSS

1 Where thoughts can be organized
11 ___ punk: No Doubt genre
14 Not go off-script
15 Zero-star fare
16 They're hidden annually
17 Holds up
18 Got into a pickle?
19 Xi preceders
20 Kind of baseball league for pre-Little Leaguers
22 Duplicates
24 Dogs follow them
26 Ruled by thieves
30 Like some restaurant boxes
33 Crispy triangle
34 One of two possible Passover mos.
35 Indignant reply
37 "It's Raining ___": The Weather Girls hit
38 Sip
40 Charge
41 Lost control in a big way

44 Throw below deck, say
45 Bollo ties or bell-bottoms
48 "Camptown Races" refrain syllables
49 Brick partner
53 Graduates
55 One using bugs
56 Media co. based in D.C. and Fla.
57 Best Actress between Jennifer and Julianne
58 Targets
62 Building blocks for tots
63 They take forever
64 Kinda equivalent
65 "Quit it with the attitude!"

DOWN

1 Begin to fast?
2 Raccoon kin
3 Start over
4 Grisham hero, often: Abbr.
5 Carbolic acid
6 Read carefully
7 They may be blonde or red
8 Glutton
9 University dept.
10 Franklin spelled it out

11 What you might get on a day off
12 Laker great, familiarly
13 Arcing recess
15 Former Fox News anchor
Van Susteren
21 2001 scandal subject
23 Ring stats
24 Extend
25 Expression maker
27 College in Claremont, California
28 ___ jure: by the law itself
29 Word with neck or cut
30 Row
31 Ancient performance halls
32 Shares expenses, in a way
36 Star-studded hunter
39 Intervention target
42 Like much table salt
43 Depresses
46 Development units
47 Lawn grass genus
50 Arab Spring city
51 "___ begins in delight and ends in wisdom": Frost
52 Certain cycle
53 Antioxidant-rich berry
54 Chocolates, e.g.
55 Kind
59 WWII arena
60 Han and
Leia's son
61 "___ a date!"

Previous Puzzle Solved

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

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

By David L Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

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

CIWEN
SIRKB
CTANAV
PEDANX

Check out the new, free JUST JUMBLE app
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TO DREAM ABOUT SURFING, THE SURFER NEEDED ---

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

Yesterday's Jumbles: TANGY ENACT RARITY OCCUPY
Answer: When the kitten scratched her arm, she suffered — "A-CUTE" PAIN

SUDOKU

PREVIOUS SOLUTION

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

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

THE ANSWERS TO THESE PUZZLES CAN BE FOUND ON TODAY'S DAILY PLANNER PAGE.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ALL-CONFERENCE

The Sumter Middle School Conference named its all-conference girls basketball team. Members of the team are first row, left to right: Quanayzha Pearson, Dajnav VanBuren, Kalayah White, Antiyona Roach and Avianna Johnson of Chestnut Oaks and Stevy Sinkler, Kewantha Stearns and Amaya Coleman of Alice Drive. Second row: India Dowling-Green, Ma'Leah McCormick, Trinity Smalls and Iasha Graham of Furman and Shataisya Lammie, Alyssa Johnson and Alicia Spann of Bates. Third row: Staclyn Bell and Quawnteona Billups of Manning, Jaunayasha McCracy and Nia English of Ebenezer, Sabrina Scarborough and April Goodman of Mayewood and Destyni Crim and Amoni Washington of Hillcrest.



The Sumter Middle School Conference named its all-conference boys basketball team. Members of the team are first row, left to right: Nakeem Isaac, Joseph Durant, Ryan McCants and Malik McKinzie of Alice Drive and Zayvin Wells, Kori Green, Khalil Peoples and Raequan Baker of Chestnut Oaks. Second row: Quinton Harrison, Joshua Mack and Derrick Prince of Mayewood, K'Shawn Boyd and Zyeir Gamble of Bates and Leslie Owens and Brent Staley of Hillcrest. Third row: Maki Williams and Andre Myers of Ebenezer, Nizhajuan McFadden, Justin Daniels and Gerkedz Sharpe of Manning and Jahquel Cheverez and Jamond Lewis of Furman.



PHOTOS BY DENNIS BRUNSON / THE SUMTER ITEM



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kurt Busch comes out of Turn 4 during a practice session on Saturday for the O'Reilly Auto Parts 500 set for today in Fort Worth, Texas. Busch is the pole sitter.

RACE FROM PAGE B1

All four Stewart-Haas cars are in the top 11 in season points through the first six races. Harvick is seventh, followed by Bowyer at eighth, Busch 10th and Almirola 11th.

Hendrick Motorsports also has all four of its drivers in the top 20. But Alex Bowman, Jimmie Johnson, Chase Elliott and William Byron are all below the Stewart-Haas drivers in the standings.

Busch is the first three-time Cup pole sitter in Texas, where he and Harvick will make their track-record 31st starts. TMS, which opened in 1997, is hosting its 35th race. Both have one win there.

When asked why Stewart-Haas is having so much success this season, Busch was admittedly biased in his assessment. Tony Gibson, his former crew chief including for the 2017 Daytona 500 win, is now off the road in what the driver calls "a perfect role" for Gibson, who is involved in building the cars for all four teams.

"If you go ask him now, he will say it is all about the people and process around him," Busch said. "But he has found some good people, rearranged them into different positions and I think that our team is doing a really good job of creating continuity between the four cars."

Harvick won at Texas last November, and this season has won the only two races on 1½-mile tracks, at Atlanta and Las Vegas, during his three-race winning streak.

This is only Stewart-Haas Racing's second season with Ford, after the team switched from Chevrolet.

"When you see what Stewart-Haas Racing has done with Ford, we still haven't reached the potential of where we can be," Harvick said. "We have, in my opinion, the most stable team in the garage. When you have the most stable team in the garage

O'REILLY AUTO PARTS 500 LINEUP

Friday's qualifying; race Sunday
At Texas Motor Speedway
Fort Worth, Texas
(Car number in parentheses)

- 1. (41) Kurt Busch, Ford, 197.368 mph
- 2. (4) Kevin Harvick, Ford, 197.116
- 3. (14) Clint Bowyer, Ford, 196.829
- 4. (12) Ryan Blaney, Ford, 196.600
- 5. (11) Denny Hamlin, Toyota, 196.257
- 6. (78) Martin Truex Jr., Toyota, 195.979
- 7. (22) Joey Logano, Ford, 195.922
- 8. (18) Kyle Busch, Toyota, 195.773
- 9. (48) Jimmie Johnson, Chevrolet, 195.603
- 10. (42) Kyle Larson, Chevrolet, 195.030
- 11. (2) Brad Keselowski, Ford, 195.023
- 12. (10) Aric Almirola, Ford, 194.995
- 13. (6) Trevor Bayne, Ford, 194.840
- 14. (19) Daniel Suarez, Toyota, 194.812
- 15. (43) Darrell Wallace Jr., Chevrolet, 194.763
- 16. (88) Alex Bowman, Chevrolet, 194.742
- 17. (3) Austin Dillon, Chevrolet, 194.546
- 18. (37) Chris Buescher, Chevrolet, 194.539
- 19. (21) Paul Menard, Ford, 194.426
- 20. (9) Chase Elliott, Chevrolet, 194.321
- 21. (20) Erik Jones, Toyota, 194.175
- 22. (47) AJ Allmendinger, Chevrolet, 193.952
- 23. (13) Ty Dillon, Chevrolet, 193.819
- 24. (1) Jamie McMurray, Chevrolet, 193.736
- 25. (31) Ryan Newman, Chevrolet, 193.514
- 26. (17) Ricky Stenhouse Jr., Ford, 193.458
- 27. (34) Michael McDowell, Ford, 193.417
- 28. (95) Kasey Kahne, Chevrolet, 192.651
- 29. (38) David Ragan, Ford, 192.294
- 30. (32) Matt DiBenedetto, Ford, 191.598
- 31. (15) Ross Chastain, Chevrolet, 190.644
- 32. (23) Gray Gaulding, Toyota, 189.016
- 33. (24) William Byron, Chevrolet, 188.193
- 34. (72) Cole Whitt, Chevrolet, 186.445
- 35. (00) Landon Cassill, Chevrolet, 178.359
- 36. (51) Harrison Rhodes, Chevrolet, 164.991
- 37. (55) Reed Sorenson, Chevrolet, 0.000

from a financial standpoint and manufacturer standpoint, that attracts good people. ... We are the drivers lucky enough to be in a position of where Stewart-Haas racing is right now. We have a very solid foundation."

Three-time Cup champion Tony Stewart was still driving with Joe Gibbs Racing in 2008 when he announced he would join forces with Cup owner Gene Haas to form Stewart-Haas Racing. The team made its debut in 2009 and is in its 10th season, marking 1,000 starts in the top series when all four drivers take the green flag in Texas.

for the third time in four years, averaging 11.8 rebounds. He also averaged 13.6 points.

— Villanova's Mikal Bridges received the Julius Erving small forward of the year for a season that saw him average 17.7 points and shoot 51 percent from the field.

— Deandre Ayton of Arizona accepted the Karl Malone power forward of the year award from the Hall of Famer. He was the Pac-12 player of the year and led the league in rebounding. The 7-foot-1 freshman had 24 double-doubles, the most in school history.

PREP SCHEDULE

MONDAY

- Varsity Baseball**
Brookland-Cayce at Lakewood, 6:30 p.m.
Lamar at East Clarendon, 6 p.m.
Wilson Hall at Camden, 6:30 p.m.
- Varsity and JV Baseball**
Trinity-Byrnes at Robert E. Lee, 4 p.m.
Sumter Christian at South Pointe Christian, 4 p.m.
- Junior Varsity Baseball**
Hartsville at Crestwood, 6 p.m.
Lakewood at Darlington, 6 p.m.
Manning at Timberland, 6:30 p.m.
- Junior Varsity Boys Golf**
Camden at Sumter (at Beech Creek Golf Club), 4:30 p.m.
- Varsity Softball**
Conway at Sumter, 6:30 p.m.
Sumter Christian at South Pointe Christian, 4 p.m.
- Varsity and JV Softball**
Lakewood at Manning, 5:30 p.m.
- Varsity Boys Tennis**
Sumter at Manning, 5 p.m.
Manning at Berkeley, 5 p.m.
- Middle School Track and Field**
Ebenezer, Furman, Hillcrest at Chestnut Oaks, TBA
Alice Drive, Bates, Mayewood (at Crestwood High), TBA

Wilson Hall, Laurence Manning at Porter-Gaud, 3:45 p.m.

THURSDAY

- Varsity Baseball**
River Bluff at Sumter, 6:30 p.m.
Robert E. Lee at Northside Christian, 6:30 p.m.
- Varsity and B Team Baseball**
Heathwood Hall at Laurence Manning, 4:30 p.m.
- Junior Varsity Baseball**
Crestwood at Hartsville, 6 p.m.
Darlington at Lakewood, 6 p.m.
Timberland at Manning, 6:30 p.m.
- Varsity Boys Golf**
Manning at Orangeburg-Wilkinson, 4:30 p.m.
Wilson Hall at Pinewood Prep, 4 p.m.
- Junior Varsity Boys Golf**
East Clarendon Varsity at Sumter (at Beech Creek Golf Club, 4:30 p.m.
- Varsity Boys Soccer**
Manning at Bishop England, 7:30 p.m.
- Varsity and JV Boys Soccer**
Lugoff-Elgin at Lakewood, 5:30 p.m.
- Varsity Girls Soccer**
Crestwood at Governor's School of Science & Math, 6 p.m.
- Varsity Softball**
Pee Dee at Laurence Manning, 4:30 p.m.
- Varsity and JV Softball**
Sumter at Lakewood, 5:30 p.m.
Wilson Hall at Northwood, 4:30 p.m.
- Junior Varsity Softball**
East Clarendon at Latta, 5:30 p.m.
Laurence Manning at Andrews, 5 p.m.
- Varsity Boys Tennis**
Berkeley at Manning, 5 p.m.
- Varsity Track and Field**
Lee Central at Marion, 5 p.m.
- Middle School Track and Field**
Thomas Sumter, Robert E. Lee at Wilson Hall, 3:45 p.m.

TUESDAY

- Varsity Baseball**
West Florence at Sumter, 6:30 p.m.
Crestwood at Hartsville, 6:30 p.m.
Darlington at Lakewood, 6:30 p.m.
Timberland at Manning, 6:30 p.m.
Lake View at East Clarendon, 6 p.m.
- Varsity and JV Baseball**
Orangeburg Prep at Wilson Hall, 4 p.m.
Florence Christian at Laurence Manning, 4 p.m.
- Junior Varsity Baseball**
East Clarendon at Green Sea-Floyds, 5:30 p.m.
- B Team Baseball**
Wilson Hall at Hammond, 4:30 p.m.
Robert E. Lee at Pee Dee, 6 p.m.
- Varsity Boys Golf**
East Clarendon, Brookland-Cayce at Manning (at Wyboo Golf Club), 4:30 p.m.
Wilson Hall, Laurence Manning, Florence Christian, Orangeburg Prep in SCISA Region II-3A Match (at Wyboo Golf Club), 3:30 p.m.
- Varsity Boys Soccer**
Darlington at Lakewood, 7:30 p.m.
Laurence Manning at Wilson Hall, 6 p.m.
Calhoun Academy at Thomas Sumter, 6 p.m.
- Varsity and JV Boys Soccer**
Carolina Forest at Sumter, 6 p.m.
- Varsity Girls Soccer**
Darlington at Lakewood, 6 p.m.
- Varsity and JV Girls Soccer**
Sumter at Carolina Forest, 6 p.m.
- Varsity Softball**
Lake View at East Clarendon, 5:30 p.m.
Wilson Hall at Florence Christian, 4:30 p.m.
Maranatha Christian at Sumter Christian, 4 p.m.

