

What's News

Business & Finance

- ◆ **Universal Music artists** will see their songs made available on WhatsApp for the first time, after the record label struck a new licensing deal with Meta Platforms. **B1**
- ◆ **Major U.S. stock indexes** gyrated between minor gains and losses before closing mixed, leaving the S&P 500 essentially flat, the Nasdaq 0.2% higher and the Dow down 0.4%. **B9**
- ◆ **Canada's rail operations** face the risk of a shutdown later this month after the country's labor-relations board effectively opened the door to a strike by unionized workers, or a lockout. **B1**
- ◆ **Shares of BT rose 8.4%** after Bharti Global agreed to buy a 24.5% stake in the telecom company from Patrick Drahi's Altice UK through its wholly owned subsidiary. **B4**
- ◆ **Bank of Nova Scotia** agreed to invest \$2.8 billion in KeyCorp, positioning itself for new commercial opportunities and strengthening its foothold in the U.S. market. **B3**
- ◆ **Gold Fields is set to buy** Osisko Mining for \$1.57 billion, giving the South African company full control of the Windfall project in Canada. **B3**
- ◆ **Cybersecurity companies** posted mixed financial results in the latest quarter, buoyed by a series of major hacks this year, but hampered by a volatile economy and cautious customers. **B4**
- ◆ **Francisco Partners** agreed to sell healthcare workforce management software provider QGenda to Hearst in a deal valued at between \$2 billion and \$3 billion, according to people familiar with the transaction. **B4**

World-Wide

- ◆ **Israel put its military** on high alert and the Pentagon said it is sending a guided-missile submarine to the region and speeding up the arrival of a second aircraft carrier, amid heightened concerns about a possible Iranian and Hezbollah response to the killing of militant leaders in Tehran and Beirut. **A6**
- ◆ **Elon Musk's rebooted** America PAC is pursuing its goal of turning out 800,000 people to vote for Trump in battleground states a month before early voting starts and fewer than 90 days before the presidential election. **A1**
- ◆ **Ukrainian soldiers** described their rapid thrust across the border with Russia as Moscow struggled to contain an advance whose sustainability military analysts are questioning given Russia's resources. **A1**
- ◆ **Tim Walz's economic** record is coming under scrutiny as both political parties work hard to try to define the Minnesota governor after his selection last week as Harris's running mate. **A5**
- ◆ **Muhammad Yunus** said he agreed to lead the caretaker government in Bangladesh after the student protesters who toppled the prime minister asked for his help. **A7**
- ◆ **Residents in parts of** Athens were ordered to evacuate as emergency teams struggled to battle raging wildfires approaching the Greek capital. **A16**
- ◆ **Hong Kong's top court** upheld the convictions of seven prominent pro-democracy activists for their roles in one of the biggest antigovernment protests of 2019. **A16**

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Pompeii Skeleton Found With Cache of Treasure



HIDEAWAY: Archaeologists at Pompeii announced the discovery of two skeletons, including that of a woman carrying gold, silver and bronze coins and jewelry as she sought refuge from the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in the year 79.

Consumers Feel Inflation's Sting On Hard-to-Do-Without Things

By HARRIET TORRY AND TERELL WRIGHT

Inflation is slowing. So why doesn't it feel that way? After all, price increases for lots of items, like cable and shampoo, are indeed cooling. Prices for vehicles, gasoline, TVs and plane tickets have even dropped over the past year. And the overall pace of year-over-year inflation as measured by the La-

bor Department's consumer-price index was down to 3% in its most recent reading—much, much lower than the high of 9.1% that it clocked two years ago. But prices for many of the things that are hard to do without are still posting eye-watering price increases. Rent and electricity bills are up 10% or more over the past two years, and car-insurance costs are up nearly 40%, according

to the Labor Department's index. Shoppers might be able to trade down from prime steak to cheaper cuts of meat at the supermarket, but they can't really do the same thing with the water bill. "We're beginning to run out of rope in how much we can substitute out," said David Bieri, an economist and professor at Virginia Tech. Rising prices have been front and center in the U.S.

over the past three years, affecting how consumers feel about the economy and how they are planning to vote. A softening jobs market will only amplify their concerns. Investors and policymakers are scheduled to get another look at price pressures on Wednesday, when the Labor Department plans to release its latest print on the CPI. Jake Tromburg and his fam-

Musk Gets Hands-On With Bid To Boost Trump

The billionaire's super PAC has had early stumbles that could weigh on race

Beginning in the spring, Elon Musk quietly blocked out an hour on Fridays for a new pursuit: national politics.

By Dana Mattioli, Joe Palazzolo and Emily Glazer

In weekly meetings, consultants and vendors for a super political-action committee updated him on their progress toward a discussed goal of turning out 800,000 people to vote for Donald Trump in battleground states. They proposed a budget of about \$160 million they would need for the task, most of it to come from Musk himself, and talked about raising an army of more than 6,000 canvassers and other workers, according to people familiar with the matter. Then, less than three months after launching the effort, Musk signed off on firing most of the vendors, only for the super PAC to rehire one of them after the resulting chaos. He also replaced the Texas-based advisers who helped him get the group off the ground with veterans of Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis's failed bid for the GOP presidential nomination. America PAC, Musk's first major foray into presidential politics, is less pioneering than, say, putting people on

◆ **Musk's Trump interview on X hit by glitches..... A4**

Ukraine's Offensive Shocks Russia but Poses Risks

By ISABEL COLES AND IEVGENIYA SIVORKA

SUMY, Ukraine—It was in darkness around 3 a.m. when the Ukrainian platoon encountered the most serious obstacle to their audacious invasion of Russia last week: a row of concrete pyramids designed to obstruct tanks. They quickly dispatched one of the pyramids with three tank rounds, then poured through the gap in their armored vehicles. The Russian enemy, largely conscripts, mostly fled or surrendered as they were quickly overwhelmed. "In 2½ years Russia built no defense line," said the Ukrainian platoon's 33-year-old commander, who goes by the call sign Yanyk. Within a few days, Ukrainian forces had seized more than two dozen villages in a lightning offensive that has shocked Russia and lifted spirits in Ukraine. It has also raised questions among military analysts about how sustainable it is, given Russian superiority in manpower and weaponry along most of the rest of the front line. For now, Russia is struggling to contain Ukrainian advances. But some Ukrainian soldiers waiting to join the battle from Sumy, the Ukrainian regional capital on the border, said they had been pulled from already threadbare units on the eastern front in Ukraine, suggesting Kyiv was already facing challenges finding fresh troops to maintain momentum. Still, images of Ukrainian



JASON GAY
The Olympics arrived at a turbulent moment and saved the summer. **A12**

PERSONAL JOURNAL
The amount of dairy in our diets is getting new scrutiny. It might be too much. **A9**

'Color War' Captain: Camp Parents' New Status Symbol
* * *
Moms and dads track kids in summer competition; 'I was hysterical'

By TARA WEISS

Sure, Heidi Blum was proud when her son Matthew Kushel got into his top choice college, the University of Colorado Boulder. But she says it wasn't as momentous as when he was named "color war general" at Tyler Hill Camp last summer. Blum, herself an alum of Tyler Hill in Pennsylvania, raced to Instagram to trumpet Matthew's achievement: "I have been dreaming of the moment when one of my children would rise above me and earn the title of General in colorwar!" she gushed. "As parents we always say we want our kids to be better versions of ourselves and this is one of those moments when you can see it."

Bank of America Ignores Rules Barring Dangerous Workloads

Death of former Green Beret puts scrutiny on all-nighters, 100-hour weeks that grind down young investment bankers

By ALEXANDER SAEEDY

Yuliya Lavysch was thrilled to accept a job offer from Bank of America while a student at Smith College. She quit in 2022 after three years in the Chicago office, where senior bankers kept her and her teammates at their desks until 5 a.m. and instructed them to lie about their hours. Once, she said, she worked until 4 a.m. in the office and was on her way home in a taxi, only for her boss to request more changes for a proposal to a client and to leave a printed copy for senior staff to review later that morning. She asked the cabdriver to turn around. Roy Wang worked as a junior investment banker for the bank in Tokyo. He said he meticulously logged his overtime hours. But when

human resources told his bosses he was working too much, a manager told him to report only as many as were allowed by the bank's policies. He said he continued to work at least one all-nighter every week—saying it wasn't unusual for junior bankers to catch a few hours of sleep in a bathroom stall or a conference room. He left after his doctor flagged his cholesterol and other indicators had spiked to unhealthy levels. An analyst on the Latin American finance team in New York collapsed last year after working long hours, prompting his colleagues to call an ambulance to the office. Another New York banker, currently a vice president, checked into a hospital this year after he felt rundown and sick from working

Big Drugmakers Pivot To Smaller Deals Now

By JARED S. HOPKINS AND LAURA COOPER

For years the world's biggest drugmakers paid up for deals. Now they are writing much smaller checks. After shelling out tens of billions of dollars for single biotech companies, pharmaceutical giants such as AbbVie, AstraZeneca and Merck have shifted to smaller targets costing \$5 billion or less. Many of the companies getting taken out are private. The reason, according to executives, bankers and lawyers: Smaller deals are just easier to do in the current regulatory environment, and the sector is looking pretty picked over. All 17 deals announced by big pharmaceutical companies during the first six months of the year were valued at \$5 billion or less, according to research firm DealForma. Dur-

ing the same period last year, big drugmakers agreed to nine deals, including two that were \$10 billion or larger. Nine of the 17 deals were for privately held companies, compared with one during the same period last year, DealForma said. Its data were for deals with disclosed values and upfront cash and equity amounts. Large drugmakers were defined as having a market value of more than \$50 billion. Last year's big acquisitions were led by Pfizer's \$43 billion purchase of cancer biotech Seagen. By contrast, the biggest pharmaceutical deal so far this year was Vertex Pharmaceuticals' \$4.9 billion purchase of Alpine Immune Sciences and its experimental kidney drug. "The size of this deal was just about perfect for Vertex. It was easy to afford and left

U.S. NEWS

Inflation Continues To Hurt

Continued from Page One
 ily moved into a smaller home last year in Chesapeake, Va., and were surprised to get an electricity bill one month last summer for more than \$500. Their new house has a pool, and they installed an air-conditioning unit in their daughter's room above the garage. Both helped push the bill higher. So Jake and his wife, Marie, bought an energy-efficient refrigerator secondhand, lowered the voltage of the pool's pump and told the children to turn off the lights during the day. Their recent monthly bill was \$250.

To save money elsewhere, the Tromburgs have downgraded their home-insurance plan. But they still pay more than \$1,700 a year, an increase of more than \$300. They likewise trimmed their spending on their kids' youth sports leagues. Instead of soccer and basketball, this season it is just soccer.

"I haven't noticed any relief in prices lowering," said Tromburg, a 42-year-old pastor. "Gas prices are a little bit lower. But that hasn't made me say, 'Oh, man, sweet, let's spend more money.'"

Housing is by far the biggest monthly expense for U.S. households. In the CPI, shelter costs—a measure of rent and the equivalent cost to homeowners, as well as lodging away from home and household insurance—have risen more than 13% in two years.

When a family's \$3,000 rent or mortgage payment jumps 13%, that dings the bank account by about \$400 a month.

Some prices are rising owing to factors other than traditional supply and demand. Home-insurance costs for owners in some parts of the U.S. have ballooned partly because of storms and fires. Utility bills have climbed as companies try to shore up an aging power grid.

The pace of some price increases is likely to slow down, according to economists. Take cars as an example. Car prices shot up early in the pandemic. It took time for car-insurance



Left, among the ways Marie and Jake Tromburg have sought to rein in household costs is to downgrade their home-insurance plan and to tell their children to turn off lights during the day; right, Jasmine Moore, here with her son, has switched to discount grocery stores and cut back on visits to out-of-town family.



costs to catch up—but over the past two years they have risen quickly, too.

Brendan Madigan, an accountant in Durham, N.C., and his wife, Alexis Madigan, would like to buy a minivan and move to a house that is bigger than their current three-bedroom.

But they have held off because of the rising costs of home insurance, transportation and other expenses. They have also cut restaurants and movie nights out of their budget.

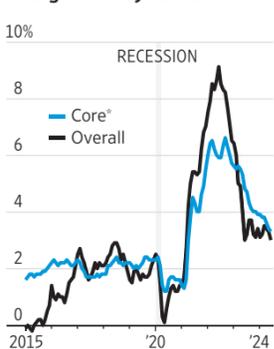
"We were looking for a bigger house and potentially growing our family further in the future. But with the cost so high, we're really pinching pennies," Brendan Madigan said.

Families with young children are also paying higher prices for child care. Costs have risen 6.4% over the past two years, in line with the overall CPI. Because daycare bills can be as big as the rent payment or the mortgage, even a relatively small increase can feel like a lot.

In major metro areas, the median price to put an infant in center-based care in 2022 was more than \$1,400 a month, according to the Labor Department. A 6.4% increase puts that bill closer to \$1,500.

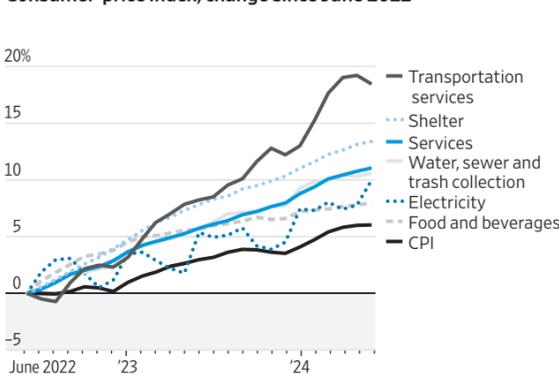
The Madigans' daycare costs have risen much faster. The daycare bill for their older daughter shot up last month to \$1,650 a month from \$1,200.

Consumer-price index, change from a year earlier



*Core excludes food and energy prices.
 Sources: Labor Department (change from a year earlier); Labor Department via St. Louis Fed (change since June)

Consumer-price index, change since June 2022



A Stubborn Holdout in the War on Inflation: Services

The Federal Reserve jacked up interest rates starting two years ago to rein in inflation, roaring in part because of buoyant consumer demand. With overall price pressures easing and the labor market showing signs of strain, the Fed is now clearing the way to start cutting rates. Major companies say

consumers are trimming nonessential spending. McDonald's, for example—seeing inflation-weary customers buying fewer items or eating at home—recently said it will emphasize a \$5 meal bundle and other deals. Other types of spending are harder to avoid, and can take up a large slice of household budgets. While

overall consumer prices have increased 6% since June 2022, when inflation hit its recent high, services—such as dental cleanings, haircuts and eldercare—have risen nearly twice as fast. That is partly because dentists, salons and nursing homes have had to increase wages for their own workers, who are also dealing with rising prices.

Daycare for their younger daughter, who starts in two weeks, will be \$1,800 a month. They searched for cheaper options but quickly realized that the price was the standard.

"I would have hoped that where my career path is at, and with my wife working as well, that we would have some financial flexibility," said Madigan, 32 years old.

Households across the country are facing similar struggles. According to the Labor Department, the prices of essential services such as water, sewer and trash collec-

tion have jumped nearly 11% over the past two years, and electricity has climbed 10%.

The cost of transportation services, which includes vehicle insurance and repair, has jumped more than 18% in the past two years, according to the CPI. That would slap an extra \$55 a month on a \$300 budget. An increasing number of cash-strapped Americans are choosing to drive without car insurance.

Jasmine Moore, an operations manager at a social-justice nonprofit, missed a payment on her auto insurance about six months ago. Now her monthly bill has doubled, from \$195 to \$395. Her bank account is often near overdraft. She also has \$80,000 in student debt from college and graduate school.

As a single mom, Moore feels guilty when she has to skimp on things that make her 10-year-old son happy. Part of her feels as though she should focus on him before any other bills. The two have had to cut back on visits to family in Valdosta, Ga., roughly three hours south of their home in the Atlanta suburbs.

Moore also canceled her son's math-tutoring sessions and instead tutors him herself. Instead of Publix, she opts for discount grocery stores and food pantries.

"I have middle-class pay," said Moore, 32. "But I feel like I'm lower-income."

Big Pharma Turning to Small Deals

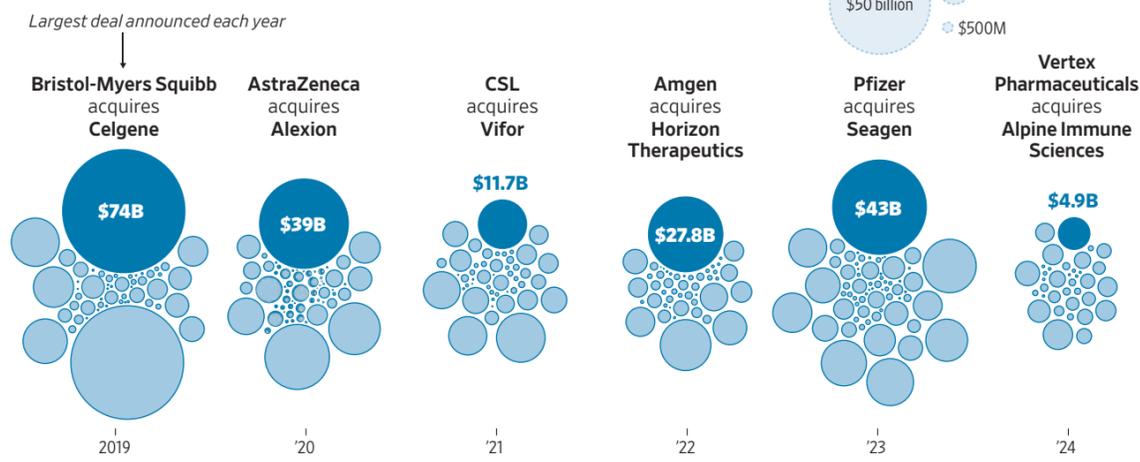
Continued from Page One
 us with a balance sheet to do more deals," said Vertex Chairman Jeffrey Leiden. Vertex Chief Executive Reshma Kewalramani said the company had been watching for some time the kidney disorder targeted by Alpine's lead drug because there isn't a treatment of the underlying cause, and Vertex didn't have a medicine of its own in the works.

Dealmaking remains a crucial way for big drugmakers to supplement the work of their own laboratories and fill in their product lineups. A reason for the shift to smaller acquisitions, lawyers and bankers said, is that big companies see fewer larger targets worth buying after many were taken out.

"A lot of the late-stage or near-term, needle-moving opportunities have either been bought" or passed over, said Andrew Weisenfeld, managing partner at MTS Health Partners, who advises biotech and pharmaceutical companies on deals.

Also behind the shift is the Federal Trade Commission's tighter scrutiny of merger-

Pharmaceutical deals are smaller in 2024 than in recent years



Notes: Data only includes deals with disclosed upfront cash and equity values, 2019 through June 2024. Sources: DealForma; staff reports

and-acquisition activity, including larger pharmaceutical deals. Smaller transactions present fewer hurdles to gaining approval from antitrust regulators, according to lawyers and bankers who advise companies on deals.

Smaller deals can also help plug pipeline holes if big drugmakers lost out in negotiations for more expensive deals. And the deals are often easier for buyers to negotiate than large ones, and then to integrate.

For buyers, the small deals come with risks. Littler targets often have drugs that are in early development, so it isn't

certain they work safely and will be able to hit the market.

The uncertainty is, however, also an opportunity for smart shoppers. "Big pharma is the rough early on," said Bill Roegge, M&A partner at law firm Cooley. "This is to try and buy them before they are a big \$10 billion company."

Roegge advised rare-disease company Amolyt Pharma on its \$1 billion sale to AstraZeneca, one among a string of \$1 billion to \$2.5 billion deals that the British drugmaker has done in recent months to bolster its pipeline. Closely held Amolyt ap-

pealed to AstraZeneca because its lead endocrine drug is in the last stage of testing and could provide a new source of sales relatively soon, helping the pharmaceutical company achieve its goal of \$80 billion in revenue by 2030, said Marc Dunoyer, AstraZeneca's chief strategy officer.

Dunoyer also said Amolyt would be easy to integrate, with only 50 employees.

Private companies with drugs in earlier stages of development have been more willing to sell themselves in recent months because of the challenges of going public and because their prospects for

raising cash to fund the next phase of development are uncertain, Roegge said.

Buyers see value because negotiations don't involve a public valuation, said Punit Mehta, a senior managing director in healthcare investment banking for Guggenheim Securities.

Johnson & Johnson bought two privately held companies developing immune-disease drugs, Proteologix and a subsidiary of Numab Therapeutics now called Yellow Jersey. They come after the drug giant lost out on some expensive deals in recent years, according to people familiar with the matter.

"If you think about larger acquisitions, those are pretty difficult to make work," said J&J Chief Financial Officer Joseph Wolk. He said J&J is "perfectly comfortable" skipping large deals, especially if there is a disconnect on price. The company has also focused on stringing together deals for small companies.

After spending big in 2023, Merck toned down its dealmaking this year with four small acquisitions. They include a \$1.3 billion deal for closely held eye-drug company EyeBio and a \$680 million tie-up for publicly traded cancer drugmaker Harpoon Therapeutics.

The experimental drugs that Merck acquired through the deals would help Merck diversify and deepen the company's pipeline, said Sunil Patel, the company's head of business development. Merck's scale and expertise could help further the drugs' development.

"When we see science that we think we can translate into a medicine and have a direct impact for patients, we act on that," Patel said.

Merck faces a potentially significant drop in sales after its top-selling cancer treatment, Keytruda, loses U.S. patent protection in 2028.

AbbVie is contending with lower-price competition for its longtime top seller Humira since it lost patent protection last year. The company has done small deals this year to fill in its pipeline of immune-disease drugs after spending more than \$18 billion last year on acquiring approved and late-stage drugs.

AbbVie bought publicly traded Lando Biopharma for \$137.5 million and privately held Celsus Therapeutics for \$250 million in June.

If their experimental immune-disease drugs win approval, they could help drive growth and help succeed AbbVie's current slate of products, said Nicholas Donoghoe, AbbVie's chief business and strategy officer.

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CORRECTIONS & AMPLIFICATIONS

A graphic in some editions Saturday with a Page One article about undecided voters was mislabeled. The voter views from a Wall Street Journal poll of whether Donald Trump or Kamala Harris could best handle certain policy issues reflected only the views among voters considered "persuadable" or up for grabs, rather than all voters in the

July 23-25 survey. Also, the source note omitted that the margin of error for the 150 persuadable voters is +/- 8 percentage points.

To make jam, Daniel Perry uses a ratio of 1 quart fruit, 1 cup sugar and 1/4 cup lemon juice. An Off Duty article on Saturday about making jam incorrectly said 2 quarts of fruit.

Readers can alert The Wall Street Journal to any errors in news articles by emailing wsjcontact@wsj.com or by calling 888-410-2667.

U.S. NEWS

Abortion Fight Has New Front: Pill Parties

Volunteers gather to send boxes to help red-state strangers evade restrictions

By SCOTT CALVERT

SOMERVILLE, Mass.—The women huddling around the conference table shuttled the small cardboard boxes along, assembly-line style. Into each went medical-information paperwork and a handwritten note proclaiming, “We wish you the best!” Then came the critical addition, a two-drug regimen that ends a pregnancy.

This tiny Boston-area office represents a new bulwark in America’s abortion battle. Volunteers are mobilizing with growing frequency for pill-packing parties to help strangers in faraway states circumvent strict laws. On a recent Monday evening, the group filled 350 boxes—in-home abortion kits ready for mailing to women in states such as Texas and Florida with near-total or six-week abortion bans.

Melissa Fischer, a 57-year-old internist, sees these efforts as a way to assist people tripped up by geography. “I strongly believe where somebody lives shouldn’t dictate their access to critical health-care,” she said.

Retirees and professionals ate pizza, sipped Chardonnay and chatted while working purposefully. Many portray the sessions as a tangible way to push back against the 2022 Supreme Court ruling that eliminated a constitutional right to abortion.

“It’s a little bit of an antidote to hopelessness,” said Judy Fleishman, 70, a medical educator. “There’s something you can do.”

The parties support the Massachusetts Medication Abortion Access Project, also known as the MAP, part of a growing movement to send abortion pills into ban states, often for just a few dollars. The nearly year-old MAP, like similar programs, leverages a state shield law meant to protect clinicians from legal jeopardy, including extradition. Massachusetts is among eight states with such laws.

These operations are intensifying amid more heated political debates. Vice President Kamala Harris is spotlighting abortion rights in her presidential bid, while Republicans struggle to articulate a winning message.

From July 2023 to March, shield-law groups provided more than 68,000 abortion kits by mail to residents in states with tight limits on the procedure or telemedicine, accord-

ing to WeCount, an abortion-data project sponsored by the Society of Family Planning, which backs abortion rights.

Shield-law providers accounted for about 9,500 medication abortions in March, up from 5,620 in July 2023, WeCount says.

“I think as long as we see states that are passing more and more restrictions, we’re going to see these numbers continue to grow,” said WeCount co-chair Ushma Upadhyay, a professor at the University of California, San Francisco.

Rising numbers

Abortions reached nearly 100,000 nationwide in March, up from 84,000 in May 2022, according to WeCount, despite 18 states imposing near-total or six-week bans. Medication abortions now outnumber surgical procedures. Nearly 20% of all abortions are via drugs sent by mail, including from bricks-and-mortar clinics.

So far, efforts targeting telemedicine abortions have failed. The Supreme Court in June rejected a bid to restrict access to mifepristone, one of the two abortion drugs. Some Republicans in Congress, including vice presidential nominee JD Vance, have called for enforcing the 1873 Comstock Act, a federal law barring the shipping of abortion drugs. More recently Vance has said the issue should be left to states.

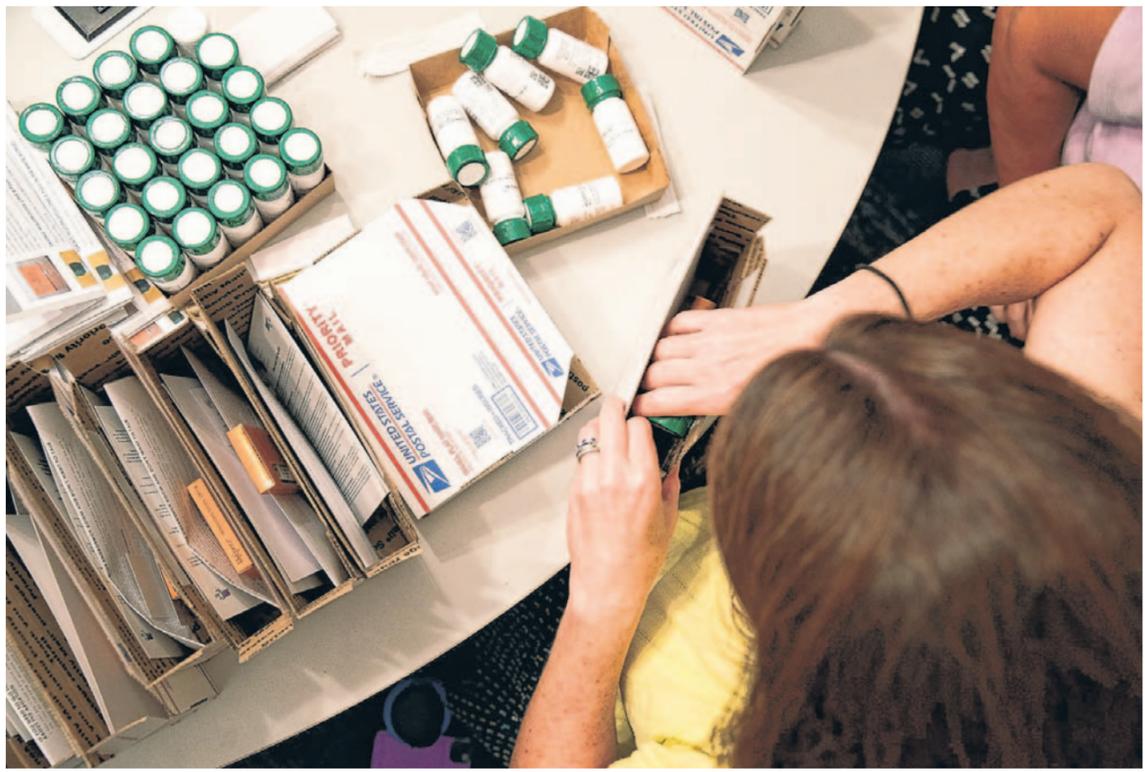
Still, legal experts say there are risks for those involved in mailing pills to states with bans.

Angel Foster, 50, a doctor who helped launch the MAP last fall, trusts the Massachusetts shield law. But because it doesn’t apply in other states, she won’t visit her mother and stepfather in South Carolina and avoids flights that require stopovers in Texas.

Maureen Paul, the MAP’s medical director, doesn’t feel safe visiting her brother in Florida, where a six-week ban took effect in May. “We are no strangers to risk. I’ve had my home picketed, I’ve had death threats,” she said. “But we’re not fearful, we’re not paralyzed. We’re determined to act.”

Frustrated officials in states with stringent laws can’t disrupt the mail, but some are warning providers. Arkansas Attorney General Tim Griffin, a Republican, demanded two entities in May stop helping state residents get the pills, asserting such actions violate Arkansas law.

One warning went to Choices Women’s Medical Center in New York, which doesn’t mail pills but removed from its website wording about Arkansas taking clinic-provided



Above and below, women prepared in-home abortion kits at a ‘pill-packing party’ at the office of the Massachusetts Medication Abortion Access Project, which is among groups sending abortion pills to women in restrictive states.



pills at home. Founder Merle Hoffman said she thinks Griffin misunderstood how her clinic operates. A cease-and-desist letter also went to Aid Access, the largest shield-law provider, which disputes the allegations.

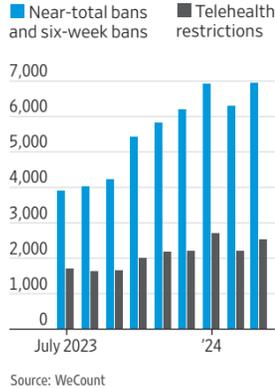
Antiabortion groups say it is dangerous for women to take these pills without medical supervision. Providers say it’s safe and that they screen for potential problems.

New terrain

Pill-mailers are in new legal terrain. “No one has challenged any of these laws yet,” said Rachel Rebouché, dean of the Temple University Beasley School of Law. “Texas has not tried to prosecute [clinicians], they haven’t been sued, a medical board hasn’t tried to discipline them. That’s not to say those things aren’t possible.”

In Massachusetts, Paul, a

Medication abortions provided under shield laws to states with:



74-year-old doctor, is one of four prescribers at the MAP. In 1968, pregnant at age 18, she couldn’t get a hospital abortion and feared seeking an illegal one. She carried to term and gave up her child for adoption,

an experience she calls “deeply traumatic and defining.”

Launched last fall, the MAP is a project of Cambridge Reproductive Health Consultants, a nonprofit co-founded by Foster that has worked to boost medication abortion access in countries including Thailand, Pakistan and Uganda—and saw a need for similar work in the U.S. MAP harnesses websites like plancpills.org to get the word out to women nationwide. Prospective patients fill out intake forms online and mainly correspond by email, although some talk by phone with Foster or a prescriber.

The program accepts patients up to the 11th week of pregnancy, aiming to get pills to them by 12 weeks. Most are earlier than nine weeks, Foster said. Despite a \$250 list price, patients pay about \$130 on average; a third pay \$25 or less.

‘Very impressed’

At the MAP’s office, before the recent pill-packing party, Foster read aloud comments women shared on intake forms. A Nebraska mother wrote: “I was using protection, but it failed, and I cannot afford to have another child right now.” A Florida woman with a diabetic 5-year-old said: “I am struggling to pay my bills, and I’m not mentally ready to bring another child into my life yet.”

As boxes circulated around the table, conversation pinged from the Paris Olympics to a promising birth-control gel for men. Amid upbeat banter, the crew kept their production line humming. Though they fell short of Foster’s goal of packing 475 boxes, she assured them 350 was more than fine.

“I am very impressed with us,” she said.

FBI Probes Iran Over Campaign Hacking Attempts

WASHINGTON—The Federal Bureau of Investigation has been investigating since June suspected Iranian attempts to

By *Dustin Volz, Alexander Ward and Robert McMillan*

hack people linked to both the Trump and Biden-Harris campaigns, according to a person familiar with the matter.

At least three staffers on the Biden-Harris campaign were targeted with so-called spear-phishing emails intended to trick recipients into clicking on seemingly legitimate links or files in a bid to gain access to their internal communications, the person said, adding that the attempts took place before President Biden stepped aside for re-election and was succeeded by Vice President Kamala Harris as the Democratic nominee. The hacking attempts were apparently unsuccessful, the person said.

