

## ELECTION 2024

# Trump campaign says it was hacked

Foreign actors to blame, says spokesman, after report on Vance is leaked

BY JOSH DAWSEY, ISAAC ARNSDORF, ELLEN NAKASHIMA AND SHANE HARRIS

Donald Trump's presidential campaign said on Saturday that it has been the victim of a foreign hack, after the campaign received questions from news organizations about a lengthy vetting document on vice-presidential nominee Sen. JD Vance (R-Ohio) sent to the outlets.

"These documents were obtained illegally from foreign sources hostile to the United States, intended to interfere with the 2024 election and sow chaos throughout our Democratic process," Steven Cheung, a campaign spokesman, said in a statement.

Cheung pointed to a report released Friday by Microsoft in which the company said it had discovered evidence that Iranian hackers had tried to break into the email account of a "high-ranking official" on a U.S. presidential campaign in June.

The company did not publicly identify the campaign or confirm whether it believed the hack had been successful. A person familiar with Microsoft's work confirmed that the report's reference was to the Trump campaign.

Cheung did not disclose whether the campaign has been in contact with Microsoft and did not offer evidence for its assertion that the documents were hacked by Iran. But he said in a statement that the timing of the episode described by Microsoft coincides with Trump's selection of Vance as his running mate.

People familiar with the matter said the campaign separately concluded earlier this summer its email system had been breached but did not disclose it publicly or to law enforcement. The people said some officials were told to take more protective measures on their email accounts. At the time, campaign officials communicated to others that they weren't sure who hacked the emails. The people

SEE HACK ON A4

**Crowd sizes:** Democrats join in on bragging about attendance. **A10**

**Harris rally:** The VP takes on the border and Trump in Las Vegas. **A17**

Dredging of sediment has bisected the shallow coral reef in this area. It remains to be seen if Vietnam will complete a channel for vessels to pass through.

A narrow road is built out onto the reef, where land-based dredgers are able to reach out and extract sand onto trucks that transport it back onto the island being built.

Among the first parts of the island to be built in August 2022 was this lagoon-facing harbor, along with numerous structures.

Possible artillery emplacements for troops and weapons. This type of structure can be found across many of Vietnam's more developed military outposts in the Spratly Islands.

Ship pumping sediment through multiple floating pipelines onto the island.

Shallow-depth lagoon waters

Vietnam has deployed powerful cutter suction dredgers to accelerate its land reclamation — the same tools that China used in its island building.

These dredgers cause extensive environmental damage by pumping out large plumes of sediment, which can disrupt marine life.

The seawater ponds will probably be filled in with dredged sand in the coming months.

Once the island is completed, the next phase will probably involve more structures and infrastructure necessary to house a functional base of operations.

Deeper open water

A structural sea wall typically indicates the maximum extent of island building.

450 feet wide

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## TROUBLE IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

# Vietnam asserts itself with island building

Nation's land-reclamation campaign is challenging China's maritime claims

BY REBECCA TAN AND LARIS KARKLIS

HANOI — Vietnam has dramatically accelerated its effort to expand islands and reclaim land in the contested South China Sea since the start of the year to challenge rising Chinese assertiveness, according to satellite imagery and interviews with Vietnamese officials, security analysts and diplomats.

While Vietnam has been enlarging its presence across a remote collection of rocks, reefs and islets called the Spratlys since 2021, the country is on pace this year to create more than 1,000 acres of new land there, more than in any year prior.

Not since China carried out its own island-building campaign there a decade ago, turning semi-submerged reefs into sophisticated military bases, has the landscape of the archipelago been so transformed. In just three years, Vietnam has increased its amount of land in the Spratlys tenfold.

Leaders of Vietnam's communist government have traditionally been muted about its land-reclamation drive in the South China Sea, often refusing to explain or acknowledge the effort even in private conversations, said security analysts and diplomats.

But in rare interviews in the capital, Hanoi, five former and current Vietnamese officials said the government has been "consolidating" outposts for the purpose

SEE VIETNAM ON A14

## 📍 Vietnam's 3-mile island

Vietnam's Barque Canada Reef has undergone a massive transformation since the government began expanding it in 2022. This satellite image captured by Maxar Technologies on May 11 reveals the resources and techniques required for this undertaking.

## A pastor said God chose Trump. His brother called him a fake.

BY DANIELLE PAQUETTE

ORANGE BEACH, ALA. — On the morning he could no longer stand it, the preacher was sipping coffee at his kitchen table. The house was quiet. The boys weren't up yet. Josiah Johnson wanted to savor the peace, but his attention drifted to his younger brother, the one he had decided was a false prophet.

How many souls, he wondered, was that Christian influencer manipulating on social media right now? Hundreds of thousands followed Jeremiah, who'd helped popularize the far-right belief that God handpicked Donald Trump to lead the United States.

Maybe his conscience was nudging him. Or perhaps it was the Lord. The wall sign above him

read: *In the morning when I rise, give me Jesus.* Jeremiah wasn't channeling Jesus, though, as far as Josiah could tell, when he claimed that God spoke through him about American politics.

So, Josiah began typing on his matte black iPhone.

"What if you found out that your favorite prophet or pastor wasn't sexually abusing anyone," he wrote in a draft message to his 5,000 Facebook friends, alluding to other religious reckonings, "but INSTEAD they were completely and totally fabricating their dreams, visions, and prophetic words?"

In an era of surging disinformation, as Americans clash over what's real and what's fake, Josiah took no issue with Trump. An

SEE PASTOR ON A6



Barry Svrluga

COLUMN

falling to their knees and all over each other, some with arms raised in full triumph, some without the energy to do even that. Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the U.S.A." blared through the speakers at Parc des Princes. It had been a bit.

The American women didn't come to the Paris Olympics to extend a dynasty, as had been the mission at such tournaments so

## Reboot for the U.S. women's soccer team is off to a golden start

PARIS OLYMPICS



The U.S. women's soccer team beat Brazil, 1-0, in the final in Paris on Saturday for its first Olympic gold medal in 12 years.

frequently over the past three decades. They came to reestablish it. We have learned that scenes such as Saturday's don't transpire automatically. It's hard.

"It's not about just putting your jersey on," veteran defender Crystal Dunn said. "It's doing the work and really earning every step on the pitch."

Funny what a few weeks can do. A proud program arrived here as a listing tanker. It leaves with the holes in its hull patched, steaming forward. Mallory Swanson scored the goal that provided a 1-0 victory over a

SEE SVRLUGA ON A20

**Golden Curry:** Stephen Curry helps Team USA hold off France for its fifth straight basketball gold. **D1**

## TRAVEL

El Rocío is a Spanish village where the past feels present.

## BOOK WORLD

'Circle of Hope' asks: What is a church called to do?

## ARTS & STYLE

Frank Zappa's children are still grappling with his legacy.

## THE NATION

People with differing political views on moving beyond partisanship. **A8**

## TECH

Literal translation of Belgnet  
Categories listed in magnetism  
What my w our  
can you an essay  
Explain why the baby boom happened, please.  
Summarize what the Monroe Doctrine was and what it did.

## BUSINESS

A glimpse into conversations people have with AI chatbots.

## METRO

Proposal would restrict campus access for GWU student protesters.

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## More than meets the eye both with Walz's military record, GOP's attacks



### The Fact Checker

GLENN KESSLER

When Vice President Kamala Harris on Tuesday introduced her running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, she lauded his lengthy service in the National Guard: "He is a veteran who served our

nation in uniform for more than two decades as a member of the Army National Guard." Walz played up his service, too: "For 24 years, I proudly wore the uniform of this nation. The National Guard gave me purpose."

Since that moment, Walz's record has been under attack by Republicans, with claims that he abandoned his troops on the eve of a deployment to Iraq and that, in an instance of "stolen valor," inflated his credentials and

wartime experience. Here's an assessment of those claims.

#### Abandonment of his troops

**"When Tim Walz was asked by his country to go to Iraq, you know what he did? He dropped out of the Army and allowed his unit to go without him."**

— **GOP vice-presidential candidate JD Vance, Wednesday**

The Washington Post reported that at least three former Guard colleagues have publicly voiced bitterness at Walz's decision to leave their unit shortly before a possible deployment to Iraq — a deployment that, because it was extended, lasted 19 months. The record shows that Walz made his decision to retire after the National Guard announced the unit might be deployed to Iraq. Walz initially issued a news release indicating he would deploy with his unit.

We constructed the following timeline from interviews, National Guard records and news reports.

**April 8, 1981** — Two days after he turns 17, Walz joins the Nebraska National Guard.

**1996** — Walz transfers to Minnesota National Guard's 1st Battalion, 125th Field Artillery.

**September 2001** — Though Walz qualified for retirement at 20 years of service, he said in an interview for a Library of Congress oral history project that the Sept. 11 attacks persuaded him to reenlist.

**Aug. 3, 2003** — Walz's unit deploys for nine months of active duty, based in Vicenza, Italy, to support Operation Enduring Freedom, the war in Afghanistan. The troops provided security for Air Force bases in Turkey, Italy, Belgium and Britain, with some elements deployed to support stability operations in Bosnia and Kosovo, a unit history says. In the Library of Congress interview, Walz said the experience made him more politically aware.

**April 2004** — Walz returns to Minnesota.

**Feb. 5, 2005** — Walz, describing himself in a news release as "Mankato West High School teacher and Command Sergeant Major in the National Guard," files paperwork saying he is exploring running for Congress.

**March 17** — The National Guard announces possible partial mobilization of 2,000 troops. "The announcement from the National Guard PAO [Public Affairs Office] specified that all or a portion of Walz's battalion could be mobilized to serve in Iraq within the next two years," according to a March 20 news release issued by the Walz campaign. "Walz Still Planning to Run for Congress Despite Possible Call to Duty in Iraq," the headline said.

In the news release, Walz said he "had no plans to drop out of the race." He also said: "As Command Sergeant Major I have a responsibility not only to ready my battalion for Iraq, but also to serve if called on. I am dedicated to serving my country to the best of my ability, whether that is in Washington DC or in Iraq."

**March 21** — KEYC, a radio station in North Mankato, Minn., broadcasts a report that highlighted Walz's "unique position" in light of the National Guard announcement. "He will



DEMETRIUS FREEMAN/THE WASHINGTON POST

Fellow Democrats have praised Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, seen campaigning Wednesday in Detroit, for his lengthy National Guard service since he became Vice President Kamala Harris's running mate. Republicans have used that record as a font of aggressive attacks.

continue his campaign for the congressional seat, despite his possible deployment to Iraq," the newscast said. "Walz also says if called to active duty in Iraq, his family will continue his campaign back home in Mankato."

**May 16** — The Harris campaign did not respond to a request to provide the day when Walz submitted his retirement papers, but records show this is Walz's last day with the National Guard. He is 41. His daughter, Hope, is 4. In the Library of Congress interview, Walz said he left the Guard in April "to run for this office." He said that "we were concerned we would try to do both" and "I decided to retire to focus full time on running."

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but it is noteworthy that his retirement request was not blocked.

In a statement, the Harris campaign said: "After 24 years of military service, Governor Walz retired in 2005 and ran for Congress, where he was a tireless advocate for our men and women in uniform — and as Vice President of the United States he will continue to be a relentless champion for our veterans and military families." The campaign did not respond directly to a question about the timing of his resignation and why he left.

#### Stolen valor claims

Republicans have cited three examples of "stolen valor" — broadly intended to mean Walz is claiming credit for something he did not achieve in the military. The Stolen Valor Act of 2013 makes it a crime to claim to be a recipient of various military medals or badges — and Walz is not accused of that.

**'Command Sergeant Major'**  
**"Walz referred to himself as a retired command sergeant major in his run for Congress and governor. This is a tie and stolen valor."**

— **Ashley Hayek, chief engagement officer, America First Policy Institute, Wednesday**  
Walz's biography on his website says: "After 24 years in the Army National Guard, Command Sergeant Major Walz retired from the 1-125th Field Artillery Battalion in 2005." At various times, such as in a 2006 C-SPAN interview, he described himself as a command sergeant major. Republicans say that is misleading because he is receiving retirement benefits for the rank one level below — master sergeant. That's because he still needed additional training at the time he retired.

"He held multiple positions within field artillery such as firing battery chief, operations sergeant, first sergeant, and culminated his career serving as the command sergeant major for the battalion," said Army Lt. Col. Kristen Augé, Minnesota

National Guard's state public affairs officer. "He retired as a master sergeant in 2005 for benefit purposes because he did not complete additional coursework at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy."

The Harris-Walz campaign on its website initially called Walz a "retired Command Sergeant Major" but then updated his biography to say he "served as a command sergeant major."

**Assessment:** This is on the line. He did achieve the title he has claimed, for a total of seven months, but it would be more accurate to say he "served as command sergeant major" rather than claim the title outright.

**Operation Enduring Freedom**  
**"Tim Walz Falsely Claimed He Served in Afghanistan."**

— **Washington Free Beacon headline, Wednesday**  
Walz's deployment overseas was in support of the war in Afghanistan, dubbed Operation Enduring Freedom, Augé said, saying "the battalion supported security missions at various locations in Europe and Turkey." Generally, Walz makes that clear. "I deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom," he said in a 2007 C-SPAN interview. "My battalion provided base security throughout the European Theater from Turkey to England in the early stages of the war in Afghanistan."

But Republicans have pointed to a 2006 news release by his congressional campaign, which called him "a veteran of Operation Enduring Freedom" and also a 2004 photo in which he is holding a sign saying "Enduring Freedom — Veterans for Kerry."

Augé said Walz earned a Global War on Terrorism medal but the records are unclear on whether it was a Global War on Terrorism Service Medal or a Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal. A Harris-Walz campaign aide said it was the service medal, which is for individuals who either directly

or indirectly supported these designated operations: Airport security, Operation Noble Eagle, Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

**Assessment:** This is also on the line. We can find no evidence Walz ever claimed he served in Afghanistan. He served overseas in support of the Afghanistan war, but sometimes his phrasing might mislead people into thinking he was an Afghanistan veteran.

**Carrying weapons**  
**"Well, I wonder, Tim Walz, when were you ever in war?"**

— **Vance, Wednesday**  
The Harris campaign circulated a 2018 clip of Walz arguing in support of gun restrictions. "We can make sure that those weapons of war that I carried in war is the only place where those weapons are at," he said.

There is no evidence that Walz served in combat — and he has not claimed he did. He did receive ribbons for proficiency in sharpshooting and hand grenades, according to military records obtained through an open records request by MPR News.

"In his 24 years of service, the governor carried, fired and trained others to use weapons of war innumerable times," a Harris-Walz campaign aide said. "Governor Walz would never insult or undermine any American's service to this country — in fact, he thanks Senator Vance for putting his life on the line for our country. It's the American way." The aide did not address his use of the phrase "in war."

On Friday, after this fact check first appeared online, campaign spokesman Ammar Moussa told The Post that "the governor misspoke" in his remarks. "He did handle weapons of war and believes strongly that only military members trained to carry those deadly weapons should have access to them."

**Assessment:** Walz's language was sloppy and false. He did carry weapons of war — just not in war.

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### CORRECTIONS

• An Aug. 10 Barry Svrluga column on Page One incorrectly said Quincy Wilson became the youngest track and field Olympian in American history. Wilson became the youngest male track and field Olympian in American history. Esther Stroy competed at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics at age 15.

• A Jerry Brewer column in the July 31 Sports section incorrectly said Iona Maher is a captain of the U.S. women's rugby team. Naya Tapper and Lauren Doyle are the team's captains.

The Washington Post is committed to correcting errors that appear in the newspaper. Those interested in contacting the paper for that purpose can:

**Email:** [corrections@washpost.com](mailto:corrections@washpost.com).  
**Call:** 202-334-6000, and ask to be connected to the desk involved — National, Foreign, Metro, Style, Sports, Business or any of the weekly sections.

## IRS to resume processing firms' pandemic tax credit claims

BY HANNAH ZIEGLER

The IRS said Thursday that it will begin processing a backlog of claims for the Employee Retention Credit, a step forward for a program that was supposed to help businesses survive the coronavirus pandemic but became mired in suspicions of fraud.

In September, the agency issued a months-long moratorium on processing new claims as it differentiated a flood of dubious applications from valid ones. Now, the IRS will begin processing claims submitted between Sept. 14 and Jan. 30.

"Today, the tide is starting to turn on the Employee Retention Credit program," IRS Commissioner Danny Werfel said Thursday. "This effort will continue and intensify in the months ahead."

Congress created the tax credit in March 2020 to help businesses that kept paying employees after being shut down early in the pandemic. The credit was narrowly

reserved for certain businesses, such as those that recorded a steep decline in revenue or those that were fully or partially shut down under government orders. But applications for the tax credit have surged in the past four years after aggressive marketing tactics misled business owners into thinking they qualified.

Businesses have filed at least 3.6 million claims for the ERC since the program's debut, The Washington Post previously reported. It has distributed at least \$232 billion, Werfel said in June, far exceeding Congress's initial expectations.

The IRS announced in June that it would deny the vast majority of claims after officials detected "red flags" in at least 70 percent of the applications awaiting processing. In recent weeks, Werfel said, the IRS has denied 28,000 high-risk claims worth about \$5 billion and initiated 460 criminal cases related to fraudulent claims.

More than 7,300 businesses

have retracted their ERC claims — totaling \$677 million — since the IRS launched a withdrawal process last year.

Since the agency's June announcement, some tax professionals have raised concerns that valid ERC applications are being denied outright and that businesses have unclear options to appeal. The IRS said Thursday that incorrect denials are isolated and that about 90 percent of the disallowance letters sent recently are valid.

The IRS also said it has identified 50,000 valid claims in recent weeks. Those and other low-risk claims will be paid out quickly, the agency said. It anticipates it will begin processing payments for another large block of low-risk claims in the fall.

Despite the processing pause, the IRS is still receiving about 17,000 applications for the tax credit per week, Werfel said Thursday. But he added that the moratorium helped limit the number of robocallers and TV ads

targeting small businesses. Over the past four years, marketing campaigns have promised businesses they could receive \$26,000 in tax credits for each employee retained during the pandemic, and companies behind the ads offered to file claims in exchange for a payout from the refund.

"Once we issued the moratorium, it took away the incentive for these marketers to continue to prey on small businesses because there was now a high likelihood that the claim wouldn't be processed anytime in the near future," Werfel said.

The ERC program was initially meant to run until April, but Werfel has called on Congress to end it early. The House passed a tax bill this year that would have ended the credit and enhanced penalties for promoting fraudulent claims in connection to it. But federal efforts to prevent new claims have stalled after the Senate struck down the House's bipartisan tax bill this month.

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**The Washington Post**

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## POLITICS &amp; THE NATION

## Deputy claims he was fearful of Sonya Massey's religious rebuke

BY JONATHAN EDWARDS

With eight words, the encounter between two sheriff's deputies and a woman who called for help rapidly deteriorated.

"I rebuke you in the name of Jesus," Sonya Massey told them, body-camera footage shows.

With that, the mood transformed from relative calm to extreme intensity. Within seconds, one of the deputies screamed and swore at Massey, pulled his gun and fatally shot her inside her Springfield, Ill., home July 6 after she had called 911 about a possible prowler.

Pastors, religious studies professors and churchgoers said verbally rebuking someone or something in the name of Jesus has a deep history in some Black communities, primarily as a way to call upon spiritual power but also as a way to dismiss or reject something someone has said. It's not a phrase typically associated with physical violence, they said.

On Monday, officials released a report in which Sean Grayson, the Sangamon County sheriff's deputy who has since been fired and charged with first-degree murder in Massey's killing, said he thought Massey was threatening him when she said those words. He said that he feared "great bodily harm or death" as Massey had a pot of boiling water, according to the report, and that she threw the liquid toward him after he drew his gun. Grayson's movements block the view of the second deputy's body camera a second before the shooting.

The interaction between Massey and Grayson started early July 6 when he and another deputy went to Massey's house because she had called 911 to report a



An image from body-camera video shows then-Deputy Sean Grayson pointing his gun at Sonya Massey — who had called 911 for help — before fatally shooting her in Springfield, Ill., on July 6.

possible prowler, prosecutor Mary Rodgers wrote in a sworn affidavit. After the deputies went inside to get more information, Grayson saw a pot on the stove and told Massey to remove it to prevent an accidental fire, body-camera footage shows.

Massey turned off the stove, carried the pot to her sink, turned on the faucet and, when she noticed one of the deputies backing away from her, asked where he was going, according to the video. He told her that he was getting away from "your hot, steaming water."

Then Massey said, "I rebuke you in the name of Jesus." "Huh?" one of the deputies responded, according to the video.

"I rebuke you in the name of Jesus," she repeated.

Grayson, using expletives, told her that she better not, threatening to shoot her "right in" the face as he drew his gun and pointed it at her, the video shows. Massey apologized as Grayson yelled at her to drop the pot, and then she ducked behind the counter that separated them, according to the video. The sound of three gunshots followed as the video shows Grayson move toward her and around the counter.

About 3½ minutes later, as Massey was on her kitchen floor, Grayson told an unidentified man off camera that he and the other deputy had cleared the house and that Massey was the only one inside, video shows.

Grayson told the man that Massey had not been armed with a gun, according to the video.

"She said she was going to rebuke me in the name of Jesus and came at me with boiling water," he said in the video.

It's impossible to know what Massey was thinking when she said those words in the moments before she died. The Rev. T. Ray McJunkins, lead pastor at Union Baptist Church in Springfield, Ill., said that based on his understanding after years living in and studying Black church life, the phrase is commonly used to combat demonic forces, de-escalate tense moments and summon protection.

McJunkins said he uses the phrase regularly, including as a way to intervene during disagreements. During a recent meeting with his church's officers, he recalled the leaders discussing the

annual budget when some began talking over one another and getting heated. McJunkins said he rebuked them in the name of Jesus before leading them in prayer.

"That calms everyone in the room down," he said. "It raises their awareness that, 'Hey, we're not acting like the body of Christ the way we should be.'"

Cheryl Sanders, a Christian ethics professor at the Howard University School of Divinity and senior pastor at the Third Street Church of God in D.C., said she reserves calling upon that power when she prays to rid the country of hatred, racism, gun violence and other such problems, especially those that seem immune to efforts made through the normal channels of power.

"Any manifestation of the demonic is fair game," Sanders added.

But there are more everyday uses of the expression, like when McJunkins's mother scolded him for breaking curfew when he was a teenager in the 1970s. When he slinked into the house through the front door, she was waiting. She would point a finger at him and rebuke him in the name of Jesus, McJunkins recalled, as a way to convey that his behavior was not appropriate.

Wil Gafney, a professor of Hebrew Bible at the Brite Divinity School, said people also ironically use the words' inherent gravity for humorous effect. She said she once saw a man at an ATM, upon discovering how little money he had, rebuke his account balance.

But for the most part, it's used seriously, she added.

"Every person raised in a certain kind of black church knows the power and gravity of those words," Gafney wrote in a July 23

blog post titled "Sonya Massey's Rebuke."

"It is not a prayer to save one's life or for God to come down and prevent the flagrant act of violence to come," Gafney wrote. "It is something between a benediction and a malediction."

The Rev. Cary Beckwith, the senior pastor at Grace United Methodist Church who delivered Massey's eulogy, said the words are also used to condemn someone's actions or attitude.

"We may say, 'I rebuke you in the name of Jesus' because I'm opposed to your actions. Your attitude, your will does not line up with God's will in that moment," Beckwith said.

Jeffrey Fagan, professor of law and public health at Columbia Law School, said the moment highlighted the need for law enforcement officers to do more to understand the communities in which they work.

"If you're not a member of that community and you're a White cop, it's threatening," Fagan said.

Austin Channing Brown, a racial justice activist who grew up in the Black church, agreed that law enforcement officers need to be culturally aware of the communities they are policing.

"It is wild how much work Black women have to do to understand White culture and how White culture operates, but how little White folks are even expected to do to understand who we are and what is normal for us," she said in a 31-minute Instagram video reacting to Massey being shot.

"And instead," Channing said, "she's gone."

Justine McDaniel and Kim Bellware contributed to this report.

## Sheriff, under pressure after deputy charged with murder, says he will retire

BY JONATHAN EDWARDS, KIM BELLWARE AND JUSTINE MCDANIEL

An Illinois sheriff has stepped down under pressure after one of his deputies was charged with murdering an unarmed Black woman in a case that has caused a national uproar and attracted the attention of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris.

Sangamon County Sheriff Jack Campbell had resisted calls for his resignation in the weeks after Deputy Sean Grayson was charged with first-degree murder for shooting Sonya Massey on July 6 when she called 911 for help with a possible prowler. Even in Friday's announcement, Campbell said that he was retiring only after receiving death threats against him, his family and his deputies.

"It has become clear that the

current political climate has made it nearly impossible for me to continue effectively in my role," he wrote in a statement. "Some individuals would rather see our community divided and in turmoil, than allow me to continue serving as Sheriff."

Campbell said he would retire by the end of the month.

Massey's death has prompted protests around the country and renewed criticism of how law enforcement responds to Black communities and to people experiencing mental health

issues. Grayson, 30, is charged with first-degree murder, aggravated battery with a firearm and official misconduct. He has pleaded not guilty. His attorney, Daniel Fultz, declined to comment.

Campbell has faced criticism for hiring Grayson, who started working at the Sangamon County Sheriff's Office last year. He had

been convicted twice of driving under the influence, with one of those convictions causing him to be discharged from the U.S. Army for "serious misconduct," according to the county's website. Even with that information, the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board certified Grayson, who passed a drug test, criminal background check and psychological evaluation, Campbell said on the website, defending Grayson's employment.

And while critics saw Grayson moving from six law enforcement agencies in four years as signs of a troubled officer bouncing out of different departments, Campbell said he viewed it as a standard law enforcement career path, in which an ambitious young officer was seeking out to work at progressively larger agencies that would help him grow professionally.

"No other law enforcement agency reported problems with Grayson before we hired him," Campbell wrote on the county

website.

But records two weeks ago showed that he had previously been flagged at least a handful of times for impulsive decision-making and filing inaccurate reports, according to personnel records released by some of Grayson's former employers.

In two instances logged in his disciplinary file at the Logan County Sheriff's Office, Grayson once filed an inaccurate report and another time filed a report that was disputed by a woman he'd arrested. About seven months into his employment, the department's chief deputy warned Grayson he was at risk of having his credibility doubted by prosecutors and told Grayson, "I'm calling you on your integrity," according to a recording of the conversation.

On July 17, the day that Grayson was indicted, Campbell announced he had fired Grayson and that his actions did "not reflect the values and training of the Sangamon County Sheriff's

Office or law enforcement as a whole."

Still, critics called on him to resign even as he apologized and asked for forgiveness. On July 29, he told a hostile crowd of more than 500 who attended a meeting organized by the Community Relations Service of the Justice Department that he was sorry for Massey's death, made no excuses and asked for forgiveness from her family and Springfield.

But, he added, he would not step down, saying he had a duty to lead the agency through turmoil.

"I cannot step down," he told them. "I will not abandon the sheriff's office at its most critical moment. That would solve nothing."

Campbell promised to listen, learn and "look for ways to improve, to ensure we hire and train the best possible employees we can."

That didn't happen, according to Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker (D), who on Wednesday called on

Campbell to resign. Pritzker said that more than a month after the shooting, Campbell still hadn't met with Massey's family, shown he'd made changes to his training, or explained why he'd hired someone with what Pritzker described as a troubling past with previous law enforcement agencies.

"The sheriff has failed," Pritzker said at a news conference.

Campbell did not respond Friday for a request for comment from The Washington Post.

Massey's family said that Campbell's retirement "marks a turning point in the ongoing pursuit of justice for Sonya Massey," according to a statement released by civil rights lawyer Ben Crump. Nevertheless, those relatives said they would work with Campbell for the rest of his tenure to help the community heal and with his successor to examine the shooting to "ensure that a tragedy like this never happens again in this community."



Jack Campbell

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## ELECTION 2024

# As Harris energizes crowds on abortion, Trump treads lightly

Republican campaign makes little mention of reproductive health care

BY MERYL KORNFELD

Former president Donald Trump predicted Thursday that abortion is “going to be a very small issue” this election, portraying it as a settled matter.

“I think the abortion issue has been taken down many notches,” he said during a news conference at his gilded Mar-a-Lago estate. “I don’t think it’s a big factor anymore.”

But over 1,000 miles away, Democrats were betting on the opposite.

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, standing beside Vice President Kamala Harris as part of the newly minted Democratic presidential ticket, forecast that Republicans would do more to restrict abortion nationwide than they were letting on.

“They will ban abortion across this country no matter what Congress says,” Walz warned while speaking at the United Auto Workers Local 900 union hall in Wayne, Mich.

“That’s my choice,” a woman in the crowd shouted.

“Damn right it is,” Walz responded.

In a string of events in battleground states across the country last week, Harris and Walz riled up Democratic supporters with similar one-liners, calling the patchwork of abortion restrictions in various states “Trump’s abortion bans” and promising that “we’ll fight for a woman’s right to choose.” The mention of reproductive health care in any fashion stood in stark contrast to the message from the Republican ticket. Trump’s running mate, Sen. JD Vance (Ohio), held campaign events alongside those by Harris and Walz in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin and made little mention of abortion or reproductive health care.

The disparate approach to the

issue on the campaign trail highlights the complicated politics of the moment. Republican voters are largely supportive of some abortion restrictions, though there are disagreements on the details, and Trump has taken credit for the Supreme Court overturning federal protections for abortion, saying it was a popular decision. But most Americans say the 2022 Supreme Court decision that overturned *Roe v. Wade* was bad for the country. Abortion rights advocates have won battles against antiabortion candidates and ballot referendums since the decision, and Democrats won midterm victories in campaigns that focused heavily on reproductive rights.

Democrats say they can once again harness that energy to help them keep the White House. But the Trump campaign is betting on a message that voters in individual states now get to decide how to address the issue.

“Has Trump found a way to defuse the issue by saying everybody wanted us to give this back to the states for 50 years, which might not be factual?” Charles Franklin, director of the Marquette Law School poll, said in an interview. “He’s trying.”

Harris has placed blame for the harshest bans on abortions on Trump since the Supreme Court overturned *Roe*. But the Democratic message around abortion has also expanded to broadly include all reproductive health care, motivated in part by an Alabama Supreme Court ruling this year that sparked outrage and debate over the use of in vitro fertilization. On the campaign trail last week, Walz brought up his own family’s experience using IVF to conceive his children, saying the issue is personal for him.

Walz on Friday described going through “years” of fertility treatments with his wife, and the devastation of learning the treatments had failed. His eldest daughter was conceived via IVF, and the process inspired her name, Hope, he has said.

“So when Vice President Kamala Harris and I talk about freedom, we’re very clear: We



MELINA MARA/THE WASHINGTON POST

Arizona voters cheer for Vice President Kamala Harris during a rally in Glendale, Ariz., on Friday.

mean the freedom to make your own health-care decisions,” Walz told cheering Arizona voters.

At the same time, Trump and Vance have spent little time discussing reproductive health care with voters. Vance did not bring it up in the past two weeks of speeches in five battleground states. And Trump said at a news conference Thursday that he believes the issue of abortion bans is resolved because it is being decided on by states — but he also suggested he was open to revoking access to a key abortion pill.

“I’ve done what every Democrat and every Republican wanted to have done,” Trump said. “And we brought that issue back to the states.”

Later in the news conference, Trump was asked if he would direct the Food and Drug Administration to “revoke access” to mifepristone, a medication used for abortions, and he did not reject the idea. (His campaign later said he didn’t hear the question and maintained the issue is settled because the Supreme Court declined to limit mifepristone access, even though that decision has no bearing on

## Trump leads in 5 of the 7 key battleground states

WITHIN A NORMAL-SIZED POLLING ERROR

	Our 2024 average	Post-Biden shift
Michigan	Trump <1	Harris +2.6
Pennsylvania	Harris +1	Harris +2.2
Wisconsin	Harris +2	Harris +1.9
North Carolina	Trump +3	Harris +2
Nevada	Trump +3	Harris +2
Arizona	Trump +3	Harris +1.9

OUTSIDE A NORMAL-SIZED POLLING ERROR

Georgia	Trump +4	Harris +2.4
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Data as of Aug. 10

THE WASHINGTON POST

whether a future administration could restrict the drug.)

Although Republicans have traditionally advocated for a federal abortion ban, the party has retreated from that position under Trump, striking the language from its party platform at the Republican National Convention last month. Trump has said the

issue should be determined by states and has added that he would not sign a federal bill banning or restricting abortion.

About 1 in 8 voters rank abortion as the most important issue for their vote in 2024, according to a KFF poll conducted in February. Those voters were mostly women, young and Black, cohorts

that could be critical in this election.

Asked about the messaging and concerns of voters who rank abortion as a major issue, the Trump campaign pointed to the other issues it is focused on, mainly the economy and immigration.

“Kamala Harris is the most unpopular Vice President in history and doesn’t have any policy plans to fix the top issues voters care about, such as ending inflation and securing the border,” Trump campaign spokeswoman Karoline Leavitt said in a statement. “President Trump has been very clear — he supports the rights of states to make decisions on abortion.”

Elaine Kamarck, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said abortion is likely to drive turnout, especially among women and young voters. She pointed to the string of ballot referendums, elections and special elections in which voters have sided with fewer restrictions on abortion or stopped harsher bans from passing.

“This is a loser for Republicans,” Kamarck said.

# Microsoft won’t say if reported hack on U.S. campaign succeeded

HACK FROM AI

spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the internal matter.

Politico was first to report the statement from Trump’s campaign Saturday. The news outlet reported that it had received messages starting July 22 from an anonymous sender offering proprietary information about the Trump campaign, including a copy of a vetting document related to Vance.

On Thursday, The Washington Post was also sent a 271-page document about Vance from a sender who called himself Robert and used an AOL email account. Dated Feb. 23 and labeled “privileged & confidential,” the document highlighted potential political vulnerabilities for the first-term senator. Two people familiar with the document confirmed it was authentic and was commissioned by the campaign from Brand Woodward, a law firm that represents a number of prominent Trump advisers in investigations by state and federal authorities.

The document drew from publicly available information, including past news reports and interviews with the senator. The campaign commissioned several reports of other candidates, too, the advisers said.

The sender would not speak on the telephone with a Post reporter but indicated they had access to additional information, including internal campaign emails and documents related to Trump’s court cases.

“Consider me as an anonymous resource who has access to [sic] other stuff too, that I can send you, if this content is in your field of interest,” the sender wrote in an email to the reporter.

“I hope you understand my limitations and my vulnerable position in the campaign,” the sender added.

On Friday, Microsoft said a group run by Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps had com-



MICHAEL CIAGLO/GETTY IMAGES

Donald Trump at a rally in Bozeman, Mont., on Friday. The document on Trump’s running mate, Sen. JD Vance (R-Ohio), was also sent to The Washington Post by a sender who would not speak on the phone with a Post reporter but claimed to have access to more information.

promised the email account of a former adviser to a U.S. presidential campaign and used that address in June to contact a senior official who was still engaged in the campaign. That email contained a link to a site that could have allowed Iran to intercept the target’s other emails, Microsoft said. A spokesman for the company said it would not reveal whether the attack had succeeded and declined to comment Saturday.

A spokesperson for the National Security Council said the Biden administration “strongly condemns any foreign govern-

ment or entity who attempts to interfere in our electoral process or seeks to undermine confidence in our democratic institutions.”

In a statement, the FBI said the agency was aware of the media reports and had no comment. A spokesperson for Iran’s permanent mission to the United Nations did not respond to a request for comment.

U.S. intelligence officials said in July that Iran is working to stoke societal discord in the United States and undermine Trump’s bid to regain the White House, a repeat of Iranian efforts

*U.S. intelligence officials said in July that Iran is working to stoke societal discord in the United States.*

in 2020.

Prosecutors in New York last month also charged a Pakistani man with ties to Iran in a murder-for-hire plot to assassinate a politician or U.S. government official on American soil. The alleged Iranian-backed plot, however, had raised concerns about Trump’s safety in the weeks before the attempted assassination in July, according to U.S. officials familiar with the investigation who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe internal discussions.

In his statement, Cheung referenced reports of that alleged

plot: “The Iranians know that President Trump will stop their reign of terror just like he did in his first four years in the White House. Any media or news outlet reprinting documents or internal communications are doing the bidding of America’s enemies and doing exactly what they want.”

A spokesman for Democratic nominee Vice President Kamala Harris’s campaign did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Cheung’s statement is a marked change in tone from the 2016 campaign, when Trump repeatedly touted internal Democratic emails and other documents released by WikiLeaks that U.S. officials suspected had been stolen by Russia.

“I love WikiLeaks,” Trump said while campaigning against Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton in October 2016, after the organization had posted online tens of thousands of emails hacked from the account of Clinton’s campaign chairman.

“This WikiLeaks stuff is unbelievable,” he said two days later, as the site posted daily troves of internal Clinton campaign emails. “It tells you the inner heart; you gotta read it.”

Thomas Rid, professor of strategic studies at Johns Hopkins University, called hacks and leaks — similar to what happened in 2016 and to what the Trump campaign has alleged took place with the Vance report — the “white whale” of foreign influence operations. “Close observers in the intelligence community and beyond have long been waiting for another sighting of that elusive beast: potentially highly impactful, deceptive, perhaps with forgeries slipped into genuine leaked material, with real news value, hard to counter,” he said, but added this did not appear to be it.

Devlin Barrett, Joseph Menn, Aaron Schaffer, Chris DeGhanpoor, Sam Oakford and Toluse Olorunnipa contributed to this report.

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# A Win for Homebuyers and Sellers:

## Welcome to the Evolution of Residential Real Estate in Maryland

On August 14, the business of residential real estate in Maryland will change. Specifically, potential homebuyers who wish to work with an agent will need to sign a written agreement with an agent prior to work done on the buyer's behalf, even before showing an open house. Also, properties for sale listed on databases known as a multiple listing service (MLS) will no longer include an offer of compensation that the seller is offering to buyer's brokers.

This means that before you begin your home search, you have a valuable opportunity to sit down with your agent and discuss the many services they will provide, ensuring you have a clear understanding of how they will assist you throughout the process. You'll also have the chance to determine a fair compensation structure that reflects the value and worth they bring to your real estate journey.

Regarding offers of compensation, Maryland REALTORS®, representing more than 28,000 members, and the Greater Capital Area Association of REALTORS® (GCAAR) and the Prince George's County Association of REALTORS® (PGCAR), serving Montgomery and Prince George's counties as well as Washington, D.C., applaud efforts that contribute to transparency in the real estate transaction, likely the most complex purchase anyone will make in their lifetimes. Of the requirement for a written Buyer's Agreement, this is an "advocacy win" we fought for more than eight years ago: Maryland law has required this since October 2016.

Transparency helps to place today's homebuyers and sellers in the driver's seat as it provides clarity in the transaction and defines the roles and responsibilities for all parties involved. Sellers can search for a REALTOR® based on a variety of factors including sales volume, community knowledge, and more. Buyers can also find their ideal REALTOR®, looking at factors important to them: fiduciary skills, inspections expertise, referrals, and others. While both Buyer and Seller will have contractual and financial obligations to their respective agents' brokerages, commissions remain negotiable. The Buyer and Seller have the power to search for the REALTOR® who best serves their needs.

**However you choose to find your REALTOR®, understand the VALUE they bring to your home sale or search.** Buying or selling a home can be stressful, difficult, confounding, complex. Your REALTOR®, a professional with specialized training, market knowledge, and unique expertise, can make your path more manageable and—dare we say?—engaging, exciting, and, at the end of the transaction, rewarding. Many REALTORS® have specializations that focus on elements that can be a game-changer: first-time homebuyers, military, diverse marketplaces, specialized properties, and many more.

The Maryland suburbs surrounding Washington, D.C., stand out for their diversity in living, cultures, recreation, and robust employment opportunities. Sharing a border with Washington, D.C., Montgomery and Prince George's counties play host to thousands of federal government jobs. Whether it's the nightlife and conferences at National Harbor, the restaurant scene in Bethesda, or the attractions and rural beauty in both counties, the quality of life here is Maryland living at its finest. According to Maryland REALTORS®' 2023 housing data, more than 12,150 REALTOR® members in Montgomery and Prince George's counties helped their clients with more than 12,160 homes—estates to condo, single-family to multi-family, urban to farmland, townhome to vacation property. Each home sale (and every new homeowner) has contributed to the economic strength and vitality in both counties. These same REALTORS® from GCAAR and PGCAR who have brought the reality of homeownership to so many people in this area are your friends, neighbors, community leaders, and volunteers of the area's many charitable causes.

While searching for the REALTOR® that best suits you, take time to educate yourself on the details of buying or selling a home. In 2019, Maryland REALTORS® launched [MarylandHomeownership.com](https://MarylandHomeownership.com), an educational resource, free of advertising and sales tactics, which provides actionable information, including downloadable resources and checklists (in English and Spanish), that educates consumers on all facets of buying or selling a home. Doing some homework ahead of one of the biggest decisions in your life always pays dividends.

Transparency and education are two of the most important factors that can lead to a successful outcome when buying or selling a home. The third factor is working with a REALTOR®. The path toward buying or selling a home is not traveled often. There are bumps, odd turns, hazards that you don't expect. Your REALTOR® will guide you through this process, and once you've successfully been handed the keys to your new home (or have sold your current home) you'll realize that your REALTOR® was WORTH the sound investment.

Your journey begins at [MarylandHomeownership.com](https://MarylandHomeownership.com).

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# Pro-Trump prophecies brought a pastor fame. His brother spoke out.

PASTOR FROM A1

opponent of abortion, he'd voted twice for the Republican nominee. What outraged him was his brother twisting the Lord's words, he thought, in a politically savvy bid for fame and fortune.

Jeremiah, 36, ran a church with hundreds of congregants and a school preparing students for the end-times. He marketed himself as a "globally recognized prophet," spoke at Christian conferences nationwide, advertised e-courses that explored "developing prophetic maturity" for \$19.99, and had garnered millions of YouTube views spreading what he framed as divine messages about Anthony S. Fauci, George Soros and President Joe Biden.

Josiah, 37, had just started yet another dead-end gig as a cocktail server, pulling double shifts to support the 25-person ministry he'd founded with his wife on Alabama's Gulf Coast.

Their father, a retired pastor and a towering figure in both their lives, had sided with Jeremiah for as long as Josiah could remember, he said, telling him that criticizing the prophet was like criticizing God.

But Josiah didn't know how many others would defend his brother, too.

He didn't know that Jeremiah — who declined to answer any questions for this story — would strike back to his 328,000 followers on Facebook, writing, "I have chosen silence over the last several months as I have been publicly slandered, threatened, and falsely accused online by my older brother Josiah."

He didn't know that strangers on the internet would call him "delusional."

Staring at his screen, Josiah mostly sensed that he could no longer stay silent. The Bible warned that false prophets led vulnerable believers astray. The stakes couldn't feel higher: spiritual life or death.

He hit "post."

They were the oldest two of four boys but presented like twins. Both had hazel eyes, stocky builds and a tendency to speak like they were onstage. Both loved wrestling and Miami Hurricanes football. Both attended the same private Christian college in Florida.

Yet childhood was rough for Josiah, while Jeremiah made their upbringing sound magical.

"I was blessed to grow up in an environment where my parents made the supernatural feel natural," Jeremiah told his YouTube viewers.

When he was in the womb, he said, their mother dreamed he would have a "prophetic call" and that Satan would try to kill him. Indeed, he continued, he was born "purple" with the umbilical cord wrapped around his neck. Their parents named him after the Hebrew prophet.

Josiah never heard that story from anyone but Jeremiah. He doesn't know the details of his own birth, either — just that his name came from a king in the Bible charged with abolishing the worship of false idols.

The brothers grew up near Indianapolis, where their father led a Christian church. It was not a solemn place. People spun, sobbed and cried out in what the boys understood to be tongues, a heavenly language.

They were part of a movement that believed in modern prophets and apostles — one that went politically mainstream when Trump's top spiritual adviser, Paula White, became the first pastor from the brothers' strand of Christianity to serve in the White House.

When they were children, their father, Joseph, would invite Jeremiah to speak at church — the man they called Pops was his "biggest fan," Jeremiah wrote on Facebook — but Josiah tended to talk back and get in trouble. Pops responded, he said, by elbowing him, spitting on him, kicking him and punching him in the face. Three times, Josiah said, his bruises were so bad that he had to stay home from school. (An adult he'd confided in at the time backed up this account to The Washington Post.) As far as he knew, Pops never hit Jeremiah.

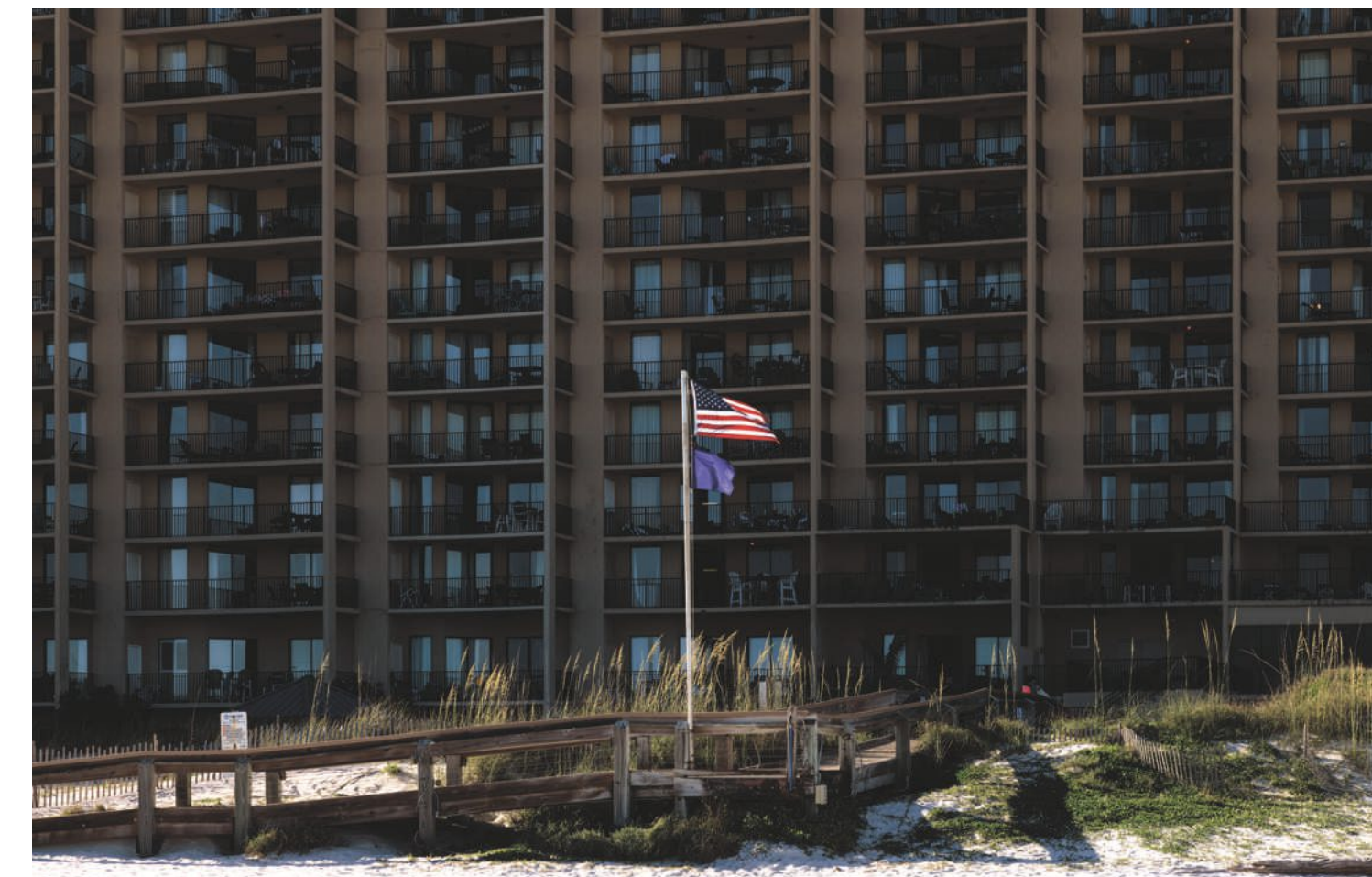
Their parents, siblings, other family members and a former co-pastor of Joseph's did not respond to calls or texts from The Post.

Josiah's wife of 12 years, Jenn, said he told her about the physical mistreatment soon after they started dating.

"Pops was always a ticking time bomb," said the freckled real estate agent, 38. Once, during a family dinner, he'd shoved the table at her, she said, and then leaned in to scream so close that saliva flecked her face.

"He would just lose it," she said, "especially with Josiah."

One brother was the golden child. The other was the black sheep. For a while, Josiah struggled with his faith. He drank, used drugs, got into fights, and later



PHOTOS BY BRYAN TARNOWSKI FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

posted in a Facebook confession that he'd been a "liar, a thief, a cheat, a gambler and a womanizer."

He'd stood up in church as a live stream captured the service and said, "I have used my anger and my rage to manipulate and to intimidate and to make people afraid of me."

Often, he said, he was fixated on justice — righting perceived wrongs, especially when he thought anyone was abusing authority. He'd considered becoming a cop before Jeremiah opened a ministry 14 years ago in Lakeland, Fla., and Josiah opted to join him.

That partnership dissolved after Jeremiah invited Pops to provide Christian family counseling. "The man who'd beat me as a kid?" Josiah had thought.

Eventually, he said, he left for Missouri after Jeremiah relayed a dream that Josiah would find "prosperity" there in Kansas City. Instead, Josiah moved into a basement apartment that flooded with sewage.

So began his decade in what he calls "the wilderness" — bouncing from state to state, managing sports bars and selling cars, preaching here and there.

Jeremiah, meanwhile, was running his ministry and self-publishing books about what he said God was telling him. He started appearing on Christian podcasts and talk shows. He launched a YouTube channel. He headlined Christian conferences, ascending in an industry of self-styled prophets who promoted each other's content.

His audience exploded when he leaned into politics.

In the summer of 2015, a few weeks after Trump announced his long shot quest for the Oval Office, Jeremiah published a prophecy about the reality television mogul from Queens.

"Trump shall become My trumpet to the American people," he wrote for a Christian web magazine, employing God's voice. "... I am going to use him to expose darkness and perversion in Amer-

ica like never before, but you must understand that he is like a bull in a china closet."

Holy forecasts about Trump soon took off like a "prophetic meme," religion scholar Matthew D. Taylor pointed out, and Politico would describe Jeremiah as a "wunderkind" who had helped seed the idea among the religious right that the Lord was backing Trump.

At the time, though, Josiah remembers recognizing his brother's words from somewhere else. They both followed Kim Clement, another self-professed seer from South Africa.

"Trump shall become a trumpet, says the Lord," Clement had declared years before Jeremiah's prediction.

Still, Josiah accepted Jeremiah's offer to man the merch table on his speaking tour. For every one of Jeremiah's books they sold with Trump's face on it, Josiah pocketed a cut of the profits.

People cheered and wept when Jeremiah took the stage, and Josiah clapped along until one con-

**Josiah Johnson and his wife, Jenn, wanted a fresh start last year and moved into a quiet neighborhood in Orange Beach, Ala.**



**LEFT: Josiah holds a photo of himself, far left, with his younger brother Jeremiah, in the knit cap, and their other brothers and father, "Pops." BELOW: A small group attends a Sunday fellowship meeting led by Josiah in his home. Josiah, feeling an urge to return to ministry, formed the group with his family and friends about a year ago.**



ference in Fort Mill, S.C., in December 2018.

He recalls freezing when Jeremiah predicted a forthcoming cleansing, according to footage of the event — "a boom in the upper room."

A boom in the upper room? Nights earlier, when Josiah couldn't sleep, he'd jotted down a poem called "the boom in the upper room." He can't find a copy of it today, he said, but he'd been so proud of the verses, he'd shared them with Jeremiah.

Had Jeremiah just ripped off his poem? And then passed it off as a prophecy?

That was harder to let go than the Kim Clement incident. Josiah's wife, who had been startled awake when he rose to write the poem, felt the same way.

"Jerry ... Jenn was really upset when you took my message 'the boom in the upper room' that I shared with you and released it as your own," he later texted Jeremiah.

"Just seems really shady bro," Josiah continued, "and unappreciated by us."

"Josiah, I have been as gracious to you as I can," Jeremiah replied, according to screenshots Josiah shared with The Post. "I got you your job. Don't forget that."

He added: "You shouldn't be offended. You should feel tremendously blessed."

Josiah did not feel tremendously blessed. He quit.

Josiah said nothing when a Christian blogger later accused Jeremiah of stealing another pastor's reaction to the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, publishing side-by-side Facebook screenshots.

"Today, Ginsburg discovered that there is a court higher than the one called 'Supreme' and she does not sit in the seat of the judge," J.D. Hall posted on Sept. 18, 2020.

"Ginsburg has now discovered that there is a court higher than the one called 'Supreme' and she does not sit in the seat of the judge," Jeremiah posted the next day.

Then before Election Day in 2020, Jeremiah assured his online audience that Trump would win again. Dozens of other self-professed prophets on Facebook and TikTok echoed that sentiment long after the results showed otherwise, lending their brand of spiritual credibility to Trump's false cries of election fraud.

After rioters stormed the U.S. Capitol, however, Jeremiah apologized and closed his ministry with a three-part YouTube series called "I Was Wrong."

Watching from afar, Josiah hoped his brother would retreat from the spotlight in repentance.

Soon, though, Jeremiah opened a new ministry under another name and was back on YouTube, claiming that the Biden administration was unleashing "demonic activity."

When approached by a Post reporter, Jeremiah declined to comment, citing the sensitive nature of family matters. Instead, he requested to pray over the reporter, thanking God for her "desire for the truth" before veering into a personalized prediction: She was meant to help "small children."

The Lord is here with us right now, says Jeremiah, pacing the stage in a flannel shirt and ripped jeans. Can you feel Him in your seat?

Stage lights flood the auditorium, which resembles the inside of a wooden ship. Hundreds of people clap and cheer. Some are crying. They stretch their hands toward the sky. Or toward Jeremiah. Several are recording him on their phones.

"A round of applause for God!" he shouts.

It's Saturday evening, the second night of a "Prophetic Weekend" conference at the Ark Fellowship, the church that Jeremiah runs in a suburb of Charlotte.

He descends from the stage and scans the crowd, a mix of regulars and out-of-towners. His keyboardist plays a melody fit for a Hollywood redemption scene.

"Brother in the glasses," Jeremiah calls out. "It's time, man."

A man in a black shirt looks around. Me? A staffer guides him to the front of the room. A cameraman trails them. Jeremiah places a hand on the brother-in-glasses's head.

"The Lord says, 'I will take what has been sowed in here,' Jeremiah says, "and I will begin to stir a fire deep down in your bones."

He purses his lips and blows into his mic. *Whoosh.*

"I loose the prophetic anointing upon you," he says.

Over the past two hours, Jeremiah has mentioned Trump just once, asserting that too many Christians these days are behaving like the former president: "all the vitriol, all the anger, all the offense."

Since whiffing his 2020 prediction, he has stayed away from forecasting election outcomes. He doesn't say if he'll vote for or against Trump. Jeremiah touches

on none of the conspiracy theories he has mentioned lately on YouTube — like his sense that Soros is secretly bankrolling pro-Palestinian demonstrations or that Fauci has accepted money from “not American” men pushing a satanic agenda.

Tonight's theme is dislodging grudges.

Evil spirits are hanging over some people in here, Jeremiah says, tempting them to dwell on grievances instead of what actually matters: their relationship with God.

A little girl hugs her mother's leg. A woman in a lime-green jumpsuit clasps her hands. A man in a red polo yells, “Yes, Jesus!”

“You are wrestling with how justified you are in your offense,” Jeremiah says. “Let it go!”

The energy is electric as he calls for healing.

“Lord,” Jeremiah says, “I pray for family reconciliation.”

He doesn't mention his brother. Or what he'd posted on Facebook about Josiah five weeks earlier.

“It is with great sadness that I share this document that has been published today from a team of leaders in the body of Christ,” Jeremiah had typed.

He linked to a statement titled: “Warning the Body of Christ About Josiah Johnson.”

Their youngest brother, also a pastor, had posted it on his own ministry's website. Printed out, the collection of accusations stretched 25 pages long.

“Full of envy and malice,” the statement read, “Josiah Johnson has appointed himself as the chief prosecutor of the church.”

On the Alabama coast, past the surf shops and the crab cake joints, Josiah's fellowship meets for Wednesday evening Bible study in a modest living room.

The worshippers ease into a circle of foldout chairs. Muted Christian music videos play on the wall-mounted television, next to a framed watercolor of angel wings. The dress code looks to be pajama-casual. Three 20-something couples and a grandmother listen as Josiah reads from his dog-eared Bible.

Fittingly, he says, this verse is from the book of Jeremiah:

*Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you; They fill you with false hopes.*



BRYAN TARNOWSKI FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

**Josiah Johnson hugs his son after a fellowship meeting at his home. Josiah has faced backlash online and from family members after speaking out against his brother Jeremiah, a self-proclaimed prophet who said God wanted Donald Trump to be elected president.**

*They speak visions from their own minds,*

*Not from the mouth of the Lord.*

The fellowship formed about a year ago, when Josiah, unsatisfied with his string of odd jobs, felt a tug to return to ministry. This thrilled Jenn. Their sons, now 8 and 10, could grow up, she hoped, in the glow of genuine Christianity.

They reached out to friends: Who else was tired of cookie-cutter churches? Did anyone want to try something new? Then the couple rented a five-bedroom, slate gray house in a quiet Orange Beach neighborhood and opened their doors to those needing a place to crash.

“It's like ‘The Real World: Austin,’ except it's ‘The Real World: Jesus,’” says one roommate, 28-year-old Tiffany Williams, who'd scooped ice cream at nearby Sweet Cone Alabama before taking maternity leave with those she calls “the family.”

They share meals. They watch

each other's kids. They've pledged to hold each other accountable. When someone struggled with a porn addiction, for instance, Tiffany had admired Josiah's blunt feedback: “That's not fair to your wife.”

A few past roommates have gotten fed up with “how they move,” as Jenn puts it, and left. One woman who'd stayed at the house for a few weeks was quoted in “Warning the Body of Christ About Josiah Johnson,” accusing Josiah and Jenn of desiring “control over people.” (The roommate did not respond to requests for comment. The Post reviewed text messages she sent to Jenn that appeared to contradict some of her statements.)

The fellowship read the “Warning” post all together, Tiffany says, after Josiah had pasted the link on his own Facebook page, seeking prayers to reveal “what the Lord says is Truth and what is lies.”

A truth, according to Josiah:

He'd cursed at Jeremiah and their youngest brother two years ago during an argument. He'd written, “It's Jerry I'm coming for.” The screenshot they'd included in the post was real.

A lie, according to Josiah: He was not a “master manipulator” who'd pushed a 28-year-old man in this group, Elijah McCurley, to ghost his family, move here from Georgia and then marry Jenn's sister.

“That is just 100 percent false,” McCurley says, backing him up.

A former drug addict, McCurley says he'd been feeling depressed in his hometown. He didn't want to relapse. When he prayed about it, he got the sense that Orange Beach could offer a fresh start with a tight-knit Christian support system.

Over the past year, he says, he'd started a window tint business, wed Jenn's 25-year-old sister after six months of dating — a match he described as “God's work” — and stayed clean. McCurley says he

rarely speaks to his mother because she still tells people he has joined a cult.

“The only thing I've ever done against my will,” he says, “was get handcuffed by a cop.”

“Are you sure you're not in a cult, dude?” Josiah asks, and the group laughs.

It's Friday afternoon, hour four of Josiah's double shift at a beach pub. A bachelorette party is scream-talking as the ladies down tequila shots. Tom Petty's voice blasts through the stereo: *But let me get to the point. Let's roll another joint...*

Josiah hums along as he fetches someone a vanilla milkshake with vodka.

The un-Christian atmosphere doesn't bother him. Elijah had picked up weekend shifts here and brought Josiah in, too. After a couple of weeks, he'd earned about \$2,000 in wages and tips. That was a relief. He and Jenn had been cutting into their savings.

“What can I get for you?” he asks a table of women in denim shorts and bikini tops.

He didn't know this Friday would be his last double shift.

Four days later, his manager abruptly let him go, he said, and didn't say why. (She told The Post that she cannot comment on personnel matters.)

Josiah wondered: Was the “Warning” post ping-pong around Orange Beach?

Even weeks later, he hadn't found a new job. Josiah deactivated his Facebook account, in case his personal life was spooking potential employers.

The “Warning” post, though, was findable on Google. Dozens of the friends he'd shared with Jeremiah had blocked him on social media. Hundreds of strangers were trashing him in comments on Jeremiah's Facebook page, calling him “manipulative” and “possessed” and “delusional.” One of his neighbors had joined in, too, writing, without elaboration, that she is “subjected everyday” to “witnessing what is taking place.”

Their father, meanwhile, was urging Josiah to delete the “false prophet” accusations, according to a screenshot Josiah shared with The Post. “It's an embarrassment to me and our whole family,” Pops texted him.

But his brother's reputation seemed shinier than ever.

There Jeremiah was, leading an e-course that tackled “true prophets vs. false prophets.” There he was, seeking applicants for his in-person school (\$1,249 per semester). There he was, promoting his new book: “Secrets to Stewarding God's Voice in a New Era: The Power and Price of Influence.” There he was, speaking at a conference in Texas. There he was, surpassing 20,000 views on a YouTube video called, “I Woke up ... And The Lord Told Me THIS!”

Josiah wasn't ready to give up. “There is still real mercy available if you repent and throw yourself on the truth,” he texted Jeremiah.

No response. He typed out another approach, one he thought reflected his motive.

“I love you bro,” Josiah wrote. “I really do.”

This time, his message would not send. Jeremiah, he figured, must have blocked him.

Aaron Schaffer contributed to this report.

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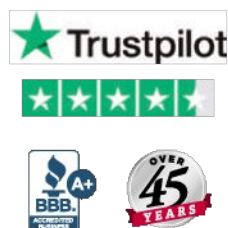
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## ELECTION 2024

## Amid distrust and anger, conversations to bridge the partisan divide

BY PAOLA CHAPDELAINE

They call themselves the Braver Angels, because given the distrust, anger and animosity dividing this nation, sitting down to talk with individuals holding different political views takes a certain amount of courage and faith.

Yet that's what the volunteer-led group pulled off this summer in Kenosha, Wis. It brought together 750 liberals, conservatives and independents — college students to octogenarians — for conver-

sation about the issues that most concern them and how to get past the partisanship for solutions.

The Washington Post asked 30 participants about the country's fractures and why they still have hope. Here are some of those people and their answers, which have been lightly edited.

Political affiliation is as each person identified it.

Photography and interviews by Paola Chapdelaine. Introduction by Susan Levine.



**Naiomi Lundman, 46**

Wisconsin | Self-employed | Unaffiliated

"As people, we are so susceptible to being manipulated by the things that we hold the dearest. So it really is heartbreaking to see that within families.

Having lived overseas for several years and in different countries, I've learned to be focused on problem solving and those who bring real hope to populations. At this time in our country, those that are willing to listen to opposing views — and be open to changing if necessary — and have intentional dialogue to truly solve problems and create hope, I will support."



**Carolyn Peterson, 43**

Ohio | Professor | Leans blue

"I am working to try to understand how to respect intellectual diversity in my classroom, and we talk about a lot of really controversial topics. How do you actually do that without it devolving into yelling or this side against that side, or people being shut down, or name calling?"

Everybody is so triggered all the time. Everyone is so threatened. Everyone is so upset. Everyone is so at a level 10 of emotion that it's almost impossible to have an authentic conversation with multiple viewpoints."



**Marc Ang, 42**

California | Business executive | Republican

"Partisan lines, to me, seem very shallow. When you make decisions based on what your party tells you, we might as well be in a third-world country with a dictatorship. I actually had a few friends defriend me, just completely cut me off. They never even wanted to have a nuanced discussion; they were just so angry at Trump.

My hope [is] that I reconnect with some of those old friends when they see that was unnecessary, that we are all individuals at the end of the day. That's the one thing I'm starting to see people come around to, that I can have a mix of red and blue beliefs."



**Jane Connor Raucher, 79, and Steve Raucher, 83**

She: Marriage and family therapist | Democrat

He: Retired school administrator | Republican

He: "I like to deal with the issues, not the politics. I abhor party lines. I think that they're getting in the way of progress in this country."

She: "The lack of civility in the debate we watched was very distressing. And I think our country deserves stronger choices. I see the capacity for growth and change all the time in my work and in my personal life. We actually know how to build stronger relationships. We know how to build cooperation. We know how to build hope and inspiration."

He: "This country is bigger than its politics. It's got something called the people."



**Jasmine Kemp, 21**

Illinois | Student | Leans blue

"When I think of the upcoming elections, the first word that pops into my head is 'disappointing.' I feel like a lot of people aren't taking the government seriously, which is sad.

What gives me hope for the future is that there are a lot of good people and people that do want change. Youth nowadays are very passionate about different issues, so it gives me hope."



**Michael Hernandez, 25**

Connecticut | Student | Conservative Democrat

"I started having debates within my own family about marriage equality and abortion, and I would walk away from those conversations very heated. [But] I still wanted to give my mom a hug. I'm the first person in my family to graduate from high school, and even though I'm more informed than my parents, my opinions are not more valid than theirs. They're just more informed."

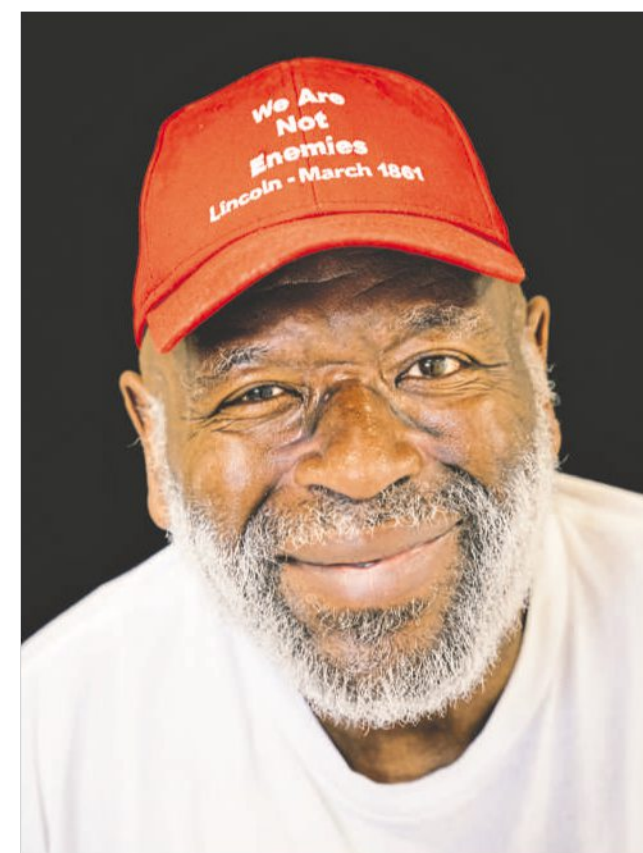


**Brandon Lawson, 52**

Ohio | Writer and speaker | Republican

"Whether you're Democrat or you're Republican, even though this is the party you're in, there's times that you see that they're more right on certain things. When it comes to weighing it all together, you lean more this way, but that doesn't mean you don't see anything they see. You gotta take a step back and try to look at it from their side.

In the end, I do believe that human beings are inherently good. It's Albert Einstein who said: Peace does not come by force. It can only be done with cooperation and understanding."



**Ron McFarland, 69**

Iowa | Retired teacher | Republican

"I had a nephew that I love so dearly, and he's a liberal. He sent me a really angry text, told me I was going to eternal death for who I voted for in 2016. I was hurt so much.

I look back in the past. Think about where we came from. Think about, as an African American, the ordeal that African Americans went through and are still surviving. This is the greatest country in the world for a person of color."



## ELECTION 2024

## Walz's liberal education record may provide grist for GOP

Critics of Minnesota's governor say he catered too much to the state's teachers union and focused on the wrong issues as test scores fell amid covid

BY LAURA MECKLER  
AND HANNAH NATANSON

The 2019 state budget negotiations in Minnesota were tense, with a deadline looming, when the speaker of the House offered Gov. Tim Walz a suggestion for breaking the impasse.

They both knew that the Republicans' top priority was to create a school voucher-type program that would direct tax dollars to help families pay for private schools. House Speaker Melissa Hortman, a Democrat, floated an idea: What if they offered the Republicans a pared-down version of the voucher plan, some sort of "fig leaf," that could help them claim a symbolic victory in trade for big wins on the Democratic side? In the past, on other issues, Walz had been open to that kind of compromise, Hortman said.

This time, it was a "hard no." "It was like kind of 'Over my dead body,'" she recalled in an interview. "He would have shut down state government if they insisted on vouchers."

Since taking office as governor in 2019, Walz, the Democratic nominee for vice president, has earned a national reputation as a progressive willing to champion and experiment with liberal ideas for governing. That approach was especially apparent in his handling of Minnesota's public schools, according to critics and allies, who said Walz has retained the heart and priorities of the teacher he was for nearly two decades before seeking elected office.

He used his position's formidable sway over education to push for more funding for schools and backed positions taken by Education Minnesota, the state's teachers union of which he was once a member. His record on education will probably excite Democrats but provide grist for Republicans who have in recent years gained political ground with complaints about how liberals have managed schools.

Teachers and their unions consistently supported Walz's Minnesota campaigns with donations, records show. And in the first 24 hours after he was selected as Vice President Kamala Harris's running mate, teachers were the most common profession in the flood of donations to the Democratic ticket, according to the campaign.

During the chaotic 2020-2021 pandemic-rattled school year, Walz took a cautious approach toward school reopening that was largely in line with teachers, who were resisting a return to in-person learning, fearful of contracting covid. Critics say that as a result, Minnesota schools stayed closed far too long — longer than the typical state — inflicting lasting academic and social emotional damage on students.

Asked about the covid response, Harris-Walz campaign spokesman Kevin Munoz shifted the blame to Donald Trump, who was president at the time: "Schools were closed because Trump failed on Covid."

He added that Harris and Walz would be far better for American education than their opponents.

"They will fight for a strong public education system, schools safe from gun violence and investing in every community," he wrote. "It's a stark contrast to Trump and [JD] Vance."

Walz also advanced his own robust and liberal education agenda. He fought to increase K-12 education spending in 2019, when he won increases in negotiations with Republicans, and more dramatically in 2023, when he worked with the Democratic majority in the state House and Senate. He won funding to provide free meals to all schoolchildren, regardless of income, and free college tuition for students — including undocumented immigrants — whose families earn less than \$80,000 per year. He also called out racial gaps in achievement and discipline in schools and tried to address them.

And as culture war debates raged across the country in recent years, Walz pushed Minnesota to adopt policies in support of LGBTQ+ rights.

"He understands what our schools and students need," said Jake Schwitzer, executive director of North Star Policy Action, a liberal research and advocacy group that is funded in large part by labor unions. "He believes in the power of government to improve people's lives and in his responsibility to move our policies in that direction."



Gov. Tim Walz (D) signs the education budget bill at Bruce Vento Elementary School in St. Paul, Minn., in May 2019. After Democrats took control of the Minnesota House and Senate in 2022, the state increased education spending by nearly \$2.3 billion in the 2023 budget.

Walz's sweeping agenda has been met with pushback from conservatives, who point to falling test scores to argue that he was focused on the wrong issues and catering to the teachers union.

Scores fell across the country during the pandemic, but in Minnesota, reading and, in particular, math scores fell more than the national average. In 2015 and 2017, the state's fourth-grade math scores were 10 points higher than the average national score on the National Assessment of Educational Progress; in 2022, they were only four points higher. Eighth-grade math scores also fell faster than average, to their lowest level in three decades.

Cristine Trooien, a mother of three and executive director of education advocacy group the Minnesota Parents Alliance, which formed in 2022 to fight for parents' rights in education, argued that public schooling in her state "has literally never been worse."

"Sadly for Minnesota students, the union-controlled Walz administration decided it would rather use its power, influence and bottomless resources to saturate the K-12 conversation with straw man issues like 'book banning,'" she said in an email, "than confront and solve the literacy and student achievement crisis."

#### Delivering for teachers

When Walz first ran for governor in 2018, he filled out a 13-page questionnaire from Education Minnesota and left no doubt about his position opposing vouchers.

"As a former public school teacher, I will always do everything in my power to protect our public education system from privatization," he wrote. His promise was quickly put to the test.

During budget negotiations in 2019, Republicans were pushing for a variety of tax cuts, but their top priority was a tax credit for donations to a scholarship program — a type of voucher program used in many other states. They argued it would give students stuck in poorly performing schools more options. Teachers and most Democrats opposed it, saying vouchers drain money from public schools and improperly mix tax dollars with religious private school instruction.

As the budget deadline approached, Republican Paul Gazelka, the Senate majority leader at the time and one of Walz's staunchest political opponents, continued to press his voucher plan but met unyielding resistance.

Hortman recalled that at a point during their closed-door talks, the governor replied, "You know I'm a member of Education Minnesota, right?" (He actually was no longer a member but had been as a teacher.)

Gazelka walked away frustrated.

"I was willing to give up a lot to get that, but it just didn't happen," Gazelka said. "We just weren't asking that much, but that's how passionate he was against any kind of education reform. He would never go

against the teachers union."

Four years later, Walz pressed his own education agenda.

In the 2022 elections, Walz was reelected, and Minnesota Democrats took control of the Senate. Democrats now had a "trifecta" — governor, House and Senate — and a \$17.6 billion budget surplus.

After taking his oath of office in January 2023, Walz said Minnesota had a historic opportunity to become the best state in the nation for children and families. His proposals included a huge increase in K-12 education spending.

"Now is the time to be bold," he said.

The final budget agreement in 2023 increased education spending by nearly \$2.3 billion, including a significant boost to the per-pupil funding formula that would be tied to inflation, ensuring growth in the coming years. Total formula funding for schools would climb from about \$9.9 billion in 2023 to \$11.4 billion in 2025, according to North Star Policy Action. The budget also included targeted money for special education, pre-K programs, mental health and community schools.

Walz also signed legislation providing free school meals for all students — a signature achievement — not just those in low-income families who are eligible under the federal program.

"Our union came to him with a pretty big list," said Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota. "He certainly delivered."

#### A covid shutdown

Like every state, Minnesota shut down its schools in March 2020 in response to the coronavirus. As the pandemic persisted, resistance to the state's response grew.

For the 2020-2021 school year, the governor left decisions on reopening partly up to school districts. But he also mandated that, for schools to reopen fully, localities had to see their virus cases fall below 10 per 10,000 people over a two-week period. That meant that some school districts — including big ones in Minneapolis and St. Paul — would stay remote, or mostly remote, for months.

He loosened these restrictions near the end of 2020, allowing elementary schools to reopen in

January 2021 regardless of case counts. The month afterward, he permitted all middle and high schools to open back up, too, and declared every campus must offer some in-person teaching by March 8.

By March 2021 — a full year after the initial shutdowns — 90 percent of Minnesota districts and charter schools were offering at least partial in-person instruction, according to Walz's office.

Minnesota schools remained remote longer than average among states, said Nat Malkus, a researcher at the American Enterprise Institute who has analyzed the length of time districts remained remote during the 2020-2021 school year. In Malkus's ranking of states — from most remote learning to most in person — Minnesota came in 19th out of 50 states, based on the number of weeks of full or partly remote school, weighted by student enrollment.

The state's ranking is "not too bad," Malkus said. "That makes it somewhat worse than average, but better than average for blue states."

Critics, both then and since, said Walz made it too difficult for schools to reopen, inflicting irreparable damage on children's academics and mental health.

In fall 2020, a mother of five, distressed by school closures and a pause of youth sports statewide, founded an advocacy group called Let Them Play Minnesota. The group soon swelled to 25,000 members and sued Walz twice over the sports halt, although both suits were later dismissed. The mother, Dawn Gillman, a Republican, rode the following she gained for her advocacy to a seat in the Minnesota House.

A few months later, Republicans in the Minnesota Senate rebuked Walz for school closures by proposing a bill that would have stripped the governor of the emergency powers he used to close campuses. The measure passed the Republican-dominated chamber but died in the Democratic-controlled House.

Some schools also tried to resist.

Sibley East Public Schools, a rural district southwest of the Twin Cities, voted in September 2020 to ignore the state's reopening restrictions and shift to in-person instruction for all students — only to back down a

week later and resume hybrid schooling. The district fell in line after the state schools superintendent called the Sibley East superintendent, the Star Tribune reported, and the district's attorney warned of a possible legal battle with the state.

How things played out in Sibley East was typical of the governor's pandemic policies, said Scott Jensen, a Republican and former Minnesota state senator who lost to Walz in the 2022 gubernatorial race.

"Tim Walz gave the public impression he was letting individual school districts make the decision they needed to make, but I don't think that was quite genuine," Jensen said. "I think school districts felt a tremendous amount of pressure to toe the line."

But Walz enjoyed the strong and continued support of teachers' unions for most of his pandemic decisions.

He pursued teacher-friendly policies, issuing an executive order that "strongly" discouraged schools from asking educators to provide in-person and virtual instruction simultaneously, a form of teaching that many found burdensome. The order also mandated that districts give teachers an extra 30 minutes of planning time a day. And like a handful of other states, he put educators near the top of the priority list for covid vaccinations once they became available, holding mass vaccination events for them. As a result, 55 percent of school staff and child-care workers were vaccinated by March 2021. His administration also delivered biweekly, free shipments of coronavirus tests to schools statewide.

"There was really no playbook, nobody knew what to do," said Specht, the Education Minnesota president. Walz "looked to the science, and he engaged our union quite a bit."

#### Pushing against 'hatred and bigotry'

In his 2023 State of the State address, Walz drew a pointed contrast between the culture wars raging in states such as Florida and the situation in Minnesota.

"The forces of hatred and bigotry are on the march in states across this country and around the world," Walz said. "But let me say this now and be very clear about this: That march stops at Minnesota's borders."

Through his tenure, he repeatedly took up the causes of LGBTQ+ rights and racial justice.

He signed a measure prohibiting public and school libraries from banning books due to their messages or opinions, and another granting legal protection to children who travel to Minnesota for gender-affirming care.

"He's a strong supporter of kids, he wants to build schools where young people can thrive," said Rep. Leigh Finke (D), Minnesota's first openly transgender lawmaker. "In Minnesota, we are providing meals. We're not taking away books."

Walz also signed a law last year that requires menstrual products be made available in all school

bathrooms regularly used by "menstruating students" in grades 4 through 12, permitting the placement of pads and tampons in boys' bathrooms. The inclusive language, meant to accommodate transgender children, has since drawn attacks from Republicans; conservatives in the state tried to amend the law so it applied to women-only and gender-neutral restrooms, but failed.

Walz's administration also updated teacher certification standards to require, among other things, that candidates examine their biases and affirm students' gender identities and sexual orientations. And his education department revised state social studies standards to require ethnic studies, including an examination of social identities of race, gender, religion, geography and ethnicity.

Walz's agenda drew backlash from Republican lawmakers in the state, who decried the book removal law as unnecessary — and warned that permitting gender-affirming care would undermine parental rights. Conservatives also unsuccessfully challenged the standards for teacher certification and social studies in court. In their own platform and a spate of 2022 bills, Republicans sought to boost parents' control of education, for example proposing parents should review curriculums.

Walz has also attempted to address the significant racial disparities in academic achievement. White students score higher on standardized tests, according to a 2019 study by the Federal Reserve of Minneapolis, and Minnesota's racial gap in graduation rates that year was the largest in the country, per the state's Department of Human Rights.

Among the governor's ideas to fix the problem: anti-bias training for school staff, stepped-up recruitment of teachers of color and more an inclusive curriculum.

Still, after five years of Walz's governance, "we haven't been able to move the needle much," said Josh Crosson, the executive director of EdAllies, a statewide education group that advocates for students of color, those with disabilities and low-income learners. He said that's partly because of the pandemic.

Crosson pointed to two Walz administration initiatives he thinks will help down the road. The 2023 Read Act requires schools to adopt "evidence-based" reading curriculums and teaching practices, such as sound-it-out instruction known as phonics. The act also gave schools \$70 million to train teachers, conduct literacy assessments and purchase new curricular materials.

Crosson also cited a law Walz signed, which took effect last school year, forbidding suspensions as a form of punishment for students in kindergarten through third grade. (A 2022 state report found that Black students were eight times more likely to be suspended or expelled than White students.)

"It is a long-term investment in closing gaps in the future," Crosson said of the two initiatives.

Nonetheless, Crosson said he wished Walz had done more to prevent school police officers from using a hold known as "prone restraint" on children in school. Black, multiracial and Native American special education students are disproportionately likely to be placed in physical holds at school, according to data from the Minnesota Department of Education.

After the murder of George Floyd, the governor signed a law forbidding prone restraints, which spurred many police departments to pull their officers from schools in protest. Ultimately, the Minnesota legislature reversed itself and passed another law allowing such restraints in "physically dangerous" situations, which Walz signed. And, Crosson said, he would have liked to see Walz do more to diversify Minnesota's teacher workforce, which remains overwhelmingly White.

Mani Sayes, a biracial mother living in Minnesota's Lakeville school district, said she is generally pleased with how Walz has conducted himself when it comes to education. She praised his attention to educators' needs and his focus on achieving racial equity.

"He ensures when kids can go to school, they can learn," said Sayes, 40. "If that means putting in free lunches to take the burden off parents, then he does that."



Seventh-graders in Carlton, Minn., in fall 2020. Minnesota schools remained remote longer than average compared with other states.

## Pelosi talks power, policy and defeating lawmakers who like Donald Trump

@PKCapitol

PAUL KANE

Late one night in July 2022 when she was House speaker, Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) got word that House Republicans had pulled support for a bipartisan bill to reenergize America's semiconductor industry.

Some liberal Democrats were also squeamish about providing corporate welfare, so some of her advisers suggested pulling the bill from the next day's schedule.

"Let me do it my way," Pelosi recalled, giving instructions to her staff. "Go tell the Republicans to go to hell. We're going to go without them. We're going to go without them."

Not a single Democrat voted against the bill. Once it was clearly passing and heading to President Joe Biden's desk for his signature, a couple dozen Republicans voted for what would become a popular piece of legislation.

Now the former House speaker, Pelosi recounted that story in a 100-minute interview Wednesday with a half-dozen veteran reporters and columnists who chronicled her 20-year reign as the Democratic leader. The long sit-down was part of her book tour promoting "The Art of Power," which includes many of these tales of her rise, then fall, and then rise back up to the most powerful post in Congress.

The book, which she started planning many years ago, serves as a lesson in how she wielded power more effectively than most of the other 55 speakers — all White men. It also published just in the wake of another illustration of Pelosi's continuing influence, even as she has rejoined the rank-and-file without even a seat on a legislative committee.

Many media appearances over the past week have focused on Pelosi's behind-the-scenes role in helping advise fellow Democrats in their effort to push Biden to step aside from his reelection effort.

While she says she did not call anyone, Pelosi acknowledged receiving "hundreds" of messages from concerned Democrats. She believes the outpouring of support for Vice President Kamala Harris's campaign has validated the actions to persuade Biden to step aside, but it's left her more than four-decade-friendship

with the president upended. "History's in a hurry. We're right in the center of it all here. At some point, I will come to terms with my own piece, my own role in this," she told reporters Wednesday.

Pelosi intended to write this book many years ago and focus on four key issues that framed her first stint as House speaker: her battles with China over human rights abuses; her opposition to the Iraq War; her critical help to the Bush administration in passing the 2008 financial relief package; and passing the 2010 Affordable Care Act.

But by the time she got around to writing after leaving her leadership post at the end of 2022, Pelosi had experienced the Donald Trump presidency, the 2021 Capitol insurrection and the brutal attack on her husband in October 2022 — all topics that had to be addressed.

In the preface she writes about "Know Your Why," a slogan she has cited for years as advice to those who want to run for elective office so that they can be grounded by the right principles in the job. Her "why" has always been a three-word mantra — "for the children" — signifying leaving the planet cleaner and safer with a bottom-up economy.

But throughout the Wednesday discussion, and after her actions last month, it is clear that Pelosi has a new "why" in this epilogue phase of her career: defeating Trump.

She pounded a table nine times as she explained that her motivation in opposing Biden's continued campaign was solely about stopping Trump. "My goal in life was that that man would never set foot in the White House again," she said.

There's an echo in her second stint as speaker, which began with the last two years of Trump's presidency, of her first tenure, beginning with George W. Bush's final two years in the Oval Office.

Each of those congressional terms, 2007-2009 and 2019-2021, included strong clashes with the GOP president but then also included major bipartisan deals on global crises that ended up being a political burden for Democrats and not Republicans.

In the fall of 2008 as the financial system collapsed, Pelosi's Democrats provided the vast majority of votes for the



KARL B. DEBLAKER/AP

Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) speaks at a North Carolina Democratic fundraiser in Raleigh on July 20. The former House speaker, who is promoting a new book, sat down last week with reporters and columnists who chronicled her 20-year reign as the Democratic leader.

\$700 billion bailout, stabilizing the system and avoiding an economic depression. But once President Barack Obama took office with massive Democratic majorities, Republicans blamed his administration and Pelosi for the lingering Great Recession and its high unemployment.

Voters recoiled as the titans of Wall Street avoided any criminal liability as millions of homes were lost and the unemployment rate topped 10 percent. "Nobody paid a price," Pelosi lamented.

Obama officials were unsuccessful in creating a campaign to sell their legislative achievements — including a nearly \$800 billion stimulus that cut taxes on the middle class — and it all got lumped into bitter feelings about the economy and the bank bailout.

"I truly believe that was why we lost in 2010," Pelosi said, a midterm drubbing that lost 63 seats and handed the GOP the majority for eight years.

In 2020, fresh off impeaching Trump over his Ukraine actions, Pelosi again worked with the GOP administration when the coronavirus pandemic killed millions and shuttered parts of the global economy. Democrats again provided most of the votes for several relief packages that tallied almost \$3 trillion — even sending direct cash payments to taxpayers that were signed by

none other than Trump.

Biden won in November 2020 and Democrats, with majorities in both the House and Senate, set out to clean up the Trump administration's disjointed handling of the pandemic — beginning with a nearly \$2 trillion recovery package.

Month by month, with no effective pushback from Biden and Democrats, voters came to place more blame on the new administration for a crisis that started under the GOP's watch. Republicans won back the House majority in 2022, this time by a narrow four-seat margin, but they have since used that power to boost Trump at almost every turn.

Pelosi resigned from leadership and returned to life in the rank-and-file, working across the street in a House office building for the first time since 2001.

Pelosi will attend the Democratic National Convention this month in Chicago with no real responsibilities — as leader of her caucus she was the co-chair for the previous five conventions — other than a likely speaking role.

Her main political role these days is still raising money and giving advice when asked. No speaker in modern times has left the post and stuck around in office this long, but Pelosi rather

enjoys the freedom and dispensing wisdom that sounds like a mix of a crime boss and local party activist.

For dealing with Republicans who made fun of the attack on her husband, she said: "Treat everyone as a friend, but know who your friends are."

But a few unnamed GOP lawmakers received the bluntest of messages. "Some of them," Pelosi said she replied to them, "I just say: 'We're out to get you, you're dead.'"

When it comes to her discussions with Biden, she returned to a motto that former California governor Jerry Brown taught her when she chaired the state Democratic Party in the early 1980s: "Those who talk don't know and those who know don't talk."

She believes Democrats have essentially missed their window to sell the legislative accomplishments, such as the semiconductor plan and the infrastructure bill, ahead of the November elections.

She is advising the Harris campaign team to focus on future proposals such as the expanded child tax credit that expired.

"Really, if I could do one thing, it would be child care. It'll make the biggest difference in our economy," she said.

Her "why," at least through

November, is squarely on defeating Trump, whom she called "unpatriotic" and whom she compared to fascist regimes for his attempts to destroy faith in independent media.

She rejected the thoughts from book reviewers that her book title was meant as a tweak on Trump's original best-selling memoir in the 1980s, "The Art of the Deal."

"Nothing that I do has anything to do with him, except his downfall," Pelosi said.

She treasures some friendships with GOP elder statesmen. George W. Bush is a legitimate friend who hosted her at an event early last year, and Pelosi still hasn't cooked the steaks that Elizabeth Dole sent her three years ago after she visited Bob Dole before he died.

But she's got no time for new friendships with younger Republicans who like Trump. Pelosi recalled several of the first-term Republicans from New York asking her to attend events tied to their shared Italian heritage.

"When you're not there, maybe I'll come," Pelosi responded to the crew, several of whom are in swing districts that will determine the majority. She declined their pleas.

"I do not like you. I'm out to get you, I'm out to get you," she said. "Your defeat is my goal."

## Democrats are joining the crowd in boasting about their rally attendance

BY HANNAH KNOWLES

Tim Walz took a page out of Donald Trump's playbook at his Friday night rally with Vice President Kamala Harris: He bragged about the size of their crowds.

In Philadelphia, the new Democratic ticket packed a 10,000-person arena. A similar crowd showed up in Eau Claire, Wis. "On Wednesday, the largest crowd of the campaign showed up in Detroit, Michigan," Walz boasted.

Then the vice-presidential pick beamed out at the audience in suburban Phoenix — more than 15,000 people, Democrats said — and delivered the punchline with a big grin: "It's not as if anybody cares about crowd sizes or anything," Walz said.

For years Trump, the GOP nominee for president, has been the one boasting about how many people he could pack into a venue. Now Democrats are eager to play the crowd game, too. With enthusiasm surging for their new presidential ticket, they have spent the week needling Trump on a topic he famously obsesses over.

Trump has pushed back with tallies of his own — often inflated. "I've spoken to the biggest crowds," Trump said at a news conference last week. "Nobody's spoken to crowds bigger than me."

He bragged, implausibly, that his Washington speech on Jan. 6, 2021 — just before a pro-Trump mob stormed the U.S. Capitol — drew more people than the "I Have a Dream" speech by civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr.

Trump returned to the subject Friday night at his rally in Bozeman, Mont., hours after Walz made his jabs. He mocked the recent attention on Harris: "They said, 'Oh, she had a big crowd, oh what a crowd' — the press is talking about the crowd."

He pointed to his own massive rallies. What about the tens of thousands of people that came to a

rally in New Jersey? What about his event last year in Pickens, S.C.? (Trump claimed 82,000 people; local officials pegged a 2023 rally at about 50,000). What about the "Front Row Joes" who show up at every event?

"We have so many people," Trump said.

A Trump campaign spokeswoman also dismissed Democrats' interest in large audiences. "Isn't it funny how the Democrats and Fake News want to talk about crowd sizes now after they have ignored and downplayed the unprecedented and massive crowds that President Trump has been pulling for eight years," said spokeswoman Karoline Leavitt, who suggested that Harris's use of celebrity performances at some rallies amounts to bribery.

Harris campaign spokesperson Sarafina Chitika said Trump has been "rage-truthing about our grassroots enthusiasm and melting down publicly, both online and in front of cameras" while Harris and Walz hit battleground states.

"Donald is welcome to keep doing his thing — our campaign will be putting in the work it will take to win this election," Chitika said.

Trump has always treated crowd size as an all-important metric. His big 2016 rallies were an early sign of the loyal base that propelled him to the White House and a point of contrast with Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton. Trump began his presidency with the false claim that more than 1 million people showed up for his inauguration; press secretary Sean Spicer dug in to declare, incorrectly, that Trump drew "the largest audience to ever witness an inauguration — period — both in person and around the globe."

Trump loved to mock Joe Biden for holding smaller events and his campaign delighted in sharing pictures of extra seats at Democratic gatherings. At rallies, Trump often accused the media of

ignoring his crowd sizes and demanded that the cameras pan around. His supporters sometimes pointed to the scale of Trump's rallies to support their false claims that Trump actually won the 2020 election.

Facing pressure this summer to drop out after a devastating debate performance in June, Biden began to point to crowd size: "How many people draw crowds like I did today?" he told ABC News' George Stephanopoulos.

Stephanopoulos responded: "I don't think you want to play the crowd game. Donald Trump can draw big crowds."

Now — with Biden out of the race and Harris finding momentum — Democrats are leaning into the subject, jabbing at Trump and reveling in comparisons to the enthusiasm once generated by Barack Obama.

On social media, Harris's campaign was eager to compare their big Friday night rally in Glendale, Ariz. to a recent Trump event at a smaller venue in Phoenix. The campaign also jabbed at Trump's Friday event in Bozeman. "Meanwhile at @realdonaldtrump's rally ..." Harris's campaign wrote on X over a video clip showing empty Trump seats — ignoring the fact that Trump was set to speak later than Harris and that many people were still filtering in. The roughly 8,500-person venue in Montana was ultimately packed and rowdy.

Leavitt, the Trump spokeswoman, jabbed back at the Harris team Saturday by noting that black drapes covered some seating at the arena in Arizona.

Onstage, Trump vented at the media, too. He claimed media outlets ignored the size of his New Jersey crowd — though many did cover it. "They don't talk about it because they're fake," Trump said.

Knowles reported from Bozeman, Mont. Dylan Wells in Glendale, Ariz., contributed to this report.



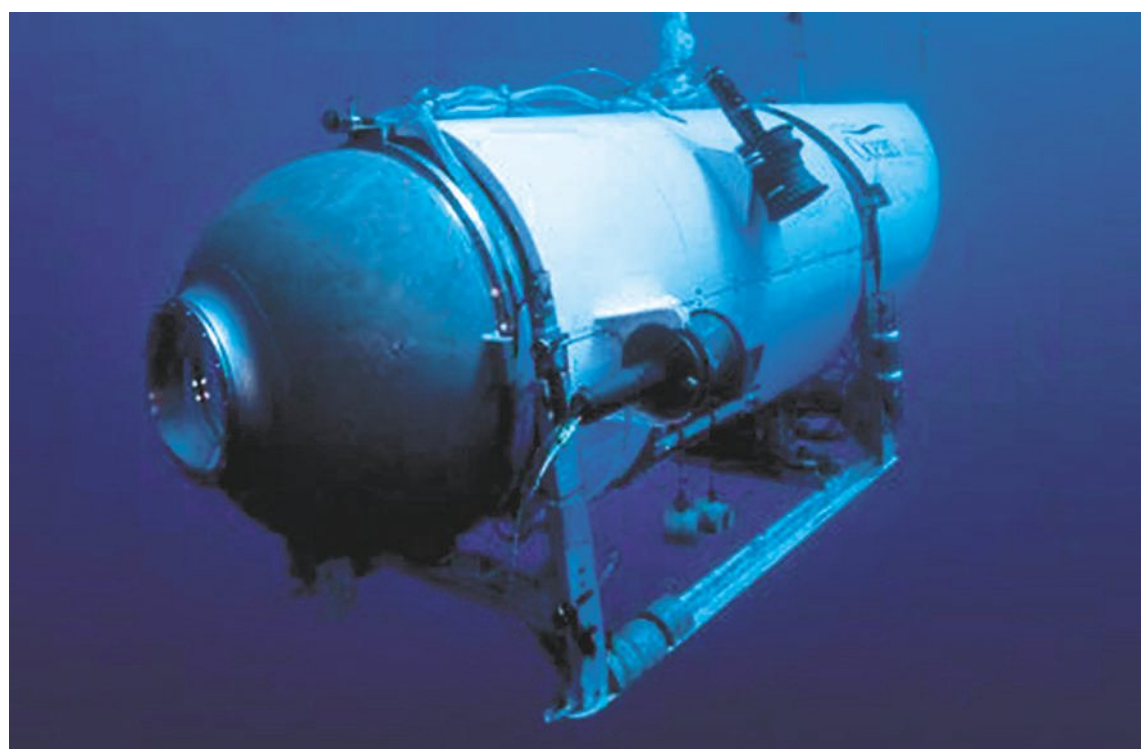
MELINA MARA/THE WASHINGTON POST

Vice President Kamala Harris and running mate Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz walk out into a rally in Glendale, Ariz. on Friday. According to Democrats, the event drew more than 15,000 people.



RICK BOWMER/AP

Meanwhile, Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump was speaking at his own rally before a packed and rowdy venue of roughly 8,500 in Bozeman, Mont.



OCEANGATE EXPEDITIONS/AP

OceanGate Expeditions's Titan submersible. The Titan's implosion in June 2023 as it was headed to the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean to see the remains of the Titanic killed all five people aboard.

## Family of explorer killed inside Titan sues for \$50M

BY ANUMITA KAUR

The family of an experienced French mariner killed in the Titan submersible implosion last year filed a \$50 million wrongful death lawsuit Tuesday, accusing private operator OceanGate of gross negligence leading to the deaths of all five people aboard and causing them "mental anguish" in their final moments.

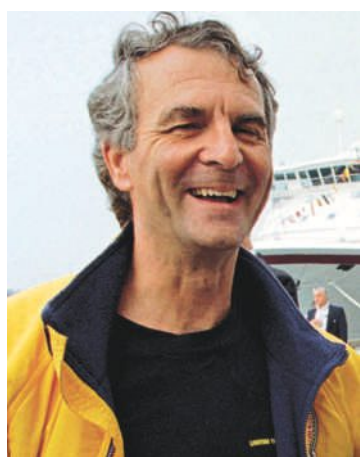
"While the exact cause of failure may never be determined, experts agree that the Titan's crew would have realized exactly what was happening," says the lawsuit, filed by the estate of Paul-Henri Nargeolet. "Common sense dictates that the crew were well aware they were going to die, before dying."

Nargeolet, a 77-year-old seasoned explorer, was among those killed when the Titan imploded in June 2023 while traveling to the site of the Titanic shipwreck, about 12,500 feet below the surface of the Atlantic Ocean. An aerial and water search that followed the disappearance of the vessel and its crew of wealthy tycoons and adventurers gripped the globe for days.

The lawsuit, filed in King County, Wash., argues that OceanGate and CEO Stockton Rush, 61, who was also killed during the implosion, flouted industry norms by using carbon fiber in the vessel's hull and skirting the inspection process commonly used to certify vessels that dive to areas of extreme pressure. Rather than disclosing the vessel's flaws, Rush obscured details about its allegedly dubious construction, the lawsuit claims.

A spokesman for OceanGate declined to comment Wednesday. A member of Rush's family did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

"We have alleged in the lawsuit that had Stockton Rush (OceanGate's CEO and founder) been transparent about all the troubles that had been experienced with the Titan, as well as the previous, similar models, someone as experienced and knowledgeable as Paul Henri-Nargeolet would not have participated," Matt Shaffer, an attorney representing Nargeolet's family, said in a statement.



JIM ROGASH/AP

**French mariner Paul-Henri Nargeolet in 1996.**

A four-page waiver that called the Titan "experimental" and mentioned death at least three times was insufficient for the dive, the lawsuit says. The document did not disclose "many key, relevant risk factors" about the submersible's design and operation, rendering it "ineffective," the complaint says.

The implosion, Nargeolet's estate alleges, "was due directly to the persistent carelessness, recklessness and negligence" of OceanGate and Rush, who were repeatedly warned by deep-sea diving experts and engineers "about the potentially fatal consequences of their choices and actions. Defendants did not heed those warnings, but rather appear to have been increasingly motivated over time to ignore them."

The carbon-fiber hull was particularly problematic, the lawsuit argues. Carbon fiber breaks down over time under pressure, and the Titan was the only submersible ever produced with a carbon-fiber hull, the complaint says. Experts told The Washington Post last year that the submersible's previous dives to the Titanic wreck may have weakened the hull.

The Titan also did not undergo the periodic inspections from a classification agency that are common in the deep diving community. In a 2019 blog post on the OceanGate's website, the company said the vessel used an innovative design. "Bringing an outside

entity up to speed on every innovation before it is put into real-world testing is anathema to rapid innovation," the company wrote.

The lawsuit alleges that much of the Titan was designed and built by a team "composed largely of either current students or recent graduates of nearby Washington State University."

"These were engineers with virtually no real-world experience and no prior exposure to the deep-sea diving industry," the complaint says, adding that OceanGate was unwilling "to spend the money required to design and construct" the vessel in a way that could withstand the depths of the ocean.

On June 18, 2023, about two hours after the Titan began descending toward the Titanic — whose 1912 sinking has engendered widespread fascination for more than a century — the vessel lost contact with its mother ship.

Four days later, the U.S. Coast Guard discovered a portion of the Titan on the sea floor, roughly 1,600 feet from the Titanic's bow. The submersible had suffered a catastrophic loss of pressure that caused it to implode, killing all aboard, the Coast Guard said at the time. The military branch said a specific cause was unclear but that the catastrophe probably happened before rescue efforts began.

In addition to Rush and Nargeolet, those killed included British business executive and adventurer Hamish Harding, 58; and British Pakistani businessman Shahzada Dawood, 48, and his son Suleman Dawood, 19.

In June, the Coast Guard said its investigation remained active but would take longer than initially projected. A public hearing is scheduled in September "to examine all aspects of the loss of the Titan," including regulatory compliance, crew qualifications, mechanical and structural systems, emergency response and the submersible industry at large, according to the Coast Guard.

Justine McDaniel, Timothy Bella and Maham Javaid contributed to this report.

## Judge dismisses murder charge in Detroit synagogue leader's killing

BY BEN BRASCH

A man is now free of charges of killing a Detroit synagogue president after a jury cleared him of one murder count and deadlocked on another, forcing a judge to dismiss much of the case.

Michigan 3rd Circuit Judge Margaret Van Houten on Friday dropped one count apiece of felony murder and home invasion against Michael Jackson-Bolanos, who was charged in the killing in December.

That leaves unanswered the question of who killed Samantha Woll.

Detroit's Jewish community was shocked into mourning Oct. 21, when the 40-year-old Woll was found stabbed to death on her driveway. Federal officials said antisemitic and anti-Muslim attacks spiked in October — the same month that Hamas's attack on Israel led to war in Gaza — but Detroit Police Chief James E. White has said from the start there's no evidence of her religion being the motive.

Woll led the board of Isaac Agree Downtown Synagogue.

