

Delta begins rolling out updates to cabin interiors

USA TODAY gets exclusive preview of airline's new color scheme and finishes. **In Money**

Kathy Bates: 'I wouldn't want to retire from this'

She says CBS' "Matlock" reboot, where she plays lawyer Matty Matlock, is unexpected gift. **In Life**

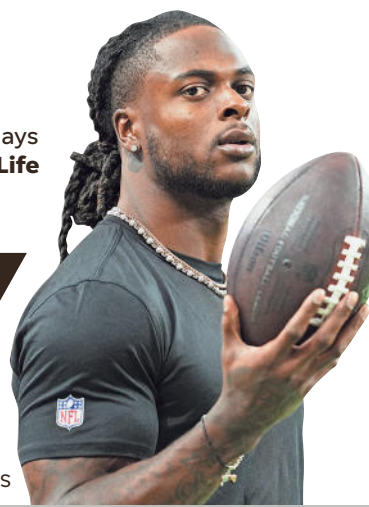
How Jets, Raiders fare in Davante Adams trade

New York lands receiver from Vegas to boost a struggling passing attack led by Aaron Rodgers. Who are the winners, losers? **In Sports**

USA TODAY

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ADAMS BY CHRIS UNGER/GETTY IMAGES



ELECTION INTEGRITY

Officials set to prevent interference

ABOUT THIS SERIES

This USA TODAY series looks at how the U.S. electoral system is resilient, and where it remains vulnerable. We highlight hot spots to watch and key players, many of whom we interviewed.

Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp resisted pressure to "find votes" in 2020. ANDREW HARNIK/GETTY IMAGES



Changes make blocking electoral votes less likely

Erin Mansfield and Sarah D. Wire
USA TODAY

When Donald Trump lost Georgia by just under 12,000 votes in 2020, he went to the two people with the most power over the state's elections – the governor and the secretary of state – and asked for help overturning the results.

He asked Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, a Republican, to help him "find 11,780 votes," but Raffensperger

refused. Then he asked Gov. Brian Kemp, another Republican, to order an audit and convene the state Legislature so they could hand the state's electoral votes to him. Kemp also resisted.

Heading into a tight Nov. 5 election, Trump in September claimed without evidence that Democrats are "cheating," laying the groundwork to challenge the results again if he loses. During a debate in June, Trump twice avoided directly answering if he would accept the result's of this year's election, eventually saying he would do so "if it's a fair and

See **ELECTION**, Page 5A



Lori Askeland learned in September that this year would be her last as a Wittenberg University professor. COURTNEY HERGESHEIMER/USA TODAY NETWORK

Struggling university's woes made even worse

Political focus on city adds to school's plight

Zachary Schermele
USA TODAY

On a warm Tuesday in early September, Lori Askeland was shifting gears.

Her Native American literature and film class just ended, her English 101 students were expecting her soon, and for the first time in nearly three decades, she wondered what life without teaching would look like.

It was the third week of the semester, and she had assigned her students a TED Talk featuring the acclaimed novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, in which the Nigerian author reflects on the misconceptions she encountered upon moving to the United States for college. Adichie's American roommate was shocked to learn that she even spoke English.

That evening after class, former President Donald Trump took to the debate stage in Philadelphia. From 500 miles away, the small Midwestern city where Askeland works was on the Republican presidential candidate's mind.

"They're eating the pets of the people that live there," Trump said, spreading inflammatory, debunked claims about Haitian immigrants in Springfield, Ohio.

Over the next week, threats peppered the community. They grew so severe that Wittenberg University, where Askeland has taught since the 1990s, transitioned to remote instruction for a week and professors offered to house international students who

See **WITTENBERG**, Page 6A

Floods' unimaginable tragedy: The lost children



A rose blooms where the Drye family home once stood in Asheville, N.C. OMAR ORNELAS/USA TODAY NETWORK

'A piece of all of us'

Isabel Hughes
Asheville Citizen-Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

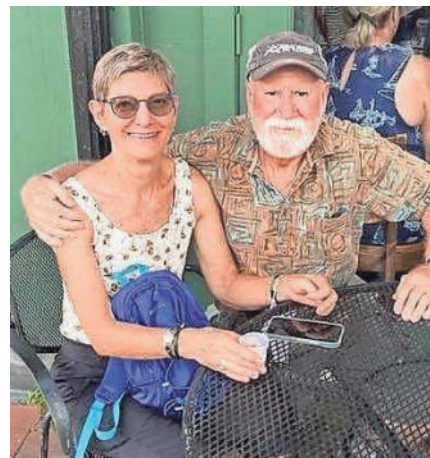
ASHEVILLE, N.C. – A single pink rose blossomed on a scraggly bush next to where the front wall of the Drye family home stood until 16 days ago, the greenery a welcomed brightness amid the mud-coated land.

Two thorny offshoots, each holding a single unopened bud, clung defiantly to the bush. Despite floodwaters rising 27 feet above the road, the plant persevered, its leaves now soaking up the bright Asheville sun. A smattering of plants and at least one tree also remained standing when the waters receded after Tropical Storm Helene.

But it was the trio of roses that Megan Drye took solace in on a Sunday afternoon in mid-October.

She believes they are a sign from her parents and young son, who perished when the family's home collapsed into the Swannanoa River on Sept. 27. Megan, 39, was the sole

See **CHILDREN**, Page 2A



Nora and Michael Drye and their grandson, Micah Drye, 7, were swept away by the Swannanoa River on Sept. 27. PROVIDED BY JESS DRYE TURNER



Road to magic mushrooms filled with potholes



The legalization of magic mushrooms is gaining steam. GETTY IMAGES

Expense an obstacle for psychedelics movement

Karissa Waddick
USA TODAY

As more and more states legalize recreational marijuana, fresh questions have begun to pop up on state ballots about another mind-altering drug: magic mushrooms.

Voters in two states – Oregon and Colorado – have in recent years passed referendums legalizing psilocybin, the hallucinogenic compound that's found

in some fungi.

Massachusetts could soon become the third state to take the leap if voters there approve a November ballot measure permitting adults over 21 to use five types of plant-based psychedelics – psilocybin, psilocin, dimethyltryptamine, ibogaine and mescaline.

In many ways, the psychedelics movement is following in the footsteps of cannabis efforts before it. They're both Schedule I drugs that are illegal at the federal level – though marijuana is poised to be reclassified as a Schedule

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