THE GRIND: Todd continues family lineage with P-15's **B1**

the Sumter ITEM

WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY, JULY 9-11, 2025 | Serving South Carolina since October 15, 1894 **$2.50**

Ragin still looking for site for his new charter school

RISE set to open in 13 months; authorizer says facility issue not uncommon

BY BRUCE MILLS
bruce@theitem.com

Sumter school board's chairman is still looking for a facility location for his new tuition-free public charter school that has been authorized to open in about one year.

On June 24, Shawn Ragin withdrew a rezoning request that was to be before Sumter City-County Planning Commission the next day for 21 acres across U.S. 378 from Shaw Air Force Base to be rezoned to allow for the establishment of a school.

In the rezoning request documentation, the planning commission staff had recommended board denial for a property rezoning at 1402 Eagle Road from two industrial districts to general commercial to allow for Ragin's new charter school. The denial recommendation was largely because of strict safety standards since the site is near Shaw's runway.

After receiving questions from *The Sumter Item* related to the matter on June 25 and June 28, Ragin responded on Monday night that he withdrew his request after receiving feedback from the commission staff.

On Monday afternoon, *The Item* contacted Ragin's authorizer/sponsor for his approved charter school — the Charter Institute of Erskine — concerning the newspaper's questions being unanswered nearly two weeks after they were initially sent, and shortly thereafter Ragin responded by email.

Ragin also said he is still looking at other options in Sumter for his planned charter that will be named Rise Entrepreneurial Leadership Institute (RISE) and serve grades 6-12. The new charter school will open for the 2026-27 school year, likely in August 2026, with 350 students.

Charter Institute of Erskine Director of Authorization Kristin Olcott said Tuesday it's not uncommon for planned charter schools to not have secured a facility 13 months out, which is the current time frame.

Ragin's charter application that was initially submitted to the state Department of Education on or

SEE **CHARTER,** PAGE A11

A salesman in the making



ABIGAIL PITTMAN / THE SUMTER ITEM

Emmanuel Delgado-Taylor, center, 9, yells "buy one, get one free" at passersby at the family run Phantom Fireworks stand outside the old Family Video store at the corner of Liberty Street and North Guignard Drive in Sumter on Friday, July 4. See more photos from the stand and Manning's Red, White & Blue Celebration on A5.

Online donation platform now available for annual Summer of Caring fundraiser

Easy to use credit card; 100% goes to SUM

BY KEVIN HOWELL
Sumter United Ministries

"Is this a potato or an onion?" This is the most common question I ask after a client shares the reason that caused them to need assistance during an interview.

The makeup of a potato could not be simpler, but an onion has a strong flavor, multiple layers and will make you cry to get to the heart of it.

I explain further, "Is there just this one reason, or have you had many different circumstances all at once?"

Sometimes, one singular cause can derail a client, such as a job loss or physical injury. However, it seems more than half of the interviews we conduct are far more complex.

Recently, I interviewed a woman who is in her 30s and a single mother. In just the last few months, she endured wave after wave of adversity. First, corporate pressure in her workplace forced her into a lesser role at her job with a 50% decrease in pay. Her significant other and the father of her child then left to assist his family in a crisis in another state but has

SEE **CARING,** PAGE A11

SLT's 86th season will be filled with diverse shows and events

BY ALAYSHA MAPLE
alaysha@theitem.com

Coming off a monumental season, Sumter Little Theatre has announced its next season of shows, including a diverse lineup that is sure to make you laugh a lot, shed a tear and sing along.

The little theater nestled on 14 Mood Ave. wrapped up its 85th season of bringing stage classics and fresh productions to its local stage for Sumterites of all ages to enjoy. This upcoming season, with curtain call set for August, is set to keep the momentum alive — don't miss your chance to get in on the fun.

"CHICKEN & BISCUITS"
Thursday, Aug. 21, to Sunday, Aug. 31

Written by Douglas Lyons, "Chicken & Biscuits" revolves around the Jenkins family who gathers to celebrate the life of their father during his funeral. As the story unfolds, the family secrets emerge, highlighting the contrasting dynamics between sisters Baneatta and Beverly, who represent different life choices and values. The funeral serves as a backdrop for comic confrontations and reconciliations that all lead back to moral lessons

SEE **THEATER,** PAGE A11

Nature lovers will unite for 2 days of guided hiking and paddling

BY DEIRDRE CURRIN
deirdre@theitem.com

To know South Carolina's beautiful elevations, vital swamps, lush forests and lengthy nature trails is to love and appreciate them, but some of these wonders can go hidden even to locals. To further the exploration of all South Carolina has to offer in ways of natural beauty, the fifth-annual SC7 expedition has begun its month-long trek along South Carolina's hiking trails and rivers with three stops in Sumter.

Join nature enthusiasts as they hike two of Sumter's nature trails and paddle in the flourishing Sparkleberry Swamp during the third week in July.

Wednesday, July 16, is the day for hiking, beginning with a 3.5-mile hike in Poinsett State Park at 6660 Poinsett Park Road in Wedgefield. Taking place from 9 to 11:30 a.m., the hike explores a blend of mountain laurels and hardwood forests with swampland and sandy trails.

If you can't make it to Poinsett or you desire a walk more central to the city, a later-in-the-day option is the expedition's second hike around Swan Lake and the Prisma Health Shot Pouch Greenway. The 3-mile hike will start at Health Pavilion at 165 Garden St. in Sumter and will begin at 2 p.m. with an expected wrapup time of 4:30 p.m. According to a news release, this route features peaceful, shaded paths winding beside the water, with

SEE **SC7,** PAGE A11

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George Edward China Jr.
Robert Thomas Clark
Richard Scott Bell
Ronny Thomas Reed
Marie Ellis Grogan
Lymon Lee Brunson
Quincetta Latoya Abrams
Herbert Harriett
Nancy Hattie Lesane Montgomery
Eddie Lee Harvin
Napoleon Ramsey
Grant Grinnell Jr.
Darcell Carter-Amador
Lynda Kay Nielsen Karel

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the Sumter ITEM

SECOND FRONT

E-mail: pressrelease@theitem.com

DPH's Sumter Health Dept. temporarily relocates during renovations

BY SC DPH

COLUMBIA — The South Carolina Department of Public Health's Sumter County Health Department and Sumter Vital Records office is now operating from two temporary locations while its regular facilities undergo renovations.

The temporary location for the Sumter County Health Department (including the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program services) will be 407 N. Salem St., Sumter. Additionally, the Sumter Vital Records office will temporarily be at 141 N. Main St., Sumter.

"We appreciate your patience and understanding as we transition the Sumter County Health Department and Vital Records services to their temporary locations," said Jim Bruckner, DPH's Pee Dee region health director. "This move is necessary to allow extensive renovations to the current health department site in the E. Alex Heise Building at 105 N. Magnolia St."

The renovations at DPH's Sumter facility will create a more functional space that enables DPH to deliver services more effectively and efficiently. The renovations are expected to be complete by June 2026.

In the meantime, all health department, WIC and Vital Records services will remain in place at their temporary locations. Health department services include family planning, immunization/vaccination clinics and vaccination certificates, and sexually transmitted infection testing and treatment. Vital Records services include birth and parentage certificates, marriage certificates and divorce reports, and death certificates.

"Throughout the renovation period, it is our intention to continue supporting and serving the residents of Sumter County with minimal disruption to services," Bruckner said. "We appreciate you and thank you for your continued support."

To contact the Sumter County Health Department, call (803) 773-5511. To make an appointment at the Sumter clinic, call (855) 472-3432. To contact Vital Records directly, call (803) 934-2845.

Visit the DPH website at *dph.sc.gov* for more information on DPH's public health clinics and Vital Records.

CORRECTION

If you see a statement in error, contact the City Desk at (803) 774-1226 or pressrelease@theitem.com.

Sumter Museum to host unveiling of 1st-ever Kindertransport Memorial Bench at special talk on July 14

BY ALAYSHA MAPLE
alaysha@theitem.com

Temple Sinai Jewish History Center is a space where the stories of Jewish community, both near and far, have a chance to be heard and honored. And Sumter Museum invites all to partake in the conversation that aims to do just that on July 14. Jason Camis, board member of Kindertransport Association and executive director of both Sertoma International and the Hearing Charities of America, will be featured speaker for "Kindertransport Talk" on Monday, July 14, at Temple Sinai Jewish History Center, 11 Church St., at 6 p.m.



CAMIS

Camis is the grandchild of Ilse Camis, who was one of nearly 10,000 children rescued through the Kindertransport effort in 1938-39. At just 13, Ilse escaped Nazi-occupied Austria, leaving behind everything she knew, including most of her family and friends, to find refuge in England. Camis will bring her story of unimaginable loss and courageous survival to life, continuing her legacy and honoring other "Kinders" who were part of the humanitarian effort.

Following Camis' presentation, attendees are invited to a reception with light refreshments and to view a Kindertransport Association's special traveling exhibit, The Kindertransport Journey: Memory into History. The thought-provoking displays will include interpretive panels and quilt replicas that illustrate the emotional and historical depth of the Kindertransport experience.

A special highlight of the evening will be the unveiling of a Kindertransport Memorial Bench in the museum's garden, making the museum among the first locations in the world to install one of the meaningful memorials. Each bench will include a QR code linking to oral history interviews with Kindertransport survivors to ensure their stories endure for generations to come.

The event is free and open to the public. There will be free parking in the grass lot adjacent to the temple.

For more information, visit *www.sumtermuseum.org* or call (803) 775-0908.

Hootie drummer returns to Sumter on Friday

Sonefeld will share personal story of rise, fall and recovery through faith

BY BRUCE MILLS
bruce@theitem.com

A local faith-based recovery group has a real treat and attraction this week with Hootie and the Blowfish drummer Jim Sonefeld back in Sumter to provide his powerful testimony of faith and some great music.

John Sellar, a long-time active participant for the local chapter of the Christian-based Celebrate Recovery group, shared the details on Monday on Sonefeld's upcoming visit to Salt and Light Church, 360 Miller Road, on Friday night.

A Columbia-area resident, Sonefeld travels the Southeast often to share his story of how fame and fortune led to alcohol and drug addiction for the hit band's drummer in the early 2000s. Sonefeld stopped drinking in 2005 but said he did not find effective healing until a few years later with a Celebrate Recovery Group.

Sonefeld is very active in Alcoholics Anonymous, but he did incorporate Celebrate Recovery and is a person of faith, Sellar added.

He has visited Sumter generally once a year for about the last decade to share his testimony.

"Just the idea that a well-known person like this is able to be open about this I think inspires some people," Sellar said. "He's helped a lot of people because of his openness and honesty about his addiction issues and recovery.

"He's incredibly humble about it, and he knows that this really messed up his life and, I think, in sharing that people can see that it really doesn't matter how famous you are or how much money you have, addiction can get all of us. It doesn't matter who you are, and he's a perfect example of that."

In 2022, Sonefeld authored a book titled "Swimming with the Blowfish," which tells the story about the heights that the band reached, his struggles with addiction and then recovery.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Hootie and the Blowfish drummer Jim Sonefeld will return to Sumter on Friday night to share his personal story of how fame and fortune led to alcohol and drug addiction. His personal recovery involved a faith-based Celebrate Recovery group.

WANT TO GO?

WHAT: Celebrate Recovery meeting featuring Jim Sonefeld

WHEN: Friday, 6 p.m. (dinner, if interested); meeting begins at 6:45 p.m.

WHERE: Salt and Light Church, 360 Miller Road

Celebrate Recovery is based on the 12 steps involved with Alcoholics Anonymous, combined with Biblical teaching of Jesus Christ from the Sermon on the Mount, Sellar said.

The program is designed not just for people who struggle with alcohol or drug addiction, but "for any hurt, habit or hangup that you can think of," he added. Those could include food, pornography, sexual addiction, divorce, anxiety and others, Sellar said.

For those interested, dinner will be at 6 p.m. at the church. The large-group meeting with Sonefeld begins at 6:45 p.m., and he will share his testimony and music.

The meeting will run to about 8 or 8:15 p.m., Sellar added, and the former pop rocker will stick around and sign books and CDs of his music — which will be available for purchase — or other items for attendees.

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SUMTER TODAY

NOW STREAMING

"Hell on Wheels" rolled into Sumter on July 3. PETA's life-size chicken transport truck was outside Sidebar blasting real chicken cries and urging diners to go vegan every 10 seconds. According to PETA, in 2025 alone, more than 37 million chickens have been killed due to bird flu outbreaks. PETA warns animal agriculture is fueling deadly zoonotic diseases.

https://www.facebook.com/share/r/1FRGwm2Q94/



UNIVERSITY OF South Carolina SUMTER

Miller to Morgan Avenue stormwater improvements project in closeout phase

BY S.C. OFFICE OF RESILIENCY

The Miller to Morgan Avenue Stormwater Improvements project in the City of Sumter reached substantial completion in April 2025, and the project is now in its closeout phase. This effort addresses regular flooding in the City of Sumter between Jackson Street, Broad Street, Miller Road and Morgan Avenue.

To mitigate this flood hazard, the project included the design, permitting and construction of a new stormwater conveyance system to reduce the frequency and severity of flooding. As part of this improvement project, approximately 2,700 linear feet of existing underground stormwater infrastructure has been removed and replaced to reduce flooding in the area.

"Flooding has been a persistent challenge for residents and businesses in this area of Sumter, and I am proud to see meaningful progress being made to reduce that issue," states G. Murrell Smith, Speaker of the House of Representatives of South Carolina. "This project is a strong example of how collaboration between state and local partners can result in lasting infrastructure improvements that enhance quality of life and protect property."

When applying for funding from the South Carolina Office of Resilience, the City of Sumter reported five instances of notable flooding in the project area between 2015 and 2020. Flood damage resulting from these events included 80 residential properties, two churches, one industrial facility and two commercial properties.

"These drainage lines were over 50 years old, and in many areas, they were caving in or on the verge of collapse," says Mayor David Merchant. "It's been incredibly difficult to even access and shore them up over the years. This project was about more than reducing flooding — it was about eliminating serious safety concerns for families whose backyards or businesses were at risk from failing infrastructure. We're especially proud that this was the first grant we've ever received through the South Carolina Office of Resilience. Without this funding, a fix wouldn't have been possible. This is a big step forward for Sumter."

S.C. Chief Resilience Officer Ben Duncan elaborates, "In line with our mission to lessen the impacts of disasters on the communities and citizens of South Carolina, SCOR is proud that the project will reduce road closures and property damage for both residents and businesses in Sumter. This not only reduces safety risks for residents who previously experienced flooding, but also minimizes interruptions to emergency services during severe rainfall events."

The project's design, permitting and construction were funded by a $3,131,700 award allocated from SCOR's U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation program. Additionally, the City of Sumter committed a $250,000 local cost share.

"This project is a win for the people of Sumter," explains Sen. Jeff Zell, S.C. Senate District 36. "Replacing over 2,700 feet of outdated stormwater infrastructure means fewer families worrying about flooded yards and damaged property every time it rains. It's about safety, stability and giving folks the confidence to invest in their homes and community. I'm proud to see real progress being made, especially in areas that need it most."

"It is exciting to see this partnership between the state and Sumter come to fruition," says Representative J. David Weeks, S.C. House District 51. "Reducing this area's flooding risk enhances the community's resilience to future hazard events, which makes partnerships like this important to continue."

To date, SCOR has committed over $99 million in CDBG-MIT funds to public infrastructure projects to reduce flood risks. These projects can range from storm sewer installations and upgrades to retention ponds, waterway and wetland restoration.



GRAPHIC PROVIDED

Sumter native receives Association of Home Office Underwriters 2025 Hall of Fame Award

SUBMITTED

The Association of Home Office Underwriters Hall of Fame is designed to recognize members who have consistently been visible leaders in the underwriting profession, exemplified the Guiding Principles for the Underwriter throughout their careers and demonstrated a meaningful contribution to the profession.



SWINTON

With more than 40 years of experience in underwriting, Sumter native James Swinton has established himself as a seasoned specialist in the field. He began his journey in the mid-1980s at Securian Financial before progressing to roles at Southland Life and Canada Life. His subsequent position at Transamerica Re in the mid-1990s proved pivotal, as he was mentored by the late Carl Macero, refining his expertise in reinsurance underwriting and risk management. In 2000, Swinton joined Munich Re, where he serves as second vice president of Underwriting Risk Management. In his role, he's responsible for audits, claims reviews and other risk management functions.

Swinton has presented several times at AHOU, covering risk factors for scuba diving and detecting underwriting fraud. He's also spoken at numerous local and regional industry association meetings, including the Northeastern, SOA, Eastern Claims Conference and the International Claims Conference, covering topics ranging from underwriting foreign risks, financial underwriting, underwriting fraud, cause of death studies and aviation risks. In addition, he authored an "On the Risk" paper titled Scuba Diving, Deeper Insights.

Swinton has held several volunteer positions in the industry, having held key roles such as president of both the Georgia Home Office Underwriting Association and Southeastern Home Office Underwriters Association. He has also contributed as a member of AHOU Program Committee. His professional credentials include the FLMI and FALU designations. Additionally, Swinton is a 1976 graduate of Sumter High School. He holds a bachelor's degree from Johnson C. Smith University and a Master of Public Administration with a concentration in Finance from Atlanta University.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, James is committed to community service. He has worked with Youth Branding University and Junior Achievement USA, demonstrating his dedication to empowering young people and giving back to his community. Swinton resides in Stone Mountain, Georgia, with his family.

To learn more, visit the AHOU website at *www.ahou.org/page/hall-of-fame*.

CHURCH NEWS

To update your listing or add a listing, please email *pressrelease@theitem.com* and include Church News in the subject line.

First Baptist Missionary Church, 219 S. Washington St., announces:

— A Food Giveaway will be held on Friday, July 11, at 1 p.m. while supplies last.

Hearts United, meets at Bethesda Church of God, 2730 Broad St., announces:

— Hearts United will hold Living Beyond Limits from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturday, July 12. Join us for a time of encouragement through the Word of God. Be equipped and empowered to excel in the purposes of God in your life. God has designed us for greatness, and all we have to do is believe it by faith and walk into it. Come and join us as Renee Nadja leads us on a journey to becoming the best women we can be in our own God-given uniqueness. Doors open at 9:40 a.m. Join us for meet and greet and light refreshments.

LaGree AME Church, 2920 Kolb Road, announces:

— Church Homecoming will be held at 3 p.m. Sunday, July 13. The Rev. Rhudene Toomer, pastor of Bethel AME Church, Wedgefield, will be the preacher. Music will be provided by the LaGree Combined Choir and visiting choirs. A reception will be held immediately following the worship.

— Vacation Bible School 2025, "The Jesus Connection," will be held from 6-8:30 p.m. All ages are welcome and refreshments will be served each night.

Bethel AME Church, 219 E. Calhoun St., announces:

— 100 Men in Black Celebration on Sunday, Aug. 24, at 3 p.m. Presiding Elder Merrit Graves will be the guest speaker.

Living on Purpose: Compromise is the enemy of our faith

The Christian faith believes that God draws people to Himself when they hear the gospel "good news" message about how much He loves the world when He sent His Son to shed His blood on the cross as the only sacrifice that could redeem those who believe. This is why evangelism is important to the follower of Christ, as the idea is the more the gospel is presented, the more people might be convicted and respond to this gift of salvation. After a person has made their public profession in the Lord and vows to love and serve Him all the days of their lives, they proceed to be baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to symbolize they have died to sin and are now resurrected into a new creation in Christ. We rise from the grave of hopelessness and become members of God's family.



The Rev. Dr. William Holland

The Bible declares that we willingly surrender our will to do His will as we are saved by His grace through our faith. We respond to His invitation to embrace Him as the King and Master of all we are and hope to be. So, what happens next? Does this mean the person is now protected from evil and sheltered from any attacks, deceptions, lies or temptations? I wish, but the truth is the battle has just started. You see, when we were spiritually lost and blind, we did not care about things like personal accountability to God, taking up our cross or trying to live holy as God is holy. We did not have deep sorrow when we sinned or a hatred for being disobedient. However, when our spirit was transformed into a child of God and our mind was renewed, our thoughts and behavior changed.

The passage in I Corinthians 6:20 says, "You were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies." We seldom hear this theology anymore, but true followers of Jesus Christ have been purchased and rescued from sin and its consequences through the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. We are called to live a life that honors God, as we are now owned and directed by Him. Within the context of this chapter, the sobering message is the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God. Verse 19 prefaces our passage by discussing how the physical body of the believer becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit, which lives within them as they no longer allow their carnality to rule them but are completely devoted to love and serve God alone.

Being sanctified means to be separate from the world. Since our identity is now changed, we no longer dwell or desire to do the things we used to do. Sounds easy, right? Not hardly. One of the greatest enemies of the faith is compromise. It is a destroyer of holiness. I've spoken with individuals who claim to be born-again followers of Jesus, but when I mention spiritual warfare, they admit they do not really know much about it. Sadly, sin is easily accepted by the religious masses, and to shine God's holy light of strictness and discipline upon their dark secrets causes lukewarm attitudes to become restless and uncomfortable. So, what is the psychological alternative? Just talk about how much God wants to bless us and all the good things He has planned for us. Don't mention blood, repentance, sacrifice, dying, discipline or war; it's too negative.

Our own imaginations will always deny the truth of how the level of spiritual warfare we are encountering reveals how close we are to God. This cuts deep, but if we do not intercede daily and are not seeking a constant awareness of His presence, we are more enthused about His blessings than doing His will. If we are not accomplishing our mission, demons will not worry about us. It's when we are tearing down evil strongholds through prayer, and trying to help others escape the lies of the devil, that all hell will come against us. I realize it's secure to enjoy the comforts of life and dream about heaven, but what about God's demand that we spiritually fight against the darkness? What, too painful and violent? Too dirty, embarrassing and difficult? Are we afraid that if we give ourselves completely to God, it will turn our lives upside down? Take the time and read I Peter 5:8-9, II Corinthians 10:3-5 and Ephesians 6:12, and you will notice our responsibility is more than attending church.

Dr. Holland is a minister, chaplain, and author. Read more about the Christian life at billyhollandministries.com.

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and live stream on
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Please check our websitefbmcsumter.org
for more information or call the church
Tuesday through Thursday 10:00 am to
1:00 pm.

