

Local

Governor Kathy Hochul spoke about her concerns with President Trump's spending bill on Monday.

Sports

The state girls flag football championships were held in Cortland for the second year in a row, with three new winners being crowned.

Community

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Cortland is hosting Kuro Winds Classical Woodwind Trio on June 20.

Cortland Standard

2025 daily No. 68 CORTLAND, N.Y. cortlandstandard.com Tuesday, June 10, 2025 \$2.00

Moravia school superintendent taking leave

Paul Cifonelli  
Managing Editor

MORAVIA — Moravia Superintendent John Birmingham has requested and will be taking a voluntary leave from his duties, effective immediately, according to a letter Moravia Board of Education President Neil Stevens wrote that was posted on the district website Monday.

"We recognize news like this may generate concern or speculation, but ask for your under-

standing and cooperation as we move forward with care, confidentiality, and professionalism required to ensure the best interests of the district and the students," Stevens stated in the letter.

According to the letter, the Board of Education will appoint an acting superintendent Wednesday.

Moravia School District's Central Office did not respond to a request for comment by the time of publication.

YMCA hosts run for late firefighter

Paige Kingsley  
Staff Reporter

CORTLAND — The Cortland YMCA will be hosting the Viking 5K in honor of late fire department captain Michael "Buzzy" Andersen for the second year in a row. The YMCA and Andersen's family hope to make this memorial run an annual event.

This year's Viking 5K will take place June 14 at the Cortland Fire Department on Court Street. The race will start at 10 a.m., but participants are encouraged to show up to the starting line as early as 9 a.m. to mingle and prepare for the event.

Cortland YMCA manager Gina Cusano-McLaughlin works with Anderson's family and the Cortland Fire Department to make this run happen in Andersen's memory. Andersen was a firefighter with the Cortland Fire Department for 22 years, and he died in February 2024 after battling stage 4 lung cancer. The cancer was a result of his service in the fire department and exposure to volatile smoke over the years, so part of the money raised from this run will go to awareness groups for firefighters.

"We will take 20% of all the sponsorship and donated money and donate it to the Fire Fighter Cancer Foundation," Cusano-McLaughlin said. "They help with medical bills that families might be straddled with after firefighters pass away from cancer and help firefighters who are still alive to receive support for any cancer diagnosis that they may have."

The race course is modeled after the Cortland Pumpkin Run, a race Andersen helped organize over the years through his athletic lifestyle. Though some routes through the

city have changed and the course isn't an exact copy, it's very close to the original route Andersen mapped for the Cortland Pumpkin Run.

"The idea when it was created last year is that this memorial run would essentially follow the same path that Mike had created when the YMCA used to host a pumpkin run," Cusano-McLaughlin said. "That run happened so long ago that part of SUNY Cortland has changed and roads that we used to run on are no longer roads. So this course that we're doing is the best that we can do to relive the memory."

Because Andersen spent so much of his life committed to the Cortland Fire Department, it has provided support for the run in the form of hosting the start and finish line and providing the electricity for the timing mechanism for racers. The YMCA also provides incentives for first responders to join in teams of four and has a special medal for the fastest time out of these teams of firefighters and police officers.

The race will be followed by an after-party celebration at Cortland Beer Company across the street from the finish line at the fire department. Cortland Beer Company has also sponsored the race and donated some prizes for raffle baskets to allow the YMCA to raise more money through this race.

Outside of the 20% donation to the Fire Fighter Cancer Foundation, the YMCA will take the donations and proceeds from race registration to add to their Membership for All scholarship fund to give assistance to those who need help paying for membership fees. This is

See YMCA A8



Conrad Janke and Diane Miller are pictured at the dessert booth.

Paige Kingsley/Staff Reporter

Italian culture celebrated at St. Anthony's Festival

Paige Kingsley  
Staff Reporter

CORTLAND — St. Anthony's Festival has completed another successful weekend of family fun on Pomeroy Street, courtesy of St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church and all the volunteers that make the festival a reality.

St. Anthony's Festival is made possible through collaboration between the many members of the community and the church that have been part of this event, with some of them having been involved for decades. It's a labor of love for the members of the church to host the festival and make it a good time for everybody.

For AnnaMaria Maniaci, planning the festival brings back memories of when she attended as a teenager. Now she's able to see people that she otherwise hasn't seen in years.

"When we were young, we used to come here to see who was dating who," Maniaci said. "Over the years, the festival has become a place to get together. You see friends, and for me personally, I see people that I see only once a year that come home just for this. There's someone that came in from California, just to work the festival. People come home for this."

A sense of home is a major theme for the members of St. Anthony's Church, and they take pride in organizing such a beloved event. Stephanie Densmore has a deep personal history with the church and considers the festival to be part of who she is.



Paige Kingsley/Staff Reporter

Church and community volunteers work at the sausage booth.

"I've been coming to this festival every year, except for the twelve years I lived in Italy," Densmore said. "My very first memory was when they built this version of the church. My grandfather brought me to the work site in the basket of his bicycle, and he showed me where the choir was going to be and where the altar was going to be. I was two years old and I still understood him. This festival is the heart of St. Anthony's. It's the most wonderful part of the year for this parish."

Densmore has taken on the role of organizing the procession that takes place each year on Sunday morning of the festival weekend. The procession starts with a morning mass, then banners representing each region of Italy are carried out in the procession with a statue of Saint Anthony before the second day of the festival begins. "There are twenty re-

gional banners of all the different regions of Italy," Densmore said. "Every region has its own history and we all know where we came from as Italians. So people like to carry the banner from their region, from where their family is."

Families often get to represent both sides of their Italian heritage by carrying different banners. Brothers Otto and Conrad Janke are able to carry one banner each, showing pride for both of the regions their family came from.

"My grandfather came from Abruzzi, and my grandmother came from Sicily," Conrad Janke said. "So I carry the banner for Abruzzi, and Otto has Sicily."

Outside of the traditions that honor the roots of those descending from Italian immigrants, the festival is also known for the food. Specifically, people love the Italian sausage and swarm the tent with their food tick-

ets to get sausage with peppers and onions.

Kurt Behrenfeld is in charge of the sausage tent operation and puts hours of preparation into his work, ensuring the festival volunteers are prepared for the demands of the crowd. The peppers and onions come frozen and have to thaw for a few days before they're cooked with extra virgin olive oil to compliment the sausage, which needs to be cut in 6- to 7-inch increments as part of the preparation.

"Prep is the key, for sure," Behrenfeld said. "We get great people to help, volunteers not only from our church but from the community. It all cooks up beautifully. We're an Italian church, so we have people experienced both in the restaurant industry and just being good Italian cooks."

Good Italian cooks are

See FESTIVAL A8

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WEATHER



Tomorrow's Weather:  
High near 74, low around 52.  
Thunderstorms possible  
after 10 a.m.

ONLINE



www.cortlandstandard.com





Cortland County police blotter

Police respond to C-ville crash

The Cortland County Sheriff’s Office responded to a call at 3:58 p.m. Saturday about a two-car accident at the intersection of State Route 13 and Bennie Road in Cortlandville.

It was determined a vehicle making a left turn onto Bennie Road failed to yield the right of way to an oncoming vehicle going north on State Route 13. The occupants of the vehicles were transported to a hospital for further evaluation.

The Cortland County Sheriff’s Office was assisted on the scene by the Town of Cortlandville Fire Department, TLC Ambulance, CNY Towing and Valu Towing.

Cortland County fire report

Structure fire handled on River Street

Nobody was injured in a fire on River Street in Cortland that the City of Cortland Fire Department responded to at 7:01 p.m. Sunday.

Crews found “moderate smoke” coming from a single-family residence. The fire was contained to the kitchen and extinguished within 10 minutes of arrival.

There was “minimal damage” to the overall structure of the house. The entire living area sustained “heavy” smoke damage and the electrical and gas systems were damaged, requiring the utility services to the building to be discontinued.

The fire was determined to have been accidental and originated from a stove in the kitchen.

The Cortland Fire Department was assisted by the City of Cortland Police Department, National Grid, NYSEG and the Cortland County E9-1-1 Communication Center.

Gov. warns of insurance premiums as Trump’s spending bill mulled

New York Governor Kathy Hochul Monday released new data showing the massive impact the GOP’s “Big Ugly” Reconciliation Bill would have on New York families. The latest bill threatens to severely disrupt health coverage for millions of New Yorkers. In addition to increasing the number of uninsured by 1.5 million and stripping \$13.5 billion in annual funding from New York’s healthcare system, the bill would trigger steep increases in private health insurance premiums for vulnerable New Yorkers and impose excessive burdens on consumers enrolling through NY State of Health, the State’s official health plan marketplace.

“The GOP’s Big Ugly bill would slash health care coverage for millions of New Yorkers and raise monthly costs by hundreds of dollars,” Hochul said. “If New York’s Republican delegation won’t stand up for their own constituents, I will.”

Health care providers, insurers and state leaders across the country are sounding the alarm over the proposed leg-



Paul Cifonelli/Managing Editor  
New Yorkers could see health insurance increases if President Donald Trump’s new spending bill is passed, according to New York Governor Kathy Hochul.

islation, which would slash billions in federal health care support. In addition to jeopardizing and in some cases entirely eliminating coverage for New York’s 1.6 million Es-

sential Plan enrollees, the bill would trigger steep increases in costs for many New Yorkers who purchase private health insurance. The elimination of American Rescue Plan en-

hanced premium tax credits, alone, will increase net cost of coverage across the State by an average of 38 percent for 140,000 low-income individuals and families purchasing plans through the state’s marketplace. This equates to an increase in cost of \$114 per month for an individual and \$228 per month for a couple.

See below for a summary of expected premium increases due to the elimination of American Rescue Plan enhanced premium tax credits across the State:

Region	Average Monthly Cost Increase For a Couple (\$)	Average Monthly Cost Increase For a Couple (%)
Central New York	\$256	43%
Finger Lakes	\$248	42%
Mohawk Valley	\$270	49%
Southern Tier	\$265	48%

Hochul announces 2025 ‘Get Outdoors & Get Together Day’ celebrations Saturday

New York Governor Kathy Hochul announced that New York’s “Get Outdoors & Get Together Day” celebrations will be held on Saturday, with events happening at more than 20 locations across New York State as part of the Governor’s initiative to “Get Offline, Get Outside,” and to ensure inclusivity of access to state public lands.

The events bring people of all abilities, ages, identities,

and backgrounds together for a day of fun and healthy activities.

“Get Outdoors & Get Together Day is an opportunity for every New Yorker to visit our world-renowned state parks and public lands, and gather with family and friends while learning something new,” Hochul said. “My Administration has prioritized accessibility and our state parks and lands are here for all New Yorkers to

enjoy, no matter their background or abilities. Everyone is welcome.”

This year’s event is hosted by the State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (Parks), in partnership with the Office of the Chief Disability Officer, the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), the Department of Veterans’

Services (DVS), the Office of Mental Health (OMH) and the Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs.

At 23 locations across the state, participants will be encouraged to discover new skills and enjoy a range of introductory-level outdoor recreation activities such as fishing, nature walks and hikes, birding, archery, paddling, camping demonstrations and more.

Cortland Calendar

**Tuesday, June 10**  
HOMER — Todd McAdam, former managing editor of the Cortland Standard, will address the topic “Independent News Media Through Time and Through Cortland” at 7 p.m. at the Glen Haven School, 7325 Fair Haven Road. The First Amendment was drafted specifically with the thought of journalists acting as a watchdog over government, holding communities accountable to themselves. The methods they used evolved over time and many of the best and most modern were developed during the 157-year life of the Cortland Standard. All are welcome to attend. For more information, call 607-749-4365.

CORTLAND — The Cortland Farmers Market is open from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Court Street in front of Grace & Holy Spirit Episcopal Church. There will be seasonal, farm-fresh vegetables and fruit, locally-raised beef, eggs and honey, as well as fresh baked goods and a variety of

hand made crafts, books and art. There are still openings for vendors. For more information, contact market manager Carla Plunkett at 607 753-0001 or cutonce55@yahoo.com. You can also follow the market at Cortland Farmers Market on Facebook.

**Wednesday, June 11**  
CORTLAND — Dr. Diane Vecchio, a former resident of Cortland, will discuss the impact of immigrant entrepreneurship on the economic development of Cortland at 7 p.m. at United Unitarian Church, 3 Church St. Beginning with the earliest settlers; the English and Irish, to the Greeks, Italians and Eastern European Jews, Vecchio will demonstrate how immigrants contributed to the economic growth of Cortland as they steadily entered the ranks of the American middle class.

**Thursday, June 12**  
HOMER — The Homer Fire Department Field Days will run from June 12 to June 14. There will

be food and rides, with a DJ performing Friday night, live music Saturday night and a parade at 6 p.m. Saturday. All are welcome to attend and participate in the parade.

**Saturday, June 14**  
CINCINNATUS — Cincinnatus Yard Sale Days will feature country roads brimming with yard sales. The Cincinnatus Fire Department will serve breakfast sandwiches in the morning and hot lunch in the afternoon.

CORTLAND — Celebrate the life of Michael “Buzzy” Andersen during his Viking 5K Memorial Run from 10 a.m. to noon starting at 21 Court St., Cortland. He served 22 years at the Cortland City Fire Department and 15 years as a fire investigator. Andersen succumbed to job-related cancer on Feb. 7, 2024. One of his true passions in life was being a competitive athlete, as he was an avid runner and canoeist. He helped coordinate and certify many races and initiated the Cortland Pumpkin Run. The race starts at 10 a.m. Check-in time is 9 a.m.

HOMER — Homer Elks Lodge 2506, in cooperation with American Legion Post 465, invites the public for its annual Flag Day Ceremony 1 p.m. in the parking lot of the Homer Elks Lodge at 82 Cortland Street, Homer. This solemn event is concluded by the proper disposal of unserviceable American flags, conducted by members of American Legion Post 465. The public is invited to bring any unserviceable American flags for disposal. In the event of inclement

weather, the ceremony will be held inside the Elks Lodge.

HOMER — The Homer Regional Farmers Market will be from 9 a.m. to noon on the lawn of the Center for the Arts of Homer at 72 S. Main St. Stock up on farm-fresh produce, artisan goods and treats while enjoying live music.

**Friday, June 20**  
CORTLAND — The Unitarian Universalist Church of Cortland is hosting Kuro Winds Classical Woodwind Trio from 6 to 8 p.m. at the church at 3 Church St. Kuro Winds is an Ithaca-based group of freelance and orchestral musicians. Programs include an entertaining and accessible variety of styles from classical to contemporary repertoire. This program will feature works by Tansman, Auric, Albert and Milhaud. The building opens at 5:30 p.m. A requested donation is \$5 to \$10, but is not required. Refreshments will be available for purchase.

**Wednesday, June 25**  
CORTLAND — The Cortland County Business Development Organization is hosting a workshop for annual state development grant applications from 10 to 11 a.m. at the McNeil & Co. Conference Hub, 11 Main St., Cortland. The informational sessions are hosted by ESD team members and consist of an overview of the REDC Initiative, application tips and time for questions about the CFA process. The workshop is free and open to any business, municipality or not-for profit organization thinking of

applying for assistance to support projects.

**Thursday, June 26**  
CORTLAND — ComedyFLOPs presents All You Can Eat Improv, a live, entirely made-up show based on audience suggestions from 7 to 9 p.m. This event will raise money to support the non-profit JM Murray Center. The suggested donation is \$5.

**Friday, June 27**  
CORTLAND — Movie Under the Stars, presented by the Cortland Youth Bureau, will be held at Yaman Beach. Pack blankets, bring lawn chairs and enjoy Moana 2 under the night sky. All movies begin at dusk.

**Saturday, June 28**  
HARFORD — The Harford Fair will be 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. by Harmony United Methodist Church on the Harford Town Field at 726 Route 221. There will be lots of vendors, games, raffles, a classic car and truck cruise in, a tractor show, bounce house, face painting, fire trucks, cotton candy, popcorn, Sir James Balloon twister, corn hole, prizes, music, food and a bake sale. All are welcome.

**Friday, July 4**  
HOMER — The 30th annual public reading of the United States Declaration of Independence will be held at the Center for the Arts of Homer at 10 a.m. to commemorate the first of our nation’s Charters of Liberty. Charles W. Jermy Jr. and Charles W. Jermy III will recount the circumstances that led up to the Declaration’s adoption in 1776 and talk briefly about its signers and their fates. Those in atten-

dance will be invited to read aloud a short portion of the Declaration. Bells in buildings surrounding the Homer Village Green will be rung fifty times. Plan to join this important commemoration of the 249th birthday of the United States of America. There’s no charge for attending. For more information, please call Bud or Chip at 607-749-4365, or send an e-mail message to cwj1@cornell.edu.

**Saturday, July 5**  
PREBLE — Celebrate America’s Independence in Cortland County with the return of fireworks at Dwyer Memorial Park in Preble. There will be live music, food and family fun. Food vendors will be on-site, as well as a beer and wine garden alongside a full lineup of local bands. The music will begin at 2 p.m. Admission is free, with a \$5 per car parking fee that will begin at 8 a.m. The event is sponsored by Cortland County.

CINCINNATUS — The Cincinnatus Rodeo will be held starting at noon at 5703 State Route 23.

**Saturday, July 26**  
CORTLAND — The Downtown is Done 1-Mile Fun Run will be held to celebrate the end of construction on Main Street, Cortland. The last day to register for the race is at noon July 25. Check-in time is 5 p.m. and the race starts at 6 p.m. Check-in will close 15 minutes before the run starts on Court Street. The course features a large loop through the side streets of downtown Cortland. Sign up online at [runsignup.com/Race/NY/Cortland/DowntownFunRunMile](https://runsignup.com/Race/NY/Cortland/DowntownFunRunMile).

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The Cortland Standard USPS 133580 is published Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday by The Palladium Times at 140 West First Street, Oswego, New York. The newspaper serves Cortland County in New York State. Periodicals postage paid at Cortland, New York.

The publisher reserves the right to change subscription rates during the term of a subscription. This notice may be by mail to the subscribers, by notice contained in the newspaper itself, or otherwise. \*POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Cortland Standard, PO Box 150, Cortland, New York, 13045.





# Trump travel ban stuns New York City's sprawling Haitian community

**Dave Goldiner  
and Colin Mixson  
New York Daily News  
(TNS)**

President Trump's new travel ban has sparked widespread outrage and fear in New York's sprawling Haitian community, by far the biggest local diaspora group impacted by the edict aimed at 12 nations.

Pastors, shopkeepers and community leaders worried out loud that their community would seek to stay out of sight to avoid any contact with authorities for fear of being arrested or possibly deported.

"We did nothing wrong," said Rev. Wesley Joseph, 55, of the Jerusalem Church of Christ in Brooklyn, a U.S. citizen who immigrated from Haiti two decades ago. "We work for America. We help America ... You have doctors, you have lawyers. We contribute to the economy."

Waving at a sparse lunchtime crowd, Jolly Fleury, 62, said business has fallen off at his J & C Haitian Restaurant and Bak-



**A woman wears a bandanna with the Haitian flag as she walks in the Little Haiti neighborhood on Sunday in the Brooklyn borough of New York City. A new travel ban ordered by U.S. President Donald Trump, restricting entry to citizens from 12 countries, took effect on Monday. The affected nations include Afghanistan, Myanmar, Chad, the Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Haiti, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen.**

ery on Clarendon Road since Trump launched his latest anti-immigrant crackdown.