The alleged efforts by Iran to hack Democrats in addition to former President Donald Trump’s campaign added to a series of rapid developments that appeared to expose a widespread and determined effort by the U.S. adversary to

Hackers Try to Copy Russia’s 2016 Interference Operation

Cybersecurity experts and former U.S. officials said Iran was attempting now to essentially re-create the successes of Russia’s 2016 interference operations, albeit crudely.

“Hack-and-leak is the white whale of influence operations,” said Thomas Rid, a disinformation expert and professor of strategic stud-

ies at Johns Hopkins University, explaining that they can be hard to counteract.

But Rid cautioned against giving the Iranians too much credit. “The Iranian surfacing attempt was old school—trying to trick a journalist into covering a seeded story—but it was also incompetent,” he said. Iranian hackers have be-

come the masters of spear-phishing campaigns. These are targeted cyberattacks, typically conducted via email or a messaging app, designed to trick the victim into divulging their online credentials. “They’re pretty sophisticated and they’re very persistent,” said Steven Adair, president of the cybersecurity firm Volexity.

play a major role in disrupting the November election.

On Monday afternoon, the FBI said in a statement it was investigating an apparently successful cyberattack that purloined internal documents from the Trump campaign that it disclosed to reporters on Saturday and blamed on Iran. Previously, the FBI only said it was aware of media reporting about the alleged hack.

The FBI’s announcement Monday was the first sign that the U.S. government has launched a probe into a suspected Iranian hack-and-leak operation amid mounting fears

of Tehran’s desire to interfere in the presidential election and harm Trump’s chances for re-election, according to U.S. intelligence officials.

The U.S. government hasn’t said publicly whether Iran was responsible, as the Trump campaign has alleged. The FBI’s probe into the hacking efforts against both the Trump campaign and Biden-Harris campaign was earlier reported by the Washington Post.

Iran succeeded in hacking communications belonging to Roger Stone, a longtime confidant to Trump, and his compromised account was used to

target Trump campaign officials with malicious email links that if clicked could have granted the hackers entry into their accounts as well, according to Stone and the person familiar with the matter.

“I was contacted by Microsoft and the FBI to inform me my two personal emails had been compromised by a foreign nation state for the purpose of phishing officials in the Trump campaign to get entry to their computers,” Stone said in a statement. “I am co-operating with the investigation.”

It wasn’t clear if the hack of Stone led to Iran also alleg-

edly infiltrating the Trump campaign. The Trump campaign didn’t return a request for comment about how Iran allegedly gained access to its materials or if the Republican nominee’s team informed law enforcement.

“Our campaign vigilantly monitors and protects against cyber threats, and we are not aware of any security breaches of our systems,” a Harris campaign official said. Iran has quickly emerged as the chief election security concern within the U.S. government. Just last month, U.S. intelligence officials told media reporters that Russia was the “pre-eminent threat” to the November vote and viewed Iran as a lesser concern seeking solely to generate discord.

But weeks later, they shared that their assessment on Iran had changed: Tehran wasn’t just hoping to spread chaos, they said, but aiming to harm Trump’s candidacy, as it haphazardly sought to do four years ago. Iran was also attempting to directly engage Americans in its influence operations and even provide funding to support Gaza protests on college campuses, officials said, while relying on

“vast webs of online personas and propaganda mills to spread disinformation.” Now, the threat posed by Tehran appears even more severe, though lacking in much sophistication. On Saturday, the Trump campaign said it had been hacked by “foreign sources hostile to the United States” in a breach the campaign linked to Iran. An anonymous source that called itself “Robert” shared apparently stolen internal Trump campaign files with reporters at several media organizations, hoping to see the material published.

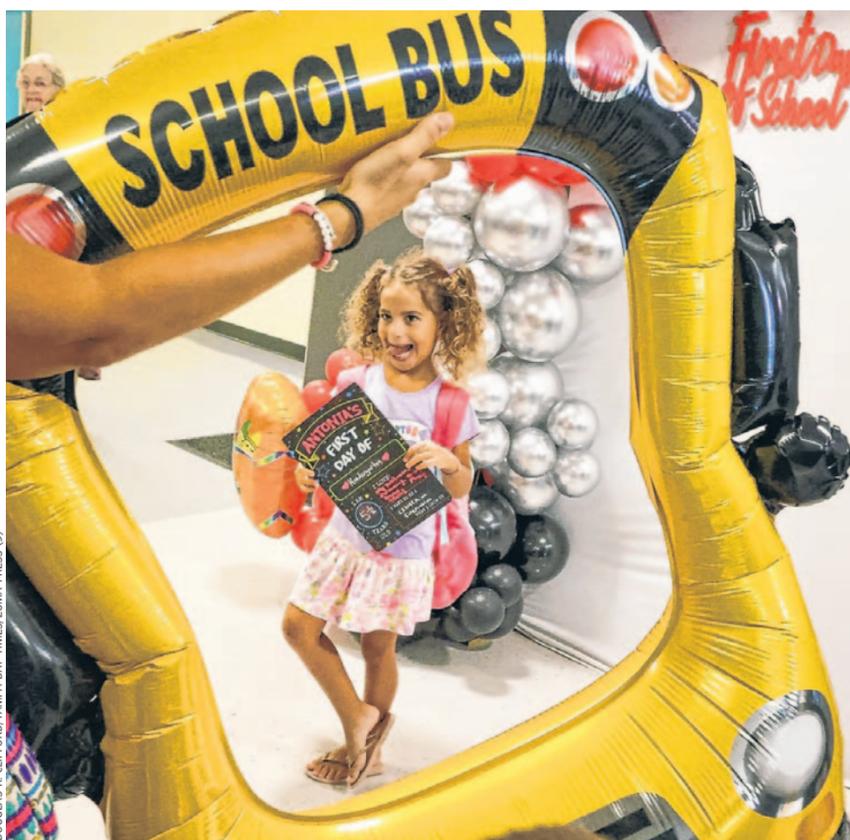
The White House was unaware of the hack-and-leak campaign, first learning of it from Politico’s Saturday report that detailed the breach, two administration officials said. The Biden administration still hasn’t made a formal determination of responsibility.

The FBI believes Iran is likely responsible for the June hacking attempts, but it is less sure whether Iran is behind the effort to disseminate internal Trump campaign material to reporters, the person familiar with the investigation said.

—Catherine Lucey, Rebecca Ballhaus and Alex Leary contributed to this article.

U.S. NEWS

U.S. WATCH



BACK TO SCHOOL: Children in Florida were welcomed to classrooms Monday as the new school year began. At Kirkland Ranch K-8 in Wesley Chapel, clockwise from left: Antonia Topalidis, 5 years old, posed for a photo; Kenijah Grant, 7, gave her brother, Denim Floys, 1, a goodbye hug after arriving for the first day; and Emilia Dimoski, 6, got a kiss from her mother, Elena Dimoski.



NEW YORK

Judge Says RFK Jr. Can't Be on Ballot

A New York state judge ruled Monday that presidential hopeful Robert F. Kennedy Jr. doesn't have a valid residence in the state, a blow to his struggling campaign that could spur additional challenges around the country and knock him off the ballot in New York.

Kennedy used an address in suburban Westchester County in filings to get on the ballot in states around the country. The legal challenge, backed by a Democratic-aligned political-action committee, said Kennedy lives in California and that his listed New York address is a place he has only visited.

Albany County Supreme Court Justice Christina Ryba ruled the Westchester address wasn't Kennedy's bona fide residence, and thereby invalidated his nomination petitions in the state.

Kennedy's campaign vowed to appeal. "The Democrats are showing contempt for democracy," Kennedy said. "They aren't confident they can win at the ballot box, so they are trying to stop voters from having a choice."

The independent candidate is on the ballot in 17 states.

—Jimmy Vielkind

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Magnitude-4.4 Quake Rattles Area

A 4.4-magnitude earthquake was strongly felt Monday afternoon from the Los Angeles area all the way to San Diego, swaying buildings, rattling dishes and setting off car alarms, but no major damage or injuries were reported.

The temblor caused a pipe to burst at the ornate 1927 Pasadena City Hall building, where TV news helicopters showed water spilling from an upper floor. Elsewhere in the Los Angeles area, an ESPN interview was interrupted, and the ground swayed in Anaheim, where Disneyland is located in Orange County.

The quake was centered near the Los Angeles neighborhood of Highland Park, about 6.5 miles northeast of LA's City Hall, and about 7.5 miles below the surface, the U.S. Geological Survey said.

The quake was felt from greater Los Angeles south to San Diego and east to the Palm Springs desert region, according to the USGS community reporting page. A small number of reports were filed from the southern San Joaquin Valley about 100 miles northwest of LA.

—Associated Press

Trump Chats With Musk on X Following Botched Start

For over two hours, Elon Musk and Donald Trump bickered on X about national security, energy policy, immigration

By Vivian Salama, Alexa Corse and Alex Leary

and more, in a freewheeling conversation that gave the former president a widely anticipated forum to launch personal attacks on his political rivals as both men reveled in their largely shared vision for the country.

The discussion on the social-media platform's live-streaming service Spaces was delayed because of technical problems. The talk began with Musk asking about the assassination attempt on Trump at a rally in Pennsylvania last month and security failures that allowed the shooter to

get on a nearby roof.

"Well, they're going to learn from this," said Trump, who has generally praised the Secret Service response.

Trump is in a fierce competition with his Democratic opponent, Vice President Kamala Harris, as polls have shown her gaining momentum since President Biden exited the race. The Republican former president has been frustrated by the attention Harris's ascent has received, and saw his return to X, known as Twitter when he frequently used it during his presidency, as a way to regain some of the spotlight.

X is a vastly bigger platform for Trump, where he had 88.9 million followers Monday night, compared with his own Truth Social network with 7.53 million followers.

It was hyped by Trump's team as "the interview of the

century," but the audio-only event felt more like overhearing a telephone call, often with rambling, between two figures who have grown closer as Musk's politics have shifted to the right. Musk, who endorsed Trump immediately after the assassination attempt, had said before the event that he didn't want to conduct a typical interview and that he wanted the discussion to be a conversation.

There were few revelations about Trump's second-term agenda—and Musk struggled at times to get a word in.

Musk said most people who enter the country "are actually good, hardworking people," but some aren't. Trump was decidedly more negative, suggesting criminals and "nonproductive" people were flooding the country.

"These are rough people,"

Trump said. "These are people we don't want in our country."

Trump falsely claimed that "over 20 million people" entered the U.S. having escaped prisons, mental institutions, or insane asylums.

Musk appeared to raise the idea of a potential position on what he called a government efficiency panel.

"I'd be happy to help out on such a commission," Musk said.

"I'd love it," Trump responded.

The former president called Harris fake. But he also attacked Biden, at times focusing on his former opponent's record and calling him stupid.

"By the way, you think Biden could do this interview? Do you think that Kamala could do this interview?" Trump said.

A Harris spokesman said: "Trump's entire campaign is

in service of people like Elon Musk and himself—self-obsessed rich guys who will sell out the middle class and who cannot run a livestream in the year 2024."

When the discussion turned to the use of fossil fuels, Trump suggested the issue was far in the future. "I think we have, you know, perhaps hundreds of years left," he added.

Musk gently pushed back. "My estimate would be, you know, a little more aggressive than that," he replied.

The conversation was plagued by technical issues at the start. Some users trying to listen instead saw a message saying: "Details not available." Others were able to get into a listening room only to quickly receive a message reading, "This Space is not available." Confusion and jokes raced across the internet and the

malfunction evoked the kind of issues that marred the presidential campaign launch of Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis on the platform last year.

Right before the event started, Musk cited without evidence a "massive DDOS attack on X," referring to a distributed denial-of-service, the sort of cyberattack that overwhelms a website, crashing it.

"There's a lot of opposition to people just hearing what President Trump has to say," Musk said as the delayed event began. Some observers questioned Musk's explanation, noting the rest of the platform seemed to continue working.

The technical problems represented a setback at a closely watched moment for X, which Musk has been seeking to promote as the go-to online venue for news.

Musk Gets Hands-On With PAC

Continued from Page One

Mars or implanting microchips in their brains. But the billionaire's full-throated support for Trump and the GOP has ignited other prominent donors. He has also received the gratitude of the Republican presidential nominee, who faces a newly energized opponent in Vice President Kamala Harris, the Democrats' nominee.

Musk is tackling the election effort in his signature hands-on, chaos-be-damned style, echoing his 2022 takeover of Twitter and early efforts to meet Tesla's production goals. Whether he and the team he has assembled succeed could be an important part of the election puzzle, and some Republican political operatives said they fear the early stumbles could be costly for the Trump campaign.

The recent overhaul means America PAC, formed in May, is resetting about a month before early voting starts and fewer than 90 days before the presidential election.

But the super PAC's new leadership is confident it can execute the group's mandate and the Trump camp has expressed support for recent changes. "The New Program 100% better than the old gang. Solidly support this effort!" senior Trump adviser Chris LaCivita posted on X last month.

Musk started America PAC with the help of Richard Weekley, a Texas real-estate developer and Republican operative, according to people familiar with the matter. Another early adviser was Denis Calabrese, a Republican consultant who is Weekley's longtime collaborator, the people said.

Weekley and Calabrese guided Musk toward In Field Strategies, a political canvassing group, to be the PAC's

boots on the ground, and Raconteur Media to handle its digital marketing. They also recruited Michael Baselice, an Austin-based pollster.

In mid-April, Musk met with the firms and advisers in Texas to share his vision for the PAC and ask for a proposed budget, according to people familiar with the meeting. He said he wanted to create a red wave of voters.

The political operatives described an estimated 800,000 low-propensity voters who could be nudged into getting to polls and said the Trump campaign and the Republican National Committee needed a better ground game, the people said. Musk also wanted the consultants to convince unregistered voters in the swing states to register.

The subsequent Friday meetings were businesslike. Musk said more than once that "bad news must be repeated before good news," according to people familiar with his comment. He wanted details: What was the script for the door-knockers? Could they record some of the interactions?

Musk initially didn't want to be seen as the face of the group, according to people familiar with the matter.

Palantir Technologies co-founder Joe Lonsdale, a longtime ally who was among the first to join with Musk on the PAC, told potential donors they needed to give only enough to help the group cover initial expenses after which a mystery donor—who turned out to be Musk—would finance the rest, people familiar with the conversations said.

Several other associates of Musk, including Antonio Gracia, a former Tesla director and current SpaceX board member, investor Kenneth Howery, and Sequoia Capital partners Shaun Maguire and Doug Leone, cut checks of \$500,000 or \$1 million, according to Federal Election Commission records.

Musk's involvement in the PAC came to light on July 12. Bloomberg reported that Musk donated an unknown amount to the PAC.



Elon Musk tried to keep his involvement in the pro-Trump super PAC under wraps.

The next day, Trump survived an assassination attempt in Butler, Pa. After the shooting, Musk posted on X, "I fully endorse President Trump and hope for his rapid recovery," publicly formalizing his support for the ex-president.

But the extent of Musk's commitment to getting Trump elected was kept under wraps. Musk had emphasized to the group his desire for privacy, according to people familiar with the super PAC. He was angered by a Wall Street Journal report a couple of days after his endorsement that revealed that he told others he had plans to commit around \$45 million a month to the group, the people said. He later said on X that he is donating at a lower level.

By mid-July, the PAC had several new faces, including Generra Peck and Phil Cox, veterans of the presidential campaign and super PAC that supported DeSantis.

Their relationship with Musk is traced to DeSantis's successful 2022 gubernatorial re-election bid. Peck, DeSantis's campaign manager, had courted the billionaire's support. Cox was a senior adviser to the campaign. Peck also managed DeSantis's presidential campaign and helped map out a super PAC called Never Back Down.

Soon after Cox and Peck arrived at America PAC, most of the group's vendors received an email notifying them that they were fired.

Weekley, the Texas businessman, and his political strategist Calabrese, left along with the canvassing and digital

firms—In Field Strategies and Raconteur Media—that represented the lion's share of the super PAC's spending.

In Field told the group's leadership that it had helped register more than 4,000 people, knocked on 725,000 doors, had 150,000 substantive con-

versations with prospective voters and got 26,000 absentee commitments, according to people familiar with data it provided to the PAC.

Raconteur, meanwhile, had compiled voter registration forms for 8,500 people from swing states who provided their information on the PAC website, these people said.

The committee paid In Field and Raconteur a total of about \$20 million from June 12 to July 19, according to FEC filings. The New York Times earlier reported the involvement of the former DeSantis team and that In Field was being replaced.

Calabrese and Raconteur have a controversial history of working together, according to separate lawsuits filed by the Laura and John Arnold Foundation against Calabrese and Raconteur. Calabrese is the former president of the foundation, which was co-founded by John Arnold, a former energy trader and hedge-fund manager.

The lawsuits alleged that after being alerted by federal authorities to possible wrongdoing, the foundation discovered that Calabrese hired Raconteur

and other vendors at inflated prices and that they in turn paid him millions in kickbacks.

Calabrese pleaded guilty to tax evasion in 2019 and was sentenced to 18 months in prison. He was later ordered to pay more than \$8 million in damages as a result of the Arnolds' civil suit and was released from the judgment after paying back the foundation. The Arnolds' lawsuit against Raconteur was settled out of court.

Musk discussed founding America PAC in a July 22 interview on X. "It's not meant to be sort of a hyperpartisan PAC," Musk said then. "The intent is to promote the principles that made America great in the first place."

The group's filings with the FEC state that its expenditures are in support of the Trump campaign.

America PAC has replaced In Field strategies with firms that include Blitz Canvassing, which is part of communications and public affairs company GP3 Partners, according to people familiar with the move.

Push Digital, based in Charleston, S.C., and IMGE, also part of GP3 Partners, took over from Raconteur, said the people. Cox is the founder of GP3 Partners and chairman of IMGE, according to his LinkedIn profile.

Since the former vendors were fired, the PAC's advertisements on Facebook and Instagram have stopped running. Social-media accounts for the PAC haven't been updated since July 17.

The turnover at the PAC was followed by online glitches and complaints from election officials in swing states that the website was collecting personal info without helping people register to vote. A Journal review found that people from the swing states were asked for personal information and then directed to a page asking to fill in yet another form. But broken code on the page prevented the form from appearing in all cases except for visitors from North Carolina.

U.S. NEWS

Walz's Economic Record Gets New Focus

Minnesota has high corporate tax rate and also a low rate of unemployment

By JOHN MCCORMICK

Gov. Tim Walz's state is known for its cold and snowy weather, more than 10,000 lakes and a tradition of "Minnesota nice." Low taxes and a booming economy don't typically make the list.

As both political parties work hard to try to define the Democratic governor after his selection last week as Vice President Kamala Harris's running mate, Walz's economic record as the state's chief executive since January 2019 is coming under scrutiny.

He has shown himself to be a big-spending governor who has also recorded some business growth and retention victories even as his state hasn't performed as well in recent years as others on certain economic benchmarks.

"There are cases where businesses are expanding here and putting up new facilities, but by and large, we are seeing growth elsewhere and it's partially because of our high-tax climate," said Doug Loon, chief executive of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce. "We are No. 1 right now in the corporate tax in the country."

Minnesota's 9.8% corporate tax is the highest in the U.S., according to the conservative-leaning Tax Foundation. The designation arrived this year, after New Jersey let a 2.5% surtax on net corporate income over \$1 million expire.

Walz's administration in 2021 proposed raising the state's corporate rate to 11.25%, but the legislature—then still partially under GOP control—didn't follow the recommendation.

His backers point to the 2023 passage of the nation's highest state child tax credit, which reduced taxes for lower-income Minnesota families. He also pushed through a \$2.6 billion infrastructure bill—the largest in state history—that will benefit residents and businesses.

Charles Lutvak, a Harris campaign spokesman, said Walz led Minnesota "with strong leadership, competent management and smart policies—reaching the lowest state unemployment rate in recorded history."

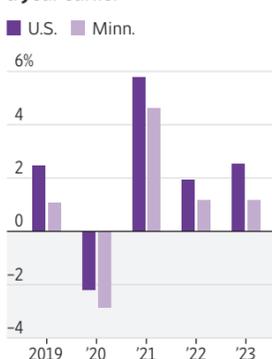
Mixed bag

Minnesota's recent economic and demographic metrics present a mixed picture. The state has experienced stagnant population growth since 2020 and smaller percentage gains in gross domes-



Minnesota has posted record-low unemployment under Gov. Tim Walz, above. At right, a job fair in 2019.

Real GDP, change from a year earlier



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis via St. Louis Fed

tic product than the national average and some neighboring states during that same period, ranking 45th in 2023 for real GDP growth.

The state's job growth has also been significantly slower than the national average, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data. Nonfarm payrolls have grown 1.4% since Walz became governor through June, compared with 5.7% for the U.S. overall.

"We are not improving our economic performance and are actually falling backward," Loon said. "We are not competing well with other states and we are on the backside of most indexes, meaning we are not competing well around the country."

But Minnesota has posted

Harris Taps Big-Money California Donors

Kamala Harris stopped in San Francisco on Sunday to fundraise from the big donors of the liberal city, which has become a crucial source of tech money. She talked about her positions on gay rights, abortion, gun violence and other issues. The vice president's wooing of West Coast voters is important as she looks to build her war chest.

Nearly 700 people attended the fundraiser, which raised more than \$13 million, according to Harris's campaign. Access cost as much as \$500,000 for

people wanting to chair it and take a photo with Harris. The least expensive tickets, going for \$3,300, quickly sold out.

Attendees included LinkedIn co-founder and venture capitalist Reid Hoffman, former Walt Disney Studios Chairman Jeffrey Katzenberg and Aaron Levie, co-founder of cloud-computing company Box.

Since Harris stepped in for President Biden in the 2024 race, Democrats have seen bolstered enthusiasm and fundraising. The vice president's campaign an-

nounced that she had raised \$310 million in combined fundraising in July. That compares with roughly \$139 million for Trump's campaign and affiliated committees, according to his campaign.

The West Coast is a critical source of funding for Harris, but also makes her an easy target for the Trump campaign, which has called her a "San Francisco radical."

Tech executives tend to support the left. Still, some high-profile investors and executives, including Elon Musk, have backed Trump.

—Preetika Rana

record-low unemployment during Walz's tenure, with the current rate of 2.9% among the country's lowest. The state has also received AAA bond ratings from all major credit-rating firms three years in a row, according to Walz's office.

Former President Donald Trump and his fellow Republicans want November's election to be a referendum on inflation and the economy and how Harris and President Biden have managed them. The most recent Wall Street Journal poll in late July showed a 12-percentage-point advantage for Trump over Harris on views about who is best able to manage the economy.

Eric Gibson, chief executive of a sign-manufacturing and

-installation company based in the western suburbs of Minneapolis, said he voted for Walz in 2018 and 2022 and remains undecided in the presidential election.

"I was very supportive of him when he first came in because he sounded very pro-business and said the right things," he said. "But it has become much more expensive to do business in Minnesota since Walz has taken over."

With his employees split roughly evenly between facilities in Minnesota and North Dakota, Gibson said those outside of Walz's state are about \$800 to \$1,500 less expensive to employ per year per employee because of lower wages, taxes and regulations. "With 120 employees, that

starts to add up quickly," he said.

Walz's support for indexing the state's gas tax for inflation also bothered Gibson. "That makes it more expensive to do business in Minnesota," he said.

Former Minnesota Republican Gov. Tim Pawlenty, who unsuccessfully ran for president in the 2012 election cycle, said the business environment has deteriorated under Walz. "It is pretty easy to take a look at Minnesota's tax and regulatory burdens and conclude that this is not a business-friendly state and that has gotten worse over the last six or seven years," he said.

Bill George, former chief executive for Medtronic, a medical-technology company

based in Minnesota, said businesses will continue to blossom in the state because workers like living there.

'Quality of life'

"It does have a high tax base and that has contributed to strong educational systems, the arts, the environment and the quality of life," said George, a Minnesotan who considers himself an independent voter and plans to vote for the Harris-Walz ticket.

"You can always talk to Tim, if there is an issue, and you can resolve things," George said of his experience with the Minnesota governor.

Walz has had some major economic wins and moments where he helped shape an outcome involving business during his tenure as governor.

He issued a veto in 2023 after lawmakers passed legislation that set minimum pay rates for Uber and Lyft drivers and provided them greater protection against being fired. And earlier this year, he played a part in negotiating a compromise that helped keep the ride-share companies from potentially leaving the state, after the Minneapolis City Council set pay minimums they objected to.

In a huge win for the state, Mayo Clinic pledged in November to invest \$5 billion to expand its Rochester, Minn., medical campus in the heart of a congressional district Walz once represented.

George pointed to Walz's role in May 2023, when Mayo threatened to reduce investment in the state if legislation that proposed to regulate nurse staffing levels passed. The proposal, scrapped after Walz exerted some influence, was backed by a large union. "He was able to work through a difficult issue," he said.

Rep. Dean Phillips (D., Minn.) said he expects Walz will be positioned by Republicans "as a tax-and-spend Democrat" but suggested the full picture is more complex.

"Look at Minnesota's business environment," said Phillips, a wealthy businessman who engaged in a failed long-shot bid for the 2024 Democratic presidential nomination. "It has been a remarkable ecosystem of innovation and success, so I think there's something to be said for that."

Phillips said a state's attractiveness to business is about more than tax rates. "We take care of kids. We protect parks and water," he said. "When people look at what will be coined as a very progressive record, it's also a state that works, and I think he should take credit for that."

—Katy Stech Ferek and Anthony DeBarros contributed to this article.

Governor's Relatively Modest Means Can Be Asset or Liability, Voters Say

By JOE PINSKER AND VERONICA DAGHER

People are judging Tim Walz on his net worth—but they don't all come to the same conclusion.

The governor of Minnesota and Kamala Harris's Democratic running mate doesn't report having any major investments aside from his pensions. He keeps his finances relatively simple compared with the varied holdings of multimillionaire opponent JD Vance, based on each candidate's disclosures to date.

Some view Walz's more modest finances as an asset. Though he has more money than the typical American, they say he comes across on his balance sheets as someone you might split the bill for beers with. They also say he can better relate to their own personal financial situation when it comes to policy.

Sara Burke, a 40-year-old business-loan underwriter in Salt Lake City, takes Walz's financial state as a sign that he doesn't use his office for his own gain, isn't swayed by outside influences and understands the needs of ordinary people.

"Because he's just a regular degular person," said Burke, a Democrat who plans to vote for Harris. Financially independent

Others, though, see Walz's lack of a fortune and investment portfolio as a weakness for someone who needs to wrangle with chief executives and central bankers and help manage the broader economy.

Walz and his wife, Gwen Walz, had a total income of about \$299,000, according to their 2023 tax return, with \$135,000 of that coming from pensions or annuities.

Vance earned between \$1.2 million and \$1.3 million in 2022, according to his financial disclosure form.

Jerry Dawson, a retiree in Hernando, Fla., wasn't impressed by Walz's finances. A registered Republican, he said Vance's wealth and private-sector experience make him a better candidate.

"If a candidate has a high net worth and it wasn't inherited, but earned by the candidate, it tells me that the candidate has financial acumen, business and investment savvy and [is] conscientious regarding saving what they have earned," said Dawson. Financially independent

candidates are also less likely to rely on special interest groups for funding, he said.

Voters grew more open to supporting very wealthy politicians in roughly the past half-century, as many everyday people became more admiring of the rich, said Guido Alfani, an economic historian at Bocconi University in Italy.

Compared with Europeans, "Americans are readier to believe that the fact of being wealthy suggests something about the character of the person," said Alfani. People like and trust those who became rich more than those who were

born rich, according to a 2023 study in the journal Social Psychological and Personality Science. Americans may gauge wealth and success by searching each other's homes on Zillow. Walz doesn't own any real estate at present.

He and his wife sold their Minnesota place in 2019 and live in a rental home paid for by the state while the governor's mansion is renovated. Vance and his wife, Usha

Chilukuri Vance, have three homes.

Mark Wardlaw, a 26-year-old government employee in Franklin, Tenn., finds Walz's financial background equal parts compelling and concerning.

Wardlaw, who tends to vote Republican, said that while Walz is a welcome break from a politics dominated by money, he is put off by the candidate's apparently limited experience with the stock market.

Asked to comment on the significance, if any, of a candidate's finances, neither camp talked about money directly.

"Tim Walz has dedicated his life to serving our country and his community—in the Army National Guard, in the classroom, and in the halls of government," said Charles Lutvak, a spokesperson for the Harris-Walz campaign. "He and Gwen have worked hard to earn a living like so many families across the country."

Vance spokesman Luke Schroeder pointed to the candidate's rags-to-riches story. "Senator Vance grew up in poverty and overcame adversity to achieve the American dream—he knows exactly how it feels to struggle to get by," he said.

—Anne Tergesen and Katherine Hamilton contributed to this article.

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WORLD NEWS

Israel on High Alert, U.S. Bolsters Force

Military moves come as Hezbollah, Iran are expected to launch an attack

Israel put its military on high alert and the Pentagon said it is sending a guided-missile submarine to the region and speeding up the arrival of a second aircraft carrier, amid height-

By Omar Abdel-Baqi, Dov Lieber and Nancy A. Youssef

ened concerns about a possible Iranian and Hezbollah response to the killing of militant leaders in Tehran and Beirut.

Israel set the high-alert level for its military for the first time this month after observing preparations by Iran and Hezbollah to carry out attacks, said a person familiar with the matter. Israel doesn't know whether attacks are in fact imminent and is proceeding cautiously, the person said.

The Israeli military's chief of staff, Herzi Halevi, approved plans Monday and said



An Israeli submarine passes between two ships off the coast of northern Israel as tensions rise.

joint statement with the U.K., Germany, France and Italy released by the White House.

Iran's forces "are waiting for the supreme leader's order, whether for patience and endurance or for response," said Brig. Gen Asghar Abbas-Gholizadeh, a commander of a provincial branch of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, according to a report by the state-run Iranian Students News Agency. "On the surface, it is too late to respond and take revenge, but the enemy is enduring a lot of pressure by waiting."

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin told Gallant by phone on Sunday that U.S. deployments strengthen the U.S. military posture in the Middle East in light of recent tensions and reflect a "commitment to take every possible step to defend Israel."

A pair of high-profile killings in the capitals of Lebanon and Iran elevated the threat of a wider conflict after 10 months of war in Gaza between Israel and Hamas, an Iranian ally. An Israeli airstrike in Beirut killed a top Hezbollah official in July. Hours later, Is-

mail Haniyeh, Hamas's politi-

offensive and defensive preparations were under way, according to the Israeli military.

"The threats from Tehran and Beirut may materialize and it is important to explain to everyone that readiness, preparedness and vigilance

are not synonyms for fear and panic," said Yoav Gallant, Israel's defense minister.

The U.S. has shared intelligence it has gathered about shifting Iranian force postures, said a U.S. official. But U.S. officials said that identi-

fying the moving of military assets doesn't provide enough information to determine the timing of a potential attack.

The U.S. and four European allies called on Iran to stand down from its threats of a military attack, according to a

Gazans Say It Is Harder to Find Food in Enclave

By ABEER AYYOUB AND OMAR ABDEL-BAQUI

Tahani Mounir spends hours ruminating over how to allocate dwindling food supplies in Gaza City among her malnourished young children.

The amount of aid reaching Gazans has dropped since Israel's May operation in Rafah, the southern border city where more than one million Palestinians were sheltering and where a significant portion of the aid-distribution infrastructure was located, say the United Nations and humanitarian groups.

"The volume of aid able to be brought from the opera-

tional border crossings into Gaza has decreased by more than half since early May, when the Rafah crossing was closed," says a U.N. spokeswoman.

Before the Rafah operation, aid groups had set up tents and cooking stations to serve the million people sheltering there, relying on the Rafah border crossing for shipments. Aid groups say they have been unable to replicate the system they had before May.

The U.N. Relief and Works Agency has moved much of its operations from Rafah to central Gaza to follow the flow of people, said spokeswoman Juliette Touma. But with con-

stant new displacement, the main area where people are sheltering often changes, making it difficult to centralize aid hubs as they were in Rafah.

Months of relying on canned food and little to no access to fresh fruit, vegetables or protein is having a severe impact on people's health. Hunger is compounding as time passes. Dozens of people have died from malnutrition, according to the U.N. Nearly all of the enclave's roughly 2.2 million residents face high levels of food insecurity.

