Today 79°/56° · Sunday 72°/60° · Monday 66°/56° · Tuesday 72°/53°
Wednesday 76°/57° · Thursday 75°/61° · Friday 77°/60°

Inside this week:
Dreams Come True
Muckdogs see two alumni move on to the majors
Sports, A5



Your hometown guide to news, events, local businesses, and more!
The Le Roy Weekend Gazette
Volume 2, No. 43 | www.thedailynewsonline.com/leroyweekendgazette | Saturday, August 22nd, 2026 / FREE

Paddock Ready For Success as Lone Female on LR/C-M Rivals Football

By SAMUEL ZERILLO
szerillo@batavianews.com

With the introduction of girls flag football as a Section V sport, female interest in football has certainly skyrocketed as more schools have added the program to their athletic departments. Nevertheless, fall tackle football has largely remained male-dominated.

This, however, did not deter Le Roy junior Maddie Paddock from giving tackle football a try. After a summer of training for this moment, she is now set to play as the starting kicker for the varsity Le Roy/Caledonia-Mumford Rivals team this fall.

Paddock has been a three-sport athlete at Le Roy High School for some time, regularly playing soccer in the fall, basketball in the winter and softball in the spring.

One of Paddock's basketball coaches, Tom Fernaays, was the one who first approached her about playing tackle football.

"One of our basketball coaches, (Tom Fernaays), is one of the kicking coaches. He said they needed a kicker, so I said I'd give it a shot," Paddock said.

The transition to playing placekicker for the football team has come somewhat naturally for her as well, as her background playing goalkeeper for the girls soccer team has given her some related experience.

"The transition has definitely been rough at some times, but a little easy. I have a background in doing goal kicks because I'm a goalie, but definitely kicking a football is way different than a soccer ball," Paddock said. "It's kind of just that timing that I got to get perfected to get the field goal going in straight. I think I'm just expecting myself to get that timing down and make the team proud this year by being able to get us some extra points."

The decision to play football was easy, as she comes from a football family and even had a former soccer teammate play a similar role for the football team in the past.

"We have a pretty big football family, so I just wanted to keep that in the family," Paddock said.

One of her own cousins, Cal-Mum's London Mattingly, also played football. Paddock said that seeing someone like her cousin try something like this inspired her to give football a try.

"I think my little cousin, London Mattingly, she definitely inspired me by being a girl and playing football all the way up through youth and two years on modified. It definitely inspired me," Paddock said.

Her experience since joining the team has been very positive, and she praised her coaches and male teammates for creating a welcoming environment for her.

"I think the football team has really been just a big part. All the coaches and players are just super supportive of everything," Paddock said.

Paddock was a major part of a Le Roy girls basketball team that won the Section V title last school year, and now she is motivated to help the Rivals earn their first block as a combined football team.

"I want to give the Rivals a block. I want the Rivals to have their first block since we've combined teams. I really just want to help the boys do that by getting extra points in very tight games," Paddock said.

Despite the attention she might get for being a girl playing tackle football, she emphasized that she doesn't want to take any spotlight away from what should be a great season for the Rivals, and she hopes to contribute to the team's success however she can.

"I am only a small part of a great program," Paddock said. "These boys work so hard all year round for football season, and this season I'm going to try my best to add to that and help them out as much as possible. Just because I'm a different gender going into this, I don't want to take away the spotlight of how much heart and grit they put into the program."

With that in mind, though, she also hopes that if any other girls at her school or elsewhere have wanted to try this themselves, they shouldn't be afraid to do so.

"If there are any girls out there that think they can't do it, if they want to get into football or wrestling or they want to be in a boys sport, definitely do it. Don't be scared. The boys aren't as scary as they look or sound, and they're all supportive through the whole thing," Paddock said.

With the Le Roy school starting a girls flag football team a few years ago, Paddock thinks that this will help create an avenue for more girls to try tackle football as well.

"I definitely think that now that we have the flag football team, girls at the school will definitely give it a shot," Paddock said. "I think that without the flag football team in the past, girls have just been a little bit hesitant. They haven't really wanted to get out there and try to do it. I'm hoping that me getting out there and showing them that they can do it will encourage girls in the spring to join the flag football team."



PHOTO CREDIT: ED HENRY
Maddie Paddock will be the LR/C-M Rivals kicker this season.

39th Annual Jim Kelly Celebrity Golf Classic Kicks Off in Batavia

By SAMUEL ZERILLO
szerillo@batavianews.com

Monday marked the 39th annual Jim Kelly Celebrity Golf Classic at Terry Hills Golf Club in Batavia, and the stars showed out once again to support this charity event.

The golf tournament has been a regular staple in the local area, raising money to support the Kelly for Kids Foundation.

At 9 a.m., buses and transport vehicles began arriving at the course to drop off celebrity participants, including famous athletes, actors, and media personnel.

Some regulars returned for the tournament this year, including former Buffalo Bills running back and 1991 NFL MVP Thurman Thomas and actor Kato Kaelin.

Thomas is also an affiliate of Batavia Downs, along with being a regular participant in Kelly's golf tournament. He shared what keeps him coming back.

"I've been with Batavia now for the last 10 or 15 years, and they're just an outstanding group at Batavia," Thomas said. "Outstanding people, and you know, it's still home. Even though I leave Buffalo to come to Batavia, it's still Buffalo to me and the people up here have been absolutely great. I enjoy coming up here and being a part of Jim Kelly's tournament or even something for Batavia Downs. It's just an awesome place, and I love it."

John Fina, another member of the legendary 90s Buffalo Bills squad, participated in the tournament on Monday and has local ties to the Batavia area.

"My uncle was the

See GOLF A3



SAMUEL ZERILLO/THE DAILY NEWS
Jim Kelly during a press conference at the golf tournament on Monday.

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PROVIDED PHOTO
A black granite bench was dedicated in 2019 to Gary Scott and Harry "Skip" Van Alst Jr.

