IN SPORTS: SHS wrestling taking strides as postseason nears **B1**

the Sumter ITEM

WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4-6, 2026 | Serving South Carolina since October 15, 1894 **$2.50**

Tri-county area sees 3 to 5.5 inches of snow



PHOTOS BY ABIGAIL PITTMAN / THE SUMTER ITEM

Students at Morris College play football Saturday, Jan. 31, in several inches of snow that fell in Sumter throughout the day. See more photos of the snow days submitted by readers on A12, A13 and A14.

Local coordination helps tri-county area weather Winter Storm Gianna

BY ALAYSHA MAPLE, BRUCE MILLS and RHIANNON O'BERRY
alaysha@theitem.com
bruce@theitem.com
rhiannon@theitem.com

Snowmen, snow angels, snowball fights and snow days. The common phrases and pictures that filled social feeds and parts of Sumter, Clarendon and Lee counties were dusted with snow during the weekend, courtesy of Winter Storm Gianna. The preparation paid off for the counties and offered residents a chance to wrap up January in true winter fashion.

The storm moved through the tri-county area on Saturday, Jan. 31, leaving behind frigid temperatures and a blanket of snow and ice that lingered for nearly two days.

Three to five inches of snow were recorded in the area. According to National Weather Service trained observers, Dalzell had the heaviest snowfall with 5.5 inches. The City of Sumter had 3.4 inches.

Bishopville in Lee County registered 5.3 inches of snow, and other parts of Lee totaled 4.5 to 5 inches. Manning in Clarendon County recorded 3.1 inches and southern portions of Clarendon had 2.5 inches, according to the weather service.

After the winter storm on Monday, the Columbia office of the National Weather Service said for many areas of the Midlands it was the biggest snowfall in 15 years, dating back to January 2011.

Initial forecasts said Sumter might get upward of 10 inches, but weather service meterologist Chris Liscinsky said by Saturday about 9 p.m. the local area had received the majority of its snowfall and only minimal amounts were expected in Saturday's overnight hours.

"Still, 5.5 inches northwest of the City of Sumter in Dalzell, that is still a pretty significant amount across the county," he said. "Really, in Sumter, you are talking 3 inches or so of snow. Down here, that's a decent amount of snow."

With the bitter cold conditions, Sunday night's low at Shaw Air Force Base was 17 degrees.

In the days leading to Gianna's arrival, several local entities decided to

SEE **SNOW DAYS,** PAGE A15



Snow falls over Second Mill on Saturday afternoon.

WHO HAD THE MOST SNOW IN S.C.?

Dillon County, a border county with southeastern North Carolina, received some of the highest snowfall totals in the state during the weekend. The small town of Lake View in Dillon recorded 12 inches of snow, which was the highest tally in South Carolina, according to the National Weather Service.

The north-central portions of the state also received high snowfall totals. Lake Wylie in York County registered 10 inches, while Clover had 9 inches. Portions of the northern tip of Lancaster County also received heavy snowfall with an area just outside of Fort Mill recording 9 inches.

Source: National Weather Service

Alice Drive Elementary is finalist for Palmetto's Finest again

State association honors top schools annually for innovative, effective programs

BY BRUCE MILLS
bruce@theitem.com

After being the first school in Sumter School District to be named a finalist for the state's Palmetto's Finest Award last year, Alice Drive Elementary repeated that recognition this year.

Alice Drive is one of 13 public schools in the state that the S.C. Association of School Administrators has selected as finalists for its 2026 award series, according to a Jan. 23 news release, and it is the only school on the list from a more rural county in South Carolina.

The Palmetto's Finest Award is one of the most coveted and respected school awards in the state and encompasses student achievement, instructional programs, professional

SEE **FINALIST,** PAGE A15

The Sumter Item's Annual
FIRESIDE FUND
Providing heating assistance to those in need since 1969
Dedicated to the memory of Arcadia 'Katy' Greenawalt

Large crowds in need expected to grow, United Ministries says

BY KEVIN HOWELL
Sumter United Ministries

I've seen a few documentaries on tsunamis. It is fascinating to me how much is required for the water to fully recede before the fury of a massive wave is unleashed.

There is a calmness and peace in those moments despite the devastation that is to come.

This winter, the Crisis Relief Ministry has certainly seen large crowds to date. Some of these requests were out of anxiety in preparation for some of the ice and snow that we have already experienced in our area. However, the recent snowfall and overnight temperatures among the lowest ever recorded are all

SEE **FIRESIDE,** PAGE A15

VISIT US ONLINE AT theitem.com

7 90534 00002 6

CONTACT US

Information: (803) 774-1200
Advertising: (803) 774-1246
Classifieds: (803) 774-1200
Delivery: (803) 774-1258
News and Sports: (803) 774-1226

DEATHS, B6

Joyce Tuten Steen
Denise Bell
Matthew Bracey
Elizabeth Mayrant Bracy
Shawn Vernon Porter
Frank Weston Davis
Cassie Mae Hunter Moore
Phyllis Ardis Hodge
Florence Bracey Weston
Everlina Porcher
Joan (Whitford) Auld
David Cantey
Jannie B. Montgomery
Henry Thomas Rogerson Jr.

INSIDE

2 SECTIONS, 24 PAGES
VOL. 131, NO. 33

Classifieds B7
Events A7
Food A10
Health A8
Lifestyle A9
Next Generation A5
Puzzles B3
Religion A4
Sports B1



the Sumter ITEM

SECOND FRONT

E-mail: pressrelease@theitem.com

Above & Beyond Award recipient Billy Sams reflects on faith and community motivation behind his cleanup efforts

BY RHIANNON O'BERRY
rhiannon@theitem.com



PHOTO PROVIDED BY CITY OF SUMTER

Sumter City Council presented Billy Sams, third from right, with the Above & Beyond Award on Jan. 20.

When City of Sumter Litter Officer Glenn Button called and asked him to come to the Sumter Opera House on Jan. 20 without telling him why, Billy Sams says he suspected something because of their collaboration over time. He was right to suspect. Sumter City Council ultimately presented Sams with the Above & Beyond Award at its regular meeting when council honored community members' litter control efforts.

This comes after WACH Fox57 honored Sumter litter volunteer Billy Sams on its "Pay it Forward" segment last year, during which it presented Sams with $500 for his years of self-driven litter pick-ups in his community. Sams, who will be 81 this April, called the recognition a surprise and a blessing.

When Sams sat down with *The Sumter Item* a week later, he cited the same inspiration he mentioned to former *Item* reporter Deirdre Currin last year, a neighbor's example and a guiding hand.

Sams says that after a neighbor in his 80s who used to drive around and pick up trash passed away, litter worsened in the community.

"I was always complaining about the junk, you know," he reflected. "I would clean around my house and all, and it just got worse and worse."

Sams says he's now been picking up litter for nine years, since his wife had brain surgery and he had to retire in 2016.

"I'm a Christian," he continued, "and the Lord just spoke to me one day, he says, 'Why don't you quit fussing and do something about it? You've got time to do it.'"

Sams started on a small street and it escalated into him going six miles at a time, on the roadside as well as in people' front yards. He says this daily routine, including Sundays before he goes to church, starts around 7 a.m. and it usually takes about two hours, during which he focuses on pieces large and small. On the day we talked alone, he'd picked up seven five-gallon buckets of trash.

Sams says he talks regularly with Button, who Ward 4 Councilwoman Rebecca Lynn Kennedy introduced him to, about bad litter spots that need attention and energy.

"I was just amazed," Button said before presenting the award at the meeting. "We've come to build a good relationship with him and everything. We're happy he's doing it; we're proud of him."

Sams was honored for collecting 42 bags and more than 1,050 pounds of litter in his neighborhood and throughout the community.

"It's been a blessing to me, and it's helped me," Sams said; passersby often question or thank him, and he has made a lot of friends along the way.

Sams continued, "A fellow asked me several years ago, he said, 'Well, what all do you pick up?' and I stopped and I said, 'You know, I really can't think of anything I haven't!' That's true; it goes from clothes to food, diapers, drugs, beer cans, whiskey cans – just everything." He says one major source of litter he sees is from people discarding the trash left from takeout meals. He occasionally finds money and even cellphones.

"She's been a blessing," Sams said about Kennedy, who attended the WACH recognition in April 2025 along with other neighbors, including Angela Riles-Irby, who nominated him for that honor. Kennedy expressed pride in Sams as she got up to greet him during the Above & Beyond Award recognition at city council. Sams said he's been picking litter up on her street since before her election and that she calls and brings him meals sometimes.

Sams' wife was excited for the recognition and texted pictures to his son afterward. "She tells me to cut back, you know, because at my age I get pretty tired sometimes," Sams said, though she supports his work. "I'm thankful that I still got the health to do it. It's a way for me to make a difference in my neighborhood."

"That's the main thing," Sams said. "The Lord really helps me, and I've never been a quitter."

'Afternoon of Special Music' to celebrate Sumter's young talent on Feb. 15

BY ALAYSHA MAPLE
alaysha@theitem.com

The next generation of music has a lot to offer, and the chance to see a fraction of what it features is Sunday, Feb. 15.

Afternoon of Special Music, presented by Woman's Afternoon Music Club in Sumter, will begin at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 15, at Church of the Holy Comforter, 213 N. Main St.

The heart-warming concert will celebrate the community's young talent and will feature Sumter High School Chamber Choir, Sumter High School strings musicians, a member of Wilson's Hall "Cinderella" production and a variety of talented youth musicians.

In addition to celebrating young talent, the Woman's Afternoon Music Club also wants to help fund the musical endeavors for high school juniors and seniors throughout the county.

Annually, the club awards $750 in scholarships to local students pursuing studies in piano, voice or instrumental. These awards honor the legacies of Sumter educators Clifton Moise, Elizabeth Book and Shelden Timmerman, whose dedication to musical excellence continues to inspire young artists to "grow, perform and share their talents with the Sumter community and beyond."

Applications for the scholarships are now open. The deadline to apply is March 20. Applications can be found and submitted online at *www.thewomansafternoonmusicclub.com*.

Afternoon of Special Music is free and open to the public. Donations are welcome, which will support the three scholarships for young musicians.

New federal SNAP work requirements take effect in S.C.

BY SC DSS

As of Feb. 1, 2026, new federal work requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) have taken effect under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), signed into law on July 4, 2025, by President Donald Trump.

More than 520,000 South Carolinians received SNAP benefits during the month of December 2025. About 48% of recipients are under age 18, while nearly 25% are over age 50.

Under the new rules, able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) aged 18–64 must work or participate in work programs for at least 80 hours per month (about 20 hours weekly) to retain SNAP eligibility beyond three months in a 36-month period. Previously, the upper age limit was 54; it is now 64.

The exemption for caregivers has also narrowed. Adults in households with children under 14 remain exempt, but those caring for children aged 14–17 are now subject to the time limit unless they meet another exemption. Additionally, exemptions for veterans, homeless individuals and young adults aged 24 or younger who aged out of foster care have been removed. These groups must meet the same 80-hour monthly requirement or face benefit suspension after three months.

Waivers that allowed states to suspend work requirements in areas with insufficient jobs have been tightened. Now, only areas with an unemployment rate over 10% are eligible for waivers. Under current law, approximately 3% of SNAP recipients in South Carolina are classified as ABAWDs and subject to work requirements. With the expanded age range and reduced exemptions, that number is expected to grow significantly, though the exact impact will depend on future USDA guidance and federal regulation details. South Carolinians seeking detailed information on eligibility, exemptions and work programs can visit the USDA Food and Nutrition Service website *https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/work-requirements* for more information.

OSTEEN
PUBLISHING COMPANY
Established 1894

36 W. Liberty St., Sumter, S.C. 29150
(803) 774-1200

Vince Johnson
Publisher
vince@theitem.com

Kayla Green
Executive Editor
kayla@theitem.com
(803) 774-1235

Jill Burrus
Customer Service Manager
Classifieds, Subscriptions and Delivery
jill@theitem.com
(803) 774-1212

Melanie Smith
Assistant Editor
melanie@theitem.com

HOW TO REACH US

IS YOUR PAPER MISSING? ARE YOU GOING ON VACATION?

Call (803) 774-1258 or (803) 774-1231
Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

TO PLACE A NEWSPAPER AD

To place an ad, **call (803) 774-1242, (803) 774-1274 or (803) 983-0786** Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., or email **advertising@theitem.com.**
To place a classified ad, **call (803) 774-1231 or (803) 774-1258** Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

TO PLACE AN OBITUARY

Obituaries must be submitted by a funeral home. Email **obits@theitem.com.**

TO BUY A SUBSCRIPTION

Call (**803) 774-1258 or (803) 774-1231** Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., or online at **www.theitem.com/subscribe.**

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Standard Home Delivery plus Digital Subscription:

WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY DELIVERED VIA USPS

One year - $229.99; six months - $119.99; three months - $59.99;
one month - $19.99

Digital-only subscription to *TheItem.com*:

One year - $143; one month - $12.99

REFUND POLICY FOR PRINT SUBSCRIPTIONS (ENROLLED IN THE MONTHLY, QUARTERLY or annual EZ PAY PROGRAM) Cancellations are effective only for future charges. You may notify us of your intent to cancel at any time, but the cancellation will become effective at the end of the billing cycle your notification is received. You will continue to receive the newspaper until the end of the billing cycle, including digital access. You may choose to discontinue receiving the newspaper immediately upon notifying us of your intent to cancel; however, your subscription account will not be canceled until the end of the billing cycle, and you will continue to have digital access during that period. You are welcome to donate your unused newspapers to the local schools if requested.

The Sumter Item is published each Wednesday and Saturday by Osteen Publishing Co., 36 W. Liberty St., Sumter, SC 29150, and delivered via USPS. Major holiday delivery may be altered due to USPS schedule.

Periodical postage paid at Sumter, SC 29150.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Osteen Publishing Co., 36 W. Liberty St., Sumter, SC 29150.

Publication No. USPS 525-900

SUMTER TODAY

NOW STREAMING

https://www.facebook.com/theitem/reels/

From quiet streets and snow-covered yards to falling flakes caught on camera, these photos and videos came straight from our community. Stay warm. Stay safe. And enjoy a look back at a weekend Sumter won't forget!



UNIVERSITY OF South Carolina SUMTER

Older adults in S.C. expected to double in 4 years; area council's executive director talks about funding for services

BY RHIANNON O'BERRY
rhiannon@theitem.com

South Carolina Department on Aging's 2025-2028 State Plan on Aging says that by 2030, the older adult population in the state is projected to double.

Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments serves Clarendon, Kershaw, Lee and Sumter and their associated municipalities and is the designated Area Agency on Aging for the four-county region. Executive Director Dennis Cyphers talked with *The Sumter Item* about his and his staff's work to find sustainable partners and solutions for the aging population they serve.He commended Santee-Lynches board members, including state legislators and local leaders from each county it serves, for their spirit of collaboration and focus on long-term effects of policy changes. Cyphers said much of his team's role is behind the scenes. "We really are here to be capacity builders for our jurisdictions," Cyphers said. "Usually where I'm at is in Columbia right now advocating for different things that I know we need in our area. Some of our representation has some bills that we're trying to get behind; they'll call us and say, 'Hey, what does this look like?' So we try to support our local legislative delegation as much as we can."

Santee-Lynches aims to be a "one-stop shop," with its varied services including workforce and economic development, transportation planning in collaboration with South Carolina Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration and other supports for local governments, especially smaller jurisdictions.



CYPHERS

"We have people in the field every day in all four of our counties," Cyphers said, including for at-home assessments and meal delivery. According to its website, the aging services Santee-Lynches oversees include:

Family Caregiver Program: Offers assistance through respite, education and supplemental services. Caregivers who are caring for loved ones age 60 or older or who are caring for an individual with Alzheimer's or a dementia-related illness may apply.

Information and Referral Assistance: The IR&A Specialist helps individuals, families and communities identify, understand and utilize the program, services and resources that are available.

Insurance Counseling: Offered for individuals who are enrolled in Medicare, Medicare supplemental insurance and other health insurance options, available to persons who receive Medicare.

ANNEX OFFICE (AREA AGENCY ON AGING/HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES)

39 E. Calhoun St.
Sumter, SC 29150
(803) 774-1980
Contact: Janae Stowe, Area Agency on Aging director
jstowe@slcog.org
(803) 774-1376

Legal Assistance Services Program: Establishes a referral plan for older persons with legal issues who have the greatest economic or social needs.

Long-Term Care Ombudsman: Seeks to improve the quality of life and quality of care of residents who live in long-term care facilities.

Older Relative Caregiver: The National Family Caregiver Support Program also recognizes the needs of grandparents who are the sole caregivers of children and those individuals who are affected by intellectual or developmental disabilities.

"We do have a growing aging population, and [state funding being considered] is what supports some of the programs that we're able to match money against the federal government with to bring into our local areas," Cyphers said.

Santee-Lynches is waiting to see what state and national legislatures do for funding for its aging programs.

"We constantly are pursuing additional revenue sources to support," he continued, "simply because even with federal and state money coming in, there's never enough."

He said they have good private partners throughout the four-county area like service organizations, faith-based organizations and contractors that elevate and sustain local aging services.

"I can't tell you with how many people I can just pick up the phone and call and we can work some things out on the fly. It's nice to have those resources, but I think it says a little something about the Southeast, too."

Those kinds of private partnerships are something Cyphers hopes to expand to reduce waitlists and expand services. He said that funding aspect "will always be a struggle" because of the consistent increase in the aging population, especially amid migration from other states.

"I think it's really important that you know, for us to try to stay ahead of that curve, make sure that we're able to keep it sustainable, always hunting for new funding for the aging population, but also becoming more efficient in the services that we're providing so that we can have more of that human touch, out in the field and doing that outreach where needed."

DPH confirms measles in Sumter resident in most recent cases

3 public exposure sites in county identified

BY S.C. DPH

COLUMBIA — South Carolina Department of Public Health is reporting 29 new cases of measles in the state since Friday, bringing the total number of cases in South Carolina related to the Upstate outbreak to 876.

There are currently 354 people in quarantine and 22 in isolation. The latest end of quarantine for these is Feb. 24.

DPH has also confirmed a case of measles in a Sumter County resident. At this point in the investigation, it is not yet clear whether this new case is linked to the Upstate outbreak centered on Spartanburg County or if the case may have been exposed where measles is occurring in other locations.

DPH has identified numerous locations where exposures to infectious measles may have occurred. DPH has defined the times of potential exposure at the following locations:

— Mariachis Mexican Restaurant at 1072 Broad St., Sumter, on Friday, Jan. 23, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

— Food Lion at 5700 Broad Street Extension, Sumter, on Saturday, Jan. 24, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

— Walmart Neighborhood Market at 343 Pinewood Road, Sumter, on Sunday, Jan. 25, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

DPH is not aware of any risk for measles exposure at these locations beyond the periods of time given.

People who were exposed at Mariachis Mexican Restaurant, Food Lion and Walmart Neighborhood Market, especially those without immunity through vaccination or previous disease, should monitor for symptoms through Feb. 13, Feb. 14 and Feb. 15, respectively. Measles symptoms to watch for typically begin 7-12 days (but can occur up to 21 days) after exposure and include cough, runny nose and red watery eyes and fever followed by a rash two to three days later that starts on the face then spreads to the rest of the body.

If anyone who may have been exposed develops an illness with fever (101°F or more), cough, runny nose or red eyes, with or without rash, immediately call a health care provider and let them know about the exposure and symptoms so that they can tell you what to do next. Arrangements like the use of masks or isolating you from others in waiting areas to evaluate you without putting others at risk of exposure may be utilized. You may be asked to stay at home until the doctor clears you.

Vaccination continues to be the best way to prevent measles and stop this outbreak. Vaccines are available at many primary care provider offices and pharmacies, as well as DPH Health Departments.

In cramped quarters, Liberty STEAM board approves teacher salary schedule

Annual starting pay to remain at $52,636

BY BRUCE MILLS
bruce@theitem.com

It might have been cramped quarters, but Liberty STEAM Charter School's Board of Directors carried on with its regularly scheduled meeting last week and approved its teacher salary schedule for next year.

Monday, Jan. 26, was an eLearning day for Liberty STEAM given forecasted icy conditions in Sumter, and with school canceled, the board shifted its meeting to the school's network administrative office on Main Street in downtown Sumter with a virtual attendance option.

With only minimal ice accumulation in the area from the previous weekend's storm on Jan. 24-25, all nine directors attended in person.

With the approval of the 2026-27 salary schedule, a first-year certified teacher at Liberty with a bachelor's degree will earn $52,636.14 in the upcoming school year. That starting-pay total is the same as this year, according to Liberty Executive Director Trevor Ivey.

For all traditional public school districts in the state, including Sumter School District, the General Assembly in Columbia is expected this spring to increase the starting base pay for a certified teacher from $48,500 to likely $50,500.



BRUCE MILLS / THE SUMTER ITEM

Liberty STEAM Charter School's Board of Directors still held its regularly scheduled board meeting on Monday, Jan. 26, in a conference room at the school's network administrative office in downtown Sumter.

Liberty STEAM board's motion from the meeting stated that the school's pay scale could change based on the final budget approved by state lawmakers this session.

Ivey emphasized after the meeting that Liberty will work to continue to be "the region's pay leader" and provided supporting spreadsheet data for seven regional districts to include Sumter, Clarendon, Lee and Kershaw counties, Florence School District 1, Richland School Districts 1 and 2 and Lexington School District 1.

As far as annual pay increases for teachers, Liberty's board structured its compensation policy last year to allow for a 3% guaranteed salary increase for staying with the school and up to 3% eligibility in performance bonuses, according to Ivey. Also, each teacher receives a $500 annual mental wellness payment, he added.

Liberty also offers sign-on bonuses for first-year certified teachers of at least $1,000 depending on their school role.

The full board said it thinks the additional pay accounts for the 10 extra days on the annual school calendar and roughly an hour more of instructional time per day.

MORE ON THE MEETING

Both Liberty STEAM Primary Academy Director LeAndrea Montgomery and Elementary Academy Director Sally Harris briefed the full board on winter assessment data from December that shows students at both campuses are ahead of last school year in both reading and math achievement at the year's midpoint.

Given the cramped quarters, Liberty STEAM Board Chairman Greg Thompson moved the staff recognition portion of the agenda to the next board meeting, which is scheduled for Monday, March 30.

In a roughly 18-by-12-foot conference room at the network office, 15 people were in attendance, including the nine board members, staff and *The Sumter Item*.

Sumter School District's Board of Trustees canceled its board meeting for that night and said that all the agenda items will move to its next regularly scheduled board meeting, which is Monday, Feb. 9.

The spiritual battle for our attention

Let's consider tracking how we spend our time in a typical 24-day period. Sleeping and working naturally take up most of it, followed by household tasks and hobbies, and finally, entertainment. Recently, I heard someone point out a troubling contrast: for Christians, spending more time on television or social media than on Bible study, prayer or ministry seems out of balance. We often hear about the spiritual battle for our minds, but do our choices reflect the seriousness of this struggle? Though I'm involved with ministries and activities, I must ask myself whether I'm still allowing these daily distractions to consume too much of my focus. Do I believe there is such a thing as having a balance with my busy schedule of helping others versus how much time I spend watching and being conformed to the world? The essential question is whether our attention is fully turned toward God, or are we trying to justify and play both sides as we indulge in meaningless distractions? Can you sense Jesus prompting you to re-examine your priorities?

