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Former President Donald J. Trump spoke in Des Moines on Monday night. His supporters turned out despite subzero temperatures.

Clashes by Proxy Act as Buffer
In Test Between U.S. and Iran

This article is by David E. Sanger, Julian E. Barnes, Vivian Yee and Alissa J. Rubin.

For all the fears of an outbreak of fighting in the Middle East that could draw the United States, Israel and Iran into direct combat, a curious feature of the conflict so far is the care taken — in both Tehran and Washington — to avoid putting their forces into direct contact. No one knows how long that will last, American and European diplomats and other officials say. But more than 100 days into the conflict, the assessment of most of the key players is that Iran has pushed its proxies to make trouble for the American military and to pressure Israel and the West in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and the shipping lanes of the Red Sea

while going to some lengths to avoid provoking a larger eruption. It is the most delicate of dances, rife with subtle signals, attacks and feints, and deniable action. The evidence of caution is piecemeal, but everywhere. While Tehran has ramped up its production of uranium drastically in recent weeks, renewing fears that it may be speeding again toward the capability of fabricating several nuclear weapons, it has carefully kept just below the threshold for bomb-grade fuel. That is considered the red line that could trigger military action against its underground nuclear complexes. When Israel struck a suburb of Beirut, Lebanon, on Jan. 2 to kill a Hamas leader, it mounted a very precise attack — exactly the

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He’s Joe and Wants Your Vote.
Don’t Mind the Metal Detector.

By PETER BAKER

EMMAUS, Pa. — It was a quiet day in Emmaus, Pa. The only sound on Main Street was the idling engine of the sleek black truck that some call a rolling doomsday communications control center, which was parked outside the bike shop. The men with guns dressed all in black were perched on the roof using binoculars to scan the area for terrorists or other bad guys. The president had come to this picturesque town of 11,000 to chat with a few local business owners, order a smoothie, visit the local firehouse and, if it so happened that his visit produced a few pictures useful for his re-election campaign, all the better. Did he mention the new

statistics on start-up businesses? No worries, he would be happy to repeat them. An election year has arrived, and it is time for President Biden to get out of the White House and hit the road for votes. He is not the only one looking for Norman Rockwell images in small-town shops and diners these days — check out the traveling circus in Iowa over the weekend, heading to New Hampshire after that. But he is the only one who comes with a mile-long motorcade of police cars, Secret Service vehicles, ambulances and enough sophisticated military hardware to launch a nuclear war from the stool at the coffee shop. Retail campaigning is not easy when you’re the commander in chief. The counterassault team

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TRUMP WINS IOWA
IN KEY FIRST STEP
TOWARD REMATCH

Caucus Voters Look Past Indictments —
Setback for DeSantis and Haley

By SHANE GOLDMACHER

DES MOINES — Donald J. Trump won the Iowa caucuses on Monday, a crucial first step in his bid to reclaim the Republican nomination for the third consecutive election as voters braved the bitter cold, looked past his mounting legal jeopardy and embraced his vision of vengeful disruption. The victory, called by The Associated Press on Monday night only 31 minutes after the caucuses had begun, accelerated Mr. Trump’s momentum toward a historic potential rematch in November with President Biden that could play out both on the campaign trail and in the courtroom. In a state that had rejected him in the caucuses eight years ago, Mr. Trump finished ahead of two of his main rivals, Ron DeSantis and Nikki Haley, who were locked in a race for second place. It was unclear who had won second and who had won third.

The result was a setback for both Republicans, who had spent as much time and money battling each other in Iowa as they had spent on the front-runner. Mr. DeSantis, the Florida governor, had previously predicted victory in Iowa, and both he and Ms. Haley, the former United Nations ambassador, have argued that a strong second-place finish would better position them as Mr. Trump’s chief rival going forward. Mr. Trump is the first former president in the modern era who

has sought to return to the White House. On Monday, he was hoping to shatter the Republican record for the largest victory ever in a contested caucus, which was just under 13 percentage points. Despite the quick declaration of Mr. Trump as the winner, it was not yet clear if he would win an outright majority of more than 50 percent, a critical psychological barrier for those in the party still hoping to stop him. A spokesman for Mr. DeSantis, Andrew Romeo, said in a statement that the early declaration of Mr. Trump’s victory was “absolutely outrageous.” He borrowed a phrase from Mr. Trump to accuse the news media of participating “in election interference by calling the race before tens of thousands of Iowans even had a chance to vote.” Regardless of what comes next, Mr. Trump’s Iowa victory amounts to a remarkable resurrection of a political career that had once appeared in tatters. He was impeached in the final days of his first White House term for his role in inciting the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the Capitol. His subsequent acquittal by the Senate left open the possibility of this return campaign. Mr. Trump has spent the last three years methodically consolidating power to ready his own restoration. Even his four felony

