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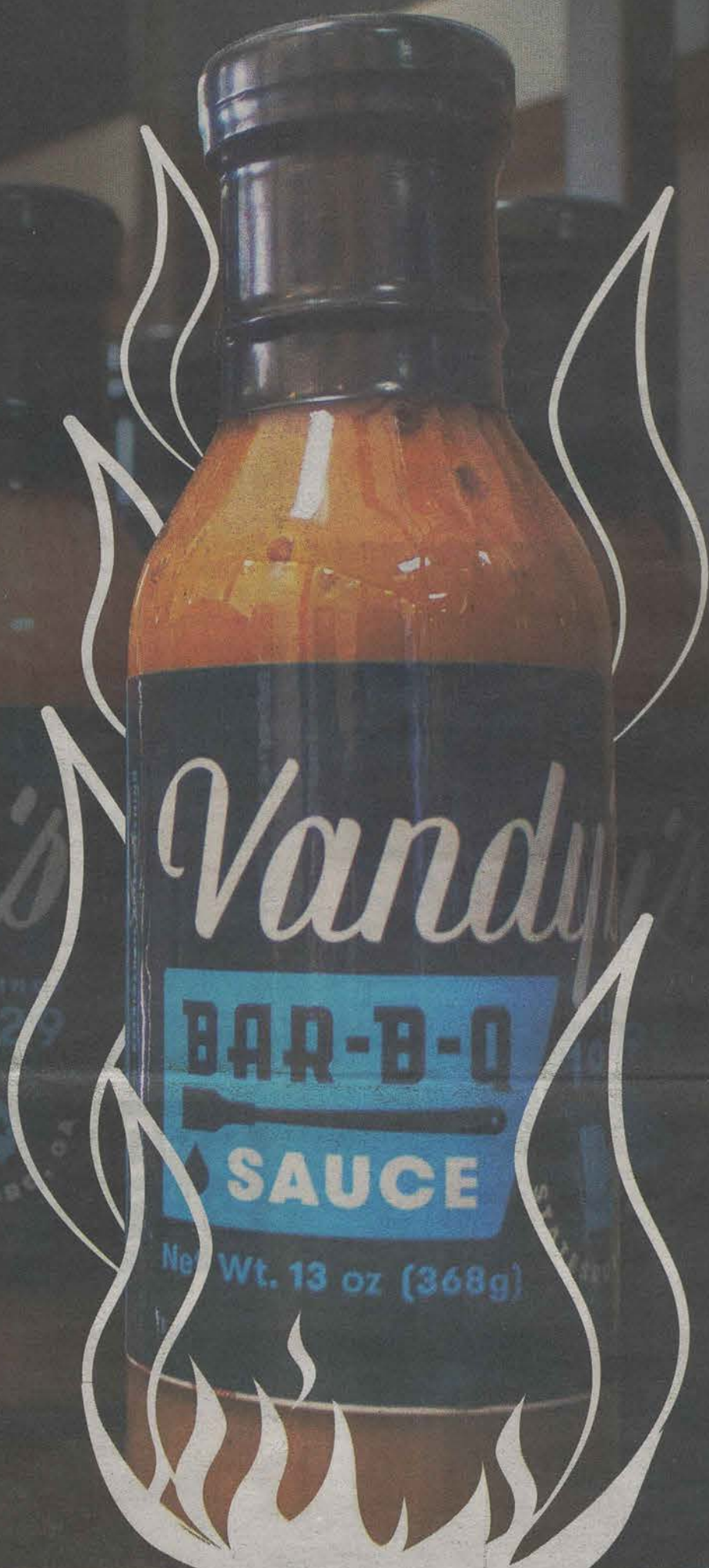
GA

THE GEORGE-ANNE

SINCE 1929

*Flavorful favorites
still served to
Statesboro locals*

PAGE 7



© TAHIR DAUDIER

NO IMPACT WEEK

PAGE 5

*Annual event
promotes
sustainability
on campus*



SEASON REVIEW

*A final take on the
2015-2016 men's
basketball team*

PAGE 9

© TAHIR DAUDIER

ACE ON THE MOUND

*Evan Challenger
shines in junior season*



PAGE 10

© TAHIR DAUDIER

Tuesday



High: 75°
Low: 47°

Wednesday



High: 83°
Low: 55°

Thursday



High: 86°
Low: 64°

Friday



High: 82°
Low: 58°

Spring is officially upon us and the weather will start reflecting that soon. With a high of 87 degrees near the end of the week, it should be all sun our first week back from Spring Break.

Weather Bar

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT OVER SPRING BREAK

ASPEN SHOOTING UPDATE



TAHIR DAUDIER

By Simeon Ike

According to the Statesboro Herald, Allison Fleet, 23, who was the victim of an attempted murder-suicide last month, was discharged from Memorial University Medical Center in Savannah on Wednesday, March 10. Fleet was shot several times by long time boyfriend Antonio Sanchez, 23, at Aspen Heights Apartments in the late evening hours on February 21.

Sanchez first shot Fleet before shooting himself. Fleet was airlifted to the hospital where she remained until this month.

Fleet is a student at Georgia Southern, taking post-baccalaureate classes and a GSU employee; Sanchez was not a GSU student.

NEW RULES FOR GEORGIA HUNTERS

By Brea Dupye

Hunting is a popular hobby in the south and with the new approaching hunting season, comes new rules for hunters.

Later this month as turkey season opens, a new rule will be in effect: Mandatory Harvest Reporting. It requires hunters to give data to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

The hunters are required to report the age of the animal, location of death and the weapon used while hunting within a 72-hour time period after the hunt. With the data, the wildlife management will be able to better calculate the hunting season lengths and bag limits.

