



A virtuoso of verse

Emory poet gains national acclaim



Tragedy hits 'Housewives'

Cast member's former fiancé dies after fight



Looted luggage

Atlanta airport keeps eyes out for thievery

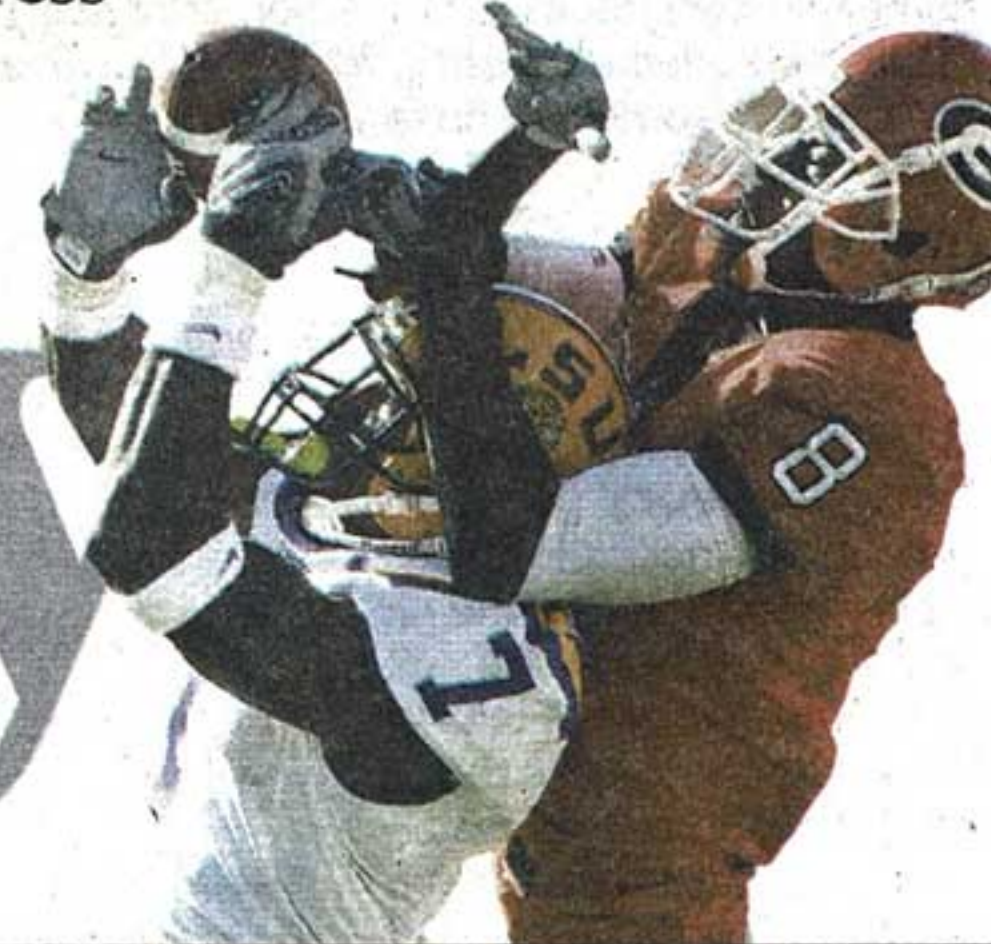
Health care shift near?

Landmark legislation shapes up in Congress

Plenty of political hurdles remain, but Democrats express confidence.

Doggone celebration

Following a great catch to take the lead, perhaps the Bulldogs were a little too happy.



ajcSunday

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution Oct. 4, 2009

The AJC Atlanta Project

Part 3: Sewers

What stinks? High cost of water, sewer



Workers excavate the pump station shaft for the combined sewer overflow tunnel at the South River Water Reclamation Center in Atlanta. The shaft will be 50 feet in diameter and about 180 feet deep when finished. **Bita Honarvar** bbonarvar@ajc.com

State, Uncle Sam little help as city shoulders \$4.1 billion in repairs.

Result: Atlantans' steep bills to get even steeper.

By **D.L. Bennett**
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Atlantans already pay more than people in other major cities to flush their toilets or turn on their taps: 108 percent more than in New York; 98 percent more than in Nashville; 144 per-

cent more than in San Antonio. As high as city water and sewer rates are now, they will increase even more in coming years: The city has already scheduled hefty rate increases for each of the next two years.

