



**SYRIA REJOICES** Thousands thronged Umayyad Mosque in Damascus for the first Friday Prayer since the Assad regime fell. Page A7.

## Frustrations Abound for Nation's Home Buyers

By RONDA KAYSEN

A young family in Grand Rapids, Mich., has been looking for a larger house for three years, losing countless bidding wars. In Portland, Maine, a 29-year-old data analyst has been anxious to get out of their rental for a year, but hasn't found a home to buy.

The story of the 2024 housing market has been one of a nation frozen in place, with millions of people unable to move amid rising home prices, stubbornly high mortgage rates and a drastic

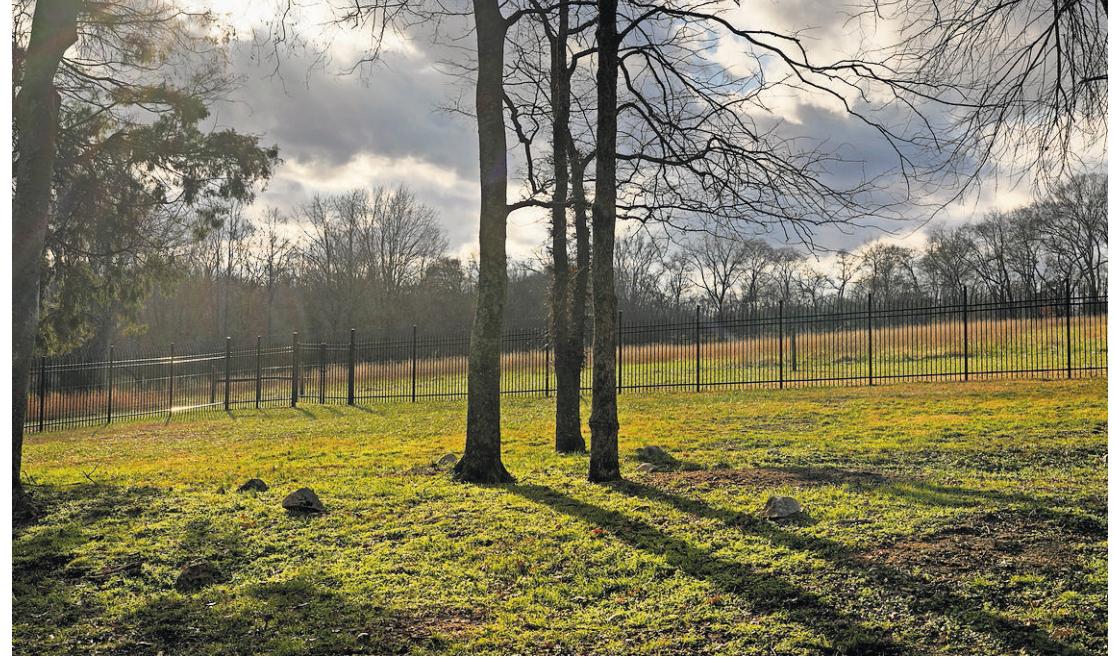
### High Rates and Lack of Inventory Keep Sales Historically Low

shortage of inventory. The year is on track to have the slowest housing market in three decades, with a projected four million home sales, according to the National Association of Realtors — making 2024 the second straight year of historically anemic sales. The last

time sales dipped that low was in 1995, when the U.S. population was 22 percent smaller than it is today.

"This is just an incredibly low figure considering how many people we have in America, and Americans' general view that as their situation improves, they move," said Lawrence Yun, N.A.R.'s chief economist. "I simply don't think that you can remain at this low level."

The depths of the housing slump surprised even economists, *Continued on Page A17*



Stone markers correspond to findings of remains buried on the grounds of the Nashville home.

## Andrew Jackson Estate Reveals Its Other Graves

By ANNIE CORREAL

The South is a land of lost graves.

The burial grounds of enslaved farm workers dot the banks of the Mississippi, where sprawling plantations once were. They also lay hidden for centuries on the grounds of America's presidential homes, including Thomas Jefferson's Monticello.