The same reporting will apply to the deer hunting season in the fall. The data can be reported through the Department of Natural Resources website or by phone. Failure to report the data will result in fines or the possibility of the hunting license being revoked.

CAMPUS CARRY LAW STATUS

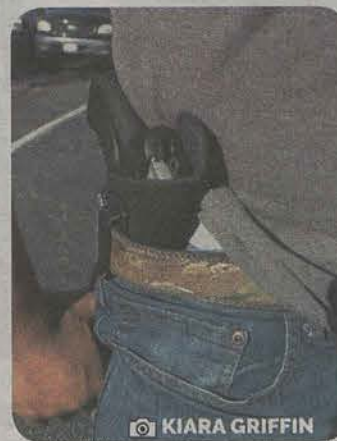
By Jozsef Papp

House Bill 859 will officially become state law once Gov. Nathan Deal signs.

On Friday, the Georgia Senate passed the Campus Carry bill after an emotional two-hour floor debate, according to the AJC.

The bill will allow anyone 21 and older with a gun permit to carry a concealed handgun on public college campuses excluding athletic facilities, student housing and fraternity and sorority houses.

Universities and colleges all over the state have raised concerns about the bill and the maturity and safety of student's on-campus, according to the AJC.



KIARA GRIFFIN

SPORTS SHORTS

-Men's Tennis won 2 out of the 3 games they played during the break: Winning against Kennesaw State (4-2) and UNC Asheville (4-2) and Losing against UNCG (3-4).

-Women's Tennis tied their win-lose 2 v 2: Beating Bethune-Cookman (4-3) and Florida A & M (7-0) and Losing against Southern Miss. (1-6) and UNCG (2-4)

-The Baseball team played six games winning a total of 5 out of 6. They defeated Appalachian State three times (13-3, 8-6, and 5-1), Mercer (11-10) and Troy (7-0), but they did lose to Troy on Friday the 18 (1-2).

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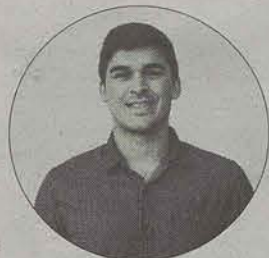
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Life, liberty and the pursuit of equality



SKYLER BLACK

Black is a senior writing and linguistics major from Warner Robins, Ga.

Georgia is going through a midlife crisis this year. With the passage of multiple bills through the House and Senate, the Georgia government has created both the possibility of campus carry and a religious freedom bill, both of which are now sitting on Governor

Nathan Deal's desk waiting to be signed. According to the House Bill 757, or Religious Liberty Bill, it would allow pastors to refuse to marry same-sex couples, permit churches to refuse to host events for anyone that doesn't share their beliefs and allow employers to deny hiring someone for the same reason.

The idea that the state has the ability to restrict the basic rights of human beings is appalling. I do understand that individuals have the right to believe what they want to believe and I understand that same-sex couples and people that don't share a group's beliefs go against the stance of that group. I am not saying that these religious groups don't have the right to believe what they believe. What I am saying is that this bill is creating the idea that homosexuals are second class

citizens. They are having the rights of marriage taken away from them eight months after the Supreme Court ruling.

Georgia has been against the marriage of same-sex couples for many years before this bill. In 1996 following the Defense of Marriage Act, Georgia had same-sex marriage banned in both the constitutional and state level, according to ProCon.org. This new bill isn't a change for the state of Georgia.

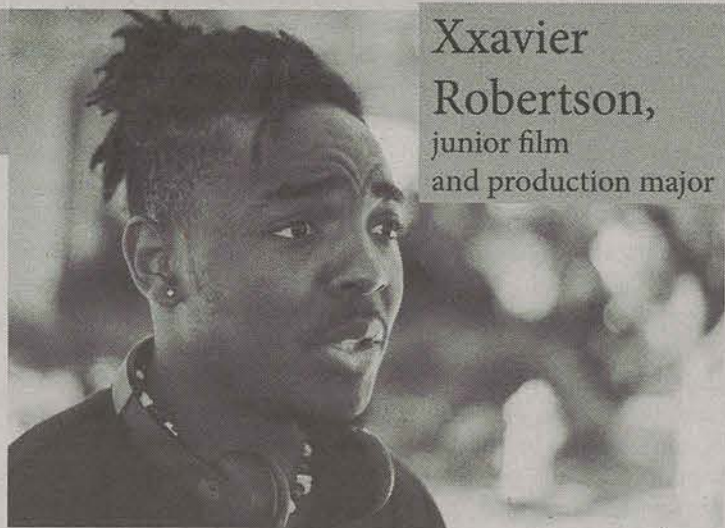
The negative responses to this bill have been accusing the bill of being discriminatory towards homosexuals. I have to agree with the Human Rights Campaign, National Football League and Apple, all of which have voiced concern over the bill. Our society has to be one that emphasizes tolerance and inclusiveness. This has to start at the governmental

level if it is going to happen at all. When the government that represents the people discriminates towards a portion of people that they are representing, there is a disturbing problem.

With the passage of this bill, the Georgia government will be taking a step backwards from the progress that our country has gained through the years. Men and women that have different beliefs and lifestyles will be turned away from groups supported by the state government and that is horrifying.

The Georgia Southern community is directly affected by the passing of this law and our students should voice their opinions throughout the proper forums. Many individuals wanted to voice their opinion and how they believed it would affect them.