And more will follow. "This is ridiculous," said Wendell Bryant of East Atlanta after opening a \$218 water bill for August. "I love living in Atlanta. I love Atlanta. But they have

Sewers continued on A6

Next week: No end in sight to problem of homelessness.

About this series

Atlanta has always been a city with vision — the kind of vision that concocts the world's favorite soft drink, sees beyond race, invents cable news, produces the world's largest airport and hosts the Olympics. But it takes more than vision; it takes a commitment to solve problems. On Nov. 3, Atlanta will choose a new mayor for the first time in eight years — a change of guard that comes at a critical juncture. A veteran team of AJC reporters is looking deeply into key issues ahead that resonate far beyond Atlanta's city limits. Outside experts also will offer their suggestions and solutions.

Ga. hospitals rated 'weak'

Facilities score poorly for pneumonia, heart trouble treatment.

Quality of care could tie into Medicare payouts.

By **Carrie Teegardin**
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Twenty-two hospitals across Georgia stand out in the latest Medicare data for poor results for patients with pneumonia or heart trouble. Those negative ratings come on top of federal as-

sessments that describe the quality of care in Georgia hospitals statewide as "weak."

Georgia hospitals posted particularly poor results for care of pneumonia patients between 2005 and 2008. Fourteen hospitals statewide fall into a group of 284 hospitals across the nation — about 6 percent of hospitals — with the highest death rates among patients admitted with a pneumonia diagnosis.

Only one Georgia hospital — Atlanta's Piedmont Hospital — stood out on the other end of the spectrum for its strong perfor-

Hospitals continued on A14

Nuke experts: Iran can build a bomb

U.N. agency says Tehran mastered design, has all components of warhead.

By **William J. Broad** and **David E. Sanger**
New York Times

Senior staff members of the U.N. nuclear agency have concluded in a confidential analysis that Iran has acquired "sufficient

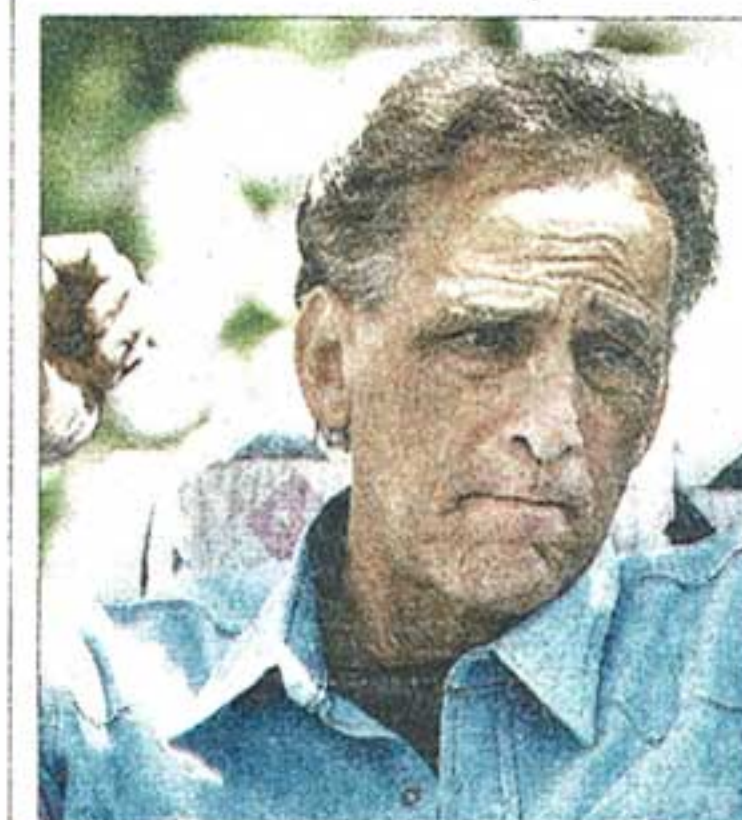
information to be able to design and produce a workable" atom bomb.

The report by experts in the International Atomic Energy Agency stresses that its conclusions are tentative and subject to further confirmation of the evidence, which it says came from intelligence agencies and its own investigations.

But the report's conclusions,

Iran continued on A8

Ex-Falcon spent sad life in long, lonely end zone



Randy Johnson talks about his life in 1999, at a mission where he lived in Florida. It was his last known interview. **Charlotte Sun-Herald**

By **Steve Hummer**
steve@ajc.com

BREVARD, N.C. — He was Atlanta's first NFL quarterback, a point man for the birth of the Falcons and the city's proud rise to the big leagues.