Now, a burial ground for enslaved people has been discov-

### Lost Cemetery of Slaves Tells of Truer History

ered at Andrew Jackson's home in Nashville, known as the Hermitage, the Andrew Jackson Foundation announced this week. The brash and divisive seventh U.S. president, whose portrait hung in the Oval Office during President-elect Donald J. Trump's

first term, was known to have owned, along with his son, 300 enslaved people before the Civil War.

While visitors could see the tomb of Andrew Jackson and his wife, Rachel, at the estate, the graves of the people they had enslaved had never been found.

Historians at the foundation established that at least two dozen of those enslaved by the Jackson family had died at the 1,120-acre Hermitage in Nashville, but find-

*Continued on Page A19*

## McKINSEY SETTLES U.S. OPIOID CASE

### Will Pay \$650 Million for Purdue Pharma Work

By WALT BOGDANICH and MICHAEL FORSYTHE

McKinsey & Company has agreed to pay \$650 million to settle a Justice Department investigation of its work with the opioid maker Purdue Pharma. A former senior partner has also agreed to plead guilty to obstruction of justice for destroying internal company records in connection with that work.

At the center of the government's case was the global consulting giant's recommendation that Purdue Pharma "turbocharge" sales of Purdue's flagship OxyContin painkiller in the midst of an opioid addiction epidemic that was killing hundreds of thousands of Americans.

The settlement and the government's findings were presented at a news conference in Boston on Friday. According to prosecutors, McKinsey "knew the risks and dangers associated with OxyContin," as well as the fact that top Purdue Pharma executives had pleaded guilty to federal crimes relating to sales of the drug. Yet the consulting company chose to continue working with the drugmaker to boost sales of the opioid.

More than two dozen McKinsey partners consulted for Purdue over roughly 15 years, earning the firm \$93 million.

The settlement, which the government said ended its investigation of McKinsey, stemmed from charges brought by the U.S. attorney's offices in Massachusetts and the Western District of Virginia. The case is unrelated to Purdue Pharma's multibillion-dollar bankruptcy plan, now in legal limbo, that would have offered compensation to tens of thousands of families. Still, the McKinsey settlement brings closure to one strand of a broad legal effort to grapple with the industry behind the opioid epidemic.

McKinsey is widely regarded as the world's most prestigious man-

*Continued on Page A17*

## Europeans Eye Giving Syrians A Nudge Home

### Several Countries Halt Asylum Proceedings

By CHRISTOPHER F. SCHUETZE

BERLIN — Just hours after President Bashar al-Assad boarded a plane for Russia on Sunday, thousands of Syrians who had fled to escape his rule and the civil war to unseat him celebrated in the streets across Germany.

The political reaction in Berlin came nearly as quickly. By Monday, far-right and even some mainstream politicians were calling for the return of some of the nearly one million Syrians who have made Germany home.

"Many refugees who have found protection in Germany are now finally hopeful of being able to return to their Syrian homeland and rebuild their country," said Nancy Faeser, the German interior minister, who is responsible for refugees.

Several European countries, including Britain, Germany, Greece, Italy and Sweden, swiftly announced that they would temporarily suspend legal proceedings considering asylum status for Syrians. Austria went a step further and announced that it would also prepare to deport Syrians whose claims for asylum fail.

The primary reason cited by the various authorities was that the Assad regime from which the asylum seekers had fled no longer exists. For now, they added, it was unclear whether Syria would remain as oppressive and as unsafe as before.

But there was also little disguising the enthusiasm in parts of Europe that Mr. al-Assad's ouster might help ease Europe's migration problem by allowing Syrians to return home or by turning new applicants away.

Jens Spahn, a German health minister under former Chancellor Angela Merkel, alluded to that possibility in a TV interview on Monday. "What if the German government said, 'We will charter planes for anyone who wants to go back to Syria, and we will give them 1,000 euros to get them started?'" he said, referring to a sum worth about \$1,000.

To the many Syrians who have successfully and painstakingly integrated into European society, such comments were troubling.

