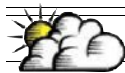


The Washington Post

Prices may vary in areas outside metropolitan Washington.

SU V1 V2 V3 V4



Partly sunny 58/33 • Tomorrow: Rain, snow 40/33 B6

Democracy Dies in Darkness

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2025 • \$4

As wreckage rises, search for remains continues



JOHN McDONNELL FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

A crane lifts part of a catastrophically damaged American Airlines regional jet out of the Potomac River on Monday. Extracting the plane will allow rescue workers to more easily search for the remaining bodies of those who perished when Flight 5342 and a military Black Hawk helicopter collided Wednesday night. **Story, B1**

Trump preps order to dismantle Education Dept.

BY LAURA MECKLER,
DANIELLE DOUGLAS-GABRIEL
AND HANNAH NATANSON

President Donald Trump is preparing an executive order aimed at eventually closing the Education Department and, in the short term, dismantling it from within, according to three people briefed on its contents.

The draft order acknowledges that only Congress can shut down the department and instead directs the agency to begin

Plans are set in motion as ‘DOGE’ agents probe sensitive internal data

to diminish itself, these people said, speaking on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly about internal issues.

That work is underway already. The new administration

has been trying to reduce the workforce by putting scores of employees on administrative leave and pressuring staff to voluntarily quit.

And roughly 20 people with Elon Musk’s “Department of Government Efficiency,” known as DOGE, have begun working inside the Education Department, looking to cut spending and staff, according to three people familiar with the situation and records obtained by The Washington Post.

At least some DOGE staffers have gained access to multiple sensitive internal systems, the people said, including a financial aid dataset that contains the personal information for millions of students enrolled in the federal student aid program.

The DOGE probe, which began last week, is a prelude to a more dramatic effort to make good on

SEE EDUCATION ON A24

Federal spending: Judge extends ban on OMB’s funding freeze. **B1**

Trump agrees to pause tariffs on Mexico, Canada

NATIONS VOW TO BOLSTER BORDER SECURITY

Leaders’ last-minute calls avert trade war for now

BY DAVID J. LYNCH
AND MARY BETH SHERIDAN

President Donald Trump agreed Monday to grant Mexico and Canada a 30-day reprieve on the U.S. tariffs that were scheduled to take effect Tuesday, after both countries pledged to intensify their efforts to prevent illicit drugs and migrants from crossing into the United States.

The president’s decision, which followed separate telephone conversations with the Mexican and Canadian leaders, averted — at least for now — an economic shock that was expected to push both U.S. neighbors into recession while slowing

growth and raising inflation in the United States.

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum was the first to secure a tariffs extension, when she promised to rush 10,000 national guard troops to the border to block the flow of fentanyl and other drugs into the United States. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau needed two calls with Trump before securing a delay in return for implementing

SEE TARIFFS ON A10

Fentanyl: Trump frames levies on China as accountability for crisis. **A9**

South Africa: Trump threatens to cut aid over land expropriation. **A9**

Musk does ‘dirty work’ to enact Trump agenda

BY ISAAC ARNSDORF
AND JACQUELINE ALEMANY

After being almost inseparable between Election Day and Inauguration Day, President Donald Trump and billionaire donor Elon Musk are starting to divide and conquer.

Trump, who spent the weekend at his Florida club, left Friday amid a massive potential purge of federal prosecutors and FBI agents involved in cases against him and supporters who attacked the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. On Saturday morning he ordered airstrikes on an Islamic State leader in Somalia and posted

video of the explosions online. He golfed, then started a trade war with the United States’ neighbors and closest trading partners.

Musk, the richest man in the world — whose election spending to help Trump topped \$288 million — dove into his stated mission of cutting \$4 billion a day. His “Department of Government Efficiency” team took control of the Treasury Department’s payment system, federal personnel files, and the agency that handles government contracts, real estate and equipment. Officials who raised concerns about access to sensitive systems were put on

SEE MUSK ON A7

Work is halted at CFPB on acting head’s orders

Consumer watchdog agency’s staff told to stop crafting, enforcing rules

BY TONY ROMM

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau halted much of its work to investigate and penalize corporate wrongdoing Monday, after Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent — tapped to lead the watchdog on an acting basis — ordered an agency-wide review to “promote consistency” with the new Trump administration.

Shortly after assuming the post,

Bessent and his aides ordered the bureau’s staff in an email to cease crafting regulations, enforcing rules, conducting probes or providing “public communications of any type,” according to a copy obtained by The Washington Post, which said he had instituted the ban “effective immediately.”

The missive appeared to herald a stark shift for the CFPB, a powerful agency formed in the wake of the 2008 banking crisis to protect consumers from unfair, deceptive or predatory financial practices. It came on the same day that President Donald Trump named

SEE CFPB ON A4

USAID restructuring: Rubio plans to review “duplicative” agency. **A4**



KENT NISHIMURA/REUTERS

A federal officer turns away a person trying to enter USAID’s D.C. offices. Like the CFPB, the agency is facing a stark reconfiguration.



OCTAVIO JONES FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Armando, 11, with his mother, was accused of making a “hit list” and threatening other students.

Jailed for jokes in the age of the gun

After Ga. shooting, police cracked down on students who made threats

BY JOHN WOODROW COX
AND HANNAH NATANSON
IN VOLUSIA COUNTY, FLA.

The dragnet first snagged a girl named Laurie, who was lying in bed amid her stuffed unicorns and Hello Kitty dolls when the ninth-grader had what she thought was a funny idea. She opened Instagram and, over a hot pink background, began to type: “Blowing the skl up tmr...” It was Sept. 10, six days after

another 14-year-old was accused of gunning down two students and a pair of teachers at Apalachee High in Georgia. At Laurie’s home in Florida, she posted the message and forgot about it until a few hours later, when a friend urged her to delete what she’d written.

It was too late, of course, because the internet is forever and because, unbeknownst to Laurie and hundreds of other kids, law enforcement’s tolerance for

threats of any kind, made anywhere, by anyone, was nearing zero.

The next day, the girl, 14, was placed in handcuffs that barely fit her wrists, charged with a felony and taken to a Volusia County detention center for three weeks. The day after that, another 14-year-old was charged for a comment on Instagram (“if yall crybabys don’t shut up ima shoot up your school”). The day

SEE THREATS ON A15

Prosecutor issues legal threat over ‘DOGE’

In unusual statement, U.S. attorney pledges to protect Musk’s initiative

BY SPENCER S. HSU
AND PATRICK MARLEY

Interim U.S. attorney Edward R. Martin Jr. alleged in a statement Monday that his office in D.C. had found evidence that people “committed acts that appear to violate the law in targeting” employees of Elon Musk’s “Department of Government Efficiency” — an unusual statement that came without any public criminal charges.

Hours after making public a letter he wrote to Musk saying the U.S. attorney’s office would “pursue any and all legal action against anyone who impedes your work or threatens your people,” Martin posted on X that his “initial review of the evidence” had found wrongdoing and hinted that he planned to take legal action.

“We are in contact with FBI and other law-enforcement partners to proceed rapidly. We also have our prosecutors preparing,” Martin said.

SEE MARTIN ON A7

IN THE NEWS

Invading the brain Microplastics are entering the organ in rising concentrations, with potentially harmful effects, a study found. **A6**

Border enforcement In an unprecedented move, federal authorities have deputized Texas National Guard troops to arrest and detain immigrants. **A19**

THE NATION

The vote of GOP Sen. Bill Cassidy, a doctor, could be pivotal for Robert F. Kennedy Jr. **A2**
Key Cabinet picks avoid stating explicitly that Donald Trump lost the 2020 election. **A3**

THE WORLD

A man wanted by Ukraine was killed in an explosion in Moscow. **A8**
Republicans, once critical of the top cyber-defense agency, now see it as a bulwark against China’s hackers. **A17**

THE ECONOMY

Many agricultural workers who labored during the wildfires in Southern California were not given masks, despite laws meant to require them. **A18**
Professors and worker advocates sued to block orders that target DEI programs. **A20**

THE REGION

The D.C. Council is set to expel Trayon White Sr. (D-Ward 8) before his trial on a federal bribery charge, a move some in the District say is an overreach. **B1**
Union Kitchen’s owner settled with grocery workers over claims of wage theft. **B1**

STYLE

Beyoncé finally roped in the Grammy for album of the year with “Cowboy Carter.” **C1**

HEALTH & SCIENCE

A scientist is harnessing the power of gene-editing technology as part of an effort to bring the dodo back from extinction. **E1**

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Physician’s vote on RFK Jr. could be pivotal

BY DAN DIAMOND
AND RACHEL ROUBEIN

Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s bid to serve as America's top health official could come down to a Louisiana Republican who's openly wrestling with his training as a physician and his instincts as a politician.

Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-Louisiana), who has begged Kennedy to stop invoking the debunked link between vaccines and autism, is seen as one of several swing votes on Kennedy's nomination to lead the Department of Health and Human Services. Local and national political leaders, public health experts, and Kennedy supporters have all spent days training their focus on Cassidy, with Kennedy allies hopeful that they've won his support after last week's confirmation hearings. Cassidy also had conversations with Kennedy over the weekend, according to two people who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe private conversations.

Cassidy's office declined to comment on whether he will support Kennedy, but his stance will soon become public: He's a member of the Senate Finance panel set to vote Tuesday on whether to advance Kennedy's nomination to the Senate floor.

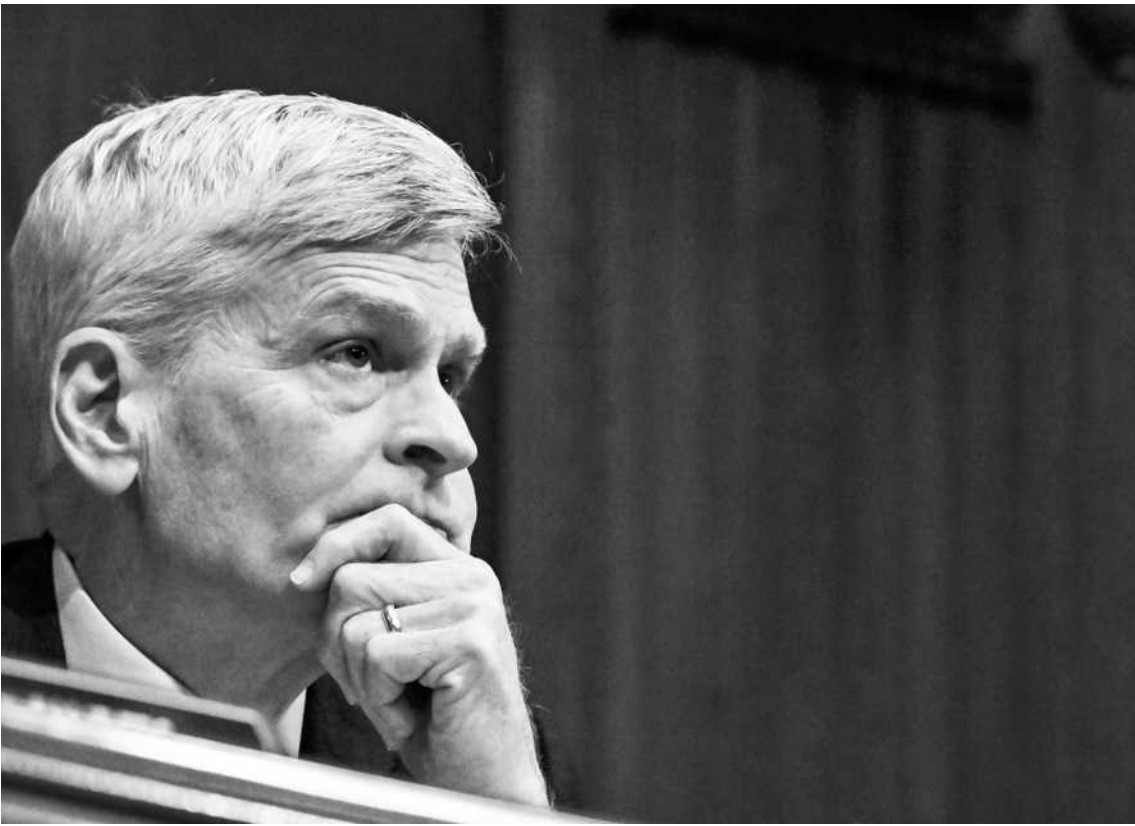
A spokeswoman for Kennedy did not immediately respond to questions about Cassidy's conversations with Kennedy and whether Kennedy believes that he has won the senator's vote.

Cassidy questioned Kennedy across two Senate hearings last week and spent much of the second chastising Kennedy for his years of undermining confidence in vaccines. The chairman of the Senate Health Committee reflected on treating a young unvaccinated woman who nearly died of a vaccine-preventable disease — “the worst day of my medical career,” Cassidy said — and his fears that confirming Kennedy to oversee the nation's health agencies would lead to real harms.

“My concern is that if there is any false note, any undermining of a mama's trust in vaccines, another person will die from a vaccine-preventable disease,” Cassidy said. He mused on whether the 71-year-old Kennedy was set in his ways — or whether he could “change his attitudes and approach now that he'll have the most important position influencing vaccine policy in the United States.”

But Cassidy also acknowledged the political realities.

“Let's be political. I'm a Republican. ... I want President Trump's policies to succeed in making America and Americans more secure, more prosperous, healthier,” he said. Cassidy also hinted at a path toward voting for Kennedy, saying that he supported much of Kennedy's “Make America Healthy Again” agenda to combat chronic disease. He also spoke of Kennedy's influential platform and his potential



RICKY CARIOTI/THE WASHINGTON POST

Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-Louisiana), seen last week, spent much of a recent hearing chastising health secretary nominee Robert F. Kennedy Jr. for his years of undermining confidence in vaccines.

power to restore Americans' flagging trust in the nation's public health agencies.

A vote for Kennedy may not be enough to save a senator that President Donald Trump dismissed last year as “a disloyal lightweight” after Cassidy voted to convict Trump on an impeachment charge in 2021 and later said that the former president should not run for reelection. The moves alienated GOP political leaders ahead of Cassidy's bid to be reelected next year. Ward Baker and Tony Fabrizio, sought-after Republican political consultants who helped manage Cassidy's 2020 reelection campaign, are no longer working with Cassidy, according to two people who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe private arrangements.

John Fleming, a former GOP congressman and Trump administration official — and, like Cassidy, a physician — last year declared that he would seek Cassidy's seat. In an interview with The Washington Post, Fleming said that he would vote for Kennedy and Trump's other nominees. Asked if he had any concerns about supporting Kennedy given his own medical training, Fleming pointed to Trump's record of shuffling staff members.

“The thing about Donald Trump that I'm so confident in is that any of the nominees, if they mess up even a little bit, he has no hesitation to replace them,” said Fleming, referencing Trump's decision to fire his first health secretary, Tom Price, after less than a year.

Bob Mann, a longtime Louisiana political commentator and former aide to Democratic lawmakers, said that Cassidy's reelection bid was already in “trouble,” independent of his pending vote on Kennedy, particularly after Louisiana revamped its primary system. Unlike Cassidy's past campaigns, Democrats can

no longer cross party lines to vote in Senate primaries.

Mann also said he recently sent an email to Cassidy's office, urging him to “have the courage to do the right thing” and vote against Kennedy.

“There's no doubt in anyone's mind that Cassidy knows that RFK is unqualified for this job,” Mann said.

The Kennedy vote is shaping up as a first test of Cassidy's new role as Senate Health Committee chairman, a prized perch that puts him in position to shape Congress' health-care legislation — and potentially be a key Trump ally. His predecessor as chairman, Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vermont), forged a partnership with President Joe Biden that helped lead to Medicare drug price negotiation and other policies that Democrats have touted as key victories of the Biden term.

Friends, aides and colleagues have said the opportunity to delve into the details of complicated health policy suits Cassidy — a professorial lawmaker who has used a whiteboard to walk reporters through the intricacies of his plans. In interviews, they shared stories of Cassidy becoming excited by academic papers, sparring with experts over wonky details — and performing small, unseen acts of civic responsibility, such as picking up trash as he walks through the U.S. Capitol.

Cassidy has been in the spotlight before. As a first-term senator, his proposal to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act in 2017 thrust him into the middle of a national debate over the health law.

Liberal-leaning advocacy groups such as Protect Our Care ran ads attacking Cassidy's plans, and late-night host Jimmy Kimmel spent several days mocking Cassidy and even sparring with him in a national TV segment. Sanders peppered Cassidy with questions in a CNN debate, urging Republicans to not “throw

the baby out with the bathwater.” The plan died.

Now, many of those same liberals are counting on a lawmaker they once derided to help block Kennedy's confirmation.

“I find myself in the unusual and uncomfortable position of having to agree with Senator Cassidy's line of questioning,” Sanders said, marveling at their similar approaches to Kennedy last week.

Leslie Dach, the co-founder of Protect Our Care — which is running a “Stop RFK” war room and has spent more than \$1 million on the confirmation fight, including on ads intended to sway Cassidy — praised the Republican senator as thoughtful and principled in an interview, saying that Cassidy realized that his ACA repeal bill was politically unpopular, so he abandoned it.

“The American people didn't want that kind of health-care policy,” Dach said in an interview. He then cited recent polling about Kennedy's nomination, such as a survey from the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research that found 3 in 10 adults approve of the nomination, while about 4 in 10 disapprove of it, arguing it was evidence that Cassidy should again listen to the polls.

Cassidy's approach to Kennedy has also been praised by some conservatives. National Review, a conservative publication, hailed his questioning of Kennedy last week as the senator's “finest hour,” saying that he deftly made his points about Kennedy's lack of fitness for the role.

As Cassidy wrestles with his political future, he is facing growing pressure to support Kennedy from prominent Republicans in his home state, which backed Trump by more than 20 percentage points.

“A new perspective is needed to address the health crisis our nation is facing,” Louisiana Gov.

Jeff Landry (R) wrote in a letter to Cassidy and Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-South Dakota) urging the swift confirmation of Kennedy.

In 2021, Kennedy called coronavirus vaccines the “deadliest vaccine ever made” at a Louisiana House hearing on a state health department proposal to require that schoolchildren be vaccinated against the virus. Conservative Republicans in the state cited Kennedy's visit to the state in a letter asking Cassidy to support the nominee.

“Then, as now, Mr. Kennedy displayed sincere concern about the well-being of American children, especially regarding unwarranted, untested, and unsafe medical interventions,” the Louisiana lawmakers wrote late last month.

Cassidy knows what it's like to endure the wrath of Republicans in his deep-red state. He voted to convict Trump on a single article of impeachment in 2021 — a position that prompted him to be censured by the Louisiana Republican Party.

Other Louisianans are hoping he draws a line on Kennedy. More than 100 Louisiana physicians signed on to a letter for Cassidy decrying Kennedy's nomination, and some have reached out to Cassidy.

Jennifer Herricks, founder of the Louisiana Families for Vaccines advocacy group, which organized the letter, said it was clear watching the hearing that Cassidy was relying on his medical training and connections to question Kennedy. Cassidy mentioned a friend texted him to tell him two children had died recently in a Baton Rouge ICU of vaccine-preventable diseases.

“We're all just over here, parents in Louisiana and all over the country, putting our trust in Senator Cassidy to protect our kids from the real danger that RFK presents,” Herricks said.

Cassidy has cited his own deep concerns with Kennedy's nomination, saying he has talked to parents in his state who partly credit Kennedy with the decision not to vaccinate their child. The doctor turned senator repeatedly implored Kennedy to acknowledge the overwhelming evidence that vaccines don't cause autism. “I know the data is there,” Cassidy said.

“If you show me data, I'll be the first person to assure the American people that they need to take those vaccines,” Kennedy replied.

Near the end of the hearing, Kennedy said he would like to show Cassidy a study suggesting the link does exist, citing a recent observational study funded by an anti-vaccine advocacy group and criticized by medical experts for shaky methodology. Cassidy asked him to repeat the name of the study and then fiddled with his computer. Roughly 10 minutes later, Cassidy appeared to have read the study.

“I looked at the article,” Cassidy said, “and it seems to have some issues.”

Lauren Weber contributed to this report.

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How Trump could feel the ‘pain’ from his tariffs

The Fix

AARON BLAKE

Perhaps no one issue delivered Donald Trump back to the White House more than inflation. And he promised instant results.

“When I win, I will immediately bring prices down, starting on Day One,” he said in August.

Trump is now singing a very different tune. Not only has he suddenly downplayed his ability to quickly bring prices down — he called it “very hard” — but he's suddenly pleading with Americans for patience as he begins to sell his tariffs on Canada, Mexico and China. (Trump on Monday morning paused the Mexico tariffs for one month after talks with Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum.)

The message is basically: Prices will probably rise, but it will be worth it.

He said Friday that there would be “some temporary short-term disruption” but that “people will understand.”

“We may have short-term, some, a little pain,” he added Sunday.

“WILL THERE BE SOME PAIN? YES, MAYBE (AND MAYBE NOT!),” he said in a Truth Social post. “BUT WE WILL MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN, AND IT WILL ALL BE WORTH THE PRICE THAT MUST BE PAID.”

One of the biggest early

questions of Trump's presidency is whether he's right about Americans' tolerance for “THE PRICE THAT MUST BE PAID.” It doesn't appear that he is.

And while Trump has his best image numbers ever of late, the tariffs clearly threaten that in a way nothing else has.

That's given the extent he sees fit to actually follow through on them. The pause on Mexico tariffs reinforces that Trump very much views the tariffs as a bargaining chip.

Trump has taken several controversial and legally dubious actions in his first two weeks, but many occupy relatively obscure territory for typical Americans. How much do Americans feel personally affected by trying to get rid of birthright citizenship, for instance? People might not like Trump pardoning people who assaulted police officers on Jan. 6, 2021, but it doesn't impact most of their lives.

That's not to say any of that isn't important; it is. But the effect of tariffs could be felt instantly across a broad swath of society. Economists have been warning for many months that Trump's tariff plans would exacerbate inflation. (This is the trade-off with tariffs; you increase taxes on imports in the name of making American-made products more competitive.)

The danger for Trump with the tariffs is not only that prices

will rise but also that Americans might be surprised by that.

The broad concept of tariffs polled reasonably well during the 2024 campaign. But large numbers of Americans never seemed to understand how they really work. And Trump has falsely pitched them as taxes paid by foreign companies.

We've seen two things in polling data in recent months. One is that the broad concept of tariffs appears to have fallen somewhat out of favor as they've moved from the hypothetical realm toward reality. And two is that they suggest support could fall even further if and when prices rise.

On the broader side, a recent Reuters-Ipsos poll showed Americans opposed tariffs on Canada 60 percent to 37 percent, and they opposed them on Mexico 55-41.

But even that doesn't get at the potential danger of rising prices.

A YouGov survey last month, for instance, showed 29 percent of Americans said they wanted tariffs increased. That wasn't overwhelming, but it was at least more than said they wanted them kept the same (27 percent) or decreased (18 percent).

But then we get to the rub. The pollster followed up by asking those who supported higher tariffs whether they still wanted them “even if that leads to higher prices for American

consumers.”

Only about half of those who said they wanted increased tariffs — 52 percent — stood by that position.

And it's not the only survey.

Another YouGov survey from December showed just 19 percent of Americans supported increased tariffs even if they increased prices. Three times as many either opposed them (32 percent) or supported them only if they didn't increase prices (28 percent).

And another Reuters-Ipsos poll last month showed Americans opposed increasing tariffs if it raised prices, 47-30. That's not as overwhelming a margin as the YouGov polling. But just 9 percent of Americans said they “strongly” supported increasing tariffs if prices rose.

In other words, this is something that not many Americans appear to be clamoring for nearly as much as Trump is.

And it's something that could catch them off-guard in a way that's very personal to them — especially given Trump's sales pitch treated the tariffs as a win-win with virtually no downside.

If anyone understands the potential potency of that problem, you'd think it would be Trump. But he's been a tariff evangelist for decades. Now we find out just how much “pain” his supporters are willing to tolerate.

POLITICS & THE NATION

Democrats challenge ‘alarming’ ousters at Justice, FBI

BY DEREK HAWKINS,
PERRY STEIN
AND JEREMY ROEBUCK

Top Senate Democrats on Monday tried to challenge major changes at the Justice Department and FBI, demanding to know whether President Donald Trump’s nominees to lead the agencies played a role in the recent removal or reassignment of law enforcement officials and suggesting that a purge of senior leaders might continue.

In a letter to the acting attorney general and acting FBI director, Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee said the apparent demotions of some officials and the ouster of others presented an “alarming threat to national security.”

“As America faces a heightened threat landscape, these shocking removals and reassignments deprive DOJ and the FBI of experienced, senior leadership and decades of experience fighting violent crime, espionage, and terrorism,” read the letter signed by the panel’s ranking Democrat, Sen. Dick Durbin (Illinois), and the committee’s nine other Democrats.

Durbin wrote that he had received “credible information” indicating that at least 25 FBI special agents in charge might be removed this week, in addition to at least four who were removed in recent days, and that a loyalty test was being implemented in the leadership hiring process that involved questions about the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol.

The Democrats asked acting attorney general James McHenry and acting FBI director Brian Driscoll for a list of all employees who have been reassigned or removed, as well as records involving their communications with attorney general nominee Pam Bondi and FBI director nominee Kash Patel — both of whom are awaiting Senate confirmation — and other top Justice Department leaders.

Durbin’s office didn’t respond to requests for more details about the information he said he had received about changes at the agencies. The FBI declined to comment, and the Justice Department didn’t respond to requests.

Both agencies have been roiled with anxiety over the past two weeks, as many prosecutors, supervisors and senior officials have



Emil Bove, left, now the acting deputy attorney general, with Todd Blanche and Donald Trump on-screen in court in New York last month.

been ousted or transferred to new positions and as the FBI has begun a broad examination of every agent and employee involved in the massive investigation of the Capitol riot.

At Justice, those transferred to less-desirable roles include top officials in the national security, civil rights, antitrust and criminal divisions. Although many have no background in immigration law, they were given the option of going to a newly created division focused on sanctuary cities and immigration enforcement — or quitting.

Some targeted for transfer, such as the senior official overseeing public corruption and politically sensitive investigations, opted to resign.

Those fired outright include leaders at the Justice Department’s immigration courts, as well as dozens of prosecutors who investigated Trump and the rioters who stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6.

At the FBI, at least eight senior

officials are being forced out on orders from the Justice Department, according to a memo sent by acting deputy attorney general Emil Bove late last week. They include leaders who oversaw intelligence, national security, cyber-investigations, and the bureau’s science and technology branch.

Some had run FBI field offices in major cities such as Miami and Washington. All had been promoted under then-FBI Director Christopher A. Wray, who resigned in the final days of the Biden administration after Trump said he would cut short Wray’s 10-year term and fire him.

More firings could be imminent.

FBI leaders have told their workforce that the examination of the Jan. 6 cases, as well as of the investigations of Trump’s handling of classified documents and efforts to block the 2020 election results, could lead to widespread personnel actions.

The warnings prompted a letter to Bove late Sunday from a team of high-profile lawyers, threatening legal action against any personnel moves that do not give federal employees due process. On Monday, before Durbin’s letter was issued, several organizations representing current and former FBI agents urged Congress to get involved.

“We are requesting your assistance in ensuring that the men and women of the FBI can continue to effectively protect our country,” said the letter to congressional leadership from the heads of the FBI Agents Association, the Society of Former Special Agents of the FBI and the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association. “We urge you to work with President Trump to prevent acting officials from taking personnel actions that undermine our shared goal of keeping the FBI out of politics. It is imperative that FBI Special Agents can continue their critical work, free from fear of

retaliation, and focused on safeguarding our nation.”

Experts interviewed last week said removing federal employees because of work they did on cases to which they were assigned would amount to retaliation and would be open to legal challenge.

Under standard FBI procedures, agents are entitled to receive any proposed punishments or disciplinary determinations against them in writing before they are finalized, and are granted an opportunity to respond in proceedings before a deciding officer. If they choose, they can hire legal representation and appeal findings against them.

Patel, Trump’s pick for FBI director, committed to following that process during his confirmation hearing last week. He also told senators he had no knowledge of any plans for a purge of bureau agents.

Bondi, the president’s nominee for attorney general, vowed during her hearing that there would

“never be an ‘enemies list’” at the Justice Department.

In the letters terminating the prosecutors who worked on Trump investigations led by special counsel Jack Smith, the acting attorney general said he didn’t trust them in “faithfully implementing” the president’s agenda because they had helped prosecute him.

“They’re being let go simply because of the cases they were handling — that’s unheard of and smells of pure retaliation,” said Mark Gaston Pearce, a former chairman of the National Labor Relations Board who was appointed by President Barack Obama.

Pearce and other experts said the move appears to clash with long-standing civil service regulations.

In most cases, any federal agency seeking to fire a career employee must provide the employee 30 days’ notice, along with a written explanation listing its reasons and evidence supporting the decision.

Fired employees can appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board, an independent agency that reviews terminations and other adverse actions on behalf of civil servants. The board’s administrative law judges have 120 days to issue a decision, though it’s common for that deadline to be pushed back.

Further appeals go to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, which has jurisdiction over federal personnel decisions.

It’s almost impossible to fast-track this process, which typically must be exhausted before employees can take their claims elsewhere, Pearce said. The merit board went years without a quorum during the first Trump administration, resulting in a huge backlog of cases that has only recently been cleared out.

Max Stier, president of the Partnership for Public Service, a non-partisan nonprofit that advocates for more effective government, said he believed the fired prosecutors had a high likelihood of winning if they appealed, but he noted that the process can be long, stressful and costly.

“They may well be able to get damages later on, but that’s not likely to make them whole, and the experience itself is extraordinarily challenging,” he said.

Questioned at hearings, key Cabinet picks refuse to say Trump lost in 2020

BY PATRICK MARLEY
AND COLBY ITKOWITZ

Two of President Donald Trump’s top law enforcement nominees have been taking a new tack when talking about the 2020 presidential election: They’re not claiming Trump won that year, but they’re not saying he lost, either.

Joe Biden was “duly sworn in” after the 2020 election, Trump’s nominee for attorney general, Pam Bondi, told senators at her confirmation hearing.

“President Joe Biden’s election was certified, he was sworn in, and he served as the president of the United States,” Kash Patel, who has been tapped to lead the FBI, said at his confirmation hearing.

Neither would say that Biden defeated Trump, despite dozens of court rulings that upheld the results.

For years, Republicans have toyed with competing rhetorical approaches when discussing an election that Trump falsely insists he won. Russell Vought, Trump’s nominee for White House budget director, has taken a strident approach, telling the Senate in a written answer to questions that he believes the 2020 election was “rigged.” Bondi and Patel used their hearings to test a different strategy common among Republicans — one that avoids embracing lies about the election but doesn’t explicitly rule them out.

Democrats and other critics call their lack of frank talk dangerous, particularly because they want to hold positions in which they would have to tell the president difficult truths.

“It is abundantly clear who the voters chose to be the president in 2020. And for officials seeking these high-profile, important positions in government to not be able to acknowledge that truth speaks more to their fear of the person who’s appointing them as opposed to anything else,” Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson (D) said.

As the top election official in a swing state, Benson oversaw Trump’s loss in 2020 and his victory in 2024. She is now running for

governor.

Aides to Bondi and Patel did not respond to requests for comment. Other Republicans called their testimony reasonable and said Democrats were making too much of their dodges on Trump’s 2020 loss.

“Politics is a funny thing,” said New Hampshire Secretary of State David Scanlan (R), who said he had no reason to doubt the 2020 results. “Some of those people have higher ambitions.”

Trump has long made views on the 2020 election a litmus test for Republicans. In job interviews, Trump advisers asked applicants for the Republican National Committee last year if they believed that the election was stolen. Over the last four years, Republicans have tried to assess the mood of their base and the public at large to decide whether to embrace false claims about the 2020 election, dodge the topic, or acknowledge that Biden won and move on.

The day after the election in 2020, Bondi traveled to Philadelphia as absentee ballots were being counted and the presidency was slipping away from Trump. Without evidence, she and Rudy Giuliani contended that “totally fraudulent” ballots could have been cast and discussed ways to challenge the results.

This month, at her Jan. 15 confirmation hearing, days before Trump was sworn in, Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Illinois) tried to pin down Bondi on her views on the 2020 election.

“Are you prepared to say today, under oath, without reservation, that Donald Trump lost the presidential contest to Joe Biden in 2020?” Durbin asked.

“President Joe Biden is the president of the United States,” she answered. “He was duly sworn in, and he is the president of the United States. There was a peaceful transition of power. President Trump left office and was overwhelmingly elected in 2024.”

Durbin followed up by asking if she had any evidence that Biden didn’t get a majority of the electoral votes in 2020. Without providing specifics, Bondi said she saw “many things” that concerned her in Pennsylvania. “But do I accept

the results? Of course I do,” she said.

Sen. Alex Padilla (D-California) asked if she could provide evidence of fraud or irregularities, and if she would retract her past comments about how the election was conducted in Pennsylvania. In a contentious exchange, he cut her off eight times when she tried to answer, demanding she respond with only a yes or a no.

When Sen. Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii) asked Bondi who won the 2020 election, she responded, “Joe Biden is the president of the United States.”

Patel — who has spent years selling Trump merchandise and at times has claimed the 2020 election was rigged — wouldn’t say Trump won during his hearing last week. Instead, he said only that Biden’s election was certified and that he served as president.

Democrats did not directly ask other nominees in their hearings about the legitimacy of the 2020 election but expressed alarm about Vought’s views. In response to written questions, Vought told Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-Rhode Island), “I believe that the 2020 election was rigged.”

Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Oregon), in his opening statement at Vought’s hearing, called his description of the 2020 election troubling. “This may be essential for your loyalty test to the president, but it’s a willingness to manipulate and deceive Americans that certainly bothers me,” he said.

Vought did not address Merkley’s comment and was not directly asked about the 2020 results. A spokeswoman for Vought did not respond to a request for comment.

Bondi and Patel were not as brazen as Vought, but because of the positions they would hold, critics zeroed in on their reluctance to say Trump lost in 2020.

“We thought the election denial movement was defeated when the insurrection failed on January 6. In fact it only went into hibernation, and it has come back stronger than ever, including in the person of the nominees for the two most powerful law enforcement jobs in the country,” said Norm Eisen, a senior fellow at the

Brookings Institution who served as special counsel to the House Judiciary Committee for Trump’s first impeachment.

Wayne Williams, a Republican who served as Colorado’s secretary of state from 2015 to 2019, said Republicans remain concerned about how the 2020 election was conducted because so many rules were quickly changed during the covid-19 pandemic. “I think there are arguments that

things were done in a way that was not appropriate,” he said.

“The way the founders framed our nation’s Constitution is the electoral college makes the decision that gets certified,” Williams said. “And that is how the president’s elected. And so, saying he was president and he was certified, I think covers the major elements of it.”

But Arizona Secretary of State Adrian Fontes (D) said public offi-

cials shouldn’t have difficulty acknowledging that Trump lost in 2020 and won in 2024, even if they don’t like the results. Bondi and Patel’s unwillingness to do so is telling, he said.

“I think they know their boss,” Fontes said. “And they know that they’ve got to suck up to make him happy.”

Yvonne Wingett Sanchez contributed to this report.



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Rubio announces plans to restructure and potentially abolish USAID

Secretary of state accuses agency of being out of step with U.S. interests

BY JOHN HUDSON, MISSY RYAN, ABIGAIL HAUSLOHNER AND KAREN DEYOUNG

SAN SALVADOR — Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Monday unveiled plans to restructure and potentially abolish the U.S. Agency for International Development, moving swiftly against an agency that has emerged as a chief target in President Donald Trump’s drive to reshape the federal government and refocus spending at home.

In a letter to senior lawmakers from both parties, Rubio cited USAID activities he described as “conflicting, overlapping, and duplicative” with the State Department and noted what he said were “systems and processes [that] ... often result in discord in the foreign policy and foreign relations of the United States.”

“In consultation with Congress, USAID may move, reorganize, and integrate certain missions, bureaus, and offices into the Department of State, and the remainder of the Agency may be abolished consistent with applicable law,” Rubio said.

At the same time, the chief diplomat assumed more direct control of USAID, taking on the role of acting administrator and naming a Trump loyalist, Peter W. Marocco, to oversee an agency review and potential cuts. But Rubio stopped short of confirming that USAID — as has been widely rumored among aid officials in recent days — will be collapsed into the State Department.

Rubio’s report to Congress marks the first official notice of the drive by Trump and billionaire Elon Musk, who is leading a pseudo-governmental initiative to remake the federal government, to review and potentially restructure or dismantle the beleaguered humanitarian assistance body.

Musk has vowed in social media posts to destroy USAID, calling it a “criminal organization.”

“Time for it to die,” he said.

Foreign aid represents approximately 1 percent of the federal budget.

Rubio, speaking earlier in the day to reporters on his first trip abroad as secretary of state, accused the agency, which has a staff of more than 10,000 and oversees food aid, emergency relief, health programs and other projects in more than 100 countries, of “insubordination” and acting against American interests.

“In many cases USAID is involved in programs that run counter to what we’re trying to do in our national strategy with that country or with that region,” Rubio told reporters in the Salvadoran capital. “That cannot continue.”



Susan Schorr of D.C. holds an anti-Elon Musk sign and a U.S. flag in a protest in front of USAID headquarters in Washington on Monday.

PHOTOS BY PETE KIEHART FOR THE WASHINGTON POST



Reps. Ilhan Omar (D-Minnesota) and Don Beyer (D-Virginia) speak to DHS police Monday at USAID.

Democrats, speaking at a news conference outside USAID headquarters Monday where protesters gathered, vowed to stop what they called an illegal takeover attempt.

“This is a corrupt abuse of power,” Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D-Maryland) said. “Elon Musk may get to be dictator of Tesla, and he may try to play dictator here in Washington, D.C., but he doesn’t get to shut down the Agency for International Development.”

Sen. Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii) vowed to place a blanket hold on all of Trump’s State Department nominees “until and unless this brazenly authoritarian action is reversed and USAID is functional again.”

Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minnesota) said U.S.-funded assistance had helped her family in the years they spent in a Kenyan refugee camp. “When the world interacts with Americans through programs that provide essential

need,” she said, “they get to see the heart and compassion of the American people.”

The lawmakers warned that halting USAID’s work would erode American soft power and damage national security.

“We are weaker today than we were yesterday,” said Sen. Chris Murphy (D-Connecticut), who accused Musk and “the billionaire class trying to take over our government.”

The developments inject new

uncertainty into what has been a turbulent two-week period for USAID and the organizations implementing its programs worldwide, starting with Trump’s decision on his first day in office to impose a near-total freeze on American foreign assistance programs.

That decision unleashed chaos across the global aid community, which has scrambled to understand the scope of Trump’s plans and laid off or furloughed thousands of staff. Many USAID employees have since been put on unpaid leave as the Trump administration moves more broadly to pare the federal workforce and bring government agencies in line with its “America First” agenda.

USAID’s website has been offline for several days. On Sunday, the agency told employees in an email that its headquarters, a short walk from the White House, would be closed Monday.

Rubio, who has a history of supporting foreign aid programs, declined Monday to echo Musk’s description of the organization, telling reporters that “there are a lot of functions of USAID that are going to continue ... but it has to be aligned with American foreign policy.”

But he also accused USAID leaders of insubordination, saying agency leaders had refused to answer basic questions posed by lawmakers during the Florida Republican’s time in the Senate. He also refuted the notion, which he said agency officials espoused to legislators, that USAID is an apolitical agency.

“American foreign policy isn’t apolitical,” Rubio said. “American foreign policy is ... to further the interest of the United States. If someone wants to spend apolitical dollars, they should spend private dollars.”

Rubio’s searing comments about the agency contrast with his years of vocal support for foreign aid and criticisms of conservatives who view it as fiscally irresponsible.

“In the minds of many, our foreign aid is exaggerated: It really is a minuscule part of our overall budget and it’s not the reason why we have this growing debt in America,” Rubio said in 2011.

In 2017, he said on social media that foreign aid “is less than 1% of budget & critical to our national security.”

As a senator, Rubio was a long-time supporter of President George W. Bush’s signature program preventing HIV in Africa, PEPFAR, which has been imperiled by Trump’s aid freeze. A major push by Republicans, Democrats and religious groups persuaded Rubio to issue a waiver last week to exempt the program.

It was not immediately clear what will happen to USAID staff, the majority of whom are overseas, under Rubio’s plans for the agency.

Sen. James E. Risch (R-Idaho), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, sought to downplay the changes the Trump administration was seeking to make.

“The idea of merging USAID and the State Department has been floated by nearly every administration since USAID was established by Congress in 1948,” he said in a statement.

The agency came into existence during the presidency of John F. Kennedy and was codified by Congress as an official agency in 1998.

In 1995, legislation to abolish USAID was introduced by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-North Carolina), who aimed to replace the agency with a grant-making foundation. Although the House of Representatives passed a bill abolishing USAID, the measure did not become law.

To gain congressional cooperation for his foreign affairs agenda, President Bill Clinton adopted in 1997 a State Department proposal to integrate more foreign affairs agencies into the department. Although the law authorized the president to abolish USAID, Clinton did not exercise this option.

While debates over a bureaucratic overhaul have been fairly mainstream over the years, Musk’s effort to shutter USAID, lay off employees and contractors en masse, and halt billions of dollars of spending without congressional authorization has amounted to the most radical shift in aid policy in the agency’s history.

Ryan, Hauslohner and DeYoung reported from Washington. Ellie Silverman, Lisa Rein, Michael Birnbaum and Carol Leonnig contributed to this report.

Work is halted at consumer watchdog agency Musk has sought to ‘delete’

CFPB FROM A1

Secretary of State Marco Rubio acting administrator of another agency, the U.S. Agency for International Development, which the administration moved to shutter as part of a broad and contested effort to slash government spending and regulation.

Much like USAID, the financial watchdog is a longtime target of Republicans’ scorn. Party lawmakers have threatened for years to defund the CFPB or neuter its powers — and tech billionaire Elon Musk, who is advising Trump on his reconfiguration of American government, has called on Congress to “delete” the bureau entirely.

Under President Joe Biden, the CFPB was active and aggressive: Its leader, Rohit Chopra, issued a wide array of rules to crack down on predatory lending, reduce the burden of medical debt and cut fees that customers pay when they fall behind on their credit card bills or overextend their checking accounts. Chopra also expanded the bureau’s watch over Apple, Google and other tech giants as their digital payment apps grew more popular with consumers.

But Trump fired Chopra on Saturday before his term was scheduled to end, pleasing Chopra’s Republican critics, who had long accused him of engaging in regulatory overreach. Banks, tech giants and other businesses similarly delighted in Chopra’s departure — and Bessent’s ascension — after years of fierce legal and political clashes with the bureau over the extent of its oversight.

“We urge Secretary Bessent to begin reversing the damage caused by these misguided regula-



Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, seen at left in the Oval Office, is leading the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau on an acting basis.

CRAIG HUDSON FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

tory actions and stand ready to support his efforts to chart a better course for the Bureau,” Rob Nichols, the president of the American Bankers Association, an industry lobbying group, said in a statement Monday.

A CFPB spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

“I look forward to working with

the CFPB to advance President Trump’s agenda to lower costs for the American people and accelerate economic growth,” Bessent said in a statement after Trump designated him for the role. The president has not yet nominated a permanent director, who must be confirmed by the Senate.

On Capitol Hill, some Democrats assailed Bessent for pausing

the bureau’s work, stressing in particular that an interruption to its investigations would leave Americans exposed to scams.

“Shutting down CFPB enforcement actions that are on the verge of delivering money into the pockets of working people is at odds with President Trump’s claim that he wants to lower costs for families — which he has done next to

nothing on so far,” said Sen. Elizabeth Warren (Massachusetts), the top Democrat on the Senate Banking Committee, who helped create the agency.

For now, Bessent’s instructions appear to halt virtually all of the agency’s activities, including implementing policies that were finalized at the end of the Biden administration.

Last month, the agency under Chopra moved to eliminate unpaid medical debts from millions of Americans’ credit reports, in rules set to take effect in March. It also enacted limits on banks’ overdraft charges, a policy scheduled to enter full force in October.

“They are trying to strangle rules that have already been lawfully finished, as part of the broad deregulatory agenda of Trump 2.0,” said Carter Dougherty, communications director for Americans for Financial Reform, who added that the administration is “responding to the pressure of the big banks.”

The treasury secretary Monday also ordered CFPB lawyers to cease defending their existing regulations in court, except to seek a delay in ongoing trials. The pause could set the stage for the bureau to stop defending its most contested rules — including those targeting so-called “junk fees” — against lawsuits brought by banks, tech giants and others that have sought to weaken the CFPB’s mandate.

Trump similarly moved to restrain the CFPB during his first term. His acting director then — former congressman Mick Mulvaney — at one point requested no new money for the agency and settled pending enforcement actions, sometimes for as little as \$1.

This time, Republicans have promised to pursue even more significant changes to the CFPB, targeting its leadership structure, investigative powers and funding source; the bureau gets its money from the Federal Reserve. Last week, Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) unveiled the latest bill to curtail its funding, describing the CFPB as an “unelected, unaccountable bureaucratic agency.”

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Plastic building up in human brains

Study: Concentrations seem to be rising, with possible harmful effects

BY SHANNON OSAKA

A new study shows that microplastics are making their way into human brains — with potentially dangerous effects on people's health and mental acuity. A paper published Monday in Nature Medicine found that the tiny fragments of plastic are passing the blood-brain barrier and into human brains, and the amount of microplastics in the brain appears to be increasing over time. The concentration of microplastics in analyzed brains rose by about 50 percent from 2016 to 2024. The scientists also examined the brains of 12 deceased patients diagnosed with dementia, and found that they had three to five times as much microplastics as

normal brains. “Every time we scratch the surface, it uncovers a whole host of, ‘Oh, is this worse than we thought?’” one of the paper's lead authors, University of New Mexico toxicology professor Matthew Campen, said in an interview about an earlier version of the paper. Microplastics are tiny pieces of plastic — less than five millimeters in size, or smaller than a pencil eraser — that are either manufactured or slough off plastic objects. Nanoplastics are even smaller and can be a fraction of the width of a human hair. Most of the microplastics found in brains in the study were on the nano scale. In recent years, scientists have realized that many plastic items (plastic bags, water bottles, tires, polyester or synthetic clothing) can shed small fragments or fibers that make their way into air, food and water. Many of those particles are burrowing deep into the human body. Microplastics have been identified in the liver, placen-

ta, blood, testicles and even certain arteries that lead to the heart. For the new study, scientists analyzed 52 brain specimens, 28 that were autopsied in 2016 and 24 that were autopsied in 2024. They found microplastics in every sample, but there were significantly higher concentrations of microplastics in those from 2024. Researchers then obtained additional brain samples going back to 1997 and found that they followed the same trend: More recent samples had much higher numbers of microplastics. They found no correlation with how old the person was when they died. Campen says that, with just a single study, there is reason to be cautious when interpreting the results. But, he added, the amount of plastics produced globally doubles every 10 to 15 years, which suggests that humans' level of exposure has skyrocketed. “To see it go up 50 percent in eight years in human organs ... I think that's perfectly in line with what we're seeing in the environment.” The researchers estimated that



Fragments of plastic litter a beach in Hawaii. Many plastic items can shed small fragments or fibers.

the average brain studied had about seven grams of microplastics in it, or a little more than the weight of a plastic spoon. But they cautioned that could be an overestimate, as some other particles in the brain can resemble microplas-

tics. Jaime Ross, a professor of neuroscience at the University of Rhode Island who has studied microplastics' effect on mouse brains, praised the new research and said the increased “plastic burden” of microplastics in the body was concerning because it could exacerbate inflammation. Phoebe Stapleton, a professor of pharmacology and toxicology at Rutgers University who was not involved in the study, said in an email that scientists have long wondered whether microplastics could pass the blood-brain barrier — the thick membrane that protects the brain from toxins and viruses. While it's not the first time researchers have found microplastics in the brain, the new study shows that the pieces of plastic are reaching deeper into the frontal cortex. Last year, a group of researchers found microplastics in the olfactory bulb, or the part of the brain that processes smells. The particles were present in eight of the 15 brains studied. “This paper provides clear evidence that micro- and nanoplastics are indeed in the human brain,” Stapleton said. The paper also showed that the brain appears to be more susceptible to microplastics than other organs — brain samples had seven to 30 times as much microplastics in them as liver and kidney samples. The scientists also used an electron microscope to identify the plastic in the tissue itself. They found small shards or flakes, in a shape that Stapleton described as “unexpected.” Most studies of microplastics' effect on cells and organs examine spherical-shaped particles — different shapes could mean different health effects. Other scientists have used mice to study how microplastics in the brain could affect health and found troubling signs. In one study from Ross and other University of Rhode Island researchers, mice were given water laced with tiny polystyrene particles, the same type of plastic that is used in plastic foam and yogurt contain-

ers. After just three weeks of exposure, the mice demonstrated cognitive changes — including changes in the brain consistent with early markers of Alzheimer's. (Humans are getting microplastics through water as well — the tiny particles have been found in bottled water and in tap water.) Researchers caution that it's still far too early to connect microplastics to specific cognitive problems, given the ways in which dementia alters the body. Patients with dementia have weaker blood-brain barriers, they warn, and have a harder time clearing toxins from the brain. In human brains, therefore, the high numbers of microplastics could be an effect of dementia or Alzheimer's, rather than the cause. Richard Thompson, a professor of marine biology at the University of Plymouth and the first scientist to use the word “microplastics,” said that linking the particles to health effects is “far more challenging” than identifying them in the first place. But Thompson, who was not involved in the current research, added that studies like this start to paint a picture of associations between microplastics and health risks. Kimberly Wise White, vice president of regulatory and scientific affairs at the American Chemistry Council, a plastics industry group, said in an email that plastic makers are working to help reduce the creation of microplastics. “The global plastics industry supports advancing scientific understanding of microplastics,” she added. Still, researchers warn that they are still just scratching the surface of what possible health risks microplastics could pose. Last year, a study found that patients with microplastics in a key artery were more likely to experience stroke, heart attack or death. But more research is needed to identify the risks — and part of the issue is the sheer ubiquity of these particles. “There are no control groups,” Campen said. “Everyone is exposed.”

DIGEST

CALIFORNIA Pacific Coast Highway reopens after wildfires

The Pacific Coast Highway reopened Monday, nearly a month after it was closed when the deadly Palisades Fire ripped through hillside Los Angeles neighborhoods, destroying properties all the way down to the beach. Traffic along the scenic shoreline route began moving again at 8 a.m. with just one lane in each direction and limited speed from Santa Monica to the Ventura County line. “Essential traffic only is strongly encouraged,” Los Angeles County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath said in a statement. Proof-of-residence or entry passes are still required to enter the Palisades burn zone. The highway partially reopened Sunday morning on the northernmost section in Malibu. Reopening of the remaining section in the Pacific Palisades area was delayed as city officials made a last-minute decision to keep the checkpoints in place over concerns of public safety and looting. Rain is in the forecast starting Tuesday, and the highway will be monitored for hazards including mud and debris flows, Horvath said.

— Associated Press

NEW YORK Law shields abortion pill prescribers

New York Gov. Kathy Hochul (D) on Monday signed a bill to shield the identities of doctors who prescribe abortion medications, days after a physician in the state was charged with prescribing abortion pills to a pregnant minor

in Louisiana. The new law, which took effect immediately, allows doctors to request that their names be left off abortion pill bottles and instead list the name of their health-care practices on medication labels. The move came after a grand jury in West Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana, indicted New York doctor Margaret Carpenter and her company Friday for allegedly prescribing abortion pills online to a pregnant minor. The case appears to be the first instance of criminal charges against a doctor accused of sending abortion pills to another state, at least since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* in 2022.

— Associated Press

MICHIGAN County will remove Bible verse from jail

A Bible verse will be removed from the entrance of a new jail in central Michigan after critics said it was a government endorsement of religion. “Blessed are the peacekeepers for they shall be called the children of God” was prominently displayed at the Isabella County criminal justice center. It is attributed to Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Sheriff Michael Main said he wanted to honor first responders and law enforcement, not promote religion. But he said the words will be removed, the Morning Sun reported. The Wisconsin-based Freedom From Religion Foundation had sent a letter to county officials, saying the message on the building would violate U.S. Supreme Court decisions about the separation between church and state.

— Associated Press

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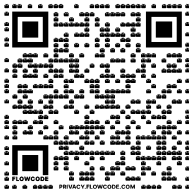


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Trump and Musk divide and conquer to carry out agenda

MUSK FROM AI

leave or retired.

Trump is not closely monitoring Musk's moves, according to people close to the president, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to speak publicly. But the people said Trump views Musk as doing the task he assigned him, and that the president benefits from letting someone else take the heat for drastic and controversial measures. One adviser described Musk as doing "the dirty work," noting that his public approval ratings were dropping.

"Elon Musk and our friends at DOGE are working very hard to find a lot of waste and fraud in the use of government," Vice President JD Vance said on "Sunday Morning Futures" with Maria Bartiromo on Fox News. "We are committed to getting America back on a sustainable fiscal pathway. Part of that, we really think the president believes, is the tariff equation. Part of that is cutting spending significantly, especially the wasteful bureaucrats."

Musk's role and reach are particularly extraordinary given that he is a private citizen — and the biggest donor in the 2024 election — who has been granted extensive access to information with no formal hearings or congressional confirmation and no defined oversight. The quasi-agency he runs was created outside a congressional process. And as Musk pursues his agenda he is also aggressively attacking critics — including Republicans — and bolstering his own views on his social media site, X.

The double impact of Trump's trade war and Musk's war on the federal administrative infrastructure risk spooking investors who had interpreted promises for tariffs and spending cuts as political posturing or negotiating tactics. Canada and Mexico immediately responded with their own tariffs, while affected companies, such as Musk's Tesla, clamored for exceptions. Trump

acknowledged the likelihood of blowback but said it would be worthwhile.

"WILL THERE BE SOME PAIN? YES, MAYBE (AND MAYBE NOT!)," he wrote Sunday on his Truth Social website. "IT WILL ALL BE WORTH THE PRICE THAT MUST BE PAID."

Shock at the speed and audaciousness of DOGE interventions has spread through the federal workforce in recent days, with some calling the newcomers setting up in executive suites "Muskovites." But the coercive tactics have also stiffened the resolve of some civil servants to stay rather than take Musk's offer to resign at the end of the fiscal year on Sept. 30.

That open invitation — branded as a "Fork in the Road," the same as an offer from Musk after his takeover of Twitter — bypassed key White House budget officials. Trump brushed off concerns that encouraging departures could hobble key agencies such as the Federal Aviation Administration, whose staffing of air traffic control towers is under scrutiny after Wednesday's collision over the Potomac that killed 67 people.

"Everybody's replaceable, and we'll get very good people to replace them," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office on Friday.

The Musk team's interest in the Treasury Department's payment system picked up where the White House budget office left off on Wednesday, with the reversal of a government-wide directive to freeze all financial assistance. Trump officials had suspected agencies of continuing payments that they thought should have been blocked by executive orders against foreign aid and diversity programs. White House officials acknowledged that the resulting budget memo was "poorly worded" and briefly disrupted operations from Medicaid to special education and housing subsidies.

The Treasury payment system — part of the Bureau of the Fiscal Service that acts as the government's checkbook — potentially presented Musk and his team a



TOM BRENNER FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Tesla CEO Elon Musk takes the stage with his son X and President-elect Donald Trump at a rally at D.C.'s Capital One Arena on Jan. 19.

way of cutting out agencies and more directly taking over the mechanism for paying or not paying bills and grants. On X, Musk has been portraying routine payments as fraudulent or illegal without specifying what or why. He did not respond to a request for comment.

"They will make it sound like we're cutting funding to save baby pandas when we're actually cutting funding to fraudsters, wastrels & terrorists," he wrote. "This is only possible because of President [Trump]."

Musk's stated goal of saving \$1 trillion would mean halving total annual outlays. Almost a third goes to Social Security and

Medicare, which Trump has promised not to cut, and 20 percent funds the military. In other words, Musk's target would be equivalent to every other dollar the government spends.

Normally, a small number of Treasury officials use the system to execute payments that other agencies authorize, not to assess the propriety information themselves. Widening access could risk exposing sensitive national security and personal information. It could also introduce errors into the clunky technology.

"These payment systems simply cannot fail, and any politically motivated meddling in them risks severe damage to our coun-

try and the economy," Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Oregon), the ranking Democrat on the Senate Finance Committee, wrote in a letter Friday to Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent. "I can think of no good reason why political operators who have demonstrated a blatant disregard for the law would need access to these sensitive, mission-critical systems."

Trump praised Musk after arriving at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland on Sunday. "I think Elon is doing a good job," he said. "Smart guy. Very smart."

As DOGE officials fanned out across federal agencies, government websites shut down, and the National Transportation

Safety Board said it would start communicating only on X, Musk's platform.

Trump and Musk's tag team played out in December during the standoff over funding the government. Musk publicly assailed a Republican-negotiated spending package, leaving lawmakers scrambling for a new agreement to avert a shutdown at the last minute. Trump declared victory even though the resulting package did not include his stated top priority of addressing the debt ceiling.

Jeff Stein, Ellen Nakashima and Mariana Alfaro contributed to this report.

U.S. attorney hints at cases over 'targeting' of 'DOGE'

MARTIN FROM AI

Martin's statement did not say what laws were broken or what evidence there was of illegal conduct, though Musk had earlier highlighted a string of menacing online posts about those working for DOGE. The images, posted on X by the account @reddit_lies, included users saying "Musk's DOGE Henchmen have identified," "let's drag their necks up by a large coil of rope" and "... doing this type of thing to the American people should result in you fearing for your life, if you get to keep it." The Reddit thread from which the images seemed to have been drawn was deleted as of Monday evening.

"They have broken the law," Musk wrote, reposting the @reddit_lies account's own message.

The letter came after a flurry of controversial DOGE-related activity in recent days, including some that drew members of Congress to the U.S. Agency for International Development on Monday to raise concerns. Musk's DOGE representatives moved over the weekend to take over and shut down that agency, removing top security officials at USAID who refused to allow DOGE representatives access to restricted spaces at the agency. DOGE representatives gained access to the Treasury Department's payment system, federal personnel files, and the agency that handles government contracts, real estate and equipment. Officials who raised concerns about access to sensitive systems retired or were put on leave.

A spokesperson for the U.S. attorney's office declined to comment. A spokeswoman for DOGE did not immediately respond to a request for comment. However, Musk reposted Martin's statement, in which the U.S. attorney added, "See something, say something."

A person close to the U.S. attorney's office, speaking on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly, said Martin was concerned for the safety of a team of software engineers working for Musk who have been named in news accounts. Martin worked with the engineers and Musk during the transition as chief of staff for Russell Vought, the nominee to lead the Office of Management and Budget, the person said.

While it is not unusual for a prosecutor to publicly confirm an investigation into a matter of public importance, Martin's statement was atypical in alleging vio-



KENT NISHIMURA/REUTERS



ROBB HILL FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

ABOVE: People demonstrate Sunday outside the Office of Personnel Management headquarters in Washington. LEFT: Edward R. Martin Jr., seen in 2021, has taken a high profile since Jan. 20, when he was appointed as the interim U.S. attorney for D.C.

law professor. "That is an abuse of power."

In Martin's letter to Musk posted Monday morning, he wrote: "It was good to work with the DOGE team this weekend. We must keep all our American government employees safe and we must protect the American people's property. Anyone imperiling others violating our laws."

Addressing Musk as "Dear Elon," and adding "Elon" in his personal handwriting, Martin assured the Trump adviser that "any threats, confrontations, or other actions in any way that impact their work may break numerous laws."

Martin has taken a high profile since Jan. 20, when the conservative activist and commentator became the first U.S. attorney for D.C. in at least 50 years to be appointed without experience as a judge or a federal prosecutor. He

fired Capitol riot prosecutors who were recently hired and still on probationary status and ordered top supervisors in the office to investigate their colleagues' handling of some prosecutions tied to the Jan. 6, 2021, attack after President Donald Trump's mass pardons. He also launched an inquiry involving Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-New York), writing to ask the top Democrat about his quickly walked-back statement in a March 2020 rally that two of Trump's Supreme Court appointees, Neil M. Gorsuch and Brett M. Kavanaugh, would "pay the price" for a vote against abortion rights.

"We take threats against public officials very seriously. I look forward to your cooperation," Martin wrote to Schumer in a Jan. 21 letter obtained by The Washington Post.

Martin has maintained an outspoken presence on his personal and official U.S. attorney social media accounts. While his bold statements are likely to be welcomed by Trump and allies, career prosecutors who have served under presidents of both parties say Martin is politicizing the office and breaking with past Justice Department practice.

McQuade said Martin's letter looked more like a press release than routine correspondence, and its familiar tone went against the notion that prosecutors are not supposed to give anyone special treatment.

"Ed Martin, with all of his rhetoric on Twitter, seems to be suggesting that he is all-in in President Trump's camp and is going to exercise his power in a way that is favorable politically," she said. "The principles of federal prosecution say that politics should never play a role in a decision that a prosecutor makes."

In his letter to Musk, Martin said he was purposefully breaking from the past administration.

"We will not act like the previous administration who looked the other way as the Antifa and BLM rioters as well as thugs with guns trashed our capital city. We will protect DOGE and other workers no matter what," Martin said.

"Please be very aware that there are those who are acting against our American people in every way," Martin wrote. "Refer to us any questionable conduct or details you find or notice. Please keep in touch."

Ellie Silverman and Aaron Schaffer contributed to this report.

lations of law before any charges were filed. Charges stemming from online threats can also be difficult — though federal law would give prosecutors jurisdiction to investigate communications via the internet and across state lines. In 2023, the Supreme Court reversed the conviction of a

man who made extensive online threats to a stranger, saying free speech protections require prosecutors to prove the stalker was aware of the threatening nature of his communications.

Barbara McQuade, who served as U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan under Presi-

dent Barack Obama, called Martin's letter highly unusual and said it appeared designed to silence Musk's critics.

"It strikes me as an effort to put a chilling effect on people who might be inclined to exercise their First Amendment rights," said McQuade, a University of Michigan

THE WORLD



Police guard the Scarlet Sails residential complex after the blast that killed Armen Sargsyan, who Ukraine said had been on an international wanted list “since May 2014 for organizing murders in central Kyiv.”

Explosion in Moscow kills man wanted by Kyiv

Ukraine’s security service had called Armen Sargsyan ‘a criminal authority from Donetsk region ... cooperating’ with Russia’s spy agency

BY FRANCESCA EBEL

MOSCOW — A man accused by Ukraine’s security service of orchestrating assassinations in Kyiv was killed Monday in an explosion in Moscow, according to Russian state news agencies.

Armen Sargsyan, 46, was critically injured in the blast and airlifted from the scene, but died in intensive care at a hospital, law enforcement officials told the Tass and Interfax news agencies.

The blast, which occurred at the Scarlet Sails residential complex on the outskirts of northwest Moscow, took place in the morning as commuters were heading to work. It reportedly injured at least four other people, including the complex’s concierge.

Sargsyan, also known as Armen Gorlovsky, was head of the Boxing Federation in eastern Ukraine’s breakaway Donetsk People’s Republic and the founder of the Arbat volunteer battalion, a pro-Russia paramilitary unit fighting in the country’s east. According to reports, Sargsyan is an Armenian who formerly held Ukrainian citizenship and lived in Horlivka, in the eastern part of Ukraine that has been controlled by Russian-linked forces since 2014.

In a Telegram post in December, Ukraine’s security service, the SBU, wrote that it had investigated Sargsyan, describing him as “a criminal authority from Donetsk region ... cooperating with the FSB,” Russia’s spy service.



The blast appeared to blow out much of the building’s lobby, shattering the entrance. At least four other people were reported injured.

“The suspect is a member of the inner circle of fugitive President Viktor Yanukovich and has been on the international wanted list since May 2014 for organizing murders in central Kyiv,” the

statement continued. The SBU added that Sargsyan’s Arbat battalion initially fought near Toretsk, a city at the center of fierce fighting in eastern Ukraine, and was later transferred to Rus-

sia’s Kursk region, which Ukrainian forces occupied in a surprise assault last summer.

The SBU declined to comment on Monday’s explosion.

The Russian Telegram channel

Mash reported that the blast occurred as Sargsyan was exiting an elevator in the building’s lobby. According to footage on Russian channels, the force of Monday’s explosion appeared to blow out

much of the lobby and shattered the front entrance. Other reports showed bomb disposal experts and sniffer dogs working at the scene, as well as an air ambulance arriving at the complex.

The explosion appears to be the latest assassination by Ukraine or pro-Ukrainian actors, demonstrating once again Kyiv’s increasing ability to reach well beyond the front lines and deep into Russian territory.

In December, a bomb hidden under an electric scooter parked outside a Moscow residence was remotely detonated, killing Lt. Gen. Igor Kirillov, head of the Russian military’s nuclear, biological and chemical weapons unit. Kirillov is believed to be the highest-ranking military official killed outside the combat zone since the war began.

The day before he was killed, the SBU charged Kirillov in absentia, accusing him of the “mass use of banned chemical weapons.” Kyiv says over 2,000 of its troops have been hospitalized because of the use of such weapons, and three have died.

Since the start of Russia’s 2022 invasion, Ukraine has been accused of (and in several cases has admitted to) orchestrating lethal operations on Russian territory. Among the most notable incidents are the 2022 car-bomb killing of Daria Dugina, daughter of the ultranationalist ideologue Alexander Dugin, and the 2023 assassination of the pro-war blogger Vladimir Tatarsky at a cafe in St. Petersburg.

DIGEST

BRITAIN
Ex-soldier who spied for Iran gets 14 years

A former British soldier convicted of spying for Iran, after an audacious three-day escape from a London prison, was sentenced Monday to more than 14 years behind bars for betraying his country.

Daniel Khalife, 23, was convicted in November of violating the Official Secrets Act and Terrorism Act for providing restricted and classified material to Iran. Jurors in Woolwich Crown Court rejected his testimony he was trying to work for Britain as a double agent.

“You had the makings of an exemplary soldier, however ... you showed yourself to be instead a dangerous fool,” Justice Bobbie Cheema-Grubb said.

Khalife’s spying case had not

received much attention until he broke out of Wandsworth Prison underneath a food delivery truck in September 2023. He was on the run for three days before being arrested on a bicycle in London. Khalife pleaded guilty to the escape, but continued to contest the spying charges.

Khalife testified that he had been in touch with people in the Iranian government but that it was all part of a ploy to work as a double agent for Britain, an idea he developed from watching the TV show “Homeland.”

Two men have been charged with aiding him after he escaped.

— Associated Press

PAKISTAN
Warning issued on Afghans with U.S. ties

Pakistan threatened to deport Afghan refugees awaiting

relocation unless cases are swiftly processed by host nations, officials said Monday.

Tens of thousands of Afghans fled to neighboring Pakistan after the Taliban took over in 2021 and were approved for resettlement in the United States through a program that helps people at risk because of their work with the American government, media, aid agencies and rights groups. But after President Donald Trump paused U.S. refugee programs last month, about 20,000 Afghans are now in limbo in Pakistan.

Pakistan’s Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif decided last week that the refugees would be deported back to Afghanistan unless their cases were processed quickly, said two security officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to talk to the media. They also said

March 31 had been set as a deadline to expel Afghan refugees from the cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi in preparation for deportation.

News about deportations has panicked many Afghans who fear it was an accident, not sabotage, a Swedish prosecutor said Monday, adding that the vessel had been released.

The Jan. 26 incident was one of several in recent months, triggering a search for culprits.

The prosecutor said that the Vezhen’s anchor severed the

cable but that the incident was related to a combination of bad weather, equipment deficiencies and poor seamanship. Swedish police had seized Maltese-flagged Vezhen the day after the cable was damaged.

A second vessel, the Silver Dania, a Norwegian cargo ship with an all-Russian crew, was seized in Norway at the request of Latvia but was cleared of wrongdoing and released.

The Baltic region is on high alert after a string of power cable, telecom link, and gas pipeline outages since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022.

— Reuters

UGANDAN
Authorities began a clinical trial of a vaccine against the Sudan strain of Ebola that has killed one person in an outbreak declared last week.

This trial is a first for the Sudan strain, according to the World

Health Organization’s director general. Health workers and others exposed to the Ebola strain are being targeted in the study, which began four days after Uganda announced the death of a nurse in the capital, Kampala. Two more cases were confirmed Monday in relatives of the first victim. Responding to this outbreak could prove difficult because Kampala has a highly mobile population of about 4 million.

Another car bomb exploded on the outskirts of the northern Syrian city of Manbij, killing at least 19 people and leaving over a dozen wounded, hospital and emergency workers said. No group claimed the blast, which occurred next to a vehicle carrying agricultural workers. It was the seventh car bombing in Manbij in about a month.

— From news services

What to know about China’s role in the fentanyl crisis

BY KATRINA NORTHPROP
AND VIC CHIANG

When President Donald Trump imposed new tariffs on Chinese goods Saturday, he homed in on a persistent sore spot in the U.S.-China relationship: Beijing’s role in the global fentanyl trade, which has fueled a deadly opioid crisis in the United States.

Announcing the new levies, Trump described the additional 10 percent tariff on all Chinese goods as a way to hold China accountable for its promises to stop “poisonous fentanyl and other drugs from flowing into our country.” He accused the ruling Chinese Communist Party of having “subsidized and otherwise incentivized” companies to ship fentanyl and related chemicals to the United States.

China’s Commerce Ministry promised Sunday to take countermeasures against the tariffs, although it gave no details, and to file a lawsuit with the World Trade Organization.

While Beijing appears to be trying to avoid escalation — it got off relatively lightly compared with the 25 percent tariffs Trump said he would impose on goods from Canada and Mexico — its criticism of Trump’s rationale for the tariffs was resounding and immediate.

Beijing described the U.S. public health crisis as a domestic issue.

Here is everything you need to know about China’s role in the opioid crisis.

What has been China’s role in the opioid crisis?

The United States has contended with an increasingly severe opioid crisis since the 1990s, when prescription opioids like OxyContin were first introduced as painkillers. Over past decade, the crisis has largely been driven by fentanyl, a potent synthetic opioid, with the covid pandemic pushing overdoses to record highs.

China, primarily due to its huge chemical manufacturing industry, was the primary source of fentanyl trafficked in the United States, according to the Drug Enforcement Administration. In 2019, however, following pressure from U.S. officials, Beijing designated fentanyl as a controlled substance, leading to a drop in direct fentanyl shipments to the United States.

But the ban didn’t eliminate China from the global fentanyl supply chain.

Chinese companies became the biggest source for fentanyl “precursors” — the chemicals needed to make the drug — which were shipped to countries such as Mexico, where criminal groups would assemble the drugs, according to a 2022 Rand report commissioned by the U.S. government. A booming online marketplace still facilitates this trade today, The Washington Post has



WANG ZHAO/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Police outside a court in China’s Hebei province in 2019, when at least nine fentanyl traffickers were sentenced in a case involving rare U.S.-Chinese collaboration.

reported.

How has China responded to Trump’s accusations about the fentanyl trade?

Beijing was quick to denounce Trump’s weekend accusations about fentanyl, arguing that the Chinese government, which maintains draconian drug laws domestically, is not responsible for an American public health crisis.

“Fentanyl is an issue for the U.S.,” a Foreign Ministry spokesperson said in a statement Sunday. “The U.S. needs to view and solve its own fentanyl issue in an objective and rational way instead of threatening other countries with arbitrary tariff hikes.”

Wang Yiwei, an international affairs expert at Beijing’s Renmin University, agreed that the root cause lies in American demand for the drugs, rather than Chinese companies’ supply.

“As long as there is a strong consumer market in the U.S., it is unfair to blame China for producing these substances,” he said. “If these substances are not produced in China, they will be produced or synthesized in Mexico or other places.”

Others are skeptical about

Trump’s use of fentanyl as a justification for tariffs, given his broader protectionist policies and his trade war with China in his first term.

Lanxin Xiang, a professor emeritus at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, described fentanyl as a “lame excuse.” But he added that the relatively moderate 10 percent tariff, compared with the 25 percent tariffs Trump announced on goods from Mexico and Canada, “indicates Trump is still in a dealmaking mood.”

Have the U.S. and China worked together on combating the fentanyl trade before?

Despite the recent bluster, China has collaborated with the United States on fentanyl issues. Under the Biden administration, Washington and Beijing set up a counternarcotics working group, a rare bright spot in an otherwise tense diplomatic relationship.

This resulted in a notice from China’s National Narcotics Control Commission (NNCC) in November 2023 warning companies not to sell fentanyl precursors, as well as China’s move to impose

new restrictions on several precursors. This new, cooperative approach also led to enhanced law enforcement collaboration: China even arrested a person indicted in the United States for involvement in money laundering on behalf of a Mexican drug cartel.

Wang Xiaohong, the NNCC director, told his counterpart in the Biden White House in January that the two countries had “made positive progress” and called on each “to promote steady and long-term” drug-control collaboration, according to state media.

U.S. fentanyl-related overdoses fell by more than a quarter in the year ending in October 2024, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The NNCC did not respond to a request for comment Monday.

Could China do more to stem the flow of fentanyl into the U.S.?

Many counternarcotics experts argue that Beijing could crack down more aggressively on precursor chemical makers operating in China, given its expansive surveillance and law enforcement apparatus.

“The truth is that if Xi Jinping and the CCP wanted to end the flow of precursors and synthetic opioids to the U.S., they can most certainly do so,” said John Coyne, director of national security programs at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, using an acronym for the Chinese Communist Party. “The CCP operate probably the most sophisticated surveillance of their population of any population in the history of humankind. So if they wanted to stop that flow, they could.”

But it may not be as simple as it appears, said Zongyuan Zoe Liu, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations who has studied China’s fentanyl supply chain. China has a sprawling chemicals industry with a vast number of small firms and intertwining illegal and legal operations.

“It’s going to be a very big national mobilization to identify where [the manufacturers] are,” she said, arguing that companies “can just quickly change the name and restart the business elsewhere.”

Liu added that Chinese law enforcement is not set up well to coordinate on this issue and has overlapping authorities from national and local governments, as

well as security and drug agencies.

