

Decision on Trump highlights split in Maine

Support, criticism, and warnings follow election chief’s announcement

By Samantha J. Gross and Niki Griswold
GLOBE STAFF

AUGUSTA, Maine — The decision by Maine’s secretary of state to bar former president Donald Trump from the state’s Republican primary election rippled through the state Friday, drawing the ire of Republicans and the support of Democrats, and raising eyebrows among some constitutional scholars.

The reception from voters is indicative of the north-south, urban-rural divide that has created a cultural and political gulf among many Maine residents. For some Republicans and Trump supporters in the upper part of the state, Thursday’s decision by Secretary of State Shenna Bellows to label Trump an insurrectionist is an affront to their rights that also sets a dangerous precedent. For many Democrats, it was a relief.

For Margaret Graham, who was returning her son’s Christmas gift at an Auburn Mall shoe store Friday, Trump’s affiliation with the US Capitol attack on Jan. 6, 2021, seems obvious.

“Just because he wasn’t convicted doesn’t mean he wasn’t a part of it,” said Graham, a 64-year-old Sabattus resident who mostly votes for Democrats.

Amy Gove, a retired tour guide who said she has been a Republican “forever,” said voters should be allowed to vote.

MAINE, Page A7

KEVIN CULLEN

AROUND NEW ENGLAND

Vermont and its governor appear to be a pretty good fit

BARRE, Vt. — After flood waters receded here in July, Phil Scott noticed that a grassy area around a statue honoring Italian stonecutters who made Barre the “Granite Capital of the World” was covered in silt.

A phone call could have rectified the situation. Scott is, after all, the governor of Vermont.

But Scott took it on himself.

“We got an excavator in here, planted grass,” he said, looking up at the statue recently. “I saw the grass starting to grow, and thought, ‘I better mow it.’ Now I feel responsible for it.”

So, through summer and fall, the governor drove 5 miles from his temporary office in Berlin to mow that grass.

Such earnestness explains in part why Scott consistently polls as the most popular governor in the United States.

Even as a Republican in the bluest state in the country, he has seen his popularity grow with each election. When he was first elected governor in 2016, he won 53 percent of the vote. Last year, he won his fourth two-year term with 71 percent, winning a majority in every city and town. His ap-

SCOTT, Page A10

Russia launches barrage on Ukraine

Massive air assault kills at least 30, points to need for more defensive aid

By Constant Méheut and Daria Mitiuk
NEW YORK TIMES

KYIV — Russia targeted Ukrainian cities with more than 150 missiles and drones Friday morning, in what Ukrainian officials said was one of the largest air assaults of the war. At least 30 people were killed, and more than 160 were wounded, according to the Ukrainian government, and critical infrastructure

was damaged.

“This is the biggest attack since the counting began,” Yuriy Ihnat, a Ukrainian air force spokesperson, said in a brief telephone interview, adding that the military did not track air assaults in the early days of Russia’s full-scale invasion, which began in February 2022.

For several hours Friday, missiles, drones, and debris slammed into factories, hospitals, and schools

in cities across Ukraine, from Lviv in the west to Kharkiv in the east, straining the country’s air defenses and sending people scrambling for shelter.

Thanks to its powerful air defense systems, Ukraine has often been able to shoot down most, if not all, Russian weapons targeting cities in recent months. But Friday the Ukrainian military said it had shot down only 114 missiles and drones out of a total of 158.

President Biden said in a statement that Friday’s attack — which he called the “largest aerial assault

on Ukraine since this war began” — showed that after nearly two years of relentless fighting and huge numbers of casualties on both sides, President Vladimir Putin’s objectives in the war remain the same.

“He seeks to obliterate Ukraine and subjugate its people,” the president said. “He must be stopped.”

Oleksandr Musiienko, head of the Kyiv-based Center for Military and Legal Studies, said that Russia’s complex barrage of weapons including hypersonic, cruise, and air defense missiles Friday was intended

UKRAINE, Page A6

‘In Ukraine, we have what we want [and need], but here you are zero.’

VIKTORIIA SUSIDENKO, speaking about her efforts to keep her children in Belmont schools



PHOTOS BY DANIELLE PARHIZKARAN/GLOBE STAFF

The Unanian family (from left), Daniel, Karen, Luka, Mariia, and Viktoriia, ate dinner in their Cambridge home.

EVEN TEMPORARY ROOTS ELUDE REFUGEES

Forced to move again, family from Kyiv seeks to keep kids in same school

By Niki Griswold
GLOBE STAFF

CAMBRIDGE — At her family’s small apartment, 10-year-old Mariia Unanian keeps a packet of farewell notes from her Belmont friends. The cover is dominated by bubble letters that read, “We will miss you.” Inside, pages contain special messages recalling memories of doing cartwheels at recess and sharing candy.

Her 8-year-old brother, Daniel, has a similar pile covered in bright stickers, messages, and drawings.

Goodbyes are hard for their family, and in the past nearly two years, they have been forced



A painting done by Viktoriia Susidenko sat on a shelf with her children’s artwork in the family’s home.

to say it often.

The Unanians — Mariia, Daniel, their 4-year-old brother, Luka, and their parents, Viktoriia Susidenko and Karen Unanian — have been desperately seeking stability since March 2022, when they fled their home in Kyiv to escape the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

They spent time in Austria and California, starting over at each stop. When they landed in Belmont in August, and their children quickly found friends and planted roots in school, the family hoped to make the community their home. But they again faced upheaval when they

FAMILY, Page A6

State won’t ask doctors about past issues



LANE TURNER/GLOBE STAFF

Dr. James Baker lost his son, Max, to a drug overdose in 2016. Baker has had to explain on state forms why he received psychiatric care for his grief.

In bid to battle stigma, queries on mental illness, addiction are dropped

By Chris Serres
GLOBE STAFF

“Are you now or have you ever engaged in the illegal use of controlled substances? ... Have you within the past five years been treated for any mental, emotional, and nervous disorders?”

For decades, such questions were standard on the forms that doctors and other medical professionals filled out every year to maintain their credentials.

Yet doctors who sought help for past mental health or substance use problems faced a dilemma: Lie about their medical histories or risk not being able to obtain a medical license. Those struggling with trauma or depression avoided seeking treatment due to fear they might have to disclose it

DOCTORS, Page A10

A devastating act of domestic violence led to the deaths of an 18-year-old college student, her mother, and her father in Dover, officials said. **B1.**

There are plenty of sports moments to reflect on and cherish, even in a year when some local teams had seasons they’d rather forget. **C4-5.**

The S&P 500 closed out 2023 with a gain of more than 24 percent, and the Dow finished near a record high, as easing inflation and the prospect of lower interest rates buoyed investors. **D1.**

A decrease in gun violence in 2023 has been a welcome trend for communities around the country, although the number of homicides and shootings remain higher than on the eve of the pandemic. **A2.**



Sol searching

Saturday: Passing showers. High: 45-50. Low: 30-35.

Sunday: Mostly sunny. High: 39-44. Low: 28-33.

Sunrise: 7:13 Sunset: 4:20

Comics and Weather, **D4-5.**

Obituaries, **C10.**

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