Our grandson is a normal first-grader who loves to play with Legos and all things related to Mario and Sonic. But he also has a strong connection to Minecraft computer games. He spends a lot of time on his Switch and becomes so deeply involved that it seems he loses contact with what's going on around him. To even mention taking a break causes him to become upset. I was convicted about this the other day and realized I would be the same way if someone took my television, computer and cellphone away. Have we literally fallen in love with entertainment? Could this addiction be associated with a type of idol worship? The devices are not evil in themselves; they are just tools, but anything that captures our hearts receives our highest devotion. Romans 6:16 talks about the deception of slavery. "Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you become a slave to them, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?"

I admit, I enjoy the internet and browse as I relax and watch television, as I suppose most everyone else does. I have my phone with me at all times, as it's now become a part of my life. I'm still astounded by the technology of a satellite beaming a video and audio signal to my big screen and me having access on a handheld device that can produce information about anything I can imagine. Should we be concerned that Satan is the prince and power of the airwaves? Why am I not more obsessed with Colossians 3:1-2? "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth." Is it not disturbing that we have become obsessed with our technology devices? Are we being distracted from God? When was the last time we turned everything off for a week? Could we do it? If the enemy can distract you from your time alone with God, then he can isolate you from the help that comes from God alone. Be encouraged as you read Ephesians chapter 5:6-21.

What did people do before technology? I know: They talked to each other! Today, many are sadly developing an illusion that Facebook likes,



The Rev. Dr. Billy Holland

or even shaking hands with our acquaintances, is a substitute for love. Some believe long-distance acknowledgments protect us from the demands and concerns of close relationships. We want to be loved, but some build walls around themselves to avoid the entanglements of sincerely caring for others. True connection requires authenticity, mutual respect and vulnerability, as we allow others to help us understand how to love and how to be loved. Sherry Turkle, a professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has spent the last 15 years studying how our "plugged-in lives" are changing who we are. She claims that our technological devices have produced a world in which we're constantly communicating, while meaningful conversations are deteriorating. Many accept that reading or listening to what others say, and indicating they agree, is the same as knowing someone personally. Hiding behind a screen can become a twisted sense of security as we observe society from the realm of our private isolation, and even more serious: Can this also be used to hide from God?

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

CHURCH NEWS

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

Allen Chapel AME Church, 471 Lynam Road, announces:

— The Sister of Faith and the Black History Committee will hold "A Black History and Love Concert" at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 9.

— Mid-Day Empowerment including Bible study and prayer is held at 2:30 p.m. every Thursday.

Alice Drive Baptist Church, 1305 Loring Mill Road, announces:

— Ladies Night Out, an evening of connection, encouragement and time in God's word, will be held at 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 19. Judi Gatson of WIS-TV will be the guest speaker. Dinner will be served by the ADBC Men's Ministry. Some exciting door prizes will be awarded.

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

— A Food Pantry Giveaway will be held at 1 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 13, while supplies last.

THANK YOU
TO OUR SPONSORS

McDonald's
Seven convenient locations.

piggly wiggly
OF SUMTER

BURGER KING
1132 Broad Street
208 East Calhoun
Bring your Church Bulletin in and receive a free small drink!

GOODYEAR TIRES
CHRIS LEE
VP of Sales
FRASIER TIRE SERVICE INC
310 E. Liberty Street
Sumter, SC 29150
(803) 773-1423

Willie Sue's
FOOD AND SPIRITS
3355 Patriot Pky.
803-469-2500

SHA
Sumter Hearing Associates
1116-F Alice Drive
Sumter, SC 29150
23 South Mill Street
Manning, SC 29102
(803) 469-7770
Audiologist
Kimberly L. Kelly, M. Aud., CCC-A
Danyelle Hayes, Au.D., CCC-A
sha3@ftc-i.net
www.sumterhearing.com
Friday Hours: By Appointment Only

Norman Williams and Associates Employment Services
344 West Liberty St
Sumter, SC 29150
(803) 775-5308

ADVANCE HEATING & AIR, INC.
2645 Warehouse Blvd., Sumter, SC
803-481-8200
www.advanceheating-air.com
Benton Young, Owner

Job's Mortuary
312 S. Main St., Sumter
(803) 773-3323
"The Home of Distinctively Finer Funeral Service"

Carolina Filters, Inc.
109 E. NEWBERRY AVE.
(803)773-6842
MANAGEMENT
AND STAFF

To Advertise On This Page Call 803-774-1242 or email karen@theitem.com

Ingram & Associates TAX FIRM
Established 1966
Individual/Business/ Corporate Tax Returns
Professional Bookkeeping & Payroll Services
803-494-8292

To Advertise On This Page Call 803-774-1242 or email karen@theitem.com

Discount Furniture Outlet
2891 Broad St. • Sumter
M-F 9:30-7:00 • Sat 9:30-5:00
Closed Sunday
(803) 469-8733
www.outletfurniture.com

To Advertise On This Page Call 803-774-1242 or email karen@theitem.com





Anglican

Church of the Holy Comforter
Traditional Anglican Worship
8:30am and 11am
And online at
Facebook/HolyComfortersumtersc
Corner of North Main and Calhoun
803-773-3823Holycomfortersc.org

Assembly of God

Sumter First Assembly
1151 Alice Drive • 803-773-3817
www.sumterfirstag.org
Brian Vanoy, Pastor
Worship: Sundays at 10:30 am
Small Groups: Sundays at 6 pm
Small Groups: Wednesdays at
7 pm – Adults, Royal Rangers,
Girls Rooted in Truth & Spirit

Baptist - Missionary

First Baptist Missionary Church
219 S. Washington St. Sumter
(803) 775-1462 • fbmcsumter.org
Rev. George P. Windley, Jr.
Sunday School 10:00 am
Sunday 11:00 am, in person
and live stream on
YouTube and Facebook
Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 pm on Zoom
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

Catholic - Roman

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.





PHOTOS BY ABIGAIL PITTMAN / THE SUMTER ITEM

Jayden Bolden, a junior at Morris College, shares how he found the keys to success through cybersecurity and consistency.

Sumter's Next Generation, presented by TheLINK: Morris College's Bolden finds key to success in cybersecurity, consistency

BY ALAYSHA MAPLE
alaysha@theitem.com



The world of cybersecurity is vast.

With its various technologies, processes and policies, the area of study has grown through the years in its sophistication, frequency and interest among young college students — that includes Morris College's Jayden Bolden.

Hailing from Riverdale, Georgia, Jayden was in the fourth or fifth grade when he first discovered his knack for critical thinking, uncovering the ins and outs and ups and downs of his first computer. When it came time to decide on where he'd further his academic career for the next four years, he wanted it to be at a college that would not only support his problem-solving interests, but challenge them as well.

It was the offering of a basketball scholarship that landed Jayden on the campus of Morris College. His research on the HBCU's broad STEM program and array of resources made the idea of being a Hornet more worthwhile. His choice was solidified after he attended the college's STEM Summer Program in June 2024.

"That was one of the best moments of my life. We had this group called STEM Five because it was just five STEM people in the group. We just stuck together; it was amazing," he expressed. "Honestly, the teachers, staff, advisors, everyone, they really helped us figure out what we're going to do and made sure everything was a smooth process."

Unlike some college freshmen, Jayden declared his major as cybersecurity with a minor in computer science his first semester, certain that the foundation he would build in the next four years would set him up for success in the decades to come.

"For me, the programming aspect of [cybersecurity], being able to figure things out and just really think things [through], I feel like that really challenges me, and I want to keep doing that and growing in that," he expressed.



Morris College has expanded its cybersecurity offerings since it was first established as a minor in 2015 to include a major, minor, two-year associate degree and certificate programs. The major focuses on hands-on training, network security and ethics to help prepare students for the high-demand careers, some in private and public government sectors. Recent state funding has allowed the college to enhance its lab with 3D printers, robotic upgrades, a Smart Board and laboratory among other supplies.

Enrollment in the program quadrupled between 2022 to 2024, and the college hosts an annual Cybersecurity Awareness Day that features exhibits, demonstrations and displays to showcase what the college offers to local high school students seeking post-secondary education.

From the courses to his classmates, from his professor to the plethora of opportunities he's been afforded, the cybersecurity major has proved to be more than what Jayden has hoped for — and he couldn't be more grateful.

"There are many, many aspects of [cybersecurity]. As you go throughout your classes, each step will lead you to the next step. It breaks down the previous step so you can learn about what's next and how to evolve," Jayden explained. "The key is to be passionate about it and do it for the right reasons. If you want to do it for the right reasons, then you're going to give it your all, and it will return your all."

And the return for Jayden has been abundant.

As only a junior, he has completed two certifications in AI fundamentals and data literacy using DataCamp, an online, self-paced learning platform that focuses on interactive training to teach users how to defend data, understand security concepts and develop skills in data protection, analytics and security technology. These certifications help build in-demand technical skills, giving them the advantage when going into the workforce. Jayden plans to acquire more before graduation.

The major also comes with financial perks, namely scholarships that helped cover Jayden's tuition and books; last year, he was one of 53 scholarship recipients to receive $150,000 toward his tuition costs. His continued diligence to the major could lead to him graduating from college debt-free. With that financial weight lifted, he has more time to focus on his professional developments and personal interests on campus — that includes being involved in different areas across campus, from being a Resident Assistant to helping grow cybersecurity enrollment through helping organize the college's Science Action Week. While it keeps him busy and involved, he also does it to show his peers the versatility and viability of being an accomplished student-athlete.

With one more year as a Hornet, it's not lost on Jayden that college, regardless of the chosen area of study, will have its fair share of struggles and strides. Which is why the advice to his peers is the same words he used to encourage himself.

"Put God first — you can do all things through him," he said with a smile. "And second is to always be who you are. Sometimes, people get in college and somewhat lose themselves. The goal is supposed to be finding yourself. When you are who you are, you will attract the right people and the right things, and eventually everything will fall into place as long as you stay patient and stay consistent."

WORKING TOGETHER TODAY FOR A BETTER SUMTER TOMORROW



Sumter Economic Development
THE LINK
SUMTER EDGE
Economic Development Growth Engine
ROSS MCKENZIE EMERGING LEADERS
Learn more at sumteredge.com

Sumter Library to host 'Little Known Stories of Reconstruction' with Citadel professor on Feb. 21 in honor of Black History Month

BY ALAYSHA MAPLE
alaysha@theitem.com

Damon Fordham's motto is "The more you learn, the more you learn there is to learn."

Sumter County Library invites all to come learn from Fordham at its upcoming Black History Month program.

To celebrate the month, which marks its 100th year of observance, Sumter County Library invites the community to "Little Known Stories of Reconstruction" with Citadel Adjunct Professor Damon Fordham on Saturday, Feb. 21.

For more than 150 years, the story of Reconstruction in South Carolina was "largely distorted or ignored in history books." Through old newspaper accounts and archival material, Fordham's presentation details how South Carolina once came close to being a defender of equality before things went "horribly wrong," according to Fordham.

"This story serves not only as an example of the path not taken in American history, but also as a warning for us today," he said.


FORDHAM

Fordham serves as an adjunct professor of world civilization and United States and African American History at The Citadel in Charleston. He is also an accomplished author of many works, including "The 1895 Segregation Fight in South Carolina," "Mr. Potts and Me," "Voices of Black South Carolina – Legend and Legacy" and "True Stories of Black South Carolina."

Outside of his own work, his research and articles also appear in several books, including "Sweetgrass Baskets and the Gullah Tradition" by Joyce Coakley, "South of Main" by Beatrice Hill and Brenda Lee, "The Greenwood Encyclopedia of African-American Folklore" for the University of Missouri Press, Cecil Williams and Sonny DuBose's "Orangeburg 1968" and "The Malcolm X Encyclopedia" for the University of Southern Mississippi Press.

He has also commented on history and storytelling at University of Memphis in Memphis, Tennessee, G.L. Roberts School near Ontario, Toronto, Canada, and University of California at Berkeley, California, as well as appeared on numerous radio and television programs in the United States, Canada, Japan and the United Kingdom.

"Little Known Stories of Reconstruction" is sponsored by South Carolina Humanities, a nonprofit organization designed to enrich the cultural and intellectual lives of all South Carolinians through engaging programs on literature, history, culture and heritage. South Carolina Humanities is governed by a volunteer board of directors of community leaders throughout the state and receives funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities as well as corporate, foundation and individual donors.

The program will begin at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 21, in the downtown library's main meeting room at 111 Harvin St. The program is free and open to the public.

For more information on this event, contact Gregory G. Johnson, information services coordinator at Sumter County Library, at (803) 773-7273.

For more about other programs available at Sumter County Library, visit *www.sumtercountylibrary.org*.

Sumter Newcomers Club is looking for you at its February events


PHOTO PROVIDED

Sumter's Newcomers Club will host a couple of events throughout February, including game groups, a coffee social the second Friday of the month and its 58th-annual anniversary dinner on Feb. 28. The club welcomes those interested in filling a few hours of their day with fun.

BY ALAYSHA MAPLE
alaysha@theitem.com

"Just like family getting together."

That's how Cecilia Hernandez described the feeling of being part of Sumter Newcomers Club.

If you're looking for something fun to fill your few hours of free time and make some new friends in the process, Sumter Newcomers Club welcomes you.

It was founded in 1968; Mary Hinson was new to Sumter and felt lost. With no friends and no idea where to go to find them, she dreamt up a community specifically for newcomers — specifically families coming to town by way of Shaw Air Force Base — to give them a place where they could feel welcomed and discover Sumter. Before long, that dream came to fruition.

As years passed and newcomers became as acclimated to the town as its natives, the club grew. Activities have been added to the club, including a coffee social on the second Friday of each month with coffee and breakfast prepared by the members to enjoy along with a guest speaker to come talk about a different area of the community. For February, the social will be Friday, Feb. 13, at 10 a.m. at South HOPE Center, 1125 S. Lafayette Drive, with a McLeod Health physical therapist as the guest speaker to chat about balance and vertigo.

The club also hosts luncheons at restaurants across Sumter and surrounding areas. Its 58th-annual anniversary dinner will be Saturday, Feb. 28, at 6 p.m.

The club also has a men's group that meets for breakfast at local restaurants and is welcome to all group events and game groups.

"I was invited to my first Newcomers Club game almost two years ago. I had so much fun that I immediately decided to become a member," Carol Ann Paul said. "Now, some of my dearest friends are Newcomers members, and I'm grateful for the friendships and relationships that I have in Sumter because of the Newcomers Club."

Beyond its game groups, which includes board games, card games, Mexican train and couple bunko, the club also has a caregivers group for meals, rides to appointments, picking up medication and lunches.

A calendar and newsletter are available that list these happenings to inform members and potential members of all the activities and special events.

Anyone interested in becoming a member or who wants more information on Sumter's Newcomers Club can contact Shelly Brown at (803) 968-0034.

VOTE FOR US
Car & Truck Accessories, Auto Parts & Customer Service
CARQUEST
AUTO PARTS
4494 Broad Street 803.494.4444
816 S. Guignard Dr. 803.778.1841
YOUR FULL LINE PART STORE WHERE YOU GET IT ALL!
PARTS • AUTO PAINT MIXED TO MATCH • HYDRAULIC HOSES MADE HERE

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?
If so, Glenn Givens can help with this matter by reviewing your Will and amending your Will or creating a new Will if wanted or needed.
Call Glenn at (803) 418-0800; ext. 108
GLENN F. GIVENS, ATTORNEY
Kolb & Givens, Attorneys at Law, LLC
107 North Main Street Sumter, SC 29150 803-418-0800

PROFESSIONAL HEATING & COOLING
361 Myrtle Beach Hwy., Sumter, SC 29153
773-6010 OFFICE
The Better Choice for Quality Service & Installation
Emergency Service Available
Contact Us Today for a FREE ESTIMATE on a New Unit!
Military & Senior Discounts
Preventative Maintenance
ALL BRANDS. COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL

Enduro at Manchester, 'Echoes of the Past | Voices of the Future' at SLT in Sumter, rodeo in Florence this weekend

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

SUMTER COUNTY

National Enduro Championship – Round 1 is heading to the woods this February. The 2026 American National Enduro Championship kicks off Feb. 7-8 in Manchester State Forest for two days of motorcycle racing. "Top pro and amateur riders from across the country will battle the sand, roots and pine woods in this nationally sanctioned event, giving spectators plenty of high-speed action and skillful riding to watch. A great weekend outing for motorsports fans and anyone who wants to experience one of the country's premier enduro rounds in our own backyard." The park is at 6740 Headquarters Road, Wedgefield. Find more information about the event at *www.serma.club*.

Sumter Little Theatre will present its second a la carte show of 2026 this February, and it will highlight voices and traditions of the past, present and future. **"Echoes of the Past I Voices of the Future"** will show at 14 Mood Ave. at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 7, and 3 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 8. In honor of Black History Month and created and curated by Tiffany Holmes and her cast, the production features singing, dancing and acting that examines cultural traditions, modern achievements and includes original work from local writers and songwriters. Tickets are $20 and $15 for students, seniors and military. To purchase tickets, visit *www.sumterlittletheatre.org*.

Get ready for a night of groovin' at the **Motown Revue,** heading to Patriot Hall in late February. It'll be a night of soul, style and show-stopping hits, and you might even win $100 at the costume contest – dress in your '70s best for your chance to take home the money. Tickets are $41 at *sumterpatriothall.com*. Patriot Hall is at 135 Haynsworth St., and the show will be from 6 to 9 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 21.

Sumter Little Theatre is starting off its year with **"A Streetcar Named Desire."** Follow the story of Blanche DuBois in this play about desire, delusion, and the struggle for power. The show runs from Thursday through Saturday, Feb. 26 to March 8 at 7:30 p.m. each day except Sunday, when it starts at 3 p.m. Get tickets at *sumterlittletheatre.org*.

The Rotary Club of Sumter–the Gamecock City's annual Farm to Table dinner is Thursday, March 12, from 6 to 9 p.m. at Sumter County Civic Center. As always, this charity event includes all-you-can eat selections from local farms, processors, restaurants, and stores as well as beverages and a live band. Tickets are $40 at *zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/farm-to-table-4*. All proceeds go to CART (Coins For Alzheimer's Research), the Sumter Rotary Scholarship Fund, Sumter United Ministries and 4-H.

Spring typically brings fun outdoor events, and this March is no different. Get a taste of some award-winning wings and barbecue at the **Annual Cook-off Benefit for the Boy Scouts** on March 20 and March 21 while strolling around the Sumter County Fairgrounds, 30 S. Artillery Drive. That Friday will be the Wing Ding from 5:30 to 9 p.m., and the next day features all the barbecue you care to try from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Buy your tickets at *sumterbbq.com*.

Speaking of fun outdoors, the same weekend, Sumter's **Springfest** is back for the third year! It will take over Main Street downtown on Saturday, March 21, with live music spanning country, pop and classic favorites, delicious food and family fun benefiting United Way. This event is billed as "Sumter's biggest street party," so don't miss out. There will be music playing all day, a kids' corner with activities and food and drinks from Sumter Original Brewery, Sidebar On Main and Hamptons. Gates open at 11 a.m. Proceeds will benefit United Way of Sumter, Clarendon and Lee Counties. Children 10 and under can participate for free, and tickets are $25 in advance or $35 at the gate. Buy them at *https://tinyurl.com/mv7s4ft2*.

FLORENCE

Pull on your boots and put on your hat for **The Florence Stampede & Pro Rodeo.** The event is returning to Florence Center, 3300 W. Radio Drive, Florence, at 7 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Feb. 6-7, 2026. Experience professional bull riding, barrel racing, roping and all the classic rodeo action. This annual rodeo brings top-tier cowboys and cowgirls from across the region to compete. Purchase tickets at *https://tinyurl.com/mr6he6us*.

Celebrate the 250th anniversary of American independence when America's Living History Foundation holds the **9th-annual American Heritage Festival** at Graham's Historic Farm, 748 State Road S-21-85, Lake City, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Feb. 21 and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Feb. 22. Documented evidence of Gen. Francis Marion's use of the farm during 1780-1781 has been found as well as physical discoveries related to British prisoners from significant battles. The event will include the French and Indian Battle of Braddock's Defeat, highlighting its influence on guerrilla tactics used in the American Revolution. Indiantown Presbyterian Church is invited due to its ties to local revolutionaries, and the Georgetown Museum will attend to discuss the farm's historical significance. For additional information, visit *www.theamericanheritagefestival.com*.

CAMDEN

Iris Fest Camden returns for its 10th year from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, March 7, at Kershaw County Airport, 2203 Airline Drive, Camden. Enjoy live music by international Celtic bands, Highland games, kids zone, food trucks, vendors, whiskey tasking, Iris and green beer and more. For tickets, visit *irishfestcamden.ticketspice.com/2026-irish-fest-camden*.

COLUMBIA

Dirty Dancing in Concert is coming to the Koger Center, 1051 Greene St., Columbia, on Feb. 11. The production by Lionsgate and GEA Live brings the beloved classic based on the iconic Academy Award-winning film, which was released 38 years ago. Tickets are on sale now at the Koger Center Box Office in person, online at *KogerCenterForTheArts.com*, through the official Koger Center for the Arts mobile app, and their ticketing charge line at (803) 251-2222. "Shows will feature a screening of the digitally remastered movie while a live band and vocalists perform the hit songs in sync with a full-size screen on stage. The show continues on with an incredible after-party, where the audience is encouraged to sing and dance to their favorite songs from the feature film and relive their best movie memories."

PLACE YOUR AD IN MORE THAN 80 SC NEWSPAPERS
Reach up to 1.5 million readers using our small space ad network!
SCNN South Carolina Newspaper Network
Contact Randall Savely
803.750.9561 | scnnonline.com
Statewide and regional options available











Where are those keys? Tricks for remembering where you put things

BY ALBERT STUMM
Associated Press

With a scarf dangling from your coat pocket and those gloves left behind at the coffee shop, there are simply more things to lose in winter. That's not counting your misplaced keys at home or those exasperated moments looking for your phone when you say, "I just had it!"

Try not to beat yourself up. Even Mark McDaniel, who has been studying human memory and learning for almost 50 years, left a hat under his chair recently at a restaurant. He doesn't usually wear hats, so he forgot it.

"I should know how to remember to remember, but at the moment, you don't think you're going to forget," said McDaniel, professor emeritus of psychological and brain sciences at Washington University in St. Louis. Luckily, there are strategies. If you can remember to implement them, here's how to stop losing things.

A BREAKDOWN IN THE BRAIN

Daniel L. Schacter, a Harvard University psychology professor and author of "The Seven Sins of Memory," said losing things is something everyone is prone to, to varying degrees. It depends on life circumstances that pull the mind away from the present.

Rather than having a bad memory, it might be "a breakdown at the interface of memory and attention," Schacter said. "That's what's responsible, based on research, based on personal experience, for a lot of the memory failures that would result in losing things."

Memory occurs in three phases in the brain: encoding, storage and retrieval. Schacter likened losing your keys to drivers who arrive at their destination safely without remembering how they got there.

