

Roman Life:
Stories of Scoring for the Silver Screen — Rome welcomes legendary Hollywood composer Lee Holdridge. **C1**



WEEKEND EDITION

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Weather: Sunny. High near 64. **B4**

Christian retreat plan hits setback

♦ The proposal for Smith Road could return in January with a revised request.

By Baylen Parker
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A proposal to build a Christian retreat and camp on Smith Road ran into a setback when the Rome-Floyd Planning Commission recommended denying a special-use permit for the project.

Several Smith Road residents raised concerns during Thursday's meeting about traffic on the narrow, winding road, emergency vehicle access, stormwater runoff and the loss of trees.

A revised site plan also left residents and county reviewers without enough time to evaluate the changes.

The commission recommended denial without prejudice, allowing the applicants to return with a revised request. The Floyd County Commission, which makes the final decision, is scheduled to hold a public hearing Nov. 24.

The request covers property on Smith Road near Mount Alto, where applicants Yound and Susan Chang have proposed Christian educational programs, marriage and family counseling, and retreat accommodations.



Brice Wood

Planning Director Brice Wood said his office received an updated site plan only about a week before the meeting, after neighbors had been provided an older version of the proposal.

"We're not confident that it's reasonable to expect people to come up with questions or concerns almost on the fly," Wood said.

See **PLANNING**, A3

Library: 'It is a very successful program'

♦ Food for Fines offers relief for late fees and food insecurity.

By Emily Bradshaw
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Patrons with late fees on library books can knock money off their fines by donating nonperishable food items through Dec. 19.

The Sara Hightower Regional Library System is holding its annual Food for Fines program, giving library users the opportunity to reduce late fees while also supporting relief from food insecurity in the community.

"It is a very successful program, and that's why we've continued to offer it each year because it is something that people appreciate the opportunity to participate in," said Amelia Blackmon, branch services and outreach manager for the library system.

For every non-perishable item brought in through Dec. 19, patrons will receive $2 off their late fee, up to $20 in forgiveness for each account on the library card, Blackmon said.

The food items must be non-perishable. Any perishable items, expired or past-sell-by-date items or homemade items will not be accepted, she said.

The donations collected at the Rome-Floyd County Library will go to the Rome-Floyd County Community Kitchen, she said.

"It is something that we try to do every year because

See **FOOD FOR FINES**, A3

The real attraction at West Rome ribbon cutting: A pedal track



Adam Carey

Charlie and Henry Barker try out the pedal track at the new Garrard Park Friday afternoon during its unveiling.

Garrard Park officially opens

By Adam Carey
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The new Garrard Park in West Rome officially opened Friday, as Rome and Floyd County officials and their guests enjoyed balmy weather and blue skies for the official ribbon-cutting.

The new park, which contains an oval-shaped pedal track, a central climbing structure and restrooms, cost $1.6 million, most of which was paid for with federal funds through the Northwest Georgia Housing Authority. The City of Rome contributed $160,000.

"There's a lot of West Rome pride out here today," Floyd County Superior Court Clerk Mary Hardin Thornton said. "We all grew up here in Garden Lakes riding our bikes around."

See **GARRARD PARK**, A3





Above: Floyd County Superior Court Clerk Mary Hardin Thornton and members of her extended family speak Friday afternoon during the unveiling of the new Garrard Park in West Rome. **Right:** Greyson Pearman, with his mom, Erika Pearman, smiles and points at the camera Friday afternoon at the new Garrard Park.

Legislators visit Rome Middle

Staff reports

Rome Middle School received a trio of state legislators last week as Rome City Schools Superintendent Eric Holland and members of the RCS Board of Education met with them for an update on students' academic progress as well as literacy, school funding and student achievements.

State Rep. Eddie Lumsden, state Rep. Katie Dempsey and state Sen. Chuck Hufstetler also toured the new Rome Middle School with Principal Christian Barnes.

"My goal is that you get to hear from the whole board's perspective today," Holland said. "And the many challenges we are dealing with every single day."

Holland then opened the discussion by highlighting the district's graduation

See **VISIT**, A4

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TODAY'S YOUNG ARTIST
Gracie Abney, a student at Model Elementary School

Email artwork to HKoon@RN-T.com.

Business	D1	Lottery	A3	Roman Life	C1
Classified	R6	Opinion	A8	Sports	B1
Dear Abby, Puzzles	C6	Religion	C4	TV listings	R3

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No Obituaries: Funeral homes submitted no obituaries for today's edition.

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