Cogat, the Israeli military body responsible for facilitating shipments into Gaza, said there

are four crossings into Gaza, including three that opened recently. But aid groups say some of the crossings give priority to commercial goods rather than aid, neglecting the most desperate people, and they don't make up for Rafah's closure.

A breakdown of law and order and an increase in smuggling of contraband like cigarettes have made aid trucks a target for criminals. Even if they make it through a crossing, they often are looted before food can reach the people who need it. Some aid groups have paused work because of the dangers.

"We've gone backward. We're now in a really desperate

situation," said Sean Carroll, president of American Near East Refugee Aid, a U.S.-based humanitarian group with a longstanding presence in Gaza.

In April, 75% of households in southern Gaza's Khan Younis area and 82% in the nearby Rafah area reported getting food aid in the month prior, said a report by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, an initiative that brings together experts from agencies including the U.N.

By June, only 48% and 25% of households in those respective areas reported receiving assistance. The proportion in both months stayed close to

60% in northern Gaza, where for months beforehand, the percentage was substantially lower compared with the south until Israel established a new land route and crossing.

The chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, is seeking arrest warrants against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, accusing their government of enacting policies aimed at intentionally starving Palestinians. Israel has opposed the charges and says it is working to ally the crisis. The court is also seeking warrants for Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar.

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WORLD NEWS

Bangladesh's New Leader Says He Answered the Call of Student Protesters

DHAKA, Bangladesh—Nobel Peace laureate Muhammad Yunus said he agreed to lead the caretaker government in Bangladesh after the student protesters, right photo, who toppled the prime minister asked for his help.

Yunus, a microcredit pioneer, was sworn in Thursday as head of the interim government after the army said former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had resigned. The leaders of the movement, which erupted over recruitment for government jobs, called him in Europe, and asked him to lead the overhaul efforts.

"These are the guys who broke the local government," Yunus told a news briefing. "I said, 'I respect you, I admire you. What you have done is absolutely unparalleled.'"

Yunus said he wants to help them realize their vision of a more democratic Bangladesh. "Because you ordered me to do this, I take your order," Yunus said he told them. "It's not my dream, it's their dream," he added.

Yunus said the first priority for his government is to restore law and order, followed by overhauls such as ensuring freedom of speech.

—Shan LI



Attacks Stun Russia but Carry Risks

Continued from Page One
soldiers like Yanyk and his comrades charging through Russian territory and tearing down Russian flags from village halls have raised morale among Kyiv's beleaguered army and embarrassed President Vladimir Putin of Russia. Yanyk was in a village near the Russian border Monday, preparing to return to the Ukrainian-controlled town of Sudzha about 7 miles inside Russia. Videos he posted online

from his forays into Russia show Yanyk driving along dark, deserted roads, stopping to take the signs of conquered villages as trophies. "Now we're going to be hanging out on your land just like you are on ours," he says in one of the videos.

The swift maneuvers are reminiscent of Ukraine's last successful counteroffensive that routed Russian forces from the Kharkiv region in 2022. Ukraine's top military commander, Col. Gen. Oleksandr Syrskiy, who led the Kharkiv operation, said Monday that 1,000 square kilometers of Russia were now in Kyiv's control.

On a visit to Kyiv on Monday, U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham called the incursion "brilliant" and "bold." The South Carolina Republican urged the Bi-

den administration to provide Ukraine with more weapons.

By thrusting across the border, Kyiv is seeking to divert Moscow's resources away from other parts of the front line where Ukrainian forces are under intense pressure. But opening a new front risks stretching Ukrainian forces even thinner.

As fighting rages in Kursk, Russian forces have continued to gain ground in eastern Ukraine, creeping toward the logistical hub of Pokrovsk and hammering the nearby city of Chasiv Yar located on strategically important heights in the Donbas region.

At the same time, the Kursk invasion is an affront to Putin, who has ordered his military to swiftly eject Ukrainian forces. Addressing the "urgent

problems" there at a meeting with top officials on Monday, Putin said Ukraine aimed to destabilize Russian society and strengthen its position in any future negotiations.

"The leaders of the Kyiv regime are not only committing a crime against the Russian people, but have in fact embarked on the path of extermination of the Ukrainians themselves," he said. More than 120,000 people have been displaced by the fighting and 28 towns and villages are under Ukrainian occupation, the acting governor of Kursk told the meeting.

Ukraine's ultimate plans are unclear. But whether Kyiv seeks to expand its incursion or cling on to what it already has, it will face trade-offs, said David Blagden, senior lecturer in international security at the

University of Exeter in the U.K.

"The personnel, equipment and logistics demands of attempting to sustain the incursion then hold the taken territory will be significant, especially as supply lines lengthen," Blagden said.

In a village near the Russian border, two Ukrainian soldiers awaiting orders to join the battle in Kursk said they had just arrived from the front line near Pokrovsk, where Ukrainian forces are under heavy pressure. "We came to help," said one of them.

Another soldier said he was surprised to learn he was being transferred to the Sumy border region as his unit was so short of men that infantry spent as long as 45 days straight in a trench. The 25-year-old had been stationed in

Chasiv Yar, one of the hottest spots on the frontline, until a week before the incursion.

Others had been shifted to the Sumy Region well in advance. The deputy commander of a squad that is taking part in the offensive said his unit had been sent there about two months ago but only found out about the Kursk offensive shortly before it got under way.

"Everybody is more or less happy with how it's going," said the soldier, who goes by the call sign Pokemon.

Another soldier said he hoped the offensive would expedite an end to the war.

"This is the first time Russia has had war on its territory since World War II," he said. "Everybody was afraid of Russia, but we are showing there is nothing to be afraid of."

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FROM PAGE ONE

Bank Breaks Limits on Workloads

Continued from Page One

around the clock—yet he chose to continue fulfilling tasks and took client calls from his bed.

Then in May, a Bank of America associate died. He had been putting in over 100 hours a week to finish work on a \$2 billion acquisition.

The Wall Street Journal spoke to more than three dozen people familiar with the working conditions at Bank of America, including former and current investment bankers ranging from junior to executive level in offices around the world.

Many described how superiors instruct junior bankers to ignore policies that limit working hours. The experiences clash with rules added a decade ago to protect bankers from being overworked, raising scrutiny of the bank's work culture. The restrictions were put in place after another death—a Bank of America intern in London died of a seizure after working several all-nighters in a row.

The death in May sparked a new public outcry over banks' treatment of young employees and the potential consequences of too much work. The experiences at Bank of America are echoed in banks across Wall Street, where long hours and deference to bosses' commands, no matter how unreasonable, are the norm industrywide. In jobs where entry level salaries can reach \$200,000, many bankers say they hesitate to raise concerns about their working conditions.

Former bankers said in viral social-media posts on Instagram and X that banks' treatment of employees needs to change. JPMorgan Chase CEO Jamie Dimon told analysts the bank was asking "what can we learn from" the recent death at Bank of America, adding JPMorgan was full of people "who give a damn about the human beings that work at this company."

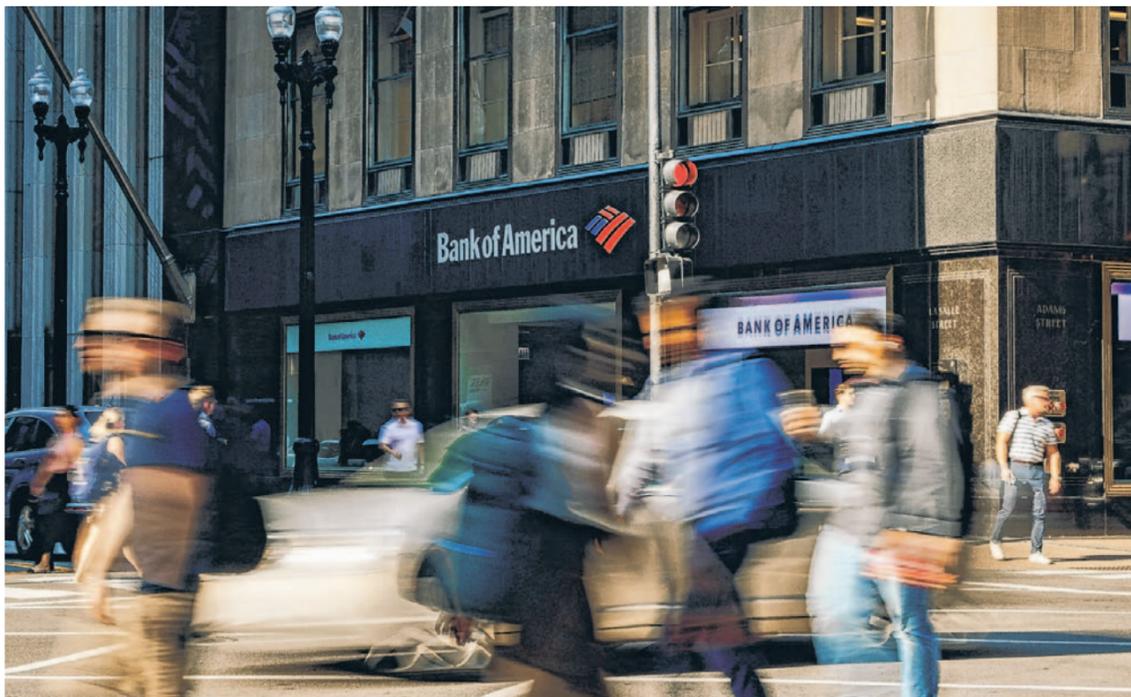
A spokeswoman for Bank of America said that "our practices are clear and we expect all employees including managers to follow them. When we've learned of violations, disciplinary actions have been taken." She said investment banking jobs at the bank are "sought after [and] challenging jobs," and that the bank received roughly 500,000 applications for entry-level positions over the past four years, while turnover for associates is under 10%.

Since the recent death, some managers have told junior bankers the bank is enforcing rules about hours more strictly, people who work at the bank said. Senior bankers have also vowed to keep better tabs on bankers' work loads, the people said.

Rite of passage

The question of how much to work junior employees has divided Wall Street for decades.

Each year, thousands of young people start entry-level jobs in investment banking, attracted by the industry's reputa-



Bank of America associate Leo Lukenas III, above, died in May. Roy Wang, right, left the bank's Tokyo office. Top, the Chicago office.



to comment.

Lukenas became a banker after serving in the U.S. Special Forces for over a decade. As a Green Beret, he did several tours in the Middle East.

Lukenas had a wife and two young children as well as a twin brother—also a veteran—who started in investment banking at Goldman Sachs weeks after his brother's death.

A few days after Lukenas died, managers at Bank of America held calls with junior bankers and some acknowledged that they might be asking too much of them. Midlevel staff responsible for setting junior bankers' schedules also told some of them in private conversations that the bank is focused on keeping closer tabs on hours.

'Do more with less'

Wall Street's approach to work-life balance appears at odds with some industries such as tech that have adapted to attract Millennial and Generation Z workers, who tend to prioritize life outside of work. While some junior bankers were able to win concessions during the pandemic, many banks have ordered employees back to the office five days a week and rolled back other allowances.

The strongest draw to working for a big investment bank is still the money and the prestige. Junior bankers are enticed to stick it out and eventually reach the rank of managing director, which can come with annual compensation of \$1 million or more. Others aim to leave after a few years for even bigger paydays at private-equity firms or hedge funds. But banker salaries haven't grown much since the 2008 financial crisis.

Kevin Mahoney, a recruiter for investment banks, said the health scares won't make it easier to attract people to work in investment banking. He said recruiting has been challenging as compensation for many bankers has dropped because of a slowdown in corporate dealmaking, and that investment banks have been asking more from young staff to help them counteract the decline.

"Even if they don't have anything to do, they have to find something to do," he said. "Senior bankers are trying to do more with less and inevitably that trickles down."

One Bank of America associate said she worked from around 8 a.m. to 4 a.m. every day for about a week last year, adding new debt transaction ideas and acquisition target analyses to a client proposal at her boss's behest. The hours should have tripped the bank's controls, but her boss had asked her not to log all of them.

She worked overnight Wednesday and Thursday to meet the deadline. The boss responded by requesting more changes by the next morning.

The associate, who still works at the bank, said she got a reprieve when another senior employee overheard her crying in the bathroom and confronted her boss, saying she had been pushed too far. The client they pitched went on to make several acquisitions, but never hired Bank of America on any.

—Imani Moise, Lauren Thomas and Karen Langley contributed to this article.

tion for turning hard workers into millionaires. But many of them say consistent bouts of working more than 12-hour days at least six days a week is not only mentally grueling but hazardous to their health.

Banks have attempted to reduce the time bankers spend working. Advances in technology have eased tasks and some low-level work has been outsourced to countries with cheaper labor. But bankers can still put in as many as 120 hours a week in the thick of a project.

Some banks rolled out "protected weekends" to guarantee at least one day off a week, but many at Bank of America said those policies are frequently ignored by their managers.

One major impediment is senior bankers who see the early years as their profession's rite of passage. That prompts some of them to ignore safeguards meant to protect the people who work for them.

Lavysh said young employees didn't honestly report their work schedules because they wanted to prove to their superiors that they were willing to work hard, even if it meant working many more hours than company policies allowed. "You don't want to say 'I cannot take more work right now' because it makes you look weak," she said. She is now working at a startup.

Wang left in 2020 for a job at a sovereign-wealth fund, where his hours dropped to around 60 a week. He has since launched

his own investment fund and said he has received a clean bill of health from his doctor.

Moritz Erhardt, the Bank of America intern in London, died in 2013 after logging long hours at the office. The bank appointed a group to review "all aspects of the tragedy" including whether employees were encouraged to work overly long hours or had been pushed into unhealthily competitive environments on the job, the Journal reported at the time.

An autopsy found Erhardt died of an epileptic seizure that was possibly brought on by fatigue.

In response, the bank in 2014 instituted policies to limit young bankers' hours. It required them to start logging their hours, and managers would receive a warning when they logged more than 80 in a week. If they worked more than 100, they would be flagged to the bank's human resources department, which would intervene to get them time off.

It also instituted a protected weekends policy, under which junior bankers were required to take off either a Saturday or Sunday every week, unless managers had received exemptions for must-do work from human resources. Other banks includ-

ing Goldman Sachs and JPMorgan followed suit on protected weekends.

Bank of America later tweaked its weekend policy, shifting it to a "protected Saturday" policy—making Sunday a regular workday.

Several current and former bankers at Bank of America said they were asked to violate those policies or directly witnessed them being contravened. They said many senior bankers across the institution tell junior bankers to avoid logging their actual hours, leaving them to work 15- or 16-hour days "off the books" for weeks.

One current associate said the bank's human-resources department intervened after he worked over 100 hours a week for a month. When his bosses were forced to give him a day off, he planned a long bike ride to clear his mind. He had just started biking when his manager called and said he needed him to work several hours that day without logging the hours.

Junior bankers working in Bank of America's leveraged-finance group, which specializes in financing corporate takeovers with high-interest debt, said their team has been overburdened after the bank laid off ju-

Saying 'I cannot take more work right now' could make you look weak.

Ready, Set, Brag About Color War

Continued from Page One

used to knowing every detail of their kids' lives, and many have an insatiable desire to see what their children are doing at camp.

So camps now provide daily photo dumps, as well as livestreams of activities—including the start, captain announcements and the competitions of color war.

For parents who've turned milestones, from gender reveals to college-acceptance reactions, into social-media highlight reels, broadcasting a child's appointment to the hallowed rite of color-war captain is a natural step.

"To see your child reach this memorable peak in their camp careers is everything," says Blum, 55, a personal trainer from Livingston, N.J. "Not every kid gets it. Not every kid deserves it."

Her son Matthew recalls he "blacked out" from sheer excitement at the announcement.

To build excitement, camps stage elaborate Hollywood-



Color War generals 'unbury the hatchet' at Tyler Hill Camp, signifying the start of color war.

style color-war kickoffs, complete with closely guarded plans for when the spectacle will begin.

Tyler Hill, a seven-week Pocono Mountains camp (with a tuition of \$16,500), last year enlisted a fleet of 300 drones to create a light show with color-war motifs.

Camp Kennybrook in Sullivan County, N.Y. (tuition, \$12,000), showered campers with personalized blue and gold ping-pong balls dropped

from a helicopter.

Many camps livestream productions, since "it would be a missed opportunity to not show it," says Stacey Landman, who runs Camp Kennybrook, a family business, with her brother.

Captains, sometimes called generals, are quasi celebrities at camp.

Armed with clipboards and walkie talkies, they juggle lengthy to-do lists, including writing cheers and songs, competing and leading by example

in victory and defeat.

The coveted captain's title signifies campers embody the best in leadership, sportsmanship, character and spirit. (Think valedictorian, prom queen/king and cheer captain rolled into one.)

"Getting into is like being president of the United States," says Iliana Lebersfeld, a Camp Kennybrook alum, former teenage color-war captain, and the mother of two former captains. "It is a fleet-

ing moment in time, and you're chosen out of everyone at camp. You're a leader," adds Lebersfeld, 46, who works at Camp Stuff 4 Less and lives in Short Hills, N.J.

When actor Ben Platt was asked by interviewers what his biggest accomplishment was, he didn't mention his prestigious awards for the musical "Dear Evan Hansen" or starring in "Pitch Perfect." Instead, it was leading the red team to victory as color war captain at Camp Ramah in California.

Alyse Dosik, 48, a nonpracticing attorney in Brooklyn, N.Y., runs a Facebook group as a resource for newbie camp parents who have questions like Dosik did when she sent her first of three daughters to Camp Lakota, a six-week camp in New York's Catskill Mountains (tuition, \$10,800).

This year, Dosik's daughter Jess was named sergeant of the blue team in color war, the highest honor for a camper. After Camp Lakota posted the news on its social feed, Dosik's phone exploded with congratulatory messages from fellow parents. "It is peak recognition at camp," says Dosik, who posted a photo of her daughter's "blue sergeant" T-shirt on Instagram.

"It means you've been a good leader, demonstrated character, are a role model

and you exemplified what it means to be engaged at camp. As a parent, how can you not be proud of that?"

Michael Childs, now Lakota's director, understands the excitement and disappointment that goes along with the selection of color war general. He recalls "hysterically crying" when he didn't make it as a teen camper, and then being elated when he snagged the title of "counselor general," as a rising college sophomore in 1990.

Shortly after color war started last month, Childs received a text from the mom of a camper general saying, "We've been talking about this all year. Now that it's happened you don't understand what this means to us."

Meanwhile, campers and parents turn into amateur sleuths, analyzing details of camp life to predict color war's start.

When her oldest, Gracie, was a contender for camper captain, Lebersfeld declined plans and kept her phone close by. "For two to three days ahead we were on edge," recalls Lebersfeld.

"I was sitting with the phone waiting until they went live. They called her name. We have the best picture of her sisters crying in her arms. I was hysterical."



The World Isn't Going to Hell, But Many People Feel That Way

The science behind why humans believe others are less good nowadays



ELIZABETH BERNSTEIN

A lot about the world feels dark right now. We're reeling from a turbulent presidential race. Processing an attempted assassination. Divided by protests—and a barrage of images on social media that feed our anxieties. Sometimes, it seems as though we're living in the worst of times. The truth is, we're really not. I realize that might seem hard to believe. And, indeed, a robust study shows that most people think society is declining morally—steadily becoming ruder, greedier and less kind. Yet the study also concludes that people are just as

good as they've ever been. The researchers examined decades of studies, some dating as far back as the 1940s, measuring things like empathy, kindness, respect and generosity. They found that although people have been decrying a moral decline for generations, their behavior toward one another really hasn't changed. "People think the world has gone to hell in a handbasket," says Adam Mastroianni, an experimental psychologist and lead author on the study. "But as far as we can tell it's just the same as it always was." The title of the study: "The Illusion of Moral Decline." Human beings have been complaining about a moral decline

Our behavior toward each other really hasn't changed over time.

since, well, forever. Jeremiah in the Old Testament, Cicero in ancient Rome, Machiavelli in Renaissance Italy and Cotton Mather in Puritan New England all griped about it, according to Richard Eibach, an associate professor of psychology at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada, who studies how people perceive themselves and the world around them. Mastroianni and a colleague, Harvard psychology professor Daniel Gilbert, tried to assess whether people *think* morality is declining, and then whether it actually is. First, they examined research going back decades from 60 countries, asking people whether they thought others were less friendly,

honest, kind or good than they used to be. The studies included approximately 575,000 participants. Then they looked at research probing how people behave toward one another. The studies asked people whether, for instance, they had recently been treated with respect, done something nice for someone else or donated to charity. A remarkably consistent portion of people over the years—around 60%—have believed that people are less good now than they were in the past. They also have believed that the moral decline began in their lifetime. Yet when the researchers looked at actual behaviors over time, they found something different. Year after year, people reported that others do nice things for them. And they do nice things for others. They also consistently said that their own friends and family mem-

bers behave better than ever. (Don't be so surprised. "We ignore their flaws to sustain the relationships," says Waterloo's Eibach.)

A survival instinct
Why do we believe that society is worse than it is? It's partly the way our brains pay attention. We have a negativity bias. We pay much more attention to bad events or emotions than good ones. This is a survival instinct; we need to detect threats. "The strategy that keeps me vigilant on whether the lion is going to get me keeps me seeing threats everywhere," says Julia DiGangi, a neuropsychologist in Chicago. Memory might play a part, too. We often remember the past more fondly than is perhaps warranted. That is because the emotional power of a positive experience stays with us longer than the emotional power of a negative one. Psychologists call this the fading affect bias and say it makes life more tolerable by helping us defang our bad experiences over time and cherish the good ones. "You remember what happened, but it doesn't feel as negative compared to how you felt at first," says Grant Shields, an assistant professor in the department of psychological science at the University of Arkansas who studies memory. Getting older might change our perceptions, too. People often see the world as more dangerous and risky during life transitions such as becoming an adult or a parent, studies show. "Being in a role of responsibility makes people hyper-responsive to misconduct," says Waterloo's Eibach, who conducted the research. "And we don't realize that the world didn't change—we did."

Check the facts
There's a danger to believing that people are getting worse when that's not really true. That belief distracts us from real problems that need to be solved. It makes us susceptible to people in power who want us to believe the worst so they can claim to be the only one who can fix it. And it keeps us from connecting with each other. "If we believe the worst in people, we treat them in terrible ways," says Jamil Zaki, a professor of psychology at Stanford University, who has a book coming out on cynicism. "And then we bring out the worst in them." His advice: Fact-check your assumptions about others. Talk more about the positive things people do, a practice he calls "positive gossip." And take a leap of faith on someone: Ask a neighbor for help, give an employee more responsibility, talk to a stranger. "We're walking around with a pair of mud-colored glasses on," says Zaki. "We need to take them off and see each other more clearly."

Dairy in Our Diet Gets Fresh Scrutiny

By ANDREA PETERSEN

Controversy is swirling over the humble glass of milk. Multiple servings of milk, cheese or yogurt have long been a staple of American nutrition advice. Now a growing number of researchers and doctors say you need less dairy than you think, and maybe even none at all. The U.S. government, which recommends that adults eat three servings of dairy a day, is taking a fresh look at its guidance. A committee of scientific advisers is analyzing diets with lower amounts of dairy to study what happens to people's nutrient levels. That is the first step toward possibly changing the recommendation in the next update of U.S. dietary guidelines. Other countries already recommend less dairy than the U.S. does. The problem? Dairy-rich diets have been linked to increased risks of cardiovascular disease and certain cancers in some studies. Foods like ice cream and full-fat cheese are high in calories and saturated fat. However, the research isn't clear-cut. Some studies link dairy foods to a lower risk of heart disease, some cancers and Type 2 diabetes. When it comes to milk, scientists can't agree on whether full fat or skim is better. Long story short: Go ahead and enjoy your Greek yogurt and that mozzarella in your caprese salad. Just don't have too much; some experts say one serving a day—one cup of yogurt or 1.5 ounces of the cheese—is good.

A lot depends on what the rest of your diet looks like, nutrition experts say. The main reason to eat dairy is to get calcium, which helps build and maintain bone, and is especially important for children and women over 50. But calcium can come from other sources, like fortified soy milk, tofu, kale, edamame and bok choy. And much of our dairy consumption happens in the form of pizza and cheese-laden deli sandwiches. Better sources are foods that aren't ultra-processed or high in sugar—plain yogurt, for instance. If you're eating dairy instead of fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains, that's unwise. But if you're eating milk, yogurt and cheese instead of processed meat, cupcakes and soda, "that's probably going to be beneficial," says Dr. Walter C. Willett, a professor of epidemiology and nutrition at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. **Health effects of dairy** One reason we don't have definitive answers on dairy: Many studies are observational, meaning scientists ask people what they eat and look at their health over time. That approach makes it hard to discern the effects of one type of food, says Lindsey Smith Taillie, associate professor in the nutrition department at the University of North Carolina's Gillings School of Global Public Health. In addition, the dairy industry funds some of the research. Still, some useful findings have emerged. There is evidence that a diet high in dairy may lower the risk



How much dairy we should eat often depends on what the rest of our diet looks like.

of colon cancer. The calcium and vitamin D seem to inhibit the growth of cancer cells in the colon, says Carrie Daniel, a nutritional epidemiologist at MD Anderson Cancer Center. Certain fatty acids in dairy may also have an anti-inflammatory effect, she says. By contrast, dairy consumption also is linked to a higher risk of prostate cancer. Dairy foods may increase the level of insulinlike growth factor, a hormone that may fuel prostate cancer growth, Daniel says. A statement from the president of the National Dairy Council, a research organization funded by dairy farmers, said, "Dairy foods are a cor-

nerstone of a balanced diet, backed by decades of rigorous, peer-reviewed research demonstrating their role in supporting overall health." Dairy foods are the primary source of calcium in the American diet, says Janet de Jesus, senior nutrition adviser at the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the agency leading the dietary guidelines process. Most Americans don't meet the current dairy recommendations, and many people are lactose intolerant. Some scientists question the government's current calcium recommendations. Several studies haven't shown a link between higher calcium intake and a reduced risk of bone fractures, Willett notes. The U.K., for example, advises

that adults have 700 milligrams of calcium a day. The U.S. recommends 1,000 milligrams a day for adult women 50 and under and adult men 70 and under, and more for older women or those who are pregnant or breast-feeding. How to square that in your own life? For most adults who eat a relatively healthy diet, one daily serving of yogurt, milk or cheese is probably best, says Willett. You'll get about 350 milligrams of calcium from one serving of dairy and another 300 milligrams or so from other foods you eat during the day, he says. For children, most nutrition researchers say dairy may be more important as they build bones. **Low-fat or full-fat?** The debate between low-fat and full-fat dairy has crescendoed in recent years. U.S. dietary guidelines and the American Heart Association recommend lower-fat dairy products. Whole milk and full-fat yogurt and cheese are higher in saturated fat, which raises your "bad" cholesterol, a risk factor for cardiovascular disease. But some recent studies comparing low-fat and full-fat dairy consumption haven't found much difference in health outcomes. There is evidence the impact of saturated fat on blood cholesterol is more complicated than previously understood. If a little whole-fat cheese is going to make you eat that big salad or fruit-and-veggie plate, go for it, says Maya Vadiveloo, associate professor in the department of nutrition at the University of Rhode Island and chair of the American Heart Association's Lifestyle Nutrition committee. Keep in mind, too, that many nonfat and low-fat dairy products contain added sugars, fillers and other additives, Daniel notes. "Choose dairy that has been the least messed with," she says.

PERSONAL JOURNAL.

Students Find Discounts Are Harder to Get

Companies crack down on people who hang on to their old school IDs for significant savings

BY MENGQI SUN

Student discounts can save people big chunks of cash—but the eligibility-crackdown era has begun.

Garner Ted Leverette graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg in 2019. But for the next three years, he was still a student when using Amazon, dining at his local hibachi restaurant and shopping at H&M.

Leverette's "student" status got him a 50% discount on Amazon Prime and as much as 20% off at other businesses when he flashed his college ID.

But in 2022, Amazon "kicked him out" of Prime Student, says the now 26-year-old who makes personal-finance videos for TikTok and Instagram. Amazon limits its student discount to people 18 to 24, unless they enroll in college or grad school. And it requires verification.

"I just rolled with it to see how long I could do it," says Leverette, who estimates he saved a few thousand dollars through student discounts since graduation. He still uses his student ID for restaurant and shopping deals.

Student discounts at museums, gyms and other businesses have existed longer than the internet, helping young people save money during a time when they have little to spare. Many people kept us-

ing them long past graduation.

Today, streaming apps, wireless carriers, gadget makers and retailers offer significant deals. But while the younger, potentially lifelong, customers are welcome, companies are turning to status-verification technology that makes it harder to claim student privileges well into adulthood.

Powerful savings

Student discounts can be a tool for helping students develop budgeting skills and the ability to set savings goals, says Amelia Simons, marketing operations manager for America Saves, a program run by nonprofit Consumer Federation of America to help lower-income households build wealth.

Online services regularly give half-price—or better—rates. Some even bundle other offerings. A Spotify student subscription includes Hulu and costs \$5.99 a month—potentially a \$14-a-month savings. Apple's \$5.99-a-month Apple Music student plan includes Apple TV+, saving students even more.

Apple also provides hardware education deals—such as \$100 off the 13-inch, M3 MacBook Air—and has a 20% discount on AppleCare+. Verizon gives students \$10 a month off each line for its unlimited wireless plans and \$10 off its Fios home broadband. AT&T offers similar cell-service discounts.

"With the costs of attending college at an all-time high, it's im-



portant for students to know that they don't need to sacrifice quality to save," a Verizon spokeswoman says.

Old college IDs and email addresses aren't enough to qualify for most online student discounts nowadays. Neither is the honor system. Service providers are turning to credential-verification companies such as SheerID and UniDays.

SheerID, founded in 2011, works with more than 300 brands such as Spotify and The Wall Street Journal to validate eligible customers. It taps into more than 200,000 data sources including university registrars and uses facial recognition, internet protocol addresses and other indicators to verify identities. During the past year, SheerID helped companies avoid \$2 billion in fraud.

People typically submit their date of birth, school email address and school name to the verification service. Sometimes they submit a picture of their student ID, transcript or other documents as proof.

Lifelong relationships

Brands like the ability to build lifelong relationships with customers, says SheerID Chief Executive Stephanie Copeland Weber. And the discounts signal to students that "the brands recognize this phase of life they're in, as they're transitioning from kids to adults," she says. "They're building trust and loyalty with those customers."



▲ Garner Ted Leverette, now 26 years old, still uses his student ID for restaurant and shopping deals.

Most streaming services working with SheerID retain more than 90% of their student customers after they graduate and have to pay full price, the company says.

Companies largely require people to be enrolled at a degree-granting U.S. college or university. Amazon has expanded the criteria to include young people in general, not just students.

"We receive highly positive feedback from young adults on Prime Student because it enables them to get these membership benefits at half the cost," says Kristin Lunghamer, an Amazon

spokesperson who didn't comment on the age crackdown.

Apple's education hardware discount extends beyond college students to school faculty and parents, among others. It doesn't require verification for its hardware purchases online. But it requires proof for in-store purchases and for its Apple Music student deal.

Ben Huff, a 25-year-old musician, used a Spotify discount for four years while attending the

School of Jazz and Contemporary Music at the New School in New York. He thought the discount would continue when he worked at the college after graduation in 2021, but SheerID flagged his account as ineligible. The savings for Spotify and Hulu during his two years as a school employee would have been about \$300.

Now traveling the U.S. in an RV, he splits the \$16.99 monthly Spotify Duo plan with his mom and doesn't watch Hulu, because it isn't free any longer. He still takes advantage of his youthful appearance to get in-store discounts.

"When it's an in-person thing, to show ID, they don't question it at all," Huff says. But he says his peers have similarly lost the sweet Spotify deal. "They cut you off."

Monthly pricing for students compared with regular pricing

	Student	Regular
Verizon cell service*	\$55	\$65
Verizon Fios home internet†	39.99	49.99
Apple Music and Apple TV+	5.99	20.98
Spotify and Hulu	5.99	19.98
Amazon Prime	7.49	14.99
YouTube Premium	7.99	13.99
Peloton App One	6.99	12.99
Target Circle 360	4.99	10.99
Max**	4.99	9.99

*1 line, Unlimited Welcome plan, with autopay and paper-free billing
†300 Mbps plan with autopay and paper-free billing
**With ads

Source: the companies

The Boom In Travel Spending Is Slowing

BY ALLISON POHLE AND MARGOT AMOUYAL

Signs of a slowdown are surfacing across the travel economy. On recent earnings calls, hotel and travel company executives have pointed to lethargic domestic leisure demand from U.S. consumers. The word "softness" came up 16 times combined on the calls of Expedia, Marriott, Airbnb and Hilton.