"Customers (are) scared. ICE hasn't come

over here yet. But some other restaurants I know, they come," said Fleury, referring to Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents. "A lot of

people are worried. That's the reason I don't make enough money."

Stephanie D. Delia, an immigration lawyer and executive director

of the Little Haiti BK advocacy group, said the impending ban is hurting Haitian-owned small businesses like the small groceries along bustling

Flatbush Ave. selling stacks of ripe mangoes, ginger root and cassava.

"There's a lot of fear. There's a lot of confusion," Delia said.

Trump last week said citizens of Haiti and 11 other countries would be banned from even visiting the United States unless they already possess visas or permanent residency, a sharp blow to the Haitian community that numbers hundreds of thousands in the New York metro area, especially in central Brooklyn and southern Queens.

Haitian leaders and Democratic lawmakers lashed out at Trump for the move, which they said was motivated by racism and hatred of immigrants.

"This is horrific for the people of my district, many of whom have family members who are in Haiti right now," Rep. Yvette Clarke, D-Brooklyn, told the Daily News. "They see their family living in the U.S. as a life-line. It's just more of the cruelty, especially when it comes to the Haitian diaspora."

Adam Gray/Getty Images/TNS

## Protesters decrying ICE arrests taken into custody in NYC

**Nicholas Williams  
New York Daily News  
(TNS)**

NEW YORK — Multiple demonstrators were taken into custody Saturday afternoon during a protest against Immigration and Customs enforcement in Lower Manhattan in response to ongoing migrant arrests this week.

Cops responded to outside immigration court around noon at 26 Federal Plaza where protesters were sitting in the middle of the street blocking traffic. Officers ordered the protesters to clear the roadway. Numerous protesters were taken into custody when they didn't comply and were issued summonses, cops said.

Demonstrators were chanting during the protest "No ICE! No KKK! No fascist USA" at the ICE agents.

Around 17 people were taken into custody, according to ABC7.

The protests come after federal agents have been rounding up migrants all week at the immigration courthouse.

ICE agents also arrested migrants after they checked in at an Intensive Supervision Appearance Program office hearing on Elk St. Wednesday afternoon, according to the New



**A woman cries as she waits for her husband at an Intensive Supervision Appearance Program office on Wednesday in New York.**

York Legal Assistance group.

"It's essentially a trap," Allison Cutler, supervising attorney from New York Legal Assistance Group's Immigrant Protection Unit, told the Daily News Wednesday. "Most of the folks who are already on ISAP tend to already have final orders of removal, so ICE would essentially ... consider (it) as an easy target. So they are already

checking in, they are already having appointments, most of them have ankle monitors, so they are monitoring their GPS and locations."

On Tuesday, around 16 people were detained at the Elk St. immigration check-in office, according to The City.

On Friday morning, two people were pinned to the ground and arrested by ICE agents who were waiting in the hall-

ways outside federal immigration courtrooms.

Dominican Republic migrant Joaquin Rosario Espinal left a courtroom after a routine check-in around 12:35 p.m. after getting his case dismissed, when at least six federal agents waiting outside swarmed him. Two agents grabbed Rosario Espinal by his shirt collar, with one tumbling to the ground along with him.

Michael M. Santiago/Getty Images/TNS

## 20M eggs recalled for salmonella

**David J. Neal  
Miami Herald (TNS)**

Another salmonella outbreak caused the recall of 1.7 million dozen eggs — meaning roughly more than 20 million less eggs to fry — and has sickened people in seven states. The aforementioned eggs were distributed to Walmart, Safeway, chains owned by Kroger and various other independent and chain supermarkets. Hilmar, California's August Egg Company, a division of Gemperle Enterprises, produced the eggs and issued the recall Friday.

"August Egg Company is not selling fresh shell eggs at this time," the company-written, FDA-posted recall notice said. "Our firm has voluntarily been diverting eggs to an egg-breaking plant for over 30 days, which pasteurizes the eggs and kills any potential food-borne pathogens."

**What eggs have been recalled?**

Packaging for the recalled eggs will have plant code P-6562 or CA5330 with the Julian Dates between 32 to 126.

The eggs that went to Walmart stores had sell by dates from March 4 through June 19. Other retailers got eggs with "sell by dates" from March 4 through June 4.

August Egg says these eggs went to stores in

California, Washington, Illinois, Nevada, Arizona, Wyoming, New Mexico, Nebraska, and Indiana. The recall section of Walmart's website says this also involves its stores in Alaska, Colorado, Hawaii, Iowa, Idaho, Kansas, Michigan, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas and Wisconsin.

■ Marketside (a Walmart store brand): Organic Large Cage Free Brown Eggs in cartons of 12 and 18; Large Cage Free Brown Eggs in cartons of 12 and 18.

■ First Street (a Smart & Final house brand): Cage Free Large Brown loose eggs.

■ Clover: Organic Large Brown Eggs, one dozen.

■ Nulaid: One dozen Medium Brown Cage Free, one dozen Jumbo Brown Cage Free.

■ O Organics: Cage Free Large Brown, six eggs; and Large Brown, 12 and 18 eggs. This brand will be found at Safeway and other Albertson's-owned stores.

■ Raley's (store brand): Large Cage Free Brown, 12 eggs; Organic Large Cage Free Brown, 12 and 18 eggs.

■ Simple Truth: Cage Free Large Brown and Medium Brown 18 eggs. This brand will be found at Food 4 Less, Ralphs and other Kroger-owned chains.

## Puerto Rico's Democratic Party boss offers rare endorsement of Andrew Cuomo for NYC mayor

**Chris Sommerfeldt  
New York Daily News  
(TNS)**

The head of the Democratic Party of Puerto Rico is endorsing Andrew Cuomo for mayor of New York City, marking an unusual foray into Big Apple politics for the organization, which typically only focuses on issues local to the island. Luis Dávila Pernas, the party's chairman, made the endorsement official in a new campaign ad that Cuomo's team was set to air on television and digital platforms during Sunday's Puerto Rican Day Parade in Manhattan. Cuomo's camp said it's

spending about \$100,000 on airing the ad over the course of a week.

"Andrew Cuomo always has and always will stand with the people of Puerto Rico," Dávila Pernas says in the 1-minute ad, which the Daily News got a preview of before it hit television and online.

Dávila Pernas then lists off how Cuomo, as governor, traveled to Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria in 2017 to "coordinate aid" when President Trump's first administration "failed to act." Again, in 2020, when devastating earthquakes rocked the island, Dávila

Pernas notes in the ad, Cuomo was back on Puerto Rico with National Guard troops to help local leaders rebuild.

"As we come together for this year's Puerto Rican Day Parade, let's remember: When Puerto Rico needed an ally, Andrew Cuomo was there," Dávila Pernas adds in the spot.

Cuomo, who resigned as governor in 2021 amid accusations of sexual misconduct and of having mismanaged nursing home policies during the COVID-19 pandemic, is expected to march in Sunday's Puerto Rican Day Parade along Fifth Ave.



Barry Williams/New York Daily News/TNS

**Former New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo speaks during a campaign news conference and rally announcing his support for a \$20 hourly minimum wage, on May 28, in Manhattan, New York.**



# Biden alums could boost ranks in midterm vote

**Daniela Altimari**  
**CQ-Roll Call (TNS)**  
WASHINGTON — As a senior attorney in the Commerce Department, Eric Chung helped implement the 2022 law known as the CHIPS and Science Act, a bipartisan effort championed by President Joe Biden to boost domestic semiconductor manufacturing and scientific research.

But Chung left his civil service job in April, shortly after President Donald Trump called the law a “horrible, horrible thing” in a joint address to Congress and urged lawmakers to scrap the CHIPS program. (Last week, Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick told Senate appropriators that Trump is renegotiating some of Biden’s semiconductor grants.)

“With elections, there are consequences and you expect some changes,” Chung said. “But the idea of just going after a program that’s so bipartisan ... for no apparent reason, just railing against it, certainly disappointed me, and I just couldn’t watch it unfold.”

Now Chung is running for Congress — he’s one of at least four Democrats hoping to flip Michigan’s 10th District — and he’s highlighting his experience working on one of the Biden administration’s signature legislative achievements.

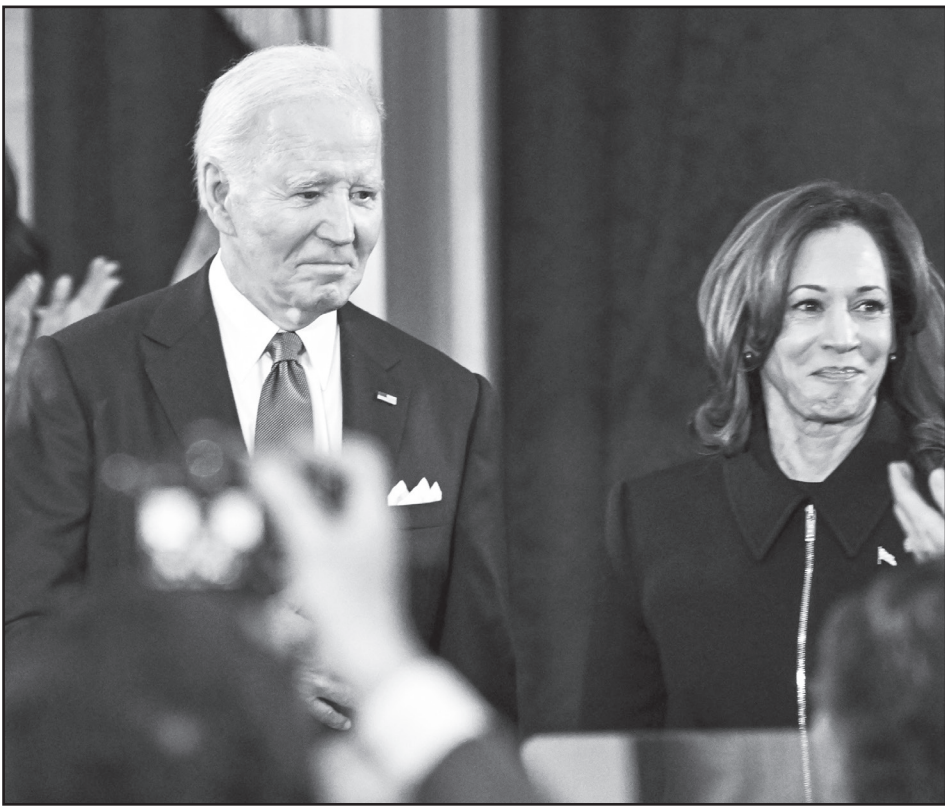
He isn’t the only one. As Trump tries to unwind

much of his Democratic predecessor’s agenda, a handful of federal employees who helped carry out the Biden administration’s policy priorities are seeking House seats in 2026. They are mostly competing in battleground districts and are expected to face competitive primaries.

The list includes Michael Roth, a former official in the Small Business Administration vying to unseat New Jersey Republican Thomas H. Kean Jr.; Sanjyot Dunung, a former member of Biden’s 2020 foreign policy working group running for an open seat in Illinois; and Cait Conley, who was director of counterterrorism on the National Security Council, then served at the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency and is now challenging New York GOP Rep. Mike Lawler.

And career diplomat and former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Bridget A. Brink is considering a run in Michigan’s 7th District, which is currently held by Republican freshman Tom Barrett. Brink resigned earlier this year, citing disagreements with Trump’s Ukraine policy.

If successful, these Democrats would join other former Biden administration officials elected to the House, including freshman Reps. Maggie Goodlander of New Hampshire, a former Biden Justice Department



**Kenny Holston/Pool/AFP/Getty Images/TNS**  
**President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris arrive for the inauguration of Donald Trump as the 47th president of the United States takes place inside the Capitol Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol building in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 20.**

attorney, and April McClain Delaney of Maryland, a former deputy assistant secretary in the Commerce Department. Another Biden alumnus, Rhode Island Rep. Gabe Amo, came to Congress in 2023, after winning a special election for an open seat.

Other prominent Biden alumni have launched 2026 gubernatorial campaigns, including former Interior Secretary Deb Haaland in New Mexico and former Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra

in California. The highest-profile member of the Biden team — former Vice President Kamala Harris — is also weighing a gubernatorial run in the Golden State.

Moving from an executive branch appointment to elective office isn’t a new trend but the reckoning over Biden’s mental acuity during his time in office, spurred by the recent publication of several books, has raised complicated questions about his legacy.

Amo, who worked in the White House as a se-

nior adviser to Biden, was recently pressed about whether he saw signs of the former president’s cognitive decline. The congressman told WJAR-TV in Providence that he saw Biden “execute the functions of that job in a way that I was supportive of, as someone there in the White House.”

“I was proud of the work that I was able to do, and proud of the work that he did to usher in key advances for the American people,” Amo said.

Several of the candidates seeking seats in

2026 said they were partly motivated to run after growing increasingly distressed watching Trump dismantle Biden’s legacy.

Trump “is squandering America’s blue star reputation,” said Dunung, who worked on international trade and policies to strengthen small-business exports as a member of Biden’s foreign policy working group during the 2020 campaign cycle.

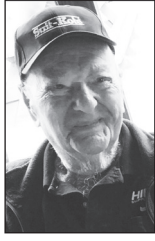
“We are losing our good reputation around the world for being a trusted ally and a trusted partner,” she said.

Dunung is running for Illinois’ 8th District, which Democratic Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi — a child of Indian immigrants like Dunung — is vacating to run for Senate. While Inside Elections with Nathan L. Gonzales rates the race Solid Democratic, Trump significantly cut into his margins in the suburban Chicago district, from a 15-point loss in 2020 to a 7-point deficit last year, according to calculations by The Downballot.

Dunung, who describes herself as “a pragmatic workhorse,” said she launched her bid for Congress partly as a reaction to what she called the “chaos ... and crony capitalism” of the Trump administration.

“I’m also about change from within our party, the Democratic Party,” she said. “I think there are better ways to do things.”

## Obituaries



### Neal R. Stearns

Mr. Neal R. Stearns, 93, of Cortland, N.Y., passed away peacefully surrounded by family on June 5, 2025. Neal was born on January 9, 1932 in Johnson City, N.Y. to Kenneth & Mildred Stearns.

As a young man Neal enjoyed the thrill of stock car racing on the dirt tracks of Glen Aubrey. He named his stock car 6 7/8 which was his hat size so he would always remember it. Thrill seeking also took him to becoming a private pilot & purchasing his own 2 seat airplane. When he was barely 21 he was a deputy sheriff at the Ithaca Airport.

Neal co-owned his excavation company Hall & Stearns and then owned Neal Stearns Construction and later on EZ Acres Materials. He was an active member of the International Union of Operating Engineers for over 58 years. When he wasn’t working Neal enjoyed Trap & Skeet Shooting and was quite proficient at it winning trophies at both local & state events.

After his retirement in 2005, Neal enjoyed his motorcycles, his mustang and his Polaris slingshot that he rode all the way through last season.

Neal is survived by his 3 daughters; Laura (Chris) Maxson, Terri Maxson & Tami Sebas-

tino, his daughter-in-law Terri Burlingame & son-in-law John Thomas. Also survived by his sister Sharon McGrath & brother Douglas Stearns, 14 grandchildren, 22 great grandchildren and 3 great great grandchildren.

He was predeceased by his wife Georgianna Stearns, daughter Toni Stearns, sons David & Ronald Stearns. Also predeceased by step daughter Cheryl Thomas, son-in-law David Sebastino, his brother William Stearns and great great grandson Harrison Sebastino.

The family will receive friends on Thursday, June 12, 2025 from 4-7 p.m. at Wright-Beard Funeral Home. Funeral services will be officiated by Rev. Dr. Eddy Bunton on Friday, June 13, 2025 at 11 a.m. in the Chapel of Wright-Beard Funeral Home, Cortland, N.Y. Burial will follow in Cortland Rural Cemetery following the service. The service will be live streamed on Neal’s Obituary page on the Wright-Beard Funeral Home website.

The family would like to extend its deepest gratitude and appreciation to the nurses, aides and staff of Guthrie Medical Center 2S and Misty Glen Rehab.

Friends and Family are welcome to attend a celebration of life at the Center of the Arts in Homer, N.Y. following the burial at the cemetery.

Arrangements are under the direction on Wright-Beard Funeral Home, Cortland, N.Y. Condolences may also be sent to the family by visiting [www.wright-beard.com](http://www.wright-beard.com).



### Scott A. Greene

Scott A. Greene of Cuyler, NY passed away unexpectedly on June 4 at Guthrie Cortland Hospital surrounded by family and friends. Scott was originally from Cortland, born December 18, 1967 to the late Bert and Linda Greene. He attended Cortland Junior Senior High School.

He was an avid hunter and loved working on cars. Before becoming disabled, Scott worked for Bonsbak Inc. as a laborer. Over the years he also worked in lumber yards such as North Main Lumber and Cayuga Lumber.

Scott is survived by the

love of his life, his wife of 37 years, Debbie; daughters Dawn (Steve) Crandall of Cuyler and Ashley Greene of North Carolina; sons Brent (Michelle) Kelley of Skaneateles and Alan Burlingame of North Carolina; grandchildren Hunter and Ryder Crandall, Adrianna and Christopher Richards, Kiya McCormick, and Terrell Bonapart; aunt Robin Terwilliger; several nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews; cousins; and his best friend—his dog Diamond.

He was a diehard Dallas Cowboys fan. Calling hours are June 21, 11am-1pm at Smith Funeral Home in DeRuyter, with a celebration of life to follow. Please wear Dallas Cowboys’ colors or Dallas gear in memory of Scott.

### Sandra J. Munson

Sandra J. Munson, 82, of Freeville, passed away on June 5, 2025 at Robert Packer Hospital in Sayre, PA.

Sandy was born on February 25, 1943 in Jersey City, New Jersey, a daughter of the late Clayton G. and Margaret (Gross) Dolly.

An area resident most of her life, she graduated from McGraw High School. She was employed for over thirty years at the State University of New York College at Cortland. She had been a longtime member of the McLean Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary and the McLean Community Church.

She is survived by her daughters, Terry Bennett and Penny Munson; four grandchildren: Joshua Bennett (Kristin), Christa Bennett, and Turner and Tyler Mitchiner; great-grandchildren:

Kinsley and Bryar Bennett; a brother, Richard Dolly, of Waterford, NY; and many nieces and nephews.

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by her husband of 63 years, Philip A. “Butch” Munson in 2021, her son, Philip W. “Ashley” Munson in 2011, and a brother, Ronald Dolly.

Funeral services will be held at 2:00 PM on Thursday, June 12 at the Shurtleff Funeral Home, 103 Lincoln Avenue, Groton with interment to follow in the McLean Cemetery.

Friends may call at the funeral home on Wednesday, June 11 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. Contributions, in lieu of flowers, may be made to the McLean Fire Department or the McLean Community Church.

Online condolences may be shared at [www.shurtleffservices.com](http://www.shurtleffservices.com).



### Debra (Debbie) L. Bennett

Debra (Debbie) L. Bennett of Homer, New York passed away peacefully on June 7, 2025 at Robert Packer Hospital after fighting for many years.