In both cases, the memory of the action is not encoded because people were thinking of something else, which makes it harder to retrieve the memory later.

"You have to do a little bit of cognitive work," Schacter said. "At the time of encoding, you have to focus your attention."

FOR THINGS YOU USE REGULARLY

It helps to not have to remember where some things are.

Schacter suggested identifying problem items such as your phone, wallet or keys and creating a structure that becomes automatic with practice. He always leaves his reading glasses in a specific spot in the kitchen. When he goes golfing, his phone always goes into the same pocket in his golf bag.

"Maybe not always, but, you know, a very high percentage of the time," he said.

If there is a noticeable increase in losing things compared to the recent past, accompanied by other memory problems that interfere with your normal function, it might be time to see a doctor, Schacter said.

FOR THINGS YOU DON'T USE REGULARLY

McDaniel said that the brain does a better job at remembering things when it receives several bits of information that can later be connected. Among memory researchers, it's known as elaboration.

One way to stop losing objects you don't habitually use — but often lose, like a hat — is to say out loud where you put it when you put it down. Verbalizing does two things that help with retrieval.

"Saying it out loud creates a better encoding because it makes you pay attention, and the verbalization creates a richer memory," McDaniel said.

The more detailed the elaboration, the more connections in the brain there will be to help you remember.

An extreme version of elaboration is the "memory palace" that memory competitors use during championships. To remember a series of numbers and other challenges, they visualize a familiar, structured environment like a house or route, imagining the numbers in particular places.

For something like your hat, imagine it in the location and connect it to a reason and a consequence: "I put my hat under the chair because I didn't want to get it dirty on the table, but I left it behind last time."

You might not remember to grab it when you leave, but you'll probably remember where you left it.



















A grey wagtail is painted on the wall of an abandoned house beside a broken window near Wang Tong village, Lantau, Hong Kong.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Across the forgotten walls of a Hong Kong island, a flock of bird murals rises

BY MAY JAMES
Associated Press

HONG KONG — They perch gently on concrete ledges. They nestle into peeling stucco. Occasionally, they soar across a stone house's rooftop.

A flock has landed in Wang Tong Village, a peaceful corner of Lantau Island on Hong Kong's southwestern edge. But this flock is unlike others: Its birds are made of paint.

They exist on murals designed for a larger purpose — not merely to draw attention to forgotten places but to tell the story of the extraordinary journeys birds undertake.

Dominic Johnson-Hill, who envisioned the flock, was captivated by an account from his ornithologist neighbor about the Amur falcon, a bird that travels from Manchuria, pauses in Lantau, then continues its migration across Myanmar, India and Madagascar to South Africa.

"I just assumed these birds lived on the island," Johnson-Hill recalls. "But they're not. They're passing guests."

That sense of wonder became the seed for what became the Flock Project. Johnson-Hill looked at the abandoned house next to his own and imagined a red-billed blue magpie painted across the wall. "They just seemed to belong there," he says.

To bring the vision to life, Johnson-Hill sought out someone who could paint birds not just accurately but with soul. He found British artist Rob Aspire, known as "The Birdman" for his intricate, expressive murals of birds.

One bird led to another. A year later, Johnson-Hill invited Aspire back and commissioned seven more murals.

Each bird was chosen for its ecological presence, visual harmony or symbolic resonance with place. A kingfisher keeps watch over a stream where fishing is no longer allowed. A Swinhoe's white-eye blends into the walls near trees where its bright, fluting call still echoes.

All the murals are painted on abandoned homes except one. High on Sunset Peak, nearly 3,000 feet above sea level, a long-tailed shrike perches naturally on the rooftop of a 90-year-old stone house, watching the mountains unfold below.

The goal is to gradually bring more of Hong Kong's native and migratory birds into view, nestling them into forgotten corners of the island as if they had always lived there.

The murals draw hundreds of people, many from Hong Kong's concrete heart. They wander the trails and alleys of Lantau's quiet corners. On weekends, some bring chalk and mark out arrows, turning village paths into treasure maps for the next bird hunter. Sometimes noticing beauty is the first step toward wanting to protect it.

Johnson-Hill has created an online map for visitors and is planning the next phase. What comes next depends on what reveals itself — a derelict house brought to his attention or the conditions that make another bird possible.

Birds migrate. They disappear. Sometimes they return, sometimes not. People are the same way. Villages empty, but the walls remain — with a painted bird or the memory of one.

Couple still maintains 2 homes after years together

DEAR ABBY: I am a widow who has been dating a widower for the past eight years. He's a wonderful man and the love of my life. We both have children, so we have been extremely careful not to cause them any distress with our relationship, and we have kept our home lives pretty separate.

At first, I thought that when the kids graduated from high school, we would maybe change our living situation, but now with all of our kids in college, the kids are going back and forth. One has moved home with me, so a change still doesn't seem appropriate.

However, even when the kids are all out of college and living on their own, I'm still not sure I want to move into his house. It's an amazing home in a wonderful town with lots of room for me, but it was built with his deceased wife, and all of her things and decorations permeate the place.

I just don't feel I could ever make it my home, as it was their family home from the time they were married and where they raised their daughter. Moving into my house is not an option because it is small, and I don't think he would want to do that.

I thought we could possibly sell both places and buy something together, but, again, his house is such an amazing place that I doubt we could find anything comparable. What should I do?

MAKING A CHANGE, OR NOT



Dear Abby
ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR MAKING: I think it is time you and your longtime partner have a serious, honest conversation about what your options are after all the children are finally independent. Express that as beautiful as his home is, you have qualms because it was the home in which he and his late wife raised a family. Tell him you fear any changes would be resented, and the house you live in is just too small. Then listen to what he has to say.

DEAR ABBY: I recently became aware that someone I know through various community groups is married to a man who is on the local sex offender list (involving a child under 13). This information was confirmed by another community group member as we needed to see how it would affect his volunteer status and our location near a school.

I don't know how to respond to this information. The man is pleasant and friendly. If I had not known this information, I would have suggested he and his wife get together with my husband and other friends. There are no children in my household, so no one would be endangered by his presence.

Should this information about his sex offender status change how I see or respect him? Neither he nor his wife know that I know, and I don't plan to tell them or anyone else. What are my responsibilities if I see him around children?

ON ALERT IN MICHIGAN

DEAR ON ALERT: Whether or not to see or respect this person is a decision only you can make. No one can do that for you. However, if you see a sex offender in the presence of minor children, you are morally and ethically bound to report it.

VOTE
for us in Best of Sumter.
Best Boss, Best Locally Owned Business,
Air Purification Company and
Air & Heating Service
AIRSOLUTIONS
HEATING AND COOLING
2190 Storage Road • SUMTER, SC 29153 • 803.469.6950
www.airsolutionssc.com



PHOTO PROVIDED BY SHUTTERSTOCK

Complement game day with Crispy Potato Skins

BY FAMILY FEATURES

In the midst of peak homegating season, with football championships taking center stage and action heating up on the hardwood, a good game day host knows you can never have too many delicious snacks on hand. Kicking off the madness can be as easy as these Crispy Potato Skins, a hearty watch party classic that keeps fans fueled and engaged with the game on the big screen.

Enjoy all the touchdown tosses and alley-oop action with more recipe inspiration at *Culinary.net*.

CRISPY POTATO SKINS

Recipe adapted from Simply Recipes
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 1 hour, 40 minutes
Servings: 6

6 medium russet potatoes
extra-virgin olive oil
6 slices bacon
kosher salt, to taste
freshly ground pepper, to taste
shredded cheddar cheese
sour cream (optional)
thinly sliced green onions (optional)

Heat oven to 400 F. Clean potatoes then pierce with fork.

Rub potatoes with olive oil then bake 1 hour until cooked through.

In frying pan over medium heat, cook bacon 10-15 minutes until crisp. Drain on paper towel-lined plate then crumble.

Cut cooked potatoes in half then scoop out insides, leaving about 1/4 inch of potato inside skins. Rub with olive oil then season with salt, to taste. Place on roasting pan and cook 10 minutes. Flip and cook 10 minutes.

Arrange potatoes skin-sides down and season with pepper, to taste. Sprinkle with cheese and crumbled bacon then broil 2 minutes.

Serve with sour cream and sliced green onions, if desired.

Source: Culinary.net

Snack like a pro on Super Bowl Sunday with chicken strips and game-changing sauce

BY KATIE WORKMAN
Associated Press



KATIE WORKMAN VIA AP

Sometimes a chicken nugget is just a chicken nugget. Sometimes it's a crisp, panko-crusted strip of chicken breast with a sweet and tangy sauce. This is the latter.

Super Bowl Sunday is snack time at its finest. No one is looking for fancy footwork (at least not in the food realm; we do want to see that on the field). I have hosted more Super Bowl parties than I can (want to) count, and what I can tell you is that the delicate little canapes aren't going to fly off the buffet as fast as the nachos.

The best Super Bowl food lives in the same realm as the best bar food. And that includes chicken tenders.

If you tend to think of chicken strips as a guilty, kiddie-centric pleasure, give yourself permission to relax and enjoy them. They're basically fried chicken sans bone.

But these chicken strips bake on a wire rack for maximum crispiness without frying. A little olive oil in the panko makes all the difference. For a spicy kick, add Sriracha to the egg wash.

Now the sauce, simple but game-changing: Melt apricot or orange preserves, stir in Dijon mustard and fresh thyme, and dip away. It's sweet, tangy and herbaceous, perfect for dunking each golden strip.

Bake, sauce, serve. The platter disappears fast, so consider making a double batch for a larger crowd. Easy enough for a weeknight, special enough for the big game and guaranteed to impress both kids and adults.

CRISPY CHICKEN STRIPS WITH APRICOT MUSTARD DIPPING SAUCE

Serves 4 to 6
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
2 large eggs
1/2 teaspoon Sriracha or other hot sauce, or to taste
1 1/2 cups Panko breadcrumbs
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 1/2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut crosswise into 1-inch thick strips (or use chicken tenders)
1 cup apricot or orange preserves
3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
1/2 teaspoon minced fresh thyme leaves

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Place a wire cooling rack into a rimmed baking sheet.

Place the flour, salt and pepper in a shallow bowl. Whisk together the eggs and Sriracha in a second shallow bowl. Combine the Panko and olive oil in a third bowl.

Working in small batches, toss the chicken strips in the flour, shake off any excess, dip them in the egg mixture, allow extra egg to drip back into the bowl, and roll them in the panko. Shake off any excess, then place the strips at least 1 inch apart on the wire rack. (It's possible you may need to bake these in two batches.)

Bake until the chicken strips are golden brown and cooked through, 15 to 18 minutes.

While the chicken is cooking, place the preserves in a small saucepan or skillet. Heat over low heat until melted, stirring occasionally, then stir in the mustard and thyme. Transfer the sauce to a small bowl, transfer the chicken strips to a serving platter and serve hot.



Lowe's of Manning opens with rural showroom







PHOTOS BY ABIGAIL PITTMAN / THE SUMTER ITEM

Lowe's Home Improvement officially opened a new store with a rural showroom in Manning on Friday, Jan. 30. Lowe's district manager and store manager gave remarks alongside Mayor Julia Nelson. There was free food, vendor demos and giveaways. The store features a rural showroom, "a specialized space around the lifestyles and needs of this community, including expanded selections and displays of rural and outdoor merchandise," according to a news release from the company. "Lowe's of Manning is the first new Lowe's store to include a rural showroom and the fifth store overall to include the rural layout."

OUT OF SIGHT
OUT OF MIND...
is not just a saying in business.
Advertise today and let your business be in sight and in the minds of your customers.
the Sumter ITEM
36 W. Liberty Street • Sumter, SC
803.774.1200
www.theitem.com

VOTE
for us in Best of Sumter.
Best Boss, Best Locally Owned Business,
Air Purification Company and
Air & Heating Service
AIR SOLUTIONS HEATING AND COOLING
2190 Storage Road • SUMTER, SC 29153 • 803.469.6950
www.airsolutionssc.com

ROLL-OFFS
PORTABLE TOILET RENTALS
STORAGE CONTAINERS
STORAGE TRAILERS
A MOBILE STORAGE CO.
1-800-533-9716 We Also Haul Equipment
VOTE FOR US!
TRUCKING COMPANY,
JUNK REMOVAL
BEST PLACE TO WORK,
BEST LOCALLY OWNED BUSINESS,
BEST CUSTOMER SERVICE AND BEST BOSS



From Stump to Storm,
We'll Clear the Way!
the Sumter ITEM BEST OF SUMTER 2026



Vote for Us in the BEST of SUMTER!! Best Tree Service
803-773-1320 866-456-TREE
WWW.STATETREE.NET
FREE ESTIMATES

Item readers enjoy snowfall from Gianna

Our readers enjoyed a few days in the snow this past weekend as Winter Storm Gianna left the powder behind. These are several reader-submitted photos we saw on our Facebook page.



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY AMBER FILYAW

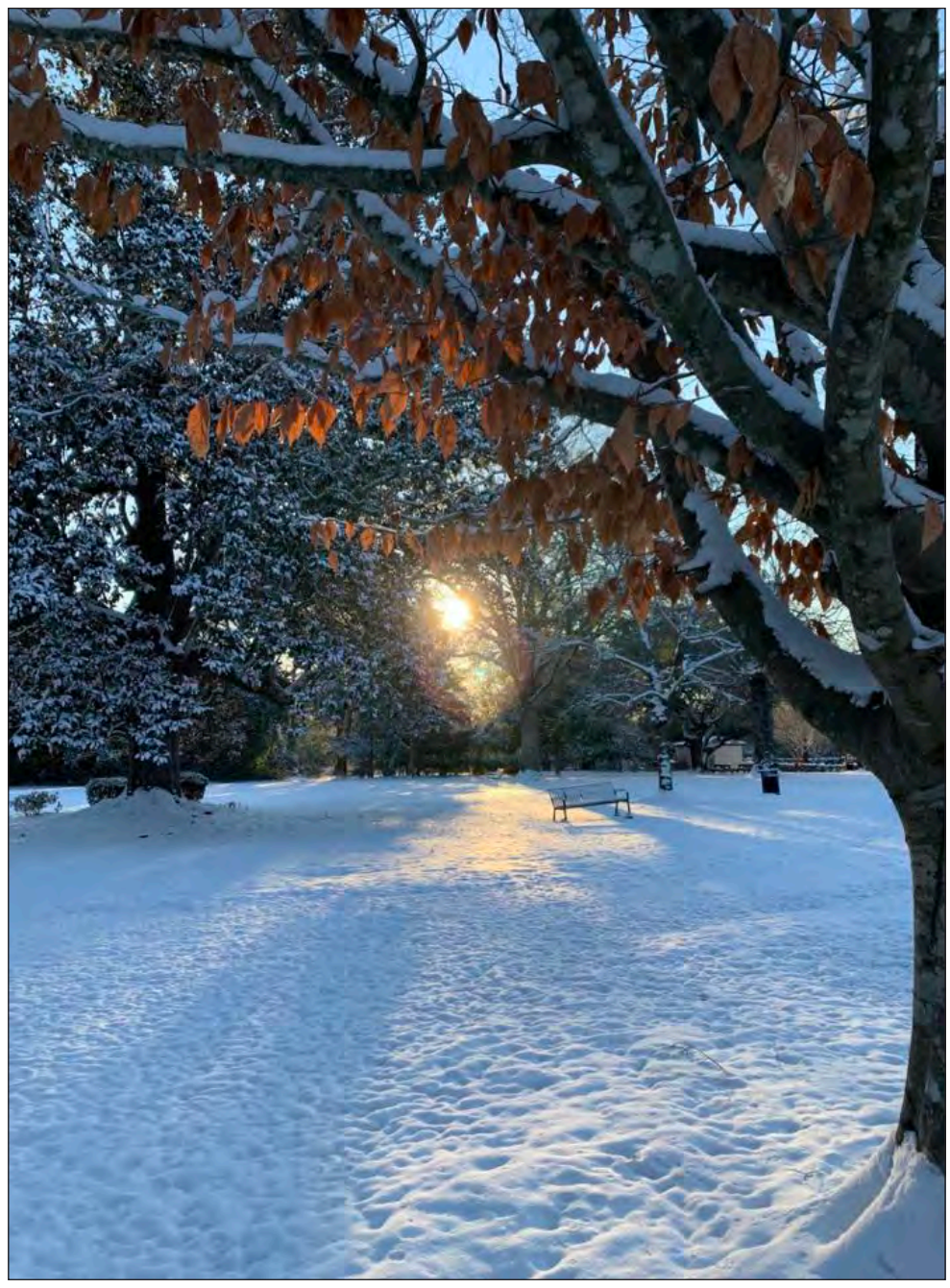
"For our sweet angel we lost too soon."



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY MARIAN NESBITT BAKER

Morgan, Colton and Presley enjoy their snow day on Sunday, Feb. 1.





PHOTOS SUBMITTED BY RUTH ANN DUPUY

Memorial Park, above, and its fountain, left



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY DEBBIE SHUST SANDERS



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY MANDII LYNN

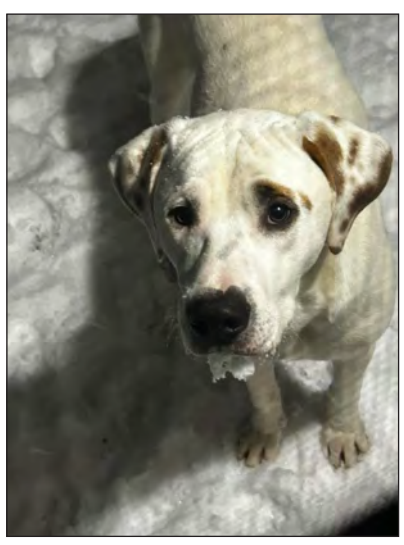


PHOTO SUBMITTED BY MEGAN LYNN RIDER

Maverick's first snow



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY ANNIE WILLIAMS

Archway Academy

South Carolina's Premier Early Education Programs



Vote for us!

- Customer Service
- Preschool
- Summer Camp
- Child Care Center
- After School Program
- Locally Owned Business
- Best Place to Work

Celebrating 41 Years of Excellence Serving Families Since 1985

Two Convenient Locations in Sumter
Open 6:30am - 6:30pm

2049 McCrays Mill Rd.
(803)773-6480

416 S. Wise Drive
(803)773-4300

WWW.ARCHWAY.ACADEMY



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY TERESA O'HARE ALEXANDER



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY MICHAEL JAMIE LESSARD



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY JAMI COKER

Katherine, age 6



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY CAROLYN YATES



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY LILA ANNETTE ARLEDGE



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY KADIE MCDONALD

U.S. 15 South



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY SARA STEELE DURANT

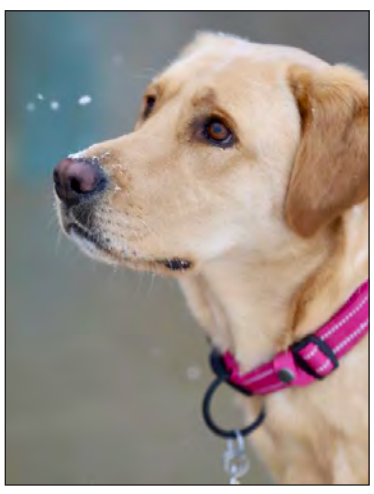


PHOTO SUBMITTED BY LEILEI EGAP

BUYING GOLD EVERY DAY
Paying Top Dollar in Sumter
JEWELRY WHOLESALE
41 E. Wesmark Blvd. • 778-1031

VOTE US
Best Painters
Jon Sill's CUSTOM PAINT WORKS
Commercial & Residential
803-464-2480
sumterpaintman@yahoo.com

Vote for Best of Sumter
In-home Care
Senior Care
Customer Service
At Your Service Home Care
803.305.0404
19 S. Harvin St.
Sumter, SC

We get you | award-winning service
Please vote for us in these categories:
PLACE TO WORK
CUSTOMER SERVICE
LOCAL CELLULAR
INTERNET PROVIDER
IT COMPANY
CABLE/SATELLITE
HOME SECURITY
FTC®
ftc.net | 888.218.5050

"The Right Ones to Count On"
VOTE FOR US
in Best of Sumter
for Best Plumber
for Best Customer Service
for Best Place to Work
for Best Boss
WRIGHT WAY PLUMBING
3425 Thomas Sumter Highway, Dalzell, SC 29040
803-499-4108 wrightwayplumbingllc.com

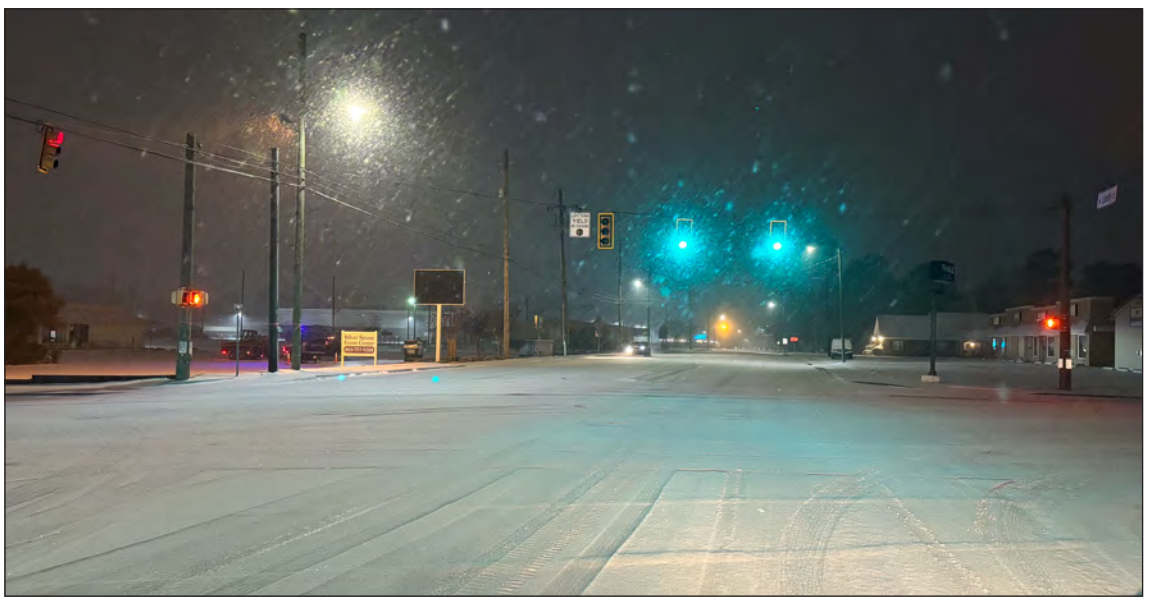
BROWN'S
FURNITURE & BEDDING
803-774-2100
31 West Wesmark Blvd., Sumter, SC
BrownsFurnitureofSumter.com

Reflections of a snowy Sumter





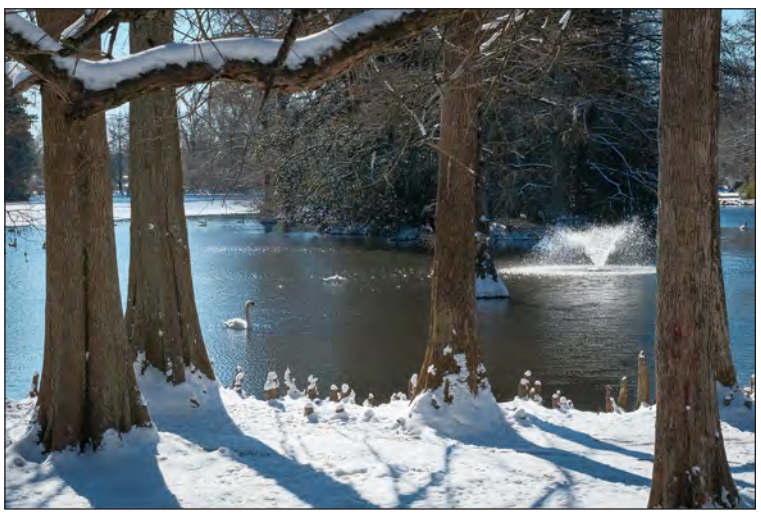
PHOTOS PROVIDED BY CHRIS M. MOORE













Shelly A. Lundberg
Certified Public Accountant
• Business • Individual • Tax Planning & Preparation
• Business Start Up Consultation • Non-Profit
• Bookkeeping & Payroll Services
• Financials • Reviews • Compilations
Personalized Service and Attention You Deserve. Over 30 Years Experience
2630-B Hardee Cove, Sumter, SC slundbergcpa.com 803-469-7300

RELIABLE
Est. 1946
PAWN SHOP
In times like these everyone is looking for
Bargain Buys!
POWER TOOLS
"Make Your Dollars Go Further at Reliable Pawn Shop"
Monday–Friday 10am–5:50 pm; Saturday 10am–4:50pm
THANK YOU FOR MAKING US #1
33 West Liberty Street · Downtown Sumter
18 N. Brooks Street · Downtown Manning
www.reliablepawnshop.com
BEST OF SUMTER 2025

PUBLIC NOTICE OF SPECIAL ELECTION

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA PINEWOOD MUNICIPALITY

A special election in the Town of Pinewood will be held on Tuesday, Apil 7, 2026. Any person wishing to register to vote in this election must do so no later than March 7, 2026.

