

How 3 Women  
Tackle Doubts  
Over Elections

Culling Georgia Voters  
or Registering Them

By ELI SASLOW

Helen Strahl stood at the front of a conference room in Savannah, Ga., last month and looked out at her audience, the evolving face of election denialism in 2024. There were no armed militia groups in attendance, no would-be revolutionaries dressed in capes and horns. The crowd was mostly made up of retirees and professional women, including some who wore glasses and T-shirts that read: “Got data?”

They called themselves the Georgia Nerds, and their volunteer group had spent the last several months challenging voter rolls and expressing skepticism about the upcoming presidential election before either candidate received a single vote.

“Can everybody hear me in the back?” asked Strahl, 65. A few people shook their heads, so she tried again.

“I’ll speak up. Can you hear me now?”

A longtime compliance officer, Strahl had found her political voice during the last few years by taking advantage of a new Georgia law that allows private citizens to file mass challenges against other people’s eligibility to vote. She has legally challenged more than a thousand voters in Chatham County during the past 18 months, quietly reshaping the electorate in a crucial stretch of coastal Georgia and amplifying conspiracy theories about widespread voter fraud. She wrote to elections officials to question the eligibility of seasonal workers who moved temporarily out of state, homeless residents who didn’t have a proper address and almost 700 students or former students who were registered to vote at Savannah State University, one of the country’s oldest historically Black colleges.

“I live in this county,” she later explained. “I’d like to know my vote is going to count and not be diluted. It’s in my interest to help maintain a clean and accurate voting roll.”

It has become a popular tactic during a campaign season that has sometimes turned into a race between pro-democracy groups that try to register a historic number of voters and election deniers who try to inhibit registration drives and remove tens of thousands of people from the rolls. More than 40 states now allow for some type of voter challenges, and Donald J. Trump’s campaign has encouraged activists to focus on the voter rolls in a relatively small number of liberal counties that could swing the election.

In Pittsburgh, a Trump supporter has challenged more than 25,000 people based mostly on change-of-address data, creating confusion among voters. In Detroit, teams of “election security” volunteers go door to door to verify people’s addresses and then file challenges based on what they find. An election-monitoring organization called True the Vote,

*Continued on Page A14*

**JAN. 6 LIVES ON** Donald J. Trump clings to a revisionist history of the Capitol riot. PAGE A13



Boxes challenging the eligibility of voters in Chatham County in Georgia have piled up at the Board of Registrars. Gary Williams updating his address; voting machines being prepared.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY HILARY SWIFT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Drug Dealers Endanger ‘Pura Vida’ of Costa Rica

By MARIA ABI-HABIB

LÍMON, Costa Rica — Before Christian Puchi set off for work in the rainforest, he made sure his machete was fastened to his hip and that his fellow forest rangers were doused in mosquito repellent. They jumped in their boat and navigated through throngs of tourists already on the water.

The tourists clutched binoculars, hoping to catch a glimpse of Costa Rica’s famous turtles. Mr. Puchi and his men just hoped to

Dense Rainforests Pair  
With Lax Oversight  
to Lure Traffickers

come back unscathed.

They can handle the poisonous frogs, venomous snakes and crocodiles. But with too few staff and inadequate gear, they’re no match for the most dangerous threat now lurking in the national parks:

violent drug cartels.

“We used to focus on conservation, finding jaguar tracks, turtle nests, normal stuff. Now, protected areas like this one have become drug warehouses,” said Mr. Puchi, 49, a forest ranger for over 20 years.

Costa Rica, often considered one of the region’s most idyllic destinations, long escaped the scourge of cartels that has pervaded the region. Its national motto, “pura vida” or pure life, has for decades

*Continued on Page A8*



ALEJANDRO CEGARRA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A park ranger on patrol in Costa Rica. The nation has no military, so rangers combat illegal activity.

Once Considered Enemies, Iran’s Proxies Are Embraced in Iraq

By ALISSA J. RUBIN

BAGHDAD — There is no sign on the door of the new Hamas political office in Baghdad, and the address is closely guarded. The same goes for the new Houthi office, a short drive away.

Iraqi government officials quietly allowed both Iranian-backed

armed groups to establish a more permanent presence in Baghdad early this summer, after years of their representatives visiting.

The shift, which Iraqi officials deny publicly even as photos of the groups in Iraq circulate on social media, comes as Iran has appeared to encourage its proxies from different countries to share

military skills and even coordinate on targets.

The new offices reflect Iraq’s growing role in the shadow war between Iran, Israel and the United States.

For more than 20 years, since the U.S. invasion to oust the Iraqi dictator, Saddam Hussein, Iraq has struggled to maintain an un-

easy balance between Iran, with which it shares a 1,000-mile border, and the United States, which still maintains about 2,500 troops in the country.

The balance has gradually shifted in favor of Iran. Iraq’s neighbor has worked steadily to amplify its geopolitical sway by

*Continued on Page A6*

TRUMP UNHARMED  
AFTER SHOTS FIRED  
AT FLORIDA COURSE

A Suspect Is Arrested in What the F.B.I.  
Calls an Assassination Attempt

This article is by **Patricia Mazzei, Jonathan Swan, Maggie Haberman, Adam Goldman and Glenn Thrush.**

MIAMI — Former President Donald J. Trump was playing golf on Sunday afternoon in Florida when a Secret Service agent spotted a man with a rifle standing by a chain-link fence on the perimeter of the course, law enforcement officials said.