Debbie was born in Cortland, New York on December 6, 1954. She was a 1973 graduate of Homer Central High School.

Debbie was employed at SCM and then at the Cortland Standard in the Circulation Department for a number of years.

Debbie loved her family with every bit of her heart. Debbie was predeceased by

her father Lyle Pratt, her mother Irene J. Penrose, her father and mother-law Robert and Doris Bennett, her son-in-law Shane Bartholomew, her brother Mark Pratt and sister Sherri Breslin.

Debbie is survived by her husband of 53 years, John R. Bennett, her daughters, Kristina M. Bartholomew and Brandy L. Lyman, her grandchildren Dylan Bartholomew, Skyler Hollister (Nick), Trynidy Lyman and Jonathon Lyman, siblings Renee Hollenbeck, Randy Pratt, Brian Breslin (Kelly) and Joyce Burk (Rich Woodrome).

Services will be held Thursday at 11:00 at Wright-Beard Funeral Home, Inc., 9 Lincoln Ave., Cortland officiated by Associate Pastor, David Coy.

To offer condolences online visit [www.wright-beard.com](http://www.wright-beard.com).



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Established June 25, 1867

Published Tuesday through Saturday by Sample News Group

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## Another View



Antonio Perez/Chicago Tribune/TNS

Visitors to Palmisano Park deal with poor air quality and hazy skies.

# That hazy sky out there isn't harmless

The following editorial is from the Chicago Tribune Editorial Board.

This week as temperatures finally reached acceptable June levels, Chicagoans prepared to step outside — onto patios and rooftops, into a park or along our gorgeous lakefront. Everything looks relatively normal out there. But it's not. The Illinois EPA reported Thursday that the Chicago area's air quality is unhealthy, not just for sensitive groups but for everyone.

Why? Canadian wildfires continue to rage up north and plumes of smoke still cloud the sky here in the Midwest. As of Thursday, Canada was battling 200 active wildfires, according to the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre.

It's amazing how quickly we become used to something like this. Many people don't look up and wonder why we're encased in a capsule of gray smoke from the north, why the air feels still and stale, and we certainly don't wonder why Canada is burning more severely and more regularly.

Yet, the smoke is a problem, reflected in

unhealthy air quality that can be a problem for anyone with asthma, heart and lung issues or other chronic conditions. Doctors warn that inhaling wildfire smoke can increase your heart rate and your risk of cardiac events if you're already at risk. The bottom line: Breathing in wildfire smoke just isn't good for you.

Thankfully the forecast predicts improvement over the next several days, though air quality is expected to worsen downstate. Chicago's air quality was the worst in the country Thursday, according to IQAir.

This isn't just a local story. Wildfire smoke from Canada is affecting major U.S. cities from New York to Minneapolis. And those most affected, of course, are in Canada. More than 27,000 Canadians across three provinces have been forced to evacuate due to wildfires.

This relatively new phenomenon was met with a different attitude when heavy wildfire smoke blanketed the Midwest and East Coast in 2023. Back then, the smoke came during the heart of summer, and the smoke on top of high tempera-

tures made breathing conditions more noticeably difficult. What followed was canceled sporting events and many more people who opted to stay inside until the smoke disappeared.

Today, it seems as though concerns have faded, though we know many folks who have complained of headaches, allergy flare-ups and fatigue this week. It's worth taking basic precautions, especially for those with preexisting health conditions.

On smoky days, experts recommend limiting outdoor activity, using air purifiers if available and keeping windows closed. Checking the air quality index — available via most weather apps — is a good habit, just like checking the forecast. Staying aware can make a real difference, especially for children, older adults and anyone with asthma or allergies.

The smoke is expected to clear soon. But as wildfires become more common, it's important to remember: Just because something starts to feel normal doesn't mean it's safe. We shouldn't ignore the health risks — or the warning signs in the sky.

## Weekly columnists sought

Do you have an opinion? We know you do! The Cortland Standard wants to hear from you as we seek to create an opinion page full of diverse view-

points. To be considered as a weekly columnist or to submit a letter to the editor, please email news@cortlandstandard.com with an example column.

## Commentary

# The GOP's fiscal hawk era is officially over

**David M. Drucker**  
**Bloomberg Opinion**  
**(TNS)**

There is no constituency for debt reduction, which is a fancy way of saying voters don't care that the federal balance sheet is roughly \$37 trillion in the red — and growing.

This simple fact of American politics goes a long way toward explaining why President Donald Trump, with the help of congressional Republicans, is pushing a sweeping reconciliation package of tax cuts and fresh domestic spending priorities that is projected to add approximately \$3.8 trillion to the swelling federal debt. Politics is a service business and Trump and his Capitol Hill allies are aiming to please the customer.

So they've loaded up the reconciliation package, dubbed the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, with a series of crowd-pleasers — expansions of existing tax breaks plus some brand-new ones.

Yes, there are spending cuts. The version of the legislation that passed in the House of Representatives and is now up for consideration in the Senate includes reductions to Medicaid and other budget line items. But there's nothing in the bill that results in a net decrease in the debt. Even the proposed changes to Medicaid face an uncertain future, thanks to GOP opposition in the Senate.

That's because the sort of substantial spending cuts and program reforms required to break Washington's addiction to borrowing would be wildly unpopular.

For instance, any meaningful attempt to balance the books probably requires both raising taxes and overhauling Medicare and Social Security. That's not a recipe for winning elections.

As concerning as the U.S. debt load is becoming for bond markets and some finance titans (and the few fiscal hawks left in Washington), most Americans have more urgent concerns, said David Winston, a Republican pollster who has been surveying voters for more than 25 years.

"There's another issue hitting voters that's a bigger deal, and that's inflation," he told me. "When you're looking at an economic situation where

there's something that's pressing people at a personal level, it's not that the deficit isn't important, it is. But being able to pay bills and deal with things on a weekly basis and keep up with all your costs takes precedence."

Winston is right — and that's not to mention the fact that so many voters are convinced the looming debt bomb can be diffused by eliminating waste, fraud and abuse in government spending.

But this isn't a new phenomenon. Voters generally, particularly on the left, have always found some reason or another for opposing legislation that asks them to participate in the solution to Washington's fiscal challenges. It's why tax hikes on the so-called rich are so popular and such an easy political message to wield.

What has changed is the Republican Party and the voters it represents.

Without question, Republican presidents prior to Trump were complicit in running up the debt. But in the pre-Trump era defined by President Ronald Reagan, fiscal responsibility and small government had currency with grassroots conservatives who formed the heart of the GOP base. But today's Republican base voters are different than their forebearers, courtesy of a Trump populist makeover.

The 45th and 47th president over the past decade attracted legions of working-class voters to the Republican Party. For the most part, these newer Republicans are former Democrats who joined the GOP for cultural reasons; for instance, they passionately oppose abortion rights and support gun rights. Notably, they brought with them their preference for government safety-net programs and general lack of concern about the debt (qualities that have long defined grassroots Democrats).

Simultaneously, suburban voters inclined to value fiscal responsibility generally, and debt reduction specifically, have drifted away from the GOP.

The result is a Republican governing coalition much more enamored of government spending than it used to be and far less concerned about the federal debt, even though it has grown to more than 120% of the entire U.S. economy — problematic to say the least.



Kevin Dietsch/Getty Images/TNS

**U.S. Speaker of the House Mike Johnson (R-Louisiana) listens as House Homeland Security Chairman Mark Green (R-Tennessee) speaks to the media after the House narrowly passed a bill forwarding President Donald Trump's agenda at the U.S. Capitol on Thursday, May 22, 2025, in Washington, D.C.**

## Letters to the Editor

# Big Beautiful Bill benefits rich

**To the Editor:** It's practically impossible to get opposing sides to talk, let alone agree on a topic.

But I don't think there are any billionaires in Cortland, so maybe folks

can understand that this so-called Big Beautiful Bill is designed to benefit the 1%. It provides a \$664 billion tax break to those who own more wealth than the bottom 93%.

That's you and me. And it will slash Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act by \$715 billion, eliminating health care to almost 14 million Americans.

Do you really want tax

breaks for the corporations that stash their profits offshore and invest in AI and robots, throwing people out of work? I don't. We need to come together to fight against

the greed and corruption of the billionaire class. We need to unite against this massive wealth inequality that is dragging us all down.

Together we can insist

that the needs of working families are more important than the need for more millions for the already ridiculously rich.

**Kathleen Elliott**  
**Cortland**

## Letters to the editor policy

The *Cortland Standard* welcomes letters from readers for publication on this page. All letters submitted must be signed by the writer and include the writer's home address and daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for length and content. Letters are limited to 300 words in length. Letters endorsing or opposing the election of candidates for public office are limited to 200 words. Thank-you notes will not be accepted.





**Police face off with demonstrators during a protest against federal immigration sweeps in downtown Los Angeles, California, Sunday.**

# Marines sent to Los Angeles

## As Trump backs arrest of Calif. governor

**Jane Ross and Idrees Ali**  
**Reuters**  
LOS ANGELES/WASHINGTON — The U.S. military will temporarily deploy about 700 Marines to Los Angeles until more National Guard troops can arrive, marking another escalation in President Donald Trump's response to street protests over his aggressive immigration policies.  
A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said a battalion would be sent on temporary duty until more National Guard troops could reach the scene. For now, the Trump administration was not invoking the Insurrection Act, which would allow troops to directly participate in civilian law enforcement.  
The official added the situation was fluid and could change.  
U.S. Marines have been deployed domestically for major disasters such as Hurricane Ka-

trina and the September 11, 2001, attacks. They are known for being "first in, last out" in U.S. military interventions abroad, but it is extremely rare for U.S. military troops to be used for domestic policing matters.  
Using them for police matters is certain to raise further objections from Democrats, who have accused Trump of unnecessarily escalating tensions in Los Angeles.  
Earlier on Monday, Trump said he would support the arrest of California's Gavin Newsom, after Newsom vowed to sue the federal government over the deployment of National Guard troops to Southern California, calling it an illegal act.  
As Los Angeles faced a possible fourth day of protests over immigration raids in the city, Democrats and Republicans clashed over what has become the biggest flashpoint in the Trump

administration's aggressive efforts to deport migrants living in the country illegally.  
Trump deployed the National Guard after street protests on Friday that turned violent over the weekend. He said on Monday he felt he had no choice but to order the deployment to prevent the violence from spiraling out of control.  
California officials called the deployment an overreaction to events on the ground. Newsom said on Monday that Trump's actions were an "unmistakable step toward authoritarianism."  
"We are suing Donald Trump," Newsom said on X. "This is a manufactured crisis. He is creating fear and terror to take over a state militia and violate the U.S. constitution."  
California Attorney General Rob Bonta said in a release that his office had sued. Reuters could not immediately confirm that a lawsuit

had been filed.  
Federal law allows the president to deploy the Guard if the nation is invaded, if there is "rebellion or danger of rebellion," or the president is "unable with the regular forces to execute the laws of the United States."  
California's suit accuses Trump of exceeding his authority under the statute and asks a court to declare his actions as unlawful.  
Returning to the White House on Monday after a night at Camp David, Trump was asked by a reporter whether his border czar, Tom Homan, should arrest Newsom.  
Homan has threatened to arrest anyone who obstructs immigration enforcement efforts, including the governor.  
"I would do it if I were Tom. I think it's great," Trump replied. "Gavin likes the publicity, but I think it would be a great thing."

# 15 states sue over gun rule change

**Nate Raymond**  
**Reuters**  
Fifteen Democratic-led U.S. states filed a lawsuit on Monday seeking to block Republican President Donald Trump's administration from returning thousands of previously seized devices that can be used to convert semiautomatic rifles into weapons that can shoot as quickly as machine guns.  
The states filed the lawsuit in federal court in Baltimore in the wake of the administration's May 16 settlement that resolved litigation involving a ban on certain "forced-reset triggers" imposed by the government under Trump's Democratic predecessor Joe Biden. The states in the lawsuit said such devices remain illegal to possess under federal law.  
The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives under Biden issued the ban after it determined that some of these devices should be classified as illegal machine guns under a federal law called the National Firearms Act.  
"We will not stand by as the Trump administration attempts to secretly legalize machine guns in an effort to once again put firearms industry profits over the safety of our residents,"

New Jersey Attorney General Matthew Platkin said in a statement.  
The lawsuit was led by New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland, and also included the states of Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington as well as the District of Columbia.  
The Trump administration's settlement reversed course on the Biden administration's policies.  
The settlement resolved lawsuits brought by a gun rights group challenging the ban and cases brought by Biden's Justice Department against a manufacturer of the devices. Those cases had resulted in conflicting court rulings over the legality of classifying these devices as illegal machine guns.  
As part of the settlement, the Trump administration agreed to not apply the machine gun ban to such devices as long as they are not designed for use with handguns and agreed to return nearly 12,000 forced-reset triggers that had been seized by the government to their owners. The new lawsuit seeks to block the return of these devices to their owners.



**Guns are displayed at an exhibition booth, during the annual National Rifle Association meeting in Dallas, Texas, May 19, 2024.**

# Republicans push forward on Trump tax agenda

**Reuters**  
WASHINGTON — U.S. President Donald Trump and his Republican allies in Congress are determined to enact his tax-cut agenda in a political push that has largely abandoned longtime party claims of fiscal discipline, by simply denying warnings that the measure will balloon the federal debt.  
The drive has drawn the ire of Elon Musk, a once-close Trump ally and the biggest donor to Republicans in the 2024 election, who gave a boost to a handful of party deficit hawks opposed to the bill by publicly denigrating it as a "disgusting abomination," opening a public feud with Trump.  
But top congressional Republicans remain determined to squeeze Trump's campaign promises through their narrow majorities in the Senate and House of Representatives by July 4, while shrugging off warnings from the official Congressional Budget Office and a host of outside economists and budget experts.

"All the talk about how this bill is going to generate an increase in our deficit is absolutely wrong," Senate Finance Committee Chairman Mike Crapo told reporters after a meeting with Trump last week.  
Outside Washington, financial markets have raised red flags about the nation's rising debt, most notably when Moody's cut its pristine "Aaa" U.S. credit rating. The bill also aims to raise the government's self-imposed debt ceiling by up to \$5 trillion, a step Congress must take by summer or risk a devastating default on \$36.2 trillion in debt.  
"Debt and deficits don't seem to matter for the current Republican leadership, including the president of the United States," said Bill Hoagland, a former Senate Republican aide who worked on fiscal bills including the 1997 Balanced Budget Act.  
The few remaining Senate Republican fiscal hawks could be enough to block the bill's pas-

sage in a chamber the party controls 53-47. But some have appeared to be warming to the legislation, saying the spending cuts they seek may need to wait for future bills.  
"We need a couple bites of the apple here," said Republican Senator Ron Johnson of Wisconsin, a prominent fiscal hardliner. Republicans who pledged fiscal responsibility in the 1990s secured a few years of budget surpluses under Democratic former President Bill Clinton. Deficits

returned after Republican President George W. Bush's tax cuts and the debt has pushed higher since under Democratic and Republican administrations.  
"Thirty years have shown that it's a lot easier to talk about these things when you're out of power than to actually do something about them when you're in," said Jonathan Burks, who was a top aide to former House Speaker Paul Ryan when Trump's Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was enacted into law in 2017.

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# SEC: Existing staff cuts help meet DOGE targets

**Douglas Gillison and Chris Prentice**  
**Reuters**  
Wall Street's top regulator told the White House in March it had already made substantial progress toward meeting President Trump and Elon Musk's demands for leaner government via voluntary workforce reductions, according to a planning document obtained by Reuters. The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission also told the Office of Management and Budget that it is legally required to seek input from Congress before any "significant reorganization" and that changes beyond certain budget thresholds need lawmakers' approval, ac-

cording to the March 13 document provided in response to a Reuters' public records request.  
The SEC submission for "reduction in force" and reorganizations, which Reuters is the first to report, responded to February's call from Trump and erstwhile ally Musk for federal agencies to develop plans for "large scale" cuts as part of the so-called Department of Government Efficiency initiative.  
Though much of the text, released under the Freedom of Information Act, is redacted, the visible portions suggest agency leadership at least in part believed voluntary reductions already in progress could weigh against the

need for further cuts.  
An SEC spokesperson declined to comment beyond recently installed SEC Chair Paul Atkins's public statements and the agency's recent budget request. The Office of Management and Budget did not respond to a request for comment.  
Since he took office in January, Trump's government-slashing efforts have stirred unease and concern among some SEC staff uncertain about the future of the agency's workforce and its political independence.  
Critics have said the workforce reductions could hinder the SEC's performance in times of crisis.



# ‘Mum, I’m home!’

## Russia and Ukraine exchange war prisoners

**Aleksandar Vasovic**  
**Reuters**

CHERNIHIV REGION, Ukraine — Russia and Ukraine exchanged prisoners of war under the age of 25 on Monday in emotional homecoming scenes, the first step in a series of planned prisoner swaps that could become the biggest of the war so far.

The exchange was the result of direct talks between the two sides in Istanbul on June 2 that resulted in an agreement to exchange at least 1,200 POWs on each side and to repatriate thousands of bodies of those killed in Russia’s war in Ukraine.

The return of POWs and the repatriation of the bodies of the dead is one of the few things the two sides have managed to agree on as broader negotiations have failed to get close to ending the war, now in its fourth year.

Fighting has raged on, with Russia saying on Monday its forces had taken control of more territory in Ukraine’s east-central region of Dnipropetrovsk and Kyiv saying Moscow had launched its largest drone attack of the war.

Officials in Kyiv said some of the Ukrainian prisoners who came home on Monday had been in Russian captivity since the beginning of the war.

At a rendezvous point for the returning Ukrainian prisoners, soon after they crossed back into northern Ukraine, an official handed one of the freed men a cellphone so that he could

call his mother, a video released by Ukrainian authorities showed.

“Hi mum, I’ve arrived, I’m home!” the soldier shouted into the receiver, struggling to catch his breath because he was overcome by emotion.

The released Ukrainian men were later taken by bus to a hospital in northern Ukraine where they were to have medical checks and be given showers, food and care packages including mobile phones and shoes.

Jubilant was tinged with sadness because outside the hospital were crowds of people, mostly women, looking for relatives who went missing while fighting for Ukraine.

The women held up pictures of the missing men in the hope that one of the returning POWs would recognized them and share details about what happened to them. Some hoped their loved ones would be among those released. Oksana Kupriyenko, 52, was holding up an image of her son, Denys, who went missing in September 2024.

“Tomorrow is my birthday and I was hoping God will give me a gift and return my son to me,” she said, through tears.

Neither side said how many prisoners had been swapped on Monday, but the Russian Defence Ministry said in its own statement that the same number of military personnel had been exchanged on each side.



**Freedom Flotilla Coalition/Handout via REUTERS**  
**Surveillance footage shows crew of the Gaza-bound British-flagged yacht ‘Madleen’ putting their hands up as strong light came into the vessel, in this screengrab from a video released on Monday.**

## Israeli forces seize Gaza aid boat carrying Greta Thunberg

**Crispian Balmer**  
**Reuters**

JERUSALEM/ASH-DOD — Israeli naval forces boarded and seized a charity vessel carrying Swedish activist Greta Thunberg, which had tried to break the naval blockade of the Gaza Strip on Monday. The British-flagged yacht, Madleen, which is operated by the pro-Palestinian Freedom Flotilla Coalition, had aimed to deliver a symbolic amount of aid to Gaza later on Monday

and raise international awareness of the humanitarian crisis there.