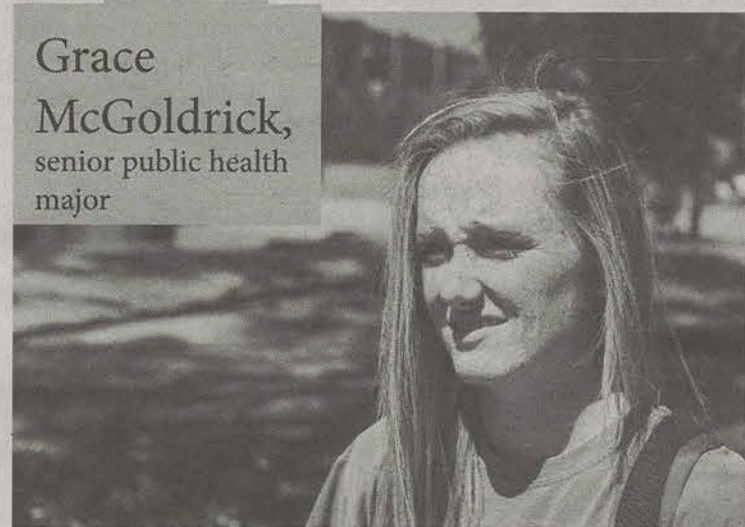
Do you think this bill should pass and why?



Xxavier Robertson,
junior film
and production major

“

I think that certain aspects of the bill are a good idea and certain aspects are not. I would say the preservation of certain things like if someone wants to participate in same-sex marriage they have the right to do so because they are a person. But at the same time you can't force certain religions to conform to that because they are two sides of the same spectrum. A lot of people try to say that you try to force LGBT down some people's throats and some people don't want to hear that. At the same time, some people want to force anti-gay down people's throats and that's not the way it's done either. I feel like there should be a compromise on the bill. I don't think that it should be passed.”



Grace McGoldrick,
senior public health
major

“

No I don't. Just because I feel like they're not letting everyone have their own point of view. It's kind of taking that away and freedom of speech and that whole thing. I don't know it's like keeping people away from other opinions and keeping them really sheltered and that is an issue.”



Sasha Phillip,
senior multimedia journalism major

“

I don't support it. Anything that segregates other people, I'm not for. I feel like that we have got by and have gotten better as a nation and I feel like we should keep going forward instead of continuing backwards and letting people feel outcasted in some type of way. So anything that is against any type of human being I am not for.”

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

The George-Anne is the official student newspaper of Georgia Southern University, operated by GSU students using facilities provided by the university. The newspaper is the oldest continuously published newspaper in Bulloch County.

The newspaper is published twice weekly, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, during most of the academic year. Any questions regarding content should be directed to the student editor by phone at 912.478.5246 or at gaeditor@georgiasouthern.edu.

ADVERTISING: The newspaper accepts advertising. Inquiries may be made by calling 912.478.5418 or 912.478.0566. For questions e-mail ads1@georgiasouthern.edu.

The George-Anne receives additional support in part from the Student Activities Budget Committee. For more information, rate cards, or sample publications, contact the advertising manager or student media director. The advertiser is responsible for any errors in advertisements and its liability for adjustments is limited to the amount of space the error occupied in the ad. Further, the newspaper is not responsible for any damages caused due to an ad's omission from a particular edition and its responsibility solely is to reschedule the ad in the next regular edition at the regular advertising rates.

STUDENTS BEWARE: The George-Anne screens all advertisements prior to publication. The newspaper strives to accept ads for legitimate products and services only. Students are urged to exercise caution when replying to ads-- particularly those that require personal information. Students are also urged to report to the newspaper any suspicious offers which they might see in an ad.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: The newspaper is printed by The Brunswick News in Brunswick, Ga.

NOTICE: Unauthorized removal of multiple copies from a distribution site constitutes theft under Georgia law, a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine and/or jail time.

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Mock Mediation to host first tournament

BY ERIN MCGUINNESS

The George-Anne contributor



PHOTO COURTESY OF DYLAN JOHN

The GSU Mock Mediation Club has won multiple awards throughout the country. This will be the tournament's inaugural year.

Georgia Southern University's Mock Mediation club is hosting their first ever mock mediation tournament April 8 and 9 and will be open to all student organizations. The goal of the tournament is to provide students with the hands on experience and skills to use communication in order to successfully mediate a mock court case.

The event is open to all students with the intent to promote conflict resolution by engaging in mediation, resolving

problems and mastering communication skills.

The tournament teaches students how to mediate issues by teaching conflict resolution and communication skills.

"Conflict resolution will be something that everyone will have to deal with in their lives and so by increasing the visibility of the skills of our members we can disseminate these skills to community members and university participants," Laura E. Agnich, Ph.D., faculty advisor for the

mock mediation club said.

All student organizations are invited to create a 3-4 person team, consisting of a client, advocate and mediator, to compete in the mediation tournament. The teams themselves pick who is the advocate, client and mediator and they also take turns and switch up their role throughout the tournament.

However, the tournament is not closed to GSU organizations. Mediation teams from across the region are invited to participate

in the tournament to practice their conflict resolution skills and spread the mediation mindset with Georgia Southern, Agnich said.

Phi Alpha Delta (PAD) and Tau Kappa Epsilon (TKE) have confirmed that they will have teams in this year's tournament.

"We consider registering a team from TKE, as not only a commitment to an organization that we strongly support and love, but also as a way of improving our own professional skill set in conflict and dispute resolution," Dylan John, officer of Tau Kappa Epsilon and an active member of the Mock Mediation Club, said.