“Even if China wants to do it, it may not necessarily have the capacity because of the fragmented nature of China’s anti-narcotics operation,” she said.

Will tariffs help bring about an end to the chemical shipments?

It is unclear how increased tariffs will help stanch the flow of drug precursors from China, other than building up negotiating leverage with Beijing.

Wang, of Renmin University, cautioned that the tariffs may even hurt the cause.

“China has consistently enforced strict measures to combat the fentanyl issue,” he said. “However, if Trump continues to use tariffs to pressure China, Beijing may decide that it is unwilling to cooperate further.”

The Foreign Ministry spokesperson sent a similar warning in Sunday’s statement. The tariffs, the spokesperson said, are “bound to affect and harm the counternarcotics cooperation between the two sides in the future.”

Lyric Li in Seoul contributed to this report.

Trump threatens to cut U.S. aid to South Africa over land expropriation law

BY KATHARINE HOURELD
AND LESLEY WROUGHTON

NAIROBI — President Donald Trump has threatened to cut all U.S. aid to South Africa while claiming, without evidence, that the government there is confiscating land, wading into a sensitive racial issue while deepening already sharp divisions between the United States and South Africa over the wars in Gaza and Ukraine.

In a post on Truth Social on Sunday, Trump wrote that South Africa “is confiscating land, and treating certain classes of people VERY BADLY,” in comments widely interpreted as referring to White South Africans. “I will be cutting off all future funding to South Africa until a full investigation of this situation has been completed!”

The subject of Trump’s post appeared to be a recent law allowing the expropriation of land without compensation in rare cases — a measure South Africa’s government has said is aimed at ending racial disparities in land ownership in the post-apartheid era. Trump’s comments were not the first time he has waded into South Africa’s sensitive racial politics, after suggesting during his first term, also without evidence, that there were “large scale” killings under way of White farmers in South Africa.

Elon Musk, who was born in South Africa and is one of Trump’s most prominent allies, has also repeatedly accused South Africa’s government of anti-White racism, touching on themes popular with far-right groups in the United States.

“Why do you have openly racist ownership laws?” Musk wrote on X on Monday, in response to a post by South African President Cyril Ramaphosa explaining the expropriation law and denying that land had been confiscated.

South Africa’s government has framed land reform as a “moral, social and economic imperative,” because of the systemic dispossession of Black South Africans under apartheid. The country’s first comprehensive land audit in 2017 found that the minority White population owned 72 percent of individually owned farms and agricultural holdings. Mixed-race citizens — referred to officially as Coloured — owned a further 15 percent, Indians owned 5 percent and Africans owned 4 percent.

Since 1994, the government has sought to redistribute land based on a voluntary “willing-seller, willing-buyer” system and by paying compensation. So far, those policies, combined with private sales of land, government land acquisition and other programs, have moved 25 percent of all farmland previously owned by White landowners to Black South African ownership or state ownership, according to research by Stellenbosch University in South Africa.

Ramaphosa, in his lengthy post on X on Monday, said the expropriation law “is not a confiscation instrument, but a constitutionally mandated legal process that ensures public access to land in an equitable and just manner as guided by the constitution.”

“South Africa, like the United States of America and other countries, has always had expro-



ALEX BRANDON/AP

Elon Musk, who was born in South Africa, reacts as President-elect Donald Trump speaks at a rally a day before his inauguration.

priation laws that balance the need for public usage of land and the protection of rights of property owners,” he added.

“We look forward to engaging with the Trump administration over our land reform policy and issues of bilateral interest,” he wrote.

It was not immediately clear what assistance Trump wanted to suspend; in 2023, the United States committed nearly \$440 million in assistance to South Africa, the most recent year that full data is available. The lion’s share went to health programs, especially HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention.

Ramaphosa, in his post on X, said aid from PEPFAR, a U.S.-funded AIDS prevention program, made up 17 percent of South Africa’s HIV/AIDS program, but apart from that, the South African government re-

quires no direct aid from the United States.

Trump could also suspend South Africa’s participation in the U.S. African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), which provides eligible sub-Saharan African countries with duty-free access to the U.S. market. The act — due for renewal this year — requires privileged trading partners to have market-based economies, the rule of law, political pluralism and the right to due process, among other conditions.

Gwede Mantashe, South Africa’s mineral and petroleum resources minister, told a mining conference in Cape Town on Monday that the country should withhold minerals from the United States if Trump follows through on funding cuts. “If they don’t give us money, let us not give them minerals,” Mantashe said. “We are not just beggars,” he

added, urging other African nations to use their mineral wealth as leverage.

South Africa exports gold, platinum, diamonds, manganese, chromite and iron ore to the United States, which are valued for their catalytic properties in items like car exhaust systems, chemical processes and fuel cells.

A proposal to suspend South Africa from AGOA was floated under the Biden administration in 2023 after South Africa hosted a Russian warship that year flying the letter “Z” — a rallying cry for the war in Ukraine — and participated in a joint naval exercise with Russia and China on the anniversary of the Ukrainian invasion. There was no suspension, but the incident underscored U.S. uneasiness with South Africa’s close ties to Russia — which date back decades, to when Russia supported and trained those fighting the apartheid government, which was supported by several U.S. administrations.

The war in Gaza has also chilled relations between Pretoria and Washington. At the end of 2023, South African lawyers filed a genocide case against Israel in the International Criminal Court, alleging that Israel’s conduct against Palestinians mirrored some of the actions of South Africa’s own previous apartheid government. Washington, a staunch supporter of Israel during the war, has repeatedly denied any suggestion that Israel’s war against Hamas in Gaza amounts to genocide.

Ernst van Zyl, head of public relations at AfriForum, a South African group that often takes legal cases on behalf of White

South African farmers, said it would write to Washington and request that U.S. sanctions target members of the ruling African National Congress party in place of punitive measures against South African residents. AfriForum said it would also table an amendment to the Expropriation Act to protect property rights.

Wandile Sihlobo, a senior fellow in the department of agricultural economics at Stellenbosch University, said the South African expropriation law merely updated legislation from 1975 and that both the law and constitution required compensation for land to be “just and equitable.”

“There is no land grab,” he told The Washington Post, calling Trump’s comments “misinformed.”

“The land reform process is still continuing on the open market,” he said. “The South African government has now purchased in the open market about 2.5 million hectares of land which will be ... transferred to Black South Africans with title deeds.”

South Africa’s agricultural sector has more than doubled in value and volume since the end of apartheid in 1994, exporting now half of what it produces, he said. This is not the case in neighboring Zimbabwe, where large-scale land seizures devastated the economy, causing the migration of millions of citizens.

That’s one reason there is not widespread political support for such seizures in South Africa, as fear of a Zimbabwean-style collapse often looms in conversation with South Africans of all races.

Wroughton reported from Cape Town.

Netanyahu portrays Washington visit as a triumph despite hurdles over Gaza

BY SHIRA RUBIN

TEL AVIV — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is in Washington this week as the first foreign leader granted an audience with President Donald Trump, a visit he has framed as a personal honor, a signal of his close relationship with the U.S. leader and a vindication of Israel's actions over 15 months of war across the Middle East.

Israeli military operations — in Gaza, Iran, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen — have “already redrawn the map,” Netanyahu said Sunday before departing for Washington. “But I believe that working closely with President Trump, we can redraw it even further and for the better,” he added, suggesting that the trip would reap further benefits for Israel.

But his week-long visit was already shaping up to be less of a victory lap than a series of brass-tacks negotiations with U.S. officials over the ceasefire in Gaza, along with other regional conflicts Trump would like to see resolved or tamped down, according to former and current Israeli officials.

“I have no assurances that it will hold,” Trump told reporters Monday at the White House, referring to the Gaza truce. “I have no guarantees that the peace is going to hold.”

Netanyahu is scheduled to meet Trump in the afternoon on Tuesday. On Monday, he was expected to hold talks with the president's Middle East envoy, Steve Witkoff, who recently traveled to Israel and Gaza to oversee the implementation of the ceasefire.

The agreement, mediated by Egypt, Qatar and the United States, began Jan. 19 and includes an initial phase of 42 days. Phase-two negotiations are expected to start this week, with some issues still unresolved, including Israel's options for resuming its war against Hamas.

Qatar's prime minister on Sunday urged the two sides to immediately return to the negotiating table, “as stipulated in the agreement,” Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani said at a news conference with Turkey's foreign minister, Reuters reported. “There is nothing yet clear about where the delegations will come and when it's going to take place.”



People cheer and wave to freed hostages aboard a helicopter as it arrives at a medical center in Petah Tikva, Israel, on Jan. 25.

Netanyahu is under pressure from far-right members of his coalition to resume the war after the agreement's first phase.

“The second stage, which includes declaring an end to the war and the withdrawal of the IDF, will not happen,” Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich said at a news conference Monday, referring to the Israel Defense Forces.

Israeli newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth reported Sunday that Israel is demanding the exile of Hamas leaders, the demilitarization of the Gaza Strip and the release of all hostages, dead or alive, in the second phase.

Over the past two weeks, Hamas and allied militants have released 18 hostages who were abducted in the attacks on Oct. 7, 2023, including 13 Israelis and five Thai nationals. Israel has also freed more than 580 Palestinian prisoners and detainees, allowed more aid to flow into Gaza and



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu acknowledges the audience after addressing a joint meeting of Congress in July.

withdrawn its troops from key military posts in the enclave.

Trump and Netanyahu agree broadly that Hamas should be removed from Gaza, but there is no consensus on the timeline,

said Yaki Dayan, Israel's former consul general in Los Angeles, who has been briefed on the government's preparations for the White House meetings.

“By the time Netanyahu and

Trump meet eye to eye, there needs to be as few gaps as possible,” Dayan said, adding that the prime minister's meeting with Witkoff on Monday was aimed at bridging any disagreements before his audience with Trump.

“Netanyahu is trying to get a different framework from the second phrase or to get guarantees from Trump that he can show to the Israeli coalition that Hamas cannot be part of the new Gaza,” said an Israeli official who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the deliberations with the media.

It is also unclear whether the two leaders will agree on how to approach Iran. Tehran has been significantly weakened by the regional turmoil, with Israel battering Iran's key ally, Hezbollah, in Lebanon. It also lost its foothold in Syria, where both Iran and Hezbollah had propped up the regime of President Bashar al-

Trump halts tariffs on Mexico and Canada for 30 days

TARIFFS FROM A1

a border security package, including the appointment of a fentanyl czar and several previously announced initiatives.

“I am very pleased with this initial outcome, and the Tariffs announced on Saturday will be paused for a 30 day period to see whether or not a final Economic deal with Canada can be structured. FAIRNESS FOR ALL!” the president wrote on his social media site, Truth Social.

The presidential pause for Canada came hours after U.S. Customs and Border Protection issued its official guidance for importers on the new 25 percent import taxes, which were scheduled to take effect on Canadian products at 12:01 a.m. Eastern time Tuesday.

As of 6 p.m., the White House had indicated no change in plans to increase tariffs on Chinese goods by 10 percent. Earlier in the day, Trump told reporters that he “would be speaking to China, probably in the next 24 hours,” leaving open the possibility of a third delay.

The flurry of diplomatic activity cooled financial market unease but left unresolved key questions about Trump's ultimate aims in reshaping relations with U.S. neighbors and global commerce.

“It causes massive havoc for our industry. There is no bigger killer for industry than uncertainty,” said Kip Eideberg, senior vice president for government relations with the Association of Equipment Manufacturers. “As a negotiating tactic, this is not advisable at all. Damage will be done every time there's another tariff temper tantrum.”

The Dow Jones Industrial Average sank 630 points, or 1.4 percent, in early trading before rebounding to end the day down 122 points.

The administration hailed Mexico's border reinforcement as vindication of the president's aggressive stance.

“For three days a lot of the far left has actively rooted against America and argued we'd get nothing out of President Trump's demand that Mexico secure its country,” Vice President JD Vance



Trucks line up in Tijuana, Mexico, to cross the border into the United States last month.

posted on X. “Well, how do you like them apples.”

But the past week's trade policy showdown triggered outrage in Mexico and Canada. Spectators at National Hockey League and NBA games in Canada over the weekend booed the U.S. national anthem. The on-again, off-again trade war left companies throughout the United States puzzling over how much of Trump's tariff talk was negotiating bravado and how much was real.

Increased tariffs on China are just “the opening salvo,” and additional import taxes will be levied on European goods “pretty soon,” the president told reporters Monday, repeating a threat he made shortly after being inaugurated.

On Wall Street, analysts in recent days scrambled to reassess economic forecasts that generally assumed Trump would use tariff threats as a club to coerce other countries into offering policy concessions but would stop short of disrupting trade ties.

Saturday's blitz of executive

orders announcing tariffs on imports from China, Mexico and Canada rattled that confidence. The United States' top three trading partners were complicit, the president said, in a flood of illicit drugs and migrants that represented a “national emergency.”

Economists at JPMorgan Private Bank initially thought tariffs on Canada and Mexico were unlikely. Trump's tendency to talk tough and then bargain, as he did with Colombia over its acceptance of migrant deportation flights, and with Mexico and Canada on Monday, supports that view, according to Joseph Seydl, senior markets economist at JPMorgan Private Bank.

But that assessment now looks less solid. If actually implemented, the tariffs on Mexico, Canada and China would trim up to 1 percentage point from the U.S. economy's growth rate, nearly cutting it in half, Seydl said.

“The odds of a wider trade war than we had anticipated are actually going up,” he said.

Across North America on Mon-

day, businesses scrambled to prepare for whatever emerged from the last-minute White House talks with the Mexican and Canadian leaders.

Among those that would be hardest-hit are manufacturers of passenger cars and heavy-duty equipment. Regional supply chains cross U.S. national borders as easily as the lines on the map that separate Ohio and Indiana.

Eideberg's association represents major equipment-makers such as Caterpillar and John Deere, whose products traverse the borders with Mexico and Canada an average of 14 times before being completed. If those tractors, loaders and excavators were assessed a 25 percent tax on each journey, they would quickly become unaffordable, Eideberg said.

Trump's first-term tariffs on imported steel and Chinese goods raised equipment makers' costs by 8 to 10 percent, costing thousands of jobs. Amid the threat of new tariffs, Eideberg's members are pausing investment and hir-

ing plans.

“This seems like a great self-inflicted wound,” he said.

Home builders, already under pressure from high mortgage rates, had asked the administration to exempt building materials from its tariff plans. But the request was denied, said Jim Tobin, president of the National Association of Home Builders. The housing industry relies heavily on lumber from Canada, gypsum from Mexico and electronics from China. Trump's plan to tax those imports is at odds with his promise to lower housing costs, the group said.

Builders have generally cheered Trump's return, hoping for streamlined regulations that will make projects more efficient. But thin margins mean more companies will probably start writing contracts that allow them to adjust prices as material costs keep climbing, Tobin said.

“There isn't a room that won't be affected by these tariffs,” he said. “It's a whole-house tariff.”

Monday began with Sheinbaum posting on X that after a “good conversation” with Trump, Mexico would deploy 10,000 national guard troops to its border to block the flow of drugs into the United States.

The United States pledged to work to stop the illegal trafficking of weapons to Mexico, she said. Trump's account of the agreement on Truth Social made no mention of that commitment but said the deployment of Mexican troops “will be specifically designated to stop the flow of fentanyl, and illegal migrants into our Country.”

Sheinbaum told reporters that she had reached out to Trump on Friday, but they were only able to speak Monday morning. During the roughly 45-minute call, she proposed suspending the tariffs while the two sides worked out an agreement on security and trade, the Mexican leader told a news conference. Trump asked how long she wanted to hold off on the tariffs.

“I said, ‘Let's pause them forever,’” she told reporters, laughing. When he repeated the question, she agreed to a month-long delay. “I'm sure, in a month, we

Assad. Syrian rebels, eyeing Hezbollah's defeat, seized the opportunity to march on Damascus and overthrow the Assad government.

“There's no longer talk about attacking Iran,” the Israeli official said. Soon after Iran fired a barrage of ballistic missiles at Israel in October, the government drew up plans for a potential joint strike with the United States on Tehran's nuclear facilities.

But the new administration is focused on a different goal in the region, one that would require an end to the fighting, the official said.

“Trump is interested in rebuilding Gaza through a regional agreement with the UAE and the Saudis,” the official said, referring to the United Arab Emirates. “Netanyahu will not go against Trump,” the official said.

One key question is how hard Trump's team will push Netanyahu to stick to the Gaza ceasefire agreement, which will eventually address who will administer and rebuild the enclave, said Gayil Talshir, a political scientist at Hebrew University.

“It's one thing to tell Bibi, ‘You need to finish the war and get the hostages back, at some point,’ and it's another to say, ‘No, you are not returning to combat,’” she said, using a common nickname for the prime minister. “Witkoff will need to be hard with Netanyahu, because ending the war will mean new elections in Israel.”

She said Netanyahu may request an extension of the first phase of the deal and argue that continued Hamas control of Gaza makes it impossible to pursue the next phases of the ceasefire.

It was also possible, she said, that Netanyahu would acquiesce to Trump's wishes, given the pressure he has already exerted through Witkoff, sending him to the region twice last month.

Trump has also indicated that he wants Israel and Saudi Arabia to normalize relations as part of a grand bargain in the Middle East. Saudi officials have said such a step would require a clear path toward the establishment of a Palestinian state.

“Trump thinks that regional peace is possible,” the Israeli official said. “And Bibi would want to stay on the same page as him.”

Lior Soroka in Tel Aviv contributed to this report.

can provide results,” she said.

In announcing the tariffs, Trump had emphasized his concern about the smuggling of fentanyl over the border. The highly addictive opioid has killed tens of thousands of Americans in recent years. U.S. authorities say Mexican cartels manufacture the drug, using chemicals imported from China and other countries.

Mexico already has thousands of troops stationed near the U.S. border, as part of a broad effort to contain irregular migration to the United States. It's unclear how much the additional Mexican troops can do to halt the trafficking of fentanyl, which is difficult to detect. Unlike heroin, cocaine or marijuana, it is highly compact. It is generally produced in small, informal laboratories, some of them in apartment buildings.

Trudeau's announcement Monday repeated a \$900 million border plan the government unveiled in December, which featured the deployment of new helicopters, surveillance systems and personnel. In new commitments, the prime minister agreed to designate international drug cartels as terrorists and signed an intelligence directive, without providing details.

Trump's tariff threats united Canadians in an unusual anti-U.S. sentiment. Trudeau said Saturday that Canada would impose retaliatory levies on \$106 billion worth of U.S. products. Several provincial leaders yanked U.S. alcohol from store shelves and said they would limit procurement opportunities for American companies.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford said Monday that he would pause the province's retaliatory measures but added that the threat of tariffs had not gone away.

“Whether it's tomorrow, in a month or a year from now when we're renegotiating the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, President Trump will continue to use the threat of tariffs to get what he wants,” he said in a post on X.

Amanda Coletta in Toronto and Valentina Muñoz Castillo in Mexico City contributed to this report.



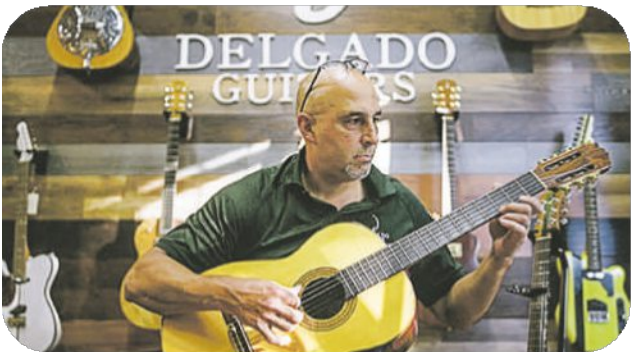
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Ace Sign Co. in Springfield, IL can quickly visualize concepts for their high-profile neon signs. This gives them a vital starting point to work off of. So instead of tinkering behind a laptop, they can spend their time physically crafting their amazing signs. Just like they have for decades.



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Family Vision Care of Ponca City, Oklahoma

Jacobsen Salt Co., Oregon

The Fulton Theatre, Pennsylvania

Sweet Talk Floral, Rhode Island

American Cornhole League, South Carolina

The Good Earth Farm, South Dakota

Delgado Guitars, Tennessee

Bison Coolers, Texas

Momentum Climbing Gym, Utah

NE Center for Circus Arts, Vermont

Penny's Wine Shop, Virginia


No Limbits, Washington

Custard Stand Chili, West Virginia

Wisconsin Cheese Mart, Wisconsin

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THREATS FROM AI

after that, a 13-year-old was charged for a post on TikTok (“I will be shooting up heritage middle school on 9/13/24”).

More threats would rapidly follow, in Volusia County and across the country, as if a pathogen had been set loose. An analysis of news reports by The Washington Post found that at least 477 people — 90 percent of them students — were arrested in the two weeks after the Georgia massacre. That’s nearly 100 more than in the aftermaths of the three previous mass school shootings combined.

Volusia’s elected sheriff, Mike Chitwood, a registered independent and brash Philadelphia native, decided he’d had enough. In the past week, he’d deployed dozens of deputies and spent an extra \$21,000 in taxpayer money. On the previous night alone, his office had received 54 tips.

“This is absolutely out of control, and it ends now,” he said at a news conference, in the same moment his investigators were tracking down two more children, one 13 and the other 12.

“Since parents, you don’t want to raise your kids, I’m going to start raising ’em,” he continued. “Every time we make an arrest, your kid’s photo is going to be put out there. And if I can do it, I’m going to perp walk your kid.”

His ultimatum was a hit on social media. In the weeks ahead, children, parents, teachers, administrators and police officers would all wrestle with what it meant in real life.

A boy named Armando, who was 11, was sleeping with his tan baby blanket when his mom rubbed his shoulder until he opened his eyes.

“The police are at the door,” she told him just past 4 a.m. on Sept. 16, so he slid on sweatpants and waited in the living room of their Port Orange home while a team in black vests searched his room for guns.

Body-cam footage shows what happened next to the boy, who, with his mother’s permission, The Post is identifying only by his middle name. Armando, a bright, round-faced kid who tends to lose his breath when he talks too fast, sat on the bed beside his mom and listened.

The detectives, who had worked the case through the night, knew he had showed off his collection of knives and airsoft guns during a FaceTime call with three other kids that weekend. Detectives had already interviewed each of the children, who disagreed on whether Armando claimed the guns were real or if he threatened to shoot up a school or if a “hit list” he had composed was a joke.

He told the investigators, in a voice yet to reach puberty, that he was “pretty sure” he’d mentioned to his friends that the guns were toys, but he figured they could spot the orange tips that indicate they’re not real. Armando swore he didn’t threaten to attack any schools.

“Did you write a list down?” asked his mom, Jessica.

“I didn’t, no,” he said, before acknowledging that wasn’t true. “I did, yes.”

The detectives had already found a notebook with names jotted down in black marker. “Did you joke and say that it was a ‘hit list’ or a ‘kill list’?” one of them asked.

“I jokingly said it was a ‘hit list,’ in a joking manner, but then, um —” Armando said.

His mom interjected. “Does this look like a joke to you?”

“No, ma’am.”

Twelve minutes later, one of the detectives told Armando that they would have to arrest him. The boy’s mouth fell open, but no words came out. He slumped forward onto the bed and cried into a blanket.

“Breathe,” his mom told him.

“I can’t,” he said, in a whisper.

Later, in the kitchen, Armando, coughing and hyperventilating, placed his hands behind his back. “Ohhh,” his mom moaned, a hand covering her mouth as the handcuffs clicked shut.

In a video released later that



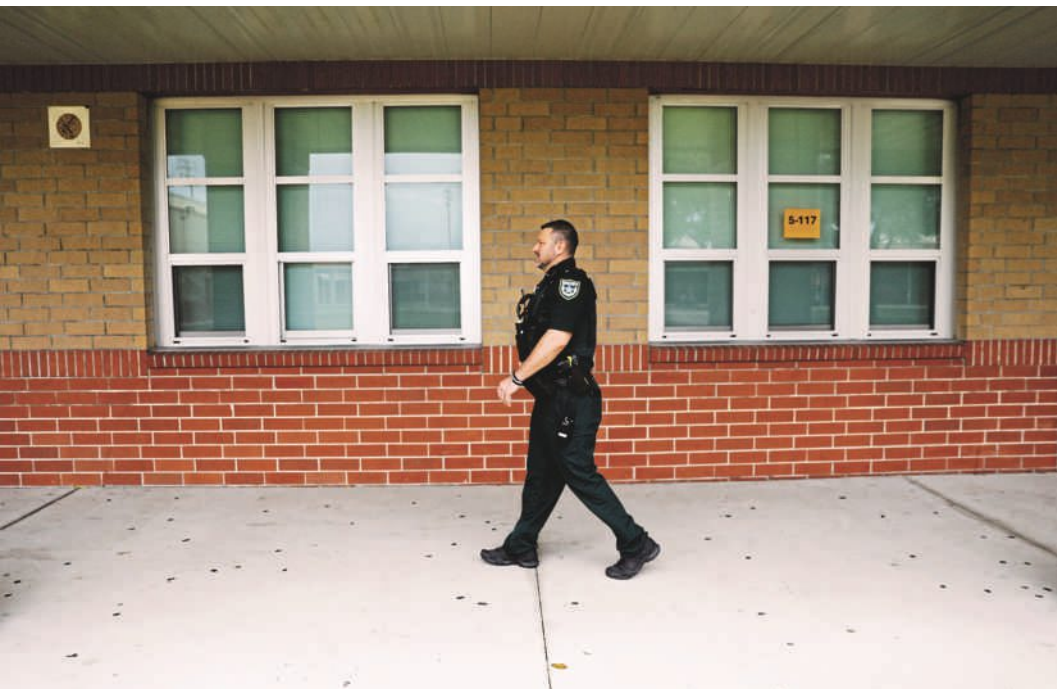
OCTAVIO JONES FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

A hard line on threats in a zero-tolerance posture

FROM TOP: Jessica’s 11-year-old son Armando was arrested and spent 12 days in a detention center. Volusia County Sheriff Mike Chitwood pointed to a drop in arrests after he began publicizing names and faces. School resource officer Christopher Newman patrols campus.



THOMAS SIMONETTI FOR THE WASHINGTON POST



OCTAVIO JONES FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

day, he steps from the back of an SUV, his wrists still cuffed.

“Right this way, young man,” a deputy says, as the boy quietly shuffles down the sidewalk, his white Nike flip-flops scraping the pavement. Inside the building, his ankles are shackled before he is ushered into an empty holding cell.

“You have any questions?” the man asks.

“No, sir,” he says, voice quavering.

The video, posted by the Volusia Sheriff’s Office to YouTube and Instagram, has been viewed more than 170,000 times, and nearly all of the most-liked comments praise the sixth-grader’s public shaming.

On another day, on another campus, in another part of Volusia, another educator was reckoning with the same epidemic.

Principal Jason Watson opened the email just before 1 p.m. His heart beat loud in his ears.

“I will be going to Atlantic High School and shooting every cis gendered person I see with my dad’s guns,” the message read. “In fact I am already parked nearby in a red Honda Civic with some handguns. ... When this is all over this entire country shall remember my name.”

There was no time to read it twice. The principal clicked a series of keys on his computer, placing Atlantic High into a “hold.” Wall alarms throughout campus flashed purple, part of the security operation that costs the district \$6.9 million per year. Alerts buzzed on computers and phones, telling students to stay inside their classrooms, asking teachers to close their doors and check the locks.

Watson yanked the walkie-talkie from his belt. “Where are you guys?” he asked his crisis team. “I got something.”

What unfolded that day now happens so often it has become part of the landscape of American education.

Educators buy expensive alert technologies. They hire large staffs or even create departments devoted to security. They start the school year with assemblies teaching students where and how to hide.

“It’s putting a huge drain on school administrators who are already overloaded,” said Kenneth Trump, president of the con-

sulting firm National School Safety and Security Services.

Inside Atlantic High, staff and students didn’t know the threat was fake or that the person who made it would never get caught.

April Travis paused her lesson on the principles of teaching. She looked out at the room of seniors, who’d signed up for the class because they might want to become educators. What if this time, she thought, someone really had a gun?

On the opposite side of campus, math teacher Caleb Rich crossed to his classroom door. As he pulled a black shade over the window, he pictured Atlantic’s campus: Its tall, chain-link fencing. Its single entry point, protected by a security guard. The heavy metal door against his palms.

In her theater class, 17-year-old Oriyah Wallace put down her mechanical pencil. She mouthed the phrase she repeats during every lockdown: “Everybody is safe until we’re told otherwise.”

And senior Dominick Nash, 18, recalled all the times he’d seen Atlantic High lock its doors or halt class for threats, starting when he was a freshman and a boy showed up to campus with a pistol tucked in his pants.

By this, his senior year, he knew exactly what to do when the wall alarms blazed different colors. Purple, like today, meant stay where you are. Green meant evacuate. Red, a “lockdown,” meant leave your desk and huddle beneath the shark sticker, a tiny version of the Atlantic mascot placed in the area of every classroom where students are most protected from gunfire.

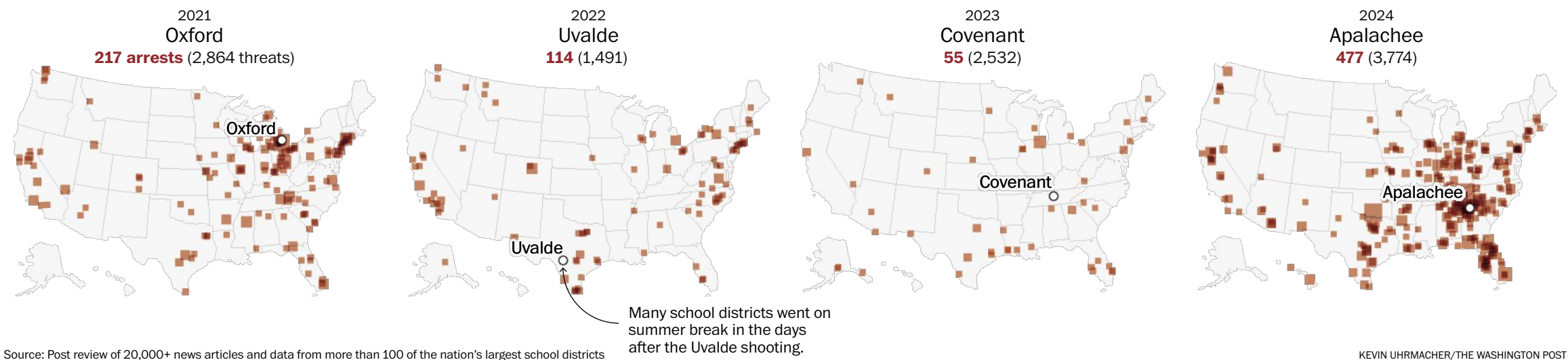
On his first day behind bars, Armando ate Goldfish crackers and learned that most of the other boys were there for stealing guns or beating people bloody. One teenager threatened to kill him, Armando said, but he didn’t really mean it. Nearly all the other inmates were older than he was. To him, some of them looked like grown-ups.

In his cell at the Volusia Regional Juvenile Detention Center, Armando said, he found “Hail Satan” written on the wall, a message he covered in toothpaste and toilet paper. When he noticed an upside-down cross above the door, Armando, just over 5 feet tall, stepped back and jumped, then kept jumping until he knocked it down. He placed the

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

More arrests in the weeks after Apalachee

Arrests over school threats in the two weeks after mass school shootings





VOLUSIA SHERIFF'S OFFICE

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

cross over his bed, right-side up.

Armando, who said he'd never thrown a punch or taken one, got slapped in the back of the neck by a cellmate who wanted to annoy him. Another teen peed in a soap bucket the boys all shared. Armando witnessed at least three fights, he said, and, during one, caught a stray fist in the chest.

Every day, he sat on his bed and cried.

Eventually, though, he learned how to get by, figuring that "just being nice and existing" was the best approach. He gave away milk and oatmeal and, once, a brownie, hoping the generosity would help him make friends, or at least avoid enemies. Other children ordered his cellmate to stop bothering him, he said, and the teen who'd threatened to kill him instead looked out for him, promising to leave Armando his bank of phone minutes if he got out first. He learned how to shuffle cards and play spades, and he liked the guards, who sometimes gave him Kit Kat bars when he volunteered to mop or pick up trash. One of them nicknamed him "Dorito" after mispronouncing his last name. That made him laugh.

Each morning, an older teen who called himself a preacher prayed with Armando, and each night, he talked to God alone.

"Please keep me safe," he asked.

By then, his arrest had made national news, drawing widespread praise online in comments that included, "I support this 100%," "Get this thug out of here!!" and "Don't ask them if they're alright just book them."

Experts in child psychology and criminology condemned Chitwood's approach.

"There's absolutely no evidence that is going to be helpful in reducing the level of threats," said Deborah Weisbrot, a psychiatry professor at Stony Brook University and author of a 20-year study on students who make school threats. "I do think it's possible that could further humiliate and embarrass a child, and they could go further underground in whatever the distress was that led them to make the threat in the first place."

Chitwood anticipated blowback but dismissed what little he heard. Profane and mustachioed, the 61-year-old had long welcomed controversy. In 2023, he led a public campaign against white supremacists he frequently referred to as "scumbags."

To critics of his approach with the accused children, he pointed to the precipitous drop in arrests after he began publicizing names and faces: from five, the week of, to seven to two to one to zero.

"I have to worry about the 99 percent of students who are going to school to do the right thing. I have to worry about teachers, administrators and parents. Somebody else could worry about little Johnny or little Janie," he said. "I cannot have schools and after-school activities and parents and teachers running around in fear."

At Armando's home, his mom, Jessica, struggled to process what had happened.

Along with his perp walk video, the sheriff's office had shared images of the array of airsoft guns he'd spent years collecting. Jessica resented that her son, an hon-

or-roll student not allowed to watch R-rated movies, had been branded as a would-be school shooter, potentially for life.

She rejected the notion popular among online commenters that she was to blame or had given her son an irresponsible number of weapons. It wasn't illegal, she noted, for Armando to own the airsoft guns or plunk cans with them in the backyard. Several didn't fire anyway.

"They tried to make him out to be this little monster," she said of the sheriff's office.

His treatment galled her in large part because of an incident that had happened the year before.

In late March 2023, according to an incident report, a teacher at his elementary school had found another "kill list." And the only name on it was Armando's.

In that case, the report said, the sheriff's office determined the girl who made the list had no history of disciplinary issues and may not have understood what she had done. Case closed.

Jessica can't understand why the same sheriff's office treated two similar allegations so differently.

"What occurred this year has nothing to do with what happened the year before," Chitwood said. "This year, it was out of control. And we announced what we were going to do. They were all given a warning."

In the detention center, Armando knew nothing about the other case, because his mom had never told him he'd been named on a supposed kill list. She wanted to preserve his innocence.

As the days passed, Armando began to wonder how long he would remain there. He tried to ignore the kid who told him he'd never go free.

One day, he said, a guard approached.

"You're on the TV," the man said.

It had been two days since the video of Armando's arrest began to spread online, and the leaders of Volusia County Schools had decided to leave no doubt for the rest of their students about what would happen if they, too, threatened a campus. Early on the afternoon of Sept. 18, the principal at T. Dewitt Taylor Middle-High School, in a rural swath of the county 25 miles from the beach, announced over the intercom that teachers were about to play a clip of Chitwood from the recent news conference.

The teens watched and listened as the sheriff delivered his ultimatums: Zero tolerance. Felony charges. Faces on posters. Arrests recorded and shared.

Just then, the deputy assigned to the school, Christopher Newman, got a call from the sheriff's office. The FBI, which has spent millions to monitor social media for potential danger, had detected a threat against Taylor, made minutes earlier by someone *on campus*.

Newman radioed the principal, and the school was placed on a hold. The cellphone used to make the threat was traced to an address where four of Taylor's students lived. At the time, Newman said, each was in a different classroom.

He knew two of them. They were cousins, a boy and a girl.

FROM TOP: Two teen students in Volusia County were arrested for threatening to shoot up their school immediately after a warning about the consequences. Jason Watson, a principal in Port Orange, Florida, talks with students in December. Kelly Cope, 47, with her daughter Journey Cope, 13, who feared she could be targeted by a student.



OCTAVIO JONES FOR THE WASHINGTON POST



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How The Post reported on school threats

Why we named some children arrested by police for threats

The Post seldom names juveniles charged with a crime. A reporter interviewed two students in Volusia County, Florida, accused of threats. With their families' permission, The Post is identifying each of them, Laurie and Armando, by their middle names. Armando's mother asked to be identified by her first name, Jessica. Another parent to a child accused of making a threat asked to be identified by his middle name, Allen.

How we reported on the explosion of post-shooting school threats

The Post paired large-scale data analysis with intimate human storytelling to explore the rising tide of violent threats that plague schools nationwide in the days after deadly school shootings. Post reporters first gathered and reviewed tens of thousands of school records and news articles, finding that both threats and arrests exploded after the September shooting at Georgia's Apalachee High. Then reporters traveled to Volusia County, Fla., to spend time inside one school district that saw a rash of threats and a harsh law enforcement crackdown, including the decision to perp-walk an 11-year-old.

How we collected and analyzed data on school threats

The Post sought and reviewed two different types of data for this story. Post reporters filed public records requests with more than 100 of the nation's largest districts, seeking the number of threats they received in the two weeks after the last four mass school shootings. Post reporters also reviewed more than 20,000 news articles to identify the number of students arrested for making school threats in the two weeks after each shooting.

Newman decided to start with the boy, rushing toward a distant red-brick building where the 16-year-old attended classes.

On his way, it struck him just how brazen these students had been. A threat made against the school, at the school, immediately after a warning about the consequences of threatening a school.

Good God, he thought. *Are you kidding me?*

In the boy's classroom, he snatched his backpack and ordered him outside. Newman took the teen's phone.

"I'ma shoot up the school," his cousin, the girl, had joked on Snapchat, sending him an identical note in a direct message.

His reply: "Same."

Newman left him with another deputy and headed across campus to retrieve his cousin. He unlocked the door to classroom 5-115 and spotted the girl, who was 17, in the middle of the room, according to body-cam footage. Newman knew her. She had anger issues and used to get in fights, but he'd seen her make progress.

Newman sighed and gathered her bag.

"I need your computer, too," he said.

She stood and walked to the classroom door, pausing next to a sign that read "DREAM BIG." She placed her hands behind her back. She laughed.

"This is not even the time to ever joke about that," he told her.

"Me and my cousin were texting by ourselves," she said.

"When you use words like, 'I'ma shoot up the school,' the FBI picks up on that," he replied as she was led down the hallway.

Newman, a school resource deputy for 18 years, had never wanted any other role in law enforcement. Bearded and broad chested, the father of four knew he could look intimidating, so Newman wore googly eyes on his body camera. The kids called him "Dep."

Nothing had changed the dynamic among students or the complexities of his work more than social media, and the episode at Taylor reminded him, yet again, just how easily it could be weaponized to paralyze a campus.

What motivates students to menace schools online is typically trivial — a desire to impress classmates they like or frighten ones they don't or, in many cases, just to get a day off from classes. Only in the rarest cases do they intend to harm anyone.

"People will say things to a computer that they would never say directly to another person in front of them," said Robert Trestman, a psychiatry professor at Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine. "Certainly teenagers and preteens act without really understanding the consequences of their behavior."

Increasingly, though, law enforcement officials have more sophisticated tools to trace the threats and less willingness to let them go unpunished.

"There is such a frustration — people are frustrated about not being able to just stop these once and for all," said Kenneth Trump, the school security expert. "So it becomes, 'We're going to arrest everybody, whether they're 18 or they're 9.'"

Much of that frustration, Newman understood, stemmed from the profound effect those threats could have on other students. Days before the incident at Taylor, he'd responded to a lockdown at a middle school where someone reported seeing a gunman. There was none, but that news hadn't reached the boy who burst out of a classroom so overcome with panic that it triggered an asthma attack.

Now, as Newman sorted through what came next for the cousins, he worried how the upheaval they'd provoked would impact the thousand other students on campus.

One of them, Journey Cope, was in science class when she heard that a girl had showed up to school with a gun and a list of kids she didn't like.

The rumor wasn't true, but the 13-year-old didn't know that. She froze at her desk — because a week before, the girl had texted Journey, calling her "fake." The angry texts turned into angry calls, and now Journey couldn't stop wondering if her name was on the list.

Journey had no space in her mind for science. She closed her eyes and put her head on the desk.

Some days later, her mother called her over and hit play on a Facebook video posted by Chitwood.

There was the girl she'd bickered with and a boy, her cousin, their hands shackled, stepping from the back of a van and trailing down the same path Armando had walked.

"Think you made a wise decision today?" a deputy asked the boy. He shook his head.

Bent over her mom's iPhone, Journey smiled. It felt good to watch.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Many applaud tough tactics

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Armando returned home to a slip-and-slide party, a new dog named Honey and, after 12 days behind bars, a mother convinced he shouldn't have served a single one. Another boy on the FaceTime call with him had since been arrested, accused of telling other children in a group chat that Armando planned to kill them. When detectives confronted him, the 11-year-old acknowledged that he'd lied. He had wanted to scare people.

His arrest didn't exonerate Armando, a spokesman for the sheriff's office said. Though Armando has always denied threatening to shoot up a school, he confirmed to detectives that he'd written up a "hit list" as a joke. Now, four months later, Armando says he thinks the list was the other boy's idea.

Whether the rest of the children encouraged him to go through with it, the spokesman said, did not matter.

A prosecutor offered Armando a diversion program that would wipe the felony charge from his record, with no admission of guilt, if he completed community service, said his mom, Jessica. She considered going to trial, but an attorney told her he could face three years in a juvenile facility seven hours away. She couldn't bear the risk.

Armando switched to home schooling and tried to stay busy. He signed up for a flag football team with kids who didn't judge him. He discovered the Harry Potter movie series and became so infatuated that he started fash-



OCTAVIO JONES FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Jessica with her son Armando. "They tried to make him out to be this little monster," she said of the sheriff's office.

ioning elaborate wands out of paper towels, glue and paint. He imagined joining the rodeo and moving to the country.

"I wish I was younger," he said, because he wanted to be the kid he used to be.

A week after his release, his family took him to a seafood restaurant that overlooked the water, but he had to leave, convinced that everyone there knew who he was. He had a recurring nightmare, imagining himself drowning in the hull of a ship. He refused to sleep in his own bed, instead spending each night on the couch next to his dog.

"I didn't want to go back into the room, because that's where I was last time, pretty much, right before I was arrested," he said. "I'm scared something else bad is going to happen if I sleep in there."

He's pleaded with his mom and her fiancé to move them away. He

"People will say things to a computer that they would never say directly to another person. ... Certainly teenagers and preteens act without really understanding the consequences of their behavior."

Robert Trestman,
psychiatry professor at Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine

can't shake the fear that people in Volusia are "disgusted" by him, a fixation that led Armando to decide he would change his name.

His mom didn't argue. She knew that, in the homes of other children, the worst moment of her son's life had become a tale of caution.

For Tori Kaspert, who also lives in Port Orange, the story was too

unnerving to ignore. Before school one morning, she noticed a news segment about Armando on TV.

"We're watching this," Kaspert told her twin sons, both 13, who went to Creekside Middle with Armando. The boys, sprawled across her lap in their pajamas, sat up. They thought they recognized him, even with his face blurred in the clip.

Kaspert looked at her sons, both honor-roll students. She couldn't imagine them wanting to shoot up a school. Then she looked at the TV. She would never have suspected an 11-year-old, either.

"If you ever do a threat like this, or anything like this," she recalled telling them, "I will let Sheriff Chitwood come over here. I will let him do it to you, too. You understand me?"

Thirty miles southwest, another Volusia parent named Allen took a screenshot of a Facebook post about Armando's arrest, including the boy's mug shot, and texted it to his teenage sons.

"Just letting you know not to be stupid," Allen wrote. "No jokes."

Allen, a middle school teacher, felt conflicted. All three of his children had been locked in their classrooms because of threats and, in his own school, he'd witnessed the panic and fear they

could cause. Even so, he didn't support what the sheriff had done to Armando.

"I don't know if he was joking or not," Allen said, "but he's 11."

The day after Armando's arrest, Allen tried to explain the stakes to his sons on the drive home from school. He was especially worried about his 16-year-old, who is autistic and suffers from depression. During the past year, he'd been placed into protective custody four times.

"If they're going to do this to a little kid, a high school kid has got no chance," he recalled telling his boys in the car.

"We know," they said. "We're not dumb."

One week later, deputies knocked on their door.

His younger son, Allen learned, had gotten into a confrontation over a video game.

"IF PEOPLE KEEP THREATENING ME I WILL DO SUM!!!" the teen had posted to Instagram and Facebook, along with a stock image of a Glock. "KEEP TRYING ME I DORE YOU"

As deputies led the teen away, Allen headed to his own bedroom, unlocked the closet door and opened the gun safe. He didn't know that his son would spend the next 15 days in the detention center. He didn't know that the sheriff would decide not to publicize the teen's identity because of his mental health problems. But he did know that parents often underestimated how desperate and dangerous — to themselves or to others — their children could be.

"Do I think my son would shoot up a school? No," Allen said. "Even if it's a 1 percent chance, I'm not going to risk it."

So he packed up his guns and took them away.

The next day, another threat spread through the county, this time from a person who claimed to be armed with several handguns. Another six Volusia campuses locked their doors. Another 300 teachers tried to keep teaching as if nothing was wrong. Another 5,000 students waited to find out if, this time, the threat was real.

Razzan Nakhlawi contributed to this report

Alarmed by Chinese hacks, GOP mutes attacks on cybersecurity agency

In shift, Republicans have taken CISA off the chopping block

BY JOSEPH MENN

President Donald Trump named the first director of the new Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency in 2018 and fired him two years later, after he declared that Trump's loss in the 2020 election wasn't down to fraud. Ever since, Republicans have targeted the top U.S. cyberdefense agency for downgrades or deep cuts. In November, Republican Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky, who now leads the Senate committee overseeing CISA, even mused about killing it altogether.

But with Trump back in office, the direst fates appear off the table. Homeland Security Secretary Kristi L. Noem, who oversees the agency, and other Republicans now say they see an essential mission in CISA protecting critical infrastructure from mounting ransomware and nation-state hacking attacks, especially those from the Chinese military and spies.

While Trump has rescinded many of his predecessor's late-term executive orders, he has so far allowed President Joe Biden's last one on cybersecurity to stand. It requires that software vendors to U.S. agencies prove they meet security standards that can better withstand China's unprecedented rash of successful

cyberattacks, including the massive Salt Typhoon hack into America's telecom systems.

Republicans are finding CISA easier to defend since it steered away from calling out disinformation in the last election cycle, only joining in a handful of FBI advisories about foreign tactics.

Meanwhile, the man most often reported to be among the new administration's lead candidates for CISA director, Sean Plankey, is widely seen not as a creature of politics but as a steady hand, having had cybersecurity roles in the Department of Energy and the White House after holding top security posts in industry and the military. "Sean is a trusted leader in the cyber domain who knows exactly what must be done to secure our critical infrastructure and address vulnerabilities," said Erik Conatser, who worked under Plankey at U.S. Cyber Command.

In another sign of continuity — rare in this presidential transition — the Republican chair of the House Homeland Security Committee pledged to work with Democrats to improve the country's electronic defenses and dedicated his first hearing of the new Congress to cyberthreats.

"Cyberspace has increasingly become the battlefield on which America's adversaries undermine our sovereignty and threaten the services that underpin the everyday lives of Americans," Mark Green (R-Tennessee) said in an opening statement focused on the Chinese government-backed hackers who have burrowed deep inside U.S. telecommunications companies for spy-



ANDY WONG/AP

Outside a museum in Beijing. China has been behind recent cyberattacks such as Salt Typhoon.

ing and, more ominously, inside utilities and ports, where they could wreak chaos if war breaks over Taiwan.

"The CCP is strategically repositioning itself in the event of escalation in the Indo-Pacific — and we must do more to prepare," Green said at the hearing, using the initials for the Chinese Communist Party. Perhaps more surprisingly, Green said he agreed with departing CISA Director Jen Easterly's long-term campaign to broaden the burden of responsibility for hacks be-

yond the targeted companies to include the makers of vulnerable programs.

"We do not expect companies to protect themselves from sophisticated nation-state actors," Green told The Washington Post. "We do expect them to uphold the strongest cybersecurity practices."

Though it does not get the same headline treatment as ransomware attacks on schools and hospitals or China's Salt Typhoon spying effort, unsafe software is one of the most fundamental

problems in securing U.S. facilities, veteran defenders say.

"We have to stop focusing on the proximate cause of someone failing to patch the infrastructure and start asking, 'Why did that infrastructure need so many patches?'" Easterly told The Post. "It's just getting worse and worse and worse. And why? Because it's not that hard for [attackers]. We've normalized vulnerabilities in our software."

Changing that will take years, but Easterly got started by speaking to Green as well as his

Warren, Hawley urge tougher chip controls to stymie Chinese AI advance

BY EVA DOU

Sens. Elizabeth Warren (D-Massachusetts) and Josh Hawley (R-Missouri) have issued a populist appeal to Commerce Secretary-designate Howard Lutnick to toughen chip export controls against China, in response to the country's surprise DeepSeek AI breakthrough.

"Multiple administrations have failed — at the behest of corporate interests — to update and enforce our export controls in a timely manner. We cannot let that continue," they wrote in a letter provided exclusively to The Washington Post, calling DeepSeek "an export control failure."

The pair laid out an anti-Big Tech line in arguing that "corpo-

rate lobbying" resulted in loopholes to Biden administration export controls, allowing DeepSeek to acquire — and more pointedly Nvidia to sell — the chips it needed to train its AI model.

The senators also asked Lutnick to "insulate" the Commerce Department's Bureau of Industry and Security from industry lobbying by hiring senior staffers without existing connections to industry or lobbying firms.

The new Trump administration has yet to clarify whether it plans to deepen the controls, which would probably lengthen the list of U.S. technologies banned from sale to Chinese companies, at the expense of a sales hit to Silicon Valley.

The senators' letter adds to the

voices asking the administration for tougher export controls against China. On Wednesday, Rep. John Moolenaar (R-Michigan), chairman of the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party, and Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-Illinois), that committee's top Democrat, also called for tighter export controls in a letter to national security adviser Michael Waltz.

U.S. star chipmaker Nvidia, the world's leading supplier of the chips powering AI systems, would probably suffer some of the worst financial pain from such heavier controls. The company said in a statement that Warren's approach would not stop "fast follower" models like DeepSeek but would restrict con-

sumer products.

"Further controls will only surrender the China market to local technology companies, with ripple effects worldwide," the company said.

Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang met on Friday with President Donald Trump, days after news of DeepSeek's AI advance slashed almost \$600 billion from Nvidia's value, largely because of the impression that the Chinese chatbot used fewer chips for training than its U.S. competitors typically do.

Lutnick avoided committing to expanding export controls against China during his confirmation hearing last week. Officials in the new Trump administration are still divided on their approach, as security hawks and

pro-business Silicon Valley voices advocate differing approaches.

Lutnick pledged during the hearing to better enforce existing export controls. He argued that Trump's tariffs, details of which were revealed over the weekend, would serve as leverage to compel Beijing to avoid trying to circumvent the controls.

"I'm going to be rigorous in our pursuit of restrictions and enforcing those restrictions to keep us in the lead, because we must stay in the lead," he said.

Nvidia said in its statement Sunday that it will support the Trump administration "as it pursues its own path for strengthening U.S. technology and AI leadership."

Chinese AI start-up DeepSeek's

unexpected announcement last month that it has matched U.S. AI leader OpenAI in key metrics has roiled Silicon Valley and Washington. About \$1 trillion was erased from stock markets in the panic, with Nvidia leading the losses.

Warren and Hawley argued in their letter that DeepSeek would not have been able to train its cutting-edge R1 AI model as effectively if the Biden administration had moved faster in implementing export controls on Nvidia chips.

"Nvidia made billions in profit off the delay, but it resulted in a costly setback for our economic and national security, and leadership on artificial intelligence," they wrote.

ECONOMY & BUSINESS

Fires highlight farmworkers’ vulnerability despite laws

California has rules mandating protections for laborers, but enforcement is sparse and disseminating information can be challenging

BY GAYA GUPTA
AND ANGIE ORELLANA
HERNANDEZ

Burning ash stung her throat and her nose. Blustering winds spread ashes onto the field, obscuring her vision with smoke.

But Griselda Ellez, who picks leeks in California’s Ventura County, said she had no option but to continue working, even as the Hughes Fire blazed north of Los Angeles last month. She needed the wages for herself and her young son.

“I was a little scared because I could feel how hot the ashes were,” Ellez said in Spanish.

When the fire blanketed Ventura County’s farmlands with smoke in January, casting an orange tint across the region, authorities advised residents to stay indoors and to limit strenuous outdoor activities. But agricultural employees like Ellez continued to work. And many were not provided masks, according to workers and union organizers, even with state laws meant to require them.

The Hughes blaze was one of several that tore through Southern California last month, in a state used to battling fires and smoke. As human-driven warming fuels extreme weather patterns across the West — including fires and record heat — outdoor farmworkers are left especially vulnerable. Even in a state with standards meant to protect them from smoke and extreme heat, researchers and advocates say, they often face serious health dangers.

“The laws on the books are not the laws on the field,” said Roman Pinal, a United Farm Workers organizer. He helped distribute masks to farmworkers in Oxnard, California, during the Hughes Fire.

Pinal said that out of dozens of workers he met with recently, many told him employers had not provided masks. The two pallets of masks his team brought to groups of workers were gone in an hour, he said.

Adriana Mandujano, part of a separate Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project, said that the group helped distribute N95 masks in Oxnard and Ventura during recent fires, and that it has passed out 5,000 masks since November.

Silvia Salvador, who picks strawberries in Oxnard, said her employer provided masks and protective eyeglasses — but ash still burned her nose and throat. And it was uncomfortable to wear a mask while harvesting strawberries, which requires workers to stoop down for long periods.

Ellez and Salvador work at separate produce farms in the county; both declined to share the names of the farms for fear of retaliation. The Washington Post reviewed photos and videos sent by advocacy groups that showed workers in fields during the wildfires without respirators. In the videos and in descriptions from community groups and workers, some are wearing only bandanas.

“We have to suffer so much to earn very little,” Salvador said.

Tim Beatty, a professor of agricultural and resource economics at the University of California at Davis, found in a recent study that during wildfires in 2020, farm employees worked less or moved locations to avoid wildfire smoke.

Because agricultural employees are a low-paid group with a



UFW FOUNDATION FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Oxnard, California, during the recent fires. State law requires employers to give workers respiratory protective equipment when the Air Quality Index is 151 or greater.

limited number of work days, he said, losing out on a day’s wages is a “nontrivial shock to their economic well-being.”

Ellez said she lost out on a week’s worth of pay when harvesting paused because of dangers and damage from the fires.

Wildfire smoke contains fine particulates and hazardous chemicals that experts say can cause short- and long-term harm. Research suggests the longer someone is exposed to those particulates, the greater their risk of respiratory problems and other adverse health outcomes.

Lucas Zucker, who helps lead Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy in Ventura County, said that leaves workers with difficult choices, between “exposing yourself to extreme health risks and losing the income that you need to put food on your family’s table.”

A ‘lack of enforcement’

California is one of three states with regulations protecting workers from wildfire smoke and heat. The state passed emergency wildfire protections in 2019, then reeling from a spate of deadly fires in the two prior years.

The law, which became permanent in 2021, requires employers to provide workers with respiratory protective equipment such as masks when the Air Quality Index, a measure of outdoor air pollution, is 151 or greater. The index ranges from 0 to 500 and classifies levels between 151 and

200 as unhealthy for the general public.

And while they must provide the masks, the standard does not require employers to enforce wearing them — unless the pollution threshold reaches the severe level of 500.

A law that went into effect this year allows agricultural workers to use accrued paid sick leave when local or state governments have declared an emergency.

“California is at the forefront of expanding protection to all workers, especially low-wage, marginalized workers” in the face of extreme weather, said Gaspar Rivera-Salgado, a lecturer on labor studies at the University of California at Los Angeles.

“However,” he added, “the state lacks the infrastructure to enforce and monitor all the fields where people are working.”

The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health, known as Cal/OSHA, notes on its website that the agency must enforce standards and protocols designed to protect workers, whether during a single-structure fire or a “large scale disaster.”

Daniel Lopez, a spokesman for Cal/OSHA, said the agency “repeatedly issued” alerts reminding employers of their obligation to protect workers last month, adding that it has not received any complaints to date relating to the Hughes Fire and wildfire smoke. Complaints can be formally filed by any employee, advocacy group or member of the public, accord-

ing to the agency.

Zucker said there is generally a “huge lack of enforcement” and a gap in how standards are communicated.

Even when protections exist, he said, information might not be accessible to the workers themselves.

“There’s a lack of Cal/OSHA being present on the ground in rural communities, being kind of linguistically and culturally competent, working with community organizations, to get worker safety information out and enforce it,” Zucker said.

Lopez noted that Cal/OSHA has established its first “agriculture-specific enforcement team” that will do planned inspections year-round. He added that community groups, funded by California’s Department of Industrial Relations, held trainings and workshops to help educate farmworkers.

The agency has struggled with low staffing levels for years. The Sacramento Bee reported last February that its vacancy rate was 34 percent among health and safety inspectors and that the agency had just two investigators to look into cases of negligence for the entire state.

Lopez said Cal/OSHA has made “significant progress” in recent hiring, bringing its overall vacancy rate to below 25 percent. The agency now employs 250 field staff members, he said.

UCLA’s Rivera-Salgado said that generally, educating workers

about their rights can be challenging.

When the fires hit last month, farmworkers may not have known about the paid-sick-leave law, which took effect Jan. 1. And seasonal workers might not qualify for paid leave, which they earn only once they work for the same employer for 30 days.

“The laws on the books are not the laws on the field.”

Roman Pinal,
a United Farm Workers organizer

Ventura County’s Air Pollution Control District recently implemented a text-messaging system that sends alerts in English, Spanish and two Indigenous languages, Mixteco and Zapoteco.

According to Tommy Winning, who helps operate the system, 2,000 users are registered — a small fraction of the 25,000 laborers estimated to work in Ventura County. Winning said he hopes

that number will continue to grow with the help of community outreach.

Adapting to extreme weather

The need to quickly reach farmworkers with emergency alerts and information will become more critical with the continuing threat of climate disasters, advocates said.

“This is a population that does not, unfortunately, have the luxury of having this safe space of indoor protection,” said Ron Estrada, who leads the Washington-based nonprofit Farmworker Justice. “So we need to certainly work on identifying how we could provide this type of protection for farmworkers.”

In addition to ongoing fire risks, high temperatures can cause heat stroke, and heavy rains can increase the risk of injuries. Record heat levels affect workers across the country, with most states lacking protective regulations for extreme temperatures.

But any changes that enable workers to adapt should come with policies to address additional risks, said Beatty, from UC-Davis. For example, workers could avoid the afternoon sun by shifting to earlier start times, but they will need additional standards and safety equipment for working in the dark.

“Increased flexibility to help reduce their exposure to an unforgiving environment will let us continue to be a real, productive agricultural region,” Beatty said.

DIGEST

WIND ENERGY

N.J. will not award new offshore contracts

New Jersey officials said Monday that the state would not grant awards for new offshore wind contracts, a sign that President Donald Trump’s order to review the federal offshore wind program is putting a chill on the industry.

The announcement by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities comes days after Shell backed out as a partner in the only project that had finalized a bid under the state’s latest offshore wind procurement scheme. In a statement, the public utilities board cited both Shell’s withdrawal from the Atlantic Shores project and uncertainty regarding federal support for the industry.

The announcement is the

latest blow to the nascent U.S. offshore wind industry, which has struggled with soaring costs, canceled projects and a high-profile construction accident.

Trump has also cast doubt on the industry’s future after he suspended new federal offshore wind leasing pending an environmental and economic review. He said wind turbines are ugly and expensive and that they harm wildlife.

New Jersey is among the nation’s top offshore wind states, and it has a goal of installing 11,000 megawatts of capacity by 2040. In its fourth solicitation, the state had sought up to 4,000 megawatts of offshore wind capacity. The public utilities board said two of three bidders had withdrawn from the process, leaving only Atlantic Shores, a joint venture between Shell and France’s EDF.

Atlantic Shores received

federal approval from the Biden administration last year. If built, the project is expected to be able to generate enough electricity to power 1 million homes.

— Reuters

INVESTING

Vanguard lowers fees on dozens of its funds

Asset manager Vanguard said Monday that it has lowered the cost of investing across its fund lineup in its largest cut ever, and it estimated that this would translate into savings of more than \$350 million for its investors this year.

Valley Forge, Pennsylvania-based Vanguard slashed the expense ratio, or the cost of owning a mutual fund or exchange-traded fund, between one and six basis points across 87 of its funds, effective Feb. 1.

The decrease in fees will lower costs across Vanguard’s bond, mutual funds, ETFs, U.S. equity, international equity and money market funds.

— Reuters

HEALTH CARE

Cigna aims to improve access for its members

Cigna Group announced a string of efforts Monday to improve access for its members — such as adding more people-facing roles and tying executive compensation to customer satisfaction — as the industry faces widespread criticism over medical care denials and delays.

The fatal shooting in December of Brian Thompson, the chief executive of UnitedHealthcare, has sparked a conversation on social media about frustrations with

navigating the complex U.S. health insurance system, particularly when medical expenses are not covered or insurance claims or requests for care are denied.

The company will tie compensation of senior executives to improving the satisfaction of its customers and add concierge teams to support customers experiencing challenges with prior authorization or with claims payments.

— Reuters

ALSO IN BUSINESS

Investment firms Warburg Pincus and Berkshire Partners have agreed to buy aircraft parts maker Triumph Group in a take-private deal valued at about \$3 billion, the company said Monday. An ongoing consolidation in the commercial

aerospace industry is expected to be enhanced this year by increasing demand for aerospace parts from large aircraft makers such as Boeing and Airbus.

Media giant Paramount Global and Nielsen have signed a new deal that would see the research firm provide measurement and analytics services across the CBS parent company’s platforms, ending a long-running dispute. The multiyear deal includes measurement for Paramount’s national and local broadcast and cable networks, and streaming on Paramount Plus and Pluto TV. Paramount has also licensed new Nielsen services as part of the agreement including Advanced Audiences, ad-supported streaming platform ratings to help form advertising, programming and licensing strategies.

— From news services

Advocacy groups file lawsuit challenging Trump’s asylum shutdown

BY MARIA SACCHETTI

Immigrant advocacy groups on Monday filed the first major lawsuit challenging the Trump administration’s claim that there is an “invasion” on the U.S.-Mexico border to justify summarily expelling migrants without giving them a chance to apply for asylum.

Lawyers argued in the lawsuit filed in federal court in Washington that President Donald Trump is trampling on decades-old federal laws and international treaties that allow anyone who sets foot on U.S. soil to apply for humanitarian protection.

Trump declared an emergency on the U.S. southern border immediately after taking office and

has invoked an executive power that he says enables him to suspend admission to foreigners he deems “detrimental” to U.S. interests.

Trump used the same power, Section 212(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, during his first term to bar foreigners from certain Muslim-majority countries from coming to the United States under a travel ban. His supporters say he is on solid footing because after multiple legal challenges and rewrites of the ban, the Supreme Court upheld it by a 5-4 vote.

But lawyers for the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Immigrant Justice Center and others leading the lawsuit said the Supreme Court never ruled on

whether the travel ban authorized the president to block people from seeking asylum.

The ACLU says Trump is over-riding Congress, which passed laws allowing migrants to apply for asylum once they arrive in the United States.

The lawsuit challenges a Trump proclamation on Jan. 20 titled “Guaranteeing the States Protection Against Invasion,” which invokes 212(f) to shield states from an “invasion” of undocumented immigrants. Opponents of the proclamation say the president’s order illegally exposes migrants — including children traveling without their parents — to swift deportation to countries where they could be persecuted. “Immigration — even at elevated

levels — is not an ‘invasion,’” the lawsuit said.

“This proclamation is an unprecedented power grab at the expense of Congress. The president cannot simply wipe away the system Congress meticulously created to provide safety for desperate people fleeing persecution,” ACLU lawyer Lee Gelernt said in a statement. “Even in the Muslim ban during his first term, President Trump did not try to eliminate asylum.”

Legal aid groups filed the lawsuit against the Trump administration on behalf of the Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services in San Antonio, the Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center in El Paso, and the Florence Immigrant &

Refugee Rights Project in Tucson. The groups asked the court to declare Trump’s proclamation unlawful and to bar federal officials from implementing it.

In response to the lawsuit, White House spokesman Kush Desai said Trump “was given a resounding mandate to end the disregard and abuse of our immigration laws and secure our borders. The Trump administration will continue to put Americans and America First.”

Anthony “Scott” Good, the new chief of law enforcement operations for the U.S. Border Patrol, said border agents are using the authority to “remove people immediately.”

“Nobody’s being released,” he said Sunday at the National Sher-

iffs’ Association winter conference, to applause from the sheriffs.

Good said the Border Patrol chief or deputy chief could authorize the release of a migrant in the United States pending immigration proceedings, but as of Sunday, he said, “they haven’t done a single one.”

Asylum is a humanitarian protection for people who fled or fear persecution based on their race, religion, nationality, political opinions or other reasons that make them a target.

Trump officials argue that immigrants and smugglers have been exploiting the asylum system for years at the U.S. southern border, using it as a proxy to enter the United States illegally to work.

Texas deputizes National Guard to enforce immigration law

BY ARELIS R. HERNÁNDEZ AND SILVIA FOSTER-FRAU

SAN ANTONIO — Federal border authorities have deputized Texas National Guard soldiers to arrest and detain immigrants in an unprecedented move that has renewed concerns about how the Trump administration will carry out its mass deportation plan.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection acting commissioner Pete Flores and the Texas military department reached an agreement last week allowing some soldiers to perform “the duties and functions of an immigration officer,” under the supervision of federal authorities while waiving any additional training requirements.

Thousands of Texas troops have been deployed to the border with Mexico since 2021 as part of the state’s billion-dollar Operation Lone Star crackdown. Soldiers have been stationed across the vast 1,200 miles of Texas land border in a support role, such as installing razor-wire barriers, to deter immigrants.

But they did not have any powers simulating that of a trained federal agent, until now.

“Today, we have a president who will partner with Texas to deny illegal entry,” Texas Gov. Greg Abbott (R) said during his State of the State speech late Sunday. “To support that mission, I have ordered Texas state agencies to assist the Trump administration with arresting, jailing, and deporting illegal immigrants.”

News of the agreement came as Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth visited El Paso in his first trip since taking over the Pentagon on Monday. He visited Joint Task Force North, a headquarters at Fort Bliss that coordinates military assistance to civil and law enforcement authorities.

“Guys and gals of my generation have spent decades in foreign countries guarding other people’s borders,” Hegseth said in a Fox News clip of the visit that he reposted on X. “It’s about time we secure our own border.”

Defense officials are expanding the Pentagon’s mission to assist in immigration enforce-



Members of the Texas National Guard along the border wall between Mexico and the United States.

ment. Marines from North Carolina recently arrived at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, as part of an effort to build what Trump administration officials have said will be a detention center that could hold 30,000 migrants.

The president also sent 2,500 active-duty troops to the U.S.-Mexico border.

This is the first time in U.S. history that the Department of Homeland Security secretary has invoked a 1996 law to declare an emergency as a result of a “mass influx” of migrants. The agency is claiming the power to authorize state and local law enforcement agencies to act as federal agents to rapidly increase their personnel to carry out immigration enforcement.

But critics and legal observers say empowering Texas National Guard soldiers, deployed on state orders, to take on Border Patrol duties raises questions about what troops are expected to do and the accountability measures in place to prevent potential human rights abuses. Border crossings have dropped to their lowest levels since the

president’s first term — something the Trump administration has acknowledged, while saying the number of encounters was still not low enough.

Legal analysts said it is not clear the “mass influx” justification for this authority will withstand judicial review, given current border trends. There are also questions about whether state soldiers meet the definition outlined under the law for the types of local law enforcement that can be engaged.

“The lawfulness of the memorandum of understanding is questionable, because there’s a question as to whether we are seeing a mass influx of aliens at the border, and I don’t see how the Texas National Guard constitutes state or local law enforcement officers,” said Joseph Nunn, counsel in the liberty and national security program at the Brennan Center for Justice.

The memorandum of understanding between Texas and DHS outlines some guidelines regarding how armed soldiers can operate. National Guard soldiers are expected to perform duties under the direct “supervi-

sion and direction” of a CBP official. No details were given on what that arrangement might look like.

DHS is not requiring training for troops but gives CBP officials discretion to do so. Soldiers acting as border agents will be subject to the same disciplinary

protocols as their federal counterparts, the memorandum said.

Border Patrol agents spend about six months at the academy learning everything from law enforcement tactics to the intricacies of immigration law. Agents have broad powers within a 100-mile region stretching from the border to the interior, to interrogate anyone about their immigration status, search property and arrest suspected undocumented immigrants without a warrant.

Expecting soldiers to perform a law enforcement duty they are not equipped or trained to undertake could put them at risk, critics said. But Border Patrol union leaders said they have been working closely with Texas military and law enforcement for years to carry out border security.

“We’ve reached the point on the border that any help is welcome,” said Art Del Cueto, a spokesman for the National Border Patrol Council, which is the union representing agents. Del Cueto said he had not yet reviewed the memorandum. “We hope other border governors have the same commitment to making sure America is secure.”

National Guard soldiers are ordinarily tasked with duties related to humanitarian missions, such as natural disaster re-

sponse, or to provide security during times of civil unrest within state borders.

“This is something that will not only affect noncitizens,” said Katherine Hawkins, a legal analyst with the Project on Government Oversight watchdog group. “It could be a prelude to even more delegation of power and abuse of that power.”

The governor’s office did not respond to detailed questions about the agreement. CBP officials did not elaborate on the limitations of soldiers acting as Border Patrol agents.

Anthony “Scott” Good, chief of law enforcement operations for the U.S. Border Patrol, said at a conference on Sunday that the agency is understaffed. He said Border Patrol has slightly more than 19,000 agents nationwide, when it should have about 22,000.

“We certainly need the manpower,” he said at the National Sheriffs’ Association winter conference in Washington.

The Texas soldiers’ new duties will augment the already burgeoning militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border on both sides. Trump is preparing to send 10,000 active service military troops to help secure the border, adding to the robust presence of troops from various Republican-led state National Guard regiments.

Dan Lamothe and Maria Sacchetti contributed to this report.

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Volatile day for markets after Trump’s tariffs are announced, then paused

BY AARON GREGG,
ANNABELLE TIMSIT
AND ELLEN FRANCIS

Wall Street endured a bit of whiplash Monday, with stocks slumping in early trading after the Trump administration moved to impose sweeping tariffs on the nation’s three largest trading partners, only to come roaring back when Mexico’s president announced a pause in the levies.

Over the weekend, President Donald Trump imposed tariffs on imports from Canada, Mexico and China. The move elicited a swift response from Canada, which retaliated by targeting hundreds of U.S. imports including goods as varied as oranges and motorcycles. Investors had been expecting Mexico to follow suit Monday morning, sparking a global sell-off that sent the Dow Jones Industrial Average tumbling 600 points by midmorning and pushed the broader S&P 500 and tech-heavy Nasdaq composite index deep into negative territory.

But all three indexes pared their losses after Mexico announced that the two nations had reached an agreement on border security and trade to delay the tariffs. By the time the regular trading day ended, the Dow had shed nearly 123 points, or 0.3 percent, to close at 44,421.91. The S&P 500 lost 0.8 percent to close at 5,994.57 while the Nasdaq fell 1.2 percent, settling at 19,391.96.

Analysts said the early market jitters reflected uncertainty about disruption of long-established trade relationships and what the new import duties might mean for inflation. Trump targeted Canada and Mexico with a 25 percent tariff on goods. For China — which already is subject to a 25 percent tax on many of its products — he tacked on a 10 per-



Traders at the New York Stock Exchange on Monday, when indexes rebounded from early losses.

cent levy.

Although tariffs are meant to protect U.S. companies from global competition, they also could disrupt global supply chains and increase costs for businesses and consumers alike. The Budget Lab at Yale University estimates the typical U.S. household could lose \$1,200 in purchasing power because of the levies.

“Volatile messaging by the administration will lead to volatile markets,” said Michael Farr of the D.C.-based investment firm Farr, Miller and Washington. “This is a process of markets becoming accustomed to Donald Trump 2.0 ... there will likely be a point, after several nauseating peaks and valleys, that the markets gets used to this.”

Wall Street was apparently re-

assured after Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said Monday that the White House agreed to pause tariffs for one month after the two nations reached an agreement on several issues. She also said she would dispatch 10,000 members of Mexico’s national guard to provide security at the border. (Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced a similar delay on social media after the markets closed.)

The market rebound could suggest that investors largely viewed the tariff threats against Mexico and Canada as a negotiation tactic rather than a change in trade policy, said Ross Mayfield, investment strategist at Baird. “I think the market was caught somewhat off guard by the speed of the decision, but this has been some-

what priced in to tariff sensitive stocks and currency markets for months.”

Still, the morning’s rout buffeted stocks in some sectors the president has sought to revitalize. Home builders saw their stock prices suffer as investors grappled with higher costs on Canadian lumber. Automakers were jolted, too, with General Motors closing down 3.2 percent, while Ford and Stellantis lost 1.9 percent and 3.9 percent, respectively. Leading electric vehicle makers also suffered, with Tesla and Rivian off 5.2 percent and 1.4 percent respectively. Honda and Nissan lost 5.1 percent and 3.2 percent respectively. Volkswagen fell 4.1 percent.

The CBOE volatility index, known as Wall Street’s fear gauge,

was up 20 percent Monday morning, although it settled throughout the day and remains far lower than recent highs. Investors flocked to “safe haven” assets such as gold and government bonds, while cryptocurrencies lost value.

The moves roiled global markets, with Asian and European stocks suffering losses and the dollar gaining value.

