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Honor and anguish: When the losses are new



Charles Simmons, in Columbus, Ohio, holds a collage of photos on Monday of his son, Master Sgt. Tyler Simmons, who died in a refueling plane crash in Iraq in March. PHOTOS BY MADDIE MCGARVEY/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Military families navigate feelings of grief, pride and anger while seeking answers about the deaths of their loved ones.

By Christina Morales
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There were parades and marching bands. Flag-waving and wreath-laying. Politicians will make speeches, friends will raise glasses and civilians observed moments of silence. All to honor America's service members, now and forever.

But for those who have lost loved ones overseas in the Iran war, which has been waged since Feb. 28, this Veterans Day came with a heaviness that only military families can fathom, and that will grow only more difficult as they face their first holiday season without their sons and daughters, siblings and spouses.



"Veterans Day is very different now," Charles Simmons said. It was the first Veterans Day since he lost his son, Tyler, one of six killed in an air crash.

"Veterans Day is very different now," said Charles Simmons, the father of Master Sgt. Tyler Simmons, who died in a refueling plane crash in Iraq in March. He added: "It takes on a whole different meaning because it's come home. The bell tolls for thee."

Simmons said that he and his family "have a profound sense of pride" for all of his son's accomplishments. But above all else, he said, there is "a profound hole in our hearts."

"I'm a selfish parent," he said. "I would rather have my son. My child was sacrificed to save the country. That sounds noble. But in the grand scheme of things, who wants that? I don't think I know any-

Veterans continued on **A7**

Legalized gambling still isn't a safe bet

Gov.-elect is a proponent of casino gambling, but strong opposition still remains.

By Caleb Groves
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Under Republican leadership, Georgia has repeatedly and unsuccessfully tried to legalize sports betting and gambling. That logjam could break next year as Democratic Gov.-elect Keisha Lance Bottoms wants to legalize casino gambling to generate new revenue for early childhood education.

Bottoms has said casino gambling could generate up to $500 million a year to help expand pre-kindergarten access and "the broader early-learning pipeline."

With backing from the governor, the odds might be better than previous years in the state Legislature.

Still, passing such a measure through both chambers is a daunting task.

Democrats will hold a minuscule majority in the House; Republicans have a similarly narrow edge in the Senate. And while most bills in the Legislature require a majority vote, legalizing gaming would require a constitutional amendment – supported by a two-thirds' vote from each legislative chamber to place it on the ballot. Then Georgians would vote on whether to add it to the state constitution.

"With the numbers of both the House and the Senate, one party can't pass nothing," said state Rep. Alan Powell, R-Hartwell, a longtime advocate for sports betting and other forms of gambling.

But he said it's ultimately up to Georgians to decide.

Previous debates over the scope of legislation – where revenue generated from gambling should be allocated and how the industry would be regulated – have proved to be powerful roadblocks.

And unlike some of Bottoms' other priorities, gambling doesn't split cleanly along party lines. A measure introduced during this year's legislative session to allow online sports betting failed by a wide margin.

Gambling continued on **A7**

Private shipping terminal in Savannah moves forward

Construction is slated to begin in 2027 downstream from Georgia Ports Authority.

By Adam Van Brimmer
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SeaPoint Industrial Marine Terminal owner Reed Dulany stands on the bank of the Savannah River on part of SeaPoint property that features more than a half-mile of riverfront, part of a 755-acre site. AJC 2024

SAVANNAH — Another shipping terminal is coming to Savannah's crowded working riverfront, this one closer to the Atlantic Ocean than facilities operated by the Georgia Ports Authority and other cargo handlers.

Construction is scheduled to begin next year on the long-planned SeaPoint Industrial Marine Terminal. The privately owned port project is part of a 755-acre site 5 miles downstream from Savannah's River Street and will include a 3,000-foot-long ship berth, long enough for multiple vessels to dock for loading and unloading.

SeaPoint's owner, Savannah industrialist Reed Dulany, has spent much of the past three years' attention on a sea wall to allow for that berth. The work was temporarily delayed by objections raised by the Georgia Ports Authority, part of a long-running feud between GPA leaders and Dulany.

The Ports Authority in 2017 considered and rejected the site for a cargo terminal

Savannah continued on **A7**

Ted Turner's trove of prized Western art heads to auction

Family says sale advances his lifelong mission to protect America's natural landscapes.

By Savannah Sicurella
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When CNN founder Ted Turner bought his first ranch in the 1980s, the artwork he'd collected up to that point didn't quite fit. A yachtsman, among many other things, he was a fan of maritime art, but sailboats felt out of place in the mountains of Montana.

It was meant to be when he found the works of 19th century artists Albert Bierstadt and Thomas Moran, whose landscape paintings depicted the sweeping vistas, mountains and waters of the American West – all places he wanted to preserve. Turner started buying as many of their works as he could, adorning his ranches and as many of his properties as he could with them, his son Teddy Turner said.

"When he discovered these artists, he went kind of nuts," Turner said. "Dad didn't do anything halfway, right?"



One of the works for sale, "Yosemite Valley," by Albert Bierstadt, used to hang above a fireplace at Ted Turner's ranch in Montana. COURTESY OF CHRISTIE'S

These works will soon leave Turner's private collection as his family brings them to auction through Christie's New York. On Jan. 20, a group of about 20 paintings will be offered, with the pro-

Turner continued on **A7**

TODAY'S TOP STORIES INSIDE



PATRICIA MURPHY, A3

Black churches fueled Jon Ossoff's rout

The senator's relationships with Black pastors paid off. Many said Ossoff had been in routine contact with them and their churches throughout his time in office.



GEORGIA & THE SOUTH, A4

Ocean liner finds new life as an artificial reef

The SS United States was set to be sunk Wednesday off the coast of the Florida Panhandle, fulfilling a project aimed at attracting more divers and fishing enthusiasts to the area.



BULLDOGS, B1

Dawgs ride the eye test to the top of the chart

Georgia is No. 1 in College Football Playoff ranking, and the committee chairman said seeing was believing. "It's just a really complete team that the committee is very high on."



BRAVES, B1

Two pitchers with two different outlooks

Elbow issues cut 2026 short for Spencer Strider (above), but he should be ready for spring training. Spencer Schwellenbach's rehab will require more time.



NEDRA RHONE, C1

What's next for state's elected Black women?

Expectations are high for Georgia's new leaders, who each made history on Nov. 3. First and foremost, they need to lead with a heart not shown by the nation's commander-in-chief.

INDEX

Comics C5 | Crossword C3 | Lotteries B2 | Obituaries A9 | Opinion A11 | Stocks A10 | TV listings C4 | Weather W1