

Metro plans to return to automated rail system

Officials say self-piloting, not in use since 2009, will lead to fewer delays

BY RACHEL WEINER AND AFIA BARRIE

The D.C. Metro system is planning a return to self-piloting trains in coming months, 15 years after automated trains were turned off in the wake of a crash on the Red Line that killed a train operator and eight passengers.

Though officials later determined that the disaster had nothing to do with automatic train operation, it set off years of crisis and disruption within Metro. Leaders were consumed by efforts to undo dysfunction exposed in the aftermath. Safety and service issues piled up and took priority. The more time lapsed, the more difficult it was to return to automated train operations, even though they are known to be safer than manual driving. Few other transit networks use fully manual trains.

“It’s kind of astonishing that that much time has gone by without this major part of the system being operational,” said Leif Dormsjo, a former member of the Metro board. “It got pushed out, pushed out and pushed out because they were dealing with the controversies of the day.”

The changes, officials say, will allow Metro trains to run at their fastest speeds and provide a

SEE METRO ON A18

Supplies of weight-loss drugs lag demand

Patients left in the lurch amid shortages, shifting coverage of injections

BY ARIANA EUNJUNG CHA

Maez Waibel lost more than 30 pounds in nine months on the new weight-loss drugs, sparking a substantial improvement in health. But instead of feeling happy and relieved, Waibel’s days have been freighted with a different emotion: anxiety.

Waibel went through two months’ worth of Wegovy before Waibel’s pharmacy ran out. All the CVS, Walgreens and Wegmans stores within a few hours’ drive from Waibel’s home in Downingtown, Pa., were out, too.

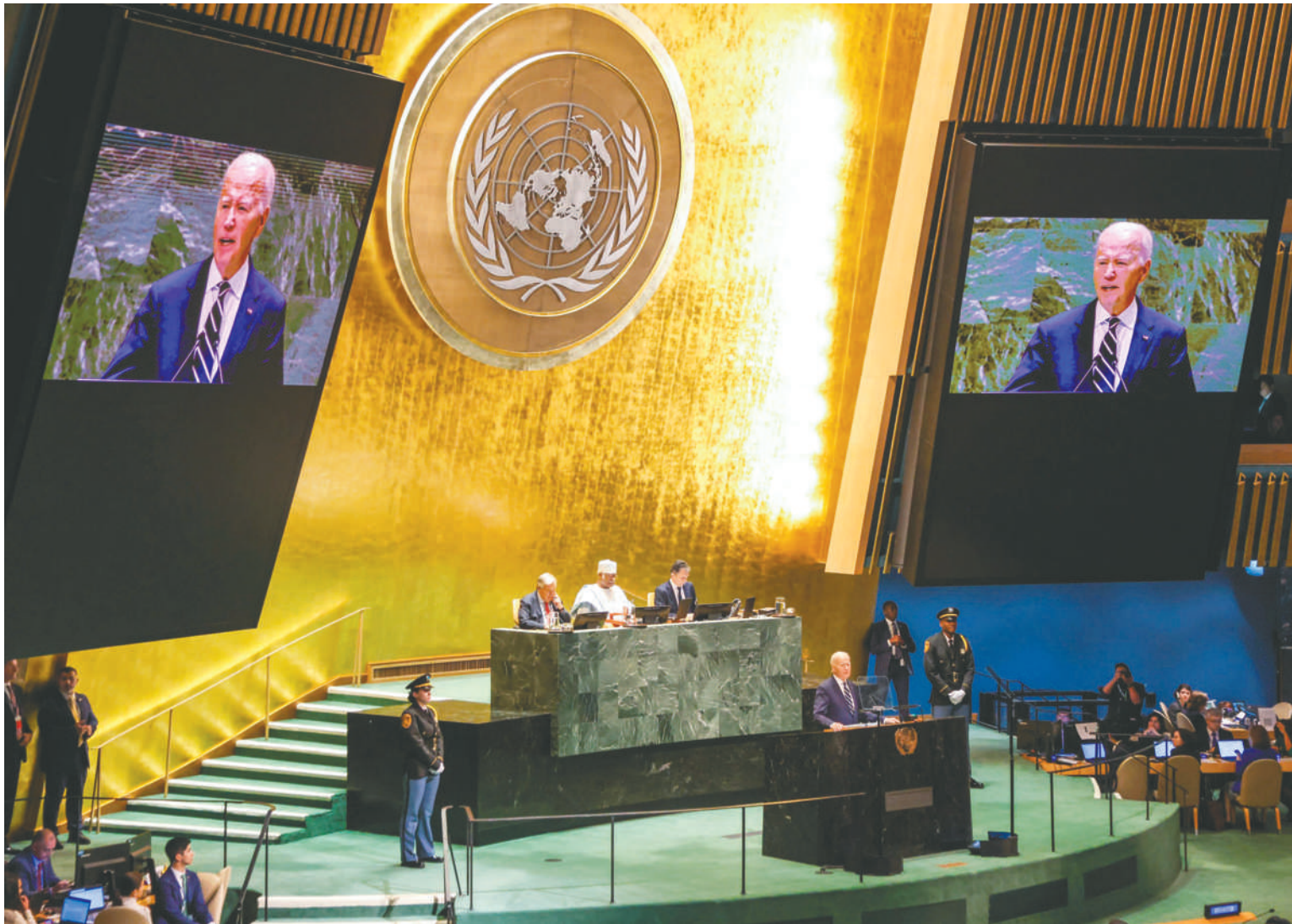
So Waibel went without for three months while the weight piled back on. Waibel was finally able to locate a stash of medication again in January. It was a lower dose than Waibel needed. But it was better than nothing.