In Asia, Taiwan’s Taiex dropped by 3.5 percent, Japan’s Nikkei index lost 2.7 percent, and South Korea’s Kopsi declined 2.5 percent. Hong Kong’s Hang Seng Index was down 0.3 percent; markets in mainland China remained closed Monday.

European stocks also retreated Monday: London’s FTSE 100 fell 1.0 percent, and the European Stoxx 600 dropped 0.9 percent. France’s CAC 40 shed 1.2 percent, and Germany’s DAX erased 1.5 percent. Car manufacturers, tech companies and financial services firms were hit particularly hard. Trump told reporters late Sunday that he “definitely” planned to impose tariffs on imports from the European Union “soon.”

European leaders pledged Monday to hit back against potential tariffs while warning that a trade war would hurt both sides. “We were listening carefully to those words, and of course we are preparing also on our side,” E.U. foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said.

“If we were attacked on trade issues, Europe, as a power that stands its ground, will have to make itself respected and therefore react,” French President Emmanuel Macron told reporters in Brussels.

Others focused on the need to negotiate with Trump to avoid a spiraling trade war. “I’m not going to start a war. I want to start negotiations,” Finnish Prime

Minister Petteri Orpo said.

Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda said Europe should engage in a “positive economic agenda” with the United States instead of “fighting with each other.” He suggests buying more weapons and liquefied natural gas from the United States. “We have to propose something that could be interesting and attractive for the United States like free trade agreements in the automotive industry, like buying more energy resources,” he said.

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk said it would be “a cruel paradox” at a time of “direct Russian threat and Chinese expansion” to find reasons for conflict among allies. “I think that we have to do everything to avoid this totally unnecessary and stupid tariff war or trade war,” he told reporters. “During our possible talks with the American friends, I think we cannot lose common sense, awareness of our interests, but at the same time, we cannot lose our European self-respect.”

The U.S. dollar climbed in offshore trading in comparison with the Chinese yuan, while the Mexican peso and Canadian dollar both tumbled, with the Canadian currency reaching levels not seen since 2003, according to Reuters.

Mayfield, the Baird investment analyst, said the uncertainty around tariff policy could weigh on markets for some time, possibly outweighing the pro-business policies such as lower taxes and deregulation. Although tariffs could effect positive change, a broader trade war with allies is “a net negative” for markets, he said.

“Corporate decision-makers want to know the rules of the game they are playing — this is why stocks rallied after a clear election result — but the tariff uncertainty muddies those rules,” Mayfield said.

Diversity officers, professors sue to block Trump’s DEI executive orders

BY JULIAN MARK

A coalition of professors, diversity officers and restaurant worker advocates filed a federal lawsuit Monday in a bid to block President Donald Trump’s executive orders that target diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in the U.S. government, the private sector and academia, alleging that he exceeded his authority in issuing them.

The 40-page federal lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in Maryland, is the first such challenge to the sweeping orders issued in the first days of the new administration. The edicts to end “illegal discrimination” and “wasteful government DEI programs” have already resulted in widespread purges of federal workers.

The plaintiffs include the American Association of University Professors, the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education, Restaurant Opportunities Centers United, and the mayor and city council of Baltimore.

They’re asking a judge to block two of the DEI-related orders Trump issued in the first two days of his second term and rule that they are unlawful. The groups are being represented by Democracy Forward, a liberal nonprofit legal group that successfully persuaded a judge last week to temporarily block Trump’s order to pause trillions of dollars in federal spending. Asian Americans Advancing Justice — AAJC is also representing the plaintiffs.

“Our Constitution protects all Americans — whether you are a university professor or a restaurant worker — from unlawful intrusion on speech, ideas, and expression and entitles all Americans to fair process,” Skye Perryman, president and chief executive of Democracy Forward, said in a statement.

Trump’s “Anti-DEIA Executive Orders offend these protections and others.”

(The “A” in the acronym stands for “accessibility.”)

“The coalition bringing this suit represents people of diverse

professions and backgrounds who are all harmed by these unlawful orders, which have chilled their activities and provision of essential services,” Perryman added.

The orders issued in the first 48 hours of Trump’s second term were meant to quash DEI in the public sector and chill such efforts in corporate America and academia — long a goal of a conservative movement that contends diversity efforts, which are intended to provide equal access to underrepresented groups, discriminate against White people and men.

The first order, issued on Jan. 20, ordered federal diversity offices closed, prompting widespread dismissals of DEI staff and even non-DEI staffers who had only previously done such work.

That order also directed agencies to terminate “equity-related” grants and contracts.

The second order, issued on Jan. 21, directed the attorney general and certain agency heads to draw up lists of publicly

traded companies and universities with endowments over \$1 billion to potentially investigate over their DEI programs.

Furthermore, the order requires federal contractors to certify that they don’t operate DEI programs that violate federal antidiscrimination laws under the penalty of being charged under the False Claims Act, which can bring heavy financial penalties.

Trump exceeded his legal authority in issuing the first order, the lawsuit alleges, as he does not have the power to unilaterally terminate “equity-related” grants and contracts “without express statutory authority.”

It further charges that both orders are overly vague, failing to define such terms as “DEI,” “equity” and “illegal DEIA” — and therefore do not adequately give fair notice of what is prohibited. Pointing to the order directing agency heads to identify “up to nine” entities for potential civil investigation, the lawsuit alleges that the order does not provide clear criteria for how they will be

selected.

“Without any definitive criteria or information, any of the over 130 colleges and universities in the United States with endowments over \$1 billion ... are potentially in the crosshairs of the order,” the lawsuit states.

That vagueness is a violation of the plaintiffs’ Fifth Amendment due process rights, the lawsuit alleges.

The lawsuit further alleges that the second order hampers the First Amendment free speech rights of university professors and diversity officers by threatening civil investigations.

“The President makes threats of civil investigation and undefined ‘deterrence’ against anyone who expresses support for what he imprecisely defines as ‘illegal DEI,’” the lawsuit states.

Lastly, the lawsuit alleges that neither the president nor the executive branch has the authority to dictate how government funds are spent — and therefore cannot force contractors and grantees to certify that they do not run diversity programs that

potentially violate federal laws.

“Higher education is about opening up opportunity, innovation and progress for people across the nation. Yet, these Executive Orders will undermine our ability to do that and will have catastrophic impacts on colleges, universities, and higher education institutions, and all of the students and communities they serve,” Paulette Granberry Russell, president and chief executive of the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education, said in a statement.

“As the nation’s leading association for diversity officers and professionals in higher education, we will use all tools available, including the legal process, to block these harmful orders.”

Legal experts say the executive orders were an extension of the Supreme Court’s 2023 ruling that overturned affirmative action in university admissions, which alone spawned dozens of lawsuits against government and corporate programs alleging that they discriminate on the basis of race, sex and sexual orientation.

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TUESDAY OPINION

We’re Russian. We know what happens when Big Tech coddles dictators.

BY VLADIMIR KARA-MURZA,
YULIA NAVALNAYA
AND ILYA YASHIN

In many countries around the world — from Russia and Iran to Venezuela and Cuba — dictators regularly draft new laws aimed at destroying citizens’ rights, including those related to the internet. Far too often, U.S. tech companies comply with these laws without asking too many questions.

Block access to foreign media? Done. Restrict tools that bypass censorship? No problem. Deny citizens tools to encrypt their messages to avoid repression? Even to that, Big Tech says “yes.”

Every concession to dictators hides a tragedy. In Iran, administrators of opposition media platforms, whose data was handed over to the government, have been executed under the country’s laws. In Russia, tens of millions lost access to uncensored information about Vladimir Putin’s bloody war against Ukraine, leaving them vulnerable to relentless state propaganda — all in full compliance with laws dictated by a regime that flagrantly violates international norms. These “laws” are crafted by a dictator and rubber-stamped by a toy parliament of loyalists.

“But do we really have a choice?” corporate lawyers from Western tech companies argue. “To operate in a country, we must follow its laws!” They see no room for debate. Law is law, they claim. And it must be obeyed.

But there *is* room for discussion. And we aim to start it.

The principle of “following local laws, no matter what they are” provides a convenient excuse. But it’s just that: an excuse and a moral dodge. Local laws can demand stoning a woman for uncovering her face or imprisoning someone for 15 years for calling Putin’s war a crime. We propose that companies replace the principle of blindly “following local laws, no matter what” with three other simple ones.

Principle 1: Put human rights first. Dictators’ “laws” are not always legitimate under international standards. Universal human rights, enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, must not be violated. The rights of users must take precedence over the interests of dictators. Compliance with local laws cannot justify violating basic human rights.

Principle 2: Focus on real-world outcomes. In dictatorships, what’s written as law is not necessarily enforced fairly. Companies must consider the practical consequences of their actions on users and aim to protect them. For example, data-localization laws exist in many democracies to protect user data. But dictatorships use similar laws to target dissidents and fuel repression. When implementing any law, companies must evaluate how it will be applied in practice and what real consequences it might have for users.

Principle 3: Establish mechanisms for dialogue with civil society. To understand how a law might harm users, tech companies should consult with users and their representatives. Numerous national and international NGOs specialize in digital rights and have extensive knowledge about how dictators exploit technology for repression. Often, preventing tragic outcomes is as simple as consulting with experts.

All three of us are Russian. Recent events in our country illustrate how Western tech companies could have avoided causing harm by adhering to these three principles.

Last summer, during the third year of Russia’s



ILLUSTRATION BY BRIAN STAUFFER FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

war against Ukraine, the Kremlin ramped up its crackdown on free speech. Truth about the war was spreading too widely, prompting the regime to further restrict Russians’ access to uncensored information. Then, between July and November, Apple agreed to a series of Kremlin demands by

The companies are complying with dictators’ laws, compromising human rights and freedom of speech.

removing independent media apps from the Russian Apple Store. Russian users lost access to content from publications such as the Insider, the BBC and Echo, as well as podcasts by Meduza and Holod. Even U.S.-funded media such as Current Time and Radio Liberty were removed.

Additionally, throughout 2024, Apple followed Kremlin orders and removed more than 50 VPN services from the App Store, which had enabled Russians to bypass censorship and access independent news.

These censorship demands by Putin’s regime were not “lawful.” The law itself is severely compro-

mised in Russia’s authoritarian regime. The Kremlin controls Russia’s parliament and judiciary, using its laws to suppress opposition and strengthen censorship. Under Putin’s laws, antiwar or opposition activities are labeled extremist, and independent journalism is criminalized.

Complying with an authoritarian regime’s demands was immoral. Apple’s actions bolstered Putin’s dictatorship, deprived Russian society of access to independent information and hindered the antiwar movement.

On Dec. 25, Apple publicly responded to criticism from Reporters Without Borders about its policies in Russia. A spokesman argued that the alternative to removing VPNs and censoring independent media was a total ban on Apple services in Russia.

This response highlights the need for the three principles we’ve outlined:

• **Were users’ human rights prioritized over legal compliance?** No. Tens of millions of users have a right to use VPNs to bypass illegal censorship to access information about Putin’s regime and his war in Ukraine. These rights were sacrificed to comply with the Kremlin’s illegitimate laws.

• **Were actions aligned with practical enforcement realities?** No. Apple claimed the Kremlin threatened to ban all Apple services in Russia if the tech giant didn’t comply. However, the Kremlin has made such threats in the past — always as bluffs to

pressure Western companies into submission. Putin’s officials, their families and even their mistresses all use Apple products. Owning the latest iPhone is a status symbol in Russia. The regime, focused on waging war against Ukraine, cannot afford to create even more new tensions, which a complete Apple service shutdown would probably spark.

• **Were consultations held with civil society?** Sadly, no. Russian digital rights experts unanimously agree that the Kremlin’s threat to ban Apple services was pure bluff. Any one of these experts would have gladly explained this to Apple’s legal and policy teams, if only they had been asked.

We urge U.S. and Western tech companies to launch a public discussion about operating principles in countries ruled by dictatorships. We offer our assistance, time and expertise to help prevent mistakes such as the one Apple made in Russia.

We believe technology can stop being an unwitting accomplice to dictators and an easy tool for oppression. We believe technologies that protect freedom, rights and users’ interests will ultimately bring greater benefits to their creators.

Vladimir Kara-Murza is a contributing columnist for Post Opinions. Yulia Navalnaya is a Russian opposition politician and the widow of the Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny. Ilya Yashin is a Russian opposition politician.

Another Trump presidency? Om ...

BY SALLY QUINN

I woke up the morning of Nov. 6 with a sinking feeling. Turning on both my phone and TV, I learned to my shock that Donald Trump had been elected.

I was in denial for several days, my stomach in turmoil. Then, I realized what I was really experiencing: grief. I looked up Elisabeth Kübler-Ross’s five stages of grief. Denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. I moved on from denial to anger to bargaining. What could I have done to prevent this from happening? I should have been out on the streets protesting the Supreme Court’s abortion ruling and ringing doorbells. What kind of poor excuse for an American was I, not to have acted?

Then, I got severely depressed. I took an antidepressant and called my old shrink. (A lot of good that did. He was as depressed as I was!) How was I going to live with my deepest fears? When was I going to get to acceptance?

That’s when I turned to meditation.

I had joined a Zen sangha (community) outside Boston the year before. It’s led by Robert Waldinger, a professor of psychiatry at Harvard University, co-author of “The Good Life” on happiness and the director of the famous Grant Study, the Harvard Study of Adult Development. The sangha meets every Monday at 7:30 p.m.

I was not new to meditation. But this sangha was different. It was a weekly commitment. I enjoyed attending via Zoom. As the election neared, the hour was sometimes the only clarity I found all week, even when some of the chants made no sense to me at all. One, the Heart Sutra, completely baffled me: “Nor is there pain, or cause of pain, or cease in pain, or noble path to lead from pain; Not even wisdom to attain! Attainment too is emptiness.”

When we discussed it, everyone else in the group seemed to understand. I finally got up the courage to say, “I don’t get it.”

Everyone laughed, and, at first, I thought they were laughing at me. To my relief, a lot of them didn’t get it either. Waldinger laughed, too, and patiently explained the meaning of the sutra. I listened carefully, but, to tell the truth, I still didn’t understand it.

I flashed back to many years ago, when the Aspen Institute had a small lunch for the Dalai Lama. I persuaded my husband, Ben Bradlee, to go, reluctantly. The Dalai Lama, who had written for On Faith, the blog I ran for The Post, was an adorable man, dressed in sleeveless saffron robes. He spoke to us through an

interpreter about Buddhism. He was a very jolly fellow and giggled much of the time. At the end of the Dalai Lama’s presentation, Ben sat back in his chair and in a loud, growly voice said, “I don’t get it.” Everyone burst out laughing. (The irony about Ben was, he might have been the most practicing Buddhist I knew. He worked in the woods for eight hours a day when we went to the country, chopping wood, clear-

Meditation helps — up to a point.

ing and burning brush. He called it mind-emptying, which is basically meditating. He said it was the only way he made it through Watergate.)

At first, I found the sessions weird. Waldinger — who admitted he had found it weird in the beginning, too — would do a quick, pithy reading and then there would be chanting and bowing and bells and candles for 10 or 15 minutes, then wooden claps, a quick break and a 25-minute sit. I learned early on the importance of breathing. We know that when you get upset or agitated, you should take a deep breath. This is especially true of meditation. If your mind is going crazy, you can chant your mantra and concentrate on your breathing until you calm down. It really works.

I found the ritual soothing. Afterward, Waldinger would often give a dharma talk, followed by a discussion, final vows and a roundtable of what we had gotten out of the session. It was a bit Peter, Paul and Mary for my taste.

But I had an odd sensation of feeling secure in this sangha. My brother Bill is a practicing Buddhist and meditates daily. He is one of the most peaceful, loving people I have ever known. I had been reading a lot about the effects of meditation, and I wanted to experience those effects. So I kept at it, turning down other invitations for Monday nights so as not to miss a session. I liked the dharma talks and the koans (riddles) and the discussions. The sits were not boring but relaxing, though I didn’t find them enlightening in the beginning. Every few weeks, Waldinger would have short breakout sessions with each of us. It was basically a five-minute shrink session that I got more out of than most 50-minute shrink sessions. During these sessions, I achieved

what I thought was enlightenment, though Waldinger convinced me that should not be a goal since most of us will never really achieve enlightenment — in this life anyway.

A year ago, disaster struck. I got covid and had a major stroke. When I became lucid, I was hit with more tragedies: deaths of close friends, extreme family medical problems and worries about the state of the country. Hardly able to sit up, I was inspired to return to the sangha two weeks after the stroke. This time, I felt it was working for me. I felt embraced. The bells and chants were reassuring, the dharma talks meaningful, and the meditation itself was an enormous release.

Before I joined, I had been intimidated by the idea that I had to push negative thoughts, or all thoughts, out of my head. I learned that you don’t have to empty your mind, that you can let thoughts come and go, that you can feel anger, sadness, frustration, despair — all the things you feel in your daily life. So I accepted every thought and, as Waldinger advised, tried to “just sit with it.” After a while, some of the chitchat in my brain would disappear. My goal was to empty my mind of clutter, to reach a level in which my mind was still, calm and serene, and I could see clearly. My brother taught me to respond to my thoughts rather than to react. But how could I respond to something upsetting in a graceful, calm and serene manner? How could I react without yielding my values, my ethics, my principles? How could I learn to accept rather than deny?

Like everything worth doing, it requires practice. And over time, it gets easier.

One of the things that appealed to me was the Four Noble Truths, the basics of Buddhism: Suffering. The cause of suffering. The cessation of suffering. The path that leads to the cessation of suffering. I wanted to understand how to follow that path.

Waldinger suggests setting intentions rather than goals. One intention is to be “fully alive and fully present for this precious, fleeting existence.” Others are being kinder, caring more about family and friends, trying to relieve the suffering of others, helping them feel good about themselves, paying attention to them. Those are the “north stars” he talks about.

After the election, Waldinger gave a dharma talk. He described how he went to bed early the night before so he wouldn’t have to find out the results of the election, then meditated for hours until he finally got up his courage. His feelings were rage, fear,

disgust. He later wrote: “I find myself unsure of how to keep from falling into paralyzing despair in the face of everything that’s happening in our world. I notice myself wanting to indulge in exactly the feelings that are guaranteed to make things worse, what Buddhists call the three poisons — greed, anger and delusion, the root causes of suffering.” It’s a relief to know that even Buddhist priests have the same feelings as we do.

Meditation is guilt-free for me. Judgment-free. There are no real rules to the practice. You can think any thought as long as you want and feel real feelings without feeling shame. You can totally accept yourself as you try (and maybe fail) to accept others. What surprised me about the sangha is that it’s fun. There’s laughter and interesting conversations, and it’s not at all pious or mournful.

People are drawn to meditation to relieve suffering. Our instinct is to turn away from suffering, but it’s important to go toward what is painful in your life. No one gets a pass on suffering. The most important thing to understand is that the main cause of suffering is attachment, because with attachment goes loss. Impermanence also is a cause of suffering. Nothing stays the same, and change is frightening. “If you’re lucky, life won’t break your heart,” says Waldinger. The purpose of meditation is to “sit down, shut up and pay attention.”

It was only after the election that I had sort of an epiphany. I was calmly sitting there with my eyes closed when all of a sudden I thought, “Oh!” I felt awakened. I tried to explain this to Waldinger, but he said it was impossible to explain. Zen meditation, he says, “is experiential. It’s like sex. You can’t describe it.” My epiphany was a moment of clarity. “How do you capture it?” he asks. “It’s opaque to the mind, radiant to the heart. You don’t have to understand everything.”

I know that Zen meditation is a gradual process. It’s like working a muscle. I’m so happy I stuck with it. I find that I’m not as agitated by things that used to upset me. I feel more compassionate toward others. In the five stages of grief, I felt I had finally achieved acceptance.

And then Trump picked Kimberly Guilfoyle to be ambassador to my beloved Greece, where I spent the happiest years of my childhood.

I had a total relapse. It was back to denial for me.

Sally Quinn is an author and journalist who has written extensively for The Post.

OPINION

The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

Why these tariffs will cause pain for Americans

“LET’S REMEMBER,” economist Peter Navarro told Chris Stirewalt of News Nation on Sunday, “that Donald Trump introduced historic tariffs on China last time around, steel and aluminum, solar and a wide range of other things, and we saw zero inflation.”

Navarro, Trump’s senior counselor for trade and manufacturing, was defending the stiff tariffs that Trump just announced for the United States’ largest trading partners. In a trio of executive orders issued on Saturday, the president levied 10 percent tariffs on all imports from China, 10 percent tariffs on energy imports from Canada, and 25 percent tariffs on other goods from Canada and Mexico.

Such steep duties are an obvious economic mistake. But Navarro’s words suggest that Trump has also miscalculated politically. This looks very much like the fatal error that President Joe Biden made during his first few months in office: thinking that what worked for presidents during the unusual period between the 2008-2009 financial crisis and the 2020 coronavirus pandemic would work as well today.

In 2021, as the Biden White House passed a slew of deficit-financed spending initiatives, Democratic economists such as Lawrence Summers warned that this risked igniting inflation. Biden ignored the risk. After all, inflation had been falling steadily for

decades, even as Barack Obama and Donald Trump ran substantial deficits during most of their terms. Why worry about something that hadn’t been an issue since the early 1980s?

The subsequent burst of inflation probably cost Democrats the 2024 election. From 2008 to the early 2020s, governments could run easy fiscal and monetary policy without consequence, but this was not a permanent new normal for the U.S. economy. It was a temporary aberration.

Trump appears now to be miscalculating in the same way. Yes, during his first term, the government levied tariffs on approximately \$380 billion worth of goods without noticeably kicking off inflation, or feeling political blowback. But this time is different.

Most obviously, today’s tariffs are much larger, covering an estimated \$1.3 trillion worth of goods. The Tax Foundation estimates that they will amount to a more than \$800 tax hike on the average household in 2025, and that the levies, which will snarl supply chains, could reduce output by nearly half a percentage point. Although tariff supporters can fairly argue that consumers won’t bear the full brunt of the taxes, because currencies will adjust and producers will absorb some of it in their margins, they are still regressive taxes that will strain budgets already stretched to the breaking point by previous rounds of inflation.

Since 2020, the consumer price index has risen more than 20 percent, and the new tariffs stand to compound this increase. Moreover, consumers who have been struggling for years with inflation’s effect on their budgets are now conditioned to look for upticks in the prices of things they buy. In other words, they will notice faster than they used to — and very likely get madder.

Thinking that what worked during the Great Recession and the covid-19 pandemic will work as well today is a clear miscalculation.

Their pain will be exacerbated by the high cost of borrowing money. Inflation in purchases that typically are financed, including cars and homes, is a double whammy: higher purchase prices, plus higher interest rates on their loans. Trump’s new tariffs are expected to hit auto prices hard because of the complexity of international supply chains, along which parts pass in and out of countries, sometimes multiple times. By one estimate, the

tariffs could push up the average cost of a new car by \$3,000. They will also boost the prices of new homes by raising the cost of inputs such as softwood lumber.

Trump might hope to avoid political fallout by blaming other countries for forcing him to impose tariffs. But such hopes are likely to be dashed for the same reason that the Biden administration failed to deflect blame for inflation onto corporate greed or consolidation in the meatpacking industry. Americans might make some allowances for truly extraordinary circumstances — a pandemic, say, or a world war — but if the economy falls short of their expectations in more ordinary times, they blame the president.

Trump would be better off trying to extract symbolic concessions from the other countries, declaring victory and ending the tariffs before they really hurt. This appears to be what’s already happening with Canada and Mexico: The president has granted a one-month delay in exchange for concessions. Mexico has agreed to more enforcement resources to stop the flow of fentanyl across the southern border. And Canada will send forces to the northern U.S. border to stop the flow of fentanyl there, such as it is. Trump should see that these delays lead to a permanent pause in tariff threats to the two neighbors, because trade wars are easier to start than to win.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

How undocumented immigrants helped my police work

President Donald Trump is using the Justice Department to pressure state and local governments into deploying their limited police resources for federal immigration enforcement with a threat of “potential prosecution” for those who refuse.

Having served as police chief in three geographically diverse U.S. cities, I’ve repeatedly seen why local police have good reason to avoid all but the most minimal immigration enforcement responsibilities. It’s hard preventing, responding to and solving crimes, and police officers rely on the help of all community members, regardless of their immigration status.

When I was police chief in Tucson, undocumented individuals provided evidence to my department that helped in the prosecution of cases involving human trafficking and drug dealing. I also recall being taken aside after a community meeting by two undocumented young men who shared information about a business owner engaging in illegal conduct. They felt safe enough to report these crimes, trusting the Tucson Police Department because they knew its officers were not part of Immigration and Customs Enforcement or the Border Patrol.

If undocumented people are afraid to engage with local police officers, they won’t come forward as witnesses — even when they are victims. This means criminals who endanger all residents are less likely to be apprehended and successfully prosecuted.

Furthermore, adding immigration enforcement to a police department’s list of responsibilities makes the already challenging job of police work even harder. Members of the public typically expect the police to respond to calls in a timely manner. They want police to solve and prevent crimes, partner with them to address neighborhood and traffic concerns, help those with mental health or substance abuse needs, and provide security during major events.

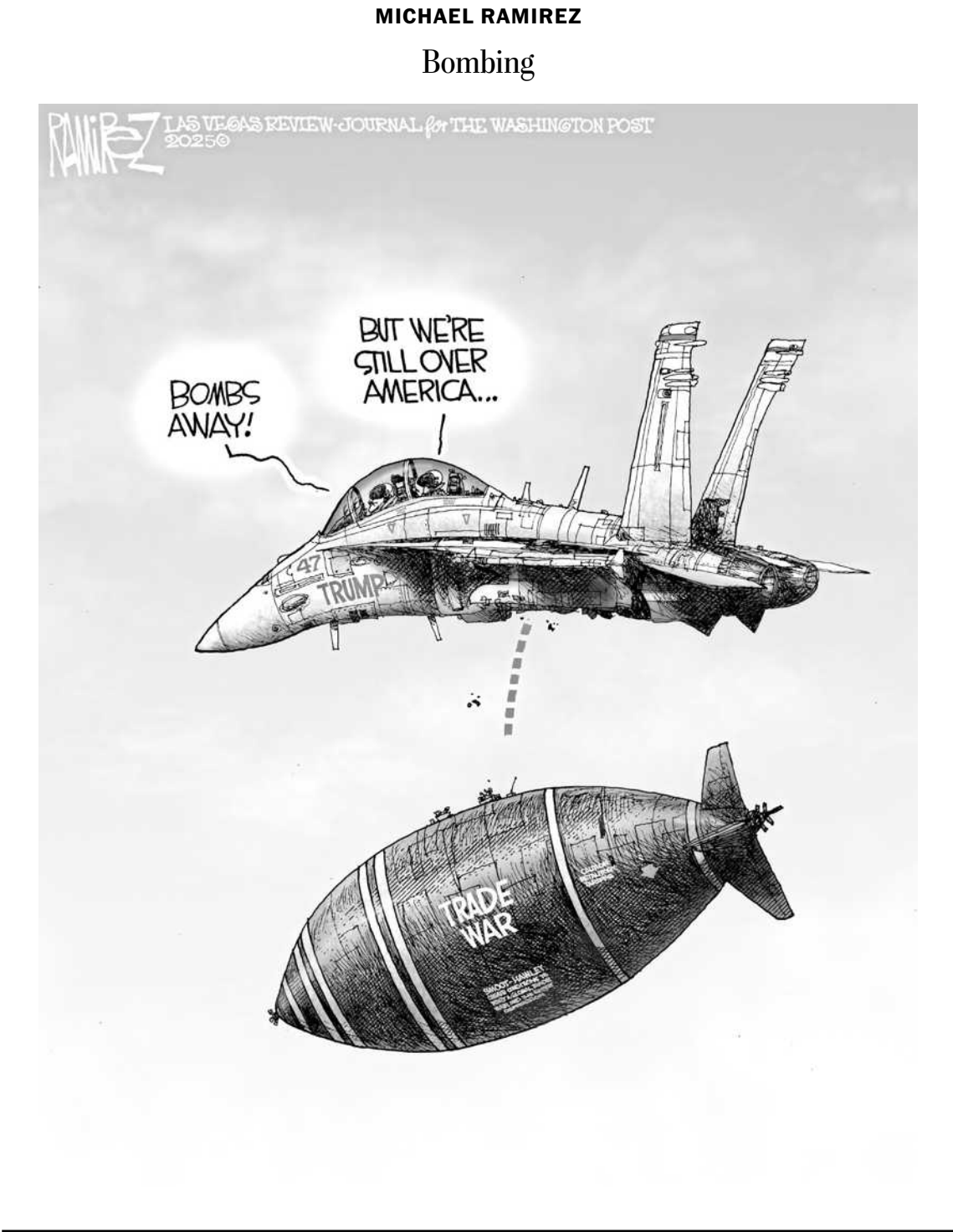
However, police staffing levels in many places already make this a challenge. According to a 2024 survey by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, most of its member agencies are operating at nearly a 10 percent deficit of their authorized staffing levels. Even with the greater use of civilians in police agencies and improved partnerships with nongovernmental agencies, local police departments struggle to meet the public’s high expectations. Committing local police to additional duties associated with enforcing immigration laws is risky and ill-conceived, especially when local police lack the authority, training and experience to do this work like federal agents.

The Major Cities Chiefs Association, composed of police chiefs and sheriffs from 70 of the largest law enforcement agencies in the United States, has made it clear in stating that “Police are here to defend and protect law-abiding residents and we will not shield anyone, regardless of their immigration status, who may commit crimes, inflict harm, violence, pain, and suffering in our communities.”

No one is suggesting that local police look the other way when undocumented people commit violence, property crimes or traffic offenses. Every police officer’s job includes the enforcement of laws and professional use of discretion.

However, immersing local police in immigration and border enforcement takes them away from their primary mission and does not make the public safer. Mayors, city council members and police chiefs must not be intimidated by the federal government into compelling their police officers to take on duties incompatible with the public-safety priorities of their residents. We have made tremendous progress in reducing crime and building bridges between the police and a diverse public. Allowing that progress to be compromised would be a serious mistake.

Chris Magnus, Honolulu
The writer worked in public safety for 43 years and served as the commissioner of Customs and Border Protection.



Stay away from our worship

Regarding the Jan. 27 article “Trump officials issue quotas to ICE officers in attempt to ramp up arrests”:

The new administration is trying to demonize immigrants and refugees and justify extreme anti-immigrant policies that are at odds with the core ethics of the prophetic Jewish tradition and the teachings of Jesus. One example is then-Department of Homeland Security acting secretary Benjamin Huffman revoking a directive that barred armed Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents from invading houses of worship without permission. As Quakers, we object to this heartless attack on religious liberty.

In response, we stand in full support of a lawsuit filed on Jan. 27 in the U.S. District Court in Maryland challenging Homeland Security’s authorization. Two D.C.-area Quaker meetings, Adelphi Friends and Richmond Friends, have joined three regional Quaker bodies — Baltimore Yearly Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and New England Yearly Meeting — as plaintiffs in the suit.

As clerks at Friends Meeting of Washington, we are committed to the same gospel values of justice, compassion and love of neighbor that inspired this lawsuit. We also stand in solidarity with the Right Rev. Mariann Budde, who urged President Donald Trump to temper his policies toward immigrants and members of the LGBTQ+ community with mercy and respect for human dignity. We fully support the lawsuit’s request that the court declare

unconstitutional any policy permitting government agents to carry out immigration enforcement activities at houses of worship when those policies are limited only by agents’ subjective common sense.

Elaine S. Wilson, Silver Spring
Steve Chase, Washington
The writers are clerks of Friends Meeting of Washington.

We’ll need a new plan

Every day, teachers make sure their classroom doors are locked and that students know the plan in the event of a shooter. We practice lockdown drills. We remind the kids to help barricade the door and pick up anything nearby in case they need to throw it at someone who would enter the room with a gun. We are as prepared to confront an armed intruder as we can be.

But it has never crossed my mind, until now, that the intruder entering my classroom with a gun could be a person authorized to do so by the federal government.

We are going to need a new plan.

Eileen McClure Nelson, Burke

You got a warrant?

President Donald Trump and White House border czar Tom Homan are targeting undocumented immigrants in schools and churches. But there’s a

difference there.

Public school facilities are on public property. Churches are on private property.

If Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers want to come onto church property, they had better have the proper warrants signed by a local judge naming specific people. Otherwise, the agents themselves might be open to arrest for armed trespass. The possibilities in Florida, where residents are permitted, by law, to “stand their ground,” are even more dire.

Don’t kid yourself: People are armed in places of worship, given the mass shootings that have taken place in churches in recent years. It’s easy to imagine a scenario in which armed ICE agents barge in, guns are pulled, and someone is shot. The prudent-person rule states that, if an adverse situation can be foreseen by a reasonable person, it becomes gross negligence not to actively avoid such a scenario.

ICE agents should stay out of places of worship and off churches’ private property. The risk of civil and criminal litigation is high if the federal government believes churches can be targeted for undocumented immigrant roundups.

Neil C. McMullen, Clearwater, Florida

How to improve immigration policy

I applaud President Donald Trump’s out-of-the-box economic policies, many of which could substantially benefit our country’s economy. Though many quibble with the merits of his social policies, I believe there can be a tremendous advantage in having an experienced and decisive businessman as our president — if he implements smart policies.

As a pro-business president, Trump should consider a more moderate deportation plan and liberalize restrictions on legal immigration to benefit our economy. Most Americans support his policy of deporting undocumented immigrants who are convicted criminals. Public support for going further is much weaker, and the policy implications of doing so are very costly and would aggravate inflation (on top of his proposed tariffs). The bond market is unhappy and likely to remain anxious, which will slow our economic growth. Moreover, most of us know that the overwhelming majority of undocumented immigrants are basically good people chasing the American Dream, as did our own ambitious forefathers. I, for one, still believe that one of our country’s greatest strengths is that we are a nation of immigrants.

Trump should consider amnesty for undocumented immigrants under limited circumstances, such as for those who have been paying taxes or have been in the United States for a certain number of years without any criminal issues. To mitigate the massive cost of deportations, Trump could encourage undocumented immigrants to return to their own countries at their own expense by adopting a policy that would give them preference for returning through legal immigration.

Trump should also liberalize legal immigration for unskilled and skilled workers to mitigate the ill effects of massive deportations, especially in fields where we have an inadequate labor supply. We face birth rates that have fallen below replacement levels, which could result in a declining population, a reduced workforce and a stagnant economy. We need to replenish a healthy labor supply to more effectively compete internationally. Selective, liberalized immigration is the fastest answer.

Trump could be a rare president with an enlightened immigration policy that benefits our great country. I ask that he demonstrate courage in fine-tuning his strategy, basing it not on politics but rather on sound economic policy.

Mark D. Betts, McLean

Guest opinion submissions

The Washington Post accepts opinion articles on any topic. We welcome submissions on local, national and international issues. We publish work that varies in length and format, including multimedia. Submit a guest opinion at oped@washpost.com or read our guide to writing an opinion article at wapo.st/guestopinion.

OPINION

EUGENE ROBINSON

Trump is no king, but it’s not from lack of effort

Last Friday, the Trump administration purged dozens of federal prosecutors and FBI officials who had worked on cases involving the Jan. 6 insurrection. And also shoved out the career Treasury Department official in charge of getting payments sent on time. And also removed references to gender identity and equity from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website. And also confirmed it would slap tariffs on Canada, Mexico and China. All on one day.

This constant barrage of executive actions and outrageous rhetoric coming from the White House is meant to overwhelm, intimidate and distract. Don’t let it. Distinguish the signal from the noise — and focus on stopping a power grab that would fundamentally change the nature of our democracy.

President Donald Trump’s preferred *modus operandi* has always been to make maximalist demands and see how much he can get away with. Unlike during his first presidency, when “mature adults” tempered his instincts, this time no one has stopped him from making a claim that plainly violates Article 1 of the Constitution: He insists that he, not Congress, has the right to decide how the federal government spends the people’s money.

That is by far the most important thing Trump has done, or tried to do. Some of the rest of his decrees are substantive, most are smoke-and-mirrors, but all pale beside his attempt to usurp the power of the purse. The first thing the resistance must resist is Trump’s attempt to make this attempted theft appear to be a fait accompli.

He has frozen money that Congress authorized for foreign aid, threatening to abolish the U.S. Agency for International Development. Acting over the weekend with Trump’s blessings, representatives of Elon Musk, the world’s richest man, seized control of USAID’s headquarters and began shuttering the agency.

“I went over it with him [Trump] in detail, and he agreed that we should shut it down,” Musk posted on X. “And so we’re shutting it down.” In earlier posts, Musk called USAID “evil” and claimed it is a “viper’s nest of radical-left marxists who hate America.”

Those calumnies are completely unfounded; USAID is staffed by idealists who fund lifesaving health and other services in Ukraine, Ethiopia and elsewhere for people desperately trying to survive war, famine and disaster. The agency’s annual budget is about \$40 billion, which is less than 1 percent of federal spending — a bargain price. Of course, Congress may defund USAID if it chooses. An out-of-control plutocrat, elected by nobody and accountable to nobody, may not.

Even more alarming is that Musk and his aides, brought in from his various companies, have been given access to the payments systems through which the Treasury Department disburses more than \$6 trillion each year. Until now, only a small number of civil servants have been allowed to access the systems because they include sensitive personal information, including Social Security numbers, for many if not most Americans.

Theoretically, Musk could mine the Treasury systems for information about firms that compete with his. Worse than that, he suggested that he intended to cancel some scheduled disbursements that he deemed “illegal.” Look past the rhetoric to the power grab: The White House, acting through Musk, is seeking control of spending that only Congress has the right to rescind.

The Impoundment Control Act of 1974, passed in response to a similar power grab by President Richard M. Nixon, makes it crystal clear that presidents do not have the power to “impound,” or withhold, congressionally mandated spending. Trump’s nominee for budget director, Russell Vought, declined to give a straight answer at his confirmation hearing when asked whether he would abide fully by the terms of the anti-impoundment law.

This is the most important battle that Democrats must wage — in the public square, at the Capitol, perhaps ultimately before the Supreme Court. Republicans ought to join them in the fight; they won’t like it if some future Democratic president decides to withhold spending on the GOP’s pet issues. But they’re too frightened of Trump to make a peep.

Some of the other damage that Trump and his minions are inflicting is also consequential. All of us will pay higher prices if he imposes his threatened tariffs, which the Wall Street Journal called “the dumbest trade war in history.” Dedicated public servants at the Justice Department and elsewhere are being purged for nothing more than doing their jobs. Refugees who fled Venezuela’s murderous regime will soon be sent home to an uncertain fate, as will migrant families from other countries who are being rounded up and deported to fill a daily quota. Trump’s vile rhetoric against diversity will restrict opportunity, and thus weaken the nation. And it matters, to the rule of law and to public safety, that violent thugs who sacked the Capitol and bashed police officers are free, while the FBI agents who tracked them down are in Trump’s crosshairs.

Everything gets worse, however, if Trump gets to decide who gets a check from the government and who doesn’t. He wants us to believe he is a king with the power to bestow or deny favors at his whim. Never forget that he is not.

USAID’s hidden purpose: It keeps Americans safe

BY CHRIS COONS

Donald Trump ran for president on a promise that he would keep Americans safe. His effort to defund and destroy the U.S. Agency for International Development shows he has a misguided idea of how to do that.

USAID’s programs, like all our foreign assistance, play a central role in combating extremism, promoting stability and protecting our homeland. Trump plans to sign an executive order that would direct action he is already taking to drastically reduce USAID’s budget and fold it into the State Department. This is an unconstitutional overstepping of our nation’s separation of powers. But even if it is blocked, Trump has already started gutting the agency.

On his first day back in the White House, Trump issued an executive order freezing all foreign assistance for at least 90 days, prompting “stop-work” orders — affecting hundreds of projects around the world — that will weaken U.S. influence. This past weekend, much of USAID’s leadership was furloughed or laid off, some fired for protecting national security secrets from unelected bureaucrats from the Elon Musk-led “Department of Government Efficiency.”

U.S. foreign assistance makes up 1 percent of our federal budget, and this money isn’t charity. It bolsters our security and advances our values. The reckless steps the Trump administration is taking as part of its isolationist “America First” agenda are, simply put, dangerous for Americans. Our foreign assistance and engagement wins us friends around the world, establishes our leadership and, more important, neutralizes distant threats to the United States well before they put our country at risk.

Right now, a new outbreak of Ebola in Uganda is beginning to claim lives. To the south, in Tanzania, there is an outbreak of the Marburg virus. Many Americans might remember 2014, when Ebola broke out in West Africa and made it to the United States. They are probably far less aware of the many other outbreaks that have been contained before they traveled here. Marburg might be even worse. Like Ebola, it is a hemorrhagic fever that shreds your blood vessels and leads to death by internal bleeding. Unlike Ebola, it has a mortality rate of up to 90 percent, and there is no approved vaccine.

The safety of Americans depends on containing these deadly viruses before carriers can travel to the United States. That depends on the success of USAID-funded projects such as disease monitoring, contact tracing and testing, administered by



People protest the Trump administration's proposed changes at the U.S. Agency for International Development in D.C. on Monday.

USAID staffers and contractors on the ground where the outbreaks occur. Without USAID funding, these programs will be kneecapped, and more of these diseases will spread unchecked throughout the world and come to our shores.

USAID’s work and our other foreign assistance programs go far beyond pandemic preparedness, however. We know that in countries such as Somalia, Yemen and Syria, terrorists exploit security vacuums to develop havens from which to attack the United States and our friends — as the Islamic State did in the 2010s and al-Qaeda did in the run-up to the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Our foreign assistance funds are used to train friendly militaries to raid terrorist training camps, to secure prisons where Islamic States members are held, and to provide the equipment needed to screen and keep bombs off planes. Similarly, we use our foreign assistance funds to train partners in our hemisphere to curb the flow of fentanyl and destroy the cartels that feed this deadly drug and others into the United States.

Foreign aid also promotes democracy. In May, Romania will rerun an election after its last one was annulled following heavy Russian interference. The Kremlin will put its thumb on the scale again, and if it succeeds, a lackey of Russian President Vladimir Putin will take charge of a key NATO ally. The State Department and USAID fund election-monitoring programs that will keep an eye out for interference and make it more likely that Romanians can go to the polls freely and fairly.

When we pull out of such coun-

tries, it creates gaps that China and our adversaries will fill. China has spent trillions of dollars in numerous countries because it is interested in pulling them into its sphere of influence. But many are pushing back. In meetings with leaders across the Global South in recent years, I have heard more requests for greater U.S. engagement and investment. USAID projects have played a crucial role in freeing nations from China’s grip. This makes it harder for our competitors to obtain raw materials and to secure bases from which they can project military power around the globe.

We have been winning this fight — but we are now abruptly leaving the playing field. Many countries will fall further into China’s orbit. We will face a more hostile world.

U.S. foreign and development assistance carried out by USAID might occur out of the public eye and far from our borders, but it addresses instability and keeps Americans safe. It keeps Americans living overseas safe. It keeps our service members stationed around the world safe. It keeps my constituents in Wilmington safe. As Gen. Jim Mattis, Trump’s first defense secretary, said, if we don’t fund foreign aid, “then I need to buy more bullets.”

USAID is not a perfect agency, and if the Trump administration wants to have a conversation about legal ways to reform it, I welcome that. What Trump is doing, however, is not a conversation. It is a destruction. Americans will pay the price.

The writer, a Democrat, represents Delaware in the U.S. Senate.

DAVID IGNATIUS

Why Britain’s outgoing envoy still believes in America

At the end of an interview last week, I asked Karen Pierce, the departing British ambassador to the United States, what worried her about the future. Open-ended questions like that often get predictable answers such as “global warming” or “the threat of war,” but not so with the famously contrarian Pierce.

“I worry that the West has lost its ‘ruthlessness edge,’” Pierce responded. I asked her what she meant, and she explained that it was a phrase used by Christopher Coker, a professor of hers at the London School of Economics, who argued that human survival was in part a product of our warlike instincts.

“When there was a Cold War, lots of things were existential,” Pierce continued. “You didn’t want things to get out of hand, and therefore you took quick, decisive action. We don’t have that clarity anymore. And hence, decision-making is harder.” She feared that the West was “too slow,” for example, in its adoption of artificial intelligence.

Maybe it’s not surprising that Pierce, with this hawkish outlook, had generally positive things to say about President Donald Trump — who in his first two weeks has been the definition of ruthlessness. But her comments reinforced something I’ve noticed with other foreign officials: The world usually defers to strong U.S. leadership, even when it’s disruptive.

I disagree with Pierce, frankly, about the benefits of this hard edge. Two weeks into the Trump administration, we’ve seen much chaos at home and abroad — accomplished with ruthless speed, to be sure, but little positive benefit that I can see. But I’m sharing Pierce’s parting thoughts because she has been an unusually influential envoy, and because many people in the United States and around the world would agree with her.

Pierce has a remarkable résumé. She was Britain’s first female ambassador to the United States, and, rare for a diplomat, she became something of a celebrity. She was profiled in The Post’s Style section and also back home in the Telegraph, which described her as a “champagne-swiggling, high-heel-wearing, feather boa-swathed diplomat.”

Pierce served from Trump to Trump, as it were. She arrived in March 2020, in the last year of his first administration, and she departed last weekend amid the turbulent start of his second. She was a well-chosen emissary to Trumpworld: Her predecessors had often been members of the British upper crust, sleek as whippets and unflappably discreet. Pierce was different — an outspoken, middle-class woman from the northern England mill town of Preston.

During our interview, she talked at length about Trump — mostly favorably — and barely at all about President Joe Biden. Perhaps she was just being diplomatic, saying nice things about the current inhabitant of the White House. But I suspect Trump meets her “ruthlessness” test in a way Biden didn’t.

Pierce has viewed official Washington from the grand oval of her dining table, where Republicans and Democrats enjoy a fancy meal and stay for after-dinner drinks. She noted that the amicable spirit she sees at the ambassador’s residence often disappears when members of Congress return to the television cameras and Capitol Hill.

The loss of bipartisanship was troubling, she said, because it diluted the United States’ voice. “I think other countries are unnerved when America isn’t working in the way they think it should work and showing leadership. I think other countries worry about a deficit of American leadership.”

Like other Europeans I’ve spoken with since Trump’s inauguration, Pierce seemed confident that the United States would survive the disruptions of the president’s first days in office. She didn’t share the worries felt by many Americans that he might be doing irreparable damage to our institutions.

“I actually think American democracy can withstand a few knocks,” she said, recalling the traumas of Tammany Hall, McCarthyism, Vietnam and Watergate. “American politics is a bit like American weather — more disruptive than what you normally see in Europe. ... [But] America always rights itself. It always comes back.”

Optimism about America’s long-term future is probably right, as it always has been in the past. But Trump is doing enormous damage in the short run — to public health, our legal system and the foundations of our economy. The sad fact is that the United States is likely to recover its balance only when the consequences — political and otherwise — become so severe that Trump’s Republican supporters demand a halt.

The one subject on which Pierce expressed genuine worry was the future of Ukraine, and the danger of a peace deal that would reward Russian aggression. “Peace through strength” was the only sensible strategy, she said. “It would please the Russians enormously to do a deal with the Americans over Ukraine’s head.”

“We can’t let Russia dictate what happens in Europe,” she continued. “After the Berlin Wall came down, America helped create a Europe whole and free, and we can’t allow Russia to walk everybody back from that in order to stop the fighting in Ukraine.”

Pierce had one last embassy bash Saturday night, with champagne glasses racked along the entry hallway almost as a ticket of admission. Republicans and Democrats mingled happily, and you could almost forget that the man in the White House had spent the past two weeks hammering at the institutions of a government that so many of the guests have faithfully served.

MOLLY ROBERTS

The anti-‘crypto president’

Donald Trump promised he’d be a “crypto president” at a Silicon Valley fundraiser last year. Judging by the \$12 million he raised at the event, the industry and its allies in attendance believed him.

The blockchain boosters have largely been proved right since Trump returned to Washington last month. David Sacks, a PayPal co-founder and venture capitalist who co-hosted the glitzy June gala at his home in the Pacific Heights neighborhood of San Francisco, is now White House crypto czar. A Week 1 executive order empowers him to work across agencies to craft friendly rules.

But a few days before Trump’s inauguration, the president-elect launched his own \$TRUMP “meme coin,” swelling his personal wealth by 800 percent, at least on paper. The transactions alone generated some \$11.4 million in fees for entities affiliated with him. So Trump is now a “crypto president” in a literal sense, too — just not the kind his supporters might have had in mind.

Normally, an industry such as crypto, which is spending vast sums on campaigns and on lobbying, would be thrilled that the personal interests of the most powerful man in the nation line up with its own. But the top-tier platforms and projects don’t only want relaxed regulations or gentler oversight. They want legitimacy in the eyes of the public: a stamp of approval from the government that will convince everyday people their technology is safe, secure and even essential.

The problem is, Americans today simply don’t trust crypto. About 17 percent of U.S. adults have invested in, traded or used crypto, according to the Pew Research Center. Between 2021 and 2024, that figure didn’t budge. Roughly 6 in 10 U.S. adults, meanwhile, aren’t confident that cryptocurrency is reliable.

The industry wants the country to see digital assets as no riskier than other investments, including traditional stocks or bonds. Better yet, they want folks to see the blockchain as a brighter, better, possibly *faster* future for finance. The technology, they say, can eliminate the need for stodgy middlemen such as banks, brokerages or credit card companies, which can charge hefty fees.

Telling this story is hard given recent history: most crucially, the coin crash of 2022, when the wipeout of “sister” coins TerraUSD and Luna, ostensibly designed to be stable, triggered a broader \$500 billion collapse in the crypto market, and the supposedly safe exchange FTX lost an estimated \$8 billion in customer assets.

So when the president-elect himself unveils a meme coin (or, as they’re more crudely referred to, a sh-- coin), the parts of the industry desperate for mainstream credibility collectively cringe. These tokens, often connected to viral figures or phenomena of the moment, have no cash flow, fundamental value or nexus to real life. The only purpose of the “currencies” is to enrich those who buy them low and sell them high. A man who is peddling his own coins — and extracting high fees along the way — is not the “crypto president” they’re looking for.

Immediately after Trump’s coin appeared on the Solana platform late on Jan. 17, it followed the typical trajectory of its class: rocketing to tens of billions of dollars in market cap in hours, fueled by purchasers’ blind belief that the invented asset could be worth something, then cratering when the “whale” investors holding huge amounts of it sold it off. (Plus, there is the whole influence angle: Want to curry favor with the president? In theory, just buy his coin, and you’re basically putting money in his piggy bank without anyone knowing.)

That \$MELANIA arrived for pur-

chase soon after her husband’s coin didn’t help. Neither did Ivanka Trump having to denounce a much-hyped \$IVANKA coin as an unendorsed fraud.

Many grouched that they’d missed out on the action. The president-elect posted his coin in the middle of the \$2,500-per-ticket inaugural Crypto Ball at downtown D.C.’s Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium. “Trump rugged all of his biggest fans by dropping his meme coin during the crypto ball when we were all sloshed,” prominent investor Nic Carter said on X. Instead, complained Carter, Trump “rewarded” the “degens” — high-risk, pump-and-dump traders — with a Friday night release.

But they also pointed to a more existential problem. First-term Trump White House communications director and current crypto mogul Anthony Scaramucci put it this way: This “actually mocks the industry we are working so hard to build.”

And there hangs crypto investors’ and inventors’ paradox: The man they’re relying on to affix a stamp of legitimacy to their business is himself drawn to the aspects that make it seem so illegitimate to the wider public. Though the president is happy to promote blockchain at its best, he has shown he’s also willing to profit off it at its worst. Case in point: Holders of \$TRUMP, reported Bloomberg, can now use the coin as payment on GetTrumpWatches.com, GetTrumpFragrances.com and GetTrumpSneakers.com to, well, get Trump watches, fragrances and sneakers.

Over the next four years, as the industry tries to gain good standing by persuading lawmakers and agencies to give digital assets the green light, it also risks being dragged down by its own backers looking to make a quick buck ... and perhaps most of all by the very prominent, very public backer sitting in the Oval Office.

President hopes to diminish, then close, Education Dept.

EDUCATION FROM A1

one of Trump's campaign promises: eliminating the Education Department altogether.

A White House official confirmed that it is preparing for executive action later this month that will fulfill Trump's campaign pledge to defund the department.

Some Republicans have argued that it would be better to wait until after Trump's choice for education secretary, Linda McMahon, appears before the Senate for her confirmation hearing. Scheduling has been held up as the government ethics office reviews her paperwork, a Senate aide said.

The expected executive order would not shut down the agency, as there is widespread agreement in both parties that doing so would require congressional action, the people familiar said. The Education Department was created by Congress, and only Congress can eliminate it.

Such congressional action is unlikely, people in both parties say. Legislation would require a supermajority of 60 votes in the Senate, meaning at least seven Democrats would need to support the plan, which observers say is inconceivable.

A 2023 vote in the House to abolish the department, considered as an amendment to a parents' rights bill, garnered 161 yes votes, but 60 Republicans joined every Democrat in voting no. The bill was defeated.

"I would not hold my breath that [closing the department] would ultimately become law," Rep. Tim Walberg (R-Michigan), chairman of the House Education Committee, said in an interview last month. He said he supports closing the agency but that such a plan does not have sufficient support in the Senate, so such legislation would not be his "highest priority" absent a plan from Trump to move a bill forward.

"So in the meantime," Walberg



President Donald Trump is reportedly preparing an order aimed at closing the Education Department.

said, "my efforts would be to find any means by which we may de-power the Department of Education."

The order is expected to direct the Education Department to develop a legislative plan to present to Congress. But it also will instruct the department to come up with a plan to diminish its staff and functions.

It was unclear how detailed the order will be, but people briefed and others who follow the Education Department closely said they expect the agency will try to move various functions to other federal departments. Project 2025, the conservative blueprint for a second Trump term, detailed where different pieces of the department might land if it were closed.

For instance, Project 2025 recommended that the student loan program move to the Treasury Department and civil rights enforcement shift to the Justice Department.

But even those moves would require congressional action, experts said. The 1979 law that established the department specifies that the agency "shall" include many of its major responsibilities, including an Office for Civil Rights and an Office of Elementary and Secondary Education.

A separate statute, the Higher Education Act, specifies that the federal student aid office be housed in the Education Department. There has been some bipartisan interest in moving some of these functions out of the department in the past, but it's unclear if Democrats would go along in this environment.

Trump and his team probably understand they will not be successful in tearing the Education Department to pieces by executive order, said Michael Petrilli, president of the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, a conservative think tank. But he said the move will please Trump's base and test

the limits of presidential power.

"What will be interesting is if he orders parts of the department to be moved to other agencies, in violation of the statutes," Petrilli said. "Then that'll be a test, and we'll see what happens in the courts."

Already, the National Student Legal Defense Network, an advocacy group, is exploring legal challenges to any effort to dismantle the agency.

"Effectively shutting down the Department of Education through Executive Order or mass firings is a recipe for chaos that will disrupt the lives of students across the country," said Aaron Ament, a former Obama administration official who is president of the group. "Trying to do so without Congress is not only shortsighted but illegal and unconstitutional."

Still, Petrilli pointed to the ongoing saga at USAID, which Trump — working through Musk — effectively closed and merged

with the State Department over the weekend.

"He can't do this on his own. He can't actually dismantle the Department of Education," Petrilli said. "But boy, everything feels up in the air right now. ... It's been a disorienting couple of days, so who knows?"

Closing the department has been an off-and-on Republican goal since it was created in 1979. During his campaign, Trump repeatedly promised to "return" responsibility for education to the states, a misleading sentiment echoed by many other GOP candidates. (States and school districts, not the federal government, operate public schools.)

The department administers federal grant programs, including the \$18.4 billion Title I program that provides supplemental funding to high-poverty K-12 schools, as well as the \$15.5 billion program that helps cover the cost of education for students with disabilities. The department also oversees the \$1.6 trillion federal student loan program and sets rules for what colleges must do to participate.

And the agency is charged with enforcing civil rights laws that bar discrimination in federally funded schools on the basis of race, sex and other factors. Executive orders signed after Trump took office suggest the department will use its authority to deny federal funding to schools that teach certain things about race and gender. Another executive order banning transgender girls and women from competing on women's sports teams is expected as soon as this week.

Americans have mixed and partisan views of the Education Department, according to a 2024 survey conducted by the Pew Research Center. It found that 44 percent had favorable views of the agency and 45 percent had unfavorable views. But among Republicans and those who lean Republican, 64 percent viewed the agency unfavorably, com-

pared with 26 percent of Democrats and those who lean Democratic.

Moves to shutter the agency are certain to draw widespread opposition.

"Parents aren't asking for more chaos," said Keri Rodrigues, president of the National Parents Union. "We're demanding leaders who strengthen schools, protect our economy and stop treating our children's futures like props in a political performance."

Donald Kettl, professor emeritus at the University of Maryland School of Public Policy, questioned whether congressional Republicans will expend the political capital to unwind the agency when they are tasked with carrying out so many other aspects of Trump's agenda, particularly extending his 2017 tax cuts.

Breaking up the Education Department would offer little savings to offset the tax cuts, making the effort largely meaningless, he said.

"Is the [House] speaker willing to invest political capital to not save any money, to simply shift the boxes around and have very little to show for it, except for saying the department was abolished?" Kettl said.

Donald K. Sherman, executive director and chief counsel for legal advocacy group Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, said Trump could weaken the department without moving a single function. Pushing senior staffers out, gutting budgets and firing the department's inspector general, he said, could make the agency a shell of its former self.

"Trump has done a lot already to weaken the department," Sherman said. "People are demoralized. They are being driven out with the end goal of destroying a critical arm of the government."

Matt Viser and Alice Crites contributed to this report.

Two weeks into his second term, Trump still can't stop talking about Biden

BY MATT VISER

He brought him up just after he was inaugurated. He ridiculed him while touring disaster sites in North Carolina, laughed about him in Las Vegas and pilloried him while delivering a virtual address to business leaders gathered at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

Joe Biden's presidency ended two weeks ago. His photos no longer hang on the walls. His artwork choices in the Oval Office are gone. But inside the head of President Donald Trump, he is still very much top of mind.

"When I think of Biden, I think of incompetence and inflation," he said on his sixth day in office. "And I'm being nice by saying — I'm being nice when I say that."

"The guy was a disaster, okay?" Trump said on the evening of his eighth. "You know, we want to be nice and he's probably not listening right now because it's a little late."

Almost every day since he took office — almost every time he has spoken — Trump has mentioned Biden, in one way or another, in interviews and news conferences, on social media and even in the text of executive orders.

"If Biden had gotten elected, Social Security was going to fail because the country was failing," he claimed Friday, his 12th day as president, mentioning Biden 11 times over 25 minutes while signing executive orders.

Trump has invoked his name while discussing a trade deficit with China ("Biden allowed it to get out of hand"), recovery efforts after Hurricane Helene ("Biden did a bad job"), oil prices ("Biden should have never allowed them to go up so high") and immigration ("Joe Biden's open borders, stupid policies").

On Thursday, the morning after the fatal collision of an Army helicopter and an American Airlines jet, Trump was barely five minutes past a moment of silence when he said Biden was to blame for undermining aviation safety standards.

"Their policy was horrible, and their politics was even worse," he said, blaming Biden and former president Barack Obama in particular for an air traffic controller diversity program (although a Washington Post fact check found that Trump's first administration also used such hiring practices.)

It is the latest chapter in the unusual relationship between the man who claims the title of the nation's 45th and 47th president and the president in between. Biden rarely mentioned Trump during his first few months in office — even referring to him as



Former president Joe Biden and former first lady Jill Biden arrive at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland on Jan. 20 after the inauguration.

"the former guy" — in what was an effort to be more forward-looking while attempting to vanquish Trump and not give him any further attention.

"It was certainly a deliberate choice not to put Trump front and center in everything Biden was doing when he came into office," said Kate Bedingfield, a Democratic strategist who was Biden's communications director at the time. "He intentionally didn't say his name and did not want to make him the beating heart of everything he did."

At one point, Biden lamented during a CNN town hall shortly after taking office: "For four years, all that's been in the news is Trump. ... I'm tired of talking about Donald Trump."

Trump has yet to tire of talking about Biden. "Biden didn't know he was alive," he joked to a crowd over his first weekend in office.

"They like Sleepy Joe," he said of world leaders who may attempt to take advantage of the country. "What's not to like?"

"President Biden totally lost control of what was going on in our country, but in particular with our high-inflation economy and at our border," he said during the

World Economic Forum.

Incoming presidents often spend their first months in office trying to unify the country, turning away from the bitter partisanship that often marks their campaigns. But Trump is not like most incoming presidents. He saw his election victory as a broad rejection of the Biden administration.

Trump allies point out that Trump does best with a foil. And, with a Democratic Party that is largely leaderless at the moment, that has left Biden as the best foil in sight. Trump also harbors a lingering personal animosity for Biden — the only one to defeat Trump in an election.

"It's clear President Trump wants to remind everyone: I beat him. I pushed him out," said Sean Spicer, Trump's first press secretary during his first term. "And there's an aspect of this that says, 'I want to remind you of what I did.'"

Biden left office as a deeply unpopular president. His legacy is tarnished among many Democrats who had viewed him as uniquely able to defeat Trump in 2020 but who now blame him for failing to see until late in the 2024 campaign that the electorate had decided that he was too old to run

for reelection.

It's a remarkable fall for a man who entered office as a longtime pol from working-class Scranton, Pennsylvania, and who was well liked over his decades in office. He left as one who animated the right with a hatred that runs deep enough through Trump's base that "Let's go, Brandon" chants rang out at Trump's inauguration event at Capital One Arena.

As Trump has signed a raft of executive orders, a number of them mention Biden specifically, including one ending diversity, equity and inclusion programs that Biden championed and another restoring use of the federal death penalty after Biden commuted the sentences of almost everyone on federal death row.

One order was directed specifically at revoking security clearances for the dozens of former intelligence officers who signed a letter in October 2020 saying that Hunter Biden's laptop data had the hallmarks of a "Russian information operation."

Biden and Trump have been intertwined for years. They've engaged in macho bluster with each other, befitting the high school jocks they both were. Biden beat

Trump but was then drummed out of his reelection campaign after a dismal debate performance that included squabbles over who between them was a better golfer.

After Biden dropped out, Trump often lamented that he couldn't still run against Biden. He struggled for weeks to adapt and find ways to attack then-Vice President Kamala Harris. These days, he seldom mentions her.

But Biden, after the race, attempted to oversee a smooth transition, rarely talking about Trump as the threat to democracy he had once claimed he was, and instead inviting him to the White House for a friendly meeting.

"Welcome home!" Biden said cheerily on the morning of the inauguration. The two men had a tea and coffee reception before riding over to the inauguration together. Once they parted ways, Trump resumed his attacks.

"We had to beat two opponents. We had to beat Biden, then we beat him," he said at a rally after the inauguration. "Now he goes on — guy was like 39 points down — I think I could have beaten Trump. They should have left me in. I would have beat him." Now, his debate performance wasn't the

best, right? That's what killed him."

That night, Trump signed executive orders in the Oval Office in front of reporters, answering questions for 45 minutes in a free-wheeling way that did not occur under his predecessor.

"Does Biden ever do news conferences like this? How many news conferences, Peter, has he done like this?" he asked, looking at Fox News correspondent Peter Doocy (who had also encouraged Trump to look into the Resolute Desk, where he found a letter Biden had written to him).

"You're getting a little bit more access to your president than you did the last time," Trump said a few days later, coming back on Air Force One to respond to questions in a way that Biden almost never did. "Slightly — like, by about 5,000 percent."

Biden often said that when he took office, he wanted to signal to the world that "America is back," and he said he wanted to make it a more reliable diplomatic partner. In his first few days in office, one of the themes of Trump's criticism has been that Biden was weak on the foreign stage.

"I had a very strong understanding with Putin," Trump said on his second day in office. "That would have never, ever happened. He disrespected Biden, very simple. He disrespects people, he's smart, he understands, he disrespected Biden."

He also claimed that the Oct. 7, 2023, attack in Israel would not have happened had he been president, and he stated, even though the ceasefire was negotiated by aides to both Biden and Trump, "Biden couldn't get it done."

Before a crowd of supporters in Las Vegas, he went on an extended riff about Biden as he suggested that he had heard from world leaders that they couldn't get ahold of the prior president.

"He would never pick up the call," Trump said. "They'd say, 'He'll call you back in two months.' Two months? Yeah, it's his schedule. He's extremely busy."

Repeating an audience member, he suggested the president was sleeping. Two months later, he added, there was still no call.

"The stories are — I mean, these stories are not very exaggerated," Trump said. "They're a little bit — a little bit for laughter."

Trump claimed that he answers each call immediately, to the point where he is frequently on the phone. "You can't get them off the phone," he said. "They're starved for love. You know, for years, they haven't spoken. They didn't even know we had a president, if you want to know."

Grocer settles over wage theft allegations

Union Kitchen agrees to pay workers more than \$133,000 in withheld tips

BY TOM JACKMAN

The owner of Union Kitchen, a chain of locally owned grocery stores in the District and Virginia, has agreed to pay its workers more than \$133,000 for illegally withholding tips paid by customers, settling a lawsuit filed nearly two years ago that alleged Union Kitchen stopped accepting tips after workers pointed out the discrepancy on their paychecks.

The discovery by Union Kitchen workers that they weren't receiving their tips led employees to unionize, said Gabriel Wittes, a former employee and the lead plaintiff in the lawsuit.

After the unionization effort, Union Kitchen was found by the National Labor Relations Board in November 2022 to have committed 26 violations of labor law — including firings and other disciplinary measures — against workers involved in organizing the union. Union Kitchen was required to pay nearly \$25,000 to five workers who were fired or disciplined.

"I and all of my co-workers were systematically stolen from over the course of years," Wittes said. "It's taken a long time, but I'm really excited and pleased to play a central role in justice being served."

Cullen Gilchrist, Union Kitchen's owner, and lawyers representing the company declined to comment Monday.

The withholding scheme was first discovered in July 2021, according to the lawsuit filed by the United Food and Commercial Workers union Local 400. Employees in one of the Union Kitchen stores in D.C. began comparing their paychecks with the itemized sales report for the store. The employees found that the store would reap more than \$2,400 a week in tips, but the employees weren't getting their fair share for the hours they worked.

Tips were left both in cash and on credit card payments, then totaled and divided up according to how many hours an employee worked. One employee was paid about \$344 in tips for a two-week period when she should have received \$681, the union claimed, a \$337 shortage in one paycheck.

Wittes and his colleague began raising this discrepancy with supervisors but said the policy continued. In October 2021, some employees received a one-time bonus to "reward Team Members who participated in the tip pool previously," the lawsuit states, and one employee received a payment of \$3,135.

The following month, Wittes and others met with Gilchrist to ask about the underpayment of tips. The workers revealed that they could see the Union Kitchen stores' sales report, which enabled them to see the stores'

SEE SETTLEMENT ON B2



JOHN MCDONNELL FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Crews begin days-long aircraft recovery process from Potomac

Investigators aim to extricate remains with dignity as they preserve debris

BY OLIVIA GEORGE
AND PAUL DUGGAN

Recovery crews using a waterborne crane began raising the wreckage of an airliner from the icy Potomac River on Monday as divers, engineers, pathologists and others worked to account for still-missing crash victims, all presumed dead, and find clues to the cause of last week's midair collision that killed 67 people aboard a passenger jet and an Army helicopter.

Five days after American Eagle Flight 5342 from Wichita and a Black Hawk helicopter went down in flames following a nighttime, low-altitude collision near Reagan National Airport, the crane hauled one of the jet's engines and remnants of its fuselage from the murky, relatively shallow water, authorities said. As of late afternoon, crews were working to bring one of the plane's wings to the surface.

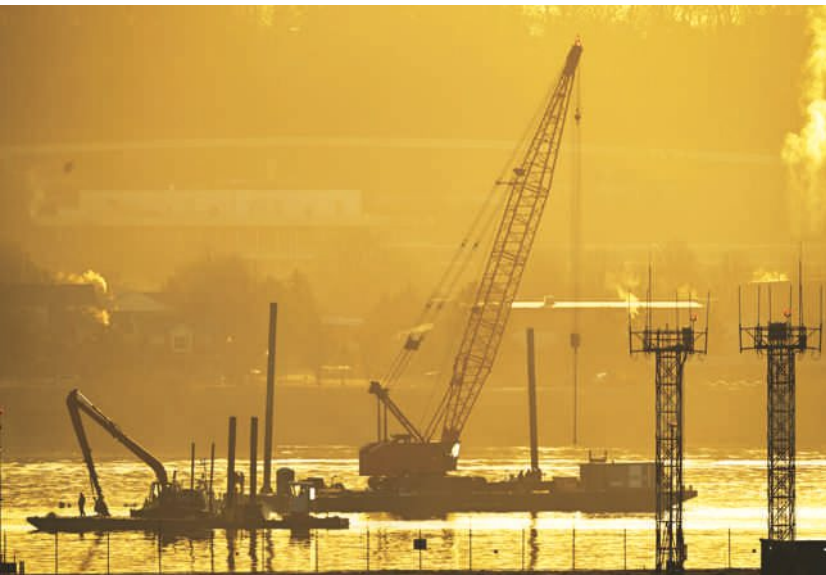
The snarled metal of the engine emerged from the Potomac shortly before 10 a.m., beginning what officials said will be a painstaking, days-long effort, as they strive to preserve every scrap possible of the two wrecked aircraft for crash investigators while extricating human remains from the debris with dignity and discretion.

Authorities had recovered and identified 55 sets of remains before Monday's work began, said assistant D.C. fire chief Gary W. Steen Jr., and more were located throughout the day; he did not give an exact number. By the afternoon, investigators had completed interviews of all five staffed positions in the air traffic control tower that night, and obtained training and flight logs for both flight crews and maintenance

SEE PLANE ON B2



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD/AP



JOHN MCDONNELL FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

FROM TOP: A jet takes off from Reagan National Airport at sunrise; a salvage crew and National Transportation Safety Board investigators uncover wreckage from the helicopter involved in Wednesday's collision; and a recovery crane sits on the Potomac River near the crash site.

Faceoff in D.C. triggers division

COUNCIL SET TO ACT BEFORE WHITE TRIAL

Some see preemptive expulsion as overreach

BY PAUL SCHWARTZMAN,
MEAGAN FLYNN
AND JENNY GATHRIGHT

Stuart Anderson, a seasoned Democratic activist in D.C., for years has been seeking to oust Trayon White Sr., the council member accused of accepting \$35,000 in bribes from a government contractor.

Lately, though, Anderson's negative view of White's leadership in the city's poorest ward has been eclipsed by another sentiment: his outrage that the D.C. Council is moving to expel the lawmaker even though he has not been convicted of a crime.

"It's bigger than just about Trayon, it's about the idea that the council is morally superseding the Constitution," said Anderson, who himself unsuccessfully challenged White (D-Ward 8) in 2020 and advised another Democrat who lost to him last year. "I'm not saying they can't kick someone off for an offense. I'm saying they can't unless it has been proven the person is guilty."

The FBI's arrest of White last August provoked a mix of anger and disappointment among his Ward 8 constituents, rolled the city's Democratic establishment and echoed the spate of scandals that have tarnished the council at various points over the past 15 years.

Now, as the council appears set to remove White on Tuesday, lawmakers are facing questions from constituents about imposing their most severe punishment before his case has been adjudicated, and potentially overriding the will of Ward 8 voters who, despite the charge, reelected him in November.

In a lawsuit filed late last week in U.S. District Court, six residents of Ward 8 sought an injunction to stop the council from expelling White, claiming that it would disenfranchise voters who elected him. The lawsuit was pending as of midday Monday.

Even if the council removes him, White, 40, would not be barred from running in a special election to fill the seat.

The council member, who has pleaded not guilty and faces trial in January 2026, has not indicated what he would do if expelled. "I don't know what's ahead, but I know God is good and His mercy endures forever," he wrote in a text to The Washington Post on Sunday.

White made no statements during a council hearing last week when offered the chance to rebut the body's own investigation that found he violated its code of conduct. His attorney, Frederick D. Cooke, told the lawmakers they would violate White's rights if they

SEE WHITE ON B2

Report issued on search for FBI site

BY AARON WIENER

The controversial selection of a suburban Maryland site for the future FBI headquarters was not the result of a conflict of interest, a federal inspector general who launched a review of allegations of such improprieties has concluded.

But a decision to weight the cost of development during the decision-making process in a way that benefited the Prince George's County site was "not justified," the inspector general's report released on Monday found.

The 2023 decision by the General Services Administration, which oversees federal real estate, to move the bureau from its aging downtown Washington home to Greenbelt drew protests from then-FBI director Christopher A. Wray, as well as Virginia

Greenbelt parcel was flawed, but a conflict of interest was not found

lawmakers who preferred a site in the Springfield area of Fairfax County.

Maryland and Virginia competed fiercely to land the FBI headquarters, a project expected to bring billions of dollars in tax revenue.

Among the allegations made were that Nina Albert, the former GSA official who made the final call on the site selection, was not in a position to act impartially because of her previous job handling real estate for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, which owns the Greenbelt site.

Wray wrote a letter to the GSA administrator in October 2023, urging the agency to redo its years-long selection process. He described a fatally flawed process in which Albert ignored the recommendation of a panel of three government employees to move the bureau to Springfield.

Albert, who now oversees planning and economic development in D.C. Mayor Muriel E. Bowser's administration, has said the allegations stemmed from "misinformation" about the selection process and that no such conflict existed.

"I think it's a distraction, frankly, from the decision and the opportunity for the FBI to get the campus that they've long waited for," she said in late 2023.

As for why she didn't follow the panel's recommendation, she said, "I evaluated criteria per-

SEE FBI ON B3

Federal judge extends OMB funding freeze ban

BY SPENCER S. HSU

A federal judge in Washington on Monday extended a temporary ban against President Donald Trump's sweeping pause on trillions of dollars in federal spending while she weighs a lawsuit challenging its legality. U.S. District Judge Loren L. AliKhan, who issued the ruling, cited the otherwise "catastrophic" impact on millions of Americans who receive vital resources from the government including food and medical assistance, disaster relief and grants for preschools and small businesses.