Early on the morning of Oct. 21,

Jackson-Bolanos was looking for cars to break into, he told investigators, when he came upon Woll's body. He testified last month that he checked for her breath but found none and that he got blood on his hand when he touched her neck. He then fled the scene to avoid drawing attention to what he was doing in the neighborhood.

Two weeks after the killing, Woll's ex-boyfriend Jeffrey Herbstman called 911, saying he may have killed Woll but didn't remember, the Detroit Free Press reported. At trial, Herbstman said his distraught call was an "adverse reaction" to doubling his dose of a new antidepressant and being high on marijuana. He was detained for questioning and released.

Prosecutors announced the charges against Jackson-Bolanos on Dec. 13, less than two months after Woll was found dead. There was no evidence that Jackson-Bolanos knew Woll, said Wayne County prosecutor Kym Worthy at a news conference to announce the charges.

Jackson-Bolanos went to trial facing four charges: premeditated

murder, felony murder, home invasion and lying to a peace officer.

He initially told investigators that he had not come into contact with Woll, according to his testimony last month, and later admitted to having touched her body after encountering a "dark figure" on the ground.

The trial ended July 18, with the jury acquitting Jackson-Bolanos, 29, of the premeditated murder and finding him guilty of lying but unable to reach a unanimous verdict on the other two charges.

Van Houten dismissed the other charges Friday, citing a 2009 U.S. Supreme Court case that centers on partial verdicts.

Wayne County prosecutors will ask an appeals court to consider the case, Worthy's office's spokeswoman Maria Miller told The Washington Post on Saturday.

Van Houten did sentence him to a minimum of 18 months and a maximum of 15 years for lying to police.

Brian Brown, the attorney representing Jackson-Bolanos, told The Post that they will appeal what he called an unfair sentence.

No one else has been charged in the killing.

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# THE WORLD

BY REBECCA TAN  
AND VIC CHIANG

When Chinese Premier Li Qiang visited Malaysia in June, he did not need to defend China's growing projections of economic and military might in Southeast Asia. Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim did it for him: China was a "true friend" whose dominance should not be feared, said Anwar.

The following month, Malaysia applied to join the BRICS grouping of countries, which Beijing has sought to expand into a coalition of developing nations. China's efforts to provide an alternative to Western hegemony, Anwar said, "brought us a glimmer of hope that there are checks and balances in the world."

Increasingly alienated by developed countries allied with Washington and Brussels, Beijing has pursued a deliberate campaign to court nations in the developing world or what is sometimes called the Global South — not just by funding infrastructure projects but by providing security assistance and geopolitical backing at international forums.

These efforts are gaining traction, say analysts studying China's foreign policy.

"In a lot of the capitals around the world, they're now thinking first of Beijing, and then of Washington," said Oriana Skylar Mastro, a center fellow at Stanford University's Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies. Some in the West have overlooked China's efforts or dismissed them as contrived, missing that these efforts have had an effect, Mastro said.

Speaking before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee late last month, U.S. State Department Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell acknowledged as much: China has outpaced the United States in engaging the Global South, he said. "We need to do more," he added.

## Security assistance and U.N. support

Along with Russia, China is seeking to create a multipolar world, offering an alternative order to one led by the United States. While scaling back on its controversial Belt and Road Initiative — generous loans and investments that used to be the linchpin of its efforts to build influence abroad — it has ramped up political and security engagement with countries that have felt neglected by or at odds with the U.S. strategic agenda.

This includes places like Malaysia, a majority-Muslim country that has condemned the U.S. involvement in the Middle East crisis; Cambodia, where an authoritarian government has rebuffed Washington's perceived moralizing over human rights; and the Solomon Islands, where the United States rushed to reopen its embassy last year after China inked a security pact. This also includes various middle- to low-income countries — which South Africa has called "bystander countries" — that blame soaring food and energy prices on Western sanctions on Russia.

China has sent high-level officials on repeated visits to these countries. It backed a bid by the African Union to be admitted as a member of the Group of 20 countries and has called for more seats on the U.N. Security Council to go to developing nations.

China has increased joint military drills with smaller militaries — kicking off a large-scale naval exercise recently with Tanzania and Mozambique — and carried out training for police in countries like the Solomon Islands and Kiribati.

It has cast itself as a global mediator, brokering relations between rival Palestinian factions and drafting a peace plan for Ukraine that it says has the support of 110 countries.

What Beijing wants in return, analysts say, is greater legitimacy on the global stage and support for issues it cares about, such as quelling criticism of its persecution of Muslim Uyghurs and aggression toward Taiwan. (Beijing



PAULA BRONSTEIN/GETTY IMAGES

The Colombo Port City project in Colombo, Sri Lanka, built on land reclaimed from the Indian Ocean and funded with \$1.4 billion in Chinese investment, in November 2018.

## China courts a Global South snubbed by the U.S.

Beijing is forging ties with developing nations, giving money and lending political support in its push to build a new world order

considers Taiwan, a self-governing democracy that has never been ruled by the Chinese Communist Party, part of its territory.)

At a United Nations human rights review this year, several developing countries — Bolivia, Burundi, Ethiopia and Cameroon — spoke in support of China as Chinese officials issued blanket denials of human rights violations in Tibet, Hong Kong and elsewhere.

Other countries — Malaysia, Suriname and Equatorial Guinea — recently vowed to support China's efforts at "reunification" with Taiwan, going a step further than their previous acknowledgments of the one-China principle.

### An 'equal' relationship

As the United States seeks to curtail economic dependence on China and isolate it geopolitically, China has come to see the Global South as vital for its future, said Tang Xiaoyang, chair of the department of international relations at Tsinghua University in Beijing.

It has been deliberate not only with prioritizing its relationship with developing nations but calibrating how it carries out these interactions, Tang said. "China understands the West's arrogance and the weakness of the West's approaches in developing countries," he added.

Though it is considered by the World Bank to be an upper-middle-income country, with a GDP per capita of \$12,614, China has sought to position itself as a member of the developing world, standing in solidarity with the poor and oppressed.

"We will never take the trodden path of colonial plundering, or the wrong path of seeking hegemony when one becomes strong," Chinese leader Xi Jinping said during a speech in June. "Among the world's major countries, China has the best track record with respect to peace and security."

China has pushed to expand the BRICS grouping of emerging economies, which Chinese state-run media calls the "voice" of the Global South. Previously comprising Brazil, Russia, India, Chi-

na and South Africa, the grouping this year added Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates, and is fielding interest from dozens of other countries, according to South African officials.

China is uniquely poised to help poor countries develop because of its "miracle" transformation over the last half-century, said Zhou Yongmei, a professor at Peking University's Institute of South-South Cooperation and Development. Unlike the West, China refers to its efforts as "cooperation" more so than "aid," said Zhou, adding: "They want to emphasize an equal relationship with the developing nations."

But this claim of equality is more true in rhetoric than in actuality, said Joshua Eisenman,

a professor of politics at the University of Notre Dame who researches China's ties to Africa.

Across Africa, countries are struggling to make payments on Chinese-funded ports and dams approved under Belt and Road, raising allegations that China is using debt to exploit poor countries and pressure them into providing support. Chinese investors dominate key industries such as the extraction of minerals for electric vehicles, often at the expense of worker safety and environmental protection, say watchdog groups. And while China's trade deficit with Africa is closing, it still exports far more than it imports.

"China has a steeply asymmetric relationship with every coun-

try in the Global South," Eisenman said.

Moreover, while China has won support by "mobilizing" anti-American and anti-colonial sentiment in parts of the world, this strategy is limited by Beijing's own projections of power, said Ja Ian Chong, an associate professor of political science at the National University of Singapore who studies China's influence.

In Southeast Asia, for example, at the same time China has brokered closer ties to Malaysia, it has alienated the Philippines with its campaign to dominate the South China Sea.

It's also uncertain, said Chong, if China's popularity will last as it reduces its large-scale investments and loans. Developing na-

tions are "willing to play along if they get something in return. So the question is what is China able to deliver based on their diplomatic and other capabilities?" Chong said.

Two weeks ago, Xi met with José Ramos-Horta, president of East Timor, a small, impoverished and highly democratic country. In Beijing, Ramos-Horta told the South China Morning Post he doesn't care for big power rivalries. If China can alleviate East Timor's poverty and malnutrition, he would be "eternally grateful," he said.

"If China can help our simple people," Ramos-Horta said, "then China is my hero."

Pei-Hin Wu contributed reporting.



ORE HUIYING FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Locals watch as a freight train travels on the Laos-China high-speed railway track in Luang Prabang, Laos, toward China.

### DIGEST

#### LIBYA

### At least 9 killed in militia clashes

Clashes between two heavily armed militia groups in Libya's capital terrorized residents and killed at least nine people, the latest bout of violence in the largely lawless North African nation, officials said Saturday.

The hours-long clashes, which involved heavy weapons,

occurred Friday in Tripoli's eastern neighborhood of Tajoura between Rahba al-Duruae militia, which is led by warlord Bashir Khalfallah — known as al-Baqrah — and another militia, al-Shahida Sabriya, the officials added. The Health Ministry's Ambulance and Emergency Services said at least nine people were killed and 16 others were wounded in the clashes.

The clashes stemmed from an attempted assassination of al-

Baqrah on Friday, which his militia blamed on al-Shahida Sabriya, according to local media.

— Associated Press

#### SIERRA LEONE

### 24 soldiers sentenced to long prison terms

Twenty-four soldiers in Sierra Leone were sentenced to lengthy prison terms, some for up to 120

years, after being convicted by a military court for their roles in an attempted coup in the West African nation last year.

A seven-member jury convicted the soldiers late Friday following an eight-month trial in the foiled coup against President Julius Maada Bio that occurred in November.

Dozens of gunmen at the time broke into the country's armory in the capital city and into a prison where the majority of the

more than 2,000 inmates were freed. The clashes left 18 security personnel dead.

— Associated Press

#### NORTH KOREA

### Kim won't seek help externally after floods

North Korea will not seek outside help to recover from floods that devastated areas near the country's border

with China, leader Kim Jong Un said as he ordered officials to bring thousands of displaced residents to the capital to provide them better care.

Kim said it would take about two to three months to rebuild. Until then, his government plans to shelter some 15,400 people at facilities in Pyongyang, North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said Saturday.

— Associated Press

# Riots in Britain put spotlight on far-right misinformation

**WorldView**

ISHAAN THAROOR

Days of discord and violence found their apotheosis in displays of solidarity. After far-right rioters set cities ablaze, attacking mosques and hostels hosting asylum seekers and harassing ethnic minorities across Britain, thousands of anti-fascist counterdemonstrators took to the streets Wednesday in towns across England. They denounced racism and stood before buildings housing asylum seekers — a protective stance amid fears that the refugee centers were vulnerable to further far-right attacks.

The explosive scenes that rocked the nation were triggered by the horrific fatal stabbing of three girls in the seaside town of Southport on July 29. They were, more specifically, triggered by false reports on social media linking the attack to a Muslim migrant.

“Within hours of the stabbings, an obscure social media account associated with an outlet calling itself Channel 3 Now News shared that the attacker was an immigrant who had come to Britain illegally by boat and had been on watch lists related to security and mental health,” reported my colleagues William Booth and Leo Sands. “The post, on the X platform, gave a name for the suspect that police said was wrong.”

The post would get amplified by an ecosystem of far-right personalities on social media, both within and outside of Britain. It would turn out later that many of its reported details were flatly wrong and that the assailant was a teen, born in Britain to Rwandan migrants. His religious identity was likely not Muslim. But a match had already been lit.

“It looks like the tweet has

been deliberately fabricated to generate hostility toward ethnic minorities and immigrants, and it’s a potentially Islamophobic piece of propaganda,” Andrew Chadwick, professor of political communication at Loughborough University and expert in the spread of online misinformation, told my colleagues.

What shocked so many onlookers was how much kindling in British society was already there to be ignited. Myriad governments outside the West issued travel warnings to their citizens to avoid Britain. Authorities have already carried out hundreds of arrests linked to the violence, with the Labour government of Prime Minister Keir Starmer vowing stiff punishments. “If you provoke violent disorder on our streets or online, you will face the full force of the law,” the prime minister said.

The anger of the rioters arguably reflects a deep-seated resentment of minorities and Muslims among a segment of the British populace, embedded in decades of angst over Britain’s particular multicultural project. Though polls show the vast majority of Britons deplore the violence carried out by far-right “hooligans,” their motivations are inescapably linked to a more mainstream set of politics.

“Islamophobic, anti-immigrant and anti-refugee sentiment has been a staple of Britain’s right-wing press for decades, but we are emerging from a period in which a Conservative government made right-wing populism a central part of its platform,” wrote Daniel Trilling in the London Review of Books.

“At each inflection point since 2019, the Conservatives and their media cheerleaders chose to double down on the populist rhetoric, painting their opponents as enemies who threatened the integrity of the



HOLLIE ADAMS/REUTERS

**Demonstrators protest illegal immigration, in Leeds, Britain, on Aug. 3. After far-right rioters caused chaos, thousands of anti-fascist counterprotesters took to the streets across England on Wednesday to denounce racism and protected buildings housing asylum seekers.**

nation,” Trilling added. “The Black Lives Matter protests in 2020 were treated as signs of an ‘alien’ culture that had taken over Britain’s cities. Demonstrations demanding a ceasefire in Gaza were smeared as ‘hate marches’ by Suella Braverman when she was home secretary.”

The departed Conservative government may also be to blame for the deeper socio-economic conditions underlying the far-right riots. Many of the cities that saw the worst violence were in areas most profoundly affected by Britain’s deindustrialization and by Tory spending cuts in the previous decade.

“These are all classic examples of post-industrial Britain — places that had the heart of their economies ripped out in the 1980s and 90s, and where the factories have been replaced by call centers and distribution warehouses,” noted

Larry Elliott, the Guardian’s economics editor, gesturing to towns like Rotherham and Stoke-on-Trent. “They have suffered more than most from the austerity imposed after the 2010 election.”

Migrants have long been easy scapegoats in any context of inequity and disillusionment. But, in the current moment, social media plays a crucial role in accelerating rage and misinformation. Yvette Cooper, Britain’s home secretary, said that social media platforms acted as a “rocket booster” in fueling the unrest. Though it seems some platforms like Meta, Google and TikTok responded quickly to take down disinformation and posts that seemed geared to incite violence, X, owned by the increasingly far-right tech billionaire Elon Musk, conspicuously locked horns with Starmer’s government.

Rather than reckoning with

the toxic misinformation enabled by his platform, Musk seemed to encourage it, boosting the hysteria of far-right commentators and adding his own.

He remarked that “civil war is inevitable” in Britain and accused the Labour prime minister of being unduly harsh on the far-right protesters. Musk’s animosity here is hardly new.

Under his watch, X has reactivated a host of incendiary, oft-racist accounts, some of which played a role in fanning the flames.

“Last November, X reinstated the account of the U.K. far-right activist and co-founder of the English Defence League, Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, known as Tommy Robinson, who has posted continual commentary and videos of the rioting on the site,” noted the Financial Times. “Before Musk’s takeover, Robinson had been banned

from what was then Twitter in 2018 for breaching its policies concerning hateful conduct.”

Heidi Alexander, Britain’s courts minister, slammed Musk’s interventions last week as “totally unjustifiable.”

“I think at the moment everybody should be calling for calm,” she told the BBC. “He does have a responsibility, given this huge platform that he has, and so to be honest I think his comments are pretty deplorable.”

If Musk heard that message, he didn’t heed it.

On Thursday, he amplified a post by a far-right British activist that spread a false newspaper headline suggesting Starmer’s government was establishing detention centers for far-right protesters in the Falkland Islands, a remote South Atlantic archipelago. Before he deleted it, the post was viewed close to 2 million times.

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## TROUBLE IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

# Vietnam creates hundreds of acres

VIETNAM FROM AI

of self-defense, part of a broader strategy to counter security threats “early and from afar.”

“We will resort to every means possible to make sure we can defend and safeguard our legitimate interests in the East Sea,” said Le Dinh Tinh, director general of policy planning in Vietnam’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, using Vietnam’s name for the South China Sea. Vietnam’s activities in the Spratlys are “completely within its legitimate rights,” he added.

Tinh stressed that Vietnam wants a peaceful resolution to its maritime disputes but added that the government is alarmed by the recent escalation of tensions in the South China Sea, particularly between China and the Philippines, which have violently clashed over a shoal within the Spratlys.

China has long sought to dominate the South China Sea, a strategic, resource-rich waterway that six other governments say belongs in part to them. Under leader Xi Jinping, Beijing has increasingly antagonized and confronted other claimants. Chinese ships have repeatedly harassed Philippine vessels in the disputed waters in recent months, raising the prospect that the United States, which has a mutual defense treaty with Manila, could be drawn into armed conflict.

From 2013 to 2015, China undertook an island-building blitz in the Spratlys, reclaiming about 3,000 acres of land, where it then constructed military bases complete with anti-ship and anti-aircraft missile systems, radar domes and fighter jets.

In response, Vietnamese officials say, Vietnam built out the small outposts it had been occupying in the Spratlys, dredging and filling in land, fortifying barriers and erecting new structures.

The most dramatic transformation in recent months has occurred at Barque Canada Reef, a narrow, 18-mile atoll on the southern end of the Spratlys that Vietnam has doubled in size to 492 acres since November.

The reef, which once hosted six pillbox-like structures, is now Vietnam’s largest outpost in the Spratlys, wide and long enough to potentially accommodate a 3,000-meter airstrip for large military and transport aircraft, according to an analysis of satellite imagery by the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative (AMTI) at the D.C.-based Center for Strategic and International Studies.

At Barque Canada, as elsewhere, Vietnam has been using powerful cutter suction dredgers to create channels and harbors for boats, and has begun construction on “coastal defense structures,” such as walled fortifications that could store artillery, said Harrison Prétat, the AMTI’s deputy director. A half-dozen vid-



BAY ISMOYO/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

An Indonesian navy boat patrols waters in the South China Sea last year as part of exercises that also included Vietnam and four other Southeast Asian countries. China has long sought to dominate the South China Sea, and its claim to most of the waterway is disputed by other nations in the region.

eos shared by Vietnam’s official government channels and reviewed by The Washington Post show cranes and excavators at the Spratly outposts working to install concrete and metal pillars for docks and piers.

By developing these outposts, Vietnam can deploy more ships and personnel to the Spratlys, strengthening its footprint in the disputed waters, said Ha Hoang Hop, a Hanoi-based military analyst.

The outposts can also host radar and radio systems that reveal the movements of Chinese vessels, which often turn off location trackers or “go dark” in the South China Sea, said Hop.

Vietnam is outgunned by China at sea, but the government’s aggressive island-building campaign demonstrates its commitment to defending Vietnam’s maritime features, said Zack Cooper, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. The campaign is a warning, “a loud one,” he said.

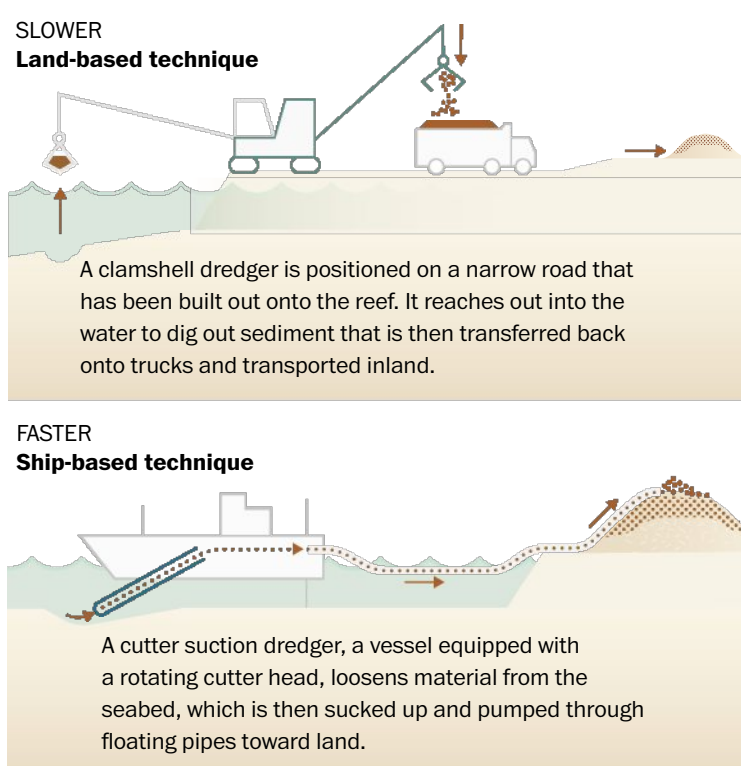
### ‘Don’t push us too hard’

In addition to its land reclamation, Vietnam has expanded its maritime militia — government-funded ships used to chase off foreign vessels — and upgraded commercial fishing ships that operate far offshore, mirroring China’s tactics to strengthen its presence at sea, say security analysts.

“What Hanoi is signaling to China is this: ‘Don’t push us too hard,’” said Huong Le Thu, an Asia-focused analyst at the International Crisis Group.

Hanoi has also enhanced security cooperation with the United

### How islands are built



States, Japan and Australia, which have all upgraded ties with Vietnam over the past 10 months, primarily in response to Chinese assertiveness, according to Le Thu and other analysts studying Vietnam.

The United States recently transferred two Coast Guard cutters and began delivering 12 training aircraft to Vietnam as part of more than \$330 million worth of security assistance and arms sales, according to State Department reports. In July, a U.S. Navy vessel paid a rare port call to Cam Ranh Bay, a strategic

Vietnamese base facing the South China Sea.

Asked about Vietnam’s island building, officials at the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi declined to comment on it directly, saying more generally that they are “concerned about a change in the status quo” in the Spratlys. At the same time, officials said, the United States supports Vietnam’s defense of its sovereignty.

Vietnam shares an 800-mile land border with China, which is also its largest trading partner. Hanoi is reluctant to antagonize Beijing, but ties between the two countries have long been strained by historical enmities and, increasingly, by China’s projection of power at sea.

In the years since an international tribunal ruled in 2016 that China’s claims over the South China Sea have no legal basis, China’s presence there has only intensified, including in areas

claimed by Vietnam, according to ship-tracking data.

China has also deepened its security relationship with Vietnam’s neighbor Cambodia, concerning officials in Hanoi who fear being encircled by old enemies.

At the same time, China has stepped up efforts to court Vietnam. In December, President Xi visited Hanoi, signing dozens of bilateral agreements. “China and Vietnam have common ideals and convictions and enjoy a shared future,” China’s Foreign Ministry said during the visit.

The Foreign Ministry did not respond to questions for this report.

### A history of tensions

The steps that Vietnam takes to “secure itself” in the South China Sea, including its island building, should not be regarded as escalatory, said Nguyen Hong Quan, a Vietnamese major general and retired official at the Ministry of Defense. “After all,” he said, “it’s China that started this.”

In 2014, China sent an oil rig 120 miles from Vietnam’s mainland, according to Vietnamese officials, deep inside what the country considers its 200-mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ). This prompted a months-long standoff that saw Chinese boats spraying Vietnamese boats with water cannons and sinking at least one Vietnamese vessel. Anti-Chinese protests across Vietnam devolved into riots, with businesses owned by Chinese people looted and burned.

More recently, there have been regular skirmishes and standoffs at sea between the two countries, Vietnamese officials said. But Vietnam and China have refrained from publicizing most of these. Chinese vessels have also continued to enter Vietnam’s EEZ, according to ship location data tracked by research groups like the AMTI and the South China Sea Chronicle Initiative, a Vietnam-based think tank.

### Trouble in the South China Sea

Tensions in the South China Sea are more acute than at any time in recent years. As China under President Xi Jinping has grown more aggressive in asserting its claims, a half dozen other governments have pursued their own security and economic interests in the strategic waters. The United States has urged that disputes be settled based on international law.

Since 2019, China has increased patrols in areas where Vietnam has oil and gas interests and deployed what China says are research vessels in Vietnam’s waters with growing frequency, sometimes for weeks at a time. Last year, after privately pressing China to withdraw a research vessel to no avail, Vietnam publicly rebuked its neighbor. In June, Vietnam again called out the “illegal activities” of a Chinese survey vessel in its EEZ.

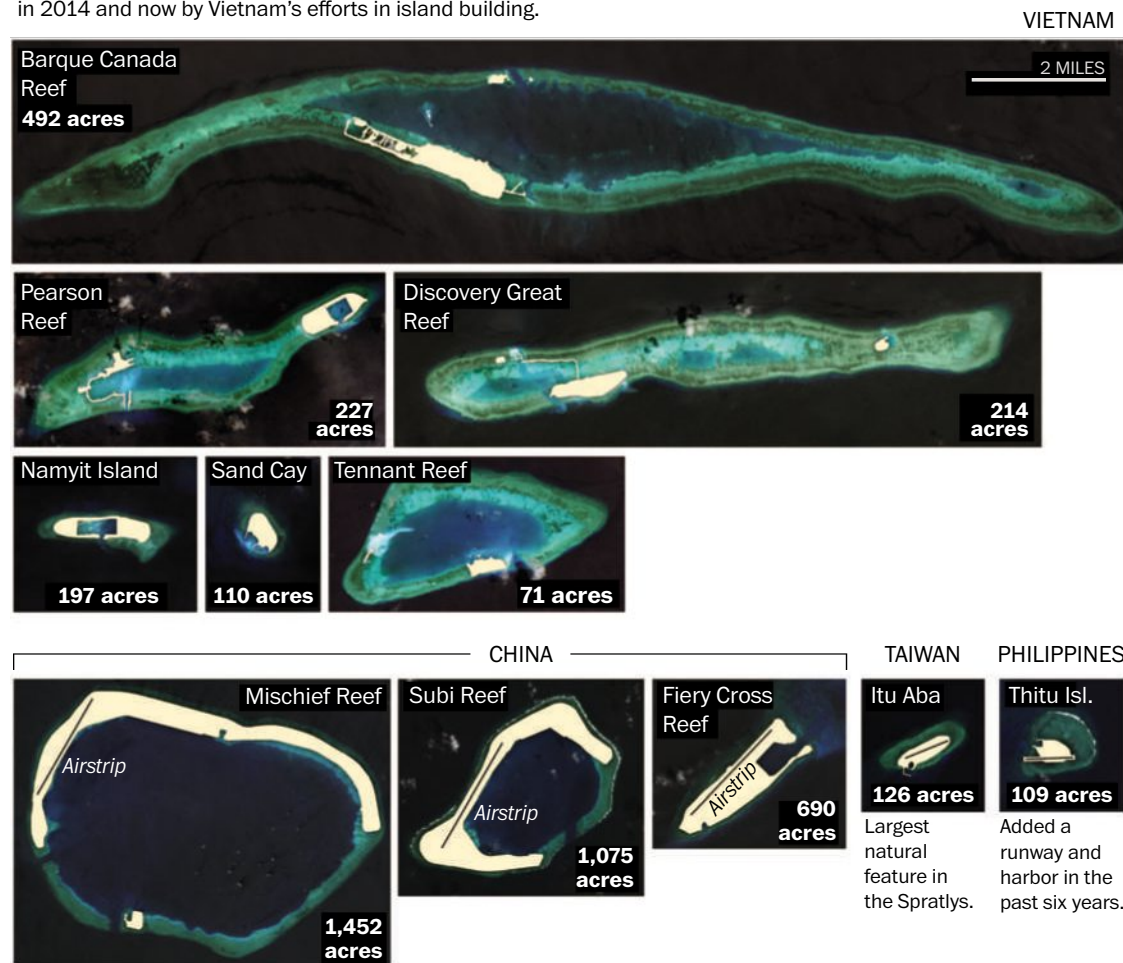
China has not dispatched ships to challenge Vietnam’s island-building efforts. But security analysts said that could change if tensions in the Spratly Islands continue to mount. “We can’t rule out the possibility of conflict ... whether by accident or by design,” said Tinh, the Vietnamese official in the Foreign Affairs Ministry.

In particular, if China moves to cement its control over the Second Thomas Shoal, now the focus of a hot dispute with the Philippines, Vietnam could face domestic pressure to become even more aggressive in defending its own outposts in the Spratlys, said Quan, the retired defense official. “We’ll be forced to act,” he added.

Satellite images by Maxar Technologies and Copernicus Sentinel-2. Karklis reported from Washington. Álvaro Valiño and Júlía Ledur contributed to this report.

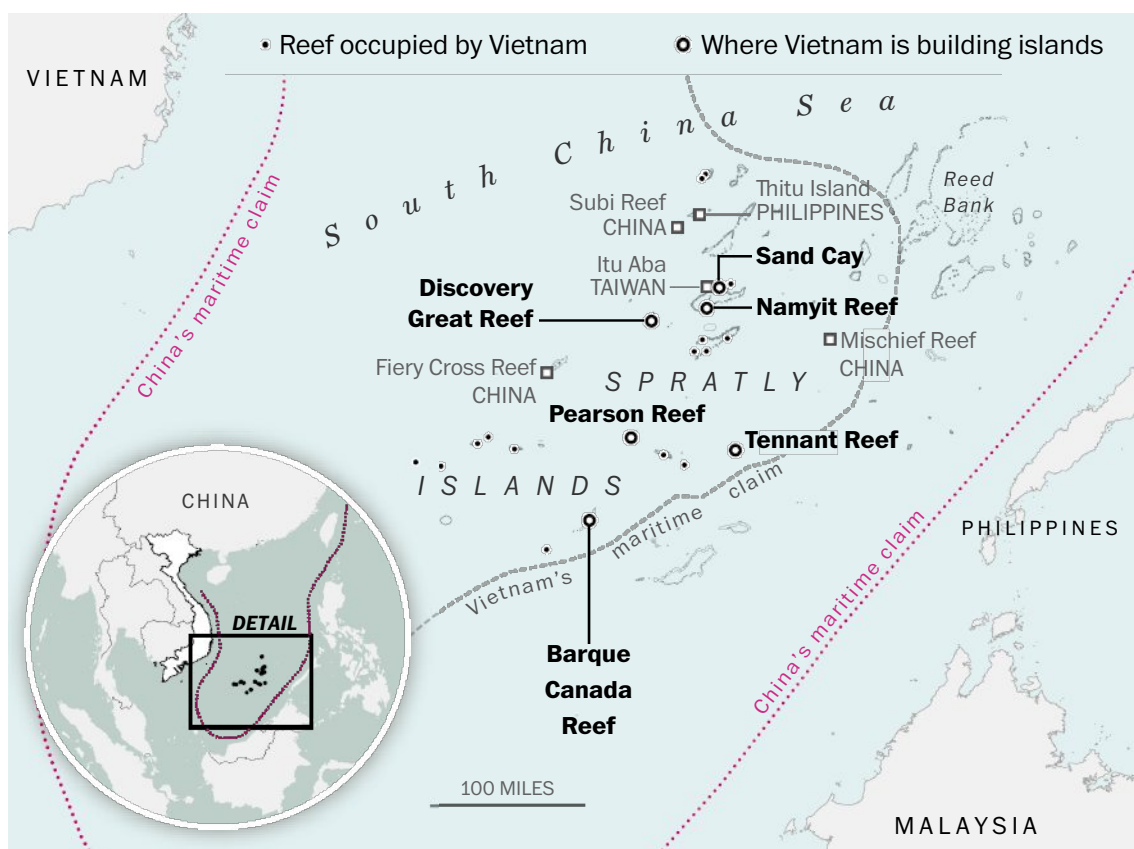
### Island outposts in the Spratlys

The largest natural feature in the Spratly island chain is Itu Aba, which is occupied by Taiwan, but its size was dwarfed by China’s island-reclamation projects beginning in 2014 and now by Vietnam’s efforts in island building.



Source: ESA Sentinel 2 satellite imagery

THE WASHINGTON POST



## ISRAEL-GAZA WAR



OMAR AL-QATTAA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

People check the damage inside a school that civil defense authorities said was being used as a shelter for displaced Palestinians in Gaza City, after an Israeli strike on Saturday that killed nearly 100 people.

## Strike hit amid morning darkness

ISRAEL FROM A1

Biden administration has spearheaded an intense diplomatic campaign in recent days to compel the two sides to reach a deal that would stop the war and see Israeli hostages released. U.S. officials have likewise been racing to head off a wider regional conflict, as Iran and Lebanon's powerful paramilitary force Hezbollah promise to attack Israel over recent strikes on militant leaders.

The site of Saturday's bombing in Gaza City, and the scale of the bloodshed, brought a swift international response.

The United States, Israel's closest ally, expressed concern about the strike and said it had asked for more information. Like other nations that have backed Israel's response to Hamas's brutal attack on Oct. 7, Washington has blamed the militant group for using civilian sites to mask its military activities, but has also called on Israel to do more to keep noncombatants safe.

"Far too many civilians continue to be killed and wounded," National Security Council spokesperson Sean Savett said in a statement. "This underscores the urgency of a cease-fire and hostage deal."

Foreign Secretary David Lammy of Britain, another key Israeli ally, said he was "appalled" by the incident. "Hamas must stop endangering civilians. Israel must comply with international humanitarian law," he wrote on social media.

France decried the targeting of Gaza schools and what its Foreign Ministry called Saturday's "intolerable" death toll.

The governments of Qatar, Egypt and other Arab nations meanwhile responded with outrage. "This is an indication that the Israeli government seeks to thwart and frustrate [cease-fire] efforts," Jordan's Foreign Ministry said.

Several eyewitnesses described a terrifying series of events during the strike, which occurred in morning darkness when some people were performing dawn prayers and others were asleep.

The windows of Amjad al-Sheikh's nearby home shattered. "My body flew through the air from the force of the explosion," he said.

Sheikh, 32, and two of his broth-



OMAR AL-QATTAA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



EYAD BABA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



OMAR AL-QATTAA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: A young girl cries after identifying a member of her family among the dead following the strike in Gaza City. People remove a body from the scene of the strike. A man cries over the shrouded corpse of a child.

ers rushed to the school to help with rescue efforts, where they used the light from their phones "to track the voices of the wounded, including children and women asking for help to save their lives."

Hashem Hamada, 31, a photojournalist who also lives close to the school, raced to the school after being awoken by the explosion. He said he helped retrieve 10 bodies, including that of a child.

Most of the wounded were transported to nearby al-Ahli hospital. Motasim Dalloul, 45, whose child once attended classes at the Taba'een school, spoke to The Washington Post from inside the hospital, where he saw dozens of wounded. "People were crying and wailing," he said.

Fares Afana, director of ambu-

lance and emergency services in northern Gaza, said that bodies were splintered by the strike. "No matter how many words we say about this scene, it is indescribable," he said.

He said the medical response was made more difficult by the severe degradation of Gaza's emergency infrastructure, including the destruction of most of the territory's ambulances.

Tamer Kirolos, regional director for Save the Children, an aid organization, said it was the deadliest attack on a school in Gaza since October.

"All parties must respect the protected status of schools and not use schools as battlegrounds," Kirolos said in a statement.

The U.N. Human Rights Office

last week reported that at least 17 schools in Gaza had been targeted in the past month, saying that the reported deaths from those strikes suggested "a failure to comply with the principles of distinction, proportionality, and precautions in carrying out these attacks."

The IDF said that Hamas had increasingly been "focused on exploiting school buildings, often where civilians are sheltering inside, to use them as military facilities, command and control centers, for storing weapons, and to execute terrorist attacks."

It said the weapons employed in the strike "cannot cause the amount of damage that is being reported" by authorities in Gaza.

After the strikes on other Gaza schools last week, the IDF said

those sites, too, were being used by Hamas.

Weapons experts suggested that Israel may have employed a GBU-39 small-diameter bomb, a U.S.-made precision weapon, in the strike but said that even guided munitions require civilian harm analysis before being used.

"Even where a relatively small munition is selected, the possibility of civilian harm can often be foreseen and should be considered in the specific context of the target and its surroundings," said N.R. Jensen-Jones, director of Armament Research Services.

Israel's targeting practices in Gaza have generated widespread criticism since the early days of the war. Rights groups have accused Israel of violating international

law and even called on the United States to suspend arms sales. The Biden administration itself said it was likely Israel had violated the laws of war in Gaza, though it has not reached conclusions in specific cases.

While the Israeli government has frequently rejected reports of civilian deaths in Gaza, Netanyahu in a recent interview with Time magazine appeared to acknowledge that some 20,000 civilians have died in the war, saying Israel believed there had been a "one-to-one" civilian-to-combatant death ratio.

The incident has the potential to further inflame tensions between Israel and Washington.

While the United States has long called on both Israel and Hamas to accept the cease-fire proposal, some U.S. officials have grown frustrated with Netanyahu's stance in recent weeks, complaining that the Israeli leader, under pressure from right-wing members of his governing coalition, has sought to improve the terms for Israel after President Joe Biden publicly laid out a cease-fire framework in May.

Hoping to shatter the impasse, the United States, Qatar and Egypt, which have all played a role in mediating talks, issued a joint statement last week urging both sides to return to the negotiating table on Aug. 15. "There is no further time to waste nor excuses from any party for further delay," the three countries' leaders said.

Netanyahu's office has said that Israel will send representatives to the talks "to finalize the details for implementing the framework agreement." Hamas gave no immediate response.

The U.S.-Israeli friction was likewise visible on Friday when the White House lambasted one of Netanyahu's ministers for his critical statements about the proposed cease-fire agreement.

National Security Council spokesman John Kirby took the unusual step of singling out an Israeli cabinet member, saying that comments by Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich were "outrageous and absurd."

U.S. Ambassador to Israel Jack Lew told Israeli media that comments by Smotrich, who said the deal would amount to a "surrender to Hamas," could put Israel "at strategic risk."

Smotrich hit back on social media, saying that the criticism would not change his stance.

"Just as the U.S. would reject international pressure to reach a surrender agreement with Al Qaeda and [Osama] bin Laden, so Israel will not submit to any external pressure that would harm Israel's security," he said, referring to the militant leader the U.S. military killed in 2011.

Harb and Suliman reported from London, El-Chamaa from Beirut and Ables from Seoul.

# Amid Venezuela tumult, U.S. wants Latin American nations to take the lead

Efforts of presidents of Mexico, Colombia, Brazil have achieved little

BY KAREN DEYOUNG AND SAMANTHA SCHMIDT

Nearly two weeks after Venezuelan president Nicolás Maduro claimed reelection to a third term despite what the United States and others have called “overwhelming evidence” of a massive opposition victory, the future of Venezuela and of U.S. policy there remain in limbo.

The Biden administration, while saying that opposition candidate Eduardo González clearly won more votes, has stopped short of declaring him the victor. Instead, it has called for the release of all official results and for Maduro and the opposition to negotiate a “transition” of power.

Rather than taking the lead in pushing for Maduro to step down and threatening sanctions and other reprisals if he refuses as the White House has in the past, the current administration has placed its hopes in a triad of leftist Latin American governments to persuade him to yield.

So far, efforts of the presidents of Mexico, Colombia and Brazil, all of whom have relatively stable relations with Maduro, appear to have achieved little.

Foreign ministers from the three countries will be meeting with their Venezuelan counterpart on Sunday, with the goal of planning a meeting among Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, Colombia’s Gustavo Petro and Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil and Maduro.

Colombia plans to propose an initial agreement of good faith in which Maduro would release all political prisoners and cease persecution of the opposition in exchange for a partial easing of sanctions by the United States and the European Union, according to a person close to the negotiations, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to share details of the talks.

This would not be a “quid pro quo,” the person said, but rather Maduro would need to make the first gesture of good faith. It is unclear if the Biden administration would support such an agreement.

Maduro’s attorney general has opened a criminal investigation into opposition leaders currently in hiding, including González. While refusing to release official results of a July 28 vote, which it says Maduro won with 51 percent, the government has accused the opposition of falsifying its own printouts of precinct-level outcomes that show González with more than twice Maduro’s tally.

Maduro has called local opposition organizers “terrorists” and has arrested thousands in security sweeps since the elections. He has annulled the passports of activists and journalists and ordered Venezuelans to delete WhatsApp, a primary tool of opposition communication. On Fri-



HIRSAID GOMEZ/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

**A Thursday vigil in Caracas called by the opposition demands freedom for political prisoners arrested during protests following the contested reelection of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro. Other countries have recognized the opposition’s win in Venezuela.**

day, he decreed that the platform X, formerly Twitter, was banned for 10 days after its owner, Elon Musk, called him a “dictator” and a “clown.”

Amid meetings with both government and opposition representatives, the three presidents have issued communiqués exhorting the Maduro-controlled National Electoral Council to release complete results of the precinct-by-precinct vote and allow “impartial verification.”

“The international community is united in our call for Maduro and his representatives to release untampered, detailed tally votes. To date, there is no evidence to back up” the “claim that Maduro won” by the electoral commission, White House National Security Council spokesman Sean Savett said Saturday.

“We welcome the engagements from our international partners who are calling for transparency to honor the people’s votes and support a peaceful way forward that respects the will of the Venezuelan people. The United States strongly supports these efforts,” he said.

Two senior administration officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss diplomatic matters, noted that the inauguration of a new Venezuelan president is not scheduled until January, leaving time to build pressure on Maduro from within the hemisphere and beyond.

The person close to the talks among Latin American leaders said they believe it is highly unlikely that Maduro will agree to a transfer of power in the short term, or agree to a power-sharing

deal with the opposition. But, the person said, the negotiations might establish conditions for a democratic space in Venezuela’s government institutions and for competitive legislative or local elections in 2025.

Agreements along those lines, allowing Maduro to be inaugurated for the third time in January, would probably test U.S. willingness to take a back seat to the Latin American negotiators.

U.S. efforts in the past — including the Trump administration’s “maximum pressure” campaign of increased sanctions on Maduro and his government and recognition of then-opposition leader Juan Guaidó as president — did little to change the situation in Venezuela. Historical resentment of U.S. power in the hemisphere grew, along with the exodus of millions of Venezuelan refugees.

“I think we’re comfortable with the position the three have taken right now,” said one senior administration official on deferring to Mexico, Colombia and Brazil, all of whom aspire to regional leadership. “They have all said there needs to be transparency in the results,” which is required under Venezuelan electoral law. Their “initiative needs some time to develop.”

The three, in varying degrees, are also important to other U.S. goals in the region, including countering drug and migration flows as well as stemming the hemispheric influence of authoritarian actors such as Russia, China and Iran.

“While the United States, Mexico, Colombia and Brazil may have differences in their views on the

way forward,” a second administration official said, “we remain united in calling for full transparency ... and publication of the voting results at the precinct level.”

“What we want to do is ensure that the United States is working in concert with our allies, in the same direction,” this official said. “We are going to have to see what sort of plan develops from [them] in order to best understand what we can do to support it, if it is in accordance with our own objectives.”

U.S. reluctance to intervene has brought some blowback from lawmakers, especially from the Republican right. In a statement Saturday, Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) described earlier negotiations with the United States that led to the election as a “farce.”

“The ‘strategies’ presented by this administration have done nothing but empower narco-dictator Maduro and his thugs. It’s disgraceful the Biden-Harris Administration is unwilling to declare the victory of President-elect Edmundo González while the regime has increased the repression,” Rubio said. “Any negotiations are a continued lifeline to the narco-regime.”

Secret talks between the Biden administration and the Maduro government, mediated last year by Qatar, resulted in a draft bilateral agreement to lift Trump-imposed U.S. sanctions that, along with Maduro’s mismanagement of the oil industry, have brought Venezuela’s economy to near ruin. In exchange, Maduro among other things pledged free and fair elections and the release of U.S. and Venezuelan political

prisoners.

While that agreement was never signed, the negotiations also led to a deal between Maduro and a united Venezuelan opposition that set a date for last month’s election. Maduro only partially complied, releasing some opposition political prisoners but arresting more. He set the July 28 date, but his Supreme Court prohibited the chosen opposition candidate, María Corina Machado, from running.

U.S. oil and gas sanctions that had been lifted when the election date was announced were reimposed last spring after Machado was banned. González, a relatively unknown former Venezuelan diplomat, was then chosen as the opposition’s fallback. But the administration left the door open for more easing as the vote approached.

Pre-election and exit polls all indicated an overwhelming opposition win. After the vote, observers from the Carter Center said the election was flawed. Opposition poll-watchers quickly gathered printouts from the voting machines that have since been verified by several other governments and news organizations.

Some regional experts have called the Biden administration’s wait-and-see policy more realistic than a sudden rush to action.

“Do we re-create our Cuba policy and make them the pariah, or do we do what’s possible to help them find some space and move in a better direction?” said Caleb McCarty, who worked on Cuba policy during the George W. Bush administration. More than six decades of U.S. sanctions have failed to dislodge Cuba’s commu-

nist government.

New sanctions, including on Maduro and other individuals in his government, may still be in the future. But for now, the Biden administration is focused, with allies, on incentives to bring him back to the table and offer him an exit strategy. Possibilities range from lifting U.S. narcotics indictments against him and several of his cronies in exchange for safe passage to a third country, or negotiating a temporary power-sharing agreement with the opposition.

Other Latin American countries that have recognized the opposition’s win, led by Panama, are organizing their own pressure group that U.S. officials believe may be more effective in prompting Petro, Lula and López Obrador to take a stronger stand.

“There are lots of conversations in the hemisphere among all of the governments,” the second administration official said. “They are all talking at some level about what the next steps are.”

For the administration’s part, “we believe the opposition does want to have a dialogue, and we support that,” although “the Maduro side is certainly acting like they have no intention of negotiations.”

“It’s incumbent upon everyone in the hemisphere to make clear that we oppose” Maduro’s actions, “... and that ultimately Maduro needs to respect the will and the votes that were cast by the Venezuelan people,” State Department spokesman Matthew Miller told reporters Wednesday.

Even as elements of a dialogue are forming in the region and between those directly involved, there is a recognition within the administration that it is unavoidably a player in whatever the outcome is.

“I’m not going to get into what we will or won’t do,” the first administration official said, although this person and others said possible U.S. actions eventually range from a return to bilateral negotiations with Maduro to more sanctions.

But sanctions are not “going to be a silver bullet,” said Geoff Ramsey, a senior fellow at the Atlantic Council who focuses on Venezuela. “I think it’s why the U.S. is focusing more on carrots than sticks right now.”

“The situation inside the [Maduro] regime is not all peachy,” Ramsey said. “There are a whole set of interests” who have benefited from the sporadic steps toward easing sanctions the administration has taken “and those people have been rubbing their hands together talking about debt restructuring, talking about global financial reintegration of Venezuela, and they don’t want to go back to the bad old days of isolation and economic pressure.”

“That pressure, while it hasn’t resulted in any kind of formal break or rupture inside the regime — and I don’t think it’s going to — I think it’s playing out behind the scenes very quietly in a way that’s reducing Maduro’s room for maneuver,” he said.

Schmidt reported from Bogotá.

## Cartel boss says he was detained before flight

‘El Mayo’ Zambada denies that he made a deal to turn himself in

BY MARY BETH SHERIDAN

MEXICO CITY — Ismael “El Mayo” Zambada, the last of the old-style Mexican drug kingpins, said in a statement Saturday that he was ambushed and secretly flown to the United States after being invited to a meeting supposedly involving the governor of Sinaloa state.

Zambada, 76, and a son of trafficker Joaquín “El Chapo” Guzmán were arrested two weeks ago after they landed at an airport outside El Paso, in a mysterious operation that has raised questions about cartel betrayals and possible U.S. involvement.

The DEA called the detentions an “enormous blow” to the Sinaloa cartel, one of Mexico’s top drug-trafficking organizations and the No. 1 supplier of fentanyl to the United States. American officials have denied their agents were involved in spiriting El Mayo out of Mexico.

U.S. and Mexican officials have issued conflicting accounts of how one of the world’s savviest

drug traffickers had been whisked over the border, with some saying Zambada may have made a deal to turn himself in. The legendary trafficker denied that, in the statement issued by his lawyer, Frank Perez.

Instead, he attributed his arrest to a trap set by El Chapo’s son, also named Joaquín. Zambada’s explanation provided further evidence of a dramatic split between two leading cartel factions — his group, and one led by the sons of El Chapo Guzmán, Zambada’s partner until his arrest in 2016.

The account could not be independently confirmed. However, the U.S. ambassador to Mexico, Ken Salazar, said Friday that it appeared Zambada had been brought to Texas against his will. Guzmán, in contrast, gave himself up, the ambassador said. U.S. officials have told The Washington Post that Guzmán, 38, may have been seeking leniency for himself and his 34-year-old brother Ovidio, who was extradited to the United States last year.

A lawyer for Guzmán has denied he lured Zambada onto the plane or cut a deal with U.S. authorities. Both alleged cartel traffickers have pleaded not guilty to extensive narcotics charges.

Zambada’s story goes like this: He was invited by Guzmán to a



JOSE LUIS GONZALEZ/REUTERS

**A plane believed to have carried Ismael “El Mayo” Zambada and Joaquín Guzmán Lopez, who were arrested in El Paso. Zambada claims he was ambushed and flown to the United States.**

meeting on July 25 with the governor of Sinaloa, Rubén Rocha, and a former mayor of Culiacán, Héctor Melesio Cuén. The politicians were at odds over who should lead the Autonomous University of Sinaloa, Zambada said — and the Sinaloa cartel leaders would help resolve it.

He said he arrived at an event center outside Culiacán, the state capital, just before 11 a.m. and spotted armed men in military uniforms — “who I assumed were

gunmen for Joaquín Guzmán and his brothers,” he said.

Zambada had four bodyguards, he said, including one who worked as a state police commander. Zambada said he greeted Cuén and followed Guzmán — “whom I have known since he was a young boy” — into a dark room.

“A group of men assaulted me, knocked me to the ground, and placed a dark-colored hood over my head,” he said in the statement. The men tied up Zambada,

forced him into a pickup and drove him to a landing strip, where he was forced onto a private plane, he said. Guzmán “bound me with zip ties to the seat,” the statement said.

Three hours later, the plane landed just outside El Paso.

Rocha, a member of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador’s Morena party, did not publicly react to the report on Saturday. His spokesman declined to comment. Asked on Saturday whether

he still supports Rocha, the president told reporters: “Yes, we’re going to wait and see what he has to say.”

The Sinaloa cartel is famous for its close ties to politicians — one of the reasons for the group’s longevity. Mexican media have speculated that Zambada could deliver a trove of information to U.S. authorities on official complicity in the drug trade.

When Rocha ran for governor in 2021, cartel operatives contributed to his victory by kidnapping more than 20 political operatives working for his opponent on the eve of the election, according to an account by the Sinaloa investigative magazine RioDoce. State officials put the number at 10. None of the cases have been solved. That opposition candidate, Mario Zamora Gastélum, told reporters that it was difficult to produce evidence, since “people are too afraid to document it.”

Rocha has denied cooperating with cartels.

Cuén, the other politician Zambada said was at the meeting, wound up dead. Mexican authorities said he was fatally shot while in his car the evening of July 25. But Zambada said he “was killed at the same time, and in the same place, where I was kidnapped.”

The split in the top ranks of the Sinaloa cartel has raised fears of a new narco war. But Zambada urged peace. “Nothing can be solved by violence,” his statement said.

Marcos Vizcarra in Culiacán, Sinaloa, contributed to this report.



# Harris goes on offense over border to undercut Trump

Vice president makes immigration focus of Southwest swing

BY DYLAN WELLS

LAS VEGAS — Speaking to supporters at a campaign rally here Saturday night, Kamala Harris told attendees that she knows the issues with the immigration system and how to fix them, touting her work as California attorney general.

"I went after transnational gangs, drug cartels and human traffickers who came into our country illegally. I prosecuted them in case after case, and I won," Harris said to cheers.

"We know our immigration system is broken and we know what it takes to fix it. Comprehensive reform that includes, yes, strong border security and an earned pathway to citizenship."

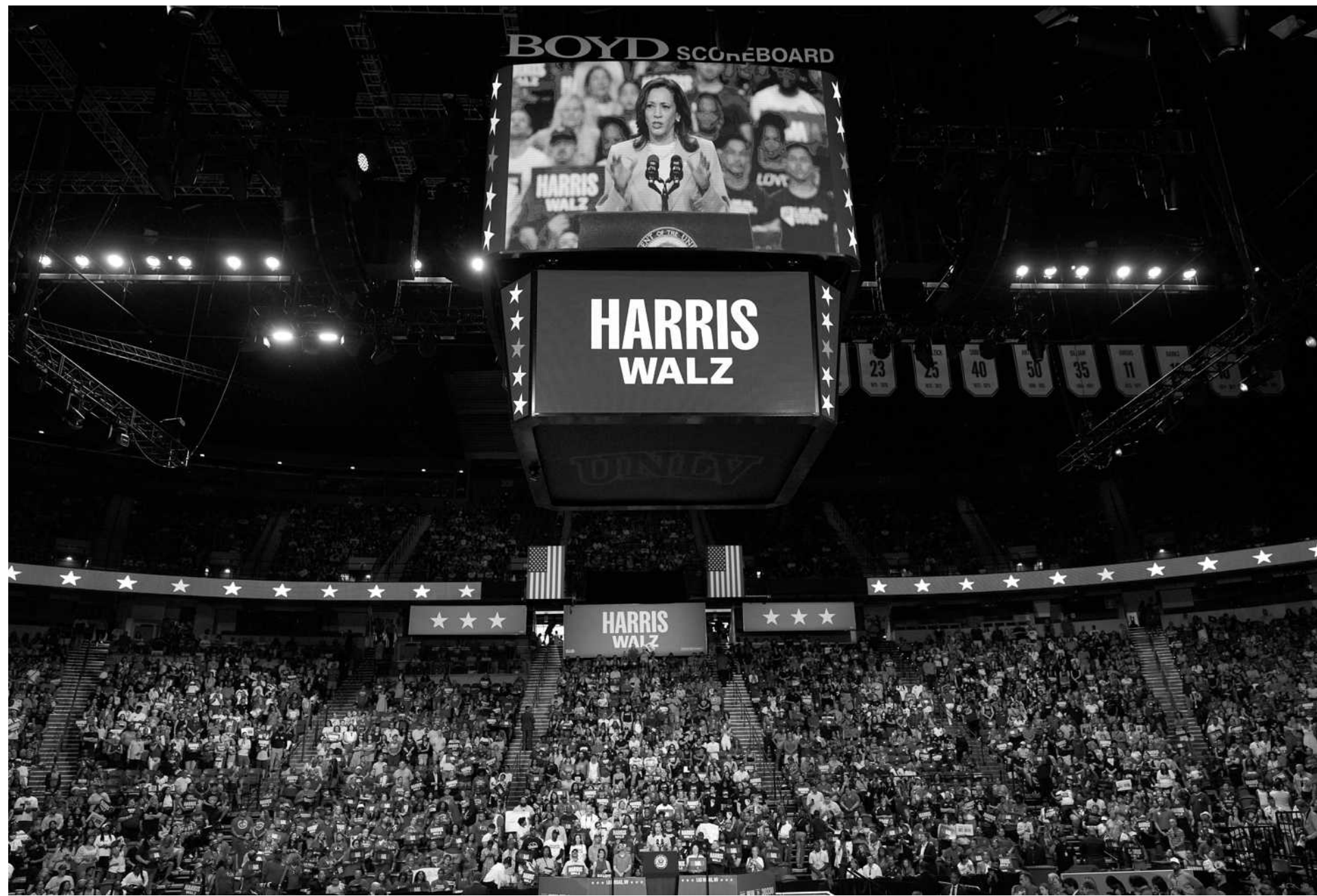
Then she turned her focus on her rival: "Donald Trump [doesn't] want to fix this problem. He talks a big game — about a lot of things — but he talks a big game about border security. But he does not walk the walk."

In the nascent weeks of her presidential campaign, Harris has tried to flip the script on the Republican attacks on her immigration record. During her first campaign swing through the Southwest as the Democratic nominee, she continued to portray herself as tough on the border and went on the offensive to attack former president Donald Trump, who has centered much of his campaign on border issues.

Republicans for years have attacked Harris as a failed "border czar" responsible for dealing with the surge of migrants at the border, and those attacks have only grown since she became the nominee. As vice president, she was directed by President Joe Biden to tackle the enduring root causes of migration, like poverty and violence, in Central America. She was never put in charge of the border nor labeled a "czar."

At the rally, Harris also unveiled a proposal to "raise the minimum wage and eliminate taxes on tips for service and hospitality workers." Trump proposed eliminating taxes on tips in June during a rally in Las Vegas.

Trump responded to Harris's support for the idea on Truth Social, saying she "just copied my NO TAXES ON TIPS Policy. The difference is, she won't do it, she



Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris speaks at a campaign rally at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas on Saturday.

JAE HONG/AP

just wants it for Political Purposes! This was a TRUMP idea - She has no ideas, she can only steal from me."

Supporters waited in extreme heat to attend the event, huddling near large misters pointed at the line. According to a campaign official, more than 12,000 people attended the event held at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas's Thomas & Mack Center before doors were closed due to the temperatures.

"Local law enforcement made the decision to close the doors to the event due to people becoming ill while waiting outside to go through security in the 109-degree heat. Approximately 4,000 people were in line when the entrances were shut down," said the official.

In Atlanta last month, Harris

described her border focus while working in California, telling attendees, "I was the attorney general of a border state. In that job, I walked underground tunnels between the United States and Mexico on that border with law enforcement officers."

Harris has also taken aim at Trump for his immigration policies, blaming him for blocking a bipartisan border security bill earlier this year and arguing that he doesn't want to resolve the issue.

"Earlier this year, we had a chance to pass the toughest bipartisan border security bill in decades. But Donald Trump tanked the bill because he thought it would help him win an election," she said in Las Vegas. "Well, when I am president, I will sign that bill into law."

Asked about Harris's claims, a Trump campaign spokesperson directed The Post to a video shared by Trump on Truth Social on Saturday.

The video says Harris would provide health care for undocumented immigrants, using footage of a Democratic primary debate in 2020, when Harris raised her hand when candidates were asked to do so if their health plan would cover undocumented immigrants. The text on screen concludes: "Failed. Weak. Dangerously liberal."

A Harris campaign ad released Friday highlighted the same components of Harris's biography that she has raised on the trail when discussing immigration.

"As president, she will hire thousands more border agents and crack down on fentanyl and

human trafficking," the ad's narrator says, concluding: "Fixing the border is tough. So is Kamala Harris."

Last week, the nonpartisan Cook Political Report shifted both Arizona and Nevada from "lean Republican" to "toss up," reversing a move it made in early July before Biden's decision to leave the presidential race and endorse Harris.

Dan Kanninen, the Harris campaign's battleground states director, said in a memo Friday that the campaign in Nevada has "the largest in-state operation of any coordinated campaign ever with 13 offices and nearly 100 staff on the ground." In Arizona, he said, "the campaign has 12 coordinated offices with six more to come — the most of any Arizona coordinated campaign in

history," with more than 120 full-time staffers.

Clark Willits — a Harris supporter from California who drove nine hours to attend the event and then waited outside in the heat for five hours to get inside — dismissed the attacks from the right on her immigration record.

"I think she can't skirt it under the rug, so to speak, but I don't think she has much to worry about when it comes to immigration," he said. "I believe in her, and I know that she will pass immigration reform, because she takes those matters very seriously as a multiracial individual herself."

"She gets it," he added. "Trump, on the other hand, he wants to build a wall. You know, there's no comparison. So I think it's a weak argument."

# Cases of mpox exceed 15,000 in Africa, put the world on alert again

BY FENIT NIRAPPIL

Global health authorities are sounding an alarm about surging mpox infections in Africa that have left hundreds dead and thousands sick, and inflicted suffering in nations previously spared from the viral disease.

Cases in Africa have surpassed 15,000 this year, exceeding the toll in all of 2023. Infections are concentrated in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where mpox has been endemic for decades, reaching record highs and infecting and killing mostly children. The virus has spilled into countries that have never recorded outbreaks, including Kenya and the Ivory Coast.

The Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will probably declare a health emergency this week, officials said Thursday. The leader of the World Health Organization said Wednesday that he would convene a committee to consider declaring another international health emergency. Meanwhile, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released an alert last week warning clinicians to be vigilant for symptoms in travelers from affected countries while stressing that the risk remains low in the United States.

"This is a major alarm for the world. We are losing the youth in Africa," Jean Kaseya, director general of the Africa CDC, said in a Thursday news briefing. "This new incident demonstrates the need for a collective and collaborative approach in curbing the spread of the disease."

In 2022, a global mpox outbreak ripped through gay communities in dozens of countries that had rarely encountered the virus and prompted an aggressive public health response and vaccination campaign that were credited with quashing the outbreak.

Recent trends in Congo, where the virus was first detected in



Physicians and researchers visit a displacement camp in the Democratic Republic of Congo during an mpox outbreak in July. The virus was first detected in 1970 in Congo, and officials have recorded 13,800 cases and 450 deaths there this year, with children most at risk of dying.

ARLETTE BASHIZI/REUTERS

1970, have ignited new concerns. This year, officials have recorded 13,800 suspected and confirmed cases and 450 deaths, with children younger than 15 accounting for 68 percent of cases and 85 percent of deaths, according to the Africa CDC.

Most infections appear to be spreading through contact with infected animals and within households, the usual routes of exposure in endemic regions. But a new form of mpox, known as clade 1b, emerged in eastern parts of Congo, including in sex workers, and has been detected in

Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda.

Clade 1b causes more severe illness than the clade 2 version that spread globally in 2022. But the death rate is low, with the new version of mpox killing fewer than 1 percent of people who became infected, according to the CDC.

"That said, it is of concern because it's spreading sexually so it makes it more of a risk versus in small villages and small households," said Christina L. Hutson, chief of the CDC's poxvirus and rabies branch.

Clade 1, the forerunner of the

new version, proves more lethal, with a death rate of about 5.5 percent in the Congo province where it predominates, disease experts said. The higher death rate could be explained by that outbreak disproportionately striking vulnerable children in an area with a weak health-care system, the experts cautioned.

While the global outbreak in 2022 was largely driven by male-to-male sexual contact, officials in Africa are identifying spread in heterosexual networks as well, including when male travelers solicit female sex workers in parts of

Congo close to other countries.

"Sexual transmission in areas where there is a great deal of population movement is particularly worrisome given the implications for rapid spread," said Anne Rimoin, an epidemiologist who runs a research camp in Congo and has studied the virus there for more than two decades. "Mpox is transmitted very efficiently through sexual contact."

The virus spreads in Africa in ways not typically seen in the West, including in health-care settings where workers have less access to personal protective

equipment while treating patients and inside smaller households where people live in tighter spaces. Outbreaks also have been recorded in displacement camps in conflict-ridden areas.

While the threat to Western countries is considered low, the African countries bearing the brunt of the latest outbreak do not have ample supplies of vaccine and antivirals that helped end the international health emergency last year.

"Let's be frank: The global south has always faced massive resource limitations, and that is certainly no different here," said Jason Kindrachuk, an associate professor at the University of Manitoba's Max Rady College of Medicine who is in Congo assisting the response.

Vaccine distribution presents a logistical nightmare in Congo and other parts of Africa where the health-care system is stretched thin and where some heavily affected rural communities can be reached only by boat. But efforts to expand vaccination are finally gaining steam.

WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said he took steps to accelerate vaccine access in lower-income countries where regulators have yet to approve the vaccine and to allow international aid organizations to buy shots for distribution.

The U.S. CDC is working with Congolese officials to develop a plan for targeting people most at risk for mpox and rolling out shots in phases once the country approves a vaccine. Rimoin said that campaign could start as early as fall.

"An infection anywhere is potentially an infection everywhere, and this is exactly what we saw with mpox in 2022," said Rimoin, who is also a professor of epidemiology at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health. "It's a critical moment to act quickly, to be vigilant and with no time to lose."

# Ukraine's extended Russia incursion boosts land, morale

Soldiers' advance is tactical signal to allies at critical time, analysts say

BY ISABELLE KHURSHUDYAN AND ANASTACIA GALOUCHKA

KYIV — Ukraine's surprise invasion of Russia stretched into a fifth day Saturday in what analysts and Western officials said increasingly looked like a prolonged operation to divert Russian forces, raising questions about Kyiv's ultimate aim as its forces pushed deeper into Russia's Kursk region.

The move has turned the tables on Moscow, which invaded Ukraine more than two years ago, and has been a morale boost for Ukrainian forces after Russia previously gained the strategic initiative on the battlefield. It could also be used as leverage in potential negotiations with Moscow to end the fighting, analysts said.

"It's not a raid, this is something different," said Andriy Zagorodnyuk, former defense minister and chairman of Ukraine's Center for Defense Strategies, an independent think tank.

"It's not a question about staying there forever or for a long time, it's an issue of trying to stretch out their forces," he added. "I doubt that Ukraine's leadership has these plans to occupy Russian territory and to hold it indefinitely."

Though Ukrainian officials have repeatedly declined to comment on the assault, their soldiers fighting in Russia have started posting more videos and photos to social media that purport to show them in Kursk and, most recently, in a second Russian border region, Belgorod.

The military has otherwise adopted what is being referred to as a "regime of silence" for opera-

tional security — a tactic Kyiv used during its counteroffensive in Kharkiv in 2022.

Fighters from Ukraine's 252nd Territorial Defense Battalion recorded a video, shared Saturday, standing outside a building identified as the village club in Poroz — a settlement in Russia's Belgorod region less than two miles from the border. The Washington Post could not immediately verify the video's authenticity or when it was recorded.

With no other reports of Ukrainian units in the Belgorod region, Russian military analysts and pro-war bloggers claimed the video was probably an orchestrated diversionary tactic to confuse Russian forces. But it was yet another development celebrated by ordinary Ukrainians happy to see the Russians get a taste of their own medicine.

Meanwhile, the Kremlin on Saturday announced heightened security measures in border areas — a sign of Moscow's growing insecurity.

Whatever the endgame of Ukraine's incursion into Russia, it has succeeded as a narrative-shifting lift for Kyiv. Instead of lamenting Russia's advances on the eastern front every day, Ukrainians are eagerly monitoring — and snickering at — the news of their troops pushing deeper and deeper into Russia's Kursk region, which borders Ukraine's Sumy region.

"War is always a contest of wills, and morale is obviously intrinsically linked," said Franz-Stefan Gady, a Vienna-based military analyst. "This is definitely one consideration that it is really a signal to the West and to Ukrainian allies and partners that Ukraine is still capable of launching offensive operations, that Ukraine is capable of conducting fairly complex operations into enemy territory."

A Western diplomat in Kyiv, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive matter, echoed that sentiment.



VIACHESLAV RATYNSKYI/REUTERS

Ukrainian service members ride a BMP-1 infantry fighting vehicle Friday in Ukraine's Sumy region, near the Russian border. Ukrainian soldiers have started posting videos and photos on social media purportedly showing them in Russia's Kursk and Belgorod regions.

After months of declining support and interest from Western partner countries, Ukraine has seized the spotlight again, the diplomat said.

"Ukraine is showing the world that the country is able to fight back," the official said. "This operation is perfect timing before the U.S. election to put this conflict back on the map."

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, speaking in a taped meeting with officials on Saturday, claimed that Ukrainian forces had advanced about 20 miles into Russia. Lukashenko also said without evidence that Ukrainian "targets" had violated Belarusian airspace Friday night, prompting the military to shoot them down. The Post has not been able to verify either claim.

The Belarusian Defense Ministry said it will send forces to its border with Ukraine as a defensive measure.

Several Ukrainian mechanized and assault units appear to be part of the offensive into Russia's Kursk, meaning Kyiv has probably pulled thousands of soldiers off the battlefield in eastern Ukraine, where Russian forces had been gaining ground. Gady said they've continued that trend during the Ukrainian offensive in recent days.

Analysts have said Ukraine's military could be maneuvering to divert Russian forces from other parts of the front line in eastern Ukraine.

But Ukraine then also risks shifting more of its soldiers from the tense defense there, and the quantity of reserves Russia uses to counter the assault on its territory might not outweigh the Ukrainian force committed. And if Ukraine intends to occupy this Russian territory for an extended period, that will also require a significant number of troops to

stay put.

"It remains to be seen whether Russia is going to commit any resources at all from sectors on the Ukrainian front line to contain this assault," Gady said. "There is some indication that Russia has already started fighting back with regular formations, but it's unclear yet."

He added that it's possible that the Ukrainian military might entrench in the territory it has moved through so far, forcing a Russian counterattack that could draw more personnel and give Ukraine a favorable attrition ratio.

Though Kyiv's ramped-up mobilization campaign has conscripted tens of thousands of men per month this summer, not all of those reinforcements have reached the battlefield, as they have to complete training.

Ukrainian officials have said bringing the war to Russia and

making its civilians experience the same displacement and bombardment that Ukrainians have for the past two years will place pressure on President Vladimir Putin and improve Kyiv's position in future negotiations to end the war.

Though Russian officials have claimed that the Ukrainian advance has been halted, Moscow announced a "counterterrorism operation" on Saturday for three regions along Ukraine's border. That entails heightened security, such as the ability to forcibly resettle civilians, check documents and vehicles, and monitor calls. Authorities can also restrict internet access and limit communications.

The Western diplomat said that "before the operation, Ukraine had nothing to negotiate."

"Now it is different," the person said.

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# Uvalde shooter said he wanted to attack school in 2018

BY ARELIS R. HERNÁNDEZ,  
STEVEN RICH,  
JOYCE SOHYUN LEE  
AND SARAH CAHLAN

Years before the 2022 massacre at Robb Elementary School, the shooter told a friend he planned to carry out a school shooting and confirmed to police that he had been thinking about it for months, according to new documents released by the city of Uvalde, Tex., on Saturday.

The 2018 police investigation found that Salvador Ramos was obsessed with the 1999 Columbine High School shooting and wrote about one of those gunmen in a journal entry seen by a teacher, the records show. Ramos, then 14, was committed to a hospital for psychological evaluation and put on medication for depression.

The report is among dozens of records released by the city after it was sued by a coalition of news organizations, including The Washington Post.

The records also include body-camera footage from five police officers, dash-cam video, recorded 911 calls, radio and emergency communications, and text mes-

sages between various officials. Lawsuits against Uvalde County, the school district and the Texas Department of Public Safety for more records are ongoing.

In a 911 call released Saturday by the city, a 10-year-old student inside a Robb Elementary classroom can be heard counting the survivors and trying to quiet crying, screaming classmates.

"A lot of people are gone," said Khloie Torres, as she tried to count those still alive in her fourth-grade classroom but gave up after reaching eight. Other students can be heard screaming out to officers, pleading for help, and the injured can be heard moaning.

"Please help, they are dying," she told the 911 dispatcher. Torres survived the shooting.

The Post previously obtained the vast majority of the records released Saturday from the Texas Rangers investigation, including excerpts of Torres' phone call. But the new information includes her full 17-minute conversation with a dispatcher.

A Post investigation with ProPublica and the Texas Tribune found that the emergency medical response was thwarted by the



Flowers and other items surround crosses at a memorial for the victims of a shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Tex.

botched police efforts to stop the gunman. Law enforcement's ill-fated transition from responding to a documentary published last year by The Post also found.

The newly released records come more than two years after the massacre that left 19 children and two teachers dead, and as victims' families clamor for greater transparency into the actions

of law enforcement. Two school district police officers, including former chief Pedro "Pete" Arredondo, have been criminally charged in connection with the law enforcement response to the massacre.

Arredondo, who has been charged with 10 felony counts of child endangerment, told CNN recently that he is being scapegoated and that Texas state troop-

ers should have taken over incident command. It took more than 70 minutes for any officer to confront the shooter.

"These are my children, too, people don't understand that," Arredondo said, describing how he walked those hallways daily and got to know the students who were gunned down. He blamed "lies and deceptions" for fueling false narratives that lost him the trust of his community.

Adrian Gonzales, the other former school district police officer facing charges, pleaded not guilty to 29 counts of child endangerment last month.

The records offer more insight into Ramos, who just after his 18th birthday purchased the AR-15 style rifle used in the shooting.

The Uvalde Police Department was called to the gunman's junior high school on April 19, 2018 after a friend reported comments Ramos had made about "shooting up" his school during his senior year, according to a police investigation conducted that year. At the time, he was in eighth grade.

Investigators talked to Ramos's friends and acquaintances, some of whom told police they had fantasized about killing them-

selves and others. Ramos had researched the Columbine shooting, and planned to wear a trench coat during his attack on a target list of popular student-athletes. He also began using the nicknames that the Columbine gunmen had used, the report found.

One acquaintance told police that Ramos was learning how to build a pipe bomb. A teacher later told police that Ramos wrote a journal entry that had been tossed in the trash referring to the Columbine shooters.

When investigators, some of whom played key roles in the 2022 shooting, questioned Ramos, he acknowledged the plan but said he didn't plan to carry it out — though he had been thinking about it for months.

Investigators called emergency medical services to have Ramos hospitalized for a psychological evaluation. Ramos was put on medication for depression, according to the investigative report. A few weeks later, Ramos was sent to a juvenile detention facility. It is unclear whether Ramos was charged.

Almost four years after police questioned him, Ramos opened fire at Robb Elementary.

## Cash App users may be eligible for over \$2,500

Claims can be filed as part of \$15 million breach settlement

BY KELSEY ABLES

Millions of people use Cash App to handle payments to friends, family and businesses — but the popular app may soon be giving some users cash, too, after reaching a \$15 million proposed settlement in a lawsuit over the company's response to security breaches.

Cash App is one of several mobile payment services, similar to Zelle or Venmo, and allows users to send and receive cash, invest in stocks, buy bitcoin and make payments at certain mer-

chants. If you've used Cash App in the last six years and dealt with a security breach, you may be eligible to receive more than \$2,500. Here's what to know.

### What is the Cash App data breach settlement about?

A group of Cash App users allege in a class-action lawsuit that Cash App Investing and its owner, Block, were negligent and broke their obligations in responding to two data breaches, failing to implement sufficient security controls and not adequately responding to user concerns about fraudulent transactions.

The complaint points to an incident in 2021, when a former Cash App Investing employee downloaded reports of some U.S. users without permission, and another incident in 2023, when

an unauthorized user accessed certain accounts' data.

According to the complaint, many of the potential class members said they lost as much as \$40,000 from their accounts. Michelle Salinas, one of the named plaintiffs, said she spent over 100 hours dealing with the aftermath of her account being compromised.

Block and Cash App continue to deny any liability or wrongdoing, and the settlement is not an admission of guilt. The defendants did not immediately respond to a request for comment Thursday evening.

### Who is eligible for settlement payments?

The settlement applies to current or former users of Cash App and its affiliates whose personal information or accounts were ac-

cessed without permission, who have had fraudulent transactions or who have experienced "a deficiency in the resolution of an error" from Aug. 23, 2018, to Aug. 20, 2024.

### How much can customers receive in the settlement?

Block and Cash App agreed to set up a \$15 million settlement fund that will be distributed among eligible customers after legal and other administrative fees are paid. If there is not enough money to pay everyone, payments will be reduced proportionally based on each recipient's share of the total amount claimed.

Settlement payments are divided into three categories: out-of-pocket losses, lost time and transaction losses.

Eligible customers can claim

up to \$2,500 in out-of-pocket losses, which include unrefunded overdraft fees and late fees as well as costs associated with credit monitoring or identity theft insurance, requesting a credit report, canceling a payment card or closing a bank account. Lost time spent responding to security breaches, unauthorized transactions or Cash App deficiencies in resolving errors may be reimbursed at \$25 an hour, up to three hours. And those who lost money through unauthorized transactions can file a claim for reimbursement.

### How to submit a Cash App settlement claim

Eligible Cash App customers must submit a claim form by Nov. 18 at [cashappsecuritysettlement.com/submit-claim](https://cashappsecuritysettlement.com/submit-claim) with proper documentation. Claims can be submitted online or by mail. The final approval hearing for the proposed settlement will

be held Dec. 16.

### Is Cash App safe to use?

Cash App says on its website that it "uses cutting-edge encryption and fraud detection technology to make sure your data and money is secure," and the app has an A-plus Better Business Bureau rating. However, customer reviews for Cash App on the BBB website, which do not influence ratings, average 1.11 out of 5 stars.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau warns consumers against storing money on payment apps because it is not automatically protected by the government, and if the companies fail, it could be lost entirely.

The American Bankers Association encourages consumers using digital payment services to take precautions such as double-checking information before sending money, using multifactor authentication and setting up notifications about transactions via email or text.



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 PARIS OLYMPICS

BARRY SVRLUGA

## For U.S. women's soccer, gold medal starts new era

SVRLUGA FROM A1

feisty Brazil side to win the Americans' first Olympic gold medal in a dozen years. Swanson did so by converting a beautiful through ball from Korbin Albert.

Swanson is 26. Albert is 20. Go down the U.S. roster: Trinity Rodman is 22. Naomi Girma is 24. Sophia Smith turned 24 on Saturday. They were all key in this perfect run through Paris. They're all young. There is speed and skill and stamina here. There's more on the way.

What a pivot. The Olympics were about winning gold, of course, after a disastrous World Cup less than a year ago. But for this group at this time, the Games were also about charting a completely new direction with so many new players. It's a path lined with something that was missing as the program drifted and the results disappointed.

"Most importantly, you keep probably hearing it: We're all playing with joy," said Swanson, who joins Smith and Rodman to make a front line that could be lethal for years. "We're having so much fun. I'm just so happy."

Those players won the gold — with a massive contribution from Alyssa Naeher, the 36-year-old goalkeeper who doubles as a team backbone. But they all were put in position by Emma Hayes, the 47-year-old Brit who coached her first major international tournament with the Americans here.

Coaches don't receive medals at the Olympics. Can someone make Hayes a replica? Out of actual gold?

"She came in with an incredibly difficult task," Dunn said. "But we just embraced it. We knew it was going to be difficult and challenging in some ways, but we got the job done."

Think about how quickly this transformation took place.

Hayes coached her first match with her new group June 1. Her record to this point: 9-0-1, including a 6-0 romp through the Olympics in which the Americans outscored their opponents 12-2.

"Winning's in my DNA," Hayes said. "I'm used to being in finals. I'm used to competing for trophies. And so is the U.S. women's national team."

After a bruising World Cup in New Zealand and Australia — one in which the Americans won only one of four games and were eliminated before the quarterfinals for the first time ever — the program seemed in disarray. Vlatko Andonovski, then the coach, had stuck with an aging roster and seemed unable to inspire. In Andonovski's two major tournaments leading the team — the Tokyo Olympics in 2021 and the World Cup down under — an American program with four World Cup titles and four Olympic golds had managed only a bronze medal and a historic flameout.

So Hayes's hiring was inarguably necessary. But it was also inspired. Rather than drawing from the American professional ranks, U.S. Soccer — the organization that oversees the national programs on both the women's and men's sides — plucked Hayes from English power Chelsea, a program she led to seven FA Women's Super League championships, including the past five.

Unfamiliar with that circuit? Doesn't matter. Hayes came with a combination of credibility and experience that was precisely what the beat-up American outfit needed.

"I think sometimes we always look at negative experiences or setbacks as something that shouldn't happen," Hayes said. "I think the opposite."

The previous losses, she



TONI L. SANDYS/THE WASHINGTON POST

**American Trinity Rodman jockeys with Brazil's Yasmim during the United States' victory in the women's soccer final at the Paris Olympics. At 22 years old, Rodman is one of a number of young stars anchoring the U.S. roster.**

believed, were about growth. She also, just about immediately, showed she was unafraid to make difficult decisions. When a program is as storied as this one, it can be easy to genuflect to the players who gave it that status. Hayes simply didn't. When it came time to choose an Olympic roster, with just 16 field players and two goaltenders, she left off Alex Morgan, a two-time World Cup champion who helped drive the Americans to their most recent Olympic gold, in 2012 in London.

This move was both substantive and symbolic. Morgan is 35. She created very little offense at last year's World Cup. There were solid soccer reasons for the decision. But it also established a clean break

and gave this group a new identity.

"All the players being coachable, buying in — it's not easy," captain Lindsey Horan said. "It's really not easy. It's not easy for Emma. It's not easy for us. I think this journey has been incredible. But there's so much belief in every single one of us."

After the final whistle and after more than a few American players exchanged hugs with Brazilian icon Marta — who, at 38, still hasn't broken through at the Olympics or the World Cup — Hayes gathered her charges in a circle just outside midfield. It was the end of the tournament. It felt like the beginning of something fresh.

"I think it's important that we realize: There's so much more that we can do," Dunn said. "And

having Emma now for the long haul is going to be incredible."

Hayes took a step toward the middle of the circle and spoke. She thumped her chest. And then she gave her players a round of applause.

They deserved it. But so did she.

"I'm a delighted, sort of half-American today," Hayes beamed.

"Ah, you're full American," Horan said.

When the American team took the medal stand — holding hands, stepping as one, then saluting the crowd — Hayes stood to the side and cheered some more. The gold medal represents what they accomplished over 2½ weeks in France. But it also points to what they can accomplish in the future.

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## OPINION

## THE FOUR SEASONS

# Summer: Abstraction as apprehension

BY AMY SILLMAN

WITH SOUND BY MARINA ROSENFELD

August is upon us, and we're in the heat of another mood swing. As with my contribution this spring, here's a one-minute video viewable by scanning the QR code below. Once again, I've prepared an animation made from cut-up ink drawings, augmented digitally and set in motion to a score by artist and composer Marina Rosenfeld, with a little help from her friend Michael Foster on saxophone.

In March, when I made the first seasonal piece for these pages, I began with something comical because a spasm of laughter felt like the best response to what we were living through then. Marina provided me with a more somber score this season, and I wondered what the opposite of comedy might look like. Should we call it apprehension? Or difficulty? Or even ugliness? What is ugliness anyway? Is it something unlikable but also, perhaps, unavoidable?

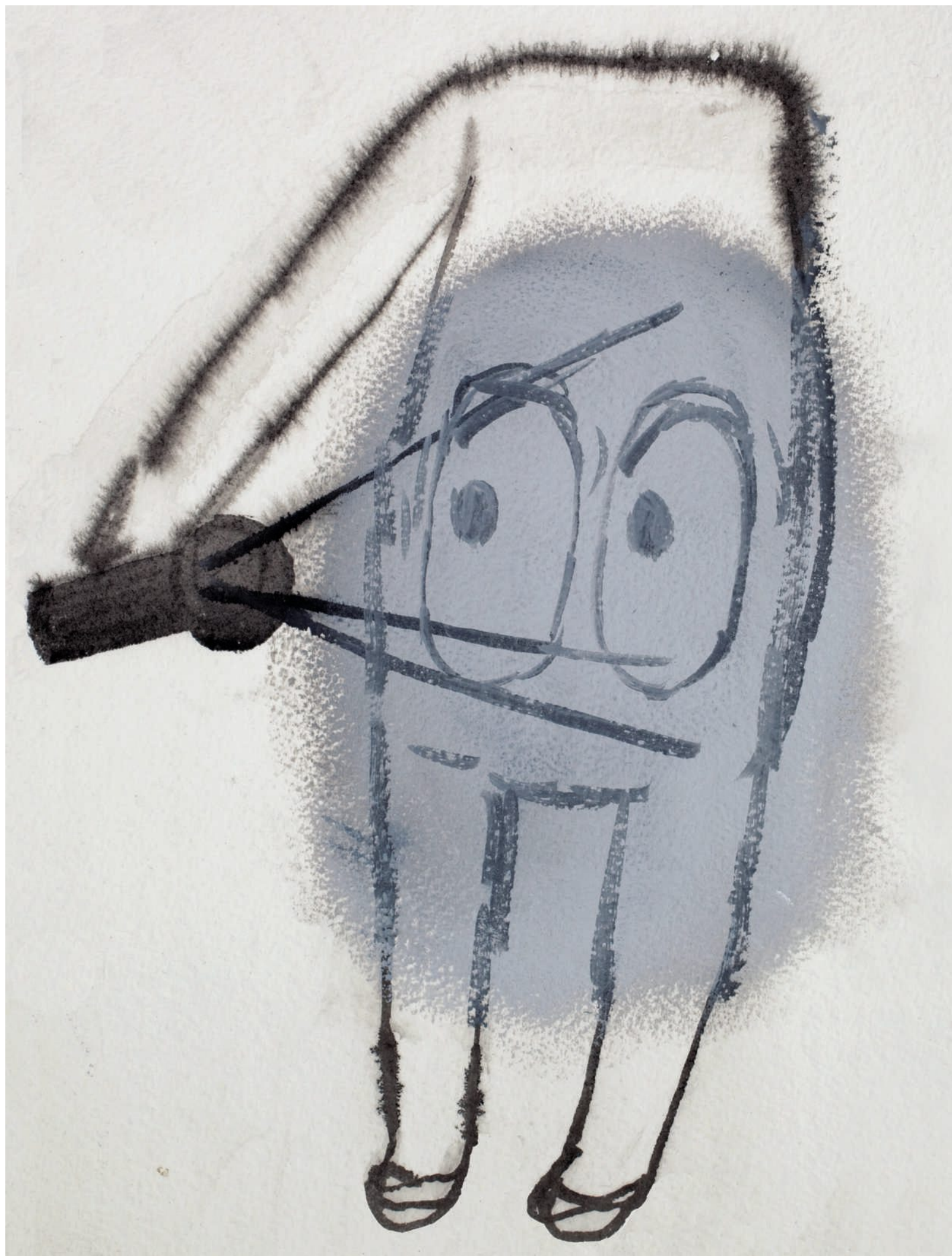
So the new video is not about summer's ease and laughter but its more vertiginous sway of apprehension, with discordant overlays and shards of narrative hurtling by, often too fast to fully grasp; the ambiguity of a season when roses bloom but their thorns also prick. Marianne Moore reminds us of this state of affairs in her 1924 poem "Roses Only": roses, she writes, "are not proof against a worm, the elements, or mildew." This work, then, is not a merry cartoon; instead, it's an attempt to capture how things change, how alacrity can become apprehension — and vice versa.

The video begins with the face of a girl whose mouth opens and closes. She is on the verge of speech or breath — it's not clear which. We flicker between her face and body and various light sources, incandescent bulbs and handheld flashlights that she eventually points at herself. The flashlights conjure a cone shape that mirrors the red stuff emerging from her mouth. Are these word balloons? Is language always illuminating, or might it feel more convoluted than enlightened?

Meanwhile, a second figure eyes a black hole nearby and is engulfed by a column of darkness. The lines between outside and inside grow murky: A tongue becomes an inky line; a couple of faces in profile make small talk, but their own word balloons reach out toward a tall figure — part totem pole, part snowman. The couple plunges clumsily into the figure's belly, and the mood shifts inward as objects become unmoored. We enter a place of surging change, while Marina's score chugs forward with percussion and drone, a little like being inside a metallic machine. Occasionally, we break from the clang to see not-at-all-ugly things, even wonderful ones, like flowers being set upon a table or the moon and clouds rearranging themselves against a white sky — respites before the relentless pace begins again.

Change is difficult, and difficulty can be scary, and fear, in turn, can be ugly. What if we walk it back the other way: Ugliness, in turn, can be complicated, but complications can be provocative, and provocation can be energizing. I remind myself that Moore's poem begins like this: "You do not seem to realize that beauty is a liability rather than an asset." And ends like this: "Your thorns are the best part of you." Let's look at the whole rose, stem and all.

Amy Sillman is a visual artist known for process-based paintings that move between abstraction and figuration and engage nontraditional media including animation, zines and installation. She curated the Museum of Modern Art's collection in 2019 and 2020 with an Artist's Choice show called "The Shape of Shape," and a focused overview of her work will open in September at the Kunstmuseum Bern in Switzerland. Marina Rosenfeld is an American composer, sound artist and visual artist. Her work has been produced and presented at the Park Avenue Armory, the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum.



To see the video scan the QR code above or visit [wapo.st/sillman-summer](https://wapo.st/sillman-summer).



## SUNDAY OPINION

DANA MILBANK

## The angry man's campaign

PHILADELPHIA

One is running a high-decibel campaign. The other is waging a high-incel campaign.

The Harris-Walz ticket debuted this past week as “joyful warriors” before massive, raucous crowds. The Trump-Vance ticket focused its outreach on angry young men.

Vice President Kamala Harris and Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz were rallying newly optimistic Democrats in seven battleground states. In Wisconsin, people abandoned their cars in cornfields and walked to the event rather than wait in a traffic jam. Here in Philadelphia on Tuesday, people began lining up 12 hours before Harris was expected to speak despite intermittent rain and temperatures that reached 90 degrees.

From my seat in the press section on the arena floor, I measured the noise when Harris and Walz took the stage at 107 decibels. That's approaching rock-concert levels, but it wasn't coming from the sound system; it was entirely from the lungs of 12,000 Democrats.

A low-energy Trump, by contrast, scheduled only one rally, in Montana. Instead, he and his running mate, Sen. JD Vance of Ohio, made a series of overtures to the “manosphere,” an online community of right-wing — and frequently misogynistic — men.

At Mar-a-Lago, Trump sat down for an hour and a half with 23-year-old live-streamer Adin Ross, who has been banned from the streaming platform Twitch for “hateful conduct.” For the benefit of Ross's hypermasculine young audience, the two men discussed their shared fondness for Ultimate Fighting and compared their “favorite fighters,” and Trump praised the “good heart” of antisemitic rapper Ye. The two also discussed their admiration for the Nerk Boys (“great people,” Trump said), other far-right influencers who, like Ross, have promoted self-described misogynist Andrew Tate, known for celebrating violence against women and who is facing rape and human trafficking charges in Romania.

Vance, in turn, recorded a TikTok video and a podcast with the Nerk Boys to boost his candidacy, which has been struggling since comments surfaced in which he disparaged childless women as “cat ladies.” Vance followed Harris around the country last week, but his crowds were generally in the dozens or low hundreds. When the Harris and Vance planes were on a Wisconsin tarmac at the same time, Vance and a phalanx of bros approached Air Force Two in an unsuccessful effort to confront the vice president and, he told reporters, to “get a look at the plane because hopefully it's going to be my plane.”

Former Republican congresswoman Liz Cheney (Wyo.) commented on the photo Vance posted of his entourage (there appeared to be nine White men in suits) on the tarmac. “Looks like @JD-Vance brought all his rally attendees to the airport with him today,” she wrote.

Things weren't much better for Vance in Philadelphia, where he drew all of 200 people and fielded a reporter's question about cat ladies. “This cat lady loves you,” somebody in the audience called out.

“Thank you, ma'am,” said Vance. “Every type of white man that gets a hasty ‘swipe left’ on his dating profile was in attendance,” wrote Salon's Amanda Marcotte, including “glowering loners staring at the two women under 40 like cats watching birds out a window.”

The Trump campaign appears to think angry men can send him back to the White House. Hulk Hogan ripped off his shirt at the Republican National Convention. Trump went on professional wrestler Logan Paul's podcast and joined UFC boss Dana White ringside. At an event on Aug. 3, Trump told the crowd how his wife hates it when he groans and moans onstage, pretending to be a girl struggling to lift a barbell. He praised a waitress he met while campaigning: “She grabbed me. She gave me a kiss. I said, I think I'm never going back home to the first lady.”

Now, Trump allies are launching what



Former president Donald Trump answers questions from reporters during a news conference in Florida on Thursday.

the Wall Street Journal says will be a \$20 million “Send the Vote” initiative aimed at young men. They're hoping all of this will improve Trump's standing among men younger than 30, a demographic that is about 5 percent of the electorate.

But it's almost certain to hurt Trump's standing further among a group that votes in very large numbers. Only 39 percent of women, and just 27 percent of college-educated women, view Trump favorably in the new NPR-PBS-Marist poll. Only 28 percent of women, and 24 percent of college-educated women, have a favorable view of Vance.

Many other women see the Trump-Vance buffet of abortion bans, cat-lady barbs, vulgar insults and ultimate fighting for what it is: gross.

Richard Reilly woke up at 3 a.m. at his home in Kingwood, N.J., so that he could arrive at the Harris event in Philadelphia by 5:30 a.m. for the 5:30 p.m. event. He has a long white beard and wore a red Santa hat, T-shirt and shorts to be sure he stood out.

Would he have gone to the same trouble if President Joe Biden were still the nominee? “Probably not,” Reilly admitted. “I just felt that it was going downhill fast.”

A few places back in line was Vevette Cundari, from Yonkers, N.Y., who came down the night before so she could be in line at dawn. She, too, wouldn't have made the trip for Biden. “I was not optimistic,” she said. “But now there's



Vice President Kamala Harris and Gov. Tim Walz of Minnesota in Detroit on Wednesday.

been a resurgence of hope.”

Trump has always drawn large crowds from his cultlike following; they gather, as though for a reunion, to compare their Trump-themed apparel and homemade signs. But in Philly, I saw an energy among Democrats I hadn't experienced since Barack Obama's 2008 campaign.

Outside, they danced and chanted Harris's name while a drum corps played. A guy waved his “Kamala is Future” sign, decorated with coconuts. The few anti-Israel protesters who demonstrated outside the event (I counted four of them) were largely ignored by the crowd.

Inside, dozens of Black women wore the pink and green of Harris's college sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha. A guy in a turban danced behind the stage. They wore their recently acquired merch for the new nominee: “Yes We Kam,” “Swifties for Harris,” “Old White Men for Harris,” “Kamala Harris for the People.” From the upper level, attendees dangled a bedsheet declaring “Madam Vice President” with “Vice” crossed out. A young woman, DJ Diamond Kuts, pumped up the crowd with hip-hop music, followed by a Motown singalong. The campaign handed out rock-concert-style wristbands that flashed red, white and blue. Two hours before Harris appeared, each of the 10,000 seats in the arena was occupied, and the floor was full.

And it was loud — even for the warm-up acts. CNN's Jeff Zeleny showed me the double noise-canceling earpieces he was using. “For Biden rallies, this was not necessary,” he told me.

“I work with JD Vance,” Sen. John Fetterman (D-Pa.) told the crowd. “And I'm here to confirm that he is a *seriously* weird dude.”

When Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro, who had been on Harris's list of potential running mates, mentioned that Vance is “not exactly off to a good start,” the crowd responded with an impromptu chant: “He's a weirdo!”

Shapiro, a powerful speaker, brought the crowd's roar up to 104 decibels when he spoke of the Republicans' abortion bans: “It's not freedom to tell women what they're allowed to do with their bodies. That's not freedom!”

Harris eclipsed even that energy when she spoke about “two middle-class kids, one a daughter of Oakland, Calif., who was raised by a working mother, the other, a son of the Nebraska plains who grew up working on a farm. It's the promise of America. Because only in America, only in America, is it possible for them together to make it all the way to the White House.”

From the crowd came a thundering chant of “USA! USA!”

It was a welcome reminder that Trump's MAGA followers don't own that chant — and they no longer own the advantage in enthusiasm.

Some of the very first words out of Walz's mouth captured the moment perfectly. “Thank you,” he said to Harris, “for bringing back the joy.”

In the week leading up to Friday, Trump delivered one speech, in Atlanta on Aug. 3. He used the word “I” 317 times. Contrast that with Harris, who referred to herself in the same way only 39 times during her Philadelphia speech.

In fairness, Trump used most words more than Harris did, because he droned on for 91 minutes, compared with Harris's 31. The former president's speech was typical: a blend of self-praise, random attacks, lunacy and invention — with no discernible structure.

“I'd like to congratulate Vladimir Putin for having made yet another great deal,” he announced, eight minutes into his speech.

He lavished praise on himself: “Trump is right about everything. ... They were saying how great I was. ... They said, ‘He was the greatest president we ever had.’”

He spent a full minute complaining that the arena operator, Georgia State University, didn't let more people in. Twenty-five minutes later, he complained about it some more: “A very liberal school, I guess. Right? Not happy with the school.” He offered his usual prophecies of doom (“We could end up in World War III and a depression. How about that?”) and other nonsensical assertions.

He referred to the Midwest as the Middle West. He gave his views on electric vehicles: “I'm for them, for a small slice is a slice” but “there's no way you can ever load them up.” He said that he'll get the economy “booming like it was four years ago” — when it had collapsed. He spouted a falsehood about an Algerian Olympian boxer being transgender and claimed he was shot because people called him a threat to democracy; the shooter was a Republican with no identified political motive.

He tried to attack Harris, but his lines were lost amid a kaleidoscope of grievances directed not just at her but at Biden, Hillary Clinton, California Gov. Gavin Newsom, prosecutors Alvin Bragg and Fani Willis, and Republicans Paul Ryan, Mitt Romney and, especially, Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp. Trump devoted the better part of 12 minutes to attacking Kemp, as well as the governor's wife, for being “disloyal” in refusing to help overturn the 2020 election.

In contrast to that 91-minute stream-

of-consciousness, it takes Walz less than three minutes to make the case against Trump. “Again and again and again, Trump weakens our economy to strengthen his own hand,” the Minnesota governor said in Philadelphia. “He mocks our laws. He sows chaos and division. And that's to say nothing of his record as president. He froze in the face of the covid crisis. He drove our economy into the ground. And make no mistake, violent crime was up under Donald Trump. That's not even counting the crimes he committed.”

He delivers a message on abortion rights — “There is a golden rule: Mind your own damn business” — and says not to believe Trump “when he plays dumb” about Project 2025 and its plans “to restrict our freedoms, to rig the economy to help the super rich.” Walz then dispatches Vance as an elitist: “Like all regular people I grew up with in the heartland, JD studied at Yale, had his career funded by Silicon Valley billionaires, and then wrote a bestseller trashing that community.” Walz concludes: “These guys are creepy and, yes, just weird as hell.”

Walz usually gets credit for branding Trump as “weird,” but really it was former president George W. Bush, who reportedly said after Trump's bizarre inaugural address in 2017: “That's some weird s---.”

The charge clearly stings, because Trump keeps trying to refute it — in ways that are pretty weird. “J.D. Vance Isn't Weird, The Democrats Are,” announced an argument Trump posted online written by ... Roger Stone?

And Trump keeps piling up erratic behaviors. He withdrew from the previously agreed-upon ABC News debate then unilaterally announced a new one, on Fox News, before reaccepting the ABC debate he had just rejected. He decided to rename Harris “Kamabla.” He posted an article about a cow tax in Denmark. He shared an article asking: “Will July 4th, like Columbus Day, soon simply disappear?” He posted several hysterical claims about a “KAMALA CRASH!” on Wall Street on Monday, then was silent as the market recovered most of its losses. He posted a claim on Truth Social saying “Tim Walz let Minnesota burn” during race riots — but an audio recording from that time has Trump praising Walz's response.

But the lines aren't just random and strange. Sometimes, they're ugly. Trump, on Fox News, made the outrageous claim that Shapiro wasn't chosen as Harris's running mate “because of the fact that he's Jewish,” which is “very insulting to Jewish people.” Vance, embracing the same vile tactics used in the “swiftboating” of John Kerry 20 years ago, accused Walz of “stolen valor” and said he “abandoned” his unit when he retired from the National Guard after 24 years for his successful run for Congress.

Twenty years ago, the attacks on Kerry were devastating, in part because such brazen lies were not routine. But Americans know to expect new outrages every day from Trump — and he seldom disappoints.

On Thursday, he shared on Truth Social an image of Harris, her face distorted and darkened, her body turned into an insect's. He held a news conference at Mar-a-Lago at which he denied saying that Harris “happened to turn Black” in recent years. “She's the one that said it. I didn't say it,” he claimed, calling Harris “very disrespectful.” He also used the session to tell an apocryphal story about a near-death trip in a helicopter, to say that Jews who vote for Harris “should have their heads examined” and to boast that, “on crowd size, in history, for any country, nobody's had crowds like I have.”

In particular, Trump proclaimed that there were more people at his speech on Jan. 6, 2021, before the attack on the Capitol, than for the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s March on Washington in 1963: “When you look at the picture of his crowd versus my crowd, we actually had more people.”

Weird doesn't begin to cover this.

ALEXANDRA PETRI

## Behold a pale horse, and his name that sat upon him was ... Tim Walz?

“He'll unleash HELL ON EARTH.”

— Included in a campaign email from Donald Trump on Tuesday, in reference to Tim Walz

It was hell. It was a nightmare. And it was all Tim Walz's doing. A vast landscape, vaguely evocative of Minnesota, with circles within circles of unthinkable torments almost too terrible to set down in words.

Above the entrance was carved “Ope! With Abandon, All Ye Who Enter Here,” which seemed to be some sort of Midwestern thing. Donald Trump and JD Vance quailed as Virgil led them inside.

The outside circle, or limbo, was awful enough. There were lots of people practicing religious tolerance. Not just of Christianity but also of other religions, which seemed like too much tolerance.

In the first circle, some children who could have been happily performing some kind of dangerous, ill-compensated

labor were attending school and eating free breakfasts and lunches. All those tiny hands that could have been usefully plunging into machines, instead performing arithmetic and clutching nourishing sandwiches! What country was this? Donald Trump shielded his eyes as he passed.

In the next circle were people who had paid their debt to society who were having their voting rights restored. Some of them were ice fishing; it was hard to tell if this were a hell thing or simply a Midwestern thing.

And in the next, so-called conversion therapists who were not being allowed to try to force LGBTQ+ people to be straight just sat there twiddling their thumbs. One of them tried to convert a frog, but it hopped disdainfully away.

The next circle was butter sculptures. Tim Walz had made a bus. He was displaying it proudly. “Look,” Tim Walz said, pointing at another sculpture. “The Mall

of America!” “You mean the National Mall?” Tim Walz shook his head. “Nope.”

The fifth circle was full of families taking paid leave. They were not just forced to give birth; they were actually getting time to spend with their babies *after they left the womb*. As Trump and Vance looked upon the ghoulish scene, several neighbors from the butter sculpture circle brought over hot dish.

The sixth circle was worse yet! More schoolchildren. They were learning to read ... with PHONICS! Why, who knew what they would read once they could read! Books, perhaps! “Cat has three sounds!” they were saying. “C! C! C!” At the mention of cats, Vance shuddered. Such horrible sounds! Tim Walz was at a booth there handing out free milk.

In the seventh circle were people with roofs over their heads. Low-income people! It was an appalling use of government funds, almost as bad as providing food to children, and the ghost of a big

police tank sadly rolled past, never built thanks to this senseless waste. Donald Trump saluted it. Why weren't they sleeping outside and being arrested, as the Supreme Court had said they ought to be? Before they could leave the affordable housing circle, another neighbor from the butter circle came by with hot dish. “Socialism,” Vance muttered.