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War in Ukraine
Pulls Oligarchs
Off Their Perch

By CONSTANT MÉHEUT

KYIV, Ukraine — For weeks, they fended off Russian assaults, holed up in a vast steel mill under barrages of missiles and mortars. And when the Ukrainian troops defending the Azovstal plant finally surrendered in May 2022, the mill had been reduced to rubble and twisted metal. The fighting at Azovstal, in the besieged city of Mariupol, was a signature moment in the early months of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine. It was also a major setback for Ukraine’s richest man, the plant’s owner. With the destruction of Azovstal, the owner, Rinat Akhmetov, lost an industrial jewel accounting for one-fifth of Ukraine’s steel output — a multibillion-dollar loss that dealt a severe blow to his longtime grip on the Ukrainian economy. Mr. Akhmetov’s case underlines how the war, by ravaging Ukrainian industry, has curbed the power of the country’s so-called oligarchs, tycoons who have long reigned over the economy and used their wealth to buy political influence, experts say. In the war’s first year, the total wealth of the 20 richest Ukrainians shrank by more than \$20 billion, according to Forbes magazine. Mr. Akhmetov took the biggest hit, losing more than \$9 billion. He is one of only two billionaires left in Ukraine, down from 10 before the war, according to The New Voice of Ukraine newspaper. Now, the Ukrainian authorities plan to use their wartime powers to try to make a clean break with the oligarchs. The aim is to reduce their influence over the economy

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The pizza box that provided Rex Heuermann’s DNA.

