

Rome News-Tribune

FRIDAY, October 9, 2026

RN-T.com

Weather: Mostly cloudy. High 81. **B3**



This graphic from the National Hurricane Center details Hurricane Isaias’ predicted path on Thursday afternoon. It’s expected to impact Floyd County with high winds and rain, and possible tornadoes, starting early Saturday morning.

RN-T.com

Keep up with the latest local weather updates and any news about local areas affected by extreme weather on the Rome News-Tribune website.

NWS forecast: Stormy Saturday

By Adam Carey
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The National Weather Service is forecasting a stormy Saturday in Rome and Floyd County as Hurricane Isaias is due to make landfall in the Florida Panhandle Friday night and will bring a lot of rain and weather as it continues to travel north. According to the weather service’s hurricane tracker, the storm was forecast to travel over western Alabama and eastern Mississippi, but Northwest Georgia will still feel the effects. “We are cautioning that there could be tropical tornadoes due to the storm,” said Meredith Wyatt, a meteorologist with the weather service. “They are shallower than a typical tornado, so they can pop up fairly quickly.”

There will be heavy rains and wind gusts as strong as 50 mph, according to Wyatt, and much of Rome and Floyd County are under a flood and high-wind watch. The Floyd County Emergency Management Agency has been speaking with local and regional emergency service workers and has been closely monitoring the situation, according to Director Tim Herrington. “The governor has just issued a state of emergency for all of Georgia,” Herrington said Thursday afternoon. “We are in contact with local and regional officials and will be having



Tim Herrington

SEE **STORMY**, A2

ONLINE EXCLUSIVE

MODERATELY CONFUSED

Bonus page of comics & puzzles

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Angel Tree signup is closing Oct. 14

◆ There’s still time to register for the annual program hosted by the Salvation Army.

By Emily Bradshaw
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Local seniors and families with young children have only a few days left to sign up for this year’s Angel Tree, which provides Christmas gifts for those in need. The Salvation Army’s annual Angel Tree benefits seniors aged 65 or older and families with children 12 years old or younger. “We know that people often don’t think of Christmas in October,” Capt. Cristina Tilley said, “but because it’s such a big operation and we need to give donors time to shop, and for us, time to look twice through every bag and so on, we are doing it early.” To register, bring required documentation to The Salvation Army Chapel, 310 E. Second Ave. Registration is from 9 a.m. to noon or 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Wednesday through Oct. 14. The final day to sign up is a Saturday, Oct. 17 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The program is open to residents of Floyd, Polk and Chattooga Counties. The following documentation is required to sign up: ◆ Photo ID for the applicant ◆ Proof of residency, such as the first page of a mortgage, lease or utility bill to show the address ◆ Proof of income for the parent or guardian applicants ◆ Birth certificate or Medicaid card for every child in the household ◆ Documentation of SNAP, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Medicaid, food stamps or other assistance received The financial requirement to qualify for Angel Tree depends on several factors, including household size and income.

SEE **ANGEL TREE**, A2

Baby red panda



Contributed

Dr. Tony Ashley and lead veterinary tech Megan Ferrell hold Masala during the baby red panda’s first vet visit in July.

Zoo to host gender reveal party

By Adam Carey
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Just like proud parents, the Chattanooga Zoo is hosting a gender reveal party Oct. 18 to celebrate the birth of its newest member, Masala the Red Panda Cub, born July 6. “We are so excited to introduce Masala to our zoo family and friends,” said Jake Cash, director of marketing and communications for the Chattanooga Zoo. “Masala was very much a miracle baby and we’re excited for the reveal party.” The party, which is free



after buying general admission to the zoo, is from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. and will include activities and games, a photo wall, limited

anonymous donor; the word “masala” means a blend of spices in Hindi but also has deeper cultural and familial meanings. The cub’s name pays homage to its mother, Saffron, while also referencing Indian culture, one of the few countries where red pandas live. Zoo officials call Masala a “miracle baby” because the cub’s birth was affected by delayed implementation, which means the embryo remained dormant in the mother’s uterus for a time before implanting and growing into her offspring. Red panda mating season typically occurs between December and March, and animal care staff observed mating behaviors between Masala’s mom Saffron and father Avi in February, according to a statement from the zoo. However, for many months, veterinary staff took a series of X-rays to see if Saffron was pregnant and could not detect a fetus.

SEE **BABY RED PANDA**, A2



Contributed

Above: Saffron and Masala share a bowl of red panda chow recently at the Chattanooga Zoo. Inset in story: Masala the baby red panda enjoys a hammock earlier this month. Right: Masala gets a first doctor visit at 10 days old this July.



Cave Spring revisiting plan for crosswalk

◆ The previous Alabama Street proposal hits a snag.

By Baylen Parker
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Cave Spring officials are revisiting plans for a crosswalk between Cave Spring Baptist Church and Rolater Park after requirements for a pedestrian study complicated a proposed safety project on Alabama Street. City Manager Stephen Walker discussed the project during Tuesday’s city council work session as the city considers how to use its next Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant, or LMIG, from the Georgia Department of Transportation. Walker said the city typically receives about \$25,000 to \$30,000 through each grant. The city initially hoped to use the funding for a crosswalk and rapid-flashing beacon system on Alabama Street near The Peddler, where officials have raised concerns about pedestrians crossing the state highway during festivals and other downtown events.

SEE **CAVE SPRING**, A2



Stephen Walker

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LOCAL MATTERS

Judged a newspaper of General Excellence 2025



TODAY’S YOUNG ARTIST

Jorge Vasquez Ambrocio, a student at Alto Park

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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