AliKhan said the Trump administration "offered no rational explanation" for freezing all federal aid virtually overnight. "Rather than taking a measured

approach to identify purportedly wasteful spending, Defendants cut the fuel supply to a vast, complicated, nationwide machine — seemingly without any consideration for the consequences of that decision," she said.

She added that allowing the executive branch to suspend Congress's power of the purse would give presidents "unbounded power" over appropriations, running "roughshod" over the Constitution's separation of powers between Congress and the White House.

AliKhan's ruling extend her earlier order — which expired at 5 p.m. Monday — preventing new restrictions from taking effect in the Trump White House's Office

SEE OMB ON B3

TODAY'S WEATHER

8 a.m.	Noon	4 p.m.	8 p.m.
49°	56°	53°	43°

High today at approx. 1 p.m.: 58°

Precip: 5% Wind: NW 8-16 mph

For weather news, go to B6

VIRGINIA

Lawmakers float broad tax cuts, a departure from the governor's plan. B3

THE REGION

An ex-adviser to the Fed is indicted on an economic espionage charge. B4

OBITUARIES

Suzanne Massie, 94, was Reagan's Cold War Russia whisperer. B4

D.C. Council’s intention to expel White before his trial date sparks concerns

WHITE FROM B1

expel him. Although no one on the council appeared swayed, Cooke's contention resonates in some parts of Ward 8, where White won 75 per cent of the vote in November. Rev. Anthony Motley, a long-time Ward 8 civic leader, acknowledged that the evidence federal prosecutors have presented — video of White accepting envelopes purportedly filled with cash — “didn't look good,” and that the council member's recent public apology for unspecified wrongdoing raised added concerns. “The question is, ‘What are you apologizing for?’ ” asked the pastor, who supported an opponent of White's in last year's Democratic primary. “Obviously, we still need to find out.”

Yet Motley also said it would be “premature” to expel the council member before he has presented his defense in court. “We know what the government is saying, but we also know that the government can say a lot of things when they want you,” he said of the prosecution. Referring to the council, he asked, “Why can't they wait until we have a trial by jury and he's found guilty or innocent?”

For some Ward 8 residents, the FBI evidence seems incriminating enough that they don't need to wait for a trial. “We literally have it on video,” said Dewey Sampson, 43, an Anacostia financial planner who attended a recent Martin Luther King Jr. Day prayer breakfast at a local church. “I understand what people are saying about due process, but if he had done the right thing we wouldn't be in this situation in the first place.”

An unprecedented move

The council has not expelled anyone since enacting legislation to give itself that power just over a decade ago, though it has reprimanded members, including Marion Barry, who was twice censured and stripped of committee chairmanships for ethical lapses when the former mayor represented Ward 8. The council was on the verge of removing Jack Evans (D-Ward 2) during a 2019 ethics scandal, but he resigned before the vote. White himself was on the council committee that voted unanimously to recommend expulsion, even though Evans was never charged with a crime. In White's case, Council Chairman Phil Mendelson (D) said the legislature is not required to wait for his trial before acting. The council's own independent investigation, he said, “substantiated”

prosecutors’ allegations that White accepted bribes in exchange for agreeing to use his influence to help an associate procure government contracts. In December, after the completion of the internal investigation, a council committee unanimously recommended White's removal. Mendelson, in an interview, pointed out that it's not unprecedented for a legislature to expel a member before a trial. He cited the 2023 House vote to eject Rep. George Santos (R-New York), whom prosecutors had charged with fraud. “Citizens citywide do not want corrupt politicians,” Mendelson said. “It would be intolerable to them to wait another year at least for a trial that may or may not take place.” “I don't think we have a choice about whether to move forward,” he said.

‘Where is the democracy?’

If the council votes to remove White, a special election to fill his seat is expected to draw a cluster of candidates. White has not said whether he'd run, but he would have a number of advantages — his indictment notwithstanding — including that he's well-known in the ward and has won three previous elections. He could also benefit if he faces multiple opponents, who would be likely to split a significant portion of the vote.

Ron Lester, a longtime D.C. pollster who has no ties to White, said his expulsion, if it comes to that, could even help the council member attract support. Without a conviction, Lester said, the severity of the punishment “would be troublesome for a lot of voters in Ward 8 who already believe there's not a lot of equity in the political, economic and criminal justice systems.”

“I think he'd win overwhelmingly — by a larger margin than he did before,” said Lester, whose clients have included Barry and former mayor Vincent C. Gray. “People want to be able to choose their own council member. They don't want the council to overstep their bounds.”

At White's council hearing last week, Nee Nee Taylor, a Southeast community organizer who turned out to support White, spotted council member Robert C. White Jr. (no relation) in the hallway and pleaded with him to allow the legal process to play out. “The way y'all moving now — where is the democracy?” she asked before turning to a reporter and adding: “He represents the constituents of Ward 8, and they voted him back in. Knowing what happened, they voted him in.”

Anderson, who served as



CRAIG HUDSON FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Trayon White Sr. (D-Ward 8), right, is seen during his swearing-in ceremony on Jan. 2. Above, White attended a D.C. Council meeting on Jan. 28 that concerned disciplinary actions that the council may take as the council member faces a federal bribery charge. Action could include expelling White from his elected post.

White's campaign manager in 2016, cited a host of reasons he has not supported him for years, including that he believes the council member has failed to build alliances with colleagues that could help the ward. But he also said that he would be outraged enough by an expulsion that he would back White in a special election. “I have to stand on principle,” he said. “I have to say to the council — and that is the only way to say it — you're wrong to remove.”

If the council doesn't act, it faces potential repercussions from another audience — the GOP-controlled Congress whose members have portrayed D.C. as dysfunctional and threatened to revoke its right to self-govern. In 2019, House Republicans cited the Evans scandal as a reason to delay consideration of D.C. statehood.

Craig Holman, a government affairs lobbyist for the nonprofit group Public Citizen, said the toll of past episodes of corruption puts added onus on the current council to act. Whether expulsion could help White politically and boost his prospects in a special election is irrelevant, he said.

“At least the council would have



MARVIN JOSEPH/THE WASHINGTON POST

stood up,” he said. “I don't think it will solve their image problem, but not doing anything is the worst option.”

Since his arrest, White has cast himself as the victim of an overzealous council and law enforcement. At his council hearing, he wore a T-shirt that read “THE FBI KILLED FRED HAMPTON,” a reference to the Black Panther leader who was targeted by an FBI informant and killed during a 1969 police raid.

Outside city hall, a parked truck displayed an electronic image of White above the words, “FBI SET ME UP.”

The council member did not directly answer a text last week from The Post asking if he'd run in a special election if expelled. Instead, he replied that “over 20,000 people voted” for him in November. “The Council is undermining the will of the people and this is

undemocratic,” he wrote, referring to himself in the third person. “He has maintained his innocence and not been convicted of anything.”

A lack of swagger

In 2017, as he was sworn in for his first council term, White introduced himself to a large audience as the face of a new chapter in local politics, eager “to change the paradigm of how we lead in Washington, D.C.”

“The days of sleeping are over,” he told the crowd, which included his supporters, many of them chanting his campaign slogan, “Don't just stand there! Do something!”

By then, White had made an impression on the broader political community as a self-styled heir to Barry's populist brand of politics, able to earn the trust of low-income Black Washingtonians. It

was the strength of his network that helped White upset incumbent LaRuby May, the choice of Mayor Muriel E. Bowser (D).

“He had an authenticity, a real connection and passion for a community that's often forgotten by the rest of the city,” Bryan Weaver, a Democratic activist, recalled. “And he was a protégé of Marion's, which resonated for a lot of people.”

White eschewed the suits and ties favored by his colleagues and wore his long hair in braids that fell down his back. He used social media to capture his day-to-day travels, drawing praise from constituents less for his legislative prowess and more for his visits to crime scenes and fires.

He also became the target of international ridicule when he claimed at one point that a Jewish banking family controlled the weather, after which he apologized.

His nadir, though, occurred Aug. 18 when FBI agents arrested him.

Four months later, at his third swearing-in, where he was greeted by a smattering of applause, White displayed none of the swagger he had exuded eight years earlier. “I want to apologize to my city,” he told the crowd, describing himself as “not a perfect man, but if you get to know me you know I'm a good man.”

Although he did not give a reason for his apology, White's expression of remorse appears to have softened the way some constituents view him.

“At first, I probably would've said he should be expelled,” said Stacey Coleman, who brought her teenage son to the MLK Jr. prayer breakfast at Matthews Memorial Baptist Church. “But I've seen how it has taken a toll on him. That humbled him — it's the most humble I've ever seen him. ... Sometimes we have to learn from experience. I hope he learned from it.”

White's arrest also has prompted questions about whether he has the capacity to focus on his council duties and constituents while also preparing for his trial.

Mable Carter, an early White supporter, said the council member has long been attentive to complaints about conditions at Marbury Plaza, a Ward 8 apartment complex where she serves as a tenant association president. But she also said that the weight of White's legal challenges may mean he should take a break from public life.

“I love Trayon to death,” she said. “But sometimes it's time to step away and see what else you can do.”

Union Kitchen, workers reach settlement; company agrees to pay withheld tips

SETTLEMENT FROM B1

revenue. The lawsuit states that Union Kitchen removed the employee access to the reports the next day.

Union Kitchen said in a filing that employees should never have been able to access that

data. The company said the bonus payments were made “by applying its new tip pool policy to the tips collected after Jan. 1, 2020.”

Then in January 2022, Union Kitchen announced it had removed the option for customers to tip employees, whether by

cash or credit. Wittes said that was “effectively a \$3.50 per hour pay cut.”

The UFCW sued in March 2023. The settlement, filed in late December in D.C. Superior Court, compensates 79 employees who had tip money wrongfully withheld between 2017 and February

2022, according to Nicholas J. Jackson, an attorney for the union. The settlement payments were based on an alleged average hourly underpayment and employees' total hours, Jackson said.

Union Kitchen also agreed to pay the workers' attorneys fees as

part of the settlement. Union Kitchen has three stores in the District, one in Arlington and one at Dulles International Airport.

“Our union is committed to protecting workers from unscrupulous bosses who are willing to violate their employees' rights and break the law instead of

properly compensating them for their hard work,” said Mark Federici, president of UFCW Local 400.

“If someone steals your pocket money from you on the street,” Wittes said, “everybody knows that's morally wrong. That's what happened here.”

Crews hoist plane wreckage from Potomac, easing path to recover remains

PLANE FROM B1

logs for both aircraft, according to the National Transportation Safety Board.

The jet's fuselage was recovered around noon, Army Col. Francis B. Pera said. He said crews accomplished Monday's goal — and hoped to bring the cockpit to the surface on Tuesday. The jet, owned by a subsidiary of American Airlines, carried 60 passengers, two pilots and two flight attendants, while the Black Hawk, which had taken off from Fort Belvoir on a training mission, had a crew of three soldiers.

“We anticipate most of those items will stay overnight [on the barge] in a secured and covered condition until we can make our way to a transport point” so they can be delivered to crash investigators, Pera said.

The NTSB said salvage teams would turn to the Black Hawk after the airplane had been recovered. A flight recorder for the Black Hawk lacked time stamps,

the NTSB said Monday, which it expects will take time for analysts to overcome as they work to piece together a comprehensive timeline.

Briefing reporters late Monday, Pera said divers have seen remains entangled with submerged wreckage, and Steen spoke of the emotional toll that these discoveries have taken on divers and others. The victims included about 20 young figure skaters who had taken part in a competition in Wichita.

“We've had peer support in place since the first hours of this incident,” Steen said, adding, “We will continue that throughout the rest of their careers if necessary to provide them with support. But, I mean, it is tragic, and everything imaginable that you can think of, that is what they're dealing with day in and day out.”

The collision, shortly before 9 p.m. Wednesday, has raised numerous questions about control tower staffing at Reagan National, the heavy congestion of

military and civilian flights in that area and whether the helicopter was exceeding an altitude limit at the moment of the catastrophe. The sky above National is the most tightly controlled and monitored airspace in the country, just a few miles south of the White House and the U.S. Capitol.

Asked about the helicopter's altitude at Monday's new briefing, Army Col. Mark Ott said: “I would not speculate because there are all kinds of reasons that you can deviate from altitude.”

“You know, something as simple as a flock of birds in front of you,” Ott said, “or you may deviate if you see something that's an obstacle or other threat to your flights. So I would wait and caution everybody — wait until the NTSB finishes its investigation.”

On Monday, crews in hard hats and bright safety jackets stood watching on the deck of the barge, water lapping at its hull, as the crane hoisted giant chunks of debris. Police boats with flash-

ing blue lights bobbed nearby, while just beyond the river, routines of daily life went on: Roadway traffic whooshed by; Metro trains rumbled on elevated tracks; jets roared aloft and landed at the bustling airport, which has resumed normal operations.

Around midday, crews briefly put up a blue tent on part of the barge. Pera had said a tent would be used to provide “full discretion” for human remains still in the wreckage. After what's left of the jet is out of the water, officials said, they will turn to removing the helicopter. By Feb. 12, officials said, they should they expect that wreckage elsewhere in the river, beyond the main debris field, also will be removed.

“Based on the type of equipment that we're bringing, we're finding that we have a much better view of what's in the wreckage than what we've seen with some of the other dive operations,” Pera said, adding: “When our divers go down there, they've got ... an HD camera that's supported by a support

boat. So you've honestly got four or five sets of eyes looking inside the wreckage at the same time.”

The Washington Post has reported that staffing levels were “not normal” on the night of the crash, and data from the Federal Aviation Administration shows the airport is three certified professional controllers below its staffing target of 28.

The NTSB said Saturday that data from the commercial jet's recorder indicated a “verbal reaction” on board before the plane's nose slightly lifted upward. Officials said they were analyzing the data recorder from the helicopter, hoping to learn its precise altitude and whether its crew members were wearing night-vision goggles.

After the Wednesday night crash, flights at the airport resumed midday Thursday, and the facility returned to its normal operations Friday.

Dean Naujoks, the Potomac Riverkeeper, knows the river and how it moves. He said he thinks some debris could drift far, but

much will stay close. The Potomac is tidal, not free-flowing or fast. “It's not easy for a lot of this stuff to completely flush down river,” he said. “It will move down, move up a little, move down, move up a little.”

With permission from authorities, Naujoks said, he took a 21-foot boat on the river Thursday, avoiding the designated debris field. At a pair of coves near the National Harbor, he said, he found items doused in aviation fuel: a seat with a fuzzy covering that matched one he later saw in a photo of one of the pilots who died, pages from a plane manual, a brown sweater, a handle from an emergency door, some bags of chips, some paper tubes of sugar.

“I just kept thinking, one of the stewardesses was probably giving this out,” Naujoks said.

Peter Hermann, Karina Elwood, Michael Laris, Dana Munro, Dana Hedgpeth, Jenny Gathright, Tom Jackman and Steve Thompson contributed to this report.



The Guide to Offers
The Washington Post

Enter for the chance to win a pair of tickets to *Heather McDonald: The Juicy Scoop Experience* on February 15 at the Lincoln Theatre

Heather McDonald's wildly successful comedy and pop culture podcast, *Juicy Scoop with Heather McDonald*, is in its ninth year. Claims to fame include more than 1,000 episodes and 200+ million downloads. The show boasts more than 20,000 five-star reviews on iTunes and is the #1 Female Comedy Interview Podcast. Juicy Scoopers continue to laugh out loud as they get the juiciest inside scoop from Heather and her celebrity guests.

See details at [washingtonpost.com/entertainment/events/lists/388](https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/events/lists/388)



Judge cites potential ‘catastrophic’ impacts of the plan to freeze OMB funding

OMB FROM B1

of Management and Budget (OMB). Rhode Island federal judge John McConnell on Friday issued a similar temporary block on the funding freeze in a lawsuit brought by 22 states and the District of Columbia. McConnell ordered that the Trump administration cannot “pause, freeze, impede, block, cancel, or terminate” taxpayer money already allocated

by Congress in those 23 jurisdictions. AliKhan’s order was broader, extending nationwide after a lawsuit by advocates, nonprofit groups and businesses represented by the left-leaning group Democracy Forward. AliKhan barred OMB from implementing or reinstating the funding freeze under a different name, required it to notify all recipients of its original memo to the court’s order, and to instruct those agen-

cies to release any open but paused awards. The parties are set to make arguments later this month over whether to block the funding freeze from taking effect throughout the litigation. The Justice Department argued Monday that the OMB has rescinded its order, that McConnell had already blocked the freeze and that funding pauses were authorized by other executive orders Trump issued in his first two weeks in office. But

AliKhan said plaintiffs had filed a slew of written declarations by individual grant recipients not subject to those orders who said they were still unable to access federal funding platforms. She cited declarations filed by plaintiffs from a litany of organizations who said they had been denied aid, including emergency shelters, scientific researchers and a rural health center that provides medical, dental and behavioral health services. In a

90-minute hearing earlier Monday, AliKhan said there was evidence that agencies and organizations serving the public interest as well as small businesses are “at risk of laying people off and potentially completely collapsing.” AliKhan also expressed puzzlement as to why, hours after OMB said it had rescinded the funding freeze memo’s rescission, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said the walk-back would

have no tangible effect on “the federal funding freeze.” “By rescinding the memorandum that announced the freeze, but ‘NOT ... the federal funding freeze’ itself, it appears that OMB sought to overcome a judicially imposed obstacle without actually ceasing the challenged conduct,” AliKhan said. “The rescission, if it can be called that, appears to be nothing more than a thinly veiled attempt to prevent this court from granting relief.”

Inspector general’s report found flaws in Md. site, but no conflict of interest

FBI FROM B1

happens differently than the panel.” Albert declined an interview request for this story. On Monday, the office of acting GSA inspector Robert Erickson — who launched a review at the request of Virginia federal lawmakers — found that there was no conflict of interest behind Albert’s decision to choose the Greenbelt site. The inspector general, the report stated, “found no evidence that Albert, as the Site Selection Authority, had a financial conflict of interest or violated the federal ethics regulations regarding being impartial in the performance of her official duties.”



JABIN BOTSFORD/THE WASHINGTON POST

Amid the search for a site that would house a modern FBI headquarters, former FBI director Christopher A. Wray in 2023 urged the General Services Administration to revisit its selection process, citing a conflict of interest involving former GSA official Nina Albert.



LENIN NOLLY FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

But Erickson’s office raised four issues of concern with the process. Foremost among them was a change in the weighting of the criteria to place more value on the relatively lower cost of land acquisition and development at the Greenbelt site. The report found that the increased weighting of cost was “not justified.” It also said the GSA supplied some inaccurate information about the Springfield site’s cost, didn’t provide sufficiently specific data regarding equity and sustainability, and failed to properly maintain text message exchanges about the process. It was unclear on Monday

whether the finding would put an end to the controversy surrounding the FBI’s pending move or inflame it. President Donald Trump has been critical of the FBI’s planned move, saying the agency’s headquarters should remain in D.C. “The new FBI building should be built in Washington, D.C., not Maryland, and be the centerpiece of my plan to totally renovate and rebuild our capital city into the most beautiful and safest anywhere in the world,” Trump wrote on Truth Social last year.

The president had not weighed in on the latest development Monday. A spokesperson for the GSA did not respond to a request for comment. The FBI declined to comment. But Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-Va.), who has led that state’s efforts to move the FBI to Springfield, said the report confirms that the process was flawed. “The GSA Inspector General confirmed what has long been clear to so many of us involved in this project — the site selection process for the new FBI head-

quarters was fundamentally tainted,” Connolly, whose district includes the Springfield site, said in a statement. “As GSA cooked the books, important cost criteria were improperly weighted without sufficient rationale.” A former senior GSA official who was involved in the site selection process said that the report vindicates both Albert and the decision to go with Greenbelt. “The report makes clear that former FBI Director Christopher A. Wray’s accusations were un-

founded — there was no conflict of interest,” said the former official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation in the job market. The former official said the report’s critiques of the process “are technical in nature, and none of them call into question GSA’s ultimate decision or the characteristics that led to the selection of the Greenbelt site — including the fact that it was the lowest cost to taxpayers.” Robin Carnahan, who served as GSA administrator under President Joe Biden, wrote in

response to the report that none of the concerns it raised “undermine the overall integrity of the process.” Maryland and Virginia competed fiercely to land the FBI headquarters, a project expected to bring billions of dollars in tax revenue. The report comes as the Trump administration has targeted some departments’ inspectors general, who operate independently within agencies to serve as a check on mismanagement and abuse of power. On Jan. 24, Trump fired more than a dozen inspectors general, representing most Cabinet-level agencies. On Dec. 1, 2023, a day after Erickson said he’d review the process, Reps. Jim Jordan (R-Ohio) and James Comer (R-Kentucky) — who lead the House Judiciary and Oversight committees, respectively — announced their own investigation. An interim staff report by their committees in July called the site selection “tainted by politics from the start.” The report suggested moving the FBI headquarters out of the D.C. region, to an FBI site in Huntsville, Alabama. Trump’s pick to lead the FBI, Kash Patel, has said he wants to close the FBI headquarters “on Day One” and turn the downtown building into a “museum of the deep state.”

VIRGINIA

Lawmakers float broad tax cuts, a departure from Youngkin’s targeted plan

BY GREGORY S. SCHNEIDER

RICHMOND — Lawmakers in the Democratic-controlled General Assembly managed to agree with Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin (R) on the overall topic of tax cuts but contradict him on how to do it, proposing changes to the state budget that favor broad reductions instead of targeted cuts. Money committees from the House of Delegates and the state Senate have produced budget proposals that are strikingly similar to each other: Both call for one-time rebates to taxpayers this year, increases to the standard deduction on personal income taxes, and bonuses for teachers and state employees. Those plans, which the full legislature will debate this week, scrap Youngkin’s ideas for both offsetting the personal property tax on cars for residents below certain income levels and for eliminating the tax on tips for service workers. “This action benefits more Virginians than the governor’s proposal because it does not exclude those without cars or those making more than \$50,000 a year,” House Appropriations Chairman Luke E. Torian (D-Prince William) said Sunday in presenting the plan to his

committee. He added that the House package gets money to residents sooner — by Oct. 15, instead of next year under Youngkin’s plan — and “gives each person more money than the governor’s proposal.” Despite the differences, Youngkin thanked the lawmakers for their work. “While there are areas where we agree and others where we may disagree, we will go to work to deliver for Virginians, as we have done the past three years,” Youngkin said in a statement. The House and Senate committees are controlled by Democrats but advanced the budget plans with unanimous, bipartisan votes. Because Virginia is in the middle of a two-year spending plan passed last year, these proposals are simply changes to the current budget, not a new document. Highlights include: Both committees proposed one-time rebates for every taxpayer of \$200 for individuals and \$400 for couples filing jointly. This would cost roughly \$1 billion, paid for through a surplus of state funds. Both committees would increase the standard deduction for personal income tax filers to \$8,750 for individuals and \$17,500 for couples. The current



MINH CONNORS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

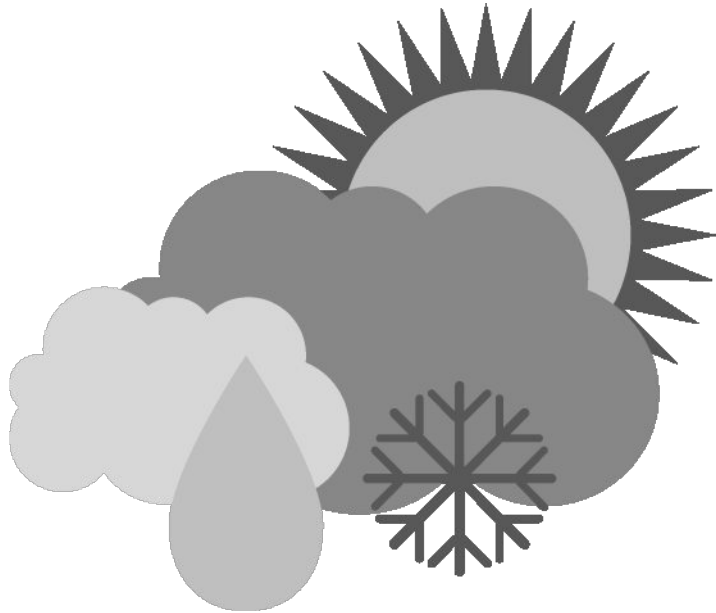
Del. Luke Torian (D-Prince William) and other lawmakers agree with Gov. Glenn Youngkin (R) on cutting taxes but disagree on how to get there. The House and Senate plans sidelined Youngkin’s ideas.

deductions of \$8,500 and \$17,000 are set to drop to \$3,000 and \$6,000 after next year unless the legislature acts. The House plan would make the

proposed higher amounts permanent; the Senate version would extend the higher amounts through 2027, pending a federal review of tax policy.

Youngkin had proposed making the current levels permanent. Those differences will be hammered out over the coming weeks.

The committees proposed extending the earned income tax credit for working families — which also is set to expire after next year — and increasing the amount that’s fully refundable to 20 percent of the federal credit amount, up from 15 percent. Lawmakers in both chambers proposed a one-time \$1,000 bonus for all K-12 public school teachers without requiring a local match. That would be on top of the pay raises already underway in the state budget. The House committee proposed a 1.5 percent bonus for state employees; the Senate proposed a 1 percent bonus. Both committees scrapped Youngkin’s proposal to withhold law enforcement funding for localities that fail to cooperate fully with federal immigration enforcement policy. The House committee would create a Virginia Gaming Commission to oversee all gaming operations in the state, which echoes a proposal from Youngkin but does not take a specific position on whether to allow slot-machine-like “skill games” in convenience stores. The Senate committee includes budget language to regulate skill games.



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THE REGION

Former Federal Reserve adviser indicted on espionage, conspiracy charges

BY TOM JACKMAN

A former senior adviser to the Federal Reserve Board of Governors was arrested Friday and accused of leaking inside information from the Fed to the Chinese government over a period of several years, at one point receiving a \$450,000 payment, and then lying about it to Fed investigators.

Economist John Harold Rogers, 63, of Vienna worked in the Division of International Finance of the Fed from 2010 until 2021, according to an indictment unsealed Friday in federal court in the District. Last year, he told a podcaster that he had retired from the Fed in May 2021, approximately a year after he had been questioned by investigators for the Fed's inspector general and allegedly lied about how he accessed and transmitted sensitive information to two unnamed Chinese co-conspirators.

After leaving the Fed, Rogers moved his family to Shanghai and began working as a professor at Fudan University, according to comments he made to the EconVue podcast last year and posted in online biographies. Court records indicated he was arrested in Vienna on Friday and

arraigned downtown before U.S. Magistrate Judge Matthew J. Sharbaugh, who ordered him held without bond pending a detention hearing Tuesday.

Jonathan K. Gitlen, a lawyer for Rogers, said that his client “denies the allegations as set forth in the indictment. Dr. Rogers will have a further comment at a later date.”

In the indictment, prosecutors said that Rogers had access to various trade secrets of the Fed, such as briefing books for its governors and spreadsheets that contained proprietary board information. The confidential information could “allow China to manipulate the U.S. market, in a manner similar to insider trading,” the indictment states. Because of the large amount of U.S. debt held by China, prosecutors argued, gaining advance knowledge of U.S. economic policy, such as knowing of changes to the federal funds rate, “could provide China with an advantage when selling or buying U.S. bonds or securities,” the indictment states.

Rogers, who has a Ph.D. in economics, reportedly received his first email from a Chinese operative in May 2013, and by the following year Rogers was preparing for an all-expense paid



JOSHUA ROBERTS/REUTERS

Economist John Harold Rogers worked in the Federal Reserve's Division of International Finance from 2010 to 2021.

trip to China, according to the indictment. In subsequent years Rogers allegedly made more trips to China, paid by the host, and in 2018 he appeared to begin providing information directly to two people there, prosecutors claim.

Rogers made the trips to China under the guise of teaching economic classes there, the indictment alleges. Meetings in hotels were portrayed as classes, though only one or two people would attend, prosecutors said.

The two Chinese co-conspirators “worked for the intelligence and security apparatus of China,” the indictment states, but posed as graduate students at Shandong University.

Sometimes one of the Chinese conspirators would ask specific questions, and Rogers allegedly would ask his colleagues at the Fed to provide him with data or documents to support his answers. One of the colleagues sent two files to Rogers in 2018 marked “INTERNAL FR/OFFI-

CIAL USE” that had confidential designations, according to the indictment. Prosecutors said some of the sensitive information came from the Federal Open Market Committee, which determines “the appropriate stance of monetary policy” in the United States.

In November 2018, Rogers allegedly asked colleagues for a confidential briefing book for Fed governors. One of the colleagues asked that Rogers not use his personal email, but the indictment claims that Rogers then forwarded the book to his personal email account. The book was marked in large type, “Nonpublic Information FOR YOUR USE ONLY DO NOT DISSEMINATE.”

The exchanges, and Rogers' free trips to China continued into 2019, according to the indictment. Then the inspector general's office interviewed Rogers in February 2020. When an investigator asked Rogers if he ever provided any restricted information to anyone outside the Fed, he replied, “Never,” according to the indictment.

There is little information about Rogers' interactions with his two co-conspirators after February 2020. In 2022, one of the co-conspirators sent a mes-

sage to Rogers asking if he and his wife would be interested in traveling to Qingdao and arranging a “class,” with all expenses paid. By then, Rogers was already living in China, and the indictment doesn't indicate that he responded.

But the indictment notes that Rogers was paid about \$448,000 in 2023 for his role as “a part-time professor at a Chinese university.”

“The Chinese Communist Party has expanded its economic espionage campaign,” said FBI Assistant Director in Charge David Sundberg in a news release, “to target U.S. government financial policies and trade secrets in an effort to undermine the U.S. and become the sole superpower.” He said the FBI had an “unwavering commitment to protect U.S. national security interests and U.S. jobs and to bring to justice those who are willing to betray their country for personal gain.”

Rogers is charged with conspiracy to commit economic espionage and making false statements to a federal investigator. The conspiracy charge carries a maximum 15-year prison sentence, though defendants rarely receive maximum sentences in federal court.

OBITUARIES

SUZANNE MASSIE, 94

Writer who focused on Russians advised Reagan during the Cold War

BY BRIAN MURPHY

Suzanne Massie, an American-born writer whose explorations into the Russian soul helped shape Cold War geopolitics as an adviser to President Ronald Reagan with lessons that included a Russian proverb, “Trust but verify,” which was embraced as White House policy, died Jan. 26 in a care facility in Harrodsburg, Kentucky. She was 94.

The cause was complications related to vascular dementia, said her son, Robert Massie Jr.

The first encounter between

Ms. Massie and Reagan in early 1984 began one of the most unexpected Oval Office partnerships of his administration. Her briefings did not directly deal with policymaking, but she was credited with helping expand Reagan's understanding of Russian culture and history in the years leading to Cold War-era détente and the eventual collapse of the Soviet Union.

“Soviets are the officials,” Ms. Massie told the New York Times in 1985. “Russians are the people.”

There was not a lot to suggest that she and Reagan would mesh. She was the daughter of a Swiss

diplomat and found a deep affinity with Russian life. He was an uncompromising foe of the Soviets who had declared the country an “evil empire” in 1983.

Reagan then came across Ms. Massie's 1980 book, “Land of the Firebird: The Beauty of Old Russia,” which delved into Russian history and its psyche. Ms. Massie, meanwhile, had recently returned from the Soviet Union in 1983 with gloomy reports of Kremlin hardliners exerting greater control. Suddenly, she was caught in a Washington whirlwind.

Her friend Sen. William Cohen (R-Maine) contacted Reagan's national security adviser Robert “Bud” McFarlane, who reached out to the Oval Office. Ms. Massie was soon named an informal U.S. envoy to clear the way for her next trip to the Soviet Union.

First, however, Reagan wanted to meet her. Relations between the Cold War superpowers were icy. Reagan had stepped up aid to Afghan militias fighting a Soviet occupation, and the White House was still demanding answers from Moscow over the downing of a Korean Air Lines plane in September 1983 after it drifted off course en route from New York to Seoul, killing all 269 passengers and crew.

Ms. Massie said she expected Reagan to rail against the U.S.S.R. when she arrived at the White House on Jan. 17, 1984. Instead, he asked about her experiences.

“The very first thing he asked me was, ‘How much do their leaders believe in communism?’” she told the Atlantic magazine in 1993.

She offered a political quip from the Soviet streets about Communist Party bosses. “They call them the ‘Big Bottoms,’” she recounted. “They care only about their chairs, their place. And so our conversations began.”

She told Reagan about the cultural influence of the Russian Orthodox Church despite the Soviet Union's officially atheist system. “No one had ever told the president of the United States that the Russians were religious,” Ms. Massie told public radio's “The World” program in 2014. “I think that humanized the Russians for him in a way that he could understand.”

Over the next four years, Ms. Massie and Reagan met 16 more times. In one discussion in 1986 — weeks before a summit between Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev — she brought up the rhyming Russian adage, “Doverai no proveryai,” or “Trust but verify,” which suggests cooperation and caution can exist in equal measure.

“You know the Russians often like to talk in proverbs, and there's one that might be useful,” Ms. Massie recalled telling Reagan. “You're an actor. You can learn it in a minute.”

The phrase became part of the Cold War lexicon. Reagan used it with Gorbachev at their summit in Iceland, and “Trust but verify” took hold as a baseline negotiating principle during arms-reduction talks.

“You repeat that [proverb] at



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Suzanne Massie, who explored the Russian soul, has a meeting with President Ronald Reagan in 1987.

every meeting,” Gorbachev said in December 1987 at the signing of a treaty on cutting some intermediate-range nuclear weapons.

“I like it,” Reagan replied, chuckling.

Ms. Massie's human-focused briefings faced pushback from some in Reagan's administration, such as Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger, who regarded her views as gauzy sentimentality. “I'm anti-Soviet but pro-Russian,” she once said in response.

Few could dispute her skill at conveying that message. McFarlane once called Ms. Massie the White House equivalent of the fabled “One Thousand and One Nights” storyteller Scheherazade. Ms. Massie, he said, was able to captivate Reagan with her narratives and insights. “She was talking his wavelength about people,” he told the Atlantic. “She's an absorbing person. Her language is salty. She can be severe in her criticism. Reagan began to lean forward.”

Ms. Massie said she knew what was needed. “I'd rather be called eccentric than boring,” she told the Boston Globe. She liked to describe how ordinary Soviets found ways to circumvent officialdom. In one meeting, she told Reagan how she once joined people dancing to Duke Ellington on Voice of America radio in a remote Soviet park, far from any prying eyes.

“There were reasons for our official blindness,” she wrote in her memoir, “Trust But Verify: Reagan, Russia and Me” (2013), “among them that in the United States we have the tendency to see everything as a reflection of our own beliefs. Being ‘like us’ is equivalent to being ‘right.’”

Suzanne Liselotte Rohrbach was born in New York's borough of Queens on Jan. 8, 1931. Her father was a Swiss consul general in Philadelphia. Her Swiss-born mother immigrated to the United States as an au pair with a Swiss family in the 1920s after being stranded in Moscow, where she was a French language tutor during World War I

and the Russian Revolution.

Suzanne was raised in Philadelphia and studied at the Sorbonne University in Paris before receiving a bachelor's degree from Vassar College in 1952. She then spent more than a decade in journalism in roles including researcher at Time and Life magazines and managing editor of Gourmet magazine.

She started Russian classes in the early 1960s and assisted her then-husband, historian Robert K. Massie, with his best-selling 1967 biography “Nicholas and Alexandra” on the last of Russia's czarist rulers. Ms. Massie and her husband (who later divorced) later co-wrote a personal saga, “Journey” (1975), on caring for their son with hemophilia.

In between those projects, she edited her first book on Soviet and Russian life, “The Living Mirror” (1972), showcasing the work and struggles of five young poets from Leningrad, now St. Petersburg. The book also reflected Ms. Massie's expanding interest in the country that began with her first visit researching czarist history — which included investigating how Nicholas II's son, Alexei, suffered from what was later diagnosed as hemophilia.

She began to see connections between the grip of the Soviet state and the gnawing anxiety that hemophilia brought to her family. “We shared the reflexes of people who live with fear,” she wrote in “Journey” Leningrad, she added, “was like finding a huge family that belonged to me, but that I had never known existed.”

Her other books include “Pavlovsk: The Life of a Russian Palace” (1990), which tells the story of the stately building's reconstruction after the nearly 900-day siege of Leningrad by German-led forces in World War II. She was a fellow at the Harvard Russian Research Center (now the Davis Center) from 1985 to 1997 and served on the board of the International League for Human Rights.

For decades, she kept a small apartment in St. Petersburg and, when in the United States, spent time in a home in Blue Hill, Maine, built using the same design as the country dacha of Russian poet and playwright Alexander Pushkin.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall in late 1989 and the end of the Soviet Union two years later, Ms. Massie was often credited with helping focus Reagan's approach during the final chapters of the Cold War before he left office in January 1989. She said her main contribution was helping Reagan see the Soviet Union as he would any country — with its own brand of bickering, clashing egos and dissent.

Ms. Massie said that Gorbachev was impressed that Reagan learned to listen, rather than lecture. Gorbachev, she said, once paid Reagan the compliment of calling him a “chelovek,” meaning a genuine person.

“Gorbachev appreciated this,” she wrote in a 2008 essay, “and later told me, ‘I thought I was going to meet a dinosaur. Instead, I met a ‘chelovek.’”

In 1992, she married Seymour Papert, a researcher of artificial intelligence and education theory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He died in 2016. Survivors include three children from her first marriage; seven grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and a sister.

In 1985, Ms. Massie said she considered then Soviet-era Russia “a country I think of as almost my own.” More than three decades later, she asked Russian President Vladimir Putin to consider giving her citizenship. Ms. Massie had always championed Russian human rights — trampled by Putin's regime — but made the appeal in hopes of avoiding visa snags and continue to chronicle Russia.

In an announcement by Putin in December 2021, Ms. Massie's request was granted, and she received her Russian passport weeks later.

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Under a power of sale and separately under an Order of Court issued pursuant to Md Rule 14-214.1 (d), as provided collectively by Md Rule 2-621, Md Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article 11-402, Md Real Property Article 14-204, and Md Real Property Article 11-110 in relation to a Judgment Lien dated April 14, 2021, recorded as Case Number 158300R in the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, MD; a Statutory Lien dated September 26, 2022, recorded in Liber 401, Folio 60 among the Land Records of Montgomery County, MD; and a Statutory Lien dated July 29, 2024, recorded in Liber 68244, Folio 161 among the Land Records of Montgomery County, MD; default having occurred under the terms of the Master deed and its attachments recorded in Liber 4292, Folio 132, and as amended in Liber 14815, Folio 73 among the Land Records of Montgomery County, MD, the Trustee will sell at public auction at the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Courthouse Door, Rockville, MD, on

February 19, 2025, at 12:45 p.m.

ALL THAT FEE SIMPLE LOT OF GROUND and Improvements thereon situated in Montgomery County, MD and described as follows in a Deed recorded in Liber 55321, Folio 160 among the Land Records of Montgomery County, MD:

Unit numbered 1205 in GROSVENOR PARK CONDOMINIUM, also referred to as GROSVENOR PARK I CONDOMINIUM, a horizontal property regime as established by Master Deed made by Karl W. Corby, dated October 26, 1972 and recorded October 27, 1972 in Liber 4292 at folio 132, and amended in Liber 4681 at folio 619 and in Liber 4715 at folio 77, and any further amendments thereto, among the Land Records of Montgomery County, Maryland; and by the Plat of Condominium subdivision recorded in Condominium Plat Book 5 at Plats No. 110 through 491, inclusive, and amended in Condominium Plat Book 15 at Plats No. 1511 through 1522, inclusive, and any further amendments thereto, among the aforesaid Land Records; together with an undivided percentage interest in and to the common elements of said Grosvenor Park Condominium as set forth in Exhibit C to said Master Deed.

BEING the same property conveyed by Deed dated April 30, 2010, and recorded on May 17, 2010, in Liber 39295 at folio 399, among the Land Records of Montgomery County, Maryland

Property address: 10201 Grosvenor Place, Unit 1205, Rockville, MD 20852
Tax ID No. 04-01580927

The property will be sold in an "as is" condition and subject to conditions, restrictions, agreements, easements, covenants, and rights of way of record affecting the same, if any, and with no warranty of any kind. The property will be sold subject to all conditions, liens, restrictions, and agreements of record affecting same.

Terms of Sale: A deposit of \$20,000.00 will be required at the time of sale in the form of cash, certified check, or other form as the Trustee determines acceptable. No deposit shall be required of the lienholder where the lienholder bids in the property at auction. Balance of the purchase price to be paid in cash within ten days of final ratification of sale by the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, time being of the essence for purchaser. In the event that settlement does not occur within the said ten days, the purchaser shall be in default. Upon such default the Trustee may file a Motion and Order to Resell the property at the risk and expense of the defaulting purchaser, and purchaser(s) hereby consent to entry of such resale order without further notice in which case the deposit shall be forfeited and all expenses of this sale (including attorney's fees and the full commission on the gross sale price of this sale) shall be charged against and paid out of the forfeited deposit. The Trustee may then readvertise and resell the property at the risk and cost of the defaulting purchaser, or, without reselling the property, the Trustee may avail themselves of any legal or equitable remedies against the defaulting purchaser. In the event of a resale, the defaulting purchaser shall not be entitled to receive the surplus, if any, even if such surplus results from improvements to the property by said defaulting purchaser. Interest to be paid on the purchase money less the stated deposit called for herein, at the rate pursuant to the (lien terms) from the date of auction to the date funds are received in the office of the Trustee. There shall be no abatement of interest due from the purchaser in the event additional funds are tendered before settlement or if settlement is delayed for any reason, including but not limited to exceptions to sale, bankruptcy filings by interested parties, Court administration of the foreclosure, or unknown title defects. All taxes, ground rent, water rent, condominium fees and/or homeowner association dues, all public charges/assessments payable on an annual basis, including sanitary and/or metropolitan district charges, if applicable, are to be adjusted to the date of auction and thereafter are to be assumed by the purchaser. Cost of all documentary stamps, transfer taxes, agricultural transfer tax, if any, and settlement expenses shall be borne by the purchaser. Purchaser waives all rights and claims against the Trustee whether known or unknown. These provisions shall survive settlement. Purchaser shall be responsible for obtaining physical possession of the property. Purchaser assumes the risk of damage to the property from the date of auction forward. If the Trustee does not convey title for any reason, including but not limited to the secured party executing a forbearance agreement with the borrower/record owner described in the above-mentioned Liens, or allowing the borrower to execute their right to reinstate or payoff the subject loan, prior to the sale, with or without the Trustee's prior knowledge, or if the sale is not ratified for any reason including errors made by the Trustee, the foreclosure sale shall be null and void and of no effect, and the Purchaser's sole remedy in law or in equity shall be the return of the deposit without interest. Further terms and particulars may be announced at time of sale, and purchaser may be required to execute a Memorandum of Sale at the time of auction. Trustee's File No. 7581.40.

LUKE A. MCQUEEN, Trustee



300 E. Joppa Road
Hagerstown, MD 21740
410-769-9767

Feb 4, 2025


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The Washington Post

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DEATH NOTICE

CALLLEN



DAVID J. CALLEN
3/10/1995 - 1/30/2025
Officers and members of IBEW Local 26 are hereby notified of the death of Brother David J. Callen. Our condolences are extended to his family and friends.


COSBY

DORIS V. COSBY (Age 89)
On Sunday, January 23, 2025. Beloved mother of Walter. Survived by her best friend and youngest sister Helen (Shepard) Thompson, many nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends. Visitation Wednesday, February 5 from 10 a.m. until time of funeral 11 a.m. at Atonement Episcopal Church, 3073 E Capitol St. SE, Washington, DC 20019. Interment Maryland Veterans Cemetery, 11:15 a.m. on Monday, February 24, 2025.

KARPISCAK

ANN KARPISCAK (Age 87)
Ann Karpiskac of Olney, MD, passed away in her home on January 30, 2025. She was predeceased by her husband, Paul Karpiskac, and her son, Paul Van Karpiskac. Ann is survived by her daughter, Lori McKay (Scott), and her grandchildren, Kaitlyn McKay and Ryan McKay. A funeral will be held on Friday, February 7, at 11 a.m., at the Roy W. Barber Funeral Home in Laytonsville, MD. A burial will be at 1 p.m. at Crest Lawn Memorial Gardens Cemetery in Marriottsville, MD.

LOWE



ALLAN M. LOWE
On Sunday, February 2, 2025, one day prior to his 91st birthday, ALLAN M. LOWE of Silver Spring, MD, Born February 3, 1934, in Union City, NJ. Beloved husband of 59 years to the late Sara Tema Lowe. Son of the late Kenneth and Essie Lowe. Devoted father of Helen Lowe Metzmann (Eric), Mitchell Lowe (Joy Jarman) and Janice Lowe Lieberman (Andrew). Dear brother of the late Loretta Kiron. Loving grandfather of Elise Lowe McCauley (Christopher), Jonathan Metzmann, Nicholas Lowe (Marie Gomes), Elana Metzmann Pasquale (Paul), Scott Lieberman, Matthew Lieberman, and Ryan Slaven. Cherished great-grandfather of Thomas McCauley and Galena Pasquale. Dear friend to Jane Handler.
A Washington and Maryland resident since age 3, Allan was a graduate of Calvin Coolidge High School, the University of Maryland School of Engineering and George Washington University Law School. Allan was proud to start his own law firm and practiced as an intellectual property attorney for decades. Allan was an avid cyclist into his late 80's, a tree farmer on his Taneytown property, and an enthusiastic world traveler.
Funeral services will be held on Tuesday, February 4, 2025, 12:30 p.m. at Riderwood Village Chapel, 3160 Gracefield Road, Silver Spring, MD 20904. Interment following at Mt. Lebanon Cemetery, Adelphi, MD. Shiva will be observed at the late residence on Tuesday and Wednesday at 7 p.m., with minyan at 7:30 p.m., and on Thursday at the Metzmann residence at 7 p.m., with minyan at 7:30 p.m. Memorial contributions may be made to The Michael J. Fox Foundation, Cure PSP, or the Riderwood Benevolent Fund. Arrangements entrusted to TORCHINSKY HEBREW FUNERAL HOME, 202-541-1001.

MCPHERSON

CLAUDETTE MARIE MCPHERSON
Claudette Marie McPherson, 81, passed away peacefully on January 18, 2025. Born on December 7, 1943, in Washington, DC she grew up in Washington with her mother, Rose Marie Hall, step father, Robert M. Hall and her brother, Victor H. McPherson. She attended North Carolina A&T, where she received a BS degree and became a registered nurse. She later received a graduate degree from Howard University, which qualified her to practice for many years at various hospitals in the Baltimore, MD metropolitan area as a Nurse Anesthetist. Claudette traveled to various countries to study the differences in the administration of anesthesia. She had a very special final wishes Claudette donated her body to science and indicated she did not desire a funeral or any type of celebration of life.

WALKER



PHYLLIS BERNSTEIN WALKER
Passed away on February 2, 2025 at 83 years old. She was born and raised in the Washington, DC area where she lived most of her life but also resided in Florida, Mexico, Uruguay, and Greece. The daughter of Bernard and Eleanor Riker Bernstein (both deceased). She is survived by her loving children, Monique Beaudry, Joe Kraus, Michael Kraus, and Lisa Kraus Cohn, and her son-in-law, Brian Cohn. She is also survived by her 11 adoring grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

Phyllis was an Interior Decorator who loved dogs, painting and art, traveling, dancing, laughing, and having a good time, but nothing brought her more joy than her family and her chosen sister Sylvia Fur Blanken (deceased).


DEATH NOTICE

DRISCOLL

Service Information
Memorial Service at Temple Beth Ami, 14330 Traviilah Road, Rockville, MD 20850 on Thursday, February 6 at 11 a.m.

The family will be sitting shiva on Thursday, February 6 at the home of Brian and Lisa Cohn at 6:30 p.m.

DEATH NOTICE



PENELOPE DENT DRISCOLL
On Wednesday morning, January 29, 2025, Penelope Dent Driscoll passed away peacefully. She was the loving wife to the late Robert Emmett Driscoll and loving mother of Kathleen Marie Driscoll (Adalberto Cedillo Mendoza) and Ann Marie Driscoll (Dane Briddell), loving daughter of the late Edward A. Dent Jr. and Elizabeth C. Dent; loving sister to Edward A. Dent III, Elizabeth Dent Ellis, Patricia Dent Delany (Gael), Michael G. Dent (Paula), adoring grandmother to Albie Emmett Briddell and June Marie Briddell. She was predeceased by her loving brother Daniel J. Dent and wife Betty. A Memorial Mass will be offered at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament, 6001 Western Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20015 on February 12 at 11 a.m. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to N St. Village in Washington, DC or the Alzheimer's Association.

DEATH NOTICE

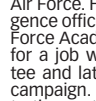
JASINOWSKI



JERRY J. JASINOWSKI
Jerry J. Jasinowski of Washington, DC passed away on January 22, 2025 at the age of 86. He was a devoted family man and distinguished leader in the Washington business community. Jerry was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force. He served in Vietnam as an intelligence officer and went on to teach at the Air Force Academy. Jerry moved to Washington for a job with the Joint Economic Committee and later joined the Carter presidential campaign. He served in the Carter administration as the Assistant Secretary for Policy in the Commerce Department. Jerry devoted much of his career to the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), where he was President and CEO from 1990

DEATH NOTICE

JASINOWSKI



JOSEPH GAWLERS
FEBRUARY 1928 - JANUARY 2025

PEABODY

MALCOLM ENDICOTT PEABODY JR. Mike (Age 96)
Malcolm "Mike" Endicott Peabody, Jr. died on December 19th, 2024 at the age of 96 following a short illness. His forbearer Lt. Francis Peabody migrated to America on the ship *Planter* in 1635 seeking freedom and opportunity in the new world. The family's fortunes grew in America, reaching a pinnacle in the late 1800s with famous philanthropist George Peabody. In 1884, his grandfather the Reverend Endicott Peabody founded Groton School, which Mike attended in the 1940s on his way to Harvard where he earned an AB and an MBA. Like his three brothers who served in WWII, Mike later served in the military as a lieutenant in the Air Force. Mike soon turned his attention to civil rights, following his family's tradition of public service since the late 1800s. When Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. sought assistance in the fight against segregation, Mike helped Dr. King recruit Mary Parkman Peabody, his mother, to protest at a restaurant in St. Augustine, Florida. The protest, in which Mrs. Peabody was jailed, made international headlines. Mike's older brother Endicott "Chub" Peabody was Governor of Massachusetts at the time, and Mike went on to fight housing discrimination at the Boston Redevelopment Authority and at the New York State Commission Against Discrimination, chaired by Elmer Carter. Soon after, he moved to Washington to serve at HUD, where he developed the Housing Choice Voucher Program, a precursor to today's Section 8 voucher program. In 1973 he left the government to start a real estate investment firm, Peabody Corporation, but he continued to pursue public service. In 1996, he co-founded Friends of Choice in Loudoun, a key proponent of charter schools in the District of Columbia, and, for this service, was inducted into the National Charter Schools Hall of Fame. He also chaired the board of Washington International School during its formative years. And, he served on the board of the DC Promise Neighborhood Initiative, which assists children in the city's Parkside/Kenilworth neighborhood. On the national stage, he was a member of the advisory board of Issue One, a bipartisan nonprofit seeking to reduce the influence of money in politics and ensure election integrity. On the lighter side, Mike was renowned for his dancing, which Marie Ridder called "stage-quality." Summers always included time in Northeast Harbor on Maine's Mt. Desert Island, where he was a well-regarded sailboat racer. In 2013, Washington Mayor Gray declared March 28th "Malcolm Peabody Day," saluting Mike on his 85th birthday for having "dedicated his life to the fight for equality on both the local and national level." Mike is predeceased by all four siblings, including Marietta Tree, Endicott, George, and Sam. Mike's wife Pamela (Rowe) died in 2018. He is survived by sons Payson and Carter, Payson's wife Kate, and three grand children: Claire, Nicholas and Holly. There will be a memorial service on February 13th at 3pm at Christ Church Georgetown, 3116 O St. NW, Washington, DC.

WHITE

DOROTHY LOUISE SIMONS GONIA WHITE "Dot"
Dorothy Louise "Dot" Simons Gonia White, of Hubbard Lake, passed away peacefully Wednesday, January 22, 2025, at Medilodge of Alpena, after an arduous journey with Alzheimer's Disease and Parkinson's Disease.

Dot was born January 18, 1952, in Wyandotte, Michigan, to Jolene Elmer Simons and Nina May Spencer Simons. Dot grew up in Lincoln Park, Michigan and spent her summers in Ossineke, Michigan. She graduated from Cass Tech High School in Detroit. A talented string bassist, Dot was the principal bassist for the Cass Tech Orchestra, performed with the Harp & Vocal Ensemble, and joined the Cass Symphony Band's 1969 European tour.

On May 27, 1972, Dot married Mike Gonia in her grandfather's Ossineke Methodist Church, in Ossineke, Michigan. After their marriage Dot and Mike worked in the Detroit area where their two daughters, Kendra and Kolette were born. When Dot's parents moved to a retirement home in 1981, Dot and Mike moved into their Ossineke home. They opened their own business, the Clean Team, a diverse janitorial service.

DEATH NOTICE

WHITE

In 1993, when it was time for another move, Dot successfully applied for an administrative position with AmeriCorps, and the family moved to Charleston, South Carolina where she began a very satisfying career as Project Manager Operations AmeriCorps. After her mother's death and the end of her first marriage, Dot married Loring Quincy White III on November 29, 1997, in Charleston, South Carolina.


She and Quinn lived on a boat for five years in South Carolina. In 2000, they purchased

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The Washington Post

DEATH NOTICE





IOAN CATON PALTINEANU
Dr. Ioan Caton Paltineanu passed away January 28, 2025, at the age of 83, at home in Leesburg, Virginia, surrounded by his family. To preface the story of his incredible life, here are what his daughter-in-law and grandson had to say, who have spent every day with him for the past five years.
From his daughter-in-law, Kasey Paltineanu: Ioan Caton Paltineanu carried an intelligence that one only learns about in history books. For years I eagerly sat doe eyed soaking in the knowledge he cheerfully shared. The depth of his intellect was vast; he taught me that you cannot move forward without knowing what came before. I once joked that all the time we spent discussing endless subjects was as if I was attending a private university. To my altruistic father-in-law, each day was a splendid gift from God and another chance to serve Him. The lessons I learned from him will continue to reveal themselves to me the entirety of my life. I will forever cherish our time together and miss him dearly. Above all, he was my friend.
From his grandson, Kip Paltineanu: My Grandpa was a great Grandpa. He used to tell me stories. There was an airplane he taught me about, called Hercules; I never knew the name of it. Whenever we would eat, he would say "I am hungry like a bear." After he would say "I ate like a pig." When I visited him, he would say "Hello, Hello." One day he yelled, "Mamma please!" We asked if he needed something, he said "No, I just wanted to talk." He would tell us stories for hours and hours. He led a fascinating life emerging from day was a splendid gift from God and another chance to serve Him. The lessons I learned from him will continue to reveal themselves to me the entirety of my life. I will forever cherish our time together and miss him dearly. Above all, he was my friend.
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THE WEATHER


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Clouds will give way to sun


 In the early-morning, clouds will gradually decrease as a cold front sweeps through, and skies will become mostly sunny by the afternoon. Highs should be in the 50s again, but it will feel colder than that as winds from the northwest blow around 10 to 15 mph, with some gusts over 20 mph. In the evening, clouds will increase and it will be chilly, with lows near freezing.


Today
Partly sunny

58° 33°
FEELS*: 54°
CHNCE PRECIP: 5%
WIND: NW 8-16 mph
HUMIDITY: Low

Wednesday
Rain, snow

40° 33°
FEELS: 39°
P: 60%
W: E 4-8 mph
H: Moderate

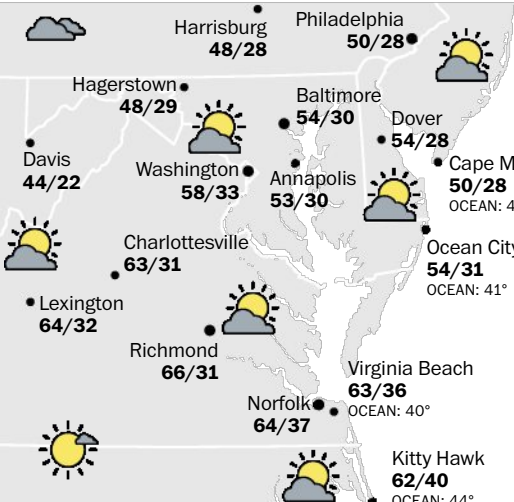
Thursday
Morning rain

57° 45°
FEELS: 53°
P: 70%
W: SW 7-14 mph
H: Moderate

Friday
Mostly cloudy

55° 33°
FEELS: 51°
P: 0%
W: NNW 8-16 mph
H: Low

Saturday
Shower

44° 39°
FEELS: 36°
P: 55%
W: E 6-12 mph
H: Moderate

Sunday
Cloudy

54° 32°
FEELS: 49°
P: 25%
W: NNW 8-16 mph
H: Moderate

REGION



Pollen: Low
Grass Low
Trees Low
Weeds Low
Mold Low

Air Quality: Moderate
Dominant cause: Nitrogen oxide

UV: Moderate
3 out of 11+

Blue Ridge: Today, breezy, partly sunny. High 47 to 51. Winds northwest 15-25 mph. Tonight, colder, increasing clouds. Low 26 to 31. Winds west-northwest 10-20 mph. Wednesday, colder. A bit of snow in central parts; a bit of rain elsewhere. High 32 to 36.

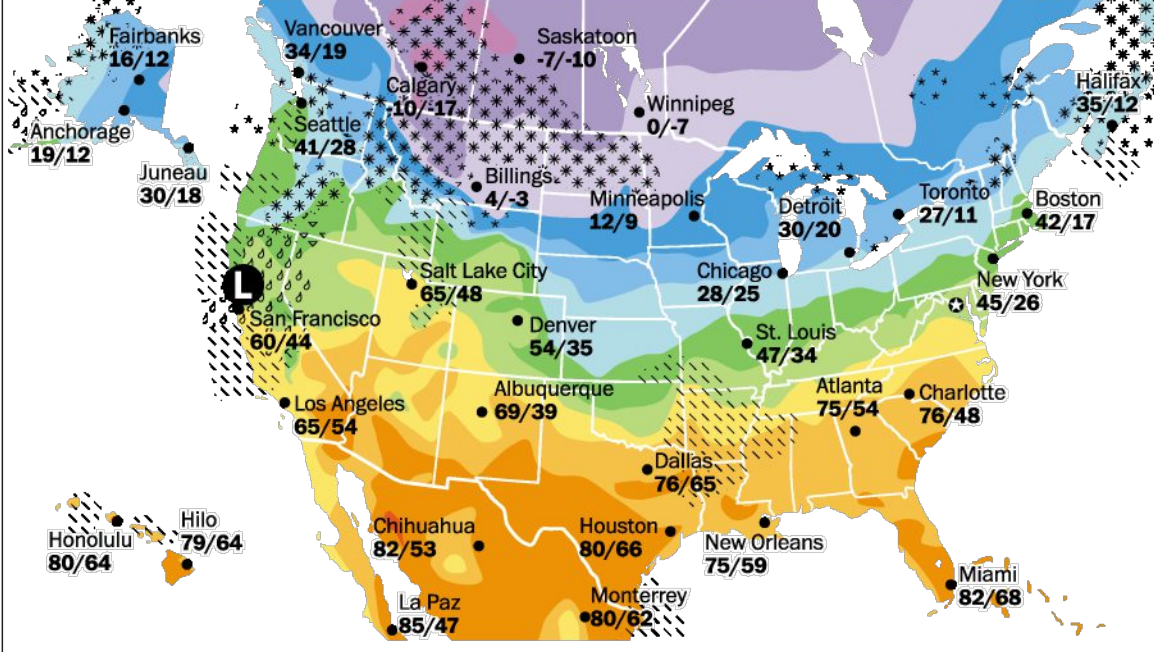
Atlantic beaches: Today, partly sunny; windy. High 52 to 64. Winds west-northwest 15-25 mph. Tonight, colder; partly cloudy in central parts. Low 27 to 37. Winds north-northwest 8-16 mph. Wednesday, a bit of snow in the north; a little rain in the south.

Waterways: *Upper Potomac River:* Today, sun, some clouds. Wind northwest 8-16 knots. Waves 1-3 feet. Visibility generally clear. • *Lower Potomac and Chesapeake Bay:* Today, partly sunny. Wind northwest 8-16 knots. Waves 1-2 feet on the Lower Potomac; 1-3 feet on the Chesapeake Bay. • *River Stages:* The stage at Little Falls will be around 3.50 feet today, rising to 4.50 Wednesday. Flood stage at Little Falls is 10 feet.

Today's tides (High tides in **Bold**)

Washington	12:02 a.m.	6:51 a.m.	12:19 p.m.	7:44 p.m.
Annapolis	3:16 a.m.	9:55 a.m.	4:17 p.m.	9:48 p.m.
Ocean City	5:59 a.m.	11:52 a.m.	6:11 p.m.	none
Norfolk	1:30 a.m.	8:00 a.m.	1:50 p.m.	8:02 p.m.
Point Lookout	5:49 a.m.	12:42 p.m.	5:56 p.m.	none

NATION
Weather map features for noon today.



Yesterday's National
High: Cimarron Springs, TX 93°
Low: St. Mary, MT -24°
for the 48 contiguous states

World
High: Paraburdoo, Australia 118°
Low: Delyankir, Russia -67°
excludes Antarctica

NATIONAL	Today	Tomorrow	Des Moines	31/22/c	33/25/f	Oklahoma City	51/44/c	74/47/p	WORLD	Today	Tomorrow
Albany, NY	35/10/p	27/8/c	Detroit	30/20/p	29/25/c	Omaha	31/21/c	31/21/f	Addis Ababa	75/46/p	79/48/s
Albuquerque	69/39/s	69/34/s	El Paso	80/45/s	80/43/s	Orlando	82/65/p	83/66/p	Amsterdam	45/38/p	48/35/p
Anchorage	19/12/s	24/14/s	Fairbanks, AK	16/12/c	21/13/sn	Philadelphia	50/28/p	35/31/sn	Athens	55/43/sh	51/42/p
Atlanta	75/54/s	70/56/c	Fargo, ND	6/5/sn	20/3/sn	Phoenix	85/54/s	79/54/s	Auckland	80/61/s	78/62/p
Austin	80/66/c	79/65/c	Hartford, CT	46/17/p	30/15/c	Pittsburgh	39/23/c	37/34/sn	Baghdad	74/50/s	73/49/p
Baltimore	54/30/p	37/32/sn	Honolulu	80/64/p	79/63/p	Portland, ME	36/6/s	23/4/p	Bangkok	92/74/s	93/75/s
Billings, MT	4/-/c	9/6/c	Houston	80/64/c	79/68/p	Portland, OR	44/23/p	43/33/sn	Beijing	36/14/p	34/15/s
Birmingham	74/59/c	74/62/sh	Indianapolis	42/29/p	36/35/f	Providence, RI	45/18/p	30/16/p	Berlin	41/26/s	41/35/c
Bismarck, ND	7/2/c	17/-/sn	Jackson, MS	76/64/c	79/65/sh	Raleigh, NC	74/42/s	49/43/r	Bogota	68/50/sh	69/48/r
Boise	49/32/c	42/28/p	Jacksonville, FL	80/51/p	78/60/p	Reno, NV	57/33/r	52/28/s	Brussels	45/37/p	47/34/p
Boston	42/17/p	29/20/p	Kansas City, MO	38/31/sh	40/30/p	Richmond	66/31/s	41/35/r	Buenos Aires	87/73/c	77/69/r
Buffalo	30/16/c	27/19/c	Las Vegas	76/57/p	72/49/r	Sacramento	59/35/r	57/38/s	Cairo	70/55/p	68/55/c
Burlington, VT	26/7/c	19/8/p	Little Rock	62/54/p	75/68/r	St. Louis	47/34/c	50/44/r	Caracas	73/62/sh	74/61/sh
Charleston, SC	80/52/c	72/56/p	Los Angeles	65/54/p	63/54/r	St. Thomas, VI	84/74/s	85/75/s	Copenhagen	37/34/c	46/35/p
Charleston, WV	57/32/c	43/38/r	Louisville	53/36/p	47/43/r	Salt Lake City	65/48/c	58/33/p	Dakar	73/61/p	74/62/p
Charlotte	76/48/p	55/43/c	Memphis	64/55/c	71/64/sh	San Diego	64/53/p	66/58/c	Dublin	52/36/sh	48/31/p
Cheyenne, WY	54/32/c	58/28/p	Miami	82/68/s	83/70/p	San Francisco	60/44/r	56/49/r	Edinburgh	51/37/sh	47/32/p
Chicago	28/25/p	33/30/sn	Milwaukee	26/22/c	34/30/sn	San Juan, PR	85/75/s	84/75/p	Frankfurt	36/25/p	39/31/c
Cincinnati	45/29/p	40/36/r	Minneapolis	12/9/c	27/13/sn	Seattle	41/28/p	39/31/sn	Geneva	42/27/p	46/31/s
Cleveland	31/22/p	33/30/sn	Nashville	62/50/p	69/65/sh	Spokane, WA	21/14/sn	26/19/c	Ham., Bermuda	69/62/s	65/57/c
Dallas	76/65/p	81/66/p	New Orleans	75/59/c	76/66/sh	Syracuse	34/13/c	26/13/c	Helsinki	24/20/c	35/31/sn
Denver	54/35/p	68/33/p	New York City	45/26/p	33/30/c	Tampa	79/61/p	80/65/p	Ho Chi Minh City	93/69/s	92/69/s
			Norfolk	64/37/s	41/39/r	Wichita	43/35/sh	55/32/sh	Hong Kong	62/55/s	65/58/p

OFFICIAL RECORD

Temperatures
Statistics through 5 p.m. Monday
National
High: 52° 5:00 p.m.
Low: 33° 5:00 a.m.
Normal: 46°/30°
Record high: 65° 1927
Record low: 0° 1895
Dulles
High: 53° 4:00 p.m.
Low: 28° 5:00 a.m.
Normal: 44°/25°
Record high: 67° 2020
Record low: 1° 1965
BWI
High: 50° 4:00 p.m.
Low: 25° 7:00 a.m.
Normal: 44°/25°
Record high: 67° 2020
Record low: 4° 1961
Difference from 30-yr. avg. (National): this month: +1.6° yr. to date: -2.8°

Precipitation
Statistics through 5 p.m. Monday
National
Past 24 hours: 0.00"
Total this month: Trace
Normal: 0.28"
Total this year: 1.95"
Normal: 3.14"
Snow, past 24 hours: 0.0"
Snow, season total: 8.4"
Dulles
Past 24 hours: 0.00"
Total this month: 0.00"
Normal: 0.28"
Total this year: 2.00"
Normal: 3.22"
Snow, past 24 hours: 0.0"
Snow, season total: 10.6"
BWI
Past 24 hours: 0.00"
Total this month: Trace
Normal: 0.30"
Total this year: 1.59"
Normal: 3.38"
Snow, past 24 hours: 0.0"
Snow, season total: 8.9"

Moon Phases
Feb 5: First Quarter
Feb 12: Full
Feb 20: Last Quarter
Feb 27: New

Solar system
Rise: 7:11 a.m.
Set: 5:33 p.m.
Sun: 10:26 a.m.
Moon: 8:53 a.m.
Venus: 3:00 p.m.
Mars: 12:31 p.m.
Jupiter: 3:08 a.m.
Saturn: 8:44 a.m.



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THEATER REVIEW

‘Schmigadoon!’:
An effervescent
valentine to
classic musicals

BY NAVEEN KUMAR

The world premiere of “Schmigadoon!,” playing at the Kennedy Center through Sunday, is a meta, multilayered confection. In step with nostalgic appetites for remixed IP, it is a stage adaptation of the Apple TV Plus series, which is itself a parodic valentine to golden-age musicals. Much of the sweetness onstage comes packaged as frothy fan service, to cult devotees of the Lorne Michaels-produced half-hour and to casual observers of the form who recognize a von Trapp when they see one.

The pleasures of “Schmigadoon!” are straightforward enough for those who won’t clock its many (many) Easter eggs. Baffled audience members even have surrogates in the modern-day New Yorkers who stumble into an enchanted hamlet (a la “Brigadoon”) where everyone resembles a character (or three) from popular mid-century musicals and where breaking into song and dance is everyday stuff.

The challenge for creator Cinco Paul is to shape that winning concept and his delightful score into a stage musical that stands on its own. (This show briskly encapsulates the plot of the TV series’ first season; Apple canceled the series after two.) Much of what makes the series great translates seamlessly to the stage. The production, directed with vibrant panache by Christopher Gattelli, who also choreographed on-screen, is a fizzy and lighthearted romp that would seem to have assumed its destined form — with sights set on Broadway.

There’s little suspension of disbelief required, for example, when lovers on the rocks Josh and Melissa (played by Alex Brightman and Sara Chase) find themselves stuck in a musical, because, well ... here we are. But there’s a little something missing.

A leprechaun helpfully explains the rules: To cross back over to the real world, they’ve gotta find true love. When that doesn’t work with each other, they pursue local romantic prospects whose quaint — by today’s standards, cringey — natures are plucked from beloved musi-

SEE THEATER REVIEW ON C4

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

Tearjerking
dramas and docs
were some of
this year’s best

BY JADA YUAN AND SONIA RAO

PARK CITY, UTAH — No one quite knew what to expect from this year’s Sundance Film Festival, which came to the mountains of Utah just two weeks after wildfires swept through Los Angeles.

Some festival staff had lost their homes, as had Michelle Satter, founding senior director of the Sundance Institute, which is kind of like a summer camp/incubator for new artists. She showed up in Park City to work with screenwriters a week after her family house burned down, then dressed up for a fundraising gala honoring her four decades of nurturing artists. Oh, and she watched 15 films, which she said was the fewest she’d ever seen at the festival. “I would have never *not* gone to Sundance,” she told The Washington Post. “It’s our community and we all came together. We’re in difficult times in this country and in L.A., but also all around the world, and I believe so much in the power of storytelling and that it can change the world and that it can have an impact. We’re not going to stop.”

Still, it was hard to escape the specter of those difficult times. In a fluke of a schedule released weeks beforehand, the festival programmed Joel Edgerton’s “Train Dreams” and Josh O’Connor’s “Rebuilding” — two movies about lonely men who’ve lost everything in a wildfire — in back-to-back premieres. Some Los Angeles residents remarked they wished the films had come with trigger warnings.

The U.S. grand jury prize for a dramatic feature went to “Atropia,” a rom-com with war commentary starring Alia Shawkat and Callum Turner as role players in a military-training exercise set in a fake Iraqi village. And then there were the many ways that the real world seeped in through nonfiction programming that was far stronger than most of this year’s fiction films, including such standouts as “Prime Minister,” about the former New Zealand leader Jacinda Ardern, which won an audience award; “The

SEE SUNDANCE ON C5



FRANÇOIS SPECKER/
GETTY IMAGES

GRAMMY AWARDS

FINALLY,
A HAT TIP TO
BEYONCÉ

The pop superstar at last
wrangles the Recording
Academy’s top album award
for ‘Cowboy Carter’

BY CHRIS RICHARDS

Finally. *Finally*. If you really care about this stuff — and maybe you shouldn’t — it feels like waking up from a bad dream that lasted 15 years.

Oh sorry, we’re talking about Beyoncé winning album of the year at Sunday night’s 67th Grammy Awards in Los Angeles, a sprawling song-and-trophy show that, this time around, suddenly felt entirely

logical and deeply triumphant. Atypically austere, too. Following the vicious wildfires that consumed so much of Southern California last month, the producers behind Sunday night’s telecast cranked the show’s must-go-on vibes all the way up, fortifying the evening’s requisite pomp with heartfelt talk of regrouping and rebuilding in Los Angeles, cradle of the American music business.

But, eventually, Grammy night had to end like it always does: in unforgiving columns of winners and losers. Cue the weird part. This was the fifth time Beyoncé had been nominated for the music industry’s highest prize, and now, voilà, the most prestigious golden gramophone of them all has finally been placed in her hands. “I just feel very full and very honored,” she said from the

SEE CRITIC’S NOTEBOOK ON C3

In addition to winning the top Grammy Award for “Cowboy Carter,” Beyoncé took home the gramophone for best country album.

Laying bare
the ‘naked’
controversy
at Grammys

BY SHANE O’NEILL
AND ANNE BRANIGIN

He didn’t win any awards at the Grammys, but Kanye West, known professionally as Ye, managed to make headlines on Sunday night after he and wife Bianca Censori’s eyebrow-raising moment on the red carpet.

As West stood by her side fully clad in black, Censori dropped her fur coat to reveal a naked dress that looked like a sheer stocking. Had the pair attempted to re-create the album cover for West’s “Vultures 1?” Had they been escorted out, as some early tabloid reports insisted?

Neither the Grammys nor West’s camp responded to The Post’s request for comment. Whatever the reason, the pair promptly left — only to emerge later at an after-party to pack on the PDA.

What to make of it all? Here, Style reporters Shane O’Neill and Anne Branigin discuss naked dressing, power dynamics and what the stunt really meant.