The agents opened fire, and the man fled in a black Nissan but was eventually taken into custody, the officials said.

While Mr. Trump was safe and unharmed, the Federal Bureau of Investigation said it was investigating the episode as an apparent attempted assassination, the second one against the former president in just over two months. Mr. Trump was wounded in a previous attempt during a July 13 rally in Butler, Pa.

The suspected gunman was identified as Ryan Wesley Routh, 58, of Hawaii, according to a law enforcement official who was granted anonymity to describe an open investigation.

The episode unfolded around 1:30 p.m. on Sunday as Mr. Trump was golfing at the Trump International Golf Course West Palm Beach, Sheriff Ric Bradshaw of Palm Beach County said at a news briefing.

A Secret Service agent standing a hole or two away from Mr. Trump saw the armed man hiding in the shrubbery by a fence at the perimeter of the course, according to Sheriff Bradshaw. The Secret

Service fired at the man, said Rafael Barros, the special agent in charge of the Secret Service’s Miami field office, though it was not immediately clear if the suspect had fired any shots.

Mr. Trump was perhaps 400 yards away from the armed man, Sheriff Bradshaw said.

An AK-47-style rifle with a scope was found near the property line, along with two backpacks that were hung on the fence.



JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES

A rifle was among the items found by the authorities.

The backpacks contained ceramic tile, and investigators also found a video camera, the sheriff said, adding that investigators believed the man might have intended to film the shooting.

“President Trump is safe following gunshots in his vicinity,” Steven Cheung, the Trump campaign’s communications director, said in a statement.

A witness saw the man flee from

*Continued on Page A13*

Adams’s Crises  
Muddle Agenda  
And Re-election

By EMMA G. FITZSIMMONS  
and JEFFERY C. MAYS

If Mayor Eric Adams needed any further evidence of his diminished stature in New York City, this past week was a new low point.

On Tuesday, the mayor’s hand-picked choice to become the city’s top lawyer withdrew his nomination, sparing himself and the mayor from a public rejection.

Two days later, a separate embarrassment emerged: Mr. Adams’s police commissioner, Edward A. Caban, resigned under duress. Mr. Caban and his twin brother are under federal investigation, one of four federal inquiries circling the highest levels of the Adams administration.

Then, late Saturday, came another blow: The mayor’s top legal adviser at City Hall, Lisa Zornberg, abruptly stepped down.

The swarm of federal scrutiny has raised questions about Mr. Adams’s fitness to lead the city, his ability to negotiate with the City Council and with state and federal leaders to push his agenda, and his capacity to lure and retain talented people in city government.

The scrutiny has also made his path to re-election more unwieldy. On Friday, a fourth prominent Democrat, State Senator Jessica Ramos, joined a crowded field of mayoral hopefuls seeking to stop Mr. Adams from winning a second term.

“Pretending that this is not happening or trying to brush it aside is no longer going to work,” Jumaane Williams, the city’s public advocate, said in an interview.

*Continued on Page A11*



PIPER TAICH

“Having fun is the point,” said Piper Taich, a graphic designer.

Arrangements  
And Eye Rolls  
In T.S.A. Line

By CLAIRE MOSES  
and REMY TUMIN

Phone: check. Passport: check. Boarding pass: check. Make it look cute: check. (Click.)

Over the past few months, influencers and content creators have flooded TikTok, Instagram and other social media sites with pictures and videos of aesthetically pleasing . . . airport trays. Yes, those gray, plastic bins in which you put your shoes, keys, laptop and other personal items.

In the images, the utilitarian bins come to life with carefully arranged accessories — cameras, headphones, tickets. Some displays get elaborate, adding designer purses and makeup, while others simply arrange commonplace items in a nicer way.

*Continued on Page A12*



INTERNATIONAL A4-9

**The Olympics for Tram Drivers**  
Europe’s public transit captains went to Frankfurt to show off their skills at an annual championship. PAGE A4

**Deadly Floods in Africa**  
Rain in the west and central regions has left over 1,000 people dead and thousands of homes destroyed. PAGE A7

NATIONAL A10-15, 18

**Abortion vs. Border Security**  
A House race in New Mexico, considered one of the most competitive in the country, tests the dueling messages of Democrats and Republicans. PAGE A10

**In Georgia, Medicaid’s Future?**  
A Medicaid work program is part of a Republican push to change how poor people qualify for health care. PAGE A18

**She Made Dresses Shimmer**  
Mary McFadden, 85, created embroideries and beadings on clothes worn by the likes of Jacqueline Onassis. PAGE B5



ARTS C1-6

**Delivering His Own Reviews**  
Over the years, Ian McKellen has had his disagreements with critics. Now he is playing one in a new film. PAGE C1

**New Twist to College Diversity**  
Does a truly inclusive campus require more conservatives on the faculty? Some Republicans think so. PAGE C1

BUSINESS B1-4

**20 Million Cards and Counting**  
Three years ago, a Virginia businessman bought a collection of sports memorabilia from its reclusive owner. Now he is trying to figure out how to show it to the world. PAGE B1

**What Jobs Data Doesn’t Show**  
Layoffs are below pre-pandemic levels and applications for jobless benefits are falling. But past recessions suggest that such signs should not offer much comfort about the labor market. PAGE B1

OPINION A16-17  
**David French** PAGE A17



SPORTS D1-8

**Shooting for a Hoops Revival**  
Griffin Taylor, left, and Jared Efron started the Program N.Y.C. to give emerging players in the city a space to develop their skills. PAGE D1