Looking Back with Lynne

A Black Granite Memorial



PROVIDED PHOTO
A close up of the black granite bench placed in memorial to Gary Scott and Harry "Skip" Van Alst Jr.

By LYNNE BELLUSCIO
Special to The Le Roy Weekend Gazette

On a snowy Veterans' Day on November 11, 2019, a black granite bench was dedicated to the two men from Le Roy who died in the Vietnam War – Gary Scott and Harry "Skip" Van Alst Jr. Funds had been raised from the Le Roy community to purchase the bench and Derrick Monument had it engraved and placed in front of the Soldiers' Monument on Trigon Park. Family members and an honor guard from the American Legion braved the cold weather for a short program, and gave everyone an opportunity to reflect on the sacrifices made by of all of the men and women of Le Roy who have pledged to preserve our democracy.

The polished black granite bench was quarried in Bangalore India in the same quarry that was the source of the black granite of the Vietnam Wall in Washington. The Wall, which was completed in 1982, was designed by American architect Maya Lin. The initial reaction to the design was not always favorable but through the years, people have come to understand her initial thoughts — — that it would be "The Wall that Heals." The wall tapers from 8 inches at the narrow end and reaches just over 10 feet at the tallest part. The entire structure is situated on 2 acres of land and includes a statue "The Three Servicemen" and the Vietnam Women's Memorial. In 1990, several blank granite panels were purchased in case any were damaged and they were put into storage at Quantico Marine base. In 2011, two of the panels were shattered during the Virginia earthquake. The names on The Wall are engraved in Optima typeface, designed by Hermann Zapf and are arranged chronologically by the date of death. The very first names originally placed on panel 1E when the Wall was built, were Army Major Dale W. Buis and Master Sergeant Chester M. Ovnand who died on July 8, 1959, however, it was later determined that Air Force Technical Sergeant Richard B. Fitzgibbon died on June 8, 1956 and his name was added later. Gary Scott's name appears on Panel 47E, Line 5. Harry Van Alst appears on Panel 44W, Line 32.

The wall connects the past with the present as visitors see their reflections while gazing at the engraved names.. There are 4124 names on the Vietnam Wall from New York State, and 19 are from Genesee County. Gary Scott is listed from Monroe County because after he graduated from high school, the family moved to Rochester and after his death, he was buried in the military section of Riverside Cemetery in Rochester. Every year, Jim Bonaquisti goes up to Riverside to clean the stone and make sure grass and debris is removed. Harry Van Alst is buried in Machpelah Cemetery in Section G.

When the black granite bench was dedicated in 2019, Mike Vinci wrote a poem that was read that day:

What's In a Name

A name is just a couple of words,
Put together for us all,
But grows to something larger,
When it's etched upon the wall
Now it paints a picture . .
Takes on a life all its own,
It represents a loved one,
That a family once had known.
It speaks of all the happy times,
And the times when they all cried,
And also tells of how he lived,
And most certainly how he died.
To all his new found brothers,
It's a story they all shared,
Of times all full of courage
And times when they were scared.
It speaks of a sacred bonding,
That will last them for all time.
And a key to all the memories,
Locked away inside their minds.
Now imagine all the names here,
Had their stories begin to play,
You's see just what a soldier sees,
On each and every day.
So, pay a visit to the Wall,
And when you see a veteran kneeling,
Offer up a little prayer,
It will help him with his healing.

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Botts-Fiorito American Legion Accepting LeRoyan of the Year Applications

By PRESS RELEASE
Botts-Fiorito American Legion Post 576

The Botts-Fiorito American Legion Post 576 in Le Roy is now accepting applications for the 56th LeRoyan of the Year

The focus of the American Legion "LeRoyan of the Year Award" is to recognize people who demonstrate the following qualifications and attributes: • The man, woman or child who exemplifies the true spirit of Americanism, fostering respect for and the ideals and love of flag and country, regardless of race, creed or color. • Good citizenship – by carrying out their day-to-day activities and principles, often beyond that expected of him or her. Setting that example for others to emulate. • Civic responsibility – service to the community through their individual obligations to the community.

All applications MUST include detailed information on the individual being submitted.

What local programs, organizations or activities is the individual involved in that impact the welfare of the community. Examples include service through community organizations, church organizations, food pantries, after school functions, sports events, recreational volunteer activities or volunteer organization(s), Village or Town government, fire department, police department, ambulance service, Le Roy Business Council or the Garden Club, etc. Also include any position or office the individual may have held within the organization and the amount of service time devoted to the organization. Explain the individual's impact on the organization or group and the accomplishments this organization has on the community.

Applications are available at the American Legion in Le Roy 53 West Main St or by emailing d.a.rumsey@hotmail.com.

Deadline for all submission of applications is Saturday August 29, 2026.

Send application to American Legion 53 West Main St, Le Roy, NY 14482 Attn: Le Royan Award.

Applications can also be emailed to d.a.rumsey@hotmail.com.



MARK GUTMAN/THE DAILY NEWS
Applications for LeRoyan of the Year are now open.

NEWS keepsake.com
Check out our store to see what obituary keepsakes we sell!
SCAN ME
NewsKeepsake.com/Pages/Batavia-News

Golf

FROM A1

principal at Batavia High School for years, and my family is from Rochester, so any chance I can get to come back is just fantastic," Fina said. "I'm just thankful that Jim Kelly invites me back every year."

Another NFL legend in attendance, former Green Bay Packers wide receiver and 2025 Pro Football Hall of Fame inductee Sterling Sharpe, discussed why it's important to attend events like these and do what he can to support charity.

"Just lend name, image and likeness to help him raise as much money for people who are in need," Sharpe said.

After participants got a chance to eat some breakfast, the tournament began with Jim Kelly giving the opening remarks and former Buffalo Bills wide receiver Lou Piccone singing the national anthem.

