high 43. Tonight, clear skies, cold,

low 29. Tomorrow, periodic clouds and sunshine, brisk and breezy, high 41. Weather map is on Page D8.

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Prices in Canada may be higher

## \$4.00

# Culture Wars Put Librarians On Front Lines

### Combating Book Bans and Threats of Jail

### By ELIZABETH WILLIAMSON

POST FALLS, Idaho — During 12 years as a youth librarian in northern Idaho, Denise Neujahr read to and befriended children of many backgrounds. Devout or atheist, gay or straight, all were welcome until a November evening in 2021, when about two dozen teenagers arriving at the Post Falls library for a meeting of the "Rainbow Squad" encountered a commotion at the en-

Members of a local church waved signs with images of hellfire and used a bullhorn to shout Bible verses and accusations sin and pedophile "groomers" in the library. Parents had to escort the teens inside that night, and the library beefed up security. But the next month the police arrested a protester outside the doors who was carrying a knife and a loaded gun.

In May, religious conservatives won a majority on the library board and named as its chair a member who had called the Rainbow Squad a "sex club." Ms. Neujahr, who created the group as a program of crafts, snacks and conversation for L.G.B.T.Q. youth and their parents, said she was told the group's funding was in danger. But she refused to disband it.

"They're really good kids," Ms. Neujahr said. "It just makes me so sad that they have to go through all this hate. This is not what libraries stand for.'

As America's libraries have become noisy and sometimes dangerous new battlegrounds in the nation's culture wars, librarians like Ms. Neujahr and their allies have moved from the stacks to the front lines. People who normally preside over hushed sanctuaries are now battling groups that demand the mass removal of books and seek to control library governance. Last year, more than 150 bills in 35 states aimed to restrict access to library materials, and to punish library workers who do not

"We're no longer seeing a parent have a conversation with a teacher or librarian about a book their child is reading," said Deborah Caldwell-Stone, the director of the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom. "We're seeing partisan groups demand the removal of books that they're told are bad books, that they are not even reading, because they don't meet the political or moral agenda."

Activists say they are protecting children from sexually explicit material and exploitation, while conservative politicians seek to harden the bans into policy. Project 2025, the Heritage Foundation's 900-page ideological blueprint for a potential second Trump administration, declares in

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When Nikki Haley conceded

"I want to say to my husband,

who is deployed, who I know may

or may not be watching this right

now - Michael, I love you," she

said, standing in front of a row of

American flags. "What keeps me

going at night is that we sleep un-

It was an unusually personal

and almost saccharine note for a

politician known for her tough ex-

terior. But it was not out of place.

der the same stars."

Haley's 'Rock' Watches Closely.

Well, From a Base in Djibouti.



Ibrahim, left, and Pinar Karapirli spent nearly four months in the hospital after the disaster, which killed two of their sons last year.

# In Arkansas, **Bitcoin Mines** Fuel a Battle

### By GABRIEL J.X. DANCE

GREENBRIER, Ark. - On a sweltering July evening, the din from thousands of computers mining for Bitcoins pierced the night. Nearby, Matt Brown, a member of the Arkansas legislature, monitored the noise alongside a local magistrate.

As the two men investigated complaints about the operation, Mr. Brown said, a security guard for the mine loaded rounds into an AR-15-style assault rifle that had been stored in a car.

"He wanted to make sure that we knew he had his gun - that we knew it was loaded," Mr. Brown, a Republican, said in an interview.

The Bitcoin outfit here, 45 minutes north of Little Rock, is one of three sites in Arkansas owned by a network of companies embroiled in tense disputes with residents, who say the noise generated by computers performing trillions of calculations per second ruins lives, lowers property values and drives away wildlife.

Scores of the operations have popped up in recent years across the United States. When a mining computer lands on numbers that Bitcoin's algorithm accepts, the payout is currently worth about a quarter-million dollars. The more computers an operation has, the better chance of earning the pay-

Continued on Page A13

Even in his absence, Maj. Mi-

creasingly lonely attempt to

snatch the Republican nomination

from former President Donald J.

In nearly every stump speech,

Ms. Haley describes her husband

and his military career as one of

her motives for running. She fre-

quently refers to his struggles af-

ter returning from a war zone in

her promises to improve health

Continued on Page A15

# Grieving What Was Forever Lost in the Rubble

### By BEN HUBBARD and SAFAK TIMUR

GAZIANTEP, Turkey - Finally, 106 days after the ambulances rushed their battered bodies to the hospital, the couple were cleared to leave.

Ibrahim Karapirli hobbled back from physical therapy on crutches to protect his aching leg. His wife, Pinar, wrangled their twin toddlers, unsure how she would care for them with her one remaining

The couple were still mourning their two sons who were killed when a powerful earthquake pancaked their six-story apartment building in southern Turkey before dawn last February.

# After Deadly Quakes, **Turkish Family Tries** Finding Solace

dozen plastic bags holding their possessions atop a wheelchair, bade the nurses goodbye and went to their car.

"God, please don't let us end up here again," Pinar said.

Ibrahim drove, despite a hulking plastic brace on his right leg. He was anxious to return to work and find a safe new home for his family, if it was possible for them to feel safe anywhere.

As he pulled into traffic, a Turk-Ibrahim and Pinar piled about a ish pop song mourning a lost love came on the stereo.

"Day after day, I have to forget about you," the singer crooned. "Did you think our tears were

For Ibrahim, 47, Pinar, 35, and their  $2\frac{1}{2}$ -year-old twins, Elcin and Eray, the year since the Feb. 6 earthquake has been a painful quest to cobble together a new life, piece by piece, trauma by trauma.

The 7.8-magnitude earthquake, followed by a second violent temblor hours later, was the broadest and most deadly in the region in hundreds of years. It ambushed people as they slept, killing more than 53,000 in Turkey and injuring many more, and toppling so many buildings that some areas have barely begun to recover.