Students participating in the tournament are required to go to a training session. This training will also be open to the public, with the intent to provide the opportunity for people to go to the training and learn about mediation and conflict resolution even if they do not compete.

"The training will allow participants to hone their skills not just in mediation but also being an advocate for a client who's upset and to enable people to reach a negotiated agreement where everyone leaves feeling satisfied that they are heard," Agnich said.

Kunjea Patel, information system major and mock mediation club member, said coming to the training sessions will help students gain various life skills such as conflict resolution, leadership, communication, team management and time management for various situations in life.

"You should consider being a part of the invitational tournament because it

allows you to practice those communication skills and how to verbalize your thoughts effectively and verbalize the emotion part of the cases they give you," Giselle Devot, senior communication studies major and vice president of public relations for the mock mediation club, said.

Agnich states that everybody argues and experiences conflicts, so knowing how to effectively resolve conflicts with mediation is an essential tool in life.

Alexis McGhee, junior pre-nursing major and chemistry minor, is a member of the Black Student Nursing Association and says that they are considering making a team in the upcoming tournament.

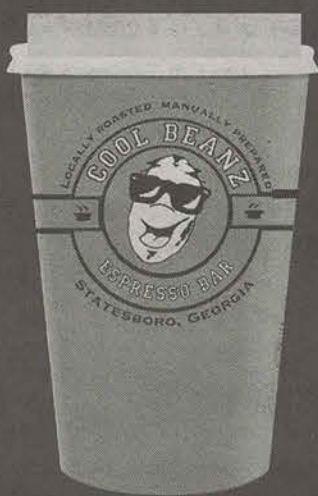
"I think we're interested so the only thing we need to do now is get people to get involved," McGhee said. "I think stuff like this is cool and I like peace."

The mock mediation club hopes to have a panel of around 16 judges - eight local lawyers and eight more experienced judges who have participated in previous tournaments.

The judges are scoring based on communication skills, how well the case was mediated (unbiased and fair) and their conflict resolution skills in mediation and advocacy said Agnich. The winner will be based on the winning ballots and the total score.

Registration, which starts on March 25, is \$15 for GSU teams and \$25 for non-GSU teams.

For more information visit the mock mediation table at the rotunda every Thursday from 11-1 p.m. or e-mail Mock Mediation president, Jessica Shanken.



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Center for Sustainability hosts sixth annual No Impact Week

BY TAISHA WHITE

The George-Anne contributor

Georgia Southern University's Wellness Program and the Center for Sustainability will host the sixth annual "No Impact Week" starting on Sunday, April 10 and ending on Saturday, April 16.

The week-long event educates GSU on the importance of decreasing environmental impact as well as increasing environmental sustainability.

Lissa Legee, Director of the Center for Sustainability, explains how No Impact Week got its start.

"I actually brought No Impact Man to campus to kick off the first No Impact Week," Legee said. "This is our six year and we actually have the longest No Impact Week in the country."

Each day of No Impact Week will be dedicated to a specific theme that GSU students will be able to learn about the basic everyday usage of resources and the dangers of the different themes. Besides the dangers, tips and tricks on how to efficiently reduce the use of energy and increase sustainability will be provided.

"We have so many incredibly exciting new sustainability projects that have happened on campus since last years 'No Impact Week' So we would really like to highlight them this time," Legee said. "For

example, we have electric golf carts with solar panels on top as them as well as bigbelly solar compactors all over campus. We also have signs all over campus now that tell people more about what is sustainable about our campus and so we will be able to highlight all of these features during that week."

Students are happy that the university is taking action on such an important issue like sustainability and human impact on the environment.

"I am impressed with how GSU is taking on this issue," Suzanne Smith, senior middle grade education major, said. "I think there is room for improvement when it comes to learning about how to become environmentally conscious."

The message of "No Impact Week" brings a bigger picture for some students as well.


Junior early childhood development and special education major Kaitlyn Davidson believes that how others treat the planet today, will affect the lives of others tomorrow.


"The act of misusing earth is so disrespectful," Davidson said. "We take for granted the limited resources we have and it might not affect us now, but future generations will have to deal with these issues."


For more information regarding No Impact Week, visit the No Impact Week Page on GSU's University Wellness website.

Themes for No Impact Week


April 10 - April 16


Sunday- Consumption 


Monday- Trash 

Tuesday- Food 

Wednesday- Water 

Thursday- Transportation 

Friday- Energy 

Saturday- Giving back to campus and community 

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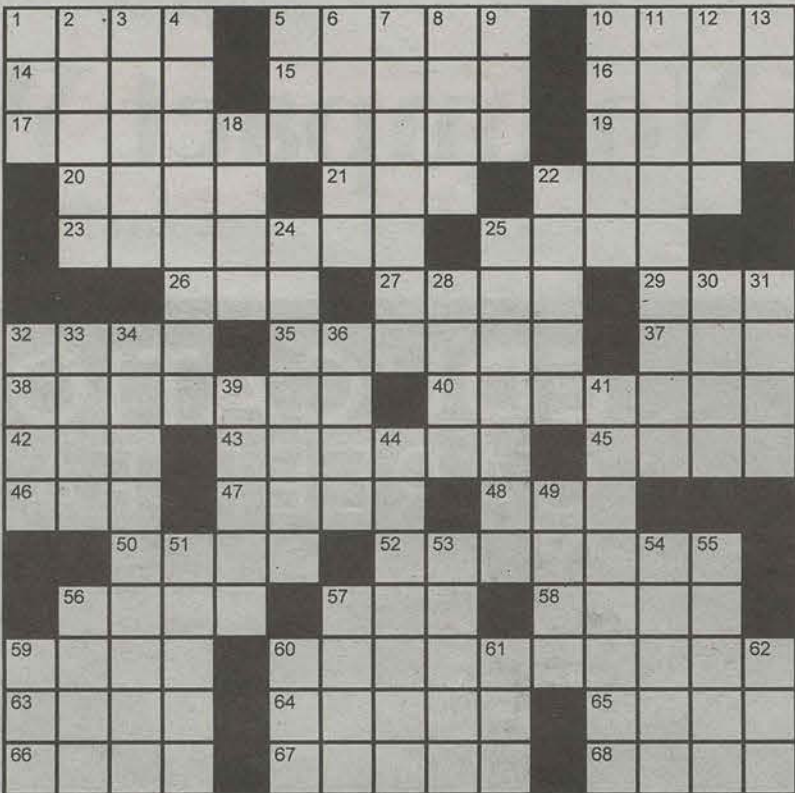
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The George-Anne 3/22/16 Crossword

