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Democracy Dies in Darkness

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Santos now says reelection bid is out

House report finds ‘substantial evidence’ of misconduct

BY AMY B WANG, MAEGAN VAZQUEZ AND MARIANNA SOTOMAYOR

House investigators found “substantial evidence” that Rep. George Santos (R-N.Y.) knowingly violated ethics guidelines, House rules and criminal laws, according to a House Ethics Committee report released Thursday that prompted Santos to declare he would not seek reelection next year.

The report detailed an array of alleged misconduct that included Santos stealing money from his campaign, deceiving donors about how contributions would be used, creating fictitious loans and engaging in fraudulent business dealings.

Santos, the report alleged, repeatedly used funds intended for his campaign for personal enrichment, including spa charges and paying down his own credit card debt.

“Representative Santos’ conduct warrants public condemnation, is beneath the dignity of the office, and has brought severe discredit upon the House,” Reps. Michael Guest (R-Miss.) and Susan Wild (D-Pa.), the committee’s chairman and senior Democrat, said in a joint statement.

Santos railed against the Ethics Committee on Thursday in a lengthy post on X in which he called the report a “disgusting politicized smear” and claimed that he was being “stoned by those who have flaws themselves.” He added that he would not be seeking reelection to a second term in 2024 after all, SEE SANTOS ON A4

Cash woes, discord at pro-Trump GOP offices

This article is by Isaac Arnsdorf, Josh Dawsey, Yvonne Wingett Sanchez, Patrick Marley and Amy Gardner

In Arizona, the state GOP chairman has been begging the Republican National Committee for a financial bailout. Michigan party officials have gotten into physical fights as their finances have dipped into the red. And in Georgia, the state party is in a standoff with the Republican governor and saddled with legal fees for alternate electors put forward in 2020.

In each of these 2024 battlegrounds, election denial and grassroots fervor for former president Donald Trump have rocked the Republican apparatus. Now, the state parties are plagued by infighting, struggling to raise money and sometimes to cover legal costs stemming from Trump’s efforts to overturn his 2020 defeat — threatening to hamper GOP organizing capabilities in next year’s presidential election.

SEE REPUBLICANS ON A6

As war rages, commemorating a life dedicated to peace



HEIDI LEVINE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

ABOVE: Ghadir Hani, right, a Palestinian citizen of Israel, embraces an Israeli peace activist during the memorial for Vivian Silver, 74, who was killed by Hamas militants on Oct. 7. The Canadian Israeli peace activist protested Israel’s treatment of Palestinians and was a founding member of the organization Women Wage Peace. Story, A14

RIGHT: Troops from the Israel Defense Forces move along from the border with the Gaza Strip on Thursday.



ALEXANDER ERMOCHENKO/REUTERS

Unlikely trio may soon sit in court next to Trump

BY PATRICK MARLEY, YVONNE WINGETT SANCHEZ AND ADRIANA USERO

CHANNAHON, ILL. — Sitting on the stage of an evangelical church for a fundraiser held in his honor, the Rev. Stephen Lee spoke about the criminal charges he faces in Georgia for allegedly trying to help Donald Trump overturn the 2020 election. Bathed in purple light, the 71-year-old said he would not accept a plea deal, as four of his co-defendants have.

“I’m not going to plead out to a

A pastor, a publicist and an activist remain defiant in Georgia election case

lie,” Lee said last week. “I’m not going to cooperate with evil. I’m not going to do something that is going to eat away or destroy our First Amendment rights. ... This is the Lord’s battle, and we’ve got to fight it.”

Lee is accused of conspiring

with hip-hop publicist Trevian Kuttie and former Trump campaign staffer Harrison Floyd to try to coerce a Georgia election worker into falsely confessing to helping rig the 2020 election for Joe Biden.

This unlikely trio are among the least-known Trump supporters facing charges in Fulton County, Ga. Their indictments show how Trump’s efforts to overturn the 2020 election pulled in Americans from many walks of life — not just elected officials and high-powered lawyers, but also low-

level campaign staffers and ordinary supporters.

Even as more-prominent defendants, including lawyers Sidney Powell and Jenna Ellis, have pleaded guilty in the case, these three have signaled that they are willing to stand by the former president as he continues to claim falsely that the 2020 election was stolen, even if that means facing prison time. They have become inspirations to Trump’s most ardent fans, especially as they continue to fundraise to pay their lawyers.

SEE GEORGIA ON A8



MELINA MARRA/THE WASHINGTON POST

Outside the El Toro Loco Supermarket in Madera, Calif., Ana Lilia Mendoza, right, of Vision y Compromiso, speaks to women in the community about free health services available to them.

Calif. hospital’s collapse exposes systemic fragility

For adults in health crises, help now is distant

BY SCOTT WILSON

MADERA, CALIF. — There is no place in this county to give birth short of an emergency.

The only facility caring for adults, Madera Community Hospital, closed in January, leaving women in labor a 40-minute drive to the closest alternative in another county. Babies often cannot wait out the ride.

More than 1,000 women had delivered babies each year at Madera Community. Over just a couple of weeks this fall, with it closed, a woman gave birth in a car on the shoulder of Avenue 9 in downtown Madera. A second delivered her baby at Valley Children’s Hospital, which, while in Madera County, does not have a maternity

ward and other doctors and services that would certify it for adult care. It is also a roughly half-hour drive away from the city center.

“When my kids feel sick, we’d just head over there,” Erika Castro, a 50-year-old maid who gave birth to one of her two children at Madera Community, said of the closed hospital.

Like many who used the now-bankrupt hospital, Castro walked to its emergency room, most recently last year when her 15-year-old son Oscar suffered from a high fever. “Now,” she said as she wheeled a cart full of fresh vegetables distributed by the one-room Church of the Divine Rapture, “there’s nowhere to go close by.”

“It has to reopen,” she said.

SEE MADERA ON A10

IN THE NEWS

Pelosi attacker The man who bludgeoned the husband of the then-House speaker with a hammer in San Francisco last year was found guilty of all charges. A2

Ex-officer sentenced A former member of the Pentagon police received 25 years in prison for fatally shooting two men while off duty. B1

THE NATION
House Speaker Mike Johnson’s plans to open a Christian law school a decade ago fell apart. A3
The case of a detective accused of violating Breonna Taylor’s civil rights ended in mistrial. A20

THE WORLD
Buffy Sainte-Marie, Canada’s most famous Indigenous icon, may not be Indigenous. A12
Italy’s premier opened an exhibit to J.R.R. Tolkien, tying her far-right ideals to his novels. A13

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Voters still aren’t convinced that President Biden’s economic policies work, data showed. A16
UAW members at General Motors ratified a contract that includes record wage gains, especially for its lowest-paid workers. A20

THE REGION
Ridership is up on the Metro system, but discounts and slashed fares have resulted in lower-than-expected revenue. B1
A self-proclaimed citizen journalist who filmed the Jan. 6 riot was convicted on charges including obstruction. B1

STYLE
“Monty Python’s Spamalot” clip-clops its way back to Broadway, and it’s as funny as it ever was. C1

WEEKEND
The annual push of prestige movies and Oscar contenders (and Beyoncé!) is headed to your local cinema.

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