If they're not scrapping a trip, many vacationers say they are trading down to cheaper accommodations. While higher income travelers still plan to jet abroad, others are cutting back to be more thoughtful about spending.

A new era of caution has arrived for U.S. travelers like Kai Tenenberg.

"I am trying to figure out how I can save money and still do what I love," says the 36-year-old healthcare worker living in Palm Beach County, Fla., who is now staying with friends to avoid paying for hotels.

Travelers say they are giving priority to overall value and becoming more discerning with their bookings. Cruise lines, which have historically embraced more of an all-inclusive pricing model, have benefited from this mindset, while some domestic hotels that rely on leisure travelers have struggled.

Because people need to pay for essentials like food and housing before they spend on a vacation, travel is an important indicator for the economy. Their travel spending can also serve as a barometer for how consumers expect to do in the next year or so.

"I sense a bit more caution, but I don't sense any significant pullback," says Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics, adding that the slowdown is expected given the Fed's rate increases.

Two traveler economies

Overall leisure demand is slowing, but the story isn't the same across all income levels or destinations. High-income consumers continue to travel but have favored international destinations, skipping out on domestic trips like theme-park visits, travel executives say. Lower-income travelers have a different reality.

"They've spent all that money," Hilton Chief Executive Chris Nassetta said in last week's earnings call. "They're now borrow-

ing more and so they have less available, less disposable income and capacity to do anything, including travel."

Liz Kelly lives outside of Richmond, Va., with her husband and two daughters and works in the transportation sector. She says they



have mostly stopped traveling as prices shot up, opting for ice skating, picnicking and taking bike rides instead. The family went on a two-and-a-half-day lake trip, funded by Kelly's in-laws, she says.

"We look at other things the money could go toward, something much more important than traveling," Kelly, 39, says.

Sticker shock has also affected some bookings.

On July 1, California began requiring companies to disclose formerly hidden fees on everything from hotel rooms to short-term rentals. This had a negative effect on bookings, Expedia executives said in their earnings call, and influenced the guidance the company put out for the rest of the year.

Mike Roese says he and his wife are more careful with booking on Airbnb after they encountered hidden fees they didn't expect. He's a major fan of the new policy, he says.

▲ Some travelers are maintaining their plans but staying at less-fancy hotels than they might have previously.

"Fool me once. Not twice," says the 50-year-old service contractor, who lives in central California.

The pair say they have grown more strategic with travel. They'll shop at Walmart to buy groceries for meals while vacationing and compare prices more, he says.

Some travelers have become more judicious about spending big on a fancy dinner or expending while on vacation, Marriott Chief Financial Officer Leeny Oberg told analysts.

Prioritizing value

Record numbers of fliers have passed through U.S. airports this summer, many of whom traveled internationally. But airlines have discounted fares to fill domestic seats and have said in recent weeks that

they will curtail fall flying capacity to better match demand.

Frontier recently scaled back its post-summer flight plans. It is cutting back the most on off-peak travel days, which are bargain travelers' usual go-to for saving money.

Deej Ratnani, who runs his own import business from New York, says he travels half as much as he did before the pandemic because of affordability. He used to travel 12 times a year for work, fun and to visit family in Hong Kong, he says. "I miss it," the 39-year-old says.

It's a different story on cruise lines, which reported higher on-board spending than in the same quarter last year.

Josh Weinstein, chief executive of Carnival Corp., said in a June earnings call that his company set a record for the most future bookings made in a second quarter.

Sharon Abraczinskas, 61, took a Caribbean cruise in February and has a cruise booked for December to visit Christmas markets in different European locales. The healthcare worker from central Pennsylvania says she finds great value in cruises, which include her food, lodging and entertainment for the week and allow her to see multiple countries without booking separate hotels and flights.

Abraczinskas looked into booking a one-night hotel stay in New York City this September to visit her daughter and see a play, but ultimately decided the hotel was too expensive.

"My daughter lives there, so we're gonna stay with her and we're just gonna make it work," she says.

Travelers are booking last-minute trips at a stronger rate than they did previously but fewer trips two or more months out, Ellie Mertz, Airbnb's chief financial officer, said on her company's earnings call.

—Dawn Gilbertson and Alison Sider contributed to this article.

ARTS IN REVIEW

By DAVID MERMELSTEIN

FILM REVIEW

Sui Generis Soviet Dramas

The Criterion Collection releases a set of two striking films by director Kira Muratova

For years, but more so recently, the Criterion Collection has belatedly recognized female film directors by reissuing on home video

examples of their work. Several Americans (Dorothy Arzner, Martha Coolidge, Karyn Kusama and Gina Prince-Bythewood among them) have made the grade, and so have a number of French ones (Agnès Varda primarily, but also Claire Denis and Céline Sciamma). Yet Criterion deserves particular praise for the spotlight it occasionally trains on an even more neglected group of distaff filmmakers, those from the former Eastern Bloc. True, the offerings, chiefly Larisa Shepitko's "The Ascent" (Russia) and Márta Mészáros's "Adoption" (Hungary), haven't exactly been plentiful, but what's there is cherche—to quote Spencer Tracy decidedly out of context.

The latest addition to this small but significant list pairs two important films directed by Kira Muratova on a double-disc Blu-ray set. Though born to a Russian father and Romanian-Jewish mother in what is now Moldova, Muratova (pronounced moo-RAT-oh-vah) is today generally considered Ukrainian because of her decades-long professional association with Odesa, the city in which she made most of her movies and where she died in 2018 at age 83.

Her earliest efforts were co-directed with her first husband, Oleksandr Muratov, but she considered "Brief Encounters" (1967), the first picture in this set, the real beginning of her filmmaking career. The movie, shot in black-and-white and in Russian, presents fractured scenes of what appears to be a love triangle involving a naive village girl, Nadya (Nina Ruslanova, a prolific Soviet actress in her first role);



A scene from 'Brief Encounters,' above, and 'The Long Farewell,' above right.

a free-spirited, ballad-loving geologist, Maksim (the celebrated, multi-talented Muscovite bard Vladimir Vysotskiy); and an officious, lovelorn building inspector, Valentina (Muratova herself, replacing an actress she dismissed after filming began).

But the film's real value lies not in the oft-told tale of two women in love with the same man—something presumed based on numerous flashbacks in which the aloof Maksim flirts with either Nadya or Valentina; he is never seen in the film's "present." Rather, the movie grips us by depicting fragments of daily life, both intimate and public—whether we're watching irate tenants awaiting water service, a childless pensioner pining for human connection, or the film's female protagonists attempting to navigate next steps on a journey for which there is no map.

The movie's final, touching image, of a table set for two with no one present, leaves us hanging. And that's as it should be in a film

where questions outnumber answers. All the performances impress. Seeing Vysotskiy at the height of his powers, strumming his guitar while serenading in his gravelly baritone, proves especially transportive. Ruslanova's winsome rural innocence conceals something close to cunning early on, and self-preservation later. Yet Muratova's indomitable Valentina proves the picture's indelible figure; it's impossible to imagine anyone else in this role.

Muratova's next film, "The Long Farewell" (1971), also in Russian and black-and-white, embraces an elliptical narrative structure to such a degree that the movie confounded Soviet censors, who essentially banned it for unwholesomeness. Yet absent that political context, the picture is a frequently



heartbreaking, sometimes heart-warming examination of the strained bond between a loquacious middle-aged translator, Yevgeniya (Zinaida Sharko in her first major film role), and her sullen teenage son, Sasha (Oleg Vladimirovsky).

Through shards of often shared experience, real and perhaps imagined, we watch as this overbearing single mother alienates a child attempting to forge an identity separate from maternal fussing. That the two share a room—this is Brezhnev-era Odesa, after all—doesn't help matters, nor does Zhenya's almost obsessive fear that Sasha's long-absent father is encouraging her son to leave home and join him.

The series of tableaux that compose the picture run the gamut from cemetery visits, train rides and dinner parties to scenes of office life, schoolyard athletics and quiet domestic moments. But coursing through them all is the tension that threatens to wreck a fundamental familial bond. The film's ambiguous conclusion (no surprise there) leaves us uncertain as to just how drastically, if at all, life will change for these two adrift yet sympathetic characters.

Gennady Karyuk served as Muratova's cinematographer on both films and became a decades-long collaborator. Here, at the beginning of their association, he navigates exterior and interior worlds, past and present, in striking monochromatic tones, effortlessly playing with light and shadow to bring the director's vision to engrossing screen life. And thanks to the new 4K restorations of both films, his work has never looked better.

Oleg Karavaychuk also worked on both pictures, crafting scores superbly suited to their purposes—jaunty and folk-inflected in the first case and more introspective and jarring in the second.

Criterion should naturally continue bringing worthy female directors to broader attention. But helping movie lovers discover the distinctive pleasures of Eastern European cinema is an equally commendable undertaking. And when those two imperatives can be combined, as is the case here, that's even better.

Mr. Mermelstein, the Journal's classical music critic, also writes on film.

ARTS CALENDAR

HAPPENINGS FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 13

By WSJ ARTS IN REVIEW STAFF

Film
"Alien: Romulus" (Aug. 16)
From director Fede Alvarez ("Don't Breathe"), the latest entry in the "Aliens" franchise follows a crew of outer-space scavengers as they confront terrifying extraterrestrials.

"Skincare" (Aug. 16)
Hope Goldman (Elizabeth Banks) launches a successful skincare boutique, but is challenged by competitor Angel Vergara (Luis Gerardo Méndez), who sets up shop across the street. Rival cosmetologists face off in this thriller helmed by Austin Peters.

gins its first season under the artistic direction of Tarell Alvin McCraney with a 20th-anniversary production of his play, directed by Bijan Sheibani. Two brothers in the Louisiana Bayou, one of whom served time in prison, must resist the disruptive influence of a charismatic convict in this modern-day fable inspired by the Yoruba people of West Africa.

Music
Blind Pilot, "In the Shadow of the Holy Mountain" (Aug. 16)
For the indie group's new record, bandleader Israel Nebeker traveled to his family's ancestral Scandinavia to connect with nomadic Sámi

alongside her paintings, drawings, and collaborative works made with her husband, Michael Frimkess, to reveal the ways she blended art history, popular culture and autobiography in her practice.

"Tuan Andrew Nguyen: The Island" (Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, Aug. 16-May 4, 2025)
Vietnamese artist Tuan Andrew Nguyen gets a show in Washington centered on his titular film, which focuses on the small Malaysian island of Pulau Bidong, a popular destination for refugees fleeing a crumbling South Vietnam in the '70s.

Videogames
"Madden NFL 25" (PlayStation 4, PlayStation 5, PC, Xbox One, Xbox Series X/S, Aug. 16)
Gamers who are also fans of football are having an MVP year thanks to the return of an NCAA game after a decade-long hiatus and the perennial NFL-focused Madden franchise dropping just before most fantasy drafts take place. With regular player favorites like Franchise Mode, the new "Madden" hopes to build on its immersive qualities with "a new dynamic physics-based tackling system" it's calling BOOM Tech.

Last Call
"Sarah Sze" (Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, through Aug. 18)
The artist's eponymous exhibition features three new installations that integrate various materials and video fragments into a high-tech bricolage. Our critic said that "No one, but no one has a résumé like that of the artist Sarah Sze" and praised the work, noting that "its craftsmanship is almost breathtaking."

For additional Arts Calendar listings visit wsj.com. Write to brian.kelly@wsj.com and irma.kiss@wsj.com.



A scene from 'Daughters,' a documentary on Netflix.

TV
"Daughters" (Netflix, Aug. 14)
Directors Natalie Rae and Angela Patton follow four young girls, separated from their incarcerated fathers, as they prepare to put on a dance show for their dads in a D.C. jail. Aubrey, Santana, Raziah and Ja'Ana open up to the filmmakers, sharing moments of levity, joy and heartbreak in this feature documentary.

Theater
"The Brothers Size" (Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater, Geffen Playhouse, Los Angeles, Aug. 14-Sept. 8)
The Geffen Playhouse be-

people. Mr. Nebeker said the creation of this 11-track album, inspired by a drum ceremony, sparked "the most joy we'd ever had in making an album together."

Art
"Magdalena Suarez Frimkess: The Finest Disregard" (LACMA, Los Angeles, Aug. 18-Jan. 5, 2025)
Multidisciplinary artist Magdalena Suarez Frimkess, best known for her clay sculptures, receives her first museum show at age 95. Covering more than half a century of her career, this exhibition features those sculptures—often of cartoon or advertising imagery—

The WSJ Daily Crossword | Edited by Mike Shenk

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	22 "Come, piggy, piggy!"
13				14					15			24 Pale yellow cheese
16			17					18				25 Agrees to join
19			20			21					22	29 Tribeca neighbor
23		24			25		26					32 Candy name derived from "Pfefferminz"
27					28		29	30				33 Bogosian of "Interview With the Vampire"
		31	32	33		34		35	36			35 Scarcely any
37	38	39			40				41			37 Dependable
42			43				44					38 Paper with a blue circle logo
45			46	47		48		49	50	51	52	39 Desert's deficit
53			54		55		56	57				40 Holds back
58				59		60				61		41 Druid, e.g.
	62					63			64			46 Applies, as liniment
	65				66				67			48 Chemical twin
	68				69				70			50 Made a lasting impression, in a way

DOG DAYS | By Jamey Smith

Across	30 Chrysler Building's style	60 Egg: Prefix	5 Scholarship establisher Rhodes
1 Autumnal birthstone	31 Bonobo, e.g.	61 "Inside Politics" network	6 "Catch-22" author
5 Wearers of aprons and toques	34 Slip up	62 *Classic album featuring "Son of a Preacher Man"	7 Before, in sonnets
10 The Mustangs of the NCAA	36 Scheduled to arrive	65 D-backs, on sports tickers	8 Abe
13 "Have one!"	37 Hit for the Lovin' Spoonful, and a hint to the starred answers	66 Take the helm	9 Beheld
14 Causing chills	42 Bear, in Bolivia	67 Home of Triple-A baseball's Aces	10 Showed leniency toward
15 Piper of myth	43 Fruity red wines, casually	68 Craving	11 Popular spa combo
16 *TV Land sitcom with Betty White and Valerie Bertinelli	44 Be in arrears	69 Old autocrats	12 Beat a competitor, pricewise
19 News agcy. since 1958	45 Villain's hideaway	70 Lysol target	17 Brief refresher
20 Suffer	47 Kenneth of "9-1-1"		18 Copier tray abbr.
21 Blog additions	49 Cask sediment		
23 *With 55-Across, rom-com that ends atop the Empire State Building	53 Collective answer to "Who's there?"		
26 Printer's piece for paste-up	55 See 23-Across		
27 Grazing group	58 Failed tech startup, snarkily		
28 Criticizes severely			
		Down	
		1 "Stop, you're making me blush!"	
		2 Barbra Streisand's first Top 10 song	
		3 More bohemian	
		4 Beach wedding ring?	

Previous Puzzle's Solution

BURP	PITT	JUMBO
OPIE	ATRA	UTURN
RENT	ICED	SAGAS
JINGOOD	HEALTH	
SNOWDAY	AINTIT	
NOD	GAIN	WHO
WATERSOURCE	EON	
OMAR	WIT	GAPE
WOK	FULLY	COOKED
ERE	ERST	CAPE
DENADA	PLASMAS	
	WELL	WELL
DETTOX	OHNO	IDLE
EVOKE	BEAU	LIED
WANED	EELS	DANS

► Solve this puzzle online and discuss it at WSJ.com/Puzzles.

SPORTS



Clockwise from top: Raygun, Tom Cruise, Steph Curry, Simone Biles and Stephen Nedorosck. Below, U.S. cyclist Kristen Faulkner.

nice that the brilliant Steph Curry won gold, but it's hard to beat Hocker's underdog charge in the men's 1,500 meters. Or Faulkner, the Alaskan bike racer who didn't know how to clip into bike pedals just a few years ago, taking home a pair of golds for Team USA.

Some of it already feels like a century ago: remember "Nadal-caraz?" Emotional scenes were constant: St. Lucia winning its first medal (a gold!) via 100-meter sprinter Julien Alfred; Cuban wrestling giant Mijain López retiring after his fifth gold; the German cycling team loaning a track bike to Nigeria's Ese Ukpeseraye after she was unable to secure her own.

Olympic spirit can be corny but irresistible: witness the scene at beach volleyball, when, amid an on-court spat between Canadian and Brazilian players, the stadium DJ began playing John Lennon's "Imagine," defusing the tension and lightening the mood.

These stories are just a sliver of it, I know. There are oodles of names and sagas missing from this column. Where is Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone? Jennifer Valente? Noah Lyles? Iлона Maher? Lindsey Horan? Lee Kiefer? Rai Benjamin? Haley Batten? The U.S. Rowing men's four? Imane Khelif? Mondo Duplantis? Zheng Qinwen? Is the Journal biking dork going to mention double golds by Remco Evenepoel? Or Tom Pidcock? Who is going to give deserved flowers to A'ja Wilson?

It's futile to fully chronicle the Olympics—and the incoming Paralympics, which start in Paris on Aug. 28—but that's also the magic.

Besides, the power to confer Olympic fame is increasingly sliding over to the viewing public, through social media. We used to have to wait for the Wheaties box, or Bud Greenpan's elegant documentaries, but now stardom arrives instantly, via the Internet, before even live TV can catch up.

Paris will be a hard act to follow for the 2028 host, Los Angeles. The City of Angels took the flag in Sunday's closing, Tom Cruise rappelling from the roof of Stade de France (take that, A.I.). The L.A. sneak preview featuring Snoop and the Red Hot Chili Peppers was the stuff of France's nightmares: gaudy, showbizzy, over the top. In other words: very L.A.

Can a self-regarding town of sunshine, stardust and superhero sequels deliver? After two weeks of navigating the seamless Metro, I'm already having pre-2028 anxiety about freeway gridlock and valet parking. I suspect Los Angeles will find a way. Not-so-alooof Paris left a proud blueprint. The Olympic Games are imperfect, but they are very hard to beat.

JASON GAY

The Olympics Saved the Summer

The Games arrived at a turbulent moment, and the numbers don't lie: Audiences fell in love



The Olympics even melted Paris. Heading into the Summer Games, we were warned that the elegant host was girding with its notorious aloofness. Residents were fleeing, renting out their flats to profligate foreigners, piling into Citroëns and lighting out for quieter parts unknown.

Paris was already lousy with sweaty summertime fanny-packers—now the Olympics? An infamously gauche spectacle, a daily circus of athleticism, corporatism and tourism? Rings hitched to the Eiffel Tower? Swimming in the stinky Seine? Public displays of enthusiasm? *Quelle horreur.*

The negative vibes didn't last a week. They barely survived opening night, after the square-jawed French soccer god Zinedine Zidane held the torch in the cinematic nighttime rain. The fussy City of Light couldn't help but swoon.

By the second weekend, Paris was beset with Olympic mania. There was fever for homegrown talent — golden swimmer Léon Marchand; mountain bike champ Pauline Ferrand-Prévo; table tennis phenom Felix LeBrun; judo king Teddy Riner.

Signs of local buy-in abounded: arenas rippling with French flags; Gendarmerie assisting befuddled travelers; bistro TVs replaying handball highlights deep into the night. There were crepes at beach volleyball; Ladurée macarons topped with Paris 2024 logos; on-site Olympic smoking sections, still doing robust business.

Paris's alleged Summer Games ennui? It never stood a chance.

"We saw ourselves as a nation of chronic complainers," Paris 2024 boss Tony Estanguet said at Sunday's closing ceremony. "We woke up in a country of unbridled sports fans who can't stop singing."

In a way, what happened in Paris happened everywhere, including in the U.S. These Games arrived amid a turbulent summer, counterprogramming to another acrid season of politics and cynicism. An exhausted country quickly fell in love—with American winning, of course, but also with the global stories of athlete unknowns and their perseverance.

The numbers don't lie. NBC's U.S. TV ratings were excellent, surging to more than 30 million a session. It was a flashback to the old monoculture, when we would watch and rally around one thing. This time it was the exploits of Katie Ledecky and Simone Biles, Gabby Thomas and Lauren Scruggs, Kristen Faulkner and Cole Hocker, Raygun the Underwhelming Australian Breakdancer and beloved, bespectacled Pommel King, Stephen Nedorosck.

To be clear: The Olympics remain a messy, bloated affair, historically marred by extravagance and corruption, to say nothing of inexplicable decision making.

France experienced whiffs of the madness, including this weekend, when the International Olympic Committee affirmed the Court of Arbitration for Sports's baffling decision to revoke U.S. gymnast's



Jordan Chiles's bronze medal due to an absurd technicality—the U.S. protesting a scoring decision a handful of seconds too late. (Team USA says they did protest on time, and plans to appeal.)

If I were Chiles, I'd say I lost the medal going for a celebratory swim in the Seine.

Throughout, these Paris Games had an exuberant advantage: people. The two prior Olympics, Tokyo 2020 (delayed to 2021) and Beijing 2022, were empty, bleak competitions held under Covid restrictions. As someone who covered those dreary predecessors, it was a blast to look around nearly every Paris stadium and see it filled to

the rafters, from the gorgeous fencing cave inside Grand Palais to the '70s soccer bunker Parc des Princes, shaking in the men's soccer final versus Spain:

*Allez les Bleus!
Allez les Bleus!
Allez les Bleus!*

The singing, cheering and shameless boosterism is still ringing in my ears. You would have thought: there's a little SEC football in Paris.

In the end, the athletes are the story, of course. You can dress up an Olympic fortnight with cameos like Celine Dion and Snoop Dogg but no star is brighter than the athlete seizing the moment. It's

BY LOUISE RADNOFSKY AND ANDREW BEATON

The Olympics Are Over. The Fight Over This Medal Is Just Beginning.

Paris
ONE OF THE MOST BIZARRE twists of the entire Olympics came after the women's gymnastics floor exercise competition had already ended, with Brazil's Rebeca Andrade, Simone Biles and Romania's Ana Bărbosu in first, second and third and preparing to be adorned with medals.

That's when the announcer inside Bercy Arena declared that the night's final competitor, Biles's American teammate Jordan Chiles, had successfully challenged her score. Boosted by a tenth of a point, Chiles suddenly jumped from fifth to third, leaving Bărbosu sobbing, Romanian observers fuming, and a packed crowd trying to make sense of what had happened.

As chaotic as it was, it seemed like the matter was settled. One of the most iconic scenes from the entire Olympics was Biles and Chiles bowing to Andrade on the podium, a viral image that also featured in the closing ceremony highlights reel.

Now, that last-second change is being revisited a week later, in a global standoff between the International Olympic Committee and gymnastics's global governing body on one side—and the U.S. on the other.

The international sports court has ruled that Chiles's coach was 4 seconds past the allowable 1-minute deadline for filing the inquiry that secured her the crucial score change, after an appeal by Romania. The IOC and international



Simone Biles and Jordan Chiles bowed to Rebeca Andrade on the podium.

gymnastics federation say that as a result, they want to give Bărbosu the medal instead and want Chiles to return hers.

But Biles is already back home—bronze medal in hand—and the U.S. is making it clear that prying it from her won't come without a fight. U.S. Olympic officials have filed an appeal of their own on Chiles's behalf. And USA Gymnastics says it has submitted "timestamped, video evidence" to show that her coach first stated her request to file an inquiry at

the inquiry table 47 seconds after Chiles's initial score was posted.

Altogether, it has spawned an embarrassing mess and yet another medal reallocation fight for the Olympics, one that highlights a series of missteps in a sport that is only in the spotlight once every four years.

There's little anyone can do to actually retrieve Chiles's medal. Twenty years ago the U.S. gymnast Paul Hamm stared down a demand for his gold before getting a ruling he could keep it. Even athletes of-

ficially stripped of their medals for doping don't always wind up returning them. In addition, after-the-fact winners typically don't want a medal that someone else has worn. They want a new one, and there are spares.

And beyond that, the original medal ceremony has already been immortalized after Chiles suggested to Biles that they both bow down to Andrade "to give her her flowers."

The least complicated solution would have been hastily arranging a ceremony to award a duplicate bronze to Romania's Bărbosu, and declaring them joint winners, before the Games were over.

Instead, the international gymnastics federation and IOC have chosen the path of most resistance.

There's plenty of precedent for sharing medals in international gymnastics, including a four-way tie for gold in the women's uneven bars final at the 2015 world championships. There was a two-way tie for bronze in the men's Olympic high-bar final here that passed without incident even though it required one athlete from China and another from Chinese Taipei (the name under which Taiwan competes at the Games) to squeeze onto the same medal stand step.

Those came from arcane tie-breaker regulations—which, it

turns out, are a lot easier to defend than what happened here.

Judging in the floor exercise final was so contentious that the Romanian gymnastics federation actually appealed on behalf of two Romanian gymnasts who it said should have been the bronze medalist, not just Bărbosu.

Romania said that its gymnast Sabrina Maneca-Voinea had 0.1 knocked improperly off her score for going out of bounds. Photos suggest that Maneca-Voinea didn't in fact step over the floor exercise line, and that the technical call that was made at the time probably wasn't correct.

The Court of Arbitration for Sport panel threw out Maneca-Voinea's appeal—without providing an immediate explanation, but likely because bad calls aren't normally in their jurisdiction.

The U.S., meanwhile, is pointing out that the only reason the timing of Chiles's inquiry is even an issue is because the Olympic judges incorrectly scored the difficulty of her routine in the first place.

"We firmly believe that Jordan rightfully earned the bronze medal," U.S. Olympic officials say, adding that the arbitration itself was mishandled and that they were not "properly represented or afforded the opportunity to present our case comprehensively."

Ironically, Romania suggested an off-ramp from the start: bronze medals for all three of Bărbosu, Maneca-Voinea and Chiles.

The international gymnastics federation and IOC have blown right past it.

OPINION

The ‘Killer Kamala’ Convention



MAIN STREET
By William McGurn

While Kamala Harris spoke to campaign donors inside San Francisco’s Fairmont Hotel on Sunday, protesters expressed their displeasure outside:

“Killer Kamala, you can’t hide, we charge you with genocide,” they chanted. Variations of the same jingle dogged her at rallies last week, from Las Vegas to Detroit.

The San Francisco Chronicle estimated the crowd at roughly 250. That’s only a fraction of what awaits her next week in Chicago, where tens of thousands of activists will be in town for the Democratic National Convention. They are showing up to hold Ms. Harris to account for the Biden administration’s policy in Gaza, where they accuse Israel of “genocide” against the Palestinian people.

“Democratic Party leadership switching out their presidential nominee does not wash the blood of over 50,000 Palestinians off their hands,” reads a statement from the March on the DNC 2024, one of the coalitions behind the planned protests. All that has changed is the groups’ target. With President Biden’s withdrawal from the race, “Genocide Joe” has given way to “Killer Kamala.”

At a rally in Detroit last Wednesday, Ms. Harris took on protesters after they inter-

rupted her with genocide accusations. “You know what?” she said. “If you want Donald Trump to win, say that. Otherwise I am speaking.”

There’s her dilemma. Ms. Harris is trying to quiet protesters on her left flank who would probably vote for her if it weren’t for Gaza. The problem is that the protesters don’t believe deflecting to Donald Trump is any kind of answer to their concerns about the vice president’s complicity in “genocide.” Zainab Hakim, one of the activists who interrupted Ms. Harris in Detroit, put it this way in an interview with Mother Jones: “What people seem to be forgetting is that she’s not just like some random person who decided to run for president. She has been the vice president for all 300-plus days of this genocide, and could have said something in all of that time. She deliberately chose not to do that.”

Such protesters intend to make Ms. Harris pay for it at the convention. While party leaders hope for a show of unity, protests—especially if they are accompanied by chaos and violence—would paint a different picture for millions of Americans watching from their living rooms. Meanwhile, although Ms. Harris has taken a harsher tone toward Israel than Mr. Biden, her policy is largely the same, including rejecting the protesters’ demand for an arms embargo against the Jewish state.

Meanwhile, a virtual who’s who of the far left is planning for Chicago. Those groups range from Code Pink, the Democratic Socialists of America and the U.S. Palestinian Community Network, who have rallied under the March on the DNC coalition, to the Poor Peoples Army, Thank God for Abortion and Jewish Voice for Peace Chicago, which are part of the Bodies

Will the thousands of anti-Israel protesters in Chicago ruin it for the Democrats?

Outside of Unjust Laws coalition. The latter has been given a permit for its own march. These groups have different priorities and don’t operate in lockstep, but almost all have included Gaza in their protest messaging. Many have been haggling with the city over permits.

In a February ruling by an administrative judge upholding the city’s denial of one permit, an activist is quoted as saying that organizers are determined to have a “family friendly” protest. If so it would be one of the first. From Columbia University to Washington’s Union Station, anti-Israel protests have often been accompanied by vandalism, intimidation and, sometimes, clashes with police.

With less than a week before the DNC begins, it all ties

back to an issue the Harris campaign thought it had put to rest by selecting Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz as her running mate. Mr. Walz has explicitly rejected the centrist label and, in the recent “White Dudes for Kamala” Zoom call, said Democrats shouldn’t “shy away from our progressive values.”

Unfortunately for Democrats, the cause that most excites progressives this election is Gaza. For them Ms. Harris’s choice of Mr. Walz, not to mention her own progressive past, only highlights her hypocrisy. Even worse for her, at least some protesters see the Democrats’ 1968 Chicago convention as their model. That was the year a Democratic Party divided by the Vietnam War nominated Hubert Humphrey while outside the convention television cameras captured images of cops beating protesters.

Before Ms. Harris announced Mr. Walz as her running mate, the odds-on favorite was Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro. He seemed a moderate from a swing state who could temper Ms. Harris’s image as a San Francisco liberal. Yet she went with Mr. Walz, apparently believing it was more important to avoid angering the party’s left-wing base than to appeal to moderate working-class Democrats and independents in Midwestern battleground states.

In Chicago next week, we’ll see how protesters reward her for it.

Write to mcgurn@wsj.com.

BOOKSHELF | By Nicholas Tomaino

The Seedy Side Of the Internet

Takedown

By Laila Mickelwait

Thesis, 320 pages, \$30

Americans seem to agree: Pornography harms children. In 2022 Louisiana’s Laurie Schlegel, a Republican state representative, proposed a bill that would require pornography sites to verify users’ ages. The measure received overwhelming bipartisan support and bore fruit in at least six other states that passed nearly identical laws. (Rather than adapt to the sprouting statutes, the website Pornhub decided to stop operating in most jurisdictions that had passed them.) Yet exposure to illicit images and videos is hardly the only way children can be affected. All too frequently, as Laila Mickelwait’s book makes clear, they are exploited in the pornography itself.

For more than 15 years, Ms. Mickelwait has fought human trafficking as an activist. A shocking and often graphic account, “Takedown: Inside the Fight to Shut Down Pornhub for Child Abuse, Rape, and Sex Trafficking” is the story of her encounters with what she describes as an “unchallenged crime scene”—that is, Pornhub’s site, which according to the author has, at times, boasted more monthly visits than Amazon, Netflix or Yahoo.

In 2020, Ms. Mickelwait was approached by a former employee of MindGeek—Pornhub’s parent company, now known as Aylo—who said he regretted some of his work. During his time with the organization, the anonymous source claimed, he was one of only 30 moderators. He described how 10 would work at a time, on eight-hour shifts. They reviewed user-uploaded videos to judge whether participants were of age and had consented and were “tasked with viewing a thousand or more user-uploaded videos per shift.”

How did his team manage? “Our process . . . was to fast-forward through them with the audio shut off,” he told Ms. Mickelwait. “The lines of consensual to nonconsensual are often very blurry in porn. So, for us, it was very hard to make that distinction.” When moderators couldn’t discern someone’s age, they would move the video along, the source explained: “It’s more money for the site anyway.” An Aylo spokesman told me the company rejected the truth of these claims, calling them “dangerously inflammatory.”

But the story made sense to Ms. Mickelwait, who in 2020 tested Pornhub’s procedure for uploading videos. She writes that the site didn’t require her to verify her identity or to substantiate relevant details for the video she uploaded (in this case, merely a banal clip of her bedroom rug). As she was prompted with the message “Congratulations! Your video is now live!” there were nearly 11 million others available to peruse, each she assumed subject to the same cursory approval. Scrolling revealed such title phrases as “Young Girl Tricked” and “Innocent Brace Faced Tiny Teen” as well as clips of women, apparently incapacitated, being violated. She writes that viewers were directed to similarly themed content, seemingly by an algorithm.