The following offices shall be included in this election:

Pinewood Town Council

Candidate Filing Period:
Filing Opens: 12:00 p.m. on Friday, January 30, 2026.
Filing Closes: 12:00 p.m. on Monday, February 9, 2026
Filing Hours: Weekdays: 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Locations:
Sumter County Voter Registration/Election Office 129 E. Liberty Street Sumter, SC 29150.

Filing Fee: There is no filing fee for this election.

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

At 9:00 a.m. on the day of the special election, the County Board of Voter Registration and Elections will begin its examination of the absentee ballot return envelopes at 129 E. Liberty Street, Sumter, South Carolina 29150

On Thursday, April 9, 2025, 10:00 a.m. the County Board of Voter Registration and Elections will hold a hearing to determine the validity of all provisional ballots cast in the special election. This hearing will be held at Sumter County Voter Registration Office 129 E. Liberty Street Sumter, SC 29150.

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

Precinct	Polling Place
Pinewood	Manchester Elementary School

FINALIST FROM PAGE A1

learning communities and school culture.

During the fall term, 30 schools across the state submitted detailed applications followed by an onsite examination visit by a review committee, the release said. Now the 13 finalists will undergo a second onsite examination early this spring.

Five elementary schools were named finalists, and two winners will be selected in late April. The other four elementary schools include Cannons Elementary School in Spartanburg (Spartanburg School District 3), Carver Elementary Magnet School in Florence (Florence School District 1), Harbor View Elementary in Charleston (Charleston County School District) and Oakridge Elementary in Clover (Clover School District of York County).

Regarding the finalist recognition, Alice Drive Principal Eric Masaitis said it reflects the school's motto this year, which is "We bring our best."

"That motto basically captures everything — our culture, our high expectations, the shared responsibility and just the commitment to doing what's right for kids every day," he said. "Being a finalist for this award just recognizes that it is the collective work of our teachers, students and families all together that allowed us to achieve this."



SUMTER ITEM FILE PHOTO

Alice Drive Elementary School students work on a group project in a class on Nov. 3, 2025. On Jan. 23, the S.C. Association of School Administrators selected Alice Drive as a finalist for the Palmetto's Finest Award.



MASAITIS

The K-5 school has achieved three consecutive Excellent rankings on the state's report card ratings for its English language arts, math and science achievement scores.

In his fourth year as principal at Alice Drive Elementary, Masaitis has served 14 years in the district. He began his career in the classroom as a social studies teacher at Furman Middle before serving five years as an assistant principal at Alice Drive Middle.

At the middle and high school levels, the state association selected fewer finalists, and there will be one winner in each of those grade-level categories.

"We are proud to spotlight schools that are pushing boundaries and thinking differently in South Carolina," S.C. Association of School Administrators Executive Director Quincie Moore said. "These innovative institutions demonstrate the caliber of education available to families statewide."

The Palmetto's Finest Award winners will be named on April 23.

SNOW DAYS FROM PAGE A1

close and events were canceled, delayed or postponed to minimize risk and exercise caution. Morris College, Central Carolina Technical College and University of South Carolina Sumter all had transitions to e-learning, as did public and private schools in Sumter, Clarendon and Lee counties. Sumter School District, Clarendon County School District and Lee County School District all were closed with e-learning days on Monday and Tuesday.

Landfills, museums, libraries, recycling centers, and parks and gardens closed while public works and emergency response agencies worked consistently to clear roads, coordinate vehicle wreck responses and keep residents informed. In Sumter, County Communications Director Joe Perry said great coordination between Sumter Emergency Management, South Carolina Emergency Management Division, city and county government officials, first responders and school administrators and executives helped the county navigate the storm safely.

While South Carolina Department of Transportation treated primary routes with brine or salt, city and county public works distributed salt with "motor graders stationed at key geographic locations around the county," addressing one of the biggest areas of concern: maintaining safe travel on major roads.

According to Perry, Sumter County Public Works worked closely with SCDOT throughout the storm, showing video of the two agencies plowing roads during the storm's peak.

FINAL SNOWFALL TOTALS

SUMTER COUNTY

Area	Inches
Dalzell	5.5
Stateburg	3.5
City of Sumter	3.4
Southern portion of county	2.7

LEE COUNTY

Area	Inches
Bishopville	5.3
Western portion of county	5.0
Southern portion of county	4.5

CLARENDON COUNTY

Area	Inches
Manning	3.1
Southern portion of county	2.5

Source: National Weather Service, Columbia

It's one thing to tell residents to use extreme caution, but it's another to show them, he said.

"We just want people to stay safe and when cold temperatures combine with strong winds and snow, it is best to stay off the roads," Perry explained.

For Lee, its county emergency management officials, along with City of Bishopville, Lee County Sheriff's Office, Bishopville Police Department, Lee County Fire Department EMS and other first responders, also coordinated with coordinated with SCDOT and kept residents updated with advisories and tips on how to best weather the storm safely and warmly.



ABIGAIL PITTMAN / THE SUMTER ITEM

Laila Myree, a student at Morris College, makes a snow angel on the baseball field on Saturday, Jan. 31.

Clarendon County's Emergency Management, Fire Rescue and sheriff's office worked in tandem, with social media updates on conditions and where residents could seek assistance if needed.

Public safety agencies across the tri-county area were grateful for residents and travelers for heeding warnings of the storm's severity and staying off the roadways. Because of that, Sumter Police Department, Sumter Fire Department and Lee County Emergency Management reported no increase in call volumes throughout the storm.

Between Saturday, Jan. 31, and Monday, Feb. 2, calls for service in the county varied, according to Sumter County Sheriff's Office Public Information Officer Mark Bordeaux, from 55 vehicle accidents to 64 domestic disturbances and eight calls of larceny.

Clarendon County Fire Rescue's Lt. April Conyers said her department saw an increase in calls on Monday, once the storm passed and traffic returned to the roads. The agency responded to two overturned vehicles within two hours in the Summerton area on Governor Richardson Road, she said. No serious injuries were reported.

As the week continues, Conyers urged drivers to slow down and continue to take caution, as some roads may still have spots of black ice.

Sumter and Clarendon's shelters were open for those in need of warmth. Sumter United Ministries Winter Shelter expanded its hours to accommodate community needs and coordinated with Santee Wateree Regional Transportation Authority to provide transportation to those seeking shelter during the storm. Manning High School served as a temporary shelter on Saturday, with support from the American Red Cross of South Carolina and Clarendon County Department of Social Services.

Lee County officials said a winter shelter was not needed during the storm.

While agencies remained diligent, residents enjoyed a day of play in the snow.

From mayors to farms and zoos to college students throwing smiles, laughter and snowballs, people shared pictures of picturesque landscapes and outdoor activities with *The Sumter Item*. See photos from the public on pages A12 and 13.

WHAT'S THE UPCOMING FORECAST?

Temperatures warmed to the low 50s on Tuesday afternoon, and Chris Liscinsky of the National Weather Service said by Wednesday another system will move into the area, but it is expected to remain all rain, given temperatures in the low to mid-50s.

Conditions are expected to dry out on Thursday and into the weekend, he added. Colder temperatures will remain at night with lows below and around freezing.

Thursday's high is expected to be in the mid-40s, while Friday and through the weekend high temperatures are forecast to reach the mid-50s, Liscinsky said.

At the beginning of next week on Monday, warmer temperatures are possible with a high in the upper 50s.

"Eventually, the cold has got to leave and we will start warming back up, but it still is going to take a little while," he added.

FIRESIDE FROM PAGE A1

building up to something yet to come. As many of our clients live in substandard housing, possibly having poor insulation and/or an inefficient heating source, all utility bill balances are going to be affected. Propane tanks are going to empty more quickly. Kerosene cans will be more difficult to keep full of fuel. Electric accounts are going to rise dramatically. The need for heat will exceed, in many cases, the ability of clients to keep up.

Large balances are coming. Larger numbers of people needing help are coming.

We may not see it right away, but the signs are evident. In these last two months of winter, our neighbors are going to need us.

Last week alone, 20 clients received financial assistance for electric accounts and heating fuels, totaling over $6,000.

Sumter United Ministries is good soil to plant a seed of hope in the lives of neighbors in need. I have reminded myself lately that having my needs met is a blessing meant to be shared. Let's come together and assist those in need around us! Donate to the Fireside Fund today. Thank you!

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

Zeffy **Square** **PayPal**

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE

Donations can be mailed to:

The Sumter Item

P.O. Box 1677

Sumter, SC 29151

Drop off donations:

The Sumter Item is located at 36 W. Liberty St.

Donate online:

Zeffy - *https://tinyurl.com/2densutv*

*This option is free for nonprofits and donor fee is optional

CashApp - $SUMdonate

Square - *https://square.link/u/Wvt5yLTR*

PayPal - *https://tinyurl.com/bdekdsks*

What to include:

Names, including groups, should be spelled completely.

When making a donation in someone's honor, the names will be printed as given.

Checks should be made out to Sumter United Ministries.

DO YOU NEED HEATING HELP?

Anyone in need of assistance with heating or heating utility costs can call Sumter United Ministries at (803) 775-0757.

YOUR IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

$400 Anonymous

$27,427 Total last year

$1,550 Total this week

$1,859,143.28 Total since 1969

$15,065.54 Total this year

2025-26 FIRESIDE FUND HONOREE

Each year, *The Sumter Item* chooses a member of the community who has passed away in the last year whose support, whether through work, advocacy, leadership, philanthropy or community activism, has made a positive impact.

This year, *The Item* is dedicating the Fireside Fund to Katy Greenawalt, Sumter United Ministries' founding director.

According to previous reporting from *The Sumter Item* after her passing: "Born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, Greenawalt met her husband, retired Lt. Col. USAF Rodgers Kenyon Greenawalt, in the summer of 1965 in Maryland, and they were married in 1967. She was an active part of her community and served on the Sumter Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, was the director of Bethel Baptist preschool and kindergarten, and, of course, she was one of the driving forces behind the success of Sumter United Ministries.

"... Greenawalt began as a volunteer, as many people do when a nonprofit is just starting out, and as she directed SUM, she set its groundwork. The ministry may stand without her physically in it today, but it will never truly be without her; she makes up SUM's foundation, and more than a trace of her is present in the now-decades-old practices that she first came up with."

She died on May 3 at the age of 77.

"We are very grateful for *The Sumter Item* and The Fireside Fund for partnering with Sumter United Ministries again this year," SUM Executive Director Mark Champagne said, who remembers Greenawalt as his mentor, according to *The Item*'s article on her this spring. "... Her steadfast leadership and remarkable creativity laid the foundation on which this ministry still stands. She built systems with excellence, served with compassion and believed fiercely in the potential of every person who walked through our doors. She would see the hope in them long before they saw it themselves. She loved people deeply and followed her Savior with unwavering devotion, leading this ministry through her faith and her heart. Her legacy continues to guide and strengthen Sumter United Ministries today and will always be fondly remembered — please give and keep Katy's legacy going strong."

New donations as of Feb. 3: Roland Alston, $250; Martha Alston, $250; Maureen Maclin, in memory of James (Jim) Maclin, $150; and Carroll Barnette, $500.

PUBLIC AGENDA

To correct any information or to make a submission to Public Agenda, email *pressrelease@theitem.com* with **PUBLIC AGENDA** in subject line.

CITY OF MANNING PLANNING COMMISSION

Monday, Feb. 9, at 6:30 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 29 W. Boyce St., Manning

SUMTER SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Monday, Feb. 9, 6 p.m., 1345 Wilson Hall Road

LEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Tuesday, Feb. 10, at 9:30 a.m., Family Court Room or the Main Court Room, located on the second floor of the Courthouse.

LYNCHBURG TOWN COUNCIL

Tuesday, Feb. 10, at 6 p.m., 106 Main St., Lynchburg

SUMTER COUNTY COUNCIL

Tuesday, Feb. 10, at 6 p.m., Sumter County Council Chambers

SUMMERTON TOWN COUNCIL

Tuesday, Feb. 10, at 6 p.m., Summerton Town Hall, 10 Main St., Summerton

MANNING CITY COUNCIL

Tuesday, Feb. 10, at 6 p.m., Manning City Hall, Council Chambers on second floor, 29 W. Boyce St. at 6 pm. If you are planning on attending please use the Mill Street entrance.

PINEWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

Tuesday, Feb. 10, at 6:30 p.m., town hall, Pinewood

TURBEVILLE TOWN COUNCIL

Tuesday, Feb. 10, at 6:30 p.m., Council Chamber of Town Hall, 1400 Main St., Turbeville

MAYESVILLE TOWN COUNCIL

Tuesday, Feb. 10, at 6:30 p.m., Senior Center, 10 Pringle St., Mayesville

PAXVILLE TOWN COUNCIL

Tuesday, Feb. 10, 7 p.m., Paxville Town Hall, 10277 Lewis Road, Paxville

GREATER SUMTER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wednesday, Feb. 11, at noon, chamber office

AROUND TOWN

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

Clemson Extension will host a **Prescribed Burn Planning Basics Workshop** for Sumter landowners on Thursday, Feb. 5, from 1 to 3 p.m. The cost is $20. This workshop is for landowners with little or no experience in preparing for a prescribed fire but who want to start burning. Those who are interested in using prescribed fire on their property and have little or no experience in preparing a prescribed fire plan are invited to attend this training. Participants will be guided through the process by experienced prescribed burning practitioners and will learn how to set prescribed burning objectives, identify smoke-sensitive areas, determine desired weather conditions, evaluate fuel types and plan for advanced burning preparations. Light refreshments will be provided. If you have questions, contact Robert Carter at *rec4@clemson.edu*. The workshop will be held at the extension office, 123 E. Liberty St., Sumter. Register at *https://tinyurl.com/yknst8hh*.

The City of Sumter recently announced the dates for **community cleanup days** for 2026. The city invites everyone to pitch in to clean up their community through volunteer litter cleanup days in 2026. Spend a couple hours in the morning making a difference where you live. Dates will be Feb. 21, April 18, June 20, Aug. 15, Oct. 17 and Dec. 12. Anyone who would like to volunteer can sign up at the city's website, *https://tinyurl.com/mryzpu5n*. People can form cleanup teams to participate, but according to the site, you don't have to stick to just the scheduled days to help beautify your community. The city provides free supplies and trash bag pickup service.

USC Sumter will hold the **2026 Graduation, Transfer and Career Fair** on Wednesday, March 25, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Nettles Gymnasium. This event is designed to help students explore their next steps after completing their associate and bachelor's degrees — whether that involves transferring to a four-year institution or entering the workforce. Caps and gowns will be sold for $60 that day only, there will be free headshots from 1 to 3 p.m., refreshments, raffle, more than 20 businesses and four-year colleges in attendance and 15% off all items in the bookstore. Graduates are encouraged to attend the event. Attendees should park in the student parking area adjacent to the Nettles and Schwartz buildings off University Drive.

WEATHER

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather, Inc.** ©2026

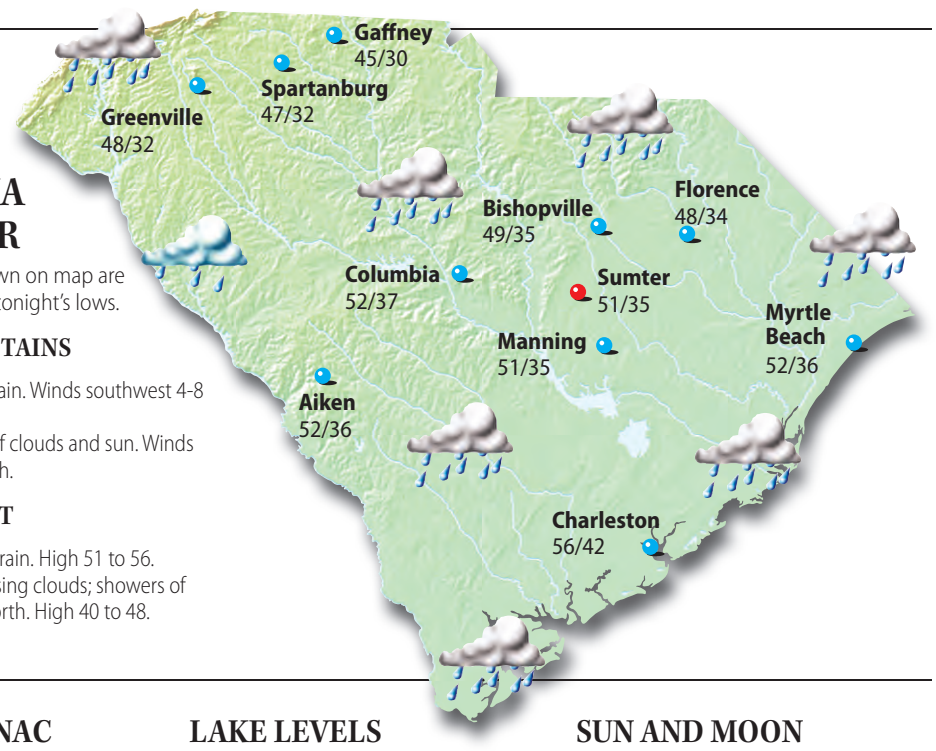
AccuWeather® five-day forecast for Sumter

AccuWeather Proven Superior Accuracy™ Visit AccuWeather.com

TODAY	TONIGHT	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Rain at times	Showers around early; cloudy	Colder; some morning snow	Plenty of sunshine	Brilliant sunshine	Chilly with some sun
51°	35°	43° / 28°	59° / 32°	59° / 25°	47° / 32°
Chance of rain: **95%**	Chance of rain: **70%**	Chance of rain: **55%**	Chance of rain: **0%**	Chance of rain: **0%**	Chance of rain: **10%**
SSW 4-8 mph	**N 6-12 mph**	**N 7-14 mph**	**WSW 7-14 mph**	**NW 6-12 mph**	**ESE 4-8 mph**

TODAY'S SOUTH CAROLINA WEATHER

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



IN THE MOUNTAINS

Today: Periods of rain. Winds southwest 4-8 mph. Cloudy.
Thursday: Times of clouds and sun. Winds northwest 6-12 mph.

ON THE COAST

Today: Occasional rain. High 51 to 56.
Thursday: Decreasing clouds; showers of rain and snow in north. High 40 to 48.

LOCAL ALMANAC

SUMTER MONDAY

Temperature

High	47°
Low	17°
Normal high	56°
Normal low	33°
Record high	81° in 1950
Record low	12° in 1979

Precipitation

Monday	0.00"
Month to date	0.04"
Normal month to date	0.24"
Year to date	2.01"
Last year to date	1.39"
Normal year to date	4.02"

LAKE LEVELS

Lake	Full pool	7 a.m. yest.	24-hr chg
Murray	360	355.65	-0.14
Marion	76.8	75.22	+0.05
Moultrie	75.5	75.14	-0.16
Wateree	100	95.19	-0.01

RIVER STAGES

River	Flood stage	7 a.m. yest.	24-hr chg
Black River	12	7.06	+0.03
Congaree River	19	3.79	-2.15
Lynches River	14	4.69	-0.27
Saluda River	14	2.91	+0.02
Up. Santee River	80	N.A.	N.A.
Wateree River	24	5.66	+0.08

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise	7:17 a.m.	Sunset	5:55 p.m.
Moonrise	9:04 p.m.	Moonset	8:51 a.m.

Last	New	First	Full
Feb. 9	Feb. 17	Feb. 24	Mar. 3

TIDES

AT MYRTLE BEACH

	High	Ht.	Low	Ht.
Today	10:46 a.m.	3.1	5:11 a.m.	-0.7
	11:15 p.m.	2.9	5:38 p.m.	-0.5
Thu.	11:26 a.m.	2.9	5:57 a.m.	-0.4
	11:59 p.m.	2.8	6:17 p.m.	-0.3

NATIONAL CITIES

City	Today Hi/Lo/W	Thu. Hi/Lo/W
Atlanta	58/30/r	47/30/s
Chicago	28/14/sf	31/28/pc
Dallas	57/34/pc	67/42/s
Detroit	22/8/pc	24/20/sf
Houston	64/39/pc	65/46/s
Los Angeles	90/60/s	81/57/c
New Orleans	62/38/r	54/39/s
New York	33/19/s	30/15/s
Orlando	73/51/s	60/35/r
Philadelphia	32/13/pc	30/8/s
Phoenix	87/60/s	79/56/s
San Francisco	69/49/s	69/53/pc
Wash., DC	35/19/sf	30/13/s

REGIONAL CITIES

City	Today Hi/Lo/W	Thu. Hi/Lo/W
Asheville	45/27/sn	39/20/s
Athens	54/36/r	48/27/pc
Augusta	54/39/r	48/25/pc
Beaufort	56/44/r	48/30/pc
Cape Hatteras	47/37/r	38/28/sn
Charleston	56/42/r	45/31/pc
Charlotte	45/32/r	44/24/pc
Clemson	51/35/r	50/26/pc
Columbia	52/37/r	46/27/pc
Darlington	48/34/r	42/25/sn
Elizabeth City	42/28/r	37/19/s
Elizabethtown	46/30/r	39/24/sn
Fayetteville	43/30/r	40/23/sn
Florence	48/34/r	42/27/sn
Gainesville	72/45/pc	59/30/pc
Gastonia	44/31/r	45/23/pc
Goldsboro	43/29/r	39/22/sn
Goose Creek	56/40/r	45/30/pc
Greensboro	38/25/r	41/20/pc
Greenville	48/32/r	48/26/pc
Hickory	42/30/r	46/24/s
Hilton Head	54/43/r	49/34/pc
Jacksonville, FL	70/46/pc	55/31/pc
La Grange	55/28/r	49/28/s
Macon	57/35/r	53/27/pc
Marietta	56/27/r	47/29/s
Marion	43/28/sn	45/23/s
Mt. Pleasant	55/42/r	48/32/pc
Myrtle Beach	52/36/r	40/28/sn
Orangeburg	52/38/r	44/29/pc
Port Royal	55/44/r	46/33/pc
Raleigh	42/28/r	44/22/s
Rock Hill	46/32/r	46/23/pc
Rockingham	44/31/r	45/24/pc
Savannah	59/43/sh	49/30/pc
Spartanburg	47/32/r	46/24/pc
Summerville	55/39/r	45/28/pc
Wilmington	52/32/r	40/25/sn
Winston-Salem	38/26/r	42/21/pc

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

Position your business to grow by advertising with us!