At a press conference after the event began, Jim Kelly expressed how happy he is that his charity golf tournament has been running as long as it has.

"It's amazing. 39 years of doing this. To be honest with you, I prayed that I was going to get my 30th (tournament) and thank God that we're (doing) 40 next year, which is awesome," Kelly said. "I mean, it's awesome. Some of these guys have been coming for 30-plus years."

The support the Kelly for Kids Foundation has received over the years through events like this has helped the organization award more than $7 million to local groups that help disadvantaged and disabled youth across the region.

Seeing so many former teammates and celebrities continue to come out year after year to support Kelly and his charity really helps make a difference in his eyes.

"But the people that continue to donate year after year makes a difference for all the communities and all the charities around Western New York and of course my son's foundation, (Hunter's Hope)," Kelly said.

As for what brings him back to the Batavia area for this tournament every year, Kelly praised the warm welcome he always receives and the quality of the course at Terry Hills.

"The people, they treat us, I mean every one of us, like stars," Kelly said. "I'm not talking (about) me, I'm talking about my staff, the volunteers. And they take good care of us. It's amazing, from the atmosphere to the food to the course."

Next year will mark the 40th anniversary of the golf tournament, and Kelly mentioned that a lot of exciting things are on the horizon in preparation for the special occasion.

"Next year I've already reached out to a bunch of (people) for the 40th anniversary," Kelly said. "We're going to have some fun, and we're going to have a heck of a crew next year."



SAMUEL ZERILLO/THE DAILY NEWS
Jim Kelly gave the opening remarks before the golf tournament began on Monday.

ROOTED IN CHRIST
LE ROY CHURCH DIRECTORY

Calvary Baptist Church of Le Roy
8703 Lake Street Road, Le Roy
www.calvarybaptistLe Roy.org
Sunday worship service begins at 10:15 a.m.
If you do not already have a church that you attend regularly, we would like to invite you to give Calvary Baptist Church a try. We have Sunday School for all ages at 9am and our Sunday worship service typically includes singing a mix of both traditional and contemporary songs and hymns, a children's message, and a sermon from the Word of God.

First Baptist Church of Le Roy
5 E. Main St., Le Roy • (585) 768-7600
fbcLe Roy1@gmail.com
Our Sunday Worship Service is at 10am.

First Presbyterian Church of Le Roy
7 Clay St. (on the corner of Main and Rte 19)
(585) 768-8700
We welcome all to join us for Sunday service every week at 10:00am.
The Thrift Shop is now open on Tuesdays from 10:00am - noon, and Saturdays from 9:00am – noon.
Donations may be brought to the church on Monday, Wednesday, or Thursday 9:00am – noon.

Le Roy United Methodist Church
10 Trigon Park, Le Roy • (585) 768-8980
office@Le Royumcny.org • www.Le Royumcny.org
Worship on Sundays at 10:30am
Watch our livestream on FB:
facebook.com/villageofLe Roy/

Living Waters Church
30 Main St., Le Roy • (585) 768-7570
livingwatersLe Roy.org
Sunday service is held at 10:00am each week.
Fully-staffed Nursery and Children's Ministries are available at every service.
Watch live on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/livingwatersLe Royny
YouTube Livestream:
www.youtube.com/@livingwaterschurch3612

Our Lady of Mercy & St. Brigid's Roman Catholic Family
44 Lake St., Le Roy • (585) 768-6543
ourladyofmercyLe Roy.org
Mass Times @ OLM:
Saturday Vigil 4:30pm
Sunday: 7:30am, 9:30am, 5:30pm
Weekday: 7:30am M-F, 9:00am Sat.
Mass Times @ St. Brigid's:
Saturday Vigil 5:00pm
Weekday: 7:30am Thursday
Mass times may change in the near future.
YouTube Livestream:
youtube.com/@ourladyofmercyLe Roy1890/streams

St. Mark's Episcopal Church
1 E. Main St., Le Roy • (585) 768-7200
www.stmarksLe Roy.org
Facebook: stmarksLe Roy
Worship on Sundays at 10:30 am
Coffee hour following
Sunday school for children & adults
First Sunday of the month at 9:30 am
All are welcome here!

OBITUARIES

David Gene Merritt

David Gene Merritt of Stafford, New York, passed away peacefully on Aug. 13, 2026, at the age of 74.

David will be deeply missed by his longtime partner of 37 years, Bonnie Perry.

He leaves behind his children, Nathan (Shawna) Merritt, Gina (Jason) Palmer and Tanya (Frank) Deel. He was a proud grandfather to Gaven, Sophia, Azalea, Ryker, Abigail, Collin, Gabriella, and Willow. He is also survived by his mother, Alytha Knapp; and his siblings, Barbara Knapp, Patricia Knapp, and Jonathan Knapp.

One of David's greatest passions in life was cars. Whether he was working on one, talking about one, admiring one, or simply taking a drive, cars were always close to his heart. He could spot a special car from a mile away and was always happy to share his knowledge, opinions, and stories — whether you asked for them or not. His love of cars was more than a hobby; it was a part of who he was.

Above all, David will be remembered for the love he had for his family, the laughter he shared, and the countless memories he created with those around him. He leaves behind a legacy that will continue through the people who loved him and the stories they will carry with them.

Though he may no longer be here to take us for a ride, his spirit will live on in every story we tell, every laugh we share, and every beautiful car that catches our eye.

David will be loved, remembered, and missed always.

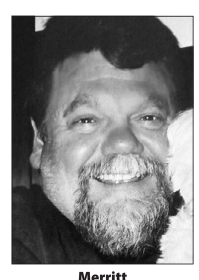
Family and friends may call on Saturday, Sept. 12 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Falcone Family Funeral & Cremation Service Inc., 8700 Lake St. Rd., LeRoy.

Family and close friends may join the family for a reception and opportunity to share stories and memories of David following calling hours approximately 3 p.m. (early arrivals are fine) at the Red Osier Landmark Restaurant.