“If you see this video, we have been intercepted and kidnapped in international waters by Israeli occupational forces or forces that support Israel,” Thunberg, 22, said in a video released by the FCC, filmed before the vessel was captured.

“I urge all my friends, family and comrades to put pressure on the Swedish government to release me and the others as soon as possible.”

The Israeli Foreign Ministry confirmed that the vessel was under Israeli control. Israel has called Thunberg an “antisemite” and dismissed the aid ship as a stunt.

“The ‘selfie yacht’ of the ‘celebrities’ is safely making its way to the shores of Israel. The passengers are expected to return to their home countries,” the ministry wrote on X. All passengers were safe and unharmed, it later added: “They were provided with sandwiches and

water. The show is over.”

Rima Hassan, a French member of the European parliament who was also on board, posted on X that the crew had been “arrested by the Israeli army in international waters around 2 a.m.”

A photograph showed the crew seated on the boat, all wearing life jackets, with their hands in the air. Israel’s foreign ministry later distributed a photo showing Thunberg in a green hat and orange life vest, smiling.

## US, Chinese officials meet for pivotal trade talks

**Kate Holton, Dan Burns and Andrea Shalal**  
**Reuters**

LONDON — Top U.S. and Chinese officials were meeting in London on Monday to try and defuse a high-stakes trade dispute that has widened from tariffs to restrictions over rare earths, threatening a global supply chain shock and slower economic growth.

On the first of likely two days of talks, officials from the two superpowers were meeting at the ornate Lancaster House to try to get back on track with a preliminary

agreement struck last month in Geneva that had briefly lowered the temperature between Washington and Beijing.

Since then the U.S. has accused China of slow-walking on its commitments, particularly around rare earths shipments.

White House economic adviser Kevin Hassett said on Monday that the U.S. team wanted a handshake from China on rare earths after Donald Trump said Xi Jinping had agreed to resume shipments in a rare call between

the two presidents last week.

“The purpose of the meeting today is to make sure that they’re serious, but to literally get handshakes,” Hassett, director of the National Economic Council, told CNBC in an interview. He said the U.S. would expect export controls to be eased and rare earths released in volume immediately afterwards.

The talks come at a crucial time for both economies, which are showing signs of strain from Trump’s cascade of tariff orders since his return to the White House

in January.

Customs data showed that China’s exports to the U.S. plunged 34.5% year-on-year in May in value terms, the sharpest drop since February 2020, when the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic upended global trade.

In the U.S., business and household confidence has taken a pummeling, while first-quarter gross domestic product contracted due to a record surge in imports as Americans front-loaded purchases to beat anticipated price increases.



**Russian Defence Ministry/Handout via REUTERS**  
**A still image from a video released by the Russian Defence Ministry shows what it said to be Russian service personnel under the age of 25 captured by Ukrainian forces and released during the latest exchange of prisoners of war in the course of Russia-Ukraine conflict.**



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# Judge dismisses \$400M lawsuit against Blake Lively

**Jonathan Stempel  
Reuters**

NEW YORK — A U.S. judge on Monday dismissed actor Justin Baldoni's \$400 million defamation lawsuit against actress Blake Lively, who had accused Baldoni of sexually harassing her while filming the 2024 movie "It Ends with Us."

U.S. District Judge Lewis Liman in Manhattan said Lively's claims to a California state agency about Baldoni's alleged harassment during the filming were privileged, and shielded from the defamation claim by Baldoni and his Wayfarer Studios.

In a 132-page decision, Liman also dismissed Baldoni's related \$250 million lawsuit against the New York Times for its December 21, 2024 article about the dispute, "'We Can Bury Anyone': Inside a Hollywood Smear Machine."

The judge said Baldoni can try to file a much narrower lawsuit against Lively focused on contractual issues.

Lawyers for Baldoni did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

"Today's opinion is a total victory and a complete vindication for Blake Lively," her lawyers Michael

Gottlieb and Esra Hudson said in a joint statement. "As we have said from day one, this \$400 million lawsuit was a sham."

Baldoni's lawsuit was in response to Lively's own lawsuit over his alleged harassment. She still seeks unspecified triple and punitive damages, and a March 2026 trial remains scheduled before Liman.

A Times spokesman, Charlie Stadlander, said in a statement: "Our journalists went out and covered carefully and fairly a story of public importance, and the court recognized that the law is designed to protect just that sort of journalism."

The feud began publicly in December when Lively filed a complaint with the California Civil Rights Department (CRD) about Baldoni, followed by her lawsuit.

In response, Baldoni's countersuit accused Lively, her husband and actor Ryan Reynolds, Lively's publicist Leslie Sloane, the Times and others of trying to smear him.

Baldoni said Lively tried to effectively hijack "It Ends with Us" and then blame him when her promotional approach prompted an online backlash against her.

# US resumes processing Harvard student visas

**Humeyra Pamuk  
Reuters**

WASHINGTON — The U.S. State Department directed all U.S. missions abroad and consular sections to resume processing Harvard University student and exchange visitor visas after a federal judge in Boston last week temporarily blocked President Donald Trump's ban on foreign students at the Ivy-League institution.

In a diplomatic cable sent on June 6 and signed by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, the State Department cited parts of the judge's decision, saying the fresh directive was "in accordance with" the temporary restraining order.

Under that order granted to Harvard late on Thursday, U.S. District Judge Allison Burroughs blocked Trump's proclamation from taking effect pending further litigation of the matter.

Trump had cited national security concerns as justification for barring international students from entering the United States to pursue studies at Harvard.

The Trump administration has launched a multi-pronged attack on the nation's oldest and



**REUTERS/Faith Ninivaggi/File Photo**  
**setts, May 23.**

wealthiest university, freezing billions of dollars in grants and other funding and proposing to end its tax-exempt status, prompting a series of legal challenges.

Harvard argues the administration is retaliating against it for refusing to accede to demands to control the school's governance, curriculum and the ideology of its faculty and students.

The State Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

In the cable, the State Department added that all other guidance re-

garding student visas remained in effect, including enhanced social media vetting and the requirement to review the applicants' online presence.

Reporting by Humeyra Pamuk, editing by Deepa Babington

# FESTIVAL

**From A1**

the backbone of the food at the festival. Members of the church donated most of the baked goods and traditional Italian sweets for the dessert booth, and they go really fast once the festival opens. Some of the supply is supplemented by local bakeries, as well.

Diane Miller has been proudly representing the hard work of the donors at the booth since 2013.

"Basically everything you can see here is baked by the parishioners and donated," Miller said. "Except for the specialty items that are baked by a bakery, it's all donated. There were about 20 people that came on baking day where we baked almost 300 goodies."

St. Anthony's Festival is an important part of Cortland's social calendar because it's a positive weekend everyone is welcome at. From church members that have participated for years to the local children, according to organizational volunteer Bill Peck, everyone can come to the festival and enjoy themselves.

"I think people need something that's wholesome to come to," Peck said. "You see more fam-



**Paige Kingsley/Staff Reporter**  
**Festival goers wait in line to order and pick up Italian sausage with peppers and onions.**

ily, you see young kids and they feel safe here. There's a lot of nice Italian people here, it's a great culture."

Lifelong church member Tony Pace has been helping with the festival for years, and the sense of community people feel when they attend is one

of the most important things to him.

The festival is rich with Italian history and it's something that they're eager to share with everyone else.

"I like the fact that members of the parish open themselves up to the community and in-

vite them to share in the celebration with us," Pace said. "We started out as an Italian parish and the traditions that our families and grandparents brought from Italy have been continued here. It's a welcoming open environment for everyone to participate."

# YMCA

**From A1**

where most of the money from the Cortland YMCA Race Series goes.

"We as the YMCA take all the funds that we raised for our race series and we put them back into our programs to offset the cost of membership," Cusano-McLaughlin said. "That way, people who are not able to cover the full cost of programs for their children, themselves or

other membership services can get financial support."

Other funds and sponsorship covers the cost of the race shirts and the timing bibs. Pre-registration for the race is still open on the website at cortlandymca.org for \$30 and will close at noon June 13. Registration on the morning of the race will also be available at the starting point between 9 and 9:45 a.m.

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— **Ernie Dodge, Cortland Country Club President**

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Flag Football

# ‘Special’ flag football state championships take place at Cortland, Homer high schools

**Aidan Briggs**  
**Sports Editor**

CORTLAND — New York State’s flag football state championships were held at Cortland Jr./Sr. High School and Homer High School this past weekend. The semifinals were played on Saturday and the three championship games took place on Sunday. This marked the second year that Cortland hosted the games, part of a three-year agreement with the state, and the first year that featured three classes.

“The facilities are beautiful,” said Jen Lapinski, co-flag football state coordinator. “Machell Phelps (Executive Director of the Cortland Regional Sports Council) is great to work, she definitely makes the process easy when we bring teams here and it’s pretty centrally located across the state, which is another benefit.”

Twelve teams traveled to Cortland to compete over the weekend. Local hotels, restaurants and other facilities were put to use for all of the traveling teams as the state helped find locations for teams to utilize.

“I think New York State makes it very easy on us to get hotels, find restau-



**Tappan Zee (red) and Colombia (white) get set before a play in the flag football class B state semifinal at Cortland Jr./Sr. High School Saturday.**

rants, all those sort of things,” said Darrell Flynn, Tappan Zee head coach. “It’s been quite an experience.”

Tappan Zee won its Class B semifinal game,

beating Colombia 26-19. Webster Schroeder beat Sayville 14-7 in the class’ second semifinal and then knocked off Tappan Zee 20-14 to win the state championship. Flynn is

proud of his team’s effort, competing as a new program and making it to the state’s highest level.

“As a program, this is our third year,” Flynn said. “The first year was like a

pilot team so this is really only our second year. It’s unbelievable to see where we were, to where we are today. I’m very fortunate to have the support system in my district and I’m

lucky to have the players that I have.”

Scarsdale won the Class A state championship. It knocked off Section III’s Fayetteville-Manlius 14-7 in the semifinal and beat Half Hollow Hills 20-6 in the championship game. Half Hollow Hills beat Penfield 20-6 in its semifinal matchup.

Class C’s state champion is Pioneer. After beating Plainedge 7-0 in the semifinal, it beat section IV’s Owego Free Academy 13-12 in the title game. Owego Free Academy beat Beekmantown 38-33 in their semifinal matchup.

Flag football continues to be a growing sport and state representatives are hoping the state championships and the local interest in them can help facilitate interest in local schools adding their own programs.

“We’re trying to grow the game,” said Marissa Dauria, co-flag football state coordinator. “Hopefully some girls will see it and expand it into this area a bit more. It’s exciting for the girls anytime they can gain an opportunity to participate. It’s really something special for them.”

Aidan Briggs/Sports Editor

Cortland Crush Baseball

# Cortland Crush taking leave for the 2025 season

**Aidan Briggs**  
**Sports Editor**

The New York Collegiate Baseball League (NYCBL) announced last November that the Cortland Crush will take a leave for the 2025 season. Cortland joins the Syracuse Spartans as two

teams that will not be participating this summer, looking to return in 2026.

With rising costs of housing, transportation and staffing, the Crush will utilize a league rule to work on reorganizing it’s operations and better set themselves up for

future years. Cortland will hold discussions with the league in August once a decision has been made on if it will return to league play next summer.

“To run a team for two months, the cost is astronomical,” said Bill McConnell, president and head

coach of the Crush. “Our No. 1 job is the health and welfare of all the players and staff. We want to make sure we can ensure that at all costs.”

Cortland placed third in the East division with a 16-13 record last year, falling in the division

finals to the eventual champion, Syracuse Salt Cats. Cortland’s most recent league championship came in 2022, when it went back-to-back. The Crush have had plenty of successful seasons under McConnell, but he felt it was time for a simple re-

set.

“This is not an unusual thing,” McConnell said. “Fatigue sets in. These are 24-hour days for two months. Recruiting is a year-long process. We’ve had a great 10-year run and just want to refresh.”

French Open

# Alcaraz defends French Open title after epic match

**Andy Sims**  
**PA Media/dpa (TNS)**

Carlos Alcaraz came from two sets down and saved three match points to overcome Jannik Sinner and defend his French Open title on Sunday in the longest final match in Roland Garros history.

The Spaniard showed incredible reserves of energy and willpower to win a five-hour 29-minute marathon, 4-6, 6-7 (4-7), 6-4, 7-6 (7-3), 7-6 (10-2), and deny world No. 1 Sinner a third consecutive Grand Slam title.

Alcaraz claimed his fifth major crown at exactly the same age as his idol Rafael Nadal did, aged 22 years, one month and three days old.

It was his fifth victory from his fifth final, which was the first at one of the Slams to be played between two players born this century.

It was also the first Grand Slam final meeting of the two young superstars of men’s tennis who have now shared the last six major titles.

And it is one that will go down as a cast-iron Roland Garros classic, a final for the ages, a high-quality and heavy-hitting marathon.

After receiving the trophy — not from Nadal but from 1999 champion An-

dre Agassi — Alcaraz said: “Jannik, it’s amazing the level you reach.

“To everyone who came from Murcia to support me, thank you. This trophy is yours also.

“Paris, you have been important support for me since the first practice in the first round, I can’t thank you enough. You will always be in my heart.”

Sinner said: “First of all, congratulations Carlos. It was an amazing performance from you again. It was an amazing battle.

“It is easier to play than to talk right now. Even though it is very difficult right now, it is okay. It is a big privilege for me to be here and to play here.

“For me, Paris is a really special place. I have achieved many great things here. I’m still happy with this one. It is an amazing trophy.

“I won’t sleep very well tonight but it is okay.”

Italian Sinner, on a 20-match winning streak at the Slams, had earlier looked certain to add the Paris title to his US and Australian Open crowns when he forged two sets ahead.

He had lost his previous four matches against Alcaraz — the most recent in the Rome final last month, his first tournament after serving a

three-month doping ban.

But the 23-year-old has been almost untouchable in the French capital, dropping no set and his serve only three times before the final and saving 19 of the 22 break points he had faced.

Some loose hitting

from Alcaraz gave Sinner a break in the first game of the third, but perhaps being short of matches after his enforced absence was beginning to tell as last year’s winner clawed back the deficit to force a fourth.

That ended a run of

31 consecutive sets won by Sinner at Grand Slam tournaments, stretching back to the Australian Open fourth round.

With both players now playing at close to their top levels, it was Sinner who made the first move in the fourth set, breaking



**Adam Pretty/Getty Images/TNS**  
**Carlos Alcaraz of Spain stretches for a forehand before slipping on the court in the fifth set against Jannik Sinner of Italy during the Men’s Singles Final match on Day 15 of the 2025 French Open at Roland Garros on Sunday, June 8, 2025, in Paris.**

to love to lead 4-3.

Second seed Alcaraz, scrambling to cling on to his title, then somehow saved three championship points on his own serve at 5-3, before incredibly digging even deeper to break back.

In the tiebreak Sinner edged two points ahead but then started missing, while Alcaraz fired down back-to-back aces on his way to leveling the match.

Sinner had never before won a match lasting longer than four hours — mainly because he has never really had to — but he was guzzling the pickle juice at the changeover to try and find more energy.

But Alcaraz, having clinched an early break, served for the match only for Sinner to somehow chase down an outrageous drop shot to level again.

A 10-point tiebreak was needed to separate them, an early-evening shoot-out to decide the champion, and by now Alcaraz had his eye in.

A glorious winner, a drop-shot and volley and some wayward shots from Sinner helped him race ahead 7-0, and a final, spectacular forehand winner sealed an unbelievable victory.



National Football League

# Ex-Cowboys player Joseph arrested, faces DWI charge

**Matt Kyle and Chris Amaya**  
**The Dallas Morning News (TNS)**

A former Dallas Cowboys player is facing charges of driving while intoxicated after he was allegedly involved in a fatal crash on U.S. Highway 75.

Richardson police said on social media that the department was investigating a fatal crash Saturday when the former NFL player, Kelvin Wayne Joseph Jr., 25, called Plano police and said he had been involved in a crash.

Richardson police said a motorcyclist, 27-year-old Cody Morris of Plano, was killed in the accident just before 5 a.m. in the 2400 block of U.S. 75.

Joseph plays as a cornerback for the DC Defenders in the United Football League. He was drafted by the Dallas Cowboys in the second round of the 2021 NFL draft and played for the team until 2023. He has also played for the Miami Dolphins, Seattle Seahawks and Indianapolis Colts.

In the statement, police said officers observed “signs of intoxication” while speaking with Joseph. He was booked into the Richardson city jail at about 7:45 a.m., and he faces a misdemeanor charge of driving while intoxicated and a felony charge of collision involving death. It was not clear if he has retained an attorney. An attorney who previously represented Joseph did not answer the phone when called by The Dallas Morning News Saturday afternoon.

Police said Joseph was traveling north in a BMW when he collided with a motorcycle. Police said no other vehicles were found at the scene.

Joseph’s Dallas stint came with off-field troubles. On March 18, 2022, Joseph was a passenger in an SUV from which two people shot into a group of men in a Lower Greenville parking lot. One man was fatally struck in the head.

Police concluded that Joseph was not a shooter.

The NFL did not suspend Joseph for his involvement in the matter. He appeared in 26 games for the Cowboys until his Dallas stint ended ahead of the 2023 season. The Cowboys traded Joseph to the Miami Dolphins in August 2023.