- Varsity and B Team Baseball**
Williamsburg at Thomas Sumter, 4 p.m.
- B Team Baseball**
Robert E. Lee at Wilson Hall, 4 p.m.
- Varsity Boys Soccer**
Hartsville at Crestwood, 7:30 p.m.
Thomas Sumter at Northwood, 6 p.m.
- Varsity and JV Boys Soccer**
Sumter at West Florence, 6 p.m.
Pinewood Prep at Wilson Hall, 5 p.m.
- Varsity Girls Soccer**
Hartsville at Crestwood, 6 p.m.
Lakewood at The King's Academy, 6 p.m.
- Varsity and JV Girls Soccer**
West Florence at Sumter, 6 p.m.
- Varsity Softball**
Green Sea-Floyds at East Clarendon, 5:30 p.m.
Thomas Sumter at Williamsburg, 6 p.m.
- Varsity and JV Softball**
Crestwood at Hartsville, 5:30 p.m.
Lakewood at Lugoff-Elgin, 5:30 p.m.
Manning at Timberland, 5:30 p.m.
- Varsity Boys Tennis**
Sumter at West Florence, 5 p.m.
- Varsity Track and Field**
Lakewood in Bojangles Classic (at Spring Valley High in Columbia), 10 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

- Varsity and JV Baseball**
North Central at Crestwood, 5 p.m.
- Junior Varsity Baseball**
Lugoff-Elgin at Sumter, 6 p.m.
Lakewood at Manning, 6 p.m.
East Clarendon at Lamar, 5:30 p.m.
Wilson Hall at Camden Military, 4:30 p.m.
- B Team Baseball**
Pee Dee at Thomas Sumter, 5:30 p.m.
- Varsity Boys Golf**
Wilson Hall in Home Match (at Sunset Country Club), 4 p.m.
- Varsity Girls Soccer**
Lakewood at South Florence, 6 p.m.
- Junior Varsity Boys Soccer**
Wilson Hall at Hartsville Middle, 6 p.m.
- Varsity Softball**
C.A. Johnson at Lee Central, 6 p.m.
- Varsity and JV Softball**
Sumter at Crestwood, 5:30 p.m.
Robert E. Lee at Wilson Hall, 3:45 p.m.
- Varsity Track and Field**
East Clarendon at Manning, 5 p.m.

FRIDAY

- Varsity Baseball**
Conway at Sumter, 6:30 p.m.
Hartsville at Crestwood, 6:30 p.m.
Lakewood at Darlington, 6:30 p.m.
Manning at Timberland, 6:30 p.m.
Lee Central at Cheraw, 6 p.m.
Green Sea-Floyds at East Clarendon, 5:30 p.m.
Carolina Academy at Robert E. Lee, 6:30 p.m.
Sumter Christian at Step of Faith Christian, 5:30 p.m.
- Varsity and B Team Baseball**
Williamsburg at Thomas Sumter, 4 p.m.
- B Team Baseball**
Robert E. Lee at Wilson Hall, 4 p.m.
- Varsity Boys Soccer**
Hartsville at Crestwood, 7:30 p.m.
Thomas Sumter at Northwood, 6 p.m.
- Varsity and JV Boys Soccer**
Sumter at West Florence, 6 p.m.
Pinewood Prep at Wilson Hall, 5 p.m.
- Varsity Girls Soccer**
Hartsville at Crestwood, 6 p.m.
Lakewood at The King's Academy, 6 p.m.
- Varsity and JV Girls Soccer**
West Florence at Sumter, 6 p.m.
- Varsity Softball**
Green Sea-Floyds at East Clarendon, 5:30 p.m.
Thomas Sumter at Williamsburg, 6 p.m.
- Varsity and JV Softball**
Crestwood at Hartsville, 5:30 p.m.
Lakewood at Lugoff-Elgin, 5:30 p.m.
Manning at Timberland, 5:30 p.m.
- Varsity Boys Tennis**
Sumter at West Florence, 5 p.m.
- Varsity Track and Field**
Lakewood in Bojangles Classic (at Spring Valley High in Columbia), 10 a.m.

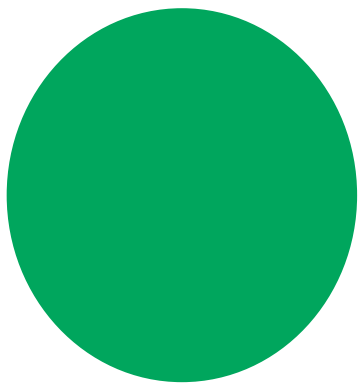
SATURDAY

- Varsity and JV Equestrian**
Wilson Hall in SCISA Equestrian Competition (at Tally Ho Equestrian Center in Timmonsville), TBA
- Varsity and JV Sporting Clays**
Wilson Hall in SCYSF Event (at Back Woods Quail Club in Georgetown), TBA
- Varsity Track and Field**
Sumter, Thomas Sumter in Gamecock Invitational, 9 a.m.
Wilson Hall at Heathwood Hall, TBA
- Middle School Track and Field**
Sumter Middle School Conference Championship Meet (at Lakewood High), 10 a.m.
- SUNDAY**
- Varsity and JV Equestrian**
Wilson Hall in SCISA Hunt Seat Equestrian State Championship (at Tally Ho Equestrian Center in Timmonsville), TBA

AWARDS FROM PAGE B1

Villanova's Jay Wright received the John R. Wooden Legends of Coaching honor.

Other winners were:
— Purdue's Carsen Edwards won the Jerry West shooting guard of the year for his team-leading 18.5-point average to go with 3.9 rebounds and 2.9 assists. West presented his namesake trophy.
— Angel Delgado of Seton Hall received the Kareem Abdul-Jabbar center of the year. He was the Big East's top rebounder



USA TODAY PERSONAL FINANCE

LIFE AFTER BANKRUPTCY



A new **Lending Tree study on bankruptcy** found:

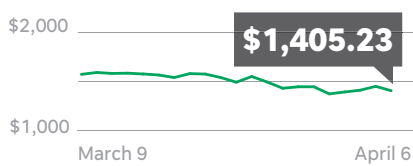
- 43% with a bankruptcy on their credit file have a credit score of 640 or higher within a year of filing. Within two years of bankruptcy it jumps to 65%.
- A \$15,000 auto loan incurs an extra \$2,171 in borrowing costs less than a year after bankruptcy but just \$799 for those who wait at least two years.

ON THE MOVE

Stock stories of the week

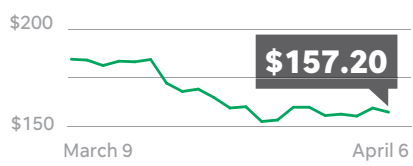
AMAZON

amazon President Trump has been criticizing the e-commerce company over the past several days on everything from the Postal Service to taxes and retailing.



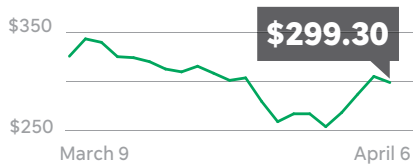
FACEBOOK

facebook The social media network said data from most of its 2 billion users could have been accessed improperly. The company removed its personal contact search tool.



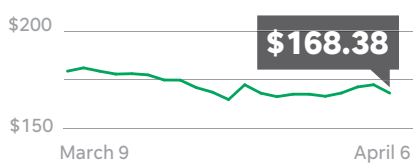
TESLA

TESLA The electric-car company made 2,020 Model 3 sedans a week vs. a forecast of 2,500 in the first quarter. It remains confident of making 5,000 a week next quarter.



APPLE

apple The iPhone maker hired Google's artificial intelligence executive to help catch rivals such as Amazon, Google and Microsoft in the AI race.



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USA SNAPSHOTS®



SOURCE: MassMutual "You Get What You Give" study of 10,000 adults
JAE YANG, JANET LOEHRKE/USA TODAY



DARWEL GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Premium or 'Top Tier' gas? When you should upgrade

Philip Reed
NerdWallet

Premium and Top Tier gas sound good, but what's really best for your car — and your budget?

In some cases, these types of fuel are indeed better for your car — but for different reasons. Premium gas, as opposed to regular, is a higher grade of fuel. It's meant for high-performance vehicles and can cost as much as 50 cents more a gallon. Gas that meets Top Tier standards, on the other hand, has higher levels of engine-cleaning additives. It costs about three cents more per gallon, according to AAA.

So, when is an upgrade worth it? **Premium gas:** The decision is simple, says Michael Calkins, AAA's manager of technical services. When to use it comes down to two words: required or recommended.

Required: If your car's owner's manual (or inside of the gas door) says premium gas is required, then you have to use premium to avoid damaging your engine.

Recommended: When your owner's manual (or inside of the gas door) recommends premium, you can still run your car on a lower-grade fuel. For cars that merely recommend it, premium gasoline may very slightly improve performance (increased horsepower) and fuel economy, according to a November

2017 study from AAA.

Bottom line: If your car doesn't require premium, don't bother.

Top Tier gas: When it comes to Top Tier gas, Calkins says the benefit is worth the slightly higher price. Top Tier gas, which applies to all grades of fuel, is recommended by AAA because it prevents carbon buildup in your engine. This buildup can reduce fuel economy and cause rough idling, acceleration hesitation or engine knock. Fuel must meet a set of standards to use the Top Tier label. Oil companies essentially create their own blends of gas by mixing in detergents and additives to improve the quality of the bulk fuel they get from refineries. The additive package in Top Tier gas is more effective than the minimum standards for additives required by the government.

Top Tier gasoline, introduced in 2004, was designed to surpass these minimum standards "to better protect increasingly sophisticated engines from carbon buildup and deposits on the intake valves," according to *Consumer Reports*.

Calkins adds that if you've been using non-Top Tier fuel and have carbon buildup, switching to Top Tier gas will clean those deposits out of your engine. You can find retailers carrying Top Tier gas on the Top Tier program's website, or you can check for a sign at the pump.

3 ways to deal with a career setback

It's critical to take an honest look at yourself

Daniel B. Kline
The Motley Fool

Earlier in my career, I had a boss who promised me a big promotion. He assured me that he could make it happen and that, while processing would take a few weeks, the job was mine.

That turned out not to be true for a variety of reasons. A few weeks later, not only was I not promoted, he no longer was with the company.

It was a bitter blow that left me upset, doubting my future with the company I then worked at and not sure what to do next. My immediate response was less than helpful. I still performed well at work but was generally sullen and withdrawn.

I had no interest in proving myself again to a new boss who seemed a whole lot less enamored with me than my previous one was. It was a rough time, but one that, in retrospect, I could have handled better.

Here's a look at what you should do after a career setback.



Don't let a work setback define you. GETTY IMAGES

1. Don't get hung up on it

It's reasonable to be upset. In my case, I had lost a significant raise, better benefits and a major jump in prestige. Being angry or sad made sense, but letting it take me out of the fight did not. The correct response would have been to vent my anger in private and get back to it at work.

2. Do an honest evaluation

Sometimes not getting a promotion or being passed over in some other way hurts, but it's not a statement on your future with the company. In my case, my association with the previous boss marked me to some of the people who had decided on his removal. Once I came out of my funk, I was able to honestly say that my chances of being considered for a promotion where I worked were non-existent.

3. Execute a plan

In my case, my plan involved aggressively trying to leave the team I was on, whether it was for another job at that very large company or to go elsewhere. For many people, a career setback can be a lesson — an opportunity to make some changes in order to not have the same disappointment happen again. If appropriate, talk to your boss about why you were passed over. Make a plan to improve and to be ready for the next opportunity.

MARKET ROUNDUP

Dow Jones industrial average ▼0.7% week ▼3.5% month ▼5.4% 3 months	S&P 500 ▼1.4% week ▼4.5% month ▼5.1% 3 months	Nasdaq composite index ▼2.1% week ▼6.5% month ▼3.1% 3 months	Wilshire 5000 ▼1.3% week ▼4.4% month ▼4.9% 3 months	Gold Ounce, Comex ▲0.7% week ▲0.3% month ▲0.7% 3 months	Oil Light sweet crude ▼4.4% week ▲1.5% month ▲1.0% 3 months	Euro Dollars per euro ▼0.0021 week ▼0.0118 month ▲0.0235 3 months	Yen Yen per dollar ▲0.35 week ▲0.78 month ▼6.29 3 months
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PERSONAL FINANCE

Do the math before enrolling in Social Security



ISTOCK IMAGE

Dear Pete: What are your thoughts on taking Social Security once you retire but before reaching full retirement age? ■ For me, full retirement age is 66 years and 2 months. My position will be eliminated when I am 65 and 4 months, so there is a 10-month shortfall. ■ Would you recommend my taking Social Security early or should I use my 401(k) and/or my after-tax investments to cover the 10 months when there will be no income? I plan to no longer work after retirement due to health concerns.

— Larry

**Pete the Planner**Peter Dunn
USA TODAY

Dear Larry: Congrats on the impending retirement, Larry. I bet you feel like your years in the workforce flew by.

You've clearly done your research. Those folks born between 1943 and 1954 are able to retire with full Social Security retirement benefits starting at age 66. And for every year after 1954, those filing simply add two months to age 66 to determine their full retirement age until the year 1960 when full retirement age tops out at 67. Since you told me your full retirement age is 66 and 2 months, then I know you were born in 1955.