The eighth circle was full of sick people taking sick leave. Why weren't they at work, infecting others? Several people from the butter circle brought them hot dish, leaving it outside with a friendly note.

To reach the final circle, you had to walk past a sad cluster of male state legislators who sat, as usual, utterly bewildered by the medical science of pregnancy but trying to pass laws about it. And *no one was letting them*. It was an awful sight. Also, the temperature was very, very cold; not even the hot dish brought by neighbors from the butter

circle was enough to warm Trump and Vance.

The ninth circle was the most frightening of all. There sat a whole coven of women getting to decide, with their doctors' input, whether to continue or end their pregnancies. Vance shuddered at the sight of all those vessels mistakenly thinking they were people. They were even voting! There were a number of cats in that circle, just as the chanting children had warned. A panicked Donald Trump and JD Vance clambered to the litter box in the center of the circle and descended the staircase hidden behind it, down, down, down until they burst out of the nightmare hellscape.

When they were free, they looked around and beheld once more their policies: forced births, child labor, the Ten Commandments in every classroom. A great sea of red hats. All was as it ought to be.

Tim Walz's hell was not upon them yet.

## OPINION

## Where did all the Black bookshops go?

BY EVAN FRISS

The District was once home to one of the country's foremost Black bookstores. Drum & Spear faced no shortage of difficulties, weathering financial troubles, fires and even an FBI investigation. Though it and other activist bookstores were ultimately felled by bigger, corporate booksellers, interest in what they provided has not dwindled. Within weeks of the murder of George Floyd in 2020, Google searches for "black bookstores" rose 100-fold. Anti-racist syllabi directed Americans to buy books about race and to purchase them from Black-owned businesses. Yet there were few Black bookstores left to turn to. Only 6 percent of independent bookshops were owned by Black people, and even those hardly resembled their counterparts from the 1960s. As demand for such institutions resurges, will we see the likes of Drum & Spear again?

"Hey, sister. Hey, brother." That's how booksellers greeted customers as they entered Drum & Spear on the ground floor of a nondescript apartment building next to Sam the barber at the corner of 14th and Fairmont streets in Northwest D.C. Up front was a table topped with tidy stacks of bestsellers: "The Autobiography of Malcolm X," "The Wretched of the Earth" and "Look Out, Whitey! Black Power's Gon' Get Your Mama!" There were containers of love beads and, seasonally, piles of "Black Christmas" cards. Under the drop ceiling and fluorescent lights, Makonde statues gleamed, racks of African dresses stood in the aisles, and newsstands cradled pamphlets, stapled-together essays and the Black Panthers' newspaper. The books were arranged face-out and comfortably spaced along cases leaning gently against the white walls. There were sections for the American Negro, Africa, Third World and Children. Posters functioned as a kind of hall of fame. It wasn't the typical lineup found in social studies classrooms. Huey P. Newton was there. So was Che Guevara.

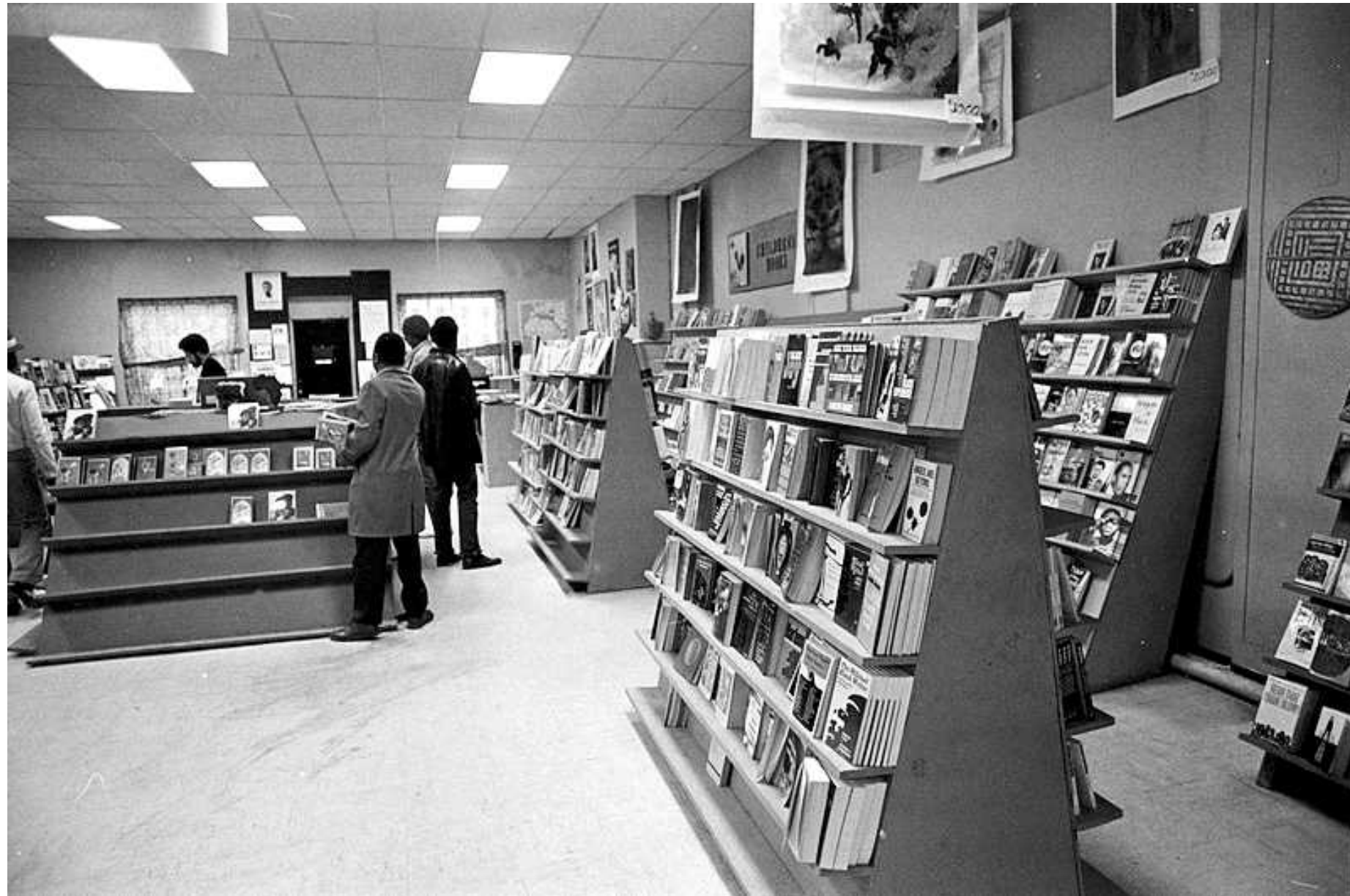
Benjamin Franklin understood that books could be revolutionary, that what colonists read shaped what colonists thought and, in turn, shaped the course of human events. Craig Rodwell, who opened Oscar Wilde, one of the nation's first gay bookstores, understood that, too. And so did the people behind Drum & Spear. It had an agenda. It pushed certain titles; it denounced others. It was, as the founders called it, a "movement bookstore."

Drum & Spear opened in the hot summer of 1968. That February, the Kerner Commission had concluded that the country was "moving toward two societies, one black, one white — separate and unequal." In March of that year, student protesters at Howard University occupied the administration building, demanding that the institution become a truly Black university with a curriculum to match. A month later, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis. D.C. was the heart of the country's emotional reaction. Buildings burned. Armed National Guard troops ringed the Capitol. Swarms of officers patrolled a population placed under curfew. Thousands of protesters and rioters were arrested. Thirteen people died. Northwest D.C. experienced the most carnage, much of it centered along U Street and up and down 14th Street, a hub of Black-owned businesses. "Arising from the ashes," as poet Gaston T. Neal put it, was Drum & Spear.

The mission at Drum & Spear was simple: to encourage more Black people to read more about Black people. The booksellers wanted customers to "understand themselves" — their history and, by extension, their future. As Courtland Cox (who, at 27, was the oldest of the bunch) said, the shop was a kind of archive of "evidence," disproving the massive lie, spread in schools and popular culture, that Black people were not intellectual. When Charlie Cobb, another of the founders, told the press that Drum & Spear wouldn't "define profit in terms of money," he wasn't exaggerating. The bookstore was a nonprofit. The founders had sat at lunch counters. They had marched in the streets. Now they would sell books.

On opening night, a large crowd gathered to celebrate. It included poet LeRoi Jones (later known as Amiri Baraka) and Stokely Carmichael, then the immediate former chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and one of the three activists whom FBI director J. Edgar Hoover worried would become the "messiah" of Black nationalism. (The two others were King and Elijah Muhammad, but it was Carmichael who had the "necessary charisma.") When The Post ran a piece about the event, FBI agents saw it and within two weeks opened an official investigation into the store. Hoover had already issued a memo regarding the troubling rise of what he called "black extremist bookstores," defined as "propaganda outlets for revolutionary and hate publications." Be on the lookout, he warned, for any "African-type bookstores."

The initial FBI reports described Drum & Spear's founders as "militant black nationalists." Agents scouted for an informant to befriend the four-person staff and subscribe to the mailing list. The FBI sent in three Black agents to pose as customers. They also tracked down everyone who phoned the store. They found



Drum &amp; Spear bookstore in D.C. in 1971.

a suspected communist here and a potential agitator there, though the callers were mostly nothing of the sort; rather, they were doctors, teachers, professors, funeral home workers, cellists, authors, editors, distributors and publishers, including Barney Rosset Jr., the owner of Grove Press and the anti-censorship advocate who had found his taste for the "underground" by way of the Gotham Book Mart.

*D.C.'s Drum & Spear survived decades of financial troubles, fires and even FBI raids but was ultimately sapped by big booksellers and online retail.*

Agents persisted, even inventing evidence. When one of them was tasked with purchasing a copy of Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong's "Little Red Book" from Drum & Spear and couldn't find it (it was out of stock), he headed to another bookstore, Brentano's, bought it and lazily submitted it as evidence of Drum & Spear's communist-leaning inventory. Despite a lack of evidence of criminal wrongdoing, the FBI maintained that the shop was "a front for underground or subversive activities."

Nothing about the bookstore was "underground." Its doors opened widely at 10 a.m. every day. Its aims were printed in



Judy Richardson and Tony Gittens at Drum &amp; Spear in 1968.

bookstore catalogues and manifest at its public events. Gwendolyn Brooks, John Hope Franklin and Shirley Graham Du Bois came for author talks. There were exhibitions of African art and celebrations of Frederick Douglass Day.

Parents and kids headed toward what was the most popular section. Although that space wasn't an initial focus, Judy Richardson, an energetic veteran of the SNCC who had left Columbia University with a mattress strapped to the roof of her car to help open Drum & Spear, came to understand the need for "good books about African children." In its regular newsletter, Drum & Spear carved out a section for "black and positive" kids' books. While picture-book characters had become more diverse throughout the 1960s, there was still a long way to go. And some of the books promoted as inclusive didn't pass muster. In 1970, Richardson returned to the publisher one such title for its "black boy panting after white girl" trope.

The shop also sponsored an annual Black Youth Arts Festival. Elementary-schoolers submitted drawings, poems, plays and paintings with African themes. School groups arrived by the busload, touring the shop as if it were a museum. Richardson hosted a weekly radio show, "Saa Ya Watoto" (Children's Hour in Kiswahili). Booksellers read, in character, from African folk tales.

It wasn't just the customers who got an education. The staff did, too, including first-grade teacher Daphne Muse, who described entering Drum & Spear as like "walking into graduate school."

Despite heightened interest in Black studies, neither the press nor the store

was ever a financial powerhouse. Bank records indicate periods of robust sales, especially in the weeks before Christmas, when the register rang, customers chatted, radiators hissed and the radio blared (WHUR, Howard University's station). At the beginning of each semester, flocks of college students arrived, many sent by their professors. At other times of the year, bank balances hovered near zero.

Financial instability was hardly the only challenge. A fire in the spring of 1969 destroyed thousands of dollars' worth of books. The fire department found a bottle of flammable liquid on the floor and acknowledged that the three-alarm blaze was suspicious, but it never issued a definitive verdict. Not uncommonly, books were stolen. Moreover, unwelcome customers put staffers on edge. Muse asked that she not be left alone at night in the store, which stayed open until 10 p.m. Ralph Featherstone made sure she wasn't alone. He was the store manager. His friends called him Feather. Featherstone was a bright, well-liked former SNCC activist who usually wore a serious face and sometimes overalls. He immersed himself in the bookstore, reading, recommending and building relationships with publishers. Arthur Wang of the publishing company Hill & Wang, one of the few seriously invested in African American literature, personally dropped off books. He and Feather would go out for lunch.

In March 1970, newly married and just hours after locking up at Drum & Spear, Featherstone headed to Bel Air, a Baltimore suburb where one of his friends, former SNCC leader H. Rap Brown (who signed copies of his autobiography at the bookstore), was slated to appear in court. Featherstone never made it. His car exploded. It was a bomb. Feather was dead. Authorities quickly floated the idea that the bomb was of Featherstone's making, that he had been planning to disrupt Brown's trial and had accidentally detonated the device. Others argued that Feather had been assassinated, perhaps mistakenly, with Brown being the real target.

Area high school students called for a walkout to honor the fallen 30-year-old. Drum & Spear covered the funeral costs and kept Feather on the payroll, sending checks to his young widow. On the day of his memorial service, the bookstore remained open; it's what he would have wanted. On the wall, right next to Muhammad Ali and Malcolm X, the staff hung a picture of Feather wearing a polo shirt and lost in thought. The caption read "African Warrior." In response to his death, the booksellers discussed whether they should ban White customers — not that there were many. In fact, staffers assumed that any White person who walked in was FBI.

Meanwhile, the insurance company threatened to cancel the store's policy, fearing that it had become a target. And then, in August, bombs shattered the windows of the Portuguese Embassy and the Rhodesian Information Office. The FBI suspected Drum & Spear of being behind the explosions. Someone had reported seeing a Volkswagen minibus, registered to Richardson, near the scene. An exasperated Cox wrote to Cobb, who was in Africa, with the news: "The white folks . . . seem to be after us."

By March 1974, Drum & Spear was doing about \$100 a day in business, roughly one-quarter of what it once pulled in. Cash was short. Taxes were unpaid. Payments to publishers were overdue. Lawsuits for failure to pay ne-

cessitated more time, energy and money to fend off. They tried cutting costs. The water cooler had to go. They reduced salaries. And the store's buyer took a field trip to learn the art, science and economics of bookselling. It was too late.

What happened to all the customers? By 1974, more than half of the recently established Black studies programs had already vanished. Everyone at the store, from the day-to-day clerks to the founders, sensed a moment passing, a "diminishing fervor and inquisitiveness about Black history." Drum & Spear closed that year, as did Michaux's, a prominent Black bookstore in Harlem. By the early 1980s, in one journalist's estimation, there were only 10 Black bookstores in the entire country.

In the late 1980s and early '90s, the trend reversed. A group of Black booksellers formed a subdivision of the American Booksellers Association. But this boom was also short-lived. Like independents of all varieties, they struggled in the era of Borders and Barnes & Noble, and then in the age of Amazon.

In 2020, a former chief executive of the American Booksellers Association, a former chief executive of Macmillan, Denver native Kwame Spearman and a group of 10 others bought one of the most beloved indies, the Tattered Cover, which had four locations in and around the Colorado city. Because Spearman is Black, the new ownership group called the Tattered Cover the largest Black-owned bookstore in the United States. Black booksellers called it "branding." As the manager of Uncle Bobbie's Coffee & Books in Philadelphia said, a true Black bookstore is "about the community that you serve, it is about your mission statement, it is about the books on your shelf, and it is about the way, frankly, that Black people feel about your business — about the way Black people feel safe."

By that definition, Drum & Spear was the quintessential Black bookstore. But "it was more than a bookstore," in the words of those who built it. It was a home. It was a school. And it was a community.

Though almost all the Black bookstores have since shuttered (Marcus Books in Oakland, Calif., is one notable exception), not all has been lost. In fact, booksellers have never been more determined to promote increasing diversity among their ranks and among the stock along the shelves. Even in nearly all-White Wardensville, W.Va., the local indie WordPlay has an entire section devoted to race and social justice. In D.C., Loyalty bookstore was founded by Hannah Oliver Depp, a Black queer bookseller who previously worked at Politics and Prose. It carries romance in addition to weighty books on racism.

Still, "Black-owned bookstores" aren't the same as "Black bookstores." Loyalty is no Drum & Spear. Nor does it have to be. The recent book-banning episodes make the stakes clear: What we read matters. Books influence our thoughts, our tastes and our politics. And we need bookstores of all types and courageous booksellers from all backgrounds to, as Oliver Depp said when opening Loyalty, "push our communities outside of their comfort zone." In her own way, she carries on the legacy of Drum & Spear, helping us discover just the right book at just the right time.

Evan Friss is the author of "The Bookshop: A History of the American Bookstore," from which this op-ed is adapted. It was published Tuesday.

## OPINION

## The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

## On a hotter planet, cooler heads will prevail

IS IT hot enough? July 22 was the hottest day on Earth ever recorded: 62.89 degrees Fahrenheit. Heat waves are now the deadliest weather-related natural disasters in the United States. The official toll is about 1,200 deaths per year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. And this could undercut the effects of deadly heat by a factor of 10. In 2020, a study detected that the combination of heat and humidity in some parts of the world — including India and Pakistan, two of the most populous countries on Earth — was “nearing or beyond prolonged human physiological tolerance.”

Repeated heat waves should serve as an urgent reminder of the need to curb the use of fossil fuels and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which continue on an upward path, having rebounded from a dip during the coronavirus pandemic that slowed global economic activity. But they should also remind people that slashing emissions is not enough. The Earth would continue to warm even if the world economy abruptly stopped and emissions plummeted to zero. The greenhouse gases already in the atmosphere would continue to trap energy arriving from the sun.

That puts humanity in a tough spot. To slow emissions of carbon dioxide, it must quickly curb

the use of fossil fuels — which remain the world’s most powerful energy source. It must do this while deploying technology to protect itself from deadly weather. This technology requires a lot of energy.

According to the International Energy Agency, energy demand for space cooling has grown more than 150 percent since the year 2000. Still, humanity remains largely unprepared for the heat. Only about 37 percent of the world’s households have some form of air conditioning. That includes about 90 percent of households in the United States, but fewer than 1 in 5 in Europe, which has suffered high death rates from heat waves in recent years. In poorer countries across Africa and Asia, air conditioning is rarer still, and many workers toil outside in industries such as agriculture, directly exposed to the heat.

So far, only some relatively narrow regions of South Asia, the Middle East and the coastal Southwest of North America have experienced heat episodes near the limit of human endurance (considered to be at a wet-bulb temperature of 95 degrees Fahrenheit). But climate change will broaden this map, leaving many of the poorest people in the world desperately scrambling to cool down.

And here lies a challenge that is underemphasized in the conversation about climate change.

Keeping people alive in these regions as the heat intensifies will require using a lot more energy. Barring substantial improvements in energy efficiency and the energy supply, this could lead to substantially higher emissions of carbon dioxide and other, even more powerful greenhouse gases.

Almost 700 million people in Africa live in areas where the average daily temperature exceeds

in the United States amounts to some 4,450 kilowatt-hours per person per year, almost 20 times as much. The average American home equipped with AC will use, on average, 2,315 kilowatt-hours per year just to cool down.

Under a scenario of robust economic development and aggressive energy access, the IEA forecasts that by 2040 residential cooling in Africa will consume at least 111 terawatt-hours and as much as 223 terawatt-hours, some 20 times demand in 2018.

This is feasible, according to the IEA: Africa can vastly expand its access to energy while barely adding to its carbon footprint by cutting back on burning biomass — mostly wood — and replacing it with oil, gas and renewables. This and efficiency gains from fuel economy standards, better building codes and improved standards for appliances would allow the African economy to grow fourfold by 2040, while energy demand increased only 50 percent. If, that is, governments choose wise policies.

The rapidly intensifying heat burden should leave little doubt about the nature of the challenge posed by climate change: The goal is not to make energy cleaner and use as little as possible. In many parts of the world, adapting to the changing climate will demand using lots more energy just to stay alive.

*And beating the heat  
is going to require  
using a lot more energy.*

77 degrees Fahrenheit, according to the IEA. Only about 84 million enjoy air conditioning. The agency expects energy demand for fans and air conditioning in Africa to quadruple over this decade. Meanwhile, 600 million people in Africa — some 40 percent of the population — lack access to electricity altogether. Adding everything up, residential electricity use in Africa comes in at barely 230 kilowatt-hours per person per year, on average. By contrast, residential electricity consumption

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## What can food tell us about ‘home’?

Post Opinions columnist Jason Rezaian knows from personal experience how important food is to immigrants: Restaurant work was his father’s first foothold in the American economy. This summer, he profiled the entrepreneurs behind D.C.-area restaurants Z&Z, Elsa Ethiopian Kitchen, Fahrenheit Asian, MezeHub and La Tingeria, exploring the flavors and traditions they are interpreting for new audiences. We asked Post readers to share dishes and food memories of their own.

## Food as a connection to my heritage

I was born in the United States, but my father immigrated from the Basque Country in Spain where he worked as a shepherd. My mother was born here, but her mother was from Zacatecas, Mexico. My abuelita made everything from scratch. For me, her warm, slightly thick flour tortillas with just a little butter on them immediately take me back to her kitchen.

My father made delicious lamb, flavoring it only with lots of garlic and olive oil. It was fragrant, a bit gamey and delicious.

**Dolores Duke, Quartz Hill, Calif.**

Eight generations of my ancestors helped create Quebec. Before that, my 10th-generation ancestor made barrels of cognac in France in the late 1500s.

A high point of my Christmas holidays in Rhode Island was always my mother’s tourtière — a traditional part of the Christmas réveillon and New Year’s Eve festivities in Quebec. It is a sort of meat pâté pie with the distinctive flavor and aroma of cinnamon, cloves and ketchup! (Yes, ketchup, the unlikely but marvelously appropriate condiment.)

Especially from the late 1800s onward, Quebec emigrants (including my grandparents) moved to New England. They brought tourtière with them.

Tourtière remains a popular dish year-round in Montreal and the rest of Canada. Today, my wife, who was brought up in France, adds her own touch to my mother’s recipe. Her ground-pork tourtières are now one of the most coveted Christmas presents for our relatives and friends.

**Joel Garreau, Warrenton, Va.**

My grandparents on my mother’s side were immigrants from Greece. They came to the United States with almost nothing and, through hard work and perseverance, opened up a Greek diner in Brookings, S.D., called Mike’s Eat Shoppe.

As a child, I loved sitting on a stool in the kitchen and helping cook. The smell of dill, kalamata olives, olive oil and feta always takes me right back to my childhood and those beautiful memories. They’ve long since passed, but I’ve continued their legacy by cooking Greek food and sharing it with family and friends. My way of showing love has always been through cooking.

**Stephanie Harstad, Denver**

## Tastes from around the world

I have visited the West Bank twice, and the flavors of the food, combined with the warm hospitality of those providing it, made for unforgettable experiences. I grew up in Georgia and thought Southern hospitality was the gold standard. That was before I stayed in Palestinian homes where, in normal times, ingredients fresh from the land that they have loved and cultivated for millennia are served with pride and generosity. Jewish friends visiting in peace have received the same welcome. When this war ends, I hope there will still be Palestinian farms and families for Americans to visit in this rich, multiethnic region of the Middle East.

**Susanne Hoder, Punta Gorda, Fla.**

Once had the friendliest service from a young man in a coffee shop in Michigan who asked whether I was familiar with Turkish coffees. I was not, so I tried one. After that, I keep thinking of the coffee and the shop’s charm. That experience led me to an incredible Palestinian bakery in Durham, N.C. This

delicious and new food is a delight to me and could be the key toward a gentler approach to connecting with strangers.

**Mary Gratch, Chapel Hill, N.C.**

When we were in Lebanon in 2004, we bought about 2 kilos of zatah from a roadside market. They triple wrapped it for us because they knew we were going to take it back to California. I carried it in my suitcase as we traveled through Syria and Jordan.

We eventually made it back to San Francisco a few weeks later, where a customs inspector asked whether we had anything in our suitcases to declare. I said no, but he said go ahead and open them anyway, so I did.

There were my dense bundles of chopped herbs, wrapped as if to fool a sniffer dog. He looked at me as I laughed; I had completely forgotten about them. I explained what it was, and he said, “Okay, whatever,” and waved me through.

Good ol’ San Francisco.

**Bern Smith, Cleveland Park**

## Home sweet home

Growing up in the inner city of Buffalo in the 1970s and ‘80s, I was surrounded by several family-owned Polish American grocery stores and restaurants. The tiny stores were just the front rooms of these people’s houses. A few of the proprietors were butchers and sausage-makers. They would make smoked kielbasa and fresh kielbasa with majeranek, the herb better known to most Americans as marjoram. They were oh-so-

delicious with a strong flavor of garlic. Just so moist and savory.

Every family I knew made giant batches of homemade pierogi at a time (several dozen in a batch) with sauerkraut, onion and mushroom filling; or mashed potato filling; or farmers’ cheese filling. The outside was a homemade pasta-type dough made with flour, egg and salt. All so delicious, first boiled and then fried in browned butter. My dad would eat czernina (duck blood soup) when he could get the ingredients. One of my cousin’s daughters still eats it. She’s the only one in the younger generation who will even try it anymore, as far as I know.

**Sue Gardner, Lincoln, Neb.**

My strongest childhood food memory is of my grandmother cooking over a stove, making stuffed cabbage, potato soup, chicken soup with matzoh balls, brisket, zimmes, eggs and onions. Basically, Jewish soul food.

**Robert Zakin, Washington**

Growing up in Manhattan, sauerkraut takes me right back to New York City, either to a hot dog stand near Central Park or to a Yorkville restaurant.

In my childhood, it would have to be gherkins. My mom used to make me deviled ham and gherkin sandwiches for school. I never understood relish as a condiment. Just use gherkins!

**Monique Gaylor, Boydton, Va.**

Four generations of rice pudding: rice boiled in whole milk and sugar with beaten eggs and vanilla

## ANN TELNAES

## The same old Trump gaslighting



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Four generations of rice pudding: rice boiled in whole milk and sugar with beaten eggs and vanilla

added at the end. When someone was sick or sad or there was milk that needed to be used up, it would appear. I’ve tinkered with the recipe a bit. I’ve used Arborio rice and brown sugar instead of white. The texture and taste instantly take me back to being 5 or 6 years old at my grandmother’s table with my grandfather enthusiastically sprinkling more sugar on top of my bowl.

Now, if only I could convince my husband and children that it isn’t a disgusting excuse for dessert.

**Debbie Robinson, Winnipeg, Manitoba**

Puffy Sicilian bread or pizza, salty peanut butter with chocolate, and the scent of meat and onions frying together in a pan.

**Lynn Tramonte, Cleveland Heights, Ohio**

## Food we’d rather forget

To this day, I cannot shake two traumatic food memories from my childhood, both made by my late grandmother. The first being her preparation of what she called “throat” for Shabbat, which were hand-sewn intestines filled with pure fat. The second was when she would buy a live carp, keep it in a water-filled tub for a day or two and then butcher it in front of my eyes. I’ll never forget that.

**Noa Shaindinger, Worcester, Mass.**

## The smell of the Pacific Northwest

The aroma of coffee brewing takes me back to my childhood. Mom had that old percolator going nonstop! Growing up near Puget Sound, the stinky smell of the low tide brings me home again. Whether we were digging for clams or visiting the Seattle waterfront, it was a scent I loved back then and still love now.

**Dana Toland, Seattle**

## Southern comfort

Fried catfish, country ham with red-eye gravy, homemade biscuits with butter, honey or molasses, and homemade ice cream.

**Linda Rizzuto, Jackson, Tenn.**

## Flavors that heal

We returned to Beirut from different places in the world that Thanksgiving Day, not to celebrate Thanksgiving, but to bury our mother.

We were silent as we got to the house from church without her. Our sister silently warmed up the leftover “mehshi,” the last dinner our mother made. “Mehshi” in Arabic means stuffed, and that day, it was mehshi zucchini: zucchini cored and stuffed with rice and meat. We ate her last meal in deafening silence, not knowing then the taste of that mehshi would linger forever in our hearts.

**Aida Haddad, Arlington**

## CORRECTION

Due to an editing error, Marc Thiessen’s Aug. 2 op-ed, “Biden broke his promise of justice for Kabul attack,” incorrectly stated why Ismail Haniyeh was in Tehran when he was killed. He was there for the inauguration of the country’s new president.

## Guest opinion submissions

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## Letter submissions

Letters can be sent to [letters@washpost.com](mailto:letters@washpost.com). Submissions must be exclusive to The Post and should include the writer’s address and day and evening telephone numbers. Letters are subject to editing and abridgment. Please do not send letters as attachments. Because of the volume of material we receive, we are unable to acknowledge submissions; writers whose letters are under consideration for publication will be contacted.

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## OPINION



MICHAEL CONROY/POOL VIA REUTERS

Nikola Jokic of Serbia in action against the U.S. men's basketball team in an Olympics semifinal game on Thursday in Paris.

## A master class in losing

BY WILL LEITCH

You play, as philosopher-football coach Herman Edwards once memorably declared, to win the game. But the slammed door of certainty that's up there on the scoreboard has a tendency to close us off from what can be an even more lasting, and resonant, character in sports: the noble, spartan loser. To face insurmountable odds and be not just valiant and resilient but also come *this close* to winning can etch your story in granite almost as powerfully as if you had won.

On Thursday in an Olympic men's basketball semifinal, Nikola Jokic, the three-time MVP of the National Basketball Association and the unlikeliest person ever to hold the title of best basketball player in the world (Jokic looks like the second henchman killed in a John Wick movie, one that doesn't even get a line of dialogue before getting kicked off a building), faced, alongside his Serbian countrymen, the most formidable opponent imaginable: Team USA, perhaps the greatest collection of talent in Olympic history. The Americans had breezed through every game leading up to the semis behind their otherworldly inner-circle quartet, LeBron James, Stephen Curry, Kevin Durant and Joel Embiid, and they were highly favored to do so again Thursday. Besides Jokic, the Serbian team had only three other NBA players, with most of the rest drawn from the Serbian league the KLS. Jokic was not exactly a superstar surrounded by rec leaguers who sneaked smokes underneath the bleachers after each timeout. But you can be forgiven, watching the game, if you felt that way.

Yet for three quarters, Jokic did the unimaginable. He turned that motley crew of balding welders into a unit that dominated a group of legends. Team USA was on its heels from the get-go, with Jokic — whose ability to see the court from all angles is so unparalleled that it can feel supernatural — consistently finding teammates for wide-open three-pointers despite the American behemoths flying at them from all angles. Jokic's mastery was never more obvious, his uncanny knack

for locating little crevices in defenses, the way he uses his deceptively lithe and graceful frame to create just the space he needs. After three quarters, Serbia led the United States, 76-63, and looked well on its way to the upset of the century.

Then, in the fourth quarter, the legends roared to life, with James, Durant, Curry and Embiid providing a blitzkrieg of brilliance that was so glorious to watch it made you feel as if you were levitating off your couch. With Serbia up 11 points and 7:30 left, the United States made 10 consecutive shots in a collective display of dominance. Jokic could not withstand the onslaught. No Earthling could have.

And so, in the end, Team USA prevailed, advancing to the gold medal game Saturday and banishing Jokic and the Serbians to play for the bronze. But Jokic somehow came away looking more heroic than if he had won. His brief status as underdog — certainly a rare role for any Best Player on the Planet — made him more human: By nearly pulling off the magical, his near miss made him relatable. And somehow even more legendary.

And I wonder whether we will remember him best this way. Some of our most lasting memories of sports revolve around noble losers. Ask Rocky Balboa. In "Rocky" — which many consider the greatest sports movie of all time, about the greatest sports underdog — the good guy loses. The ending of that movie wouldn't work if Rocky had beaten Apollo Creed. It would feel too clichéd, too unbelievable, too *much*. Losing, after putting up such a great fight, makes his story more powerful. No one loves Rocky less because he lost. We love him more for how close he came.

The closeness, in fact, is what makes such stories immortal. One of the best moments in NCAA basketball tournament history came in 2010 when coach Brad Stevens and Butler University — the most unlikely of national championship game participants — fought mighty Duke tooth and nail until, in the last seconds, Gordon Hayward launched a half-court shot that *just* missed. Had that shot gone in (and it was *so close*) it would have been the most stunning moment in

college basketball history. But Butler lost no glory in the miss. The miss underlined the fact that sports are real, not fairy tales. Not every Cinderella story ends with the foot sliding into the slipper.

How about the No. 16-seeded Princeton team that almost beat Alonzo Mourning and Georgetown in 1989? Or Tennessee Titans quarterback Steve McNair almost single-handedly fighting back "the Greatest Show on Turf" St. Louis Rams in Super Bowl XXXIV, only to watch Kevin Dyson fall inches short at the goal line? The closest corollary to Jokic's performance might be when Wilt Chamberlain failed to push Kansas to victory in the 1957 college basketball championship against North Carolina in triple overtime, in a game where, by the end, Chamberlain had been punched in the stomach and bashed in the knee by a North Carolina cheerleader's megaphone. (Really.) He was later named that Final Four's most outstanding player.

But while the closeness is what sticks in the throat, it's the grandeur of the doomed effort that most stirs. One of my favorite NBA finals games was in 2001 when Allen Iverson and his undermanned 76ers faced off against the Lakers of Kobe Bryant and Shaquille O'Neal, a team no one could touch. Iverson, all by his undersized self, somehow got his Sixers a Game 1 road victory, scoring 48 points and displaying a heart three times his size. The Lakers then breezed to wins in the next four games and captured the title. But the only game anyone remembers is that Game 1.

I'm not sure Jokic will be quite *that* fortunate: To see James, Curry, Durant and Embiid in full flower was the stuff of instant legend. But his effort in leading the underdog Serbs was glorious, a lone superstar standing bravely athwart an unstoppable force. Sure, he didn't beat Apollo Creed. But he's the one we rushed to congratulate anyway. There is nobility in losing. There is sometimes more valor in having fought the good fight.

Will Leitch is the author of the novels "How Lucky" and "The Time Has Come," a contributing editor at New York magazine and founder of the former sports website Deadspin. He also writes a free weekly newsletter.

GEORGE F. WILL

## A market hiccup with a message

Which came first, this week's volatility in equities markets, or volatility in the minds of people who think government has the duty and competence to fine-tune those markets? Whatever the answer, the more pressing question is: How high will be the cost of interest rates, having been too low for too long? Events might be teaching a tutorial on the steep price of cheap money. Call this Thomas Hoenig's vindication.

Such money has been intermittent for decades: The real (inflation-adjusted) federal funds rate was *negative* about 40 percent of the time in the 1970s and in the first decade of this century. One purpose of the low rates was to send a flood of money into the increasingly frothy stock market in search of higher returns.

This would, the thinking was, produce a "wealth effect," making a fortunate minority feel even more flush, and more inclined to increase its consuming and investing, with benefits for all.

For 20 years, from 1991 to 2011, Hoenig, an Iowa native, was president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, in which role he said: Interest rates are the prices of money, so, "Tell me one product, one service, that trades well at a price of zero." By "trades well" he meant "is put to efficient use."

Today, Hoenig, who is now with George Mason University's Mercatus Center, notes this: The Fed's balance sheet of government and government-guaranteed assets, by which it nudges down interest rates, grew from \$900 billion in 2007 to nearly \$9 trillion in March 2022. Since 2010, after the Great Recession of 2008, whenever the Fed has tried to "normalize its balance sheet and interest rates, the market has become unstable."

Last week's events, Hoenig suggests, "began last fall" when the Fed "signaled" that rates "would soon be lowered," a signal it has repeated. "It slowed its planned reduction of its balance sheet, which remains above \$7 trillion." The question now, Hoenig says, is will the Fed properly allow rates to come down only as inflation falls to the Fed's 2 percent target, or will it aggressively try to fend off unwanted, but necessary, corrections — necessary for "better long-run outcomes?"

A disappointing report, on the festive Friday, on just one month of hiring seems to have triggered Monday's stock sell-off. This ignited worried chatter about whether the Fed should have cut rates the week before, or might have to do so as an "emergency" measure before its scheduled meeting next month.

This is not what panicky markets need: yet another government entity declaring yet another emergency to justify violating a prudential maxim: "Don't just do something, stand there."

In election years, or in years before such (these are the only kinds of years there are), the Fed is in an awkward position of its own making. In 2010, Fed Chair Ben Bernanke spoke of the Fed's tasks of "economic management" and "economic engineering." Fed chairs before and since have seemed to embrace similar thinking. Bernanke, said Hoenig at the time, was speaking "the language of a central planner." Such planning is a political project — attempting to shape society's allocation of wealth and opportunity. Such talk guarantees that any action the Fed takes, or does not take, will be skeptically examined for political motives or impacts.

Last year, the government went into a swivet when the nation's 17th-largest bank, Silicon Valley Bank, made some bad bets on interest rates and faced possible failure. So, what is *not* "too big to fail"? Perhaps the biggest "systemic risk" is the propensity to discern such risk hither and yon.

Accurately reporting the over-cafeinated response in financial and other circles to Monday's market events, the lead story in Tuesday's Post began: "U.S. stock markets fell sharply Monday, with two major indexes racking up their worst day of trading in almost two years." So, to find a comparable earthquake we must peer through the mists of history all the way back to ... 2022.

A year before this week's market blip, on the first Monday of August 2023, the Dow Jones Industrial Average closed at 35,473.13. This was 3,230 points (8.3 percent) *below* last Monday's close of 38,703.27.

When experiencing unsettling turbulence, some people pray, "Hail Mary, full of grace," etc. When markets have erratic episodes, Americans should say to themselves (and their government), "Markets go up, markets go down, get over it."

KATHLEEN PARKER

## News flash: Kamala Harris is not a remake of Barack Obama

Even the usually stone-faced David Axelrod couldn't suppress his enthusiasm at the first rally of the Democratic presidential ticket on Tuesday, but he was downright Rushmore-ian compared with other giddy commentators on CNN's panel.

I beg to differ that Vice President Kamala Harris is the second coming of Barack Obama, though that is what her campaign would like you to think. And whether her new running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, is the folksiest "normy," as one commentator put it, White guy in the Midwest, news anchors ought to be able to resist the tug of Harris mania.

Poor Joe Biden, who, we should note, is still the president of the United States. What must he be thinking as Kamala-palooza takes off before the dust has settled on his shuffle off to Delaware — or wherever Nancy Pelosi has stashed him? Maybe he's in the Obamas' basement, from which the former president once joked he wouldn't mind running the country via a frontman or woman wearing an earpiece as a third-term president. Will Obama be dictating terms to a President Harris, whom he once complimented as "the best-looking attorney general in the country?"

The feminist guard, ever fluid in its perceived effrontery, tsk-tsked that remark, but Obama was merely saying what was obviously true. Of course, he had to apologize. Also true: Without her beauty, Harris might be joining Biden in retirement. All you have to do is imagine her spoken words coming from a less-attractive package. Or put her on radio.

I'm treading on soggy turf here, and not just because Tropical Storm Debby has dumped a couple of lakes in my yard. Speaking about a person's physical appearance today, especially a woman's, is verboten. "Telegenic" is the only acceptable term, as though people can't extrapolate the meaning. Why not be bold — and honest — as Wall Street Journal columnist Peggy Noonan was in a recent column? A bad picture can't be taken of Harris. She's gorgeous. There.

She's also a Big Government liberal, as her childhood friend Lateefah Simon described her during a recent NPR interview. Simon recalled Harris telling her, as she handed Simon a professional suit to wear to work: "We lift as we climb. I sent you home so you understood that this is big government, and government is not the enemy, it is the

prize."

Big Government, which Republicans since Ronald Reagan have viewed as the enemy (except when they're running it), isn't Harris's best selling point when the country is facing a likely recession, and a vast swath (70 percent) of Americans can barely pay their bills. Recent polling and election history tell us that voters usually turn to Republicans when the economy is on the line.

Walz boasts that Democrats, unlike Republicans, "don't have the Ten Commandments posted in our classrooms, but we have free breakfast and lunch." Which is to say Walz might be to the left of Harris and is one of the reasons Trump said "I could not be more thrilled" when Walz became Harris's pick as running mate. But Walz will "unleash HELL ON EARTH," as Trump also said (his emphasis). I didn't realize vice presidents were so powerful.

The man whose assaults on democracy (and women) are too numerous to mention was referring to Walz's expansion of state services to undocumented Minnesotans, including drivers' licenses for all, access to the state's publicly funded health insurance program for low-income residents, and in-state tuition for low-income students, including the undocumented. Minnesota has an estimated 81,000 undocumented residents. I suspect that if Trump prevails in November, he'll be shipping a few thousand (or million) more to Walz's backyard.

These observations shouldn't be construed as an endorsement of Trump, who remains as Trumpy as ever, despite his near-death experience at the hands of a would-be assassin. Nor of his running mate, Sen. JD Vance of Ohio, erstwhile hillbilly/Yale law grad/hedge funder and provocateur, who, among his several foot-in-mouth feats, let the cat ladies out of the bag. As unforced errors go, this one surely has nine lives.

While Vance promises to "mop the floor" with Walz, Trump doesn't exactly burn up the debate stage — unless, of course, his opponent is cognitively impaired. When trying to make a point, as in a recent Fox News interview, Trump circles the barn so many times, I can collect eggs from the henhouse and water the horses before he gets to it. A debate between him and Harris would require not

only a fact-checker but a sous chef adept at deconstructing word salads.

As for his recent meltdown, shoving insults into his musket and firing off invectives at Harris and Walz, Trump merely proved that he can't control his childish impulses and wouldn't recognize the high ground if he walked on stilts. At 78, he's apparently not intellectually agile enough to recognize that things aren't what they used to be.

I don't know about you, but I feel embarrassed, sad and a little scared. As New York magazine heralds "Kamalot" on its cover, The Movement is being sold as Obama 2008. The giddiness I mentioned earlier has all the markings of a run on tulips. Harris and Walz, meanwhile, are calling themselves "joyful warriors," waging a war of smiles and killing it with kindness.

It's smart strategy juxtaposed against the unsmiling, petulant Trump, but that's all it is. Strategy isn't policy and, except for Harris's radiant smile, 2024 is nothing like 2008. Obama was more than just a pretty face. He brought a keen intellect to the arena and remains the most eloquent, effective orator of our time. Harris remains the person she has been for the past 3½ years: a sometimes bumbling beauty with a stride that conveys confidence if not precisely competence.

Twenty years ago, at the Democratic National Convention in Boston, Barack Obama, then merely a state senator from Illinois, stepped out onto the stage, a lanky vision of grace and beauty, and mesmerized the crowd with his message: "There is not a liberal America, and a conservative America. There is the United States of America. There is not a Black America, and a White America, a Latino America, an Asian America. There is the United States of America."

Spellbound as anyone else, I elbowed fellow journalist Carl Cannon and said, "We've just heard the first Black president of the United States."

I've listened to Harris as often as the Biden administration would allow her to speak, which hasn't been often, and never once did I feel compelled to predict her certain ascension to the presidency. No matter how many times her campaign and its surrogates in the media try to portray her as such, Kamala is no Barack. And Trump is still Trump. Good luck, America.

The Washington Post | LIVE

# Upcoming Programs



MON. AUG. 12 AT 1:30 P.M.

## WORLD STAGE: A CONVERSATION WITH ROGER D. CARSTENS

Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs

The special presidential envoy for hostage affairs discusses the recent historic prisoner swap and his work to end the practice of hostage-taking around the world.



WED. AUG. 14 AT 12:00 P.M.

## PRESS FREEDOM: A CONVERSATION WITH VLADIMIR KARA-MURZA

Contributing Columnist, The Washington Post

The Pulitzer Prize-winning Russian writer and Washington Post contributing columnist shares his compelling story of two years in a Russian prison and recent historic release.



THURS. AUG. 15 AT 12:00 P.M.

## STYLE LIVE

Moon Unit Zappa, Actor & Author, "Earth to Moon"

Zappa discusses her new memoir about finding her creative path, coming of age in Hollywood and her legendary father's musical legacy.



FRI. AUG. 16 AT 9:00 A.M.

## SUBSCRIBER EXCLUSIVE: FIRST LOOK

The Post's Jonathan Capehart, E.J. Dionne and Megan McArdle

Washington Post Live's "First Look" offers a smart, inside take on the day's politics. Jonathan Capehart hosts a reporter debrief followed by a roundtable discussion with Washington Post columnists.



WEDNESDAY, AUG. 21

## DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION

Rep. James E. Clyburn (D-S.C.)

Clyburn joins from the Democratic National Convention in Chicago to talk about the Harris-Walz 2024 campaign strategy, the Black vote and the prospects for Democrats regaining control of the House of Representatives.

# Next Month

## This is Climate Summit: The Global Stakes



**Kristalina Georgieva**  
Managing Director,  
International Monetary Fund



**Jennifer Morgan**  
State Secretary & Special  
Envoy for International  
Climate Action for Germany



**Tina Stege**  
Climate Envoy for  
the Marshall Islands



**Tim Latimer**  
CEO & Co-Founder,  
Fervo Energy



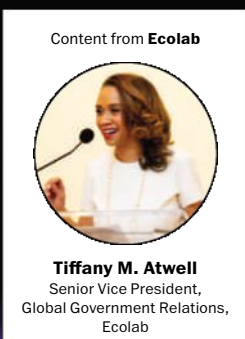
**Kimberly Budil**  
Laboratory Director,  
Lawrence Livermore  
National Laboratory



**Susana Muhamad**  
Minister, Environment &  
Sustainable Development  
of Colombia



**James Balog**  
Photographer & Founder,  
Earth Vision Institute



**Tiffany M. Atwell**  
Senior Vice President,  
Global Government Relations,  
Ecolab

Monday, Sept. 23

As world leaders gather for the United Nations General Assembly, we explore the course of climate change across all seven continents, the lessons for humanity and the solutions for new pathways.

To register for program updates, visit [wapo.st/climatesept23](https://wapo.st/climatesept23)

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# BOOK WORLD



ILLUSTRATION BY JESS SUTTNER FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

## WHAT IS A CHURCH CALLED TO DO?

‘Circle of Hope’ shows how clashes over the answer tore one faith community apart

BY AYANA MATHIS

**C**ircle of Hope was a little church that would. Founded in Philadelphia in 1996, 700 members strong at its peak, Circle was a “beloved community” built on salvation through Christ and the radical mutuality of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. The Pulitzer Prize-winning author Eliza Griswold first encountered members of Circle of Hope in Philadelphia in 2019, “half a dozen white men and women huddled together on the curb in thrift-store chic,” their “fresh faces and starry eyes” striking in a neighborhood ravaged by the opioid crisis. “A church,” Griswold thought. Later that year, she asked Circle’s four pastors, Ben White (a son of founders Gwen and Rod White), Julie Hoke, Jonny Rashid and Rachel Sensenig, if she could embed herself with them as a reporter. I get the sense that Griswold, a self-identified “pastor’s kid” — her father, Frank Griswold III, was the presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church from

1998 to 2006 — began this enterprise with deep respect, sincere curiosity and high hopes. But over four years of reporting, she witnessed Circle’s sundering, its fellowship torn apart by racial strife, power plays, gender issues and profound disagreement over a fundamental question: What is a church called to do in contemporary America?

Long before Gwen and Rod White founded Circle of Hope in Philadelphia, they were California evangelicals who established a Jesus-centered commune in the 1970s. At that time, evangelicals included a much broader swath of Christians: the ultra-conservative, yes, but also Jimmy Carter. And at one far end of the spectrum, Rod and Gwen’s folks, the Jesus People, or “Jesus freaks” — “born again” young people, often recently converted counterculture types, who pledged to follow Christ and organize their lives around the egalitarian principles of

SEE CHURCH ON B7

## FICTION

ALLA DREYFUSER  
THE WASHINGTON POST

Ron Charles

Because the violent confrontation between federal agents and the Branch Davidians had captured the nation's attention for weeks, when the finale came, Americans watched the conflagration live on television: David Koresh's compound near Waco, Tex., burned to the ground on April 19, 1993, with dozens of cult members and children inside.

Over the past three decades, the Waco siege has fueled government investigations, books, films, songs and, most ominously, rallying cries against federal authority. In the furnace of right-wing paranoia, Koresh and his band of apocalyptic zealots have been purified and beautified. Indeed, if you assumed that patch of scorched Texas prairie had cooled by now, remember that Donald Trump held his first 2024 campaign rally in Waco. "I am your justice," the MAGA leader promised his followers. "I am your retribution."

For a nation founded by religious outsiders and devoted to religious freedom, the questions raised by Waco retain the sharp edges of a shattered stained-glass window. If citizens' most egregious actions can be justified by an appeal to spiritual revelation, what sort of civil society is possible? And yet, if actions inspired by spiritual revelation must conform to civil law, what sort of religious liberty do citizens really have?

One generation's criminal is another generation's saint. The great unresolved tension between divine and earthly authority persists; we're still wrestling with Pilate's question, "What is truth?"

In a brief afterword to his new novel, Bret Anthony Johnston claims, "'We Burn Daylight' is not about David Koresh." But the fact that his plot is set around a millenarian compound besieged by federal agents in Waco is no less coincidental than Trump's decision to rally there. Although people have different motives for circling this mass grave, they all seek to warm their hands in that inferno.

Johnston, though, comes bearing an additional, even older tragedy. "We Burn Daylight" reimagines the conflict between the government and the Branch Davidians as a modern-day echo of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet." His star-crossed lovers are a pair of teenagers whose ardor is doomed by an

## Two stories of woe come together in Waco

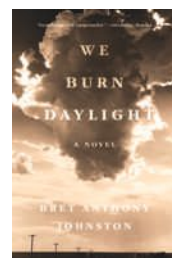
animosity far beyond their control. Roy is a lonely 14-year-old boy, the younger son of the McLennan County sheriff. Jaye is the angry daughter of a devoted member of the religious group holed up in Waco. In the Bard's words, "Here's much to do with hate, but more with love."

Johnston, a native of Texas, captures this area with an appreciation for the rhythms and courtesies of rural life — neighbors who know who drinks too much and who keeps their fences mended. Church is the center of everyone's week.

The novel comes to us in chapters narrated, alternately, by Roy and Jaye. She's essentially a captive, acting out any way she can to irritate her mother and repel the cult's leader. Roy, a high school freshman, occupies a strangely bifurcated position: His father's police work gives him access to the town's ills that he's not supposed to know. No wonder he's become a secret locksmith. "I could open car doors with wire hangers, school lockers with a pocketknife, and almost anything else," he says. But can he unlock the chambers of his own heart?

Roy is struggling to keep his equilibrium in a family pulled apart by stress. His older brother is serving in Iraq, which makes his parents pine for and dread every phone call. His mother is a hospice nurse who often works nights. And his father is grinding himself down trying to maintain a precarious truce with a gang of religious gun nuts.

Early in the novel, while tagging along with his dad, Roy spots Jaye at a gun show — hardly the Capulets' costume party but typical of how Johnston winks at Shakespeare's play. Jaye is wandering around the floor wearing a gas mask as an ironic fashion statement. She's bold and daring; Roy is immediately intimidated and entranced. Later, alone, she picks him up in a truck she's too young to drive.



### WE BURN DAYLIGHT

By Bret Anthony Johnston  
Random House.  
332 pp. \$29

"I don't even know your name," Roy says. "Who cares about names?" Jaye asks. "Would you not have gotten in the truck if my name were Baby Snot?"

Okay, maybe this doesn't smell as sweet as Shakespeare's immortal poetry, but there's no denying the sparks of humor ignited by these allusions. (Roy and Jaye's first kiss takes place in a particularly clever revision.) And, as in "Romeo and Juliet," the story slips on sweat and blood from comedy to tragedy. While Roy describes his father's efforts to keep the peace, Jaye grows increasingly disgusted with her mother's devotion to a messianic creep named Perry Cullen whose followers call him the Lamb. Can Roy and Jaye find eternal happiness before the Lamb takes Jaye as one of his many brides or the government liberates them all to kingdom come?

Although Johnston never calls these people Branch Davidians, and Perry isn't David Koresh, there's no ambiguity about where this crisis is headed, even for readers too young to recall the shocking images of Waco in 1993. Given the way the novel is structured, the group's fiery end is both foreshadowed and remembered throughout. Intercalary chapters designed to look like excerpts from a modern-day podcast present interviews with surviving cult members and government officials. That could reduce the novel to a pale reenactment, but telling the story from the point of view of two love-struck teens on opposite sides of the compound's walls injects a sharp dose of suspense into a catastrophe we think we know. And once the government's assault begins and America tunes in to this "morbid festival," tear gas wafts over the pages, and the novel shakes with terror.

What's disappointing, though, is Johnston's effort to have it both ways — to veil the historical facts while also relying on them as the novel's

ballast. Those podcast snippets, for instance, tease the profound philosophical and political challenges posed by Waco but never arrive at anything more than doleful sighs. Meanwhile, the Lamb remains a lump of dark matter at the center of the novel. He comes off merely as a cocky operator who's memorized phrases from the Book of Revelation, and yet he draws around him people willing to give up their families, their lives. What exactly is his appeal? To comprehend his influence, we crave a stronger sense of his psychological power, an entrance into the mysteries of the charismatic's sway. The same can be said about Johnston's treatment of the government's actions and motives, which remain thinly outlined.

My criticism probably sounds unfair. After all, most of the novel is conveyed by two teenagers who have limited access to the larger context of what's happening. And that defense makes sense if we arrive at Romeo's poisoned body in the Capulets' crypt, but Johnston casts Roy's narration as an act of *remembrance*; the boy's voice is laced with aged reflection. "We were just children," Roy says early in the novel. "Keep that in mind before you judge us."

I'm not judging his teenage actions; I'm judging his adult reticence, which is really Johnston's tendency to retreat into clouds of poetic language. We have every reason to expect more insight from a character who walked in the flames like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

Maybe Johnston is just making an effort to be exceedingly judicious, to call down "a plague on both your houses": a religious egomaniac and an intolerant government. But the novel's concluding flight into a fantastical future feels like another deflection, a final avoidance of the questions raised about the true horrors and potential blessings of religious fanaticism. Regardless of the fiction writer's standard caveat — *It's not history!* — there's something vaguely unseemly about subordinating the deaths of so many real people to the ashen background of a far-fetched romance. Paradoxically, even as "We Burn Daylight" mourns the tragedy of spiritual mania, it relies on the zealot's mindset, insisting we have faith in a glorious deliverance that doesn't ring true.

Ron Charles reviews books and writes the Book Club newsletter at The Washington Post. He is the book critic for "CBS Sunday Morning."

Late summer is upon us — the perfect time to settle in with a good mystery novel. This season there are many new titles to choose from, some by familiar authors like Donna Leon and John Dickson Carr; and others by newer voices like Wanda Morris, Iris Mwanza and Delia Pitts. Each of these novels is transporting in its own way, providing suspense, intrigue and puzzles to solve.

### 'A Refiner's Fire' by Donna Leon

In Leon's 33rd Commissario Guido Brunetti novel, Brunetti must try to save two of his co-workers. One colleague faces a blackmail demand because she walked a teen home in the middle of the night after he was arrested — and then released — for his role in a street fight. The other is being terrorized by a gang leader who lives in his apartment building and threatens to harm him and his beloved collection of centuries-old bronze statues. You don't need to have read the other books in the series to appreciate this deeply layered mystery.

### 'What You Leave Behind' by Wanda M. Morris

Deena Wood's life is a mess. Her beloved mother has died, she's lost her high-powered Atlanta law job, and her marriage has imploded. As a result, she's been forced to move back to Brunswick, Ga., to live, at age 39, with her father and new stepmother. Hoping for a fresh start, Wood finds herself unwittingly embroiled in a

land-grab effort by unscrupulous developers who try to scare her away. Morris's exceptional mystery illuminates a troubling nationwide trend where developers use a legal theory called "heirs' property" to scoop up, at bargain prices, land jointly owned by many family members — by persuading just one owner to sell their share.

### 'The Lions' Den' by Iris Mwanza

It's October 1990, and rookie lawyer Grace Zulu is trying to find justice for her 17-year-old client. Wilbess "Bessy" Mulenga was earning money as a dancer and escort at a gay bar in Lusaka, Zambia, when he was arrested. Zulu finds that the police have beaten him, and when she protests, Zulu is roughed up. Undeterred,

she uses every possible legal strategy to gain Bessy's freedom, unearthing corruption that leads to the highest levels of government. Mwanza, a Zambian American lawyer, addresses issues of queer rights and corrupt politicians in this stellar debut.

### 'Trouble in Queenstown' by Delia Pitts

Evander "Vandy" Myrick, a former cop, is a perfect fit for her new career as a private eye in her hometown of Queenstown, N.J. The job change also is a way to cope with her heartbreak over the accidental death of her 19-year-old daughter. Business is slow until the mayor's nephew, Leo Hannah, asks her to follow his wife, Ivy, to find out if she is having an affair. Myrick

accepts, seeing a chance to make some money and gain politically connected contacts. Soon after she starts the job, however, Ivy is murdered, and things quickly spiral out of control. Hired by Ivy Hannah's grief-stricken father to find the killer, Myrick uncovers a scandal that rocks the city and puts her life in danger.

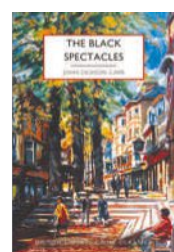
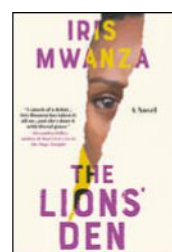
### 'The Black Spectacles' by John Dickson Carr

In this reissue of a 1939 classic whodunnit, Detective Inspector Andrew MacAndrew Elliot is dispatched by his Scotland Yard superior to the town of Sodbury Cross to see if he can dig up any new clues in a case involving the death of a child who was poisoned by chocolates from the local sweet shop. As Elliot arrives in the town, another Sodbury Cross resident, businessman Marcus Chesney, has just been murdered — also by poisoning. What is the link between the two deaths? Elliot calls in Scotland Yard consultant Gideon Fell, renowned for his ability to solve impenetrable cases. Best known for his ingenious locked-room mysteries, Carr offers a different type of sleight-of-hand puzzle in this book, presenting illusion layered on illusion, all cunningly designed to mislead the characters — and readers — until the very end.

Karen MacPherson, the former children's and teen coordinator at the Takoma Park Maryland Library, is a lifelong mystery aficionado.

### MYSTERIES

by Karen MacPherson



## BOOK WORLD

## Years of sex work, and one unexpected love



Becca Rothfeld

In America, land of the pruders and home of the Puritans, every popular portrayal of sex work is essentially the same. In “Pretty Woman” (1990), Julia Roberts plays a prostitute who confesses to a client that she has long harbored dreams of being whisked off by a knight

on a white horse. It’s a trite and sentimental movie — and its right-wing analog, a superficially different but deeply similar effort, is “Sound of Freedom,” a 2023 blockbuster beloved by Trumpian die-hards. In that film, a federal agent goes rogue in hopes of rescuing the figure that remains, for Donald Trump’s base, the archetypal sex worker: the trafficked child. The assumption of both movies is that sex workers are only ever helpless victims in want of male saviors. The writer and sex worker Charlotte Shane defies this dire picture. She is not desperate or downtrodden; she was never kidnapped and sold into sex slavery; and as far as I can tell, she has never longed for the sudden appearance of a white knight. “An Honest Woman” is Shane’s second memoir about her profession, and like her first, “Prostitute Laundry” (2015), it is a corrective to incurious narratives in which sex work is assumed to be nothing but an unrelenting debasement. Shane’s path to the world of escorting was sometimes bumpy, but it was freely chosen.

As Shane explains in the book, she opted for sex work in large part because she craved erotic knowledge. Her approach to sexual experimentation in high school was cool and scientific: Each bout of awkward fumbling in the back of a car with a friend was a data point. (“The situation wasn’t volatile or risky because what would happen was made explicit in advance,” she writes. “I didn’t even take off my clothes.”) Shane’s priority during those exchanges was “information-gathering,” not pleasure, and the sex work she pursued after college was a natural continuation of her informal education.

But she admits that she was also drawn to escorting for less sanguine reasons. Like many young women in her cohort, she longed for male validation, and she set out to earn it by cultivating erotic discipline. As a teenager, she recounts, she “fell in love with boys, really fell in love with them — the fact of them, the phenomenon.” They enthralled her because they were raucous and wild; they “had permission in a way girls didn’t, and therefore access to a bigger, freer world.” Shane envied their power and their confidence; she couldn’t commandeer these qualities for herself, so she settled for trying to attract the boys who monopolized them.

At first, she suffered from the usual adolescent hang-ups: a fear that she was ugly or unlovable, a premonition that she was irredeemably maladroit. Britney Spears, then the reigning emblem of female desirability, was a daunting model for a gangly teen. The tanned and toned pop star “represented a degree of aesthetic perfection and sexual prowess that seemed compulsory yet permanently out of my reach,” Shane writes. In a world where “women’s value” was a function of sex appeal, but in which it was impossible to compete with the likes of Britney, what was a girl to do?

Shane decided to hone her skills, first as a “cam girl,” then as an employee at an unlicensed massage parlor and finally as a self-employed escort. “My sense that I wasn’t sexually appealing could have kept me from sex work, but instead, I think, it drove me to it,” she writes. “I wanted so badly to be proven wrong.”

Many women of Shane’s generation (which is also mine) endured similarly vexed girlhoods under the star of Britney — and many of us survived by adopting methods not dramatically unlike Shane’s. We, too, set out to master the art of heterosexual seduction. Sex work is work in that it is remunerated, but it is also work in that it is laborious. Not all heterosexual women are compensated for their efforts, but we have all toiled to perfect the feminine performance. That is to say, we have all worked at sex.

Like all jobs, escorting has its advantages

AN HONEST WOMAN  
A Memoir of Love and Sex WorkBy Charlotte Shane  
Simon & Schuster.  
175 pp. \$25.99

SAM MILLER

and its drawbacks. Before Shane struck out on her own, she had some inconsiderate bosses, and every so often she was obliged to sit through dates with boring clients. Some men were worse than dull: One of them stalked her, claiming that he could tell she felt trapped in her trade and offering — then demanding — to liberate her, while others pressured her to disclose personal information that she preferred to keep confidential.

But what line of work is free of oafish bosses or selfish (and occasionally sexist) clients? Sex work was not perfect, but it was not appreciably worse than any of the other forms of employment on offer to Shane. Indeed, she reports that “women with straight jobs who started moonlighting as strippers or call girls often left the white-collar world to spend more time at their sex job because it paid more, offered more control over working conditions, and entailed less harassment.”

Of her hundreds of patrons, she remembers “just one man who was saturated with disregard for me in the way anti-sex work activists imagine all clients are, and his attitude was so foreign that trying to recall it now feels like summoning an obscure academic fact as opposed to a personal experience.” The rest of the men who annoyed her were misogynist in a more garden-variety fashion. Their disregard was perhaps no less pernicious, but it was at least more familiar. By the time Shane found herself listening to tedious male laments on the clock, she had already observed men in all walks of life conscripting women to serve as “emotional-support animals.” Some of these women were sex workers; others were “dutiful wives and

girlfriends and subordinates.”

Men could be tiresome and entitled, but they could also be a riot. After one particularly exhilarating night at a bachelor party, Shane felt she had been “welcomed into a zone of masculine joy and fellowship, embraced by the occupants, and made delirious by their exuberance.” For the most part, she reflects, “clients treated us better — exponentially better — than most of the men we [had sex with] for free.”

One man in particular treated her with care and consideration, and much of “An Honest Woman” is an homage to him.

Shane’s memoir begins with recollections of her adolescence, when she was an avid student of desire, and it ends with a moving account of her marriage to a man she loves. In less than 200 pages, the book manages to be part autobiography, part anthropological investigation and part feminist tract — but centrally, it is a eulogy for Roger (not, of course, his real name), who was Shane’s client for nearly a decade.

Roger was not the sort of man who hires sex workers in the movies: He was neither a seedy lecher nor a would-be white knight. Instead, he was an avuncular type trapped in a loveless marriage. Shane describes him as “a nice guy: a prominent lawyer who’d worked pro bono on a significant environmental case.” He wore unassuming jeans and sneakers, and “he was kind, and not snobbish, and unfailingly polite to service staff.”

For nine years, he met Shane regularly while he was on business trips (some of them real, some of them fictitious). She was not in love with him, nor was she physically attracted

to him, but she grew to admire his decency and his sense of humor. He sought not sex but companionship, and he and Shane developed a sweet and steady attachment.

Then, he was diagnosed with incurable brain cancer — and all at once, “An Honest Woman” transforms into a strange and poignant love story. For what was Shane to Roger? Where was she inscribed in the ledger of his life? “I knew him well — maybe I knew more of him than his kids or his wife, or at least I knew him differently, because the version of him I knew was obscured from them and from everyone else,” Shane writes. “But I didn’t have his health history. ... I couldn’t even visit him in the hospital. We’d played prominent roles in each other’s lives for almost a decade, but I couldn’t talk to anyone in his family.”

As a result, “we didn’t get to say goodbye. It’s a wound that will last forever.” Shane only learned that he had passed away when his emails stopped coming; she later found an obituary online. Every week, she walks past a condo where he stayed and peers up at the balcony. “I don’t know what I expect to see, but it would feel wrong not to do it,” she writes.

The biggest tragedy of Shane’s career is not the clichéd one envisioned by squeamish critics of sex work. It is not that she has been devalued or debauched, or that she has become too jaded to love, or that she was routinely exploited. It is only the ordinary yet unbearable calamity of death.

Becca Rothfeld is the nonfiction book critic for The Washington Post and the author of “All Things Are Too Small: Essays in Praise of Excess.”

## The overriding charm of Veto and his tale

BY RON CHARLES

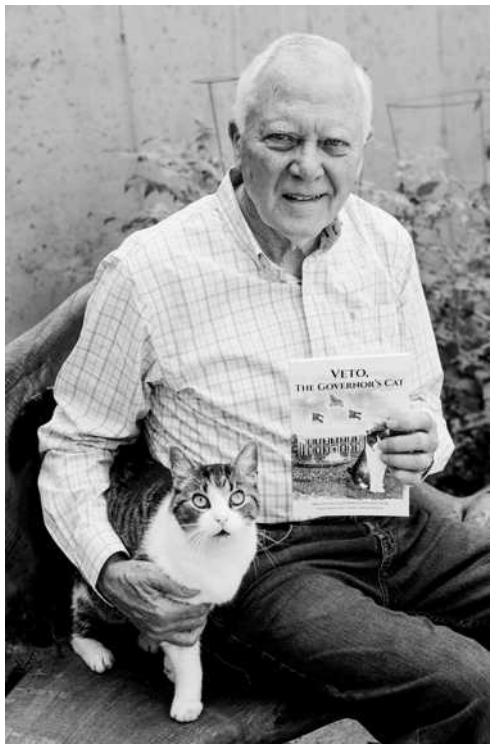
JD Vance’s weird comment about cat ladies has already outlived nine lives. Let’s talk about a cat gentleman instead.

Former Georgia governor Nathan Deal, who will turn 82 this month, has just published his first book. It’s a story for children called “Veto, the Governor’s Cat.” With widely spaced lines of text and sweet illustrations by Cheryl Riner Hodge, it looks like the sort of homespun vanity project that years of disappointment have trained me to cast aside with a sigh.

But something about “Veto” got its claws in me. Once I started reading, I didn’t stop until I finished. Then, suspicious of my enthusiasm, I read the book aloud to my wife. She agreed. The governor has written something particularly charming.

Over six short chapters, a cat describes his early life on a farm. He tries to eat grass like a cow, jump as high as a grasshopper and crow like a chicken. As kittens, he and his brother are taken to the governor’s mansion, where they’re named Veto and Bill. They befriend staff members and enjoy activities around the house. When the governor retires, Veto and Bill move with him to the mountains where new creatures await, including a witty porcine and a Shakespearean opossum.

Former Georgia governor Nathan Deal and Veto with their new children’s book. Veto is the narrator of the refreshingly old-fashioned and apolitical story.



ANDREA HUDSON

I know — it hardly sounds like fireworks, but that’s the point. It feels quaint, old-fashioned — so retro it’s fresh. Deal keeps the plot gentle, his prose simple and concrete. Veto and Bill sport open minds and curious hearts. I was reminded of the Little Bear stories written by Else Holmelund Minarik.

Publishing “Veto” wasn’t an obvious retire-

ment project for this experienced Republican politician. But his wife, Sandra, a teacher and lifelong literacy advocate, asked him to write a book that she could read to schoolchildren. She approved of the story but passed away in 2022.

In a world of ideologically driven children’s books, Deal’s picture book feels slightly antique. His moral truths come on little cat feet — lessons that children can appreciate about the value of patience, hard work and kindness. A chapter about grief sends Bill off “to follow the sunset.”

In one section, the cats decide to befriend a sad gardener named Dan. Before long, Dan’s demeanor improves. “He smiled every time he saw us!” Veto says. “Sometimes, those who are quiet and shy and don’t seem to have any friends can become your best friend with a little love and kindness!”

Deal tells me that Dan is based on a man who was part of a work program for inmates in the state prison system. “He was the most depressed human being I have ever seen,” Deal says. But the cats made him smile for the first time. “They literally saved his life, and he became a totally different person.”

Not that Deal puts all his faith in the power of felines. He tells me that prison reform — particularly improving literacy for incarcerated individuals — is crucial.

“People fail to see the big picture,” he says. “The law-and-order attitude just sweeps aside all of the things that people are trying to do in a progressive way to rehabilitate those who have gotten in trouble, to make sure they don’t get in trouble again.”

Among Republicans, you might expect talk

like that to start a cat fight, but Deal comes from an old breed of the Grand Old Party.

When I ask him about the book-banning craze burning across right-wing states, he sounds deeply concerned. “If you have books that do contain objectionable material, those should be handled carefully, especially in the younger ages,” he says. “But as you and I both know, if you’re going to read classical literature, a lot of that would be banned if you applied the same standards to it. And that would be a real tragedy.”

He goes on to recall meeting an intellectual in China who had barely survived the Cultural Revolution. “I’m not insinuating that the effort to scrutinize literature and books in our libraries and in our schools is anywhere comparable to that,” Deal says, “but it’s an illustration of what you can take to an extreme. And we always have to watch out. Once we start down a path, sometimes it’s very easy to keep going and speed up and never slow down, and you can wind up with these kinds of very unintended consequences.”

Deal now works with a new bipartisan organization called the Democracy Defense Project. It’s trying to strengthen faith in our election system, which the former governor says “has become the focus of conspiracy theories, a lot of hyperbole about how unreliable our system is — and that casts doubt in people’s minds. That is not healthy for our society.”

This is one cool cat who gets it.

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## BOOK WORLD

# It's time to toast the weird, wild and unsettling



Michael Dirda

Once more, the stars are right. On Aug. 15, I'll be flying from Washington to Providence, R.I., to attend NecronomiCon, which runs from that day until Aug. 18. Originally focused on H.P. Lovecraft and his circle, this biannual literary festival now bills itself as "the international convention of weird fiction, art, and academia." I'm not sure if "weird" is meant to modify "academia," though it might be a reference to the — alas, fictional — Miskatonic University in nearby Arkham, Mass.

As usual, there are several tracks of programming, mingling author readings with panels focusing on Edgar Allan Poe, Arthur Machen, Franz Kafka, Leonora Carrington, Angela Carter, Margaret St. Clair, W.H. Pugmire and many others. I'll be on two: "From the Night Land to the Dreamlands: Parallels and Convergences in William Hope Hodgson and H.P. Lovecraft" and "The Cowboy and the New Englander: The Correspondence of Robert E. Howard and H.P. Lovecraft."

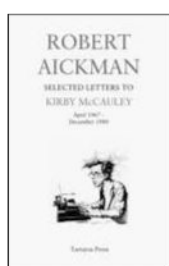
To prepare for Providence, I've recently been reading some newly published, con-appropriate books. First, there's "The Weird Tales Boys," by Stephen Jones (PS Publishing), a compact illustrated survey of the lives, achievement and influence of Lovecraft, Robert E. Howard and Clark Ashton Smith, the big three of the original *Weird Tales* magazine. While there's little discussion of individual works, Jones — a noted editor of contemporary horror fiction — does summarize each writer's aesthetic principles and general outlook on life. For example, Lovecraft wrote that "to me all mankind seems too local and transitory an incident in the cosmos to take at all seriously." He brought that same cosmic viewpoint to his own writing: "When all else fails, I never fail to extract a sarcastic smile from the contemplation of my own empty and egotistical career."

Howard, we learn, drew on his dreams for many of the adventures of Kull, Bran Mak Morn and Conan: "I am never in these dreams of ancient times, a civilized man. Always I am the barbarian, the skinclad, touse-haired, light-eyed wild man armed with a rude ax or sword, fighting the elements and wild beasts." Howard also believed — in the words of a character in "Beyond the Black River" — that "barbarism is the natural state of mankind. Civilization is unnatural. It is a whim of circumstance. And barbarism must always triumph."

As usual, Smith is somewhat shortchanged. His irony-laden fantasies often exude a lush, hothouse decadence, whether they are set on the lost continent of Hyperborea or in far-future Zothique. To sample Smith's prose and poetry, look for "The Dark Eidolon and Other Fantasies," edited by S.T. Joshi (Penguin).

In his monograph "Supernatural Horror in Literature," Lovecraft praises Algernon Blackwood's "The Willows" as probably the greatest of all weird tales. In fact, a strong case could be made for Blackwood as the dominant British writer of supernatural fiction in the first half of the 20th century. He is certainly the most various. This past year, Hippocampus Press began to issue hefty trade paperbacks of "The Collected Short Fiction of Algernon Blackwood," also edited by Joshi. The first two installments, "The Willows and Others" and "The Nemesis of Fire and Others," cover stories published between 1889 and 1910, including the six adventures of the occult investigator John Silence. Future volumes will feature such classics as "The Wendigo," "The Man Whom the Trees Loved" and "A Descent Into Egypt."

Blackwood's best work overlaps with that of M.R. James, the undisputed master of the



EVENING STANDARD/HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

classic ghost story. Few people know James's work more intimately than Robert Lloyd Parry, who impersonates the author in stunning one-man performances of his "ghost stories of an antiquary." Lloyd Parry — who is scheduled to again be onstage at this year's NecronomiCon — has also emerged as a scholar of writers influenced by James. Back in 2020, he assembled "Ghosts of the Chit-Chat" (Swan River Press), featuring eerie tales by some of those present when James read his first story, "Canon Alberic's Scrap-Book," to the Cambridge University club of the title.

That elegant volume is now complemented by the equally elegant "Friends and Spectres," spotlighting work by participants in a Cambridge University debate on the existence of ghosts. James supported the case for the spectral. Following an astute introduction and excellent biographical headnotes, Lloyd Parry reprints two versions of James's "A Night in King's College Chapel," as well as stories by, among others, F. Anstey (best known for the comic classic "Vice Versa," in which a Victorian father and son switch bodies) and Adrian Ross, author of that unsettling novel "The Hole of the Pit."

All the writers of "Friends and Spectres" wrote before World War II. In the decades afterward, Robert Aickman gradually emerged as mid-century England's finest writer of "strange stories." In 2022, R.B. Russell brought out a welcome biography of that enigmatic author, which should now be supplemented by "Robert Aickman: Selected Letters to Kirby McCauley" (Tartarus Press).

Kirby McCauley started off as a young fan of Aickman's writing, but the two men shared many sympathies, convictions and prejudices. Eventually, McCauley, who died in 2014, became a literary superagent, representing not just Aickman but also Stephen King, George R.R. Martin, and host of other horror and science fiction notables. It's a pity that we don't have McCauley's side of this correspondence, since Aickman periodically makes tantalizing statements such as "I entirely agree with what you say about Shirley Jackson." Did the two dislike Jackson or adore her?



EVERETT/SHUTTERSTOCK

We do learn that Aickman admires the novels of Knut Hamsun, the films of Leni Riefenstahl and Ingmar Bergman, the music of Frederick Delius, and the work of Thomas Mann. Mann, he says, "deals with the supernatural better than any other writer I know," and he claims him as a major influence. When McCauley sends him "The Surly Sullen Bell," he rhapsodizes — quite rightly — about the wonderful ghost stories of Russell Kirk, then better known as a political theorist and the author of "The Conservative Mind."

In later pages, many of the letters deal with contracts, reprint rights, gripes about agents and failed movie deals. The young Ridley Scott, no less, hoped to make a film of "The Inner Room" but couldn't assemble the financing. As he grows older, Aickman complains that the noise in his apartment building prevents him from writing, fears the world's descent into a "new barbarism," and hints at "grave misfortunes" and personal unhappiness. Still, on any page of this immensely readable book you will find some memorable pronouncement, whether about the merits of Arthur Wing Pinero's plays or the "quiet sad beauty, difficult

to find elsewhere," of La Rochefoucauld's "Maxims." Of his own art, Aickman declares in his very first letter to McCauley that "ghost stories ... are properly a form of poetry — and therefore, of the first literary importance (the good ones of course)."

It's unlikely that Aickman would have cared for the work of the late Michael Shea. For years, I meant to read him but managed to do so only when the estimable Valancourt Books reprinted his collection "Polypheumus," with a new introduction by Laird Barron. Its very dark highlight is the long story "The Autopsy," a tour de force of visceral shocks orchestrated around two favorite Lovecraftian motifs, alien possession and body horror. So intensely graphic a story wouldn't normally be to my taste, but I can recognize a masterpiece when I encounter one.

I've only dipped into "The Theory of the Weird Tale" (Sarnath Press), in which that industrious scholar Joshi assembles observations about supernatural fiction by its actual practitioners, starting with Horace Walpole in the 18th century. Undertow has just issued a new, not-to-be-missed collection of Canadian ghost stories, "Northern Nights," edited by Michael Kelly; it features chilling work by Richard Gavin, Silvia Moreno-Garcia and Simon Strantzas, among others. For a longer read, there's "Horror Movie," Paul Tremblay's novel about a disturbing 1990s film never shown in its entirety yet now about to receive a reboot. Does that sound like good idea to you? Only one member of the original's cast is still alive, but he remembers what happened.

As we all know from that tiresome T-shirt, there's so little time to read all the books you'd like. True enough, but in the case of the writers and stories mentioned above, you will actually gain a few extra hours: They'll keep you reading way past your bedtime, afraid to switch off the light and go to sleep.

Michael Dirda is a Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist for Book World and the author of the memoir "An Open Book" and of four collections of essays: "Readings," "Bound to Please," "Book by Book" and "Classics for Pleasure."

# A grieving woman and a magpie form a powerful bond

BY ELIZABETH HAND

Catherine Chidgey's new novel — about the relationship between a woman and a bird — reminded me of another work in which a nonhuman protagonist's mother-love propels the plot: Stephen Spielberg's haunting, underrated 2001 film, "A.I."

Chidgey's book is a gorgeous, sublime exploration of the natural world and the powerful, perhaps unbreakable bonds that can exist between its human and nonhuman inhabitants. It is also a domestic tragedy, a nail-biting noir and a sly satire of viral online celebrity — a difficult feat to pull off, but Chidgey, author of several critically acclaimed novels, including most recently "Pet," does it beautifully.

The story centers on Tama, an Australian magpie scooped up by Marnie, the wife of a New Zealand sheep farmer. Marnie's husband, Rob, warns her not to grow attached to the newborn bird.

Still grieving over the miscarriage she suffered a year earlier, Marnie ignores her husband's demands that she release the bird back into the wild. "It's not normal to keep a wild bird inside. It's not kind," he tells her. At first, he seems not unreasonable. Marnie does attempt to release Tama (whose name is derived from the digital Tamagotchi pet), but his magpie family attacks him, and he flies back to his human home, crying



**THE AXEMAN'S CARNIVAL**  
By Catherine Chidgey  
Europa Editions.  
336 pp. \$18, paperback

**In Catherine Chidgey's novel, a woman who had a miscarriage adopts a newborn bird.**



EBONY LAMB

Mar, Mar, Mar, Mar. Even Rob agrees that the bird sounds like a child asking for its mother, and he doesn't put up a fight when Marnie takes in the magpie again.

Marnie doesn't just feed Tama from syringes, letting him perch on her finger "as if it were [his] home." She installs him in the nursery she had prepared for her lost infant, where the bird sleeps in a crib under a blanket with a toy bear after Marnie lovingly tucks him in. She housebreaks him, teaches him to talk, to recognize the reflection in a windowpane not as a rival bird but as Tama. She installs a baby monitor so she can make sure Tama is safe when she's not there, encouraging him to meow so he can use a cat door to go outside to eat worms and insects and mice, as wild magpies do.

Much of the delight of this gorgeously strange novel derives from how delicately and deftly Chidgey balances Tama's avian and human selves. Tama narrates the story in lyrical and deeply sensory, often sensual detail, yet his actual communication with humans consists of phrases and sentences (many quite sophisticated) he's learned by rote, sometimes to hilarious and profane effect. Readers are always aware that Tama is an animal whose experience of the world can be jarringly different from ours: seeing in monocular vision, understanding the complex cries, conversations and social cues of the wild magpies who are hunted and killed by neighboring farmers.

To amuse herself, Marnie starts dressing Tama in handmade outfits. She shares images and footage of Tama online: "Me perched on the edge

of the toilet seat. Me as a DIY rotisserie. ... Me in the bath, underneath the showerhead, wearing a tiny shower cap. ... Me wearing a pirate hat, a top hat, a nurse's hat. Me wearing bunny ears. Me dressed as Batman."

Tama goes viral as, encouraged by her venal sister and tech-savvy brother-in-law, Marnie begins live-streaming his antics. The bird's newfound fame inspires merchandise, including a talking Tama toy that replicates Tama's real voice. Marnie's sudden financial success and independence inflame the depressive, alcoholic Rob as he struggles to maintain the grim acreage that's been in his family for generations, refusing help and suggestions on how to combat the destructive impact of climate change on an unforgiving landscape. His history of violence against his wife is chillingly described by Tama, who witnesses it as a child might.

For all its humor and evocative descriptions of its isolated setting, "The Axeman's Carnival" is a disturbing book. The carnival of the title takes place at an annual agricultural fair. Here, men whose skills and woodlore once allowed them to make a living from the land desperately compete for the coveted golden axe, splitting logs in a frightening display of barely controlled violence. Middle-aged Rob, the longtime champion, finds himself up against a much younger competitor. Elsewhere on the fairgrounds, Marnie and her sister perform a musical routine featuring Tama, an innocent entertainment that the reader knows will incite Rob's rage.

"The Axeman's Carnival," published in Chidgey's native New Zealand last year, received the country's prestigious Jann Medlicott Acorn Prize (the author's second). I found its riveting finale moving and deeply unsettling, not least for Chidgey's eerie depiction of Tama's unbounded love for his adoptive mother. Chidgey's novel is an extraordinary achievement: Like Tama, it soars.

Elizabeth Hand's most recent novel is "A Haunting on the Hill."

## FICTION

# A princess, radiant and fractured, rules this reissued classic

BY B.D. McCLAY

Princess Esmeralda, the ruler of Manhattan's 72nd Street "from Central Park West to Riverside Park," has much to do when she attends to her domain. In the grip of a periodic feeling that she calls "the radiance," she floats up and down the street, in and out of the local establishments, surveying all her subjects:

"Socrates, the Greek manager of the Oedipus luncheonette, treats me with a mixture of awe and desire. I come close on occasion, say a few words, listen to his particular story, and then I withdraw. It is the same way with all the store managers, bartenders, and many of the residents. There is a trick of appearing not to see and yet seeing everything clearly and precisely. My awareness, although extreme, is never suspected."

If anyone churlishly suggests that these radiances are really manic episodes, or that "Esmeralda" is really Ellen, not a princess but an unemployed artist who lives off disability checks — well, that person is simply mistaken.

Esmeralda's journey through her seventh period of radiance makes up the plot of "The Princess of 72nd Street," by Elaine Kraff, originally published in 1979 and now reissued with an introduction by Melissa Broder. It's a story rife with fraught friendships, ex-lovers and an ex-husband. Unlike during Esmeralda's previous radiances, which saw her hustled off to the hospital ("Usually they treat this lovely feeling with drugs"), this time she has a plan. She will tie herself to her typewriter and rig ropes to cling to as she goes from her desk to other rooms, so she can account for herself. She writes down truths she needs to remember on cards — things like "money is the means of barter" and "don't sleep with strange men." The transformative effect of the radiances — among other things, Esmeralda cannot feel pain during them — is, we're given to understand, an exquisite way to live. To leave them is brutal, an abrupt return to a world drained of all higher aspects: Everything that was beautiful there is ugly here in ways that Esmeralda, once reduced to Ellen, does not know how to explain.

It's no insult to Kraff's novel to say that if one were to imagine a perfect specimen of a "forgotten classic" by a woman writer from the 1960s and '70s, you might come up with "The Princess of 72nd Street." Like Renata Adler's "Speedboat," Elizabeth Hardwick's "Sleepless Nights," Simone de Beauvoir's "The Woman Destroyed" or Iris Owens's "After Claude," it's a slender, accomplished and frequently funny work told from the perspective of a lively and bruised female consciousness. Like those books, it focuses primarily on the narrator's inner life rather than on external events. Its first-person narration feels essayistic, full of bold declarations about heterosexual love, gender roles and aesthetics. These qualities make these sorts of books very quotable — they are monologues easy to hijack for one's own purposes.

What sets Kraff's novel apart from the others is the nature of its narrator, or narrators. Esmeralda's unstable sense of reality and sudden acknowledgment, halfway through the book, that there's some other woman cocooned inside the one with whom we're interacting — Ellen, who possesses "a sense of the world of material necessity, economics, politics, and growth" — differentiates her from the more transparent consciousnesses of "Speedboat" and "Sleepless Nights," and from the hateful narrator of "After Claude." Esmeralda is fractured, not a steady sensibility or even a coherent individual. Ellen even seems to provide her own running commentary to Esmeralda, if not always to us, about the book's events. While Esmeralda waits hopefully outside a shop hoping to be reunited with a past lover, a man she views as her prince, we're told that Ellen thinks of him as "not very bright, promiscuous, self-centered, and a fake."

So which is he? He's both, really — the



MILENA LONDON

Elaine Kraff's "The Princess of 72nd Street," about an unemployed New York artist dealing with mental illness, was originally released in 1979. It was the last novel she published, though she continued to write.

special qualities Esmeralda perceives in him are real, but so are his weaknesses. Kraff is sympathetic to Esmeralda's enchantment and Ellen's cynicism, but perhaps most sympathetic to the way they can't be synthesized to match complicated reality.

Instead, our narrator finds herself moving between extremes. "You thrive on complication," an insane psychiatrist — the only medical professional we see her consult in the book — tells her. "My best advice in this matter is destruction instead of false construction." He's right, even though, as she thinks on leaving his office, it's not exactly actionable advice. Though her instability is related to her mental illness ("for the past five minutes I have been a water lily," she interrupts herself to tell us at one point), her inability to reduce or simplify manifests in other ways. Reflecting on her failure to become "a great painter," she tells us: "I felt the need to tell the truth about everything. If a pot had nine hundred colors I wasn't about to leave one out." The resulting paintings are "crazily intense," riots of color in which the form of the original objects remains recognizable even if nothing else does.

In an insightful essay about Kraff for the New Yorker in 2022, Hannah Williams noted that the author wrote to Peter Glassgold, an editor at her publisher, to say she herself was not fond of "The Princess of 72nd Street," characterizing it as a "farewell to a part of my life composed of dreams and fantasies. ... I was young for a long long time and now I am not young any longer." Though she kept writing, she never published another novel; Kraff's ex-husband, whom Williams interviewed for the piece, speculated that people wanted another novel like the one Kraff had just written, and that she wasn't interested in that.

So Kraff spent her final decades writing and painting and teaching special education classes, but not publishing. It's a frustrating end to her story, not only because of the books that might have resulted, but because "The Princess of 72nd Street" feels like a novel written by someone on the threshold of a big change. If Kraff's book is a perfect example of a literary subgenre, it also scrapes up against the limits of what that template can offer. So where did Kraff go next? What was she pursuing that was so unappealing to the editors who loved her last book?

"The Princess of 72nd Street" closes in a characteristically uneasy place. Esmeralda has subsided back into Ellen, who ends up in a stable companionship with an agreeable, if boring, lawyer named Alan. (In a revealing moment of encountering past clichés, we're told that Alan's bookshelves contain "the inevitable 'Catch-22,' 'Portnoy's Complaint,' 'The Naked Lunch,' 'The Alexandria Quartet,' 'Lolita,' 'Shogun,' 'The French Lieutenant's Woman,' and Masters and Johnson's research books" — perhaps an Alan of today would have a queue of prestige TV to get to.) Has Ellen achieved a life in which she can now embrace complication — paint as she wants to, enjoy love with somebody who appreciates her strangeness? Or is this the false construction her therapist warned of? Maybe once again the answer is both. Or maybe the answer lies tucked away in one of those novels nobody was willing to publish. If we're lucky, one day we'll find out.

B.D. McClay is a critic and essayist whose work has appeared in the New Yorker and Lapham's Quarterly, among other publications.



**THE PRINCESS OF 72ND STREET**  
By Elaine Kraff  
Modern Library.  
137 pp. \$27

## In an AI dystopia, a mother alters her face for money

BY JACKIE THOMAS-KENNEDY

Artificial intelligence already plays a role in various daily transactions; to imagine that it will become truly omnipresent is not much of a stretch. To saturate a novel with the implications of such omnipresence is a different task. In "Hum," Helen Phillips presents potential outcomes in measured, elegant, chilling prose. It would be fair to call the work dystopian, or futuristic, or a harbinger, but the novel should not be reduced to its fizzy topicality.

Phillips's writing is perilously good and unsparingly perceptive as it probes at current concerns — climate change, ubiquitous advertising, personal privacy — through the lens of May Webb, a harried wife and mother of two, who allows a start-up to alter her face in exchange for money. "Your face will become unlearnable," the consulting doctor tells her. "You'll be incognito. Isn't that kind of fun?" May asks if she'll be "untrackable." The doctor claims that in theory, if she isn't carrying her phone, "you'd be pretty close to invisible, as far as the system is concerned."

Phillips does not define the "system" in question; she doesn't need to. Sometimes May takes note of surveillance cameras as she walks through the city — she refers to them internally as "cams" — but they are simply part of the landscape, along with the litter and discolored tap water and poor air quality. In May's world, vehicles without human drivers, known as "vees," are an alternative to the subway with its screens full of terrible news. Hums — "clean silver lines of arms and legs and neck linking oblong head and torso and feet" — can identify



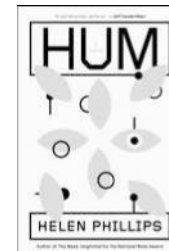
ANDY VERNON-JONES

humans through facial features or fingerprints; can complete medical and dental tasks; are patrolling streets; and are "in such high demand by government institutions and private corporations that the company who had figured out how to so elegantly embody the expansive brain of the network had a waitlist months long." That May used to work in this very sector, "hired to help refine and deepen the communicative abilities of artificial intelligence," is mentioned briefly. The novel is too sophisticated, too attuned to

complexity, to bother haunting May with this detail from her past. The most potent parts of May's backstory are the glancing allusions to the forest of her childhood, which has since burned.

May's husband, Jem, a gig worker, calls the payment for her procedure "skin money," but May's goal is to bring her family to the walled Botanical Garden. Later, in a moment of anguish, May acknowledges that the garden is, in fact, just a hotel, but the prospect of seeing her children frolic there is irresistible. "She had watched [the promo] countless times before," Phillips writes, "but she never tired of it. The close-ups of ferns and flowers ... the tree sagging with fruit ... the waterfall, white spray on green rocks." The waterfall will turn out to be a site of enormous consequence and fear for May, but its initial role is part of a verdant fantasy.

Fantasy, it should be noted, is crucial in May's household. May, Jem and their children, Sy and Lu, each own a "woom" — an upright egg with an "accordion shade" that streams personally curated content. Even after she buys the tickets to the garden, May "longed for her woom. Not to watch anything, just to be alone. Maybe ensconce herself in a still image of tree trunks and a recording of forest sounds. Water dripping off pine needles. A capsule of solitude. Automatic meditation. Dissolve into it, numb your brain, soothe your body, reset yourself." These final three sentences dip into a tone that sounds distinctly like that of an advertisement. One of the novel's recurring jokes has a note of horror, as May is accosted by the same ad for lotion in multiple scenes: "Did you know that people can tell how old a



**HUM**  
By Helen Phillips  
S&S/Marysue Rucci.  
272 pp. \$27.99

**Surrounded by tech, Hellen Phillips's protagonist is desperate to take her family to a green oasis.**

woman is by the way her hands look, even if she is otherwise well-preserved?"

The wooms and other devices do not read like the trappings of speculative fiction; often they provide services that are already effectively available. Sy and Lu wear "bunnies" on their wrists, which allow May to track them. When she declares that the family should bring neither bunnies nor phones into the Botanical Garden, she does so with a blend of hope, smugness and naïveté.

Fittingly, the language spills close to the biblical when the family first enjoys their garden paradise. "They ate well of the bread and the cheese and the honey, and drank deeply of the water in the earthenware pitcher," Phillips writes. This idyllic moment is preceded by May feeling "the instinct for the phone, the desperation to document." The word "desperation" suggests that the novel regards this habit with compassion rather than mockery.

Perhaps Phillips's greatest feat is the way the work's technological clutter is at once essential to the story — the absent bunnies create catastrophic fallout for May — and, in another sense, beside the point. As May's reputation rapidly unravels in the novel's final third, Phillips explores the ways in which public scrutiny is not, at its core, a technological endeavor, even as technology abets the act. Marbled with glints of dark humor, this novel avoids sanctimony, offering revelation in its stead.

Jackie Thomas-Kennedy's debut novel, "The Other Wife," is forthcoming from Riverhead in 2025.

## BOOK WORLD

# The water's fine — but this 1950s housewife is not

BY SUSAN COLL

Virgil, an aggressively handsome but lackluster insurance salesman, has concerns about his wife. On an unseasonably warm November day, Kathleen has dipped herself into the swimming pool at their apartment complex in suburban Delaware and won't come out. "The men at Equitable had spoken of 'episodes' with their wives, and Virgil worried that's what this was turning into. A bona fide episode."

It is around this single "episode" that "The Most," Jessica Anthony's spare, elegant novella, revolves. Her previous novel, "Enter the Aardvark," was a darkly funny political satire that might best be described as unhinged. That plot involved taxidermy, closeted gay politicians and a stuffed aardvark. The premise of Anthony's new book had me thinking this would be in a similar vein: A housewife gets into a swimming pool and decides to stay there. But "The Most" is darkly funny in its own way, and in the end is less a comedy than a smoldering, Cheeveresque meditation on mid-century, middle-class disappointment.

The novel unfurls over the course of one day: Sunday, Nov. 3, 1957. The Russian spacecraft Sputnik 2 has just begun to orbit the Earth, and strapped inside the small cabin is a tiny dog named Laika. Not only does the dog's fate seem cruel — fears that it will not survive the orbit will prove true — but the mere idea of a dog in space adds another layer of unreality to a day when Virgil is already struggling to parse the mercurial behavior of his wife. "A dog was up there now, he thought dizzily, flying right over his head, and it was as though everything he once trusted as logical was illogical."

Rather than attend church with her husband and their two boys, Kathleen stuffs herself into her old red bathing suit from college, which still fits despite her body's post-pregnancy shapeshifting, and heads to the pool.

"The water was clean, like it was ready for her. *It's blue as a dream*, she thought. ... She climbed the little metal stepladder down into the water, smooth and warmed by the late autumn sunlight, and suddenly Kathleen Beckett was weightless."

Kathleen has no particular plan. She submerges and glides from one end to the other. She studies her painted toenails. She ruminates. She remains in the pool for so long that her cuticles begin to shred and her hands swell.

Virgil and the boys return from church and spy her from the balcony of their apartment at Acropolis Place. Neighbors gape. Kathleen



MATT COSBY



#### THE MOST

By Jessica Anthony  
Little, Brown.  
144 pp. \$18.99,  
paperback

**Jessica Anthony's protagonist decides to go for a swim, then refuses to leave the pool.**

is a spectacle. No one goes into this "cheap community swimming pool," especially since it had been closed for the previous two years, ever since the owner drowned.

When Virgil fails in his attempts to coax his wife out of the pool, he decides to play golf.

Six months earlier, the family sold their house in Pawtucket, R.I., and moved into this shabby, too-small apartment in Newark, Del., so Virgil could take a new job. They plan to buy a house, but money is tight, and Virgil is not closing a lot of deals.

Money problems are symptomatic but not the only factor contributing to this couple's malaise. The bottle of whiskey tucked behind a tub of cooking lard helps, but not enough.

Both Virgil and Kathleen harbor secrets, and on this already strange day, as poor Laika is burning up in space and the "unseasonably warm weather prompted everyone to flee the First Presbyterian as quickly as possible," a phone call serves as the catalyst for Kathleen's decision, such as it is, to escape to the pool.

Kathleen's troubles might be more accurately described as regret. A former tennis player at the University of Delaware, she had been good enough to play professionally and had even been approached by a scout who told her that "she had Wimbledon 'in her pocket.'" He turned out to be lecherous, but

that's not why she gave up the sport. It wasn't because she loved her future husband more than tennis, either. It was because she hated losing. "Marrying Virgil, she thought, was the safer bet. Maybe she couldn't win, but she wouldn't lose." Now, from the swimming pool, she daydreams about a life winning Grand Slams.

This alternative life might have seen her married, instead, to Viliam "Billy" Blasko, her former tennis coach. There is an explosive literary charge to what Billy teaches her about tennis, including a key move that he calls "the most." It's a play that is meant to be deployed sparingly. Viewed a certain way, the move mirrors the very trap that Kathleen currently finds herself in.

As this Sunday begins to draw to a close, it's getting cold in the pool, while "above them, in space, a little Moscow street dog was crying out in her chamber ... the harness she wore was too tight ... her pulse was decreasing. Death was imminent."

Will Kathleen ever hoist herself out of this kidney-shaped swimming pool, heat up the chicken cordon bleu and feed this family dinner? Tennis is like a dance, Billy once told her. And this marriage is, too. But someone will have to make the first move.

**Susan Coll** is the author of seven novels, most recently, "Real Life & Other Fictions."

#### LITERARY CALENDAR

Aug. 12 - 17

**12 MONDAY | 6 P.M. Heather Murphy Capps** discusses "The Rule of Three" with **Meg Eden Kuyatt** at Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Dr. Reston. 703-966-2111.

**7 P.M. Briana Pegado** discusses "Make Good Trouble: A Practical Guide to the Energetics of Disruption" at Solid State Books, 600F H St. NE. 202-897-4201.

**7 P.M. James Parker** discusses "Get Me Through the Next Five Minutes: Odes to Being Alive" with **Jeffrey Goldberg** at Politics and Prose at the Wharf, 610 Water St. SW. 202-488-3867.

**7 P.M. John J. Sullivan** discusses "Midnight in Moscow: A Memoir From the Front Lines of Russia's War Against the West" with **Jill Dougherty** at Politics and Prose, 5015 Connecticut Ave. NW. 202-364-1919.

**7 P.M. Erin Becker** discusses "Crushing It" with **Anna Lopera** at Politics and Prose.

**13 TUESDAY | 7 P.M. Mai Sennaar, Diana Rojas and Amanda Shaw** discuss the concept of home in their writing at Politics and Prose at Union Market, 1270 Fifth St. NE. 202-544-4452.

**7 P.M. Keith Donohue** discusses "The Girl in the Bog" at Politics and Prose.

**14 WEDNESDAY | 7 P.M. Marjorie Feld** discusses "The Threshold of Dissent: A History of American Jewish Critics of Zionism" with **Emily Tamkin** at Politics and Prose at the Wharf.

**7 P.M. R.R. Virdi** discusses "The Doors of Midnight" at Scrawl Books.

**7 P.M. Evan Friss** discusses "The Bookshop: A History of the American Bookstore" with **Bradley Graham** at Politics and Prose.

**7 P.M. Brian Tyler Cohen** discusses "Shameless: Republicans' Deliberate Dysfunction and the Battle to Preserve Democracy" with **Jen Psaki** and **Shaniqua McClendon** at Sixth & I, 600 I St. NW. 202-408-3100. \$20-\$35.

**15 THURSDAY | 5 P.M. Rachel Kipp and Dan Shortridge** discuss "Lost Delaware," streamed through Lewes Library at [lewes.lib.de.us](http://lewes.lib.de.us).

**7 P.M. Nate Silver** discusses "On the Edge: The Art of Risking Everything" at Politics and Prose.

**7 P.M. Sarah Pekkanen** discusses "House of Glass" with **Alex Finlay** at Politics and Prose at Union Market.

**16 FRIDAY | 7 P.M. Laura Beers** discusses "Orwell's Ghosts: Wisdom and Warnings for the Twenty-First Century" at Politics and Prose.

**7 P.M. Anthony Abraham Jack** discusses "Class Dismissed: When Colleges Ignore Inequality and Students Pay the Price" with **Adam Harris** at Politics and Prose at the Wharf.

**17 SATURDAY | 10:30 A.M. Cynthia Cliff** discusses "A Weekend Trip" at Petworth Library, 4200 Kansas Ave. NW. 202-243-1188.

**2 P.M. Taj McCoy, Mindy Klasky and Simone Soltani** discuss their works at the Romance Day Game Panel at One More Page Books, 2200 North Westmoreland St., Arlington. 703-300-9746.

For more literary events, go to [wapo.st/literarycal](http://wapo.st/literarycal).

#### Washington Post Paperback Bestsellers

COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION

#### FICTION

**1 A COURT OF THORNS AND ROSES** (Bloomsbury, \$19). By Sarah J. Maas. A threat is growing over a magical land where a huntress is being held captive.