Ms. Mickelwait’s invention of a Twitter campaign, #Traffickinghub, drew the attention of many young women who’d had sexual content uploaded against their will. Even if, after many attempts, they succeeded in getting the site to remove them, the videos would invariably recirculate. At one point, we learn, Pornhub allowed users to download clips. Vulnerable moments, or abuse, could persist on the internet in perpetuity. In some cases, as Ms. Mickelwait documents, despair at the situation pushed women to use drugs or attempt suicide. Sofia, a woman from Guatemala, wrote of her resurfacing videos: “In some of them I was as young as 9 in others I was 15.”

A shocking, often graphic account of an activist’s efforts to uncover predatory and illegal content on a pornography website.

As the author continued to dig, she connected with New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof, who published an essay, “The Children of Pornhub,” in December 2020. Mr. Kristof detailed what Ms. Mickelwait had unearthed, including the story of Serena Fleites. Videos of Ms. Fleites at 14 had appeared online and effectively stayed there. Mr. Kristof also broached another subject: Why were Mastercard and Visa still processing Pornhub memberships, payments for advertisements and the like?

The essay made a difference: Not only did Pornhub delete 10.6 million videos and more than 30 million images (or roughly 80% of its content, according to Ms. Mickelwait); the credit-card companies eventually ceased all operations with the site. A series of lawsuits on behalf of the women Ms. Mickelwait had discovered added to the pressure and helped to prompt government investigation. In December 2023, the Justice Department announced that Aylo had admitted to profiting from sex trafficking and had entered into a “deferred prosecution agreement”—agreeing to pay a fine of more than \$1.8 million and be subject to a monitor for three years. The site has significantly amended its video uploading and downloading processes.

Ms. Mickelwait demonstrates many journalistic virtues—among them doggedness, a desire to uncover the truth and a gift for getting sources to talk. Those strengths, however, are often let down by sensationalist writing. She intersperses her findings with contemporaneous thoughts, rendered as if the reader were entering the mind of a detective. The book is presented as true crime, which obscures the powerful if unsurprising story at its core.

It is perhaps unfair to criticize a book for what it doesn’t mention, yet I finished “Takedown” with a sense of disappointment. Ms. Mickelwait insists that she wants to abolish only “illegal trafficking” and that she’s “hardly lived the life of a prude or an enemy of the entertainment business.” “What consenting adults do with each other is their business, not mine,” she writes, “as long as it is lawful and not harming another person.” Left untouched is a different argument: that all pornography corrupts, distorting the emotional, spiritual and sexual lives of everyone who creates and views it.

“There’s still work to be done,” Ms. Mickelwait says at the end of “Takedown.” She might consider whether the bad fruit she’s discovered has grown from a rotten tree.

Mr. Tomaino is an assistant editorial features editor at the Journal.

The Hard Power Behind Olympic Triumph



GLOBAL VIEW
By Walter Russell Mead

Paris The Summer Olympics were a triumph for the beleaguered President Emmanuel Macron, for the city of Paris and above all for the athletes.

The Games reminded the world why we look to France for elegance and why France receives more tourists than any country in the world.

They also reminded everyone why the Games matter. Launched in 1892 by the French aristocrat Pierre de Coubertin (1863-1937), the modern Olympic movement reflects and embodies the strengths and weaknesses of the current world order in a way that no other global event comes close to doing.

It isn’t only that the final medal count, with the U.S. and China tied for the most gold medals and the Americans winning the most medals overall, offers a rough match for the state of the current global competition between the two great powers. It is that the Olympic Games reflect the current structure of the global order.

The Olympics are a distinctly Western and even imperialist creation. Coubertin saw the 19th-century British ethos of amateur athletics as described in books such as Thomas Hughes’s “Tom Brown’s School Days” both as

a revival of the best traditions of the ancient Greeks and as a key contributor to Victorian Britain’s culture of economic and political liberty at home. Those conditions in turn gave Britain the power to uphold the Pax Britannica. Coubertin believed that an international Olympic movement could promote world peace by uniting nations in a peaceful competition and strengthen France by encouraging the young to develop their physical and mental capacities through athletic training.

More than this, the principles Coubertin identified in athletic competition stand at the core of the culture of ordered liberty that propelled the West to global leadership in the 19th century and can still power the world to new heights of prosperity and freedom today.

The blended ideals of competition and cooperation at the heart of the Games don’t only symbolize the principles behind free governments and free markets. They embody them. The creative synthesis of competition and cooperation is how democratic capitalism works. The rules of sports such as basketball and tennis exist to make the competition more thrilling and to allow true excellence to shine forth. In the same way, constitutional order allows free competition between political ideas. Similarly, the laws and rules that surround markets exist to allow markets to do their work more efficiently,

and to fill the world with an ever-growing abundance of ever cheaper and better goods and services.

At the Games as in the wider world, those ideals aren’t always fully realized. Still, despite their shortcomings and their distinctively Western and even imperialist origins, the Olympics have been widely embraced around the world. The competition has made humanity run faster

The Games in Paris succeeded because they were protected by a ring of steel.

and jump farther than ever before. The closing ceremony, in which athletes and Paris 2024 volunteers representing more than 200 nations peacefully carried their flags, offered something as close to the realization of a united humanity as we are likely to see.

But there is something else to be learned from the spectacle. The Olympics, like the broader world order, can’t be taken for granted. There is, for example, the constant threat of cheating and attempts to “game” the system in various ways. At the Olympics, such efforts can compromise the fairness of given competitions. Carried to extremes, they would turn the Games into a mockery. In the wider world, systemic cheating and abuse threaten the

survival of the global trading system.

There is another threat to the Olympic Games and to the peace of the wider world. French authorities were on high alert during every moment of the games. The opening day witnessed dangerous acts of sabotage, and much worse would have occurred without the dedication and competence of the security forces. Phenomenal athletes such as ace swimmer Katie Ledecky and your Global View columnist’s rowing nephew, Nick Mead, could carry their country’s flag in the closing procession only because 45,000 police, 10,000 soldiers and 22,000 private security personnel were vigilant over the Games.

The Paris Games were a triumph for French and Western soft power, broadcasting an inspiring vision of the best humanity can achieve. But the Games succeeded only because they were protected by a ring of steel. Hard power was the necessary foundation of all the joy, all the excellence and all the competitive drama that made the Games so great.

In these dangerous times it would be catastrophically foolish to forget that the same truth holds in the wider world. The culture of ordered liberty that Coubertin saw in amateur sport can still bring freedom and prosperity to America and the wider world—but the arena of peaceful competition must always be defended.

Nigeria Reverts to Its Old Colonial Anthem

By Bruce Gilley

Nigeria ditched its indigenous national anthem in May and restored the old colonial one. The decision by the country’s National Assembly to revive a song written and composed by two white British women has caused predictable meltdowns in polite society. But it is the latest evidence that the shine is off decolonization.

The British assumed colonial rule over the first part of the territory that is now Nigeria in 1861. As the peaceful and carefully planned shift to Nigerian independence in 1960 approached, contests were held to decide the lyrics and music of the national anthem. The winners were a British social worker temporarily living in Nigeria and a piano teacher from London. Both women were white, but nobody seemed to care. As a Nigerian commentator wrote in 2009, “our national anthem ‘Nigeria we hail thee . . .’

opened me and I believe millions of Nigerians up with pride and the feeling of patriotism.”

After a few years, Nigeria collapsed into a vicious civil war. Three decades of dictatorship followed. In 1978 the military government decided to swap out the “colonialist”

The song represents the patriotism present at its independence.

anthem for a new one. Five poets and one police-band musician delivered a clunky, unmemorable tune called “Arise, O Compatriots,” with no refrain and Soviet-sounding lyrics like “The labor of our heroes past shall never be in vain.”

As corruption and misgovernance continued to plague Nigeria even with a return to democracy in 1999, the original anthem became a re-

minder of how far short the country had fallen from the feelings of nationhood and unity present at the country’s independence. By reinstating it, legislators hoped to move Nigeria closer to those ideals. “This anthem, with its familiar lyrics and stirring melody, evokes a sense of nostalgia and patriotism,” said Philip Agbese, deputy spokesman for the Nigerian government. Senate leader Opeyemi Bamidele similarly said that the original anthem “played quite a significant and crucial role in shaping Nigeria’s national identity” and “was symbolic of Nigeria’s rich cultural heritage.”

Critics of the move aren’t in short supply. One of the poets responsible for the 1978 anthem complained to a local newspaper that “Nigeria, the hitherto giant of Africa that led the liberation struggles of Africans to defeat apartheid and colonialism, is now reduced to a midget crawling back and crying ‘mama’ to

her colonial master.”

For most Nigerians, the old anthem is completely new. Only 5% of the population is 60 or older. At a World Cup qualifying match in early June, the Beninoise Football Federation played “Arise, O Compatriots,” despite the decision to revert to “Nigeria We Hail Thee.” While this move elicited censure from the country’s national soccer federation, the players didn’t seem to care. They sang along to the anthem that they’ve known their entire lives.

The anthem change bears on a serious question for Nigeria. Can it push the reset button and inspire its young people to feel the patriotism and unity developed in its colonial period? That would be something to sing about.

Mr. Gilley is the 2024-25 Presidential Scholar in Residence at the New College of Florida and author of “The Case for Colonialism.”

OPINION

REVIEW & OUTLOOK

War Maneuvers in the Middle East

The Pentagon is sending more naval and air assets to the Middle East, and Israel is on high alert, as Iran positions its military for a potential attack on the Jewish state. Meanwhile, Hamas announced Sunday that it has no interest in the U.S.-brokered “final round of negotiations” for a Gaza cease-fire.

The Pentagon said it is sending a missile submarine to the Mediterranean, while also urging the USS Abraham Lincoln carrier group to speed its way to the region. The USS Theodore Roosevelt is already in the area. This is a formidable force, clearly intended to deter Iran from striking Israel or at least minimize the damage in Israel if Tehran goes ahead. The U.S. also wants to limit the damage so it can persuade Israel not to strike back with force and keep diplomacy going.

But the diplomacy isn't going so well. After days of U.S. warnings that Israel had better cut a deal, Hamas pulled the rug out from under President Biden on the talks. Then on Monday Hamas said its guards killed one hostage and seriously wounded two others it had taken on Oct. 7, without explanation. Hamas wants more war, not a cease-fire.

In announcing a negotiating summit, scheduled for Thursday, President Biden had released a joint statement with the leaders of Egypt and Qatar. “No more time should be wasted, and there should be no excuses by any party for further postponement,” they wrote.

The White House sees a deal as its best way to buy peace through the U.S. election and perhaps deter a larger war. How strong such a deal would leave Hamas and the rest of the Iranian axis for the future isn't a White House priority. But that is understandably Israel's main concern.

Vice President Kamala Harris echoed the Administration's urgency for a deal on the campaign trail, and leaks from “senior officials” in the U.S. and Israel indicate that the Biden Administration is willing to blame Israel if a deal fails

to materialize. That's what Hamas likes to hear.

When Mr. Biden presses Israel, Hamas has a habit of introducing a setback. Recall that after the President made a major address on May 31 to reveal an Israeli framework for a deal, locking in Israel to specific terms, Hamas rejected it with a wild counteroffer.

Only later, as Israel closed in on Hamas leaders, did the terrorists blink and consent to the framework. Now Hamas resists Israeli interpretations of some of the terms, including whether Israel can remain in the section of Gaza on the Egyptian border to block the terrorists from rearming. A State Department spokesman said Monday that talks are still expected to go forward, despite Hamas's rejection. Hamas could show up, having turned mere attendance into a concession.

Senior Israeli officials see Iran behind Hamas's move because Iran may not want talks to pre-empt the attack it appears to be cooking up for Israel. Perhaps only after an Iranian attack will Hamas discover some flexibility to offer concessions, hoping to persuade Israel not to answer Iran with its own forceful retaliation.

We'll soon learn how Iran views all of this mixed U.S. messaging of begging for more diplomacy while hoping to deter war. But the enemy gets a vote, and Iran's proxies will take orders from Tehran.

Israelis have a clearer idea of what works in this bad neighborhood. “Give us the tools faster, and we'll finish the job faster,” Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told Congress in July, referring to Hamas.

But how about speeding up munitions and transferring bunker-busting bombs as well? That ordnance, which can put Iran's nuclear facilities at risk, would get Tehran's attention as much as the other assets steaming to the region. Iran understands Western strength and resolve, and both are essential to any successful diplomacy.

As Iran prepares an attack on Israel, Hamas rejects compromise.

Whistling Past a \$1.9 Trillion Deficit

Ten months into the fiscal year, and the U.S. government is running a deficit of \$1.52 trillion, with a few hundred billion dollars of additional red ink still expected to be spilled before Sept. 30. That's according to the Treasury Department's latest monthly statement of receipts and outlays, the July edition, posted Monday. Read it and weep, because America's leaders aren't.

The cumulative receipts for the year so far total \$4.09 trillion, including \$2.04 trillion of individual income taxes, \$1.44 trillion coming from social insurance and retirement programs, and \$413 billion in corporate income taxes. Alas, the government's outlays total \$5.6 trillion, including \$1.21 trillion for Social Security, \$763 billion in net interest, and \$721 billion for Medicare. Spending on national defense, to compare, is \$715 billion.

The Treasury report says its estimate of the deficit for the full fiscal year is \$1.87 trillion. This ought to be an astounding figure during peacetime and without a recession or any kind of a national emergency. Yet many politicians in Washington seem inured to the numbers, as if boring accountants can't tell American voters what's possible or how to feel about the country's future. Simply imagine what can be, unburdened by what has been, as Vice President Kamala Harris sometimes says.

The deficit and debt should be a big topic of debate during the 2024 election, and one that probably wouldn't redound to Ms. Harris's benefit. For one thing, she could be forced to defend the spending binge that has taken place on President Biden's watch, as well as the 9.1% year-over-year inflation that his policies helped to ignite.

Despite taking over as the presumptive Democratic presidential candidate, Ms. Harris keeps talking like it's her job to finish Mr. Biden's Build Back Better agenda, promising a future of “affordable health care, affordable child care, and paid family leave,” courtesy of Uncle Sam. How much will all of this cost? How does she propose to pay for it? Has she even thought about it?

No one seems much inclined to make her answer these questions. Ms. Harris isn't sitting for interviews with even friendly journalists who might pry out some details of how she intends to govern. And Donald Trump seems more interested in demanding credit for his tax-free-tips brainstorm (see nearby), while claiming that Ms. Harris is faking pictures of her rallies. “Has anyone noticed that Kamala CHEATED at the airport?” Mr. Trump asked. “There was nobody at the plane, and she ‘A.I.’d it, and showed a massive ‘crowd.’”

Politicians can look away from the spending problem, but the fiscal math can't be escaped.

If Trump won't press Harris on too much spending, nobody will.

A Bad Tax Policy Tips Over

So much for the no-taxes-on-tips gambit. Donald Trump floated that tax idea several weeks ago to win votes among Nevada service workers, and on Saturday Kamala Harris did the same in the same state. Imitation is the sincerest form of politics, and whatever election edge Mr. Trump hoped to gain on the issue vanished at the blackjack table.

“It is my promise to everyone here when I am president we will continue to fight for working families, including to raise the minimum wage and eliminate taxes on tips for service and hospitality workers,” the Vice President said. Her campaign said her tips tax exemption would include an income limit.

Mr. Trump replied on Truth Social, saying that Ms. Harris “just copied my TIPS Policy. The difference is, she won't do it, she just wants it for Political Purposes! This was a TRUMP idea—she has no ideas, she can only steal from me. Remember, Kamala has proposed the LARGEST TAX INCREASE IN HISTORY—it won't happen.”

Sorry, Mr. Trump. By copying the idea, she has neutralized its power. As for her “political purposes,” that was also Mr. Trump's motivation for the idea. Did he think Democrats wouldn't play me-too if the issue polled well in a crucial state?

There's no economic justification for the proposal, which would carve out one kind of income from taxation in violation of equitable tax principles. The exemption would further narrow the tax base, increasing the pressure to raise tax rates on everyone else. No one knows how much revenue it would cost the Treasury, but one es-

timate is \$150 billion over 10 years.

Workers and many employers will inevitably rearrange their income, or how they structure compensation, to exploit the tips tax advantage. Lawyers might still bill by the hour, but why not make 20% tax-free in the form of a gratuity? The Trump-Harris special tax treatment would almost certainly lead to entirely new categories of tipped workers.

This is what happens when politicians treat the tax code as a tool for social policy and political favoritism. Mr. Trump has also called for not taxing Social Security benefits, and Democrats could copy that too. As with the tips tax exemption, Ms. Harris would probably exempt only the benefits of middle- and lower-income seniors. The political advantage that Mr. Trump hoped to gain would vanish and likely backfire on that one too.

Mr. Trump can't outbid Democrats in treating the tax code as a tool of income redistribution. His advantage, as he showed in his first term, is tax cutting and reform to promote economic growth. He's right that Ms. Harris would seek the largest tax increase in history if she wins, but Mr. Trump has muted that major political vulnerability by proposing a 10% tariff on all imported goods—a tax increase on American consumers.

Chasing voter groups with tax carve-outs is a losing game that won't help the economy, the federal fisc, or in the long run the tax favored. Oh, and by the way, Culinary Workers Union Local 226, which represents thousands of workers on the Las Vegas strip, endorsed a presidential candidate on Friday. It wasn't Mr. Trump.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Will America Get Serious About Venezuela?

The editorial board hits the nail on the head in “The U.S. Finally Wakes Up on Venezuela” (Review & Outlook, Aug. 6), but let me hit it harder. The Biden-Harris administration's history of disgusting appeasement of Nicolás Maduro, the madman ruling Venezuela, has done nothing but enable more repression, torture and oppression of the Venezuelan people.

If the administration is now serious about supporting Venezuela and ensuring a more stable hemisphere, it will go beyond words and immediately do three things:

- Commit that no U.S. funds or assistance will go to Mr. Maduro, while reimposing sanctions on him and the military thugs protecting him.

- Impose sanctions on countries that provide assistance to Mr. Maduro's crippling dictatorship.

- Call for the immediate end of repression of the Venezuelan people and make a statement about that every day.

Saying that Edmundo González Urrutia won the election while failing to recognize him as Venezuela's president-elect is yet another example of the have-it-both-ways weakness that has created the endless foreign-policy failures that define the Biden-Harris administration. We've seen it in this administration's approach to Communist China, Cuba and Iran. Statements

posing as strength from the White House, coupled with gross appeasement, only fuel the national-security threats posed by these leaders of the world's most evil regimes.

The Venezuelan people have spoken. It is time for the Biden-Harris administration to recognize democracy in Venezuela. The U.S. must lead the world by example by taking real action that helps facilitate a democratic transition of power back to the Venezuelan people, starting with recognizing Mr. González as Venezuela's president-elect. Anything less is unacceptable.

SEN. RICK SCOTT (R., FLA.)
Naples, Fla.

Here's an idea: Instead of reinstating oil sanctions on Venezuela, which the Maduro regime has learned to circumvent with the aid of other rogues, Treasury could publish a thorough accounting of the looted proceeds, naming the frontmen of generals and high-ranking officials.

The threat of having their children and paramours evicted from their European pieds-à-terre would surely grab the attention of key figures in the ruling coalition. Making it clear that their retirement nests are well-known and at-risk could prompt them to rethink their support for Mr. Maduro.

MARTÍN RODRÍGUEZ RODRÍGUEZ
Washington

The Forgotten Swing Voters of the 2024 Race

While reading “Kamala Harris's Revealing VP Choice” (Review & Outlook, Aug. 7), I was disappointed as an independent voter to see Vice President Harris copy former President Donald Trump by playing to her base. Just as I'm convinced that Mr. Trump picked Sen. J.D. Vance because he couldn't tap his own son, Ms. Harris picked Gov. Tim Walz as her running mate because going with Sen. Bernie Sanders directly wouldn't fly.

Those of us in the middle of the political spectrum were hoping the choice in November, post-Biden, wasn't going to be so stark between far left and right.

RON D. CORDES
Bridgehampton, N.Y.

The vice president had an opportunity for a mild Sister Souljah moment, gesturing toward the center, by pick-

ing Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro or Arizona Sen. Mark Kelly. She passed on both. I guess swing voters can continue to twist slowly in the wind.

JOSH WIENER
Stillwater, Okla.

The line from Mr. Walz is incomplete: “Don't ever shy away from our progressive values. One person's socialism is another person's neighborliness,” he said. That should be finished by adding “. . . with another neighbor's money.”

KEN KATONA
Purcellville, Va.

Mr. Walz said, “One person's socialism is another person's neighborliness.” But there's a big difference between the two: coercion.

MICHAEL DIGIACOMO
Hudson, N.Y.

We're Stuck with Quantitative Easing Effects

Kevin Warsh is right to point out the influence of the Federal Reserve's balance sheet on inflation (“Interest Rates Are a Sideshow in the Fed Drama,” op-ed, July 29).

Until the global financial crisis, there used to be a near one-to-one relation between the total amount of U.S. currency in circulation and the size of the Fed's portfolio. This stopped when the Fed adopted quantitative easing, and its securities holdings began to exceed the amount of U.S. currency.

Before the global financial crisis, the amount of currency outstanding and the Fed's balance sheet were each in the \$800 billion to \$900 billion range. By 2016, the number of dollar bills used by the global economy had gradually increased to \$1.5 trillion, but quantitative easing meant that the Fed's balance sheet had ballooned to \$4.5 trillion. Thus, the government had been printing money to the tune of \$3 trillion. Although the Fed began reducing this amount in the late 2010s, the Fed resumed easing once Covid hit, taking the amount of printed money up to a whopping \$6.7

trillion over the course of 2021.

It did so even though the pandemic recession had long ended. It should be no surprise that inflation spun out of control during this run-up in printed money in 2021. In response, the Fed began to reduce its portfolio holdings again in 2022, but by then it was too late. Even today, the difference between the size of the Fed's balance sheet and the amount of dollar bills in circulation remains at \$4.9 trillion.

Milton Friedman warned against the perils of good intentions. Quantitative easing was well intended. But we'll be stuck with its inflationary effects for years to come.

JERRY H. TEMPELMAN, C.F.A.
New York

Mr. Tempelman was a senior financial and economic analyst with the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

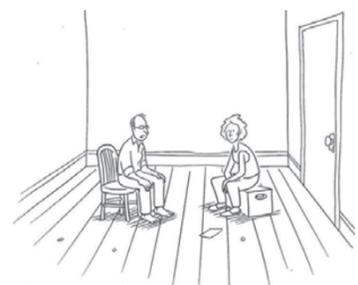
Iran's Hopes Become Reality

Sen. Lindsey Graham is right that when the crowds in the Islamic Republic of Iran chant “death to America,” they mean it (“Three Ways to Confront Iran,” op-ed, Aug. 6). As an Iranian refugee seeking asylum in the U.S., I am deeply concerned that this threat is already manifesting. I see echoes of 1979 haunting the free world. Perhaps America's demise will come not from a fire-and-brimstone apocalypse but from an insidious unraveling of our society. Internal chaos and division weakens us, precisely as Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, hopes.

WILLIAM MEHRVARZ
Washington

Pepper ... And Salt

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL



“Now what would you think about recomplicating our life?”

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DAVID HEBERT

Senior research fellow, American Institute for Economic Research
Grand Rapids, Mich.

OPINION

We All Pay the Price for Protectionism

By Phil Gramm
And Donald J. Boudreaux

Since Adam Smith debunked mercantilism in “The Wealth of Nations” (1776), the political appeal of trade protectionism has centered on its ability to benefit a privileged few special interests while spreading costs across society. Yet as the global economy has become more integrated, the cost of granting special favors through such policies has exploded. Each job created by recent tariffs on washing machines and steel has cost the U.S. economy an estimated \$820,000 and \$900,000,

Industrial policy intrudes on our sovereignty as consumers to protect politically favored jobs.

respectively. Tariffs imposed in the name of revitalizing American manufacturing have, over six years, been followed by slightly decreased manufacturing output, reductions in the percentage of the nonfarm labor force employed in manufacturing, and significantly higher trade deficits.

Sidestepping the economic logic and evidence that trade and private markets fuel growth and higher living standards, protectionists and industrial planners are trying to change the terms of the debate. Disciples on the right and left argue for policies that promote net efficiency, consumer benefit and economic

growth, but rather jobs as ends in themselves. American Compass’s Oren Cass expresses this new mantra when he states that economic policy should emphasize “a healthy labor market rather than merely rising consumption.” Former U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer adds that “Americans are producers first and consumers second.”

On the surface, their argument is appealing. Jobs are at least as important as consumption. But this raises an age-old question: Who decides which jobs to promote? In attempting to answer, it becomes clear that the new mantra is the same old siren song.

In a free society, consumers determine what is produced by choosing where to spend the incomes they’ve earned through hard work and thrift. Consumer sovereignty directs labor and capital to create the mix of goods and services that consumers want. Businesses either produce them efficiently or fail.

Politicians who advocate focusing on jobs propose that we allow government to direct how labor is employed, how capital is invested, and which goods and services are made available to consumers. That concept isn’t exactly novel: Allowing the “best and brightest” to choose such arrangements has been tried and rejected for eons. The idea of letting those who earn their incomes by the sweat of their brows decide how to spend their own money is relatively new and revolutionary.

It’s also proved fruitful. Five thousand years of experience has



tured goods, will domestic producers be able to compete in selling products made with more expensive inputs?

Protectionism and industrial policy misallocate resources and reduce economic efficiency. When firms in a free market produce outputs that consumers won’t buy, the money entrepreneurs and investors lose is their own. When protectionists and industrial-policy planners make mistakes, they often mask them with more subsidies and tariffs—at taxpayers’ expense. Think, in the first case, of Ford: When Americans didn’t buy the Edsel, the company lost money and stopped selling the model. Conversely, when Americans haven’t bought heavily subsidized electric vehicles, the government has imposed tariffs on EV

imports—taxes that consumers pay.

Adam Smith was on to something when he wrote: “Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production; and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to only so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer.” The American people would be better served if we heeded that enduring wisdom rather than let Donald Trump or Kamala Harris decide which jobs should be created.

Mr. Gramm, a former chairman of the Senate Banking Committee, is a nonresident senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. Mr. Boudreaux is a professor of economics at George Mason University and the Mercatus Center. Mike Solon contributed to this article.

shown that politicians and bureaucrats don’t possess unique insight into what should be produced or how. Even if they were somehow to possess such knowledge, in time they would use their power to promote their own interests, at the expense of consumers and workers alike.

Would politicians in both parties be trying to outdo each other in vowing to save manufacturing jobs if industrial employees weren’t swing voters in the states that will decide the presidential election? When the bill for their protectionist policies arrives, it’s clear who will pay: consumers in the form of higher prices, and unprotected sectors of the economy in the form of lost jobs. When the cost of tariffs hits a politically powerful group, as it did when re-

cent retaliation cost agriculture \$28 billion, taxpayers pick up the tab in the form of additional subsidies.

When government tries to conceal the negative effects of tariffs and subsidies, the costs grow. Morris Chang, founding chairman of Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Corp., which accepted billions of dollars in subsidies to build computer-chip manufacturing facilities in Arizona, mused in 2023 that “if you give up the competitive advantage in Taiwan and move to the U.S.—which has already happened—costs would be 50% higher than in Taiwan.”

If U.S.-subsidized computer chips cost 50% more than the world market price, how long will it be before Washington imposes tariffs on foreign-made chips? As chips play a significant role in modern manufac-

Trump Is Looking Like a Loser Again

FREE
EXPRESSION
By Gerard Baker

We need to talk about Donald. We can complain all we like, as I have, that the coronation of Kamala Harris by deceitful Democrats and a complaisant media is depriving voters of any understanding of what they are being asked to vote for in November. But we can’t ignore the giant Republican problem either: None of us are in any doubt what we are being asked to vote for on the Republican ticket.

I watched in its entirety and then, perhaps hoping that the written version might yield hidden intelligence not evident to the ear, read the transcript of the press conference Donald Trump held at Mar-a-Lago last week. Houston, we have a problem.

Mr. Trump does deserve credit, as some have said, for showing up to meet the press, unlike his opponent—and in his case, facing brickbats from an almost universally hostile crowd, unlike the softballs that will doubtless be lofted Ms. Harris’s way when she eventually deigns to

grant them an audience.

But, with apologies to Woody Allen, it isn’t true that 90% of being presidential is just showing up. Being impressed at the readiness merely to take questions is, if feminists will forgive me, a little like reacting in the way Samuel Johnson did when he saw a woman preach—“like seeing a dog walk on its hind legs. It is not done well but you are surprised to find it done at all.”

By my calculation, about one-third of Mr. Trump’s remarks fell into three categories: false, obtuse or lunatic.

I’m not even talking here about the usual grotesque hyperbolic assertions or baffling verbal manufactures, the finest of which last week was surely the description of “people dying financially because they can’t buy bacon.”

I am talking about things like these:

- The argument that he must have won Georgia in 2020 because he easily won Alabama and South Carolina, suggesting he thinks that Georgia—which has two Democratic senators, and which two Democrats have carried in the last eight presidential elections—is politically indistinguishable from states that no Demo-

cratic candidate has carried since 1976.

- The claim that the crowd at his Jan. 6, 2021, rally was as big as the one at Martin Luther King’s “I Have A Dream” speech in 1963.

- The assertion that everyone in America agreed that *Roe v. Wade* needed to be overturned.

About one third of his remarks at last week’s press conference were false, obtuse or lunatic.

We can add to this his failure to identify Gov. Tim Walz, Ms. Harris’s running mate, by name, but warning that this anonymous figure was “heavy into the transgender world,” a pregnant remark that conjured up an image of a slightly pudgy 60-year-old Minnesotan showing up for affairs of state in a tutu.

False, obtuse, lunatic. Often, like those Venn diagrams Ms. Harris is fond of, the remarks combined two of the three. On at least one occasion—Mr. Trump’s detailed recounting of an imaginary helicopter ride

he took with Willie Brown, the former mayor of San Francisco—we got the full triple intersect.

This is all of a piece with his recent behavior—from his claim that Joe Biden will be back as the Democratic candidate to his insistence that the crowds at Ms. Harris’s rallies are enhanced by artificial intelligence.

We need to be clear about the problem. It isn’t, as some have suggested, that Mr. Trump has been wrong-footed by the Democrats’ switch from Mr. Biden to Ms. Harris. Nor is it a reflection of accelerated degeneration. The Trump of the past few weeks has looked and sounded more or less exactly like the Trump of nine years ago.

This is the problem. It is this Mr. Trump who lost the presidency in 2020. It is this Mr. Trump who lost the House in 2018 and the Senate in the Georgia runoff election in January 2021.

Why did he win in 2016? Because he was new and up against the most tediously familiar and disliked politician in America. Even then, he only squeaked past Hillary Clinton by a total of fewer than 90,000 votes in the three decisive states.

All this explains where we are

now. This is the same old Mr. Trump, but this time he is up against something the American people are being sold as new. Those of us who have paid attention may know that Ms. Harris is a seasoned hard-liner with extreme views, but most voters don’t. They see a blank slate onto which they are being invited to project anything they like.

Mr. Trump’s performances as he traipses around the country again are reinforcing the illusion of that choice. Instead of telling them consistently and repeatedly what they are actually getting if they vote Democrat, he is merely reminding them what they will get again if they vote Republican.

Mr. Trump has unusual political skills. I don’t disdain the voters who have backed him as the way to express their disgust at a rotten, complacent political establishment—on both sides—that has dominated Washington for too long. I commend them.

But, if things don’t change, the ranks of those voters won’t be enough to outweigh others who simply can’t face another four years of the Trump show and will back even a party hack concealing her real politics simply to escape it.

Obama’s Alma Mater Sacks Its Only Free-Market Professor

By Mark Skousen

For all its talk about diversity, equity and inclusion, Occidental College, the only small liberal-arts college in Los Angeles, doesn’t seem keen on putting those values into practice. Late last year the economics department opted not to renew the contract of an untenured professor whose libertarian and conservative views went against the grain. So much for its public commitment to diversity of political views.

Occidental College appointed Daron Djerdjian in 2010. He taught introductory economics, econometrics and Austrian economics, and his classes were popular. Students gave him a 4.4 out of 5.0 on the Rate My Professors website.

When word got out in February that he was being dismissed, more than 400 people—mostly students and alumni, according to the student-run campus newspaper—signed a petition to keep him at

Oxy. The petition’s organizers wrote that Mr. Djerdjian’s “departure will significantly diminish the breadth and range of ideas and thoughts available to students at Occidental College.” In a petition comment, one student wrote that Mr. Djerdjian “offers a great and fresh perspective that is rarely offered in this institution.” Another student said that the professor “cares about his students” and “changed the way I think about certain things in life.” Many petition signers wrote that while they didn’t always agree with Mr. Djerdjian, they appreciated his perspective and supported his freedom to teach.

