

Wind-Whipped Walls of Flame Consume Enclaves of L.A.



ETHAN SWOPE/ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Pacific Palisades neighborhood of Los Angeles on Tuesday. At least five people were killed, officials reported on Wednesday, and about 600,000 lost power.

Running Low on Firefighters and Water

By CORINA KNOLL and THOMAS FULLER

LOS ANGELES — A series of firestorms raging out of control in Los Angeles on Wednesday decimated the affluent neighborhood of Pacific Palisades and was threatening an ever wider swath of America’s most populous county as night fell.

Propelled by howling, hurricane-force winds that served as a kind of hellish bellows, the blazes came with the terrifying prospect for the 10 million residents of Los Angeles County that further infernos could erupt in any place at any moment.

At least five people were killed in the fires, officials reported on Wednesday, and more than 1,100 homes and businesses were destroyed. About 600,000 electricity customers across California were without power, many because power companies shut down their lines to avoid sparking more fires.

“Last night was one of the most devastating and terrifying nights that we’ve seen in any part of our city, in any part of our history,” Marqueece Harris-Dawson, the president of the Los Angeles City Council, said in a news briefing on Wednesday, as the skies above the city were filled with a toxic smoke haze.

In Altadena, north of Los Angeles and adjacent to the city of Pasadena, staff at a senior care facility rushed to push dozens of residents in wheelchairs and on gurneys down the street to a parking lot where emergency workers loaded them into ambulances and other vehicles to take them to safety. The nearby fire had moved miles from where it started and was advancing into residential neighborhoods in Pasadena, said Mayor Victor Gordo of Pasadena. “We’re very concerned,” he said in an interview.

Images of Pacific Palisades, home to celebrities including Tom Hanks, Jennifer Aniston and Conan O’Brien, showed lines of luxury cars gridlocked and abandoned by owners who were forced to leave them behind. Some documented their harrowing escapes in videos showing walls of flames

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INSURANCE Companies were already leaving the state. The exodus could accelerate. PAGE A19

NEWS ANALYSIS

Trump Echoes Age of Empire

His Bravado Unsettles The World’s Diplomats

By DAMIEN CAVE

When Donald J. Trump won a return to the White House, many countries thought they knew what to expect and how to prepare for what was coming. Diplomats in world capitals said they would zero in on what his administration does, rather than what Mr. Trump says. Bigger nations developed plans to soften or counter his threat of punitive tariffs. Smaller countries hoped they could simply hide from four more years of gale-force America First.



OLIVIER MORIN/A.F.P. — GETTY IMAGES

The president-elect seems fixated on securing Greenland.

But it’s getting harder for the world to keep calm and carry on. At a news conference on Tuesday at Mar-a-Lago, Mr. Trump declined to rule out the use of force in a potential land grab for Greenland and the Panama Canal. He vowed to rename the Gulf of Mexico the “Gulf of America.” He also said he could use “economic force” to turn Canada into the 51st state as a matter of American national security. For those eager to parse substance from bluster, it looked like another performance of scatter-shot bravado: Trump II, the sequel, more unrestrained. Even

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Party Haunted By Caricature Of Carter Era

By ADAM NAGOURNEY

Since his death, Jimmy Carter has been lauded for brokering the Camp David Accords and for his post-White House mission to help the poor and battle disease. But glossed over amid all the tributes is the burdensome legacy that Mr. Carter left for his Democratic Party: a presidency long caricatured as a symbol of ineffectiveness and weakness. This perception has shadowed the party for nearly 40 years. It was forged in the seizure of American hostages by Iranian militants in 1979 and the failed military attempt to free them, as well as the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union. And it lingered in memories of Mr. Carter wearing a cardigan as he asked Americans to conserve energy, or bemoaning what he called a “crisis of confidence” in an address to the nation that became a textbook example of political self-harm.

Over the decades, these events have provided endless fodder for attacks by Republicans, who reveled in invoking Mr. Carter’s name to deride Democrats. And that mockery, in turn, influenced the way Democrats have presented themselves to voters. Without Mr. Carter’s image of weakness on national security and defense, for example, it is hard to imagine the party’s war-hero candidate for president in 2004 introducing himself with a salute at its nominating convention and saying, “I’m John Kerry and I’m reporting for duty.”

Mr. Carter’s political legacy produced what many analysts argue was a kind of conditioned response: an overreaction among Democrats anxious to avoid comparisons to him on foreign policy issues. This was evident in the roster of prominent congressional Democrats, including Hillary Clinton, who voted for the 2002 resolution that authorized President George W. Bush to take the nation to war in Iraq, a vote many said they came to regret.