Please attend driving in with your favorite hot rod or motorcycle in recognition of David's love for cars.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are suggested to St. Jude Children's Hospital, www.stjude.org/donate.

Your memories and condolences may be shared with David's family at www.falconefuneralhome.com.



Merritt

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Your hometown guide to news, events, local businesses, and more!
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Obituary announcements
Honor the cherished memory of a loved one with a personal tribute.
Place an obituary in **The Le Roy Weekend Gazette** starting at $75 for 5". Each additional inch in depth will cost $15. Adding a standard size photo will cost $15. If you would like to run the obituary in either **The Daily News** or **Livingston County News** in addition to **The LWG**, the obituary can be repeated at 50% of the original cost.
Newspapers offer a historical account of the communities they serve and we do not want to exclude anyone from our obituary page due to inability to pay. Therefore, a one-inch death notice that only lists the name, age, town, date of death and occupation of the deceased will be free of charge. The funeral home needs to note in their email that the obituary will be free. As such, the name of the Funeral Home will not be published in the free obituary.
The LWG allows Funeral Homes to publish a "partial" obituary. There is no charge for a partial as long as a complete obituary is forthcoming. If for any reason a full obituary is not published, **The LWG** will charge the minimum $75 obituary fee.
Call us for more information on deadlines and placement details.
The Le Roy Weekend Gazette
Local News & Community • In Print & Online
585-250-0555 | www.thedailynewsonline.com/leroyweekendgazette

What's Up Le Roy?

EVENTS COMING UP IN OUR Community!

Saturday, August 22

11am
Liz Green Memorial Golf Tournament
Registration Begins at 11am
Shotgun Start at 12noon
Dinner & Raffles at 5pm
$125 Per Foursome Includes...
(4) person scramble
18 holes
Dinner
TO REGISTER or SPONSOR THE EVENT...
Email: eegreen.13@gmail.com
Call or Text: 585-409-5967 (Erin)
Le Roy Country Club
7733 Route 5, Le Roy NY

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5pm
Masquerade Gala
Enjoy an evening of mystery, fine dining, dancing, and supporting a great cause. 5:00pm Cocktails, 6:00pm Dinner, 8:00pm Party with the Something Else Band. Tickets and table sponsorships are available by calling 494-1621. Formal attire. All proceeds benefit Gillam Grant Community Center.
Gillam Grant Community Center
6966 W. Bergen Rd., Bergen

•

Sunday, August 23

10am
Rochester VegFest 2026
Rochester VegFest returns to Parcel 5 for a full day of plant-powered celebration, showcasing the best in vegan food, ethical living, and sustainable practices. This FREE outdoor festival features a lively mix of food and retail vendors, engaging speakers, cooking demos, live music, family-friendly activities, and community resources. Come join us at the Rochester VegFest and our vibrant celebration of plant-based living! For all the details, visit RocVegFestNY.org
Parcel 5
285 E. Main St., Rochester NY

•

2 - 5pm
Wilmot Warrior Weekend Guest Bartending Fundraiser
Every year, my Wilmot Warrior Weekend team rides 25 miles to help raise money for cancer research and survivorship programs for our region! My teammate Kyle and I will be guest bartending at Tracy B's, on Sunday, August 23 and donating 100% of all tips to support this mission.
Live music starts at 3pm by local artist Rich Hancy.
Limited food is provided by Alex's Place.
Please join us for an afternoon of ice-cold drinks, good times and a great cause!
Huge shout out to Tracy and Jimmy for opening up their amazing brewery for this event. We are so grateful!
Tracy B's Market and Farm Brewery
8041 E. Main Rd., Le Roy NY

•

Sunday, August 30

12pm
FXE All Star Season Preview
Want to be the first to know everything about the Freedom X Elite All Star program for the 2026-2027 season?
• Team information
• Age divisions
• Practice schedules
• Competition details
• Tuition & program costs
• Tryout information
• And more!
Join us on August 30th at 12:00 PM for our FXE All Star Season Preview and get an inside look at what it means to be part of Freedom X Elite All Stars.
Freedom X Elite Allstars
3 West Ave (Back Gym)
Le Roy, NY

•

Saturday - Sunday September 5-6

Starting 2pm on Sept. 5
Ending 9pm on Sept. 6
2026 Wings Over Batavia Air Show
We're thrilled to share that the show will be back September 5 & 6 to light up the night above Batavia Airport!
Wings Over Batavia has become the area's can't-miss event of the summer, always featuring world-class performers putting on breathtaking displays. The performances begin in the late afternoon and continue into the evening, concluding with our iconic pyromusical. And with this year being the 250th anniversary of the United States, we'll be taking our show to historical heights to celebrate!
Tickets are on sale now! Check out our website to get yours today! https://wingsoverbatavia.com/tickets/
Genesee County Airport
4701 E. Saile Dr., Batavia

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Sat. Sept. 12

Whole Day
Le Roy Community Wide Garage Sale
Nancy Crocker and Mollie Mart are looking to add more addresses to the LeRoy community garage sale list on September 12! Add your name by contacting her at 585-314-7982 or emailing nancycrocker619@gmail.com
Don't wait! Let's make this bigger than ever!
Village of Le Roy
Le Roy, NY

ONGOING:

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Mondays

6 - 10pm
Modern Monday
$10 entry (includes 1 booster pack of current set)
Weekly event:
Sign-ups begin at 5:00 pm
Round 1 begins promptly at 6 pm
Players entering after 6 pm will receive a round 1 loss
Format: Modern Constructed. 3 rounds
Prizes: Go 3-0 and get $15 in Store Credit!
Go 2-1 and get $5 in Store Credit!
Additional prizes will be awarded based upon 1st, 2nd, 3rd place running leader board for this event and set. Final day will be last Monday prior to pre-release of the next set.
Dio's Eclectic Treasures
8 Lake St., Le Roy