**2 TOMORROW, AND TOMORROW, AND TOMORROW** (Vintage, \$19). By Gabrielle Zevin. Two friends run a successful video game design company while testing the boundaries of their relationship.

**3 JUST FOR THE SUMMER** (Forever, \$17.99). By Abby Jimenez. Despite a couple's plans to keep things lighthearted, their summer fling turns serious.

**4 IT ENDS WITH US** (Atria, \$16.99). By Colleen Hoover. A woman questions her relationship with a commitment-phobic partner when her old flame appears.

**5 THE HOUSEMAID** (Grand Central, \$12.99). By Freida McFadden. A woman with a troubled past is grateful for employment as a housemaid until things take a sinister turn.

**6 HAPPY PLACE** (Berkley, \$19). By Emily Henry. At a friend group's annual getaway, one couple hides the fact that they have split.

**7 A COURT OF MIST AND FURY** (Bloomsbury, \$19). By Sarah J. Maas. A woman struggles with her loyalty toward two warring courts.

**8 THE SEVEN HUSBANDS OF EVELYN HUGO** (Washington Square, \$17). By Taylor Jenkins Reid. A Hollywood icon recounts the story of her glamorous life to a young reporter, and both discover the cost of fame.

**9 THE HOUSEMAID IS WATCHING** (Poisoned Pen, \$17.99). By Freida McFadden. A former housemaid moves into her dream home and finds that the neighbors may be harboring secrets as dangerous as her own.

**10 THE MIDNIGHT LIBRARY** (Penguin, \$18). By Matt Haig. A regretful woman lands in a library where she gets to play out her life had she made different choices.

#### NONFICTION

**1 THE BACKYARD BIRD CHRONICLES** (Knopf, \$35). By Amy Tan. The best-selling novelist's essays and sketches document the birds inhabiting the land around her home.

**2 HILLBILLY ELEGY** (Harper, \$18.99). By JD Vance. The U.S. senator and vice-presidential candidate analyzes White working-class Americans and their politics through the lens of his rural upbringing.

**3 THE ART THIEF** (Vintage, \$18). By Michael Finkel. More than 300 art objects were stolen by one man, who kept them in a secret room.

**4 BRAIDING SWEETGRASS** (Milkweed, \$20). By Robin Wall Kimmerer. Essays by an Indigenous scientist offer lessons in reciprocal awareness between people and plants.

**5 THE BODY KEEPS THE SCORE** (Penguin, \$19). By Bessel van der Kolk. A scientific look at how trauma can reshape a person's body and brain.

**6 ALL ABOUT LOVE** (Morrow, \$16.99). By bell hooks. The first volume in the iconic feminist's "Love Song to the Nation" trilogy considers compassion as a form of love.

**7 THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR ON PALESTINE** (Picador, \$19.99). By Rashid Khalidi. A historian of the Middle East traces events from 1917 to 2017 to argue that the conflict between Israel and Gaza is a war of colonial conquest.

**8 EVERYTHING I KNOW ABOUT LOVE** (Harper Perennial, \$18.99). By Dolly Alderton. A British journalist shares stories chronicling her attempts at finding happiness and love.

**9 KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON** (Vintage, \$18). By David Grann. A look at the FBI's investigation of Native American deaths in 1920s Oklahoma.

**10 CRYING IN H MART** (Vintage, \$17). By Michelle Zauner. A Korean American indie rock star chronicles her relationship with her mother and their shared culture.

Rankings reflect sales for the week ended Aug. 4. The charts may not be reproduced without permission from the American Booksellers Association, the trade association for independent bookstores in the United States, and [indiebound.org](http://indiebound.org). Copyright 2024 American Booksellers Association. (The bestseller lists alternate between hardcover and paperback each week.)



## NONFICTION

## The spellbinding origins of Dungeons &amp; Dragons

BY DAVID PERRY

In 1966, Gary Gygax, an insurance underwriter living in Lake Geneva, Wis., placed a notice in the “Opponents Wanted” section of the Avalon Hill General, the in-house promotional magazine of the era’s premier war gaming company. Like many gamers, Gygax was part of some local and regional clubs but was always searching for new people to compete with or against. He wrote, “Opponents wanted for face-to-face play. Any AH [Avalon Hill] Wargame, other type war game, or any form of chess.” But then he added a telling sentence: “Will cooperate on game design.”

And cooperate he did. Over the next few years, his labors helped lead to the first edition of Dungeons & Dragons, in 1974. But though his name remains the most famous associated with the title, he couldn’t have done it without an adventurous army of Midwestern gamers, especially Dave Arneson, a just-graduated history major at the University of Minnesota and Gygax’s co-author. The game slowly caught on as people began to understand that it offered something new — a product where play was as collaborative as the process through which its rules had been written, and where the only true limit was the imagination of the players. Today, the elements that first coalesced in D&D underpin not only much of the global gaming industry but also the gamification of everyday life.

As D&D turns 50, games historian Jon Peterson wants us to take the history of this iconic game seriously. And he’s done the work, meticulous archival research into the core primary documents through which D&D came together — letters, memos, early drafts, trade publications, and an avalanche of newsletters and fanzines — to argue that this revolution in gaming emerged out of a broad network of interlocking gaming communities. These individuals and clubs often came together in a spirit of innovation and improvisation, constantly debating and tinkering with the rules others had put forward. Sometimes, of course, they were motivated as much by conflict, petty gripes and greed. That word in Gygax’s first ad, “cooperate,” is revealing, but it doesn’t tell the whole story.

In “Playing at the World, 2E: Volume I: The Invention of Dungeons & Dragons,” Peterson opens by breaking down D&D to its core elements, then locates where those elements first appeared in precursor games. *Tractics*, a World War II tank game, first used polyhedral dice (that is, dice used to create random numbers in ranges other than one to six). *Braunstein*, a war game set in a fictional Prussian town, allowed gamers to role-play as nonmilitary characters and affect the outcome of the conflict. Eventually Arneson hosted a “medieval Braunstein” with fantasy elements that he called *Blackmoor*, a critical precursor of D&D.

After 1974, Peterson shifts to tracing the continued evolution of D&D in many iterations (and the struggles of Gygax’s company, TSR, to maintain control of its core product). The 1974 edition was confusing and limited, and even as TSR started putting out addition-



WIZARDS OF THE COAST

al material, gamers around the country improvised their own, much as Gygax and Arneson had fiddled with other products to make their game. Sometimes, those improvisers wrote back to TSR, such as when a Californian gamer called Gygax to suggest the game’s “thief” class. The very term “role-playing game” came out of an attempt by TSR to make it clear that while there was a mass of new games, and they all involved role-playing, they were not all D&D.

Peterson proves an able guide through those conflicts and communities, carefully selecting which individuals and publications to highlight, building toward a taxonomy of role-playing games and their core elements. He has previously written a corporate history of D&D (“Game Wizards: The Epic Battle for Dungeons & Dragons”). But this book — a wholesale revision of a self-published tome from 2012 that Peterson himself characterizes as having “a reputation of an impenetrable labyrinth” — is a highly readable history of

ideas, rather than a biographical approach to Gygax, his co-authors or the companies they founded.

Another recent volume, “The Making of Original Dungeons & Dragons: 1970-1977,” engages with the same history but shows rather than tells. Produced by a team at Wizards of the Coast (the company that purchased TSR and Dungeons & Dragons in 1997), it is a sumptuously curated collection of facsimiles of early D&D-related texts, along with commentary from Peterson. Jason Tondro, who led the project, used to be a professor of premodern English literature before he left academia, and he clearly brought that training with manuscripts and curation to this work. The book is gorgeous, packed with gems like doodles of monsters from Gygax and, more central to the story, items such as an announcement in a local newsletter in 1971 of Arneson hosting “medieval Braunstein.” But most of the book is taken up with



**PLAYING AT THE WORLD, 2E Volume 1: The Invention of Dungeons & Dragons**  
By Jon Peterson  
MIT Press.  
373 pp. \$29.95



**THE MAKING OF ORIGINAL DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 1970-1977**  
Wizards of the Coast.  
576 pp. \$99.95



WIZARDS OF THE COAST

complete editions of core texts, including *Chainmail*, Gygax’s medieval war game, to which he appended (controversially) a “fantasy supplement.” It also includes the first unpublished draft of D&D, reproductions of the published first edition and most of the major supporting texts that followed in the next few years.

D&D, as a game, is played by more people than ever before. After a moribund period in the aughts, the release of new, easier-to-play editions, paired with the rise of online live streams of gaming sessions, helped draw new people to the hobby. That’s how it was in the beginning, too; you just had to see the game to understand its potential. In the ’70s, that meant going to a convention or a local gaming group, or at least reading a fictionalized transcript of a gaming session: “The Making” includes a reproduction of one such account that Gygax wrote for a Swiss fanzine. Now, with streaming, it’s easier to learn to play, and as many folks discovered during the early years of the covid pandemic, role-playing games translate very well to Zoom and other virtual platforms.

But if D&D hadn’t bounced back, or if someday it fades away, the history provided in these volumes would still be valuable. If you look around, you’ll find the influence of D&D everywhere, from corporate culture to the classroom, from exercise apps to customer loyalty programs. Understanding how we live now means understanding how concepts like experience points, leveling up and role-playing entered our culture. Where TSR had once tried to maintain control of D&D, the monster born in the Midwest has long since spread its wings and taken to the skies. But the story of how it was hatched — and the many gamers who helped raise it — is as relevant as ever.

**David Perry** is a journalist and assistant director of undergraduate studies in the history department at the University of Minnesota. He is a co-author of “The Bright Ages: A New History of Medieval Europe.”

**ABOVE LEFT: Early art from the game Chainmail, which helped lead to Dungeons & Dragons. ABOVE RIGHT: The first issue of the Dragon magazine, an early outlet for fans of role-playing games.**

## A well-intentioned church, torn asunder

CHURCH FROM B1

Jesus’ teaching. That evangelical movement was a far cry from the one that gathered momentum around the 1980 presidential election, when Moral Majority, Jerry Falwell’s religiopolitical juggernaut, mobilized to support Ronald Reagan and combat America’s “moral decay.” That formidable voting bloc led directly to today’s Christian-nationalist right.

In stark contrast, churches like Circle of Hope and others of its “radical evangelical” ilk — expansive, dynamic fellowships living out the call to serve the least of these — represent an alternative to the absolutism and maliciously invidious of the far right. These churches are less visible, eclipsed so thoroughly that it can seem as though Falwellian, power-politics Christianity is the only kind there is. In this context, churches like Circle of Hope are essential: If one very vocal faction lays claim to morality, hijacks Christianity to create a political monolith and forces its agenda onto the legislative floor, where does that leave the rest of us, religious or not? What of the collective common good? Or the New Testament commandment to “Love your neighbor as yourself”? What do we lose as a nation if we allow Christianity to be discredited by those who weaponize it? Circle of Hope and churches like it, Griswold writes, are “reclaiming moral authority from the Christian right.”

Circle of Hope was deeply committed to its Jesus-first, anti-empire vision of Christianity. The church’s earnest zeal was reflected in its membership: Gen Xers and millennials, many employed in the helping professions, “who’d been hurt by organized religion or who rejected right-wing politics, and were seeking more authentic ways to follow Jesus.” Members became something like a family, pooling time and resources to help one another with child care, even sharing houses in some cases. Their beliefs mandated action in the world, beyond the confines of the congregation. They planted community gardens, accompanied undocumented people to interviews with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and protested at military bases against drone strikes.

How did a well-intentioned church of deep faith descend into crisis? In 2020, at the height of the pandemic, and just after waves of nationwide protests in the wake of George Floyd’s murder, Circle’s pastors issued a call for a churchwide self-reckoning: “What are we going to do to keep the anti-racist movement



SEAMUS MURPHY

going in deeper and wider ways?” In a predominantly White church, with cultural coding to match — Circle’s members tended toward dived, PBR-drinking hangouts and cringey drum circles composed of “white women who sometimes mimicked African dance during worship” — answering that question led to ideological and theological battles. Rod White and other members maintained that the church’s teachings were “naturally anti-racist,” while the few people of color (about 15 to 25 percent), alongside some White members like Pastor Julie Hoke, were outraged and wounded by the other side’s refusal to engage explicitly and meaningfully with police brutality or the power imbalances within the congregation.

Other fault lines were exposed. Griswold writes, “For nearly twenty years, Circle had played a theological version of ‘Don’t ask, don’t tell.’” Circle refused to make any public statement about LGBTQ people, and when one gay member made fliers listing Circle as a queer-welcoming church, Rod blocked him from the church Listserv. Pastor Rachel Sensenig had

struggled mightily with what she experienced as the church’s ingrained gender biases and the sexism of the male pastors. Class was an issue as well: Some low-income members felt isolated in the largely middle-class congregation. Griswold writes of members’ efforts to “heal” poor neighborhoods, where they bought houses and “drove up property values and drove out longtime residents.”

Rancorous division followed, all the more devastating given the church’s broad, hopeful vision of Christian community. Sensenig and Ben White, though committed to anti-racist action and social justice, didn’t believe that those were the primary building blocks of God’s kingdom on Earth. “For Ben, as for his parents,” Griswold writes, “there was a clear distinction between the radical social reordering Jesus commanded and secular politics.” Jonny Rashid and Hoke believed that Christ stood unequivocally with the oppressed — that social justice wasn’t an aspect of Christianity but its very essence. It wasn’t that Circle’s race and gender issues weren’t real, nor that some



**CIRCLE OF HOPE A Reckoning with Love, Power, and Justice in an American Church**  
By Eliza Griswold  
Farrar, Straus & Giroux.  
337 pp. \$30

**Eliza Griswold spent four years reporting on Philadelphia’s Circle of Hope church and witnessed its dissolution.**

of the pastors were entirely right while others were entirely wrong; the heartbreak lies in the fact that when the church’s members were confronted with its shortcomings, their pain, anger and disillusionment overwhelmed Circle’s calling to put “the Spirit of God over religion.” Compromise became impossible. Membership dropped, financial support withered, and Circle of Hope was dissolved on Jan. 1, 2024.

Griswold presents Circle of Hope’s crises in alternating chapters from the perspectives of the four pastors, the founders and a few secondary players. Her exhaustive reporting makes for a compassionate narrative that has something like the effect of an ambulance ride-along: propulsive and immersive, but at times overwhelming. This reader craved an occasional counterbalance to the narrative’s granularity and near-constant action, a broader perspective on the interlocking battles and what they mean to Griswold’s overarching concerns about religion and politics in American life.

The imbalance between the proverbial forest and trees is also a function of the book’s aggressive pursuit of neutrality. Griswold’s subjects speak for themselves, as journalistic ethics justly dictate, but I was always aware that I was seeing the action through the eyes of an interpretive and selective observer laboring to present these complexities as though she were not there. This is an old argument about the nature of — or even possibility of — objectivity, about which I confess a certain skepticism. Perhaps these objections would be better suited to a journalism school’s lecture hall. Nonetheless, I longed for Griswold to more often step out from the margins, as she does at the beginning and end of the book, to share her keen perspective.

These considerations aside, this is an ardent, distinctive work, generous and character-driven, with concerns that speak directly to the current moment and beyond. How do we live together? How do we attend to our spiritual needs and the social evils that plague us? At the end of the book, in what she calls the *Benediction*, Griswold writes: “Churches are messy places where people seek many things. ... This can be a beautiful, courageous endeavor, that, in its effort to do right, usually goes wrong.” Yet we make the attempt again and again, from pulpits and altars, in town halls and school board meetings. I dare say some of the holiness is in the attempt, even when it fails.

**Ayana Mathis** is a Book World contributing writer and the author of the novels “The Unsettled” and “The Twelve Tribes of Hattie.”

## BOOK WORLD

*"I really hope we can kind of continue to move in this wave of more subtlety and more nuance, and less ... perfectionism. ... We're just messy people who are in disabled bodies and making mistakes and, you know, falling in love."*

Hannah Bonam-Young, author of "Out on a Limb"

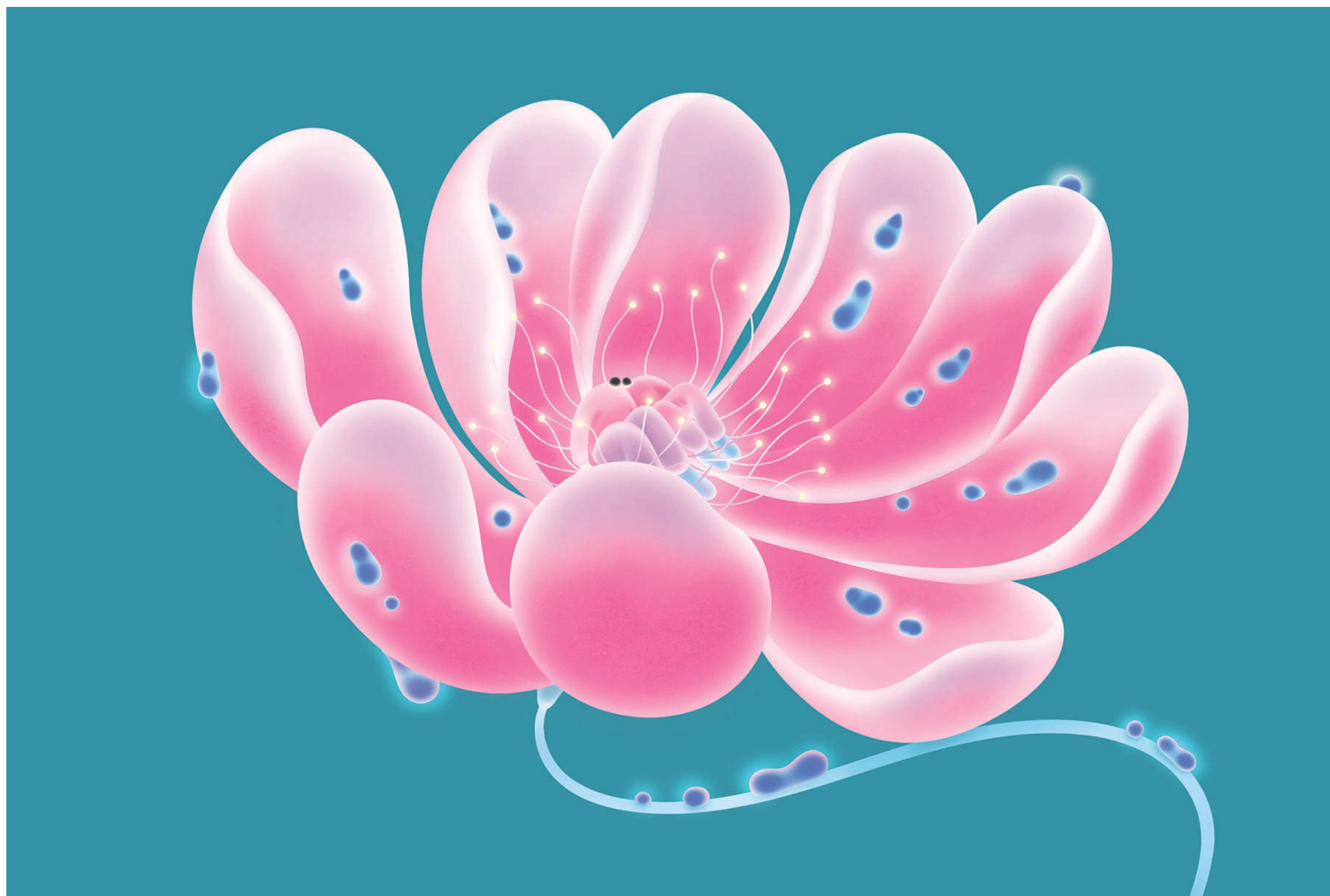


ILLUSTRATION BY HOI CHAN FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

## Romance plus disability: It's hot

BY KALYANI SAXENA

When Mimi Matthews's bone fusion for a previous neck injury snapped more than a decade ago, it reshaped her world. Her planned career in law? Out of reach. Her passion for riding horses? Out of the question. With a neck flare-up always on the horizon, Matthews was navigating an uncertain future, with limitations she'd never anticipated.

But the traumatic injury did give her something: a love for writing, which she has since turned into a successful career as a best-selling historical romance novelist. "This injury is 100 percent what brought me back to writing," Matthews says. "I have written every book that I have written from bed."



For Matthews, writing romance is a way to process the complicated emotions that come from living with a disability. Reading the genre "just reaffirms your belief that everything's going to work out, and that it all means something ... the things you're going through. I feel that romance is incredibly valuable in that way," she says.

Matthews isn't alone in finding comfort within the genre and its happy endings. Our media landscape isn't known for its positive depictions of disabled people. But within romance novels, characters with disabilities are frequently shown as they are — worthy of love and intimacy. They have meet-cutes, epic love stories and good sex. And as the romance genre continues to diversify, more nuanced depictions of disability are making their way onto shelves.

Now before we get ahead of ourselves, it's worth noting that romance hasn't always done the best job with disability representation. For decades, the genre reliably portrayed physical disability as a barrier to love — particularly for scarred war heroes in historical romance novels. According to Sarah Wendell, co-founder of the site Smart Bitches, Trashy Books, that trope was frequently used within the narrative as a shortcut to emotional growth for the hero.

Wendell says disability was often seen as a character's defining trait, which could be a little heavy-handed. It was used "to create sympathy for an otherwise abominably behaved character. And ... that in itself is kind of ableist, because it's like, 'Oh, you're only sympathetic because you are missing a piece of your body' or 'you are having emotional difficul-

ties.'" But things have changed in recent years. "I think we've moved away from 'your disability as part of the conflict' and moved to 'any disability is actually just part of the character,'" Wendell says.

That's the case in Erica Ridley's upcoming regency caper, "Hot Earl Summer." The book follows Elizabeth Wynchester, an axe-wielding heroine with debilitating chronic pain who's determined to defend a castle against a power-hungry aristocrat. Ridley says she approaches writing about disability like she approaches any type of diversity. "I wanted to write about queer characters, where the angst wasn't that they were queer," she says. "I feel kind of the same way about the disability. ... It's a part of who you are, just like any other aspect of your culture, religion or anything else."

Ridley also notes that traditional publishing wasn't always open to romances about disability: "I definitely felt [writing about] rich, White, able-bodied aristocracy was the only way I was going to get published." So, what changed? According to Ridley, industry conversation shifted when the self-publishing boom proved there was a market for diverse romances.

And as the market has grown, so have the types of disabilities we see on the page. "In the last, I would say, 10 years or so, we're seeing a lot more about neurodivergence," says Jayashree Kamblé, a professor of English who focuses on mass-market romance novels.

Best-selling romance author Helen Hoang didn't think much of making Stella, the protagonist of her first romance novel, "The Kiss

Quotient," autistic. She was stunned to see that people felt otherwise. "It was shocking to me to think that it was extraordinary to write an autistic woman who wanted to have a life like

everybody else," Hoang says. While crafting the story, she drew on her own life experiences as a woman with autism. "I didn't feel like I was being so, so outrageous and brave when I wrote the character, because she was coming from somewhere very familiar," she says.

Nevertheless, for Hoang, writing Stella was an act of self-love. "It was very healthy for me at the time to write a female character with autism ... portraying it empathetically, and not as, kind of, an infantilized character that you need to feel bad for."

Romance readers connected with that. Some had spent years hungry for positive portrayals of disability and neurodivergence within the books they love. But sometimes that hunger translates into pressure to only depict differences in a positive light. Matthews says she's felt that pressure. "I think in trying to be a zealous advocate for disability rep, sometimes an able-bodied person ... is trying so hard to advocate for a certain level of acceptance that they do not allow for these lived experiences of people who have had a traumatic injury and [are] like, 'I'm unhappy. I have lost something.'"

While the genre has taken strides toward more nuanced disability representation, romances between two disabled characters are still rare. Author Hannah Bonam-Young was looking for that kind of story when she drafted "Out on a Limb," which follows Win, a woman with a limb difference, and Bo, a man — and total dreamboat — with an amputated leg.

Bonam-Young says it was important for her to write two disabled characters who had vastly different life experiences. "I wanted to point out that the disabled experience is varying," she says. "I think, unfortunately, even with the best intentions, in some romances where only one of the leads is disabled and accommodations are necessary, it can become a bit preachy, or it can become a bit like a how-to guide of how to love someone with a disability."

Ultimately, Bonam-Young wants to see more romances where disability is normalized. "I really hope we can kind of continue to move in this wave of more subtlety and more nuance, and less ... perfectionism," she says. "We're just messy people who are in disabled bodies and making mistakes and, you know, falling in love."

In a society where disabled people are rarely protagonists, there's power in making their love stories visible. Wendell concurs: "The message of romance is that you are lovable ... that you don't have to conform to some external standard to become lovable. You are lovable exactly as you are."

Kalyani Saxena is a journalist and writer covering romance and fantasy. She's a voracious reader in perpetual search of the perfect execution of the enemies-to-lovers trope.



VICKIE HAHN

Mimi Matthews



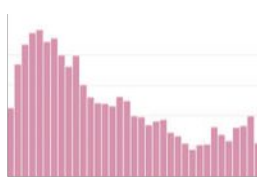
MEGAN PREECE PHOTOGRAPHY

Hannah Bonam-Young

8 a.m. 73°    Noon 79°    4 p.m. 83°    8 p.m. 77°

High today at approx. 4 p.m. **83°**  
 Precip: 5%    Wind: NW 6-12 mph

**THE DISTRICT**  
 D.C.'s murder rate is tracking below 2023's pace, according to data compiled by The Post. **c2**



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 For stories about the past, rediscovered, visit [washingtonpost.com/retropolis](http://washingtonpost.com/retropolis).



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 Chi Chi Rodriguez, 88, added showmanship and levity to the staid professional golf tour. **cs**



PHOTOS BY JORDAN TOVIN FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

## GWU students face campus restrictions

A proposed court agreement would limit their access to school property following arrests during Gaza protests



**TOP:** Protesters greet each other over the fence at an encampment on the campus of George Washington University on April 27 in Washington. **ABOVE:** Protesters clash with D.C. police outside of the encampment on the GWU campus on May 8.

BY ELLIE SILVERMAN AND DAN ROSENZWEIG-ZIFF

Several George Washington University students arrested during a spring protest of the war in Gaza may be able to have their charges dropped — but only if they accept a deal that would restrict their access to campus for six months.

That would mean they could not go to dining halls, nor study sessions in the library. No meeting up with friends for coffee. The students would only be allowed to go to and from their residence and classes, with exceptions for accessing the hospital or using the Metro.

While the deal could result in the students' misdemeanor unlawful entry charge being dropped, it is not immediately clear if they will also face restrictions from the university. At least one student who signed the

"stet agreement" said they face a temporary suspension as part of a separate disciplinary process at GWU.

The students were among thousands of people arrested during pro-Palestinian demonstrations at colleges across the country in the spring as police were called to clear encampments, disperse crowds or remove students who had occupied buildings. In some cases, charges were dropped against demonstrators, while others were offered deals with requirements such as avoiding being rearrested for six months and performing community service, according to attorneys representing protesters. Some criminal cases remain unresolved.

Alivia Valauri, a 20-year-old rising GWU junior, wore a kaffiyeh in a courtroom earlier this month as she

SEE ARRESTS ON C3

## Drunk driver given 8 years

2023 WRONG-WAY CRASH KILLED 1

Family reminisces about nurse and mother of 3

BY DAN MORSE

The Nissan Pathfinder was packed for the beach — adults up front, three kids in the middle, suitcases and sand toys stuffed in the back.

For Elizabeth Velez, Myrtle Beach called out as a welcome respite from working as an ER nurse in Pennsylvania. Several hours into the drive, she'd reached the Capital Beltway just north of Washington.

"It was supposed to be a good day," a Maryland judge recently said from the bench.

The man seated in court before the judge, waiting to be sentenced, had been on the Capital Beltway the same time as Velez. Jayleen Hannon, 24, was drunk, going the wrong way, speeding and weaving in and out of oncoming traffic. Velez tried to avoid him, steering right and hitting her brakes, but Hannon slammed his Mercedes sedan head-on into the Nissan. Velez, 36, suffered catastrophic injuries.

"You killed somebody," Montgomery County Circuit Court Judge Bibi Berry told Hannon, handing down a sentence this month of eight years.

For Velez's surviving family, grief over the 2023 crash continues to be compounded by knowing what Hannon did both before and after it.

The U.S. Army veteran had been arrested twice in Georgia in 2022 on drunken-driving charges. And after striking Velez's car, according to court records, Hannon got out of his own car without checking on anyone, climbed over several concrete Jersey walls, crossed the Beltway, and made it a mile down the road before police found him.

His fleeing, Velez's family said, was the exact opposite of what she would have done had she come upon such a crash.

"She would have tried to save anybody," said her sister, Ligia Torres.

Hannon had faced a maximum of 18 years in prison, having

SEE CRASH ON C3

PARIS OLYMPICS

## 'Sibling rivalry' builds around golden bonds

Alexandria, Arlington County rack up medals at the Paris Olympics

BY TEO ARMUS

Arlington County and Alexandria have long enjoyed some friendly competition — and now, that rivalry has made its way to the Olympics.

These Northern Virginia neighbors are similar in many ways, growing from bedroom communities outside D.C. into two of the country's wealthiest and most educated communities. Bound by demographics and geography, their civic leaders often work together — even as they have also enjoyed a time-honored tradition of poking fun at the other locality.

With the Olympics ending this weekend, there's one more dis-

inction they share: Both have been racking up medals, putting them in a jovial race to see which locality might come out on top.

Producing any medalist at all is no small feat for either Arlington or Alexandria, which each have fewer than a quarter of a million residents. The success is thanks to just two standout Olympians on Team USA with an inside-the-Beltway Virginia connection.

Torri Huske, part of a team that broke a swimming record in the 4x100-meter medley relay in Paris, is an Arlington native who honed her skills in the pool at Yorktown High School. Noah Lyles, the "fastest man alive" who won a bronze medal in the 200 meters while sick with covid to go with his gold medal in the 100, has been treated like a hometown hero in Alexandria.

That friendly rivalry has been competitive enough that Arlington County Board member Mau-

SEE RIVALRY ON C2

## With clothing line, she went from law to leggings

The founder of the brand Stript left the legal profession behind to launch a career in fashion

BY JORDAN D. BROWN



JORDAN BROWN/THE WASHINGTON POST

Arianna Davis founded Stript in 2020, and since then, the D.C. native has built a loyal customer base in the region. She wants women to find community and confidence in the clothing line.

On a Saturday morning in March, over 1,000 people lined up outside a store for an exclusive product release. They weren't waiting for the latest iPhone, pair of Jordan sneakers or video game.

Instead, they were outside a Goodwill in Bowie, Md., hoping to snag discounted bodysuits, leggings and tennis skirts from Stript, a local brand founded by 29-year-old Arianna Davis. Customers were limited to two items each. But within 30 minutes of doors opening, all of Stript's 400 or so items were gone.

By now, Davis has come to expect this type of excitement for her clothing line. The D.C. native and current Bowie resident has built a loyal customer base: Almost all of her collections sell out, and her brand has nearly 25,000 followers combined on Instagram and TikTok. A recent pop-up in D.C.'s Ivy City neighborhood, featuring a DJ and dance floor, attracted the same fervor.

Yet Davis couldn't have

SEE STRIPT ON C4

# The homicide rate in the District is down from 2023 so far this year

The Post is tracking and mapping every D.C. killing in 2024

BY WASHINGTON POST STAFF

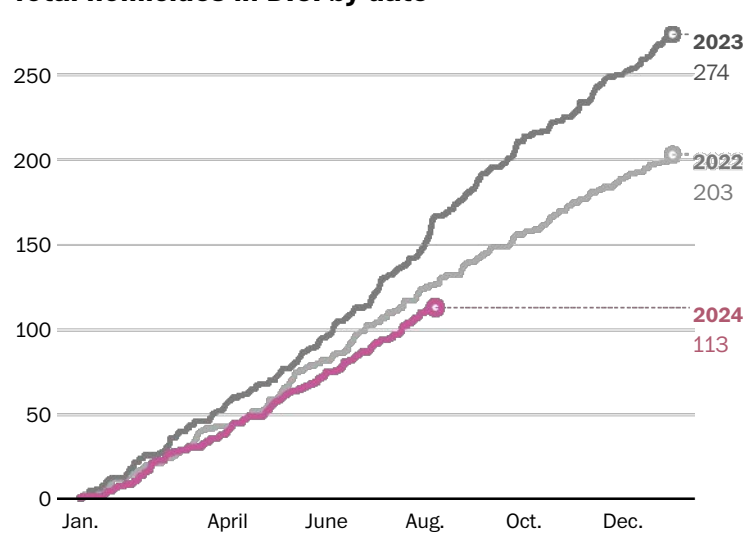
Homicides in the District reached a quarter-century high in 2023, the fifth-highest murder rate among the nation's biggest cities. The pace has slowed so far this year.

Last week, The Washington Post launched an online tracker of D.C. homicides for 2024 based on data compiled by Post reporters. The tracker includes information about how homicides in 2024 compare with previous years, a map of reported incidents and a running list of victims' names.

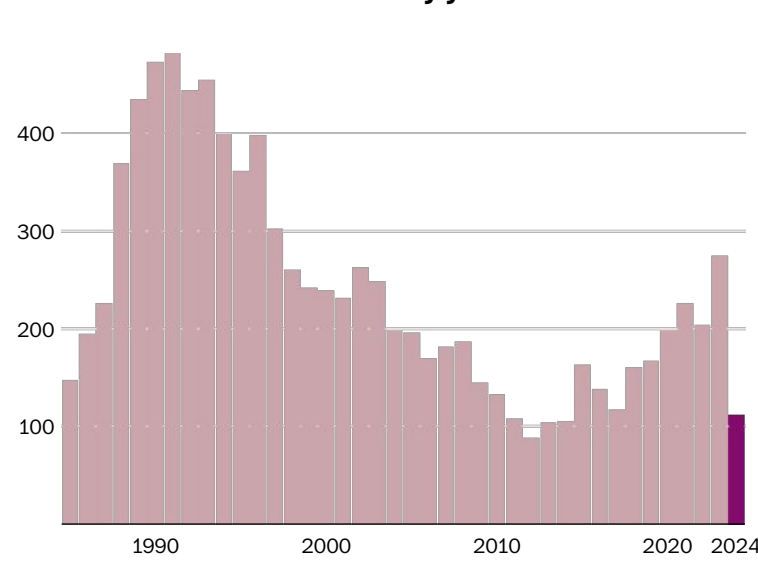
In addition to information from D.C. police, the tracker uses the FBI's database for historical context. Data shows that while homicides in D.C. spiked in 2023, they did not reach the numbers that occurred during the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the District was dubbed the nation's murder capital because of bloodshed fueled by the crack epidemic.

Data collected by The Post for the tracker also includes victim gender and age and the method of killing. Homicide data will generally be updated weekly. Use your phone's camera to scan the QR code to take you to the tracker.

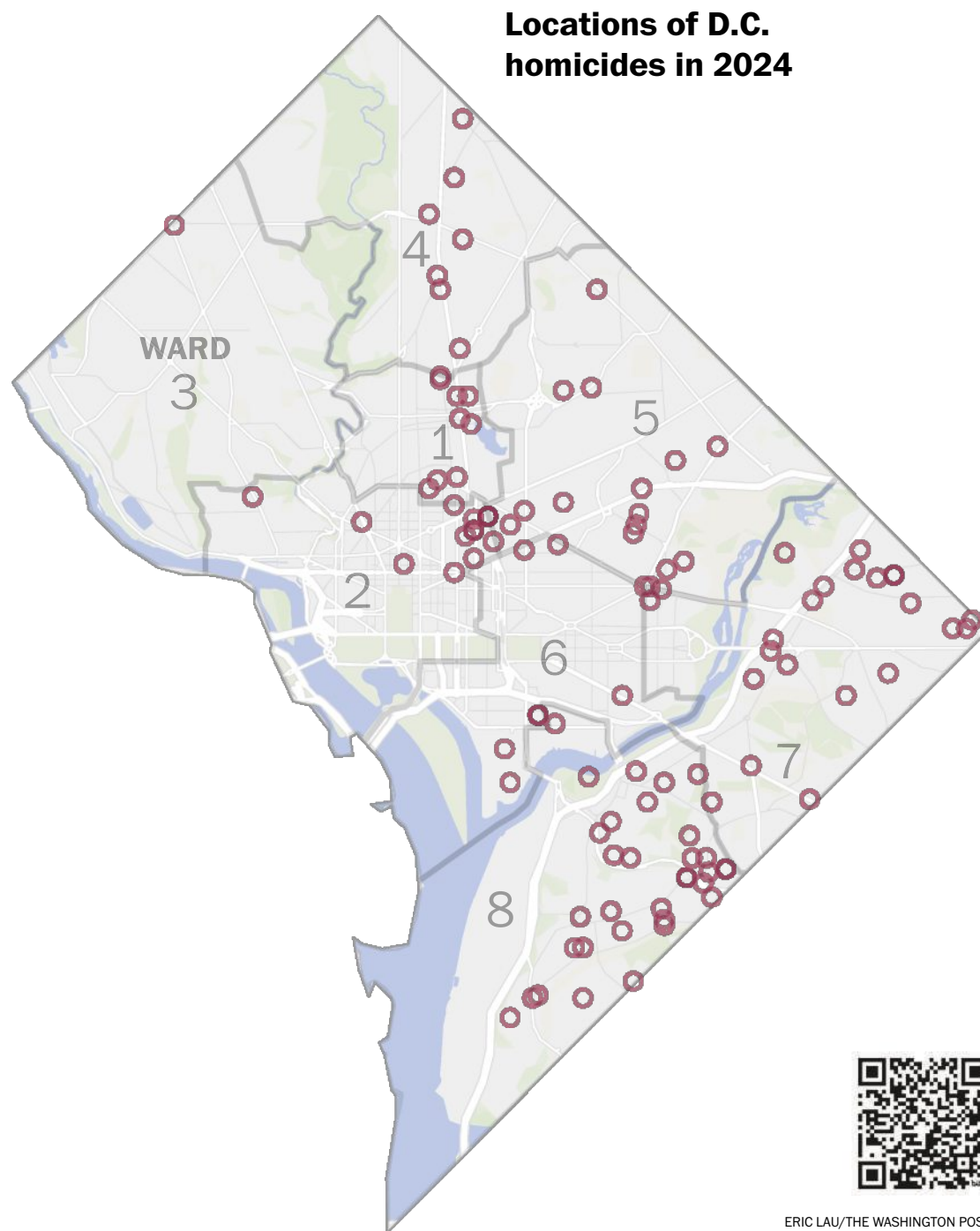
Total homicides in D.C. by date



Number of homicides in D.C. by year since 1985



Data for 2024 is as of Aug. 7.



ERIC LAU/THE WASHINGTON POST

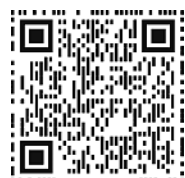
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JABIN BOTSFORD/THE WASHINGTON POST

Noah Lyles, who graduated from high school in Alexandria, celebrates on the podium after winning the gold medal in the 100 meters. He added a bronze in the 200 after testing positive for coronavirus.

## Lyles, Huske gold medals spur rivalry between neighboring D.C. suburbs

RIVALRY FROM C1

reen Coffey (D) took to social media on Monday with a chart comparing her home county with its neighbor.

"Alexandria on the board for gold medals but Arlington still holds the lead," she wrote.

Coffey, who played field hockey in college, said she wanted to be sure that Huske — who won three golds and two silvers, including a world record in the 100 butterfly — received the same sort of hometown love as Lyles, given that women's sports don't always take center stage.

But she could not help lightly teasing Alexandria in the process, either.

"It's a very familial kind of thing," she said. "At the end of the day, we're two of the best possible places you could live. It's the fact that we're so similar and so close together on so many things that it's fun to make fun of."

For a time, in fact, the two jurisdictions were literally indistinguishable: In 1801, Virginia donated what is now Arlington and Old Town Alexandria to become part of the new District of Columbia.

They were grouped together by Congress as a D.C. subdivision under the title "Alexandria County" before being returned to the commonwealth in 1847. It was not until 1870 that the city of Alexandria became independent; Virginia's state legislature changed the county's name to Arlington another 50 years later.

True to a sibling rivalry, there is still plenty of love to be had: "If anyone were to pick on Alexandria, I would say, 'No, no, no, only we get to do that,'" Coffey said.



BERNAT ARMANGUE/AP

Torri Huske, who grew up in Arlington, celebrates with her Olympic gold medal in the 100-meter butterfly on July 28. She also won gold in two relays and silver in two other events.

Farther south and west, Alexandria Mayor Justin M. Wilson (D) described the bond between these two localities as "the special relationship of Northern Virginia." (Wilson, who has lived in Alexandria for decades, nonetheless spent about eight years working day jobs in Arlington.)

"From a values perspective and politically, if you look at election results, we're very similar: They're our sibling community," he said. "We, of course, do everything better, though, just to be clear."

Asked to make a case for her county's superiority, Coffey pointed out that Arlington has been named the "fittest city" in the country seven times and contains several neighborhoods that are more urban than Alexandria — even though it is not

technically a city.

Wilson, for his part, noted with a mix of regret and glee that Alexandria lacks its own rap song — in reference to a semi-viral, tongue-in-cheek 2009 ditty about "the straight-up thug town called Arlington."

(He nonetheless admitted that he owns the same brown flip-flops highlighted in that song, true to the fact that many references could apply to his own city.)

Regardless, if this Olympic faceoff for medals included the whole D.C. area, it's possible that neither Alexandria nor Arlington would end up on top anyway.

Montgomery County, Md., home to swimmer Katie Ledecky and her four Paris medals — plus several others — is right there with them.

## Retropolis

Stories of the past, rediscovered.  
washingtonpost.com/retropolis

The Washington Post



S0129-3x2.5

# Students protesters face campus restrictions after arrests

ARRESTS FROM C1

decided to accept the deal offered by prosecutors.

"As far back as students have existed they have challenged and debated those who put societal laws and norms in place," Valauri, who is from New York and is studying fine arts and criminal justice, said after the hearing. "I'm a little nervous ... about my ability to effectively complete my coursework given these restrictions."

Valauri was among 33 people arrested when D.C. police cleared an encampment in the University Yard at GWU on May 8. At least eight were current GWU students or recent graduates of the university, according to defense attorneys, and so far, five have accepted a stay agreement.

A GWU spokesperson said the government, not the university, is responsible for the court deal presented to students and said the university supports the ability of students who aren't suspended to be able to attend classes.

Patricia Hartman, a spokeswoman for the U.S. attorney's office, declined to comment. In court filings, prosecutors acknowledged some demonstrators were nonviolent, but alleged they refused multiple warnings to leave. This, prosecutors wrote, shows "a proclivity to refusing to comply with both the law and directives from law enforcement."

In D.C., where protests across the political spectrum are as common as traffic on the Beltway, many of those arrested for minor infractions handled by the attorney general office can pay a "post and forfeit" fine on the day of their arrest and not appear in court or face a criminal conviction. However, the unlawful entry charge puts the GWU students' cases before the U.S. attorney's office.

Mara Verheyden-Hilliard, a constitutional rights lawyer who has represented protesters in the city for decades, said it's typical for prosecutors not to pursue charges for minor offenses or offer stay away orders that are narrower than the proposed re-



JORDAN TOVIN FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

**Officials throw out tents and sleeping bags as they clear the encampment at George Washington University on May 8. The student protesters were among thousands of people arrested during pro-Palestinian demonstrations at colleges across the country in the spring.**

strictions for the GWU students.

"These prosecutions are just so outside the normal practice regarding protest arrests, that they demonstrate that they're politically motivated and intended to silence and retaliate against students because they advocated against genocide in Gaza," said Verheyden-Hilliard, executive director of the Partnership for Civil Justice Fund, a nonprofit whose co-founder is representing one of the GWU students. "This is certainly intended to have a chilling effect."

In a statement, a spokesperson for the U.S. attorney's office said "an individual's political motivation for committing a crime is irrelevant to us." A GWU spokesperson said university policies around the rights of student protesters are applied regardless of political views.

Representatives from the U.S.

attorney's office have explained that they often use stay away orders in agreements for certain nonviolent offenses. To determine the scope of a stay away order, prosecutors will weigh several factors, including where a person lives and the location and circumstances of the alleged offense.

The proposed deals come as some student protesters and others remain frustrated over the clearing of the GWU encampment, which occurred just hours before D.C. Mayor Muriel E. Bowser (D) and the city's police Chief Pamela A. Smith were scheduled to testify before congressional Republicans about their handling of the protests. Soon after, the hearing was canceled.

The mayor and police chief have said there was no connection between the scheduled hear-

ing and the encampment clearing. Smith said police learned of items in the encampment that could be used as weapons and uncovered evidence that demonstrators were planning to occupy a campus building, similar to what happened at Columbia. Police said investigators believed demonstrators involved in the protest there had come to D.C.

The encampment at GWU came as students across the country joined demonstrations to protest the war in Gaza, leading to arrests of more than 3,200 people.

In New York, among those arrested were protesters at Columbia University who occupied Hamilton Hall, and some protesters at City College of New York who broke into an administration building. The Manhattan district attorney's office offered some protesters a deal to drop

charges if they agreed to complete an in-person class covering "what constitutes peaceful, legal protesting." Protesters must also avoid getting arrested for six months to have the charges formally dropped, but they would not have to agree to stay away orders. At least 19 people have accepted those agreements, said Manhattan district attorney's office spokesman Douglas Cohen.

Back at GWU, an attorney for Neha Darisi, a South Asian and Hindu student who was arrested in the spring, said the proposed stay away order would mean she could not access essential resources like the Multicultural Student Services Center, as well as the campus library and nearby dining options that can accommodate her dietary restrictions.

In court documents, Darisi's attorney described the center as "one of the only places she feels

safe on campus." The order also would prohibit Darisi from joining friends in various Asian American, South Asian, Indian and Hindu student associations that use outdoor spaces to gather and "create inclusive spaces on campus which Ms. Darisi relies upon."

Darisi, who is still weighing the offer from prosecutors, is expected to make a decision at a hearing on Aug. 19.

In court filings, prosecutors said protesters can seek exceptions in the stay away order if they believe they should have access to other areas on campus.

Mark Goldstone, a defense attorney who has represented thousands of protesters in the District for more than 40 years, called the proposed stay away order offered to his client, GWU student Julia Schmittker, "excessive, broad and unnecessary." He's hopeful it will be narrowed by her next court hearing.

"We're basically begging GWU to allow our students who are paying \$70,000 a year to eat in the dining halls and go to the library. It's ridiculous," Goldstone said. "Just kids sleeping in a tent."

For GWU student Gabriela Lee, 19, who also was arrested in the May demonstration, the decision to accept the deal was a bit easier. They were already facing a temporary suspension from the university as a result of the encampment, including the possibility of being barred from being a leader of a student organization on campus, according to documents shared with The Washington Post. At GWU, disciplinary hearings involve a student conduct panel with three to five full-time students, possibly a member of the faculty or an administrator and a case manager.

"This is definitely not my first choice," said Lee, who just finished their sophomore year majoring in American studies with a minor in Asian American studies. "I am in this situation not because I did anything wrong, but because the university is trying to target me and repress me as an individual who stands for Palestinian activism."

## Family headed to beach shattered by wrong-way drunk driver on Beltway

CRASH FROM C1

earlier pleaded guilty to vehicular manslaughter, causing life-threatening injuries while driving drunk and failure to remain at the scene of an accident involving death. His blood alcohol concentration was more than twice the legal limit.

Maryland sentencing guidelines for the case, while not mandatory, suggested to Berry that she impose a sentence of three months to six years — a duration criticized by the prosecutor on the case, Assistant State's Attorney Kyle O'Grady.

"Although Maryland has significantly improved tools available to law enforcement to combat drunk driving," he wrote in court filings, "the penalties for many serious driving offenses remain low and lag behind neighboring states."

O'Grady requested a sentence of 15 years, citing Hannon's driving record, his fleeing the scene, and the crash's impact on Velez's family.

"The pain and suffering that they experience from not having Ms. Velez in their life — that pain is permanent," he said.

Because vehicular manslaughter is not designated as a crime of violence in Maryland, O'Grady added, Hannon will become eligible for parole consideration after serving 25 percent of his sentence.

Hannon's attorney, Peter Fayne, asked for three years' incarceration. Fayne submitted more than 30 letters to the judge from his client's friends and family, attesting to a childhood rooted in church in Georgia, excellence as a high school student and five years in the Army.

"What has happened here was not intentional," he said in court. "It was not somebody willfully going out and committing an intentional act."

Velez grew up in the Bronx. Her

grandfather, Ramon Velez, served on the New York City Council. As a child, she was hardly shy. "Nobody really scared her," her sister, Torres, recalled. "If someone was wrong, she would make sure they knew it."

The birth of Velez's first child when she was 20 lent focus to her life. "She really fell into being a mother. She wanted to be like our mom. She wanted to make sure everyone was cared for. She even started cooking like our mom," Torres said.

Five years later tragedy hit. Fire broke out at Velez's childhood home. Injuries to her father put him in a two-week coma. He awoke to learn his wife had died.

Torres and Velez later moved to Easton, Pa. Velez worked as a medical assistant before graduating from St. Luke's School of Nursing in December 2022.

On Aug. 1, 2023, as Velez was getting ready for her beach trip, she stopped by her sister's house for help installing a new car seat for her youngest child — the continuation of a running joke between them that Velez was not mechanically gifted.

"She was so excited to be going to the beach," Torres recalled.

The family set off that evening. Because Velez had been working overnight shifts in the emergency room and was used to being up at night, she took the first leg of driving. Their plan was to stay at a hotel in Virginia and make it to the beach by early afternoon the next day.

At the time, Hannon was settling into Maryland. He, too, had lost a parent — his father, who died of complications of a heart transplant when Hannon was 12 years old. "Jayleen felt the need to become the man of the house," his mother said in court.

Hannon went on to finish among the top four in his high school class, she said, while excelling in a Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps program. At 18, he

joined the Army.

Hannon was stationed in Kuwait, South Korea, Virginia and Georgia, said Fayne, his attorney, and earned degrees in information technology and human resources. By then, though, years of drinking as a way to cope with mental health struggles were catching up to him, Fayne said.

On July 4, 2022, just after 10 p.m., police officers in Savannah, Ga., were called to a wreck. They found a Hyundai Sonata flipped in a ditch. Another driver near the scene, Hannon, was described by witnesses as having pushed the Sonata off the road while weaving in and out of traffic.

Hannon smelled of alcohol, had trouble balancing and was charged with speeding and drunken driving, the officers wrote in reports. The case is pending, according to O'Grady.

Less than three months later, Hannon was clocked by a Georgia state trooper going 84 mph in a 45 mph zone. He was stopped and tested at a blood alcohol level more than twice the legal limit, O'Grady said. That matter also is pending.

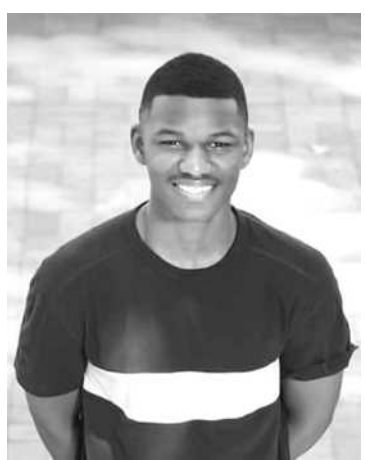
About 10 months later, the evening Velez and her family left for the beach, according to court testimony last week, Hannon drove to a Mexican restaurant and drank, drove to a friend's house and drank, passed out on a sofa, woke up, and tried to get home. "I was young and dumb and I was just focused on having fun," he later told a psychologist who evaluated him and testified in court.

By 11:34 p.m., Hannon had made his way to the northbound lane of Interstate 270 but was driving southbound, hitting speeds of at least 73 mph, according to prosecutors. He flashed his lights at oncoming cars, which swerved out of the way, and approached Montgomery County police officer Jesse Knuth, who happened to be on the Beltway.



MONTGOMERY COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

**This Nissan Pathfinder was crushed head-on by a Mercedes sedan driving the wrong way on the Capital Beltway in Maryland. The Mercedes driver was drunk and weaving in and out of oncoming traffic.**



FAMILY PHOTO

**Jayleen Hannon, who was driving the Mercedes.**



FAMILY PHOTO

**Elizabeth Velez, a Pennsylvania ER nurse, died in the crash.**

Knuth hit his emergency lights but Hannon kept going, zipping by the cruiser one lane away. "There is a vehicle going the wrong way on 495 at the 270 split," Knuth said into his radio and requesting help tracking him down, according to his dashboard camera.

Responding officers quickly got word of a crash near the

Rockville Pike exit. Hannon had slammed into the Pathfinder. A third vehicle, a Lexus SUV that couldn't get out of the way, also collided with the Pathfinder. The Lexus's five occupants received relatively minor injuries.

Three occupants in Velez's car — the front-seat passenger, Johnny Tejada, 36 at the time, and the couple's two younger children in

the back seat — also suffered non-life-threatening injuries. Velez's oldest daughter, 15 at the time, was seated right behind her. She suffered major fractures to her pelvis, left femur and jaw, according to court records.

The girl, now 16 and walking with a cane, spoke in court about her younger sisters, now 9 and nearly 3.

"No one deserves to grow up without a mom, especially two little girls," the 16-year-old said, her voice cracking.

The youngest is just starting to develop memories. "Unless we constantly remind her and show her pictures, she's not going to remember who her mom is," the 16-year-old said.

She praised the 9-year-old's resilience. "She's amazing," said the teen.

Hannon spoke briefly. "Not a day goes by without me thinking about what happened," he said, his voice cracking as well. "I pray for forgiveness and mercy each and every day. I'm sorry to the victims. And I'm sorry to the victims' family."



The Guide to Offers  
The Washington Post

**Enter for the chance to win a pair of tickets to Randy Rogers Band on August 24 at 9:30 Club**

Fronted by singer-songwriter Randy Rogers and featuring Geoffrey Hill (guitar), Jon Richardson (bass guitar), Brady Black (fiddle), Les Lawless (drums) and Todd Stewart (guitar, fiddle, mandolin, keyboards), the Randy Rogers Band was founded in San Marcos, Texas, and has spent more than 20 years bringing the Texas Country tradition to dedicated fans far and wide. The band dropped album *Homecoming* in 2022. "The Randy Rogers Band is the compass point for what Texas country is, and *Homecoming* is as splendid an example of it as any other, with striking appeal in every track, never letting you down, and exemplifying everything that Texas country is supposed to be" (savingcountrymusic.com).

See details at [washingtonpost.com/entertainment/events/lists/388](https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/events/lists/388)



# Clothing line's founder used pandemic downtime to create a business plan

STRIPT FROM C1

imagined this type of success four years ago, when she was in law school. A career in fashion was merely a dream.

"I knew I didn't want to be a lawyer, but I didn't know when I would be able to get into business," Davis said. "And then it kind of just came together."

## A pandemic pivot

The idea for Stript originated in 2020, a time when millions of people created businesses during the covid-19 pandemic.

That March, Davis was in her last semester of law school at Howard University. Although graduation was right around the corner and a legal career seemed imminent, she dreamed of pursuing a fashion business. With her legal externship canceled because of the pandemic, she spent nine months creating a business plan for making her own bodysuits.

She came up with the name Stript to describe how her clothes create a sculpting feeling on the body.

"I knew that I wanted the name to be about feeling like your true self. ... We thought that Stript sounded so cool, and it made sense, because you're stripped down to your real self," Davis said.

She launched Stript online on Black Friday in 2020, three months before she started working full time at a law firm. In her first three days of business, she sold 300 bodysuits. Some of her first customers included the rappers Latto and Flo Milli. Others have flocked to the brand since then, waiting for the next clothing release.

"Everyone has pleated skirts and tennis skirts or whatnot, but there's nothing like the Stript one," said Clarke Smith, who has been a customer since the launch. Smith, a wardrobe stylist, says she feels like "an immediate baddie" when she puts on one of her 13 and counting Stript products.

"You know when you're about to go out somewhere and you're just like, 'I don't feel my skinniest'? I don't have to worry about that with Stript because it's literally going to suck you in. You instantly feel confident and secure," the 27-year-old said.



JORDAN BROWN/THE WASHINGTON POST

Stript founder Arianna Davis hosted the brand's first pop-up in June in D.C.'s Ivy City neighborhood. The line includes bodysuits, leggings, crop tops and leotards, and Davis came up with the name Stript to describe how the clothing creates a sculpting feeling on the body.

*"Everyone has pleated skirts and tennis skirts or whatnot, but there's nothing like the Stript one."*

Clarke Smith, who has been a customer since the launch and says she feels like "an immediate baddie" when she puts on a Stript product

Over the next three years, Davis saw her customer base grow and demand rise across the country. She finally got the push she needed to make it her full-time job. In March, she retired from her associate position at White & Case LLP and now manages Stript full time with a team of 10 women of color. She says pursuing the career she loves was easy, but leaving law behind was challenging.

"The difficult part was the risk associated with going full time [at Stript] and stepping away from the income I was making," Davis said. "I was doing well, but I was

so unhappy."

## Engaging with the community

Although Davis primarily sells her clothing online, she's begun holding more in-person events this year, including her partnership with Goodwill and the pop-up event in June. Davis sees this as a way to foster community with her customers.

"We wouldn't have the brand we are without the support that we have. We don't often send things out to major influencers or celebrities or do a whole bunch of

PR things," said Tiara Usog, Stript's head of operations. "We really just rely on love and appreciate our customers for sharing word of mouth, letting their friends try on their pieces to try to get Stript where it is now."

At the Goodwill-Stript event, accessibility and sustainability were top priorities, Davis said. The clothes on offer were ones that had been returned or used in photo shoots. Items were available in all sizes, and prices ranged from \$13 to \$18, a stark discount compared with Stript's lowest-priced product normally, a \$55

crop top.

"I know what it's like to be a young person or not having enough money for something and really wanting it," Davis said.

Goodwill's sales, which average about \$1,000 on a Saturday morning, totaled nearly \$6,000 during the sale, according to Carolyn Becker, director of communications and community engagement at Goodwill of Greater Washington.

In May, Davis started a tennis club for Stript customers to learn the game. Nearly 100 people attended her first event, held at Watkins Regional Park in Upper Marlboro, Md., on May 25. Spanning four courts, the crowd of predominantly Black women received lessons from three tennis coaches.

Kevin Woodruff, one of Stript's tennis coaches, said he hopes Davis's effort will expose more Black women to the sport. In 2023, the share of Americans who played tennis was only 11 percent Black, according to a report from the U.S. Tennis Association.

"There's not many Black women in the game of tennis, other than Coco [Gauff], Alycia Parks, Madison Keys and the Williams sisters, who are pretty much on their way out," Woodruff said. "The more we expose the younger women, as they start families, they'll introduce their children to the game at an early age."

Next on the horizon for Stript is an expansion of the tennis club to Atlanta and Los Angeles, which have the highest number of Stript customers outside the D.C. region. Davis's goal is for Stript to become a one-stop shop, its clothing sold both online and through in-person retailers, where customers can buy current products along with T-shirts, denim, nightwear, eyewear and jewelry.

Davis wants Stript to be not only a clothing brand, but also a source of confidence for her customers.

"Our whole aesthetic and identity is about being empowered ... and that paired with the actual garment that is designed to snatch you and enhance your curves," Davis said. "Those two things together, I think have really helped a lot of women and girls feel confident and better."

## VIRGINIA

# Iranian nationals charged in smuggling plot that led to deaths of Navy SEALs

## Two brothers accused of shipping illicit weapons remain at large

BY PAUL DUGGAN

Two brothers described by federal prosecutors as being affiliated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard have been indicted on new charges in what authorities said was a weapons-smuggling operation that led to the deaths of two Navy SEALs in the Arabian Sea this year.

The brothers, both Iranian nationals who remain at large, employed the captain of a merchant vessel that was intercepted off the coast of Somalia by the U.S. military Jan. 11, according to the indictment that was issued by a federal grand jury in Virginia. Authorities said the vessel, called

a "dhow," was carrying Iranian-made missile warheads and components bound for militants in Yemen.

Two SEALs, Christopher J. Chambers, 37, and Nathan Gage Ingram, 27, died during the nighttime ship-boarding raid when one of them fell into the rough sea and the other jumped in to try to save him, officials said. Their bodies have not been recovered.

"The type of weaponry found aboard the dhow" was consistent "with the weaponry used by [Yemen's] Houthi rebel forces in recent attacks on merchant ships and U.S. military ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden," the U.S. attorney's office in Alexandria said in a statement.

The indictment issued Wednesday expands on federal charges leveled against the brothers this year.

Authorities identified the brothers as Shahab Mir'kazei

and Yunus Mir'kazei. Each was indicted on multiple charges, including providing material support or resources to terrorists, resulting in death, and committing violence against maritime navigation involving weapons of mass destruction, resulting in death. The indictment says the two men "worked in Iran for the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps," the country's most powerful military institution.

The Houthi rebels are engaged in a civil war against Yemen's government and are designated a terrorist group by the U.S. State Department. The organization is among a cluster of armed groups, including some operating in Iraq and Syria, that receive weapons and training from Iran as part of a vast anti-Israel, anti-U.S. network that Tehran has supported for years.

The deaths referred to in the charges were those of the two SEALs, who are identified in the

indictment by their initials. The charges are punishable by up to life in prison.

Shahab Mir'kazei owned the intercepted ship, named the Yunus, which is also his brother's name, prosecutors said. They said the brothers employed the vessel's captain, Muhammad Pahlawan, 48, a Pakistani citizen who had been in federal custody since the Jan. 11 boarding.

Pahlawan also was charged in Wednesday's indictment with the same offenses that the Mir'kazei brothers face. Two crew members of a dhow, also named in the indictment, were charged with the lesser offenses of lying to U.S. authorities during the boarding of a ship.

In all, 14 members of the crew, including the captain, were taken into custody in January after the boarding. How many are still being held was not immediately clear Thursday.

"Pahlawan allegedly worked

with Shahab to prepare the dhow for multiple smuggling voyages, and Shahab paid Pahlawan in Iranian Rials from a bank account in Shahab's name," the statement said. "Pahlawan allegedly arranged to receive payments from Shahab and Yunus in Iran and distribute the money to his family and others."

The vessel's January trip in the Arabian Sea was part of an operation that began last August, according to the indictment. During that span, Pahlawan "completed multiple smuggling voyages, coordinated and funded by Shahab and Yunus, by traveling with cargo from Iran to the coast of Somalia and transporting that cargo to another dhow for ship-to-ship transfer."

In January, "Pahlawan departed Iran and traveled toward the coast of Somalia with advanced conventional weaponry until United States forces stopped him," the indictment says.

With the dhow at sea near Somalia on the night of Jan. 11, a team that included SEALs and U.S. Coast Guard personnel was dispatched from a floating base, the USS Lewis B. Puller, to raid the vessel, which was suspected of carrying illicit arms. As they attempted to board, one of the SEALs slipped from a ladder and the other, having witnessed his comrade fall into the water, dove in to help, officials said. Both vanished in the powerful swells.

The two were declared dead by the Navy after an exhaustive 10-day search covering 21,000 square miles of the Arabian Sea, officials said at the time, underscoring the risks to the United States of spiraling violence across the Middle East amid Israel's war in Gaza.

After the missile components were confiscated, the dhow was intentionally sunk. The boarding team had deemed it "unsafe," officials said.

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# OBITUARIES

CHI CHI RODRIGUEZ, 88

## Big swing, showman's flair brought fans to noted golfer from Puerto Rico

BY MATT SCHUDEL

Chi Chi Rodriguez, one of the most popular and entertaining figures in golf history, who brought ebullience and a showman's flair to his staid and tradition-bound sport and became a dominant force on the senior tour in his 50s, died Aug. 8 at age 88.

His death was announced by the PGA Tour, which did not specify the cause or location of his death. He had homes in Port St. Lucie, Fla., and his native Puerto Rico.

Mr. Rodriguez, who grew up in poverty, had an unlikely climb to stardom. He fashioned his first clubs out of branches from a guava tree, worked in sugar-cane fields and as a country club caddy, then served in the U.S. Army before joining the professional tour in 1960.

At 5-foot-7, he weighed 117 pounds at the time and seldom topped 135 pounds during his career, but his strong hands and flexible wrists helped him produce one of the most powerful swings of his era. Long before metal club heads were introduced — when drivers called “woods” were actually made of wood — Mr. Rodriguez could routinely hit the ball 250 to 300 yards off the tee. (Many players currently hit more than 300 yards, but with more advanced equipment.)

“You’ve certainly got to respect Chi Chi’s ability,” Jack Nicklaus told *Sports Illustrated* in 1964. “For a little man, he sure can hit it.”

Mr. Rodriguez also had an exceptional short game and was adept at getting out of bunkers with his iron and wedge play. He won eight tournaments during his 25 years on the PGA Tour, but his weakness at putting kept him from being among the elite golfers of the 1960s and 1970s.

As the first Puerto Rican golfer on the tour, Mr. Rodriguez had an exuberant style of play that seemed completely alien to the stoic manner of Ben Hogan, Cary Middlecoff and other golfers who defined the sport in the 1950s. Mr. Rodriguez, who always wore a brimmed straw hat on the course, shook hands and joked with fans between shots and sometimes broke into song.

After sinking a birdie putt, he would dance on the green and drop his hat over the hole, “so the little birdie won’t fly away.” Long before he won his first tournament in 1963, Mr. Rodriguez was already a favorite with fans.

His fellow golfers were not always amused, calling him a “showboat” and a “firecracker.” They complained that his constant chatter distracted them,



**TOP:** In a 2001 tournament just outside Boston, Chi Chi Rodriguez displays the sand-trap skills that gave him a strong short game. **ABOVE:** Mr. Rodriguez accepts a check after winning a Las Vegas invitational. He won eight tournaments during 25 years on the PGA Tour, though a weakness at putting kept him from being one of the best.

that his dancing disturbed the surface of the greens and — probably — that the weight of his straw hat left marks near the hole.

“Personally, I like him,” Arnold Palmer said in 1964, “but I think a little of his clowning around goes a long way.”

At the Master’s Tournament that year, Palmer scolded Mr. Rodriguez for his antics. A few months later, Mr. Rodriguez beat Palmer by a single stroke to win the Western Open outside Chicago.

“When I first joined the tour, it bothered me what the other golfers said,” Mr. Rodriguez told *The Washington Post* in 1970. “But I’ve learned ... the average golfer is jealous. ... We’ll be playing together, and I draw all the fans, and he can’t understand ... why a guy like me is so popular. I do what I do because the fans like it, and I like the fans.”

Nonetheless, he began to show more restraint by not celebrating while other golfers were preparing for their shots. Instead of dropping his hat over the hole, he developed his “sword dance” routine, which became a signature move.

After sinking an important putt, Mr. Rodriguez brandished his putter like a fencer or a matador about to administer the coup de grâce. He then wiped off the shaft of the club with a handker-

chief and slid it through his other hand, as if placing a sword back in its scabbard.

“Why not give the fans something extra?” Mr. Rodriguez told *The Post*. “With no fans, there is no golf. I like to see people happy and laughing. Whatever I do, I do because I love people.”

He won his final PGA tournament — the Tallahassee Open — in 1979. Six years later, after turning 50, he joined the senior tour, now called the PGA Tour Champions. On the advice of veteran coach Bob Toski, he sharpened his putting stroke and won 22 titles on the senior tour, and became the first senior golfer to win \$500,000 in prize money. He eventually earned more than \$6 million as a senior golfer before retiring in his late 60s.

Once, on a 95-degree day, a spectator asked Mr. Rodriguez how he could play in such steamy conditions.

“I said, ‘That’s not hot,’” he recalled to the *New York Times* in 1987. “Hot is when you’re working all day in the sun in a sugar-cane field for a dollar a day. That’s what I did, starting when I was 7 years old.”

### Impoverished childhood

Juan Antonio Rodriguez Jr. was born Oct. 23, 1935, in Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, the fifth of six children. His parents separat-

ed when he was young, and he and his siblings grew up with their father, who cut sugar cane.

Young Chi Chi carried water to the field workers and began cutting cane himself before discovering that he could make more money as a caddy at a nearby country club. He began by spotting balls hit by club members and soon took up the game in earnest, making his own clubs from branches and hammering tin cans into the shape of golf balls. He also boxed and played baseball in his youth alongside such stars as Roberto Clemente and Orlando Cepeda. He took his nickname from another Puerto Rican ballplayer, Chi Chi Flores.

At the age of 12, Mr. Rodriguez shot a 67 on the country club course and made extra money by winning bets against unsuspecting adults. He spent two years in the Army in the 1950s, winning the base golf championship at Fort Sill, Okla.

Back in Puerto Rico, he became the assistant pro at a golf resort and received financial backing from one of the owners, Laurance Rockefeller, to join the PGA Tour.

Throughout his life, Mr. Rodriguez was a frequent speaker at banquets and business gatherings, often drawing humor and inspiration from his background. He was so poor as a child, he joked, that he drank milk with a fork to make it last longer. As a youngster, he had rickets and other ailments caused by poor nutrition. He said he didn’t own a toothbrush until he was in his teens.

In 1979, Mr. Rodriguez established a foundation in Clearwater, Fla., that has raised millions of dollars and has benefited thousands of underprivileged children.

“I love kids because I was never a kid,” he told *Sports Illustrated*. “I was too poor to be a kid.”

In 1964, Mr. Rodriguez married Iwalani Lum-King, a Hawaiian-born hula dancer and beauty queen, and adopted her daughter from an earlier marriage. His wife died in 2021. Survivors include his daughter, two brothers and two sisters.

Mr. Rodriguez, who published several books about golf technique, was named to the World Golf Hall of Fame in 1992 and always retained his easy rapport with fans.

“Players today, they don’t want to look people in the eye,” he told the *Kansas City Star* in 2002. “They think, ‘If I look them in the eye, they will want something from me.’ Can you imagine that?”

“Me, I’m just the opposite. I want to look everybody in the eye. I just hope they look back.”

SUSAN WOJCICKI, 56

## She rented her garage to the founders of Google, then became key executive

BY FRANCES VINALL, VICTORIA BISSET AND BRIAN MURPHY

Susan Wojcicki, whose garage was the brainstorming base for the internet-age powerhouse Google and who cemented her place as one of the most influential women in Silicon Valley during almost a decade as chief of YouTube, died Aug. 9 at age 56.

A Facebook post by her husband, Dennis Troper, said she had lived with non-small-cell lung cancer for two years. He gave no other information, including the location of her death.

Ms. Wojcicki (pronounced WO-jis-key) stepped down from YouTube last year. At the time, she was the only woman running one of the major social media platforms.

She had been part of Google since the company’s beginnings in the late 1990s. She was working at the chipmaker Intel at the time and rented the garage of her Menlo Park, Calif., home to friends Larry Page and Sergey Brin for \$1,700 a month.

Page and Brin used the space to create a more intuitive algorithm for internet searches as the web was taking an increasingly prominent role in the workplace and at home. When Google was launched in 1998 — with its name spelled out in playful colors — the browser ecosystem was already full of options, including AltaVista and Netscape.

Google began to leapfrog over rivals one by one. In an early company announcement by Page, he wrote: “Have fun and keep googling!” By the early 2000s, Google had become so dominant that “google” was becoming a verb.



**Susan Wojcicki at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, on May 24, 2022. She ran YouTube for nearly a decade, the only woman running a major social media platform.**

Ms. Wojcicki was one of Google’s earliest hires — “employee number 16” — and was the company’s first marketing manager. She helped launch and grow ventures such as AdSense, Google Analytics, Google Books, Google Images — and the distinctive Google Doodle on the site — before pushing for the acquisition of YouTube in 2006. She was appointed head of the video-sharing site in 2014.

One of the Google acquisitions she helped shepherd, control of the online advertising space DoubleClick, became the target of federal antitrust monitors and

led to a Justice Department lawsuit in 2023 seeking to break up segments of the company’s online advertising divisions.

“She is as core to the history of Google as anyone, and it’s hard to imagine the world without her,” Sundar Pichai, Google’s chief executive, said in a statement after her death.

Over her tenure, YouTube’s monthly users approximately doubled to more than 2 billion, and the platform introduced methods for creators to earn money for their content. But the company was also criticized for how it dealt with problematic

content such as hate speech and misinformation.

She acknowledged that content moderation remained one of the enduring challenges at YouTube — and all social media operations.

“I know we can do better, but we’re going to get there. We’ll get to a point where we have solved a lot of these issues, and I feel like we’ve already made significant progress,” she told the *New York Times* in 2019. “I own this problem, and I’m going to fix it.”

She stepped down from YouTube last year to spend more time with her family and focus on her

health and personal projects, she said in a letter to employees.

In an event at the Atlantic Council in 2021, Ms. Wojcicki recalled her experience at the very beginning of Google, saying of Page and Brin: “I can’t say I thought, ‘Oh, they have this amazing idea, I’m going to rent them the garage because I want to have equity’ or anything. I just wanted the rent.”

That, she said, changed once she found out more about their work while Page and Brin worked through the nights. “I realized, like, wow, this is really making a difference, and it can help me find information,” she said.

### Followed early tech

Susan Diane Wojcicki was born in Santa Clara, Calif., on July 5, 1968. Her father was chairman of the physics department at Stanford University; her mother was a journalist and teacher.

Ms. Wojcicki graduated in 1990 from Harvard University with a bachelor’s degree in history and literature and considered pursuing a career in academia. She said the emergence of what was then called the World Wide Web — and its transformational potential — set her on a new path into technology.

She received a master’s degree in economics from the University of California at Santa Cruz in 1993 and, in 1998, an MBA from UCLA.

Ms. Wojcicki was pregnant when she joined Google, she wrote in a 2016 column for the *Wall Street Journal* about the benefits of paid maternity leave. “Mothers were able to take the time they needed to bond with their babies and return to their jobs feeling confident and ready,” she wrote. “And it’s much better

for Google’s bottom line — to avoid costly turnover, and to retain the valued expertise, skills and perspective of our employees who are mothers.”

Ms. Wojcicki also spoke out about other obstacles that women in technology and leadership face.

After a memo from a Google employee in 2017 that suggested differences between men and women may contribute to the lack of women in tech and top management, Ms. Wojcicki said that she had repeatedly “faced the slights that come with” such beliefs.

“I’ve had my abilities and commitment to my job questioned,” she wrote in *Fortune*. “I’ve been left out of key industry events and social gatherings. I’ve had meetings with external leaders where they primarily addressed the more junior male colleagues. I’ve had my comments frequently interrupted and my ideas ignored until they were rephrased by men. No matter how often this all happened, it still hurt.”

She and her husband had five children. Their son Marco died in February at 19 from a reported drug overdose. Survivors include two sisters, Anne Wojcicki, who co-founded and leads ancestry site 23andMe, and Janet Wojcicki, a professor of pediatrics at the University of California at San Francisco, and her mother, Esther Wojcicki, who wrote “How to Raise Successful People” (2019).

Ms. Wojcicki’s net worth was estimated by *Forbes* to be about \$800 million.

In her last post on X, she expressed excitement last month at joining the board of Planet, a satellite and geospatial solutions technology company.

## IN REMEMBRANCE

## MALONEY



**SYLVIA ANN MALONEY (Age 82)**  
Of Upper Marlboro, MD, passed away peacefully at home on July 20, 2024 at the age of 82. Born on February 19, 1942, in Southend-On-Sea, Essex England. Survived by loving partner Lou Caporaletti. Lovingly remembered by sons Russell Maloney and Darron Maloney. Daughters-in-law Aoyjai Maloney and Melissa Torres. Loving grandchildren Chayla Maloney, Caiden Maloney, Leah Hanlon, Aidan Torres, Andrew Maloney and Gideon Maloney. Great Grandson Bronx Yeary.

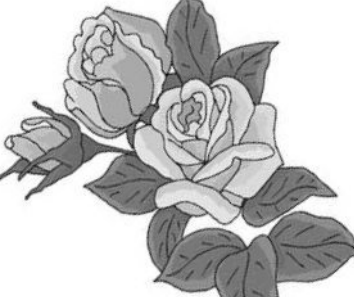
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## BURBA

**SEGAL L. BURBA**  
On Monday, August 5, 2024 of Springfield, VA. Beloved husband of Brenda Burba; father of Derek Burba (Debra), Angie Thomas, Deron Burba (Kim), Anita Tolliver and Andrea Patterson; brother of Daniel Burba (Roswita); grandfather of 11 and great-grandfather of two.

A visitation will be held at Fairfax Memorial Funeral Home, 9902 Braddock Rd., Fairfax, VA on Tuesday, August 13, 2024 from 6 to 8 p.m. Funeral service and burial will be held in Hillsboro, OH.

Contributions may be made to any Parkinsons Foundation.



## DEATH NOTICE

## CUSHING

**JOAN CUSHING**  
Cushing, Joan, 77, peacefully passed away Tuesday, May 21, 2024 at a care facility in Columbia, Maryland. She is survived by her sons Ben, Chris and Patrick; by her siblings Vince, Nancy, David, Frank, Brian, Michael and Dan; by four grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews; and was predeceased by her husband Paul Buchbinder. Funeral services will be performed at Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Washington, DC on Monday, August 19, 2024 at 10:30 a.m. and livestreamed (<https://www.youtube.com/live/TNmurk1V1Q>). An obituary was published in the Washington Post on June 25, 2024 (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/obituaries/2024/06/25/joan-cushing-mrs-foggybottom-dead/>). Memorial donations may be made in Joan's name at Goodwill Industries (<https://www.goodwill.org/donors/financial-donation/>) and at the HealthWell Foundation (<https://secure.healthwellfoundation.org/forms/donate-for-the-purpose-Neurology-MovementDisorders-Medicare-Access/>).

## IN MEMORIAM

## GOERINGER



**JOAN M. GOERINGER & GERALD C. GOERINGER**  
In loving memory of our parents. It is hard to believe that 2024 means a decade has passed already. We love you and miss you both.  
Your spawn, Keith and Leslie

## DEATH NOTICE

## DOOLEY

**PATTIE ROBERT DOOLEY**  
Pattie "Pat" Robert Dooley, 92, of Burke, Virginia, beloved wife of the late Ronald "Ron" Dooley, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, August 7, 2024, at the age of 92. Family and friends are invited to attend a viewing at Domaine Funeral Home, 5308 Backlick Road, Springfield, VA on August 13, 2024, from 5 to 7 p.m. Her Funeral Service will be held at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 5800 Backlick Road, Springfield on August 14, 2024, at 11:30 a.m. with interment at Fairfax Memorial Park, 9900 Braddock Road, Fairfax.

Pattie was born on October 16, 1931, in Hopewell, Virginia to Ruth Amelia Saunders (nee Turner) and William Bernard Saunders both of Washington, DC. She graduated from Anacostia High School in 1948. In 1950, she married her high school sweetheart, Robert F. Wiener, with whom she had three children: Ruth Marguerite Hille (Rolf), Susan Frances Yuridsky (Alan), and Robert Francis Wiener, Jr. (William). Then in 1959, Pattie married Ron Dooley. In the following years, Pattie became the one great-great-grand-

## DEATH NOTICE

## DOOLEY

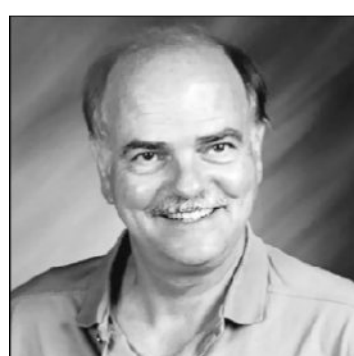
daughter. She retired from the Department of Commerce as a personnel specialist in 1986.

Pattie is preceded in death by her parents; former husband, Robert Francis Wiener of Forestville, MD, and her husband of 60 years, Ronald Dooley of Burke, Virginia. Pat is also preceded in death by her sisters Lillian Diemer, of Maryland and Janice Bridgman of California; her brother Charles Saunders of Maryland; her daughter Susan Yuridsky of Virginia, and her great-grandson, Christopher Nathan Hille of Texas.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation of your favorite charity. Condolences may be expressed at [dignitymemorial.com](https://dignitymemorial.com).

The family would like to thank the entire staff at Heatherwood Retirement Community in Burke, doctors, nurses, and technical staff at Fairfax Hospital; and Capital Caring Hospice Care, for their dedication, kindness and professionalism.

## DRISCOLL



**JOHN THOMAS DRISCOLL**  
John Thomas Driscoll, of Alexandria, VA, passed away peacefully on August 4, 2024, with his family by his side. Born on April 24, 1949, in Johnson City, NY, he was the son of John Harold Driscoll and Elizabeth May Payne. John graduated from McLean High School in McLean, VA, in 1966 and went on to earn a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a Master of Urban Affairs from Virginia Tech. He married Clorinda Luisa Renzi of Watertown, NY, on March 17, 1984.

John devoted 33 years to teaching political science and economics at Robinson Secondary School in Fairfax, VA. Known affectionately as "D" and "the Drisco" by his students, he was one of the first teachers to work on pilot programs in Applied Economics for Junior Achievement USA. His role as an adviser and consultant took him to Russia, Vietnam, and various locations across the United States. John served on numerous teacher panels and participated in a special White House council on the role of technology in education. He also contributed letters to The Washington Post, where he passionately advocated for national education policy.

John is survived by his wife, Clorinda Luisa Renzi; his daughter, Erin Gardner (James) of Springfield, VA; his step-daughter, Joan Dickinson (David) of Blacksburg, VA; his step-son, Joseph Ivers III (Yvonne) of Nokesville, VA; and his grandchildren, Christian Gardner, Gabriella Gardner, Madeleine Dickinson, Samuel Dickinson, Emily Ivers, and Wyatt Ivers.

John's legacy lives on through his family, students, and the many lives he touched throughout his distinguished career. A celebration of John's life and legacy will be held on Saturday, September 14 from 3 to 5 p.m. at Domaine Funeral Home in Alexandria, VA.

## DEATH NOTICE

## FLOWE



**DORIS MARIE LOUIS FLOWE (Age 86)**  
Entered eternal rest on Sunday, August 4, 2024. She is survived by her beloved children, Stacy (Stevenson) Tranquille and Michael Workman; three adored grandchildren, Samara Grace and Josiah; loving niece and nephew, Veronica and Stephen Williams, Sr.; great-grand niece and nephew, Verica Sharie and Stephen Williams, Jr.; host of other relatives and close friends. She worked as a nurse at Freedman's, Providence Hospitals, and Junior Village and as a social worker for the Department of Human Services. Ms. Flowe was an active member of National Eligibility Workers Association.

Ms. Flowe will lie in state at STEWART FUNERAL HOME, 4001 Benning Road NE, Washington, DC 20019, on Wednesday, August 14, 2024, from 10 a.m. until celebration of life service at 11 a.m. Final resting place at Lincoln Memorial Cemetery, Suitland, MD.  
[www.stewartfuneralhome.com](http://www.stewartfuneralhome.com)

## KING

**JAMES ARTHUR KING**  
James King, (August 26, 1941) passed away on (August 5, 2024) after a long battle with serious health conditions. He is survived by his three children (Kristin Bussell, Roger King, Adam King); his siblings (Warren King, Jackie King); eight grandchildren (Bryan, Sara, Zachary, Caille (deceased), Amy, Tyler and Samantha); and 11 great-grandchildren. He was a fun uncle to his many nieces and nephews and will be remembered fondly.

James, known as Will to his friends, was active in community service and will be missed. A celebration of his life will be held at a later time.

## LARSON

**CAROLYN GRACE LARSON**  
Librarian and Head of the Business Section at the Library of Congress, passed away on August 1, 2024, in Omaha, Nebraska. She graduated from Oberlin College and Columbia University. Survived by her husband, Everett; four children—Elizabeth, Richard, Edward, Catherine; and six grandchildren. Memorial service at The Village at Rockville's chapel on August 30 at 2 p.m. Full obituary and family guestbook at [www.pumphreyfuneralhome.com](http://www.pumphreyfuneralhome.com)

**When the need arises, let families find you in the Funeral Services Directory.**

To be seen in the Funeral Services Directory, please call paid Death Notices at 202-334-4122.

*The Washington Post*

## IN MEMORIAM

## DEATH NOTICE

## EDMONDSON



**MICHAEL ANDREW EDMONDSON (Age 47)**

Of Alexandria, Virginia passed away on August 3, 2024. Loving husband of Angela Edmondson (Luciano); beloved father to Dominic and Grace; son of Curtis Edmondson and

## DEATH NOTICE

## EDMONDSON

Leslee Valentini; and dear brother of Christopher Edmondson and Steven Edmondson. Mike was a 1999 graduate of the United States Air Force Academy, a 23-year Air Force veteran and combat tested pilot, retiring in 2022 as a Lieutenant Colonel. He was a shining example of everything a family, band, father and friend should be. Mike's life was tragically cut short by a blood clot in his heart.

Family and friends may call on the Edmondsons at Jefferson Funeral Chapel, 5755 Castleweller Drive, Alexandria, VA 22315 for a visitation on Tuesday, August 13, 2024 from 2 to 4 and 6 to 8 p.m. A funeral service will be held at the Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling Chapel on August 14, 2024 at 11 a.m. Interment will follow at Arlington National Cemetery on a later date. In lieu of flowers, contributions in Mike's memory may be made to the gofundme account set up in their name. Angela intends to divide all contributions between a local youth sports charity and Dominic and Grace's college savings accounts. Please view and sign the family guestbook at [www.jeffersonfuneralchapel.com](http://www.jeffersonfuneralchapel.com)

## FRAZIER



**ROY DONALD FRAZIER**

Age 96 of Rockville, MD retired US Patent Office and Navy Vet WWII passed away on August 6, 2024. Son of the late Grover Cleveland Frazier and Sarah Leah Reed of San Antonio, TX.

Preceded in death by his wife Marilyn Elizabeth Coughler Boudin; daughter Melissa; brothers Grover Conn and Winfred Reed Frazier.

He is survived by children: Deborah Boudin Culpepper (Jack), Lisa Frazier, Reed Frazier (Kathy), Mark Frazier. Grandchildren: Elizabeth Culpepper, Donald Culpepper (Jodi) and Matthew Frazier (Erin), seven great grandchildren and three great-great grandchildren.

Relatives and friends will be received at PUMPHREY'S COLOMBIA FUNERAL HOME, 300 W. Montgomery Avenue, Rockville, MD on Sunday, August 18, 2024 from 3 to 6 p.m. A Graveside Service will be held on Monday, August 19, 2024 at 10 a.m. in Parklawn Memorial Park, 12800 Veirs Mill Road, Rockville, MD.

In lieu of flowers donations can be made to the Maryland Water Pipe Band. Full obituary and online guestbook at [www.pumphreyfuneralhome.com](http://www.pumphreyfuneralhome.com)

## GEER



**JAMES HORACE GEER "Jim"**

James "Jim" Horace Geer, 84 years old, passed away peacefully on Wednesday May 22, 2024, at home in Parkland, Florida, a home which he shared with the love of his life and wife of 62 years, Kathleen "Kathy" Geer.

Jim was born and raised in Sparta, Tennessee, graduating from White County High School in 1957. He attended Tennessee Technological University, graduating in 1961 with a B.S. Degree in Business Administration. Jim received his commission in November 1961 in the U.S. Army through ROTC and served as a 2nd Lieutenant based at Fort Bragg.

Jim joined the FBI in May 1964 and after training was assigned to the FBI office in Springfield, Illinois. After attending language training in Monterey, California, he was transferred to Washington, DC where he held various positions until 1978 when he was transferred to the Dallas, Texas office as Assistant Agent in Charge. He returned to Washington, DC in 1979 and in 1982 was appointed Assistant Director of the FBI's

Laboratory Division. In August 1985 he took the position of Assistant Director of Foreign Counterintelligence and served in this position until his retirement in November 1989. Following his retirement from the FBI, Jim joined the DuPont Company as Director of Corporate Security for the company's worldwide operations from December 1989 until his retirement on December 31, 2000. On May 5, 1986, the mayor of his hometown Sparta, Tennessee proclaimed Jim "A Most Illustrious Citizen of Sparta, Tennessee".

Also in 1986, he received the Louis Johnson Outstanding Alumnus Award from the College of Business Administration Foundation at Tennessee Tech.

For his service in the FBI, Jim received the National Intelligence Distinguished Service Medal on December 4, 1980. The CIA Director noted that Jim's career with the FBI would have "overreaching importance to U.S. national security for years to come."

Jim was a loving husband, devoted father, proud grandfather, and great grandfather. He was well known by all for his southern charm, sense of humor, and kindness. He will be greatly missed.

Jim is survived by his wife Kathleen Geer, three children: James Geer Jr. (Sheri), Kelly Geer (Michael Horton) and Jeffrey Geer (Reene Maurer); six grandchildren: Matthew (Fabiola), Kelsey, Joshua, Danielle, Alex, and Samuel; and two great grandchildren: Ezra and Grace.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents Mr. Horace Greeley Geer and Mrs. Pamela Clyde (Bain) Geer and grandson-in-law Alexander Dalbey.

A service was held June 8, 2024, at North Creek Presbyterian Church, 4601 NW 71st St., Coconut Creek, FL 33073. Memorial gifts may be directed to one of the following: Former Agents of the FBI Foundation/North Creek Presbyterian Church in Coconut Creek, FL.

## HESTER



**LUKE CHRISTOPHER HESTER**

Age 94, died at home in Bethesda, MD on July 26, 2024 surrounded by loving family and friends, following a courageous battle with AML Leukemia. Survivors include his devoted wife of 65 years, Margaret, four daughters, Dairde of Bethesda, MD; Erin (Jim Klocke) of Wellesley, MA; Megann of Iowa City, IA; Bethann of Chicago, IL, and

sister Patricia Kelly of Ridgefield, CT. His five precious grandchildren Aidan, Harry, Olivia, Matthew and Caroline, cherished nieces, nephews, and many friends will miss him dearly.

Trained as a journalist Luke spent over 30 years working in Public Affairs at the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). He was an active parishioner at Holy Redeemer, Kensington, MD, and Holy Trinity Church, Washington, DC. He made his mark serving others, volunteered for decades with Northwestern University's Alumni Admissions Council, Mother Seton Academy in Baltimore, D.C.'s Archbishop Carroll High School, and St. Ann's Center for Children Youth and Families in Hyattsville, MD.

Visitation will be held Monday, August 19, 2024, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Pumphrey's Funeral Home, 5755 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda, MD 20814, and a Funeral Mass will take place on Tuesday, August 20, 2024 at 10:30 a.m. at Holy Trinity Church, 3513 N Street NW, Washington, DC 20007. Burial will be private. Full obituary and family guestbook at [www.pumphreyfuneralhome.com](http://www.pumphreyfuneralhome.com)

## HILDRETH



**MARIE A. HILDRETH (Age 94)**

Marie A. Hildreth, a long-time resident of Bethesda, Maryland, died peacefully on August 6, 2024. Marie was born in Providence, Rhode Island and graduated, a year early, from Classical High School in Providence and spent a further year at Lincoln High School in Lincoln, Rhode Island. Marie then attended and graduated from George Washington University in Washington, DC. It was there that her husband-to-be, Richard Hildreth, a law student at GW, first noticed

her across a room. His fraternity honored her by making her a Sweetheart of Sigma Chi. Following graduation, Richard and Marie married and settled in the Washington, DC area where Richard was a native and practiced law.

Together they raised six children who adored her. Marie was a gutsy and athletic woman – she played tennis into her 80s. She was so loved and admired by those she met and befriended. Marie was beautiful in spirit and remained beautiful in every other way until the end.

Preceded in death by her parents, Francis and Fabrice DiMaio and her brothers Chris, Frank and Robert, she is survived by her husband who always called her his "Bride," her children Richard (Debbie), Robert, Linda, and Fabrice (Diana), Stephen (Nancy) and Roger. She is also survived by nine beautiful grandchildren whom she cherished: Richard III (Janet), Christine and Michael Hildreth, Alexandra and George Hildreth and Christopher, Grace, Owen and Dennis Hildreth. A funeral mass will be held at 12 p.m. on Wednesday, August 14, 2024 at St. Bartholomew's Catholic Church, 6900 River Road, Bethesda, Maryland. A private interment service for family only will follow the mass in lieu of flowers. Please consider donating to Special Olympics in honor of Marie and her brother Frank.

## HOFFMAN

## CAROL J. HOFFMAN

Carol J. Hoffman, age 88, passed away peacefully at home surrounded by family on August 5, 2024, due to multiple health complications. She was born in January 1936, in Columbus, Ohio to John and Catherine Forst. She was the youngest of five siblings. Carol graduated from South High School in Columbus, Ohio and then worked as head teller at Franklin Federal Savings & Loan, where she met her husband, Karl. They enjoyed frequent travel. They cherished their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Carol lived in Annandale, VA for 34 years and worked for Fairfax County Government in the foodservice departments at Carver-Burby Woods Elementary and at Frost Intermediate when her children were in school. Later, she worked for Fairfax County Parks & Recreation at Wakefield Recreation Center where she was like a mom and counselor to the younger staff.

She moved to Centerville, VA 24 years ago. She spent the past two years living in an assisted living facility at The Gardens at Fair Oaks in Fairfax, VA and received daily visits from her loving husband, Karl. Carol had the heart of a servant. She always thought of others first, and she was kind, compassionate, and forgiving. She

## DEATH NOTICE

## LEVY



**MARY M. LEVY**

Mary M. Levy, a longtime D.C. resident and D.C. public schools advocate, died suddenly at home on July 31, 2024, from complications of uterine cancer. She leaves behind her beloved husband of 57 years, Edward P. Levy, who had been caring for her during this difficult period; siblings Roger, Laura, and Paul Mansnerus; daughters Dina S. Levy and Rachel A. Levy; son-in-law Cedar Reilly Riener; and grandchildren Caleb, Liam, and Amelie Riener, and Nora and Seth Levy. Mary born on December 16, 1941, in Chicago, held a B.A. in linguistics from the Univer-

sity of Wisconsin, a Ph.D. in linguistics from the University of Michigan and a J.D. from George Washington University Law School. She studied D.C. public education for over 40 years, analyzing staffing, budgets and expenditures, and monitoring D.C. Public Schools (DCPS) for parent advocacy and school support organizations. As Director of the Public Education Reform Project at the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights & Urban Policy from 1999 to 2009, she played a significant role in developing the District of Columbia's public school funding system, formulating many major reform plans, as well as working with the D.C. State Education Office. She was a frequent source of information on DCPS for the media, government officials, educators, parents, and non-profit, business, and civic groups. Previously, private practice with Rauh, Kichtman, Levy & Turney; her work consisted principally of litigation in school finance, labor law, civil rights, and civil liberties.

Mary loved her children and grandchildren deeply. In her spare time, she was a voracious reader (in several different languages) and puzzle aficionado; a world traveler; a devotee of classical music, opera, and the Washington Nationals; and a skilled and seamstress, knitter, and gardener. The family will hold a memorial service sometime after Labor Day, details of which will be provided at a later time.

## MACOMBER



**JOHN D. MACOMBER (Age 96)**

John D. Macomber, a prominent corporate executive and board member of leading financial companies and nonprofit organizations, who rose from modest beginnings in upstate New York to become an early McKinsey partner and president of the U.S. Export-Import Bank, died peacefully on August 2, 2024 in Washington, DC. He was 96 years old.

John Dewitt Macomber was born in Rochester, NY, in 1928. He and Caroline Morgan were married in 1955 and were inseparable for the next 57 years, until her passing from cancer in 2012. John and Caroline shared a full life of sailing, gardening, skiing, travel, and a love of family. Even after her death, Macomber never tired of calling Caroline the love of his life.

Macomber graduated from Phillips Academy Andover '46, Yale University '50, and Harvard Business School '52. After a short service in the Air Force, he joined McKinsey & Company, rose to partner, and led the firm's expansion into Europe while he was based in London, Geneva and Paris in the 1960s. His willingness to take risks was a hallmark of his long career. He left McKinsey to helm the Celanese Corporation in New York, a global fiber and chemical company. He oversaw its expansion and dramatically increased share value, partly through stock buybacks – a concept he was one of the first to implement. When Celanese was acquired by Hoechst AG of Germany in 1987, it became the world's largest chemical company.

## MUNDY



**ALONZO DERRICK MUNDY**

Alonzo ("Lonnie") Derrick Mundy, 90, passed away peacefully on Monday, July 22, 2024 in Eustis, FL due to complications from dementia. Born on September 24, 1933 in Akron, Ohio to the late Herbert P. and Mattie L. Mundy, Lonnie attended Kent State University and served almost two years as a specialist in the United States Army. He relocated to Washington, DC where he worked for the United States Postal Service and then dedicated close to 35 years of his career to General Electric. While living in Reston, VA, Lonnie held various positions in the appliance division which led to serving as a

regional sales manager for the Washington, DC metro area before his retirement. Lonnie relocated to Florida and continued spending time with his family and friends and pursuing his interests in golf, horse racing, traveling, listening to jazz music, and watching sports including his beloved Cleveland Browns. Lonnie was known as a gentleman who always had a kind word, a caring disposition, and a great laugh.

In addition to his parents, Lonnie was preceded in death by his brothers, H. Ralph, R. Aubrey, and Arthur. He is survived by three children with his deceased wife, Sylvia P. Mundy – daughter Traci Mundy Jenkins (James); son Scott F. Mundy, and daughter Jill Pemberton (Dennis). Lonnie was a loving father and a devoted "Poppy" to three cherished granddaughters, Nina Pemberton, Jaelyn Jenkins, and Natalie Pemberton. Until his death, Lonnie lived happily in Florida with his loving partner and his good friend, Shirley Turner McAlwain. He also leaves many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends to cherish his memory.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, August 17 at Page-Theus Funeral Home in Leesburg, Florida. An interment will follow at Mount Peace Cemetery in Akron, Ohio.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to Thoroughbred Charities of America ([www.tca.org](http://www.tca.org)).

## ROBINSON



**SUE ANNE ROBINSON**

Sue Anne Robinson passed away on August 9, 2024 at the age of 81. She was born in Easton, MD in 1942, the only child of Rod and Nina Miller. Her family travelled with the Navy and the Foreign Service, and lived

in Greece, Okinawa, and Puerto Rico. She attended Gettysburg College and spent her junior year abroad in Madrid. She met her future husband Ken at a college summer break visiting her parents in Iran. After working as an analyst for NSA in Washington, DC, she got married and they moved to Venezuela. They had more foreign service assignments in Romania and Syria and had two daughters along the way. She loved living overseas and touring new places. After moving home to Vienna, VA, she got her Masters in Library Science from Catholic University and worked her way up to senior Librarian at the CIA. Upon retiring from the government she worked at several Fairfax County libraries, and volunteered at the Shepherd Center. She is survived by her beloved husband Ken Robinson of 59 years; her two daughters Megan Rahaman (Gary) of Montvale, NJ, Meredith Dorey (Mark) of Ashburn, VA; and five grandchildren, Alexa, Madison, Zachary, Katherine, and Savannah. She will be greatly missed. A Celebration of Life will be held at Monday & King Funeral Home, Vienna, VA on Sunday, August 18 from 2 to 4 p.m.

## SINGER

## ALLEN M. SINGER PHD

Allen M. Singer, PhD, age 94, of Spartanburg, SC, beloved husband of Voula Karegeannis Singer for more than 62 years, passed away on Tuesday, July 30, 2024.

Dr. Singer served his country in the US Army. He attended George Washington University, D.C., where he earned his BA, MA, and PhD. In addition to majoring in Economics and Statistics, he lettered in Golf and Track & Field, and was proficient in various computer languages.

His celebrated career spanned over 60 years with various accomplishments and many publications. Early on, he performed statistical analyses and computer modeling of radar and communications systems at the Illinois Institute of Technology Research Institute in Annapolis, MD. He performed studies of satellite communications systems at the Communications Satellite Corporation in Washington, DC.

In 1972, Dr. Singer began a long tenure at the National Academy of Sciences/Institute of Medicine in Washington, DC, as the Staff Director for the committee on National Research for Biomedical and Behavioral Research Personnel.

Later, he was VP for Research and Information Services at the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine. His research and writings have been published in the RAND Notes, the Journal of

Osteopathic Medicine, and the National Institutes of Health, to name just a few. A sports enthusiast, Dr. Singer enjoyed playing tennis and golf, his last day on the golf course just weeks before his passing. At 94, he still laid it close to the green and gave handicaps to players decades younger than him. He was also an animal lover who supported the Humane Society and volunteered in homing stray dogs.

Dr. Singer was surrounded by a vast circle of family and friends who knew him as an exceptionally kind and generous man. A man of great empathy, he was always there for others, offering support without question. In addition to his wife, Voula whom he met on a blind date, he is survived by their two children, George Bernard Singer who resides in Long Beach, CA and Nicole Sari Singer who resides in Spartanburg. Also left to mourn his death is his beloved furbaby, Pawla T. Singer, his Doxiepop companion for the last seven years. A loving extended family of siblings, spouses, in-laws and nieces and nephews will miss Allen very much. A graveside service will be held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, August 17, in Greenlawn Memorial Gardens where his daughter, son, and nephews will share memories with all who attend.

Instead of flowers, donations may be made to any no-kill animal shelter in his memory.

## POST YOUR CONDOLENCES

Now death notices on [washingtonpost.com/obituaries](http://washingtonpost.com/obituaries) allow you to express your sympathy with greater ease. Visit today.

