



Sports:
Georgia Highlands has eyes on the future of the Chargers. While for now GHC is still in the NJCAA, it's taking steps toward joining the NAIA. **B1**

◆ **WEEKEND EDITION** ◆

Rome News-Tribune

Saturday/Sunday, July 11/12, 2026

RN-T.com

Weather: Showers, storms likely. Sunny. High 91. **B4**

183rd year ◆ No. 135 ◆ \$2



2026 millage rate discussions begin

Members stress that no proposals or decisions were made at Friday's Rome Finance Committee meeting

By **Baylen Parker**
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The Rome Finance Committee kicked off discussions on the city's 2026 millage rate, weighing how to balance rising oper-

ating costs with taxpayer relief as preliminary figures showed slower-than-expected growth in the city's tax digest.

Committee members stressed that no proposals or decisions were made at the Friday finance committee meeting. Instead,

the meeting served as the first step in the annual millage rate process, with several possible scenarios presented for discussion before a final recommendation is made to the Rome City Commission.

"We don't have to make a decision today, but it's really more to start a conversation, kind of getting the information out more than anything about what this preliminary digest looks like," Rome City

Manager Sammy Rich said.

Much of the committee's discussion centered on what members have been hearing from residents about property taxes and the rising cost of living.

Mayor Pro Tem Wayne Robinson said many taxpayers feel financially stretched after the past several years.

SEE **MILLAGE**, A3



Through Cherokee Eyes

East Band cultural ambassador shares history of the Cherokee

By **Baylen Parker and Rachel Hartdegen**
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"I want you to think about this," Cultural Ambassador for the East Band of Cherokee Sonny Ledford said to a full ballroom at Coosa Country Club. "Imagine someone coming up to you saying you can't live here no more. If you have gardens

or you have crops and that's how you make a living, if you were told you will never plant here again, ever. How would that make you feel?"

While this was a thought exercise for attendees at the Rotary Club of Rome Thursday afternoon, it was the reality for the Cherokee when Europeans settled in America.

"This is the last time you will plant and you will harvest," Ledford said his ancestors were

told before they were removed from their land in 1838.

Thursday afternoon and later in the evening, Ledford shared the unfettered history of the Cherokee people, his people, in two presentations in Rome: first at the Rotary Club of Rome and then at the Chieftains Museum/Major Ridge Home during History & Happy Hour.

SEE **CHEROKEE**, A4



Steven Eckhoff

Top: Sonny Ledford, a cultural ambassador for the Eastern Band of Cherokee, speaks during Chieftains Museum's History & Happy Hour on Thursday, encouraging attendees to explore Cherokee history through Cherokee perspectives. **Above:** Attendees fill the meeting space at Chieftains.

Cancer pavilion will open next week

Staff reports

AdventHealth will celebrate the opening of its new cancer pavilion in Rome next week, marking the completion of a project designed to expand comprehensive cancer care services for patients across Northwest Georgia.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony is scheduled for 4 p.m. Wednesday, July 15, at the AdventHealth Cancer Pavilion, 641 Braves Blvd. Community members, local officials and health care partners are invited to attend the event, tour the new facility and learn more about the services it will provide.

Construction on the 30,000-square-foot pavilion

SEE **CANCER PAVILION**, A3

Rome-Floyd Fire Department teaches hot car safety

◆ With summer's high temperatures, a mistake could be fatal.

By **Emily Bradshaw**
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The temperatures outside are scorching, but being trapped in a hot car is far worse — and potentially fatal.

The Rome-Floyd Fire Department made it its mission on Friday to continue educating the public on the dangers of hot vehicles.

At the corner of Broad Street near the Rome Area History Center, those driving by could see a real-time temperature display inside one of the RFFD's vehicles.

"We put it here, so everybody on Broad Street (can see)," said Fire and Life Safety Educator Sgt. Shasta Farrer. "I love paying attention

to everybody that's been looking and being aware of it."

Farrer said she hopes this event will help people realize not only how hot a car truly gets but how quickly it heats up as well.

Just before noon, the outdoor temperature read 90.2 degrees Fahrenheit, while the car's interior temperature was 105 degrees Fahrenheit.

SEE **SAFETY**, A2



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LOCAL MATTERS

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TODAY'S YOUNG ARTIST

Easton Mason, a third grader at Alto Park Elementary

Email artwork to HKoon@RN-T.com.

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R6

Dear Abby, Puzzles

C6

Lottery

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