Jehovah Missionary Baptist Church
609 Manning Ave. • 803.775.4032
Marion H. Newton
Sunday Worship: 8:30 am
Wednesday Bible Study - Online YouTube

Salem Missionary Baptist Church
320 West Fulton Street
803-775-8054
Reverend Dr. Cartrell Woods, Jr. Pastor
Sun. School 9:00 am
Praise Worship 9:55 am
Worship 10:00 am

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Saint Anne and Saint Jude Roman Catholic Church
1855 Beckwood Rd
Sumter, SC. 29153
803-773-9244
Mass times:
Saturday: Vigil Mass 5:00pm
Sunday: 8:00am, 10:00am, 1200pm
(Spanish) 5:00pm

Church of Christ

Plaza Church of Christ
1402 Camden Hwy. • 905-3163
Sunday School: 10 am
Sunday Worship: 11 am & 6 pm
Wed. Bible Class: 7 pm

Episcopal

Church of the Good Shepherd
401 Dingle Street
Sunday Worship: First and Third Sunday
9:30am

Interdenominational

Love Covenant Church
245 Oswego Hwy, Sumter
803-775-7605
Tommy and Angela Frederick, Pastors
Sunday Worship 11am
Thursday Evening 7pm
www.lovecovenantchurch.com

Spiritual Life Christian Center
4710 Broad Street * 968-5771
Randolph & Minerva Paige, Pastors
Sunday Worship: 11:00 am
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:00 pm
www.spirituallifechristiancenter.com

Lutheran - ELCA

St James Lutheran Church
1137 Alice Dr, Sumter
773-2260 / www.stjamessumter.org
Rev. Scott Landrum
Adult Sunday School: 9:00 am
Sunday Worship: 10:00 am

Non-Denominational

Christ Community Church (CCC)
320 Loring Mill Rd., Sumter
www.cccsumter.com
803-905-7850
Sunday Worship 8:08, 9:30 & 11:00 am
Greater St. Paul Church
200 Watkins Street • 803-778-1355
Founder Bishop W.T. English
Sunday School - 10:30 am
Sunday Morning Worship - 11:30 am
Wed. Mid Week Service - 7:30 pm

The Rock Church of Sumter
365 N. Saint Paul Church Rd
803-494-7625 (ROCK)
Pastor Gwendolyn Credle
Sunday School 9:30 am
Worship 11:00 am
Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm

Sumter Bible Church
420 South Pike West, Sumter
803-773-8339 • Pastor Ron Davis
Sunday School 10:00 am
Worship 11:00 am & 6:30 pm
Wed. Bible Study & Prayer 7:00 pm

Pentecostal

First United Pentecostal Church
14 Plowden Mill Rd • 775-9493
Pastor Theron Smith
Sunday Service: 10:00 am & 6:30 pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30 pm

Sumter First Pentecostal Holiness Church
2609 McCray's Mill Rd. • 481-8870.
Brett Gardner, Pastor
Sunday School: 10:00 am
Sunday Worship: 10:45 am
Wed. Bible Study/Youth Group: 6:30 p.m.

Presbyterian - ARP

Mayesville Presbyterian Church
109 W. Sumter St, Mayesville
803-453-5759 / www.mayesvillepres.org.
Rev. Brian C. Peake, Pastor
Worship Service 11:00 am
Sunday School 10:00 a.m.

Presbyterian USA

First Presbyterian Church of Sumter
9 W Calhoun St (at Main St.)
(803) 773-3814 • info@fpcsumter.org
"Classes for all ages" 9:30 am
Hospitality & Fellowship
(Fellowship Hall) 10:10 a.m.
Worship (Sanctuary) 10:30 a.m.







Selling fireworks is a family affair at the Phantom Fireworks stand outside the old Family Video store at the corner of Liberty Street and North Guignard Drive in Sumter on July 4. Here, Kenyetta Hagans, left, dances with her son, Emmanuel Delgado-Taylor, 9, outside the stand.



Kariell McKnight, 2, looks out into the distance with her aunt's support. She won't wear shoes — she hates them, her family said.





The rockets' red glare





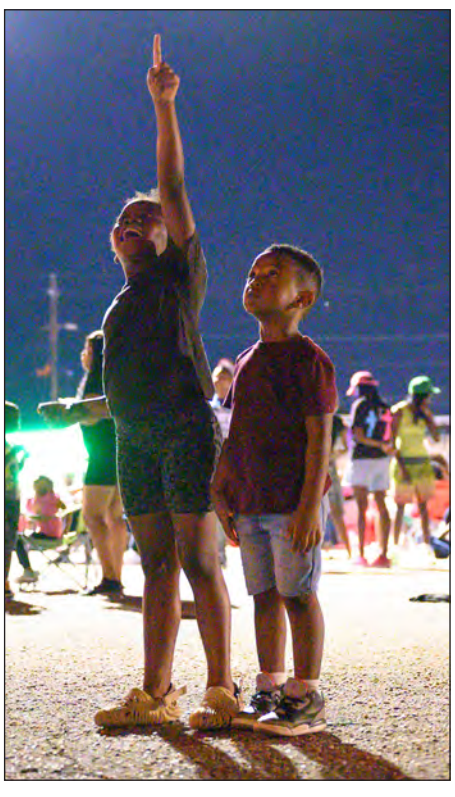
PHOTOS BY ABIGAIL PITTMAN / THE SUMTER ITEM

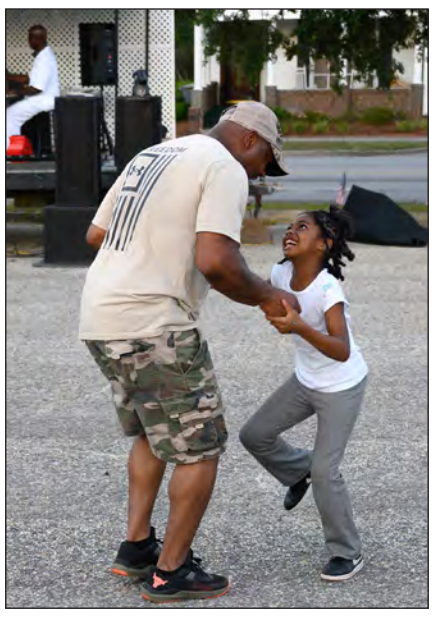
The City of Manning hosted its annual Red, White & Blue Celebration on Thursday, July 3, in the Manning Municipal Parking Lot near the corner of East Boyce and North Church streets. Independence Day celebrants enjoyed music, food, face painting and a fireworks display.

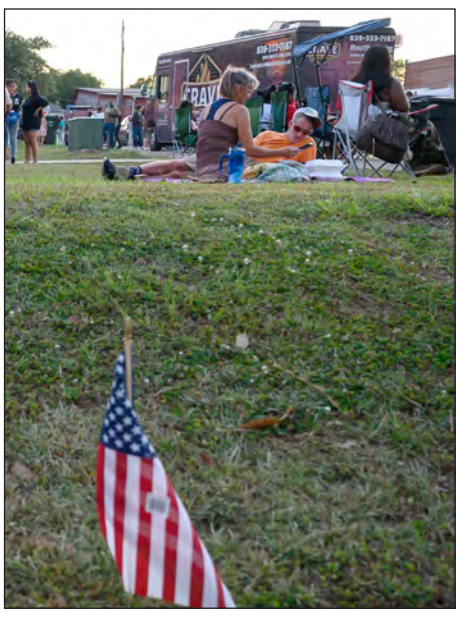












SC7 invites public to hike or paddle during visits to Poinsett, Swan Lake and Sparkleberry Swamp next week; library hosts summer family events

To make a submission to our events list, email *pressrelease@theitem.com* with EVENTS in the subject line.

SUMTER COUNTY

Join Temple Sinai and Sumter Museum for their **Curious George book readings** this summer. The final reading will be on Saturday, July 12, at 1:30 p.m., when kids can hear "Curious George's Dinosaur Discovery." The event is free and open to the public at 11 Church St.

Want a movie experience along with a few summer reading books? The Sumter County Library invites families for its **Family Movie @ Main** series all summer long on Wednesdays at the main branch at 111 N. Harvin St. The next featured movie, "If," will be played on Wednesday, July 16, at 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Kids can also read to a therapy dog on Saturday, July 12, from 11 to noon at the same branch. Come tell Sparky, Skipper and Missy a story! If you can't make it to the main branch, the Wesmark branch is also hosting a movie afternoon on the second Friday of every month from 3:30 to 5 p.m. at 180 W. Wesmark Blvd. The next movie date is July 18 with "Dragonkeeper."

Join SC7 for an **Expedition Hike** at Poinsett State Park with your family this summer. On Wednesday, July 16, from 9 a.m. to noon, take a guided 3.5-mile hike and explore sections of the Knot, Coquina and Splice trails, seeing everything from pine uplands to lush, fern-filled ravines. You'll learn about the unique natural features of the park, its connection to the broader S.C. park system and ways to engage with the outdoors through hiking, conservation and stewardship. Meet at the park office parking lot. The park is at 6660 Poinsett Park Road, Wedgefield. If you can't make the morning hike, there will be another, shorter hike the same day from 2 to 4:30 p.m. with the group at Swan Lake Iris Gardens. The 2.25-mile hike will focus on local conservation efforts, student-led research and the community's environmental stewardship. Meet at Health Pavilion, 165 Garden St., Sumter. Both will be easy hikes that are open to all with free admission.

If hiking isn't your thing, perhaps kayaking with SC7? Take a **5.7-mile paddle** around Sparkleberry Swamp on Thursday, July 17, from 9 a.m. to noon. Bring your own kayak or canoe, or book your excursion through Coastal Expeditions at *https://coastal-expeditions.com*. The swamp at the northern end of Lake Marion in South Carolina's Santee region is a sub-merged forest of cypress and tupelo trees with plenty to see, including great blue herons, white egrets, owls, woodpeckers and the prothonotary warbler. The trip is an easy paddle, free and open to all. Meet at Sparkleberry Landing Road.



Tom Mullikin of South Carolina Seven (SC7) walks along Shot Pouch Greenway in 2024. Join the group for a hike at Poinsett State Park on Wednesday, July 16, or at Swan Lake Iris Gardens later that day.

SUMTER ITEM FILE PHOTO

City of Sumter Aquatics Center, 1115 S. Lafayette Drive, is open for the summer so families can cool down. The center is equipped with a six swim lane pool, diving blocks, lazy river, waterslide and wade pool with beach entrance and fountain and also offers hot showers, a concessions area, party rental, life jackets available at no charge, and lockers available for rent. Certified pool operators and aquatic facilities operators. Lifeguards, swim coaches, water aerobics and water safety instructors employed during the season are certified through the American Red Cross. The center is open to the public from Memorial Day to Labor Day. For additional information, visit *www.sumtersc.gov/aquatics*, call (803) 774-3998, or email *aquatics@sumtersc.gov*.

There are five bands scheduled to bring hits and all genres of tunes to downtown Sumter through the **Fourth Fridays Concert Series** this summer. The remaining bands on the schedule this year are: July 25 – United Sound Entertainment, Aug. 22 – Chris Taylor & The Rumor and Sept. 26 – Sole Purpose. Concert attendance is free, and there will be plenty of food and drink available for sale. Sertoma will have plenty of cold brews for sale, Palmetto Optimist Club will be back with free books for the kids and popcorn for sale. Downtown restaurants will be open for dine-in and take-out.

The fourth-annual **KRAWLIN' FOR CHRIST Jeep Show and Shine** is coming up quickly. Join the group July 26 for a fun-filled day with Jeep vendors, live music, food vendors, RC course and Jeep Show and Shine Competition. It will be an indoor and outdoor event open to the public with proceeds going to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. There will also be raffles for prizes and a 50/50 raffle. Register your Jeep for $20 the morning of the event. Learn more at *https://Krawlinforchrist.wixsite.com/my-site-1* or email *krawlinforchrist@sc.rr.com*. The event will be at Sumter County Civic Center, 700 W. Liberty St.

Find a bite to eat this summer as Swan Lake Iris Gardens presents **Food Truck Saturdays** through Aug. 9. Each Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., get lunch from various food trucks with a nice view at the lake, 822 W. Liberty St. Admission to the gardens is free.

Cars and Coffee Sumter invites the community to join the group this summer to enjoy each other's company and check out all types of vehicles. Cars, trucks and motorcycles are welcome. Coffee, water and doughnuts will be available, first come, first served. Cars and Coffee Sumter T-shirts will also be available. Donations benefit Helping South Carolina, a 501(c)3 nonprofit of Sumter. Join the group, and bring your best ride. The events are at Gamecock Lanes, 817 Broad St., Sumter, on July 26 and Aug. 23 from 9 to 11 a.m. Email *carsandcoffeesumter@gmail.com* for more information.

Iron Legacy MC will host the **Sumter Dreamride** to benefit South Carolina Special Olympics on Saturday, July 12, with registration from 7 to 9 a.m. that day. The event will include a 50/50 raffle. The group will start at Sumter Hobby Lobby then ride to Great Falls, then head back to Sumter, ending up at Yucatan Mexican Restaurant and Tobacconist Cigar Lounge. There will be an afterparty at the Sumter Clubhouse after the ride. Bike participation is $20, and riders are $10. Email *sumter.sc.ilmc@gmail.com* for more information.

Kick up dust with Southern Vibes Entertainment as it presents **Field Fest 2025: Boots On The Ground** on Saturday, July 19. This country-themed extravaganza will be a day filled with good music, great vibes and, of course, dancing. Anyone under 18 will only be permitted with a parent or guardian. The event will be at 3155 Oswego Hwy. Buy tickets at *https://tinyurl.com/wy-364jfs*.

Sumter Original Brewery will host **Sumter's first beer festival** on Saturday, Aug. 2, beginning at 1 p.m. This will be a tasting tour of craft breweries where you can sample a wide variety of craft beers. You must be 21 or older to attend. Get your tickets and find more information at *https://tinyurl.com/5ycx-a83s*.

CLARENDON COUNTY

Food Trucks in the Park, sponsored by Clarendon County Recreation Department, will be held every Wednesday beginning June 18 through July 30 at J.C. Britton Park, 3057 Raccoon Road. Truck vendor times will begin at 8 a.m. and end at 4 p.m. The park will be open from sunrise to sunset for your enjoyment. The vendor fee is $25. For more information, call (803) 473-3543. Bring a chair, claim a seat under one of the shelters, relax outdoors, and enjoy delicious meals from local food trucks.

The **3rd-Annual Back to School Bash** will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, July 12, at East Clarendon Middle High School gymnasium. The bash will include free food, haircuts, activities and much more. For more information, call LaQuan Barnes at (803) 460-1310.

The **3rd-Annual Back 2 School Summerton Town Bash** will be held from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. Saturday, July 19, at 1154 4th St. gymnasium. Sponsored by Summerton Police Department, Interim Police Chief Leshawn Green and the Town of Summerton, the free event is open to the community. Sponsorships and vendors are welcome. Please RSVP by June 30 to reserve your sponsorship and vendor space. Make donations payable to Town of Summerton. For more information, contact Green at (803) 460-4287, Kathleen L. Gibson at (803) 225-0832 or Annett Smith at (803) 460-6679 or *annett.smith1@gmail.com*.



He pioneered the cellphone. It changed how people around the world talk to each other — and don't

BY MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN, CHINEDU ASADU and JAVIER ARCIGA
Associated Press



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Martin Cooper, who led the team that built the first mobile cellphone, holds a prototype of that phone at his home on April 4, 2025, in San Diego.

DEL MAR, Calif. — Dick Tracy got an atom-powered two-way wrist radio in 1946. Marty Cooper never forgot it.

The Chicago boy became a star engineer who ran Motorola's research and development arm when the hometown telecommunications titan was locked in a 1970s corporate battle to invent the portable phone. Cooper rejected AT&T's wager on the car phone, betting that America wanted to feel like Dick Tracy, armed with "a device that was an extension of you, that made you reachable everywhere."

Fifty-two years ago, Cooper declared victory in a call from a Manhattan sidewalk to the head of AT&T's rival program. His four-pound DynaTAC 8000X has evolved into a global population of billions of smartphones weighing mere ounces apiece. Some 4.6 billion people — nearly 60% of the world — have mobile internet, according to a global association of mobile network operators.

The tiny computers that we carry by the billions are becoming massive, interlinked networks of processors that perform trillions of calculations per second — the computing power that artificial intelligence needs. The simple landlines once used to call friends or family have evolved into omnipresent glossy screens that never leave our sight and flood our brain with hours of data daily, deluging us with endless messages, emails, videos and a soundtrack that many play constantly to block the outside world.

From his home in Del Mar, California, the inventor of the mobile phone, now 96, watches all of this. Of one thing Cooper is certain: The revolution has really just begun.

THE PHONE IS ABOUT TO BECOME A THINKING COMPUTER

Now, the winner of the 2024 National Medal of Technology and Innovation — the United States' highest honor for technological achievement — is focused on the cellphone's imminent transition to a thinking mobile computer fueled by human calories to avoid dependence on batteries. Our new parts will run constant tests on our bodies and feed our doctors real-time results, Cooper predicts.

"That will let people anticipate diseases before they happen," Cooper envisions. "People are going to die from old age and accidents, but they're not going to die from disease. That's a revolution in medicine."

Human behavior is already adapting to smartphones, some observers say, using them as tools that allow overwhelmed minds to focus on quality communication.

The phone conversation has become the way to communicate the most intimate of social ties, says Claude Fischer, a sociology professor at the University of California, Berkeley and author of "America Calling: A Social History of the Telephone to 1940."

For almost everyone, the straight-up phone call has become an intrusion. Now everything needs to be preceded by a message. "There seems to be a sense that the phone call is for heart-to-heart and not just for information exchange," Fischer says.

And this from a 20-year-old corroborates that: "The only person I call on a day-to-day basis is my cousin," says Ayesha Iqbal, a psychology student at Suffolk County Community College. "I primarily text everyone else."

Child education student Katheryn Ruiz, 19, concurs, saying "texting is used for just like nothing substantial, like nothing personal."

Sometimes the roles are reversed, though. Sixty-eight-year-old Diana Cunningham of Overbrook, Kansas, population 1,005, uses a group text to stay in touch with her kids and grandkids. Her 18-year-old granddaughter Bryndal Hoover, a senior at nearby Lawrence High School, says she prefers voice calls over texting because then "I can understand, 'Oh, how should I go about a conversation?'"

When she was a girl, Karen Wilson's family shared a party line with other phone customers outside Buffalo, New York. Wilson, 79, shocked her granddaughter by telling her about the party line when the girl got a cellphone as a teenager.

"What did you do if you didn't wait?" the girl asked. Responded her grandmother: "You went down to their house and you yelled, 'Hey, Mary, can you come out?'"

THE BRAVE NEW WORLD HAS A PRICE

Many worry about the changes exerted by our newly interconnected, highly stimulated world.

We increasingly buy online and get products delivered without the possibility of serendipity. There are fewer opportunities to greet a neighbor or store employee and find out something unexpected, to make a friend, to fall in love. People are working more efficiently as they drown.

"There's no barrier to the number of people who can be reaching out to you at the same time, and it's just overwhelming," says Kristen Burks, an associate circuit judge in Macon, Missouri.

Most importantly, sociologists, psychologists and teachers say, near-constant phone-driven screen time is cutting into kids' ability to learn and socialize. A growing movement is pushing back against cellphones' intrusion into children's daily lives.

"At the turn of the millennium, technology companies based on the West Coast of the United States created a set of world-changing products," New York University social psychologist Jonathan Haidt writes in "The Anxious Generation," which has been on *The New York Times* best-seller list for a year.

"By creating a firehose of addictive content that entered through kids' eyes and ears, and by displacing physical play and in-person socializing, these companies have rewired childhood and changed human development on an almost unimaginable scale," he writes.

Seven states have signed — and 20 states have introduced — statewide bell-to-bell phone bans in schools. Additional states have moved to prohibit them during teaching time.

That doesn't sit well with the smartphone's inventor, who says there are better solutions than regulation. "Accommodating disruptive technologies requires disruptive solutions," Cooper wrote from Del Mar. "Wouldn't it be better for teachers to integrate the cellphone that provides access to all the information in the world?"

GLOBAL INEQUALITY IS AN ISSUE

That advantage is coming to rich countries faster than poor ones.

The first time that Nnaemeka Agbo had to leave his family in Nigeria for a prolonged period, life shuttled him to Russia for studies, like many other young Nigerians increasingly desperate to relocate to seek better opportunities.

Adjusting to life in Russia when he moved there in 2023 was tough, he says, but one thing kept him going; WhatsApp calls with family. "One thing that kept me sane was calling home every time, and it made me feel closer to my people," the 31-year-old says.

In a country that has one of the world's highest poverty and hunger levels despite being Africa's top oil producer, Agbo's experience mirrors many young people in Nigeria increasingly forced to choose between remaining at home with family or aiming at a better life elsewhere. At least 37% of African adults expressed their desire to live somewhere else in 2023, the highest rate in the world, according to a Gallup survey published in October last year.

For many, phone calls blur the distance and offer comfort.

"No matter how busy my schedule is, I must call my people every weekend, even if that's the only call I have to make," Agbo says.

In Africa, where only 37% of the population had internet access in 2023, according to the International Telecommunication Union, regular mobile calls are the only option many have. In northern Nigeria's Zamfara state, Abdulmalik Saidu says the mobile connectivity rate is so low that "sometimes we stay for weeks without network."

When 19-year-old Shamsu Deen-Cole flew from Sierra Leone to the United States to study international relations in 1971, making a call to his parents in Sierra Leone would take days, starting with telling his parents when to expect the call. Calls would cost around $150 for under 10 minutes. "There was no time for extra talks or complimentary because it would all add up in cost," recalls Deen-Cole, 73.

Tabane Cissé, who moved from Senegal to Spain in 2023, makes phone calls about investing Spanish earnings at home. Otherwise, it's all texts, or voice notes, with one exception.

His mother doesn't read or write, but when he calls "it's as if I was standing next to her," Cissé says. "It brings back memories — such pleasure."

He couldn't do it without the cellphone. And half a world away, that suits Marty Cooper just fine.

"There are more cellphones in the world today than there are people," Cooper says. "Your life can be made infinitely more efficient just by virtue of being connected with everybody else in the world. But I have to tell you that this is only the beginning."



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Notice of Filing and Public Hearings

Application of Duke Energy Progress, LLC, for Increase in Electric Rates, Adjustments in Electric Rate Schedules and Tariffs, and Request for an Accounting Order - **Docket No. 2025-154-E**

Why is this Notice Important?

- The Public Service Commission of South Carolina ("Commission") has scheduled public hearings in this case and will decide what rates Duke Energy Progress, LLC, ("DEP" or "the Company") can charge.
- DEP is requesting a rate increase and changes to the Company's electric rates and schedules for retail electric base rates.
- According to the Application, the proposed rates and charges represent an overall annual revenue increase of approximately $74.8 million. Electric rates, if approved, will be effective for service rendered on and after February 1, 2026.

Duke Energy Progress, LLC Residential Service – Rate RES Current and Proposed Typical Bill Example

Typical Bill kWh Sales	Current Bill As of June 1, 2025	Bill After Total Effective February 1, 2026	Typical Bill Increase
1,000 kWh	$144.85	$166.51	$21.66

Monthly Bill Impacts

Line No.	Customer Class	Average Sales per Bill (kWh)	Average Monthly Bill Impact[1] $ Increase	Average Monthly Bill Impact[1] % Increase
1	Residential	1,140	$24.66	15.1%
2	Commercial	9,684	$126.68	12.8%
3	Industrial	2,344,770	$6,008.43	3.6%

[1] The actual monthly bill impact will vary by each individual customer within each of the rate classifications, and by month. The table directly above includes the average rate increase calculation based on a weighted average of total proposed revenues and kWh across each customer class.

The case was filed according to S.C. Code Ann. Sections 58-27-820 and 58-27-870 and S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 103-303 and 103-823; these hearings have been scheduled according to S.C. Code Ann. Section 58-27-870 and S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 103-817.

A public merits hearing has been scheduled in this case to begin on **Monday, October 27, 2025**, at **10:00 a.m. and continuing through the week as necessary**, at the Public Service Commission, Hearing Room, 101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia, SC 29210.
Public Hearings have also been scheduled for persons interested in attending and/or providing in-person testimony in Florence, Sumter, and/or Lee Counties or in-person or virtually in Columbia.