Joseph appeared in nine games throughout the Defenders’ 2025 season

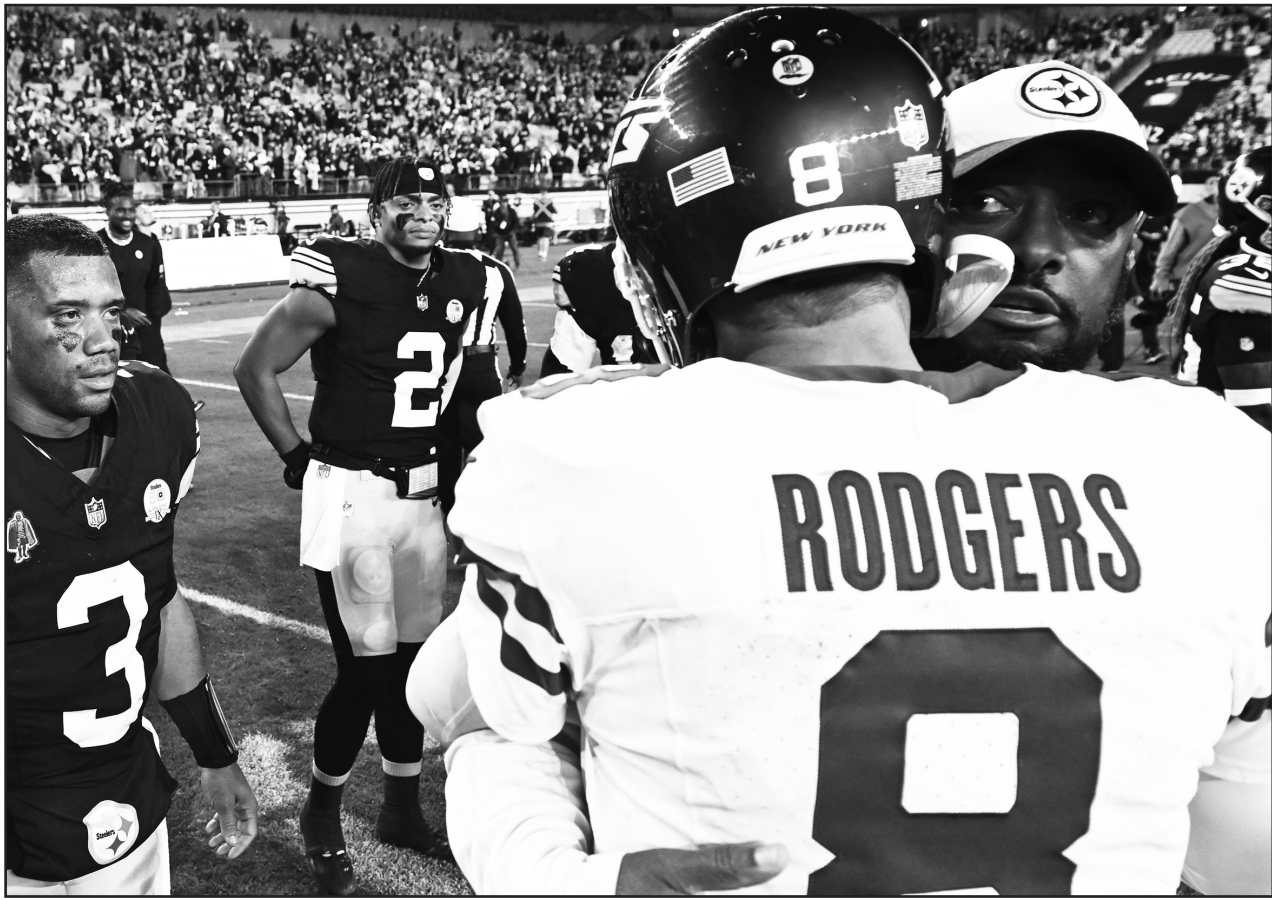
The Defenders are scheduled to face the St. Louis Battlehawks in the XFL conference championship game Sunday.

Joseph is not the first NFL player to face charges for a wreck on U.S. 75. In March of last year, Kansas City Chiefs wide receiver and ex-Southern Methodist University player Rashee Rice was involved in a multivehicle crash on the freeway near SMU.

He and then-SMU player Teddy Knox were accused of speeding on the highway in rented luxury vehicles before losing control, striking four other vehicles. They were then accused of leaving the scene. Charges against Rice and Knox are still pending.



**Smiley N. Pool/The Dallas Morning News/TNS**  
**Ex- Dallas Cowboys cornerback Kelvin Joseph, left, defends during a training camp practice on Aug. 7, 2023, in Oxnard, California.**



**Joe Sargent/Getty Images/TNS**  
**Head coach Mike Tomlin of the Pittsburgh Steelers, right, and Aaron Rodgers of the New York Jets embrace after the game at Acrisure Stadium on Oct. 20, 2024, in Pittsburgh.**

# Aaron Rodgers has spanned generations of NFL players

*But for the Steelers, it comes down to one shot*

**Brian Batko**  
**Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (TNS)**

At 41, Aaron Rodgers is the oldest player in the NFL. His soon-to-be 21 seasons of experience are also the most among active veterans, and he has outlasted everyone else in his 2005 draft class by more than three years now.

This isn’t to make a negative out of the man’s longevity. But it’s a reminder of just how many past and future teammates — and opponents — he’s crossed paths with over the years. Naturally, the Pittsburgh Steelers have their share of those with Rodgers connections, from coach Mike Tomlin on down through the roster.

“He didn’t fold under the pressure,” Tomlin said of Rodgers once upon a time. “I thought we hit him some early. We got to him as the game went on, but he showed his mettle, continued to stand in there and throw the football and throw it accurately. I tip my hat to him for that.”

That was after the most haunting loss of Tomlin’s career, when Rodgers and the Green Bay Packers beat the Steelers 31-25 to win Super Bowl XLV in 2011. Both sides have been on a roller coaster since that night, neither making it back to the game’s biggest stage, let alone standing on stage with the Lombardi Trophy in hand.

But now the Steel-

**Column**

ers’ best hope for such a dream run is for the Rodgers era to be more than a rerun. Fifty-two other players likely will go as far as the four-time NFL MVP can take them. It will be a full-circle moment for some, those who grew up watching him or others who have a more intimate history with him in the league.

“He’s seen every coverage,” Cam Heyward said last season before facing Rodgers with the New York Jets. “It’s not like you’re gonna fool him that much.”

The Steelers fooled him enough to lead to three interceptions that Monday night at Acrisure Stadium, two of which ended up in the hands of undrafted rookie nickelback Beanie Bishop Jr. One of those was a ricochet off of the chest of receiver Garrett Wilson, but nonetheless, Bishop picked off Rodgers twice.

It became a subplot for a week or two that Bishop had requested Rodgers sign the footballs for him, and a future Hall of Famer with a reputation for being prickly at times obliged. Bishop was appreciative, Rodgers was cool about it and the rest was history — until the two came across each other in late March when the quarterback was taking his free agency visit to the Steelers.

“I met him when he was at the facility,” Bishop said Wednesday. “He’s a funny guy.”

Bishop and fellow cornerback Cory Trice Jr. had just finished an offseason workout when Rodgers happened to walk by. So, to Rodgers, it looked like they were just loafing.

Always one to talk some trash to defensive backs, Rodgers gave them some grief for working hard or hardly working.

“Are y’all gonna keep F’ing around or are y’all gonna work out?” Bishop recalled. “Just funny stuff.”

If there’s one current Steeler who can appreciate — or rue — the irony of Bishop intercepting Rodgers twice the first time he stepped on the field against him, it’s the elder statesman in the cornerback room. That would be 34-year-old free agent acquisition Darius Slay Jr., who was in the same division as Rodgers from 2013-19 with the Detroit Lions and same conference from 2020-22 with the Philadelphia Eagles.

In 13 career matchups with Rodgers, Slay has never picked him off. He was hoping to get one in 2022, when the Eagles were rolling and welcomed Rodgers to Philadelphia for what would be his last game there as a Packer. The Eagles won 40-33, and Rodgers even served up two interceptions, but those went to journeyman slot cornerback Josiah Scott and —

to really twist the knife — rookie safety Reed Blankenship.

“I’m low-key jealous, too, a little bit, I ain’t gonna lie,” Slay joked after that game, “because he got him before I did. I been in the league 10 years and he’s a [expletive] rookie. ... He got a pick before me with A-Rod. I was in his division for seven years and I couldn’t get his ass, but he got him.”

Don’t mistake Slay’s competitive nature for a grudge against Rodgers, though. In fact, Slay and Rodgers have about as much mutual admiration as you could imagine for a confident quarterback and a fiery cornerback.

Slay attributes much of his confidence early in his career to praise that came from Rodgers when they were embroiled in the Lions-Packers rivalry. Rodgers told Slay he deserves the utmost respect because of the way he would shadow opposing receivers — inside, outside, left side, right side, wherever they went.

“Him and [Richard] Sherman were the first two people that told me that I’d get all the recognition,” Slay said in 2019 via DetroitLions.com.

A self-proclaimed “fan” of Rodgers’ even before he made it to the league himself, Slay has the No. 12 Packers in his uniform collection. And he was floored one season when Rodgers sought him out before a game to request a Slay jersey in return.

Major League Baseball

# Pete Alonso passes David Wright on HR list

**Abbey Mastracco**  
**New York Daily News (TNS)**

Pete Alonso is now just nine home runs from tying Darryl Strawberry for the New York Mets’ all-time club home run record, and 10 from taking the title.

The first baseman was one of four Mets hitters to homer in a 13-5 win over the Colorado Rockies on Sunday afternoon at Coors Field, with Alonso and Jeff McNeil each hitting two dingers, while Brett Baty and Francisco Alvarez each hit one, and Juan Soto reached base six times.

Tylor Megill earned the win and right-

hander Paul Blackburn pitched out of the bullpen for the first time this season, going four innings for a save.

The Mets (42-24) completed a season sweep of the Rockies, finally getting the big offensive game they’ve been looking for, but it was Alonso who moved up in the record books with both of his home runs.

Alonso’s first home run tied him David Wright for second all-time in franchise history, and with his second, he took sole possession of second place. In the top of the third with the Mets up 2-0 and Soto on second, right-hander

Chase Dollander threw a 1-1 cutter that didn’t quite cut the way it might have if it wasn’t for Coors Field’s altitude. Alonso drove it 416 feet to left-center field, giving the Mets a 4-0 lead.

Tyrone Taylor’s RBI double off Dollander in the same inning made it 5-0. Dollander (2-6) finished the inning, but wouldn’t return for the fourth, finishing with five earned runs on eight hits, walking one, striking out three and being charged with an error trying to pick off Soto.

The Rockies (12-53) went to right-hander Juan Mejia, but he wasn’t any better.

Up 5-0 in the fourth, McNeil hit his second of the game and sixth of the season, a three-run shot that gave the Mets an eight-run lead. Colorado got two back in the fifth, but the Mets kept going. Baty hit a two-run home run off right-hander Seth Halvorsen in the top of the seventh.

With the Mets up 10-3 in the eighth, right-hander Tyler Kinley tried to go inside to Alonso with a fastball. The slugger turned on it, sending it over the left-field fence for another two-run blast.

He has 17 on the season, and his average is up to .301.



**Dustin Bradford/Getty Images/TNS**  
**Pete Alonso of the New York Mets celebrates his eighth inning two-run home run against the Colorado Rockies at Coors Field on Sunday, June 8, 2025, in Denver.**



Professional Golf Association

US Open at Oakmont to cause havoc for world’s best golfers

Column

Gerry Dulac  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette  
(TNS)

When he played his first practice round before the 2016 U.S. Open, Shane Lowry quit after six holes because he thought Oakmont Country Club was too paralyzing — and too damaging to his confidence.

“I sat there in the locker room going, I have no idea how I’m going to play golf around this place,” Lowry said.

Six days later, Lowry had a three-shot lead after 54 holes going into the final round.

“It wasn’t that I felt like I couldn’t play it, but I was just like, ‘This is too hard, I’m going in.’ You know what I mean?” Lowry said at the Memorial in Dublin, Ohio. “Honestly, if it didn’t rain — I remember it rained on Wednesday and Thursday that week — God knows what the winning score would have been.”

It ended up being 4-under 276. But it was posted by Dustin Johnson, not Lowry, who shot 76 on Sunday and finished tied for second — three shots behind the winner.

Flash forward to Monday, six days ago, when world No. 2 Rory McIlroy and former Masters champion Adam Scott were part of a private event at



Shane Lowry of Ireland reacts during the final round of the U.S. Open at Oakmont Country Club on June 19, 2016, in Oakmont, Pennsylvania. Andrew Redington/Getty Images/TNS

Oakmont with a shotgun start.

McIlroy began on No. 2, the driveable 346-yard par-4, and made 7. Scott hit every fairway on the front and shot 3-over.

Yes, it’s tough out there, and the 125th U.S. Open hasn’t even started.

And if it stays relatively dry, unlike 2016, it’s going to get tougher than a three-day-old pork chop.

“I don’t get too caught up in the whole carnage, pre-tournament reports because we

hear that almost seemingly every year at these events,” said NBC’s tower analyst Kevin Kisner, who played in nine U.S. Opens, including 2016 at Oakmont when he finished tied for 49th. “And then when we show up on Thursday, somebody’s 3-under at the turn, and it’s, like, ‘What happened to all the carnage reports?’

“You put 156 of the best players in the world at a course, it doesn’t matter; you stick a hole in the ground, and they’re go-

ing to figure out a way to make birdies.”

The U.S. Open is back at Oakmont for a record 10th time, with practice rounds open to the public beginning Monday and the real fun commencing Thursday. The field of 156 players includes McIlroy, a three-time winner in 2025, world No. 1 Scottie Scheffler and defending champ Bryson DeChambeau, who has become a major presence at major championships.

Belmont Stakes

Sovereignty wins the Belmont Stakes

John Cherwa  
Los Angeles Times (TNS)

Sometimes a rivalry falls short of the hype. But no such thing happened Saturday at Saratoga Race Course when in almost a repeat of the Kentucky Derby, Sovereignty ran past Journalism in mid-stretch to win the 157th running of the Belmont Stakes.

The conversation would have been quite different if

Sovereignty had run in the Preakness Stakes and won. If that were the case he would have been the 14th winner of the Triple Crown.

Rodriguez and Crudo, as expected, were the front runners going into the first turn of the 1 1/4-mile race.

But as the horses went down the backstretch Journalism started to get engaged with Sovereignty close by. Enter-

ing the homestretch, Journalism poked his head in front as Rodriguez began to fall back. Sovereignty was working his way to the outside of Journalism and with 200 yards to go moved swiftly to the front and won by three lengths.

Just like in the Kentucky Derby, Baeza was third. Rodriguez finished fourth. Sovereignty paid \$7.00 to win.

“I think there are three re-

ally good horses and I’m glad he was able to come back and put in a race like he did in the Derby,” said winning trainer Bill Mott.

“If we wouldn’t have won today, we would have taken a lot of criticism, but it turned out good. Sometimes you make the right decision and a lot of times you make the wrong ones, but today it really worked out well.”

Scoreboard

Scores are from Saturday, June 7, 2025

BASKETBALL

NBA Playoff Glance

FIRST ROUND  
(Best-of-7; x-if necessary)

Eastern Conference

**New York 4, Detroit 2**  
Saturday, April 19: New York 123, Detroit 112  
Monday, April 21: Detroit 100, New York 94  
Thursday, April 23: Cleveland 117, Detroit 116  
Sunday, April 27: New York 94, Detroit 93  
Tuesday, April 29: Detroit 106, New York 103  
Thursday, May 1: New York 116, Detroit 113

**Cleveland 4, Miami 0**  
Sunday, April 20: Cleveland 121, Miami 100  
Wednesday, April 23: Houston 109, Golden State 94  
Saturday, April 26: Cleveland 124, Miami 87  
Monday, April 28: Cleveland 138, Miami 83

**Indiana 4, Milwaukee 1**  
Saturday, April 19: Indiana 117, Milwaukee 98  
Tuesday, April 22: Indiana 123, Milwaukee 115  
Friday, April 25: Milwaukee 117, Indiana 101  
Sunday, April 28: Indiana 129, Milwaukee 103  
Tuesday, April 29: Indiana 119, Milwaukee 118, OT

**Boston 4, Orlando 1**  
Sunday, April 20: Boston 103, Orlando 86  
Wednesday, April 23: Boston 109, Orlando 100  
Friday, April 25: Orlando 95, Boston 93  
Sunday, April 27: Boston 107, Orlando 98  
Tuesday, April 29: Boston 120, Orlando 89

Western Conference

**Golden State 4, Houston 3**  
Sunday, April 20: Golden State 95, Houston 85  
Tuesday, April 23: Houston 109, Golden State 94  
Saturday, April 26: Golden State 104, Houston 93  
Monday, April 28: Golden State 109, Houston 106  
Wednesday, April 30: Houston 131, Golden State 116  
Friday, May 2: Houston 115, Golden State 107  
Sunday, May 4: Golden State 103, Houston 89

**Denver 4, L.A. Clippers 3**  
Saturday, April 19: Denver 112, L.A. Clippers 110, OT  
Monday, April 21: L.A. Clippers 105, Denver 102  
Thursday, April 24: L.A. Clippers 117, Denver 83  
Saturday, April 26: Denver 101, L.A. Clippers 99  
Tuesday, April 29: Denver 131, L.A. Clippers 115  
Thursday, May 1: L.A. Clippers 111, Denver 105  
Saturday, May 3: Denver 120, L.A. Clippers 101

**Oklahoma City 4, Memphis 0**  
Sunday, April 20: Oklahoma City 131, Memphis 80  
Tuesday, April 23: Oklahoma City 118, Memphis 99  
Thursday, April 24: Oklahoma City 114, Memphis 108  
Saturday, April 26: Oklahoma City 117, Memphis 115

**Minnesota 4, L.A. Lakers 1**  
Saturday, April 19: Minnesota 117, L.A. Lakers 95  
Tuesday, April 22: L.A. Lakers 94, Minnesota 85  
Friday, April 25: Minnesota 116, L.A. Lakers 104  
Sunday, April 27: Minnesota 116, L.A. Lakers 93  
Wednesday, April 30: Minnesota 103, L.A. Lakers 96

SECOND ROUND  
(Best-of-7; x-if necessary)

Eastern Conference

**Indiana 4, Cleveland 1**  
Sunday, May 4: Indiana 121, Cleveland 112  
Tuesday, May 6: Indiana 120, Cleveland 119  
Friday, May 9: Cleveland 126, Indiana 104  
Sunday, May 11: Indiana 129, Cleveland 109  
Tuesday, May 13: Indiana 114, Cleveland 105

**New York 4, Boston 2**  
Monday, May 5: New York 108, Boston 105, OT  
Wednesday, May 7: New York 91, Boston 90  
Saturday, May 10: Boston 115, New York 93  
Monday, May 12: New York 121, Boston 113  
Wednesday, May 14: Boston 127, New York 102  
Friday, May 16: New York 119, Boston 81

Western Conference

**Oklahoma City 4, Denver 3**  
Monday, May 5: Denver 121, Oklahoma City 119  
Wednesday, May 7: Oklahoma City 149, Denver 106  
Friday, May 9: Denver 113, Oklahoma City 104, OT  
Sunday, May 11: Oklahoma City 92, Denver 87  
Tuesday, May 13: Oklahoma City 112, Denver 105

Thursday, May 15: Denver 119, Oklahoma City 107  
Sunday, May 18: Oklahoma City 125, Denver 93

**Minnesota 4, Golden State 1**  
Tuesday, May 6: Golden State 99, Minnesota 88  
Thursday, May 8: Minnesota 117, Golden State 93  
Saturday, May 10: Minnesota 102, Golden State 97  
Monday, May 12: Minnesota 117, Golden State 110  
Wednesday, May 14: Minnesota 121, Golden State 110

CONFERENCE FINALS  
(Best-of-7; x-if necessary)

Eastern Conference

**Indiana 4, New York 2**  
Wednesday, May 21: Indiana 138, New York 135, OT  
Friday, May 23: Indiana 114, New York 109  
Sunday, May 25: New York 106, Indiana 100  
Tuesday, May 27: Indiana 130, New York 121  
Thursday, May 29: New York 111, Indiana 94  
Saturday, May 31: Indiana 125, New York 108

Western Conference

**Oklahoma City 4, Minnesota 1**  
Tuesday, May 20: Oklahoma City 114, Minnesota 88  
Thursday, May 22: Oklahoma City 118, Minnesota 103  
Saturday, May 24: Minnesota 143, Oklahoma City 101  
Monday, May 26: Oklahoma City 128, Minnesota 126  
Wednesday, May 28: Oklahoma City 124, Minnesota 94

FINALS  
(Best-of-7; x-if necessary)

Indiana 1, Oklahoma City 0

Thursday, June 5: Indiana 111, Oklahoma City 110  
Sunday, June 8: Indiana at Oklahoma City, 8 p.m.  
Wednesday, June 11: Oklahoma City at Indiana, 8:30 p.m.  
Friday, June 13: Oklahoma City at Indiana, 8:30 p.m.  
x-Monday, June 16: Indiana at Oklahoma City, TBA  
x-Thursday, June 19: Oklahoma City at Indiana, TBA  
x-Sunday, June 22: Indiana at Oklahoma City, TBA

WNBA Glance

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	8	0	1.000	—
Atlanta	5	2	.714	2½
Indiana	3	4	.429	4½
Washington	3	6	.333	5½
Chicago	2	4	.333	5
Connecticut	1	6	.143	6½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	8	0	1.000	—
Phoenix	6	3	.667	2½
Las Vegas	4	2	.667	3
Seattle	4	4	.500	4
Golden State	2	5	.286	5½
Los Angeles	2	6	.250	6
Dallas	1	7	.125	7

Thursday's Games

New York 86, Washington 78  
Phoenix 86, Golden State 77

Friday's Games

Atlanta at Connecticut, (n)  
Los Angeles at Dallas, (n)

Saturday's Games

Las Vegas at Golden State, 3 p.m.  
Indiana at Chicago, 8 p.m.  
Seattle at Phoenix, 10 p.m.

