

“All the News
That’s Fit to Print”

The New York Times

THE WEATHER
Today, brisk, colder, partly cloudy, high 38. **Tonight**, cloudy, late snow, a coating on nonpaved surfaces, low 32. **Tomorrow**, cloudy, snow and rain, high 39. Weather map, Page B8.

VOL. CLXXV No. 60,741

© 2025 The New York Times Company

MONDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2025

Prices in Canada may be higher

\$4.00



MATTHEW ABBOTT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

For Australian Jews, Hanukkah Goes On
The community has ramped up its use of armed guards and secretive precautions after last week’s attack at Bondi Beach. Page A10.

Hyping Crypto, Trump Heralds Risky Ventures

By DAVID YAFFE-BELLANY and ERIC LIPTON

This summer, a group of executives pitched a business plan to Anthony Scaramucci, the Wall Street financier and short-lived adviser to President Trump.

They wanted Mr. Scaramucci to join a publicly traded company with a peculiar strategy: accumulating enormous quantities of cryptocurrency to make its business more appealing to investors.

They “didn’t really have to pitch it to me,” said Mr. Scaramucci, who was soon unveiled as an adviser to three little-known companies with this same plan. “It was a pretty easy conversation.”

The excitement did not last. The crypto market cratered this fall, sending shares of all three of Mr. Scaramucci’s ventures tumbling. The worst performer plunged more than 80 percent.

The businesses were part of a frenzy of crypto activity driven by Mr. Trump, who has turned the once obscure world of digital currencies into a major force in the global economy. Declaring himself the first “crypto president,” Mr. Trump ended a regulatory crackdown on crypto companies, promoted crypto investments from the Oval Office, signed pro-crypto legislation and even launched a “memecoin” called \$TRUMP.

Now the consequences of that advocacy are coming into focus.

An array of boundary-pushing new crypto ventures have emerged this year, exposing more people to the volatile world of virtual currencies. More than 250 publicly traded companies are now stocking up on cryptocurrencies, which are digital assets that fluctuate in price like stocks, bonds or other investments.

A wave of companies started offering products that make it easier to incorporate crypto into brokerage accounts and retirement plans. And industry executives are pitching regulators on a plan to offer coins that represent shares in public companies, which would be traded in a crypto-powered version of the stock market.

The rush of experimentation has already led to problems. Major cryptocurrencies crashed in recent months, sending businesses that had loaded up on the assets into free fall. Other new

Continued on Page A8

When Flights Hit Snags, They Manage the Chaos

By NIRAJ CHOKSHI

FORT WORTH — American Airlines Flight 27 was hundreds of miles out to sea on its way from Los Angeles to Tokyo this month when a passenger had a medical emergency.

The flight’s captain called Mike Doran, a dispatcher for the airline in Texas. Mr. Doran connected him to a doctor employed by American. After that consultation, the pilot changed course, flying more than two hours to San Francisco, so the passenger could get help.

As the plane made its way, Mr. Doran and his colleagues turned their attention to all the problems that would result from that diversion. The crew would need a break. Passengers would have to be provided accommodations. The plane would have to get new meals. And other flights scheduled on that plane would require reassignment.

Dealing with such messes is routine at the center where Mr. Doran and hundreds of others manage the far-flung operations of the world’s largest airline. Hubs like this play a central role in the aviation system. But unlike airport security officers or air traffic controllers, whose travails in the United States have drawn a lot of attention recently, what happens in such airline nerve centers is largely invisible to most people.

Small disruptions can have severe effects on an airline’s planes, employees and customers. Companies make meticulous plans and have backup planes, parts and pilots to put to use when something goes wrong, which can happen during the frenzied days around holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas and in the winter when storms can paralyze airports across the country.

Largely Invisible Hub Plays a Crucial Role

But for that preparation to be effective it has to be deployed with care and skill. “These operation control centers are there to make the best possible use of resources,” said Michael Boyd, a

consultant with the Boyd Group International, a firm that specializes in aviation.