•

Tuesdays

6 - 8pm
Weekly Flesh & Blood Armory
We would love to offer the community FaB at our play space. We are open to hosting whatever people are interested in playing! Bring a friend or group on out and enjoy yourselves! Top 6 prizes.
Dio's Eclectic Treasures
8 Lake St., Le Roy

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Wednesdays

6:30 - 7:30pm
Join the Crafty Crafters
Official Start Date of the Crafty Crafters, Wednesday, September 2nd at 6:30 pm at York Baptist Church in the gathering room! Everyone is welcome, from beginner to expert! All ages are welcome to participate. Please bring your own knitting, crocheting, quilting, and embroidery materials, and a good "yarn" to spin!
First Baptist Church
5 E. Main St., Le Roy

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Thursdays

5 - 8pm
From May 21st to September 10th
Cruisin' at the Corral
Come Showcase Your Pride & Joy! ... and relax with the Cruiser fellowship of Cruisin' at the Corral Join us for one of Western New York's finest displays of classic cars, trucks & motorcycles! FUN FOR ALL !!! Old Cars • New Cars • Sports Cars • Muscle Cars Trucks • Motorcycles • Specialty Cars
INFO: - Some come early, some stay late! - Most vehicles arrive between 5:15-5:45pm - This is a relaxed event of Cruiser fellowship. - Please wait for an attendant to be present before parking in the field. - Join us in the stage area around 6:30pm
Charcoal Corral & Silver Lake Twin Drive-In
7037 Chapman Ave., Perry NY

•

Fridays

1 - 7pm
Friday Night Magic the Gathering
People are welcome to come (in pairs or groups) anytime during our business hours (1-7pm) and play free play. Sign up for the event through the WPN event link website. People are welcome to do this any day (Mon-Sun) between 1-7pm. D&D, Pokémon, YuGiOh, or any other family friendly game play also welcomed in our game room!
Contact us via call or text if you have any questions (585) 356-7579
Dio's Eclectic Treasures
8 Lake St., Le Roy

MAGIC MAZE ● MEASURED WORDS

K P N K I F C A X V S Q O L J
H E C A F X V D R A Y E N I V
T R S P N O L J I H L R F D B
M Y M X V F O O T A G E F T R
P I I O M K H T N A M T O O F
I C L I N C H Y W R G E O E D
B Z E E N X A W A E U M T T R
Q O N I A R L D J I A I H E G
F D C C D G R I N C H R O A R
Y X W V T A E N O T S E L I M
S D R A Y L A H R P O P D N L

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.
Unlisted clue hint: A FIELD OF GRAPEVINES

Cinch · Clinch · Diameter · Footage · Foothold · Footman · Footwear · Grinch · Halyard · Lanyard · Mileage · Milestone · Perimeter · Smile · Yardarm

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Weekly SUDOKU

6		7		9	2			3
			3	7		6	1	8
			1			9		
	8			2	1	7		6
7		1		3			2	
		2	6			1	9	4
				4	3		8	
3	9	5			8		4	
4					5	3		7

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆
◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging ◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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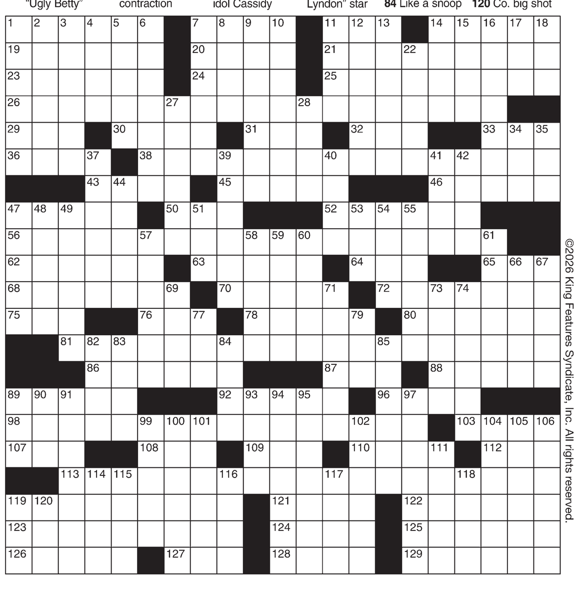
Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

1. TELEVISION: Which musical instrument does Leonard play in "The Big Bang Theory"?
2. MUSIC: In what year did the Woodstock music festival take place?
3. MOVIES: Which horror movie features a character named Ellen Ripley?
4. HISTORY: When did the French Revolution begin?
5. FOOD & DRINK: What is carpaccio?
6. U.S. STATES: How many states border Mexico?
7. GAMES: How many wooden blocks are in the game of Jenga?
8. GEOGRAPHY: What is the longest mountain chain in the world?
9. ART: Who painted the "Mona Lisa"?
10. MATH: How many sides does a hexagon have?

Super Crossword — TOOTIN' MAD

ACROSS
1 Lie down in rest
7 Pedometer unit
11 Trial fig.
14 Pig in a kids' series
19 A bit coarse, as humor
20 — sapiens
21 Informal talks
23 Personae non — (unwelcome sorts)
24 At the summit
25 Nielsens, e.g.
26 Start of a riddle
29 Granola bit
30 Goose of Hawaii
31 Many a craft brew, in brief
32 — center (play area)
33 Thu. follower
36 "That's — blow!"
38 Riddle, part 2
43 Suffix with Information
45 High-IQ crew
46 Harp relatives
47 Uncouth sorts
50 Ortiz of "Ugly Betty"
52 City near Seattle
56 Riddle, part 3
62 Hat for Indiana Jones
63 Esther of "Good Times"
64 China's Chou En- —
65 Uncertainties
68 Very last part
70 Opus
72 Freaks out
75 Gore, Roker and Pacino
76 Relative of .edu or .org
78 Base for head hair
80 Like many Coast Guard rescues
81 Riddle, part 4
86 Feature of the word "jot"
87 Execs' mag
88 Idea sources
89 Skylit lobbies
92 Project deets
96 James of "Alien Nation"
98 End of the riddle
103 Pirate's drink
107 Bunch
108 "Deck the Halls" contraction
109 Mined stuff
110 Egyptian canal
112 Year, in Brazil
113 Riddle's answer
119 Like the work of insurance risk calculators
121 "Bye-bye!"
122 Walk really quietly
123 Lambastes
124 Pre-'91 empire
125 "7 Rings" singer Grande
126 Applesauce brand
127 "Fancy that!"
128 Chinese dog, in brief
129 Became taut