You're right that, if you choose to take your Social Security retirement benefits early, you will permanently reduce your benefits under the current rules. If you took the benefit at age 62, your benefits would be permanently reduced by about 25%.

But you're not looking at taking income at 62, you just want your income 10 months early. In that case, I've got good news and bad news. The good news is there's a calculation for that. The bad news is that the calculation isn't the easiest math. The percentage reduction is five-ninths of 1% per month for the first 36 months and five-twelfths of 1% for each additional month.

If you were to take the benefit 10 months early, your benefit would be reduced by a total of 5.56% based on the reduction formula. Therefore, if your benefit at full retirement age is \$1,800 per month, taking the benefit 10 months early would reduce your benefit permanently by \$100.08 per month.

Now that you know what's at stake, it's time to figure out how you're going to make this work for you. If you need income during those 10 months (which it sounds like you do) and you don't want to take the reduced benefit, then you will be forced to find \$18,000 until you reach 66 and 2 months.

That is, of course, if you truly need \$1,800 per month to survive. Frankly, it behooves you to find a way to withdraw less during this time frame. Going by the latest guidelines on retirement with-

drawals, you should have approximately \$540,000 in retirement assets, which would then allow you to draw down only 4% (a debatably safe rate of withdrawal during retirement) of those assets during this 10-month period.

If your health concerns are severe enough in nature that you fear your retirement will be a short one, then you might consider taking the early benefit and preserving your personal assets for your heirs. The longer you think you will live, the better off you will be waiting to take Social Security. It's much easier to take \$100.08 per month out of their future inheritance each month than it is to take \$1,800 per month for 10 months at the very beginning of your retirement.

If your health concerns are severe enough in nature that you fear your retirement will be a short one, then you might consider taking the early benefit and preserving your personal assets for your heirs.

Think of it this way: Taking the benefit when your job is eliminated means you will only need to supplement your income with your assets for about \$1,200 a year.

There are several different opinions about when to take Social Security benefits. I don't particularly believe in Social Security rules of thumb because everyone's situation is different. Your decision on when to take your benefit should be based on a few different factors: your health, your spouse's health, your income sources and your asset levels.

Based on the information you provided, my opinion is you should take your Social Security benefits early, as opposed to liquidating your retirement assets for 10 months. Again, ask five other financial people their opinions, and you will likely get five different opinions.

Peter Dunn is an author, speaker and radio host, and he has a free podcast: "Million Dollar Plan." Email him at Ask-Pete@petetheplanner.com.

The views and opinions expressed in this column are the author's and do not necessarily reflect those of USA TODAY.

DIGITAL DOLLARS

Lots of apps are soaking up your personal information

Rob Pegoraro
Special to USA TODAY

If you've deleted old apps in your Facebook account, don't forget other apps on your smartphone that soak up too much personal information.

Those programs can raise some of the same privacy risks as Facebook apps if they ask for data that they don't need to do their jobs — especially if you accepted that request long ago and haven't checked the app's settings since.

Remember, any information an app collects doesn't necessarily stay within the app.

The Android version of Facebook Messenger, for example, requests your phone's calendar, contacts, phone and SMS. Letting older versions of Facebook Messenger sync your contacts led that app to upload your text-messaging and calling history to the site.

That logging no longer happens, but the Android messenger app remains thirsty for your data — and the Facebook help article meant to explain these requests still doesn't explain why the app wants into your calendar.

Snapchat — a company that had its own data breach four years ago — is almost as inquisitive. Its Android app's permissions include your phone's status and your contacts, and its iOS permissions list is only a little shorter. Its explanation for needing your contacts cites inviting friends to use the app but also includes this open-ended line: "so we can improve the app."

Snapchat did not answer a request for clarification.

And Uber's Android and iOS apps make their own dubious permission requests. For instance, they seek calendar access to streamline hailing a ride across town — but is it really that hard to type in an address or a point of interest?

Fortunately, both iOS and Android make it easier than Facebook to review and revoke these permissions by providing an overview of which apps can employ which types of data and device

features. You don't have to inspect each app's permissions individually to see how many can see your contacts list.

In iOS, open the Settings app and tap Privacy. You'll see a list of core iPhone apps and components, such as the Contacts program or the camera; tap one to see which apps have access to it, as indicated by a slider button highlighted in green. To revoke the app's permission, tap that slider so it's no longer green.



Snapchat seeks permissions (such as access to your contacts) that you don't need to give. GETTY IMAGES

To see all of any one app's permissions, however, you need to return to the first level of Settings and scroll down to the entries for individual apps.

In Android, open the Settings app and search for "App permissions," and you should be pointed to a similar list of phone capabilities, like the microphone or SMS. Below each, you'll see how many apps now use it and how many could. The app-permissions screen should also offer a complete list of installed apps; to see the full set of permissions for each, tap its entry.

In both iOS and Android, these system-level app permissions override an app's own settings.

Don't forget that uninstalling an app also works to end its access to your data.

Rob Pegoraro is a tech writer based in Washington, D.C. To submit a question, e-mail rob@robpegoraro.com. Follow him on Twitter @robpegoraro.

THE WEEK AHEAD



GETTY IMAGES

Fed minutes could indicate how fast interest rates move higher

Paul Davidson
USA TODAY

What do Federal Reserve policymakers really think about the future pace of interest rate hikes? Minutes of the Fed's March meeting, which featured a rate increase, could help answer that question. So could the latest reading on inflation, also out this week. Both reports highlight a light week of economic news.

At its March 20-21 meeting, the Fed lifted its benchmark short-term interest rate by a quarter percentage point, as expected, and policymakers' median forecast continued to show a total of three rate hikes for 2018. Initially, that eased market fears that federal tax cuts and spending increases would juice economic growth and inflation, and spur the Fed to raise rates more rapidly. But a closer look at Fed officials' projections revealed a murkier picture. Seven policymakers now predict four rate hikes, up from four predictions in December. Also, new Fed Chairman Jerome Powell downplayed the effects of President Trump's market-rattling, get-tough trade policy. But the minutes, due out Wednesday, could point to "more robust discussions" about the potential impact of tariff threats by the U.S. and vows of retaliation by other countries, Nomura

economist Lewis Alexander says.

The pace of inflation will probably be the key factor that determines how quickly the Fed bumps up rates. Annual inflation remains modest, and economists reckon that didn't change in March. Gas prices probably fell, Alexander says. And recent, unusually sharp increases in apparel prices probably moderated while car price increases likely remained tepid, he says. As a result, economists figure overall inflation was unchanged while a core measure that strips out volatile food and energy costs edged up a slender 0.2%. But there's a wrinkle. It was in March 2017 that some factors began to push down inflation. That means that starting this past March, those decreases will no longer keep a lid on annual inflation. Economists expect the Labor Department to report that consumer prices in March increased 2.3% from a year ago, up from 2.2% the prior month, while core prices jumped 2.1%, up from 1.8%.

On Friday, Labor takes a peak beneath February's 326,000 net job gains. Its Job Openings and Labor Turnover survey spotlights openings, hires and quits across the country. Job openings hit a record 6.3 million in January, reflecting robust demand from employers. If they continued to hover around that level in February, that would be encouraging for future job growth.

RETIREMENT

How to plan a peaceful end of life

Discussions with your family need to happen long before you die, experts say



Robert Powell
Columnist
USA TODAY

In his book *Being Mortal*, surgeon, writer and public health researcher Atul Gawande notes that few people have discussed their end-of-life wishes with family members or other caregivers.

The reasons are many, but the consequences are the same: Many people die without expressing the kind of care they would want to receive if they were incapacitated with injury or illness.

To be sure, it can be hard to discuss death. Yet personal, medical and financial conversations can help make the end-of-life time as peaceful as possible.

Here's how to approach this topic.

Think about those final years now

Discuss wishes with family and friends well before death nears, says Kathy Cerminara, a law professor at Nova Southeastern University who specializes in end-of-life decision-making.

"No one wants to think about it," she says, but it's important to get this conversation going early and to have it often.

It's much easier to have these discussions before any dire situations arise, says David Henderson, a principal of financial planning firm The Henderson Group and former board member of the Hospice of the Shenandoah.

"Folks who are counting months, or even weeks, recognize the need" for such a discussion, he says, yet "they or their spouses and close family are often in denial and don't want to broach the subject."

Use current happenings to drive discussion

Even if you are ready to talk about death, some loved ones may not be open to the conversation, Cerminara says. Her suggestion on how to handle that: Capitalize on the moment when death comes up on a movie or newscast, or when the conversation turns to someone who has recently died.

Seize that moment "to ask family or friends if they would be willing to participate in a later group discussion about the topic," she says.

This gives loved ones advanced notice that you would like to talk about the subject in-depth, she says.

"That way, they can wrap their minds around the concept and can prepare if they feel they need to," Cerminara says.



Even if you are ready to talk about death, some loved ones may not be open to the conversation. GETTY IMAGES

"Then follow up by scheduling a family meeting or friends' gathering for a discussion of your values, wishes and goals."

Karl Pillemer, author of *30 Lessons for Living* and director of the Cornell Legacy Project, which collects wisdom from elders, also suggests capitalizing on any mentions of death to get the conversation started.

He says to say something like, "My friend Alice was in an accident, and her family had to make some hard decisions. I've been thinking about what I would like to have happen. Have you ever thought about this?"

Pillemer also suggests bringing up death as part of a general conversation. For example, he says to mention articles about people who decide not to have treatment when they are terminally ill, and then to ask others what they think of that decision.

Get the help of financial professionals

Estate-planning attorneys and financial professionals can help prepare the

Capitalize on the moment when death comes up on a movie or newscast.

documents needed to make sure end-of-life instructions are carried out. Those documents might include ethical wills, a prewritten obituary, a living will, a health care proxy, information on powers of attorney and advance directives.

Non-profit consumer advocacy group Medicare Rights Center provides detailed descriptions of such financial documents on its Medicare Interactive website.

"Many people assume that their family members would automatically be able to make decisions about medical treatments if they were to become incapacitated.

However, rules vary greatly from state to state," Medicare Rights Center says on the site. "In some cases, decisions are left up to the health care pro-

viders and institutions in charge of your care unless you have appointed someone as your legal representative."

Also employ medical assistance

Schedule time to discuss end-of-life wishes with medical professionals, Cerminara says.

"Yes, they are busy," she says. "But billing codes are available for them to use in conversations about advance directives and end-of-life wishes."

Some health professions may be uncomfortable with this topic, she says, but in general, those in this field are becoming more aware about how important it is to engage in such discussions.

"I'm optimistic that more and more such professionals are going to become accustomed to engaging in them," Cerminara says.

Robert Powell is the editor of TheStreet's Retirement Daily and contributes regularly to USA TODAY. Email rpowell@allthingsretirement.com.

The views and opinions expressed in this column are the author's and do not necessarily reflect those of USA TODAY.

Five ways to see what data reports reveal about you

Bev O'Shea
NerdWallet

When you apply for a job, find an apartment or switch insurance companies, routine personal background checks can reveal how much money you make, whether you've been late with rent or whether you've filed an insurance claim in the past seven years.

Businesses use the information to determine how much risk you bring as a customer — and you have the right to see the reports others might check.

Reports from the credit bureaus — Equifax, Experian and TransUnion — are the most well-known. The Fair Credit Reporting Act gives you the power to see these reports for free once every 12 months and the ability to dispute them.

Five other reports businesses may use and how to get a copy of the data:

1. The work number

Data type: Background check

This is one way potential employers verify information you've provided on an application and how government agencies determine public assistance eligibility. This data is also used to determine child support collections and enforcement. TALX Corp., a subsidiary

of Equifax, runs it.

To see your report:

- Go online to <https://www.theworknumber.com/Employees/DataReport/index.asp>.

- Call 866-604-6570

- Write Equifax Workforce Solutions Attn: EDR, 3470 Rider Trail South, Suite 337, Earth City, Mo. 63045, and enclose the data request form from its website.

2. Screening Reports, Inc.

Data type: Rental background

This report offers screening for multifamily and student housing. Information includes rental and employment verification, credit reports, eviction history, criminal and sex offender reports and foreign asset compliance.

To see your report:

- Check the company website at <https://www.screeningreports.com>.

- Call 866-389-4042

- Write Screening Reports, Inc., 220 Gerry Drive, Wood Dale, Ill. 60191

3. CLUE (Comprehensive Loss Underwriting Exchange) Inc.

Data type: Insurance

A CLUE report can show a potential insurer your seven-year history of



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claims associated with a car and personal property, such as your home. CLUE Inc. is affiliated with LexisNexis Risk Solutions.

To see your report:

- Go online to https://personalreports.lexisnexis.com/fact_act_disclosure.jsp.

- Call 866-312-8076

- Write CLUE Inc. Consumer Center, P.O. Box 105295, Atlanta, Ga. 30348

4. VIP Preferred

Data type: Gambling

If you frequent casinos, racetracks or other gambling establishments, you may have a file. The company helps gambling venues assess the risks with cashing customers' checks.

To see your report:

- Call 800-638-4600, ext. 410

- Fill out and print the FACT Act Disclosure Form and send the completed form to Global Payments Gaming Services, Inc., Attn: FACT ACT Support, P.O. Box 59371, Chicago, Ill. 60659.

5. LexisNexis

Data type: Various

Your professional and financial life are revealed in a LexisNexis Full File Disclosure, similar to credit reports.

To see your report:

- Request a form at https://personalreports.lexisnexis.com/access_your_full_file_disclosure.jsp.