Date and Time of Hearing:	Location:	Please Pre-Register By:
September 25, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.	Florence County Council Chambers, County Complex 180 N. Irby Street, Room 803, Florence, South Carolina 29501	September 18, 2025
September 29, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.	Sumter High School Auditorium 2580 McCray's Mill Road, Sumter, South Carolina 29154	September 22, 2025
October 2, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.	Lee County Courthouse 123 South Main Street, Bishopville, South Carolina 29010	September 25, 2025
October 27, 2025 AM Session: 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. PM Session: 4 p.m. – 8 p.m.	Public Service Commission Hearing Room 101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia, SC 29210	October 20, 2025

For information on this entire Case, visit: https://dms.psc.sc.gov/Web/Dockets/Detail/119377

Intervention deadline: Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Manner of filing Intervention: Email a Petition to Intervene to contact@psc.sc.gov or mail a Petition to Intervene to 101 Executive Center Drive, Suite 100, Columbia, SC 29210. Please include your email address. You must give a copy of your Petition to Intervene to all Parties in this case.

Manner to file Letters of Protest: File Public Comments or Letters of Protest by emailing contact@psc.sc.gov or mail Public Comments or Letters of Protest to 101 Executive Center Drive, Suite 100, Columbia, SC 29210.

For questions regarding this filing, contact the Office of Regulatory Staff at 1-800-922-1531, the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs at 1-800-922-1594, Duke Energy Progress, LLC, 1-803-988-7132, or for public information on this filing, contact the Public Service Commission at 1-803-896-5100.

Women buck trend, look to grow rodeo sport of ranch bronc riding



JEFF MCINTOSH / THE CANADIAN PRESS VIA AP

Victoria Ruf, of Rocky View County, Alberta, hits the ground after her ride in women's ranch bronc during rodeo action in Crossfield, Alberta, on Saturday, June 14.

CALGARY, Alberta (AP) — Sophia Bunney launched the first time she tried ranch bronc riding, landing "quite a ways away from the horse."

"I'm very stubborn, and I don't like being defeated," said the 18-year-old from Cessford, Alberta.

In other words, the teenager was hooked on a sport that pits women against bucking horses for eight seconds.

"I always kind of wanted to hop on a bronc," Bunney told the Canadian Press. "In Grade 3, we did 'what do you want to be when you grow up?' and I said I wanted to be a female bronc rider."

Unlike saddle bronco riding, a rodeo mainstay, ranch bronc uses a regular western saddle — not a specialized one — and riders hang on with two hands instead of one. A hand is on a rein and the other on a strap wrapped around the saddle horn.

Pearl Kersey, who won the Canadian women's ranch bronc title recently in Ponoka, Alberta, is president of Women's Ranch Bronc Canada and teaches it at clinics.

"I've got teenagers, 20-year-olds, 30-year-olds and this year a woman in her 50s. I was like, 'You sure?'" Kersey said. "She doesn't want to compete. She wants to try it before she gets too old. We have bucking machines. She doesn't necessarily need to get on a horse. They can go through all the drills and the bucking machine, and if they're comfortable enough, they can get on a horse."

GETTING USED TO IT

It took a while for 19-year-old Blayne Bedard, who grew up cow riding in the Canadian Girls Rodeo Association, to master keeping her feet forward toward the horse's shoulders.

"If they come back, I'm like a pendulum, and I just go head over teakettle," Bedard said. "For the longest time, that was my biggest problem with riding ranch bronc and why I kept bucking off was because my feet weren't moving and they'd come behind me, and I'd get lawn-darted right away."

She's improved to the point where Bedard has competed in the last two Canadian championships.

"I like the look of it, too," Bedard said. "You get cool pictures."

One of the lessons Bedard picked up at a Kersey clinic had nothing to do with riding form — and everything to do with what goes inside a boot.

"I put baby powder in my boots every time before I ride, and I wear my mom's boots that are a size too big for me, because if you get your foot stuck in a stirrup — which I've had a few times — you need your boot to be able to come off so you're not being dragged by the horse," she said.

EXPOSURE FOR THE SPORT

Women's ranch bronc isn't part of the $2.1 million Calgary Stampede, but women's breakaway roping debuted at the 10-day rodeo. Breakaway and barrel racing are the two women's events on a program that also featured men's bull riding, saddle bronc, bareback, steer wrestling and tie-down roping.

The Ponoka Stampede adding women's ranch bronc to its lineup in 2022 was a big step forward, Kersey said. Inclusion in the Calgary Stampede would be another milestone.

"The ultimate is the same with girls in breakaway roping, which is getting into pro rodeos because that's when you get the big money," she said. "We're way bigger with the added money than we were, but it takes time. ... It takes a while to get contestant numbers up."

Kersey, 36, has qualified for the world finals July 19-20 in Cheyenne, Wyoming, where she won in 2019 and has twice finished second. Kersey intends to retire from competition after this year but continue teaching.

One of her students, Calgary's Emma Eastwood, picked it up quickly thanks to years of riding horses and a stint as an amateur jockey. She attended Kersey's clinics last fall and this spring and won an event in just her third time competing.

"It is difficult to try and think through your ride and hang on through all that adrenaline," said the 27-year-old massage therapist. "Things kind of get a little blurry, and it's hard to process everything going on so quickly."

Rodeo bucking events have traditionally been the domain of men. Kersey, Eastwood and Bedard say the cowboys have been welcoming, though Bunney's experience has been mixed. Kersey said she has heard from many.

"Women have come up to me and said, 'Thank you for doing what you're doing.' They might not go into ranch broncs, but it just gave them the power in themselves to go pursue something that they wanted that they didn't think they could because they were women," Kersey said. "Other girls tell me, 'I saw you ride at Ponoka,' and they're like 'I want to try it.' Sometimes it's a confidence-booster thing. Sometimes they want to see if they'll like it, and some are like 'Yeah, I'm doing this.'"

Husband's new friendship puts marriage on the rocks



Dear Abby
ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: I am 57 and have been married for 32 years to my husband, who retired from his full-time job last year. I still work full time. Since his retirement, he has been going to a bar once a week or so, spending a few hours visiting with the customers and staff.

One of the staff has taken an interest in being his "buddy." My husband is outgoing and somewhat flirtatious. The staff member is a younger, female bartender who he invites to our home bar for drinks. They have also established a social media relationship and send text messages.

When I had an out-of-town trip planned, they concocted a plan for her to come over for cocktails with another of our friends. They planned to keep it a secret because "I might become upset." I found out and DID become upset and have remained so.

I have discovered other messages, and I no longer trust my husband. I don't think they are in a physical relationship, but despite his reassurances, I can't let go of what might have been shared about me and feel a deep sense of betrayal. How can I move forward?

SUSPICIOUS IN WASHINGTON

DEAR SUSPICIOUS: What the bartender and your husband are doing is inappropriate. It might be worthwhile to ask her employer whether there are any rules about their staff socializing with patrons outside the establishment. As to your lack of trust in your "flirtatious" husband, under these circumstances it is understandable. Marriage counseling may help to repair your relationship. Offer him the option of going with you, and if he refuses, go alone.

DEAR ABBY: I have been working with a personal trainer for a year who just gave me the bad news that he may be leaving soon for a promotion in Chicago. I'm happy he's so motivated and hardworking, but I have grown to adore him. I feel like we're connected.

Lately, when I think about his leaving, it almost makes me cry. He's so kind, protective, funny and sweet to me. He mentioned in one of our first sessions that he was attracted to me. He tells me I'm beautiful, and it makes me smile. If he moves away, it will leave a hole in my heart. I feel like he's forgetting everything we have shared.

I text him but don't want to be a pest. Should I tell him how I feel before it's too late? Does it seem clingy? How do I know he feels the same way about me without making myself look like a fool?

WORKED UP IN PHOENIX

DEAR WORKED UP: You wrote that your trainer said he "may" be moving to Chicago. How definite is it? Forgive me if this seems harsh, but if your feelings are reciprocated, your trainer would invite you to move to Chicago with him, or at least find time to see you outside of your paid sessions. If you think it would help to express your feelings for him, say so. It's a huge compliment, and he should regard it as such. I don't think you have anything to lose by being honest.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

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OPINION

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

GUEST COMMENTARY

Doing nothing for education is not an option

The July 5 commentary in *The Item*, raising concerns about Sumter School District's realignment vote and questioning its impact on a future master facilities plan, deserves a direct and honest response. As a lifelong Sumter resident and advocate for our children's future, I believe the worst course of action we can take right now is to do nothing.

The call by the Rev. Ralph Canty to prioritize a comprehensive master plan before implementing realignment reflects wisdom and foresight. But the deeper issue is not about the timing of realignment; it is about the urgency of action. When will this master plan be completed? What is its projected cost? And how long can our children wait in outdated, under-resourced and inequitable environments while adults debate over a perfect solution?

We cannot afford to wait: The Rev. Canty raises valid points. Schools with declining enrollments, outdated buildings and ineffective operational models should be addressed through strategic, community-informed planning. However, the master plan which should indeed guide the district's long-term capital development remains undefined. To date, no clear timeline or cost estimate has been presented to the public. Without this information, it becomes a vision without substance and risks becoming a rhetorical placeholder for inaction.

Meanwhile, we face an even more urgent crisis: Young people are killing each other. The realignment debate cannot be separated from the social conditions it indirectly influences. Schools play a pivotal role in shaping community life, and when we delay critical decisions about educational equity, facilities and access, we are delaying progress that could uplift neighborhoods and redirect young lives.



Reginald Evans

Why does the board appear divided? It is disheartening to witness a board divided not simply by policy differences but by what appears to be competing loyalties and fractured priorities. Public trust is eroded when votes appear bloc-driven rather than guided by the best interest of all children in all zip codes. Every board member has a moral responsibility to prioritize students above politics. Community unity starts with board unity. Without it, even the best plans will flounder due to a lack of credibility.

We must act now: Delaying realignment until the master plan is complete is not a responsible choice if the master plan lacks a defined timeline or budget. Instead, the district should move forward on parallel tracks: begin realignment based on current needs and conditions, and simultaneously accelerate the development of a transparent, public-facing master plan. These are not mutually exclusive endeavors. Strategic adaptation and long-term planning must coexist.

In the meantime, we cannot ignore the pressing need to stabilize our schools, improve morale and address the factors driving disconnection and violence among youth. We must not wait for a perfect plan when lives are at stake.

My recommendation: Prioritize certified teacher recruitment. While facilities and district lines matter, nothing matters more than having effective, committed educators in every classroom. The top priority for this board and district leadership must be teacher recruitment and retention. No building new or old can compensate for a lack of qualified, inspired teachers. We are currently in a national teacher shortage crisis, and Sumter is not exempt.

To become a destination district, Sumter must lead with people, not just plans. Let us launch an aggressive, innovative teacher recruitment initiative. Offer signing bonuses. Partner with local colleges. Recruit from 56 colleges and universities in South Carolina. Provide housing stipends. Build a pipeline of educators from within our own community.

Conclusion: Doing nothing is not an option. Realignment should not be paused indefinitely for a master plan that has yet to be produced. The board must unite around a shared mission to serve all students and act with courage, transparency and urgency.

Let us address realignment and the master plan as interdependent, not conflicting, priorities. Let us confront youth violence not just with policing but with purpose, opportunity and education. Let us stop arguing over what building to close and start opening doors to hope.

Our students cannot wait. Our teachers cannot wait. Our community cannot wait. The time to act is now.

Where are those people shouting, "5-4 no more"?

GOD BLESS THE USA #A United Sumter

Reginald Evans lives in Sumter.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

'GOOD' THINGS WILL HAPPEN AFTER 'EVIL' SETTLES DOWN

This is for all the people who have told me that they miss my editorials.

I am going to give a quick history of the kings of Israel. I find it rather ironic because of what is happening in America today.

Let's start with Saul. The people wanted a king. God made Saul king. He started out "good but turned bad." Then there was David. He was "good."

Then there was Solomon, David's son. He was "mostly good." They each reigned about 40 years each.

When Solomon died, two of his sons served as kings in a "Divided Kingdom." Jeroboam was the King of Israel, the "Northern Kingdom" of Israel. Rehoboam was the King of Judah, the "Southern Kingdom" of Israel.

There were 19 "Northern Kings" from 931 BC - 722 BC. They were all "evil/bad" kings in God's perspective. All God really wanted was for them to follow the 10 Commandments, fear Him and ask for His guidance.

There were 19 kings and 1 queen from the "Southern Kingdom" from 931 BC - 586 BC. Only eight of the 19 kings were "good" kings in God's perspective. The other 11 kings and one queen were all "evil/bad" in God's perspective.

By the way, the kings of Judah were all ancestors of Jesus. (Matthew 1:1-16.)

The kings of the "Northern Kingdom" started off with Jeroboam, Solomon's son, as king. It didn't take long before other people started killing the kings and the killer would then became the king.

Sources: 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, and "Rose Book of Bible Charts, Maps & Time Lines", pages 108-109.

When the "evil/bad" kings ruled, "evil/bad" things happened to Israel.

When the "good" kings ruled, things were "good." We have a "good" president now, so I believe that "good" things will happen after the "evil" settles down and allows him to be our president. God Bless America! In God we trust! Forgive US (United States of America)! We need you more than ever!

JACQUELINE K. HUGHES
Sumter

COMMENTARY

What the 12-day war hath wrought

Not many people today remember the exhilaration so many Americans felt after Israel's victory in the Six-Day War in June 1967. The liberal folks around me at work and law school then had been frustrated and puzzled at the lack of progress being made in Vietnam by the 448,000 U.S. troops stationed there, and the sudden and astonishing success of the Israel Defense Forces, symbolized by the eye-patched Gen. Moshe Dayan, was a refreshing contrast. No talk then of Israelis as colonialist settler oppressors.

You will not encounter much in the way of exhilaration in similar milieus today at Israel's multifront and even more astonishing victory, capped off by the U.S. bombing of Iran's nuclear facilities, in what is now called the 12-day war of June 2025. In contrast to the success in 1967, when there was minimal American involvement, this success owed much to American collaboration, appropriately kept secret before the fact.

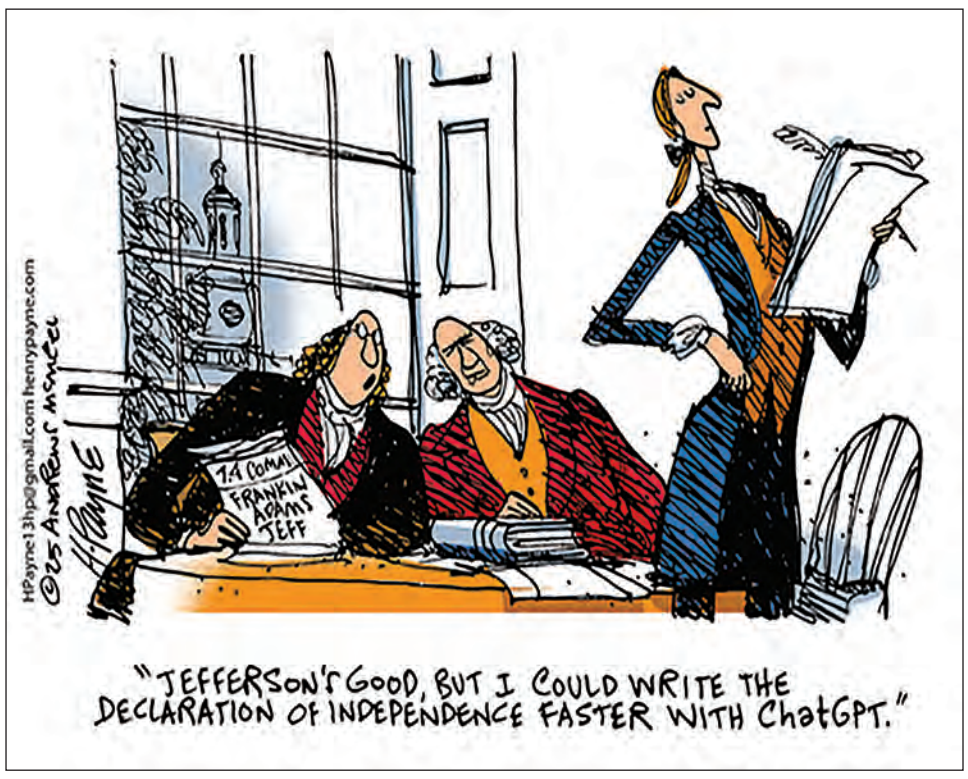


Michael Barone

It came also amid a series of significant and largely unexpected policy successes for President Donald Trump — China trade concessions, NATO summit agreeing to 5% of GDP defense spending, Supreme Court overturning of single-judge national injunctions, G7 finance ministers' climbdown on global corporate tax, negotiation of a Rwanda-Congo peace deal, Canada's repeal of a digital services tax, S&P stock index at an all-time high, Senate passage of the "Big Beautiful bill." We are at "Peak Trump," as Matthew Continetti wrote in The Free Press.

Democrats' sour responses to Trump's domestic successes, based on some mix of principled disagreements and opportunistic politicking, are understandable. Their sour responses to the Israeli and American success against the Iranian regime's nuclear program are another matter.

The result of the Six-Day War elated both liberal and conservative Americans. The result so far of the 12-day war was, by many Democrats and many in the press, denounced as the overture to a massive ground war like the 2003 Iraq invasion and deconstructed by leaked memos suggesting the mullahs would have their nuclear weapons program up and running in a few weeks.



It's hard to resist *The Wall Street Journal*'s Walter Russell Mead's conclusion that Trump's second term is "the most consequential foreign-policy presidency since Richard Nixon left the White House." His scorn for outworn shibboleths and changed circumstances has produced successes that deserve respect, if not total agreement from his domestic opponents, instead of the knee-jerk opposition and shopworn sloganeering seen so far.

The aggressive nationalism of Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping, both rooted in historic tradition, has relegated the hopes of the Clinton and Bush eras that a post-communist Russia and a post-impoverished China would adhere to international rules and foreswear predatory expansion.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has prompted NATO partners, which ignored the Obama administration's quiet goal of 2% defense spending, to agree to Trump's louder demand and meet his raise to 5%. Far from destroying NATO, as his critics feared, he has strengthened it.

Similarly, he has ignored demands, like those of 2024 vice presidential nominee Tim Walz, that he pressure Israel to accept the outworn goal of a "two-state solution." Instead, he is working for a Middle East free from the Iranian nuclear threat and open to mutually beneficial agreements like his first-term Abraham Accords.

Trump's adherence to his pre-escalator vows that Iran should not get nuclear weapons, while flummoxing supporters like Tucker Carlson and Steve Bannon, has surely gotten Putin's and Xi's attention.

They surely didn't miss, when Israel began its precision bombing and targeted drone attacks on June 13, that Trump told Reuters that he had given Iran 60 days to reach an agreement, "and today is the 61st day."

Democrats were still busy disparaging Trump's willingness to back down on trade deals with the acronym TACO ("Trump always chickens out"). But Xi may not want to risk a 61st day on Taiwan. And while Democrats dismiss Trump's boast that Putin didn't launch an attack on Ukraine while he was president, the fact is that he didn't. Will he risk a 61st-day surprise if Trump, losing confidence as his recent statements suggest he has in his good intentions, sets a time limit on his aggression in Ukraine?

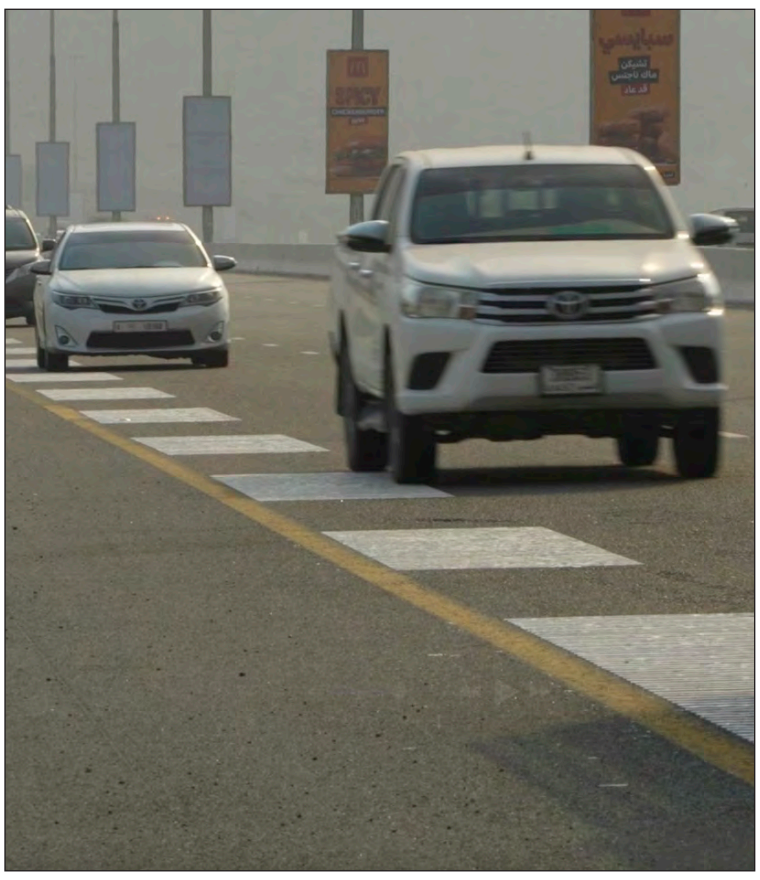
Israel's strikes on Iran, the historian Niall Ferguson posted, are "a decisive victory for the West." Just as the Six-Day War largely removed the threat of Israel being overrun, the 12-day war largely removed the threat of Israel being annihilated by an Iranian nuclear attack.

The Six-Day War was followed in time by Nixon's resupply of Israel in the October War of 1973 and by his simultaneous maneuver of splitting Russia and China in what had been a stalemated bipolar world. His opening to China, though criticized in both parties' presidential primaries, was followed by presidents of both parties past well behind what now appears to have been its sell-by date.

What will follow the 12-day war can't be known for sure. But it looks like Trump's policies have moved toward a more peaceful Middle East, a Europe more alert to Russian aggression, and perhaps an increasing caution by the leaders of Russia and China. These are consequential achievements, like Nixon's, that deserve to be taken seriously even by the president's detractors.

Michael Barone is a senior political analyst for the Washington Examiner, resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and longtime co-author of The Almanac of American Politics. His new book, "Mental Maps of the Founders: How Geographic Imagination Guided America's Revolutionary Leaders," is now available.

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ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vehicles drive over rumble strips that play Ludwig van Beethoven's Ninth Symphony on a highway in Fujairah, United Arab Emirates, on Thursday, July 3.

A classical drive: Road rumble strips play Beethoven's 9th Symphony in UAE emirate of Fujairah

BY GABE LEVIN
Associated Press

FUJAIRAH, United Arab Emirates — The humble road rumble strip, used around the world to alert drifting drivers to potential hazards or lane departures, can play Beethoven on a mountain highway in the far reaches of the United Arab Emirates.

For nearly a half mile along the E84 highway — also known as the Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Road — motorists in the right-hand lane coming into the city of Fujairah can play Ludwig van Beethoven's Ninth Symphony where the rubber meets the road.