DOWN
1 Singer Belle or Spektor
2 Lengthy reprimand
3 Beseech reverently
4 Preminger of film
5 Former teen idol Cassidy
6 Glasses and contacts
7 Unselfish sort
8 Carry around
9 Like theatrical behavior
10 Appear like a jack-in-the-box
11 Last part of some plays
12 Saloon
13 Castle tower
14 Org. against leather
15 Estrada of "CHiPs"
16 Miss terribly
17 Tent stake
18 Hoofed beast
22 Nickname for Louis Armstrong
27 Make beloved
28 Sculling tools
34 Comic Issa
35 SSNs, e.g.
37 Artist Andy
39 Iconic "Dragnet" line
40 Granola bits
41 Often-tickled Muppet
42 With 48-Down, "Barry Lyndon" star
44 French river or department
47 U.K.'s counterpart to an Oscar
48 See 42-Down
49 A bit strange
51 Neither's partner
53 Ocean east of Ga.
54 Mined stuff
55 Columbus citizen
57 Mexican general Villa
58 Donovan of "Clueless"
59 Decide (to)
60 Decompose
61 "— Cousins" (Elvis Presley film)
66 Grazing area
67 Doesn't leave
69 Mail slot spot
71 Plaza Hotel girl
73 Rho follower
74 Botching it up
77 "Rocky III" co-star
79 Wordplay bit
82 "That so?"
83 Persian ruler
84 Like a snoop
85 Build up, as interest
89 Piercing tool
90 Even if, in brief
91 Snare drum sound
93 Inadequate
94 Annual basketball contest on the Continent
95 Silk nightdress
97 Proficient in
99 Pong maker
100 Clamping down on
101 Lordly home
102 Beachward
104 Believers in Jah, informally
105 Common soccer score
106 Conk out, as a machine
111 Old name of the Congo
114 "Hooper" star Reynolds
115 Junior miss
116 Big ice mass
117 Bit of work
118 Revolve
119 It's pressed for cash
120 Co. big shot



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LWG SPORTS INSIDER

Muckdogs See Two Alumni Move On to the Majors

By SAMUEL ZERILLO
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Two former Batavia Muckdogs saw their dreams come true by being drafted into the majors during the MLB Draft this season.

Luc Rising and Adam Agresti left the Muckdogs in 2025 and 2023, respectively, but their baseball journeys will continue to cross as they were both drafted to the same MLB team, the Los Angeles Angels, at picks 289 and 319.

For Muckdogs head coach and manager Joey Martinez, seeing players like Agresti and Rising come through the organization shows the quality of talent that comes to play right here in Batavia.

"It means the world to us," Martinez said. "Speaks of the quality of guys that we bring in here and the crazy rigorous recruiting process that we go through all season."

Martinez explained the lengths to which the Muckdogs organization goes every year to build its roster, and how that has produced several great players and successful teams.

"People think that you show up and your roster just magically appears. It's pretty much a year-round gig where once these guys go back to school and fall ball, somewhere between that period of September and November, we start signing guys for the summer. So, it's a rigorous, rigorous, long recruiting process," Martinez said.

Getting the opportunity for players like Agresti and Rising to join the Muckdogs organization, and then being part of their development and baseball journey, is very rewarding for Martinez.

"When we get guys like Luc Rising and Adam Agresti, man, you could just see the potential ooze out of those kids," Martinez said. "You get excited for them, and you're just glad to be a part of that journey for them. You hope that you made an impression on them."

Getting to watch Rising become the player he is through his time in Batavia is something Martinez looks back on very fondly.

"Luc Rising is like this crazy great story," Martinez said. "Some guys come here, and they're not very talkative or not very outgoing. And then within this culture, they just open up, and it makes us feel good that we can get guys to just embrace the everyday hustle and bustle that goes on here, the grind, and just embrace the culture and become better players and better human beings because of it."

Martinez still keeps in close contact with both players and got a chance to congratulate them after they were drafted in July.

"Both of them have reached out to me since I reached out to them and congratulated them both," Martinez said. "Adam just recently texted me a couple days ago... and he goes, 'Man, thank you for the experience in Batavia. I'll never forget that experience there.'"

In Martinez's six years as manager, he has now seen an impressive four former players that he coached get drafted to the MLB. He believes the culture that he and his coaching staff helped build in Batavia has created a great environment for talent to grow.

"When I first took over here in 2021, I told Robbie Nichols, who's one of the best owners in the league, I told him, before we start winning games around here, we need to build the culture," Martinez said.

Providing players with these best possible circumstances to succeed and improve both their playing and professional skills is what the Muckdogs pride themselves on.

"It's just as close to pro ball that some of them may ever get outside of our draft guys, right? So, they sign autographs, they come in here, they have a beautiful clubhouse, they have trainers, they got coaching staffs, they got early birds, they got data, they got video analysis, they have early work, they have gyms that they go to, trainers, just so much stuff that they don't experience at their own schools for some of them, most of them," Martinez said.

"So, we came here, and we built this kind of thing where they sit there and go, 'this is the best baseball environment I've been around,' and that's the goal for us," Martinez said. "So now when they go back to their respective school, they say, 'hey, coach, Batavia's the place to play and we need to send guys there.'"