Sunday's Games

Connecticut at Washington, 3 p.m.  
Minnesota at Dallas, 4 p.m.

Monday's Games

Golden State at Los Angeles, 10 p.m.

Tuesday, April 22: Florida 6, Tampa Bay 2  
Thursday, April 24: Florida 2, Tampa Bay 0  
Saturday, April 26: Tampa Bay 5, Florida 1  
Monday, April 28: Florida 4, Tampa Bay 3  
Wednesday, April 30: Florida 6, Tampa Bay 3

Washington 4, Montreal 1

Monday, April 21: Washington 3, Montreal 2, OT  
Wednesday, April 23: Washington 3, Montreal 1  
Friday, April 25: Montreal 6, Washington 3  
Sunday, April 27: Washington 5, Montreal 2  
Wednesday, April 30: Washington 4, Montreal 1

Carolina 4, New Jersey 1

Sunday, April 20: Carolina 4, New Jersey 1  
Tuesday, April 22: Carolina 3, New Jersey 1  
Friday, April 25: New Jersey 3, Carolina 2, 2OT  
Sunday, April 27: Carolina 5, New Jersey 2  
Tuesday, April 29: Carolina 5, New Jersey 4, 2OT

Toronto 4, Ottawa 2

Sunday, April 20: Toronto 6, Ottawa 2  
Tuesday, April 22: Toronto 3, Ottawa 2, OT  
Thursday, April 24: Toronto 3, Ottawa 2, OT  
Saturday, April 26: Ottawa 4, Toronto 3, OT  
Sunday, April 27: Carolina 5, New Jersey 2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Dallas 4, Colorado 3

Saturday, April 19: Colorado 5, Dallas 1  
Monday, April 21: Dallas 4, Colorado 3, OT  
Wednesday, April 23: Dallas 2, Colorado 1, OT  
Saturday, April 26: Colorado 4, Dallas 0  
Monday, April 28: Dallas 6, Colorado 2  
Thursday, May 1: Colorado 7, Dallas 4  
Saturday, May 3: Dallas 4, Colorado 2

Edmonton 4, Los Angeles 2

Monday, April 21: Los Angeles 6, Edmonton 5  
Tuesday, April 22: Minnesota 5, Vegas 2  
Thursday, April 24: Minnesota 5, Vegas 2  
Saturday, April 26: Vegas 4, Minnesota 3, OT  
Tuesday, April 29: Vegas 3, Minnesota 2, OT  
Thursday, May 1: Vegas 3, Minnesota 2

Winnipeg 4, St. Louis 3

Saturday, April 19: Winnipeg 5, St. Louis 3  
Monday, April 21: Winnipeg 2, St. Louis 1  
Thursday, April 24: St. Louis 7, Winnipeg 2  
Sunday, April 27: St. Louis 5, Winnipeg 1  
Wednesday, April 30: Winnipeg 5, St. Louis 3  
Friday, May 2: St. Louis 5, Winnipeg 2  
Sunday, May 4: Winnipeg 4, St. Louis 3, 2OT

SECOND ROUND

(Best-of-7; x-if necessary)

EASTERN CONFERENCE

**Carolina 4, Washington 1**  
Tuesday, May 6: Carolina 2, Washington 1, OT  
Thursday, May 8: Washington 3, Carolina 1  
Saturday, May 10: Carolina 4, Washington 0  
Monday, May 12: Carolina 5, Washington 2  
Thursday, May 15: Carolina 3, Washington 1  
Sunday, May 17: Dallas 2, Winnipeg 1, OT

Florida 4, Toronto 3

Monday, May 5: Toronto 5, Florida 4  
Wednesday, May 7: Toronto 4, Florida 3  
Friday, May 9: Florida 5, Toronto 4, OT  
Sunday, May 11: Florida 2, Toronto 0  
Wednesday, May 14: Florida 3, Toronto 1  
Friday, May 16: Toronto 2, Florida 0  
Sunday, May 18: Florida 6, Toronto 1

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Dallas 4, Winnipeg 2

Wednesday, May 7: Dallas 3, Winnipeg 2  
Friday, May 9: Winnipeg 4, Dallas 0  
Sunday, May 11: Dallas 5, Winnipeg 2  
Tuesday, May 13: Dallas 1, Washington 1  
Thursday, May 15: Winnipeg 4, Dallas 0  
Saturday, May 17: Dallas 2, Winnipeg 1, OT

Edmonton 4, Vegas 1

Tuesday, May 6: Edmonton 4, Vegas 2  
Thursday, May 8: Edmonton 5, Vegas 4, OT  
Saturday, May 10: Vegas 4, Edmonton 3  
Monday, May 12: Edmonton 3, Vegas 0  
Wednesday, May 14: Edmonton 1, Vegas 0, OT

CONFERENCE FINALS

(Best-of-7; x-if necessary)

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Florida 4, Carolina 1

Tuesday, May 20: Florida 5, Carolina 2  
Thursday, May 22: Florida 5, Carolina 0  
Saturday, May 24: Florida 6, Carolina 2  
Monday, May 26: Carolina 3, Florida 0  
Wednesday, May 28: Florida 5, Carolina 3

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Edmonton 4, Dallas 1

Wednesday, May 21: Dallas 6, Edmonton 3  
Friday, May 23: Edmonton 3, Dallas 0  
Sunday, May 25: Edmonton 6, Dallas 1  
Tuesday, May 27: Edmonton 4, Dallas 1  
Thursday, May 29: Edmonton 6, Dallas 3

FINALS

(Best-of-7; x-if necessary)

Edmonton 1, Florida 0

Wednesday, June 4: Edmonton 4, Florida 3, OT  
Friday, June 6: Florida at Edmonton, (n)  
Monday, June 9: Edmonton at Florida, 8 p.m.  
Thursday, June 12: Edmonton at Florida, 8 p.m.  
x-Saturday, June 14: Florida at Edmonton, TBA  
x-Tuesday, June 17: Edmonton at Florida, TBA  
x-Friday, June 20: Florida at Edmonton, TBA

BASEBALL

MLB Glance

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	38	23	.623	—
Tampa Bay	34	29	.540	5
Toronto	33	29	.532	5½
Boston	30	34	.469	9½
Baltimore	25	36	.410	13

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Detroit	41	23	.641	—
Minnesota	34	28	.548	6
Cleveland	33	28	.541	6½
Kansas City	33	30	.524	7½
Chicago	20	43	.317	20½

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	34	28	.548	—
Seattle	32	29	.525	1½
Texas	29	34	.460	5½
Los Angeles	28	33	.459	5½
Athletics	24	40	.375	11

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	39	24	.619	—
Philadelphia	37	25	.597	1½
Washington	29	33	.468	9½
Atlanta	27	34	.443	11
Miami	23	38	.377	15

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	39	23	.629	—
St. Louis	34	28	.548	5
Milwaukee	34	29	.540	5½
Cincinnati	30	33	.476	9½
Pittsburgh	23	40	.365	16½

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	38	25	.603	—
San Diego	35	26	.574	2
San Francisco	35	28	.556	3
Arizona	31	31	.500	6½
Colorado	12	50	.194	25½

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Thursday's Games

St. Louis 6, Kansas City 5, 10 innings, 1st game  
Chicago White Sox 3, Detroit 2, 10 innings  
Toronto 9, Philadelphia 1  
Baltimore 4, Seattle 3  
Athletics 14, Minnesota 3  
Houston 8, Pittsburgh 2  
N.Y. Yankees 4, Cleveland 0  
Tampa Bay 4, Texas 3

Kansas City 7, St. Louis 5, 2nd game

Friday's Games

Tampa Bay 4, Miami 3  
Texas at Washington, (n)  
Boston at N.Y. Yankees, (n)  
Chicago Cubs at Detroit, (n)  
Houston at Cleveland, (n)  
Kansas City at Chicago White Sox, (n)  
Toronto at Minnesota, (n)  
Seattle at L.A. Angels, (n)  
Baltimore at Athletics, (n)

Saturday's Games

Chicago Cubs (Taillon 5-3) at Detroit (Montero 2-1), 1:10 p.m.  
Toronto (Gausman 5-4) at Minnesota (Paddack 2-5), 2:10 p.m.  
Texas (deGrom 5-2) at Washington (Parker 4-5), 4:05 p.m.  
Houston (Brown 8-3) at Cleveland (Williams 5-3), 4:10 p.m.  
Kansas City (Wacha 3-4) at Chicago White Sox (Houser 1-1), 4:10 p.m.

Miami (Weathers 1-1) at Tampa Bay (Bradley 4-5), 4:10 p.m.  
Boston (Crockett 5-4) at N.Y. Yankees (Yarbrough 3-0), 7:35 p.m.  
Seattle (Castillo 4-3) at L.A. Angels (Kochanowicz 3-7), 9:38 p.m.  
Baltimore (Morton 2-7) at Athletics (Severino 1-5), 10:05 p.m.

Sunday's Games

Miami at Tampa Bay, 12:10 p.m.  
Texas at Washington, 1:35 p.m.  
Chicago Cubs at Detroit, 1:40 p.m.  
Houston at Cleveland, 1:40 p.m.  
Kansas City at Chicago White Sox, 2:10 p.m.  
Toronto at Minnesota, 2:10 p.m.  
Baltimore at Athletics, 4:05 p.m.  
Seattle at L.A. Angels, 4:07 p.m.  
Boston at N.Y. Yankees, 7:10 p.m.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Thursday's Games

Arizona 11, Atlanta 10  
St. Louis 6, Kansas City 5, 10 innings, 1st game  
Toronto 9, Philadelphia 1  
San Francisco 3, San Diego 2  
L.A. Dodgers 6, N.Y. Mets 5  
Houston 8, Pittsburgh 2  
Chicago Cubs 7, Washington 1  
Kansas City 7, St. Louis 5, 2nd game

Friday's Games

Tampa Bay 4, Miami 3  
Philadelphia at Pittsburgh, (n)  
Texas at Washington, (n)  
Arizona at Cincinnati, (n)  
Chicago Cubs at Detroit, (n)  
San Diego



# Dear Abby

## PROUD GRANDMA IS WORRIED BY WHAT SHE'S SEEING

**Abigail Van Buren**  
**DEAR ABBY:** I'm blessed at 38 to have my first and likely only grandbaby. She's PERFECT. My daughter, "Robin," is stressed. She's left alone with the baby all day, every day while her partner works. Robin sleeps only when he's home. I understand her frustration. I raised her and her brother, 12 months apart, on my own. I don't get to see my grandbaby often as I don't have a vehicle and Robin doesn't have a driver's license.



I cherish every picture I receive. I want to memorize every aspect of my grandbaby. There's a recurring theme in her photos. I think the baby has a lazy eye. I've compared pictures from birth until now at 10 months of age. Robin is in a fragile state with stress and postpartum depression. Should I tell her or let a doctor catch it? I know the longer it goes untreated, the worse it gets. Right now, I can't say or do anything right to her. Apparently, "I don't know what it's like to raise a kid!" — WATCHFUL GRANDMA IN MISSOURI  
**DEAR GRANDMA:** If your daughter is suffering from postpartum depression, it is very important that she be treated by her doctor for it. You should be telling her that. I cannot stress this too strongly. Your granddaughter should be having regular examinations by her pediatrician because if there is something wrong with her eye, her pediatrician should catch it and recommend treatment.

**DEAR ABBY:** My father divorced my mother when I was 7. He was never around much prior to their divorce. They married young, and I have three siblings. My parents "had" to get married (those were the times), so it wasn't a happy union. Dad was self-absorbed and immature. He moved out of state, never supported us and sat on the sidelines, watching us flounder. My mother worked three jobs during my whole childhood. She was the best parent you could imagine, but it was a real struggle for all of us. In a way, we were blessed that he left. Two of my siblings maintained a relationship with this man, who later in life remarried and had two more children. I have never understood how they could forgive him, but they must have. My father is 86 now. Years ago, he moved back to where we grew up. He is dying and has two to six months to live. It is a strange feeling, and I have sympathy for what my siblings have been going through. How do I support them? I haven't spoken to my father in 40 years, and we never speak of him to each other. I can never forgive him for what he did to me and my mother. Of course, I will know when he passes. I want to be sincere and support my siblings. — EMPATHETIC IN CALIFORNIA  
**DEAR EMPATHETIC:** No one can predict how the death of a parent will affect them, and that includes you. Don't be surprised if it comes as a jolt. You do not have to mourn your father's death in order to be sensitive to your siblings' feelings.

# Cryptoquote

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

6-10 CRYPTOQUOTE

FY FW RUYUD YG RU H SGQAL

ZQAU RQL YJHA HA GOC RFDC

GV MHDHCFWU. — KHDX YTHFA

**Saturday's Cryptoquote:** COURAGEOUS PEOPLE DO NOT FEAR FORGIVING, FOR THE SAKE OF PEACE. — NELSON MANDELA

# Whatzit?

@WhatzitGame June 10, 2025

WHATZIT?

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

dealraw

SOLUTION: Raw end of the deal

www.facebook.com/dingbatgame

Whatzit ©2025 Paul Sellers Distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

40 Quiver item

41 Clan symbol

42 Inclines

43 Canary chow

DOWN

1 Coffee bar order

2 Grill waste

3 Manual readers

4 Tell tales

5 Studio time

6 Boxing weapons

7 Worker in a colony

8 Brainstorming tool

9 River from Lake Erie

10 Rest

14 Snaky fish

19 Pub brews

22 Crazy talk

23 Magazine order

24 Magnetite, e.g.

25 Box opener of myth

26 Legal experts

28 Brought into the world

30 Hearty dishes

31 Gladden

32 Did some yard work

33 Goblet parts

38 Mafia boss

39 Sock part

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11 12

13 14

15 16 17

18 19 20

21 22

23 24 25 26

27 28

29 30 31 32 33

34 35 36

37 38 39

40 41

42 43

6-10

# Sudoku

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

9 3 7 5 6 1

8 6 9 5

4 6

2 7 9 1 8 6 3

8 5 6 7 9

6 9 5 7

7 4 8

5 2 8 6

6 9 3 5

Difficulty: ★★

6/10

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Answer to previous puzzle

1 2 5 8 3 6 4 9 7

8 4 6 9 7 2 1 3 5

7 9 3 1 5 4 8 6 2

6 1 9 2 4 7 3 5 8

2 7 4 3 8 5 6 1 9

3 5 8 6 1 9 2 7 4

5 8 7 4 6 3 9 2 1

9 6 1 5 2 8 7 4 3

4 3 2 7 9 1 5 8 6

Difficulty: ★★★★★

6/7

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# Astrological Forecast

**By Magi Helena**  
**Wednesday, June 11, 2025**

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** Aim high and let your limitless imagination shape a brighter future. Cherish people and moments, making every interaction meaningful.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Stay close to trusted friends but be open to new friendships. Interacting with people who aren't on the same path could spark conflict.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Wheel and deal with confidence, as you may be a bit wiser than usual. Write down your inspirations or spend time on a hobby.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** You may be so optimistic that you want to avoid anything discouraging. The crossword in the paper might make more sense than crossed words with someone.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Communicate like a pro. Polish your phone skills to confidently reach out to strangers or distant contacts. It may be up to you to initiate important matters related to home or take the first steps toward attaining a goal.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** A small act of kindness could snowball into a lucky break. Consider discussing the future with a loved one and making solid plans.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** Joint ventures might be appealing. You and a partner could create something valuable and long-lasting together.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** Taking a closer look may serve you well, especially when something seems too good to be true. Always weigh your options before making major decisions. Interestingly, some people might find your caution charming and appealing.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** You might be sizzling with sincerity even if the crowd is still warming up. Over the top antics could go either way: You might get a chilly shutdown from some who don't share your perspective, or your playful charm could help you stand out.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** Embrace gestures of warmth and affection. You might be in harmony with loved ones, intuitively sensing their trustworthiness and sincerity.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Teamwork could set the tone as you focus on pursuing your goals. You may feel comfortable yielding gracefully as events unfold and let others take the reins. Someone might be calling the shots or leading the dance in romance.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** The options ahead may have great potential if you choose wisely. Be cautious about financial advice from friends because your intentions and theirs may not align. Consider your decisions and the outcomes before you make an important choice.

# To Your Good Health

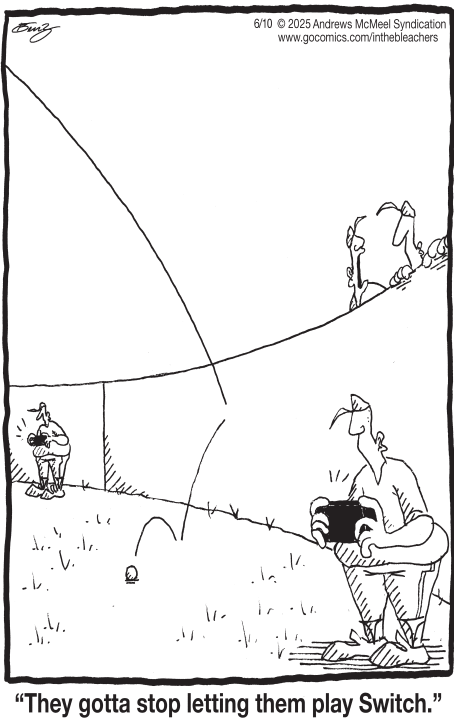
## Understanding how PSA tests and DREs help to identify cancer

**Keith Roach, M.D.**  
**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I am a 53-year-old healthy male, and I always request to check my PSA levels each year. My 57-year-old brother's new doctor denied his request for a routine PSA check on their initial visit. She said that the test now produces more false positives and unnecessary procedures and surgeries, so she said "no" and wouldn't order it. Are primary care physicians discouraging the PSA test for older men now? I don't get any push back when I request to check it. Also, I heard the digital rectal exam (DRE) isn't as valid anymore for screening. His new doctor also did not do a DRE. I'm curious to know your thoughts are on the current DRE and PSA screening guidelines for primary care physicians? — C.C.

