

The Decatur Daily

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FORECAST

TODAY **FRI** **SAT**
40°/31° **62°/34°** **45°/27°**
Complete forecast, **A2**

RIVERFRONT

Change to street clothes aids escape

A Lacey's Spring man in jail for theft and drug charges now has been charged with escape after he allegedly changed into street clothes in a Morgan County Jail bathroom Tuesday and walked from the jail along a bike path. **B1**

NATION



Doberman pinscher wins best in show

A Doberman pinscher named Penny won best in show Tuesday night at the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, netting U.S. show dogs' most coveted prize. **B3**

Fight escalates over Georgia voting records

Officials in Georgia's Fulton County said Wednesday they have asked a federal court to order the FBI to return ballots and other documents from the 2020 election that it seized last week, escalating a voting battle as President Donald Trump says he wants to "take over" elections from Democratic-run areas. **A3**

Democrats demand major changes to ICE

Democrats are threatening to block funding for the Homeland Security Department when it expires in two weeks unless there are "dramatic changes" and "real accountability" for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and other law enforcement agencies. **B3**

BUSINESS

Washington Post makes drastic cuts

The Washington Post laid off one-third of its staff Wednesday, eliminating its sports section, several foreign bureaus and its books coverage in a widespread purge that represented a brutal blow to journalism. **A6**

AREA DEATHS

Richard Blackmon, Decatur
Percy Campbell, Decatur
William Evans III, Hartselle
Oscar Goodwin, Decatur
James Hall, Danville
Hugh Huggins, Decatur
Maria Reyes, Decatur
Janice Roberts, Eva
Irene Terry, Decatur
Death notices, obits, **C5**

AbbyD3 Entertainment ...D1
BusinessA6 Horoscopes.....D3
ClassifiedE1 Obituaries.....C5
Comics.....D2 Riverfront.....B1
Crossword.....D3 Sports.....C1
Editorials.....A4 Weather.....A2

Decatur, Alabama
114th year, No. 296
24 pages, 5 sections



SOUTHEAST DECATUR

Consultant hired for historic survey

By Bayne Hughes
Staff Writer

As the Pennyacres neighborhood of Southeast Decatur ages, the historic significance of the homes near Walter Jackson Elementary School is being recognized.

The city and its Historic Preservation Commission hired a consultant, Eocene Environmental Group Inc., to undertake a reconnaissance survey of the Pennyacres and Fairview Addition

Neighborhood for a cost not to exceed \$45,000.

Eocene is doing the survey to comply with Alabama Historical Commission standards and identify areas for additional research and recommendations for survey expansion and/or National Register of Historic Places eligibility. The National Register is a U.S. federal list of sites, buildings and districts



Swope

recognized for their historical or artistic significance.

"Part of the Preservation Commission's responsibilities with the state is to survey properties to see if they have historic integrity for National Register," said Caroline Swope, program coordinator of the Historic Preservation Commission.

Swope said the committee keeps a list of the city's important properties.

"We really hadn't done much yet with the World War II era,"

she said. "And they are looking for things that are 50 years or older."

According to an Aug. 9, 1953, issue of The Decatur Daily provided by Morgan County archivist John Allison, Decatur Land Co. Ltd. developed this section of Southeast Decatur with \$20,000 to \$30,000 homes.

The story says the one-story homes may not be less than 1,500 square feet, and not less than 1,200 square for one-and-a-half

SEE CONSULTANT, A5

MORGAN COUNTY

EMA orders study on ability to handle hazmat incidents



A truck specialized in the transport of chemicals travels east on Wilson Street this week. A recent study found that hundreds of different hazardous materials are transported in Morgan County. [JERONIMO NISA/DECATUR DAILY]

By Erica Smith
Staff Writer

Hundreds of different hazardous materials and more than two dozen extremely hazardous materials are transported through the county, prompting the Morgan County Emergency Management Agency to request a study to see if it has the capability to handle a hazardous material incident.

The planned capability study follows the completion of a commodity flow study.