The future continues to look bright for the Muckdogs, as they are now coming off a season in which the team won its first-ever Perfect Game Collegiate Baseball League championship, and Martinez is hopeful that one day more Batavia players' names will be called on MLB draft night.

"I think in this group here, you may have a few more (drafted to the MLB) in a couple of years too," Martinez said.

The MLB Draft took place on July 11 and 12 in Philadelphia.



MIKE ROSE/THE DAILY NEWS
Luc Rising celebrates during a game last season. This year he was drafted into the MLB at pick 289 by the Los Angeles Angels.

Takeaways from Bills Preseason Opener Against Panthers

By MIKE ROSE
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ORCHARD PARK — The Bills had plenty of positive signs to take from Saturday's preseason opener and a couple of negatives. Here are my takeaways from the 29-14 win over the Carolina Panthers.

Budding star?

Second-year defensive tackle Deone Walker was a one-man wrecking crew across his three series of action on Saturday.

Walker racked up three total tackles, a tackle for loss and a sack and dominated the Panthers' offensive line no matter who was across from him. He looked like the best player on the field of anybody all day, which is a welcome sight for the Bills in their new defensive scheme. Bills head coach Joe Brady had high praise for him postgame.

"I felt like he was an emerging stud last year," Brady said. "You know, going back and obviously watching the tape with it. He's so mature, his size and his length and his versatility up front and in a limited role today, you felt him out on the football field. And what that does for Ed Oliver, what that does for the other guys, that's huge. And you know, like I say all the time, we got to be able to stop the run. and a guy with his size and length and the versatility with it helps that."

If Walker can become a consistent game-changer on the interior, it completely changes the outlook both short and long term for this defense. Many have long clamored for the team to make a move at that spot, especially lately with the potential rumblings of Tampa Bay Buccaneers' star DT Vita Vea being available for trade. Still, Walker may be the guy who changes this defense without having to cost anything extra.

Moore shines again, avoids scare

DJ Moore has garnered well-earned hype all offseason, and he showcased a bit of why across two series of action on Saturday.

Moore's connection with Josh Allen was sizzling, with the Bills' new WR1 finishing with 3 catches for 61 yards.

"Yeah, I thought he had a good day," Allen said of Moore. "So we're going to continue to grow on that. He's a heck of a football player, and we're lucky to have him."

He did get rolled up on a bit at the end of the last catch, exiting with a small limp to the sideline and not returning.

He talked with trainers briefly but walked around the sidelines for the rest of the game and appeared to be fine. While Brady has kept injury updates extremely close to the vest so far, he did note that Moore was fine postgame, a welcome sign for his long-term outlook.

Leonhard pushing the right buttons

The Bills' new-look defense was downright dominant in the victory.

Carolina failed to get a first down in each of the first three drives of the day. Buffalo had forced another three-and-out on the fourth drive until a bad facemask by Geno Stone extended the drive. That eventually led to the Panthers' only points of the game.

Panthers quarterbacks Bryce Young, Kenny Pickett and Kyle Trask averaged 4.9 yards per attempt, with the longest completion of the day being a 20-yard dump-off to AJ Dillon. The push up front beyond Walker was consistent throughout, the tackling was firm, and the coverage was sticky all the way down the depth chart for the Bills.

It was all capped by a Kani Walker interception in the fourth quarter, perfect icing on the cake for the Bills' dominant defensive day.

At the end of the day, it is still a preseason game, but holding the Panthers to 201 total yards, 3-for-11 on third and only 14 points is a statement to begin the Jim Leonhard era.

Walk(er)-ing on to the roster

Speaking of Walker, the rookie has been a standout all summer long, and the interception was just the latest example of his ability. The undrafted free agent signing has quickly vaulted up the depth chart, and his size and skill have been a big reason why. The interception, however, showcased his elite instincts and football sense, reading the play before it developed and getting into the lane before Trask released the ball.

Walker's celebration lasted through the next offensive possession, and it is clear he formed a strong bond with his teammates in short order. His name also goes down in the record books as having the first takeaway in the history of the new Highmark Stadium.

It was a question whether he'd be able to play after missing most of practice this week, with Walker getting clearance just yesterday.

"...A guy like Kani doesn't blink right, and he hasn't. He didn't practice this week. He found out yesterday; we put him through a workout and was like, hey, you're going to go out there, we're going to go warm you up in the second quarter or the third and halftime, and get you ready to go out there and play because we didn't want to overdo it with some of the injuries. He was all for it, being instinctual, seeing it and kind of trap and make the interception. I mean, that is high-level play from a guy that's a rook. And I'm happy for him. There's a lot of emotions that are going on when you're just sitting on the sideline for him to not blink, and that was pretty cool," Brady said.

Walker had an additional pass breakup in the win. Even though he was playing late into the fourth quarter and seemingly behind fellow rookie Toriano Pride Jr., it feels like Walker is the one who has a spot on this team staring him down with two weeks left of the preseason.

Put QB1 on ice

Josh Allen, as you'd expect, was excellent in his short stint on the field, finishing 6 of 8 for 111 yards and a touchdown pass to Keon Coleman, the first in the new stadium.

The bad news was the offensive line allowed him to get hit several times in just two drives, notably with Jaelin Phillips causing havoc in the backfield with a sack and another QB hit.

Offensive line struggles were one of the biggest blemishes of the Bills offense on the day, with the starters and reserves letting up some ugly reps. Rookie tackle Jude Bowry had a particularly notable tough day, allowing multiple sacks.

Game planning for these games is bare-bones, so it may not all fall directly on the big guys up front, but it is worth monitoring as things progress.

Bass busy

With the Bills consistently driving into scoring territory, Tyler Bass got to kick early and often. He finished the day 3-for-4 on field goal attempts, making from 33, 46 and 29 yards, while missing from 45 yards out. He also was perfect on extra-point attempts, going 2-for-2.