Randy Johnson may not have had much of a football team around him in 1966, but he had all the people in place with whom to build a beautiful life.

He was married to the smart, pretty cheerleader he had met in college. And, while beginning one family with her, he was

Johnson continued on A12

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'Free-range' parents loosen reins on kids

By **Helena Oliviero**
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No baby gates or cabinet locks confined Eden and Oriane Levin. When they were toddlers, they roamed freely, as if their home were an open prairie. Their parents relied on the power of "no" to teach the youngsters which drawers were off limits.

Now Eden is 5; Oriane, a year younger. And they are as unfettered as ever, flying kites and riding bikes in their Sandy Springs neighborhood and walking to friends' homes alone.

Eden and Oriane are "free-range kids," a new moniker that describes the old practice of giving

Free-range continued on A15

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Style



Icon of influence

Interest in Coco Chanel has never declined.

She is the subject of films and books and still is a legend to designers.

By Ruth La Ferla
New York Times

In a mock interview with *Coco Chanel* in the August issue of *Harper's Bazaar*, Karl Lagerfeld attempted to channel his muse. Asked "what inspires you, an architect, an actress?" Chanel, aka Lagerfeld, was quick to respond, "An actress, why not?"

Why not indeed? If, apart from her work, Gabrielle Bonheur Chanel possessed an overarching talent, it was her gift for self-invention. In the words of Axel Madsen, one of her many biographers, she "made things up." The scrappy peasant girl from the Auvergne transformed herself in the public eye from the child of an itinerant peddler to a daughter of privilege brought up by genteel maiden aunts; from a fiercely ambitious courtesan to the social equal of the Duke of Westminster; from a moderately gifted seamstress to a celebrated couturier — and an enduring emblem of ambition.

"She is the ultimate Gatsby character," said Rhonda Garelick, a professor of English at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, and the author of a forthcoming Chanel biography, "Antigone in Vogue." Garelick argued in an interview that Chanel represents "a very American rags-to-riches story."

"She is a successful poseur who came from nothing and blasted her way into society and celebrity," Garelick writes. Chanel improvised as she went, "tapping into desires that are far more than sartorial."

Today, many of those desires are mirrored in a spate of films, books and fashions that explore the designer who has been called the first modern woman — if not the first modern celebrity. "As a phenomenon, Chanel shoulders a lot of different narratives," said Harold Koda, the curator in charge of the Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. "Her life has a kind of mythic quality."

Interest in the couturier has never really waned, but 2009 has taken shape as a banner year for all things Chanel. In "Coco Before Chanel," a gauzy film biography that opens in Atlanta on Oct. 16, the director Anne Fontaine reconstructs Chanel's early years as a "Pretty Woman" saga. The film follows the onetime music-hall singer as she turns the attentions of well-born lovers like Etienne Balsan and Boy Capel to her advantage, wooing them into financing her career as a designer.

The movie is framed to capture a youthful heroine who is gritty

"She is the ultimate Gatsby character."

Rhonda Garelick
Author of Chanel biography 'Antigone in Vogue'



Audrey Tautou portrays Coco Chanel in "Coco Before Chanel," which opens in Atlanta on Oct. 16. The film looks at Chanel's early years as a "Pretty Woman" saga. Chantal Thomine-Desmazures Sony Pictures Classics



A model wears an outfit by Derek Lam at Bryant Park in Manhattan last month. Chanel's life and style have always been in fashion. Her looks still have an influence on today's designers. Beatrice de Gea New York Times

and vulnerable. "When you know her better at the beginning of her life, you understand her fragility, her stress," Fontaine said. "She never knows what is going to happen next and she has no protection, so she must fight against her destiny and create a new way not just to dress but to be."

That film follows "Coco Chanel," an Emmy-nominated television miniseries broadcast last year on the Lifetime network, which similarly focused on Chanel's formative years and her efforts to face down privations and social snubs as she refashioned herself as the imperious couturier (played by a caustic Shirley Maclaine).

Darker, more villainous aspects of the designer's history are explored in "Coco Chanel," (HarperCollins), a biography by Justine Picardie to be published later this fall. Picardie discusses Chanel's affair with a Nazi officer during the occupation of Paris, one in a series of morally compromising choices she made to ensure that even in wartime, with her competitors shuttering, her business would continue to thrive.