"Results from the commodity flow study confirmed the transport, usage and storage of 349 hazardous materials, 26 extremely hazardous substances, and 15 other substances representing all nine



Warner

U.S. Department of Transportation of hazard classes," the commodity flow study reads.

This puts Morgan County EMA Director Jonathan Warner on high alert.

"That was pretty eye opening I feel for everybody," he said. "And this is not just Decatur, of course they play a huge part in it. But this is for the whole county."

The commodity flow study was done with a grant for the Morgan County EMA in 2024 by JH Consulting LLC to determine what hazardous materials were coming through Morgan County

either by road, rail or water. Warner said road was the most studied. He said, as far as they know, it was the first time a commodity flow study was done for Morgan County.

"They went through a bunch of records, did some research on their own of what chemicals are coming in and out of the county on a regular basis," Warner said. "They went to 20 different locations inside of the county and monitored the placards coming in. And then they looked at some online data and looked at our barges and railroads."

Warner said the completed report was given to emergency responders and city and county officials in Morgan

SEE EMA, A5

CONGRESS

Alabama's Democrats split votes

By Alex Angle
Alabama Daily News

WASHINGTON — The spending package approved by the U.S. House on Tuesday reopens the vast majority of the federal government, with 21 Democrats, including Congresswoman Terri Sewell, joining most Republicans to support the measure.

Alabama's House Republicans voted to pass the roughly \$1.2 trillion package, while the state's two Democrats were split, with Rep. Shomari Figures, D-Mobile, opposing it. The vote was 217-214, with 21 Republicans voting with a majority of Democrats against the spending bills.

The package will fund multiple agencies through September and temporarily fund the Department of Homeland Security for two weeks while lawmakers negotiate over restrictions on immigration enforcement.

The earmarks for Alabama totaled more than \$205 million in the five-bill fiscal 2026 package that passed Tuesday.

The Boll Weevil Circle project in Enterprise will receive the most money at about \$15.7 million. Sen. Katie Britt, R-Ala., an appropriator, secured that funding. In the package, Britt secured more than \$111.3 million for projects across the state, including \$5.7 million to the Alabama Community College System for



Britt



Sewell

SEE CONGRESS, A5

IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

Border czar pulling 700 officers out of Minnesota

By Steve Karnowski
The Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — The Trump administration is reducing the number of immigration officers in Minnesota but will continue its enforcement operation that has sparked weeks of tensions and deadly confrontations, border czar Tom Homan said Wednesday.

About 700 federal officers — roughly a quarter of the total deployed to Minnesota — will be withdrawn immediately after state and local officials agreed

over the past week to cooperate by turning over arrested immigrants, Homan said.

But he did not provide a timeline for when the administration might end the operation that has become a flashpoint in the debate over President Donald Trump's mass deportation efforts since the fatal shootings of U.S. citizens Renee Good and Alex Pretti in Minneapolis.

About 2,000 officers will



Homan

remain in the state after this week's drawdown, Homan said. That's roughly the same number sent to Minnesota in early January when the surge ramped up, kicking off what the Department of Homeland Security called its "largest immigration enforcement operation ever."

Since then, masked, heavily armed officers have been met by resistance from residents who are upset with their aggressive tactics.

A widespread pullout, Homan said, will occur only after there's more cooperation and protesters stop interfering with federal

agents carrying out arrests.

Trump told NBC News that he ordered the reduction and added that one lesson coming out of the turmoil in Minnesota is "maybe we can use a little bit of a softer touch. But you still have to be tough."

Gov. Tim Walz and Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey, both Democrats who have heavily criticized the surge, said pulling back 700 officers was a good first step but that the entire operation should end quickly.

SEE BORDER, A5



See More
in Today's
Classified
Section

- Classifieds on the cover -

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- Classifieds on the cover -

Town Creek Police Dept. is accepting resumes for a Full-Time Certified Police Officer
resumes accepted at City Hall
15737 Main. St., Town Creek
until Feb. 10th @ 4pm