

Rome News-Tribune

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THURSDAY, September 20, 2007

Two sections • 50¢

Weather: Sunny. High in the mid 80s. 8A

On the Web: www.romenews-tribune.com

Federal court denies bar owner

A request to keep liquor in The Alley and Prickly Pear fails.

Page 3A

Murderers, thieves skulk onto Shorter stage

"The Threepenny Opera" curtain opens Sept. 27 at Shorter's Callaway Theatre.

A&E, page 6A



Vikes pluck Hawks

Berry beats Shorter's soccer team 2-1 in a Southern States Athletic Conference match.

SPORTS, page 1B



Shorter College's title bid on hold

The NAIA delays its choice of a host city for its 2008 championship game.

SPORTS, page 1B



William T. Martin / Rome News-Tribune

Crews attempt to lift a pedestrian bridge beam into place. The attempt was called off after low water kept the crane-carrying barge from being in its proper place. Another attempt may be made today.

Low water delays bridge

By Heath Hooper
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Two more beams for downtown Rome's under-construction pedestrian bridge were delivered to their new home Wednesday, though low water levels thwarted efforts to begin moving the beams into place.

Workers attempted to place the first beam onto pylons Wednesday afternoon, but low

water levels on the Oostanaula River prevented correct barge placement.

The river level was only 3.14 feet Wednesday afternoon at the Turner McCall bridge, where measurements are taken.

Ron Sitterding, community development director, said during the beam's attempted placement that construction was moving forward despite setbacks such as stuck barges.

Please see BRIDGE 2A

ON THE WEB

Read this story online to see a previous story about the pedestrian bridge beams and to see video coverage.

www.romenews-tribune.com

Still no OK to tear down old building

By Mike Perry
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Developer Ira Levy says he will return next month before the historic review board that Wednesday nixed his plans to demolish a Broad Street building — for the third time.

Levy seeks to demolish the old Top Hat building at Third Avenue and Broad Street and replace it with seven two-story townhouses above street-level retail shops.

The Historic Preservation Commission rejected Levy's plans at its July meeting, saying the proposed design was not in keeping with other historic downtown structures.

And last month, the board tabled his modified plan, citing additional design concerns and the possibility of leaving a post-demolition void in the downtown streetscape.

Commissioners on Wednesday voted 4-1 to allow Levy to build two of the seven townhouses but took no action on his demolition request. Com-

mission Chair Mike Page cast the lone dissenting vote.

"I think it is too great a risk to downtown Rome to demolish the building without some guarantee of when the replacement (structure) is going to happen," Commissioner Ann Pullen said.

Levy said he has negotiated deals with buyers on two townhouses within the development and would build those units first. Construction of other units would follow after the sale, he said.

But the site requires soil excavation and proper compaction to support the townhouses, Levy said. The heavy equipment used for that site work could damage the old Top Hat building's foundation, creating a safety hazard downtown, he said.

"I bought this property to take the building down. It cannot be rehabbed to make it meet today's codes," Levy said.

Howard Gibson, building official for the Rome-Floyd Building & Inspection Department, echoed Levy's safety concerns.

Please see BUILDING 2A

ON THE WEB

Read this story online to see a previous related story.

www.romenews-tribune.com



Ira Levy said the old Top Hat building "cannot be rehabbed to make it meet today's codes."



Campus safety

ABOVE: Firefighter Michael Barger gives Berry President Stephen Briggs a bucket-truck ride during Wednesday's Campus Safety Day.

RIGHT: Parker Jenkins (left) and Parker Kelley pet Champ. Story on 3A.

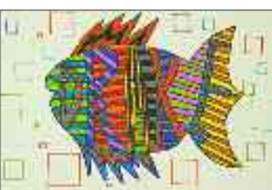
Photos by Ryan Smith, Rome News-Tribune



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TODAY'S YOUNG ARTIST



Today's artwork is by Drake Frix, a fourth-grader at Darlington Lower School.

Visit www.romenews-tribune.com to see Today's Young Artist galleries.

Best Bet: Jesus in the Park this Saturday

By Mike Gellatly
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Romans are invited to come together for fun, fellowship and quality family time Saturday at Ridge Ferry Park.

Organized by the youth of Trinity Unity Methodist Church, "Jesus in the Park 2007" is a free day of games and fun. Starting at noon and going to 7 p.m., the day at the park will be replete with games, inflatables, music, sports and food.

"The programming is brought in to respect all Christian traditions, all

church groups, families and individuals," said Grant Magness, youth minister at Trinity. "This year we tried to take it a step further. ... One of our corporate sponsors stepped up, and we had the whole event for free."

Those planning on coming are told they might want to bring a bathing suit, as wet inflatables will also be on hand. "The goal is fellowship and a great day in the park," Magness said. "A fun day for kids and family and if you can get to the park it will be free all day."

Several local Christian rock groups, both acoustic and electric, will provide

ON THE WEB

Read this story online for more information about Jesus in the Park.

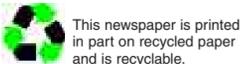
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the afternoon's music.

A religious service will take place at 6:45 p.m.

For more information, log on to www.jesusthepark.net or e-mail Magness at Yutedaddy@aol.com or call 706-409-7468.

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