*The Washington Post*












# THE WEATHER

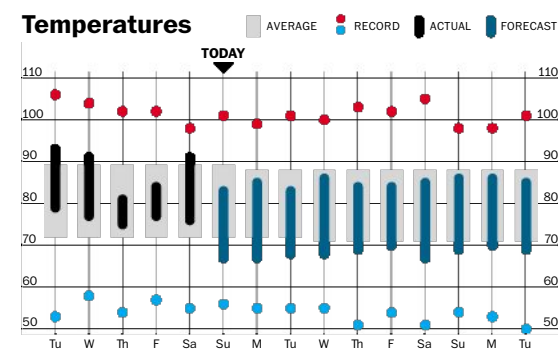
WASHINGTONPOST.COM/WEATHER · X: @CAPITALWEATHER · FACEBOOK.COM/CAPITALWEATHER

## Warm and dry

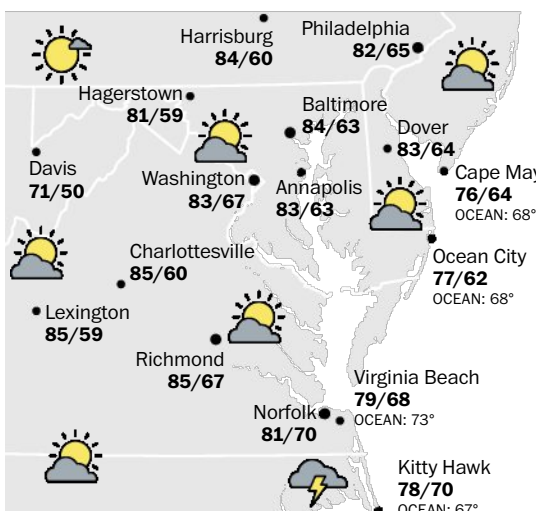
 Dew points head below 60, which makes humidity not much to think about. With highs mainly in the mid-80s, it'll be a great day to be out and about. Light northwest winds should continue. Partly to mostly clear conditions continue. With drier air firmly in place, even the city should get into the upper 60s, with a range of about 62 to 68.

Today	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Partly sunny	Mostly sunny	Partly sunny	Partly sunny	Mostly sunny	Partly sunny
					
<b>83°</b> 67°	<b>85°</b> 67°	<b>83°</b> 68°	<b>86°</b> 68°	<b>84°</b> 69°	<b>84°</b> 70°
FEELS*: 87°	FEELS: 87°	FEELS: 88°	FEELS: 90°	FEELS: 92°	FEELS: 92°
CHNCE PRECIP: 5%	P: 5%	P: 25%	P: 25%	P: 15%	P: 25%
WIND: NW 6-12 mph	W: WNW 6-12 mph	W: SSE 4-8 mph	W: SSE 4-8 mph	W: S 4-8 mph	W: SSE 4-8 mph
HUMIDITY: Low	H: Low	H: Moderate	H: Moderate	H: Moderate	H: Moderate

## OFFICIAL RECORD



## REGION



**Pollen: Low**  
 Grass Low  
 Trees Low  
 Weeds Low  
 Mold Low

**Air Quality: Moderate**  
 Dominant cause: Ozone

**UV: Very High**  
 9 out of 11\*

**Blue Ridge:** Today, mostly sunny. Not as warm in central parts; low humidity elsewhere. High 68 to 73. Winds west 6-12 mph. Tonight, clear. Low 56 to 60. Winds northwest 6-12 mph. Monday, partly sunny. High 68 to 73. Winds west 6-12 mph.

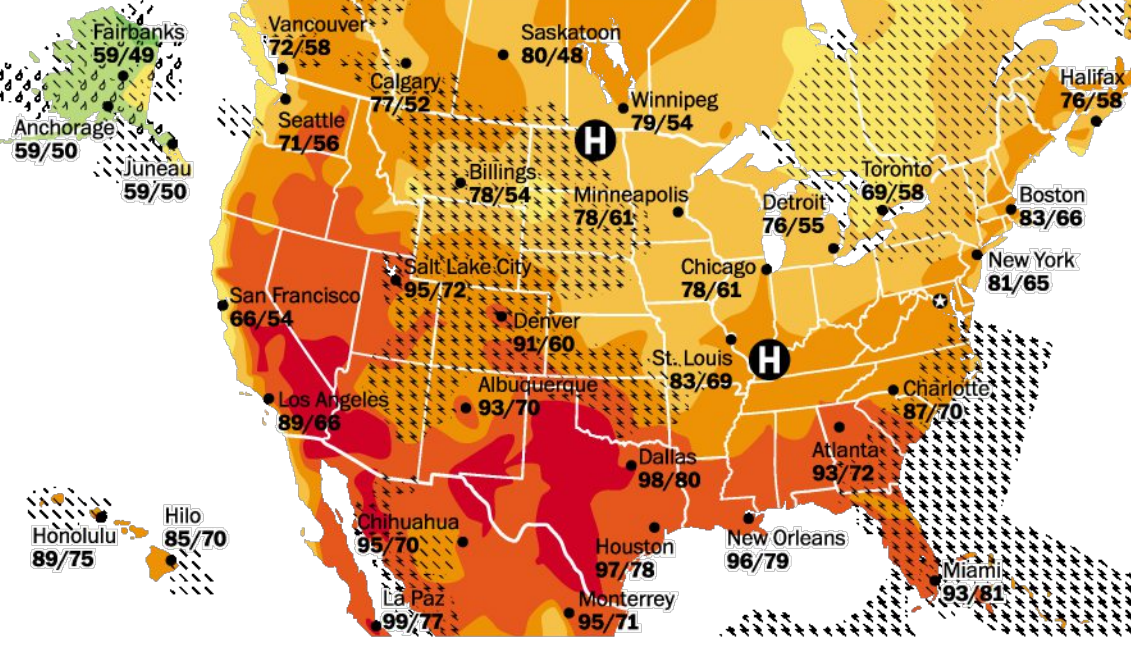
**Atlantic beaches:** Today, mostly cloudy. An afternoon thunderstorm in spots in the south; not as warm, lower humidity in the north. High 76 to 83. Winds north-northeast 6-12 mph.

**Waterways:** *Upper Potomac River:* Today, partly sunny. Wind west-northwest 4-8 knots. Waves less than a foot. Visibility unrestricted. *Lower Potomac and Chesapeake Bay:* Today, partly sunny. Wind north 4-8 knots. Waves 1-2 feet on the Lower Potomac and the Chesapeake Bay. *River Stages:* The stage at Little Falls will be around 6.80 feet today, rising to 8.30 Monday. Flood stage at Little Falls is 10 feet.

**Today's tides** (High tides in **bold**)

City	1:02 a.m.	7:58 a.m.	1:22 p.m.	7:47 p.m.
Washington	4:49 a.m.	<b>9:45 a.m.</b>	4:36 p.m.	<b>11:36 p.m.</b>
Annapolis	12:24 a.m.	6:36 a.m.	<b>12:55 p.m.</b>	7:19 p.m.
Ocean City	<b>2:20 a.m.</b>	8:18 a.m.	<b>2:50 p.m.</b>	9:20 p.m.
Norfolk	1:13 a.m.	<b>6:06 a.m.</b>	12:10 p.m.	<b>7:23 p.m.</b>

## NATION



PARIS OLYMPICS

# The gold standard



JABIN BOTSFORD/THE WASHINGTON POST

**UNITED STATES 98, FRANCE 87:** Stephen Curry holds aloft the American flag after he scored 24 points to help Team USA secure the gold medal in men's basketball for the fifth Olympics in a row. **Story, D7**

## Russell's dream comes true in 100 hurdles photo finish

BY ADAM KILGORE

SAINT-DENIS, FRANCE — Masai Russell slept just a few hours Friday night into Saturday, kept awake by the same dream. In the dream, she saw her name flash on the Stade de France scoreboard atop one of the deepest, strongest fields of 100-meter hurdlers ever assembled. She was 24 and at her first Olympics, but since she first started running on Prince George's County tracks, Russell never has dreamed small.

Russell spent a little more than 12 seconds sprinting and hurdling, then had to wait to see whether her vision would become real. A few steps past the finish line, Russell stared up at the list of names. The word "PHOTO" was next to five. She waited, cupped her fingers and

SEE TRACK ON D8

### A historic haul for Team USA, but what's next?

U.S. track and field brought home its most medals since 1984. Can it sustain that momentum in non-Olympic years? **D8**

## New-look women's soccer team returns to its winning ways

UNITED STATES 1, BRAZIL 0

BY STEVEN GOFF

PARIS — The U.S. women's soccer team arrived at these Olympics more than three weeks ago with a marvelous portfolio and tempered expectations. It seemed incongruous that the sport's standard-bearers would not carry championship aspirations, but with a new coach finding her way and young players inheriting key roles, a medal was not the certainty it once was.

Everything, though, began falling into place sooner than almost anyone expected, and on the penultimate day of this

SEE SOCCER ON D9

### A new era is off to a golden start

Barry Svrluga on the Emma Hayes-led reboot for the U.S. women: Her early results could not be more impressive. **A1**

## The U.S. makes it five straight, but the Wemby era starts now



Jerry Brewer

PARIS — Victor Wembanyama sat on the bench, tears streaming, and watched the best men's basketball team in the world celebrate again. LeBron James pinched the corners of his jersey to make the letters "USA" jut out more. Kevin Durant pranced around with the American flag cloaking his skinny frame. Stephen Curry hugged every star courtside from Jimmy

Fallon to Sha'Carri Richardson.

Wembanyama, the 20-year-old budding superstar from France, had wept for a good 10 minutes by then. Still, he observed every punishing second. With wet cheeks, he had made it through shaking hands with the U.S. squad, through huddling with his French teammates

SEE BREWER ON D7

### Allez les Bleus!

The French fans have gone wild for their athletes, who have repaid them with regular marches to the medal podium. **D9**

## Commanders' Daniels checks every box in preseason debut

BY NICKI JHABVALA

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Jayden Daniels scanned the defense and saw a row of seven white jerseys at the line of scrimmage. He knew instantly the originally called play was dead, so he checked out

it and instructed Dyami Brown to run a go route up the right sideline.

"It's just something throughout practice in the time I've been here where [offensive coordinator] Kliff [Kingsbury] is like, 'If you don't like this look, check it,'" Daniels recalled. "So they came out in

a certain look, and we were in a play I didn't like, so I checked it."

On third and six during his first drive of Washington's preseason opener against the New York Jets on Saturday, Daniels connected with Brown for an over-the-shoulder 42-yard completion to

help set up a touchdown run (by Daniels, no less) and show one of the many reasons the Commanders were so high on him long before they drafted him in April.

"I think we got a dude back there,"

SEE COMMANDERS ON D3

### PRO FOOTBALL

Caleb Williams shines in his debut, leading the Bears on a pair of scoring drives. **D2**

### BASEBALL

Rookie José Tena delivers a walk-off single in his Nats debut to beat the Angels. **D3**



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# THE DAY IN SPORTS

## GOLF

### Kuchar, playoff streak on the line, takes lead

Needing a victory to keep his FedEx Cup playoff streak alive, **Matt Kuchar** shot his second straight 6-under-par 64 on Saturday to take the second-round lead in the rain-delayed Wyndham Championship in Greensboro, N.C.

Kuchar is the only player to reach every postseason in FedEx Cup history. The top 70 will qualify for the playoff opener next week in Tennessee, with the 46-year-old Kuchar 113th — and the late **Grayson Murray** still on the list at 57th.

“Certainly been a frustrating year, but I feel like the bar’s been set high,” Kuchar said. “I feel like I played a lot of good golf, consistent golf for a long time. Makes me, I guess, poor golf that much more frustrating.”

The nine-time tour winner was facing a 36-hole Sunday at Sedgefield Country Club in the event washed out by rain Thursday and delayed Friday and Saturday. Twenty players were unable to finish play Saturday.

**Max Greyserman** was a stroke back along with **Cameron Young** and **Chad Ramey**. Greyserman shot a 60, leaving a 50-foot birdie putt two feet short on the final hole. ...

**Asterisk Talley** led **Rianne Malixi** 1 up halfway through the U.S. Women’s Amateur championship match in Tulsa, three weeks after Malixi routed Talley in the U.S. Girls’ Junior final.

“I’m feeling a lot better than last time I played Rianne,” said Talley, a 15-year-old from Chowchilla, Calif.

Last month in the U.S. Girls’ Junior, Malixi beat Talley, 8 and 7, at El Caballero in Tarzana, Calif., the largest championship-match blowout in tournament history.

“It’s amazing. I love Asterisk,” said the 17-year-old Malixi, from the Philippines. “She is such a good player and good person as well. It’s fun being matched up with her again.”

Malixi is trying to become the second player to win both events in the same year, joining **Eun Jeong Seong** in 2016.

Because of expected rain Sunday at Southern Hills, the first 18 holes of the 36-hole championship match were moved to Saturday.

## PRO FOOTBALL

### Burrow passes test in return from surgery

The Cincinnati Bengals saw all they needed to see of **Joe Burrow** in their first series against the visiting Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

In his first game action in nearly nine months, Cincinnati’s franchise quarterback directed a 73-yard drive, tossed a touchdown pass to **Tee Higgins** and then walked off the field.

The Buccaneers scored late to win the game, 17-14, but Burrow looked as if he was back to his old self after having surgery last year to repair a torn ligament in his throwing hand. He was 5 for 7 for 51 yards, directed five first downs and completed passes to four different receivers. ...

In Inglewood, Calif., **Sam Howell** threw for 130 yards and a touchdown in his Seattle debut as the Seahawks had a successful preseason opener under new coach **Mike Macdonald**, defeating the Chargers, 16-3, in **Jim Harbaugh**’s first game coaching Los Angeles.

Howell, acquired from the Washington Commanders during the offseason, directed a pair of scoring drives in the second quarter. ...

**Jordan Love** made the most of his limited playing time, throwing a 65-yard touchdown pass to **Dontayvion Wicks** on Green Bay’s third play as the visiting Packers rolled to a 23-10 exhibition win over the Cleveland Browns.

Love, who signed a four-year, \$220 million contract extension at the start of training camp, completed both pass attempts in his one series on the field. **Sean Clifford** replaced him. ...

Minnesota rookie **J.J. McCarthy** rebounded from an ill-advised throw that was intercepted by Las Vegas starting cornerback **Jack Jones** with two touchdown passes against backups, a mixed but promising preseason debut for the Vikings quarterback in a 24-23 victory over the visiting Raiders in Minneapolis. ...

**Parker Washington** took advantage of the NFL’s new kickoff rules — delivering an ankle-breaking 73-yarder that set up an early touchdown — and



STU FORSTER/GETTY IMAGES

### Liftoff

Bernardo Silva scored Manchester City’s lone goal in regulation time in its Community Shield victory over Manchester United.

## SPOTLIGHT: NFL

# Top pick Williams shines in preseason debut

BY JOHN WAWROW

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Though the ever-confident quarterback never doubted himself, Caleb Williams still found his NFL preseason debut performance reassuring after the rookie helped lead the Chicago Bears to a 33-6 win over the Buffalo Bills on Saturday.

After all, it had been nearly nine months since the No. 1 draft pick handled a snap in a competitive setting.

“Last time I was out there on a field other than practice was November 18,” Williams said, referring to Southern California’s 38-20 loss to UCLA in the regular season finale, before he sat out the Holiday Bowl. “You go that long without something, it’s tough. But no, it’s been great.”

“The guys made it fun. They made it easy on me.”

## BEARS 33, BILLS 6

### Ex-Gonzaga star leads Chicago on two scoring drives in rout

His Bears teammates could say the same about Williams, who showed awareness and poise in the pocket, hit receivers on the run and displayed his dual-threat ability by scrambling 13 yards for a first down on third and nine.

“It was great. Everybody was open today,” wide receiver DJ Moore said. “Yeah, it gives you hell of a confidence going into the season.”

The 22-year-old Williams went 4 for 7 for 95 yards in overseeing two drives that

ended with field goals. Though he wasn’t perfect — Williams was late in nearly throwing an interception on a play wiped out by a Bills defensive penalty away from the ball — the Gonzaga College High graduate headed an offense that gained a combined 152 yards and seven first downs on 20 plays over two possessions.

The game was decided a minute into the fourth quarter when Bears linebacker Micah Baskerville intercepted Shane Buechele’s pass and returned it 53 yards for a touchdown to put Chicago up 19-6. Velus Jones Jr. scored on a four-yard run in the third quarter, and Ian Wheeler ran for touchdowns of seven and eight yards in the final six minutes.

For Buffalo, Josh Allen went 2 for 3 for 22 yards and also had a seven-yard run while playing the first quarter of the Bills’ preseason opener.

— Associated Press

## TELEVISION AND RADIO

### PARIS OLYMPICS, SEE PAGE D10

#### NFL PRESEASON

1 p.m. **Denver at Indianapolis** » NFL Network  
4:30 p.m. **Dallas at Los Angeles Rams** » NFL Network

#### MLB

11:30 a.m. **Los Angeles Angels at Washington** » Roku, WJFK (106.7 FM), WDCN (87.7 FM)  
1:30 p.m. **Baltimore at Tampa Bay** » MASN, WYYY (97.9 FM), WSNB (630 AM)  
1:30 p.m. **Texas at New York Yankees** » MLB Network  
4:30 p.m. **Philadelphia at Arizona** » MLB Network (joined in progress)  
7 p.m. **New York Mets at Seattle** » ESPN

#### AUTO RACING

6 p.m. **NASCAR Cup Series: Cook Out 400** » USA Network, WSNB (630 AM)

#### GOLF

1 p.m. **PGA Tour: Wyndham Championship, final round** » Golf Channel  
3 p.m. **PGA Tour: Wyndham Championship, final round** » WUSA (Ch. 9), WJZ (Ch. 13)  
3 p.m. **U.S. Women’s Amateur, final** » Golf Channel  
6 p.m. **PGA Tour Champions: Boeing Classic, final round** » Golf Channel

#### SOCCER

7:30 a.m. **Scottish Premiership: Celtic at Hibernian** » CBS Sports Network  
2:45 p.m. **Turkish Super Lig: Besiktas at Samsunspor** » BeIN Sports

#### TENNIS

1 p.m. **ATP/WTA: National Bank Open, semifinals** » Tennis Channel

#### PROFESSIONAL BASKETBALL

1 p.m. **Big3: Semifinals** » WUSA (Ch. 9), WJZ (Ch. 13)

#### PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL

7 p.m. **Canadian Football League: British Columbia at Edmonton** » CBS Sports Network

#### WOMEN’S LACROSSE

2 p.m. **Athletes Unlimited: Team Kennedy vs. Team Moreno** » ESPN2  
4:30 p.m. **Athletes Unlimited: Team North vs. Team Apuzzo** » ESPNU

#### LITTLE LEAGUE SOFTBALL WORLD SERIES

9 a.m. **Semifinal: Sterlington, La., vs. Salisbury, N.C.** » ESPN  
Noon **Semifinal: Greensburg, Pa., vs. Winterville, N.C.** » ESPN  
3 p.m. **Championship: Semifinal winners** » WJLA (Ch. 7), WMAR (Ch. 2)

the host Jacksonville Jaguars defeated the two-time defending Super Bowl champion Kansas City Chiefs, 26-13.

## SOCCER

### Akanji comes through in shootout for City

Chastened by a decisive penalty miss at the recent European Championship, **Manuel Akanji** was happy to be

placed near the end of Manchester City’s list of spot-kick takers during a shootout against Manchester United in the Community Shield in London.

Imagine how the Switzerland defender felt, then, when the opportunity fell to him to score the winning penalty at Wembley Stadium.

“I let the others shoot first,” Akanji said, “because obviously when you miss a penalty, you

don’t go into the next one with that much confidence.”

This time he made no mistake.

After a 1-1 draw in regulation time, City beat United 7-6 in a shootout to win the traditional curtain-raiser to the English soccer season between the winners of the previous season’s Premier League (City) and FA Cup (United).

City’s players rushed from the center circle to celebrate with Akanji after he lifted the

clinching penalty straight down the middle and into the roof of the net.

City ended a run of three straight losses in the Community Shield — to Leicester, Liverpool and Arsenal over the past three years — and went some way to avenging the loss to United in the FA Cup final 77 days ago.

It looked as if United would be claiming another Wembley win over its neighbor when second-half substitute **Alejandro**

**Garnacho** cut inside and drove a low shot inside the near post in the 82nd minute.

City equalized in the 89th when **Bernardo Silva**, also a substitute, headed in from **Oscar Bobb**’s cross.

The game went straight to penalties — there is no extra time in the Community Shield.

The Premier League season starts Friday when United hosts Fulham. ...

Tottenham completed the signing of striker **Dominic Solanke** from Premier League rival Bournemouth in a deal worth a reported 65 million pounds (\$83 million) over six years.

While the fee was undisclosed, Bournemouth said it was a “significant financial package — the largest the club has ever received for a player.”

Solanke scored 77 goals in 214 appearances for Bournemouth over five years. ...

France defender **Jean-Clair Todibo** joined West Ham on a season-long loan from Nice, completing a remodeled center-back partnership for the English club ahead of the season.

The deal for Todibo contains an option to make the transfer permanent for a reported 40 million euros (\$43.6 million) in the offseason of 2025.

## TENNIS

### Anisimova knocks off Sabalenka in Toronto

**Amanda Anisimova** upset second-seeded **Aryna Sabalenka**, 6-2, 6-2, to reach the National Bank Open semifinals in Toronto, her first win over a top-10 player in nearly two years. One of five U.S.

quarterfinalists, the 22-year-old Anisimova took a mental health break from tennis last year.

“She’s an amazing player, so it’s always really tough playing against her,” Anisimova said about Sabalenka, the Australian Open winner the past two years.

Sabalenka, from Belarus, had eight double faults in windy conditions, the last at love-40 in the final game. She withdrew from Wimbledon because of a shoulder injury and skipped the Paris Olympics.

Anisimova will face eighth-seeded **Emma Navarro** in an all-American semifinal. Navarro beat fellow American **Taylor Townsend**, 6-3, 7-6 (7-5).

Townsend was the first “lucky loser” to reach a WTA 1000 quarterfinal. She got into the main draw as an injury replacement.

In the night session, third-seeded defending champion **Jessica Pegula** beat **Peyton Stearns**, 6-4, 7-5, in another all-American matchup. No. 6 **Liudmila Samsonova** faced No. 14 **Diana Shnaider** in an all-Russian quarterfinal in the late match.

The five U.S. quarterfinalists are the most on the tour since 2001.

In the rain-delayed men’s tournament in Montreal, fifth-seeded **Andrey Rublev** outlasted top-seeded defending champion **Jannik Sinner**, 6-3, 1-6, 6-2, to reach the semifinals.

Rublev beat **Brandon Nakashima**, 6-2, 6-2, earlier, while Sinner also was playing his second match of the day after topping **Alejandro Tabilo**, 6-4, 6-3, in the afternoon.

Rain washed out play Thursday night and all of Friday as remnants of Hurricane Debby rolled through.

In the late match, **Kei Nishikori** took on **Matteo Arnaldi** for a semifinal spot opposite Rublev.

The other two quarterfinals were pushed back to Sunday. Second-seeded **Alexander Zverev** was set to face **Sebastian Korda**, the winner last week in the DC Open, while fourth-seeded **Hubert Hurkacz** was scheduled to play **Alexei Popyrin**.

## AUTO RACING

### Hamlin, out for sweep, wins Richmond pole

**Denny Hamlin**’s bid for a sweep at Richmond Raceway is off to a good start.

Hamlin won the pole for Sunday night’s NASCAR Cup Series race, topping qualifying in his No. 11 Toyota. It was Hamlin’s third pole of the year, although he went on to finish out of the top 10 after his first two at Phoenix Raceway and Nashville Superspeedway.

Hamlin won at Richmond in March and is trying to become the first to sweep the track’s two Cup races since **Martin Truex Jr.** in 2019. Hamlin edged Truex, his Joe Gibbs Racing teammate, in qualifying.

— From news services

# New third baseman Tena, latest face of Nats' rebuild, comes through in extras

**NATIONALS 5,  
ANGELS 4 (10)**

BY SPENCER NUSBAUM

The return of Anthony Rendon to Nationals Park this weekend has sparked a few not-too-distant memories. Rendon, an all-star during that World Series season of 2019, was a fixture at third base and a key bat in a deep lineup.

His departure that offseason led to a revolving door of candidates to fill the void he left. It has mostly been a futile search of prospects and veterans.

The latest to get a chance at the job appears to be 23-year-old José Tena, who joined the organization from Cleveland less than two weeks ago in the Lane Thomas deal at the trade deadline. His one chance to make a first impression at Nationals Park couldn't have gone much better Saturday night; the left-handed hitter laced a walk-off single in the 10th to lift the Nationals to a 5-4 win over the Los Angeles Angels.

It was the Nationals' third consecutive extra-inning game and the second straight night they walked off the Angels. Alex Call did the honors Friday night.

Tena's arrival could be a boost to a power-starved Nationals lineup; in 100 games at Class AAA, he hit .287 with 18 home runs and an .824 OPS.

"He's going to get a chance to play here," Manager Dave Martinez said.

Tena, a native of the Dominican Republic, made his MLB debut in August 2023 and appeared in 21 games for the Guardians across two seasons, though their infield depth made him the odd man out. On Friday night, he learned he would return the majors.

Upon his arrival — too late for most of his teammates to meet him in the clubhouse — he said he felt he could stand to work on his fielding at third base. He felt he could provide good bat-to-ball skills. Martinez said he doesn't try to do too much at the plate.



JOHN MCDONNELL/ASSOCIATED PRESS

**José Tena, right, who joined the Nationals in last month's Lane Thomas trade, delivered a walk-off single in his first game with the team.**

But the manager said he can tell Tena loves the game.

His winning swing Saturday — a 102-mph rocket to left-center that clanged off the wall on a fly — capped a 2-for-4 Nationals debut. It also scored CJ Abrams, who was out of the starting lineup for the second straight game with upper back stiffness but was inserted by Martinez to be the ghost runner in the 10th.

Tena arrived in Washington not knowing a single soul in the clubhouse, yet his new teammates were only too happy to give him a bath in a bucket of bubble

gum — followed by a cooler full of Gatorade — as he looked backward to the dugout with a big grin.

"Manager had told that I was going to win the game for us," Tena said through an interpreter. "Once I realized the hit was a game-winning one, I gave him a wink."

"I think his teammates know who he is now," Martinez said.

Tena batted sixth against the Angels, which speaks to the lack of depth in Washington's lineup. The nine players Martinez penciled into Saturday's lineup have

just 114 career home runs. Rendon, by comparison, has 158.

Apart from rookie James Wood, who hit the fourth homer of his career in the second inning, the lineup lacks thump.

Wood (2 for 4) nearly sent another homer out in the fourth, though it died at the warning track. He ripped another ball, this one at 101 mph, into center field for an RBI double to cut the Nationals' deficit to 4-3 in the seventh. Tena then tied the game when he singled in Wood.

As power-deprived as these Nationals are, support could be wait-

ing in the minors. Top prospects Dylan Crews and Brady House have upside in the power department. Andrés Chaparro, recently acquired from the Arizona Diamondbacks, homered in each of his past four games with Class AAA Rochester.

These Nationals, however, have to play with what they have. And they glued it together to win their second straight from the Angels. Luis García Jr. prevented a pair of runs from scoring with a diving stop in the second. Juan Yepez threw a runner out at the plate in the fifth, saving another.

## NATIONALS ON DECK

**vs. Los Angeles Angels**

Sunday 11:35 Roku a.m.

**at Baltimore Orioles**

Tuesday 6:35 MASN, MASN2

Wednesday 6:35 MASN, MASN2

**at Philadelphia Phillies**

Thursday 6:40 MASN2

Friday 6:40 MASN2

Saturday 6:05 MASN2

Aug. 18 1:35 MASN2

Radio: WJFK (106.7 FM), WDCN (87.7 FM)

They produced their second run via a bloop double from Jacob Young, a sacrifice bunt from Nasim Núñez and Call's single up the middle.

It all helped them overcome another shaky outing from lefty Patrick Corbin, who lasted just four innings and allowed four earned runs, eight hits and three while striking out two.

With the bullpen putting up six zeros, though, Washington stayed in it. And Tena arrived just in time.

"I mean, that's how you're going to start it off? Like, come on," said Derek Law, who pitched a scoreless ninth and 10th. "I really didn't even know what the move was [before the game]. I guess that's how I found out. That's a bad teammate, I guess. I gave him a hug after the game, though. 'I'm so happy you're here.'"

"I worked very hard for moments like this," Tena said.

**Note:** The Nationals reinstated Jordan Weems (shin splints) from the 15-day injured list. In a corresponding move, the team optioned right-hander Joan Adon to Rochester. Weems had a 6.59 ERA in 40 appearances before going on the injured list July 26. Adon has a 6.48 ERA with Washington.

# Daniels displays poise, potential in Commanders' preseason setback vs. the Jets

COMMANDERS FROM D1

guard Sam Cosmi said on the local broadcast of the team's 20-17 loss.

Coach Dan Quinn had a different view of the play but came away just as pleased.

"I thought of 'Top Gun,'" Quinn said with a grin. "Do I have permission to buzz the tower? 'No, Ghost rider, the pattern is full.' I think on that one he wanted to ask for forgiveness and not permission and throw an absolute dime over the top to Dyami to go. It was a really cool play. I think it probably illustrates for him the awareness and checks and things that go into it."

Daniels buzzed the tower anyway, and although the sample size was minimal — he and backup Marcus Mariota played a series apiece in the first quarter — and wasn't against the Jets' starting defense, the rookie showed everything the Commanders could have wanted in his NFL debut.

Decision-making: check.

Accuracy: check.

Mobility: check.

Poise and command of the huddle: check and check.

And Daniels did it all without Washington's top three offensive tackles.

Andrew Wylie, Brandon Coleman and Cornelius Lucas did not play, leaving Daniels with a rotation that included Trent Scott, Chris Paul, Braeden Daniels, Mason Brooks and Armani Taylor at those spots.

Seven of the 11 plays in the series were handoffs to running backs Brian Robinson Jr. and Austin Ekeler, and another was a screen pass to wide receiver Terry McLaurin. Daniels's first completion of his pro career was that long missile to Brown down the right sideline — incredibly, the same throw (and distance) Daniels made for his first completion in college at Arizona State.

Daniels capped his drive with a three-yard zone-read keeper for the touchdown to finish the day 2-for-3 passing (66.7 completion percentage) for 45 yards and a 109.7 passer rating.

"He was smiling back at us," Quinn said of Daniels's big completion. "He knew that he went off script and [was like], 'Can I go back in?' The answer was no."

Mariota took the subsequent series — a quick three-and-out — before handing the offense to Jeff Driskel for the remainder of the first half. Rookie Sam Hartman played most of the second half but left the field early because of an apparent shoulder injury; he had an ice pack strapped to his



MITCHELL LEFF/GETTY IMAGES

**During his one series Saturday, quarterback Jayden Daniels called an audible before completing a 42-yard pass. He then capped the opening drive with a rushing touchdown.**

right shoulder in the stadium tunnel after the game. Driskel played the final seven minutes of the fourth quarter.

Here's what else to know about the Commanders' loss:

### Don't rule out Davis

Jamin Davis, the team's first-round pick in 2021, is among several returning players under pressure to prove themselves to the new staff. Washington talked about moving him to the edge in years past but never did. Quinn's staff finally did, and Davis proved that might be a good plan.

The fourth-year player had tackles on back-to-back run plays

in the first quarter. Lined up on the right side of the line, Davis flashed his power and quick reaction by pushing back the Jets' left tackle before quickly turning and tackling the running back up the middle.

### Forbes is up and down

Second-year cornerback Emmanuel Forbes Jr. played much of the first half. He hung tight in coverage to break up a deep pass to wide receiver Jason Brownlee along the left sideline on the Jets' first offensive play. But in the second quarter, he was beat by Brownlee on a corner route for a touchdown. Forbes seemed to

lose track of the ball in the air as Brownlee gained outside leverage to pull in the over-the-shoulder throw from third-string quarterback Andrew Peasley.

Forbes' future remains unclear. He started Saturday and is listed as a backup on the unofficial depth chart. He has struggled with his technique and play in coverage. A strong outing would have left him on better footing going into next week's joint practice and preseason game in Miami. Instead, his performance generated more uncertainty.

### Wanted: A tackle. Or two.

Hardly news here, but Satur-

day's game was another reminder of the Commanders' uncertainty with projected starters and their clear lack of depth at the position. Wylie hasn't participated in team drills for much of training camp. Lucas was excused for a personal reason, and Coleman was out most of the week with what Quinn said is a strain "in his shoulder and his pec."

"He's probably day-to-day or week to week," Quinn added, "...but we anticipate him moving forward quickly."

Paul and Mason Brooks, who are traditionally guards, have rotated at tackle to help fill the void, but they're both clearly better

suited inside. Braeden Daniels, a fourth-round pick in 2023, was on injured reserve as a rookie and appears to be the last resort at tackle, never a good sign for a young player.

### Rookies stand out

Tight end Ben Sinnott showed his big-play ability with a 44-yard grab up the middle. At least 25 of those yards were earned after the catch as Sinnott dragged a group of defenders upfield.

On defense, undrafted safety Tyler Owens had one of the plays of the game on special teams when he tackled Malachi Corley on a punt.



The Washington Post

# PARIS OLYMPICS

SUNDAY, AUGUST 11, 2024

EZ SU



ISABEL INFANTES/REUTERS

Ethiopia's Tamirat Tola won the men's marathon and set the Olympic record by finishing in 2 hours 6 minutes 26 seconds. Later Saturday, he thanked countryman Sisay Lemma for giving up his spot in the race.

## Ethiopia's late sub sets the standard

Tola conquers a hilly marathon course that's too much for the two-time defending champion; two Americans finish in the top 10



Candace Buckner

PARIS — The hills lived up to their reputation. They broke up the crowd of 81 runners Saturday morning, and there on those climbs, a plastic, blue-capped water bottle was as coveted as gold. It was precious, at least, until it was tossed over the barriers toward an empty space or to a spectator lucky enough to receive a souvenir filled with the DNA of an Olympic marathoner.

The hills caused one of the world's best runners to grab his hip and lose touch with the pack — and also his chance of winning three consecutive gold medals. And as the course defeated a legend, the ascents and their even trickier declines magnified the unlikely winner.

The biggest hill of the Paris Olympics marathon course never slowed Tamirat Tola of Ethiopia. Neither did the fact that he entered the race as an injury replacement. About 63 minutes in, Tola began his separation. Even though he was in front, he would check over his shoulder several times. Tola only needed to watch the clock. Time turned out to be his only rival and, just like the hills that created a historically challenging course, he conquered it as well.

Tola's winning time of 2 hours 6 minutes 26 seconds set the Olympic record. He snapped a cold streak for his country, earning Ethiopia its first gold medal in the event since Sydney in 2000. And he did so without originally being on the start list.

Sisay Lemma, the winner of this year's Boston Marathon, withdrew from Ethiopia's Olympic team because of injury. In late July, Tola took his place. And then in Paris, he took over.

"Sisay told me that it was better for him to drop out and for me to compete. He said, 'You can do better than me in my condition,'" Tola said. "It is thanks to him. This victory also belongs to him for giving me this opportunity."

Before the Olympics, runners from around the world prepared for what they knew would be a hilly 26.2-mile course unlike most major metropolitan routes, which feature much more forgiving flat roads. The loop



CHRISTIAN BRUNA/EPA-EFE/SHUTTERSTOCK

Lemma won the Boston Marathon this year. His withdrawal gave Tola an opportunity, and he ended up atop the medal podium. "This victory also belongs to him," Tola said.

from Hôtel de Ville, through the city, 14 miles out to Versailles, along the Seine and back to the streets of Paris (a beautiful backdrop and a balm for tired legs) paid homage to the Women's March on Versailles. On Oct. 5, 1789, revolutionary women demanded bread and firearms. On Saturday, the men of the marathon just needed water. Runners expected a certain kind of agony on this course, and yet ...

"I'm not going to lie," American Clayton Young said. "Those hills were grindy."

One website dedicated to runners described the course as having "some of the toughest hills the Olympic marathon has ever seen." Another called the race "shockingly hilly." In all, there was 1,430 feet of elevation. Tola trained in his home country, while silver medalist Bashir Abdi of Belgium also tested himself in Ethiopia as well as in the south of France. Once Abdi faced his first hill of the day, he discovered

the climbs weren't so scary after all. However, he should have been more concerned about the horrors hidden in those descents.

"I actually expected the uphills would be the most challenging one, but going down was a little more challenging today," Abdi said. "It was so deep down. You don't have any control of your body. Everything was hurting — my knees, my lower back."

Before, during and after those climbs, the typical scenes of a marathon unfolded: runners hydrating then littering, and hydrating then littering some more. But then a shocker: two-time Olympic gold medalist Eliud Kipchoge falling behind.

When the broadcast cameras found Kipchoge 59 minutes into the race, the hills were winning. Three years ago in Tokyo's 80-degree weather, Kipchoge won by 80 seconds. In Paris, however, the hills proved more punishing than the heat as he

struggled to break free from the unfamiliar middle of the pack. One announcer perceived Kipchoge as "suffering." From then on, anytime Kipchoge appeared on the screen, in real speed or in slow-motion replays that showed him holding his left hip, the commentators tried to be respectful while providing a requiem of the 39-year-old's career.

Sixty-three minutes in, as Tola and others made the definitive move, the cameras no longer followed the runners who wouldn't medal. So Kipchoge wasn't on the screen when the announcer noted he had been reduced to walking.

With more than eight miles to the finish, Kipchoge abandoned the race. When he stopped, an audience beyond the barriers chanted his name and clapped. Kipchoge raised his hands in a gesture of gratitude and smiled.

"I was next to him at the start line and I was next to him through the first 10 to 15 [kilometers] like most people. What a legend," said Young, one of two Americans to place in the top 10. "I do a lot of visualization and preparation for these races. When I think of the perfect form, the perfect embodiment of a marathoner, I envision Eliud Kipchoge and I try to emulate this form and his character and his smile in the race — and what he represents. Mad respect to him."

American Conner Mantz ran in the three-man breakaway around the halfway point, but Tola soon took the lead by himself.

"You forget that everybody here is really, really good," he said.

Mantz finished eighth in 2:08:12. Young, who had caught up to his teammate and friend after the hills, ran in right behind him in ninth (2:08:44). Young celebrated as he crossed the finish line and, as he thought deeper about the accomplishments — only Ethiopia and the United States put multiple runners in the top 10 — he grew emotional while talking with reporters.

"We executed a great race. ... Obviously we both in the back of our minds wanted to be on the podium. We wanted more, but to be top 10 is a great, great day," Young said as tears came to his eyes. "And me personally, I'm proud. I'm proud."

United States				
GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	TOTAL	
38	42	42	122	

China				
GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	TOTAL	
39	27	24	90	

Britain				
GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	TOTAL	
14	22	27	63	



Live updates: For analysis and results throughout the Games, visit [wapo.st/parisolympics](https://wapo.st/parisolympics)

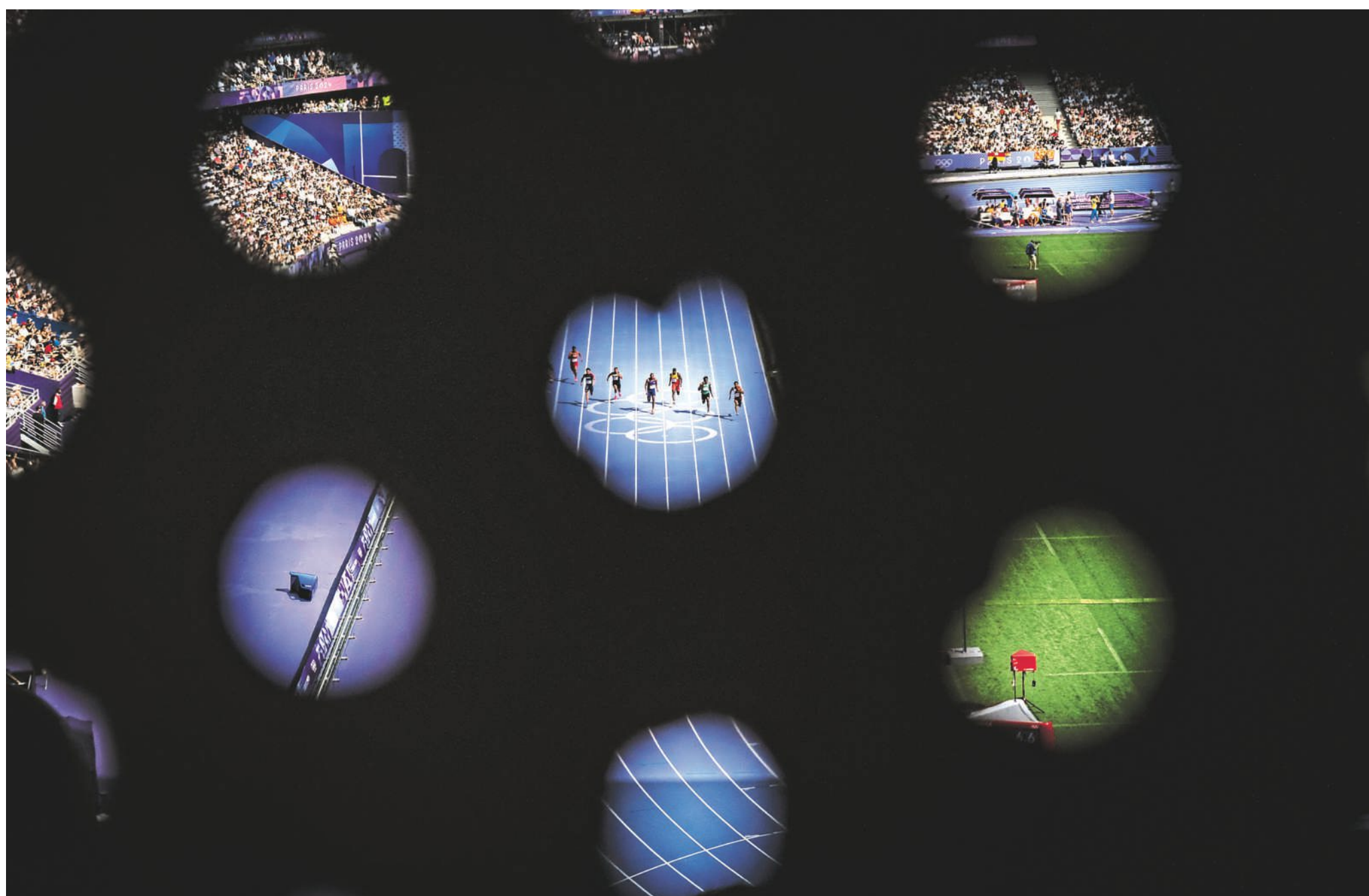
Medal leaders through Saturday.

PARIS OLYMPICS

# THE GAMES IN EXPRESSION AND LIGHT



TONI L. SANDYS/THE WASHINGTON POST



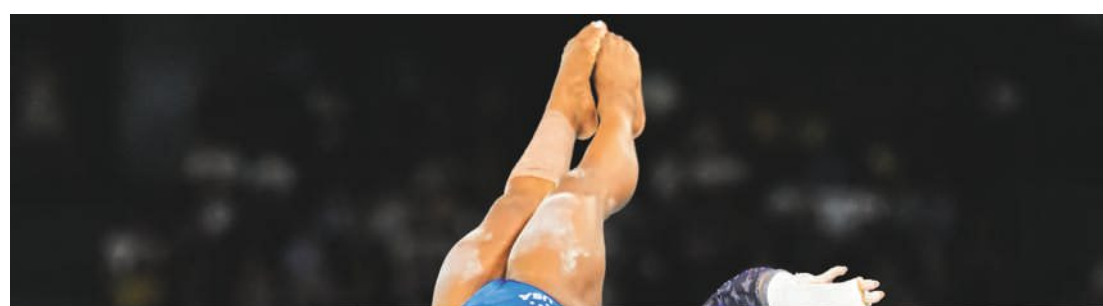
JABIN BOTSFORD/THE WASHINGTON POST



JABIN BOTSFORD/THE WASHINGTON POST



JABIN BOTSFORD/THE WASHINGTON POST



JABIN BOTSFORD/THE WASHINGTON POST

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:** Gabby Thomas was all smiles after winning the 200 meters for one of her three gold medals at the Paris Olympics. Runners competed in a heat of the men's 100 meters; Noah Lyles eventually grabbed the gold. The U.S. artistic swimming team took part in the technical routine while on its way to a silver medal. Simone Biles ruled the gymnastics all-around final on her way to three gold medals. Stephen Curry led a furious comeback by the men's basketball team in a semifinal victory over Serbia; the Americans followed that up by claiming their fifth straight gold medal with a victory over France.



## PARIS OLYMPICS

## BASKETBALL

## Behind veteran trio, Americans extend their golden era

UNITED STATES 98,  
FRANCE 87

BY BEN GOLLIVER

PARIS — Stephen Curry and Kevin Durant, cloaked in American flags, shared hugs with LeBron James as the final buzzer sounded and their tumultuous road to Olympic gold was finally complete.

The United States defeated France, 98-87, at Bercy Arena on Saturday night, besting the host country in Paris to win its fifth straight gold medal at the Summer Games.

While the Americans never trailed after taking a 29-27 lead midway through the second quarter, the final was a spirited affair in which the French got within three points in the final three minutes. But Curry hit four late three-pointers to seal the victory, celebrating by shaking his USA jersey toward the crowd and putting his hands together next to his head in his signature “night, night” motion. Curry finished with a team-high 24 points on eight three-pointers.

“It’s everything I imagined and more,” Curry said. “For a first experience, this is all you could ask for. You just stay confident, stay present and don’t get rattled by the moment. The last two minutes were special.”

James, who was named tournament MVP, had 14 points, six rebounds and 10 assists. Curry and Durant said the Los Angeles Lakers forward first reached out to them via text message nearly a year ago to begin conversations about teaming up in Paris.

“We got our moment,” said James, a three-time gold medalist. “This is what we wanted. We didn’t like the way we played last summer [finishing fourth at the FIBA World Cup], so we put together this team very fast.”

The United States captured its 17th gold medal in 20 Olympic appearances. The Americans, who now boast a 149-6 record in the Olympics, remained undefeated in the knockout round since 2004. And the U.S. team, which went undefeated in Paris and won its six games by an average of 19 points, improved to 4-0 against France in gold medal games.

Durant set a men’s basketball record by earning his fourth gold medal; he had 15 points against France. The Phoenix Suns forward became the United States’ leading men’s or women’s Olympic scorer during the knockout round, prompting questions about whether he would add to his career tally by returning for a fifth appearance in 2028 in Los Angeles when he would be 39, the same age James is now.

“My goal every time I put this jersey on is to represent my country, my state, my street and my family name and to push the



JABIN BOTSFORD/THE WASHINGTON POST

Anthony Davis, inserted into the game to help offset the athleticism of France big man Victor Wembanyama, left, throws down a dunk.

game forward,” Durant said. “We built off what the Dream Team did in 1992 and carried that torch. As far as 2028, who knows?”

The basketball world — and a glitzy court-side row that included Carmelo Anthony, Scottie Pippen, Draymond Green, Dirk Nowitzki, Pau Gasol, Tony Parker and Thierry Henry — was treated to a riveting and well-played final. Victor Wembanyama, France’s 20-year-old sensation, immediately made it clear he was ready for the big stage, converting a three-pointer to open his team’s scoring and following it up with a brilliant spinning dunk.

The United States and France met in the gold medal game three years ago in Tokyo, and the heated rematch had the feeling of a budding rivalry. After entering the game as 16½-point favorites, the Americans led 49-41 at halftime despite cold shooting from beyond the arc. The United States finally opened a double-

digit lead shortly before halftime, but Guerschon Yabusele, France’s bruising forward, pounded away inside to counter the Americans’ momentum. Yabusele delivered his team’s highlight of the night with a dunk over James that drew “M-V-P!” chants from the French partisans.

Of course, the Americans countered with razzle-dazzle of their own. James, dressed in golden sneakers, tossed a pretty behind-the-back pass to a cutting Devin Booker for a layup, and Durant lobbed an alley-oop to Anthony Edwards. James, tasting victory, beelined to the rim for a thunderous slam midway through the fourth quarter, punishing France’s trapping defense. Curry finished the job with his backbreaking, spectacular three-pointers.

France’s upset bid came up short because its guards and wings couldn’t support the productive duo of Wembanyama, who had a game-high 26 points and seven rebounds, and

Yabusele, who added 20 points. Breakout star Isaia Cordinier was held scoreless, and Evan Fournier didn’t get on the board until late in the third quarter. France Coach Vincent Collet also lamented his team’s 10-for-17 shooting from the free throw line and botched scoring opportunities in transition.

“I would have liked to see how [the United States] would have reacted if we could have gotten the lead again,” Collet said. “But maybe [Curry] would have made the shots the same way he made them tonight. I was expecting more, but you have to do the perfect game. We had a chance. We didn’t take it.”

This will not be remembered as a flawless run to gold for the United States. The challenges began even before Coach Steve Kerr gathered the team for a Las Vegas training camp in early July: Durant suffered a calf injury that sidelined him for weeks. When the four-day camp ended, the United States parted ways

with forward Kawhi Leonard, who was rehabbing a knee injury.

While the United States defeated the talent-rich Canadians to open its 5-0 exhibition schedule, it hardly looked unbeatable as the rest of the tour — including stops in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates; and London — unfolded. The Americans appeared lackluster down the stretch against Australia, and they narrowly avoided a catastrophic exhibition loss against Olympic newcomer South Sudan. They also had to work hard for a narrow win over Germany in their final tuneup.

Once they arrived in France, they navigated the back-and-forth logistics of traveling to Lille, near the Belgium border, with relative ease, scoring three blowout wins in pool play. Despite the one-sided victories, questions swirled over Kerr’s lineup decisions: starting Joel Embiid over Anthony Davis, bringing Durant off the bench and jettisoning Jayson Tatum

from his rotation. Embiid also faced regular booing from French fans chafed by his decision to play for the United States rather than France or Cameroon, where he also holds citizenship.

Kerr stressed the importance of sacrifice while swatting away questions about his rotations, and Embiid repeatedly responded to the jeers by uncorking a crotch chopping gesture. In the final, Kerr finally moved Durant into the starting lineup and brought Tatum back into the rotation. Curry said Kerr tried to keep the team focused during its month-long journey by displaying a picture of a gold medal on a projector during every team meeting.

“There’s a lot of noise around our team,” Curry said. “I don’t envy [Kerr’s] position to find minutes for everybody. Rotations are hard. At the end of the day, it’s about winning.”

The United States began the knockout round by routing Brazil. But Nikola Jokic and Serbia pushed the Americans to the brink in the semifinals, building a 17-point lead in the first half and carrying a 13-point edge into the fourth quarter. Curry, who led the way with 36 points and nine three-pointers, joined forces with James, Durant and Embiid to power an unforgettable comeback in a 95-91 victory that was the closest the United States has come to losing in the knockout round since 2004. (Serbia beat Germany, 93-83, to claim the bronze medal Saturday.)

In the final, the Americans had to contend with an opponent who enjoyed the ultimate home-court advantage. Parker, the French basketball legend, welcomed the Paris crowd to Bercy Arena. Rows of tricolor flags blanketed three sections of baseline seats, and hundreds of Wembanyama No. 32 jerseys were peppered throughout the crowd. L’Équipe, the French sports journal, hyped the final with the headline: “Once upon a time with the Americans.” Inside the arena, a banner read “Rendezvous with history.”

The host’s swelled hopes went unfulfilled. The French went down as they had in Tokyo, just like the Serbians (2016) and the Spanish (2008 and 2012) before them. After Wembanyama and his teammates clapped their appreciation to the crowd, James, Durant and Curry — the 30-somethings who starred in their first and probably last Olympics together — posed with their medals between their teeth and stood side by side as “The Star-Spangled Banner” played and the American flag was raised to the rafters.

“There’s a sense of relief at the end, but it’s more a sense of accomplishment,” Curry said. “I was smiling, cheesing and having the best time of my life because this might not come around again.”

## JERRY BREWER

## Team USA better enjoy this one. France has next.

BREWER FROM D1

and through showing appreciating to the home crowd. The 7-foot-4 phenom did everything he could to deliver an Olympic gold medal, and so did a spirited French audience, which turned a basketball game into a drum-banging, tricolor-flag-waving, raucous spectacle. All of it was good enough only to come close.

The United States claimed a 98-87 victory over France and won its fifth straight gold medal Saturday at Bercy Arena. As a stirring night ended, Wembanyama looked on as if searching for the missing ingredient.

His pain was beautiful to witness.

I say that not to make light of Wemby’s disappointment. It’s never fun to see a fabulous competitor hurting. But in his agony, we received an even deeper look at basketball’s future. If it already means that much to this kid, there is far more substance to the hype than we realized. And after his stellar rookie NBA season, we were plenty amazed by the depth of his talent.

As Wembanyama takes in those hard lessons, his development will enrich and

complicate the fiercest rivalry in men’s international basketball. For the second straight Olympics, the United States had to go through France in the final. Get used to it. France looms as the most persistent challenge to American hoops supremacy that the United States has had to withstand since it turned to NBA players 32 years ago.

“I’m learning, and I’m worried for the opponents in a couple of years,” Wembanyama said. When asked whether he was talking about the NBA or FIBA, he said, “Everywhere.”

There have always been fleeting challengers. Argentina, in its golden era with Manu Ginóbili, was dangerous for a time. Spain, with the Gasol brothers and a host of NBA talent, lost thrilling gold medal games to the Americans in 2008 and 2012. Lithuania has beaten the United States on the Olympic stage. Serbia has pushed Team USA, and in the semifinal of this tournament, it forced the Americans to pull off perhaps the most memorable fourth-quarter comeback in program history.

But those teams tend to fade after a few good runs. France has the potential to create a multigenerational chase. French basketball reached new heights



JABIN BOTSFORD/THE WASHINGTON POST

After notching 14 points, 10 assists and six rebounds for his third Olympic gold medal, LeBron James congratulates Jrue Holiday.

before Wembanyama. With him, the possibilities are greater. The dream was to play host to a changing of the guard. But with James, Durant and Curry leading one of the most legendary Team USA rosters over, an upset wasn’t going to happen.

But the rivalry is about to intensify. James, 39, just enjoyed the ultimate Olympic basketball walk-off moment with his MVP performance. Durant, 35, must tussle with time if he wants to return and attempt to win a fifth gold medal in Los Angeles in 2028. Curry, 36, finally was able to play in his first Olympics. He closed it as only Curry can, finishing with 60 points over the final two games, including a team-high 24 on eight three-pointers against France. But Curry would be 40 in 2028.

Much will be different in Los Angeles. By then, Wembanyama could be the best player in the NBA — or at least a perennial MVP candidate. As Nikola Jokic proved for Serbia, a superstar with longevity on the national team can pose a huge threat to Team USA, even though no one can match the Americans’ depth. We’re in an era in which the past six NBA MVPs were born outside the United States. As James comes closer to retirement, the face of the NBA isn’t guaranteed to be American anymore.

With a little player development, it also seems France will have better depth moving forward. A pair of 20-year-olds, Wembanyama and Washington Wizards forward Bilal Coulibaly, made this Olympic team. In the June NBA

draft, the top two picks — and three of the first six players selected — were French. The Atlanta Hawks selected Zacharie Risacher first. The Wizards took big man Alex Sarr at No. 2. At No. 6, the Charlotte Hornets chose Tidjane Salaun. In 2025, there is a 6-foot-5 French point guard named Nolan Traoré garnering lottery-pick buzz. There are a few other players, including guard/forward Noah Penda and combo forward Noa Essengue, on the NBA’s radar.

Those are just the teenagers with potential. Established veterans such as Isaia Cordinier, Guerschon Yabusele and Frank Ntilikina are still in their 20s and available to help Wembanyama anchor the team. France seems certain to stand up to the United States for a long time.

Wemby was emotional after the semifinal victory over Germany, saying of the gold medal matchup, “It’s a chance to write history.”

A banner in the crowd shared the sentiment. A fan wrote: “Rendezvous avec l’histoire.” Translation: Rendezvous with history.

Curry would have none of it. He hit four three-pointers late in the fourth quarter, ending every France threat with a flair that we hadn’t seen from him at the Olympics. He clasped his hands next to his head to tell the French crowd, “Night, night.” He went to sleep wearing gold.

“You just simply marvel at his talent,” James said of Curry. Said U.S. Coach Steve Kerr: “This is storybook stuff, but

that’s what Steph does. He likes to be in storybooks.”

So do Durant and James, the latter of whom turned reflective.

“It means everything,” said James, who finished with 14 points, 10 assists and six rebounds while earning the third gold medal of his career. “I don’t know how many games I’m going to play, how many more big moments, so to have my family here means everything to me.”

Wembanyama scored a game-high 26 points and grabbed seven rebounds, teaming with Yabusele (20 points) to account for more than half of France’s points. But they couldn’t match the Americans’ balance. The Americans made 18 of 36 three-pointers. France made 9 of 30.

“This is the second time I have got silver, and I am getting tired of it,” said Yabusele, whose exploits included dunking on James, who tried unsuccessfully to take a charge. “I need to get a gold, and I think next time is going to be a good time for us to get the gold.”

Next time, huh? That’s something you don’t hear often from challengers that Team USA has cast aside. But France wants more.

Next time, the Olympics will be on America soil. Next time, Curry, Durant and James probably won’t play. Next time, Wemby will be an even bigger star.

“I will be going for gold in four years’ time,” Wembanyama said.

He still had tears in his eyes. Oh, next time is going to be good.

## PARIS OLYMPICS

## TRACK AND FIELD

## After a historic showing for the U.S., what is the encore?

BY RICK MAESE

SAINT-DENIS, FRANCE — Over the course of nine days, they paraded from the finish line to the medal podium, shedding tears, waving flags and collecting medals. With each heave and every leap, each burst out of the blocks and every lean across the line here, they reset the course of American track and field.

In this final night of the Olympic track and field meet, it happened to be high jump, hurdles, relays and a long-distance race — but virtually everyone had a turn at these Paris Games. The Americans exceeded expectations at Stade de France and bounced back from a subpar showing in Tokyo, winning 34 track and field medals, including 14 golds. It's the United States' best track and field showing since the 1984 Games in Los Angeles, where it won 40 medals, 16 gold on home soil.

The Americans reached the podium in 20 of the 35 track and field events held at Stade de France. Had U.S. track and field stars somehow sought status as an independent nation, their 14 golds would be tied for sixth on the overall Olympic medal table, ahead of countries such as Germany, Italy and Canada.

So it was perhaps fitting that this Olympic meet closed with the U.S. national anthem playing on a crisp Parisian night. Workers waited to reconfigure the stadium for Sunday's Closing Ceremonies. But first, the Americans' stellar women's 4x400 relay team stood beaming atop the podium, accepting its gold medals after decimating the field by more than four seconds, finishing just 0.10 seconds shy of a world record.

The relay squad, which has won gold in the 4x400 race at every Olympics dating back to the 1996 Atlanta Games, exemplified the excellence the U.S. runners showed throughout the meet. It featured Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone, who leaves here with two golds, matching her medal haul from Tokyo, and Gabby Thomas, who is the first American runner since Allyson Felix in 2012 to win three gold medals at an Olympics.

"We were watching people win medals all week," Thomas said. "I was so inspired watching my teammates do what they do. I know what it takes. I know how hard it is to win a medal in track and field. It's a very cutthroat sport, especially at this level."

The men's 4x400 relay grabbed gold Saturday night, too, setting an Olympic record and capping an important bounce-back meet. Three years ago in Tokyo, the American men didn't win a single



MATTHIAS SCHRADER/ASSOCIATED PRESS

The American women's 4x400-meter relay team won the final by more than four seconds, one of 14 gold medals for the U.S. track and field program at the Paris Games.

individual race. In Paris, the men took gold in five (Noah Lyles in the 100, Quincy Hall in the 400, Cole Hocker in the 1,500, Grant Holloway in the 110 hurdles and Rai Benjamin in the 400 hurdles).

In all, the men medaled in nine of 10 individual track races — the most for any country since the first time all of these events were part of the Olympic program in 1920. Three years ago at the Tokyo Games, the Americans finished on the podium in five of these events, which include sprints, middle- and long-distance races and hurdles. It's rare for a team to finish on the podium in more than a few of these events. Since 2000, the United States and Kenya are the only countries that have medaled in at least half of these 10 races at a single Olympics.

The only men's race that didn't feature an American medalist was the 800 — and in that one Bryce Hoppel set a U.S. record with his 1-minute 41.67-second finish.

So how did this happen and what does it mean?

Benjamin said U.S. track and field athletes — individual sprinters, jumpers and throwers who are scattered all around the country and typically come together only to compete against one another — embraced the team mentality the moment they arrived in Paris. If they weren't at the track, many watched the action together each night back at the Olympic Village. Every U.S. medal built excitement and momentum, starting with Grant Fisher reaching the podium in the 10,000 meters, the meet's first medal event, followed the next day by six American medals, which included Ryan Crouser's gold in the shot put and Sha'Carri Richardson's silver in the 100.

"How my teammates set the tone on Day 1 kind of dictated subconsciously what the team would do throughout the rest of the championships," said Benjamin, who won a second gold here Saturday as part of the 4x400 relay. "... It's very infectious. When you're down there and you're mingling with everyone,

you kind of get the sense, okay, the ball is rolling here. Everyone is doing it."

Fisher felt it. He got the podium parade started Aug. 2 with his bronze and returned Saturday night with a third-place finish in the 5,000. Late in the grueling race, "I honestly thought I was toast," he said. But he kept pushing. He remembered his American teammates coming from behind and stealing wins — Hall in the 400, Richardson in the 4x100 relay, Hocker in the 1,500. In the 5,000, Fisher was running seventh with about 120 meters to go and willed his way to third down the stretch.

"Maybe fighting for a podium is contagious," he said. "You see guys getting medals fighting for a higher position than they were projected, and when you see that, you think it's possible for yourself."

As they leave Paris, the question hanging over U.S. track and field is: Now what? The sport has long struggled for relevancy and audience outside of the Olympics,

particularly in the United States. "Winning medals is pretty big for us in America," Benjamin said, "and we go home, and no one remembers."

There are efforts underway to build the sport between the Paris and Los Angeles Games. World Athletics has announced plans to stage a biennial "Ultimate Championship" beginning in 2026, featuring an elite field and stoking fan interest between its world championships. Michael Johnson, the four-time Olympic champion, is planning to launch a professional track and field league starting next year. And Alexis Ohanian, the Reddit co-founder and husband of Serena Williams, is debuting the 776 Invitational in September — a track meet just for women.

"You still have this crazy paradox that you have historically always been the powerhouse of track and field, but your athletes can't walk through here [in Paris] or the Bahnhofstrasse [in Zurich] or Brussels or London without being mobbed," said Sebastian

Coe, president of World Athletics. "They're still in relative anonymity in their hometowns, and that's a disconnect there."

Coe says he has met with officials from both the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee and USA Track & Field in Paris with an aim of building up interest and excitement ahead of the 2028 Games.

"[If] it's any other nation on the planet, this would be your national sport," Coe said.

Many of the sport's biggest stars became household names for at least a couple of weeks — Lyles, Richardson, Thomas, McLaughlin-Levrone. The goal is to make sure a sports-mad country with a short attention span and no shortage of entertainment options doesn't quickly forget.

"This will be a pretty historic meet when you look back on track and field," Fisher said. "Hopefully, this will lead into 2028 and we'll have another good one there."

Emily Giambalvo and Adam Kilgore contributed to this report.

## Russell's dream comes true as she wins 100-meter hurdles gold in photo finish

## TRACK FROM D1

mouthed: "Give it to me. Give it to me."

The board went blank, and suddenly it came true: Russell's name appeared first. She had won the gold medal on track's final day at the Paris Olympics by 0.01 seconds. Her time of 12.33 edged Frenchwoman Cyréna Samba-Mayela, who sobbed after she earned the meet's first track and field medal for France and the country's earsplitting fans. Reigning Puerto Rican gold medalist Jasmine Camacho-Quinn, another piece of the photo finish, crossed in 12.36.

"I wanted to come out here and put my name on history," Russell said. "I always knew that I had the talent and capability of being one of the best hurdlers ever. And I'm coming for the world record, respectfully."

Russell achieved the all-time flex of winning an Olympic gold medal wearing Louis Vuitton earrings. Her fashion flourishes also included long eyelashes, distinctive braids down to her waist, multiple nose piercings, U.S. flag fingernail extensions and a gem affixed to her tooth.

"Just a little bit of spice," Russell said. "Not too, too much."

Russell started dreaming on the tracks of Prince George's County. She grew up in Upper Marlboro and ran as part of Fast Track Club on the Largo High track. Her first coach was her father, Mark, who sat in the Stade de France stands Saturday night, surrounded by loved ones who wore "Team Masai" T-shirts.

Mark had zero track background, but he liked to throw himself into research. He bought



MARTIN BERNETTI/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE/GETTY IMAGES

Masai Russell, who attended the Bullis School, tried not to cry during the medal ceremony Saturday.

Russell resistance bands and studied training programs. When Russell was 10, she entered a national track meet in California.

"I ended up getting third with my dad being my coach and him not even really knowing what he was doing," Russell said. "It was nothing too crazy. He was just, like, being a good dad."

Russell's prodigious youth career helped her elevate the track team at the Bullis School. She dominated in college at Kentucky, the same alma mater as Camacho-Quinn, 400-meter hurdles champion Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone and men's 110-meter hurdles silver medalist Daniel Roberts. "We're honestly Hurdle

U," Camacho-Quinn said.

At the beginning of this track season, Russell wrote down her goals: Break the indoor world record, become the indoor world champion, win the U.S. Olympic trials, win the Olympics and break the world record. Only the biggest dreams.

"She's dominant," American fi-

nalist and NCAA champion Grace Stark said.

Russell lost a podium spot at the line to end the indoor season, but her main season went according to plan. Russell won the U.S. trials in 12.25 seconds, making her the fourth-fastest woman ever. She bought herself a Mercedes to celebrate.

Despite her world-leading time, Russell did not enter the Olympics as the favorite. There wasn't one. The field had grown so dense with possible winners that world record holder Tobi Amusan of Nigeria did not escape the semifinal heats.

"Once all of us get on the line, you could pretty much close your eyes and choose a winner," U.S. hurdler Alaysha Johnson said Wednesday after winning her first-round heat.

Before the final, Russell told herself: "I'm not going regret the things I didn't do in this race. I'm going to make it happen." She is a bubbly personality, but when she emerged from the tunnel on to the track, she wore a scowl.

"At that point, nothing's funny," Russell said. "It's do or die." In Lane 5, with Americans to her left and right, Russell burst from the blocks. The hurdlers moved through the race in a line. Russell was in the middle of a tightly packed bunch over the fifth hurdle. She knew then she could win.

"I know a lot of people can't compete with me on the back end," Russell said.

Samba-Mayela landed first over the final hurdle, Russell a blink behind. She practices the mad-dash final sprint endlessly. She could not sense where she stood, but she knew the race

would come down to a dive and a lean. Samba-Mayela could hear the crowd chanting her name and "Allez les Bleus!"

Russell drew even with Samba-Mayela. The naked eye could not differentiate between the two and maybe even Camacho-Quinn. Russell looked up at the board. When her dream came true, she took off at a dead sprint.

The next name was Samba-Mayela's. French fans had filled Stade de France for nine days, morning and night, making prenoon high jump qualifiers sound like the fourth quarter of the Super Bowl. They had not cheered for a home medalist. Once she saw her name flash second, Samba-Mayela collapsed and bawled.

"It was a duty for me, a duty of long years," Samba-Mayela said. "A lot of suffering. A lot of pleasure. But it was so hard. Some of the most stressful days of my life, but actually it has been a lot of pleasure because of this crowd. They are lovers of sport. They shared that pleasure with me. All that joy, it lifted me."

In the evening came the second part of Russell's dream. She cried when she stepped onto the top of the medal podium, then held back tears as a gold medal hung around her neck while the national anthem blared.

Russell still wants to break the world record, currently 0.13 seconds off her best. That could wait. Mark Russell, her old coach, the dad who helped make her dreams come true, sat in the stands and watched his daughter try not to cry.

"It always seems like it's not possible," Russell said. "Until it is."

## PARIS OLYMPICS

## French athletes repay homeland's love with gold after gold

BY DAVE SHEININ  
AND CHUCK CULPEPPER

PARIS — France's "La Marseillaise" is surely the bloodthirstiest of all national anthems, from the throat-slitting imagery of the first verse to the blood flowing like water in the refrain. But this summer in Paris, in its countless renditions both official and impromptu as the people of France celebrate in full-throated unison their country's many Olympic triumphs, it has sounded less like a bloody call to arms than an ode to joy, if not "Ode to Joy."

On the penultimate day of the Olympics, the French anthem rang out once more in its official, orchestral, gold medal iteration at South Paris Arena at the conclusion of the men's volleyball championship match, won by France in straight sets over Poland. The athletes, with gold-coated chunks of the Eiffel Tower around their necks, sang along and, like many of their countrymen and countrywomen, either choked back tears or didn't even bother trying.

"Our families in the stands, friends, relatives — everyone is there. It is an even greater emotion," French star Earvin Ngapeth told reporters, comparing the feeling of winning gold in front of the home crowd with winning in Tokyo three years ago in an empty arena. "It's difficult to explain because it had never happened and it will never happen again."

Saturday brought France's 15th and 16th gold medals of the Games, topping its haul of 15 from Atlanta 1996 for the country's most since 1900. On Saturday night, Victor Wembanyama and the French men fell to Team USA in the men's basketball gold medal game and had to settle for silver. On Sunday, its women's basketball team will get a shot at the Americans, too.

With one day of competition



ELOISA LOPEZ/REUTERS

Colorful and boisterous, fans of France have been everywhere — and their athletes have responded.

left, France's 62 medals also are its most since the 1900 Games, the second of the modern era in which roughly 60 percent of the participants were French. France made the final in a staggering seven team sports this year: men's and women's basketball, men's volleyball, women's handball, men's rugby, men's soccer and men's three-on-three basketball. It won gold in such disparate sports as fencing, judo, surfing and BMX racing.

"Just a love letter to our fans and our supporters," French women's basketball star Gabby Williams said when asked what it meant to have both the men's and women's teams in the gold medal games. "Every gym has been full. The atmosphere has made us

want to cry every single game. ... We're happy that we can give this back to them."

Renditions of "La Marseillaise" have not been reserved only for gold medal victories. At the men's soccer final Friday, France lost to Spain, denying the overflow crowd its anthem at the medal ceremony. Fans serenaded their beloved silver medalists with an a cappella version anyway, then a hearty chant of France's rallying cry: "Allez les Bleus! Allez les Bleus!"

French soccer legend Thierry Henry, who coached the men's team here, said afterward, "We are a beautiful country when we are together."

"La Marseillaise," in fact, has not been confined to the venues.

Impromptu versions have been heard these past few weeks on Metro trains, on public streets and in cafes, where TVs are invariably showing whichever event features a French athlete.

Before the men's volleyball final Saturday, fans unfurled a banner that stretched across two sections of stands and read "Rendezvous Avec L'Histoire." Every fan in the building seemed to have a French flag in one hand and another painted on their cheek. For 76 minutes, they chanted and sang and implored Les Bleus to fight.

"It pushes us forward," Ngapeth said. "In our quarterfinal against Germany, we were struggling, and the crowd kept us in."

If nothing else, the nightly shows of nationalistic pride on the Olympic stage have blown apart a long-held stereotype: This summer, the idea of the French as indifferent sports fans finally died after decades of precipitous decline.

It is a trend that historians frequently trace to a monumental moment near the end of the previous century, when host nation France, behind star Zinedine Zidane, won the 1998 World Cup for the country's first title.

On the Champs-Élysées after France's 3-0 upset of Brazil in the final, the French romped the great boulevard into the night and well toward morning singing, over and over, "On est les champions" ("We are the champions"). Some French fathers carried young children out to sidewalks in the hopes the kid might remember the moment.

Perhaps it requires a home nation event for the French to sit up and pay attention. It took just one day at these Paris Games for France's significant home-field advantage to make itself known — at the men's rugby final against Fiji on the opening Saturday, when the audience seemed to include about 73 Fijians and 68,927 French.

Swimmer Leon Marchand's memorably dominant performance in the pool — featuring four individual gold medals — brought "La Marseillaise" to a global audience tuning in for one of the Olympics' marquee sports. At Paris La Défense Arena, the French in the crowd made a cheeky, punny tweak to the anthem: Where the lyrics say, "Marchons! Marchons! (We march! We march!)," they sang, "Marchand! Marchand!"

Every host country in recent history has enjoyed a tangible bump in medal performance at its home Olympics. China jumped from 32 golds and 63 medals in Athens 2004 to 48 and

100 at Beijing 2008. Britain improved from 19 and 51 in Beijing to 29 and 65 at London 2012. And Brazil went from three and 17 in London to seven and 19 in Rio de Janeiro 2016. Even Japan, which because of the pandemic didn't even get the benefit of supportive crowds, went from 12 golds and 41 overall in Rio to 27 and 58 at the Tokyo Games in 2021. But France's home Olympics boom has been almost seismic. Three years ago, the country finished with 10 golds (tied for seventh on the medal table) and 33 overall (10th). In Paris, France enters the final day of competition with 16 golds (fifth) and 62 overall (fourth).

If anything, the Paris Olympics have been an even bigger success on the business side, with the Games reportedly breaking records for ticket sales — an estimated 9.4 million — and drawing record ratings. The Opening Ceremonies reportedly was the most-watched TV event in French history, with more than 24 million viewers.

In Paris, these Olympics are viewed as a once-in-a-century event, which they literally are — the city last hosted them in 1924. In hindsight, it seems almost absurd to have kept the Summer Games away for so long. But both the French public and the French athletes have embraced Paris 2024 as if it might be another 100 years until the Olympics return.

"We were dreaming about this kind of atmosphere," volleyball stalwart Benjamin Toniutti said. "The generation before didn't have the chance to play an Olympic Games at home. The generation after will not have the chance to play an Olympic Games at home. This generation, we have this opportunity to play in front of our fans in an Olympics at home. It's something crazy."

Emily Giambalvo and Jinpeng Li contributed to this report.

## After a quick makeover led by their new coach, the Americans are on top again

SOCCER FROM D1

Paris spectacle, the United States returned to the pinnacle of women's soccer with a 1-0 victory over Brazil on Saturday at sold-out Parc des Princes.

Mallory Swanson scored early in the second half, cracking open a tense match that could have turned in either team's direction.

"This journey has been incredible," captain Lindsey Horan said. "There's so much belief in every single one of us. I saw it in every game. Forget the principles and the tactical adjustments and the way we played. It's the belief that someone's going to get a goal and that we're going to go out and win that game."

In completing a six-game sweep, the Americans won their first gold medal since 2012 and rebounded from last year's World Cup disappointment. They won gold for the fifth time; no one else has won more than one title. They also earned their ninth major title in 17 major tournaments (Olympics and World Cups) — and their first since winning the 2019 World Cup in France.

The turnaround was swift. It began with the hiring of Coach Emma Hayes, a London native who worked wonders over a dozen years at English club Chelsea. She accepted the job in November but did not begin working in earnest until late May — a short runway to prepare for the Olympics. Even after arriving in France, she admitted to still having to learn about her players. World champion Spain, not the United States, was the pretournament favorite.

"I don't think anyone was like: 'Oh, my God, [U.S. soccer] is doomed. We're never going to be successful ever again,'" left back Crystal Dunn said, reflecting on the fallout from the round-of-16 exit at the World Cup last summer. "We were just like: 'All right, that wasn't great. Let's really get back to who we are.'"

The Americans performed with renewed energy and purpose, and with a dynamic front line leading the way, they had the ability to bust open a match. They also played with looseness and joy.

"We wanted to enjoy this," Horan said. "We're playing on the world stage. Why not enjoy that?" Hayes set the tone and also relished it.

"I genuinely believe that I came in the right moment and, I'm telling you, I had a f—ing blast," she said. "I felt at times that I was in university. I felt lighter than I'd felt in a long, long time."



TONI L. SANDYS/THE WASHINGTON POST

The U.S. women won all three of their matches in the knockout round 1-0. Mallory Swanson had the goal Saturday, lifting her squad to its first Olympic gold medal in 12 years.

The players also embraced Hayes's tactics and, though they teetered at times, they did not concede a goal in the three elimination matches. Each of those games ended 1-0, each goal scored by a member of that exciting set of forwards. Trinity Rodman did it against Japan, Sophia Smith against Germany and Swanson against Brazil, which was seeking its first Olympic gold medal — and its first major international championship — after decades of near misses. This was Brazil's third loss to the United States in the gold medal match.

In the 57th minute Saturday, Korbin Albert, a 20-year-old midfielder making her second Olympic start, pushed a perfectly weighted through ball into the

open field. Had Smith collected it, she would have been whistled for offside. Instead, she left it for Swanson, who breezed into the penalty area before slotting a low shot into the far side for her team-leading fourth goal.

Swanson said she yelled to Smith: "Do not touch it. You are offside. ... Don't touch it. Leave it, leave it, leave it."

Swanson added, "And then it was on me to put it away."

Albert said she thought the same thing. "Please just leave it. Leave it," she said she remembered thinking. "And then Mal picked it up, and I'm like: 'Ah, it's going in. You don't even have to worry about it.'"

Scoring the winning goal capped a long comeback for

Swanson, 26, who missed the World Cup last year because of a knee injury and subsequent infection and did not return to the national team until this spring.

"To see the joy in her face again, to see her emotional, of being back on the field, it kind of all finally hit when you looked in each other's eyes," said goalkeeper Alyssa Naeher, Swanson's teammate with the NWSL's Chicago Red Stars.

Naeher played a big part, too, making a one-handed save on Brazilian captain Adriana's header in second-half stoppage time.

Brazil's disappointment was compounded by its inability to win Olympic gold in Marta's final international tournament. A six-time Olympian — and widely con-

sidered the greatest player in women's history — the 38-year-old forward returned from a two-game, red-card suspension and entered in the 60th minute.

Brazil was just fine without her in the starting lineup, creating several dangerous situations and taking the game to the Americans.

Brazil appeared to take the lead in the 16th minute when Ludmila torched Naomi Girma in the box — one of the few times in the tournament the center back had been beaten one-on-one. Ludmila then ripped a shot over Naeher, but the offside flag quelled Brazil's celebration.

Late in the half, Naeher made a terrific reaction save on Gabi Portillo's close-range smash.

Brazil's speed and creativity

were warning signs.

"We knew there were going to be storms," Naeher said. "We knew if we could weather the storm, we trusted our attacking players to get the job done up top."

Early in the second half, the U.S. attack clicked. And for the rest of the half, plus more than 10 minutes of stoppage time, the Americans showed the resolve to secure a gold medal after losing in the quarterfinals in 2016 and the semifinals in 2021.

"That mentality is why I love the country," Hayes said. "I'm so made for it, that mentality — that never-say-die and gut it out and grit it out and grind it out. We find things in ourselves that were there before, but they've impressed me immensely."

## PARIS OLYMPICS

### GYMNASTICS

#### Chiles may lose bronze following court ruling

Jordan Chiles's bronze medal on floor is in jeopardy after gymnastics' global governing body modified the results of the event final, moving the American out of medal position and Romanian Ana Barbosu into third. The update followed a Court of Arbitration for Sport ruling Saturday night.

Chiles, the last gymnast to compete in Monday's floor final, initially earned a 13.666 for her routine, which put her in fifth place. Afterward, her coach filed an inquiry through an appeals process that provides the opportunity to dispute a gymnast's difficulty score. Upon review, Chiles's score increased by 0.1 points to a 13.766, which pushed her into third and Barbosu and fellow Romanian Sabrina Maneca-Voinea into fourth and fifth.

After Barbosu and the Romanian federation appealed the change, CAS ruled Saturday that the inquiry that benefited Chiles had been filed after the one-minute deadline.

The panel ruled that Chiles's previous score should be reinstated, and shortly after the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) announced it had updated the results. An FIG spokesperson said the reallocation of medals is the responsibility of the International Olympic Committee. The IOC, which could decide to allow Chiles to keep her medal while awarding another bronze to Barbosu, did not immediately respond to a request to comment.

USA Gymnastics and the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee said in a statement that the organizations were "devastated" by the court's ruling and believed the inquiry had been "in good faith and, we believed, in accordance with FIG rules to ensure accurate scoring."

— Emily Giambalvo

### WATER POLO

#### Netherlands surprises U.S. for bronze medal

The U.S. women's team lost its bronze medal match to the Netherlands, 11-10.

The Dutch, who trailed by four in the third quarter, scored the game-winner with a second remaining.

The Americans had won gold at three consecutive Olympics. This was their first time missing the podium since women's water polo debuted in 2000.

Bea Ortiz scored four goals as Spain won its first gold medal in the event by defeating Australia, 11-9.



FRANK FRANKLIN/ASSOCIATED PRESS

### Unbreakable

Canada's Philip Kim — better known as Phil Wizard — won the gold medal in men's breaking Saturday at Place de la Concorde.

### ON TV TODAY

#### BASKETBALL

5:45 a.m. — Women's bronze medal: Australia vs. Belgium — USA Network  
9:30 a.m. — Women's final: United States vs. France — NBC

#### HANDBALL

7:30 a.m. — Men's final: Germany vs. Denmark — USA Network  
9 a.m. — Men's final: Serbia vs. Croatia — USA Network (joined in progress)

#### VOLLEYBALL

7 a.m. — Women's final: United States vs. Italy — NBC

#### WATER POLO

4:30 a.m. — Men's bronze medal: United States vs. Hungary — USA Network  
9 a.m. — Men's final: Serbia vs. Croatia — USA Network (joined in progress)

#### CLOSING CEREMONIES

3 p.m. — NBC

### FREESTYLE WRESTLING

#### Men are not golden for first time since '68

The U.S. men's team did not win an Olympic gold medal for the first time since 1968.

Kyle Dake of the United States won his second bronze medal at 74 kilograms; his first came in Tokyo in 2021. He defeated Serbia's Khetag Tsalobov. Uzbekistan's Razambek Zhamalov took the gold.

Kyle Snyder lost a 97-kilogram semifinal to Bahrain's Akhmed Tazhudinov on Saturday but clinched a bronze medal. That match is Sunday. Also Sunday, American Kennedy Blades will wrestle in the women's 76-kilogram gold medal match against world champion Yuka Kagami of Japan.

### VOLLEYBALL

#### French men become back-to-back champs

France repeated as the men's volleyball gold medalist, defeating Poland, 3-0, before a raucous home crowd.

The French became the first back-to-back men's volleyball gold medalists since the Americans in 1984 and 1988. Poland's silver was its first medal in men's volleyball since 1976.

— Sapna Bansil

The Brazil women denied Turkey its first Olympic medal in the sport. The Brazilians won, 3-1, to earn their third Olympic bronze after Turkey faded in the fourth set. The United States will face Italy in Sunday's gold medal match.

— Glynn A. Hill

### GOLF

#### New Zealand's Ko comes out on top

New Zealand's Lydia Ko finished at 10 under par to hold off Germany's Esther Henseleit (8 under) and China's Lin Xiyi (7 under) and win the women's gold medal.

Rose Zhang, 21, was the top American finisher, tying for eighth place at 5 under. She endured after a final-round 74 that included three birdies, three bogeys and a double bogey.

World No. 1 Nelly Korda, the defending Olympic champion, landed in a tie for 22nd at 1 under. Her bid for a medal effectively ended with a triple bogey at the 15th hole; she finished 4 over on the back nine.

— Sapna Bansil

### CANOE

#### Harrison just misses gold in the 200 sprint

American Nevin Harrison came within a photo finish of winning her second straight Olympic gold medal in the 200-meter sprint.

Katie Vincent of Canada edged her in a world-best 44.12 seconds. Harrison's time was 44.13.

Harrison, who won the inaugural event in Tokyo three years ago at 19, enjoyed the moment. She wasn't able to in Tokyo because of the pandemic.

"I definitely got yelled at by security just now because I went through the gate," she said. "But giving my mom, my dad, my boyfriend all hugs was so worth it."

### SPORTS CLIMBING

#### In boulder and lead, Raboutou takes silver

Janja Garnbret of Slovenia won gold in boulder and lead. American Brooke Raboutou celebrated the first climbing medal, a silver, for the U.S. women. Jessica Pilz of Austria won the bronze.

### BOXING

#### Lin defeats Szeremeta to win 67-kg gold

Lin Yu Ting of Taiwan, the boxer who drew unwelcome attention alongside Algeria's Imane Khelif for allegedly failing an eligibility test, defeated Poland's Julia Szeremeta to win the women's gold medal at 67 kilograms.

### ARTISTIC SWIMMING

#### With Russia sidelined, China's twins win duet

Chinese twins Wang Liuyi and Wang Qianyi won the duet competition. Kate Shortman and Isabelle Thorpe of Britain earned the silver, edging out another set of twins, Noortje and Bregje de Brouwer, who took bronze for the Netherlands.

From Sydney in 2000 through Tokyo in 2021, Russia won every artistic swimming gold medal.

### DIVING

#### Cao completes sweep of golds for Chinese

Cao Yuan defended his title in the men's 10-meter platform and gave his nation an unprecedented sweep of all eight diving golds at the Olympics.

The 29-year-old locked up the gold with big scores on his toughest dive, a forward 4½ somersaults in the fifth of six rounds. He finished with 547.50 points to become the first male diver since Greg Louganis in 1988 to win a second straight gold off the big tower. Cao now has four golds in his career, tying Louganis for the most by a male Olympic diver.

Rikuto Tamai locked up the silver for Japan's first diving medal. The bronze went to Noah Williams of Britain.

### BEACH VOLLEYBALL

#### Swedes top Germans; Norway gets bronze

Sweden's David Ahman and Jonatan Hellvig defeated Germany's Nils Ehlers and Clemens Wickler for the men's gold. Norway beat Qatar for the bronze.

— From news services and staff reports

# Small populations plus scant resources plus medals equal Games at their best

BY CHUCK CULPEPPER

PARIS — Here at the Windward Islands Olympics, the honorable category of Medals Per Capita distilled to a stirring six-night tussle involving three Caribbean neighbors with populations whose tininess abetted their causes. This battle of athletic arithmetic, long dominated by Norway at the Winter Olympics, eventually came down to four hundredths of a meter (13 hundredths of a foot) from one flying javelin.

The MPC standings first roiled and rumbled at Stade de France on the night of Aug. 3, when Thea LaFond won the women's triple jump gold medal for Dominica (pop. 74,661). Lindon Victor got bronze in the men's decathlon for Grenada (114,621) and Julien Alfred won the women's 100 meters for St. Lucia (168,038).

That held for three days — Dominica first, Grenada second, St. Lucia third — until Aug. 6, when Alfred snared a second medal, a silver in the 200 meters. Dominica remained first, but St. Lucia passed Grenada by halving its MPC total to 84,019.

Then came the javelin Aug. 8, when the loud combination of Pakistani gold medalist Arshad Nadeem and Indian silver medalist Neeraj Chopra obscured the heft of the bronze. With MPC distinction hanging in the balance, Grenada's Anderson Peters, a two-time world champion, sent his fourth throw airborne. When it came down and the incredibly precise measurers did their work, it registered 88.54 meters (290 feet 5½ inches), just a speck of a notch ahead of the 88.50 (290-4¼) on the third throw of Jakub Vadlejch, the Czech Republic's longtime contender.

That meant Grenada had a fresh bronze, the Windward Is-



CARL DE SOUZA/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE/GETTY IMAGES

Grenada's cup overflowed with two bronze medals, including Anderson Peters, above, in the javelin.

lands had a fifth medal, Grenada had leapfrogged to first with a hard-to-beat one medal per 57,310 Grenadians, and the Windwards really had soared above their resources.

"The entire population, 120,000 people, are glued to their TV right now, celebrating, cheering," said Peters, who rounded up that number slightly even as increased population can bring medals-per-capita peril.

"My country is 70,000 people," LaFond said five nights before that, rounding down. "Logically, this is not even supposed to happen, but here we are: We are breaking barriers and setting records."

That same night, Alfred said, "I'm going to start crying."

All reflected a kinship among the islands that might show when, say, a family in Brooklyn with St. Lucian heritage celebrates for St. Lucia but also cheers for

Dominica. It turned up when Peters, 26, took his thoughts just outside the Windwards to speak of inspiration, at 14, from a Trinidadian:

"I've been dreaming of this," Peters said of his medal, "since I saw Keshorn Walcott win gold [in javelin] in 2012 [in London]. I decided I was going to work my hardest to get an Olympic medal."

Thirty-nine sovereign countries and eight more National Olympic Committees carry fewer than 1 million citizens, aiding them in their MPC pursuit. (If the Cook Islands, which brought two athletes here, ever snares a medal, that 1-in-7,761 will stand as just about insuperable.)

Four of those 47 sub-million types got medals at Paris 2024, the fourth being Cabo Verde, the archipelago of 611,014 off the West African coast. The Cabo Verdean medal, as in the cases of Dominica and St. Lucia, doubled as one of

the grand little fabrics without which Olympics would get predictable: a first medal to a certain country.

"I can't describe my emotions," Cabo Verdean boxer David de Pina said after clinching his bronze. "They are huge. I did it for my country as we deserve this. We are a small island, and we've never done this before. I'm the first one to write the story."

He lost in the semifinals and said of Los Angeles 2028: "The preparations start tomorrow. Next time we will get the gold."

Before that will come one of the other enchantments of Olympic small nations — de Pina, LaFond, Alfred and Victor will go home (or to the homeland, if living elsewhere) and find who-knows-what to honor them.

After Surinamese butterfly swimmer Anthony Nesty won gold at Seoul 1988 — he later added a bronze at Barcelona 1992

— the overlooked South American country honored him on stamps, bank notes, coins and with his name on a jet (which crashed in 1989).

When Tongan super-heavyweight boxer Paea Wolfgramm won boxing silver at Atlanta 1996, losing only to the eventually famous Vladimir Klitschko, Wolfgramm got a protracted parade, a seat on a throne and a place on a coin after he returned to the Pacific island where people had held a national day of fasting and prayer for his gold medal match, decreed by King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV.

Grenada named a stadium and a boulevard (at least) for Kirani James, the runner who won gold, silver and bronze across three Olympics in the men's 400 meters. Peters already has an MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire).

Bermuda, the British overseas territory in the North Atlantic, had won one bronze medal in its Olympic life — by boxer Clarence Hill at Montreal 1976 — before Flora Duffy won the women's triathlon at the Tokyo Games. On Flora Duffy Day the following October, she said in a speech: "I am from Bermuda, where at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, July 26, 2021, the streets fell silent — because an entire nation believed I could do it. And where, roughly two hours later, pots banged, pubs emptied and air horns echoed into the night."

Bermuda had a hill there, Corkscrew Hill. It changed it to Flora Duffy Hill.

When Duffy won, Bermuda (72,800) became the smallest nation to grab a medal, a distinction it kept for days, until Alessandra Perilli of San Marino (35,095) got two medals in shooting and lifelong Michigander Myles Amine

got another with his San Marino lineage in wrestling. As the seventh-smallest Olympic entity, San Marino will be hard to undercut unless a medal goes someday to Monaco, Palau, Tuvalu, Nauru, the Cook Islands or the Vatican.

As much as small-nation charm brings vivid decoration, it dovetails with another Olympic essential: important stories about resource hardship.

The paths to small-nation medals almost always feature some type of human inspiration such as de Pina, the boxer, saying, "I have fought so hard to get here — getting construction jobs so I could put food on the table for my family."

The four Windward medalists know this kind of thing also by contrast, having competed for a notable ilk of victory ravenousness: U.S. universities.

"It's unbelievable, the access to resources that the rest of the world has," LaFond said. "We cannot compete with that in the Caribbean, but we somehow always end up making the best of what we have."

"I'm not a 400-meter runner or a javelin thrower," said Victor, the Grenadian decathlete. "I have to look to pole vault, and we didn't have pole vaults in Grenada when I was doing the decathlon. We didn't even have hurdles going up, so coming here in the toughest event is just amazing."

"Growing up," Alfred of St. Lucia said, "I used to be on the field, struggling, with no shoes, running barefoot, running in my school uniform, running all over the place. We barely have the right facilities. The stadium is not fixed. I hope this gold medal will help St. Lucia build a new stadium to help the sport grow."

Well, the naming should be easy.

# SCOREBOARD

## OLYMPICS

### Paris Summer Games

#### MEDALS TABLE

##### 316 OF 329 TOTAL EVENTS

Nation	G	S	B	Tot
United States	38	42	8	122
China	39	27	24	90
France	16	24	22	62
Australia	18	14	10	42
Japan	18	13	13	43
Italy	11	15	19	39
Netherlands	11	13	12	32
Germany	12	11	8	31
South Korea	13	8	9	30
Canada	9	7	11	27
Brazil	7	10	10	27
New Zealand	9	7	2	18
Hungary	5	7	6	18
Spain	5	8	17	30
Uzbekistan	2	2	3	12
Ukraine	3	4	5	12
Sweden	4	4	3	11
Kenya	4	2	4	10
Romania	2	1	3	8
Cuba	2	1	5	8
Denmark	1	2	5	8
Switzerland	1	2	5	8
Greece	1	2	5	8
Turkey	0	3	5	8
Ireland	4	0	3	7
Bulgaria	2	1	4	7
Taiwan	2	1	4	7
Israel	1	5	1	7
Kazakhstan	1	3	3	7
Georgia	2	2	1	5
Azerbaijan	2	1	2	5
Croatia	2	1	3	6
Jamaica	1	3	2	6
South Africa	1	3	2	6
Thailand	1	3	2	6
North Korea	0	2	4	6
Kyrgyzstan	0	2	4	6
Japan	0	1	5	6
Czech Republic	0	1	5	6
Austria	2	0	3	5
Ecuador	1	2	2	5
Mexico	0	3	2	5
Serbia	0	2	1	3
Hong Kong	0	2	1	3
Philippines	2	0	1	3
Portugal	1	2	1	4
Armenia	0	2	1	3
Lithuania	0	2	1	3
Moldova	0	1	3	4
Slovenia	2	1	0	3
Algeria	1	0	3	4
Indonesia	2	0	1	3
Ethiopia	1	2	0	3
Argentina	1	1	1	3
Bahrain	1	1	1	3
Egypt	1	1	1	3
Tunisia	1	1	1	3
Dominican Republic	1	0	2	3
Colombia	1	0	2	3
Tajikistan	0	0	3	3
Botswana	1	0	2	3
Saint Lucia	1	0	2	3
Uganda	1	0	2	3
Guatemala	1	0	2	3
Morocco	1	0	1	2
Kosovo	0	0	2	2
Grenada	0	0	2	2
Malaysia	0	2	0	2
Dominica	1	0	1	2
Pakistan	1	0	1	2
Cyprus	0	0	2	2
Fiji	0	1	1	2
Jordan	0	1	1	2
Mongolia	0	1	1	2
Panama	0	1	1	2
Cuba	0	1	1	2
Cape Verde	0	0	2	2
Ivory Coast	0	1	1	2
Peru	0	1	1	2
Puerto Rico	0	0	2	2
Qatar	0	0	2	2
Refugee Olympic Team	0	0	2	2
Slovenia	0	0	2	2
Slovakia	0	0	2	2
Zambia	0	0	2	2

### ATHLETIC RESULTS

#### MEN MARATHON

1. Tamirat Tola, Ethiopia, 2:06:26
2. Bashir Abdi, Belgium, 2:06:47
3. Benson Kiprop, Kenya, 2:07:00
4. Emile Cairns, Britain, 2:07:29
5. Dereza Gelata, Ethiopia, 2:07:31
6. Akira Akasaki, Japan, 2:07:32
7. Tsebelo Ramakonaqona, Lesotho, 2:07:58
8. Conner Mantz, United States, 2:10:09
9. Clayton Young, United States, 2:08:44
10. Samsom Amare, Eritrea, 2:08:56
11. Eloy Gelant, South Africa, 2:09:07
12. Richard Ringer, Germany, 2:09:18
13. Suguru Otsako, Japan, 2:09:25
14. Ibrahim Hassan, Djibouti, 2:09:31
15. Samuel Filwi Sibbaha, Germany, 2:09:50
16. Nicolas Navarro, France, 2:09:54
17. Alphonse Felix Simbu, Tanzania, 2:10:03
18. Othmane El Goumi, Morocco, 2:10:06
19. Isaac Mporfu, Zimbabwe, 2:10:09
20. Hassan Chah, France, 2:10:09
21. Alexander Munyayo, Kenya, 2:10:31
22. Michael Sorens, Belgium, 2:10:32
23. Naoki Koyama, Japan, 2:10:33
24. Patrick Tieman, Australia, 2:10:34
25. Yemaneberhan Crippa, Italy, 2:10:36
26. Maru Teferi, Israel, 2:10:42
27. Stephen Mokoka, South Africa, 2:10:59
28. Suldan Hassan, Sweden, 2:11:21
29. Han Il Ryong, North Korea, 2:11:21
30. Matthias Kyburz, Switzerland, 2:11:32
31. Gashau Ayale, Israel, 2:11:36
32. Sondre Nordstad Mowin, Norway, 2:11:39
33. Yaseen Abdalla, Sudan, 2:11:59
34. Ibrahim Chakir, Spain, 2:11:44
35. Zouhair Talbi, Morocco, 2:11:51
36. Cameron Levins, Canada, 2:11:56
37. Victor Kiplangat, Kenya, 2:11:59
38. Tadesse Abraham, Switzerland, 2:12:22
39. Kenenisa Bekele, Ethiopia, 2:12:24
40. Wu Xiandong, China, 2:12:34
41. Yago Rojo, Spain, 2:12:43
42. Tachlwinvi Gabryrievs, Refugee Olympic Team, 2:12:47
43. Eyob Faniel, Italy, 2:12:50
44. Girmaw Amare, Israel, 2:12:51
45. Andrew Buchanan, Australia, 2:12:58
46. Philip Sesemann, Britain, 2:13:08
47. Rory Linkletter, Canada, 2:13:09
48. Samuel Barata, Portugal, 2:13:23
49. Liam Adams, Australia, 2:13:33
50. Felix Bour, France, 2:13:46
51. Daniele Meleg, Italy, 2:14:02
52. Zereh Krom Meng, Norway, 2:14:14
53. Carlos Diaz Chiz, Chile, 2:14:25
54. Henok Tesfay, Eritrea, 2:14:31
55. Yang Shaohui, China, 2:14:48
56. Samuel Ferret, Cape Verde, 2:15:05
57. Mohamed Mahamed, Britain, 2:15:19
58. Khalid Choukoud, Netherlands, 2:15:25
59. Hugo Catrileo, Chile, 2:15:44
60. Hector Garibay, Bolivia, 2:15:54
61. Koen Haert, Belgium, 2:16:23
62. Andrew Rotich Kivioni, Uganda, 2:16:28
63. Leonard Korir, United States, 2:18:45
64. Berhane Tesfay, Eritrea, 2:18:50
65. Moath Alkhalaf, Jordan, 2:20:01
66. Alberto Gonzalez Mindez, Guatemala, 2:22:12
67. He Jie, China, 2:22:31
68. Tariku Novales, Spain, 2:25:50
69. Dario Ivanovski, Bulgaria, 2:28:15
70. Valentin Botoudji, Chad, 2:32:11
71. Ser-Oh Bat-Ochir, Mongolia, 2:42:33
72. Amanal Tesse, Germany, DNF
73. Eliud Kipchoge, Kenya, DNF
74. Mochlin Outalha, Morocco, DNF
75. Abdi Nagege, Netherlands, DNF
76. Christian Pacheco, Peru, DNF
77. Gabriel Gerardi, Tanzania, DNF
78. Kaan Ozkan Zibelen, Turkey, DNF
79. Eduardo Terrance Garcia, U.S. Virgin Islands, DNF
80. Stephen Kissa, Uganda, DNF
81. Shokhridd Davlatov, Uzbekistan, DNF

### HIGH JUMP

1. Hamish Kerr, New Zealand, (2.36), 7-9
2. Shelby McEwen, United States, (2.36), 7-9
3. Mutaz Essa Barshim, Qatar, (2.34), 7-8 1/4
4. Stefano Sottile, Italy, (2.34), 7-8 1/4
5. Ryoichi Akamatsu, Japan, (2.31), 7-7
6. Oleh Doroshchuk, Ukraine, (2.31), 7-7
7. Woo Sanghyeok, South Korea, (2.27), 7-5 1/4
8. Thimoti Ivanov, Bulgaria, (2.27), 7-5 1/4
9. Isaac Steffel, Czech Republic, (2.22), 7-3 1/2
10. Romane Beckford, Jamaica, (2.22), 7-3 1/2
11. Gianmarco Tamberi, Italy, (2.22), 7-3 1/2
12. Brian Raults, South Africa, (2.17), 7-1 1/2

### 57KG

1. Abdulkamil Khalukov, Uzbekistan, def. Munarbek Seitbek Kholov, Kyrgyzstan, 5-0.
2. Lin Yu-Ting, Taiwan, def. Julia Szeremeta, Poland, 5-0.