"It was shocking that on the same day that the Assad regime fell, we immediately heard politicians from Germany and all over Europe talk about when and how the Syrians should go back," said Anas Aboura, 38, a curator and ar-

*Continued on Page A8*

## U.S. TECH FIRMS BATTLE TO KEEP SELLING TO CHINA

### INTENSE D.C. STRUGGLE

White House Draws Line Over Concerns About National Security

By ANA SWANSON

WASHINGTON — At a meeting in Washington this spring, tech company representatives and government officials once again found themselves at odds over where to draw the line when it came to selling coveted technology to China.

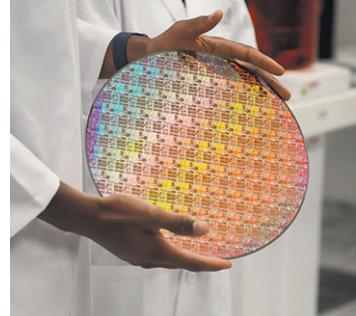
The Biden administration was considering cutting off the sales of equipment used to manufacture semiconductors to three Chinese companies that the government had linked to Huawei, a technology giant that is sanctioned by the United States and is central to China's efforts to develop advanced chips.

Applied Materials, KLA Corporation and Lam Research, which make semiconductor equipment, argued that the three Chinese companies were a major source of revenue. The U.S. firms said that they had already earned \$6 billion by selling equipment to those Chinese companies, and that they planned to sell billions more, two government officials said.

U.S. officials, who view the flow of U.S. technology to Huawei as a national security threat, were stunned by the argument. In regulations issued this month, they ultimately rejected the American companies' plea.

Over the past year, an intense struggle has played out in Washington between companies that sell machinery to make semiconductors and Biden officials who are bent on slowing China's technological progress. Officials argue that China's ability to make chips

*Continued on Page A11*



JIM WILSON/THE NEW YORK TIMES  
A silicon wafer at Applied Materials in Sunnyvale, Calif.

## Talk to My Teens About Porn? Yes, Experts Say. It's Needed.

By MATT RICHTEL

Brian Willoughby knows he's doing a good job when parents become uncomfortable. That's because part of his job involves telling them that their teenagers are looking at pornography — hard-core, explicit, often violent. Sometimes, the conversation is with a church group.

Dr. Willoughby is a social scientist at Brigham Young University, where he studies the pornography habits of adolescents and the impact this has on relationships. When he goes into the community to explain what the modern world is like, he speaks plainly.

"I always have to be careful to couch things by saying, 'I'm not saying porn is good — but I am

saying it's a reality,'" he said. "You can stick your head in the sand and pretend it doesn't exist, and say this is bad and pray harder, or use addiction language, but you have to have a realistic understanding of what's happening."

In the past, many parents have tried to ignore the watching of pornography by their children, forbid its use or wish it away. But scholars who study the adolescent use of online pornography say that the behavior is so commonplace and impossible to prevent

*Continued on Page A19*

INTERNATIONAL A4-9

Prince Andrew Linked to Spy

A London immigration court upheld a ban on a Chinese citizen described as a "close confidant" of the prince's, on the grounds of national security. PAGE A9

NATIONAL A10-21

Benghazi Inquiry Distortion

Kash Patel, Donald J. Trump's pick to be the F.B.I. director, has exaggerated his role in the government's criminal investigation into the 2012 attack. PAGE A15

BUSINESS B1-5

'Most Pro-Crypto President'

Eric Trump said his family had embraced cryptocurrency when some banks stopped doing business with them after the Jan. 6 riot. PAGE B1

ARTS C1-6

Four Centuries of Oppression

"In Slavery's Wake," at the National Museum of African American History and Culture, looks beyond the United States to tell a global story. PAGE C1

OPINION A22-23

Frank Bruni

PAGE A23



**Emirates NBA CUP SEMIFINALS TODAY**  
**HAWKS vs BUCKS 4:30PM ET TNT**  
**ROCKETS vs THUNDER 8:30PM ET ABC**