"The 'Street of Music,' of course, is an art project that exists in some countries ... but we wanted this project to be in our country," said Ali Obaid Al Hefaiti, the director of Fujairah Fine Arts Academy, which recently wrapped up the project in collaboration with local authorities.

"I think that the project is focused on spreading the art culture. The combination of music in our lives and our normal lives," he added.

For drivers coming into Fujairah, the rumble strip initially looks like a larger, rectangular version of the dash lines separating the three-lane highway. That's until you hit the first block, and the grooves of the road combine with the speed of the vehicle to make music.

Driving over each block sounds out the best-known parts of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony — the final movements known commonly as the tune "Ode to Joy," or in its more modern form, the official anthem of the European Union. Al Hefaiti recommended motorists hit the blocks at around 60 mph to get the tune just right.

The road has become a social media sensation, bringing visitors to one of the lesser-known emirates in the UAE along its eastern coast with the Gulf of Oman.

Drivers have been spotted slowing down to experience the musical road as they come into the city. Passers-by can get the same effect from standing on the side of the road, though motorists often come in quickly.

The concept isn't new — there have been so-called "singing shoulders" deployed in other countries including across the Persian Gulf in Iran. But Al Hefaiti believes this is the first one in the Arab world. Beyond it going viral, Al Hefaiti thinks it will bring classical music into everyday life and "raise awareness about the importance of art culture."

As for why an Emirati fine arts school picked a European composer born in the 18th century to represent Fujairah, Al Hefaiti said that he always encourages his students to explore different cultures.

Amazon extends Prime Day discounts as retailers weigh tariff-related price increases

BY ANNE D'INNOCENZIO
AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK — Amazon is extending its annual Prime Day sales and offering new membership perks to Gen Z shoppers amid tariff-related price worries and possibly some consumer boredom with an event marking its 11th year.

The e-commerce giant's promised blitz of summer deals for Prime members started at 3:01 a.m. Eastern time on Tuesday. For the first time, Seattle-based Amazon is holding the now-misnamed Prime Day over four days; the company launched the event in 2015 and expanded it to two days in 2019.

Before wrapping up Prime Day 2025 early Friday, Amazon said it would have deals dropping as often as every 5 minutes during certain periods. Prime members ages 18-24, who pay $7.49 per month instead of the $14.99 that older customers not eligible for discounted rates pay for free shipping and other benefits, will receive 5% cash back on their purchases for a limited time.

Amazon executives declined to comment on the potential impact of tariffs on Prime Day deals. The event is taking place two-and-a-half months after an online news report sparked speculation that Amazon planned to display added tariff costs next to product prices on its website.

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt denounced the purported change as a "hostile and political act" before Amazon clarified the idea had been floated for its low-cost Haul storefront but never approved.

Amazon's past success with using Prime Day to drive sales and attract new members spurred other major retail chains to schedule competing sales in July. Best Buy, Target and Walmart are repeating the practice this year.

Like Amazon, Walmart is adding two more days to its promotional period, which starts Tuesday and runs through July 13. The nation's largest retailer is making its summer deals available in stores as well as online for the first time.

Here's what to expect:

TARIFFS DON'T SEEM TO BE IMPACTING COSTS MUCH (SO FAR)

Amazon executives reported in May that the company and many of its third-party sellers tried to beat big import tax bills by stocking up on foreign goods before President Donald Trump's tariffs took effect. And because of that move, a fair number of third-party sellers hadn't changed their pricing at that time, Amazon said.

Adobe Digital Insights' Pandya expects discounts to remain on par with last year and for other U.S. retail companies to mark 10% to 24% off the manufacturers' suggested retail price between Tuesday and Friday.

Caila Schwartz, director of consumer insights and strategy at software company Salesforce, said she's noticed retailers becoming more precise with their discounts, such as offering promotion codes that apply to selected products instead of their entire websites.

SHOPPERS MIGHT FOCUS ON NECESSITIES

Prime Day and other July sales have historically helped jump-start back-to-school spending and encouraged advance planners to buy other seasonal merchandise earlier. Analysts said they expected U.S. consumers to make purchases this week out of fear that tariffs will make items more expensive later.

Brett Rose, CEO of United National Consumer Supplies, a wholesale distributor of overstocked goods like toys and beauty products, thinks shoppers will go for items like beauty essentials.

"They're going to buy more everyday items," he said.

A LOOK AT THE DISCOUNTS

As in past years, Amazon offered early deals leading up to Prime Day. For the big event, Amazon said it would have special discounts on Alexa-enabled products like Echo, Fire TV and Fire tablets.

Walmart said its July sale would include a 32-inch Samsung smart monitor priced at $199 instead of $299.99 and $50 off a 50-Inch Vizio Smart TV with a standard retail price of $298. Target said it was maintaining its 2024 prices on key back-to-school items, including a $5 backpack and a selection of 20 school supplies totaling less than $20.

SOME THIRD-PARTY SELLERS WILL SIT OUT PRIME DAY

Independent businesses that sell goods through Amazon account for more than 60% of the company's retail sales. Some third-party sellers are expected to sit out Prime Day and not offer discounts to preserve their profit margins during the ongoing tariff uncertainty, analysts said.

Rose, of United National Consumer Supplies, said he spoke with third-party sellers who said they would rather take a sales hit this week than use up a lot of their pre-tariffs inventory now and risk seeing their profit margins suffer later.

However, some independent businesses that market their products on Amazon are looking to Prime Day to make a dent in the inventory they built up earlier in the year to avoid tariffs.

Home fragrance company Outdoor Fellow, which makes about 30% of its sales through Amazon's marketplace, gets most of its candle lids, labels, jars, reed diffusers and other items from China, founder Patrick Jones said. Fearing high costs from tariffs, Jones stocked up at the beginning of the year, roughly doubling his inventory.

For Prime Day, he plans to offer bigger discounts, such as 32% off the price of a candle normally priced at $34, Jones said.

"All the product that we have on Amazon right now is still from the inventory that we got before the tariffs went into effect," he said. "So we're still able to offer the discount that we're planning on doing."

Jones said he was waiting to find out if the order he placed in June will incur large customs duties when the goods arrive from China in a few weeks.

How Current is Your Will?

Have you kept your Will current? Have you had or are you undergoing major life changes that warrant a Will review or change?

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SC7 FROM PAGE A1

opportunities to spot local wildlife and enjoy scenic lake views. During the walk, a discussion of local conservation efforts and the community's environmental stewardship will take place.

Join the group again on Thursday, July 17, for a paddling expedition through Sparkleberry Swamp. Paddlers will launch from Sparkleberry Landing in Rimini, just off Lake Marion, at 9 a.m. and will return by noon. To paddle the biodiverse swamp, participants must bring their own canoe or kayak. A limited number of rentals are also available through Coast Expeditions. To rent one, go to *www.coastalexpeditions.com* and search under "Tours & Trips."

The two-day stretch of the month-long expedition does not require registration, but attendees are responsible for providing their own water, hiking gear, bug spray and sunscreen. The events are suitable for all ages, though younger children may need extra support during the hikes and paddle.

SC7 is a partnership between two South Carolina based nonprofit organizations, Global Eco Adventures and the South Carolina National Heritage Corridor. The goal of the expedition is to further the appreciation of South Carolina's natural spaces, and its mission is simple: "Healthy People. Healthy Places. Healthy Economy."

Can't make it to a Sumter hike or paddle? Visit southcarolina7.com to find information about the SC7 expeditions taking place near you, a calendar of events and a field guide.

Even if you can't participate in SC7 this year, you can still explore the beauty of nature around you. Explore Poinsett State Park and Sparkleberry Swamp on your own, or try out the Prisma Health Shot Pouch Greenway. South Carolina is teeming with nature just ready for you to explore.

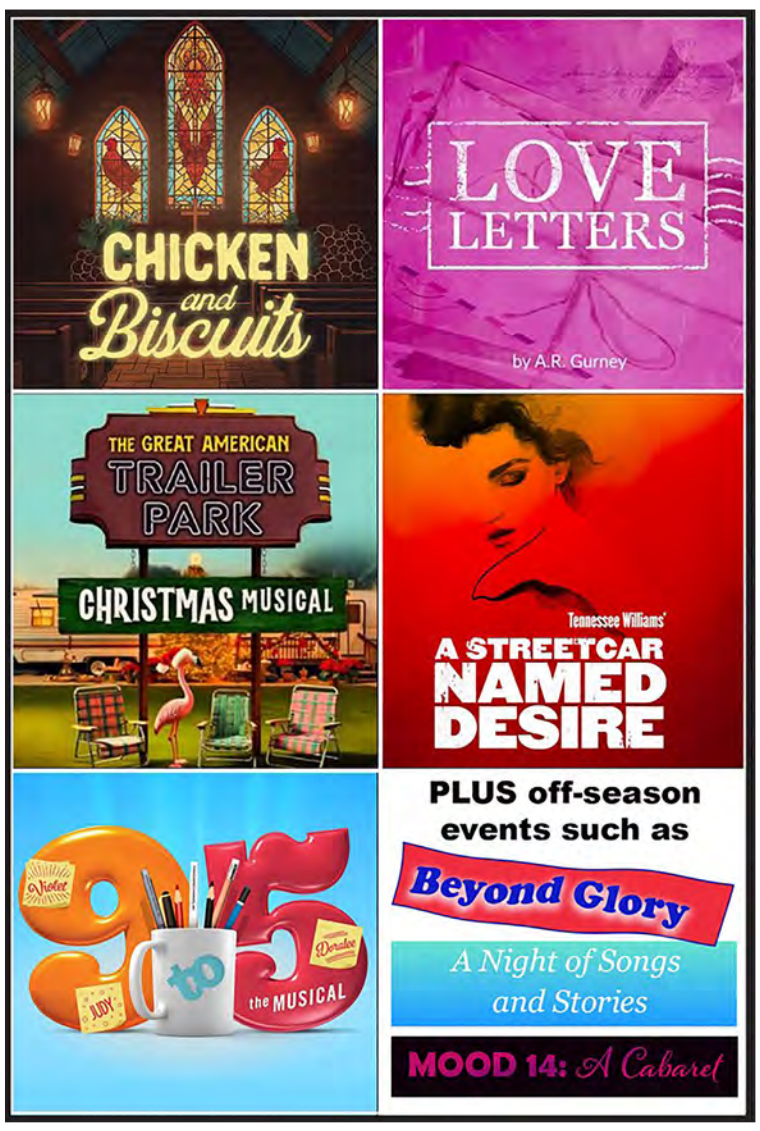


PHOTO PROVIDED

Sumter Little Theatre's 86th season features a diverse lineup of musicals, stage plays and special offerings for the community. Tickets are currently on sale.

THEATER FROM PAGE A1

about family and unity.

This production will be locally directed by Eric Bultman.

"LOVE LETTERS"
Thursday, Oct. 2, to Sunday, Oct. 12

A.R. Gurney's "Love Letters" unfolds through a lifetime of letters exchanged between Melissa Gardner and Andrew Makepeace Ladd III, who for more than 50 years shared their hopes, dreams and disappointments, revealing the deep emotional connection and complexities of their friendship. The production provides a look at their intertwined lives as they explore themes of nostalgia, missed opportunities and the societal context of middle-class WASP life in New England during and after the world wars.

Sumer Jarvis will direct this production.

"BEYOND GLORY"
Nov. 11

Matt Williams returns with an encore performance of "Beyond Glory." This production will follow the city's Veterans Day events on Veterans Day. More information will be released on this event as the date approaches.

"THE GREAT AMERICAN TRAILER PARK CHRISTMAS MUSICAL"
Thursday, Dec. 4, to Sunday, Dec. 14

A sequel to the original musical, "The Great American Trailer Park Christmas Musical" follows characters from Armadillo Acres, a mobile living community in Florida whose story revolves around trailer park Scrooge, Darlene. She experiences amnesia, and her neighborly love is put to the test. The musical involves cat-fighting, sun-worshipping, chair throwing and good times with tinsel and Keg Nog.

This production will be locally directed by Traci Quinn.

"A NIGHT OF SONGS AND STORIES"
Jan. 10, 2026

Curt Ackerman and a group of guitar players return to host the favorite fundraiser which offers an evening of great music and storytelling.

"ECHOES OF THE PAST, VOICES OF THE FUTURE"
Feb. 7-8, 2026

This special offering during Black History Month, created and directed by Tiffany Holmes, will feature singing, dancing and acting that will examine cultural traditions, modern achievements and some original material by local writers and songwriters.

To reserve tickets, visit *https://ticketpeak.co/sumter-littletheatre/events*. For more information and updates, visit Sumter Little Theatre on social media.

"A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE"
Thursday, Feb. 26, 2026, to Sunday, March 8, 2026

Directed by Tennessee Williams, "A Streetcar Named Desire" explores themes of desire, mental instability and clash between illusion and reality through the tragic story of Blanche DuBois and her interactions with her sister, Stella, and brother-in-law Stanley Kowalski.

SLT Executive Director Heather Turner will direct this production.

"MOOD 14"
April 11, 2026

The annual cabaret-style fundraiser, "Mood 14," will feature the theater's most talented singers who put on performances to help raise money for the theater's Youth Theatre educational program. It is recommended to get tickets early for this crowd favorite, as it sells out fast.

"9 TO 5"
Thursday, May 14, 2026, to Sunday, May 24, 2026

Written by Patricia Resnick and with songs by Dolly Parton, "9 to 5" centers on the working women of Consolidated Industries: Violet Newstead, Judy Bernly and Doralee Rhodes, who each faces challenges in a male-dominated workplace led by their sexist boss, Franklin Hart Jr.

John Michael Osteen will direct this production.

Outside of these spectacular shows, SLT will offer non-season offerings that will allow community members to see more of what this talented, quaint theater has to offer.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Shawn Ragin (at podium), planning committee chairman for public charter school Rise Entrepreneurial Leadership Institute, along with other planning committee members, addresses the Charter Institute of Erskine's Board of Directors on April 23. Erskine's board officially approved RISE's application the same day.

CHARTER FROM PAGE A1

about Feb. 1 said RISE's planning committee had "confirmed preliminary approval to use and renovate the old Lincoln High School building" on Council Street.

However, the application did note contingency plans if a lease agreement could not be finalized with Lincoln.

The Item contacted Lincoln Preservation Alumni Association member and former president Jim Felder last week, and he said Ragin did approach the association for use of the unoccupied south wing of the building, but Lincoln remains committed to developing its own plans for the property.

Felder also confirmed that previously the association also turned down Sumter's first tuition-free public charter school — Liberty STEAM Charter School — for use of the former Lincoln High School for a high school academy for that school.

In his Monday email, Ragin also said RISE cannot be housed at his South Carolina Independent School Association school, Ragin Preparatory Christian Academy, at 68 Market St. in the City of Sumter, where he serves as headmaster.

With the start of his new charter, Ragin Prep — as it is commonly known — will become a K-5 school. It is currently K-12 and has about 200 students, according to SCISA administration staff based in Orangeburg.

Ragin did not respond to a question from the newspaper on Monday night on what his role with RISE will be when it opens.

The Charter Institute of Erskine's Board of Directors approved for Ragin to open RISE on April 23, during its spring application cycle.

Ragin has remained as chairman of Sumter School District's Board of Trustees since RISE was approved, and he and his attorney cite that "South Carolina law presents no inherent legal conflict for an individual to serve on the local school district board while simultaneously planning to establish and eventually contribute to a public charter school, provided that no official actions are taken as a board member that directly involve, influence or advantage the proposed charter school."

They have cited that with the state's Charter Schools Act and general ethics rules under the South Carolina Ethics Act, "a conflict of interest would arise only if you were using your current board position to influence decisions affecting your future charter school (such as voting on charter authorizations, funding, facilities or resources related to charter schools). As long as one recused oneself from any such matters and does not use your public office for personal gain, you remain in compliance."

Ragin has said he will maintain a clear and absolute distinction between his responsibilities as a school board member and any personal responsibilities with RISE.

Fellow Sumter school board member Phil Leventis has openly taken issue with Ragin still serving the district's board and said he thinks it is a conflict of interest and that the chairman is a "total distraction" for the district.

Ragin has countered his dual role is not a conflict of interest and he is not a distraction.

He has said he will not seek re-election to the school board in November 2026.

The only other local example of Sumter School District officials starting a public charter school is through Liberty STEAM. Businessman Greg Thompson departed from the school board's Finance Committee to pursue Liberty STEAM and formed a planning committee for the venture. Less than a year later, Trevor Ivey left district administration to take on a leadership role on Liberty's staff.

CARING FROM PAGE A1

stayed too long when she really needs him to be here. She then injured her leg and required surgery because she could not put pressure on it to continue working. Having no medical leave, she has been out of work for six weeks and has not yet fully recovered. She lost half of her income before losing all of her income, and she feels all alone.

Though her story of adversity was absolutely an "onion," it did not take an onion to make the tears flow. Her emotions revealed the depth of pain, disappointment and despair that she felt.

I told this client what I tell many clients: "You came to talk about your financial need, but very often these conversations will lead down paths you never expected."

I cannot tell you the elation that I feel when God uses us at Sumter United Ministries to provide real solutions, encouraging steps to be taken and hopeful truths from God's Word. The change in countenance on a client's face says it all!

When life deceitfully makes a door appear as a wall, so often the client will leave SUM knowing there is a way outward and upward, after all.

At the Crisis Relief Ministry, we assist with financial help toward critical needs (utilities, rent, etc.), food, clothing and more. However, as God enables us, we are all about life change and heart transformation.

Big things happen here … but not without you! Please consider giving to the Summer of Caring campaign and partner with us. Thank you!

Kevin Howell is the director of the Crisis Relief Ministry at Sumter United Ministries.

NEW WAY TO DONATE

You can now donate to Summer of Caring online with a credit or debit card and have 100% of your donation still go directly to Sumter United Ministries.

Scan the QR code or go to *https://www.zeffy.com/donation-form/summer-of-caring*. The process is the same as donating a check to *The Sumter Item*'s office in that you can make your donation in honor of someone. You will be emailed a tax receipt.

New donations as of July 8: Aida Sikora, $50; Verena Matthews, $200; Kayla Green, $25.

YOUR IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

$100
Anonymous

$48,346
Total since 2014

$375
Total this week

$2,150
Total last year

$375
Total this year

ABOUT SUMMER OF CARING

Each summer season since 2014, *The Sumter Item* has held a fundraising campaign to benefit Sumter United Ministries.

A similar and longer-running wintertime campaign, the Fireside Fund, gives the ministry money to support clients' heating needs, but money from this campaign can be used for any of the nonprofit's services.

An update of collections and clients benefited will run every Wednesday through Labor Day.

Last year, *Item* readers donated $2,150. They have given $47,971 since 2014.

PUBLIC AGENDA

SUMTER COUNTY VOTER REGISTRATION / ELECTION COMMISSION

Thursday, July 10, at 5:30 p.m., registration / election office, 129 E. Liberty St.

CLARENDON COUNTY COUNCIL

Monday, July 14, at 6 p.m., Administration Building, Council Chambers, 411 Sunset Drive, Manning

CITY OF MANNING PLANNING COMMISSION

Monday, July 14, at 6:30 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 29 W. Boyce St., Manning

SUMTER SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Monday, July 15, 6 p.m., 1345 Wilson Hall Road

SUMTER CITY COUNCIL

Tuesday, July 15, at 5:30 p.m., Council Chambers on the fourth floor of Sumter Opera House, 21 N. Main St. (enter through the back parking lot entrance and take elevator to fourth floor)

CLARENDON COUNTY PLANNING & PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Tuesday, July 15, at 6:30 p.m., planning commission office, 411 Sunset Drive, Manning

BISHOPVILLE CITY COUNCIL

Tuesday, July 15, at 6:30 p.m., Colclough Building

SCEA-R ORGANIZATION

Wednesday, July 23, at 11 a.m. the North HOPE Center, 904 N. Main St. Contact Ernestine Mickens (803) 840-2156 for further info.

SUMTER COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Thursday, July 24, at 7:45 a.m., 10 E. Liberty St.

LEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Thursday, July 24, 6:30 p.m., District Administration Complex Quadplex, 310 Roland St., Bishopville.

SANTEE WATEREE RTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Monday, July 28, at 6 p.m., 129 S. Harvin St. For special accommodations, call (803) 934-0396, extension 103.

AROUND TOWN

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

Help Sumter kids start the school year right by donating needed supplies to Sumter School District through the annual **Gear Up for Learning drive**, organized by Sumter United Ministries. The ministry is asking for mechanical and sharpened pencils, black or blue ink pens, colored pencils, regular and fine-tipped markers, highlighters, crayons of either 16-count or 24-count, erasers, packs of college rule loose leaf notebook paper, packs of wide rule loose leaf notebook paper, composition notebooks, college rule spiral notebooks, primary composition notebooks with picture box ruled for kindergarten, pocket folders with clasps, three-ring binders in 1" and 2", glue sticks, round-tip scissors, rulers and backpacks. Donate at these locations: Sumter United Ministries, 36 S. Artillery Drive, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. from June 23-July 15; Assured Partners, 1170 Wilson Hall Road, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. from June 23-July 14; Office School and Church Supply, 780 S. Pike W., Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. from June 23-July 14.

Partners for Change along with the kindnesses of local businesses is sponsoring **free food for kids** ages 18 and under at 1 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Harvin Clarendon County Library, 215 N. Brooks St. in Manning. Make sure to get the kids to HCCL by 1 p.m. to be served. Lunches are only given to children who are present. Look for the food truck by the picnic tables behind the Archives building. Just follow the sidewalk in front of HCCL to get there.

The Sumter County Recreation Department will be offering **2025-26 After School Program** for youth ages 5–12 at the following locations: Catchall-Shaw Community Center, Cherryvale Community Center, DeLaine Community Center, Eastern Community Center, Ebenezer Community Center, Rembert/Rafting Creek Community Center, Salterstown Community Center and Shiloh Community Center. The program runs from Aug. 4 to May 21, 2026. It lasts from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. each school day and provides a safe and supportive environment for children to complete homework and engage in fun, educational activities. Registration will be held July 1 through July 18. The cost is $ 100 per month. Contact the Recreation Department at (803) 436-2248 or the community center listed for additional information, or email *recreation@sumtercountysc.gov*.

Rembert Youth Center Summer Camp runs through July 18 for children ages 5 to 13. The camp includes interactive projects, sports, games, STEM activities, farming, swimming and more. Price without scholarship is $140 a week, but scholarships are available for those who qualify in varying amounts. The center is at 20 Horatio Hagood Road, Rembert. Call the center (803) 424-8434 and find QR codes for the camp and center on the center's Facebook page, Rembert Area Community Coalition - RACC. Look for the camp flyer on the page.