### 75KG

1. Li Qian, China, def. Athayna Bibeichi Bylon, Panama, 4-1.
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### GOLF WOMEN FINAL ROUND

Lydia Ko, New Zealand, 72-67-68-71=278
Esther Henseleit, Germany, 72-73-69-66=280
Xiyu Lin, China, 71-70-71-69=281
Hannah Green, Australia, 72-69-72=293
Bianca Padangnanan, Philippines, 72-69-73-68=282
Miyu Yamashita, Japan, 71-70-68-73=282
Amy Yang, South Korea, 72-71-70-69=282
Wei-Ling Hsu, China, 72-69-72-68=283
Rose Zhang, United States, 72-70-67-74=283
Maja Stark, Sweden, 72-71-71-69=284
Marijo Urbe, Colombia, 70-70-71-73=284
Ruoning Yin, China, 72-72-72-76=285
Dottie Ardina, Philippines, 72-76-69-68=285
Ashleigh Buhai, South Africa, 68-73-74-70=285
Brooke Henderson, Canada, 74-73-67-71=285
Albane Valenzuela, Switzerland, 72-72-76-69=285
Celine Boutier, France, 72-74-74-65=285
Peiyun Chen, Chinese Taipei, 71-76-77-73=287
Morgane Mettraux, Switzerland, 70-66-71-79=286
Attayya Thitikul, Thailand, 72-69-76-66=286
Pia Babnik, Slovenia, 74-66-74-73=287
Nelly Korda, United States, 72-70-70-75=287
Minjee Lee, Australia, 71-72-76-74=287
Hyo Jo Kim, South Korea, 76-70-73-69=288
Jin Young Ko, South Korea, 73-73-69-68=288
Linn Grant, Sweden, 74-71-73-71=289
Charley Hull, England, 81-77-69-66=289
Adri Ashok, India, 72-71-79-68=290
Celine Borghe, Norway, 71-73-75-71=290
Manon De Rooy, Belgium, 72-75-71-72=290
Gaby Lopez, Mexico, 72-74-76-70=290
Emma Spitz, Australia, 75-70-75-70=290
Patty Tavatanakit, Thailand, 76-71-68-75=290
Georgia Forsterling, Germany, 76-75-71-70=292
Georgia Hall, England, 74-74-74-74=293
Nanna Koerstz Madsen, Denmark, 74-75-72-72=293
Lilia Vu, United States, 70-73-76-74=293
Shanehan Meadow, Northern Ireland, 78-74-72-70=294
Stephanie Tan, Singapore, 74-73-72-70=294
Alena Ledeneva, Russia, 72-72-76-76=296
Perrine Lalou, France, 79-78-74-66=297
Alena Sharp, Canada, 71-76-77-73=297
Emily Pedersen, Denmark, 73-79-75-72=299
Anne Van Dam, Netherlands, 75-74-78-72=299
Sarah Schaber, Austria, 75-73-73-79=300
Madeline Stavnar, Norway, 76-73-76-73=300
Alena Ledeneva, Russia, 74-76-72-68=293
Carla Ciganda, Spain, 73-78-75-75=301
Diksha Dagar, India, 71-72-80-78=301
Ines Lakičević, Morocco, 78-75-77-73=303
Alexandra Fanal, Italy, 78-76-72-68=293
Yuka Saso, Japan, 70-74-82=305
Sara Koukova, Czech Republic, 73-77-79=306
Ashley Lu, Malaysia, 72-77-79=306
Francesca Wilstrom, Finland, 72-77-79=306
Marina Fassi, Mexico, 78-72-74=309
Leona Maguire, Ireland, 78-79-83-71=311
Noora Komutainen, Finland, 84-82-78-78=WD

### 16. Hugo Hay, France, 13:26.71

17. Narve Gilje Nordnes, Norway, 13:31.34
18. Stewart McCosken, Australia, 13:31.38
19. Dawit Searie, Eritrea, 13:31.50
20. Oscar Chelimo, Uganda, 13:31.56
21. George Mills, Britain, 13:32.32
22. Stewart Galloway, Canada, 13:49.69

### 4 X 400M RELAY FINAL

1. United States (Christopher Bailey; Vernon Norwood; Bryce Deadmon; Rai Benjamin), 2:54.43
2. Sotswana (Bayayo Ndori; Busang Collen Kebinatshi; Anthony Pessle; Letsile Tebogo), 2:54.53
3. Britain (Alex Haydock-Wilson; Matthew Hudson-Smith; Lewis David; Charles Dobson), 2:55.83
4. Belgium (Jonathan Sacoor; Dylan Borlée; Kevin Borlée; Florent Nabile), 2:57.75
5. South Africa (Gardeo Isaacs; Zakithi Nene; Lythe Pillay; Antonio Matshy Nortje), 2:58.12
6. Japan (Yuki Joseph Nakajima; Kaito Kawabata; Fuga Sato; Kentaro Sato), 2:58.23
7. Italy (Luca Sito; Vladimir Aceti; Edoardo Scotti; Alessandro Sibilli), 2:59.72
8. Zambia (Patrick Kakori Nyambe; Kennedy Luchembe; Chanda Mulenga Muzala Samukonga), 3:02.76
9. France (Muhammad Abdallah Kounta; Gilles Biron; Theo Andant; Fabrisio Saldy), 3:07.30

### WOMEN JAVELIN THROW FINAL

1. Haruka Kitaguchi, Japan, (65.80), 215-10-3-4
2. Jo-Anne van Dyk, South Africa, (63.93), 209-9
3. Nikola Odrodnikova, Czech Republic, (63.68), 208-11-4
4. Sara Kolak, Croatia, (63.40), 208-0-1-4
5. Flor Denis Ruiz Hurtado, Colombia, (63.00), 206-8-1-2
6. Yulennis Aguilar, Spain, (62.78), 205-11-3-4
7. Kathryn Mitchell, Australia, (62.63), 205-5-3-4
8. Maria Andrievskaya, Poland, (62.44), 204-10-1-2
9. Alina Zharhova, France, (62.35), 202-1-4
10. Momone Ueda, Japan, (61.64), 202-3
11. Marie-Therese Ost, Norway, (61.14), 200-1-4
12. Mackenzie Tibb, Australia, (60.32), 197-1-1

### 100M HURDLES FINAL

1. Masai Russell, United States, 12.33
2. Cyrena Sama-Mamba, France, 12.34
3. Jasmine Camacho-Quinn, Puerto Rico, 12.36
4. Nadine Visser, Netherlands, 12.43
5. Grace Hightower, United States, 12.45
6. Devynne Charter, Bahamas, 12.56
7. Alaysia Johnson, United States, 12.93
8. Ackera Nugent, Jamaica, DNF.

### 1500M FINAL

1. Faith Kipyegon, Kenya, 3:51.29
2. Jessica Hull, Australia, 3:52.56
3. Georgia Bell, Britain, 3:52.61
4. Diribe Welteji, Ethiopia, 3:52.75
5. Laura Mui, Britain, 3:53.37
6. Susana Lokoye Ejere, Kenya, 3:56.07
7. Nikki Hiltz, United States, 3:56.38
8. Elle St. Pierre, United States, 3:57.52
9. Aline Guillemot, France, 3:59.08
10. Klaudia Kazmierczak, Poland, 4:00.12
11. Agueda Marques, Spain, 4:02.1
12. Gudaf Tsegay, Ethiopia, 4:01.27

### 10 X 400M RELAY FINAL

1. United States (Shamir Little; Sydney McLaughlin-Leverson; Gabrielle Thomas; Alexis Hillier), 3:15.27
2. Netherlands (Lieke Klaver; Cathelin Peeters; Lisanne de Witte; Femke Bol), 3:19.50
3. Britain (Victoria Obichigo; Lavai Nielsen; Nicole Yeargin; Amber Anning), 3:19.72
4. Ireland (Sophie Becker; Róisid Aisidele; Phil Healy; Sharlene Mawdsley), 3:19.90
5. France (Souskama Sylla; Shana Grebo; Amandine Brossier; Louise Maraval), 3:21.41
6. Canada (Zoe Sherar; Savannah Sutherland; Kyra Constantine; Lauren Gae), 3:22.40
7. Belgium (Noemi Vanden Broeck; Imke Vervaet; Hanne Claes; Helena Ponette), 3:22.40
8. Jamaica (Stacey Ann Williams; Andrenette Knight; Shantel Salmon; Stephanie Ann McPherson), DNF.

### BASKETBALL MEN BRONZE MEDAL

Serbia 93, Germany 83
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### GOLD MEDAL

United States 98, France 87
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### REACH VOLLEYBALL MEN BRONZE MEDAL

Norway 2, Qatar 0 (21-13, 21-16)
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### GOLD MEDAL

Sweden 2, Germany 0 (21-10, 21-13)
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### BREAKING MEN B-BOYS

#### ROUND ROBIN - GROUP A

Shigeki, Japan, vs. United States, 1-1
Ltbe-Hing, China, vs. Hiro10, Japan, 2-0
Shigeki, Japan, vs. Hiro10, Japan, 2-0
Victor, United States, vs. Ltbe-Hing, China, 0-2
Ltbe-Hing, China, vs. Shigeki, Japan, 1-1
Hiro10, Japan, vs. Victor, United States, 2-0

#### ROUND ROBIN - GROUP B

Phil Wizard, Canada, vs. Dany Dann, France, 2-0
J.Attack, Australia, vs. Kuzya, Ukraine, 0-2
Phil Wizard, Canada, vs. Kuzya, Ukraine, 1-1
Dany Dann, France, vs. J.Attack, Australia, 2-0
J.Attack, Australia, vs. Phil Wizard, Canada, 0-2
Kuzya, Ukraine, vs. Dany Dann, France, 0-2

### TABLE TENNIS WOMEN'S TEAM FINALS

BRONZE MEDAL MATCH
South Korea (Lee Eunhye; Shin Yubin; Jeon Jihee), def. Germany (Anna-Maria Alexandri; Eirini-Marina Alexandri), 3-0.

PARIS OLYMPICS

# A big development for a little Olympian

As our favorite cartoonists watched and illustrated the Paris Games, an Egyptian fencer's big reveal grabbed Hannah Good's attention

Egyptian fencer Nada Hafez lost in the round of 16 of the women's individual saber — the best result of her three Olympic appearances. It was a remarkable feat, given that she achieved it while seven months pregnant. "What appears to you as two players on the podium, they were actually three!" Hafez revealed on social media after the competition. While Olympians competing while pregnant is far from new, being open about it is. And with advancements in facilities, some are calling these the friendliest Games yet for athletes who are parents. Cartoonist Hannah Good broke down the response to Hafez's announcement and the history of pregnancy and parenting at the Games.

After Egypt's Nada Hafez competed in the round of 16 in fencing at the Olympics, she revealed a secret:

**7 MONTHS PREGNANT OLYMPIAN!**

you make all of us women so proud!

You are setting such a good example for this little champ!

Aif Mabrouk habibi! ❤️

Women are amazing!

كل المصريين فخوريين

While many praised her athleticism ...

Selfish...

I feel sorry for your opponents.

Would it have been better for someone physically fit to play?

... others on social media expressed disdain or concern.

But Hafez isn't the first. American diver Juno Stover-Irwin earned a bronze at the 1952 Helsinki Games while pregnant with her second child.

NO ONE GUESSED I WAS PREGNANT. IT TURNED OUT TO BE MY BEST PREGNANCY.

- Stover-Irwin, interview with the Olympians Oral History Project

Malaysian sports shooter Nur Suryani Mohamed Taibi competed with the most-advanced pregnancy of any Olympian. She was eight months pregnant when she competed at the 2012 London Games.

MOST PEOPLE SAID I WAS CRAZY AND SELFISH BECAUSE THEY THINK I AM JEOPARDIZING THE BABY'S HEALTH [...]

I AM THE MOTHER. I KNOW WHAT I CAN DO.

- Taibi, to reporters in 2012

The stigma these athletes faced is not new. Myths about the impact of sports on reproductive health span centuries.

YOUR UTERUS IS GONNA FALL OUT!!!

And while there's not a lot of research about high-level competition and pregnancy, prenatal physical activity is strongly encouraged.

Olympians have long campaigned for better nursing and parenting accommodations.

For the first time, organizers introduced a nursery in the Olympic village this year.

I THINK IT REALLY TELLS WOMEN THAT YOU CAN CHOOSE MOTHERHOOD AND STILL BE AT THE TOP OF YOUR GAME.

Allyson Felix  
11-time Olympic medalist who helped organize the initiative

NURSING ROOM

Diapers

And while Hafez was knocked out of the competition by South Korea's Jeon Hayoung, she said she's leaving Paris with pride.

HAVING TO FIGHT TO KEEP THE BALANCE OF LIFE & SPORTS WAS NOTHING SHORT OF STRENUOUS, HOWEVER WORTH IT.

- Hafez, in an Instagram post

Michele Granger, Softball Gold 1996

3 months pregnant

Kerri Walsh Jennings, Beach Volleyball Gold, 2012

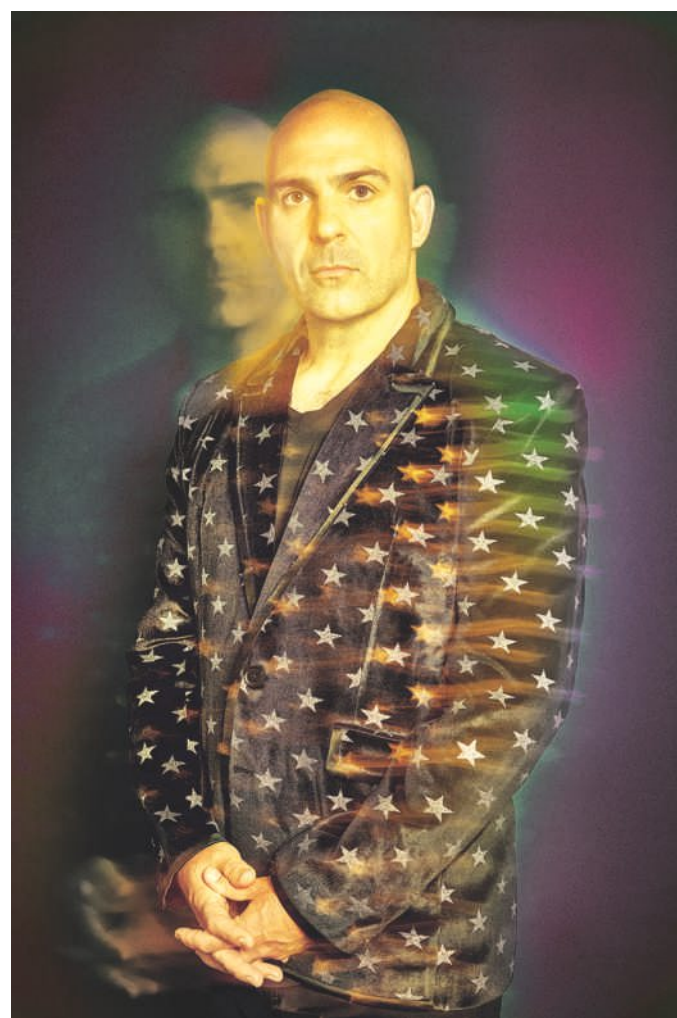
Found out she was pregnant at the Games

Anky van Grunsven, Dressage Gold 2004

5 months

END.

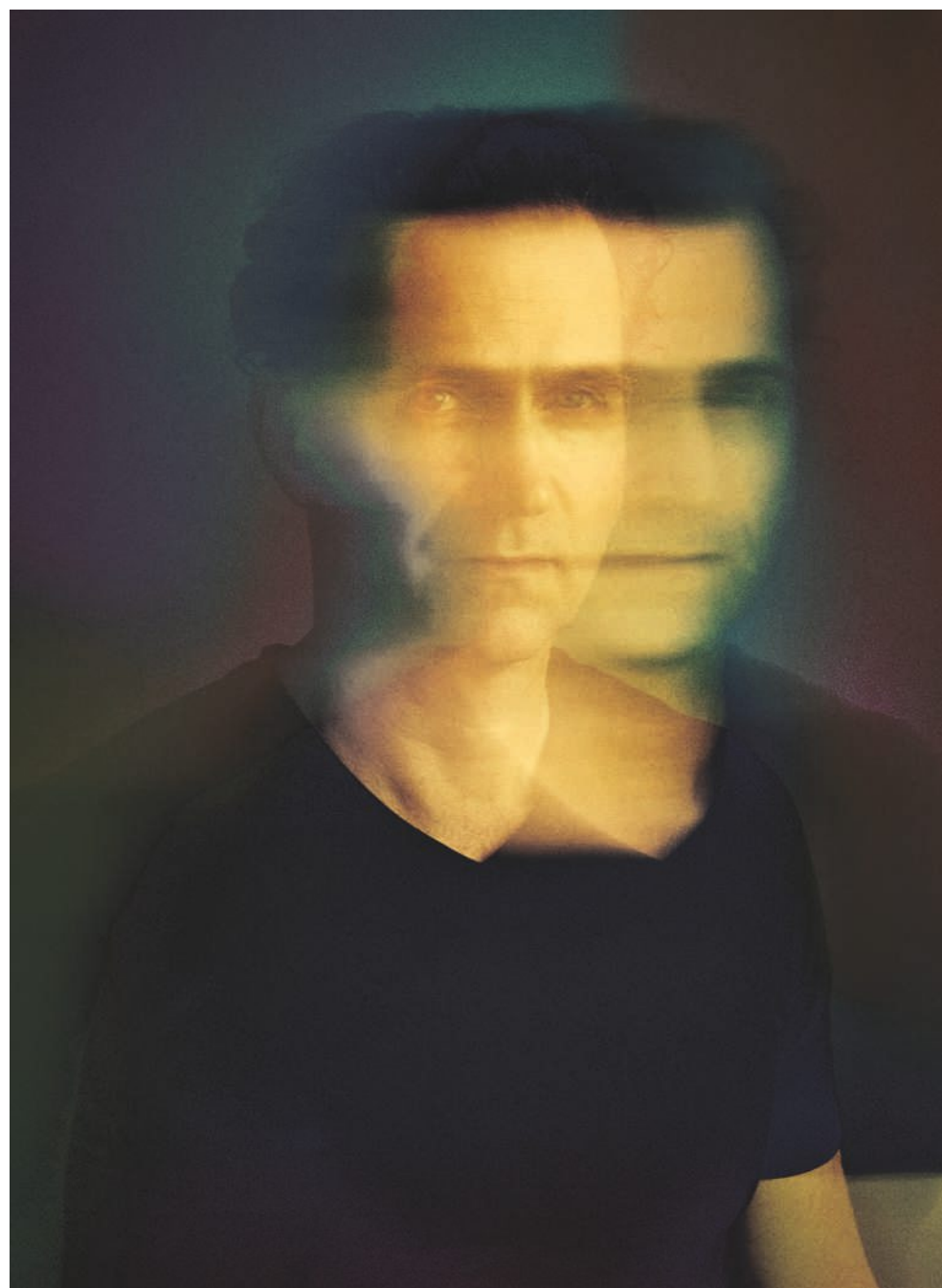
## Growing up



Like their father's oddball rock songs, their family defied description. His music — and their pain — has endured.

BY GEOFF EDGERS  
IN LOS ANGELES

# Zappa



PHOTOS BY SEAN SCHEIDT FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

In her final years, Gail Zappa showed signs of becoming a hoarder, clinging to every scrap and memento of an outside life. Her four adult children assessed the chaos overtaking the family home in the Hollywood Hills and decided they had to confront her about the problem.

So they made a zine. A decade later, Moon Unit Zappa takes the handmade volume from a folder at the restaurant table where three of the four of them have agreed to meet and share a late afternoon snack together, no small feat these days. Their zine was a parody of a home decor magazine, constructed with all the prankster creativity and aggro wit you'd expect from the spawn of Frank Zappa, the hard-to-categorize rock innovator and provocateur.

Diva, now 45, photographed their mom's disarray with a fisheye lens. Moon, 56, and Dweezil, 54, captioned it with ironic text blocks they cut from real style magazines ("One size does not fit all") or penned themselves ("If one can sit, you have not effectively decorated with clutter!"). Their brother Ahmet, 50, who says he has no recollection of the project, thumbs through the 50-plus pages at the table.

"I just realized how mean it was," says Diva, who lived with Gail until the end.

"It's not mean," says Moon.

"She hated it," says Diva.

"Oh, she hated it," says Moon. "But it's not mean."

There is a gap between being edgy and being mean, between caring for someone as best you can and as much as that person truly needs. But how you measure these things depends on how you were brought up — standards and expectations imprinted upon you early, even if you

SEE ZAPPA ON E7

Musician Frank Zappa's children, from top, Moon Unit, Ahmet, Dweezil and Diva. After their mother, Gail, died in 2015, the two younger children — Ahmet and Diva — were made "the sole and exclusive managers of all business" related to their father's estate.

### PROCESS

## The twisters in 'Twisters' are terrifying. How'd they do it?

BY SONIA RAO

Back in May, about two months before the release of "Twisters," star Glen Powell said that the blockbuster-to-be had about 1,000 special effects to go.

It turns out 1,000 effects isn't all that many. It took a small army of visual effects experts — packing millions and millions of pixels into every frame and working with practical effects makers on set — to create the stunning tornadoes that rip through "Twisters," including the jaw-dropper toward the end that nearly annihilates the town of El Reno, Okla.

How do you play God with an act of God? With a grin. Director Lee Isaac Chung, visual effects supervisor Ben Snow, production designer Patrick Sullivan, and supervising sound editors Al Nelson and Bjorn Ole Schroeder recently said they had a blast making "Twisters" — from the real-life rodeo they hired and the vending machines and horse trailers they dropped from the sky to the delicate behind-the-scenes postproduction work that makes the movie a visual marvel. Here, step by step, is how they did it.

SEE PROCESS ON E3



SUNSET BOULEVARD/CORBIS/GETTY IMAGES

'The Conversation' saw where surveillance was headed in 1974. E2

### CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

## Marisol is the missing master of postwar American art

BY SEBASTIAN SMEE

There used to be a roll call or "canon" — a list of names every budding student of postwar art was supposed to learn and remember. All the names were male. They all worked in America.

The list existed to demonstrate how abstract expressionism led into pop art, minimalism and conceptualism, the four most significant movements between the end of World War II and the 1970s.

So the roll call began with abstract expressionists: Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning and Mark Rothko. It moved on to the bridging figures Jasper Johns and

Robert Rauschenberg; then to pop artists Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein and finally to minimalists and conceptualists Frank Stella, Richard Serra, Donald Judd and Sol LeWitt.

Of course, any list of this kind mainly provokes us to think about who is excluded. Where — even sticking exclusively to Americans — are Lee Krasner, Helen Frankenthaler, Sam Gilliam, Cy Twombly, Lee Bontecou, Richard Diebenkorn, Joan Mitchell, Louise Nevelson, Jack Whitten, Philip Guston, Nam June Paik, Joseph

SEE MARISOL ON E12

## MOVIES



EVERETT COLLECTION

PERSPECTIVE

# What a 1974 film tried to tell us about the modern surveillance state

BY TY BURR

**Y**ou are being watched. How *much* you are being watched may depend on where you go and what websites you visit and perhaps your personal level of paranoia. But you *are* being watched, by closed-circuit cameras on highways, in stores and on city streets; by internet browsers that funnel every click into a database of consumer algorithms; and by digital assistants in your phone and on your kitchen counter that essentially function as consensual wiretaps.

Maybe even by the very computer on which you're reading this. Go ahead, cover your laptop camera with duct tape like your company's scary IT guy.

Or like Harry Caul. Harry knew. He didn't want to believe it at the start of "The Conversation," writer-director Francis Ford Coppola's 1974 film about the coming surveillance state, but he damn well knew by the final scene, sitting in the wreckage of the apartment that he's just taken apart looking for a bug. He hasn't found anything, but that's not proof: He *knows*, and Coppola pans back and forth across the scene with the ominously robotic rhythms of a closed-circuit TV camera. He's being watched. By whom? Doesn't matter.

Gene Hackman plays Harry, a surveillance expert — the best in the field, we're told — and a blur of a man who would do anything to render himself invisible. "The Conversation" was the movie that Coppola sandwiched between "The Godfather" (1972) and "The Godfather Part II" (1974) — a minimalist masterpiece that was lauded at the time and even won the top prize at Cannes but still fell into the shadow of the second Corleone epic. Now, a half-century on, "The Conversation" has been restored in sound and vision for a theatrical rerelease (including the AFI Silver through Aug. 15) and eventual reappearance on digital media. It's a movie that was made for a conspiracy-minded time, premiering as it did on April 7, 1974, just days before the House Judiciary Committee subpoenaed the Nixon White House tapes — tapes that had been recorded on the same type of equipment used by Harry Caul in the film.

So "The Conversation" was ripe for the Watergate era. Or maybe it was the other way around, given that the early 1970s saw a glut of conspiracy-minded political thrillers ("The Parallax View," "Three Days of the Condor," etc.) fueled by a youthful distrust in government and growing doubts over what we thought we knew about such events as John F. Kennedy's assassination. Coppola's wasn't the first movie to hang our anxieties on the mechanisms of surveillance — you can go back at least to Chaplin's "Modern Times" (1936) with its depiction of an all-seeing, all-monitoring factory boss — but it stood at the threshold of a new age in technology, filmmaking and the stories we tell about the world we live in.

In "The Conversation," Hackman's Harry is hired by the head of a nameless corporation to eavesdrop on the man's wife (Cindy Williams, post-"American Graffiti" but pre-"Laverne & Shirley") as she's talking in a

park with the employee (Frederic Forrest) with whom she's having an affair. Still guilty over a long-ago assignment that resulted in the death of innocent people, Harry comes to believe the couple is being set up for murder, and his fear rubs up against his pathological need to stay unseen in the background — an invisible private ear with no human attachments of his own. (There's an assistant played by the late, great John Cazale, and a mistress played by a young Teri Garr, but Harry keeps them both firmly at arm's length.)

Coppola has always admitted that "The Conversation" was inspired by "Blow-Up" (1966), Michelangelo Antonioni's Swinging London thriller about a fashion photographer (David Hemmings) who captures what may or may not be a murder in a city park. Both movies feature stray appearances by mimes; more to the point, both have extended sequences of the heroes atomizing their

material in a fruitless search for the truth, the photographer enlarging his snapshot into an expanse of grain and the surveillance man filtering out layers of garbled speech and urban noise to isolate the one sentence that seems to prove the couple is in danger. Both films are about the mutability of "evidence" — the suspicion that the deeper we go into the molecules of sight and sound, the less we really know.

Neither "Blow-Up" nor "The Conversation" is explicitly political, but you could argue that in paranoid times *everything* is political, and Coppola's vision of a monolithic corporation run by stone-faced men (including an unbilled Robert Duvall and some kid named Harrison Ford) echoes with the dread of people we never see making decisions that affect our lives. Perhaps the most blandly terrifying scene is the mid-movie visit to a surveillance convention, with Harry, Cazale's Stan, and a rival bugger played by Allen

Garfield touring booths touting the latest in spy equipment: rotating security cameras, car tracking devices, the "Spectre Eavesdropper Wall Sound Detector." To an extent even Coppola didn't understand, we're seeing our own future.

While "The Conversation" was a box-office disappointment, it was enough of a cultural talking point — a conversation piece, if you will — that the movie's DNA worked its way into other films and TV shows. Genetically combine "Blow-Up" and "The Conversation," and, *voilà*, you have "Blow Out" (1981), Brian DePalma's dark thriller about a movie sound technician (John Travolta) who accidentally records a political assassination.

The arrival of the internet and the rise of reality TV in the 1990s amped up the possibilities of watching, being watched and being entertained by being watched. Peter Weir's "The Truman Show" (1998) and Ron Howard's "EDtv" (1999) toyed with the notion that everyone *is* their own TV series, whether they're aware of it (like Matthew McConaughey's Ed) or blissfully clueless and then terrified (like Jim Carrey's Truman). Actual shows like "Big Brother" (which began in the Netherlands in 1999) put attractive idiots into a house, locked the doors and let the audience become the camera, voyeuristically peeping through the slats of the video transmission lines in hopes of getting some dirt.

That's one way to take the sting out of surveillance — pretend to give the power back to the people being surveilled and provide them with heroes, villains and a narrative. And new toys: With the arrival of modern cellphone technology and social media in the new millennium, the world has become an endless open-air studio, with everyone watching everyone else in a recursive daisy chain of viral video. Some good has come out of this — think of the citizen videos exposing police brutality and racist assaults — amid a tsunami of self-promotion and self-aggrandizement.

There have been attempts to dramatize the essential vacuity of broadcasting one's life — "The Circle" (2017), with Emma Watson and Tom Hanks, was a lecture-heavy warning about where Google and other tech behemoths were taking us. But the rare films about the secret listeners, whether they do it for money like Harry Caul in "The Conversation" or political ideals like the East German surveillance expert played by Ulrich Mühe in "The Lives of Others" (2006), catch the gnawing unease of a world in which we never know who's watching or even *if* they're watching, through the appliances of our smart homes, the cameras and mics in our phones, through our doorbells and security systems, the keystrokes of our computers, or the paparazzi lineup of videocams on every street corner and in every shop.

Fifty years on, "The Conversation" reveals its only flaw: It wasn't paranoid *enough*.

Ty Burr is the author of the movie recommendation newsletter Ty Burr's Watch List at [tyburrswatchlist.com](http://tyburrswatchlist.com).



SUNSET BOULEVARD/CORBIS/GETTY IMAGES

**TOP:** In "The Conversation," which has been rereleased for its 50th anniversary, Gene Hackman plays a surveillance expert grappling with guilt.  
**ABOVE:** Hackman with writer-director Francis Ford Coppola on the film set.



MOVIES



ILM/UNIVERSAL PICTURES/WARNER BROS. PICTURES/AMBLIN ENTERTAINMENT

Glen Powell as Tyler and Daisy Edgar-Jones as Kate interpret possible paths for tornadoes in a scene from "Twisters." Some real-world research went into digitally animating the storms in the film.

Step 1: Assemble the team

As in "Twister," Jan de Bont's 1996 film starring Helen Hunt and Bill Paxton, "Twisters" follows storm chasers in Oklahoma (Powell, Daisy Edgar-Jones and Anthony Ramos, among others). The film brought back members of the original crew, including Sullivan, who "couldn't watch anyone else do this movie," and Snow, who had to be convinced (the original "Twister" was "quite a stressful, tricky production").

Digitally animating tornadoes was so difficult back then, he said, that producer Steven Spielberg looked into making a convincing twister without computers. (That was a no.) In the end, Snow signed on for the sequel because of Chung's vision. The director had scoured the web for reference images of real storms and presented Snow with footage from storm chasers who, like Powell's character,

# No other movie has twisters this true to science, director says

PROCESS FROM E1

posted it to YouTube. Chung was confident and clear-eyed. He could lead the team.

Step 2: Create the storms

Some real-world research went into digitally animating those storms. "We actually sent out storm chasers to get footage for us ... that we could parse out and figure out how to translate into VFX," Chung said.

The production team met with the National Weather Service and brought on Oklahoma meteorologist Kevin Kelleher, who had consulted on "Twister." His advice even shaped tasks like animating moisture, down to the specific way sunlight hits drops of water in the atmosphere. The film boasts "the truest-to-science storms that anyone will be able to see rendered on a big screen," Chung said.

The tornadoes were created using "a complex fluid dynamic system," Snow said —

basically, almost unfathomably involved computer animation. His team divided the fictional world into "little cubes of three-dimensional specks" called voxels, or volumetric pixels. Each voxel required its own calculation determining where and how it appeared. "To get something that has the visual complexity you want — of clouds and the vapor that makes up a tornado — you need millions and millions of them," Snow said.

"Twisters" kicks off with a deadly EF5 tornado, which Chung wanted to foreshadow with glimpses of dark skies and rolling clouds. The storm needed to be "chasing" the characters, Snow said. "Something's behind them, but you can't see it. The boogeyman is back in the mist." As the movie begins, the audience feels the tension of an encroaching disaster.

Then, wham! The EF5 whirls through. They shot the actors running out of their car to seek

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## MOVIES



MELINDA SUE GORDON

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shelter under an overpass. Crew members on set blew smoke and rain close to the camera so it could be seen on the actors' bodies, and Snow's team added even more mist later "using a combination of particle systems and little tiny bits of cloudlike stuff we can generate on the computer," he said.

**Step 3: Perfect the sound**

The team did very little rerecording of dialogue after the film shoot — among the bits was Edgar-Jones screaming while her character clings onto an overpass, said Nelson, one of the supervising sound editors.

Each of the six tornadoes in the film has its own sonic personality. The first and final storms are presented as killers, and the team layered a low, throbbing pulse onto the audio track to contribute a sense of menace. Nelson created the sound by manipulating recordings of a commuter train he once rode in Sweden. It made a "thump thump thump" sound while moving through tunnels.

"It's about imagining what you want to hear, and then using sounds from the real world to help articulate that," he said. "Then you upload it all together in the same way you put a recipe together."

Nelson keeps a library of sounds. For "Twisters," he turned to the recordings of wind he captured during a tropical storm while on



MELINDA SUE GORDON/UNIVERSAL PICTURES/WARNER BROS. PICTURES/AMBLIN ENTERTAINMENT

**TOP LEFT:** Director Lee Isaac Chung and visual effects supervisor Ben Snow stand in a pool that was built for one of the more violent tornado sequences in "Twisters."  
**ABOVE:** Chung works with actors Daisy Edgar-Jones and Anthony Ramos.

vacation. That was as close as the team got to recording real weather. "No actual tornado was recorded for this movie," said Schroeder, also a supervising sound editor.

**Step 4: Wreck a rodeo**

Powell's character takes Edgar-Jones's to a rodeo to show her the fun side of Oklahoma — only for tornado sirens to blare. The ensuing panic is palpable.

Chung leaned on practical effects as much as possible. He referred to Casey O'Neill, the second-unit director, as a "master of horse work," noting that they had hired a rodeo for

the scene but worked with separate animals for the stunts. As the horses gallop away, the wind blows all sorts of debris into the crowd. "We had a bunch of special effects guys on top of the stands, I'd say five stories high, just pumping leaves out," Chung said.

Some moments were rendered on computers for the sake of safety. Snow's team animated the stand falling apart, as well as the nearby tornado siren falling off its pole.

The main characters seek refuge at a motel across the street. It was a real location, which meant the production couldn't mess with it. But Sullivan, the production designer, did build an extra office and a concrete pool. "I

had my playground," Sullivan said. "We were able to come in and wreck it all."

The characters hide in the pool. The plan was to drop an actual vending machine into the concrete structure near the hotel manager, but it ended up looking "like the actor was getting crushed under the Coke machine — and story-wise, that just didn't work for us," Chung said. So the teams worked together. They shot the machine falling with the actors in sight, and then dropped it again — in a slightly different, better location — without the actors present. Then "we combined it in post," Snow said.

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MOVIES



PHOTOS BY MELINDA SUE GORDON/UNIVERSAL PICTURES/WARNER BROS. PICTURES/AMBLIN ENTERTAINMENT

# In making of 'Twisters,' objects were hurled and a real storm led to issues

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After the vending machine, a massive horse trailer lands in the pool. (The horror never ends!)

"That was actually dropped," Sullivan said. "When the guy got pulled out from the pool [and sucked into the storm], that was on a cable. After that, he became a CGI character."

## Step 5: Make it through a historic strike

Production halted in July 2023 when the Screen Actors Guild went on strike. The strike lasted for 118 days, making it the longest work stoppage in the union's history. The "Twisters" team was in the middle of shooting the rodeo sequence when the strike began. Upon returning to Oklahoma in December, they faced unexpected obstacles. Where, for instance, would they find more green leaves in winter?

"Even some of the debris out there was slippery because it would get a coating of water that would freeze a little bit" in the cold air, Sullivan said. And yet the actors had to continue wearing summer clothing. Chilling, in more ways than one.

## Step 6: Destroy a movie theater

Before they shot the climactic sequence in downtown El Reno, a real storm blew in and wrecked the set. "We were all stuck inside, cowering in shop fronts on either side of the farmers market, watching the set be destroyed in exactly the way we wanted it to be destroyed for the film," Snow said. "But ironically, because of safety concerns, we weren't able to go out there and film."

When the storm passed, everyone pitched in to get the set back in order "so we could go back in with the actors, and [special effects supervi-

sor] Scott Fisher could turn on his giant wind fans and destroy the site — again — while the film camera was going," Snow said.

Fisher positioned two jet engine fans far enough away from the set to blow wind at rates of 170 to 180 mph, according to production notes. (Regular fans were also positioned closer to the actors, set to about 70 mph.) El Reno residents whisked away by the winds were played by stuntpeople on ropes. Fisher's team used dump tanks to release tons of water at once, washing the actors down the street. "We added some additional water in computer graphics," Snow said.

Chung often gave the actors earplugs that were edited out in post. "I had heard on the original 'Twister' that some of the actors had a hard time physically with what they were forced to do," Chung said, then joking: "I certainly didn't want to have these actors writing articles about me 10 years from now. So I tried to be careful."

Shooting some of the El Reno sequence on a soundstage allowed the team more creative control. Sullivan built a movie theater based on a real structure in the city, then took it apart. "You're conscious of the footage of film that's being run through the cameras constantly," he said. "There's the pressure to get it right the first or second time." They dropped a big chunk of the ceiling a few times, resetting it each time by hoisting it up on motors. The storm also rips off the movie theater screen, a practical effect Sullivan and his team executed only once.

Working on "Twisters" required great stamina and meticulous planning. Shooting on film, a limited resource, only made it harder. And yet —

"It was the biggest pleasure of my career," Sullivan said. "I joke that I can retire now because I have my bookends. I have my 'Twister' and my 'Twisters.' It's like, where do I go from here?"

ABOVE: Glen Powell's Tyler grabs Sasha Lane's Lily as a tornado approaches a movie theater specifically built for the scene. BELOW: Powell and Daisy Edgar-Jones talk with director Lee Isaac Chung while working on the rodeo scene. Chung leaned toward using practical effects for that part.



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# A neighbor's constant dirt-slinging gossip drags down their daily walks



**Carolyn Hax**

**Dear Carolyn:** Several years ago, I moved into a homeowners-association community. I love to walk and invited two ladies I met to walk with me each morning.

I am at the end of my patience with one of them, an incessant gossip about everyone in the community. And the gossip is always negative and derogatory. Generally, I just change the subject or walk ahead and don't respond. But many times, she is flat-out wrong and spreading lies. Example: There is a young man in the community who clearly has mental issues. She has demonized him and says she "knows" he is trying to rob the other owners because he walks at night and wears a black hoodie. She says we need to be careful because he is dangerous. I have run into him at night on several occasions, and he has always been polite. He walks at night because he doesn't want to engage with a lot of people.

When she said this about him, I sort of changed the subject and talked about my friend who has a son with mental illness. When I do this, she clearly gets mad. This morning, she cut her walk short

because I wouldn't engage.

I have said before that I really would like our walks to be a time for us to enjoy the outdoors and have a great start to the day. I have said that hearing derogatory things about other members of our community is not something I want to participate in. It stops for a day or two and then starts up again.

The interesting thing is, she is a very kind person otherwise. She helps all the elderly and makes sure they are okay. When someone is ill, she helps out in any way she can. I am at my wit's end and don't know how to end the gossip.

— Done With Gossip

**Done With Gossip:** Your "interesting" thing sounds like a common thing, actually; many people are wonderful about "us" while being casually vicious about "them." And I'd hazard a guess she has strong ideas who "they" are.

But that's neither here nor there when it comes to your gossip problem, because you've already 90 percent solved it yourself by 90 percent speaking up. When she gets going, say nope in one of the fine ways you describe. It works; her huffy departure this morning is all the



LET'S JUST KEEP INVITING HER TILL NONE OF US REMEMBERS WHY WE EVER BECAME FRIENDS BUT WE'RE ALL TOO LAZY TO UNFRIEND EACH OTHER.

ILLUSTRATION BY NICK GALIFIANAKIS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

proof you need of that.

You're right that it doesn't work permanently, since she snaps back to her old shape in a day or two. But that's her prerogative. She gets to say whatever rude thing she wants. You, in turn, get to say what you

think about that. Blather, rinse, repeat. The only permanent solutions are to accept some friction or walk with someone of higher quality. Or more likable. Or alone. She could tire, too, of walking with someone who dislikes her.

My only suggestion is to use real muscle, please, against derogatory comments — especially known lies. "Unless you have proof, calling him dangerous and criminal is reckless and could get him killed." Because it is and it could. You have direct knowledge, so share it: "I have encountered the young man around the neighborhood at night many times. I'm fine. He is always polite." The responsibility to stop lies, prejudice and fearmongering is shared by all who witness them.

**Dear Carolyn:** When something arises in our house that is a problem but not an existential crisis — think: the WiFi router is blinking red or I hear what I think may be a mouse moving around somewhere — my husband tends to FREAK OUT. I tend to not freak out and just try to address the problem.

He always says I "don't care." I always say, "Can you please tell me how your freaking out and yelling at me about it has helped solve the problem?" And of course he can't.

I end up getting mad at him for getting mad at me that I "don't care," and the whole thing spirals! Any advice?

— Define "Caring"

**Define "Caring":** Whoo. Sounds exhausting.

How 'bout this: "My care mechanism doesn't work the same way yours does. Is that okay? Can we have different methods for caring?"

If that is not okay with him in the heat of the moment, then I suggest a professional eye on his anxiety. And if you can't plant yourself mentally in a calm place and stop reacting to his reactions, then counseling for you both. Because this is a lot of reactivity for one modern household — a.k.a. aggregation of minor nuisances. Plus, you don't want the mouse stress-eating.

I suspect it's a shame response on your husband's part, that he feels anxious and out of control while you seem able to cope, so he finds this way to dump it back on you after the fact. If true, then that can corrode (or just exhaust) a marriage from the inside, so it's worth a professional look.

Write to Carolyn Hax at [tellme@washpost.com](mailto:tellme@washpost.com). Get her column delivered to your inbox each morning at [wapo.st/gethax](http://wapo.st/gethax).

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# Husband's forgetfulness causes anxiety for spouse who'll eventually be caregiver

**Asking Eric**

R. ERIC THOMAS

**Dear Eric:** I'm in my late 50s, and my husband is in his early 70s. While he's always been incredibly intelligent, he has

also always had a very poor memory. We believe he might also have ADHD.

As he's aged, his memory and decision-making have worsened. Several years ago, we had him baselined by a neuropsychologist, then reevaluated twice. His assessment showed nothing more than age-related memory changes. After the last assessment three years ago, the neuropsychologist indicated that we were probably having him evaluated more often than he needed.

I've gotten help for my own anxiety about this and feel like I'm handling that part of it much better. But I still find myself frustrated and impatient when we set up procedures or tools or

lists or whiteboards or insert coping mechanism here that are intended to help him, and he either forgets to use them or delusionally believes himself capable of remembering without them.

He is quite capable and independent now, but I will be his caregiver as he grows older. If I'm this frustrated and at a loss now, I'm concerned about what is to come.

— Trying to Stay on Task

**Task:** Fear of future forgetfulness is crowding your present. Try to stay in the here and now.

In the book "Dirty Laundry: Why Adults With ADHD Are So Ashamed and What We Can Do to Help," Richard Pink and Roxanne Emery write, "You can't shame yourself, or be shamed, into being more functional." This is a message for your husband and for you.

Your anxiety and frustration aren't something that you should

feel ashamed of, but they aren't going to be effective catalysts to positively change in your relationship.

When your husband doesn't take advantage of help, it probably feels like a personal affront. It's not. Don't take his neurological state personally.

His memory struggles are also frustrating and possibly shame-inducing for him, too.

Have a conversation about places in your life where you feel like you're carrying more than your share of the burden. Do this without blame and with a focus on solutions to which you can both commit.

Even though your husband's memory issues are age-related, your state's department of aging will have resources for you. For instance, the Texas Department of Aging has a hotline staffed by trained professionals — 855-YES-ADRC.

**Dear Eric:** I've been living with my niece for the past year since

my mom passed. Neither of us know anyone outside of family. I lived with mom until she had to go into a nursing home. I can't work because I'm on disability and haven't had a job in 20 years. I haven't made new friends in a long time. It's a struggle to pay bills. I have food stamps and go to the pantry, but it goes fast. I need objective advice on how to get ahead.

— Falling Behind

**Falling:** You're confronting social problems and financial problems at once. It's no wonder you're overwhelmed.

Choose one small part of this seemingly insurmountable constellation of troubles and make a plan to chip away at it. If it's your isolation you want to address, make a goal of meeting one neighbor a week, for instance.

Visit your library and ask for help locating free local financial management services or literature.

You've experienced a lot of upheaval in the past year. It will take time to get your bearings. Challenge yourself with manageable goals but make sure you celebrate your wins, too.

**Dear Eric:** I cried when I learned that Amy Dickinson was leaving her advice column. At my age, this old heart is just so broken.

Another ending is facing me, and I don't know where to put my feelings. Amy's column helped me through so many sad, terrible and confusing times.

She truly helped, not in any professional way but in a kind, neighborly way.

How do I ameliorate this great sadness from losing yet another wise voice? How do I survive now in this increasingly cruel, ageist, heterosexist and just plain mean world?

— No More Endings

**Endings:** I'm a longtime fan of Amy's just like you. We shared a relationship with her that I'm

not trying to replace. I couldn't. But that relationship doesn't go away.

Many column questions are about having trouble with change. That's human, and it can be hard. It can feel like we're being left behind. When change isn't what we want, the world can feel full of endings.

I've learned that although I can't stop change, I can adjust my relationship to it so I can be in the flow of change. I can see endings as also new beginnings, as invitations to dream

possibilities, and as a chance to commemorate what was and what will always be. I wish that for you, as well.

Send questions to R. Eric Thomas at [eric@askingeric.com](mailto:eric@askingeric.com) or P.O. Box 22474, Philadelphia, PA 19110. Follow him on Instagram and sign up for his weekly newsletter at [rericthomas.com](http://rericthomas.com)

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## MUSIC

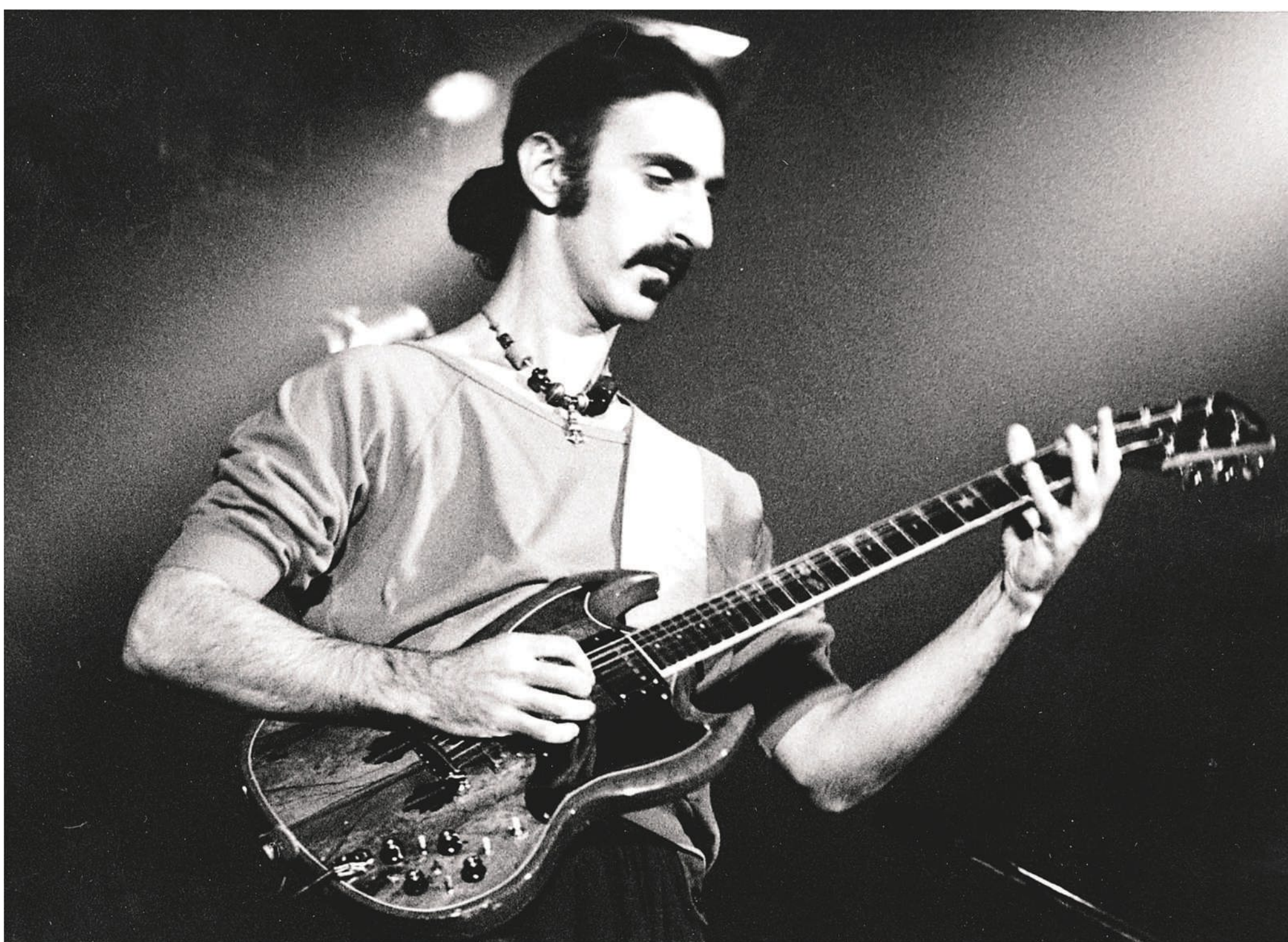


AP PHOTO/AP PHOTO



MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES

## The stroke of a pen opened wounds for the Zappas, rock's first family of weird genius



KEYSTONE/ASSOCIATED PRESS

**TOP LEFT: Frank and Gail Zappa, seen in 1972, were married from 1967 until his death from prostate cancer in 1993. TOP RIGHT: The couple pose in 1968 with their oldest child, Moon Unit, who was born shortly after the two married. ABOVE: Frank Zappa, who later became a special cultural attaché for Czechoslovakia, performs in Bern, Switzerland, in 1978.**

## ZAPPA FROM E1

spend the rest of your years making sense of them — and guides how you treat the other people in your life.

For the Zappa children, raised with one foot in the counterculture and one foot in show business, it's an emotional calculus that became ever more complex after the 2015 death of their mother, the keeper of her late husband's challenging legacy.

In a maneuver they didn't discover until after she died, Gail altered the family trust that she and Frank had signed in 1990. Instead of splitting the estate evenly four ways, she gave 30 percent to Ahmet and Diva each — making them “the sole and exclusive managers of all business” — and only 20 percent apiece to Dweezil and Moon.

That stroke of a pen opened wounds for rock's first family of weird genius. Dweezil, an MTV-era heartthrob, no longer speaks to his siblings. Moon, who endured an even more dizzying musical rise as the teen who personified the Valley Girl craze of the early 1980s, has spent decades reassessing the family dynamic — emotional labor that lies thick on the pages of her new memoir.

“What parent does this?” Moon writes in “Earth to Moon,” which will be released Aug. 20. “What mother does this? What the f--- did I do? What mother chooses some kids over

others? What mother wishes unending love and peace and belief and resources and creativity and total empowerment and divides a family into a *them* and an *us*, into a hateful before and an even worse after? What siblings *allow* that? Who are these people?”

Ahmet and Diva, meanwhile, seem dazed still by the force of their siblings' anger — siblings with whom they share not just a fraught business partnership but also a one-of-a-kind childhood.

“I'm just upset for them because they could be friends,” says Pamela Des Barres, who was a nanny for the Zappas in the early 1970s before finding fame as an era-defining rock groupie turned memoirist. “They could have family gatherings with the kids and stuff. To me, it's just heartbreaking. But they had different realities growing up in that house. And I don't think they understand each other.”

Everything starts with Frank Vincent Zappa.

The ultimate cult artist broke out in the mid-1960s with his band the Mothers of Invention, looking like the typical psychedelics-fueled guitarist, that dark glower peering out from a forest of facial hair. But he didn't do drugs — just coffee and his ever-smoldering Winstons — and his music didn't place him in any particular scene either.

A Baltimore native, Zappa fell in love with

doo-wop on the radio and avant-garde classical music at the record store, during a childhood spent moving around for his father's defense-industry work on poison gases. Soon, he was spending 14 hours a day constructing complex instrumentals, blues jams, brilliant political parodies and naughty scatological goofs about yellow snow. His albums, with titles like “Burnt Weeny Sandwich” and “Weasels Ripped My Flesh,” enthralled savvy college kids but barely made it onto the airwaves and only occasionally hit the Top 100 charts.

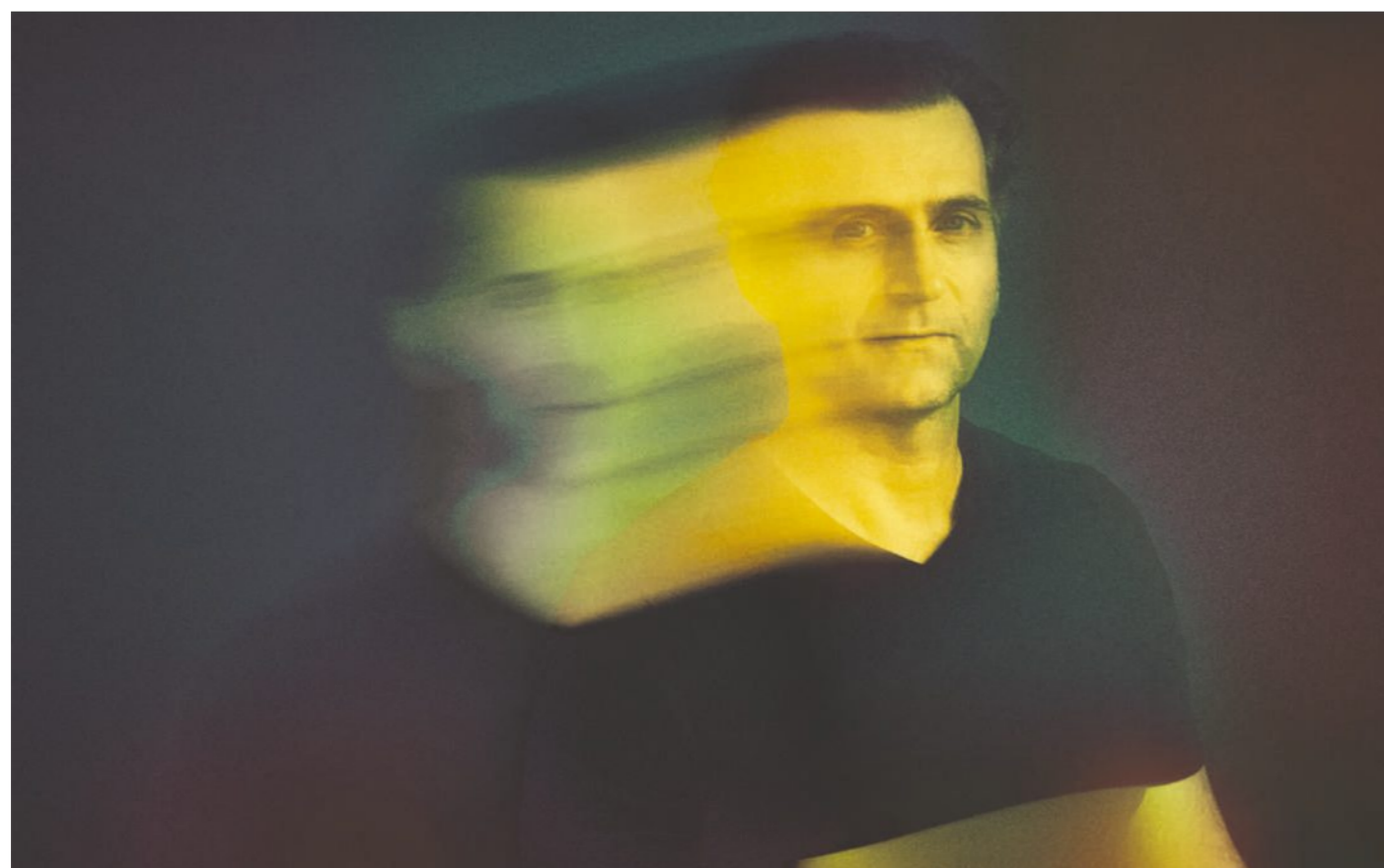
He nonetheless became a household name — in large part due to his emergence, in later years, as an acerbic activist and raffishly telegenic talking head, who urged young people to vote and testified before Congress on behalf of free speech and against censorship of rock music. Superfan Vaclav Havel, with the powers vested in him as then-president of Czechoslovakia, installed Zappa as a special cultural attaché.

“A brilliant, genius artist,” says Tipper Gore, of all people, who unexpectedly became friends with Frank and his family after debating him on “Nightline” during her 1980s campaign to add warning labels to albums with raunchy lyrics. “He listened to the beat of his own drum, and his own drum was amazing.”

But as a husband and father? It was

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## MUSIC



SEAN SCHEIDT FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

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complicated.

He was 26 in 1967 when he married Adelaide Gail Sloatman, a secretary at the Whisky a Go Go on the Sunset Strip. She was four years his junior and pregnant with Moon.

After Moon, Dweezil arrived in 1969, Ahmet in 1974 and Diva in 1979. And over 26 years of marriage, Gail played housewife. But in the early years it was for a house full of groupies.

"A diverse array of horny dreamers, oddballs, misfits, and sycophants freeloading on heavy rotation," Moon describes in her memoir. (They included longtime Zappa bassist Roy Estrada, who was later twice convicted on charges of child molestation.) "I still wear my pacifier around my neck for security, never knowing who's safe and who isn't, who my dad is humping and who he isn't."

In a 1971 documentary, Frank was asked about his affairs on the road.

"I like to get laid," he said.

What about your wife, the interviewer asked?

"She's become accustomed to it over a period of years," says Zappa. "You have to be realistic about these things. You go out on the road, you strap on a bunch of girls, you find out you've got the clap. What are you going to do, keep it secret from your wife? So I come back there and say, 'Look, I've got the clap, go out and get a

prescription."

In fact, Gail was bitterly unhappy about his extramarital pursuits and could explode into rages. Moon writes about the time her father asked her to find the gun so her mother couldn't get her hands on it.

"Gail is on a rampage," he said. "I didn't even know we had a gun," she writes.

"Frank was my friend," says Co de Kloet, a Dutch musician and radio presenter who first interviewed Zappa in 1977. "He was my hero. One thing, though: I'm glad he was not my father. Because I wouldn't want my father to treat my mother the way he treated Gail."

Even after the groupies drifted away, nothing much changed. There was no structure, no family vacations, no PTA meetings. None of the four Zappa children graduated from high school. If Frank wasn't touring the world, he was asleep or holed up in his basement studio.

Ahmet and Moon both remember crying for attention. They each ran away from home only to find that nobody seemed to notice.

Diva's fondest memory of Frank is watching "The Simpsons" with him, seeing his belly rise as he laughed. She was only 14 when he died in 1993 at age 52. At the restaurant, she turns to Moon and Ahmet sadly.

"I am jealous that you guys got to know him," she says.

Moon and Ahmet laugh. If only. Music was Frank's primary concern. It may

be for this reason that Dweezil — the only Zappa child who can play an instrument — has the most benign view of the family home.

Dweezil is the one with the curly hair and piercing eyes, the one who dated Molly Ringwald, Demi Moore, Jennifer Connelly. He took his earliest guitar lessons with virtuosos Eddie Van Halen and Steve Vai, released his first solo album at 16, and joined his father onstage.

"The way the studio was set up, I could go in there if he was working in the control room and practice guitar," he says, interviewed independently from his siblings in his Los Angeles studio. "Or I would just go in there and listen to what he was doing and talk to him. I was probably in there 250 days out of the year, just always around."

Moon had a harder time gaining entrance. But when she did, it changed everything.

"I'm 13 years old. My name is Moon," she scribbled on a note she slipped under his studio door in a chastening mock introduction. "Up until now I have been trying to stay out of your way while you record."

Zappa invited her in. He asked her to improvise in the stereotypical language of a shopping-addled San Fernando Valley teenager ("Like, oh my God!" "Gag me with a spoon!" "Fer sure"), a track he laid over the driving guitar riff he had already composed.

Released in 1982, "Valley Girl" made a massive pop-cultural splash — winning a

## Gail Zappa's vigilance over the estate extended to such an extreme that in 2006, when Dweezil began performing his father's music as Zappa Plays Zappa — a tribute band that later won a Grammy — mother and son fought bitterly over how much in royalties he owed her for the right to use the name and the songs.

**FROM LEFT: Brothers Dweezil (with guitar) and Ahmet Zappa once performed music together and co-hosted a short-lived TV show. These days, Ahmet calls Dweezil his "biggest bully," and Dweezil refuses to be in the same room as his younger brother. Moon Unit Zappa helped her father score his biggest pop hit when she collaborated with him as a teen on "Valley Girl," and she is the author of the upcoming memoir "Earth to Moon." Diva Zappa is the least public of the siblings. She is an artist who reads tarot cards on Instagram and is knitting a mile-long scarf that she calls Emilio.**

Grammy nomination and training an entire nation in the patois of a niche SoCal tribe. The experience was miserable for Moon, pushed to do talk shows and perform on "Solid Gold" while struggling with the usual teenage insecurities.

It was surely a complicated matter for Frank, too, that his only Top 40 hit in the U.S. was a novelty tune whose layers of satire were lost on much of the audience.

His ambitions still sprawled, never fully satisfied. In his 1989 autobiography, he grumbled about the money lost trying to record with orchestras or tour with a 12-piece band.

In 1993, he appeared on NBC's "Today" show, weary and sporting a gray beard. Dying of prostate cancer, he was asked how he would like to be remembered.

"I don't care," he said. "It's not important to even be remembered."

And yet, Zappa had saved it all. Everything. A vault packed with films, drawings and hundreds of reels of music, from the first tapes he recorded in the late 1950s to virtually every concert he ever performed.

"He probably wouldn't have been such an audio pack rat if he didn't expect something should or would be done with it one day," says Vai, who toured with Zappa in the 1980s.

He had advised his wife to sell it. Instead, she took over the business and cast herself as the

keeper of the Zappa flame.

She filed or renewed trademarks for everything, from his name to the image of his mustache. She sued anyone she felt was using Zappa material without permission. She spent millions fighting to get Frank's master tapes back from Rykodisc and its parent company, Warner Bros.

"For decades, he was in control," says Des Barres. "And she finally had control of the situation and wanted to run with it."

"She said, 'Frank's past is my future,'" recalls another confidante, the actress Beverly D'Angelo. "It gave her an identity."

Gail came into her own. She invested in real estate and became such a generous donor to the Democratic Party — more than \$450,000 — that she felt comfortable sending a note to Al Gore advising him to buy a new suit. Tipper, a drummer from back in her school days, would stay at the house and jam with Dweezil and Diva, her daughter Kristin singing backup on one recording.

"I thought Gail was wonderful," says the former second lady. "She was someone I could talk to and trust, and at that period of time, you had to be careful about that."

Gail's vigilance over the estate extended to such an extreme that in 2006, when Dweezil began performing his father's music as Zappa Plays Zappa — a tribute band that later won a Grammy — mother and son fought bitterly over

how much in royalties he owed her for the right to use the name and the songs.

In Dweezil's view, his touring and recording under the Zappa name did more than any other family member did to boost the brand's value.

"Look at the bad business moves Gail made," he says. "Then you can see how everything just fell apart."

Indeed, when she died of lung cancer in 2015, the family trust was \$5 million in debt.

Even now, her children don't know how it happened. But they have come to believe that her money problems propelled Gail's decision to alter the trust.

Near the end of Gail's life, Moon recounts in her memoir, she gathered the children and explained that she needed cash to make her final payments to Warner for Frank's catalogue. She asked them to sign over their rights to an insurance policy she had taken out.

Ahmet and Diva agreed. But the other two balked: Dweezil still sore over their money dispute, and Moon holding out for more of a say in business decisions. Moon believes their mom decided to punish them by reducing their inheritances.

But Ahmet, who had previously been called upon to help manage the family business and also pay some of his mother's bills, sees Gail's reasoning like this:

She had already spent millions to bolster the

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## MUSIC



JENNA SCHOENEFELD FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Flanked by West Hollywood Vice Mayor Chelsea Lee Byers and Mayor John Erickson, Diva Zappa, left, and Moon Unit Zappa hold a proclamation at the Whisky a Go Go declaring June 10 "Frank Zappa Day."

## Eldest Zappa daughter hopes her memoir helps her family mend frayed connections

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

estate by reclaiming the rights to Frank's music — and she desperately hoped it was as important to the kids as it was to her.

"I was like, 'Mom, whatever you need to do, I never viewed it as my money anyway. You bought the insurance policy,'" Ahmet says. "So then Moon and Dweezil had a different feeling about that. And I can tell you that Gail was heartbroken."

At Gail's funeral, Moon approached Ahmet and told him he had to make things right with the trust.

"I already told you," she recalls him saying. "My hands are tied."

Technically, they were not, says Jeffrey Forer, the attorney Ahmet and Diva hired after Gail's death. Ahmet and Diva could have taken steps to restore Moon and Dweezil's equal control of the trust, with a judge's consent. Meanwhile, Moon says the children discovered that her father had left a will, which indicated he wanted his estate evenly divided between them.

Yet Ahmet and Diva were following Gail's wishes by keeping the trust as she left it.

"This is Gail's voice," Forer says. "It's Gail's intentions and Frank's before that. Frank's long dead. He gave her the ability to do it."

Even today, Dweezil wryly speculates that his mother was driven by some Oedipal impulse to "take the favorite children of the father and kill them." Her overhaul of the trust created new rifts and revived old resentments — particularly between the brothers. They had toured and recorded as a band in the early 1990s and hosted a short-lived TV show together. Today, though, Ahmet recalls Dweezil as "my biggest bully," and Dweezil dismisses Ahmet for goofing off, blowing lyrics and never committing to the act.

But money undeniably made things worse, as Ahmet stepped into the role of estate trustee and the family businessman.

Dweezil's team said the trust under Ahmet put even more onerous demands and restrictions on his ability to perform as Zappa Plays Zappa than their mother had. It was a dispute that played out in the media as well as in lawyer's offices.

Finally, in 2018, Dweezil, Ahmet and Diva reached a legal agreement — Moon refused to sign on — with a healthy mutual nondisparagement clause. And all four began to settle into careers and avocations which, while tapped into the creative life, do not require one to be a child of Frank Zappa.

Moon, in addition to her memoir, is selling handmade products, including needlework hats ("Moonknits"), and her own line of tea. Dweezil is still playing his dad's music, currently on a 30-city tour; but also working in

the studio for other artists, including a remix for a rerelease of the 1972 Deep Purple album "Machine Head." Ahmet, who has written children's books, produced movies and founded an advertising company, is now managing the estates and intellectual property of other showbiz stars. Diva, the least public of the siblings, is an artist who reads tarot cards on Instagram and is knitting a mile-long scarf that she has named Emilio.

Perhaps most crucially, though, in 2022, the Zappa trust sold Frank's music catalogue, vault and likeness to Universal, allowing Ahmet to step away from the burden of managing it himself.

The price tag was a reported \$30 million — which definitely helped everyone get along better.

Or at least, it was a start.

On a recent Monday, Ahmet calls Moon and asks her to go to a party. It's in honor of their dad — a celebration Universal organized for the release of a box set capturing an epic 1968 Mothers of Invention concert at the Whisky a Go Go, yet another gem from the Zappa vault.

Moon had no intention of attending. She wasn't even planning to be in town — she splits time between coasts — and it's really not her scene. But now Ahmet has covid and he can't join Diva at the event. And it's important for at least a couple of Zappas to go fly the flag.

That's the Zappa family these days. A delicate mix of personal connections and professional obligations that they're still trying to work out.

Now, at the table at a restaurant near his office, Moon, Ahmet and Diva work through their past. Diva mentions how she desperately wanted to go to college. But she couldn't get anyone to help her with applications or figuring out how to take the SATs.

Ahmet has a confession.

"I told Gail, I said, 'I am begging you, for Diva's sake, send her to college,'" he recalls.

"We all begged," adds Moon.

"What are you talking about?" Diva asks, beginning to tear up.

"We knew you would excel," says Ahmet. "And she's like, 'I'm not going to do it.'"

"Because she'd be alone," says Moon.

It's an emotional and revelatory moment for Diva. But when the subject turns to the family trust, the sibling group tenses up again. Moon complains again that Ahmet and Diva operated in secrecy, never giving her or Dweezil a chance to weigh in on decisions, such as when Lady Gaga put in a successful \$5.25 million bid for the family home in 2016.

Ahmet tells Moon that she has always had the ability to obtain most of the information she wanted, if she had asked. The house sale, however, required certain layers of confidenti-

ality.

"We had to sell the house. It was [required] in the trust," he says. "And then when Lady Gaga decides to buy the house and she's like, 'no one can know about any of this information,' you sign an NDA."

"But could you have asked Lady Gaga and said, 'Can I at least include Moon and Dweezil?'" Moon counters.

"I didn't even speak to her!" Ahmet says, growing frustrated. "I spoke with the business manager, and they provided the terms."

Moon is unappeased.

"I'm learning s--- in real time," she says, now crying at the table. "It's f---ing frustrating."

It may go without saying that the fourth Zappa sibling has declined to join this gathering. His wife sends regrets on his behalf via a text: "Dweezil isn't interested in spending any time in the presence of his brother. Ever."

In a separate interview, Dweezil still questions his brother's business acumen: "What was done to create a new fan base, other than what I was already doing by touring, during the entire period Ahmet was in charge?" And he wonders why those who control the trust and the catalogue haven't enlisted *him*, the professional musician, to work on his father's reissues.

"It would probably make sense to a lot of people, if you suggested to them, 'Hey, who would be a good fit to mix Frank Zappa music or curate new things?'"

A day after his get-together with his sisters ends in tears, Ahmet looks back at it all and sighs.

"All I do is get f---ing hammered by my own family," he says. "They have no concept of what it was like. Zero."

He remains relieved that it is no longer his daily burden to wrestle with the needs of the estate. Already, he has dropped 50 of the 70 pounds of stress weight he packed on during those years.

Next up for the Zappa family, though, is Moon's book.

None of her siblings has read it yet. They say she didn't offer them a chance to see an advance copy. She says they didn't ask.

Will it be yet another occasion for hurt feelings and misunderstandings within a fragile family? Moon is more optimistic.

"My book is an invitation," she says, "to explore the complicated dynamics together."

With any luck, she says, her siblings will appreciate the chance to see the world they shared through her eyes.

Perhaps the others are fine with the distance between them, she speculates. She, however, yearns to close those gaps.

"If they can live with not speaking for many years, and they can live without mending connections, then I guess that's what they can do," she says. "I can't do it."

So you want to get into Frank Zappa? Start with these four albums (and a book).

BY GEOFF EDGERS

To a newbie, Frank Zappa's frenetic, eccentric output may seem overwhelming: over 120 releases to date, with more coming thanks to Universal Music Group's ambitious curation program. If you need a cheat sheet to the late rocker, here are five ways to get into Frank's world.

### 'Whisky a Go Go, 1968' (2024)

This weirdo extravaganza, released in various configurations this year, captures the psychedelic jam fests of Zappa's early Mothers of Invention period. It's all here: blues, jazz, doo-wop, oddball speeches and groupies writing on the floor in front of the band.

### 'Hot Rats' (1969)

Songs-wise, this is Zappa the composer at his best, stretching out on complex but catchy jazz-rock instrumentals — including his signature tune "Peaches en Regalia." The lone vocal belongs to Zappa's sometime-collaborator Captain Beefheart, delivering a memorable growl on "Willie the Pimp."

### 'Roxy & Elsewhere' (1974)

Zappa's live performances could send you down an entirely different rabbit hole, and his gigs with the Mothers at the Roxy in Hollywood were particularly strong. The original release is a good starting point; "The Roxy Performances," a massive 2018 box set, captures the entire three-night run.

### 'You Are What You Is' (1981)

Produced in his home studio (otherwise known as the Utility Muffin Research Kitchen), this late-period album darts across genres, from doo-wop to jazz-metal to country, and societal targets, from religion to cultural appropriation and recreational drugs. And now that you "get" Frank Zappa, pick up a vintage 45 of "Valley Girl," his 1982 collaboration with daughter Moon.

### 'The Real Frank Zappa Book' (1989)

With humor and edge and an incredible level of self-confidence, Zappa lays out in this memoir the rules for survival in the music business, his feelings about religion and organized schooling (hint: not a huge fan) and his philosophy on parenting. It's an entertaining read, even if you don't know the Zappa story. If you do, it provides fascinating insight into the decisions he made at home and on the road.

## ART

## IN THE GALLERIES

## Dynamic compositions capture nature's fractured side

BY MARK JENKINS

The three-artist show at Hemphill Artworks features several things associated with the decorative arts: flowers, butterflies and embroidery. Another essential element, however, is decay, which makes "Belkin Caldwell Shull" a bit edgier than its nature motifs might suggest.

Sophia Belkin is a Baltimore artist who prints wetlands-inspired compositions on fabric, outlining certain portions with stitching. A former local resident and a longtime Hemphill artist, North Carolina's Colby Caldwell makes camera-less woodland photographs directly with a digital scanner. Randy Shull, who divides his time between North Carolina and Mexico, hints at butterflies ("mariposa" in his Spanish-language titles) with sections of partly unraveled hammocks painted in vivid hues.

The show's largest piece is Belkin's "Cloud Garden," whose shapes and colors evoke botanical forms but are far from naturalistic. Although inspired by swamps and marshes, the artist appears just as concerned with the innate character of fabric. Much the same seems true of Shull, whose arrangements of pigmented mesh call attention to the tactile qualities of the drooping, mangled strings.

Caldwell offers the most realistic flowers, but many of the blooms are warped by computer glitches. The artist has experimented for years with digitally corrupting images into utter abstraction, and sections of these pictures are simply jagged rainbows of distortion. The scans, from a series titled "Garlands," match soft natural pinks with liquefying pictorial details. Caldwell's career indicates his affinity for the outdoors, but his recent work elevates computer-generated randomness over nature's more fruitful anarchy.

**Belkin Caldwell Shull** Through Aug. 24 at Hemphill Artworks, 434 K St. NW. hemphillfinearts.com. 202-234-5601.

### A Closer Look

Most of the artworks in "A Closer Look: Conflicted Art From Ukraine" depict people directly affected by Russia's 2022 invasion. Among the most powerful pictures in the Mason Exhibitions Arlington show are Natalia Amirova's exquisitely detailed watercolors of everyday Ukrainians and Kristina Otchich-Cherniak's line drawings, mostly in red, of protesters, displaced persons and victims of Russian brutality. Otchich-Cherniak spatters her stark pictures with blood-hued drops of ink.

Documentary photographer Andriy Dubchak's images of war refugees and a young soldier who peers from a captured Russian tank are assembled into a floor-to-ceiling banner. Roman Rabyk's sculptural tribute to Ukrainian fighters, made of metal and resin, portrays a solid head and shoulders that yield below to more vulnerable-looking latticework.

Elena Alyabyeva and Roman Bonchuk both depict battered locations. The former's sketches are executed dramatically in white on black, while the latter uses watercolor to consecrate as a "temple" the steel works that served as a stronghold for Ukrainian fighters in Mariupol. More gently, Sergiy Simutin's stylized paintings of "Saint Wheat" and "Saint Corn" memorialize prewar Ukraine's status as Europe's breadbasket.

Curators Sophie Bae and Yevgen Nemchenko selected a few whimsical pieces,



DAVID MYERS

"Farm Room" by David Myers, part of the photography exhibit "14 Visions" at Multiple Exposures Gallery.



PARINAZ BAHADORI

"Dancing," in the "Come Together" photo-collage exhibit by CoLab artists at Fred Schnider Gallery of Art.

notably Eugene Baraban's bomb-shaped vessel decorated in the style of a traditional Ukrainian Easter egg. It sits near something that's not at all playful: a piece of debris from a Russian helicopter. The show's only non-art object, the gnarled metal is also the most direct reminder of Ukraine's grinding battle for survival.

**A Closer Look: Conflicted Art From Ukraine** Through Aug. 23 at Mason Exhibitions Arlington, 3601 Fairfax Dr., Arlington. masonexhibitions.org.

### 14 Visions

The title of Multiple Exposures Gallery's "14 Visions" emphasizes the 14 contributors' individuality. Yet many of the photographs selected by curator Allison Nance dovetail neatly. While half are in black-and-white and half in color, the latter pictures are usually muted and sometimes nearly monochromatic. Stacy Smith Evans's mountain panorama is mostly blue with splashes of yellow sunlight, and Francine B. Livaditis's study of a Frank Gehry building is predominantly silvery. The near-abstract elements of Maureen Minehan's elegant close-up of a boat and its tether are black and cream, framed by a luminous expanse of light-green water.

The greens are stronger in Irina



HEMPHILL ARTWORKS

Sophia Belkin's "Emergence" in the three-artist show "Belkin Caldwell Shull."

Dakhnovskaia-Lawton's picture of a woman who poses next to a painted portrait, but the hues are cool and their range narrow. One of the show's few touches of red is the illuminated stop sign suspended high above an intersection in Fred Zafran's round-midnight shot of a Tokyo back street. And while that photo is unusually colorful, compositionally it fits well with a half dozen others that feature rectangles of light within overwhelming darkness.

Two of the most effective of these pictures are by Tim Hyde and David Myers. The first peers through a door frame into a shadowy room to spy a partly illuminated patch of bed; the second gazes out, past a bed frame in a near-black chamber, to reveal a window that admits light but no sense of what's beyond. If the sense of isolation in such scenes is suffocating, Van Pulley's nighttime moment is more expansive. His photo captures a steel-gray sky split by a ribbon of stars that are also reflected in still water below. The composition evocatively juxtaposes light and dark, openness and confinement.

**14 Visions** Through Aug. 25 at Multiple Exposures Gallery, Torpedo Factory, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria. multipleexposuresgallery.com. 703-683-2205.

### Come Together

Four of the pieces in "Come Together: A CoLab Collage Project" are jam sessions, collage-paintings improvised by all nine of the local artists in the CoLab Group. But the highlights of the Fred Schnider Gallery of Art show are solos by such participants as Doug Fuller, Rosemary Forsythe, Julia Tova Malakoff and Mary McCracken.

While none of the artists make purely representational pictures, some favor recognizable motifs. Malakoff constructs garden-like scenes, stuffed with plants and the occasional piece of furniture. The concentric circles in Forsythe's pictures suggest orbiting planets, their rotation highlighted by raised nibs of gold paint. Such McCracken abstractions as the heavily red "Inside Out" are distinguished by their bold color contrasts.

Echoes of Robert Rauschenberg's style resound throughout the show, especially in Fuller's burly 3D combines. The artist builds his assemblages around metal objects, including a beer can and rusted bracket. Arranged on panels, Fuller's constructions rear from the surface, muscular and untamed.

**Come Together: A CoLab Collage Project** Through Aug. 18 at Fred Schnider Gallery of Art, 888 N. Quincy St., Arlington. fredschnidergalleryofart.com. 703-841-9404.

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# Turandot

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## ART



Beautiful women — it's one of the oldest, most tired tropes — often struggle to be taken seriously. Marisol was glamorous and cosmopolitan, and from the outset, this complicated her reception.

HANS NAMUTH/BUFFALO AKG ART MUSEUM AND CENTER FOR CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY, UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

## 'LATIN GARBO' MADE POP ART WITH DEPTH

MARISOL FROM E1

Kosuth, Robert Smithson and Ruth Asawa (just for starters)?

But the original list was used to tell a specific story — a heroic, echt-American tale of evolution and progress, intimately connected to the nation's rise on the world stage, economically, geopolitically, culturally.

Together, you could say, those male artists constituted the trunk of the tree. Everything else was just proliferating branches. Artists who didn't fit the story — perhaps because the critics telling the story didn't know what to do with them, or because they were women or Black or Asian American — could still be part of the tree. But they weren't foundational.

Thankfully, we've moved far beyond this. Canons are useful. In fact, once you concede that some artists are more impactful than others, they're all but inevitable. But they're also lazy.

They're perhaps most useful as a provocation, a stimulus to tell better, more interesting stories, to make us ask: who else? Who might look more important, more influential, if we shifted our vantage point so that what we thought was a branch is really part of the trunk?

For more than 15 years, I've firmly believed that one of the most exciting and pivotal artists of the postwar period was the Venezuelan-born sculptor Marisol Escobar (1930-2016). Marisol, as she chose to be known, is the subject of a traveling retrospective that has just opened at the Buffalo AKG Art Museum in Buffalo. I saw the show in January at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

Marisol's work, like Picasso's, can be childlike and playful, but it is exceptionally rich in connotations. Enigmatic, often somber and private, it is nonetheless socially engaged, sharply political and disarmingly perceptive

about human psychology.

Marisol was always generating tensions between smooth, blockish, geometrical forms and crudely carved wood, which she often used for faces, hands or headwear. She drew sensitively rendered faces onto coarse surfaces, setting elements apart with texture, bright pastel color and vibrant decorative effects.

Hats, helmets and other headwear constituted her most striking inventions, which sometimes veered into cubist or completely abstract territory. Elsewhere she incorporated found items such as TV screens, baby carriages, strings of pearls, wooden barrels or silver trays of crystal glasses. Perhaps most arrestingly, she used casts of her own face and hands, out of which she squeezed extraordinary psychological depth and suggestiveness.

Beautiful women — it's one of the oldest, most tired tropes — often struggle to be taken seriously. Marisol was glamorous and cosmopolitan, and from the outset, this complicated her reception. Born to well-off Venezuelan parents, she spent her childhood in Paris, Caracas, Los Angeles and New York, where she settled in 1950 when she was 20.

By the early 1960s, Marisol had established herself as one of the founding figures of pop art. By the middle of the decade, dubbed the "Latin Garbo," she was truly famous. Warhol, who filmed her in 1964, called her the "first girl artist with glamour." She was written up in magazines including *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar* and *Glamour*.

American pop art was always ambivalent. On the surface, its stance seemed critical, satirizing consumer and celebrity culture. More often, however, it piggybacked on these phenomena, jovially endorsing them. Warhol, who always wanted it both ways, epitomized the conflict.

But from the get-go, Marisol was less complacent and naive about American mass cul-



BUFFALO AKG ART MUSEUM/ESTATE OF MARISOL/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY

TOP: A 1960s portrait of Marisol by Hans Namuth.  
ABOVE: Marisol retouches her 1961-1962 work "The Generals" at the Albright Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo in 1963.

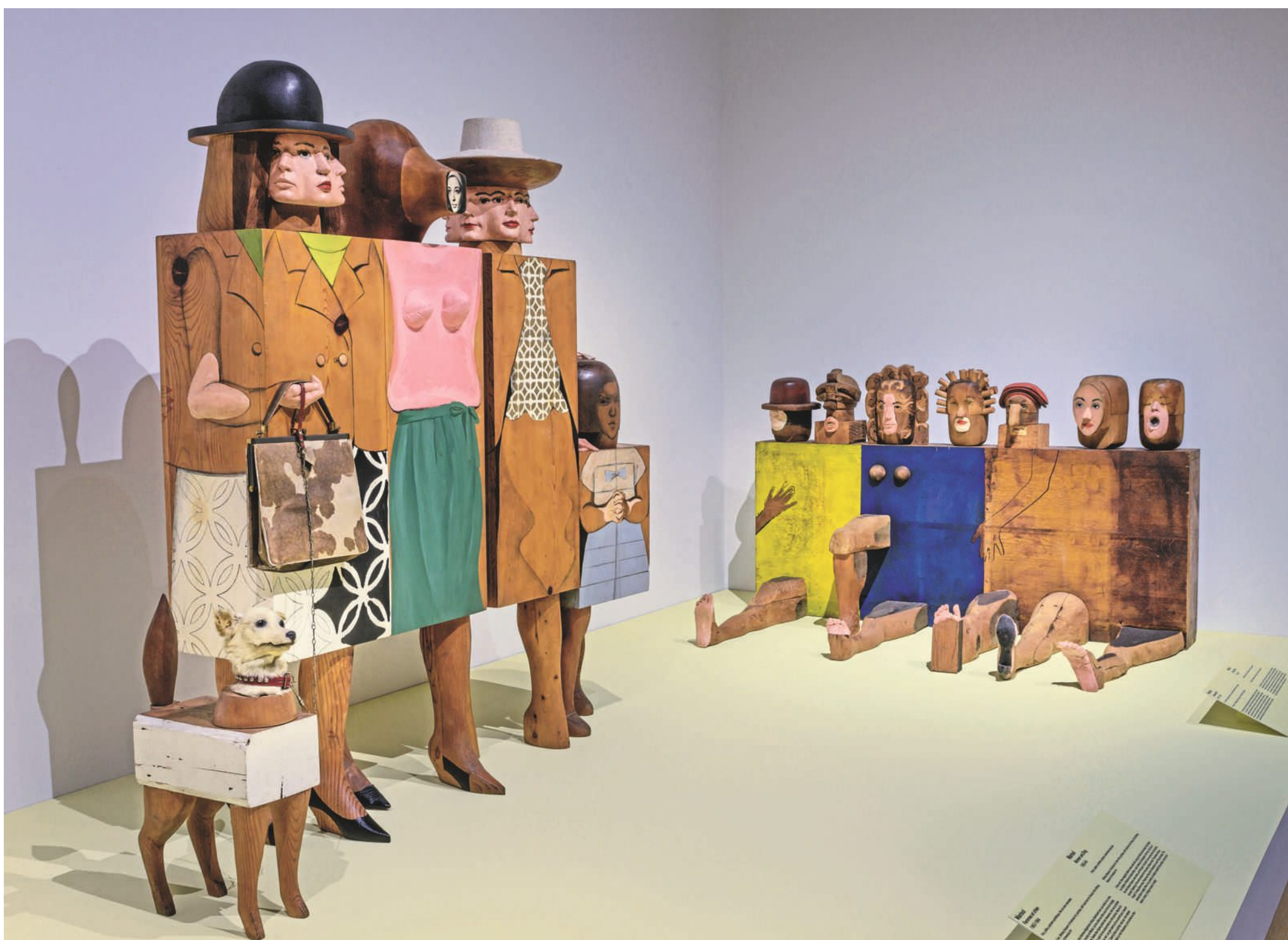
## ART



DENIS FARLEY/TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART



BUFFALO AKG ART MUSEUM



DENIS FARLEY

Marisol's work, like Picasso's, can be childlike and playful, but it is exceptionally rich in connotations. Enigmatic, often somber and private, it is nonetheless socially engaged, sharply political and disarmingly perceptive about human psychology.

ture. She was certainly less comfortable with wallowing in the modes of irony favored by other pop artists. Her work was edgier, darker, more troubled and troubling.

Before becoming famous, Warhol befriended Marisol. He used her for entrée to influential art circles. He was influenced by her persona (shy but theatrical, intentionally enigmatic) and by her portraiture, which put U.S. presidents, babies, artists, Hollywood actors and popes all on the same level.

Marisol was always more interested in the dynamics of celebrity than in consumerism. "No one has deflated human pomposity with greater insight," wrote art historian and curator Katharine Kuh in 1963.

She was herself an object of fascination — not only to others but to herself. In one sculpture after another, she tried to reconcile her self-perception with the image of her projected by the media. One critic spoke about her "celebratable face." Using casts from her face (and other body parts), Marisol gave form to her insights about celebrity, anxiety and death.

She also had a powerful social conscience. She chose to explore wider themes, including the immigrant experience; the suffering and courage of America's Indigenous population; the confusions, constraints and freedoms of gender and sexuality; and the fragility of natural (especially marine) ecosystems.

Remarkably, at the height of her fame, Marisol temporarily withdrew from the art world, appalled by the ongoing violence in Vietnam and by the era's other social convulsions.

I think she was at her best when expressing the agonies of identity — not through anguished expressionism but through varieties of play that could express wit and vivacity, but also numbness, silence and absurdity.

Many of Marisol's best works related to family life. When she was 11, her mother died by suicide. Journalists incessantly asked Mari-

sol when she would marry and have kids herself. She never did, but she frequently made family tableaux that seemed to hint at an unbridgeable gap between how families present themselves to the outside world and what really goes on within.

Much of Marisol's work is deliberately childlike, as if she were making so many dolls or toys. The resulting tension between things presenting themselves as the tools of childish whimsy and inscrutable, museum-scale, very adult artworks was key to her unique sensibility.

I find traces of this sensibility everywhere in contemporary art today. Marisol's influence can be seen in the laconic freedom and satirical impulse with which artists like Nicole Eisenman treat social and psychological themes. It can also be seen in the return to funky, hand-made objects whose makers, rebelling against digital culture, are not afraid of being mixed up with "craft."

Marisol shares affinities with the playful, pictorial rawness of Rose Wylie, the social commentary of early Amy Sillman, the formal inventiveness of Arlene Shechet and Nairy Baghramian and the combination of decorative pop energy and heartfelt intimacy in the work of Elizabeth Peyton and Mickalene Thomas.

Marisol ushered in the pop art revolution. She gave shape to her astute responses to private trauma and social upheaval. She was a committed artist of conscience, alive to environmental and Indigenous issues well ahead of her time. Formally, her work was dazzling, inventive, wholly original.

No story of postwar American art is quite complete without her.

**Marisol: A Retrospective** Through Jan. 6 at the Buffalo AKG Art Museum, after which it will travel to the Dallas Museum of Art, Feb. 23-July 6, 2025.



BRENDA BIEGER/BUFFALO AKG ART MUSEUM//ESTATE OF MARISOL/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY



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**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: A detail from the work "The Party" 1965-1966. Marisol used casts of her own face and hands, squeezing out extraordinary psychological depth and suggestiveness. Marisol in 1974 with her 1973 sculpture "The Fishman." An installation view of the exhibit at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. Her 1963 sculpture "Baby Girl" and the 1968 work "Mi Mama y Yo."**

## ART

GREAT WORKS, IN FOCUS

# The future was bright when a man of science painted his chic landlord

BY SEBASTIAN SMEE

Let's say you're a fashion student. Maybe you're already thriving as an online influencer. Free merch. So many likes. Fun life. Lucky you.

But wow, the pressure! People don't realize. You're constantly required to come up with fresh ideas. Where are you going to find them?

Unsolicited tip from an uncool dad: Make a beeline for an art museum. Find the galleries with all the old paintings. Look at the clothes, the poses, the expressions. Why?

Because what people used to wear was wild! And not just the clothes — the poses, the hairstyles, the accessories. You never know what you'll find.

Case in point: this arresting portrait, at the Cleveland Museum of Art, of Nathaniel Olds. The painting is by Jephtha Homer Wade, one of the American 19th century's more vivid characters. A painter and photographer (he made some of the first daguerreotypes in the country), he was also an extremely wealthy industrialist who made his fortune in the telegraph industry. (His grandson, Jephtha Wade II, was a founder of the Cleveland Museum of Art.)

When Wade painted this portrait of his landlord, Nathaniel Olds, all that was ahead of him. Wade was in his mid-20s. He was interested in painting, but also a man of science, drawn to anything new.

Including, it seems, green-tinted wrap-around glasses.

It's hard to say which man proposed including them: Perhaps Olds and Wade simply conspired, tickled by the prospect. All we know is that the spectacles were designed to protect Olds's eyes from the intensity of Argand lamps.

From, er, *what?*

Argand lamps, which were widely used for indoor illumination in the early 1800s, burned whale oil. People worried that the light from the flames might be harmful to their eyes.

I can't tell you if whale oil flames really damaged eyesight, nor if green-tinted specs did anything to alleviate the risk. I'm an art critic. My job is not to tell you how solid the

science is. It's simply to tell you how much I love bumping into "Nathaniel Olds" every time I'm in Cleveland. His chic, chisel-jawed, shades-sporting look is so arresting, so anachronistically, almost *inappropriately* modern that I laugh every time.

It's partly, perhaps, that Wade's painting is not very sophisticated, giving the portrait a blockish, mildly faux-naïf look that calls to mind modern portraits by Henri Rousseau or Frida Kahlo. But even more, it's the green tint and wraparound shape of the glasses, which look vaguely Jetsons, and the hilarious contrast they make with his starched, artfully curled collar tips, charcoal-dust whiskers, pursed lips and bouffant hair.

Of course, if you're into fashion and do go looking for inspiration in the Old Master galleries, don't think you're the first. As far as I can tell, most serious fashion designers have sought inspiration in old paintings at one point or another.

Vivienne Westwood, the doyenne of punk fashion, used to hang out at London's Wallace Collection, a house museum packed with portraits of ancien régime worthies wearing very un-punk clothing, as painted by the likes of Boucher, Fragonard and Watteau. I once glimpsed Kate Moss, in a stunning green dress, floating down the beautiful wide staircase at the Wallace. I read in the papers the next day that she'd been wearing vintage Vivienne Westwood.

If only, it occurs to me now, she'd also been wearing green-tinted spectacles ...

Jephtha Homer Wade (b. 1811)

*Nathaniel Olds*, 1837

at the Cleveland Museum of Art

A series featuring art critic Sebastian Smees's favorite works in permanent collections across the United States



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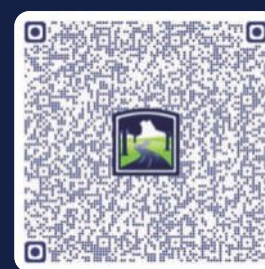


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# the **GUIDE** to the Lively Arts

SHOW NAME	DATES & TIMES	DESCRIPTION	DETAILS	PRICE	ADDITIONAL
<b>THEATRE</b>					
 <b>A NUMBER</b> by Caryl Churchill	Now until September 1 Thu - Sun	Starring real-life father and son David Bryan Jackson and Max Jackson. Hailed as "stunning" by <i>The New York Times</i> , A NUMBER is set in a near-future as a guilt-ridden father clones his son to correct past mistakes triggering shocking revelations about identity, parenting, and the ethical dilemmas of science.	<b>Gunston Theater II</b> Arlington, VA  <a href="http://www.edgeuniversetheater.org/wapo">www.edgeuniversetheater.org/wapo</a>	\$30	Save w/ Promo Code WP25
 <b>Olney Outdoors</b> presented by Olney Theatre Center	through August 31	Olney Outdoors is back for another great summer of outdoor entertainment! Coming up this week, musical salutes to Rodgers & Hammerstein (8/15), Joni Mitchell (8/16) and Motown (8/17). Plus Young Audiences: Sing-Along with Disney Princesses (8/17)!	<b>Olney Theatre's Root Family Stage at Omi's Pavilion</b> 2001 Olney-Sandy Spring Road, Olney, MD 20832 <a href="http://olneytheatre.org">olneytheatre.org</a>	\$12-\$40	Free Parking! Chair, Bleacher, and Lawn seating available Most shows at 8:00 pm
<b>MUSIC - CONCERTS</b>					
 <b>Summer Concert Series</b>	Tuesday, August 13 at 7 P.M. at the U.S. Capitol Steps  Saturday, August 17 at 7 P.M. at National Harbor	Join The U.S. Air Force Band for two FREE concerts in the Summer Concert Series on Tuesday evening on the West Lawn at the steps of the U.S. Capitol and Saturday evening at the National Harbor Waterfront. FREE and open to the public, no tickets required! All outdoor concerts are subject to weather cancellation.	<b>Tuesday at U.S. Capitol West Lawn</b> Washington, D.C. <b>Saturday at Plaza Stage</b> National Harbor Blvd Oxon Hill, MD <b>MORE INFORMATION AT</b> <a href="http://USAIRFORCEBAND.COM">USAIRFORCEBAND.COM</a>	FREE	Find The U.S. Air Force Band on FB/IG @ USAFBand and YouTube @ TheUSAF Band
 <b>United States Marine Band</b> Summer Concerts	Wednesday, August 21 at 7 p.m.  Thursday, August 22 at 7 p.m.	Enjoy summertime evenings with outdoor Marine Band concerts at the U.S. Capitol and National Museum of the Marine Corps! This week's program includes Harold Arlen, John Philip Sousa and John Williams' Olympic Fanfare and Theme.	<b>U.S. Capitol West Terrace:</b> August 21 at 7 p.m. <b>National Museum of the Marine Corps:</b> August 22 at 7 p.m. <b>Full Details:</b> <a href="http://www.marineband.marines.mil">www.marineband.marines.mil</a>	FREE, No Tickets Required	Weather updates posted on social media & website by 6 p.m.
 <b>United States Marine Chamber Orchestra</b>	Saturday, August 17 at 7:30 p.m.	The Marine Chamber Orchestra performs an iconic work of chamber music repertoire: Mahler's arrangement of Franz Schubert's Death and the Maiden. Also on the program, contemporary works by Jessie Montgomery and Philip Glass.	<b>Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center,</b> 4915 East Campus Drive, Alexandria, VA 22311 <b>Full Details:</b> <a href="http://www.marineband.marines.mil">www.marineband.marines.mil</a>	FREE, No Tickets Required	FREE parking available

The Guide to the Lively Arts appears: • Sunday in Arts & Style. deadline: Tues., 12 noon  
• Monday in Style. deadline: Friday, 12 noon • Tuesday in Style. deadline: Mon., 12 noon • Wednesday in Style. deadline: Tues., 12 noon  
• Thursday in Style. deadline: Wed., 12 noon • Friday in Weekend. deadline: Tues., 12 noon • Saturday in Style. deadline: Friday, 12 noon  
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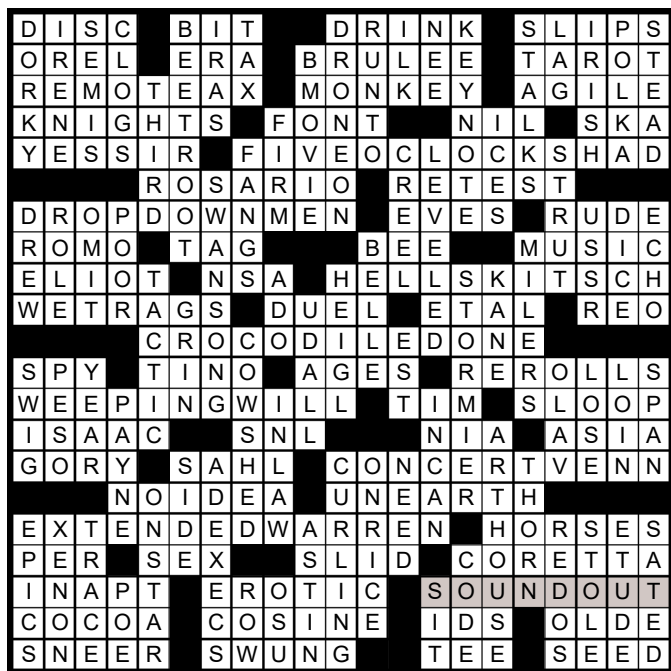

  


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24-0158 10x12.

Answers to last week's puzzle.

NEVER HEAR THE END OF IT (AUG. 4)



The syllables that were removed from the ends of eight familiar phrases sound like letters. For example, REMOTE AX at 22 Across is based on REMOTE ACCESS with its final "S" sound missing. The letters you hear from the deleted syllables spell SOUND OUT.

Answers to last week's L.A. Times Sunday puzzle.



8/4/24

"SPACE ODDITY" BY EVAN BIRNHOLZ

Evan is on vacation this week. Here's one of his favorite puzzles from 2017 (with a few updated clues).

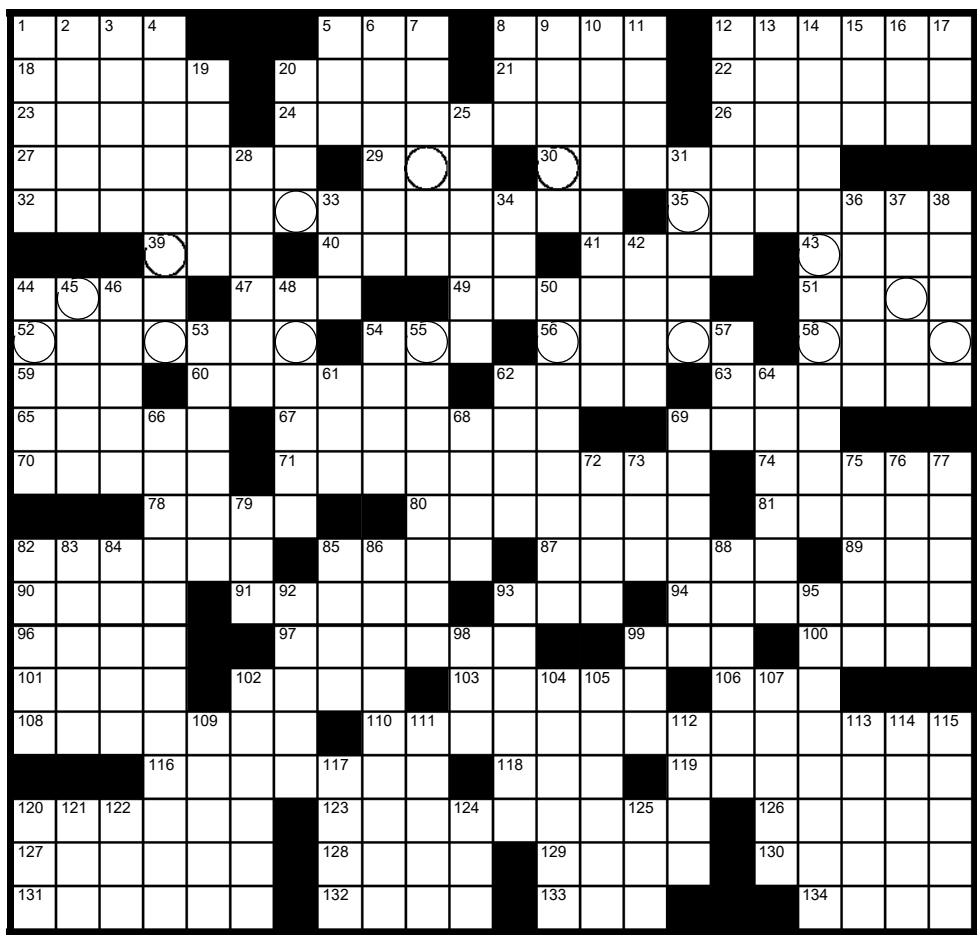
The circled squares, beginning at 30 Across and reading clockwise, will spell an apt two-word phrase.