Getting as much work as he did is certainly a plus for the veteran kicker after not playing at all last season. The miss, however, spells what has long loomed over Bass since his last healthy season: a lack of consistency. Buffalo has not brought in any competition this offseason, so the job is his to start the regular season barring injury. But that doesn't mean the leash will be long, and some ugly weeks and costly misses could lead to tryouts happening quickly this season.

It is also worth noting that, although the punters did not punt at all in this game, rookie Tommy Doman Jr. handled the holds on Bass' early kicks, and the veteran kicker praised the rookie.

"He's a pro. He's a holder. I've been through a few. Getting to work with him in training camp, it's nice. He does a good job, and he's growing. We're learning," Bass said.

Ground repairs

The Bills may still be working out some kinks with the new Highmark Stadium, and at times the grass was noticeably beat up. This was also noticeable during the Return of the Red & Blue practice last week.

The field had to be worked on during stoppages more than once, particularly early on, as divots formed on the new grass. There was also a massive presence on the field postgame repairing the many divots left from the game. This will be something to monitor as the games start to count on whether this is preventable or the new normal.



BILL WIPPERT/BUFFALO BILLS
Bills defensive tackle Deone Walker celebrates after the team gets a stop.

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LWG SPORTS INSIDER

Bills Host Open Practice Tuesday Ahead of Second Preseason Game

Injury latest, a look at week ahead

By MIKE ROSE
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ORCHARD PARK — The Buffalo Bills held their last practice of the week in Orchard Park on Tuesday, with an open practice for fans at Highmark Stadium.

Two big players returned to the field on Tuesday, cornerback Maxwell Hairston and safety Cole Bishop. Both players had been billed as dealing with 'lower-body injuries' by head coach Joe Brady. Hairston told reporters after practice that he had been dealing with a groin injury dating back to training camp.

Before practice, defensive coordinator Jim Leonhard spoke about Hairston's missed time.

"Anytime corners go out, to me, the first thing to go is their tempo, right? They start playing too fast or sometimes your eyes just get a little bit messed up. So obviously every time you lose reps, you feel like you're falling behind and having to catch up. I don't think he'll have any issues as far as schematically what we're asking them to do or communication on the field. It's how fast can they snap back into playing with the right tempo, playing with a right technique. That's the stuff, just with a new scheme and a new defensive back coach, you'd like him to get as many reps as possible just to lock in that technique so it's second nature for him," Leonhard said.

The Bills still had plenty of players down for Tuesday's practice, including some new additions. Wide receiver Keon Coleman was sporting a walking boot on his right foot following an injury Saturday. Brady said after the preseason opener that Coleman would be fine. NFL Network's Cameron Wolfe is reporting Coleman is suffering from a sprained right foot/toe. Khalil Shakir was also on the shelf on Tuesday with an undisclosed injury.

Defensive tackle Ed Oliver and safety Jalen Kilgore were also new additions to the injury report, sitting out Tuesday.

Receiver Skyler Bell, running back Ty Johnson, center Connor McGovern and safety CJ Gardner-Johnson remained out, with McGovern and Gardner-Johnson out on the field during practice in street clothes besides for their jerseys.

DJ Moore also did not participate in any team drills during practice after leaving Saturday banged up with a lower-body injury. Moore did participate in individual drills and appeared to move at full speed during the portion of practice he was on the field for.

With the multitude of receivers out of the lineup, it was a day for the defense. Several plays would've been sacks due to Josh Allen's lack of options open downfield. One of those came from Landon Jackson, who started Saturday on the defensive line. Leonhard spoke about his increased confidence prior to practice Tuesday.

"I think you'd see the confidence growing," Leonhard said. "In the offseason was a little bit limited to start just coming off the injury, and obviously new scheme, new position. And when he came back to camp, you just saw him own it. Like, this is what I am, this is who I am, and he's continuing to grow. That was a big part of the evaluation last week was get out there and let's see what he's able to do with that first group. And was excited for some of the things he did. And I'm sure he'd have a different critique of himself; he's hard on himself. But that's the number one thing with Landon, is just playing with confidence and trusting his ability and trusting the physicality he has."

There is a real chance Jackson, even if he hasn't already, surpasses T.J. Sanders in the pecking order up front.

Even when Allen was getting the ball away, it was clear he was not on the same page with the guys out there that he hasn't worked with as much.

A couple of highlight plays featured Stephen Gosnell skying over Kani Walker for a long completion from Allen, and Dante Pettis catching a touchdown around 30 yards on a perfect throw from the Bills' star quarterback.

The Bills are set to hit the road this week for Cleveland, where the team will have a joint practice on Thursday before the second preseason game on Saturday. The two teams are expected to play starters significantly at practice, according to Browns head coach Todd Monken.

"We [Monken and Brady] both talked about that if we see out of our ones (starters), our old players, on Thursday, they would not play in the game. We agreed upon that. The plan is that we'll play our ones a significant amount against each other on Thursday in a controlled environment... and see where we're at," Monken told the local media.

With that in mind, it will be interesting to see how much, if any, the Bills play some of the top guys in the preseason game.

Other notes:

— The Bills worked out and later signed defensive tackle Greg Gaines late in the day Tuesday. The 30-year-old spent the last three seasons with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

— The grass field was a hot topic again on Tuesday. Several players said they preferred the grass over the old turf, but that there were still improvements to be made. The Bills are continuing to try to get the field in top shape ahead of the regular-season home opener.



MIKE ROSE/THE DAILY NEWS
Bills cornerback Maxwell Hairston works during his return to practice on Tuesday.



MIKE ROSE/THE DAILY NEWS
Bills quarterback Josh Allen fires a pass.



MIKE ROSE/THE DAILY NEWS
Bills wide receivers DJ Moore (left), Khalil Shakir (center) and Tyrell Shavers (right) watch on during practice. Shakir and Shavers (PUP list) were both out, while Moore did not participate in team drills.

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