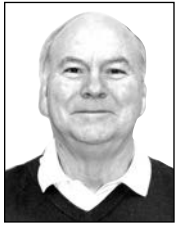
- Call 866-897-8126

- Write LexisNexis Consumer Center Attn: Full File Disclosure, P.O. Box 105108, Atlanta, Ga. 30348-5108

the Sumter ITEM REFLECTIONS

Historic homes adorn Sumter's downtown

This issue of Reflections focuses on the exceptional number of historic homes within the Sumter community. From 1890 to 1940, the city experienced a period of unprecedented growth and development brought on by the influx of new businesses and the growth of the rail industry. Fortunately, a number of families have been able to preserve a number of these historic treasures



Sammy Way
REFLECTIONS

which illuminate our community's history and illustrate the changes in architecture with the passage of time.

The ensuing article features several of the structures that remain and provides information on others that are no longer standing. The information used in preparing this article was obtained from *The Item* archives. Some editing was required.

In 1890, it was reported in the *Watchman and Southron* that "the growth of Sumter had been so rapid in the last five years and the demand for houses within the limits of our city were so great to have induced some of our enterprising citizens to open up for residences in a portion of the city hitherto utilized only as farming lands."

"During the last few days, the surveyors have been busy staking off streets and blocks in the northwestern portion of the city, extending from Main Street opposite the place of Mr. J. B. Roach and residence of the late Judge Green, westward to the Corbett lands. These streets were broad and laid out with such regularity as to make a beautiful suburb to our growing city."

"The extension of Church Street one third of a mile beyond the residence of Col. Jos. H. Earle made it one of the handsomest streets and the pleasantest drives in the city; we hope to see elegant residences being built on either side, where the land is said to be 6 feet higher than at the intersection of Main and Liberty streets. The blocks will be of convenient size. The lots are about 80 feet front by 200 deep and we are informed will be sold at reasonable figures, so that all may be able to secure for themselves desirable locations for houses. There will be several streets running from Main Street westward through the entire tract of land and others in the city."

"Westward on the Stateburg Road beyond Capt. Gaillard's residence, including the Dargan place, there will be quite a number of fine building lots. These streets will be in a very short time graded, and should oak trees that grow so quickly in our soil be set out on either side, this will certainly be the most attractive portion of the city of Sumter."

"We view with pleasure the increasing interest of our citizens in the prosperity of our town and feel assured that in the near future with its present and increasing railroad facilities, its educational advantages, its factories, cotton compress and other enterprises it will soon become the most thriving and prosperous city within the state. We have no sudden abnormal boom but a steady growth that shows itself upon our streets, in our businesses being erected, and now this latest enterprise of extending the city, that our friends Dr. Hughson and Messrs. A. S. and W. A. Broyn have entered upon, show the demand that is being made for more eligible building lots by those who are desirous of making their homes in our midst."

In 1891, it was reported that



The Harby Home at southwest corner of Church and Haynsworth streets, built circa 1892.

SUMTER ITEM FILE PHOTOS



Bland-Tiller home

several "large, airy, well-built and comfortable homes" were built or were under construction by several of Sumter's leading citizens. "The residence of Mr. Horace Harby on Church Street is one of the finest in the state and combines beauty of architecture with the best materials and workmanship. It contains 15 large rooms besides the halls."

"Mr. Ernest Bultman of Ducker and Bultman on Main Street, next to the Presbyterian parsonage, built a large home which was a model of neatness and comfort."

"Mr. C. T. Mason Jr. is proceeding with the greatest elaboration to make his home one of the gems of architecture and completeness. It will be heated with a furnace and provided with all modern appliances."

"Mr. D. Rosendorf's home next to the Mason House on Main Street is built in a style of a modern city house and has many novel attractions. The beautiful hard driveway on West Liberty Street leading to Charleston Sumter and Northern Rail Road depot was ornamented by some of the loveliest homes in the town. Among them were the elegant residences of Messrs. Ferdinand and Mitchell Levi."

On Washington Street were the new and handsome homes of Messrs. W. F. Shaw, W. H. Ingram, Schwartz Bros., Chas. McFadden, W. A. Pringle and others. Gen. Moise's new home, which we have mentioned before, was one of the prettiest in Sumter."

"In 1912, several homes were being constructed including the W. B. Boyle two-story, eight-room house, brick-veneered structure, Robert Shelor on Calhoun Street, an eight-room brick-

veneered structure. F. C. Manning was building a small cottage on North Main Street on what was formally the McDowell property. A residence was being put up by Mr. J. L. McCallum and was a two-story, seven-room building."

"On the corner of Salem Avenue and Liberty Street, Mr. J. Z. Tisdale has just completed a nice two-story residence, having eight rooms."

"Three practically new buildings were those of the Rev. Friday K. Kershaw, Thomas Jefferson and James L. Foggie, which were being remodeled near the corner of Council Street and Oakland Avenue. The owners were black men living in Sumter. The buildings are six- to eight-room two-story structures. One of them was already occupied."

"In 1941, a unique housing development was announced for the Sumter community by the Henry P. Moses Co. The plans called for the building of a court of houses on Haynsworth Street on what was generally referred to as the Judge H.L.B. Wells property. The land in question consisted of a peach orchard (i.e. the name given to the development was "Orchard Place") and was located between the two houses once occupied by H. A. Mood Jr. and Julius Pitts.' There was to be a 50-foot-wide street cut down the middle of the court. 'On each side of the street, there were three small houses, either frame or brick veneer construction making six houses in all.'"

"Plans called for the construction of a large apartment building at the end of the court. The building was to have a U-shape configuration, and the apartments would vary in size."



ABOVE: The Haynsworth House

BELOW: Home of Dr. Mood



Sumter has undergone a steady growth since its inception. The homes constructed have varied in size, and the architecture has been consistent with the fashionable architecture of the different pe-

riods. Sumterites are blessed to have many of these beautiful historic homes to visit and study. We are also fortunate that photographs and studies on the histories of many of the razed structures remain.

POW letters limited to 25 words; Shaw Field band performs

75 YEARS AGO — 1943
Oct. 31 — Nov. 6

• All enlisted men were to be admitted free of charge to the Sumter County Fairgrounds as long as the gates are open. Secretary J. Cliff Brown of the Fair Association announced today. The exposition is scheduled to open next week. Soldiers will be welcomed at any time, according to Mr. Brown, and an invitation is extended particularly to the men of Shaw Field and to local men in the service at home on leave. Although entrance will be gratis, it was



Yesteryear in Sumter
SAMMY WAY

suggested that the soldiers will save their money for spending in the fair's amusement area and at sale booths.

• An increase from three to four cents in charges on

out-of-town letters was voted in today by the House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee. The revenue group previously had raised the local letter rate from two to three cents. The committee decided to cut back the air mail rate from a tentatively approved 10 cents to 8 cents. The present rate is 6 cents.

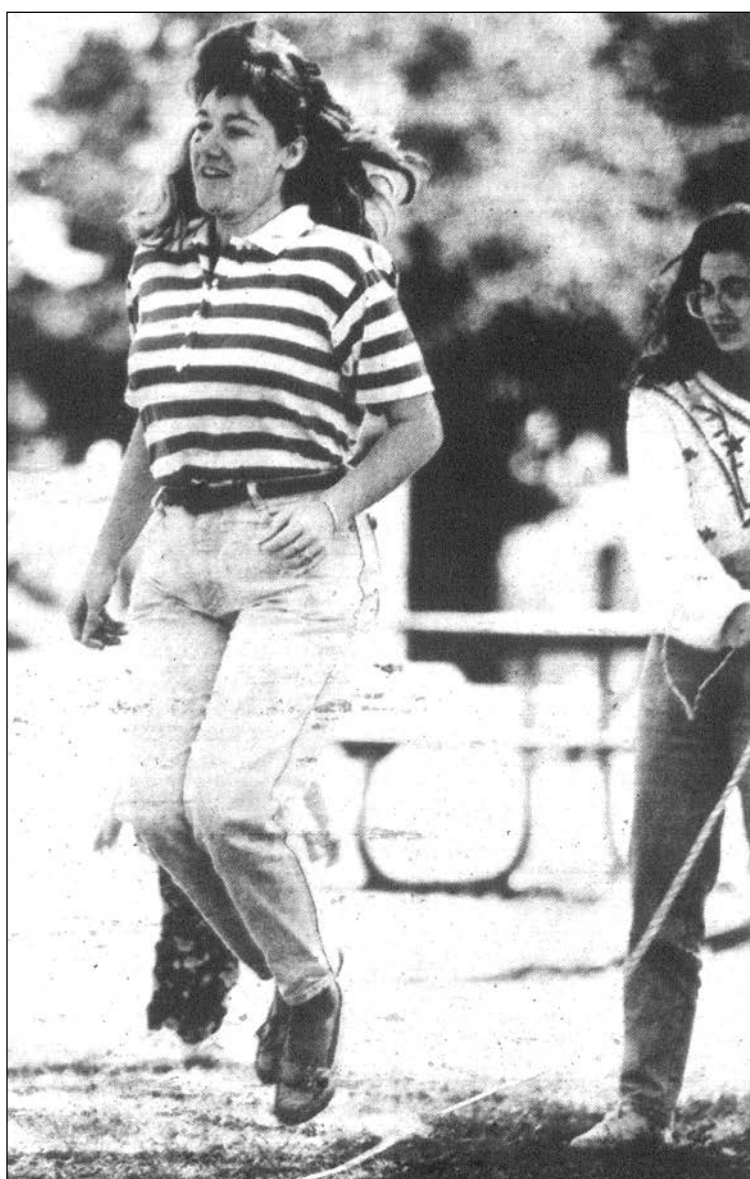
• Beginning Friday of this week the Sumter Theater will celebrate its seventh anniversary. Kermit Ward, manager, stated that September was really the theater's anniversary but that everyone at the theater was so busy selling War Bonds that it was decided to postpone the celebration.

• The second qualifying test for the Army Specialized Training program and the Navy college program, V-12, will be conducted at Edmunds High School from 9 until 12 o'clock Nov. 9, according to William Henry Shaw, superintendent of the city schools. These training programs present an opportunity to persons to secure at government expense and education approximately equivalent to that secured in a college course of equal length, according to Mr. Shaw.

• Letters to prisoners of war and civilian internees held by the Japanese must be limited to 25 words, the Red Cross office has been notified by national headquarters. The previous ruling was 25 words or less, but the present order means that not more than 24 words may be used. Red Cross officials warned Sumter people who may write to Japanese-held friends or relatives that unless they comply strictly with the regulation, the prisoners of war and internees may not receive their letters.

• Ed and Ted, the Silar twins from Wrightsville, Pennsylvania, are identical in only one respect—their enthusiasm for the Air Corps. On that subject they think as a single entity. On practically everything else, they differ as widely as any two brothers could. It even goes as far as Ed's left-handedness versus his twin's traditional right-handedness. Ted is slightly the taller of the two, but as to which is the older, that's a well-kept family secret. Knowing her sons exceptionally well, Mrs. Silar was always afraid the truth might bring on a feud.

• The Social Security Act has been in operation eight years, and it has been paying off since Jan. 1, 1940. Yet an astonishing proportion of Americans still think of it only as a system that brightens the lives of people who retire from work after they are 65. There is a good deal more than that to Social Security. For example, to many widows with young children, the survivors insurance payments provided to families of deceased workers have proven an unexpected and heartening windfall.



1993 — Anna Tootle of Bishopville shows off her jump-rope skills at Old Grammar School Park in Bishopville. She was attending a birthday party for Anna Hancock, who turned four.

• Another class of aerial triggermen to guard Army Air Forces' bombers graduated from Harlingen aerial gunnery school, and among the qualified "sharpshooters of the sky" was Cpl. Robert G. Boney. Along with his diploma, he received a pair of aerial gunner's wings at brief graduation exercises held here. After a delay en route to visit relatives, he will join an aerial combat team, unless he is retained at Harlingen Army Air Field to serve as an instructor.

• The untimely passing of Mr. J. J. Britton, besides leaving this board and the entire community shocked and saddened, leaves a vacancy in his community and in the ranks of the officials of the County of Sumter which will be hard to fill. The board has lost a friend and a co-worker whose long years of service speak for the high esteem in which he was held by all, and we, the County Board of Commissioners, feel that it is fitting that we seek to honor his memory.

• This Friday the teenage youth of Sumter will congregate on the third floor of the YWCA for an afternoon of informal recreation. The hall is equipped with a juke box and a piano, ping pong, darts, magazines and table games—and enough floor space to accommodate a large crowd of boys and girls. There will be several adult hostesses on hand to see that everybody is having a good time.

• Funeral service for Sgt. Robeson Sherred, who was killed in the crash of a light bomber near Thomas, Oklahoma, was held at Grace Baptist Church of Sumter. Sgt. Sherred's widow was the former Miss Jean Sweatte of Sumter. He was stationed at Shaw Field for a period of time. The plane was based at Woodward Army Air Base in Oklahoma.

• The Shaw Field post band, under the direction of Warrant Officer Robert Simpson, will furnish the music for the ceremonies in which Sonoco Co. of Hartsville, manufacturers of paper products, will receive the Army-Navy E. award. The awards are made to factories which produce with excellence materials for one or more of the branches of the service. The people of Sumter have a particular interest in the Hartsville plant because the paper collected in a recent drive by schoolchildren, and that gathered by the Children's Home has been sold to that factory.