Shane O’Neill: I think the pearl-clutching about Bianca being naked is overblown and probably what she and Kanye were trying to get at in the little place. Functionally, there is very little

SEE RED CARPET ON C3

FASHION

The businesslike look of Doecheii on the red carpet was a pleasure. **c3**



WINNERS

Kendrick Lamar took home several gramophone trophies. **c2**



PERFORMANCES

Chappell Roan is among the artists who made a big impression. **c2**



Performers we flipped over, and some we didn’t

BY SONIA RAO,
HERB SCRIBNER,
ANNE BRANIGIN,
HELENA ANDREWS-DYER
AND CHRIS RICHARDS

Held in downtown Los Angeles, Sunday night’s Grammy Awards paid homage to a city recovering from devastating wildfires. Host Trevor Noah set the tone in his opening monologue by recognizing audience members who lost their homes to the flames, and later welcomed local firefighters to be honored onstage (one of whom was thrilled to award album of the year to Beyoncé, finally, for “Cowboy Carter”). L.A. native Billie Eilish was one of a few artists to perform in front of a slideshow of nearby landscapes. Compton legend Kendrick Lamar dedicated his record of the year win for “Not Like Us” to the city that raised him, a theme he repeated in his song of the year acceptance speech.

The fire metaphor even extended to a pointed political statement made by Alicia Keys, the 17-time Grammy winner who accepted a career award celebrating global impact. She praised DEI programs, which the Trump administration has attacked in its early days, and said that “when destructive forces try to burn us down, we rise from the ashes like a phoenix.”

Her words earned loud applause from the audience of music luminaries, who were also treated to mood-lightening performances throughout the night. Newer artists dominated the stage, including genre winners like Doechii (best rap album) and Sabrina Carpenter (best pop vocal album). Toward the end of the show, the Grammys stuck to tradition by presenting a strange, intergenerational mix of artists during a Quincy Jones tribute (Herbie Hancock, Stevie Wonder and ... Lainey Wilson?). Viewers at home witnessed a lengthy performance of a new song by Lady Gaga, which turned out to be a Mastercard commercial.

Some acts landed. Others fell flat. Here’s a ranking of the night’s performances, from best to worst.

Doechii

Where do we even start with Doechii’s performance? There was that exquisite gray Thom Browne schoolgirl uniform and the legion of schoolgirl dancers. There was the capital-F flexibility. (Who raps while holding a split? Apparently Doechii does!) There was the choreography, with Doechii giving us some “Chicago” energy—but in her skivvies and a pair of loafers. Fresh off winning her first Grammy for the mixtape “Alligator Bites Never Heal,” the Florida native performed a medley that was sexy, ferocious and despicably fresh. Though squeezed in between other best new artist nominees, Doechii’s performance was the Grammys at its absolute best: heralding a new voice and elevating a star whose moment has definitely arrived. — *Anne Branigin*

Chappell Roan

It’s been a remarkable year for Chappell Roan, the self-proclaimed Midwest Princess who might one day rule the entire country. Despite experiencing the downside of overexposure, she has continued to speak her mind—evidenced by her acceptance speech for best new artist, in which she advocated for developing musicians to be paid a living wage and granted health insurance. Her performances are just as bold. During a rendition of “Pink Pony Club” that brought audience members to their feet, she rode a giant prop horse and



KEVIN WINTER/GETTY IMAGES



EMMA MCINTYRE/GETTY IMAGES



MARIO ANZUONI/REUTERS

From top, Benson Boone flips during his best new artist performance, Sabrina Carpenter sings a jazz-inspired rendition of “Espresso,” and Cynthia Erivo performs “Fly Me To The Moon” during the Quincy Jones tribute.

even crawled across the stage. Background dancers dressed in country clothes and clown make-up mimicked her boisterous movements. Never change, Chappell. — *Sonia Rao*

Charli XCX

Brat summer feels like ancient history, but Charli XCX just sang “Von Dutch” like it was Memorial Day. She might have lost album of the year—after earning two Grammys in the pre-telecast earlier in the day—but exuded the confidence of a winner as cameras followed her characteristically unruly performance from the parking garage to the stage. She enlisted a few collaborators to join her there, including producer The Dare, who doubled the chaos by making out with a random woman. If only Billie Eilish had appeared for the “Guess” remix. — *Chris Richards and S.R.*

Sabrina Carpenter

Carpenter knows how to put on a lively show, and her performance of “Espresso” was no exception. She started out singing in a jazzy style, paired with choreography that would have made Bob

Fosse proud (maybe), then returned to the hit song’s original style. It’s an upbeat track, so that was fun on its own, but then she tossed in some of “Please Please Please.” Wait, hold on—a tap break? This girl really does it all. — *S.R.*

Raye

If you didn’t know Raye before, you do now! The best new artist nominee’s performance of “Oscar Winning Tears” from her album “My 21st Century Blues” was a showstopper. She was giving off Amy Winehouse vibes with her sprawling range, hitting notes that might have been hitherto unknown. Extra points for the old-school vibes and the jazzy big band. — *Herb Scribner*

Shaboozey

Sporting heeled emerald boots and an eggplant purple suit that looked inspired by the famous Nudie suits of cowboy couture’s flamboyant 1960s heyday, Shaboozey gave a straightforward performance of his hit “A Bar Song (Tipsy).” With a bevy of line dancers behind him, the 29-year-old gave us a two-step and some

finger snapping. But while the Beyoncé collaborator seemed to be having a lot of fun singing “Everybody at the bar getting tipsy” (who wouldn’t when their song spent 19 weeks at No. 1?), the performance had less razzle and dazzle than the rest of his best new artist cohort. — *H.A.*

Billie Eilish

Does Billie Eilish keep getting invited to sing on live television because she’s great at it? Or is she great at singing on live television because people keep inviting her? She made it look easy-breezy again—this time with her song and record of the year contender “Birds of a Feather.” — *C.R.*

Quincy Jones tribute

Well, if you’re gonna do a tribute to Quincy Jones (and you should!), you might as well assemble a dream team of performers for it. We saw Herbie Hancock on the piano while Cynthia Erivo performed “Fly Me to the Moon”—and she absolutely crushed it. Lainey Wilson took over for Erivo with a performance of “Let the Good Times Roll” (with Jacob Collier on keys). And then there was Stevie Wonder, who performed a little “Bluesette” for everyone. Quite a crew! We even got a cover of “We Are the World.” Janelle Monáe wrapped up the tribute with a slick take on “Don’t Stop ‘til You Get Enough,” channeling Michael Jackson in her performance. An eclectic mix, but a fun one—kind of like Jones’s résumé. — *H.S.*

Teddy Swims

Teddy Swims showed up with some red sunglasses and a rose-covered coat, and gave the audience a sultry performance of “Lose Control.” Definitely a slower performance compared with the others on the night, but there’s no question his lyrics connected with the crowd and at least made us feel something. — *H.S.*

Lady Gaga and Bruno Mars

Lady Gaga and Bruno Mars offered a tribute to L.A. with their cover of the Mamas and the Papas’ “California Dreamin’.” Gaga swayed in circles during the song, while Mars, wearing a cowboy hat, nailed his typical Bruno Mars notes, bringing the crowd to its feet in celebration. It provided a warm moment to honor the first responders and families affected by the fires, but far from the best show of the night. — *H.S.*

Shakira

Shakira certainly knows how to win over a crowd, even if her performance was a little light on substance. There was belly dancing, hips-not-lying, EDM beats

and lots of bright lights, but less punch than you’d hope for. — *H.S.*

Dawes (and company)

Of the many, many songs about Los Angeles they had to choose from, the Grammys picked Randy Newman’s fizzy 1983 bop “I Love L.A.” “I Love L.A.” wasn’t a chart-topper when it was first released, but the following year Los Angeles hosted the 1984 Summer Olympics and Newman’s hometown ballad became a hit. The actual lyrics about sunshine and happiness and mountains (and, um, Santa Ana winds) aren’t the point (and have been debated as mildly sarcastic). Really, the whole thing is just an excuse to shout, “We love it!” because—duh!—it’s Los Angeles. What’s not to love? So it made sense the L.A. folk-rock band Dawes would kick off this show in a fire-ravaged city, performing a song with the singular purpose of putting a smile on your face. Backed by a supergroup made up of John Legend, Sheryl Crow, Brad Paisley, Brittany Howard and St. Vincent, the performance was a necessary boost. — *H.A.*

Benson Boone

Sorry to this man—who seems very nice and is talented enough to have spent a considerable amount of time last year on the Billboard Hot 100—but between the aerobic dancing and an outfit change into a sparkly, light blue jumpsuit, his performance played like a lesser version of the one Sabrina Carpenter delivered earlier in the night. It’s not Boone’s fault that Grammys producers chose to have him perform so soon after her, but we aren’t sure he would’ve stood out elsewhere, either. His viral hit “Beautiful Things,” however, might be stuck in your head for the rest of time. — *S.R.*

Khruangbin

It took us a minute to figure out who was performing, and it wasn’t because we don’t like their music. Coming in straight from a commercial break, Khruangbin played with all the verve of a jazz quartet dutifully pumping out background music to a room full of clanking silverware and cigar smoke. Their showing ended up being part of a set of back-to-pack performances from all the best new artist nominees. In retrospect, it was a small mercy that the band wasn’t sandwiched between their livelier, more compelling counterparts. — *A.B.*

The Weeknd and Playboi Carti

Leading into tonight, the Grammys had been teasing a surprise guest performer. A lot of guesses circulated online, but in the end, the only thing more anticlimactic than the reveal—the Weeknd!—was the subsequent performance. In 2021, the Weeknd vowed a permanent boycott of the Grammys after the Recording Academy snubbed “After Hours”—a pretty glaring oversight, considering the lead single “Blinding Lights” was a global smash and he had recently headlined the Super Bowl halftime show. (His pledge also followed several high-profile rebukes of the Academy for the way it has historically overlooked Black and female artists.) His return was presented by Recording Academy chair Harvey Mason Jr. as a triumphant comeback, an indicator of strides the industry has made in recent years. In reality, we got a curiously bundled-up Canadian pop star giving us a perfectly adequate but instantly forgettable performance alongside his compadre Playboi Carti. Was that even the Weeknd underneath that heavy winter coat? We can’t be sure. — *A.B.*

WINNERS

Album of the year

“Cowboy Carter,” Beyoncé

Record of the year

“Not Like Us,” Kendrick Lamar

Song of the year

“Not Like Us,” written and performed by Kendrick Lamar

Best new artist

Chappell Roan

Best pop vocal album

“Short n’ Sweet,” Sabrina Carpenter

Best pop duo/group performance

“Die With a Smile,” Lady Gaga and Bruno Mars

Best R&B song

“Saturn,” written by Rob Bisel, Cían Ducrot, Carter Lang, Solána Rowe, Jared Solomon and Scott Zhang, performed by SZA

Best country album

“Cowboy Carter,” Beyoncé

Best música urbana album

“Las Letras Ya No Importan,” Residente

Producer of the year, nonclassical

Daniel Nigro

Best pop solo performance

“Espresso,” Sabrina Carpenter

Best rock performance

“Now and Then,” The Beatles

Best rock album

“Hackney Diamonds,” The Rolling Stones

Best alternative music performance

“Flea,” St. Vincent

Best alternative music album

“All Born Screaming,” St. Vincent

Best R&B performance

“Made for Me (Live on BET),” Muni Long

Best progressive R&B album (tie)

“So Glad to Know You,” Avery*Sunshine
“Why Lawd?,” NxWorries (Anderson .Paak and Knxwledge)

Best R&B album

“11:11 (Deluxe),” Chris Brown

Best rap performance

“Not Like Us,” Kendrick Lamar

Best melodic rap performance

“3,” Rapsody featuring Erykah Badu

Best rap album

“Alligator Bites Never Heal,” Doechii

Best country solo performance

“It Takes a Woman,” Chris Stapleton

Best Latin pop album

“Las Mujeres Ya No Lloran,” Shakira

Best música Mexicana album (including Tejano)

“Boca Chueca, Vol. 1,” Carín León

Best comedy album

“The Dreamer,” Dave Chappelle

Best audiobook, narration and storytelling recording

“Last Sundays in Plains: A Centennial Celebration,” Jimmy Carter

Best song written for visual media

“It Never Went Away” from “American Symphony”

Best music video

“Not Like Us,” Kendrick Lamar

Complete list at [grammys.com](https://www.grammys.com).

Mom won’t stop rehashing every detail of Dad’s final days and refuses therapy



Carolyn Hax

Adapted from an online discussion.

Dear Carolyn: My dad died last year, and I was with him and Mom for his final days in hospice. Since then, I’ve spent a million hours helping her with finances, cleaning out her house to sell and serving as her de facto therapist.

I want to be there for her, but I’m resenting it. Lately, she is intent on dissecting every detail of his final days, but it’s really painful for me to revisit it. I’ve tried telling her I can handle only a few minutes of it, but she keeps bringing it up. I’ve tried to get her to see a therapist, but she says she has nothing to talk about. I’m torn because there is no one else she can ask about the experience, but ... he was my dad

and it’s really, really hard. Any advice?

— *Torn*

Torn: I’m sorry about your dad. And the hard year.

Please gently hold firm on the grief counseling suggestion and on the amount of time you will agree to be her shoulder to cry on. When she says she has nothing to talk about, say out loud what you are thinking: “Actually, Mom, you have a lot to say, because you are talking to me about it.”

“There’s nothing wrong with wanting to talk—I support that! I am saying simply that I am grieving as well, and talk is not my way of grieving. So I can’t both support you and get well. “If you would like me to call some places, I will.”

You probably need to make only one call to find local groups—to the hospice provider who



ILLUSTRATION BY NICK GALIFIANAKIS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

cared for your dad. I’d be surprised if they didn’t leave the literature already. If she says no, then get the names and numbers anyway and have them ready when she brings up the painful details again.

But do not make it your problem that she has “no one else she can ask about the

experience”—she is choosing not to have anyone else.

If this is the kind of thing she responds to, share this description of “ring theory” (bit.ly/RTheory) with her to explain why it is not good for your health to be her only source of support.

A reader’s thought:

• Hold your line and take care of yourself as much as you do your mom. “Mom, I love you, but I can’t talk about this with you right now. Please try talking to these folks [list a couple of support groups]. Would you like me to go to the first meeting with you?” Lather, rinse, repeat.

Dear Carolyn: One of our group of women has started bringing her husband, who then sits with us and makes us uncomfortable. Is there some way to let her know the discomfort I feel?

— *Awkward*

Awkward: One-on-one conversation: “You’re bringing [husband] lately. What’s up?” Get the why before addressing the what.

If she just says he wants to come, then say what you mean: “I like [husband], but he changes the vibe. What if we make some

plans specifically with partners?”

Could be a range of things that are more complicated, though. Here’s one from a reader:

• In our group, one started bringing her husband. Turns out she was in the early stages of dementia, and he was helping her to remain social with as much dignity as possible without letting everyone know. Eventually, we all realized what was happening. We became his social support system as his beloved wife and our beloved friend deteriorated and died.

Write to Carolyn Hax at tellme@washpost.com. Get her column delivered to your inbox each morning at wapo.st/getthax.

Join the discussion live at noon Fridays at [washingtonpost.com/live-chats](https://www.washingtonpost.com/live-chats).

Notable wins after years of snubs

CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK FROM C1

stage, clutching the trophy honoring “Cowboy Carter,” her ambitious, meticulous, country-fried eighth album. “It’s been many, many years.”

Many, many. But during that culture-steering run of music (the albums “I Am ... Sasha Pierce,” “Beyoncé,” “Lemonade,” and “Renaissance”), didn’t Beyoncé become the winningest Grammy recipient of all time? Yes, it’s true, her total trophy count now stands at 35 — which includes Sunday night’s big one, as well as two others she earned earlier in the evening, best country album and best country duo/group performance for “II Most Wanted,” a duet with Miley Cyrus. But we must always remember that not all Grammys are equal. Each year, four particular prizes matter more than the rest: song of the year, record of the year, best new artist and album of the year. Those four awards are genre blind, therefore the most coveted, and before Sunday, Beyoncé had only ever snapped up one of them — song of the year for “Single Ladies (Put a Ring on It)” back in 2010.

If you think this wasn’t a sore spot for one of pop’s brightest

superstars, go back and listen to “Sweet Honey Buckiin,” the penultimate track on “Cowboy Carter,” during which Beyoncé sings, “AOTY, I ain’t win.” Yet, despite those sour grapes, “Cowboy Carter” was conspicuously crammed with Grammy-friendly gestures: a bold crossover into a neighboring style of music; a stately rendition of a Beatles song (its title stylized as “Blackbird”); cameos from country music deities Dolly Parton and Willie Nelson; instrumental contributions from the likes of Paul McCartney and Stevie Wonder. Intentional or not, “Cowboy Carter” felt like prize bait. Which felt like a shame. A generational artist had allowed the Academy’s perennial cold shoulder to change her art. Per-versely, it totally worked.

But, hey, fine. If Beyoncé wanted to translate her music into something more Grammy-legible to get Academy voters to finally understand her detail-minded pop syncretism, it’s at least been fun to watch her thread that impossible needle. Plus, Sunday night’s other big victor, song and record of the year winner Kendrick Lamar, proved that there are other ways to change Grammy voters’ minds.

Like Beyoncé, Lamar is an era-



FRANCIS SPECKER//GETTY IMAGES

From left, Jay-Z, Bruno Mars, Beyoncé, and Babyface at the 67th Annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles on Sunday. Beyoncé won the album of the year award for “Cowboy Carter.”

defining voice who has suffered his share of album of the year snubs. He’s been blanked for the prize four times and counting, which speaks to the Academy electorate shunning not only him, but rap music writ large. Album of the year has been awarded to a rap album twice — Lauryn Hill for “The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill” in 1999; OutKast for “Speak-

erboxx/The Love Below” in 2004 — and before Sunday, Lamar had never won a Grammy in the top four categories.

Now, “Not Like Us” has been named record and song of the year — a blistering stand-alone single that originated as a Drake diss before evolving into something like a planetary sing-along. The audience inside Crypto.com

Arena confirmed it at the top of their voices, chanting along to Lamar’s seething rhymes with a thundering joy as the rapper sauntered toward the stage to collect his prize. “At the end of the day, [there’s] nothing more powerful than rap music,” Lamar said in his first acceptance speech. “We are the culture.”

“Not Like Us” feels like the

opposite of Grammy bait. It’s spontaneous. Stylish. Mean. Which instantly qualifies it for Grammy miracle status considering it snatched Sunday night’s record of the year prize away from “Now and Then,” a resuscitated Beatles demo supposedly refurbished with artificial intelligence. “Now and Then” is nice enough, but the more the song began to circulate in the public imagination — which is to say, from barely to a little bit — the more it came to feel like a talking point for AI enthusiasts than an actual song. Sadly, that’s exactly the kind of too-familiar-to-fail nonsense that Grammy voters traditionally drool over, and earlier in the night, it seemed poised to win. Over in the rock categories, “Now and Then” won the award for best rock performance. Meantime, the prize for best rock album went to “Hackney Diamonds,” the latest from the Rolling Stones. Remember, we are living in the year 2025.

It’s always hard to know what year it is at the Grammys, even this one. Beyoncé and Lamar should have been celebrating nights like this years ago. But in finally recognizing both artists this way after years of neglect, the Recording Academy has signaled a massive and necessary shift toward honoring real-world resonance in real time. And that’s probably better for the Grammys than anyone else. Neither Beyoncé nor Lamar ever needed a trophy to confirm their greatness. Now they have some of the big ones — for whatever they might be worth.

On the Grammys red carpet, black and white with some splashes of color

BY ASHLEY FETTERS MALOY, RACHEL TASHJIAN AND SHANE O’NEILL

On Sunday night, the 67th Grammy Awards became the first awards ceremony to take place in Los Angeles since wildfires tore through the region in January. Many stars dressed accordingly, in somber black and dialed-back silhouettes.

Still, that’s not to say the evening lacked sartorial risks. It was, for example, a great night for butts: Samara Joy carried a silver clutch in the shape of a shapely pair of buttocks, while Ye’s partner, Bianca Censori, dropped her fur coat to reveal a *very* see-through (so see-through we can’t publish a photo!) illusion dress.

It was a great night for young stars in old dresses, too, between 21-year-old Olivia Rodrigo’s 25-year-old Versace and 26-year-old Chappell Roan’s 22-year-old Jean Paul Gaultier. Speaking of which: Below are a few of our favorite looks from the evening.

Chappell Roan

Roan looked like a pop star who spent her childhood dreaming of wearing exactly what she wore Sunday night: a vintage Jean Paul Gaultier dress from the 2003 couture collection. These kind of “vintage pulls” are considered a major flex. It was a pleasure to see Roan, who has spent the past year snarling at her own

fame, wear a custom dress by a designer who has also found release in rolling his eyes at his industry’s status quo. The dress is funny, campy and immaculately made, just like one of Roan’s songs. — *Rachel Tashjian*

Sabrina Carpenter

The red carpet (and this list) had plenty of roomy, heavy-looking all-black ensembles, but the singer who’s come to be known for barely there skirts and hard-to-miss innuendos cut the other direction with this soft blue JW Anderson. Paired with a backward-facing lavalier necklace, this whole dreamy puff of silk and feathers looked like it came perfectly preserved from a studio-system starlet’s boudoir. — *Ashley Feters Maloy*

Billie Eilish

When Billie Eilish first hit the scene as a teenager, she made a point of showing up on red carpets in big, baggy, elegantly oversize looks. It was a way of saying, “I’m not here to put my body on display for you.” In the past few years, she has started toying with more feminine gowns that bared cleavage and décolletage. This gothic sailor look by Prada nodded to the boxy silhouettes she wore when we fell in love with her, but the playful dangling strings and white flap on the back of the jacket showed that she has relaxed into her adult role as a

music industry and Grammy voter darling. — *Shane O’Neill*

Cardi B

The Grammys red carpet is a theater for the extreme, which makes it so much fun. Take in Cardi B’s custom gown by Roberto Cavalli, a brand that is unapologetically cheesy. This dress had a sequin tiger print, a feather hem and an asymmetrical neckline. It is the dream dress of a 1980s New Jersey prom queen — and it is sublime. — *R.T.*

Brittany Howard

On an evening of wild ensembles, a simpler look is powerful. Brittany Howard’s silk opera coat was magnificent, and her hair was studied with little rhinestones. — *R.T.*

Doechii

Doechii has been on a fashion winning streak for months now. (I have yet to catch my breath from the Willy Chavarria look she wore for her Tiny Desk concert.) This Thom Browne ensemble continued her perfect record. The pinstripes and tailoring were impeccable, the padded hips and off-the-shoulder straps were a bit alien. It’s an alternate-reality version of classic Americana. Don’t you want to live in this universe, too? — *S.O.*

Kelsea Ballerini

Kelsea Ballerini was nominat-



JORDAN STRAUSS/JORDAN STRAUSS/INVISION/AP

Sabrina Carpenter brought a studio starlet mood to the red carpet at the Grammy Awards.



ROBYN BECK/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Billie Eilish went with a gothic sailor look that was worthy of a hearty salute.



JORDAN STRAUSS/JORDAN STRAUSS/INVISION/AP

Chappell Roan wore a vintage dress that was funny, campy and immaculately made.

‘Naked dressing,’ power dynamics and what the red carpet stunt really meant

RED CARPET FROM C1

that is different about what she wore compared with what was worn by Chrissy Teigen or Willow Smith. It doesn’t really show much more than J-Lo’s famous Versace dress or Rose McGowan’s VMA dress from 1998 or Rihanna’s crystal mesh dress from the CFDA’s 10 years ago. I’m also disappointed that it was described as “obscene.” To be honest, Victoria Monet’s dress looked more obscene to me.

Anne Branigin: To me, the obscenity rests more in the juxtaposition of Kanye’s coverage versus Bianca’s nakedness. Even the sunglasses he was wearing — standard for him and a lot men on red carpets — seemed like a statement next to her nudity. What’s weird about this discourse to me is that even if it’s ostensibly about Bianca’s outfit, she seems almost like an afterthought.

S.O.: I think Kanye was well aware of all this. I assume he was amplifying the dynamic that you see up and down red carpets and in the entertainment industry: men can be neutral, women are offered up for consumption.

A.B.: It’s not just the entertainment industry in general but Kanye specifically. We’ve seen these same dynamics before with Ye and ex-wife Kim Kardashian, and with ex-girlfriends Amber Rose and Julia Fox. He has this way of propping up his partner’s bodies while simultaneously hiding behind them.

A.B.: Come to think of it, I don’t know if I can conjure up an

image of what Bianca looks like alone. She’s always by Kanye’s side. In the public eye, she is always always, always in relationship to Kanye.

S.O.: I’ve never heard her voice either.

A.B.: Like you said, there was a statement being made on his part, however muddled the message may be.

S.O.: All of this is tempered by the fact that signs point to Kanye being unwell. I kept thinking about that New Yorker story about him ripping out the walls and windows of his Malibu home. We as a culture really don’t know what to do when someone is both mentally ill and a genius. It’s even harder when the person is also spewing bigotry. I’m thinking of Roseanne. These are people whose work I love so much that I want to find a way to ignore or excuse their behavior, but I don’t know how to square that circle. Neither does our culture, obviously.

A.B.: Right! One of the many thorns we inevitably prick ourselves on when we talk about Kanye. Another thing sticking in my craw about this is that for a night that felt delightful, even revelatory, and maybe even brave, it feels like a special kind of sad to be talking about this attempted provocation than all the other things we could be chatting about. Like all the young women — DoeChii, Chappell Roan, Sabrina Carpenter — planting their flag as the future of this industry. Like the Academy feeling as if it’s finally correcting course when it comes to



JORDAN STRAUSS/INVISION/AP

Ye, left, and Bianca Censori arrive at the 67th annual Grammy Awards on Sunday in Los Angeles.

recognizing Black artists (if only for one night). We had Chappell use her stage time to plead with labels for *health insurance!* Slotted alongside that, this thing Kanye is doing feels so *old*.

S.O.: That’s a very good point. You could read Ye’s MAGA hat as a provocation during a Biden presidency. It’s less clear what he’s pushing against right now.

A.B.: It’s also worth noting that we also don’t really know about Censori’s own participation or agency in this — I think it’s unfair to assume she wasn’t a willing co-conspirator, though the power dynamics between them also speak volumes. Shane, I do want to go back to a point you made earlier, though, about how flat this provocation came across from a fashion perspective. Why do you think that is?

S.O.: Well, to quote you, it’s *old*. Robert Altman put an all-nude runway show at the end of “Pret a Porter” in 1994. Anthony Haden-Guest wrote that Grace Jones showed up fully nude at Studio 54 so much that it became a bore. In 2003, Pam Grier said this about her work with the filmmaker Jack Hill in an interview with the AV Club: “You’re not thinking about some sort of Victorian handicap called, ‘Don’t show your breasts, it’s considered indecent.’” Nudity is still a taboo, but people have been challenging that taboo for a long time. You also used the word “flat.” I mean, the dress literally flattened her breasts. So did Chrissy Teigen’s. As I wrote last night, “the less you wear, the better it has to fit.” Willow Smith understood this.

A.B.: I want to live in the world where we’re gushing for 1,000 words about Willow Smith!

S.O.: I want to live in a timeline where we’re gushing for 1,000 words about Jaden Smith and his Transylvanian mansion headpiece!

A.B.: I was also thinking about how, in 2016, saying you supported trans kids was the default position of corporate America. But when Lady Gaga says it in 2025, it feels brave and bold, mostly because so many celebrities seem unwilling to engage with trans issues?

S.O.: I mean, I loved seeing Charli XCX having Alex Consani strutting beside her and Richie Shazam dancing onstage. Not for nothing, Shazam was among the friends given a Birkin by Kanye when he was dating Julia Fox.

A.B.: I think one of the reasons 2016 is on my mind is because talking about Kanye, more and more, feels like we’re talking about the past. So maybe it’s worth revisiting what his and Bianca’s message — if there was any — could have been.

S.O.: I mean, it looked like a Los Angeles old man/trophy wife couple that had been generated by slightly malfunctioning AI. If she had been wearing underwear, it wouldn’t have even registered as a stunt. It’s not blowing my mind, but it is interesting, if just from a dorm-room stoner “what even are clothes, man?” point of view.

A.B.: Right! The outfit, in isolation, truly doesn’t warrant much more than that. But it is a stunt we’ve seen variations of

from Ye before. Specifically, red carpet appearances where he’s covered pretty much head-to-toe (often obscuring his eyes in some way, which feels like another layer of protection) alongside his scantily clad and — this is important — lighter-skinned partner. Kanye’s oeuvre — his music, his interviews, his public appearances — have shown us that he’s very conscious of racial dynamics, but he’s also fixated on them in an explicitly sexual way. Based on his music, he’s maybe done a little bit of self-examination on this topic, but on a red carpet, these images almost read as a challenge: How does the world react when a powerful Black man totes a White woman as a trophy?

S.O.: That’s interesting to me. Not to give them too much credit, but if she had just worn a little black dress, we wouldn’t be having this conversation.

A.B.: Exactly. What’s sad to me is that these elements of Ye — fetishization, fixation, provocation — have now seemingly surpassed his musical/cultural relevance. I keep thinking about our colleague Chris Richards’s piece, “The Pain of Giving Up on Ye.” Is this all he has left to give us?

S.O.: I don’t think so. I think he has more to say and I hope that he finds a way to make me hear it without cringing or worrying about him or despairing for the future of America. If nothing else, he could always make an even bigger splash if *he* shows up naked on a red carpet.

Herb Scribner contributed to this report.

‘Schmigadoon!’ hits the right notes

THEATER REVIEW FROM C1

cal’s. For Melissa, there’s the cartoonishly seductive carnival barker (Ryan Vasquez), cribbed from “Carousel,” and later, the dashing, uptight doctor (Javier Muñoz) inspired by Captain von Trapp from “The Sound of Music.” Melissa immediately gets what’s going on and how each plot is supposed to go. At first, she’s spiteful and jealous of Josh’s attempt to pair off with a giggly flirt (McKenzie Kurtz) modeled off Ado Annie from “Oklahoma!” But eventually, Melissa helps her ex woo a strong-willed schoolmarm (Isabelle McCalla) by pointing to “The Music Man” — which would make Josh “a morally adrift narcissist who needs to change.” First, he needs to give the teacher’s young ward (an “aww”-inspiring Ayaan Diop) the gift of music.

All of this unfolds against a picturesque storybook set (by Scott Pask) that evokes the platonic ideal of small-town America. The gazebo glows with a soft-pink dawn you only catch a few times a year (lighting is by Jen Schriever). The finely patterned frocks and pinstripe shirts (by Linda Cho) suggest a wholesome diversity of experience. These are people with good, open hearts, and “Schmigadoon!” illustrates their capacity for understanding and change, a broader argument for what musicals can do — to both characters and audiences.

What we don’t see are the specifics of the relationship between Josh and Melissa, or the friction that drove them into the wilderness on a couples retreat — and ultimately, to Schmigadoon — to repair it. The series details that history in frequent flashbacks to their real-life ups and downs, which may be a cumber-

some device to replicate onstage. But the absence of that context means that the show often feels mired in surface-level cleverness. Melissa explains to Josh that “romance in musicals isn’t always logical,” which is why they “usually let the songs do the heavy lifting.” As a songwriter Paul takes that maxim to extremes, and for good reason. His score — including the Emmy-winning “Corn Pudding,” an ode to the form’s joyful goofiness, plus memorable numbers from the series and several new ones — is as infectious as the source material it’s designed to emulate. One could argue Paul’s compositions lack originality and, technically, they do. But whether you’re attuned to the references or not, the musical pastiche he creates is close to irresistible.

Many of the actors are, too. Playfully exaggerated performances from Vasquez and Kurtz poke delicious fun at the gendered stereotypes their roles embody. (As Melissa, Chase also delivers running commentary on the retrograde values underlying the spoofed shows — like auctioning off women alongside their home-baked pies.) McCalla nails the rousing classroom tap number “With All of Your Heart.” Ann Harada, reprising her on-screen role as the mayor’s wife; Emily Skinner, as a doctrine-obsessed matron “against the future”; and Angel Reda, as a frosty countess who’s “definitely a Nazi” each knock a funny, standout song out of the park. Kevin Del Aguila, as the soft-spoken reverend, and Brad Oscar, as the mayor who suggestively swoons for the former’s baked goods, lend gentle humor to parts that ultimately feel underwritten.

To assemble all of these characters, and to fit some two dozen numbers into two acts, dialogue has been cut to a minimum. Part



Above, the cast of “Schmigadoon!” at the Kennedy Center. At left, Ann Harada, left, and Sara Chase. Harada reprises her on-screen role from the Apple TV Plus series.



PHOTOS BY MATTHEW MURPHY AND EVAN ZIMMERMAN

of that is by necessity. But the result feels at times like a medley aimed at die-hard fans rather than a stand-alone, high-concept show inviting new audiences to follow along. Deepening our investment in Josh and Melissa’s relationship beyond the bickering we see in the present would go a long way.

Part of the problem may also be structural: What “Schmigadoon!” currently lacks and beloved musicals have by the fistful is genuine sentiment underlying the sung romance. However illogical their affections, characters in those stories actually believe them. Here, dalliances with the resident showpeople are detours that lead Josh and Melissa back to each

other. (No spoiler alert necessary, this is a musical, remember?) That means we get four misguided, illusory love plots while the obvious one goes underdeveloped.

Maybe Schmigadoonians would say I’m looking for logic where nonsense and whimsy ought to reign. A certain chic Nazi does have a point when she insists that love is “something you choose to believe in” rather than something you can prove. The same might be said for the magic of musicals.

Schmigadoon! Through Sunday at the Kennedy Center. 2 hours and 35 minutes with an intermission. kennedy-center.org.

At the Metropolitan Opera’s Laffont Voice Competition, everyone’s a critic

BY MICHAEL ANDOR BRODEUR

Nothing lightens the critic’s burden than a performance that comes equipped with its own judges. And nothing empowers an audience more than granting everyone with a ticket the role of critic.

Both were the case Sunday afternoon at the Kennedy Center’s Terrace Theater, where the Metropolitan Opera’s Laffont Voice Competition held its Mid-Atlantic regional finals — and ended in a three-way tie.

Those winners — Filipino soprano Michelle Mariposa, 29; Texan tenor Angel Gomez, 26; and Puerto Rican soprano Kresley Figueroa, 28 — were each awarded a \$3,500 prize and a spot in the Laffont national semifinals (March 9) and, if the stars align, the finals (March 16), where singers will enjoy the accompaniment of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra.

Figueroa picked up an additional \$500 by winning the Audience Prize Award, tabulated through a flash poll distributed to attendees through a QR code.

Dallas-based mezzo-soprano Winona Martin, 28, took third place and a prize of \$1,500. Soprano Katerina Burton, 30, a recent graduate of the Washington National Opera’s Cafiritz Young Artist program from Ocean City, Maryland, took second place and a prize of \$2,500.

Sunday’s contest marked the first Mid-Atlantic regional competition since 2021, its purview en-



TERRY BARNETT/ALPHA ONE MEDIA GROUP

Fifteen singers competed at the Kennedy Center in the regional finals of the Laffont Competition.

compassing the districts of Washington, D.C., Maryland and Philadelphia — though singers can come from anywhere to compete in a given regional.

Before this four-and-a-half year hiatus — a result of the pandemic as well as transitions of leadership within the organization — winners of the Mid-Atlantic region included J’Nai Bridges, Gordon Hawkins and Alyson Cambridge. And since its inception in 1954, the national competition has launched the ca-

reers of singers such as Jessye Norman, Renée Fleming, Susan Graham, Eric Owens, Lawrence Brownlee and Anthony Roth Costanzo, to name a few.

A pool of more than 1,500 hopefuls was narrowed down to just 90 auditions, resulting in the 15 finalists who took the stage Sunday to perform for a panel of three judges: Melissa Wegner, executive director of the Met’s Lindemann Young Artist Development Program as well as the Laffont Com-

petition; Gregory Lamar, an acclaimed vocal coach; and mezzo-soprano Susan Graham, who recently dazzled in the National Symphony Orchestra’s concert performance of Samuel Barber’s “Vanessa.” Mid-Atlantic regional chair (and celebrated soprano) Aundi Marie Moore hosted the competition and singers were accompanied by pianists José Meléndez, Tongyao Li and Juan José Lázaro.

Singers come prepared with

four arias and sing two — one of their choosing and one selected on the fly by the judges.

Mariposa thrilled with a spirited take on “Ah, quel giorno ognor rammento” from Rossini’s “Semiramide,” masterfully navigating its quicksilver coloratura with comfort and confidence. The judges’ request for “Werther! qui m’aurait dit la place” showcased her attention to detail and her spellbinding dramatic energy.

Gomez was the lone tenor on the program (“A good tenor is hard to find,” quipped Moore post-performance) and made a last-minute substitution that proved shrewd. Rather than “O amore, o bella luce del core” from Pietro Mascagni’s “L’amico Fritz,” he opted to introduce himself with a stunning “Parmi veder le lagrime,” the Duke’s aria from Verdi’s “Rigoletto.” The steely thrust of his tenor was tempered with sweetness, and brought to a deceptively fine point — causing the audience to leap into their applause a touch too soon. The judges’ selection, “Ah, mes amis” from Donizetti’s “La fille du régiment,” caused a flutter across the theater, and Gomez rose to the challenge with heroic presence, overwhelming charisma and a dependably searing high C.

Figueroa, who recently appeared in the short opera “Mud Girl” as part of the WNO’s American Opera Initiative, brought easy authority to another aria from “Rigoletto,” Gilda’s lovesruck aria “Gualtier Malde ... Caro nome,” with artful pacing, gleaming highs

and a presence that made her competition-closing performance feel like a reward. The judges selected “Piangerò la sorte mia” from Handel’s “Giulio Cesare,” a de capo aria that quickly pivots from forlorn grief to furious vengeance, each beautifully embodied by the soprano.

There were plenty of other memorable moments — and the three-way tie accurately reflects the near uniformity of the contestants’ talents. The white-suited bass Raúl Morales Velazco emerged with a sinister chuckle and made an instantly diabolical Mefistofele, singing “Ecco il mondo” from Arrigo Boito’s “Mefistofele.” Alla Yarosh’s round and hearty mezzo-soprano and careful articulation to “Dopo l’oscuro nembo” from Bellini’s “Adelson e Salvini,” and her follow-up of “Smanie implacabili” from Mozart’s “Così fan tutte” bristled with personality and power.

Runners-up Burton and Martin also gave dazzling performances: the soprano illuminating “L’année en vain” from Donizetti’s “Le prophète,” and the mezzo delivering an ecstatic “Sein wir wieder gut” from Strauss’s “Ariadne auf Naxos,” reveling in its declaration of music as “the holiest art.”

Across three hours and 30 arias, the Laffont is a test of endurance for singers, listeners and judges alike. But such commitments have a way of paying off, and the chance to enjoy the future of opera before it arrives feels like a win in itself.

Older couple gets invited by family only when a gift is expected

Asking Eric

R. ERIC THOMAS

Dear Eric: My spouse and I are an older couple with some family members who live in the same town as us and some

family who live out of state. The families who live near us only invite us to functions where a gift is needed, such as weddings and birthdays, etc.

We feel very sad about this since we spend many holidays alone. May I add that my spouse and I are pleasant people and so are they, but they never reach out to us except when they send an invitation for a function. We are perplexed by this. What can we do?

— Heartbroken

Heartbroken: It might seem bold, but you may have to invite yourself to a holiday dinner.

Sometimes, even those who love us and want to be around us don’t think of us as much as we’d like. This is normal; everyone is the star of their own show. So, it’s helpful to reach out and let people know when we have a need or a want.

Your family could assume that you already have holiday plans or that you’re happy to spend holidays solo. Try not to ascribe a pattern to the invitations you’re getting. Yes, they all involve gifts, but weddings and birthdays fall into the “celebration” category of event. One throws a party; one invites a big group to celebrate en masse. Holidays can fall into this category, too. But more often they fall into the “tradition” category. By letting your family know that you’d like to be invited, you give them — and yourselves — a chance to make a new tradition.

Dear Eric: Regarding “Socially Perplexed,” the couple who always initiated plans with friends but didn’t receive invites from said friends, perhaps the other couples are introverts. My wife and I have become introverts and don’t initiate much anymore because we don’t have the need to socialize, and our lives are full and busy and stressful. However, when we receive an invitation, we think, “oh, that would be nice” and say yes.

— Happy Guest

Guest: This is a helpful perspective and could also be of use to the letter writer above. Sometimes what seems like a slight is just a different way of being at home in the world.

Dear Eric: I’ve been with my husband for almost 20 years.

After my last trip to see his family (where one of his siblings had a screaming/cursing meltdown in our hotel lobby), I said I was done spending thousands of dollars for travel to people who clearly didn’t appreciate it. He agreed. For the past five years he’s been flying to see his family solo. I’ve been staying home with the pup quite happily.

One of his half-siblings is getting married. Husband would like to renegotiate our prior agreement as he says he needs support to even be around his own family for this “can’t-miss occasion.” Over the past two decades, these in-laws have been horrible toward me for simply being an outsider.

We both have complicated familial history and have individual therapists. I want to support my spouse, but not to the detriment of my own mental

health. I quite literally had to ask if security would be present because of all the bad blood that will be in the same room (bad blood that was present before I came along). I loathe the thought of having to be around these people. I want to be a good partner, but I also realize this trip will be beyond miserable for me. How do I make myself and everyone else happy? Or do I have a husband problem?

— Should I Stay or Should I Go

Go: Short answers: stay home; husband has a family problem, which is not yours to fix.

I’m curious what makes this trip so different that he feels he needs you there. That’s worth talking to him about, if for no other reason than context. Maybe he doesn’t really want/need to go, either. But that’s his decision to make, knowing that the fallout

might be worse than the visit. Talk to him about what he expects will happen and how he can get what he needs without your attendance. This may look like him staying somewhere else, even if the family doesn’t want him to, or flying in only for the day of the event. Help him think through ways that he can feel empowered, despite the toxic dynamic.

Sometimes being a good partner means putting on formal attire and gritting one’s teeth through caustic toasts. But at other times, the most supportive thing to do is to help one’s spouse figure out ways to help themselves and return home as happy as possible.

Send questions to R. Eric Thomas at eric@askingeric.com or P.O. Box 22474, Philadelphia, PA 19110. Follow him on Instagram and sign up for his weekly newsletter at rericthomas.com.

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SUNDANCE FROM C1

Stringer,” a controversial documentary about who really took a famous Vietnam War photo; “The Alabama Solution,” in which prisoners documented their own horrific living conditions; and “The Librarians,” a look at the fearless educators (all women) fighting the endless tide of book bans around the country.

Here are some other films we loved — most of which don’t yet have distributors, but should.

‘Lurker’

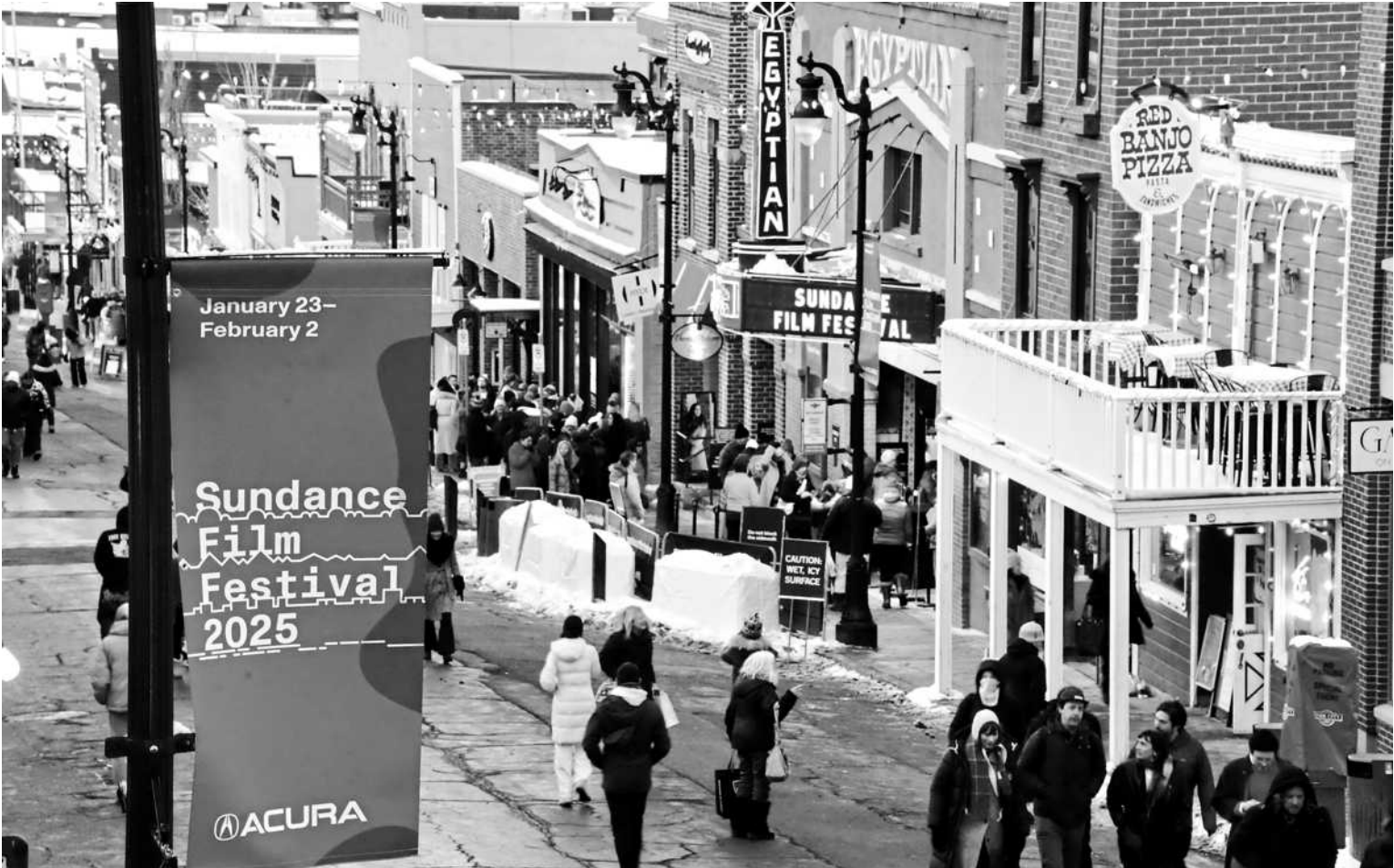
A wildly entertaining Gen Z thriller about fame and obsession, “Lurker” marks the debut of an astonishingly assured director in Alex Russell, a TV writer known for “Beef” and “The Bear.” The title is self-explanatory. A retail worker in his twenties, Matthew (Théodore Pellerin), makes his way into the inner circle of Oliver (Archie Madekwe), a mononymous young music star, to become the singer’s videographer and confidant, all built on lies. The film is stacked with awkward, unpredictable moments stemming from the way Oliver manipulates his entourage by giving and withholding affection, or his insecurities about his artistry, which Matthew knows just how to twist. And the stakes grow higher as the hanger-on gets Instagram famous himself. Set in Los Angeles and shot through gritty film stock and pixelated camcorder footage, this doesn’t have the plush feel of “Saltburn” (which also featured Madekwe), but one can see its vaguely homoerotic intrigue setting off the same kind of online frenzy. It’s a film that feels as cool and obsession-worthy as the celebrity culture it’s skewering — an “All About Eve” for the boys, and that’s meant as the highest compliment. — *Jada Yuan*

‘Train Dreams’

If this year’s festival produces an Oscar contender (beyond the documentaries, which always do well), it’ll likely be “Train Dreams,” an aching beautiful epic starring Joel Edgerton as Roger Grainier, a man of nature in the early 1900s Pacific Northwest contending with a rapidly industrializing world. Clint Bentley, co-writer of “Sing Sing,” directed this adaptation of Denis Johnson’s Pulitzer-finalist novella and co-wrote the script with “Sing Sing” director Greg Kwedar. (They have a partnership in which they write together and trade off directing duties.) In it, we follow Grainier from his beginnings as an orphan, through a life as an itinerant lumberer and rail worker, to a lonely existence as a hermit, interrupted only by a few blissful years with a wife (Felicity Jones) and daughter (Zoe Rose Short) and a horrific wildfire that upends it all. It’s not as morose as it sounds. The violence of the frontier is constant, and deployed with dark humor, as men come to their untimely ends — a fallen branch, a man who shows up with a pistol to exact revenge and apologizes for interrupting everyone else’s day — and then move on in an instant. Film critic Ty Burr compared it to “A River Runs Through It” in his newsletter, and Netflix snatched it up as one of only two sales out of this festival so far. — *J.Y.*

‘The Perfect Neighbor’

Crafted almost exclusively from police body-cam footage and taped interviews, “The Perfect Neighbor” is a disturbing reminder of the darkness that lurks in even the most normal-seeming of American communities. The documentary begins with a dispute between a Florida “Karen” and her neighbors, many of them Black children she accuses of being loud and disrespectful as they play outside. She frequently complains to the police, who don’t seem to take her too seriously — until the conflict escalates one night in 2023, and she shoots a gun through her own front door, killing one of the children’s mothers. Filmmaker Geeta Gandbhir won Sundance’s



CHARLES SYKES/INVISION/AP

The best movies we saw at Sundance



ADOLPHO VELOSO/SUNDANCE INSTITUTE



SUNDANCE INSTITUTE



LOGAN WHITE



VIKAS URS/SUNDANCE INSTITUTE



SUNDANCE INSTITUTE



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documentary directing award for exploring the impact of Florida’s “stand your ground” laws, which protect people who use lethal force in self-defense. Heartbreaking footage of the victim’s family helps paint an indelible portrait of this American policy crisis. — *Sonia Rao*

‘Omaha’

Fresh off the fast-paced journalism thriller “September 5,” indie darling John Magaro (“Past Lives,” “First Cow”) returns to the sort of quiet, understated work he’s best known for. In “Omaha,” a narrative feature directed by Cole Webley, he plays a troubled widower who takes his two young children on a road trip to Nebraska after their Nevada home is foreclosed on. Their exact desti-

nation is unclear, as is the father’s plan for their financial future — but his deep love for his kids is always present in Magaro’s puppy-dog eyes, which betray a simultaneous sense of desperation. His remarkable performance is complemented by that of newcomer Molly Belle Wright, who plays his 9-year-old daughter. The character’s accelerated maturity recalls the heart-wrenching father-daughter relationship of the 2022 drama “Aftersun,” and Wright is every bit as capable as that film’s young star, Frankie Corio. — *S.R.*

‘2000 Meters to Andriivka’

For his Oscar-winning film “20 Days in Mariupol,” journalist Mstyslav Chernov documented the horrific effects of war on

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: The Egyptian Theatre along Main Street in Park City, Utah, during the 2025 Sundance Film Festival. John Magaro with Molly Belle Wright and Wyatt Solis in “Omaha.” From left, Suraj Suman and Bhushaan Manoj in “Sabar Bonda.” André Ricciardi in “André is an Idiot.” Archie Madekwe and Théodore Pellerin as a rising musician and his friend-slash-stalker in “Lurker.” Rose Byrne plays a mom driven to the brink in “If I Had Legs I’d Kick You.” Felicity Jones and Joel Edgerton in the aching Pacific Northwest period epic “Train Dreams.”

civilians in the first 20 days of the Russian invasion of the Ukrainian city. Two years later, he returned to Sundance with “2000 Meters to Andriivka,” another harrowing account, this time from the perspective of soldiers — just civilians who took up arms — on the front lines of the 2023 Ukrainian counteroffensive. Winner of Sundance’s directing prize for world cinema documentary, and produced by the Associated Press and PBS Frontline, it’s an urgent but not easy watch. In footage captured by Chernov and his team, or by drones or soldiers wearing GoPros, we see a man screaming in agony as both of his legs and his arms are broken by mortar. Another gets shot and killed right in front of the camera. The Ukrainians are making their

way, just a few meters at a time over the course of months, through a narrow stretch of forest to the village of Andriivka, which they’re trying to capture to cut off a Russian supply route. At a screening, Chernov reported that Andriivka has been retaken and that the warfare has advanced so much with drones and AI-guided weapons that he can no longer get to the battlefield. But, in a ray of hope, the cat they rescued from the rubble is alive and well. — *J. Y.*

‘If I Had Legs I’d Kick You’

Rose Byrne gives the performance of her life as the mother of a sick child driven to madness in the terrific, anxiety-inducing dark comedy, “If I Had Legs I’d Kick You.” In only her second film, director Mary Bronstein (2008’s “Yeast”) knows exactly how to send viewers running for their therapists, which is fitting since Byrne’s Linda is a Montauk therapist who keeps running down the hall to scream in hysterics at her own therapist, a dour Conan O’Brien, who seems to be stifling laughs as well as how much his character clearly hates his client. Shot in naturalistic, claustrophobic close-up, Byrne’s well-heeled Linda increasingly falls apart over the inconveniences of her life: a parking lot attendant who keeps making her move, a store clerk who won’t sell her the bottle of wine she drinks nightly, a husband who’s left town for eight weeks to captain a ship. Her daughter, who must be fed through a tube due to a mysterious illness, is always off screen, her little voice and constant demands buzzing around Linda like a mosquito. And even when she’s awful to a new friend (A\$AP Rocky) at the hotel where she has to live because the contractors won’t fix the hole in her apartment ceiling, it’s hard not to hope that this new high-water mark for unlikable characters will just take a breath and chill. — *J. Y.*

‘Sabar Bonda’

“Sabar Bonda” is a queer love story set in the Indian countryside, where 30-year-old Anand (Bhushaan Manoj) travels from Mumbai so he and his mother can perform 10 days of mourning rituals for his recently deceased father. At first, Anand is reluctant to stay: He’s gay, and, while his parents accepted this, it remains a secret to extended family members who wonder why he doesn’t yet have a wife. But things turn around when he encounters another gay man, a farmer (Suraj Suman), who can relate to Anand’s situation. The film — the Marathi title of which translates to “cactus pears,” a nod to the farmer’s sweet gift to Anand — is a gentle exploration of queerness and grief. It avoids the melodrama that often plagues such stories, instead projecting an authenticity that earned director Rohan Parashuram Kanawade Sundance’s top prize for world cinema. — *S. R.*

‘André is an Idiot’

When André Ricciardi, an eccentric advertising creative director from San Francisco with a wild mane of white hair, found out he had Stage 4 colon cancer, he decided to make a movie about his march to death. In the moving documentary “André is an Idiot,” with the help of director Tony Benna, Ricciardi interviews his wife of 30 years, Janice — a Canadian bartender who married him for her green card — plus his teenage daughters and close friends. He practices a powerful “death yell” for the moment he moves to the beyond, and helps to develop a “Colonoscopy Reminder” ad campaign featuring common objects that look like anuses. His irreverence masks fear, and regret about the colonoscopy he neglected to get. Winner of the festival’s audience award and a documentary editing award, Ricciardi has created the ultimate public service announcement. The film doesn’t hide where it’s headed, but all that laughing sure makes it heartbreaking when it gets there. — *J. Y.*

Spouse was reluctant to engage in backstage chitchat after play

Miss Manners

JUDITH MARTIN, JACOBINA MARTIN AND NICHOLAS IVOR MARTIN

Dear Miss Manners: My wife and I saw a theatrical production that was written by, and starred, a friend of a friend. This person used to live in our city.

Our mutual friend suggested we convey their greetings after the show.

My wife was very reluctant to do so, but I was not. The star was incredibly happy to see us and to receive our friend’s greetings. We chatted for a long time about the production, joined by other cast members who also knew our mutual friend. They all said it

was a pleasure to see somebody from home.

The production itself was truly wonderful, so it felt great to be able to tell those involved firsthand how much we enjoyed it and what the experience meant to us. To anyone in a similar situation, wondering what to do, I say go for it!

Your wife had a case of backstage fright, which is understandable. What if she hadn’t liked the show?

Backstage etiquette is not easy. Honest criticism is rude, and insincere praise is — well, insincere. (It should be noted, however, that insincerity is not the major moral transgression

some make it out to be. In many cases, it is preferable to the full unloading of every thought and feeling, no matter how harmful.)

You were fortunate in being able to offer honest praise. But how should you handle cases where the show is so awful that you just cannot choke out kind words?

Miss Manners has resorted to “That was something!” or a simple “Wow,” with hand over heart.

One time, with a particularly egotistical playwright who would have prowled for more, she got away with, “You must be so proud.” Later, someone who had overheard this said that Miss Manners was due a Tony

Award for delivering that line.

Dear Miss Manners: I have been to several weddings over the past few years, and I’ve noticed a trend. Do the groomsmen have no responsibilities to the bride and groom before, during or after the ceremony these days?

Other than giving a quick speech or toast to the happy couple, the groomsmen are not to be found anywhere. Not helping the groom, fetching things, gathering family members for that amazing sunset picture, holding doors open, or any other last-minute tasks that may come up during the festivities.

I find this odd and unsettling. I’ve found myself stepping in to hold the groom’s beverage while he is in candid pictures with friends and family, or helping the bride navigate a narrow flower-lined pathway in her long dress. I’ve even helped elderly family members to their seats.

Aren’t these things the groomsmen should be tasked with doing?

Do the bridesmaids know about this?

Miss Manners hears so many sad tales from exploited bridesmaids that the position sounds less like an honor than a form of indentured servitude — but one in which those serving

are dunned for expenses.


But come to think of it, she never hears such complaints from groomsmen. If they are not saddled with excessive tasks and expenses, so much the better.

However, they represent the bridegroom, who should instruct them to do minor hostile jobs — including those you mention, as well as socializing with any stranded guests.

As with bridesmaids, the time to mention expectations is before they sign on.

New Miss Manners columns are posted Monday through Saturday on [washingtonpost.com/advice](https://www.washingtonpost.com/advice). You can send questions to Miss Manners at her website, missmanners.com. You can also follow her @RealMissManners.

	TELEVISION									
2/4/25	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	
4.1 WRC (NBC)	◆ NBCNe...	◆ News4...	◆ St. Denis	◆ Night	◆ Deal or No		◆ The Irrational		◆ News	
4.2 WRC (IND)	Frasier	Frasier	King	King	King	King	Frasier	Frasier	Frasier	
5.1 WTTG (Fox)	◆ Fox 5	◆ TMZ	◆ Nightmares		◆ Doc		◆ Fox 5 at 10		◆ News	
7.1 WJLA (ABC)	◆ Wheel	◆ Jeopard...	◆ Will Trent		◆ High Potential		◆ The Rookie		◆ News	
9.1 WUSA (CBS)	◆ InsideEd.	◆ ET	◆ FBI		◆ FBI: International		◆ FBI: Most Wanted		◆ 9 News	
14.1 WFDC (UNI)	◆ Rosa		◆ conveniencia		◆ de la señora García		◆ C.D.I. Código de		◆ Noticias	
20.1 WDCA (MNTV)	◆ FamFeud	◆ FamFeud	◆ Fox 5 News		◆ TrueCri...	◆ Crime	◆ FamFe...	◆ FamFe...	◆ Suits	
22.1 WMPT (PBS)	◆ Farm	◆ Outdoors	◆ Finding Your Roots		◆ Great Migrations		◆ Frontline			
26.1 WETA (PBS)	◆ PBS News Hour		◆ Finding Your Roots		◆ Great Migrations		◆ Frontline			
32.1 WHUT (PBS)	◆ Mike	◆ Tell Me	◆ Don Quixote in Newark		◆ Pacific Heartbeat	◆ Here		◆ BBCNe...		
50.1 WDCW (CW)	◆ BobHeart	◆ BobHeart	◆ WWE NXT (Live)			◆ DC News Now		◆ Neighbor		
66.1 WPXW (ION)	◆ Chicago Fire		◆ Chicago Fire	◆ Chicago Fire				◆ Chi. Fire		
A&E	Neighbor.	Neighbor.	Neighbor.	Neighbor.	Neighbor.	Neighbor.	Customer	Customer	Neighbor.	
AMC	Movie: Scarface ★★★ (1983) A Cuban immigrant fights to the top of Miami's drug trade. Movie: Blow (2...									
Animal Planet	Lone Star Law		Dog Detectives		Dog Detectives		Wardens of the North		Wardens	
BET	(6:00) Movie: White Chicks ★★★ (2004)				T. Perry's The Oval		The Family Business		The Oval	
Bravo	The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills		The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills		The Real Housewives of New York City (SF)		(15) Watch ..		(15) Real Housewives	
Cartoon Network	Burgers	Burgers	Burgers	American	American	American	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	
CNN	E. B. OutFront (Live)		Cooper 360 (Live)		The Source (Live)		CNN (Live)		Laura	
Comedy Central	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	Family Guy	DailyShow	
Discovery	Moonshiners		Moonshiners				Moonshiners		Harpoon	
Disney	Big City	Big City	Marvel's	Marvel's	Marvel's	Marvel's	Marvel's	Marvel's	Raven	
E!	The Office		The Office		The Office		Office		E! News	
ESPN	College Basketball (Live)		Kentucky at Ole Miss		TGL Golf Boston Common Golf vs. Los Angeles Golf Club (Live)				Basketball	
ESPN2	College Basketball (Live)		Drake at Murray State		College Basketball Baylor at Texas Tech (Live)				SportCtr (Live)	
Food Network	Chopped		Chopped		Wildcard Kitchen		Wildcard Kitchen		Chopped	
Fox News	Ingraham (Live)		Jesse Watters (Live)		Hannity (Live)		Gutfeld!		Fox News	
Freeform	(15:55) Movie: Aladdin ★★★ (1992) A genie helps Baghdad thief and princess.				(15:55) Movie: Mulan ★★★ (1998) A Chinese maiden disguises herself as a man.				The 700 Club	
FX	Movie: Furious 7 ★★★ (2015) A dead man's brother seeks revenge on the Toretto gang.						Movie: Fast & Furious Presents: Hobbs & Shaw ★★ (2019)			
Hallmark	(6:00) Movie: Love on the Menu (2019)		Movie: Always Amore (2022)				Golden Girls		Golden Girls	
Hallmark M&M	(6:00) Curious Caterer Mysteries		Curious Caterer Mysteries				Murder, She Wrote		Murder ...	
HBO	Real Time With Bill Maher		Movie: Goodrich ★★ (2024) A man leans on his daughter when his wife enters rehab.				(15:55) Movie: Final Destination ★★ (2000)			
HGTV	Fixer to Fabulous		Fixer to Fabulous		Hunt Intl		Hunt Intl		Hunt Intl	
History	Curse of Oak Island		Curse of Oak Island				(15:05) Hunting History		OakIsland	
Lifetime	The Rookie		Married at First Sight				(15:35) Married at First Sight			
MASN	Charlie	Bensinger	Inside ECU	Carolina	Sports	World Poker Tour	Touchdown			
Monumental	NHL Hockey Florida Panthers at Washington Capitals				Caps (Live)		NHL Hockey			
MSNBC	The ReidOut (Live)		All In With (Live)		R. Maddow (Live)		Last Word (Live)		11th Hour	
MTV	Love, Hip Hop		Love, Hip Hop		Help! I'm In		Help! I'm In		Help!	
Nat'l Geographic	Life Below Zero		Life Below Zero		Life Below Zero		Port Protection		Life Below	
Nickelodeon	(6:00) Movie: Wonder ...		Friends		Friends		Friends		Friends	
Nickel	On Balance (Live)		Cuomo (Live)		Dan Abrams (Live)		Banfield (Live)		Cuomo	
Paramount	Two and a Half Men		Movie: The Hangover Part III ★★ (2013) All bets are off when the Wolfpack hits the road.				Movie: 21 Jump Street ★★★ (2012)			
Paramount+Sho	(6:15) Movie: The Mask (1994) (P)		Dexter: Original Sin		Movie: Shooter ★★ (2007) A betrayed sniper is the subject of a massive manhunt.		(15:05) Movie: ...			
Syfy	Movie: Underworld ★★ (2003) A vampire protects a medical student from werewolves.				Movie: Underworld: Evolution ★★ (2006)					
TBS	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	The Joe Schmo Show		Mod Fam	Mod Fam	Mod Fam	
TCM	(6:00) Movie: The Band Wagon (1953)		Movie: Harvey ★★★ (1950) A gentle tippler makes the rounds with an invisible friend.				Movie: Auntie Mame ★★★ (1958)			
TLC	7 Little Johnstons		7 Little Johnstons		7 Little Johnstons		Baylen Out Loud		90 Day	
TNT	NBA Tip-Off (Live)	NBA Basketball (Live)	Boston Celtics at Cleveland Cavaliers				NBA Basketball Los Angeles Lakers at LA Clippers (Live)			
Travel	A Haunting		Paranormal Nightshift		Paranormal Nightshift		Paranormal		Paranor...	
truTV	Tip-Off		Basketball		Boston Celtics at Cleveland Cavaliers (Live)		NBA Basketball			
TV Land	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	(15:20) Raymond		Raymond		(15:05) King	
TV One	Cosby/Sh...	Cosby/Sh...	black-ish	black-ish	black-ish	black-ish	black-ish	black-ish	black-ish	
USA Network	Law & Order: SVU	Law & Order: SVU	Law & Order: SVU	Law & Order: SVU	Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order: SVU		Law-SVU	
VH1	(5:30) Movie: Cadillac ...		Movie: Miles Ahead ★★ (2016) (P)				Movie: All Eyez on M...			
WNC8	Paid Prog. Cleaning!		Paid Prog. 7News at...		SportsTalk WorldNe...		WJLANe...		Skincare	
	LEGEND: Bold indicates new or live programs ◆ High Definition									
	Movie Ratings (from TMS)		★★★★ Excellent		★★★ Good		★★ Fair		★ Poor	
									No stars: not rated	



BIRTHDAY | FEBRUARY 4: You create activity around you. You like to be fired up by an idea, which you pursue with fierce intensity. This is a year of service, perhaps to family. Therefore, take care of yourself so you can be a resource for others. Family and friends will look to you for support.

MOON ALERT: There are no restrictions to shopping or important decisions today. The Moon is in Taurus.

ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19). Disagreements about financial arrangements, shopping, difficulty in buying something, dissatisfaction with earnings or perhaps a dispute about the ownership of something – all of these could arise today. These disputes could be minor or major. Handle them with a minimum of fuss.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20). Today the Moon is in your sign at odds with Mercury, which means your feelings might get hold of you before you have a chance to think. You have a strong need to communicate, but your emotions will rule. Others might feel the same way. Keep disputes to a minimum.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20). Avoid touchy subjects today, because they will lead to arguments and disagreements. In fact, people have an inclination to argue today and might even change sides just for the perverse pleasure of fighting. Who needs this? Not you.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22). You might end up bickering with someone about shared property,

differring values or even the cost of something. Perhaps one party thinks they are carrying an unfair share. This dispute also might be about inheritances or how to divide something. Be honest and cope as best you can.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22). This is the classic day for a disagreement with a parent, boss, teacher or any member of authority, including the police. This could happen, because you will feel compelled to speak up about something even though it might do you no good. However, it might be your chance to air your grievances.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22). Steer clear of controversy today. Nevertheless, discussions at work might get out of hand because you have strong feelings about something. Or you might feel personally offended. Instead of reacting to others, use this energy to be productive and get something done. You'll be happier doing this.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22). You might have difficulty dealing with your kids today. Likewise, romantic relationships might be strained. Discussions about shared property or differing values will also be problematic, because conversations will be based more on feelings rather than facts.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21). Avoid important family discussions today, because very little will be resolved. They might become heated and lead to emotional arguments, especially with partners and spouses. Avoid this; there is no upside. Look for

ways to be productive and get things done. This will make you feel better.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21). Be accommodating in discussions with neighbors, relatives and siblings today. Make a point of listening to others. Very likely, you'll have an emotional reaction, but is this disagreement worth it? What do you gain? The better choice is to entertain yourself with sports or social outings.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19). Seek out your own ways of having pleasure today or enjoying some fun outings. Avoid financial squabbles with others or the dispute of ownership of something. Don't let arguments ruin your chance to socialize in a lighthearted way. Alternatively, you might entertain at home.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18). Avoid squabbles with others today, which might be difficult because, for starters, people are eager to argue. And secondly, they are driven by their emotions and feelings, and not by logic. This could lead to silly disputes about practically anything. Steer clear of tension with others.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20). Resist the urge to wind up in an argument. You don't have to waste your time doing this, even though you'll be tempted. You will be happy to shop for beautiful things today, especially because you have been entertaining ideas of reinventing yourself, and this might involve a new image.

— Georgia Nicks

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BRIDGE

N-S VULNERABLE

NORTH (D)

♠ Q 9 6 3

♥ 8 5

♦ A Q 10

♣ A 9 4 2

WEST

♠ K 8 4

♥ Q 10 7 6

♦ 9 8 4

♣ Q 7 3

EAST

♠ A 10 5 2

♥ K 3

♦ 7 6 2

♣ J 10 8 6

SOUTH

♠ J 7

♥ A J 9 4 2

♦ K J 5 3

♣ K 5

The bidding:

NORTH

1 ♠

EAST

Pass

SOUTH

1 ♥

WEST

Pass

1 ♠

Pass

3 NT

All Pass

Opening lead — ♦ 9

People who are always kicking may not have a leg to stand on. If declarer makes a beatable contract against you, don't assume your partner is to blame.

Today's West led a passive diamond against 3NT, and declarer won in dummy and led the eight of hearts: three, deuce, 10. He won the next diamond in dummy and led a second heart. When East's king came up, South took the ace, led the jack to force out West's queen and had nine tricks.

West was quick to pan his partner:

"Cover the eight of hearts with the king," West said. "Declarer loses three hearts plus the A-K of spades and a club."

True, East couldn't lose by covering a near-honor with an honor, but West wasn't blameless. When he takes the 10 of hearts, he can judge to shift to a low spade (or to the king and a low spade). If East ducks the first (or second) spade, West can

continue spades when he takes the queen of hearts, and the defense gets three spades and two hearts.

Pick your partner, but not to pieces.

DAILY QUESTION

You hold:

♠ Q 9 6 3 ♥ 8 5

♦ A Q 10 ♣ A 9 4 2

Your partner opens one spade, and you respond 2NT, a conventional forcing raise. He then bids three clubs. What do you say?

ANSWER: As an adjunct to your 2NT, partner's bid of a new suit shows a singleton there. You can tell whether you have "wasted" honors opposite his singleton. Your hand is a minimum, but your ace of clubs is working. Cue-bid three diamonds. Partner may hold A K 10 7 4, A Q 7, J 8 7 4, 3.

— Frank Stewart

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SUDOKU

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

2				9		4		
4	6		5	7		9		
1			6	2				
	3					2		5
			9	6	1			
8		4					6	
				8	5			3
	8		2		3		5	1
	4		1					9

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆☆

2/4

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PREVIOUS SUDOKU SOLUTION

4	3	5	8	9	7	1	2	6
6	7	9	4	1	2	8	3	5
8	1	2	5	6	3	9	7	4
7	9	3	2	4	1	5	6	8
5	4	1	7	8	6	3	9	2
2	8	6	3	5	9	7	4	1
1	2	8	9	7	4	6	5	3
9	6	4	1	3	5	2	8	7
3	5	7	6	2	8	4	1	9

SCRABBLE GRAMS

PAR SCORE 140-150

BEST SCORE 200

FOUR RACK TOTAL

TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

Directions: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. Finally, 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All the words are in the Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary, 5th Edition. SOLUTION TOMORROW

For more information on tournaments and clubs, email NASPA - North American SCRABBLE Players Association info@scrabbleplayers.org. Visit our website - www.scrabbleplayers.org. For puzzle inquiries contact sgramsg@gmail.com

02-04

RACK 1

E I U N R G L T

RACK 2

E I E I O N L D

RACK 3

A I I U T W S L

RACK 4

A I O I O D P T H

Double Word Score

2nd Letter Triple

PREVIOUS SCRABBLEGRAMS SOLUTION

H	L	O	T	F	A	O	T
L	I	A	S	A	G	N	A
N	I	A	U	S	E	A	I
C	O	N	C	A	V	E	I

RACK 1 = 71

RACK 2 = 58

RACK 3 = 6

RACK 4 = 78

PAR SCORE 145-155

TOTAL 213

LA TIMES CROSSWORD

By Justin Werfel

ACROSS

1 Calamine lotion target

5 _ Peace Prize

10 Internet destination

14 City fooled by a wooden horse

15 Jazz singer Adams who toured with Tears for Fears

16 Approximate location

17 Serialized daytime dramas

19 At sea

20 Balderdash

21 Needles

23 Sound in a library

24 Early web portal

25 Pound or ounce

26 "Anything could happen"

32 Choreographer de Mille

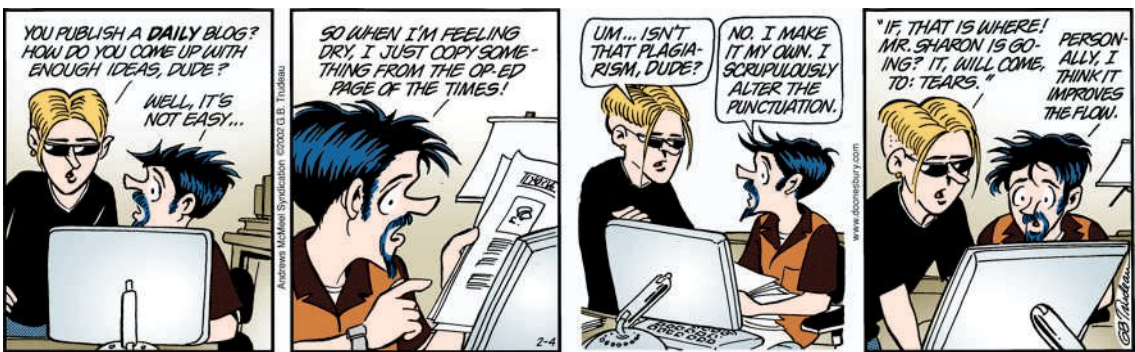
34 Bottom lines?