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Across

- 1 "La Vie en Rose" singer
5 Phial
10 Polish language
14 Baal, e.g.
15 Hollow gourd musical instrument
16 Rum-soaked cake
17 Jolly Roger
19 This and that
20 Chemistry Nobel
21 Address book abbr.
22 Feathery scarves
23 Newspaper type
25 ____pedia
26 Poet's contraction
27 Like hand-me-downs
29 Court ruling?
32 Capital of Latvia
35 Parti-colored
37 Chef's phrase
38 First
40 Last syllable in a word
42 On vacation
43 Some joints
45 Billiard cushion
46 Little squirt
47 Ever's partner
48 Farm mother
50 Fairy tale figures
52 Ex-military man
56 Extinct bird
57 Annoy
58 Palm type
59 Fat
60 Amateur



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- 63 "Not to mention ..."
64 Son of Cain
65 ____ East
66 Hammer part
67 Thicket
68 Shopper stopper

Down

- 1 Lulu
2 Dimwit
3 Blood line
4 Barge
5 Ripen
6 Civilian clothes
7 Accumulated
8 Orsk's river

- 9 Register
10 Electronic novel
11 VIP of Tibet
12 Nile bird
13 Chinese truth
18 Lacquered metalware
22 Bathroom cleaner?
24 Establishes
25 Strongly built
28 Track offshoot
30 Distinctive flair
31 Mission
32 Sidesplitter
33 Data
34 Don't look him in the mouth
36 Violist's clef
39 Insect stage
41 Caucasus natives
44 Wrap
49 Hit the road
51 Extension
53 Decision makers, briefly
54 Breathing problem
55 Birth-related
56 Broad valley
57 Trattoria drink
59 Napkin's place
60 Holiday mo.
61 Everyday article
62 Before, in verse

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Statesboro's Secret Recipe

Local barbecue keeps traditional tastes alive

Vandy's Bar-B-Q is known for their signature sauce and Brunswick stew. The restaurant has been a favorite for generations of Statesboro families.



TAHIR DAUDIER

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**MALL LOCATION: MON-SAT. 7 A.M. - 9 P.M.
SUN. 8 A.M.- 3 P.M.**

BY RACHEL KELSO & ANNIE MOHR

The George-Anne staff and contributor

In Statesboro, it's not uncommon to see several restaurants open and close within the span of a few years. The names and owners of popular bars and restaurants are always changing and there is an all too familiar feeling of finding a "now closed" sign posted outside of stores within just a few months of being opened.

In a town where it seems like only chain restaurants can survive, Vandy's Bar-B-Q has managed to satisfy Statesboro locals and Georgia Southern students for 87 years.

Vandy Boyd opened the first restaurant in 1929 in Portal, Ga. He later moved his business to Statesboro, where he opened two locations: the first in the Statesboro Mall and the second on 22 W. Vine St. in 1943. It's been 25 years since the store has been family owned, but tradition remains in the business.

These famous dishes, such as Vandy's Brunswick stew, barbecue and chicken finger platters have not changed at all since their start in 1929. The southern-style barbecue is still smoked over local oak that gives the meat its unique flavor, and it's all made fresh daily with multiple trips being made to deliver the food to each location.

"It basically has not changed in all these years. The barbecue, the Brunswick stew, and the sauce are the same as Mr. Vandy did in 1929," Barbara Hayes Brown, Assistant Manager, said. "It's good, southern, down-home cooking."

Brown has been working at the mall location since March of 1970. She was a sophomore in high school when she started waiting tables at Vandy's. After earning three degrees and starting her own career as a teacher and assistant principal, as well as an adjunct professor at Georgia Southern for 16 years, she has returned to help wait tables and manage at Vandy's every weekend.

"The barbecue is all cooked in downtown Statesboro," Brown

said. She explained that the meat is pit cooked over oak wood and that the cooking process will sometimes start at three or four in the morning. Fresh barbecue is brought to the mall location daily from the downtown location, where everything is cooked, and is sometimes restocked two or three times each day.

Vandy's is also known for its famous barbecue sauce, which has remained top secret in all 87 years of business. However, lovers of the sauce can now purchase bottled versions at Vandy's Bar-B-Q or at the local Bi-Lo.

Regular customers come in nearly everyday to eat their favorite Vandy's combos, and some have been coming since they were children. "There's a man that comes in here now with his grandchildren and I can remember his parents bringing him in when he was a little boy and he would get a grilled cheese sandwich with chocolate milk," Brown said. "There is a lot of repeat business."