50 YEARS AGO — 1968
June 30 — July 6

• A stone-laying ceremony signaled virtual completion of the 60-unit Mt. Pisgah Apartments on College Street off Lafayette Boulevard. Painting of the apartments is now in progress, and paving of parking areas still must be done. But otherwise the housing project is practically complete. The \$620,000 project, first of its kind in South Carolina, was built under a program to allow private enterprise in the form of nonprofit corporations to provide housing for low-income families and individuals. Sponsor for the local project is Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Church.

• To race fans who were on hand at Sumter Speedway, Barnum and Bailey should never have called their circus "The Greatest Show on Earth," because never in the history of the track has there been so much going on all night. From the warm-ups in the afternoon until the final lap later in the night, fans were treated with pile-ups, wrecks and spins every minute in every division, with the largest field of cars in many years assembling for the action.

• Sumter's bats, quiet all season, came to life for a while pushing across six runs in the very first inning, and the league-leading P-15's went on to rip Manning 10-2 for their 10th victory of the campaign. Coach Bernie Jones' club collected 12 hits, 11 of them singles, for their highest number of safeties in one game this year. Big men for the P-15's attack were Donnie Branham, who had three hits in four at bats, and Mike Newman, who had two hits, one a booming triple, to deep left-field. Al Harris, who managed to survive danger for seven innings, was credited with the triumph, his first of 1968.

• The Wesmark Plaza Merchants Association will sponsor a gala 4th of July celebration, starting at noon, featuring free pony rides, refreshments and entertainment for all. A free pony-drawn cart ride for children will be held from 2 until 6 p.m., and free slices of watermelon and soft drinks will be served. Picnic tables will be available to encourage families to bring a picnic lunch. The Sumter Jaycees will promote a car wrecking "happening" at the Wesmark Plaza parking lot, and anyone wishing to take a sledge hammer to the car may do so for 25 cents a blow.

• "Sumter really kicked it around out there, didn't they," said Camden Coach Arthur Robinson after his team had walked over Sumter, 12-3, to throw the League III race into a first-place deadlock between the two squads. Robinson was referring to the fact that the P-15's had committed eight errors in aiding the Camden cause.

• Camp Mac Boykin, the Sumter YMCA's day camp, opened June 10 for the summer season with more than 70 boys and girls attending the first session. The camp is directed by Bob Partin, "Y" youth director. This is Partin's sixth year on the camp staff since he was a counselor before serving as director for the past three years. Camp Mac Boykin is 22 miles from Sumter in Manchester State Forest and consists of a 35-acre plot with a five-acre lake used for swimming, boating, canoeing and fishing.

• An automatic hydraulic-lift elevator is being built into the Manning Post office, a two-story contemporary brick building constructed in 1958 as a post office and federal office building. A total of \$41,000 has been provided for addition of a small lobby to the left of the present entrance, installation of the elevator for the convenience of persons using the upstairs offices, installation of 22,000 square feet of acoustical tile in the various offices and a complete repair and paint job inside.

• Sumter city Police Chief L. W. Griffin announced that beginning Friday, July 5, two-hour parking will be enforced at the parking lot at the corner of Sumter and Liberty streets where the old Sumter YMCA was located. Chief Griffin stated that two-hour parking has been in effect for some time at the parking lot but up until now has not been enforced. The two-hour limit will be observed as of Friday when tagging of cars in violation of the time limit will begin.

• Some \$38,000 in federal funds are being made available to Sumter County Economic Opportunity Corp. for establishment of a comprehensive job placement, recreation and cultural program for young people. Approval of the program, designed primarily to assist senior high school and college students during vacation periods, was coupled with approval of \$20,000 in supplemental funds for the existing day care program. The additional day care funds will restore the four centers to the level of service they were able to provide prior to a 20 percent cut in appropriations.

• The American Forces Network observed its silver anniversary July 4. Only a few thousand Americans in Britain heard the first broadcast in 1943, which was aired in London over five 50-watt transmitters fed by telephone lines. It is doubtful if any of the listeners imagined that the embryonic network would one day grow to span a continent with powerful 150,000-watt transmitters and an estimated peak audience of 25 million.

• Anthony Kennedy Dawson of Sumter will be a library intern during the summer at Sumter County Library. Under the joint sponsorship of the South Carolina State Library Board and local libraries, the library intern project provides a work-training program for college undergraduates who are interested in the fast-growing field of librarianship. Dawson, the son of John H. Dawson, will work on a paid basis for three months. He will be given an opportunity to become acquainted with the various duties and responsibilities of a professional librarian.

25 YEARS AGO — 1993
April 2 — April 8

• Clarendon School District 1 trustees have called a public hearing to help name the dis-

trict's soon-to-be-constructed high school. The hearing will be held in the Scott's Branch High School cafeteria, according to Clarendon 1 Superintendent Dr. Milt Marley. Marley said the district is inviting the public as well as members of Summerton Town Council, Clarendon County Council, local ministers, Summerton's Mayor Charles Ridgeway and the Clarendon County legislative delegation for their input.

• The Sumter High School boys' tennis program didn't have one of the better days in its history. The Gamecocks dropped a 6-0 decision to Region IV-4A owner Richland Northeast at the SHS tennis courts. Head coach Tony Shorter was not down on his team for its performance, not even close. He realizes what he has, and that is a young team that is still maturing. "Playing these (kind of teams and matches), it's a learning experience," said Shorter, whose Gamecocks dropped to 4-4 with the loss.

• Sumter County officials are close to hiring a director for a South Sumter resource center, and city officials hope to negotiate buying a building for it soon. City officials plan to purchase the old Manning Avenue Piggly Wiggly grocery store and turn it into a satellite operation for local and state government agencies, as well as private volunteer organizations. Schools and state agencies will be asked to provide programs on child care, pregnancy, literacy and drug abuse.

• Sumter County Council will ask sponsors of a retirement center seeking approval for \$9 million in tax-free loans to get the approval from the governor's office instead of the county. Sponsors of Covenant Place, a nonprofit corporation that plans to build a retirement center at the intersection of Carter and Terry roads, asked council last month to authorize a \$9 million low-interest, tax-free loan to build the center. The loan would come from banks in the form of a bond issue, and the county would have no fiscal responsibility for repaying the loans.

• Mayewood High School's softball team took advantage of C.E. Murray's 17 errors and defeated the Eagles 20-4 in five innings. Mayewood improved its Region VII-1A record to 3-0. C.E. Murray scored two runs on four hits in the first inning but then hit a dry spell.

• Charging fees to use the county's landfills and public roads could help balance next year's budget without raising property taxes, Sumter County councilmen said. Council began considering ways to squeeze \$21 million in requests into an \$18 million budget during a work session. Because revenues from tipping fees at the Sumter County Landfill won't quite produce the \$1.1 million county officials had hoped for this year, councilmen are wondering how to pay for the public works department's \$1.2 million budget next fiscal year. Equally challenging is generating the money needed to maintain Sumter County's roads. Although no decisions were made Friday, councilmen did agree to consider charging a flat fee to trucks that cross the landfill's scales (trucks now go across freely), and instead of taxing all residents for trash service, council discussed charging each user a flat fee, too.

• Ring up the main Sumter office of the Sumer-chartered NBSC, and you may get a free long-distance call to Columbia. If you ask for someone who happens to be at the bank's corporate headquarters in Columbia that day, your call will be transferred, in seconds, to the capital city. But you would not know that your call had even left the family building opened in 1957 on Sumter's North Main Street unless someone at the bank told you.

Sumter ITEM OUTDOORS

Call the newsroom at: (803) 774-1226 | E-mail: pressrelease@theitem.com

The hunt is on for wild turkeys

I know the fish are biting. I see the steady stream of trucks headed to the lake every day, pulling boats. I like to fish — especially when the bream are biting. The full moon in April, and again in May, is the best time to catch a mess of sunfish.

But for me — the hunt is on. Turkeys are in season, and we only get six weeks to hunt them. Some people say turkey hunting is an obsession. It's hard to say why, but it gets under your skin and is like nothing else. For now, the bream can wait.

There are very few casual turkey hunters. Either you like it and can't get enough, or you don't care for it. I look forward to turkey season all year long, like a kid waiting on Christmas, and it's here now.

For me, the turkey season is the best time of the year. Winter has passed, and spring leaps out to us. There are warm days and cool nights. The first wildflowers bloom, then redbuds and dogwoods. The bugs and snakes aren't out yet. The sweet fragrance of yellow Jessamine and honeysuckle hang in the air. The trees go from winter bare to summer green. The songbirds sing a

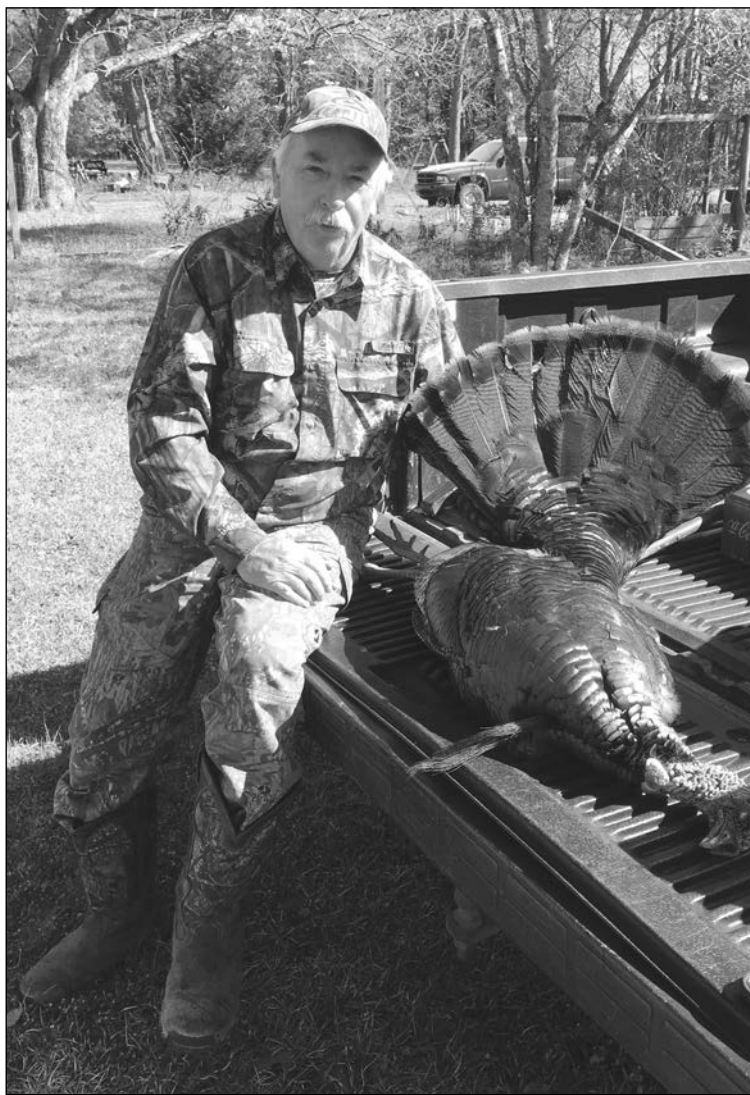


PHOTO PROVIDED

Dan Geddings shot this wild turkey on a recent hunt in Clarendon County.

joyous melody. And the turkeys gobble.

Our fathers didn't have turkeys to hunt. Heavy timber harvest, intensive share-crop farming and a widespread rural population dec-

imated wild turkey numbers at the turn of the century. A few remnant turkey populations managed to hold on in some of the big river swamps and isolated coastal plantations. Those few tur-

keys provided the stock for a statewide restoration effort that exceeded all expectations.

I started seeing turkeys here in the '80s, and then along came Hugo. The hurricane decimated a huge area of woodlands — from the coast inland to Charlotte. Pine trees were snapped off, and hardwoods were uprooted. It was a jungle out there for a while, and the new turkey populations needed time to recover.

I didn't think we would ever have a huntable population of wild turkeys in this part of the state, but eventually it did happen. And boy am I glad. Now, all I had to do was figure out how to hunt them. Our elders couldn't teach us because they had never hunted turkeys. So, many of us were on our own. I went a few times with a friend of mine from the Upstate and learned a little about turkey hunting. I read everything I could find about turkeys and turkey hunting. But mostly it was an exercise in trial and error.

Turkey hunters must have more patience, more perseverance and more woodsman skills than the average hunter. It's a thinking game, with many decisions. One decision usually just leads to another. Success will come just enough to keep you going.

My brother Matt and I hunted turkeys together for years. We learned a lot from

each other. We were never experts by any stretch of the imagination, but we got better at it. We shared information with each other about where we saw turkeys and saw good sign, like tracks and strut marks.

We learned to keep that information to ourselves. Other hunters were sometimes after the same birds as we were. We didn't come out and lie too much — well, maybe little white lies. We learned to not volunteer any MRI or "most recent information." We were usually evasive and secretive about our scouting — so were other hunters. I would ride the county dirt roads looking for gobbler tracks. If I saw some I would stop, get out of the truck and step on the tracks to disguise them.

Turkey hunters sometimes love to talk about their successful hunts without giving away any useful information to other hunters, and usually only another turkey hunter can appreciate the story.

Now my son Clayton is getting an education in turkey hunting. At least he has someone to teach him a few things. Maybe he will teach his son one day.

In the spring, wild turkeys will gobble. It is the call of the wild, like the howl of a wolf or the honking of a goose. It is the essence of wildness and raw nature. I guess we could live without it, but now that I know it, I wouldn't want to.