Call (803) 774-1200 and get started today.



SUMTER SPCA PETS OF THE WEEK

ABOVE: Winnie is a female American shorthair cat who was born in April 2024. She is available for adoption at Sumter SPCA.



BELOW: Bonnie is a 6-month-old, female hound mix available for adoption at Sumter SPCA.



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: Meet Alice! Alice is an adorable little girl who weighs just 23 pounds and is estimated to be 2 to 4 years old. This sweet pup is friendly with everyone she meets, but she truly loves having one special person to bond with. She would do best as a mostly indoor dog with regular outdoor potty breaks. If you're looking for a loyal companion who will be right by your side, Alice may be your perfect match.



BELOW: Meet Skyler! Skyler is an absolute doll baby — and those ears are just too adorable for words! She is under 1 year old and weighs 26 pounds, making her the perfect small- to medium-sized pup with a big personality. Skyler still has that wonderful puppy energy and is full of tail wags, kisses and playful fun. She loves people and is looking for a family who will give her the attention, love and affection she craves.

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

E-mail: sports@theitem.com

SECTION B

WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4-6, 2026



TIM LEIBLE / THE SUMTER ITEM

Manning's Ameerah Conyers, left, shoots against Mullins on Friday.

Lady Monarchs cling to region win over Mullins, Manning boys fall to No. 4 Auctioneers

BY TIM LEIBLE
tim@theitem.com

Before a frigid weekend, Manning hosted Mullins for an important night of region hoops. The Lady Monarchs needed a win to keep their playoff hopes alive. The boys, meanwhile, had a chance to take down the No. 4 team in SCHSL 2A. A win would've left them in a tie atop the region entering the final three games of the regular season.

The ensuing night of basketball was anything but normal, as one Manning squad got its wish and the other ended the night with a lopsided loss.

LADY MONARCHS HOLD ON

The Manning girls have struggled with consistency all season long. At their best, they've shown an ability to compete with some talented squads, but they also have long lulls as a result of a young lineup. Friday's matchup with Mullins was a microcosm of their season. They led by as many as 15 points after an up-and-down first half, but a complete breakdown at the end of the game left the Lady Monarchs limping away with a 65-62 win.

With 2:32 left to play, Manning was in the driver's seat with a commanding 65-51 lead. That gap was nearly erased in the final 30 seconds, as star forward Ameerah Conyers committed a foul before getting hit with a tech.

The ensuing free throws brought Mullins within six. Mullins retained possession after the tech, and Breanna Ford buried a three with 16 seconds to play to get within three points. Manning was able to maintain possession for the final 16 seconds to hold onto the win, but they failed to score in the final 2:32 and nearly let an important win slip out of their grasp.

"I told them coming into this game that it was a playoff game for us, we had to have it. To get it, we'll take it, but I'm definitely not happy with how we finished that ball game at all," head coach Justin Johnson said. "That (foul and tech)

SEE **MONARCHS,** PAGE B5

SHS wrestling taking strides as postseason nears

BY TIM LEIBLE
tim@theitem.com

The Sumter High wrestling program was supposed to begin its playoff journey this weekend, but a snowstorm had other plans. Still, the Gamecocks aren't letting a little snow put a damper on a strong season on the mat.

The SHS wrestling program has been building under the leadership of Johnny Lee. This year, the varsity boys, girls and middle school teams all hit major milestones. The girls had their first proper season schedule this year after piggybacking off the boys slate a year ago. They turned that into a trip to the playoffs, and they'll travel to Rock Hill once a rescheduled postseason bracket is established this week. The boys, anchored by six all-region wrestlers, earned the No. 9 seed in SCHSL 5A DI playoffs and will face Lexington at James Island in the first round. Sumter High also had six wrestlers punch their tickets to the JV/MS state tournament.

The arrow is pointing up at Sumter High.

"The team is still growing. This is the first time we've had four teams practice," Lee said, mentioning both boys and girls teams at the varsity and JV/middle school level. "We're just continuing to grow, and the coaches are learning so we can give the wrestlers their best opportunities as coaches."

BIG ADDITIONS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The Gamecocks had a few new faces join the fold this year, as David Rogers, Nahaze Wells and Joey Thomas made the move over from Lakewood. The former Gators were unsure of the status of Lakewood's program amid some turnover, so they decided to reach out to Lee about coming to Sumter High, where they could face the challenge of 5A wrestling as seniors. They're all making the most of the opportunity.

SEE **WRESTLING,** PAGE B2



PHOTOS PROVIDED

The Sumter High wrestling program is continuing to build as they gear up for team duals. The team is, front from left, Brianna Montalbano, Angel Mitchell, Elijah-Ray Benevente, Kathy Marzano; second row from left, Barry Gainey-Bryant, Collin Bracey, Andrew Miller, David Montero, Christian Ingram, Joshua Feldman, Jordan Lewis, Alexander Thomsen, Kaim Schnyder; back row from left, Joey Thomas, Nahaze Wells, Salih English, David Rogers, Coach Andre Amaker, Coach Johnny Lee, Joshua Miller, Koi Hudson, Justin Washington, Jayvion Tindal.



Sumter High's JV/Middle School state qualifiers, from left, Jayvion Tindal, Jordan Lewis, Daxson Jackson, Antwain Ramsey, Mason McDonald and Alexander Thomsen pose at Sumter High.

AREA ROUNDUP

East Clarendon splits with Kingstree

STAFF REPORT

The East Clarendon basketball teams hosted Kingstree on Friday, splitting the region matchups.

The Lady Wolverines put up a fight against the No. 5 team in SCHSL 2A but eventually fell 56-40. The game was tied at 16-16 going into halftime, but a 22-point second quarter helped Kingstree break away. Cherish Cochran did what she could to lift EC, scoring 25 points in the loss. Bailey Hicks added seven.

The EC boys followed with a 48-38 win. They got out to a quick start with 19 in the first before holding Kingstree to five in the fourth quarter to seal the win. James Gamble led the charge with 19 points, 10 rebounds, four steals and three assists. Braylon Hunt added 11 points, five rebounds and four steals.

LEE CENTRAL SPLITS WITH LAMAR

The Lee Central basketball teams traveled to Lamar on Friday, splitting the region matchups.

The Lady Stallions extended their region winning streak to six games with a 55-40 victory. A sluggish stretch in the middle two quarters left LCHS clinging to a 34-32 lead entering the fourth, but Lee Central poured in 21 points in the fourth quarter to run away with the win. Serenity Williams led the charge with 22 points, while My'Keriyah Holmes added 15, Jacquelyn Damon had eight and Tatiyana Mixon chipped in with seven.

The Stallion boys fell 39-31 in a defensive battle. A slow start left Lee Central in a 22-12 hole at the half, and they couldn't quite climb out. Sinatra Rembert led the team with 10 points in the loss, while Tyshawn Henry added seven.

EAGLES FALL TO CHARLESTON M&S

Scott's Branch hosted SCHSL 1A No. 10 Charleston Math & Science on Friday, falling 49-39.

The typically potent Eagles offense struggled to get going on Friday, as

SEE **ROUNDUP,** PAGE B3



TIM LEIBLE / SUMTER ITEM FILE PHOTO

East Clarendon's James Gamble scored 19 points in the Wolverines' win over Kingstree on Friday.



WRESTLING

FROM PAGE B1

"It made a lot of wrestlers uncomfortable in a good way," Lee said of the additions. "They understood that if you want to keep your spot, you've got somebody you've got to beat. With kids like that, they focus more."

Rogers made his impact felt on the football field in the fall before an impressive winter on the mat. He enters the postseason as the No. 7 heavyweight in 5A with a sparkling 25-0 record, 24 of which came by pin. For Rogers, this is a revenge tour. After qualifying for the SCHSL 3A state tournament as a sophomore, he missed out on the 4A tournament a year ago after failing to make weight at the qualifying tournament.

"It's like a revenge tour for me because I disappointed myself, disappointed my coaches, my family and my friends," Rogers said. "It's redemption."

Wells was a state qualifier at Lakewood last year and carried that momentum into a bigger classification and weight class this season. He's wrestling at 157 with a record of 25-4, finishing third in the region at his weight. Wells has collected 22 pins so far this season. He's appreciated the challenge that comes with wrestling in 5A this winter.

"I wrestle a different way now," Wells said. "At Lakewood, I could just muscle kids. In 5A, you can't do that. You have to work your technique and show your skills off."

Thomas has been another important addition at 175, as he's collected 23 pins while amassing a record of 27-10 as he finished third in the region.

"I've known Joe for two years, and he leaves it on the mat," Lee said. "He's a great, great kid. Even when he's losing, he fights until the end because there's always an opportunity to get a win."

The new faces have felt right at home at Sumter High.

"It's been pretty amazing," Rogers said. "It's been way different. Not saying Lakewood didn't have the love and support, but you can really feel the love and support and how high they want you to aim. And they'll aim with you."



PHOTO PROVIDED

The Sumter High girls wrestling program had their first complete schedule this year and earned a trip to the postseason. The team is, front from left, Brianna Montalbano, Kathy Marzano; second row from left, Shalea Rose, Evelyn Prince, Madilyn Robinson, Shafiqa Graham, Miley Le, Selena Vargas, Jocelynn Gilliam, Krysta Segra; back from left, Tamirah Williams, Amariah Fields, Monica Jackson, Bright Adjio, Coach Andre Amaker, Coach Johnny Lee, Elizabeth Taylor, Brianna Murphy, Madison Crooks-Carlisle, Allison Padro-Chavez.

NOT JUST THE NEWBIES

The boys team also boasts three other all-region wrestlers. The lightest is their 106, Eli Benevente. He's sitting at 18-10 on the season with 16 pins. Then there's Andrew Miller, who has 12 pins at 126; he enters the playoffs with an 18-18 record.

"Eli just needed to get more mat time so he could get his confidence. He got his confidence, and he placed third in the region, and he beat some kids he probably shouldn't have beaten," Lee said. "Andrew was my 113 last year, and he came to me and said he couldn't make that weight, so he wrestled at 126 and got third in the region. He's an awesome kid, does everything I ask him to do."

The last male all-region wrestler is Joshua Miller, who enters the postseason with a 22-13 record and 17 pins. Miller finished as the region runner-up at 190. He's a veteran Lee has loved working with through the years.

"I've had Joshua for three years. He first came to me from basketball because that sport left him behind. He was a scrawny kid, tall, but he leaves it on the mat," Lee said. "He's one of my team leaders who does everything I've asked."

LADY GAMECOCKS SHINING

The Sumter High girls have been impressive during their first season with a proper schedule. Miley Le leads the way at 15-8. She's ranked No. 8 in the state at 130 and helps set the tone for the Lady Gamecocks. Fellow sophomore Krysta Segra, who transferred from South Florence, is 17-5 on the season at 170 and freshman Jocelynn Gilliam is 15-8 as SHS builds a strong foundation for its women's program. Coach Lee mentioned wins over strong upper-state programs like South Pointe and Greenville as signs that things are headed in the right direction.

"At first, I wasn't sure, but we went to an upper-state tournament and got fourth. We did well," Lee said. "Krysta Segra is phenomenal. Miley Le might be less than 5 feet, but she is tough. She'll wrestle you for six minutes just to win."

MIDDLE SCHOOL/JV

Sumter High also had six state qualifiers at the JV and middle-school level. Jayvion Tindal, Jordan Lewis, Daxon Jackson, Antwain Ramsey, Mason McDonald and Alexander Thomsen all punched their tickets, showing the bright future of the program.

BUILDING AS A COUNTY

While Lee is excited about the growth at Sumter High, his focus is not solely on the Gamecocks.

Wrestling is a sport built around community, so he wants to see all of Sumter grow in the sport. Two former Gamecocks are helping guide programs at the other two county schools. Lenell Allen is at Lakewood, while Gregory Jones is at Crestwood, where he reestablished the program alongside Willie Martin. In Lee's eyes, a rising tide lifts all ships, so he's trying to plant the seeds for the entire county.

"It's not about Sumter High, it's about Sumter County," Lee said. "Iron sharpens iron; the better you get, the better we can get, and now we can compete in different areas. That's what we're trying to do for Sumter County."

Lee plans to start a tri-county Christmas tournament in 2026, which will welcome the rest of Sumter County, alongside the programs like Manning, East Clarendon and a few programs in Columbia. Sumter High will also host multiple skills camps during the summer to help interested wrestlers of all ages grow in the sport, though dates for those camps are still being finalized.

"We want to make the sport popular in Sumter," Lee said. "We'll have two three-day camps teaching basic movement. One is first through sixth grade; the other will be seventh through 11th grade. Last year, it was a huge success, so we're going to try to do it again to get the kids interested, girls and boys."

Lee is also fundraising to help get local wrestlers to college camps across the state. There, local athletes will get the chance to compete in front of college coaches, hopefully opening the door for scholarships. Those interested in donating can mail the school at 2580 McCrays Mills Road, Sumter, SC 29154 ATTN: Stephanie Tickel/Sumter Wrestling Club/Johnny Lee or reach Coach Lee via email at *johnny.lee@sumterschools.net* to get involved.

POSTSEASON WAITING GAME

The playoff schedule is a bit in the air as of Tuesday morning for Sumter High. The weather complicated matters because wrestling programs typically have to adjust their schedule around when their basketball teams play. Once the new dates are set, the SHS girls will head to Rock Hill and face White Knoll. The winner of that match will then face the winner between Rock Hill and Spartanburg later the same day. The boys will be on a similar schedule. They'll travel to No. 1-seeded James Island and face Lexington. The winner will then face the host school after the conclusion of the match. Once the state duals are complete at the team level, the individual state qualifiers will take place with the SHS girls heading to South Florence and the boys wrestling at White Knoll. The individual state championships will be wrestled at Florence Center.

The Gamecocks don't care when they'll wrestle; they just want to hit the mat.

"I'm excited. I know the type of team we've got. We're going to have a little competition, but our grit, our grind, our fight, our heart is going to overpower, along with our technique and skill," Rogers said. "Individually, I think we'll have seven or eight placers at state. I'd bet my house on that."

Wells added, "I think we can keep moving forward and shock the world."



the Sumter ITEM SCOREBOARD

BASKETBALL

KINGSTREE		@		EAST CLARENDON
BOYS	38-48		GIRLS	56-40
LEE CENTRAL		@		LEWISVILLE
BOYS	31-39		GIRLS	55-40
MULLINS		@		MANNING
BOYS	81-60		GIRLS	62-65
CHARLESTON M&S		@		SCOTT'S BRANCH
BOYS	49-39			

WILSON HALL		@		JOHN PAUL II
BOYS	70-74		GIRLS	49-62
LMA SWAMPCATS		@		CAMDEN MILITARY
BOYS	62-37			
RAGIN PREP		@		RIDGE CHRISTIAN
BOYS	74-60		GIRLS	



ROUNDUP

FROM PAGE B1

Scott's Branch suffered its first loss of 2026. Nyren Bowman led the team with 11 points, four rebounds, two steals and two blocks, while Kazon Taylor had 10 points. Fra'jon Bennett added six points, 11 rebounds and two blocks.

BARONS FACE JPII

Wilson Hall traveled to John Paul II on Friday, suffering a pair of tough region losses.

The Lady Barons opened with a 62-49 loss. JPII got out to a hot start, leading 37-22 at the half. Wilson Hall outscored the Golden Warriors after the break but couldn't close the gap. Lilly Grace Przybyla led the team with 15 points, seven rebounds and a steal. Grace McArthur added 12 points, four rebounds and three blocks. Ella Sill scored nine points and had two steals.

The Wilson Hall boys followed with a tense battle, falling just short of a comeback with a 74-70 loss. After a rough third quarter, the Barons trailed 60-46 entering the fourth. Caulder Williamson got hot with a trio of threes in the fourth to spark a 24-point frame, but Wilson Hall couldn't quite complete the comeback. Williamson finished with 17, while Ford Wilder led the team with 23 points and Nehemiah Dinkins had 15.

LMA TOPS CAMDEN MILITARY

The Laurence Manning boys basketball team traveled to Camden Military on Friday, cruising to a 62-37 win to improve to 18-4.

Charlie Duvall led the offense with 16 points, while Wes Lyles and Ben Sanders each added 14. Zy Dennis and Whitley Boykin each chipped in with seven.

RAGIN BEATS RIDGE

The Ragin Prep boys basketball team traveled to Ridge Christian on Friday and left with a 74-60 win that all but sealed their region title.

Kden Shannon led the team with 23 points in the win, while Kayshaun Rutherford added 19 and Zymir Robinson-Hill tacked on an additional 16 points.



South Carolina forward Joyce Edwards (8) looks to shoot as Texas A&M forward Fatmata Janneh (44) and guard Ny'ceara Pryor (1) defend on Monday, Feb. 2, 2026, in College Station, Texas.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Edwards' 28 points lead No. 3 South Carolina to a 71-56 victory over Texas A&M

BY KRISTIE RIEKEN
Associated Press

COLLEGE STATION, Texas — Joyce Edwards had 28 points and Tessa Johnson added 19 and tied a career high with five 3-pointers to help No. 3 South Carolina outlast Texas A&M 71-56 Monday night.

South Carolina (22-2, 8-1 Southeastern Conference) led by as many as 16 points, but was clinging to a five-point lead when Edwards scored eight points in a 9-0 run that made it 67-53 with less than two minutes remaining.

Johnson made her first four 3-point attempts and made all five of her 3s in the first half. She finished 5 of 11 from long range.

The Aggies had made six free throws in the fourth, but missed their first 10 shots of the quarter before Janae Kent made a 3-pointer with 90 seconds remaining.

Ny'ceara Pryor had 14 points for Texas A&M (8-10, 1-8), which lost its sixth straight. The Aggies performed much better on Monday night than they had in recent contests when they dropped four of their previous five games by 25 points or more.

Salese Blow made two free throws for A&M seconds into the fourth quarter and added two more with about eight minutes left to get Texas A&M within 55-51. Alicia Tournebize made South Carolina's first point of the quarter when she hit the second of two free throws with 7½ minutes remaining.

The first field goal of the quarter didn't come until a jump shot by Edwards extended the lead to 58-51 about a minute later.

The Gamecocks were up by 16 with about 2½ minutes left in the third quarter before the Aggies scored the next seven points, highlighted by a 3 from Pryor, to get within 53-44. South Carolina made two free throws after that before a 3-pointer at the buzzer by Pryor cut the lead to 55-47 entering the fourth.

UP NEXT

South Carolina: Hosts Mississippi State on Thursday night.

Texas A&M: Hosts No. 21 Alabama on Sunday.

UConn, UCLA, USC hold 1-3 in AP poll

BY DOUG FEINBERG
Associated Press

Louisville moved up to sixth for its best ranking in four years in The Associated Press women's Top 25 basketball poll released Monday.

UConn remained the unanimous No. 1 from the 31-member national media panel. The Huskies are the lone undefeated team in women's college basketball and kept that streak going Sunday with a 96-66 rout of then-No. 15 Tennessee. UConn has won 39 consecutive games dating to last season. UCLA, South Carolina and Texas remained behind the Huskies in an unchanged top four.

The Bruins had an impressive win over then-No. 8 Iowa on Sunday. The Hawkeyes dropped to 10th. The Longhorns topped then-No. 10 Oklahoma on Sunday as well. The Sooners fell to 11th.

The rest of the top 10 shuffled. LSU moved back up to fifth, and Louisville climbed to its highest ranking since 2022 after wins at Stanford and Cal. Vanderbilt dropped two spots to seventh after a loss to Ole Miss. Michigan and Ohio State were next. It's the Buckeyes first appearance in the top 10 in a year.

FALLING TIGERS

Princeton fell four spots to No. 23 after seeing its 15-game winning streak end Friday in a loss to rival Columbia. The Tigers rebounded with a victory over Cornell the next day. Princeton was having its best year since going undefeated during the regular season in 2014-15.

CONFERENCE SUPREMACY

One week after having a record 10 teams in the poll, the SEC dropped to nine with Georgia falling out of the rankings. The Big Ten is next with seven. The Big 12 has four teams, the Atlantic Coast Conference has three, and the Big East and Ivy League each have one.

GAMES OF THE WEEK

No. 17 Duke at No. 6 Louisville, Thursday. First place in the ACC will be on the line. The Blue Devils have a 13-game winning streak and the Cardinals have won 14 straight.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

South Carolina head coach Dawn Staley calls a play against Texas A&M on Monday, Feb. 2, 2026, in College Station, Texas.

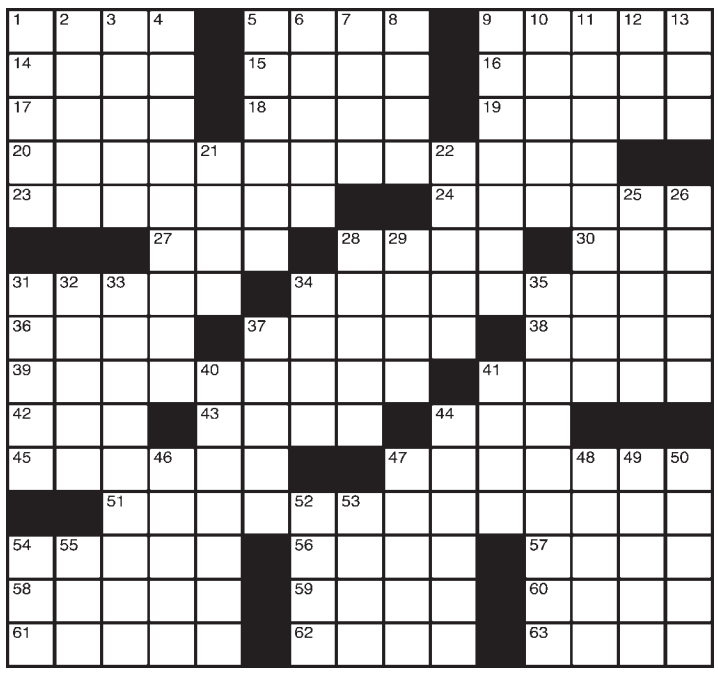
No. 2 UCLA at No. 8 Michigan, Sunday. The top two teams in the Big Ten will face off when the Bruins visit the Wolverines. UCLA hasn't lost a conference game this season, while Michigan has just one loss.