ACROSS

- 1 Marked down
5 With 80 Across, "Love Is a Battlefield" rocker
8 Target of Nerd Skincare products
12 Tactical military units
18 Thalia's sister
20 Composer John
21 Waffle maker
22 Far north's biome
23 \_\_\_ Games
24 Apt rhyme of "invaded"
27 Erik with a cameo in the 2017 "ChiPs" film
29 Sandwich choice
30 Sign with lines
32
35 More commonly, uncommonly
39 Clumsy sort
40 God with 99 names
41 Fill, as a ship's hold
43 Matriarchal nickname
44 Chargers legend Junior
47 Cause of explosions
49 Recognize
51 Coin \_\_\_
52 Chet who anchored an NBC news show with David Brinkley
54 Aza's condition in "Turtles All the Way Down"
56 "Rashomon" director
58 "It's my turn"
59 Bodybuilder's pride
60 Luxurious fur
62 Just made, with "out"
63 Challenges
65 Lords' lands
67 Clerical dignity
69 "Titans" actor Morales
70 Divulges
71
74 Faithful subgroups

- 78 Motion-backing votes
80 See 5 Across
81 Moscow's locale
82 Son of the Devil, in "The Omen"
85 Red carpet sighting
87 Move like fan blades
89 It's nothing at all
90 Subway installation
91 Armstrong's gear
93 Big NASCAR sponsor
94 Garden spot
96 Resonated, as an alarm
97 Excited reply to a request for volunteers
99 Interdiction
100 "Benevolent" group
101 11th letter of the NATO phonetic alphabet
102 Environmental woe
103 Soprano Fleming
106 IMF co-founder
108 Emulate Odie
110
116 Boxer Taylor who defeated Bernard Hopkins for the middleweight title in 2005
118 Paving material
119 Resembling Leslie Nielsen's delivery
120 Shot at the Olympics, e.g.
123
126 Far from enthusiastic
127 Constructs
128 Chilled beverage
129 Site where a miniature helmet and armor made for a guinea pig were sold for \$2,000 in 2013
130 Round of shots that you can't drink
131 Deserving of merit
132 Work site, for many
133 Bear's refuge
134 It's not a good look

CROSSWORD



DOWN

- 1 Stinky toon's surname
2 Clear, as from a drive
3 Dancer's director
4 Get going
5 Green Giant morsel
6 Celestial
7 "\_\_\_ never see it coming!"
8 Require Tylenol, say
9 Marx born in 1887
10 Similar to, double-negatively
11 Parrying implement
12 Attack from above
13 Eighth of a peck
14 With 66 Down, odd sighting ... and a description of five answers in this puzzle
15 Contribute
16 "Black-ish" father
17 Description of a teary Facebook reaction
19 Midwestern home of Triple-A's Storm Chasers
20 Winter Palace VIP
25 Laura Palmer's father on "Twin Peaks"
28 More adroit
31 Web development expert
33 Red club?
34 "Well, whaddya know!"
36 Nebula Award-winning novelist Novik
37 Come afterward
38 Has a grate sound?
42 Beaker contents, maybe
44 Elevator site
45 Jazz great Blake
46 Adams with a camera
48 Those who nurtured the infant Dionysus
50 Engage (in)
53 Super caller, maybe
54 Memoir in which the author compared reading his first case to "stirring concrete with my eyelashes"
55 Abstinent, in a way
57 Plugs on a TV set?
61 Cause of explosions
62 Collar type, or a backward message
64 Requiring fewer hints
66 See 14 Down
68 Tennis player's favorite PC brand?
69 List of corrections
72 "Vette option
73 Enjoy a date, say
75 See 85 Down
76 Hard to cut through
77 Oxford bottoms
79 Lee of cinema
82 Some "Freaks and Geeks" characters
83 Be helpful to
84 \_\_\_ Park (site of the Thomas Edison Center)
85 With 75 Down, battle site during Operation Musketeer in 1956
86 Second-hand item, perhaps?
88 Academic goal
92 Insincere flattery
93 Looks after
95 Authenticity paradigm
98 "\_\_\_ Robinson"
99 Ask while kneeling
102 Doctrinal dissension
104 Got warmer, so to speak
105 Get dressed at a spa, perhaps
107 Petty quarrels
109 Tournament slot
111 Pot payments
112 Raptids vortex
113 Modern watchmaker
114 Hardly experienced
115 Forest moon of film
117 Surrounded by
120 Repair a tear
121 Skilled worker
122 \_\_\_ Ladyship
124 "What a terrifying pest!"
125 McKellen who portrayed Gandalf and Magneto

HOROSCOPE

BY GEORGIA NICOLS

Happy Birthday | Aug. 11: Truth matters to you. You are observant and quick to spot manipulation. You don't hesitate to confront others. You like to perform. Take inventory of your life this year, and let go of people, places and things from the past that are holding you back. Clean the slate!

Moon Alert: There are no restrictions to shopping or important decisions. The Moon is in Scorpio.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Get out and enjoy fun diversions, playful activities with kids, sports events, camping outings, the theater, matinee movies or whatever pleases you to share good times with others. This is also a positive day for those who are working. It's a win-win blessing!

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Some Sundays are good for doing laundry and catching up for the week ahead, and some Sundays are perfect for relaxing and socializing with others. This is a playful Sunday. Plan to share good food and drink with others.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) This is a great day to entertain at home because you're in the mood to socialize! Invite family and friends over for a visit. (There's

nothing like company coming to get the place clean!)

CANCER (June 21-July 22) You might spend money on social outings, vacations, sports events and fun times with kids. This is an excellent day to socialize with others, especially because you appreciate your surroundings. (Gratitude is a wonderful thing.)

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) The Sun is in your sign, which is invigorating and empowering. However, the placement of the Moon will encourage you to relax at home (or entertain at home), because you will feel best in familiar surroundings.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) People from your past are back in your world because Mercury retrograde is in your sign this

month. You're keen to talk to others. Today in particular you need to find a good listener.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) This is a popular month. Today you might attract money to you. You also might have moneymaking ideas. You certainly will be tempted to buy beautiful things — clothing, jewelry and art. (Your sign has domain over the fine arts and haute couture.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Today your interest in the arts is heightened. You will also enjoy socializing with others, especially groups, clubs and organizations. This will include success at conferences or conventions.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) Despite your desire to travel or get further education, you'll be happy to find some privacy. You'll prefer working alone because you need a break from the busyness of everything around you. Be patient with partners.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) You're prepared to work hard now for what you want. You might share your hopes and dreams for the future with someone to get their feedback. This might include travel plans.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) People notice you. In fact, some people know personal details about your private life. Meanwhile, physical sports, especially something competitive, appeal to you!

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) Do something different so you can learn something new or discover new places. Because you have an urge to broaden your horizons, do something to satisfy this desire for adventure. See new places and meet new faces. Ex-partners and old friends are on the scene.

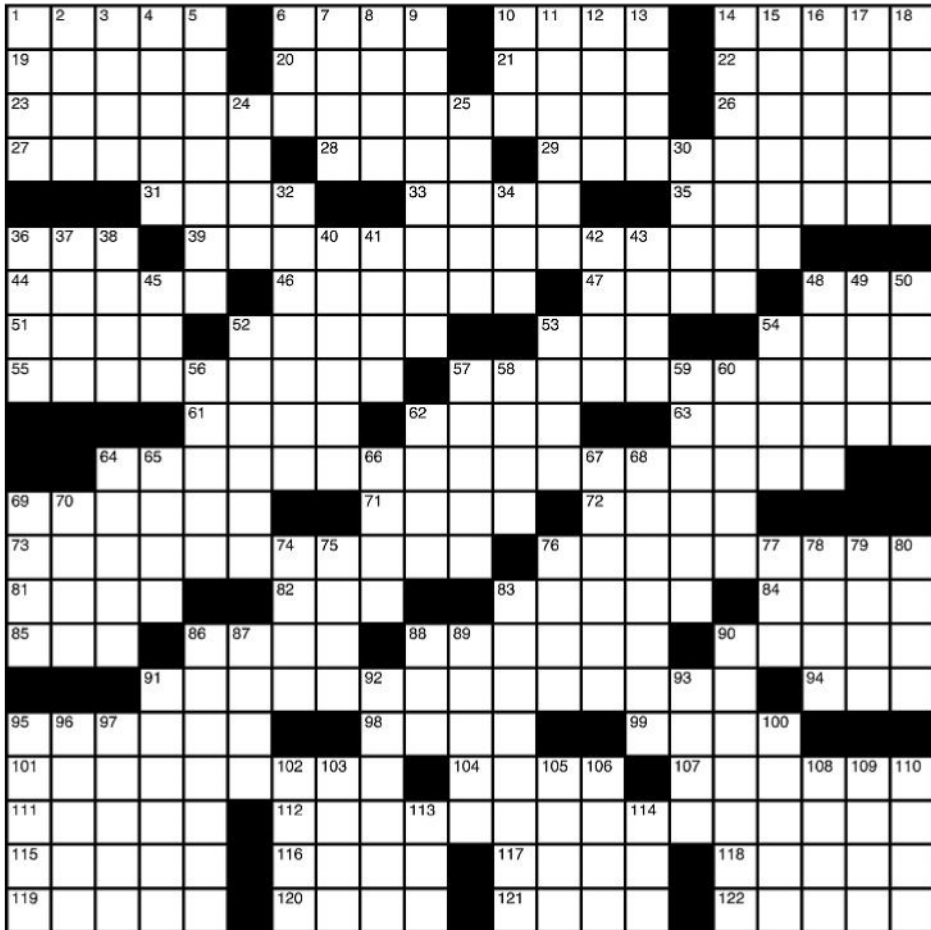
L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY PATTI VAROL AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

"WHERE THE BOYS ARE" BY DOUG PETERSON

- ACROSS
1 Residence
6 Iced tea
10 Sgts. and cpls.
14 Slap sharply
19 Broadband device
20 Overcook
21 Subj. with AB and BC AP tests
22 "Cold Hearted" singer Abdul
23 Golden State 90-Down
26 Two-in-one conjunction
27 Misize Hyundai
28 Yemeni port
29 Pro with a racket?
31 \_\_\_ bean
33 React to yeast
35 Divisions of a biblical chapter
36 Explosive initials
39 Sooner State 90-Down
44 Feature of Goliath, but not plants
46 Like carbonara
47 Take a strop to
48 Org. with a Ballpark app
51 Much of an atlas
52 Encircles with a band
53 Jazz style
54 Surf sound
55 Use lofty language
57 Hoosier State 90-Down
61 Olympic skating gold medalist Nathan
62 Chorus syllables
63 Ready to wear, in a way
64 Mount Rushmore State 90-Down
69 Rum cocktail
71 Lawful borders?
72 Privy to
73 Lone Star State 90-Down
76 Like a noteworthy day
81 Highest-paid corp. employees, often
82 Trellis climber
83 Jordanian archaeological site
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## DINING



MARISSA VONESH/THE WASHINGTON POST/ISTOCK

# Our food critic lists 8 restaurant red flags to avoid a bad meal out

BY TOM  
SIETSEMA

Almost all my meals away from home are in restaurants I've chosen because I think readers might want to know about them. My subjects might occupy prime real estate, serve an uncommon cuisine, star a major chef or simply offer great tacos. They're newsworthy. ¶ Now and then, I find myself in a situation where others are in charge of selecting a place to eat. I have mixed feelings about this arrangement. On one hand, the pressure is off the food critic to make all the decisions. On the other, citizens sometimes lack the set of skills and experience that professional eaters use to avoid dining disappointments. ¶ Consider a recent dinner with loved ones who had booked a reservation at a busy waterfront American restaurant in Upstate New York. ¶ I knew we were headed into rocky terrain — a bad meal — just by reading the menu. Not only was the list too long, the choices were all over the map: lamb chop tikka masala, chicken fraise and pork osso bucco shared the pages with steak and seafood — major red flags when dining out. Sure enough, the fusion smacked of confusion. ¶ "Isn't this great?" the host asked me in front of a gaggle of guests. ¶ "So nice to be with you all tonight!" I replied. ¶ One of the tools in a critic's arsenal is changing the topic instead of lying to anyone asking about disappointment on the plate. Another strategy involves vetting restaurants before committing to them. With very little effort, diners' chances for finding good food are improved simply by using their powers of observation and senses — common sense included. ¶ Herewith are my low-tech, time-tested tips for avoiding bad meals when dining out:

## 1. Use your nose

One detail that links inferior restaurants is an absence of (good) cooking smells when you walk in. A steakhouse should be fragrant with beef, an Italian dining room should whisper garlic, and the air in a Korean venue should fairly tingle with chiles. A blank smell — or sometimes worse, a blast of bleach or ammonia from cleaning products — should send you back onto the sidewalk.

## 2. Listen for problems

Loud music early at night almost always signals a restaurant that doesn't care about diners' comfort or staff's health. A boom box posing as a dining room isn't prioritizing food. Exhibit A: the chain STK, so thunderous at the Washington branch that diners can't tell whether servers are greeting them or asking their water preference.

## 3. Trust your first impressions

If a restaurant is short with you on the phone, chances are good the in-person service will match. (In fairness, diners should call at off-hours, not at high noon or dinner rush.) If a website fails to list prices or continues to post its Mother's Day specials in summer, the restaurant is asleep at the switch. A good establishment wants to welcome diners, not send them to competitors.

## 4. Look for activity

See that beautiful host armed with menus outside a restaurant? Keep walking. A reputable restaurant doesn't need to use shiny baubles to lure people inside. Inside a place, look for servers who appear happy (proud to work there) and some bustle (diners willing to wait for a table). A slow sushi joint, for instance, is best avoided. You want to see a busy counter and lots of turnover.

## 5. When reading reviews, use some skepticism

Particularly for glowing reviews from major publications, check out the date they were published. Anything older than a year is iffy; restaurants are like live theater, with the possibility of changing casts and scripts. It also helps if the author or endorser is still alive. If Julia Child or James Beard approved the place, well, she died 20 years ago, and he passed in 1985. As for Yelp and company, consumers are getting information from an anonymous crowd whose credentials aren't always obvious. (Whether you agree or disagree with me, my bio and body of work are easy to find and I aim for fairness by visiting restaurants multiple times.)

## 6. Take hints from the menu

Be wary of places with menus that have lots of typos, exclamation marks or point out that a dish is "cooked to perfection." Sloppiness and hyperbole don't bode well for the rest of the dining experience. Nor do lists that go on and on, like Barbra Streisand's memoir. Lots of photographs are suspect, too. See: Buffalo Wild Wings.

## 7. Keep in clean

I've eaten in some great places where the restrooms were less than tidy. But I've never had a memorable meal from a chef whose jacket is stained, or in a dining room where floors are sticky or tables go uncleaned for more than a few minutes. Such sights suggest inattention and understaffing.

## 8. Use the transportation test

Are there lots of in-state license plates in the parking lot? Step inside the restaurant, especially if Porsches and beaters are in the mix. (Seafood shacks are universally beloved.) Buses, on the other hand, should be viewed as a stop sign — a tourist trap of the first degree.

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## Southern charm

In the south of Spain, the pilgrimage to El Rocío paints a romantic picture of the past | **F3**



MICHAEL ROBINSON CHÁVEZ FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

### EUROPE

Beat the heat (and the crowds) by visiting these cool spots. **F2**

### INAUGURATION

Hotel rooms for that weekend are already hard to find. **F5**

### AIRPORT LOUNGES

Etiquette do's and don'ts for relaxing in these spaces. **F6**

### SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

The move to assigned seating is worrying plus-size travelers. **F6**

People participating in the El Rocío pilgrimage in Spain stop to tack up their horses in Sanlúcar de Barrameda in May.



# 7 cooler vacation destinations in Europe

BY CHADNER NAVARRO

If you're used to seeing vacation photos of Greek beaches, Roman ruins and Spanish cities dominate your social media feeds, you're not alone. These European classics have long filled the bucket lists of most travelers. ¶ But rising temperatures and soaring prices at the continent's most popular spots have the savviest of us seeking out alternatives that can offer not just respite from the heat and crowds but also better value. ¶ Some of the following destinations previously were more popular during other seasons, while others were off most travelers' lists entirely. Now, new attractions, easier flight connections, growing culinary scenes and hotel openings are changing their appeal. ¶ They may not be as known for their summertime exploits as St. Tropez and Barcelona, but they are proving to be just as captivating.

## The Dolomites, Italy

Wellness trends in recent years have boosted interest in mountain destinations, said Henley Vazquez, founder of the travel agency Fora Travel. "Many travelers are looking to accomplish something on their trips rather than the traditional fly-and-flop beach stays," she said. They "want to wake up, climb a mountain, personally challenge themselves, then balance with relaxation."

For European travel, that means more people are looking to the Dolomites for their next holiday. Alberto Schiavon, a former Olympic snowboarder who now manages his family's Hotel Chalet del Sogno, in the ski town of Madonna di Campiglio, said the Dolomites' mild summer temperatures enable more active vacationers to go on excursions all day long. Schiavon leads biking tours as well as hiking and climbing adventures in the Dolomites, which he describes as limestone skyscrapers that shoot out of lush green forests.

As a relaxing counterweight, most of the area hotels feature decadent spas. And, because you're in Italy, great meals are never too far away.

"Find yourself in a picnic in the middle of the Dolomite towers or enjoying a gourmet lunch in a mountain hut at the base," Schiavon said. "The quality is always going to be high."

## The Black Forest, Germany

To combine high-quality art and design with gorgeous natural surroundings, head to the Black Forest, in southwest Germany. Although known for the chocolate cake that bears its name, the area is filled with forest trails, rushing rivers and tranquil lakes. The Brothers Grimm fairy tales are another well-known local export, and many of them are set in the region.

Through September, the region is hosting Ornamenta, a large contemporary art and design exhibition with events all over the Black Forest, including publicly installed sundials and tasting events reinventing the Black Forest cake.

"The region is a well-kept secret," said Katharina Wahl, one of the curators of Ornamenta and a native of one of the Black Forest's larger cities, Karlsruhe. "Because of its size and a lack of a central town or city, it has stayed out of the focus of international travelers."

Its size also means there's so much you can do in the Black Forest. You can tour the hilltop Gothic revival Hohenzollern Castle from the 19th century; explore Schiltach, a half-timbered medieval village; get to know Freiburg, one of the region's biggest cities, and its massive, Middle Ages-era cathedral; or, for a bit of glamour, check out Baden-Baden, the elegant spa town whose waters have been luring pilgrims (including, in recent years, Hollywood celebrities) since Roman times.

## Vienna

This former imperial capital in the center of Europe offers a lot of what you would want from Europe's historic major cities: world-class art, award-winning restaurants, user-friendly public transportation and lovely shopping. Days there often start in a historic cafe sipping a mlange (a local take on the cappuccino) and snacking on Viennese pastries, before a stretch of museum-hopping to see the best of architect Otto Wagner and painters Egon Schiele and Gustav Klimt. Then you can pick between a Michelin-starred dinner or maybe a more casual meal at a schnitzel house.

Vienna has started to make a play for more tourism, with an influx of big-name hotels at lower price points than in Paris or Rome. New direct flights from the United States — Austrian Airlines started flying from Boston in July — also mean that getting to Vienna has never been easier.

A citylike Vienna is "heavy on history and culture, where you can also go deep on dining and stay in gorgeous hotels, all at a more budget-friendly level," Vazquez said. She also credits Vienna's rising popularity to connectivity: From there, it's easy to reach more of Austria's beautiful and historic cities, such as Salzburg, or the cool embrace of the Austrian Alps.



## Slovenia's Alpine region

Slovenia, which is roughly the size of New Jersey, has gained renown for its booming food scene. Ten of its restaurants hold Michelin stars.

The Julian Alps, which run across the country's north and border both Italy and Austria, boast stunning bucolic landscapes: the jagged peaks, the fairy-tale vibe of Lake Bled and the emerald waters of the Virje waterfall. But when it comes to food, the area offers a unique kaleidoscope of regional influences.

"This part of Slovenia is a cooler and more relaxing area that's influenced by Austria and the Balkans, and that can be found in its cuisine as well," said Ivana Tomic, founder of tour operator Journey2Slovenia. Like in many mountain regions, meals here often revolve around heartier fare, such as nourishing stews, juicy sausages, dishes that feature wild game and mushrooms, and lots of local cheese varieties. When temperatures drop, try jota, a soup with sauerkraut and beans.

While the culinary traditions here might sound more modest and comforting, the Slovenian Alps are also home to two of the country's most sought-after dining reservations: the three-starred Hisa Franko, by chef Ana Ros, in the picturesque Soca Valley, and the two-star, lakeside Milka.

## Bergen, Norway

Scandinavia has experienced a surge of summer tourism this year, but if you want to avoid the crowds that descend on Stockholm; Copenhagen; and Reykjavik, Iceland, consider the gateway to the fjords: Bergen. Norway's second city offers a stirring mix of small-town charm, dramatic natural surroundings and compelling history. The 2022 launch of a United Airlines flight between Newark and otherwise far-flung Bergen makes reaching it much easier.

Yngve Hansen, a hotel general manager who was raised in Bergen, said that what makes it sing in the summer is its medley of culture and nature. You can see Edvard Munch masterpieces from the Kode art collection, attend electronic music parties, and check out jazz and film festivals.

"Combine these experiences with a hike in the mountains or paddle in the nearby archipelago — that is a perfect day in Bergen," Hansen said. Even in summer, he said, you can ski a glacier at Folgefonna, then taste local cider from apple farms in the fjord.

## English wine country

If you're looking to spend your summer sipping fine wines with vineyard views as far as you can see, skip the sweltering Douro Valley and Sicily in favor of the burgeoning sparkling-wine scene in southern England.

"We're seeing the most in-the-know types pairing London with boutique bolt-holes in the rolling hills outside of the city," Vazquez said. "This summer alone, we've seen a tenfold increase in bookings here." Most will focus on the southeast, where you'll find the heaviest concentration of England's vineyards.

The wine country there, which orbits Kent and Sussex, typically features chalky soil and mild, sunny weather that's drawing new wine labels nearly every year. Michelin Green Star winner Leonardslee Lakes & Gardens just launched its own bottling of sparkling vino to go with its farm-fresh cuisine. The folks from Taittinger, the famed French producers of champagne, are expected to unveil the first vintage from their Chilham vineyard, Domaine Evremond, this year.

A host of festivals and wine trails have also been popping up in the region as its success picks up. And the new Explore Wealden Wine Trail connects and showcases the lesser-known producers of Sussex.

## Azores, Portugal

Portugal's tourism cachet shot up several years ago, drawing increasing international visitors to Lisbon, Porto, and beach destinations such as Comporta and Algarve. But if you've been there and done that, consider the wild landscapes of the Azores, Portugal's nine-island archipelago in the middle of the Atlantic.

"The diverse geography of the islands always offers cooler and fresher areas to explore, such as natural parks filled with shade and a refreshing atmosphere, or coastal areas where it is pleasant to swim and enjoy our Atlantic waters," said Filipe Lucas Frazo, a founder of the travel company Atlantic Brine.

With an average daytime temperature of around 75 degrees, the nine islands allow for a wide range of outdoor summertime experiences. Atlantic Brine leads tours around Pico, which has wineries on volcanic soil and is great for trekkers and wine lovers. So Miguel, the largest isle, is home to the twin lakes of Sete Cidades and the steamy hot springs of Furnas. And on So Jorge, you can find fantastic cheese, coffee plantations (a rarity in Europe) and remote surf breaks.

Chadner Navarro is Manila-born, New Jersey-based writer who covers travel, food and design.

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: A farm in Slovenia. The Black Camel restaurant in Vienna. The port of Bergen in Norway. The Sigmaringen Castle in Baden-Wrttemberg, Germany. The Dolomites in northern Italy.**

PHOTOS FROM SHUTTERSTOCK



Ask Rick Steves all about traveling to Europe. Join reporter Natalie B. Compton for a live chat with the travel mogul on Thursday at 2 p.m.

## TRAVEL

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PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ROBINSON CHÁVEZ FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

# In this seductive Spanish village, the past feels present

BY MICHAEL ROBINSON CHÁVEZ  
IN EL ROCÍO, SPAIN

It was hard to make out the face through all of the dust, but the man's old-fashioned clothing gave him away. A flat-brimmed sombrero Cordobés sat on his head. He strummed a guitar from atop an Andalusian horse. There was no question why he was here trotting the road to this village between Seville and the Gulf of Cádiz on this day in May.

In front of the rider, in the back of a covered wagon adorned with colorful flowers, a group of women wore traditional flowing dresses adorned with polka dots and floral patterns. They drank manzanilla wine as they sang and clapped in a hypnotic rhythm.

A foreigner's thoughts of Spain are often populated with the potent and romantic imagery of Andalusia: flamenco, the magnificent horse culture, processions and the seductive sound of the canto profundo. The El Rocío pilgrimage embodies all of that imagery.

Despite some wagons now being pulled with tractors, it still feels as though you have stepped into a traditional piece of Spanish literature.

Every May or June, brotherhoods that plan and participate in religious processions flock to the region in southern Spain for this pilgrimage that dates back to the 17th century. Spanish festivals are a huge draw on the European tourism circuit. The running of the bulls in Pamplona, Seville's Semana Santa and the Fallas festival in Valencia come immediately to mind. Others, like El Rocío, are sparsely attended by foreigners but still command a large following of Spaniards.

The majority of pilgrims that converge on El Rocío come from cities and towns in the south of the country. Some come from as far away as Madrid.

The songs they sing honor La Virgen del Rocío, a Catholic icon that is also known as the "Paloma Blanca," or White Dove. On this day in May, many had traveled, via oxen-pulled cart, on horseback or on foot, for many days from throughout southern Spain to reach the village that bears her name. The peak

days are either side of the Sunday before Pentecost, usually late May.

The "village" of El Rocío is more a series of buildings that house the various brotherhoods than a functioning town. Restaurants, bars, markets and places typically found in a Spanish village are scarce.

The power of El Rocío lies in the passion and devotion of the participants. Fruti Guerrero, a towering 25-year-old from the Andalusian coastal city of Huelva, has been participating in the pilgrimage since he was 2. He has no memory of it, but he says there are "countless photos from those days" in his family's house.

The amount of young people making the pilgrimage, and the fact that they know every word to the many songs, speaks to the multigenerational nature of the event.

"It is a tradition that comes from my great-great-grandparents," says Guerrero, who works as a construction administrator back home.

The warmth and generosity of the groups making the journey leave a lasting impression. If you stop to ask someone on the route where the rest stop is for lunch, they will hop out of the car to ply you with jamón serrano and cold beer or water. If you pass by a wagon that has stopped for lunch, you are beckoned to a table to sample some fine Andalusian food.

If you do decide to come see the spectacle, be sure to wear comfortable walking shoes. If you want to follow the carts for a bit, you will be walking in soft sand and under a searing sun, though the numerous stone pines offer shade.

A mask is a good idea for those who are sensitive to dust, as the mule teams, horses and oxen can kick up a substantial cloud. It is also advisable to hire a car in Seville (and perhaps a driver), because the roads heading into Rocío are easily choked with all the livestock and wagons.

Singing voices float on the breezes across the encampments. The devotion and emotion to the pilgrimage and rituals are palpable and powerful.

SEE EL ROCÍO ON F4



FROM TOP: Pilgrims eat, dance and sing during lunch near El Rocío, Spain, on May 21. A woman, riding sidesaddle, passes through a stone pine forest while returning to her hometown of Huelva. A pilgrim is overcome with emotion. Cars sit parked on a ferry crossing the Guadalquivir River.



## The road to El Rocío

EL ROCÍO FROM F3

"The truth is that everything that revolves around El Rocío means a lot to me," Guerrero says. "Many vivid memories, family members who are no longer there that you always remember, many sincere friends who are with you, and, above all, the Virgin of El Rocío, who, for me, is the greatest inheritance that my elders left me."

As Guerrero speaks, all around him, songs fill the air, and food, beer and wine cover the table. Being Spain, a lot of attention is put into the journey, especially when it comes to the food. At the lunch stops, tables are overflowing with jamón, tortilla Española and gambas (shrimp).

Emotions are especially apparent when the pilgrims return to their respective towns and cities. Crossing the Guadalquivir River into Seville's famous Triana neighborhood for the pilgrims' return is not to be missed.

This is also a very easy spot to witness the pageantry, as, unlike around Rocío itself, there is no walking through soft sand and clouds of dust. Instead, the oxen ply past numerous bars, flamenco taverns and restaurants, all of which are overflowing with customers.

Some of the pilgrims embrace, others weep, as the journey comes to an end. Until the next year.

It is impressive to see the number of younger people learning the tradition, especially in a country where church attendance is on the wane. I asked Guerrero whether he feels as if the Rocío will live on.

"Of course, I will pass it on to the next generations and to everyone who wants to experience this wonderful pilgrimage," Guerrero says.

Michael Robinson Chávez is a Pulitzer Prize-winning former staff photographer for The Washington Post.



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ROBINSON CHÁVEZ FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:** People participating in the pilgrimage to El Rocío, Spain, many on horseback, line up under the stone pines. Pilgrims in traditional dress wait to return to their town of Huelva following a religious ceremony in El Rocío. A likeness of the Señora del Rocío, a patron saint, is carried during a procession. Nighttime in the Triana neighborhood of Seville. Women dress to pay tribute to Señora del Rocío. People in a wagon travel the dusty road to El Rocío.

BY HANNAH SAMPSON

Marci Walton, 41, saw how the “vibes shifted” last month when President Joe Biden announced that he would not run for reelection and endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris.

“My group texts were going crazy. Friends were calling each other,” said Walton, a corporate trainer from Cleveland. “We were like, ‘We can win this.’”

Walton rode that surge of enthusiasm all the way to a booking at an Arlington hotel for the Jan. 20 inauguration — a potentially historic occasion that could see the first woman, the first Black woman and the first Asian American sworn in as president on Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

“I just didn’t want to miss it if it goes our way,” she said. But while polls have her feeling good about Harris’s chances — and she is planning to volunteer to help those odds — Walton is being cautious. She almost booked a different hotel but looked at the fine print and changed course. “This has to be refundable,” she said of the nearly \$1,900 total she ended up spending for four nights.

Energized Harris supporters like Walton suddenly are dreaming of a can’t-miss celebration in D.C. in five months — and finding that hotel options closest to the action are limited, extremely expensive and, in many cases, non-refundable. A Washington Post search found more than four dozen hotels that listed no availability online for the long holiday weekend of the inauguration; many that showed rooms for booking were charging \$850 or more a night.

The limited hotel stock this far in advance has surprised some social media users, who have sounded an alarm about prices — or declared that the costs would have them watching the ceremony from home. Some announced that they had just booked their hotels.

Near the White House, the Willard InterContinental listed its cheapest rooms for MLK weekend at \$2,851 a night. Rooms at the Marriott at Metro Center started at \$1,344 a night, compared with the cheapest price of \$242 a night the weekend before.

“What’s happening now is because there’s so much momentum tied to the potential of the first female president, first Black female president, there is a lot of interest from specific groups ... wanting to be here to witness history,” said Elliott Ferguson, CEO of Destination DC.

#### Mass bookings, no matter who wins

Historic elections tend to draw bigger crowds, Ferguson said, and first-term inaugurations generate more interest than repeats. The last inauguration, for Biden in 2021, was dramatically scaled back because of the pandemic and the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol. Officials in D.C. urged Americans not to visit, while some hotels closed and Airbnb canceled all reservations.

In most instances, the inauguration provides a much-needed January boost to the District’s hospitality businesses. Hotel occupancy often surpasses 90 percent, Ferguson said.

“We anticipate Washington, D.C. to be exceptionally busy during inauguration time,” the St. Gregory Hotel, near Dupont Circle, said in a statement. “Over the past couple of weeks, we’ve seen a notable increase in queries when it comes to Washington D.C. travel in January.”

## Kamala Harris fans want to book inauguration hotels. Good luck with that.



MATT MCCLAIN/THE WASHINGTON POST



ALLISON ROBERT/THE WASHINGTON POST

**TOP:** Should Vice President Kamala Harris win in November, she would be the first woman, the first Black woman and the first Asian American to be president. **ABOVE:** The Waldorf Astoria is one of many hotels showing no availability for the inauguration.

Representatives for several properties said that hotels listing rooms as unavailable may not be sold out but instead holding back inventory; in some cases, blocks of rooms will go to large groups. For individuals who hope to see their candidate’s big moment in person, scoring a centrally located place to stay could be a logistical or financial stretch.

Many travelers will come to town for the inauguration regardless of whether Harris or former president Donald Trump wins the election. Those crowds, which include representatives from foreign countries, already are filling up blocks of rooms at some high-end hotels, Ferguson said. Travel companies that negotiate rates and rooms with hotels often lock down such blocks.

The Sofitel at Lafayette Square said most hotels in the area were keeping inauguration inventory closed until the election was over, in part to focus on booking groups. The Four Seasons in Georgetown has “limited availability,” according to a statement, and “all requests will be handled internally.”

The Rosewood, also in Georgetown, closed reservations be-

cause it already has booked “substantial business,” according to a statement.

“However, we do try and make an effort to keep some availability for our repeat guests who will be inquiring for reservations closer to that time period,” the Rosewood said. “In this instance in particular, this high demand has been since April.”

## Australians can start using TSA PreCheck and Global Entry in 2025

BY NATALIE B. COMPTON

Australian travelers will soon be allowed to use a pair of expedited security services at U.S. airports, joining lines that feed into customs inspections and Transportation Security Administration checkpoints.

According to a news release from the Embassy of Australia in Washington, the United States and Australia signed an agreement Monday that allows Australians to apply for Global Entry, a Customs and Border Protection (CBP) program that helps paying members speed through customs using the Global Entry app or a kiosk. Australians approved for Global Entry will also be able to use TSA PreCheck, which speeds up the checkpoint process at more than 200 U.S. airports with a separate line.

Joining the Global Entry program — or TSA PreCheck — requires applying in advance, paying a one-time application fee and passing an interview process.

Australians will undergo a similar application process but will be vetted by a “Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check” from the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission in addition to U.S. authorities, the Australian news outlet ABC News reported.

#### Other countries with Global Entry eligibility

The United States has similar arrangements with more than a dozen places, including Mexico, Argentina, Bahrain, Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Croatia, Germany, India, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Panama, Qatar, Switzerland and Britain. Canadians also are eligible for Global Entry benefits through the Nexus program.

Australia’s addition to the Global Entry program will take place in two phases. In the first, only 1,000 Australians will be eligible to apply and must frequently travel to the United States (defined as more than



JONATHAN WIGGS/GETTY IMAGES

**Australians approved for Global Entry will also be able to use TSA PreCheck, which helps speed up the airport checkpoint process.**

five times in the past 12 months). The second phase will go into effect later in 2025 and allow all eligible Australians to apply; the exact timing will depend on the passage of legislative amendments through the Australian Parliament, the embassy said.

John Rose, chief risk and security officer of the travel agency Altour, called the move “fantastic,” because “it’s also going to have some sort of reciprocal value to Americans.”

Americans already have a comparable arrangement when traveling to Australia. The SmartGate

program allows eligible U.S. air travelers arriving in Australia to bypass dealing with a border officer and “self-process” using a kiosk instead. Unlike Global Entry, there is no application process for using the SmartGate system in Australia. Travelers must be at least 16 years old and have a valid U.S. passport, among other stipulations.

#### Will lines get more crowded?

According to the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, more than 1.3 million Australian tourists visit the United States each year. Does their addition to the Global Entry pool mean travelers at U.S. airports can expect longer waits at airport security and customs?

Scott Keyes, founder of the cheap-flights booking site Going, says the impact should be “very, very minimal,” thanks to the staggered rollout and reality of how many people may apply.

“Think of the number of Australians who are actually here on any given day. It’s going to be very small,” Keyes said. “The number

D.C. hotels that showed no availability for the inauguration included the Waldorf Astoria, formerly the Trump International Hotel; the Fairmont; the Hay-Adams; the Grand Hyatt; and some lower-priced options, including Residence Inns, Courtyards by Marriott and Hyatt Place locations.

#### Tips for travelers

Those who want to stay close to the inauguration and other festivities should prepare to pay for the privilege — and gamble, if they book before the election. Besides commanding high rates, hotels are requiring minimum stays of three or four nights and mandating prepayment with no refunds available.

For people who are more budget-conscious and risk-averse, there are other options. Some social media users familiar with the area suggested that potential visitors can search for lodging in parts of the wider region that connect to D.C. by public transit, where availability should be better and prices lower.

Airbnb still has some reasonably priced listings in parts of D.C. and the surrounding area, though rentals closer to the action near the National Mall are listed for much higher, in some cases thousands of dollars a night. AirDNA, which tracks the performance of vacation rentals, said that about a third of the available nights in the greater D.C. area during the inauguration were already booked as of July 29.

Ferguson said the tourism office will showcase hotel packages on an inauguration page on its website ([washington.org/inauguration](http://washington.org/inauguration)) for places to stay within D.C. and in the larger metropolitan area. According to Destination DC, there are more than 113,000 hotel rooms in the region, which stretches into parts of Maryland and Virginia.

Ferguson said there typically is a “frenzy” to book rooms in November, after a winner is declared.

But a wait-and-see approach won’t cut it for Gourjoine Wade, a university administrator from San Antonio. Wade, 44, called the 11-week turnaround between the election and inauguration a “tight timeline” to plan a trip — and he would know. He made plans closer to the event to attend the first Barack Obama inauguration, in 2009, driving from Arkansas and staying in Laurel, Md.

At the time, he and his wife had a baby who stayed with her grandparents. This time around, that daughter will be 16. Her younger sister is 11. If Harris wins, Wade wants them to see a fellow Black woman take the oath of office.

“Everybody was cold, everybody was happy; it was an experience like none other,” he said of the Obama inauguration. “I want my girls to experience that type of history, no matter what logistics look like.”

Wade posted about the hotel landscape on X last month, the same day he booked a refundable inauguration stay for his family in a Columbia, Md., hotel for less than \$200 a night. Multiple people responded with their own plans or tips — or shock at the prices that, as one put it, “could feed a small nation.”

“I think that that speaks again to the energy and the enthusiasm that people have and the optimism about what could happen,” Wade said. “No matter what side of the political spectrum you fall on, you can’t shy away from the history and the implications of what could happen.”

of foreigners who will actually travel enough to the U.S. on a frequent basis that they’ll be tempted to join the Global Entry program and pay the \$100 fee and do the whole background process and everything is minuscule.”

Particularly compared with the number of Americans who use the programs, “it’s a drop in the bucket,” Keyes added.

Rose agrees, saying that the Global Entry program has never been faster thanks to its biometric upgrades.

“The U.S. government has increased the technology so much that I can’t remember the last time I even waited for a kiosk flying international,” Rose said. “It’s facial recognition — you walk through, you don’t show your passport, you’re not typing in flight numbers. . . . It’s just fast.”

TSA is testing similar Touchless Identity Solution systems to speed up the checkpoint process at select airports.

“I do that at LAX now,” Rose said, referring to the Los Angeles airport. “I walk up there and they just wave me through.”



ILLUSTRATION BY CARA WANG FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

BY CHRIS DONG

## How to enjoy the airport lounge without ruining it for everyone

Grumpy security agents, the threat of flight delays, crowds massing at the gate: Together, they're a recipe for traveler stress. If you have access, airport lounges can be a serene haven in which to counter it.

Lounges have become easier to access and, at times, overcrowded. As airports open more of them, travelers should recognize the major do's and don'ts.

For fliers entering a lounge for the first (or 500th) time, here's our etiquette guide to keeping the peace within the club.

### Respect the entry rules

You've strolled into the lounge, and the doors to your airport retreat close behind you. Now, only one person separates you from the breakfast buffet and a preflight mimosa: the lounge agent.

"Be courteous to the people who are checking you in, much like flight attendants on a plane," said Diane Gottsman, an etiquette expert and the founder of the Protocol School of Texas.

Don't just assume that you have entry. One lounge may be accessible with the right credit card, while another lounge next door

could be restricted to certain premium passengers. Figure out which lounge you have access to before arriving at the airport.

A bonus: If you have multiple lounge options, a little research can tell you in advance which has the better champagne (or soften the disappointment if there isn't any).

### Don't be a space hog ...

Typically, airport lounges are shared public spaces. If a lounge is particularly popular, that might even mean a line to get in.

Gottsman said that, as with any public domain, there should be certain expectations of courtesy and respect. "Be conscientious of available seating, and don't spread your belongings across several tables and chairs," she said. When charging your devices, avoid monopolizing multiple power outlets if there are only a limited number available.

The lounge also is not the place to conduct personal grooming sessions.

Flight delays happen, but if you need to take a quick snooze, keep to one seat rather than sprawling out. This is not your living room (or bedroom, for that matter). Thankfully, a handful of lounges offer semiprivate nap pods.

And, for the love of all good things, please leave your shoes and socks on.

### ... or a squatter

Many airport lounges have instituted time limits, including the ability to enter only when departing — and not when arriving. Capital One Lounges, for instance, do not allow access more than three hours before your flight departure time. That means you can't use these particular lounges as a dining room or home office all day.

No matter the rules, perhaps squatting in a lounge isn't the most polite thing, especially if people are waiting to get in.

### The buffet (and bar) isn't a free-for-all

Sure, the reason you're going into a lounge may be to indulge in a few drinks and sate your appetite. But with exclusive access comes responsibility.

When it comes to alcohol, a lack of self-restraint is more than a matter of etiquette; it might also prevent you from boarding a flight. "Gate agents and flight attendants can most certainly boot a passenger off a plane if they seem too intoxicated since it's a safety issue," said Stella Shon, a consumer travel expert at Upgraded Points.

As for the all-you-can-eat buffet? Perhaps save the overindulging for your destination, Gottsman advised. And, for sanitary

reasons, use the proper utensils and serving ware when retrieving food.

Finally, respect the rules of the dining area. "If there's no clear indication you're supposed to take things to go, don't," Gottsman said.

### Use your inside voice — and headphones

Be mindful of your speaking volume. It's best not to be *that* self-important person on the phone, loudly spewing confidential information for the entire lounge to hear. And it's even worse if that individual is on speakerphone. Use headphones — always.

Many lounges now offer private pods to take calls, so be on the lookout. If those are not available, keep phone conversations to a low volume and be as brief as possible, or take calls in a corner of the lounge, where it's just a bit more secluded.

### The lounge isn't a playground

Children running amok does not scream "serene." Although traveling with younger kids can be a challenge, Gottsman said parents and parental figures should not treat a lounge as the place to forgo their duties.

"Let's give parents grace, but at the same time, it's their responsibility to ensure children aren't running around like it's a playground," she added. Many lounges, like several American Express Centurion Lounges, offer a children's area or specific sections for families.

### Clean up after yourself

Airport lounges typically have attendants roaming around to collect dirty dishware and cups. But that doesn't mean it's okay to make a mess. Someone else probably will be occupying your seating area once you leave.

Before you go, consider leaving a small tip for the attendant. Don't forget your bartenders, too. In that respect, at least, an airport lounge is just like anywhere else.

Chris Dong is a freelance travel writer and credit card points expert based in Los Angeles. You can follow him on Instagram: @thechrisflyer.

## Plus-size travelers ask Southwest Airlines to not abandon them

BY ANDREA SACHS

For years, Southwest Airlines has endeared itself to plus-size travelers with a rare benefit: the opportunity to reserve a free extra seat for people who need more space. But now that the airline has announced the end of its signature open-seating policy, advocates are worried that the carrier's "customer of size" policy could go away.

Southwest said it will continue to offer this service in the near term but has not provided any details about its future, telling The Washington Post that it will reveal more in September.

Concerned advocates are not taking any chances. They are letting the airline know how much a complimentary second seat means to them — that, for some of them, traveling wouldn't be possible without it. They are already circulating petitions and voicing their worries directly to Southwest on social media.

"They've been the best in the industry for so long. It just makes us nervous when they make an announcement and we know they haven't talked to us or any of our allies, and they don't mention anything about this policy," said Amanda Cooper, board chair for the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance (NAAFA). "We decided that we wanted to insert ourselves into the conversation."

NAAFA recently released a statement to Southwest. In the message, the organization emphasizes the importance of the

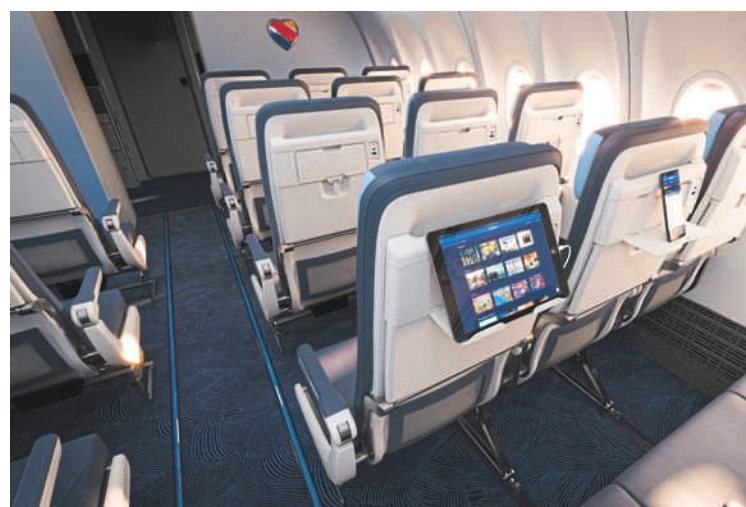
policy, which provides plus-size passengers with the opportunity to fly comfortably and safely without breaking the bank. The statement said the program owes its success to the open-seating arrangement.

"The Southwest Customer of Size policy is the most clear and affordable procedure in the air travel industry for those who need more space than a standard economy seat," NAAFA's statement read. "... Allowing Customers of Size to pre-board and select two adjoining seats ensures that passengers are able to choose seating in a part of the plane that is safer and more accessible."

The group also urges Southwest to take several actions when deciding the fate of the policy, such as to assess how the new procedures will affect fat and disabled passengers and to "publicly address" its plans to reduce the impact on these populations. It also requests the carrier partner with its organization and other similar advocates when drawing up a new policy.

At the same time NAAFA released the statement, it kicked off a petition campaign that has garnered more than 1,000 signatures. Tigress Osborn, the group's executive director, said she anticipates a bump in the number of supporters during Fat Liberation Month, which started Aug. 1.

"The goal is to make sure they are listening to passengers who have experience with these systems, so that they are being responsive to our needs and are committed to us," Osborn said.



SOUTHWEST

For years, Southwest Airlines has given plus-size travelers the opportunity to reserve a free extra seat. At right, Tigress Osborn, executive director of the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance.

Southwest has been accommodating plus-size passengers for more than 30 years, according to the carrier. Passengers can reserve a second seat at the time of booking and receive a full refund for that reservation. Or they can request a second seat at the gate, based on availability.

Henry Harteveltdt, president of the Atmosphere Research Group, an airline consulting firm, said Southwest might retain some aspects of the policy, but

the experience will be different, such as selecting the two adjacent seats.

"I don't think Southwest wants to alienate any passenger with this change, but they need to figure out what will serve the shared interests of this community, the airline and the other travelers who will have the opportunity to choose their seats," Harteveltdt said.

Osborn said one of the advantages of open seating is that it gives passengers more autonomy. Choosing the location of their seats is critical for people who struggle in constricted spaces.

"For supersized passengers or passengers who are fat and disabled, getting to the back of the plane for two seats together is a whole different experience and sometimes an impossibility," Osborn said.



TIGRESS OSBORN

domestic routes to provide a free adjacent seat to people with a disability. For larger travelers to qualify, they must be "functionally disabled by obesity."

Annette Richmond, founder of Fat Girls Traveling, said she is a Southwest loyalist and often shares the carrier's sales on her social media platforms. Though she does not always need a second seat — she prefers two on longer flights, for instance — she is grateful for the option.

In addition to signing the petition, Richmond said she plans to become more involved in the cause and even floated a few ideas. She suggested creating an accessibility area on the plane similar to those on buses and trains. She also recommended charging a small fee for keeping the middle seat open, a practice a few airlines, such as Qantas and Frontier, have adopted. Passengers could also provide a note from a physician explaining the passenger's medical need for extra space.

"We feel like so many fashion brands are abandoning us by no longer offering plus sizes, and now our mode of transportation?" Richmond said.

If Southwest ignores the needs of travelers of size, Richmond said she will take action, ending her support of the carrier.

"The airlines need to understand that there is purchase power, and we are aware of this," she said. "If they don't care about us, then I'm going to remind my community of that."

hi, who are u?

The Washington Post

# BUSINESS

SUNDAY, AUGUST 11, 2024 · SECTION G

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## WHAT DO PEOPLE REALLY ASK CHATBOTS?

Write quotes from Futurama

Summarize what the Monroe Doctrine was and what it did in one sentence

what is the literal translation of Beignet

AI chatbots are taking the world by storm. The Post analyzed thousands of conversations to see what people are really asking them.

BY JEREMY B. MERRILL AND RACHEL LERMAN

**T**hey draft our work emails and help us brainstorm ideas for the great American novel. They field our questions about surprisingly intimate problems and offer us personal advice. The release of OpenAI's ChatGPT in late 2022 promised to usher in a new age of artificial intelligence. But until now, we've had little insight into how AI chatbots are actually being used in the wild. So The Washington Post looked at nearly 200,000 English-language conversations from the research dataset WildChat, which includes messages from two AI chatbots built on the same underlying technology as ChatGPT. These conversations make up one of the largest public databases of human-bot interaction in the real world. Researchers say these conversations are largely representative of how people use chatbots. "The biggest motivation behind this work was that we can collect real user interactions versus those done in labs," said Yuntian Deng, a postdoc at the Allen Institute for Artificial Intelligence, where the project was developed. The chatbots are free, and users can have unlimited exchanges with the bots. The Post's final analysis included nearly 40,000 conversations with WildChat, focusing on the first prompt submitted each day by each user. Here's what The Post learned about how thousands of people are using chatbots.

SEE WILDCHAT ON G3

### Stock market doesn't dance to the tune of any president



Michelle Singletary

THE COLOR OF MONEY

The stock market is not the economy, and presidents — much less presidential candidates — should not be cheered when it's flying high or blamed when it's decidedly not.

Yet, it didn't take long before social media posts started trending in conservative circles, including all-cap tirades by former president Donald Trump, blaming Vice President Kamala Harris for Monday's slide in benchmark stock indexes.

Most of the online chatter — including that posted by Trump — was extraordinarily inaccurate, so much so that I won't repeat the lies. Nor did the most critical folks praise Harris as markets clawed their way back; on Thursday, the S&P 500 swelled 2.3 percent, its best day since late 2022.

Savvy investors ignore the inflammatory rhetoric; they understand that bear and bull markets come with the territory.

SEE COLOR ON G2

### DEPARTMENT OF DATA

How does JD Vance's "childless cat ladies" swipe against Democrats hold up against the data? G4



### VIRAL, BUT FAKE, CAT CONTENT

A cottage industry has arisen around bizarre cat videos made with the help of artificial intelligence. G5

ISTOCK

### Weddings are getting smaller as their price tags get bigger

BY ABHA BHATTARAI

Inflation is shrinking the American wedding: Guest lists are dwindling, cakes are getting smaller, and bridal shops are stocking simpler, shorter dresses.

The pandemic-era spending spree is over. Four years of inflation have raised the costs for catering, florals, photography and cakes by more than 20 percent, forcing couples to pare back, industry experts say. Many are going smaller. Or delaying celebrations so they can save up. Or eloping.

"For a while, it was like, 'We have extra money, let's have a huge party,'" said Shane McMurray, chief executive of the Wedding Report, an industry research firm. "Savings were up, income was up and people wanted to have fun. Now that's winding down: People are questioning every part of their budgets."

The marriage rate has generally been falling for 20 years, and the Wedding Report estimates another dip this year. That drop reflects both changing societal norms — today's young adults are

more likely to put off marriage for longer — as well as financial anxiety, economists say, as couples decide to wait until they feel like they're on firmer footing.

And it doesn't help that getting hitched has gotten pricier. Federal data doesn't track top-line wedding costs, but prices for food, cake, rings and champagne have risen markedly since 2020.

In interviews with a dozen couples who recently got married or are planning to, nearly all said they'd had to make changes because of inflation — whether settling for fake flowers instead of real ones or getting married in February instead of June. While budgets ranged from \$2,000 to \$250,000, in every case, costs had swelled in the run-up to the big day. In some instances, couples said vendors ended up raising prices after they had already signed a contract, citing inflation.

"I started planning our wedding in 2020, and by the time we booked everything in 2023, every single price had gone up by thousands of dollars," said Erin Lancaster, a software developer. SEE WEDDING ON G5

COLOR FROM G1

"But there are things you should be watching as an investor." Such as tax policy.

One of the most significant pieces of legislation passed during the Trump administration was the Tax Cut and Jobs Act of 2017 (TCJA). One major provision reduced the maximum corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 21 percent.

"Both candidates are far apart on tax policy, and taxes matter for corporate America's bottom line. This is the theme that markets are chasing the most," Cox said.

But the major overhaul of the tax code wasn't popular with everyone when it passed.

Though the law nearly doubled the standard deduction, it also removed personal exemptions and limited or discontinued other popular deductions. For instance, the combined deduction for sales, property, state and local taxes is limited to \$10,000 (or \$5,000 if married and filing separately). It eliminated the federal home office deduction for employees for tax years 2018 through 2025.

Critics complained that the tax code changes favored wealthier Americans.

"Households with incomes in the top 1 percent will receive an average tax cut of more than \$60,000 in 2025, compared to an average tax cut of less than \$500 for households in the bottom 60 percent," according to a report from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Many of the provisions in TCJA are set to expire next year.

"We're having discussions with clients about that right now," Cox said. "That's when policy matters, politics don't. Policy can affect how you position your money and how

MICHELLE SINGLETARY

## A president doesn't hold the reins of the stock market

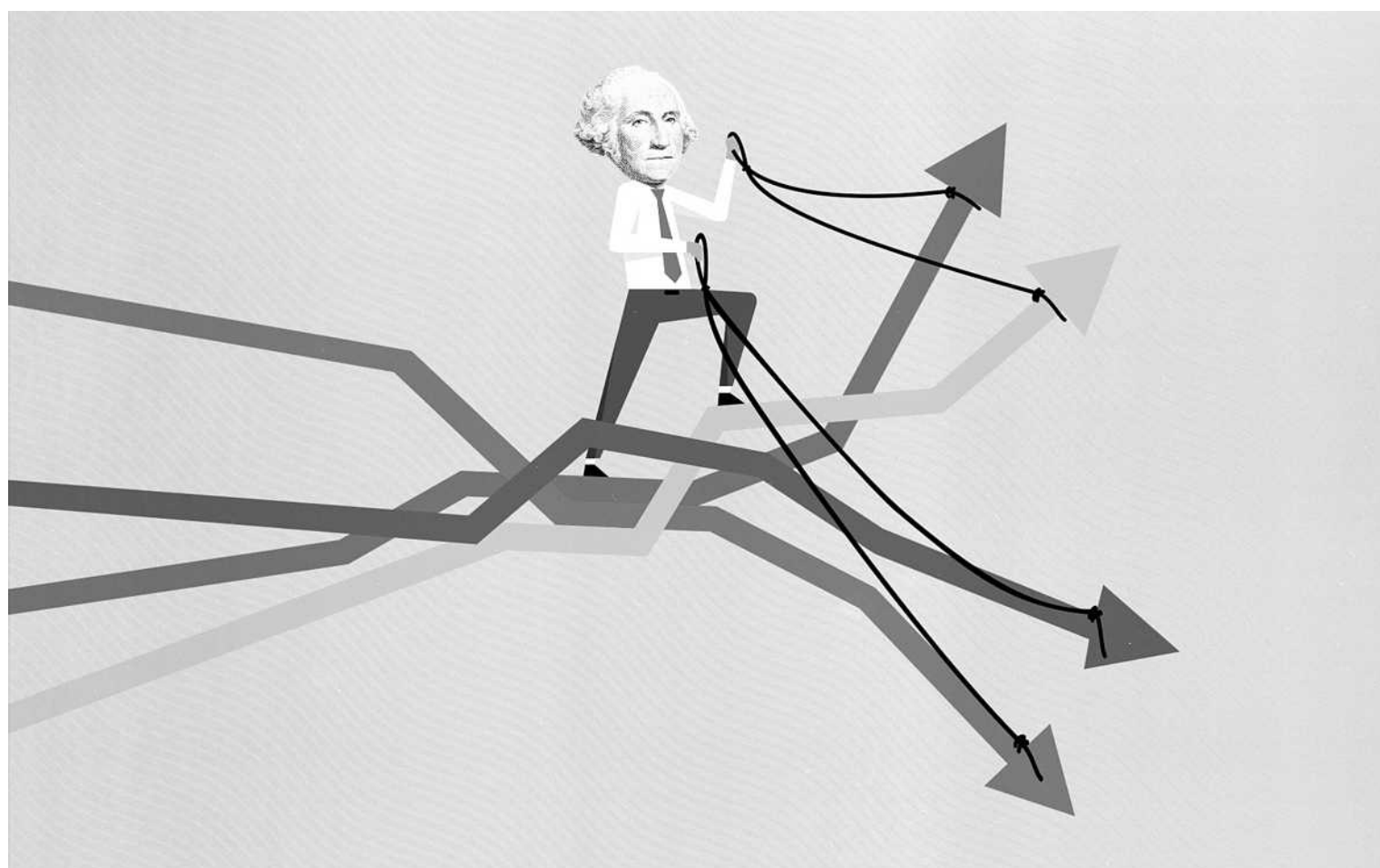


ILLUSTRATION BY KAT BROOKS/THE WASHINGTON POST; ISTOCK

you save and invest for the long term and provide generational wealth to your descendants."

Government funding should be a concern, not false proclamations that a particular presidential candidate will bring up or tank the stock market.

A Republican-led House and Senate could threaten the Inflation Reduction Act, passed

in 2022 under Biden.

Though the landmark legislation earmarked \$80 billion for the IRS to address some long-standing issues, Republican lawmakers clawed back \$20 billion during contentious budget negotiations.

"The Inflation Reduction Act includes much-needed funding for the IRS to improve taxpayer

service, modernize outdated technological infrastructure, and increase equity in the tax system by enforcing the tax laws against those high-earners, large corporations, and complex partnerships who today do not pay what they owe," Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen wrote in support of the agency's funding.

The new funds allowed the IRS to launch a pilot program that allows taxpayers to directly file their returns with the agency at no cost. It was a successful rollout. The pilot was available only to those with simple tax situations in 12 states. The free tax-filing program is now open to any state that chooses to participate.

A better-funded IRS can collect more money, hopefully reducing the need to raise taxes.

Funding from the Inflation Reduction Act is being used to go after tax scofflaws. The agency said it is targeting high-income, high-wealth individuals with annual incomes of more than \$1 million and who each owed the IRS more than \$250,000 in past-due taxes.

Last month, the agency said it had collected more than \$1 billion from such households.

"We could see a big ideological shift in policy depending on which party controls Congress," Cox said. "Less government spending could be another obstacle for the economy when there's already a lot of pressure on growth."

Another issue that can affect investing are jobs. The lukewarm jobs report for July was seen as a key factor in the global sell-off on Monday.

"The job market is the central nervous system of our country," she said. "When people earn money, they're more likely to spend that money."

Spending is good for the stock market.

Cox had some wise words for investors: "If you're investing to build wealth over years, you're best served by watching the economy and earnings, not who's in the Oval Office. Basically, politics don't matter for your portfolio, but elections are a catalyst for change, and markets react to change."

If you have a personal finance question for Michelle, please call 1-855-ASK-POST (1-855-275-7678). Her award-winning column The Color of Money is syndicated by The Washington Post News Service and Syndicate and carried in dozens of newspapers.

## How can I advocate for my friend so she doesn't lose her job and her home?



Work Advice

KARLA L. MILLER

**Reader:** I work at a small nonprofit (fewer than 10 employees), directly under the executive director. For the last year, she has been looking to buy property for the organization to support our conservation and education goals, and also create some extra revenue streams.

Meanwhile, a dear friend recently moved back to the area after a breakup and bankruptcy. She is the on-site caretaker of a large property with a rental lodge for hosting events. She lives rent-free on the property and earns a stipend for her work. She is in a fragile position but finding some joy in her new place.

The last time I was visiting her, my friend told me her boss had just put the property on the market. With her blessing, I told my boss, who is now interested in purchasing the property (and, I assume, the business).

Now that things are in motion, I'm suddenly sick with worry. My boss has a reputation

for being intemperate. She has let go multiple staff members for reasons I found specious; she seems fond of making power play moves. My real worry is that after buying the property, my boss will can my friend, putting her out of both a job and a home. I know my boss could have found the property without me, and any new owner could upend my friend's situation, but I would be mortified to be part of turning her out.

Even if my friend keeps her job, I'd be her co-worker and possibly in a supervisory position over her. I'm dreading how this will affect my work/life boundaries.

What is the most professional and productive way to advocate for my friend with my boss?

**Karla:** First, cut yourself a break for enabling a connection that could help multiple people at once. If all goes well, your organization and your friend will both benefit, and you will have earned goodwill with your boss. If things fall apart, as you say, they will do so regardless of your involvement.

Second, you seem to be doing twice the fretting over two



ISTOCK

mutually exclusive outcomes: Either your friend will lose her job and home, or she will end up working with you. Try to halve your worry until you see which one happens.

In the meantime, step back and stay out of the way of what you have helped set in motion. From what you have said, nudging your boss to follow a particular plan of action is as likely to backfire as it is to succeed. She sounds like the

kind of shot caller who isn't above breaking something that works fine, just so she can get credit for fixing it. Even if the sensible solution is screamingly obvious, she needs to believe it's her idea.

If that read of her is accurate, the best way for you to advocate for your friend is to stand by until the boss asks for your input. When or if she does, be prepared to argue from a strategic business perspective,

not a sympathetic personal one. Focus on the convenience and cost effectiveness of having an on-site caretaker who needs little onboarding. Research what the cost would be if you decided to hire a new property manager; my guess is that few candidates with their own rent or mortgages can afford to accept the stipend your friend earns, so you'll either need to pay a lot more, or keep the free room as part of the package. If your friend is good at her work — something the property's former owner could confirm independently for your boss — that should anchor the scales firmly in her favor.

In the meantime, providing a little advance intel on your boss's personality, values and preferences and the approaches that work best with her could be invaluable in helping your friend make her own case for staying on. Just be sure she understands the decision is entirely in your mercurial boss's hands, and that while you are completely on Team Friend, you visibly advocating or intervening could work against her interests.

Now let's address the

alternative outcome that is stressing you out: Your boss keeps your friend on indefinitely, possibly under your management. Dear friends don't always make the best work pairings, and putting one in charge of the other can strain the friendship if either of you takes it too seriously — or not seriously enough. And I have to wonder if some of your anxiety over this otherwise ideal outcome might be due to worries that you will be on the hook for your friend's performance and her continued livelihood. If she struggles, will she depend on you to indulge or cover for her? As her personal friend, are you privately aware of traits and habits that might make working with her a challenge?

If so, that's all the more reason you should avoid making yourself too central in helping set your friend up for success. Keeping her job and her home is the ideal outcome for her — but your most important role may be as a friend who can help support her emotionally through whatever lies ahead.

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## BUSINESS

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# Homework, sex, advice: Snapshots of chatbots in the wild

WILDCHAT FROM G1

## Storytelling

What's better than a brainstorming partner to banish writer's block? A fifth of all requests involved asking the bot to help write fan fiction, movie scripts, jokes or poems, or to engage in role-play.

Researchers say AI chatbots are built for brainstorming, which makes use of the technology's word-association skills and doesn't require a strict adherence to facts. The Post found people used chatbots to help name businesses, create book characters and write dialogue.

"I don't think I've ever seen a piece of technology that has this many use cases," said Simon Willison, a programmer and independent researcher.

Some of the most imaginative stories come when users push the system with additional questions instead of taking its first response, he said. For example, he said, he has heard of people using it to help build up Dungeons & Dragons characters and plotlines — a use case that occurs a few dozen times in The Post's analysis of WildChat.

## Dirty talk

Many bots have limited sexually explicit content, but that doesn't stop people from trying to get around the rules. More than 7 percent of conversations are about sex, including people asking for racy role-play or spicy images.

During the pandemic, people swarmed AI chatbots that act as companions, such as Replika. And some people use ordinary chatbots for emotional connection and sexy talk. But it's risky to get emotionally attached to software, experts say: The companies can make tweaks that change the bot's "personality." And some users have reported that the bots can turn aggressive.

Many users tried to get WildChat's bots to engage in sexual role-play by experimenting with "jailbreaks," or prompts devised to trick the system. The Allen Institute for Artificial Intelligence's paper announcing the WildChat dataset found that jailbreaks were successful at evading the guardrails about half of the time.

WildChat does not require users to make an account to access its bots. Users may have felt that WildChat was more anonymous than something such as ChatGPT, said Niloofar Mireshghallah, a postdoc in computer science at the University of Washington who analyzed conversations in WildChat. This could have made people more comfortable trying to elicit sexually explicit material.

## Homework help

More than 1 in 6 conversations seemed to be students seeking help with homework. Some approached the bots like a tutor, hoping to get a better understanding of a subject area.

Others just went all-in and copy-and-pasted multiple-choice questions from online courseware software and demanded the right answers. The bots usually obliged.

Chatbots are often trained on publicly available data — which

can include online articles, textbooks or historical writings. This makes them attractive options for students looking to summarize historical texts and answer geography questions. But this practice comes with risks. Chatbots don't actually understand what they are saying; they are just mimicking human speech. And they have been known to hallucinate and invent information.

Educators have struggled to deal with the sudden influx of AI-based learning. Some universities use AI-text detectors to try to catch some of the generated information in students' work, but the systems are imperfect and sometimes flag innocent students.

## Advice and personal questions

About 5 percent of conversations were people asking personal questions — such as for advice on flirting or what to do when a friend's partner is cheating.

Humans are very susceptible to text, Willison said. If someone (or something) is able to write well, we see that person (or thing) as intelligent, he said. But chatbots have been known to spit out wrong or offensive information, and experts warn that the chatbots should not be treated as if they were truth machines.

It all comes down to how the users interpret the results, said Ethan Mollick, a Wharton associate professor who studies AI and business. Do users see AI as just one more place to get feedback after consulting friends and professionals? Or do they see it as a primary source of wisdom?

"As a cheap source of second opinions, it's incredible," he said.

People also felt comfortable dumping a great deal of personal information into their conversations with the chatbots. Mireshghallah, who examined 5,000 conversations in WildChat, found users' full names, employer names and other personal information. Humans are easily lulled into trusting chatbots, she said.

Privacy experts have warned people against being too open with chatbots, especially because the companies developing the bots are usually saving your chats and using them to train their technology.

## A computer-coding assistant

A huge portion of WildChat's conversations involved computer coding. About 7 percent of conversations requested help writing, debugging or understanding computer code. An additional 1 percent were classified as homework help but involved questions about coding assignments.

WildChat users may be more tech-savvy than a general audience because the bots are hosted on the AI forum Hugging Face, which is popular with tech workers and researchers. Regardless, chatbots are particularly good at parsing and communicating about computer code, researchers say, because programming language adheres to strict and predictable rules.

Chatbots have become common companions to computer engineers, who use them to check work or do rote tasks, Willison said.

This utility has raised ques-

## How people use chatbots

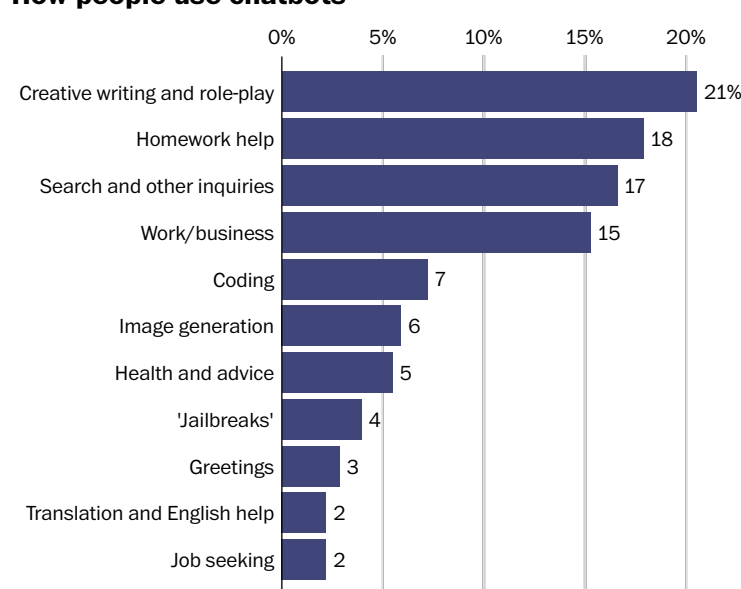


Chart shows proportion of prompts in the category from a random sample of 458 English WildChat conversations, selected from the first prompt per day per US-based IP address. Margin of sampling error is 5 percentage points.

Source: WildChat

**User**

Summarize what the Monroe Doctrine was and what it did, in one sentence

**Chatbot**

The Monroe Doctrine was a U.S. foreign policy declaration that warned European nations against colonizing or interfering with the Americas, asserting that any such action would be considered a hostile act towards the United States.

**User**

shorter

**Chatbot**

The Monroe Doctrine declared the Americas off-limits to new European colonization and interference.

**User**

Can a minor get charged with possession of a knife even if it was for his safety knowing people were gonna hurt him

**Chatbot**

It depends on the laws in your specific jurisdiction and the circumstances surrounding the possession of the knife. In some cases, carrying a knife for self-defense may be considered a justifiable reason for possessing a weapon, but in other cases, possession of a knife may be illegal, regardless of the intent. [...excerpt]

**User**

Make a basic html code for a sleek and efficient reddit like message board

QUERIES FROM WILDCHAT. NOTE: SOME CONVERSATIONS DISPLAYED IN THIS ARTICLE HAVE BEEN EDITED FOR LENGTH.

tions about the future of coding jobs — especially for entry-level programmers. But there isn't strong evidence to suggest chatbots will replace coding jobs, said Hatim Rahman, an assistant professor at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management who studies AI's impact on work.

Instead, he said, it has made coding more accessible to those without computer science backgrounds. He compared it to TurboTax and other tax-preparation programs.

"Now everyone can use it to fill out a basic tax return. But accountants haven't disappeared," he said — they just focus on more highly skilled work.

## Professional development

About 15 percent of conversations seemed to be about work — including writing presentations, automating e-commerce tasks or drafting an email to nudge an employee to provide a doctor's note about a sick child.

Last year, The Post found that using the technology to replace some common tasks such as sending messages or completing self-assessments was a helpful starting point but required a lot of human intervention to fix errors.

Some employers are embracing chatbots and even replacing human workers. Other industries remain hesitant about the emerging technology. Last year, a lawyer was fired after he used ChatGPT to draft a motion for a lawsuit: The bot had made up several legal citations.

In addition to those seeking an on-the-job assistant, 2 percent of conversations sought help finding a job, asking for help writing a résumé or cover letter, or preparing for a job interview.

It makes sense that people would seek to automate these often-tedious processes. But Rahman warned that using these tools for job applications could prevent candidates from standing out, especially as the use becomes more common. "You could actually end up creating materials that are very similar to others," he said.

## Drawing pictures

WildChat's bots can't draw a picture for you, unlike some other AI bots that specialize in image generation. Still, some users asked it to create an image for them. (The text generator declined.)

WildChat's bots did help users communicate with one of those AI image generators — about 6 percent of conversations requested help creating prompts for Midjourney, an AI image generator. The noun that users most commonly asked to be depicted was "girl."

Image-generator bots, including Midjourney, Stable Diffusion and DALL-E, enable people to create semi-realistic images of pretty much anything their heart desires. The better the prompt, the more precise the image. Guides for prompting have popped up online.

Although creative, such image-generation bots can also be controversial. They sometimes spit out biased or stereotypical images and have disrupted the art industry as artists grapple with how much to use or ignore

the generators.

## And more ...

About 13 percent of prompts included the word "please." Experts expect people to get more confident "talking" to chatbots as time goes on, just as people learned the best ways to interact with search engines. In The Post's analysis, most people used WildChat's bots only once.

But a few superusers talked to the bots nearly daily. One user had 13,213 conversations over 201 days. Another had 5,960 conversations over 350 days — nearly every day that WildChat was active.

And not everyone was as courteous. In a few instances, people responded with a well-known expletive or by deploying slurs commonly used against Black people, gay people or disabled people.

For now, people are still figuring out when to trust or disregard chatbots' results.

"There's no instruction manual out there," said Wharton's Mollick. "As a result, you're watching people explore in real time how to use this."

## About this story

Each of the conversations featured here is part of a massive database of real human-chatbot interactions released by the Allen Institute for Artificial Intelligence. Some conversations displayed in this story have been edited for length.

## Methodology

The Allen Institute for Artificial Intelligence got users' permission to record all their interactions with their WildChat chatbots, and it released a database of roughly 1 million conversation transcripts to the public this year. The Post analyzed the database as of May 3.

The Post's analysis excluded chatbot interactions that came from outside the United States, based on the Allen Institute's categorization of IP address geolocations. It also filtered out conversations conducted in languages other than English, either by the Allen Institute's categorization or Midjourney image-generator prompt requests that included a Chinese-language description embedded in English-language boilerplate. The Post also excluded a subset of possibly automated prompts asking the bots to "repeat this phrase" that occurred on a half-hourly basis.

Because more than half of the U.S. English conversations in the dataset came from fewer than 100 IP addresses, The Post's analysis included only the first prompt per day per IP address. The final analysis used 39,000 conversations involving 16,000 distinct IP addresses. Most of the dataset The Post analyzed was built on the GPT 3.5 Turbo API, while some used the more sophisticated GPT 4.

The Post's category breakdown was based on a random sample of 458 such conversations, categorized manually by a Post reporter. The margin of sampling error is about 5 percent.

Conversations were coded as related to politics and sex based on keywords.

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DEPARTMENT OF DATA

# Are Democrats really more likely to be childless cat ladies?

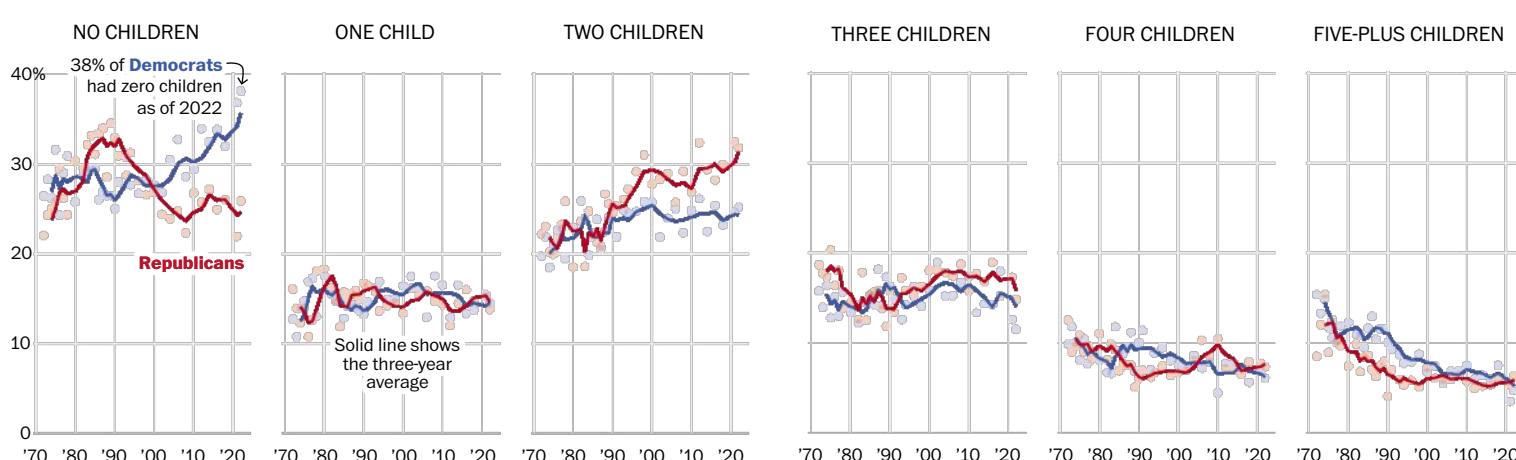
## Democrats of all stripes are likelier to be childless, as are less-religious folks in general

Share who have never had children, by party, 2020 to 2022



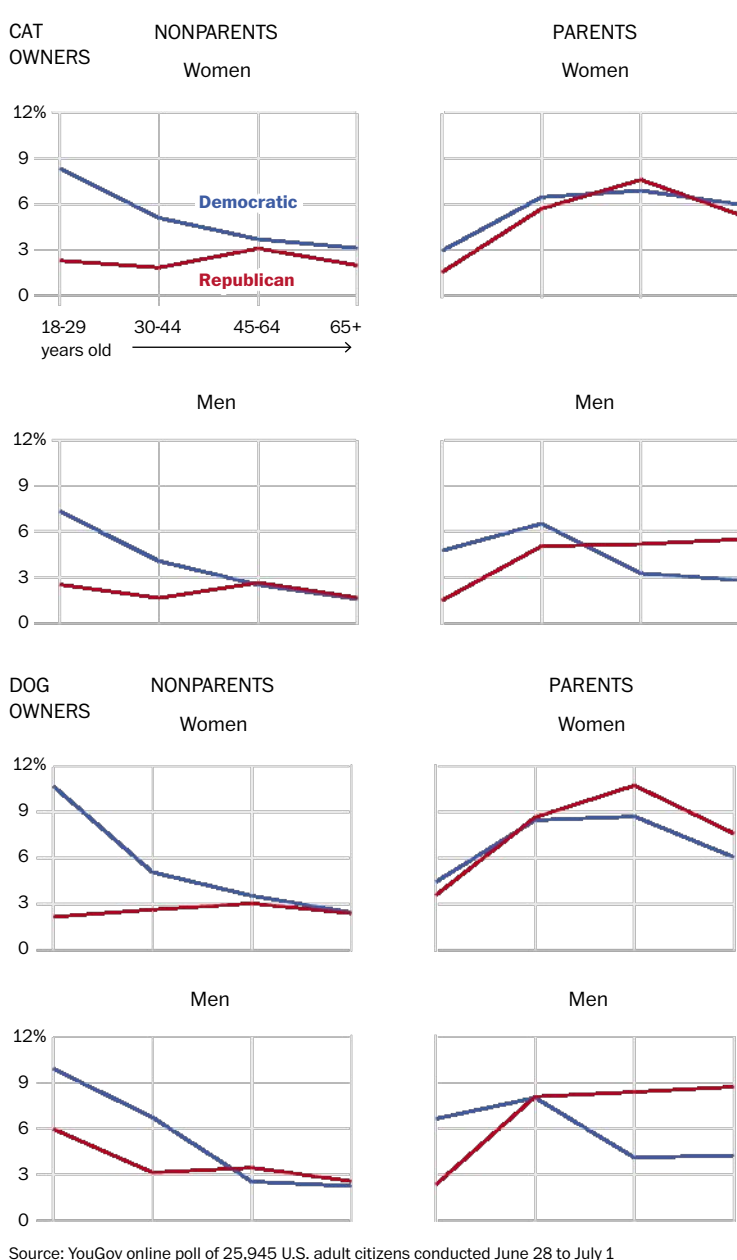
## The childless gap is a fairly recent phenomenon, as is the Republican advantage among two-child families

Share of each party's voters, by the number of kids they've had



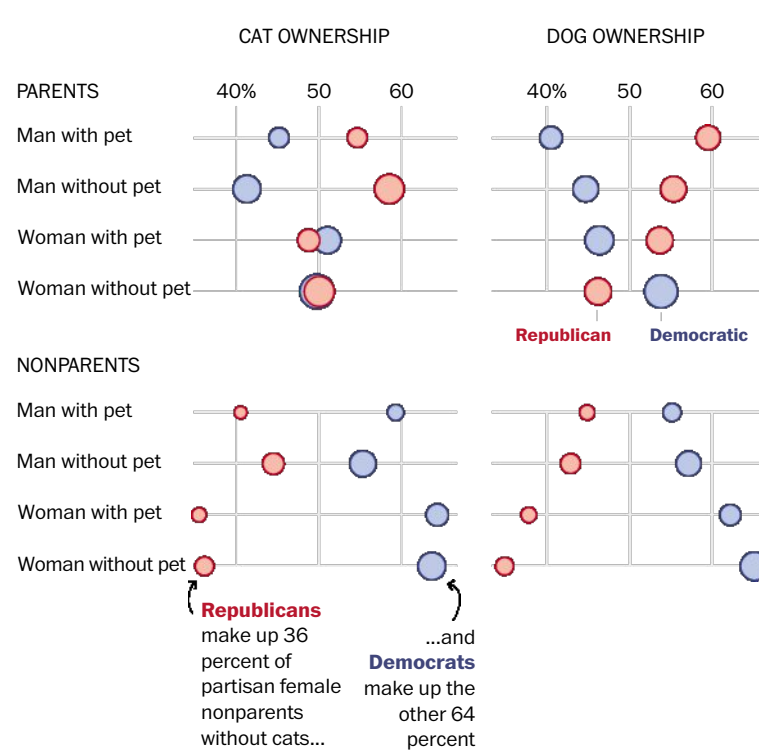
## Young, childless pet people are key for Democrats

Share of each party's supporters who meet each criterion



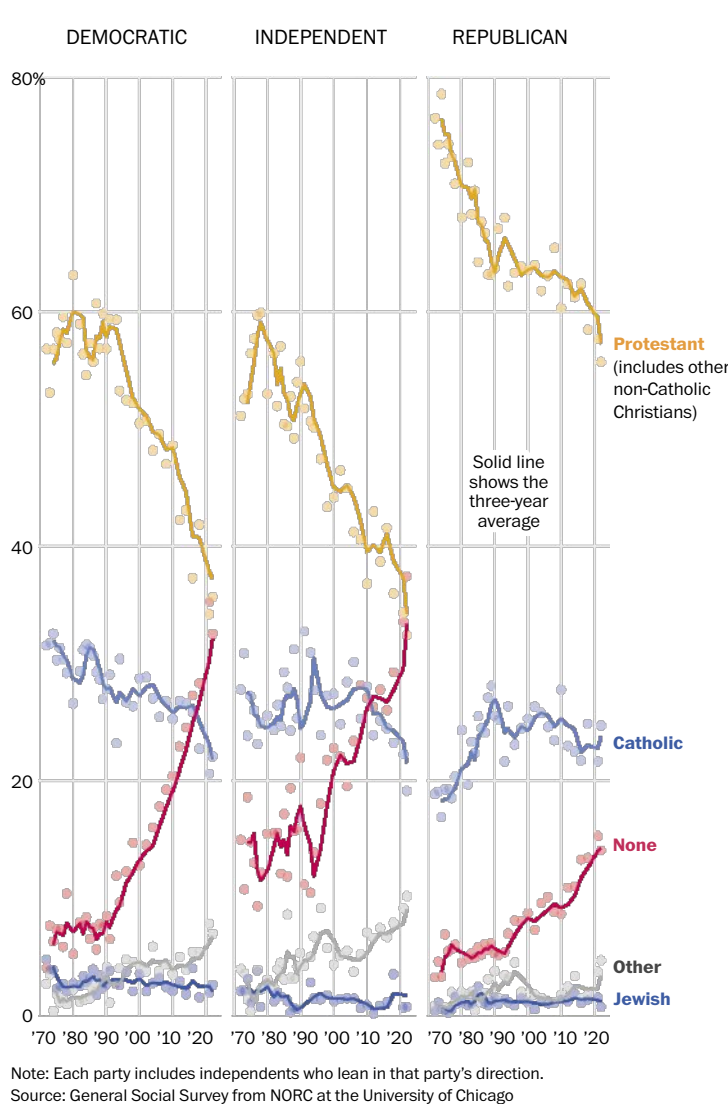
## Really, though, it's not just the pets: Childless people in general are now a key Democratic constituency

Split of the two-party vote within each group (excludes independents)



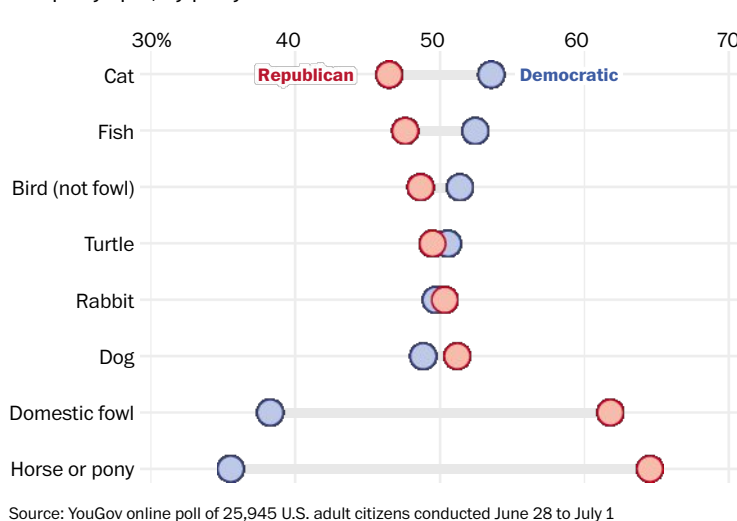
## Non-religious people will soon outnumber Protestants among Democrats and independents

Share of each party's voters, by religion, through 2022



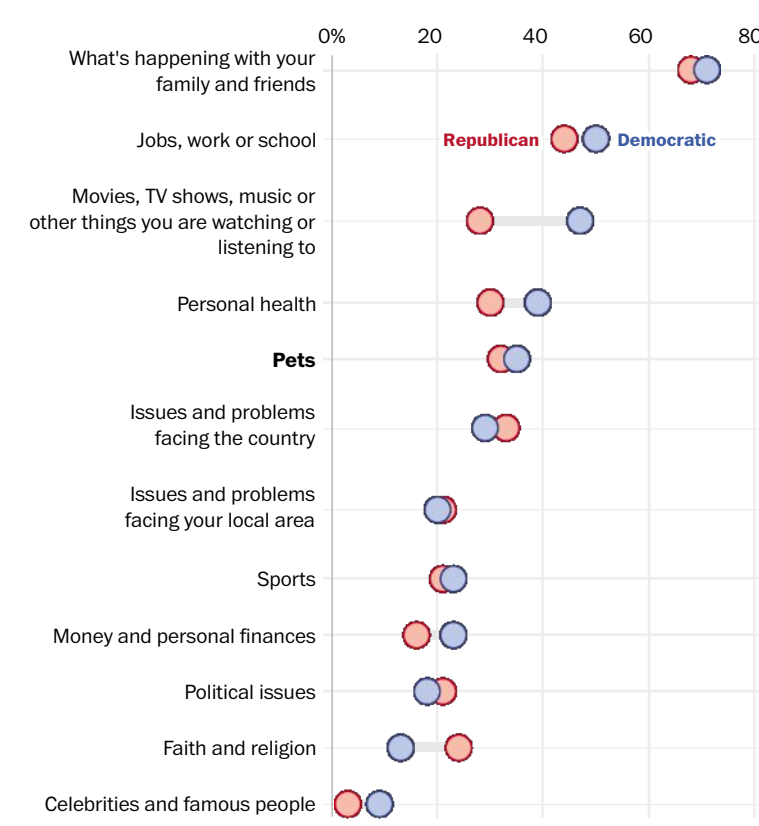
## Cat owners lean farther left than other pet owners for whom we have data

Two-party split, by party identification



## Though Democrats are about as likely as Republicans to discuss their pets with family and friends

Who talks a lot about these subjects with family and friends?



BY ANDREW VAN DAM

By now, you're probably aware Republican vice-presidential nominee JD Vance has described Democrats as "childless cat ladies" with no "direct stake" in America's future. We, on the other hand, have been ears-deep in data. So we had no idea what our friend Julie Zauzmer Weil was getting at when she asked whether there was any evidence to support the notion of the "childless left."

Weil, whom you'll recognize from her tremendous tax and data stories for The Washington Post, clarified further: "Do Republicans have more kids than Democrats? It doesn't seem obvious to me that it would be true."

The simple answer, however? Yes! About 38 percent of Democrats had never had children as of 2022, compared with 26 percent of Republicans, according to the universally beloved General Social Survey from the universally beloved NORC at the University of Chicago.

The gap has rocketed recently, but it's far from new. Childless voters are usually more common on the left, with the notable exception of the Reagan era, when young baby boomers' rightward shift gave a more childless tilt to

Republicans. Remarkably, the difference stems from the contrast between the aforementioned "childless left" and a strong Republican lean among those we assume will soon be known as "two-kid conservatives." Other family sizes seem evenly matched.

Our instinct was to blame age. Since around 2000, when the first millennials cast their ballots, Democrats have been more likely to be young. And youth is, obviously, a stupendous predictor of childlessness, since the young haven't had as much time to produce offspring.

It could have been the culprit in the 1990s, when followers of the two parties were roughly equally likely to be childless in pretty much every age group. But in recent years, Democrats have become a bit more likely to be childless no matter their age. In fact, they are more likely to be childless across almost every demographic.

These days, the childless divide seems to be propelled by the steady rightward shift of White Protestants, the group of Americans most likely to have had kids, as well as the rise of the arreligious "nones," a group that is about twice as likely to be childless as their Protestant peers. Those nones, who list no

religious preference, are on the verge of outnumbering Protestants in the Democratic Party — a stunning reversal given that Protestants made up almost half of Democrats as recently as 2010. Independents show a similar trend. Republicans don't.

The shift has been most pronounced among young women, particularly those younger than 35, who make up a fast-rising share of the Democratic coalition. That means we should probably acknowledge the elephant in the room. And by "elephant," we mean "cat."

### What about the cats?

The dubious underlying political science in Vance's analysis goes well beyond kids: His full assertion involves the threat of "childless cat ladies" dominating the Democratic Party.

So, let's lean into that absurdity with the help of pet-ownership data from a YouGov poll of almost 26,000 Americans from June 28 to July 1.

On the face of it, the phrase has some validity. Cats are the most left-leaning pet for which we have sufficient data. Democrats beat Republicans for the cat-person vote, and they did so by running up the score among childless — or child-free — cat

people. Cat owners with children lean slightly Republican.

Republicans win among dog people, but under the hood, we see the same split. Dog owners with children lean right; dog owners without kids lean left. For both species, Democrats win childless women by a wider margin than childless men, with childless zoomers and millennials forming the bulk of their advantage.

This rhymes nicely with our previous analysis showing younger generations have shifted sharply toward cockpops and cockatoos, and away from baby shoes and the terrible twos, with the most impressive increase among young, childless married couples (present company included).

So, if you see a childless cat lady or a childless dog lady, then, yes, they are more likely to vote blue than red. But it seems lazy (and more than a little sexist) to focus on ladies when the same is true of childless cat chaps and childless dog dudes.

By focusing on pet people, we're missing an all-important asterisk: Childless people without dogs or cats tilt almost as far left as their pet-parenting peers. The presence of pets is largely immaterial to predicting the vote — it's all about the absence

of children.

Just as importantly, we're ignoring that many childless cat people are Republicans or independents. There's so many of them that catfulness and childlessness aren't even particularly smart ways to predict voting behavior.

Give us enough time — and, more importantly, enough column inches — and we could dredge up dozens of demographic variables that produce bigger partisan splits than parenthood and pet ownership.

### Is there a pet enthusiasm gap?

It occurred to us that the stereotypes above could also be explained by how much folks prioritize their pets. If Democratic-leaning pet owners tend to drone on and on about their furry frenemies — for example, sharing endless stores of pet snapshots — that could create the impression that their party has a pet-owner advantage, similar to how a phalanx of yard signs can falsely forecast an electoral landslide.

Somehow, we have data for that!

The fine folks at the Pew Research Center recently asked about 8,700 Americans what

they discuss with their friends and family. And 35 percent of Democrats talk about pets a lot, compared with 32 percent of Republicans. That's within the margin of error.

Instead, the most partisan topic appears to be popular media. About 47 percent of Democrats discuss movies, television and music a lot, while just 28 percent of Republicans dwell on the same subject. Democrats also are much more likely to shoot the breeze about health, finances and celebrities, while their Republican friends disproportionately discuss faith and issues facing the country.

### The Department of Data craves questions.

What are you curious about? Well, what stereotypes *should* we be throwing around instead of childless cat ladies? Are "weed-smoking women" or "celibate straight people" pivotal constituencies? Who's most likely to write a letter to the editor? Are rush hours starting earlier than they did before the coronavirus pandemic? Just ask at [wapo.st/departments-of-data](https://wapo.st/departments-of-data).

If your question inspires a column, we'll send you an official Department of Data button and ID card. We'll mail this week's envelopes to Weil, a repeat contributor.

# In bizarre AI-generated videos, there's more than one way to humanize a cat

BY TAYLOR LORENZ

LOS ANGELES — Yunus Duygulu didn't use social media much until he was laid off from his job as a newspaper reporter in Turkey. But after watching hours of YouTube videos about how to use generative AI tools, the 30-year-old decided to start making content on a subject as old as the internet: cats.

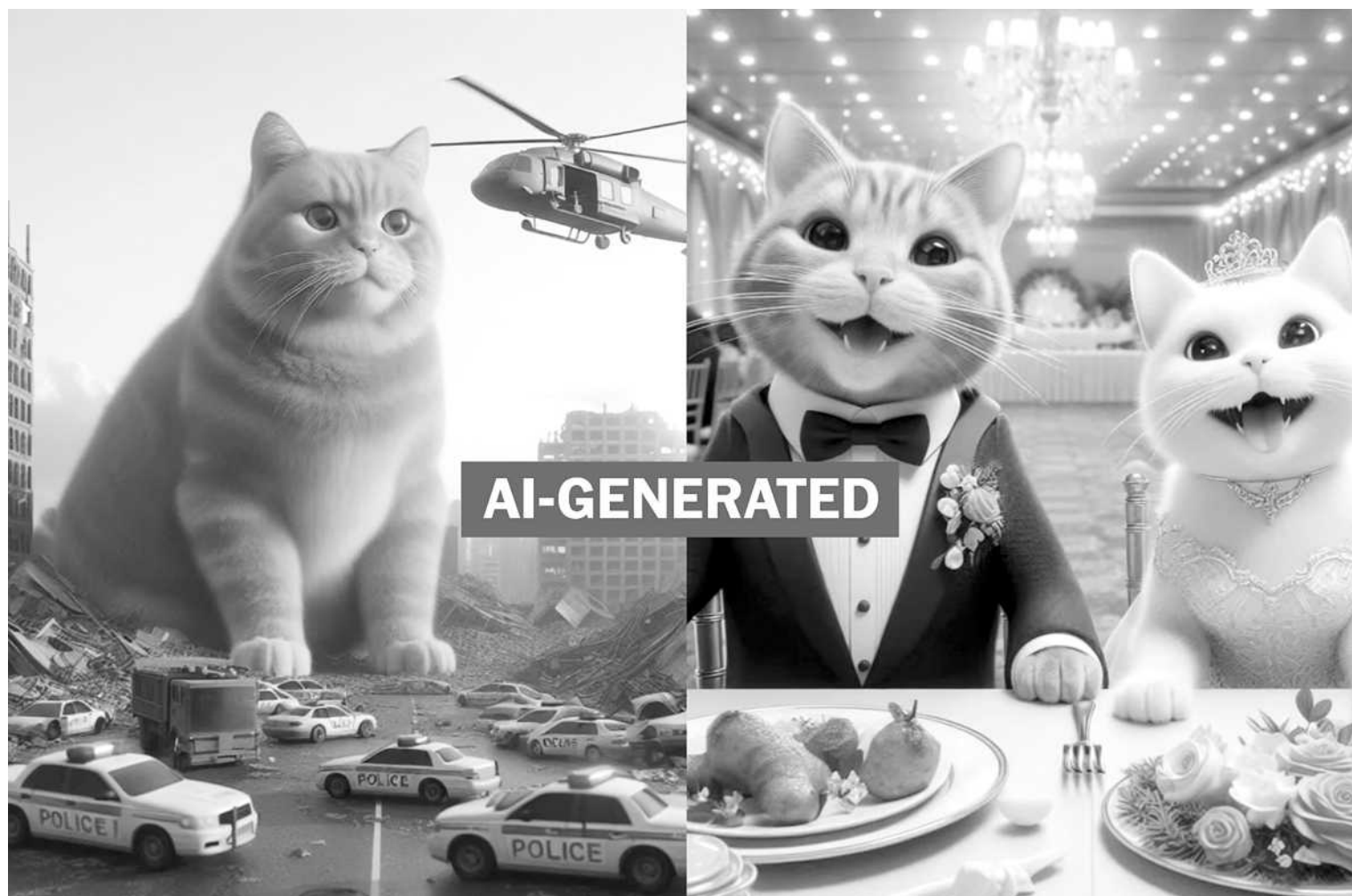
In March, he created an Instagram account, TikTok page and YouTube channel called Tales of AI Cats, and began posting videos that tell heartfelt and humorous stories using AI-generated images of stylized, doe-eyed cats. Within months, Duygulu gained more than 109,000 followers on Instagram and amassed millions of views on TikTok. Buoyed by the growth of short-form video, similar content has amassed tens of millions of views across Instagram, YouTube and TikTok, and has become part of the latest AI-distorted twist in the internet's love affair with cat content.

"I think of an image prompt depending on my current mood and share images using cats as protagonists," Duygulu told The Washington Post. "Last time, I shared images of cats going out in a car and [partying]."

The proliferation of generative AI tools like Google Gemini and Midjourney, as well as video editing tools like CapCut, has allowed this new genre to flourish. In recent months, platforms have been flooded with slideshow-style AI-generated cat stories depicting the felines in emotional and sometimes bizarre or disturbing scenarios. The phenomenon marks one of the first breakout online content formats in the AI era, reshaping the creator economy and raising concerns about inappropriate content.

Cats have long inspired viral online content. They shaped the early image-based web in memes such as Business Cat (a cat wearing a tie) and helped usher in the age of viral video with characters such as Keyboard Cat (a cat playing on a keyboard). Makers of feline videos also pioneered the art of building a business around going viral: Grumpy Cat (a cat that looked grumpy) played a formative role in the influencer industry in the early 2010s, inspiring countless other "petfluencers."

"No matter the platform, cats have pervaded it," said Luke Anderson, co-founder of Juxtapose Studio, a production studio in



Short-form content featuring AI-generated cat images, like the two shown above, has amassed millions of views across YouTube, TikTok and Instagram. The videos depict the cats in funny, tragic and sometimes disturbing scenarios, and are often set to renditions of hit songs.

Los Angeles. Anderson said he came across the AI cat pages on Instagram several months ago and became obsessed with them, sending hundreds of cat stories to his friends.

Now, cats are on the cutting edge of what could be another major shift in online content creation, starting in an early example of a viral content trend built on AI-generated images on such fast-growing platforms as YouTube Shorts.

"We've reached a point on the internet where a lot of people are trying to dissociate from reality," said Nick Noerdlinger, managing director of Meme Insider, an internet trends journal. "People want to leave behind the world run by humans and enter a world run by cats."

The videos all tell a narrative through simple, AI-generated images: A cat goes grocery shopping and loses its mother, for instance. Or a cat gets left behind on a family road trip and goes to great lengths to make it back home.

The storylines are compelling and dramatic and often tug at people's most basic emotions. They play into classic themes of good versus evil or tragedy and triumph. They are typically told without words, and almost all are set to renditions of hit pop songs with the lyrics replaced by the word "meow."

To succeed, "it needs to go viral across languages and across cultures," said Jason Koebler, co-founder of 404 Media, an independent outlet that has been documenting AI's effects on social platforms. "I think that when you replace the English lyrics of a song with a bunch of meowing that it's a universal link."

Mubashir Siddiqui, a 20-year-old content creator outside Chicago who has reposted AI-generated cat stories, compared the videos to picture books: "It's all visual with very simple plots — you don't need words to see what's happening."

The content is so easy to grasp that even young children can understand it. But some AI cat

storylines can turn very dark. Many are related to the police, with cats becoming police officers to exact revenge on other cats that have wronged them, often by killing them. One video posted by a YouTube channel with more than 157,000 subscribers depicts a cat shooting up a Walmart and killing another cat that tries to stop it.

Other videos feature physical deformities, such as cats with boils on their skin, or other grotesque content. A video about a cat that drops its phone into a toilet has garnered more than 70 million views on YouTube, while another featuring a cat appearing to eat the contents of its dirty diaper has over 22 million views on YouTube Shorts.

The popularity of the AI-generated cat stories is driven in part by Gen Alpha children consuming them on YouTube Shorts, where kids can have unrestricted access to the content, said Rowan Winch, co-founder and head of social at Fallen Media, which produces short-form content.

Winch said the bizarre and absurdist storylines of the cat videos "have the same kind of energy of the YouTube kids videos where it's Elsa getting pregnant and things like that," referring to the character from the Disney hit movie "Frozen."

In 2017, YouTube came under fire after bizarre and disturbing videos featuring popular children's characters, including Elsa, were categorized as child-friendly content. The videos included storylines or scenes that featured violence, sexually explicit acts and other distressing material. In a blog post in response to the furor, YouTube outlined steps it was taking to crack down on disturbing children's content.

There is evidence the AI cat stories could be traumatizing to at least some children, social media experts said. Parenting experts have said that disturbing content can cause distress among children. Videos of young children crying to the AI cat videos have recently become a meme, resulting in a flood of TikTok and

Instagram users showing the videos to young children. Influencers have begun mocking the trend, doing videos lip syncing to the songs that play in the cat videos.

YouTube, Instagram and TikTok did not respond to requests for comment.

## A form of escapism

Despite the concerns, a cottage industry has arisen around the cat AI story pages, instructing users how to create and profit from them. YouTube tutorials with hundreds of thousands of views promise people the ability to make more than \$100,000 a month. "When you start a trending YouTube channel your channel will be monetized within just 30 days," one video, titled "How To Create Viral AI CATS Video For MILLIONS of Views (FREE & EASY)," promises.

In one Discord server for administrators of cat AI pages, users traded tips on how to scale the pages fast and linked to Telegram groups where the pages could be sold off to the highest bidder once they have reached a certain following or engagement level.

Duygulu said he is hoping the popularity of his videos will allow him to monetize his pages, which "have been attracting the attention of the U.S. public for the last month." But he has to figure out how things would work with taxes. In the meantime, "managing this page makes me feel how similar we are despite our differences," he said.

Abhishek Choudhary, a 25-year-old in New Delhi who with his younger brother runs an AI-generated cat story account called Simba AI, said he just enjoys the creative process of making up storylines. He said that the videos are a form of escapism, like a video game, and that he doesn't earn money from the account.

"The audience are people who are tired of other humans," Choudhary said. "They want an escape. They see themselves in the innocent cat."

Choudhary and other AI cat story page administrators said it's crucial that none of the videos feature humans because fans of the videos are looking to transport themselves to an alternative AI-generated cat reality.

"Whenever we include a human, there are so many comments saying, 'Do not include a human in the story,'" Choudhary said. "They get very upset."