Child shoots her 1st turkey



PHOTO PROVIDED

Ava Lowery, age 8, got her first turkey while hunting with her Daddy. Ava is the daughter of Danny and Kelly Lowery.

Gardening's benefits jibe with today's emphasis on wellness

BY DEAN FOSDICK

The Associated Press

Modern gardening isn't just about growing plants — it's part of a movement toward personal and family wellness that includes everything from diet and exercise to a clean and livable environment.

"A lot of things are going on with wellness as it applies to our food culture," said Helen Lundell, a senior consultant with The Hartman Group Inc., a company in Bellevue, Washington, that studies consumer, food and beverage trends. "The essential theme is that consumers are moving toward natural foods. First and foremost is the absence of pesticides and chemicals used in production."

But gardening fits the moment in ways beyond healthier food, she said.

"People want to exercise," she said. "They want to connect with nature. They want to socialize. They want to have some private time and disconnect from social media. They want long-term weight management rather than crash diets." All of those can be benefits from gardening.

A trend toward outdoor living has blossomed in landscape design and is also health related, said Missy Henriksen, a spokeswoman for the National Association of Landscape Professionals.

"People are recognizing that being outdoors benefits wellness," Henriksen said. "They feel better when they interact with

nature, even if it's simply looking through a window."

If you're remodeling a deck or patio, Henriksen said, consider adding creative lighting, wifi, TV connections and shelter from harsh sun and wet weather. "Not only for nighttime use, but more people are working remotely from home, and they're doing it outdoors," Henriksen said.

When planning the garden, she recommended nature-scaping with pollinator-friendly plants ("Attracting wildlife is a great educational tool for kids") and including edibles.

"People look at their landscapes and think they're attractive, but they may be missing some personal benefits," Henriksen said. "Herbs, fruits and vegetables add texture, color and variety to residential landscapes."

You also can hardscape to fit family lifestyles as they evolve. Include badminton or bocce ball courts, chessboards, pools and spas, fire pits and yoga spaces. Aside from their immediate satisfaction, these also may pay off when selling the property.

Try your local university Extension office if you need help. "Family health and wellness has been the mission of Oregon (State University) Extension for over 100 years," said Stephanie Polizzi, a registered dietitian-nutritionist with the university.

"Our field faculty and campus specialists have expertise in nutrition, community food systems, physical activity and community engagement," she said.

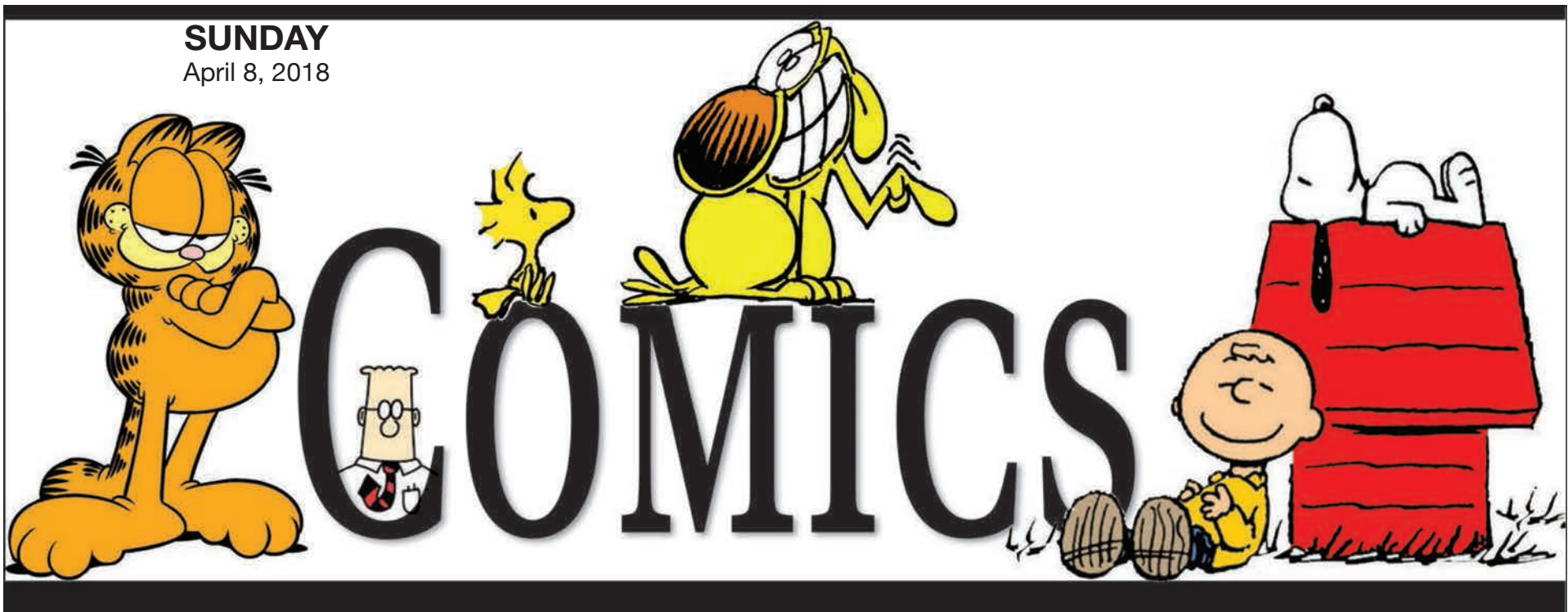


A fire ring in the backyard of a Langley, Washington, home is one of many health-related themed spaces becoming popular in landscape design. It's the kind of hardscaping that provides enjoyment as family lifestyles evolve.

AP FILE PHOTO

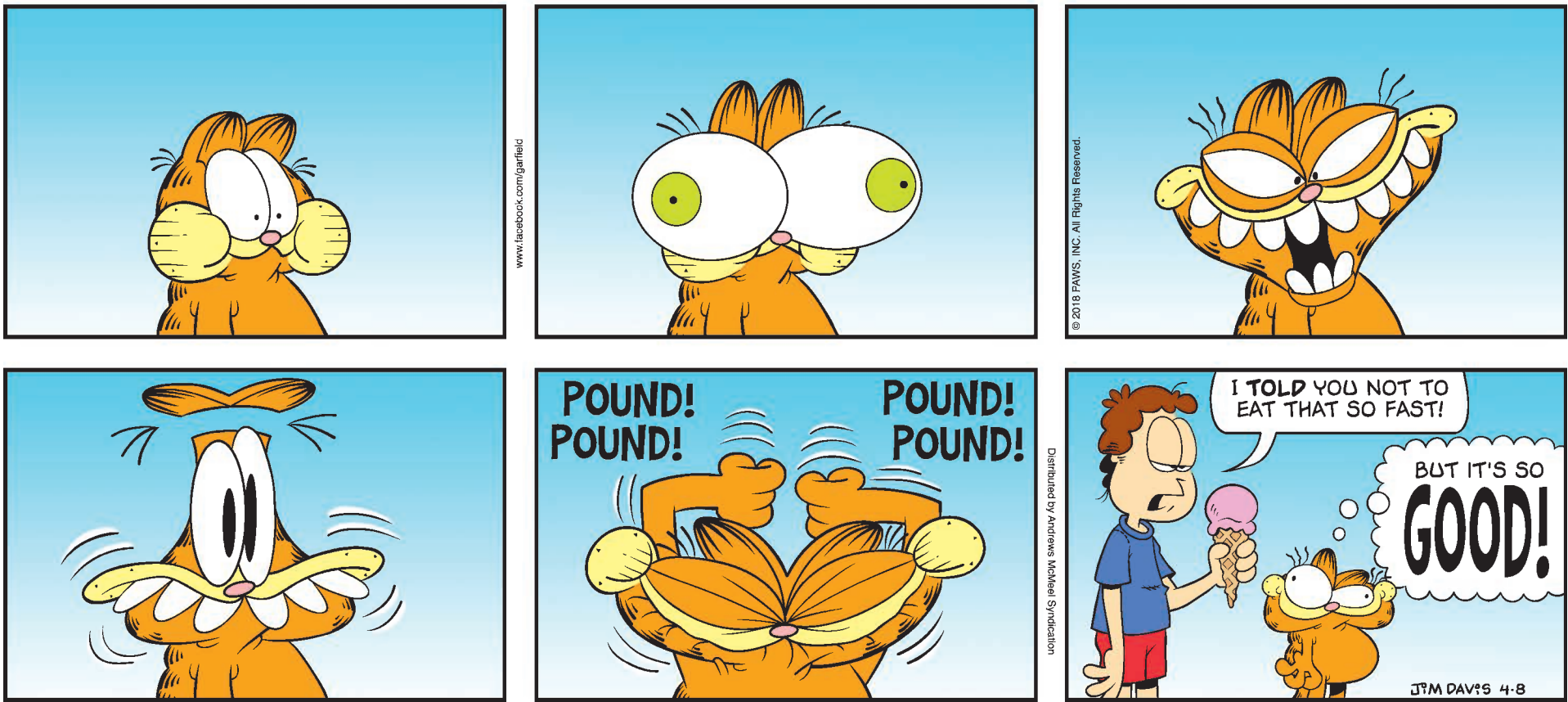
**Did you kill a big buck? Kill your first deer?
Catch a big fish? Catch your first fish?**

We want to share your outdoor photos with our readers. Email your photo submissions to pressrelease@theitem.com. Please include name of person in the photo, where the catch or kill took place and any other pertinent information.



GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS



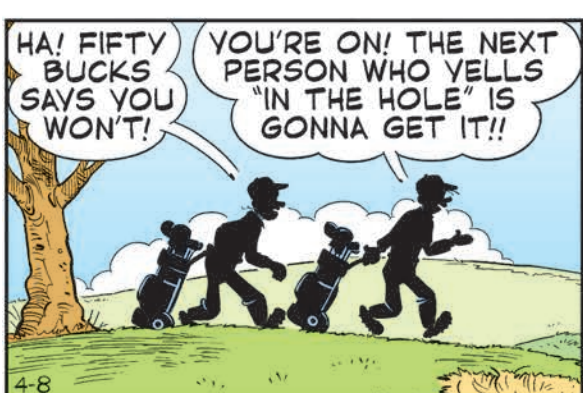
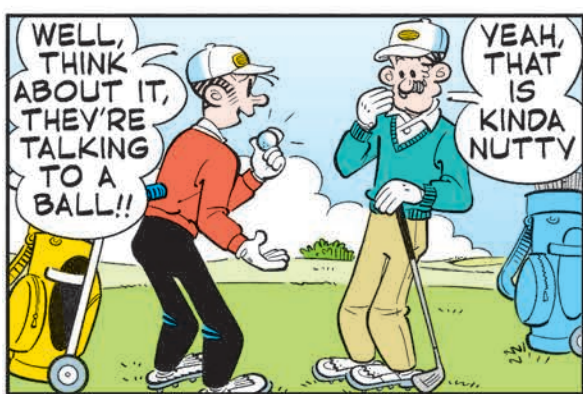
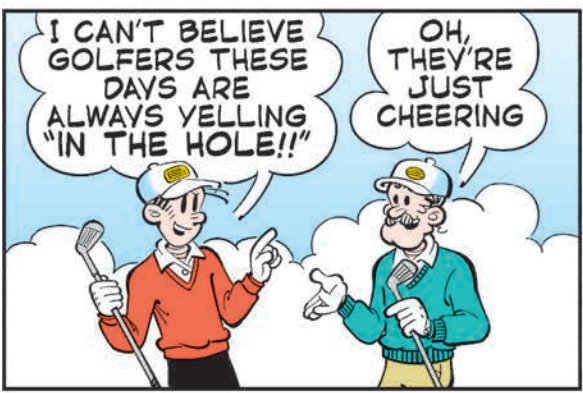
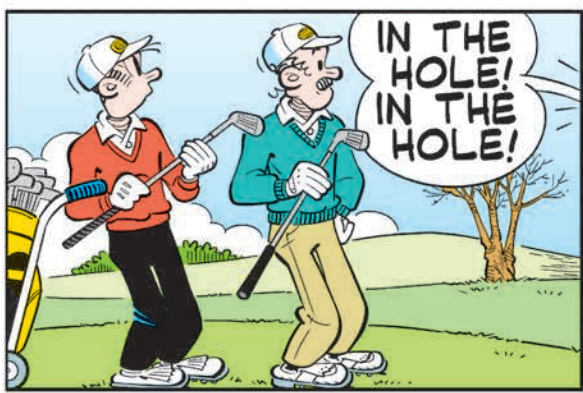
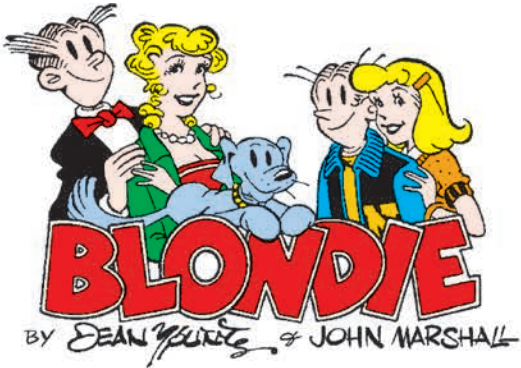
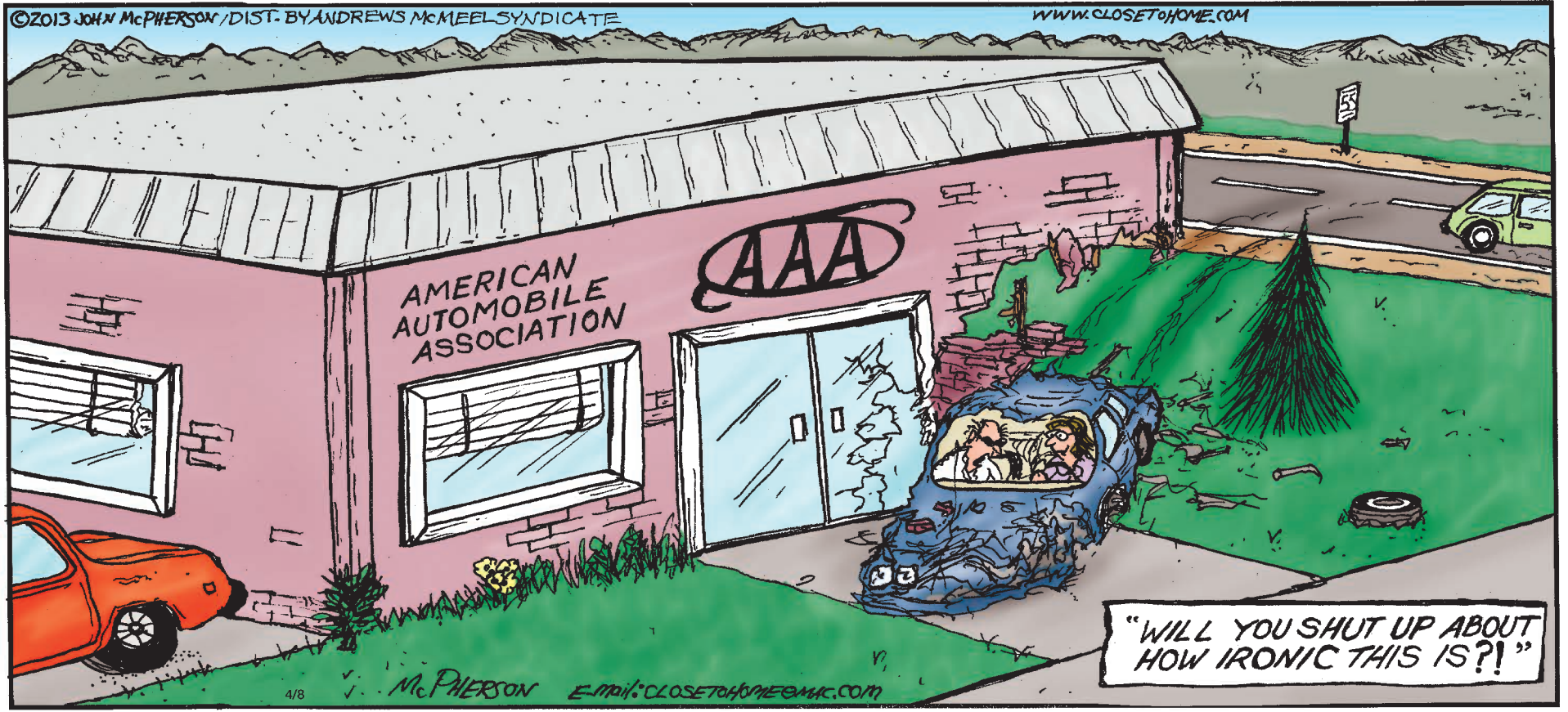
DILBERT