ASSOCIATED PRESS TOP 25

1. UConn (31) 23-0
2. UCLA 21-1
3. *South Carolina 21-2*
4. Texas 21-2
5. LSU 21-2
6. Louisville 21-3
7. Vanderbilt 21-2
8. Michigan 19-3
9. Ohio St. 20-3
10. Iowa 18-4
11. Oklahoma 17-5
12. Michigan St. 19-3
13. Mississippi 18-4
14. TCU 20-3
15. Baylor 19-4
16. Kentucky 18-5
17. Duke 16-6
18. Texas Tech 21-3
19. Tennessee 14-5
20. West Virginia 18-5
21. Alabama 19-4
22. Maryland 17-6
23. Princeton 18-2
24. Washington 17-5
25. North Carolina 17-5

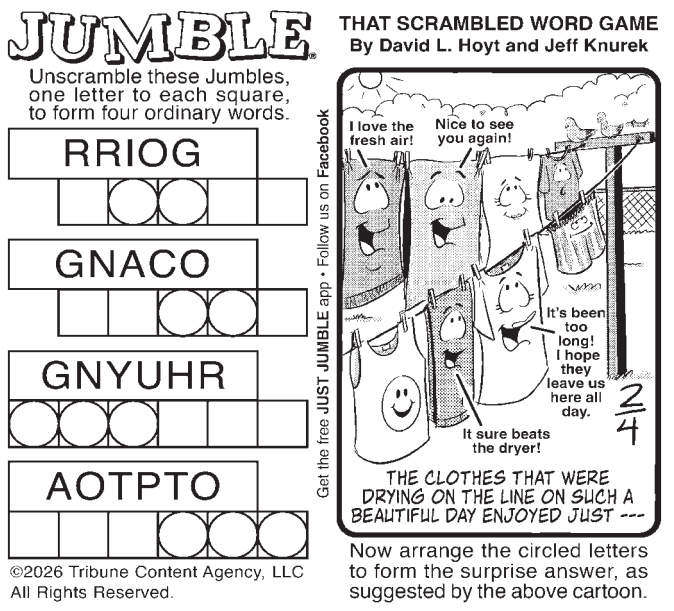
Others receiving votes: Georgia 66, Rhode Island 26, NC State 20, Nebraska 10, Minnesota 9, Illinois 6, Oklahoma St. 5, Syracuse 5, Iowa St. 4, Fairfield 3, Richmond 1, Southern Cal 1.

CROSSWORD



Across
1 Excerpt from a film
5 Like back legs
9 Wanders
14 Highway division
15 Purple berry in healthy smoothies
16 Illuminated from below
17 Food thickener made from seaweed
18 Takes a snooze
19 __-gritty
20 *Tailor's tool
23 Get ready
24 Word before bar or drink
27 Contents of a barn stack
28 Nursing spot
30 WNW's opposite
31 Very pale
34 *Inker's tool
36 The sun, for one
37 Common living room piece
38 Big name in volleyballs
39 *Intelligence agent's tool
41 Jai alai basket
42 Shorthand in a coffee order
43 Went as a passenger
44 Only Canadian MLB city, for short
45 Consumed uncooked
47 Look of the recently woken
51 Make a measurable difference, or what the answers to the starred clues do
54 Honeycrisp, e.g.
56 Shoe bottom
57 Hubbubs
58 Gives stars to
59 Work with yarn
60 NHL venue
61 Romantic meeting
62 Goes out with
63 Disappointing report card grades

Down
1 Jewelry fastener
2 Golden beer
3 Amazed
4 Outer edge
5 Grumpy due to lack of food
6 Start of Caesar's boast
7 California wine valley
8 Many a drink coaster
9 Encounter
10 State one's view
11 Mr. Incredible and Elastigirl, e.g.
12 Cambridge univ.
13 Total dump
21 Flat bread served with curry
22 Toffee bar brand
25 "Top Gun" outfit
26 Gossipy sort
28 Brownish gray
29 Engrave
31 Pet adoption org.
32 Weasel with a short black-tipped tail
33 Pessimist's description of a glass, perhaps
34 Super Mario character who looks like a mushroom
35 Picked up, in a way
37 Director Cameron
40 Most serious
41 Girls Who __: nonprofit that supports STEM initiatives
44 Religious beliefs
46 Parts
47 Contradict
48 Pearl Jam vocalist Vedder
49 Without company
50 Classroom workspaces
52 Sounds of disapproval
53 Sharpen, as a knife
54 Gallery display
55 Golf course standard

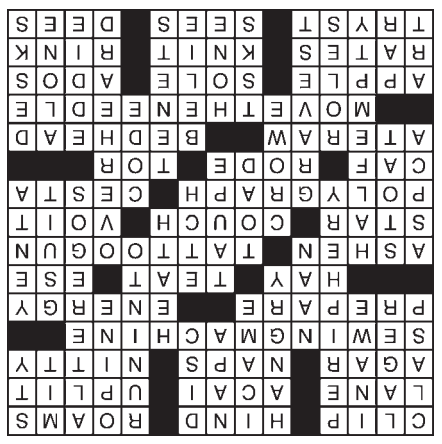


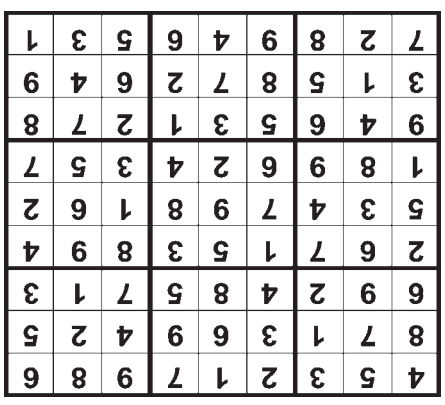
SUDOKU

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

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

SOLUTIONS





Jumbles: RIGOR CONGA HUNGRY POTATO
Answer: The clothes that were drying on the line on such a beautiful day enjoyed just — HANGING OUT



The San Francisco 49ers are hiring former Atlanta Falcons head coach Raheem Morris, center, as their next defensive coordinator.

AP FILE PHOTO

49ers hire former Falcons head coach Morris as DC

BY JOSH DUBOW
Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — The San Francisco 49ers are hiring former Atlanta Falcons head coach Raheem Morris as their new defensive coordinator in hopes of finding a long-term solution to a revolving door at the spot.

A person familiar with the decision said Sunday that Morris will join the Niners to replace Robert Saleh, who left San Francisco to take over as head coach for the Tennessee Titans. The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the team hadn't announced the hiring.

ESPN first reported the decision.

Morris had long been viewed as a strong potential candidate because of his success as a coordinator and his ties to San Francisco coach Kyle Shanahan. Morris and Shanahan were on staffs together as assistants in Tampa in 2004-05, Washington in 2012-13 and Atlanta in 2015-16.

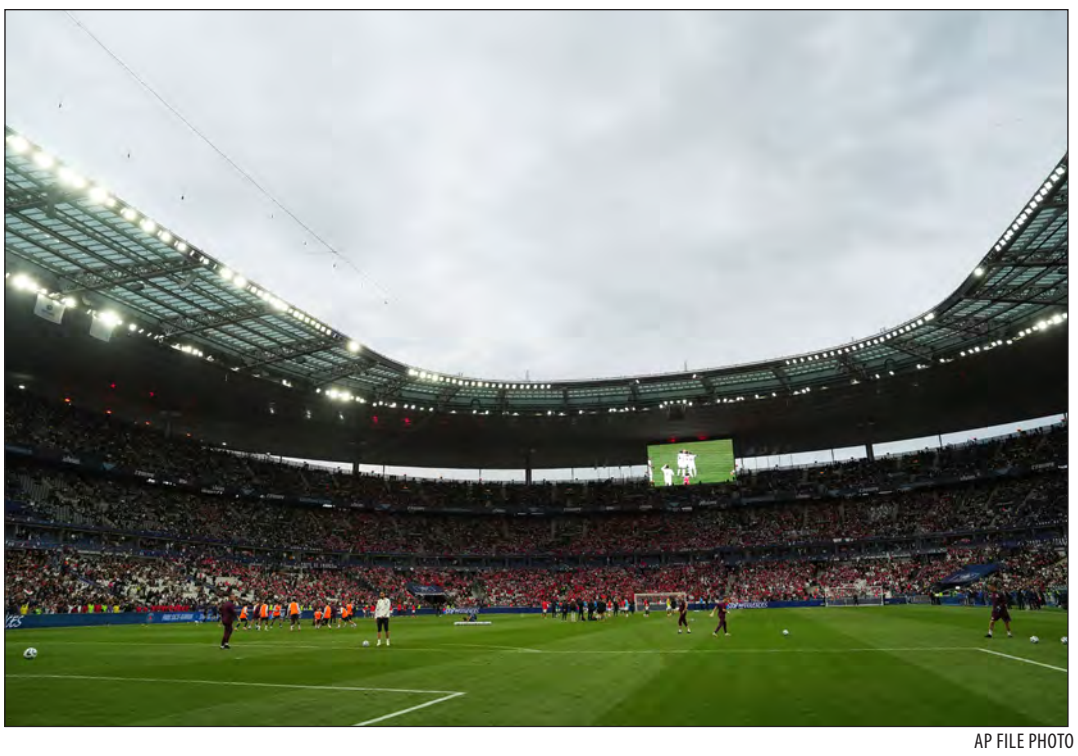
Shanahan had initially tried to get Morris on his original staff in San Francisco in 2017 only to be blocked by Atlanta head coach Dan Quinn and has long praised Morris' ability as a defensive coach.

Morris was fired by Atlanta last month after back-to-back 8-9 seasons as head coach for the Falcons. He previously served three years as head coach in Tampa Bay from 2009-11 with a 17-31 record and was interim coach in Atlanta in 2020.

While he has never made the playoffs as a head coach, he had a successful three-year run as a defensive coordinator for the Los Angeles Rams from 2021-23, helping the team win the Super Bowl in his first season. Morris has extensive experience as a secondary coach and even spent a few years coaching wide receivers in Atlanta.

Morris will be San Francisco's fifth defensive coordinator in as many seasons. DeMeco Ryans left following the 2022 season to become head coach for Houston before Shanahan cycled through Steve Wilks and Nick Sorensen the next two seasons before firing both.

Saleh, who was Shanahan's defensive coordinator in his first four seasons in San Francisco, returned in 2025 after a failed stint as head coach of the New York Jets and did a good job piecing together a capable defense despite having a unit hampered by injuries to players such as Nick Bosa, Fred Warner and Mykel Williams.



AP FILE PHOTO

Stade de France stadium in Saint-Denis, France, seen on Saturday May 24, 2025, will be the location for the first NFL game in France this fall.

NFL to play 1st regular-season game in France in 2026

BY JOSH DUBOW
Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — The NFL will play its first regular-season game ever in France next season with the New Orleans Saints set to travel to Paris later this year.

The league on Monday announced the plans to play a game at the Stade de France next season in addition to a multiyear deal to keep playing regular-season games at Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu Stadium.

The NFL has already announced its first game in Australia next season with the Los Angeles Rams set to host that game, as well as games in Rio de Janeiro, Munich, and three in London. The league also could return to Mexico City next season.

The additions of Australia and France will mean NFL games will have been played in nine countries outside of the United States after next season.

The NFL says it has played 62 regular-season games outside the U.S. so far, with London, Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt, Madrid, Dublin, Sao Paulo, Mexico City and Toronto as hosts.

The Saints will play an opponent to be determined after the schedule is finalized later this year. The Saints have international marketing rights in France as part of the NFL's Global Markets Program.

"Bringing a regular season game to Paris in 2026 marks an exciting next step in the continued expansion of the league's global footprint," Commissioner Roger Goodell said in a statement. "Paris is one of the world's greatest sporting and cultural cities with tremendous success in hosting global events that unite fans on the biggest stages. Playing our first–ever regular season game at the impressive Stade de France, together with the New Orleans Saints, underlines our continued global growth ambitions and we look forward to bringing the NFL to our passionate fans in France."

Saints owner Gayle Benson said she is excited to play in France, citing the "strong cultural connection between Louisiana and France."

The Stade de France was built in 1998 when the country hosted the World Cup. It was also used for the 2024 Olympics and has hosted several major international sporting events.

The NFL says it has more than 14 million fans in France and launched a flag football program there in 2023 that already reaches more than 8,000 boys and girls.

The NFL did not announce any of the teams for the game in Spain. The Miami Dolphins, Kansas City Chiefs and Chicago Bears currently have marketing rights in Spain as part of the league's Global Markets Program.

The first NFL regular-season game in Spain was played at the Bernabeu last November as the Dolphins defeated the Washington Commanders 16-13 in overtime before a crowd of 78,610 fans.

NFL Spain country manager Rafa De Los Santos said the multiyear agreement to playing games in Madrid "underlines our commitment to the market and enables us to continue to engage fans year-round and invest long-term in initiatives like NFL Flag and youth participation."

The NFL said Spain is "an important market globally," with 11 million fans. It said it will also focus on developing the league's flag football initiatives across the country.

After the first game in Madrid last year, there had also been talks of the league also trying to organize a game in Barcelona at some point.

Cardinals hire Rams OC Mike LaFleur as head coach

BY DAVID BRANDT
Associated Press

TEMPE, Ariz. — The Arizona Cardinals hired Mike LaFleur as head coach on Sunday, turning to a division rival's offensive coordinator to try to pull the franchise out of the bottom of the NFC West.

The Cardinals' announcement of the five-year deal brought an end to the nearly four-week hiring process.

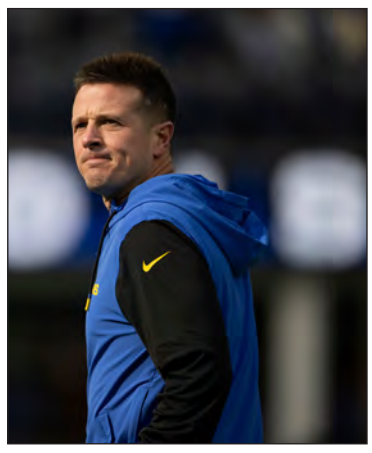
The 38-year-old Los Angeles Rams assistant replaces Jonathan Gannon, who was fired on Jan. 5 after a 15-36 record over three seasons, including 3-14 this past season.

LaFleur — who is the younger brother of Green Bay Packers head coach Matt LaFleur — has been the Rams' offensive coordinator for the past three seasons.

"I couldn't be more fired up to become the head coach of the Arizona Cardinals and am beyond grateful to (owner) Michael (Bidwill) and (general manager) Monti (Ossenfort) for this opportunity," LaFleur said in a statement.

"Having competed against them in the NFC so many times in recent years, I know the type of talent and toughness the team has and cannot wait to get to Arizona to hit the ground running."

Los Angeles had the NFL's top offense in 2025, averaging nearly 400 total yards and more than 30 points per game. The Rams fell one game short of the Super Bowl, losing to the Seattle Seahawks 31-27 in the NFC championship game.



AP FILE PHOTO

The Arizona Cardinals hired former Los Angeles Rams offensive coordinator Mike LaFleur as their next head coach on Sunday.

The Cardinals' brass got a good look at LaFleur's offense twice this past season when the Rams piled up a total of 82 points in a pair of lopsided wins. LaFleur also was the offensive coordinator for the New York Jets in 2021 and 2022 and worked under 49ers coach Kyle Shanahan for several years — including in Cleveland, Atlanta and San Francisco.

Arizona's hiring process was a quiet one, with no official team announcements for interviews. The Cardinals reportedly talked to several candidates, including Seahawks offensive coordinator Klint Kubiak, former Falcons head coach Raheem Morris and Broncos defensive coordinator Vance Joseph.

"We had the opportunity to speak with an outstanding group of candidates during this very thorough process and gathered tremendous insight from each of them," Bidwill said. "At the end of that process, it was clear that Mike LaFleur possesses all the traits necessary to lead this team to success as its head coach."

LaFleur inherits some intriguing players on Arizona's roster, including All-Pro tight end Trey McBride, receiver Marvin Harrison Jr., left tackle Paris Johnson Jr. and veteran edge rusher Josh Sweat.

Raiders working on deal to hire Klint Kubiak as head coach

BY MARK ANDERSON AND ROB MAADDI
Associated Press

The Las Vegas Raiders are working toward finalizing an agreement to make Seattle Seahawks offensive coordinator Klint Kubiak their head coach, a person with knowledge of the discussions said Sunday.



KUBIAK

The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because no contract was in place and no announcement can be made until after next Sunday's Super Bowl between the Seahawks and New England Patriots in Santa Clara, California.

Kubiak interviewed with the Raiders on Saturday for the second time and appeared in recent days to be their primary target.

Kubiak, 38, would be the third coach in three seasons for the Raiders and fifth full-time leader since they moved to Las Vegas in 2020. He succeeds Pete Carroll, who went 3-14 in one season in Las Vegas after a storied run with Seattle that included two Super Bowl appearances and one championship.

Kubiak likely will be counted on to mold Fernando Mendoza, who led Indiana to the national championship, into the franchise quarterback the organization has long sought. The Raiders own the top pick in this year's draft, and they are expected to use that selection on the Heisman Trophy winner.

The front office will have nearly $90 million in salary cap space to surround Mendoza with talent, the second-highest amount in the league, according to overthecap.com.

It was Kubiak's work with Sam Darnold that got the Raiders' attention. Darnold, taken third overall by the New York Jets in the 2018 NFL draft, had been considered a bust until leading Minnesota to a 14-win season in 2024. But the Vikings moved on from Darnold, and he proved that season was no fluke, winning 14 games in Seattle en route to making the Super Bowl against New England.

Kubiak's father, Gary, coached Denver to the Super Bowl title in the 2015 seasons, and he played quarterback for the Broncos from 1983-91. Gary and Klint Kubiak would be the 10th father-son pair to serve as NFL head coaches, including interim coaches.

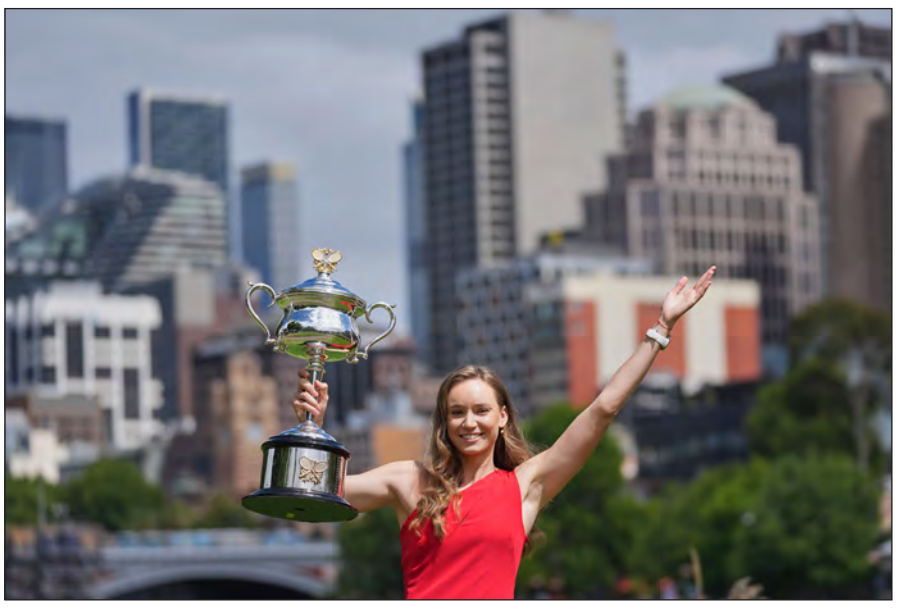
Kubiak also has two brothers who are on staffs of other NFL teams — Klay with San Francisco and Klein with Dallas. Klay Kubiak, the 49ers' offensive coordinator, also interviewed with the Raiders.

The Raiders have been searching for a path back to their glory days. Three Lombardi Trophies sit in the team's facility, but the Raiders haven't won a playoff game since their last Super Bowl appearance in the 2002 season. They have made the postseason just twice since then, most recently in the 2021 season.

Owner Mark Davis, frustrated at the lack of success, put the search in the hands of minority owner Tom Brady and general manager John Spytek.

Brady was notably complimentary of Kubiak while serving as the Fox Sports analyst during the NFC championship game last Sunday between the Seahawks and Los Angeles Rams NFC. Darnold completed 25 of 36 passes for 346 yards and three touchdowns in Seattle's 31-27 victory.

Davis also made it clear that Brady and Spytek will oversee football operations even beyond the coaching search.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Elena Rybakina poses with Daphne Akhurst Memorial Cup on the banks of the Yarra River the morning after defeating Aryna Sabalenka in the women's singles final at the Australian Open in Melbourne, Australia, on Sunday, Feb. 1.

Rybakina wins the Australian Open with calm precision

BY JOHN PYE
Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — The extreme nervous tension. The adrenaline. Elena Rybakina felt it all as she stood at the baseline on match point, relying on one of the best tools at her disposal to clinch the Australian Open title.

"Even maybe (my) face didn't show, but inside it was a lot of emotions," Rybakina recalled of that ace, cooly and matter-of-factly served, that gave top-ranked Aryna Sabalenka no chance of extending the contest.

The 26-year-old Rybakina clearly isn't one for euphoric, jubilant celebrations, as tennis rivals and observers noted in her run to the Wimbledon title in 2022.

After ending any lingering doubts that she'd ever be able to add another major title with a 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 win Saturday over the world No. 1, her reserved and understated reaction was again a defining feature.

Expect to see more of it — the winning part, not demonstrative celebrations. It's her secret to success.

Within three months, she has won the WTA Finals, beating Sabalenka to collect a record $5.2 million in prize money, and, more importantly in tennis terms, added another of the sport's four most treasured trophies.

The No. 5 seed has shrugged off any doubt that she's a top contender for the biggest titles with a run that included second-week victories over No. 1 Sabalenka, a four-time major winner and four-time runner-up, No. 2 Iga Swiatek, a six-time major winner, and No. 6-ranked Jessica Pegula.

"Of course, they're tough opponents, and they have great results, and for so long they are at the top and it's stable," she said. "Yeah, it's a lot of tough matches I had here — I'm glad that the opportunities which I was getting during the match, I managed to take it."

She'll return to No. 3 in the rankings next week.

THE RECENT RISE

Rybakina's resurgence is coming off a 2025 season that was interrupted by the monthslong suspension of her coach by the WTA and up-and-down form.

Rybakina has been working with Stefano Vukov since 2019. Most recently, she said, clear communication has been the key in preparation and competition.

Her support team gives her the information — there's an almost unending stream of technical and tactical advice from the coach's box during her matches — and she processes it in real time and works it out on court.

Her first real interactions with anyone other than Sabalenka after the victory were with her support team in the courtside seating.

First she hugged Vukov. Then, one by one, she hugged the other three.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Carlos Alcaraz holds the Norman Brookes Challenge Cup after defeating Novak Djokovic in the men's singles final at the Australian Open in Melbourne, Australia, on Sunday, Feb. 1.

Alcaraz becomes youngest man to complete career Grand Slam. Is a calendar Slam next?