35 Miss Piggy's favorite pronoun

36 Implores

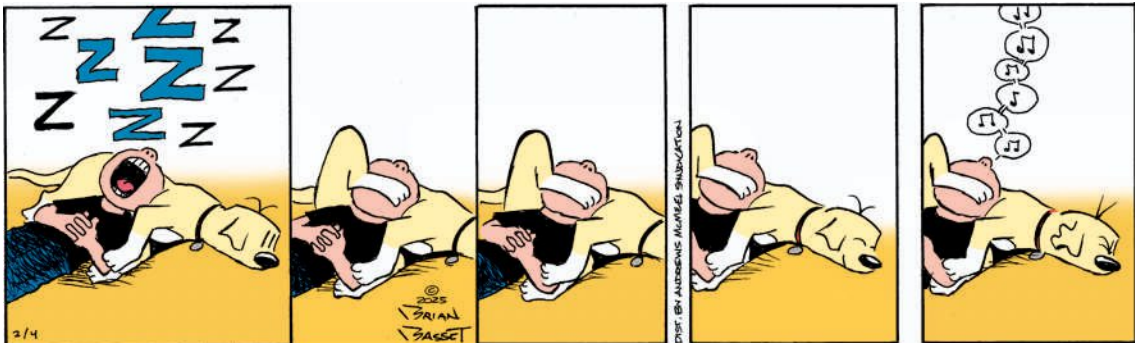
CLASSIC DOONESBURY

GARRY TRUDEAU



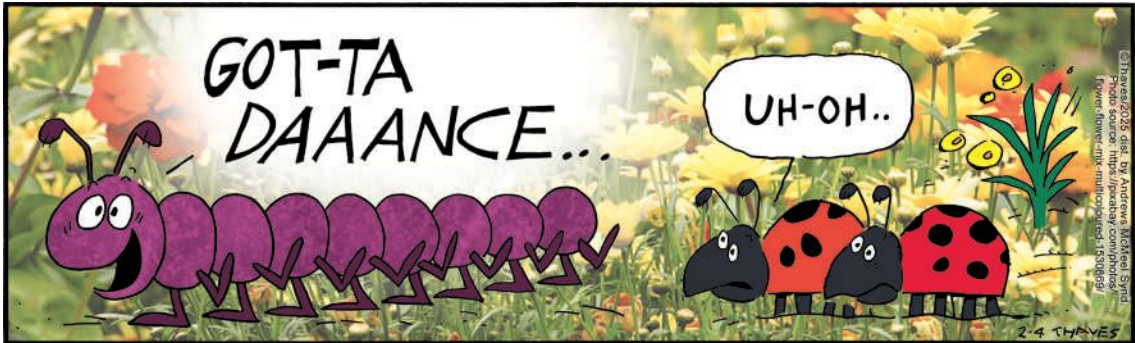
RED AND ROVER

BRIAN BASSET



FRANK AND ERNEST

TOM THAVES



CLASSIC PEANUTS

CHARLES SCHULZ



RHYMES WITH ORANGE

HILARY PRICE



LIO

MARK TATULLI



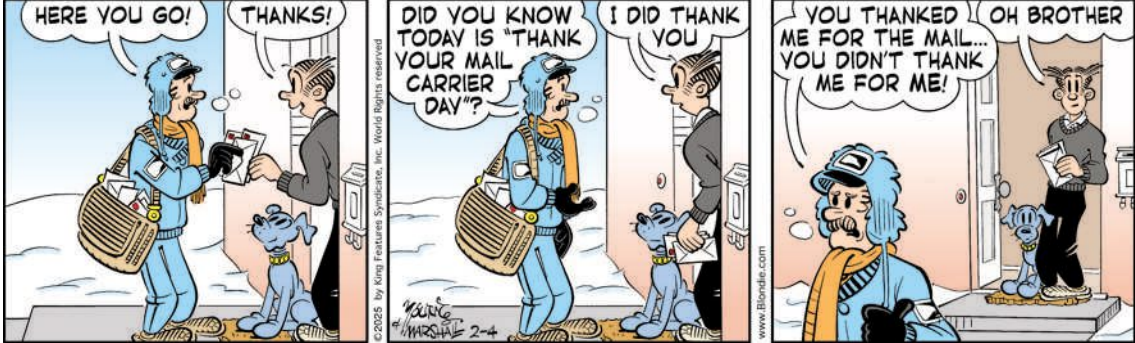
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE

CHRIS BROWNE



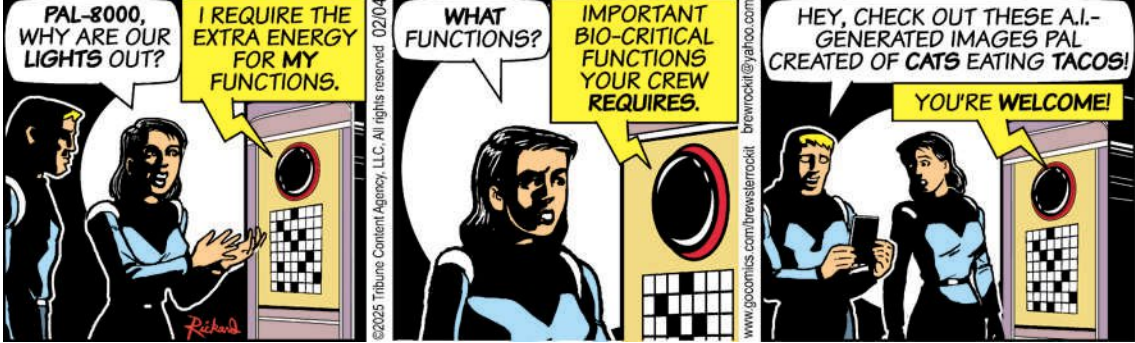
BLONDIE

DEAN YOUNG & JOHN MARSHALL



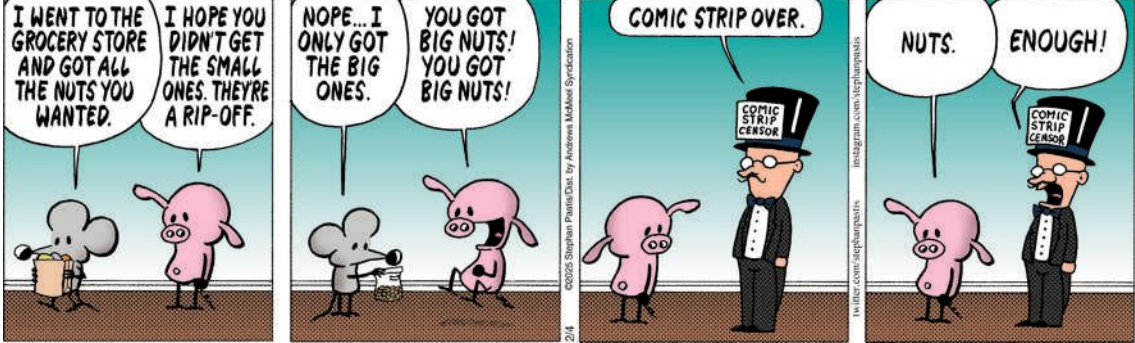
BREWSTER ROCKIT: SPACE GUY!

TIM RICKARD



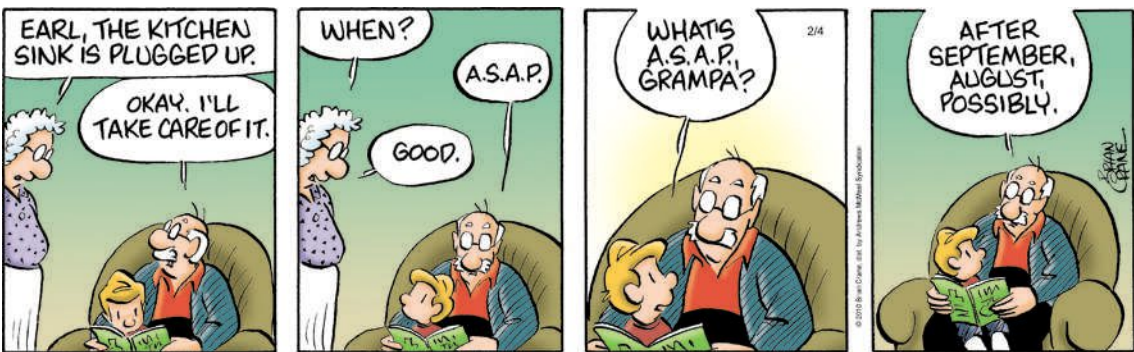
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

STEPHAN PASTIS



PICKLES

BRIAN CRANE



AGNES

TONY COCHRAN



WUMO

MIKAEL WULFF & ANDERS MORGENTHAUER



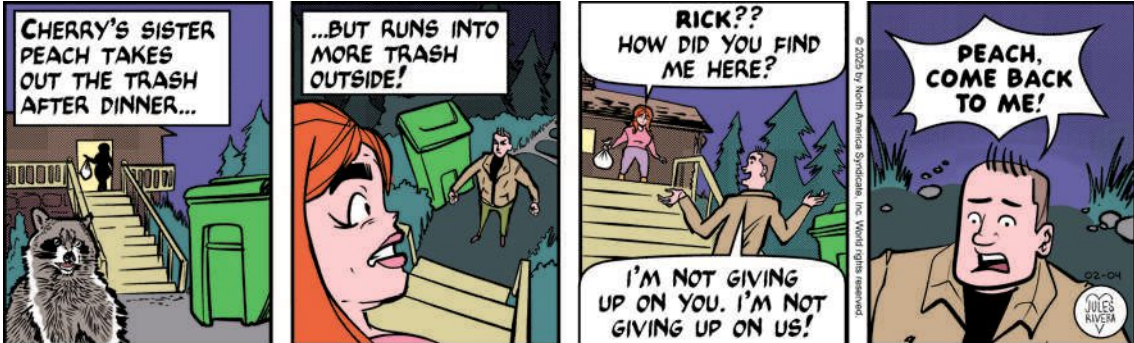
CRABGRASS

TAUHIID BONDIA



MARK TRAIL

JULES RIVERA



MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

MIKE PETERS



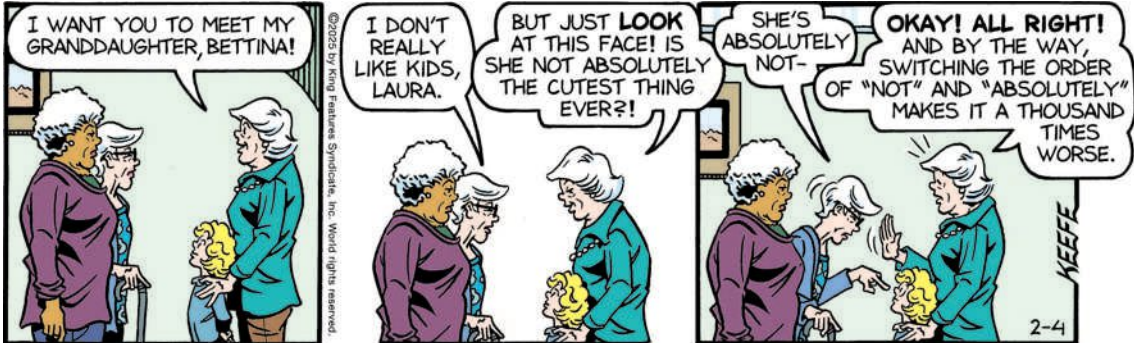
BALDO

HECTOR CANTU & CARLOS CASTELLANOS



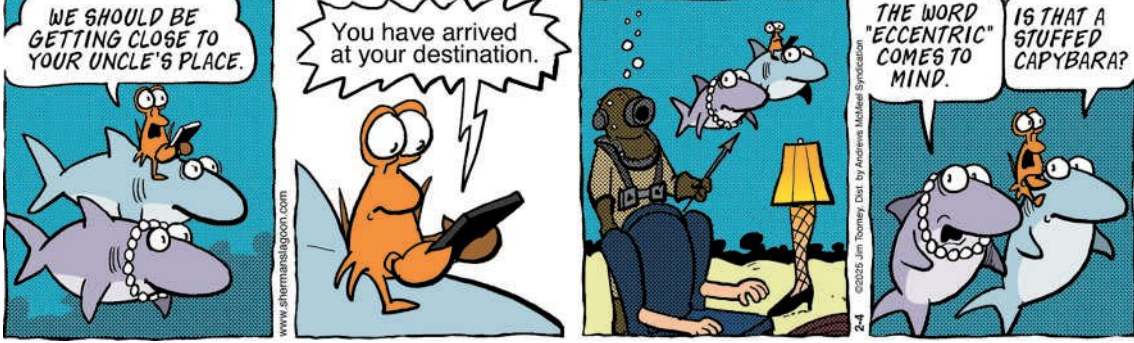
SALLY FORTH

FRANCESCO MARCIULIANO & JIM KEEFE



SHERMAN'S LAGOON

JIM TOOMEY



CURTIS

RAY BILLINGSLEY



MUTTS

PATRICK McDONNELL

ALL-KNOWING SPHINX, MY OWNER DOESN'T UNDERSTAND ME... DOES YOURS?

I DOUBT IT...

SHE'S NEVER EVEN MENTIONED YOUR NAME.

ZITS

JERRY SCOTT & JIM BORGMAN

WOW.

CONGRATULATIONS ON CREATING A PRETERNATURALLY AVERAGE REPORT!

YOU'RE REALLY GETTING THE HANG OF SARCASM. WAS IT DRIPPING?

HEART OF THE CITY

STEENZ

YEESH, HOW DOES HEART CARRY ALL OF THESE BOOKS? I'M DYIN' HERE!

OKAY, MADE IT TO HER LOCKER. NOW TO GET TO CLASS BEFORE THE BELL RINGS AND IT'S...

...ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SCHOOL?!

JUDGE PARKER

FRANCESCO MARCIULIANO & MIKE MANLEY

SO RANDY'S CON ARTIST SISTER SAYS THERE'S A DRONE OUT HERE THAT MAY PROVE SHE'S INNOCENT OF MURDER AND WE'RE JUST SUPPOSED TO BELIEVE HER?

FOLLOWING UP ON ALL POSSIBILITIES. MAKE SURE TO CHECK THE TREES.

WHY DIDN'T SHE BRING UP THE DRONE IN OCTOBER? IT'S NOT 22 DEGREES IN THE WOODS IN OCTOBER.

FRAZZ

JEFF MALLETT

SO THEY SAID I'M APPARENTLY NOT OLD ENOUGH TO BE HAPPY.

PLUS THE SIGN OUTSIDE IMPLIED AN HOUR LASTS FROM 4 TO 7.

IS "HAPPY HOUR" WHERE CYNICS COME FROM? I KNOW IT'S WHERE SOME OF THEM GO.

SIX CHIX

BANNERMAN, XUNISE, KONAR, LAWTON, PATRINOS & PIRO

NOW WE'RE TALKIN'.

GARFIELD

JIM DAVIS

THERE ARE TIMES I JUST FEEL LIKE DOING NOTHING

FEBRUARY, FOR INSTANCE

BARNEY AND CLYDE

WEINGARTENS & CLARK

Clem the Con Man, what are you up to now? I'm running the government's new sovereign wealth fund.

The government doesn't have a sovereign wealth fund. Sure it does.

When did Congress create that? I created it. You? How?

I walked into the Treasury and said the president sent me. Anybody can do it. Too true.

DUSTIN

STEVE KELLEY & JEFF PARKER

I GOT MY HAIR CUT TODAY. DID YOU CHANGE YOUR STYLE? NO, NOT REALLY. OH, THAT'S TOO BAD.

I WAS GOING TO SAY "IT'LL GROW BACK" BUT I GUESS IT DOESN'T MATTER.

FLASH GORDON

DAN SCHKADE

NO TWO WAYS ABOUT IT -- WE GOTTA LEAVE FOR KIRA STRAIGHT AWAY. IF YOUR BOYS CAN HELP US PREP ZARKOV'S JET.

FLASH, HOLD ON A MOMENT. WE JUST RETURNED FROM SHARK CITY, YOU NEED FOOD AND YOU NEED REST.

EATING IS A FIGHTING ART. SLEEPING IS A FIGHTING ART. YOU SAY YOU HAVE A WEEK, TAKE A NIGHT. AND ARM YOURSELVES. MAN, I'M GONNA MISS YOU, THUN.

"SO... A FEAST?" "OH YES, SPORTSMAN. "A FEAST."

PRICKLY CITY

SCOTT STANTIS

IN 2017, THE RESISTANCE. IN 2025, IT'S RESIGNATION. WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE WILL BE NEXT? EITHER REGRET OR REEDUCATION...

LOOSE PARTS

DAVE BLAZEK

GOD'S TRAINER. For shoulders, I recommend three sets of 12 reps using the weight of the world.

NON SEQUITUR

WILEY

I CLEANED THE LITTER BOX AND EMPTIED THE DISHWASHER WITHOUT BEING ASKED! THE SUPERHERO RETIREMENT ADJUSTMENT PERIOD.

BABY BLUES

RICK KIRKMAN & JERRY SCOTT

I'M GOING TO BE A MAILMAN! SERIOUSLY? THINK ABOUT IT... BY THE TIME YOU GROW UP, SNAIL MAIL WILL BE EXTINCT! THEN I'LL BE AN EMAILMAN.

BIG NATE

LINCOLN PEIRCE

OKAY, NATE... JUST THIS ONCE I'LL LET YOU COPY MY HOMEWORK! AND DON'T WORRY, I WON'T COPY IT. EXACTLY! I'LL PUT IT IN MY OWN WORDS! LIKE HERE, WHERE YOU SAY "THE COLONISTS WERE FURIOUS..." I'LL SAY "THE COLONISTS WERE VERY FURIOUS!" GOOD IDEA.

SPEED BUMP

DAVE COVERLY

YOU KNOW I JUST THROW AWAY ANY MAIL THAT SAYS "OR CURRENT RESIDENT" ON IT.

DENNIS THE MENACE

H. KETCHAM

"OF COURSE THEY'RE GONNA RAISE THE PRICES! THEY KNOW YOU'RE NOT GONNA STOP EATING."

ON THE FASTTRACK

BILL HOLBROOK

ART, YOU DO HAVE SOME UNRECOGNIZED SKILL SETS! REALLY? LIKE, YOU CAN SPOT PEOPLE WHO ARE JUST TRYING TO "LOOK BUSY." YEAH! I KNOW ALL THOSE TRICKS! ...NEXT, ALWAYS WEAR EARBUDS SO YOU CAN CARRY ON A FAKE CONVERSATION AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE...

FAMILY CIRCUS

BIL KEANE

"Daddy, how old were you when you were my age?"

REPLY ALL LITE

DONNA A. LEWIS

"Portion control" just means not eating the whole package at once. What about single-serve packages? A bunch of those and you're good to go.

BEETLE BAILEY

GREG, BRIAN & NEAL WALKER

IS THAT A DOG IN A UNIFORM? YES, THAT'S OTTO. ISN'T THAT A LITTLE UNUSUAL? IT'S AMAZING WHAT YOU GET USED TO AROUND HERE.

REPLY ALL LITE

DONNA A. LEWIS

"Portion control" just means not eating the whole package at once. What about single-serve packages? A bunch of those and you're good to go.

Dear Commanders fans: The name isn't changing



Barry Svrluga

clarity. Let's move on to issues that matter.

Josh Harris owns Washington's NFL team, and he said Monday at a postseason news conference that his franchise, on its third name in five years, will keep the current moniker regardless of how the fan base feels about it. The

The Washington Commanders will be known as the Washington Commanders next week and next month and next decade. Thank goodness for

Commanders are coming off a surprising run to the NFC championship game. The *Commanders* will enter training camp with heightened expectations to contend for a spot in the Super Bowl. Jayden Daniels will be named the NFL's offensive rookie of the year later this week as a *Commander*. That all counts for something.

"That name is growing in meaning," Harris said.

So buy that Commanders jersey with confidence that you won't need to replace it in a year. Yeah, maybe the uniform will be tweaked to more resemble what

SEE SVRLUGA ON D4



THOMAS SIMONETTI FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Owner Josh Harris said he believes "the name Commanders means something" — and noted the team will be sticking with the moniker.

Amid siege on diversity, NFL stands by initiatives

BY MARK MASKE

NEW ORLEANS — The nation's most popular and prosperous professional sports league arrived at its signature event vowing to stick by its diversity initiatives, which once were widely copied by other businesses. But the landscape that the NFL confronts at this Super Bowl week has changed.

President Donald Trump's administration is targeting such hiring measures and the federal employees who have been involved in them, while some of the country's most prominent businesses are retreating from their

own diversity initiatives. The NFL, meanwhile, has not built on its year-old minority hiring gains during the current cycle, which has seen six teams choose new head coaches since the end of the regular season. The league is poised to have fewer minority head coaches next season than it did this season.

Commissioner Roger Goodell said Monday that the NFL was "not in this because it's a trend," adding that it would continue to

SEE NFL ON D3

Chiefs vs. Eagles

Super Bowl LIX in New Orleans
Sunday, 6:30 p.m., Fox

It's time to get to know speedskater Jordan Stolz, who is set to be the face of next year's Winter Games



STACY REVERE/INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION/GETTY IMAGES

Wisconsin native Jordan Stolz is expected to contend for gold medals in three long-track speedskating events during next year's Milan-Cortina Winter Olympics.

Speeding toward stardom

BY LES CARPENTER

MILWAUKEE — The next American Olympic star holds multiple world records and enjoys celebrity status in Europe, but outside of his hometown ice rink, he draws little notice in his home country.

Jordan Stolz, 20, learned to skate on a home-made pond not far from here, amassing laps under a light pole put up by his father. He didn't play video games, didn't have a phone until he was 17 and didn't learn to drive until last year because he was too busy dominating Europe's speedskating circuit.

On Sunday afternoon, he finished second in a World Cup race after winning an astounding 18 in a row, obliterating the best skaters from countries where the sport holds prominence. In the Netherlands, where he skates professionally for the

Albert Heijn Zaanlander team, he is national news. Fans stop him on the street. He even got out of a parking ticket in Amsterdam when the officer looked at him and said, "Are you Jordan?"

At next year's Milan-Cortina Olympics, Stolz will be favored to win gold medals in the 500-meter, 1,000-meter and 1,500-meter long-track events. If he does, he will become the second American to win more than two gold medals at a single Winter Games, joining another speedskater from Wisconsin: Eric Heiden, who won five golds at Lake Placid in 1980.

He's on the cusp of stardom, but Stolz is not one to celebrate his success. He doesn't shout when he wins and usually stares placidly during medal ceremonies. He seems somewhat uncomfortable in interviews and during news conferences, which often are punctuated with bashful smiles and

awkward silence.

He doesn't have an American sponsor or advertising deal and remains almost completely unknown, even in his own state.

"It keeps you humble [when] nobody's swarming you at Pick 'n Save," said his coach, Bob Corby.

The only place in the United States where it does seem Stolz is recognized is inside Pettit Ice Center, a giant concrete oval building beside Interstate 94 where a crowd of about 1,500 packed temporary bleachers this past weekend to watch Stolz continue his winning streak. Surrounding the track were friends and family. His parents, Dirk and Jane, sat high in the stands at the finish line. His aunt sang the national anthem. Even fans from the Netherlands begged to take pictures with him.

SEE STOLZ ON D10

Capitals shake up power play gone 'stale'

McMichael gets a look with the first unit; Frank, Protas join the second

BY BAILEY JOHNSON

The Washington Capitals' power play had been scuffling for a while, but things reached a breaking point in Ottawa last week.

Two shorthanded goals during one power play — one on a penalty shot and one on a two-on-one rush — had the Capitals in a hole against the Senators late in the second period. At the second intermission, Coach Spencer Carbery tweaked the personnel, moving defenseman Jakob Chychrun down to the second unit and changing the forwards in search of something that would work.

"We couldn't enter [the offensive zone]," Carbery said after the game. "We were giving up chances against, breakaways, you name it. ... There was nothing we were doing [right]. We had a couple [where] I don't know if we were able to get in and set up. It was just not good."

The Capitals' on-the-fly units scored two power-play goals in the third period to help send the game to overtime, but all involved knew significant improvement was needed going forward.

"The power play was horrible tonight through two periods," said center Dylan Strome, who scored one of the power-play goals. "Find a way to get two in the third and use it for momentum to get back in the game, but just too many turnovers and too many mistakes on the entries. Easy to clean up, which is good."

Added Carbery: "All options are in play, power-play-wise. We'll look at what we did well. We just changed the entire look of it in the third period, so we'll go back to the drawing board and see where we go with it."

On Saturday against the visiting Winnipeg Jets, forward Connor McMichael moved into the bumper spot between the circles on the first unit, which has defenseman John Carlson running the point, captain Alex Ovechkin in his office in the left circle, Strome on the right and winger Tom Wilson at the net front.

SEE CAPITALS ON D4

Panthers at Capitals

7 p.m., Monumental

BASEBALL

MLB upholds the firing of umpire Pat Hoberg after a probe reveals details of his wagering. **D2**

PRO FOOTBALL

Roger Goodell delivers his strongest backing yet to a potential Commanders return to the RFK site. **D4**

PRO BASKETBALL

The Wizards have won two straight. Yep, you read that right — this one is 124-114 over Charlotte. **D5**

The Doncic shocker was exactly what the humdrum NBA needed



Candace Buckner

trending on their social media accounts — because no one could believe the initial report. It was so callous and confounding that it sobered up several players around the league, who are now wondering whether they should keep an

The Luka Doncic trade just saved basketball. This midseason transaction was so insane that some fans noticed the word "hacked"

emergency "go bag" just in case.

And when it became clear that, yes, Dallas Mavericks General Manager Nico Harrison had intentionally ripped the hearts out of all those Metroplex parents who had named their kids "Luka," trading away the team's superstar because he believes defense — not once-in-a-generation talent — wins championships, his business decision rocked the NBA.

That is why my early nod for executive of the year goes to Harrison. He deserves it, for

giving the league the juice it had been seeking (and lacking) over the past several seasons. Even more than that, the Mavericks' GM has proved this truth: The NBA is far more fun when the players focus on performing on the court and the executives are the ones working deals from the front office.

Don't confuse the message. This is not me telling players to "shut up and dribble" or calling for an end to this era of player empowerment, though that has morphed from giving the

workforce some muscle to only the elite handful having control. Instead, this is just admitting that LeBron James shines brighter as the league's all-time leading scorer than he does as the Los Angeles Lakers' would-be president of basketball operations. Paul George looks better playing on anyone's court than he did sitting on the Clippers' sideline next to Kawhi Leonard after the Southern Californians negotiated their own ill-fated partnership. And who in their right mind gave Bradley Beal

the power to hold up the entire trade market?

When players moonlight as executives — LeBron masterminding the Lakers' failed Russell Westbrook experiment and George forcing his way out of Oklahoma City, even after signing an extension, just to form one half of the league's most underachieving duo in Los Angeles — the league dulls. Not only on the court but in the sports conversation.

LeBron's legacy should be all he has done for the game and

SEE BUCKNER ON D4

THE DAY IN SPORTS

SOCCER Rubiales kiss ‘stained’ Hermoso’s victory

Jenni Hermoso testified Monday that an unsolicited kiss by the former leader of Spain's soccer federation in the moments after her team won the World Cup in 2023 “stained one of the happiest days of my life.”

Her testimony about the kiss, delivered as players were receiving their medals after their victory over England, came on the first day of the trial of **Luis Rubiales**, who is accused of sexual assault and of trying to coerce her and others to publicly support him.

“I felt disrespected,” Hermoso, the first witness in what is expected to be a 13-day trial in Madrid's High Court, said, according to the Associated Press.

She said Rubiales had not asked whether he could kiss her, adding that she had “greeted the queen” and the queen's daughter, then met Rubiales.

“I didn't hear or understand anything,” she said. “The next thing he did was to grab me by the ears and kiss me on the mouth.”

Rubiales has denied the accusations but has apologized for being overly effusive.

—Cindy Boren

Chelsea forward **Sam Kerr** allegedly called a police officer “stupid and White,” a London jury heard.

Kerr, the Australian captain who is one of the best women's players in the world, is on trial after being charged with causing racially aggravated harassment to Metropolitan Police officer **Stephen Lovell** in London on Jan. 30, 2023. ...

The Chelsea men came from behind to beat West Ham, 2-1, in a pulsating London derby at Stamford Bridge in the English Premier League.

Chelsea's second win in eight games lifted the home side into fourth place, two points above Manchester City and four behind third-place Nottingham Forest. West Ham remained 15th. ...

Manchester City and Aston Villa made big moves just before the midseason transfer window closed.

Four-time defending Premier League champion City secured a late deal for Porto midfielder **Nico González** for a reported \$61.8 million, while Paris Saint-Germain winger **Marco Asensio** followed **Marcus Rashford** in joining Villa on loan for the rest of the season.

Uncertainty over Bayern Munich forward **Mathys Tel** ended when he completed a loan move to Tottenham with the option of a permanent deal in the summer. ...

Brighton signed one striker and loaned out another after its largest Premier League defeat ever. **Stefanos Tzimas**, a Greece under-21 international, joined from Nuremberg on a deal until 2030 — though he will remain at the second-tier German team until the end of the season. Brighton then sent Ireland international **Evan Ferguson** on loan to West Ham for the rest of the season. ...

Midfielder **Carlos Alcaraz** sealed a loan to Everton from Flamengo. ...

AC Milan had a busy final day of the transfer window. The Italian club brought in **João Félix**, **Santiago Giménez**, **Ricardo Sottil** and **Warren Bondo** while letting former captain **Davide Calabria** leave for Bologna, along with **Álvaro Morata** (Galatasaray), **Noah Okaka** (Napoli) and **Ismaël Bennacer** (Marseille). ...

Italy's Juventus signed Newcastle defender **Lloyd Kelly** on loan for the rest of the season, with a “high probability” the transfer will be permanent. ...

Germany's Borussia Dortmund said Swedish defender **Daniel Svensson** was joining on loan from FC Nordsjaelland with an option to buy. Chelsea winger **Carney Chukwuemeka** and Ajax goalkeeper **Diant Ramaj** are expected to join as well.

But the club's move to sign Lyon midfielder **Rayan Cherki** appeared to collapse; the French team's owner turned down a reported 22.5 million euros (about \$23.2 million) for the 21-year-old. ...

Manuel Neuer is set to mark 15 years at Bayern Munich next year after agreeing to a one-year contract extension. The 38-year-old goalkeeper's deal was due to expire at the end of this season. ...

Lyon is allowed to play on in the Europa League after the American-owned French club showed its finances were healthy enough to finish the season and avoid disqualification.

The Philadelphia Union sold the contract of midfielder **Jack McGlynn** to fellow MLS club



JIM WATSON/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE/GETTY IMAGES

Hardware at the White House

The Stanley Cup was in Washington on Monday for the champion Florida Panthers' meeting with President Donald Trump.

SPOTLIGHT: MLB

Fired umpire, better friend shared accounts

BY DES BIELER

Umpire Pat Hoberg was fired last year after evidence emerged that he shared legal sports betting accounts with a friend who placed bets on baseball games, Major League Baseball said Monday.

In addition, Commissioner Rob Manfred upheld the May 2024 firing because of Hoberg's “intentional deletion of messages central to MLB's investigation into his conduct.”

Hoberg, a 38-year-old who first officiated MLB games in 2014 and became a full-time umpire three years later, can apply for reinstatement no earlier than spring training next year. In a statement Monday in which he denied ever betting on baseball, Hoberg said he took “full responsibility for the errors in judgment” presented in MLB's announcement.

When Hoberg was taken off the field last year during spring training, MLB said the discipline was for potential and unspecified violations of its sports betting policies. After he was fired May 31, Hoberg said he would appeal, a process

Probe finds no evidence Hoberg gambled on baseball or manipulated games

that entailed a probe by a mutually agreed-upon “neutral factfinder,” the findings of which informed but did not determine Manfred's decision.

Monday's announcement provided details of Hoberg's actions, as well as those of his friend, identified as “Individual A” and described as a professional poker player. While Hoberg was not found to have bet directly on baseball or to have manipulated any games — acts that could have resulted in a lifetime ban — Manfred said the information uncovered by the MLB and neutral factfinder investigations provided “just cause to uphold Mr. Hoberg's termination for failing to conform to high standards of personal conduct and to maintain the integrity of the game of baseball.”

The investigations, which included an interview with Hoberg and examinations of his electronic devices and certain phone and financial records, found his friend made eight total bets over five games in which Hoberg umpired or oversaw video reviews. MLB said there was “no evidence that Hoberg took any action to manipulate the outcome of the games.”

Hoberg began placing bets through his friend in 2015 or 2016, per the findings, and then was given login access to accounts the friend opened at two online sportsbooks. Over four-plus years ending in January 2024, at least 529 bets at the sportsbooks were placed from Hoberg's devices. They totaled almost \$710,000, with an aggregate loss of almost \$75,000. Most of the bets were made on football, basketball, hockey or golf, MLB said, with no bets on baseball made from Hoberg's devices.

On the shared accounts with other devices, the friend was said to have made 141 bets on baseball totaling almost \$214,000, with an aggregate gain of almost \$34,600.

TELEVISION AND RADIO

NHL
7 p.m. **Florida at Washington** » Monumental Sports Network, WJFK (106.7 FM)

NBA
7:30 p.m. **Boston at Cleveland** » TNT
10 p.m. **Los Angeles Lakers at Los Angeles Clippers** » TNT

MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL
6:30 p.m. **Marquette at St. John's** » Fox Sports 1
7 p.m. **Kentucky at Mississippi** » ESPN
7 p.m. **Notre Dame at Florida State** » ACC Network
7 p.m. **Wichita State at Charlotte** » ESPN
7 p.m. **Drake at Murray State** » ESPN2
7 p.m. **Vanderbilt at Auburn** » SEC Network
7 p.m. **Minnesota at Penn State** » Big Ten Network
7 p.m. **La Salle at VCU** » CBS Sports Network
8:30 p.m. **Georgetown at Xavier** » Fox Sports 1, WTEM (980 AM)
9 p.m. **Georgia Tech at Clemson** » ACC Network
9 p.m. **Baylor at Texas Tech** » ESPN2
9 p.m. **Oklahoma at Auburn** » SEC Network
9 p.m. **Southern California at Northwestern** » Big Ten Network
9 p.m. **St. Bonaventure at Loyola Chicago** » CBS Sports Network
11 p.m. **Arizona at BYU** » ESPN
11 p.m. **Boise State at UNLV** » CBS Sports Network

WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL
10:30 p.m. **Colorado State at New Mexico** » Fox Sports 1

BASEBALL — CARIBBEAN SERIES
5 p.m. **Puerto Rico vs. Dominican Republic** » MLB Network
10 p.m. **Japan vs. Venezuela** » MLB Network

GOLF
9 p.m. **TGL: Boston vs. Los Angeles** » ESPN

SOCCER
1 p.m. **French Cup, round of 16: Dunkerque at Lille** » Fox Sports 2
3 p.m. **French Cup, round of 16: Paris Saint-Germain at Le Mans** » Fox Sports 2
7:30 p.m. **Copa Libertadores first round, first leg: Defensor Sporting at Monagas** » BeIN Sports
8 p.m. **Concacaf Champions Cup first round, first leg: Cruz Azul vs. Real Hope** » Fox Sports 2

TENNIS
5 a.m. **WTA: Abu Dhabi Open and Transylvania Open, early rounds** » Tennis Channel
1 p.m. **ATP: Dallas Open and Rotterdam Open, early rounds** » Tennis Channel
8 p.m. **ATP: Dallas Open, early rounds** » Tennis Channel

his right arm on a faceoff, the NHL's Department of Player Safety said.

It's the longest suspension for on-ice conduct since the Washington Capitals' **Tom Wilson** got 20 games in 2018 for an illegal check to the head. That was reduced to 14 on appeal, but Wilson already had served 16.

Hartman has the right to appeal the suspension, his fifth overall and his fourth since 2023.

The 30-year-old was ejected with a match penalty for roughing the Ottawa Senators' **Tim Stützle** in the second period Saturday. ...

The Chicago Blackhawks recalled **Artyom Levshunov** from the minor leagues, giving the No. 2 pick in last year's NHL draft a chance to practice with the team during the American Hockey League's all-star break.

Chicago also placed defenseman **Louis Crevier** on injured reserve. ...

The Columbus Blue Jackets will have to continue their playoff push without forward **Kirill Marchenko**, who will be out indefinitely after having surgery to repair a broken jaw.

PRO BASKETBALL Big night by Brunson keys Knicks' comeback

Jalen Brunson had 42 points, breaking a tie with **Carmelo Anthony** for third on the franchise list with his 18th 40-point game, as the New York Knicks beat the visiting Houston Rockets, 124-118.

Brunson, who added 10 assists, scored 17 points in the fourth quarter to help New York rally after it trailed by 11 after three. He ended up with his 12th game with at least 30 points and 10 assists since joining the Knicks, passing Hall of Famer **Richie Guerin** for the most in franchise history.

Karl-Anthony Towns and **Mikal Bridges** added 22 points apiece for New York, which played without forward **OG Anunoby** for the first time this season because of a sprained right foot.

Amen Thompson posted 25 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists in his third career triple-double for Houston, which has lost a season-high three straight. ...

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 34 points in 22 minutes as the host Oklahoma City Thunder routed the shorthanded Milwaukee Bucks, 125-96.

Milwaukee was without injured stars **Giannis Antetokounmpo**, **Damian Lillard**, **Brook Lopez** and **Khrist Middleton**, turning what could have been an exciting rematch of the NBA Cup final that Milwaukee won into a blowout.

Ousmane Dieng finished with 21 points and seven rebounds for Oklahoma City, which improved to 39-9 despite all-star **Jalen Williams** sitting out with a sprained right wrist.

BASEBALL Lefty Mayza, Pirates agree on one-year deal

Left-hander **Tim Mayza** and the Pittsburgh Pirates agreed to a one-year, \$1.2 million contract.

Mayza, 33, was 0-2 with a 6.33 ERA in 50 relief appearances last season for the Toronto Blue Jays and New York Yankees. He did not allow a run in three postseason appearances. ...

Rich Dauer, an infielder who played a decade in the major leagues and won the World Series as a player with the Baltimore Orioles and as a coach with the Houston Astros, died. He was 72.

Baltimore announced Dauer's death but did not list the cause.

MISC. Shields defeats Perkins for heavyweight title

Claressa Shields unanimously outpointed **Danielle Perkins** late Sunday night in the first undisputed heavyweight bout in women's boxing to remain undefeated.

Shields, a two-time Olympic gold medalist with titles in five divisions, was in control of the fight in Flint, Michigan, from the start. She knocked down Perkins, landing a right hand on her chin with 15 seconds left in the 10th and final round. ...

UFC fighter **Bryce Mitchell** said he is “definitely not a Nazi,” backing away from antisemitic comments that he made on a podcast that had drawn widespread criticism. ...

Oklahoma's **Patty Gasso** was selected to coach the U.S. softball team through the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics, the national program announced.

—From news services and staff reports

NFL NOTES

Citing desire to win title, Garrett asks to be traded

FROM STAFF REPORTS
AND NEWS SERVICES

After eight seasons with the Cleveland Browns, Myles Garrett wants a fresh start because of his “desire to win” a Super Bowl.

“As a kid dreaming of the NFL, all I focused on was the ultimate goal of winning a Super Bowl — and that goal fuels me today more than ever,” the defensive end said in a statement Monday. “My love for the community of Northeast Ohio and the incredible fanbase of the Cleveland Browns has made this one of the toughest decisions of my life. These past eight years have shaped me into the man that I am today.

“While I’ve loved calling this city my home, my desire to win and compete on the biggest stages won’t allow me to be complacent. The goal was never to go from Cleveland to [the Pro Football Hall of Fame in] Canton; it has always been to compete for and win a Super Bowl.

“With that in mind, I have requested to be traded from the Cleveland Browns.”

Browns General Manager Andrew Berry said last week that he hoped Garrett would retire in Cleveland and preferred to sign him to a contract extension. Garrett signed a five-year, \$125 million extension in 2020, but he said in December that he wants to win now. The Browns secured the second pick in the NFL draft with a 3-14 record this season.

“First of all I want to win and want the Browns to be able to put me and us in a position to win,” Garrett said in December. “I’m not, trying to rebuild. I’m trying to win right now. And I want that to be apparent when the season’s over and we have those discussions. I want them to be able to illuminate, illustrate that for me so that can be something I can see in the near future. Because that’s all we want to do.”

The No. 1 pick out of Texas A&M in the 2017 draft, the 29-year-old Garrett was the 2023 defensive player of the year and has recorded double-digit sacks every season but his first. A 2024 defensive player of the year finalist, Garrett had 14 sacks and a career-high 40 solo tackles.

—Cindy Boren

•**RAMS:** Wide receiver Cooper Kupp said Los Angeles is attempting to trade him after eight seasons with the club and voiced his displeasure with the decision.

The Super Bowl LVI MVP revealed the development on social media, saying the Rams told him they “will be seeking a trade immediately and will be working with me and my family to find the right place to continue competing for championships.”

The 2021 offensive player of the year essentially said farewell to the place where he has spent his entire career.

“I don’t agree with the decision and always believed it was going to begin and end in L.A.,” Kupp said. “Still, if there’s one thing that I have learned over the years: There are so many things that are out of your control, but it is how you respond to these things that you will look back on and remember.”

Kupp’s future with the Rams was in question because he is signed for the next two seasons as part of the three-year, \$80.1 million contract extension he received after having one of the greatest seasons by a wide receiver in NFL history in 2021. He would have taken up nearly \$30 million in salary cap space next season, but the Rams could clear a large chunk of that by releasing him or trading him with a post-June 1 designation.

•**JAGUARS:** Hall of Fame left tackle Tony Boselli, the first draft pick in team history, was hired as Jacksonville’s executive vice president of football operations.

Jaguars owner Shad Khan announced the move, saying Boselli, first-time coach Liam Coen and Jacksonville’s next general manager will form “the football leadership unit.”

•**TEXANS:** Houston is hiring Rams assistant Nick Cauley as its offensive coordinator, a person familiar with the move told the Associated Press, speaking on the condition of anonymity because the team had not announced the transaction.

Cauley, 42, spent last season as the passing game coordinator and tight ends coach for Los Angeles. He replaces Bobby Slowik, who was fired last month after two seasons.

—Associated Press

Saints aided Catholic church in crisis

Emails show team execs assisted archdiocese amid sex abuse fallout

BY WILL HOBSON

Hundreds of internal emails obtained by The Washington Post on Monday shed new light on the role New Orleans Saints executives played in helping the city’s Catholic church leaders deal with the fallout of a sex abuse crisis years ago.

In one 2018 email, sent the night before the Archdiocese of New Orleans released a list of former clergy accused of sex crimes, Saints vice president of communications Greg Bensel wrote of a call with a local prosecutor that “allowed us to take certain people off the list.”

For years, Saints officials have denied allegations by lawyers for victims that team officials had input on the list of accused clergy, produced amid a sex abuse crisis that sent the archdiocese into bankruptcy proceedings.

On Monday, Bensel deferred questions from The Post to the Saints’ lawyers, who did not reply with any comment.

The emails were produced as part of litigation filed by hundreds of alleged victims of sex abuse by local Catholic priests. Lawyers for the Saints and the Archdiocese of New Orleans had successfully fought in court to keep the emails from public view. The emails also were obtained and reported earlier Monday by the Associated Press, the New York Times and the Guardian.

In statements to those news outlets, the Saints maintained that Bensel and the team had no input on the clergy list and that the email in question described “a conversation he was told had occurred ... concerning the list.”

The prosecutor whom Bensel mentioned in the email, Leon Cannizzaro, repeatedly has denied having any input on the list. Cannizzaro did not reply to requests for comment Monday.

The Archdiocese of New Orleans, in a statement to The Post on Monday, also denied that the team or local prosecutors had any input on the clergy list.

“The relationship between the New Orleans Saints and the Arch-



JOHN BAZEMORE/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gayle Benson owns the Saints, who have denied having input on a list of clergy accused of sexual abuse.

diocese of New Orleans in regard to the 2018 release of the list of those removed from ministry for abuse of a minor was limited to assistance in a public relations capacity. No one from the Saints organization or the New Orleans District Attorney’s Office had any role in compiling the list or had any say in adding or removing anyone from the list,” the archdiocese said.

The bulk of the rest of the 770 pages of emails shared by Saints executives in 2018 and 2019 show the extent to which Bensel, also the top communications executive for the NBA’s New Orleans Pelicans, provided public relations guidance to church officials, including Archbishop Gregory Aymond. Bensel helped prepare Aymond for interviews, offered suggested edits on a letter to the editor and lobbied local news outlets for favorable coverage of Aymond and the church, the emails show.

“I am writing this email not as the communications person for the Saints/Pelicans but as a parent, New Orleanian and member of the Catholic Church. ... I am a close friend of Archbishop Aymond and have been confidentially discussing the recent horrible issues that he and the Church are facing,” Bensel wrote to a top editor at the New Orleans Advocate newspaper in October 2018.

“I am asking that YOU as the most influential newspaper in our state, please get behind him and work with him. ... Casting a critical eye on him is neither beneficial nor right,” Bensel wrote.

The emails began in July 2018, when Bensel shared a news story with Gayle Benson, who owns the Saints and Pelicans. The story regarded a deacon who continued to hold a role with a New Orleans-area church until the previous month, despite sexual abuse allegations dating from the 1980s.

The deacon, George Brignac, was later criminally charged with raping a 7-year-old altar boy but died while awaiting trial.

“Yes, I saw this, Archbishop is very upset. He told me last week ... a mess,” Bensel wrote. Like Bensel, Burchon is Catholic and a friend of Archbishop Aymond.

In response, Bensel suggested to Burchon he could help Aymond and the church with crisis communications.

“We have been through enough at Saints to be a help or sounding board — but I don’t want to overstep!” Bensel wrote.

“Thank you Greg, I will pass this on to him. I am certain he will appreciate it,” Bensel replied.

Bensel spoke at a news conference held by the Super Bowl host committee Monday in New Orleans, but she did not address the issue or take questions.

Hours later, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell expressed support for the Saints when asked about the matter during a news conference.

The Saints previously characterized the public relations guidance Bensel offered as “minimal” and emphasized he encouraged the church to be transparent.

“Never did the Saints organization offer advice to conceal information,” the team said in 2020.

In one email, Bensel suggested the church offer a public decree of support for abuse victims that the church’s top spokeswoman found a step too far.

“Is there a benefit to saying we support a victim’s right to pursue a remedy through the courts?” Bensel wrote in October 2018.

“I don’t think we want to say we ‘support’ victims going to the courts but we certainly encourage them to come forward,” replied archdiocese director of communications Sarah McDonald, who did not reply to a request for comment Monday about the exchange.

The trove of emails ends in July 2019, after Bensel received an email from a reporter at the New Orleans Advocate about two developments: Lawyers for abuse victims had sent a subpoena to the Saints, and then a letter to Goodell, seeking documents relating to communications with the archdiocese.

Despite Trump’s attacks on diversity programs, NFL reaffirms its commitment

NFL FROM D1

abide by its minority hiring programs and guidelines because those “efforts are fundamental.” That message has been reinforced in recent months by other league leaders and team owners.

The NFL has an uneven history with diversity in its coaching and leadership ranks. Black coaches often have had a difficult time advancing to head coaching jobs. In 2022, former Miami Dolphins coach Brian Flores filed a racial discrimination lawsuit against the league and teams. But the NFL has stood by its minority interviewing requirement for key positions, known widely as the Rooney Rule.

That puts it at odds with Trump’s moves toward having federal agencies eliminate all positions related to diversity, equity and inclusion. Trump ordered all federal employees whose work is focused on DEI initiatives to be placed on leave, and he revoked a 60-year-old executive order banning discrimination by federal contractors.

Companies such as Amazon, Target, Walmart, Meta, McDonald’s and Ford have announced they would end or modify their DEI initiatives. (Amazon’s founder, Jeff Bezos, owns The Washington Post.) Others, such as Apple and Costco, have remained committed to their DEI programs.

“We’re all certainly hoping that the league continues with this focus on providing fair, open and competitive hiring practices,” said Rod Graves, the executive director of the Fritz Pollard Alliance, the diversity group that works with the NFL on minority hiring. “I very much assume that they will. I think that it’s still a high value and priority of the league as a whole.”

White House officials did not respond Monday to a request for comment about the NFL’s diversity policies.

The NFL has been at odds with Trump previously. Trump sparked a national controversy in 2017 by suggesting at a campaign rally that NFL owners should fire any player — referred to as a “son of a bitch” by Trump — who protested by kneeling

during the national anthem.

Goodell said Monday at his annual news conference during Super Bowl week that the league would not change its approach.

“I believe that our diversity efforts have led to making the NFL better,” he said. “It’s attracted better talent. We think we’re better if we get different perspectives, people with different backgrounds, whether they’re women or men or people of color. We make ourselves stronger and we make ourselves better when we have that. It’s something that I think will have a tremendous impact on this league for many, many years. We win on the field with the best talent and the best coaching. And I think the same is true off the field.”

NFL rules require each team with a vacancy at a key position such as head coach or general manager to conduct in-person interviews with at least two minority candidates from outside the organization.

Last year, those rules helped produce minority hiring gains, including in the high-profile ranks of the league’s head coaches. NFL teams hired four minority head coaches, including three Black men, among eight vacancies last year. That gave the league nine minority head coaches, including six Black head coaches, among its 32 teams at the outset of the 2024 season.

In October, the New York Jets dismissed Robert Saleh, who is of Lebanese descent. Two Black coaches were fired by their teams last month after the regular season: Jerod Mayo by the New England Patriots and Antonio Pierce by the Las Vegas Raiders. Mayo, the first Black head coach in Patriots history, lasted just one season as the successor to six-time Super Bowl-winning coach Bill Belichick. Pierce was fired by the Raiders after one season as the full-time coach, following a stint as the team’s interim coach during the 2023 season.

This offseason, six of the seven teams with coaching vacancies have made their hires. The New Orleans Saints continue their search. The only minority head coach hired thus far is Aaron Glenn, the former defensive co-



ED MULHOLLAND/GETTY IMAGES

With one vacancy still remaining, the Jets’ Aaron Glenn is the lone Black coach who was hired as a head coach during this cycle.

ordinator of the Detroit Lions who was hired by the Jets. The Lions will be awarded a pair of third-round draft picks, one in each of the next two drafts, under the NFL program that rewards teams that develop minority head coaching and general manager candidates hired by other franchises.

“For African American coaches and executives, this hiring cycle has probably produced more questions and concerns about where we’re headed with respect to those goals and objectives,” Graves said in a phone interview Sunday.

Questions have occasionally been raised about whether teams give serious consideration to minority candidates or merely perform the interviews to fulfill the NFL’s requirement. In this cycle, some observers criticized the Patriots for interviewing two Black coaches who were out of the NFL, Pep Hamilton and Byron Leftwich, before hiring Mike

Vrabel. And eyebrows similarly were raised when the Jacksonville Jaguars interviewed a Black coach, Raiders defensive coordinator Patrick Graham, on the same day they moved toward hiring Tampa Bay Buccaneers offensive coordinator Liam Coen as their coach. The Jaguars announced an agreement with Coen the following day.

Graves mentioned the NFL’s lack of minority offensive coordinators, the assistant position that is often the final stepping stone to head coaching opportunities.

“It makes you wonder whether teams are truly committed to the spirit of the Rooney Rule and what we were trying to accomplish with respect to diversity,” Graves said.

The NFL has five active Black head coaches, with Glenn joining the Pittsburgh Steelers’ Mike Tomlin, the Buccaneers’ Todd Bowles, the Houston Texans’ DeMeco Ryans and the Atlanta

Falcons’ Raheem Morris. The league has seven active minority head coaches. That includes the Carolina Panthers’ Dave Canales, who is Mexican American, and the Dolphins’ Mike McDaniel, who is biracial.

Graves, formerly the general manager of the Arizona Cardinals, said there has been bigger-picture progress.

“We see a lot more diversity in terms of not only candidates of color but ... experience,” he said. “It’s certainly more diverse in that area than it was five, certainly 10 years ago.”

The league has pointed to its minority hiring gains in other areas, such as with team presidents and general managers, and has said its diversity efforts extend to all levels of its franchises and within the league office. In December, the NFL said 53 percent of team employees and league staffers were minorities or women. In addition to its nine minority head coaches during the 2024 season, the league said it had five women as principal franchise owners, six minority team presidents and eight minority general managers. About two-thirds of the NFL’s players were minorities in the 2023 season, the most recent for which data is available, according to the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport.

“We got into diversity efforts because we felt it was the right thing for the National Football League,” Goodell said Monday. “And we’re going to continue those efforts because we’ve not only convinced ourselves but I think we’ve proven [to] ourselves that it does make the NFL better. So we’re not in this because it’s a trend to get in or a trend to get out of it. Our efforts are fundamental in trying to attract the best possible talent into the National Football League, both on and off the field.”

The league regularly conducts what it calls “accelerator” programs to provide professional training and networking opportunities with owners to minority general manager and head coaching candidates. It conducted a front-office accelerator at an NFL owners meeting in December.

“I’ve been in this league for 22 years,” Terrance Gray, the Buffalo Bills’ director of player personnel, said at that meeting. “And the greatest thing that we can be provided as you move up in this industry is access and opportunity. I feel like the accelerator program provides those two things, and I look forward to the continued growth with the program.”

Steelers owner Art Rooney II said then: “It’s always a great program. It gives ownership as well as the potential candidates an opportunity to get to know each other and network a little bit. So I think it’s been a good program. ... I think it’s been a positive. And I think both the ownership and the participants have enjoyed it and look forward to continuing to do it in the years to come.”

Rooney is the chairman of the NFL’s diversity, equity and inclusion committee. The league’s minority interviewing rule is named for his late father, Dan Rooney, the longtime Steelers owner who was the chairman of what was then known as the workplace diversity committee.

“There are no quotas in our system,” Goodell said. “This is about opening that funnel and bringing the best talent into the NFL. And so we are confident with that.”

Jonathan Beane, an NFL senior vice president who is the league’s chief diversity and inclusion officer, said at the December meeting that the league’s focus was on attempting to bring transparency and clarity to the hiring process. The NFL has tweaked its interviewing rules in recent years to try to slow teams’ hiring decisions, encouraging franchises to conduct extensive searches with large and diverse pools of candidates.

“We remain committed to the work that we’re doing,” Beane said then. “We see it, whether it’s social justice work or whether it’s inclusion work ... as something that’s extremely beneficial for our business. It supports our objectives to be a global brand. ... We feel very confident with the work that we’re doing, and we’re committed to that.”

Goodell: Stadium in D.C. ‘would be great for our nation’

BY NICKI JHABVALA
AND SAM FORTIER

NEW ORLEANS — NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell on Monday delivered his strongest public comment yet on the league's desire to have the Washington Commanders move back to D.C.

At a wide-ranging media availability ahead of Super Bowl LIX, Goodell said a new venue at the RFK Stadium site would be “a huge economic driver,” adding that the team returning to the District to a new home with the monuments and the U.S. Capitol in its sight lines “would be great for our nation.”

“I remember that as a kid growing up, the power of that vision and what it means to that community,” Goodell said at the Superdome. “It’s a really powerful thing. So if it turns out that that is the best alternative, it could be a great thing.”

Goodell, the son of a former senator, has memories of seeing Washington’s football team play in the District, which it called home for 59 years — first at Griffith Stadium, then at RFK — before moving to what is now known as Northwest Stadium in Landover.

“It’s important for the team to play in an area that is beneficial for the fans,” Goodell said. “It’s going to be beneficial for those communities, and it’s going to be beneficial to the team. I’m also a kid who grew up in Washington, D.C., go-

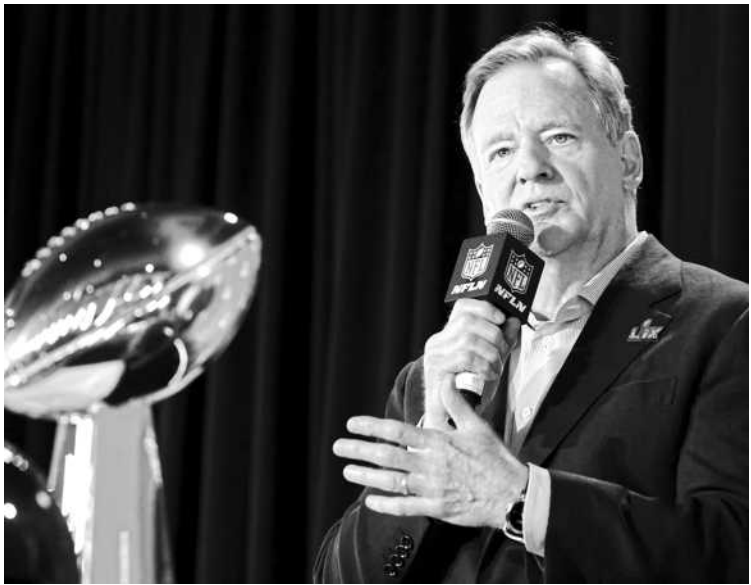
ing to RFK Stadium, and I remember that experience. When I see that stadium site today — I went by it when I was down in Washington in December — and, frankly, it was really disappointing. It made me sad to see that area and how the stadium looks today and how the community looks.”

That the Commanders have options — D.C. and Maryland — for their next stadium is a reflection of the franchise’s turnaround under owner Josh Harris and the result of legislation that passed the Senate in December and granted the District control of 170-plus acres along the Anacostia River.

The Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium Campus Revitalization Act passed Congress in December on a Hail Mary action that transferred control of the site from the federal government to D.C., which has long sought to revitalize the property, potentially with a new NFL stadium. Now that the city controls the land, the 13-member D.C. Council has the final say on what will go there.

Goodell and the NFL were integral in pushing the legislation through with bipartisan support; he traveled to D.C. in December to meet with lawmakers and has had multiple conversations with Mayor Muriel E. Bowser (D) and members of Congress, among others, to give the District a chance to vie for a stadium.

Like Goodell, Harris and Commanders limited partners Mitch-



CHRIS GRAYTHEN/GETTY IMAGES

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell said a new Commanders venue at the RFK Stadium site could become “a huge economic driver.”

ell Rales and Mark Ein grew up in D.C. as fans of Washington’s NFL franchise and have often cited their personal memories of RFK Stadium in discussing their vision for the team’s next home.

But the team is having regular conversations with both D.C. and Maryland officials. The Commanders own Northwest Stadium and its surrounding property, where they are contractually obligated to play their home games until September 2027, after which they can stay or leave.

At his end-of-season news con-

ference in Ashburn, Harris doubled down on his November comments that D.C. would be the most politically viable site for the next stadium because of its regional centrality and rich history.

“It’s the location that, when we do surveys, is the most acceptable,” he said. “That doesn’t mean that there’s not a lot of support in Maryland, a lot of support in Virginia. There is, but obviously D.C. is kind of aligned with the history and happens to be the easiest place to get to for the most number of fans.”

BARRY SVRLUGA

Time to talk about the Commanders, not their name

SVRLUGA FROM D1

the franchise wore in its glory years. Sure, Harris is cognizant that the team’s current look should do a better job of honoring its past.

But the owner did well to clarify the issue going forward. Well, not initially, when he gave a version of an answer he has provided before: “We’re focused on winning football games” — and, by extension, not on the name.

But asked directly whether he was keeping the name, he said: “Yes. ... I think it’s now being embraced by our team, by our culture, by our coaching staff. And so we’re going with that.”

And with that, Washington, let’s drop it. For good.

The list of issues that are more important for this franchise than the name is lengthy. How do General Manager Adam Peters and his staff go about improving a roster that, despite the deep playoff run, has glaring holes? How does Coach Dan Quinn keep together a coaching staff that other teams would like to poach? Where do Harris and his partners make a deal for a new stadium? What does that deal look like financially — meaning how much is Harris paying and how much falls to the public?

It’s true that a Post poll from last spring found most people

from metropolitan Washington disliked the name and that those feelings were even stronger among people who identified as fans of the team.

But here’s the thing: What name would have resulted in polling that unified the fan base? The previous name? That was retired in 2020, and with good reason. Harris long ago said — appropriately — that he wouldn’t bring it back.

So would a majority of fans have backed the Washington Armada? The Brigade? Defenders? Red Hogs? Red Wolves? Or the Washington Football Team, the interim name used in 2020 and 2021? (At the time, I endorsed keeping the last one, not because it was awesome but because it had a European soccer vibe. It certainly seemed less contrived than the rest of the choices above, which then-CEO Tanya Snyder said were the finalists in early 2022.)

There’s just no way 60 or 70 percent of the fan base would have fully endorsed RedWolves or anything else.

So, then, Commanders. Let it sink in.

Harris was also right about something else he said Monday: “The name Commanders means something.”

These aren’t the Commanders who went 4-13 and rode Ron

Rivera’s tenure into oblivion. These are the Peters-Quinn-Daniels Commanders who made the franchise’s deepest postseason foray in 33 years. These are the Commanders who, at Quinn’s direction, determined the standard to which they would hold one another, a standard that greets every new player who walks through the door.

The success of this season — which Harris repeatedly called “the reawakening of Washington football” — meant it was going to be more difficult to move on from the name, even if Harris’s ownership group didn’t pick it. Daniels only has played for the Commanders. Quinn only has coached the Commanders. Peters has said, “We want to find Commanders.” The Commanders will be a hot ticket and prime-time fodder in 2025. How do you change that?

You don’t.

So, moving on. The meat of Harris’s 25-minute question-and-answer session had to do with plans for a new stadium. That’s appropriate. For nearly a quarter-century, the issues that dogged this franchise were the meddlesome owner, the endless search for a quarterback and the stadium everyone hated from Day 1. Two of those issues appear solved. One remains.

Harris and his team clearly are focused on securing a stadium site — and soon. He reiterated that his goal is to have the new facility open in 2030.

What’s not clear: how that stadium will be funded. Last month, Harris was part of an announcement of a new arena for the NBA’s Philadelphia 76ers, which he owns, and the NHL’s Philadelphia Flyers — a building that will be privately funded by Harris and Comcast, which owns the Flyers. Does Harris foresee paying for a new football stadium, whether it’s in the District or Maryland or, frankly, on the moon?

He wouldn’t say.

“Obviously, we’re having a lot of discussions right now, and I don’t think it would be appropriate for me to get in front of the governments that we’re talking to — the Maryland government, D.C. government, [Prince George’s] County,” he said.

That is where to put our attention: Not even so much on where the new stadium will be, though that’s important. But more on who will pay for it, which is paramount.

What we learned for sure Monday: Wherever the stadium is, the Washington Commanders will be the home team. Buy your Commanders gear now. They aren’t going away.



ELIAS VALVERDE II/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fans of the Dallas Mavericks — and other NBA teams — were stunned after they traded Luka Dončić to the Los Angeles Lakers.

CANDACE BUCKNER

Doncic trade was absurd — and great for the NBA

BUCKNER FROM D1

for society. But let’s just say no one at the Basketball Hall of Fame will honor him for that one time he handpicked his podcast buddy to coach the Lakers. Players, who lack self-awareness yet are full of years remaining on their contracts — such as George (twice), James Harden (pretty much every other year), Ben Simmons and Kyrie Irving — have forced their way out of NBA markets without positive returns for their new teams or their personal brands.

And again: Why does Bradley Beal have a no-trade clause? Because Beal is in an unmerited position of authority, he’s potentially holding up a Jimmy Butler trade from Miami to Phoenix, along with all the other dominoes that will fall before Thursday’s trade deadline. While we should be all for players having freedom of movement and doing what’s best for themselves and their families — fair compensation and improved workplace conditions and all — recent history would indicate many of those players make crummy front-office decisions.

Let LeBron finish burnishing his on-court accomplishments. I would prefer the executives orchestrate the deals that make us blink in confusion and rage online.

For myriad reasons, too long to explain here, this was going to be the season when I officially said goodbye to the NBA. It had been a good run, fellas: from Bird and Magic, Ahmad Rashad and Willow Bay to Grant Hill’s teal jerseys and “boomshakalaka” dunks from the three-point arc in NBA Jam. This league had been an essential through line from my childhood to my career choices. However, I had fallen out of love with a game in which coaches *encourage* their teams to settle and jack up 30-plus three-point attempts per game. And I’m completely done watching the all-star showcase

because not a single multimillionaire gives a darn about respecting the fans, or their time and money.

But just when I thought I was out ... Nico Harrison and his love for perimeter defense pull me back in.

This trade, heartbreaking for some yet invigorating for others (mostly Lakers fans), has jolted a league that once held such cultural relevance from falling deeper into obscurity. For several years, as salaries expanded but the passion for performing from October through March deteriorated, the NBA has struggled to hold on to its shrinking cachet. This Christmas, a game averaging about 5 million viewers was seen as progress. Try to imagine that Kobe vs. Shaq Christmas matchup in 2004 getting swallowed up by an NFL game. You can’t. Because it never would have happened.

But Sunday, believe it or not, it was the NBA dominating the news cycle at the start of Super Bowl week, not the Chiefs nor Eagles. Even Patrick Mahomes weighed in. In the literal sense, casuals awakened Sunday morning to news of the trade, which happened past midnight on the East Coast. And figuratively, the conversation shook all sports fans during a sleepy time on the NBA calendar.

All because Harrison pocket-listed one of the top five players in the NBA and shopped him solely to the league’s glamour franchise.

So, thank you, Mr. Harrison, for giving us something to talk about. The NBA is more interesting today, following the trade of the century, than it was even a week ago, when fans had to nourish themselves on bland January basketball and reports of Butler sabotaging his way out of Miami. The Dončić trade is a perfect prescription for what has weakened the NBA. It sounds cold, but there can be a thrill in seeing a superstar occasionally treated merely as a trade asset.

Caps shake up personnel to jolt stagnant power play

CAPITALS FROM D1

In Ottawa, Ethen Frank briefly played the bumper role on the top unit. After more adjustments, Frank is now in the same spot on the second unit, with Chyechrun running things from up top, center Pierre-Luc Dubois in the right circle and winger Aliaksei Protas at the net front. Ovechkin plays on both units, but he only practices with the first; Taylor Raddysh is serving as the placeholder in his spot with the other group.

“The power play has gone a little bit stale, so changing personnel and mixing up formations are ways that us as coaches can try to reinvigorate a power play and plug some life into it,” Carbery said Monday. “Hopefully it heats back up and we move on.”

The only look Washington got at the new power plays Saturday was short-lived. Protas took a penalty 1:18 into the power play, just after the second unit had come onto the ice. But the Capitals spent extended amounts of time at Monday’s practice working on the man advantage, both within the offensive zone and on the entry across the blue line.

“It’s not just an overnight thing,” McMichael said. “You’ve got to know exactly where each guy is going to be. For example, if Stromer has the puck in a certain area, with chemistry I’ll know exactly where he’s putting that puck next. Whereas maybe the first game with that unit, I’m still kind of feeling it out. ... That stuff will come.”



JOHN MCDONNELL FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Defenseman Jakob Chyechrun was moved from the Capitals’ first power-play unit to their second group, which he runs from up top.

Chasing Gretzky
Capitals captain Alex Ovechkin is nearing Wayne Gretzky’s NHL career goals mark of 894.

GOALS FROM BREAKING THE RECORD

18

For most of this season, Washington has avoided putting Protas, its leading scorer at five-on-five, on the power play. He has been so critical to the team’s success at even strength and on the penalty kill, the thinking went, that adding the man advantage to his duties might affect his performance in the other phases of the game.

The initial returns have been

imperfect — Protas was called for a penalty shot on the power play in Ottawa, Washington’s second of the game, and took that penalty against the Jets — but Carbery reiterated Monday that, for now, the opportunity is his.

“Pro has earned the opportunity to play,” Carbery said. “We’ve held off [through] 50 games of him being as productive of a five-on-five player as there is in the league. He’s going to get a look to be able to power play. As long as it doesn’t diminish what he continues to do five-on-five and on the penalty kill, we’ll give him a chance to prove himself there.”

The same is true for Frank, who has been a bright spot for Washington during his 11 games. His line’s even-strength minutes have ebbed and flowed, sometimes leaving Frank without

Coulibaly boosts the Wizards to just their second two-game winning streak

WIZARDS 124, HORNETS 114

BY VARUN SHANKAR

CHARLOTTE — The Charlotte Hornets became the latest team to scorn Bilal Coulibaly's three-point shot. It's an understandable strategy — Coulibaly entered Monday's game shooting 27.1 percent from deep — but the second-year Frenchman made Hornets Coach Charles Lee pay in the Washington Wizards' 124-114 win at Spectrum Center.

The victory gave the Wizards (8-41) their second two-game winning streak of the season — and their first since October. Coulibaly led all scorers with 26 points, his most since December. Corey Kispert added 25 points in 29 minutes off the bench. The Hornets (12-35) got 24 points

each from forward Miles Bridges and guard Nick Smith Jr.

Charlotte started the game with center Mark Williams on Coulibaly. Williams sagged off the Wizards guard, focusing his attention on protecting the paint and daring Coulibaly to shoot.

"I knew it was happening. In the morning, we talked about it, too. [Coach Brian Keefe drew up] some plays ... to make it easier," Coulibaly said. "... I don't take [the strategy] as a disrespect or something. I just think that's part of the game."

In the first half, Coulibaly shot 3 for 5 from deep and scored 18 points, forcing Lee to largely abandon his strategy late in the second quarter. The Wizards scored 77 points in the first 24 minutes — their most in two years, according to the team — and led by 23.

Coulibaly cooled in the second half but still finished 9 for 16 from

WIZARDS' NEXT THREE

at Brooklyn Nets

Wednesday 7:30 Monumental

vs. Cleveland Cavaliers

Friday 7 Monumental

vs. Atlanta Hawks

Saturday 7 Monumental

Radio: *WTEM (980 AM)*

the field, including 4 for 8 from beyond the arc.

The Wizards' lead dwindled to as little as five in the second half, when they shot just 36.2 percent from the field and 18.2 percent from three. The margin was seven when Coulibaly shut the door after Malcolm Brogdon found him alone in the corner with 1:16 remaining. His fourth three-pointer marked his most in a

game since December.

A possession later, his defender left him to trap Brogdon. Coulibaly alertly cut to the basket and finished a lob, putting an exclamation point on a rare happening with this rebuilding team: a winning streak.

Here's what else to know about the Wizards' victory:

Sarr's status

Rookie Alex Sarr, who missed a fourth straight game with a left ankle sprain, did some individual on-court work at the end of the morning shoot-around. Keefe acknowledged before the game that the center was progressing but did not offer a timeline for his return.

Sarr, the No. 2 pick in the 2024 draft, was one of three Wizards selected as an NBA Rising Star. The Rising Stars three-on-three teams will be drafted Tuesday and begin play Feb. 14.

SCOREBOARD

PRO FOOTBALL

NFL playoffs

FIRST ROUND

SATURDAY, JAN. 11

at Baltimore 28, Pittsburgh 14

at Houston 32, L.A. Chargers 12

SUNDAY, JAN. 12

Washington 23, at Tampa Bay 20

at Buffalo 31, Denver 7

at Philadelphia 22, Green Bay 10

MONDAY, JAN. 13

L.A. Rams 27, Minnesota 9

DIVISIONAL ROUND

SATURDAY, JAN. 18

Washington 45, at Detroit 31

at Kansas City 23, Houston 14

SUNDAY, JAN. 19

at Buffalo 27, Baltimore 25

at Philadelphia 28, L.A. Rams 22

CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS

SUNDAY, JAN. 26

NFC

at Philadelphia 55, Washington 23

AFC

at Kansas City 32, Buffalo 29

SUPER BOWL LIX

SUNDAY

IN NEW ORLEANS

Philadelphia vs. Kansas City (-1½), 6:30 (Fox)

TENNIS

ATP

DALLAS OPEN

At Stylingier/Altex Tennis Complex

Purse: \$2,760,000

Surface: Hardcourt indoor

SINGLES — ROUND OF 32

Aljandro Davidovich Fokina, Spain, def. Brandon Holt, United States, 6-1, 7-5; Matteo Arnaldi (8), Italy, def. Christopher Eubanks, United States, 6-3, 6-4; Riniky Hijikata, Australia, def. Adrian Mannarino, France, 7-5, 6-3; Francesco Tiafoe (5), United States, def. Taro Daniel, Japan, 6-1, 3-6, 6-4.

AEN AMRO WORLD TENNIS TOURNAMENT

At Ahoy Rotterdam in Rotterdam, Netherlands

Purse: \$2,478,737

Surface: Hardcourt indoor

SINGLES — ROUND OF 32

Hubert Hurkacz (8), Poland, def. Flavio Cobolli, Italy, 6-3, 6-2; Stefanos Tsitsipas (6), Greece, def. Harold Mayot, France, 6-1, 7-5; Daniil Medvedev (2), Russia, def. Stan Wawrinka, Switzerland, 6-7 (10-8), 6-4, 6-1; Mattia Bellucci, Italy, def. Mees Troetger, Netherlands, 6-3, 6-2.

DOUBLES — ROUND OF 16

Jakob Schniatter and Mark Wallner, Germany, def. Jean-Julien Rojer, Netherlands, and Adam Pavlasek, Czechia, 6-3, 4-6, 10-8; Kevin Krawietz and Tim Putz (2), Germany, def. Botik Van de Zandschulp and Tallon Griekspoor, Netherlands, 6-3, 7-6 (7-5).

WTA

TRANSILVANIA OPEN

At Arenele BNR, in Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Purse: \$275,094

Surface: Hardcourt indoor

SINGLES — ROUND OF 32

Viktoria Tomova, Bulgaria, def. Malar Sherif Ahmed Abdelaziz, Egypt, 3-6, 6-4, 6-1; Suzan Lamens, Netherlands, def. Anna Bondar, Hungary, 7-6 (7-2), 7-6 (6-6); Caroline Dolehide, United States, def. Daria Snigur, Ukraine, 7-5, 2-6, 6-4; Anhelina Kalinina (4), Ukraine, def. Elena-Gabriela Ruse, Romania, 6-2, 6-3; Marina Stakusic, Canada, def. Sorana Cristea, Romania, 6-1, 1-6, 6-4.

DOUBLES — ROUND OF 16

Anastasia Detiuc, Czechia, and Maja Chwalinska, Poland, def. Lucia Bronzetti and Elisabetta Cocciaretto, Italy, 6-1, 6-3; Angelica Morrettelli, Italy, and Jaelene Cristian, Romania, def. Monica Niculescu, Romania, and Sabrina Santamaria (1), United States, 4-6, 7-5, 10-12; Emily Appleton, Britain, and Qianhui Tang (4), China, def. Simona Halep and Ana Bogdan, Romania, 7-6 (7-5), 6-1; Katarzyna Piter, Poland, and Aleksandra Sasnovich, Belarus, def. Kimberley Zimmermann, Belgium, and Quinn Gleason (3), United States, 6-2, 6-0.