Continued on Page A6

# U.S. FORCES HIT **IRANIAN PROXIES** FOR A THIRD DAY

### MISSILE IS DESTROYED

### Blinken Travels to Israel, **Pushing for Captives** Deal and Gaza Aid

This article is by Vivek Shankar, Charlie Savage and Matthew Rosenberg.

The United States launched scores of strikes across the Middle East over the weekend as Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken set out for the region to push forward negotiations to secure the release of Israelis still held hostage in Gaza and get more humanitarian aid into the battered enclave.

The latest strike came Sunday in Yemen, where the U.S. military said it had destroyed an anti-ship cruise missile that belonged to Houthi militants and posed "an imminent threat to U.S. Navy ships and merchant vessels in the region."

It was the third American military action against Iranianbacked militias in three days: The United States led strikes on Saturday against 36 Houthi targets in northern Yemen, and on Friday carried out airstrikes on more than 85 targets in Syria and Iraq.

American officials insist that the strikes have been carefully calibrated to avoid setting off an open battle with Iran and say that they have degraded the ability of the militias to attack U.S. forces.

Yet the militias all remain formidable Iranian proxies, especially the heavily armed Houthis in Yemen, and the strikes against them risked the kind of escalation of hostilities that President Biden has sought to avoid since the war between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip began in October.

In a four-day trip, Mr. Blinken is expected to travel to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Qatar, Israel and the West Bank. His goal is in part to "continue work to prevent the spread of the conflict," said Matthew Miller, a State Department spokesman.

The secretary of state, Mr. Miller said, will also "continue discussions with partners on how to establish a more integrated, peaceful region that includes lasting security for Israelis and Palestinians alike."

The most immediate goal, though, is securing an agreement that would include the release of the more than 100 remaining people kidnapped during the Hamasled Oct. 7 attack on Israel and a humanitarian pause in the conflict to allow for the delivery of aid to civilians in Gaza.

Jake Sullivan, Mr. Biden's national security adviser, said on Sunday that making sure more aid reaches civilians in Gaza would be a "top priority" for Mr. Blinken on his trip, including in meetings with the Israeli government. "We want to ensure that they are getting access to lifesaving food, medicine, water, shelter, and we'll continue to press until that is done," he said on CBS's "Face the Nation."

The trip is Mr. Blinken's fifth to the region since the war began. Friday's strikes were largely in

retaliation for a drone attack by an Continued on Page A10

### Wildfires Engulf Chile's Coast By KEN BENSINGER and MATTHEW ROSENBERG

Officials are warning of major destruction and loss of life in the Valparaiso region. Page A9.

### chael Haley, a National Guardsher deflating third-place defeat in man serving a voluntary, yearlong the Iowa caucuses this month, the N.F.L. Warns of Pitfalls of a Gambling Culture It Fully Embraces first person she thanked was deployment in Africa, has played nearly 8,000 miles away. an outsize role in his wife's in-

## By JENNY VRENTAS

Over the next week, the National Football League's players, coaches, fans and executives will gather for an event that was virtually unthinkable just 10 years ago: the Super Bowl in Las Vegas, the gambling capital of the United States.

Since the Supreme Court struck

down, in 2018, a federal law that effectively banned sports betting outside Nevada — a prohibition once backed by the N.F.L.'s commissioner, Roger Goodell the N.F.L. has embraced the gambling industry. It has forged partnerships reportedly worth nearly \$1 billion over five years with sports betting companies, and permitted a sports book to operate

### Las Vegas Super Bowl Shows Mixed Signals

inside one of its stadiums. Now it even has a franchise in Las Vegas, which the league shunned for decades because any affiliation with the city was seen as a threat to the integrity of the game.

Yet the embedding of sports gambling so quickly into the culture of the league has resulted in jarring contradictions. The N.F.L. is pushing to popularize and benefit from sports betting while still guarding against the potential pitfalls that it long condemned. While the league donates money

Continued on Page A17



**INTERNATIONAL A4-10** 

## Welcome to 'Dalifornia'

Young Chinese are flocking to the picturesque mountain town of Dali to escape the megacities. PAGE A8

## Germany's Russia Problem

Despite alarms, Chancellor Olaf Scholz is wary of pushing the Kremlin, and his own ambivalent public, too far. PAGE A4 NATIONAL A11-17

# Senators Reach Border Deal

After months of talks, a bipartisan effort produced a plan to clamp down on migration and unlock aid to Ukraine, but it faces an uphill path.

## Being Helpful Neighbors

A group of Brooklyn parents helped three migrant families evicted from their hotel shelter find temporary homes and other assistance. PAGE A14

## **New Overdose Prevention Site**

The facility in Providence, R.I., also known as a safe injection center, will be the only one in the U.S. outside New York City to operate openly. PAGE A14



SPORTS D1-7

## A Small-Town Phenom

The N.B.A. hasn't drafted a Maine native in 40 years. Cooper Flagg could change that in 2025. PAGE D1

### Baseball's Top Prospects With spring training around the corner,

here is a 40-man roster of up-and-coming young players.

**BUSINESS B1-5** 

## U.S. Soft Landing Stands Out

Economies all over the world are lowering inflation while avoiding serious recession - but because of a combination of luck and judgment, growth in the United States is notable.

## Thin Mints Inflation

In some parts of the United States, the cost of Girl Scout cookies will increase this year, in some cases by \$2 a box. The price had remained steady in most areas for years.

OPINION A18-19

Megan K. Stack

PAGE A18



### **Discerning Documentaries** Some films tell the whole story, warts

and all. Above, Willie Nelson, Quincy Jones and Bruce Springsteen in "The Greatest Night in Pop."