BY JOHN PYE
Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Carlos Alcaraz had Novak Djokovic across the net from him and Rafael Nadal watching from above in Rod Laver Arena.

His inspiration, and his idol.

Alcaraz had visions of this as a kid — not entirely long ago, in the scheme of things — so there was no better time to show them what he'd learned from watching the two all-time greats, or borrowed from their aura.

He had a comeback, four-set win over Djokovic and walked away from the Australian Open final Sunday as the youngest man ever to complete a career Grand Slam — that's winning all four of the tennis majors.

At 22 and 272 days of age, he's considerably younger than Nadal (24) and Djokovic (29) were when they achieved that milestone, lowering a mark that Don Budge set in 1938 when he was a couple of days shy of his 23rd birthday.

No sooner had he completed the career Slam — adding his first victory in Australia to his two each at Wimbledon, Roland Garros and the U.S. Open — than the question was posed about a run at the calendar Grand Slam. That's all four major titles in one season, something no man has achieved since Rod Laver in 1969.

"Those are big words, to be honest," said Alcaraz, the two-time defending champion at Roland Garros. "You know, I just want it to be one at a time. Right now next one is French Open. I have great memories in that tournament. I feel really special every time that I go there.

"I don't want to put myself in a really pressure position to have to do it, but you know, it's going to be great. Right now I will try to be ready ... to play a good tournament in the next Grand Slam."

A set down after Djokovic's opening salvo, Alcaraz channeled the legends and changed up his game to upset the rhythm. It worked. He's now the only man to capture seven major titles before his 23rd birthday.

Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner have dominated the majors since Djokovic won the last of his 24 Grand Slam titles at the 2023 U.S. Open, with one or the other winning the last nine.

Sinner was aiming for a third consecutive title in Australia but lost in five sets to 10-time Australian champion Djokovic in the semifinals.

There were many who questioned the decision when Alcaraz and longtime coach Juan Carlos Ferrero parted ways after the young Spaniard won the last U.S. Open and who doubted his chances of being ready to win a first title in Australia.

Samuel Lopez stepped up to head the team, and Alcaraz admitted the pre-season had been "a roller coaster for me emotionally."

"A lot of people were having doubts about my level in this tournament," he said. "Every year that I came here to Australia I was thinking about getting the trophy (but) couldn't go further than quarterfinals."

MONARCHS

FROM PAGE B1

can't happen. You can't foul on that play; at that point, let them have it. We foul, and then we compound that with a technical foul to swing momentum, they hit a three. We're lucky to walk out of here with a win tonight, to be completely honest."

The ending reflected the way Manning played the rest of the night. They never really got in a rhythm in the first half, as simple mistakes led to easy baskets for Mullins. Taniya Johnson hit a pair of free throws in the final seconds of the opening half to send the Lady Monarchs into the break with a 28-25 lead, but it was not the start Manning was looking for in a must-win game. In the third quarter, Manning found its groove. They got the ball down to Conyers in the post, and she dominated, scoring 12 of her 26 points in the third. Tamia Watson and Aysia Moore chipped in as Manning built a nine-point lead. Mullins made a late push, but Watson scored at the buzzer to give the Lady Monarchs a 48-41 lead going into the fourth quarter.

Mullins immediately erased the deficit with five points in less than 30 seconds, but Manning settled in again and once again built a comfortable lead behind six more points from Conyers. Coach Johnson knows a young squad, which features just two seniors and six freshmen, will make mistakes, but he also said it's too late in the season to blame inexperience.

"We've got to grow up," the Manning head coach said.



PHOTOS BY TIM LEIBLE / THE SUMTER ITEM

Manning's Lovon Stevenson, center, drives against Mullins on Friday.



Manning's Taniya Johnson shoots a three-pointer on Friday.

"We're out there making mistakes that you expect in the beginning of the season. We've been in that spot before, trying to close out a game, and we did that before. I thought we learned from it. Then we're out there and they're trying to play to get 6-7 on the board, instead of worrying about finishing the ballgame. That's the maturity-level thing that we've got to get over."

Watson added 13 for Manning, while Moore and Johnson had nine as Manning held on for an important win. The Region VII-2A standings are cluttered in the middle. It's a two-horse race for the title with Atlantic Collegiate and Kingstree, but Manning is within striking distance of Lake City and Marion, who hold the final two playoff spots for the region. Lake City has a 5-5 mark in region play, while Marion sits at 4-5 and Manning is at 3-6. East Clarendon is right behind the Lady Monarchs at 2-7. Manning was scheduled to host ACA on Tuesday, but the game was postponed to Thursday, Feb. 5 after this weekend's weather. They'll head to Marion next Friday before ending the regular season with a trip to Lake City on Feb. 10.

"I like to control my own destiny, so hopefully we can get one on the road somewhere," Coach Johnson said. "We have three left, and we have to grab one of the three, so that's our message."

FIRST QUARTER SINKS MONARCHS

The first time Manning and Mullins faced off, the Monarchs gave the Auctioneers a run for their money. Manning held a 26-25 lead at the half and scored 20 points in the third quarter. The fourth quarter was lopsided, as Mullins broke away for a 68-51 victory, but the Monarchs showed they could compete with one of the best teams in the classification. The game was flipped on Friday, as Mullins used a string of turnovers at the end of the first quarter to build a 16-point lead heading into the second and never took their foot off the gas in an 81-60 victory.

"We just didn't play with energy," head coach Shawn Johnson said. "It was a lack of energy starting early, that's all. But we'll regroup and adjust. We still have a good long way to go."

Quick turnovers killed Manning early, as Maning scored points in bunches. Lovell Stevenson hit a pair of free throws for Manning with 3:33 left in the first quarter to bring the score to 12-9 in Mullins' favor. Two-and-a-half minutes later, Mullins led 24-9 after a barrage of steals and a three from Dakarai Worley.

Manning hung around a bit in the second quarter, as foul trouble forced Mullins to pull back their press slightly, but another late flurry of points sent the Auctioneers into the half with a 43-26 lead after a brief delay to break up a scuffle in the stands amid a very chippy game of basketball. Worley hit a three coming out of the half to extend Manning's lead to 20, and they maintained a comfortable lead for the rest of the evening.

Lovon Stevenson led Manning with 21 points, while his brother Lovell added 15. Daniel Robinson had eight, and Jordan Hayward chipped in with seven.

Despite the lopsided loss, Manning is still well positioned in the region. They entered the night in solo possession of second place, but the loss dropped them into a tie with Atlantic Collegiate and Marion. The Monarchs will now host ACA next Thursday as they continue to jockey for position. ACA won their first matchup 54-49 on Jan. 9. Manning has one win over Marion already and travel to the No. 10 team in 2A for their rematch on Friday. Johnson is urging his team to quickly move past the loss as they seek a home playoff game in a couple of weeks.

"Just finish out, finish hard; take care of business and play how we know how to play. It'll work out," Johnson said. "There will be a specific message, but we've just got to refocus and get back to business. You go and get smacked in the mouth, but Mullins is a good team. They came out and did what they did, but we've got to regroup and just go get it and get our continuity back."

Rose still has gas in tank as he rises to No. 3 in world rankings at 45

BY DOUG FERGUSON
Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Justin Rose doesn't pay attention to his age no matter how much he gets reminded.

His victory Sunday in the Farmers Insurance Open was historic on a couple of fronts. At age 45, he became the oldest winner of a tournament that dates to 1952. He became the first wire-to-wire winner at Torrey Pines in 71 years. He broke the 72-hole tournament record at 23-under 265, beating by one the mark held by Tiger Woods (1999) and George Burns (1987).

He also moved to No. 3 in the world, making him the second-oldest player behind Vijay Singh to be ranked that high.

Rose must not have received the memo. The PGA Tour is supposed to be a young man's game.

"Yeah, listen, I don't read into it," Rose said. "I don't buy into the narrative of it, but I take the pride out of it, that I'm doing something that's not easy to do. But I don't wake up in the morning and believe that narrative, either."

He left Torrey Pines a year ago at No. 55 in the world. He ended the year at No. 10 having lost another playoff at the Masters (to Rory McIlroy), won



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Justin Rose holds the winner's trophy at the Farmers Insurance Open golf tournament on Sunday, Feb. 1, at Torrey Pines in San Diego.

the FedEx Cup playoff opener and qualified for his seventh Ryder Cup appearance. He was the oldest player on the team by seven years.

There's that age thing again.

But it's no less remarkable considering how the numbers are dwindling. Rose is among just 10 players 40 or older who have full PGA Tour status. That includes 50-year-old Tiger Woods, who last played in 2024 because of injuries, and 62-year-old Vijay Singh, who took a career money exemption and probably won't play but a few times this year.

Harris English, the previous winner at Torrey Pines who qualified for the Ryder Cup last year, is 36 and found himself not taking anything for granted.

"I don't know how much time I have left, maybe 10 years," English said last week at The American Express. "It's getting way more competitive."

Joel Dahmen is trying to make do on conditional status this year. He's 38.

"The tour is so deep," he said. "These kids are so good. I think nine or 10 guys have their cards who are over 40."

The others with full cards 40 and over are Brice Garnett, Chris Kirk, Alex Noren, Adam Scott, Webb Simpson, Jhonattan Vegas and Gary Woodland.

The age really isn't an issue. Rose works hard, keeps fit and has added speed. It's the motivation, the willingness to keep trying to improve when he has already accomplished so much — U.S. Open title, Olympic gold medal, reaching No. 1 in the world, and one of the few players who can claim victory on all six continents where golf is played.

"I'm still loving it," Rose said. "I'm still working hard. You've got to love it to work hard. I still believe there's good stuff in front of me."

Woods was his motivation on Sunday. Rose had a six-shot lead and focused on little goals to keep him pointed in the right direction. He wanted to expand his lead for the third straight day. And he was aware the tournament record was 266 last matched by Woods in 1999.

No one got closer than six shots — his lead at the start — and he won by seven. And closing with six pars gave him the tournament record.

"Those days or those weeks or those rounds are definitely showing me that the gas is still in the tank," Rose said. "Obviously, accessing it is the job now. How do I do that more often? That's always the trick, but at least knowing it's there builds a lot of confidence."

His goals are clear. The next chance is April at Augusta National. Rose not only joins Ben Hogan as the only players who twice lost a playoff in the Masters, he has played with the Masters champion three times on Sunday — McIlroy last year, Sergio Garcia in 2017 and Jordan Spieth in 2015.

He also has six top 10s in the majors since turning 40. But his lone title was the 2013 U.S. Open at Merion.

OBITUARIES

JOYCE TUTEN STEEN

Joyce Tuten Steen, 72, wife of 51 years to Stanley Kenneth "Kenny" Steen, passed away Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2026, at McLeod Health Clarendon surrounded by her family.



STEEN

Born Nov. 22, 1953, in Wimpole Park, England, she was the daughter of the late Paul Edison Tuten Sr. and Sadie Burnell Locklear Tuten.

Survivors include her husband; two daughters, Angie Geddings (Billy) and Shelly Sutton (Sean); five grandchildren, Breanne, Kaitlin, Chandler, Leslie and Cody; one brother, Paul Tuten Jr.; one sister, Melissa Lee (Tim); and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held at 3 p.m. Monday, Feb. 2, 2026, at Bethel Baptist Church with the Rev. Chris Moore officiating. Burial was in Bethel Baptist Church Cemetery.

The family received friends from 2 to 3 p.m. on Monday at Bethel Baptist Church.

In lieu of flowers, the family has asked for memorials to be made to Bereans Sunday School Class or the WMU Ministry, 2401 Bethel Church Rd., Sumter, SC 29154.

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

DENISE BELL

Denise Bell was born March 24, 1982, in Sumter, to Bobby Hickman and Norma Jean Bell. "Neicy," as she was affectionately called, received her formal education in the Sumter and Clarendon County school systems.

On Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2026, God called Neicy from her earthly home in Sumter.

She leaves to cherish her memories: two sons, Raheem Bell and Ikeem Bell, both of Sumter; two daughters, Shydeshia Bell of Sumter and Kamya Washington of the home; her mother; Norma Jean (Kevin) Bell of Sumter; her fathers, Bobby Hickman of Alcolu and James Polite of Bradenton, Florida; and a host of other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were held at 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 31, 2026, at the John Wesley Williams Sr. Memorial Chapel of Williams Funeral Home Inc. with Pastor Barbara Snider, officiant. Burial followed in Congruity Presbyterian Church Cemetery.

The family will receive relatives and friends at the home, 46B Highland Ave., Sumter.

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*. Visit us on the web at *www.WilliamsFuneralHomeInc.com*.

MATTHEW BRACEY

Matthew Bracey, 71, husband of Diana Green Bracey and son of the late Zackie Bracey and Nellie Leneau Bracey, was born on Jan. 11, 1955, in Sumter. He departed this life on Thursday, Jan. 29, 2026, at Prisma Health Tuomey Hospital, Sumter.

Family will be receiving friends at the home, 14 Strange St., Sumter.

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

ELIZABETH MAYRANT BRACY

Elizabeth Mayrant Bracy, 65, widow of Eliza Bracy and daughter of the late James Garrett and Leary McLeod Mayrant, was born on Dec. 1, 1960, in Sumter County. She departed this life on Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2026, at Prisma Health Richland Hospital, Columbia.

Family will be receiving friends at the home, 5390 Mayrant Road, Rembert, daily from noon to 8 p.m.

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

SHAWN VERNON PORTER

Shawn Vernon Porter, 62, son of Johnnie Louise Harris Cunningham and the late Charles Murvin, was born on Nov. 1, 1963, in Miami, Florida. He departed this life on Dec. 21, 2025.

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

CASSIE MAE HUNTER MOORE

Cassie Mae Hunter Moore, 65, daughter of the late James Milton Hunter and Olivia Montgomery Hunter, was born on Oct. 22, 1960, in Sumter. She departed this life on Friday, Jan. 30, 2026, at her residence.

Family will be receiving friends at the home of her daughter, 732 Wen Le Drive, Sumter, daily from 3 to 7 p.m.

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

PHYLLIS ARDIS HODGE

Phyllis Ardis Hodge, 79, wife of Paul M. Hodge, died Saturday, Jan. 31, 2026, at Pocotaligo River Health and Rehabilitation Center in Manning.



HODGE

Born April 16, 1946, in Clarendon County, she was a daughter of the late Newell L. Ardis and Hannah Mae Kolb Ardis. Mrs. Hodge was a member of Providence Baptist Church.

Survivors, in addition to her husband of nearly 47 years, include three children, Laura Cook (Richard) of Montana, Tom Bochette of Georgia and Bryan Bochette (Wendy) of Paxville; nine grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; one sister, Julie Shadoan (Paul) of Sumter; one brother, Ronnie Ardis of Georgia; and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by a granddaughter, Madeline Nicole Bochette, and a brother, Gerald Ardis.

Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 5, 2026, in Elmore-Cannon-Stephens Funeral Home Chapel with the Rev. Wayne McElveen officiating. Burial will be in Providence Baptist Church Cemetery.

The family will receive friends from 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 4, 2026, at Elmore-Cannon-Stephens Funeral Home and other times at the home.

The family would like to express their appreciation to her doctors and nurses, the staffs of East Palmetto Transport, Swan Lake Dialysis and Pocotaligo Health and Rehabilitation for the exceptional care they provided.

Memorials may be sent to Providence Baptist Church, 2445 Old Manning Road, Sumter, SC 29150.

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

FLORENCE BRACEY WESTON

Florence Bracey Weston, 90, widow of Robert Weston and daughter of the late Roosevelt Bracey and Elise Brown, was born on June 7, 1935, in Sumter.

Family will be receiving friends at the home, 335 Love St., Sumter, daily from 3 to 6 p.m.

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

EVERLINA PORCHER

Everlina Porcher, 93, daughter of Henry Lowery and Hattie Lucille Porcher, was born on Oct. 27, 1932, in Bishopville. She departed this life on Sunday, Feb. 1, 2026, at Oak Hollow of Sumter, Sumter.

Family will be receiving friends at the home of her daughter, 2990 Trenton St., Dalzell.

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

JOAN (WHITFORD) AULD

Joan (Whitford) Auld, 91, died on Sunday, Feb. 1, 2026, in Sumter. Mrs. Auld was born in Door County, Wisconsin. She lost her parents as a young girl and spent most of her childhood in Spencer, Wisconsin, raised by her maternal grandmother and step-grandfather, Emma and Jonas Ayer. Mrs. Auld worked her way through high school and college, graduating from Wisconsin State College at Stevens Point in 1956 with a degree in elementary education. She then taught in Marshfield, Wisconsin, for 12 years, while also caring for her grandmother.



AULD

In 1967, Mrs. Auld married Lawrence W. Auld, and, after finishing out the school year, moved to Sumter, where she raised two children, defeated advanced breast cancer and ultimately returned to teaching. She retired from Willow Drive Elementary in 1996. During retirement, Mrs. Auld remained a teacher-at-heart, serving as the "first teacher" for her grandchildren, just as she had for her children. She followed with delight their progress in school even while caring for her husband full-time after a fall left him unable to care for himself.

Mrs. Auld belonged to First Presbyterian Church in Sumter, where (with her husband) she taught children's Sunday school for a number of years. She was preceded in death by her grandparents, her parents, her brother and her husband. Mrs. Auld is survived by her children and their respective spouses, Patricia Auld Leasure and husband, John H. Leasure, of Sumter, and L. Patrick Auld and wife, Dixie T. Wells, of Greensboro, North Carolina, as well as her grandchildren, Alexander Whitford Leasure of Atlanta, Georgia, Brice E. Leasure of Columbia, South Carolina, and Zoe K. Auld of Washington, D.C.

The family thanks the caregivers of Prisma Hospice and Visiting Angels for the care they provided to Mrs. Auld so that she could remain in her home during the final weeks of her life.

The funeral will be at First Presbyterian Church in Sumter on Saturday, Feb. 7, 2026, at 2 p.m. The family will greet friends and family in the church parlor before the service beginning at 1 p.m. and at Mrs. Auld's home on Friday, Feb. 6, 2026, between 3 and 6 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, those so inclined may consider making a donation to First Presbyterian Church, 9 W. Calhoun Street, Sumter, SC 29150, or to the Joan Whitford Auld Future Teacher Scholarship at the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point at https://give.uwsp.edu/g/cps-giving-page (type "Auld" into the search bar) or by check made payable to UWSP Foundation, 2100 Main St. Suite 134, Stevens Point, WI 54481 with #8226 in the memo line.

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

Elmore Hill McCreight Funeral Home & Crematory, 221 Broad St., Sumter, is assisting the family with final arrangements (803) 775-9386.

Elmore Hill McCreight
Funeral Home and Crematory

DAVID CANTEY

David Cantey, 96, son of the late Alexander Cantey and Mary Harvin Cantey, was born on April 23, 1929, in Sumter. He departed this life on Sunday, Feb. 1, 2026, at Sumter East Health and Rehabilitation Center, Sumter.

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

JANNIE B. MONTGOMERY

Jannie B. Montgomery, 91, daughter of the late Frank Briggs and Lizzie Belser Briggs, was born on June 12, 1934, in Clarendon County. She departed this life on Thursday, Jan. 29, 2026, at NHC Healthcare Sumter.

Public viewing will be held on Thursday, Feb. 5, 2026, from 2 to 6 p.m. at Job's Mortuary Inc.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. Friday, Feb. 6, 2026, at First Baptist Missionary Church, 219 S. Washington St., Sumter, with the Rev. George P. Windley Jr., officiating.

Interment will follow in Mayesville Community Cemetery, Mayesville.

Family will be receiving friends at 5775 Lost Creek Drive, 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*.

HENRY THOMAS ROGERSON JR.

Henry Thomas "Tommy" Rogerson Jr.,76, beloved husband of 56 years to Patricia "Patsy" Hatcher Rogerson, died Thursday, Jan. 29, 2026, at Prisma Health Tuomey Hospital.

Tommy was born Sept. 17, 1949, in Sumter, the son of the late H. T. "Tom" Rogerson and Taphenas "Tena" Russell Rogerson. He graduated from Mayewood High School, Sumter Area Technical College and the University of South Carolina. He served in the United States Air Force during the Vietnam War. Tommy retired from Farmers Telephone Cooperative.

He leaves to cherish his memory his wife; his daughter and son-in-law, Brandi and Josh Hamrick, and their children, Ian and Max, of Spartanburg, S.C.; his son and daughter-in-law, H. T. III "Tram" and Brooke Rogerson, of Piedmont, S.C., and their children, Chase Berry and his wife, Falyn, and their son Nelson of Hickory Tavern, S.C., Carson Ramirez and her husband, Rony, of Simpsonville, S.C., and Davis Rogerson and Avery Rogerson, both of Piedmont; and one sister-in-law, Pam Hatcher Still, of Greenwood, S.C.

He was preceded in death by one sister, Anne Rogerson Jones, and his brothers-in-law, David Jones and John Still.

Graveside service will be held at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 4, 2026, at Evergreen Memorial Park Cemetery with the Rev. Donald R. Witherspoon officiating.

The family will receive friends following the graveside service.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Sumter United Ministries, 36 S. Artillery Drive, P.O. Box 1017 Sumter, SC 29150 or a charity of one's choice.

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

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.

LEGAL NOTICES

Beer & Wine License

Notice Of Application

Notice is hereby given that **Shree Hari 108 LLC** intends to apply to the South Carolina Department of Revenue for a license permit that will allow the sale and **OFF** premises consumption of **BEER & WINE at 10297 Scott Ave, Manning, SC 29102** to object to the issuance of this permit / license, written protest must be postmarked no later than **February 20, 2026** . 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.

Summons & Notice

Notice of legal action against Gambrell Manufacturing Company, Inc, Defendant, via this service by publication, pending in Maricopa Superior Court, Phoenix, AZ: STENSON TAMADDON, LLC, Plaintiff v. GAMBRELL MANUFACTURING COMPANY, INC., Defendant,
Case No.CV2025-019598: A lawsuit has been filed against the above-named Defendant. An answer must be filed within 30 days to avoid a Judgment. Defendant may contact the Maricopa Superior Court and/or Judith Atkinson, Hartley Law Offices, Phoenix AZ for a copy of the Summons and pleadings: https://www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov/docket/CivilCourtCases/caseInfo.asp?caseNumber=cv2025-019598.

HARTLEY LAW OFFICES
200 E. Van Buren St.
6th Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85004

STATE OF
SOUTH CAROLINA
IN THE COURT
OF COMMON PLEAS
COUNTY OF RICHLAND
Civil Action # 2025-CP-40-00853
S U M M O N S
(Jury Trial Requested)

Tyskie Leon Morris,
Plaintiff,
vs.
James Nathaniel Alston and Sang Dynasty III, Inc.,
Defendants.