AUTO RACING

NASCAR Cup Series

COOK OUT CLASH AT BOWMAN GRAY

SUNDAY'S RESULTS

At Bowman Gray Stadium, in Winston-Salem, N.C.

Start position: 0.25 miles

(Lap length in parentheses):

- (1) Chase Elliott, Chevrolet, 200 laps, 0 points.
- (2) Ryan Blaney, Ford, 200, 0.
- (3) Denny Hamlin, Toyota, 200, 0.
- (4) Joey Logano, Ford, 200, 0.
- (5) Bubba Wallace, Toyota, 200, 0.
- (6) Ross Chastain, Chevrolet, 200, 0.
- (7) Austin Cindric, Ford, 200, 0.
- (8) Tyler Reddick, Toyota, 200, 0.
- (9) Shane Van Gisbergen, Chevrolet, 200, 0.
- (10) Chris Buescher, Ford, 200, 0.
- (11) Kevin Harvick, Chevrolet, 200, 0.
- (12) Ryan Preece, Ford, 200, 0.
- (13) Christopher Bell, Toyota, 199, 0.
- (14) Justin Berry, Ford, 199, 0.
- (15) Kyle Busch, Chevrolet, 199, 0.
- (16) Carson Hocevar, Chevrolet, 199, 0.
- (17) Kyle Larson, Chevrolet, 199, 0.
- (18) Daniel Suarez, Chevrolet, 199, 0.
- (19) Alex Bowman, Chevrolet, 199, 0.
- (20) Noah Gragson, Ford, 199, 0.
- (21) Brad Keselowski, Ford, 199, 0.
- (22) Daniel Suarez, Chevrolet, 198, 0.
- (6) Chase Briscoe, Toyota, garage, 120, 0.

GOLF

PGA Tour

FEDEX CUP LEADERS

Through Sunday.

	Points	Money
1.....Sepp Straka	799	\$2,568,138
2.....Hideki Matsuyama	783	\$3,833,355
3.....Rory McIlroy	700	\$3,600,000
4.....Ludvig Aberg	595	\$1,891,400
5.....Harris English	515	\$1,734,611
6.....Sungjae Im	497	\$1,877,500
7.....Collin Morikawa	460	\$2,432,000
8.....Cameron Davis	440	\$1,290,400
9.....Shane Lowry	400	\$2,160,000
10.....Russell Henley	383	\$1,087,525
11.....Lucas Glover	373	\$1,240,088
12.....Sam Stevens	371	\$1,326,046
13.....Jonathan Snodgrass	354	\$1,075,320
14.....Taylor Pendrith	353	\$1,271,632
15.....Justin Thomas	351	\$1,171,133
16.....Thomas Detry	332	\$945,985
17.....Nicolas Echavarria	331	\$1,099,050
18.....Jason Day	297	\$1,020,780
19.....Andrew Novak	285	\$1,010,200
20.....Corey Conners	278	\$778,112
21.....Corey Conners	273	\$780,167
22.....Harry Hall	264	\$867,545

PRO BASKETBALL

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	35	15	.700	—
New York	33	17	.660	2
Philadelphia	19	29	.396	15
Toronto	16	33	.327	18½
Brooklyn	16	33	.327	18½

SOUTHEAST	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	24	23	.511	—
Orlando	24	26	.480	1½
Atlanta	23	27	.460	2½
Charlotte	12	35	.255	12
Washington	8	41	.163	17

CENTRAL	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	40	9	.816	—
Indiana	27	20	.574	12
Milwaukee	26	22	.542	13½
Detroit	25	25	.500	15½
Chicago	21	29	.420	19½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

SOUTHWEST	W	L	Pct	GB
Memphis	34	16	.680	—
Houston	32	17	.653	1½
Dallas	26	24	.520	8
San Antonio	21	26	.447	11½
New Orleans	12	37	.245	21½

NORTHWEST	W	L	Pct	GB
Oklahoma City	39	9	.813	—
Denver	30	19	.612	9½
Minnesota	27	23	.540	13
Portland	20	29	.408	19½
Utah	11	36	.234	27½

PACIFIC	W	L	Pct	GB
L.A. Lakers	28	19	.596	—
L.A. Clippers	28	21	.569	1
Phoenix	25	23	.521	3½
Sacramento	25	24	.510	4
Golden State	24	24	.500	4½

x-Late game

SUNDAY'S RESULTS

at Detroit 127, Chicago 119

at Cleveland 144, Dallas 101

at Toronto 115, L.A. Clippers 108

Boston 118, at Philadelphia 110

Memphis 132, at Milwaukee 119

MONDAY'S RESULTS

Washington 124, at Charlotte 114

Atlanta 132, at Detroit 130

at New York 124, Houston 118

at Oklahoma City 125, Milwaukee 96

Sacramento 116, at Minnesota 114

at Memphis 128, San Antonio 109

Indiana at Utah, late

New Orleans at Denver, late

Orlando at Golden State, late

Phoenix at Portland, late

TUESDAY'S GAMES

Dallas at Philadelphia, 730

Houston at Cleveland, 730

Boston at Brooklyn, 730

New York at Toronto, 730

Miami at Chicago, 8

Indiana at Portland, 10

L.A. Lakers at L.A. Clippers, 10

WEDNESDAY'S GAMES

Washington at Brooklyn, 7:30

Cleveland at Detroit, 7

Milwaukee at Charlotte, 7

San Antonio at Atlanta, 7

Memphis at Toronto, 7:30

Miami at Philadelphia, 7:30

Chicago at Minnesota, 7:30

Golden State at Utah, 9

New Orleans at Denver, 9

Phoenix at Oklahoma City, 9:30

Orlando at Sacramento, 10

Wizards 124, Hornets 114

Washington	31	46	20	27	— 124
Charlotte	29	25	34	26	— 114

Jeffries	11:52	1-4	0-0	0-1	1	2	2
Curry	8:59	0-1	0-0	0-0	2	0	0
Wong	5:29	1-2	0-0	0-0	1	1	3
TOTALS	240	39-89	25-28	9-46	26	17	114

TOTALS 240 44-99 19-28 18-54 29 21 124

Percentages: FG .444, FT .826. 3-Point Goals: 17-51, 33.3 (Kispert 5-9, Coulibaly 4-8, Kuzma 3-13, George 2-4, Poole 2-8, 9-0-0-13, Diante 1-3-0-0-21, Jay Williams 19-23-34, 8-13, Jones 0-3-0-0-0, Ducas 3-6-0-0-2, Flagler 1-11-0-0-2, Joe 5-9 3-3-18. **Totals** 51-99 7-8 125.

CHARLOTTE MIN FG FT O-T A PF PTS
Bridges 36:42 9-21 4-4 3-10-10 0 24
Green 36:51 4-7 2-3 0-3 1 3 11
M.Williams 32:08 7-12 0-0 2-14 2 2 23
Nene 28:30 4-14 2-2 0-5 1 1 13
Smith Jr. 38:54 9-16 2-2 1-4 2 4 24
Simpson 24:12 3-10 3-3 1-4 1 3 9
Diabate 16:22 1-2 3-4 2-7 1 1 5
Jeffries 11:52 1-4 0-0 0-1 1 2 2
Curry 8:59 0-1 0-0 0-0 2 0 0
Wong 5:29 1-2 0-0 0-0 1 1 3

TOTALS 240 39-89 25-28 9-46 26 37 114

Percentages: FG .438, FT .893. 3-Point Goals: 11-29, 37.9 (Smith Jr. 4-7, Micic 3-4, Bridges 2-7, Wong 1-1, Green 1-3, Jeffries 1-3, Simpson 0-4). **Team Rebounds:** 9. **Team Turnovers:** 1. **Blocked Shots:** 5 (Championnie 2, Poole 2, George 1). **Blocked Shots:** 1 (M.Williams). **Turnovers:** 10 (Bridges 1, Smith Jr. 2, Wong 2, Curry, Diabate, Green, Simpson). **Steals:** 4 (Green 2, M.Williams, Smith Jr.). **Technical Fouls:** None.

At: 14,129 (19,077).

Thunder 125, Bucks 96

MILWAUKEE	22	22	31	21	— 96
OKLAHOMA CITY	39	38	38	9	— 125

MILWAUKEE JACKSON Jr. 4-8 1-2 1-10, Prince 3-7 0-0-8, Livingston 4-10 2-4 1-10, Green 1-4 0-0-2, Rollins 5-9-4-4, Poole 2-8 9-0-0-13, Diante 1-3-0-0-21, Jay Williams 19-23-34, 8-13, Jones 0-3-0-0-0, Ducas 3-6-0-0-2, Flagler 1-11-0-0-2, Joe 5-9 3-3-18. **Totals** 51-99 7-8 125.

Three-point Goals: Milwaukee 13-39 (Smith 3-10, Rollins 2-3, Johnson 2-4, Prince 2-4, Connaughton 1-1, Beauchamp 1-2, Jackson Jr. 1-2, Trent Jr. 1-4, Green 0-2, Wright 0-0-3, Livingston 1-2, Holmes 0-1, Valanciunas 0-1-5-8, Diang 3-5, Jay Williams 3-5, Dort 2-2, Giougeous-Alexander 2-3, Wiggins 1-2, Hartenstein 0-1, Jones 0-1, Ducas 0-3, K.Williams 0-3, Flagler 0-8). **Fouled Out:** 1 (None). **Rebounds:** Milwaukee 24 (Beauchamp 6, Johnson 4), Oklahoma City 28 (Giougeous

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

GIRLS' TOP 20

1. Bishop McNamara (18-1) Last ranked: 1

The Mustangs again proved they are the team to beat with a 62-54 win over Bishop Ireton on Wednesday and a 28-point rout of No. 6 Paul VI on Sunday.

2. Sidwell Friends (17-2) LR: 3

The Quakers bounced back from last week's loss to No. 5 Bullis with three wins, including a double-digit victory against No. 12 Potomac School.

3. Bishop Ireton (18-4) LR: 2

Senior Nyla Brooks became the first player in program history to be named a McDonald's all-American.

4. St. John's (20-2) LR: 4

A nine-point win over Good Counsel on Tuesday was the first of three WCAC victories on the week.

5. Bullis (14-6) LR: 5

The Bulldogs picked up their fourth victory over a ranked team with a 76-51 win over No. 13 Maret.

6. Paul VI (17-6) LR: 6

After pushing past No. 7 Elizabeth Seton, 72-60, on Friday, the Panthers couldn't keep pace with the top-ranked Mustangs on Sunday.

7. Elizabeth Seton (15-5) LR: 7

The Roadrunners fell to Paul VI for the second time in 10 days, this time in overtime.

8. Mount Zion Prep (18-7) LR: 8

The Crusaders shook off a five-point loss to No. 10 Virginia Academy with a 47-24 rout of No. 16 Riverdale Baptist.

9. Osbourn Park (15-3) LR: 9

The Yellow Jackets face defending Virginia Class 6 champion Manchester on Thursday.

10. Virginia Academy (13-8) LR: 13

The Patriots get a boost after scoring a quality victory over No. 8 Mount Zion Prep on Friday.

11. West Potomac (16-1) LR: 11

Senior Olivia Jones eclipsed the 20-point mark in wins over South County and C.G. Woodson.

12. Potomac School (14-8) LR: 10

A 10-point loss to Independent School League foe Sidwell Friends offset wins over Georgetown Day and Georgetown Visitation.

13. Maret (15-6) LR: 12

The Frogs' five-game winning streak was snapped by Sidwell Friends.

14. Centreville (15-2) LR: 14

Senior Kennedy Parrott and junior Malia Siriwardene scored 22 points apiece in the Wildcats' 59-53 win at Madison on Friday.

15. Robinson (17-1) LR: 16

Georgia Simonsen finished with 24 points and 10 assists on senior night in a win over Alexandria City.

16. Riverdale Baptist (18-7) LR: Not ranked

The Crusaders join the rankings after they posted a 22-point win over No. 17 Coolidge.

17. Coolidge (22-3) LR: 15

After routing Bowie and Ballou, the Colts fell to Riverdale Baptist.

18. C.H. Flowers (11-2) LR: 18

Coach Rod Hairston's team is unbeaten in 2025.

19. Clarksburg (11-3) LR: 19

The Coyotes continue their quest for another berth in the Montgomery County title game.

20. Bethesda-Chevy Chase (15-2) LR: 20

Coach Ryan Ingalls's Barons easily dispatched Quince Orchard, Paint Branch and Blair.

Dropped out: No. 17 North Point **On the bubble:** Eastern, Langley, North Point, Oakton, South River *Records through Sunday.*

BOYS' TOP 20

1. Gonzaga (21-2) Last ranked: 1

The Eagles are still the team to beat after victories against No. 2 Paul VI and Oak Hill (Virginia).

2. Paul VI (16-5) LR: 2

Losses to Gonzaga and Long Island Lutheran (New York) were countered with wins against College Achieve (New Jersey) and Christ School (North Carolina).

3. Mount Zion Prep (18-4) LR: 3

The Warriors dropped Saturday's game to Sidwell Friends but defeated Veritas Academy (California) two days before.

4. DeMatha (18-5) LR: 8

The Stags are back in the top five. Guard Ashton Meeks scored 35 points in their win over Good Counsel.

5. Sidwell Friends (15-5) LR: 6

Sidwell beat St. Andrew's and Mount Zion Prep but was knocked off by conference foe Flint Hill.

6. Bullis (14-7) LR: 5

An upset by Landon resulted in Bullis's first conference defeat.

7. Bishop O'Connell (18-5) LR: 7

The Knights have won six straight games, recently beating St. John's and Bishop Ireton.

8. St. John's (16-8) LR: 4

St. John's beat St. Mary's Ryken but took losses to Bishop O'Connell and Archbishop Carroll.

9. Jackson-Reed (18-6) LR: 9

The top-ranked public school remains Jackson-Reed, which prevailed after being pushed to overtime by Coolidge.

10. Largo (12-2) LR: 10

Largo was never seriously threatened by the four opponents it faced last week.

11. South Lakes (17-2) LR: 12

The Seahawks, who haven't lost since Jan. 11, handled Chantilly and Centreville last week.

12. Friendship Tech (18-7) LR: 11

A close loss to Christ School ended a week that featured two blowout wins over DCIAA opponents.

13. Hayfield (13-5) LR: 13

Senior Aaron Mcfarlane had a triple-double in Hayfield's win over Annandale: 12 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists.

14. St. Stephen's/ St. Agnes (19-4) LR: 14

The Saints are 5-1 in the Interstate Athletic Conference after notching three more league wins.

15. C.G. Woodson (16-2) LR: 15

Woodson improved to 9-0 in the Patriot District by beating West Potomac and Alexandria City.

16. Clinton Grace Christian (17-6) LR: 18

Make it seven straight wins for Clinton Grace, which was victorious against Virginia Academy and Evergreen Christian.

17. Riverside (18-1) LR: 17

The Rams still haven't lost this calendar year.

18. Sherwood (13-1) LR: 19

Sherwood is on a roll, having extended its winning streak to seven with victories over Kennedy and Gaithersburg.

19. Blake (12-1) LR: 20

Right behind Sherwood is Blake, which beat Watkins Mill and Einstein.

20. Riverdale Baptist (16-8) LR: Not ranked

The Crusaders return to the Top 20 after beating Virginia Academy and St. Stephen's/St. Agnes.

Dropped out: No. 16 Bishop Ireton

On the bubble: Archbishop Spalding, Bishop McNamara, Cardozo, Coolidge, Potomac (Virginia) *Records through Sunday.*



RYAN M. KELLY FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Coach Derek Fisher, who lost 10 players from Woodgrove's first state title team, challenged this season's squad with a difficult schedule.

NOTES

The Woodgrove girls are fast learners

Young squad is chasing another title by sticking with its up-tempo style

FROM STAFF REPORTS

There's only one downside to a state title that was years in the making: the aftermath.

The Woodgrove girls' basketball team lost 10 players, including star seniors Sadie Shores and Angelina Nice as well as breakout freshman Amaya Ramey, after winning its first state title last season.

What remained after those departures was the Wolverines' up-tempo offense and a few contributors who saw what it took to win. Coach Derek Fisher challenged his new-look group with a tough schedule. While the Wolverines have taken some losses, this season's team has continued to grow and play nearly as fast as last year's.

That pace was on full display in Purcellville on Tuesday when Woodgrove tied its own Virginia High School League record for three-pointers made in a game, draining 18 during an 85-72 win over Broad Run.

On Friday, the Wolverines (13-6) topped Champe to earn their eighth victory in nine games and remain unbeaten against Loudoun County opponents. Many of Woodgrove's losses came early in the season. All six were against elite area teams: No. 3 Bishop Ireton, No. 7 Elizabeth Seton, No. 11 West Potomac, No. 14 Centreville, No. 16 Riverdale Baptist and a Langley team on the bubble of The Washington Post's latest Top 20.

"We thought the best way to maybe accelerate things was to have a challenging schedule — you know, throw them in the deep end," Fisher said. "We only won a couple of those, but we've been able to really compete well."

Woodgrove is still playing fast, as evidenced by Tuesday's outburst, but Fisher said its possessions per quarter have dropped from about 20 last season to around 16 or 17. This team is different, with senior Valerie Blankenship, who hit seven threes in Tuesday's win and leads the team in scoring, stepping into a leadership role. Sophomores May Marsh and Mya Bundick also have been key to the team's success.

Those players saw what it took to win the Class 4 state championship last season as secondary options. Now they're leading the charge.

"In addition to them sort of taking on those larger roles, they've been able to help the next group play their role because they know they understand it," Fisher said.

— Nicky Wolcott

Gwynn Park boys adjust

No one at Gwynn Park knew the boys' coach was set to retire, so no one at Gwynn Park had a contingency plan in place.

But when Rob Garner resigned two weeks before the first game of this season, one of Prince George's County's top programs was thrust into a chaotic restructuring.

Eventually, Gwynn Park picked Charlie White as its interim coach.

"I actually got the job two days before the season started," he said. "So we were two weeks behind already. It was tough."

White has been involved with the program for the past six years and said Garner was the best coach he had ever worked for.

While the transition was made easier by his familiarity with the program, White said it didn't change what was always going to be a difficult season. He took over a team that lost nine seniors. Even if he had had months to prepare, it would have been a challenge.

Gwynn Park is 7-9. It had close calls against some of the county's better teams — losing to Fairmont Heights by five, Douglass by eight and Wise by eight — but has not been the contender it was under Garner.

That will take time. White knows that. His goal is to prove why this should be his job for good.

"Being at Gwynn Park is a basketball heaven for any coach," White said.

— Matt Cohen

Landon rallies past Bullis

All season, Landon Coach Chris Bohlen and his staff have reiterated to their players that basketball is a game of runs and success will be largely predicated on their ability to weather the inevitable highs and lows. So when the Bears trailed Bullis 23-4 at the end of the first quarter Tuesday, the message was uncomplicated: Cut the deficit to a more manageable one and, when the

game presents itself for the taking, grab it.

That 19-point deficit turned to 14 by halftime, and then the run came. By the beginning of the fourth quarter, Landon trailed by three. The Bears executed down the stretch and secured a 61-60 win in Bethesda over The Post's sixth-ranked team — a signature Interstate Athletic Conference result. For a team that had lost five games this season by four points or fewer, it was doubly sweet finally seeing that season-long competitiveness reflected in the win column.

"We got huge contributions from everybody — just timely plays at important moments throughout the game from a variety of different players," Bohlen said. "It was great to get that win, see the joy on their faces and see them come into practice the next day with a renewed sense of purpose."

Landon (8-11) was paced in scoring by Ubie Zaid's 19 points. Frankie Mannino, who recently committed to Harvard, had 12, continuing a strong senior campaign during which he scored his 1,000th point. His layup with about two minutes left gave Landon the lead, and Jermaine Drakes Jr. hit a pair of free throws with seconds remaining to seal the win.

Now the mission is building on Tuesday's result.

"It's a battle every night [in the IAC], and we've got to make sure that we're prepared," Bohlen said. "We can't rest on our laurels, so to speak. We've got to get back to work and see if we can really maximize the opportunities ahead of us. With the playoffs starting in a couple of weeks, we're hopefully going to position ourselves to make some noise."

— Emmett Siegel

Reservoir girls hold steady

This season, the Reservoir girls have learned how to put teams away. The Gators, who have won seven games in a row dating from mid-December, have led many of their Howard County matchups by slim margins entering the fourth quarter. Not once have they let a lead slip through their grasp.

Those close wins have created confidence, Coach Deb Taylor said, as the team hunts for a berth in Howard County's inaugural county championship game in late February. That confidence paid off Friday against county powerhouse River Hill as Reser-

Players of the week

Colin Byrd, Tuscarora: The Paul VI transfer had 71 points during a 3-0 week for last year's Virginia Class 4 boys' runner-up.

Kyle Longanecker, Northwest: The senior scored 16 points and made 3 of 5 three-point attempts to help the Jaguars take down Springbrook, 71-67.

Ava Redmond, C.H. Flowers: The sophomore fell one assist shy of a double-double in both of Flowers' wins last week.

Ivanna Wilson Manyacka, Bullis: One of the nation's top sophomores secured her 12th double-double in the Bulldogs' win over Maret by accounting for 23 points and 12 rebounds.

Games to watch

Potomac Falls boys at No. 17 Riverside, Tuesday, 7:15 p.m.

No. 4 St. John's girls at No. 6 Paul VI, Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.

Friendly girls at Gwynn Park, Thursday, 7:15 p.m.

No. 19 Blake boys at Paint Branch, Friday, 7:15 p.m.

voir (11-2) resisted a late Hawks surge to prevail on the road, 54-47.

"Good teams come back, and [River Hill] did," Taylor said. "But we withstood every run that they made, and they never took the lead."

Senior guard Alissa Young, the team's leading scorer, had 15 points, seven rebounds and two assists in the victory. Senior forward Jasmin Shelton, a defensive specialist, recorded 15 points of her own. Freshman center Samantha Feher finished with 10 points, eight rebounds and five steals.

Reservoir entered the season with specific goals. The Gators knew they wanted to repeat as Maryland Class 4A South Region 1 champions after winning that title for the first time last season. They also had their eyes on winning the county championship game. Now, with quality wins over River Hill and Howard, those goals appear well within reach.

"I think getting a couple of these signature wins over these quality teams probably gives the girls belief that [we] can take this further," Taylor said. "For now, the important thing is just not looking past any opponent."

— Noah Ferguson

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Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 961-6555

SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES' SALE
OF REAL PROPERTY AND
ANY IMPROVEMENTS THEREON

2802 CLEAR SHOT DRIVE, UNIT #4
SILVER SPRING, MD 20906

Under a power of sale contained in a certain Deed of Trust dated January 9, 2006, recorded in Liber 31702, Folio 760 among the Land Records of Montgomery County, MD, with an original principal balance of \$206,000.00, default having occurred under the terms thereof, the Sub. Trustees will sell at public auction at the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, at the Court House Door, 50 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850, on

FEBRUARY 21, 2025 AT 3:14 PM

ALL THAT FEE SIMPLE LOT OF GROUND, together with any buildings or improvements thereon located in Montgomery County, MD and described as Unit Numbered 4-36, Phase 36, in a Condominium styled "Wintergate at Longmead Condominium" and more fully described in the aforesaid Deed of Trust.
The property, and any improvements thereon, will be sold in an "as is" condition and subject to conditions, restrictions and agreements of record affecting the same, if any, and with no warranty of any kind.

Terms of Sale: A deposit of \$15,000 in the form of certified check, cashier's check or money order will be required of the purchaser at time and place of sale. Balance of the purchase price, together with interest on the unpaid purchase money at the current rate contained in the Deed of Trust Note, or any modifications thereto, from the date of sale to the date funds are received by the Sub. Trustees, payable in cash within ten days of final ratification of the sale by the Circuit Court. There will be no abatement of interest due to the purchaser in the event additional funds are tendered before settlement. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE FOR THE PURCHASER. Adjustment of all real property taxes, including agricultural taxes, if applicable, and any and all public and/or private charges or assessments, to the extent such amounts survive foreclosure sale, including water/sewer and front foot benefit charges, to be adjusted to date of sale and thereafter assumed by purchaser. Purchaser is responsible for any recapture of homestead tax credit. All transfer taxes and recordation taxes shall be paid by Purchaser. Condominium fees and/or homeowners association dues, if any, shall be assumed by the purchaser from the date of sale. Purchaser is responsible for obtaining physical possession of the property, and assumes risk of loss or damage to the property from the date of sale. The sale is subject to post-sale audit of the status of the loan with the loan servicer including, but not limited to, determination of whether the borrower entered into any repayment agreement, reinstated or paid off the loan prior to the sale. In any such event, this sale shall be null and void, and the Purchaser's sole remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of the deposit without interest. If purchaser fails to settle within ten days of ratification, subject to order of court, purchaser agrees that property will be resold and entire deposit retained by Sub. Trustees as liquidated damages for all losses occasioned by the purchaser's default and purchaser shall have no further liability. The purchaser waives personal service of any papers filed in connection with its failure to settle within ten days of ratification and expressly agrees to accept service by first class mail at the address provided by the Purchaser as identified on the Memorandum of Sale. The defaulted purchaser shall not be entitled to any surplus proceeds resulting from said resale even if such surplus results from improvements to the property by said defaulted purchaser. Sub. Trustees will convey either marketable or insurable title. If they cannot deliver one or the other, or if ratification of the sale is denied by the Circuit Court for any reason, the Purchaser's sole remedy, at law or equity, is return of the deposit without interest. (Matter No. 107983-1)

Howard N. Bierman, Carrie M. Ward, et. al.,
Substitute Trustees

908 York Road • Towson, MD 21204 • 410.828.4838
www.alexcooper.com

Feb 4,11,18, 2025

0012483690

Robertson, Anschutz, Schneid & Crane, LLC
11350 McCormick Road, EP 1, Suite 302
Hunt Valley, MD 21031
470-321-7112

TRUSTEES' SALE OF VALUABLE FEE SIMPLE PROPERTY KNOWN AS 12215 BRAXFIELD CT # 101 ROCKVILLE, MD 20852

Under a power of sale contained in that Deed of Trust dated August 20, 2021, and recorded in Liber 63910, folio 222, of the land records of **MONTGOMERY COUNTY** , with an original principal balance of \$203,700.00, default having occurred under the terms thereof, the appointed Substitute Trustees will offer for sale at public auction at THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY COURTHOUSE LOCATED AT 50 MARYLAND AVENUE, ROCKVILLE, MD 20850 ON,

FEBRUARY 19, 2025 at 1:00 PM

ALL THAT FEE SIMPLE LOT OF GROUND together with any buildings or improvements thereon situated in MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD, located at the above address and more fully described in the aforementioned Deed of Trust.

TAX-ID# - 04-02025978

The property and improvements will be sold in an "AS IS", physical condition without warranty of any kind and subject to all conditions, restrictions and agreements of record affecting the same, including any condominium or homeowners association assessments pursuant to MD Real Property Article AS11-110 and AS11B-117.

TERMS OF SALE: A non-refundable bidder's deposit of \$19,000.00 by cashier's/certified check or such other form as the Substitute Trustee may determine, in their sole discretion, required at time of sale except for the party secured by the Deed of Trust. Risk of loss on purchaser from date and time of auction. The balance of the purchase price together with interest thereon at 2.875% per annum from date of sale to receipt of purchase price by Substitute Trustees must be paid by cashier's check within 10 days after final ratification of sale. The noteholder shall not be obligated to pay interest if it is the purchaser. There will be no abatement of interest due from the purchaser in the event that additional funds are tendered before settlement or if settlement is delayed for any reason. All real estate taxes and other public charges and/or assessments to be adjusted as of the date of sale and thereafter assumed by purchaser. If applicable, any condominium and/or homeowners association dues and assessments that may become due after the date of sale shall be purchaser's responsibility. Purchaser shall pay all transfer, documentary and recording taxes/fees and all other settlement costs. Purchaser is responsible for obtaining possession of the property. Time is of the essence for the purchaser. If purchaser defaults, deposit will be forfeited and property resold at the risk and cost of the defaulting purchaser who shall be liable for any deficiency in the purchase price and all costs, expenses and attorney's fees of both sales. If Substitute Trustees do not convey title for any reason, purchaser's sole remedy is return of deposit without interest. This sale is subject to post-sale audit of the status of the loan secured by the Deed of Trust including but not limited to determining whether prior to sale a bankruptcy was filed; forbearance, repayment or other agreement was entered into; or loan was reinstated or paid off. In any such event this sale shall be null and void and purchaser's sole remedy shall be return of deposit without interest. File No. (24-227235)

Keith Yacko, David Williamson,
Substitute Trustees

300 E. Joppa Road
Harrison Plaza Suite 103
Harrison, MD 21076
410-769-9797

Feb 4,11,18 2025

0012481694

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Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 961-6555

SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES' SALE
OF REAL PROPERTY AND
ANY IMPROVEMENTS THEREON

9876 DOCKSIDE TERRACE
GAITHERSBURG, MD 20886

Under a power of sale contained in a certain Deed of Trust dated April 27, 2017, recorded in Liber 54214, Folio 300 among the Land Records of Montgomery County, MD, with an original principal balance of \$235,550.00, default having occurred under the terms thereof, the Sub. Trustees will sell at public auction at the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, at the Court House Door, 50 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850, on

FEBRUARY 21, 2025 AT 3:18 PM

ALL THAT FEE SIMPLE LOT OF GROUND, together with any buildings or improvements thereon located in Montgomery County, MD and more fully described in the aforesaid Deed of Trust.
The property, and any improvements thereon, will be sold in an "as is" condition and subject to conditions, restrictions and agreements of record affecting the same, if any, and with no warranty of any kind.

Terms of Sale: A deposit of \$25,000 in the form of certified check, cashier's check or money order will be required of the purchaser at time and place of sale. Balance of the purchase price, together with interest on the unpaid purchase money at the current rate contained in the Deed of Trust Note, or any modifications thereto, from the date of sale to the date funds are received by the Sub. Trustees, payable in cash within ten days of final ratification of the sale by the Circuit Court. There will be no abatement of interest due to the purchaser in the event additional funds are tendered before settlement. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE FOR THE PURCHASER. Adjustment of all real property taxes, including agricultural taxes, if applicable, and any and all public and/or private charges or assessments, to the extent such amounts survive foreclosure sale, including water/sewer and front foot benefit charges, to be adjusted to date of sale and thereafter assumed by purchaser. Purchaser is responsible for any recapture of homestead tax credit. All transfer taxes and recordation taxes shall be paid by Purchaser. Condominium fees and/or homeowners association dues, if any, shall be assumed by the purchaser from the date of sale. Purchaser is responsible for obtaining physical possession of the property, and assumes risk of loss or damage to the property from the date of sale. The sale is subject to post-sale audit of the status of the loan with the loan servicer including, but not limited to, determination of whether the borrower entered into any repayment agreement, reinstated or paid off the loan prior to the sale. In any such event, this sale shall be null and void, and the Purchaser's sole remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of the deposit without interest. If purchaser fails to settle within ten days of ratification, subject to order of court, purchaser agrees that property will be resold and entire deposit retained by Sub. Trustees as liquidated damages for all losses occasioned by the purchaser's default and purchaser shall have no further liability. The purchaser waives personal service of any papers filed in connection with its failure to settle within ten days of ratification and expressly agrees to accept service by first class mail at the address provided by the Purchaser as identified on the Memorandum of Sale. The defaulted purchaser shall not be entitled to any surplus proceeds resulting from said resale even if such surplus results from improvements to the property by said defaulted purchaser. Sub. Trustees will convey either marketable or insurable title. If they cannot deliver one or the other, or if ratification of the sale is denied by the Circuit Court for any reason, the Purchaser's sole remedy, at law or equity, is return of the deposit without interest. (Matter No. 365605-1)

Howard N. Bierman, Carrie M. Ward, et. al.,
Substitute Trustees

908 York Road • Towson, MD 21204 • 410.828.4838
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Feb 4,11,18, 2025

0012483692

BWW Law Group, LLC
6003 Executive Blvd., Suite 101
Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 961-6555

SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES' SALE OF REAL PROPERTY AND ANY IMPROVEMENTS THEREON

**12405 LOFT LANE
SILVER SPRING, MD 20904**

**12405 LOFT LANE
SILVER SPRING, MD 20904**

Under a power of sale contained in a certain Deed of Trust dated August 2, 2007, recorded in Liber 34903, Folio 697 among the Land Records of Montgomery County, MD, with an original principal balance of \$332,100.00, default having occurred under the terms thereof, the Sub. Trustees will sell at public auction at the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, at the Court House Door, 50 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850, on

FEBRUARY 21, 2025 AT 3:16 PM

ALL THAT FEE SIMPLE LOT OF GROUND, together with any buildings or improvements thereon located in Montgomery County, MD and more fully described in the aforesaid Deed of Trust.

The property, and any improvements thereon, will be sold in an "as is" condition and subject to conditions, restrictions and agreements of record affecting the same, if any, and with no warranty of any kind.

Terms of Sale: A deposit of \$33,000 in the form of certified check, cashier's check or money order will be required of the purchaser at time and place of sale. Balance of the purchase price, together with interest on the unpaid purchase money at the current rate contained in the Deed of Trust Note, or any modifications thereto, from the date of sale to the date funds are received by the Sub. Trustees, payable in cash within ten days of final ratification of the sale by the Circuit Court. There will be no abatement of interest due to the purchaser in the event additional funds are tendered before settlement. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE FOR THE PURCHASER. Adjustment of all real property taxes, including agricultural taxes, if applicable, and any and all public and/or private charges or assessments, to the extent such amounts survive foreclosure sale, including water/sewer and front foot benefit charges, to be adjusted to date of sale and thereafter assumed by purchaser. Purchaser is responsible for any recapture of homestead tax credit. All transfer taxes and recordation taxes shall be paid by Purchaser. Condominium fees and/or homeowners association dues, if any, shall be assumed by the purchaser from the date of sale. Purchaser is responsible for obtaining physical possession of the property, and assumes risk of loss or damage to the property from the date of sale. The sale is subject to post-sale audit of the status of the loan with the loan servicer including, but not limited to, determination of whether the borrower entered into any repayment agreement, reinstated or paid off the loan prior to the sale. In any such event, this sale shall be null and void, and the Purchaser's sole remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of the deposit without interest. If purchaser fails to settle within ten days of ratification, subject to order of court, purchaser agrees that property will be resold and entire deposit retained by Sub. Trustees as liquidated damages for all losses occasioned by the purchaser's default and purchaser shall have no further liability. The purchaser waives personal service of any papers filed in connection with its failure to settle within ten days of ratification and expressly agrees to accept service by first class mail at the address provided by the Purchaser as identified on the Memorandum of Sale. The defaulted purchaser shall not be entitled to any surplus proceeds resulting from said resale even if such surplus results from improvements to the property by said defaulted purchaser. Sub. Trustees will convey either marketable or insurable title. If they cannot deliver one or the other, or if ratification of the sale is denied by the Circuit Court for any reason, the Purchaser's sole remedy, at law or equity, is return of the deposit without interest. (Matter No. 319262-3)

Howard N. Bierman, Carrie M. Ward, et. al.,
Substitute Trustees

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Feb 4,11,18, 2025

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Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 961-6555

SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES' SALE
OF REAL PROPERTY AND
ANY IMPROVEMENTS THEREON

1025 SCOTT AVENUE
ROCKVILLE, MD 20851

Under a power of sale contained in a certain Deed of Trust dated December 27, 2004, recorded in Liber 29190, Folio 180 among the Land Records of Montgomery County, MD, with an original principal balance of \$312,000.00, default having occurred under the terms thereof, the Sub. Trustees will sell at public auction at the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, at the Court House Door, 50 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850, on

FEBRUARY 21, 2025 AT 3:10 PM

ALL THAT FEE SIMPLE LOT OF GROUND, together with any buildings or improvements thereon located in Montgomery County, MD and more fully described in the aforesaid Deed of Trust.
The property, and any improvements thereon, will be sold in an "as is" condition and subject to conditions, restrictions and agreements of record affecting the same, if any, and with no warranty of any kind.

Terms of Sale: A deposit of \$18,000 in the form of certified check, cashier's check or money order will be required of the purchaser at time and place of sale. Balance of the purchase price, together with interest on the unpaid purchase money at the current rate contained in the Deed of Trust Note, or any modifications thereto, from the date of sale to the date funds are received by the Sub. Trustees, payable in cash within ten days of final ratification of the sale by the Circuit Court. There will be no abatement of interest due to the purchaser in the event additional funds are tendered before settlement. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE FOR THE PURCHASER. Adjustment of all real property taxes, including agricultural taxes, if applicable, and any and all public and/or private charges or assessments, to the extent such amounts survive foreclosure sale, including water/sewer and front foot benefit charges, to be adjusted to date of sale and thereafter assumed by purchaser. Purchaser is responsible for any recapture of homestead tax credit. All transfer taxes and recordation taxes shall be paid by Purchaser. Condominium fees and/or homeowners association dues, if any, shall be assumed by the purchaser from the date of sale. Purchaser is responsible for obtaining physical possession of the property, and assumes risk of loss or damage to the property from the date of sale. The sale is subject to post-sale audit of the status of the loan with the loan servicer including, but not limited to, determination of whether the borrower entered into any repayment agreement, reinstated or paid off the loan prior to the sale. In any such event, this sale shall be null and void, and the Purchaser's sole remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of the deposit without interest. If purchaser fails to settle within ten days of ratification, subject to order of court, purchaser agrees that property will be resold and entire deposit retained by Sub. Trustees as liquidated damages for all losses occasioned by the purchaser's default and purchaser shall have no further liability. The purchaser waives personal service of any papers filed in connection with its failure to settle within ten days of ratification and expressly agrees to accept service by first class mail at the address provided by the Purchaser as identified on the Memorandum of Sale. The defaulted purchaser shall not be entitled to any surplus proceeds resulting from said resale even if such surplus results from improvements to the property by said defaulted purchaser. Sub. Trustees will convey either marketable or insurable title. If they cannot deliver one or the other, or if ratification of the sale is denied by the Circuit Court for any reason, the Purchaser's sole remedy, at law or equity, is return of the deposit without interest. (Matter No. 345153-2)

Howard N. Bierman, Carrie M. Ward, et. al.,
Substitute Trustees

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Feb 4,11,18, 2025

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(301) 961-6555

SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES' SALE OF REAL PROPERTY AND ANY IMPROVEMENTS THEREON

**3850 CLARA DOWNEY AVENUE, UNIT #24
SILVER SPRING, MD 20906**

Under a power of sale contained in a certain Deed of Trust dated December 24, 2016, recorded in Liber 53818, Folio 453 among the Land Records of Montgomery County, MD, with an original principal balance of \$299,786.00, default having occurred under the terms thereof, the Sub. Trustees will sell at public auction at the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, at the Court House Door, 50 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850, on

FEBRUARY 21, 2025 AT 3:12 PM

ALL THAT FEE SIMPLE LOT OF GROUND, together with any buildings or improvements thereon located in Montgomery County, MD and described as Unit No. 24GE, Block No. E, Phase No. 1 Parcel G, Building 6 in the Horizontal Property Regime known as "Norbeck Crossing Condominium" and more fully described in the aforesaid Deed of Trust.

The property, and any improvements thereon, will be sold in an "as is" condition and subject to conditions, restrictions and agreements of record affecting the same, if any, and with no warranty of any kind.

Terms of Sale: A deposit of \$25,000 in the form of certified check, cashier's check or money order will be required of the purchaser at time and place of sale. Balance of the purchase price, together with interest on the unpaid purchase money at the current rate contained in the Deed of Trust Note, or any modifications thereto, from the date of sale to the date funds are received by the Sub. Trustees, payable in cash within ten days of final ratification of the sale by the Circuit Court. There will be no abatement of interest due to the purchaser in the event additional funds are tendered before settlement. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE FOR THE PURCHASER. Adjustment of all real property taxes, including agricultural taxes, if applicable, and any and all public and/or private charges or assessments, to the extent such amounts survive foreclosure sale, including water/sewer and front foot benefit charges, to be adjusted to date of sale and thereafter assumed by purchaser. Purchaser is responsible for any recapture of homestead tax credit. All transfer taxes and recordation taxes shall be paid by Purchaser. Condominium fees and/or homeowners association dues, if any, shall be assumed by the purchaser from the date of sale. Purchaser is responsible for obtaining physical possession of the property, and assumes risk of loss or damage to the property from the date of sale. The sale is subject to post-sale audit of the status of the loan with the loan servicer including, but not limited to, determination of whether the borrower entered into any repayment agreement, reinstated or paid off the loan prior to the sale. In any such event, this sale shall be null and void, and the Purchaser's sole remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of the deposit without interest. If purchaser fails to settle within ten days of ratification, subject to order of court, purchaser agrees that property will be resold and entire deposit retained by Sub. Trustees as liquidated damages for all losses occasioned by the purchaser's default and purchaser shall have no further liability. The purchaser waives personal service of any papers filed in connection with its failure to settle within ten days of ratification and expressly agrees to accept service by first class mail at the address provided by the Purchaser as identified on the Memorandum of Sale. The defaulted purchaser shall not be entitled to any surplus proceeds resulting from said resale even if such surplus results from improvements to the property by said defaulted purchaser. Sub. Trustees will convey either marketable or insurable title. If they cannot deliver one or the other, or if ratification of the sale is denied by the Circuit Court for any reason, the Purchaser's sole remedy, at law or equity, is return of the deposit without interest. (Matter No. 345961-10)

Howard N. Bierman, Carrie M. Ward, et. al.,
Substitute Trustees

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Feb 4,11,18, 2025

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Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 961-6555

SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES' SALE
OF REAL PROPERTY AND
ANY IMPROVEMENTS THEREON

2003 APPERSON PLACE
GERMANTOWN, MD 20876

Under a power of sale contained in a certain Deed of Trust dated December 27, 2016, recorded in Liber 53724, Folio 31 among the Land Records of Montgomery County, MD, with an original principal balance of \$207,000.00, default having occurred under the terms thereof, the Sub. Trustees will sell at public auction at the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, at the Court House Door, 50 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850, on

FEBRUARY 14, 2025 AT 12:12 PM

ALL THAT FEE SIMPLE LOT OF GROUND, together with any buildings or improvements thereon located in Montgomery County, MD and more fully described in the aforesaid Deed of Trust.
The property, and any improvements thereon, will be sold in an "as is" condition and subject to conditions, restrictions and agreements of record affecting the same, if any, and with no warranty of any kind.

Terms of Sale: A deposit of \$13,000 in the form of certified check, cashier's check or money order will be required of the purchaser at time and place of sale. Balance of the purchase price, together with interest on the unpaid purchase money at the current rate contained in the Deed of Trust Note, or any modifications thereto, from the date of sale to the date funds are received by the Sub. Trustees, payable in cash within ten days of final ratification of the sale by the Circuit Court. There will be no abatement of interest due to the purchaser in the event additional funds are tendered before settlement. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE FOR THE PURCHASER. Adjustment of all real property taxes, including agricultural taxes, if applicable, and any and all public and/or private charges or assessments, to the extent such amounts survive foreclosure sale, including water/sewer and front foot benefit charges, to be adjusted to date of sale and thereafter assumed by purchaser. Purchaser is responsible for any recapture of homestead tax credit. All transfer taxes and recordation taxes shall be paid by Purchaser. Condominium fees and/or homeowners association dues, if any, shall be assumed by the purchaser from the date of sale. Purchaser is responsible for obtaining physical possession of the property, and assumes risk of loss or damage to the property from the date of sale. The sale is subject to post-sale audit of the status of the loan with the loan servicer including, but not limited to, determination of whether the borrower entered into any repayment agreement, reinstated or paid off the loan prior to the sale. In any such event, this sale shall be null and void, and the Purchaser's sole remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of the deposit without interest. If purchaser fails to settle within ten days of ratification, subject to order of court, purchaser agrees that property will be resold and entire deposit retained by Sub. Trustees as liquidated damages for all losses occasioned by the purchaser's default and purchaser shall have no further liability. The purchaser waives personal service of any papers filed in connection with its failure to settle within ten days of ratification and expressly agrees to accept service by first class mail at the address provided by the Purchaser as identified on the Memorandum of Sale. The defaulted purchaser shall not be entitled to any surplus proceeds resulting from said resale even if such surplus results from improvements to the property by said defaulted purchaser. Sub. Trustees will convey either marketable or insurable title. If they cannot deliver one or the other, or if ratification of the sale is denied by the Circuit Court for any reason, the Purchaser's sole remedy, at law or equity, is return of the deposit without interest. (Matter No. 371210-1)

Howard N. Bierman, Carrie M. Ward, et. al.,
Substitute Trustees

908 York Road • Towson, MD 21204 • 410.828.4838
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Jan 28, Feb 4,11, 2025

0012483046

Rosenberg & Associates, LLC
4340 East West Highway, Suite 600
Bethesda, MD 20814
(301) 907-8000
www.rosenberg-assoc.com

SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES' SALE OF IMPROVED REAL PROPERTY

**17817 BUEHLER ROAD, APARTMENT #94
OLNEY, MD 20832**

Under a power of sale contained in a certain Deed of Trust from Alan L. Maane dated April 22, 2013 and recorded in Liber 46848, folio 131 among the Land Records of Montgomery County, MD, default having occurred under the terms thereof, the Trustees will sell at public auction at the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, at the Court House Door, 50 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850, on

FEBRUARY 21, 2025 AT 3:02 PM

ALL THAT FEE SIMPLE LOT OF GROUND, together with the buildings and improvements thereon situated in Montgomery County, MD and described as Unit numbered and lettered 1-F-6 in Building 3 in the plan of condominium subdivision known as "Cameback Village Condominium" and more fully described in the aforesaid Deed of Trust. Tax ID #08-01617332.
The property, which is improved by a dwelling, will be sold in an "as is" condition and subject to conditions, restrictions and agreements of record affecting the same, if any, and with no warranty of any kind.

Terms of Sale: A deposit of \$20,000 in the form of certified check, cashier's check or money order will be required of the purchaser at time and place of sale. Balance of the purchase price to be paid in cash within ten days of final ratification of sale by the Circuit Court for Montgomery County. Interest to be paid on the unpaid purchase money at the rate pursuant to the Deed of Trust Note from the date of sale to the date funds are received in the office of the Trustees. There will be no abatement of interest in the event additional funds are tendered before settlement or if settlement is delayed for any reason. The noteholder shall not be obligated to pay interest if it is the purchaser. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE FOR THE PURCHASER. There will be no reduction of interest due to overpayment of deposit. Adjustment of all real property taxes (excluding recapture of previously reduced or exempt taxes) and any other public charges or assessments, to the extent such amount survive foreclosure sale, including water/sewer charges, and ground rent to be adjusted to date of sale and paid at execution of the deed, except where the secured party is the purchaser, and thereafter assumed by the purchaser. All due and/or unpaid private utility, water and sewer facilities charges, condominium assessments and Columbia Assoc. assessments, to the extent such amount survive foreclosure sale, are payable by the purchaser without adjustment. Cost of all documentary stamps, transfer taxes, recaptured taxes (including but not limited to agricultural taxes), and settlement expenses shall be borne by the purchaser. Purchaser shall be responsible for obtaining physical possession of the property. Purchaser assumes the risk of loss or damage to the property from the date of sale forward. Additional terms to be announced at the time of sale. If the Trustees are unable to convey good and marketable title, the purchaser's sole remedy, in law and equity, shall be limited to a refund of the deposit without interest. If the purchaser fails to go to settlement, subject to order of the court, the entire deposit (including any amount received over the advertised deposit amount) shall be forfeited to the Trustees as liquidated damages for all losses occasioned by the purchaser's default and purchaser shall have no further liability. In the event of a resale, the defaulting purchaser shall not be entitled to receive the surplus, if any, even if such surplus results from improvements to the property by said defaulting purchaser and the defaulting purchaser shall be liable to the Trusts to pay and secured party for reasonable attorney's fees and expenses incurred in connection with all litigation involving the Property or the proceeds of the resale. Defaulting purchaser waives personal service of any document filed in connection with such a motion on him/ herself and/or any principal or corporate designee, and expressly agrees to accept service of any such document by regular mail directed to the address provided by said purchaser at the time of the foreclosure auction. Trustees' file number 23-001921-MD-F-1.

Diane S. Rosenberg, Mark D. Meyer, et al., Trustees

908 York Road • Towson, MD 21204 • 410.828.4838
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Feb 4,11,18, 2025

0012483669

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SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES' SALE
OF REAL PROPERTY AND
ANY IMPROVEMENTS THEREON

730 QUINCE ORCHARD BOULEVARD, UNIT #P-1
GAITHERSBURG, MD 20878

Under a power of sale contained in a certain Deed of Trust dated March 19, 2021, recorded in Liber 62518, Folio 294 among the Land Records of Montgomery County, MD, with an original principal balance of \$80,400.00, default having occurred under the terms thereof, the Sub. Trustees will sell at public auction at the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, at the Court House Door, 50 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850, on

FEBRUARY 14, 2025 AT 12:10 PM

ALL THAT FEE SIMPLE LOT OF GROUND, together with any buildings or improvements thereon located in Montgomery County, MD and described as Unit No. P-1/730 in "Diamond Farms Condominium" and more fully described in the aforesaid Deed of Trust.
The property, and any improvements thereon, will be sold in an "as is" condition and subject to conditions, restrictions and agreements of record affecting the same, if any, and with no warranty of any kind.

Terms of Sale: A deposit of \$8,000 in the form of certified check, cashier's check or money order will be required of the purchaser at time and place of sale. Balance of the purchase price, together with interest on the unpaid purchase money at the current rate contained in the Deed of Trust Note, or any modifications thereto, from the date of sale to the date funds are received by the Sub. Trustees, payable in cash within ten days of final ratification of the sale by the Circuit Court. There will be no abatement of interest due to the purchaser in the event additional funds are tendered before settlement. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE FOR THE PURCHASER. Adjustment of all real property taxes, including agricultural taxes, if applicable, and any and all public and/or private charges or assessments, to the extent such amounts survive foreclosure sale, including water/sewer and front foot benefit charges, to be adjusted to date of sale and thereafter assumed by purchaser. Purchaser is responsible for any recapture of homestead tax credit. All transfer taxes and recordation taxes shall be paid by Purchaser. Condominium fees and/or homeowners association dues, if any, shall be assumed by the purchaser from the date of sale. Purchaser is responsible for obtaining physical possession of the property, and assumes risk of loss or damage to the property from the date of sale. The sale is subject to post-sale audit of the status of the loan with the loan servicer including, but not limited to, determination of whether the borrower entered into any repayment agreement, reinstated or paid off the loan prior to the sale. In any such event, this sale shall be null and void, and the Purchaser's sole remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of the deposit without interest. If purchaser fails to settle within ten days of ratification, subject to order of court, purchaser agrees that property will be resold and entire deposit retained by Sub. Trustees as liquidated damages for all losses occasioned by the purchaser's default and purchaser shall have no further liability. The purchaser waives personal service of any papers filed in connection with its failure to settle within ten days of ratification and expressly agrees to accept service by first class mail at the address provided by the Purchaser as identified on the Memorandum of Sale. The defaulted purchaser shall not be entitled to any surplus proceeds resulting from said resale even if such surplus results from improvements to the property by said defaulted purchaser. Sub. Trustees will convey either marketable or insurable title. If they cannot deliver one or the other, or if ratification of the sale is denied by the Circuit Court for any reason, the Purchaser's sole remedy, at law or equity, is return of the deposit without interest. (Matter No. 369380-1)

Howard N. Bierman, Carrie M. Ward, et. al.,
Substitute Trustees

908 York Road • Towson, MD 21204 • 410.828.4838
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Jan 28, Feb 4,11, 2025

0012483045

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SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES' SALE OF REAL PROPERTY AND ANY IMPROVEMENTS THEREON

13015 PARKLAND

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2025

EZ

850 Montgomery County **850 Montgomery County**
BWW Law Group, LLC
6003 Executive Blvd., Suite 101
Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 961-6555

**SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES' SALE
OF REAL PROPERTY AND
ANY IMPROVEMENTS THEREON**

**163 TALBOTT STREET
ROCKVILLE, MD 20852**

Under a power of sale contained in a certain Deed of Trust dated July 27, 2005, recorded in Liber 30502, Folio 352 among the Land Records of Montgomery County, MD, with an original principal balance of \$189,600.00, default having occurred under the terms thereof, the Sub. Trustees will sell at public auction at the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, at the Court House Door, 50 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850, on

FEBRUARY 7, 2025 AT 1:30 PM

ALL THAT FEE SIMPLE LOT OF GROUND, together with any buildings or improvements thereon located in Montgomery County, MD and described as Unit No. 163 in Building No. 4 in a plat of condominium Subdivision styled "Plat of Condominium Subdivision-Village Green Condominium" and more fully described in the aforesaid Deed of Trust. The property, and any improvements thereon, will be sold in an "as is" condition and subject to conditions, restrictions and agreements of record affecting the same, if any, and with no warranty of any kind.

Terms of Sale: A deposit of \$16,000 in the form of certified check, cashier's check or money order will be required of the purchaser at time and place of sale. Balance of the purchase price, together with interest on the unpaid purchase money at the current rate contained in the Deed of Trust Note, or any modifications thereto, from the date of sale to the date funds are received by the Sub. Trustees, payable in cash within ten days of final ratification of the sale by the Circuit Court. There will be no abatement of interest due to the purchaser in the event additional funds are tendered before settlement. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE FOR THE PURCHASER. Adjustment of all real property taxes, including agricultural taxes, if applicable, and any and all public and/or private charges or assessments, to the extent such amounts survive foreclosure sale, including water/sewer and front foot benefit charges, to be adjusted to date of sale and thereafter assumed by purchaser. Purchaser is responsible for any recapture of homestead tax credit. All transfer taxes and recordation taxes shall be paid by Purchaser. Condominium fees and/or homeowners association dues, if any, shall be assumed by the purchaser from the date of sale. Purchaser is responsible for obtaining physical possession of the property, and assumes risk of loss or damage to the property from the date of sale. The sale is subject to post-sale audit of the status of the loan with the loan servicer including, but not limited to, determination of whether the borrower entered into any repayment agreement, reinstated or paid off the loan prior to the sale. In any such event, this sale shall be null and void, and the Purchaser's sole remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of the deposit without interest. If purchaser fails to settle within ten days of ratification, subject to order of court, purchaser agrees that property will be resold and entire deposit retained by Sub. Trustees as liquidated damages for all losses occasioned by the purchaser's default and purchaser shall have no further liability. The purchaser waives personal service of any papers filed in connection with its failure to settle within ten days of ratification and expressly agrees to accept service by first class mail at the address provided by the Purchaser as identified on the Memorandum of Sale. The defaulted purchaser shall not be entitled to any surplus proceeds resulting from said resale even if such surplus results from improvements to the property by said defaulted purchaser. Sub. Trustees will convey either marketable or insurable title. If they cannot deliver one or the other, or if ratification of the sale is denied by the Circuit Court for any reason, the Purchaser's sole remedy, at law or equity, is return of the deposit without interest. (Matter No. 197897-2)

Howard N. Bierman, Carrie M. Ward, et. al.,
Substitute Trustees

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Jan 21,28,Feb 4, 2025 0012482440

Robertson, Anschutz, Schneid & Crane, LLC
11350 McCormick Road, EP 1, Suite 302
Hunt Valley, MD 21031
470-321-7112

**TRUSTEES' SALE OF
VALUABLE FEE SIMPLE PROPERTY
KNOWN AS
7505 DEMOCRACY BLVD #A-417
BETHESDA, MD 20817**

Under a power of sale contained in that Deed of Trust dated October 30, 2020, and recorded in Liber 61581, folio 156, of the land records of **MONTGOMERY COUNTY**, with an original principal balance of \$303,403.00, default having occurred under the terms thereof, the appointed Substitute Trustees will offer for sale at public auction at THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY COURTHOUSE LOCATED AT 50 MARYLAND AVENUE, ROCKVILLE, MD 20850 ON,

FEBRUARY 19, 2025 at 1:00 PM

ALL THAT FEE SIMPLE LOT OF GROUND together with any buildings or improvements thereon situated in MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD, located at the above address and more fully described in the aforementioned Deed of Trust.

TAX-ID# - 10-01593510 and 10/02177605

The property and improvements will be sold in an "AS IS" physical condition without warranty of any kind and subject to all conditions, restrictions and agreements of record affecting the same, including any condominium or homeowners association assessments pursuant to Md Real Property Article AS11-110 and AS11B-117.

TERMS OF SALE: A non-refundable bidder's deposit of \$28,500.00 by cashier's/certified check or such other form as the Substitute Trustee may determine, in their sole discretion, required at time of sale except for the party secured by the Deed of Trust. Risk of loss on purchaser from date and time of auction. The balance of the purchase price together with interest thereon at 3.625% per annum from date of sale to receipt of purchase price by Substitute Trustees must be paid by cashier's check within 10 days after final ratification of sale. The noteholder shall not be obligated to pay interest if it is the purchaser. There will be no abatement of interest due from the purchaser in the event that additional funds are tendered before settlement or if settlement is delayed for any reason. All real estate taxes and other public charges and/or assessments to be adjusted as of the date of sale and thereafter assumed by purchaser. If applicable, any condominium and/or homeowners association dues and assessments that may become due after the date of sale shall be purchaser's responsibility. Purchaser shall pay all transfer, documentary and recording taxes/fees and all other settlement costs. Purchaser is responsible for obtaining possession of the property. Time is of the essence for the purchaser. If purchaser defaults, deposit will be forfeited and property resold at the risk and cost of the defaulting purchaser who shall be liable for any deficiency in the purchase price and all costs, expenses and attorneys' fees of both sales. If Substitute Trustees do not convey title for any reason, purchaser's sole remedy is return of deposit without interest. This sale is subject to post-sale audit of the status of the loan secured by the Deed of Trust including but not limited to determining whether prior to sale a bankruptcy was filed; forbearance, repayment or other agreement was entered into; or loan was reinstated or paid off. In any such event this sale shall be null and void and purchaser's sole remedy shall be return of deposit without interest. File No. (23-161866)

Keith Yacko, David Williamson,
Substitute Trustees

HARVEY K. WHITE
AUCTIONEERS, LLC

300 E. Johns Road
Huntington Plaza, Suite 1103
Baltimore, MD 21206
410-769-9797

Feb 4,11,18 2025 0012481693

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Potomac, MD 20854
(301) 230-5241
File No. 1.40345.00002

**SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES' SALE
OF IMPROVED REAL PROPERTY**

**13604 Canal Vista Court
Potomac, Maryland 20854
(the "Property")**

Under a power of sale contained in a certain Second Deed of Trust, Assignment of Rents and Security Agreement (the "Deed of Trust") from Trudah Mills-Harding (a/k/a Trudah A. Mills and Trudah M. Harding) to Jeffrey P. Shiller, trustee, dated December 8, 2017, and recorded in Book 55536, at Page 94, among the Land Records of Montgomery County, Maryland, default having occurred under the terms thereof, the Substitute Trustees ("Trustees") will sell at public auction at the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, located at 50 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD 20850, at the Court House Door on,

February 13, 2025 at 11:00 AM

All that Fee-Simple lot of ground and the improvements thereon, if any, identified as Tax ID No. 06-01827518 and more fully described in the aforesaid Deed of Trust.

The Property and improvements, if any, thereupon will be sold in "as is" condition and subject to conditions, restrictions, and agreements of record affecting the same, if any, and with no warranty of any kind. The Property will be sold subject to a senior deed of trust, the amount(s) to be announced at the time of sale if available to the Trustees.

Terms of Sale: A deposit of \$15,000.00 by cashier's or certified check, or in such other form as the Substitute Trustees may determine, at their sole discretion at the time of sale. Balance of the purchase price to be paid in cash within ten days of final ratification of sale by the Circuit Court for Montgomery County. Interest to be paid on the unpaid purchase money at the rate of 13% from the date of sale to the date funds are received in the office of the Trustee. There will be no abatement of interest in the event additional funds are tendered before settlement or if settlement is delayed for any reason. The noteholder shall not be obligated to pay interest if it is the purchaser. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE FOR THE PURCHASER. Adjustment of all real property taxes, including agricultural taxes, if applicable, and any and all public and/or private charges or assessments, including water/sewer charges and ground rent, to be adjusted to the date of the sale and thereafter assumed by the purchaser. Condominium fees and/or homeowners association dues, if any, shall be assumed by the purchaser from the date of sale forward. Costs of all documentary stamps, transfer and recordation taxes, and settlement expenses shall be borne by the purchaser. Purchaser shall be responsible for obtaining physical possession of the Property. Purchaser assumes the risk of loss or damage to the Property from the date of sale forward. Additional terms may be announced at the time of sale.

If the Trustees are unable to convey good and marketable title, the purchaser's sole remedy in law and equity shall be limited to a refund of the deposit without interest. If the purchaser fails to go to settlement, the deposit shall be forfeited to the Trustees for application against all expenses, attorneys' fees and the full commission on the sale price of the above-scheduled foreclosure sale. In the event of default, all expenses of this sale (including attorneys' fees and the full commission of this sale) shall be charged against and paid out of the forfeited deposit. Any remaining deposit shall be applied to the loan secured by the Deed of Trust. The Trustees may then re-advertise and resell the Property at the risk and expense of the defaulting purchaser or may avail themselves of any legal or equitable remedies against the defaulting purchaser without re-selling the Property. In the event of a resale, the defaulting purchaser shall not be entitled to receive the surplus, if any, even if such surplus results from improvements to the Property by said defaulting purchaser and the defaulting purchaser shall be liable to the Trustees and secured party for reasonable attorneys' fees and expenses incurred in connection with all litigation involving the Property or the proceeds of the resale.

Benjamin P. Smith
Rebekah F. Paradis
Substitute Trustees

HARVEY K. WHITE
AUCTIONEERS, LLC

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Huntington Plaza, Suite 1103
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Jan 28, Feb 4, 11 2025 0012481452

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**SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES' SALE OF
VALUABLE FEE SIMPLE PROPERTY
KNOWN AS
5405 Morton Place
Riverdale, MD 20737**

Under and by virtue of the power of sale contained in a certain Deed of Trust to SCOT BROWNING, Trustee(s), dated February 28, 2022, and recorded among the Land Records of **PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND** in Liber 47315, folio 179, the holder of the indebtedness secured by this Deed of Trust having appointed the undersigned Substitute Trustees, by instrument duly recorded among the aforesaid Land Records, default having occurred under the terms thereof, and at the request of the party secured thereby, the undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction at THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COURTHOUSE LOCATED AT FRONT OF THE DUVAL WING OF THE COURTHOUSE COMPLEX 14735 MAIN ST, UPPER MARLBORO, MD 20772 ON,

FEBRUARY 6, 2025 at 2:00 PM

ALL THAT FEE SIMPLE LOT OF GROUND and improvements thereon situated in PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD and described as follows:

LOT NUMBERED FIFTEEN (15) IN BLOCK LETTERED "C" IN THE SUBDIVISION KNOWN AS "BEACON HEIGHTS" AS PER PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK W.W.V. 23 AT PLAT NUMBERED 38, AMONG THE LAND RECORDS FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND. PROPERTY ADDRESS: 5405 MORTON PLACE, RIVERDALE, MD 20737. PARCEL ID #02-018182

The property will be sold in an "AS IS WHERE IS" condition without either express or implied warranty or representation, including but not limited to the description, fitness for a particular purpose or use, structural integrity, physical condition, construction, extent of construction, workmanship, materials, liability, zoning, subdivision, environmental condition, merchantability, compliance with building or housing codes or other laws, ordinances or regulations, or other similar matters, and subject to easements, agreements and restrictions of record which affect the same, if any. The property will be sold subject to all conditions, liens, restrictions and agreements of record affecting same including any condominium and of HOA assessments pursuant to Md Real Property Article 11-110.

TERMS OF SALE: A deposit of \$20,000.00 PAYABLE ONLY BY CERTIFIED FUNDS, shall be required at the time of sale. CASH WILL NOT BE AN ACCEPTABLE FORM OF DEPOSIT. The balance of the purchase price with interest at 4.5% per annum from the date of sale to the date of payment will be paid within TEN DAYS after the final ratification of the sale. There will be no abatement of interest for any reason. Adjustments on all taxes, public charges and special or regular assessments will be made as of the date of sale and thereafter assumed by purchaser. There will be no abatement of taxes, public charges and special or regular assessments for any reason. If applicable, condominium and/or homeowner association dues and assessments that may become due after the time of sale will be the responsibility of the purchaser. Title examination, conveyancing, state revenue stamps, transfer taxes, title insurance, and all other costs incident to settlement are to be paid by the purchaser. Time is of the essence for the purchaser, otherwise the deposit will be forfeited, and the property may be resold at risk and costs of the defaulting purchaser and the purchaser agrees to pay reasonable attorneys' fees for the Substitute trustees, plus all cost incurred, if the Substitute Trustee's have filed the appropriate motion with the Court to resell the property. The purchasers waive personal service of any papers filed in connection with such a motion and expressly agrees to The purchaser agrees to accept service by first class mail at the address provided by the Purchaser as identified on the Memorandum of Sale. If the sale is not ratified or if the Substitute Trustees are unable to convey marketable title in accord with these terms of sale, the purchaser's only remedy is return of the deposit.

The sale is subject to post-sale confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the loan servicer including, but not limited to, determination of whether the borrower entered into a repayment agreement, reinstated, or paid off the loan prior to sale. In any such event, this sale shall be null and void, and the Purchaser's sol remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of the deposit without interest.

Trustee's File No. (85708)

Robert A. Jones, et al
SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES

HARVEY K. WHITE
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Feb 4,11,18, 2025 0012483678

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**SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES' SALE
OF REAL PROPERTY AND
ANY IMPROVEMENTS THEREON**

**55 FOX ROCK DRIVE
MYERSVILLE, MD 21773**

Under a power of sale contained in a certain Deed of Trust dated September 14, 2012, recorded in Liber 9114, Folio 138 among the Land Records of Frederick County, MD, with an original principal balance of \$90,000.00, default having occurred under the terms thereof, the Sub. Trustees will sell at public auction at the Circuit Court for Frederick County, at the Court House Door, 100 W. Patrick St., Frederick, MD 21701, on

FEBRUARY 14, 2025 AT 10:45 AM

ALL THAT FEE SIMPLE LOT OF GROUND, together with any buildings or improvements thereon located in Frederick County, MD and more fully described in the aforesaid Deed of Trust.

The property, and any improvements thereon, will be sold in an "as is" condition and subject to conditions, restrictions and agreements of record affecting the same, if any, and with no warranty of any kind.

Terms of Sale: A deposit of \$5,000 in the form of certified check, cashier's check or money order will be required of the purchaser at time and place of sale. Balance of the purchase price, together with interest on the unpaid purchase money at the current rate contained in the Deed of Trust Note, or any modifications thereto, from the date of sale to the date funds are received by the Sub. Trustees, payable in cash within ten days of final ratification of the sale by the Circuit Court. There will be no abatement of interest due to the purchaser in the event additional funds are tendered before settlement. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE FOR THE PURCHASER. Adjustment of all real property taxes, including agricultural taxes, if applicable, and any and all public and/or private charges or assessments, to the extent such amounts survive foreclosure sale, including water/sewer, ground rent and front foot benefit charges, to be adjusted to date of sale and thereafter assumed by purchaser. Purchaser is responsible for any recapture of homestead tax credit. All transfer taxes and recordation taxes shall be paid by Purchaser. The purchaser shall be responsible for the payment of the ground rent escrow, if required. Condominium fees and/or homeowners association dues, if any, shall be assumed by the purchaser from the date of sale. Purchaser is responsible for obtaining physical possession of the property, and assumes risk of loss or damage to the property from the date of sale. The sale is subject to post-sale audit of the status of the loan with the loan servicer including, but not limited to, determination of whether the borrower entered into any repayment agreement, reinstated or paid off the loan prior to the sale. In any such event, this sale shall be null and void, and the Purchaser's sole remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of the deposit without interest. If purchaser fails to settle within ten days of ratification, subject to order of court, purchaser agrees that property will be resold and entire deposit retained by Sub. Trustees as liquidated damages for all losses occasioned by the purchaser's default and purchaser shall have no further liability. The purchaser waives personal service of any papers filed in connection with its failure to settle within ten days of ratification and expressly agrees to accept service by first class mail at the address provided by the Purchaser as identified on the Memorandum of Sale. The defaulted purchaser shall not be entitled to any surplus proceeds resulting from said resale even if such surplus results from improvements to the property by said defaulted purchaser. Sub. Trustees will convey either marketable or insurable title. If they cannot deliver one or the other, or if ratification of the sale is denied by the Circuit Court for any reason, the Purchaser's sole remedy, at law or equity, is return of the deposit without interest. (Matter No. 367268-2)

Howard N. Bierman, Carrie M. Ward, et. al.,
Substitute Trustees

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Jan 28, Feb 4, 11, 2025 0012483044

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Rockville, MD 20852
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**SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES' SALE
OF REAL PROPERTY AND
ANY IMPROVEMENTS THEREON**

**12 SETON PLACE
EMMITSBURG, MD 21727**

Under a power of sale contained in a certain Deed of Trust dated August 26, 2020, recorded in Liber 14075, Folio 43 among the Land Records of Frederick County, MD, with an original principal balance of \$186,868.00, default having occurred under the terms thereof, the Sub. Trustees will sell at public auction at the Circuit Court for Frederick County, at the Court House Door, 100 W. Patrick St., Frederick, MD 21701, on

FEBRUARY 21, 2025 AT 12:15 PM

ALL THAT FEE SIMPLE LOT OF GROUND, together with any buildings or improvements thereon located in Frederick County, MD and more fully described in the aforesaid Deed of Trust.

The property, and any improvements thereon, will be sold in an "as is" condition and subject to conditions, restrictions and agreements of record affecting the same, if any, and with no warranty of any kind.

Terms of Sale: A deposit of \$17,000 in the form of certified check, cashier's check or money order will be required of the purchaser at time and place of sale. Balance of the purchase price, together with interest on the unpaid purchase money at the current rate contained in the Deed of Trust Note, or any modifications thereto, from the date of sale to the date funds are received by the Sub. Trustees, payable in cash within ten days of final ratification of the sale by the Circuit Court. There will be no abatement of interest due to the purchaser in the event additional funds are tendered before settlement. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE FOR THE PURCHASER. Adjustment of all real property taxes, including agricultural taxes, if applicable, and any and all public and/or private charges or assessments, to the extent such amounts survive foreclosure sale, including water/sewer, ground rent and front foot benefit charges, to be adjusted to date of sale and thereafter assumed by purchaser. Purchaser is responsible for any recapture of homestead tax credit. All transfer taxes and recordation taxes shall be paid by Purchaser. The purchaser shall be responsible for the payment of the ground rent escrow, if required. Condominium fees and/or homeowners association dues, if any, shall be assumed by the purchaser from the date of sale. Purchaser is responsible for obtaining physical possession of the property, and assumes risk of loss or damage to the property from the date of sale. The sale is subject to post-sale audit of the status of the loan with the loan servicer including, but not limited to, determination of whether the borrower entered into any repayment agreement, reinstated or paid off the loan prior to the sale. In any such event, this sale shall be null and void, and the Purchaser's sole remedy, in law or equity, shall be the return of the deposit without interest. If purchaser fails to settle within ten days of ratification, subject to order of court, purchaser agrees that property will be resold and entire deposit retained by Sub. Trustees as liquidated damages for all losses occasioned by the purchaser's default and purchaser shall have no further liability. The purchaser waives personal service of any papers filed in connection with its failure to settle within ten days of ratification and expressly agrees to accept service by first class mail at the address provided by the Purchaser as identified on the Memorandum of Sale. The defaulted purchaser shall not be entitled to any surplus proceeds resulting from said resale even if such surplus results from improvements to the property by said defaulted purchaser. Sub. Trustees will convey either marketable or insurable title. If they cannot deliver one or the other, or if ratification of the sale is denied by the Circuit Court for any reason, the Purchaser's sole remedy, at law or equity, is return of the deposit without interest. (Matter No. 371701-1)

Howard N. Bierman, Carrie M. Ward, et. al.,
Substitute Trustees

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Feb 4,11,18, 2025 0012483678

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Rockville, MD 20852
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**SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES' SALE
OF REAL PROPERTY AND
ANY IMPROVEMENTS THEREON**

**13 EAST ALL SAINTS STREET
FREDERICK, MD 21701**

Under a power of sale contained in a certain Deed of Trust dated April 21, 2011, recorded in Liber 8520, Folio 59 among the Land Records of Frederick County, MD, with an original principal balance of \$300,000.00, default having occurred under the terms thereof, the Sub. Trustees will sell at public auction at the Circuit Court for Frederick County, at the Court House Door, 100 W. Patrick St., Frederick, MD 21701, on

FEBRUARY 7, 2025 AT 10:45 AM

ALL THAT FEE SIMPLE LOT OF GROUND, together with any buildings or improvements thereon located in Frederick County, MD and more fully described in the aforesaid Deed of Trust.

The property, and any improvements thereon, will be sold in an "as is" condition and subject to conditions, restrictions and agreements of record affecting the same, if any, and with no warranty of any kind.

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Feb 4,11,18, 2025 0012483678

Soon, Americans will know all about speedskating star Stolz

STOLZ FROM D1

“When he got the world record, it was on the top of the 8 o’clock news, not just sports,” said Giel van Nuland, a Dutchman who had come from the Dutch city of ’s-Hertogenbosch to take a picture with Stolz at the World Cup.

This was the first World Cup event in Milwaukee since 2005, and the victory gifts on the medal stands were foam cheeseheads, the customary headwear of Green Bay Packers fans. Stolz dutifully put his cheesehead on after each win, grinning wanly as old friends in the stands whooped and yelled things like, “Go Pack Go!” It was probably the last whiff of modest local fame he will have for the next several months. His family has hired an agent, who has told them the endorsement offers will be coming and soon he will be the face of the approaching Olympics.