The notion that Chanel is a role model for aspiring divas informs another work, "The Gospel According to Coco Chanel" (Skirt!, 2009), a self-help guide posing as an irreverent biography. "My book is not just for people interested in fashion," said the author, Karen Karbo. "It is more for people who are looking for a philosophy of living — a biography for a self-absorbed age."

Chanel's own towering self-regard is legendary. Her life and style have been copiously documented in past works including "Chanel and Her World" (1985) by her friend and biographer, Edmonde Charles-Roux, and the 1969 Broadway musical "Coco," starring Katharine Hepburn.

Her seminal designs — from the little black dresses and "poor boy" jersey pullovers to the braid-trimmed bouclé collarless jackets and schoolgirl sailor blouses — are routinely resurrected on fashion runways. During the presentations of spring 2010 collections in New York, Tory Burch, Jason Wu and Donna Karan were among those re-adapting Chanel to modern tastes. The look — slim, easy and devoid of embellishment — conveys a feeling of "youth and hopefulness," Garelick suggested. "It reflects austerity and speaks to great elegance without requiring lavish materials. It is a kind of fashionable way to establish financial restraint."

Chanel's signature style may be fundamental to the survival of the designer's mystique. "If she was just a demimondaine who had a little millinery shop, even though she had wildly notorious affairs we wouldn't remember her," said Koda of the Costume Institute. She owes her presence in the contemporary consciousness to a "very lively if disputable biography, together with the continuing vigor of the brand."

The survival of that brand has served the designer well indeed. Even people who know little about the proud, brittle couturier seem intuitively to grasp the power of the double-C logo, Garelick said. "They know there is some talismanic power in those Cs."

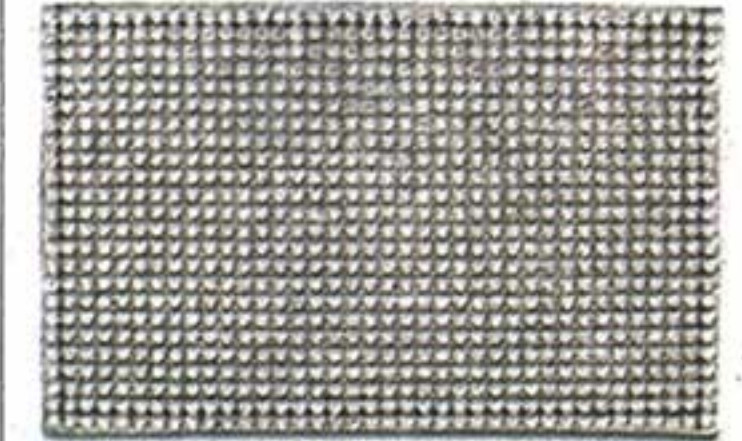
Eyecatchers



T-shirt support

Support breast cancer awareness at Sage boutiques this month. T-shirts with witty sayings such as "Breast Friends," "Treasured Chest" and the newest "Saving Second Base" are priced \$28 to \$30 with 100 percent of sales going to Susan G. Komen for the Cure. Available at all Sage locations or online at www.sageclothing.com.