Vandy's has gained fame beyond Statesboro as well. While former Georgia Southern football coach Erk Russell used to enjoy Vandy's Bar-B-Q, the restaurant was even listed as one of the best barbecue restaurants in America by Delta's Sky Magazine and the Atlanta Journal Constitution.

"I enjoy their barbecue sandwiches with their coleslaw and beans," Kevin Hankinson, sophomore mechanical engineering major, said. "Price wise it's pretty fair, honestly. Most barbecue places are more expensive but Vandy's is pretty [fairly priced]." Hankinson's former roommate recommended the barbecue restaurant to him. Ever since his first taste of Vandy's barbecue he's been going back for more.

Vandy's now accepts EAGLEXPRESS and has daily deals offered throughout the week. For more information, visit www.vandysbbq.com or stop by one of their two Statesboro locations.

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Southern cooking kept simple

Small town diner turns into fan favorite

BY TOM BARSZCZ

The George-Anne contributor

The homely and quaint little restaurant of D's Friendly Diner lies in the Statesboro Square Shopping Center right off of Northside Drive East and ironically right behind a Waffle House. The Diner, which opened its doors four years ago in June of 2012, is owned and operated by Dana Smith.

Dana Smith, or more commonly known as "Miss D" opened the Diner in honor of her mother, who had owned a diner in Statesboro many years ago.

"The restaurant is named after my mom's old diner which was called 'The Friendly Diner'," Smith said.

D's current location used to be a breakfast place called "Mr. Omelette" where Smith worked as a waitress. When it was time for Mr. Omelette to close, Smith knew she had to buy it and open up her own restaurant.

"I missed the customers from Mr. Omelette," said Smith, "I loved making friends with customers and eventually calling them family, so I wanted my own place where the customers become family."

Since its opening, the diner has had no advertising and has had very little public recognition. In 2015, a local Statesboro magazine called 'Fabulist,' awarded D's with the "Best kept secret in Statesboro" and the "Undiscovered restaurant in Statesboro" awards. Other than the published awards, the customer base has been accumulated purely by word of mouth.

Upon walking into D's, there is an immediate sense of comfort as walk-in's are welcomed by Miss D or one of the waitresses with a "Hey y'all! How are you?" Along with the warm greeting, one will notice the walls are mostly covered with pictures of smiling customers who most likely become regulars. To Miss D, her customers are her family and she will make sure to make anyone feel that way.

John Milloy, a regular of D's, explained how Miss D's genuine care for strangers is what made him become a weekly customer.

"I had come to Statesboro about four years ago to attend the local alcohol rehabilitation center and eventually moved on to living in a local halfway house," Milloy said, "and she would hire people from the halfway house because she's very supportive of people in treatment, so we wanted to help and support her for helping us...Now I come weekly because the food is great, everyone is always friendly and in a small town like Statesboro, supporting a local business is important."

Not only are the employees of D's hospitable, but the food is incredible as well. They offer every traditional southern style breakfast and lunch dishes one could think of, as well as offering weekly specials.

Billy Boan, a cook for D's diner, expressed his feelings about Miss D, the customers and why he loves working for the diner.

"I've always enjoyed cooking and worked in different restaurants but I always wanted to work as a flash cook... Dana hired me three years [ago] and I haven't left since," Boan said.

Even though D's Diner has a great customer base of loyal regulars, they would like to see more Georgia Southern students come enjoy the friendly dining experience they have to offer.

"We're a good alternative to the franchise breakfast restaurants, especially for students. We have a friendlier environment and the food is better," Boan said, "and that's why we want to see more Georgia Southern students become regulars because we're family here and Dana is a great role model. She's a great example to show people that you can improve yourself and still help others."

Eating at D's Friendly Diner makes one quickly understand how that the name is fitting to its character and their great home style southern breakfast.

Dana Smith, also known as "Miss D", tending to her restaurant located in the Statesboro Square Shopping Center. Behind her are photos of previous guests who have visited the diner.



TAHIR DAUDIER

**PRE LEASING
FALL 2016!**

STUDIO

2BR

3BR

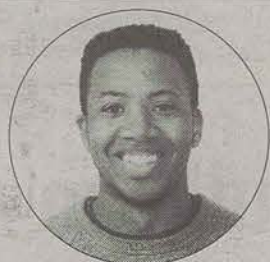
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MY TAKE: 2015-2016 MEN'S BASKETBALL

The Georgia Southern basketball team finished the season with a 14-17 overall record and 10-10 in the Sun Belt. Our reporter offers his thoughts on the season and the program going forward.



MARQUS WILLIAMS

Marqus is a junior journalism major from Grovetown, Ga.

With the season finished for the Eagles, there was much to learn from this year's team. To start, they can't be compared to last year's team in the slightest. Both teams made the Sun Belt Tournament, but other than that the teams are far apart in who they are.

The 2015-2016 Eagles were young, inexperienced and undersized coming into the

season, but they have all grown up. They learned how to play together, win games and learn what it takes to play in the Sun Belt.

The Eagles started off the season in a downward spiral, losing 10 of their first 15 and starting 1-4 in conference play. Many fans might make conclusions about how the season would go based on the rocky start, but judging the team based off that stretch is an injustice. They finished the season on an 11-7 run, beating rivals App State twice in a series sweep, splitting games with Georgia State and beating top conference opponent Louisiana-Monroe.

They went 10-10 in conference play, placing them fifth out of 12, much higher than preseason polls had them finishing. The Eagles showed they are capable of being competitive in the Sun Belt, despite the fact that they were the youngest team in college basketball. That has made them more impressive in where they started to where they finished, not only for what they accomplished,

but also for the future of the program.