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANT JAMES NATHANIEL ALSTON:
YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and required to answer the Complaint in this action of which a copy is herewith served upon you and to serve a copy of your Answer to the said Complaint on the subscriber at his office, 1419 Bull Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201, within thirty (30) days from the date of service hereof, exclusive of the date of such service; and if you fail to answer the Complaint within the time aforesaid, judgment by default will be rendered against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.
YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that the Summons and Complaint in the above-entitled action was filed in the Richland County Clerk of Court's Office, Columbia, South Carolina on June 02, 2025.
YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that if you fail to answer the Summons and Complaint within the time aforesaid, judgment by default will be rendered against you for the relief demanded in said Complaint.

s/Barry B. George
BARRY B. GEORGE
(SC Bar #2417)
PAIGE B. GEORGE
(SC Bar #75124)
ATTORNEY FOR
THE PLAINTIFF
1419 Bull Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201
(803) 254-7222
blair41@bellsouth.net

June 2, 2025

STATE OF
SOUTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF SUMTER
IN THE COURT
OF COMMON PLEAS
THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
CASE NO.: 2025-CP-43-00664
SUMMONS
(Declaratory Judgment
Non-Jury)
TO: THE DEFENDANTS ABOVE-NAMED:

U-HAUL CO. OF SOUTH CAROLINA, INC., a South Carolina corporation, and
U-HAUL CO. OF ARIZONA, an Arizona corporation;
Plaintiffs,
vs.
CORIE THOMAS; CALVIN SHARPE; REGINALD RAGIN; TIFFANY BROWN; DAVION BROWN and DIAMOND MILLER
Defendants.

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and required to answer the Complaint in this action, of which a copy is herewith served upon you, and to serve a copy of your Answer to said Complaint on the subscribers at their offices at Post Office Box 12519, Post Office Box 12519 (29201), Columbia, South Carolina 29211 within thirty (30) days after the service hereof, exclusive of the day of such service; and if you fail to answer the Complaint within the time aforesaid, judgment by default will be rendered against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

MCANGUS GOUDELOCK & COURIE, LLC

s/ George C. James, III
GEORGE C. JAMES, III
(SC Bar No. 102745)
george.james@mgclaw.com

Summons & Notice

HEATH M. STEWART, III
(SC Bar No. 74190)
heath.stewart@mgclaw.com
1320 Main Street, 10th Floor
Columbia, South Carolina 29201
Telephone: (803) 779-2300
Facsimile: (803) 748-0526
ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFFS
April 2, 2025
Columbia, South Carolina

STATE OF
SOUTH CAROLINA
IN THE COURT
OF COMMON PLEAS
THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
COUNTY OF SUMTER
CIVIL ACTION NO:
2025-CP-43-02073
(Quiet Title)
SUMMONS AND NOTICE

Charles Smith,
Plaintiff,
vs.
Larry Maples, Brenda E. Hemingway and Bettye S. Brundidge and if any of them are deceased to their children and heirs at law, distributes and devisees, and if any be deceased, then and persons entitled to claim under or through them; also all other Persons unknown claiming any right, title, estate, interest in or lien upon the real estate described in the complaint herein, designated as John Doe, and any minors or incompetent persons or persons in the military designated as Richard Roe,
Defendants.

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and required to answer the complaint herein, a copy of which is herewith served upon you, and to serve a copy of your answer to this complaint upon the subscriber, at the address shown below, within thirty (30) days after service hereof, exclusive of day of such service, and if you fail to answer the complaint, judgment by default will be rendered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint.
LIS PENDENS
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that an action has been commenced by the Plaintiff against the Defendants, to quiet title to property described as follows:
All that lots of land, with any improvements thereon being in the County of Sumter, State of South Carolina, shown as Lots Nos. 94 and 95 on plat prepared by C.D. Caughman, R.L.S., dated June 20, 1956 and recorded in the Office of the Register of Deeds for Sumter County in Plat Book A-13 at Page 137. Property Address: 1143 Cherryvale Drive (1151). Parcel 1551503006.
AND
All that lot of land, with improvements thereon being in the County of Sumter, State of South Carolina, this property dated and recorded February 28, 2006 in the Office of the Register of Deeds for Sumter County in Volume 1018 at Page 1525. Property address: 1003 Yankee Drive. Tax parcel 156-03-01-012.
NOTICE OF GUARDIAN ad LITEM
Attorney John S. Keffer has been appointed Guardian ad Litem Nisi for unknown heirs.
NOTICE OF FILING
Please take notice that the Plaintiff will move to refer the case to the Master in Equity with any appeal to the South Carolina Supreme Court. The pleadings in this case are on file in the Office of the Clerk of Court for Sumter County.
s/ Stephanie Weissenstein
Stephanie Weissenstein,
SC Bar #:72604
Attorney for Plaintiff
106 Broad St.
Sumter, SC 29150
(803) 828-7661
January 29, 2026

STATE OF
SOUTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF SUMTER
IN THE COURT
OF COMMON PLEAS
THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
Civil Action No.:
2025-CP-43-01847
SUMMONS

Joseph Montgomery,
Plaintiff,
vs.
Barbara Freed,
Defendants.

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and required to answer the Complaint herein, a copy of which is herewith served upon you, or otherwise appear and defend, and to serve a copy of your Answer to said Complaint upon the subscriber at his office, 8 Law Range, Sumter, South Carolina, 29150, within 30 days after service hereof, exclusive of the day of such service, and if you fail to answer the Complaint within the time aforesaid, or otherwise appear and defend, the Plaintiffs in this action will apply to the Court for the relief demanded therein, and judgment by default will be rendered against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.
LIS PENDENS
All that piece, parcel or lot of land, with the improvements thereon, situate, lying and being in the County of Sumter, State of South Carolina,
shown on a plat by Palmer & Malone, C. E., dated August 23, 1951, and filed for record in the Office of the Register of Deeds (ROD) for Sumter County in Plat Book Z-10, at page 129. Pursuant to Section 30-5-250 of the South Carolina Code of Laws (1976, as amended, reference to said plat is hereby craved for a description of the metes, bounds, courses and distances of the property delineated thereon.
This property was devised to Celeste Baker by the Last Will and Testament of Ernest W. Baker, Ill, as evidenced by the Deed of Distribution from his estate, dated August 6, 2020, and recorded August 7, 2020 in the Office of the Register of Deeds for Sumter County in Book 1272 at Page 1276. (See Sumter County Probate File #2019-ES-43-010189.
And is currently designated as Sumter County TMS #244-00-02-012.

Property Address:
3245 North Main Street,

NOTICE OF FILING
YOU WILL PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Summons & Complaint were filed with the Clerk of Court for Sumter County, S.C. on October 21, 2025.
s/ Nicholas A. Young
Nicholas A. Young
Patrick M. Killen
Attorney for Plaintiff

Summons & Notice

8 Law Range,
Sumter, South Carolina 29150
(803) 774-5026
nick@killenlawfirm.com
Sumter, South Carolina
January 20th, 2025

SUMMONS AND NOTICE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF SUMTER IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS C/A NO. 2025-CP-43-02095 Vanderbilt Mortgage and Finance, Inc., Plaintiff vs. The Personal Representative, if any, whose name is unknown, of the Estate of Joe Johnson, Jr.; Wilhemenia Stephenson Johnson; and Unknown Occupant(s), Defendants . TO THE DEFENDANT(S): The Personal Representative, if any, whose name is unknown, of the Estate of Joe Johnson, Jr.; YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and required to answer the Complaint in the above action, a copy of which is herewith served upon you, and to serve a copy of your Answer upon the undersigned at his office, 2838 Devine Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29205, within thirty (30) days after service upon you, exclusive of the day of such service, and, if you fail to answer the Complaint within the time aforesaid, judgment by default will be rendered against you for relief demanded in the Complaint. NOTICE NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the original Complaint in this action was filed in the office of the Clerk of Court for Sumter County on December 16, 2025. NOTICE OF PENDENCY OF ACTION NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT an action has been commenced and is now pending in the Circuit Court upon the complaint of the above named Plaintiff against the above Defendant(s) for the purpose of claiming and repossessing collateral, which secures the repayment of a certain Contract bearing date of May 27, 2021 and given and delivered by Defendant(s) Joe Johnson, Jr. and Wilhemenia Stephenson Johnson to Vanderbilt Mortgage and Finance, Inc. in the original principal sum of Seventy Six Thousand Six Hundred Fifty Three and 10/100 Dollars ($76,653.10). Said collateral is described as a 2020 TRUT VIN: CLH043357TNAB mobile home and is located in the County of Sumter, South Carolina. RILEY POPE & LANEY, LLC 2838 Devine Street Columbia, SC 29205 (803) 799-9993 Attorneys for Plaintiff 7592

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: DONALD BRADFORD BRETTELLE
Case Number: 2026ES4300022
Personal Representative: ELVIN E. ROGERS
Address: 4950 HUCKABEE RD SUMTER SC 29150
Attorney, If Applicable:
Address:

Estate: Ashton Marie Galloway
Case Number: 2026ES4300047
Personal Representative: Brandon M. Galloway
Address: 5515 Shakemia Rd Dalzell, SC 29040
Attorney, If Applicable: A. Bennett Evers
Attorney at Law
PO Box 11262
Columbia, SC 29211

Estate: MICHAEL DAVID SPEVACK
Case Number: 2026ES4300032
Personal Representative: SHERRY SPEVACK
Address: 103 BLAND AVE SUMTER SC 29150
Attorney, If Applicable: KENNETH R YOUNG JR
Address: 23 WEST CALHOUN STREET SUMTER SC 29150

Estate: RUBY C MEYER
Case Number: 2026ES4300043
Personal Representative: DAVID M MEYER
Address: 1055 WELLSBORO CT SUMTER SC 29154
Attorney, If Applicable:
Address:

Estate: NANCY HATTIE MONTGOMERY
Case Number: 2026ES4300020
Personal Representative: EVELLEN MUNCHIE MONTGOMERY
Address: 2130 AVE A MAYESVILLE SC 29104
Attorney, If Applicable:
Address:

Estate: PATRICIA C. BRUMMITT
Case Number: 2026ES4300030
Personal Representative: JOSHUA COUNTS BRUMMITT
Address: 5 BANCROFT DR. SUMTER SC 29154
Attorney, If Applicable:
Address:

Estate: DWAYNE ANDRE MCCRAY
Case Number: 2026ES4300041
Personal Representative: STACY L MCCRAY
Address: 2653 LORENTZ DR SUMTER SC 29154
Attorney, If Applicable:
Address:

Estate: MARGARET POSTON
Case Number: 2026ES4300018
Personal Representative: MARIA POSTON
Address: 308 WINN ST SUMTER SC 29150
Attorney, If Applicable:
Address:

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: ELMERIA HANNA DAVIS
Case Number: 2026ES4300014
Personal Representative: YVONNE C. BILLINGSLEY
Address: 1755 QUEEN CHAPEL RD SUMTER SC 29153
Attorney, If Applicable:
Address:

Estate: ROBERT THOMAS CLARK
Case Number: 2025ES4300549
Personal Representative: SAMANTHA JOYCE RICHARDS
Address: 249 ABERLOUR DR SUMTER SC 29154
Attorney, If Applicable: E THOMPSON KINNEY
Address: 17 EAST CALHOUN STREET SUMTER SC 29150

Estate: JERRY ALLEN HYATT
Case Number: 2026ES4300016
Personal Representative: HERBERT HUDSON JR
Address: 2703 EZELL CT SUMTER SC 29150
Attorney, If Applicable:
Address:

Estate:Patricia Ann Dennis
Case Number: 2026ES4300052
Personal Representative: Shannon Webster
Address: 8364 Puddin Swamp Rd Turbeville, SC 29162
Attorney, If Applicable:

Estate: TOYOKO ITO BEANE
Case Number: 2026ES4300024
Personal Representative: SHIRLEY A GANTT
Address: 9 EDISTO COURT SUMTER SC 29154
Attorney, If Applicable:
Address:

Estate: Roy J. Floyd
Case Number: 2026ES4300048
Personal Representative: Angela M. Floyd
Address: 3760 Peach Orchard Rd Dalzell, SC 29040
Attorney, If Applicable: Marvin E. McMillan Jr.
Attorney at Law
PO Box 3690
Sumter, SC 29151

Estate: ROSE MARIE CATO
Case Number: 2026ES4300015
Personal Representative: TOMMY ARCHIE
Address: 1872 RIVERBIRCH DR SUMTER SC 29150
Attorney, If Applicable:
Address

Estate: Sonya Gurley
Case Number: 2026ES4300051
Personal Representative: Tayler Gurley
Address: 3407 Star Gazing Ln Durham, NC 27703
Attorney, If Applicable:

Estate: JAMES EDWARD ROSE
Case Number: 2026ES4300034
Personal Representative: FRANCINE BATTLE
Address: 3911 MIDLOTHIAN TPKE RICHMOND VA 23224
Attorney, If Applicable:
Address:



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

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

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.



Tree Service

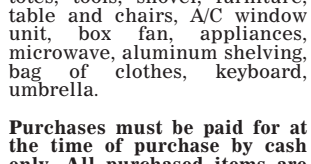
Ricky's Tree Service Tree removal, forestry mulching, stump grinding, Lic & ins, free quote, 803-473-2202 or cell 803-460-8747.

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

Property of the following tenants will be sold to satisfy rental liens ONLINE in accordance with Title 39, Chapter 20, Section 10 through 50 of the South Carolina Lien Statutes. The undersigned will sell at public sale by competitive bidding starting February 9th 2026 after 10:00 AM EST on WWW.STORAGETREASURES.COM with pictures attached. The Auction will end on or after February 19th ,2026 at 10:00 AM. Said property is stored at Storage Rentals of America 4194 Broad St. Sumter, SC 29154
Unit # Tenant Name Items

0047 Sharon Ballard Boxes, furniture, dresser and mirror, end tables, household items, lamps
0087 Craig Hauser Boxes, furniture, 3 stand drawers, household items, cube shelf, children's toys, clothes, horror movie items.
0104 Avery Author Boxes, furniture shelf, mattress, dresser, household items, vacuum, appliances, washer and dryer.
0107 Cindy Leroux Boxes, tools, toolbox, furniture, night stands, appliances, air fryer, baby items, clothes, tires, Christmas decorations.
0114 Dovion Fortune Boxes, totes, furniture, curio cabinet, chest of drawers (2) mattress, appliances, microwave, speakers, baby items, fishing poles.
0240 Craig Phillips Boxes, totes, mattress, dresser, clothes rack, bar stand, curtain rods, trash can, fertilizer spreader, summer folding chairs.
0246 Savannah Haigler Boxes, totes, tools, shovel, furniture, table and chairs, A/C window unit, box fan, appliances, microwave, aluminum shelving, bag of clothes, keyboard, umbrella.

Purchases must be paid for at the time of purchase by cash only. All purchased items are sold as is, where is, and must be removed at the time of sale. Sale is subject to cancellation in the event of settlement between owner and obligated party.

L130

Notice of
Self Storage Sale
Please take notice Cannon Secure Storage - Dalzell located at 2935 Stamey Livestock Rd Dalzell SC 29040 intends to hold an Auction of storage units in default of payment. The sale will occur as an online auction via www.bid13.com on 2/19/2026 at 10:00 AM. This sale is pursuant to the assertion of lien for rental at the self-storage facility. Unless stated otherwise the description of the contents are household goods, furnishings and garage essentials. Jamila Ricks; Robin Glynn; Tianna Drayton; Laquanbra Borden. This sale may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Certain terms and conditions apply

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 February 18th, 2026 @ 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
Sumter, SC 29150
803-757-1368
Sale to be held at
www.storagetreasures.com

Rosa Lowe A35 Boxes, Furniture, Misc.
Linda Robinson C01 Lawn Tools, Misc.
Ahshad Jefferson C31 A/C Unit, Box, Furniture, Misc.
Dy'mond Gipson D02 Appliances, Bags, Boxes, Clothing, Misc.
Sonia Racey D13 Bird Cage, Electronics, Furniture, Misc.
Craig Dennis F26 Appliances, Boxes, Electronics, Furniture, Misc.
Craig Dennis F28 Bed Set, Boxes, Electronics, Furniture, Misc.
Brittany Smith F30 Boxes, Furniture, Electronics, Misc.

Auctions

Public Auction:
February 10th @ 9:00 AM
A-1 Self Storage
3501 Broad St. Ext
Sumter, SC 29154
(803) 494-2668

The following units will be up for auction:
M, Gardner (A13)- Furniture, Tools, Mini Refrigerator, Misc. Boxes, Misc. Items

Storage Rentals of America
2619 Broad St.
Camden SC 29020
The property of the following tenant(s) will be sold for cash to satisfy rental liens in accordance with Title 39, Chapter 20, Section 10 through 50 of the South Carolina Lien Statutes. All items will be sold or otherwise disposed of. The sale will be conducted online at StorageTreasures.com on 2/19/26 at 10:00 AM EST. All goods will be sold in "AS IS" condition. All items or spaces may not be available at the time of sale. All sales are final, and a $100 refundable cleaning deposit is required for all sales.

Unit # Tenant Name Items
A095B APRYL BENSON
TVS, BOXES, BOOKS, KIDS TOYS, BEDFRAME, DRESSERS, COUCH
A103B MARILYN MATTHEWS
BOXES, TOTES, POOL NOODLES, POTS, PANS, BASKETS, KIDS TOYS
B004M CHRISTOPHER HARNEY
MATTRESSES, BOXSPRING, NIGHTSTAND, CHAIRS, DRESSER
B15MCC COREY SALMOND
BOXES, TOTES, FURNITURE, CLOTHES, MATTRESSES, BOXSPRING, BABY ITEMS, PRESSURE WASHER, SUITCASES, BAGS
C007S DEVON TAYLOR
MATTRESS, COUCH, DRESSERS, CRIB, HEADBOARD, KIDS WALKER, DEEPFRYER
DA20 CASEY CATOE
AC UNITS, TOTES, CLOTHES, BAGS, TV, SAW
DH12 DANIELLE REYNOLDS
B O X E S , F U R N I T U R E , DISHWASHER, BAGS, DVDS, VIDEO GAMES
DF16 GERALD WILSON
MATTRESSES, BOXSPRING, BOXES, BEDFRAME, CHAIRS, TV, COUCH, TV STAND, CARPET CLEANER

L187

GREAT ESTATE AUCTION. Sat., Feb. 7 at 9:30 AM. 940 Ellis Ave., Orangeburg, SC. Two story house packed with nice antique furnishings, Early Southern pieces, fine contemporary furniture, glassware, china, art, pottery, coins and much more. Please continue to browse web as we are still adding items. Call 803-860-0712. www.cogburnauction.com

For Sale or Trade

Successful 26 Year Lawn Maintenance Business. Interested Parties Only! Contact 803-968-3262.



Help Wanted Full-Time

Driver/mover helper, part-time to full-time hours. No experience needed. Background check. Driver class A or B or non-CDL. Good driving record. 803-236-4008.

Help Wanted Part-Time

Looking for experienced lawn care person, drivers license preferred, and experience with lawn care equipment. Call 803-968-3262.

Part-time tax preparer needed in Sumter, SC. Required: PTIN Number. 803-848-1115. Please email resume to: sumtertaxpreparer@gmail.com

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.



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

TRANSPORTATION

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.



1 Bedroom Apartments for 62 YEARS AND OLDER

- •Refrigerator
- •Range
- •Blinds
- •Carpet
- •Ceiling Fans
- •Central Heat & Air
- •Handicap Accessible
- •Emergency Call System
- •Community Room
- •Coin Operated Laundry Room

Rent Based On 30% of Adjusted Income
Utility Allowance Given

Bassett Park

1390 Granville Court • Sumter, S.C. 29150
For application or information, please call
803-469-8238
TTY 800-735-8583



Take the Newspaper with you

Your local news, wherever you go throughout the day. Subscribe today!

36 W. Liberty St. • 803.774.1200
www.theitem.com

YOUR AD HERE

call us TODAY

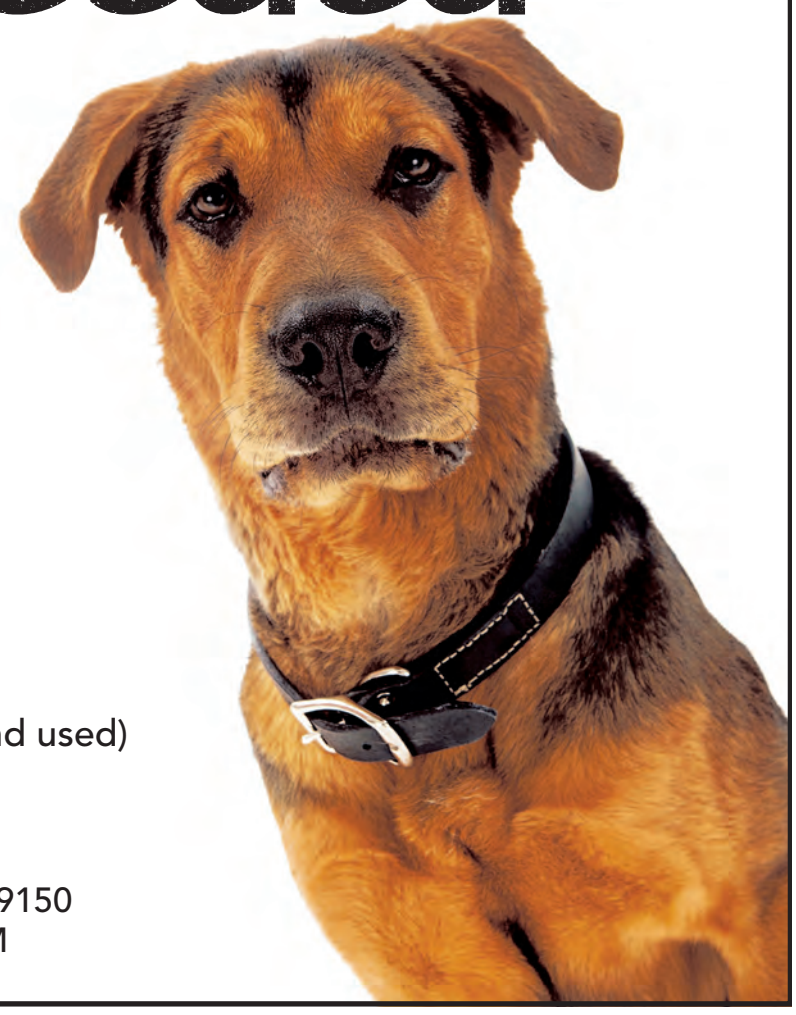






Donations Needed For Sumter SPCA You can help





- Cat Litter
- Canned Cat Food
- Soft treats and Hard Treats
- Dry Dog Food
- Cleaning Supplies
- Lysol
- Bleach
- Dawn Dishwashing Soap
- Laundry Detergent
- Towels and Blankets (new and used)

Donations can be dropped off at
Sumter SPCA
1140 S. Guignard Drive • Sumter, SC 29150
Office Hours: 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Closed Wednesdays & Sundays



NEED TO REACH US? HERE'S HOW!

For Subscriptions/Circulation/ Missed delivery/Vacation holds:
Circulation@theitem.com or 803-774-1231 or 803-774-1258

For Classifieds
Circulation@theitem.com or 803-774-1231 or 803-774-1258

For Legal ads
Legals@theitem.com or 803-774-1212

For Obituaries
Obits@theitem.com

For Story ideas or News tips
Newstips@theitem.com or 803-774-1200

For Press Releases
Pressrelease@theitem.com or 803-774-1200

For Marketing & Sales Reps
Marketing@theitem.com

For The Editor
Editor@theitem.com

the Sumter ITEM