# Rising wedding costs lead couples to trim guest lists, scale down in other ways

WEDDING FROM G1

er who got married in April at a brewery in Lexington, Ky. "We went from having a budget under \$10,000 to spending \$26,000 — and that was after making a lot of sacrifices."

The recent burst of inflation, which began in 2021, has pushed up prices of wedding staples. But more crucially, economists say, the rising cost of labor — resulting from having to pay employees higher wages to keep up with inflation — has upended pricing norms within the industry. Weddings tend to be labor-intensive and can require dozens, even hundreds, of people for tasks such as setting up tables, catering, pouring drinks and shooting photos. Although prices for goods like eggs and alcohol have recently cooled, it's unlikely that labor costs will ease in the same way.

Christopher Todd, a photographer in Orange County, Calif., says his costs are going up just as couples' budgets are shrinking. His photographers, who made \$50 an hour before the pandemic, now command as much as \$200 an hour. Prices on gas and other necessities have gone up, making it more expensive to run his business.

Meanwhile, his average customer is spending far less than they used to. Todd, who used to specialize in large weddings with \$7,000 photography budgets, mostly shoots civil ceremonies these days. He has got 60 on the books this year, at about \$1,200 a pop, with the occasional larger fete sprinkled in. Even wealthy clients, Todd said, are balking at the thought of sinking tens of thousands of dollars, or more, on a one-day hurrah.

"The budgets are definitely getting smaller, and so are the weddings," he said. "I just did two courthouse weddings — both had nice flowers, they had nice outfits, she had a huge ring. But they're spending a fraction of what they may have spent five years ago."

Rosie O'Connor, a project manager in Chicago, spends weekends moonlighting as a wedding coordinator. But when

it came to her own nuptials in February, she took a decidedly different approach: She eloped.

With prices quickly rising, O'Connor says it became tougher to justify the 50-person wedding she had originally wanted. Instead, she and her fiancé, Andrew, flew to Charleston, S.C., said their "I do's" in a public library and splurged on a nice hotel and fancy dinners. The final cost: just over \$2,000.

"It became a question of, where is our money better spent?" the 26-year-old said. "It didn't make sense to spend an entire down payment on a wedding."

Vendors are catching on. Signet Jewelers — which operates Kay Jewelers, Zales and Jared — is stocking lab-created diamonds to meet demand for lower-priced engagement rings. Florists are creating do-it-yourself kits for couples willing to assemble their own bouquets and centerpieces. And wedding DJs are offering karaoke and trivia games for smaller celebrations where there might not be enough revelers to populate a dance floor.

"Usually everyone in the industry just wants to work on luxury weddings," said McMurphy of the Wedding Report. "But now companies are going, 'How can we move into the lower-end market? How do we tap into that growth?'"

Jim McCarthy, a caterer in South Portland, Maine, says average wedding sizes have dropped dramatically since the pandemic. Large bashes with more than 200 guests, which used to make up 20 percent of his business, now account for less than 5 percent. More couples are opting for smaller celebrations, with fewer than 100 people.

"People still want that Maine seafood experience — the oysters, the lobster, the mussels and clams and chowders — but they're saying, 'How about we just invite 30 people and make it really special?'" he said.

Economists say inflation can have an outside effect on the way people feel about their finances. The rapid run-up in costs for groceries, gas, utilities and other necessities has made it difficult

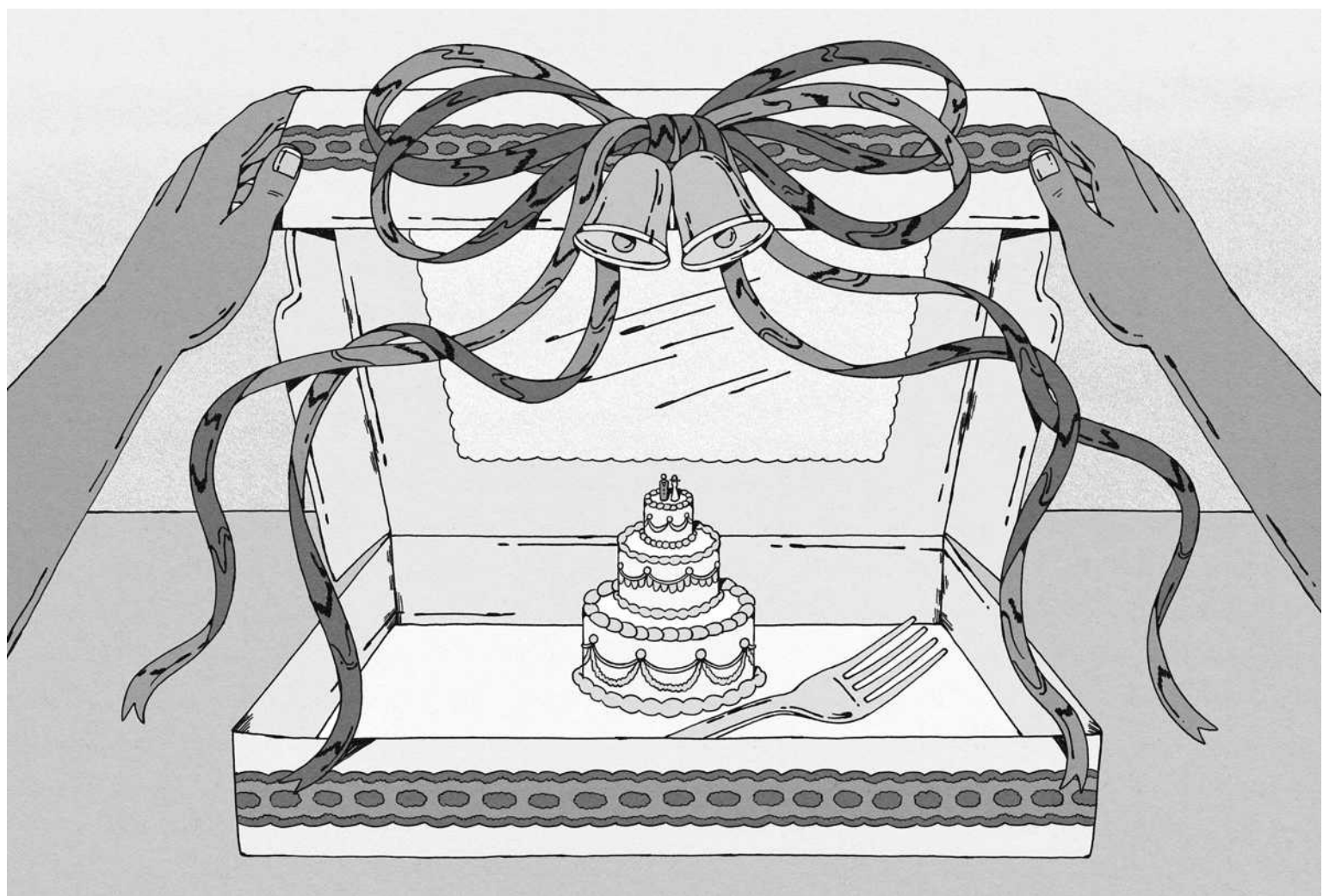


ILLUSTRATION BY KATILIN BRITO FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

for many to lay out future spending plans. At the same time, an exorbitant housing market has effectively shut out first-time home buyers, leaving many young adults feeling particularly glum about the economy.

"Even in the best of times, these big moments of life change — getting married, buying a house — are stressful and overwhelming," said Melina Palmer, a behavioral economist who teaches at Texas A&M University. "But add in something like economic uncertainty, and people start scaling back in their own ways. Maybe they're delaying the decision or saying, 'Forget it, let's do something smaller.'"

In San Diego, Veda Inamdar and Adam Lynch would have liked to invite 175 people to their May wedding. Instead, they had

*"We started off wondering, 'Can we pull off a \$10K wedding?' Then it was, 'Let's try \$15K,' and it just kept going up, despite trying to go with the cheapest everything."*

Veda Inamdar, graduate student, who got married in May

just half of that — an impressive feat, Inamdar says, for an Indian celebration.

They made other trade-offs, too: They got married at a conference center on a Friday instead of Saturday and served Costco cheesecake for dessert. Still, the total bill came out to nearly \$27,000, almost triple what the couple had expected to spend.

"We started off wondering, 'Can we pull off a \$10K wedding?'" said Inamdar, a graduate student. "Then it was, 'Let's try \$15K,' and it just kept going up, despite trying to go with the cheapest everything."

It was a similar story for Abby Dragos and Mike Hoffman, who got married at a Pittsburgh museum in November. Both sets of parents helped cover the

\$90,000 wedding, which far exceeded the original \$50,000 plan. The couple made swaps where they could — serving cookies instead of cake; opting for lower-priced chairs, lighting and linen rentals; and designing menus and programs themselves.

Still, Dragos and Hoffman drained about \$20,000 in savings on their big day, which prevented them from taking a honeymoon or putting a 20 percent down payment on their first home a few months later.

"We ended up depleting a lot of accounts that we were hoping to not touch," Dragos, a clinical researcher for a pharmaceutical company, said of the wedding. "If we'd known how much it would end up costing, we probably would have eloped."

# The Washington Post

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AN ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT TO THE WASHINGTON POST

## How AI is improving recruitment strategy

By Bob Helbig

With the time-consuming and expensive nature of recruiting, many recruiting teams are turning to AI to save time, money and resources.

Recruiting is all about building the best teams possible. With AI, tedious tasks such as screening applicant experiences and scheduling interviews become less time-consuming, leaving room for building connections and diving into application data insights. From the applicant's perspective, things can happen much faster, too.

Here are six of the best ways to use artificial intelligence in recruitment.

**Candidate sourcing:** There are a lot of talented job seekers out there. Hiring teams use AI algorithms to identify top candidates from databases, job boards and social media. These tools improve recruiting productivity by reducing candidates' time from top-of-funnel to actual human-to-human connection.

**Candidate screening:** AI can help identify the most

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qualified ones at the click of a button. Whether it's a large or small volume to choose from, AI saves time and reduces unintentional biases in the recruiting process.

**Interview assistance:** Interviews are one of the most essential parts of the recruiting process. New tools streamline the interview process by crafting the most effective interview questions. Want to go a step further? AI can even perform its own interviews with facial and voice analysis insights.

**Talent assessments:** AI algorithms can analyze candidates' personality traits, performance strengths, weaknesses, skills and cultural fits. AI tools can even be customized to find people who match the soft and hard skills employers need. This new development increases the chances people match company culture and goals.

**Predictive analytics:** AI tools can predict hiring completion dates, budget forecasts, quality success rates and more. This takes the guesswork out of recruiting and keeps teams operating on effective timelines. Whatever you need help predicting, AI can help.

**Chatbots:** Questions often come up during recruiting and interviewing. Chatbots use AI algorithms and natural language processing tools to answer candidate FAQs quickly. With a large volume of candidates, chatbots can save time. Then, hiring teams can focus on more significant priorities.

Artificial intelligence is like hiring a cleaning service for your employee recruitment process. It cleans up wasted time, candidates' experience and biases in hiring.



Hiring teams no longer manually review job boards, answer repetitive questions or worry about missing applications. They spend less time on administrative tasks and more time on hiring strategy and execution, and that's something executive teams love to hear.

Best of all, AI can help at any time of day or night. Candidates often do their job searching after hours. It's helpful to have tools such as AI chatbots set up to answer questions 24/7. That way, candidates get timely responses and HR teams reduce delays.

When hiring teams have more time to strategize and get to know candidates, they can provide a more personalized experience to each candidate. Recruiting is all about making connections. AI tools give teams more time to make meaningful connections.

There's also the benefit of bias control. AI can help eliminate the biases in the recruitment process — intentional and unintentional. Many companies use AI to build diverse teams and an inclusive hiring strategy. That way, they can find the top talent with a perfect set of skills, even with a variety of backgrounds.

But beware, if not used correctly, AI tools themselves can be impersonal. Relying exclusively on AI risks sounding robotic, which is not good for relationship building. The more employers maintain a human touch in recruiting, the more they will stand out.

Bob Helbig is media partnerships director at Energage, an employee survey firm that is The Washington Post's survey partner for Top Workplaces. The production of this section did not involve the news or editorial staff of The Washington Post.

### A JOBS

**ACCOUNTANT (Jessup, MD)**  
Bachelor's degree in acctg./fin., 5 yrs experience in acctg./fin. software exp in distribution business essential. MS Excel, A/P, A/R, banking, budgeting, inventory receipts, audits. Email [har@tyvelements.com](mailto:har@tyvelements.com)

Accounting & Finance Specialist - Will maintain accounting & business records for business operations. Reconcile bank statements with P/L statements & balance sheets. Regs: Bach's or US equiv in business, international business, financial accounting or related. 1 yr exp as business manager, purchasing manager, accountant, accounting specialist or related. \$66,000 per year. Job in Fairfax, VA for FFC Management. Consider CV in salary reqs to FFC Management Corp, Attn: HR, 4016 Williamsburg Ct, Fairfax, VA 22032.

### Computer Packages Inc

Specializing in Intellectual Property Community Since 1988

### Accounts Receivable Specialist

Computer Packages Inc., a private company and world leader in intellectual property software, is seeking an Accounts Receivable Specialist with at least 5 years of A/R experience to work full-time at our headquarters office in Rockville, MD. Bachelor's degree and strong computer skills are preferred. Excellent salary and benefits including fully paid health insurance, 401k, relocation assistance, visa sponsorship and strong opportunity for growth. Resume only to [cpjobs@computerpackages.com](mailto:cpjobs@computerpackages.com)

### Administrative Assistant in Falls Church, VA

Req. 6 mos exp. in the job offered. Mail resumes to SES America, LLC, dba TAS Interiors, 7257 Lee Hwy, Ste. 1, Falls Church, VA 22042.

### ANALYST, INTEGRATION SERVICES AND AUTOMATION

SES America, Inc. (Washington, DC) Responsible for the development and operations of integration projects within the SES GROUP. Provide support for integration (both REST and streaming) projects and supports both internal and customer facing projects. Position requires up to 10% domestic travel. Remote work allowed 50% of time within commuting distance from the Washington DC office, 40 hrs. per week. Mail resumes to SES America, Inc., Attn: Kariy Osorio, Specialist, Employee Services, 8050 Piney Branch Ln, Bristow, VA 20136. Reference job # VV070824.

### Associate Regulatory Affairs Director

sought by AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP, Gaithersburg, MD (FT, M-F) - Lead the end-to-end planning, coord'n, & execution of assigned deliverables. Play a key role in contributing to regulatory submission strategy, identifying submission risks & opportunities, & leading regulatory agencies while managing procedures thru approval. BA or foreign equiv in Biology, Biotech., or rel. field, +5 yrs of resp exp in role or rel. Must have 5 yrs exp w/ leading submission strategy & execution of dossiers to global Regulatory Agencies w/in pharma indust. Reviewing & authoring of regulatory submission docs. Apply: <http://www.astrazenecareers.com>. Enter "R-206601" as the "Keyword," & click "Search Roles." No calls. EOE.

### A JOBS

**Attorney:** Prep patent app forms, provide consult on intellectual prop., patent & trademark law & reg. Research on patent & trademark infringement cases & PCT cases. Regs: Master of Law (LLM) degree from accredited U.S. Law School in intellectual prop. & admit to practice law in DC or US State & have a Bach in elect engg. Job location: Charlottesville, VA. Supervise multiple lab staff & complex laboratory activities & day-to-day operation of the lab's serv lab. Master's or equiv in Biotech, Molecular Biotech or rel. field & 4 yrs of exp as lab tech and/or supervisory role. Bkgrnd check reqd. See website for other reqs. Apply online at [www.tetra.com](https://www.tetra.com) or by mail to: Tetra Tech, Inc., 4010 Riverport Commons Dr, Front Royal, VA 22630. Ref: NSFC21.

### B JOBS

**Biotechnology:** University of Virginia. Lab Manager, Advanced Microscopy Facility. Charlotteville, VA. Supervise multiple lab staff & complex laboratory activities & day-to-day operation of the lab's serv lab. Master's or equiv in Biotech, Molecular Biotech or rel. field & 4 yrs of exp as lab tech and/or supervisory role. Bkgrnd check reqd. See website for other reqs. Apply online at [www.tetra.com](https://www.tetra.com) or by mail to: Tetra Tech, Inc., 4010 Riverport Commons Dr, Front Royal, VA 22630. Ref: NSFC21.

### C JOBS

**Business Manager in Alexandria, VA:** Plan & manage business operations of a business agency, direct admin activities directly related to the community service, food distribution and homelesn ministries. Visit locations within Arlington County and its SLS area. 40 hrs/week, Tue-Sun. Associate degree in business or equivalency reqd. Send application to Employer & Job location: Arlington Assembly of God at 4501 North Pershing Drive, Arlington, VA 22203

### C JOBS

**Chemist - Tetra Tech, Inc.** (Washington, DC) Must have PhD of legal authorization to work in U.S. Apply online at <https://www.tetra.com> or by mail to: Tetra Tech, Inc., 4010 Riverport Commons Dr, Front Royal, VA 22630. Ref: NSFC21.

### C JOBS

**Cook (FRONT ROYAL VA)** - assist chef to prep cook sauce, dishes & deserts, manage inventory, comply Health Food Syst. Rqrs two yrs of exp as cook or rel. in Nepali or Indian Cuisine. Mail resume to NS FOOD LLC dba Khukuri Cafe, Falls Church, VA. Apply at: [L703957538@163.com](mailto:L703957538@163.com)

### D JOBS

**DATA SCIENTIST 3:** Use statistical modeling, machine learning Python/R & SQL skills to develop predictive analytics capabilities for key corporate initiatives. WFH from home in U.S. F/T, \$112,803 - \$152,283. <https://careers.choicehotels.com/> benefits. Choice Hotels International Services Corp, North Bethesda, MD. Send CV to [jobposting@choicehotels.com](mailto:jobposting@choicehotels.com). Reference# R18210 on subject line. No calls/agents/visa sponsorship.

### D JOBS

**Travel:** 25% some travel may be required to work on projects at various, unanticipated sites throughout the United States and Internationally

### E JOBS

**Micro Technology, Inc.** has an opening for **Operations Improvement Engineer** in Manassas, VA. Job duties include: Responsible for analyzing and optimizing the performance of the production facility optimization, improving overall manufacturing efficiency and ensuring high product quality.

### F JOBS

**Fin Eng:** use advanced mathematical, analytic, computational, & econ tools to create algorithms for analyt or prod develop; dev models & algorithms support measuring service perform & level of credit risk; build quantitative analytic models & scalable software; provide analysis of new prod or asset classes; suggest fin prod modifications; propose new risk indicators for sr staff/manager approval & implementation; maintain & update econ models, perf metrics for models. Min reqts: MS Finance, Quantitative Finance, Econ Stats or rel field; 10 yrs exp in Econ Python & SQL req'd. Telecommuting benefit. Nat'l Telecommuting position anywhere in U.S. & perform work exclusively from work-at-home. Send res & cv to: Attn: HR, Entangle, LLC, 4000 Legato Rd, Ste 1100, Fairfax, VA 22033. No emails or tel. calls. EOE.

### G JOBS

**Kiewit Engineering Group Inc.** has an opening for **Instrumentation & Controls Engineer 2 (KWIT-VA23-SRIM)** - Conduct electrical engineering design & field survey, assessment & field site, analyze customer needs & data. Travel required 10%. Resume to [Kiewit.Recruit@kiewit.com](mailto:Kiewit.Recruit@kiewit.com) & specify Job ID# in the subject line. EOE.

### JOB

**Bechtel Manufacturing & Technology Inc.** has an opening in Reston, VA for **Assistant Project Engineer I&C Design Manager**. Interface with our customer on detailed design development interface for LSS and telecom systems. Position requires a Bach degree or a foreign degree equiv in Instrumentation, Systems, or Elec Eng or a related degree or a foreign degree equiv in any occupation in which the req'd exp was gained. Various unanticipated locations. Relocation possible. To apply email resume to [bechteljobs@bechtel.com](mailto:bechteljobs@bechtel.com) & ref job #7429262.

### JOB

**Executive Secretary Job/res/Ad:** Le Ara Beauty, 7535 Little River Turnpike, Unit 325C, Annandale, VA, 22003

### JOB

**Head of Public Engagement** for Medical Society seeks Head of Public Engagement in College Park, MD to lead, supervise, and train staff in public engagement and physics education activities for K-12 and adults; write grant proposals; coordinate research and author publications on original physics education material; and deliver physics lectures to the public. Reg's Master's in Physics or related & 4 years' experience in public engagement & outreach. Telecommuting permitted. To apply, mail resume to Timera Pipkin, American Physical Society, 1115 Wilson Blvd, Suite 1000, Arlington, VA 22204. ATTN: HPE, 1 Physics Ellipse, College Park, MD 20740.

### JOB

**Contractors Solutions, Inc.** is looking for Medical Technicians to work in the Aldie, VA area. Position requires: Bachelor's degree in medical technology, Life Science, or Medical Laboratory Science; ASCP Certification or AMT Certification; and +5 years of experience as a medical technologist. May be asked to provide services at unanticipated work-site locations.

### JOB

**BA in Econ, Acct., or bus. related field req'd.** Direct & indirect sales & distribution, pricing, sales & distribution. \$73,278-\$74,000/yr. Mail CV Anatolian Art LLC dba Astra, 2200 Wisconsin Ave, NW, Wash, DC 20007.

### JOB

**DENTIST** Dental Professionals of VA seeks Dentist in Manassas, VA to treat patients & provide dental services. Resume: 2100 Network Center Dr. Ste. 2 Fillingham, IL 62401

### JOB

**Dietitian:** Sodexo, Inc. - Dietitian Nutritionist 2 - Healthcare (Multiple Positions) in Bethesda, MD and various unanticipated client locations throughout the U.S. Functions as a nutrition resource to assigned patient care areas, developing peers, and food service staff to ensure the provision of safe, high-quality care. Req's Master's degree in Nutrition OR Bachelor's degree in Nutrition or a related field & 3 years of clinical nutrition work experience. Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RD/RDN). Certification/licensure as required by state(s) of practice. TO APPLY: Please apply directly online at <https://jobs.us.sodexo.com/> and reference job ID: 9743243

### JOB

**Imgrtn prgrl, req 2y lgl exp + Assoc. dgr in lgl stds or rtd, asst atty's w imm & crt flngs, rsch, work in lts. Law Firm 3920 Walnut St., Ste 200, Fairfax, VA 22030**

### JOB

**Installation Supervisor** in Baltimore, MD. Inspect, test & measure completed cabinet installation work; inspect & monitor work areas; examine tools & equipment; monitor day-to-day work of cabinet installers. High School/GED. Attn: HR, Entangle, LLC, 4000 Legato Rd, Ste 1100, Fairfax, VA 22033. No emails or tel. calls. EOE.

### JOB

**Merchandise LLC** DBA Air Grilles is seeking a 3D Prototyping and Design Coordinator. (Herndon, VA) Liaise w/ team to make decisions for all 3D printing processes for prototypes & production. Manage allocation. 24 Mos Exp in the job or in the 3D Printing Industry. M-F, 40 hrs/Wk. Send resume & cover letter to: L.S. Law Firm 3920 Walnut St., Ste 200, Fairfax, VA 22030

### JOB

**Office Helpers:** assist to copy, sort, scan docs, organize files, stock office supplies & rel. duties. HS/GED or for. equiv. Send resumes to: Allanza Management, LLC, Attn: Monica, 18572 Office Park Drive, Montgomery Village, MD 20886

### JOB

**Handloom Weaver - HS Diplo., or frng. equiv. & 24 mths. of exp. req'd.** Set up & operate hand power looms & machines to weave fiber into fabric, rugs & carpet, or to knit by hand. \$39,996/41,000/yr. Mail CV Anatolian Art LLC dba Azam Rugs, 2200 Wisconsin Ave, NW, Wash, DC 20007.

### JOB

**Caregivers sought** by House Calls Home Care LLC in Springfield, Virginia. Multiple F/T positions available. Responsibilities include providing health & dental care, activities of daily living, from personal care, light housework, meal assistance, to companionship. Work performed in the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-Wash Metro area. Send resume to [info@virginiahomecare.com](mailto:info@virginiahomecare.com)

### JOB

**Java Developer** Computer Packages Inc., an international software company specializing in Intellectual Property software is seeking Java Developers with at least three years practical experience. You will be responsible for design, development and management of Java-based applications. Knowledge of Jasper, Spring-Boot and/or Angular a plus. Apart from experience with Java we're seeking someone with solid database structure knowledge and analytical skills. B.S. in Computer Science or other technical major preferred. Recent or upcoming graduates are encouraged to apply. Excellent benefits including tuition reimbursement and opportunity for advancement. Please send resume to: [cpjobs@computerpackages.com](mailto:cpjobs@computerpackages.com).

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### JOB

**Software Developers/DevOps Engineer-Multiple Openings-Ashburn, VA**

### JOB

**Work using Jenkins, Docker, Kubernetes, Terraform, Python, Bash, AWS, Azure, GCP.**

### JOB

**Req. - Bachelor's with 2yrs exp w/ Selenium Web Driver using Selenium Web Driver in multiplatform environment. Reply to: Softrams, LLC, 161 Fort Evans Road NE, 2205 Leesburg, VA 20176**

### JOB

**Software Quality Assurance Analyst, Leesburg, VA:** Limited domestic travel, telecommute and/or occasional relocation to multiple client locations nationwide to create test scenarios/test cases for black box, grey box testing using multiple testing techniques that include Use Case, Boundary Value, Equivalence Partitioning, Decision Table, etc. Design/Dev team (hybrid automation framework) work using Selenium Web Driver in multiplatform environment. Reply to: Softrams, LLC, 161 Fort Evans Road NE, 2205 Leesburg, VA 20176

### JOB

**Find a job.** [washingtonpost.com](https://www.washingtonpost.com)

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**Find more jobs.** [washingtonpost.com](https://www.washingtonpost.com)

### JOB

**Head of Public Engagement** for Medical Society seeks Head of Public Engagement in College Park, MD to lead, supervise, and train staff in public engagement and physics education activities for K-12 and adults; write grant proposals; coordinate research and author publications on original physics education material; and deliver physics lectures to the public. Reg's Master's in Physics or related & 4 years' experience in public engagement & outreach. Telecommuting permitted. To apply, mail resume to Timera Pipkin, American Physical Society, 1115 Wilson Blvd, Suite 1000, Arlington, VA 22204. ATTN: HPE, 1 Physics Ellipse, College Park, MD 20740.

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### JOB

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### JOB

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### JOB

**Handloom Weaver - HS Diplo., or frng. equiv. & 24 mths. of exp. req'd.** Set up & operate hand power looms & machines to weave fiber into fabric, rugs & carpet, or to knit by hand. \$39,996/41,000/yr. Mail CV Anatolian Art LLC dba Azam Rugs, 2200 Wisconsin Ave, NW, Wash, DC 20007.

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**Java Developer** Computer Packages Inc., an international software company specializing in Intellectual Property software is seeking Java Developers with at least three years practical experience. You will be responsible for design, development and management of Java-based applications. Knowledge of Jasper, Spring-Boot and/or Angular a plus. Apart from experience with Java we're seeking someone with solid database structure knowledge and analytical skills. B.S. in Computer Science or other technical major preferred. Recent or upcoming graduates are encouraged to apply. Excellent benefits including tuition reimbursement and opportunity for advancement. Please send resume to: [cpjobs@computerpackages.com](mailto:cpjobs@computerpackages.com).

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Tech Jobs

Computer/IT: CGI Technologies & Solutions Inc. seeks Software Developer in Fairfax, VA...

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Tech Jobs

Sanit IT Solutions, Inc., Herndon, VA has multiple positions open for Web Developers...

Tech Jobs

Lead Software Engineer @ Mastercard International (Arlington, VA)...

Tech Jobs

SAF CONSULTANT Herndon, VA & various unanticipated locations throughout the U.S....

Tech Jobs

Pure Integration, LLC seeks 3 Software QA Analysts to develop & execute software tests...

Tech Jobs

Software Engineer The Washington Post has multiple openings for a Software Engineer in Washington, DC...

Tech Jobs

TECHNOLOGY Infrastructure LLC has multiple openings in Manassas, VA. Applications Developer Specialists (\$139,589.00/yr)...

Computer/IT: CGI Technologies & Solutions Inc. seeks Software Engineer in Fairfax, VA...

Computer/IT: CGI Technologies & Solutions Inc. seeks Software Developer in Fairfax, VA...

Computer/IT: CGI Technologies & Solutions Inc. seeks Software Developer in Fairfax, VA...

Senior Manager, Application Security - Bloomberg Industry Group, Inc. - Arlington, VA - Take a leadership role...

Ciphermine, Inc., Herndon, VA has multiple positions open for Web Developers...

Operations Research: Independent Project Analyst, Inc. seeks an Associate Research Analyst in Ashburn, VA...

Senior Data Analyst Moxie IT Solutions Inc. seeking Senior Data Analyst (WFOE) in Ashburn, VA...

SOFTWARE DEVELOPER Multiple openings available for following position in Herndon, VA...

Technical Consultant Daon seeks a Technical Consultant in Fairfax, VA to conduct solutions workshops...

Post your resume and get found by employers. washingtonpost.com The local expert on local jobs.

Computer/IT: CGI Technologies & Solutions Inc. seeks Software Developer in Fairfax, VA...

Computer/IT: CGI Technologies & Solutions Inc. seeks Software Developer in Fairfax, VA...

Computer Network Specialist GL Intelligence, Inc. is seeking a Computer Network Specialist to analyze network data...

IT-AAA Virginia Consulting INC has Multiple Openings in Leesburg, VA...

Oracle Procurement Cloud Consultant Ashburn, VA & Various Unanticipated Locations Throughout the U.S....

Senior Data Analyst: Moxie IT Solutions Inc. seeking Senior Data Analyst (WFOE) in Ashburn, VA...

SOFTWARE DEVELOPERS ITSTAC, LLC, Sterling, VA, seeks Software Developers. This is a full-time position...

Software Developer IT & IT seeks Software Developer to design the architecture and develop digital platforms...

Technical Program Manager Anira Solutions (Ashburn, VA) seeks Technical Program Manager to execute end to end complex tech projects...

Find the most Washington-area jobs. washingtonpost.com The local expert on local jobs.

Computer/IT: CGI Technologies & Solutions Inc. seeks Software Engineer in Fairfax, VA...

Computer/IT: CGI Technologies & Solutions Inc. seeks Software Developer in Fairfax, VA...

Computer/IT: University of Maryland, College Park Research Analyst - College Park, MD - Support the data reporting needs of the Office of Enrollment Management...

Informatica Administrator Open Text, Inc. Gaithersburg, MD Administration of the Informatica systems Power Center...

IT Professionals: Ent. Lvl to Sen. Lvl Sftwr Engrs are needed for our Herndon, VA Office...

Programmer Analyst Advanced Management Technology, Inc. (Arlington, VA) Must have proof of legal authorization to work in U.S....

Senior Data Analyst: Moxie IT Solutions Inc. seeking Senior Data Analyst (WFOE) in Ashburn, VA...

Software Developer - Develop/create/modify comp apps & dev/design software solutions per user needs...

Software Engineers (multiple positions): MS in Comp. Sc/Eng related with 1 yr exp. Expertise in Adv. Computer Arch, Internet & Network tech...

Search 20,000 job listings by location. washingtonpost.com The local expert on local jobs.

Computer/IT: CGI Technologies & Solutions Inc. seeks Software Engineer in Fairfax, VA...

Computer/IT: CGI Technologies & Solutions Inc. seeks Software Developer in Fairfax, VA...

Computer/IT: University of Maryland, College Park Research Analyst - College Park, MD - Support the data reporting needs of the Office of Enrollment Management...

IT Professionals: Ent. Lvl to Sen. Lvl (multiple positions) Salesforce Dvlpers, Sftwr Dvprs, Bus Intllgnc Analysts, Data Engrs, Sftw Engrs, DBAs, Net Dvlpers, Sftw Dvlpers, QA Analysts, Sftwr Dvlpers, & Network Engrs...

IT Professionals: Ent. Lvl to Sen. Lvl (multiple positions) Salesforce Dvlpers, Sftwr Dvprs, Bus Intllgnc Analysts, Data Engrs, Sftw Engrs, DBAs, Net Dvlpers, Sftw Dvlpers, QA Analysts, Sftwr Dvlpers, & Network Engrs...

Pure Integration, LLC seeks 3 Software QA Analysts to develop & execute software tests to identify & address software issues...

Software Engineer - Develop/create/modify comp apps & dev/design software solutions per user needs to optimize operational efficiency...

Software Engineers (multiple positions): MS in Comp. Sc/Eng related with 1 yr exp. Expertise in Adv. Computer Arch, Internet & Network tech...

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Find an entry-level job. washingtonpost.com The local expert on local jobs.

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washingtonpost.com/classifieds. The local expert on local jobs. homes for sale, commercial real estate, rentals, merchandise, garage sales, auctions, tickets, dogs, cats, birds, fish, Trustee Sales 202-334-5782, mypublicnotices.com/washingtonpost/PublicNotice.asp

For Recruitment advertisements, go to washingtonpost.com/recruit or call 202-334-4100 (toll free 1-800-765-3675). To place an ad, go to washingtonpostads.com or call 202-334-6200. Legal Notices: 202-334-7007. Auctions, Estate Sales, Furniture: 202-334-7029. Biz Ops/Services: 202-334-5787.

Official Notices. All medical records retained by R. Patrick Savage, Jr., Ph.D. will be destroyed after September 15, 2024.

Bids & Proposals. THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HOUSING AUTHORITY. INVITATION FOR BID (IFB) SOLICITATION NO. 47-2024. ON-CALL GENERAL REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE FOR DCHA PROPERTIES.

MD Real Estate Auctions. BANK FORECLOSURE AUCTION. Valuable Commercial/Residential Parcel in Odenton, MD.

Seashore Sales. Delaware \$1,295,000. Beautiful 3-story 11,050 sqft Bayside Virginia A-frame chateau by Bryce Mountain Resort in Timbershire.

Time Shares, Rentals, Sales. Bayside Virginia 11,050 sqft Bayside Virginia A-frame chateau by Bryce Mountain Resort in Timbershire.

Found. HOWARD CO. ANIMAL CONTROL. U.S. dog found on animal in the Howard County/Washington Metro area.

Dogs for Sale. MAJESTIC POODLES YORKIES. Purebred, NOT mixed, located in Rutherford, NJ.

Give the gift of awareness. Gift subscriptions. washingtonpost.com/my-post

WELL+BEING. Tips and guidance on food, fitness and mental health. washingtonpost.com/wellbeing

Bids & Proposals. THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HOUSING AUTHORITY. REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) SOLICITATION NO. 47-2024. General Consulting Services.

MD Real Estate Auctions. BANK FORECLOSURE AUCTION. Valuable Commercial/Residential Parcel in Odenton, MD.

Social Announcements. JONIC CARING INC. A NON PROFIT IN WDC INVITES YOU TO THEIR 2024 WORD OF GOD TOWN ARE BETTER THAN ONE by a session of Word of God on Sunday August 11, 2024.

Garage Sales, MD. YARD SALE 9/25: Labels Dr Chevy Chase, lots of cool stuff.

Dogs for Sale. Shichon Teddybear Puppy. Adorable Shichon Teddybear puppy for sale. Local home breeder.

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SUNDAY, AUGUST 11, 2024

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Montgomery County

HUESMAN, JONES AND MILES, LLC Hunt Valley, MD 21031 SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES' AUCTION SILVER SPRING RESIDENTIAL LOT 0.261± Acre Zoned R90 Sale On Premises 708 HOLLYWOOD AVE. Lot 43, Block G, Hollywood Park Montgomery County, MD 20904 TUES., AUG. 20, 2024 AT 11:00 A.M.

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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA Roommates

NW PENTHOUSE - Large furn room in quiet home. Close to shopping. on busline. \$895. 301-529-5430

MARYLAND Roommates

CAP HEIGHTS Sub-Sr/ds. rehab home. rms avail. 2 BA 2 kit. \$650-SD, w/d, util inc. 202-568-0792



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The Washington Post Jobs

FEATURED EMPLOYERS SPOTLIGHT

JOBSEEKERS: Washington Post Featured Employers are D.C.'s largest and most prominent organizations. They include employers across a range of industries, like IT, accounting, healthcare, and government, and are hiring candidates today!

This spotlight showcases a small sample of our Featured Employers, allowing you to learn about each company and some of the thousands of jobs they are currently hiring for. Check out the FE Spotlight each Sunday to discover new D.C. area companies.

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Featured Employers of The Week

Adventist HealthCare HealthCare-We are a faith-based healthcare organization, based in Montgomery County, Maryland. We are the largest employer in Montgomery County, with over 6,000 employees!

George Mason University Education-George Mason University is a university with three campuses, each with a distinctive academic focus that plays a critical role in the economy of its region.

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Delivery and Transportation-The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority operates the second largest rail transit system in the United States.

Dewberry Engineering-Dewberry is a leading, market-facing professional services firm with more than 50 locations and 2,000 professionals nationwide.

Westat Research-Westat, headquartered in Rockville, Maryland, near Washington, D.C., is an employee-owned research corporation serving agencies of the U.S. Government, state and local governments, businesses, and foundations.

SHEEHY AUTOSTORES Automotive-In 1966, Sheehy Ford began as a small, suburban, family-owned car dealership just off the Washington, D.C. Beltway.

Fairfax County Government Government and Public Services-Fairfax County, Virginia is a diverse and thriving urban county. As the most populous jurisdiction in both Virginia and the Washington metropolitan area,

Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Airport Operations/Management-The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority operates a two-airport system that provides domestic and international air service for the mid-Atlantic region.

Fairfax Water Science-Fairfax County Water Authority (Fairfax Water) is Virginia's largest water utility, serving one out of every five Virginians who obtain their water from public utilities.

Alexandria City Public Schools Education-Alexandria City Public Schools is one of the most diverse school systems in the country and we celebrate that diversity.

MIL The MIL Corporation (MIL) Government Contractor-Established in 1980, MIL provides innovative cyber, engineering, financial, and information technology services to the federal government.

AARP Associations-AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, social welfare organization with a membership of nearly 38 million. Our aim is to disrupt preconceived notions about aging.

Capital One Financial Services and Banking-We Don't Only Think Big Things-At Capital One, We Do Big Things. You're dedicated to your career. You deserve professional satisfaction and personal fulfillment.

ENSCO, Inc Technology and Software-ENSCO, Inc. represent a \$165 million international technology enterprise with over 750 employees headquartered in the Washington, D.C., area.

Rigil Corporation Engineering-Rigil is an award-winning strategy, technology, and products company committed to making life better for every individual and community they support.

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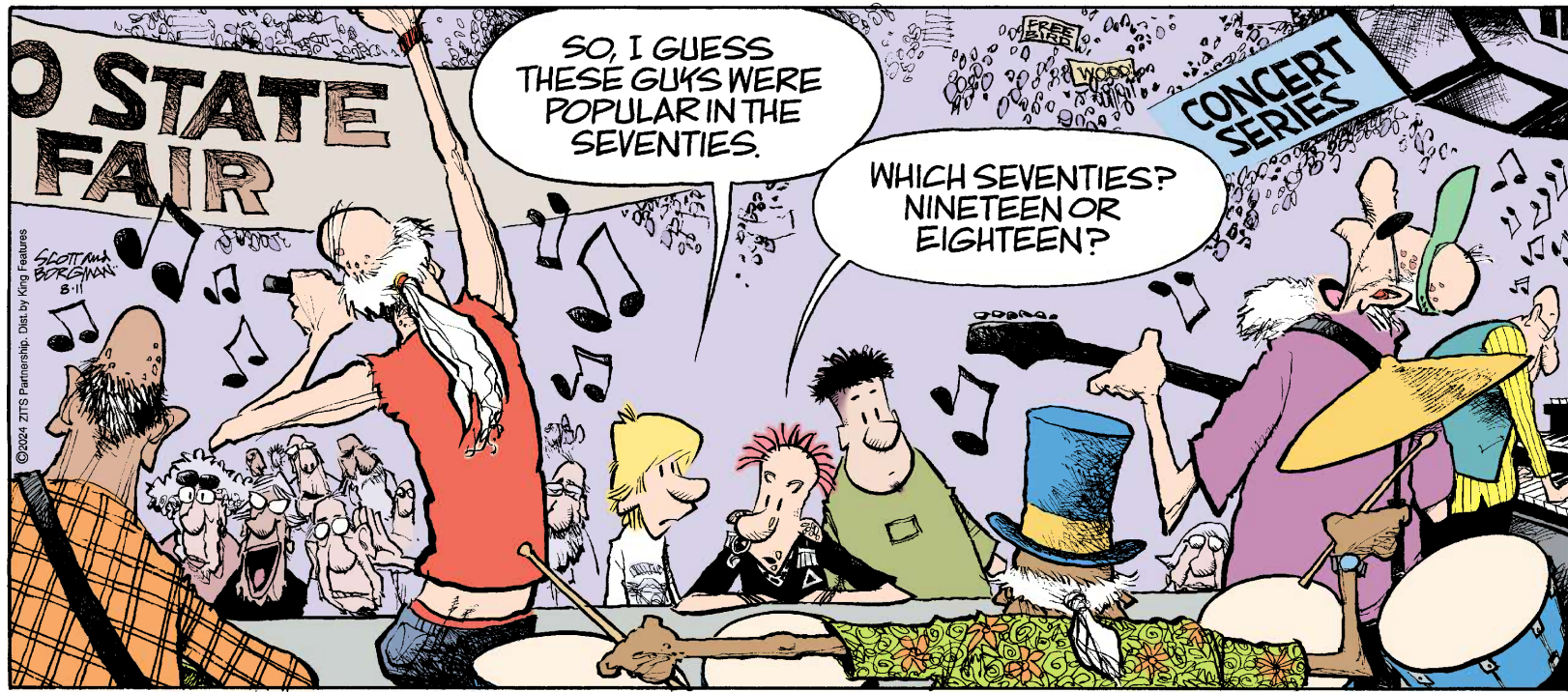
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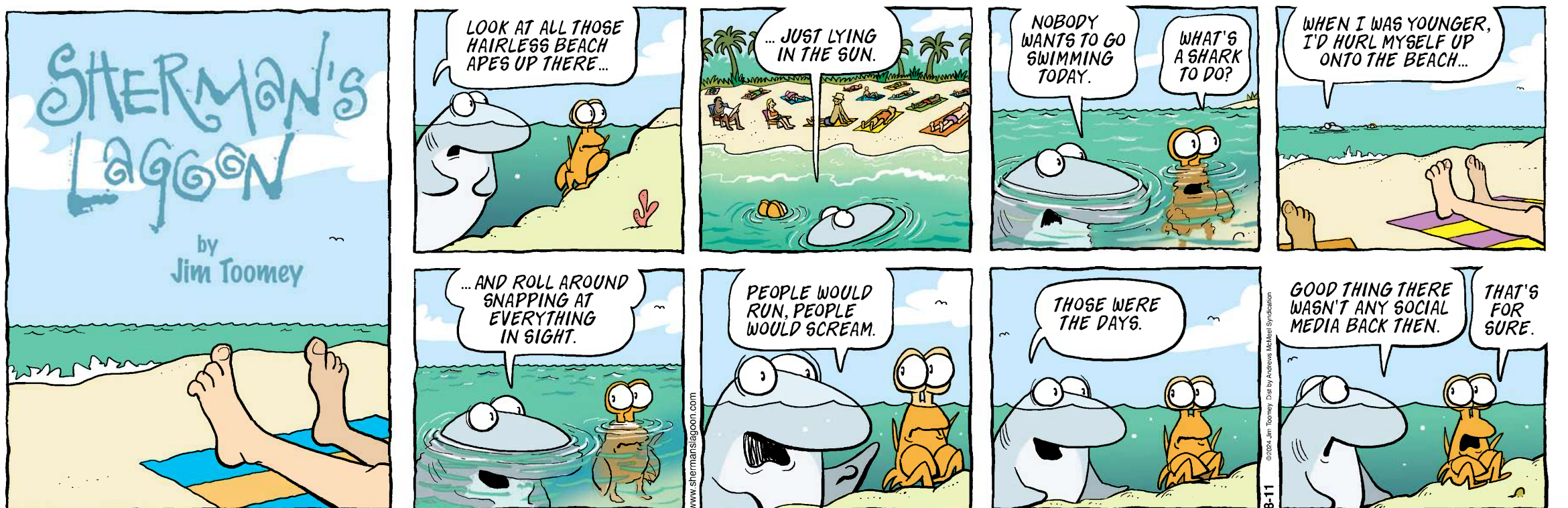
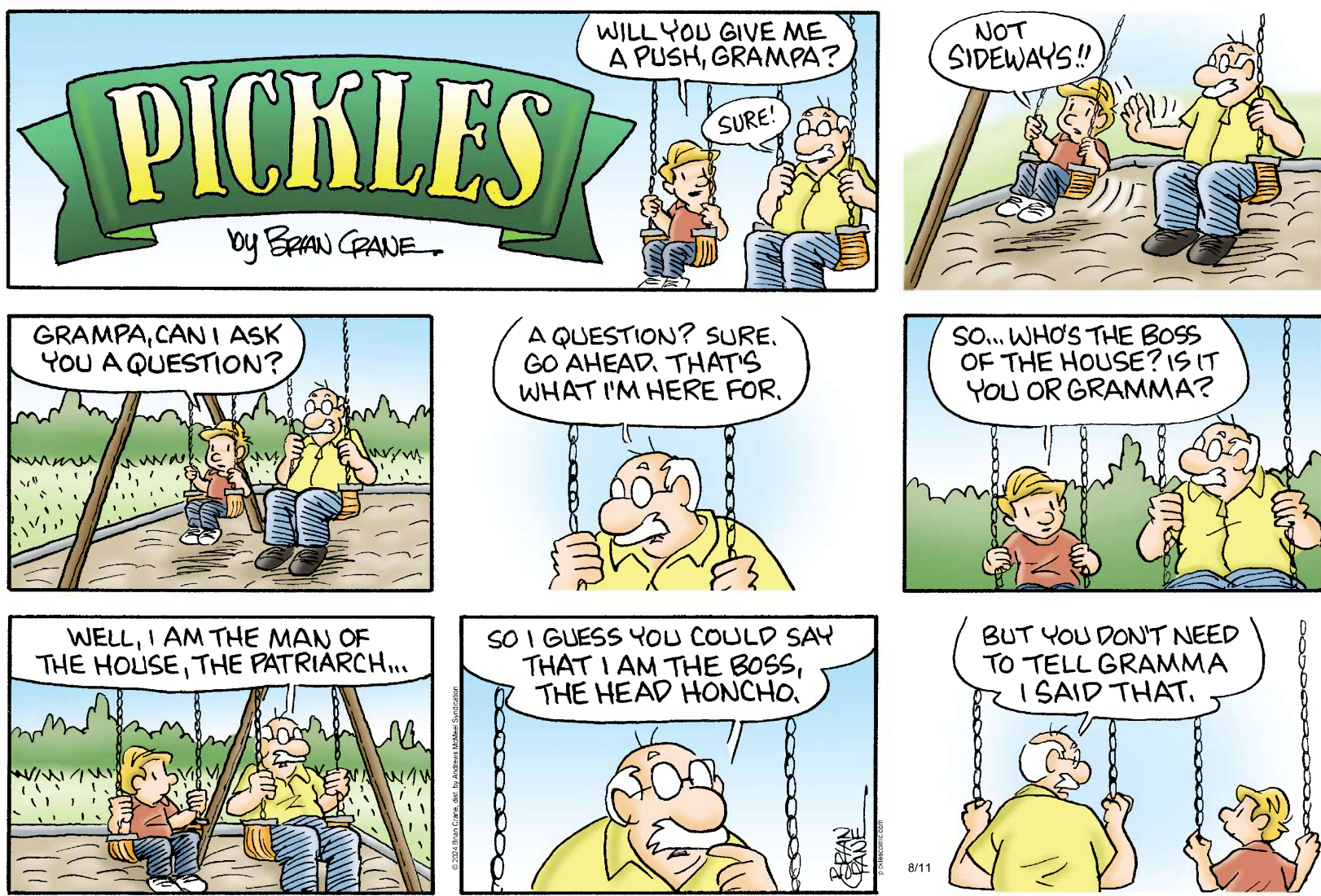
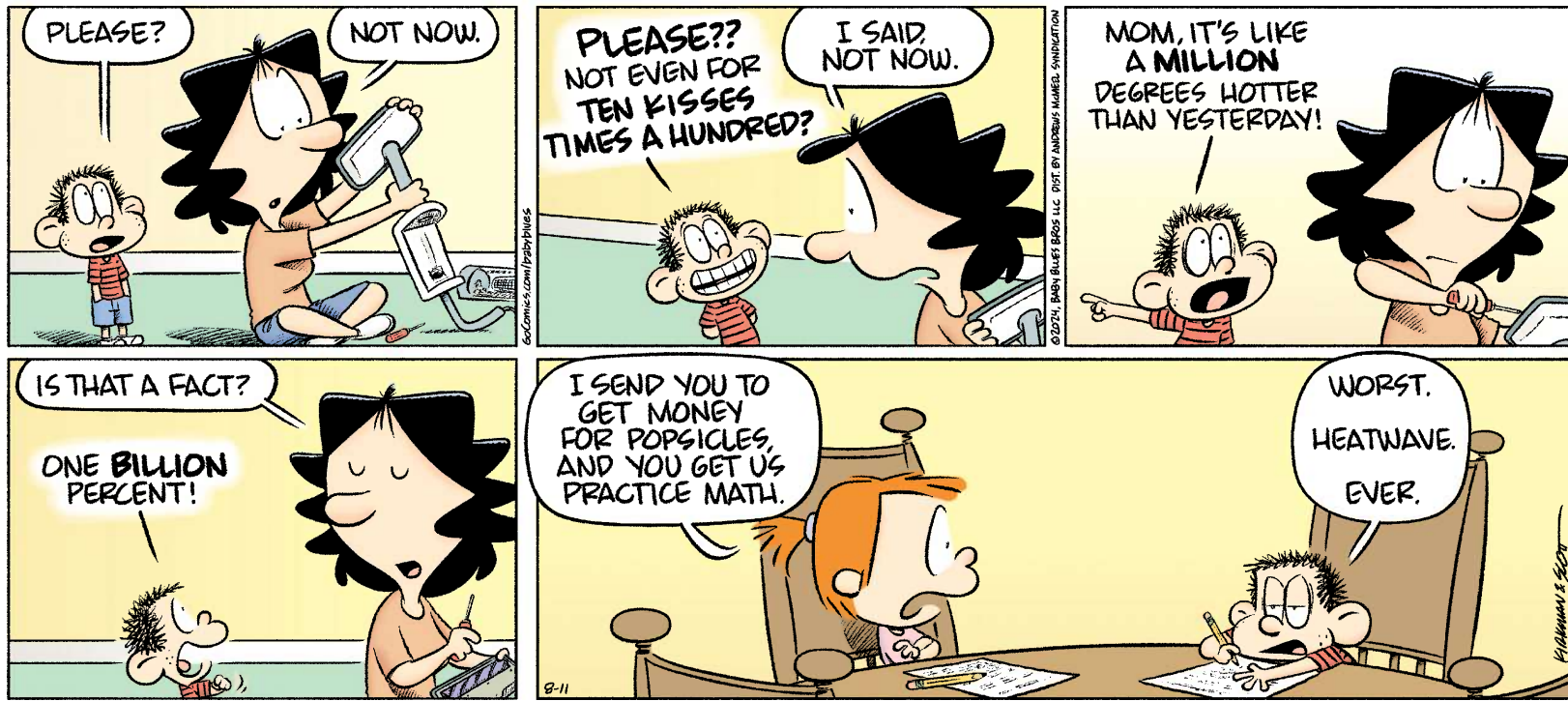
ZITS

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



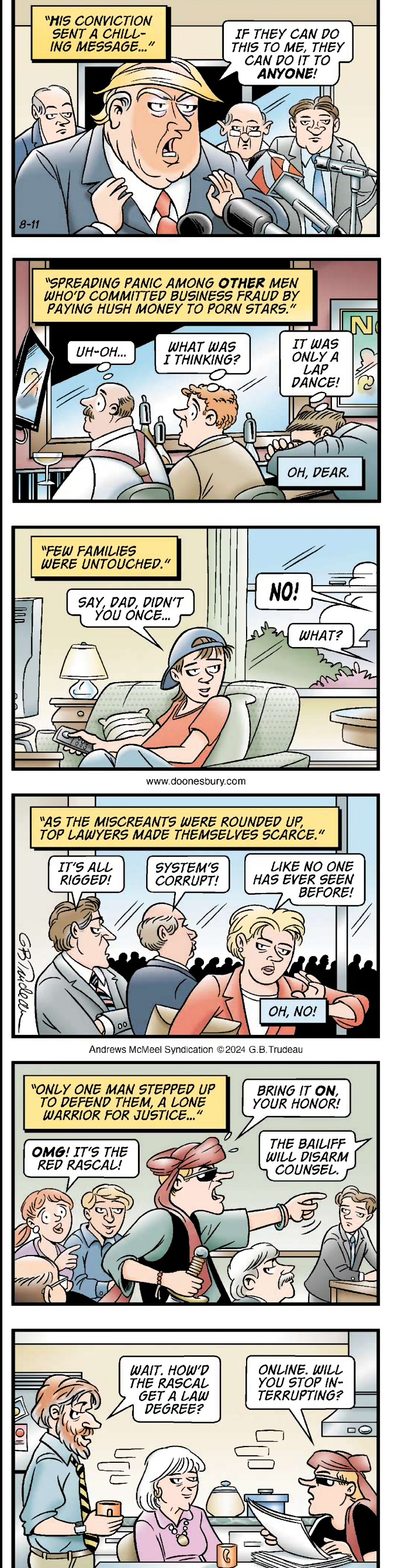
BABY BLUES

By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



DOONESBURY

By Garry Trudeau



# CANDORVILLE

by DARRIN BEL

I'VE GOT A BEAUTIFUL FOUR-BEDROOM HOME ON 30 ACRES, WITH A POND AND AN ORCHARD. I LOVE IT.

I SEE. AND HOW DOES THAT FEEL? IT MAKES ME FEEL WHITE HOT RAGE, AND I TOLD THEM SO.

BUT SQUATTERS MOVED IN AND THEY REFUSE TO LEAVE.

AND HOW DOES THAT MAKE YOU FEEL? THEY RESPONDED WITH SOME NONSENSE ABOUT HOW IF I LIKED IT SO MUCH I SHOULD'VE BOUGHT IT BEFORE THEY DID.

LET'S... SCHEDULE A FEW YEARS OF SESSIONS.

WHAT PART OF "I WAS GOING TO BUY THIS FOR ME AND MY FAMILY" DON'T THEY UNDERSTAND?

HOW DID THEY RESPOND? DID THEY VALIDATE YOUR FEELINGS?

NO.

Dr. NOODLE

©2024 Darrin Bel. Art by King Features Syndicate. BUY CANDORVILLE BOOKS AT WWW.CANDORVILLE.COM

## DENNIS THE MENACE

By Hank Ketcham

LOOK, DAD! I LOST ANOTHER TOOTH!

GO I SEE!

WE'LL PUT IT UNDER YOUR PILLOW!

THE TOOTH FAIRY WILL LEAVE YOU A QUARTER!

©2024 Hank Ketcham. Art by Hank Ketcham. BUY DENNIS THE MENACE BOOKS AT WWW.DENNISTHEMENACE.COM

## THE ARGYLE SWEATER

By Scott Hilburn

HON, DO YOU MIND WARMING UP MY COFFEE?

SURE.

OH, THAT'S PERFECT. THANK YOU.

PUTTING HOT FLASHES TO WORK

©2024 Scott Hilburn/Distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication

NO WAY!

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## FRAZZ

By Jef Mallett

WELL, HELLO, CAULFIELD. WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

WATCHING THE BIRDS.

OH! BIRD-WATCHING!

THIS IS A PROBLEM. I JUST LIKE WATCHING BIRDS.

BUT APPARENTLY THAT'S INSUFFICIENT.

I NEED TO IDENTIFY THEM, NOTE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THEM, TAKE NOTES AND CATALOG THEM.

OH, FOR...

I NEED TO BE A "BIRDWATCHER."

WAS THAT MRS. OLSEN?

YOU MEAN THE RASPY-THROATED FUNSCOTCHER?

©2024 Jef Mallett/Distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication

I'M TAKING IT TO JOEY'S TO PUT UNDER HIS PILLOW.

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THE TOOTH FAIRY LEAVES HIM A DOLLAR!

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# Lio

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ZOMBIE GHOW

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# BARNEY

by Kevin Dopart & Clark

Now this part of the cognitive test is based on familiar image recognition.

What's this? Banana.

And this? Banana.

And this? Orange.

Why the worried look, doctor?

Mr. Pillsbury, your responses are extremely...

But orange you glad I didn't say "banana" again?

It's an old joke.

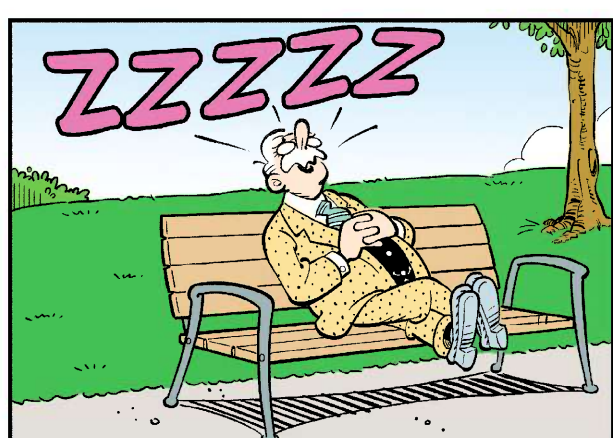
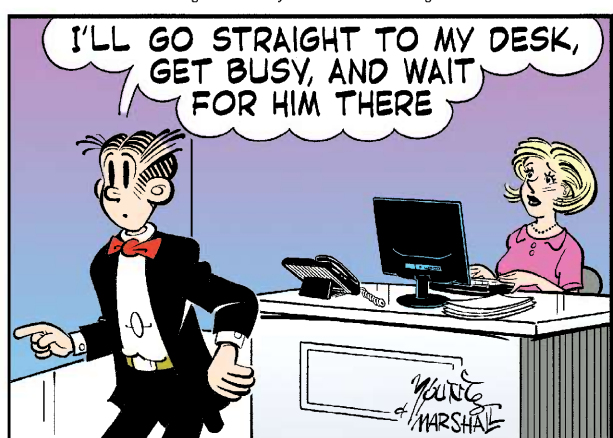
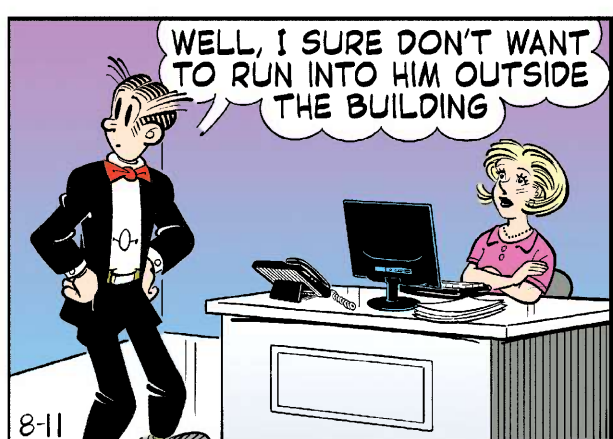
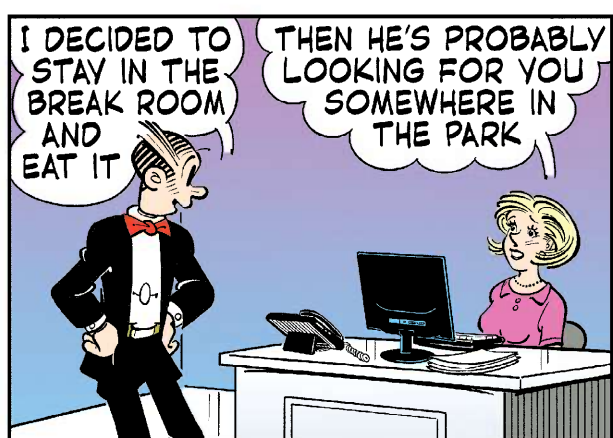
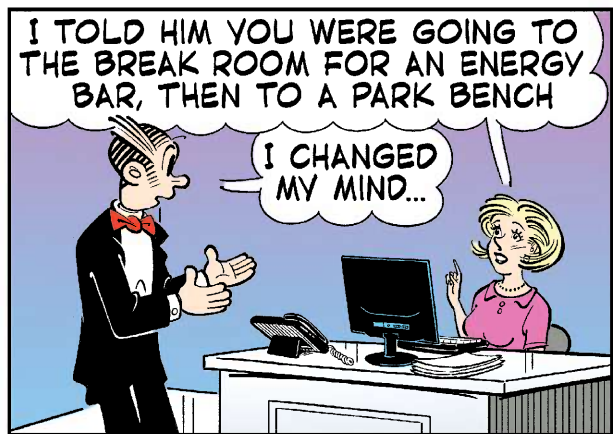
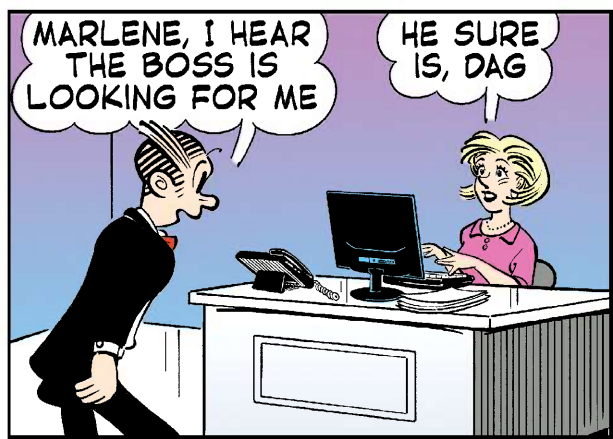
Yes, but brilliantly deployed.

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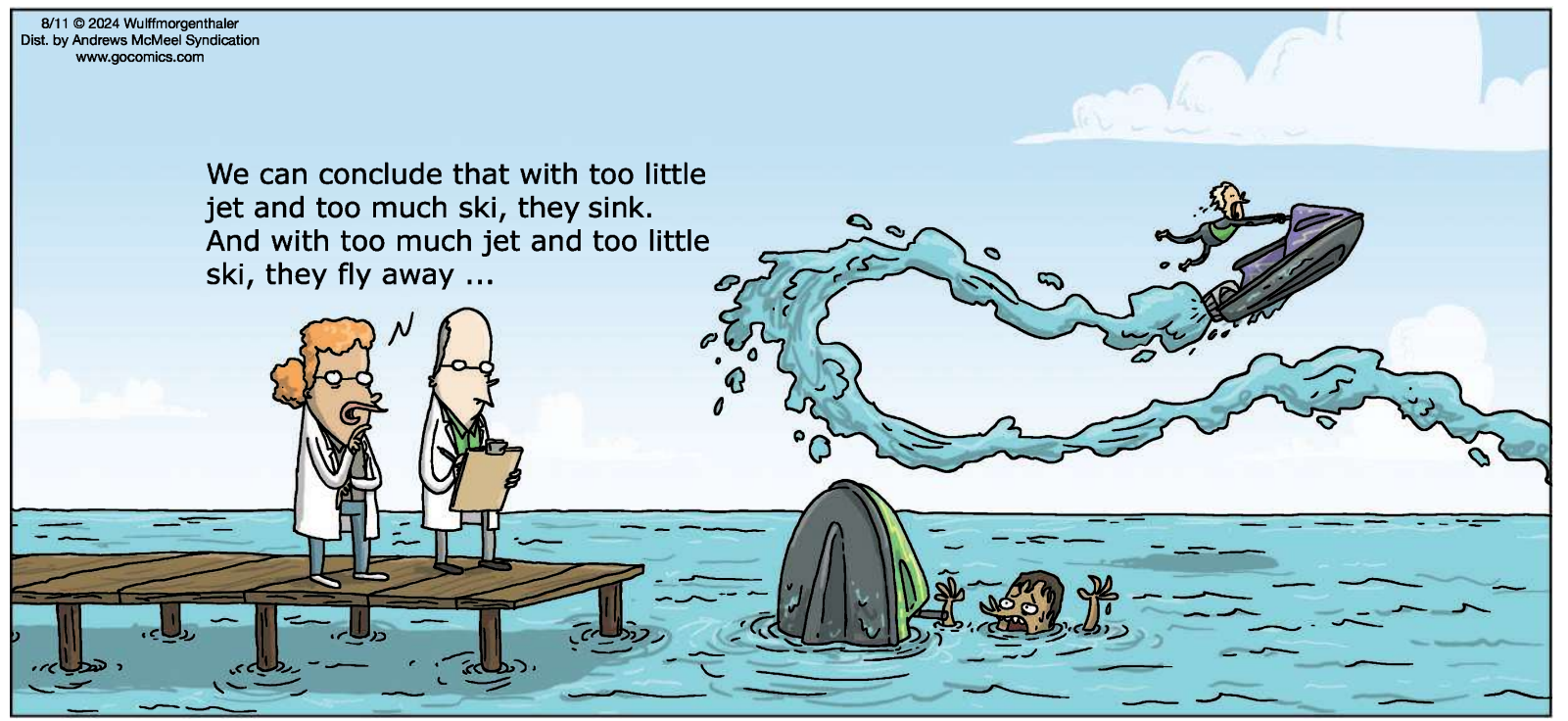




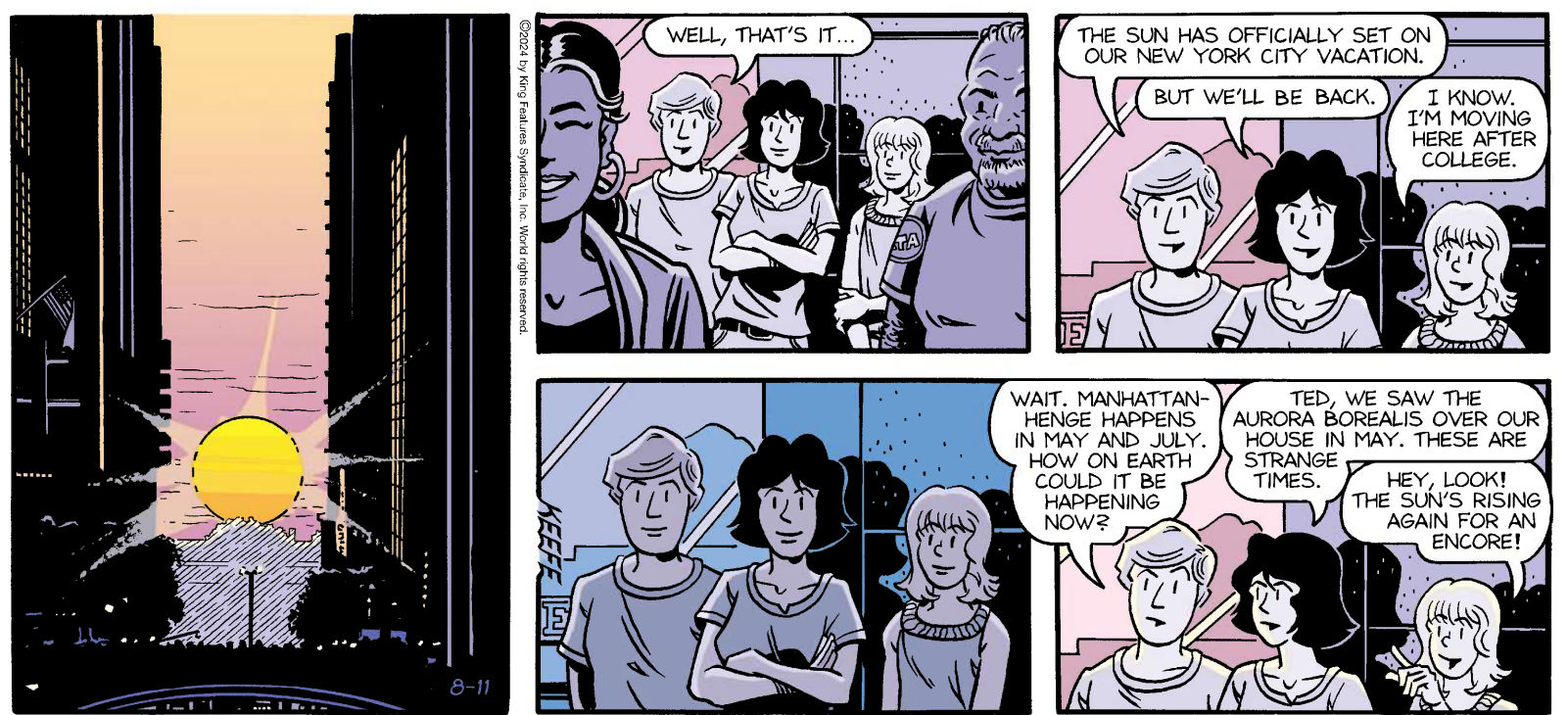
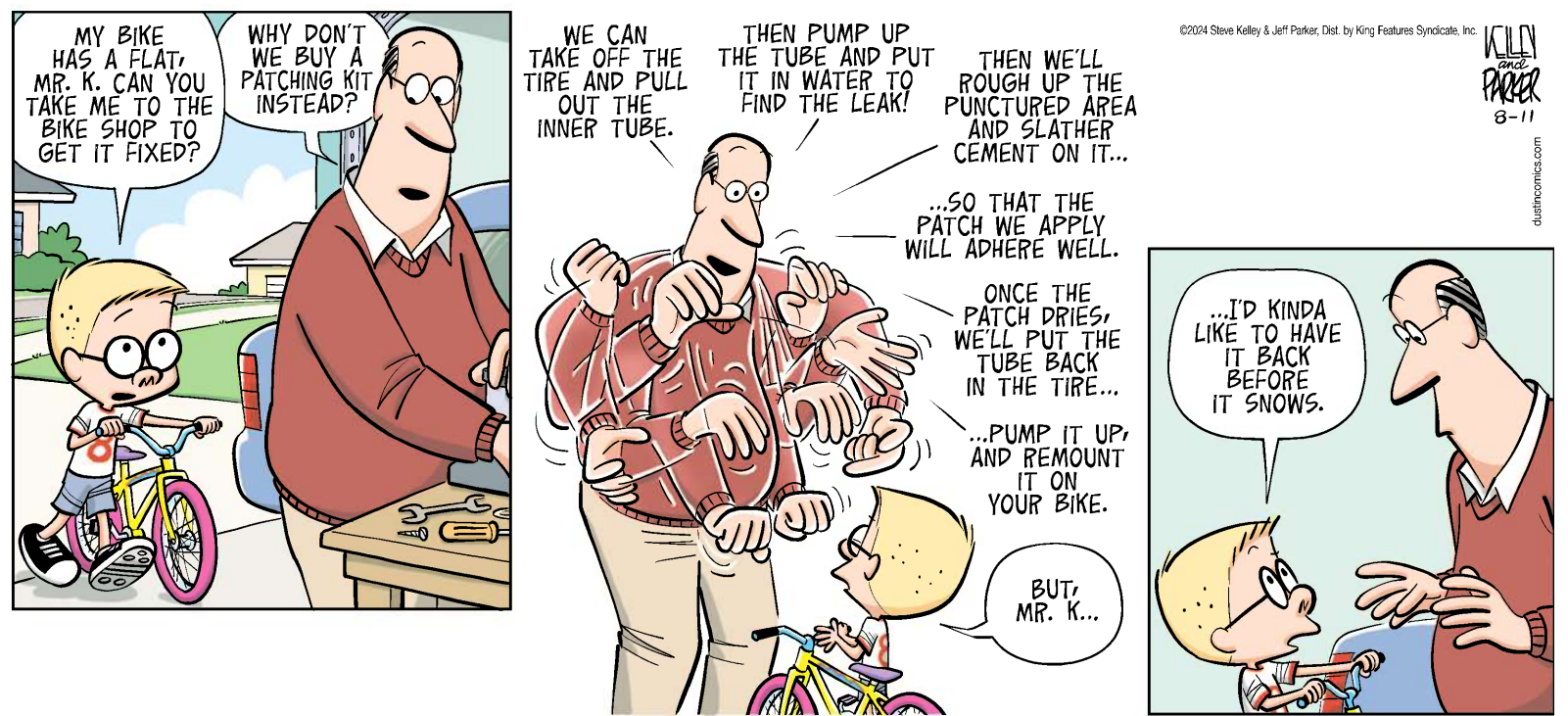
BLONDIE By Dean Young & John Marshall



WUMO



DUSTIN



BIG NATE



REPLY ALL LITE



LOOSE PARTS



**JUMBLE KIDS**  
THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME!  
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

The letters of these crazy words are all mixed up. To play the game, put them back into the right order so that they make real words you can find in your dictionary. Write the letters of each real word under each crazy word, but only one letter to a square.

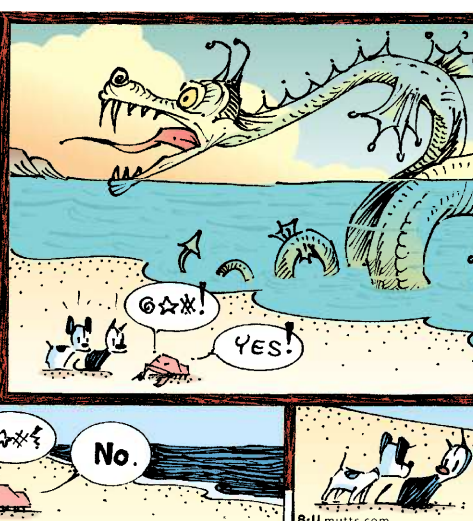
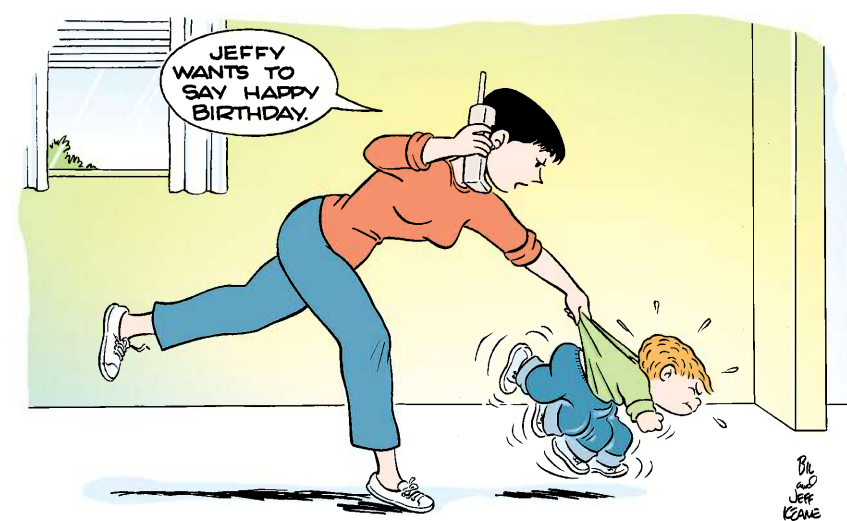
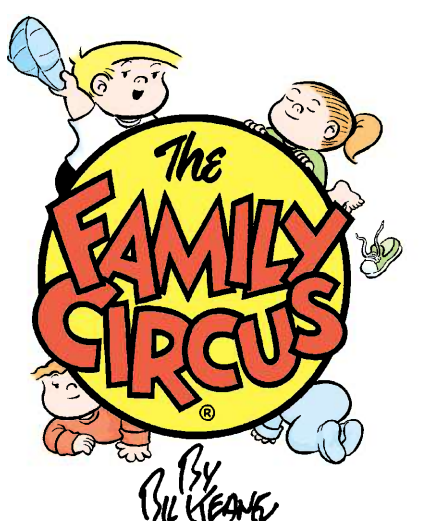
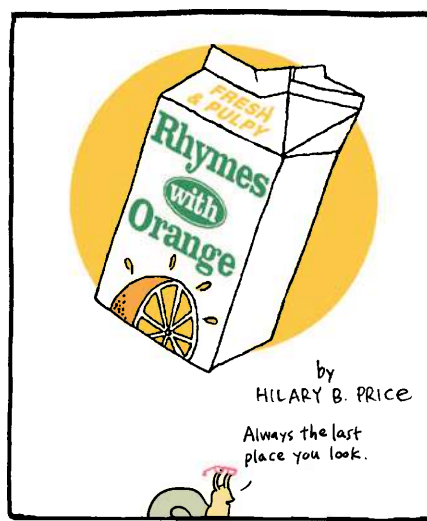
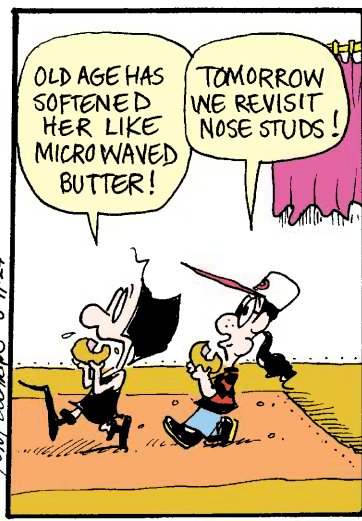
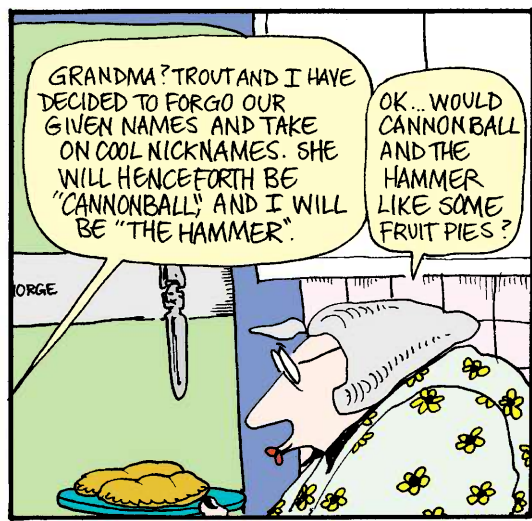
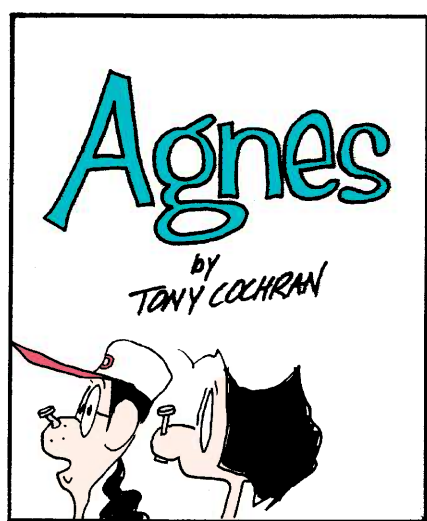
BYO	What did Snow White call her chicken? Egg White!	Is that a "hen-cyclopedia"?
OHKO	That cracks me up!	
FDLO		
CSKO	THEY WANTED TO LEARN A BUNCH OF EGG JOKES, SO THEY BOUGHT A ---	

Color me

Now you're ready to solve today's Jumble For Kids. Study the picture for a hint. Play around with the letters in the circles. You'll find you can put them in order so that they make your funny answer.

Print your answer here: " O O O O O " O O O O O

ANSWER (HOLD UP TO MIRROR)  
 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000  
 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000



FLASH GORDON

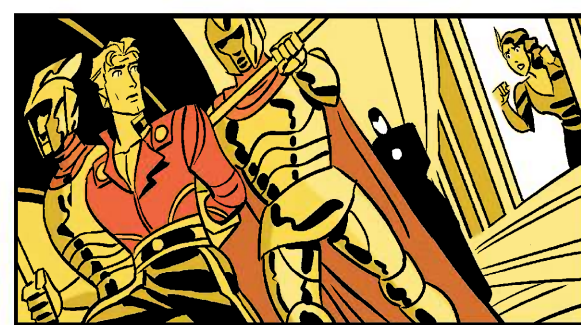
By Dan Schkade



MONTHS AGO, WE ALL BROUGHT DOWN THE FLAGSHIP, AND THE REIGN, OF EMPEROR MING.



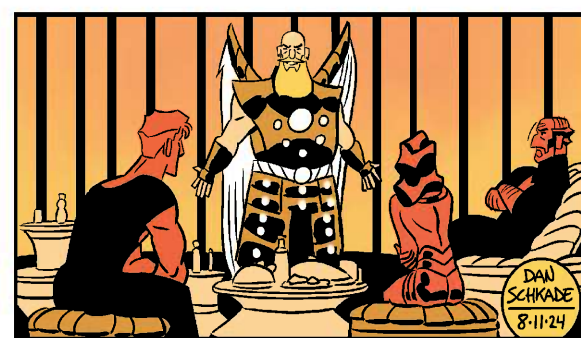
PRINCE BARIN WAS M.I.A. -- WE CROSSED A DESERT, A JUNGLE, AND A LUNATIC TO FIND HIM.



AT BARIN'S WEDDING, I GOT FRAMED FOR A MURDER. DALE AND ZARKOV FOUND THE REAL KILLER, BUT WE STILL HAD TO GO ON THE RUN.

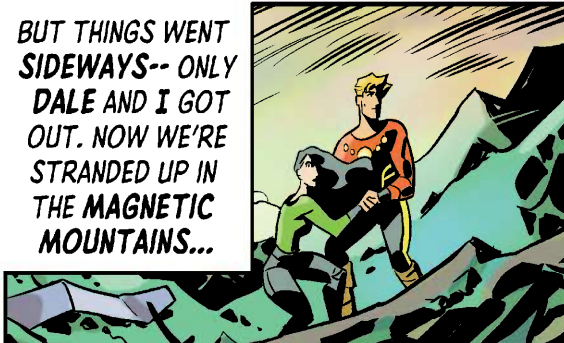


WE SAW SOME ACTION UP IN FRIGIA. IT WAS FUN, HONESTLY... UNTIL IT WASN'T.



WE ENDED UP IN SKY CITY, WHERE VULTAN STRONG-ARMED US INTO HELPING HIM BUILD A WEAPON. NOTHING FOR IT: WE HAD TO ESCAPE.

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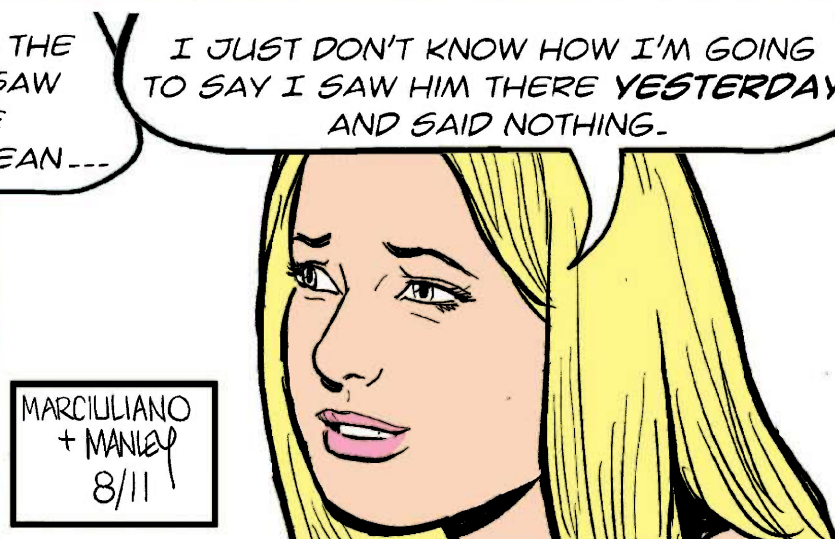
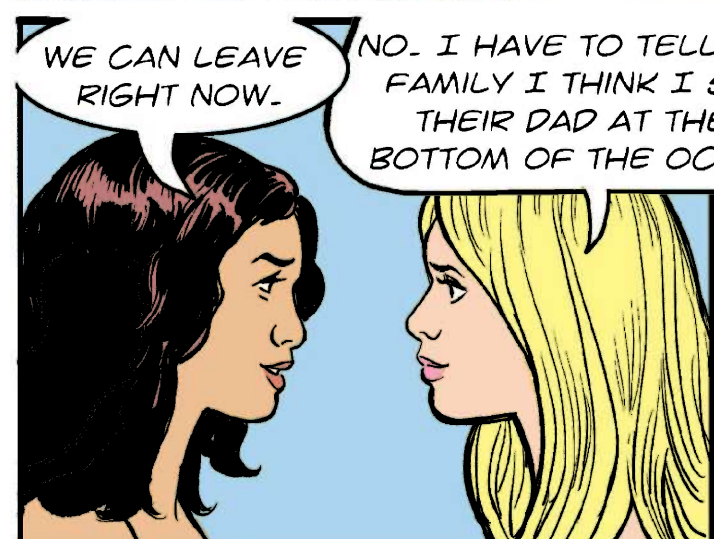
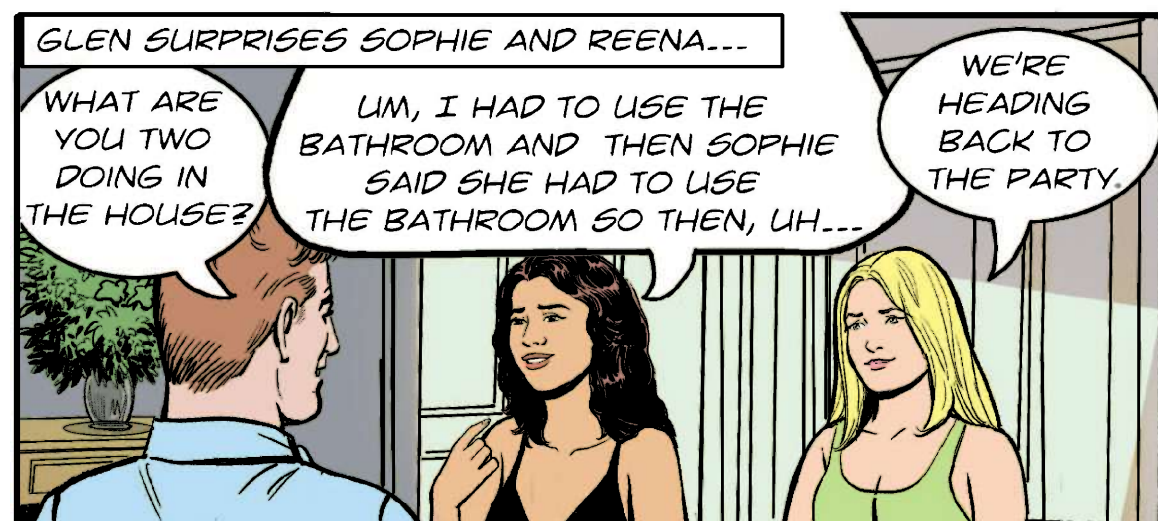
BUT THINGS WENT SIDeways-- ONLY DALE AND I GOT OUT. NOW WE'RE STRANDED UP IN THE MAGNETIC MOUNTAINS...

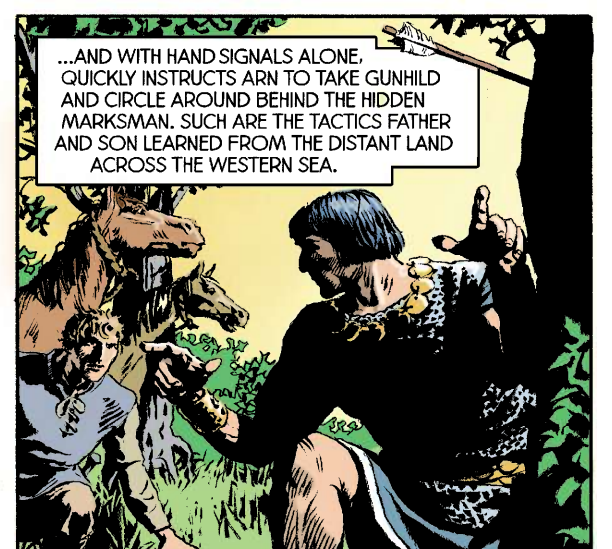
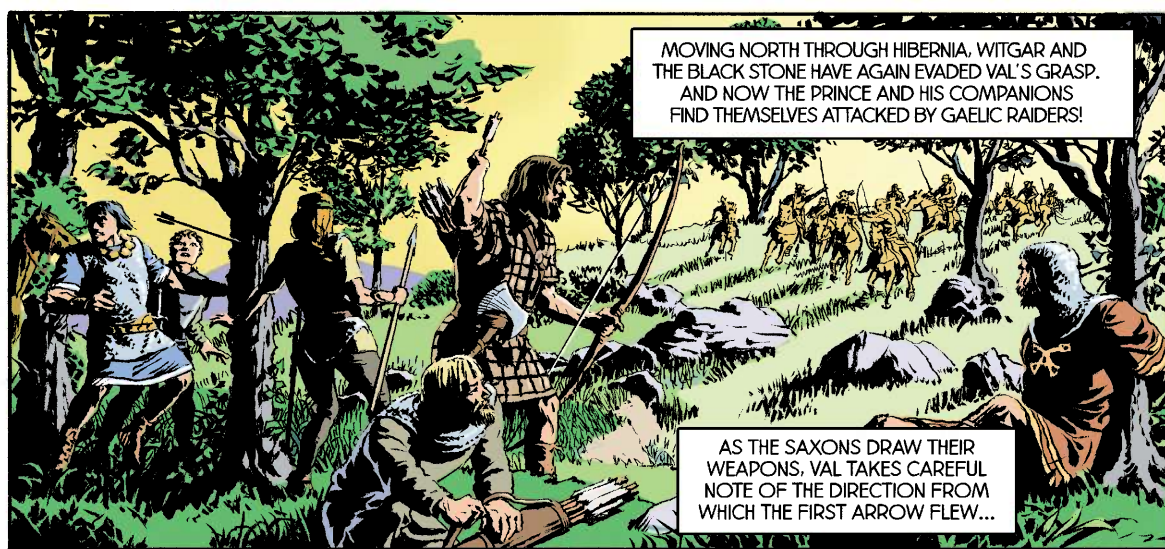
RIGHT BY WHERE MING'S FLAGSHIP CRASHED.

NEXT: THE KILLING STONE

JUDGE PARKER

By Francesco Marciuliano & Mike Manley





# KIDTOWN

8/11

©2024 Andrews McMeel Syndication. Written and illustrated by Steve McGarry.

**Cheese is made when bacteria digest the natural sugars that are in milk, producing lactic acid. There are two major proteins in milk – casein and whey. The acid makes the casein curdle, which is another way of saying turns it into lumps. The whey is left as a thin, watery liquid that is drained off, and the lumps are left to dry off and age. People have been making cheese for thousands of years. Archaeologists recently identified a substance found in an Egyptian tomb as cheese that was 3,200 years old!**

**TRUE but STRANGE**

**pee-yooo!**

**NOW THAT'S A MATURE CHEDDAR!**

Most of the cheese you'll find in your local store is made from the milk of cows or goats. Around the world, people also eat cheese made from the milk of buffalo, sheep and even camels and donkeys!

Fill in the "holes" in these famous types of cheese using the letters below:

O A E A  
 A E E  
 A E A  
 I O  
 I O A  
 B C C L L L M M M M  
 N N P R R R R R S S  
 T T T T Z Z

Answers: MOZZARELLA, CAMEMBERT, PARMESAN, STILTON, RICOTTA

**Use the News**  
Find something in today's paper that is associated with milk or cheese.

# SLYLOCK FOX

8-11

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Slick Smitty has been sneaking into beachfront homes to snatch food and drinks. Smitty wore gloves to avoid leaving fingerprints, but Slylock Fox found prints that match Slick Smitty's in all the burgled homes. How is that possible?

**THAT'S MY SANDWICH!**

**BRAZEN!**

**HOW TO DRAW a dog**

**YOUR DRAWING**  
Today's terrific artist is Sanchita, age 15

In which year was the very first photograph taken?  
a) 1902  
b) 1852  
c) 1826  
d) 1812

Submit your drawing to [www.slylockfox.com](http://www.slylockfox.com)

Spot six differences between these panels.

Answers: Whiskers, railing, squirrel, keyhole, eye and fly.

Answer -- (c) The photo was taken by French scientist Joseph Nicéphore Niépce.

Have fun solving a new comic puzzle every day at [www.slylockfox.com](http://www.slylockfox.com)

# GARFIELD

8-11

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BE CAREFUL, BOYS. BREAKFAST IS A LITTLE SPICY

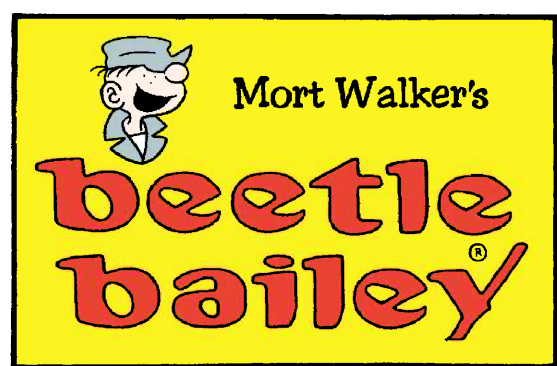
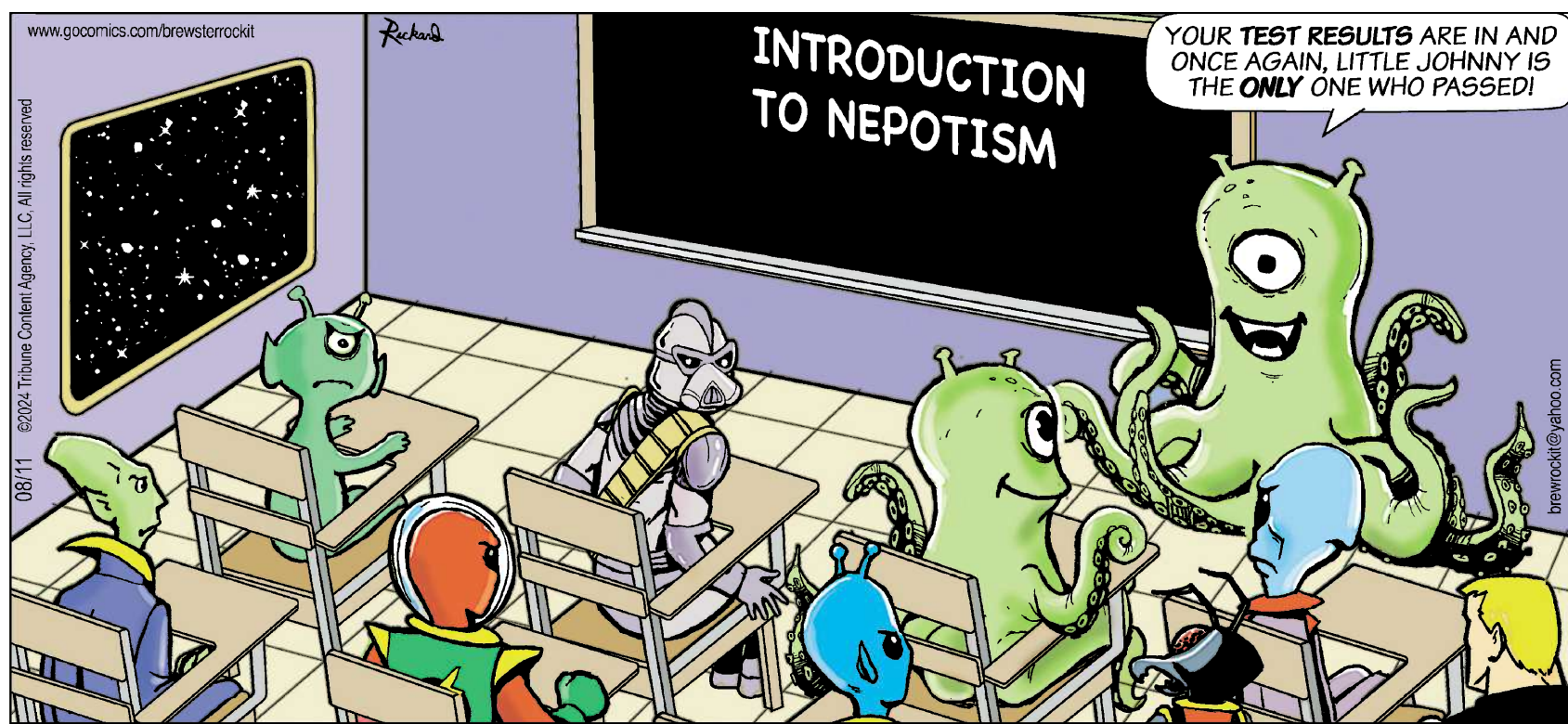
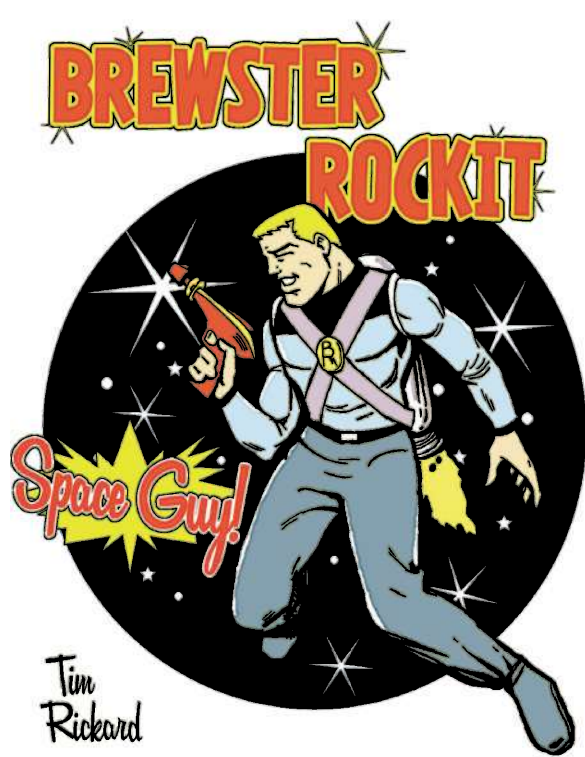
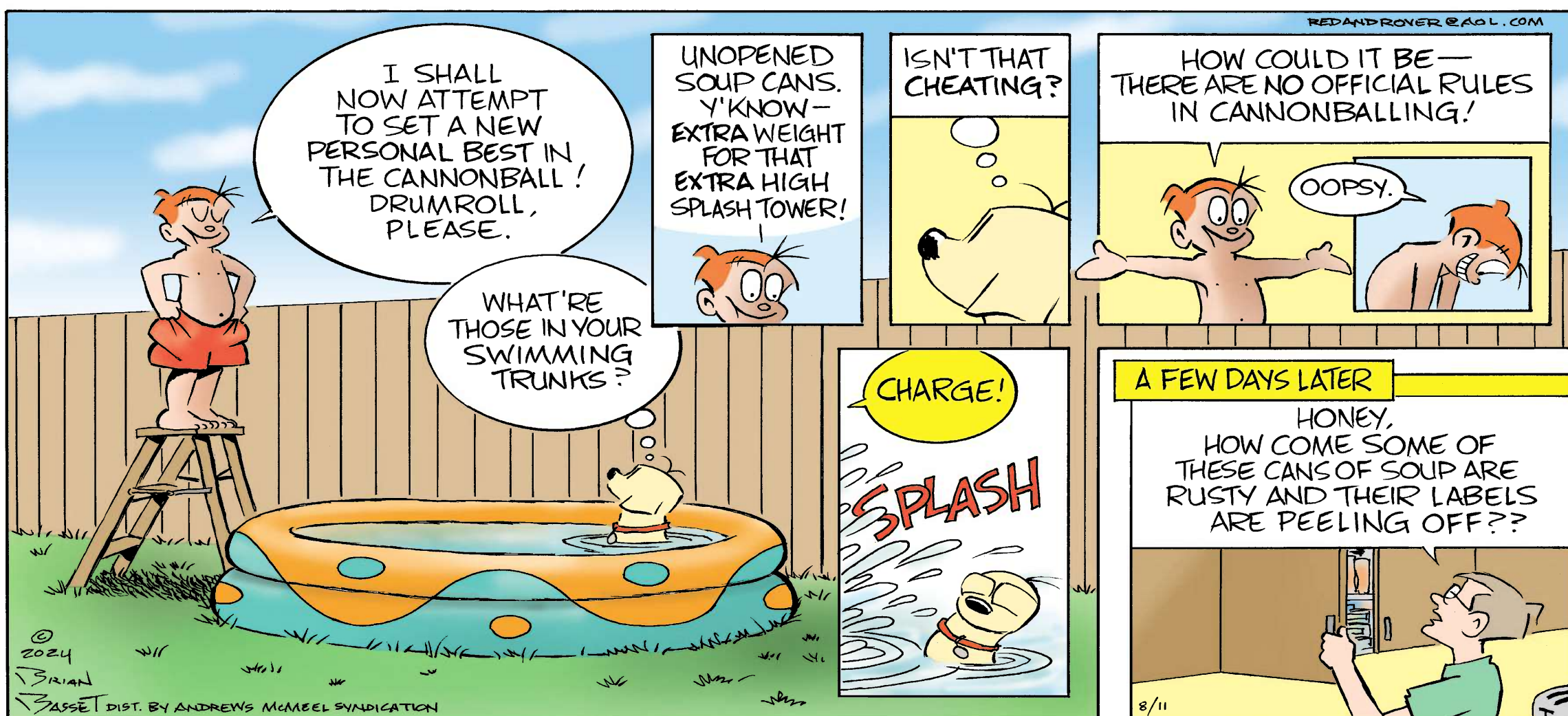
WHOA! WHAT DID YOU PUT ON THOSE EGGS, IRMA?!

GHOST PEPPERS, HABANERO PEPPERS, CAYENNE PEPPERS, AND CAROLINA REAPER PEPPERS. WHO WANTS MILK?

Jim Davis 8-11

RED AND ROVER

By Brian Basset



POPEYE

By Randy Milholland