The most intriguing players to watch have been the freshmen. The Sun Belt Freshman Player of the Year was GSU's very own Tookie Brown, who ranked fourth in the conference in points per game and was an All-Sun Belt First Team honoree. Brown is also the record holder for most points in a season by a freshman at GSU. Combined with the play of fellow freshman Ike Smith, Montae Glenn and Shawn O'Connell, the future is bright, providing they can max out their potential and put in the work needed to get better.

Since the team was as young and inexperienced as labeled, the leadership displayed by sophomores Mike Hughes and Jake Allsmiller put the Eagles in a better spot to succeed this season. Without clearly stating who played key leadership roles on the team, it was evident in their body language and actions that the team looked to these guys for support when things got tough.

Hughes was honored with an All-Sun Belt Third Team selection and provided two SportsCenter Top 10 plays this season that led to wins for the Eagles. He was a vital point in keeping the team focused and only looking at the task at hand, no matter the opponent. While the record and the early Sun Belt Tournament exit wasn't what the team wanted, they did better than most experts, fans and even friends believed they could. They persevered even when things didn't go their way and pushed through until the end.

This season may not go down as a success in the record book, but it should serve as a successful step in their building block to a Sun Belt Championship. Their potential shown this season was no accident and the players should keep this season in their memories not as a painful reminder, but as a note of where they started and where they are going.



TAHIR DAUDIER

Despite their youth, the Eagles finished 10-10 in the conference and made it to the Sun Belt Tournament for the second consecutive season.

GEORGIA SOUTHERN FALLS TO SOUTH ALABAMA IN FIRST ROUND OF SUN BELT TOURNAMENT

BY MARQUS WILLIAMS
The George-Anne staff

The Eagles lost in their Sun Belt Tournament matchup against the University of South Alabama 61-67 in New Orleans. The Jaguars completed a series sweep of the Eagles that included the regular season and conference tournament matchups.

Georgia Southern was down 21-36 at the half, with their largest deficit being 18 in the first half but a slight comeback was not enough as the Eagles could not come away with a win. The Eagles were the higher seed in

the tournament as the fifth seed but they could not find a way to outplay the Jaguars. They were out-rebounded and the Eagles only had 12 points from their bench compared to the 29 from South Alabama.

The Eagles leading scorers were Ike Smith and Tookie Brown with 15 points each. Smith had a double-double with 15 points and 10 rebounds while Brown also added seven rebounds. Mike Hughes had 10 points but combined they shot 11 for 38 from the field which was 29 percent and shot 17 percent from three, making 4-23.

Forward Nick Stover led the

Jaguars with 14 points, eight rebounds, and three assists as guard, Ken Williams, had 13 points and five rebounds. Like the Eagles, the Jaguars didn't shoot well from the field, shooting 37 percent and 16 percent from three, but their first half statistics were a key element in their win.

The Eagles' best hope to beat South Alabama was to shoot the ball exceptionally well and play tough defense. They didn't play as well as they wanted and it cost them progressing through the Sun Belt Tournament, but it could lead to an offseason with a purpose. A purpose and sense

of motivation to improve for the following year and become the team they are capable of being.

Arkansas Little Rock took home the Sun Belt

Championship, capping off a dominant season in the conference.

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Challenger heats up heading into conference play

The ace has gotten off to a strong start in the 2016 season. He has posted a 2.43 ERA over 33.1 innings of work.

BY KEVIN KENEELY
The George-Anne staff

Evan Challenger, starting pitcher for Georgia Southern, has had a great start to his career at Georgia Southern, while overcoming a detrimental injury after his freshman year.

Challenger was named preseason All-Sun Belt going into the 2016 season.

His success can be traced back to his passion for baseball. He takes baseball day-by-day, never letting anything distract him from his goal, which is to get better everyday.

Growing up, his favorite pitcher to watch was Jamie Moyer.

"In high school I liked watching Jamie Moyer because he didn't throw hard, I never threw hard, so I liked how he still got guys out and competed in the MLB without being a flamethrower," Challenger said.

While in high school, Challenger had no idea what position he was going to play in college until he was an upperclassman.

"I originally didn't think I was going to go to college as a pitcher," Challenger said. "The first opportunity I had to go to

a college was as an outfielder and so I think around my junior year of high school that that was the path I was going to take, but yeah really realize that until my junior year of high school that pitching would be my way to go."

His freshman year, he posted a 4.23 ERA while going 1-1 in five starts.

After his freshman season, he had to take a medical redshirt and postpone his sophomore campaign another year.

Challenger had to go in for Tommy-John surgery after tearing his UCL.

Tommy-John is one of the scariest injuries a pitcher can get. The injury has been known to end many pitchers careers, but in Challengers case, it has also been known that pitchers come back better than they were before.

Last season, Challenger posted a team-best 2.03 ERA over 14 starts. He became known as the "ace", being the first pitcher in the rotation and pitching in all the big games.

The role of being an ace usually brings on more responsibility as a leader.

"I think I just come down and try to lead by example, I'm not much of a vocal leader but

I think I just go about stuff the right way and I think that's the way to do it," Challenger said.

Coming off his best season at Georgia Southern, he continues to find things to improve on.

"I think just controlling my off speed a little more. I've added some more pitches this year so I'm working on making that a part of my everyday pitching," Challenger said.

Everyday Challenger comes out and is working hard to be better than he was last season.

This season, he has already tied a career high with nine strikeouts in a game against Radford.

In his previous three starts, Challenger has been almost lights out pitching a combined 21.1 innings and has only given up three earned runs while racking up 15 strikeouts and two victories.