“You get to the point where you think, ‘Is this going to be my life?’” Waibel, 29, said.

Ozempic and Mounjaro, used to treat diabetes, and their respective counterparts for weight loss, Wegovy and Zepbound, were approved by the Food and Drug

SEE WEIGHT LOSS ON A24

Senate hearing: Novo Nordisk’s CEO testifies on drug prices. **A24**



SARAH YENESE/EP A-EFE/SHUTTERSTOCK

President Joe Biden speaks before the U.N. General Assembly on Tuesday. Biden focused much of his speech on his administration’s work supporting Ukraine against Russia, bolstering alliances and, in a nod to his decision not to seek reelection, defending democracy.

On brink of all-out war, Israel poised for next step

BY LOVEDAY MORRIS, CLAIRE PARKER AND SHIRA RUBIN

JERUSALEM — Israel has been preparing for its next war against Hezbollah for nearly a decade, and a full-scale conflict has seemed increasingly inevitable with each passing month since Oct. 7. Now, with Hamas diminished in Gaza, Israel is putting its battle plan in motion.

Israel’s punishing airstrikes across southern Lebanon, follow-

Invasion of Lebanon is one option as conflict escalates, observers say

ing last week’s unprecedented attacks on Hezbollah communications devices and a series of strikes on the group’s top commanders, mark a dramatic escalation after more than 11 months of damaging, but calculated, exchanges of fire

between the two sides. Now, former officials and analysts say, Israel has opened a window of opportunity for a possible ground invasion, which parts of the security establishment have long advocated for.

“The military has been building and rebuilding the plan for years,” said Miri Eisin, a former senior intelligence officer in the Israeli military who has been briefed on security deliberations. “Every time we got to a place where we were going to do it, there were

constraints.”

Now, “it all came together” for the opening phase, she said. “The question is what’s next.”

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was previously reluctant to enter into a full-scale confrontation with Hezbollah, analysts said, fearful of fighting on two fronts and of getting bogged down in another costly and inconclusive war in Lebanon. While those risks remain, there are political advantages to be gained by acting now,

SEE ISRAEL ON A11

ELECTION 2024

Shadowy effort in Ohio aims to tip Congress in crypto’s favor

BY TONY ROMM

Bernie Moreno smiles and crosses his arms, as sparks fly around steelworkers in the distance. A narrator introduces the Ohio Republican vying for U.S. Senate, touting his promises to create jobs, combat illegal immigration and keep local families safe.