Strands of Hair
Will Be Central
In Gilgo 4 Case

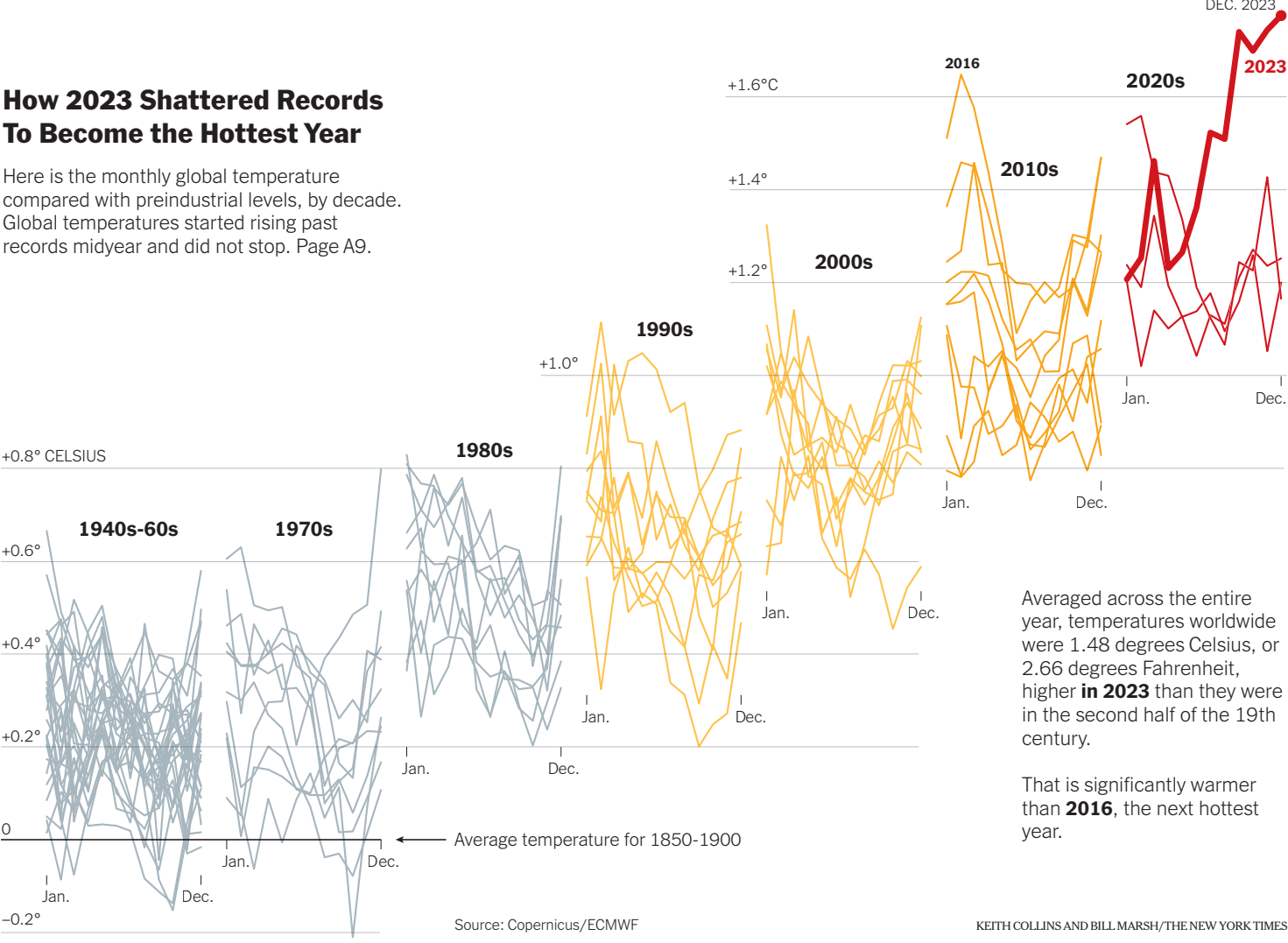
By COREY KILGANNON

After 13 years of dead ends and blown leads, the Gilgo Beach murder investigation finally turned on pizza crusts that Rex Heuermann had tossed in a trash can in Midtown Manhattan. It was a jackpot for investigators who had watched Mr. Heuermann for months. “Pizza crust is like a sponge — it allowed the saliva to seep into the dough,” Ray Tierney, the Suffolk County district attorney, said in a recent interview. The sample gave investigators the genetic match that helped connect Mr. Heuermann to four bodies found in 2010 on Long Island, and his arrest followed in July, Mr. Tierney said. When Mr. Heuermann’s trial begins, possibly this year, the DNA evidence will underpin the charges that he murdered women he had hired as escorts and left their bodies wrapped in burlap along a desolate oceanfront parkway. Investigators say the DNA profile obtained from a male hair found on the burlap used to wrap

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How 2023 Shattered Records
To Become the Hottest Year

Here is the monthly global temperature compared with preindustrial levels, by decade. Global temperatures started rising past records midyear and did not stop. Page A9.



Averaged across the entire year, temperatures worldwide were 1.48 degrees Celsius, or 2.66 degrees Fahrenheit, higher in 2023 than they were in the second half of the 19th century. That is significantly warmer than 2016, the next hottest year.

KEITH COLLINS AND BILL MARSH/THE NEW YORK TIMES

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The Whisky Is From Wales

The path to receiving an official seal of approval is arduous. Then there’s the work to win over the purists. PAGE A4

Housing Crisis Rattles Ireland

Climbing rents have left many struggling to afford homes in Dublin, creating a generational divide. PAGE A5



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Big Battery Under a Tiny Town

An audacious project in rural Utah would produce clean-burning hydrogen and store it in underground caverns until the electricity is needed. PAGE A10

A Precedent on the Line

The Supreme Court will hear arguments in a case that could curb the power of government agencies. PAGE A11

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Blacklisted Screenwriter

Norma Barzman continued her career in Europe with her husband after the Red Scare. She was 103. PAGE B10

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Solar Businesses Take a Hit

Some companies are leaving California after the state cut incentives for homeowners to install rooftop solar panels, reducing the demand. PAGE B1

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Everton Under Scrutiny Again

The Premier League soccer team had already been docked points under financial viability rules. PAGE B9

Comebacks Crushed

Naomi Osaka was among several players at the Australian Open who had rough returns to tennis action. PAGE B9

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A Victory for Conservation

A national park in Colombia protects a link between a tropical savanna and the world’s largest rainforest. PAGE D4

The Crochet Coral Reef

A project involving an army of crocheters has resulted in a worldwide archipelago of more than 50 reefs. PAGE D1



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An Unretired Detective

In a new show, Clive Owen plays the inscrutable Sam Spade, who is trying to put the past behind him. PAGE C1

Deconstructing ‘The Curse’

Three critics discuss the afflictions, blessings and confounding season finale of the horror-comedy show. PAGE C1

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Zeynep Tufekci

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