WEATHER

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather, Inc.** ©2025

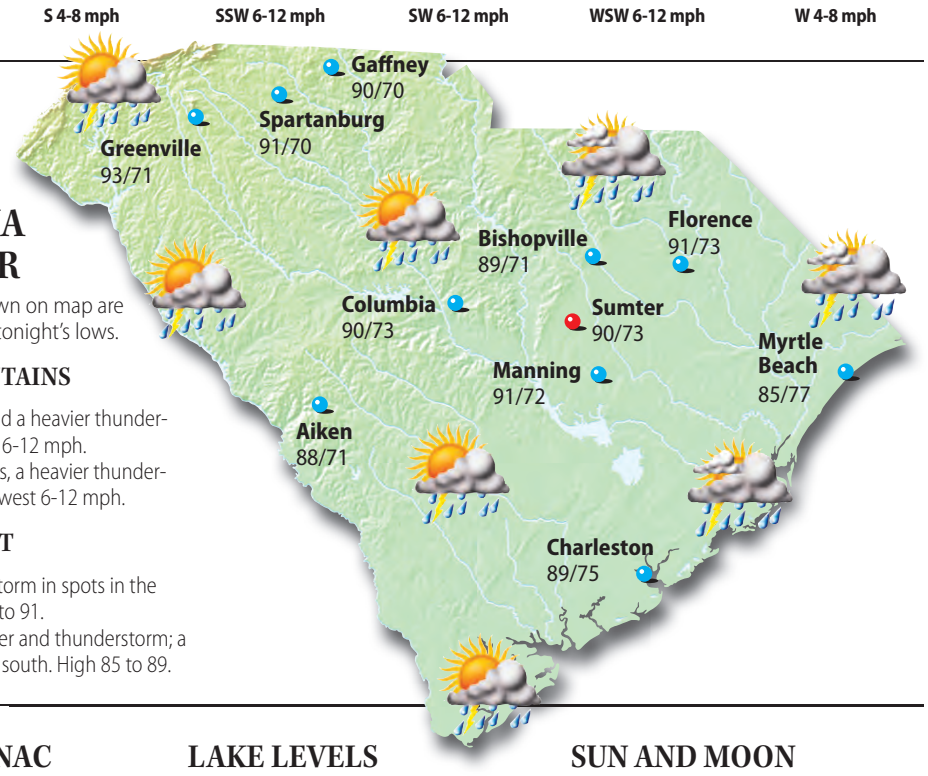
AccuWeather® five-day forecast for Sumter

AccuWeather. Visit AccuWeather.com

TODAY	TONIGHT	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Showers and a heavier t-storm	Showers and a heavier t-storm	A shower and thunderstorm	Humid with a thunderstorm	A t-storm around in the p.m.	A stray afternoon thunderstorm
90°	73°	89° / 74°	91° / 74°	94° / 73°	94° / 74°
Chance of rain: 90%	Chance of rain: 70%	Chance of rain: 70%	Chance of rain: 80%	Chance of rain: 40%	Chance of rain: 40%
S 6-12 mph	S 4-8 mph	SSW 6-12 mph	SW 6-12 mph	WSW 6-12 mph	W 4-8 mph

TODAY'S SOUTH CAROLINA WEATHER

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



IN THE MOUNTAINS

Today: Showers and a heavier thunderstorm. Winds south 6-12 mph.
Thursday: Showers, a heavier thunderstorm. Winds southwest 6-12 mph.

ON THE COAST

Today: A thunderstorm in spots in the afternoon. High 85 to 91.
Thursday: A shower and thunderstorm; a stray thunderstorm south. High 85 to 89.

LOCAL ALMANAC

SUMTER MONDAY

Temperature

High	97°
Low	75°
Normal high	90°
Normal low	70°
Record high	103° in 1954
Record low	55° in 1951

Precipitation

Monday	0.00"
Month to date	0.20"
Normal month to date	1.14"
Year to date	17.05"
Last year to date	16.07"
Normal year to date	24.29"

LAKE LEVELS

Lake	Full pool	7 a.m. yest.	24-hr chg
Murray	360	358.12	-0.05
Marion	76.8	75.52	-0.02
Moultrie	75.5	75.47	-0.07
Wateree	100	97.54	+0.02

RIVER STAGES

River	Flood stage	7 a.m. yest.	24-hr chg
Black River	12	2.92	+0.20
Congaree River	19	3.39	none
Lynches River	14	3.33	+0.18
Saluda River	14	2.73	-0.06
Up. Santee River	80	N.A.	N.A.
Wateree River	24	9.78	+1.89

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise	6:18 a.m.	Sunset	8:36 p.m.
Moonrise	8:10 p.m.	Moonset	4:45 a.m.

Full	Last	New	First
July 10	July 17	July 24	Aug 1

TIDES

AT MYRTLE BEACH

	High	Ht.	Low	Ht.
Today	8:36 a.m.	2.4	3:31 a.m.	0.4
	9:13 p.m.	3.2	3:11 p.m.	0.2
Thu.	9:19 a.m.	2.5	4:14 a.m.	0.3
	9:54 p.m.	3.3	3:55 p.m.	0.1

NATIONAL CITIES

City	Today Hi/Lo/W	Thu. Hi/Lo/W
Atlanta	89/73/t	87/71/t
Chicago	85/66/t	84/69/pc
Dallas	93/76/t	95/78/pc
Detroit	83/67/t	84/66/pc
Houston	92/77/t	92/78/t
Los Angeles	88/65/s	89/64/s
New Orleans	90/77/t	90/77/t
New York	86/73/pc	82/73/t
Orlando	92/76/t	92/76/t
Philadelphia	89/73/t	84/74/t
Phoenix	118/94/s	115/91/s
San Francisco	67/54/pc	71/54/s
Wash., DC	90/73/t	87/75/t

REGIONAL CITIES

City	Today Hi/Lo/W	Thu. Hi/Lo/W
Asheville	84/67/t	82/68/t
Athens	90/71/t	89/70/t
Augusta	90/72/t	89/71/t
Beaufort	91/74/t	89/76/t
Cape Hatteras	85/77/t	86/76/t
Charleston	89/75/t	89/76/t
Charlotte	91/74/t	88/71/t
Clemson	91/70/t	85/69/t
Columbia	90/73/t	91/73/t
Darlington	89/72/t	88/71/t
Elizabeth City	90/76/t	86/74/t
Elizabethtown	90/75/t	87/72/t
Fayetteville	89/74/t	88/73/t
Florence	91/73/t	87/74/t
Gainesville	88/73/t	90/71/t
Gastonia	90/71/t	84/71/t
Goldsboro	91/76/t	86/74/t
Goose Creek	90/74/t	89/75/t
Greensboro	87/71/t	82/69/t
Greenville	93/71/t	87/70/t
Hickory	90/70/t	85/70/t
Hilton Head	87/76/t	84/79/t
Jacksonville, FL	89/74/t	91/74/t
La Grange	89/71/t	87/71/t
Macon	89/71/t	88/71/t
Marietta	90/71/t	86/72/t
Marion	87/68/t	80/68/t
Mt. Pleasant	88/76/t	88/76/t
Myrtle Beach	85/77/t	86/75/t
Orangeburg	88/72/t	87/73/t
Port Royal	90/74/t	89/76/t
Raleigh	90/75/t	86/72/t
Rock Hill	90/72/t	84/71/t
Rockingham	88/73/t	88/72/t
Savannah	90/73/t	89/74/t
Spartanburg	91/70/t	85/69/t
Summerville	90/73/t	89/73/t
Wilmington	88/77/t	88/75/t
Winston-Salem	89/72/t	84/70/t

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

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SUMTER SPCA PETS OF THE WEEK



ABOVE: My name is Dopey, and I am a 9-week-old, male, gray tabby American longhair. I am housebroken and good with kids and other cats. My siblings and I are so thrilled to go to our forever homes. I am a very sweet, curious and quiet kitty. I have five siblings with me looking for new homes.



BELOW: My name is Diesel, and I am a 10-month-old, male, brindle Catahoula Leopard mix. I am not good with small dogs, but I know how to sit, I'm very friendly, I walk on a leash pretty good, I'm very food motivated, and to top it all off, I'm a very handsome, good boy.

The Sumter SPCA is located at 1140 S. Guignard Drive, (803) 773-9292, and is open 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. every day except Wednesday and Sunday. Visit the website at *www.sumterscspca.com*.

SUMTER ANIMAL CONTROL PETS OF THE WEEK



ABOVE: Caleb is the definition of easygoing charm! This adorable 51-pound hound mix has never met a stranger — he absolutely loves people and greets everyone with a wagging tail and a big heart. He gets along wonderfully with the other dogs at the shelter and is happiest when he's out for a walk or playing in the yard. Whether you're looking for a walking buddy, a playmate or just a loyal companion to share the couch, Caleb is your guy. This sweet, loving pup is 3-5 years old and ready for his new forever family.



BELOW: Nettie's story began in a wooded area, where she and her three siblings were found all alone. They were brought to Animal Control, scared and unsure of the world around them. Nettie was especially shy at first — confused, quiet and needing time to adjust. But with the gentle care of our volunteers, Nettie has started to blossom. She's learning how to walk on a leash, accepting love with a wagging tail and soft eyes. This precious girl is as sweet as they come. She may be a little timid at first, but she's ready to find a home where she'll feel safe, cherished and loved every single day. Nettie is searching for a family to give her a chance.

If you're interested in meeting one of these pets at Sumter Animal Control, 1240 Winkles Road, call (803) 774-3232 or email sumterstrays@gmail.com. As with all of our adoptable pets, a spay or neuter agreement is required, and it is strictly enforced. Proof of spay/neuter after adoption will be required. Visit Sumter Animal Control online at *www.savingsumterstrays.com* or find them on Facebook.

The SPCA relies heavily on community support and donations. Currently, the biggest needs are for dry puppy and kitten food, wet cat food, cat litter and cleaning supplies. The following are also appreciated:
Newspapers, stuffed animals, heavy duty trash bags (30 gallon or larger), dishwashing liquid, laundry detergent, bleach, paper towels, sheets and comforters, baby blankets, canned dog and cat food, dry dog food, treats, leashes and collars, disinfectant spray, all-purpose cleaner, air freshener, no scratch scrubbers, two-sided sponges for dishes, litter freshener and, of course, monetary donations are also gratefully accepted.

SUMTER ANIMAL CONTROL NEEDS YOUR HELP. We are looking for people to walk dogs, foster or help with transport. We desperately need 9 a.m. Monday – Friday walkers. Message us if interested. Must be at least 18 years old. Don't have extra time to be a volunteer? We gladly accept donations of the following: newspapers, puppy pads, canned and dry puppy food, paper towels, Clorox wipes and heavy duty slip leashes. You can also donate from our Amazon Wishlist under Saving Sumter's Strays at *https://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/ wishlist/10Q422KA0MI19*. All donations go toward helping Sumter County dogs. Our all-volunteer organization is making a big difference in the lives of so many homeless pets. Please help us continue to save animals.

the Sumter ITEM SPORTS

Call: (803) 774-1221 | **E-mail:** sports@theitem.com

SECTION B

WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY, JULY 9-11, 2025

BASEBALL IN HIS BLOOD



ABIGAIL PITTMAN / THE SUMTER ITEM

Carson Todd's entire life has been built around having a baseball in his hand. Two days after he was born, he was watching his older brothers play baseball. Since then, he's grown into a top-flight pitcher for the P-15's.

Todd continues family lineage with the P-15's as he works his way back from injury

BY TIM LEIBLE
tim@theitem.com

Carson Todd has been in love with baseball since the day he was born.

That might sound like hyperbole, but he was sitting outside of the fence at his brother's baseball game as soon as he left the hospital just two days after he came into the world.

"He really didn't have a chance, honestly, when it comes to playing baseball," his dad and longtime coach, Morgan Todd, joked.

Ever since then, his passion for the sport only grew. He's seen the highs that come with baseball, including a victory on the mound when the Junior P-15's claimed the state title in 2023. But he's also seen the lows. Carson missed most of the last year recovering from elbow surgery and made his triumphant return this summer.

For the Todds, baseball is a way of life, and Carson is trying to enjoy every second of it, especially as he wraps up his time with Post 15 this summer.

"It's an emotional kind of thing because I've been around it for so long," Carson said of suiting up with the P-15's for a final ride. "This is my fifth year playing. I'm just having fun all summer and kinda playing laid-back baseball and trying to get back to myself on the mound and win as many ballgames as we can one last time."



ABIGAIL PITTMAN / THE SUMTER ITEM

Carson Todd is no stranger to the bleachers at Riley Park. Growing up, he was in the stands and in the dugout as his brothers played and now he's suiting up for his final season for the P-15's.

GROWING UP IN BASEBALL

From an early age, Carson was surrounded by excellent examples on the diamond. His older brothers, Evan and Lathan, both suited up for the P-15's and went on to play sports in college. Evan golfed for USC Sumter and Columbia College, while Lathan pitched at The Citadel.

While his brothers were playing games, Carson was always right beside them. When he could, he played with his brothers and their friends. During their games, he always had a front-row seat.

"One of the main things I can remember during the summer times, me, Evan and Lathan, and their buddies, we'd be in the front yard playing wiffle ball," Carson said. "That's probably one of the main things I can remember when I was little, and just them making me better. They kind of gave me crap from time to time coming up, like that's just like a brother thing, but they love me, they support me. They're at every game."

As the youngest in a family of three brothers, Carson was typically the punching bag, but it was typically in good fun. The brothers formed a sort of yin and yang. Carson was always trying to prove himself to his brothers, while Evan and Lathan jokingly kept him in his place.

"It was never a soft moment between them," Morgan said. "If he came in and he was bubbling that he did this, he did that, it was never, 'You're awesome, you're going to do great.' It was always, 'You could've done better.' They pointed out the bad and he

SEE **GRIND,** PAGE B5



TIM LEIBLE / THE SUMTER ITEM

Carson Todd delivers during his first start of the summer against West Columbia on June 2.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Long before Carson played for the P-15's, he suited up as the team's bat boy while his dad coached and his brother played.

For a video interview with Todd hover your phone's camera over the code and click on the link that pops up.

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Lady Legends ride 11-run first to playoff rout of Blythewood

BY TIM LEIBLE
tim@theitem.com

The Sumter Lady Legends wanted to kick off the American Legion playoffs with a bang on Monday when Blythewood came to town, but they couldn't have predicted what the night had in store for them at Patriot Park.

After a relatively painless top of the first inning, Sumter started a hit parade in the bottom of the frame. All nine starters stepped into the batter's box before the Lady Legends recorded their first out. In total, they collected eight base hits and walked twice en route to an 11-run opening frame. With a big lead in tow, Sumter was able to cruise to a 12-0 win in just five innings.

"It just worked out for us in the first inning," head coach Glenn Posey said after the win. "It's a little sweaty out here, and our pitchers and their pitchers were having a hard time getting a good grip to get those spin pitches to work. The ball was a little flat for us, and we made her pay for that. Our hitters did what I hoped they would do, what they're capable of doing, and they kinda got it figured out there a little bit and pitched better down the stretch."

Lyza Prickelmyer kicked off the game with a single before a walk by Ariana Evans and a single by Maggie Harrington loaded the bases. Mandy Wells and Maddy Long followed with RBI singles to push the lead to 4-0 before Brynli Brewer reached on an error to tack on one more. Caroline Welch singled before another RBI error, this time off the bat of Talan Griffin, before Skylar Dymond smacked a double to extend the lead to 8-0. Prickelmyer recorded the first out during her second at bat of the frame, but a run still managed to score on the play when Alannah Dixon, who served as Dymond's courtesy runner, swiped third and home. An error and Long's second RBI single extended the lead to 11-0. Along with the hit parade, Sumter swiped six bases in the inning.

"Some of that was battling; we went high in the count. I'd have to look back, but I think six of those girls went to a count that was beyond 2-2," Posey said of the quality of at bats in the first inning. "A lot of those hits were with two strikes, so that tells you about the character of our hitters. They battle, and that was nice to see."

With 11 runs in her back pocket, Lillie Ivey went to work. She allowed two singles in the first but wiggled her way out of the jam. She didn't run into much trouble after that, striking out two batters in each of the next two innings. With a comfortable lead, she passed the ball off to Marsha Kate Skey, who celebrated her birthday and the win on Monday. Ivey was able to have plenty of success without being able to use her full repertoire in the heat. With some adjustments, the All-State pitcher from Sumter High was dominant in the win.

"We did not land a rise ball with Bug (Ivey) at all, and that's normally a pitch we set up other stuff off. We couldn't throw it. It was in the dirt almost every time we tried to throw it because she was so sweaty," Posey said. "The changeup and locating that fastball was what kinda did it for us with Bug."

Skey pitched the final two innings and scattered two hits, one of which was erased on a double play as shortstop Ashley Rae Hodge handled a lineout and made a quick throw back to first. Skey's most stressful portion of the win was deciding where the team would go out to eat after the victory.

Sumter only added one more run in the final four innings. Wells hit an RBI single in the third before Posey swapped out most of the starting lineup. The Lady Legends unloaded the bench to get everyone in the game.

"Being able to flip that lineup between the third and fourth inning and get all the girls in is always something I really work hard to do, to make sure we can reward them for working hard and being here every day," Posey said. "They buy into what we're doing. When the starting lineup doesn't include some of them, you look at the bench and we've got some fantastic players, but they all believe in each other and have good chemistry, so that's the blessing I have with this team."

Emptying the bench came with another major benefit. Sumter would need wins on three consecutive days to punch their ticket to the state championship, so saving some active time in the heat for the full roster was definitely a plus.

"It's critical when it's 100 degrees. My dash said 100 when I pulled up to the ballfield, so we know it's important," Posey said. "It's important for our pitchers. The arms are one thing, they can throw, but your legs go in this heat when you throw too many innings. I know what my strategy needs to be in the circle, so hopefully that plays out, but we need run support to do it the way we want to do it."

The Lady Legends host Mid-Carolina on Tuesday as they advance in the postseason. Results from that game were not available at press time. The winner will advance to face the victor from League 4 on Wednesday.

On the other end of the bracket, the Bishopville Express traveled to Florence and suffered a 17-5 loss to end their season. Lugoff defeated Camden 9-2, setting up a matchup between Post 1 and Post 195 on Tuesday.

Bishopville fell into a quick hole on Monday and couldn't quite dig out. Florence piled on four runs in the first, three in the second and two in the third before the Express found their offense to the tune of five runs in the fifth. But it was too little, too late. Florence scored once in the bottom of the inning before ending the game in the sixth with seven more runs. Hartlee Butler, Bristol Baker and Kaisley Melton each drove in runs, while Ansley Nesbit led the team with two hits.





PHOTOS BY TIM LEIBLE / THE SUMTER ITEM

ABOVE: Sumter's Lyza Prickelmyer swings against Blythewood on Monday.

LEFT: Sumter's Lillie Ivey delivers against Blythewood on Monday.



BELOW: Sumter's Maddy Long slides into second on Monday.



Sumter's Ariana Evans, left, high fives Coach Ken Wells after scoring a run on Monday.



Sumter's Mandy Wells signals the number of outs to the defense during their win over Blythewood on Monday.



Sumter's Skylar Dymond flashes a smile after an RBI double on Monday against Blythewood.



Sumter's Marsha Kate Skey delivers against Blythewood.

AMERICAN LEGION ROUNDUP

Junior P-15's open state playoffs with win over Aynor

STAFF REPORT

The Sumter Junior P-15's opened the South Carolina American Legion playoffs on Monday against Aynor Post 81. Sumter pushed three runs across late to pull out an 8-5 win in a back-and-forth affair. Game 2 of their best-of-three series headed to Aynor on Tuesday. Results from that game were not available at press time.

Both teams had some trouble in the field on Monday, as each squad finished with four errors. Only one of the five runs Aynor scored was an earned run. Benson Elmore was charged with four runs, but only one was earned as he scattered three hits and two walks across five innings. Curt Jackson pitched two innings in relief, allowing one unearned run despite not allowing a base hit. He struck out three.

The Junior P-15's piled up 13 hits while drawing five walks in the victory. Cade Mooneyham and Connor Carter each had two hits, including a double, and three RBIs. Mac McDaniel, Landon Olson, Zy Dennis and Cody Schultz each had two hits in the victory.

MANNING-SANTEE FALLS TO FLORENCE

The Manning-Santee juniors fell to Florence 9-5 in Game 1 of their best-of-three series on Monday.

Post 68 managed just three hits, two of which came from Tyler Woodward. Manning-Santee added six walks and a hit batter. They fell behind 9-0 before scoring five runs in the final two innings.

Landon Duke had a shaky night on the mound, allowing six earned runs on 10 hits in 3 2/3 innings. Cole Richburg closed out the game, allowing one run on a hit and two walks. Manning-Santee also committed seven errors in the defeat.

Game 2 was set for Florence on Tuesday but results were not available at press time.

SENIOR LEGION

SUMTER OUTLASTS FLORENCE

The Sumter P-15's bad a busy Thursday before the Fourth of July, finishing up a game from Wednesday before completing their three-game set with Florence. The first game ended with the same score from Wednesday night, 2-0 in the favor of Post 1, before Sumter claimed a 3-2 win in the nightcap. The P-15's were slated to travel to Horry on Monday, but a stormy weekend left the field at St. James unplayable. That game was moved to Thursday at Riley Park.

Thursday started with the last inning and a half from Wednesday's game, which was called due to storms. Sumter loaded the bases on walks in the sixth but couldn't push a run across.

After a little reset between games, the P-15's pulled out a big 3-2 win. Cory Bailey tossed a complete game, allowing two runs on four hits and two walks.

Brayden Robinson, who played high school ball at South Florence, provided the heroics with a two-run double in the second before scoring on an RBI single by Larry Johnson. Sumter only needed four hits and two walks to score three runs. Joseph Chapman and Bowdie Bowden each added a hit and a run scored.

MANNING-SANTEE FALLS

Manning-Santee suffered a pair of tough League 2 losses on either side of the holiday weekend. They fell 1-0 to Horry on Thursday before a 9-4 loss to Florence on Monday.

Post 68 outhit Horry 7-2 on Thursday but couldn't push a run across. Bryce Blackburn led the team with two knocks and suffered the loss on the mound. He surrendered just two hits, but an unearned run came home after two errors to lead off the seventh. A sacrifice fly drove in the game's lone run before Blackburn got out of the inning with two quick outs.

But the damage was done. Rory Carter singled to open the bottom of the seventh and advanced to second on a bunt, but he was thrown out at the plate trying to score on a single by Blackburn.

Manning-Santee then couldn't keep pace with Florence on Monday. David Driggers got the start, allowing four runs across 4 1/3 innings on six hits and four walks. Lucas Peters took the ball after that, allowing two earned runs on five hits and a walk. He suffered the loss. Carter got the final two outs, allowing one run on two hits and a walk. Manning-Santee committed five errors, which led to two unearned runs against Peters.

Riley Jordan provided an offensive spark with a grand slam in the seventh, but it wasn't enough to close the gap. Post 68 finished with nine hits and five walks.

Morris College names Jenone Bell head women's basketball coach

STAFF REPORT

Morris College has announced Jenone Bell as the new head coach of the women's basketball team. Bell arrives with more than 28 years of collegiate coaching experience and a proven track record of building competitive, high-character programs across the country.

Bell most recently served as the athletic director and head women's basketball coach at Shorter College, where she successfully revived the athletic program after a 25-year hiatus. In just their second season back, Bell's team advanced to the Region 2 Championship game and finished second in the region. She coached four First Team All-Region players who continued their athletic careers at Division I and II institutions.

"I'm very passionate about basketball, and my vision for our basketball program here at Morris College is to emphasize a commitment to excellence both on and off the court, including engaging with fans and building a strong presence in the community," said Coach Bell.


BELL

"I'm excited to get to work and help our student-athletes thrive in all areas of life."