The 30-second advertisement

has blanketed televisions across the Buckeye State in the final weeks of the 2024 election. But it is not the work of Moreno’s campaign: It is financed by the cryptocurrency industry, which has started pouring money into Ohio as part of an aggressive, nationwide bid to tilt Congress in its favor.

Major crypto companies, executives and investors have spent

more than \$38 million recently to help elect Moreno, according to a Washington Post analysis of federal records and ad data, part of an expensive national quest to fend off unwanted regulation in Washington. These crypto interests have primarily funneled their support into a network of obscurely named super PACs, which have blitzed Ohio airwaves with glowing biographical ads about

the GOP candidate.

The burgeoning relationship is symbiotic. In Moreno, 57, the nation’s crypto magnates see a kindred spirit: a former currency owner and entrepreneur who has publicly promised to “lead the fight to defend crypto in the U.S.”

SEE CRYPTO ON A6

Voter fraud claims: Jurisdictions turn to radical transparency. **A3**



DEB LINDSEY FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Lunchtime customers at the deli counter of the Food Rite in Snow Hill, Md. The supermarket is the only one of its kind in the Eastern Shore town.

An ailing grocery store, a fractured community

Online complaints about expired food began a saga that divided a small town among racial lines

BY TIM CARMAN IN SNOW HILL, MD.

A 2.5-ounce bag of cheese puffs appeared to be the final straw for Tarak Patel and his Food Rite supermarket, the only one in this tiny town on the Eastern Shore.

For months, Patel and his store had increasingly become targets of online critics, who had grown tired of the craphood that was shopping at the Food Rite, where practically every item, locals claimed, needed to be inspected for mold or an expiration date. The grousing came to a head on Monday, Feb. 12, in a fairly innocuous post to the Neighbors of Snow Hill community on Face-

book. A woman by the name of Mary Mac snapped a picture of some Rap Snacks cheese puffs, whose best-by date was Nov. 30, 2023 — or more than two months before she purchased the bag. Mac didn’t say anything sensational about the grocery store or Patel in her post.

She simply wrote: “Good ol foodrite.”

Her comment echoed the general resignation that many in Snow Hill had come to feel about the Food Rite, an independent grocery store that, like others of its kind, faces mounting financial pressures to serve rural communities. Over the years, grumbling about the supermarket had be-

SEE SNOW HILL ON A16

IN THE NEWS

Harris’s economic agenda The vice president is expected to call for new federal incentives to spur domestic manufacturing. **A7**

DOJ sues Visa The department accused the company of illegally monopolizing the debit card market by penalizing merchants who use alternative payment processors. **A14**

THE NATION **Helene is forecast** to slam into Florida’s Gulf Coast on Thursday as a major hurricane. **A2** **A Senate panel** called for operational changes at the Secret Service and a budget evaluation. **A4**

THE WORLD **China moved** to uplift its troubled economy with an unusually broad stimulus package. **A9** **U.S. reluctance** to relax limits on Ukraine’s use of arms is confounding Kyiv and its allies. **A10**

THE ECONOMY **Seven details** home buyers need to consider before signing a contract with an agent under the new real estate rules. **A14** **Caroline Ellison**, a former associate of Sam Bankman-Fried’s, was sentenced to two years in prison for financial crimes. **A15**

THE REGION **Maryland filed** court documents saying the state suffered “tremendous costs and damages” in the Key Bridge collapse. **B1** **A “perfect storm”** of unpaid rents, rising costs and scarce public funds threatens affordable housing in D.C. **B1**

OBITUARIES **Editor Jack Limpert**, 90, built Washingtonian into one of the nation’s most successful city magazines. **B1**

FOOD **In today’s saturated** landscape of influencer chefs, catchphrases and crass humor can be as important as cuisine. **E1**

BUSINESS NEWS.....A14
COMICS.....C5
OBITUARIES.....B4
OPINION PAGES.....A19
TELEVISION.....C4
WORLD NEWS.....A9

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