American’s Integrated Operations Center is at the company’s headquarters in Fort Worth, a short drive from Dallas Fort Worth International Airport. Most of the operational work is carried out on the carpeted second floor of the building, which is designed to

Continued on Page A17



DESIREE RIOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Jennifer Irwin coordinated ground workers when an American Airlines flight had to make an emergency medical landing.

A Weekly Salon for Those Who Fled Nazis Ends

By AIDAN GARDINER

In 1943, two artist friends who fled the Nazis and landed in New York City decided to host a weekly meeting with other refugees. At this stammtisch, as they called it, they could talk freely, in German, about art and politics and the culture they missed from home.

Week after week, the stammtisch moved around the many German restaurants on the Upper East Side. And it kept go-

Gathering in New York Lasted 82 Years

ing, even after the war ended and one of the founders died. And when their regular restaurants began to close, they met in a nearby apartment, and then another, and another.

For 82 years, they spoke German together virtually every

week until Dec. 13, when the Oskar Maria Graf Stammtisch finally decided to disband.

This coda was shared by nine people in the Upper Manhattan apartment of Thomas Strasser (around 20 others Zoomed in from abroad). At 2 p.m., Mr. Strasser raised a small bell shaped like a woman in a blooming dress — a significant artifact to the longtimers — and, with a few gentle chimes, opened the last meeting

Continued on Page A20

Kennedy Likes Denmark’s Set Of Fewer Shots

Plans for U.S. Children Baffle Smaller Nation

By APOORVA MANDAVILLI

Over the last year, Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and his appointees have taken tentative steps toward his longstanding goal of remaking the childhood vaccination schedule.

But emboldened by a directive from President Trump, Mr. Kennedy is now poised to make a seismic shift. He is expected to announce in the new year that American children should be immunized according to a different schedule with fewer vaccines, used by the much smaller, largely homogenous country of Denmark.

A wholesale revision of the schedule would bypass the evidence-based, committee-led process that has underpinned vaccine recommendations in the country for decades, and could affect whether private insurance and government assistance programs will cover the shots.

And many medical experts worry that losing strong endorsements of some vaccines will create financial and logistical hurdles to obtaining them, further erode Americans’ confidence in immunizations and increase the chances of disease outbreaks. Measles and whooping cough are already resurgent in multiple states because of dropping vaccination rates.

It is states, not the federal government, that decide which shots are mandated for children to attend day care or kindergarten. And the specifics of changes in the vaccine schedule are as yet unclear.

Also unclear is whether any changes will still protect vaccine manufacturers from being sued for claims of harm. Without that guarantee, companies might face “frivolous” lawsuits and flee the American market as they did before such protections were instituted in the 1980s, some vaccine experts warned.

Mr. Trump directed Mr. Kennedy to align recommendations for childhood vaccines with “best practices from peer, developed countries,” calling the United States “a high outlier in the number of vaccinations recommended for all children.” He pointed to Denmark, Germany and Japan as examples of nations that immunize against fewer diseases.

The directive said that health officials should make the changes “while preserving access to vaccines currently available to Americans,” suggesting to some public health experts that those who

Continued on Page A17

U.S. PLAYS A GAME OF CAT AND MOUSE IN THE CARIBBEAN

CHASING OIL TANKERS

As Pressure Is Exerted on Venezuela, Carrier Evades Boarding

This article is by Nicholas Nehamas, Christiaan Triebert, Tyler Pager, Anatoly Kurmanaev and Eric Schmitt.

The U.S. Coast Guard over the weekend tried to intercept an oil tanker linked to Venezuela that was fleeing in the Caribbean Sea, according to three U.S. officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive operation, days after President Trump said he would crack down on vessels under sanction involved in the country’s oil trade.

The tanker, called the Bella 1, was en route on Saturday to pick up oil in Venezuela and was not carrying cargo, according to one of the officials and ship-tracking data. The tanker has been under U.S. sanctions since last year for transporting Iranian oil, which the federal authorities say is sold to finance terrorism.

When U.S. forces approached the Bella 1 late on Saturday, it was not flying a valid national flag, the officials said, making it a stateless vessel liable to be boarded at sea under international law.