Bell's coaching journey has included successful stints at Southeastern Baptist College, St. Gregory's University, Southern University Shreveport, Lindenwood University, Lincoln University (Missou) and more. As a student-athlete at Cal State San Bernardino, Bell was a record-setting sharpshooter, finishing with a career three-point field goal percentage of 38.4%, a record that still stands today.

Morris College Athletic Director Coach Fredrick Summers shared his enthusiasm for the new hire: "I am extremely excited about the hiring of Jenone Bell. She brings over 20 years of coaching and administrative experience to the Athletic Department of Morris College. She will be a great mentor for our young men and women, and I'm looking forward to her success with our women's program in the classroom and on the court. Our goal is to elevate Morris College, and with this hire, we have done just that. We are looking forward to great things from Coach Bell as she rebuilds our women's basketball program."

Bell holds a Bachelor of Science in Physical Education from Cal State San Bernardino and a Master's in Secondary Education from Kansas State University.

Morris College welcomes Coach Bell and looks forward to a new era of excellence in women's basketball.

Knicks officially name Brown next head coach

BY BRIAN MAHONEY
Associated Press


ASSOCIATED PRESS

The New York Knicks officially hired former Sacramento Kings head coach Mike Brown as their next head coach on Monday.

NEW YORK — The New York Knicks liked Mike Brown's experience with championship teams after he worked for four of them.

That sounds good to a franchise that's been stuck on two titles for more than 50 years but believes its time to win another is now.

The Knicks hired Brown on Monday, turning to the two-time NBA Coach of the Year after firing Tom Thibodeau.

The Knicks offered the job to Brown last week and announced Monday that he would be taking over the team that reached the Eastern Conference finals last season for the first time in 25 years. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

They decided to fire Thibodeau despite that playoff success and eventually picked Brown, who wasn't out of work long after getting fired by the Sacramento Kings during last season.

"Mike has coached on the biggest stages in our sport and brings championship pedigree to our organization," Knicks president Leon Rose said in a statement. "His experience leading the bench during the NBA Finals, winning four titles as an assistant coach, and his ability to grow and develop players will all help us as we aim to bring a championship to New York for our fans."

Brown led the Kings to a 48-34 record and the postseason in 2022-23 — their first appearance since 2006 — and was voted the Coach of the Year. He also won the award in Cleveland, where he led the Cavaliers to the 2007 NBA Finals.

He was on San Antonio's bench when the Spurs won the 2003 NBA title and was with the Golden State Warriors for their 2017, '18 and '22 championships, including going 12-0 as the acting head coach during the 2017 postseason when Steve Kerr was sidelined with a back injury.

Brown is 454-304 in 11 seasons, winning at least 45 games in seven of them.

He will take over a Knicks team with championship potential. The Knicks won at least 50 games in each of the last two seasons and knocked off 2024 champion Boston before falling to Indiana in six games in the East finals.

With the Pacers playing without star point guard Tyrese Haliburton next season after he tore his right Achilles tendon in Game 7 of the NBA Finals and the Celtics in transition with Jayson Tatum hurt and Kristaps Porzingis and Jrue Holiday traded, the Knicks will be one of the East favorites.

Their starting lineup is set with All-NBA selections Jalen Brunson and Karl-Anthony Towns, and they strengthened the bench Monday by signing former Utah guard Jordan Clarkson, one of the league's highest-scoring reserves, and Guerschon Yabusele, who played last season with Philadelphia.

Thibodeau's reluctance to use some of his bench players may have been a reason the Knicks decided to fire him after he led them to the postseason in four of his five seasons. They reached at least the second round in the last three seasons after not winning a single playoff series since 2013.

But they haven't won a championship since 1973. Their first title was in 1970, about two months after the 55-year-old Brown was born.

Powell joins Heat, Collins to Clippers in 3-team trade with Jazz

BY TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

MIAMI — The Miami Heat have acquired Norman Powell, while John Collins is going to the Los Angeles Clippers and Kevin Love and Kyle Anderson are headed to the Utah Jazz as parts of a three-team trade that was completed Monday.

Also in the deal: at least one second-round draft pick, going from the Clippers to Utah.

Powell averaged 21.8 points last season for the Clippers and is a career 40% shooter from 3-point range. Collins averaged 19 points in 40 games for the Jazz last season, while Love averaged 5.3 points in 23 games with the Heat and Anderson averaged 6.7 points in 25 games after being traded to Miami.

Powell figures to give Miami much-needed scoring and shooting. The Heat were 24th out of 30 teams in points per game last season, plus have already seen the departure of Duncan Robinson — the team's career 3-point leader — this summer. Robinson joined the Detroit Pistons in a deal that was agreed to last week and finalized on Monday.

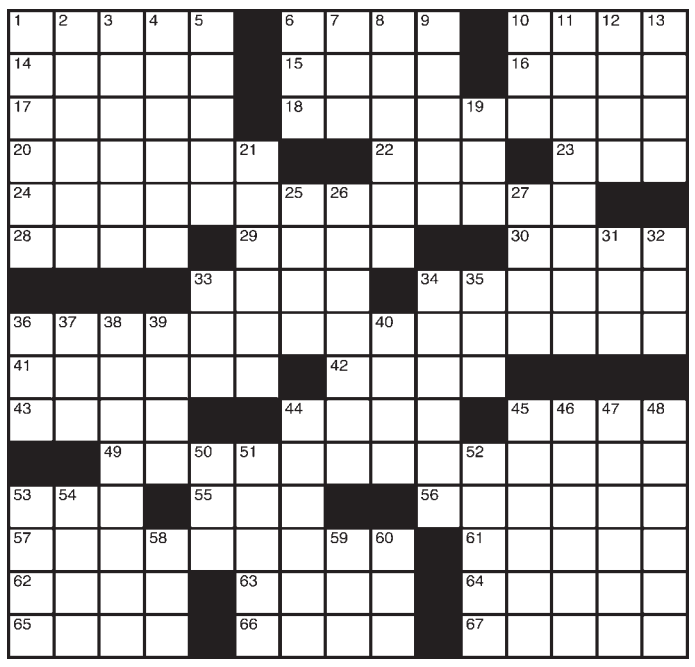
Love is an NBA champion, a five-time All-Star, a likely Hall of Famer when his playing days end and had expressed interest in possibly remaining with the Heat even past his current contract — which is set to expire after the coming 2025-26 season.

"Never thought I'd be a math problem," Love posted on social media after being informed of the trade. "Welcome to the NBA."

Collins has averaged 16 points per game in eight seasons, the first six with Atlanta and two with Utah. Anderson will be joining his sixth team, after previous stints with San Antonio, Memphis, Minnesota and Golden State before getting sent to the Heat as part of the trade that moved Jimmy Butler to the Warriors.

"This was an opportunity to address a position and a skillset that we felt needed reinforcement," Clippers President of Basketball Operations Lawrence Frank of acquiring Collins. "John is a power forward in his prime with great athleticism who can also play small-ball (center). He scores at all three levels, excelling in space and transition, as a runner, roller and vertical threat. He stretches the court with his shooting and helps win the possession battle with his rebounding. We're excited to add John to the group."

CROSSWORD



Across
1 Clown's prop, maybe
6 Criminally assist
10 Breakfast spot
14 "Golly!"
15 Angelic adornment
16 Prefix meaning "all"
17 Oscars host O'Brien
18 *Bills wide receiver who played in four consecutive Super Bowls
20 Paraguayan pals
22 Airport pickup info
23 Acid initials
24 *Wildlife sanctuary
28 Cry of insight
29 Fit, as matryoshka dolls
30 Volcano near Catania
33 Whiskey flavor
34 Chewy mints
36 *Meh evaluations
41 Only national park in New England
42 One of 14 in a sonnet
43 "u crack me up"
44 Part of a Rorschach test
45 Operatic solo
49 *Like material that slows flames
53 Artist Yoko
55 Boxing family name
56 Shelter with a sloping roof
57 Made twice as great, and what can be found in the answers to the starred clues
61 Urged (on)
62 Cheese with an edible rind
63 Gymnast Korbut
64 Wicked one
65 Convinced
66 Golf club choice
67 Varieties

Down
1 Confident retort to a boast
2 Inventor Edison
3 Set off, as fireworks
4 Maritime measure
5 Voice above baritone
6 Cry of insight
7 Abolish
8 Like Cain, of Adam's sons
9 Dense cake
10 Neither's partner
11 Brunch option
12 Change for a five
13 "The Secret Life of Bees" novelist Sue Monk __
19 Linguist's asset
21 __ Falls: women's suffrage convention site
25 Tail end
26 Getty of "The Golden Girls"
27 Caesar's "I came"
31 "__ we're talking!"
32 Pack animal
33 Taro-based staple
34 __ block
35 Night for last-minute wrapping
36 Stain or tear
37 Italian scholar Umberto
38 National flower of Wales
39 South Asian rice cake
40 Hilarious comedian
44 S.O.S competitor
45 "Slowly," on sheet music
46 Madison Square Garden hockey player
47 Purpose
48 In conflict
50 Novelist Santha Rama __
51 Jab with one's arm
52 Coral colonies
53 Snow globes, e.g.
54 Wolfe of detective fiction
58 Uni reference
59 Feeling of self-worth
60 June honoree

JUMBLE

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

CRTTA

RNCKA

LPYLEU

ASCWEH

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THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

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

SUDOKU

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

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

SOLUTIONS

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

Jumbles: TRACT CRANK PULLEY CASHEW
Answer: Many people love quartz, and the reason is — CRYSTAL CLEAR

Kershaw makes 11th All-Star team as rosters fill out

NEW YORK (AP) — Dodgers pitcher Clayton Kershaw was picked for his 11th All-Star Game and Paul Skenes, James Wood and Elly De La Cruz boosted the 23-and-under group to five when they were picked Sunday for the July 15 showcase at Atlanta's Truist Park.

Wood at 22 is the youngest of the 65 All-Stars, while Skenes, De La Cruz and fan-elected starters Pete Crow-Armstrong and Jacob Wilson are all 23.

Cal Raleigh and Yoshinobu Yamamoto joined Wood, Wilson and Crow-Armstrong among 19 first-time All-Stars. Wood was acquired by Washington in the August 2022 trade that sent outfielder Juan Soto to San Diego.

"It'll just be cool being around some of the best players in the game," Wood said.

Kershaw last week became the 20th pitcher to reach 3,000 strikeouts and Commissioner Rob Manfred made the left-hander the 65th All-Star as a so-called Legend Pick, his first since selecting Miguel Cabrera and Albert Pujols in 2022 under a provision in the then-new collective bargaining agreement.

Kershaw gives the Dodgers at least five All-Stars for the sixth straight season. The oldest NL All-Star at 37 and most senior All-Star with 11 selections, Kershaw is joined by Yamamoto and fan-elected starters Shohei Ohtani, Freddie Freeman and Will Smith.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Clayton Kershaw, right, and manager Dave Roberts, left, interact before a game against the Chicago White Sox on Thursday, July 3, 2025, in Los Angeles.

Kershaw said he didn't want to discuss the selection on Sunday.

Pittsburgh's Skenes is willing to start his second straight All-Star Game if picked by Dave Roberts, the Dodgers manager in charge of the NL team.

"I think it would be stupid to say no to that. It's a pretty cool opportunity," Skenes said. "I didn't make plans over the All-Star break or anything. So, yeah, I'm super stoked."

Detroit and Seattle will have four players each at the game.

Starting pitchers Hunter Brown of Houston, Garrett Crochet of Boston, Jacob deGrom of Texas, Max Fried of the New York Yankees and Tarik Skubal of Detroit were voted to the AL staff by players, managers and coaches along with relievers Aroldis Chapman of Boston, Josh Hader of Houston and Andrés Muñoz of Seattle.

Chapman is the oldest All-Star, born 19 days before Kershaw.

AL reserves picked by players included Toronto catcher Alejandro Kirk, Tampa Bay first baseman Jonathan Aranda and second baseman Brandon Lowe, Houston shortstop Jeremy Peña, Boston third baseman Alex Bregman, Athletics designated hitter Brent Rooker and outfielders Byron Buxton of Minnesota, Steven Kwan of Cleveland and Julio Rodríguez of Seattle.

MLB used its six picks on pitchers Kris Bubic of Kansas City, Yusei Kikuchi of the Los Angeles Angels, Shane Smith of the Chicago White Sox and Bryan Woo of Seattle, along with Yankees infielder Jazz Chisholm Jr. and Kansas City shortstop Bobby Witt Jr.

"Red carpet, that's my thing," Chisholm said. "I do have a 'fit in mind."

Smith became the second player since 2000 to become an All-Star in the season after he was selected in the Rule 5 draft, following Marlins second baseman Dan Uggla in 2006, according to the Elias Sports Bureau. Smith was left unprotected by Milwaukee and joined Wilson (Athletics) as the only rookies on the All-Star rosters.

Skenes, Washington's MacKenzie Gore, Atlanta's Chris Sale, San Francisco's Logan Webb and Philadelphia's Zack Wheeler were elected to the starting rotation by players along with relievers Jason Adam of San Diego, Edwin Díaz of the New York Mets and Randy Rodríguez of San Francisco.

Skenes started last year's All-Star Game just 66 days after his major league debut, pitching a hitless inning in the NL's 5-3 loss at Arlington, Texas.

Player-elected NL reserves were Colorado catcher Hunter Goodman, Mets first baseman Pete Alonso, St. Louis second baseman Brendan Donovan, Cincinnati's De La Cruz at shortstop, Arizona third baseman Eugenio Suárez, Philadelphia DH Kyle Schwarber and Wood, Arizona's Corbin Carroll and the Padres' Fernando Tatis Jr. in the outfield.

MLB's NL picks were Yamamoto, the Cubs' Matthew Boyd, Milwaukee's Freddy Peralta and the Giants' Robbie Ray for the pitching staff along with Atlanta first baseman Matt Olson and Miami outfielder Kyle Stowers.

Sears spins gem as A's thump Giants

WEST SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — Former Wilson Hall star JP Sears pitched six scoreless innings, Nick Kurtz and Denzel Clarke hit home runs, and the Athletics cruised past the San Francisco Giants 11-2 on Friday night.

Jacob Wilson and Brent Rooker both drove in two of six early runs off Justin Verlander as the Athletics took a 6-0 lead after three innings.

Sears (7-7) allowed three hits and two walks, striking out six. Rookie Jack Perkins gave up two runs — one earned — in three innings for his second save in his third appearance.

Verlander (0-6) was tagged for six runs on seven hits in three innings but fanned five.

After Lawrence Butler singled in the first and scored on Rooker's single, the Athletics used four doubles in the second to score four times.

Tyler Soderstrom and Max Muncy had two straight leading off for the first run. Wilson followed with a two-out, two-run double before scoring on a double by Rooker for a 5-0 lead.

Zack Gelof — on the injured list since spring training — hit a sacrifice fly in the third.

The game was delayed in the middle of the sixth when home plate umpire Andy Fletcher left after taking an earlier foul tip off his mask. Tripp Gibson finished behind the plate.

Clarke tripled when play resumed and scored on Butler's single. Two outs later rookie Kurtz hit his 13th home run for a 9-0 lead. Clarke's two-run shot in the seventh capped the A's scoring.

Brett Wisely homered in the eighth and the Giants got an unearned run in the ninth.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Former Wilson Hall standout and current Athletics pitcher JP Sears throws against the San Francisco Giants on Friday, July 4, 2025, in West Sacramento, California.

KEY STAT

Verlander is 262-152 in his career but winless in his first 14 starts with the Giants. He hasn't won since his final start for the Astros last season, beating the Guardians 4-3 on Sept. 28.

KEY MOMENT

Wilson's two-out double to left in the four-run second came on a 0-2 pitch from Verlander.

Last-place Nats fire manager Martinez, GM Rizzo

WASHINGTON (AP) — Manager Dave Martinez and general manager Mike Rizzo were fired by the Washington Nationals in moves that were surprising for their timing, even if the club is more than halfway through its sixth consecutive losing season since winning the 2019 World Series.

The team announced the changes Sunday just hours after Washington's 6-4 loss at home completed a sweep by the Boston Red Sox. The Nationals are 37-53 and last in the NL East; the only National League club with a worse record is the Colorado Rockies.

But the amateur draft is just a week away, and Washington has the No. 1 overall pick.

Senior VP and assistant GM Mike DeBartolo is taking over for Rizzo on an interim basis. Bench coach Miguel Cairo was named interim manager Monday.

"Miguel is well-respected in our organization and around baseball," DeBartolo said. "A diligent worker and student of the game, he has a proven track record of showing strong leadership in a variety of situations, and I believe that his voice and energy will serve as a catalyst to our team and our fan base in the second half of the season."

Washington could have exercised options to extend the contracts of both Martinez and Rizzo beyond this season.

"While we are appreciative of their past successes," Nationals owner Mark Lerner said in a statement issued by the team, "the on-field performance has not been where we or our fans expect it to be. This is a pivotal time for our club, and we believe a fresh approach and new energy is the best course of action for our team moving forward."

Rizzo's time running the Nationals is over after more than a decade and a half. One of the Lerner family's first hires when it assumed control of the organization, Rizzo had been GM since 2009 and added the title of president of baseball operations in 2013.

"He played an instrumental role in leading the transformation of our farm system and building a roster that reached an unprecedented level of organizational success," Lerner said. "Mike helped make us who we are as an organization, and we're so thankful to him for his hard work and dedication."

Martinez is the fourth manager fired since the start of this season — after Pittsburgh's Derek Shelton, Colorado's Bud Black and Baltimore's Brandon Hyde.

Martinez's full record with the Nationals was 500-622. Last month, he bristled at a reporter's question about how to split the blame for poor performance among players and his staff.

"It's never on coaching," Martinez said then. "Never on coaching. Coaches work their (butts) off every single day. We're not going to finger point here and say it's coaches. It's never on the coaches. They work hard. The message is clear. All the work is done prior. So, sometimes, they have to go out there and play the game. It's always been about the players. Always."

Martinez had never been a manager at any level when Rizzo hired him to replace Dusty Baker before the 2018 season. The Nationals went 82-80 in Martinez's first season and got off to a 19-31 start the following year, leading to some calls for him to be replaced.

But Rizzo stuck with Martinez, and that decision paid off in a big way: Led by starting pitchers Stephen Strasburg, who earned World Series MVP honors, and Max Scherzer, rookie outfielder Juan Soto, young shortstop Trea Turner and a string of veterans — including Howie Kendrick, Ryan Zimmerman and Anthony Rendon — the Nationals won the franchise's first title.

No one from the World Series roster is still playing for the franchise.

Washington took a step back in the pandemic-shortened 2020 season, and then Rizzo began tearing apart the roster, making a series of trades that sent Scherzer, Soto, Turner and others elsewhere.

The reconstruction has continued, without much in the way of concrete progress in the standings to show for it, although the team does have some building blocks that show promise, including starter MacKenzie Gore and outfielder James Wood — both named NL All-Stars on Sunday — along with shortstop CJ Abrams, who was an All-Star a year ago.

"Nationals fans have a lot to be optimistic about, and we see these changes as a difficult, but necessary move in a positive direction," Lerner said. "As has been the case since my late father took control of the team almost 20 years ago, our family remains committed to winning."



AP FILE PHOTO

The Atlanta Braves added relief pitcher Jesse Chavez to their major league roster on Sunday, bringing him into the fold for the second time this season and seventh overall.

He's back! 41-year-old reliever Chavez returns again for his 7th stint with Braves

ATLANTA (AP) — Jesse Chavez has returned yet again for his seventh stint with the Atlanta Braves, including his second this season.

The Braves added the 41-year-old reliever to their major league roster before Sunday's game against the Baltimore Orioles. It is the sixth move to add the veteran right-hander to Atlanta's roster since 2021 and the seventh overall since 2009.

Chavez allowed two runs in three innings in his first stint with the Braves this season after being called up on April 1. He was released a few days later and granted free agency before re-signing with the team.

The Braves optioned left-hander Dylan Dodd to Triple-A Gwinnett and transferred right-hander Spencer Schwellenbach to the 60-day injured list. Schwellenbach was placed on the injured list on Wednesday with a fractured right elbow, possibly ending his season.

The loss of Schwellenbach led the Braves to use seven pitchers, including Dodd, in a bullpen game in Saturday's 9-6 loss to Baltimore in 10 innings. That prompted the move to add Chavez for pitching depth in Sunday's final game of the series.

Chavez first joined the Braves in December 2009 in a trade with Tampa Bay for reliever Rafael Soriano. He played on Atlanta's 2021 World Series championship team after signing a minor league deal.

Chavez made his major league debut with Pittsburgh in 2008 and has pitched for nine teams in 18 seasons, including multiple stints with Toronto, the Los Angeles Angels, Texas and the Chicago Cubs.

GRIND FROM PAGE B1

pointed out the good, and I think that kept him grounded a good bit through his career."

As they grew up, of course, the jokes melted away. Now, Evan and Lathan are Carson's biggest supporters. After years of Carson sitting in the stands cheering for them, the elder Todds are returning the favor.

"It's awesome looking to your right and your left, and you've got your 28-year-old and 26-year-old, and they're watching their brother when they could be doing whatever. Both of them work out of town, but they make it a point to come and watch their little brother," Morgan said. "They really pull for him. They give him a hard time, but they really pull for him. They want nothing but the best for Carson. He leans on them a lot.

"I thank the Lord that I've got three great boys and they pull for each other. It's a joy to watch."

Throughout Carson's life, Morgan was coaching. He's served as the pitching coach at Sumter High, as well as for both the Senior and Junior P-15's over the years. He's currently coaching the juniors in the South Carolina American Legion postseason. Sometimes it can be challenging for your dad to be your coach, but Carson always saw the benefits of having his father around the ballpark.

"I think it's a blessing because he has the utmost confidence in me," Carson said. "Coming up through high school, I get to pitch, and I knew he had confidence in me, so it helps me perform out there."

The Todds always tried to make sure there was a line in the sand when they stepped onto the field. Morgan was dad everywhere except for the diamond. There, he was coach. Morgan tried to treat his kids like any other players, though there are always little things that keep that from happening 100% of the time.

"Me and Carson and Lathan have gone into great discussions on whether I should pull them or leave them (in the game) more so than other pitchers," Morgan said. "Other pitchers, I say I'm going to pull you and they say OK; you pull your son and it's, 'I've got this.' They've always called me coach. It was never, 'Hey, dad,' on the field, and they understood that."

Carson also learned the right mechanics from the beginning because his dad coaches pitching. As he puts it, while many kids are throwers on the mound, Carson was actually pitching from a young age.

"I didn't throw hard when I was little, so I felt like that really helped me because I perfected mechanics and throwing different pitches hitting spots. So, I was really a pitcher before I was a really good pitcher," Carson said. "Most guys, when they're young, they throw real hard, and when they get older, it's kinda hard to settle in on the bigger mound, farther away, because they're just throwers when they were little. Having my dad helping me with mechanics, and Lathan, that was really a blessing because not a lot of people have that every day at their house."

His baseball family stretched far beyond blood relatives. Carson was around his brothers' friends and his dad's teams. When Sumter High won their most recent baseball state championship in 2014, which featured players like Phillip and Jacob Watcher and Charlie Barnes, Carson had a front-row seat.

