

# Rome News-Tribune

THURSDAY, September 18, 2025

RN-T.com

Weather: Sunny. High near 92. **B3**

## FCPD busts more than 40 COAM locations in Floyd

◆ After two weeks of the compliance operation, officials say the investigation is ongoing.

By Adam Carey  
ACarey@RN-T.com

The Floyd County Police Department inspected 50 locations across Floyd County that housed coin operated amusement machines, issuing more

than 70 citations to 43 of the locations. This was a part of a two-week-long operation and a months-long investigation. The COAM machines, also known as “ding-ding” machines, are in gas stations, convenience stores, and even Kroger across the region. The compliance operation lasted for approximately two weeks, according to FCPD Investigator Lt. Jordan Clayton and was led by the FCPD Crimi-

nal Investigation Division. However, the investigation has lasted several months and is ongoing. The investigation found that many businesses were not adhering to COAM machine laws. Some violations included: operating machines without proper licensing, concealing COAMs in back rooms, not posting required signage and even offering illegal cash payouts.

SEE **DING-DING MACHINES**, A2



Adam Carey

More than 40 locations containing coin operated amusement machines in Floyd County, similar to these inside Kroger in Rome, were issued citations following a two-week operation by the Floyd County police. A sign above these particular machines encourages customers to report fraud, abuse or cash payouts.

## Georgia elections chief running for gov.

By Ty Tagami  
Capitol Beat News Service

Brad Raffensperger wants to follow the trail of Brian Kemp, who used his title as Georgia secretary of state to launch into the governor’s office.

Raffensperger joined the field of Republican contenders Wednesday, on a platform that includes more jobs, less taxation, immigration controls and other traditional GOP hallmarks, including guns, God and — these days — opposition to anything “woke.”



Brad Raffensperger

Like Kemp, he is focusing on voters who work hard for their money.

“Hardworking Georgians are struggling to put food on the table,” Raffensperger said. “Parents worry about their kids being indoctrinated in the classroom. Too many families live in fear of gangs, cartels, and violent criminals.”

Raffensperger earned the enmity of President Donald Trump by contradicting his claim that Georgia’s 2020 election results were inaccurate. Now, he must try to win the 2026 GOP primary election against a Trump-backed candidate.

Trump has endorsed Lt. Gov. Burt Jones, who was already running against state Attorney General Chris Carr for the GOP nomination.

Jones is a longtime ally of Trump, whose voting base is driving state Republican politics. Their influence is so strong that they got the state Republican Party to adopt a resolution in June to bar Raffensperger from running as a Republican, though the party chief doubted it was legally enforceable.

Should Raffensperger win the GOP nomination, he will face the survivor of an increasingly crowded primary for Democrats.

There are standard Democrats in the field: Jason Esteves, who resigned from his Atlanta-based state Senate

SEE **RAFFENSPERGER**, A3

## Exemplary Professionals



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Rome City Schools Teacher of the Year Chase Bowles (center) poses with Atrium Health Floyd’s Stephanie Reeder (left) and RCS Superintendent Eric Holland (right) during the Exemplary Professionals Banquet at Rome High School.

## Anna K. Davie’s Chase Bowles named RCS Teacher of the Year

By Adam Carey  
ACarey@RN-T.com

Chase Bowles, a third grade math teacher at Anna K. Davie Elementary School, was named Teacher of the Year during the Exemplary Professionals Banquet Tuesday night at Rome High School.

Each school nominated a teacher and a support staffer for recognition, and the final decision was made by the RCS Board of Education after reviewing the nominations. Nominees’ names were removed from the ballot before the board reviewed the nominations.

“These teachers were recommended and voted on by their peers,” RCS Director of Communications Jim Alred said. “And they all represent the best of our talented



Adam Carey

Rome City Schools teachers and Board of Education member at the beginning of the RCS Exemplary Professionals Banquet Tuesday night at Rome High School.

teachers and support staff.” Susan Johnston of the Central Office was named Exemplary Operational Staff Member of the Year.

There were several categories of Rome teachers and staff that received

awards Tuesday night. These include: Melinda Blattner for Exemplary Bus Driver of the Year, John Reid for Exemplary Leader of the Year, Elm Street Elementary’s Penny Atkinson and Main El-

ementary’s Belinda Miller for Exemplary Staff with 30+ Years of Service.

Bowles will be advancing to the Georgia Department of Education to represent RCS and will have the opportunity to win Teacher of the Year at the state level.

Additionally, nominees for Teacher of the Year were:

- ◆ East Central Elementary’s Lisa Peck.
- ◆ Elm Street’s Elementary’s Charissa Ondovic.
- ◆ Main Elementary’s Monica Barton.
- ◆ West Central Elementary’s Charisse Mann.
- ◆ West End Elementary’s Sandy Mull.
- ◆ Rome Middle School’s Manuel Pedroza.
- ◆ Rome High School’s Traci McPherson.

SEE **RCS**, A2



Contributed

Rome City Schools staffers pose with their awards with RCS Superintendent Eric Holland (far right) Tuesday night at the end of the Exemplary Professionals Banquet.

## Board of elections prepares for Nov. 4

By Mo Burge  
MBurge@RN-T.com

The Floyd County Board of Elections and Registration is busy preparing for the November election, which will decide two contests for the city of Rome, two Public Service Commission seats and three referendums.

The Nov. 4 election ballot will contain candidates for three seats on the Rome City Commission and candidates for all seven Rome Board of Education seats. There will also be a vote for liquor by the glass and Sunday liquor sales in the county.

The alcohol referendums are not to determine approval, but are meant to help gauge support and give the Floyd County Commission an idea of how to move forward, said Board Chair Jerry Lee.

Voters also will decide on a 1 cent sales tax meant to offset property taxes.

Elections Supervisor Akyn Beck told the board at a Tuesday meeting that ballots have been proofed and sent to the Secretary of State’s office and ballot samples should be available later this month.

SEE **ELECTION**, A3



Akyn Beck



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**LOCAL MATTERS**

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### TODAY'S YOUNG ARTIST

Molly Sutherland, a seventh grader at Pepperell Middle School

Email artwork to HKoon@RN-T.com.

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**NO OBITUARIES:** Funeral homes submitted no obituaries for today's edition.

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