Not all students had positive things to say about the professor. Ava Manier, then a sophomore, told the student newspaper in February that she didn’t enjoy an economics course she took from Mr. Djerdjian. “I understand the need to have people who aren’t super liberal, but I think it crossed a line,” Ms. Manier said. “He kept saying that

poor people were ‘lazy.’”

“I never said that,” Mr. Djerdjian says. In his account, the class discussion related to economist Thomas Sowell’s contention that government welfare makes poor people less productive.

When I inquired on Aug. 1 why Occidental was letting go of Mr. Djerdjian, the college responded via email with an official statement saying that it “values political and other forms of diversity” and that faculty appointments are made “without reference to political or other affiliations.”

Two full-time faculty members, who spoke anonymously for fear of ostracism, rebutted this claim. One said he was convinced that the college’s cancellation of Mr. Djerdjian was “politically motivated.” Another said that the college didn’t renew the contract because it had recently hired two tenure-track faculty and because student enrollment in economics was down. “The department was in its rights not to renew his

contract,” the faculty member said, “but their decision was a disservice to Oxy students, who will no longer be exposed to an entirely different free-market perspective that is both stimulating and valuable.”

Occidental College didn’t renew Daron Djerdjian’s contract, and colleagues suspect ideological bias.

It’s a shame that Occidental College seems not to be living up to its promise to uphold political diversity. The college has a plaque on display quoting Barack Obama, who was a student there for two years, praising Oxy for its “diverse and inspiring” professors. The school has historically honored alumni of various ideologies: It also has a sports stadium named after Jack Kemp, an Oxy quarterback who went on to be-

come a conservative U.S. representative and the 1996 Republican vice-presidential nominee.

In the past, the economics department offered courses across the political spectrum, ranging from the free-market Austrian economics of Ludwig von Mises and Friedrich Hayek to the radical political economy of Karl Marx and Thomas Piketty.

But times are changing. The economics department is now largely staffed by graduates of University of California schools who place more emphasis on fair trade than free trade and market failure than government failure, and are more likely to quote Keynesian Joseph Stiglitz than Milton Friedman. According to Mr. Djerdjian, the college even dropped Greg Mankiw’s pro-market textbook because the majority of the pronouns he used were masculine, and replaced it with a more politically correct textbook by Betsey Stevenson and Justin Wolfers, which emphasizes “better coverage of discrimination and inequality.”

Sadly, political diversity is dying at Oxy and is being replaced by less tolerant wokeness. Yet there’s a silver lining. Mr. Djerdjian in June founded an academic institution with a peer-reviewed journal—the Carl Menger Institute for Market Economics in Los Angeles. Many of his former students are signing up to take classes from his new institute. Mr. Djerdjian has also secured a new position teaching as an adjunct at the University of California Los Angeles. You can’t keep a good man down.

Mr. Skousen holds the Doti-Spogli Chair of Free Enterprise at Chapman University and is the author of “The Making of Modern Economics.”

Notable & Quotable: ‘Joy’

Byron York writing for the Washington Examiner, Aug. 9:

The operative word of the Harris-Walz campaign is “joy.” A New York Times analysis of the campaign brought the headline: “Harris Used to Worry About Laughing. Now Joy Is Fueling Her Campaign.”

Joy is fueling her campaign? You bet it is—no less a figure than Walz himself declared that Harris “emanates the joy.” MSNBC went along to declare that Harris and Walz “campaign with joy.” The Washington Post reported that the two Democrats have “seized on a joyful message.”

The New York Times, again, announced that Harris and Walz are running a “joyful campaign.” . . .

“Tim Walz loves food,” declared the Atlantic. Corn dogs, cinnamon rolls, his very own “Turkey Trot Tater-Tot Hotdish” recipe, and more, all washed down with prodigious quantities of milk. It all brings joy, the Atlantic declared—“cold milk on a hot day; a perfectly cracked egg; a steaming casserole dish full of God knows what.” By being so joyous about food, the byline concluded, “Harris and Walz are making theirs the candidacy of terrestrial pleasure and straightforward abundance.”

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WORLD NEWS

U.S. Fights Resurgent Islamic State in Syria

Terrorist group is rebounding as chaos destabilizes the Middle East

By MICHAEL M. PHILLIPS

U.S. SPECIAL FORCES BASE, Northeastern Syria—American commandos are scrambling to contain a resurgence of Islamic State where the militant group once imposed its violent religious fervor on vast territories and millions of people.

Islamic State is mustering forces in Syria's Badiya desert, training young recruits to become suicide bombers, directing attacks on allied troops and preparing to resurrect its dream of ruling an Islamist caliphate, according to officers from the U.S. and the Syrian Democratic Forces, Kurdish-led troops whom the U.S. helped to defeat the militant group five years ago.

Militant fighters have doubled their pace of attacks in Syria and Iraq this year. They have targeted security checkpoints, detonated car bombs and plotted to free thousands of comrades jailed since the SDF and a U.S.-headed Western coalition recaptured the last Islamic State-held town.

In a little-publicized campaign, American aircraft conduct airstrikes and provide live aerial surveillance to SDF ground forces who conduct raids on suspected Islamic State cells. While they usually stay a safe distance from the fighting, elite U.S. troops sometimes conduct missions on their own to kill or capture senior Islamic State leaders.

"This year has been the worst year since we defeated Islamic State," said Gen. Rohilat Afrin, co-commander of the SDF. "No matter how much you knock them down, they'll try to get up again," she said in an interview at a U.S. commando base in northeastern Syria.

Elsewhere, Islamic State affiliates have carried out attacks, including twin bombings in Kerman, Iran, and a massacre at a Moscow concert venue.

But its focus has been on the region it once controlled.

Islamic State's latest comeback effort represents a different challenge than the one it posed in its heyday, when hundreds of militants would charge through isolated villages and crowded cities in tanks and pickup trucks mounted with machine guns. Now the group operates in smaller cells armed with rifles and booby traps. And today's response from the U.S., France and their Western allies is complicated by uncertainty—fueled by diplomatic negotiations and the coming American elections—about what role the coalition will play in the region in the future.

During the first six months of the year, Islamic State claimed responsibility for 153 attacks in Syria and Iraq. It is building its ranks by surreptitiously indoctrinating youngsters in camps that hold thousands of wives and children of detained Islamic State fighters.

"What we're seeing is the movement of men, weapons and equipment," said an American Special Forces officer stationed in Syria.

U.S.-aligned SDF personnel report having captured 233 suspected Islamic State fighters in 28 operations in the first seven months of 2024. American aircraft have conducted three strikes on Islamic State targets in Syria, and one in Iraq, so far this year. The U.S., which now has 900 military and civilian defense personnel in Syria and 2,500 in Iraq, carried out four strikes against Islamic State in all of 2023. U.S. forces have assisted in nearly 50 other airstrikes conducted by the Iraqi air force since the beginning of last year, according to Pentagon data.

SDF ground forces usually hunt down Islamic State cells in villages and towns around northeastern Syria. In one July raid, SDF commandos backed by U.S. Special Forces hit eight compounds housing suspected Islamic State militants.

The operation took six weeks to plan, with U.S. drones and Apache attack helicopters providing aerial surveillance to help



U.S. and Syrian Democratic Forces patrol northeast Syria in a campaign against Islamic State.

Militants Recruit Young People in Refugee Camps

About 43,000 Syrian, Iraqi and other displaced people are living in camps in northeastern Syria, including many wives and children of jailed Islamic State fighters whom the U.S. and Syrian Democratic Forces see as potential recruits for the next generation of militants.

At the al-Hol camp, children draw images of hand

grenades and AK-47 rifles. U.S. soldiers have obtained photos of Islamic State-themed children's birthday parties, the militants' black-and-white flag hung on the wall amid the balloons. "They're trying to brainwash them as kids, so when they grow up they'll be willing to kill without hesitation," said Gen. Rohilat Af-

rin, co-commander of the SDF.

As boys reach fighting age, Islamic State smuggles them out of the camp for military training, security officials say. Authorities have had a tough time figuring out what to do with the families, who often aren't wanted in their home countries but are deemed too dangerous to be released in the general public.

commandos spot patterns of people entering and leaving key buildings. SDF troops built models of the suspect compounds to plan their assault and held full-scale rehearsals. In the early hours of the day of the raid, more than 100 SDF soldiers staggered their movements to arrive simultaneously at their assigned targets spread out over a 10-mile stretch of villages, so that no Islamic State fighters could warn others that the net was closing around them.

The SDF arrested a dozen people without firing a shot, according to the U.S. Special

Forces officer. After the compounds were secured by the Syrian troops, American commandos entered the houses and seized cellphones in the hopes of using their call histories to locate other Islamic State militants. "We do know this absolutely disrupted planned attacks on coalition and SDF personnel," the U.S. officer said.

In Iraq, Shiite Muslim leaders have ties to Tehran and are pressing U.S. troops to leave the country, which serves as a logistical base for Pentagon operations in Syria. U.S.-Iraq talks in Washington last month

ended without a withdrawal decision but still alarmed American allies in the region.

"We'll see chaos like we've never seen before," said Brig. Gen. Ali al-Hassan, spokesman for northeast Syria's U.S.-allied internal-security force. "Any withdrawal will cause the immediate activation of sleeper cells."

SDF officers recall that in 2018 then-President Donald Trump ordered the withdrawal of all 2,000 U.S. troops in Syria. Defense officials protested, and Trump was persuaded to leave nearly half of them in place.

Decisions about whether the

U.S. will remain in the fight are made even more complex by the crazy-quilt conflicts in Syria.

While the U.S. and SDF take on Islamic State in Syria's breakaway northeastern region, which Kurds call Rojava, NATO member Turkey carries out airstrikes against the SDF, because it sees the independence-minded Kurds as terrorists.

Russian forces help Syrian President Bashar al-Assad battle both the SDF and Islamic State.

Militias armed by Iran meanwhile, routinely launch explosive drones at U.S. bases in the region. A January attack on a U.S. position in Jordan killed three Americans and wounded dozens. Earlier this month, an Iran-backed militia fired rockets at Iraq's Al Asad air base, wounding five American servicemembers and two contractors, according to U.S. military officials.

For months this year, Iran-backed attacks forced U.S. troops to reinforce their half-dozen positions in Syria and distracted from the fight against Islamic State.

In 2014, then-President Barack Obama assembled an international coalition to help Iraqi and Kurdish-led forces reassert control over territories in Iraq and Syria. In 2017, Iraqi government forces and Kurdish fighters recaptured the Iraqi city of Mosul after a fierce battle, and SDF troops retook Raqqa in Syria, once Islamic State's capital.

In 2019, the Syrian town of Baghouz, Islamic State's last stronghold, fell to the SDF, and the physical caliphate was no more. "It was a threat to the entire world, and we defeated it," recalls Gen. Mahmud Barkhadan, SDF operational commander in northeast Syria.

Some 9,000 Islamic State fighters remain in jails across northeastern Syria, however, and the group has made no secret of its intention to free its comrades so they can return to the battlefield.

"Attention has shifted elsewhere," said the U.S. Special Forces officer. "But now is not the time to take our eyes off of northeast Syria."

WORLD WATCH



BULL RUN: Human and bovine participants in 'El Pilon' charged down a mountain trail in Falces, Spain, on Monday.

SUDAN

Talks Are Planned In Brutal Civil War

War-wrecked, flood-wrecked Sudan is at "a catastrophic breaking point," the U.N. migration agency said Monday, ahead of peace talks planned for this week in Switzerland. Sudan's military has yet to confirm its participation in the meeting, brokered by the U.S. and Saudi Arabia.

The northeastern African nation plunged into chaos in April last year when tensions between the military and the Rapid Support Forces paramilitary group turned into open warfare. The conflict has killed thousands of people and pushed many into starvation, with atrocities including mass rape. The war has created the world's largest displacement crisis, as more than 10.7 million people have been forced to flee their homes.

—Associated Press

UNITED KINGDOM

Mother, Daughter Stabbed in London

A man stabbed an 11-year-old girl and her mother in London's bustling tourist magnet of Leicester Square shortly before noon Monday, police said, adding that there was no indication that the attack was terrorism-related.

Workers from nearby shops leapt to the assistance of the victims. Officers arrived within four minutes and arrested the attacker, said police, adding that they weren't seeking anyone else in connection with the attack.

The girl required treatment but her life wasn't in jeopardy, police said. Her mother, 34, had less serious injuries. The suspect is 32, and police said that at this stage, they don't believe he knew the victims. Britain is experiencing a rise in knife attacks.

—Associated Press

HONG KONG

Convictions Upheld In Protest Cases

Hong Kong's top court, the Court of Final Appeal, on Monday unanimously upheld the convictions of seven of Hong Kong's most prominent pro-democracy activists over their roles in one of 2019's biggest antigovernment protests.

Jimmy Lai, founder of the now-defunct Apple Daily newspaper; Martin Lee, founding chairman of the city's Democratic Party; and five former pro-democracy lawmakers were found guilty in 2021 of organizing and participating in an unauthorized assembly. Last year they partially won their appeal at a lower court, which quashed their convictions for organizing the assembly. But their convictions over taking part in it were upheld, and they continued their legal battle.

—Associated Press

CONGO

At Least 12 Killed In Militant Attacks

Militants allied with the Islamic State group in eastern Congo have killed at least 12 people in several villages in North Kivu province, a local official said Monday.

Fighters with the Allied Democratic Forces attacked people in the village of Mukonia on Saturday, Mayor Nicole Kikuku, said on national television. Several villagers are still missing, the mayor added. Last June the ADF killed at least 40 people in North Kivu. It is also suspected of being behind a massacre last year of 41 people, mostly students, in neighboring Uganda.

Eastern Congo has struggled with armed violence for decades as more than 120 groups fight over power, land and mineral resources.

—Associated Press

Flames Up to 80 Feet Spur Athens Evacuations

By GARETH VIPERS

Residents in parts of Athens have been ordered to evacuate as emergency teams struggled to battle raging wildfires approaching the Greek capital during the country's peak tourism season.

Water bombing planes and helicopters were deployed northeast of the city Monday as vast forest fires spread with flames reaching up to 80 feet, authorities said.

"It is an extremely dangerous fire that we've been battling for over 20 hours in dramatic conditions because of the very strong winds and prolonged dryness," said Vassilis Kikilias, Greece's minister of climate crisis and political protection.

Residents in and around Athens hurried to pack up cars and secure animals. Local TV stations showed scorched shrub land and giant flames ripping through highly inflammable pine forests. Athenians speaking to state-owned broadcaster ERT reported a strong smell of smoke in the city.

The fires come during the busy vacation season, when foreigners and locals make their way to the Greek islands.

Several suburbs in northeastern Athens were ordered to evacuate Monday, authorities said. In the suburb of Penteli, the children's hospital and a military hospital were evacuated Monday as thick

smoke approached the edges of the city. Another hospital in the suburb of Melissia was also evacuated.

More than 700 firefighters tried to bring the blazes under control, one near the village of Kallitichnoupoli, roughly 15 miles east of Athens, and the other in the area of Grammatikos about 20 miles northeast. Two regions—Attica, which includes Athens, and Central Greece, just outside Athens—will be under very high risk of fire on Tuesday, said the country's fire department.

Devastating wildfires are becoming increasingly common for the Mediterranean nation. Greece recorded its hottest ever June and July on record, according to the country's national observatory.

Last summer, extreme heat fueled fires in northern and central Greece that burned 312 square miles, the biggest wildfire this century in Europe. At least 21 people were killed.

Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis cut his Crete holiday short to return to Athens to oversee the emergency response, according to a government spokesman.

Watch a video

Scan the code to watch a video of the wildfires in parts of Athens.



A resident evacuated with her cat in Greece on Monday.

5 Big Earnings Season Takeaways

Profits remain strong, but some worrying signals spook investors

By HARDIKA SINGH

Traders are on alert for any signs the economy is coming under pressure. That is putting corporate earnings under extra scrutiny.

Strong growth for corporate profits has helped keep the stock market afloat during a recent bout of volatility, with Wall Street expecting earnings overall this year to jump the most since 2021. But the results have come with some worrying signs. Chief among them: Sales growth hasn't been as strong as usual.

For the second quarter, companies in the S&P 500 are on pace to deliver a 5.2% jump in revenue from a year earlier. That is higher than the 4.7% Wall Street expected at the end of June, but below the 6.7% average over the past five years.

"There's more pressure on the top line," said Keith Lerner, co-chief investment officer at Truist Advisory Services. "Consumers are pushing back on prices that are moving too high."

Here is what second-quarter results have shown so far:

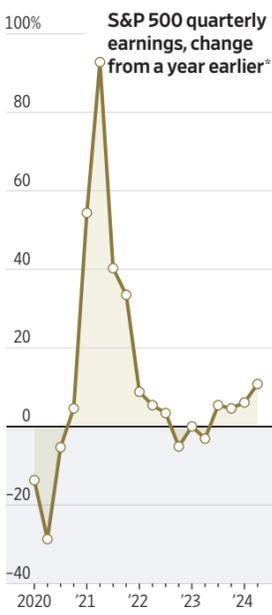
1 Profits look strong

Earnings for companies in the S&P 500 are on pace to record a jump of 10.9% from a year earlier, better than what analysts expected at the end of June and headed for the biggest quarterly increase in over two years, according to FactSet.

The problem is revenue, which is underperforming. That suggests profits are being driven by cost-cutting and one-time items, rather than strong underlying performance.

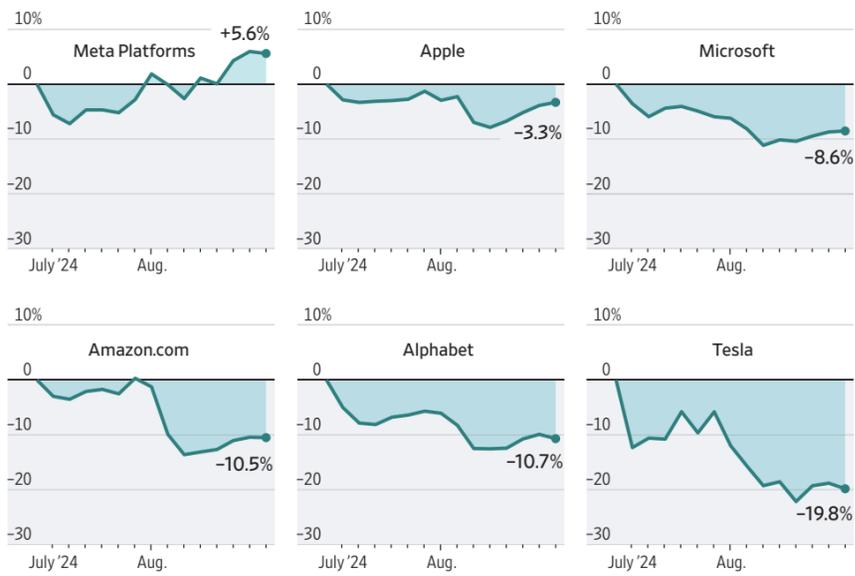
"There's always one-time items, either gain or loss, or

Traders are paying extra attention to earnings



*Second-quarter 2024 data is a mix of actual and estimates.

Share-price performance since the first Magnificent Seven earnings were released



Source: FactSet

something close to the income to make that gain," said Justin Burgin, vice president of equity research at Ameriprise Financial. "The true tell is revenue."

2 People are cutting back on the little things

One reason for the underwhelming revenue is that people are budgeting more.

McDonald's said customers are picking cheaper items and going to its restaurants less often, driving down U.S. same-store sales for the first time since 2020. Starbucks reported another quarterly decline in sales and Chipotle said its sales growth was cooling.

"Low-income consumers, in many cases, they're dropping out of the market, eating at home and finding other ways to economize, cutting down on trips," McDonald's Chief Executive Chris Kempczinski said on the company's earnings call.

French-fry supplier Lamb Please turn to page B2



Results from luxury companies suggest even high-end consumers are paring their spending.

Billionaire Fights Facebook Parent Over Fake Ads

By ALEX PERRY

Every day, around the clock, a small group of cybersecurity professionals scours Facebook, looking for the face of their boss, an Australian billionaire who is determined to take the social-media giant to court.

Like U.S. financiers such as Bill Ackman, Andrew Forrest says he has spent years trying to get Facebook parent Meta Platforms to do more to stop scam advertisements that use his likeness to promote fraudu-

lent investment schemes.

Yet unlike other Meta adversaries, the mining executive has pledged to spend vast sums on his legal campaign. His U.S. federal lawsuit against Meta alleges that the company's artificial-intelligence-powered ad systems help create and amplify the false ads. It is one of the first cases in years that appears on track to break through broad immunity protections afforded to technology companies that host user-generated content. Last

month, a federal judge rejected Meta's efforts to dismiss the suit. The company has appealed.

The protections have withstood numerous court challenges in recent years, and legal experts say the case is one of the first in which AI has played a role in litigation related to the 1996 law, often referred to as Section 230.

Forrest has said he doesn't care what it costs and promises to see the fight to its conclusion, believing that Meta

must be forced to do more to police its platform. "I cannot believe a board of directors of any company would knowingly allow innocent, vulnerable people to lose their life savings to enhance their own corporate profits," Forrest said.

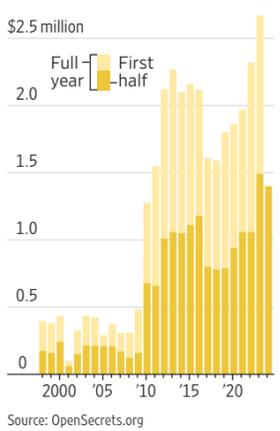
Meta didn't respond to requests for comment.

Fraudulent celebrity ads have proliferated on social media in recent years, with X and Snapchat seeing crypto scams on their platforms, according to cybersecurity and block-

chain researchers. The scams on Meta apps use ads to lure victims into joining chat groups on WhatsApp or elsewhere that steer them toward dubious investments. The schemes have cost small investors millions of dollars.

Eric Goldman, a law professor at the Santa Clara University School of Law, said he was surprised by the judge's ruling in the Forrest case given that a judge ruled in 2009 that Google wasn't liable for ads Please turn to page B4

McDonald's federal lobbying



Source: OpenSecrets.org

Canadian Railroads Face Work Stoppage

By ROBB M. STEWART

Canada's rail operations face the risk of shutdown later this month after the country's labor-relations board effectively opened the door to a strike by unionized workers, or a lockout.

The Canada Industrial Relations Board in a ruling Friday determined a work stoppage at Canadian Pacific Kansas City and Canadian National Railway wouldn't pose an immediate or serious danger to safety or public health. It ordered a 13-day cooling-off period between the rail companies and Teamsters Canada Rail Conference.

In response to the ruling, Canadian Pacific issued a lockout notice for one minute past midnight Aug. 22 if no settlement is reached with the Please turn to page B2

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Meta, Universal Music Sign License Deal

By DOMINIC CHOPPING

Universal Music Group artists will see their songs made available on WhatsApp for the first time, after the record label struck a new licensing deal with Meta Platforms.

The world's largest music company has signed an expanded multiyear global agreement that allows music from its artists and songwriters to be used and shared across Meta's global network of platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, Horizon, Threads and WhatsApp. The group's artists include Taylor Swift, Adele and Elton John.

The two companies initially penned a deal in 2017 in which Universal Music licensed its recorded-music and music-publishing catalogs across Facebook's platforms, which mainly covered songs used in the background of videos and "other social experiences" on Facebook, Messenger, Instagram and Oculus.

That deal opened the way for a new revenue stream for the industry, as user-generated videos hadn't before gen-



Meta apps can share songs by Universal artists such as Adele.

erated income for artists and relied on burdensome legal proceedings to have unlicensed content removed.

With Monday's agreement, the companies said monetization opportunities for Universal Music artists and songwriters have been expanded with short-form video and licensed music for WhatsApp.

"The new agreement reflects the two companies' shared commitment to protecting human creators and artistry, including ensuring that artists and songwriters are compensated fairly," the companies said in a joint statement.

They also will continue to work together to address the

growing threat from unlicensed content created using artificial intelligence that could affect artists and songwriters, they said.

The deal follows an agreement earlier this year with TikTok that brought Universal Music Group artists and their songs back to the popular video-sharing app after months of disagreements over pay.

Universal threatened legal action over unlicensed songs on TikTok, as the monthslong public spat dragged on amid congressional calls to force a sale or U.S. ban of the platform.

A surprise move by Swift to put her music back on TikTok promoted a new dialogue between the two companies and led to the reaching of an agreement that increases artist royalties.

The clash highlighted the increasing importance of social-media platforms for artist revenue.

Meta has similar licensing agreements with publishers such as Warner Music Group and independent music-licensing agency Merlin.

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Canadian railways account for half the country's exports.

Canada Rail Faces Stoppage

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Canadian National called on the government to launch binding arbitration and said it would have no choice but to begin a phased and progressive shutdown of its network, starting with embargoes on hazardous goods, which would also result in a lockout after midnight Aug. 22.

The decision puts the rail companies and the labor union back where they were in early May, before the federal government averted possible widespread disruption to the movement of goods across the country and cross-border trade when it asked the board to rule on possible safety risks and whether the railroads must transport certain goods during a strike or lockout.

Leaders from the union, which represents around 10,000 workers at the companies, and the railroads agreed Monday to restart stalled negotiations this week alongside federal mediators.

Labor Minister Steven MacKinnon said at the time the government expected the talks

to be productive and substantive, given the country has entrusted the companies and their workers with transporting close to 400 billion Canadian dollars, equivalent to \$291 billion, in goods annually.

In May, the Teamsters voted overwhelmingly to strike.

In a letter Friday to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and other lawmakers, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce urged Ottawa to intervene to avert a rail shutdown that it warned would have an immediate impact on thousands of businesses and commuters in several major cities, as well as leaving Canadians with access to fewer goods and driving up prices.

The industry body said Canadian railways transport half the country's exports. A prolonged railway strike, on top of near-term disruption, could damage the country's international reputation and weaken its negotiating position in advance of the renewal of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement in 2026, it said.

In a statement posted on X, Minister MacKinnon on Friday called on all sides to remain at the bargaining table. "A negotiated agreement is the best way forward," he said.

In its decision, the labor-relations board said the companies and union were best placed to determine what threat a strike or lockout posed, given that Canadian Pacific has experienced five separate work stoppages since 2012 and Canadian National has been hit by one strike in the past 15 years that lasted eight days. The rail companies and the union have agreed that none of their services or activities needed to be maintained during a work stoppage.

The board said a work stoppage at the railways would result in inconvenience, economic hardship and possibly harm to Canada's international reputation as a reliable trading partner, but those weren't factors it had to consider when tackling the government's call to rule whether safety would be at risk.

Paul Boucher, president of Teamsters Canada, said that in earlier suspending any possible strike, the government had robbed the union of leverage, and that neither company has been willing to compromise or show flexibility in their demands.

Teamsters Canada is bargaining for the renewal of two collective agreements covering 3,200 so-called running trades employees and a unit of 85 rail-traffic controllers at Canadian Pacific and the renewal of a collective agreement covering about 6,000 railway transportation employees at Canadian National. The union said both companies want concessions on issues pertaining to crew scheduling, rail safety and fatigue management.

McDonald's Puts Weight Into Politics

Continued from page B1

said created an uneven playing field versus other types of restaurants and businesses. Political spending from McDonald's, the world's largest fast-food chain by sales, has ballooned since the wage law was debated and enacted, campaign filings and company records show.

"California was a watershed moment," Gonda said.

Burger bash

Since the beginning of 2023, the chain has given around \$2 million to candidates' political campaigns in California. Some of those funds last December went to Ronaldo Fierro, a Riverside, Calif., restaurant owner seeking election to the state Legislature as a Democrat.

A political group backed by McDonald's operators spent \$188,000 against Fierro's opponent, Riverside City Councilwoman Clarissa Cervantes, a Democrat. Ads and mailers attacked her past work as a union organizer, including one featuring a burger with a \$100 bill stuffed inside, tying Cervantes to rising menu prices that followed the state's higher fast-food wages. A separate mailing in March called Cervantes a "serial drunk driver."

"I've been attacked by corporate special interests because I stand up to them," Cervantes said in a mailer. She apologized during the campaign for her past DUI arrests and said she has completed treatment.

In the March primary, Cervantes beat Fierro by about 200 votes. Fierro didn't respond to requests for comment.

Following the 2022 wage law backed by union and worker groups, industry players eventually helped negotiate a \$20-an-hour compromise with the California bill's backers. It took effect in April.

McDonald's and other restaurant chains have said the higher California wages have rapidly increased their costs and cut into profits, with operators increasing their menu prices or slashing workers'

BUSINESS & FINANCE

While Sacramento politician Chris Holden saw the world on trips paid for by his special interest friends, LA County working families saw their cost of living skyrocket thanks to Holden... 2

In the Assembly, Chris Holden voted on the biggest gas tax increase in state history — raising gas taxes 40% on those who can least afford it. 1

SOURCE: 1. Chris Holden's Form 700, California FPPC (2012-2021); 2. SB 1 (1917-2018), Assembly Floor, 4/6/2017. CBS Sacramento, 8/4/2017

Too Beholden to Special Interests. Say NO to Chris Holden

Ad paid for by California Alliance of Family Owned Businesses PAC, Ad Committee a Top Funders, California Operators Political Action Committee. This advertisement was not authorized by a candidate or a committee controlled by a candidate.

Burger chain operators in California formed a PAC that targeted a state assemblyman.

hours to try to compensate. The higher restaurant prices in California have depressed restaurant visits more than national averages, industry analysts said.

The chain spent around \$5.7 million on lobbying last year in California, making the company the state's fourth-biggest such spender, according to an analysis of state records. The burger giant's 2023 total was more than 23 times the amount it spent in California from 1999 through the end of 2022, the records show.

McDonald's USA President Joe Erlinger said the company

Global Food Forum in June.

Big PAC

Earlier this year, California McDonald's operators helped form the California Alliance of Family-Owned Businesses political-action committee. The group of McDonald's operators said the PAC plans to spend \$1.5 million on local political contests this year.

PAC founder and board member Scott Rodrick, who owns around a dozen Northern California McDonald's restaurants, said the PAC has been involved in about, half a dozen

primary races so far, while hiring professionals to track state legislation. The group intends to shovel at least a million dollars into California general election races in the fall.

"We will continue to get very aggressive and be proactive in identifying politicians that understand and will stand by small-business owners in California," said Rodrick.

In Los Angeles County, more than \$625,000 of the PAC's funds went toward mailers and attack ads targeting state Assemblyman Chris Holden, a sponsor of the 2022

fast-food minimum wage bill, who ran for the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

"While Sacramento politician Chris Holden saw the world on trips paid for by his special interest friends, LA County working families saw their cost of living skyrocket thanks to Holden," said one of the mailers sponsored by the restaurant operators' group.

Danielle Cendejas, Holden's campaign strategist, said the attacks misconstrued his record of standing up for workers. Holden, a Democrat, lost the March race.

In the spring, as New York state lawmakers debated the legislation allowing workers to sue their employers, ads began popping up in local publications attacking it as overreach by Albany. New Yorkers for Local Businesses, a new PAC supported by McDonald's franchisees, funded the ads and a lobbying effort opposed to the legislation.

New York Assembly member Jo Anne Simon, one of the bill's sponsors, said the opposition by McDonald's operators was "unfortunate" and she intends to reintroduce the bill.

Gonda said McDonald's plans to expand its lobbying and political outreach efforts across the country. "Frankly we were too quiet for too long," he said.

—Christine Mai-Duc contributed to this article.

Earnings Season Takeaways

Continued from page B1

Weston felt the crunch, with shares tumbling 28% after it missed profit and sales expectations. Potato chips are another casualty: **PepsiCo** said shoppers are buying fewer bags of them.

The S&P 500's consumer discretionary is down 1.7% this year, the only sector in the red.

3 High-end shoppers are economizing, too

The appetite for luxury watches, jewelry and clothes seemed endless not that long ago. Now, even high-end shoppers are taking a breather.

The parent company of Louis Vuitton and Dior said sales rose a disappointing 1% from a year earlier. Gucci owner **Kering** said sales fell 11% and issued a profit warning. French distillery **Rémy Cointreau** flagged a sluggish market in China and posted an overall decline in sales.

Germany's **Hugo Boss** cut its sales guidance for the year.