"Being around the older kids taught him how to play the game, the right way to act, what your response is in a negative situation, how to face adversity. I'll be honest, that oldest group I had, I had a roster full of kids who knew how to play the game of baseball. They knew it was a game of failure," Morgan said. "Carson learned that early, and it paid dividends for him down the road. Being around those older kids all his life helped him. He was around good-attitude kids. Good baseball players, obviously, but they knew how to play the game the right way."

NERVE ISSUES

When Carson was a senior in the spring of 2024, everything seemed to be going perfectly. The Gamecocks snapped a streak of playoff-less seasons on the diamond, and he signed to continue his career at USC Sumter. Then he made his final start of the season against Conway. Carson had an electric performance, scattering five hits in a 2-1 complete game victory. But he felt a little off on the bus ride home.

"It was just a weird feeling in my elbow. I didn't really think much of it, and then the next morning, I look up, and my elbow was kind of stiff, and that was weird," Carson recalled.

Every pitcher fears elbow injuries, but the Todd family had a little more reason to be afraid. Lathan suffered an elbow injury during his time at The Citadel and needed Tommy John surgery to repair his UCL. When Carson told Morgan something was off, alarm bells immediately went off.

"We didn't hit the panic button, but we hit the button because his brother Lathan had the Tommy John. It was in the same kind of area, the same kind of words used with the uncomfortableness of the elbow," Morgan said. "I can remember plain as day sitting in the truck, picking up the phone when he said the elbow was tight, and my heart sank thinking we have another UCL repair in tow."



PHOTOS BY ABIGAIL PITTMAN / THE SUMTER ITEM

Carson has spent most of his life representing Sumter on the diamond, from Dixie Youth teams to Sumter High, the P-15's and USC Sumter. For Carson, Riley Park is a home away from home.



Carson Todd has been finding his groove on the diamond after missing most of a calendar year due to elbow surgery.

Luckily, Carson didn't have the same injury as his brother, but it took them a while to find out what exactly was wrong. While they waited for answers, Carson stopped pitching. He played the field as the Gamecocks wrapped up their season with a pair of playoff losses. It was not the way Carson saw his final high school season coming to an end.

"I'm not gonna lie, it did kind of crush me because it's my senior year. I want to go help my team win," Carson said. "I felt like me not being out there on the mound hurt us a lot, and other guys had to step up who hadn't done it all year. I decided not to go to the doctor at that point because I knew they'd shut me down, so I decided I'd just hit to try to help my team, but that really did suck. I hated that."

Eventually, Carson learned that the weird feeling in his elbow was actually a displaced nerve. Morgan hoped it would be a relatively simple fix, but that was far from the case. Carson tested his arm briefly that summer but mostly played the field for the P-15's. His freshman season at USC Sumter was spent recovering. He redshirted to avoid losing a year of eligibility, but it wasn't a fun experience watching everyone else play the game he loves. Randy Twitty, who coaches Carson on the P-15's, said it best.

"He watched a whole college season, and it's kinda like you're at a candy store and you don't have any money to buy anything," Twitty joked. "He's just sitting there wanting to play and pitch, and he's just watching. He's done everything he should do. I'm sure he was anxious to do that."

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

Carson went to practice every day and worked through his throwing program, but it wasn't the same.

"It was really tough in the beginning. Toward the end, I got to start throwing and stuff, so that was better, but college is a completely different animal than high school. It's really just a full-time job," Carson said. "You know you're practicing for three to four hours every day, and I was out there practicing knowing that I wasn't going to get to play on the weekend. I was right back here doing charts for the pitchers.

"It was tough, but it was good to get my feet wet in college, and I didn't waste a year of eligibility. I'd say just being able to sit back at first and watching was a better thing for me, so when I got back, I knew what to do at practice and what not to do. I think that really helped me fit in as soon as I got there."

But Carson learned some valuable lessons during his first season with the Fire Ants. He was able to see how the other pitchers managed their time and approached the sport.

"Taking every throw seriously as a pitcher," Carson said of his biggest lesson during his year on the sideline. "Coming up through high school, I was a position player and a pitcher, so I got to college, and I'm just a pitcher. I saw how serious those guys took arm care. Every throw they made that day, it was just a very serious throw, nothing was lackadaisical. And they took like stretching serious, warming up. And you've just gotta find stuff to do as just a pitcher to make yourself better because you can't just throw every single day."

Carson slowly worked his way back into pitching throughout the spring. He had to work through physical therapy just to be able to bend his arm after a month in a hard cast. The coaches at USC Sumter were an excellent resource, but Carson also had the perfect person to bounce questions off at home.

"It was definitely a good thing that he has been through something like that," Carson said of his brother, Lathan. "It's a long process; you've just got to trust it, and if you don't go about it the right way, you're not going to come back the way you should or where you were before."

Once Carson overcame the physical barriers, he had to clear the mental hurdle. He was thinking too much about his elbow every time he threw the baseball, but Morgan said something that jolted him back into a state of normalcy.

"It probably took two or three weeks to really get back into throwing the right way. It actually took my dad telling me, 'They fixed it, you have to trust it. Just don't worry about it, just throw.' That's what helped me a lot to get to throwing the right way," Carson said. "A lot of credit to him, because if he didn't tell me that, I'd probably be really jacked up right now with throwing."

BACK WITH THE P-15'S

After building up his arm strength in the spring, Carson was able to pitch for the P-15's this summer. He made the team's first start of the summer against West Columbia on June 2. He's never been more antsy for a start.

"That was awesome. I was looking forward to that start for a while," Carson said. "Warming up in the bullpen, I was telling our pitching coach, Andrew, I hadn't had adrenaline in a long time, like in a game. So, I got on the mound and (threw) warm-up pitches and, I'll be honest, I just blacked out. The first inning, I didn't hear anything, nobody was saying anything to me, just kind of blacked out, and that was a real big kinda weight off my chest to be able to go out there and perform."

Carson was electric. He pitched four innings and allowed just one hit and two walks, adding eight strikeouts to the tally. The entire Todd family was able to breathe a sigh of relief.

"It was nerve-wracking, to be honest. I never got really nervous for the boys when they got on the mound," Morgan said. "I was really nervous to see him cut it loose. You want to believe everything is good, but you don't really know until you get out there in the fire. I don't recall being that nervous ever, honestly."

The P-15's come with unforgettable memories for Carson. Growing up, he was a precocious bat boy while his dad coached and his brothers played. In 2023, he split time between the senior and the junior teams as both squads had their best seasons in recent memory. The seniors made it to the state quarterfinals, falling just short against Camden in the state semifinals. Once his time with the seniors wrapped up, he rejoined the juniors and took the mound in the final game of the season as Post 15 took down Anderson 6-3 for the state title. He claimed the trophy with his dad in the dugout as a touching moment for the Todd family.

"That was a really fun summer," Carson said. "The senior and the junior teams, we had a really great year. We had a lot of good guys, a lot of team guys, I felt like, on both teams. They all kinda knew their role, and that makes it easy to go out there and play because everybody's up in the dugout."

This summer has been a work in progress for Carson as he continues to knock off some rust. He entered the week with a 2-2 record and a 3.39 ERA with 24 strikeouts and 10 walks across 20 2/3 innings. He's extremely happy to have this summer to get back into the groove before he gets back to USC Sumter.

"I've treated each and every start just trying to get better and better as I go, trying to knock the rust off. I'm still kinda rusty, I'd say," Carson said. "I haven't really gotten back to like 100% like me, and the rhythm and everything, but this is big for me to be able to play in the summertime and get to throw on the mound to hitters and just not going to USC Sumter in the fall just not throwing in two years to batters."

Randy knew it would take some time for Carson to find his form, but he knew the righty would be a major asset for the P-15's even if he wasn't able to take the mound.

"Carson is the kind of player you're glad to get back because he's a last-year player, he's mature, and he's been around the game a lot," the P-15's head coach said. "His dad has been a long-time coach here in Sumter, and he had two older brothers play, so it was good to have him back regardless of how much pitching we got out of him. It's kinda like a player-coach."

Perhaps most importantly, Carson appreciates having another summer with the P-15's. He's spent countless hours at Riley Park as both a spectator and player, and he refused to let his last opportunity to represent Post 15 slip away.

"Just like he's grown up around the game, he's grown up at Riley Park. I coached Lathan back in the day on juniors, moved up to seniors with him, and Carson was our bat boy. He was probably the most involved bat boy ever," Morgan said. "He wouldn't have done anything but legion baseball over the summer by his choice. He was ready to get out there and play some real baseball because he hadn't played over the fall and spring, and he's ready to play for the Sumter P-15's. He absolutely loves the P-15's; I love the P-15's. I think every kid that's able should play legion baseball, especially in Sumter. We're blessed in Sumter. Wally Jones and the previous coaches before him laid a great foundation.

"A lot of these kids grow up on the sideline watching those kids in the red and blue and can't wait to get out there. Carson is one of those kids. He was so proud when he made the juniors, you couldn't tell him anything. And he wasn't taking anything from this last summer. He would've been devastated if he couldn't play this last summer. He's enjoying this last ride with the boys."



PHOTO PROVIDED

Carson is surrounded by his family during his senior night last spring.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Carson, right, and Morgan Todd were able to team up for the Sumter Junior P-15's when the team won the 2023 junior state championship.

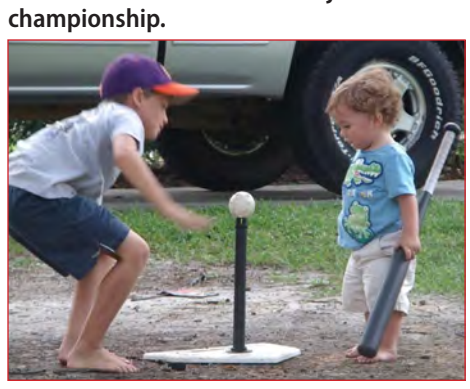


PHOTO PROVIDED

A young Carson Todd, right, gets in some tee work with his brother Lathan.

No. 1 Sabalenka narrowly outlasts Siegemund to reach Wimbledon semis

LONDON (AP) — Aryna Sabalenka trailed by a set, then twice was down a break in the third before grabbing the last three games to reach the Wimbledon semifinals by overcoming 104th-ranked Laura Siegemund 4-6, 6-2, 6-4 at Centre Court on Tuesday.

"She pushed me so much," said Sabalenka, No. 1 since last October. "After the first set, I was just looking at my box, thinking, 'Guys, I mean, book the tickets. I think we're about to leave this beautiful city, country, place.'"

Sabalenka never has been to a title match at the All England Club, the only Grand Slam tournament where that's the case. She won the Australian Open twice and the U.S. Open once and was the runner-up at this year's Australian Open and French Open.

On Thursday, she gets a third chance in that round.

Sabalenka hadn't dropped a set during this year's trip to the grass-court major until Tuesday — but she also hadn't faced an opponent whose style is quite as unorthodox as that of the 37-year-old Siegemund.

The German was the oldest and by far the lowest-ranked of any woman in the quarterfinals, as well as the one with the fewest career titles (two). Her ability to change the depth, speed, angles and spins of her shots over and over can frustrate any opponent and dull the type of power that Sabalenka brings to the court. And, make no mistake: Sabalenka was frustrated, especially in the final set.

"It's not like it's an annoying game. It's a smart game. She's really making everyone work against her," Sabalenka said.

OBITUARIES

THOMAS P. THOMPSON SR.

DALZELL — Thomas P. Thompson Sr., "Tommy", 83, husband of Sandra Thompson, passed from this life to join the Lord on Wednesday, July 2, 2025, at his home.


THOMPSON

Born May 25, 1942, in Lake City, he was the son of the late Walter James Thompson and Irene Allen Thompson. He retired at the age of 79 after owning two tree companies for over 30 years, Jim's Tree Service, in partnership with his friend, Jim Arnemann, and Po Boy's Tree Service in partnership with his nephew, Rex Prescott. He enjoyed the outdoors, fishing and kayaking, traveling with his family and spending time in his "Dog House" listening to books and laughing and talking with his family and friends. He dearly loved God and his family. The impact of his life of unwavering faith leaves a legacy that will continue to touch lives.

A man of prayer and service to God's people, he was a church member and deacon at Green Acres Assembly of God and member of First Pentecostal Holiness Church.

Survivors include Sandy, his beloved wife of 63 years; children, Cindy Thompson Klein (Rob), Thomas Thompson Jr. (fiancé Candace); and three grandchildren, Hunter Thompson Rollins, Thomas "Trey" Thompson III (fiancé Erin) and John Riley Thompson; sisters, May Lineberger, Kay Sprowls (Rick); brothers, John Thompson (Suzie) and Charlie Thompson (Gloria); and a number of nieces and nephews.

In addition to parents, he was preceded in death by a daughter, Debbie Thompson; sisters, Ruth Richburg and Betty Prescott; and brothers, Jimmy Thompson, Billy Thompson and Frank Thompson.

Funeral services were held at 2 p.m. Saturday, July 5, 2025, in the Elmore-Cannon-Stephens Funeral Home chapel with the Rev. Ronnie Morris officiating. Burial was in the High Hills of Santee Baptist Church cemetery.

Pallbearers will be Trey Thompson, John Riley Thompson, Hunter Rollins, Rob Klein, Rex Prescott and Stevie Price.

The family received friends from 1 to 2 p.m. Saturday, July 5, 2025, at Elmore-Cannon-Stephens Funeral Home.

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

DIANE B. DRAYTON

Diane B. Drayton, 73, died Thursday, June 26, 2025, in New Jersey.

Funeral services were held at 10 a.m. Saturday, July 5, at Greater St. Phillip RMUE Ch., 4574 Old River Road in Pinewood.

Services entrusted to Clarendon Funeral Home LLC, (803) 485-3755.

GEORGE EDWARD CHINA JR.

George Edward China Jr., son of the late George China Sr. and Marie Dawson China, was born on Aug. 11, 1958, in Sumter. His soul entered eternal rest on Sunday, June 29, 2025, at his home in Dalzell.

He attended the public schools of Sumter County and graduated from Hillcrest High School with the Class of 1977. Shortly after, he enlisted in the United States Army, where he honorably served his country from May 11, 1977, to Jan. 3, 1983. He was a member of American Legion Post 175 in Dalzell.

His memories will be cherished by his daughter and a host of other relatives and friends.

The family will receive relatives and friends at the home of his sister, 4160 South Lake Cherryvale Drive, Sumter.

Funeral services were held at 2:30 p.m. Monday, July 7, 2025, at Bible Outreach Ministry, 1010 N. Guignard Drive, Sumter, with Pastor Calvin Peterson, eulogist, Pastor Eric Stuckey, officiating.

Burial followed at 1 p.m. Tuesday, July 8, 2025, in Fort Jackson National Cemetery, 4170 Percival Road, Columbia.

Services directed by the management and staff of Williams Funeral Home Inc., 821 N. Main St., Sumter. Online messages may be sent to the family at *www.williamsfuneralhomeinc.com*.

ROBERT THOMAS CLARK

Robert Thomas Clark, age 31, died on Thursday, July 3, 2025, in his hometown of Sumter.

You may go to *www.bullockfuneralhome.com* to sign the family's guestbook.

The family has chosen Bullock Funeral Home for the arrangements.

Bullock Funeral Home & Crematorium

RICHARD SCOTT BELL

Richard Scott Bell, age 80, beloved husband of 55 years to Margaret Bell, died on Thursday, July 3, 2025, at NHC Healthcare of Sumter.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, July 12, 2025, at 11 a.m. at Bullock Funeral Home.

A reception will follow the service at Bullock Funeral Home.

You may go to *www.bullockfuneralhome.com* to sign the family's guestbook.

The family has chosen Bullock Funeral Home for the arrangements.

Bullock Funeral Home & Crematorium

RONNY THOMAS REED

Ronny Thomas Reed, age 83, beloved husband of 40 years to Rebecca P. Reed, passed away on Friday, July 4, 2025, at his residence.

A visitation was held on Tuesday, July 8, 2025, from 6 to 8 p.m. at Bullock Funeral Home.

A funeral service will be held on Wednesday, July 9, 2025, at 11 a.m. in Bullock Funeral Home Chapel. The burial will immediately follow the service in Evergreen Memorial Park Cemetery with full military honors.

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

The family has chosen Bullock Funeral Home of Sumter for the arrangements.

Bullock Funeral Home & Crematorium

MARIE ELLIS GROGAN

Marie Ellis Grogan, 83, died Sunday, July 6, 2025, at Prisma Health Tuomey Hospital.


GROGAN

Born in Sumter, she was a daughter of the late Lewis Reid Ellis and Juliette Christine Dunning Ellis.

Ms. Grogan was a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church. She was a 1959 graduate of Edmunds High School and attended Palmer Business College. At a young age, she started working with her father in the family business, Ellis Pharmacy in Sumter; she was formerly employed by Century 21 Development Company in Charleston and Realty World Graham & Grubbs in Laurinburg, N.C.

Surviving are two sons, Tom Lewis Sylvester (Silvania) of Alpharetta, Georgia, and Mark Russell Littell (Joy) of Summerville; two daughters, Julieanne Sylvester Knight of Summerville and Alison Lynn Mims (Bryan) of Grayson, Georgia; one sister, Emilie Ellis Goldman (David) of Sumter; 10 grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

Funeral services will be held at noon Thursday, July 10, 2025, in the Chapel of Elmore Hill McCreight Funeral Home.

Burial will be in Evergreen Memorial Park Cemetery.

The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service at Elmore Hill McCreight Funeral Home.

Memorials may be made to Immanuel Lutheran Church, 140 Poinsett Drive, Sumter, SC 29150.

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

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

Elmore Hill McCreight Funeral Home and Crematory

LYMON LEE BRUNSON


BRUNSON

Lymon Lee Brunson, 89, widower of Jacqueline Regena Mixon Brunson, died Sunday, July 6, 2025, at NHC Healthcare-Sumter.

Born April 28, 1936, in Sumter County, he was a son of the late Washington Lee "Watt" Brunson, and Loulie Marie Newman Brunson. He was a member of Concord Presbyterian Church.

Survivors include three children, Chris Brunson and Keby Brunson, both of Sumter, and Brandi Brunson of Auburn, Alabama; three grandchildren, Courtney Brunson, Tanner Brunson and Cassidy Brunson; two great-granddaughters, Emma and Ava; and two sisters, Marie Burns of Sumter and Patricia Muldrow of Mayesville.

In addition to his wife and parents, he was preceded in death by his brother, Washington M. "Wattie" Brunson.

A graveside service was held at 11 a.m. Tuesday, July 8, 2025, in the Concord Presbyterian Church cemetery.

The family received friends from 5 to 7 p.m. Monday, July 7, 2025, at Elmore-Cannon Stephens Funeral Home.

Memorials may be sent to Concord Presbyterian Church, 3350 E. Brewington Road, Sumter, SC 29153.

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

QUINCETTA LATOYA ABRAMS

Quincetta Latoya Abrams, 35, daughter of Ginny Connie Abrams and the late Silas Abrams Jr., was born on Jan. 28, 1990, in Sumter. She departed this life on Thursday, June 19, 2025, at Prisma Health Tuomey Hospital, Sumter.


ABRAMS

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. Wednesday, July 9, 2025, at St. Paul Holiness Church, 129 Moore St., Sumter, with Elder Barrington A. Pierson, eulogist.

Family will receive friends at the home, 861 Carolina Ave., Apt #50, Sumter.

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

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

HERBERT HARRIETT

Herbert Harriett, 79, son of the late Jesse Massey and Rosa Lee Massey, was born on March 30, 1946, in Bronx, New York. He departed this life Friday, July 4, 2025, at McLeod Health-Cheraw, Cheraw.

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

NANCY HATTIE LESANE MONTGOMERY


MONTGOMERY

Nancy Hattie Lesane Montgomery, 82, widow of Tommy Lee Montgomery and daughter of the late Samuel Lesane and Flora Solomon Lesane, was born on June 18, 1943, in Sumter. She departed this life on Sunday, July 6, 2025, at Prisma Health Richland Hospital, Columbia.

Public viewing will be held on Wednesday, July 9, 2025, from 2 to 6 p.m. at Job's Mortuary Inc.

Funeral services will be held at 10 a.m. Thursday, July 10, 2025, at Salem Chapel & Heritage Center, 101 S. Salem Ave., Sumter, with the Rev. Othan Sharp, officiating.

Interment will follow in Mayesville Community Cemetery, Mayesville.

In lieu of flowers humbly request all donations be sent to Job's Mortuary Inc.

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

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

EDDIE LEE HARVIN

Eddie Lee Harvin, 96, widower of Jessie Mae Washington Harvin and son of the late Jethro Harvin and Elsie Benjamin Harvin, was born on Jan. 22, 1929, in Sumter, County. He departed this life on Saturday, July 5, 2025, in Mayesville.

Family will receive friends at the home of his daughter, 2065 Avenue B, Mayesville, starting Tuesday, July 8, 2025, from 2 to 8 p.m.

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

NAPOLEON RAMSEY


RAMSEY

Napoleon Ramsey, 79, husband of Essie Mae Geter Ramsey and son of the late Washington Ramsey and Annie Mae Rhames Ramsey, was born on Dec. 6, 1945, in Sumter. He departed this life on Friday, July 4, 2025, at Prisma Health Tuomey Hospital, Sumter.

Public viewing will be held on Thursday, July 10, 2025, from 2 to 6 p.m. at Job's Mortuary Inc.

Funeral services will be held at noon Friday, July 11, 2025, at Salem Chapel & Heritage Center, 101 S. Salem Ave., Sumter, with Minister Ernest LeGette, officiating.

Interment will follow in W. T. English Memorial Park, Gable.

Family will receive friends at the home, 50 Lula Lane, Sumter, daily from 3 to 7 p.m.

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

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

GRANT GRINNELL JR.

Grant Grinnell Jr., husband of Mary Mathis Grinnell and son of the late Grant Grinnell Sr. and Carrie Singleton Grinnell, was born on June 4, 1946, in Sumter County. He departed this life on Sunday, July 6, 2025, at Prisma Health Tuomey Hospital, Sumter.

Family will receive friends at the home, 938 Jensen Road, Sumter, daily from 3 to 6 p.m.

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

DARCELL CARTER-AMADOR

Darcell Carter-Amador passed away peacefully on Friday, July 4, 2025, in Jacksonville, Florida. She was born on May 20, 1969, in Sumter. She is the granddaughter of the late Maggie K. Carter. Darcell is survived by her husband, Rigo Amador, her three sons, Brandon, Ticen and Darius, and two daughters, Jasmine and Diva.

LYNDA KAY NIELSEN KAREL

Lynda Kay Nielsen Karel, age 80, beloved wife of 60 years to Robert James Karel, passed away on Sunday, July 6, 2025, at her residence surrounded by her family.


KAREL

Born in Pensacola, Florida, she was the daughter of the late Kenneth Nielsen and Evelyn Larson Nielsen. After graduating high school, Lynda went on to obtain a master's degree in education and enjoyed a very long, successful career as a math teacher. She taught at Gilbert High School, Thomas Sumter Academy and the University of South Carolina. In addition to teaching, there were many hobbies that she enjoyed, such as gardening, sewing, traveling and shopping. However, Lynda was an avid dancer, especially round dancing, line dancing and square dancing. Her true joy in life was spending time with her family. She will be remembered as a very loving and devoted wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister and friend. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

In addition to her husband, Robert, she is survived by two sons, Tom Karel and wife, Daphne, of Greenwood, S.C., and Scott Karel of Sumter; a brother, Ron Nielsen, and wife, Chris, of Elizabeth, Colorado; a sister, Debbie Vance, and husband, John, of Coleman, Texas; four grandchildren, Jennifer Michaloski and husband, Gabriel, David Karel, Kathy Randall and husband, Jonathan, and Rebecca Karel; and three great-grandchildren, Mark, Hudson and Rhodes.

