

# Rome News-Tribune

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Weather: Showers and possibly a storm. High 68. **A6**

## Man sentenced to 7 life terms

◆ The consecutive sentences are for rape and child molestation charges.

By John Bailey  
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As a Floyd County judge read off life sentences in prison for a man convicted of raping and molesting two children over a period of years, one word stood out over and over again — consecutive.

The first life sentence for 61-year-old Lawrence Wayne Nevins, for rape, is one without the possibility of parole.

As Superior Court Judge Bryan Johnson piled on additional sentences, he continued to use the same words — life term in prison, consecutive — on aggravated child molestation and other charges.

Nevins didn't said a word, except to his attorney, or show expression as the sentences were handed down.

In addition to the life term in prison without the possibility of parole, Nevins

received six other life sentences as well as 39 more years, Rome Circuit Assistant District Attorney Natalie Staats said.

Each of those sentences must be completed before he can begin to serve the next. In layman's terms, Nevins will die in prison for sexually abusing two children under the age of 8 over the course of several years.

The first incident involved a child he had



Lawrence Wayne Nevins

a family connection with in 2012, Staats said. The abuse stopped for a while, until 2017, when he began victimizing the child's younger sibling.

That abuse lasted for several years, until the older sibling noticed a change. The younger child had begun withdrawing from friends and self-cutting. The siblings talked and the younger child admitted what Nevins had done. They also said he'd threatened to harm a family member if the child told anyone.

SEE SENTENCE, A3

## Temporary Ga. gas tax suspension gains final passage

By Dave Williams  
Capitol Beat News Service

The Georgia Senate unanimously passed legislation Thursday temporarily suspending the state sales tax on gasoline, but not before a lengthy debate over who is to blame for record-high pump prices.

The bill, which the state House of Representatives passed last week, now heads to Gov. Brian Kemp's desk for his signature.

The governor and lawmakers acted after gas prices surged following the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Suspension of the tax will save Georgians 29.1 cents per gallon of gasoline, Senate

Finance Committee Chairman Chuck Hufstetler, R-Rome, said before Thursday's vote.

"The 29 cents is not going to completely solve the problem," he said. "But it's a start and a statement."

Hufstetler went on to accuse the Biden administration of contributing to higher gas prices through the Democratic president's decision to cancel the Keystone XL project last year and ban drilling for oil and gas in the eastern Gulf of Mexico and on federal lands in Alaska.

Sen. Greg Dolezal, R-Cumming, said gas prices started rising well before Russian troops entered Ukraine three weeks ago.

"Gas prices were up last year by \$1 a gallon," he said.

SEE GAS TAX, A3



Anastasia Vlasova/Getty Images/TNS

People examine the damage to a residential building in Mostytska Street, which got hit by a rocket, on Tuesday in Kyiv, Ukraine.

## Civilian targets under heavy fire as Ukraine war enters 4th week

By Nabih Bulos and Jaweed Kaleem  
Los Angeles Times

**KYIV, Ukraine** — Rescuers began Thursday to pull survivors from the rubble of a nighttime airstrike on a theater where more than 1,000 people had sheltered in the besieged port city of Mariupol, as Russia's war on Ukraine entered its fourth week with no sign of a respite.

The death toll at the red-roofed building in Mariupol — which satellite images showed had the word "children" written on the ground outside to try to deter an attack — was still unknown. But an official from the city said there were at least some survivors among those huddled inside for protection.

"After a terrible night of uncertainty on the 22nd day of war, finally good news from Mariupol! The bomb shelter survived,"

### Areas of Russian control



lawmaker Sergiy Taruta wrote on Facebook. "People are coming out alive!"

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in an early-morning video that he believed Russian troops "purposefully" targeted the building.

"Our hearts are broken by what Russia is doing to our people, to our Mariupol," he said of the southeastern city on the Sea of Azov, which has been one of the worst hit of the war and is surrounded by enemy

forces. Local officials say more than 2,400 people have died and tens of thousands more are struggling to survive without running water, power or much food.

In the capital, Kyiv, residents woke to what has become a depressing routine: reports of death and damage at another residential building following a Russian assault. This time it was by indirect fire: Ukrainian air-defense officials said they intercepted a Russian missile, which then fell in front of high-rises in the southeastern district of Darnytsky.

The blast killed one person and wounded three others, authorities said, and 30 residents were evacuated from the worst-hit tower. The explosion's impact could be seen all over the block, with at least eight building facades damaged.

SEE UKRAINE, A2

## Rome, NW Ga. get mixed labor report for January

By John Druckenmiller  
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Rome, Bartow and the rest of Northwest Georgia received another mixed labor report to start 2022 from the Georgia Department of Labor.

Despite "help wanted" signs plastering billboards around town as well as displays in front of retailers and restaurants, Floyd County did see an increase in the local work force while Bartow and the region saw all-time highs in their respective work forces.

Those records and increases weren't enough to hold the unemployment rate at December levels, however. Floyd posted a 3.3% jobless rate as did Polk, while Bartow was at 3.2%. Chattooga was the highest at 4.2% while Gordon County was the lowest at 2.9% in January.

Rome's unemployment rate for January was 3.3%, up six-tenths of a percent over December. A year ago, the rate was 4.8%. Despite this, Rome saw a rise in the labor force in the month of January.

"Even though we continue to see Georgia's workforce be successfully employed in record-breaking numbers, there is still much more work to do as we continue to see hundreds of thousands of jobs needing to be filled," said Georgia Labor Commissioner Mark Butler.

### ROME AND FLOYD COUNTY

The labor force increased in Rome by 126 and ended the month with 44,127. That number is up 290 when compared to January of 2021.

SEE JOBS, A2



### TODAY'S YOUNG ARTIST

Canyon Potts, a student at Model Elementary School

Visit [RN-T.com](http://RN-T.com) to see Today's Young Artist monthly galleries. Email submissions of student artwork to [HKoon@RN-T.com](mailto:HKoon@RN-T.com). Include the student's name, grade and school.

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