Those upscale companies aren't part of the S&P 500, but their performance offers insight into the financial health of both aspirational and ultrawealthy shoppers.

4 High interest rates are weighing on banks

After paying basically nothing on savings accounts for years, banks are being forced to offer higher yields to prevent customers from taking their deposits elsewhere. That is hurting their profit margins.

Higher rates also mean people take out and refinance fewer mortgages. Consumers are spending big on credit cards and carrying balances, which is giving banks a boost. But now more borrowers are falling behind on bills.

Meanwhile, investment banking and trading revenue at banks including **Goldman Sachs** and **JPMorgan Chase** are showing signs of improvement.

5 Big tech isn't letting up on its AI dreams

Tech titans have been riding high on hopes about the transformative powers of arti-

ficial-intelligence technology. Now they are spending billions of dollars to make those dreams happen.

"When you go through a curve like this, the risk of underinvesting is dramatically greater than the risk of overinvesting," **Alphabet** Chief Executive Sundar Pichai said on a call with analysts.

Investors apparently aren't so sure. Six of the Magnificent Seven group of big tech companies have released results so far, and the stock prices of

four dropped the day after they reported. Shares of **Amazon** tumbled 8.8%, **Tesla** dropped over 12%, **Alphabet** lost 5% and **Microsoft** slipped 1.1%.

Meta Platforms and **Apple** were the exceptions, with shares up 4.8% and 0.7%, respectively. **Nvidia**, the last member of the Magnificent Seven, reports on Aug. 28.

For the year, Wall Street remains optimistic. Analysts expect earnings will rise 10.3% in 2024, according to FactSet.

Watch a Video: The U.S. and China Race to Build AI Combat Drones

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MICHAEL TABB

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BUSINESS NEWS

Canadian Bank to Buy Stake In KeyCorp

By ADRIANO MARCHESE

Bank of Nova Scotia has agreed to invest \$2.8 billion in **KeyCorp**, positioning itself for new commercial opportunities and strengthening its foothold in the U.S. market.

The move by the Canadian financial institution targets one of its key markets, with the investment in KeyCorp significantly boosting its capital deployment in the U.S.

"This transaction provides attractive near-term returns to our shareholders and creates future optionality for Scotiabank in the North American corridor," Scotiabank Chief Executive Scott Thomson said Monday.

KeyCorp, which is based in Cleveland, operates about 1,000 branches across 15 states and has \$187 billion in assets. The company offers commercial and retail banking, as well as investment advice and services.

While Scotiabank doesn't have a retail presence in the U.S., it does operate in the country through its financial-services arms.

Through the acquisition, the two companies also plan to explore commercial opportunities to partner in the future to serve their respective client bases.

Scotiabank will pay \$17.17 a share to acquire the ownership stake in the KeyCorp in two stages, starting with an initial 4.9% stake at the end of August. The second part of the investment is expected to complete after receiving approval by the Federal Reserve and satisfying other closing conditions in the first quarter of 2025.

KeyCorp shares rose 9.2% to \$15.96 on Monday. American depository shares of Bank of Nova Scotia slid 3.5% to \$44.74.

Gold Fields Set to Acquire Osisko

The \$1.57 billion deal will give buyer full control of Windfall project in Canada

By CHRISTIAN MOESS LAURSEN AND IAN WALKER

Gold Fields is set to buy **Osisko Mining** for \$1.57 billion, giving the South African company full control of the Windfall project in Canada as it seeks to secure supply amid soaring gold prices.

Under terms of the deal, Gold Fields is offering 4.90 Canadian dollars, or \$3.57, in cash for each Osisko share held. The price is a 67% premium to the stock's closing price of C\$2.94 on Friday.

"Throughout our joint ownership of the project since May 2023, and the due diligence that preceded it, we have developed a strong understanding of Windfall and its potential and view it as the next long-life cornerstone asset in our portfolio," Gold Fields Chief Executive Mike Fraser said on Monday.

Windfall is among the largest gold deposits in Canada. The site is expected to produce around 300,000 ounces of gold a year at an all-in sustaining cost of \$758 an ounce, based on Osisko Mining's feasibility study from 2022.

It currently has a projected mine life of 10 years, with potential for extension.

"Deposits with the scale and quality of Windfall, with a



A South Africa Gold Fields mine. Gold prices lately hit a high.

20%, mainly on safe-haven demand and U.S. rate-cut hopes.

Gold Fields said on Monday that it has more than \$2.2 billion in cash and undrawn debt facilities.

It added that environmental permitting for full-scale construction of the project is under way, with a new round of questions recently received from the Quebec Ministry of the Environment, and final approval expected in 2025.

The company said it expects the deal to close in the fourth quarter of this year.

Earlier this year, the gold miner—one of the world's top producers—achieved its first production at its key project Salares Norte in Chile, which is set to add 485,000 ounces a year once fully operational.

highly prospective exploration camp on top of that, are extremely rare," Fraser said.

The acquisition comes as surging gold prices have

boosted producers' coffers this year, hitting a record two weeks ago at just above \$2,500 a troy ounce. In the year so far, prices have jumped nearly

Adnoc Gas Boosts Investments After Earnings Beat Estimates

By CHRISTIAN MOESS LAURSEN

Adnoc Gas, one of the world's biggest natural-gas producers, booked a higher-than-expected net income for the second quarter, and said it plans to boost investments in growth projects.

The Abu Dhabi-owned gas company on Monday reported a 21% rise in net profit to \$1.19 billion for the quarter compared with a year earlier as prices for liquefied petroleum-gas and naphtha—a hydrocarbon mixture used in laundry soap and cleaning fluids—offset weak liquefied-natural-gas prices. Analysts expected \$1.16 billion, according to a consensus polled by FactSet.

The company—which has a market valuation of around \$60 billion—plans to speed up its growth projects in the coming years, making use of its strong, low-leverage bal-

ance sheet, Chief Financial Officer Peter van Driel said.

"In the coming years [we] will step up [our] investments in more growth projects, and then [we're] going to leverage up," Van Driel said, adding the company has around \$13 billion earmarked for investments in growth projects.

One of its projects under development is the Ruwais LNG project which is set to more than double the United Arab Emirates' export capacity as the country pushes into global markets. Last month, European energy giants Shell, BP and TotalEnergies—along with Japan's Mitsui—signed deals to invest in the project, each taking a 10% stake.

Adnoc Gas said it plans to acquire the project, which was greenlighted in June, from its parent Adnoc group. This could either happen soon, or after commission in 2028, Van

Driel said. "The answer depends very much on our strategic intends for the coming years," he said. It might be most beneficial for Adnoc Gas to wait to make the most of its balance sheet, he said, adding the company will provide clarity to the market soon. Adnoc Gas will be operating the project either way.

In the quarter, revenue grew 13% to \$6.08 billion, driven by the favorable prices, strong demand in domestic sales and a 1% increase in production volumes.

Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization from domestic gas as well as exports were notably higher, benefiting from the higher prices and increased sales volumes. This drove an 18% jump in quarterly Ebitda to \$2.09 billion, which beat a market consensus of \$1.96 billion.

Adnoc Gas—which supplies



Profit rose 21% for the Abu Dhabi-owned natural-gas company.

around 60% of the Emirates' gas supply—said domestic sales benefited from population and industrial growth in the country.

The company kept its margin on earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization stable at 34%, in line with its full-year target.

It narrowed its domestic sales guidance for the year to between 2,240 trillion to

2,280 trillion British thermal units due to planned shut-downs in the fourth quarter.

Adnoc Gas now expects total sales volumes to be between 3,420 trillion and 3,500 trillion BTU in 2024. Last year it logged total sales volumes of 3,540 trillion BTU. The company reiterated its dividend guidance of a 5% yearly rise to 2027 and declared a payout of \$1.706 billion for the half year.

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TECHNOLOGY

WSJ.com/Tech



Security chiefs face diminished budgets and more spending oversight from boards and senior executives. A security gathering, above.

Crowded Market Challenges Cybersecurity Companies

Cautious customers, spending scrutiny pressure earnings for some vendors

By JAMES RUNDLE

Cybersecurity companies posted mixed financial results in the latest quarter, buoyed by a series of major hacks this year, but hampered by a volatile economy and cautious customers.

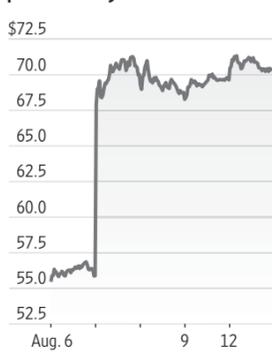
While some results were encouraging, others proved disappointing, highlighting the challenges many of the companies face in crowded markets, analysts said.

“We continue to see a great deal of customer scrutiny around cyber spending,” Amit Yoran, chief executive of **Tenable**, said during a call with analysts on July 31. “This makes it more difficult to transact and close new deals as new projects and procurements are getting the greatest scrutiny.”

The larger the deal, the more pronounced the effect, Yoran added. Tenable, which provides vulnerability-management software, posted a \$14.6 million loss in its second quarter, compared with a \$16 million loss in the same period in 2023, and beat analyst estimates.

Cloud-security company **Qualys** posted results generally in line with guidance and notched a \$43.8 million profit, up 24% from \$35.4 million in the second quarter of 2023.

Fortinet share price over the past five days



Source: FactSet

Rapid7's share price over the past five days



However, billings slipped 1.6% from a year earlier.

Qualys Chief Executive Sumedh Thakar said he would take on the additional role of chief product officer to address the decline, a position he previously held.

“The macro environment remained challenging with customers optimizing spend, but [Qualys] attributed the challenges more to its own difficulty in upselling products,” Jonathan Ho, a cybersecurity analyst at investment bank William Blair wrote in a note on the company’s results.

Security chiefs have contended with flat or diminished budgets in recent years, along with more oversight on spending from boards and senior executives, as wider financial pressures cut into technology budgets. Some cybersecurity providers have in turn cut staff. Many are moving toward platform strategies, betting

customers will prefer to pick fewer suppliers that can perform multiple functions in one product.

Some results impressed Wall Street, in particular quarterly figures from firewall specialist **Fortinet** and threat detection and incident response company **Rapid7**.

Fortinet posted a net profit of \$379.8 million, compared with \$266.3 million for the second quarter of 2023. The company beat analyst expectations on earnings and revenue, despite warnings that traditional sales periods may be longer than usual.

Chief Financial Officer Keith Jensen told analysts Tuesday that Fortinet now expects customers to refresh their technology in 2025, rather than this year as initially thought. Network security generally operates in four- to five-year cycles before customers refresh their

technology.

“We believe customers are currently managing a tough macro environment in a key election year in the U.S., and we believe this is having an impact on our customers’ purchasing decisions,” Jensen said.

Rapid7 swung to a profit of \$8.2 million from a loss of \$66.8 million in the same quarter last year. The company, which announced its acquisition of cybersecurity company Noetic in July, launched its own platform product on Monday.

Application security company **F5 Networks** also impressed analysts with its second-quarter results last week, reporting a profit of \$144 million against a profit of \$89 million in the year-earlier period.

CyberArk Software, which specializes in identity management, posted a loss of \$12.9 million, compared with a \$25.8 million loss in the year-earlier quarter, but otherwise beat all analyst estimates.

Internet security company **Cloudflare** posted a net loss of \$15.1 million, narrowing from a \$94.5 million loss in 2023’s second quarter. **Check Point Software Technologies** reported a \$197 million profit compared with a \$202 million profit in the year-earlier period, and said Nadav Zafrir, co-founder of venture-capital firm Team8, would take over as chief executive in December, with founder Gil Shwed moving to an executive chairman role.

Billionaire Fights Meta Over Ads

Continued from page B1

An important facet of Forrest’s case is whether the courts will view content that is AI-generated as originating from the user giving inputs—a scammer in this case—or Meta’s model. In 2009, the judge said the plaintiff had to establish Google’s involvement in “creating or developing” the words used in the ads.

Meta and other platforms have long successfully defended against attacks on Section 230, but the companies are facing pressure on a number of fronts seeking to hold them liable for certain user content. A shareholder suit was filed this year by investment firms that claim Meta failed to protect users from human trafficking and child sexual exploitation.

Between 2018 and 2019, three Jane Does sued Facebook in Texas courts, alleging they were lured into sex trafficking as minors by men who connected with them on Instagram and Facebook. In 2021, Texas’ Supreme Court dismissed the claims of negligence and product liability, maintaining that they fell under Section 230. The Supreme Court declined to hear the case in 2022.

Forrest, whose net worth is about \$14 billion, has spent more than \$5 million on legal fees so far. The second-richest man in Australia, who accumulated his wealth running an iron-ore mining company, **Fortescue Metals Group**, is widely seen in the country as an aggressive business executive who doesn’t shy away from drawn-out legal battles.

Forrest first approached Facebook about the fake pro-

files in 2014 when his private security team flagged the issue.

Executives at the time directed him to create an official account so the company had a reference point to compare the fake accounts against. Despite doing so, fake profiles kept appearing on the platform.

Around 2019, Forrest created a mission-control-style room with four to seven cybersecurity professionals in Perth, Australia, who scour Meta platforms for fake profiles and advertisements featuring his likeness and report them to the company. The cyber monitoring center is staffed around the clock. He has spent \$10 million running the team so far.

The fake ads use Forrest’s name and image to lure users who click on them into private chat rooms. “Check This Before the Banksters Make Their Next Move—Andrew Forrest Says,” one of the Facebook ads referenced in the lawsuit says.

The billionaire also engaged Australian authorities, sending members of his private security team to work with Australian Federal Police to track down the international crime syndicates alleged to be behind the advertisements.

One of Forrest’s main assertions is that Meta’s AI ad tools have enabled scammers to create and distribute false advertisements at scale. Facebook rolled out new tools in October allowing select advertisers to generate multiple versions of text if given a string of original copy. The company announced in May that enhanced generative-AI ad features would allow advertisers to create image variations based on user prompts.

His lawyer, Simon Clarke, said that the number of false advertisements surges whenever Forrest’s name is in the news.

“It has been a long battle since the investment scams started in 2019. They have only increased and become more prominent with artificial intelligence,” Forrest said.



Andrew Forrest says he doesn’t care what the legal fight costs.

Hearst Buys Tech Firm In Multibillion Deal

By LAURA KREUTZER

Private-equity firm **Francisco Partners** has agreed to sell healthcare workforce management software provider **QGenda** to media company **Hearst** in a deal valued at between \$2 billion and \$3 billion, according to people familiar with the transaction.

The people added that Francisco stands to return more than 15 times its gross investment in the company over roughly eight years of ownership.

Francisco initially backed QGenda in 2016 to help founder Greg Benoit expand the company, whose roots go back to Benoit’s high school days when he helped build a computer program to manage schedules for the anesthesiology practice of a family friend, according to Francisco Co-President Ezra Perlman.

QGenda provides software that helps hospitals and other healthcare providers manage their workforces, including scheduling, credentialing, compensation management and other tasks. The company employs about 650 people and will become part of Hearst’s healthcare information business.

Benoit officially launched Atlanta-based QGenda in 2006, after he had graduated from college, and Francisco was the company’s first outside institutional investor,

Perlman said.

Francisco brought in operating partner Duncan James to help Benoit expand the company and recruited an executive team to work under Benoit, according to Perlman. He added that under Francisco’s ownership, the company completed about five small add-on acquisitions. They include the 2021 purchase of scheduling-tech provider Schedule360 and the 2019 acquisition of clinical capacity management company OpenTempo.

In 2020, as QGenda had expanded, Francisco decided to sell a portion of its stake in the company to growth investor Iconiq Capital, to lock in some liquidity without having to sell outright, according to Perlman. Iconiq is also exiting as part of the transaction.

“We have learned that for the best companies, if you sell them after four or five years, you often leave money on the table and don’t fulfill the full potential of the company,” he said.

The QGenda deal is the second full or partial sale of a healthcare technology company that Francisco has announced in recent months. In June, the firm sold down a portion of its stake in pharmacy software provider Red-Sail Technologies to fellow private-equity firm Leonard Green & Partners.

\$2B
Minimum value of QGenda sale by private-equity firm Francisco Partners

BT Group Shares Rise After Bharti Deal To Purchase 24.5% Stake From Altice

By NAJAT KANTOUAR

BT Group shares rose after Bharti Global agreed to buy a 24.5% stake in the U.K. telecom group from Patrick Drahi’s Altice UK through its wholly owned subsidiary.

Shares in London rose 8.4% to 141.50 pence in Monday’s trading.

Under the agreement, the Indian international investment arm of **Bharti Enterprises** said on Monday that Bharti Televentures UK will acquire 9.99% of BT’s issued capital following the deal with Altice.

The remaining balance of around 14.51% will be acquired after the applicable regulatory clearances.

In 2022, the U.K. government decided to not take any action after examining the security implications of Altice increasing its BT stake to 18% from 12%. Once the deal is completed, Bharti will be BT’s biggest shareholder.

Financial details of the deal weren’t disclosed. However, the shareholding is worth about £3.25 billion, or \$4.15 billion, based on BT’s



Once the deal is done, Bharti will be BT’s biggest shareholder. A worker from a BT unit.

current market valuation.

“We review global investment opportunities in the world of technology from digital infrastructure to software. BT is well known to us from the long association with Bharti, so we are pleased to have this opportunity to acquire a significant

stake in the company,” Managing Director of Bharti Global Shravini Bharti Mittal said.

Bharti Global said it would also apply for U.K. National Security and Investment Act clearance, and has no intention of making an offer to acquire the company.

“This scale of investment from Bharti Global is a great vote of confidence in the future of BT Group and our strategy,” BT Chief Executive Officer Allison Kirkby said.

BT previously owned a 21% stake along with two board seats in Bharti Airtel from 1997 to 2001.

MARKETS DIGEST

EQUITIES

Dow Jones Industrial Average

39357.01 ▼140.53, or 0.36%
 High, low, open and close for each trading day of the past three months.
 Trailing P/E ratio 24.38 25.83
 P/E estimate * 19.34 19.18
 Dividend yield 2.17 2.02
 All-time high 41198.08, 07/17/24



*Weekly P/E data based on as-reported earnings from Birming Associates Inc.; *Based on Nasdaq-100 Index

S&P 500 Index

5344.39 ▲0.23, or 0.004%
 High, low, open and close for each trading day of the past three months.
 Trailing P/E ratio * 23.15 22.43
 P/E estimate * 21.92 20.41
 Dividend yield * 1.38 1.56
 All-time high 5667.20, 07/16/24



Nasdaq Composite Index

16780.61 ▲35.31, or 0.21%
 High, low, open and close for each trading day of the past three months.
 Trailing P/E ratio ** 29.65 30.25
 P/E estimate ** 27.35 27.55
 Dividend yield ** 0.85 0.85
 All-time high: 18647.45, 07/10/24



Major U.S. Stock-Market Indexes

	High	Low	Latest Close	Net chg	% chg	52-Week High	52-Week Low	% chg YTD	% chg 3-yr. ann.
Dow Jones									
Industrial Average	39587.06	39251.72	39357.01	-140.53	-0.36	41198.08	32417.59	11.5	4.4
Transportation Avg	15367.56	15214.58	15248.70	-85.83	-0.56	16298.98	13556.07	-6.2	-4.1
Utility Average	1001.16	993.26	1000.91	3.58	0.36	1018.46	783.08	12.8	13.5
Total Stock Market	53116.43	52677.63	52845.98	-51.06	-0.10	56206.02	40847.04	17.9	10.6
Barron's 400	1146.75	1135.59	1137.43	-6.15	-0.54	1212.12	907.97	12.2	6.1

	High	Low	Latest Close	Net chg	% chg	52-Week High	52-Week Low	% chg YTD	% chg 3-yr. ann.
Nasdaq Stock Market									
Nasdaq Composite	16895.79	16699.39	16780.61	35.31	0.21	18647.45	12595.61	21.7	11.8
Nasdaq-100	18665.75	18433.61	18542.03	28.93	0.16	20675.38	14109.57	21.9	10.2

	High	Low	Latest Close	Net chg	% chg	52-Week High	52-Week Low	% chg YTD	% chg 3-yr. ann.
S&P									
500 Index	5371.20	5324.37	5344.39	0.23	0.004	5667.20	4117.37	19.0	12.0
MidCap 400	2942.75	2911.25	2916.03	-19.52	-0.67	3115.02	2326.82	9.4	4.8
SmallCap 600	1338.28	1316.25	1319.93	-16.40	-1.23	1435.83	1068.80	6.7	0.1

Sources: FactSet; Dow Jones Market Data

Late Trading

Most-active and biggest movers among NYSE, NYSE Arca, NYSE Amer. and Nasdaq issues from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. ET as reported by electronic trading services, securities dealers and regional exchanges. Minimum share price of \$2 and minimum after-hours volume of 50,000 shares.

Most-active issues in late trading

Company	Symbol	Volume (000)	Last	Net chg	After-Hours % chg	High	Low
Visa Cl A	V	13,226.5	260.47	0.58	0.22	261.78	258.50
Ford Motor	F	6,272.9	9.86	...	unch.	9.89	9.85
NVIDIA	NVDA	5,100.3	108.85	-0.17	-0.16	109.18	103.16
Tesla	TSLA	4,530.4	197.64	0.15	0.08	209.78	195.35
SPDR S&P 500 ETF Trust	SPY	3,923.4	533.02	-0.25	-0.05	537.13	506.38
Southwest Airlines	LUV	3,488.2	25.48	0.10	0.39	25.49	25.16
Johnson Controls Intl	JCI	3,259.4	66.56	...	unch.	66.56	66.56
Grab Holdings	GRAB	3,133.7	3.27	0.01	0.31	3.30	3.24

Percentage gainers...

Company	Symbol	Last	Net chg	% chg	High	Low
Hesai Group ADR	HSAI	62.2	4.00	0.44	12.36	4.47
Owlet	OWLT	52.1	5.00	0.32	6.84	6.23
Zseventy bio	TSVT	214.3	4.47	0.25	5.92	4.47
argenX ADR	ARGX	73.6	565.07	26.90	5.00	565.07
Rackspace Technology	RXT	55.3	2.33	0.11	4.95	2.34

...And losers

Company	Symbol	Last	Net chg	% chg	High	Low
ViaSat	VSAT	89.2	19.66	-1.96	-9.07	21.62
FTAI Aviation	FTAI	191.7	98.59	-5.19	-5.00	103.78
Hilltop Holdings	HTH	187.4	28.68	-1.50	-4.97	30.18
Genworth Financial	GNW	102.5	6.11	-0.31	-4.83	6.42
Brookfield Renewable	BEPC	63.3	26.59	-0.98	-3.55	27.57

Trading Diary

Volume, Advancers, Decliners

	NYSE	NYSE Amer.
Total volume*	813,363,626	15,256,992
Adv. volume*	315,844,072	11,362,748
Decl. volume*	487,349,868	3,717,355
Issues traded	2,867	295
Advances	968	159
Declines	1,830	124
Unchanged	69	12
New highs	51	4
New lows	73	10
Closing Arms*	0.81	0.21
Block trades*	3,936	154

*Primary market NYSE, NYSE American NYSE Arca only.

†(TRN) A comparison of the number of advancing and declining issues with the volume of shares rising and falling. An Arms of less than 1 indicates buying demand; above 1 indicates selling pressure.

International Stock Indexes

Region/Country	Index	Close	Net chg	Latest % chg	YTD % chg
World	MSCI ACWI	787.30	0.14	0.02	8.3
	MSCI ACWI ex-USA	325.25	0.23	0.07	2.7
	MSCI World	3446.33	-1.42	-0.04	8.7
	MSCI Emerging Markets	1069.11	5.68	0.53	4.4
Americas	MSCI AC Americas	2010.22	0.06	0.003	10.8
Canada	S&P/TSX Comp	22398.93	87.63	0.39	6.9
Latin Amer.	MSCI EM Latin America	2258.58	8.70	0.39	-15.2
Brazil	Ibovespa	131115.90	501.31	0.38	-2.3
Chile	S&P IPSA	3428.40	2.75	0.08	-1.1
Mexico	S&P/BMV IPC	53040.35	-11.19	-0.02	-7.6
EMEA	STOXX Europe 600	499.08	-0.11	-0.02	4.2
Eurozone	Euro STOXX	483.38	-0.12	-0.02	1.9
Belgium	Bel-20	4040.47	-19.28	-0.48	9.0
Denmark	OMX Copenhagen 20	2670.23	-56.27	-2.06	16.9
France	CAC 40	7250.67	-19.04	-0.26	-3.9
Germany	DAX	17726.47	3.59	0.02	5.8
Israel	Tel Aviv	1986.66	-25.64	-1.27	6.5
Italy	FTSE MIB	31928.32	146.09	0.46	5.2
Netherlands	AEX	885.65	2.28	0.26	12.6
Norway	Oslo Bors All-Share	1657.84	21.02	1.28	9.1
South Africa	FTSE/JSE All-Share	80560.78	-178.53	-0.22	4.8
Spain	IBEX 35	10646.20	7.70	0.07	5.4
Sweden	OMX Stockholm	952.79	-0.21	-0.02	5.5
Switzerland	Swiss Market	11873.71	7.78	0.07	6.6
Turkey	BIST 100	9828.56	-78.82	-0.80	31.6
U.K.	FTSE 100	8210.25	42.15	0.52	6.2
U.K.	FTSE 250	20677.19	52.01	0.25	5.0
Asia-Pacific	MSCI AC Asia Pacific	175.50	0.07	0.04	3.6
Australia	S&P/ASX 200	7813.70	36.00	0.46	2.9
China	Shanghai Composite	2858.20	-3.99	-0.14	-3.9
Hong Kong	Hang Seng	17111.65	21.42	0.13	0.4
India	BSE Sensex	79648.92	-56.99	-0.07	10.3
Japan	NIKKEI 225	35025.00	...	Closed	4.7
Singapore	Straits Times	3235.38	-26.45	-0.81	-0.2
South Korea	KOSPI	2618.30	29.87	1.15	-1.4
Taiwan	TAIEX	21773.26	304.26	1.42	21.4
Thailand	SET	1297.07	...	Closed	-8.4

Sources: FactSet; Dow Jones Market Data

Percentage Gainers...

Company	Symbol	Close	Net chg	% chg	High	Low
Greenlane Holdings	GNLN	11.50	9.03	365.40	21.50	2.05
Revance Therapeutics	RVNC	6.60	3.07	86.97	20.38	2.30
Wheeler Real Est Inv Tr	WHLR	3.29	1.25	61.27	1130.40	1.89
WaveDancer	WAVD	3.17	0.99	45.41	5.30	1.06
Indonesia Energy	INDO	4.63	1.39	42.90	6.65	2.03
TOYO	TOYO	5.76	1.49	34.89	15.61	1.36
Laser Photonics	LASE	4.34	1.10	33.95	4.48	0.67
Personalis	PSNL	4.31	1.05	32.21	4.58	0.89
Telos	TLS	2.63	0.63	31.25	5.03	1.87
Mediaco Holding	MDIA	5.03	1.00	24.81	6.86	0.40
Nutex Health	NUTX	12.60	2.50	24.75	59.25	4.16
Skeena Resources	SKE	7.04	1.33	23.29	7.26	3.05
Envoy Medical	COCH	2.70	0.44	19.47	11.72	0.75
FutureFuel	FF	5.54	0.82	17.37	8.36	4.15
Jiuzi Holdings	JZXX	2.74	0.40	17.09	67.60	1.70

Most Active Stocks

Company	Symbol	Volume (000)	% chg from 65-day avg	Latest Session Close	% chg	52-Week High	Low
NVIDIA	NVDA	321,807	-14.3	109.02	4.08	140.76	39.23
Draganfly	DPRO	207,127	21936.3	0.14	36.80	1.04	0.10
PS International Group	PSIG	181,973	114017.6	2.30	127.72	12.25	0.65
FSD Pharma	HUGE	133,543	539.3	0.13	-35.05	1.67	0.07
ProSh UltraPro Shrt QQQ	SQQQ	126,835	-13.8	9.65	-0.52	23.34	7.14
Interactive Strength	TRNR	92,830	6776.8	0.62	79.05	71.20	0.34
JetBlue Airways	JBLU	91,711	681.9	4.80	-20.66	7.58	3.42
Direction Dly SCOND 3 BL	SOXL	88,249	30.2	31.41	1.29	70.08	14.01
Palantir Technologies	PLTR	67,584	50.6	29.38	-2.10	31.20	13.68
Tesla	TSLA	63,725	-32.5	197.49	-1.26	278.98	138.80

*Volumes of 100,000 shares or more are rounded to the nearest thousand

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Percentage Losers

Company	Symbol	Close	Net chg	% chg	High	Low
B. Riley Financial	RILY	8.15	-8.80	-51.92	52.74	7.08
Fenbo Holdings	FEBO	4.31	-4.			

COMMODITIES

wsj.com/market-data/commodities

Futures Contracts

Metal & Petroleum Futures						
	Open	High	Low	Settle	Chg	Open interest
Copper-High (CMX) -25,000 lbs.; \$ per lb.						
Aug	4.0200	4.0710	4.0190	4.0550	0.0750	2,146
Dec	4.0365	4.1285	4.0120	4.1040	0.0730	90,494
Gold (CMX) -100 troy oz.; \$ per troy oz.						
Aug	2432.70	2469.80	2424.50	2462.40	30.30	4,028
Sept	2436.00	2478.00	2430.00	2469.90	30.10	5,503
Oct	2447.50	2490.00	2439.80	2480.80	30.40	50,783
Dec	2470.10	2513.40	2462.70	2504.00	30.60	380,269
Feb'25	2488.00	2534.90	2486.40	2526.10	30.80	20,750
April	2510.10	2552.40	2505.00	2545.00	31.40	12,115
Palladium (NYM) -50 troy oz.; \$ per troy oz.						
Aug	836.00	846.00	836.00	896.50	3.00	2
Sept	895.50	922.50	890.50	899.40	3.00	22,622
Platinum (NYM) -50 troy oz.; \$ per troy oz.						
Aug	928.30	928.30	928.30	945.10	17.50	2
Oct	930.70	955.00	925.90	946.60	16.70	71,812
Silver (CMX) -5,000 troy oz.; \$ per troy oz.						
Aug	27.840	27.925	27.780	27.917	0.430	113
Sept	27.550	28.105	27.280	28.008	0.420	76,788
Crude Oil, Light Sweet (NYM) -1,000 bbls.; \$ per bbl.						
Sept	76.99	80.16	76.70	80.06	3.22	210,263
Oct	75.62	78.54	75.44	78.46	2.85	282,757
Nov	74.84	77.45	74.61	77.37	2.60	163,203
Dec	74.18	76.59	73.96	76.52	2.40	240,304
June'25	71.90	73.79	71.70	73.75	1.93	128,618
Dec	69.99	71.79	69.99	71.76	1.65	131,877
NY Harbor ULSD (NYM) -42,000 gal.; \$ per gal.						
Sept	2.3423	2.4109	2.3375	2.4065	.0668	97,395
Oct	2.3631	2.4325	2.3590	2.4285	.0676	74,555
Gasoline-NY RB08 (NYM) -42,000 gal.; \$ per gal.						
Sept	2.3972	2.4442	2.3878	2.4429	.0526	98,384
Oct	2.2076	2.2605	2.1992	2.2593	.0570	100,627
Natural Gas (NYM) -10,000 MMBtu.; \$ per MMBtu.						
Sept	2.173	2.256	2.155	2.189	.046	244,867
Oct	2.311	2.394	2.301	2.342	.050	188,154
Nov	2.769	2.829	2.746	2.777	.035	163,250
Dec	3.341	3.395	3.318	3.352	.033	100,244
Jan'25	3.633	3.681	3.598	3.630	.023	147,036
March	3.104	3.145	3.066	3.102	.015	120,767

Agriculture Futures						
	Open	High	Low	Settle	Chg	Open interest
Corn (CBT) -5,000 bu.; cents per bu.						
Sept	376.25	385.25	372.50	383.25	6.50	440,799
Dec	394.75	403.00	390.25	401.50	6.50	706,215
Oats (CBT) -5,000 bu.; cents per bu.						
Sept	325.25	327.75	317.75	320.25	-1.75	462
Dec	311.25	313.50	308.00	308.50	-1.75	4,301
Soybeans (CBT) -5,000 bu.; cents per bu.						
Aug	1020.50	1038.25	1020.50	1012.00	-16.00	44
Nov	1001.00	1002.50	975.50	986.00	-16.50	411,753
Soybean Meal (CBT) -100 tons; \$ per ton.						
Aug	327.70	328.90	316.80	318.30	-8.00	126
Dec	310.60	312.80	307.20	304.60	-5.80	236,563
Soybean Oil (CBT) -60,000 lbs.; cents per lb.						
Aug	42.87	42.89	41.70	41.61	-1.13	176
Dec	40.99	41.14	40.15	40.47	-0.65	239,582
Rough Rice (CBT) -2,000 cwt.; \$ per cwt.						
Sept	14.80	14.80	14.52	14.54	-0.30	6,758
Nov	15.00	15.00	14.74	14.75	-0.29	2,209
Wheat (CBT) -5,000 bu.; cents per bu.						
Sept	542.75	547.00	528.00	536.75	-5.75	159,702
Dec	565.75	570.00	552.00	559.75	-6.00	146,998
Wheat (KC) -5,000 bu.; cents per bu.						
Sept	552.75	558.75	540.00	548.25	-5.75	94,841
Dec	569.50	574.75	556.00	563.50	-7.00	102,859
Cattle-Feeder (CME) -50,000 lbs.; cents per lb.						
Aug	246.50	246.925	243.80	244.400	-2.100	6,337
Oct	240.075	240.850	237.300	237.725	-2.050	15,432

Cash Prices | wsj.com/market-data/commodities

Monday, August 12, 2024

These prices reflect buying and selling of a variety of actual or "physical" commodities in the marketplace—separate from the futures price on an exchange, which reflects what the commodity might be worth in future months.