The American authorities had obtained a seizure warrant from a federal magistrate judge, which would allow them to take possession of the ship, two of the officials said. The warrant had been sought because of the Bella 1’s previous involvement in the Iranian oil trade, not because of its links to Venezuela.

But the ship did not submit to being boarded and continued sailing, one of the officials said. A second official referred to the situation as “an active pursuit.” The Coast Guard had successfully boarded another tanker earlier on Saturday, and the United States took possession of a third tanker on Dec. 10 that is now at port in Texas.

The U.S. actions represented a significant escalation of Mr. Trump’s pressure campaign against President Nicolás Maduro of Venezuela. They come as Mr. Maduro has ordered Venezuelan Navy vessels to accompany some oil tankers leaving his country — raising the possibility of an armed confrontation at sea. The Bella 1 had not yet reached Venezuelan waters and did not have such an escort, according to one of the officials and ship-tracking data.

Continued on Page A10

Crackdown on Immigration Creates Rift Among Baptists

By ELIZABETH DIAS and SHANNON SIMS

When federal agents descended on Louisiana this month to pursue their aggressive deportation campaign, a group of Roman Catholic priests privately brought the Eucharist to the homes of immigrants too worried to step outside.

But Lewis Richerson, the pastor of Woodlawn Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, planned to take an opposite approach.

“I would not knowingly extend communion to an illegal immigrant who is visiting our church,” he said. “That person would be in sin by being in this country illegally, and Christians should obey the law of the land.”

Instead, the main way he would minister to them would be “to help them submit themselves to the authorities,” he said. “They should absolutely deport themselves.”

Mr. Richerson’s church is part of

the Southern Baptist Convention, the largest Protestant denomination in the United States, with about 12.7 million members. For years, the denomination has supported immigration reforms, especially given its extensive missionary work and theological commitments to helping “the least of these,” as Jesus says in the Gospel of Matthew.

But while Catholic bishops this year have repeatedly rebuked the Trump administration over its deportation actions, Southern Baptists are contending with an increasingly loud contingent in their ranks that, like Mr. Richerson, supports the immigration crackdown. Even as many rank-and-file churches continue to support immigrant ministries, signs of fracture are emerging.

Continued on Page A20



INTERNATIONAL A4-10

Paradise on Bones of Massacre
On Bali, resorts and clubs were built on mass graves of victims of a 1960s anti-Communist crackdown. PAGE A6

Fighting Mexico’s Cartels
Omar García Harfuch is overseeing an aggressive offensive against the country’s powerful criminal groups. PAGE A4

NATIONAL A11-17, 20

Teen’s Killing Shakes Families
In the Florida Panhandle, a confession led to the arrest of two teenage boys on murder charges in the death of a 14-year-old girl. PAGE A11

Just Not Their Type
Designers dissect the State Department’s order to jettison Calibri in favor of Times New Roman, which is widely regarded as less accessible. PAGE A14

Rifts at Right-Wing Gathering
At Turning Point USA’s AmericaFest, speakers revealed tensions over conspiracy theories, antisemitism and who belongs in America. PAGE A16



BUSINESS B1-5

She Ghosted Her ChatGPT
The woman who created a group called “MyBoyfriendIsAI” on Reddit found something more fulfilling. PAGE B1

An Uneasy Economic Limbo
A feared recession did not occur in 2025, but unemployment rose and affordability challenges mounted. PAGE B1

SPORTS D1-8

The Spurs Send a Warning
Victor Wembanyama and San Antonio did not win the N.B.A. Cup, but they put the league on notice by beating the Thunder in the semifinals and planting the seeds for a rivalry. PAGE D2

A Playoff Reality Check
The Group of 5 teams fizzled in the first round of the College Football Playoff, but there’s a revival in Miami, and Mississippi seems to be just fine without Coach Lane Kiffin. PAGES D4-5

OPINION A18-19

Mitt Romney PAGE A19



ARTS C1-6

Bachata Ambassadors
With the new album “Better Late Than Never,” Prince Royce and Romeo Santos are joining forces to ensure a Latin music genre receives its due. PAGE C1



0 354613 9