Challenger is 3-2 on the season with a 2.43 ERA and 25 strike outs, putting him on pace to set career highs in both wins and strikeouts this season. His current highs in those categories are five wins and 58 strikeouts respectively over 14 starts, both of which were accomplished last season.



BRANDON WARNOCK

The redshirt-junior ace has started in a team-high five games so far. He struck out a career-high nine batters in his start against Radford.

Georgia Southern picks up Sun Belt wins over the break

BY KEVIN KENEELY
The George-Anne staff

While everyone was away for Spring Break, the Georgia Southern baseball team had to stay back and begin conference play. The team went 5-2 over the break.

The Eagles took on Appalachian State, Mercer and Troy over the break.

GSU travelled to App State to take them on in a three game series and swept the Mountaineers in three games. They posted a season-high 26 runs over the series.

Evan Challenger, Connor Simmons and Brian Eichhorn all picked up victories for GSU in the series sweep.

In game one, Hunter Thomas lead the way for the Eagles knocking in five runs. Challenger also tied his career high with eight innings pitched.

In game two, Logan Baldwin lead the way with three RBIs.

In game three, C.J. Brazil lead the way with two RBIs, while Brian Eichhorn had an efficient night on the mound, setting a season record for the team when he retired 13-straight batters and recorded a career-high six strike outs.

GSU then travelled to Macon to take on the Mercer Bears. Anthony Paesano picked up another victory for the Eagles as they went on to win 11-10.

Evan McDonald lead the way for the Eagles against Mercer as he went 3-for-4 at the plate, scoring twice

and knocking in one run. He notched his first home run as an Eagle and extended his hitting streak to eight games.

GSU was finally able to return home this past weekend as they took on Troy at J.I. Clements Stadium. This series did not go as well as the previous two series' went as the Eagles came out of the series going 1-2 against the Trojans.

Chase Cohen picked up the lone victory for the Eagles Saturday night as the team went on to win 7-0, while Logan Baldwin lead the way for the Eagles on offense with four RBIs. McDonald continued to swing a hot bat as he extended his impressive hitting streak to 11 games.

Before McDonald started his hitting streak he was at the bottom of the lineup hitting ninth every game as he only picked up two hits in the first nine games of the season.

Now McDonald is hitting first for the Eagles and has increased his batting average from .100 to .304, which places him second on the team behind Baldwin who is hitting .313 on the season.

GSU hopes to get back to their winning ways this Thursday as they take on Arkansas State on the road. The Eagles don't return home until April 1 when they take on Texas State.

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The Eagles are 15-13 on the season following the road trip. They are 2-1 in the Sun Belt.

Eagles spend Spring Break in Texas on nine-game road swing

The softball team opened Sun Belt play against Texas State on Mar. 12. They play again tomorrow at Georgia.

BY KEITH SMILEY
The George-Anne staff

Most students kicked their feet up and caught some sun this past week during spring break, but the Georgia Southern softball team was on the road in Texas. The Eagles won three out of nine games they played over the past week.

The team wasted no time getting their first victory during the break as they took on Texas State in their first Sun Belt competition of the season.

GSU junior Morgan Robinson played a big part in the Eagles 6-1 victory in the first game of the series with her two-run home run in the top of the first inning. The following day in the doubleheader, the Eagles dropped both games, losing 5-4 and 0-2.

After the Eagles battled with Texas State, they stayed in the Longhorn state to take on nationally ranked Texas A&M in a two-game series. Texas A&M swept the series, but the Eagles didn't shy away from the elite competition.

The first game was a high scoring affair. Texas A&M beat the Eagles in a wild 13-10 contest. Both teams finished the game with a total of 13 hits.

The second game of the series was still a battle between the two teams with a low scoring contest that Texas A&M won 3-2. The first four innings were neck and neck with no scores until the top of the fifth inning when GSU captured a 2-0 lead. Texas A&M bounced back in the bottom sixth inning scoring two runs and one more in the bottom of the seventh inning to come away with the victory.

"We schedule tough opponents like this because we are looking to compete and win. I feel like we competed for all seven innings of both games against them and that's not something that very many people have done this year," head coach Annie Smith said.

The Texas road trip continued

with a non-conference tournament against Boise State and Texas Tech in the Jeannine McHaney Memorial Classic at Rocky Johnson Field. The Eagles lost 1-4 to Texas Tech in the opening game.

After dropping the opening two games of the Classic, GSU got a chance to avenge their loss against Boise State. They did just that with a 12-9 victory. Both teams went back and forth to either tie the game or take the lead.

The game was tied 8-8 in the top of the fifth and 9-9 at the top of the seventh inning. In the bottom of the seventh the Eagles went on to end the game with a walk off homerun. Alesha Mann stepped up to bat with only one out and two runners on and hit a missile home run just left of straight center field to end the game.

The Eagles then faced Texas Tech in the final game of the Classic. The Red Raiders jumped out to a 4-0 lead early in the first inning and GSU was never able to recover. Texas Tech scored every inning of the game except for the fifth inning.

GSU tried to capitalize on Texas Tech not scoring that inning with a pair of runs off of A.J. Hamilton's fifth homerun of the season, but it wasn't enough to slow Texas Tech down for the rest of the game. Texas Tech tallied seven runs in the top of the sixth to put the game out of reach.

"Overall I think we had a very good, productive week," Smith said. "Obviously we would like to have gotten a couple different results, but I am very pleased with the progress we made on the field and the fight we showed all week long."

GSU softball team will be looking to bounce back with a win this Wednesday, as they take on Georgia Bulldogs in Athens. The game will be aired at 6 p.m. on the SEC Network.

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