**ANSWER:** The prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test is a screening blood test for cancer, and the recommendation for its use has gone back and forth over decades since it's been introduced. Since screening and prevention are my areas of expertise, I have followed the literature on the use of PSA and other screening tests very closely. In my opinion, your brother's doctor was wrong to refuse to order the test. She was right that it does produce false positives, which could potentially lead to unnecessary surgeries; however, there are good ways to reduce unnecessary treatment while still ordering the test, which can save lives. Most prostate cancer is so slow-growing that it is likely never to bother a man until he dies from something else. So, we don't want to operate on these relatively indolent cancers because there's a possibility of a serious side effect from surgery, such as urinary incontinence or erectile dysfunction (neither of which any man wants). Before operating, careful testing is done on the prostate cancer, including imaging (ideally by MRI scan), biopsy with pathological examination, and often genetic testing of the tumor. Along with the PSA results, we can separate prostate cancer into categories of very low risk and low risk versus intermediate and high risk. Once we have the diagnosis, we can make good recommendations so that we can identify the rare high-risk cancers while not unnecessarily treating the low-risk cancers. Without screenings, we can't keep rare, small and aggressive tumors from spreading until it's too late. Now I have to tell you that age 53 and 57 isn't so much "older," at least from the perspective of prostate cancer screening.



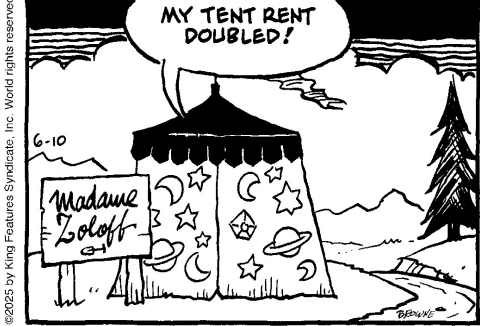
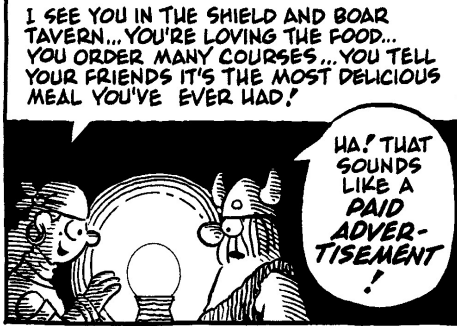
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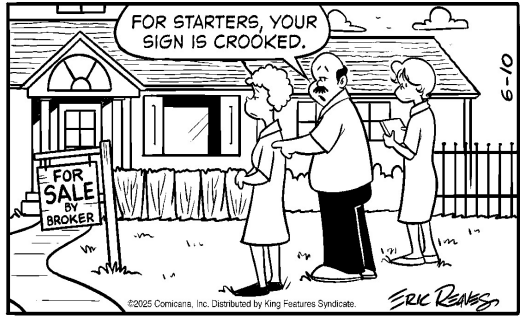
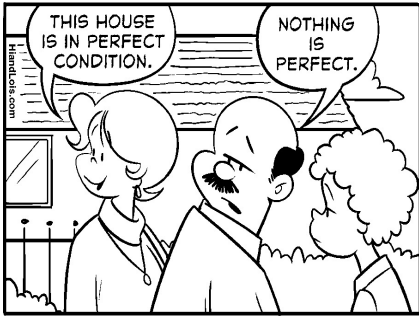
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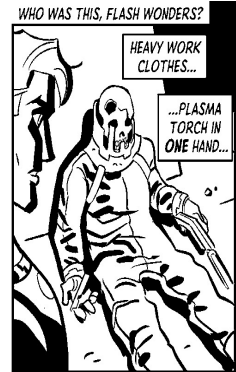
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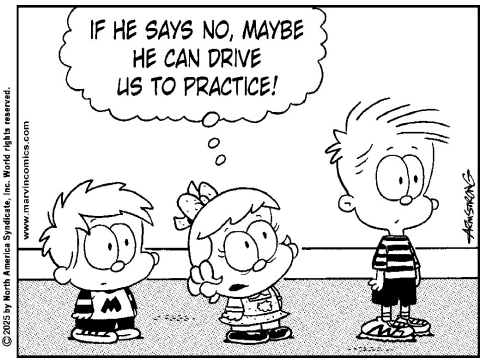
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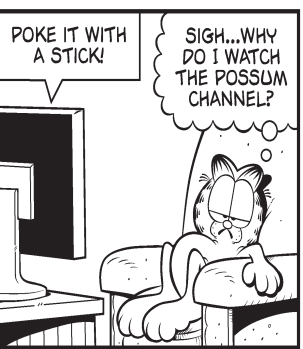
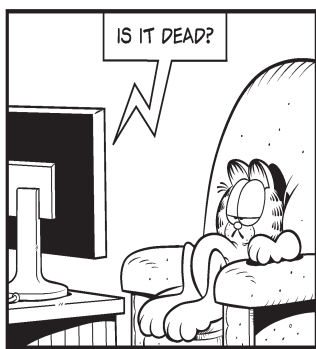
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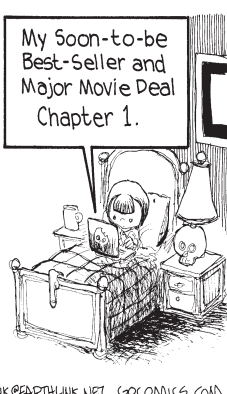
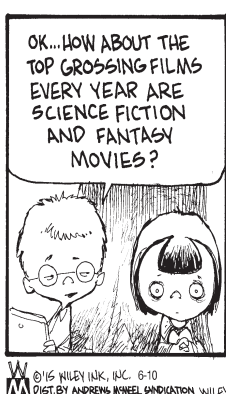
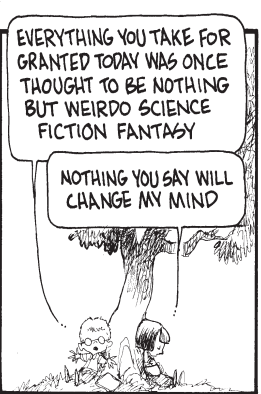
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MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM



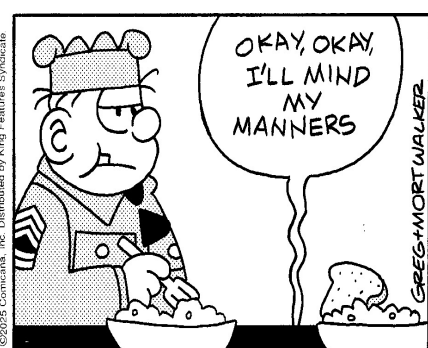
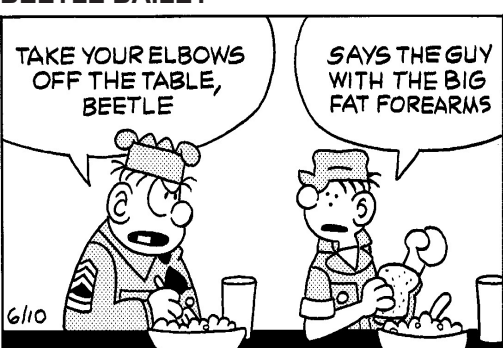
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PEANUTS



BEETLE BAILEY



TIGER



ZITS



BABY BLUES



FAMILY CIRCUS

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Classifieds

Special Services

Help Wanted

**Shane's Handyman Service**  
Lawnmowing, junk removal, cleanouts (houses & barns), pressure washing (houses & decks), mulching, driveway sealing, gutter cleaning, shrub trimming, roll-off dumpsters for rent, much more.  
Fully insured, reasonable rates, free estimates.  
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Cortland Standard

**The Village of McGraw is looking to hire a DPW Laborer.**  
Must have a valid clean NYS Driver's License, Must be 18 years of Age or older, have a High School Diploma or a GED. Must have working knowledge of the care and safe use of common hand and power tools found in construction and maintenance, ability to perform routine physical labor, ability to follow oral instructions, work well with others. Will be required to take part in rotational weekend duties. \$17- \$18 per hour depending on experience. Applications can be picked up at the Village Office located at 24 Cemetery Street McGraw NY 13101 All applications must be in the Village office by June 16, 2025

Legal Ads

**PUBLIC NOTICE  
VILLAGE OF GROTON  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC  
HEARING**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Board of Trustees of the Village of Groton will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, June 16, 2025 - 7:30pm & 7:40 pm, at the Groton Village Office, 308 Main St. to consider the adoption of the following amended Local Laws:

**Proposed Amended Laws:**  
7:30pm - A local law that will amend the Code of the Village of Groton, amending Chapter 165, "Sewers", specifically Sections 165-3 (A) and (B) in relation to sewer rents imposed.  
A discussion will be had to determine a proposed amendment that will increase the rents charged for sewer services. The effective date of the rate schedule is scheduled to be June 27, 2025.  
7:40pm - A local law that will amend Chapter 17 of the code of the Village of Groton, "Employee Policies; Article II. Reimbursement for Training Costs" amending Section 17-6 (A)  
The public is invited to attend, and all oral or written comments may be presented for consideration.  
Any person with special needs, who wishes to attend the hearing, should contact the Village Office (607) 898-3966 immediately so your particular needs can be accommodated.  
By order of the Board of Trustees.

Nancy Niswender  
Village Clerk

**BUYING?  
SELLING?**

**Check the  
Classifieds!**

**Carter's Tree Service  
LLC  
NOTICE OF FORMATION  
OF A  
LIMITED LIABILITY COM-  
PANY**

Notice of formation of Carter's Tree Service LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of NY (SSNY) on 03/21/2025. Office location: Cortland County. SSNY designated as an agent of Limited Liability Company (LLC) upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY should mail process to the Company: 3681 Route 215, Cortland, NY 13045. Purpose: Any lawful purpose. May 20, 27, Jun 3, 10, 17, 24, 2025

**NOTICE OF BOND  
RESOLUTION**

The resolution, a summary of which is published herewith, was adopted on June 5, 2025. The validity of the obligations authorized by such resolution may be hereafter contested only if such obligations were authorized for an object or purpose for which the McGraw Central School District is not authorized to expend money or if the provisions of law which should have been complied with as of the date of publication of this notice were not substantially complied with, and an action, suit or proceeding contesting such validity is commenced within twenty days after the date of publication of this notice, or such obligations were authorized in violation of the provisions of the constitution.

**Fleurette Clough,  
District Clerk**

**SUMMARY OF BOND  
RESOLUTION**

A Bond Resolution adopted by the Board of Education of the McGraw Central School District on June 5, 2025 authorizes the issuance of bonds and other obligations to purchase and finance two (2) 66-passenger school buses to be used for student transport, including furnishings, equipment, machinery and apparatus as may be required for the purposes for which the vehicles are to be used and to expend therefor an amount, including preliminary costs and costs incidental thereto and to financing thereof, not to exceed the estimated maximum cost of \$326,031. The plan of financing includes the issuance of serial bonds in the aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$326,031 and the levy and collection of taxes on all the taxable real property in the District to pay the principal of said bonds and the interest thereon as the same shall become due and payable, subject to applicable amounts of state assistance available or to any revenues available for such purpose from any other source. The bonds may be issued such that annual installments of principal and interest are substantially level, as provided by law. Under the Local Finance Law, the student transport vehicles have a period of probable usefulness of five (5) years. Such resolution shall be kept available for public inspection in the District Offices during regular business hours for twenty days following this publication.

**VILLAGE OF GROTON  
EMPLOYMENT  
OPPORTUNITY  
ELECTRIC UTILITY  
WORKER**

The Village of Groton, NY is seeking applications for the position of part-time or full-time Electric Utility Worker.

The candidate should be in good physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position. Must have current Lineman Certification. Salary will be dependent upon qualifications and relevant experience. Possession of a Class B CDL driver's license is required.

To apply for the position, please log into the Tompkins County Human Resources Dept. ( www.tompkinscivilservice.org/civilservice/vacancies ) website under the Village of Groton and fill out the online application for Electric Utility Worker. If your resume is available, please attach it to the application along with any certifications.

Application deadline is June 27, 2025

**Notice of Formation  
NOTICE OF FORMATION  
OF A  
LIMITED LIABILITY  
COMPANY**

Notice of formation of Finch Family Farmstead LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of NY (SSNY) on 2/13/2025. Office location: Corrland. SSNY designated as an agent of Limited Liability Company (LLC) upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY should mail process to Dakota Finch: 1490 McGraw Marathon Rd Marathon NY 13803. Purpose: Any lawful purpose. May 27, Jun 3, 10, 17, 24, Jul 1, 2025



**After a pandemic-era pause, repayments on defaulted student loans restarted last month, and many borrowers are running into barriers.** Dreamstime/TNS

# Federal officials resume student loan collections

## And states are trying to catch borrowers before they sink

**Robbie Sequeira  
Stateline.org (TNS)**

Over the past few months, Celina Damian's phone has been ringing off the hook with one bewildered, anxious question after another: "What kind of loan is this?" "Am I in default?" "Will the government really take my wages?"

"Sometimes they just don't know where to start," said Damian, California's student loan servicing ombudsperson.

"I'm talking to borrowers from all ages, from new borrowers to — I have 80-, 90-year-old borrowers," she said.

The federal government last month restarted collections on defaulted loans. State student loan ombudspersons such as Damian have become some of the only sources of contact for worried borrowers lost in a tangle of conflicting information at the federal level about their loan status and repayment options.

The U.S. Department of Education began collecting on defaulted student loans in May for the first time since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020.

Federal student loans issued by the U.S. Department of Education come with fixed rates, set repayment plans and borrower protections. Private servicers handle billing, repayment-plan enrollments and defaults.

More than 5 million borrowers are in delinquency, and nearly 10 million — about 25% of the federal student loan portfolio — are at risk of default within months, according to data from the U.S. Department of Education.

States can't cancel that debt, but they do register and oversee servicers operating in their states, run ombuds offices, tweak tax rules and offer outreach or limited grants — actions aimed at reducing defaults and the economic fallout.

When borrowers default, states will likely feel the economic impact. They might lose tax revenue as home buying stalls. They could end up paying more for Medicaid and social services if borrowers need to rely on them. And students with loan debt may be reluctant to

go into lower-paying public-sector work, leading to staffing shortages at state agencies.

A borrower is considered delinquent after missing a payment to the servicing companies that handle billing, repayment plan enrollments, and defaults.

Damian's office, established under California's Student Borrower Bill of Rights, began as a narrow statutory role but now serves as a hub for outreach, "Student Loan 101" workshops and escalated complaints to federal agencies.

Roughly 16 states plus the District of Columbia have followed suit, creating ombuds offices to guide borrowers through confusing paperwork and misinformation. Damian believes these ombuds offices should be in every state, as borrowers across the country will likely have similar questions and little help at the federal level.

"If you don't have an ombudsperson or even just a person at the state level who can educate borrowers, that will make a difference," Damian told Stateline. "These borrowers are trying to pay, but the system is broken. No other financial product works this way."

Student loans became a key issue during last year's election race, with President Joe Biden blocked by the U.S. Supreme Court in his effort to offer relief to 40 million Americans. In its waning days, his administration did forgive loans for some 150,000 borrowers under previous programs.

But President Donald Trump opposes most loan forgiveness programs, and in May, the U.S. Education Department issued a "Dear Colleague" letter to higher education institutions, reminding them of their legal obligations to help former students understand repayment responsibilities and access support.

Some conservative economists say that federal loan forgiveness and financial aid hurt all students, offering colleges an incentive to raise tuition or lower their own institutional aid.

Winston Berkman-Breen, the legal director at the Student

Borrower Protection Center, a nonprofit aimed at protecting borrowers and improving the repayment system, said that more than 2 million borrowers are stuck in a backlog of unprocessed applications for income-driven repayment, or IDR, plans—calculated pay structures meant to keep payments affordable based on a borrower's income.

Other borrowers have called federal agencies for help only to find that U.S. Education Department staff, including servicer-oversight teams, have been laid off as the Trump administration works toward dismantling the department entirely.

"There was an expectation to repay," Berkman-Breen said. "But there was also an expectation that people would have access to affordable plans. That promise has broken down."

States now have three primary tools to address student loan debt, Berkman-Breen said: enforcement actions to protect consumers, such as the 39-state lawsuit against servicer Navient; legal oversight by suing to uphold or challenge federal policy; and direct outreach to help public servants access Public Service Loan Forgiveness and similar programs.

Nineteen states now require registration for companies that service student loans, he said. And more than a dozen states align with federal policy to exempt forgiven loan balances from state income taxes.

**'Can't wait for Washington'**

Connecticut state Rep. Eleni Kavros DeGraw, a Democrat, calls student debt "a drag on the economy," and said states can't afford to wait for Congress — mired in partisan gridlock over student loan forgiveness — to find common ground.

"(Student debt) is stopping people from buying homes, starting families and fully participating in the economy," she told Stateline. "That hurts us as a state, as a city, and we can't wait for Washington to figure it out."

Last year, Connecticut created a bipartisan reimbursement program that provides up to \$20,000 for graduates of local colleges

who make payments and complete community service. The state has distributed more than \$2 million so far.

Kavros DeGraw hopes the program can serve as a model, and has already talked with lawmakers in other states on possibly developing their own versions of it.

"These were people who were already paying," Kavros DeGraw said. "It just made sense. I think it's something that other states could explore this session, and it would provide an immense deal of relief."

Lawmakers in other states also have considered student loan legislation. This year, New Jersey introduced bills to register education lenders and cap interest rates. Lawmakers in New Mexico, New York and North Carolina have proposed Borrower Bill of Rights legislation. Arizona has a registration bill for private servicers. None of these measures has advanced far.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, more than 20 states have enacted laws expanding loan forgiveness, repayment programs and servicer oversight in recent years.

Several states are also investing directly in workforce-aligned loan forgiveness: Georgia expanded its service-cancelable loan program to cover dental students working in rural areas. Idaho created a loan repayment incentive for rural nurses. Kentucky now offers \$5,000 stipends to attract new teachers. Maryland authorized Anne Arundel County to launch a local forgiveness program for public school educators.