It could even be discerned in the taciturn response from President

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MARK ABRAMSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Nancy Chiamulon tried to stop the fire moving onto her Sunset Boulevard property on Wednesday.

In Pick for Attorney General, A ‘Business Friendly’ Lawyer

By ERIC LIPTON and KATE KELLY

WASHINGTON — Halfway through the first Trump administration, Carnival Corporation, the world’s biggest cruise line, had a problem in Cuba that it wanted the president to fix.

So Carnival, a Miami-based company, hired a new lobbyist: Pam Bondi, who developed a close relationship with Donald J. Trump during her two terms as Florida’s attorney general, the state’s top law enforcement official.

Carnival feared it could be sued for damages of up to \$600 million for parking its cruise ships at Havana docks that had been seized decades earlier by Cuban communists. The company wanted Mr. Trump’s aid in fending off the lawsuits.

With Ms. Bondi’s help, Carnival’s chairman, Micky Arison, got a meeting with Mr. Trump in the Oval Office to push its case.

In the end the president did not side with the company. But Ms. Bondi’s involvement demonstrated that she could help grease rela-

tions with the Trump administration for her new clients.

It was also a continuation of her open-door approach to companies, which started when she held office in Florida.

Now, critics question if Ms. Bondi will bring that same transactional philosophy to the Justice Department. She was picked by

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MANDEL NGAN/A.F.P. — GETTY IMAGES

Pam Bondi, Donald J. Trump’s pick for attorney general.

If You Want to Live to Be 100, Family Connection Can’t Hurt

By DANA G. SMITH

When Dr. Nir Barzilai met the 100-year-old Helen Reichert, she was smoking a cigarette. Dr. Barzilai, the director of the Institute for Aging Research at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, recalled Mrs. Reichert saying that doctors had repeatedly told her to quit. But those doctors had all died, Mrs. Reichert noted, and she hadn’t. Mrs. Reichert lived almost another decade before passing away in 2011.

There are countless stories about people who reach 100, and their daily habits sometimes flout conventional advice on diet, exercise, and alcohol and tobacco use. Yet decades of research shows that ignoring this advice can negatively affect most people’s health and cut their lives short.

So how much of a person’s longevity can be attributed to lifestyle choices and how much is just luck — or lucky genetics? It depends on how long you’re hoping to live.

Research suggests that making

it to 80 or even 90 is largely in our control. “There’s very clear evidence that for the general population, living a healthy lifestyle” does extend the life span, said Dr. Sofiya Milman, a professor of medicine and genetics at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

One study published last year, which analyzed the lifestyles of more than 276,000 male and female United States veterans, found that adopting eight healthy behaviors could add up to 24 years to people’s lives. They included eating a healthy diet, getting regular physical activity, sleeping well, managing stress, having strong relationships, and not smoking, abusing opioids or drinking to excess.

If the veterans adhered to all eight behaviors, the researchers calculated that they could expect to live to about age 87. To most people, that probably sounds pretty good; after all, it’s almost 10 years longer than the average U.S.

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Meta’s MAGA Makeover

Mark Zuckerberg positions his company for a Trump term, revealing its hollow identity. The Shift. PAGE B1

Starting a Small Coffee Shop

These owners took their businesses from \$80 days to \$6,000 days with no college degrees, just grit. PAGE B1



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Egypt’s Refugee Problem

People fleeing war have found a home in the country, but Cairo says newcomers are straining resources. PAGE A4

Strike on West Bank Kills 3

Palestinians said two children were among the dead in what Israel said was an attack on a terrorist cell. PAGE A6

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Sanction for Doping Agency

The Biden administration has halted funding and said it had lost confidence in WADA’s ability to guard against the use of drugs by elite athletes. PAGE B8

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Release of Trump Reports

One report is being held back by the Justice Department. A separate report could be made public soon. PAGE A13

Bezos Rocket Poised for Liftoff

If the New Glenn launch is successful, the Amazon founder’s company could give SpaceX real competition. PAGE A21

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Hollywood’s Nostalgic Look

Enough with the throwback fashions displayed at the Golden Globes — stars should be less conservative on the red carpet, Vanessa Friedman says. PAGE D1

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Architect of a War Monument

Friedrich St. Florian, whose World War II Memorial on the National Mall was criticized and praised, was 91. PAGE B11

‘Thomas & Friends’ Creator

Britt Allcroft, the British producer who adapted the antics of a cheerful, impetuous locomotive for TV, was 81. PAGE B10



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Billboard Activism

Artists with the group For Freedoms used billboards to energize voters, but the effort’s impact was unclear. PAGE C1

Exhibitions Worth the Trip

Shows in London and Amsterdam, as well as a Cézanne tribute in the south of France, are on tap in 2025. PAGE C6

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Charles M. Blow

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