



SPORTS

Bethlehem grad, rising national team star Claire Hutton on her way to San Jose. **B1**

PREVIEW

Kathak artist barkha patel channels Kali for Schenectady show. **D1**



FOOD

Three Yemeni coffee houses coming to Latham, part of nationwide trend. **E1**

TIMES UNION

TIMESUNION.COM THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2026 ALBANY, NEW YORK \$3.00

Sage students help ID suspect in '64 murder

By Kathleen Moore
STAFF WRITER

TROY — Russell Sage College students helped identify a man who Elmira police believe was a murderer.

Interning at the college's Criminal Investigation Resource Center, 20 students focused on the murder of a 12-year-old girl in Elmira, a small city about 45 minutes from Ithaca.

In 1964, Mary Theresa Simpson headed home from her grandmother's house in Elmira. It was 6:30 p.m. on Sunday, March 15 — not quite dark. Her mother and some friends walked her part of the way. Then they let her finish the walk alone.

She never made it home.

Police found her body four days later. It was clearly a homicide —

death by choking or strangling, police said.

They developed a list of suspects. But as the investigation continued, they began to suspect this was the truly rare stranger abduction.

"When you have a stranger perpetrator, you might as well throw a rock and hope to hit someone," said Christina Lane, director of the Criminal Investigation Resource Center.

It was long before DNA became the key to solving those cases. Police didn't yet even know that DNA could be used to pinpoint criminals. But they still collected evidence, thinking about blood or fingerprint testing.

In the case of Mary Theresa Simpson, police preserved the evidence so carefully that DNA could still be recovered, decades later. The girl's See **STUDENTS, A3**



Courtesy of the Elmira Police Department
A photo of murder victim Mary Theresa Simpson is on the screen as Elmira police explained their investigation on Tuesday. Police believe they now know who killed Simpson in 1964.



Photos by Will Waldron/Times Union

Albany Mayor Dorcey Applyrs appears before a joint legislative budget hearing at the Capitol Wednesday to ask that lawmakers increase the main funding stream that helps municipalities fund essential services.

Applyrs' Capitol plea: Albany needs more cash

Mayor tells Legislature that state's formula is unsustainable

By Timothy Fanning
STAFF WRITER

ALBANY — Calling Albany a city that quietly carries the weight of state government while struggling under decades-old financial constraints, new Mayor Dorcey Applyrs on Wednesday asked state lawmakers for help.

Applyrs told a legislative panel at a budget hearing at the Capitol that her city's "resilience and determination" can no longer compensate for a funding system she said is fundamentally unfair.

The mayor said the city's fiscal challenges are rooted in state decisions, which have shrunk the city's tax base, leaving more than half of its properties tax-exempt and forcing residents to shoulder one of the highest tax burdens in New York. "With about 45% taxable proper-



A panel of New York state mayors appear before a joint legislative budget hearing on Wednesday at the Legislative Office Building in Albany.

ties in the city, we are showing up to a bazooka fight with a slingshot," Applyrs said.

Applyrs wasn't alone in asking for help. Mayors from the state's See **APPLYRS, A3**

Judges skip Trump, tap interim U.S. attorney

Ex-prosecutor Kinsella sworn in to fill post until president makes call

By Brendan J. Lyons
STAFF WRITER

ALBANY — A panel of federal judges in New York's Northern District on Wednesday appointed Donald T. Kinsella, a former federal prosecutor, as the district's interim U.S. attorney.

Under federal statutes, Kinsella will serve as interim U.S. attorney until the vacancy is filled by President Donald Trump, whose administration also may have the authority to immediately terminate the judges' appointment.

The extraordinary action by the panel of judges took place a day after the former acting U.S. attorney, John A. Sarcone III, quietly reverted his title to "first assistant U.S. attorney." That change in title came as Sarcone's term as the Northern District's acting U.S. attorney expired Tuesday, when he hit the 210-day limit for him to remain in that temporary position under the Federal Vacancies Reform Act.

It's unclear how long Kinsella's appointment to the position will remain in effect if Trump's adminis-

See **KINSELLA, A3**



Kinsella

Bondi clashes with Democrats over Epstein files

By Alanna Durkin Richer, Eric Tucker and Stephen Groves
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Attorney General Pam Bondi launched into a passionate defense of President Donald Trump Wednesday as she tried to turn the page from relentless criticism of the Justice Department's handling of the Jeffrey Epstein files, repeatedly shouting at Democrats during a combative hearing in which she postured herself as the Republican president's chief protector.

Besieged by questions over Epstein and accusations of a weaponized Justice Department, Bondi aggressively See **BONDI, A4**

Business.....**C8**
Classified.....**C10**
Comics.....**D7**

Crossword.....**D6, D8**
Horoscope.....**D8**
Obituaries.....**C6**

Perspective.....**A10**
Sports.....**B1**
Television.....**D6**

WEATHER: Breezy in the morning; cloudy
High: **30°** / Low: **9°** / Details, **A2**



Hear the Love

This February, hear every giggle, story, and "I love you" from the grandkids.

SCHEDULE YOUR FREE* HEARING EVALUATION TODAY 1-888-387-3068



*Hearing evaluations are always free. Hearing evaluation is an audiometric evaluation to determine proper amplification needs only. These are not medical exams or diagnoses.