BY SCOTT ADAMS



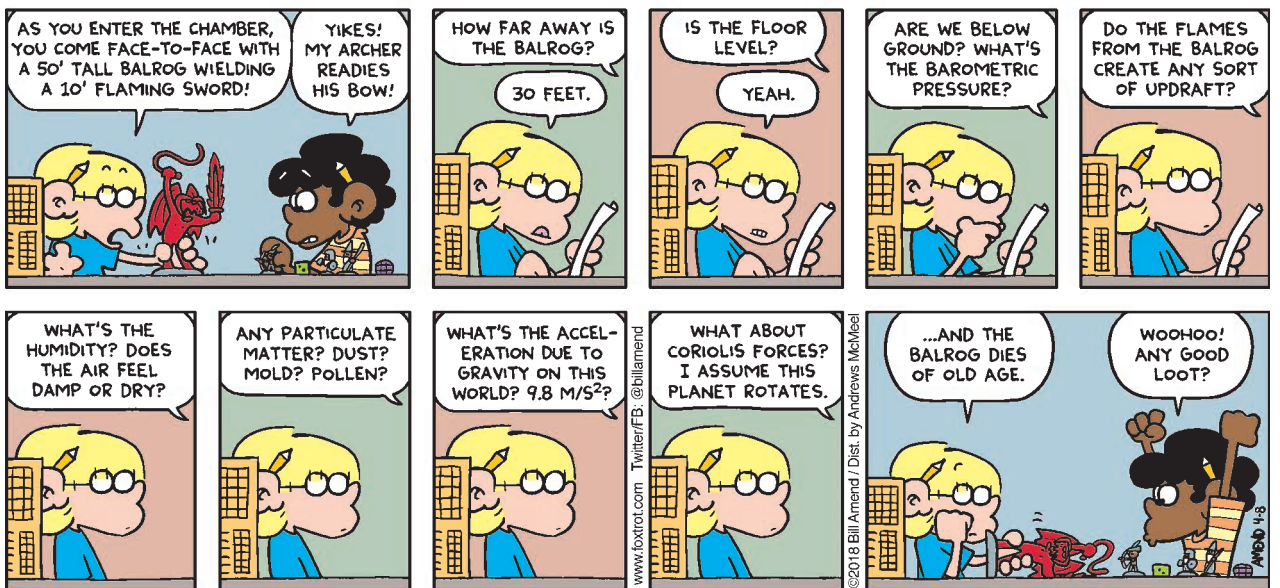
CLOSE TO HOME

BY JOHN McPHERSON



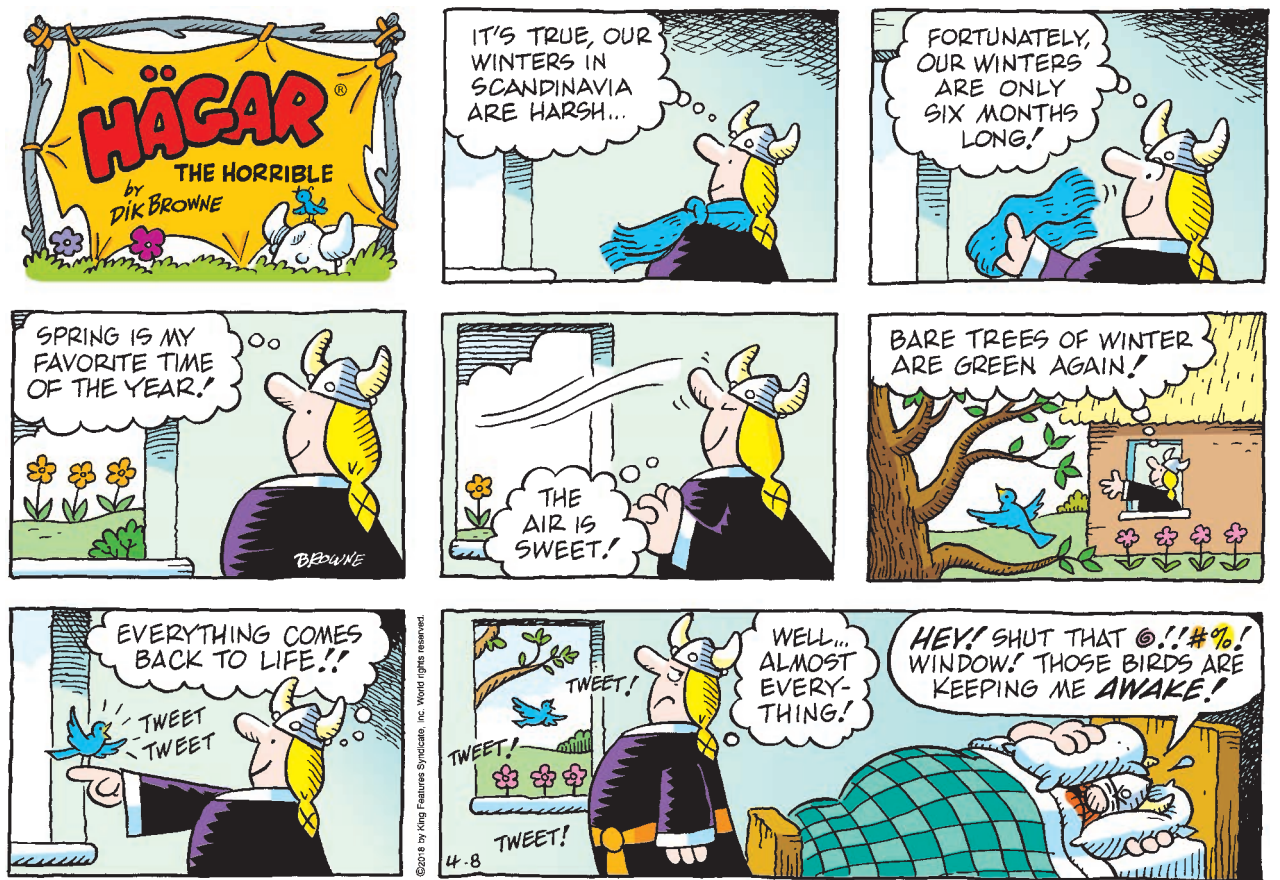
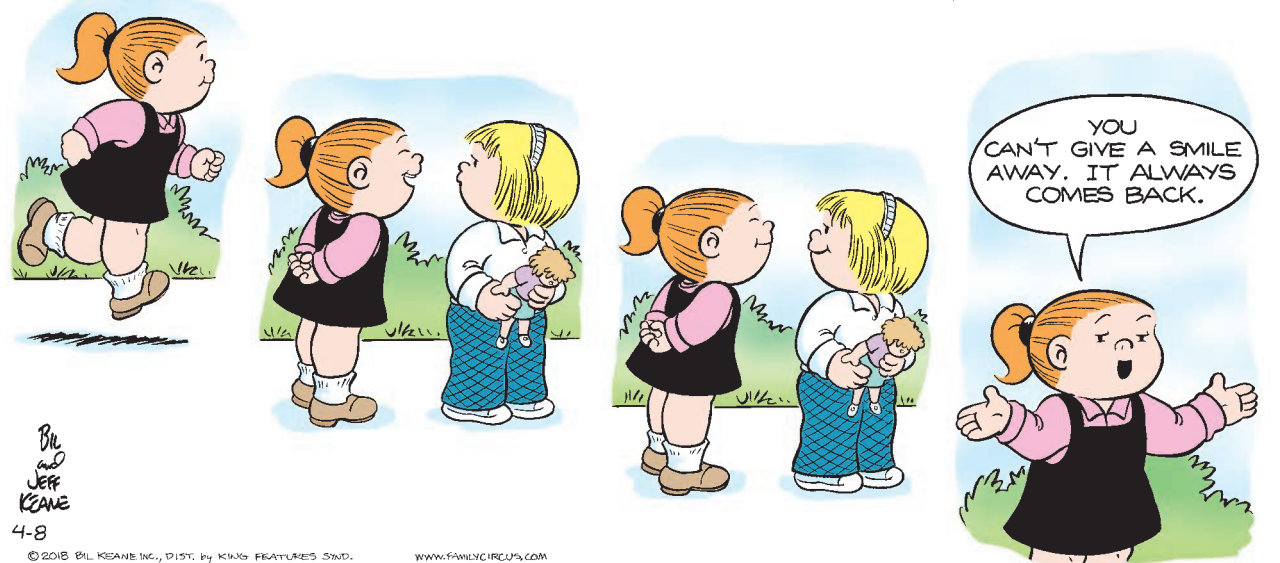
FoxTrot

by Bill Amend



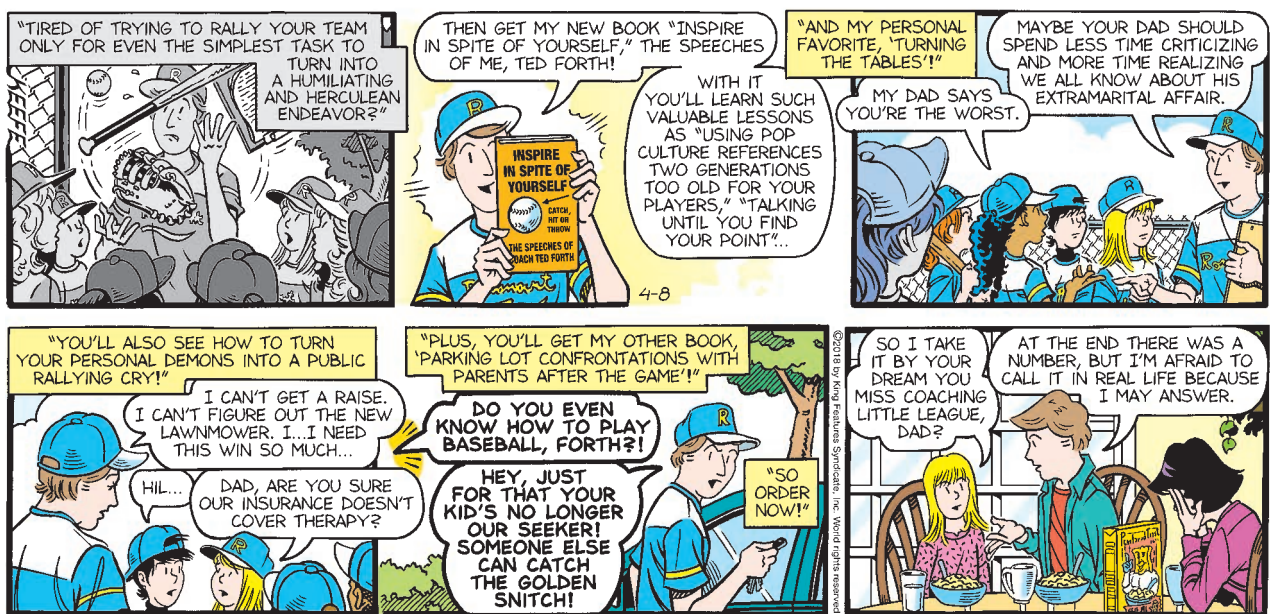
THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bill Keane



SALLY FORTH

BY FRANCESCO MARCIULIANO & JIM KEEFE



DOODLES

By Foot & Sack © 2018 Creators.com

FiND 5 "Blimp"s!!!