**Repayment**

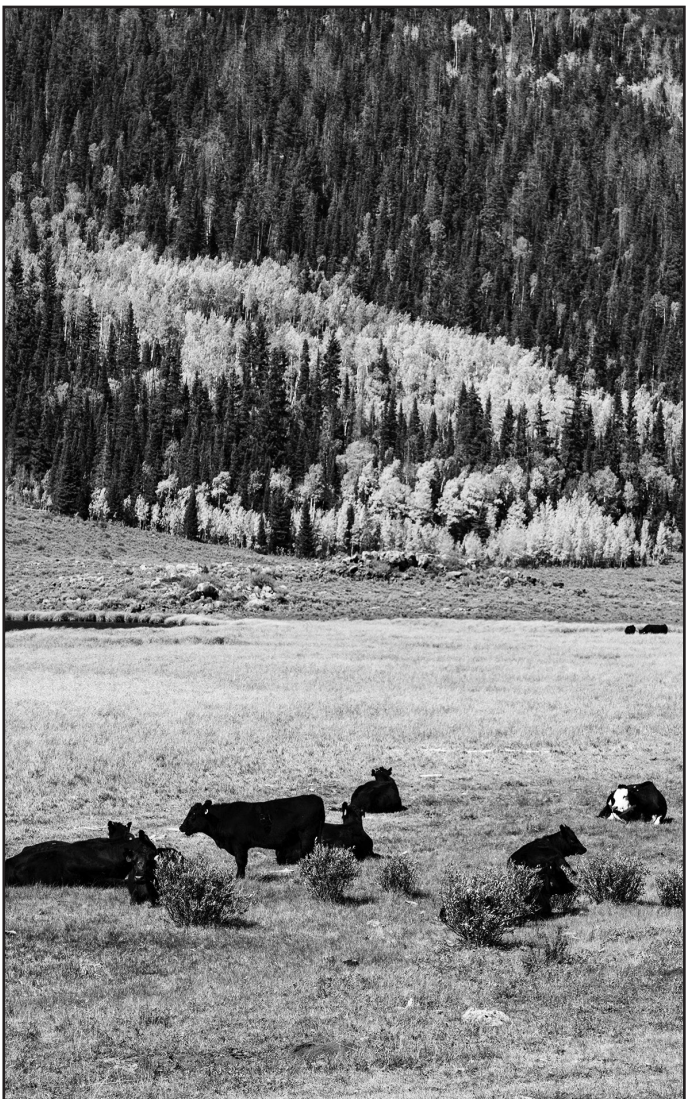
Student loan stress is not evenly distributed. Seven states, all with Republican-controlled legislatures, report delinquency rates above 30% among borrowers required to make payments.

Mississippi leads the nation with a conditional delinquency rate of nearly 45% — meaning borrowers who should be making payments are late. That's just ahead of Alabama, West Virginia, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana, all of which have rates above 31%, according to recent data.





George Frey/Getty Images/TNS  
People boondock camp on public lands the day before the annular eclipse on Oct. 13, 2023, just outside Capitol Reef National Park, Utah.



Jon G. Fuller/VW Pics/ZUMA Press/TNS  
Cattle graze on open range land near Fish Lake in the Fish-lake Plateau in central Utah, Sept. 25, 2021.

# Long-thwarted efforts to sell public lands see new life under Trump

Alex Brown, Clark Corbin and Kyle Dunphey  
Stateline.org (TNS)

Public outcry was swift and forceful after a U.S. House committee last month hastily approved an amendment directing the federal government to sell off more than half a million acres of public land.

A few days later, lawmakers advanced the larger bill — a sweeping list of President Donald Trump’s priorities — but stripped the federal lands provision.

Yet leaders on both sides of the issue say the battle over selling off federal lands is likely just heating up.

Some conservatives in Western states have complained for decades that the feds control too much of the land within their borders. They see a long-awaited opportunity in a Trump administration that’s sympathetic to their cause. Public lands advocates are bracing for more attempts to turn land over to states, industry groups and developers.

“The threat level is red alert,” said Randi Spivak, public lands policy director with the Center for Biological Diversity, an environmental nonprofit. “Some of these states have been champing at the bit for decades to privatize. They’re certainly not going to let this opportunity pass without an aggressive effort.”

## The ‘balance sheet’

In Western states, where most federally owned lands are located, some leaders view these lands as a treasured inheritance — places reserved for all Americans and critical for wildlife, tourism and outdoor recreation. Others feel that too much of the land in their states is controlled by officials in Washington, D.C., leaving it off-limits for development and curtailing its economic value.

Trump officials and allies have embraced the latter view. Interior Secretary Doug Burgum has repeatedly called federal lands America’s “balance sheet,” describing them as untapped assets worth trillions of dollars. He has launched an effort to identify federal lands suitable for housing development.

Other proposals have centered around using land sales to pay for

tax breaks or to finance Trump’s proposed government-run fund that could invest in stocks or real estate.

For some state leaders, the newfound interest at the federal level to turn public lands into cash — along with Trump’s cuts to land management agency staff — aligns with a long-standing movement to reduce federal ownership.

“I look at it as an opportunity to say, ‘Hey, turn it over to the state,’” said Utah House Speaker Mike Schultz, a Republican.

Utah leaders have made the most forceful push to challenge federal land ownership. The state filed a legal challenge last year seeking to take control of more than 18 million acres of “unappropriated” lands — parcels held by the federal government without a specific designation such as a national park or monument. That effort hit a roadblock earlier this year when the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear the case.

But with Trump in the White House, state leaders may pivot from challenging the feds in court to seeking their cooperation.

“We would love if the federal government just turned it over to us and said, ‘Here, manage these lands,’” Schultz said. “That’s an option as well. Those are discussions that are happening. Everything is on the table.”

Schultz declined to say which federal officials have been involved in discussions about transferring lands to the state.

Some lawmakers in Wyoming backed a state resolution this year — which ultimately failed — calling on Congress to hand over all federal lands except for Yellowstone National Park. Idaho lawmakers passed a measure calling on the feds to turn over a wildlife refuge to the state. And Nevada Gov. Joe Lombardo, a Republican, has called for a “systematic release” of federal land in the state.

But public lands also have many supporters in Western states, including some prominent Republican members of Congress, such as Reps. Mike Simpson of Idaho and Ryan Zinke of Montana. Zinke was Interior secretary for two years during the first Trump administration.

John Leshy, who served as solicitor for the U.S. Department of the Interior during the Clinton administration, said proposals to dispose of federal lands tend to be stymied by fierce public backlash. “Federal lands are really popular,” he said. “It’s political poison [to sell off public land]. It’s a different West now. Public attitudes have changed.”

Leshy also noted that livestock ranchers especially benefit from discounted lease rates offered by the federal government.

## Housing arguments

The most recent clash

“That’s an option as well. Those are discussions that are happening. Everything is on the table.”

— Mike Schultz, Utah House Speaker

over the future of federal lands was the amendment sponsored by a pair of congressional Republicans last month. The measure would have directed the Bureau of Land Management to sell more than 500,000 acres of land in Nevada and Utah. Local governments would have been able to buy the land at market value, with no restrictions on how they used it.

Backers said the sale would bring in revenue to cover Trump’s proposed tax cuts, while allowing local governments to build much-needed housing on the parcels. Utah GOP Sen. Mike Lee said he will try to revive the measure as the Senate considers the bill this month, E&E News reported.

In Nevada, where 85% of land is owned by the federal government, some leaders say their communities are hemmed in by a checkerboard of public lands that constrain development. The city of Fernley, which is growing rapidly, would have acquired 12,000 acres under the proposal.

“We need housing,” said Benjamin Marchant, Fernley’s city manager. “The city can’t plan roads and water lines, sewer lines and gas lines, when you have federal land between two parcels that want to develop. This will bring a practical and helpful consolidation of all these lands into one developable area.”

Nevada leaders have long worked on proposals to transfer some federal lands to local governments and allow for increased growth. But some lawmakers say the latest push bypassed that collaborative process — and failed to include safeguards that the money raised from the sale of the lands would be reinvested into conserving public lands elsewhere.

“It was a complete betrayal of everything we’ve worked on in this state,” said Assemblymember Howard Watts, a Democrat. “This amendment is trying to sell off half a

million acres of Nevada’s public lands in order to pay for tax cuts for billionaires. This is not going to address our housing problem. These lands are positioned to be sold off for other forms of development and extraction.”

Similar debates are happening in Utah. In southwestern Utah’s Washington County, local officials say the disposal of federally controlled land could help alleviate the region’s housing crisis and increasingly strained infrastructure.

The county is experiencing rapid population growth — in 2022, St. George, the county seat, was the fastest-growing metro area in America. County and city leaders hoped the amendment would have helped them manage the growth. The measure would have disposed of roughly 11,500 acres of federally controlled land in Utah, selling it at market value to local governments.

The proposal received pushback from all sides, including environmentalists, hunting and fishing groups, House Democrats and even conservatives.

“[The amendment] is consistent with how U.S. Department of the Interior Secretary Burgum thinks about federal public lands, as simply assets on a ledger to be sold off,” said Steve Bloch, legal director for the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, an environmental

nonprofit. “... It’s just antithetical to how Westerners think about the federal public lands that make up so much of our landscape.”

Washington County Commissioner Adam Snow, a Republican, said a lot of the opposition was misguided. The county would have acquired almost half of the land earmarked for disposal, and Snow said much of that would have been used to widen existing roads and construct new ones that are bordered by Bureau of Land Management property.

“These were not pristine wilderness lands. Some of the environmental groups tried to make it sound like we’re selling off Zion National Park, and that’s not even close to true,” Snow said. “If we can just not have to deal with the federal government every time we want to chip seal a road or improve an intersection, that would be really nice. Because we have to ask ‘Mother, may I?’ for everything out here.”

Local leaders say federal parcels could help ease housing pressures as well. Snow said transferring parcels to the city or county is one of the only ways to stop the area from becoming wildly expensive.

“We’re running out of room real quick,” he said. “... There is still private land to develop, but they’re going to charge an absolute premium.”

The amendment that was stripped from the House bill was widely criticized for not having any restrictions on what could be done with the land.

“There was no language whatsoever that would require Washington County or St. George to do anything with these lands. They could lease them for development. They could sell them outright,” said Bloch.

## The costs of management

In Utah, lawmakers have created a state Department of Land Management — essentially a placeholder agency that would be funded and staffed only if their effort to assume control of large swaths of federal land succeeds. Schultz, the House speaker, said the state is committed to keeping the lands in the public domain, reopening

roads and campgrounds closed by the feds.

“We’d just take over the job from the federal government,” he said. “It is something that the state absolutely would do, and we’d do it more efficiently, more effectively and we’d have better outcomes.”

Schultz said the state could bring in the revenues needed to manage the land by raising lease prices for oil and gas operations on parcels currently managed for drilling.

But some public lands advocates say that’s not realistic. The federal Bureau of Land Management employed more than 950 people in the state as of 2024, and feds also assume the expensive task of wildfire management on their lands.

“If you look at the history of what Utah has done with their lands, they’ve sold more than half of them,” said Devin O’Dea, Western policy and conservation manager with Backcountry Hunters & Anglers. “We’re certainly of the perspective that states could not handle the economic costs of managing these lands. Their hand would be forced; they would have to sell these lands in order to deal with those costs.”

John Robison, Idaho Conservation League public lands and wildlife director, said Simpson — the Idaho congressman — and the state’s two senators have all won praise from constituents for their work on public lands compromises.

“Savvy Idaho politicians know that public lands are popular,” he said.

But other state leaders insist their governments are better equipped to manage the lands. Idaho Attorney General Raúl Labrador, a Republican, was among the officials who signed an amicus brief in support of Utah’s lawsuit against the feds.

“We live here, we work here, and we are far better stewards of our forests and resources than federal bureaucrats in Washington,” Labrador said in a statement. “... If Idaho owned this land, we could lease it for timber, grazing, and mining — just like the federal government does — but reinvest that revenue right here in Idaho.”





Genaro Molina/Los Angeles Times/TNS

A car accident victim is transported by an ambulance from San Bernardino County Fire Dept. Station 53 in Baker, California, to Primm, Nevada.

# A lonely desert fire station, the only lifeline for millions of Vegas travelers

Rachel Uranga  
Los Angeles Times  
(TNS)

The rain was pounding in the Mojave Desert on the Saturday before Easter when the first call came in about a crash along Interstate 15. Details were sketchy: head-on collision, Mercedes versus another car, a 7-year-old not breathing, a nurse on scene performing CPR. San Bernardino County Fire Protection District Capt. Dan Tellez and his crew were more than a half hour away. The next closest responding ambulance was more than 70 miles away, and the nearest trauma center was more than an hour away by road — if there was no traffic.

Fire Station 53 in the tiny town of Baker, home to the “world’s tallest thermometer,” has the only dedicated emergency medical services to cover a 93-mile span of the four-lane highway between Yermo and the Nevada border.

The freeway draws more than 15 million vehicles a year through an immense, mostly empty land of extreme heat and occasional bitter cold between Las Vegas and Los Angeles. Every day, well over a hundred-times Baker’s own population of 422 people blazes by — often at very high speeds, sometimes intoxicated — and the rescuers in this little blip out their windows will be the ones who try to save them in a wreck.

“The freeway is our population,” Tellez said. “When somebody crashes out here, when somebody needs help, we are it.”

At any one time, there are only five people assigned to the station set on the edge of a sandy basin speckled with yucca and scrub. The crew work four-day shifts and cover roughly 5,000 square miles, an area larger than Los Angeles County. And this arrangement is an improvement from years past, when the station didn’t exist and convicts from a nearby prison, under the supervision of a fire captain, responded to highway crashes.

Tellez, a veteran firefighter who was in charge of Fire Station No. 53 that rainy day, pulled up to the scene 40 minutes after the call.

They were just seven miles from the station, at mile marker 145, near Halloran Springs. But the reality of Fire Station 53 is that rescuers are often



Genaro Molina/Los Angeles Times/TNS

**From left: San Bernardino County Fire Engineer Jeff Garcia, Capt. Dan Tellez, standing, paramedic Brian Bement, EMT Ray Barron and paramedic Eric Butikofer, right, with San Bernardino County Fire Protection District Station 53 in Baker, stabilize a car accident victim who was thrown from her vehicle along I-15 at Mountain Pass in Nipton.**

elsewhere, sometimes far away. Tellez had been near the Nevada border, about 25 miles from the scene of the accident, when the call came through.

He arrived behind the unit’s two-man ambulance with his engineer and firefighter. They were the first paramedics to arrive. Had the incident happened in Los Angeles or Las Vegas, paramedics, police and other emergency personnel would have swarmed the area in minutes. Television crews likely wouldn’t have been far behind.

The wind was howling and people were strewn along the highway amid the wreckage of a Mercedes GLE 350 and a Kia Sorrento. He had expected three or four injured people. There were 10.

“It was one of the worst-case scenarios,” Tellez said.

Other drivers had pulled over to help. An emergency room doctor, a pediatric anesthesiologist, some nurses and others were tending to the wounded.

Witnesses said the Kia had been speeding toward Los Angeles.

William Coddington was at the wheel with his partner, Alicia Ramos, at his side and their two children and his two stepchildren in back. The couple’s relationship had been on the rocks and this trip was an attempt to repair their relationship, family members said.

“Her mother begged her not to go,” said Marie Hernandez, Ramos’ cousin.

Driving the opposite way, were Cristobal Cortes Castillo, 37, his girlfriend, Iliana German, 35 and her two children — taking advantage of the kids’ spring break to visit family on a road they regularly traveled.

As they approached Mile Marker 145, German turned around to ask the kids if they had their seatbelts on. They did.

Coming toward them, Coddington lost control and the Kia hydroplaned, then barreled over the median, according to the California Highway Patrol.

In the Mercedes, German came to with her body crushed under the dashboard. Trapped, she felt like she couldn’t breathe. Then a woman opened the door and took off her belt. She asked for her children, and was assured they were fine.

She heard her daughter Danna, 12, scream, “Mi pierna, mi pierna.” My leg. But she never heard her 11-year-old son, Derek.

“I felt like so much time was passing,” she said. “I didn’t know if anyone was going to help us.”

She didn’t know people were trying to resuscitate Derek — her sweet, generous boy who played soccer and was learning to box. He died before the sirens arrived.

In the Kia, Ramos — beloved at the Madera nursing home where she worked — was fatally injured and would die in a hospital that day. Her teenage son Issac, 13, was already dead. Coddington was lying on the ground bleeding, alive but staring blankly. His 3-year-old

boy, Liam, lost an arm.

Between 2019 and 2023, at least 112 people died in crashes along the span, often the result of speeding or intoxicated drivers, CHP data show. Fire Station 53 responded to nearly 1,000 calls on the roadway, at least half of which were crashes.

Those incidents involved just a fraction of the more than 41,000 cars and trucks that barrel along the stretch of highway every day, according to state data analyzed by Ben Hodgson and Natan Euol at the Road Ecology Center at UC Davis.

Tellez, who has a handlebar mustache and soft eyes, has been with San Bernardino County fire for more than three decades and, like most firefighters, has seen his share of twisted metal, charred earth and human agony on the asphalt. Working in Baker is different, he said. There is no back-up at the station. There’s no hospital in town. There’s no night crew. There’s miles and miles of road and desert. The blistering heat — with an average high temperature that’s more than 100 degrees four months of the year — only heightens the sense of desolation.

Pedestrians hit at night can be struck so many times, their bodies become unrecognizable. Competing calls force firefighters to make impossible trade offs, choosing their emergency.

“It’s a beautiful desert,” he said. “But it will kill you.”

Beyond the I-15, the station covers, to the north,

the majestic Dumont Dunes, popular with off-roaders, and Highway 127, a main gateway to Death Valley. To the south, its territory extends to Interstate 40, a major transcontinental trucking route; its 140-mile stretch from Barstow to Needles has no first responders stationed between the two cities. Fire Station 53 is closest to the middle of that expanse, about 57 miles away on Kelbaker Road. Depending where they are when the call comes in, it can take up to 1½ hours to arrive at an accident on the I-40.

Cars regularly overheat, big rigs catch fire on the side of the road. Motorists get stuck deep in the desert, dehydrated and without water. And in winter they spin out or crash in icy conditions on the I-15 through Mountain Pass—elevation 4,700 feet.

Few understand how isolated the route can be, said Tellez.

“What took you so long?” Tellez frequently hears when he arrives on the scene. “And I’m like, ‘Do you know where you are?’”

“Many people think there’s a hospital here in Baker, a police department here,” he said. “No, this is not that type of town.”

There’s not even a major grocery store, only a handful of truck stops, fast food restaurants, gas stations, trailers, some homes and a single traffic signal installed nine years ago in front of Baker Travel Plaza.

And then there are other emergencies, including

massive wildfires threatening the area’s sensitive habitat and train derailments.

Brightline West recently broke ground in Las Vegas to build a high-speed rail to connect the Strip to Southern California. It hopes to open by 2028, which will make the area an active construction zone for years. The specter of a train going up to 200 miles an hour in the solitude of the desert raises many unanswered questions, said San Bernardino County Fire Chief Dan Munsey.

How would the district deal with a major emergency should the train stop or crash when it’s 120 degrees outside? Even more basic, how will communications with first responders work?

Rescuers could also lose even more time than they do now, because they will have to wait for designated railroad crossings to get across the median to opposite lanes.

Munsey said the district has reached out to Brightline to talk through some of these issues, and the conversations are pending. But for now, there are no plans for adding services or personnel. The San Bernardino County Fire Protection District is largely funded by property taxes, and in the Mojave much of the land is owned by the federal government and untaxed.

The result is often triage on the highway. The hardest calls for the crew are those involving children.

At Mile Marker 145, the responders declared the two children deceased and they scrambled to rescue the rest.

The blanket of clouds overhead made it nearly impossible for medical helicopters to land nearby.

Tellez called for more backup. Paramedics came from Las Vegas, another from Helendale and one was dispatched from a nearby Marine base.

But the backup from the crash and the holiday weekend traffic slowed them down.

At first, dispatchers refused to send air medics because of the weather, but after some negotiations five helicopters landed 30 miles south, at Afton Canyon Road. It was about two hours past the initial call. The closest trauma center was in Las Vegas, but weather so bad, the victims were flown to Antelope Valley Medical Center, in the opposite direction.