	Monday	Monday	Monday
Energy			
Coal,C.Aplc.,12500Btu,1.25O2-r,w	75.000	Aluminum,LME,\$ per metric ton	**2263.0
Coal,Pwdr/RvBsn,8800Btu,0.85O2-r,w	13.950	Copper,Comex spot	4.0550
Metals			
Gold, per troy oz	2450.00	Iron Ore, 62% Fe CFR China-s	*n.a.
Engelhard industrial	2450.85	Steel,HRC USA, FOB Midwest Mill-s	*680.0
Handy & Harman base	2720.44	Battery/EV metals	
Handy & Harman fabricated	*2423.45	BMI Lithium Carbonate, EXW China >99.2%-v/w	11250
LBMA Gold Price AM	*2427.35	BMI Lithium Hydroxide, EXW China >56.5%-v/w	10850
LBMA Gold Price PM	*2427.35	BMI Cobalt sulphate, EXW China >20.5%-v/w	3892
Kruggerand,wholesale-e	2569.88	BMI Nickel Sulphate, EXW China >22%-v/w	3726
Maple Leaf-e	2594.59	BMI Flake Graphite, FOB China, >100 Mesh, 94-95%-v/w	485
American Eagle-e	2594.59	Fibers and Textiles	
Mexican peso-e	2987.33	Burlap,10-oz,40-inch NY yd-n,w	0.8200
Austria crown-e	2425.11	Cotton,11/16 std lw-mdMphs-u	0.6379
Austria phil-e	2594.59	Cotlook 'A' Index-t	*78.70
Silver, troy oz.			
Engelhard industrial	28.0500	Hides,hvy native steers piece fob-u	n.a.
Handy & Harman base	27.8970	Wool,64s, staple, Terr del-u,w	n.a.
Handy & Harman fabricated	34.8710	Grains and Feeds	
LBMA spot price	*21.4000	Bran,wheat middlings, KC-u,w	80
(U.S.\$ equivalent)	*27.5750	Corn,No. 2 yellow,Cent IL-bp,u	3.6000
Coins,wholesale \$1,000 face-a	21614	Corn gluten feed,Midwest-u,w	108.0
Other metals			
LBMA Platinum Price PM	*925.0	Corn gluten meal,Midwest-u,w	427.8
LBMA Palladium Price PM	*922.0	Cottonseed meal-u,w	n.a.
Platinum,Engelhard industrial	944.0	Hominy feed,Cent IL-u,w	104
Palladium,Engelhard industrial	944.0	Meat-bonemeal,50% pro Mnpls-u,w	335
		Oats,No.2 milling,Mnpls-u	4.0025
		Rice, Long Grain Milled, No. 2 AR-u,w	n.a.
		SoybeanMeal,Cent IL,rail,ton48%-u,w	335.20
		Soybeans,No.1 yllw IL-bp,u	9.9400
		Wheat,Spring14%-pro Mnpls-u	8.2225
		Wheat,No.2 soft red,St.Louis-u	5.2025
		Wheat - Hard - KC (USDA) \$ per bu-u	5.7825
		Wheat,No.1soft white,Portld,OR-u	5.7750
		Food	
		Beef,carcass equiv. index	297.05
		choice 1-3,600-900 lbs.-u	280.19
		select 1-3,600-900 lbs.-u	1.2544
		Broilers, National comp wtd. avg.-u,w	3.1400
		Butter,AA Chicago-d	209.00
		Cheddar cheese,bbk,Chicago-d	200.00
		Cheddar cheese,blk,Chicago-d	121.50
		Milk,Nonfat dry,Chicago lb-d	2.3522
		Coffee,Brazilian,Comp-y	2.5340
		Coffee,Columbian, NY-y	3.5750
		Eggs,Large white,Chicago-u	16.45
		Flour,hard winter KC-p	n.a.
		Hams,17-20 lbs,Mid-US fob-u	87.46
		Hogs,Iowa-S. Minnesota-u	n.a.
		Pork bellies,12-14 lb MidUS-u	1.2023
		Pork loins,13-19 lb MidUS-u	186.50
		Steers, Tex.-Okla. Choice-u	283.38
		Steers,feeder,Okla. City-u,w	n.a.
		Fats and Oils	
		Degummed corn oil, crude wtd. avg.-u,w	n.a.
		Grease,choice white,Chicago-h	0.4600
		Lard,Chicago-u	n.a.
		Soybean oil,crude,Cent IL-u,w	0.4317
		Tallow,bleach,Chicago-h	0.4763
		Tallow,edible,Chicago-u	n.a.

KEY TO CODES: A=ask; B=bid; BP=country elevator bids to producers; C=corrected; D=CME; E=Manfra, Tordella & Brookes; H=American Commodities Brokerage Co; K=bi-weekly; M=monthly; N=nominal; n.a.=not quoted or not available; P=Sosland Publishing; R=SNL Energy; S=Platts-TSI; T=Cotlook Limited; U=USDA; V=Benchmark Mineral Intelligence; W=weekly; Y=International Coffee Organization; Z=not quoted. *Data as of 8/9

Source: Dow Jones Market Data

Borrowing Benchmarks | wsj.com/market-data/bonds/benchmarks

Money Rates

August 12, 2024

Key annual interest rates paid to borrow or lend money in U.S. and international markets. Rates below are a guide to general levels but don't always represent actual transactions.

	Latest	Week ago	-52-Week- High	-52-Week- Low
Inflation				
June index				
Chg From (%)				
May '24	1.475	1.475	1.475	1.475
June '23				
U.S. consumer price index				
All items	314.175	0.03	3.0	
Core	319.003	0.12	3.3	
International rates				
Latest	Week ago	-52-Week- High	-52-Week- Low	
Prime rates				
U.S.	8.50	8.50	8.50	8.50
Canada	6.70	6.70	7.20	6.70
Policy Rates				
Euro zone	4.25	4.25	4.50	4.25
Switzerland	1.75	1.75	2.25	1.75
Britain	5.00	5.00	5.25	5.00
Australia	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.10
Overnight repurchase				
U.S.	5.43	5.39	5.48	5.25
U.S. government rates				
Discount				
U.S.	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.50
Federal funds				
Effective rate	5.3300	n.a.	5.3500	5.3100
High	5.6500	5.6500	5.6500	5.3400
Low	5.3100	5.3100	5.3300	5.3000
Bid	5.3300	5.3300	5.3300	5.3100
Offer	5.3500	5.3400	5.3600	5.3300
Treasury bill auction				
4 weeks	5.285	5.285	5.325	5.230
16 weeks	5.070	5.075	5.345	5.070
26 weeks	4.795	4.700	5.350	4.700
Other short-term rates				
Latest	Week ago	-52-Week- High	-52-Week- Low	
Call money				
7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25	
Commercial paper (AA financial)				
90 days	5.11	n.a.	5.53	5.11
Secured Overnight Financing Rate				
5.34	5.35	5.40	5.30	
	Value	-52-Week- High	-52-Week- Low	
Latest	Traded	High	Low	
DTCC GCF Repo Index				
Treasury	5.398	54.000	5.504	5.142
MBS	5.433	45.710	5.689	5.322
Weekly survey				
Latest	Week ago	Year ago		
Freddie Mac				
30-year fixed	6.47	6.73	6.96	
15-year fixed	5.63	5.99	6.34	
Notes on data:				
U.S. prime rate is the base rate on corporate loans posted by at least 70% of the 10 largest U.S. banks, and is effective July 27, 2023. Other prime rates aren't directly comparable; lending practices vary widely by location; Discount rate is effective July 27, 2023. Secured Overnight Financing Rate is as of August 9, 2024. DTCC GCF Repo Index is Depository Trust & Clearing Corp.'s weighted average for overnight trades in applicable CUSIPs. Value traded is in billions of U.S. dollars. Federal funds rates are Tullett Prebon rates as of 5:30 p.m. ET.				
Sources: Federal Reserve; Bureau of Labor Statistics; DTCC; FactSet; Tullett Prebon Information, Ltd.				

	Open	High	Low	Settle	Chg	Open interest
Euro (CME) -€125,000; \$ per €						
Aug	1.0917	1.0943	1.0914	1.0935	.0011	1,453
Sept	1.0935	1.0957	1.0928	1.0949	.0010	644,568
Index Futures						
Mini DJ Industrial Average (CBT) -55 x index						
Sept	39618	39739	39366	39480	-160	80,209
Dec	39928	40081	39730	39836	-161	1,033
Mini S&P 500 (CME) -550 x index						
Sept	5364.25	5396.75	5347.75	5369.75	-0.50	1,967,903
Dec	5425.50	5452.00	5403.75	5425.75	...	35,576
Mini S&P Midcap 400 (CME) -100 x index						
Sept	2949.40	2955.50	2921.50	2928.10	-18.10	33,286

	Open	High	Low	Settle</
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BIGGEST 1,000 STOCKS

How to Read the Stock Tables
The following explanations apply to NYSE, NYSE Arca, NYSE American and Nasdaq Stock Market listed securities. Prices are consolidated from trades reported by various market centers, including securities exchanges, Finra, electronic communications networks and other broker-dealers. The list comprises the 1,000 largest companies based on market capitalization.

Underlined quotations are those stocks with large changes in volume compared with the issue's average trading volume.
Boldfaced quotations highlight those issues whose price changed by 5% or more if their previous closing price was 52 or higher.

Footnotes:
F-New 52-week high; 1-New 52-week low; dd-Indicates loss in the most recent four quarters.

Stock tables reflect composite regular trading as of 4 p.m. ET and changes in the official closing prices from 4 p.m. ET the previous day.

Table with columns: Stock, Sym, Close, Net Chg. Lists top 1000 stocks including ADP, AutoZone, Avantor, etc.

Table with columns: Stock, Sym, Close, Net Chg. Lists top 1000 stocks including Diageo, HBC, H World, etc.

Table with columns: Stock, Sym, Close, Net Chg. Lists top 1000 stocks including Manulife, PulteGroup, PureStorage, etc.

Table with columns: Stock, Sym, Close, Net Chg. Lists top 1000 stocks including RBC Bearings, RELX, REBR, etc.

Table with columns: Stock, Sym, Close, Net Chg. Lists top 1000 stocks including T. Ericsson, T. Systems, T. Connectivity, etc.

Table with columns: Stock, Sym, Close, Net Chg. Lists top 1000 stocks including WEC Energy, WPCarey, Wabtec, etc.

Table with columns: Stock, Sym, Close, Net Chg. Lists top 1000 stocks including JPMorgan Chase, Jabil, Jockey, etc.

Table with columns: Stock, Sym, Close, Net Chg. Lists top 1000 stocks including OGE Energy, ONEOK, On Sem, etc.

Table with columns: Stock, Sym, Close, Net Chg. Lists top 1000 stocks including Monday, August 12, 2024. ETF, Symbol, Closing Price, YTD.

Table with columns: Stock, Sym, Close, Net Chg. Lists top 1000 stocks including Dana, Dave&Buster's, Denny's, etc.

Table with columns: Stock, Sym, Close, Net Chg. Lists top 1000 stocks including AccuWeather, Aflac, Alkermes, etc.

Table with columns: Stock, Sym, Close, Net Chg. Lists top 1000 stocks including ADMA Biologics, Aetna, Agilent, etc.

Table with columns: Stock, Sym, Close, Net Chg. Lists top 1000 stocks including GE Aerospace, GE Healthcare, GE Vernova, etc.

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CLASS ACTION
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
IN RE OKTA, INC. SECURITIES LITIGATION CASE NO. 3:22-cv-02990-SI
SUMMARY NOTICE OF PENDENCY OF CLASS ACTION, PROPOSED SETTLEMENT, AND MOTION FOR ATTORNEYS' FEES AND EXPENSES
To: All persons and entities who or which, during the period from March 3, 2022 through August 31, 2022, inclusive (the "Class Period"), purchased or otherwise acquired the publicly traded Class A common stock of Okta, Inc. and were damaged thereby (the "Class").

NEW HIGHS AND LOWS
The following explanations apply to the New York Stock Exchange and Nasdaq Stock Market stocks that hit a new 52-week intraday high or low in the latest session. % CHG-Daily change from the previous trading session.

Exchange-Traded Portfolios
Largest 100 exchange-traded funds. Preliminary close data as of 4:30 p.m. ET
Monday, August 12, 2024
ETF Symbol Closing Price YTD (%)
JPM USHlthCmn JPST 50.50 0.06 0.5
iShares MSCI EAFE S&P 500 Index Fund IEF 102.12 0.12 0.8

FINANCE & MARKETS



Demand is still seen at healthy levels—well above the historical average of 1.4 million barrels a day logged before the pandemic.

OPEC Trims Oil-Demand Forecast on China Softness

Cartel sees growth of 2.11 million barrels a day this year, down from 2.25 million

By Giulia Petroni

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries slightly lowered its forecast for oil-demand growth, citing softening expectations for China at a time when market concerns over the top crude importer's outlook have been weighing on prices.

The Vienna-based cartel now forecasts demand to grow by 2.11 million barrels a day this year—reaching a total of 104.3 million barrels a day on average—from 2.25 million barrels a day previously. The revision also reflects actual data for the first and second quarter.

Demand is still seen at healthy levels—well above the historical average of 1.4 million barrels a day recorded before the pandemic, according to OPEC—boosted by strong air travel and road mobility, as well as healthy industrial, construction and agricultural activities in non-OECD countries.

Oil-demand estimates for next year also were slightly cut, with growth now forecast at 1.78 million barrels a day from

previous estimates of 1.85 million barrels a day.

Monday's report came as oil prices recorded their first weekly gain since early July last week, after staging a recovery from a broader selloff in financial markets. Brent crude, the international oil benchmark, and benchmark U.S. crude trade at around \$80 a barrel.

Both benchmarks are supported by fears of a full-scale war in the Middle East, with markets bracing for Iran's retaliatory strike against Israel in response to the killing of Hamas's political leader. Sentiment also is buoyed by intense fighting between Russia and Ukraine threatening energy supplies to Europe; the shutdown of Libya's largest oil field; and more-encouraging economic data easing fears of a recession in the U.S. Still, prices continue to be under pressure due to persistent concerns over a slowing Chinese economy crimping demand and uncertainties around the timing of interest-rate cuts in the U.S.

Current prices also seem far from what the two main leaders of the OPEC+ alliance—Saudi Arabia and Russia—need to balance their budgets, according to market watchers, with some analysts now wondering whether the group will

delay or stick to its plan to gradually put more oil into the market starting from October.

The group of oil-producing countries in June agreed to extend all production curbs into next year. It decided to roll over voluntary cuts of 2.2 million barrels a day until the end of September, but said it aims to gradually phase them out from October 2024 to September 2025.

An OPEC+ ministerial committee that gathered earlier this month made no recommendations for the group to change its output policy and didn't provide any hints on whether a gradual phaseout of voluntary output cuts could start in October.

Meanwhile, overall OPEC crude-oil production rose by 185,000 barrels a day in July, the cartel said, citing secondary sources.

Oil production from Saudi Arabia rose by 97,000 barrels a day, while Libya's production fell by 19,000 barrels a day to 1.175 million barrels a day.

OPEC left its estimates for supply growth from countries not participating in the Declaration of Cooperation—the formal name for OPEC+—at 1.2 million barrels a day for 2024, saying the main drivers of

growth are expected to be the U.S., Canada and Brazil. Growth estimates for 2025 also were maintained at 1.1 million barrels a day.

The group raised its estimates for economic growth in the U.S. to 2.4% this year from 2.2%.

Estimates for global economic growth were maintained at 2.9% for this year and next, with growth in the eurozone still projected at 0.7% and 1.2%, respectively.

OPEC said it expects growth in OECD economies to rebound in the second quarter and keep the momentum through the end of the year, while growth in non-OECD economies should remain strong throughout the year despite a gradual normalization from robust levels seen in the first quarter.

AUCTION RESULTS table showing Treasury auction results for 13-Week and 26-Week bills, including applications, accepted bids, and auction prices.

S&P 500 Holds Steady Ahead Of Fresh Data

By David Uberti

The stock market remained on edge Monday, with Wall Street searching for direction after one of its wildest weeks in years.

Major U.S. indexes gyrated between minor gains and losses throughout the session before posting mixed results at the closing bell. The Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped by 0.4%, or about 141 points, while the S&P 500 finished roughly flat. Fueled by a jump in Nvidia shares, the tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite eked out a 0.2% advance, rising about 35 points.

The relatively calm Monday provided investors with a breather after the roller coaster of last week, when a selloff gave way to a rebound. Now, many analysts are trying to parse whether stocks can move past economic uncertainty in the U.S. and the reversal of a popular trade to resume their climb.

Fresh data in the coming days will offer clues about the outlook for consumers and the economy. Inflation data is due on Wednesday, and a report on retail sales follows a day later. Investors will get company-level insights in the form of quarterly results from Home Depot and Walmart.

This string of data will help show "if we are bracing for continued volatility in the markets or if we're exiting the volatile period we just witnessed over the past few weeks," Mark Hackett, chief of investment research at Nationwide, told cli-

ents in a note.

One key sign of stability comes from the market for government debt. Yields on 10-year Treasuries held roughly steady in recent days, settling Monday at 3.908%, suggesting investors aren't rushing to gobble up safe assets en masse.

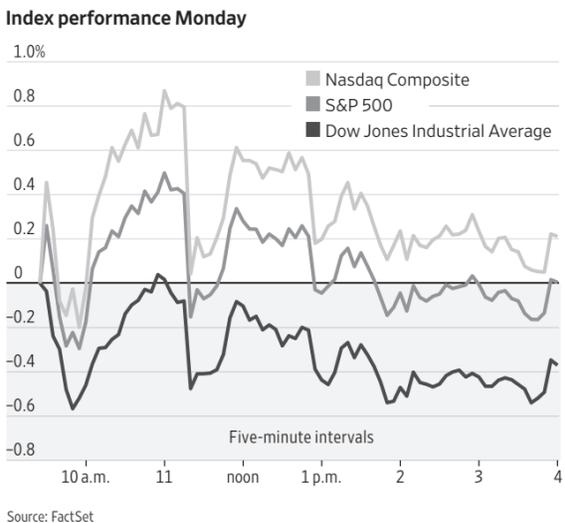
Some analysts believe many traders who sold off positions early last week on worries about a worsening economic backdrop escaped mostly unscathed. "When you get a massive, ugly, cross-asset unwind, a lot of emergency rip cords are being pulled in these portfolios," said Andrew Beer, managing member at DBI, a firm that offers exchange-traded funds designed to mimic hedge funds' trend-following strategies. Like many of its counterparts, DBI slashed its exposure to the yen by about 80% in recent months as the Bank of Japan began raising interest rates. The firm remains bullish on U.S. stocks.

A new variable emerged from oil markets, where prices jumped at their fastest daily rate in 10 months amid heightened fears of a wider war in the Middle East. Benchmark U.S. crude gained 4.2% to \$80.06 a barrel after Israel put its military on high alert for potential attacks.

Many analysts are skeptical an assault would push up prices for very long unless the conflict disrupts the Strait of Hormuz, a chokepoint for tankers.

At midday Tuesday in Asia, Japan's Nikkei had jumped over 2%. The Shanghai Composite and Hong Kong's Hang Seng were slightly down.

—Patricia Kowsmann contributed to this article.



China Central Bank to Study Financial Institutions' Bond Risks

China's central bank is set to conduct stress tests on financial institutions' exposure to bond holdings, marking the latest efforts by authorities to rein in a monthslong rally and prevent fallout risks.

The People's Bank of China said in its quarterly policy report that the planned checks are aimed at preventing risks stemming from potential rate fluctuations in the future that could dent bond prices and cause financial losses for investors. Bond prices tend to move inversely to rates.

For economists at Goldman Sachs, the statements signal

the central bank's concern over mark-to-market risks on Chinese banks' bond portfolios that could spark a Silicon Valley Bank-style collapse.

The U.S. lender failed in March of last year when, after having loaded up on Treasuries and government-backed bonds, interest rates started to rise quickly and it had to sell assets at a loss while facing a wave of de-

posit withdrawal requests. The crisis has frequently been cited by Chinese authorities when they warn about rate-related risks.

Friday's report came after a PBOC-backed interbank regulator said last week that it is investigating four rural commercial banks for potential bond-market manipulation and had reported some for alleged breaches of regulations. Regu-

lators also have asked mutual-funds companies to limit the duration of their new bond funds to two years, a cap that would further restrict funds' investment in longer-dated notes.

Over the past few months, the PBOC has warned against the bond rally that has pushed China's long-term yields to multidecade lows as demand for haven assets is fueled by concerns about the economy. Investors have been seemingly undeterred, with some betting that China's weak economic fundamentals could lead to more rate cuts.

In the policy report, the PBOC also reiterated its bond borrowing plan and intention to restart trading treasury bonds, which some analysts view as signaling intervention.

Any such direct interventions would likely only have a temporary effect, however, as bond yields are ultimately decided by economic fundamentals, economists at Citi said in a recent note.

"A better alternative in theory would be to take action to change market expectations on growth and inflation so as to influence the shape of the yield curve," they said.

Investors who bet that more reductions to borrowing costs are in the cards might be right, economists say.

Weak credit demand, low inflation expectations and depressed consumer and business confidence don't support high interest rates in China, economists at Goldman Sachs said.

"We expect interest rates to trend lower in the medium term, as the PBOC may eventually need to lower interest rates further to support the economy and boost domestic inflation," they said in a recent report.

Mutual Funds

Data provided by LIPPER

Table of mutual fund listings for Nasdaq-published share classes by net assets, including fund names, NAV, YTD change, and return.

HEARD ON THE STREET

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS & COMMENTARY

AI Is About to Boost Power Bills

High prices are a windfall for power-plant owners but are starting to raise difficult questions

The AI-driven, energy-hungry data-center boom was bound to bring up uncomfortable questions: Will it raise energy bills and, if so, who will shoulder the costs? America's largest wholesale power market is starting to see the results.

Rapid data-center build-out is increasing power demand just as a wave of older power-plant retirements is reducing supply in PJM Interconnection, the independent system operator that manages the wholesale power market spanning 13 states including Virginia, Pennsylvania and Illinois. It said two weeks ago that its latest capacity auction yielded prices of \$269.92 per megawatt-day for most of its footprint, about nine times the clearing price a year ago. A contributing factor was a tweak in PJM's modeling to better plan for extreme weather conditions. Skyrocketing capacity prices are a clear signal that the grid needs new power plants.

This is a windfall for independent power producers such as **Talen Energy**, **Constellation Energy Group** and **Vistra**, all of which own a sizable number of power plants that cleared the latest auction. Constellation's shares jumped 10% since the company reported last week that its earnings would get a healthy boost from high capacity prices. If they remain high in 2026, the company expects that to boost profit by 14% compared with analysts' earnings expectations before the auction results.

Vistra last Thursday raised the midpoint of its 2025 guidance for earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization by \$200 million, or about 4%, partly as a result of higher capacity prices. Its shares have gained 5.4% since its earnings call.

High prices should encourage more companies to build new power plants, but they can take up to five years if built from scratch, notes Hugh Wynne, co-head of utilities and renewable energy research at SSR.

"What we're seeing in the [latest] capacity auction is the tip of the iceberg," said Wynne, referring to future capacity needs. This means the capacity price windfall could last a few more years for companies such as Constellation and Vistra.

But high prices come with risk of political backlash and court challenges, said Steve Fleishman, equity analyst at Wolfe Research. The utilities that purchase elec-



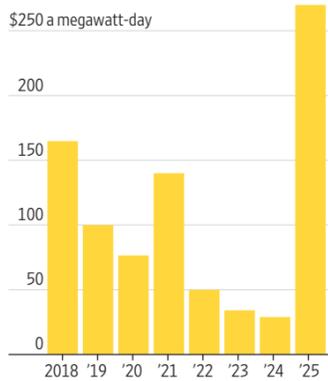
Skyrocketing capacity prices are a clear signal that the grid needs new power plants. A control room at a Constellation nuclear station in Scriba, N.Y.

tricity from these producers have signaled that bills will rise: Chicago utility **Exelon** said in its latest earnings call that rates will increase by a double-digit percentage in some of its jurisdictions as a result of higher capacity prices. **PPL**, whose service territory includes Pennsylvania, Kentucky and Virginia, said higher capacity prices would increase utility bills by \$10 to \$15 a month starting next year.

The strains could reshape the industry. Utilities in certain states aren't allowed to own power plants, but some are hinting that they will push for legislation to change that. PPL said during its latest earnings call that it would advocate for legislative changes in Pennsylvania that would allow it to do so. Similarly, **FirstEnergy** floated the idea that some states might change their rules to allow utilities to invest in their own generation.

Another point of conflict came up earlier this summer, when utilities—including Exelon and **American Electric Power**—pushed back on an aspect of Talen Energy's agreement to sell nuclear power to

PJM Interconnection's capacity prices for the majority of its footprint

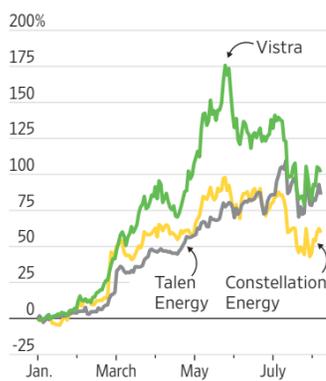


Sources: PJM Interconnection (capacity); FactSet (performance)

an adjacent **Amazon.com** data center in Pennsylvania, arguing that the power plant would benefit from the transmission system without paying for it. They estimated that as much as \$140 million of costs could shift to other customers as a result.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission sought more informa-

Share-price performance, year to date



tion about that agreement earlier this month, and analysts at energy research firm ClearView Energy Partners think Talen can get the green light from FERC. The overhang could nevertheless create some delays for companies like Constellation and Vistra, which are vying for long-term, high-price contracts similar to the one that

Talen set. Constellation was said to be nearing a deal with Amazon Web Services, as The Wall Street Journal reported.

Vistra said on Thursday it was talking to potential data-center customers but didn't give a timeline on when a deal might be reached. FERC is also set to hold a conference this fall to discuss broader issues related to co-locating large loads near power plants.

Also worth watching are states' changing stances toward data centers. While many have pushed forward incentives to lure the facilities, some are having misgivings. Georgia earlier this year passed a bill that would have halted the state's tax incentives for new data centers for two years, though that was ultimately vetoed by the governor in May.

Virginia, which also has tax breaks for data centers, is conducting a legislative study to examine how they are affecting electric reliability and affordability.

Power-plant owners are reaping a bonanza, but not without new risks, too.

—Jinjo Lee

New Measure Flashes Recession Signal

"The Michailat Saez measure" doesn't quite roll off the tongue the way "the Sahm rule" does, but check back later this year.

If it turns out that the U.S. already is in a recession—something not officially declared until well after the fact—then a paper making the rounds by economists Pascal Michailat and Emmanuel Saez could become required reading.

Their measures are similar to a highly regarded one by economist Claudia Sahm that came very close to being triggered recently.

Wall Street Journal economics columnist Greg Ip put that close

call into context last week, noting that a recession isn't an on-off switch, but a self-reinforcing cycle.

Michailat and Saez say their measure is more accurate than Sahm's in pinpointing recessions and when they start. It uses unemployment and the vacancy rate, a measure of open jobs.

The Sahm rule detects recessions 2.6 months after they start, while theirs works with a 1.4-month lag. It also works for historic recessions as far back as 1930, while they claim Sahm's predictive value breaks down before 1960.

The bad news: There is now a 40% chance the U.S. already is in recession, based on July data. It might have started as early as March.

Should that be of concern? Well, yes—recessions are bad for employment and company share prices.

On the other hand, high-level economic measures have obvious limitations. Individuals know whether they or their friends and neighbors have jobs, no matter if a recession is called or not.

Statisticians are only so good at gauging why a still-historically

low number of Americans didn't have a job last month, or how hard employers are really trying to fill vacant roles. Even if people claim they aren't confident about their prospects, is it true and can it be compared with what the same people said when a different party was in control of the White House?

The idea of a single, predictive measure is appealing, and Michailat's and Saez's measure looks intriguing when backtested. Whether it is right today is debatable.

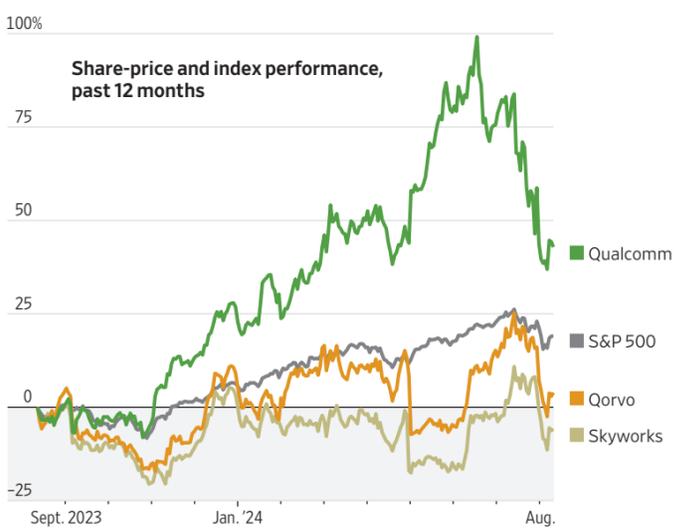
—Spencer Jakab

U.S. unemployment rate



Source: St. Louis Federal Reserve

Apple Clock Ticks a Little Louder for Qualcomm



Source: FactSet

It is no secret that **Apple** is working furiously to get **Qualcomm** out of the iPhone. Exactly when that happens has long been the billion-dollar question.

More analysts believe that is going to start happening next year. And the cost is more than \$1 billion. Chris Caso of Wolfe Research said in a report Monday that Apple's in-house modem will cost the chip maker about \$4 billion in revenue between 2024 and the end of 2026.

That estimate presumes a very limited launch for Apple's in-house chip in a new iPhone SE next spring, and more phones by the time Apple launches iPhone 17 models in fall 2025.

Apple, of course, has said no such thing. And it likely won't until the actual launch of whatever phone carries the new chip, based

on its longstanding practice of being tight-lipped ahead of new products.

But the company's huge global supply chain can be a leaky ship. The Wolfe report comes a month after Ed Snyder of Charter Equity raised the same issue. In a July 9 note to clients, Snyder said the limited launch in the iPhone SE will act as a "low-risk field trial" for the new modem that Apple has long struggled to build.

Qualcomm itself has made no secret of Apple's effort. The two companies signed a new three-year supply agreement last September that runs through 2026.

But Qualcomm has told analysts its modem chips will probably be in only 20% of the iPhones launched in the deal's final year.

Caso, however, worries that the Street didn't fully get the message.

And he reckons the company's other businesses—which now include chips to power a new generation of AI-enabled PCs—won't be big enough by then to fully compensate.

He cut Qualcomm's shares to "neutral," saying losing Apple revenue "creates a headwind that's not fully in estimates with uncertain catalysts elsewhere, making it difficult for us to continue defending the bull case."

In a separate report, he said an Apple modem creates new opportunities for companies like **Qorvo** and **Skyworks**, which specialize in wireless signal filters that work with modem chips. Those two stocks rose Monday, while Qualcomm's slipped. When it comes to selling an Apple-free future, Qualcomm still has a little work to do.

—Dan Gallagher