Stolz says he is ready, even if he doesn’t seem sure what the new fame will be like. What he does know: how to skate fast and how to win. He figures the more he does that, the sooner companies will be asking him to appear in their ads.

“Hopefully I can get some good sponsors going into the Olympics” is the most he will say about the subject before adding: “Hopefully I don’t disappoint them, which I don’t think I will. I think I should be in pretty good shape. And if I keep the lead I’ve had over the past couple of years, you know, I’ll be doing well.”

Much like their son, Dirk and Jane don’t seek attention. They remain a low-key family. Jane wonders why the television networks want so much to put microphones on her during her son’s races. She doesn’t scream or cheer or clang a bell. She can’t imagine a mother whistling in the stands making for compelling television.

Maybe that’s because she never really spent much time watching television. Years ago, when she and Dirk bought a plot of land and had plans drawn up for a house on top of the property’s hill, they imagined a place where their kids would grow up with the outdoors. Dirk had a friend with a giant dragline excavator dig out a pond three acres wide and 25 feet deep — for fishing.



KYODO NEWS

All but anonymous in the United States — for now — Jordan Stolz has dominated his European rivals. His streak of 18 consecutive World Cup victories was snapped Sunday.

They didn’t want Jordan and his sister — Hannah, two years older — to sit inside. They had a TV but rarely watched. They didn’t have cable. The kids weren’t allowed to have phones. Jordan didn’t get his until 2022, when he went to the Beijing Olympics and Dirk and Jane wanted a way to reach him.

“We have strict godly values,” Jane said. “If you don’t get structure in their lives, [they become] free-range, and who knows what they get?”

One of the few things Jordan

and Hannah did watch as children was the 2010 Winter Olympics. They were mesmerized by Apolo Ohno, the American short-track star. Dirk liked the idea of speedskating; he never had much use for team sports such as baseball and football, loaded with their politics. An officer with the Washington County Sheriff, he worked the late shift so his afternoons were free for his kids. He saw speedskating as a way they could spend time together.

He built a track on the pond, and soon Jordan was out until

close to midnight doing lap after lap. But the pond wasn’t enough — Dirk and Jane began driving their kids to Pettit Ice Center for lessons. It wasn’t long before the coaches there started talking about potential.

Bob Fenn, who coached Olympic gold medalist Shani Davis and skated with Heiden and his sister Beth, told Dirk and Jane that their children could be the next Heidens, who were both Olympic medalists. Jane remembers rolling her eyes and heaving a skeptical “Okayyyyyy.”

While Hannah eventually left skating as a teenager to start a taxidermy business, Jordan kept getting faster and faster. Fenn died when Jordan was around 12, and Corby stepped in with grueling training plans that included running the slopes of a nearby ski resort in the summer. Corby knew Jordan had a chance to be really good but didn’t grasp the extent of it until rival coaches from other countries began saying, “Don’t tell anyone, but I never miss his races.”

Jordan was just 17 when he competed at the Beijing Olympics, finishing a respectable 13th in the 500 meters and 14th in the 1,000. A year later, he won his first World Cup event, and in January of last year, he just stopped losing.

As the streak stretched through this past weekend, Stolz said he could feel the pressure of maintaining it. Corby was more annoyed by it.

“It just goes on and on, and it has to end at some point,” Corby said.

He didn’t want that to happen at March’s world championships or, even worse, at the Olympics. It was better the first loss in a year came now, when the stakes were lower.

On Saturday afternoon, Eric Heiden walked through Pettit Ice

Center largely unrecognized. He’s 66 now, and it has been decades since he moved away from Wisconsin to become an orthopedic surgeon in California and then the Salt Lake City area. He and Davis and Dan Jansen, a three-time Olympian and a 1994 gold medalist also from Wisconsin, had been invited to present the cheeseheads at the medal ceremony.

Heiden is the only American with a genuine sense of what Stolz soon will be facing. Heiden loves the way Stolz has taken over speedskating, especially in an era when most skaters specialize in one or two distances. The two talk frequently, but Heiden is hesitant to push those conversations too far.

“I don’t want to get in his head,” Heiden said. “A lot of people are looking at him as the next Eric Heiden, and that’s a lot to put on his shoulders.”

Lake Placid, he continued, “was a big deal, and I wasn’t ready for it. I was exposed to it in Europe, but then I came home and I wasn’t used to prying eyes.”

Eventually, he adjusted. He thinks Stolz will, too, with help from those around him.

The night before, Stolz set another record in the 1,000 meters with the fastest time at sea level. (The world record he set last year came at altitude in Salt Lake City.) He didn’t celebrate the record with anything more than a wave as he circled the track. Later, he said he could hear the fans’ cheers and the announcer saying he had gotten off to a good start.

“It was nice,” he said.

There wasn’t much more to add.

He was in a hallway beneath the rink, wearing a black U.S. Speedskating jacket and clutching his victory cheesehead and a framed certificate certifying that

his sea-level record time in the 1,000 also was a Pettit Ice Center record. Making history in the building where he has skated since he was a child seemed to mean something to him.

“Usually [the races are] always somewhere else,” Stolz said. “Now it’s at home. I’m comfortable. And it’s great to see all the exposure here, and it’s nice to have a home crowd with Wisconsin people. All the great skaters coming together who haven’t been here in a long time, now they get to see a race on the home ice.”

A few minutes later, Stolz went upstairs to the Pettit Ice Center lobby, where he was surrounded much the way he is in Europe. Everyone, it seemed, wanted to shake his hand or pose for a picture. The top Dutch skaters quietly slipped out the door. This was Stolz’s weekend, the rare moment when America’s next great Olympic star is seen as a star in his own country.

Davis stood a few feet away, wearing a Chicago Bulls cap and leaning on a railing. The two have become good friends, often talking when Stolz trains at U.S. Speedskating’s headquarters near Salt Lake City. Davis raced in the previous World Cup event at Pettit Ice Center in 2005. The crowd had felt huge that weekend, but as he looked around the lobby, he thought this one was bigger.

“And I think it’s something that the sport needs,” Davis said. “It needs an American, young American, forefront-running champion. And I think it helps that he’s a state, hometown hero. And I think it’s just going to explode the more time that we get closer to the Olympics. It’s only going to get bigger and bigger.”

Jordan Stolz and the rest of America are about to find that out.

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ANIMALIA

A new day for the dodo?

Gene-editing technology is being harnessed to try to bring the bird back from extinction

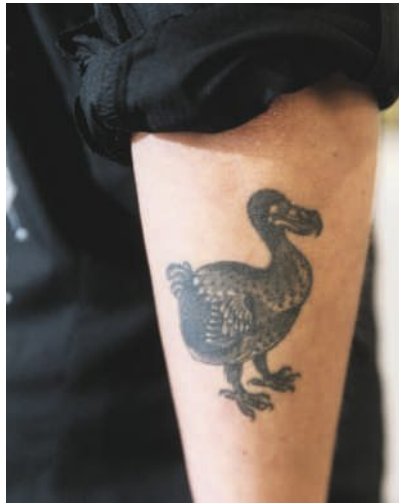
BY DINO GRANDONI
IN DALLAS

The place where the dead may be brought back to life is a drab, single-story building in an office park next to a semitruck lot.

Inside, between rows of incubators and microscopes, Beth Shapiro and her team are attempting a feat straight out of science fiction: reviving the dodo, a bird that's been extinct for more than three centuries.

A growing group of scientists is trying to bring back extinct animals, an idea that is drawing closer than ever because of recent advances in gene editing.

Shapiro, one of the world's leading experts on finding and decoding strains of genetic material from long-lost animals, has already done more than anyone to reveal the secrets of the dodo, the flightless icon of extinction that inspired generations to protect still-living species



Beth Shapiro is chief science officer for Colossal Laboratories & Biosciences. Above, Shapiro shows off her dodo tattoo.

from vanishing.

Yet in the not-so-distant past, Shapiro didn't see why the dodo needed to make a comeback. Like many skeptics of the idea of "de-extinction," she once thought there was no point to bringing back an extinct animal with no home to go to.

Now, unlike the dodo, Shapiro is adapting. She took leave from a cushy university gig last year to become chief science officer at Colossal, a Dallas-based bioscience firm that has raised \$435 million in funding, including \$200 million announced last month.

"As the world changes and technology changes, as a scientist, you should adapt," she said before slipping on a white lab coat over another recent change — a tattoo of a dodo on her arm. "And your opinion of what is possible should adapt to that."

For Shapiro, it's not just about the dodo. The scientific breakthroughs she

SEE **DODO** ON **E6**

Friendships boost health but aren't always easy

BY EMMA NADLER

I am a relationship-based therapist, but like anyone, I can be lured by the illusion that friendship should be logistically simple. But I know from research that the restorative power of true connection requires effort.

Embracing friendship means accepting that friends bring varying levels of inconvenience — yet the many benefits of these relationships are well established.

A 2023 review of 38 research articles about adult friendship indicated that people with close relationships report higher well-being, including overall increased life satisfaction. In addition, a 2010 meta-analysis involving 308,849 participants found that social ties have as much influence on mortality as other known health factors, including smoking cigarettes.

Thankfully, despite the inevitable hurdles of modern life, there are ways to make friendships more accessible. Here are six evidence-backed suggestions that can help you strengthen relationships and build more joy into your days.

Create rituals

For several years, I didn't pursue a close friendship with my colleague and then-casual friend. We would get together about once a year, have a notably joyful

SEE **FRIENDSHIPS** ON **E4**

Protecting seniors from health fraud is a full-time job

BY JOANNE KENEN

CULPEPER, VA — Gladys Williams has been a nurse, a social worker and a special ed teacher.

Now, she's a one-woman bulwark against a geyser of misinformation and disinformation about health, medicine and money directed at older Americans in her community.

"Here," she said, her eyes scanning the crowded luncheon tables at the senior center in Culpeper, Virginia, where she's worked for 42 years, "they can come to me."

As the senior administrator, she makes sure everyone is well fed, well entertained, well exercised — and well informed.

In recent years, "well informed" has become more challenging, as older Americans get inundated by misinformation and disinformation aimed at scamming them, scaring them — or both.

Herbs that give long life. CBD treatments for Alzheimer's. Super vegetables that conquer cancer. Unproven stem cell therapies for arthritis. Miracle cures for just about any ailment delivered right to

SEE **FRAUD** ON **E4**

WELL+BEING

It's safe, it doesn't cost much, and it may actually offer some relief from the common cold

Ask A Doctor

ERICA ORSINI

isn't effective. Is there a cold remedy that actually works?

A: There are plenty of over-the-counter remedies for the common cold, but some carry significant risks, and their efficacy is dubious. The latter applies to phenylephrine, an active ingredient in common cold medications that the FDA is proposing to remove because it isn't effective when taken orally. Herbal supplements, such as elderberry, are popular and also questionable.

But hidden at your pharmacy among the potpourri of cough drops and cold remedies, you can find a low-risk treatment that actually may help: nasal irrigation devices.

Nasal irrigation is the practice of rinsing the nasal passages with saltwater to help remove mucus and debris, hydrate the nasal passages, and reduce

swelling from the common cold. It is one of the best-studied non-pharmaceutical treatments for nasal symptoms, including respiratory infections and even allergies. It is cheap, safe and recommended by the American Academy of Otolaryngology, the leading source on sinus health.

Several small studies suggest that nasal irrigation may even do more than provide symptom relief: It may shorten the duration of cold symptoms and reduce the levels of cold virus in the nasal passages, though these findings need to be corroborated by larger trials to be more conclusive.

If you haven't tried nasal irrigation before, it may feel a bit unusual. But all you'll need is a nasal irrigation device, such as a neti pot or squeeze bottle; sterile, distilled or boiled (and cooled) water; baking soda; and salt. Mix the water, baking soda and salt together to create a saltwater solution (mix approximately 3 teaspoons of non-iodinated salt and 1 teaspoon of baking soda; take 1 teaspoon of this mixture and

SEE **NETIPOT** ON **E5**



ENRICO SOMOGYI/OCEAN ART

Beauty and mystery under the waves

The winners of the Ocean Art 2024 Underwater Photography Contest include this image of juvenile pike in Lake Kulkwitz in Leipzig, Germany. See more of the winning images on **E2**.

ASTROPHYSICS

Discovery of flickering "loops" in the sun's atmosphere may help predict space weather. **E2**

MENTAL HEALTH

"Phone Free February" is a good time to curb screen time and find other outlets. **E3**

WHO SAID IT?

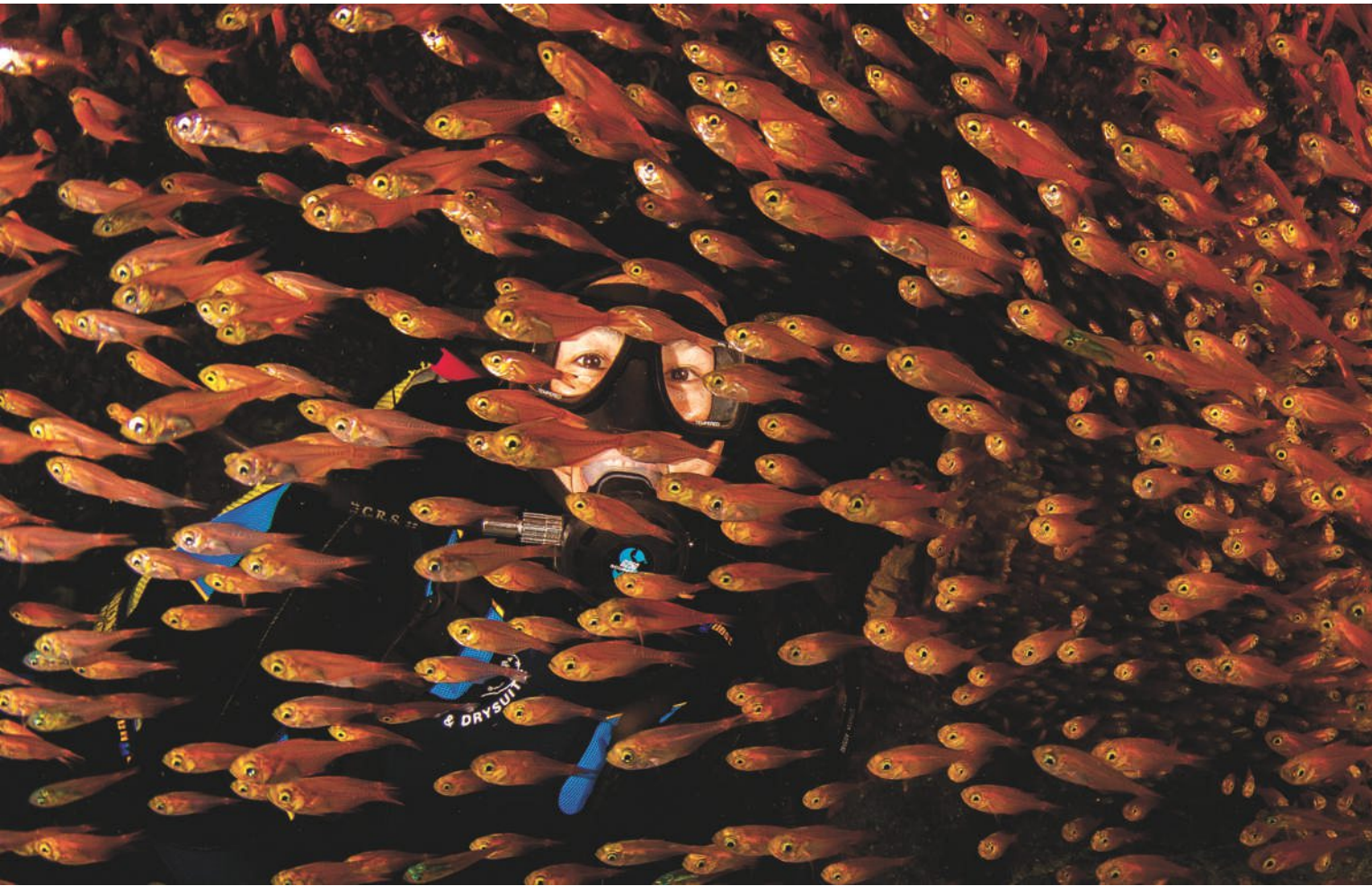
Was it Michelle Obama or RFK Jr.? Take a quiz about their comments on healthy food. **E5**

ASK A THERAPIST

How to spark hope and find meaning and connection, even in the dreariest days of winter. **E6**



HWANHEE KIM/OCEAN ART



TODD AKI/OCEAN ART



KAT ZHOU/OCEAN ART



JENNY STOCK/OCEAN ART



MARTIN BROEN/OCEAN ART

Winners of the Ocean Art 2024 Underwater Photography Contest were announced in January. Clockwise from top: The first-place wide-angle image captures a diver in Rancho Viejo, Mexico. A photo of a diver hidden behind tiny fish in Bali took third place in the wide-angle category. A photo of a male cardinal fish in the Philippines won second place for underwater digital art. Third place in the portrait category went to an image of a blue crab in a cave in Tulum, Mexico. A picture of an adult female blanket octopus in Anilao, Philippines, won second place in the blackwater category.

SCIENCE NEWS

Recent flights appear to have made it snow over Denver, creating snowflakes unintentionally

BY MATTHEW CAPPUCCI

You’ve heard of lake-effect snow and perhaps even ocean-effect snow, but ... airplane-effect snow? That’s the bizarre phenomenon that happened over Denver this weekend.

Flights landing the night of Jan. 25 at Denver International Airport unwittingly helped trigger the formation of ice crystals in a cloud layer just above the ground, producing a bit of snow — though it was mostly light and did not accumulate.

It’s not the first time commercial flights have produced surprise snowfall. It happened in Chicago with planes landing at O’Hare on Nov. 27, 2018, and in Dallas on Feb. 12, 2021.

In the case of the recent snow in Denver, the culprit was aircraft landing on a 12,000-foot-long north-south runway west of the terminals.

As the airplanes made final approach, they flew through a cloud of supercooled water droplets — or water droplets that remain liquid even at temperatures below freezing. That’s because the droplets had nothing to freeze onto to become snowflakes — until the airplanes flew through.

Aircraft have inherently dirty combustion, with small amounts of microscopic particulates ejected out of the engines along with exhaust. Those itty-bitty specks of metal, hydrocarbons and sooty material can act as condensation nuclei, or embryos for water droplets to collect onto and freeze. The result? Lab-grown snowflakes of a sort, albeit unintentional.

The ejection of condensation nuclei into the atmosphere via airplanes is the same basic premise behind the idea of cloud seeding.

So, what makes it clear that it’s the airplane that generated the snow? Look closely at the radar.

At the time, the overall environment did not support widespread snows. Plus, snow showers don’t usually form loop-de-loops and tight curves the way this minor shower did. The snow showers also remained stationary and traced the exact approach path of aircraft landing on the Denver runway.

The snows happened between 6:10 p.m. and 7 p.m. local time — coinciding with about a dozen mostly United Airlines flights arriving then. Radar suggests it was snowing only below 3,000 feet.

Itty-bitty specks of metal, hydrocarbons and sooty material can act as condensation nuclei, or embryos for water droplets to collect onto and freeze.

To properly assess the conditions, we look for supercooled water droplets below 3,000 feet. We know the air needs to be close to saturation — full of moisture — and temperatures have to be below freezing.

At the time, Denver International was reporting 10 miles of visibility, light easterly winds at 7 mph, a temperature of 17.6 degrees and light snow. (So we know the snow was reaching the surface, too.)

Based on the shape of the snow showers, it also appears that one plane in particular very effectively produced snow: United Flight 5528 — operated by SkyWest Airlines — which originated from Williston Basin International Airport in northwest North Dakota.

SCIENCE SCAN

ASTROPHYSICS

Invisible ‘loops’ in the sun’s atmosphere might make it easier to predict disruptive solar flares

BY ERIN BLAKEMORE

Flickering, invisible “loops” in the sun’s atmosphere appear to warn of larger solar flares to come, a new analysis finds. The discovery could help scientists better predict space weather, researchers say.

Researchers presented their results, published in the Astrophysical Journal Letters in December, at a recent meeting of the American Astronomical Society.

It’s notoriously difficult to predict when the sun will belch a large solar flare — an explosive burst of radiation that directly affects Earth’s atmosphere. The flares occur when electromagnetic energy builds up in the solar atmosphere and suddenly releases, flinging energetic particles into space.

The massive radiation bursts can endanger space-bound electronics, satellites and astronauts, and they can pose problems on Earth, too. Though our planet is surrounded by its own atmosphere and magnetic field, some of the charged particles can make their way to Earth within minutes, compromising electronics and endangering GPS and global cellular communications. Predicting them has long been challenging.

The research offers a potential

131 and 304 A Emission Variability Increases Hours Prior to Solar Flare Onset

The Astrophysical Journal Letters

due to coming solar flares: variability in the brightness of the ultraviolet light emitted in magnetically active solar regions in the hours before a solar flare. Scientists studied coronal loops in 50 such regions in the hours before a flare. These coronal loops — flickering arcs of plasma that produce ultraviolet light that can’t be seen by the human eye — seem to vary more in intensity over regions that are soon to flare.

“We found that some of the extreme ultraviolet light above active regions flickers erratically for a few hours before a solar flare,” study leader Emily Mason, a heliophysicist at Predictive Science, said in a news release. “The results are really important for understanding flares and may improve our ability to predict dangerous space weather.”

These emission spikes could be used to create automated flare prediction tools, the researchers write, though “several future studies are necessary” to better understand the processes behind the flares.



ISTOCK

Large solar flares from the sun can compromise GPS and global cellular communications and put astronauts and satellites at risk.

HEALTH & SCIENCE

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BIG NUMBER

27 percent

In 2023, about 1 in 4 high school students ate breakfast daily, according to a survey of adolescent health and well-being from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that charted a decline in students' health lifestyle behaviors between 2013 and 2023. The report, which describes 10-year trends and more recent changes over a two-year period, delves into adolescents' dietary, physical activity and sleep behaviors. It is based on a national youth risk behavior survey of a representative sample of students in grades nine to 12. The study revealed that while there was a slight decrease in soda and sports drink consumption, along with an increase in water consumption, all other indicators of healthy dietary behaviors decreased in high school students. In 2023, only 27 percent ate breakfast daily in the previous seven days. The number was lower for female students, with only 22 percent eating breakfast daily in 2023, compared with 32 percent of male students. Boys were also more likely to eat fruit and vegetables daily and to drink water at least three times a day. Along with other unhealthy behaviors such as not getting enough physical activity, students' poor mental health has been associated with not eating breakfast. Across the full 10-year survey period, there were decreases in the percentage of high school students eating fruit (63 to 55 percent), vegetables (61 to 58 percent) and breakfast daily (38 to 27 percent). The only positive trends were increases in the percentage of students who drank plain water at least three times per day (49 to 54 percent), which the survey began tracking in 2015. Fewer students also said they drank soda in 2023 than in 2013 — 22 percent avoided soda in 2013, but 31 percent did so 10 years later. The report emphasizes that a healthy diet, along with daily physical activity and sufficient sleep, contributes to a healthy lifestyle. "The 10-year trends from 2013 to 2023 also show a decline in healthy dietary, physical activity, and sleep behaviors," the survey reported.

— Ian McMahan

HEALTH NEWS

Tuberculosis outbreak in Kansas is alarming but not the biggest in U.S. history, CDC says

By Devi Shastri

A year-long outbreak of tuberculosis in the Kansas City, Kansas, area has taken local experts aback, even if it does not appear to be the largest outbreak of the disease in U.S. history as a state health official claimed last month.

"We would expect to see a handful of cases every year," said Dana Hawkinson, an infectious-disease doctor at the University of Kansas Health System. But the high case counts in this outbreak were a "stark warning," he said.

The outbreak has killed two people since it started in January 2024, Kansas state health department spokeswoman Jill Bronaugh said. Health officials in Kansas say there is no threat to the general public.

TB is caused by bacteria that lives in people's lungs and spreads through the air when they talk, cough or sing. It is very infectious but spreads only when a person has symptoms.

Once it infects a person, TB can take two forms. In "active" TB, the person has a long-standing cough and sometimes bloody phlegm, night sweats, fever, weight loss and swollen glands. In "latent" TB, the bacteria hibernates in the person's lungs or elsewhere in the body. It does not cause symptoms and does not spread to others.

Roughly a quarter of the global population is estimated to have TB, but only about 5 to 10 percent of those develop symptoms.

As of Jan. 24, 67 people were being treated for active TB, most of them in Wyandotte County, Bronaugh said. Another 79 have

latent TB. The state's provisional 2024 count shows 79 active TB cases and 213 latent cases in the two counties where the outbreak is happening, Wyandotte and Johnson. Not all of those are linked to the outbreak, and Bronaugh did not respond to requests for clarification.

The situation is improving, though: "We are trending in the right direction right now," Ashley Goss, deputy secretary at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, told the state Senate's Committee on Public Health and Welfare on Jan. 21.

Kansas health officials called the outbreak "the largest documented outbreak in U.S. history" since the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention began counting cases in the 1950s.

But a CDC spokesperson later refuted that claim, noting at least two larger TB outbreaks in recent history. In one, the disease spread through Georgia homeless shelters. Public health workers identified more than 170 active TB cases and more than 400 latent cases from 2015 to 2017. And in 2021, a nationwide outbreak linked to contaminated tissue used in bone transplants sickened 113 patients. TB is treated with antibiotics over the course of several months. A vaccine is available but generally not recommended in the United States because the risk of infection is low and getting the vaccine can interfere with the test doctors use to diagnose the disease.

TB is a leading cause of infectious-disease death worldwide and has been on the rise.

— Associated Press

HEALTH SCAN

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

People experiencing food insecurity are at higher risk of pregnancy complications, study suggests

By Erin Blakemore

Those who go hungry or worry about getting food while pregnant are at higher risk of complications such as preeclampsia and gestational diabetes, a new analysis suggests.

The paper, published in JAMA Network Open, used data from an online health survey of more than 19,300 pregnant Kaiser Permanente Northern California members between June 2020 and September 2022. Researchers did not find similar risks among those who received food assistance while pregnant.

Participants were screened for food insecurity with questions about whether they had run out of food or worried about running out because of money while they were pregnant.

Fourteen percent of the participants — about 2,700 — said they had experienced food insecurity during their pregnancy, and 7.6 percent — 1,470 — said they received food assistance while pregnant.

The analysis found that food-insecure participants had a higher rate of gestational diabetes (10.9 percent vs. 7.9 percent among those without food insecurity), preeclampsia (8.1 percent vs. 6.3 percent) and other complications, including preterm birth and neonatal ICU admission. Gestational hypertension and Caesarean delivery were not associated with food insecurity.

Food Insecurity in Pregnancy, Receipt of Food Assistance, and Perinatal Complications

JAMA Network Open

By contrast, those who said they received food assistance did not experience the same rate of complications.

The reasons for the higher complications rate are unclear, the researchers write: Less healthy diets, inconsistent eating habits and the stress of worrying about food could play a role.

"It was reassuring to see that even during difficult times, receiving food assistance may mitigate the adverse effect of food insecurity on pregnancy complications," Assiamira Ferrara, a senior research scientist at Kaiser Permanente's Division of Research and a study co-author, said in a news release.

The majority of participants who said they received food aid got benefits from the grant-based Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, commonly known as WIC. The program served 6.31 million pregnant and postpartum people, infants and children in 2022, according to the U.S. Agriculture Department.

The researchers recommend better screening for food insecurity in pregnancy and policies that ensure food assistance funding and availability.

FROM CONSUMER REPORTS

The chai you choose makes a difference

By Rachel Meltzer Warren

Chai tea is a spiced drink that originated in India and is now a fixture on many coffeehouse menus. The name is a bit of a misnomer. Chai is the Hindi word for tea — any kind — so chai tea really means "tea tea." The more accurate term is masala chai, a mixture of spices (masala) and tea (chai).

And the name isn't the only thing that separates traditional masala chai from the chai tea latte Starbucks popularized in the late 1990s or the versions that are now served at many coffee shops. The former is a basic combination of black tea leaves and spices blended with milk and sweetener. The latter is often made from presweetened bottled concentrates or powdered creamerlike blends. Not surprisingly, the nutritional benefits and drawbacks of the two, as well as the flavor, are very different.

Origins of masala chai

Spiced beverages have existed in India in one form or another for thousands of years, says Nandita Godbole, author of "Seven Pots of Tea: An Ayurvedic Approach to Sips & Nosh."

Herbs and spices were blended according to Ayurvedic principles (Ayurveda is the traditional system of medicine in India) and brewed with water. People would sip these drinks as part of their health regimens.

Much later, in the mid-19th century, British colonizers started tea plantations in India. At first, the purpose was to supply tea to Great Britain and other countries, Godbole says. But soon, realizing they could create another avenue of demand, the British began marketing tea to Indians. Much of what was sold locally was a lower-quality product, overly bitter and astringent. To balance those flavors, many Indians adopted the British habit of adding milk to tea.

During colonialism, the British also decreased funding to Ayurvedic medicine colleges, and traditional Ayurvedic medicine in India became harder to access. As something of a health hack, Indians started adding spice blends into their chai to treat ailments without having to go to a doctor, Godbole says. And thus,



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Masala chai is a mix of black tea leaves, spices, milk and sweetener.

masala chai was born.

The benefits

The building blocks of masala chai have some pretty solid health benefits.

Black tea is rich in powerful health-promoting antioxidants called polyphenols, says Shailee Saran Varanasi, a registered dietitian nutritionist and adjunct health and nutrition instructor at Logan University in Chesterfield, Missouri. These compounds have been linked to a reduced risk of health problems, such as heart disease and Type 2 diabetes. Sipping black tea can help you feel alert with less jitteriness than java. In addition to being lower in caffeine than coffee, black tea contains a compound called L-theanine, which balances the impact of caffeine. (You can also use decaf black tea to make masala chai.)

Spices vary depending on who's doing the brewing, but black pepper, cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, ginger and star anise are some of the ones most used in masala chai. Spices can be a good source of antioxidants. When scientists ranked the antioxidant levels in more than 3,000 foods, they found that several herbs and spices — such as allspice, cinnamon, cloves and peppermint — came out on top. Some spices may have other health benefits, Varanasi says. For instance, cardamom may help with digestion, while cloves may have antimicrobial properties.

Milk adds protein and calci-

um. (In India, water buffalo milk is often used, but because that's not generally available in the United States, cow's milk, usually whole milk, is standard.) While the teaspoon or two you'd add to a regular cup of tea wouldn't have much of these nutrients, in chai you could be drinking one-quarter to one-half cup. That amount of whole milk provides 2 to 4 grams of protein and 78 to 155 mg of calcium, as much as 15 percent of the Daily Value (1,000 mg).

Sweetener is standard. But you don't need to add much. You can use sugar, agave, honey or jaggery (an unrefined sugar popular in India that is similar to raw cane sugar). Just keep the American Heart Association's recommendations for added sugars in mind; no more than 25 grams per day for women and no more than 36 grams for men. Sugar substitutes are an option, but they may not be much better for you than sugar. Some research has linked them to an increased risk of certain cancers, heart disease, diabetes and more.

The lesser chais

"Premade chai concentrates and powders are convenient but could be high in sugar and calories," Varanasi says. For example, three-fourths of a cup of Oregon Original Chai Tea Latte Concentrate has 130 calories and 31 grams (nearly 8 teaspoons) of added sugar. You could use less of it, but that may lead to a weak-tasting brew. There are lower-sugar options, such as Dona

WELL+BEING

Try 'Phone Free February' to improve your health

By Amanda Morris

Many of us have been there: You go on your phone to check a notification or respond to a text, then end up scrolling through social media for the next 30 minutes.

If this sounds like you and you want to be less tied to your phone, consider the "Phone Free February" challenge.

Despite its name, the nonprofit campaign does not actually ask participants to be phone-free (which is not practical for most people). Instead, Jacob Warn, who co-created the campaign run under the Global Solidarity Foundation, said the goal is for people to reduce their overall smartphone usage. The point is "to get you to question what you need your phone for," Warn said.

Smartphone usage in the United States has exploded over the past decade. The vast majority of Americans own a smartphone. Meanwhile, they are also spending more time online, with roughly a third saying they are "almost constantly" on various devices, including phones.

But, experts said, there's good reason to try cutting back. Emerging research shows that more screen time is associated with higher rates of obesity, sleep problems and mental health issues. And psychologists are treating an increasing number of people who are addicted to their devices.

The good news is that some of these harmful effects seem to be reversible, said Jennifer Margaret Katzenstein, director of psychology, neuropsychology and social work at Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital.

"Reducing your cellphone use by just an hour a day instead of going cold turkey can have a great impact on your quality of life and levels of depression," she said.

Curbing screen time can be difficult because devices are often designed to be addictive, Katzenstein said. Using a device for activities such as scrolling through social media, texting friends or playing games causes the brain to release dopamine, a neurochemical that makes us feel pleasure. Over time, the brain can build up dopamine tolerance, so we need

to use our phones longer to feel the same amount of pleasure. Left unchecked, this pattern can lead to addiction, she said.

If you're not sure whether you are spending an excessive amount of time on your phone, "go into your settings and look at your average daily screen time," Warn said.

If that time causes you concern, here are some tips to help you cut back this February.

Make your phone 'as boring as possible'

Disable push notifications for nonessential apps, or consider deleting them entirely, Warn said. If your phone allows it, change the color filter to grayscale, reduce motion on animations and turn off auto-play for videos. "A lot of it is about how can you make your phone as boring as possible," he said.

Implement screen-free breaks

Blue light from our phone screens stimulates the production of cortisol, a stress hormone, said Larry Rosen, professor emeritus at California State University at Dominguez Hills and co-author of numerous books on the psychology of technology.

Consistently high levels of cortisol are associated with increased anxiety, sleep problems and a wide variety of chronic health conditions. Paradoxically, the excess cortisol triggered by our phone use can send us into a cycle of stress and anxiety that makes us want to use our phones more, Rosen said.

To break this cycle, take screen breaks, Rosen suggested. Start with a 15-minute break in which you don't look at your phone, then time yourself using your phone for one minute to check whatever you want. If you're able to get to the end of 15 minutes without craving your phone, you can keep gradually increasing your screen-free break time until you can go extended periods without thinking about your phone or feeling anxious about checking it.

Once you can tolerate it, try to go screen free one day per week, which can help reset the neuro-

chemicals in your brain and allow you to function better during the rest of the week, said Nicholas Kardaras, an addiction psychologist and clinical assistant professor at Stony Brook Medicine's School of Social Welfare.

Use 'dopamine replacement therapy'

But it's not enough to simply limit screen time, Kardaras said. Solely focusing on cutting back screen time can cause some people to become obsessive and hyper-focus on their phones, he said.

Leaning into healthier pleasurable activities is more effective, he said, because it provides your brain with a replacement for the enjoyment that the phone provided. Kardaras refers to this practice as dopamine replacement therapy.

Having activities prepared ahead of time can redirect your focus from strong urges to use your phone, said Hilarie Cash, chief clinical officer of reStart, a residential treatment facility for people with technology, gaming and social media addictions in Bellevue, Washington. As part of the program, Cash asks her patients to list 100 screen-free activities they enjoy — such as taking a walk outside, reading or doodling. When they have the urge to use their phones, she tells them do one of those activities instead.

It might feel boring at first, but she said this is a sign that your overstimulated brain is going through the process of calming down. "Increasing your tolerance for boredom is a good thing," she said.

Keep your phone out of the bedroom

Smartphone use close to bedtime can be especially detrimental for sleep, Katzenstein said. Try to remove your phone from your bedroom at least one hour before bed and use an analog alarm clock instead of relying on your phone as an alarm clock.

Practice mindfulness

Mindfulness practices can help us identify the underlying emotions that trigger us to crave our smartphones and then handle

Masala Chai, with 10 grams (around 2½ teaspoons) in a half-cup serving. Some brands offer unsweetened versions, but watch for those labeled sugar-free. That often means the product contains a sugar substitute such as sucralose.

And, Varanasi says, these products often don't contain as much tea or the same concentration of spices as traditionally brewed masala chai, so you may not be getting the same benefits or flavor.

Chai it on for size

Using a chai tea bag can be a healthier option; most are just a mix of black tea and spices. Like regular tea, you steep it in hot water and add your own milk and sweetener. Or consider brewing your own masala chai from scratch. "It takes five minutes and can become an exercise in mindfulness for yourself," Godbole says. Here's her recipe for a perfect cup:

- Combine ¾ cup of water, 1 teaspoon of black tea leaves (Assam, Nilgiri Black or Darjeeling are traditional), and sugar or another sweetener to taste in a small pot. (If sweetening with honey, wait until just before serving to add it.) Add a pinch or two of a masala blend or a small amount of different spices you like, such as a sliver of ginger, a cardamom pod and a pinch of cinnamon.

- Bring to a boil. Lower the heat, add ¼ cup of dairy milk and bring to a second boil. (Plant milks will separate if you heat them this way. If you prefer nondairy milk, pour it into a cup and top it with the brewed tea and spices.)

At this point, you can strain the tea-milk mixture into a cup. For a more concentrated flavor, reduce the heat and let it simmer on low for a minute more before straining into a cup.



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those emotions in a healthier way, Cash said.

Try seated meditations or mindful walks in nature (but don't bring your phone with you).

You can also try being more mindful about your phone use, Rosen said. Before you pick up your phone, decide what you will do and how long you plan to use it for, and don't multitask.

Reach out to your friends and family

Let friends and family know that you are planning to reduce your online availability, so that you don't feel as pressured to respond right away, Cash said.

Reaching out to people who can support you in reducing your phone use or who can also participate in the challenge increases your chances of success. Schedule regular check-ins to talk about your progress.

"Reducing your cellphone use by just an hour a day ... can have a great impact."

Jennifer Margaret Katzenstein, Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital

Determine whether you need to take further steps

Over time, maintaining healthier habits with your phone can get easier, Katzenstein said. "It's about being graceful with yourself and realizing that any small change is an improvement," she said.

If you find yourself really struggling even after a few weeks of trying to cut back, consider getting a phone with fewer features, such as a Gabb phone or a Wisephone.

Feeling out of control and experiencing significant anxiety or panic attacks when you try to curb your screen time may be a sign of a more serious addiction, Cash said, and you could seek the help of a mental health professional.

Six ways to make friendship easier

FRIENDSHIPS FROM E1

time and then promptly wait another 12 months or so to connect again — largely because of the distance between us in a sprawling metropolitan area. When we identified a scenic mid-way point and began a weekly walking date, our friendship flourished.

If you want to deepen a relationship, create a regular routine to prioritize the connection — even a phone call or video chat. Or consider celebrating a holiday together, gathering in a group setting monthly (like a book club or card game) or joining something with a friend that has a built-in structure, such as a class or a cause. This will reduce the time spent on coordination and free up mental energy.

Vacation or day-trip together

Setting aside a more substantial amount of time to enjoy a friend's company may take the relationship to the next level. Research in 2019 by Jeffrey Hall, a professor of communication studies at the University of Kansas, suggests that casual friend-

ships take about 30 hours to establish and good friendships around 140 hours.

Once your basic travel itinerary is set, do as much or as little preparation as you desire. When you're on vacation, you can be present, away from the tasks that compete for your energy at home, which means more time to deepen your bond. The getaway doesn't need to be extravagant and could just be a day trip.

I love visiting my dear friend Kate in Durham, North Carolina. Although flying 1,200 miles is far from convenient, we arrange a restorative, retreat-like weekend at her home that includes a daily walk along our favorite hiking trail with a stop at the everblooming Duke Gardens. The hours we spend reconnecting solidify our friendship.

Communicate

In my psychotherapy practice, I talk a lot about the life-altering concept of asking for what you want. Being open about your hopes and needs dramatically increases the chance of getting them met. Plus, assertiveness can help reduce stress, depression



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and anxiety, as a 2024 research study involving a randomized trial of college students indicates.

Psychologists John and Julie Gottman created a process for couples communication that can be applied to friendships, too.

The Gottmans recommend that you first say how you feel and that you're focused on a specific situation. Importantly, don't criticize — instead, make a positive request. For example: "I am feeling overwhelmed by work lately. I would love to de-stress together sometime soon. Do you have any time for a walk next week?"

Schedule your next meetup

To reduce the sting of saying goodbye, my friend Kate and I

plan our next visit before our getaway is over. This also works well for in-town friendships. Scheduling in person reduces the burden of planning and cuts down on irksome logistics-related texts, calls or emails. It also creates a collaborative process, instead of leaving the task of initiating plans on whichever friend is more organized or intentional. Plus, you can talk through where to meet and when, which provides an opportunity for direct communication.

For more freedom and flexibility, try "rough scheduling," a concept developed from the research of Gabriela N. Tonietto, an assistant professor at Rutgers Business School, and Selin A. Malkoc,

Senior advocates fight fraud, misinformation

FRAUD FROM E1

your door (as soon as you hand over your credit card number).

"It's a multimillion-dollar business, defrauding Americans. ... And a lot of it is health," said Darren Linvill, a professor at Clemson University who studies disinformation, including its risk to older people.

Over sweet potatoes, ham, seasoned greens and apple crisp, five friends in their 70s and 80s — Ruby, Esther, Mary, Pauline and Miriam, whose friends call her Mimi — all said they considered themselves reasonably alert to disinformation. The women spoke on the condition that they be identified by first names only as they described their challenges and vulnerabilities and those of their spouses, friends and siblings.

The women — White, Black and Latino, married and single — don't have big online presences. Only one was on Facebook. Two had migrated to TikTok because that's where their grandkids and the good cooking videos are these days.

Yet even without a lot of social media use, disinformation finds them. It's on their phones, in their texts, in their email and through the grapevine.

The women swapped stories about fraudsters and purveyors of fake cures. Several had received emails informing them that coronavirus vaccines harm their hearts or brains. Pauline

had filled out an "arthritis survey" that turned out to be a front for a CBD and gummies merchant that kept trying to get her to make purchases. Several had gotten late-night calls seeking to cajole them into sharing sensitive financial information.

The quintet fretted about a mutual acquaintance who, despite grave health problems, was shunning standard medicine, including antibiotics, in favor of 36 supplements a day peddled by a natural "healer" a few towns over.

When these women come across health advice that sounds fishy, some consult their doctors. Others ask Williams.

"If I don't have the answers, I know where to get them," Williams said, referring to the network of health experts she's built up over four decades.

Seniors like these lunch mates aren't the only targets of digital snake oil; pretty much everyone is. But older people have unique risks. Some have cognitive decline. Others may lack tech or social media savvy. A few studies have also found that seniors are more likely to share and thus inadvertently spread disinformation, and that they may overestimate how well they personally can spot bad information.

Among policymakers and lawmakers, the threats to older people generally get less attention than the risks to kids and teens. But efforts are underway, in government, academia and health-care settings, to come up with



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tools to better protect seniors.

It's an uphill battle.

Doctors and nurses see the harm when patients spurn sound medical advice because of something they see online or maybe what that nice lady down the hall saw online.

"There's a lot of 'drive-by science,'" including attention-grabbing headlines online, that's flat-out wrong, said Kit Bredimus, vice president and chief nursing officer at Midland Health in west Texas. Bredimus has become somewhat of an evangelist for having nurses, who consistently poll as the most trustworthy profession and who spend a lot of bedside time with patients and their families, take a more active role in helping people sort out health fact from fiction.

That's what Williams is doing on a small scale, table by table, in her quiet little Culpeper center. But not everyone has a Gladys Williams.

In Gentry, Arkansas, retired art teacher Lynn Garside, a widow, is

pretty savvy. She knows about checking the veracity of rumors and scary stories on the Snopes website; she has her own internal alarm that warns her when something on Facebook seems too good to be true.

The day she saw "Kelly Clarkson" weight-loss keto gummies, promising to just melt away the pounds without diet or exercise, that alarm went off. But Garside ignored it.

"I knew they were too good to be true," she said ruefully. "But I wanted it to be true. I wanted pounds to just melt off."

She ordered a month's supply, for \$39. But the gummies that arrived in the mail weren't magical fat-melters, and Clarkson had nothing to do with them. The marketing was an AI-generated deepfake manipulation of one of Clarkson's music videos. And not only did the gummies keep coming, other supplements Garside hadn't purchased and didn't want arrived, too, despite her attempt to cancel her order and stop the

a professor at Ohio State University. Rough scheduling assigns a general range of time in a specific day but not a set hour, such as Sunday brunch. This approach to time has been known to preserve a feeling of spontaneity and freedom yet still bolster connection with a clear commitment.

Do something different

If you feel like your friendship is in a rut, try something new to bring fresh energy. Many times, small shifts can help.

If you always meet for a morning coffee near your friend's home, why not plan an evening outing in a new neighborhood? If there's too much talk about the kids or health issues or any other topic you find less inspiring, suggest meeting to discuss something different and specific, such as to get your friend's perspective on a career change.

If you are unsatisfied, instead of passively hoping things will shift on their own, take a more active approach.

If you need additional guidance about how to do this, a skilled therapist can support you to build up the courage — and skills — for more assertive communication.

Of course, when a friendship is too exhausting, when a friend egregiously damages trust, or when there is abuse or harm, a small shift won't do. Instead, the friendship probably should end.

Aim for good enough as a host

A gathering that celebrates a positive life event is associated with boosting social support, according to a 2023 study published in the Journal of Public Policy & Marketing. But don't stress about doing things perfectly.

Instead, bring friends together for a good-enough gathering. That could mean hosting a casual outdoor bonfire to toast a buddy's retirement, or serving tea to your girlfriends instead of a meal. Whatever feels manageable so that you can relax and enjoy your company. I recently enjoyed a few hours in a friend's backyard, where she offered drinks and snacks such as pretzels and chocolate. What I remember is the camaraderie and lively conversation, although the chocolate was tasty, too.

Planning an event also gives you something to look forward to. In fact, the pleasure of anticipating the event may affect your happiness in powerful ways; a 2018 study using MRI imaging illuminated how anticipation affects the bilateral medial prefrontal cortex in the brain, resulting in increased well-being.

Hosting is an act of kindness because it promotes connection — and bringing friends together can spark joy in the people you care about.

So let yourself enjoy it, imperfectly.

Study suggests this key ocean current hasn't started to weaken yet

BY KASHA PATEL

In the movie "The Day After Tomorrow," the Atlantic Ocean's main current system is disrupted and sets off a chain of disastrous events from monster storms to an Ice Age across the northern hemisphere. While Hollywood has a flair for exaggeration, scientists are genuinely concerned about the severity and timing of when this ocean pattern could collapse — debating whether it's already started to weaken.

Some studies have indicated a recent slowdown, but a new study adds evidence to the other side of the controversy. A team of researchers reconstructed this critical ocean circulation system — called the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation, or AMOC — in computer models. They found no evidence of long-term weakening over the past 60 years, contradicting a popular study from a few years ago.

The results don't mean that it won't destabilize in the future though, with climate models predicting some kind of weakening this century.

"We still fully expect the AMOC to decline in the future," said Nicholas Foukal, a co-author of the paper. If the AMOC is more stable than previously thought, he said it "is good news because it gives us time to act."

Struggling to re-create the past

The AMOC is like a conveyor belt that transports water, nutrients and heat throughout the Atlantic Ocean. If that conveyor belt becomes drastically weaker, the effects could be significant — although not quite like Hollywood depicted.

Areas like Southeast Asia and parts of Africa could experience unreliable rain. Farming and fisheries could be disrupted. Disease could migrate to unprotected populations. Average temperatures in western Europe could cool down but could be somewhat countered by global warming.

"Without that transport of heat from the atmosphere and the ocean, the band of hospitable latitudes to society would be much narrower," said Foukal, a physical oceanographer at the University of Georgia. "I think about migration patterns of people, climate refugees, agriculture and disease."

These dire consequences motivate many scientists to study the system and assess when it might greatly weaken. But it's not an easy task.

For one, moorings and buoys in the Atlantic Ocean have been collecting direct observations of the circulation system only since 2004. As a result, scientists must

look at other features that could be a fingerprint for the AMOC. But, the second catch is that the stand-in measurements aren't perfect indicators of what's going on with the ocean currents.

The most prominent dataset used to indirectly measure the AMOC is sea surface temperatures. Previous studies, notably one in 2018, reconstructed the AMOC over decades using sea surface temperature data and the top-tier climate models of that time, and they found a slowdown in the circulation. They were able to link an observed "cold blob" in the North Atlantic to a decline in the AMOC.

Initially, Foukal and his colleagues attempted to re-create this past research by using sea surface temperature data with newer climate models that have higher resolution and include more processes to better represent Earth's atmosphere, oceans and ecosystems.

It didn't work too well. They could see some connection between sea surface temperature and past AMOC behavior, but the relationship was too weak to provide a solid conclusion. The cold blob may not be caused by a decline in the AMOC.

"The actual mechanism that links the sea surface temperature to the AMOC is not as direct of a link as one might expect," Foukal said. "When the AMOC changes, you would expect to see a change in sea surface temperature, not necessarily an immediate cold blob."

Going back to the drawing board, the team looked at what other parts of the North Atlantic's heat budget might be significantly affected if the AMOC were

to change. They saw links between the AMOC and heat exchanges between the air and ocean called air-sea fluxes.

If the AMOC strengthens, more heat is transported north and released in the atmosphere, said co-author Jens Terhaar, who was a postdoctoral student at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution when conducting the research. If it weakens, less heat is moved northward and less heat is absorbed into the atmosphere.

If the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation, or AMOC, is more stable than previously thought, it "is good news because it gives us time to act."

Nicholas Foukal,
study co-author

Using air-sea flux data and calculations in the North Atlantic, the team reconstructed the AMOC from 1963 to 2017 and found no weakening when averaged on the scale of decades. They did find variability on smaller timescales, but they chalked those up to natural changes in the atmosphere.

Compared to the previous studies, Terhaar said "it's not that we corrected a wrong assumption."

He said the assumption was fine based on the available data and models at the time — emphasizing that scientific understanding is always evolving.

An ongoing debate: Is it slowing?

Stefan Rahmstorf, who was an author of the 2018 paper showing the AMOC is weakening, said he's not so sure this new result is more reliable than previous ones — including his study or indirect paleoclimate data.

For one, he said the newer climate models struggle to "reproduce past temperature evolution well" compared with observed data, and he thinks the older model might be better suited for re-creating the AMOC.

Second, he said the observed air-sea heat flux data used in the model isn't as robust as sea surface temperatures, so the study authors used some calculations to fill in gaps temporally. Both Terhaar and Foukal understand the limitations of the dataset but think it's a more sensitive fingerprint of the AMOC and should be a better indicator.

Overall, Rahmstorf has not changed his assessment that the AMOC is weakening. The only way to certainly know if it is destabilizing is through direct observations, "but since we don't have direct current measurements going far enough back in time, some uncertainty about that remains," said Rahmstorf, a professor at the University of Potsdam.

Other scientists who were not involved in the either study said the new research is a step forward in helping to understand the past behavior and where it

may be headed.

"We are seeing a lot of studies seeking to determine whether the AMOC is slowing down ... there is no clear consensus," said Fiamma Straneo, a researcher at Harvard University. She complimented the study for not only appropriately evaluating past approaches to address this question but also providing a more robust indicator of AMOC behavior.

Climate scientist Peter Ditlevsen said the study was a "valuable contribution" in understanding whether the AMOC has been declining or not.

To him, "it was no surprise" that air-sea heat exchanges worked better as a fingerprint of AMOC behavior than sea surface temperatures. It's a more direct physical connection: The whole motor of the AMOC is the heat transferred to the atmosphere, which cools the water and has other effects deeper into the ocean.

But Terhaar warns people not to get a false sense of security just because the AMOC hasn't seemed to decline.

Multiple studies predict a weakening of the AMOC sometime this century. In October, 44 ocean experts wrote an open letter urging for more urgent climate mitigation to minimize the risks of a weakened or collapsed system. The timing of a complete collapse is still debated, but even some weakening could have problematic effects.

"I hope [people don't think] climate change is just not happening or it's not as bad as we think it is, because that's not what this is about," Terhaar said. "It doesn't mean that it's going to stay stable in the future."



ILLUSTRATION BY DARYN RAY FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Did RFK Jr. or Michelle Obama say it about food? Take our quiz.

BY LAUREN WEBER

Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has vowed to go after the food industry, decrying the country's lackluster life expectancy and tapping into a groundswell of support from Americans who want to improve the nation's nutrition, especially among children. It is unclear how much scrutiny

President Donald Trump's pick to run the Department of Health and Human Services will receive on the subject in his upcoming confirmation hearings. But some nutrition advocates and Democrats point out that Republicans raised fierce resistance to first lady Michelle Obama's efforts to revamp the nation's

school lunches 15 years ago, with some blasting her efforts as the "nanny state run amok." Test if you can tell whether these public comments on slimming American waistlines and improving health and nutrition came from Obama or Kennedy.

Who said it?

1

"Fast food was a rare treat. Snacking between meals was frowned upon. I mean, we all had our share of soda, chips and desserts, but certainly not every day, and not at every meal."

2

"We're currently spending billions of dollars treating obesity-related conditions — costs that many of your companies pay in the form of rising health-care expenses; expenses that will only continue to rise and affect your bottom lines if we fail to act."

3

"That's one of the things that [the Department of Education] ought to be doing is to make sure that school lunches are healthy."

4

"Parents are increasingly anxious as they see their kids developing diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure — conditions that would have been unthinkable to find in children just a generation ago."

5

"Get yourself in shape. Start exercising. Stop eating processed foods."

6

"So people literally get addicted to, you know, doughnuts and packages and salted food and all the sugar and all of these other ingredients, and they mass-poison the American public."

7

"And just imagine what that number will look like in 20 years from now if we stand by and let today's unhealthy kids grow into unhealthy adults who become the employees of tomorrow."

Answers

1. Obama: Obama spoke critically of the growing trend of snacking among America's children at the 2010 Grocery Manufacturers Association conference, a gathering of top food industry forces.

2. Obama: At the Grocery Manufacturers Association Conference in March

2010, Obama spoke critically of the food industry to its many powerful players.

3. Kennedy: Echoing Obama's push for years, Kennedy argued for healthier lunch food for America's kids in a conversation in January of last year with Mark Hyman, a physician and wellness proponent who has been a longtime ally of Kennedy.

4. Obama: Obama warned of the exploding rates of obesity and chronic conditions in a White House presentation on food marketing to children she gave in September 2013.

5. Kennedy: Kennedy decried how food was destroying Americans' health in a July conversation streamed on Rumble,

with Russell Brand, the British entertainer turned political commentator popular among people on the right, and Kennedy's wife, actress Cheryl Hines.

6. Kennedy: In May, Kennedy pushed against certain practices in the food industry at the "American Wellness" summit hosted by holistic lifestyle influencer

Aubrey Marcus that promoted Kennedy's presidential run.

7. Obama: When Obama said this in September 2013, 17 percent of kids were considered obese, a number that has now risen to almost 20 percent.

Caitlin Gilbert contributed to this report.

ASK A DOCTOR

Humble neti pot packs mighty punch against cold symptoms

NETIPOT FROM EI

dissolve it in 1 cup of water). While standing over a sink, tilt your head to the side and pour the solution from the neti pot into your upper nostril.

Continue to breathe calmly through your mouth. The saltwater solution will fill your nasal passages and sinuses, cross behind the nasal septum and exit from your lower nostril into the sink. Repeat on the opposite side. Once finished, gently blow your nose to clear mucus and excess saltwater.

How does nasal irrigation work?

Nasal irrigation may alleviate cold symptoms through several mechanisms. During a cold, the mucus-producing cells in your sinuses go into overdrive. Excess mucus clogs nasal passages and reduces the function of hairlike cells in the nasal passages, known as cilia, whose rhythmic beating clears harmful cold viruses. Nasal irrigation with saltwater dissolves the

bonds between mucus molecules, promoting mucus clearance and restoring cilia function.

How often should you perform nasal irrigation?

Researchers haven't determined an ideal frequency for nasal irrigation. But some studies on nasal irrigation have tested a frequency of two to four times daily. I recommend using nasal irrigation as needed for symptom relief. But you should stop if you feel any discomfort or experience bleeding.

Which is better: A neti pot or a squeeze bottle?

There is no rigorous clinical trial data comparing neti pots with squeeze bottles for nasal irrigation. But computational simulations give us a clue as to the fluid dynamics of each technique. While neti pots are more effective at delivering saltwater to the opposite nasal passage, squeeze bottles provide increased flow

and surface coverage of the same-side nasal passage. The most important thing when selecting a nasal irrigation device is to find one that is most comfortable and effective for you, which may mean experimenting with different options.

Are there any risks?

Overall, nasal irrigation is extremely

safe — and time-tested. The practice began thousands of years ago in India using a teapot-shaped device, called a neti pot. In fact, the word "neti" originates from the Sanskrit word meaning "nasal cleansing."

But there are a few precautions to follow. It is critical that nasal irrigation is always performed with boiled, sterilized



WASHINGTON POST ILLUSTRATION; ISTOCK

or distilled water. Although safe to drink, tap water contains germs such as the "brain-eating amoeba" *Naegleria fowleri* and should not be used for nasal irrigation unless boiled before use. Remember to always thoroughly clean your nasal irrigation device with soap and water between uses (check the manufacturer's instructions first, but some neti pots can be placed in the dishwasher).

When should nasal irrigation be avoided?

If you have an ear infection or your nasal passages are completely blocked, you shouldn't practice nasal irrigation. Those at increased risk of nosebleeds should weigh the risks and benefits of nasal irrigation with their physician. There are a few other, less-common circumstances when nasal irrigation should be avoided, including certain birth defects, but in general, most people can practice it safely.

But be careful before trying it on young babies: While there is evidence demonstrating the benefits of nasal irrigation in children, consult a physician for infants under 9 months old.

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DODO FROM E1

hopes to make may not only revive extinct species but also save animals at the brink today, she said.

Still, as she takes on this job, Shapiro still dwells on some of the same questions she had as a critic: not only how, scientifically, to bring it back, but also how to do it ethically.

Extinction

Shapiro, 49, never planned to be a DNA hunter. Raised in northwestern Georgia, she enrolled at the University of Georgia intent on becoming a broadcast journalist. But a nine-week geology and anthropology program during which she toured the country and camped in national parks got her hooked on digging through dirt.

After winning a Rhodes Scholarship at Oxford, she joined the lab of Alan Cooper, a pioneer in the brand-new field studying ancient DNA.

“He said, ‘If you join my lab, you can go to Siberia.’ And I was like, ‘That sounds like a great opportunity,’” she said.

Instead of studying extinct animals by analyzing the shape of their skeletons, as traditional paleontologists do, ancient DNA researchers scour dusty museums for specimens and remote tundra for bones from which to pluck strains of genetic material and unravel the secrets of how prehistoric creatures lived and evolved.

The field was hot, and Shapiro was trying to make a name for herself in it.

“It was a very male-dominated field, and there was a lot of ego,” said Duane Froese, an earth scientist at the University of Alberta who trekked into the Klondike with Shapiro to find ancient bison, bear, horse and mammoth bones. Shapiro was the “glue” that kept scientific collaborations from falling apart over disagreements, he said. “She’s often very good at bringing everybody back together.”

During the course of her career, Shapiro searched for DNA-rich fossils in frigid permafrost and on tropical islands. But one of her first big breaks came while walking the halls of Oxford.

“Every day going into the lab, I would have to pass this dodo specimen,” she said. “It was there in front of me all the time, this icon of extinction.”

When she first asked to be the first geneticist to get her hands on the icon, Oxford’s museum said no.

“She often goes against the flow,” said Daniel Rubenstein, a behavioral ecologist who was a fellow with her at Oxford and who today is a professor at Princeton University. “She’s not timid in tackling wicked problems.”

The Oxford specimen is famous. No one is quite sure how it was acquired, but it probably served an inspiration for the Lewis Carroll character who goaded Alice to compete in an absurd footrace in Wonderland in which everyone won.

In real life, the dodo lost. After the Dutch settled its home, the island of Mauritius, in the 17th century, it took less than three decades for the bird, which laid only one egg a year, to go extinct. The odd, flightless bird didn’t fear humans, who clubbed it for a quick meal. Stowaway rats raided the eggs of the rest.

Even in death, a question persisted: What exactly was it? For centuries, no one was sure what type of bird the dodo was. “This

One scientist’s evolution on de-extinction and a flightless bird



was a genuine mystery,” Shapiro said.

After proving herself with ancient DNA work on other birds, Shapiro persuaded the museum to let her take a chunk of leg bone. Publishing their results in the journal Science, she and her colleagues discovered the dodo is a big, overgrown pigeon.

Evolution

For Shapiro, ancient DNA filled an itch for adventure, allowing her to travel into the past. It was “a way of being a kind of explorer, but in modern times,” she said.

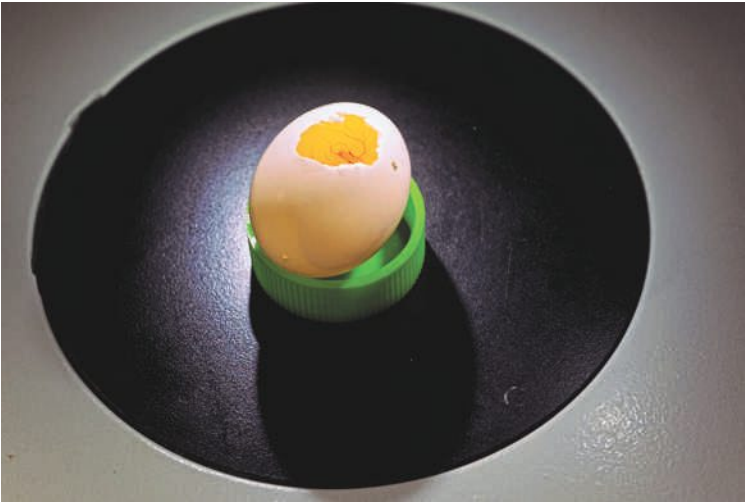
She went on to win a MacArthur Fellowship and become a professor at Pennsylvania State University and then the University of California at Santa Cruz.

Whenever she talked to people about her work, they’d ask the same thing: “whether this means we’re bringing extinct species back to life.”

Shapiro admitted she was “initially pretty reluctant to accept this idea of de-extinction.” But the thought, of course, crossed her mind. She taught a graduate seminar at Santa Cruz on de-extinction to explore the idea and published a book called “How to Clone a Mammoth” in 2015.

Her book’s title promises a how-to manual, but inside she comes to what she called a “positive yet skeptical” conclusion: Though high-tech biology may benefit existing species, cloning a mammoth is technologically impossible, in large part because no one has ever found viable mammoth cells frozen in ice.

And even if an extinct animal could be brought back, she thought, it’d be returning to an altered environment where it may not thrive. “There is no point in bringing the dodo back,” Shapiro told the Wall Street Journal a few years after publishing her book. “Their eggs will be eaten



PHOTOS BY SHELBY TAUBER FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Top, Anna Keyte of Colossal Laboratories & Biosciences points to the aorta of a rock pigeon embryo before extracting germ cells from it on Aug. 29. The embryo is visible through an incision in the shell.

the same way that made them go extinct the first time.”

“She was probably the biggest critic” of de-extinction, Froese said.

Her thinking began to shift while writing the book and after meeting Harvard geneticist George Church.

His idea wasn’t to clone mammoths, per se, but to tweak the genome of its closest relative, the Asian elephant. By using the latest gene-editing tools, including CRISPR, to make changes to the DNA code linked to tusk size and shape, woolly hair and other adaptations to the cold, geneticists could create something mammoth-like.

“I’d been thinking about it wrong,” she said. No, scientists will never clone a genetic copy of an extinct mammoth, like scientists have done with Dolly the sheep. “But that’s not how it would happen.”

When Church and Ben Lamm, a tech entrepreneur, launched Colossal in 2021, Shapiro was still leery, saying at the time that

“there’s tons of trouble everyone is going to encounter along the way.”

Lamm made a point of winning over the doubters by explaining the company’s goals. “It’s not our job to persuade anyone that what we’re doing is a good idea or bad idea. It’s just our job to be transparent and educate,” he said. Trying to bring Shapiro aboard was a no-brainer. “Beth is arguably the top ancient DNA researcher,” Lamm said.

Like for many, the coronavirus pandemic proved to be a turning point in Shapiro’s career.

A number of personal changes piled up — a breast cancer scare, her mother’s Alzheimer’s diagnosis, the murder of her close cousin, raising her first- and fourth-graders while they attended school on Zoom for more than a year. The upheaval prompted her to reflect on how she spends her time.

In quiet moments, she began asking herself and her husband, Richard E. Green, also a professor at UC-Santa Cruz, “Am I using

every minute of my day and the talents that I have and the reach that I have to do the most that I can?”

De-extinction?

At Colossal’s gleaming white lab in Dallas, Shapiro watched as one of the company’s scientists, Anna Keyte, probed an egg of one of the dodo’s closest living relatives, a common pigeon.

Working at one of the lab’s benches, Keyte gingerly inserted a needle into the shell, sucking out a bit of the egg white to make room for a dime-sized window she then cut into the top of the egg with a tiny pair of scissors.

The hole revealed a web of red vessels embedded in the yolk. Keyte maneuvered another needle into the thump-thumping at its center and drew out a sliver of blood to extract the key to de-extincting the dodo: primordial germ cells.

In the embryos of birds, humans and many other organisms, primordial germ cells are the ones destined to become sperm or egg cells in adults. Colossal plans to extract and edit these cells, using a living pigeon’s DNA as a canvass and dabbing the genes of the dodo into it. After that, Shapiro’s team plans to inject the edited cells into the circulating blood of a developing embryo.

The bird that hatches from that egg will be a regular pigeon, but with one key difference: Its reproductive organs will contain dodo DNA. If all goes according to plan, *that* bird’s offspring, in turn, will be a dodo.

Or at least, it will be a close copy. “We’re not trying to make something that’s identical to a dodo,” Shapiro said. “We’re trying to create something that’s able to behave like a dodo would on that landscape in some key, functional way. So a large, flightless bird that wanders around and eats fruits

and spreads the seeds.”

In addition to the dodo, Colossal aims to bring back the woolly mammoth and a carnivorous marsupial called the thylacine, or Tasmanian tiger. Apologies to “Jurassic Park” fans, but the *Tyrannosaurus rex* is not happening, she said.

“When you say de-extinction to the average person, they immediately think ‘Jurassic Park,’” Shapiro said. But the DNA of dinosaurs that died tens of millions of years ago has degraded too far to be stitched back together.

When Colossal launched, it faced many critics in addition to Shapiro with lots of questions: Would de-extinct animals displace modern ones? Could people safely live alongside revived beasts as big as a mammoth? And couldn’t the money be better spent on saving endangered species that are still around?

“Species that have been extinct for thousands of years, to think that you can re-create that ecosystem in today’s world?” said Rubenstein, one of Shapiro’s old collaborators. “I’m not a big fan of that.”

But if anyone can do it right, he added, it’s Shapiro. “Because she’s careful, because she cares about evolutionary history, she’s a good person to be at the helm of this project.”

For Shapiro, doing the dodo justice means making sure it has a home to go to. Last year, she took a trip with one of her sons to Mauritius. Officials there eased her earlier concerns about a lack of habitat for the bird after showing her fenced-off areas where dodos could roam in the future. “They actually have some really advanced conservation work that’s going on to try to restore native habitats,” she said.

Shapiro aims to use gene editing and other Colossal tech to help extinct animals’ living cousins. The company wants to fix “deleterious mutations” in endangered pink pigeons, which suffer from inbreeding, with DNA from museum specimens. Piggybacking on its mammoth work, her team also wants to make a vaccine for a herpes virus that kills elephants.

Shapiro’s evolution on the idea of de-extinction involved “coming to grips with how transformative this technology will be” for living species, she said. She said her new salary is on par with that at her university job. “I guess I swapped tenure for stock options,” she said.

The company plans to make money not with zoo-style exhibits but by selling its technologies as well as credits for conserving biodiversity and sequestering carbon. It hopes future mammoth herds will restore grasslands that will store the climate-warming carbon.

Shapiro is ready to embrace the mammoth in a new way, too.

“I had always wanted a tattoo but could never commit,” she said, referring to the dodo inking on her arm. “One of my best friends is fully covered in tattoos and finally convinced me.”

After putting on her coat at Colossal’s lab, she whirled her thumbs over her head to point to a spot on her back where she could add an image of a mammoth. “I have to keep them at the same size ratio.”

This article is part of Animalia, a column exploring the strange and fascinating world of animals and the ways in which we appreciate, imperil and depend on them.

WELL+BEING

Hope is possible no matter the season. Here’s how to spark it.

Ask A Therapist

EMMA NADLER

The holidays are over, and now there isn’t as much going on socially. How do I keep a sense of joy and hope

during the rest of winter?

Most people are aware of how winter can increase feelings of isolation and loneliness. But hope is possible in every season, and my 15-plus years as a psychotherapist have provided insight on how to boost a sense of possibility, even in this season.

If you sometimes experience a lack of hope, or if you are seeking more of it, there are many things you can do. The information offered here is not a substitute for individualized health care.

Allow yourself to feel

Suppressing negative or more difficult emotions has many consequences, including the reduction of positive feelings. It can also lead to long-term health problems. You can’t truly feel good without sometimes feeling sadness, anger, or embarrassment, or what are considered less desirable states of mind. Find outlets to work

through feelings, such as deep breathing, exercise, confiding in a trusted person in your life and an all-out cry. You may benefit from expert help from a therapist or a support group.

Increased darkness in fall and winter can spark seasonal-related mood changes. If this could be you, or you experience a chronic or pervasive hopelessness, talk with your doctor.

Pursue connection

Strong relationships improve physical and mental health. If you don’t know where to start, join a group with regular meeting times, such as a faith or spiritual congregation, community education classes, or a neighborhood cause. Or reengage with an activity that you used to enjoy.

If you have friends but don’t see them much, make a tangible request such as, “I am feeling down right now, but would really like to see you. Would you be willing to drive out near me sometime this weekend?” Most people tend to underestimate how much others want to help, and friends are more likely to agree to what you desire if they

understand it in a clear and concrete way. And try to state this in positive terms, instead of what you do not want.

Make plans ahead of time

I encourage the people I work with in my therapy practice to make a soothing plan before a possibly difficult or lonely day; this includes grief anniversaries and other milestones but could also include weekends with no set activities.

Do not put this off; knowing that you have structure ahead of time — especially including calming or enjoyable activities — can be relieving. For instance, if you know that you often feel isolated on Saturdays, sign up for a workout class or plan to enjoy a coffee out with a new book or magazine in tow. Or schedule a

walk with a friend who may also crave companionship. Having things on your calendar to look forward to can reduce your stress level.

Find meaning

To paraphrase psychiatrist Viktor Frankl, with a sense of purpose, humans can endure almost anything. A 2018 research study suggests that when individuals have meaning in their lives, they weather stress better, even on more stressful days.

For those who find meaning elusive, it can be cultivated. Start by helping others, which is linked to increased well-being. Volunteer to help someone else, mentor, or fundraise for a cause you believe in. Regular volunteering can reduce loneliness.

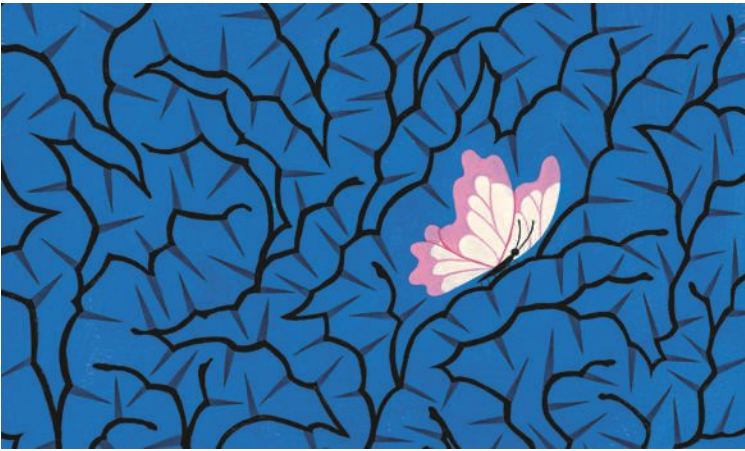


ILLUSTRATION BY CELIA JACOBS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Follow nature’s lead

There are many physical and mental health benefits that correlate with time in nature, including less anxiety and worry. The natural environment showcases the nonlinear cycles of light and darkness, growth and decay, which mirrors the human experience of shifting feelings throughout a day and a lifetime. Accessing nature is a way to decompress and stay in touch with these rhythms — which model the periodic variation in levels of hope.

During the colder months, instead of lounging indoors, consider visiting a farm or regional park to boost a sense of optimism. You could even visit a garden store for a fresh perspective; I often browse at a flower shop when my hope wavers during the long, frigid winters — because of the temperatures, being outside is not always an option. But seeing the bright greenery is a reminder that things still bloom.

Initiate joy

Joy might not just find us — we need to cultivate it.

Accessing joy means scanning for delight in everyday life, and embracing small bursts of playfulness, wonder, beauty and gratitude. This could involve more structure, such as deciding to record three satisfying moments each day by writing them down or snapping a photo

of each. Or you could spend a few minutes at the end of the day considering the joy you encountered. Looking consciously for joy will bring joy to your attention — and can create more of it.

Get creative

Being creative is linked with happiness, and winter offers its own opportunities for innovation. Consider small, attainable acts such as trying out a new cookie recipe (and sharing them with neighbors) or jotting down your intentions for the day near a window. And coziness can lead to inward reflection and a fresh perspective.

Living creatively does not require the construction of entire works of art. It can involve incorporating new ideas such as trying a different route to work or attempting a novel solution for an ongoing problem. After feeling isolated in my private therapy practice, I collaborated with a colleague to start a monthly therapy consultation group, a shift that energized my work.

Creativity is for everyone — and hope is possible in any season. Even winter.

Emma Nadler is a psychotherapist, speaker and the author of “The Unlikely Village of Eden: A Memoir.”

We welcome your comments on this column at AskATherapist@washpost.com.