A visitation will be held on Thursday, July 10, 2025, one hour prior to the service from 11 to noon at Bullock Funeral Home.

A funeral service will be held on Thursday, July 10, 2025, at noon in Bullock Funeral Home Chapel with the Rev. Wes Conner officiating.

The interment will follow the service at Fort Jackson National Cemetery at 2 p.m.

Donations may be made in memory of Lynda to Alzheimer's Association Mid-State SC Chapter, P.O. Box 7044, Columbia, SC 29202-7044.

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

The family has chosen Bullock Funeral Home of Sumter for the arrangements.

Bullock Funeral Home & Crematorium

the Sumter ITEM CLASSIFIEDS

To Place Your Classified Ads, Please call

803-774-1200

CLASSIFIED DEADLINES

11:00 a.m. Tuesday
for the Wednesday edition

11:00 a.m. Friday
for the Saturday edition

We will be happy to change your ad if an error is made; however we are not responsible for errors after the first run day. We shall not be liable for any loss or expense that results from the printing or omission of an advertisement. We reserve the right to edit, refuse or cancel any ad at any time.



Beer & Wine License

Notice Of Application
Notice is hereby given that **PZA Lane, LLC DBA Pizza Lane** intends to apply to the South Carolina Department of Revenue for a license permit that will allow the sale and **ON** premises consumption of **Beer & Wine** at **460 Broad St, Sumter, SC 29150**. To object to the issuance of this permit/license, written protest must be postmarked no later than **July 11, 2025**. For a protest to be valid, it must be in writing, and should include the following information: (1) the name, address and telephone number of the person filing the protest; (2) the specific reasons why the application should be denied; (3) that the person protesting is willing to attend a hearing (if one is requested by the applicant); (4) that the person protesting resides in the same county where the proposed place of business is located or within five miles of the business; and (5) the name of the applicant and the address of the premises to be licensed. Protests must be submitted online e-mailed to: ABL@dor.sc.gov Attn: S.C. Department of Revenue, ABL Section.

Abandon Vehicle / Boat

Abandoned Vehicle Notice:
The following vehicle was abandoned at **J & T Customizing, 4390 Questria Dr., Sumter, SC 29154.** Described as a **1986 Chev, VIN # 1GCHC33W2GS158768. Total Due for storage is $7,280.00 as of July 8, 2025.**

Described as a **1970 MIDG, VIN # GAN6UG179873. Total Due for storage is $3,986.00 as of July 8, 2025.**

Described as a **1953 CHEV, VIN #B53B106075. Total Due for storage is $4,312.00 as of July 8, 2025.**

Described as a **2007 HOND #2HKYF18557H539976. Total Due for storage is $6,720.00 as of July 8, 2025.**

Owner is asked to call 803-720-7058. If not claimed in 30 days. it will be turned over to the Magistrate's Office for public sale.

Summons & Notice

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF SUMTER
IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
DOCKET NO.: 2024-CP-43-02130
AMENDED SUMMONS AND NOTICE WITH LIS PENDENS (Action to Quiet Title)

Daniel Morwood, Plaintiff,
v.
Ammallah Kortia Mooris-Bey, Janet James, Kiyan C. Morris, Anthony Wheeler, The Personal Representative, if any, whose name is unknown of the Estate of Michael L. Frieson a/k/a Michael Louis Frieson, and Michael L. Frieson, II a/k/a Michael Frieson, II, Defendants.

TO THE DEFENDANT(S): The Personal Representative, if any, whose name is unknown of the Estate of Michael L. Frieson a/k/a Michael Louis Frieson, his heirs, Personal Representatives, Successors and Assigns, and all other persons with any right, Title, or interest in the real estate described herein; also, any persons who may be in the military service of the United States of America, being a class designated as John Doe; and any unknown minors or persons under a disability being a class designated as Richard Roe; YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and required to appear and defend by answering the Amended Complaint in this action, of which a copy is herewith served upon you, and to serve a copy of your Answer on the subscribers at their offices, 700 Huger Street, Suite 102 Columbia, SC 29201, Post Office Box 123 (29202), within thirty (30) days after the service hereof, exclusive of the day of such service; except that the United States of America, if named, shall have sixty (60) days to answer after the service hereof, exclusive of the day of such service; and if you fail to do so, judgment by default will be rendered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. TO MINOR(S) OVER FOURTEEN YEARS OF AGE, AND/OR TO MINOR(S) UNDER FOURTEEN YEARS OF AGE AND THE PERSON WITH WHOM THE MINOR(S) RESIDES, AND/OR TO PERSONS UNDER SOME LEGAL DISABILITY, ALL BEING A CLASS DESIGNATED AS RICHARD ROE: YOU ARE FURTHER SUMMONED AND NOTIFIED to apply for the appointment of a guardian ad litem within thirty (30) days after the service of this Amended Summons and Notice upon you. If you fail to do so, application for such appointment will be made by the Plaintiff immediately and separately and such application will be deemed absolute and total in the absence of your application for such an appointment within thirty (30) days after the service of the Amended Summons and Complaint upon you. NOTICE TO APPOINT ATTORNEY FOR DEFENDANT(S) IN MILITARY SERVICE TO UNKNOWN OR KNOWN DEFENDANTS THAT MAY BE IN THE MILITARY SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ALL BEING A CLASS DESIGNATED AS JOHN DOE: YOU ARE FURTHER SUMMONED AND NOTIFIED that if you fail to apply for the appointment of an attorney to represent you within thirty (30) days after the service of this Amended Summons and Notice upon you, Plaintiff will apply for the appointment of an attorney to represent you. YOU WILL PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Lis Pendens was filed with the Clerk of Court for Sumter County, South Carolina on November 20, 2024, and the amended Summons and Complaint of which the foregoing is a copy of the Amended Summons, were filed with the Clerk of Court for Sumter County, South Carolina on January 6, 2025. YOU WILL ALSO TAKE NOTICE this matter has been referred to the Sumter County Master in Equity and the Order of Reference specifically provides that the said Special Referee/Master in Equity is authorized and empowered to enter a final judgement in this case with appeal only to the South Carolina Court of Appeals pursuant to Rule 203(d)(1) of the SCAR, effective June 1, 1999.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that an action has been commenced and is now pending or will commence within twenty (20) days hereof in this Court upon the Complaint of Plaintiff above named against the Defendant(s) above named for the Reformation of Deed, Quiet Title, and Termination of Installment Sales Contract for the real property located in the County of Sumter, State of South Carolina and more fully described as follows:

All that certain piece, parcel or lot of land, with improvements thereon, if any, situate, lying and being in the County of Sumter, State of South Carolina, being shown and designated as Lot No. 3, as shown on a certain plat prepared by H.D. Moise, C.E., dated June 1, 1920 and recorded in the Office of the Register of Deeds for Sumter County in Plat Book V-4 at Page 7. Aforesaid plat is specifically incorporated herein and reference is craved thereto for a more complete and accurate description of the metes, bounds, courses, and distances of the property concerned herein. This description is in lieu of metes and bounds, as permitted by law under Section 30-5-250 of The Code of Laws of South Carolina (2007). Be all measurements a little more or less and according to the said plat.
Property Address: 118 S. Salem Avenue, Sumter, South Carolina 29150
Tax Map ID: 228-14-10-018

BLAIR CATO PICKREN CASTERLINE, LLC

s/Jeffrey L. Silver
Jeffrey L. Silver, Esquire
S.C. Bar No. 5104
700 Huger Street, Suite 102
Post Office Box 123 (29202)
Columbia, SC 29201
(803) 744-3484
ATTORNEY FOR PLAINTIFF
Columbia, South Carolina
June 30, 2025

Public Hearing

NOTICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION DESIGN REVIEW

The Historic Preservation Design Review Committee will meet on Thursday, July 24, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. in the Sumter City Council Chambers located on the Fourth Floor of the Sumter Opera House (21 North Main Street, Sumter, South Carolina). This is a public hearing.
HP-25-15, 344 W. Calhoun St.
Request for Design Review Approval for (1) the installation of 4 ft. tall black aluminum picket fencing around the pool in the rear yard, and 2) installation of a 6 ft. tall natural wood privacy fence in the rear yard (west and south property lines). The property is located at 344 W. Calhoun St. and is represented by Tax Map# 228-11-01-027.
Documents pertaining to the proposed request(s) are on file in the Office of the Sumter City-County Planning Department and are available to be inspected and studied by interested citizens.

David P. Merchant
Mayor

Estate Notice Sumter County

NOTICE TO CREDITORS OF ESTATES

Persons having claim against the following estates are required to deliver or mail their claims to the indicated Personal Representatives, appointed to administer these estates, and to file their claims on Form #371PC with the Probate Court of Sumter County Courthouse, N. Main Street, Sumter, SC, 29150, on or before the date that is eight months after the date of the first publication of this Notice to Creditors, (unless previously barred by operation of Section 62-3-803), or such persons shall be forever barred as to heir claims. All claims are required to be presented in written statements, indicating the name and the address of the claimant, the basis of the claim, the amount claimed, the date when the claim will become due, the nature of any uncertainty as to the amount claimed and the date when due, and a description of any security as to the claim.

Estate: Linda G. Hendrix
2025ES4300362

Personal Representative:
David Michael Hendrix
927 Wisteria Way
Sumter, SC 29150

Kenneth L. Hamilton
Attorney at Law
PO Box 1774
Sumter, SC 29151

Estate: Carlette Pack Woodcock
2025ES4300420

Personal Representative:
Richard Gregoty Morris
2715 Angel Oak Dr.
Sumter, SC 29150

Estate: Henry Richardson Dubose
2025ES4300457

Personal Representative:
Belinda Caudle Muldrow
950 McCathern Ave.
Sumter, SC 29154

Estate: Willie Edward Montgomery
2025ES4300459

Personal Representative:
Kiyana Shirleen Belser James
9715 Stukes Rd.
Pinewood, SC 29125

Estate: Charlie Spencer Ridgeway
2025ES4300428

Personal Representative:
Linda W. Ridgeway
1905 Plowden Mill Rd.
Sumter, SC 29153

Estate: Stanley Otis Brunson
2025ES4300419

Personal Representative:
Lessie Mae Brunson
7555 Crim Lane
Rembert, SC 29128

Estate Notice Sumter County

NOTICE TO CREDITORS OF ESTATES

Persons having claim against the following estates are required to deliver or mail their claims to the indicated Personal Representatives, appointed to administer these estates, and to file their claims on Form #371PC with the Probate Court of Sumter County Courthouse, N. Main Street, Sumter, SC, 29150, on or before the date that is eight months after the date of the first publication of this Notice to Creditors, (unless previously barred by operation of Section 62-3-803), or such persons shall be forever barred as to heir claims. All claims are required to be presented in written statements, indicating the name and the address of the claimant, the basis of the claim, the amount claimed, the date when the claim will become due, the nature of any uncertainty as to the amount claimed and the date when due, and a description of any security as to the claim.

Estate: Betty Ann Holland Wright
2025ES4300446

Personal Representative:
Nathan Lee Wright
3105 West Brewington Rd
Sumter, SC 29153

Estate: Carolyn F. Buckner
2025ES4300431

Personal Representative:
Jocelyn Louise Buckner
2014 California St.
Huntington Beach, CA 92648

Marcy Michele Buckner
1019 3rd Place SE
Washington, DC 20003

Estate: Derrick Bennett
2025ES4300426

Personal Representative:
Kim Janice Sinkler
1195 Mineral Circle
Sumter, SC 29153

Estate: Linda Edens Montague
2025ES4300440

Personal Representative:
Nancy M. Cromer
10 Pathfinder Dr.
Sumter, SC 29150

Estate: Phyllis Nabors Hall
2025ES4300455

Personal Representative:
James O. Hall
3080 Gainous Rd.
Dalzell, SC 29040

Estate: Barbara Jackson Taylor
2025ES4300423

Personal Representative:
Angela R. Sieber
2116 Sumter Hwy
Bishopville, SC 29010

Estate: Thomas Adam Rygalski
2025ES4300434

Personal Representative:
Dale Marie Rygalski
876 Gordonia Ave
Sumter, SC 29150

Estate: Paul Edward Pollard
2025ES4300438

Personal Representative:
Cindy E. Young
2545 Stirrup La
Dalzell, SC 29040

Estate: Edna Lucinda Evans
2025ES4300418

Personal Representative:
Gloria Jean Evans
560 Magnolia St. #111
Spartanburg, SC 29303

Estate: Larry James Green
2025ES4300430

Personal Representative:
Russell J. Green
2611 Highview St.
Sumter, SC 29154

Estate: John Rowland
2025ES4300421

Personal Representative:
Ellie F. Rowland
3001 Waverly Dr.
Sumter, SC 29150

Estate: John Melvin Shank
2025ES4300432

Personal Representative:
George V. Shank
74 Creek Bend Dr.
Summerville, SC 29485

Estate: Louella Benton
2025ES4300232

Personal Representative:
Willie Benton
438 Lenox Ave
New York, NY 10037

Garryl L. Deas
Attorney at Law
PO Box 1211
Sumter, SC 29151



Announcements

Replace your roof with the best-looking and longest-lasting material: steel from Erie Metal Roofs! Three styles and multiple colors available. Guaranteed to last a lifetime! Limited time offer up to 50% off installation + additional 10% off install (for military, health workers & 1st responders). Call Erie Metal Roofs: 1-855-900-1261

DONATE YOUR CAR TO KIDS. Your donation helps fund the search for missing children and preventing abduction. Accepting trucks, motorcycles and RVs, too! Fast, free pickup. Running or not. 24-hour response. Maximum tax donation. Call (888) 515-3810.

DENTAL INSURANCE from Physicians Mutual Insurance Company. Coverage for 400- plus procedures. Real dental insurance- NOT just a discount plan. Do not wait! Call now! Get your FREE Dental Information Kit with all the details! 1-855-397-7030 www.dental50plus.com/60 #6258

Announcements

Portable Oxygen Concentrator may be covered by Medicare! Reclaim independence and mobility with the compact design and long-lasting battery of Inogen One. Free information kit! Call 833-230-8692.

Safe Step- North America's #1 Walk-In Tub. Comprehensive lifetime warranty. Top-of-the-line installation and service. Now featuring our FREE shower package and $1600 off for a limited time! Call today! Financing available. Call Safe Step, 1-877-852-0368.



Home Improvements

H.L. Boone, Contractor: Remodel, paint, roofs, gutters, drywall, blown ceilings, etc. 803-773-9904

Tree Service

Ricky's Tree Service Tree removal, forestry mulching, stump grinding, Lic & ins, free quote, 803-473-2202 or cell 803-460-8747.

Satellite Sales & Service

DIRECTV OVER INTERNET- Get your favorite live TV, sports and local channels. 99% signal reliability! CHOICE Package, $84.99/mo for 12 months. HBO Max and Premium Channels included for 3 mos (w/ CHOICE Package or higher.) No annual contract, no hidden fees! Some restrictions apply. Call IVS 1-855-237-9741

Get DISH Satellite TV + Internet! Free install, free HD-DVR upgrade, 80,000 on-demand movies, plus limited time up to $600 in gift cards. Call today! 1-877-542-0759.

DIRECTV- All your entertainment. Nothing on your roof! Sign up for Directv and get your first three months of Max, Paramount+, Showtime, Starz, MGM+ and Cinemax included. Choice package $84.99/mo. Some restrictions apply. Call DIRECTV 1-844-624-1107



Auctions

To satisfy the owner's storage lien, People's Choice Storage, will sell at public lien sale on July 25, 2025 @ 10:00AM, the personal property in the below listed units, which may include but are not limited to: household goods, personal items, office and other equipment.

People's Choice Storage
1180 Old W Liberty St,
Suite 4
Sumter, SC 29150
803-757-1368
Sale to be held at
www.storagetreasures.com

Deloris Hatcher A25
Household Goods/Furniture; Boxes & Bags
Robert Glenn A43
Outdoor Equipment; Totes; Sports Equipment

ADVERTISE YOUR AUCTION in 80 S.C. newspapers for only $375. Your 25-word classified ad will reach more than 1.5 million readers. Call Randall Savely at the S.C. Newspaper Network, 1-803-750-9561.

To satisfy the owner's storage lien, People's Choice Storage, will sell at public lien sale on July 25, 2025 @ 10:00AM, the personal property in the below listed units, which may include but are not limited to: household goods, personal items, office and other equipment.

People's Choice Storage
731 Broad St
Sumter, SC 29150
803-921-0202
Sale to be held at
www.storagetreasures.com

Adriane Russ 314
Event Décor, Misc.
Brenda Michael 441
Misc. Furniture, Mattress, Box Spring, Boxes, Misc.
Booker McGee 504
Dryer, Washer, Mattress, Box Spring, Misc.
Christy Williams 824
Children's Toys, Clock, Cleaning Supplies, Misc Bags.
Christy Williams 825
Stove, Children's Toys, Lawn Décor, Shelving, Misc Bags.

Auctions

SUMTER EAST SELF STORAGE
800 MYRTLE BEACH HWY.
July 12, 2025
10:00 A.M.

UNITS FOR AUCTION

A-5 THOMAS RICHARDSON
A-21 KALENTAE GETER
A-32 SHEILA MURRAY
A-49 CARRIE RUBIN
B-18 CONNIE JAMES
B-25 GREGORY WILLIAMS
B-33 WILLIE CEASAR
B-37 CARLETHA WALTON
C-6 WANDA ANDERSON
C-35 AMANDA ALLEN
D-9 MILDRED SCARBOROUGH
D-2 KIMBERLY DYER
D-29A MARQUEETA WILLIAMS
E-13 BETH NEWMAN
E-25 RANDY LOGAN
F-10 THOMAS RICHARDSON
F-13 ALPHENE HOLLAND
F-17 GWENDONLYNN McBRIDE
F-22 BRIDGETTE NELSON
F-29 MARKEL DAVIS
F-34 DOMINIQUE REED
H-4 McKINLEY BROGDON
H-16 VANESSA BLANDING
H-26 JEROME HARRIS

Farm Products

Tomatoes Ready. Call ahead for Sweet Corn Orders. Mon-Sat, Highway 401/3285 Oswego Hwy, Sumter. 803-428-8101.

Garage, Yard & Estate Sales

Huge 75 year estate sale, Sat., 8-11am, 3055 Old York Rd, Sumter. Old Disney magazine collection, furn & hshld, etc.

Moving Sale, July 11 & 12, 9:00am-4:00pm. 1137 Rugby Ave, Summerton. Hshld furnishings, fishing items, fridge, tools & MUCH MORE!! No early birds! Rain or shine.

Yard Sale in Memory of Lisa Skinner, 14 West Bartlette (Sumter Place) Sat July 12th. 7am-3pm.

Lawn / Garden / Nursery

Lawn, Flowerbed, Shrubbery, Leaf, & Pine Straw Service. Yards starting at $35. Pressure washing services. Call Bobby 803-983-5364.

For Sale or Trade

4 burial plots and 2 vaults at Evergreen Memorial Gardens in Sumter. Sold as a package, $7500. May buy 4 plots for only $5000. Contact 404-936-1253 if interested.

4 lots together in Garden of Gethsemane, lot 229. Graves 1,2,3,4. Want to sell together $9500 OBO. Please contact @ 803-521-3809 or email rpack @jimhudson.com.

Evergreen Cemetery Grave Lots. (4) grave lots located in Acacia section. Lot#176, graves 1-4. Asking price of $7500 and I will absorb the $400 transfer fee if a deal is made. Priced for quick sell. Feel free to contact for any other questions and leave voicemail. 1 (615) 804-6446.



Help Wanted Full-Time

FSA is looking for temporary office assistance to help deliver "The American Relief Act of 2025," which was signed into law on Dec. 21, 2024 and provided the U.S. Department of Agriculture with more than $30 billion to deliver disaster recovery assistance for farmers and livestock producers. This position will help support the implementation of the Emergency Livestock Relief Program and the Supplemental Disaster Relief Program which will provide assistance to producers for necessary expenses due to losses due to weather related events in 2023 and 2024. Resumes can be submitted to the Sumter County office at 1975 Castlerock Drive or by email to richard.geddings@usda.gov.



Help Wanted Full-Time

Maintenance Employee
Town of Turbeville
The town is seeking a full-time employee able to join its public works team and assist in maintaining all town properties and facilities. Individual will report to the public works director and will be responsible for a variety of job tasks including, but not limited to, routine maintenance of the water and wastewater treatment plant facilities; reading water meters and performing cut off's and cut on's; maintenance of town wells and water tanks; street and sidewalk maintenance; maintenance of public properties including landscaping and mowing; assisting with special event banners, other general construction activities, and other related duties as required. Individual must be able to perform moderate to strenuous physical activity outdoors and be on call as needed. Ability to operate and maintain heavy-duty equipment is a plus.
Candidates must have a high school diploma or GED, a valid SC drivers' license with a safe driving record and be able to pass a criminal background check and drug test. Candidates may request a job application by contacting the town clerk at 843-659-2781 or by email at tbvlclerk@ftc-i.net.
Pay Range is dependent on qualifications and experience.
The Town of Turbeville participates in the SC State Retirement program and offers State Health Insurance to full-time employees.
The Town of Turbeville is an Equal Opportunity Employer
Application deadline:
July 25th, 2025
5:00PM

Trucking Opportunities

ADVERTISE YOUR DRIVER JOBS in 80 S.C. newspapers for only $375. Your 25-word classified ad will reach more than 1.5 million readers. Call Randall Savely at the S.C. Newspaper Network, 1-803-750-9561.

Schools / Instructional

JULY SPECIAL: Free homeschooling/tutoring available--This month only. Have had many years of experience in all grades and subjects. Available Monday-Friday, 9:00-4:00. Please call Mrs. G. at (803) 773-1078 to set up a time.

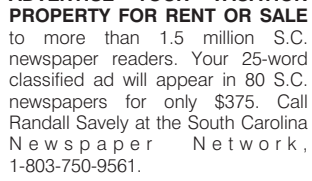


Mobile Home Rentals

14 x 60, 2BR 1BA NEWLY REFURBISHED. Reduced to $750 MO. + DEP. NEAR SHAW. NO PETS Call 803-840-3371.

Vacation Rentals

ADVERTISE YOUR VACATION PROPERTY FOR RENT OR SALE to more than 1.5 million S.C. newspaper readers. Your 25-word classified ad will appear in 80 S.C. newspapers for only $375. Call Randall Savely at the South Carolina Newspaper Network, 1-803-750-9561.



Homes for Sale

We Buy Houses for CASH AS IS! No repairs. No fuss. Any condition. Easy three step process: Call, get cash offer and get paid. Get your fair cash offer today by calling Liz Buys Houses: 1-855-704-3381



Miscellaneous

Prepare for power outages today with a GENERAC Home Standby Generator. Act now to receive a FREE 5-year warranty with qualifying purchase. Call 1-844-775-0366 today to schedule a free quote. It's not just a generator. It's a power move.

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