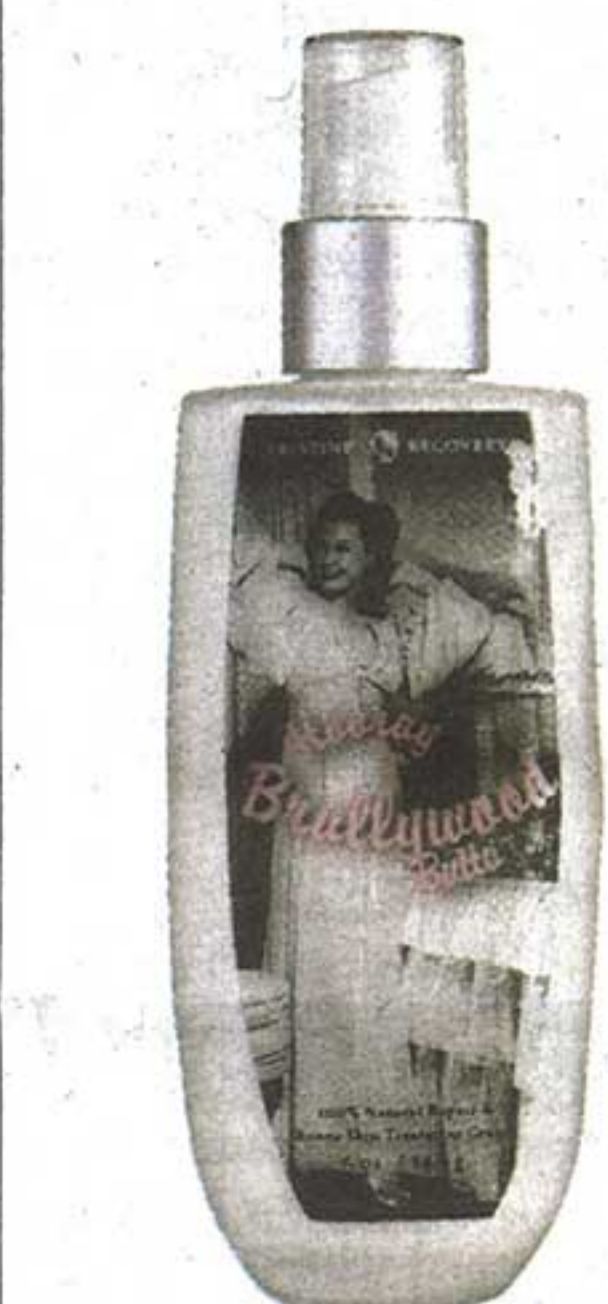
NEDRA RHONE



Crystallized support

Pink Swarovski crystals give a glam makeover to the standard cardholder so you can network in style. Ten percent of proceeds from sales of the \$190 cardholder will benefit the Libby Ross Foundation's Yoga Program for Breast Cancer Survivors. Find this and other products in the collection at Swarovski stores in Lenox Square, Perimeter Mall or online at www.swarovski.com.

NEDRA RHONE



Skin support

Born from a need of a young breast cancer survivor who had major hair and skin scarring issues after undergoing treatment, Pristine Beauty is a line of natural skin and hair care products made of 100-percent pure, natural ingredients. All products are free of sulfates, silicones, glycols, parabens, mineral oil and artificial dyes. They're certified vegan and cruelty-free. Pristine Beauty is cleverly retro packaged and includes Horray for Brallywood Butta skin renewal and scar treatment, No Scary Hair conditioner and Sunless Trip sunless tanner. Prices start at \$22, and the products are available through www.amazon.com. A portion of the proceeds are donated to the Young Survival Coalition and the Cancer Prevention Coalition.

SABINE MORROW

My Style



Photos by Allison Church Special

Name: Leila Regan-Porter
Age: 27
Occupation: Promotions director at Ticket Alternative
Neighborhood: Decatur

What I'm wearing: a 1950s style A-line dress and a vintage Woodward & Lothrop hat

Collectibles: Vintage hats and scarves

Signature style: Classic '40s and '50s vintage with a bit of rock 'n' roll and a lot of color. My favorite clothes are great pieces handed down to me from my mother or made by myself (with a lot of help from my mum — she taught me everything).

Best find: A gorgeous raw silk Indian coat at a vintage clothing sidewalk sale at South by Southwest (music festival) in Austin, Texas. Fits me perfectly, has lots of color and it was only \$5. A vintage Dior scarf in a bin at a flea market in Asheville for \$10.

Fashion pet peeve: When people



This raw silk coat was bought at a flea market in Texas. It's paired with blue suede shoes from Franco Sarto.

wear clothes that don't fit or suit them. Why would you wear it if it doesn't make you look your best?

Favorite stores: J. Crew, Anthropologie, Filene's Basement and the delightful Liberty in

Atlanta style is ...

"... pretty schizophrenic. While you have some great rock 'n' roll styles being shown off, a lot of folks seem to just lazily follow the trends and not try something new and exciting."

London (I'm British by birth.) It's been around for over a hundred years and has the most exquisite collections of everything from bags to jewelry to clothes to apothecary. Not to mention they have a legendary line of fabrics that influence many designers, which I use myself.

Biggest splurge: My pink feather fascinator with one huge feather from Harrods, bought for my cousin's wedding.

@ajc.com

See more photos of Regan-Porter, as well as past My Style profiles, at accessatlanta.com/fashion-style.



Weakness: Vintage hats: I could spend hours (and lots of money) scouring the stores on Etsy for incredible finds.