

**In ICE custody:** Dalton student joins father in detention after traffic stop.

**His last games:** Tech's Danny Hall about to coach his final baseball series at home.

# The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

The Substance and Soul of the South • Friday, May 9, 2025 • Atlanta, GA • AJC.com • \$2.00

## A NEW PONTIFF: POPE LEO XIV

# Conclave chooses first U.S.-born pope

In first address, Robert Prevost offers his desire ‘to walk together with you as a united church, always trying to find peace, justice.’



Newly elected Pope Leo XIV, Robert Prevost, arrives on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica on Thursday. Prevost, the first pope from the U.S., was close to Pope Francis and spent years as a missionary in Peru. ALBERTO PIZZOLI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES/TNS

By Nicole Winfield and Vanessa Gera  
Associated Press

VATICAN CITY — Robert Prevost, the Chicago-born missionary who spent his career ministering in Peru and took over the Vatican's powerful office of bishops, was elected pope on Thursday — the first in the history of the Catholic Church from the United States.

Prevost, a 69-year-old member of the Augustinian religious order, took the name Leo XIV.

In his first words as Pope Francis' successor, uttered from the loggia of St. Peter's Basilica, Leo said, "Peace be with you," and emphasized a message of "a disarmed and disarming peace" dialogue and missionary evangeliza-

tion. He wore the traditional red cape and trappings of the papacy — a cape that Francis had eschewed on his election in 2013 — suggesting a return to some degree of tradition after Francis' unorthodox pontificate.

"I would also like to thank all my brother cardinals who have chosen me to be the successor of Peter and to walk together with you as a united church, always trying to find peace, justice, and always trying to work as men and women faithful to Jesus Christ, without fear," the pope said in near-perfect Italian, mentioning the saint considered the first pope.

Prevost had been a leading candidate for the papacy, but there had

**Pope** continued on A6

### MORE DETAILS

**Why did the pontiff choose Leo?**

Pope Leo XIV's choice of name signals a commitment to social justice very much in line with the late Pope Francis' ministry. The last pope named Leo was Pope Leo XIII, who led the Catholic Church from 1878 to 1903 and laid the foundation for modern Catholic social thought, most famously with his 1891 encyclical Rerum Novarum, which addressed workers' rights and capitalism at the dawn of the industrial age.

**MORE INSIDE**  
» Chicagoans thrilled and a bit stunned at Prevost's selection, A8

# Kemp seeks to work with Trump on Senate pick

Governor hopes for a unified GOP candidate in quest to unseat Ossoff.

By Greg Bluestein | gbluestein@ajc.com

Gov. Brian Kemp said he's trying to "line up" with President Donald Trump on a consensus Republican candidate to challenge U.S. Sen. Jon Ossoff. But he cautioned that's no simple prospect.

In his first public remarks since passing on a challenge against the first-term Democrat, the governor said he decided against a bid because he wants to "stay focused on what the people elected me to do."

"I've got the best job in politics, and a lot of times you can get more done in a year and a half being governor than you can in two terms in the U.S. Senate," said Kemp.

The two-term governor, a diehard Bulldog football fan, also compared a decision to run for the Senate to a move by University of Georgia coach

**MORE INSIDE**  
» Buddy Carter jumps into U.S. Senate race vs. Ossoff, A5

**Senate** continued on A11

# Helene-ravaged farmers receive help from state

Kemp signs bills aiding agricultural and timber industries, homeowners.

By David Wickert | david.wickert@ajc.com  
and Caleb Groves | caleb.groves@ajc.com

Eight months after Hurricane Helene devastated large swaths of Georgia and the Southeast, farmers and timber producers are still waiting on federal aid.

But on Thursday, Gov. Brian Kemp signed state legislation designed to help them and other Georgians ravaged by the storm.

One bill would authorize tax breaks and other steps to aid agricultural and timber producers. Another would boost consumer protections for homeowners seeking repairs in the wake of disasters.

Those measures are in addition to nearly \$863 million in storm-related spending included in the

**MORE INSIDE**  
» Kemp bans gender-affirming care for trans inmates, A2

**Hurricane** continued on A11

# On National Have a Coke Day, soda rival brings Pepsi Challenge to Atlanta

Compare the zero-sugar variety of both around the city this weekend.

By Kelly Yamanouchi  
kelly.yamanouchi@ajc.com  
and Olivia Wakim  
olivia.wakim@ajc.com

Deep in the heart of Coca-Cola territory in Georgia, PepsiCo is launching a new front in the cola wars — with the return of the Pepsi Challenge blind taste test.

The skirmish arrived in the Peach State on Thursday — National Have a Coke Day, no less — and will run the next few days.

This time, the longtime Coke

rival is asking people out and about in Atlanta to sip from unmarked cups of Pepsi Zero Sugar and Coca-Cola Zero Sugar to decide which they prefer.

PepsiCo says all who participate will get a free 20 oz. bottle of Pepsi Zero Sugar "because even those with questionable taste deserve a second chance."

The return of the Pepsi Challenge — and doing so in Atlanta-based Coke's backyard — adds a bit of fizz to the long-brewing cola wars.

There will be Pepsi Challenge taste testing over the next couple of days at The Interlock on

**Pepsi** continued on A6



Pepsi Brand Ambassador Brittney Smith (right) reacts after Taren Ferguson chooses Pepsi during the Pepsi Challenge at The Interlock on Thursday in Atlanta. JASON GETZ/AJC

# Coweta County second metro Atlanta government to hit pause on data centers

Board to evaluate zoning codes after \$17B Project Sail is pitched.

By Zachary Hansen  
zachary.hansen@ajc.com

Coweta County officials on Tuesday became the second metro Atlanta government to temporarily pause all new data center projects, to find their bearings amid an unprecedented wave

of proposals.

The Coweta County Board of Commissioners unanimously adopted a 180-day moratorium to evaluate its data center policies and zoning codes. A similar 90-day moratorium was adopted by Douglas County in March because of the number of pending data center projects coalescing in the area.

Coweta's pause comes weeks after the board in a 3-2 vote approved a rezoning request for

a \$1 billion data center campus called Project Peach. The 320-acre project along Johnston Circle received stark opposition, including from the mayor of neighboring Palmetto in south Fulton County, according to the Newnan Times-Herald.

The moratorium was prompted by an even larger project, a \$17 billion campus called Project Sail that ranks among the largest pro-

**Coweta** continued on A6

## EDUCATION, A9

### Shaq-backed online college opens Atlanta hub

Campus — a two-year, for-profit school — seeks to change how community colleges work. It plans to create hundreds of jobs at its new hub here.

## U.S.-U.K. TRADE DEAL, A3

### Trump cuts taxes on British autos, steel

The president's announcement used grandiose terms but with limited details about what the deal will achieve.



## INDEX

Classifieds	B4	Lotteries	C2
Comics	B8	Obituaries	A10
Crossword	B5	Stocks	A12

Volume 77, Number 129



7 22011 00002 1



## GO GUIDE, B1

# Spoil your mom this weekend with a day (or night) on the town

Mother's Day is Sunday, and sure, a rose with breakfast in bed is nice. But how about pampering her in a way she'll never forget? Metro Atlanta is brimming with events this weekend, and a number of restaurants are serving up specials for the mom or mother figure in your life.