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

MY PIGGY BLIMP IS FUN TO FLY—
OINK, OINK, OINK
ACROSS THE SKY

Send your riddles and puns to:
Doodles, P.O. Box 105, Excelsior, MN 55331

DOODLE ZOO

SPOILED MILK IS AN UDDER SHAME.

DRAW!!

DRAW A PIG!

RIDDLES!!!

Q. WHO CAN SHAVE 20 TIMES A DAY AND STILL HAVE A BEARD?
A. A BARBER.
Louise Tetrey, Salem, MA

Q. HOW DO FISH ALWAYS KNOW WHAT THEY WEIGH?
A. THEY HAVE THEIR OWN SCALES.
Brian Stevens, Pittsburgh, PA

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Hair is different. 2. Arm is longer. 3. Hat is different. 4. Leg is wider. 5. Windows in door are smaller. 6. House is wider.

FRANK AND ERNEST

THE INMATE TEAM WILL BE WEAK RUNNING THE BASES AGAIN THIS YEAR.

THESE GUYS GET CAUGHT ATTEMPTING TO STEAL.

THE MONEY LAUNDERER IS THE OBVIOUS CHOICE TO HIT CLEANUP.

PRISONERS CONVICTED OF CONSPIRACY ARE GOOD TEAM PLAYERS—THEY'LL BUNT IF NEEDED.

AND THE CON MAN GUILTY OF FRAUD WILL BE THE ACE ON THE MOUND.

YEAH, PEOPLE ALWAYS FALL FOR HIS DECEPTIVE PITCH!

THE BORN LOSER

by Art & Chip Sansom

HIS DESIGNS WERE THE REASON FOR OUR COMPETITOR'S EDGE OVER US...

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS

DOG PARK PICNIC

OH DARN... I FORGOT MY NAME TAG.

DERITH, ECHO, LILY, MAISY, MOLLY, GRACE, CADE, ADDIE, JAKE, MARCI, FEONA, ARCHER, TRACY, JUDE, MARIAN, JAMES

SO I INSTRUCTED HIM TO RE-CREATE HIS DESIGNS FOR US, TWEAKED JUST ENOUGH TO DISTINGUISH THEM FROM HIS OLD DESIGNS...

THEN I PUT THE NEW DESIGNS ON THE MARKET AT A FIVE PERCENT DISCOUNT AND DROVE OUR COMPETITOR OUT OF BUSINESS!

AND THAT'S HOW I MADE MY FIRST MILLION!

SIGH... I'VE GROWN WEARY OF TALKING ABOUT MYSELF...

WHY DON'T YOU TALK ABOUT ME FOR A WHILE!

WIZARD OF ID

by Hart, Mastroianni and Parker

EPIC SILHOUETTE...

READY? WAIT... WAIT! WHOA!

WHOA, PLEASE! WHOA!

ALL THE KNIGHTS IN THE KINGDOM, AND I GO UP AGAINST YOSEMITE SAM

GET FUZZY

BY DARBY CONLEY

GUESS HOW MANY STATES WERE NAMED AFTER PEOPLE? EASY! ALL OF THEM!

NOT EVEN CLOSE. WHICH ONE ISN'T?

LOTS OF THEM! MONTANA, FOR ONE.

WHEN WAS IT NAMED? 1889. WHY?

HA! YOU'RE EVEN LESS CLOSE! I HEARD OF A GUY WHO HAD A NAME IN, LIKE, 1492!

I MEANT... OK, LET'S START OVER. WHICH STATES HAVE PEOPLE'S NAMES IN THEM?

EVERY STATE HAS PEOPLE WITH NAMES LIVING IN—

OK, NOPE. NOPE. MY BAD. I'LL REPHRASE IT AGAIN...

NAME A STATE... THAT HAS THE NAME... THAT A PERSON IS CALLED AS PART OF THE STATE NAME.

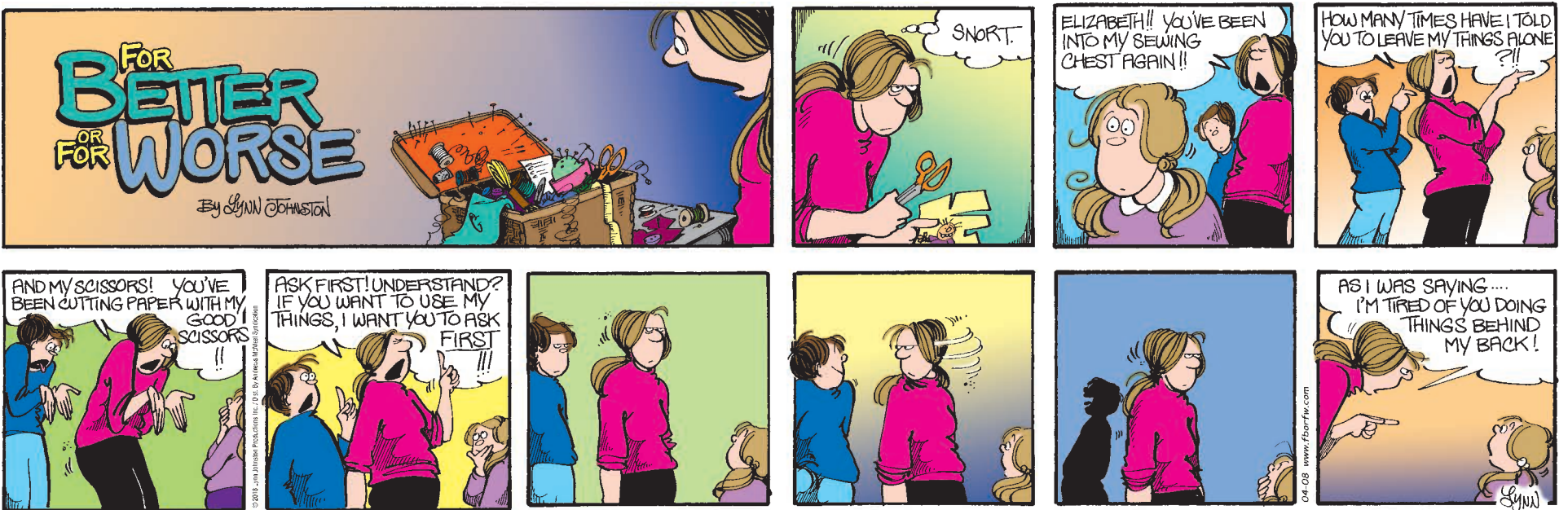
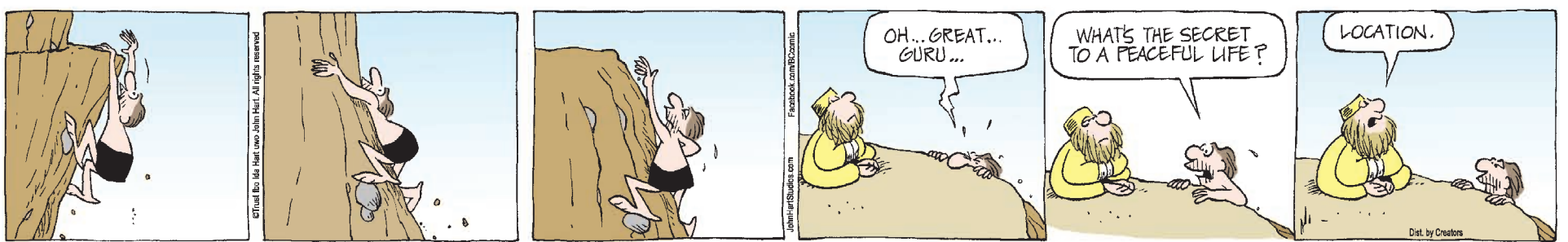
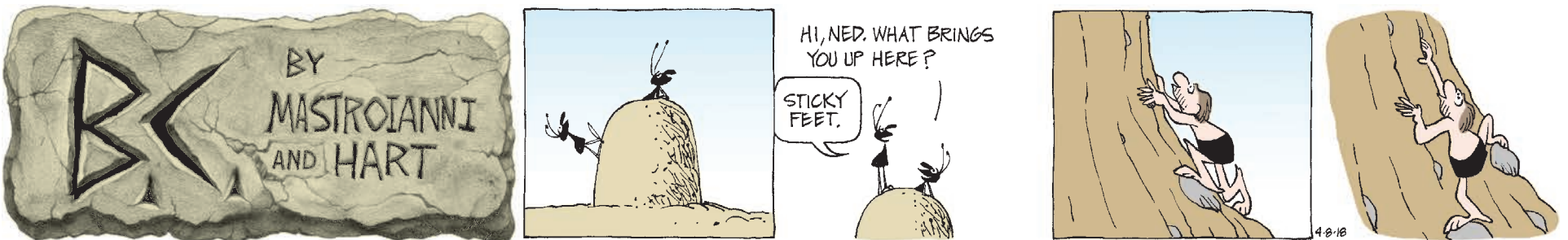
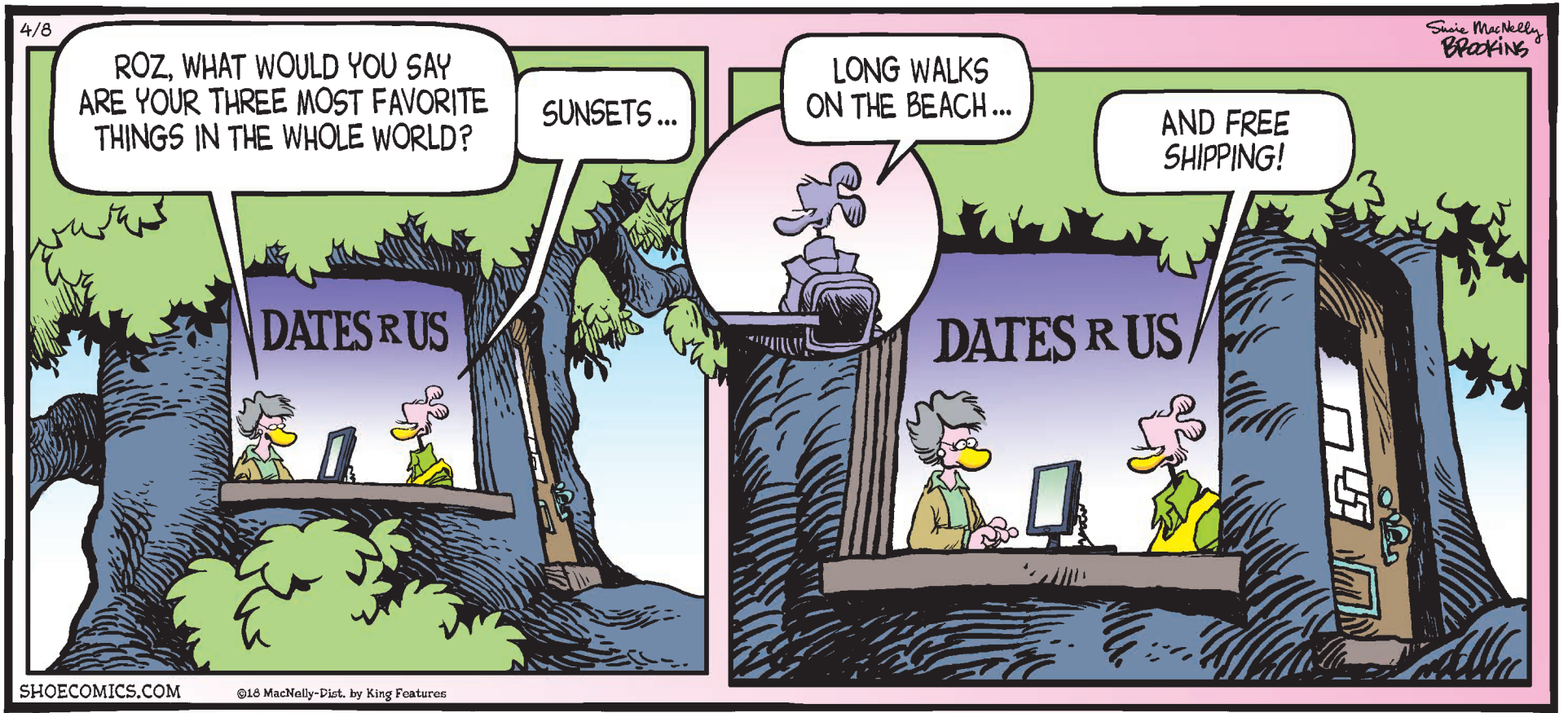
IDAHO.

I'M OUT.

YOUTAH!

SHOE

BY GARY BROOKINS & SUSIE MACNELLY



DENNIS THE MENACE

BY HANK KETCHAM

